

L'étourdit

by

Jacques Lacan

A Bilingual Presentation of the First Turn

Translator's note:

What is presented here is an attempt to render into English a text which many argue is unreadable in French. The translation is intended to be readable, but only at the cost of considerable effort by the reader. It is a literal translation. There may be a value in paraphrasing Lacan but this is not what I have tried to do. Hence the English is frequently tortured – this even when I have spent several years and gone through innumerable drafts to get it right. The first paragraph is a good example. The insertion of headings from Fierens' *Lecture* was prompted by my experience with *La Famille*. Students found the headings of its first edition in the *Encyclopédie* a great help. When I was persuaded to lighten the text by removing them they found it very difficult to follow. The facing French text from *l'archive de L'Ecole Lacanienne* also makes for heaviness. But what we want to provide is an *instrument de travail*. Fellow workers in the Lacanian field will let us know how to sharpen it up.

C. Gallagher

First turn: The signifier and the absence of sexual relationship

Introduction (5c; 449)

(5, 449)¹ In contributing to the 50th birthday celebrations of L'hôpital Henri-Rousselle for the favour that my friends and I have received there in a work concerning which I will indicate what it has been able to do, namely go beyond presentation, I pay homage to Dr. Daumézon who allowed me to do it.

What follows, as is my custom, does not prejudge anything about the interest that was taken in it by those to whom it was addressed: my saying (*mon dire*) at Sainte-Anne was a vacuole just like at Henri-Rousselle, and, just imagine, for almost the same time, preserving in any case the price of this letter that I say always arrives where it ought.

Chapter 1: Relationship of meaning to sense (5d-7d; 449-452)

Introduction (5d-5e; 449)

I start from morsels, not philosophical ones to be sure, since they are scraps from my seminar of this year (at Paris-1).

I wrote on two occasions on the board there (and a third time in Milan where on my travels I made it into a headline for a news-flash on “the psychoanalytic discourse”) these two sentences:

That one might be saying (*Qu'on dise*) remains forgotten behind what is said in what is heard.

This statement which appears to be an assertion since it is produced in a universal form, is in fact modal, existential as such: the subjunctive by which its subject is modulated, testifying to this.

If the welcome that responds to me from my audience is enough for the term “seminar” to be not too unworthy for what I contribute there in terms of speech, had not enticed me away from these sentences, I would have wished from their relationship of meaning (*rapport de signification*) to demonstrate the sense (*sens*) they take on from psychoanalytic discourse.

¹ J. Lacan, *L'étourdit, Scilicet* 4 (1973) pp. 5-25. The approximately corresponding pages of the version published in *Autre écrits*, Paris: Seuil, 2001 are given for convenience. The page is divided into sections a, b, c, d, e.

En contribuant au 50^e anniversaire de l'hôpital Henri-Rousselle pour la faveur que les miens et moi y avons reçue dans un travail dont j'indiquerai ce qu'il savait faire, soit passer la présentation, je rends hommage au docteur Daumézon qui me l'a permis.

Ce qui suit ne préjuge, selon ma coutume, rien de l'intérêt qu'y prendra son adresse : mon dire à Sainte-Anne fut vacuole, tout comme Henri-Rousselle et, l'imagine-t-on, depuis presque le même temps, y gardant en tout état de cause le prix de cette lettre que je dis parvenir toujours où elle doit.

Je pars de miettes, certes pas philosophiques, puisque c'est de mon séminaire de cette année (à Paris I) qu'elles font relief.

J'y ai inscrit à deux reprises au tableau (d'une troisième à Milan où itinérant, j'en avais fait banderole pour un flash sur « le discours psychanalytique ») ces deux phrases :

Qu'on dise reste oublié derrière ce qui se dit dans ce qui s'entend.

Cet énoncé qui paraît d'assertion pour se produire dans une forme universelle, est de fait modal, existentiel comme tel : le subjonctif dont se module son sujet, en témoignant.

Si le bienvenu qui de mon auditoire me répond assez pour que le terme de séminaire ne soit pas trop indigne de ce que j'y porte de parole, ne m'avait de ces phrases détourné, j'eusse voulu de leur rapport de signification démontrer le sens qu'elles prennent du discours psychanalytique.

The opposition that I am evoking here will have to be emphasised later.

1. *The signifier and the discourses* (5e-6a; 449-450)

I recall that it is from logic that this discourse touches on the real by encountering it as impossible, which is why it is this discourse that raises it (6,450) to its final power: science, I have said, of the real. And may I be forgiven here by those who even though involved in it, do not know it. Were I to spare them again, they would soon learn it from the outcomes.

Meaning, by being grammatical, confirms first of all that the second sentence bears on the first, by making it its subject in the form of a particular. It says: this statement, then qualifies it as assertive because it is posed as true, confirming it by being in the form of the proposition described as universal in logic: in any case the fact is that the saying remains forgotten behind what is said.

But by way of antithesis, in other words on the same plane, in a second phase it exposes its semblance: by affirming it from the fact that its subject is modal, and by proving it from the fact that it is modulated grammatically as: that one might be saying. Which it recalls not so much to memory but, as they say: to existence.

2. *A relationship between heteroclitc meanings or the delusion of interpretation*

3. *The relationship between the meaning of the signifier and interpretation* (6a-7a; 450-451)

The first sentence is not then on the thetical plane of truth that the first phase of the second assures, as is usual, by means of tautologies (here two). What is recalled, is that its stating is a moment of existence, is that, situated from discourse, it “ex-sists” to truth.

Let us recognise here the way in which the necessary happens: in proper logic it should be understood, the one that organises its modes by proceeding from where it gets to, namely, this impossible, modest (*modique*) no doubt though inconvenient (*incommode*) from then on, that for what is said (*dit*) to be true, one still must say it, that there should be a saying.

And this is how grammar already measures the force and the weakness of logics that isolate themselves from it, by splitting them with its subjunctive, and indicates itself by concentrating the power, to open up all of them.

For, I come back to it one more time: “there is no metalanguage” such that any of the logics entitled propositional, could use it as a crutch

L'opposition qu'ici j'évoque devant être plus loin accentuée.

Je rappelle que c'est de la logique que ce discours touche au réel à le rencontrer comme impossible, en quoi c'est ce discours qui la porte à sa puissance dernière : science, ai-je dit, du réel. Qu'ici me pardonnent ceux qui d'y être intéressés, ne le savent pas. Les ménagerais-je encore, qu'ils l'apprendraient bientôt des événements.

La signification, d'être grammaticale, entérine d'abord que la seconde phrase porte sur la première, à en faire son sujet sous forme d'un particulier. Elle dit : cet énoncé, puis qualifie celui-ci de l'assertif de se poser comme vrai, l'en confirmant d'être sous forme de proposition dite universelle en logique : c'est en tout cas que le dire reste oublié derrière le dit.

Mais d'antithèse, soit du même plan, en un second temps elle en dénonce le semblant : à l'affirmer du fait que son sujet soit modal, et à le prouver de ce qu'il se module grammaticalement comme : qu'on dise. Ce qu'elle rappelle non pas tant à la mémoire que, comme on dit : à l'existence.

La première phrase n'est donc pas de ce plan théorique de vérité que le premier temps de la seconde assure, comme d'ordinaire, au moyen de tautologies (ici deux). Ce qui est rappelé, c'est que son énonciation est moment d'existence, c'est que, située du discours, elle « ex-siste » à la vérité.

Reconnaissons ici la voie par où advient le nécessaire : en bonne logique s'entend, celle qui ordonne ses modes de procéder d'où elle accède, soit cet impossible, modique sans doute quoique dès lors incommode, que pour qu'un dit soit vrai, encore faut-il qu'on le dise, que dire il y en ait.

En quoi la grammaire mesure déjà force et faiblesse des logiques qui s'en isolent, pour, de son subjonctif, les cliver, et s'indique en concentrer la puissance, de toutes les frayer.

Car, j'y reviens une fois de plus, « il n'y a pas de métalangage » tel qu'aucune des logiques, à s'intituler de la proposition, puisse s'en faire

(*béquille*) – to each one there remains its own imbecility – and if people believe they can find it in my reference, above, to discourse, I refute it from the fact that the sentence which appears there to become the object for the second, is no less significantly applied to the former.

For, that one might be saying this second, remains forgotten behind what is said. And this in a way that is all the more striking, since being, for its part, relentlessly assertive to the point of being tautological in the proofs (7, 451) that it advances – by exposing in the first its semblance, it poses its own saying as inexistent, since in contesting the former as what is said as truth (*dit de vérité*), it is existence that it makes correspond to its saying, this not by making this saying exist since it simply names it, but by denying its truth – without saying so.

4. *The universal and the existence of a saying* (7a-e; 451)

By extending this process there is born my own formula that there is no universal that must not be contained by an existence that denies it. So that the stereotype that every man is mortal is not stated from nowhere. The logic that dates it, is only that of a philosophy which feigns this “nullubiquity”, this in order to create an alibi for what I name the discourse of the master.

Now it is not from this discourse alone, but from the place in which the others take their turn (the other discourses), the one that I designate as semblance, that a saying takes on its sense.

This place is not for all, but it ex-sists them, and it is from there that it is “homologated” (*s'hommologue*) that all are mortal. They all cannot but be so, because at death we assign them from this place, all it must be, since it is there that one looks on the marvel (*on veille à la merveille*) of the good of all. And particularly when what one looks after there creates a semblance of the master-signifier or of knowledge. Hence the ritornelle of philosophical logic.

There is therefore no universal that is not reduced to the possible. Even death, since this is the point from which alone it is articulated. However universal one may pose it, it always remains only possible. That the law is alleviated by being affirmed as formulated from nowhere, namely, as being without reason, confirms still more where its saying comes from.

Before rendering to analysis the merit of this apperception, let us do our duty with respect to our sentences by remarking that “in what is heard” of the first, is equally connected to the existence of the “remains forgotten”

béquille (qu'à chacune reste son imbécillité), et si l'on croit le retrouver dans ma référence, plus haut, au discours, je le réfute de ce que la phrase qui a l'air là de faire objet pour la seconde, ne s'en applique pas moins significativement à celle-ci.

Car cette seconde, qu'on la dise reste oublié derrière ce qu'elle dit. Et ceci de façon d'autant plus frappante qu'assertive, elle sans rémission au point d'être tautologique en les preuves qu'elle avance, – à dénoncer dans la première son semblant, elle pose son propre dire comme inexistant, puisqu'en contestant celle-ci comme dit de vérité, c'est l'existence qu'elle fait répondre de son dire, ceci non pas de faire ce dire exister puisque seulement elle le dénomme, mais d'en nier la vérité – sans le dire.

À étendre ce procès, naît la formule, mienne, qu'il n'y a pas d'universelle qui ne doive se contenir d'une existence qui la nie. Tel le stéréotype que tout homme soit mortel, ne s'énonce pas de nulle part. La logique qui le date, n'est que celle d'une philosophie qui feint cette nullibiquité, ce pour faire alibi à ce que je dénomme discours du maître.

Or ce n'est pas de ce seul discours, mais de la place où font tour d'autres (d'autres discours), celle que je désigne du semblant, qu'un dire prend son sens.

Cette place n'est pas pour tous, mais elle leur ex-siste, et c'est de là que s'hommologue que tous soient mortels. Ils ne peuvent que l'être tous, parce qu'à la mort on les délègue de cette place, tous il faut bien, puisque c'est là qu'on veille à la merveille du bien de tous. Et particulièrement quand ce qui y veille y fait semblant du signifiant-maître ou du savoir. D'où la ritournelle de la logique philosophique.

Il n'y a donc pas d'universel qui ne se réduise au possible. Même la mort, puisque c'est là la pointe dont seulement elle s'articule. Si universelle qu'on la pose, elle ne reste jamais que possible. Que la loi s'allège de s'affirmer comme formulée de nulle part, c'est-à-dire d'être sans raison, confirme encore d'où part son dire.

Avant de rendre à l'analyse le mérite de cette aperception, acquittons-nous envers nos phrases à remarquer que « dans ce qui s'entend » de la première, se branche également sur l'existence du « reste oublié » que

which depends on the second and to the “what is said” that it itself exposes, as covering this remains.

Here I note in passing the defect of the “transformational” attempt to make logic out of a recourse to a more profound structure which is supposed to be a layered tree.

Chapter 2: Freud’s saying (7e-10d; 451-454)

Introduction (7e-8a; 451)

And I come back to sense to recall the trouble philosophy must take – the latest one to save its honour by being of a contemporaneity (8, 452) from which the analyst is absent – to notice what is its own everyday resource: that nothing is hidden so much as what is unveiled, as the truth, *Aletheia* = *Verborgenheit*.

1. Ab-sense or Freudian practice (8a-c; 451-452)

Thus I did not renounce my fraternity with this saying since I only repeat it from a practice which, situating itself from another discourse, makes it incontestable.

For those who listen to me...*ou pire*, this exercise would only have confirmed the logic by which castration and the Oedipus complex are articulated in analysis.

Freud puts us on the track of the fact that lack-of-sense (*ab-sens*) designates sex: it is by the inflation of this lack-of-sex-sense (*sens-absexe*) that a topology is unfolded where it is the word that decides.

Starting from the expression: “it does not go without saying” (*ça ne va pas sans dire*), one sees that this is the case with many things, of even the majority, including the Freudian thing as I situated it as being what is said in truth.

Not to go without ..., is to make a couple which, as they say, “is not all that obvious (*ne va pas tout seul*)”.

Thus it is that what is said does not go without a saying. But if what is said always poses itself as truth, even though never going beyond a half-said, as I express it, the saying only couples with it by ex-sisting it, in other words by not being of the *dit-mension* of the truth.

relève la seconde et sur le « ce qui se dit » qu'elle-même dénonce comme, ce reste, le couvrant.

Où je note au passage le défaut de l'essai « transformationnel » de faire logique d'un recours à une structure profonde qui serait un arbre à étages.

Et je reviens au sens pour rappeler la peine qu'il faut à la philosophie – la dernière à en sauver l'honneur d'être à la page dont l'analyste fait l'absence – pour apercevoir ce qui est sa ressource, à lui, de tous les jours : que rien ne cache autant que ce qui dévoile, que la vérité, *Αλήθεια* = *Verborgenheit*.

Ainsi ne renié-je pas la fraternité de ce dire, puisque je ne le répète qu'à partir d'une pratique qui, se situant d'un autre discours, le rend incontestable.

Pour ceux qui m'écoutent... ou pire, cet exercice n'eût fait que confirmer la logique dont s'articulent dans l'analyse castration et Œdipe.

Freud nous met sur la voie de ce que l'ab-sens désigne le sexe : c'est à la gonfle de ce sens-absexe qu'une topologie se déploie où c'est le mot qui tranche.

Partant de la locution : « ça ne va pas sans dire », on voit que c'est le cas de beaucoup de choses, de la plupart même, y compris de la chose freudienne telle que je l'ai située d'être le dit de la vérité.

N'aller pas sans..., c'est faire couple, ce qui, comme on dit, « ne va pas tout seul ».

C'est ainsi que le dit ne va pas sans dire. Mais si le dit se pose toujours en vérité, fût-ce à ne jamais dépasser un midit (comme je m'exprime), le dire ne s'y couple que d'y ex-sister, soit de n'être pas de la dit-mension de la vérité.

2. *Mathematical saying and the wall of the impossible* (8d-e; 452-453)

It is easy to make this sensible in the discourse of mathematics where what is said is constantly renewed by taking its subject from a saying rather than from any reality, provided this saying is summoned from the properly logical sequence that it implies as what is said.

No need for Cantor's saying to deal with that. It begins with Euclid.

If I had recourse this year to the first, namely, to set theory, it was to refer to it the marvellous efflorescence which by isolating the incomplete from the inconsistent in logic, the indemonstrable from the refutable, and even adding to it the undecidable, by not managing to exclude itself from demonstrability, puts us face to face with the impossible so that there could be ejected the 'that's not it' which is the wail of an appeal to the real.

3. *A discourse embarrassed by its language* (8e-9a; 452-453)

I said discourse of mathematics. Not its language. This should be noted for the moment when I come back to the unconscious, structured like a (9,453) language, as I have always said. For it is in analysis that it is organised as discourse.

It remains to be recorded that the mathematician has the same embarrassment with his language as we have with the unconscious, and expresses it by this thought that he does not know what he is speaking about, even to assure it as being true (Russell).

Il est facile de rendre cela sensible dans le discours de la mathématique où constamment le dit se renouvelle de prendre sujet d'un dire plutôt que d'aucune réalité, quitte, ce dire, à le sommer de la suite proprement logique qu'il implique comme dit.

Pas besoin du dire de Cantor pour toucher cela. Ça commence à Euclide.

Si j'ai recouru cette année au premier, soit à la théorie des ensembles, c'est pour y rapporter la merveilleuse efflorescence qui, d'isoler dans la logique l'incomplet de l'inconsistant, l'indémontrable du réfutable, voire d'y adjoindre l'indécidable de ne pas arriver à s'exclure de la démontrabilité, nous met assez au pied du mur de l'impossible pour que s'évince le « ce n'est pas ça », qui est le vagissement de l'appel au réel.

J'ai dit discours de la mathématique. Non langage de la même. Qu'on y prenne garde pour le moment où je reviendrai à l'inconscient, structuré comme un langage, ai-je dit de toujours. Car c'est dans l'analyse qu'il s'ordonne en discours.

Reste à marquer que le mathématicien a avec son langage le même embarras que nous avec l'inconscient, à le traduire de cette pensée qu'il ne sait pas de quoi il parle, fût-ce à l'assurer d'être vrai (Russell).

4. *Saying in the roundabout of discourses* (9b-d; 453)

Being the language that is most suitable for scientific discourse, mathematics is the science without consciousness that our friend Rabelais promised, before which a philosopher¹ can only remain dumb: gay science rejoiced by presuming of it the ruin of the soul. Naturally, neurosis survives it.

Having noted this, the saying is demonstrated, and escapes from what is said. From then on it only assures this privilege by being formulated as “saying no”, if, by going in the direction of sense, it is containing (*contien*) that is grasped in it, not contradiction – the response, not being taken up again in negation – rejection, not correction.

Responding in that way suspends what is true in what is said.

Which clarifies the tangential light (*jour rasant*) that the analytic discourse contributes to the others, by revealing in them the modal loci by which their roundabout is accomplished.

Remark 1: *Philosophy and Mathematical Language* (9 note; 453)

¹ The philosopher is inscribed (in the sense that one says it of a circumference) in the discourse of the master. He plays the role of the fool in it. That does not mean that what he says is stupid; it is even more than usable. Read Shakespeare.

That does not mean either, and take note of this, that he knows what he is saying. The court fool has a role: that of being the replacement of the truth. He can be so by expressing himself like a language, just like the unconscious. That he is, himself, unconscious of it is secondary, what is important is that the role should be held.

Thus Hegel in speaking as accurately about mathematical language as Bertrand Russell does, loses his bearings no less: the fact is that Bertrand Russell is in the discourse of science.

Kojève whom I hold to be my master for having initiated me into Hegel, had the same bias regarding mathematics but it must be said that he was of Russell's time, and that he only philosophised under the title of the university discourse into which he had settled provisionally, but knowing well that his knowledge only functioned there as a semblance and treating it as such: he showed this in all sorts of ways, handing over his notes to whoever could profit from them and posthumously showing his derision for the whole adventure.

This contempt of his was supported by his starting discourse which was also the one he returned to: the great commander knows how to deal with buffoons as well as the others, namely, as subjects, which they are, of the sovereign.

Pour être le langage le plus propice au discours scientifique, la mathématique est la science sans conscience dont fait promesse notre bon Rabelais, celle à laquelle un philosophe² ne peut que rester bouché : la gaye science se réjouissait d'en présumer ruine de l'âme. Bien sûr, la névrose y survit.

Ceci remarqué, le dire se démontre, et d'échapper au dit. Dès lors ce privilège, il ne l'assure qu'à se formuler en « dire que non », si, à aller au sens, c'est le contien qu'on y saisit, non la contradiction, – la réponse, non la reprise en négation, – le rejet, non la correction.

Répondre ainsi suspend ce que le dit a de véritable.

Ce qui s'éclaire du jour rasant que le discours analytique apporte aux autres, y révélant les lieux modaux dont leur ronde s'accomplit.

² Le philosophe s'inscrit (au sens où on le dit d'une circonférence) dans le discours du maître. Il y joue le rôle du fou. Ça ne veut pas dire que ce qu'il dit soit sot ; c'est même plus qu'utilisable. Lisez Shakespeare. Ça ne dit pas non plus, qu'on y prenne garde, qu'il sache ce qu'il dit. Le fou de cour a un rôle : celui d'être le tenant-lieu de la vérité. Il le peut à s'exprimer comme un langage, tout comme l'inconscient. Qu'il en soit, lui, dans l'inconscience est secondaire, ce qui importe est que le rôle soit tenu. Ainsi Hegel, de parler aussi juste du langage mathématique que Bertrand Russell, n'en loupe pas moins la commande : c'est que Bertrand Russell est dans le discours de la science. Kojève que je tiens pour mon maître, de m'avoir initié à Hegel, avait la même partialité à l'égard des mathématiques, mais il faut dire qu'il en était au temps de Russell, et qu'il ne philosophisait qu'au titre du discours universitaire où il s'était rangé par provision, mais sachant bien que son savoir n'y fonctionnait que comme semblant et le traitant comme tel : il l'a montré de toutes manières, livrant ses notes à qui pouvait en faire profit et posthumant sa dérision de toute l'aventure. Ce mépris qui fut le sien, se soutenait de son discours de départ qui fut aussi celui où il retourna : le grand commis sait traiter les bouffons aussi bien que les autres, soit en sujets, qu'ils sont, du souverain.

Remark 2: "To say what is there" (9c-10d; 454)

I would metaphorise for the moment as incest the relationship that the truth maintains with the real. The saying comes from where it [the real] (10, 454) determines it [the truth]. But can there not also be a direct saying?

To say what there is, means nothing to you, my dear friends from the *salle de garde*, so called no doubt because it is very careful (*se garde bien*) not to contradict the body of employers to which it aspires (and whatever it may be).

To say what is there, for a long time raised its man for you to this profession that no longer haunts you except by its emptiness: the doctor who in every age and over the whole surface of the globe, pronounces on what is there. But it is still starting from the fact that what is, only has the interest of having to be conjured away.

At the point to which history has reduced this sacral function, I understand your uneasiness. Not even possible for you, this no longer being the time, to play the philosopher, which was the latest moulting by which, by acting as the flunkeys of emperors and princes, doctors survived (read Fernel).

Know nevertheless, even though analysis is of another siglum – but that it tempts you is comprehensible – the one that first and foremost I testify to.

I say it, because it has been demonstrated without exception by those I called my "dandies": there is not the slightest access to Freud's saying which is not foreclosed – and with no return in this case – by the choice of one or other analyst.

The fact is that there is no conceivable formation of the analyst outside the maintenance of this saying, and that Freud for want of having forged with the analytic discourse, the bond that would have held psychoanalytic societies, situates them from other discourses that necessarily bar his saying.

Which all my writings demonstrate.

Je métaphoriserai pour l'instant de l'inceste le rapport que la vérité entretient avec le réel. Le dire vient d'où il la commande.

Mais ne peut-il y avoir aussi dire direct ?

Dire ce qu'il y a, ça ne vous dit rien, chers petits de la salle de garde, sans doute dite ainsi de ce qu'elle se garde bien de contrarier le patronat où elle aspire (et quel qu'il soit).

Dire ce qu'il y a, pendant longtemps ça vous haussa son homme jusqu'à cette profession qui ne vous hante plus que de son vide : le médecin qui dans tous les âges et sur toute la surface du globe, sur ce qu'il y a, se prononce. Mais c'est encore à partir de ceci que ce qu'il y a, n'a d'intérêt qu'à devoir être conjuré.

Au point où l'histoire a réduit cette fonction sacrée, je comprends votre malaise. Pas même possible pour vous, le temps n'y étant plus, de jouer au philosophe qui fut la mue dernière où, de faire la valetaille des empereurs et des princes, les médecins se survécurent (lisez Fernel).

Sachez pourtant, quoique l'analyse soit d'un autre sigle – mais qu'elle vous tente, ça se comprend – ce dont je témoigne d'abord.

Je le dis, de ce que ce soit démontré sans exception de ceux que j'ai appelés mes « dandys » : il n'y a pas le moindre accès au dire de Freud qui ne soit forclos – et sans retour dans ce cas – par le choix de tel analyste.

C'est qu'il n'y a pas de formation de l'analyste concevable hors du maintien de ce dire, et que Freud, faute d'avoir forgé avec le discours de l'analyste, le lien dont auraient tenu les sociétés de psychanalyse, les a situées d'autres discours qui barrent son dire nécessairement.

Ce que tous mes écrits démontrent.

Chapter 3: There is no sexual relationship (10d-14e; 454-458)

1. *The absence of sexual relationship and the two ex-sistences* (10d-11d; 454-455)

Freud's saying is inferred from the logic which takes as source what is said by the unconscious. It is in as much as Freud discovered this "what is said" (*dit*) that it ex-sists.

Restoring this saying, is necessary for the discourse of analysis to be constituted (which is what I am contributing to), this from the experience where it is proved to exist.

One cannot express this saying in terms of truth since in truth there is only a half-said, properly cut, but that there can be this clear half-said (it can be conjugated by going back: you meditate, *tu médites*, I speak ill of, *je médis*) takes on its sense only from this saying. This saying is not free, but is (11, 455) produced by relaying it from others that proceed from other discourses. It is by being closed in analysis (c.f. my *Radiophonie*, the number just before of this a-periodical) that their roundabout situates the loci by which this saying is circled.

They circle it as real, namely, from the impossible, which is announced as: *there is no sexual relationship (il n'y a pas de rapport sexuel)*.

This presupposes that in terms of relationship (of relationship "in general") there is only a statement, and that the real is only assured in it by being confirmed from the limit which is demonstrated by the logical consequences of the statement.

Here an immediate limit, from the fact that 'there is nothing' (*n'y a rien*) to make a relationship of a statement.

Because of this, no logical consequence, which is not deniable (*niable*), but which is not sufficient to support any negation: simply the saying that: *nya*.

Nia only contributing to it just the homophony required in French in order, from the past that it signifies, to mark that there is no trace (*nya la trace*) of any present whose existence can be connoted there.

But what is at stake? The relationship of the man and of the woman in as much as they would be suitable, from the fact that they inhabit language, to make a statement about this relationship.

Is it the absence of this relationship that exiles them in this stable habitat (*stabitat*)? Is it by inhabiting it in a labile way (*d'labiter*) that this relationship can only be inter-dicted (*inter-dit*)?

Le dire de Freud s'infère de la logique qui prend de source le dit de l'inconscient. C'est en tant que Freud a découvert ce dit qu'il ex-siste.

En restituer ce dire, est nécessaire à ce que le discours se constitue de l'analyse (c'est à quoi j'aide), ce à partir de l'expérience où il s'avère exister.

On ne peut, ce dire, le traduire en termes de vérité puisque de vérité il n'y a que midit, bien coupé, mais qu'il y ait ce midit net (il se conjugue en remontant : tu médites, je médis), ne prend son sens que de ce dire.

Ce dire n'est pas libre, mais se produit d'en relayer d'autres qui proviennent d'autres discours. C'est à se fermer dans l'analyse (*cf. ma Radiophonie*, le numéro juste d'avant de cet apériodique) que leur ronde situe les lieux dont se cerne ce dire.

Ils le cernent comme réel, c'est-à-dire de l'impossible, lequel s'annonce : *il n'y a pas de rapport sexuel*.

Ceci suppose que de rapport (de rapport « en général »), il n'y a qu'énoncé, et que le réel ne s'en assure qu'à se confirmer de la limite qui se démontre des suites logiques de l'énoncé.

Ici limite immédiate, de ce que « n'y a » rien à faire rapport d'un énoncé. De ce fait, nulle suite logique, ce qui n'est pas niable, mais que ne suffit à supporter nulle négation : seulement le dire que : *nya*.

Nia n'y apportant que juste d'homophonie ce qu'il faut en français pour, du passé qu'il signifie, d'aucun présent dont s'y connote l'existence marquer que *nya* la trace.

Mais de quoi s'agit-il ? Du rapport de l'homme et de la femme en tant justement qu'ils seraient propres, de ce qu'ils habitent le langage, à faire énoncé de ce rapport.

Est-ce l'absence de ce rapport qui les exile en *stabitat* ? Est-ce d'*labiter* que ce rapport ne peut être qu'*inter-dit* ?

This is not the question: much more rather the response, and the response that supports it – by being what stimulates it to repeat itself – is the real.

Let us admit it: where it is-there (*est-là*). Nothing to be expected from going back to the flood, when this is already recounted as retribution for the relationship of the woman to angels.

2. *The absence of sexual relationship and the two universals* (11d-12e; 455-456)

Let us nevertheless illustrate this function of the response by an apologue, a logue that is hard pressed (*aux abois*) having been provided by the psychologist, since the soul has its back to the wall (*aboi*), and even, by pronouncing (a) *petit a*, (*a*)*boi*.

The trouble is that the psychologist, since he can only support his sector by theology, wants the psychical to be normal, and as a result he elaborates what would suppress it.

Especially the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*, when he would do better to pay attention to the *volte-man* (*homme-volte*) which makes up the labyrinth from (12, 456) which man does not get out. The stimulus-response couple leads to the avowal of his fabrications. To call response what would allow the individual to keep himself alive is excellent, but that this ends up quickly and badly, opens up the question which is solved by the fact that life reproduces the individual, and therefore also reproduces the question, which means in this case that it is repeated (*ré-pète*).

This indeed is what is uncovered from the unconscious, which from then on proves to be a response, but from the fact that it is what stimulates.

'Tis (*c't*) also why, whatever happens, the psychologist re-enters into *volte-man* of repetition, the one that we know is produced from the unconscious.

Life no doubt reproduces, God knows what and why. But the response only gives rise to a question where there is no relationship to support the reproduction of life.

Except for the fact that the unconscious formulates: "How is man reproduced?", which is the case.

– "By reproducing the question", is the response. Or "in order to make you speak", in other words, that the unconscious has, by existing.

Ce n'est pas la question : bien plutôt la réponse, et la réponse qui la supporte, – d'être ce qui la stimule à se répéter –, c'est le réel.

Admettons-le : où il est-là. Rien à attendre de remonter au déluge, alors que déjà celui-ci se raconte de rétribuer le rapport de la femme aux anges.

Illustrons pourtant cette fonction de la réponse d'un apologue, logue aux abois d'être fourni par le psychologue, puisque l'âme est aboi, et même, à prononcer (a) petit a, (a)boi.

Le malheur est que le psychologue, pour ne soutenir son secteur que de la théologie, veut que le psychique soit normal, moyennant quoi il élabore ce qui le supprimerait.

L'Innenwelt et l'Umwelt notamment, alors qu'il ferait mieux de s'occuper de l'homme-volte qui fait le labyrinthe dont l'homme ne sort pas.

Le couple stimulus-réponse passe à l'aveu de ses inventions. Appeler réponse ce qui permettrait à l'individu de se maintenir en vie est excellent, mais que ça se termine vite et mal, ouvre la question qui se résout de ce que la vie reproduit l'individu, donc reproduit aussi bien la question, ce qui se dit dans ce cas qu'elle se ré-pète.

C'est bien ce qui se découvre de l'inconscient, lequel dès lors s'avère être réponse, mais de ce que ce soit elle qui stimule.

C't aussi en quoi, quoi qu'il en ait, le psychologue rentre dans l'homme-volte de la répétition, celle qu'on sait se produire de l'inconscient.

La vie sans doute reproduit, Dieu sait quoi et pourquoi. Mais la réponse ne fait question que là où il n'y a pas de rapport à supporter la reproduction de la vie.

Sauf à ce que l'inconscient formule : « Comment l'homme se reproduit-il ? », ce qui est le cas.

– « À reproduire la question », c'est la réponse. Ou « pour te faire parler », autrement dit qu'a l'inconscient, d'ex-sister.

It is from there that we must obtain two universals, two *alls* sufficiently consistent to separate among -- speakers who, by being plural (*des*), believe themselves – beings, two moieties such that they will not get too entangled in coiteration when they get there.

3. *The absence of sexual relationship and the phallus* (12d-13e; 456-457)

Moiety in French means that it is an ego-affair (*moitié/moi*), the half-chicken which began my first reading book having besides opened up for me the division of the subject.

The body of speakers is subject to being divided by its organs, enough to have to find them a function. It sometimes takes ages: for a foreskin that takes on usage in circumcision, indeed for the appendage to wait for it for centuries, from surgery.

It is thus that from psychoanalytic discourse, an organ makes itself the signifier. The one that can be said to be isolated in corporeal reality as bait, by functioning in it (the function being delegated to it from a discourse):

a) as a phanerogam favoured by its aspect of detachable addition accentuated by its erectility,

b) by being a snare, to which this last accent contributes, in the different (13, 457) catches (*pêches*) that make discourses of the voracities by which the inexistence of the sexual relationship is plugged.

We recognise, even from this mode of evacuation, of course the organ which by being, let us say, “credited to” the male, makes the active of the verb in what is said about copulation, be decerned to the latter. It is the same one that its diverse names, in the tongue that I use, quite symptomatically feminise.

One should all the same not be deceived by this: because of the function that derives it from discourse, it has passed to the signifier. A signifier can be used for many things just like an organ, but not for the same. As regards castration for example, if it makes use of it, it has not (luckily in general) the same consequences as if it were the organ. As regards the function of bait, if it is the organ that offers itself as a hook for the voracities that we were situating just now, let us say: of female origin [*d'origyne*], the signifier on the contrary is the fish to gulp down what is necessary for discourses to maintain themselves.

C'est à partir de là qu'il nous faut obtenir deux universels, deux *tous* suffisamment consistants pour séparer chez des êtres parlants, – qui, d'être des, se croient des êtres –, deux moitiés telles qu'elles ne s'embrouillent pas trop dans la coïtération quand ils y arrivent.

Moitié dit en français que c'est une affaire de moi, la moitié de poulet qui ouvrait mon premier livre de lecture m'ayant en outre frayé la division du sujet.

Le corps des parlants est sujet à se diviser des organes, assez pour avoir à leur trouver fonction. Il y faut parfois des âges : pour un prépuce qui prend usage de la circoncision, voyez l'appendice l'attendre pendant des siècles, de la chirurgie.

C'est ainsi que du discours psychanalytique, un organe se fait le signifiant. Celui qu'on peut dire s'isoler dans la réalité corporelle comme appât, d'y fonctionner (la fonction lui étant déléguée d'un discours) :

- a) en tant que phanère à la faveur de son aspect de plaquage amovible qui s'accroît de son érectilité,
- b) pour être attrape, où ce dernier accent contribue, dans les diverses pêches qui font discours des voracités dont se tamponne l'inexistence du rapport sexuel.

On reconnaît, même de ce mode d'évacuation, bien sûr l'organe qui d'être, disons, « à l'actif » du mâle, fait à celui-ci, dans le dit de la copulation, décerner l'actif du verbe. C'est le même que ses noms divers, dans la langue dont j'use, bien symptomatiquement féminisent.

Il ne faut pourtant pas s'y tromper : pour la fonction qu'il tient du discours, il est passé au signifiant. Un signifiant peut servir à bien des choses tout comme un organe, mais pas aux mêmes. Pour la castration par exemple, s'il fait usage, ça n'a (bonheur en général) pas les mêmes suites que si c'était l'organe. Pour la fonction d'appât, si c'est l'organe qui s'offre hameçon aux voracités que nous situons à l'instant, disons : d'origyne, le signifiant au contraire est le poisson à engloutir ce qu'il faut aux discours pour s'entretenir.

This organ, gone on to being the signifier, hollows out the place from which an effect is had on the speaker, let us follow him in that he thinks himself: to be, the inexistence of the sexual relationship.

The present state of the discourses which feed therefore on these beings, is situated by this fact of inexistence, by this impossible, not to be said, but which, squeezed by all these “what is saids”, shows itself as the real.

Posed in this way Freud’s saying is justified first and foremost by what he said, from which it is proved, what I said, – is confirmed by having been acknowledged by the stagnation of analytic experience, that I expose, – might develop from the re-emergence of the analytic discourse, at which I occupy myself, since, even though without resources, it falls under my jurisdiction.²

4. From Freud to the phallic function (13e-14e; 457-458)

In the confusion where the parasitic organism that Freud grafted onto his saying, itself makes a graft of what he said, it is no easy matter for a cat to find its kittens, nor the reader a sense.

The muddle is insurmountable about what is pinpointed there about castration, about the defiles by which love is sustained from incest, about the function of the father, about the myth in which the Oedipus complex is reduplicated by the comedy of the orang-Father (*Père-orang*) or the (14, 458) speechifying Outang. It is well known that for ten years I had taken the trouble to make a French garden of these tracks Freud was able to stick to in his design, the first, even though it could always be spotted how twisted they were by whoever wanted to get to the bottom of what supplies for the sexual relationship.

It was still necessary that the distinction of the symbolic, the imaginary and the real should come to light: this so that the identification to the man moiety and to the woman moiety, where as I have just called to mind the business of the ego dominates, should not be confused with their relationship.

² Here stops what appeared concurrently in the memorial d’Henri Rousselle.

Cet organe, passé au signifiant, creuse la place d'où prend effet pour le parlant, suivons-le à ce qu'il se pense : être, l'inexistence du rapport sexuel. L'état présent des discours qui s'alimentent donc de ces êtres, se situe de ce fait d'inexistence, de cet impossible, non pas à dire, mais qui, serré de tous les dits, s'en démontre pour le réel.

Le dire de Freud ainsi posé se justifie de ses dits d'abord, dont il se prouve, ce que j'ai dit, – se confirme à s'être avoué de la stagnation de l'expérience analytique, ce que je dénonce, – se développerait de la ressortie du discours analytique, ce à quoi je m'emploie, puisque, quoique sans ressource, c'est de mon ressort².

Dans la confusion où l'organisme parasite que Freud a greffé sur son dire, fait lui-même greffe de ses dits, ce n'est pas petite affaire qu'une chatte y retrouve ses petits, ni le lecteur un sens.

Le fouillis est insurmontable de ce qui s'y épingle de la castration, des défilés par où l'amour s'entretient de l'inceste, de la fonction du père, du mythe où l'Œdipe se redouble de la comédie du Père-Orang, du pérorant Outang.

On sait que j'avais dix ans pris soin de faire jardin à la française de ces voies à quoi Freud a su coller dans son dessin, le premier, quand pourtant de toujours ce qu'elles ont de tordu était repérable pour quiconque eût voulu en avoir le cœur net sur ce qui supplée au rapport sexuel.

Encore fallait-il que fût venue au jour la distinction du symbolique, de l'imaginaire et du réel : ceci pour que l'identification à la moitié homme et à la moitié femme, où je viens d'évoquer que l'affaire du moi domine, ne fût pas avec leur rapport confondue.

² Ici s'arrête ce qui paraît concurremment dans le mémorial d'Henri Rousselle.

It is enough for the business of the ego like the business of the phallus where you were kind enough to follow me just now, to be articulated in language to become the business of the subject and to no longer fall under the jurisdiction of the imaginary. Just fancy that since the year '56 all of this could have been taken as acquired, if there had been consent about the analytic discourse.

For it is in the "question preliminary" of my *Ecrits*, which was to be read as the response given by the perceived (*le perçu*) in psychosis, that I introduce the Name of the Father and the fields (in this *Ecrit*, put in a graph) by which it allows psychosis itself to be arranged, that one can measure its power.

There is nothing excessive with regard to what experience provides us, to put under the heading of being or having the phallus (cf. my *Bedeutung* in the *Ecrits*) the function that supplies for the sexual relationship.

Hence a possible inscription (in the meaning where the possible is a foundational, Leibnizien) of this function as Φx , to which people are going to respond in their fashion by arguing about it. This articulation of the function as proposition is that of Frege.

It is simply of the order of complement that I contribute above to every position of the universal as such, that it would be necessary at a point of the discourse that an existence, as they say: opposes the phallic function, so that to pose it may be "possible", which is the little of which it can lay claim to existence.

It is indeed in this logic that there can be summarised everything (*tout*) involved in the Oedipus complex.

Il suffit que l'affaire de moi comme l'affaire de phallus où l'on a bien voulu me suivre à l'instant, s'articulent dans le langage, pour devenir affaire de sujet et n'être plus du seul ressort de l'imaginaire. Qu'on songe que c'est depuis l'année 56 que tout cela eût pu passer pour acquis, y eût-il eu consentement du discours analytique.

Car c'est dans « la question préalable » de mes *Écrits*, laquelle était à lire comme la réponse donnée par le perçu dans la psychose, que j'introduis le Nom-du-Père et qu'aux champs (dans cet *Écrit*, mis en graphe) dont il permet d'ordonner la psychose elle-même, on peut mesurer sa puissance.

Il n'y a rien d'excessif au regard de ce que nous donne l'expérience, à mettre au chef de l'être ou avoir le phallus (cf. ma *Bedeutung* des *Écrits*) la fonction qui supplée au rapport sexuel.

D'où une inscription possible (dans la signification où le possible est fondateur, leibnizienne) de cette fonction comme Φx , à quoi les êtres vont répondre par leur mode d'y faire argument. Cette articulation de la fonction comme proposition est celle de Frege.

Il est seulement de l'ordre du complément que j'apporte plus haut à toute position de l'universel comme tel, qu'il faille qu'en un point du discours une existence, comme on dit : s'inscrive en faux contre la fonction phallique pour que la poser soit « possible », ce qui est le peu de quoi elle peut prétendre à l'existence.

C'est bien à cette logique que se résume tout ce qu'il en est du complexe d'Œdipe.

Chapter 4. The phallic function and the formulae of sexuation (14e-25d; 458-495)

1. *The first two formulae and the Oedipus complex* (14e-17b; 458-460)

All of it can be maintained by being developed around what I advance about the logical correlation of two formulae which, being inscribed mathematically $\forall x. \Phi x$ and $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$, are stated:

the first, for all x , Φx is satisfied, which can be expressed by a T (15, 459) noting truth-value. This, expressed in the analytic discourse where the practice is to make sense, “means to say” (*veut dire*) that every subject as such, because that is what is at stake in this discourse, is inscribed in the phallic function to guard against the absence of the sexual relationship (the practice of making sense, is precisely to refer oneself to this ab-sense);

the second, there is by exception the case, familiar in mathematics (the argument $x = 0$ in the exponential [*sic*] function $1/x$), the case where there exists an x for which Φx , the function, is not satisfied, namely, by not functioning, is in effect excluded.

This is precisely from where I combine the all of the universal, more modified than is imagined in the *forall* of the quantifier, to the *there exists one* that the quantic pairs with it, its difference to what the proposition that Aristotle described as particular implies, is patent. I combine them from the fact that the *there exists one* in question, by creating a limit to the *forall*, is what affirms or confirms it, (which a proverb already objects to in Aristotle’s contradictory).

The reason for this is that what the analytic discourse concerns is the subject, which, as effect of meaning, is response to the real. This I articulated, from 11 April 56, having recovered the text, from a quotation about the non-semantic signifier, this for the people who might have taken an interest in it for feeling themselves called by it to a function of waste product (*déjet*).

A clearing of the way to be sure not suited to anyone who having come out of the academic discourse, diverts it into this hermeneutic, indeed semiologising dripping, that I see myself responding to, streaming from every corner, due to the failure of analysis to fix its deontology.

Tout peut en être maintenu à se développer autour de ce que j'avance de la corrélation logique de deux formules qui, à s'inscrire mathématiquement $\forall x. \Phi x$ et $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$, s'énoncent :

la première, pour tout x , Φx est satisfait, ce qui peut se traduire d'un V notant valeur de vérité. Ceci, traduit dans le discours analytique dont c'est la pratique de faire sens, « veut dire » que tout sujet en tant que tel, puisque c'est là l'enjeu de ce discours, s'inscrit dans la fonction phallique pour parer à l'absence du rapport sexuel (la pratique de faire sens, c'est justement de se référer à cet ab-sens);

la seconde, il y a par exception le cas, familier en mathématique (l'argument $x = 0$) dans la fonction hyperbolique $1/x$ le cas où il existe un x pour lequel Φx , la fonction, n'est pas satisfaite, c'est-à-dire ne fonctionnant pas, est exclue de fait.

C'est précisément d'où je conjugue le tous de l'universelle, plus modifié qu'on ne s'imagine dans le *pourtout* du quanteur, à *l'il existe un* que le quantique lui apparie, sa différence étant patente avec ce qu'implique la proposition qu'Aristote dit particulière. Je les conjugue de ce que *l'il existe un* en question, à faire limite au *pourtout*, est ce qui l'affirme ou le confirme (ce qu'un proverbe objecte déjà au contradictoire d'Aristote).

La raison en est que ce que le discours analytique concerne, c'est le sujet, qui, comme effet de signification, est réponse du réel. Cela je l'articulai, dès l'onze avril 56, en ayant texte recueilli, d'une citation du signifiant asémantique, ce pour des gens qui y eussent pu prendre intérêt à s'y sentir appelés à une fonction de déjet.

Frayage certes pas fait pour qui que ce soit qui à se lever du discours universitaire, le dévie en cette dégoulinade herméneutique, voire sémiologisante, dont je m'imagine répondre, ruisselante qu'elle est maintenant de partout, faute de ce que l'analyse en ait fixé la déontologie.

That I state the existence of a subject by posing it from a saying no to the propositional function Φx , implies that it is inscribed from a quantifier from which this function finds itself cut off because of the fact that at this point it has no value that can be noted as truth, which means not of error either, the false simply to be heard as *falsus* as what has fallen, which I have already stressed.

In classical logic, when one thinks about it, the false can only be perceived as being the inverse of the truth, and it designates it just as well.

It is therefore correct to write as I do: $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$. The one that exists, is (16, 460) the subject supposed from the fact that the phallic function is forfeited in it. This is a simply hopeless way of gaining access to the sexual relationship, the syncope of the function which only supports itself by resembling it (*d'y sembler*), by precipitating itself on it from the beginning (*de s'y embler*), I would say, not being able to suffice to simply inaugurate this relationship, but being on the contrary necessary to achieve the consistency of supplement that it makes of it, and this by fixing the limit at which this semblance is nothing more than the fall of sense/decency (*dé-sens*).

Nothing operates therefore except from signifying equivocation, or from the trick by which the *ab-sens* of the relationship might be plugged at the suspension point of the function.

It is indeed the fall of sense that by putting it under the heading of castration I denoted as symbolic, also from 1956 (at the beginning of the academic year: object relations, Freudian structures: there is a report of it) thus distinguishing it from imaginary frustration and real

The subject found itself already supposed there, merely by grasping it from the context that Schreber, through Freud, had furnished me about the exhausting of his psychosis.

It is here that the Name-of-the-Father, by acting as the locus of its beach-head (*plage*), demonstrated its responsibility for it according to tradition.

The real of this beach-head, since the semblance lands on it, "realises" no doubt the relationship of which the semblance acts as the supplement, but it is not so any more than the phantasy supports our reality, no less so either since it is everything, except for the five senses, if I am to be believed.

Castration in effect relays a link to the father, that which in each discourse is connoted as virility. There are therefore two *dit-mensions* of the forallmen (*pourtouthomme*), that of the discourse by which he is foralld (*il se pourtoute*) and that of the loci by which this is man-cut (*dont ça se thomme*).

Que j'énonce l'existence d'un sujet à la poser d'un dire que non à la fonction propositionnelle Φx , implique qu'elle s'inscrive d'un quanteur dont cette fonction se trouve coupée de ce qu'elle n'ait en ce point aucune valeur qu'on puisse noter de vérité, ce qui veut dire d'erreur pas plus, le faux seulement à entendre *falsus* comme du chu, ce où j'ai déjà mis l'accent. En logique classique, qu'on y pense, le faux ne s'aperçoit pas qu'à être de la vérité l'envers, il la désigne aussi bien.

Il est donc juste d'écrire comme je le fais : $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$. L'un qui existe, c'est le sujet supposé de ce que la fonction phallique y fasse forfait. Ce n'est au rapport sexuel que mode d'accès sans espoir, la syncope de la fonction qui ne se soutient que d'y sembler que de s'y embler, dirai-je, ne pouvant suffire, ce rapport, à seulement l'inaugurer, mais étant par contre nécessaire à achever la consistance du supplément qu'elle en fait, et ce de fixer la limite où ce semblant n'est plus que dé-sens.

Rien n'opère donc que d'équivoque signifiante, soit de l'astuce par quoi l'ab-sens du rapport se tamponnerait au point de suspens de la fonction.

C'est bien le dé-sens qu'à le mettre au compte de la castration, je dénotais du symbolique dès 56 aussi (à la rentrée : relation d'objet, structures freudiennes : il y en a compte rendu), le démarquant par là de la frustration, imaginaire, de la privation, réelle.

Le sujet s'y trouvait déjà supposé, rien qu'à le saisir du contexte que Schreber, par Freud, m'avait fourni de l'exhaustion de sa psychose.

C'est là que le Nom-du-Père, à faire lieu de sa plage, s'en démontrait le responsable selon la tradition.

Le réel de cette plage, à ce qu'y échoue le semblant, « réalise » sans doute le rapport dont le semblant fait le supplément, mais ce n'est pas plus que le fantasme ne soutient notre réalité, pas peu non plus puisque c'est toute, aux cinq sens près, si l'on m'en croit.

La castration relaie de fait comme lien au père, ce qui dans chaque discours se connote de virilité. Il y a donc deux dit-mensions du pourtouthomme, celle du discours dont il se pourtoute et celle des lieux dont ça se thomme.

The psychoanalytic discourse is inspired from Freud's saying by proceeding initially from the second, and from an established decency by starting from these – to whom biological heritage makes a handsome gift of the semblance. Chance which does not seem to have to be reduced right away to this breakdown (*répartition*) is formulated as the “sex ratio” of the species, stable it seems, without being able to know why: these – are valid therefore for a moiety (*moitié*), unluckily (*mâle heur*) for me, a male.

The loci of this *thommage* are located by making sense of the semblance, – through it, of the truth that there is no relationship, – of an enjoyment that supplies for it, – indeed of the product of their complex, of the effect called (through my good offices) surplus enjoying.

(17, 461) No doubt the privilege of these elegant pathways might be advantaged by apportioning in a more reasoned dividend than this game of heads or tails (the proportions of the “sex ratio”), if it was not proved from the other dimension by which the man-cutting is foralled, that this would aggravate the case.

The semblance of good luck for one moiety proves in effect to be of a strictly inverse order to the implication that makes it seem destined to the office of a discourse.

I will limit myself to proving it from what the organ itself suffers from it.

Not simply because its man-cutting is an a priori prejudice by placing the subject there in his parents saying, because for the girl, it can be worse.

2. *The prejudice of the first two formulae* (17c-18c; 461-462)

It is rather that the more it is snapped up (*happé*) by the a posteriori of the discourses that await it (happiness as it is called in the U.S.A.) the more does the organ have things to carry from them.

It is put down to it being emotional... Ah! Could it not have been better trained, I mean educated. For that you have another think coming.

We see clearly in the *Satyricon* that to be constrained, indeed implored, supervised from the earliest years, studied *in vitro*, changes nothing in its moods, that one is mistaken to make its nature responsible, when, on the contrary, it is simply because of the fact that it is not happy with what it is made say, what it is coming up against.

Le discours psychanalytique s'inspire du dire de Freud à procéder de la seconde d'abord, et d'une décence établie à prendre départ de ces – à qui l'héritage biologique fait largesse du semblant. Le hasard qui semble ne devoir pas se réduire de sitôt en cette répartition se formule de la *sex ratio* de l'espèce, stable, semble-t-il, sans qu'on puisse savoir pourquoi : ces – valent donc pour une moitié, mâle heur à moi.

Les lieux de ce thommage se repèrent de faire sens du semblant, – par lui, de la vérité qu'il n'y a pas de rapport, – d'une jouissance qui y supplée, – voire du produit de leur complexe, de l'effet dit (par mon office) du plus-de-jouir.

Sans doute le privilège de ces allées élégantes serait-il gain à répartir d'un dividende plus raisonné que ce jeu de pile ou face (dosage de la *sex ratio*), s'il ne se prouvait pas de l'autre dimension dont ce thommage se pourtoute, que ça en aggraverait le cas.

Le semblant d'heur pour une moitié s'avère en effet être d'un ordre strictement inverse à l'implication qui la promet à l'office d'un discours.

Je m'en tiendrai à le prouver de ce qu'en pâtissee l'organe lui-même.

Pas seulement de ce que son thommage soit un dommage *a priori* d'y faire sujet dans le dire de ses parents, car pour la fille, ça peut être pire.

C'est plutôt que tant plus de l'*a posteriori* des discours qui l'attendent il est happé (la *happiness* qu'on dit ça aux U.S.A.), tant plus l'organe a-t-il d'affaires à en porter.

On lui impute d'être émotif... Ah ! n'eût-on pu mieux le dresser, je veux dire l'éduquer. Pour ça on peut toujours courir.

On voit bien dans le *Satyricon* que d'être commandé, voire imploré, surveillé dès le premier âge, mis à l'étude *in vitro*, ne change rien à ses humeurs, qu'on se trompe de mettre au compte de sa nature, quand, au contraire, ce n'est que du fait que ne lui plaise pas ce qu'on lui fait dire, qu'il se bute.

To tame it, it would be better to have this topology on which its virtues depend, which is the one I spoke of to whoever was willing to hear me while the conspiracy intended to shut me up was being pursued (the year '61-'62 on identification). I drew it as a cross-cap or a mitre, as it is also called.... It is not surprising that the bishops *s'en chapotent* [*s'en coiffent* + *s'en chipotent* + *s'en capotent*, cap themselves with it, quibble about it, hood themselves with it – *capote* also means condom].

It must be said that nothing can be done if one does not know how with a circular cut, – of what? what is it? not even a surface, being separated by nothing as regards space, – it is nevertheless undone.

It is a matter of structure, in other words of what is not learned from practice, which explains for those who know it that it has only recently become known. Yes, but how (*mais comment*)? Just like that: *mécomment* (c.f. *méconnaissance*).

It is indeed from the angle of this function that the bastardy of organo-dynamics explodes, even more than from elsewhere. Can it be (18,462) believed that it is by the organ itself that the Eternal feminine draws you on high, and that it works better (or worse) because the marrow frees it from signifying.

I say that for the good old times of a *salle de garde* which by allowing itself to get lost in all of this, admits that its reputation for vulgarity does not simply depend on the songs yelped out there.

Fiction and the song of speech and of language, all the same, might not the boys and girls have permitted themselves against the Permissive Father Masters (*Permaîtres*) whose habits it must be said they had already acquired, to take the two hundred steps to get to where I spoke for all of ten years. But not one of those to whom I was interdicted actually did so.

After all who knows? Stupidity has its own impenetrable ways. And if psychoanalysis propagates it, I have been heard, precisely at Henri-Rousselle, re-assuring myself that more good than harm results from it.

Let us conclude that there is a misdeal (*maldonne*) somewhere. The Oedipus complex is what I say, not what is believed.

Mieux vaudrait pour l'apprivoiser avoir cette topologie dont relèvent ses vertus, pour être celle que j'ai dite à qui voulait m'entendre pendant que se poursuivait la trame destinée à me faire taire (année 61-62 sur l'identification). Je l'ai dessinée d'un *cross-cap*, ou *mitre* qu'on l'appelle encore... Que les évêques s'en chapotent, n'étonne pas.

Il faut dire qu'il n'y a rien à faire si on ne sait pas d'une coupure circulaire, – de quoi ? qu'est-elle ? pas même surface, de ne rien d'espace séparer –, comment pourtant ça se défait.

Il s'agit de structure, soit de ce qui ne s'apprend pas de la pratique, ce qui explique pour ceux qui le savent qu'on ne l'ait su que récemment. Oui, mais comment ? – Justement comme ça : mécomment.

C'est bien du biais de cette fonction que la bâtardise de l'organo-dynamisme éclate, plus encore que d'ailleurs. Croit-on que ce soit par l'organe même que l'Éternel féminin vous attire en haut, et que ça marche mieux (ou pire) à ce que la moelle le libère de signifier ?

Je dis ça pour le bon vieux temps d'une salle de garde qui d'en tout cela se laisse paumer, avoue que sa réputation de foutoir ne tient qu'aux chansons qui s'y glapissent.

Fiction et chant de la parole et du langage, pourtant n'en eussent-ils pu, garçons et filles, se permettre contre les Permaîtres dont il faut dire qu'ils avaient le pli, les deux cents pas à faire pour se rendre là où je parlai dix ans durant. Mais pas un ne le fit de ceux à qui j'étais interdit.

Après tout qui sait ? La bêtise a ses voies qui sont impénétrables. Et si la psychanalyse la propage, l'on m'a entendu, à Henri-Rousselle justement, m'en assurer à professer qu'il en résulte plus de bien que de mal.

Concluons qu'il y a maldonne quelque part. L'Œdipe est ce que je dis, pas ce qu'on croit.

Remark: *The discourses and their racism* (18b-19d; 462-463)

This through a slip that Freud was not able to avoid by implicating – in the universality of the interbreeding of the species where it talks (*où ça parle*), or in the seemingly fruitful maintenance of the sex ratio (moitié-moitié) among those who form the greatest number, of their mixed blood – the universal “*signifiance*” [significance + *jouissance*?] that he discovered for the organ, among its bearers.

It is curious that the recognition, so strongly emphasised by Freud, of the bi-sexuality of somatic organs (when moreover he lacked chromosomic sexuality), did not lead him to the blanketing function of the phallus with regard to the *germen*.

But his allmanity (*touthommie*) acknowledged its truth from the myth that he creates in *Totem and Taboo*, less reliable than that of the Bible even though carrying its mark, to account for the twisted ways along which the sexual act proceeds, where it speaks (*où ça parle*).

Will we presume that if there remains a biological trace of *allman*, it is only because there is only a race by *thomme*-ing itself and zilch (*qu'dale*) to forall it.

Let me explain: the race of which I speak is not what an anthropology calling itself physical supports, the one that Hegel well denoted as of the skull and which still deserves it by finding in it, well after Lavater and Gall the most weighty of its measurements.

(19, 463) For it is not there, as was seen in a grotesque attempt to found on it a *Reich* described as third, the way in which any race is constituted is not there (nor in effect that particular racism).

It is constituted according to the mode in which symbolic places are transmitted by the order of a discourse, those by which there is perpetuated the race of masters and no less of slaves, of pedants (*pédants*) also, to respond to which there must be the fags (*pédés*), the bores (*scients*), I would say, even though they are not to be found without the shits (*sciés*).

Therefore I will dispense completely with the time of *cervage* [*servage* + *cervix*; slavery and the chained neck], with the Barbarians rejected from where the Greeks situate themselves, with the ethnography of primitives and the recourse to elementary structures, to secure what discourses in action involve in terms of racism.

Ce d'un glissement que Freud n'a pas su éviter à impliquer – dans l'universalité des croisements dans l'espèce où ça parle, soit dans le maintien, fécond semble-t-il, de la *sex ratio* (moitié-moitié) chez ceux qui y font le plus grand nombre, de leurs sangs mêlés –, la signifiante qu'il découvrait à l'organe, universelle chez ses porteurs.

Il est curieux que la reconnaissance, si fortement accentuée par Freud, de la bisexualité des organes somatiques (où d'ailleurs lui fait défaut la sexualité chromosomique), ne l'ait pas conduit à la fonction de couverture du phallus à l'égard du *germen*.

Mais sa touthommie avoue sa vérité du mythe qu'il crée dans *Totem et Tabou*, moins sûr que celui de la Bible bien qu'en portant la marque, pour rendre compte des voies tordues par où procède, là où ça parle, l'acte sexuel.

Présumerons-nous que de touthomme, si reste trace biologique, c'est qu'il n'y en ait que d'race à se thommer, et qu'dale à se pourtouter.

Je m'explique : la race dont je parle n'est pas ce qu'une anthropologie soutient de se dire physique, celle que Hegel a bien dénotée du crâne et qui le mérite encore d'y trouver bien après Lavater et Gall le plus lourd de ses mensurations.

Car ce n'est pas là, comme on l'a vu d'une tentative grotesque d'y fonder un Reich dit troisième, ce n'est pas là ce dont aucune race se constitue (ce racisme-là dans le fait non plus).

Elle se constitue du mode dont se transmettent par l'ordre d'un discours les places symboliques, celles dont se perpétue la race des maîtres et pas moins des esclaves, des pédants aussi bien, à quoi il faut pour en répondre des pédés, des scientes, dirai-je encore à ce qu'ils n'aillent pas sans des sciés.

Je me passe donc parfaitement du temps du cervage, des Barbares rejetés d'où les Grecs se situent, de l'ethnographie des primitifs et du recours aux structures élémentaires, pour assurer ce qu'il en est du racisme des discours en action.

I would prefer to base myself on the fact that as regards races, what we hold to be most reliable is the achievement of horticulture, or indeed of animals which live from our domestication, the results of skill, therefore of discourse: these races of man are maintained on the same principle as those of the dog or the horse.

This before observing that the analytic discourse foralls that by a reverse slope, which can be imagined if it happens to close the real by its buckle.

Because it is the one where the analyst must first of all be someone analysed (*l'analysé*), if, as we know, this indeed is the order in which his career is traced out. The analysand, even though it is only due to me that he is so named (but what powder-trail is equal to the success of this activation), the analysand is indeed the one whose *cervice* [*cervage* + *service*] (oh, *salle de garde*), bowed neck, must straighten itself.

3. *Feminine Sexuality* (19d-21e; 463-465)

Up to now we have no more than followed Freud on what is stated about the sexual function in terms of a *forall*, but moreover by remaining at one moiety, of the two that he located, as far as he was concerned, of the same measure by referring them to the same *dit*-mensions.

This carryover onto the other sufficiently demonstrates what is involved in the *ab-sens* of the sexual relationship. But it is rather to force this *ab-sens*.

It is in fact the scandal of psychoanalytic discourse, and it says enough about the way things are at in the Society that supports it, that this scandal is only expressed by being stifled, as one might say, at birth. To the point that (20, 464) it requires the utmost effort to raise this debate defunct since the 1930's, not to be sure that to the Master's thought, there are not confronted those of Karen Horney, Helene Deutsch, indeed Ernst Jones, and still others.

But the lid kept on it ever since, since Freud's death, by sufficing to ensure that the least puff of it no longer filters out, says a lot about the retention-splint (*contention*) that Freud, in his pessimism, deliberately relied on to lose his discourse, in wanting to save it.

Let us simply point out that the women here named, appealed in it – this is their leaning in this discourse – from the unconscious to the voice of body, as if precisely it was not from the unconscious that the body took its voice. It is curious to note, intact in the analytic discourse, the lack of measure that exists between the impression of authority that these women give and the triviality of the solutions by which this impression is produced.

J'aimerais mieux m'appuyer sur le fait que des races, ce que nous tenons de plus sûr est le fait de l'horticulteur, voire des animaux qui vivent de notre domestique, effets de l'art, donc du discours : ces races d'homme, ça s'entretient du même principe que celles de chien et de cheval.

Ceci avant de remarquer que le discours analytique pour toute ça à contre-pente, ce qui se conçoit s'il se trouve en fermant de sa boucle le réel.

Car c'est celui où l'analyste doit être d'abord l'analysé, si, comme on le sait, c'est bien l'ordre dont se trace sa carrière. L'analysant, encore que ce ne soit qu'à moi qu'il doive d'être ainsi désigné (mais quelle traînée de poudre s'égalent au succès de cette activation), l'analysant est bien ce dont le cervicé (ô salle de garde), le cou qui se ploie, devait se redresser.

Nous avons jusqu'ici suivi Freud sans plus sur ce qui de la fonction sexuelle s'énonce d'un *pourtout*, mais aussi bien à en rester à une moitié, des deux qu'il repère, quant à lui, de la même toise d'y reporter dimensions les mêmes.

Ce report sur l'autre démontre assez ce qu'il en est de l'ab-sens du rapport sexuel. Mais c'est plutôt, cet ab-sens, le forcer.

C'est de fait le scandale du discours psychanalytique, et c'est assez dire où les choses en sont dans la Société qui le supporte, que ce scandale ne se traduise que d'être étouffé, si l'on peut dire, au jour.

Au point que c'est un monde à soulever que ce débat défunt des années 30, non certes qu'à la pensée du Maître ne s'affrontent pas Karen Horney, Hélène Deutsch, voire Ernest Jones, d'autres encore.

Mais le couvercle mis dessus depuis, depuis la mort de Freud, à suffire à ce que n'en filtre plus la moindre fumée, en dit long sur la contention à quoi Freud s'en est, dans son pessimisme, délibérément remis pour perdre, à vouloir le sauver, son discours.

Indiquons seulement que les femmes ici nommées, y firent appel – c'est leur penchant dans ce discours – de l'inconscient à la voix du corps, comme si justement ce n'était pas de l'inconscient que le corps prenait voix. Il est curieux de constater, intacte dans le discours analytique, la démesure qu'il y

I am touched by the flowers, all the more so because they come from rhetoric, with which Karen, Helene – it does not matter who, I forget now because I do not like to reopen my seminars –, with which therefore Horney or Deutsch furnish the charming fingerstall which acts as their water reserve on the bodice as it displays itself for dating, or that from which a relationship is expected, were it only from what he said.

For Jones, the angle of *service* (c.f. the final line before the last break) that he takes in qualifying the woman by deuterophallicity, *sic*, in other words in saying exactly the contrary of Freud, namely, that they have nothing to do with the phallus, while all the time appearing to say the same thing, namely, that they have nothing to do with the phallus, while all the time appearing to say the same thing, namely, that they bypass it by castration, is no doubt here the masterpiece by which Freud recognised that for the *çervilité* to be expected of a biographer, he had his man.

I add that logical subtlety does not rule out mental deficiency which, as a woman of my school demonstrated, results from the parents' saying rather than from an inborn obtuseness. It is because of this that Jones was the best of the *goyim*, since with the Jews Freud was sure of nothing.

But I am going astray by coming back to a time when I chewed this over, chewed it over for whom?

The *there is no sexual relationship* does not imply that there is not a relationship to sex. This indeed is even the very thing that castration (21, 465) demonstrates, but not anything more: namely, that this relationship to sex may not be distinct in each moiety, by the very fact that it apportioned them.

I underline. I did not say: that it apportioned them by restarting there from the organ, a fog in which Karen, Helene, may God receive their souls if it has not happened already, lost their way. For what is important, is not that it starts from the tickling that these little darlings feel in the moiety of their bodies which is to be put under its high-ego (*moi-haut*), it is that this moiety takes the stage there as empress so that it only comes on again as a me'being(master)-signifier (*m'êtré-signifiant*) of this affair of relationship to sex. This quite explicitly (there in effect Freud is right) from the phallic function, for the reason that it is indeed from a unique phanere that by originating in a supplement, for its part, this function, organises itself, finds the *organon* that I am revising here.

a entre l'autorité dont les femmes font effet et le léger des solutions dont cet effet se produit.

Les fleurs me touchent, d'autant plus qu'elles sont de rhétorique, dont Karen, Hélène, – laquelle n'importe, j'oublie maintenant, car je n'aime pas de rouvrir mes séminaires –, dont donc Horney ou la Deutsch meublent le charmant doigtier qui leur fait réserve d'eau au corsage tel qu'il s'apporte au *dating*, soit ce dont il semble qu'un rapport s'en attende, ne serait-ce que de son dit.

Pour Jones, le biais de cervice (*cf.* dernière ligne avant le dernier intervalle) qu'il prend à qualifier la femme de la *deutérophallicité*, sic, soit à dire exactement le contraire de Freud, à savoir qu'elles n'ont rien à faire avec le phallus, tout en ayant l'air de dire la même chose, à savoir qu'elles en passent par la castration, c'est sans doute là le chef-d'œuvre à quoi Freud a reconnu que pour la cervilité à attendre d'un biographe, il avait là son homme.

J'ajoute que la subtilité logique n'exclut pas la débilité mentale qui, comme une femme de mon école le démontre, ressortit du dire parental plutôt que d'une obtusion native. C'est à partir de là que Jones était le mieux d'entre les *goym*, puisqu'avec les juifs Freud n'était sûr de rien.

Mais je m'égare à revenir au temps où ceci, je l'ai mâché, mâché pour qui? *L'il n'y a pas de rapport sexuel* n'implique pas qu'il n'y ait pas de rapport au sexe. C'est bien là même ce que la castration démontre, ⁽²¹⁾mais non pas plus : à savoir que ce rapport au sexe ne soit pas distinct en chaque moitié, du fait même qu'il les répartisse.

Je souligne. Je n'ai pas dit : qu'il les répartisse d'y répartir l'organe, voile où se sont fourvoyées Karen, Hélène, Dieu ait leurs âmes si ce n'est déjà fait. Car ce qui est important, ce n'est pas que ça parte des titillations que les chers mignons dans la moitié de leur corps ressentent qui est à rendre à son moi-haut, c'est que cette moitié y fasse entrée en emperesse pour qu'elle n'y rentre que comme signifiant-m'êtré de cette affaire de rapport au sexe. Ceci tout uniment (là en effet Freud a raison) de la fonction phallique, pour ce que c'est bien d'un phanère unique qu'à procéder de supplément, elle, cette fonction, s'organise, trouve l'*organon* qu'ici je revise.

I am doing so in that over against him, – as regards women nothing guided him, this is even what allowed him to advance so much about them by listening to the hysterics who “play/make the man” (*font l’homme*) –, over against him, I repeat, I will not impose on women the obligation of measuring by the yardstick of castration the charming sheath that they do not raise to the signifier, even if this yardstick, on the other hand, helps not only the signifier but also joy (*piéd*).

By being exactly suited, to be sure, for this joy, women (and may I be pardoned among them for this generality that I soon repudiate, but men are hard of hearing on this subject), women, I say, make use of it on occasion. That a shoe-horn is recommended for it, follows thereafter, but that they can do without it should be foreseen, this, not only by the *M.L.F.* [Movement for the Liberation of Women] which is in the news today, but from the fact that there is no sexual relationship, which the current state of affairs is only the testimony of, even though, I fear, temporarily.

For that reason the Freudian lucubration about the Oedipus complex, which makes the woman like a fish in water in it, since in her case castration is the starting point (Freud *dixit*), woefully contrasts with the fact of the devastation that is, in the case of the woman for the most part, her relationship to her mother, from whom she seems indeed to expect as woman more substance than from her father – the trouble she has with him is secondary, in this devastation.

Here I lay my cards on the table by posing the quantic mode under which the other moiety, moiety of the subject, is produced from a function to satisfy it, or to complete it by its argument.

4. *The third and fourth formulae of sexuation* (22a-23c; 465)

(22, 466) That the subject here proposes itself to be called woman depends on two modes. Here they are:

$$\overline{\exists x}. \overline{\Phi x} \text{ and } \overline{\forall x}. \Phi x$$

Their inscription is not usual in mathematics. To deny, as the bar over the quantifier marks it, to deny that *there exists one* is not done, and still less that *forall* is fornottalled (*pourpastoute*).

It is here nevertheless that there is revealed the sense of the saying, from the fact that, combining there the *nyania* (thereisnotonewasdenied), that produces the sound-effects of the sexes in company, it supplies for the fact that between them, there was no relationship (*de rapport nyait pas*).

Je le fais en ce qu'à sa différence, – pour les femmes rien ne le guidait, c'est même ce qui lui a permis d'en avancer autant à écouter les hystériques qui « font l'homme » –, à sa différence, répété-je, je ne ferai pas aux femmes obligation d'auner au chaussoir de la castration la gaine charmante qu'elles n'élèvent pas au signifiant, même si le chaussoir, de l'autre côté, ce n'est pas seulement au signifiant, mais bien aussi au pied qu'il aide.

De faire chaussure, c'est sûr, à ce pied, les femmes (et qu'on m'y pardonne d'entre elles cette généralité que je répudie bientôt, mais les hommes là-dessus sont durs de la feuille), les femmes, dis-je, se font emploi à l'occasion. Que le chausse-pied s'y recommande, s'ensuit dès lors, mais qu'elles puissent s'en passer doit être prévu, ce, pas seulement au M.L.F. qui est d'actualité, mais de ce qu'il n'y ait pas de rapport sexuel, ce dont l'actuel n'est que témoignage, quoique, je le crains, momentanément.

À ce titre l'élucubration freudienne du complexe d'Œdipe, qui y fait la femme poisson dans l'eau, de ce que la castration soit chez elle de départ (*Freud dixit*), contraste douloureusement avec le fait du ravage qu'est chez la femme, pour la plupart, le rapport à sa mère, d'où elle semble bien attendre comme femme plus de subsistance que de son père, – ce qui ne va pas avec lui étant second, dans ce ravage.

Ici j'abats mes cartes à poser le mode quantique sous lequel l'autre moitié, moitié du sujet, se produit d'une fonction à la satisfaire, soit à la compléter de son argument.

De deux modes dépend que le sujet ici se propose d'être dit femme. Les voici :

$$\overline{\exists x. \Phi x} \text{ et } \overline{\forall x. \Phi x}$$

Leur inscription n'est pas d'usage en mathématique. Nier, comme la barre mise au-dessus du quanteur le marque, nier *qu'existe un* ne se fait pas, et moins encore que *pourtout* se pourpastoute.

C'est là pourtant que se livre le sens du dire, de ce que, s'y conjuguant le nyania qui bruit des sexes en compagnie, il supplée à ce qu'entre eux, de rapport nyait pas.

This, which is to be taken not in the sense that, to reduce our quantifiers to their reading according to Aristotle, would make the *nexistun* (onedoesnotexist) equal to the *nulnest* (thereisno) of his universal negative, would bring back the *me pantes*, the *notall* (which he nevertheless was able to formulate), by testifying to the existence of a subject to say no to the phallic function, this by supposing it from the contrariety described as that of two particulars.

That is not the sense of the saying, which is inscribed here from these quantifiers.

It is: that by introducing as moiety those to be called (*à dire*) women, the subject is determined by the fact that, not existing as being suspended on the phallic function, everything (*tout*) here can be said about it, even if it proceeds without reason (*du sans raison*). But it is an all (*tout*) outside universe, which is read right away from the second quantifier as *notall*.

The subject in the moiety where it is determined by denied quantifiers, arises from the fact that nothing existent creates a limit to the function, that would not be able to secure for itself anything whatsoever from a universe. Thus even basing oneself on this moiety, “they (*elles*)” are not *notalls* (*pastoutes*), with the consequence and by the very fact, that none of them is all (*toute*) either.

I could here, by developing the inscription that I constructed by a hyperbolic function, of Schreber’s psychosis, demonstrate in it how sardonic is the effect of push-to-the-woman (*pousse-à-la-femme*) that is specified from the first quantifier: having clearly specified that it is from the irruption of *A-father* as without reason (*sans raison*), that there is precipitated here the effect experienced as forcing, in the field of an Other in thinking itself as most foreign to all sense.

But to carry the function to its power of extreme logic, would lead away from the right path. I was already able to measure the trouble that good will took in applying it to Hölderlin: without success.

How much more easy is it not, indeed a delight to promise oneself, to (23, 467) attribute to the other quantifier, the singular of a “confine” (*confin*), from the fact that it might make the logical power of the *notall* be inhabited from the recess of enjoyment that femininity conceals, even to the point of being espoused to what plays/makes the cut-man (*thomme*)

Because this “confine” though stated here from logic, is indeed the one behind which Ovid protects himself by depicting it as Tiresias in myth. To say that a woman is not all, this is what the myth points out to us in that

Ce qui est à prendre non pas dans le sens qui, de réduire nos quanteurs à leur lecture selon Aristote, égalerait le *nexistun* au *nulnest* de son universelle négative, ferait revenir le μή πάντες, le *pastout* (qu'il a pourtant su formuler), à témoigner de l'existence d'un sujet à dire que non à la fonction phallique, ce à le supposer de la contrariété dite de deux particulières. Ce n'est pas là le sens du dire, qui s'inscrit de ces quanteurs.

Il est : que pour s'introduire comme moitié à dire des femmes, le sujet se détermine de ce que, n'existant pas de suspens à la fonction phallique, tout puisse ici s'en dire, même à provenir du sans raison. Mais c'est un tout d'hors univers, lequel se lit tout de go du second quanteur comme *pastout*.

Le sujet dans la moitié où il se détermine des quanteurs niés, c'est de ce que rien d'existant ne fasse limite de la fonction, que ne saurait s'en assurer quoi que ce soit d'un univers. Ainsi à se fonder de cette moitié, « elles » ne sont *pastoutes* avec pour suite et du même fait, qu'aucune non plus n'est toute.

Je pourrais ici, à développer l'inscription que j'ai faite par une fonction hyperbolique, de la psychose de Schreber, y démontrer dans ce qu'il a de sardonique l'effet de pousse-à-la-femme qui se spécifie du premier quanteur : ayant bien précisé que c'est de l'irruption d'*Un-père* comme sans raison, que se précipite ici l'effet ressenti comme de forçage, au champ d'un Autre à se penser comme à tout sens le plus étranger.

Mais à porter à sa puissance d'extrême logique la fonction, cela dérouterait. J'ai déjà pu mesurer la peine que la bonne volonté a prise de l'appliquer à Hölderlin : sans succès.

Combien plus aisé n'est-il pas, voire délice à se promettre, de mettre au compte de l'autre quanteur, le singulier d'un « confin », à ce qu'il fasse la puissance logique du *pastout* s'habiter du recès de la jouissance que la féminité dérobe, même à ce qu'elle vienne à se conjindre à ce qui fait thomme...

Car ce « confin » de s'énoncer ici de logique, est bien le même dont s'abrite Ovide à le figurer de Tirésias en mythe. Dire qu'une femme n'est pas toute, c'est ce que le mythe nous indique de ce qu'elle soit la seule à ce que sa jouissance dépasse, celle qui se fait du coût.

she is the only one in that her enjoyment goes beyond, the one that is created from coitus.

It is moreover why it is as the only one that she wants to be recognised from the other side: we know about it only too well.

But it is again where there is grasped what is to be learned there, namely, that though one satisfies there the requirement of love, the enjoyment that one has of a woman divides her, making her a partner of her solitude, while union remains on the threshold.

For to what could the man acknowledge as best serving the woman he wants to enjoy, than rendering to her own enjoyment which does not make it all his: to re-surrect something of it in her.

5. *The notall or the Heteros* (23c-24c; 467-468)

What is called sex (or even the second, when it is by a ninny) is properly, by supporting itself from *notall* (*pastoute*), the *Heteros* which cannot be staunched by a universe.

Let us call heterosexual by definition, one who loves women, whatever may be his/her own sex. This will be clearer.

I said: to love, not: being engaged to them by a relationship that is not there. This is even what the insatiability of love implies, which is explained by this premise.

That it should have required the analytic discourse that this might come to be said (*à se dire*), sufficiently shows that it is not in every discourse that a saying comes to ex-sist. For the question was tossed around for centuries in terms of the intuition of the subject, which was very well able to see it, indeed to gloat over it, without it ever having been taken seriously.

It is the logic of the *Heteros* which must be got going, the remarkable thing about it being that the *Parmenides* ends up with it starting from the incompatibility of the One and Being. But how give a commentary on this text before seven hundred people?

There remains the career always open to the equivocation of the signifier: the *Heteros*, by being declined into the *Hetera*, is etherised, or even (24, 467) hetaerised.

The prop of the *deux* to make *d'eux* that this notall (*pastoute*) seems to offer us, creates an illusion, but the repetition which is in short transfinite, shows that it is a matter of an inaccessible, starting from which, the enumerable of it being sure, the reduction also becomes so.

C'est aussi bien pourquoi c'est comme la seule qu'elle veut être reconnue de l'autre part : on ne l'y sait que trop.

Mais c'est encore où se saisit ce qu'on y a à apprendre, à savoir qu'y satisfait-on à l'exigence de l'amour, la jouissance qu'on a d'une femme la divise, lui faisant de sa solitude partenaire, tandis que l'union reste au seuil.

Car à quoi l'homme s'avouerait-il servir de mieux pour la femme dont il veut jouir, qu'à lui rendre cette jouissance sienne qui ne la fait pas toute à lui : d'en elle la re-susciter.

Ce qu'on appelle le sexe (voire le deuxième, quand c'est une sottise) est proprement, à se supporter de *pastoute*, l'Ἐτερος, qui ne peut s'étancher d'univers. Disons hétérosexuel par définition, ce qui aime les femmes, quel que soit son sexe propre. Ce sera plus clair.

J'ai dit : aimer, non pas : à elles être promis d'un rapport qu'il n'y a pas. C'est même ce qui implique l'insatiable de l'amour, lequel s'explique de cette prémisse.

Qu'il ait fallu le discours analytique pour que cela vienne à se dire, montre assez que ce n'est pas en tout discours qu'un dire vient à ex-sister. Car la question en fut des siècles rebattue en termes d'intuition du sujet, lequel était fort capable de le voir, voire d'en faire des gorges chaudes, sans que jamais ç'ait été pris au sérieux.

C'est la logique de l'Ἐτερος qui est à faire partir, y étant remarquable qu'y débouche le *Parménide* à partir de l'incompatibilité de l'Un à l'Être. Mais comment commenter ce texte devant sept cents personnes ?

Reste la carrière toujours ouverte à l'équivoque du signifiant : l'Ἐτερος, de se décliner en l'Ἐτερα, s'éthérise, voire s'hétaïrise...

L'appui du deux à faire d'eux que semble nous tendre ce *pastout*, fait illusion, mais la répétition qui est en somme le transfini, montre qu'il s'agit d'un inaccessible, à partir de quoi, l'énumérable en étant sûr, la réduction le devient aussi.

It is here that there is precipitated (*s'emble*), I mean: is sown (*s'emblave*), the semblable whose equivocation I alone have tried to unknot, by having dug it out from the "hommosexed" (*l'hommosexué*), or from what was called up to now man as an abbreviation, who is the prototype of the semblable (c.f. my mirror stage).

It is the *Heteros*, let us note, which beginning there from discord, erects man in his status which is that of the hommosexual. Not with my help, I underline, but that of Freud who, spelling it out, restores this appendage to him.

It is nevertheless only precipitated in this way from a saying when it is already well advanced. What is striking at first, is the point to which the manofwhatissaid (*hommodit*) was able to make do with the run-of-the-mill of the unconscious, until the moment when, by saying it was "structured like a language", I allowed it to be conceived that in speaking so much about it, what is said about it is not very weighty: that it causes, that it chatters (*que ça cause, que ça cause*), but that it is all it is able to do. I was so little comprehended, so much the better, that I can expect that one of these days someone will make objections.

The congruence of the phallic function (24d; 468)

In short we float away from the islet phallus, to what is cut off from it because of what fortifies itself against it.

In this way history is made up of naval manoeuvres where the boats perform their ballet from a limited number of figures.

It is interesting that some women do not disdain to take up the running in it: that is even why dance is an art that flourishes when the discourses hold in place, those who have what it takes, for the congruent signifier, leading.

C'est ici que s'emble, je veux dire : s'emblave, le semblable dont moi seul ai tenté de dénouer l'équivoque, de l'avoir fouillée de l'hommosexué, soit de ce qu'on appelait jusqu'ici l'homme en abrégé, qui est le prototype du semblable (*cf.* mon stade du miroir).

C'est l'Έτερος, remarquons-le, qui, à s'y embler de discord, érige l'homme dans son statut qui est celui de l'hommosexuel. Non de mon office, je le souligne, de celui de Freud qui, cet appendice, le lui rend, et en toutes lettres.

Il ne s'emble ainsi pourtant que d'un dire à s'être déjà bien avancé. Ce qui frappe d'abord, c'est à quel point l'hommodit a pu se suffire du tout-venant de l'inconscient, jusqu'au moment où, à le dire « structuré comme un langage », j'ai laissé à penser qu'à tant parler, ce n'est pas lourd qui en est dit : que ça cause, que ça cause, mais que c'est tout ce que ça sait faire. On m'a si peu compris, tant mieux, que je peux m'attendre à ce qu'un jour on m'en fasse objection.

Bref on flotte de l'îlot phallus, à ce qu'on s'y retranche de ce qui s'en retranche.

Ainsi l'histoire se fait de manœuvres navales où les bateaux font leur ballet d'un nombre limité de figures.

Il est intéressant que des femmes ne dédaignent pas d'y prendre rang : c'est même pour cela que la danse est un art qui florit quand les discours tiennent en place, y ayant le pas ceux qui ont de quoi, pour le signifiant congru.

From one turn to the other (24e-25e; 468-469)

The riddle of the notall (24e-25b; 468)

But when the *notall* (*pastoute*) has just said that it does not recognise itself in them, what does it say, if not what it finds in what I brought to it, namely:

the quadripod of the truth and of the semblance, of enjoying and of that which from a surplus –, slopes away having failed to protect itself from it,

and the bipod whose separation shows the *ab-sens* of the relationship,

then the tripod which is restored by the re-entrance of the sublime (25, 469) phallus which guides man towards his true bed, the one he has lost his way to.

“You have satisfied me, little(cut)man (*petithomme*). You have comprehended, that is what was required (*fallait*). On [you] go (*Vas*), there is not too much *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*l’après midit*). Thanks to the hand that will respond to you, because you call her Antigone, the very one who can tear you apart because I sphynx my *notall* (*pastoute*) in her, you will even be able towards evening to make yourself the equal of Tiresias and like him, because of having played the Other, divine what I told you”.

Here is a superego/moiety-ness (*surmoitié*) which does not superego itself as easily as the universal conscience.

What is said by it (*ses dits*) can only be completed, be refuted, be shown as inconsistent, as indemonstrable, as undecidable by starting from what exists by way of its saying.

A logic for the analyst (25c-d; 468-469)

Whence the analyst from a source other than this Other, the Other of my graph and signified as S of O barred: *notall* (*pastoute*), where would he be able to take exception to what flourishes from the logical chicane in which the relationship to sex goes astray, by wanting its paths to go to the other moiety?

That a woman here is of use to a man only when he ceases to love another one: that not being able to do so is held against her by him, so that it is indeed by succeeding in it, that she misses it,

– that being awkward, he imagines that to have two of them makes her all (*toute*),

– that the woman should be the boss among the common people, that elsewhere the man would want her to know nothing:

Mais quand le *pastoute* vient à dire qu'il ne se reconnaît pas dans celles-là, que dit-il, sinon ce qu'il trouve dans ce que je lui ai apporté, soit : le quadripode de la vérité et du semblant, du jouir et de ce qui d'un plus de –, s'en défile à se démentir de s'en défendre, et le bipode dont l'écart montre l'ab-sens du rapport, puis le trépied qui se restitue de la rentrée du phallus sublime qui guide l'homme vers sa vraie couche, de ce que sa route, il l'ait perdue.

« Tu m'as satisfaite, petithomme. Tu as compris, c'est ce qu'il fallait. Vas, d'étourdit il n'y en a pas de trop, pour qu'il te revienne l'après-midi. Grâce à la main qui te répondra à ce qu'Antigone tu l'appelles, la même qui peut te déchirer de ce que j'en sphynge mon *pastoute*, tu sauras même vers le soir te faire l'égal de Tirésias et comme lui, d'avoir fait l'Autre, deviner ce que je t'ai dit ».

C'est là surmoitié qui ne se surmoite pas si facilement que la conscience universelle.

Ses dits ne sauraient se compléter, se réfuter, s'inconsister, s'indémontrer, s'indécider qu'à partir de ce qui ex-siste des voies de son dire.

D'où l'analyste d'une autre source que de cet Autre, l'Autre de mon graphe et signifié de S de A barré : *pastoute* d'où saurait-il trouver à redire à ce qui foisonne de la chicane logique dont le rapport au sexe s'égare, à vouloir que ses chemins aillent à l'autre moitié ?

Qu'une femme ici ne serve à l'homme qu'à ce qu'il cesse d'en aimer une autre ; que de n'y pas parvenir soit de lui contre elle retenu, alors que c'est bien d'y réussir, qu'elle le rate, – que maladroit, le même s'imagine que d'en avoir deux la fait toute, – que la femme dans le peuple soit la bourgeoise, qu'ailleurs l'homme veuille qu'elle ne sache rien : d'où saurait-il s'y retrouver en ces gentilles – il y en a d'autres –, sauf de la logique qui s'y dénonce et à quoi je prétends le rompre ?

where would he be able to find his bearings in these sweet nothings – there are others – except by the logic which is exposed here and which I claim to break him into?

Jacques Lacan *in* Ireland

Collected Translations and Papers by
CORMAC GALLAGHER

THE FOUNDING ACT

By Jacques Lacan

I found - as alone as I have always been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause – *L'Ecole Française de Psychanalyse*, of which, for the four coming years in which nothing in the present forbids me to answer for, I will personally assure the direction.

I intend this title to represent the body where a work is to be accomplished – which, in the field Freud has opened up, restores the cutting ploughshare of its truth – which brings the original praxis that he instituted under the name of psychoanalysis back to the duty that that is incumbent on it in our world – which, by an assiduous criticism, exposes the deviations and compromises that deaden its progress by degrading its use.

This work-objective is indissoluble from a formation to be dispensed in this movement of reconquest. That is to say that those that I have formed are fully qualified for it as of right, that all those who can contribute to putting the merits of this formation to the test are invited to do so.

Those who come to this School will commit themselves to fulfilling a task submitted to both internal and external supervision. In exchange they are assured that nothing will be spared so that everything valuable they do will have the repercussions it deserves, and in the appropriate place.

For the execution of the work, we shall adopt the principle of an elaboration supported in a small group. Each of these (we have a name to designate these groups) will be composed of three people at least, of five at most, four is the right measure. PLUS ONE charged with the selection, with the discussion and with the outcome to be reserved to the work of each.

After a certain period of functioning, the elements of a group will be invited to permute into another one.

This office of directing will not constitute a fiefdom in which the service performed might be capitalised on to gain entry to a higher grade, and no one will have to regard himself as demoted by going back to the bottom rung of the work.

For the reason that every personal enterprise will restore its author to the conditions of criticism and supervision to which any work to be undertaken will be submitted in the School.

This in no way implies an inverted hierarchy, but a circular organisation whose functioning, easy to program, will be firmed up with experience.

We are setting up three sections whose running I will ensure with two collaborators seconding me in each.

1) – **SECTION FOR PURE PSYCHOANALYSIS**, in other words praxis and doctrine of psychoanalysis properly speaking, which is and is nothing other – this will be established at the proper time – than didactic analysis.

2) The urgent problems to be posed about all the issues of didactic analysis will find a way to opening up the path through a confrontation maintained between people having experience of didactic analysis and candidates in formation. Its *raison d'être* being based on what there is no reason to conceal: namely, the need resulting from professional exigencies whenever they lead the analyser in formation to take on a responsibility that is in the slightest way analytic.

It is within this problem and as a particular case that there should be situated the one of entering into supervision. A prelude to defining this case on criteria other than the

impression of all and the prejudice of each. For we know that such is its only law currently, when violations of the rule implied in the observance of its forms are rife.

From the outset and in every case qualified supervision will be assured for the practitioner in formation within the framework of our School.

There will be proposed for the study thus established the features whereby I myself break with the formulated standards of didactic practice, as well as the effects imputed to my teaching on the course of my analyses when it is the case that my analysers attend it in the capacity of students. Included therein, if required, will be the only impasses to be remembered from my position in such a School, to wit, those that the very induction my teaching aims at, would engender in its work.

These studies, the point of which is to call into question established routine will be collected by the directors of the section who will look for the most suitable ways to support the effects of their attraction.

Three sub-sections:

- doctrine of pure psychoanalysis,
- internal critique of its praxis as formation,
- supervision of psychoanalysts in formation.

Finally I pose as a principle of doctrine that this section, the first, as moreover the one whose destination I will describe under heading 3, will not limit its recruitment to a medical qualification, pure psychoanalysis not being in itself a therapeutic technique.

3) – **SECTION FOR APPLIED PSYCHOANALYSIS**, which means for therapeutics and clinical medicine.

To it will be admitted medical groups, whether composed of psychoanalysed subjects or not, provided they are capable of contributing to psychoanalytic experience; by the criticism of its indications in its results – by putting to the test the categorical terms and structures that I have introduced as maintaining the true line of Freudian praxis - this in clinical examination, in nosographical definitions, in the very setting up of therapeutic projects.

Here again three subsections

- doctrine of treatment and its variations,
- casuistry,
- psychiatric information and medical explorations.

A group of directors to authenticate each study as the School's, and composed in such a way as to exclude all preconceived conformism.

3) – SECTION FOR REVIEWING THE FREUDIAN FIELD.

This will first of all ensure the reporting and the critical censoring of everything offered in this field by the publications that claim to be authorised in it.

It will undertake the up-dating of the principles from which analytic praxis must receive its status within science. A status which, however particular it must in the be recognised as, cannot be that of an ineffable experience.

Finally it will be a call to investigate our experience as well as to communicate what elements of structuralism established in some sciences, can throw light on those whose function I have demonstrated in our own, – in the opposite direction, what these same sciences can receive as complementary inspiration from our subjectivation.

Ultimately, a praxis of the theory is required, without which the order of affinities delineated by the sciences that we call conjectural will remain at the mercy of this political drift which elevates itself by the illusion of a universal conditioning.

Therefore again three subsections

- ongoing commentary on the psychoanalytic movement,
- articulation with kindred sciences,
- ethics of psychoanalysis, which is the praxis of its theory.

The financial resources constituted initially by the contribution of members of the School, by the subventions it will eventually obtain, indeed the services it will provide as School, will be entirely reserved for its publishing efforts.

In the first instance a directory will assemble the titles and abstract of works of the School, wherever they have appeared, a yearbook in which will figure at their simple request all those who have fulfilled a function in it.

People will join the School by presenting themselves to it in a working group constituted as I have said.

Admission initially will be decided by me without my taking into account positions taken by anyone in the past towards me personally, sure as I am that those who have left me, it is not I who blame them, but they who will blame me all the more for not being able to go back on it.

My response moreover will only concern what I can presume or observe on the basis of titles about the value of the group and the place it initially intends to fill.

The organisation of the School on the rolling principle that I have indicated, will be fixed by the care of a committee approved by at an initial general meeting to be held in a year's time. This committee will elaborate it on the basis of the experience undergone at the end of second year, when a second meeting will have to approve it.

It is not necessary for the membership to cover the entirety of this plan for it to function. I do not need a numerous list, but resolute workers, such as those I know here and now.

21 June

1964

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK IX

Identification

1961 - 1962

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY

Seminar 1: Wednesday 15 November 1961

Identification - this is my title and my subject for this year. It is a good title but not an easy subject. I am sure you do not think that it is an operation or a process that is very easy to conceptualize. If it is easy to recognise, it would perhaps nevertheless be preferable, in order to recognise it correctly, for us to make a little effort in order to conceptualize it. It is certain that we have encountered enough of its effects even if we remain at something rather summary, I mean at things which are tangible, even to our internal experience, for you to have a certain feeling about what it is. This effort of conceptualization will appear to you, at least this year, namely a year which is not the first of our teaching, to be without any doubt justified retrospectively because of the places, the problems to which this effort will lead us.

Today we are going to take a very first little step in this direction. I apologise to you, this is perhaps going to lead us to make efforts which are properly speaking called efforts of thinking: this will not often happen to us, to us any more than to others.

If we take identification as the title, as the theme of our remarks, it would be well for us to speak about it otherwise than in what could be called the mythical form on which I left it last year. There was something of this order, of the order of (2) identification in particular, involved, you remember, in this point at which I left my remarks last year, namely where - as I might say - the humid layer with which you represent for yourselves the narcissistic effects which circumscribe this rock, what was left emerging from the water in my schema, this autoerotic rock whose emergence the phallus symbolises: an island in short battered by the waves of Aphrodite, a false island since moreover like the one in which Claudel's Proteus figures, it is an island without moorings, an island that is drifting away. You know what Claudel's Protee is. It is the attempt to complete The Orestia by the ridiculous farce which in Greek tragedy is obliged to complete it and of which there remains in the whole of literature only two pieces of jetsam by Sophocles and a Hercules by Euripedes, if I remember correctly.

It is not unintentionally that I am evoking this reference in connection with the fashion in which last year my discourse on transference ended on this image of identification. Try as I might I could not find a beautiful way to mark the barrier at

which transference finds its limit and its pivoting point. No doubt, this was not the beauty which I told you was the limit of the tragic, the point at which the ungraspable thing pours its euthanasia over us. I am embellishing nothing, whatever may be imagined from the rumours one sometimes hears about what I am teaching: I am not overdoing things for you. This is known to those who formerly listened to my seminar on Ethics, the one in which I exactly approached the function of this barrier of beauty under the form of the agony which the thing (la chose) requires of us for us to join it.

(3) Here then is where transference ended last[^]year. I indicated to you, to all of those who attended the Journées provinciales in October, I highlighted for you, without being able to say any more, that what we had here was a reference hidden in something comic which is the point beyond which I could not push any further what I was aiming at in a certain experience, an indication as I may say which is to be rediscovered in the hidden meaning of what one could call the cryptogrammes of this seminar, and after all I do not give up hope that a commentary will one day separate it out and highlight it, because moreover I happen to have heard a certain testimony which, in this regard is a sign of hope: it is that the seminar of the year before last, the one on ethics had effectively been taken up again - and according to those who have been able to read the work in a completely successful way - by someone who went to the trouble of rereading it in order to summarise the elements of it, I am talking about M. Safouan, and I hope that perhaps these things may be able to be put at your disposal fairly rapidly so that there can be linked onto them what I am going to bring you this year. Jumping from one year onto the second next one after it may seem to give rise to a question for you, or even to constitute a regrettable delay; this however is not altogether justified, as you will see if you take up this sequence of my seminars since 1953: the first on the technical writings, the one which followed on the ego: technique and Freudian psychoanalytic theory, the third on the Freudian structures of psychosis, the fourth on object relations, the fifth on the formations of the unconscious, the sixth on desire and its interpretation, then ethics, transference, identification at which we are arriving: that is nine, you can easily find in them an alternation, a pulsation, you will see that in every second one there dominates the thematic of the subject and that of the signifier, which, given that it was with the signifier, with the elaboration of the function of the symbolic that we began, makes us land this year also on the signifier because we are at an odd number, even though what is in question in identification ought to be properly the relationship of the subject to the signifier.

This identification then, which we propose to attempt to give an adequate notion of this year, has no doubt been rendered rather trivial for us by analysis; as someone who is rather close to me and understands me very well said to me, "so this year you are doing identification", and this with a pout: "the all-purpose explanation", allowing there to pierce through at the same time some disappointment about the fact in short that something rather

different was expected from me. Let this person be under no illusions. His expectation, in effect, of seeing me avoid the topic, as I might say, will be disappointed, because I hope indeed to treat it and I hope also that the fatigue which this topic suggests to him in advance will be dissolved. I will indeed speak about identification itself. In order to specify what I understand by that, I would say that when one speaks about identification what one thinks about first is the other to whom one is identified, and that the door is easily opened for me to put the accent, to insist on this difference between the other and the Other, between the small other and the big Other, which is a theme with which I may indeed say that you are already familiar.

It is not however from this angle that I intend to begin. I will put the accent rather on that which, in identification, poses (5) itself immediately as identical, as founded on the notion of the same, and even of the same to the same, with all the difficulties that this gives rise to.

You surely know and can even rather quickly spot what difficulties have always been presented for thinking by the following: $A = A$. Why separate it from itself in order to replace it there so quickly? What we have here is not purely and simply a jeu d'esprit. You can be sure, for example, that, along the line of a movement of conceptual elaboration, which is called logical-positivism, where one or other person strives to aim at a certain goal which would be, for example, that of not posing a logical problem unless it has a meaning that can be located as such in some crucial experiment, it would be decided to reject any logical problem whatsoever which could not in some way offer this final guarantee by saying that it is as such a meaningless problem.

It nevertheless remains that if Russell can give a value to these mathematical principles, to the equation, to the equivalence of $A = A$, someone else, Wittgenstein, opposes it because precisely of the impasses which seem to him to result from it in the name of the principles he starts with and that this refusal will even be set forth algebraically, such an equality requiring then a change of notation in order to find what can serve as an equivalent of the recognition of the identity A is A .

For our part, we are going, having posed the fact that it is not at all the path of logical-positivism which appears to us, in logical matters, to be in any way the one which is justified, to (6) question ourselves, I mean at the level of an experience of words, the one in which we put our trust despite its equivocations, even its ambiguities, about what we can tackle under this term of identification.

You are not unaware of the fact that one observes, in all tongues, certain rather general, even universal historical turning points so that one can speak about modern syntaxes opposing to them in a global way syntaxes which are not archaic, but simply ancient, by which I mean the tongues of what one can

call Antiquity. These sorts of general turning points, as I told you, are those of syntax. It is not the same with the lexicon where things are much more changeable; in a way each tongue contributes, as compared to the general history of language, vacillations which are proper to its own genius and which render one or other of them more propitious for highlighting the history of a meaning. Thus it is that we can pause at what is the term, or the substantival notion of the term, of identity (in identity, identification, there is the Latin term idem), and this will go to show you that some significant experience is supported in the common French term, which is the support of the same signifying function, that of the meme. It seems, in effect, that it is the em, the suffix of i in idem, in which we find operating the function, I would say of the radical in the evolution of Indo-European at the level of a certain number of italic tongues; this em is here redoubled, an ancient consonant which is rediscovered then as the residue, the remainder, the return to a primitive thematic, but not without having collected in passing the intermediate phase of etymology, positively of the birth of this theme which is a commonplace Latin met ipsum, and even a (7) metipsissimum from the expressive low Latin, pushes us then to recognise in what direction here experience suggests we should search for the meaning of all identity, at the heart of what is designated by a sort of redoubling of moi-meme, this myself being, as you see, already this metipsissimum, a sort of au jour of aujourd'hui which we do not notice and which is indeed there in the moi-meme.

It is then in an metipsissimum that there are afterwards engulfed the me, the thou, the he, the she, the them, the we, the you and even oneself, which happens then in French to be a soi-meme. Thus we see there, in short in our tongue a sort of identification through the operation of a special significant tendency, that you will allow me to qualify as "mihilisme" in so far as to this act, this experience of the ego is referred.

Naturally, this would only have an incidental interest if we were not to rediscover in it another feature in which there is revealed this fact, this difference which is clear and easy to locate if we think that in Greek, the auton of the self is the one which serves to designate also the same, just as in German and in English the selbst or the self will come into play to designate identity. Therefore I do not believe that it is for nothing that we pick up here and that we interrogate this kind of permanent metaphor in the French expression. We will allow it to be glimpsed that it is perhaps not unrelated to what happened at a quite different level: that it should have been in French, I mean in Descartes, that being was able to be thought of as inherent in the subject, in a mode in short which we will describe as captivating enough to ensure that ever since the formula was proposed to thought, one might say that a good share (8) of the efforts of philosophy consists in trying to extricate oneself from it, and in our own day in a more and more open fashion, there being, as I might say, no thematic of philosophy which does not begin, with some rare exceptions, by trying to master this famous: "I think therefore I am".

I believe that for us it is not a bad point of entry for this "I think therefore I am" to mark the first step of our research. It is understood that this "I think therefore I am" is on the path taken by Descartes. I thought of indicating it to you in passing, but I will tell you right away: it is not a commentary on Descartes that I can try to tackle today in anyway whatsoever, and I have no intention of doing it. The "I think therefore I am", naturally if you referred to Descartes' text is, both in the Discourse and in the Meditations, infinitely more fluid, more slippery, more vacillating than this kind of lapidary expression with which it is marked, both in your memory and in the passive or surely inadequate idea that you may have of the Cartesian process. (How would it not be inadequate because moreover there is not a single commentator who agrees with another one as regards its exact sinuosity).

It is therefore arbitrary to some extent, and nevertheless there are reasons enough for it, the fact is that this formula which has a meaning for you and has a weight which certainly goes beyond the attention that you may have granted it up to now, I am going today to dwell on it in order to show a kind of introduction that we can rediscover in it. It is a question for us, at the point of the elaboration that we have arrived at, of (9) trying to articulate in a more precise fashion something that we have already advanced more than once as a thesis: that nothing supports the traditional philosophical idea of a subject, except the existence of the signifier and its effects.

Such a thesis, which as you will see will be essential for every incarnation that we will subsequently be able to give to the effects of identification, requires that we should try to articulate in a more precise fashion how effectively we conceive of this dependence of the formation of the subject on the existence of the effects of the signifier as such. We will even go further by saying that if we give to the word thinking a technical meaning: the thinking of those whose trade is thinking, one can, by looking closely at it, and in a way retrospectively, perceive that nothing of what is called thinking ever did anything other than to position itself somewhere within this problem.

From this, we will state that we cannot say that, at the very least, we contemplate thinking only, in a certain fashion, whether we wish it or not, whether you knew it or not, every research into, every experience of the unconscious, which we have on this occasion about what this experience is, is something which is placed at this level of thinking where, in so far as we are no doubt going there together, but not all the same without me leading you there, the tangible relationship which is the most present, the most immediate, the most incarnated of this effort, is the question that you can pose yourselves in this effort about the "who am I?".

What we have here is not an abstract philosophical game: for, on the subject of "who am I?" what I am trying to initiate you into, you doubtless know - at least some of you - that I mean it in

(10) every possible sense. Those who know it may be, naturally, those from whom I hear it, and I am not going to embarrass anyone by publishing here what I hear of it. Moreover, why would I do it since I am going to grant you that the question is a legitimate one? I can lead very far along this track without there being guaranteed for you for a single instant the truth of what I am telling you, even though in what I am telling you there is never a question of anything but of the truth and, in what I hear of it, why not say after all that this carries over into the dreams of those who address themselves to me. I remember one of the them - one can quote a dream -: "Why?", dreamt one of my analysands, "does he not tell the truth about the truth?".

I was the one in question in this dream. This dream ended up nevertheless with my subject in a fully awake state complaining to me about this discourse in which, according to him, the last word was always missing. It does not resolve the question to say: you are children who are always wanting to believe that I am telling you the real truth (la vraie verite*): because this term, the real truth, has a meaning, and I would further say: it is on this meaning that the whole credit of psychoanalysis has been built. Psychoanalysis presented itself at first to the world as being that which brought the real truth. Naturally, one falls quickly into all sorts of metaphors which allow the thing to escape. This real truth is what is concealed. There will always be one, even in the most rigorous philosophical discourse: it is on this that there is founded our credit in the world and the stupefying thing is that this credit still persists even though, for a good while now, not the least effort has been made to give even the slightest start to something which would respond to it.

(11) Under these circumstances I feel myself quite honoured to be questioned on this theme: "where is the real truth of your discourse?". And I can even, after all, find that it is precisely indeed in so far as I am not taken for a philosopher, but for a psychoanalyst, that I am posed this question. Because one of the most remarkable things in philosophical literature, is the degree to which among philosophers, I mean in so far as they are philosophising, when all is said and done the same question is never posed to philosophers, unless it is to admit with a disconcerting facility that the greatest of them have never thought a word of what they have communicated to us in black and white and allowed themselves to think in connection with Descartes, for example, that he had only the most uncertain faith in God because this suits one or other of his commentators unless it is the opposite that suits him.

There is one thing, in any case, which has never seemed to shake for anyone the credit of philosophers, which is that it has been possible to speak, with respect to each of them, and even the greatest, about a double truth. That then I who, entering into psychoanalysis, put my feet in the platter by posing this question about truth, should suddenly feel the aforesaid platter getting warm under the soles of my feet, is something about which after all I can rejoice, since, if you reflect on it, I am all the same the one who turned on the gas. But, let us leave this

now, let us enter into the identity-relationships of the subject, and let us enter into it through the Cartesian formula and you are going to see how I intend to tackle it today.

It is quite clear that there is absolutely no question of pretending to go beyond Descartes, but rather indeed to draw the (12) maximum effect from the utilization of the impasses whose foundation he connotes for us. If you follow me then in a critique which is not at all a textual commentary, you should clearly remember what I intend to take from it for the good of my own discourse. "I think therefore I am" appears to me under this form to go against common usages to the point of becoming this worn down money without a figure that Mallarmé makes an allusion to somewhere. If we hold onto it for a moment, and try to polish up its sign function, if we try to reanimate its function for our purposes, I would like to remark the following: the fact is that this formula, which I repeat is only found in its concentrated form in Descartes at certain points of the Discours de la Methode, it is not at all in this way in this dense form that it is expressed. This "I think therefore I am", encounters this objection - and I believe that it has never been made - which is that "I think" is not a thought. Descartes, of course, proposes these formulae at the end of a long process of thinking, and it is quite certain that the thinking involved is the thinking of a thinker. I would go even further: this characteristic, it is a thinking of a thinker, is not required for us to talk about thought. A thought, in a word, in no way requires that one thinks about the thought.

For us in particular, thinking begins with the unconscious. One cannot but be astonished at the timidity which makes us have recourse to the formula of psychologists when we are trying to say something about thinking, the formula of saying that it is an action at the state of being outlined, at a reduced state, the small economic model of action. You will tell me that you can find that somewhere in Freud, but of course, one can find (13) everything in Freud: in some paragraph or other he may have made use of this psychological definition of thinking. But after all, it is extremely difficult to eliminate the fact that it is in Freud that we also discover that thinking is a perfectly efficacious mode, and in a way one that is sufficient to itself, of masturbatory satisfaction? This to say that, as regards what is in question concerning the meaning of thinking, we have perhaps a slightly broader span than other workers. This does not exclude that in questioning the formula we are dealing with: "I think therefore I am", we could say that, as regards the use that is made of it, it cannot but pose us a problem: because we have to question this word "I think", however large may be the field that we have reserved for thinking, to see the characteristics of thinking being satisfied, to see being satisfied the characteristics of what we can call a thinking. It could be that this word proved itself quite insufficient to sustain in any way, anything whatsoever that we may at the end discover of this presence: "I am".

This is precisely what I am claiming. To clarify my account, I

would point out the fact that "I think" taken simply in this form, is logically no more sustainable, no more supportable than the "I am lying", which has already created problems for a certain number of logicians, this "I am lying" which can only be sustained because of the no doubt empty but sustainable logical vacillation which this apparent meaning unfolds, quite sufficient moreover to find its place in formal logic. "I am lying", if I say it, it is true, therefore I am not lying, but nevertheless I am indeed lying because in saying "I am lying" I affirm the contrary.

(14) It is very easy to dismantle this so-called logical difficulty and to show that the so-called difficulty on which this judgment reposes depends on the following: the judgement that it involves cannot refer to its own enunciation, it is a collapsing: it is on the absence of distinction between two planes, because of the fact that the accent is put on the "I am lying" itself without making a distinction in it, that this pseudo-difficulty comes about; this in order to tell you, that without this distinction, we are not dealing with a real proposition.

These little paradoxes, of which the logicians make a great deal, in order moreover to reduce them immediately to their proper measure, may seem to be simple amusements: they have all the same their interest: they should be retained in order to pinpoint in short the true position of all formal logic, up to and including this famous logical-positivism of which I spoke earlier. By that I mean that in my opinion not enough use precisely has been made of the famous aporia of Epimenides - which is only a more developed form of what I have just presented to you in connection with the "I am lying" - that "All Cretans are liars". Thus speaks Epimenides the Cretan, and you immediately see the little whirligig that is engendered. Not enough use has been made of it to demonstrate the vanity of what is called the famous universal affirmative proposition A. Because in effect, one notices it in this connection, it is indeed here, as we will see, the most interesting form for resolving the difficulty. Because, observe carefully what happens, if one poses the following which is possible, which has been posed in the criticism of the famous universal affirmative A of which some people have claimed, not without foundation, that its substance has never been other than that of a universal negative proposition "there is no Cretan who (15) is not capable of lying", from then on there is no longer any problem. Epimenides can say it, for the reason that expressed in this way he does not say at all that there is someone, even a Cretan who is able to lie in a continuous stream, especially when one notices that tenaciously lying implies a sustained memory which ensures that it ends up by orienting the discourse in the sense of being the equivalent of an admission, so that, even if "all Cretans are liars" means that there is no Cretan who does not wish to lie in a continuous stream, the truth indeed will finish up by escaping him and, in the precise measure of the rigour of this will; the most plausible meaning of the avowal by the Cretan Epimenides that all Cretans are liars, this meaning can only be the following, which is that:

- 1) he glories in it
- 2) he wants by that to unsettle you by really warning you about his method; but this has no other intention, this has the same success as this other procedure which consists in announcing that one is oneself a plain blunt man, that one is absolutely frank. This is the type who suggests to you that you should endorse all his bluffing.

What I mean, is that every universal affirmative, in the formal sense of the category, has the same oblique goals, and it is very interesting to see these goals manifesting themselves in the classical examples. That it should be Aristotle who takes the trouble to reveal that Socrates is mortal should all the same inspire some interest in us, which means offer an opening for what we can call among ourselves an interpretation, in the sense that this term claims to go a little further than the function which is found precisely in the very title of one of the books of Aristotle's Logic. Because if obviously it is qua human animal that he whom Athens names Socrates is assured of death, it is all (16) the same well and truly in so far as he is named Socrates that he escapes from it, and this obviously not alone because his renown still endures for as long as there lives the fabulous transference operation operated by Plato, but again more specifically because it is only as having succeeded in constituting himself, beginning from his social identity, as this atypical being which characterises him, that the person called Socrates, the one so named in Athens - and that is why he could not go into exile - was able to sustain himself in the desire of his own death even to the extent of making of his life an acting out of it. There is also to be added this final touch of settling up for Asclepios¹ famous cock of which there would be question if the recommendation had to be made of not doing any harm to the chestnut-seller at the corner.

There is therefore here, in Aristotle, something which we can interpret as some sort of attempt precisely to exorcise a transference which he believed to be an obstacle to the development of knowledge. It was moreover an error on his part since its failure is obvious. It would have been surely necessary to go a bit further than Plato in the denaturing of desire for things to have ended up otherwise. Modern science is born in a hyper-Platonism and not at all in the Aristotelian return to, in short, of the function of knowledge according to the status of the concept. It required, in fact, something which we can call the second death of the Gods, namely their ghostly re-emergence at the time of the Renaissance, for the word to show us its real truth, the one which dissipates, not the illusions, but the obscurities of meaning from which modern science emerged.

(17) Therefore - as we have said - this sentence of: "I think" has the interest of showing us - it is the least that we can deduce from it - the voluntary dimension of judgement. We have no need to say that much about it: the two lines that we distinguish as enunciating and enunciation are sufficient to allow us to affirm that it is in the measure that these two lines are mixed up and confused that we find ourselves before a

paradox which culminates in this impasse of the "I am lying" on which I made you pause for an instant; and the proof that this is really what is in question, is the fact that I can at the same time lie and say in the same voice that I am lying; if I distinguish these voices it is quite admissable. If I say: he says I am lying, that is easily admitted, there is no objection to it, anymore than if I said: he is lying, but I can even say I say I am lying.

There is all the same something here which ought to retain us, it is that if I say "I know that I am lying", this has again something quite convincing which ought to retain our attention as analysts since, precisely as analysts, we know that what is original, living and gripping in our intervention is the fact that we can say that we are there to speak, to displace ourselves in the exactly opposite but strictly correlative dimension which is to say: "but no, you do not know that you are telling the truth", which immediately goes much further. What is more: "you only tell it so well in the measure that you think you are lying and when you do not want to lie it is to protect yourself from that truth".

(18) It seems that one cannot reach this truth except through these glimmers, the truth is a girl in this - you recall our terms - that like any other girl it can be nothing but a stray, well, it is the same for the "I think". It appears indeed that if it has such an easy run among those who spell it out or who re-broadcast its message, namely the professors, that can only be by not dwelling too much on it. If we have for the "I think" the same exigencies as for the "I am lying", either indeed this means: "I think that I am thinking", which is then absolutely to speak of nothing other than the "I think" of opinion or imagination, the "I think" in the way you say it when you say "I think she loves me" which means that trouble is on the way.

Following Descartes, even in the text of the Meditations, one is surprised at the number of incidences in which this "I think" is nothing other than this properly imaginary dimension on which no so-called radical proof can be founded. Or indeed then this means: "I am a thinking being" - which is, of course, to upset in advance the whole process for what is aiming precisely at making emerge from the "I think" an unprejudiced status, not infatuated as it were by my own existence. If I begin by saying: "I am a being", that means: I am of course a being essential to being, there is no need to throw out anything else, one can preserve one's thinking for one's personal use.

This having been highlighted, we find ourselves encountering something which is important: we find ourselves encountering this level, this third term that we raised in connection with the I am lying, namely that one could say: "I know that I am lying", and this is something which should retain you. In effect, this indeed is the support of everything that a certain phenomenology has developed concerning the subject, and here I putting forward a formula which is one on which we will be led to begin again on the next occasions, which is the following: what we are dealing

with, and how this is given us since we are psychoanalysts, is to radically subvert, to render impossible this most radical prejudice, and therefore it is the prejudice which is the true support of this whole development of philosophy, which one can say is the limit beyond which our experience has gone, the limit beyond which there commences the possibility of the unconscious.

The fact is that there has never been, in the philosophical lineage which has developed from what are called the Cartesian investigations into the cogito, that there has never been but a single subject which I would pinpoint, to terminate, under^this form: the subject who is supposed to know (le sujet suppose savoir). You should here provide this formula with the special resonance which, in a way, carries with it its irony, its question, and notice that by referring it to phenomenology and specifically to Hegelian phenomenology, the function of the subject who is supposed to know takes on its value by being appreciated in terms of the synchronic function which is deployed in this connection: its presence always there, from the beginning of phenomenological questioning, at a certain point, at a certain knot of the structure, will allow us to extricate ourselves from the diachronic unfolding which is suppose to lead us to absolute knowledge.

This absolute knowledge itself - as we will see in the light of this question - takes on a singularly refutable value, but today only in this: let us stop ourselves from posing the motion of (20) distrust at attributing this supposed knowledge to anyone whatsoever, or of supposing (subjicere) any subject of the knowledge. Knowledge is intersubjective, which does not mean that it is the knowledge of all, nor that it is the knowledge of the Other - with a capital O - and the Other we have posed. It is essential to maintain it as such: the Other is not a subject, it is a locus to which one strives, says Aristotle, to transfer the knowledge of the subject.

Naturally, of these efforts there remains what Hegel unfolded as the history of the subject; but this does absolutely not mean that the subject knows a whit more about what he is returning from. He is only stirred, as I might say, in function of an unfounded supposition, namely that the Other knows that there is an absolute knowledge, but the Other knows even less about it than he, for the good reason precisely that it is not a subject. The Other is the refuse dump of the representative representations of this supposition of knowledge, and this is what we call the unconscious in so far as the subject has lost himself in this supposition of knowledge. He drags it (ca) along without his being aware of it, it is the debris that comes back to him from what his reality undergoes in this thing, a more or less unrecognisable debris. He sees it coming back, he can say or not say: it is indeed that or indeed it is not at all that: all the same it is altogether it.

The function of the subject in Descartes, it is here that we will take up our discourse the next time, with the resonances of it that we find in analysis. We will try, the next time, to map out

the references to the phenomenology of obsessional neurosis in a signifying scansion in which the subject finds himself immanent in every articulation.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 22 November 1961

You have been able to see, to your satisfaction, that I was able to introduce you the last time to the remarks we are going to make this year by means of a reflection which, in appearance, might have seemed to be a rather philosophical one because it dealt precisely with a philosophical reflection, that of Descartes, without it giving rise on your part, it seems to me, to too many negative reactions. Far from it, it seems that I have been trusted as regards the legitimacy of what might follow from it. I am delighted at this feeling of confidence which I would like to be able to translate as saying that you at least sensed where I wanted to lead you by that.

Nevertheless, so that you may not develop, from the fact that I am going to continue today on the same theme, the feeling that I am delaying, I would like to pose that such indeed is our goal, in this mode that we are tackling, to engage ourselves on this path. Let us say it right away, in a formula which all our future development will subsequently clarify: what I mean is that, for us analysts what we understand by identification - because this is what we encounter in identification, in what is concrete in our experience concerning identification - is a signifier-identification (une identification de signifiant).

Reread in the Course in Linguistics one of the numerous passages where de Saussure tries to get closer to, as he continuously (2) tries to do by circumscribing it, the function of the signifier, and you will see (I am saying this in parenthesis) that all his efforts did not finally avoid leaving the door open to what I would call less differences of interpretation than veritable divergences in the possible exploitation of what he opened up with this distinction which is so essential of signifier and signified. Perhaps I could touch on it in passing for you so that you can at least note the existence, the difference there is between one school and another: that of Prague, to which Jakobson, to whom I so often refer, belongs and that of Copenhagen to which Hjelmslev gave its orientation under a title which I have never yet evoked before you, that of Glossematics.

You will see: it is almost bound to happen that I will be led to come back to it because we cannot take a step without trying to deepen this function of the signifier, and consequently its relationship to the sign.

You ought all the same to know already - I think that even those among you who might have believed, even to the extent of reproaching me for it, that I was repeating Jakobson - that in fact, the position which I take up here is in advance of, ahead of that of Jakobson as regards the primacy which I give to the function of the signifier in every realisation, let us say, of the subject. The passage of de Saussure, to which I alluded earlier - I am only privileging it here because of its value as an image - is the one in which he tries to show what sort of identity that of the signifier is by taking the example of the (3) 10.15 express. The 10.15 express, he says, is something perfectly defined in its identity: it is the 10.15 express despite the fact that obviously the different 10.15 expresses, which succeed one another in an always identical way every day, have absolutely nothing either in their material, indeed even in the composition of the train, but indeed a different real structure and components.

Of course, what is true in such an affirmation supposes precisely, in the constitution of a being like the 10.15 express, a fantastic interlinking of signifying organisation entering into the real through the mediation of spoken beings. It remains that this has in a way an exemplary value, in order to well define what I mean when I put forward first what I am going to try to articulate for you: these are the laws of identification qua signifier identification. Let us even highlight, as a reminder, that to remain with an opposition which is a sufficient support for you, what is opposed to it, what it is distinguished from, what makes it necessary that we should elaborate its function, is that the identification that it thus distances itself from is that of the imaginary, the one whose extreme form I tried to show you a long time ago in the background of the mirror stage in what I would call the organic effect of the image of our fellows, the effect of assimilation that we grasp at one or other point of natural history, and the example which I was happy to show in vitro under the form of this little animal, which is called the migratory locust, and of whom you know that the evolution, the growth, the apparition of what is called the totality of the (4) phaneres, of the way in which we can see it - depends in its form in some way on an encounter which happens at one or other moment of its development, of the stages, of the phases of the larval transformation or according to whether there have appeared to it or not a certain number of traits of the image of its fellow, it will evolve or not, in different cases, according to the form which is called solitary or the form which is called gregarious.

We do not know everything, we even know rather little about the stages of this organic circuit which bring with them such effects. What we do know is that it is experimentally certain. Let us classify it under the general rubric of the effects of the image of which we will find all sorts of forms at very different levels of the physical and even the inanimate world, as you know, if we define the image as any physical arrangement which has as a result the constitution between two systems of a bi-univocal concordance, at whatever level it may be.

It is a very conceivable formula, and one which can be applied just as much to the effect that I have just mentioned, for example, as to that of the formation of an image, even a virtual one, in nature through the mediation of a plane surface, whether it be that of a mirror or of the one that I have for a long time evoked, of the surface of the lake which reflects the mountain.

Does that mean that, as is the tendency and a tendency which is expanding under the influence of a kind, I would say, of intoxication, which recently took hold of scientific thinking from the fact of the irruption of what is only at bottom the (5) discovery of the dimension of the signifying chain as such but which, in all sorts of ways, is going to be reduced by this thinking to more simple terms - and very precisely this is what is expressed in what are called information theories - does this mean that it is correct, without any other connotation, for us to resolve to characterize the liaison between the two systems, one of which is an image with respect to the other, by this idea of information, which is very general, implying certain paths taken by this something which carries the bi-univocal concordance?

This indeed is where there exists a very great ambiguity, I mean the one which can only end up by making us forget the proper levels of what information should involve if we want to give it a value other than the vague one which would only end up when all is said and done by giving a sort of re-interpretation, a false consistency to what had up to then been subsumed, and this from Antiquity up to our own day, under the notion of the form, something which captures, envelopes, determines the elements, gives them a certain type of finality which is the one that in the whole ascension from the elementary towards the complex, from the inanimate towards the animate, is something which has no doubt its enigma and its own value, its order of reality, but which is distinct.

If this is what I intend to articulate here with all the force of the new things that are brought to us, in the new scientific perspective, by the highlighting, the separating out of what is contributed by the experience of language and of what the signifier relationship allows us to introduce as an original dimension that it is a matter of radically distinguishing from the real in the form of the symbolic dimension, it is not, as you see, in this way that I am tackling the problem of what is going (6) to allow us to split up this ambiguity.

Already all the same I have said enough about it for you to know, for you to have sensed, apprehended, in these elements of signifying information, the originality that is contributed by the trait, let us say, of seriality, that they involve, the trait also of discreteness, I mean of cutting, something which Saussure in no way better articulated than by saying that what characterizes them with regard to one another, is to be what the others are not.

Diachrony and synchrony are the terms to which I pointed out you should refer, even though all of this is not fully articulated.

the distinction having to be drawn with this de facto diachrony: too often it is simply what is aimed at in the articulation of the laws of the signifier. There is a rightful diachrony through which we rejoin the structure; in the same way for synchrony, one is not saying everything about it, far from it, by implying in it the virtual simultaneity of the code in each supposed subject, because that is to rediscover here something which I showed you the last time is for us an entity which is untenable. I mean that we cannot be satisfied in any way with having recourse to it, because it is only one of the forms of what I denounced at the end of my discourse the last time under the name of the subject who is supposed to know. Here is why this year I am beginning my introduction to the question of identification in this way, the fact is that it is a question of starting from the very difficulty, from the one which is proposed to us by the very fact of our experience, from what it begins with, from that which as a starting point we must articulate it, theorise it; the fact is that we cannot, even in terms of our aims, of a future promise, in any way refer ourselves, as Hegel did, to any (7) possible termination, precisely because we have no right to pose it as possible for the subject in some sort of absolute knowledge or other.

We must learn at every moment to dispense with this subject who is supposed to know. We cannot at any moment have recourse to it, this is excluded: through an experience which we already have since the seminar on desire and on interpretation (the first trimester which was published) it is very precisely what seemed to me in any case could not be omitted from this publication, because this is the term of a whole phase of this teaching that we gave: the fact is that this subject of ours, this subject which I would like today to interrogate for you in connection with the Cartesian way forward, is the same one that in this first trimester I told you we could not approach any closer than is done in this exemplary dream which is entirely articulated around the sentence: "he did not know that he had died".

To be absolutely rigorous, it is indeed there, contrary to the opinion of Politzer that we can designate the subject of enunciating, but in the third person. This is not to say, of course, that we could not approach it in the first person, but this would be precisely to know that in doing so, and in the most pathetically accessible experience, it slips away, because by translating it into this first person, it is precisely at this sentence that we will end up: by saying what we can say precisely, in the practical measure that we can confront ourselves with time's chariot, as John Donne [sic] says "hurrying near": it is at our heels, and in this pause in which we can foresee the ultimate moment, the one precisely at which already (8) everything will leave us, to say to ourselves: "I did not know that I was living as a mortal being, (je ne savais pas que je vivais d'etre mortel)".

It is quite clear that it is in the measure that we can say to ourselves that we have forgotten it at almost every instant that we will be placed in this uncertainty, for which there is no

name, either tragic, or comic, of being able to say to ourselves, at the moment of leaving our lives that we have always been in a certain measure strangers to our own lives. This indeed is what is at the bottom of the most modern philosophical interrogation, that through which, even for those who as I might say are only very little fettered by it, even those very people who proclaim their feelings about this obscurity, all the same something is happening, whatever may be said about it, something different is happening than the popularity of a fashion in the formula of Heidegger recalling us to the existential foundation of being for death. Whatever its causes may be, whatever its correlations, or even its impact - one can say - what one can call the profanation of the great phantasies forged for desire by the style of religious thinking is not a contingent phenomenon, this mode of thinking is here what will leave us uncovered, disarmed, giving rise to this hollow, this void, to which this modern philosophical meditation strives to respond, and to which our experience has also something to contribute, because this is its place, at the instant that I am designating sufficiently for you the same place at which this subject constitutes himself as not being able to know precisely why there is a question for him here of the All.

This is the value of what Descartes brings us, and that is why it was good to start with him.

(9) That is why I am coming back to it today, because it is appropriate to go over it again in order to measure again what is involved in what you were able to hear me designating for you as an impasse, namely the impossibility (l'impossible) of the "I think therefore I am".

It is precisely this impossibility which gives its price and its value to this subject which Descartes proposes to us, even if it is only the subject around which the age-old cogitations turned before, turn since, it is clear that our objections in our last discourse take their weight, the very weight implied in the etymology of the French verb penser which means nothing other than peser (to weigh). What can be based on the "I think", if we know, we analysts, that this "what I am thinking about" which we may grasp, refers back to a "from which and from where I think" which necessarily slips away; and this is indeed why Descartes' formula questions us to know whether there is not at least this privileged point of the pure "I think" on which we might base ourselves, and this is why it was at the very least important that I should make you pause for an instant. This formula seems to imply that it would be necessary for the subject to be careful to think at every instant in order to assure himself of being. Is it sufficient for him to think that he is for him to touch this thinking being? For it is indeed on that that Descartes, in this incredible magic of the discourse of the two first meditations, suspends us. He manages to make stand up, I mean in his text, not that once the professor of philosophy has picked out its signifier and shown too easily the artifice which results from formulating that in thinking thus I can say that I am a thing which thinks - it is too easy to refute - but which

takes nothing from the force of the progress of the text, except (10) for the fact that we must interrogate this thinking being, ask ourselves if it is not the participle of an être-penser (to be written in the infinitive and in a single word): j' 'être-pense, as one says j'outrecuide (I overween), as our analytic habits make us say "I compensate (je compense), even I decompensate, I overcompensate". It is the same term and just as legitimate in its composition. From then on, the "je pense-être" which is proposed to us to introduce us to it, may appear, in this prospective, an artifice that is hard to tolerate because moreover to formulate things in this way, the being already determines the register in which I inaugurate my whole progress; this "je pensetre" - as I told you the last time - cannot even in Descartes' text, be connoted except with traits of lure and appearance. "Je pensêtre" does not bring with it any greater consistency than that of dreams at which effectively Descartes at several moments of his progress has left us suspended. The "je pensetre" can for its part also be conjugated like a verb, but it does not go very far: "je pensêtre, tu pensêtres, with l's if you wish at the end, that may still be allowable, even "il pensêtre". All that we can say is that if we make of it the tenses of the verb with a sort of infinitive of "pensêtrer", we can only connote it with what is written in dictionaries that all the other forms, except the third person singular of the present, are not used in French. If we want to be humourous we will add that they are supplemented ordinarily by the same form of the verb complementary to pensêtrer: the verb s'empêtrer (to become entangled). What does that mean? The fact is that the act of êtrepenser - because this is what is in question - only ends up for whoever is thinking with a "peut-être je, perhaps I", and (11) moreover I am not the first nor the only one to have always remarked the contraband trait of the introduction of this "I" into the conclusion "I think therefore I am". It is quite clear that this "I" remains problematic and that until Descartes' next step - and we are going to see which one - there is no reason why it should be preserved from the total putting into question that Descartes carries out of the whole process by profiling at the foundations of this process the function of the deceitful God - you know that he goes further: the deceitful God is still a good God: in order to be there, to swamp me with illusions, he goes so far as to be an evil demon, a radical liar, the one who leads me astray in order to lead me astray: this is what has been called hyperbolic doubt. It can in no way be seen how this doubt has spared this "I" and leaves it therefore properly speaking in a fundamental vacillation.

There are two ways of articulating this vacillation: the classical articulation, the one which is already found - I rediscovered it with pleasure - in Brentano's psychology, the one which Brentano refers quite rightly to Saint Thomas Aquinas, namely that being cannot be grasped as thought except in an alternating fashion. It is in a succession of alternating moments that he thinks, that his memory appropriates its thinking reality without this thinking being at any moment able to join up with itself in its own certainty.

The other method, which is the one that brings us closer to the Cartesian approach, is for us to perceive precisely the properly speaking vanishing character of this "I", to make us see that the real meaning of the first Cartesian approach is to articulate (12) itself as an "I think and I am not". Of course, one can delay at the approaches of this assumption and perceive that I spend all the being I may have in thinking. Let it be clear that in the final analysis it is by stopping thinking that I can glimpse that I quite simply am; these are only approaches. The "I think and I am not" introduces for us a whole series of remarks, precisely some of those which I spoke to you about the last time concerning French morphology, first of all that about this "I", so much more dependent in our tongue in its form on the first person than in English or in German, for example or Latin where to the question "who did it?" you can reply: I, Ich, ego, but not je in French, but "c'est moi" or "pas moi". But je is something different, this je so easily elided in speech thanks to what are called the muted properties of its vocalisation, this je which can be a ch'sais pas (don't know), namely that the e disappears, but "ch'sais pas" is something different - you can really sense it because you are among those who have an original experience of French - to the "je ne sais" the ne of the "je ne sais" is brought to bear not on the sais (know) but on the je. That is also why that, contrary to what happens in these neighbouring tongues to which, without going any further, I allude for the moment, it is before the verb that there is brought to bear this decomposed part - let us call it that for the moment - of the negation which is the ne in French. Of course, the ne is neither proper to French, nor unique: the Latin ne presents itself for us with all the same problematic, which moreover I am here only introducing and to which we will return.

(13) As you know, I already alluded to what Pichon in connection with negation in French contributed to it by way of indications. I do not think - and this is not new either, I indicated it to you at the same time - that Pichon's formulations about the forclosive or the discordant can resolve the question, even though they introduce it in an admirable way.

But the closeness, the natural linkage in the French sentence of the je with the first part of the negation, "je ne sais" is something which enters into the register of a whole series of concordant facts, around which I signal to you the interest of the particularly significant emergence in a certain linguistic usage of problems which refer to the subject as such in his relationships to the signifier.

What I want to get to then is the following: it is that if we find ourselves more easily than others put on our guard against this mirage of absolute knowing, one which can already be sufficiently refuted by translating it into the satiated repose of a sort of colossal seventh day on this Sunday of life where the human animal will finally be able to feed his face with grass, the great machine being finally regulated down to the last carat of this materialised nothingness which the conception of knowledge is. Naturally, the human being will finally have found

his share and his reservation in his henceforth definitively cradled stupidity, and it is supposed that at the same time there will be torn away with this thinking excrescence its peduncle, namely worry.

But this, at the rate there are going things which are constructed, despite their charm, to evoke that there is there (14) something rather close to what we are dealing with I must say much more fantasy and humour: these are the various playthings of what is commonly called science fiction, which show in connection with this theme that all sorts of variations are possible.

In this respect, naturally, Descartes does not appear in such a bad light. If one may perhaps deplore that he did not know much more about these perspectives on knowledge it is in this respect alone that if he had known more about them, his morality would not have fallen so short. But apart from this trait which we leave here provisionally to one side for the value of his initial approach very far from that, there results something quite different.

The professors, in connection with Cartesian doubt, spend a lot of time underlining that it is methodical. They attach enormous importance to it: methodical, that means doubt that is cold. Naturally, even in a certain context, cold meals were consumed; but, in truth, I do not believe that this is the correct way to consider matters, not that I want in any way to encourage you to consider Descartes as a psychological case, however exciting it may appear to rediscover in his biography in the conditions of his kin, indeed of his descendants, some of these traits which, collected together, may make up a figure, by means of which we rediscover the general characteristics of psychasthenia, even to swallow up in this demonstration the celebrated passage about human coat hangers, these sorts of marionnettes around which it seems possible to restore a presence which, thanks to the whole detour of his thought, one sees precisely at this very moment in the process of being unfolded, I do not see any great interest in (15) it. What is important for me is that after having tried to make you sense that the Cartesian thematic is logically unjustifiable, I can reaffirm that it is not for all that irrational, it is no more irrational than desire is irrational because it is not articulatable simply because it is an articulated fact, as I believe is the whole meaning of what I have been demonstrating to you for a year to show you how it is.

Descartes' doubt, it has been underlined, nor am I the first to do it, is of course a doubt which is very different to sceptical doubt. Compared to Descartes' doubt, sceptical doubt entirely unfolds at the level of the question of the real. Contrary to what is believed he is far from putting it in question, he brings back, he reassembles his world in it, and some sceptic or other whose whole discourse reduces us to no longer holding anything to be valid except sensation, does not make it disappear for all that, he tells us that it has more weight, that it is more real than anything that we can construct in connection with it. This

sceptical doubt has its place, as you know, in Hegel's Phenomenology of the spirit: it is a moment of this research, of this quest in which knowing is engaged with respect to itself, this knowing which is only an not-yet-knowing, therefore, which because of this fact is an already-knowing. This is not at all what Descartes attacks. Descartes has no place in the Phenomenology of the spirit, he puts the subject himself in question and, even though he does not know it, it is the subject who is supposed to know that he is dealing with; it is not a matter for us of recognising ourselves in what the spirit is capable of, it is the subject himself as an inaugural act that is in question. This is, I believe, what gives its prestige, what (16) gives its fascinating value, what constitutes the turning-point effect that this senseless approach of Descartes effectively had in history, it is that it has all the characteristics of what we call in our vocabulary an impulsive action (un passage a l'acte). The first phase of Cartesian meditation has the mark of an impulsive act. It situates itself at this necessarily inadequate, and at the same time necessarily primordial stage, the whole attempt having the most radical, the most original relationship to desire, and the proof is indeed what he is led to in the step on God which immediately follows. What immediately follows, the step of the deceitful God, what is it?

It is the appeal to something that, to contrast it with the previous proofs, which naturally are not to be cancelled out, of the existence of God, I would allow myself to oppose as the verissimum to the entissimum. For St. Anselm, God is the most being of beings. The God we are dealing with here, the one whom Descartes brings in at this point of his thematic, is the God who must guarantee the truth of everything which is articulated as such. He is the truest of the true, the guarantor that the truth exists and all the more the guarantor in that this truth as such could be different, Descartes tells us, it could be if this God wanted it, it could be properly speaking error. What does that mean if not that we find ourselves there in everything that one can call the battery of the signifier confronted with this single trait, with this einziger Zug which we already know, so that if really necessary it could be substituted for all the elements of what constitutes the signifying chain, supports this chain, all (17) by itself and simply by being always the same.

What we find at the limit of the Cartesian experience as such of the vanishing subject, is the necessity of this guarantor, of the most simple structural trait, of the unique trait, absolutely depersonalised, may I say, not alone of all subjective content, but even of all variation which goes beyond this single trait, of this trait which is one by being the single trait.

The foundation of the one which this trait constitutes is grasped nowhere other than in its unicity: as such one can say nothing else about it except that it is what all signifiers have in common by being above all constituted as a trait, by having this trait as a support.

Are we going to be able, to encounter ourselves around this in our concrete experience? I mean that what you already see highlighted, namely the substitution which already gave so much trouble to philosophical thought, namely this almost necessarily idealistic slope that every articulation about the subject has in the classical tradition, of substituting for it this function of idealisation in so far as on it there reposes this structural necessity, which is the same as the one which I already articulated before you under the form of the ego-ideal, in so far as it is starting from this not at all mythical but perfectly concrete point of inaugural identification of the subject to the radical signifier, not at all of the Plotinian one, but of the single trait as such that the whole perspective of the subject as (18) not knowing can be unfolded in a rigorous fashion. It is this that after having made you pass today no doubt along paths, about which I wish to reassure you by telling you that it is certainly the most difficult peak of the difficulty to which I have to make you pass, which has been gone through today, it is this that I think I will be able before you, in a more satisfying fashion, more designed to help us rediscover our practical horizons, to begin to formulate.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 29 November 1961

I led you then the last time to this signifier that the subject must in some way be in order for it to be true that the subject is signifying (signifiant) .

It is a matter very precisely of the 1 qua single trait; we could be very subtle about the fact that the primary teacher writes the 1 like that with a rising stroke which indicates in a way where it emerges from. Moreover it would not be a pure refinement because after all it is precisely what we also are going to do: try to see where it comes from. But that is not where we are at. So, as a way of accommodating your mental vision which is very confused by the effects of a certain cultural fashion, very precisely the one which leaves a gaping interval between primary teaching and the other which is called secondary, you should know that I am not in the process of directing you towards the one of Parmenides, nor the one of Plotinus, nor the one of any totality in our field of work of which such a great fuss has been made for some time. It is indeed a question of the 1 which I called earlier that of the primary teacher, the one of "pupil X, write out a hundred lines of 1's for me", namely strokes: "pupil Y, you will get 1 in French". The teacher in his notebook, traces out the einziger Zug, the single trait of the sign which has always been sufficient for minimal notation. This is what is in question, the relationship of this with what we are dealing with in identification. If I establish a relationship, it should (2) perhaps begin to appear to your mind as a dawning, that identification is not immediately collapsed. It is not altogether simply this 1, in any case not as we envisage it: as we envisage it, it can only be - you see already the path that I am leading you along - at a pinch the instrument of this identification and you are going to see, if we look closely at it, that this is not so simple.

Because if what thinks, the thinking being we are considering, remains at the level of the real in its opacity, it does not immediately follow that he emerges from some being where he is not identified, I mean: not even from some being where it is in short thrown on the paving of some extension which first of all required thinking in order to clear it away and to make it void. Not even that: this is not where we are at. At the level of the real, what we can glimpse, is to glimpse him among so many beings also, in one word, so many beings of a etr'etant where he is hanging on to some breast, in short, at the very most capable of

outlining this sort of palpitation of being which makes laugh so much the enchanter at the bottom of the tomb where the cunning of the lady of the lake has imprisoned him.

Remember - it is a few years ago, the year of the seminar on President Schreber - the image that I evoked during the last seminar of the year, the poetic one of the monster Chapalu after he had satiated himself on the bodies of the sphinxes mutilated by their suicidal leap, this remark about which the rotting enchanter who is the monster Chapalu laughs for a long time "someone who eats is no longer alone".

(3) Of course, in order for being to come to birth, there is the perspective of the enchanter; it is indeed it which at bottom regulates everything. Of course, the veritable ambiguity of this coming to birth of the truth is what constitutes the horizon of our whole practice. But it is not at all possible for us to start from this perspective which the myth indicates well enough to be beyond the mortal limit: the enchanter rotting in his tomb. So is not this also a point of view which is always completely abstract when it is thought about, at an epoch when the ragged fingers of Daphne's tree, if they are profiled against the field charred by the giant mushroom of our omnipotence which is always present today at the horizon of our imagination, are there to recall for us the beyond from which there can be posed the point of view of the truth. But it is not contingency which brings it about that I have to speak here before you about the conditions of the truthful. It is a much tinier incident the one which summoned me to take care of you in so far as you are a handful of psychoanalysts and I remind you that you certainly do not have the truth in great quantities, but that all the same this is your stock and trade, this is what you sell.

It is clear that in coming to you people are chasing the truth, as I said the time before last it is the truth about the true that is being sought. It is precisely for this reason that it is legitimate that, to deal with identification, I should have started from a text whose rather unique character in the history of philosophy I tried to make you sense in that the question of the truth being posed in it in a specially radical fashion, in so far as it puts in question, not at all the truth that is found in the real, but (4) the status of the subject in so far as he is charged to bring this truth into the real, I found myself, at the end of my last discourse, the one I gave last time, ending up with what I indicated to you as recognizable in the figure already mapped out for us of the single trait of the einzigiger Zug in so far as it is on it that there is concentrated for us the function of indicating the place where there is suspended in the signifier, where there is hooked on, as regards the signifier, the question of its guarantee, of its function, of what use this is, this signifier in the advent of the truth. This is why I do not know how far I will be able to push my discourse today, but it will be entirely turning around the goal of ensuring in your minds this function of the single trait, this function of the one.

Of course, this is at the same time to put in question, this is at the same time to make advance - and I expect to encounter because of this fact in you a type of approbation, from the heart to the belly - our knowledge of what this signifier is.

I will begin, because that is what I feel like doing, by making you play truant. I made an allusion the other day to a kind remark, however ironical it may have been, concerning the choice of my subject for this year as if it were not at all absolutely necessary. This is an opportunity to focus on the fact, and this is surely connected in some way to the reproach, that it implied that identification is somehow or other a master key which would avoid having to refer oneself to an imaginary relationship which alone supports the experience of it, namely the relationship to the body.

(5) All of this is consistent with the same reproach which may be addressed to me about the paths that I pursue, of always keeping you too much at the level of the articulations of language the one which precisely I strive to distinguish from all others. From that to the idea that I overlook what is called the preverbal, that I overlook the animal, that I believe that man in all this has some privilege or other, there is only a step which is all the more quickly taken because one does not have any sense of taking it. It was in thinking again about it, at the moment when more than ever this year I am going to make everything that I am going to explain to you turn around the structure of language, that I went back to an experience of mine which is close, immediate, near at hand, tangible and appealing and which perhaps will clarify the fact that I also have my notion of the preverbal which is articulated within the relationship of the subject to the word in a fashion which has not been apparent perhaps to all of you.

Close by me, in the midst of the Mitseinden environment in which I live as Dasein, I have a dog whom I named Justine as a homage to Sade, without you can be sure my exercising any particular cruelty towards her. My dog, in my sense and without ambiguity, speaks. My dog has without any doubt the gift of speech. This is important, because it does not mean that she possesses language totally. The measure in which she has speech without having the human relationship to language is a question from which it is worthwhile envisaging the problem of the preverbal. What does my dog do when she speaks, in my sense? Why do I say that she speaks? She does not speak all the time, she speaks contrary to many humans only at moments when she needs to (6) speak. She has a need to speak at moments of emotional intensity and of relationships to the other, to myself, and some other people.

This manifests itself by sorts of little guttural whimpers. It is not limited to that. It is particularly striking and pathetic since it manifests itself in a quasi-human way which is what brought it about that I had today the idea of speaking to you about it: she is a boxer bitch, and you see there appearing on this quasi-human facies, rather Neanderthal when all is said and done, a certain trembling of the lip especially the upper one under this muffle, a little high for a human, but after

all there are types like that: I had a caretaker who looked terribly like her, and this trembling of the lip when the caretaker had to communicate with me at one or other high point of intentionality was not at all sensibly different. The effects of breathing on the animal's cheeks evoke no less sensibly a whole set of mechanisms of a properly phonatory type which, for example, would be completely suitable for the celebrated experiments of Abbe Rousselot, the founder of phonetics. You know that they are fundamental and consist essentially in filling the diverse cavities in which there are produced phonatory vibrations with little drums, horns, vibrating instruments which allow there to be controlled at what levels and at what moments there come to be superimposed the diverse elements which constitute the emission of a syllable, and more precisely everything that we call a phoneme, because these phonetic experiments are the natural antecedents of what was afterwards defined as phonematics.

My dog has speech, and it is uncontestable, indisputable, not only from the fact that the modulations which result from these (7) properly articulated decomposable efforts inscribable in loco, but also from the correlations between the moments at which these phonemes are produced, namely when she is in a room where experience has taught the animal that the human group gathered around a table should be there for a good while, that some spin-off from what is happening at that moment, namely the festivities, should accrue to her: it must not be believed that all of this is centred on need. There is no doubt a certain relationship with this element of consumption, but the communing element of the fact that she is eating with the others is present in it.

What is it that distinguishes this usage, which is in short very sufficiently successful as regards the results that it is a question of obtaining for my dog, of speech, from human speech? I am not in the process of giving you words which claim to cover all the results of the question, I am only giving responses which are orientated towards what should be for all of us what it is a question of mapping out, namely: the relationship to identification. What distinguishes this speaking animal from what happens because of the fact that man speaks is the following, which is quite striking as regards my dog, a dog who could well be yours, a dog who has nothing extraordinary about her, is that, contrary to what happens in the case of man in so far as he speaks, she never takes me for another. This is very clear: this shapely boxer bitch who, if one is to believe those who observe her has feelings of love for me, gives herself over to fits of passion towards me in which she takes on a quite terrifying aspect for the more timorous souls who exist for example at one or other level of my offspring: it appears that (8) people are afraid that, at the moments that she begins to jump on top of me with her ears flattened and growling in a certain fashion, the fact that she takes my wrists between her teeth might appear to be a threat. This is nevertheless not at all the case. Very quickly, and this is why it is said that she loves me, a few words from me bring her to order, even if I have

to repeat myself a few times, and stop the game. The fact is that she knows very well that it is I who am there, she never takes me for another, contrary to what in all your experience is there to testify about what happens in the measure that, in the analytic experience, you put yourself in the conditions of having a "pur-parlant" subject, if I may express myself in that way as one speaks about a pure pork pate. The purely-speaking subject as such, it is the very birth of our experience, is led, because he remains purely-speaking, to take you always for another. If there is some element of progress in the paths on which I am trying to lead you, it is to make you that by taking you for another, the subject puts you at the level of the Other with a big O.

It is precisely this which is lacking to my dog: for her there is only the small other. As regards the big Other, it does not seem that her relationship to language gives her access to it. Why, since she speaks, does she not manage to constitute at all as we do these articulations in such a fashion that the locus of this Other where the signifying chain is situated is developed for her as for us?

Let us rid ourselves of the problem by saying that it is her sense of smell which prevents it for her, and here we are only (9) rediscovering a classical indication, namely that the organic regression of the sense of smell in the case of man has a lot to do with his access to this Other dimension.

I am very sorry to appear, with this reference, to be re-establishing the cut between the canine species and the human species. I am saying this to signify to you that you would be completely wrong to believe that the privilege I give to language is some sort of pride which hides this sort of prejudice which would make of man precisely some sort of summit of being. I would temper this cut by telling you that if my dog lacks this sort of possibility which was not separated out as autonomous before the existence of analysis which is called the capacity for transference, that does not at all mean that this reduces for her partner, I mean for myself, the emotionally expressive field of that which in the current sense of the term I call precisely human relations. It is manifest, in the behaviour of my dog, concerning precisely the reflux onto her own being of the effects of comfort, of positions of prestige, that a large part, let us say it, if not the totality of the register of what constitutes the pleasure of my own relationship, for example, with a woman of the world, is there completely fulfilled. I mean that, when she occupies a privileged place like the one which consists in climbing onto what I call my cot, in other words the marriage bed, the sort of look with which she fixes me on such occasions, suspended between the glory of occupying a place whose privileged signification she situates perfectly well and the fear of the imminent gesture which is going to dislodge her from it, is not at all of a different dimension to what can be seen in the look of what I called, in a purely demagogical way, a woman of the (10) world; because if she does not have, in what concerns what can be called the pleasure of conversation, a special privilege,

she has just the same look, when having taken off in a dithyramb about some film or other which appears to her to be the latest thing in technical achievement, she feels suspended over her a declaration from me that I was bored to the teeth with it, which from the point of view of nihil mirari, which is the law of good society, already gives rise in her to the suspicion that she would have done better to let me speak first.

This by tempering, or more exactly by re-establishing the sense of the question that I am posing concerning the relationships of speech to language, is designed to introduce what I am going to try to separate out for you concerning what specifies a language as such; the tongue as it is called, in so far as, if it is the privilege of man, it is not immediately completely clear why it should be limited to him. I assure you that it is worthwhile spelling this out. I spoke about a tongue: for example, it is not indifferent to note - at least for those who have not heard about Rousselot here for the first time, it is all the same very necessary that you should at least know how Rousselot's reflexes are constituted - I allow myself to see right away the importance of something, which was absent from my earlier explanation about my dog, that I am speaking about something pharyngeal, something glottal, and then about something which was trembling all around here and there and therefore which is recordable in terms of pressure, of tension. But I did not speak at all about the effects of the tongue: there is nothing here (11) which produces a click for example, and still less which produces an occlusion; there is undulation, sighing, breathing, there are all sorts of things which are close to it, but there is no occlusion.

I do not want to go on about this too much today, this is going to push into the background things about the l; too bad, one has to take the time to explain things. If I underline it in passing, you can be sure that it is not for the pleasure of it, it is because we will rediscover - and this we can only do retrospectively - its meaning. It is perhaps not an essential pillar of our explanation but this phase of occlusion will in any case take on its meaning at a particular moment; and the sketches of Rousselot, which perhaps you for your part will have consulted in the interval, since this will allow me to abbreviate my explanation, will perhaps be particularly expressive at that time.

In order to properly image for you for now what the solution is, I am going to give you an example of it; the phonetician encounters in the same step - and it is not without reason as you are going to see - the phoneme PA and the phoneme AP, which allows him to pose the principles of the opposition between the implosion AP and the explosion PA and to show us that the consonance of P is, as in the case of your daughter, to be mute. The meaning of P is between this implosion and this explosion. The P is heard precisely because it is not heard and this silent time in the middle, hold onto the formula, is something which, at the very phonetic level of the word, is what might be called a sort of announcement of a certain point to which, as you will see, I will lead you after some detours. I am

taking advantage simply of the passage through my dog, to indicate it to you in passing and to make you notice at the same (12) time that this absence of occlusives in the speech of my dog, is precisely what it has in common with a spoken activity which you know well and which is called singing.

If it often happens that you do not understand what the singer is saying, it is precisely because one cannot sing occlusives and I also hope that you will be happy to land on your feet again by thinking that everything is in order because in short my dog sings, which reinserts her into the concert of the animals. There are many others who sing and the question is not still demonstrated whether for all that they have a language.

People have always spoken about this, the Shaman whose representation I have on a very beautiful little grey bird fabricated by the Kwakiutl of British Columbia carries on his back a sort of human image who communicates in a tongue which links him with a frog: the frog is supposed to be communicating to him the language of animals. It is not worth the trouble to do all this ethnography because, as you know St. Francis spoke to the animals: he is not a mythical personage, he lived at a epoch incredibly illuminated already in his time by the full light of history. There are people who have made very pretty little paintings in order to show him to us on a rock, and one sees out at the very edge of the horizon the mouths of fish emerging from the sea in order to hear him which is the all the same, you have to admit, quite something.

One might in this connection ask oneself in what tongue he spoke to them. This always has a meaning at the level of modern (13) linguistics, and at the level of psychoanalytic experience. We have learned to define perfectly the function in certain beginnings of the tongue of what is called baby-talk, this thing which gets on the nerves of some people, me for example, this type of "gilly, gilly, what a lovely little baby". This has a role which goes well beyond these manifestations which are noted for their inane dimension, the inaneness consisting on this occasion in the feeling of superiority of the adult. There is nevertheless no essential distinction between what is called baby-talk and, for example, a sort of tongue like that which is called pidgin namely these sorts of tongues constituted when two types of language articulation enter into relationship, the users of one considering it to be both necessary and their right to use certain signifying elements which belong to the other region, and this with the aim of using them in order to make penetrate into the other region a certain number of communications which are proper to their own region, with this sort of prejudice which is in question in this operation of getting across to them, of transmitting to them categories of a higher order. These sorts of integration between one language region and another are one of the fields of study of linguistics, deserving then as such to be taken up as a quite objective value thanks to the fact that there exist precisely, with respect to language, two different worlds in that of the child and in that of the adult. We can all the less avoid taking it into account, we can all the less neglect it

in that it is in this reference that we find the origin of certain rather paradoxical traits of the constitution of signifying batteries, I mean the very particular prevalence of (14) certain phonemes in the designation of certain relationships which are called kinship, the not universal but overwhelming majority of phonemes PA and MA to designate, to furnish at least one of the modes of designation of the father and of the mother; this irruption of something which is only justified because of developmental elements in the acquisition of a language, namely pure speech events, this is only explicable precisely starting from the perspective of a relationship between two distinct spheres of language. And you see there being outlined here something which is again the outline of a frontier. I do not think that I am innovating here because you know what Ferenczi tried to begin to highlight under the title of "The confusion of tongues"¹¹ very specifically at this level of the verbal relationship between the child and the adult.

I know that this long detour will not allow me to tackle today the function of the One, it will perhaps allow me to add to it, because when all is said and done all that is in question here is to clear the way, namely that you should not believe that where I am leading you is a field which is exterior with regard to your experience, it is on the contrary the most internal field because this experience, the one for example which I evoked earlier specifically in the concrete distinction here between the other and the Other, all we can do is go through this experience. Identification, namely that which is able very precisely and also as intensely as possible, to imagine there being put under some sort of being of your relationships the substance of another, is something which can be illustrated to infinity in an "ethnographical" text because precisely (it is on this that there (15) has been constructed, with Levy-Bruhl, a whole series of theoretical conceptions which are expressed under the term: pre-logical mentality, indeed later on mystical participation, when he was led to focus more especially on the function of identification the interest of what seemed to him to be the path to the objectification of the field he had taken as his own. I think that here you know within what brackets, under what express reserve there can only be accepted relationships put under such a rubric. It is from something infinitely more common which has nothing to do with anything whatsoever which puts in question logic, or rationality, that one must start from in order to situate these facts (whether they are archaic or not) of identification as such. It is a fact which has always been known and can still be established for us when we address ourselves to subjects taken in certain contexts which remain to be defined, that these sorts of event - I am going to call them by terms which upset the barriers, which take things in a crude way in order to make it clearly understood that I do not intend here to stop at any dividing walls which are destined to obscure the primacy of certain phenomena - these phenomena of false recognition, let us say on the one hand of bi-location let us say of the other, flourish at the level of such experience, in the reports, in testimonies one hears. It is a matter of knowing why it is to the human being that these things happen; contrary

to my dog, the human being recognizes, in the emergence of such and such an animal the personage he has just lost, whether it is a question of his family or of an eminent personage of his tribe, the chief or someone else, the president of one or other society of young people or somebody else; he is this bison, that is him, or in a particular Celtic legend which by pure chance comes to me here because I would have to speak for all eternity to tell you (16) all things that arise in my memory in connection with this central experience... I take a Celtic legend which is not at all a legend, which is a piece of folklore taken from the testimony of someone who was a servant on a farm. On the death of the master of the place, of the lord, he sees appearing a little mouse, he follows it, the little mouse goes all around the field, she comes back, she goes into the shed where the agricultural implements are, she walks on these implements: on the plough, the hoe, the spade and the others, then she disappears. After that the servant, who already knew what was involved as regards the mouse, has a confirmation for it in the apparition of the ghost of his master who says to him, in effect: I was in that little mouse, I made a tour of the property to say goodbye to it, I had to see the agricultural implements because these are the essential objects to which one remains attached longer than to any other, and it is only after having made this tour that I could free myself from them etc... with an infinite number of considerations concerning in this regard a conception of the relationships of the dead person and certain instruments, linked to certain conditions of work, properly rural conditions, or more especially agrarian, agricultural conditions. I am taking this example to centre the gaze on an identification of being concerning two individual apparitions as obviously and as strongly to be distinguished from the one which would concern the being who, with respect to the narrating subject, had occupied the eminent position of master with this contingent little animal going one knows not where, going nowhere. There is something which, all by itself, deserves to be taken not simply to be (17) explained as a consequence, but as a possibility which deserves as such to be highlighted.

Does that mean that such a reference can engender anything other than the most complete opacity.

It would be a poor recognition of the type of elaboration, the order of effort that I am demanding from you in my teaching, to think that I could in any way content myself, even if one were to obliterate its limits, with a reference to folklore in order to consider as natural the phenomenon of identification: because once we have recognized this as the basis of the experience, we know absolutely no more about it, precisely in the measure that this can only happen to those I am speaking to in the most exceptional cases. It is always necessary to make a little reservation: you can be sure that this may perfectly well happen in one or other country area. That this cannot happen to you, you to whom I am speaking, is what settles the question: from the moment that this can no longer happen to you, you can understand nothing about it and, not being able to understand anything about it, do not believe that it is enough for you to connote the event

under some chapter heading, which you may call with M Levy-Bruhl mystical participation, or whether with the same man you make it enter under the great whole of the pre-logical mentality, for you to have said anything that is of the slightest interest.

It remains that what you can draw from it, make more familiar with the help of more attenuated phenomena, will not be for all that any more valuable because you will have started from an opaque foundation. You discover again here a reference of (18) Apollinaire: "Mange tes pieds a la Sainte Menehould", says the hero of the heroine of Mamelles de Tiresias somewhere to her husband. It is a matter for us of grasping the relationship between this possibility which is called identification, in the sense that from it there arises something that exists only in language, and thanks to language, a truth to which this is an identification which is not at all distinguished for the farm labourer who comes to tell you the experience that I spoke to you about earlier; and for us who found the truth on A is A: this is the same thing because what will be the starting point of my discourse the next time, will be this: why is it that A is A is an absurdity?

The strict analysis of the function of the signifier, in so far as it is through it that I intend to introduce for you the question of signification, starts with this: it is that if A is A, has constituted, as I might say, the condition of a whole era of thought of which the Cartesian exploration with which I began is the term - what one could call the theological era - it is no less true that linguistic analysis is correlative to the advent of another era, marked by precise technical correlations among which is the mathematical advent, I mean the extended use of the signifier in mathematics. We can glimpse that if the A is A does not work, I would take further the problem of identification. I indicate to you here and now that I will make my demonstration turn around the function of the one; and in order not to leave you completely in suspense and in order that perhaps each one of you would envisage beginning to formulate something on the path of what I will say to you about it, I would (19) ask you to refer to the chapter in de Saussure's Course in linguistics which ends on page 175. This chapter ends with a paragraph which begins on page 174 and I will read the following paragraph of it:

"Applied to units, the principle of differentiation can be stated in this way: the characteristics of the unit blend with the unit itself. In a tongue, as in any semiological system," this would deserve a discussion, "whatever distinguishes one sign from the others constitutes it. Difference makes character just as it makes value and the unit". [English translation, page 121].

In other words, unlike the sign - and you will see it confirmed provided you read this chapter - what distinguishes the signifier, is simply being what the others are not; that which, in the signifier, implies this function of the unit, is precisely to be simply difference. It is qua pure difference that the unit, in its signifying function, structures itself, constitutes

itself. This is not a single trait. In a way, it constitutes a unilateral abstraction concerning the synchronic relationship for example of the signifier. As you will see the next time, nothing is properly speaking thinkable, nothing in the function is properly speaking thinkable, unless it starts from the following which I formulate as: the one as such is the Other. It is starting from here, from this fundamental structure of the one as difference that we can see appearing this origin from which one can see the signifier constituting itself, as I might say: it is in the Other (l'Autre) that the A of "A is A", the big O, as one says the great word, is released.

(20) From the processes of this language of the signifier, from here alone can there begin an exploration which is fundamental and radical of how identification is constituted. Identification has nothing to do with unification. It is only by distinguishing it from it that one can give it, not only its essential accent, but its functions and its varieties.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 6 December 1961

Let us take up again our idea, namely what I announced to you the last time that I intended to make pivot around the notion of the 1 our problem, that of identification, it being already announced that identification is not just simply to make 1, I think that this will not be difficult to admit.

We are starting, as is normal concerning identification, from the most common mode of access of subjective experience: that expressed by what appears to be the essentially communicable experience, in the formula which, at first sight, does not appear to give rise to objections that A is A. I said: at first sight because it is clear that, whatever may be the degree of belief involved in this formula, I am not the first to raise objections to it; you have only to open the smallest treatise on logic in order to encounter what difficulties the distinguo of this formula, in appearance the most simple, gives rise to of itself. You could even see that the greater part of the difficulties which are to be resolved in many domains - but it is particularly striking that it should be in logic more than elsewhere - come out of all the possible confusions which may arise from this formula which lends itself in an eminent way to confusion. If you have, for example, some difficulties, even some fatigue, in (2) reading a text as exciting as Plato's Parmenides, it is in as much as on this point of "A is A" let us say that you lack a little reflection, and in as much precisely that if I said above that the "A is A" is a belief, you must indeed understand it in the way I told you: it is a belief which has certainly not always reigned over our species, in as much as after all, the A indeed began somewhere - I am speaking about A, the letter A - and that it must not have been so easy to gain access to this kernel of apparent certainty that there is in "A is A", when man did not the A at his disposition.

I will tell you a little later the path onto which this reflection may lead us; it would be well all the same to be aware of the new thing that arrives with the A; for the moment let us content ourselves with something that our language here allows us to articulate well: it is that "A is A" appears to mean something: it makes a "signified" (cela fait "signifie").

I pose, very sure that I will not encounter on this point any opposition from anybody, and on this theme in a position of competence which I put to the test through the testimonies of what can be read about the matter, as well as by challenging one

or other mathematician who is sufficiently familiar with his science to know where we are at at the present time for example, and then many others in all sorts of domains, that I will encounter no opposition in putting forward under certain conditions of explanation which are precisely those to which I am going to submit myself before you, that "A is A" signifies nothing. It is precisely this nothing (rien) that is going to be in question, because this nothing has a positive value because it says what that signifies. We have in our experience, indeed in our (3) analytic folklore, something, the image never sufficiently explored, exploited, which is the game of the little child so shrewdly picked out by Freud, perceived in such a perspicacious fashion in the Fort-Da. Let us take it up on our own account since, from an object taken up and rejected - the child in question is his grandson - Freud was able to glimpse the inaugural gesture in the game. Let us remake this gesture, let us take this little object: a ping-pong ball, I take it, I hide it, I show it to him again; the ping-pong ball is the ping-pong ball, but it is not a signifier, it is an object, it is an approach to say: this little o is a little o; there is between these two moments, which I indisputably identify in a legitimate fashion, the disappearance of the ball; without that there is no means for me to show it, there is nothing formed on the plane of the image. Therefore, the ball is always there and I can fall into a cataleptic state looking at it.

What relationship is there between the "is" which unites the two apparitions of the ball and this intervening disappearance?

On the imaginary plane, you sense that at least the question is posed of the relationship of this "is" with what seems indeed to cause it, namely the disappearance, and there you are close to one of the secrets of the identification which is the one to which I tried to get you to refer in the folklore of identification: this spontaneous assumption by the subject of the identity of two appearances which are nevertheless quite different. Remember the story of the dead farm owner whom his servant rediscovers in the body of the mouse. The relationship (4) of this "it is him" with the "it is him again", this is what for us gives its model and its register to the most simple experience of identification. Him, then him again, there is here the being-perspective of the question; in "him again", it is the same being who appears. As regards the other, in short, it is all right like that, it is satisfactory; for my dog whom I took the other day as a term of reference, as I told you, it is all right; this reference to being, is sufficiently, it seems, supported by her sense of smell; in the imaginary field the support of being is easily conceivable: it is a matter of knowing if it is effectively this simple relationship that we are dealing with in our experience of identification. When we speak about our experience of being, it is not at all for nothing that a whole effort of a thought which is our own contemporary one, is going to formulate something whose centrepiece I never shift without a certain smile, this Dasein, this fundamental mode of our experience in which there must be designated the centrepiece giving every access to this term of being, as a primary

reference.

It is here indeed that something else forces us to question ourselves about the fact that the punctuation in which this presence to the world manifests itself is not simply imaginary, namely that already it is not at all to the other that we refer ourselves here, but to this most intimate part of ourselves which we try to make the anchoring point, the root, the foundation of what we are as subjects. For, if we can articulate, as we have done, on the imaginary plane, that my dog recognises me as the same, we have not on the contrary any indication about the fashion in which she identifies herself; in whatever way we may (5) re-engage her within herself, we know nothing at all, we have no proof, no testimony about the mode under which she approaches this identification. It is indeed here that there appears the function, the value of the signifier same (meW) as such; and it is in the very measure that we are dealing with the subject that we have to question ourselves about the relationship of this identification of the subject with what is a different dimension to everything that is the order of appearance and disappearance; namely the status of the signifier. That our experience shows us that the different modes, the different angles under which we are led to identify ourselves as subjects, at least for some of us, supposes the signifier to articulate it, even most often under an ambiguous, improper, difficult-to-handle form subject to all sorts of reservations and of distinctions which the "A is A" is, this is what I want to draw your attention to and first of all without dallying any longer show you that if we have the good fortune to take a further step in this direction, it is by trying to articulate this status of the signifier as such. I am indicating it right away: the signifier is not at all the sign. It is with giving to this distinction its precise formula that we are going to busy ourselves; I mean that it is to show where this difference lies that we can see arising from the fact already given by our experience that it is from the effect of the signifier that the subject as such emerges. Metonymical effect, metaphorical effect, we do not yet know and perhaps there is something already articulatable before these effects which allows us to see dawning, being formed in a relationship, in a link, the dependence of the subject as such with respect to the signifier. (6) This is what we are going to see by putting it to the test. To anticipate what I am trying here to make you grasp, to anticipate it in a short image to which it is only a matter of giving again a sort of value as a support, as a apologue, you should measure the difference between the following which is going at first perhaps to appear to you as a play on words - but precisely it is one - there is the footprint (la trace d'un pas). Already I led you along this trail, strongly tainted with myth, precisely correlative to the time where there begins to be articulated in thinking the function of the subject as such: Robinson Crusoe in front of the footprint which shows him that on the island he is not alone. The distance which separates this pas from what the pas as instrument of negation has become phonetically, these are two extremes of the chain that here I ask you to hold onto before showing you effectively what constitutes it and that it is between the two extremities of the chain that

the subject can emerge and nowhere else.

By grasping it, we will manage to relativise something in such a way that you can consider this formula "A is A" itself as a sort of stigma, I mean in its character of belief as the affirmation of what I would call an epoch: epoch, moment, parenthesis, historical term after all whose field we can glimpse - as you will see - as limited.

What I called the other day an indication, which will remain still only an indication of the identity of this false coherence of the "A is A" with what I called a theological era, will allow me, I believe, to take a step in what is at stake concerning the problem of identification, in so far as analysis requires that it (7) should be posed, with respect to a certain accession to the identical, as the transcendent A [¹Autre?].

This fecundity, this sort of determination which is suspended from this signified of "A is A" could not repose on its truth, because this affirmation is not true. What it is a question of reaching in what I am striving to formulate before you, is that this fecundity reposes precisely on the objective fact - I employ objective there in the sense that it has for example in Descartes' text: "when one goes a little further, one sees the distinction arising as regards the ideas between their actual reality and their objective reality", and naturally professors produce very learned volumes for us such as a Scholastico-Cartesian index in order to tell us something that seems here for the rest of us, since God knows we are very smart, a little confused, that this is a legacy of Scholasticism by means of which it is believed that everything is explained. I mean that one has spared oneself what is really involved, namely: why Descartes the anti-Scholastic, was led for his part to make use again of these old props. It seems that it does not come so easily to the mind of even the better historians that the only interesting thing is what made it necessary for him to wheel them out again. It is quite clear that it is not in order to remake anew the argument of St Anselm that he drags all of this out again into the forefront of the stage. The objective fact that "A" cannot be "A", this is what I would first of all like to highlight for you; precisely in order to make you understand that it is with something which has a relationship with this objective fact that we are dealing and this up to the false signified- (8) effect which is only a shadow here and, as a consequence, which leaves us attached to this spontaneity that there is in the "A is A".

That the signifier has a fecundity because it is never in any case identical to itself, understand clearly here what I mean: it is quite clear that I am not in the process, even though it would be worth the trouble in passing to distinguish it from it, of pointing out to you that there is no tautology in the fact of saying that "war is war". Everyone knows that: when one says "war is war", one is saying something, one does not know exactly what moreover, but one can seek it, one can find it and one finds it very easily within hand's reach; that means: that which begins

at a certain moment: we are in a state of war. This involves conditions of things which are a little bit different, this is what Peguy called that "the little pegs no longer fitted into the little holes". It is a Peguy-type definition, namely that it is not at all certain: one could even sustain the contrary, namely that it is precisely in order to put the little pegs back in their real little holes that war begins, or on the contrary it is to make new little holes for the old little pegs, and so on. Moreover this has strictly no interest for us, except that this pursuit whatever it may be is accomplished with a remarkable efficacy by means of the most profound imbecility, something which ought equally make us reflect on the function of the subject with respect to the effects of the signifier.

(9) But let us take something simple, and let us finish with it quickly. If I say "my grandfather is my grandfather" you should all the same fully grasp here that there is no tautology: that my grandfather, the first term is an index usage of the term "my grandfather", which is not tangibly different from his proper name, for example Emile Lacan, nor of the "C" either of the "C'est" when I point him out when he enters a room: "C'est mon grand'pere". This does not mean that his proper name is the same thing as this "C"¹, of this is my grandfather. One is stupefied that a logician like Russell was able to say that the proper name belongs to the same category, to the same signifying class as the this, that or it, under the pretext that they are susceptible to the same functional usage in certain cases. This is a parenthesis, but like all my parentheses, a parenthesis designed to be rediscovered further on in connection with the status of the proper name of which we will not speak today.

In any case, what is in question in "my grandfather is my grandfather" means that the execrable petit bourgeois that this gentleman was, this horrible personage thanks to whom I acceded at an early age to this function of cursing God, this personage is exactly the same as the one who is posted on the civil register as being demonstrated by the bonds of marriage to be the father of my father, in as much as it is precisely the birth of the latter that is at stake in the act in question. You see therefore the degree to which "my grandfather is my grandfather" is not at all a tautology. This applies to all tautologies and this does not at all give their univocal formula, because here it is a question of a relationship of the real to the symbolic; in (10) other cases there will be a relationship of the imaginary to the symbolic, and you would have to go through the whole sequence of permutations in order to see which are valid. I cannot engage myself along this path because if I talk to you about this which is in a way a method of excluding false tautologies which are simply the permanent current usage of the language, it is in order to tell you that this is not what I mean. If I pose that there is no tautology possible, it is not in so far as the first A and the second A mean different things that I say that there is no tautology, it is in the very status of A that there is inscribed that A cannot be A, and it was on this that I ended my discourse the last time by designating for you in Saussure the point where it is said that A as signifier cannot in any way be

defined except by not being what the other signifiers are.

From this fact, that it cannot be defined except precisely by not being all the other signifiers, on this there depends this dimension that it is equally true that it cannot be itself. It is not enough to put it forward in this way in this opaque fashion precisely because it surprises, it upsets, this belief suspended on the fact that this is the real support of identity: you must be got to sense it.

What then is a signifier?

If everybody, and not alone the logicians speak about A when it is a question of "A is A", it is not after all by chance. It is because in order to support what one desires, a letter is necessary. You will grant me this, I think, but moreover I do (11) not hold this leap to be decisive except for the fact that my discourse cross-checks with it, demonstrates it in a sufficiently superabundant fashion for you to be convinced of it; and you will be all the more convinced because I am going to try to show you in the letter precisely this essence of the signifier through which it is distinguished from the sign.

I did something for you last Saturday in my house in the country where I have hanging on the wall what is called a Chinese calligraph. If it were not Chinese, I would not have hung it on my wall for the reason that it is only in China that the calligraph has taken on a value as an object d'art: it is the same thing as having a painting, it has the same price. There are the same differences and perhaps even more between one writing and another in our culture as in Chinese culture, but we do not attach the same price to it. On the other hand, I will have occasion to show you what can mask from us the value of the letter which, because of the particular status of the Chinese character, is particularly well highlighted in this character. What I am going to show you only takes on its full and most exact position from a certain reflection about what the Chinese character is: I already all the same made allusion enough on occasions to the Chinese character and to its status for you to know that to call it ideographic is not at all sufficient. I will show it to you perhaps in greater detail, this moreover is what it has in common with everything that is called ideographic, there is properly speaking nothing which merits this term in the sense in which one imagines it habitually, I would say almost specifically in the sense that de Saussure's little schema, with arbor and the tree drawn underneath, still sustains it through a (12) kind of imprudence which is what misunderstandings and confusions attach themselves to.

What I want to show you here, I made two examples of. I was brought at the same time a new little instrument that certain painters make a lot of, which is a sort of thick brush where the ink comes from inside which allows the traits to be traced out with a worthwhile thickness and consistency. The result is that I copied much more easily than I would normally have done the form that the characters on my calligraph have: in the left hand

column here is the calligraphy of this sentence which means "the shadow of my hat dances and trembles on the flowers of Hai Tang"; on the other side, you see the same sentence written in the usual characters, those which are the most legitimate, those that the stumbling student makes when he makes his characters correctly: these two series are perfectly identifiable and at the same time they do not resemble one another at all. Notice that it is in the clearest fashion in so far as they do not resemble one another at all that there are quite obviously from top to bottom on the right and on the left, the same seven characters, even for someone who has no idea not alone about Chinese characters, but no idea up to now that there were things which were called Chinese characters. If someone discovers that for the first time drawn somewhere in a desert, he will see that on the right and on the left it is the same characters that are in question and the same series of characters on the right and on the left.

(13) This to introduce you to what constitutes the essence of the signifier and which it is not for nothing that I will illustrate best in its simplest form which is what we have been designating for some time as the einziger Zug. The einziger Zug which is what gives to this function its value, its act and its mainspring, this is what makes it necessary, in order to dissipate the confusion that may remain here, for me to introduce in order to express it in the best and closest possible way this term which is not at all an neologism, which is used in what is called set theory: the word unary (unaire) instead of the word single (unique). At the very least it is useful for me to make use of it today in order to make you properly sense this core that is in question in the distinction of the status of the signifier. This unary trait, therefore, whether it is vertical like here - we call that drawing strokes - or whether it is, as the Chinese do it, horizontal, it might seem that its exemplary function is linked to the extreme reduction, precisely with regard to it, of all the opportunités for qualitative difference. I mean that from the moment when I must simply make a trait, there are not, it seems, many varieties nor many variations. This is what gives it its privileged value for us, disabuse yourselves: just as it was not a matter earlier in order to discover what was in question in the formula: "there is no tautology" of pursuing tautology there precisely where it did not exist, so now it is not a matter here of discerning what I called the perfectly graspable character of the status of the signifier whatever it may be, A or another one, in the fact that something in its structure might eliminate these differences. I call them qualitative because it is this term that the logicians use when (14) it is a question of defining identity by the elimination of qualitative differences by reducing them as one might say to a simplified schema: this is supposed to be the mainspring of this recognition characteristic of our apprehension of what is the support of the signifier, the letter.

That is not it at all, this is not what is in question. Because if I make a line of strokes, it is quite clear that, however well I may apply myself, there will not be a single one like any another and I would say more: they are all the more convincing as

a line of strokes in that precisely I have not applied myself so much to make them rigorously alike.

Since I have been trying to formulate for you what I am in the process of formulating at the moment, I have questioned myself with the means at my disposal, namely those which are given to everyone, about something which after all is not immediately obvious: at what moment does one see appearing a line of strokes? I was in a really extraordinary place whose emptiness perhaps after all through my remarks I am going to draw people to animate, I mean that some of you are going to rush over there, I mean the museum of Saint-Germain. It is fascinating, it is exciting and it will be all the more so if you try all the same to find someone who was already there before you because there is no catalogue, no plan and it is completely impossible to know where and who and what, and to find out where one is in this series of rooms. There is a room which is called La Salle Piette, from the name of the justice of the peace who was a (15) genius and who made the most fantastic discoveries about pre-history, I mean from some tiny objects, in general of a very small size, which are the most fascinating things that you could see. And to hold in one's hand the little head of a woman which is certainly about 30,000 years old has all the same its value, besides the fact that this head is full of questions. But you can see in a glass case - it is very easy to see, because thanks to the testamentary dispositions of this remarkable man they are absolutely obliged to leave everything in the greatest possible disorder with completely out-of-date showcards on the objects, they have succeeded all the same in putting on a piece of plastic something which allows to be distinguished the value of certain of these objects. How can I tell you the emotion that I felt when bending over one of these glass cases I saw on a thin rib-bone, obviously the rib of a mammal - I do not really know which one, and I do not know whether anyone would know better than I, a type of Cervide deer - a series of little strokes: first two, then a little interval and afterwards five, and then it recommences. There, I said to myself addressing myself by my secret or my public name, this is why in short Jacques Lacan your daughter is not mute, this is why your daughter is your daughter, because if we were mute she would not be your daughter. Obviously, there is some advantage in this, even living in a world very like that of a universal asylum of madmen, a no less certain consequence of the existence of signifiers, as you are going to see.

These strokes which only appear much later, several thousand (16) years after men knew how to make objects of a realistic exactitude, when at the Aurignacian epoch bisons were made which are beyond anything from the point of view of the art of the painter that we have yet been able to achieve! But what is more, at the same epoch people made in bone on a very small scale, a reproduction of something that it might not seem one should have taken so much trouble over because it is a reproduction of something else in bone but which is much bigger: a horse's skull. Why redo in bone on a small scale, when really one imagines that at that epoch they had other things to be doing, this matchless

reproduction? I mean that, in le Cuvier which I have at my country house, I have extremely remarkable engravings of fossilized skeletons which are made by consummate artists, these are no better than this small reduction of a horse's skull sculptured in bone which is of such an anatomical exactitude that not only is it convincing: it is rigorous.

Well then it is only much later that we find the trace of something which belongs unambiguously to the signifier.

And this signifier is all alone, because I do not intend giving, for want of information, a special meaning to this little increased gap that there is some place in this line of strokes; it is possible, but I can say nothing about it. What I mean, on the contrary, is that here we see arising something which I am not saying is the first appearance, but in any case a certain (17) appearance of something which you see is altogether distinguished from what can be designated as a qualitative difference: each one of these traits is not at all identical to its neighbour, but it is not because they are different that they function as different, but because the signifying difference is distinct from anything that refers to qualitative difference, as I have just shown you with the little things that I have just circulated before you.

Qualitative difference can even on occasion underline the signifying sameness. This sameness is constituted precisely by the fact that the signifier as such serves to connote difference in the pure state, and the proof is that at its first appearance the one manifestly designates multiplicity as such. In other words, I am a hunter because now we have been carried to the level of Magdalenian 4. God knows that catching an animal was not any more simple at that epoch than it is in our own day for those who are called Bushmen, and it was quite an adventure! It seems indeed that after having wounded the beast it was necessary to track it for a long time in order to see it succumb to what was the effect of the poison. I kill one of them, it is an adventure, I kill another of them, it is a second adventure which I can distinguish by certain traits from the first, but which resembles it essentially by being marked with the same general line. At the fourth, there may be some confusion: what distinguishes it from the second, for example. At the twentieth, how will I know where I am, or will I even know that I have had twenty of them?

(18) The Marquis de Sade at the Rue Paradis in Marseille, locked up with his little valet, proceeded in the same way for the ejaculations (coups), even though varied in different ways, that he got off in the company of this partner, even with some confederates who themselves were varied in different ways. This exemplary man, whose relationships to desire must surely have been marked by some unusual ardour, whatever one might think, marked on the head of his bed, it is said, by little traits each one of the ejaculations - to give them their name - that he managed to achieve in this sort of singular probationary retreat. Undoubtedly one must oneself be well engaged in the adventure of

desire, at least according to everything that ordinary things teach us about the most ordinary experience of people, in order to have such a need to locate oneself in the sequence of one's sexual accomplishments: it is nevertheless not unthinkable that at certain favourable epochs of life something can become hazy about the exact point that one is at in terms of decimal enumeration.

What is in question in the notch, in the notched trait, is something of which we cannot help seeing that here there arises something new with respect to what one could call the immanence of any essential action whatsoever. This being whom we can imagine to be still lacking this method of location, what will he do, after a time which is rather short and limited by intuition, in order not to sense himself simply solidary with a present which is always easily renewable where nothing allows him any longer to discern what exists as difference in the real. It is not at all sufficient to say - this is already quite obvious - (19) that this difference is in the living experience of the subject just as it is not at all sufficient to say: "But all the same such and such a person is not me". It is not simply because Laplanche has hair like that and that I have hair like this and that his eyes are a certain way and that he has not got quite the same smile as me, that he is different.

You will say: "Laplanche is Laplanche and Lacan is Lacan". But it is precisely there that the whole question lies, since precisely in analysis the question is posed whether Laplanche is not the thought of Lacan and if Lacan is not the being of Laplanche or inversely. The question is not sufficiently resolved in the real. It is the signifier which settles it, it is it that introduces difference as such into the real, and precisely in the measure in that what is involved are not at all qualitative differences.

But then if the signifier, in its function of difference, is something which presents itself thus in the mode of the paradox of being precisely different because of this difference which would be based or not on similarity, of being something other which is distinct and as regards which - I repeat - we can very well suppose, because we have them within our reach, that there are beings who are alive and tolerate Very well completely ignoring this sort of difference which certainly, for example, is not at all accessible to my dog, and I will not show you immediately - because I will show it to you in greater detail and in a more articulated fashion - that it is indeed for that reason that apparently the only thing that she does not know, is that she herself is. And that she herself is, we ought to search for the mode under which this is appended to this sort of distinction which is particularly manifest in the unary trait in so far as (20) what distinguishes it is not at all an identity of resemblance, it is something else.

What is this other thing?

It is this: it is that the signifier is not at all a sign. A

is what ought to give us the effect that:

$$f \quad S \quad S' \quad S^{1'} \quad S^{1''} \quad \text{etc}$$

$$f (S, S', S^{1'} \dots) = S(-) s$$

I called that of the peu-de-sens, in so far as the minus sign designates, connotes a certain mode of appearance of the signified as it results from the putting into function of S the signifier in a signifying chain. $S(-) s$

We will put it to the test of a substitution for these S and S* of 1 in so far as precisely this operation is quite legitimate, and you know it better than anybody, you for whom repetition is the basis of your experience: what constitutes the core of repetition, of the automatism of repetition for your experience is not that it is always the same thing which is interesting, it is why there is repeated something of which precisely the subject from the point of view of his biological comfort has not - as you know - really any strict need as regards the repetitions that we have to deal with, namely the stickiest, the most annoying, the most symptomogenic repetitions. This is where your (23) attention should be directed in order to uncover in it as such the incidence of the function of the signifier.

How can it happen, this typical relationship to the subject constituted by the existence of the signifier as such, the only possible support of what is for us originally the experience of repetition?

Will I stop there or will I already indicate to you how the formula of the sign must be modified in order to grasp, to understand what is in question in the advent of the signifier. The signifier, as opposed to the sign, is not what represents something for someone, it is what represents precisely the subject for another signifier; my dog is on the lookout for signs and then she speaks, in the way you know, why is her speech not a language; because precisely I am for her something which can give her signs, but who cannot give her any signifier.

The distinction between speech (la parole), as it can exist at the preverbal level and language consists precisely in this emergence of the function of the signifier.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 13 December 1961

Monas esti kathen hekaston ton outon
 Arithmos de to ek monadon synkeimenon plethos
 Euclid - Elements 4 VII.

This sentence is a sentence borrowed from the beginning of the seventh book of Euclid's Elements and appeared to me, taking everything into consideration, the best one I found to express, on the mathematical plane, this function to which I wished to draw your attention the last time, of the 1 in our problem. It is not that I had to search for it, that I had trouble finding among the mathematicians something which referred to it: the mathematicians, at least some of them, those who at every epoch have been in the forefront of the exploitation of their field, have concerned themselves a lot with the status of the unit (1'unite), but they are far from all having arrived at equally satisfying formulae; it even seems that, for some of them, in their definitions it went right in the opposite direction to the appropriate one.

In any case, I am not unhappy to think that someone like Euclid who all the same in the matter of mathematics cannot be considered otherwise than as from the right stock, should give this formula, which is precisely all the more remarkable because it is articulated by a geometer, that what the unit is - because (2) this is the meaning of the word monas: it is the unit in the precise sense in which I tried to designate it for you the last time under the designation of what I called, I will come back again on the reason why I called it that: the unary trait; the unary trait in so far as it is the support as such of difference, this indeed is the meaning that monas has here. It cannot have a different one, as the rest of the text is going to show you.

Monas, namely this unit in the sense of the unary trait which I indicate here to you as cross-checking with, as highlighting in its function what we managed last year in the field of our experience to locate in the very text of Freud as the einzigere Zug, that through which every being is said to be a One, with the ambiguity that is brought by this en, the neuter of eis which means One in Greek, being precisely what can be employed in Greek as in French to designate the function of unity in so far as it is this factor of consistency through which something is distinguished from what surrounds it, makes a whole, a One in the unitary sense of the function; therefore it is through the

mediation of unity that each one of these beings comes to be called One. The advent, in the statement, of this unity as characteristic of each of the beings is here designated: it comes from the usage of the monas which is nothing other than the unary trait.

It was worthwhile picking up this thing precisely from the pen of a geometer namely of someone who situates himself in mathematics in such a fashion apparently that for him at least, we must say that intuition conserves all its original value. It is true that he is not just any old geometer, because in short we can (3) single him out in the history of geometry as the one who was the first to introduce, as having absolutely to dominate it, the exigency for proof over what could be called experience, the familiarity with space.

I will finish the translation of the quotation: "that number for its part is nothing other than this sort of multiplicity which arises precisely from the introduction of units", monads in the sense that this is understood in Euclid's text.

If I identify this function of the unary trait, if I make of it the unveiled face of this einzigiger Zug of identification, to which we were led by our path last year, let us highlight here, before going any further and so that you may know that contact is never lost with what is the most direct field of our technical and theoretical reference to Freud, let us highlight that it is a question here of the second kind of identification, p.117, volume 13 of the Gesammelte Werke of Freud. It is indeed as a conclusion to the definition of the second kind of identification which he calls regressive, in so far as it linked to a certain abandoning of the object that he defines as the beloved object. This beloved object goes from women to rare books.

It is always in some measure linked to the abandoning or the loss of this object that there is produced, Freud tells us, this sort of regressive state from which there arises this identification which he underlines (with something which is for us a source of admiration, as each time the discoverer designates a trait derived from his experience which it might seem at first approach is not required by anything, that it has a contingent character, (4) moreover he does not justify it, except by his experience) that in this sort of identification where the ego sometimes copies the situation of the unloved object, sometimes that of the beloved object, but that in both cases this identification is partial: "höchst beschränkt" extremely limited - but which is accentuated in the sense of narrowness, of restrictedness by the fact that it is "nur ein einziger Zug", only a single trait of the objectified person, which is like the place borrowed from the German word.

It may therefore seem to you that to approach identification through this second type, is also to "beschränken" myself, limit myself, restrict the import of my approach; because there is the other, the identification of the first kind, the singularly ambivalent one which is constructed on the basis of the image of

assimilating devouring; and what relationship has it with the third, the one which begins immediately after this point which I am designating for you in Freud's paragraph: the identification to the other through the instrumentality of desire, the identification that we know well, which is hysterical, but precisely which I taught you cannot be properly distinguished - I think you ought to be sufficiently aware of it - except when there has been structured - and I do not see anyone who has done it anywhere other than here and before it was done here - desire as presupposing in its underlay exactly as a minimum the whole articulation that we have given of the relationships of the subject specifically to the signifying chain, in so far as this relationship profoundly modifies the structure of every relationship of the subject with each one of his needs.

(5) This partiality of the approach, this way in, as I might say, into a corner of the problem, I have the feeling that at the same time as I designate it for you, I should legitimate it today, and I hope to do it quickly enough to allow myself to be understood without too many detours by recalling to you something that is a methodological principle for us: that, given our place, our function, what we have to do as we break new ground, we should be mistrustful, let us say - and take this as far as you wish - of genus and even of class.

It may appear strange to you that someone who accentuates for you the pregnancy, in our articulation of the phenomena with which we have to deal, of the function of language, marks himself off here from a mode of relationship which is really fundamental in the field of logic. How can one indicate, speak, about a logic which ought, at the very moment it begins, to mark the completely original distrust that I intend to pose about the notion of class? It is indeed precisely what makes original, distinguishes the field that we are trying to articulate here, it is not any prejudice in principle which leads me here; it is the very necessity of our own object which pushes us so that there is developed in the course of the years, segment by segment, a logical articulation which does more than suggest, which gets closer and closer, specifically this year, I hope, to disengaging the algorithms which allow me to describe as logical this chapter which we will have to add on to the functions exercised by language in a certain field of the real, the one of which we, as speaking beings, are the conductors.

(6) Let us distrust therefore in the most extreme way any "Koinonia" to use a Platonic term, everything that marks a community in any genus (genre) and especially in those which are most original for us. The three identifications probably do not form a class, even though they may nevertheless bear the same name which brings a shadow of the concept to it; it will be also no doubt up to us to account for it; if we work correctly, this does not seem to be beyond our strength. In fact, we know already that it is at the level of the particular that there always arises what is for us a universal function, and we have no reason to be too astonished by this in the field in which we move about because, as regards the function of identification, we know

already - we have worked enough together to know it - the meaning of this formula: what happens, happens essentially at the level of structure; and structure, do I need to remind you, and precisely I believe that today, before taking another step I must recall it - is what we have introduced specifically as a specification in the register of the symbolic. If we distinguish this register of the symbolic from the imaginary and the real - I believe I should also highlight all the hesitations that there may have arisen from this neglect of something that I have never seen anyone worry himself about openly, another reason for dissipating any ambiguity on it - it is not a matter of an ontological definition, it is not fields of being that I am separating out here. If from a certain moment on, and precisely that of the birth of these seminars, I believed I had to bring into play this triad of the symbolic, the imaginary and the real (7) it is in so far as this third element which was not at all up to then sufficiently discerned as such in our experience, is exactly to my eyes what is exactly constituted by this fact of the revelation of a field of experience. And, to remove any ambiguity from this term, it is a matter of the Freudian experience, I would say of a field of experimentation. I mean that we are not dealing with Erlebnis, we are dealing with a field constituted in a certain fashion up to a certain degree by some artifice, the one inaugurated by the analytic technique as such, the complementary aspect of the Freudian discovery, complementary as the front is to the back, really stuck together.

What is first of all revealed in this field, as you of course know is the function of the symbol and at the same time of the symbolic. From the beginning these terms had the fascinating, seductive, captivating effect which you know about, in the whole field of culture, this shock effect from which as you know scarcely any thinker, and even the most hostile, could stand aside from. It must also be said that it is a fact of experience that we have lost from this time of revelation, and of its correlation with the function of the symbol, we have lost its freshness, as one might say, this freshness which is correlative to what I called the effect of shock, of surprise, properly defined by Freud himself as characteristic of this emergence of the relationships of the unconscious, these sorts of flashes lighting up the image which were characteristic of this epoch by means of which, as one might say, there appeared to us to be included in a new way, imaginary beings, by means of which suddenly something guided their meaning properly speaking, became clear by means of a grasp which we cannot better qualify than by (8) designating them by the term Begriff, a clinging grasp, where planes stick together, the function of fixation, of some Haftung or other which is so characteristic of our relationship in this imaginary field, at the same time evoking a dimension of genesis where things are drawn out rather than evolving: a certain ambiguity which allowed the evolutionary schema to be left present, naturally implicated I would say in the field of our discoveries.

How in all this can we say that when all is said and done what characterises this dead time, highlighted by all sorts of

theoreticians and practitioners in the evolution of the doctrine under different headings and titles, could have happened? How did there come about this kind of slow burn which imposes on us, what is properly speaking our object here, the one in which I am attempting to guide you, of taking up again our whole dialectic on surer principles? It would be well for us to be able to designate somewhere the source of the going astray which means that in short we can say that after a certain time these glimpses only remain alive for us if we refer back to the time of their emergence, and this all the more so on the plane of the efficacy of our technique, in the effect of our interpretations, in what makes them efficacious. Why have the imagos discovered by us been in a way banalized?

Is it only through a sort of effect of familiarity? We have learned to live with these ghosts, we are shoulder to shoulder with the vampire, the octopus, we live and breathe in the space of the maternal womb at least metaphorically. The comics for (9) their part also with a certain style, the funny drawing, make these images live for us in a way that was never seen in other ages, carrying with them even the most primordial images of analytic revelation and making of them a day-to-day object of amusement: on the horizon the spineless display and the function of the Great Masturbator preserved in the images of Dali.

Is it because of that alone that our mastery seems to weaken in the instrumental use of these images as revelatory? It is surely not that alone, for projected - as I might say - here into the creations of art, they still preserve what I would call not only their striking but their critical force, they preserve something of their character of derision or alarm but this is not what is in question in our relationship to the person who designates them for us in the actuality of the treatment.

Here the only plan of action that remains to us is the duty of doing good, making people laugh being a very occasional and limited way of using it. And here what we have seen happening, is nothing other than an effect of what one could call a collapse or a degradation, the fact is that we have seen these images returning quite simply to what has been designated very well as a type of archetype, namely old rope from the store of accessories in use. It is a tradition which is very well known under the name of alchemy or of gnosis, but which was linked precisely to a very ancient confusion and which was the one that the field of human thought remained entangled in for centuries.

(10) It might seem that I am marking myself off from or that I am putting you on your guard against a mode of understanding our reference points which is that of Gestalt. Its not quite that. I am far from underestimating what was contributed, at a moment in the history of thought, by the function of the Gestalt; but in order to express myself quickly and because here I am carrying out this kind of clearance of our horizon that I have to carry out again from time to time in order to avoid precisely the same confusions always re-emerging, I would introduce in order to make myself understood this distinction: what constitutes the core of

some of the productions of this mode of exploring the field of the Gestalt, what I would call crystallographic Gestalt, the one which puts the stress on these points of junction, of kinship, between natural formations and structural organisations, in so far as they arise and are definable only from the signifying combinatory, is what gives the subjective force, the efficacy of this point which, for its part, is ontological in which there is delivered to us something of which we in effect have a real need which is to know whether there is a relationship which justifies this introduction as a sort of ploughshare of the effect of the signifier in the real.

But this does not concern us. Because it is not the field that we have to deal with; we are not here to judge the degree of naturalness in modern physics, even though it may interest us - this is what I do from time to time before you sometimes - to show that historically it is precisely in the measure that it completely neglected the naturalness of things that physics began to enter into the real.

(11) The Gestalt against which I put you on your guard, is a Gestalt which, you will observe, in opposition to what the initiators of the Gestalt theory were attached to, gives a purely confusing reference to the function of the Gestalt which is the one that I am calling the anthropomorphic Gestalt, the one which in any way whatsoever confuses what our experience contributes with the old analogical reference of the macrocosm and the microcosm, of the universal man, rather abbreviated registers when all is said and done and which analysis in so far as it believed it could be at home in them only shows once again its relative infecundity. That does not mean that the images, which I humorously evoked above, do not carry a certain weight, nor that they are not there for us still to make use of them. For ourselves the fashion in which for some time we have preferred to leave them hidden, in the shade, ought to be indicative; they are scarcely spoken about any more, except from a certain distance; they are there, to use a Freudian metaphor like one of these shades which are ready to rise up from hell. We have not really known how to reanimate them, we have no doubt not given them enough blood to drink. But after all so much the better, we are not necromancers.

It is precisely here that there is inserted this reminder which is characteristic of what I am teaching you, which is there to completely change the appearance of things, namely to show that the living core of what the Freudian discovery contributed did not consist in this return of old ghosts, but in another

(12) relationship. Suddenly this morning, I rediscovered, from the year 1946, one of these little "Propos sur la causalite psychique" with which I made my re-entry into the psychiatric circle immediately after the war and there appears in this little text here (a text which appeared in connection with the Bonneval conversations), as a sort of apposition or incidence at the beginning of the same concluding paragraph, five lines before finishing what I had to say about the imago: "More inaccessible to our eyes made for the signs of the changer" which leads to

what follows: "than that of which the hunter in the desert", I say - which I only evoke because we came across him the last time, if I remember correctly - "knows how to see the imperceptible trace: the footprint of the gazelle on the rock, one day the aspects of the imago will be revealed".

The accent is to be put for the moment on the beginning of the paragraph "more inaccessible to our eyes..." What are these signs of the changer? What signs and what change or what changer?

These signs, are precisely what I have summoned you to articulate as signifiers, namely these signs in so far as they operate properly in virtue of their associativeness in the chain, of their commutativity, of the function of permutation taken as such. And here is where the function of the changer is: the introduction into the real of a change which is not at all one of movement nor of birth nor of corruption and of all the categories of change which a tradition which we call Aristotelian sketches out, that of knowledge as such, but of another dimension where the change that is in question is defined as such in the topological combinatory which it allows us to define as the (13) emergence of this fact, of the fact of structure, as degradation on occasion, namely the collapse in this field of the structure and the return to the capture of the natural image.

In short, there is sketched out as such something which is only after all the functional framework of thinking, you are going to say. And why not? Let us not forget that this word thinking is present, accentuated from the beginning by Freud, as no doubt not being able to be other than it is, to designate what is happening in the unconscious. Because it was certainly not the need to preserve the privilege of thinking as such, of some primacy or other of the spirit which could have guided Freud here. Far from it: if he had been able to avoid this term, he would have done it. And what does that mean at this level? And why is it that this year I thought I should start, not even from Plato without mentioning the others, but moreover not from Kant, not from Hegel, but from Descartes? It is precisely to designate what is in question, where the problem of the unconscious is for us, it is about the autonomy of the subject in so far as it is not alone preserved, as it is accentuated as it never was in our field and precisely about this paradox that these pathways that we discover in it are in no way conceivable if properly speaking it is not the subject who is their guide and that in a fashion which is all the more sure because it is without knowing it, without being an accomplice to it, as I might say: "conscius", because he cannot progress towards anything nor in any way except only by locating it retrospectively, because there is nothing that is not engendered by him except precisely in the measure that he fails to recognise it at first.

(14) This is what distinguishes the field of the unconscious, as it is revealed to us by Freud. It is itself impossible to formalise, to formulate if we do not see that at every instant it is only conceivable by seeing in it, and in the most obvious and

tangible fashion, this autonomy of the subject preserved, I mean that by which the subject cannot in any circumstances be reduced to a dream of the world. I show you the reference and not the presence of this permanence of the subject. Because this presence cannot be circumscribed except in function of this reference: I demonstrated, designated it for you the last time in this unary trait, in this function of the stroke as figure of the one in so far as it is only the distinctive trait, the trait precisely all the more distinctive in so far as there is effaced from it almost everything which distinguishes it, except the fact of being a trait by accentuating this fact that the more alike it is, the more it functions, I am not saying as a sign, but as a support for difference, and this only being an introduction to the throwing into relief of this dimension that I am trying to punctuate before you. Because in truth there is no longer any folds ("plis"): there is no ideal of similitude, of the ideal of the effacing of traits. This effacing of qualitative distinctions is only there to allow us to grasp the paradox of radical otherness designated by the trait, and it is after all of little importance that each of these traits resembles one another. It is elsewhere that there resides what I called just now this function of otherness. In ending my discourse the last time I highlighted what its function was, the one which assures to repetition precisely the following that by this function, by it alone, this repetition escapes from the identity of its eternal return under the figure of the hunter notching the number (15) of what? Of traits that he wounded his prey, or of the divine Marquis who shows us, that even at the summit of his desire, he takes good care to count these ejaculations, and that this is an essential dimension, in so far as it never abandons the necessity that it implies in almost any of our functions.

In counting these events, the trait which counts, what is it?
Are you still following me properly here?

Grasp carefully what I intend to designate, it is the following whose source is easily forgotten: it is that what we are dealing with in the automatism of repetition is the following: a cycle in however amputated, deformed, abraded way we may define it: once it is a cycle and once it involves a return to a terminal point, we can conceive of it on the model of need, of satisfaction. This cycle is repeated; it does not matter whether it is altogether the same or whether it presents tiny differences, these tiny differences will manifestly only be constructed in order to conserve it in its function of cycle as referring to something definable as a certain type through which precisely all the cycles which preceded it are identified in the very instant as being, in so far as they are reproduced, properly speaking the same. Let us take to depict what I am in the process of telling you the cycle of digestion: every time we go through one, we repeat digestion. Is this what we are referring to when we speak, in analysis, of the automatism of repetition? Is it in virtue of an automatism of repetition that we go through (16) digestions which are tangibly always the same digestion?

I will not leave you the opening of saying that up to this it is

a sophism. There can be naturally incidents in this digestion which are due to the reminders of old digestions which were disturbed: effects of disgust, of nausea, linked to one another contingent linking of such a food with such a circumstance.

This will not for all that help us to make a step further in the distance to be covered between this return of the cycle and the function of the automatism of repetition. Because what the automatism of repetition means in so far as we have to deal with it, is the following: the fact is that if a determined cycle which was only that very one - it is here that there is outlined the shadow of the "trauma" which I am putting here only in inverted commas, because it is not its traumatic effect that I hold onto but only its uniqueness - this one therefore which is designated by a certain signifier which can only be supported by what we will subsequently learn to define as a letter, the agency of the letter in the unconscious this big A, the initial A in so far as it is numberable, that this cycle here, and not another is equivalent to a certain signifier, it is in this sense that the behaviour repeats itself in order to make re-emerge this signifier that it is as such, this number that it grounds.

If for us symptomatic repetition has a meaning towards which I am redirecting you, reflect on the import of your own thinking. When you speak about repetitive incidence in symptomatic formation, it is in so far as that which is repeated is there, not even just to fulfil the natural function of the sign which is (17) to represent something which is supposed to be actualised here, but to presentify as such the signifier that this action has become.

I am saying that it is in so far as what is repressed is a signifier that this cycle of real behaviour is presented in its place. It is here, since I have imposed on myself to give a precise and convenient time limit for a certain number of you to what I should present before you, that I will stop. As for the confirmation and the commentaries that all of this requires, you can count on me to give them to you in what follows in the most appropriately articulated fashion, however astonishing their abruptness may have appeared to you, when I exposed them to you just now.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 20 December 1961

The last time I left you on a remark designed to give you the sense that my discourse is not losing its moorings, namely that the importance, for us, of this research this year depends on the fact that the paradox of the automatism of repetition is that you see arising a cycle of behaviour inscribable as such in terms of a resolution of tension, therefore of the need-satisfaction couple, and that nevertheless whatever may be the function involved in this cycle, however carnal you may suppose it to be, it nevertheless remains that what it means qua automatism of repetition is that it is there in order to make emerge, to recall, to make insist something which is nothing other in its essence than a signifier which can be designated by its function, and especially under this aspect that it introduces into the cycle of its repetitions - always the same in their essence and therefore concerning something which is always the same thing - difference, distinctiveness, unicity, and that it is because something happened at the origin which is the whole system of the trauma, namely that at one time there was produced something which took on from that time the form A, that in the repetition the behaviour however complex, engaged you may suppose it to be in the animal individuality, is only there in order to make (2) re-emerge this sign A. Let us say that the behaviour from then on is expressible as behaviour number such and such; it is this behaviour number such and such, let us say it, the hysterical access for example: one of the forms in the case of a particular subject are his hysterical accesses, and it is this which emerges as behaviour number such and such. Only the number is lost for the subject. It is precisely in so far as the number is lost that there emerges this behaviour masked in this function of giving rise to the number behind what will be called the psychology of his access, behind the apparent motivations; and you know that in this regard no one will find it difficult to find an apparent reason for it: it is proper to psychology always to make a shadow of motivation appear.

It is therefore with this structural sticking together of something radically inserted into this vital individuality with this signifying function, that we are in analytic experience (Vorstellungsrepräsentanz): this is what is repressed, it is the lost number of behaviour such and such.

Where is the subject in all of that?

It is in the radical, real individuality, in the pure sufferer of this capture, in the organism which henceforward is sucked in by the effects of the "it speaks" (ça parle) by the fact that one living being among the others was summoned to become what Mr Heidegger calls the shepherd of being, having been caught up in the mechanisms of the signifier. Is it at the other extreme identifiable to the very operation of the signifier? And is not the subject only the subject of discourse who is in some way torn away from his vital immanence, condemned to fly on high, to live (3) in this sort of mirage which flows from this redoubling which ensures that he not only speaks everything he lives, but that he experiences living being by speaking it and that already what he is living is inscribed in an epos, a Saga woven right throughout his very act.

Our effort this year if it has a meaning, is precisely to show how the function of the subject is articulated elsewhere than in one or other of these poles, that it operates between the two. It is after all - I for my part imagine - what your cogitation - at least I like to think so - after these few years of seminars may give you, even if only implicitly, as a reference point at every instant. Is it enough to know that the function of the subject is in the between-the-two, between the idealising effects of the signifying function and this vital immanence which you may too readily confuse, I still think, despite all my warnings, with the function of the drive? It is precisely what we are engaged in and what we are trying to push further, and the reason why also I thought I should begin with the Cartesian cogito in order to make tangible the field in which we are going to try to give more precise articulations about identification.

I spoke to you, a few years ago, about little Hans; there is in the story of little Hans - I think that you have kept the memory of it somewhere - the story of the dream which one can pinpoint with title of the crumpled (verwurzelt) giraffe. This verb verwurzeln which has been translated by to crumple, is not a very (4) common verb in the usual German lexicon. Though wurzeln is found there, verwurzeln is not. Verwurzeln means: to make a ball. It is indicated in the text of the dream of the crumpled giraffe that it is a giraffe which is there next to the big living giraffe, a paper giraffe and that as such one can make a ball of it. You know the whole symbolism which is unfolded right through this observation, of the relationship between the big giraffe and the little giraffe, the crumpled giraffe under one of its aspects, conceivable under the other as the reduced giraffe, as the second giraffe, as the giraffe which can symbolise many things. If the big giraffe symbolises the mother, the other giraffe symbolises the daughter; and the relationship of little Hans to the giraffe, at the point that we are at at that moment of his analysis, will tend to be incarnated rather readily in the living interplay of family rivalries.

I remember the astonishment - it would no longer be appropriate today - that I provoked at that time by designating at that very moment in the case of little Hans as such, the dimension of the symbolic in act in the psychical productions of the young subject

in connection with this crumpled giraffe. What could be more indicative of the radical difference of the symbolic as such, than to see appearing in the production, certainly not suggested on this point - because there is no trace at that moment of any such articulation concerning the indirect function of the symbol - than to see in the observation something which really incarnates for us and images the advent of the symbolic as such in the psychical dialectic. "Really, where did you find it" one of you kindly said to me after that session?

(5) The surprising thing is not that I saw it because it would be difficult to have it indicated more crudely in the material itself, it is that at that place one could say that Freud himself does not dwell on it, I mean does not give at all the stress that would be appropriate to this phenomenon, to what materialises it, as one might say, to our eyes. This indeed is what proves the essential character of these structural delineations, it is by not making them, by not highlighting them, by not articulating them with all the energy of which we are capable, it is a certain aspect, a certain dimension of the phenomena themselves that we condemn ourselves in a way to overlook.

I am not going to go over again for you on this occasion the articulation of what was involved, of what was at stake in the case of little Hans. These things have been published enough and well enough for you to be able to refer to them. But the function as such at this critical moment - the one determined by his radical suspension on the desire of the mother, in a fashion which, as one might say, has nothing to off-set it, is irretrievable, inescapable - is the function of artifice which I showed you to be that of the phobia in so far as it introduces a key signifying mainspring which allows the subject to preserve what is in question for him, namely the minimal anchoring, centering of his being, which allows him not to sense himself as a being who is completely adrift at the whim of his mother. This is what is at stake, but what I want to highlight at this level is the following: it is that in a production which can scarcely be considered unreliable on this occasion - I say it all the more because everything towards which little Hans had previously been directed (because God knows he was directed as I showed you -

(6) nothing of all of this is of a nature to put him into the field of this type of elaboration; little Hans shows us here in a figure which is certainly obscure, but exemplary, the leap, the passage, the tension between what I defined first of all as the two extremes of the subject: the animal subject which represents the mother, but also with its long neck, no one has any doubt about it, the mother in so far as she is this immense phallus of desire ending again in the browsing mouth of this voracious animal, and then on the other something on a paper surface. We will return to this dimension of surface, something which is not without a subjective accent; because one sees well the whole import of what is involved: the big giraffe, when she sees him playing with the small crumpled one, cries out very loudly until finally she grows weary, her cries are exhausted, and little Hans, sanctioning in a way the taking possession, the Besitzung of what is involved, the mysterious import of the affair, by

sitting on top of it (darauf gesetzt).

This lovely mechanism ought to make us sense what is involved, since indeed it concerns his fundamental identification, the defence of himself against this original capture within the world of the mother, as no one of course doubts, at the point that we are at in elucidating phobia. Here already we see exemplified this function of signifier. It is indeed here that I want to pause again today on the point of departure of what we have to say about identification. The function of the signifier in so far as it is the mooring point of something from which the subject constitutes himself, here is something which is going to (7) make me dwell for a moment today on something which, it seems to me, should come quite naturally to mind, not just for reasons of general logic, but also because of something that you should touch on in your experience: I mean the function of the name (nom), not the noun (nom), the noun defined grammatically, what we call the substantive in our schools, but the name in the way that in English - and what is more, in German - the two functions are distinguished. I would like to say a little more about it here, but you will understand the difference: the name, is the proper name. You know as analysts, the importance that the proper name of the subject has in every analysis. You should always pay attention to what your patient is called. It is never indifferent. And if you ask for names in analysis, it is indeed something much more important than the excuse that you may give for it to the patient, namely that all sorts of things may hide themselves behind this sort of dissimulation or effacing of a name, concerning the relations that it may bring into play with some other subject.

It goes much further than that; you should sense it even if you do not know it.

What is a proper name?

Here we should have a lot to say. The fact is that in effect we could bring a lot of material to the name. This material, we analysts, even in supervision, we would have a thousand opportunities to illustrate its importance. I do not believe (8) that we could here precisely give it all its import - this is a further occasion to put your finger on a methodological necessity - without referring to what the linguist has to say in this respect, not necessarily to submit ourselves to it, but because as regards the function, the definition of this signifier which has its own originality, we should at least find in it a control, if not a complement to what we can say.

In fact, this indeed is what is going to happen. In 1954 there appeared a little factum by Sir Allan H. Gardiner. There are all sorts of works by him and in particular a very good Egyptian grammar - I mean one of antique Egypt - he is therefore an Egyptologist, but he is also and above all a linguist. Gardiner produced - it was at that time that I acquired it during a short trip to London - a very small little book called The theory of proper names. He produced it in a rather contingent fashion.

He calls it himself a "controversial essay", un essai controversiel. One could even say that this is a litotes: a polemical essay. He wrote it because of the extreme exasperation he had felt at a certain number of enunciations of a philosopher whom I am not indicating to you for the first time: Bertrand Russell whose enormous role in the elaboration of what one could call in our days mathematicised logic or logicised mathematics you know about. In the Principia mathematica with Whitehead, he gave us a general symbolism of logical and mathematical operations which one cannot fail to take into account, once one enters into this field. Russell then, in one of his works, gives (9) a certain definition which is quite paradoxical - the paradox moreover is a dimension in which he is far from reluctant to move about in, on the contrary: he makes use of it more often than it deserves - Mr Russell put forward then certain remarks about the proper name which literally put Mr Gardiner beside himself. The quarrel is in itself significant enough for me to think that today I should introduce you to it and in this connection hook onto it remarks that I think are important.

What end are we going to start with, with Gardiner or with Russell?

Let us begin with Russell.

Russell finds himself in the position of the logician; the logician has a position which does not date from yesterday. He brings into operation a certain apparatus to which he gives different titles: reasoning, thinking. He discovers in it a certain number of implicit laws. In a first phase he separates out these laws: they are the ones without which nothing which belongs to the order of reason would be possible. It is in the course of this quite original research into the thinking which governs us, by reflection, that we grasp for example the importance of the principle of contradiction. This principle of contradiction having been discovered, it is around the principle of contradiction that something unfolds and is organised, which undoubtedly shows that if contradiction and its principle were not something tautological, tautology would be singularly fruitful; because Aristotelian logic cannot be unfolded in a few (10) pages.

With time, nevertheless, the historical fact is that even though the development of logic is directed towards an ontology, a radical reference to being which is supposed to be aimed at in these most general laws of the mode of understanding necessary for truth, it orients itself towards a formalism, namely that that to which the leader of a school of thought as important, as decisive in the orientation that it has given to a whole mode of thinking in our epoch as Bertrand Russell, should have managed to put everything that concerns the critique of the operations brought into play in the field of logic and of mathematics, into a general formalisation that is as strict, as economical as possible.

In short, the correlative effort of Russell, the thrust of

Russell's effort in the same direction, in mathematics, culminates at the formation of what is called set theory, whose general import one can characterise in the fact that an effort is made in it to reduce the whole field of mathematical experience accumulated throughout centuries of development, and I believe that a better definition of it cannot be given than to reduce it to an interplay of letters (jeu de lettres). We should take this into account then as a given in the progress of thinking; let us say, at our epoch, this epoch being defined as a certain moment of the discourse of science.

What is it then that Bertrand Russell finds himself led to give in these conditions, when he comes to interest himself in it, as a definition of a proper name?

(11) It is something which in itself is worthwhile dwelling on, because it is what is going to allow us to grasp - it could be grasped elsewhere, and you will see that I will show you that it is grasped elsewhere - let us say the degree of miscognition (méconnaissance) implied in a certain position which is found to be effectively the corner into which there is pushed the whole age-old effort of the elaboration of logic. This miscognition is properly speaking something which no doubt I put before you in a way from the beginning of what I have to pose here because of the requirements of my exposition: this is precisely the miscognition of the thinking subject's most radical relationship to the letter. Bertrand Russell sees everything, except this: the function of the letter. This is what I hope to be able to make you sense and to show you. Have confidence and follow me. You are going to see now how we are going to advance. What does he give as a definition of the proper name? A proper name is, he says, "word for particular" a word to designate particular things as such. Now, in every description there are two ways of approaching things: to describe them by their quality, their reference-points, their co-ordinates from the point of view of the mathematician, I mean to designate them as such. This point, for example, let us say that here I can tell you: it is on the right of the blackboard, at such a height more or less, it is white and so on and so on. That is a description, Mr Russell tells us. These are the ways of designating it, outside of any description, as particular: that is what I am going to call proper name.

(12) The first proper name for Mr Russell - I already alluded to it in my preceding seminars - is the "this", celui-ci (this is the question). Here the demonstrative has passed to the rank of proper name. It is no less paradoxical that Mr Russell coolly envisages the possibility of calling this same point John. It must be recognised that we have all the same here a sign that perhaps there is something which goes beyond experience; because the fact is that it is rare for one to call a geometrical point John. Nevertheless Russell has never retreated from the most extreme expressions of his thought. It is all the same here that the linguist becomes alarmed, becomes all the more alarmed because between these two extremes of Russell's definition "word for particular", there is this altogether paradoxical consequence

that, being logical with himself, Russell tells us that Socrates has no right to be considered by us as a proper name, it being given that for a long time now Socrates is no longer a particular. I am abbreviating what Russell says, I am even adding a touch of humour to it, but it is indeed the spirit of what he tells us, namely that Socrates was for us Plato's master, the man who drank the hemlock, etc... It is an abbreviated description; it is therefore no longer as such what he calls a word to designate the particular in its particularity.

It is quite certain that we see here that we are completely losing any of the advantages that a linguistic consciousness gives us, namely that, if we have to eliminate everything that in proper names is inserted into a community of the notion, we arrive at a sort of impasse which is indeed that against which Gardiner tries to oppose properly linguistic perspectives as (13) such.

What is remarkable, is that a linguist who does not lack merit or experience or skill, because of an experience of the signifier that is all the more profound in that it is not for nothing that I pointed out to you that he is someone whose work in part unfolded in an especially suggestive and rich angle of experience which is that of hieroglyphics since he is an Egyptologist, is going, for his part, to be led to counter-formulate for us what appears to him to be characteristic of the function of the proper name.

He is going to elaborate this characteristic of the function of the proper name for us by referring himself to John Stuart Mill and to a Greek grammarian of the second century before Christ, called Dionysius Thrax.

Curiously, he is going to encounter in them something which, without ending up in the same paradox as Bertrand Russell, takes into account formulae which at first sight could appear as homonymie as one might say. The proper name, "idion choluon", moreover is only the translation of what the Greeks and specifically this Dionysius contributed on this point, idion as opposed to choluon. Is idion here to be confused with the particular, in Russell's sense of the term? Certainly not, because this is not what Mr Gardiner would have taken as a support, if what he were to find there was an agreement with his adversary. Unfortunately, he does not manage to specify^ the difference here between the term of ownership (propriété*) as implied in what distinguishes the original Greek point of view, (14) and the paradoxical consequences that a certain formalism arrives at. But under the shelter of the progress that the reference to the Greeks, then to Mill who is closer to him, fundamentally allows him, he highlights the following which is what is involved, namely what it is that functions in the proper name which allows us immediately to distinguish it, to spot it as such, as a proper name. With a good deal of pertinence. Mill, in approaching the problem puts the accent on the following: the fact is that the way a proper name is distinguished from a common noun, is from the angle of something which is at the level of

meaning; the common noun appears to concern the object in so far as it brings a meaning with it. If something is a proper name, it is in so far as it is not the meaning of the object that it brings with it, but something which is of the order of a brand applied in a way to the object, superimposed on it, and which by this fact will be all the more in close solidarity if it is less open, because of the absence of meaning, to any participation in a dimension by which this object goes beyond itself, communicates with other objects. Mill here makes intervene moreover, brings into play a sort of little apologue linked to a story: the coming into play of an fantasy-image. It is the story of the role of the fairy Morgiana who wants to preserve some of her protege's from some plague or other that is destined for them because of the fact that in the town a chalk mark had been put on their doors. Morgiana helps them avoid succumbing to the effect of the exterminating plague by putting the same mark on all the other houses of the same town.

Here Sir Allan Gardiner has no trouble in demonstrating the miscognition that is implied in this apologue itself; it is that (15) if Mill had had a more complete notion of what was involved in the incidence of the proper name, he should not only have taken into account the identificatory character of the mark when it was being forged, but also its distinctive character, and as such the apologue would be more suitable if one were to say that the fairy Morgiana had also to mark the other houses with a sign in chalk, but one different from the first so that the person who comes into the town to fulfill his mission, searching for the house where he must bring to bear his fatal incidence, no longer knows how to find the sign that is in question, for want of knowing in advance precisely what sign among others is to be searched for.

This leads Gardiner to an articulation which is the following: in an obvious reference to this distinction of the signifier and the signified, which is fundamental for every linguist even if he does not put it forward as such in his discourse, Gardiner remarks - not unjustifiably - that it is not so much the absence of meaning that is involved in the usage of the proper name. Because moreover everything tells us that the opposite is the case: very often proper names have a meaning. Even M Durand, that has a meaning; Mr Smith means a smith and it is quite clear that it is not because Mr Smith may be perchance a smith that his name will be any the less a proper name. What constitutes the usage of the proper name, on this occasion of the word smith, Mr Gardiner tells us, is that the accent in its usage is put, not on the meaning, but on the sound qua distinctive. There is here obviously a very great advance of dimensions, which in most cases will allow us to perceive in practice that something functions (16) more especially as a proper name. Nevertheless, it is all the same rather paradoxical precisely to see a linguist whose first definition of his material, the phonemes, is that they are precisely sounds which are distinguished from one another, giving as a particular trait to the function of the proper name that it is precisely because of the fact that the proper name is composed of distinctive sounds that we can characterise it as a proper

name. Because of course, from a certain angle it is obvious that every use of language is precisely based on this: the fact is that a language is composed of a material which is that of distinctive sounds. Naturally this objection does not fail to appear to the author himself of this elaboration. It is here that he introduces the subjective notion - in the psychological sense of the term - of the attention accorded to the signifying dimension which is here the sonant material. Observe carefully that what I am highlighting here, is that the linguist who ought to strive to put to one side - I am not saying to totally eliminate from his field - anything which is a properly psychological reference, is all the same led here as such to take into account a psychological dimension as such, I mean that because of the fact that the subject, as he says, invests, pays special attention to what is the body of his interest when it is a question of a proper name. It is in so far as it carries a certain sonant difference that it is taken as a proper name, remarking that on the contrary in common discourse, what I am in the process of communicating for example to you at the moment, I am paying absolutely no attention to the sonant material of what I am telling you. If I paid too much attention to it I would soon see my discourse being killed off and drying up, I am trying (17) first of all to communicate something to you. It is because I believe that I know how to speak French that the material which is effectively distinctive in its essence, comes to me; it is there as a vehicle to which I pay no attention; I am thinking of the goal that I am going to, which is to get across to you certain qualities of thinking that I am communicating to you.

Is it as true as all that that each time that we pronounce a proper name we are psychologically aware of the accent put on the sonant material as such? It is absolutely not true. I no longer think about the sonant material, Sir Allan Gardiner, when I am speaking to you about it any more than when I am speaking to you about verwurtzeln or anything else whatsoever. Already my examples here are badly chosen because these are already words which I highlight as words by writing them on the blackboard. It is certain that whatever may be the value of the claim of the linguist here, it fails very specifically, in so far as it believes it has no other reference to bring into play except the psychological one. And it comes to grief on what?

Precisely in articulating something which is perhaps indeed the function of the subject, but of the subject defined completely differently than by anything whatsoever which is of the order of concrete psychology, of the subject in so far as we could, as we must, as we will define it properly speaking by its reference to the signifier. There is a subject which is not confused with the signifier as such, but which is unfolded in this reference to the signifier with traits, characters which are perfectly articulatable and formalisable and which ought to permit us to (18) grasp, to discern as such the idiotic character - if I take up the Greek reference, it is because I am far from confusing it with the use of the word "particular" in Russell's definition - the idiotic character as such of the proper name. Let us try now to indicate in what sense I intend to make you grasp it.

In the sense in which for a long time I have been bringing into play at the level of the definition of the unconscious, the function of the letter. I brought this function of the letter into play for you first of all in a sort of poetic fashion; the seminar on the "purloined letter", in our very first years of elaboration, was there to indicate for you that something was to be taken well and truly in the literal sense of the term letter because it involved a missive, something that we could consider as being determining right into the psychical structure of the subject: a fable no doubt but one which rejoined the most profound truth in its structure as fiction. When I spoke about "The agency of the letter in the unconscious" a few years later, I gave by means of metaphors and metonymies a more precise accent to it. We are arriving now, with this beginning we have made about the function of the unary trait, at something which is going to allow us to go further: I am posing that there cannot be a definition of the proper name except in the measure that we are aware of the relationship between the naming utterance and something which in its radical nature is of the order of the letter. You are going to say to me: here then there is a great difficulty, because there are many people who do not know how to read and who make use of proper names; and then proper names (19) with the identification they determine existed before the appearance of writing. It is under this heading, under this register, "man before writing" that there has appeared a very good book which gives us the very last word on what is currently known about human evolution before history. And then how will we define ethnography about which certain people thought it plausible to advance that it was a matter properly speaking of everything that in the order of culture and of tradition is unfolded outside any possibility of documentation using the tool of writing.

Is it as true as all that?

There is a book which I can ask all of those who are interested by this - and already some people have anticipated my indication - to consult: it is the book by James Février on the history of writing. If you have the time during the holidays, I would ask you to refer to it. You will see there clearly being laid out there something whose general principle I indicate to you because in a way it is not fully separated out and it is everywhere present: it is that prehistorically speaking, if I can express myself in this way, I mean in the whole measure that the stratographic layers of what we find bear witness to a technical and material evolution of human accessories, prehistorically everything that we can see about what happens in the advent of writing and therefore in the relationship of writing to language, everything happens in the following fashion whose result is here posed, articulated very precisely before you, everything happens in the following fashion: without any doubt we can admit that man, ever since he has been man, as a speaker has had vocal (20) utterance. On the other hand, there is something which is of the order of these traits in connection with which I told you of the emotion of admiration that I experienced in rediscovering them marked in a little row on what seemed to be the rib of an

antelope. There is in the prehistorical material an infinity of manifestations of traces which have no other character than that of being, like this trait, signifiers and nothing more. People speak about ideograms or about idéographies, what does that mean?

What we always see every time that one can bring into play this label of ideogram, is something which presents itself as being in effect very close to an image, but which becomes an ideogram in the measure that it loses, that it effaces more and more this character of image. Such is the birth of cuneiform writing: it is for example a bouquetin's limb or head, in so far as after a certain moment this takes on an aspect for example like the following for the arm:



namely nothing about its origin is recognisable anymore. That transitions exist here, has no importance other than to strengthen us in our position, namely that what is created, at some level where we see writing emerging, is a baggage, a battery of something which one has no right to call abstract, in the sense that we employ it in our own day when we speak about abstract painting. For they are in effect traits which emerge from something which in its essence is figurative; and that is the reason why it is believed that it is an ideogram. But it is something figurative that is effaced, let us say the word which necessarily comes here to our minds: repressed, even rejected. (21) What remains is something of the order of this unary trait in so far as it functions as distinctive, that it can on occasions play the role of brand. You are not unaware - or you are unaware, it does not matter - that at the Mas d'Azil, another site dug by Piette of whom I spoke to you the other day, pebbles and stones were found on which you see things like the following for example:



This would be in red, for example, on rather polished type of stones which have taken on a greenish colour. On another one you will even plainly see this £ which is all the more polished in that this sign, £ is what is used in set theory to designate the belonging of an element; and there is another one of them: when you look at it from a distance it is a dice; one sees five points, from the other you see two points, when you look from the other side it is again two points, it is not a dice like the ones we have and if you ask the curator, if you have the glass case (22) opened for you, you see that on the other side of the five there is a bar, a 1. It is therefore not altogether a dice, but it has an impressive appearance at first sight so that you might have thought that it was a dice. And when all is said and done you would not be wrong, because it is clear that a collection of moveable characters - as we can describe them - of this kind is something which in any case has a signifying function. You will

never know what that was used for, if it was for drawing lots, if they were objects of exchange, tesseræ properly speaking, objects of recognition or whether that was used for anything whatsoever that you can lucubrate on in terms of mystical themes. That changes nothing in the fact that what you have here are signifiers.

That the aforesaid Piette should have subsequently drawn Salomon Reinach into deliberating the tiniest little bit about the extremely archaic and primordial character of occidental civilisation because supposedly this is already an alphabet, is another affair: but this is to be judged as a symptom, but also to be criticized for its real import. That nothing of course allows us to speak about an extremely archaic writing in the sense that these moveable characters would have been used to make a sort of cave printing press, this is not what is in question. What is in question is the following in so far as one or other ideogram means something: to take the little cuneiform character that I drew for you earlier, this at the level of a very primitive stage of Accadian writing designates the heavens, there results from this that it is articulated "an"; the subject who looks at this ideogram names it "an" in so far as it represents the heavens. But what is going to result from it is that the (23) position is reversed, that from a certain moment on this ideogram of the heavens is going to be used in a writing of a syllabic type, to support the syllable "an" which will at that time no longer have any relationship with the heavens. All ideographic or so-called ideographic writings without exception, carry the trace of the simultaneity of this use which is called ideographic with what is called the phonetic usage of the same material.

But what is not articulated, what is not highlighted, what it seems nobody has dwelt on up to now is the following: it is that everything happens as if the signifiers of writing having first of all been produced as distinctive marks, and we have historical attestations of this, because someone called Sir Flanders Petrie showed that well before the birth of these hieroglyphic characters, on the pottery which remains to us from what is called predynastic industry, we find as a brand on the pottery more or less all the forms which are found to be used subsequently, namely after a long historical evolution in the Greek, Etruscan, Latin, Phoenician alphabets everything that interests us to the highest degree as being characteristics of writing. You see what I am trying to get to. Even though in the final analysis what the Phoenicians at first, then the Greeks did most admirably, namely this something which allows a notation apparently as strict as possible of the functions of the phoneme with the help of writing, it is from a completely contrary perspective that we should see what is in question. Writing as material, as baggage, was waiting there - following on a certain process to which I will return: that of the formation, let us say (24) of the brand, which today incarnates the signifier that I am speaking to you about: writing was waiting to be phoneticised and it is in the measure that it is vocalised, phoneticised like other objects, that writing learns, as I might say, to function

as writing. If you read this work on the history of writing you will find at every instant the confirmation of what I am giving you here as a schema. Because every time there is a progress in writing it is in so far as a population tried to symbolise its own language, its own phonematic articulation with the help of a writing material borrowed from another population, and which was only in appearance well adapted to another language - because it was not better adapted, it is never well adapted of course, because what relationship is there between this modulated and complex thing and a spoken articulation - but which was adapted by the very fact of the interaction that there is between a certain material and the usage that is given to it in another form of language, of phonematic, of syntax, whatever you wish, namely that it was in appearance the least appropriate instrument at the beginning for what one had to make of it.

In this way there takes place the transmission of what is first of all forged by the Sumerians, namely before it arrives at the point that we are at here; and when it is picked up by the Accadians all the difficulties come from the fact that this material fits in very badly with the phonematics that it has to enter into, but on the contrary once it has entered into it, it influences it as far as we can see and I will have to come back on this. In other words, what the advent of writing represents is the following: that something which is already writing if we consider that the characteristic is the isolation of the (25) signifying trait, when it is named, manages to be able to serve as a support for this famous sound on which Mr Gardiner puts the whole accent concerning proper names.

What results from this?

There results from it that we should find, if my hypothesis is correct, something which proves its validity. It has been thought of more than once, there are swarms of them; but the most accessible, the most obvious, is the one that I am going to give you right away, namely that one of the characteristics of the proper name - I will of course have to come back on it and in a thousand forms, you will see a thousand demonstrations of it - is that the characteristic of the proper name is always more or less linked to this trait of its liaison not to the sound, but to the writing; and one of the proofs, the one that today I want to put in the forefront before you, is the following: it is that when we have writings which are undeciphered because we do not know the language that they incarnate, we are very embarrassed, because we have to wait to have a bilingual inscription, and this does still not take us very far if we know nothing at all about the nature of its language, namely about its phonetics.

What are we waiting for when we are cryptographers and linguists; it is to discern in this undeciphered text something which could indeed be a proper name because there is this dimension to which I am astonished Mr Gardiner did not have recourse, he who all the same has Champollion as the chief, the inaugural leader of his (26) science, and that he does not remember that it is in connection with Cleopatra and Ptolemy that the whole deciphering

of the Egyptian hieroglyphs began because in every language, Cleopatra is Cleopatra, and Ptolemy is Ptolemy. What distinguishes a proper name despite little appearances of borrowings - Cologne is called Koln - is that from one tongue to another its structure is preserved, its sonant structure no doubt; but this sonant structure is distinguished by the fact that precisely we should respect it above all others, and this by reason precisely of the affinity of the proper name with the brand, with the direct designation of the signifier as object, and here apparently we fall again and even in the most brutal fashion on the "word for particular". Does that mean that for all that I think Mr Bertrand Russell is correct here? Certainly not as you know. Because in the interval is the whole question precisely of the birth of the signifier starting from that of which it is the sign. What does that mean? It is here that there is inserted as such a function which is that of the subject, not of the subject in the psychological sense but of the subject in the structural sense.

How can we, under what algorithms can we, because it is a question of formalisation, place this subject? Is it in the order of the signifier that we have the means to represent that which concerns the genesis, the birth, the emergence of the signifier itself? It is towards this that my discourse is directed and I will take it up next year.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 10 January 1962

Let us evoke again what I said the last time: I spoke to you about the proper name in so far as we had encountered it on our path towards the identification of the subject, the second, regressive, type of identification to the unary trait of the Other. In connection with this proper name, we have encountered the attention that it has already attracted from a particular linguist and mathematician as they were philosophising.

What is the proper name?

It seems that it is not something which betrays itself at the first approach, but, in trying to resolve this question, we had the surprise of rediscovering the function of the signifier probably in the pure state; it was indeed along this path that the linguist himself directed us when he told us: a proper name is something that takes its value from the distinctive function of its sonant material, in saying which of course, he was only repeating the first fruit of the Saussurian analysis of language: namely that it is the distinctive trait, it is the phoneme as coupled to the totality of a certain battery, in so far uniquely that it is not what the others are, that we find it here as having to designate as what was the special trait of the usage of a subject-function in language: that of naming by one's own name.

(2) It is certain that we could not content ourselves with this definition as such, but that we were for all that put on the track of something, and this something, we were able at least to approach, to circumscribe, by designating the fact that it is, as one might say, in a form latent to language itself, the function of writing, the function of the sign in so far as it itself is read as an object; it is a fact that the letters have names; we have too great a tendency to confuse them with the simplified names that they have in our alphabet which seem to become confused with the phonematic utterance to which the letter has been reduced: an a seems to mean the utterance a, a b is not properly speaking a b, it is only a b in so far as for the consonant b to make itself heard it has be supported by a vocalic utterance. Let us look at things more closely, we will see for example, in Greek, alpha, beta, gamma, and what follows are well and truly names and, a more surprising thing, names which have no meaning in the Greek tongue in which they are formulated; in order to understand them, it must be realized that they reproduce the names corresponding to the letters of the Phoenician

alphabet, of a proto-Semitic alphabet, an alphabet such as we can reconstitute it from a certain number of stages, of strata; from inscriptions we find the signifying forms of it: these names have a meaning either in textual Phoenician, or such as we can reconstitute it, this proto-Semitic tongue from which there are supposed to be derived a certain number - I am not insisting on their detail - of languages to the evolution of which is closely linked the first appearance of writing.

(3) Here, it is a fact that it is important at least that there should come into the foreground the fact that the very name aleph is related to the cow, whose head the first form of aleph supposedly reproduces in a schematised fashion in different positions: something of it still remains: we can still see in our capital A the shape of a cow's skull upside down with the horns which prolong it. Likewise, everyone knows that beth is the name for house. Naturally, the discussion becomes complicated, even obscure when one attempts to make a register, a catalogue of what the name of the other succeeding letters designates: when we arrive at guimel, we are only too tempted to rediscover in it the Arabic name for camel, but unfortunately, there is a time obstacle: it is in the second millenium more or less before our era that these proto-Semitic alphabets might have been in a position to connote this name: the third letter of the alphabet, the camel, unfortunately for our comfort, had not yet made his appearance in the cultural usages of transport in these regions of the Near East.

A series of discussions begins therefore about what this name guimel might represent (here there is a development about the consonantal tertiary of Semitic tongues and about the permanence of this form at the basis of every verbal form in Hebrew). It is one of the traces by which we can see that what is involved as regards one of the roots of the structure in which language is constituted, is this something which is called at first a reading of signs, in so far as already they appear before any use of writing.

(4) I pointed out for you in ending the last time the usage in a surprising fashion, in a fashion which seems to anticipate - if the thing is to be admitted - by approximately a millenium, of the same signs in the most current alphabets, the alphabets which are the direct ancestors of our own: the Latin, Etruscan alphabets etc...:



which are found by the most extraordinary mimicry of history in an identical form in marks on the predynastic pottery of antique Egypt; they are the same signs, even though it is completely out of the question that they could at that moment have been used in any way for alphabetical purposes, alphabetic writing being at that moment far from being born.

You know that, earlier again, I made an allusion to these famous pebbles of the Mas d'Azil which are not the least important of the discoveries made at that place, to the point that at the end

of the Paleolithic era a stage is designated by the term Azilian because it refers to the fact that we can define the point of technical evolution at the end of this Paleolithic era in the not properly speaking transitional, but pre-transitional period of the Paleolithic to the Neolithic.

On these pebbles of the Mas d'Azil, we find analogous signs, whose striking strangeness, resembling so closely the signs of our alphabet was able to lead astray, as you know, minds which were not especially mediocre, into all sorts of speculations (5) which could only lead to confusion, even to ridicule.

It nevertheless remains that the presence of these elements is there to allow us to put our finger on something which is proposed as radical in what we could call the attachment of language to the real, a problem, of course, which is only posed in so far as we have first been able to see the necessity, in order to understand language, to order it through what we could call a reference to itself, to its own structure as such, which first of all posed for us what we could almost call its system, as something which is in no way satisfied by a purely utilitarian, instrumental, practical genesis, by a psychological genesis, which shows us language as an order, a register, a function whose problematic is always for us that we have to see it as capable of functioning outside any consciousness on the part of the subject and whose field as such we are led to define as characterised by structural values which are proper to it. From then on, it is necessary, for us, to establish the junction between its functioning and this something which carries, in the real, its mark: is it centrifugal or centripetal? It is here around this problem that we are for the moment not brought to a halt, but pausing.

It is therefore in so far as the subject, in connection with something which is mark, which is sign, already reads before there is question of the signs of writing, that he perceives that signs can carry on occasions differently reduced, cut-off fragments of his speaking modulation, and that, reversing its (6) function, it can subsequently be admitted to being as such its phonetic support, as they say, if you know that it is in this way that phonetic writing is born, that there is no writing to my knowledge, more exactly, that everything that is of the order properly speaking of writing, and not simply a drawing, is something which begins always with the combined usage of these simplified drawings, of these abbreviated drawings, of these effaced drawings that are in different ways incorrectly called ideograms in particular. The combination of these drawings with a phonetic usage of the same signs which appear to represent something, the combination of the two appears, for example obvious in the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Moreover, we might, just by looking at a hieroglyphic inscription, believe that the Egyptians had no other objects of interest than the quite limited baggage of a certain number of animals, of a great number of them, of a really surprising number of birds because of the incidence with which effectively birds intervene in inscriptions which need to be commemorated, of a plentiful number no doubt of instrumental

forms agrarian and others, of some signs also, which for all time, have been no doubt useful in their simplified form: the unary trait first of all, the bar, the cross of multiplication, which do not designate moreover the operations which were subsequently attached to these signs, but after all on the whole, it is quite evident at first glance that the baggage of drawings that we are dealing with has no proportion, congruence, with the effective diversity of objects which could be validly evoked in lasting inscriptions.

Moreover what you see, what I am trying to designate for you and (7) what is important to designate in passing to dissipate confusions for those who have not the time to go and look more



closely at things, is for example, the figure of a horned owl, to take a form of night bird particularly well drawn, locatable in the classic inscriptions on stone, we see it coming back extremely often, and why? It is certainly not the case that this animal itself is ever involved; the fact is that the common name of this animal in antique

Egyptian language can act as a support for the labial utterance m and that every time you see this animal figure, it is a matter of an m, and nothing else, which m moreover far from being represented simply in its literal value, every time you encounter this figure of the aforesaid horned owl, is susceptible to something which is made more or less like this (see the figure above).

The m will signify more than one thing, and in particular what we cannot, any more in this letter than in the Hebrew tongue when we have not the adjunction of vowel points, when we are not very fixed as regards the vocalic supports, we will not know exactly how this m is completed, but in any case we know enough broadly speaking from what we can reconstruct of the syntax to know that this m can moreover represent a certain function, which is more or less an introductory function of the type: "Look!"¹¹, a function for fixing the attention, as one might say, a voici: or again in (8) other cases where very probably it must be distinguished by its vocalic support, representing one of the forces, not of negation, but of something which must be specified as a stronger accent of the negative verb, of something which isolates negation in a verbal form, in a conjugatable form, in a form not simply of ne, but of something of which it is said that it is not. In short, it is a particular tense of a verb which we know which is certainly negative, or even more exactly a particular form in two negative verbs: the verb immi on the one hand, which seems to mean not to be and the verb gehom on the other hand which would seem to indicate more especially effective non-existence.

This is to tell you in this connection, and introducing in this connection in an anticipatory fashion the function that it is not by chance that what we find ourselves confronted with as we go along this path, is the relationship which is here incarnated, immediately manifested of the most primitive coalescence of the signifier with something which immediately poses the question of

what is negation, of what it is closest to. Is negation simply a connotation which then nevertheless is proposed as the question of the moment when with respect to the existence, to the exercise, to the constitution of a signifying chain there is introduced a sort of additional index, a siglum of virtual words as it is put, which ought therefore always to be conceived of as a sort of secondary invention required by the necessities of the utilisation of something which is situated at different levels: at the level of the response, what is put in question by the signifying interrogation, it is not there (cela n'y est pas); is it at the level of the response that this "is it not" (n'est-ce) (9) seems indeed to be manifested in language as the possibility of the pure utterance of the negation no, is it on the other hand in the mark of relationships that negation is imposed, is suggested by the necessity of disjunction: such a thing is not if another one is, one cannot be with the other? In short, the instrument of negation - we know it certainly, no less than the others - but then as regards the genesis of language, one is reduced to making of the signifier something which ought to be more or less elaborated starting from signs of emotion: the problem of negation is something which is posed as one properly speaking of a jump, indeed of an impasse.

If, in making a signifier, something quite different, something whose genesis is problematic, carries us to a level of interrogation about a certain existential relationship, the one which as such is already situated in a negativity-reference, the mode in which negation appears, in which the signifier of an effective negativity is experienced, can emerge, is something which takes on a quite different interest, and which is not then by chance, without being of a nature to illuminate us when we see that from its first problematics the structuring of language is identified, as one might say, by the location of the first conjugation of a vocal utterance with a sign as such, namely with something which already is referred to a first manipulation of the object; we had called it simplificatory when it was a matter of defining the genesis of the trait what is more destroyed, more effaced than an object. If it is from the object (10) that the trait emerges, it is something of the object that the trait retains: precisely its unicity. The effacing, the absolute destruction of all the other emergences, of all these other prolongations, of all these other appendices, of all the other ramified palpitating things there may be, well, this relationship of the object to the birth of something which is here called the sign, in so far as it interests us in the birth of the signifier, this indeed is what we have dwelt on and about which it is not unpromising for us to have made, as one might say, a discovery, because I believe that it is one. This indication that there is, let us say, at a time, a locatable time, one historically defined, a moment at which something is there to be read, read with language when there is still no writing, it is by the reversal of this relationship, and this relationship of reading to the sign, that writing can subsequently be born in so far as it can serve to connote phonemat icisation.

But it appears at this level, that precisely the proper name in so far as it specifies as such the rooting of the subject, is more specially linked than any other, not to the phonematisation as such, to the structure of the language, but to what already in the language is ready, as one might say, to receive this informing by the trait. If the proper name still carries even for us and in our usage, the trace under this form that it is not translated from one language to another, because it is simply transformed, it is transferred, and this indeed is its characteristic: I am called Lacan in every tongue, and you also, everyone by your name. This is not a contingent fact, a (11) fact of limitation, of impotence, a senseless fact, because on the contrary, it is here that there lies, that there resides the very particular property of the proper name in signification.

Is this not designed to make us question ourselves about what is at stake at this radical, archaic point that we must necessarily suppose to be at the origin of the unconscious, namely of this thing through which, in so far as the subject speaks, all he can do is to advance further along the chain, in the unfolding of enunciations, but that, directing himself towards the enunciations, by this very fact in the enunciating, he elides something which is properly speaking what he cannot know, namely the name of what he is qua enunciating subject.

In the act of enunciating, there is this latent nomination which can be conceived of as the primary kernel as signifier of what is subsequently going to be organised as a turning chain, such as I have always represented it for you from this centre, this speaking heart of the subject which we call "the unconscious".

Here, before we advance any further, I think I should indicate something which is only the convergence, the point of a thematic which we have tackled already on several occasions in this seminar, on several occasions by taking it up at the different levels at which Freud was led to approach, to represent, to represent the system, the first psychical system as it was necessary for him to represent it in some way to give a sense of what was in question: the system which is articulated as (12) unconscious, preconscious, conscious.

On several occasions, I had to describe on this blackboard, in differently elaborated forms, the paradoxes with which the formulations of Freud, at the level of the Entwurf, for example, confront us.

Today, I will limit myself to a topologisation as simple as the one that he gives at the end of the Traumdeutung, namely that of the layers across which there can occur breakthroughs, thresholds, eruptions from one level into another, such as the one which interests us to the highest degree: the passage from the unconscious into the preconscious for example, which is in effect a problem, which is a problem moreover - I note it with satisfaction in passing, it is certainly not the least effect that I might expect from the effort of rigour into which I am drawing you, that I am imposing on myself for you here, that

those who listen to me, who understand me, should raise themselves to a degree that is liable even on occasion to go further - well then, in their very remarkable text published in Les Temps Modernes on the subject of the unconscious, Laplanche and Leclaire - I am not distinguishing for the moment the share each of them has in this work - question themselves about what ambiguity remains in the Freudian enunciating concerning what happens when we can speak about the passage of something which was in the unconscious and passes into the preconscious. Does that mean that it is only a matter of a change of cathexis, as (13) they pose very correctly the question, or indeed is there a double inscription? The authors do not conceal their preference for the double inscription, they indicate it to us in their text.

This however is a problem that the text leaves open, and which after all what we are dealing with, will allow us this year, to contribute perhaps some responses to or at the very least some precise details.

I would like, in an introductory fashion, to suggest the following to you: it is that if we ought to consider that the unconscious is the locus of the subject where it speaks (ca parle) we come now to approach this point where we can say that something, without the subject knowing it, is profoundly altered by the retroactive effects of the signifier implied in the word. It is in so far as and for the least of his words, the subject speaks, that he cannot avoid always, once more, naming himself without knowing it, without knowing with what name. Can we not see that, in order to situate the relationships between the unconscious and the preconscious, the border for us is not to situated first of all somewhere inside, as they say, a subject who is simply supposed to be simply the equivalent of what is called in the broad sense, the psychical?

The subject that we are dealing with, and especially if we try to articulate it as the unconscious subject, requires a different way of establishing of the frontier. What the preconscious is in so far as what interests us in the preconscious is language, the language here that effectively we not alone see, hear being (14) spoken, but that punctuates, articulates our thoughts. Everyone knows that the thoughts involved at the level of the unconscious, even if I say that they are of course structured like a language, it is in so far as they are structured in the final analysis and at a certain level like a language that they interest us, but the first thing to be recognised, is that it is not easy to express those we are speaking about in common language. What is involved, is to see that the articulated language of common discourse, with respect to the subject of the unconscious in so far as it interests us, is outside, an "outside" which connects to it what we call our intimate thoughts, and this language which flows to the outside not in an immaterial fashion, because we know well, because all sorts of things are there to represent it to us, we know what perhaps was not known by cultures where everything happened in the breath of the word, we who have before us kilos of language, and who know, what is more, how to inscribe the most fleeting word on discs.

We know well that what is spoken, the effective discourse, the preconscious discourse is entirely homogenisable as something which takes place outside: language as a substance is everywhere and here, there is effectively an inscription on a magnetic tape if necessary. The problem of what happens when the unconscious comes to make itself heard is where we see the problem of the border between this unconscious and this preconscious.

How should this border be seen?

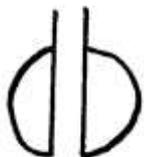
It is the problem that, for the moment, I am going to leave open, but what we can, on this occasion, indicate, is that in passing from the unconscious into the preconscious, what is constituted (15) in the unconscious encounters an already existing discourse, as one might say, an interplay of liberated signs, not only interfering with the things of the real, but one might say closely woven like a mycelium into their gaps. Moreover, is this not the true reason for what one could call the idealist fascination, entanglement.

In philosophical experience, if man perceives or believes he perceives that he never has anything but ideas of things, namely, that in the final analysis he only knows ideas of things, it is precisely because already in the world of things, this parcelling into a universe of discourse, is something which can absolutely not be disentangled. The preconscious, in a word, is already in the real, and if the status of the unconscious for its part poses a problem, it is in so far as it is constituted at a completely different level, at a more radical level of the emergence of the act of enunciating. In principle there is no objection to the passage of something from the unconscious into the preconscious, what tends to manifest itself, the contradictory character of which Laplanche and Lecaire note so well. The unconscious has as such its status as something which by position and by structure is not able to penetrate to the level where it is susceptible to a preconscious reorganisation, and nevertheless, we are told, this unconscious, at every moment, makes the effort, pushes in the direction of making itself recognised; undoubtedly, and with good reason, it is because it is at home as one might say in a universe structured by discourse.

Here, the passage from the unconscious towards the preconscious is only, one might say, a sort of normal irradiation effect of (16) what is turning around in the constitution of the unconscious as such, of what maintains present in the unconscious the primary and radical functioning of the articulation of the subject qua speaking subject.

What must be seen, is that the order which is supposed to be that of the unconscious, the preconscious, arriving then at the conscious, is not to be accepted without being revised, and one can say that in a certain fashion, in so far as we must admit what is preconscious as defined, as being in the circulation of the world, in the real circulation, we must conceive that what happens at the level of the preconscious is something which we have to read in the same fashion, in the same structure, as the

one I tried to get you to sense at this root-point where something comes to contribute to language what one could call its final sanction: this reading of signs, at the actual level of the life of the constituted subject, of a subject elaborated through a long history of culture, what happens, is that for the subject a reading outside of what is all-encompassing because of the presence of language in the real and at the level of the conscious, that level which, for Freud, always seemed to be a problem he never stopped indicating that it was certainly the object of future specification, of more precise articulation as regards its economic function at the level that he describes it for us at the beginning, at the moment when he is separating out his thought let us remember how he describes for us this protective layer that he designates by the term CO, it is above all something which, for him, is to be compared with the surface film of sensory organs, namely essentially with something which (17) filters, which blocks out, which only retains this index of quality whose function we can show is homologous with this index of reality which just allows us to appreciate the state that we are in, enough to be sure that we are not dreaming, if it is a matter of something analogous, it is really what is visible that we are seeing. In the same way, consciousness, compared to what constitutes preconsciousness and constructs for us this world closely woven by our thoughts, consciousness is the surface through which this something which is the heart of the subject, receives, as one might say, from the outside his own thoughts, his own discourse.



Consciousness is there in order that the unconscious, as one might say, may much rather refuse what comes to it from the preconscious or choose in it in the most precise fashion what it needs for its own purposes; and what is that?

It is indeed there that we encounter this paradox which is the one that I called the intersection of systemic functions at this first level so essential to recognise in Freud's articulation: the unconscious is represented for you by him as a flux, as a world, as a chain of thoughts. No doubt consciousness also is made up of the consistency of perceptions. Reality testing is the articulation of perceptions between themselves in a world.

Inversely, what we find in the unconscious, is this significant repetition which leads us from something which are called thoughts, Gedanken, which are very well formed, Freud says, to a (18) concatenation of thoughts, which escapes from us.

Now, what is Freud himself going to tell us? That what the subject seeks at the level of both one and the other of these systems, that at the level of the preconscious, what we seek is properly speaking the thought-identity, this was what was elaborated by this whole chapter of philosophy; the effort of our organisation of the world, the logical effort, is properly speaking to reduce the different to the identical, it is to identify thought to thought, proposition to proposition in differently articulated relationships which form the very texture

of what is called formal logic, which poses for someone who considers in an extremely ideal fashion the edifice of science as being able to be or as having even virtually been already achieved, which poses the problem of knowing whether effectively, every science of knowledge, every grasp of the world in an ordered and articulated way must not end up in tautology.

It is not for nothing that you have heard me on several occasions evoke the problem of tautology and there is no way that we will be able to terminate our discourse this year without forming a definitive judgement on it.

The world therefore, this world whose reality-function is linked to the perceptual-function is all the same that about which we make no progress in our knowledge except by way of thought identity. This is in no way a paradox for us, but what is paradoxical, is to read in the text of Freud that what the unconscious seeks, what it wants, as one might say, what is the (19) root of its functioning, of its being brought into play, is perceptual-identity, namely that this would have literally no meaning if what was involved, was only the following: that the relationship of the unconscious to what it seeks in its own mode of return, is precisely what in the once perceived is identically identical, as one might say, is what was perceived at that time, is this ring that he put on his finger with the stamp of that time, and it is precisely this that will always be lacking: the fact is that in every other kind of reappearance of what corresponds to the original signifier, at the point where there is the mark that the subject has received from anything whatsoever at the origin of the Urverdrangt, there will always be lacking in anything whatsoever that comes to represent it, this mark which is the unique mark of the original appearance of an original signifier which once presented itself at the moment when the point, the something of the Urverdrangt in question passed to an unconscious existence, to the insistence in this internal order which the unconscious is, between, on the one hand what it receives from the outside world and where there are things to be bound: from the fact that by binding them in a signifying form, it can only receive them in their difference, and this indeed is the reason why he cannot in any way be satisfied by this seeking of perceptual-identity as such if it itself is what specifies it as unconscious.

This gives us the triad: conscious, unconscious, preconscious, in a slightly modified order and in a certain fashion, which justifies the formula which I already tried to give you once of the unconscious, in telling you that it was between perception and consciousness, as one says between the skin and the flesh (entre cuir et chair). This indeed is something which, once we (20) have posed it indicates that we should refer ourselves to this point from which I started in formulating things beginning with the philosophical experience of the subject's search, as it exists in Descartes in so far as it is strictly different from anything that was able to be done at any other moment of philosophical reflection, in so far as it is indeed the subject who is himself questioned, who tries as such to be so: the

subject in so far as he goes at it in very truth, that what is questioned here, is not the real and the apparent, the relationship between what exists and what does not exist, of what remains and what disappears, but to know whether one can trust the Other, whether as such what the subject receives from outside is a reliable sign. The "I think, therefore I am" which I sufficiently triturated before you for you to be able to see now more or less how the problem of it is posed. This "I think" about which we have said that it is properly speaking meaningless - and this is what gives it its value - it has not, of course, any more meaning than the "I lie", but he can do nothing starting from its articulation but realize himself that "therefore I am" is not the consequence that he draws from it, but the fact is that he cannot help thinking from the moment when truly he begins to think, namely that it is in so far as this impossible "I think" changes to something which is of the order of the preconscious that it implies as signified, and not as consequence, as ontological determination, that it implies as signified that "I think" refers back to an "I am" which henceforth is no more than the x of this subject which we are seeking, namely of what there is at the beginning in order that there should be produced the identification of this "I think". (21) Notice that this continues. An so on. If "I think that I think that I am" - I am no longer being ironical: if "I think that I can do no other than be a pense-a-e'tre or a thinking being: the "I think" which is here the denominator sees very easily being produced the same duplicity, namely that I can do nothing other than to perceive that thinking that I think, this "I think" which is at the end of my thinking, over my thinking, is itself an "I think" which reproduces the "I think, therefore I am". Does this go on ad infinitum?

Certainly not: it is also one of the most usual modes of philosophical exercise when people began to establish such a formula to apply that what one was able to retain from it in terms of effective experience is in a way indefinitely multipliable like in a game of mirrors.

I think

I am

I am - I think

I am - I think

I am - I think.

There is a little exercise which is the one that I devoted myself to at one time - my little personal sophism - that of the assertion of anticipated certainty in connection with the game of disks where it is from noting what the two others do that a subject has to deduce the even or odd mark on his own back, namely something very close to what is involved here.

It is easy to see in the articulation of this game that far from the hesitation which it is, in effect, quite possible to see being produced, because if I see the others deciding too quickly about the same decision that I want to take, namely that I am like them marked with a disk of the same colour, if I see them

drawing their conclusions too quickly, I will draw from it precisely the conclusion, I can in this case see some hesitation arising for myself, namely that if they have seen so quickly who they were, it must be that I myself am distinct enough from them to locate myself, because if one is logical, they must be thinking the same thing: we see them oscillating also and saying to themselves: let's have a second look at it; namely that the three subjects we are dealing with will have the same hesitation together, and one can easily show that it is effectively only after three hesitating oscillations that they can really have and will certainly have and in a way fully, figured out through the scansion of their hesitation, the limitations of all the contradictory possibilities.

There is something analogous here: one cannot indefinitely include all the "I think, therefore I am"'s in an "I think"; where is the limit? This is what we cannot immediately say and know so easily here. But the question that I am posing, or more exactly the one that I am asking you to follow, because, of course, you are perhaps going to be surprised, but it is subsequently that you are going to see coming here being joined on what can modify, I mean subsequently render operational, what seemed to me at first sight only a sort of game, even what is called a mathematical recreation.

(23) If we see that something in the Cartesian understanding, which certainly terminates in its enunciating at different levels, because moreover there is something which cannot go any further than what is inscribed here, and it is necessary that he should make intervene something which comes, not from the pure elaboration, "on what can I base myself?". What is viable? He is indeed going to be led like everybody else to try to manage with what is experienced but in the identification which is the one which is made to the unary trait, is there not enough to support this unthinkable and impossible point of the "I think" at least under the form of its radical difference?

If it is through one that we depict it, this "I think" I repeat in so far as it only interests us in the measure that it is related to what is happening at the origin of nomination in so far as it is what concerns the birth of the subject, the subject is what names itself. If naming is first of all something which has to deal with a reading of the trait one designating absolute difference, we can ask ourselves how I might depict the sort of "I think" which here is constituted in a way retroactively simply by the reprojection of what is constituted as the signified of the "I think", namely the same thing, the unknown of what is at the origin under the form of the subject. If the 1 that I am indicating here in the definitive form that I am going to leave to it is something which, here, is supposed in a total problematic, namely that it is just as much true as it is not because it is only thinking about thinking, is nevertheless

$$1 - \frac{1}{1-1} \\ \frac{1}{1-1} \\ \frac{1}{1-1}$$

(24) correlative, indispensable, and this is what gives its force to the Cartesian argument about every apprehension of a thought once it is linked up - the path is

the power of two becomes positive. This is why the root of minus 1 is nothing but algorithm, but it comes in handy.

(26) If you define as a complex number any number composed of a real number to which there is joined an imaginary number, namely a number which cannot in any way be added to it, because it is not a real number, made up of the product of the root of minus 1 with b, if you define this complex number, you can perform with this complex number, and with the same success, all the operations that you can perform with real numbers and when you have started off on this path you will not only have the satisfaction of seeing that this works, but that it allows you to make discoveries, namely to see that numbers constituted in this way have a value which allows you specifically to operate in a purely numerical fashion with what are called vectors, namely with magnitudes which, for their part, will be not only provided with a value representable in a different way by a length but what is more, that thanks to the complex numbers you can implicate in your connotation, not alone the aforesaid magnitude, but its direction, and especially the angle that it makes with another magnitude, in such a way that $\sqrt{-1}$ which is not a real number, proves from the operational point of view to have a singularly more astounding power, as I might say, than anything that you had at your disposition up to then by limiting yourself to the series of real numbers.

This in order to introduce you to what this little i is. And then if one supposes that what we are trying to connote here in a numerical fashion is this conventional value: $\sqrt{-1}$ what does that mean? something we can operate on by giving it

(27) That just as we have applied ourselves to elaborating the function of unity as a function of the radical difference in the determination of this ideal centre of the subject which is called the ego-ideal, in the same way subsequently - and for a good reason, the fact is that we will identify it to what we have introduced up to now in the connotation which is personal to ourselves as namely the imaginary function of the phallus - we are going to occupy ourselves with extracting from this connotation, $\sqrt{-1}$, all the ways it can be of use to us in an operational fashion; but, meanwhile, the utility of its introduction at this level is illustrated by the following: it is that if you seek out what it does, this function of the root of minus one plus one over the root of minus one plus, other words, it is $\sqrt{-1}$ etc... in seen i, you which is there everywhere that you have convergent see appearing a function which is not at all a

$$\sqrt{-1} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{-1}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{-1}+1}$$

function, which is a periodic function:

which is easily calculable; it is a value which is renewed as one might say every third time in the series.

$$i+1$$

The series is defined as follows:

first term of the series

$$i + \frac{1}{i+1}$$

second term of the series and third term.

You rediscover periodically, namely every third time in the series this same value, the same three values which I am going to give you:

(20) 1 The first is, namely the enigma-point that we are at in order to ask ourselves what value we can indeed give to i in order to connote the subject qua subject before any nomination, a problem which interests us.

The second value you find, namely $i + \frac{1}{i+1}$ is strictly equal $\frac{i+1}{2}$ and this is rather interesting; because the first thing that we encounter is the following: it is that the essential relationship of this something that we are seeking as being the subject before it is named, to the use that he can make of his name quite simply as being the signifier of what there is to be signified, namely of the question of the signified precisely of this addition of himself to his own name, it is immediately to divide it in two. to bring it about that there remains only a half of literally of what there was present. As you can see, my words are not prepared, but they are all the same carefully calculated and these things are all the same the fruit of an elaboration which I have tried to find my way into in dozens of different ways while assuring myself of a certain number of controls, having subsequently a certain number of switching points in the times that are going to follow.

The third value, namely, when you stop the term of the series there will be quite simply 1, something which in several ways, can have for us the value of a sort of confirmation as a buckle, I mean that it is to know whether it is at the third moment, a curious thing, a moment towards which no philosophical meditation (29) has pushed us in any special way to dwell on, namely at the moment of the "I think" in so far as it is even an object of thinking and that it takes itself as an object, it is at that moment that we seem to manage to reach this famous unity whose satisfying character for defining anything whatsoever is assuredly in no doubt, but about which we can ask ourselves whether it is indeed the same unity that is involved as the one that was involved at the beginning, namely in the primordial initiating identification. In any case I have to leave this question open for today.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 17 January 1962

I do not think that however paradoxical the symbolisation on which I ended my discourse the last time may appear at first approach, making the subject be supported by the mathematical symbol of the root of -1 , I do not think that everything in this could have been only pure surprise for you. I mean that in recalling the Cartesian approach itself, one cannot forget what this approach leads its author to. Here he is setting off with a good stride towards the truth, and what is more: this truth is in no way, for him as for us, placed in the parenthesis of a dimension which distinguishes it from reality, this truth towards which Descartes advances with a conquering stride is indeed that of the thing, and this leads us to what? To emptying the world to the extent of no longer leaving anything of it except this void which is called extension. How is this possible?

As you know, he is going to choose as an example: melt a block of wax. Is it by chance that he chooses this material or is he drawn to it because it is the ideal material for receiving the divine seal, signature. Nevertheless, after this quasi-alchemical operation that he carries out before us, he is going to make it vanish, be reduced to being nothing more than pure extension, no longer anything on which an impression can be made. If precisely in his approach, there is no longer any relationship between the signifier and any natural trace, if I (2) can express myself in this way, and very specifically the natural trace par excellence which the imaginary of the body constitutes, this is not to say precisely that this imaginary can be radically rejected. But it is separated off from the operation of the signifier. It is what it is: an effect of the body, and as such impugned as witness to any truth; there is nothing to be done with it except to live with it, with this imaginary theory of the passions, but certainly not to think with it: man thinks with a discourse reduced to the facts of what one could call natural light, namely a logistical group which, consequently, could have been different if God had willed it (The theory of the passions).

What Descartes is still not able to see, is that we can will it in his place, it is that some 150 years after his death set theory was born - he would have loved it - in which even the figures one and zero are only the object of a literal definition, of a purely formal axiomatic definition, a neutral element. He could have done without the truthful God, the deceiving God not

being able to be other than the one who might cheat in the solution of the equations themselves. But nobody has ever seen that: there is no miracle in the combinatory, if not the meaning that we give it; every time we give it a meaning it is already suspect. That is why the Word exists, but not Descartes' God. For Descartes' God to exist, it would be necessary for us to have some beginnings of a proof of his own creative will in the domain of mathematics. But, it is not he who invented the transfinite, the quantum, it is we. This indeed is why history bears witness (3) to us that the great mathematicians who opened up this beyond of divine logic, Euler in the first place, were very frightened; they knew what they were doing, they encountered, not the empty extension of Descartes' approach, which finally, despite Pascal, no longer frightens anyone because people are encouraged more and more to go and live in it, but the void of the Other, a much more terrifying place because someone is necessary there. This is why, in circumscribing in the closest possible way the question of the meaning of the subject as it is evoked in Cartesian meditation, I think I am doing nothing more here - even if I am trespassing on a domain which has been gone over so often that it ends up by appearing to become reserved to particular people - I do not believe I am doing something which can fail to be of interest, this even in so far as the question is a current one, more current than any other, and still more current - I think I will be able to show it to you - in psychoanalysis than elsewhere.

What I am therefore going to lead you towards today, is a consideration, not about the origin, but about the position of the subject, in so far as at the root of the act of the word there is something, a moment at which he is inserted into the structure of language, and this structure of language, in so far as it is characterized at this original point, I am trying to circumscribe, to define, in terms of a thematic which, in a vivid way, is incarnated, is included in the idea of an original contemporaneity of writing and of language, and that writing is signifying connotation, that the word does not create it so much as bind it, that the genesis of the signifier at a certain level of the real which is one of its axes or roots, is no doubt for us the principle way of connoting the coming to light of effects, (4) called effects of meaning.

In this first relationship of the subject, in what he projects before him, nachträglich by the simple fact of engaging himself by his word, first of all in a stammering way, then in a playful, indeed confusing way in the common discourse, what he projects of his act backwards, there is produced this something which we have the courage to go towards in order to interrogate it in the name of the formula: "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden", which we would tend to push towards a very slightly differently accentuated formula in the sense of a being having been, of a Gewesen which subsists in as much as the subject advancing towards it cannot ignore that a work of profound reversing of his position is necessary for him to grasp himself there. Already there, something directs us towards something which is very controversial, suggests to us the remark that all by itself, in

its existence, negation has not failed always to conceal a question. What does it suppose? Does it suppose the affirmation on which it is based? No doubt. But is this affirmation for its part simply the affirmation of something of the real which has been simply removed? It is not without surprise, it is not either without malice that we can find from the pen of Bergson some lines in which he rises up against every idea of nothingness, a position quite in conformity with a thinking fundamentally attached to a sort of naive realism.

There is more, and not at all less, in the idea of an object conceived of as not existing, than in the idea of the same object conceived of as existing, because the idea of the object not (5) existing is necessarily the idea of the object existing with, in addition, the representation of an exclusion of this object by the present reality taken as a whole.

Can we be satisfied with situating it in this way? For a moment, let us direct our attention towards negation itself. This is the way in which we are going to be able to satisfy ourselves, to situate its effects in a simple experience of its use, of its employment.

To lead you to this place along all the paths of a linguistic enquiry is something that we cannot refuse ourselves. Besides, already, we have advanced along this direction, and if you remember, allusion has been made here for a long time to the certainly very suggestive, even illuminating, remarks of Pichon or of Damourette, in their collaboration on a grammar which is very rich and very fruitful to consider, a grammar especially of the French tongue in which their remarks come to highlight that there is not, they say, properly speaking any negation in French. What they mean is that what to their eyes is this simplified form of radical ablation, as it is expressed at the end of certain German sentences, I mean at the end because it is indeed the term nicht which by coming in a surprising fashion at the conclusion of a sentence carried on in a register that allowed the listener to remain up to its end in the most complete indétermination and fundamentally in a position of belief; by this nicht which erases it, the whole signification of the sentence finds itself excluded, excluded from what? From the field of the admissibility of the truth.

(6) Pichon remarks, not without relevance, that the most ordinary division, split, of negation in French between a ne on the one hand, and an auxiliary word, the pas, the personne, the rien, the point, the mie, the goutte, which occupy a position in the enunciative sentence which remains to be specified with respect to an ne named at first, that this suggests to you specifically, by looking closely at the separate usage that can be made of it, to attribute to one of these functions a signification called discordant, and to the other an exclusive signification.

It is precisely the exclusion from the real which would be the responsibility of the pas, the point, while the ne would express this dissonance sometimes so subtle that it is only a shadow, and

specifically in this famous ne of which you know that I made a great fuss in order for the first time precisely to show in it something like the trace of the subject of the unconscious, this ne which is called expletive. The ne of this "je crains qu'il ne vienne" (I am afraid that he will come) you immediately put your finger on the fact that it means nothing other than "I was hoping that he would come", it expresses the discordance of your own feelings with respect to this person, that it carries in a way its trace which is all the more suggestive because it is incarnated in its signifier because in psychoanalysis we call it ambivalence: "je crains qu'il ne vienne", does not express so much the ambiguity of our feelings as by this overloading show how much, in certain types of relationships, there is able to arise, to emerge, to be reproduced, to be marked in a gap, this distinction between the subject of the act of enunciating as such, with respect to the subject of the enunciation, even if he is not present at the level of the enunciation in a fashion which (10) designates him. "Je crains qu'il ne vienne" is a third; it would be if what was said was "je crains que je ne fasse" (I am afraid that I will make) - which is hardly ever said, even though it is conceivable - which would be at the level of the enunciation; nevertheless, it is of little importance that he can be designated - you see moreover that I can bring him into it - at the level of the enunciation; and a subject, masked or not at the level of enunciating, represented or not, leads us to pose the question of the function of the subject, of its form, of what it supports, and not to deceive ourselves, not to believe that it is simply the I which, in the formulation of the enunciation, designates him as the one who in the instant which defines the present, carries the word. The enunciating subject has perhaps always another support. What I articulated, is that, much more, this little ne, graspable here in its expletive form, is where we should recognise the support properly speaking in an exemplary case, and moreover this is not to say of course, that we should recognise its exclusive support in this exceptional phenomenon.

Usage of the tongue is going to allow me to accentuate before you in a very banal fashion, not so much Pichon's distinction - in fact, I do not believe it is sustainable up to its descriptive term; phenomenologically it reposes on the idea, inadmissible for us, that one can in some way fragment the movements of thinking. Nevertheless, you have this linguistic consciousness which allows you to appreciate immediately the originality of the case where you have simply, or you can in the present usage of the tongue - it was not always this way: in archaic times the form that I am (8) now going to formulate before you was the more common one; in every tongue an evolution is marked by a sliding of the forms of negation that linguists try to characterise. The direction in which this sliding takes place - later I will perhaps give its general line, it is expressed in what the specialists write, but for the moment let us take the simple example of what is quite simply available to us all - in the distinction between two equally admissible, equally acceptable, equally expressive, equally common formulae: that of "je ne sais" (I do not know) and "j'sais pas" (don't know). You see, I think immediately what the difference between them is, the difference of accent. This "je

ne sais" is not without some mannerism, it is literary, it is better all the same than "jeunes nations" (young nations) but it is of the same order. They are both Marivaux, if not rivals (rivaux).

What this je ne sais expresses is essentially something quite different to the other code of expression to the one of j'sais pas: it expresses oscillation, hesitation, even doubt. If I evoked Marivaux, it is not for nothing: it is the ordinary form in which veiled avowals can be made on the stage. As regards this "je ne sais", one would have to amuse oneself by writing, (9) with the ambiguity given by my play on words, the j'sais pas by the assimilation that it undergoes because of the nearness of the inaugural s of the verb, the j of je which becomes the aspirative che which becomes by this the silent sibilant. The ne which is swallowed here disappears: the whole sentence comes to repose on the heavy pas of the occlusive which determines it. The expression would only take on its slightly derisory, even folksy accentuation in this case precisely from its discourse and what was being expressed at the time. The "j¹sais pas" marks, as I might say, even the impact of something in which on the contrary the subject has collapsed or is grovelling. "How did you manage that", authority demands of the person responsible, after some unfortunate misadventure: "j'sais pas". It is a hole, a gap which opens up at the bottom of which what disappears, is engulfed, is the subject himself, but here he no longer appears in his oscillatory movement, in the support which is given to him in his original movement, but on the contrary, in the form of a recognition of his ignorance properly speaking expressed, assumed, rather projected, affirmed, it is something which presents itself as a not being there, projected onto a surface, onto a plane where it is as such recognisable.

And what we approach along this path in these remarks which are verifiable in a thousand ways, by all sorts of other examples, is something the idea of whose double aspect we should at the very least retain. Is this double aspect really one of opposition, as Pichon seems to suggest - as regards the apparatus itself, would (10) a more serious examination allow us to resolve it?

Let us remark first of all that the ne of these two terms seems to undergo the attraction of what one could call the leading group of the sentence, in so far as it is grasped, supported by the pronominal form: this leading group in French is remarkable in the formulae which gather it together such as "je ne le" and "je le lui", this grouped before the verb certainly does not fail to suggest a profound structural necessity: that the ne should come to aggregate itself to it, is not I would say what appears most remarkable to us. What appears most remarkable to us is the following: it is that by coming to aggregate itself to it, it accentuates what I would call its subjective signification.

Notice in effect, that it is not by chance that it is at the level of a "je ne sais", of a "je ne puis", of a certain category which is that of verbs that there is situated, inscribed the subjective position itself as such, that I found my example of

the isolated use of the *ne*. There is in effect a whole register of verbs whose usage is liable to make us remark that their function changes profoundly by being employed in the first or the second or the third person. If I say "je crois qu'il va pleuvoir" (I think it is going to rain) this is not distinguished from my enunciating that it is going to rain, an act of belief; I believe it is going to rain simply connotes the contingent character of my forecast. Observe that things are modified if I pass onto other persons: "tu crois qu'il va pleuvoir" (you think it is going to rain) makes much more of an appeal to something: the one to whom I am addressing myself, I am appealing to his testimony. "Il croit qu'il va pleuvoir" (he thinks it is going (11) to rain) gives more and more weight to the subject's adherence to his belief. The introduction of the *ne* will always be easy when it comes to join itself to these three pronominal supports of this verb which has here a varied function: from the beginning of the enunciative nuance up to the enunciation of a position of the subject; the weight of the *ne* will always be to bring it back towards the enunciative nuance.

"Je ne crois pas qu'il va pleuvoir", is even more linked to the character of dispositional suggestion which is mine. This may have absolutely nothing to do with a non-belief, but simply with my good mood. "I do not think that it is going to rain", "I do not think that it should rain", means that to me things do not appear to present themselves too badly.

In the same way, by joining it to two other formulations, which moreover is going to distinguish two other persons, the *ne* will tend to je-iser what is involved in the other formulae. "You do not think that it is going to rain", "he does not think that it should rain". It is indeed in so far as, it is indeed towards the *je* that they will be drawn because of the fact that it is with the addition of this little negative particle that they are here introduced into the first member of the sentence.

Does this mean that over against this we should make of the pas something which, quite brutally, connotes the pure and simple fact of privation? This would certainly be the tendency of Pichon's analysis, in so far as he finds in effect that grouping the examples gives every appearance of it. In fact, I do not (12) think so for reasons which belong first of all to the very origin of the signifier we are dealing with. No doubt, we have the historical genesis of their form of introduction into usage. Originally, "je n'y vais pas" (I am not going there) can be accentuated by a, "je n'y vais pas pas" (I am not going there at all), as I might say; "je n'y vois point" (I do not see at all): not even with a point; "je n'y trouve goutte" (I do not find anything in it), "il n'en reste mie" (nothing at all of it remains), it is indeed a matter of something which, far from being at its origin the connotation of the hole of absence well expresses on the contrary reduction, disappearance no doubt, but not completed, leaving behind it the furrow of the tiniest, the most fleeting trait.

In fact these words, easy to restore to their positive value, to

the point that they are currently employed with this value, receive indeed their negative charge from the sliding which is produced towards them of the function of the ne, and even if the ne is elided, it is indeed a matter of its charge on them in the function that it exercises. Something as one might say, of the reciprocity, let us say, of this pas and of this ne will be brought home to us by what happens when we invert their order in the enunciation of the sentence.

We say - an example from logic - "pas un homme qui ne mente" (there is no man who does not lie) in this case it is indeed the pas which opens fire. What I intend to designate here, make you grasp, is that the pas even though it opens the sentence in no way plays the same function which would be attributable to it, according to Pichon, if this were what is expressed in the following formulae: I arrive and I note: "il n'y a ici pas un chat" (there isn't a cat here). Between ourselves, allow me to point out to you in passing the illuminating, privileged, even (13) redoubling value of the very usage of such a word: not a cat. If we had to draw up the catalogue of the means of expressing negation, I would propose that we should put under this heading these type of words which become a support for negation, they do not at all fail to constitute a special category. What does a cat have to do with the question? But let us leave that for the moment.

"Pas un homme qui ne mente" shows its difference from this concert of lack, something which is at an altogether different level and which is sufficiently indicated by the usage of the subjunctive.

The "pas un homme qui ne mente" is at the same level as what motivates, what defines all the most discordant forms, to use Pichon's term, that we could attribute to the ne from the "je crains qu'il ne vienne" to the "avant qu'il ne vienne" (before he comes), to the "plus petit que je ne le croyais" (smaller than I thought he was) or again, "il y a longtemps que je ne l'ai vu" (it is a long time since I have seen him), which pose - I am saying it to you in passing - all sorts of questions which I am, for the moment, forced to leave to one side. I point out to you in passing what supports a formula like "it is a long time since I have seen him", you cannot say it in connection with someone who is dead nor with someone who has gone missing; "it is a long time since I have seen him" supposes that the next encounter is always possible.

You see the prudence with which the examination, the investigation of these terms ought to be handled and this is why, (14) at the moment of trying to expose, not the dichotomy, a general table of the different levels of negation, in which our experience brings us matrice entries which are much richer than anything that was done at the level of philosophers from Aristotle to Kant, and you know what they are called, these matrice entries: privation, frustration, castration, it is these that we are going to try to take up again in order to confront them with the signifying support of negation as we can try to

identify it.

"There is no man who does not lie", what does it suggest to us this formula, "homo mendax", this judgement, this proposition which I present to you under the typical form of universal affirmation, to which you know perhaps I already made an allusion in my first seminar of this year, in connection with the classical usage of the syllogism "all men are mortal", Socrates etc... with what I connoted in passing about its transferential function.

I believe that we can get something to approach this function of negation at the level of its original, radical usage by the consideration of the formal system of propositions as Aristotle classified them in the categories described as universal affirmative and negative and also of the particular also called negative and affirmative: AEIO.

Let us say it right away: this subject described as the opposition of propositions, the origin in Aristotle of his whole (15) analysis, of the whole mechanism of the syllogism, does not fail despite appearances to present the most numerous difficulties: to say that the developments of the most modern logistics have clarified these difficulties would certainly be to say something which the whole of history is against. On the contrary, the only thing that it can make seem astonishing, is the appearance of uniformity in the approval that these so-called Aristotelian formulae encountered up to Kant, because Kant preserved the illusion that this was an unattackable edifice.

Undoubtedly, it is not nothing to be able for example, to point out that the accentuation of their affirmative and negative function is not articulated as such in Aristotle himself and that it is much later, with Averroes probably, that their origin should be put. This is to show you moreover that things are not so simple when you try to form a judgement on them. For those who need to be reminded of the function of these propositions, I am going to recall them briefly.

"Homo mendax", since it is what I have chosen to introduce this reminder. Let us take it then: homo, and even omnis homo: "Omnis homo mendax" = every man is a liar. What is the negative formula? According to a form which is valid in many tongues: "omnis homo non mendax" may be enough. I mean that "omnis homo non mendax" means that as regards every man, it is true that he is not a liar. Nevertheless, for clarity, it is the term nullus (16) that we use: "nullus homo non mendax".

A : omnis homo mendax
universal
affirmative

E : nullus homo non mendax
universal
negative.

Here is what is usually connoted by the letters A and E respectively of the universal affirmative and the universal negative.

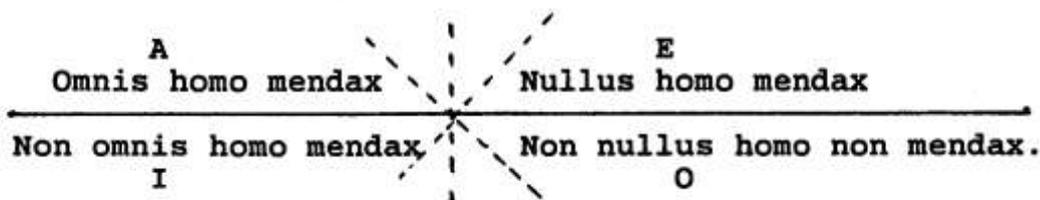
What is going to happen at the level of particular affirmatives?

Because we are interested in the negative, it is in a negative form that we are going to be able to introduce them here: "non omnis homo mendax" not every man is a liar, in other words, I choose and I note that there are men who are not liars.

In short, this does not mean that someone, aliquis, may not be a liar, aliquis homo mendax. This is the particular affirmative habitually designated in the classical notation by the letter I.

Here, the particular negative will be the "non omnis" being here resumed by "nullus",: "non nullus homo non mendax" = there is no man who is not a liar. In other words, in the whole measure that we have chosen to say that not all men were not liars (first case), this expresses in another fashion, namely that there is no (17) one who is a non-liar.

The terms organised in this way are distinguished in the classical theory by the following formulae, which put them reciprocally in what is called the position of control or of sub-control, namely that the universal propositions are opposed at their own level as not being allowed to be and not being able to be true at the same time. It cannot at the same time be true that every man can be a liar and that no man can be a liar, while all the other combinations are possible.



It cannot at the same time be false that there are men who are liars and men who are not liars.

The so-called contradictory opposition is that through which the propositions situated in each one of these quadrants are diagonally opposed in the fact that each one excludes, if it is true, the truth of the one which is opposed to it as contradictory, and being false excludes the falseness of the one which is opposed to it as contradictory.

If there are men who are liars, this is not compatible with the fact that no man is a liar. Inversely, the relationship is the same between the negative particular and the universal (18) affirmative.

What am I going to propose to you in order to make you sense what, at the level of the Aristotelian text, always presents itself as what has developed in history in terms of confusion

around the definition of the universal as such?

Observe first of all that if here I have introduced for you the non omnis homo mendax: the not all, the term not being brought to bear on the notion of the all as defining the particular, this is not because this is legitimate, because precisely Aristotle opposes it in a fashion which is contrary to all the development that was subsequently made by speculation about formal logic, namely a development, an explanation in extension making the symbolisable framework intervene by a circle, by a zone within which the objects constituting its support are assembled: Aristotle, very precisely, before the Prior Analytics, at least in the work which preceded it in the grouping of his works, but which apparently antecedes it logically, if not chronologically, which is called De interpretatione, remarks - and not without having provoked the astonishment of historians - that it is not on the qualification of universality that negation should be brought to bear. It is therefore indeed some man or other that is in question and some man or other that we ought to interrogate as such, as a liar.

The qualification therefore of omnis, of allness, of the parity of the universal category is here what is in question. Is it something that is at the same level, at the same level of existence as what can support, or not support the affirmation or (19) the negation, is there a homogeneity between the two levels? In other words, is it something that simply supposes as realised the collection involved in the difference between the universal and the particular?

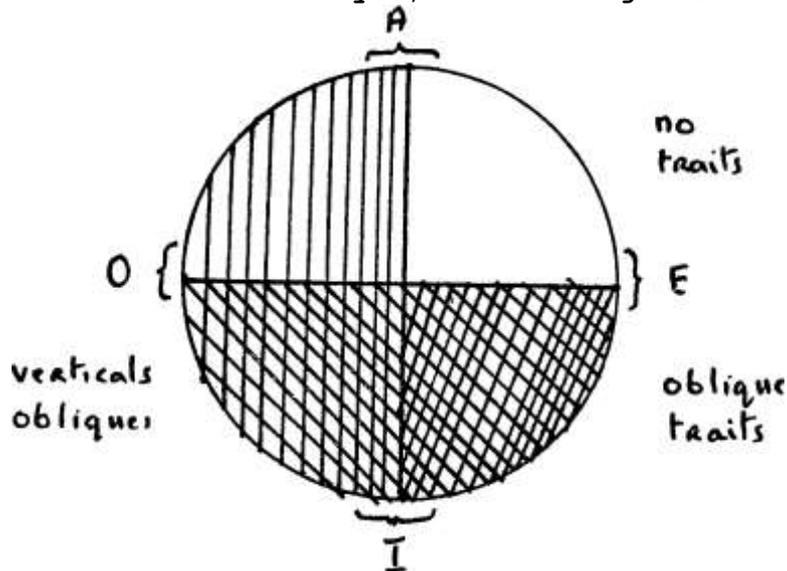
Overturning the import of what I am in the process of trying to explain to you, I am going to propose something to you, something which is designed in a way to respond to what? To the question which precisely links the definition of the subject as such to that of the order of affirmation or of negation in which it enters in the operation of this propositional division.

In the classical teaching of formal logic, it is said - and if you investigate what that goes back to, I am going to tell you, it is not without a certain piquancy - it is said that the subject is taken from the angle of quality and that the attribute that you see here incarnated by the term mendax is taken from the angle of quantity. In other words, in the one, they are all, they are several, indeed there is one of them. This is what Kant still preserves at the level of The Critique of Pure Reason in the third division. This does not fail to give rise to considerable objections on the part of linguists.

When one looks at things historically, one perceives that this quality/quantity distinction has an origin: it appears for the first time paradoxically in a little treatise about the doctrines of Plato, and this - it is on the contrary the Aristotelian enunciation of formal logic which is reproduced, in an (20) abbreviated fashion but not without a didactic emphasis, and the author is none other than Apuleius, the author of a treatise on Plato - is found to have here a singular historical function,

it is namely to have introduced a categorisation, that of quantity and of quality, of which the least one can say is that it was because it had been introduced and had remained for such a long time in the analysis of logical forms that it was introduced there.

Here in effect is the model around which I am proposing to you for today to centre your reflection. Here is a dial in which we are going to put vertical traits (subject). The trait function is going to fulfil here that of the subject and the vertical function, which is moreover chosen simply as support, that of attribute. I might well have said that I was taking the unary term as attribute but for the representative and imaginable aspect of what I have to show you, I am making them vertical.



(21) Here, we have a segment of the dial where there are vertical traits, but also oblique traits, here there are no traits. What this is designed to illustrate, is that the universal/particular distinction, in so far as it forms a couple distinct from the affirmative/negative opposition is to be considered as a completely different register from the one that with more or less skill commentators from Apuleius on, thought that they should direct in the very ambiguous sliding and confusing formulae which are called respectively quality and quantity, and to oppose it in these terms. We will call the universal/particular opposition an opposition of the order of lexis, which is for us legein; I read and moreover I choose, very exactly linked to this function of the extraction, the choice of the signifier which is for the moment, the terrain, the footbridge on which we are in the process of advancing. This to distinguish it from the phasis, namely from something which here is proposed as a word through which I engage myself as regards the existence of this something which is put in question by the first lexis. And in effect, as you are going to see, about what am I going to be able to say that everything that is vertical is true? [or: All traits are vertical.]

Naturally, about the first sector of the dial 1, but you should note also about the empty sector 2: if I say, all traits are vertical, that means that when there is no vertical, there are no traits? In any case, it is illustrated by the empty sector of the dial: not only does the empty sector not contradict, is not contrary to the affirmation: "all traits are vertical", it (22) illustrates it. There is no vertical trait in this sector of the dial.

Here the universal affirmative is illustrated then by the two first sectors. The universal negative is going to be illustrated by the two sectors on the right, but what is in question there will be formulated by the following articulation: no trait is vertical, there are not in these two sectors any traits. What is to be remarked, is the common sector 2 which includes these two propositions, which according to the formula, the classical doctrine, apparently cannot be true at the same time.

What are we going to find following our gyratory movement, which has thus begun very well here as a formula like this, to designate the two other possible 2 by 2 groupings of the dials. Here, we are going to see the truth of these two dials in an affirmative form. There are - I am saying it in a phasic (phasis) fashion: I note the existence of vertical traits - there are vertical traits, there are some vertical traits, that I can find either here, or here?

Here, if we try to define the distinction between the universal and the particular, we see which are the two sectors which correspond to the particular enunciating. Here there are non-vertical traits "non nullus, etc...".

Just as earlier, we were suspended for an instant at the ambiguity of this repetition of negation, not not is very far from being necessarily the equivalent of yes and this is (23) something to which we will have to return subsequently.

What does that mean? What interest is there for us in making use of such an apparatus? Why am I trying to detach for you this plane of the lexis from the plane of the phasis? I am going towards it immediately and not in a roundabout way. And I am going to illustrate it.

What can we say, we analysts, what does Freud teach us since the meaning of what is called a universal proposition has been completely lost, ever since precisely a formulation whose chapter-heading one can put at the Eulerian formulation which manages to represent all the functions of the syllogism for us by a series of little circles, either excluding one another, overlapping, intersecting one another in other words, and properly speaking in extension, to which there is opposed the comprehension which would be distinguished simply by some inevitable manner or other of understanding, of understanding what? That the horse is white, what is there to understand?

What we contribute to renew the question is the following: I am

saying that Freud promulgates, puts forward the following formula: the father is God or every father is God. There results, if we maintain this proposition at the universal level, the one of there is no other father but God, which on the other hand as regards existence is in Freudian reflection rather aufgehoben, rather put in suspension, indeed in radical doubt.

(24) What is involved, is that the order of function that we are introducing with the name of the father is this something which, at the same time, has its universal value, but which leaves up to you, to the other, the task of determining whether there is or not a father of this stature. If none exists, it is still true that the father is God, simply the formula is only confirmed by the empty sector of the dial, thanks to which at the level of the phasis we have: there are fathers who fulfill more or less the symbolic function that we ought to denounce as such, as being that of the name of the father, there are those who, and there are those who are not. But that there are those who are not, who are not in all cases, which is supported here by this sector 4, is exactly the same thing which gives us a basis and support for the universal function of the name of the father; for grouped with the sector in which there is nothing 2, it is precisely these two sectors taken at the level of the lexis which are found because of this, because of this supported sector which complements the other sector, which gives its full import to what we can enounce as universal affirmation.

De^h₆

I am going to illustrate it differently, because moreover, up to a certain point the question was able to be posed of its value, I mean with respect to a traditional teaching which ought to be the one that I contributed the last time concerning the small i.

(25) Here the professors are in dispute: what are we going to say? The professor, the one who teaches, should teach what? What others have taught before him, namely that he bases himself on what? On what has already undergone a certain lexis. What results from every lexis, is precisely what is important for us on this occasion, and at the level of what I am trying to sustain for you today: the letter. The professor is literate in his universal character, he is the one who bases himself on the letter at the level of a particular enunciation, we can now say that he can be half-and-half, he cannot be entirely literate. There will result from it that all the same one cannot say that any professor is illiterate, there will always be in his case a few letters.

It nevertheless remains that if, by chance, there was an angle from which we could say that there are some eventually from a certain angle who are characterised as giving rise to a certain ignorance of the letter, this would not prevent us for all that from looping the loop and from seeing that the return and the foundation, as one might say, of the universal definition of professor is very strictly in the following, it is that the identity of the formula that the professor is the one who is

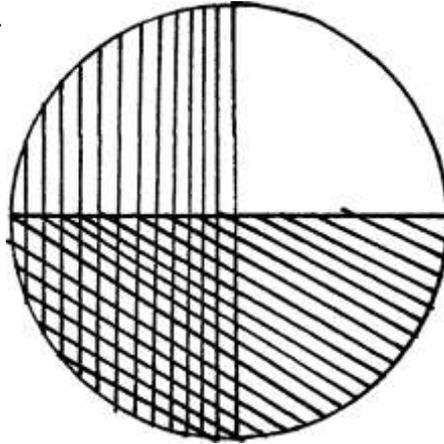
identified to the letter imposes, requires even the commentary that there can be illiterate (analphabètes) professors. The negative space 2 as essential correlative for the definition of universality is something that is profoundly hidden at the level of the primitive lexis.

This means something: in the ambiguity about the particular support that we can give in the engagement of our word to the name of the father as such, it nevertheless remains that we (26) cannot bring it about that anything which drawn up into the human atmosphere, if I can express myself in this way, is able, as one might say, to consider itself as completely disengaged from the name of the father, that even here (void) where there are only fathers for whom the function of father is, if I may express myself in this way, one of pure loss, the father who is not the father, the lost cause, on which I ended my seminar of last year, it is nevertheless in function of this collapse, with respect to a first lexis which is that of the name of the father, that this particular category is judged.

Man can only ensure that his affirmation or his negation with everything that it engages: this person here is my father, or that one is his father, is not entirely suspended from a primitive lexis of which, of course, it is not the common meaning, the signified of the father that is in question, but something to which we are here provoked to give its true support and which is legitimate even in the eyes of professors, who, as you see, would be in great danger of being always left in some suspense as regards their real function even in the eyes of professors, ought to justify me trying to give, even at their level of professors, an algorithmic support to their subject-existence as such.

All traits are vertical
 (=when there is no vertical
 there is no trait)
 All fathers are God
 (there is no other father
 but God)
 The professor bases himself
 on the letter
 There are some vertical
 traits (A.P)
 There are some fathers
 who fulfill + or - the
 symbolic function of the
 name of the father.
 The professor only
 partially

bases himself on the
 letter
 N
 There is neither
 trait, nor vertical
 name of the father
 illiterate professor
 Father not father
 Lost cause
 No trait is vertical
 Some of them do not
 exist
 No professor bases
 himself on the lexis



LEXIS

PHASIS

Seminar 9: Wednesday 24 January 1962

The important thing as far as we are concerned for the continuation of our seminar, is that what I said last evening obviously concerns the function of the object, of the little o in the identification of the subject, namely something which is not immediately within hand's reach, which is not going to be resolved immediately, of which last evening I gave, as I might say, an anticipatory indication by making use of the theme of the three caskets. This theme of the three caskets clarifies my teaching a good deal, because if you open what is bizarrely called Essais de Psychologie Appliquée and you read the article on the three caskets you will see that when all is said and done it will not fully satisfy you; you do not know very well what our father Freud is getting at. I believe that with what I told you last evening which identifies the three caskets to the demand, a theme to which, I believe, you have become accustomed for a long time, which says that in each one of these three caskets - without this there would be no riddle, there would be no problem - there is the little o, the object which in so far as it interests us analysts, but not at all necessarily - is the object which corresponds to demand. Not at all necessarily nor the contrary either, because without that there would be no difficulties. This object, is the object of desire, and where is desire? It is outside; and where it truly is, the decisive point, is you, the analyst, in so far as your desire should not be deceived about the object of the subject's desire. If this (2) were not the way things were, there would be no merit in being an analyst.

There is a something which I tell you also in passing, which is that I already put the accent before an audience which was supposed not to know on something into which I have not perhaps sufficiently put my big heavy boots here, namely that the system of the unconscious, the psi-system, is a partial system. Once again, I repudiated, obviously with more energy than motives, given that I had to go quickly, the reference to totality, which does not prevent one speaking about the partial. I insisted in this system on its extra-flat character, on its surface character which Freud insists on with all his might all the time. One cannot but be astonished that this should have engendered the metaphor of depth-psychology. It is quite by chance that a little earlier before coming here I found a note that I had taken from The ego and the id: " The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity but is itself the

projection of a surface." [SE XIX 26] It is a nothing: when one reads Freud, one always reads him in a certain fashion that I would describe as deaf.

Let us now take up again our pilgrim's staff, let us take up again where we are, where I left you the last time, namely on the idea that negation, if it is indeed somewhere at the heart of our problem which is that of the subject, is not already, immediately, even if one looks at its phenomenology, the simplest thing to handle. It is in many places, and then it happens all (3) the time that it slips through your fingers. You saw an example of it the last time, for a moment in connection with the "non nullus homo non mendax", you saw me putting in this non, taking it out and putting it back again; you see this every day. It was pointed out to me in the interval that in the discourses of the one that someone, in a note, my poor dear friend Merleau-Ponty, called the Great Man who governs us, in a discourse that the aforesaid great man pronounced one hears "on ne peut pas ne pas croire que les choses se passeront sans maF" (one cannot not think that things will happen without harm). The exegesis on this: what does he mean? The interesting thing, is not so much what he means, it is that obviously we understand very well precisely what he means and that if we analyse it logically we see that he is saying the opposite.

This is a very pretty formula which you ceaselessly slips into when you say to someone "vous n'etes pas sans ignorer" (you cannot fail to be ignorant of [to realise]). It is not you who are wrong, it is the relationship of the subject to the signifier which emerges from time to time. It is not simply tiny paradoxes, slips, that I am pinpointing here in passing. We will rediscover these formulae at the appropriate bend in the road. And I think I am giving you the key to why "you cannot fail to realise", only means what you mean. In order that you may find your bearings here, I can tell you that it is indeed by exploring it that we will find the proper weight, the proper incline of this balance on which I place before you the relationship of the neurotic to the phallic object when I tell you in order to catch this relationship, one must say: "il n'est pas sans l'avoir" (he is not without having it). This obviously does not mean that he has it. If he had it, the question would not arise.

(4) In order to get there, let us begin from a little reminder about the phenomenology of our neurotic concerning the point that we are at in it: his relationship to the signifier. For the last number of times I have begun to make you grasp the sort of writing, of original writing there is in the business of the signifier. It must really have all the same occurred to you that it is with this that the obsessed subject is dealing all the time: ungeschen machen, to undo something. What does that mean, what does that involve?

Obviously, it can be seen in his behaviour: what he wants to abolish is what the annalist writes throughout his history, the annalist - with two n's - that he has in himself. It is the annals of the affair that he would like to efface, to scratch

out, to abolish. From what angle does Lady Macbeth's discourse reach us when she tells us that all the waters of the sea would not wash away this little spot if not through some echo which guides us to the heart of our subject? Only the point is, in washing away the signifier, since it is clear that this is what is involved - in his way of behaving, in his way of effacing, in his way of scratching out what is written, what is much less clear to us, because we know a little bit more about it than the others, is what he is trying to obtain by doing that. This is why it is instructive to continue along the road that we are on, where I am leading you as regards how a signifier as such comes about. If this has such a relationship with the foundations of the subject, if no other subject is thinkable than this natural something, *x*, in as much as it is marked by the signifier, there must all the same be some source or other for that. We are not going to content ourselves with this sort of blindfolded truth. (5) It is quite clear that we must find the subject at the origin of the signifier itself; "in order to pull a rabbit out of a hat", this is how I began to spread scandal in my properly analytic remarks: the poor dear man who is now dead and who was so touching in his fragility, was literally exasperated by this reminder which I so persistently gave - because at that time it was a useful formula - that "in order to pull a rabbit out of a hat you must have put it in beforehand".

It must be the same for the signifier, and this is what justifies the definition of the signifier that I give you, its distinction from the sign: the fact is that if the sign represents something for someone, the signifier is articulated otherwise, it represents the subject for another signifier. This you will see sufficiently confirmed at every step provided you do not let go of the solid hand-rail. And if it represents the subject in this way, how is it done?

Let us come back to our starting point, to our sign, to the elective point at which we can grasp it as representing something for someone in a trace. Let us start from the track in order to track down our little affair.

A footprint, a track, Friday's footprint on Robinson's island: emotion, the heart racing before this trace. All this teaches us nothing, even if from this racing heart there results a whole lot of stamping around this trace; this could happen on coming across (6) any animal tracks but if coming on it unexpectedly I find the trace of something whose trace someone has tried to efface, or if even I no longer find the trace of this effort, if I have come back because I know - I am not any more proud of it because of that - that I left the trace, that I find that, without any correlative which allows this effacing to be attached to a general effacing of the traits of the configuration, one has well and truly effaced the trace as such, then I am sure that I am dealing with a real subject. Notice that, in this disappearance of the trace, what the subject is trying to make disappear is his own passage as a subject. The disappearance is redoubled by the disappearance that is aimed at which is that of the act itself of making disappear.

This is not a bad trait for us to recognise in it the passage of the subject when it is a question of his relationship to the signifier, in the measure that you already know that everything that I am teaching you about the structure of the subject, as we are trying to articulate it starting from this relationship to the signifier, converges towards the emergence of these moments of fading linked properly speaking to this eclipse-like pulsation of what only appears in order to disappear and reappears in order to disappear anew, which is the mark of the subject as such.

Having said this, if the trace is effaced, the subject surrounds its place with a ring (cerne) something which thenceforward concerns him; the mapping out of the place where he found the trace, well then, here you have the birth of the signifier. This implies a whole process involving the return of the last phase onto the first, that there cannot be any articulation of a signifier without these three phases. Once the signifier is (7) constituted, there are necessarily two others before. A signifier is a mark, a trace, a writing, but it cannot be read alone. Two signifiers is a bloomer, a cock-and-bull story. Three signifiers is the return of what is involved, namely of the first. It is when the pas (step) marked in the trace is transformed in the vocalisation of whoever is reading it into pas (not) that this pas, on condition that one forgets that it means the step, can serve at first in what is called the phonetics of writing, to represent pas, and at the same time to transform the trace of pas eventually into the pas of the trace.

I think that you can hear in passing the same ambiguity that I made use of when I spoke to you, in connection with the witticism, of the pas de sens, playing on the ambiguity of the word sens (meaning) with this leap, this breakthrough which takes hold of us when we start to have fun when we do not know why a word makes us laugh, this subtle transformation, this rejected stone which being taken up again becomes the cornerstone (pierre d'angle), and I would be quite happy to make a play on words with the TvR of the formula of the circle because moreover it is in it - I announced it to you the other day in introducing the minus 1 - that we will see that there is measured, as I might say, the vectorial angle of the subject with respect to the thread of the signifying chain.

It is here that we are suspended and it is here that we should habituate ourselves a little to displacing ourselves, on a substitution through which that which has a meaning is transformed into an equivocation and finds its meaning again. It is in the very syncopes of this ceaselessly turning articulation of the play of language that we have to locate the (8) subject in its diverse functions. My illustrations are never a bad way of adapting a mental eye in which the imaginary plays a great part. It is for this reason that, even if it is a detour, I do not think it's a bad thing to rapidly sketch out for you a little remark simply because I find it at this point in my notes.

I have spoken to you more than once, in connection with the signifier, about the Chinese character, and I am very keen to

dispel for you the idea that its original is an imitative figure. There is an example of it which I only took because it is the one which was of most use to me, I took the first of those which are articulated in these examples, these archaic forms in the work of Karlgren which is called Grammata Serica, which means exactly "Chinese signifiers".

The first one that he makes use of in its modern form is the following, it is the character Kho which means power. In

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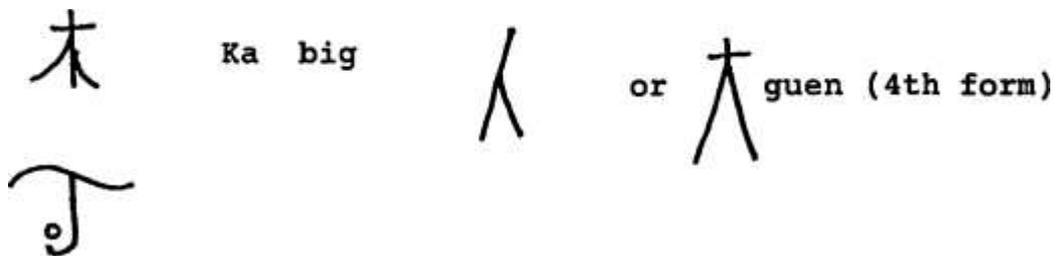
the Tch ouen which is an erudite work, precious for us both because its relatively ancient character and the fact that it is already very erudite, that is to say well furnished with interpretations which we may have to come back to. It seems that we would have good reason to trust the root that the commentator gives of it which is a very nice one, namely that it is a question of a schématisation of the shock of the column of

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air which it has just expelled in the guttural occlusive against the obstacle which the back of the tongue against the palate opposes to it. This is all the more seductive in that, if you open a book on phonetics, you (9) will find an image which is more or less that in order to express for you the functioning of the occlusive:

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And you must admit that it is not a bad thing that it should be that which was chosen in order to depict the word to see the possibility, the axial function introduced into the world by the advent of the subject right in the middle of the real. The ambiguity is complete. For a very great number of words are articulated as kho in Chinese, in which this would act for us as a phonetic, except for the fact that the complete outfit (les completes) presentifying the subject with its signifying framework, and this without any ambiguity and in all the characters, is the representation of the mouth:



 𠂇 Ka big 𠂇 or 𠂇 guen (4th form)

Put this sign on top, it is the sign Ka which means big. It has obviously some relationship with the small human form, generally deprived of arms. Here, since it is a big person that is in question, there are arms. This has nothing to do with what happens when you have added this sign ta to the preceding signifier. Henceforth this is read as i, but this preserves the trace of an ancient pronunciation of which we have attestations thanks to the usage of this term in rhymes in the ancient poems, specifically those of Che King who is one of the most extraordinary examples of literary misadventure because destiny made him become the support of all sorts of moralising lucubrations, to be the foundation of a whole very twisted teaching of the mandarins on the duties of the sovereign, of the

(10) people and of everybody and anybody, even though what we have are obviously lovesongs which have a peasant origin. A little experience of Chinese literature - I am not trying to make you believe that mine is very great, I am not confusing myself with..... who, when he makes an allusion to his experience of China, gives us a paragraph that you can find in the books of Pere Wieger which are available to everybody.

In any case, others besides myself have lit up this path specifically Marcel Granet, whose beautiful book on the dances and legends and the ancient feasts of China you will lose nothing by opening. With a little effort you will be able to familiarise yourself with this really extraordinary dimension which appears of what one can do with something which reposes on the most elementary forms of signifying articulation. By chance, in this tongue, words are monosyllabic: they are superb, invariable, cubic, you cannot make a mistake in them. They are identified to the signifier it has to be said. You have groups of four verses, each one composed of four syllables, the situation is simple. If you see them and think that from that one can extract everything even a metaphysical doctrine which has no relationship with the original signification, it will begin, for those who have not got there yet to open your spirit. That is nevertheless the way it is: for centuries the teaching of morality and of politics was carried out on the basis of jingles which signify on the whole "I would really like to have sex with you", I am not exaggerating at all, go and see.

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(11) This means i, which is given the commentary: great power, enormous. This of course has absolutely no relationship with this conjunction, i does not mean great power any more than this little word for which in French there is really nothing which satisfies us: I am forced to translate it by impair in the sense that the word impair can take on of sliding, of fault, of failure, of something which is wrong, which is not working, so nicely illustrated in English by the word odd. And as I told you earlier, this is what

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started me off on the Che King. Because of the Che King, we know that it was very close to kho, at least in this: the fact is that there was a guttural in the ancient tongue which gives the other implantation of the usage of this signifier to designate the phoneme i.

木 大
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If you add in front of it this , which is a determinant, that of the tree, and which designates everything that is wooden, you will have once things have got that far a sign which designates the chair, that is called i, and so on. It continues like that, there is no reason for it to stop. If you put here, at the place of the sign of the tree, the sign of the horse, that means to sit astride.

巨 大
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This little detour, I consider, because of its

usefulness for helping you to see that the relationship of the letter to language is not something which should be considered (12) along evolutionary lines. One does not begin from a dense, tangible origin in order to disengage from it an abstract form. There is nothing which resembles anything at all that can be conceived of as parallel to what is called the process of even only the concept of generalisation. One has a succession of alternations where the signifier comes back to strike, as I might say the flowing stream with the flails of its mill, its wheel raising up each time something streaming, in order to fall back again, to enrich itself, to complicate itself, without us ever being able at any moment to grasp what dominates in terms of the concrete starting point or of equivocation.

Here is what is going to lead you to the point where today the step that I have to get you to take, a great part of the illusions which bring us to a sharp halt, imaginary adhesions, of which we can say that it does not matter that everybody remains with their feet stuck in them like flies, but not analysts, is very precisely linked to what I would call the illusions of formal logic. Formal logic is a very useful science, in terms of the idea of it that I tried to highlight for you the last time, on condition that you perceive that it perverts you in the sense that because it is formal logic it should prevent you at every moment from giving the least meaning to it. That of course is what with time people came to. But I can assure you that this gives the very serious, courageous, honest men of symbolic logic who have been known for fifty years all sorts of trouble because it is not easy to construct a logic as it ought to be if it really answers to its title of formal logic, by basing oneself strictly on nothing but the signifier, by forbidding oneself (13) every relationship and therefore every intuitive support upon what may arise from the signified - in the case that we make mistakes in general it is on this that we take our bearings. I reason wrongly because in this case, something or other would result: my grandmother with her head upside down. What does that matter to us? In general we are not guided by this because we are very intuitive; if one does formal logic, one cannot but be.

Now the amusing thing is that the basic book of a symbolic logic, encompassing all the needs of mathematical creation, the Principia Mathematica of Bertrand Russell almost gets to this goal: they stop considering as a contradiction which would put in question the whole of mathematical logic, this paradox which is called that of Bertrand Russell the bias of which strikes at the value of what is called set theory. How is a set to be distinguished from a definition of class, the matter remains ambiguous because, what I am going to tell you and what is admitted by every mathematician, is namely that what distinguishes a set from a class, is nothing other than that the set will be defined by formulae which are called axioms, which will be posed on the blackboard in symbols reduced to letters to which there are joined some supplementary signifiers indicating relationships.

(14) There is absolutely no other specification of this logic which is called symbolic compared to traditional logic, except this reduction to these letters, I guarantee that you can believe me, without my going any further into examples. What then is the virtue, which must necessarily be somewhere, that it should be because of this single difference that there were able to be developed a pile of consequences whose incidence I assure you in the development of something which is called mathematics is not slight compared to the apparatus which was at peoples' disposal for centuries and the compliment paid to it of not having budged between Aristotle and Kant is turned against it. It is a good thing, if all the same things have begun to scoot along as they have done - because the Principia Mathematica comprises two big volumes and they are only of very slight interest - but after all (15) if the compliment is turned against itself, it is indeed because the previous apparatus for whatever reason it may be was found to be singularly stagnant.

So then, starting from there, how do the authors come to be astonished at what is called Russell's paradox?

Here is Russell's paradox: people speak about the set of all the sets which do not include themselves. I must clarify a little this story which may appear dry to you at a first approach. I indicate it to you right away. If I interest you in it, at least I hope, it is with this aim that it has the closest relationship - and not simply a homonymic one, precisely because it is a matter of a signifier and that consequently it is a matter of not understanding - with the position of the analytic subject, in so far as he also, in another sense of the word understand and if I tell you not to understand it is in order that you may understand in all the ways that he also does not include himself.
[Comprehendre = to include or to understand]

To go through this is not useless, as you are going to see, because by taking this route we are going to be able to criticize the function of our object. But let us pause for a moment at these sets which do not include themselves. It is necessary obviously to conceive of what is in question to begin with, because in communication we cannot all the same not concede intuitive references to ourselves, because you already have the intuitive references. They must then be upset in order to put others in their place. Since you have the idea that there is a class and that there is a mammal class, it is necessary all the (16) same that I should try to indicate to you that it is necessary to refer oneself to something else. When one enters into the category of sets, it is necessary to refer oneself to the library classification which some people are so fond of, a classification composed of decimals or something else; but when one has something written, it has to be put somewhere, one must know automatically how to find it. So then, let us take a set which includes itself, let us take for example the study of humanities in a library classification. It is clear that it will have to be put within the works of humanists about the humanities; the set of the study of humanities ought to include all the works concerning the study of humanities as such.

But considering now the sets which do not include themselves; this is no less conceivable, it is even the most ordinary case. And since we are set theorists and since there are already a class of sets which include themselves, there is really no objection to us making the opposite class - I am using class here because it is indeed here that the ambiguity is going to reside: the class of sets which do not include themselves, the set of all the sets which do not include themselves. And it is here that the logicians begin to rack their brains, namely that they say to themselves: this set of all the sets which do not include themselves, does it include itself or does it not include itself? In one case or the other it is going to collapse into contradiction. Because if, as it might appear, it includes (17) itself, we find ourselves in contradiction with the start which said that it was a question of sets which did not include themselves. On the other hand, if it does not include itself, how can we except it precisely from what is given by this definition, namely that it does not include itself?

This may seem rather naive to you, but the fact that this strikes, to the extent that it brings them to a halt, logicians who are precisely not the kind of people to pause at a stupid difficulty, and if they sense there something that they can call a contradiction putting their whole edifice in question, it is indeed because there is something that ought to be resolved and which concerns, if you will listen carefully to me, nothing other than the following, which concerns the only thing that the logicians in question do not exactly have in view, namely that the letter that they make use of is something which has in itself powers, a mainspring, to which they do not seem to be at all completely accustomed. Because if we illustrate this as an application of our statement that it is a matter of nothing other than the systematic usage of a letter, to reduce, to reserve for the letter its signifying function in order to make there repose on it, and on it alone, the whole logical edifice, we arrive at this very simple thing that it is altogether and quite simply, that this comes back to what happens when we charge the letter a, for example, if we set about speculating on the alphabet, with representing as letter a all the other letters of the alphabet.

It must be one thing or the other: either we enumerate the other letters of the alphabet from b to z, which means that the letter (18) a will represent them unambiguously without for all that being included itself; but it is clear that on the other hand, representing these letters of the alphabet qua letter, it comes quite naturally I would not even say to enrich but to complete at the place from which we have withdrawn, excluded it, the series of letters, and simply by the fact that, if we begin from the fact that a - this is our starting point as regards identification - fundamentally is not at all a, there is no difficulty here, the letter a, inside the parenthesis in which there are oriented all the letters that it has symbolically subsumed, is not the same a and is at the same time the same.

There is no difficulty of any kind here, there should all the less be any since those who see one are precisely those who

invented the notion of set in order to face up to the deficiencies of the notion of class and as a consequence suspect that there must be something else in the function of the set than there is in the function of the class.

But this interests us because what does that mean?

As I indicated to you last evening, the metonymical object of desire, the one which in every object represents this elective little o, in which the subject loses himself, when this object comes to metaphorical birth, when we come to substitute it for the subject who, in the demand has a syncope, has fainted, no trace: S, we reveal the signifier of this subject, we give it its name: the good object. The mother's breast, the mamma, here is the metaphor in which, let us say, there are caught up all the (19) articulated identifications of the subject's demand; his demand is oral, it is the mother's breast which takes them up into its parenthesis it is the A which gives their value to all these unities which are going to be added together in the signifying chain: A (+ I + I + I).

The question that we have to pose, is to establish the difference between this usage that we are making of the mamma and the function that it takes on by the definition, for example, of the mammal class. The mammal is recognised by the fact that it has mammae. Between ourselves it is rather strange that we are so little informed about what in fact is effectively done with them in each species. The ethology of mammals is still very much behind because we are, on this subject as in formal logic, more or less no further than the level of Aristotle (the excellent work Historia Animalium). But for us, what does it mean for us to say the signifier mamma in so far as it is the object around which we substantify the subject in a certain type of relations described as pregenital?

It is quite clear that we make a completely different use of it, much closer to the manipulation of the letter E in our set paradox, and in order to show it to you, I am going to show you the following: A (+ 1 + 1 + 1) the fact is that among these ones of the demand whose concrete significance we have revealed, is there or is there not the breast itself? In other words, when we speak about oral fixation, the latent breast, the present one, the one after which your subject goes ah, ah, ah, is it mammary? (20) It is quite obvious that it is not because your oral types who adore breasts, adore breasts because breasts are a phallus. And it is even because of that that it is possible for the breast to be also a phallus, for Melanie Klein to make it immediately appear, just as quickly as the breast, from the beginning, telling us that after all it is a little breast that is more convenient, more portable, nicer.

You see clearly that to pose these structural distinctions can lead us somewhere, in the measure that the repressed breast re-emerges, appears again in the symptom, or even simply in something that we have not qualified otherwise: the function on the ladder of perversity of producing this something else which

is the evocation of the object phallus.

This is written as follows:

$$\frac{\$}{\text{breast}} \swarrow \text{breast } (o) \\ \text{phallus}$$

What is the o ? Let us put in its place the little ping-pong ball, namely nothing, anything at all, any support whatsoever of the alternating operation of the subject in the Fort-Da. There you see that it is strictly speaking a question of nothing other than the passage of the phallus from $o+$ to $o-$ and that in this way we see in the identification relationship, because we know that in what the subject assimilates it is him in his frustration, we know that the relationship of $\$$ to this $\frac{1}{A}$, he the 1 qua assuming the signification of the Other as such, has the closest relationship to the realisation of alternation.

$$(o \times - o)$$

(21) This product of o by $-o$, which formally gives a minus o squared: $-o^1$, we will get closer to why negation is irreducible: when there is affirmation and negation, the affirmation of the negation gives a negation, the negation of the affirmation also - we see there being highlighted here in this very formula of $-o^1$. we rediscover the necessity of the bringing

$$\sqrt{-1}$$

into play at the root of this product of the root of -1 ,

What is involved is not simply the presence or the absence of small o , but the conjunction of the two, the cut. It is the disjunction between the o and the $-o$ that is involved, and it is here that the subject comes to take up his dwelling as such, that identification has to be made with this something which is the object of desire. It is for this reason that the point to which, as you will see, I led you today is an articulation which will be of use to you in what follows.

Next seminar 21/2/62.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 21 February 1962

I left you the last time with the apprehension of a paradox concerning the modes of appearance of the object. This thematic starting from the object qua metonymical was questioning itself about what we are doing when we make this metonymical object appear as a common factor of this line.

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This line, which is called that of the signifier, whose place I designated by that of the numerator in the great Saussurian fraction: signifier over signified, this is what we were doing when we made it appear as a signifier, when we designated this object as the object of the oral drive, for example. As this new type designated the genus of the object, in order to make you grasp it, I showed you the new element contributed to logic by the mode in which the signifier is used in mathematics, in set theory, a mode which is precisely unthinkable if we do not put in the forefront of it as constitutive this famous paradox called Russell's paradox. In order to make you put your finger on what I have started from, namely the signifier as such is not alone not subject to what is called the law of contradiction, but is even properly speaking its support, namely that the a is usable as a signifier in so far as a is not a; from which it resulted that the object of the (2) oral drive in so far as we consider it as the primordial breast, in connection with this generic mamma of analytic objectalisation, the question could be posed: in these conditions is the real breast mammary? I told you no, as is quite obvious, since in the whole measure that the breast is found to be eroticised in oral eroticism, it is in so far as it is something completely different to a breast, as you know well, and someone after a class, came up to me saying: in that case is the phallus phallic?

What has to be said, is that it is in so far as the signifier phallus is what comes at a certain stage as a factor revealing the meaning of the signifying function, it is in so far as the phallus comes to the same place in the symbolic function where the breast was and in so far as the subject is constituted as phallic that the penis, which for its part is the inside of the parenthesis of the set of objects which for the subject have arrived at the phallic stage, that the penis, one can say, not alone is not any more phallic than the breast is mammary, [but] that things are posed much more seriously, namely that the penis-part of the real body, falls under the influence of this

threat which is called castration.

It is because of the signifying function of the phallus as such that the real penis falls under the influence of what was first understood in analytic experience as a threat namely the threat of castration.

(3) Here therefore is the path on which I am leading you. I am showing you here its goal and its aims. It is now a question of going along it step by step, in other words of rejoining what since our beginning this year, I am preparing and approaching little by little, namely the privileged function of the phallus in the identification of the subject.

Let us understand carefully that in all this, namely the fact that this year we are talking about identification, it is namely because of the fact that from a certain moment of the Freudian work, the question of identification comes into the foreground, comes to dominate, comes to remodel the whole Freudian theory. It is in so far - one blushes almost to have to say it - that from a certain moment, for us after Freud, for Freud before us, the question of the subject is posed as such, namely who, who is there, who is functioning, who is speaking, who is a lot of other things as well and it is in so far as it might well have been expected in a technique which is a technique generally speaking of communication, of speaking to one another, and in a word of relating: it was all the same necessary to know who is speaking to whom.

It is indeed for this reason that this year we are doing logic. I cannot do anything about it: it is not a question of knowing whether this pleases me or whether it displeases me. It does not displease me, it may not please others. But what is certain is that it is inevitable. It is a question of knowing what logic this draws us into. You were well able to see that already I (4) have shown you - I strive to take as many shortcuts as possible, I assure you that I am not playing truant - where we situate ourselves with respect to formal logic and undoubtedly it is not that we do not have our own word to say about it.

I remind you of the little dial which I constructed for your use and to which we will perhaps have occasion to return on more than one occasion unless, because of the speed that we are forced to go in order to arrive at our goal this year, it is to remain for some months or some years yet a proposition left hanging for the ingenuity of those who take the trouble to go back on what I am teaching you.

But surely it is not only formal logic that is involved. Is it a matter - and this is what is called ever since Kant, I mean in a well constituted fashion since Kant a transcendental logic, in other words the logic of the concept? Surely not that either. It is even rather striking to see the degree to which the notion of concept is apparently absent from the functioning of our categories.

What we are doing, it is not worth the effort of giving ourselves a lot of trouble for the moment in order to pinpoint it more precisely, is a logic of which at first some said that I tried to construct a sort of elastic logic. But after all, this is not (5) enough to constitute something very reassuring for the spirit. We are constructing a logic of the functioning of the signifier, for without this reference constituted as primary, fundamental, of the relationship of the subject to the signifier, and what I am putting forward is that it is properly speaking unthinkable even for one to situate the error in which the whole of analysis progressively became engaged and which is caused precisely by the fact that it did not carry out this critique of transcendental logic that is strictly required by the new facts that it brings forward.

This - I am going to tell you its secret which has not in itself any historical importance but I think I can all the same communicate it to you as a stimulus - this led me, for a long or a short time according to whether I was separated from you and from our weekly encounters, led me to put my nose again, not at all as I did two years ago into the Critique of Practical Reason but into the Critique of Pure Reason. Since it happened by chance that I had through forgetfulness only brought my German copy, I did not reread it completely, but only the chapter called "The introduction to the transcendental analytic", and while deploring that the ten or so years during which I have been addressing myself to you have not had, I believe, much effect as regards the propagation among you of the study of German, which never fails to astonish me, which is one of these little facts which makes me sometimes reflect my own image to myself as being like that of the personage in a well known Surrealist film called Le Chien Andalou, the image of a man who with the help of two (6) ropes, drags behind him a piano on which there repose (no allusion meant) two dead donkeys. That aside, let those at least who already know German not hesitate to re-open the chapter that I am designating for them of the Critique of Pure Reason. This will certainly help them to centre correctly the kind of reversal that I am trying to articulate for you this year.

I think I can very simply recall to you that its essence depends on the radically other, excentric fashion in which I am trying to make you understand a notion which is the one that dominates the whole structuring of the categories in Kant. This is why he is only putting the purified full-stop, the completed story, the final full-stop to what dominated philosophical thought until here in some sort of way he completes it: the function of Einheit, which is the foundation of every synthesis, of the a priori synthesis, as he puts it, and which seems in effect to impose itself from the time of its progression in Platonic mythology as the necessary path: the One, the big 1 which dominates all thinking from Plato to Kant, the One which for Kant, qua synthetic function, is the very model of what in every a priori category brings with it, he says, the function of a norm, to be understood as a universal rule. Well then, let us say, to add its tangible point to what, since the beginning of this year, I have been articulating for you that if it is true

that the function of the One in identification, as the analysis of Freudian experience structures and decomposes it, is that, not of Einheit, but what I tried to make you sense concretely since (7) the beginning of the year, as the original accent of what I called for you the unary trait, namely something completely different to the circle which gathers together, at which in short there ends up at a summary level of imaginary intuition all logical formalisation, not the circle, but something completely different: namely what I called for you a 1: this trait, this unsituatable thing, this aporia of thinking which consists in the fact that precisely it is all the more purified, simplified, reduced to anything whatsoever with a sufficient abatement of its appendices, can end up by reducing itself to that: a 1; what is essential in it, what constitutes the originality of this, of the existence of this unary trait and of its function and how it is introduced is precisely what I am leaving in suspense, because it is not so clear that it is through man, it is possible from a certain angle, in any case put in question by us that it is from there that man emerged.

Therefore, the paradox of this One is precisely the following: it is that the more it resembles, I mean the more everything which belongs to the diversity of appearances is effaced from it, the more it supports, the more it incarnates I would say, if you will allow me this word, difference as such.

The reversal of the position around the One means that from the Kantian Einheit, we consider that we pass to Einzigkeit to unicity expressed as such. If it is through this, as I might say, that I am trying, to borrow an expression from a title that I hope is celebrated for you, from a literary improvisation by Picasso if it is through this that I chose this year to try to do what I believe I am trying to get you to do, namely to catch (8) desire by the tail, if it is in this way, namely not by the first form of identification defined by Freud, which is not easy to handle, that of the Einverleibung, that of the consumption of the enemy, of the adversary, of the father, if I started from the second form of identification, namely from this function of the unary trait, it is obviously with this goal in mind; but you see where the reversal is, it is that this function, (I believe that it is the best term for us to take because it is the most abstract, it is the most supple, it is properly speaking the most signifying, it is simply a big F) if the function that we are giving to the One is no longer that of Einheit but that of Einzigkeit, it is because we have passed - this is something that all the same we would do well not to forget, which is the novelty of analysis - from the virtues of the norm to the virtues of the exception. Something which you have remembered all the same a little bit and with good reason: the tension of the thinking which accommodates itself to it by saying: "the exception confirms the rule". Like a lot of idiocies it is a profound idioy. It is enough simply to know how to tease it out. If I I had done nothing other than to take up again this quite luminous idioy like one of these little search-lights that one sees on top of police cars it would already be a little gain on the plane of logic.

But obviously it is a lateral benefit. You will see this, especially if some of you, perhaps some of you might go so far as to devote themselves, even to the point of giving in my place someday a little resume of the way in which the Kantian analytic would have to be repunctuated. You may well imagine that there (9) are the beginnings of all that: when Kant distinguishes universal judgement and particular judgement and when he isolates singular judgement by showing in it the profound affinities with universal judgement - I can say what everybody had perceived before him - but in showing that it is not enough to gather them together in so far as the singular judgement has indeed its independence, there is here something like a tooting stone, the beginnings of this reversal that I am speaking to you about.

This is only an example.

There are many other things which initiate this reversal in Kant. What is curious, is that it had not been done even earlier. It is obvious that what I was alluding to in passing, the time before last, namely the aspect which scandalised so much Mr Jespersen the linguist - which proves that the linguists are not at all provided with any infallibility - namely that there is some paradox in the fact that Kant put negation under the rubric of categories designating qualities, namely as a second moment as one might say, of the categories of quality, the first being reality, the second being negation and the third being limitation.

This thing which surprises and which it surprises us that it should surprise so much this linguist, namely Mr Jespersen, in this very long work on negation that he published in the annals of the Danish Academy. One is all the more surprised that this long article on negation is precisely written, in short, from one (10) end to the other, to show us that linguistically negation is something which can only be sustained by - as I might say - a perpetual overbidding. It is therefore not such a simple thing to put it under the rubric of quantity where it might be confused purely and simply with what it is in quantity, namely zero.

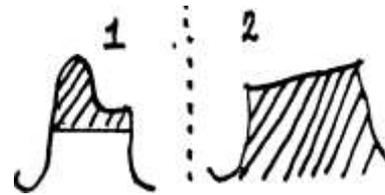
But precisely I have already given you enough indications about this; I give the reference to those who are interested by this: the big work of Jespersen is really something considerable, but if you open the dictionary of Latin etymology by Ernout and Meillet and consult simply the article ne you will understand the historical complexity of the problem of the functioning of negation, namely this profound ambiguity which brings it about that after having been this primitive function of discordance on which I have insisted as well as on its original nature, it is always necessary that it should support itself on something which is precisely this nature of the One in the way that we are trying to get closer to it here that linguistically negation is never a zero, but a not one to the point that the Latin sed non for example, to illustrate what you can find in this work published by the Danish Academy during the war of 1914 - and for that reason very difficult to find - the Latin non itself which seems to be the simplest form of negation in the world is already

an ne oinon, oinon, in the form of unum. It is already a not one and after a certain time, one forgets that it is a not one and a one is put after it again, and the whole history of negation is the history of this consumption by something which is where? It (11) is precisely what we are trying to get close to: the function of the subject as such.

It is for this reason that Pichón's remarks are very interesting because they show us that in French, one sees the two elements of negation operating so well, the relationship of the ne with the pas, that one could say that French in effect has this privilege, not unique moreover among other tongues, of showing that there is no veritable negation in French. What is curious moreover, is that they do not see that if this is the way things are, it should go a little bit further than the field of the French domain, if one can express oneself in that way. It is, in effect, very easy in all sorts of forms to understand that it is necessarily the same everywhere given that the function of the subject is not suspended at its root on the diversity of tongues. It is very easy to see that the not at a certain moment of the evolution of the English language is something like naught.

Let us go back in order that I may reassure you that we are not losing our goal. Let us begin again from last year from Socrates, from Alcibiades and from the whole clique who, I hope, provided a little diversion for you at that stage. It is a matter of connecting this logical reversal about the function of 1 with something with which we have been dealing with for a long time, namely desire; since because of the time that I have not spoken to you about it it is possible that things have become a little bit vague, I am going to give a little reminder which I believe it is just the moment to give in this presentation, this (12) year. As regards the following - as you remember, it is a discursive fact, that it was in this way that I introduced the question of identification last year, it was properly speaking, when I tackled what ought to be constituted for us about the narcissistic relationship as a consequence of the equivalence put forward by Freud between narcissistic libido and object libido. You know how I symbolised it at the time: a little intuitive schema, I mean something which is represented, a schema, not a schema in the Kantian sense. Kant is a very good reference. In French it is dull. M M have accomplished all the same quite a feat by turning the reading of The Critique of Pure Reason, which it is absolutely not unthinkable to say that from a certain angle can be read as an erotic book, into something absolutely monotonous and dusty. Perhaps thanks to my commentaries, you will manage, even in French, to restore to it this sort of spice that it is not exaggerated to say it involves. In any case, I had always allowed myself to be persuaded that it was badly written in German, because first of all the Germans, with certain exceptions have the reputation of writing badly, it is not true: The Critique of Pure Reason is written as well as Freud's books - and that is no small thing.

The schema is the following: subject



It concerned what Freud speaks to us about at this level of the "Introduction to narcissism" namely that we love the other from the same humid substance as the one of which we are the (13) reservoir, which is called libido, and that it is in so far as it is here that it can be there (see the schema) namely surrounding, swamping, wetting the object in front. The referring of love to humidity does not come from me, it is in the Symposium which we gave a commentary on last year.

The moral is: this metaphysics of love - because this is what is involved - the fundamental element of Liebesbedingung, of the condition of love, the moral is: in a certain sense I only love - what is called loving, what we call here loving, there is also the matter of what exists as a remainder beyond love, therefore what is called loving in a certain fashion - I only love my body, even when I transfer this love onto the body of the other. Of course a good amount of it still remains on my own. It is even indispensable, up to a certain point, even if only in the extreme case of what must of course function autoerotically, namely my penis, to take for simplicity the androcentric point of view. There is no problem about this simplification, as you will see, because this is not what interests us.

What interests us is the phallus. Now, I proposed to you implicitly, if not explicitly in the sense that it is even more explicit now than last year, I proposed to you to define with respect to what I love in the other who for his part is subject to this hydraulic condition of the equivalence of the libido, namely that when it increases on one side, it increases also on the other, what I desire, what is different in what I experience, (14) is what in the form of pure reflection of what remains invested of me whatever the circumstances is precisely what is lacking to the body of the other in so far as it is constituted from the point of view of desire by this impregnation of the humidity of love, at the level of desire, this body of the other, at least however little I love it, only takes on a value precisely from what it lacks, and it is very precisely for that reason that I was going to say that heterosexuality is possible, because we have to understand one another.

If it is true, as analysis teaches us, that it is the fact that the woman is effectively castrated from the penile point of view which frightens some people, if what we say there is not at all nonsensical - and it is not at all nonsensical because it is obvious, one meets it at every turn in neurotics - I insist: I am saying that it is well and truly there that we have discovered it, I mean that we are sure because it is there that the mechanisms operate with such subtlety that there is no other hypothesis possible to explain the way in which the neurotic establishes, constitutes his hysterical or obsessional desire.

Which will lead me this year to articulate completely for you the meaning of the desire of the hysteric as well as that of the

obsessional, and very quickly, because I would say that up to a certain point, it is urgent. If this how things are, it is even more conscious in the homosexual than in the neurotic: the homosexual tells you himself because it has all the same a very painful effect on him to be confronted with this being without a penis. It is precisely because of this that we cannot trust it all that much and moreover, we are right. It is for this reason that I take my reference from the neurotic.

(15) All this having been said, it remains indeed that there are still all the same quite a few people whom that does not frighten and that, as a consequence, it is not crazy - let us say simply, I am forced to tackle the thing like that, since after all, nobody has said it like that, when I will have said it two or three times to you, I think that this will end up by becoming quite obvious to you - it is not crazy to think that in the case of the beings who cannot have a normal, satisfying relationship I mean of desire with the partner of the opposite sex: not alone does it not frighten him, but it is precisely this which is interesting namely that it is not because the penis is not there that the phallus is not there. I would even say on the contrary. Which allows there to be rediscovered at a number of crossroads this in particular that what desire seeks is less the desirable in the other than the desiring, namely what is lacking in him, and there again I would ask you to recall that it is the first aporia, the first abc of the question, as it begins to be articulated when you open this famous Symposium which seems to have traversed the centuries only for the theology that can be constructed around it. I am trying to make something else of it, namely to make you grasp that on every line, what is spoken of effectively is what is in question, namely Eros.

I desire the other as desiring and when I say as desiring, I did not even say, I deliberately did not say as desiring me: because it is I who desire, and desiring desire, this desire could only be desire for me if I rediscover myself at this turning point (16) where of course I am, namely if I love myself in the other, in other words if it is myself that I love.

But then, I am abandoning desire. What I am in the process of accentuating, is this limit, this frontier which separates desire from love: which does not mean, of course, that they do not condition it in all sorts of ways - this is even the whole drama here - as I think ought to be the first remark that you should make to yourselves about your experience as an analyst, it being well understood that it happens as it does to many other subjects at this level of human reality and that it is often the common man who is closest to what I would call on this occasion the bone. What is to be desired is obviously always what is lacking, and it is indeed for that reason that in French desire is called desiderium which means regrets.

And this also connects up with what I accentuated last year as being the point always aimed at by the ethics of the passions, which is to bring about, I am not saying this synthesis, but this conjunction regarding which it is a question of knowing whether

precisely it is not structurally impossible, if it does not remain an ideal point outside the limits of the working drawing, which I called the metaphor of true love, which is the famous equation: $\frac{\text{ERON}}{\text{εΑΟΜΕΝΟΝ}}$ the eron substituting himself, the désirer

substituting himself for the desired at this point, and through this metaphor equivalent to the perfection of the lover as it is also articulated in the Symposium, namely this reversal of this (17) whole property of what one could call: the naturally loveable, the heartbreak in love which puts everything that can be desirable in itself outside the range of lovingness, as I might say, this noli me amare, which is the true secret, the true final word of the ideal passion of this courtly love whose term, which has so little to do with the present, I placed for very good reasons, I mean however confusing it has become, at the horizon of what I articulated last year, preferring to substitute for it as more present, more exemplary this order of experience, for its part not at all ideal, but perfectly accessible, which is our own under the name of transference and which I illustrated for you, already showed, illustrated in the Symposium under this quite paradoxical form of a properly speaking analytic interpretation by Socrates after the long mad exhibitionistic declaration, indeed, the analytic rule applied at full tilt to the discourse of Alcibiades.

No doubt, you have been able to retain the irony implicitly contained in something which is not hidden in the text, which is that the one whom Socrates desires at the time for the beauty of the demonstration is Agathon, in other words, the deconograph, the pure spirit, the one who speaks about love in the way in which one ought no doubt speak about it by comparing it to peace on the waves, in a frankly comic tone, but without doing it deliberately, and even without noticing it.

In other words what does Socrates mean?

Why would Socrates not love Agathon if precisely stupidity, like (18) M Teste, is precisely what he is lacking. Stupidity is not my strong point, it is a teaching, because that means - and this then is articulated literally - to Alcibiades: "my dear friend, talk on, because it is him that you also love". It is for Agathon this whole long discourse. Only, the difference, is that you for your part do not know what is in question: your strength, your mastery, your riches lead you astray, and in effect, we know enough about the life of Alcibiades to know that few things were lacking to him in the most extreme order of what one can have. In his own way very different to that of Socrates, he also was nowhere. Received moreover with open arms wherever he went, people always too happy to make such an acquisition. A certain atopia was his lot. He himself was too much of a burden. When he came to Sparta, he found simply that he was doing a great honour to the King of Sparta - this is reported in Plutarch, clearly articulated - by having a child with his wife for example, this to give you the style of the man, this is the least of it, there are some really hard men around.

But for Socrates, the important thing is not there. The important thing is to say: "Alcibiades, pay a bit more attention to your soul", which, believe me, I am well convinced of it, has not at all the same meaning in Socrates that it took on after the Platonic development of the notion of the one. If Socrates responds to him "I know nothing, except, perhaps about the nature of Eros", it is indeed because the outstanding function of Socrates was to have been the first to have conceived what the true nature of desire was.

(19) And it is exactly for that reason that beginning from this revelation up to Freud, desire as such in its function, desire qua the very essence of man as Spinoza says - and everyone knows what that means, man in Spinoza, is the subject, is the essence of the subject - that desire remained throughout this respectable number of centuries a function that is half, three quarters, four fifths hidden in the history of knowledge.

The subject involved, the one whose track we are following is the subject of desire and not the subject of love for the simple reason that one is not the subject of love: one is ordinarily, one is normally its victim, it is completely different.

In other words, love is a natural force, this is what justifies what is called Freud's zoological point of view. Love, is a reality, it is for this reason moreover that I tell you "the Gods are real". Love is Aphrodite who strikes. It was very well known in antiquity. This astonished nobody.

You will allow me a very nice play on words. It is one of my most divine obsessionals who produced for me a few days ago: "l'affreux doute de l'Hermaphrodite" (the awful doubt of the Hermaphrodite). I mean that I can do nothing less than think about it since obviously things have happened which have made us slide from Aphrodite to awful doubt.

(20) I mean: there is much to be said in favour of Christianity, I could not support it too much and especially as regards the disengaging of desire as such.

I do not want to deflower the subject too much, but I am determined on this point to put all sorts of considerations before you. That all the same to obtain this most praiseworthy of ends, this poor love should have been put in the position of becoming a commandment, is all the same to have dearly paid for the inauguration of this research, which is that of desire.

We of course, all the same, as analysts, should know how to summarise a little bit the question about the subject, that what we have well and truly advanced about love, is that it is the source of all evil. That makes you laugh. The least conversation is there to demonstrate to you that the love of the mother is the cause of everything. I am not saying that one is always right, but it is all the same on this path that we do our roundabout every day. It is what results from our daily experience.

Therefore, it is well posed that as regards the research into what the subject is in analysis, namely what one should identify him to, even if it were only in an alternating fashion, it could not be other than one of desire.

It is here that I will leave you today, not without pointing out to you that even though, of course, we are in a position to do it (21) much better than it was done by the thinker that I am going to name, we are not so much in no-man's-land.

I mean that immediately after Kant, there is someone who noticed it who was called Hegel whose whole Phenomenology of the Spirit starts from this, from Begierde. He made only one mistake, which is to have had no knowledge, even though one could designate its place, of what the mirror stage was.

Hence this irreducible confusion which puts everything under the angle of the relationship of the master and the slave and which makes this approach inoperative and makes it necessary to take up everything from there.

Let us hope, as regards ourselves, that encouraged by the genius of our master, we can complete in a more satisfactory fashion the question of the subject of desire.

Seminar 11: Wednesday 28 February 1962

People may find that I am busying myself here a little bit too much with what are called - God's curse on the name - the great philosophers. The fact is that perhaps not they alone, but they in an eminent way, articulate what one may well call a pathetic research because it always returns, if one knows how to consider it throughout all its detours, its more or less sublime objects, to this radical knot that I am trying to undo for you namely desire; it is to this that I hope, by enquiring into it if you are willing to follow me, to restore decisively its property as an unsurpassable point, unsurpassable in the very sense that I mean when I tell you that each one of those who can be described by this name of great philosopher cannot be surpassed on a certain point.

I believe that I have the right to confront myself, with your assistance, with such a task in so far as desire is our business as psychoanalysts. I believe that I am also required to stick to it and to ask you to do so with me because it is only by rectifying our perspective on desire that we can maintain analytic technique in its primary function, the word primary needing to be understood in the sense of what appeared first historically - there was no doubt about it at the beginning -: a truth function. Naturally, this is what encourages us to interrogate this function at a more radical level; this is the (2) one that I am trying to show you by articulating for you the following, which is at the basis of analytic experience, that we are enslaved as men, I mean as desiring beings, whether we know it or not, whether we think we want it or not to this truth function. Because, do I have to remind you that the conflicts, the impasses, which are the raw material of our press, can only be objectified by making intervene in their operation the place of the subject as such, qua bound as subject into the structure of the experience. This is the meaning of identification in so far as it is defined as such by Freud.

Nothing is more precise, nothing is more demanding than the calculation of the subjective conjuncture when one has found what I can call in the proper sense of the term, the sense in which it is employed in Kant, its practical reason. I prefer to call it that than to say the operational bias, because of what the term operational implies for some time now: a sort of avoidance of what is fundamental. Remember on this point what I taught you two years ago about this practical reason in so far as it involves desire. Sade is closer than Kant, even though Sade,

almost mad, as one might say, about his vision, cannot be understood except by being on this occasion referred to Kant's measure in the way I tried to do it.

Remember what I told you about it, about the striking analogy between the total exigency of the liberty of jpuissance in Sade, with the universal Kantian rule of behaviour. The function on which desire is founded in our experience makes manifest that it has nothing to do with what Kant distinguishes as the Wohl, by (3) opposing it to the Gut and to the good, let us say with well being, with the useful. This leads us to realise that this goes much further than this function of desire. It has nothing to do, I would say, in general with what Kant calls, in order to relegate it to a second rank in the rules of behaviour, the pathological.

Therefore, for those who do not remember very well the sense in which Kant employs this term, whom this lead into a misinterpretation, I will try to translate it by saying the protopathic, or again more generally what is too human in human experience, limits linked to convenience, to comfort, to dietary concessions. This goes further, it goes as far as to imply tissue thirst itself. Let us not forget the role, the function that I give to anorexia nervosa, as being that in whose first effects we can sense this function of desire and the role that I gave it by way of example in order to illustrate the distinction between desire and need.

Therefore however far convenience, comfort, concession may be from it will you not tell me that there is no doubt no compromise because we speak about it all the time. But the compromises that this function of desire has to pass through are of a different order to those linked for example to the existence of a community founded on biological association, because it is in this form that we have most conveniently to evoke, to recognise, to explain the function of compromise. You know well that at the point that we are at, if we follow Freudian thinking to the end, these compromises involve the relationship of a death instinct to a (4) life instinct, which are one and the other no less strange to consider in their dialectical relationships than in their definition.

To begin again, as I always do, at some point of every discourse that I address to you weekly, I remind you that this death instinct is not a gnawing worm, a parasite, a wound, not even a principal of contrariety, something like a sort of Ying opposed to the Yang, the alternating element. It is clearly articulated for Freud: a principle which envelopes all the detours of life, which life, which detours only find their meaning by rejoining it. To be honest, it is because they are scandalised that some people distance themselves from it; because here indeed we have no doubt returned, come back, despite all the positivist principles, it is true, to the most absurd properly speaking metaphysical extrapolation, in contempt of all the acquired rules of prudence. The death instinct in Freud is presented to us as that which for us, I am thinking in his place, is situated

from the sequellae of what we are here calling the signifier of life, because what Freud tells us about it is that the essence of life, reinscribed in the frame of death instinct is nothing other than the design, required by the law of pleasure, of realising, of always repeating the same detour in order to come back to the inanimate.

The definition of the life instinct in Freud - it is not vain to come back to it, to reaccentuate it - is no less strange because of the fact that it is appropriate always to re-underline that it (5) is reduced to Eros, to the libido. Notice carefully what that signifies. I will accentuate it through a comparison with the earlier Kantian position; but already you see here the point of contact to which we are reduced as regards the relationship to the body. It is a matter of a choice, and of one so obvious that in the theory this is materialised in these figures which it must not be in any way forgotten are new and also what difficulties, what aporias, indeed what impasses they oppose to our efforts to justify them, even to situate them, to define them exactly. I think that the function of the phallus, since it is that around which there comes to be articulated this Eros, this libido, sufficiently designates what I intend to highlight here. On the whole all the figures, to take up again the term that I have just employed, that we have to handle concerning this Eros, what have they to do with, what have they in common for example in order to make you sense the distance from the preoccupations of an embryologist about whom one cannot all the same say that he has nothing to do with it, with the life instinct, when he questions himself about what an organiser is in growth, in the mechanism of cellular division, the segmentation of skin layers, morphological differentiation? One is astonished to find it written somewhere or other by Freud that analysis might lead to some biological discovery or other. This is to be found on occasions, as far as I remember, in the Abriss. What got into him at that time? I ask myself what biological discovery has been made in the light of analysis? But moreover, since it is a question of highlighting here the limitation, the elective point of our contact with the body, in so far, of course, as it is the (6) support, the presence of this life, is it not striking that, in order to reintegrate into our calculations the function of the preservation of this body, it was necessary for us to pass through the ambiguity of the notion of narcissism which has been sufficiently designated. I am thinking, in order not to have to articulate it otherwise, about the very structure itself of the narcissistic concept, and the equivalence that is placed on it there with the liaison to the object, sufficiently designated, I am saying, by the accent put ever since "An introduction to narcissism" on the function of pain, and the first article in so far - reread this excellently translated article - as pain is not a signal of damage but an autoerotic phenomenon as I recalled not too long ago in a casual conversation, and in connection with a personal experience, to someone who is listening to me, the experience of one pain effaces that of another, I mean that in the present it is difficult to suffer two pains at the same time: one takes over, makes one forget the other as if the libidinal cathexis, even onto one's own body, showed itself in this case to

be subject to the same law which I would call that of partiality which motivates the relation to the world of the objects of desire.

Pain is not simply, as the technicians say, exquisite by nature; it is privileged, it can be a fetish. This in order to lead us to this point which I already, during a recent lecture, not here, articulated that it is of contemporary interest in our account to put in question what is meant by the subjective organisation that is designated by the primary process, what it means as regards what is and what is not its relationship to the body. It is here that, as I might say, the reference to, the analogy with the Kantian investigation is going to be of use to us.

(7) I apologise with all the required humility, to those who have an experience of the Kantian texts which gives them a right to some marginal observations when I go a little quickly in my reference to the essential of what the Kantian exploration brings us. We could also perhaps delay here on these meanderings around certain points at the expense of rigour, but is it not also the case that in following them too much we might lose something in terms of its massive reliefs on certain points, I am speaking about the Kantian critique and specifically about the one called that of pure reason.

In that case, have I not got the right to limit myself for a moment to the following which, for someone who has simply read once or twice with an intelligent attention the aforesaid Critique of Pure Reason, something moreover which is not contested by any commentator, that the categories described as those of pure reason undoubtedly require to function as such the foundation of what is called pure intuition, which is presented as the normative, I will go further, obligatory form of all sensible understandings. I am saying of all, whatever they may be. This is the way in which this intuition, which is ordered in categories of space and of time, finds itself designated by Kant as being excluded from what one can call the originality of sensible experience, of Sinnlichkeit, from which alone there can emerge, there can arise any affirmation whatsoever about palpable reality, these affirmations of reality remaining no less in their articulation subject to the categories of the aforesaid pure reason, without which they would not be able to be, not alone enounced, but even glimpsed. In that case, everything is (8) dependent on this principle of the so-called synthetic function, which means nothing other than unifying, which is, if one may also say it, the common term of all the categorical functions, the common term which is ordered and is decomposed in the very suggestive articulated table that Kant gives of it or rather in the two tables that he gives of it: the forms of the categories and the forms of judgement, which grasps that by right, in so far as it marks the spontaneity of the subject in the relationship to reality, this pure intuition is absolutely required.

One could manage to reduce the Kantian schema to Beharrlichkeit, to permanence, to the holding, which I would describe as empty,

but the possible holding of anything whatsoever in time. This intuition which is pure by right is absolutely required by Kant for the functioning of the categories, but after all that the existence of a body, in so far as it is the foundation of sensoriality - Sinnlichkeit - is not required at all, no doubt, for what one can validly articulate as a relationship to reality, this will take us no further since, as Kant underlines, the use of these categories of understanding will only concern what he is going to call empty concepts; but when we say that this will take us no further, it is because we are philosophers, and even Kantians, but once we no longer are that, which is the most common case, everyone knows precisely that on the contrary this goes very far because the whole effort of philosophy consists in countering a whole series of illusions, of Schwärmereien as it is expressed in "philosophique" and particularly Kantian language; bad dreams - at the same epoch Goya tells us: "the sleep of (9) reason engenders monsters" - whose theologising effects indeed show us quite the contrary, namely that this goes very far, since through the mediation of a thousand fanaticisms this leads quite simply to bloody violence, which continues moreover quite tranquilly, despite the presence of philosophers to constitute, it has to be said, an important part of the texture of human history.

It is for that reason that it is not at all indifferent to show where there passes in effective the frontier of what is effective in experience despite all the theoretical purifications and the moral rectifications. It is quite clear in any case that there is no way of admitting Kant's "Transcendental aesthetic" as tenable despite what I called the unsurpassable character of the service that he renders us in his critique, and I hope to make you sense it precisely from what I am going to show you it would be well to substitute for it. Because precisely if it would be well to substitute something for it and if this functions while preserving something of the structure that he articulated, this is what proves that he at least glimpsed, that he profoundly glimpsed this very thing. Thus it is that the Kantian aesthetic is absolutely not tenable, for the simple reason that for him it is fundamentally supported by a mathematical argumentation which belongs to what one could call the geometrizing epoch of mathematics. It is in so far as Euclidian geometry is uncontested at the time Kant was pursuing his meditation, that it is sustainable for him that there are in the spatio-temporal order certain intuitive facts. One has only to bend down, to open his text, to collect examples of what may appear now (10) immediately refutable to a student averagely advanced in a mathematical initiation, when he gives us as an example of a fact which does not even need to be demonstrated, that only one straight line can pass between two points. Everyone knows, in so far as the mind has in sum adapted itself rather easily to the imagination, to the pure intuition of a curved space through the metaphor of this sphere, that through two points, there can pass many more than one straight line, and even an infinity of straight lines. When he gives us in this table of nichts, of nothings, as example of the leere Gegenstand ohne Begriff: of the empty object without a concept, the following example which is

rather extraordinary: the illustration of a rectilinear figure which would only have two sides, here is something which might seem to Kant - and no doubt not to everyone at his epoch - as the very example of the inexistent object and what is more the unthinkable one; but the least usage I would say even of the quite elementary experience of a geometer, the investigation of the trace described by a point linked to the circumference of a circle, what is called a Pascalian cycloid, will show you that a rectilinear figure, in so far as it properly puts in question the permanence of the contact between two lines and two sides is something which is truly primordial, essential to any kind of geometrical comprehension, that there is well and truly here a conceptual articulation and even a quite definable object.

Moreover, even with this affirmation that nothing except the synthetic judgement is fruitful, it may still, after the whole effort of logicising mathematics, be considered as subject to (11) reason. The so-called unfruitfulness of the a priori analytic judgement, namely of what we will call quite simply the purely combinatory usage of elements extracted from the primary position of a certain number of definitions, that this combinatory usage has in itself its own fecundity, this is what the most recent, the most advanced critique of the foundations of arithmetic, for example, can certainly demonstrate. That there is in the final analysis, in the field of mathematical creation, a necessarily undemonstrable residue, this is what no doubt the same logicising exploration seems to have led us to (Godel's theorem) with a rigour unrefuted up to now, but it remains nonetheless that it is by way of formal demonstration that this certainty can be acquired and, when I say formal, I mean by the most expressly formalist procedures of logicising combination.

What does that mean? Is it that for all that this pure intuition, as for Kant at the end of a critical progress concerning the required forms of science, that this pure intuition teaches us nothing? It undoubtedly teaches us to discern its consistency with and also its possible disjunction from precisely the synthetic exercise of the unifying function of the term of unity qua constitutive in every categorical formation and, once the ambiguities of this function of unity have been shown, of showing us to what choice, to what reversal we are led under the influence of diverse experiences.

(12) Here obviously it is only our own which is important. But is it not more significant than anecdotes, accidents, even exploits, to the precise point that one can point out the slenderness of the point of conjunction between the functioning of the categories and sensible experience in Kant, the strangling point as I might say, at which there can be raised the question of whether the existence of a body, altogether required of course, could not in fact be put in question in the Kantian perspective. As regards the fact that it is required by right, is there something which has not at all been done?

In order to presentify for you this question in the situation of this lost child that the cosmonaut of our epoch in his capsule is

in when he is in a state of weightlessness, I will not put any weight on this remark that the tolerance of it, it seems, has of course not yet been put to the test for very long. But all the same the surprising tolerance of the organism of the weightless state is all the same likely to make us pose a question, since after all dreamers question themselves about the origin of life - and among them there are those who say that this suddenly began to fructify on our globe, but others say that it must have come through a germ which came from the astral spaces. I cannot tell you how indifferent this sort of speculation leaves me. All the same, from the moment that an organism, whether it is human, whether it is that of a cat or of the least lord of the living kingdom, seems so happy in the state of weightlessness, is it not precisely essential for life let us simply say that it should be in an equipollent position with respect to any possible effect of (13) the field of gravity? Of course, the cosmonaut is always subject to the effects of gravity; simply it is a gravity which does not weigh on him. Well then, there where he is in his weightless state, locked in as you know in his capsule and what is more again sustained, moltonne from all sides by the folds of this capsule, what does he transport with him in terms of an intuition which is pure or not, but phenomenologically definable, of space and of time? The question is all the more interesting because you know that since Kant we have all the same gone back on that. I mean that the exploration qualified precisely as phenomenological has all the same brought our attention back to the fact that what one can call the naive dimensions of specifically spatial intuition, are not all the same an intuition, however purified one may think it, that is so easily reducible and that the top, the bottom, indeed the left preserve all their importance not alone in fact, but even by right for the most critical thinking.

What happened to Gagarin or to Titov or to Glenn, in terms of their intuition of space and of time in the moments when certainly they had, as one says, other things on their minds? It would not perhaps be altogether uninteresting to have a little phenomenological dialogue with one of them while he is up there. In these experiments, naturally it was considered that this was not the most urgent thing to do. Besides, there is time to return to it. What I am affirming, is that, whatever may be the case about these points on which we all the same are rather eager to have answers from Erfahrung, from experience, this in any case (14) did not prevent him from being quite capable of what I would call pressing the buttons, because it is clear, at least for the last one, that the business was commanded at one or other moment and even decided from inside. He remained therefore in full possession of the means of an effective combination. No doubt his pure reason was powerfully equipped with a whole complex arrangement which undoubtedly gave its final efficacy to the experiment. It nevertheless remains that, as regards everything that we can suppose, and as far as we can suppose, to be the effect of the combinatory construction in the apparatus, and even in the learning experiences, in the repeated tasks in the exhausting formation imposed on the pilot himself, to the extent that we could suppose him to be integrated to what one could call

the already constructed automatism of the machine, it is enough that he should have to push a button in the right direction while knowing why, for it to become extraordinarily significant that such an exercise of combining reason is possible in conditions which perhaps are far from still being the extremes reached of the constraint and paradox we can suppose imposed on the conditions of natural motor functions, and that correlatively, things only function in so far as the aforesaid motor subject is literally imprisoned by the carapace which alone guarantees the containment, at least at one or other moment of the flight, of the organism in what one could call its elementary solidarity.

(15) Here therefore this body has become as I might say a sort of mollusc, but torn away from its vegetative implantation. This carapace becomes such a dominant guarantee of the maintenance of this solidarity, of this unity, that one is not far from grasping that it is in it in the final analysis that it consists, that one sees there in a sort of exteriorized relationship of the function of this unity as a veritable container of what one can call the living pulp. The contrast between this corporal position and this pure function of reasoning machine, this pure reason which remains the only efficacious thing and everything from which we await some efficaciousness or other within, is indeed here something exemplary which gives all its importance to the question that I posed earlier about the preservation or not of spatio-temporal intuition, in the sense that I sufficiently supported it by what I would call the false geometry of Kant's time. Is this intuition still there? I have a strong tendency to think that it is still there.

This false geometry is still there, just as stupid and just as idiotic, because it is effectively produced as a sort of reflection of the combining activity, but a reflection which is no less refutable. Because as the experience of the meditation of mathematicians has proved, on this earth, we are no less liberated from weight than in the place above where we follow our cosmonaut. In other words that this so called pure intuition has come from the illusion of the lures attached to the combinatory function, itself quite possible to dissipate even if it proves to be more or less tenacious, it is no more, as I might say, than the shadow of a shadow.

(16) But of course, to be able to affirm that, it is necessary to have based number itself elsewhere than in this intuition. Besides, if we suppose that our cosmonaut does not preserve this Euclidean intuition of space, and the still much more questionable one of time which is appended to it in Kant, namely something which can be projected onto a line, what would that prove? That would simply prove that he is all the same capable of correctly pushing the buttons without having recourse to their schematism, this would simply prove that what is already refutable here is refuted up there in intuition itself, which, you will tell me, reduces perhaps a little the import of the question that we have to pose to him.

And this indeed is the reason why there are other more important

questions to pose to him, which are precisely ours, and particularly this one: what becomes in the weightless state of a sexual drive which is used to manifesting itself by appearing to go against, and whether the fact that he is entirely stuck inside a machine - I mean in the material sense of the word - which incarnates, manifests in such an obvious fashion the phallic phantasy, does not particularly alienate him from its relationship to the functions of weightlessness natural to male desire. Here is another question that we have quite legitimately I believe to stick our nose into.

To come back to number, which it may astonish you that I make into an element so obviously detached from pure intuition, from sense experience I am not going to give you a seminar here on the Foundations of arithmetic the English title of Frege to which I (17) would ask you to refer because it is a book as fascinating as the Martian chronicles and you will see that it is in any case obvious that there is no empirical deduction possible of the function of number, but as regards which, since I have no intention of giving you a lecture on this subject, I will content myself, because it is part of our account, with pointing out to you that for example the five points arranged in this way that



you can see on the face of a dice, is indeed a figure which can symbolise the number five but that you would be completely wrong to believe that the number five is given to you in any way by this figure. As I do not want to weary you by making an infinite number of detours, I think that the quickest way is to make you imagine a behavioural experiment that you might be in the process of carrying out on an animal.

It is rather frequent, in order to experiment with this faculty of discernment that the animal has, in one or other situation made up of goals to be reached, for you to give him different shapes. Suppose that alongside this arrangement, something which constitutes a figure, you would not expect in any case and from any animal that he should react in the same fashion to the following figure, which is nevertheless also a five, or to this one which is no less one, namely the form of a pentagon (schema):



If an animal were ever to react in the same fashion to these three figures, well you would be stupified, and very precisely for the reason that you would then be absolutely convinced that the animal knows how to count. But, you know that he does not know how to count. This is not a proof of the non-empirical origin of the function of number. I tell you again: this merits (18) a detailed discussion regarding which after all the only true, sensible, serious reason that I have to strongly advise you

to interest yourselves in it, is that it is surprising to see the degree to which few mathematicians, even though it is not only mathematicians who have treated it properly, really interest themselves in it. It will therefore be on your part, if you interest yourselves in it, a work of mercy: to visit the sick, to interest oneself in uninteresting questions, is this not also in some way our function? You will see in it that in any case unity and zero, so important for every rational constitution of number, are what are the most resistant, of course, to every attempt at an experimental genesis of number, and most especially if one intends to give a homogenous definition of number as such, reducing to nothing all the geneses that one may try to give of number starting from a collection and from the abstraction of difference starting from diversity. Here the fact that I was led, directly along the line of the Freudian approach, to articulate in a fashion which appeared necessary to me the function of the unary trait takes on its value, in so far as it makes the genesis of difference appear in an operation that one can say is situated along the line of an ever increasing simplification, that it is in a perspective which is the one which culminates at the line of strokes, namely with the repetition of the apparently identical that there is created, separated out, what I call, not the symbol, but the entry into the real as inscribed signifier - and this is what the term of primacy means - of writing. The entry into the real, is the form of this trait repeated by the primitive hunter of absolute difference in so far as it is there.

(19) Moreover you will have no trouble - you will find them in reading Frege, even though Frege does not take that path, for want of an adequate theory of the signifier - in finding in Frege's text that the best mathematical analysts of the function of unity, specifically Givon and Schroder, put the accent in the same way as I am doing it, on the function of the unary trait.

This is what makes me say that what we have to articulate here, is that by reversing, as I might say, the polarity of this function of unity, by abandoning the unifying unity, the Einheit, for the distinctive unity, the Einzigkeit, I am leading you to the point of posing the question, of defining, of articulating step by step the solidarity of the status of the subject qua bound to this unary trait with the fact that the subject is constituted in his structure where the sexual drive has its privileged function among all the afferents of the body. To the first fact, the liaison of the subject to this unary trait, I am going today to put the final point, considering the path to be sufficiently articulated by reminding you that this fact so important in our experience, put in the forefront by Freud, of what he calls the narcissism of small differences, is the same thing as what I am calling the function of the unary trait; because it is nothing other than the fact that it is starting from a small difference - and to say small difference means nothing other than this absolute difference of which I speak to you, this difference detached from all possible comparison - it is starting from this small difference, in so far as it is the same thing as the big I, the ego-ideal, that every narcissistic

perspective can be accommodated; the subject constituted or not (20) as bearer of this unary trait, is what allows us to take today our first step into what will constitute the object of our next lecture, namely the taking up again of the functions of privation, frustration, castration.

It is first of all by taking them up again that we will be able to glimpse where and how there is posed the question of the relationship between the world of the signifier and what we call the sexual drive, namely the privilege, the prevalence of the erotic function of the body in the constitution of the subject. Let us tackle it a little bit, let us nibble at it, this question, starting from privation, because it is the most simple. Something of minus 0 exists in the world, there is an object which is not in its place, which is indeed the most absurd conception of the world if one gives its meaning to the word Real. What could be lacking in the Real?

Moreover it is because of the difficulty of this question that you still see, in Kant, remaining, as I might say, well beyond therefore pure intuition, all these old remainders which shackle him with theology, and under the name of a cosmological conception, "In mundo non est casus", he reminds us: there is nothing casual, occasional. "In mundo non est fatum": there is no fatality which goes beyond a rational necessity; "In mundo non est fatum": there are no leaps: "In mundo non est hiatus", and the great refutor of metaphysical imprudences makes his own these four denegations, about which I ask you, whether in our perspective, they can appear to be anything other than the very inverted status of what we always have to deal with in cases, in the proper sense of the term, with a fatum properly speaking, (21) because our unconscious is an oracle, with as many hiatuses as there are distinct signifiers, as many jumps as there are metonymies produced. It is because there is a subject who is himself marked or not by a unary trait who is one or minus one, that there can be a minus 0, that the subject can identify himself with the little ball of Freud's grandson and especially in the connotation of its lack: there is not, ens privativum. Of course, there is a void and it is from there that the subject is going to start: leere Gegenstand ohne Begriff.

Of the four definitions of nothing that Kant gives and that we will take up the next time, it is the only one that holds up rigorously: here there is a nothing. Observe that in the table that I gave you in three terms, castration, frustration, privation, the counterpart, the possible agent, the properly speaking imaginary subject from whom privation the enunciating of privation can flow, is the subject of imaginary omnipotence, namely of the inverted image of impotence. Ens rationis: leere Begriff ohne Gegenstand, pure concept of possibility. Here is the framework in which there is situated and there appears the ens privativum. Kant of course does not fail to ironise about the purely formal usage of the formula which seems to be self-evident: everything real is possible. Who will contradict that? Obviously. And he takes the further step by pointing out to us that: therefore some real is possible, but that can also

mean that some possible thing is not real, that there is something possible which is not real; no less of course the philosophical abuse which can be made of it is here enounced by Kant. What is important for us is to grasp that the possible (22) involved is not the possible of the subject. The subject alone can be this negated real of a possible which is not real. We thus see the minus 1 constitutive of the ens privativum linked to the most primitive structure of our experience of the unconscious, in so far as it is not that of prohibition, nor of saying not, but of the unsaid (du non-dit), of the point where the subject is no longer there to say whether he is no longer master of this identification to the 1, or of this sudden absence of the 1 which, you will remark, here finds its force and its root; the possibility of fatum, casus, saltus, is precisely the way in which I hope beginning from the next session to show you what other form of pure and even spatial erudition is especially involved in the function of surface. In so far as I believe it to be capital, primordial, essential, for any articulation of the subject that we can formulate.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 7 March 1962

In regrouping the difficult thoughts to which we are led, on which I left you the last time, in beginning to tackle by way of privation what concerns the most central point of the structure of the identification of the subject, in regrouping these thoughts I found myself starting again from some introductory remarks.

It is not my custom to take up the interrupted thread again absolutely ex abrupto; these remarks echoed some of these strange personages of whom I spoke to you the last time, who are called philosophers, great or small, this remark was more or less the following, as far as we are concerned, the fact that the subject is mistaken (se trompe), is undoubtedly for us, analysts just as much as philosophers, the inaugural experience.

But the fact that it interests us, is manifestly and I would say exclusively because he can express himself (il peut se dire), and this expression shows itself to be infinitely fruitful and more especially fruitful in analysis than elsewhere, at least one likes to think so.

But, let us not forget that the remark has been made by eminent thinkers that if what is involved in the affair is the real, the way described as that of the rectification of the means of (2) knowing could well - it is the least that one might say - distance us indefinitely from what it is a question of reaching, namely something of the absolute. Because it is a matter of the real, full stop, that is what is involved. It is a matter of reaching what is aimed at as independent of all our moorings; in the search for what is aimed at this is what is called absolute: in the end to cast off everything. All overloading therefore, it is always a more overloaded way that the criteria of science tends to establish, in the philosophical perspective that I am talking about. I am not speaking here about these learned men, who for their part, contrary to what is believed, have no doubts.

It is in this measure that we are more sure that at least they approach the real.

In the philosophical perspective of the critique of science, we ought, for our part, to make some remarks; and specifically the term that we should most distrust in order to advance in this critique, is the term appearance, because appearance is far from being our enemy, I am talking about when it is a matter of the

real. I am not the one who incarnated what I am telling you in this simple little image: It is indeed in the appearance of this figure that there is given to me the reality of the cube, that it stands out for me as a reality.

To reduce this image to the function of an optical illusion, would simply divert me from the cube, namely from the reality that this artifice is meant to show you.

(3) It is the same for a relationship with a woman, for example. Every scientific investigation of this relationship will tend when all is said and done towards formulae like the celebrated one that you surely know of Colonel Bramble, which reduces the object involved, the woman in question, to what she simply is from the scientific point of view: an agglomeration of albumins, which obviously does not agree very well with the world of feelings which are attached to the aforesaid object.

It is all the same quite clear that what I would call, if you will permit it, the dizziness about the object in desire, this kind of idol, of adoration which can prostrate us or at least weaken us before a hand as such. Let us even say, in order to make ourselves better understood about the subject given us in experience, that it is not because it is her hand because in a less terminal place, a little higher up, a little down on the forearm can suddenly take on for us this unique savour which makes us in some way tremble before this pure apprehension of her existence.

It is quite obvious that this has a greater relationship to the reality of the woman than any elucidation whatsoever of what is called sexual attraction, in so far of course as elucidating sexual attraction poses in principle that it is a matter of putting in question its lure, while this lure is its very reality.

Therefore, if the subject is mistaken, he may well be right from the point of view of the absolute. It nevertheless remains, and (4) even for us who busy ourselves with desire, that the word error keeps its meaning.

Here allow me to tell you how I for my part conclude, namely to give you as completed the fruit of a reflection on this matter whose continuation is precisely what I am going to advance today. I am going to try to show you its well-foundedness, the fact is that it is not possible to give a meaning to this term of error, in any domain and not just in ours - this is a daring affirmation, but this supposes that I consider that, to use an expression to which I will have to return in the course of my lecture today, I have gone into this question thoroughly - there can be no question, if the word error has a meaning for the subject, of anything but an error in his count.

In other words, for any subject who does not count, there can be no error. This is not obvious. It is necessary to have explored a certain number of directions in order to perceive and

to believe - this is where I am at and I would ask you to follow me - that this is the only thing that opens up the impasses, the blind alleys into which people have gone about this question.

This means of course that this activity of counting begins early for the subject. I carried out a full rereading of someone for whom everyone knows I do not have very refined leanings despite the great esteem and respect that his work merits and in addition his uncontestable charm as a person, I am speaking about M Piaget; this is not to discourage anyone from reading him!

(5) I carried out then a re-reading of The genesis of number in the child. It is disconcerting that someone can believe themselves able to detect the moment that there appears in the subject the function of number by posing him questions which in a way imply their response, even if these questions are posed through the mediation of a material which one imagines perhaps excludes the biased character of the question. One thing can be said: that when all is said and done it is rather a lure that is involved in this way of proceeding. It is not at all sure that what the infant appears to misconceive does not depend at all on the very conditions of the experiment; but the strength of this terrain is such that one cannot say that there is not a lot to be learned, not so much in the little bit which is finally collected about the so-called stages of the acquisition of number in the child, but from the fundamental reflections that M Piaget who is certainly a much better logician than psychologist, concerning the relationships of psychology and of logic; and specifically this is what makes a work which unfortunately is unfindable, published by Vrin in 1942 which is called: Classe, relation et nombres, a very instructive work because here there are highlighted the structural, logical relationships between class, relation and numbers, namely everything that one claims subsequently or previously to rediscover in the child which manifestly is already constructed a priori: and very correctly, the experiment only shows us there what one had organised it to find in the first place.

(6) This is a parenthesis confirming the following: the fact is that the subject counts well before applying his talents to any collection whatsoever, even though of course, to establish collections is one of the first concrete, psychological activities. But he is implicated as subject in what is called the relationship of computation, in a fashion much more radically constituting than people want to imagine, starting from the functioning of his sensorium and his motor functions.

Once again here the genius of Freud surpasses what I might call the deafness of those to whom he is addressing himself in the exact measure of the warnings that he gives them, which go in one ear and out the other, this justifying no doubt the appeal to the mystical third ear of Mr Theodore Reik who was not very well inspired that day, because what use is a third ear if one hears nothing with the two one has already!

Of what use is the sensorium involved, according to what Freud

teaches us? Does this not tell us that its only use is this, to show us that what is already there in the calculation of the subject is quite real, really exists; in any case this is what Freud says: it is with it that the judgement of existence begins, this is used to audit the accounts, which is all the same a funny position for someone whom people attach to this straight line of the positivism of the 19th century.

(7) So, let us take things up where we left them, because it is a matter of calculation, and of the basis and foundation of calculation for the subject: because of course if the unary trait begins the function of counting so early, let us not go too quickly as regards what a subject may know about a higher number. It is difficult to imagine that two and three do not come rather quickly. But when we are told that certain so-called primitive tribes along the mouth of the Amazon were only recently able to discover the virtue of the number four and raised altars to it, it is not the picturesque aspect of this story about savages which strikes me: this seems to me to be self-evident, because if the unary trait is what I am telling you, namely the difference and the difference, which not alone supports, but which supposes the subsistence alongside it of one plus one and one again, the plus being only meant there to mark well the radical subsistence of this difference, where the problem begins is precisely that one can add them together, in other words that two, that three have a meaning. Taken from that angle this causes a lot of trouble; but one must not be astonished at it. If you take things in the opposite direction, namely if you begin from three, as John Stuart Mill did, you will never manage to rediscover one, the difficulty is the same.

For us here - I point it out to you in passing - with our way of interrogating the facts of language in terms of the effects of the signifier, in so far as we are used to recognising this effect of the signifier at the level of metonymy, it would be simpler for us than for a mathematician to ask our pupil to recognise in every signification of number an effect of metonymy (8) which has arisen virtually from nothing more and, as its elective point, from the succession of an equal number of signifiers. It is in so far as something is happening which makes sense of the simple sequence of extension x of a certain number of unary traits, that the number three for example can make sense, namely that it makes sense - whether it has any or not - to write the word end in English: here again perhaps is the best way we have of showing the emergence of the number three because there are three letters.

As for us we have no need to demand so much of our unary trait; because we know that at the level of the Freudian series, if you will allow me this formula, the unary trait designates something which is radical for this originating experience: it is the unicity as such of the circuit (tour) in repetition.

I think I have sufficiently stressed for you that the notion of the function of repetition in the unconscious is absolutely distinguished from any natural cycle, in the sense that what is

accentuated is not its return, it is that what is sought by the subject is its signifying unicity and in so far as one of the circuits of the repetition, as one might say, has marked the subject who begins to repeat what of course he will only be able to repeat because this will never be anything but a repetition, but with the goal, the plan, of making the original unary re-emerge from one of its circuits.

With what I have just told you, I have no need to put the accent on the following: the fact is that this operates already before (9) the subject knows how to count properly. In any case, nothing implies that he has a need to count the circuits of what he is repeating very far because he repeats it without knowing it. It is no less true that the fact of repetition is rooted in this original unary, which unary as such is tightly coupled to and co-extensive with the very structure of the subject in so far as it is thought of as repeating in the Freudian sense.

What I am going to show you today, through an example, and with a model that I am going to introduce, what I am going to show you today, is the following: it is that there is no need for him to know how to count for one to be able to say and demonstrate the constituting necessity of his function as subject that he should make an error in the count. There is no need for him to know nor even to try to count for this error of counting to be constitutive of him as subject: as such it is error.

If things are as I am telling you, you can be sure that this error may last a long time on such a basis, and this is quite true. It is so true that it is not alone on the individual that it brings its effect to bear. It brings its effect to bear on the most radical characters of what is called Thinking.

Let us take for a moment the theme of Thinking, about which it would be proper all the same to use some prudence; you know that on this point I do not lack it, it is not all that sure that one can validly refer to it in a fashion which may be considered as a (10) properly speaking generic dimension. Let us take it nevertheless as such: the thinking of the human species.

It is quite clear that it is not for nothing that I have advanced more than once, in an inevitable fashion, towards putting in question here, since the beginning of my discourse this year, the function of class and its relationship with the universal, to the point even that it is in a way the reverse and the opposite of all this discourse that I am trying to bring to a conclusion before you.

In this connection, simply remember what I was trying to show you in connection with the little exemplary dial on which I tried to re-articulate before you the relationship of the universal to the particular and of affirmative and negative propositions respectively. Unity and totality appear here in the tradition as solidary, and it is not by chance that I always come back to it in order to shatter the fundamental category: unity and totality at once solidary, linked to the other in this relationship that

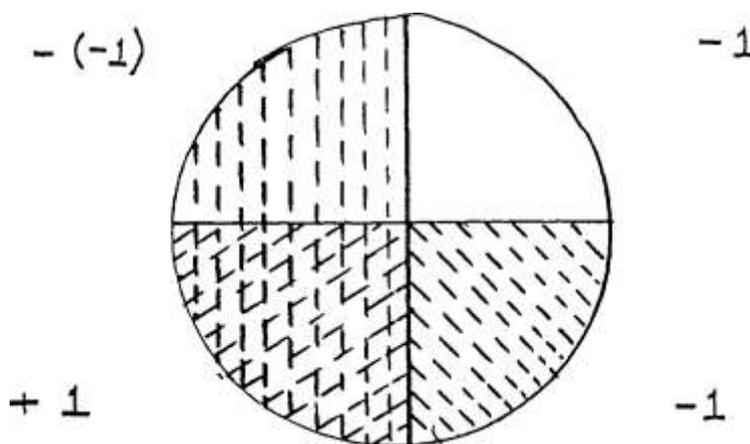
one could call a relationship of inclusion, totality being totality with respect to units, but unity being what founds totality as such by drawing unity towards another meaning, opposed to the one that I distinguish of it, of being the unity of a whole. It is around this that there is pursued this misunderstanding in what is called the logic of classes, this age-old misunderstanding of extension and intension which it seems tradition effectively has always made more of, even if it is true, taking things in the perspective for example of the middle of the XIXth century, in the writings of a Hamilton, even if it is true that it has only been clearly articulated from (11) Descartes on and that the logic of Port-Royal, as you know, is modelled on the teaching of Descartes. What is more this is not true; because this opposition between extension and comprehension is there for a long time, since Aristotle himself. What one can say, is that it causes for us, as regards the handling of classes, difficulties which are always more unresolved, hence all the efforts that logic has made to transport the core of the problem elsewhere: into propositional quantification for example.

But why not see that in the structure of class itself as such a new beginning is presented to us, if, for the relationship of inclusion, we substitute a relationship of exclusion as the radical support? In other words, if we consider as logically original as regards the subject something that I am not discovering, which is within the range of an average logician, the fact is that the true foundation of class is neither its extension nor its intension, that class always supposes classification. In other words: mammals, for example to throw some light immediately on what I mean are what are excluded from vertebrates by the unary trait "mamma".

What does that mean? That means that the primal fact is that the unary trait can be lacking, that there is first of all the absence of the mamma and that one says: it cannot be that the mamma is missing, here is what constitutes the mammal class.

Look carefully at things when you really push them, namely open the treatises and go through these thousand little aporias that formal logic puts before you and you will see that it is the only (12) possible definition of a class, if you really want to guarantee it its universal status in so far as it constitutes also from one side the possibility of its possible inexistence with this class. For you can just as validly, lacking from the universal, define the class which includes no individual, this will be nonetheless a class universally constituted with the conciliation I am saying, of this extreme possibility with the normative value of every universal judgement in so far as it cannot but transcend every inductive inference namely drawn from experience.

This is the meaning of the little dial that I represented for you in connection with the class to be constituted among the others, namely the vertical trait.



The subject at first constitutes the absence of such traits, as such he is himself the top quarter on the right. The zoologist if you will allow me to go this far, does not carve out the mammal class in the assumed totality of the maternal mamma; it is because he detaches the mamma that he can identify the absence of mamma. The subject as such is minus one. It is starting from (13) there, from the unary trait qua excluded that he decrees that there is a class in which universally there cannot be the absence of the mamma: minus minus one: $-(-1)$. And it is starting from there that everything is specifically ordered in particular cases: in anything whatsoever (le tout venant), there is one or there is not one (2 - 3). A contradictory opposition is established diagonally, and this is the only true contradiction which subsists at the level of the establishment of the universal/ affirmative, particular/negative dialectic, by the unary trait.

Everything is ordered therefore in anything whatsoever at the lower level, there is some of it or there is none of it, and this cannot exist except in so far as there is constituted, by the exclusion of the trait, the stage of anything whatsoever or of what is valid like everything at the upper level.

It is therefore the subject, as one might have expected, who introduces privation and this by the act of enunciating which is essentially formulated as follows: "could it be that there is no mamma?" (qu'il n'y ait), ne which is not negative, ne which is strictly of the same nature as what one can call the expletive in French grammar - "could it be that there is no mamma? Not possible, nothing maybe". Here we have the beginning of every enunciating of the subject concerning the real.

In the first blank of the circle it is a question of preserving the rights of the nothing, on top, because it is what creates below the perhaps, namely the possibility. Far from being able (14) to say as an axiom - and this is the stupefying error of the whole abstract deduction of the transcendental - far from being able to say that anything real is possible, it is only starting from the not possible that the real takes its place.

What the subject is looking for is this real qua precisely not possible; it is the exception and this real exists of course. What one can say, is that there is precisely not only the not possible at the origin of any enunciating. But this can be seen from the fact that it is from the enunciation of the nothing that it begins. This in a word is already guaranteed, clarified, in my triple enumeration: privation, frustration, castration as I announced we would be developing it the other day, and some people are upset because I am not providing a place for the Verwerfung: it is there beforehand, but it is impossible to start from it in a deducible fashion. To say that the subject is first of all established as minus one, is indeed something in which you can see that effectively, as one might expect, it is as Verworfen that we are going to rediscover him, but in order to grasp that this is true, we are going to have to make an enormous circuit. This is what I am going to try to initiate now.

In order to do it, I must unveil the battery I announced - and you may well imagine that I tremble a little at this - and that I bring out for you one of my turns which has of course been prepared for a long time. I mean that if you look in the Rome report you will already find its place highlighted somewhere. I speak about the structure of the subject as that of a ring. Later on, I mean last year and in connection with Plato - and (8) still as you see it is not unrelated to what I am debating for the moment, namely the inclusive class - you have seen all the reservations that I believed I had to introduce in connection with the different myths of the Symposium, so intimately linked to Platonic thinking concerning the function of the sphere.

The sphere, this obtuse object, as I might say: you only have to look at it to see it. It is perhaps a good shape, but it really is stupid! It is cosmological of course. Nature is supposed to show us a lot of it, not so much as all that when one looks closely at it; and the ones that it shows us, we hold onto. For example: the moon which nevertheless would be much better used, if we were to take it as an example of a unary object. But let us leave this to one side.

This nostalgia for this sphere which with a phonuscule makes us drag on in biology itself this metaphor of the Innen and Umwelt, this is what is supposed to constitute the organism.

Is it altogether satisfying to think that in order to define the organism we have to satisfy ourselves about the correspondence, about the fitting together of this innen and this urn? No doubt there is here a profound view; because it is indeed here in effect that the problems lies, and already simply at the level at which we are, which is not that of the biologist but of the analyst of the subject.

What is the Welt doing here? This is what I am asking. In any (16) case, because it is necessary that here in passing we should acquit ourselves of some homage or other to the biologists, I would ask why, if it is true that the spherical image is to be considered as radical, it should then asked why this blastula is

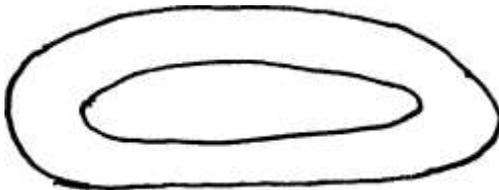
not satisfied until it has been gastrulated and having been gastrulated it is not content until it has redoubled its stomach orifice with another, namely a hole in the backside. And why also at a certain stage of the nervous system it presents itself as a tube, open at both ends to the outside; no doubt this closes itself off, it is even very well closed off but this, as you are going to see, should not discourage us at all, because I am going to abandon right away this path which is described as that of Naturwissenschaft.

This is not what interests me now and I am quite determined to transport the question elsewhere, even if by that I may appear to you to be putting myself, one may as well say it, in the wrong (dans mon tore)!

Because the torus is what I am going to speak to you about today. From today on, as you will see, I am deliberately opening up the era of presentiments. For a certain time I would like to envisage things under the double aspect of rightly and wrongly (a tort et a raison), and many others again which are offered to you.

Let us try now to clarify what I am going to tell you.

A torus - I think that you know what it is - I am going to make a (17) rough figure of it for you; it is something that one plays with when it is made of rubber, it is handy, a torus can be deformed, it is round, it is full, for the geometer it is a figure of revolution engendered by revolving a circumference around an axis situated on its plane; the circumference turns; at the end you are surrounded by the torus, I even believe that that is called a hula hoop.



What I would like to underline is that here this torus, I am speaking in the strict geometrical sense of the term, namely that according to the geometrical definition it is a surface of revolution, it is the surface of revolution of this circle around an axis and what is generated is a closed surface.

This is important because this rejoins something that I announced to you in a special lecture outside the series that I am giving you here but to which I have referred since, namely the accent that I intend to put on the surface in the function of the subject.

In our time, it is fashionable to envisage a whole lot of spaces with a multitude of dimensions. I ought to tell you that, from

the point of view of mathematical reflection, this demands that one should not unreservedly believe in it.

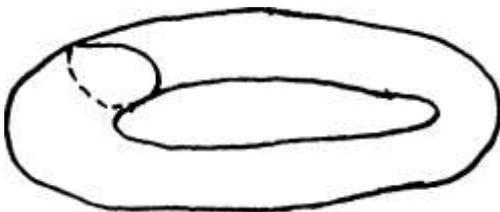
(18) Philosophers, the good ones, those who leave behind them a good smell of chalk like M Alain, will tell you that even the third dimension, well then, it is quite clear that from the point of view that I was putting forward earlier about the real, is quite suspect. In any case for the subject two are enough, believe me.

This explains for you my reservations about the term "depth psychology" and will not prevent us from giving a meaning to this term.

In any case for the subject as I am going to define it for you, you can be sure that this infinitely flat being which gave, I am sure, such joy to your mathematics classes when you were in philosophy: "The infinitely flat subject¹¹" said the professor, since the class was rowdy and since I was too, one did not hear everything; it is here, then, it is here that we are going to advance into this infinitely flat subject in the way that we conceive of it, if we wish to give its true value to the fact of identification as Freud promotes it for us. And as you will see, this again will have a lot of advantages.

Because, after all, if it is expressly to the surface that I here ask you to refer yourselves, it is for the topological properties that it is going to be able to demonstrate to you.

It is a good surface, as you see, because it preserves, I would (19) say necessarily, it could not be the surface it is if it did not have an inside. As a result, reassure yourselves, I am not taking you away from volume, nor from what is solid, nor from this complement of space of which you surely have need in order to breathe. Simply I am asking you to notice that if you do not prohibit yourself from entering into this inside, if you do not consider that my model is designed to be of service only at the level of the properties of the surface, you are going, as I might say, to lose all its savour, because the advantage of this surface depends entirely on what I am going to show you about its topology, because of the original thing that it contributes from a topological point of view compared for example to the sphere or the plane; and if you start weaving things on the inside, by drawing lines from one side to the other of this surface, I mean even though it has the appearance of being opposed to itself you are going to lose all its topological properties.



You are going to see the core, the spice, the savour of these topological properties. They consist essentially in a support-word that I allowed myself to introduce in the form of a riddle at the lecture of which I spoke earlier; and this word which could not have appeared to you at that time with its real meaning, is the loop (lacs).

You see that in the measure that advances are made I reign over my words for some time. I deafened your ears for a while with (20) lacuna, now lacuna is reduced to lacs.

The torus has this considerable advantage over a surface, which is nevertheless a good one to savour which is called the sphere or quite simply the plane, of not being at all Umwelt with respect to the loops whatever they may be - lacs is lakis - that you may trace on its surface.

In other words, on a torus as on any other surface you can make a little ring; and then as they say, by progressive shrinkages you reduce it to nothing, to a point. Observe that whatever may be the loop that you situate in this way on a plane or on the surface of a sphere it will always be possible to reduce it to a point; and if it is the case, as Kant tells us, that there is a transcendental aesthetic, I believe in it: simply I believe that his is not the right one because precisely it is the transcendental aesthetic of a space which first of all is not one, and in the second place where everything depends on the possibility of the reduction of anything whatsoever that is traced on the surface which characterises this aesthetic so that it can be reduced to a point, so that the totality of inclusion which defines a circle can be reduced to the vanishing unity of any point whatsoever around which it gathers itself, of a world whose aesthetic is such that everything can be folded back on everything, one always believes that one can have the all in the hollow of one's hand; in other words that whatever one draws on it, one is able to produce in it this sort of collapse which when (21) significance is involved will be called tautology.

Everything entering into everything, consequently the problem is posed: how it can happen that with purely analytic constructions one can manage to develop an edifice which rivals the real as well as mathematics?

I am proposing that one should admit in a fashion which no doubt involves a concealment, something hidden which is going to have to be carried forward, rediscovered where it is, one should pose that there is a topological structure regarding which it is going to be a question of showing how it is necessarily that of the subject, which means that there are certain of its loops which cannot be reduced. This is the whole interest of the model of my torus.

The fact is, as you can see, just by looking at it, there are a certain number of circles traceable on this torus; this one, in so far as it closes on itself I would call, it is simply a question of a name, a full circle. No hypothesis about its inside, it is a simple tag which I believe, by God, no worse than

any other, taking everything into consideration. I wavered for a long time in speaking about it with my son - why not name him. One might call it the engendering circle, but God knows where that would lead us!

But let us suppose therefore that any enunciating of the methods which are called synthetic - because one is surprised especially by this: even though one can enounce them a priori, they seem, one does not know where, one does not know what, to contain something, and this is what is called intuition, and one seeks out its aesthetic, transcendental foundation - let us suppose therefore that every synthetic enunciating - there are a certain number of them at the origin of the subject, and to constitute it - well then, unfolds according to one of these circles, called the full circle and this is what images best for us what in the completion of this enunciating is an irreducible series.

I am not going to limit myself to this simple little banter, because I could have been content to take an infinite cylinder because if it depended on that this would not take us very far. An intuitive, geometrical metaphor let us say. Everyone knows the importance that every battle between mathematicians has, it is only around elements like this that it rages. Poincaré and others maintain that there is an irreducible intuitive element and the whole school of axiomaticists claim that we can entirely formalize, starting from axioms of definition and from elements, the whole development of mathematics, namely tear it away from any topological intuition. Luckily M Poincaré understands very well that it is indeed in topology that one finds the essence of the intuitive element, and that one cannot resolve it and that I would even say further: without intuition one cannot do this science which is called topology, one cannot begin to articulate it because it is a great science.

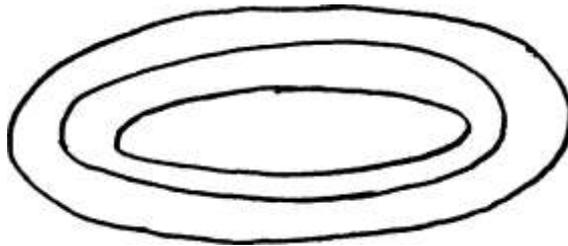
There are big primary truths attached around this construction of the torus and I am going to make you put your finger on something: on a sphere or on a plane, you know that one can draw (23) what is called any geographical map whatsoever however complicated it may be and that in order to colour its domains in a way which does not allow any one of them to be confused with its neighbour four colours are enough.

If you find a very good demonstration of this really primary truth, you can bring it to the right quarter because you will be awarded a prize, since up to now the proof has not yet been found.

On this torus, you will not see it experimentally, but it can be proved: in order to resolve the same problem, seven colours are necessary, in other words on the torus with the tip of a pencil you can define up to seven domains but not one more, these domains being defined each one as having a common frontier with the others. This to tell you that if you have a bit of imagination, in order to see them altogether clearly, you will draw hexagonal domains.

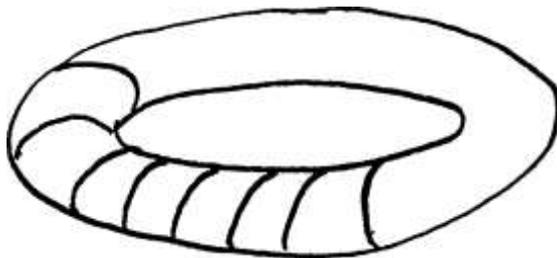
It is very easy to show that you can draw seven hexagons on the torus and not one more, each one having with all the others a common frontier. This, I apologise for it, to give a little consistency to my object. This torus is not a bubble, it is not a puff of air; you see how one can speak about it, even though entirely, as one says in classical philosophy, as a construction of the spirit it has all the resistance of something real. Seven domains? For most of you: it is not possible. As long as I have not shown it to you you have a right to oppose this "not (24) possible" to me; why not six, why not eight?

Now let us continue. This ring here is not the only thing that interests us as irreducible; there are others that you can draw on the surface of the torus of which the smallest is what we can call the most internal of the circles, which we will call empty circles.



They make a circuit around this hole. One can make a lot of things of them. What is certain, is that it is apparently essential; now that it is there you can deflate your torus like a bladder and put it in your pocket, because it is not part of the nature of this torus to be always completely round, completely even; what is important is this holed structure. You can reinflate it every time you need it, but it can like the little giraffe in little Hans who made a knot of his neck....

There is something that I want to show you right away. If it is true that the synthetic enunciating in so far as it is maintained in one of these circuits, in the repetition of this one, does it not seem to you that this is going to be easy to depict. I have only to continue what I drew for you at first fully, then in dots, this will give a bobbin:



Here then are the series of circuits that they carry out in the unary repetition of what returns and what characterises the primary subject in his signifying, automatism of repetition relationship. Why not push the bobbining to the end, until this little bobbin snake bites its own tail. It is not an image to

be studied as an analyst which exists in the writings of Mr Jones.

What happens at the end of this circuit? It closes itself off; we find here moreover the possibility of reconciling what is supposed, implicated and the final return to meaning of Natiirwissenschaft with what I underline concerning the necessarily unary function of the circuit.

This does not appear to you here in the way I am representing it for you. But already there at the beginning and in so far as the subject goes through the sequence of circuits he has necessarily made a mistake of one in his count and we see reappearing here the unconscious minus one in its constitutive function. This for the simple reason that the circuit that he cannot count is the one that he made in making a circuit of the torus and I am going to illustrate it for you in an important fashion, because it is of a nature to introduce you to the function that we are going to give to two types of irreducible act, those which are full circles and those which are empty circles, regarding which you will guess that the second must have some relationships with the function of desire. Since, as compared to these circles which succeed one another, the succession of full circles, you ought to notice that the empty circles, which are in a way caught in the rings of these buckles and which unify all the circles of demand among themselves, there must be something which is related to the little object of metonymy in so far as it is this object. I did not say that it is desire that is symbolised by these circles, but the object as such which is opposed to desire.

This in order to show you the direction in which we will subsequently advance. It is only a very small beginning, the point on which I want to conclude so that you may really sense that there is no artifice in this kind of skipped circuit that I seem to be trying to get over to you by sleight of hand.

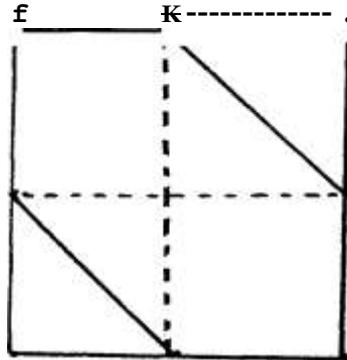
I want to show it to you before leaving you. I want to show it to you in connection with a single circuit on the the full circle. I could show it to you by making a drawing on the board. I can trace a circle which is of such a kind that it is ready to go around the whole torus. It is going to travel on the outside of the central hole then come back from the other side.



A better way to get you to sense it: you take the torus and a pair of scissors, you cut it in terms of the full circles, here it is unfolded like a black pudding open at both ends, you take

up the scissors again and you cut it length-ways, it can open completely and be spread out, it is a surface which is equivalent to that of the torus; for this it is enough that we should have so defined it that each one of its opposite edges has an equivalence implying continuity with a point of the opposite edge.

What I have drawn for you on the unfolded torus is projected as follows:



Here is how something which is nothing other than a single loop is going to be presented on the torus which has been properly cut by these two cuts of the scissors: and this oblique trait defines (26) what we can call a third type of circle, but which is precisely the circle which interests us as regards this sort of possible property that I am trying to articulate as structural of the subject; even though it only made one circuit it nevertheless well and truly made two, namely the circuit of the full circle of the torus and at the same time the circuit of an empty circle, and that as such this circuit which is missing in the count is precisely what the subject includes in the necessities of his own surface to be infinitely flat that subjectivity can only grasp by a detour: the detour of the Other, this to show you how one can imagine in a particularly exemplary fashion thanks to this topological edifice to which, have no doubt about it, I accord a little more weight than simply that of an artifice. Likewise - and for the same reason - because it is the same thing that replying to a question that was recently posed to me concerning the root of minus one as I introduced it into the function of the subject: "By articulating things in this manner", I was asked, "do you intend to make manifest something other than a pure and simple symbolisation replaceable by anything else whatsoever or something which belongs more radically to the very essence of the subject?" "Yes," I said. "It is in this sense that you should understand what I articulated before you and this is what I am proposing to continue to develop with the shape of the torus". - I am saying: on the total surface -, if this is no longer possible at the level of the central, fragmented, surface divided by the signifier of the double ring (boucle), the fact is that very precisely something of that is preserved at the level of the point.

(27) Except for the fact that precisely in order that this point should function as this point, it has this privilege of being precisely un-supersedable, unless, as one might say, by making the whole structure of the surface vanish.

As you see, I was not able yet to give its full development to what I have just said on this point. If you reflect on it, you can, between now and the next time, find it yourselves.

It is getting late, and it is here indeed that I am forced to leave you. I apologise for the aridity of what I was led to produce before you today, because of the complexity itself, even though it is not an extraordinarily punctual complexity, it must be said. This is where I will take things up the next time.

I come back therefore to what I said at the beginning: the fact that I have only been able to get to this point of my exposition means that next Wednesday¹'s seminar - tell the people who have received the next announcement - will take place in order not to leave too much space, too much of an interval between these two seminars, because this space could be harmful for the continuation of our explanations.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 14 March 1962

In the dialogue with you that I am pursuing, there are necessarily hiatuses, jumps, cases, occasions, to say nothing of fatum. In other words, it is interrupted by different things; for example last evening, at the scientific meeting of the Society, we heard the interesting and important paper by Lagache on sublimation. This morning, I wanted to begin from it, but on the other hand, on Sunday I had started from elsewhere, I mean from a sort of remark on the character of what is being pursued here as research. It is obviously a research conditioned by what? For the moment by a certain aim which I would call the aim of an erotic. I consider this to be legitimate, not at all because we are essentially destined by nature to carry it out when we are on the road where it is required, I mean that we are on this road a little in the way that, through the centuries, those who meditated on the conditions of science were on the road to what science effectively is successful at. Hence my reference to the cosmonaut which has indeed its meaning, in so far as what it was successful at was certainly not necessarily what it was expecting up to a certain point, even though the phases of its research may be abolished, refuted by its success.

It is certain that there is among the peoples - I am using this term in the most general sense, unless I am using it in a (2) slightly narrower sense, that of the gentiles - which would obviously leave open the curious question of gentiles defined with respect to X (you know where this definition of gentiles comes from) which would leave open the curious question of how it happens that the gentiles represent, as I might say, a secondary class in the sense that I meant it the last time of something founded on a certain previous acceptance. Despite everything this would not be a bad thing; because in this perspective the gentiles is Christianity, and everyone knows that Christianity as such is in a well-known relationship with the difficulties of the erotic, namely that the dealings of the Christian with Venus are all the same something that it is rather difficult to overlook, even though people pretend to take things, as I might say, in a relaxed manner.

In fact, if the essence of Christianity is to be found in the Pauline revelation, namely in a certain essential step taken in relation to the father, if the relationship of love to the father is its essential step, if it really represents the breaking through of everything great that the Semitic tradition

inaugurated about this fundamental relationship to the father of this original baraka, to which it is all the same difficult to overlook that Freud's thinking is attached more in a contradictory, maledictory fashion - we cannot doubt it - because if the reference to Oedipus may leave the question open, the fact that he ended his discourse on Moses and the way he did it, leaves no doubt that the foundation of Christian revelation is indeed therefore in this grace relationship which Paul makes (3) succeed to the law.

The difficulty is the following: it is that the Christian does not maintain himself, and with good reason, at the height of this revelation and that nevertheless he lives it in a society of such a kind that one can say that even reduced to the most lay forms its principles of law issue directly all the same from a catechism which is not unrelated to this Pauline revelation. Simply, since the meditation on the Mystical Body is not within everyone's reach, a gap remains open which means that practically the Christian finds himself reduced to something which is not all that normal or fundamental, of really no longer having any other access to jouissance as such except by making love. This is what I call his troublesome dealings with Venus. Because of course, with the way he is situated in this order, things arrange themselves after all on the whole rather badly.

What I am saying is very tangible, for example when one goes outside the boundaries of Christianity, once one goes into areas dominated by Christian acculturation, I mean not areas which have been converted to Christianity, but which have undergone the effects of Christian society. I shall long remember a long conversation pursued one night in 1947 with someone who was my guide during a trip to Egypt. He was what is called an Arab. He was, of course, through his functions and also because of the area he lived in, an excellent example of someone who falls into our category. This sort of effect of the promotion of the erotic question was very clear in his discourse. He was certainly prepared by all sorts of very antique resonances of his own (4) sphere to put in the foreground the question of the justification of the existence of his jouissance; but the fashion in which he incarnated this jouissance in the woman had all the impasse characteristics of everything that one can imagine the most open to view in our own society - the requirement in particular of a renewal of an infinite succession - what is in its nature the essentially non-satisfying character of the object, this was indeed what constituted the essential, not alone of his discourse, but of his practical life. A personage, one would have said in another vocabulary essentially torn away from the norms of his tradition.

When it is a question of the erotic, what should we think of these norms? In other words, are we charged for example with justifying the practical subsistence of marriage as an institution throughout even our most revolutionary transformations?

I believe that there is no need for all the effort of a

Westermarck to justify through all sorts of arguments, from nature and from tradition, the institution of marriage, because simply it justifies itself because of its persistence which we have seen before our eyes, and in form very clearly marked by lower middle class traits, throughout a society which at the beginning believed it could go further in the putting in question of fundamental relationships, I mean in Communist society. It seems very certain that the necessity of marriage was not even touched by the effects of this revolution. Is this properly speaking the domain into which we are led to bring some light?

(5) I absolutely do not believe it: the necessities of marriage prove themselves to be, for us, a properly social trait of our conditioning; they leave completely open the problem of the dissatisfactions which result from it namely the permanent conflict in which the human subject finds himself, just because he is human, with the effects, the repercussions of this law (of marriage).

What evidence do we have for that? Quite simply the existence of what we note, in so far as we busy ourselves with desire, I mean that there exists in societies, whether they are well organised or not, whether one makes in them in a greater or lesser abundance the constructions necessary for the environment of individuals, we note the existence of neurosis; and it is not in the places where the most satisfactory conditions of life are guaranteed, nor where tradition is most guaranteed that neurosis is more rare. Far from it.

What does neurosis mean? What is for us the authority, as I might say, of neurosis? It is not quite simply linked to its pure and simple existence. The position of those who in this case attribute its effects to a sort of displacement of human weakness is too facile, I mean that what proves effectively to be weak, in social organisation as such, is visited on the neurotic whom one describes as maladjusted. What a proof!

(6) It seems to me that the right, the authority which flows from what we have to learn about the neurotic, is the structure that he reveals to us and what at bottom it reveals to us, from the moment that we understand that his desire is indeed the same as our own, and with good reason. What comes little by little to be revealed to our study, what gives the neurotic his dignity, is that he wants to know. And in a way it is he who introduces psychoanalysis. The inventor of psychoanalysis is not Freud, but Anna O as everyone knows, and of course behind her many others: all of us.

What does the neurotic want to know? Here I am slowing down my delivery so that you can hear properly, because every word has its importance. He wants to know what real there is in that of which he is the passion, namely what real there is in the effect of the signifier, this of course supposing that we have got far enough to know that what is called desire in the human being is unthinkable except in this relationship to the signifier and the effects that are inscribed in it.

This signifier, that he himself is by his position, namely as a living neurosis, is if you refer to my definition of the signifier - it is moreover inversely what justifies it, the fact is that it is applicable - that through which this cryptogram that a neurosis is, what makes the neurotic as such a signifier and nothing more - because the subject that he serves precisely is elsewhere - this is what we call his unconscious. And this is why he is qua neurosis a signifier, according to the definition that I give you of it, it is because he represents a hidden (7) subject, but .for what? For nothing other than for another signifier.

That what justifies the neurotic as such, the neurotic in so far as analysis - I am slipping in this term borrowed from the discourse of my friend Lagache yesterday - "valorises" him, is the extent to which his neurosis manages to contribute to the advent of this discourse required by a finally constituted erotic. He, of course, knows nothing about it and is not looking for it. And we moreover, we do not have to search for it except in so far as you are here, namely that I am clarifying for you the signification of psychoanalysis in relation to this required advent of an erotic, by which you should understand that through which it is thinkable that the human being might make in this domain also - and why not - the same breakthrough and which moreover culminates in this bizarre moment of the cosmonaut in his carapace. Which allows you to think that I am not even trying to glimpse what a future erotic might give rise to.

What is certain, is that the only people who have dreamt about it in a suitable way, namely the poets, have always ended up with rather strange constructions. And if, whatever préfiguration of it may be found in something on which I spent a lot of time, the outlines of it which may be given precisely in certain paradoxical points of the Christian tradition, courtly love for example, this was in order to underline for you the quite bizarre singularities - let the people who were my listeners remember - of certain sonnets by Arnaut Daniel for example which open up to (8) us very curious perspectives on what the relationships between the lover and his lady effectively represented. This is not at all unworthy of comparison with what I am trying to situate as an extreme point about aspects of the cosmonaut. Of course, the attempt may appear to have a certain amount of mystification about, and besides it came to a sudden end. But it is altogether illuminating in order to situate for us, for example, what must be understood by sublimation. I recalled last evening that sublimation, in Freud's discourse, is inseparable from a contradiction, namely that jouissance, the aim of jouissance, subsists and is in a certain sense realised in every activity of sublimation, that there is no repression, that there is no effacing, that there is not even a compromise with jouissance, that there is a paradox, that there is a detour, that it is by ways which in appearance are contrary to jouissance that jouissance is obtained.

This is not properly speaking thinkable except precisely in so far as in jouissance the medium that intervenes, the medium

through which access is given to its essence which can only be - as I showed you - the thing, that this medium also can be nothing but a signifier. Hence this strange aspect that the lady in courtly love takes on for our eyes. We cannot come to believe in it because we can no longer identify to this degree a living subject with a signifier, a person called Beatrice with wisdom and with what was for Dante the whole, the totality of knowledge.

(9) It is not at all excluded by the nature of things that effectively Dante could have slept with Beatrice. This changes absolutely nothing in the problem. People believe they know it is not so, it is not fundamental in the relationship.

These remarks having been posed, what defines the neurotic?

The neurotic devotes himself to a curious retransformation of that whose effect he is undergoing. The neurotic, in fine, is an innocent: he wants to know. In order to know he goes off in the most natural direction, and it is naturally at the same time by this that he is deceived. The neurotic wants to retransformation the signifier into what it is the sign of. The neurotic does not know, and with good reason, that it is qua subject that he has fomented the following: the advent of the signifier in so far as the signifier is the principal effacing of the thing, that it is he, the subject who by effacing all the traits of the thing, makes the signifier. The neurotic wants to efface this effacing, he wants to bring it about that this has not happened. This is the most profound meaning of the summary, exemplary behavior of the obsessional. What he always comes back to, without ever of course being able to abolish its effect - because everyone of his efforts to abolish it only reinforces it - is to bring it about that this advent of the function of the signifier has not been produced, that one can rediscover the real that was there at the origin, namely what all this is the sign of. This, I leave here indicated, initiated in order to come back to it in a more generalised and at the same time a more diversified fashion, (10) namely according to the three kinds of neurosis: phobia, hysteria and obsession, after I have completed the circuit to which this preamble is destined to bring me back to in my discourse.

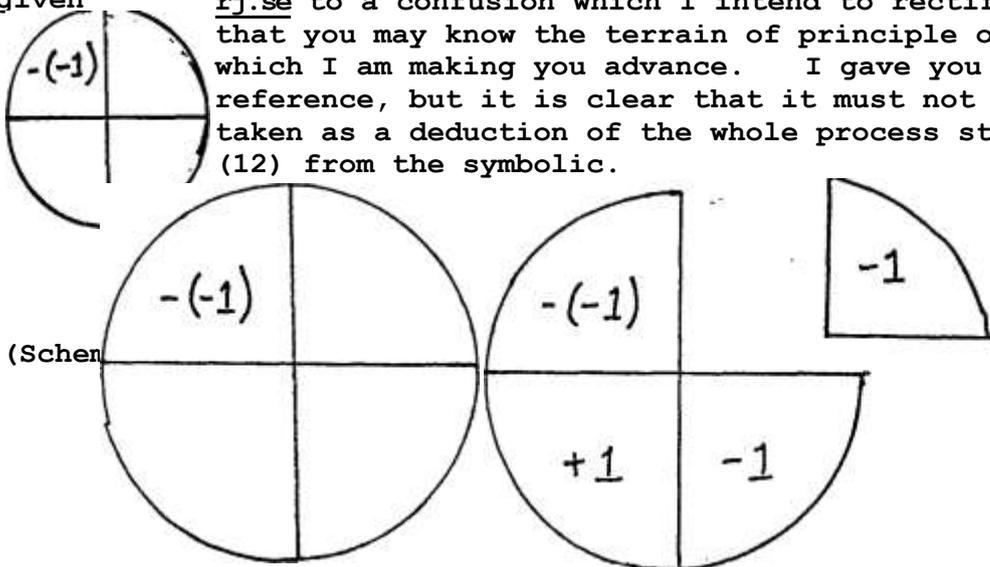
This detour therefore is well designed to situate, and at the same time to justify, the double aims of our research, in so far as it is what we are pursuing this year on the terrain of identification.

However extremely metapsychological our research may appear to some by not pursuing it exactly on the edge that we are pursuing it, in so far as analysis can only be conceived of in this most escathological of aims, if I can express myself in this way, of an erotic, but impossible also without maintaining at least at a certain level the consciousness of the meaning of these aims in order to carry out appropriately in practice what you have to do, namely of course not to preach an erotic, but to deal with this fact that, even in the case of the most normal people and with a full and entire application of good will, of norms, well, it does

not work (that not alone, as M de la Rochefoucauld said, there are good marriages but no delicious ones, we can add that things have deteriorated a little more since then because there are no longer even good ones, I mean from the point of view of desire) it would be all the same a little unbelievable that such remarks could not be put in the foreground in a gathering of analysts.

(11) This does not make you for all that the propagandists of a new erotic. What situates you, what you have to do in each particular case: you have to do exactly what everyone has to do for himself and for which he has more or less need of your help, namely, while we wait for the cosmonaut of an erotic future, small scale solutions.

Let us take things up again where we left them the last time, namely at the level of privation. I hope that I made myself understood about this subject in so far as I symbolised it by this (-1), the necessarily not counted circuit, counted as minus in the best hypothesis, namely when it has made the circuit of the circuit, the circuit of the torus. The fact that I immediately gave an indication which refers the function of this -1 to the logical foundation of any possibility of a universal affirmation, namely the possibility of founding the exception - and it is this moreover that the rule requires: the exception does not prove the rule, as it is so nicely put, it requires it; it is its true principle - in short, that in drawing my little dial for you, namely in showing you that the only veritable guarantee of the universal affirmation is the exclusion of a negative trait: "there is no man who is not mortal", I may have given rj.se to a confusion which I intend to rectify now in order that you may know the terrain of principle on which I am making you advance. I gave you this reference, but it is clear that it must not be taken as a deduction of the whole process starting (12) from the symbolic.



The empty part where there is nothing in my dial, must still be considered at this level as detached. The (-1) that the subject is at this level in himself is in no way subjectivated, in no way is there yet a question either of knowing, or of not knowing. For something of this order to happen, it is necessary that a whole cycle should be completed of which privation is therefore only the first step. The privation involved is real privation for which with the support of intuition which you will concede I have a right to, all I am doing here is following the very traces

of tradition, and the purest one; Kant is granted the essential of his procedure and I am seeking a better foundation for this schematism in order to try to make it tangible, intuitive for you - I forged the mainspring of this real privation. It is therefore only after a long detour that there can come to the subject this knowledge of his original rejection. But meanwhile, I tell you this right away, enough things have happened in order that when it comes to light, the subject knows not alone that this knowledge rejects him, but that this knowledge is itself to be rejected in so far as it will prove to be always either beyond, or on this side of what must be reached for the realisation of desire.

In other words that if ever the subject, and this is his goal since the time of Parmenides, arrives at the identification, at the affirmation that noein kai einai, to think and to be, are the same thing, to auto, at that moment he will find himself (13) irremediably divided between his desire and his ideal. This, as I might say, is designed to demonstrate what I could call the objective structure of the torus in question. But why should I be refused this usage of the word objective since it is classic in the domain of ideas and is still used up to Descartes? At the point therefore that we are at and in order not to come back to it any more, what is involved of the real is perfectly touchable, and that is all that is in question. What led us to the construction of the torus at the point that we are at, is the necessity to define each one of the circuits as an irreducibly different one. For this to be real, namely for this symbolic truth, since it presupposes computation, counting, to be grounded, be introduced into the world, it is necessary and sufficient that the something called the unary trait should have appeared in the real. It will be understood that before this 1, which is what gives all its reality to the ideal - the ideal is the only real that is in the symbolic and it is enough - it will be understood that at the origins of thinking, as people say, at the time of Plato and in the case of Plato not to go back any further, this gave rise to adoration, prostration: the 1 was the good, the beautiful, the true, the supreme being.

The reversal that we are encouraged to face up to on this occasion consists in grasping that however legitimate this adoration may be from the point of view of an affective elation, it nevertheless remains that this 1 is nothing other than the reality of a rather stupid little stroke. That is all. The first hunter, as I told you, who made a notch on an antelope's (14) rib in order to remember simply that he had hunted ten, twelve or thirteen times, did not know how to count, you should note, and it is even for that reason that it was necessary to put these traits, in order that the ten, twelve or thirteen all the times should not be confused as they deserved nevertheless to be one with another.

Therefore, at the level of the privation that is involved, in so far as the subject is at first objectively this privation in the thing, this privation which he does not know is that of the uncounted circuit, it is from this that we begin again in order

to understand what is happening. We have other elements of information so that from there he comes to constitute himself as desire and knows the relationship there is between this constitution and this origin in so far as it may allow us to begin to articulate some symbolic relationship more adequate than those promoted up to now concerning what his structure of desire is for the subject. This does not for all that oblige us to make assumptions about what will be maintained about the notion of the function of the subject when we have put him into the situation of desire; this is what we are obliged indeed to go through with him according to a method which is only in short the one of experience; this is the subtitle of Hegel's phenomenology Wissenschaft der Erfahrung: science of experience. We are following an analogous path with different data which are the ones which present themselves to us.

The next step is centred - I could just as well not put in a chapter heading here, I am doing it for didactic purposes - it is that of frustration. It is at the level of frustration that there is introduced with the Other the possibility for the (15) subject of a essential new step. The 1 of the unique all, the 1 which distinguishes each repetition in its absolute difference, does not come to the subject, even if its support is nothing other than that of the real stroke, does not come from any heaven, it comes from an experience constituted for the subject with whom we have to deal, by the existence, before he was born, of the universe of discourse, by the necessity that this experience supposes the locus of the Other with a big 0 as I have previously defined it.

It is here that the subject is going to conquer the essential, what I called this second dimension, in so far as it is a radical function of his own location in its structure if it is the case that metaphorically, but not without claiming in this metaphor to reach the very structure of the thing, we call this second dimension a torus structure in so far as among all the others it constitutes the existence of loops irreducible to a point, of non-vanishing loops. It is in the Other that there comes necessarily to be incarnated this irreducibility of the two dimensions in so far as, if it is tangible somewhere, it can only be, because up to the present the subject is only for us the subject in so far as he speaks, in the domain of the symbolic. It is in the experience of the symbolic that the subject must encounter the limitation of his displacements which makes him enter at first into the experience of the high point, as I might say, the irreducible angle of this duplicity of the two dimensions.

This is how the schema of the torus is going to be of the (16) greatest use to me - as you are going to see - by starting from the experience so highly valued by psychoanalysis and the observation that it gives rise to. The subject can attempt to speak the object of his desire. He does nothing but that. It is more than an act of enunciating, it is an act of imagining. This gives rise in him to a manoeuvre of the imaginary function and this function necessarily reveals itself to be present once

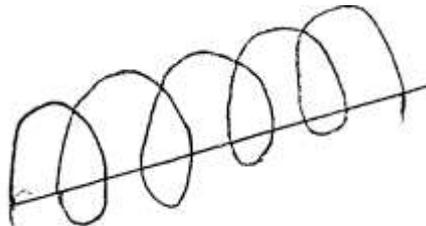
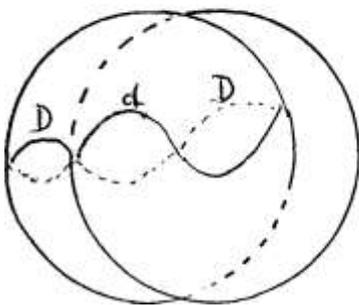
frustration appears. You know the importance, the accent that I in the wake of others, specifically St Augustin, put on the moment of the awakening of jealous passion in the constitution of this type of object which is the very one that we have constructed as underlying each of our satisfactions: the little child a prey to jealous passion before his brother who for him makes arise in an image the possession of this object, specifically the breast, which up to then was only the underlying object elided, masked for him behind this return of a presence linked to each of his satisfactions, which was in this rhythm where there is inscribed, where there is sensed the necessity of his first dependency, only the metonymical object of each one of its returns; here it is suddenly produced for him in the light with effects signaled for us by his mortal pallor, the light of the something new which is desire: the desire of the object as such in so far as it resonates to the very foundation of the subject, that it shakes him well beyond his constitution as satisfied or not, as suddenly menaced in his innermost being, as revealing his fundamental lack, and this in the form of the Other as bringing to light both metonymy and the loss it conditions.

(17) This dimension of loss essential to metonymy, the loss of the thing in the object, is the true sense of this thematic of the object qua lost and never refound, the same one which is at the basis of the Freudian discourse and is ceaselessly repeated. One further step, if we push metonymy further, as you know, it is the loss of something essential in the image, in this metonymy, which is called the ego, at this point of the birth of desire, at this point of pallor at which St Augustin pauses before the infant at the breast as Freud did before his grandson eighteen centuries later. It is false to say that the being of which I am jealous, the brother, is my fellow (semblable): he is my image in the sense that the image involved is the founding image of my desire. Here is the imaginary revelation, and it is the meaning and the function of frustration. All of this is already known. I am only recalling it as the second source of the experience.

After real privation, imaginary frustration. But, just as I tried today to situate for you the use of real privation at the term which interests us, namely in the founding of the symbolic, in the same way, we have to see here how this fundamental revelatory image of desire is going to be placed in the symbolic. This placing is difficult. It would of course be quite impossible if the symbolic were not there, if - as I have reminded you, always hammered out for a long enough time for this to have got into your head - if the Other and the discourse in which the subject has to place himself were not always waiting for him before his birth and that he is spoken to, at least (18) through the mediation of his mother, of his nurse. The mainspring involved, the one which is both the abc, the infancy of our experience, but which for some time people do not know how to go beyond for want precisely of knowing how to formalise it as abc, is the following, namely the intersection, the naive exchange which is produced somewhere in the dimension of the Other between desire and demand.

If there is, as you know, something which as one might say the neurotic allows himself to be caught by from the start, it is this trap; and he will try to make what is the object of his desire pass into the demand, to obtain from the Other, not the satisfaction of his need, for which the demand is made, but the satisfaction of his desire, namely to have its object, namely precisely what cannot be demanded - and this is at the origin of what is called dependency in the relationships of the subject to the Other - just as he will try more paradoxically still to give satisfaction by conforming his desire to the demand of the Other; and there is no other meaning, of correctly articulated meaning I mean, to what is the discovery of analysis and of Freud, to the existence of the super-ego as such. There is no other correct definition, I mean no other one which allows us to escape from confusing slippages.

I think without going any further, that the practical, day-to-day concrete resonances, namely the impasse of the neurotic, is at first and above all the problem of the impasses of his desire, this impasse which is tangible at every moment, massively tangible, and against which you always see him stumbling. This is what I would summarily express by saying that for his desire (19) he has to have the sanction of a demand. What do you refuse him, if not what he is waiting for you to demand of him - to desire appropriately? Without going into what he expects from his spouse, from his parents, from his offspring and from all the conformities which surround him. What does this allow us to construct and to perceive?

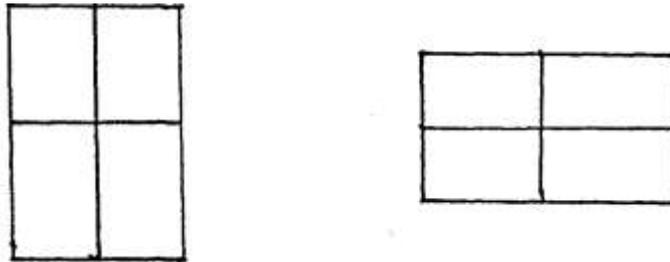


If it is the case that demand is renewed in accordance with the circuits that have been made, in accordance with the full circles all around and the successive returns which the return of need, but encompassed by the loops of demand, necessitates, if it is a fact that, as I gave you to understand through each of these returns, which allows us to say that the elided circle, the circle which I simply called the empty circle in order that you should see what I mean with respect to the torus, comes here to materialise the metonymical object beneath all these demands. A topological construction is imaginable of another torus which has the property of allowing us to imagine the application of the object of desire, the internal empty circle of the first torus, onto the full circle of the second which establishes a buckle,

one of these irreducible loops.

(20) Inversely the circle of a demand on the first torus is here superimposed on the other torus. The torus here a support of the Other, the imaginary Other of frustration, is superimposed on the empty circle of this torus, namely fulfils the function of showing this inversion: desire in one, demand in the other, demand of the one, desire of the other, which is the knot in which there is trapped the whole dialectic of frustration. This possible dependency of two topologies, that of one torus on that of the other, expresses in short nothing other than what is the goal of our schema in so far as we support it by the torus. The fact is that if the space of Kantian intuition ought, I might say, thanks to the new schema that we are introducing here, be put in parenthesis, cancelled out, aufgehoben, as illusory because the topological extension of the torus allows us to consider only the properties of the surface, we are sure of the permanence, of the solidity, as I might say, of the volume of the system without having to have recourse to the intuition of depth. What this images, as you see, is that by maintaining ourselves, in the whole measure that our intuitive habits allow us, within these limits, what results is that since all that is involved between these two surfaces is a substitution by a bi-univocal application, even though it is inverted, namely that once it is cut out this will be in this direction on one of the surfaces and in this other direction on the other.

(Schema
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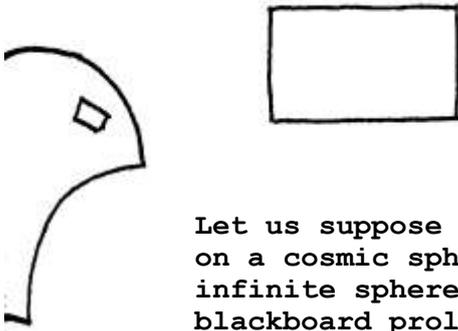


(21) It remains nonetheless that what this makes tangible, is that from the point of view of the required space, these two spaces: the inside and the outside, from the moment that we refuse to give them any substance other than a topological one, are the same. This is what you will see expressed in the sentence that the already indicate, in the Rome report, the use that I counted on making of it for you, namely that the property of the ring in so far as it symbolises the function of the subject in his relationships to the Other depends on the fact that his inside space and his outside space are the same: starting from there the subject constructs his outside space on the model of the irreducibility of his inside space.

But what this schema shows clearly, is the lack of ideal harmony which might be required between the object and the demand, between the demand and the object, an illusion which is sufficiently demonstrated by experience, I think, for us to have experienced the need to construct this necessary model of their necessary discordance. We know the source of this, and of course, if I seem to be advancing only slowly believe me: no

stagnation is too much, if we want to assure ourselves of the next steps. What we already know, and what is intuitively represented here, is that the object itself as such, qua object of desire, is the effect of the impossibility of the Other to respond to demand. This is what is seen here manifestly in this sense that, whatever may be his desire, the Other cannot suffice for the aforesaid demand, that he necessarily leaves open the (22) greater part of the structure, in other words that the subject is not enveloped, as is believed, in the all, that at the level at least of, the subject who speaks the Umwelt does not envelop his Innenwelt; that if there was something to be done to imagine the subject in relation to the ideal sphere, always the intuitive and mental model of the structure of a cosmos, it would be rather that the subject would be, if I may allow myself to push it, to exploit for you - but you see that there is more than one way of doing it - my intuitive image, it would be to represent the subject by the existence of a hole in the aforesaid sphere and his supplement by two sutures.

(Schema)

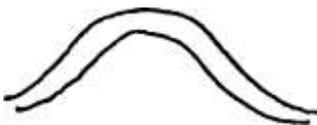


Let us suppose the subject to be constituted on a cosmic sphere. The surface of an infinite sphere is a plane: the plane of the blackboard prolonged indefinitely.



Here is the subject, a quadrangular hole, like the general configuration of my skin earlier, but this time in the negative. I stitch one edge to the other, but with this condition that they are the two opposite edges, that I leave the two other edges free. From this there results the following figure:

(23) namely, with the void filled in here, two holes which remain in the sphere of infinite surface. You have only to pull on each of these edges of these two holes to constitute the subject on the infinite surface as constituted in short by what is always a torus even if it has a paunch of infinite radius, namely a handle emerging at the surface of a plane.



This is what, at its maximum, the relationship of the subject to the great All means at its maximum. We will see the applications that we can make of it.

What is important to grasp here, is that for this overlapping between the object and the demand if the imaginary Other thus constituted in the inversion of the functions of the circle of desire with that of demand, the Other as regards the satisfaction of the desire of the subject must be defined as without power

(sans pouvoir). I insist on this "without", because with it there emerges a new form of negation in which there is indicated properly speaking the effects of frustration. Without is a negation, but not an indifferent one: it is a liaison-negation which is well materialised in the English tongue, by the conformist homology of two relationships of the two signifiers: within and without. It is a bound exclusion which already in itself alone indicates its reversal.

(24) Let us take a further step, it is that of the "not without" (pas sans). The Other is introduced of course into the naive perspective of desire as without power, but essentially what links him to the structure of desire is the "not without". He is not either without power; this is why this Other whom we have introduced qua metaphor in short of the unary trait, namely of what we find at his level and what he replaces in an infinite regression because it is the locus where there succeed one another these l's which are all different from one another, of which the subject is only the metonymy, this Other as one - and the play on words is part of the formula that I am employing here to define the mode in which I introduced it - is rediscovered once there is completed (bouclée) the necessity of the effects of imaginary frustration as having this unique value, because it alone is not without, not without power: it is posed as condition at the possible origin of desire, even if this condition remains in suspense. For this it is like not one (comme pas un); it gives to the (-1) of the subject another function which is incarnated at first in this dimension, that this "like" situates well enough for you as being that of metaphor. It is at its level, the level of the "like not one" and of everything which is going to remain suspended from it subsequently, as what I have called the absolute conditionality of desire, that we will have to deal the next time, namely the level of the third term, of the introduction of the act of desire as such, of its relationships to the subject on the one hand at the root of this power, at the rearticulation of the moments of this power, in so far as - as you see - I shall have to go back over the not possible (pas possible) to mark the path that has been completed by the introduction of the terms power and without power. It is in so

(25) far as we will have to pursue this dialectic the next time that I stop here today.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 21 March 1962

(Schema I)

I left you the last time with this symbolic embrace of two toruses in which there is imaginarily incarnated the relationship of inversion, as one might say, experienced by the neurotic in which we see tangibly, clinically that apparently at least it is on a dependency on the demand of the Other that he tries to found, to establish his desire. Of course, there is something well grounded in this structure that we describe as the structure of the subject in so far as he speaks, which is the one for which I am fomenting for you this topology of the torus that I believe to be very fundamental. It has the function of what one calls moreover in topology the fundamental group, and after all this will be the question to which it will be necessary for us to indicate a response. I hope that this response, at the moment when it is necessary to give it, will already truly be superabundantly sketched out.

Why, if this is the fundamental structure, was it so profoundly miscognised for such a long time throughout the ages by philosophical thought, why if things are this way was it the (2) other topology, that of the sphere, which traditionally appears to dominate every elaboration of thinking concerning its relationship to the thing.

Let us take up things where we left them the last time and where I was indicating for you what is implied in our very experience: there is in this knot with the Other, in so far as it is presented to us as a first tangible approximation, perhaps one that is too easy - we will see that it certainly is - there is in this knot with the Other, as it is imaged here, a relationship of lure. Let us return here to the present, to what is articulated about this relationship to the Other. We know it. How would we not know it when we are every day the very support of its pressure in analysis and when the neurotic subject, with whom we have to deal fundamentally, presents himself before us as requiring from us the response, even if we teach him the value there is in suspending this response.

The response about what? This indeed is what justifies our schema, in so far as it shows us desire and demand being substituted for one another; it is precisely because the response is about his desire and about its satisfaction. What no doubt today I will be almost certainly limited by the time that I am

accorded, is to properly articulating the co-ordinates on which there are suspended this demand made on the Other, this demand for a response, which specifies the true explanation, the final explanation, with respect to which every approximation is insufficient, of what in Freud is pinpointed as Versagen, (3) Versagung: the retraction, or again the deceiving word, the breaking of a promise, at the limit the Vanitas at the limit of the bad word and the ambiguity - I recall it for you here - which unites the term blasphemy to what it has given rise to through all sorts of transformations, in themselves moreover very interesting to follow: blame. I will not go any further along this path.

The essential relationship to the word of the frustration that we are dealing with to the word is always the radical point to sustain, to maintain, otherwise our concept of frustration becomes degraded: it degenerates until it is reduced to the lack of gratification with regard to what in the final analysis can no longer be conceived of as anything but need. Now, it is impossible not to recall what the genius of Freud establishes for us as original in what concerns the function of desire, what he began with in his first steps - let us leave to one side the letters to Fliess, let us begin with The interpretation of dreams and let us not forget that Totem and taboo was his favourite book - the aforesaid genius of Freud establishes for us the fact that desire is fundamentally, radically structured by this knot which is called the Oedipus complex, and is something from which it is impossible to eliminate this internal knot that I am trying to sustain before you by these figures, this internal knot which is called the Oedipus complex in so far as it is essentially what? It is essentially the following: a relationship between a demand which takes on such a privileged value that it becomes the absolute commandment, the law, and a desire, which is the desire of the Other, the Other involved in the Oedipus complex. This (4) demand is articulated as follows: Thou shalt not desire her who has been my desire. Now it is this which founds in its structure the essential, the beginning of the Freudian truth. And it is here, it is starting from here that any possible desire is in a way obliged to take this sort of irreducible detour, this something similar to the impossibility in the torus of the reduction of the loops on certain circles which means that desire must include in itself this void, this internal hole specified in this relationship to the original law. Let us not forget that the steps to found this first relationship around which - we forget it all too easily - are articulatable for Freud - and only in this way - all the Liebesbedingungen, all the determinants of love, let us not forget the steps that this requires in the Freudian dialectic that it is in this relationship to the other, the father who has been killed, beyond this death of the original murder that there is constituted this supreme form of love. It is a paradox not at all dissimulated even if it is elided by this veil over the eyes which always seems to accompany here the reading of Freud: this moment cannot be eliminated that after the murder of the father there arises for him - even if this is not sufficiently explained for us, it is well enough so for us to retain the moment as essential in what one can call the mythical

structure of the Oedipus complex - this supreme love for the father, which makes precisely of this death of the original murder the condition of his henceforth absolute presence. Death in short playing this role manifested itself as alone being able to fix him in this sort of reality, no doubt the only absolutely durable one, of being as absent; there is no other source to the absoluteness of the original commandment.

(5) Here is where there is established the common field in which the object of desire is set up in the position that we know already of course to be necessary for it even at the imaginary level, namely a third position: the simple dialectic of the relationship to the other qua transitive in the imaginary relationship of the mirror stage, has already taught you that it established the object of human interest as linked to his fellow, the object o here with respect to this image which includes it, which is the image of the other at the level of the mirror stage: i of o. But this interest in a way is only a form, it is the object of this neutral interest around which even the dialectic of M Piaget's enquiry could be ordered, by putting in the foreground this relationship that he describes as one of reciprocity that he believes that he can join up to a radical formula of the logical relationship. It is from this equivalence, from this identification to the other as imaginary, that the ternarity of the emergence of the object is established; it is only a partial, insufficient structure and therefore one that we should find, finally, as deductive of the setting up of the object of desire at the level where I am articulating it for you here today. The relationship to the Other is not at all this imaginary relationship founded on the specificity of the generic form, because this relationship to the Other is specified by the demand in so far as it makes emerge from this Other, which is the Other with a big O, its "essentialness", as I might say, in the establishment of the subject, or, to take up again the form that is always given to the verb inter-esser its "inter-essentialness" to the subject. The field in question cannot therefore in any way be reduced to the field of need and of the object which (6) because of the rivalry of his fellows may at the limit be imposed - because this would be the slope down which we would find our recourse for the final rivalry - be imposed as object of subsistence for the organism. This other field, which we are defining and for which our image of the torus is made, is another field, a field of the signifier, a field of the connotation of presence and absence and where the object is no longer the object of the subsistence, but of the ex-sistence of the subject. In order to demonstrate it, it is indeed a matter in the final analysis of a certain place of ex-sistence necessary for the subject and that this is the function to which there is raised, brought the small o of the first rivalry.

We have before us the path which we still have to take of this mountain peak to which I led you the last time of the dominance of the other in the setting up of the frustrating relationship; the second part of the path should lead us from frustration to this still to be defined relationship which as such constitutes the subject in desire, and you know that is it only there that we

can properly articulate castration. We will not know therefore in the final analysis what this place of ex-sistence means until this path has been completed. From now, we can, we ought even to recall, but recall here to the philosopher who has no introduction to our experience, this point which it is peculiar to see so often shied away from in his own discourse, which is that there is indeed a question, namely why it is necessary that the subject should be represented - and I mean in the Freudian sense represented by an ideational representative - as excluded from the very field in which he has to act in what we could call Lewinian relationships with others as individuals, that it is necessary that at the level of structure we should manage to (7) account for why it is necessary that he should be represented somewhere as excluded from this field in order to intervene in this field itself. Because, after all, all the reasonings into which the psycho-sociologist draws us in his definition of what I have just called a Lewinian field are never presented without a complete elision of this necessity that the subject should be, let us say, in two topologically defined places, namely in this field but also essentially excluded from this field, and that he manages to articulate something and something which holds up. Everything that in a thinking about the behaviour of man as observable comes to be defined as learning and at the limit the objectification of learning, namely montage, forms a discourse which holds up and which up to a certain point takes into account a whole lot of things, except for the fact that effectively the subject functions, not with this simple use as I might say but in a double use, which is all the same worth dwelling on and which, however fleetingly it is presented to us, is tangible in so many ways that it is enough, as I might say, to bend down to gather up proofs of it. It is nothing other that I am trying to get you to sense every time for example that I bring in incidentally the traps of the double negation and that the "I do not know whether I want to" is not understood in the same way I think as the "I know that I do not want to".

Reflect on these never to be exhausted little problems - because the logicians of language work at them and their stammerings in this regard are more than instructive - that as long as there are words which flow and even writers who allow things to flow from (8) the tip of their pen in the way they talk, you will say to someone - I already insisted on it, but one cannot come back too much on it - "You cannot fail to know (vous n'êtes pas sans ignorer)" in order to tell him: "You know well all the same". The double plane on which this operates is something that is self-evident. That someone may write like that and that it has happened was recalled to me recently in one of these texts of Prevert which astonished Gide: "Was he trying to mock himself or does he really know what he is writing?" He did not want to mock himself: it flowed from his pen and all the critique of logicians will not help us to realize, if we are engaged in a veritable dialogue with someone, that it is a matter in some way or other of a certain essential condition in our relationships with him - which is the one to which I hope to get a little later - that it is essential that something should be set up between us as ignorance, that I will slip into saying to him, however learned

and however purest I may be, "You cannot fail to know".

The same day that I was talking to you here, I avoided quoting what I had just read in Le Canard Enchaîné at the end of one of these purple passages which are carried under the signature of Andre Ribaud entitled La Cour: "il ne faut pas se decombattre" (in a pseudo-Saint-Simon style, just as Balzac wrote a XVIIth century tongue entirely invented by himself) "de quelque defiance des rois".

You understand perfectly what that means. Try to analyse it logically and you see that it means exactly the opposite of what you understand; and you are naturally quite within your rights to (9) understand what you understand because it is in the structure of the subject: the fact that the two negations which are superimposed here, not alone do not cancel one another out, but sustain one another quite effectively depends on the existence of a topological duplicity which means that "il ne faut pas se decombattre" is not said on the same plane, as I might say, where there is set up the "quelque defiance des rois": the enunciating and the enunciation, as always, are perfectly separable but here the gap between them explodes.

If the torus as such can be of use to us, you will see, as a bridge, already proves to be enough to show us what the ambiguity of the subject consists in once it has passed into this world of redoubling, would it not be well moreover in this place, to pause at something which this topology obviously involves, and first of all in our most simple experience, I mean that of the subject. When we speak about commitment, is there any need for big detours for the ones that here I make you take because of what is required by our cause, do we need big detours for the least initiated people to evoke the fact that to commit oneself implies already in oneself the image of a corridor, the image of the entrance and of the exit and up to a certain point the image of the way out behind oneself being closed, and that it is indeed in this relationship to this "no exit" that the final term of the image of commitment is revealed.

Is much more necessary, and a whole literature which culminates in the work of Kafka allows us to grasp that it is enough to reverse what, it appears, the last time I did not sufficiently (10) image in showing you this particular form of the torus in the form of a handle standing out from a plane, the plane only presenting here the particular case of an infinite sphere enlarging one side of the torus. It is enough to upturn this image, to present it belly up and like the earthly field where we sport and play to show us the very reason why man presents himself to us as what he was and perhaps what he remains: a burrow animal, a torus animal. All his architectures are not all the same without something which ought to strike us because of their affinity with something which must go much further than the simple satisfaction of a need, because of an analogy which is obviously irreducible, impossible to exclude between anything which is called by him inside and outside and that both one and the other flow into one another and determine what I called a

little earlier the corridor, the gallery, the underground: Notes from the underground, Dostoievski entitled this extreme point where he punctuates the palpitation of his final question. Is this something which is exhausted in the notion of a socially useful instrument? Of course, like our two toruses, the function of the social agglomerate and its relationship to pathways in so far as their anastomosis simulates something which exists in the innermost part of the organism is for us a prefigured object of interrogation, it is not our privilege: the ant and the termite know it, but the badger in his set that Kafka speaks to us about is not precisely for his part a social animal.

What does this reminder mean for us, at the point that we have to (11) bring ourselves to, if not that if this structural relationship is so natural that provided we think about it we find it everywhere and its roots very deeply plunged into the structure of things, the fact that when it is a matter of thinking organising itself, it fails so abundantly throughout the ages to recognise the relationship of the subject to the world, poses precisely the question of why repression, or at least we could say miscognition, has gone so far here.

This brings us back to our starting point which is that of the relationship to the Other, in so far as I described it as founded on some lure which it is now a question of articulating elsewhere than this natural relationship because moreover we see clearly the degree to which it can be hidden from thinking, how much thinking refuses it. It is from elsewhere that we will have to begin and from the position of the question to the Other, of the question about his desire and its satisfaction. If there is a lure, it must depend in some way on what I called earlier the radical duplicity of the position of the subject; and it is this that I would like to make you sense at the proper level then of the signifier in so far as it is specified by the duplicity of the subjective position, and ask you to follow me for a moment onto something which is called in the final analysis the difference for which the graph which I kept you to for a certain time of my discourse is properly speaking forged: this difference is called the difference between the message and the question.

This graph which could be so well inscribed here: (schema II) in the very gap through which the subject is doubly linked up to the (12) universal plane of discourse, I am going today to inscribe on it the four meeting points which are the ones that you know: 0; $s(0)$ the signification of the message in so far as it is the return coming from the Other, of the signifier which resides in him; here: $\$OD$ the relationship of the subject to the demand, in so far as there is specified here the drive; here: the $S(\$)$, the signifier of the Other in so far as the Other himself in the final analysis can only be formalised, be made significant as himself marked by the signifier, in other words in so far as it imposes on us the renunciation of any metalanguage. The gap that it is a matter of articulating here is entirely suspended on the form in which in the final term this demand to the Other to respond, alternates, oscillates in a succession of returns between the "nothing maybe" and the "maybe nothing" (le rien)

peut-être et le peut-être rien). Here it is a message (schema III). It opens out onto what has appeared to us as the opening established by the entry of a subject into the real. We are here in accord with the most certain elaboration of the term possibility: Möglichkeit. It is not on the side of the thing that the possible is, but on the side of the subject. The message opens itself out onto the term of the eventuality constituted by an expectation in the constituting situation of desire, as we are trying to get close to it here. "Maybe": the possibility is anterior to this nominative "nothing" which at the extreme point, takes on the value of a substitute for positiveness. It is a point and only a point. The place of the unary trait is reserved there in the void which can respond to the expectation of desire. It is a completely different thing to the question in so far as it is articulated: (schema IV) "nothing maybe"?

(13) That the maybe at the level of the demand that is put in question: "What do I want?" speaking to the Other, that the maybe comes here in a position homological to that which at the level of the message constituted the eventual response "maybe nothing", is the first formulation of the message. "Maybe nothing", this may be a response, but is it the response to the question "nothing maybe?". Precisely not. Here the enunciative "nothing" as posing the possibility of the failure to conclude at first as anterior to the mark of existence, to the power of being, this enunciative at the level of the question takes on all its value from a substantiating of the nothingness of the question itself. The sentence "nothing maybe" opens up, for its part, onto the probability that nothing determines it as question, that nothing at all is determined, that it remains possible that nothing is sure, that it is possible that one cannot conclude except by having recourse to the infinite anteriority of Kafka's The Trial, that there is a pure subsistence of the question with an impossibility of concluding.

Only the eventuality of the real allows something to be determined and the nomination of the nothingness of the pure subsistence of the question is what we have to deal with, at the level of the question itself. "Maybe nothing" could have been a response at the level of the message, but the message was precisely not a question. "Nothing maybe?" at the level of the question only gives a metaphor, namely the power of being is from the beyond, any eventuality has already disappeared from it and any subjectivity also. There is only an effect of meaning, an infinite referring on of meaning to meaning, except that, for us analysts, we are accustomed by experience to structure this referring on on two planes and that this is what changes everything, namely that the metaphor for us is condensation, (14) which means two chains and that the metaphor makes its appearance in an unexpected fashion right in the middle of the message, that it also becomes message in the middle of the question, that the question "family" begins to be articulated and that there emerges right in the middle the million of the millionaire, that the irruption of the question in the message occurs in that it is revealed to us that the message manifests

itself right in the middle of the question, that it comes to light on the path where we are called to the truth, and it is through our question about the truth - I mean the question itself and not the response to the question - that the message comes to light.

It is therefore on this precise point, which is precious for the articulation of the difference between enunciating and enunciation, that we had to pause for a moment. If this possibility of the nothing is not preserved, it prevents us from seeing, despite this omnipresence which is at the source of every possible properly subjective articulation, this gap which is equally very precisely incarnated in the passage from the sign to the signifier in which we see appearing that this is what distinguishes the subject in this difference: is he, for his part, sign when all is said and done, or signifier.

Sign, sign of what? He is precisely the sign of nothing. If the signifier is defined as representing the subject for another signifier - indefinite referring on of meanings - and if this signifies something, it is because the signifier signifies for (15) the other signifier this privileged thing that the subject is qua nothing. It is here that our experience allows us to throw into relief the necessity of the path by means of which there is supported any reality identifiable in the structure in so far as it is the one which allows us to pursue our experience.

The Other does not give any response therefore except that nothing is sure, but this has only one meaning: the fact is that there is something that he wants to know nothing about and it is very precisely this question. At this level the impotence of the Other is rooted in an impossible which indeed is the same one on whose path we have already conducted the question of the subject. "Not possible" was this void in which the unary trait with its dividing value came to emerge. Here we see this impossible embodying itself and joining up with what we have seen earlier was defined by Freud about the constitution of desire in the original prohibition. The impotence of the Other to respond is due to an impasse and this impasse - as we know - is called the limitation of his knowledge. "He did not know that he had died", that he has come to this absoluteness of the Other only by a death not accepted but undergone, and undergone because of the desire of the subject; this the subject knows, as I might say: that the Other must not to know it, that the Other demands not to know it, this is the privileged part in these two not-to-be-confused demands: that of the subject and that of the Other. The fact is that precisely desire is defined as the intersection of that which in the two demands is to be not said. It is only starting from there that there are liberated the demands formulatable everywhere else except in the field of desire.

(16) Thus desire is established at first from its nature of being that which is hidden from the Other by structure; it is precisely the impossible to the Other that becomes the desire of the subject. Desire is established as the part of the demand which

is hidden from the Other. It is here that this Other who guarantees precisely nothing qua Other, qua locus of the word, takes on his constructive incidence. He becomes the veil, the covering, the source of the occultation of the very place of desire and it is here that the object is going to put itself under cover, that if there is an existence which is constituted at first it is that and that it substitutes itself for the existence of the subject himself because the subject qua suspended on the Other remains equally suspended on the fact that on the side of the Other nothing is sure except precisely that he is hiding, he is covering something which is this object, this object which is still maybe nothing in so far as it is going to become the object of desire.

The object of desire exists as this very nothing which the Other cannot know to be all it consists in; this nothing takes on consistency qua hidden from the Other, it becomes the envelope of every object before which the very question of the subject comes to a halt in so far as the subject then does not become more than imaginary. The demand is liberated from the demand of the Other in the measure that the subject excludes this not-knowing of the Other. But there are two possible forms of exclusion: "I wash my hands of what you know or what you do not know, and I act", "you cannot fail to know" means how much I could not be bothered whether you know or whether you do not know. But there is also the other way; "it is absolutely necessary that you should know", (17) and this is the path that the neurotic chooses, and it is for that reason that he is, as I might say, designated in advance as a victim. The right way for the neurotic to resolve the problem of this field of desire qua constituted by this central field of demands which precisely intersect and for that reason must be excluded, is that for his part he finds that the right way is that you should know. If it were not so, he would not be doing a psychoanalysis.

What the Ratman doing getting up at night like Theodore? He shuffles along in his slippers towards the corridor to open the door to the ghost of his dead father in order to show him what? That he has a hard-on. Is this not the revelation of a fundamental behaviour? If he is not able, since it is obvious to him that the Other is not able to do anything, the neurotic wants him at least to know. I spoke to you a little earlier about commitment: the neurotic, contrary to what is believed is someone who commits himself as subject. He shuts himself off from the double outcome of the message and the question; he puts himself in the balance to decide between the "nothing maybe" and the "maybe nothing", he poses himself as a real in face of the Other, namely as impossible. Of course this will be clearer to you if you know how it happens. It is not for nothing that today I brought forward this image of the Freudian Theodore in his nocturnal and phantastical exhibition, the fact is that there is indeed some medium, and to put it better, some instrument for this unbelievable transmutation between the object of desire and the existence of the subject and which is precisely the phallus. (18) But this is reserved for our next remarks. Today I am noting simply that phallus or not the neurotic comes on the scene

as something of the real which specifies itself as impossible. This is not exhaustive; because we cannot apply this definition to phobia. We can only do it the next time, but we can apply it very well to obsessional. You will understand nothing about an obsessional if you do not remember this dimension that he the obsessional incarnates because of the fact that he is too much - it is his form of the impossible - and that once he tries to come out of his ambush position as a hidden object, he has to be a nowhere object. Hence this kind of almost ferocious avidity in the obsessional to be the one who is everywhere in order precisely to be nowhere.

The obsessional's taste for ubiquity is well known, and if you do not spot it you will understand nothing about most of his behaviour. The least thing, because he cannot be everywhere, is in any case to be in several places at once, namely that in any case he can nowhere be laid hold of.

The hysteric has another mode which is of course the same, because it is the root of this one, even though less easy, less immediate to understand. The hysteric also can pose herself as real qua impossible. Her trick then is that this impossible will subsist, if the Other admits her as sign. The hysteric poses herself as the sign of something in which the Other could believe; but even though she constitutes this sign she is quite (19) real and it is necessary at all costs that this sign impose itself and mark the Other.

Here therefore is where there ends up this structure, this fundamental dialectic which entirely reposes on the ultimate weakness of the Other as a guarantee of what is sure. The reality of desire is established there and takes its place there through the medium of something whose paradox we can never stress too much, the dimension of the hidden, namely the dimension which is indeed the most contradictory one that the spirit can construct once it is a question of the truth. What is more natural than the introduction of this field of truth if not the position of a omniscient Other, to the point that the sharpest, the keenest philosopher cannot sustain the very dimension of the truth, except by supposing that it is this science of the one who knows everything which allows him to sustain it.

And nevertheless nothing of the reality of man, nothing of what he seeks for nor of what he follows can be sustained except by this dimension of the hidden, in so far as it is the guarantee that there is indeed an existing object that infers and gives by reflection this dimension of the hidden; when all is said and done it is what gives its only coherence to this other problematic. The source of all faith and eminently of faith in God is indeed the fact that we move about in the very dimension of the fact that even though the miracle of the fact that he must know everything gives him in short his whole subsistence, we act as if he always knew nothing about nine tenths of our intentions. "Not a word to the Queen Mother", this is the principle upon which every subjective constitution is unfolded and is carried out.

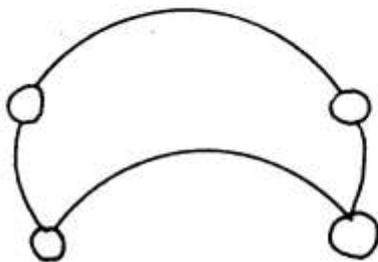
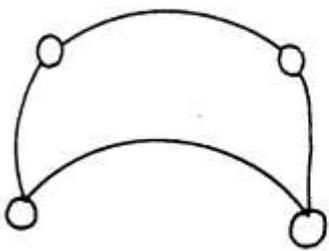
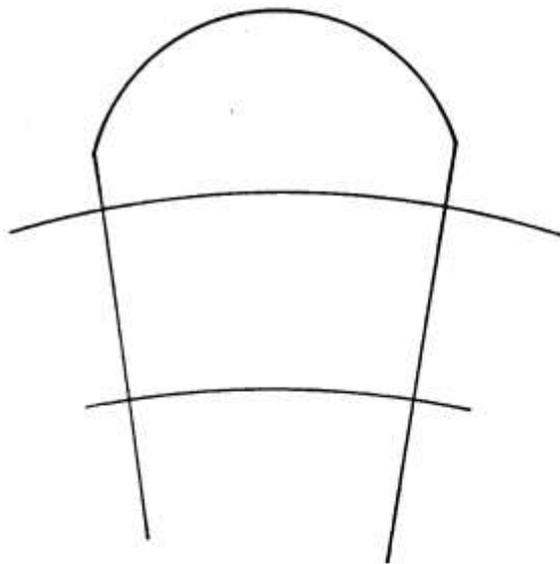
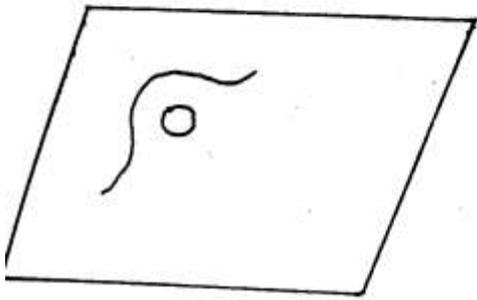
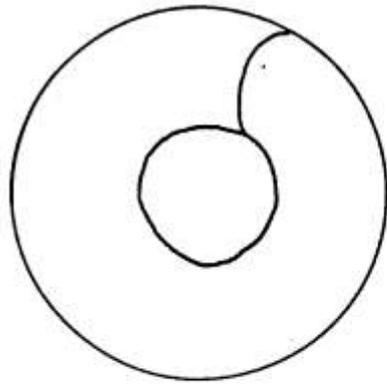
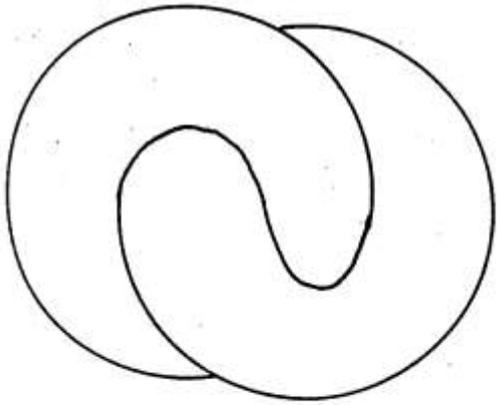
(20) Is it not possible that a behaviour might be conceived which measures up to this true status of desire and is it even possible for us not to see that despite appearances, despite the age-old chit-chat of the moralist, nothing, not a step of our ethical behaviour can be sustained without an exact mapping out of the function of desire? Is it possible for us to content ourselves with examples like the one Kant gives, when to reveal for us the irreducible dimension of practical reason, he gives as example that the honest man, even at the height of his happiness, cannot fail at least for a moment to consider whether he might not renounce this happiness in order not to bear false witness against an innocent man for the benefit of the tyrant. An absurd example because in our own day, but just as much in the time of Kant, is the question not altogether elsewhere? Because the just man is going to weigh up, yes, whether if in order to preserve his family he should or should not bear false witness. But what does that mean? Does that mean that, if he is giving a handle in this way to the hatred of the tyrant against the innocent man, he could bear true witness, denounce his little pal as a Jew when he really is one.

Is it not here that there begins the moral dimension which is not to know what duty we should fulfill or not vis-a-vis the truth, nor whether our behaviour falls under the universal rule, but whether we should or not satisfy the desire of the tyrant?

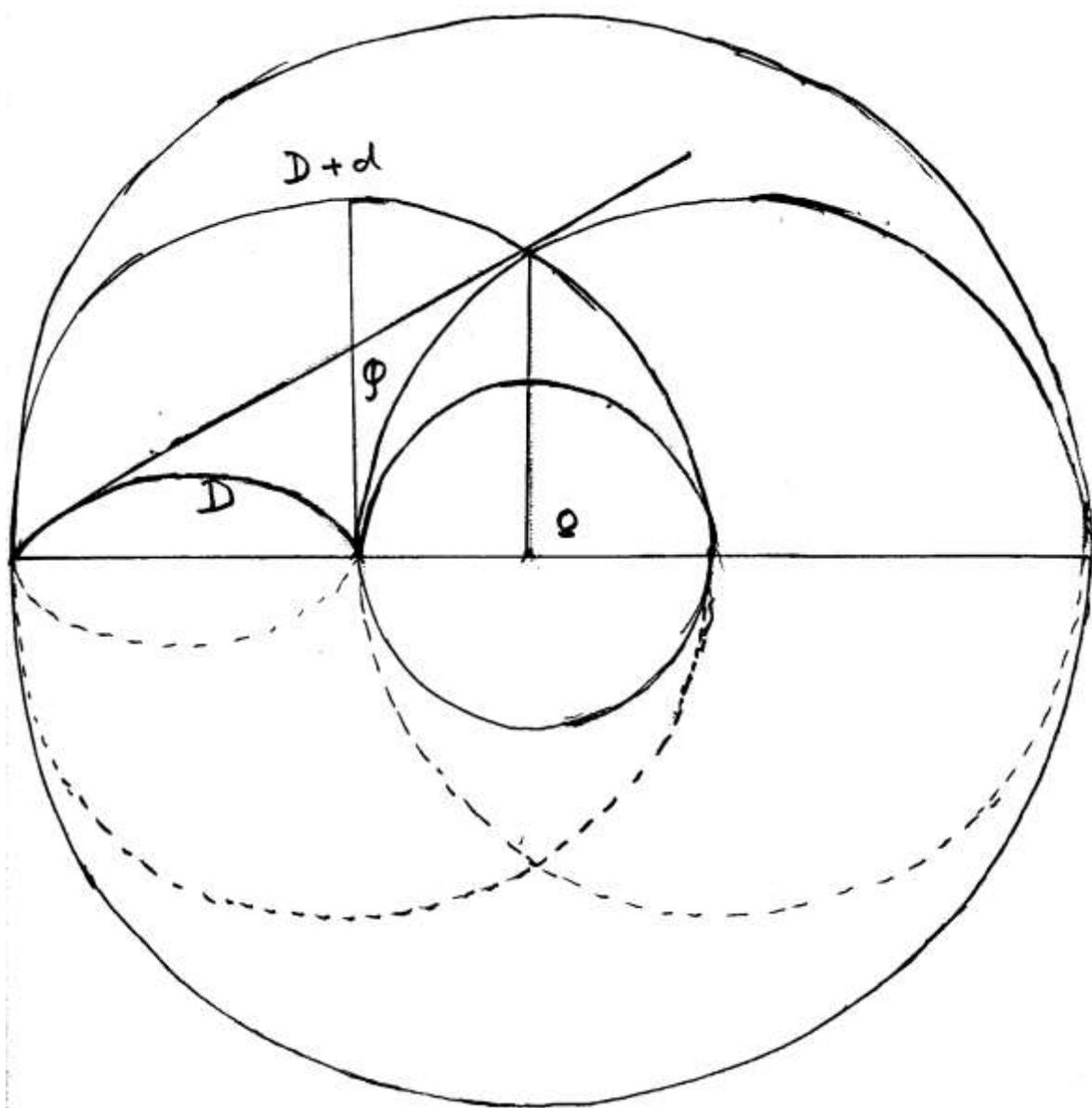
(21) Here is the ethical balance properly speaking; and it is at this level that without making intervene any dramatics from outside - we have no need for it - we also have to deal with what, at the end of the analysis, remains suspended on the Other. It is in so far as the measure of unconscious desire at the end of analysis still remains implicated in this locus of the Other that we incarnate as analysts, that Freud at the end of his work can mark as irreducible the castration complex as unassignable by the subject.

This I will articulate the next time, committing myself to allow you to glimpse at least that a correct definition of the function of phantasy and of its assumption by the subject allows us maybe to go further in the reduction of what has appeared up to now in experience as a final frustration.

21. 3. i 1



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Seminar 15: Wednesday 28 March 1962

Of what use to us is the topology of this surface, of this surface called the torus, in so far as its constituting inflection which makes necessary its turns and returns is what can best suggest to us the law to which the subject is submitted in the processes of identification? This of course will only finally appear to us when we have effectively gone through everything that it represents and how well suited it is to the dialectic proper to the subject in so far as it is a dialectic of identification.

By way of reference therefore and in order that when I highlight one or other point, when I accentuate one or other relief, you may record, as I might say at every moment the degree of orientation, the degree of relevance, of what I am putting forward at that moment with respect to a certain goal that is to be attained, I will tell you that at the limit what can be inscribed on this torus, in so far as it can be of use to us, is going to be symbolised more or less in such a way, that this shape, these circles that are drawn, these letters next to each of these circles, are going to designate it immediately for us. The torus no doubt appears to have a privileged value. Do not think that it is the only form of non-spherical surface that is capable of interesting us; I could not encourage too much those (2) who have some leanings, some gifts for this, to refer to what is called algebraic topology and to the shapes that it proposes to you in something which, if you wish, as compared to classical geometry, the one that you keep written on the seat of your pants because of your passage through secondary education, presents itself exactly as an analogy for what I am trying to do for you on the symbolic plane, what I called an elastic logic, a supple logic. This is still more manifest for the geometry involved. Because the geometry involved in algebraic topology is presented as the geometry of figures which are made of rubber. It is possible that the authors bring into play this caoutchouc, this rubber as they say in English, in order to get across to the listener what is involved; it is a matter of figures which can be deformed and which through all the deformations remain in a constant relationship. This torus is not required to present itself here in its filled-out shape. Do not think that among the surfaces which are defined, which must be defined, the ones that essentially interest us, closed surfaces, in the measure that in any case the subject presents himself as something closed, closed surfaces, however ingenious you may be, you see that there is a

whole field open to the most outrageous inventions. Do not think moreover that imagination lends itself all that willingly to the forging of these supple, complex shapes, which coil around one another and get themselves into knots. You have only to try to accustom yourself to the theory of knots in order to see how difficult it is already to represent for oneself the most simple combinations; this will still not take you far. Because it can be proved that however complicated it may be, you will always be (3) able to reduce any closed surface by means of appropriate procedures to something which cannot go any further than a sphere provided with some appendices, among which precisely those which from the torus are represented here as a handle annexed to, a handle added onto a sphere, as I recently drew it on the blackboard for you, a handle sufficing to transform the sphere and the handle into a torus from the point of view of its topological value.

Therefore, everything can be reduced to the adjunction to the shape of a sphere with a certain number of handles plus a certain number of other eventual shapes.

I hope that in the session before the holidays I will be able to initiate you into this shape which is very amusing - but when I think that the majority of you here do not even suspect its existence! - it is what is called in English a cross-cap or what one can designate by the French word mitre. So, imagine a torus which would have as a property the inversion of its surface at some part of its circuit, I mean that at a place which is put here between two points A and B the outside surface goes through, the surface which is in front goes through the surface which is behind, the surfaces intersect one another. I can only indicate it to you here. This has very curious properties and perhaps even for us rather exemplary ones, in so far as in any case it is a surface which has this property that the outside surface for its part, if you wish, is found to be continuous with the inside face in passing to the inside of the object and therefore can return in one single circuit from the other side of the surface (4) from which it started. It is something very easy to produce in the simplest fashion when you do something with a strip of paper which consists in taking it and twisting it in such a way that its edge is stuck on to the extreme edge after being reversed. You will see that it is a surface which has effectively only a single face, in this sense that something travelling on it never encounters in a certain sense any limit, passes from one side to the other without your being able to grasp at any instant where the conjuring trick has taken place.

Therefore there is here the possibility on the surface of any sphere whatsoever of coming to produce, to simplify any surface however complicated it may be. Let us add here the possibility of holes; you cannot go beyond that, namely that however complicated the surface you imagine may be, I mean for example however complicated the surface you have to make may be, you can never find anything more complicated than that. So that there is a certain naturalness in the reference to the torus as being intuitively the most simple, the most accessible shape.

This can teach us something. In this regard I told you the signification that we could give by convention, by artifice, to two types of circular axis, in so far as they are privileged here. The one which makes the circuit of what one could call the generating circle of the torus, since it is a torus of revolution in so far as it is open to being indefinitely repeated, in some way the same and always different, is well designed to represent for us signifying insistence and especially the insistence of (5) repetitive demand. On the other hand what is implied in this succession of circuits, namely a circularity that is accomplished while at the same time being unnoticed by the subject which is found to offer us an obvious, passive, and in a way maximum symbolisation for intuitive sensibility of what is implied in the very terms of unconscious desire, in so far as the subject follows its highways and byways without knowing it. Throughout all these demands, this unconscious desire is in a way by itself the metonymy of all these demands, and you see here the living incarnation of these references to which I have accustomed you, habituated you throughout my discourse, specifically to those of metaphor and metonymy.

Here, metonymy finds in a way its most tangible application as being manifested by desire in so far as desire is what we articulate as presupposed in the succession of all the demands in so far as they are repetitive. We find ourselves before something where you see that the circle described here merits that we should attach to it the symbol D, qua symbol of Demand. This something involving the inside circle must indeed have something to do with what I will call metonymical desire. Well then, there is among these circles, the test that we can make of it, a privileged circle which is easy to describe: it is the circle which starting from outside the torus finds the means of completing itself, not simply by passing through the central hole, but by enveloping the central hole without for all that passing by the central hole. This circle has the privilege of (6) doing both things at once. It passes through and it envelopes it. It is therefore made up of the addition of these two circles, namely it represents $D + d$. The addition of demand and desire, allows us to symbolise in a way demand with its underlay of desire.

Why is this of interest? The interest of this is that if we end up at an elementary dialectic, namely that of the opposition between two demands, if it is inside this same torus that I symbolise by another analogous circle the demand of the Other with what that will involve for us of "either..., or...", "either what I demand", "or what you demand", we see this everyday in daily life; this to recall that in the privileged conditions at the level we are going to look for it, to interrogate it, in analysis, it is necessary that we should remember this, namely the ambiguity that there always is in the very usage of the term "either..., or...", this term of disjunction symbolised in logic as: $a \vee b$.

There are two usages of this "either..., or...". It is not for nothing that logic will mark all its efforts and, as I might say.

That the "either..., or..." concerning for example these two circles can mean two things: the choice between one or other of these two circles. But does that mean that simply as regards the position of the "either..., or..." there is exclusion? No, what (7) you see is that in the circle into which I am going to introduce this "either..., or..." there is involved what I can call the intersection symbolised in logic by

The relationship of desire to a certain intersection involving certain laws is not simply called on to put on a matter of fact terrain what one could call the contract, the agreement between demands; given the profound heterogeneity that exists between this field and that one, this is sufficiently symbolised by the following: here we are dealing with the closing of the surface and there properly speaking with its internal void. This puts before us a model which shows us that it involves something other than grasping the part the demands have in common. In other words, it will be a matter for us of knowing in what measure this shape can allow us to symbolise as such the constituent parts of desire, in so far as desire for the subject is this something that he has to constitute along the path of the demand. I am indicating to you already that there are two points, two dimensions that we can privilege in this circle which is particularly significant in the topology of the torus: on the one hand the distance which connects the centre of the central void to this point which is found to be, which can be defined as, a sort of tangency thanks to which a plane intersecting the torus is going to allow us to separate out this privileged circle in the simplest way. This is what will give us the definition, the measure of small o qua object of desire.

On the other hand this, in so far as it is only itself locatable, definable, with respect to the very diameter of this exceptional (8) circle, it is in the radius, in the half if you wish of this diameter, that we see what is the mainspring, the final measure of the relationship of the subject to desire, namely the small qua symbol of the phallus. This is what we are heading towards and what will take on its meaning, its applicability and its import from the path that we will have taken beforehand, in order to allow us to succeed in making this image itself more manageable, tangible for you and up to a certain point suggestive of a truly structural intensity.

This having been said, it is of course understood that the subject, in what we have to deal with in our partner who summons us, in what we have before us in the form of this summons, and what comes to speak before us, only what one can define and punctuate as the subject identifies itself. It is worth recalling that because, after all, it is easy for thinking to drift. Why, if one does not dot the i's, should one not say that the drive identifies itself and that an image identifies itself?

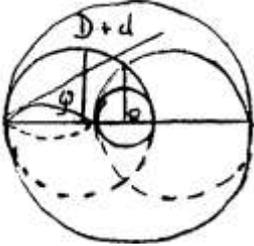
Nothing can correctly be said to identify itself, the term identification is only introduced into Freud's thinking from the moment that one can to some degree, even if this is not articulated in Freud, consider this identification as the dimension of the subject - and that does not mean that this does not take us much further than the subject.

The proof here also - I am reminding you of something about which one cannot know whether it is in the antecedents, the first steps or in the future of my discourse that I highlight it - is that the first form of identification and the one which is referred to (9) with such frivolity, such pitiful parroting is this identification which, we are told, incorporates, or again - adding a confusion to the imprecision of the first formula - introjects. Let us be content with incorporates which is the best. How can one even begin with this first form of identification when not even the slightest indication, not the slightest reference point except a vaguely metaphorical one, is given to you in such a formula about what it can even mean? Or indeed if one speaks about incorporation, it is indeed because something must be happening at the level of the body. I do not know if I can push things far enough this year, I hope so all the same, we have time enough before us to get there, returning to where we began, to give its full meaning and its true meaning to this incorporation of the first identification.

As you will see, there is no other means of bringing it into play except by rejoining it through a thematic which has already been elaborated from the time of the most antique, mythical, indeed religious traditions under the term of "mystical body". Impossible not to take things in a span which goes from the primitive Semitic conception: there is between the age-old father and all those who descend from him a bodily identity, but at the other extreme you know that there is the notion which I have just called by its name, that of the mystical body, in so far as it is from a body that a church is constituted: and it is not for nothing that Freud, to define for us the identity of the ego in its relationships with what he calls on that occasion Massenpsychologie refers to the corporality of the Church.

(10) But how can I make you begin from there without giving rise to all the confusions and make you believe that, as the term mystical sufficiently indicates, it is on quite different paths to those along which our experience would wish to draw us, it is only retroactively, in a way, returning to the necessary conditions of our experience, that we can introduce ourselves to the antecedence suggested by every attempt to tackle in its fullness the reality of identification. Therefore the approach that I chose in the second form of identification is not by chance; it is because this identification is graspable by approaching it by way of the pure signifier, because we can grasp in a clear and rational fashion an angle from which to enter into what is meant by the identification of the subject in so far as the subject brings to birth the unary trait, rather than the unary trait once it has been detached makes the subject appear as one who counts - in the double sense of the term.

The scope for ambiguity that you can give to this formula - the one who actively counts no doubt, but also the one who counts quite simply in reality, the one who really counts, obviously is going to take some time to find where he is in his count, exactly the time that we will take to go through everything that I have just designated for you here - will have for you its full meaning (schema): Shackleton and his companions in the Antarctic



several hundred kilometres from the coast, explorers submitted to the greatest frustration, one which resulted not only from the lacks which were more or less elucidated at the time - because it is a text which is already (11) about fifty years old - from the more or less elucidated lacks in a

special food which was still being tested at that time, but who one might say were disoriented in what I might call a still virgin landscape, not yet inhabited by human imagination, tell us in notes which are very peculiar to read, that they always counted themselves as one more than they were, that they could not make it out: "We were always asking ourselves where the missing person had gone", the missing person who was not missing except because of the fact that their whole effort of counting always suggested to them that there was one more, and therefore one less.

You put your finger here on the appearance in its naked state of the subject who is nothing more than that, than the possibility of one more signifier, of an additional 1 thanks to which he himself notes there is a one who is missing.

If I remind you of this it is simply to highlight in a dialectic which includes the most extreme terms where we situate our path and where you may believe and sometimes even ask yourselves if we are not forgetting certain reference points. You may for example even ask yourselves what relationship there is between the path that I have made you travel and these two terms with which we have had to deal, we have constantly to deal with but at different moments, of the Other and the thing.

Of course, the subject himself in the final analysis is destined for the thing, but his law, more exactly his fatum is this path that he can only describe by passing through the Other in so far (12) as the Other is marked by the signifier, and it is on this side (en deca) of this necessary passage through the signifier that desire and its object are constituted as such. The appearance of this dimension of the Other and the emergence of the subject, I cannot remind you too much of it in order to give you properly the meaning of what is involved and whose paradox, I think, ought to be sufficiently articulated for you in the fact that desire - you should understand it in the most natural sense - can and must constitute itself only in the tension created by this relationship to the Other, which takes its origin from the fact of the advent of the unary trait in so far as at first and since it begins with the thing it always effaces this something which is quite a different thing to this one which has always

been irreplaceable; and we find there from the first step - I point this out to you in passing - the formula, here is where Freud's formula ends: there where the thing was I must come. It should be replaced at the origin by: "Wo Es war, da durch den Ein", rather by "durch den Eins" there by the one qua one, the unary trait, "werde Ich", the "I" will come: the whole path is completely traced out at every point of the path.

It is here indeed that I tried to suspend you the last time by showing you the progress necessary at this moment in so far as it can only be established by the effective dialectic which is accomplished in the relationship with the Other.

I am astonished at the kind of dullness into which it seemed to me there fell my nevertheless carefully worked out articulation of "nothing maybe" and "maybe nothing". What must be done then to make you sensitive to it?

(13) Perhaps precisely my text at this point and the specification of their distinction as message in question, then as response, but not at the level of the question, as suspension of the question at the level of the question, was too complex to be simply heard by those who did not note its detours in order to come back to it. However disappointed I may be it is necessarily I who am wrong, that is why I am coming back to it in order to make myself understood. Will I not suggest to you today for example the necessity at least of coming back to it; and when all is said and done it is simply by asking you: do you think that "nothing sure, rien de sûr", as an enunciating seems to you to give rise to the slightest sliding, to the slightest ambiguity with "surely nothing, sûrement rien"? It is all the same similar. There is the same difference between the "nothing maybe", and the "maybe nothing". I would even say that there is in the first one, the "nothing sure", the same undermining quality of the question at the origin as in the "nothing maybe". And even in the "surely nothing", there is the same power of eventual response no doubt, but always anticipated with respect to the question, as it is easy to put your finger on, it seems to me, if I remind you that it is always before any question and for reasons of security, as I might say, that one learns to say, in life when one is small, surely nothing. That means surely nothing other than what is already expected, namely what one can in advance consider as reducible to zero, like the loops. The non-anxiety-provoking quality of Erwartung, here is what Freud was able to articulate for us on occasion, nothing that we did not know already: when one is like that one is calm, but one is not always so.

(14) So therefore what we see, is that the subject in order to find the thing sets out at first in the opposite direction, that there is no means of articulating these first steps of the subject, except by a nothing which it is important to make you sense in this dimension, at once metaphorical and metonymical, of the first signifying game because every time that we analysts have to deal with this relationship of the subject to the nothing, we slip regularly between two slopes: the common slope

which tends towards a nothing of destruction, the shameful interpretation of aggressivity considered as purely reducible to the biological force of aggression, which is in no way sufficient, except in a degraded way, to support the tendency to nothing as it arises at a certain necessary stage of Freudian thinking in the death instinct just before he introduces identification.

The other, is the nihilisation which could be assimilated to Hegelian negativity. The nothing that I am trying to get to hold together for you at this initial moment in the establishment of the subject is something else. The subject introduces the nothing as such and this nothing is to be distinguished from any ens rationis which is that of classical negativity, from any imaginary being which is that of a being whose existence is impossible, the famous centaur which brings the logicians, all the logicians, indeed the metaphysicians to a halt at the beginning of their path towards science, which is not either the ens privativum, which is properly speaking what Kant admirably in the definition of his four nothings which he turns to such little account, called the nihil negativum, namely to use his own terms: leere Gegenstand ohne Begriff, an empty object, but let us add without concept, (15) without any grasp on it being possible. It is for that reason, to introduce it, that I had to put before you again the network of the whole graph, namely the constitutive network of the relationship to the Other with all its reverberations.

I would like, in order to lead you onto this path, to pave your way with flowers. I am going to try it today, I mean to mark my intentions when I tell you that it is starting from the problematic of the beyond of the demand that the object is constituted as object of desire; I mean that it is because the Other does not answer, except with "nothing maybe", that the worst is not always sure, that the subject is going to find in an object the very virtues of his initial demand. You should understand that it is in order to pave your way with flowers that I am recalling these truths of common experience whose signification is not sufficiently recognised, and try to make you sense that it is not by chance, analogy, comparison, nor just flowers but profound affinities which will make me indicate to you at the end the affinity of the object with this Other - with a big 0 - in so far for example as it manifests itself in love, that the famous speech of Eliante in Le Misanthrope is taken from the De natura rerum of Lucretius:

"The palefaced lady's lily white, perforce;
The swarthy one's a sweet brunette of course;
The spindly lady has a slender grace;
The fat one has a most majestic pace;
The plain one, with her dress in disarray,
They classify as beaute negligee..."

(16) It is nothing other than the impossible-to-efface sign of this fact that the object of desire is only constituted in the relationship to the Other in so far as it takes its origin itself

from the value of the unary trait. There is no privilege in the object except in this absurd value given to each trait of being a privilege.

What else is still necessary to convince you of the structural dependency of this constitution of the object (object of desire) on the initial dialectic of the signifier, in so far as it runs aground on the non-response of the Other, if not the path we have already taken of Sadian research which I showed you at length - and if it is lost, you should know at least that I have committed myself to going back on it in a preface that I promised for an edition of Sade - we cannot overlook with what I am calling here the structuring affinity of this journey towards the Other in so far as it determines any setting up of the object of desire; that we see in Sade at every moment mingled, woven together with one another, invective - I mean invective against the Supreme Being, his negation being only a form of invective even if it is the most authentic negation - absolutely interwoven with what I would call, in order to approach it, to tackle it a little, not so much the destruction of the object as what we could take first of all for its simulacrum because you know the exceptional resistances of the victims of the Sadian myth to all the trials which the romantic text puts them through. And then what, what is meant by this sort of transference onto the mother incarnated in nature of (17) a certain and fundamental abomination of all her acts? Should this dissimulate from us what is involved and what we are told nevertheless is involved in imitating her in his acts of destruction and by pushing them to the final term by a will applied to forcing her to recreate something else, which means what? Giving his place back to the creator.

When all is said and done in the final analysis, Sade said it without knowing it, he articulates this by his enunciating: I am giving you your abominable reality, you the father, by substituting myself for you in this violent action against the mother. Of course, the mythical returning of the object to nothing is not simply aimed at the privileged victim, who is when all is said and done adored as object of desire, but the very million-fold multitude of everything that there is. Remember the anti-social plots of Sade's heroes. This returning of the object to nothing essentially simulates the annihilation of signifying power. This is the other contradictory term of this fundamental relationship to the Other as it is established in Sadian desire, and it is sufficiently indicated in the final testamentary wish of Sade in so far as it is aimed precisely at this term which I specified for you of the second death, the death of being itself in so far as Sade in his will specifies that of his tomb and intentionally of his memory despite the fact that he is a writer there should literally remain no trace and a thicket ought to be regrown over the place where he is inhumed, that of him essentially as subject it is the no traces which indicates where he wants to affirm himself: very precisely as what I called the annihilation of the signifying power.

(18) If there is something else that I have to remind you of here to sufficiently punctuate the legitimacy of the necessary

inclusion of the object of desire in this relationship to the Other in so far as it implies the mark of the signifier as such, I will designate it for you less in Sade than in one of the most sensitive recent, contemporary, commentaries of him, indeed the most illustrious of them. This text which appeared immediately after the war in an issue of Les Temps Modernes, recently re-edited through the efforts of our friend Jean-Jacques Pauvert in the new edition of the first version of Justine, is the preface by Paulhan. We cannot be indifferent to such a text, in so far as you follow here the detours of my discourse; because it is striking that it is by the simple paths of rhetorical rigour - you will see that there is no other guide to the discourse of Paulhan, the author of Fleurs de Tarbes - I mean that the ever so subtle separating out by him in this way of everything that had been articulated up to the present on the subject of the signification of Sadianism, namely what he calls the "complicitousness of the Sadian imagination with its object", namely the view from the outside, I mean through the approach that can be made of it by a literal analysis, the surest view, the strictest one that one can give to the essence of masochism, of which precisely he says nothing except that he makes us sense very clearly that it is along this path, that this is the last word on Sade's approach, and not to judge it clinically and in a way from outside where nevertheless the result is manifest. It is difficult to better offer oneself to all the mistreatment of society than Sade did at every instant, but this is not the essential thing, the essential thing being suspended in this text (19) of Paulhan, which I would ask you to read, which proceeds by way of a rhetorical analysis of the Sadian text to make us sense, only behind a veil, the point of convergence in so far as it situates itself in this quite obvious reversal founded on the most profound complicity with that of which the victim here is when all is said and done only the symbol marked by a sort of substance absent from the ideal of Sadian victims. It is as object that the Sadian subject cancels himself out, by means of which effectively he rejoins what appears to us phenomenologically then in the texts of Masoch, namely that the end, that the high point of masochistic jpuissance is not so much in the fact that it offers itself to support or not one or other bodily pain, but in this extreme particularity that namely in the books you will always find in the small or big texts of the masochistic phantasmagoria, this cancelling out properly speaking of the subject in so far as he makes himself pure object. There is no end to this except the moment when any masochistic novel whatsoever, arrives at this point which from the outside may appear so superfluous, indeed a de luxe embellishment, which is properly speaking that this masochistic subject forges himself as being the object of a bargaining or very exactly of a sale between the two others between whom he is passed like a property, a venal property - and you should note not a fetish - because the final term is indicated in the fact that he is a vile piece of cheaply sold stuff that there would be no reason even to preserve as an antique slave who at least constituted himself, imposed respect for himself, by his market value.

(20) All this, these detours, this path paved with the flowers of

Tarbes precisely or literary flowers, in order to mark clearly for you what I mean when I talk about what I have accentuated for you: namely the profound perturbation of jouissance, in so far as jouissance is defined with respect to the thing, by the dimension of the Other as such in so far as this dimension of the Other is defined by the introduction of the signifier.

Just three more little steps forward and then I will put off to the next time the rest of this discourse lest you may become too aware of the fluey fatigue that is hanging over me today.

Jones is a curious personage in the history of analysis: as regards the history of analysis what he impresses on my mind, I will tell you immediately to continue this path of flowers today, is what diabolical wish to dissimulate there must have been in Freud for him to have entrusted the task of writing his own biography to this cunning and therefore short-sighted Welshman, so that he would not go too far in the work that was entrusted to him. It is there in the article on symbolism which I devoted to the work of Jones, which does not simply signify the desire to close my article with something clever, what that on which I concluded signifies, namely the comparison between the activity of the wily Welshman and the work of a chimney sweep. In effect he swept all the tubes very well and I can be accorded this credit that in the aforesaid article I followed him through all (21) the detours of the day's work until I emerged with him completely black through the door that opens out onto the salon, as you remember maybe. Something which earned me from the part of another eminent member of the analytic Society, one of those whom I best appreciate and love, another Welshman, the assurance in a letter that he really did not understand in any way the utility that I apparently believed was to be found in this scrupulous approach.

Jones never did any more in his biography to mark all the same a little his distance than to bring a little light from outside, namely the points where the Freudian construction is found to be in disaccord with, in contradiction with the Darwinian gospel, which is quite simply on his part a really grotesque manifestation of chauvinistic superiority.

Jones therefore, in the course of a work whose progress is fascinating by reason of its very miscognitions, especially in connection with the phallic stage and his exceptionally plentiful experience of female homosexuals, Jones encounters the paradox of the castration complex which constitutes undoubtedly the best of all the things to which he adhered - and did well to adhere to - to articulate his experience in which literally this was the only thing he ever penetrated. The proof is the introduction of this term, which is certainly handy provided one knows what to make of it, namely that one knows how to spot in it what must not be done in order to understand castration: the term aphanisis. To define the meaning of what I can call here without forcing anything the Oedipal effect, Jones tells us something which could not be (22) better situated in our discourse: here he finds himself, whether he wants to or not, sharing the notion that the Other, as

I articulated for you the last time, prohibits the object or the desire. My "or" is or seems to be exclusive. Not altogether: "either you desire what I desired, I the dead God, and there is no other proof - but it is enough - of my existence than this commandment which prohibits its object to you"; it constitutes it precisely in the dimension of the lost: "You can no longer, whatever you do, do anything but find another, never that one". It is the most intelligent interpretation that I can give to this step that Jones takes so lightly - and I assure you with drums playing - when it is a matter of marking the entrance of these homosexuals into the sulphurous domain which from then on will be their habitat: either the object or the desire, I assure you that there is no delay about it.

If I dwell on it, it is in order to give to this choice: "vel... vel...", the best interpretation, namely that I add to it, I am allowing my interlocutor to speak in the best way possible. "Either you renounce desire", Jones tells us. When one says it quickly it may seem to be self-evident, in the measure that previously our soul and at the same time our understanding had been given an opportunity to relax by translating castration for us as aphanisis. But what does it mean to renounce desire? Is it all that tenable, this aphanisis of desire, if we give it this function that it has in Jones, of being a subject of fear.

Is it even conceivable first of all in the experiential fact, at (23) the point that Freud brings it into play - and I grant it to him - in one of the possible exemplary outcomes of the Freudian conflict, that of the female homosexual? Let us look closely at it. This desire which disappears, which you as subject renounce, does our experience not teach us that this means that henceforth your desire is going to be so well hidden that it can appear to be absent for a while? Let us even say that like our cross-cap or mitre surface, it is inverted in the demand. The demand here, once again, receives its own message in an inverted form. But in the final analysis, what does this hidden desire mean if not what we call and discover in experience as repressed desire? There is only one thing in any case that we know very well we will never find in the subject: it is the fear of repression as such, at the very moment that it is operating, when its happening. If in aphanisis something which concerns desire is involved, it is arbitrary given the way that our experience teaches us to see it concealing itself.

It is unthinkable that an analyst should articulate that there can be formed in consciousness something which is supposed to be the fear of the disappearance of desire. Where desire disappears, namely in repression, the subject is completely included in, not detached from this disappearance. And we know it: anxiety, if it is produced, is never about the disappearance of desire, but of the object that it dissimulates, of the truth of desire, or if you wish again of what we do not know about the desire of the Other. Every questioning by consciousness about desire as being able to lose strength can only be complicituous. Consci moreover means accomplice, which is something here in (24) which etymology takes on its freshness again from experience

and it is indeed for that reason that I reminded you earlier in my path paved with flowers about the relationship between the Sadian ethics and its object. This is what we call ambivalence, ambiguity, the reversibility of certain instinctual (pulsionnels) couples, but all we see by simply saying that about this equivalent, is this turning back on itself, the subject becoming object and the object subject. We do not grasp the true mainspring of it which always implies this reference to the big Other where all of this takes on its meaning.

Therefore aphanisis explained as source of the anxiety in the castration complex is properly speaking an exclusion of the problem; because the only question that an analytical theorist has to pose here - and one understands very well that he has in effect to pose a question, because the castration complex remains up to the present a reality which is not completely elucidated - the only question that he has to pose himself is the one that begins from the fortunate fact that thanks to Freud who bequeathed his discovery to him at a much more advanced stage than the point to which he, the analytical theorist, can get to, the question is to know why the instrument of desire, the phallus, takes on such a decisive value, why it is it and not desire which is implicated in anxiety, in a fear about which it is all the same not vain that we have testified, as regards the term aphanisis, in order not to forget that every anxiety is an anxiety about nothing, in so far as it is from the "nothing maybe" that the subject has to barricade himself, which means that for a time, it is the best hypothesis for him: nothing (25) maybe to fear. Why is it here that the function of the phallus emerges, here where in effect without it everything would be so easy to understand, unfortunately in a fashion altogether outside experience? Why the phallus thing, why does the phallus come as a measure at the moment when it is a question of what? Of the void included at the heart of the demand, namely of the beyond of the pleasure principle, of that which makes of the demand its eternal repetition, namely of what constitutes the drive. Once more we are brought back to this point which I will not go beyond today that desire is constructed on the path of a question which menaces it and which belongs to the domain of not being (n'etre), which you will allow me to introduce here with this play on words. A final reflection was suggested to me lately with the every day presentation of the way in which it would be appropriate to articulate honestly, and not simply by sniggering, the eternal principles of the Church and the vacillating detours of different national laws about birth control, namely that the first raison d'etre, which no legislator has up to the present taken into account for the birth of a child, is that one desires it and that we who know well the role of this - whether it was or was not desired - on the whole development of the subsequent subject, it does not seem that we have felt the need to recall it, to introduce it, to make it understood throughout this drunken discussion which oscillates between obvious utilitarian necessities of demographic policy and the anxiety provoking fear - let us not forget it - of the abominations that eugenics eventually promise us.

It is a first step, a tiny little step, but an essential step - and you will see how much it needs to be tested - deciding (26) between such a possibility of choosing, to point out the constitutive effective relationship in any future destiny to be respected as it were as the essential mystery of the being who is to come that he should have been desired and why.

Remember that it often happens that the basis of the desire of a child is simply the fact that nobody says: that he should be a not one, that he should be my curse on the world.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 4 April 1962

Those who for diverse reasons, personal or other, distinguished themselves by their absence from what we call the provinciale meeting of the Society are going to have to put up with a little aside; because for the moment, it is to the others that I am going to address myself, in so far as I owe them a debt, an agreeable sort of debt. Perhaps they may have suspected it, because I said something at this little congress. This was to defend the position they had taken up and I must admit that on my part this masked a certain dissatisfaction with them.

One must all the same philosophize a bit about the nature of what is called a congress. In principle, it is one of these sorts of meetings at which people speak, but at which everyone knows that something he is saying has some element of bad taste about it, so that it is quite natural that nothing is said there except pompous nothings, each one ordinarily remaining locked in the role he has to protect.

This is not altogether what happens at what we more modestly call our Journees. But for some time everyone is very modest. They are called conferences, meetings. This changes nothing... at bottom they always remain congresses.

(2) There is the question of rappports [reports, relationships]. It seems to me that it is worth while dwelling on this term because after all it is rather amusing when one looks closely at it: rapport to what, about what, rapport between what, even indeed rapport against what, as when one talks about an informer (rapporteur). Is this really what is meant? We would have to see. In any case if the word rapport is clear when one says: "The report of Mr So-and-so on the financial situation", one cannot all the same say that one is completely at ease in giving what should be an analogous meaning to a term like a "report on anxiety" for example. You must admit that it is rather curious to be giving a report on anxiety, or on poetry for that matter, or on a certain number of terms of this type. I hope all the same that the strangeness of the thing is obvious to you, and that it specifies not simply congresses of psychoanalysts, but a certain number of other congresses, let us say, of philosophers in general.

The term report, I must say, makes one hesitate; moreover at one time, I myself did not hesitate to describe as a discourse what I

had to say about analogous terms: "Discourse on psychic causality", for example. That looks a bit precious. I came back to report like everyone else.

All the same this term and its usage are there to make you pose the question precisely about the degree of appropriateness against which these strange rapports with their alien objects are measured. It is quite certain that there is a certain proportion between these aforesaid reports and a certain constitutive type of the question to which it refers: the void at the centre of my torus for example is very tangible when we (3) are dealing with anxiety or desire. Which should allow us to believe, to understand, that the best signifying echo that we could have of the term scientific rapport on this occasion, might be with what is also called rapport when we are dealing with sexual relationships; both one and the other are not without a rapport to the question we are dealing with, but only just.

It is here indeed that we rediscover this dimension of the "not without", (pas sans), as grounding the very point at which we are introduced into desire and in so far as access to desire requires that the subject should not be without having it. Having what? That is the whole question. In other words, that access to desire resides in a fact, in the fact that the covetousness of the being who is called human must be inaugurally depressed in order to be restored to the echelons of a power of which there is question as regards what it is, but above all, towards what this power is exerting itself. Now obviously, tangibly, it seems that what it is exerting itself towards throughout all the metamorphoses of human desire, is something always more tangible, more specified which is grasped by us as this central hole, this thing which it is ever more necessary to turn around in dealing with this desire that we know, this human desire in so far as it is more and more unformed. This is what makes it legitimate therefore up to a certain point that their reports, that of the report on anxiety in particular the other day, could only accede to the question by being not without a rapport to the question.

(4) This does not mean all the same that the "without", as I might say, should get too far ahead of the "not", in other words that one may believe a little bit too easily that one can respond to the constitutive void at the centre of a subject by an excessive poverty in the means of approaching it; and here you will allow me to evoke the myth of the foolish virgin which, in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, corresponds so nicely to that of Penia, of extreme poverty, in Plato's Symposium. Penia succeeds in her efforts because she knows about Venus; but it is not necessarily so: the improvidence that the aforesaid foolish virgin symbolises may very well make her miss becoming pregnant.

Now, where is the unforgiveable limit in this affair - because after all this indeed is what is involved: it is the style of what can be communicated in a certain mode of communication that we are trying to define, the one which forces me to come back to anxiety here not in order to admonish nor to lecture those who spoke, not without some faltering - the limit obviously being

sought, from which one can reproach congresses in general about their results, where is it to be sought? Because we are speaking about something which allows us to grasp its void when it is a matter for example of speaking about desire; are we going to look for it in this sort of sin in desire against some fire or other of passion, of the passion for truth for example, which is the mode onto which we could very well pin for example a certain manner, a certain style: the university manner for example? This would be altogether too convenient, it would be much too easy.

(5) I am certainly not going to parody here the famous roar of the vomiting of the Eternal Being before a mediocre lukewarmness, a certain kind of heat ends just as well - as we know - with sterility. And in truth, our morality, a morality which already holds up very well, Christian morality, says that there is only one sin: the sin against the spirit. Well then, we for our part are saying that there is no sin against desire, any more than there is a fear of aphanisis, in the sense that Mr Jones understands it. We cannot say in any case that we can reproach ourselves for not desiring well enough. There is only one thing - and this we can do nothing about - there is only one thing to be dreaded: it is an obtuseness in recognising the curve proper to the progress of this infinitely flat being whose necessary propulsion I demonstrate for you on this closed object which I am here calling the torus, which is in truth only the most innocent shape that the aforesaid curve can take on since in another different shape which is no less possible nor less widespread, it is in the very structure of these shapes to which I introduced you a little the last time, that the subject in displacing himself finds himself with his left placed on the right and this without knowing how it could have happened, how it came about. In this respect, all those who are listening to me here are not privileged in this respect about this; nor am I, I would say, up to a certain point; that can happen to me just as it happens to others.

The only difference between them and me up to the present, it seems to me, lies in the work that I put into it in so far as I give a little bit more to it than they do.

I may say that in a certain number of things which were advanced (6) on a subject that no doubt I have not tackled at all: anxiety - this is not what decided me to announce to you that it will be the subject of my seminar next year, if the times we live in will allow there to be one - on this subject of anxiety I heard many strange things, risky things, not all erroneous, that I would not have to reprove, addressing myself specifically to one or other of them, one at a time. It seemed to me nevertheless that what was revealed there in terms of a certain weakness was indeed that of a without (sans) and not at all of a nature to encompass what I call the void of the centre. All the same some remarks from my last seminar should have put you on your guard about the most pertinent points; and it is for this reason that it appears to me just as legitimate to tackle the question from this angle today because this links on exactly to last week's discourse. It is therefore all the same not for nothing that in it I put the

accent on, recalled, the distance that separates in our fundamental coordinates, those into which there must be inserted our theorems about identification this year, the distance that separates the Other from the thing, nor indeed that in explicit terms I believed I had to highlight for you the relationship between anxiety and the desire of the Other.

For want really of starting from there, of hanging on to this as a sort of firm handle and for having only circled around it because of some shame or other - because really at certain moments, I would say almost all the time and even in these reports of which I spoke - for some reason or other which comes from this sort of lack which is not the right one, even in these reports all the same you can connote in the margin this something (7) or other which was always the convergence imposing itself with the kind of orientation of a compass needle, that the only term which could give a unity to this sort of oscillating movement around which the question hesitated, was this term: the relationship of anxiety to the desire of the Other; and this is what I wanted, because it would be false, vain, but not without risk not to mark here something in passing which might be like a germ to prevent all the interesting things that no doubt were said throughout the hours of this little meeting at which more and more accentuated things came to be enounced, in order that this should not be dissipated, in order that this should be linked up with our work, allow me to try here very massively, in the margin as it were and almost in advance but also not without a relevance to exact points, at the point that we had arrived at to punctuate a certain number of primary guiding points, without the reference, which should never be lacking to you at any moment.

If the fact that a fundamental access to jouissance qua jouissance of the thing is prohibited, if this is what I told you throughout the whole year of the seminar on Ethics, if it is in this suspension, in the fact that this jouissance is aufgehoben, suspended properly speaking that there lies the supporting plane on which desire is going to be constituted as such and be sustained - because it is really the most distant approximation from anything that the world may say - do you not see that we can formulate that the Other, this Other in so far as it at once poses itself as being and is not, that it is to be, when we advance towards desire we clearly see that the Other here in as (8) much as its support is the pure signifier, the signifier of the law, that the Other is presented here as a metaphor of this prohibition. To say that the Other is the law or that it is jouissance qua prohibited, is the same thing. So then, an alert to the person - who moreover is not here today - who made of anxiety the support and the sign and the spasm of the jouissance of a self identified, identified exactly as if he were not a pupil of mine with this ineffable foundation of the drive as if it were the heart, the centre of being where precisely there is nothing. Now everything that I teach you about the drive is precisely that it is not to be confused with this mythical self, that it has nothing to do with what has been made of it from a Jungian perspective. Obviously, it is not common to say that

anxiety is the jpuissance of what one could call the final foundation of one's own unconscious. This was what this discourse depended on. It is not common and it is not because it is not common that it is true. It is an extreme to which one can be brought when one is in a certain error which entirely reposes on the elision of this relationship of the Other to the thing as antinomical; the Other is to be, therefore it is not, it has all the same some reality, without that I could not even define it as the locus where the signifying chain is unfolded, the only real Other because there is no Other of the Other, nothing which guarantees the truth of the law, the only real Other being what one can enjoy without the law. This virtuality defines the Other as locus: the thing in short elided, reduced to its place, this is what the Other with a big O is. And I am going right away very quickly to what I have to say about anxiety: this passes, as I announced to you, through the desire of the Other. So then (9) this is where we are at with our torus, it is here that we have to define it step by step. It is here that I will carry out a first examination a little too quickly: this is never a bad thing because one can come back on it.

First approach: are we going to say that this relationship that I am articulating in saying that the desire of man is the desire of the Other, something which of course means something, but now what is in question, what that already introduces is that obviously I am saying something completely different. I am saying that the desire x of the ego subject is the relationship to the desire of the Other, is supposed to be with respect to the desire of the Other in a relationship of beschränkung, of limitation, is supposed to become configured in a simple field of vital space or not, conceived as homogeneous, is supposed to come to limit itself by their colliding with one another. A fundamental image of all sorts of thoughts when one is speculating on the effects of a psycho-sociological conjunction. The relationship of desire to the subject, of the subject to the desire of the Other has nothing to do with anything whatsoever that can be intuitively supported from this register.

A first step would be to advance that if measure means a measure of size, there is no common measure between them and simply by saying that, we rejoin experience. Who has ever found a common measure between his desire and anyone whom he has had to deal with as desire? If one does not put that first in any science of experience, when one has Hegel's title, the real title of the Phenomenology of the spirit, one can permit oneself anything, including the delirious sermonising about the benefits of genitality. It is this and nothing other which is meant by my introduction of the symbol 41, it is something designed to suggest to you that $J-1$ multiplied by $J-1$, the product of my (10) desire by the desire of the Other only gives and can only give a lack: -1 , the want of the subject at this precise point:
 $\sqrt{-1} \times j-1 = -1$. Result: the product of one desire by the other one can only be this lack, and it is from that that one must start in order to hold onto something. This means that there cannot be any agreement, any contract on the plane of desire, that what is involved in this identification of the desire of man

to the desire of the Other, this is what I will show you in an open operation by making the puppets of the phantasy operate for you in so far as they are the support, the only possible support for what can be in the proper sense a realisation of desire. Well then, when we have arrived there - you can already all the same see indicated in a thousand references: the references to Sade to take those which are closest, the phantasy: "A child is being beaten", to take one of the first angles with which I began to introduce this operation - what I will show is that the realisation of desire signifies, in the very act of this realisation, can only signify being the instrument, serving the desire of the Other who is not the object that you have before you in the act but another who is behind.

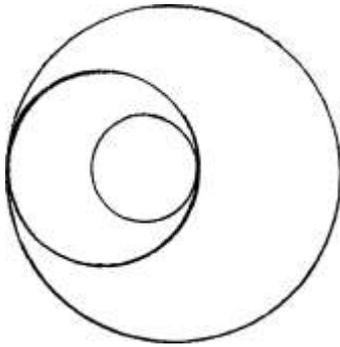
It is a matter here of the possible term in the realisation of the phantasy, it is only a possible term and before making yourselves the instrument of this Other in a hyper-space, you have well and truly to deal with desires, with real desires. Desire exists, is constituted, makes its way through the world and exercises its ravages before any attempt of your erotic (11) or other imaginings to realise it; and it is even not excluded that you might encounter the desire of the Other as such, of the real Other as I defined it earlier.

It is at this point that anxiety is born; anxiety is as stupid as a cabbage. It is unbelievable that at no time did I even see the outline of something so simple in what seemed at certain moments, as they say, to be a game of hide-and-seek. People went looking for anxiety, and more exactly what is more original than anxiety: pre-anxiety, traumatic anxiety. No one spoke about this: anxiety is the sensation of the desire of the Other. Except that, as of course every time someone advances a new formula, I do not know what happens, the preceding ones find their way to the bottom of your pockets and never come out again. It is necessary all the same for me to image this - I apologise for it - and that in a gross way to get across what I mean, allowing you after that to try to make use of it, and this can be of use wherever there is anxiety.

A little apologue which is perhaps not the best one. The truth is that I made it up this morning, telling myself that I would have to try to make myself understood. Usually I make myself understood inexactly, which is not such a bad thing; this avoids you making mistakes in the right place. I am going to try to make myself understood in the right place and avoid you making an error: imagine me in an enclosed area alone with a praying mantis three metres high - it is the proper proportion for me to be the (12) same size as the aforesaid male, and furthermore I am dressed in a skin the size of the aforesaid male which is 1m 75cm high, more or less my own. I look at myself, I look at my image decked out in this way in the faceted eye of the aforesaid praying mantis. Is this anxiety?

It is very close to it. Nevertheless in telling you that it is the sensation of the desire of the Other, this definition shows itself for what it is, namely purely introductory. You must

obviously refer to my structure of the subject, namely know all the preceding discourse in order to understand that if it is the Other with a big O that is involved, I cannot be satisfied with not going any further by only representing in the affair this little image of myself as a male mantis in the faceted eye of the Other. It is properly speaking the pure apprehension of the desire of the Other as such that is involved if precisely I fail to recognise what? My insignia: namely that I am decked out in the skin of the male. I do not know what I am as object for the Other. Anxiety, it is said, is an affect without object but we have to know where this lack of object is: it is on my side. The affect of anxiety is in effect connoted by a want of object, but not by a want of reality. If I no longer know myself as eventual object of this desire of the Other, this Other who is before me, its figure is entirely mysterious to me in the measure especially that this shape as such which I have before me cannot in effect be constituted for me either as object, but where all the same I can sense sensations of a type which make up the whole substance of what is called anxiety, of this unspeakable oppression through (13) which we arrive at the very dimension of the locus of the Other in so far as desire can appear there.



That is what anxiety is. It is only starting from there that you can understand the different angles the neurotic takes to manage in this relationship with the desire of the Other. Now, at the point that we are at, I showed you the last time this desire as necessarily included in the demand of the Other. Here moreover what do you rediscover as a primary truth if

not a commonplace of daily experience? What is anxiety-provoking for someone, not just for small children, but for the small children that we all are, is what can indeed be hidden in any demand in terms of this x , of this impenetrable and anxiety-provoking x par excellence of the "what can he want in this situation?" You can clearly see what the configuration here demands, you can clearly see: it is a middle term between demand and desire. This middle term has a name, it is called the phallus. The phallic function has absolutely no other meaning than to be what gives the measure of this field to be defined within the demand as the field of desire, and moreover, if you wish, that everything that analytic theory, Freudian doctrine, tells us about this consists precisely in telling us that it is through this when all is said and done that everything is arranged.

I do not know the desire of the Other: anxiety, but I know its instrument: the phallus, and whoever I am, I am requested to pass this way and not to make a fuss; which is called in everyday (14) language continuing on daddy's principles; and since everyone knows that for some time now daddy no longer has any principles, this is where all the trouble begins; but as long as daddy is there in so far as he is the centre around which there is organised the transference of what is in this matter the

unit of exchange, namely: I mean the unit which is established, which becomes the basis and the principle of every support, of every foundation, of every articulation of desire, well then, things can carry on, they will be exactly stretched between the mephunai, "would that he had never begotten me!" at the limit and what is called the baraka in the Semitic and even properly speaking biblical tradition, namely the contrary, what makes me the living, active prolongation of the law of the father, of the father as origin of what is going to be transmitted as desire.

You are going to see here that castration anxiety therefore has two meanings and two levels; because if the phallus is this element of mediation which gives its support to desire, well then the woman is not the worst off in this affair because after all for her it is quite simple: because she does not have it, she only has to desire it; and indeed in the most successful cases, it is in effect a situation to which she adapts very well. The whole dialectic of the castration complex in so far as for her it introduces the Oedipus complex, as Freud tells us, means nothing other than that. Thanks to the very structure of human desire, the path for her requires fewer detours - the normal path - than for the man. Because for the man, in order that his phallus may serve as this foundation of the field of desire, is it going to (15) be necessary for him to demand it in order to have it? It is indeed something like that that is involved at the level of the castration complex, a transitional passage from what in him is the natural, become semi-alien, vacillating support of desire through this habilitation by the law, by means of which this piece, this pound of flesh is going to become the pledge, the something through which he is going to designate himself at the place where he has to manifest himself as desire within the circle of demand. This necessary preservation of the field of demand which through the law humanises the mode of relationship of desire to its object is what is involved at this point and is what means that the danger for the subject is not, as is said in all these deviations that we have been making for years to try to contradict analysis, that the danger for the subject is not in any abandonment on the part of the Other, but in his abandonment as subject to the demand. Because in as much as he lives, as he closely develops the constitution of his relationship to the phallus in the field of the demand, it is here that this demand does not properly speaking have any term: because again even though it is necessary, as you know, for this phallus to be demanded in order to introduce, to establish this field of desire, it is not properly speaking in the power of the Other to make a gift of it on the plane of demand. It is in the measure that therapeutics does not at all manage to resolve better than it has done the ending of analysis, does not manage to make it emerge from the proper circle of demand, that it comes up against, that it finally ends up in this demanding form, in this unsatisfiable, unendliche form that Freud in his final article, "Analysis terminable and interminable", designates as unresolved (16) anxiety about castration in the case of the man, as Penisneid in the woman. But an exact positioning, a correct positioning of the function of demand in analytic efficacy and

the fashion of directing it might perhaps allow us, if we were not so backward about it, a backwardness already sufficiently designated by the fact that obviously it is only in the rarest cases that we come up against this term marked by Freud as the end point of his own experience. Would to heavens we could arrive at this point even if it is only an impasse! This would at least prove how far we could go, while what is involved, is to know effectively if going that far leads us to an impasse or whether one can go further.

Before leaving you must I indicate to you some of the little points which will give you satisfaction because they show you that we are in the right place by referring ourselves to something which exists in our experience of the neurotic? What for example does the hysteric or the obsessional neurotic do in the register that we have been trying to construct, what do both one and the other do with regard to the desire of the Other as such?

Before we fell into their snare by encouraging them to play out the whole game on the plane of demand, by imagining to ourselves - which moreover is not an absurd thing to imagine - that we will manage at the limit to define the phallic field as the intersection of two frustrations, what do they do spontaneously?

(17) For the hysteric it is quite simple; for the obsessional also, but it is less obvious. The hysteric does not need to have attended our seminar in order to know that man's desire is the desire of the Other and that as a consequence, the Other can perfectly well, in this function of desire, supply for her the hysteric. The hysteric lives her relationship to the object by fomenting the desire of the Other with a big O for this object. Consult Dora's case. I think that I have already sufficiently articulated this per longum et latum not to even need to recall it here. I appeal simply to the experience of each one of you and to what are called the operations of subtle plotting that you can see being developed in the whole behaviour of the hysteric which consists in sustaining in her immediate environment the love of one or other person for somebody else who is her friend and the true final object of her desire, the profound ambiguity always remaining of course of knowing whether the situation ought not to be understood in the reverse direction.

Why? This is what of course you will be able to see in the continuation of our remarks as perfectly calculable from the simple fact of the function of the phallus which here can always pass from one to the other of the hysteric's two partners.

But we will come to this in detail. And what does the obsessional really do concerning, I am speaking directly, his business with the desire of the Other? It is more astute because moreover this field of desire is constituted by the paternal demand in so far as it is what preserves, what defines the field of desire as such by prohibiting it. Well then, let him sort it (18) out for himself therefore, the one who is charged with

sustaining desire with respect to the object in obsessional neurosis: the dead person. The subject has the phallus, he may even exhibit it on occasion, but it is the dead person who is asked to make use of it. It is not for nothing that I highlighted the story in the Ratman, the nocturnal hour when having contemplated his erection at length in the mirror he goes to the entrance door to open it to his father's ghost, to ask him to recognise that everything is ready for this supreme narcissistic act that this desire is for the obsessional.

Except for this do not be surprised that with such means anxiety only appears from time to time, that it is not there all the time, that it is even much more and much better set aside in the hysteric than in the obsessional, the complacency of the Other all the same being much greater than that of a dead person whom it is always difficult all the same to maintain present as one might say. This is why the obsessional from time to time, every time there cannot be repeated to satiety the whole arrangement which allows him to manage the desire of the Other, sees re-emerging of course in a more or less overwhelming fashion the affect of anxiety. From this simply by returning backwards, you can understand that the phobic business marks a first step in this attempt which is properly speaking the neurotic mode of resolving the problem of the desire of the Other, a first step, I am saying, of the way in which this can be resolved. It is a step as everyone knows, for its part, which is of course far from arriving at this relative solution of the anxiety relationship.

(19) Quite the contrary, it is only in an altogether precarious fashion that this anxiety is mastered, as you know, through the mediation of this object whose ambiguity between the small o function and the small function is already sufficiently underlined for us. The common factor which the small constitutes in every small o of desire is here in a way extracted and revealed. It is on this that I will put the accent the next time by beginning again from phobia, in order to specify what exactly this function of the phallus consists in.

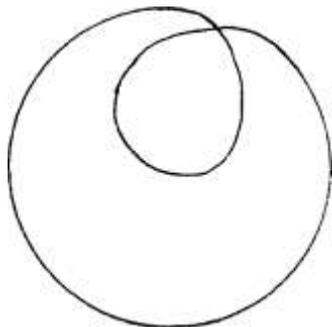
Today in general what do you see? It is that when all is said and done the solution that we perceive to the problem of the relationship of the subject to desire at its radical foundation, is proposed as follows: because it is a question of demand and it is a question of defining desire, well then let us say roughly: the subject demands the phallus and the phallus desires. It is as stupid as that. It is from that at least that one must begin as a radical formula to see effectively what is to be made of it in experience. This model is modulated around this relationship of the subject to the phallus in so far as, as you see, it is essentially of an identificatory nature and that if there is something which effectively can provoke this arousal of anxiety linked to the fear of a loss, it is the phallus. Why not desire? There is no fear of aphanisis, there is the fear of losing the phallus because only the phallus can give its proper field to desire.

But now let no one speak to us either about defence against

anxiety. One does not defend oneself against anxiety, any more (20) than there is a fear of aphanisis. Anxiety is at the source of defences, but one does not defend oneself against anxiety. Of course, if I tell you that I am going to consecrate a whole year to this subject of anxiety, this means that I am not claiming today to have dealt with every aspect of it, that it does not pose a problem. If anxiety - it is always at this level that my little apologue has defined for you in an almost caricatural way that anxiety is situated - if anxiety can become a sign, it is of course because transformed into a sign, it is perhaps not quite the same thing as it was where I tried to pose it for you at first at its essential point.

There is also a simulacrum of anxiety. At this level, of course, one can be tempted to minimise its import, in so far as it is really tangible that if the subject sends himself signs of anxiety it is obviously in order that things should be more cheerful. But it is all the same not from there that we can begin in order to define the function of anxiety; and then finally to say, as I have simply claimed to do today, massive things, let us open ourselves to this thought that if Freud told us that anxiety is a signal which happens at the level of the ego, it is all the same necessary to know that it is a signal for whom? Not for the ego, because it is at the level of the ego that it is produced. And I greatly regretted also, that at our last meeting no one dreamt of making this simple remark.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 11 April 1962



I had proposed that I would continue today about the phallus. Well I shall not be speaking to you about it or indeed I will only speak to you about it in the shape of this inverted eight which is not all that reassuring.

It is not a new signifier that is involved. You are going to see that it is still the same as the one that I have been speaking about in short from the beginning of this year; only the reason why I bring it forward as being essential, is to bring about a renewal with the topological base that is involved: namely what is meant by the introduction this year of the torus.

It is not so much of course that what I said about anxiety was all that well understood. Someone who is very nice and who reads - because it is someone from a milieu where people work, I must admit that I am choosing this example because it is rather encouraging - remarked to me in a very timely way that what I said about anxiety as desire of the Other overlapped with what is found in Kierkegaard. At a first reading - because it is quite true - you can well imagine that I remembered that Kierkegaard, in order to speak about anxiety, evoked the young girl at the moment when for the first time she realises that she is desired. Only if Kierkegaard said it, the difference with what I am saying is, as I might say to use a Kierkegaardian term, that I am (2) repeating it. If there is someone who has pointed out that it is never without reason that one says "I say and I repeat", it is precisely Kierkegaard. If one feels the need to underline that one is repeating it after having said it, it is because probably it is not at all the same thing to repeat it as to say it; it is absolutely certain that, if what I said the last time has a meaning, it is precisely because the case raised by Kierkegaard is something quite particular and as such obscures rather than clarifies the true meaning of the formula that anxiety is the desire of the Other - with a big O.

It can happen that this other is incarnated for the young girl at a moment of her existence in some ne'er-do-well. This has nothing to do with the question that I raised the last time and with the introduction of the desire of the other as such in order to say that it is anxiety, more exactly that anxiety is the sensation of this desire.

Today I am going to come back therefore to my path for this year and that all the more rigorously because I had to make a digression the last time. And that is why, more rigorously than ever, we are going to do topology, and it is necessary to do it because you cannot but do it at every instant, I mean, whether you are logicians or not, whether you know the meaning of the word topology or not. You make use for example of the conjunction or. Now, it is rather remarkable but undoubtedly true that the usage of this conjunction was not properly articulated, properly specified, properly highlighted in the field of technical logic, of the logic of logicians until recent times, much too recent for its effects in short to have really reached you; and that is why it is enough to read the smallest current analytic text for example to see that at every instant thinking stumbles once it is a question, not only of the term identification, but even of the simple practice of identifying anything whatsoever in the field of our experience.

It is necessary to begin again from schemas unshaken in spite of everything, let us admit, in your thinking, unshaken for two reasons: first of all because they emerge from what I would call a certain peculiar incapacity properly speaking for intuitive thinking or more simply for intuition, which means at the very foundations an experience marked by the organisation of what is called the sense of vision. You will very easily grasp this intuitive impotence, if I have the good fortune that after this little conversation you set yourself to pose simple problems of representation about what I am going to show you can happen at (3) the surface of a torus. You will see the difficulty you will have not to become confused. Nevertheless a torus is quite simple: a ring. You will become confused, but then I become confused like you: I needed practice in order to find my bearings a little in it and even to grasp what that was suggesting and what that allowed to ground practically.

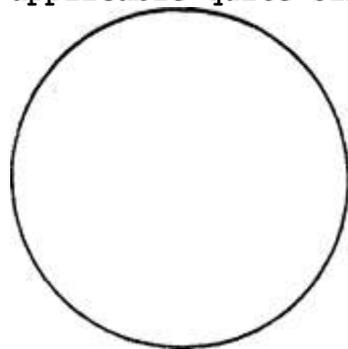
The other term is linked to what is called education, namely that everything is done to encourage this sort of intuitive impotence, to establish it, to give it an absolute character, that of course with the best of intentions. This is what happened for example when in 1741 Mr Euler, a very great name in the history of mathematics, introduced his famous circles which, whether you know it or not, did a lot in short to encourage the teaching of classical logic in a certain direction which far from opening it out could only tend unfortunately to render more evident the idea that simple schoolboys might have of it.

This happened because Euler had got it into his head, God knows why, to teach a princess, the princess of Anhalt Dessau. Throughout a whole period people were very preoccupied with

princesses, people are still preoccupied with them and that is unfortunate. You know that Descartes had his own one, the famous Christina. This is a historical tale of a different kind, he died of it. It is not altogether subjective, there is a kind of very particular stench which emerges from everything that surrounds the entity princess or Prinzessin. Throughout a period of about three centuries, we have something which is dominated by letters addressed to princesses, the memoirs of princesses, and this holds a certain place in the culture. It is a kind of substitute for this flaw [or dame] whose function, so difficult to understand, so difficult to approach, I tried to explain to you in the structure of courtly sublimation whose real import I am not at all sure after all of having made you really understand. I was really only able to give you kinds of projections of it in the way that one tries to depict four dimensional figures that cannot be had in another space.

I learned with pleasure that something about it reached ears which are close to me, and that people are beginning to interest themselves, not here but elsewhere, in what courtly love might be. It is already a result.

Let us leave the princess and the troubles that she gave Euler. He wrote 254 letters to her, not simply to make her understand Eulerian circles. Published in 1775 in London, they constitute a (4) sort of corpus of the scientific thinking at that date. The only thing that survived from it effectively are these little circles, these Eulerian circles which are circles like any other circles it is simply a matter of seeing the use that he made of them. It was to explain the rules of the syllogism and in the final analysis exclusion, inclusion and then what can be called the intersection of two what? Of two fields applicable to what? Well, my heavens, applicable to many things, applicable for example to the field where a certain proposition is true, applicable to the field where a certain relationship exists, applicable quite simply to the field where an object exists.

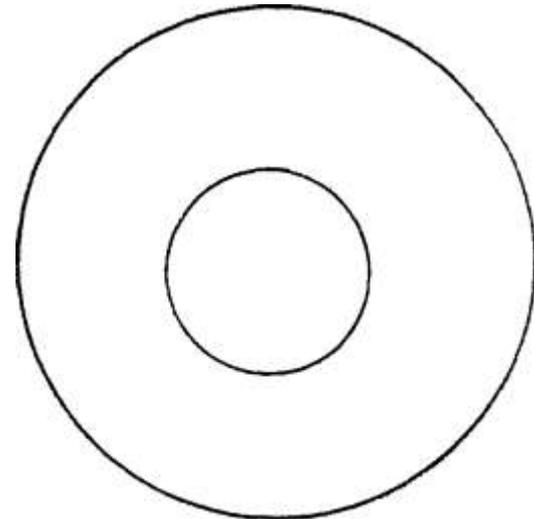


You see that the usage of the Eulerian circle, if you are used to the multiplicity of logics as they were elaborated in an immense effort, the greater part of which belongs to propositional logic and the logic of classes, was distinguished in the most useful fashion. I cannot even dream of entering of course into the details

that would be required to make the distinction between these elaborations. What I simply want to have recognised here, is that you surely remember one or other moment of your existence where there has come to you, under this form of a support, some logical proof or other, some object as a logical object, whether it involved a proposition, a class relationship, or even simply an object of existence.

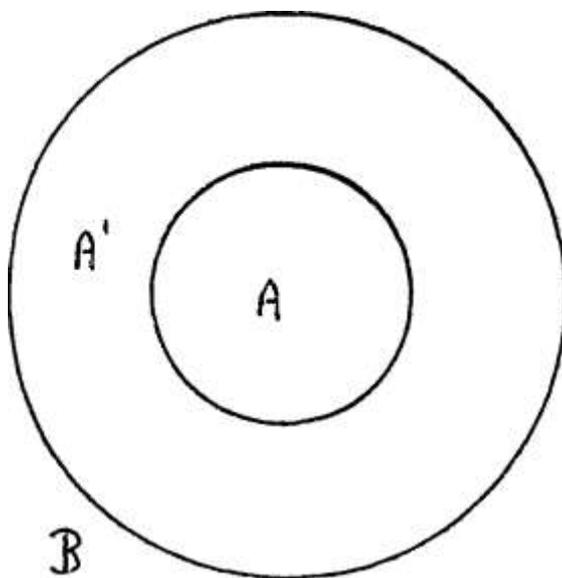
Let us take an example at the level of the logic of classes

and let us represent this example by a small circle inside a big one, mammals with respect to the class of vertebrates; this works quite easily and all the more simply because the logic of classes is certainly what at the beginning opened up in the easiest way the paths to this formal elaboration and you should consult here something already



incarnated in a signifying elaboration, quite simply that of zoological classification which really gives it its model. But the universe of discourse, as it is quite correctly expressed, is not a zoological universe; and, by wanting to extend the properties of the universe of zoological classification to the whole universe of discourse, one easily slips into a certain number of traps which help you to avoid mistakes and allow there (5) to be heard rather quickly the alarm signal of an significant impasse.

One of these drawbacks is for example an ill-considered use of negation. It is precisely in recent times that this use was opened up as possible, namely just at the time when the remark was made that this exterior Eulerian circle of inclusion ought to play an essential role in the use



of negation, namely that it is absolutely the same thing to speak without any precision for example of that which is not-man or of that which is not-man within the animal world. In other words that in order that negation should have a more or less assured, usable meaning in logic, it is necessary to know in relation to what set something is denied. In other words if A^1 is not A, it is necessary to know within what it is not A, namely here in B.

$$A' = A$$

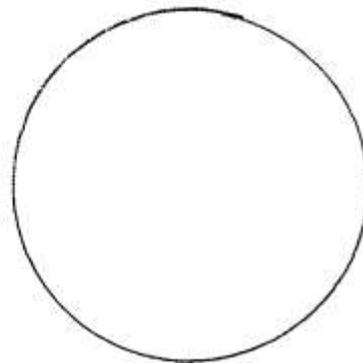
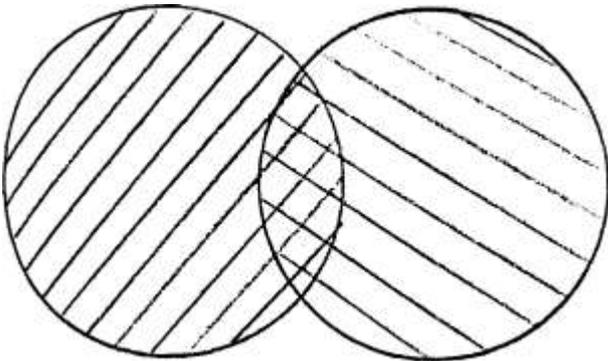
If you open Aristotle on this occasion, you will see negation dragged into all sorts of difficulties. It nevertheless remains incontestable that these remarks were not at all expected nor was the slightest use made of this formal support - I mean that it is not normal to make use of it in order to make use of negation - namely that the subject in his discourse frequently makes use of

elsewhere than where It found its established position that we have to define the status of negation. It is a reminder, a reminder designed to clarify for you retrospectively the importance of what from the beginning of my discourse of this year I have been suggesting to you about the primordial originality of the function of negation compared to this distinction.

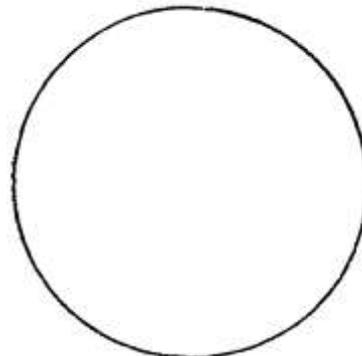
You see then that it was not Euler who used these Eulerian (6) circles for this purpose; it was necessary in the meantime for there to be introduced the work of Boole, then that of De Morgan in order that this should be fully articulated.

If I come back to these Eulerian circles then, it is not because he himself made good use of them, but because it was with his material, with the use of these circles that there could be made the progress which followed of which I will give you at the same time an example which is not the least important nor the least notorious, in any case particularly gripping and immediate to see.

Between Euler and De Morgan the use of these circles allowed a symbolisation which is useful also in that it appears to you moreover implicitly fundamental, which reposes on the position of these circles which are structured as follows: this is what we will call two circles which intersect, which are especially important for their intuitive appearance which will appear incontestable to everyone if I point out to you that it is around these circles that there can be first of all be articulated two relationships which it would be well to accentuate strongly, which are first of all that of union: involving anything whatsoever that I enumerated earlier, \cup their union, it is the fact that after the operation of union, what is united are these two fields.
is precisely what introduced this



The operation described as union which is ordinarily symbolised as follows: \cup - it symbol - is, as you see, something which is not altogether like addition, the advantage of these circles is to make you sense that. It is not the



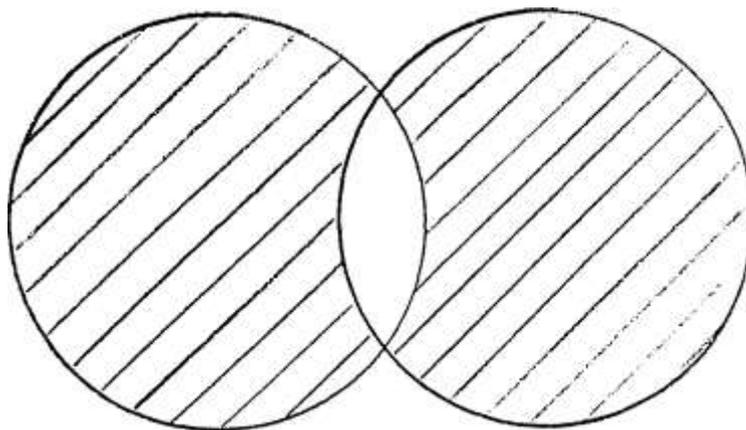
same thing for example to add two separate circles or to unite them in this position.

(7) There is another relationship illustrated by these overlapping circles: it is that of intersection, symbolised by this sign \cap whose signification is completely different. The field of intersection is included in the field of union.

union	\cup	+
intersection	\cap	X

In what is called Boolean algebra, it is shown that, up to a certain point at least, this operation of union is analogous enough to addition for it to be able to be symbolised by the sign of addition (+). It is also shown that intersection is structurally analogous enough to multiplication for it to be symbolised by the sign of multiplication (X).

I assure you that I am giving here an ultra-rapid extract designed to lead you where I have to lead you and I apologise of course to those for whom these things present themselves in all their complexity for the elisions that all of this involves. Because we must go further and on the precise point that I have to introduce, what interests us, is something which up to De Morgan - and one can only be astonished at such an omission - had not been properly speaking highlighted as precisely one of these functions which flow from, which ought to flow from an altogether rigorous usage of logic, it is precisely this field constituted by the extraction, in the relationship between these two circles of the zone of intersection.

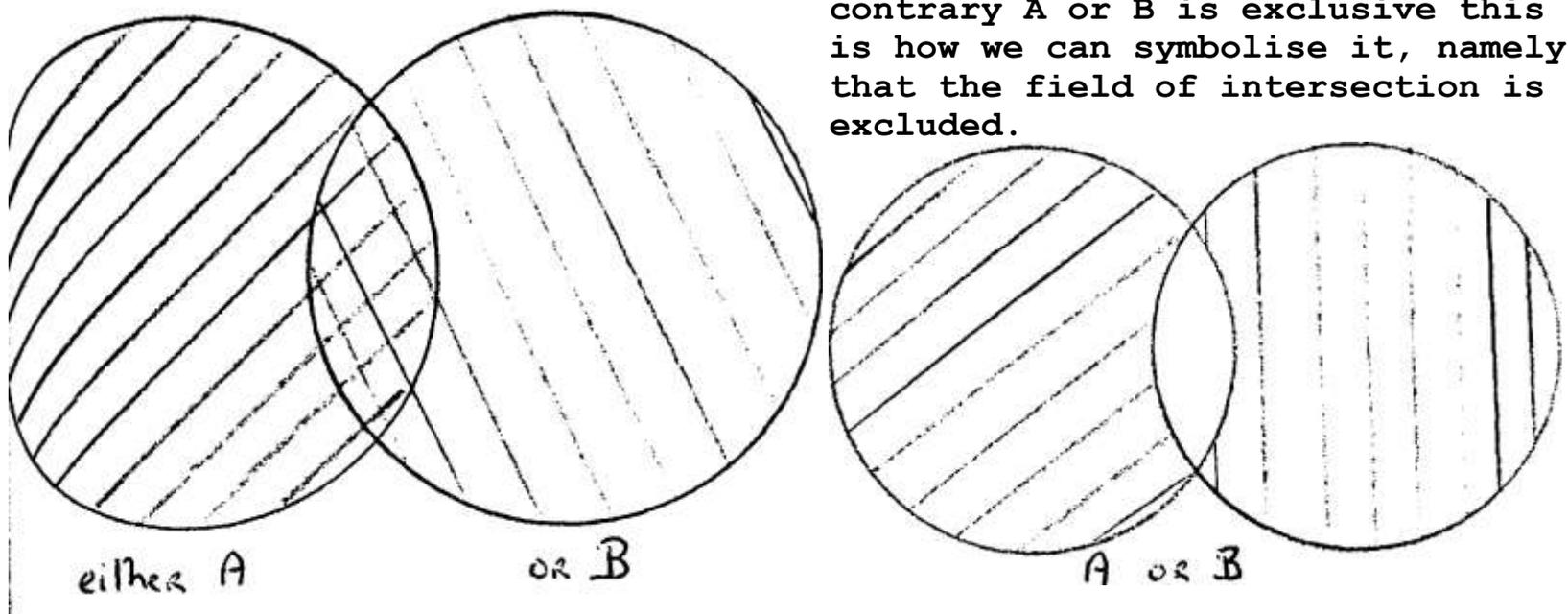


And to consider what the product is, when two circles cut, at the level of a field described in this way, namely the union minus the intersection. This is what is called the symmetric difference.

This symmetric difference is what is going to retain our (8) attention, what for us - you will see why - is of the greatest interest. The term symmetric difference is here an appellation that I would simply ask you to take for its additional usage. This was what it was called. Do not try

therefore to give a grammatically analysable meaning to this so-called symmetry. The symmetric difference, this is what that means, that means: these fields, in the two Eulerian circles, in so far as they define as such an exclusive "or". With respect to two different fields, the symmetric difference marks the field as it is constructed if you give to the "or", not the alternative sense, but one which implies the possibility of a local identity between the two terms; and the usual usage of the term "or" means that in fact the term "or" applies here very well to the field of union. If a thing is A or B, this is how the field of its extension can be drawn, namely in the first form that these two

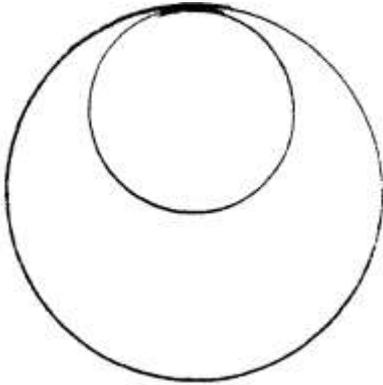
fields are discovered. If on the contrary A or B is exclusive this is how we can symbolise it, namely that the field of intersection is excluded.



This should lead us back to a reflection about what is intuitively supposed by the usage of a circle as a basis, as a support for what is formalised in function of a limit. This is very sufficiently defined in the fact that on a commonly used plane, which does not mean a natural plane, a plane that can be fabricated, a plane which has completely entered into our universe of implements, namely a sheet of paper, we live much more in the company of sheets of paper than in the company of tori. There must be reasons for that but after all reasons which are not evident. Why after all does man not fabricate more tori? Moreover for centuries, what we nowadays have in the form of sheets were rolls which must have been more familiar with the notion of volume in epochs other than our own. Finally there is certainly a reason why this plane surface is something which (9) suffices for us and more exactly that we satisfy ourselves with it. These reasons must be somewhere. And - I indicated it earlier - one cannot give too much importance to the fact that, contrary to all the efforts of physicists and philosophers to persuade us of the contrary, the field of vision whatever is said about it is essentially two-dimensional:

is made of it in the Eulerian illustration of logic. I pose the following question to you: what happens if Euler, instead of drawing this circle, draws my inverted eight the one that today I have to talk to you about?

In appearance it is only a particular case of the circle with the inside field that it defines and the possibility of having another circle within. Simply the inside circle touches - here



is what at first sight some people may say to me - the inside circle touches on the limit constituted by the outside circle. Only it is all the same not quite that, in this sense that it is quite clear, in the way I draw it, that the line here of the outside circle continues into the line of the inside circle and finds itself here.

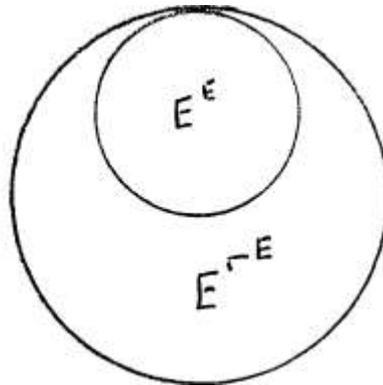
And so in order simply immediately to mark the

interest, the import of this very simple shape, I will suggest to you that the remarks that I introduced at a certain point of my seminar when I introduced the function of the signifier consisted in the following: reminding you of the paradox or the supposed one introduced by the classification of sets - you remember - which do not include themselves.

I remind you of the difficulty they introduce: should one or should one not include these sets which do not include themselves (10) in the set of sets which do not include themselves? You see the difficulty here. If yes, then they include themselves in this set of sets which do not include themselves. If not, we find ourselves confronted with an analogous impasse.

E^E Sets which include themselves.

$E^{\neg E}$ Sets which do not include themselves.



This is easily resolved on this simple condition that one grasps at least the following - it is the solution that moreover the formalists, the logicians have given - that one cannot speak, let us say in the same way, about sets which include themselves and sets which do not include themselves. In other words that one excludes them as such from the simple definition of sets, that

one poses when all is said and done that the sets which include themselves cannot be posed as sets. I mean that far from this inside zone of objects as important in the construction of modern logic as sets, far from an inside zone defined by this image of the inverted eight by the overlapping or the redoubling in this overlapping of a class, of a relation, of some proposition or other by itself, by being raised to a second power, far from this leaving as a well-known case the class, the proposition, the relationship in a general fashion, the category inside itself in a fashion that is in a way more weighty more accentuated, this has the effect of reducing it to homogeneity with what is outside.

How is this conceivable? For indeed one must all the same clearly say that, if this is the way that the question is presented, namely among all the sets, there is no a priori reason not to make of a set which includes itself a set like the others. You define as a set for example all the works that refer to the (11) humanities, namely to the arts, to the sciences, to ethnography. You make a list of them; the works produced on the question of what one should class as humanities will form part of the same catalogue, namely that what I have even defined just now in articulating the title: works about the humanities, forms part of what is to be catalogued.

How can we conceive that something which is thus posed as redoubling itself in the dignity of a certain category can find itself practically leading us to an antinomy, to a logical impasse such that we are on the contrary constrained to reject it? Here is something which is not as unimportant as you might think because one has practically seen the best logicians see in it a sort of failure, a stumbling block, a vacillating point of the whole formalist edifice, and not without reason. Here is something which nevertheless puts to intuition a sort of major objection, inscribed, tangible, visible of itself in the very form of these two circles which are presented, in the Eulerian perspective, as included one in the other.

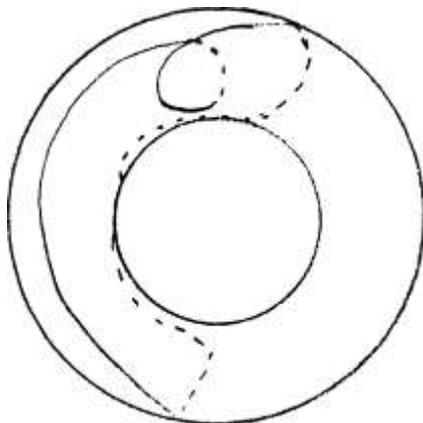
It is precisely on this point that we are going to see that the use of the intuition of the representation of the torus is quite usable. And given that you clearly sense, I imagine, what is involved, namely a certain relationship of the signifier to itself, as I told you, it is in the measure that the definition of a set has got closer and closer to a purely signifying articulation that it leads us to this impasse, it is the whole question of the fact that it is a matter for us of putting in the foreground that a signifier cannot signify itself. In fact it is something excessively stupid and simple, this very essential point that the signifier in so far as it can be used to signify itself has to be posed as different to itself. This is what it is a matter of symbolising in the first place because it is also this that we are going to rediscover, up to a certain point of extension which it is a matter of determining, in the whole subjective structure up to and including desire.

When one of my obsessionals, quite recently again after having

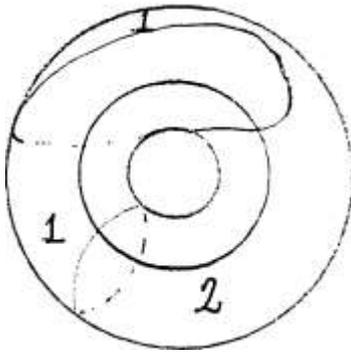
developed all the subtlety of the science of his exercises with respect to feminine objects to whom, as is common among other obsessives, he remains attached, as I might say, by what one can call a constant infidelity: at once the impossibility of leaving any of these objects and the extreme difficulty of (12) maintaining them all together, and that he adds that it is quite clear that in this relationship, in this so complicated relationship which requires this high degree of technical subtlety, as I might say, in the maintaining of relationships which in principle must remain outside one another, impermeable as one might say to one another and nevertheless linked, that, if all of this, he tells me, has no other purpose than to leave him intact for a satisfaction which he himself here comes to grief on, it must therefore be found elsewhere, not just simply in a future that is always put off, but manifestly in another space since as regards this intactness and its purpose he is incapable when all is said and done of saying at what this could end up in terms of satisfaction.

We have all the same here in a tangible way, something which can pose for us the question of the structure of desire in the most day-to-day fashion.

Let us come back to our torus and let us inscribe on it our Eulerian circles. This is going to necessitate - I apologise for it - a tiny little twist which is not, even though it might appear so to someone who comes into my seminar today for the first time, a geometrical twist - it will be that perhaps right at the end but very incidentally - which is properly speaking topological. There is no need for this torus to be a regular torus nor a torus on which we could make measurements. It is a surface constituted according to certain fundamental relationships that I am going to be led to remind you of, but because I do not want to appear to go too far from what is the field of our interest I am going to limit myself to things that I have already initiated and which are very simple.



As I pointed out to you: on a surface like this, we can describe this type of circle which is the one that I have already connoted (13) for you as reducible, one which if it is represented by a



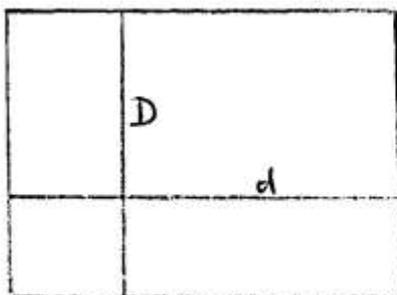
little string which passes at the end through a buckle, I can by pulling on the string reduce to a point, in other words to zero. I pointed out to you that there are two other kinds of circle or loop whatever size they may be because for example this one here could just as well have that shape there:
(1)

That means a circle which goes through the hole whatever may be its more or less tight more or less loose shape. This is what defines it: it goes through the hole it passes to the other side of the hole. It is represented here in dots while the 2 is represented in full. This is what that symbolises: this circle is not reducible, which means that if you suppose it to be realised by a string still passing through this little arch which would allow us to tighten it we cannot reduce it to something like a point; whatever its circumference may be, there will always remain at the centre, the circumference of what one could call here the thickness of the torus. If from the point of view which interested us earlier, namely the definition of an inside and an outside, this irreducible circle shows from one side a particular resistance, something which with respect to other circles confers on it an eminent dignity, on this other point here suddenly it is going to appear singularly deprived of the properties of the preceding one; because if you materialise this circle that I am talking to you about for example by a cut with a pair of scissors, what will you obtain? Absolutely not, as in the other case, a little piece which disappears and then the remainder of the torus. The torus will remain entirely intact in the form of a pipe or of a sleeve if you wish.

If you take on the other hand another type of circle, the one that I already spoke to you about, the one which does not go through the hole, but goes around it, this one finds itself in the same situation as the preceding one as regards irreducibility. It also finds itself in the same situation as the preceding one as regards the fact that it is not sufficient to define an inside or an outside. In other words that if you follow this circle and if you open the torus with the help of a pair of scissors, you will finally get what? Well, the same thing as in the preceding case: this has the shape of a torus but it is a shape which presents only an intuitive difference, which is altogether essentially the same from the point of view of (14) structure. You always have after this operation, as in the first case, a sleeve, simply it is a very short and a very wide sleeve, you have a belt if you wish but there is no essential difference between a belt and a sleeve from the topological point of view, again you can call it a strip if you wish.

Here we are then in the presence of two types of circle which from this point of view moreover are the same, which do not define an inside and an outside. I would point out to you incidentally that, if you cut the torus successively following

one and the other, you will still not manage for all that to make what it is a matter of making and what you nevertheless obtain immediately with the other type of circle 1 (p 10), the first one that I drew for you, namely two pieces. On the contrary the torus not only remains well and truly entire, but it was, the first time that I spoke to you about it, a flattening out that resulted from it which allows you to symbolise the torus eventually in a particularly convenient fashion as a rectangle which you can, by pulling a little, spread out like a skin pinned down at the four corners, to define the properties of correspondence of these edges one to the other, of correspondence also of its vertices, the four vertices which unite at a point and to have in this way, in a fashion much more accessible to your ordinary faculties of intuition, the means of studying what happens geometrically on the torus, namely that there will be one of these types of circle which will be represented by a line like



this one another type of circle by lines like this representing two points posed, defined in a preliminary fashion as being equivalent on what are called the edges of the spread-out flattened surface, as I might say, even though of course it is not a real flattening out, a flattening-out as such being (15) impossible because we are not dealing with a surface which is metrically identifiable to a plane surface, I repeat purely metrically, not topologically.

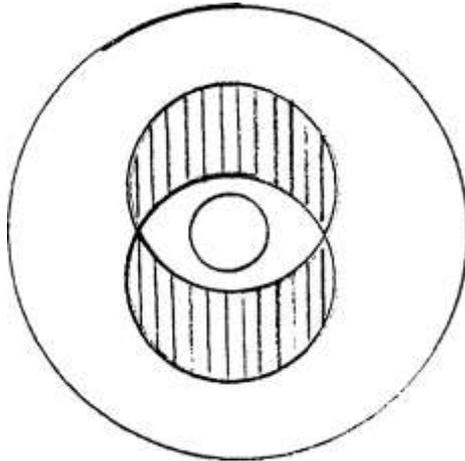
Where does all this lead us?

The fact that two sections of this kind are possible, with moreover the necessity of the one or the other being regrouped without fragmenting the surface in any way, leaving it whole and entire, leaving it in one piece, as I might say, this is enough to define a certain type of surface. Not all surfaces are of this type; if you carry out in particular a section like that on a sphere, you will always only have two pieces whatever the circle may be.

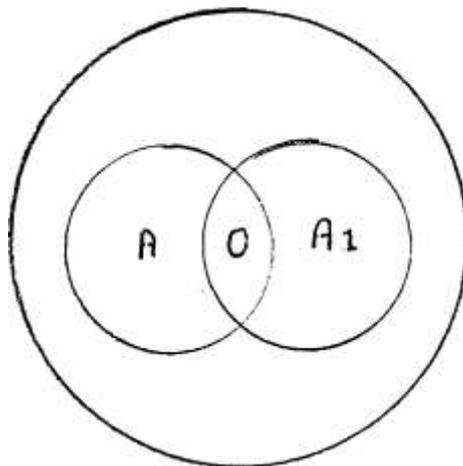
This in order to lead us to what?

Let us make no longer a single section but two sections on the single base of the torus. What do we see appearing? We see appearing something which undoubtedly is going to astonish us immediately, namely that if the two circles are regrouped, what is called the field of the symmetric difference well and truly exists. Can we say, for all that, that the field of intersection exists? I think that this figure, as it is constructed, is sufficiently accessible to your intuition for you to clearly

understand immediately and right away that there is no question of it.

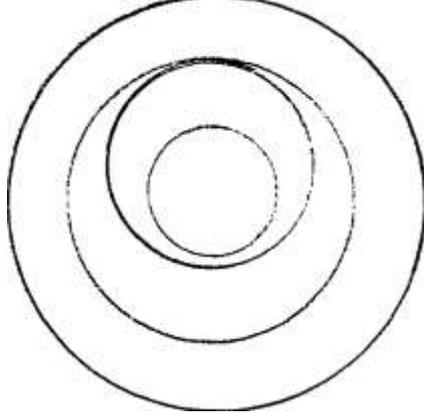


Namely that this something which might be the intersection, but which is not one and which, I am saying, for the eye because of course there is no question for a single instant of this intersection existing, but which for the eye is, as I have presented it to you in this way on this figure as it is drawn, would be found perhaps somewhere here (see the schema) of this field perfectly continuous in a single block, in a single piece with this field here which could analogically, in the crudest fashion for an intuition precisely accustomed to base itself on things which happen uniquely on the plane, to correspond to this external field where we could define, with respect to two Eulerian circles cutting one another, the field of their negation, namely if here we have the circle A and here the circle B, here we have A' as a negation of A and we have here B' as a negation of B, and there is something to be formulated concerning their intersection at these eventual external fields.



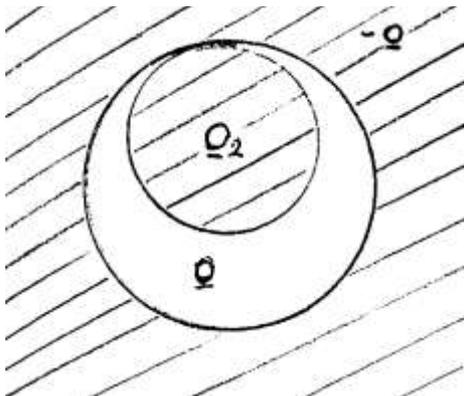
Here we see illustrated then in the simplest fashion by the structure of the torus the fact that something is possible, something which can be articulated as follows: two fields cutting one another being as such able to define their difference qua symmetric difference, but which are nonetheless two fields about which one can say that they cannot unite and that neither can they overlap one another, in other words that they cannot serve either as a function of "either..., or...", of union, nor as a function of multiplication (intersection) by itself. They can

literally not be raised to a higher power, they cannot be reflected one by the other and one in the other; they have no intersection, their intersection is exclusion from themselves. The field where one would expect intersection is the field where you leave behind what concerns them, where you are in the non-field. This is all the more interesting in that for the representation of these two circles we can substitute our inverted eight of a little while ago.



(17) We find ourselves then before a shape which for us is still more suggestive. For let us try to remind ourselves of what I thought of immediately in comparing these circles which make the circuit of the hole of the torus to something which, I told you, is related to the metonymical object, to the object of desire as such. What does this inverted eight, this circle which continues itself inside itself, what is it, if not a circle which at the limit redoubles itself and grasps itself again, which allows there to be symbolised - because it is a question of intuitive evidence and the Eulerian circles appear particularly appropriate for a certain symbolisation of the limit - which allows this limit to be symbolised in so far as it takes itself up again, as it identifies itself to itself. Reduce more and more the distance which separates the first loop, let us say, from the second and you have the circle in so far as it grasps itself. Are there objects which for us have this nature, namely, that they uniquely subsist in this grasp of their self-difference? Because it is either one thing or the other: either they grasp it, or they do not grasp it... But there is one thing in any case that everything which happens at this level of the grasp implies and requires, it is that this something excludes any reflection of this object onto itself. I mean that suppose that it is small o that is involved, since I already indicated to you that this was what these circles were going to be used for by us, that means that o^2 , the field thus defined, is the same field as what is there, namely not $\frac{o}{2}$ or $-\frac{o}{2}$.

$$o^2 = -o$$

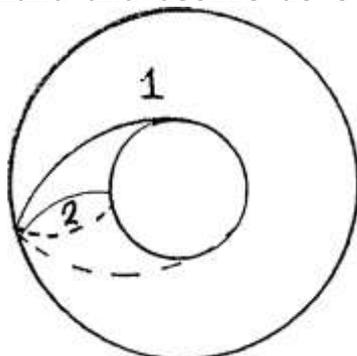


Suppose for an instant, I did not say that it has been proved, I am telling you that I am providing you today with a model, an intuitive support for something which is precisely what we need concerning the constitution of desire. Perhaps it will appear to you

more accessible, more immediately within your reach to make of it the symbol of the self-difference of desire to itself and the fact that it is precisely by its redoubling onto itself that you (18) are going to see what it encompasses slipping away and escaping towards what surrounds it. You will say: stop, hold on here, because it is not really desire that I intend to symbolise by the double loop of the inverted eight but something which applies much better to the conjunction of small o, of the object of desire as such with itself. In order that desire should be effectively, intelligently supported in this intuitive reference to the surface of the torus, it would be well of course to bring into it the dimension of demand. I told you on the other hand that the circles encompassing the thickness of the torus as such could very intelligibly serve to represent this dimension of demand and that something moreover which is in part contingent, I mean linked to a completely exterior, visual perception, itself too marked by common intuition not to be refutable, as you will see, but after all because of the way you are forced to represent the torus for yourself, namely something like this ring, you quickly see how easily what happens in the succession of these circles capable of continuing in a way in a helix and by to a repetition which is like that of a thread around a spool, how easily the demand in its repetition, its identity and its necessary distinction, its unfolding and its return onto itself, is something which easily finds something to support it in the structure of the torus.

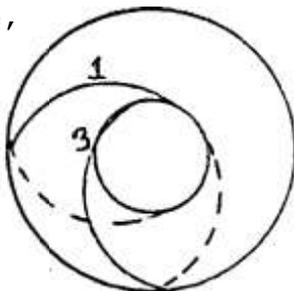
It is not this that I intend today to repeat once again. Moreover, if I were only to repeat it here, it would be quite insufficient; it is on the contrary something to which I would like to draw your attention, namely this privileged circle which is constituted by the fact that it is not only a circle which makes a circuit around the central hole, but it is also a circle which goes through it. In other words that it is constituted by a topological property which merges, which adds together the loop (boucle) constituted around the thickness of the torus to the one which would be made by a circuit made for example around the inside hole.

This sort of loop has an altogether privileged interest for us; because it is what is going to allow us to support, to depict, the relationships of demand and desire as structural.

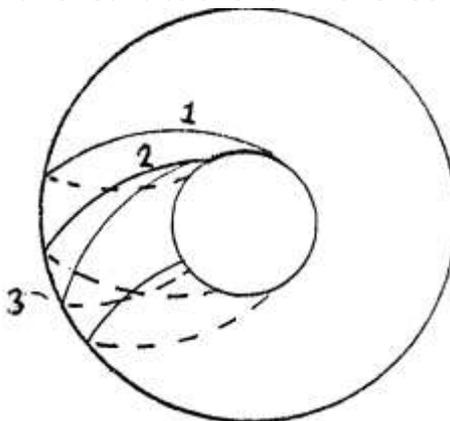
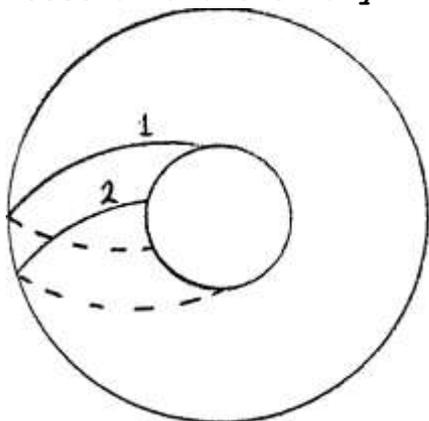


(19) Let us see in effect what emerges about such loops: observe that some can be so constituted, that another next to it is

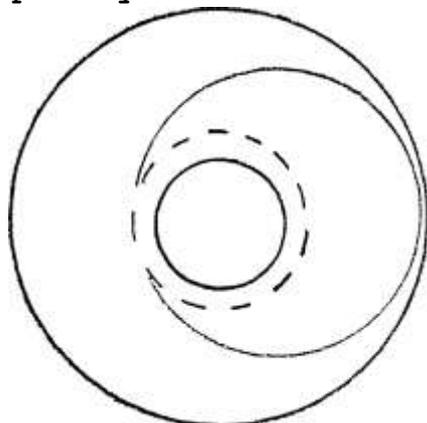
completed, comes back on itself, without in any way cutting the first. As you see, given what I tried here to clearly articulate, to clearly draw, namely the fashion in which this passes to the other side of this object which we suppose to be a solid mass because that is the way you intuit so easily and which obviously is not, the line of circle 1 passes here, the other line 3 passes a little further on. There is no kind of intersection between these two circles.



Here are two demands which while implying the central circle with what it symbolises - on this occasion, the object, and in what measure it is effectively integrated to demand, this is what our subsequent developments allow us to articulate - these two demands do not involve any kind of overlapping, any kind of intersection and even any kind of articulatable difference

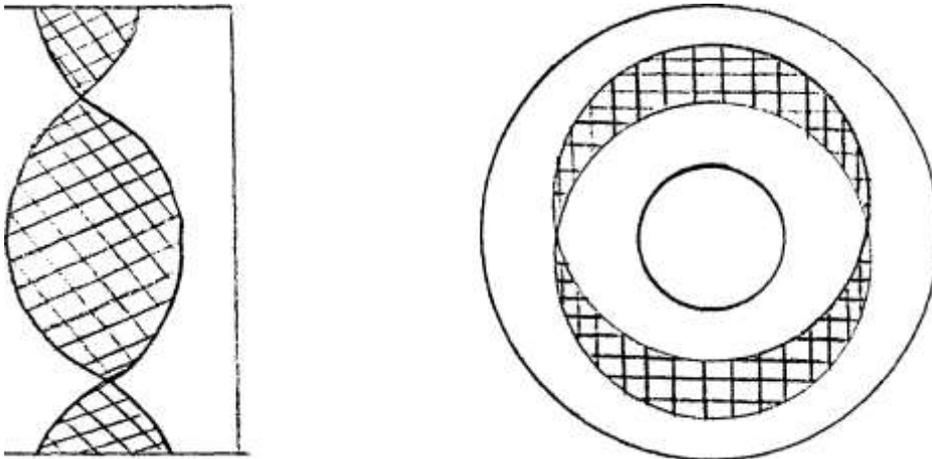


between them even though they have the same object included in their perimeter. On the contrary there is another phase of the circuit, the one which effectively passes to the other side of the torus, but far from connecting up with itself at the point from which it started begins here another curve in order to come back a second time to pass by here and come back to its point of departure.



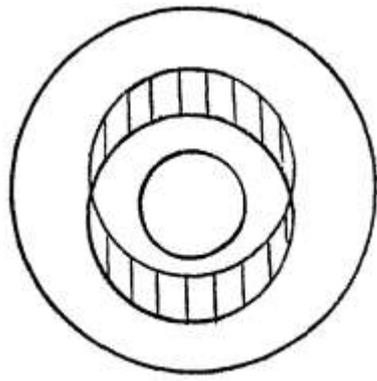
(20) I think that you have grasped what is involved; it is a matter of nothing less than something absolutely equivalent to the famous curve of the inverted eight which I spoke to you about earlier. Here the two loops represent the reiteration, the

reduplication of demand and so involve this field of difference to itself, of self-difference which is the one on which we put the accent earlier, namely that here we find the means of symbolising in a tangible fashion, at the level of demand itself, a condition for it to suggest, in all its ambiguity and in a fashion strictly analogous to the fashion in which it is suggested in the reduplication earlier of the object of desire itself, the central dimension constituted by the void of desire. I am bringing all of this to you only as a sort of proposal for exercises, for mental exercises, exercises with which you have familiarise yourself, if you subsequently want to be able to find in the torus the metaphorical value that I shall give it when I shall in every case, whether it is a matter of the obsessional, of the hysteric, of the pervert, even of the schizophrenic, have to articulate the relationship between desire and demand. That is why it is in other shapes, in the shape of the unfolded, flattened out torus of earlier on, that I am going to try to clearly mark for you what the different cases that I have evoked up to now correspond to, namely the two first circles for example which were the circles which made the circuit of the central hole and which cut one another by constituting properly speaking the same figure of symmetric difference as that of the Eulerian circles.



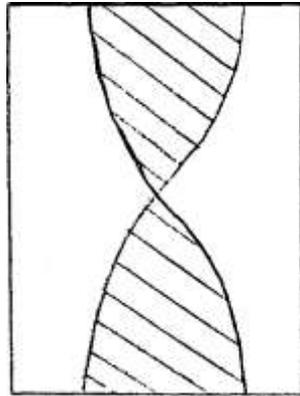
(21) Here is what that gives on the spread-out torus, certainly in this more satisfyingly illustrated fashion than the one you saw earlier because you can put your finger on the fact that there is no symmetry, let us say between the four fields, two by two, as they are defined by the cutting of the two circles.

You could have said to yourself earlier, and certainly in a fashion which would have been the sign of a lack of attention, that by drawing the things in this way, and by giving a privileged value to what I am calling here symmetric difference,



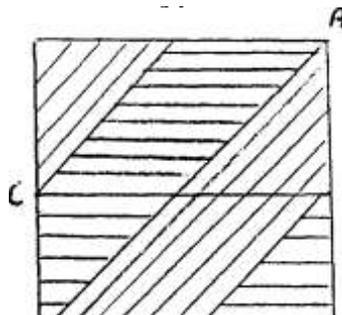
that all I am doing here is something rather arbitrary since the two other fields which I pointed out to you were merged, occupied perhaps with respect to these two here a symmetrical place. You see that it is nothing of the kind, namely that the fields defined by these two sectors, however you join them up - and you can do it - are in no way identifiable to the first field.

The other figure, namely that of the inverted eight presents itself as follows:



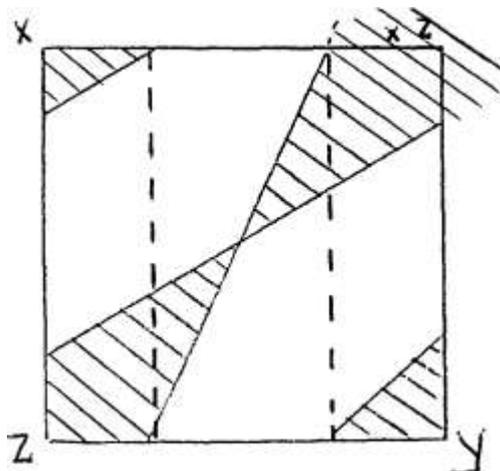
The non-symmetry of the two fields is still more obvious: the two circles which I subsequently drew successively on the periphery of the torus as defining two circles of demand in so far as they do not cut one another are now symbolised here. There is one (22) that we can identify purely - I am speaking about the two circles of demand as I have just defined them in so far as they included in addition the central hole - one can be very easily defined, be situated on the spread-out torus as an oblique line diagonally linking a vertex to the same point which it really is on the opposite edge; to the vertex opposite its position, AB.

loop that I drew would be as follows: with some point here, we have here a point C which as this point C¹ up at B': A'B'CB'.



The second earlier symbolised beginning or other A', here B', is the same and ending

There is here no possibility of distinguishing⁵ between the field which is in A and A¹. It has no privileges with respect to this field. It is not the same if on the contrary it is the inside eight that we symbolise, because in that case it presents itself as follows:

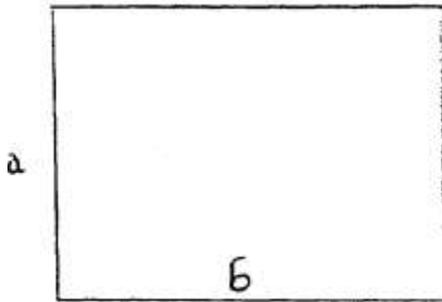


Here is one of these fields: it is defined by the shaded parts here. It is obviously not symmetrical with what remains of the other field, however you try to recompose it. It is quite obvious that you can try to recompose it in the following fashion, that this element there - let us say the x - coming here, this y coming there and this z coming here you would have the shape defined by the self-difference drawn by the inside eight.

This business, whose utilisation we will subsequently see, may appear to you a little bit fastidious, even superfluous as I try to articulate it for you. Nevertheless I would like to point out to you what it is used for. You see clearly: the whole accent that I put on the definition of these fields is designed to mark for you how these fields of symmetric difference and of what I (23) call self-difference can be used, how they can be used for a certain end and how they are sustained as existing with respect to another field that they exclude.

In other words if I go to so much trouble to establish their asymmetrical function it is because there is a reason. The reason is the following: the fact is that in the case of the torus, as it is structured purely and simply as surface, it is very difficult to symbolise in a valid fashion what I would call its asymmetry. In other words when you see it spread out namely in the shape of this rectangle which would involve, in order to reconstitute the torus, that you should imagine in the first place that I fold it and make a tube, and in the second place that I take one end of the tube and make a closed tube. It remains nonetheless that what I did in one direction I could have done in the other one.

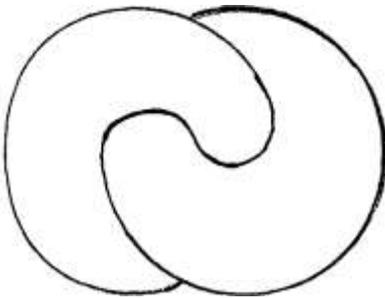
Because it is a question of topology and not of metrical properties, the question of the greater length of one side with respect to the other has no significance. That it is not this which interests us, because it is the reciprocal function of these circles that it is a matter of utilising. Now precisely in this reciprocity they appear to be able to have strictly equivalent functions. Moreover this possibility is at the basis of what I had first allowed to emerge, to appear from the beginning for you in the utilisation of this function of the torus as a possibility of a tangible image in its connection, the fact is that in the case of certain subjects, certain neurotics for example, we see in a way in a tangible fashion the projection, if I can put it this way, of the very circles of desire in the whole measure that it is a matter for them, as I might say, of finding a way out of it in the demands required of the Other. And this is what I have symbolised by showing you this: it is that if you draw a torus you can simply imagine another one which encompasses as one might say the first one in this way; it is necessary to see clearly that each one of the circles around the hole can have by simple rotation their correspondence in circles which go through the hole of the other torus, that a torus in a way is always transformable in all its points into an opposite torus.



What it is a matter of seeing therefore is what gives its originality to one of these circular functions, that of full circles for example compared to what we have called at another moment empty circles. This difference very obviously exists, one could for example symbolise it, formalise it by indicating through a

(24) little sign on the surface of the torus spread out as a rectangle, if you wish, the priority according to which the folding is to be done, and if we called this side small a and this side small b , to note for example small a under small b , or inversely. This would be a notation that nobody in topology has ever dreamt of and which would have something quite artificial about it because it is hard to see why a torus should in any way be an object which might have a temporal dimension.

From that moment on, it is quite difficult to symbolise it otherwise, even though one can see clearly that there is here something irreducible and which gives properly speaking all its exemplary virtue to the toric object.



There would be another way to try to tackle it. It is quite clear that it is in so far as we only consider the torus as a surface taking its co-ordinates from its own structure alone that we are faced with this impasse, which has serious consequences for us because obviously if these circles which you see I tend to make use of to fix the demand in them in its relationships of course

with other circles which have a relationship with desire, if they are strictly reversible, is this something that we want to have for our model? Certainly not. It is on the contrary an essential privilege of the central hole that is involved; and as a consequence the topological status that we are seeking as utilisable in our model, is going to flee from us and escape us. It is precisely because it is going to flee and escape that it is going to reveal itself as fruitful for us.

Let us try another method to mark something that the mathematicians, the topologists do perfectly well without in the definition, the use, that they make of this structure of the torus in topology: they themselves, in the general theory of surfaces, have highlighted the function of the torus as an irreducible element in any reduction of surfaces to what one calls a normal form. When I say that it is an irreducible element, I mean that one cannot reduce the torus to something else. You can imagine surface shapes as complex as you wish but it is always necessary to take into account the function of the torus in all planification, if I can express myself in this way, in all triangulation in the theory of surfaces. The torus does (25) not suffice, other terms are necessary, specifically the sphere is necessary, there is necessary in it something that I was not even able to make an allusion to today, to introduce the

possibility of what is called the cross-cap and the possibility of holes.

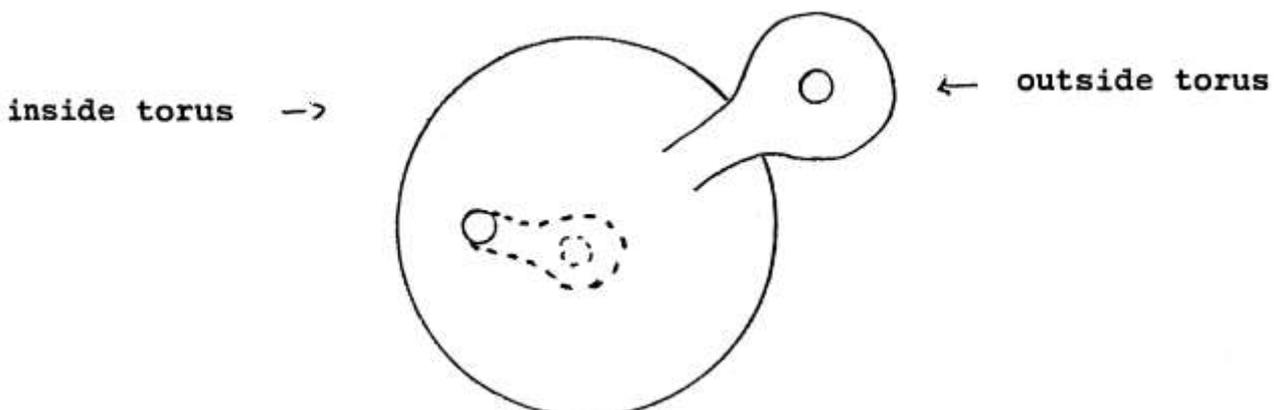
When you have the sphere, the torus, the cross-cap and the hole, you can represent any of what are called the compact surfaces, in other words a surface which is decomposable in pieces. There are other surfaces which are not decomposable, but we leave them aside.

Let us come now to our torus and to the possibility of its orientation. Are we going to be able to do it with respect to the ideal sphere onto which it is hooked? We are always able to introduce this sphere, namely if you blow enough, any torus whatsoever can come to be represented as a simple handle at the surface of a sphere which is a sufficiently inflated part of itself. Are we going to be able through the mediation of the sphere, as I might say, to replunge the torus into what - you sense it clearly - we are seeking for the moment, namely this third term which allows us to introduce the asymmetry we need between the two types of circles?

This asymmetry which is nevertheless so obvious, so intuitively tangible, so irreducible even and which is nevertheless of such a kind that it manifests itself in this connection as being this something which we always observe in every mathematical development: the necessity, for it to get started, of forgetting something at the beginning, this you will find in every kind of formal progress, this something forgotten and which literally escapes us, flees us in the formalism - are we going to be able to grasp it for example in the reference to something which is called the tube of the sphere?

In effect, look carefully at what happens and are we told that in reduction every formalisable surface can give us the normal shape? We are told that this will always come back to a sphere, with what? With tori inserted on it and which we can validly symbolise as follows. I will spare you the theory, experience proves that it is strictly accurate. That in addition we will have what are called cross-caps. These cross-caps, I am not going to speak to you about them today, I will have to speak to you about them because they will be of the greatest use to us. Let us be satisfied with considering the torus.

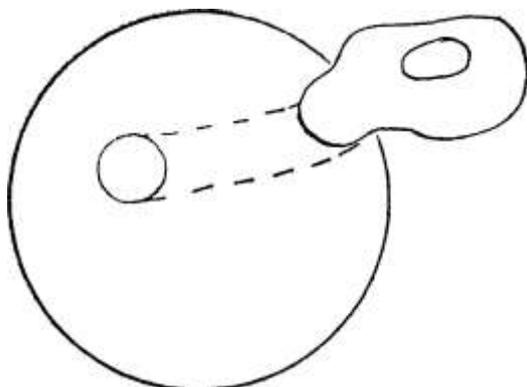
(26) We might get the idea that a handle like this one, which is not outside the sphere, but inside with a hole in order get into



it is something irreducible, uneliminateable and that it would be necessary in a way to distinguish outside tori from inside tori.

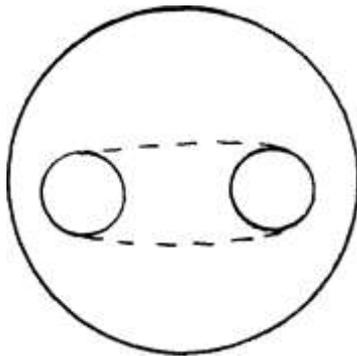
What is the interest of this for us? Very precisely in connection with a mental form which is necessary for our whole intuition of our object. In effect in the Platonic, Aristotelian, Eulerian perspective of an Umwelt and of a Innenwelt, of a dominance placed from the beginning on the division between inside and outside, will we not place everything that we experience, and specifically in analysis, within the dimension of what I called the other day the underground, namely the corridor which goes down into the depths, in other words, to the maximum degree, I mean in its most developed form according to this shape.

It is extremely exemplary to make you sense in this connection the absolute non-independence of this shape; because I repeat to you in so far as one arrives at reduced shapes which are the shapes inscribed, vaguely sketched on the blackboard with the aim of giving a support to what I am saying, it is absolutely impossible to sustain as different for even an instant, the eventual originality of the inside handle compared to the outside (27) handle, to employ the technical terms. It is enough for you, I think, to have a little imagination to see that if it is a question here of something that we materialise in rubber it is enough to introduce your finger here (see the schema) and to hook



onto the central ring of this handle as it is here constituted from the inside in order to extract it to the outside exactly according to a shape which would be the following, namely a torus that is exactly the same, without any kind of tearing, nor even properly speaking inversion. There is no inversion: what was inside, namely the journeying in this way from the inside of the corridor, becomes the outside because it always was. If that surprises you, I can illustrate it again in a more simple fashion which is exactly the same because there is no difference between this and what I am going to show you now and what I showed you from the first day, hoping to make you sense what was involved. Imagine that it is in the middle of its journey, which is exactly the same thing from the topological point of view, that the torus is caught in the sphere; you have here a little corridor which travels from one hole to another hole. Here I think that it is sufficiently tangible that it is not difficult, simply by making bulge a little what you can grasp through the corridor with your

finger, to make appear a figure which would be more or less the following: something which is here a handle and whose two holes communicating with the inside are here in dots.



We arrive then at a further failure, I mean at the impossibility, by a reference to the third dimension here represented by the sphere, of symbolizing this something which puts the torus, as one might say, in its place, with respect to its own asymmetry. What we see once again being manifested, is this something which is introduced by this very simple signifier which I first brought to you of the interior eight, namely the possibility of an inside field as being still homogeneous with the outside field.

This is such an essential category, so essential to mark, to imprint in your spirit that I believed I had today, at the risk of wearying you, even of wearing you out, to insist throughout one of our lectures. You will see, I hope, its utilisation in what follows.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 2 May 1962

It is not necessarily with the idea of making things easier either for you or for anyone else, that I thought today for this session where we are starting again, at a moment when we have a two month run before us to finish dealing with this difficult subject, that I thought of making of this restart a sort of relay. I mean that for a long time I would have liked, not simply to give one of you a opportunity to speak, but even precisely to give it to Mme Aulagnier. I have been thinking about it for a very long time because it was the day after she read a paper at one of our scientific sessions.

I do not know why some of you who unfortunately are not here, because of a sort of myopia characteristic of certain positions that I would describe moreover as mandarin-like because this term has had a success, thought they saw in this paper some return or other to the letter of Freud while to my ears it seemed that Mme Aulagnier handled with a particular pertinence and acuteness the distinction already long-matured at that time between demand and desire.

There is all the same some chance that one may oneself better recognise one's own posterity than others do. Moreover there was someone who was in agreement with me on this point: it was Mme Aulagnier herself. I regret therefore having taken so long to allow her to speak, perhaps the feeling, an excessive one moreover, of something which is always at our heels putting pressure on us to advance. Precisely today we are for a moment going to make this sort of loop (boucle) which consists in making our way through what in the mind of one of you may respond in a fruitful way to the path that we have taken together. A good while has passed already since the moment that I am evoking, and it is very especially at this intersection, this crossroads constituted in the mind of Mme Aulagnier [with what] I recently (2) said about anxiety, that she came to propose to me some sessions ago that she should intervene here.

It is therefore because of an timeliness which is worth as much as any other one, the feeling of having something to communicate to you and something quite to the point about anxiety, and this in the closest relationship with what she like you has heard about what I am teaching this year about identification, that she is going to bring you something that she has prepared carefully enough to have a full text of it.

She was good enough to share this text with me, I mean that I looked at it with her yesterday and I thought, I must say, that I ought to encourage her to present it to you. I am sure that it represents an excellent middle term (medium) and I mean by that not something which is an average of what, I believe, the most sensitive, the best ears among you can understand, and of the way in which things can be taken up again; resonating with her ear, I will say therefore after she has conceived this text what use I intend to put it to subsequently.

Anxiety and Identification! During the recent Journées Provinciales (a type of congress) a certain number of H interventions centred on the question of knowing if one can define different types of anxiety. But the question was raised as to whether one ought for example to accord a particular status to psychotic anxiety. I will say at the outset that I take a slightly different view: it seems to me that anxiety whether it appears in a normal, neurotic or psychotic subject is a response to a specific and always identical situation of the ego and that this is one of its essential characteristics.

As for what may be called the position of the subject vis a vis anxiety, in psychosis for example, we have seen that unless the relation between affect and verbalisation is more clearly defined a kind of paradox appears, whereby on the one hand the psychotic is seen as someone particularly subject to anxiety; indeed one of the major difficulties in treatment is the mirroring of this anxiety in the analyst, and on the other hand we are told that the psychotic is incapable of recognising his anxiety, that he has alienated himself from it and keeps it at a distance.

The position thus stated is not sustainable unless one tries to go a little further: what in fact does it mean to recognise anxiety? It does not wait to be named and has no need to be named in order to submerge the ego. I do not know what is meant by saying that the subject is anxious without knowing it. We might ask if the property of anxiety is not precisely not to name itself: a diagnosis; a name can only come from the other the one before whom it appears. He the subject he is the affect anxiety, he is totally it, living it, and it is this impregnation, this capturing of his ego which is dissolved there which debars him from the mediation of the word.

At this level we could draw a first parallel between two states which however different seem to me to present two extreme positions of the ego which are as opposed to each other as they are complementary; I mean orgasm. At the moment of orgasm there is the same profound incompatibility between the possibility of living it and that of distancing oneself sufficiently to recognise and define it in the here and now of its occurrence. To say that one is anxious in itself indicates a certain distance from the lived experience and shows that the ego has already acquired a degree of mastery and objectivity vis-a-vis an affect which perhaps from this moment on no longer deserves the name anxiety.

I do not here a need to emphasize the mediating metaphoric role of the word, nor the gaps which exist between an affective experience and its translation into words.

From the moment man puts his affects into words, he makes them into something else; through the word he transforms them into a means of communication causing them to enter into the field of relationship and of intention-ality. The word renders communicable what was lived at the level of the body, which in itself, in the last analysis remains non-verbal. We all know that to say one loves someone has only a slight connection to what is meant by this love as experienced bodily. Lacan reminds us that to tell someone you desire him is to include him in your fundamental phantasy. It is also undoubtedly to bear witness to this fact, the witness of ones own signifier. Whatever may be said on this topic everything indicates a gap which exists between affect as interiorized bodily emotion, as something which has its own profound source, in that which by definition cannot be expressed in words, I speak of phantasy, and the word which thus appears in its function as metaphor.

If the word is the magic and indispensable key which alone grants us access to the world of symbolisation, it seems to me that anxiety occurs precisely at the moment when this key no longer opens any door, when the ego (the me) must come face to face with that which is behind or before all symbolisation, when that which appears is that which is without a name, "this mysterious figure", this place from which a desire arises which one can no longer apprehend, where for the subject a kind of telescoping occurs between phantasy and reality. The symbolic fades giving way to phantasy as such, the ego dissolves and it is this dissolution which we call anxiety.

Certainly the psychotic does not have to wait for the analytic experience in order to know anxiety: it is true that for every subject the analytic situation is a privileged domain in this regard. There is nothing surprising in the statement that anxiety is very closely related to identification. If identification always involves something at the level of desire, - the desire of the subject as it relates to the desire of the Other, - it becomes obvious that a major source of anxiety in analysis is caused by what is in fact the essence of the analytic situation: the fact that the Other in this case is the one whose most fundamental desire is to not desire, someone who by means of this, in allowing every conceivable projection, can unmask their phantasmatic and subjective base, and can cause the subject from time to time to pose the question of the analyst's desire, a desire always presumed never known and for this reason always potentially the place from which anxiety can arise for the analysand.

But before attempting to define the parameters of the anxiogenic situation, parameters which can only be sketched from the baseline of the problem proper to identification, an initial question concerning description can be asked: what do we mean

when we speak of oral anxiety, of castration anxiety, of death anxiety?

To attempt to differentiate these in terms of a type of quantitative grading is impossible. There is no such thing as an anxiety meter. One is not more or less anxious. One either is or is not anxious. The only possibility of sketching an answer at this level lies in taking up one's proper position which is that of the one who alone can define the anxiety of the subject, beginning with whatever it is that this anxiety signals. If it is true as Lacan points out, but it is extremely difficult to speak of anxiety in so far as it is a signal at the level of the subject, it seems certain to me that its appearance designates, signals the Other, as source, as the place from which it surges up, and it is perhaps not unimportant to point out in this connection that there is no affect which we experience as less bearable in others, no other affect is more contagious. Sadism or aggravity for example can arouse opposite feelings in a partner such as masochism or passivity: anxiety can only provoke either flight or an answering anxiety. There is a reciprocity of response here, which raises certain questions.

Lacan rebels against the attempt carried out by several people to find "the content of anxiety": which reminds me of his dictum about something else altogether: in order to pull a rabbit out of a hat one must first put him in. I wonder then if anxiety appears not only when the rabbit comes out but when he has gone off to browse in the grass, when the hat now only represents something which looks like a forus, which surrounds a black hole from which all nameable content has disappeared, faced with which the ego no longer has any point of reference, because the first thing one can say about anxiety is that its appearance is the sign of the momentary collapse of all possible identificatory terms of reference. It is only by starting from here that one can perhaps answer the question I posed earlier concerning the different names given to anxiety, oral etc and not at the level of defining its content, since the property of the anxious subject is to have lost his or her content so to speak.

In other words it seems to me that it is not possible to speak of anxiety as such, to do so seems to me as inaccurate as to try to define an obsessional symptom while remaining at the level of the automatic movement which can represent it. We can learn something about anxiety only if we consider it as the consequence, the result of an impasse of the ego, the sign for us of an obstacle which has occurred between these two fundamental and parallel lines, the convergence of which forms the coping stone of the entire human structure - identification and castration. It is the relation between these two structuring and pivocal lines in different subjects that I will try to sketch out here in order to attempt to define anxiety since in each case it is to this relation that anxiety bears witness.

In the Seminar of April 4th to which I refer Lacan tells us that: "castration can be conceived as a transitional passage from what in him is the natural, become half alien, vacillating support of

desire through this habilitation by the law, by means of which this piece, this pound of flesh is going to become the pledge, the something through which he is going to be designated at the place where he has to manifest himself as desire within the circle of demand".

This transitional passage is what allows us to approach a kind of equivalence penis phallus, in other words that which as "natural support" is the place where desire manifests itself as affect, as bodily feeling, must become, must yield its place to a signifier, because it is only in relation to a subject and not in relation to a partial object penis or otherwise, that the word desire can take on any meaning. The subject demands and the phallus desires says Lacan, the phallus but never the penis. The penis is only the instrument at the service of the signifier itself. If it can be a very indocile instrument it is precisely because as phallus it is the subject whom it designates and for this to happen the Other must recognise it as such, must choose it, not in its role as this natural support but rather in so far as it is as subject the signifier which the Other recognises from his or her own place as signifier.

That which differentiates the masturbatory act from coitus on the plane of Jouissance (they are clearly different but this difference is difficult to explain physiologically) is that coitus in so far as both partners have been able to assume their castration, at the moment of orgasm the subject finds again, not as some would have it a kind of primitive fusion - there is no reason after all why the deepest experience of joy (Jouissance) of which man is capable should be necessarily linked to such a total regression but on the contrary this privileged moment where for an instant he attains his identification, ever elusive but always longed for, where he the subject is recognised by the Other as object of his deepest desire, but also at the same moment because of the Jouissance of the other, where he can recognise him or her as the one who constitutes him as phallic signifier; at this unique instant demand and desire can fleetingly coincide, and it is this which gives to the ego this blossoming of identificatory joy from which Jouissance springs.

It must not be forgotten however that even though demand and desire coincide in this moment, Jouissance carries within itself the source of the most profound dissatisfaction; because if desire is above all desire for continuity Jouissance is by definition something instantaneous and it is this which immediately re-establishes the gap between desire and demand, and the lack of satisfaction which ensures the ceaselessness of demand.

But if there are imitations of anxiety there are even more frequent imitations of Jouissance. This identificatory situation, source of true Jouissance cannot occur if one or both partners has remained fixated to the partial object, locked in a dual situation in which they as subjects have no place: since what is demonstrated by everything linked to castration is that it expresses not so much the fear that the penis will be cut off,

even if this is how the subject verbalises it, as the fear that it will be left to him and that everything else will be cut off; that this penis, this partial object source of pleasure is resented, he will be denied and not accorded recognition as subject. This is why anxiety is closely related to Jouissance, and why one of the most anxiety provoking of situations is the subjects confrontation with the Other at this level.

If we look at the problems encountered by the subject at this level we see that they represent nothing less than the sources of all anxiety. In order to discuss these we must refer to the pre genital modes of relating to objects, to this all important moment in the subject's life where the mediation between the subject and the Other between demand and desire takes place around this very ambiguously defined object which is called the partial object. The relation of the subject to this partial object is nothing other than the relation of the subject to his own body. This primary relationship which is fundamental for every human being is the point of departure and the mould for everything that can be included in the term object relation. Whether the oral, anal or phallic phase is discussed the same coordinates will be encountered. If I choose the oral phase it is because for the psychotic who will be discussed further on this appears to be the fruitful moment for what I have elsewhere called the moment of the inauguration of the psychosis.

How shall we define it? By a demand which from the start is a demand for something else. And by a response which is not only and obviously a response to something else but is, and this seems to me a very important point, that which constitutes a cry, a call perhaps, as demand and as desire. When the mother responds to the baby's crying she recognises it, constituting it as demand, but more importantly she interprets it on the plane of desire: the child's desire to have her near, to take something from her, to attack her or whatever. What is certain is that by her response the Other confers the dimension of desire on the cry of need and that this desire with which the child is invested is always at the beginning the result of a subjective interpretation, a function of maternal desire only, of maternal phantasy. In this way through the unconscious of the Other, the subject enters the world of desire; he will have to constitute his own desire first of all as response; as either acceptance or refusal of the place designated for him in the unconscious of the Other.

It seems to me that the first moment of this key mechanism of the oral relation which is projective identification has its origin in the mother. There is a first projection on the plane of desire which comes from her. The child will have to identify with this or to fight it, to refuse an identification which he may experience as determinant. And this first state of human evolution can also carry with it the revelation for the subject of what it is that his demand conceals. From this moment Jouissance which doesn't wait for phallic organisation to appear can enter the picture carrying with it the revelatory dimension it will always conserve: if frustration reveals the gap between

need and desire, Jouissance on the contrary by responding to that which has not been formulated reveals that which is beyond the demand, in other words desire. What do we see in the oral relation? That demand and response are articulated for both partners around a partial relation - mouth breast. The response at the level of the oral cavity provokes an activity of absorption, a source of pleasure; an external object, the milk will become part of one's own bodily substance. This is what gives it meaning and its importance to this absorption. Starting from this first response the seeking out of this activity of absorption, this source of pleasure will become the object of demand. As for desire it must be sought elsewhere, although it is from this same baseline, this same response, this same experience of the appeasement of need that it will constitute itself.

If the mouth breast relation and the activity of absorbing food represent the numerator of the equation representing the oral relation, there is also a denominator, that which invokes the mother child relationship, and it is here that desire must be situated. No-where else may one more fully appreciate the truth of the proverb: the manner in which one gives is more important than that which one gives. Thanks to or because of this manner of giving, in view of what it reveals of maternal desire, the child will learn the difference between the gift of food and the gift of love. Along with the absorption of food, an introjection occurs, a phantasmatic relationship in which the child and the Other are represented by their unconscious desires. If the numerator can carry a plus sign the denominator can at the same moment carry a minus sign; it is this difference of sign between demand and desire, this place from which frustration arises, that is the origin of every signifier.

From here one can trace the different phases of the evolution of the subject - normal, neurotic, perverse or psychotic. I will try to schematise them here, simplifying them perhaps in a slightly caricatural fashion in order to show the relationship which exists in each case between identification and anxiety.

In the first and most Utopian situation the child finds in the gift of food the gift of love which he desires. The breast and the maternal response can then become symbols of something else. The child enters the symbolic world and can accept the unfolding of the signifying chain. The oral relation as absorption can then be abandoned and the subject evolves in the direction of normal growth.

For this to happen the mother must have taken on board her own castration. A third term, the father must be present for the mother. Only then what she seeks in the child will not be some kind of erotogenic satisfaction which makes of the child the equivalent of the phallus, but a relation in which as mother she is also the wife of the father.

The gift of food will be a symbol of the gift of love for her and because this gift of love will precisely not be the phallic gift

which the subject desires the child will be able to maintain his relation to demand. He will have to seek the phallus elsewhere. He will enter into the castration complex which alone will permit him to identify himself with something other than S. Baird.

If the mother has not taken her own castration on board every object which can be the source of pleasure or the object of demand for the Other risks becoming for her the phallic equivalent she desires. But in so far as the breast has a privileged existence only for the child to whom it is indispensable we see this child - phallus equivalent happening which is centre to the origin of most neurotic structures.

The subject as he develops will be faced with the dilemma of either being or having whatever the bodily object - breast or penis - which has become the phallic support. Either he will identify with the one who has it, but not having acceded to the symbolic, having it will always be having castrated the other. Or else he will renounce having it, he will identify with the phallus as the object of desire of the Other but must also then renounce being himself the subject of desire.

This identificatory conflict between being the agent of castration or the subject who undergoes it is what defines this continual???? this question which is always present at the level of question at the level of identification which is clinically referred to as neurosis.

The third case is what we encounter in perversion. If this latter has been defined as the negative of neurosis, we find the structural opposition also at the level of identification. The pervert is he who has eliminated all identificatory conflict: on the oral plane we could say that in perversion the subject constitutes himself as if the activity of absorption had no other goal than to make of him an object which provides phallic Jouissance for the Other. The pervert neither has nor is the phallus: he is this ambiguous object which serves a desire which is not his: his Jouissance is in this strange situation where the only identification possible to him is as an object which procures the Jouissance of a phallus, but he doesn't know to whom this phallus belongs. One could say that the desire of the pervert is to respond to the demand of the phallus. To take a banal example I would say that in order for the Jouissance of the sadist to appear, another is pleased by the fact that he the pervert makes himself into a whip. If I speak of phallic demand which is a kind of play on words it is because for the pervert the other exists only as the almost anonymous support of a phallus for whom the pervert performs his sacrificial rights.

The perverse response is always a negation of the Other as subject. The perverse identification is always to this object which is the source of the Jouissance for a phallus which is as powerful as it is phantasmatic. Perversion needs to be seen in a context which is wider than the merely sexual. Perversion refers to Jouissance whatever the bodily part involved. If I share Lacan's distrust for what is called genitility it is because

anatomical analysis is dangerous. The most normal seeming intercourse can be as neurotic or as perverse as that which is called a pregenital drive. Normality neurosis or perversion can only be recognised by examining the relation between the ego and the identification which does or does not permit Jouissance.

If one reserves the diagnosis of perversion to sexual perversion only, not only will this get us nowhere since a purely symptomatic diagnosis means nothing, but we will also be forced to recognise that there are very few neurotics who will escape this diagnosis. And it is not only at the level that the solution is to be found of the guilt from which the pervert is said to be exempt - no human being is free from guilt. The only way to approach perversion is to try to define it at the level where it exists, at the level behaviour in relationship.

The obsessional can also be sadistic - for him it means the ongoing presence of an anal relation, a relation where it is a question of possessing or being possessed, a relation where the love which one feels and of which one is the object can only be signified to the subject in terms of a possession which can go so far as the destruction of the object. The obsessional is the one who punishes well because he loves well, he for whom the father's beating has remained the privileged sign of his love and who is always seeking someone to whom he can give or from whom he can receive this beating. But having giving or received it, having assured himself that he is loved he will seek Jouissance in a different type of relation to the same object and whether this relation is oral, anal or vaginal it will not be perverse in the sense I mean, which seems to me to be the only one by which one can avoid extending this label perverse to a large number of neurotics and a large number of our fellow men.

Sadism becomes a perversion when the beating is no longer sought or given as a sign of love but when it is perceived by the subject as the only possibility of procuring Jouissance for a phallus: and the sight of this Jouissance becomes the only possibility offered to the pervert for his own Jouissance.

A lot has been said about the aggressivity of exhibitionism. Flashing is a way of attacking the other undoubtedly, but the exhibitionist is convinced that this aggression is source of Jouissance for the Other. The obsessional when he is exhibitionistic tries to bait the other; he shows what he thinks the other doesn't have but wants to have. The intention is aggressive. Think of the ratman: the father is Jouissance is the father's least of his worries: he shows to the dead father what he thinks the dead father would like to take away from him. This is an aggressive act from which the obsessional draws Jouissance. Whereas the pervert seeks his own Jouissance via that of another. This is what perversion is: this zig-zag journey, this detour by which the ego is always at the service of an anonymous phallic power. He does not care who is his object, it is enough for him that it should be capable of Jouissance that he can make of it a support of this phallus to which he is identified, that it can serve as an object presumed to be capable of procuring Jouissance

for this phallus. This is why, contrary to what one finds in neurosis, perverse identification like its particular type of object relation is something which is striking in its stability, its unity.

We now reach our fourth category which is the one most difficult to grasp: psychosis.

The psychotic is a subject whose demand has never been symbolised by the Other, for whom the real and the symbolic, phantasy and reality have never been demarcated because he has never acceded to the imaginary, the third dimension which alone allows a differentiation between these two different levels. In order to simplify things let us situate ourselves at the very first moment of the history of the subject, before the oral relation at the moment of conception.

The first amputation undergone by the psychotic happens before his birth: for his mother he is a part of her own metabolism; all paternal participation is denied by her, is unacceptable. Throughout the pregnancy the child is the partial object which will fill up the phantasmatic lack on a bodily plane. From birth the role assigned to him will be to be the witness of her negation of castration.

The child contrary to what is often said is not the mother's phallus: he is the proof (witness) that the breast is the phallus, which is not the same thing. So that the breast may be the phallus and an all powerful one, the response it brings to the child must be perfect and total. The demand of the child cannot be recognised as anything that is not demand for food, the dimension of desire at the level of the subject must be denied; what characterizes the mother of the psychotic is a total interdiction which blocks the child from becoming subject to any desire.

One can see from this moment how the psychotic's particular relation to the word will develop. From the beginning it will be impossible for him to maintain his relation to the demand: if he is responded to only as a mouth to be fed, only as a partial object, every demand, even as it is being formulated will carry within it the death of desire. Since he has not been symbolised by the Other he will be drawn himself to make the symbolic and the real coincide in the response. Since no matter what he demands, it is food which is given to him, it will be food as such which will become for him the master signifier. From that moment the symbolic will erupt into the real: instead of the gift of food finding its symbolised equivalent in the gift of love, for him every gift of love can only be signified by oral absorption. To love or to be loved will be translated by him into oral terms: to absorb or to be absorbed. For him there will always be a fundamental contradiction between demand and desire: either he maintains his demand and his demand destroys him as subject of desire: he must alienate himself as subject in order to make himself a mouth, an object to be fed: or else he will try

one way or another to constitute himself as subject and to do this he will find himself obliged to alienate that body part which is the source of pleasure and the origin of his response of himself which is for him incompatible with any attempt at autonomy.

The psychotic always finds himself forced to alienate either his body as support of the ego or a body part as support of the possibility of a Jouissance. If I do not use the term identification here it is precisely because I do not think it is applicable in the case of psychosis. In my view identification implies the possibility of a relation to the object where the desire of the subject and the desire of the Other are in a conflictual situation but exist as the two constitutive poles of the relation (to the object). In psychosis the Other and his desire have to be defined at the level of a phantasmatic relation of the subject to his own body. I will not go into this since it will take us too far from the subject of our discussion which is anxiety. Contrary to what may be believed it is of anxiety that I have been speaking all along. As I said at the beginning it is not possible to address the subject of anxiety without taking into account the parameters of identification.

What has been seen in all the cases discussed, whether normal neurotic or perverse, identification can only happen in relation to what the subject imagines rightly or wrongly to be the desire of the Other. In the normal, neurotic or perverse subject it is always a matter of identifying oneself in accordance with or in opposition to what one thinks is the desire of the Other. As long as this desire can be imagined, phantasized, the subject will find there the necessary reference points in order to define himself, either as the object of the desire of the Other or as an object refusing to be the desire of the Other. In either case he will be able to locate himself, to define himself.

But from the moment when the desire becomes something mysterious, undefinable, the subject discovers that it is precisely this desire of the Other which constitutes him as subject; what he will encounter faced with this void is his fundamental phantasy. To be the object of the desire of the Other is only bearable in so far as we can name this desire, can shape it in terms of our own desire. To become the object of a desire we can no longer name, is to become oneself an object without a name having lost all possible identity: to become an object whose insignia no longer means anything since they have become undecipherable for the Other. This precise moment when the ego is reflected in a mirror which gives back an image which has no identifiable meaning - this is anxiety. In calling it oral, anal or phallic we are simply trying to define which insignia the ego has donned in order to be recognised. If anxiety is the affect which most easily provokes a reciprocal response it is because from this moment we become for the Other the one whose insignia are equally mysterious, equally inhuman. In anxiety it is not just the ego which is dissolved, the other also dissolves as support of identification. Jouissance and anxiety are the two extreme positions in which the ego can situate itself: in the first the

ego and the Other for an instant exchange insignia, recognise each other as two signifiers whose shared Jouissance assures a momentary identity of desire: in anxiety the ego and the Other are dissolved, annulled in a situation where desire disappears because it cannot be named.

In psychosis things are a little different. Here too anxiety is nothing other than the signal of the loss of all possible reference points for the ego. But the source from which this anxiety arises is indigenous: it is the place from which the desire of the subject can appear - it is his desire which is the privileged source of all anxiety for the psychotic.

If it is true that it is the Other who constitutes us by recognising us as object of desire, if the response of the Other makes us realise the gap which exists between demand and desire and if it is through this gap that we enter into the world of signifiers, then for the psychotic the Other is the one who has never signified anything other than a hole, a void at the very centre of his being. The interdiction regarding desire which he has experienced means that his response has caused him to register not a gap but a fundamental antimony between demand and desire. From this gap which is not just a gap but a gaping pit what appears is not the signifier but the phantasy, that which causes the telescoping of the symbolic and the real which we call psychosis.

For the psychotic - if I can put it simply - the Other is introjected at the level of his own body, at the level of everything which surrounds the primordial absence which is the only thing which designates him as subject.

For him anxiety is linked to specific moments where out of this hole something appears which can be called desire: because in order to assume this desire the subject must situate himself in the only place from which he can say "I" - in other words must identify with this hole which because of the interdiction of the Other is the only place where he can be recognised as subject. Every desire can only throw him back on either a negation of himself or an negation of the Other.

But in so far as the Other is introjected at the level of his own body it is this introjection alone which allows him to live. All negation of the Other would be for him a self mutilation which can only throw him back onto his own fundamental drama.

If our silence helps to reveal the sources of anxiety in the neurotic, our presence, our word does so with the psychotic. Everything which causes him to lose awareness of our existence as separate from him, as autonomous subjects who can recognise him as subject, releases his anxiety. So long as he talks, he repeats a monologue which situates us at the level of this introjected Other which constitutes him, but if he should begin to talk to us in so far as we as object may become the place where he must recognise his desire, his anxiety will be released: because to desire means to constitute oneself as subject and for

him the only place where he can do that is the place which refers him back to this gaping hole.

Here too one can see that anxiety appears at the moment when desire makes of the subject something which is a lack of being, a failure to name oneself.

I have not spoken of phantasy which is intimately related to both identification and to anxiety. I could have said that anxiety appears at the moment when the real object can only be grasped in its phantasmatic meaning, that it is from this moment, since all possible identification of the ego has dissolved that anxiety appears.

I will end with a short case history in order to give you a clinical example of the sources of anxiety in the psychotic. I will not go into detail except to say that this is a schizophrenic suffering from delusions who has been frequently hospitalized. The first sessions were given over to an account of his delusions, a fairly classic one which he called the problem of the robot man. Then in one session where by chance communication with others and the word were being discussed he explained that what he cannot bear is "the form of the demand", that "the handshake is an improvement on civilizations which use verbal salutations, because the word falsifies things, blocks understanding. The word is like a turning wheel - everyone sees a different part at different moments so communication is always false; there is always a dialogue".

In this same session at the moment when he broaches the problem of the woman's word he suddenly says: "what disquiets me is what they say about amputees, that they can feel things with the limb they no longer have:" at this moment this man whose speech even in his delusion is extremely precise, begins to fumble, to search for words and finally comes out with this: "a ghost would be a man without limbs and without a body who by his intelligence alone could recognise a false sensation in a body he doesn't have. This makes me very uneasy."

"Would recognise a false sensation in a body he doesn't have". This phrase took on its meaning in the following session when he announced that he wanted to stop, that the treatment was unhealthy and dangerous. What was unhealthy and dangerous was "that I realised you wanted to seduce me and that you could succeed". What he realised from these false sensations in a body he doesn't have was that he might desire. Then he would have to recognise, to assume this lack which is his body. He would have to look at what is unbearable for man if it has not been symbolised - castration as such.

In this same session he himself expressed better than I could the source of his anxiety: "you are afraid to look at yourself in a mirror, you don't really know what you will see there. It is better if you buy a gilded mirror."

One has the impression that he wants to be sure that the changes are caused by the mirror.

As you see anxiety appears at the moment when he fears I may become an object of desire; from that moment the arousal of his own desire would imply for him the necessity of taking on board the fundamental lack which constitutes him.

From the moment anxiety appears, his position of ghost, as robot is no longer possible. He risks being no longer able to deny the false sensations of a body he cannot acknowledge. What causes his anxiety is the precise moment when faced with the eruption of his desire he wonders what image of himself the mirror will reflect back to him; he knows it may be a void, an unnameable# something, something which will render impossible any neutral recognition, and which we the involuntary spectators of this drama call anxiety.

Before trying to examine the place of this discourse I would like some of the people whom I saw with different interrogative, expectant expressions, expressions which became more precise at one or other turning point of Mme Aulagnier's discourse, to simply indicate the suggestions, the thoughts produced in them at one or other detour of this discourse as a sign that this discourse has been heard. I only regret one thing: it was read. This will provide me with supports on which I will be able to accentuate my commentary more precisely.

M Audouard

What struck me by way of association, is really the clinical example that you brought in at the end of your presentation, it is this sentence of the patient about the word which he compares to a wheel which different people never see the same part of. This seems to me to illuminate everything that you said and to open up - I really don't know why - a whole broadening of the themes that you have presented.

I think I have more or less understood the meaning of the presentation; I am not used to schizophrenics, but as regards neurotics and perverts anxiety in so far as it cannot be the object of symbolisation because it is precisely the mark that symbolisation has not been able to take place and to symbolise oneself is really to disappear into a sort of non-symbolisation from which the summons of anxiety comes at every instant. It is obviously something extremely rich but which perhaps on a certain logical plane would demand some clarifications. How in fact is it possible that this fundamental experience which is in a way the negativism of the word should come to be symbolised and what happens then in order that from this central hole there should spring forth something that we have to understand. Indeed how is the word born? What is the origin of the signifier in this precise case of anxiety in so far as it cannot express itself. For anxiety in so far as it expresses itself? There is perhaps there a movement which is not unrelated with this wheel which

turns, which would perhaps need to be made a little clearer and more precise.

M Vergotte

I was wondering if there were not two sorts of anxiety: Mme Aulagnier spoke of castration-anxiety: the subject is afraid that it's going to be taken away from him and that he will be forgotten as a subject, here is the disappearance of the subject as such; but I was wondering if there were not an anxiety where the subject refuses to be subject, if for example in certain phantasies he wants on the contrary to hide the hole or the lack. In Mme Aulagnier's clinical example the subject refuses his body because the body reminds him of his desire and his lack; in the example of castration anxiety you said rather: the subject is afraid that he will be misrecognised as subject. An anxiety has therefore the two possible meanings: or he refuses to be subject. There is also the other anxiety where he has, for example in claustrophobia, that there he is no longer a subject, that on the contrary he is closed in, that he is in a closed world where desire does not exist; he can be in a state of anxiety before his desire and also before the absence of desire.

Aulagnier

Do you not think that when one refuses to be a subject it is precisely because one has the impression that for the Other one cannot be subject except by paying for it with one's castration, I do not believe that the refusal to be subject is to be really a subject.

Lacan

We are right at the heart of the problem. You see immediately here the point at which one becomes confused. I find that this discourse is excellent in so far as the handling of certain of the notions that we find here has allowed Mme Aulagnier to highlight, in a fashion which would not have been possible for her otherwise, several dimensions of her experience. I am going to take up again something that appeared remarkable to me in what she produced. I say right away that this discourse seemed to me to remain at a half-way point. It is indeed a sort of conversion, you should have no doubt about it, that I am trying to obtain from you through my teaching, which is not, God knows, after all such a unique pretention in history that for it to be seen as exorbitant. But it is certain that a whole part of Mme Aulagnier's discourse and very precisely the passage at which, with an eye to intelligibility, her own as well as that of those to whom she was speaking, to whom she believed she was speaking, she goes back to formulae which are the ones against which I warn you, I direct you, I put you on your guard, and not simply because in my case it is a sort of tic or aversion, but because their coherence with something which must be radically abandoned (22) always shows itself every time they are used, even knowingly.

The idea, for example, of any kind of antinomy whatsoever between word and affect, even though it may be empirically verified in experience, is nevertheless not something on which we can articulate a dialectic, if what I am trying to do before you has a value, namely allows you to develop as far as possible all the consequences of the effect that man is an animal condemned to dwell in language. Hence, we cannot in any way hold affect to be anything whatsoever without ending up in some sort of primariness (primarite). No significant affect, none of those we have to deal with from anxiety to anger and all the others, can even begin to be understood except within a reference in which the relationship of x to the signifier is primary. Before emphasizing the distortions, I mean that with respect to certain breakthroughs which would be the next stage, I want of course to mark the positive aspect of what was already permitted to her by the simple usage of these terms in the forefront of which are those which she made use of with correctness and skill: desire and demand. It is not enough to have heard about this which - if one makes use of them in a certain fashion, but they are not all the same such esoteric words that anyone feels that they cannot use them - it is not enough to use these terms: desire and demand, in order to apply them correctly. Certain people have tried it recently and I am not sure that the result was in any way either brilliant - which after all would only be of secondary importance - or even had the slightest relationship with the function that we give to these terms.

This is not the case for Mme Aulagnier, but something that allowed her to attain at certain moments a tone which manifested a sort of conquest, even if only in the form of the question posed. The handling of these terms allows us to designate the first very impressive opening that she gave us. I would point out to you what she said about orgasm or more exactly about loving jouissance.

If I may be allowed to address myself to her as Socrates might address himself to some I would say to her that she proves that she knows what she is talking about. That she does it as a woman, this is what traditionally seems to be self-evident. I am less sure about it: rare are the women, I would say, whatever about knowing, who are able to talk while knowing what they are saying about the things of love. Socrates (23) said that undoubtedly he could bear witness to that himself, that he knew. The women are therefore rare, but you should clearly understand what I mean by that: the men are even more so.

As Mme Aulagnier told us, in connection with what loving jouissance is, in rejecting once and for all this famous reference to fusion which should alert us who have given a quite archaic sense to this term fusion, you cannot at the same time require that it is at the end of a process that one arrives at a moment that is qualified as unique, and at the same time suppose that it is by a return to some primitive differentiation or other. In short, I will not reread her text because I do not have the time, but on the whole I do not think it would be unprofitable for this text, to which I am certainly far from

giving a mark of 100 percent, I mean of considering as a perfect discourse, to be considered rather as a discourse defining a rung starting from which we could situate the progress to which we could refer ourselves, to something which was touched on or in any case perfectly grasped, caught, circumscribed, understood by Mme Aulagnier.

Of course, I am not saying that she is giving us her last word here, I would even say more: on several occasions she indicates the points where it would seem necessary to her to advance to complete what she is saying and of course a great part of my satisfaction comes from the points that she indicates. They are precisely the very ones which could be turned round, as I might say. She designates these two points in connection with the relationship of the psychotic to his own body on the one hand - she said that she had many things to say, she indicated a little bit of it to us - and on the other hand in connection with the phantasy where the obscurity in which she left it would appear to me sufficiently indicative of the fact that this darkness is rather general in groups. This is one point.

The second point that I find very remarkable in what she contributed to us, is what she contributed when she spoke to us about the perverse relationship. Not of course that I subscribe at every point to what she said on this subject, which is really of an unbelievable daring. It is to congratulate her highly for having been in a position, even if it is a step to be rectified, to do it all the same; to describe this step as I should, I would say that it is the first time, not simply in my circle - and I am delighted that someone has preceded me in this - that something has come to the fore, a certain fashion, a certain tone in speaking about the perverse relationship which suggests to us the idea which is properly speaking the one that has prevented me (24) from speaking about it up to now because I do not want to appear to be the one who says: everything that has been done up to the present isn't worth buttons. But Mme Aulagnier, who has not the same reasons for modesty as I have, and moreover who says it in all innocence, I mean who has seen perverts and who has interested herself in them in a truly analytic fashion, begins to articulate something which, from the very fact of being able to present under this general form, I repeat, an unbelievably audacious one that the pervert is someone who makes himself object for the jouissance of a phallus whose ownership (appartenance) he does not suspect: he is the instrument of the jouissance of a god. That means when all is said and done, that this deserves some sharpening, some rectification by directive manoeuvres and, in a word, that this poses the question of reintegrating what we call the phallus, that this poses the urgency of the definition of phallus - there is no doubt about it - since that surely has the effect of telling us that if a diagnosis of perverse structure ought, for us analysts, to have a meaning, we must begin by throwing out the window everything that was written from Kraft-Ebing to Havelock Ellis and everything that has been written in any supposedly clinical catalogue whatsoever of the perversions. In short, there is to be overcome on the plane of the perversions, in short, we have to overcome

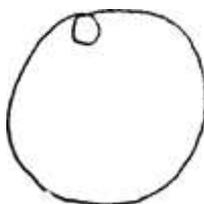
this sort of distance taken under the word clinical, which in reality is only a way of failing to recognize what is absolutely radical, absolutely open in this structure to whoever knows how to take this step which is precisely the one I require of you, this step of conversion which allows us to be at the point of view of perceiving where we know the absolutely universal thing meant by this perverse structure.

If I evoked gods it is not for nothing, because I could just as well have evoked the theme of metamorphoses and the whole mystical relationship, a certain pagan relationship to the world which is the one in which the perverse dimension has I would say its classical value.

It is the first time that I have heard someone speaking in a certain tone which is really decisive, which is the opening into this field where precisely we need it at the moment that I am going to explain to you what the phallus is.

The third thing, is what she told us in connection with her experience of psychotics. I do not need to underline the effect that this may have. I mean that Audouard undoubtedly bore witness to it. There again what appeared outstanding to me, is precisely the way in which this also opens up this psychotic (25) structure as being something in which we ought to feel ourselves at home. If we are not capable of grasping that there is a certain degree, not an archaic one to be situated somewhere around birth, but a structural one, at the level of which desires are properly speaking mad, if for us the subject does not include in its definition, in its primary articulation, the possibility of psychotic structure, we will never be anything but alienists. But how can one not sense living, as happens all the time to those who come to hear what is said here at this seminar, how can we not grasp that everything that I began to articulate this year in connection with the surface structure of the -system and the enigma about the way in which the subject can gain access to his own body is that this does not happen just by itself, which is something everyone throughout the ages is perfectly aware of because this famous and eternal distinction of disunity or unity of body and soul is always after all the aporia point on which all the philosophical articulations have been shipwrecked. And why should it not be possible for us analysts, precisely, to find the passage? Only this requires a certain discipline and in the first place what you must know in order to be able to speak about the subject is the following which you can never get into your heads enough in the brutal form in which I am going to announce it, it is that the subject is nothing other than the following, than the consequence of the fact that there is signifier and that the birth of the subject depends on the fact that he cannot but think of himself as excluded from the signifier which determines him. This is the value of the little

cycle that I introduced to you the last time and which we have not finished hearing being spoken about because, in truth I will all the same have to unfold it more than once before you in order for you to see where exactly it leads



us. If the subject is only that: this part excluded from a field entirely defined by the signifier, if it is only starting from that that everything can come to birth, one must still know at what level one makes this term subject intervene. And despite herself, because it is to us that she is speaking and because it is to her and because there is still something not yet learned, assumed all the same when she speaks of this choice for example that there is between being a subject or an object in connection with the relationship to desire, well then, despite herself, Mme Aulagnier allows herself to slip into re-introducing into the subject the person with all the subsequent dignity that you know we give it in our enlightened times: personology, personalism, personality and all that follows from it, a (26) convenient approach which everyone knows we live in the middle of. Never has there been so much talk about the person. But after all as our work is not a work which ought to interest itself much in what is happening in the public square, we have to interest ourselves in the subject in a different way. Here then Mme Aulagnier called to her aid the term, parameters of anxiety. Well then, here all the same in connection with person and personology, you see a rather considerable work which took me some months, a work of observations on the discourse of our friend Daniel Lagache. I would ask you to consult it, I would ask you to consult it to see the importance in the articulation that she gives us about the function of anxiety and this kind of stifling that it is supposed to constitute at the level of the word, the importance that should normally have been taken in her presentation by the function $i(o)$, in other words the specular image which is certainly not at all absent from her presentation because when all is said and done she ended up by dragging her psychotic in front of his mirror for us, and this is why, it is because this psychotic came there all by himself, it is here therefore that she quite correctly made her rendezvous with him. And to give you something to smile about I would inscribe in the margin of the remarks which she admired so much in what she quoted, these four little verses inscribed at the bottom of a plate I have at home:

"A Mina son miroir fidele
Montre, hélas, des **traits** allonges
Ah ciel, oh Dieu, s'écrit-elle
Comme les miroirs sont changes

(To Mina, alas, her faithful mirror shows a long face
Oh heavens, oh goodness, she cries, how mirrors have changed)

This effectively is what your psychotic says, showing here the importance of the function, not of the ego-ideal, but of the ideal ego as the place where there come to be formed properly ego-type identifications, this as the place where anxiety is produced, anxiety which I qualified for you as a sensation of the desire of the Other. To bring this sensation of the desire of the Other back to the dialectic of the subject's own desire confronted with the desire of the Other, here is the whole distance between what I initiated and the already very

efficacious level at which there is sustained the whole development of Mme Aulagnier.

But, as she says, this sort of conflictual level which is that of the reference of two already constituted desires in the subject, can in no way suffice for us to situate the difference, the distinction that exists between the relationships of desire for example at the level of the four kinds or types which she defined for us under the terms of: normal, perverse, neurotic, psychotic.

(27) That the word, in effect, is lacking something in connection with anxiety, lies in the fact, which we cannot fail to recognise as one of the absolutely essential parameters, that it cannot designate who is speaking, that it cannot refer to this point i(o) the I of the discourse itself, the I which in the discourse designates itself as the one who is actually speaking and associates him with this image of mastery which finds itself vacillating at that moment. And she could have been reminded of this because I noted in what she took as a point of departure in connection with the seminar of 4 April, remember the vacillating image that I tried to set before you of my obscure confrontation with the praying mantis and the fact that, if I spoke at first about the image which was reflected in this eye, it was to say that anxiety begins from this essential moment when this image is lacking. No doubt the small o which I am for the phantasy of the other is essential, but where there is lacking - Mme Aulagnier does not fail to recognize it, because she reinstates it in other passages of her discourse - the mediation of the imaginary - this is what she means, but it is not yet sufficiently articulated - it is the i of o which is lacking and which is functioning there.

I do not want to go any further because you are well aware that it is a matter of nothing less than taking up again the discourse of the seminar, but it is here that you ought to sense the importance of what we are introducing. It is a matter of what is going to make the link in the signifying economy of the constitution of the subject at the place of his desire. And you should here glimpse, tolerate, resign yourself to something which requires from us something which appears just as far from our ordinary preoccupations, indeed from anything that one could with decency demand of honourable specialists like you who do not come here all the same to do elementary geometry. Reassure yourselves, it is not geometry, because it is not metric, it is something about which geometers have not had the slightest idea up to the present: the dimensions of space. I would go as far as to tell you that M Descartes had no idea about the dimensions of space.

The dimensions of space, it is something of a different aspect which was decided, valorized by a certain number of jests made about this term as the fourth or the fifth dimension and other things which have a quite precise and mathematical meaning, but which it is always amusing to hear spoken about by incompetents, so that when one speaks about it one always has the feeling that one is engaging in what is called science fiction and this has all the same a rather bad reputation.

(28) But all the same you will see that we have our word to say about it. I began to articulate it in this sense that psychically I told you we only have access to two dimensions; for the remainder there is only an outline, a beyond. As regards what comes from experience, in any case as a research hypothesis which can be of use to us for something, to be willing to admit that there is nothing well established beyond - and it is already sufficiently rich and complicated - the experience of the surface. But this does not mean that we cannot find in the experience of the surface alone the testimony that it, the surface, is plunged in a space which is not at all the one that you imagine with your visual experience of the specular image. And in a word, this little object which is nothing when the most elementary knot, not the one which I



only made because I could not have woven for myself a piece of string which would close on itself, simply this (schema) the most elementary knot, the one which is traced out like that, suffices to carry with itself a certain number of questions that I am introducing in telling you that the third dimension is absolutely not sufficient to account for

the possibility of that. Nevertheless a knot all the same, is something which is within everybody's range, it is not within everybody's range to know what he is doing in making a knot, but after all this has taken on a metaphorical value: the knots of marriage, the knots of love. Knots sacred or not, why do people speak about them?

They are quite simple, elementary modes, of putting within your reach the habitual (usual) character if you wish to apply yourself to it, and once it becomes habitual, the possible support of a conversion which, if it is realised will clearly show all the same retrospectively that perhaps these terms must have something to do with these references to structure that we need to distinguish what happens for example at the steps that Mme Aulagnier has divided in going from the normal to the psychotic. At this point of junction where the subject constitutes for himself the image of the knot, the fundamental image, the image which allows the mediation between the subject and his desire, can we not introduce very simple distinctions, and, you will see, ones which are quite utilisable in practice, which allow us to represent for ourselves in a simpler fashion and one which is less a source of antinomy, of aporia, of confusion, of labyrinth finally, that what we have here at our disposal, namely this summary notion for example of an inside and an outside which in effect appears to be self-evident starting (29) from the specular image and which is not at all necessarily the one which we are given in experience.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 9 May 1962

The last time, we heard Mme Aulagnier speaking to us about anxiety. I paid her discourse the homage it deserved, as the fruit of work and reflection that are well oriented. I marked at the same time the degree to which a certain obstacle, which I situated at the level of the paper itself, is always the same: the one which arises every time we have to speak about language.

Undoubtedly the sensitive points, the points which deserve to be rectified in what she told us, are precisely those where putting the accent on what exists: the unsayable (l'indicible), she made of it the index of a heterogeneity of what precisely she is aiming at as the "not being able to be said", even though what is involved in the business when anxiety is produced is precisely to grasp its link with the fact that there is a said (du dire) and an able to be said. This is why she is unable to give its full value to the formula that the desire of man is the desire of the Other. It is so not with reference to a supposedly renascent third, the more central subject, the subject identical to itself, the Hegelian self-consciousness which would be there to bring about the mediation between two desires which it is supposed in a way to be confronted with: his own proper one as an object, and the desire of the Other, and even if it were to give primacy to this desire of the Other it would have to situate, to define its own desire in a sort of reference, of relationship or non-dependence on this desire of the Other.

Of course on a certain level at which we could always remain, there is something of this order, but this something is precisely that thanks to which we avoid what is at the heart of our experience and what must be grasped. And that is why, it is for that reason that I am trying to forge for you a model of what (2) must be grasped. What must be grasped, is that the subject which interests us is desire. Of course this only takes on a meaning when we have begun to articulate, to situate at what distance, through what mediation, which is not that of an intermediary screen but of constitution, of determination, we can situate desire.

It is not that demand separates us from desire as if it were only a matter of setting demand aside to find it. Its signifying articulation determines me, conditions me as desire. This is the long path that I have already made you take. If I have made it so long, it is because it is necessary that it should be so in order that the dimension that this presupposes should make you go

through in a way the mental experience of apprehending it. But this desire thus transported, put off to a distance, articulated as such not beyond language as if it were due to the impotence of this language, but structured as desire through that very potency itself, this is what it is now a matter of rejoining in order that I may manage to make you conceive of, grasp - and there is in the grasp, in the Begriff, something tangible - something of a transcendental aesthetic which ought not to be the one accepted up to now because it is precisely from the one accepted up to now that the place of desire up to the present has been hidden.

But this is what explains for you my attempt, which I hope is successful, to lead you along paths which are also those of the aesthetic in so far as they try to catch hold of something which has not been seen at all in all its relief, in all its fecundity at the level not so much of spatial as topological intuitions, because it must be that our intuition of space does not exhaust everything which is of a certain order because moreover those who are best qualified to occupy themselves with it, the mathematicians, try from every angle and succeed in going beyond intuition.

I am leading you along this path when all is said and done to say things with words which are slogans (des mots d'ordre): it is a question of escaping from the pre-eminence of the intuition of the sphere in so far as it in a way dominates our logic in a very intimate way, even when we do not think about it. Because of course if there is an aesthetic called transcendental which interests us, it is because it is what dominates logic. It is for this reason that to those who say to me: "Could you not really tell us things, make us understand what is happening in a neurotic or in a pervert and how it is different, without going through your little tori and other detours?", I would respond that it is (3) nevertheless indispensable, just as indispensable and for the same reason because it is the same thing, as doing logic, because the logic in question is not something empty. Logicians, like grammarians, dispute among themselves and in so far as of course in going into the field of these disputes we can only evoke them with discretion in order not to lose ourselves in them, but all the confidence that you have in me reposes on the following: it is that you credit me with having made some effort not to take the first path that came to me and to have eliminated a certain number.

But all the same, to reassure you, there comes to me the idea of pointing out to you that it is not a matter of indifference to put in the forefront in logic the function of the hypothesis for example or the function of assertion. In what is called an adaptation Ivan Karamazov is made to say in the theatre:

"If God does not exist, then everything is permitted".

You refer to the text. You read - and moreover if I remember properly, it is Aliocha who says that as it happens -:

"Since God does not exist, then everything is permitted".

Between these two terms there is the difference between the "if, si" and the "since, puisque", namely between a hypothetical logic and an assertive logic, and you will say to me: a logician's distinction, what is the interest of that to us?

It interests us to such a degree that it is by presenting things in the first fashion that at the final term, the Kantian term, the existence of God is maintained for us. Since in short it is all there: since it is clear that everything is not permitted, therefore in the hypothetical formula it is imposed as necessary that God exists. And this is why your daughter is mute and why in the teaching articulation of free thinking there is maintained at the heart of the articulation of all valid thinking about the existence of God, as a term without which there would not even be a means of advancing something in which there is grasped the shadow of a certainty, and you know - something I thought I should remind you a little about on this subject - that Descartes' approach cannot pass along any other paths.

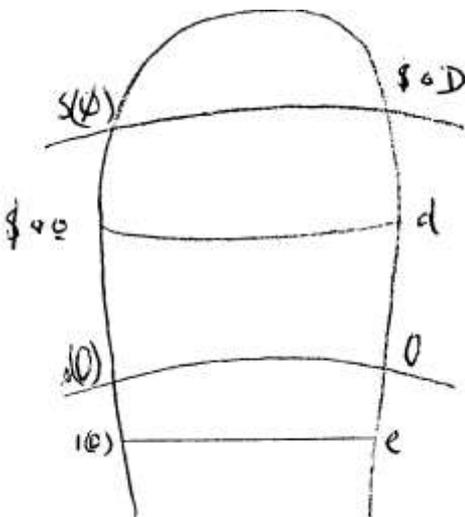
It remains that it is not necessarily by pinning the term atheistic on it that one will best define our project, which is perhaps to try to make pass through something else the consequences involved for us in this fact of experience, that (4) some things are permitted (qu'il y ait du permis). Some things are permitted because there are prohibitions, you will tell me, quite satisfied to rediscover here the opposition of a and non-a, of white and black. Yes, but this is not enough, because far from the permitted and the prohibited exhausting the field, what it is a matter of structuring, of organising is how it is true that they determine one another very closely, while at the same time leaving open a field which not alone is not excluded by them but makes them rejoin one another, and in this movement of torsion, as one might say, gives its shape properly speaking to what sustains the whole, namely the shape of desire. In a word that desire is set up in transgression is something everyone feels, everyone clearly sees, everyone has the experience of that, which does not mean, could not even mean that all that is involved here is a matter of a frontier, of a limit traced out. It is beyond the frontier that has been broken through that desire begins.

Of course, this often appears to be the shortest way, but it is a hopeless way. It is elsewhere that the path of passage is taken. Even though the frontier, that of prohibition, does not signify either making it descend from heaven and from the existence of the signifier. When I speak to you about the law, I speak to you about it like Freud, namely that, if one day it arose, no doubt it was necessary that the signifier should immediately emit its mark, its stamp, its form, but it is all the same from something which is an original desire that the knot was able to be formed in order that there should be founded together the law as limit and desire in its shape.

It is this that we are trying to depict in order to enter into detail, to retrace again this path which is always the same, but which we tighten around a knot that is more and more central

whose umbilical aspect I do not despair of showing to you. We are taking the same path and we are not forgetting what is least situated for us in terms of reference which are supposed to be either legalist, or formalist, or naturalist, it is the notion of the small o in so far as it is not the imaginary other that it designates in so far as we identify ourselves to him in our ego-style miscognition. This is i of small o, $i(o)$, and there also we find the same internal knot. Which means that it seems to be quite simple: that the Other is given to us in a imaginary form, is not so because it is precisely this Other that is involved when we speak about the object. It must not to be said at all that this object is quite simply a real object, that it is precisely no doubt the original object of desire as such but that (5) we cannot say that until after we have grasped, understood, apprehended what it means that the subject in so far as he is constituted as dependence on the signifier, as beyond the demand, is desire.

Now, it is this point of the loop (boucle) which is not yet at all secure and that is where we are advancing and it is for this reason that we recall the usage that we have made up to now of small o. Where have we seen it, where are we first going to designate it? In the phantasy where quite clearly it has a function which has some relationship with the imaginary: let us call it the imaginary value in the phantasy. It is quite other than simply projectable in a intuitive fashion into the function of the lure as it is given to us in biological experience for example. It is something different and this is what you are reminded of by the formalisation of phantasy as being established in its relationship by the ensemble: S desire of o, S o and the situation of this formula in the graph which shows homologically, by its position at the upper level which makes it the homologue, of the i of o of the lower level in so far as it is the support of the ego, little e here, just as S desire of o is the support of desire.



What does that mean? It is that the phantasy is there where the subject grasps himself in what I highlighted for you as being in question at the second level of the graph in the form taken up at the level of the Other, in the field of the Other, at this point here of the graph of the question: "What does it (5a) want?" which is moreover the one which will take on the form: "What does he want?" if someone has been able to take the place projected by the structure of the locus of the Other, namely of this locus which is that of the master and the guarantor. This means that in the field and the the phantasy has a homologous

trajectory of this question, function to that of i of o, of the ideal ego, the imaginary ego

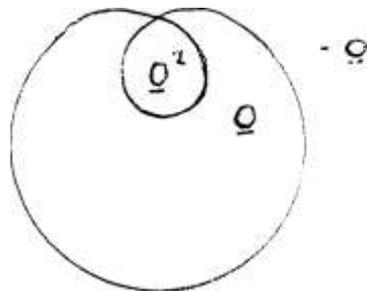
on which I repose, that this function has a dimension, highlighted no doubt on some occasion, and even more than once, which I must here remind you anticipates the function of the ideal-ego which is marked for you in the graph by the fact that it is a sort of return which all the same allows a short-circuiting with respect to the intentional manoeuvres of (6) the discourse considered as constitutive at this first level of the subject, that here before signified and signifier recross one another he has constructed his sentence, the imaginary subject anticipates the one he designates as ego. It is the very one no doubt that the I of the discourse supports in its function as shifter. The litteral I in the discourse is no doubt nothing other than the very subject who is speaking, but the one whom the subject designates here as his ideal support is in advance, in a future perfect, the one that he imagines will have spoken: "he will have spoken", at the very basis of the phantasy there is even a "he will have wanted".

I will not push any further. So this opening or this remark can only be located because at the beginning of our path in the graph I held a dimension of temporality to be implicated. The graph is made to show already this type of knot that we are for the moment in the process of seeking at the level of identification. The two curves intersect one another in the contrary direction, showing that synchronicity is not simultaneity, already indicating in the temporal order what we are in the process of trying to knot together in the topological field. In short, the movement of succession, the signifying kinetics, this is what supports the graph. I recall it to you here to show you the import of something that I did not take into account so much in a doctrinal way, this temporal dimension, which contemporary phenomenology feathers its nest with.

Because in truth, I believe that there is nothing more mystifying than to speak without rhyme or reason about time. But it is already here that I make a note to indicate to you here that we will have to come back on it to constitute no longer a kinetics but a temporal dynamics, which is something we cannot do until we have overcome what it is a matter of doing for the moment, namely the spatialising topological mapping out of the identificatory function. That means that you would be wrong to stop at anything whatsoever that I have already formulated, that I thought it well to formulate also in an anticipatory fashion on the subject of anxiety with the complement that Mme Aulagnier was kind enough to add to it the other day as long as there is not effectively restored, referred back, brought back into the field of this function something I have already always pointed out, I mean ever since the article on the mirror stage which distinguishes the anxiety relationship from the aggressive relationship, namely temporal tension.

Let us come back to our phantasy and to small o to grasp what is involved in this "imaginification" which properly has its place in the phantasy. It is quite sure that we cannot isolate it in its correlation to \$ because of the fact that the emergence of the function of the object of desire as small o in the phantasy

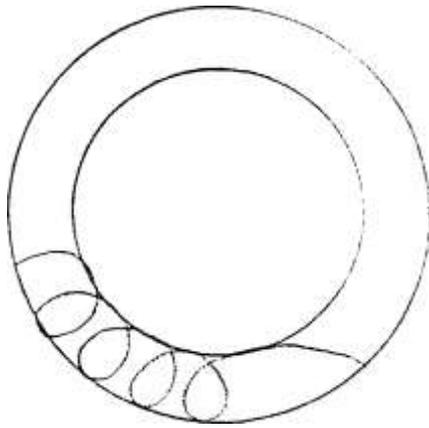
is correlative to this sort of vanishing, fading of the symbolic (7) which is the very one that I articulated the last time - I believe, in replying to Mme Aulagnier, if I remember correctly - as the exclusion determined by the very dependence of the subject on the usage of the signifier. That is why it is in so far as the signifier has to redouble its effect by wanting to designate itself that the subject arises as exclusion from the very field that it determines, being then neither the one who is designated, nor the one who designates, but more or less the following, which is the essential point that this is only produced in relation to the operation of an object at first as alternation between a presence and an absence. What is first of all formally meant by the conjunction \$ and small o is that in the phantasy, the



subject in his purely formal aspect and radically, becomes $(-o)$, the absence of o , and nothing but that in front of the small o at the level if you wish of what I called identification to the unary trait, identification is only introduced, only operates purely and simply in this product of $-o$ by the small o , and that it is not difficult to see how, not simply as it were by a mental operation, but because we are brought back to it by something which is, for us, our mode of something which there legitimately receives its formula, the $(-o^2-) = 1$ which results from it introduces us to what is carnal, implied in this mathematical symbol of the root of $0-1$: $\sqrt{-1}$

Of course, we would not dwell on such an operation if we were not brought back to it from more than one angle in a converging fashion.

For the moment, let us set out again to try to designate what determines for us in the drawing of the structure, the necessity of giving an account of the shape to which desire leads us. Let us not forget that unconscious desire, as we have to account for it, is found in the repetition of demand; and after all, from the origin of what Freud modulates for us, it is what motivates it. I see someone saying to me: "Yes indeed, of course that is never spoken about" except that for us desire is not justified simply by being a tendency, it is something else. If you understand, if you follow what I intend to signify for you by desire, it is that we do not content ourselves with an opaque reference to an automatism of repetition, in so far as we have perfectly identified this automatism of repetition: it is a matter of the (8) search, which is at once necessary and condemned, for one unique time, qualified, pinpointed as such by this unary trait, the very one which cannot repeat itself, except always by being another one.



And from then on, in this movement, this dimension appears to us through which desire is what supports the no doubt circular movement of the always repeated demand, but of which a certain number of repetitions can be conceived - this is the use of the topology of the torus - as achieving something. The bobbing movement of the repetition of demand closes somewhere even virtually, defining another loop which is completed by this very repetition and which sketches out what? The object of desire, which it is necessary for us to formulate in this way in so far as equally at the start what we are setting up as the very basis of our whole apprehension of analytic signification is essentially the fact that no doubt we speak about oral, anal objects etc. but that this object has an import for us: this object structures what for us is fundamental in the relationship of the subject to the world by something that we always forget: it is that this object does not remain an object of need; it is from the fact of being caught up in the repetitive movement of demand, in the automatism of repetition, that they become object of desire.

This is what I wanted to show you the day when for example taking the breast as signifier of the oral demand, I showed you that precisely it is because of this that eventually - this was the simplest thing I had to make you put your finger on it - it is precisely at that moment that the real breast becomes not an feeding object, but an erotic object, showing us once again that the function of the signifier excludes the signifier being able to signify itself. It is precisely because the object becomes recognisable as signifier of a latent demand that it takes on the value of a desire which is of another register.

The libidinal dimension, which began to be entered into in analysis as marking all human desire, only means, can only mean that. This does not mean that it is not necessary to recall it. It is the factor of transmutation that it is a matter of grasping, the factor of this transmutation is the function of the phallus, and there is no way of defining otherwise the function of the phallus, small phi, this is what we are going to try to give its topological support.

(9) The true shape of the phallus, which is not necessarily that of a tail, even though it is very like one, is something that I do not despair of drawing for you on the blackboard; if you were able, without succumbing to vertigo, to contemplate with some persistence the aforesaid tail of which I am speaking, you would be able to perceive that with its foreskin it is really

constructed in a funny way. This will help you perhaps to realise that topology is not just the scrap of paper thing that you imagine as you will certainly have occasion to take into account.

This having been said, it is not for nothing no doubt that throughout the centuries of the history of art there are only really such lamentably gross representations of what I am calling the tail.

Still let us begin by recalling this all the same because one should not go too quickly: it is never so much there, this phallus - it is from this one must begin - as when it is absent, which is already a good sign for presuming that it is the pivot, the turning point of the constitution of every object of desire. It would be tiresome for me to have to recall more than one indication of the fact that it is never so much there than when it is absent, let it be enough for me to evoke the equivalence of girl=phallus to say everything that the omnipresent silhouette of Lolita may make you sense. I do not need Lolita all that much; there are people who know very well simply how to sense what the appearance of a bud on a little branch of a tree is. It is obviously not the phallus - because after all the phallus is the phallus - it is all the same its presence precisely where it is not. This even goes very far. Mme Simone de Beauvoir wrote a whole book in order to recognise Lolita in Brigitte Bardot. The distance there is between the complete development of feminine charm and what is properly speaking the mainspring, the erotic activity of Lolita seems to me to constitute a total gap, the easiest thing in the world to distinguish.

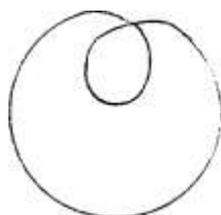
When did we begin here to concern ourselves with the phallus in a fashion which is a little structuring and fruitful? It was obviously in connection with problems of feminine sexuality, and the first introduction of the difference in structure between demand and desire, do not forget, was about facts discovered in all their original relief by Freud when he tackled this subject, namely when he articulated in a fashion that is very close to this formula that it is because the phallus has to be demanded where it was not, namely in the mother, from the mother, through the mother, for the mother that it is along there that there passes the normal path through which it can come to be desired by (10) the woman.

If it is a fact that it happens that it can be constituted as an object of desire for her, analytic experience puts the accent on the fact that it is necessary that the process should pass by way of a primitive demand, with everything that it involves on this occasion of the absolutely phantastical, unreal, unnatural, a demand structured as such and a demand which continues to carry its marks to the point that it appears inexhaustible and that the whole accent of what Freud said does not mean that it is enough for Mr Joyce [Jones?] himself to understand it. That means that it is in the measure that the phallus can continue to remain indefinitely an object of demand to the one who cannot give it on this plane, that there arises precisely the whole difficulty in

that it even reaches what might even seem - if really God made them man and woman, as the atheist Jones says: in order that they should be for one another like a thread is for a needle - what would seem nevertheless to be natural: that the phallus was at first object of desire.

This is the way in, the difficult way in, and the way in which twists the whole relationship that this phallus brings with it at a point where it seems to be the most natural object, in the function of object.

The topological schema that I am going to shape for you and which consists with respect to what first of all is presented for you in the shape of the inverted eight, is designed to warn you about



the problematic of any limiting usage of the signifier, in so far as by it a limited field cannot be identified to the pure and simple one of a circle. The field marked inside is not as simple as the one here, as the one which a certain outside signifier marked. There is necessarily produced somewhere, from the fact that the signifier redoubles itself, is summoned to the function of signifying itself, a field which is one of exclusion and through which the subject is rejected into the outside field. I anticipate and I propose that the phallus in its radical function is simply signifier, but even though it can signify itself, it is unnameable as such. If it is in the order of the signifier - because it is a signifier and nothing else - it can be posed (11) without being different to itself. How can it be conceived intuitively? Let us say that it is the only name which abolishes all other nominations and that it is for that reason that it is unsayable. It is not unsayable because we call it the phallus but one cannot at the same time say the phallus and continue to name other things.

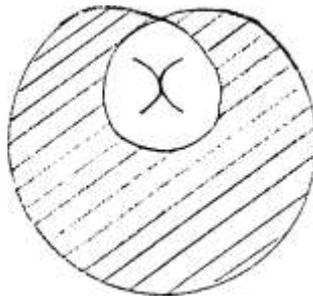
The final reference point: in our indications at the beginning of one of our scientific years someone tried to articulate in a certain fashion the most radical transferential function occupied by the analyst as such. It is certainly an approach which is not at all to be neglected that he managed to articulate quite crudely; and indeed what can it mean that one might feel that it is rather brazen for the analyst in his function to have the place of the phallus?

The fact is that the phallus of the Other is very precisely what incarnates, not the desirable, the eromenos, even though its function is that of the postman through whom any object whatsoever may be introduced to the function of object of desire, but that of desirer, of the eron. It is in so far as the analyst is the presence which supports an entirely veiled desire that he

is the incarnated "Che vuoi?"

I will recall later that one can say that the $\hat{}$ factor of the phallic value constitutive of the very object of desire is supported and incarnated by him. But it is a function of subjectivity so redoubtable, so problematic, so projected into such a radical otherness, and it is indeed for that reason that I led you and brought you to this crossroads last year as being the essential mainspring of the whole question of transference: what should this desire of the analyst be?

For the moment what is proposed to us, is to find a topological model, a transcendental aesthetic model which would allow us to account at once for all these functions of the phallus. Is there something which resembles that, which like that is what one calls in topology a closed surface, a notion which takes on its



function, to which we have the right to give a homologous value, an equivalent value to the function of significance because we can define it by the function of the cut. I already referred to it on several occasions. The cut, I mean with a pair of scissors, a rubber ball, in order to prevent through habits that one could qualify as age-old in many cases a crowd of problems that are posed from immediately striking us.

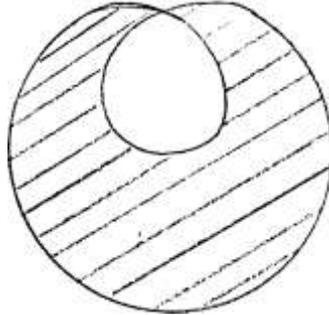
When I thought I was telling you very simple things in connection with the interior eight on the surface of the torus, and when subsequently I unrolled my torus believing that it was self-evident, that I had a long time ago explained to you that there was a way of opening the torus by cutting it with a scissors and when you open the torus crossways you have an open belt, the torus is reduced to that (see the schema) and it is enough at that moment to try to project onto this surface the rectangle which we would have done better to call the quadrilateral, to apply onto it what we have designated previously in this form of the inverted eight in order to see what happens and to what something is effectively limited, something can be chosen, distinguished between a field limited by this cut and, if you wish, what is outside, something which is not so obvious, does not immediately strike us.

Nevertheless, this little image that I represented for you seems in the first shock to have created problems for certain people. It must be therefore that it is not so easy.

The next time I will not only have to return to it, but to show you something which I have no reason to make a mystery of beforehand, because after all if some of you want to prepare yourselves for it, I am indicating to them that I will speak about another type of surface defined as such and purely in terms of surface, whose name I already pronounced and which will be very useful for us. This is called in English, where the works are the most numerous, a cross-cap, something which means something like a bonnet croise. It has been translated into French on certain occasions by the term mitre, with which effectively it may have a rough resemblance.

This form of topologically defined surface involves in itself certainly a purely speculative and mental attraction which, I hope will not be lost on you. I will take care to give you figurative representations of it which I have done in great quantity, and especially from the angles which are not the ones of course from which it interests mathematicians or in which you will find them represented in some works about topology. My (13) figures will preserve all their original function, while accepting that I do not give them the same usage and that it is not the same things that I was looking for.

You should know however that what it is a matter of forming in a tangible, sensitive fashion, is designed to involve as a support a certain number of reflections and others which are subsequently expected, your own on this occasion, to involve what I might call a mutative value, which will allow you to think out the logical things with which I began in a different fashion which does not keep them moored for you to the famous Eulerian circles.



Far from this interior field of the eight being obligatorily and forever an excluded field, at least in a topological shape, a very tangible fact and one of the most representable and the most amusing of cross-caps in question, in so far as far from this field being a field to exclude, it is on the contrary to be completely kept.

Of course we should not allow this to go to our heads. There would be a quite simple way of imagining it in a way that should be held onto. It is not very difficult. You only have to take something which has a more or less appropriate shape: a slack circle and, twisting it in a certain fashion and folding it, to have in front a little tongue whose bottom would be in continuity with the rest of the edges. Only there is all the same the following: namely that this is never anything but an artifice,

namely that this edge is effectively always the same edge.

This indeed is what is in question: it is a question of knowing very differently whether this surface makes a case for us which finds itself intuitively, aesthetically symbolised. Another possible import of the signifying limit of the field marked out is realisable in a way that is different and in a way immediately obtainable through the simple application of the properties of a surface which you are not used to up to the present. This is what we will see the next time.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 16 May 1962

(Edited from notes)

I am justifying the necessity of these lucubrations about the surface. It is obvious that what I am telling you about it is the result of a reflection. You have not forgotten that the notion of surface in topology is not a self-evident one and it is not given as an intuition. The surface is not something self-evident.

How can it be tackled? Starting from what introduces it into the real, namely what would show that space is not this open and contemptible extension that Bergson thought it was, space is not as empty as he thought, it conceals many mysteries.

Let us pose certain terms at the beginning.

It is certain that a first essential thing in the notion of surface is that of face: there are two faces or two sides in it. This is obvious if we plunge this surface into space. But to appropriate to ourselves what the notion of surface can take on for us, it is necessary that we should know what it presents us with from its dimensions alone, indeed what it can give us qua surface dividing space by its dimensions alone, suggests to us that we should reconstruct space in a different way to the intuition we believe we have of it. In other words, I propose to you to consider it as more obvious (imaginary capture), much more certain (linked to action), more structural to start from the surface to define space - which I hold we have few guarantees about - let us say rather to define the locus (lieu), than to start from the locus to define the surface - cf the locus in philosophy. The locus of the Other already has its place in our seminar. To define the face of a surface, it is not enough to say that it is on one side and on the other, all the more so because that has nothing satisfying about it, and if something (2) gives us a Pascalian vertigo, it is indeed these two regions into which an infinite plane is supposed to divide the whole of space.

How define this notion of face? It is the field on which a line, a path can be extended without having to meet an edge. But there are surfaces without edges: the plane to infinity, the sphere, the torus and several others which are surfaces without edge being reduced practically to a single one: the cross-cap or mitre or bonnet pictured here (1).

In learned books this is what the cross-cap is: cut in order to

be inserted onto another surface (2).

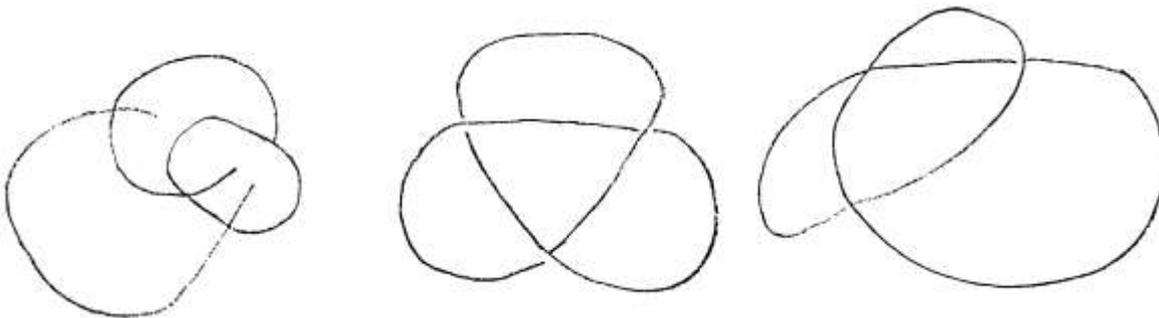
These three surfaces, sphere, torus, cross-cap are elementary closed surfaces to the composition of which all the other closed surfaces can be reduced.

I will nevertheless call figure 1 the cross-cap. Its real name is the projective plane of Riemann's theory of surfaces whose plane is the base. It brings into play at least the fourth dimension.

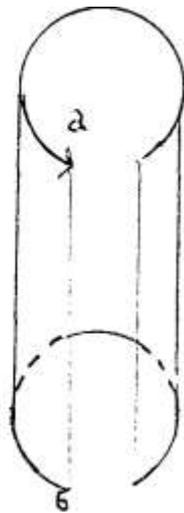
Already, for us depth psychologists, the

third dimension creates problem enough for us to consider it as not very assured. Nevertheless in this simple figure, the cross-cap, the fourth is already necessarily implied.

The elementary knot made the other day with a piece of string already presentifies the fourth dimension. There is no valid topological theory unless we make intervene something which will lead us to the fourth dimension.



(3) If you want to try to reproduce this knot using the torus by following the circuits and the detours that you can make on the surface of a torus, you could after several circuits return to a line which closes on itself like the knot above. You cannot do it unless the line cuts itself; since [on] the surface of the torus you will not be able to mark that the line passes above or below, there is no means of making this knot on the torus. It is on the contrary perfectly makeable on the cross-cap. If this surface implies the presence of the fourth dimension, it is a beginning of the proofs that the most simple knot implies the fourth dimension. I am going to tell you how you can imagine this surface, the cross-cap. It will not impose its necessity by that even, for us, its manoeuvre. It is not unrelated to the torus, it even has the most profound relationship to the torus. The simplest fashion to show you this relationship is to recall to you how a torus is constructed when it is decomposed in a polyhedric shape, namely by bringing it back to its fundamental polygon. Here this fundamental polygon, is a quadrilateral. If you fold this quadrilateral onto itself, you will get a tube by



joining the edges. If you vectorize these edges by agreeing that only the vectors which go in the same direction can be stuck to one another, the beginning of one vector being applied to the point where the other vector terminates, from then on you have all the coordinates for defining the structure of the torus.

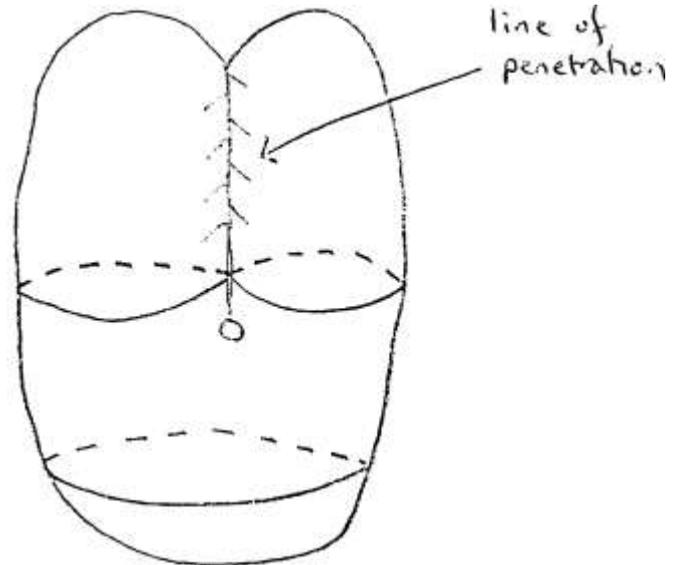
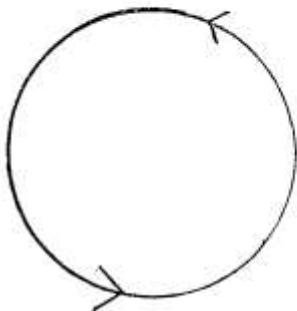
If you make a surface whose fundamental

polygon is thus defined by vectors all going in the same direction on the basic quadrilateral, if you start from a polygon defined in this way, that will give you two edges or even a single one, you get what I am materializing for you as the cross-cap.

I will come back to its function of symbolising something and it will be clearer when this name serves as a support.

In section with its jawbone, it is not what you think, this is a line of penetration thanks to which what is in front...

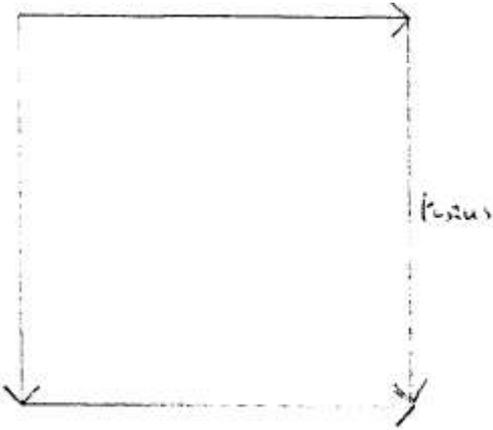
Why this shape more than any other? Its fundamental polygon is



(4) Underneath is a half sphere, above the front wall passes by penetration into the opposite wall and comes back in front.

distinct from that of the torus. A polygon, whose edges are marked by vectors in the same direction, and distinct from that of the torus, which starts from one point to go to the opposite point, what sort of surface does that give?

From now on the problematic points of these surfaces become separated out. I introduced you to surfaces without edges in connection with the face. If there is no edge how can you



define the face? And if we prohibit ourselves as far as possible from plunging our model too quickly into the third dimension, where there is no edge we will be assured that there is an inside and an outside. This is what is suggested by this surface without edges par excellence which is the sphere. I want to detach you from this vague intuition: there is what is within and what is without.

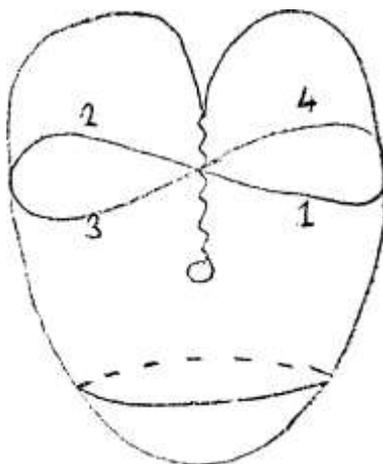
Nevertheless for the other surfaces, this notion of inside and outside disappears. For the infinite plane, it would not suffice. For the torus, intuition apparently fits sufficiently because there is an inside of a bicycle tube and an outside. Nevertheless what happens in the field through which this outside space traverses the torus, namely the central hole, is the (5) topological kernel of what gave its interest to the torus and where the relationship of inside to outside is illustrated by something which may touch us.

Notice that up to Freud, traditional anatomy, ever so little a Wissenschaft in the case of Paracelsus and Aristotle, always took account, among the orifices of the body, of the sense organs as authentic orifices.

Analytic theory, in so far as it is structured by the function of the libido, made a very narrow choice among the orifices and does not speak to us about sensory orifices as orifices, except to refer them back to the signifier of the orifices first chosen. When one makes of scotophilia a scotophagia, as Fenichel does, one is saying that scotophilic identification is an oral identification.

The privilege of the oral, anal and genital orifices is of interest to us in that they are not really orifices which end up on the inside of the body: the digestive tube is only a passage, it is open to the outside. The true inside is the mesodermic interior and the orifices which lead into it exist in the form of the eyes or of the ear which analytic theory never mentions as such except on the cover of the review La Psychanalyse. This is the real import given to the central hole of the torus; even

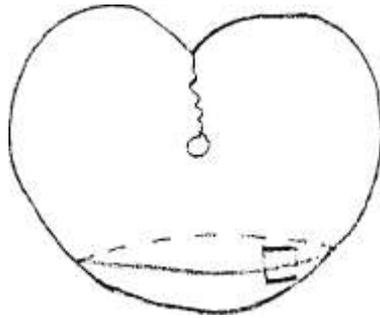
though it is not a real inside, but that it suggests to us something of the order of a passage from the inside to the outside.



This gives us an idea which comes from inspecting this closed surface, the cross-cap. Imagine something infinitely flat which moves about on this surface passing from the outside 1 of the closed surface to the inside 2 and continues further to the inside 3

of the line of penetration where it re-emerges at the outside 4
(at the back).

This shows the difficulty of defining the inside-outside distinction, even when a closed surface, a surface without edges is involved. I have only opened up the question in order to show you that the important thing in this figure is that this line of penetration should be held by you to be null and void. One cannot materialize it on the blackboard without bringing this line of penetration into play, because ordinary spatial intuition requires it to be shown, but speculation takes no account of it. One can make this line of penetration slide indefinitely. There is nothing of the order of a seam. There is no passage possible. Because of this, the problem of the inside and the outside arises in all its confusion.



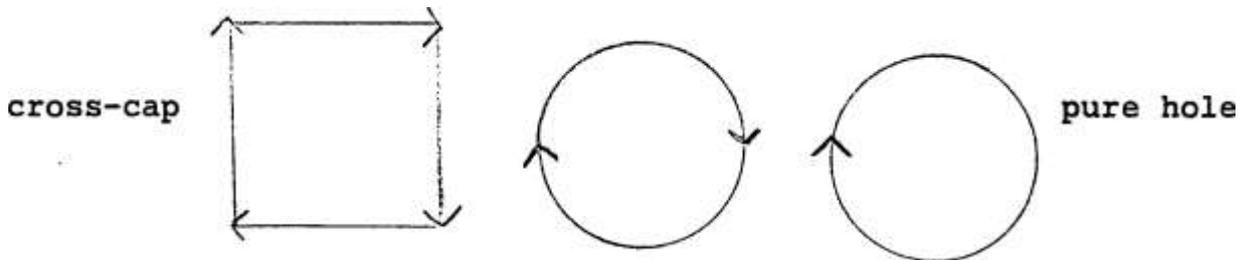
There are two orders of consideration as regards a surface: metrical and topological. All metrical considerations must be put aside: in effect starting from this square, I could give the whole surface. From a topological point of view, that has no meaning. Topologically the nature of the structural relationships which constitute the surface is present at every point: the inside face is merged with the outside face for each one of its points and its properties.

To mark the interest of this, we are going to evoke a question never yet posed which concerns the signifier: does a signifier not always have a surface as a locus? This may appear a bizarre question. But it has at least the interest, if it is posed, of suggesting a dimension. At first approach a graph (graphique) as such requires a surface. If it is a fact that the objection can be raised that a raised stone, a Greek column is a signifier and that it has a volume, do not be so sure of it, so sure of being able to introduce the notion of volume before being well assured about the notion of surface. Especially if, in putting things to the test, the notion of volume cannot be grasped otherwise than starting from what envelopes it. No raised stone has interested us for anything else, I would not say but for its envelope - this would be going towards a sophism - but for what it envelopes.

Before being about volumes, architecture came about by mobilising, by arranging surfaces around a void. Raised stones (7) are used to make alignments or tables, to make something which is of use because of the hole around it.

Because this is the remainder that we have to deal with. If, in grasping the nature of face, I started from a surface with edges in order to point out to you that the criterion failed us in surfaces without edges, if it is possible to show you a fundamental surface without edges, where the definition of the face is not necessary, because the surface without edges is not suitable for resolving the problem of inside and outside, we ought to take into account the distinction between a surface without and a surface with: it has the closest possible relationship with what interests us, namely the hole which is to be made enter positively as such into the theory of surfaces.

This is not a verbal artifice. In the combinatory theory of general topology, every triangulatable surface, namely one composable of little triangular pieces that you could stick onto one another, torus or cross-cap, can be reduced by means of the fundamental polygon to a composition of the sphere to which there would be added more or less toric elements, cross-cap elements and the indispensable elements of pure holes represented by this vector looping back on itself.



Cannot a signifier, in its most radical essence, be envisaged simply as a cut $> <$ in a surface, these two signs "greater: $>$ " and "smaller: $<$ " only impose themselves by their cut-structure inscribed on something where there is always marked, not simply the continuity of a plane on which what follows will be inscribed, but also the vectorial direction where this will always be rediscovered? Why has the signifier in its corporal that is to say vocal incarnation always been presented to us as essentially discontinuous? We had therefore no need of surface: discontinuity constitutes it. The interruption in the successive forms part of its structure.

This temporal dimension of the functioning of the signifying chain which I at first articulated as succession, has as a consequence that the scansion introduces an additional element than the division of the modulatory interruption: it introduces (8) haste which I inserted qua haste in logic. It is an old work: "Le temps logique".

The step that I am trying to get you to take has already begun to be traced, it is the one in which discontinuity is bound to what is the essence of the signifier, namely difference. If that on which we have made pivot, have ceaselessly brought back this function of the signifier, is to draw your attention to the fact that, even by repeating the same, the same by being repeated is

inscribed as distinct. Where is the interpolation of a difference? Does it reside only in the cut - it is here that the introduction of the topological dimension beyond the temporal scansion interests us - or in something else which we will call the simple possibility of being different, the existence of the differential battery which constitutes the signifier and through which we cannot confuse synchrony with simultaneity at the root of the phenomenon, synchrony which makes the same reappear?

It is as distinct from what it repeats that the signifier reappears, and what can be considered as distinguishable is the interpolation of difference in so far as we can pose the identity of "a and a" as fundamental in the signifying function, namely that difference is in the cut, or in the synchronic possibility which constitutes the signifying difference. In any case, what we repeat is only different because it can be inscribed.

It remains nonetheless that the function of the cut is of the greatest importance for us in what can be written. And it is here that the notion of the topological surface ought to be introduced into our mental functioning because it is only here that the function of the cut takes its interest.

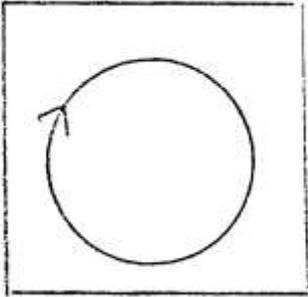
Inscription bringing us back to memory is an objection to be refuted. The memory which interests us analysts, is to be distinguished from an organic memory, the one which would respond to the same suction of the real in the same way for the organism to defend itself from it, as well as the one which maintains homeostasis, because the organism does not recognise the same which is renewed qua different. Organic memory memorises (meme-orise).

(9) Our memory is something different: it intervenes in function of the unary trait marking the unique time and has as a support inscription. Between the stimulus and the response, the inscription, the printing, ought to be recalled in terms of Gutenberg's printing press. The first rough outline of psychophysical theory against which we rebel is always atomist; it is always in the imprinting of surface schemas that this psychophysics takes its first foundation. It is not enough to say that it is insufficient before one has found something different.

Because if it is of great interest to see that the first theory of relational life is inscribed in interesting terms which express only without knowing it the very structure of the signifier under the masked forms of distinct effects of contiguity and continuity (associationism) it is good to show what was recognised and miscognised as signifying dimension was the effects of the signifier in the structure of the idealist world from which this psychophysics never detached itself.

Inversely what was introduced by the Gestalt is not enough to account for what happens at the level of vital phenomena, because of a fundamental ignorance which is expressed by the rapidity with which one holds as certain coordinates which everything

contradicts. The so-called good form of the circumference that the organism is supposed to strive on every plane - subjective or objective - to try to reproduce is contrary to every observation of organic forms. I would say to the Gestaltists that a donkey's ear resembles a cornet, an arum, an Mobius surface. A Mobius surface is the most simple illustration of the cross-cap: it is constructed with a strip of paper, the two ends of which one sticks together after having twisted it, so that the infinitely flat being which goes along it can follow it without ever crossing an edge. This shows the ambiguity of the notion of face. Because it is not enough to say that it is a unilateral surface, with a single face, as certain mathematicians formulate it. A formal definition is a different thing, it nevertheless remains that there is a coalescence for each point of the two faces and this is what interests us. For us who are not satisfied to say unilateral under the pretext that these two faces are always present, it nevertheless remains that we can manifest at every point the scandal for our intuition of this relationship of the two faces.



(10) If in effect on a plane we trace a circle in a clockwork direction, from the other side, by transparency, the same arrow turns in the opposite direction. The infinitely flat being, the little personage on the Mobius surface, if he carries with him a circle turning around him in the clockwise direction, this circle will turn

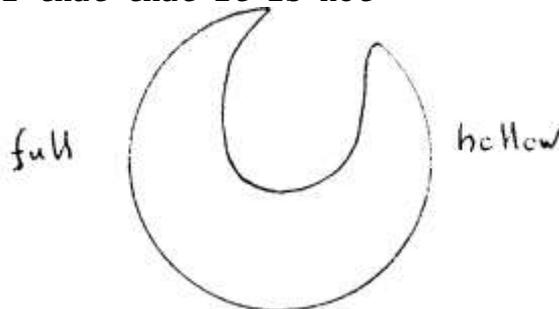
always in the same direction, so that from the other side of its point of departure what will be inscribed will turn in the horary direction, namely in a sense opposite to what would happen on a normal strip on the plane: it is not inverted.

This is why these surfaces are defined as non-orientable and nevertheless are no less oriented. Even though desire is not articulatable we cannot say for all that that it is not articulated. Because these

little ears in the Mobius strip, however non-orientable they may be, are more oriented than a normal strip. Make a conical belt for yourself.

Turn it over: what was open below is now so on top. But turn over the Mobius strip: it will always have the same

shape. Even when you turn over the object, it will always have the sunken hump on the left, the swollen hump on the right: a non-orientable surface is therefore much more oriented than an orientable surface.



Something which goes still further and surprises the mathematicians who with a smile refer the reader to experience, is that, if in this Mobius strip using a scissors you make a cut

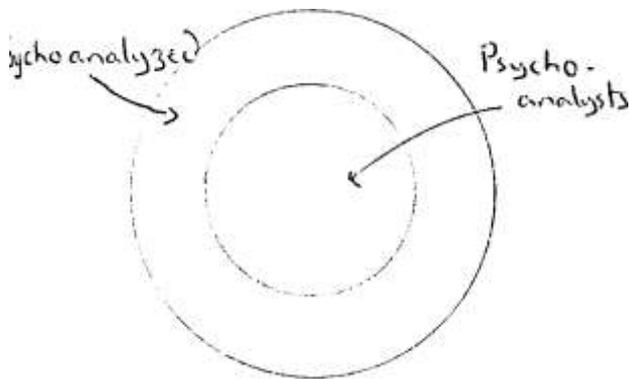
at an equal distance from the most accessible points of the edges (it has only a single edge), if you make a circle, the cut closes on itself, you produce a circle, a loop, a closed Jordan curve. Now this cut, not alone leaves the surface entire, but transforms the non-orientable surface into an orientable surface, namely into a strip which, if you colour one of the sides, a whole side will remain blank, contrary to what would have happened earlier on the entire Mobius surface: everything would have been coloured without the paintbrush changing face. The simple intervention of cut has changed the omnipresent structure of all the points of the surface, as I told you. And if I ask you to tell me the difference between the object before the cut and this one, there is no way of doing it, this to introduce the interest of the function of the cut.

The quadrilateral polygon originates the torus and the cross-cap. If I never introduced the true verbalisation of this shape o , stamp, desire, uniting the $\$$ to the o in the $\$ \blacktriangleleft o$, this little quadrilateral should be read: the subject qua marked by the signifier is properly in the phantasy, the cut of o .

Next time, you will see how this will give you a functioning support to articulate the question: how what we can define, isolate starting from demand as field of desire, in its ungraspable aspect, can, by some torsion or other, knot itself to what taken from another angle is defined as the field of the object o , how can desire be equal to o . This is what I introduced and what will give you a model useful even in your practice.

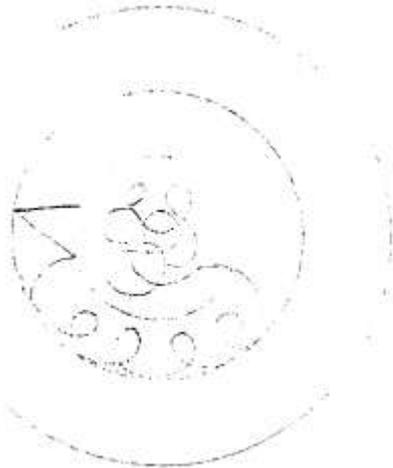
Seminar 21: Wednesday 23 May 1962

Why is a signifier grasped by (saisi de) the slightest thing? Can it grasp the slightest thing? Here is the question, a question which perhaps it is not excessive to say has not yet been posed because of the form that logic classically took on. In effect the principle of predication which the universal proposition implies only one thing: that what one grasps are nullifiable beings: the dictum of omni et nullo. For those for whom these terms are not familiar and who consequently do not understand very well, I recall that this is what I have been in the process of explaining to you for a number of occasions now, namely taking the support of the Eulerian circle all the more legitimately in that what it is a question of substituting is something different, the Eulerian circle like what I might call any naive circle, the circle in connection with which the question does not arise of knowing whether it rings a fragment, a piece. The proper of the circle, whether or not it detaches a piece of this implied hypothetical surface, is that it can be progressively reduced to nothing. The possibility of the universal, is nullity. All professors, I told you one day - because I chose this example in order not to fall always into the same problems - all professors are literate; well then, if by chance somewhere no professor merits to be qualified as literate, this does not mean that we will have professors who are nuls. Notice carefully that this is not the same thing as saying that there are no professors. The proof is that we do have stupid (nuls) professors on occasion. When I say "to have", take this to have in the strong sense, in the sense that is involved. It is not a slippery word that lets the soap fall. When I say "we have them", that means that we are used to having them. In the same way we have a load of things like that: we have the republic, as the countryman with whom I spoke not long ago said: this year, we had hail, and then afterwards the boy scouts. (2) Whatever may be the definitional precariousness for the countryman of these meteors, the verb "to have" has therefore here indeed its meaning.



We also have for example psychoanalysts; and it is obviously much more complicated because psychoanalysts begin to make us enter into the order of existential definition. We enter into it by way of the condition. We say for example: there is not, no one can

call himself a psychoanalyst if he has not been psychoanalysed. Well now, there is a great danger of believing that this relationship is homogeneous with what we evoked previously in the sense that, to make use of the Eulerian circles, there would be the circle of those psychoanalysed; but, as everyone knows, all psychoanalysts having to be psychoanalysed, the circle of psychoanalysts could therefore be traced as included in the circle of the psychoanalysed. I do not need to say that if our experience with psychoanalysts was not able to be analysed, it is probably because things are not so simple, namely that after all if it is not obvious at the level of the professor that the very fact of functioning as professor can draw into the professor's breast, like a siphon, something which empties him of all contact with the effects of the letter, it is on the contrary quite obvious for the psychoanalyst that this is the whole problem. It is not enough to refer the question on to: what does being psychoanalysed mean? Because of course what one believes one is doing there, and of course naturally, would divert nobody from putting in the forefront the question of what it is to be psychoanalysed. But in the relationship to the psychoanalyst, this is not what must be grasped, if we wish to lay hold of the conception of the psychoanalyst: it is to know what it means to the psychoanalyst to be psychoanalysed, this qua psychoanalyst and not as part of the psychoanalysed. I do not know whether I am making myself understood, but I am going to bring you back once again to the abc, to elementary things. If all the same in listening to the oldest example in logic, the first step that was made to push Socrates into a hole, namely: "all men are mortal", ever since then we have been deafened with this formula, I do not know whether you have had the time to become hardened to it, but for anyone who is a little fresh, the very fact of promoting this example at the heart of logic cannot but be the source of some unease, of some feeling of fraudulence. Because what interest (3) has such a formula for us, if it is man that we are trying to grasp? Unless what is involved - and it is precisely what the concentric circles of Eulerian inclusion dodge - is not to know that there is a circle of mortals and



inside it the circle of man, which has strictly no interest, it is to know how the fact that he is mortal concerns man, to catch hold of the whirlwind which is produced somewhere at the centre of the notion of man because of the fact of his conjunction to the predicate mortal, and that this indeed is why we are chasing after something; when we speak about man, it is precisely about this whirlwind, this hole which is made there in the middle somewhere that we touch.

Recently, I opened an excellent book by an American author whose work one can say augments the patrimony of thinking and of logical elucidation. I am not going to mention his name because you are going to try to find out who it is. And why do I not do

it? Because I, for my part, had the surprise of finding in the pages where he works over so well such a lively sense of the actuality of the progress of logic, where precisely my interior eight intervenes.

He does not make the same use of it at all as I do. Nevertheless I was led to the thought that some mandarins among my listeners would come to tell me one day that it was there that I found it. As regards the originality of the passage I rely in effect on M Jakobson for my strongest reference. I have to say that in this case I believe I began to push forward metaphor and metonymy in our theory sometime around the discourse of Rome which has been published - it was in speaking with Jakobson that he said to me: "Of course, this business of metaphor and metonymy, we worked that out together, you remember, on July 14 1950". As for the logician in question, he has been dead for a long time, and his little interior eight incontestably precedes its promotion here. But when he enters boldly into his examination of the universal affirmative, he makes use of an example which has the merit of not being found everywhere. He says: "All saints are men, all men are passionate, therefore all saints are passionate." He gathers this together because you should clearly sense, in such an example, that the problem is indeed that of knowing where is this most exterior predicative passion, from this universal syllogism to know what sort of passion is appropriate to a heart in order to produce sanctity.

(4) I thought this morning about all that, I mean to say it to you like that in order to make you sense what is involved as regards what I called a certain whirlwind movement. What are we trying to get close to in our apparatus concerning surfaces, surfaces in the sense that we intend giving them here a usage which, to reassure my listeners, uneasy perhaps about my not altogether classical excursions, is all the same something which is nothing other than to renew, to re-interrogate the Kantian function of the schema. I think that the radical illogicality in experience involved in the inclusion of the relationship of extension to understanding, to Euler's circles - this whole direction was begun with "Le temps logique" - is it not in its very deviations the recalling of what was, at its beginning, forgotten, what was at the beginning the object involved - even if it were the purest one: is it or will it be, whatever one does, the object of desire - and that if it is a matter of circumscribing it in order to lay hold of it logically, namely with language, it is because first of all it is a matter of grasping it as object of our desire, having grasped it to keep it, which means to enclose it and that this return of inclusion to the forefront of logical formation, finds its root in this need to possess in which there is grounded our relationship to the object as such of desire.

Begriff evokes grasping because it is from running after the grasp of an object of our desire that we have formed the Begriff. And everyone knows that everything that we want to possess for desire, and not for the satisfaction of a need, flees us and slips away from us. What moral preaching does not evoke it! At

the end we possess nothing! All this must be left behind, said the celebrated cardinal, how sad it is! We possess nothing, says moralistic preaching, because there is death.

What is promised us at the level of the fact of real death is not what is in question; it is not for nothing that for one long year I made you travel in this space that my listeners described as between-two-deaths. The suppression of real death would settle nothing in this affair of the flight of the object of desire because it was the other death that was involved, the one which brings it about that even if we were not mortal, even if we had the promise of eternal life, the question still remains open whether this "eternal life", I mean from which there would be excluded any promise of an end, is not conceivable as a form of eternally dying.

It undoubtedly is, because it is our day-to-day condition, and we (5) should take it into account in our logic as analysts because this is the way it is, if psychoanalysis has a meaning and if Freud was not mad. Because this is what designates this point called the death instinct.

Already the physiologist who was the greatest genius, one might say, of all those who have the sense of this angle of the biological approach, Bichat, said: "Life is the totality of the forces which resist death." If something of our experience can be reflected, may one day take on a stable meaning in this very difficult plane, it is this precession produced by Freud of this formula of the whirlwind of death to the flanks of which life clings in order to avoid falling into it. Because the only thing to be added to render this function quite clear to anyone, is that it is enough not to confuse death with the inanimate, when in inanimate nature it is enough to bend down in order to pick up the trace of what is a dead form, a fossil, in order to grasp that the presence of death in nature is something other than the inanimate.

Is it so sure that these shells and rubbish are a life-function? This is to resolve the problem a little easily when it is a matter of knowing why life twists itself like that. As we take up again the question of the signifier already tackled by way of the trace, the ironic idea came to me, suddenly emerging from the Platonic dialogues, of thinking that this ever so slightly scandalous imprint that Plato takes note of in thinking of the mark left in the sand of the stadium by the bare backsides of the beloveds, expressions towards which the adoration of their lovers precipitated and which their propriety consisted in effacing, they would have done better to leave it in place. If the lovers had been less clouded by the object of their desire, they would have been capable of taking advantage of it and of seeing in it the outline of this curious line that I am proposing to you today, such is the image of the blindness that every desire from being too lively carries with it.

Let us begin again therefore from our line which must indeed be taken in the shape that it is given to us: closed and

nullifiable, the line of the original zero of the effective history of logic. If we learn in it, already coming back to it, that null is the root of all, at least the experience will not have been made in vain.

This line, for us, we call the cut (la coupure), a line - this is our starting point - that we must hold a priori to be closed. This is the essence of its signifying nature. Nothing can ever (6) prove to us, since it is in the nature of each one of these circuits to ground itself as different, nothing in experience can allow us to ground it as being the same line. It is precisely this that allows us to apprehend the real. It is in the fact that its return being structurally different, always another time, if it resembles it, then there is a suggestion, a probability that the resemblance comes from the real. There is no other way of introducing in a correct fashion the function of the similar (du semblable). But this is only an indication that I am giving you. To go further, I think I repeated to you on several occasions if only not to have to come back to it again, that, all the same in recalling it, I refer you to this work by a precocious genius and like all precocious geniuses one who died too soon, Jean Nicaud, "La geometrie du monde sensible", in which the passage concerning the axiomatic line - perhaps some of you who are genuinely interested in our progress might consult it - shows clearly that it is chimerical to dodge the function of the signifying circle in this analysis of sensible experience, leading the author, despite the incontestable interest of what he puts forward to the paralogism which you will not fail to find in it. At the beginning we take this line whose deceptive proof that the inside of the line was something univocal was first upset for you by the existence of the function of defined topological surfaces, because it is enough that the line should be drawn on a surface defined in a certain fashion, the torus for example for it to be apparent that, while retaining its function of cut, it is not able in any way to fulfill here the same function as on the surface that you will allow me without further ado to call here fundamental, that of the sphere, namely to define a piece as nullifiable for example. For those who come here for the first time, this means a closed line drawn here or again this one which can in no way be reduced to zero, namely that the function of the cut that they introduce into the surface is something which every time gives rise to a problem. I think that what is involved as regards the signifier, is this reciprocal liaison which ensures that if on the one hand, as I made tangible for you the last time in connection with the Mobius surface, this nice distorted little ear of which I gave you a few examples, the median cut with respect to its field transforms it into a different surface which is no longer this Mobius surface. If it is a fact that the Mobius surface is - I have more than one reservation about this - can be said to have only one face, undoubtedly the one which results from the cut had two faces. What is involved for us, taking this angle to interrogate the effects of desire by approaching it through the signifier, is to perceive how the field of the cut, the gap of the cut, by organising itself into a surface gives rise for us to all the (7) different shapes in which there can be ordered the moments of

our experience of desire.

When I tell you that it is starting from the cut that there are organised the shapes of the surface involved for us in our experience, since they are able to bring about the effect of the signifier, I illustrate it - it is not the first time I have illustrated it -: here is the sphere, here is our central cut taken from an inverse angle to that of the Eulerian circle. What interests us, is not the piece

which is necessarily detached on the sphere by the closed line, it is the cut thus produced and, if you wish, already here and now the hole. It is quite clear that everything that we are going to find at the end must already be given, in other words that here already a hole has all its meaning, a meaning made particularly obvious by the fact of our having recourse to the sphere. A hole here makes the inside and the outside communicate with one another. There is only one little piece of bad luck: it is that once the hole is made, there is no longer either an inside or an outside, as is only too obvious from the fact that it is the easiest thing in the world to turn this sphere with a hole in it inside out. We are dealing with the universal, primordial, creation - that of the eternal potter. There is nothing easier than to turn a bowl, that is to say a skullcap. The hole would then not have any great meaning for us, if there were not this other thing to support this fundamental intuition - I think that this is familiar to you today - namely that avatars happen to a hole, a cut, and the first possible one is that two points of the edge are coupled: one of the first possibilities for a hole is that of becoming two holes.

Certain people have said to me: why do you not refer your images to embryology? Believe me they are never very far from it. This is what I am explaining before you, but it would only be an alibi because for me to refer to embryology here is to give myself over to the mysterious power of life which for some unknown reason it really believes can only be introduced into the world from the angle of, through the mediation of this globule, of this sphere which is multiplied, is depressed, is invaginated, is swallowed by itself, then peculiarly at least up to the level of the betrachia, the blastopore, namely this something which is not a hole in the sphere, but a piece of the sphere which has entered into the

(8) other. There are enough doctors here who have done a little bit of elementary embryology to remember this something which begins to divide itself in two to initiate this curious organ that is called the neuroenteric canal which is completely unjustifiable by any function, this communication from the inside of the neural tube to the digestive tube being rather to be



considered as a baroque peculiarity of evolution which moreover is promptly reabsorbed: in subsequent evolution nothing more is said about it.

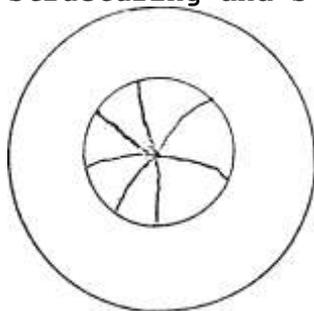
But perhaps matters would take a new turn if they were taken as a metabolism, a metamorphosis guided by elements of structure whose presence and homogeneity with the plane on which we are moving about in the guise of a signifier are the term of what is a sort of pre-vital isolation of the trace of something which could perhaps lead us to formalisations which even on the plane of the organisation of biological experience might prove fruitful. In any case, it is these two isolated holes at the surface of the sphere, which connected to one another and then very extended then connected, gave us the torus. This is not new. Simply I would like to clearly articulate the result for you; the result



first of all, is that there is something which for us supports the intuition of the torus, it is that: a macaroni which connects up with itself, which bites its own tail this is what is what is most exemplary in the function of the hole. There is one in the middle of macaroni and there is a draught, which means that in passing through the hoop that it forms there is a hole which makes the outside communicate with the inside, and then there

is another

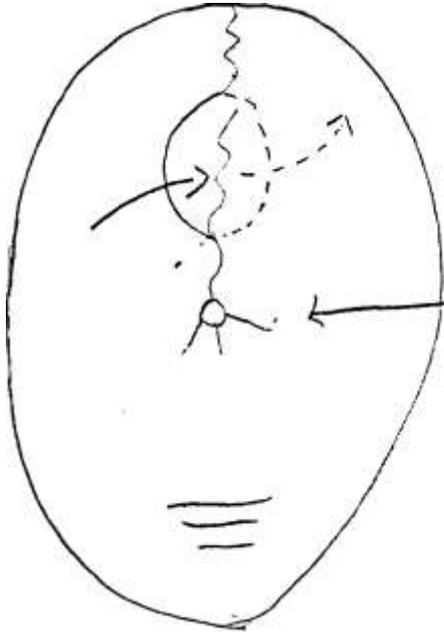
still more formidable one which puts a hole at the heart of the surface which is here a hole while at the same time being completely outside. The image of boring is introduced; because what we are calling hole, is that: it is this corridor drilled into a thickness, a fundamental image which as regards the geometry of the sensible world has never been sufficiently distinguished. And then the other hole which is the central hole of the surface, namely the hole that I would call the hole that causes a draught. What I am claiming to advance to pose our problems, is that this irreducible draught-hole, if we ring it with a cut, is properly where there belongs, in the effects of the signifying function, o, the object as such. This means that the object is missed, because in no case could there anything (9) here but the contour of the object, with all the meanings that you can give to the word contour. Another possibility opens out again which for us vivifies, gives its interest to the structuring and structural comparison of these surfaces, it is



that the cut can be articulated differently on a surface. We can enounce, formulate, wish that each point of the hole drawn here on the surface should be connected to its antipodal point, that without any division of the gap, the gap organises itself into a surface in a way which outlines it completely without the medium of this intermediary division. I showed you the

last time and I will show you again: this can give us the surface described as the bonnet or cross-cap, namely something about which it would be well for you not to forget that the image which

I gave you is only properly speaking a distorted image because what appears to each and everyone who has reflected on it for the first time, what creates an obstacle in it, is the question of this famous line of apparent penetration of the surface through itself which is necessary to represent it in our space. What I am designating here in a wavering line, I am doing to indicate that it must be considered as vacillating, not as fixed. In other words we never have to take into account everything which is paraded here on one side at the outside of the surface, which cannot pass to the outside of the other side because there is no



real meeting of faces, but on the contrary could only pass from the other side to the inside therefore of the other face, I mean the other with respect to the observer placed here.

Therefore representing things in this way as regards this shape of surface depends only on a certain incapacity of intuitive shapes of space in three dimensions to allow the support of an image which really takes into account the continuity obtained under the name of this new surface called the cross-cap, the bonnet, in question. In other words what does this surface

sustain? We will call it - since these are these that I am advancing at first, and we will allow ourselves subsequently to give its meaning to the usage that I will propose to you to make (10) of these different shapes - we call this surface, not the hole - because as you see, there is at least one that it avoids, whose shape completely disappears - but the place of the hole. This surface structured in this way is particularly suitable to make function before us this most ungraspable element which is called desire as such, in other words lack. It remains nevertheless that this surface



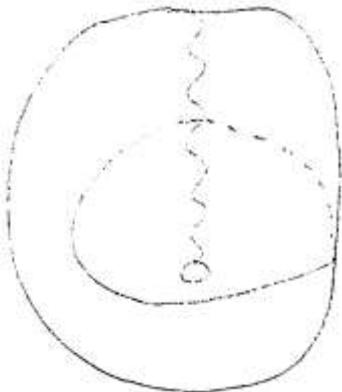
which fills the gap despite the belongingness which makes of all these points which we will call, if you wish, antipodal, equivalent points, they can nevertheless not function in this antipodal equivalence if there are not two privileged points. These are represented here by this little ring about which the perspicacity of one of my listeners has already questioned me: "what in effect are you trying to represent

with this little ring?" Of course it is not in any way something equivalent to the central hole of the torus because everything that, at whatever level you place yourself even from this privileged point, everything that is exchanged between one side and the other of the figure, passes here through this false decussation or crossing point which makes up the structure. Nevertheless what is indicated in this way by this form thus encircled is nothing other than the possibility underneath, if one can express oneself in this way, of this point passing from one outside surface to the other.

It is also the necessity of indicating that a non-privileged circle on this surface, a reducible circle, if you make it slide, if you extract it from its appearance of semi-occultation beyond the limit apparently here of re-crossing and of penetration to make it spread itself out, develop in this way towards the lower half of the figure, and therefore isolate

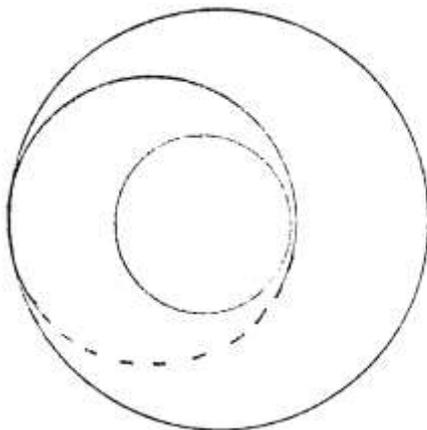


(11) itself here in a form outside the figure, it must always

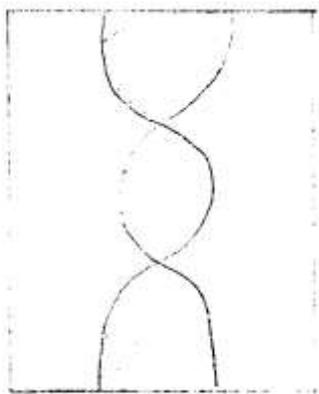


here turn around something which does not allow it in anyway to transform itself into what would be its other shape, the privileged form of a circle in so far as it does the circuit of the privileged point and must then to be depicted on the surface in question: this in effect cannot be equivalent to it in any way, since this shape is something which passes around the privileged point, the structural point around which is supported the

whole structure of the surface thus defined. This double point and single point around which at once there is supported the very possibility of the criss-crossed structure of the bonnet or of the cross-cap, it is by this point that we symbolise what can introduce any object whatsoever to the place of the hole. We know the functions and the nature of this privileged point: it is the phallus; the phallus in so far as it is through it as operator that an object o can be put at the same place where in another structure (the torus) we only grasp its contour. This is



the exemplary value of the structure of the cross-cap that I am trying to articulate before you: the place of the hole, is in (12) principle this point of a special structure in so far as it is a question of distinguishing it from other forms of point, the one for example defined by the overlapping of a cut on itself, the first possible form to be given to our interior eight. We cut something on a sheet of paper for example and a point will be defined by the fact that the cut retraverses a place that is already cut. We know well that this is in no way necessary for the cut to have a completely definable action on the surface and introduce into it this change which it is a matter for us of taking as a support to depict certain effects of the signifier. If we take the torus and cut it in this way, this gives this form that we have drawn here, passing to the other side of the torus, you see clearly that at no moment does this cut rejoin itself. Try the experiment on an old bicycle tube, you will see what that



gives: this will give a continuous organised surface of such a kind that it folds back twice on itself before rejoining itself. If it only were folded back once it would be a Mobius surface. Since it folds back twice, it gives a surface with two faces which is not identical to the one that I showed you the other day after the section - the Mobius surface - because that one folds back twice and once again in a different way - a Jordan ring.

The interest for us is to see what exactly this privileged point is in so far as it intervenes as such, specifies the piece where it remains irreducibly, giving to it the particular accent which allows it to designate for us at once the function according to which an object which has always been there, is even before the introduction of the reflections, the appearances that we have in the form of images, the object of desire. It only takes on this effect from the effects of the function of the signifier and one only rediscovers in it its eternal destination as object, it is the only absolutely autonomous, primordial object with respect to the subject, decisive with respect to it to the point that my relationship to this object is in a way to be inverted.

That if in the phantasy the subject through a mirage parallel at every point to the one of the imaginings of the mirror stage, (13) although of a different order, is imagined through the effect of what constitutes it as subject, namely the effect of the signifier, to support the object which comes through it to fill the lack, the hole of the Other - and this is the phantasy - inversely one can say that the whole cut of the subject, that which in the world constitutes it as separate, as rejected, is imposed on it by a determination that is no longer subjective going from the subject towards the object, but objective from the object towards the subject, is imposed on it by the object o, but in so far as at the heart of this object o there is this central point, this whirlwind point through which the object emerges from

a beyond of the imaginary knot, the idealist subject-object which brought about from the beginning of time up to now the impasse in thinking, this central point which from this beyond promotes the object as object of desire. This is what we will pursue the next time.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 30 May 1962

The teaching in which I am leading you is determined by the paths of our experience. It may appear excessive, indeed troublesome, that these paths give rise in my teaching to detours that we might call unusual, and which, because of this, may appear to be really outrageous. I spare you them as much as I can. I mean that, through examples that are tied into, are as close as possible to our experience, I outline a sort of reduction, as one might say of these necessary paths.

You should not however be surprised that there are implicated in our explanation fields, domains such as the one for example this year of topology, if in fact the paths we have to take are those which, putting into question an order as fundamental as the most radical constitution of the subject as such, involve because of this what one could really call a sort of revision of science. For example this radical supposition of ours, which places the subject in his constitution in a dependency, in a secondary position with respect to the signifier, which makes of the subject as such an effect of the signifier, cannot fail to emerge from our experience however incarnated it may be in domains of thinking which are apparently the most abstract. And I do not believe I am forcing anything in saying that what we are elaborating here could be of the greatest interest to a mathematician. For example, as was recently stated, by looking at it closely enough in a theory which, for the mathematician, at one time at least, posed great problems, a theory like that of transfiniteness whose impasses undoubtedly long antedate our highlighting of the function of the unary trait, in so far as what grounds this theory of the transfinite is a return to, a grasp of, the origin of counting before number, I mean of what precedes all counting and includes it and supports it, namely (2) bi-univocal correspondence, the trait for trait.

Of course these detours could be for me a way of confirming the breadth, the infinity and the fruitfulness of what it is absolutely necessary for us to construct, for our part, starting from our experience. I am sparing you them.

If it is true that this is how things are, that analytic experience is the one which conducts us through the incarnated effects of what exists, of course, from all ages - but as regards which the fact that we are aware of them is the only new thing - the incarnated effects of the fact of the primacy of the signifier on the subject, it cannot but be that every kind of

attempt at reducing the dimensions of our experience to the already constituted point of view of what is called psychological science, in this sense that nobody can deny, can fail to recognise that it was established on premises which neglected, and with reason because it was avoided, this fundamental articulation on which we put the accent, this year simply in a still more explicit, tighter, more tightly knotted way, it cannot but be, I am saying, that any reduction to the point of view of psychological science as it has already been established by preserving as a hypothesis a certain number of opaque points, of avoided points, of points of major unreality, culminates necessarily at objectively lying - I am not saying mistaken, I am saying lying - falsified formulations which determine something which always manifests itself in the communication of what one can call an incarnate lie.

The signifier determines the subject, I tell you, in so far as necessarily this is what psychoanalytic experience means. But let us follow the consequences of these necessary premisses. This signifier determines the subject. The subject takes on a structure from it; it is the one that I already tried to demonstrate for you this year in connection with identification, namely with this something which focusses our experience on the very structure of the subject. I am trying to make you follow more closely this link of the signifier to the subjective structure.

What I am leading you to in these topological formulae which you have already sensed are not purely and simply this intuitive reference to which the practice of geometry has habituated you, is to consider that these surfaces are structures and I had to tell you that they are all structurally present at each one of their points, if indeed we must employ this word point without (3) reserving what I am going to contribute to it today.

I led you, through what I previously enounced, to the fact that it is now a matter now of setting up in its unity, that the signifier is cut and it is a matter of making this subject and its structure depend on that - this is possible by means of what I am asking you to admit and to follow me in at least for a while - that the subject has the structure of a surface at least topologically defined. It is a matter of grasping therefore - and this is not difficult - how the cut engenders the surface. This was what I began to exemplify for you in launching towards you, like so many little kites for some game or other, my Mobius surfaces, I also showed you that if you cut these surfaces in a certain way, they also become different surfaces, I mean topologically defined and materially graspable as changed because they are no longer Mobius surfaces from the very fact of this median cut that you have carried out, but a strip twisted a little about itself, but well and truly a strip, what is called a strip, like this belt that I have around my waist. It is to give you the idea of the possibility of the conception of this engendering which is in a way inverted compared to what first appears evident. It is the surface, you would think, which allows the cut, and I am telling you: it is the cut that we can

conceive of, by taking the topological perspective, as engendering the surface. And it is very important. Because when all is said and done it is here perhaps that we are going to be able to grasp the point of entrance, of insertion of the signifier into the real, confirm in human praxis that it is because the real presents to us what I might call natural surfaces that the signifier can enter it.

Of course, one can amuse oneself by bringing about this origin with concrete actions as they are called, in order to recall that man cuts and that God knows our experience is indeed one in which there has been highlighted the importance of this possibility of cutting with a pair of scissors. One of the fundamental images of the first analytic metaphors - the two little thumbs which are cut off with a snip of the scissor - is of course there to urge us not to neglect what is concrete, practical in it: the fact that man is an animal who prolongs himself with instruments, and in the foreground a pair of scissors. One could amuse oneself by redoing a natural history: what is the result for the few animals who have a pair of scissors in the natural state?

This is not what I am leading you to, and with good reason.

(4) What the formula "man cuts" (l'homme coupe) leads us to, is much more rather to its semantic echoes that he contradicts himself (il se coupe), as they say, that he tries to cut things short (y couper). All of this is to be gathered together in a different way around the fundamental formula: "it will be cut off you" (on t'la coupe)!

An effect of the signifier, the cut was first of all for us, in the phonematic analysis of language, this temporal, or more precisely sequential line of signifiers which I accustomed you to call up to the now the signifying chain. But what is going to happen if now I encourage you to consider the line itself as original cut? These interruptions, these individualizations, these segments of the line which are called, if you wish, on occasion phonemes, which are supposed therefore to be separated from the one which precedes and from the one which follows, to make a chain at least punctually interrupted; this "geometry of the sensible world" to which, the last time, I encouraged you to refer by reading Jean Nicaud and the work of that name, you will see in a central chapter the importance that this analysis of the line has in so far as it can be, I may say, defined by its intrinsic properties and how much easier it would have been for him to have put in the foreground, radically, the function of the cut for the theoretical elaboration that he has to erect with the greatest difficulty and with contradictions which are nothing other than the neglect of this radical function. If the line itself is cut, each one of its elements will then be a section of cut, and this is what in short is introduced by this lively [empty?] element, as I might say, of the signifier which I called the interior eight, namely precisely the loop (la boucle)♦ The line recuts itself: what is the interest of this remark?

The cut brought to bear on the real manifests here, in the real, what its characteristic and its function is, and what it introduces into our dialectic, contrary to the usage which is made of it that the real is the diverse: I have always made use of this original function, the real, to tell you that the real is what introduces the same, or more exactly the real is what returns always to the same place. What does that mean, if not that the section of the cut, in other words the signifier being what we have said: always radically different to itself - A is not identical to A - there is no way of making the same appear, except on the side of the real. In other words, the cut, if I can express myself in this way, at the level of a pure subject of cutting, the cut can only know it is closed, that it repasses through itself, because the real, as distinct from the (5) signifier, is the same. In other words, only the real closes it. A closed curve is the real revealed but as you see more radically it is necessary that the cut should recut itself if something has not already interrupted it. Immediately after the trait, the signifier takes this form which is properly speaking the cut; the cut is a trait which recuts itself, it is only after it is closed on the basis that, cutting itself, it has encountered the real, which alone permits to connote as the same, respectively what is found under the first, then the second loop.

We find here the knot which provides us with a recourse with respect to what constituted the uncertainty, the wavering of the whole identificatory construction. You will grasp it very well in the articulation of Jean Nicaud; it consists in the following: is it necessary to wait for the same in order that the signifier should consist, as it was always believed without dwelling sufficiently on the fundamental fact that the signifier, in order to engender the difference between what it signified originally, namely at once that particular time which, I assure you, cannot be repeated, but which always obliges the subject to rediscover it, this particular time requires therefore, in order to achieve its signifying form, the signifier to be repeated at least once and this repetition is nothing other than the most radical form of the experience of demand.

What the signifier incarnates are all the times that the demand is repeated. And if precisely the demand were not repeated in vain, there would be no signifier, because there would be no demand. If you had what the demand encloses in the loop (boucle), there would be no need for demand. There is no need for demand if need is satisfied.

A humorist cried one day: "Gentlemen, long live Poland, because if there were no Poland there would be no Poles". The demand is the Poland of the signifier. That is why I would be rather tempted today, parodying this accident of the theory of abstract spaces which brings it about that one of these spaces - and there are now more and more of them that I do not believe I am obliged to interest you in - is called Polish. Today let us call the signifier a Polish signifier and this will avoid you

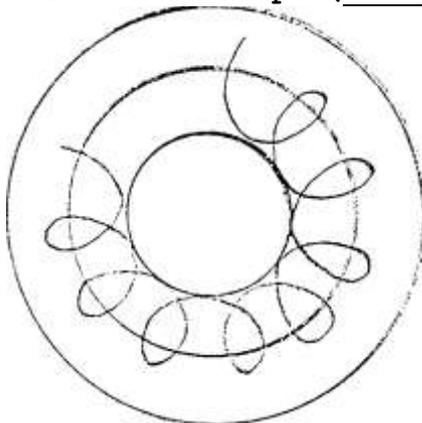
calling it the loop (lac), which would seem to me a dangerous encouragement to the use that one of my fervent supporters thought he could make of term lacanism! I hope that at least while I am alive that this obviously tempting term will be spared me after my second death!

Therefore what my Polish signifier is designed to illustrate, is (6) the relationship of the signifier to itself, namely to lead us to the relationship of the signifier to the subject, if indeed the subject can be conceived of as its effect.

I already remarked that there is apparently only signifier, every surface where it is inscribed being supposed to it. But this fact is in a way imaged by the whole system of the Beaux-Arts which illuminates something which introduces you to questioning the architecture, for example on this ticket which makes it appear to you why the perspective is so reducibly trompe-l'oeil. And it is not for nothing that I also put the accent in a year whose preoccupations seemed to me to be very distant from properly aesthetic pre-occupations, on the anamorphose, that is to say for those who have not been here before - the use of the flight of a surface to make appear an image which is unrecognisable when unfolded, but which, from a certain point of view is gathered together and imposes itself.

This singular ambiguity of an art about what appears in its nature to be able to attach itself to depths and to volumes, to some completeness or other which, in fact, is always revealed as essentially subject to the interplay of planes and of surfaces is something just as important, interesting, as to see also what is absent from it. Namely all sorts of things that the concrete usage of extension offers us: for example knots, quite concretely imaginable as realisable in an architecture of undergrounds as perhaps the evolution of time will show us. But it is clear that never has any architecture dreamt of composing itself around an arrangement of elements, of rooms and communications, even of corridors, as something which would make knots inside itself. And nevertheless why not? This indeed is why our remark that there is no signifier unless a surface is supposed for it, is overturned in our synthesis which is going to look for its most radical knot in the fact that the cut, in fact, determines, engenders the surface, that it is what gives it its constituting reason as well as its varieties.

This indeed is the way that we can grasp, homologate this first relationship of demand to the constitution of the subject in so far as these repetitions, these returns in the shape of the torus these loops (boucles) which are renewed in describing what

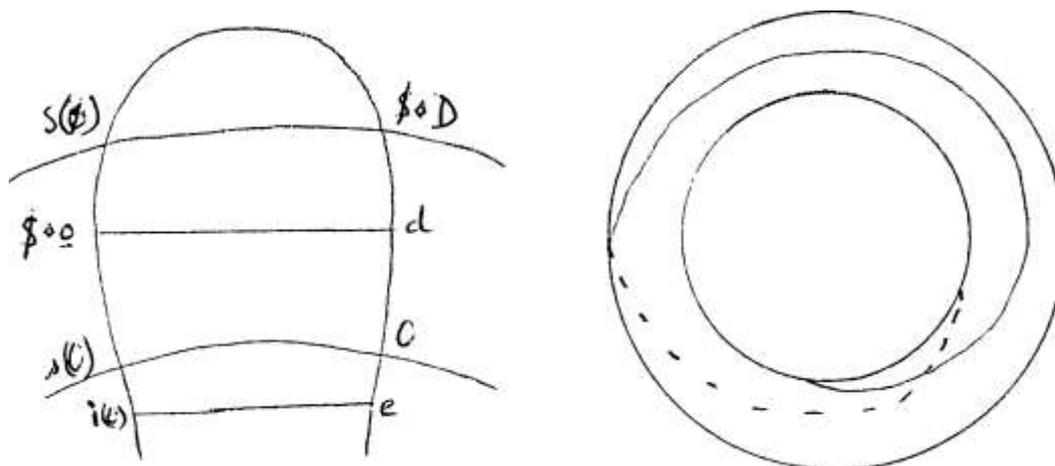


is presented for us, in the imagined space of the torus, as its contour, this return to its origin allows us to structure, to exemplify in a major fashion a certain type of relationship (7) of the signifier to the subject which allows us to situate in its opposition the function D of demand and

the o of the object; o , object of desire, D , the scansion of the demand.

You will have noticed that in the graph you have the following symbols $s(o)$; at the upper level $S(0)$, ^ cut of D ; at the two intermediary stages: $i(o)$, e , and on the other side, $\$$ cut of o , the phantasy... Nowhere will you see D and o connected. What does that express? What does that reflect? What does that support? It supports first of all the following: it is that what you find on the contrary is 3" cut of D and that these elements of the signifying treasury at the stage of enunciating, I am teaching you to recognise them, are what is called the Trieb, the drive. This is how the first modification of the real in the subject under the effect of the demand formalises it for you, it is the drive. And if in the drive, there were not already this effect of demand, this effect of the signifier, it could not be able to be articulated in such a manifestly grammatical schema. I am expressly making an allusion to what I suppose everyone here is accustomed to from my previous analyses; as regards the others I referred them to the article "Trieb und Triebchicksale" which has been bizarrely translated here by "Avatars des pulsions" no doubt through a sort of confused reference to the effects that the reading of such a text produces on the first obtuseness (obtusion) of the psychological reference

You see here the application of the signifier - which today, to amuse ourselves, we are calling the "Polish signifier" - to the surface of the torus:



(8) It is the simplest form of what can be produced in an infinitely enriched fashion by a succession of twists around a spool, the spool properly speaking of the dynamo, in so far as in the course of this repetition the circuit is already made around the central hole. But in this most simple form that you see it drawn here, this circuit is also made, I underline - this cut is not the simple cut - in such a way that it does not recut itself. To image things: in real space, the one that you can visualise, you see it up to now in this surface presented to you, this face of the torus towards you, it subsequently

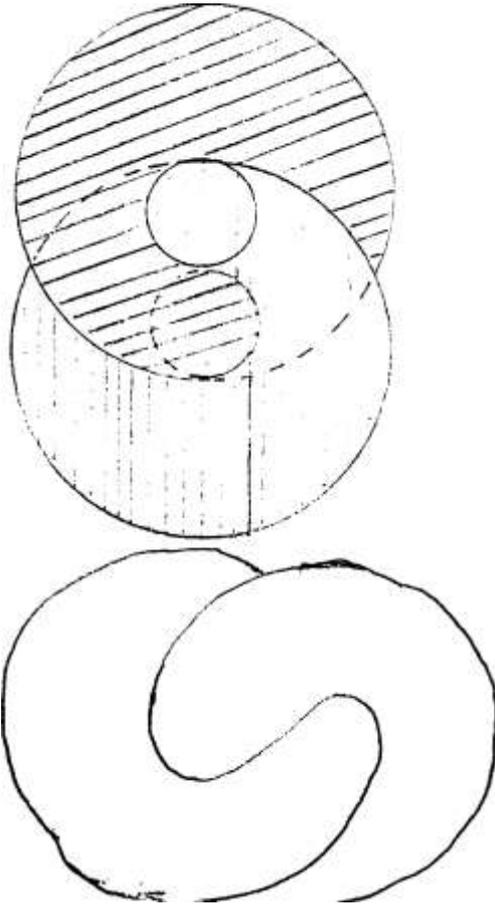
disappears onto the other face - that it why it is in a dotted line - in order to come back from this side.

Such a cut, as I might say, grasps absolutely nothing. Try it out on a bicycle tube, you will see at the end the tube opened out in a certain fashion, transformed into a surface twisted twice onto itself, but not at all cut in two. It renders, as I might say, graspable in a signifying and preconceptual fashion, but which is not at all without characterising a sort of grasp of its own kind of this radical thing of the flight, as one might say, the absence of any way of laying hold of its object at the level of demand. For if we have defined demand in the fact that it repeats itself and that it only repeats itself in function of an inside void that it rings, this void which sustains it and constitutes it, this void which does not involve - I point out to you in passing - any operation of an ethical or pleasantly pessimistic kind - as if there were something worse (un pire) going beyond what is ordinary for the subject, it is simply a necessity of a logical abc as I might say - every graspable satisfaction, whether one situates itself on the side of the subject or on the side of the object, is missed by demand. Simply in order that the demand should be demand, namely that it should be repeated as signifier it is necessary that it should be disappointed; if it were not, there would be no support for demand.

But this void is different from what is in question as regards o, the object of desire. The advent constituted by repetition, the metonymical advent, the one which slides, is evoked by the very sliding of the repetition of demand; o, the object of desire, can in no way be evoked in this void ringed here by the loop (boucle) of the demand. It is to be situated in this hole that we will call the fundamental nothing to distinguish it from the void of demand, the nothing from which the object of desire is called to become. What it is a matter for us of formalising with the elements that I am bringing you, is what allows there to be situated in the phantasy the relationship of the subject as $ij \rangle$, the subject informed by the demand, to this o. While at (9) this level of the signifying structure that I am demonstrating for you in the torus, in so far as the cut creates it in this form, this relationship is an opposite relationship. The void which sustains the demand is not the nothing of the object that it rings as object of desire, it is this that the reference to the torus is designed to illustrate for you.

If this were all that you were able to get from it, it would be a lot of effort for a small result. But, as you are going to see, there are many other things to be got from it. In effect to go quickly and without of course making you go through the different steps of the topological deduction which show you the internal necessity which determines the construction that I am going to present to you now; I am going to show you that the torus allows something which undoubtedly you can see the cross-cap for its part does not allow.

I think that the most unimaginative people can see, through



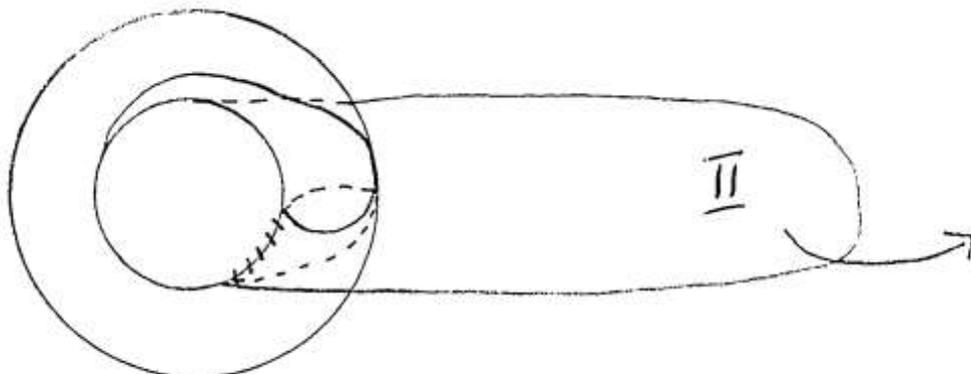
these topological windings, what is involved. Metaphorically at least, the term chain which implies concatenation has already sufficiently entered into the language for us not to have to dwell on it. The torus, through its topological structure, implies what we can call a complement, another torus which can come to concatenate with it.

Let us suppose that they are in complete conformity with what I asked you to conceptualise in the usage of these surfaces, namely that they are not metric, that they are not rigid, let us say they are capsule-like. If you take one of these rings with which one plays the game of that name, you will be able to see that if you take hold of one in a firm and fixed fashion, by its circumference and if you make turn back on itself the body of what has remained free, you will obtain

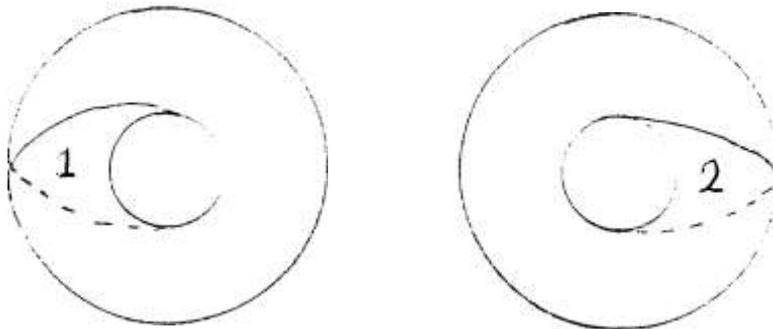
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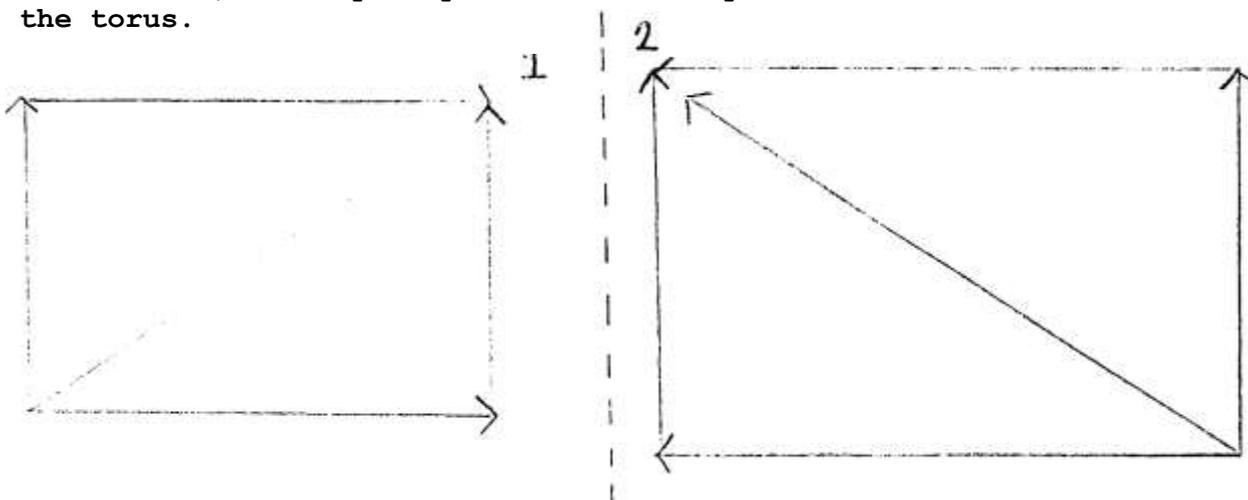
fashion as if "yo" were using a curved reed, by twisting it in this way onto itself, you will make it come back to its first position without the torsion being in a way inscribed in its substance. Simply it will have come back to its primitive (10) point. You can imagine that by a torsion which would therefore be like this, one of these tori onto the other, we would proceed to what could be called a transfer (decalque) of anything whatsoever inscribed already on the first one that we will call 1, and let us suppose that what is involved is what I ask you to refer simply to the first torus: this curve, in so far as it does not simply englobe the thickness of the torus and that, it not alone englobes the space of the hole but it goes through it, which is the condition which can allow it to englobe at the same time the two voids, the nothings, both what is here in the thickness of the torus and what is here at the centre of the knot.



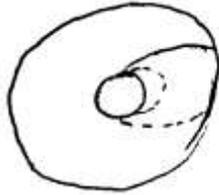
It can be proved - but I spare you the proof which would be long and would demand an effort from you - that in proceeding in this way what will come onto the second torus will be a curve superimposable on the first if one superimposes the two tori. What does that mean? First of all that they may not be superimposable. Here are two curves:



They appear to be made in the same way: they are nevertheless irreducibly not superimposable. This implies that the torus, despite its symmetrical appearance, involves possibilities of highlighting, through the cut, one of these effects of torsion which allows what I would call the radical asymmetry, whose presence as you know in nature is a problem for any formalisation, one which means that snails have in principle a direction of rotation which makes a great exception of those who have the opposite direction. There are a many phenomena of that (11) order, up to and including chemical phenomena, which express themselves in what are called polarising effects. There are therefore structurally, surfaces whose asymmetry is elective and which involve the importance of the dextrogyral or laevogyral gyration. You will later see the importance of what that signifies. You should only know that the phenomenon of the relationship by transfer (décalque) of what is produced as composing, englobing the loop of the demand with the loop of the central object, this relationship on the surface of the other torus, which you sense is going to allow us to symbolise the relationship of the subject to the big Other, will give two lines which, are superimposable with respect to the structure of the torus.



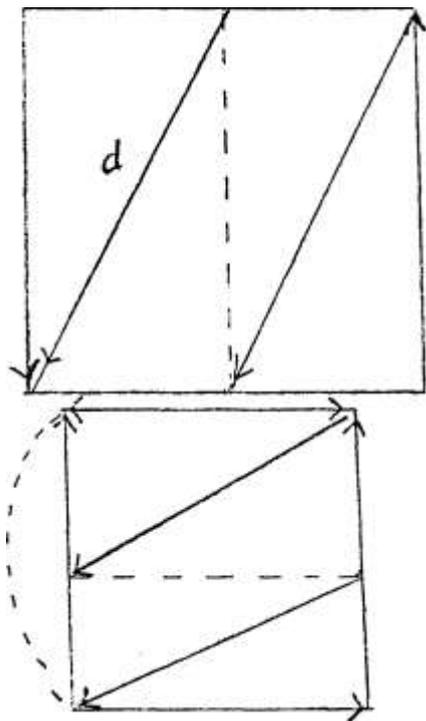
I apologise for making you follow a path which may appear arid to you, it is indispensable that I get you to sense the steps in



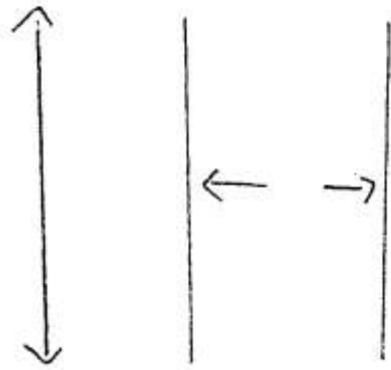
order to show you what we can draw from it.

What is the reason for that? It is very clearly seen at the level of what are called fundamental polygons. The polygon being thus described, you imagine in front of it its transfer which is inscribed as follows. The line involved on the polygon is projected here, as an oblique, and will be prolonged inverted on the other side on the transfer. But you ought to grasp that in making this fundamental polygon swing through 90 degrees you will reproduce exactly, including the direction of the arrows, the figure of this and that the oblique line will be in the same direction, this swing representing exactly the complementary composition of one of the tori with the other.

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Now put onto the torus, no longer this simple line, but the repeated curve whose function I taught you earlier. Is it the same? I will spare your hesitations. After transfer and swing, what you will (12) have here is symbolised as follows:



What does that mean? That means, in our signified transposition, in our experience, that the demand of the subject in so far as here it repeats itself twice, inverts its relationships: D and o, demand and object at the level of the Other, that the demand of the subject corresponds to the object o of the Other, that the object o of the subject becomes the demand of the Other.

This relationship of inversion is essentially the most radical form that we can give of what happens in the case of the neurotic: what the neurotic aims at as object, is the demand of the Other; what the neurotic demands, when he demands to grasp o, the ungraspable object of his desire, is o, the object of the Other.

The accent is put differently according to the two aspects of neurosis. For the obsessional the accent is put on the demand of the Other, taken as object of his desire; for the hysteric the accent is put on the object of the Other, taken as support for

his demand.

We would have to go into detail about what this implies in so far as what is in question for us is nothing other here than the access to the nature of this o. We will only grasp the nature of o when we have elucidated structurally in the same way the relationship of S to o, namely the topological support that we can give to the phantasy. Let us say, to begin to illuminate this path, that o, the object of the phantasy, o, the object of desire has no image and that the impasse of the neurotic's phantasy is that in his search for o, the object of desire, he encounters i of o. Such is the origin from which there starts the whole dialectic to which, from the beginning of my teaching, I have been introducing you, namely that the specular image, the understanding of the specular image depends on the fact, and I am astonished that nobody has thought of commenting on the function that I give it, the specular image is an error, it is not simply an illusion, a lure of the captivating Gestalt whose aggressivity has marked the accent. It is fundamentally an error in so far as the subject miscognises himself in it (s'y me-connait) if you will allow me the expression, in so far as (13) the origin of the ego and its fundamental miscognition are here reassembled in the spelling; and in so far as the subject is mistaken he believes that he has his own image in front of him; if he knew how to see himself, if he knew, what is the simple truth, that there are only the most deformed relationships in any identifiable fashion between his left-hand side and his right-hand side, he would not dream of identifying himself with the image in the mirror. When, thanks to the effects of the atomic bomb, we will have subjects with a right ear as big as an elephant's ear and, in place of the left ear, a donkey's ear, perhaps the relationships to the specular image will be better authenticated. In fact, many other more accessible and also more interesting conditions would be within our reach. Let us suppose another animal, the crane, with an eye on each side of her skull. It seems to be a mountainous task to know how there can be composed with one another the planes of vision of two eyes in an animal whose eyes are arranged in that way. One does not see why this opens up greater difficulties than for us. Simply, for the crane to have sight of her images, she has to be given two mirrors, and she will run no risk of confusing her left-hand image from her right-hand image.

This function of the specular image in so far as it is referred to the miscognition of what I called above the most radical asymmetry is the one which explains the function of the ego in the neurotic. It is not because he has a more or less twisted ego that the neurotic is subjectively in the critical position which is his, he is in this critical position because of a radically structuring possibility of identifying his demand with the object of the desire of the Other or of identifying his object with the demand of the Other, for its part a properly alluring form of the effect of the signifier on the subject, even though a way out of it is possible precisely when, the next time, I will show you how in another reference of the cut, the

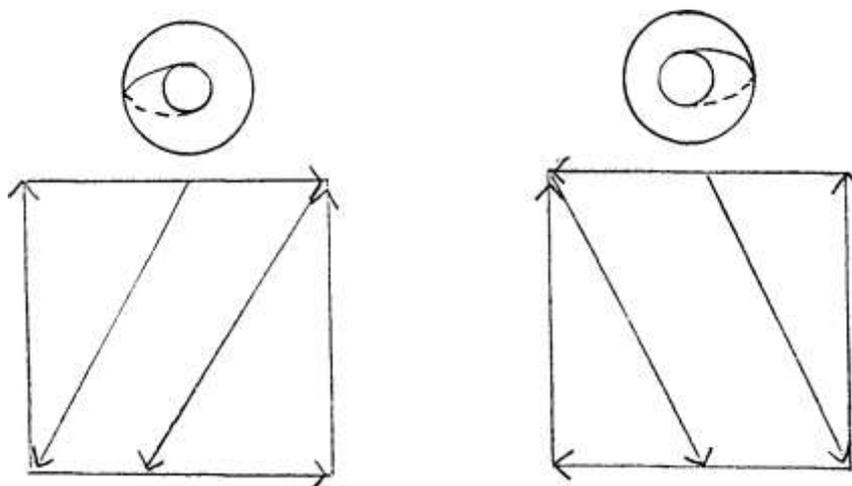
subject qua structured by the signifier can become the cut o itself. But it is precisely what the phantasy of the neurotic does not accede to because he searches for its ways and its paths along an erroneous passage. Not at all that the neurotic does not know very well how to distinguish, like any subject worthy of this name, $i(o)$ from o , because they do not have at all the same value, but what the neurotic seeks, and not without foundation, is to arrive at o through $i(o)$. The path along which the neurotic persists - and this is very tangible in analysing his phantasy - is to get to o by destroying $i(o)$ or by fixing it.

I said first of all "by destroying", because it is the most (14) exemplary. It is the most exemplary; it is the phantasy of the obsessional in so far as it takes on the form of the sadistic phantasy and is not one. The sadistic phantasy as the phenomenological commentators do not fail to support it with all the excessive overflowings which allow them to fix it forever in ridicule, the sadistic phantasy is supposedly the destruction of the Other. And as the phenomenologists are not - let us say "lucky for them!" - authentic sadists but simply have the most common access to the perspectives of neurosis, they find in effect all the appearances necessary to sustain such an explanation. It is enough to take up a sadistic or a Sadian text for this to be refuted: not alone is the object of the sadistic phantasy not destroyed, but it is literally resistant to every trial as I frequently underline for you.

You should clearly understand that I do not even intend getting into here again what is involved in the meaning of the properly Sadian phantasy, as I may probably be able to do it next time. What I want to punctuate here is that what one could call the impotence of the sadistic phantasy of the neurotic reposes entirely on the following: it is that in effect there is indeed a destructive aim in the phantasy of the obsessional, but this destructive aim, as I have just analysed it, has the meaning not at all of the destruction of the other, object of desire but the destruction of the image of the other in the sense that I am situating it for you here, namely that precisely, it is not the image of the other because the other, o , object of desire, as I will show you the next time, has no specular image. There is indeed here a proposition, I agree, which is a little excessive...

I believe it to be not only entirely demonstrable but essential to understand what happens in what I would call the deviations in the neurotic of the function of phantasy. Because whether or not he destroys in a symbolic or imaginary fashion this image, $i(o)$, it is never this that will ever make him authenticate by any subjective cut the object of his desire for the good reason that what he is aiming either to destroy or to support - $i(o)$ - has no relationship for the simple reason of the fundamental asymmetry between $i(o)$, the support, and o , which does not tolerate it. What the neurotic moreover effectively ends up at is the destruction of the desire of the Other. It is indeed why he has gone irremediably astray in the realisation of his own.

But what explains it is the following, namely what makes the neurotic as one might say symbolise something along this path of his of aiming in phantasy at the specular image, is explained by (15) what I am materialising for you here: the asymmetry which has appeared in the relationship of the demand and the object in the subject compared to the demand and the object at the level of the Other, this asymmetry which only appears from the moment where there is properly speaking demand namely already two circuits, if I can express myself in this way, of the signifier and appears to express an asymmetry of the same nature as the one which is supported by the specular image; they have a nature which, as you see, is sufficiently illustrated topologically because here the asymmetry which would be the one that we would call specular would be this with this:



It is from this confusion through which two different asymmetries are found, for the subject, to serve as a support for what is the essential aim of the subject in his being, namely the cut of o , the veritable object of desire where the subject himself is realised, it is in this aim led astray, captured by a structural element which depends on the effect of the signifier itself on the subject that there resides not alone the secret of the effects of neurosis, namely that the relationship of what is called narcissism, the relationship inscribed in the function of the ego is not the true support of the neurosis; but in order that the subject should realise the false analogy, the important thing - even though getting close to, discovering this internal knot is capital in order to orientate us in the neurotic effects - is that it is also the only reference which allows us radically to differentiate the structure of the neurotic from neighbouring structures, namely from those which are called perverse and from those which are psychotic.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 6 June 1962

We are going to continue today to elaborate the function of what one can call the signifier of the cut, or again the interior eight, or again the loop, or again what I called the last time the Polish signifier. I would like to be able to give it a still less significant name in order to try to approach what is purely signifying in it.

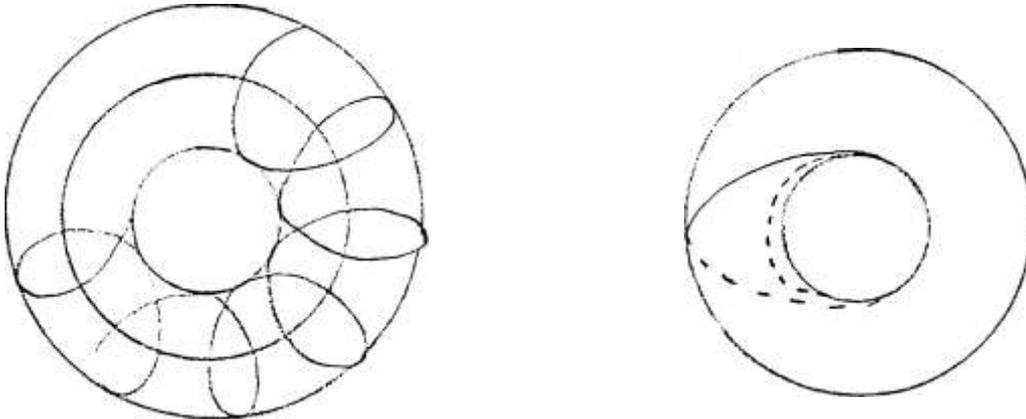
We have advanced onto this terrain as it presented itself, namely with remarkable ambiguity, since as pure line nothing indicates that it recuts itself, as the shape in which I drew it there reminds you, but at the same time leaves open the possibility of this recutting. In short, this signifier does not prejudge in any way the space in which it is situated. Nevertheless in order to make something of it, we pose that it is around this signifier of the cut that there is organised what we are calling the surface, in the sense that we understand it here.

The last time, I reminded you - because it was not the first time that I showed it to you - how the surface of the torus can be constructed around, and only around, a cut, a cut arranged, manipulated in this quadrilateral fashion that the formula expressed by the sequence of an A, of a B, then of an A* and of a B¹, our witnesses respectively in so far as they can be referred to, coupled with the two preceding ones, in an arrangement that we can qualify, in general, by two terms oriented on the one hand, crossed on the other.

I showed you the relationship, what one might call at first sight the exemplary metaphorical relationship, regarding which precisely it is a question of knowing whether this metaphor goes beyond, as one might say, the pure plane of metaphor, the metaphorical relationship, I am saying, that it can take on, of the relationship of the subject to the Other, on condition that (2) in exploring the surface of the torus we perceive that we can put two tori qua linked to one another, into a style of correspondence such that to a particular privileged circle on one of the two, which we have made correspond for analogical reasons to the function of demand, namely this sort of turning circle in the familiar form of the spool which appears to us particularly suitable to symbolise the repetition of demand in so far as it involves this sort of necessity of completing itself, if it is ruled out that it recuts itself, after numerous repetitions, multiplied as we can imagine ad libitum, by

completing this buckling, to have described the circuit, the contour of a void other than the one that it rings, the one which we first distinguished as defining this place of the nothing, the circuit of which, drawn for itself, serves to symbolise for us - in the shape of the other circle topologically defined in the structure of the torus - the object of desire.

For those then who were not there (I know that there are some in this gathering) I illustrate what I have just said by this very simple shape, while repeating that this spool-buckle of demand.

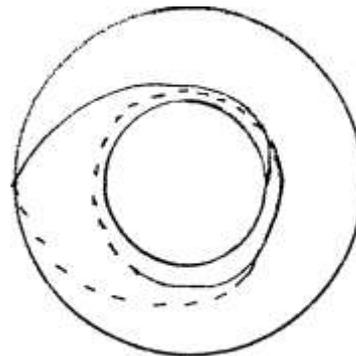


which is found around the constitutive void of the torus, is found to depict what serves us to symbolise the circle of the object of desire, namely all the circles which go around the central hole of the ring.

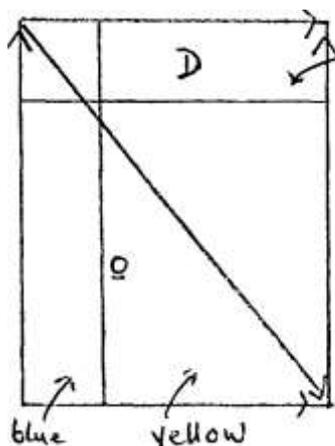
There are therefore two sorts of privileged circles on the torus

- those which are drawn around the central hole.
- and those which go through it.

A circle can have both properties at once. It is precisely what happens with this circle drawn as follows:



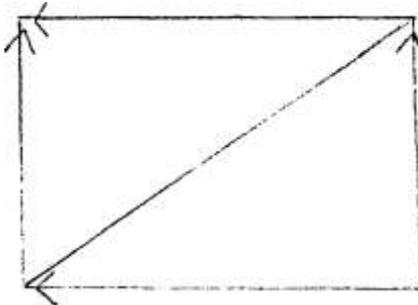
I put it in dots when it goes over to the other side.



(3) On the quadrilateral surface of the fundamental polygon which serves to show in a clear and univocal fashion the structure of the torus, I symbolise here, to use the same colours, from here to here, a circle called the circle of demand, from here to here, a circle called circle o, symbolising the object of desire. And it is this circle here that you see on the first figure, which is here drawn in yellow, representing the oblique circle, which could at the limit serve to symbolise for us, as cut

of the subject, desire itself.

The expressive, symbolic value of the torus on this occasion, is precisely to make us see the difficulty, in so far as we are dealing with the surface of a torus and not another one, of arrangement this yellow circle of desire here, with this blue circle here of the object of desire.



Their relationship is all the less univocal in that the object is not here fixed, determined by anything other than by the place of a nothing which, as one might say, prefigures its eventual place, but in no way allows it to be situated.

Such is the exemplary value of the torus.

You heard the last time that this exemplary value is completed by the fact that by supposing it enchainé, concatenated with another torus in so far as it would symbolise the Other, we see that undoubtedly this - as I told you - can be proved - I left you the job of finding this proof for yourselves in order not to delay - we see that undoubtedly by transferring (a decalquer) in this way the circle of desire projected onto the first torus, onto the torus which is fitted into it, symbolising the locus of the Other, we find a circle oriented in the same fashion.

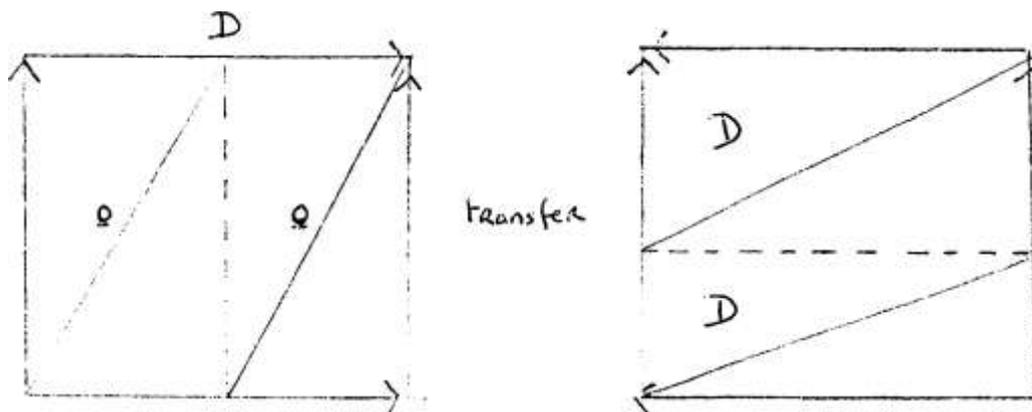
Remember. You have, represented in front of this figure that I will begin again here if it does not appear too fastidious to you, the transfer which is a symmetrical image. We will have then an oblique line, oriented from north to south, which we can call inverted, specular properly speaking.

(4) But the ninety degree swing, corresponding to the interlocking at ninety degrees of the two tori will restore the same obliqueness. In other words, after having effectively taken - these are experiments which are very easy to carry out which have all the value of an experiment - these two tori and having effectively made, by the method of the rotation of one torus inside the other which I designated for you the last time, this transfer, having picked up as I might say the trace of these two circles arbitrarily drawn on the one and determined from then on on the other, you can see, by subsequently comparing them, that they are exactly, down to the circle which sections them, superimposable on one another.

This image then proves itself to be appropriate for representing the formula that the desire of the subject is the desire of the Other.

Nevertheless, I told you, if we suppose, not this simple circle drawn with this property, with this particular topological definition of at once encircling the hole and going through it, but make it go through the hole twice, and circle it once, namely

on the fundamental polygon to present it as follows (drawing), these two points here being equivalent, we have therefore something which, on the transfer, at the level of the Other, is presented according to the following formula:



If you wish, let us say that the completion of two times the circuit, which corresponds to the function of the object and to the transferring (transfert) twice onto the transfer (decalque) on the other torus, of the demand according to the formula of equivalence which is precious for us on this occasion, is to symbolise the fact that in a certain form of subjective structure, the demand of the subject consists in the object of the Other, the object of the subject consists in the demand of the Other. Recutting: then the superimposition of two terms, after the swing, is no longer possible.

After the ninety degree swing (drawing) the cut is this one, (5) which is not superimposed on the preceding shape.

We have recognised in it a correspondence which is already familiar to us, in so far as what we can express about the relationship of the neurotic to the Other in as much as it conditions his structure down to its final term, is precisely this crossed equivalence of the demand of the subject to the object of the other, of the object of the subject to the demand of the other. One senses here in a sort of impasse or at least ambiguity the realisation of the identity of two desires.

This is obviously as abridged as possible as a formula and of course supposes already a familiarity acquired with these references, which presuppose our whole previous discourse.

The question then remaining open, the one that we are going to tackle today, about a structure which allows us to formalise in an exemplary fashion, rich in resources, in suggestions, which gives us a support for what precisely our research points towards, namely the function of the phantasy, it is to this end that we can make use of the particular structure called the cross-cap or the projective plane, in so far as I also gave you already enough pointers for this object to be, if not altogether familiar to you, at least that already you have tried to explore what it represents in terms of exemplary properties.

I apologise therefore for entering, from now on, into an explanation which, for an instant, is going to remain very closely linked to this object of a particular geometry described as topological, not a metric geometry but a topological geometry, with respect to which I already pointed out to you in passing as much as I could the idea you should have of it, so that eventually, after having taken the trouble to follow me in what I am now going to explain to you, you will subsequently be recompensed by what it will allow us to support as a formula concerning the subjective organisation which is the one which interests us, through what it will allow us to exemplify as being the authentic structure of desire in what one could call its central organising function.

Of course, I am not without some reluctance, once again, to be drawing you onto terrains which may not fail to tire you. This is why I will refer for a moment to two terms which happen to be close in my experience and which will give me the occasion - first of all a first reference - to announce to you the imminent (6) appearance of a translation by an eminent person who today does us the honour of his visit, namely M De Waehlens. M De Waehlens has just completed the translation - which one cannot but be very astonished was not done earlier - of Being and Time, Sein und Zeit, at least has brought to its point of completion the first part of a volume which has appeared and you know that it is only the first part of a project whose second part has never come to birth. Therefore in this first part, there are two sections; and the first section has already been already translated by M De Waehlens who did me the great honour, the favour, of sending it to me, which allowed me to get to know for myself this first part - still only the half of it - and I must say, with infinite pleasure, a pleasure that is going to allow me to offer myself another one: namely finally, in this place, something that has weighed on my heart for a long time and that I always spared myself from making a public profession of, because in truth, given the reputation of this work which I do not believe many people here have read, it might have looked like a provocation.

It is the following: it is that there are few texts more clear, indeed of a concrete and direct clarity and simplicity - I do not know what qualification I must invent to add a supplementary dimension to what is obvious - than the texts of Heidegger. It is not because what M Sartre has made of it is effectively rather difficult to read that this takes anything from the fact that this text here of Heidegger - I am not saying: all the others - is a text which carries in itself this sort of superabundance of clarity which renders it really accessible, without any difficulty, to any intelligence not intoxicated by a previous philosophical teaching.

I can tell you this now, because you will very soon have the opportunity of seeing it thanks to M De Waehlens¹ translation: you will see the degree to which it is so.

The second remark is this one, which you can confirm at the same

time: assertions are made, in the bizarre hack writings of a professional gossip that my teaching is neo-Heideggerian. This was said with injurious intent. The person probably put in a "neo" out of a certain prudence; as she knew neither what Heideggerian meant nor what my teaching meant either, this protected her from a certain number of refutations that this teaching of mine has really nothing neo nor Heideggerian about it, despite the great reverence I have for the teaching of (7) Heidegger.

The third remark is linked to a second reference, namely that something is going to come out - you are going to be spoiled in a little while - which is at least as important - indeed importance is not measured in different domains by centimetres - which is very important also let us say: it is the volume - which is not yet in the bookshops, I have been told, by Claude Lévi-Strauss, called La pensée sauvage.

It has appeared, you tell me. I hope that you have already begun to amuse yourselves. Because of the preoccupations that our seminar imposes on me, I have not got very far in it, but I read the magisterial inaugural pages, where Claude Lévi-Strauss enters into the interpretation of what he calls savage thinking, which must be understood - as, I think, his interview in Le Figaro has already informed you - not as the thinking of savages but as one might say the savage state of thinking, let us say: thinking in so far as it functions well, effectively, with all the characteristics of thought, without having taken on the form of scientific thought, of modern scientific thought with its status. And Claude Lévi-Strauss shows us that it is quite impossible to make here such a radical cut because the thinking which has not yet conquered its scientific status is already quite appropriate for carrying certain scientific effects.

Such, at least, is his apparent aim at the beginning, and singularly he takes as an example to illustrate what he means to say about it, about savage thinking, something where no doubt he intends to connect this something common there is between the thinking let us say as, he underlines it, as it has borne fundamental fruit starting from the moment itself which one cannot qualify as absolutely ahistorical since he specifies it: thinking starting from the neolithic era which gives, he tells us again, all its foundations to our sense of place in the world. To illustrate, as I might say, still functioning within our range, he finds nothing other and nothing better than to exemplify in a form which is no doubt not unique, but privileged by his demonstration under the form of what he calls bricolage.

This passage has all the brilliance that we know him to be capable of, the originality proper to this sort of abruptness, of novelty, of something which tips over and upsets banally accepted perspectives, and it is a piece which undoubtedly is very suggestive.

But it appeared precisely particularly suggestive for me, after (8) the re-reading that I had just carried out, thanks to M De

Waehlens, of Heideggerian themes, precisely in so far as he takes as an example in his research for the status, as one might say, of knowledge in so far as it can be established in an approach which to establish itself claims to make its way from the interrogation about what he calls "being there", namely at once the most veiled and the most immediate form of a certain type of being, the fact of being which is the one peculiar to the human being, one cannot fail to be struck, even though probably the remark would revolt both one and the other of these authors, by the surprising identity of the way both of them advance.

I mean that what Heidegger encounters first of all in this research, is a certain relationship of this being there to a being which is defined as utensil, as tool, as this something that one has at hand to use the term that he uses, as Zuhandenheit for what is to hand.

Such is the first form of the link, not to the world, but to being, that Heidegger outlines for us. And it is only starting from there, namely as one might say, in the implications, the possibility of such a relationship, that he is going, he says, to give its proper status to what constitutes the first great pivot of his analysis: the function of being in its relationship to time, namely the Weltlichkeit which M De Waehlens has translated by "les mondanités", namely the constitution in a way of the preliminary world, preliminary at this level of the being there which is not yet detached inside the being, these sorts of being that we could consider as purely and simply subsisting by themselves.

The world is something other than the totality, the englobing of all these beings which exist, subsist through themselves with which we have to deal at the level of this conception of the world which appears to us so immediately natural - and with good reason - because it is what we call nature. The anteriority of the constitution of this worldliness with respect to the moment that we can consider it as nature, this is the interval that Heidegger preserves by his analysis.

This primitive utensil-like relationship prefiguring the Umwelt still anterior to the environment which is only constituted, with respect to it, secondarily, this is the approach of Heidegger and it is exactly the same - I do not believe that I am saying anything here which might be taken as a critique which certainly, after everything that I know about the thinking and the statements of Claude Lévi-Strauss, might appear to us indeed to be the approach most opposed to his own in so far as the status (9) he gives to ethnographic research is supposed to be produced only in a position of aversion with respect to the metaphysical or even the ultra-metaphysical research of Heidegger - nevertheless it is indeed the same that we find in the first step by which Claude Lévi-Strauss wants to introduce us to savage thinking in the form of this bricolage which is nothing other than the same analysis, simply in different terms, a barely modified illumination, a name which is no doubt distinct from this same utensil-like relationship as being what both of them

consider as anterior, as primordial with respect to this sort of structured access which is ours with respect to the field of scientific investigation, in so far as it allows it to be distinguished as founded on an articulation of the objectiveness (l'objectité) which is supposed to be in a way autonomous, independent of what is properly speaking our existence and that we no longer keep with it anything but this so-called subject-object relationship which is this point at which there is resumed today everything that we can articulate about epistemology.

Well then let us say, to fix it once and for all, how our enterprise here in so far as it is based on analytic experience is distinct as compared to both one and the other of these investigations whose parallel character I have just shown you here. The fact is that we also are searching here for this status, as one might say, which is anterior to the classical access of the status of the object, entirely concentrated in the subject-object opposition. And we search for it where? In this something which, whatever may be the obvious character of approach, of attraction in the thinking of a Heidegger or of a Claude Levi-Strauss, is well and truly distinct from it because neither one nor the other names as such this object as object of desire.

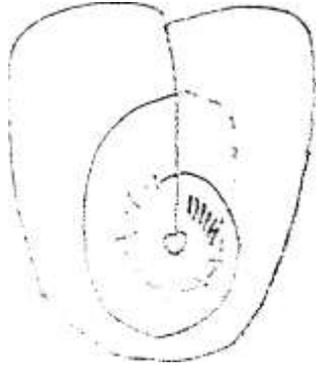
The primordial status of the object for let us say in any case analytic thinking cannot be and could not be anything other than the object of desire. All the confusions with which analytic theory has been embarrassed up to now are the consequences of the following: of an attempt, of more than one attempt, of all the possible modes of attempt to reduce what is imposed on us, namely this search for the status of the object of desire, to reduce it to already known references of which the simplest and the most common is that of the status of the object of science in so far as a philosophising epistemology organises it in the final and radical opposition of subject-object in so far as an interpretation more or less weakened by the nuances of phenomenological research may at the limit speak about it as the object of desire.

(10) This status of the object of desire as such still remains eluded in all the forms of analytic theory articulated up to now; and what we are looking for here is precisely to give it its proper status. It is along this line that there is situated the perspective that I am pursuing before you for the moment.

Here are the figures in which today I am going to try to make you notice what interests us in this surface structure whose privileged properties are designed to retain us as a structuring support of this relationship of the subject to the object of desire, in so far as it is situated as supporting everything that we can articulate at whatever level it may be of analytical experience, in other words as this structure that we call the fundamental phantasy.

For those who were not at the last seminar, I recall this shape

here (sketch) drawn in white: this is what we call the cross-cap.

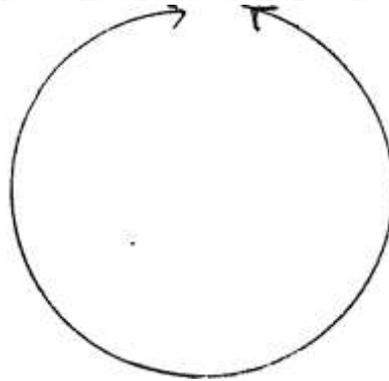


or to be more precise - since as I have told you, a certain ambiguity remains on the usage of this term cross-cap -: the projective plane. As its drawing here in white chalk is not enough, for those who have not yet grasped it, to represent for you what it is, I am going to try to make you imagine it by describing it to you as if this surface was constituted here as a bladder.

To be still more clear, I am going to start at the base. Imagine that you have two hoops like those of a wolf-trap (sketch) this is what is going to serve to represent the cut for us.

If we orientate the two circles of the wolf-trap in the same direction, this means that we are simply going to close them

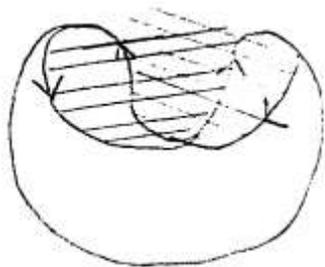
(11) onto one another. If you have a bladder, precisely if you blow into it and if you close the wolf trap, it is all the same within the reach of elementary imaginings to see that you are going to make a sphere.



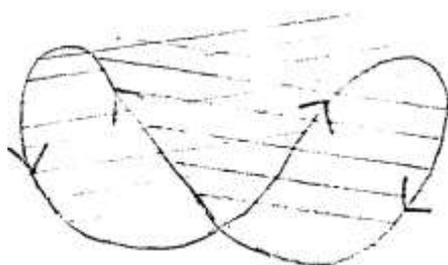
If blowing does not seem to you to be enough, fill it with water until you have obtained this shape here, close the two half-circles of the wolf-trap, and you have a half-full or a half-empty sphere.

I already explained to you how instead of doing that one can make a torus. This is what a torus is: you put the two corners of the handkerchief connected in the air like that and the two others underneath like that, and that is enough to make a torus. The essential of the torus is there, because you have here the central hole and here the circular void around which turns the circuit of the demand. This is what the fundamental polygon of the torus already illustrated for you. A torus is not at all like a sphere. Naturally a cross-cap is not at all like a sphere either.

Here you have the cross-cap (sketch). You ought to imagine it as being, as regards this lower half, realised like half of what you



did earlier with the bladder when you filled it with water or with your breath; in the upper part what is anterior here will come to traverse everything that is continuous, what is here posterior. The two faces cross one another, give the appearance of penetrating one another; because the conventions concerning surfaces are free - because do not forget that we are only considering them as surfaces, that we can say that no doubt the properties of space as we imagine it force us, in the representation, to represent them as penetrating one another - but it is enough that we should take no account of this line of intersection at any of the moments of our treatment of this surface, in order for everything to happen



as if we held it to be nothing. It is not a hindrance. It is nothing but something that we are forced to represent for ourselves because we want to represent this surface here as a line of penetration. But this line, as one might say, has no privilege in the establishment of the surface. You will say to me: "What does what you are saying mean?" X in the audience: "Does it mean that you are admitting, with Kant's transcendental aesthetics the fundamental constitution of space in three dimensions, since you tell us that to present things here you are forced to pass by way of something which in the representation is in some way awkward?" Of course, in a certain way, yes. Everyone who articulates anything about the topology of surfaces as such starts - it is the abc of the question - from this distinction between what one can call the intrinsic properties of the surface and the extrinsic properties. They will tell us that everything they are going to articulate, determine, concerning the functioning of surfaces thus defined, is to be distinguished from what happens - as they literally express it - when one plunges the aforesaid surface into space, specifically in the present case in three dimensions.

This is the fundamental distinction that I too have reminded you of incessantly in order to tell you that we should not consider the ring, the torus as a solid and, that when I speak about the void which is central, about the circumference of the ring, as well as of the hole which is as we might say axial to it, these are terms that must be taken within the context that we do not have to make them function in so far as we are aiming purely and simply at the surface.

It nevertheless remains true that it is in so far, as the topologists put it, as we plunge into a space that we can leave

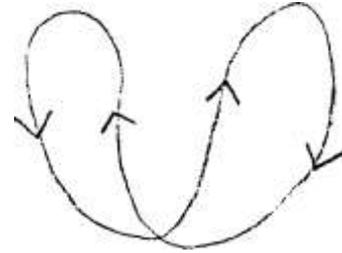
at the state of x - we are not obliged to prejudge the number of dimensions that structure it - that we can highlight one or other of the intrinsic properties that are involved in a surface.

And the proof is precisely the following: it is that we will have no difficulty in representing the torus in the three dimensional space which is intuitively familiar to us, while for this one we will all the same have a certain amount of trouble because we will have to add on to it the little note of all sorts of reservations concerning what we have to read when we try to represent this surface in this space.

This is what will allow us to pose precisely the question of the (13) structure of a space in so far as it admits or it does not admit our surfaces as we have previously constituted them.

With these reservations, I would ask you now to pursue and to consider what I have to teach you about this surface precisely in so far as it is in connection with its representation in space that I am going to try to highlight for you certain of its characteristics, which are no less intrinsic for all that.

Because if I have already eliminated the value that we can give to this line, the line of penetration, whose detail you see illustrated here - this is how we can represent it (see the sketch) - you see that simply by the way in which I, for my part already drew it on the blackboard, there is here something which poses a question.

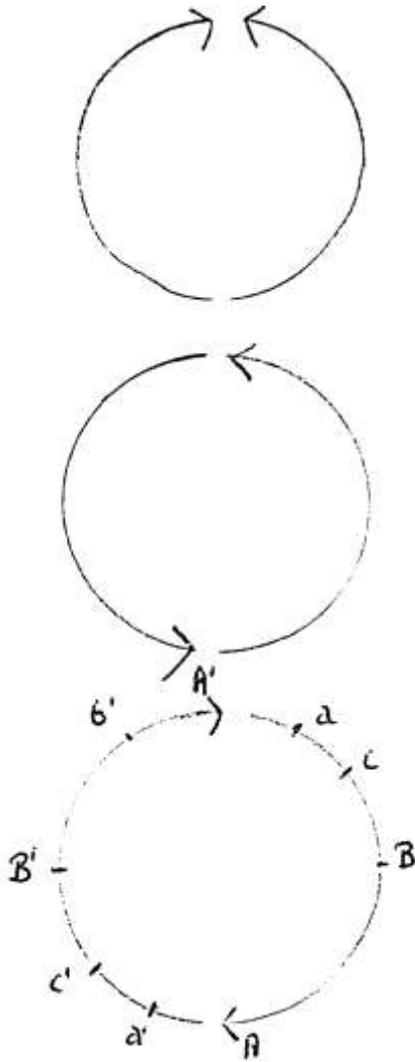


Is the value of the point which is here a value that we can in a way efface like the value of this line? Is this point also for its part something which only depends on the necessity of representation in three-dimensional space? I am telling you this right away to clarify my account a little in advance: this point, as regards its function, cannot be eliminated, at least at a certain level of speculation about the surface, a level which is not simply defined by the existence of three-dimensional space.

In effect, what does the construction of this surface called the cross-cap signify radically, in so far as it is organised starting from the cut that I represented for you earlier as a wolf-trap that closes?

Nothing more simple than to see that this wolf-trap must be bi-partite, when the sphere is involved, because it is necessary that it should fold back on itself somewhere, that its two halves are orientated in the same direction: the terminus a quo will be distinguished therefore from the terminus ad quod in as much as they must overlap lengthways.

We can say that here (sketch) we have the way in which there function with respect to one another the two halves of the edge



that must be connected in order to constitute a projective (14) plane. Here (sketch) they are oriented in a contrary direction, which means that a point situated at this place, point a for example, will correspond, will be identical, equivalent, to a point situated at this place in a* diametrically opposite, that another point b situated here for example will refer to another point b^1 situated diametrically.

Does this not encourage us to think that given this antipodal relationship of the points oriented on this circuit in a continuous fashion always in the same direction, no point will be privileged and that, whatever may be our difficulty in intuiting what is involved, we have simply to think about this circular antipodal relationship as a sort of radiating intercrossing as one might say, concentrating the exchange of one point with the opposite point of the single edge of this hole, and in concentrating it, as one might say, around a vast central interlacing which escapes our thinking and which does not allow

us in any way therefore to give a satisfactory representation of

Nevertheless what justifies things being represented in this way, is that there is something that should not be forgotten: it is that it is not a question of metric figures, namely that it is not the distance between a and A, and from a' to A' which regulates the point by point correspondence which allows us to construct the surface by organising the cut in this way, but it is uniquely the relative position of points, in other words in a set of three points which are situated on the half - admit the usage of the term half that I make use of on this occasion, which is already represented by the analogical reference that I made here of two halves of an edge - it is in so far as on this edge, on this line, as on every line, a point can be defined as being between two others that a point c for example is going to be able to find its correspondent in the point c' of the other side...

But, if we do not have a point of origin, an archen point, "ten archèn o ti kài lalb umin" Saint John VIII 25, as it is expressed in the gospel something which lends itself to so many difficulties in translation that a thinker from Franche-Comte (15) could say to me: "That's just like you: the only passage in

the gospel on which nobody can agree is the one you took as an epigraph for a section of your Rome report". Archen, therefore the beginning, if there are not these starting points somewhere, it is impossible to define a point as being between two others, because c and c' are moreover between these two others a and B if there is no AA* to locate in a univocal fashion what is happening in each segment.

It is therefore reasons other than the possibility of representing them in space that make it necessary for us to define a point of origin for this intersecting exchange which constitutes the surface of a projective plane between an edge which it is necessary for us, despite the fact that it turns always in the same direction, to divide in two.

This may appear extremely tiresome for you, but you are going to see that it is going to take on a greater and greater interest.

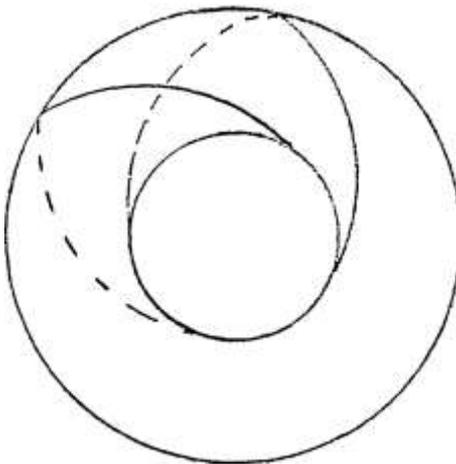
I announce to you right away what I intend to say.

I intend to say that this archen point of the origin has an altogether privileged structure, that it is it, it is its presence, which guarantees for the interior loop of our Polish signifier, a status which is altogether special to it.

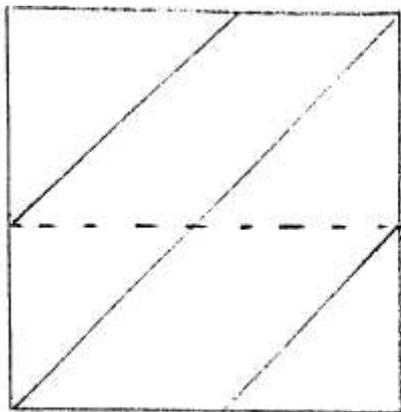
In effect, so as not to make you wait any longer, I apply this signifier, called the interior eight, onto the surface of the cross-cap. We will see afterwards what that means. Observe all the same that to apply it in this way means that this line that our interior eight outlines finds itself here turning twice around this privileged point (sketch).

Here, make an effort of imagination. I am quite happy to illustrate it for you by something; look at what comes out of this (sketch).

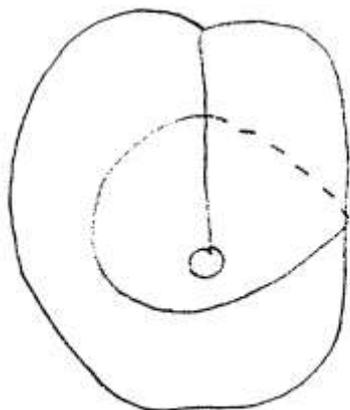
You have here, if you wish, the bulge of the lower half, the bulge of the left pincer of the lobster's foot, the bulge of the right pincer.



(16) Here this goes into the other one, it goes to the other side. What does that mean? That means that you have something like a plane which rolls up like that on itself, then which at a moment traverses itself. So that it behaves like two kinds of shutter or flapping wings superimposed here which find themselves in short isolated by the cut from the lower swelling, and at the upper level these two wings cross one another. It is not too unimaginable.



If you had interested yourselves as long as I have in this object, obviously there would be little surprising in this. Because in fact the privilege this double cut has is very interesting. It is very interesting in the sense that, as regards the torus, I already showed you, if you make a cut, it is transformed into a strip; if you make a second one, which traverses the first, this does not for all that fragment it, this is what allows you to spread it out like a fine square. If you make two cuts which do not intersect, on the torus - try to imagine that - then you would necessarily make two parts of it.



Here, on the cross-cap, with a simple cut like the one which can be drawn here thus (sketch) will open up this surface. Amuse yourself by making a drawing of it, it will be a very good intellectual exercise to know what happens at that moment. You cut it in two, you do not make two

open the surface, you do not parts of it.

If you make any other cut whatsoever which intersects itself or (17) does not intersect itself, you divide it.

What is paradoxical and interesting, is that in short it is always only a question of a single cut here and that nevertheless, by simply making it turn twice around the privileged point, you divide the surface.

It is not the same at all on a torus. On a torus, if you turn around the central hole as often as you wish, you will never obtain anything but a lengthening in a way of the strip, but you will not divide it for all that.

This, in order to make you notice that we are touching here, no doubt, something interesting about the function of this surface.

There is moreover something which is no less interesting: it is that this double circuit, with this result, is something that you can only repeat one more time; if you make a triple circuit, you will be led to draw on the surface something which will indefinitely repeat itself like the loops that you draw on the torus, when you engage in this spooling operation about which I spoke to you at the beginning, except for the fact that here the line will never connect up with itself, will never bite its own tail.

The privileged value of this double circuit is therefore sufficiently guaranteed by these two properties.

Let us consider now the surface that this double circuit isolates on the projective plane. I am going to point out certain properties of it for you.

First of all, it is what we can call a surface - let us call it that, for rapidity, between ourselves, as one might say, because I am going to remind you what that means -; it is a left-handed surface, like a left-handed body, like anything at all that we may define like that in space. I am not using it to oppose it to the right, I am using it to define the following, which you ought to know well: it is that if you want to define the rolling up of a snail who, as you know, is privileged dextrogyre or levogyre, it does not matter, it depends how you define one or other of them - you will find this winding is the same whether you look at the snail from the side of his head or whether you turn him around to look at it from the side of the place where there is a hollow.

In other words, it is by turning over the cross-cap here in order to see it from the other side, if we define here the rotation (18) from left to right by distancing ourselves from the central point, you will see that it always turns in the same direction on the other side, figure B.

This is the property of all bodies which are asymmetrical. It is therefore an asymmetry which is fundamental to the shape of this surface that is involved.

As proof, the fact is that you have underneath something which is the image of this surface defined in this way on our double loop, in the mirror. Here it is. We should expect that, as in any asymmetrical body, the image in the mirror is not superimposable on it, just as our image in the mirror, with regard to us who are not symmetrical despite what we think, is not superimposed at all on our proper support. If we have a beauty spot on the right cheek, this beauty spot will be on the left cheek of the image in the mirror.

Nevertheless, the property of this surface is such that, as you see, it is enough to raise this loop here a little - which is legitimate - to make it pass over the other one, since the two planes do not really traverse one another, in order that you should have an image (3) absolutely identical to and therefore superimposable on the first one, the one with which we started (1). Figure C.

You see what is happening: lift this very gently, progressively up to here, and see what is going to happen, namely that the occultation of this little part in dots situated here is the identical realisation of what is in the primary image.

This serves to illustrate for us this property which I told you was that of o qua object of desire, of being this something which

is at once orientable and undoubtedly very oriented, but which is not, if I can express myself in this way specularisable.

At this radical level which constitutes the subject in his dependence with respect to the object of desire, the function i of o , the specular function, loses its hold as one might say.

And all of this is determined by what?

By something which is precisely this point (central point) in so far as it belongs to this surface.

(20) To clarify immediately what I mean, I will tell you that it is in articulating the function of this point that we will be able to find all sorts of auspicious formulae which allow us to conceive the function of the phallus at the centre of the constitution of the object of desire. It is for this reason that it is worth our trouble to continue to interest ourselves in the structure of this point.

I must pause for a moment to show you what is the true function of this point, in so far as it is the key to the structure, of the surface defined in this way, cut out by our cut on the projective plane. This is something that is going to demand from you of course, a little more patience.

What is the function of this point?

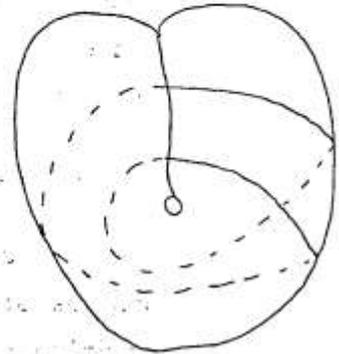
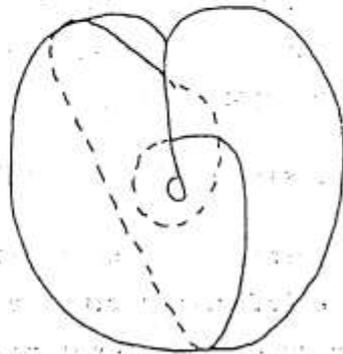
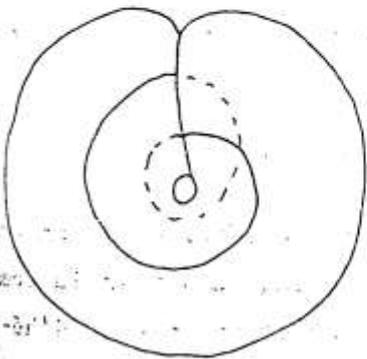
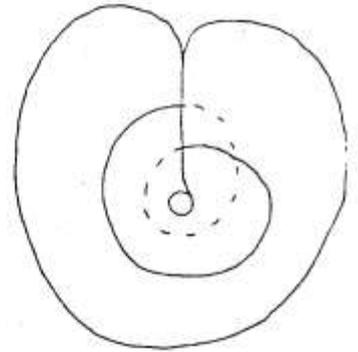
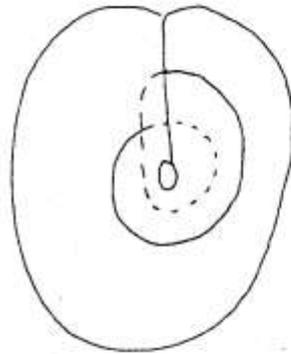
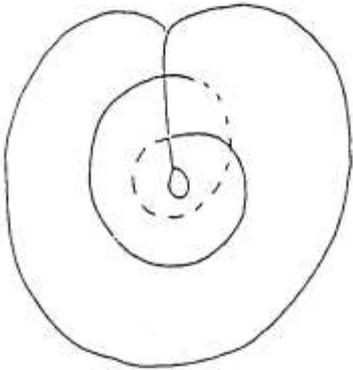
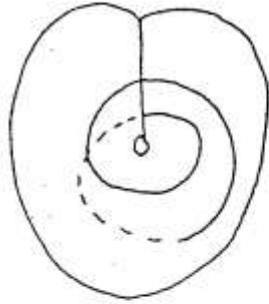
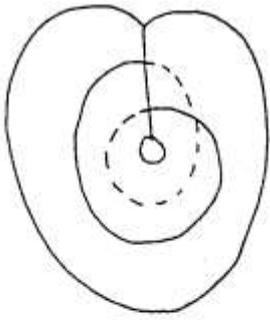
What is there, at this moment at which we pause, is manifest, is that it is in one of the two parts by which the projective plane is divided by the double cut. It belongs to this part which is detached, it does not belong to the part which remains. (Figure D).

Since it seems that you were capable earlier - I must all the same infer this from the fact that no murmur of protestation was raised - of conceiving how this figure can pass to this one by a simple legitimate displacement at the level of the cut, you are going, I think, to be just as capable of making the mental effort of seeing what happens if, on the one hand, we are going to make this cut break through the horizon of the lower cul de sac of the surface by making it pass over therefore to the other side, as my yellow arrow indicates and if we also make breakthrough to the upper part of the loop the horizon of what is on top of the cross-cap. (Figure D).

This leads us without difficulty to the following figure.

The passage to the last one is a little bit more difficult to conceive of, not for the lower loop as you see, but for the upper loop in so far as you may perhaps have a moment of hesitation about what happens at the moment of breaking through what is presented here as the extremity of the line of penetration.

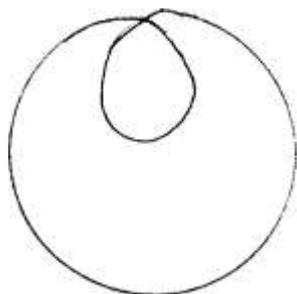
If you reflect on it a little, you will see that if it is from the other side that the cut is brought to break through this line



of penetration, obviously it will present itself like that, namely, as it is on the other side, it will be dotted on this side, and it will be unbroken because according to our convention (21) what is dotted is seen by transparence.

Nothing in the structure of the surface allows us to distinguish the value of these cuts 1 and 2, therefore of those at which we culminate here. For the eye, they present themselves as both entering on the same side of the line of penetration.

Is it very simple for the eye? Surely not. Because this difference that there is between, for the cut to enter from two different sides (1) or to enter by the same side (3), is something which ought all the same to be signaled in the result, on the figure. And moreover this is quite tangible. If you reflect on what it is, you will easily recognise what from now on is cut out on this surface:



first of all, it is the same thing as our signifier; what is more in the way in which it cuts out a surface, it cuts out a surface which you sense very well - you only have to look at the figure - is a strip, a strip which has no edge. I already showed you what it is: it is a Mobius surface.

Now, the properties of a Mobius surface are properties completely different to those of this little rotating surface whose properties I showed you earlier by turning it, by aiming at it, by transforming it and by telling you finally that this is what interests us.

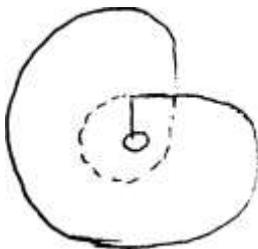
This little conjuring trick has obviously a reason which is not hard to find. Its interest is simply to show you that this cut always divides the surface into the two parts, one of which preserves the point involved on its inside, and the other which no longer has it.

This other part which is just as present there (1) as in the terminal figure (3), is a Mobius surface. The double cut always divides the surface called the cross-cap in two: this something that we are interesting ourselves in and which I am going to make (22) the support for you of the explanation of the relationship of \mathbb{Z} with \mathbb{O} in the phantasy, and, on the other side a Mobius surface.

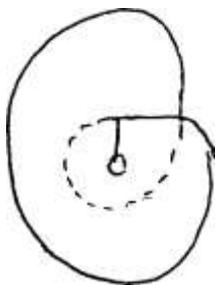
What is the first thing that I made you put your finger on when I made you a present of these five or six little Mobius surfaces which I launched through the audience?

It is that the Mobius surface, for its part, in the sense that I understood it earlier, is irreducibly left-handed. Whatever modification you may make it undergo, you can never superimpose on it its image in the mirror.

Here therefore is the function of this cut and what it shows to be exemplary. It is such that, dividing a certain surface in a privileged fashion, a surface whose nature and function are completely enigmatic to us, because we can scarcely situate it in space, it makes appear privileged functions on the one hand, which are those which I called above being specularisable, namely involving its irreducibility to the specular image, and, on the other hand, a surface which, while presenting all the privileges of a surface for its part oriented, is not specularised. Because notice carefully that one cannot say of this surface, as one can about a Mobius surface, that an infinitely flat being moving along it finds itself all of a sudden on this surface on its own reverse side: each face is well and truly separated from the other in this:



this property, of course, is something which leaves open an enigma; because it is not so simple, all the less simple that the total surface - it is quite obvious, is only reconstitutable, and immediately reconstitutable, if we start from this:



(23) It is necessary therefore that the most fundamental properties of the surface be preserved somewhere, despite its more rational appearance than that of the other, in the surface.

It is quite clear that they are preserved at the level of the point. If the passage which in the total figure always makes it possible for an infinitely flat traveller to find himself by an excessively short path at a point which is its own proper reverse

- I am saying: on the total surface - if it is no longer possible at the level of the central surface, fragmented, divided by the signifier of the double loop, it is because very precisely something of this is preserved at the level of the point.

Except that precisely for this point to function as this point, it has this privilege of being precisely unsurmountable, you make vanish, as one might say, the whole structure of the surface.

As you see, I have not been able yet to give its full development to what I have just said about this point. If you reflect on it, you will be able, before the next time to find it yourselves.

Time is passing, and it is indeed here that I am forced to leave you. I apologise for the aridity of what I was led to produce before you today, because of the very complexity, even though it is only an extraordinarily punctual complexity, it must be admitted. This is what I will take up the next time.

I come back therefore to what I said at the beginning: the fact that I could only get to this point of my account means that next Wednesday's seminar - tell those who have received the next announcement - will be held in order not to leave too much space, too much of an interval between these two seminars, because this space could be harmful for the continuation of our explanation.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 13 June 1962

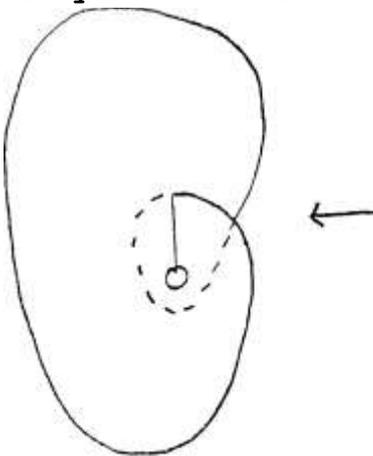
Here are three figures. Figure 1 corresponds to the simple cut in as far as the projective plane cannot tolerate more than one without being divided. This one here is not divided, it opens out. This opening is interesting to show in this form, because it allows you to visualise, to materialise the function of the point.

Figure 2 will help you to understand the other one. It is a matter of knowing what happens when the cut designated here has opened out the surface. Of course, here it is a matter of a description of the surface linked to what are called its extrinsic relationships, namely the surface in so far as we are trying to insert it into a three-dimensional space. But I told you that this distinction between the intrinsic properties of the surface and its extrinsic properties was not as radical as people with an eye for formalism sometimes insist, because it is precisely in connection with its being plunged into space, as it is put, that certain intrinsic properties of the surface appear with all their consequences. I am only pointing out the problem to you. Hence what I am going to tell you in effect about the projective plane, the privileged place that will be occupied in it by the point, what we will call the point, which is here depicted in this cross-cap, here the terminal point of the line, the pseudo-penetration of the surface onto itself. You see the function of this point in this open shape of the same object described in figure 1. If you open it along the cut, what you are going to see appearing is a bottom which is below, that of the half-sphere. Above, it is the plane of this anterior wall in so far as it continues into a posterior wall, after having penetrated the plane which for its part is, as one might say, symmetrical in the composition of this object. Why do you see it stripped bare in this way up to the top? Because once the cut has been made, since these two planes which cross one another, like this, at the level of the line of penetration, do not really cross one another, it is not a real penetration that is involved, but a penetration which is required by the projection into space of the surface we are dealing with. We can, at our whim, once a cut has dissolved the continuity of the surface, lift up one of these planes across the other since moreover not only is it not important to know at what level they traverse one another, what points correspond in the traversing, but on the contrary it is good not to take into account deliberately this coincidence of levels of points in so far as the penetration may render them, at

certain moments of reasoning, superimposable. On the contrary, it would be well to remark that they are not. The anterior plane of figure 1, which passes from the other side found itself lowered towards the point that we now call from now on quite simply the point, while above we see the following being produced: a line which goes to the top of the object and which, behind, passes to the other side. When we carry out a crossing (traverse'e) on this figure, we obtain something which presents itself as an open hollow towards the front. The trait in dots is going to pass behind this sort of ear and finds an exit on the other side, namely the cut between this edge here and that which, from the other side, is symmetrical to this sort of basket, but behind. It must be considered that behind there is a way out.

Here is figure 3 which is an intermediate figure. Here you see again the interlacing on the upper part of the anterior plane, which becomes posterior and subsequently returns. And as I already pointed out to you, you can lift that up indefinitely. This indeed is what is produced at the extreme level. It is the same thing as this edge here that you find described in figure 1. This part which I designate in figure 1 we are going to call A. This is what is maintained at this place in the figure. The continuity of this edge is made with the one which, behind the sort of oblique surface thus separated out, folds itself back once you have begun to let the whole lot go. So that if one stuck them together again this would rejoin itself like in figure 3. This is why I indicated it in blue on my drawing. The blue is, in short, all that the cut itself perpetuates.

What results from it? The fact is that you have a hollow, a pocket into which you can introduce something. If you pass your hand through it, it passes behind this ear which is in continuity from the front with the surface: what you encounter behind is a (3) surface which corresponds to the bottom of the basket but separated from what remains on the right, namely this surface which comes forward here, and which folds itself back to figure 2. In following a path like that one you have an unbroken arrow, then one in dots because it passes behind the ear which corresponds to A. It comes out here because it is the part of the cut which is behind. It is the part that I can designate here by B. The ear which is outlined here by the limits of this dotted line in figure 2 could be on the other side. This possibility of two ears, is what you will discover when you have realised the double cut and when you isolate in the cross-cap something which is fabricated here. What you see in this central piece of figure 4 isolated in this way, is in short a plane such that you now efface the rest of the object, so that you will no longer have to put in the dots here nor even the traversal: there remains only the central piece.



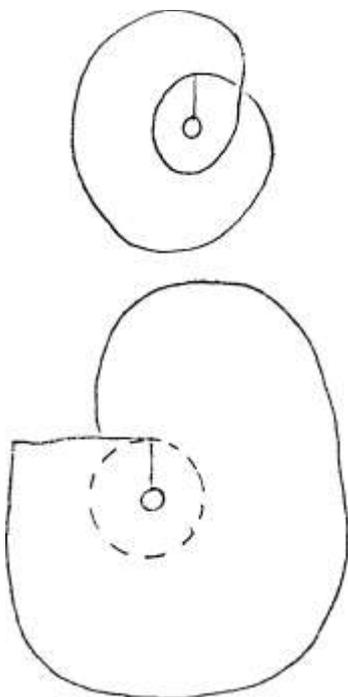
What do you have then? You can easily imagine for yourselves

with a sort of plane which by going out of true comes, at a moment, to recut itself by means of a line which then passes behind. You have therefore, here also, two ears, a lamella in front, a lamella behind. And the plane traverses itself according to a line strictly limited by a point. It could be that this point was placed just at the extremity of the posterior ear, this would be, for the plane, a way of recutting itself which would be just as interesting from certain points of view since it is what I realised in figure 5 to show you earlier the proper way to consider the structure of this point.

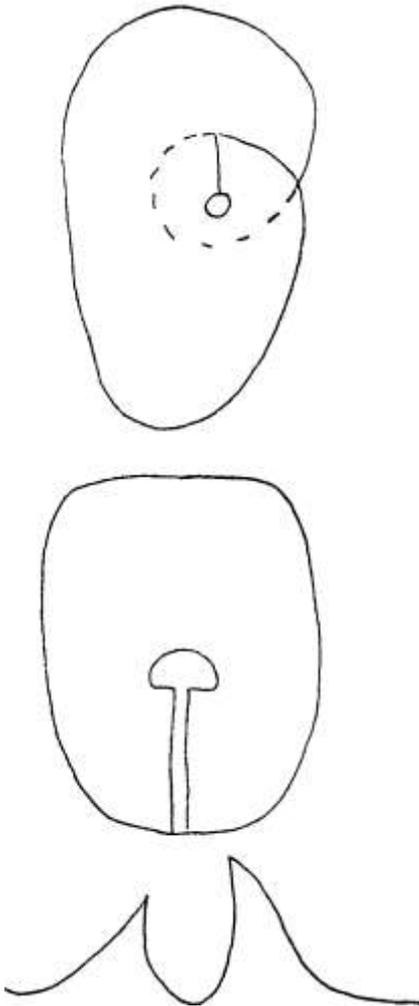
I am aware personally that you have already become disturbed about the function of this point because one day you posed me the question in private of why I and the other authors always represent it in this form, indicating at the centre a sort of little hole. It is quite certain that this little hole gives rise to reflections. And it is precisely on it that we are going to insist, because it gives the quite particular structure of this point which is not a point like the others. This is what I (4) am going to be led to explain now.

Its rather oblique, distorted shape is amusing, because the analogy between the helix, the antelix and even the lobule, and the shape of this cut projective plane is striking, if one considers that one can rediscover this shape which fundamentally is drawn towards the shape of the Möbius strip.

It is found much more simplified in what I once called the arum or again the donkey's ear. This is done only to draw your attention to the obvious fact that nature seems in a certain way drawn by its structures, and in particularly significant organs, those of the orifices of the body which are in a way left to one side, distinct from the analytic dialectic. To these orifices of the body, when they show this sort of resemblance, could be linked a sort of consideration about the attachment of this point to Naturwissenschaft, which ought indeed to relate to it, to be reflected in it if it has effectively some value.



The striking analogy between many of these drawings that I have made with the figures that you find on every page of books on embryology also deserves to retain our attention. When you consider what happens, scarcely has the stage of the germinative plaque been gone through in serpents' or fishes' eggs - in so far as it is what is closest, according to an examination which is not absolutely complete in the present state of science, to the development of the human egg - you find something striking, it is the appearance on this germinative plaque, at a given moment, of what is called the primitive line which also terminates at a point, Hensen's node, which is a quite significant and really



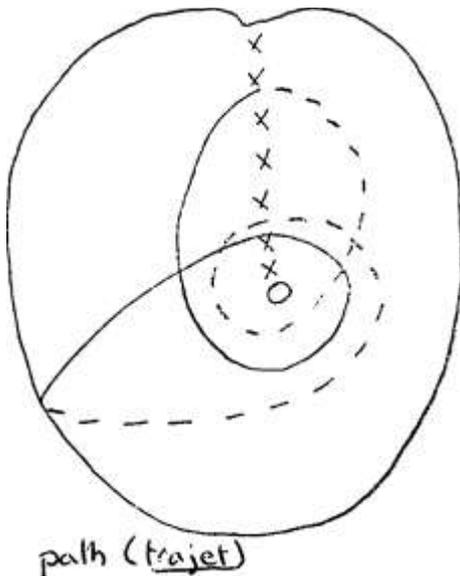
problematic point in its formation in so far as it is linked by a sort of correlation to the formation of the neural tube. It comes in a way to meet it by a refolding process of the ectoderm: it is, as you cannot fail to know, something which gives a good idea of the formation of a torus, since at a certain stage this neural tube remains open like a trumpet on two sides. On the contrary the formation of the cordal canal which is produced at the level of this Hensen's node, with a way of propagating itself laterally, gives the idea that there is produced here a process of interlacing, whose morphological aspect cannot fail to recall the structure of the projective plane, especially if one thinks that the process which is realised of this point called the Hensen node, is in a way a regressive process, according as development advances, it is in a line, in a posterior withdrawal of Hensen's node that there is completed this function of the primitive line, and that here there is produced this opening towards the front, towards the endoblast, of this canal which in sauropsidians presents itself as homologous, without being altogether identifiable to the neuro-enteric canal

that is found in the batrachia, namely what puts the terminal part of the digestive tube and the terminal part of the neural tube into communication, in short this point which is so highly significant because it joins the cloacal orifice, which is so important in analytic theory, to something which is found in front of the lowest part of the caudal formation to be what specifies the vertebrated and the prevertebrated more strongly than any other characteristic, namely the existence of the cord of which this primitive line and Hensen's node are the point of departure. There is here certainly a whole series of directions of research which, I believe, would deserve to retain our attention. In any case, if I have not in any way insisted on it, it is because it is certainly not in this direction that I want to engage myself. If I am speaking about it for the moment, it is both to awaken in you a little more interest about these structures which are so captivating in themselves and also to authenticate a remark which (6) was made to me about the fact that embryology would have its word to say here, at least by way of illustration.

This will immediately allow us to go further, on the function of this point.

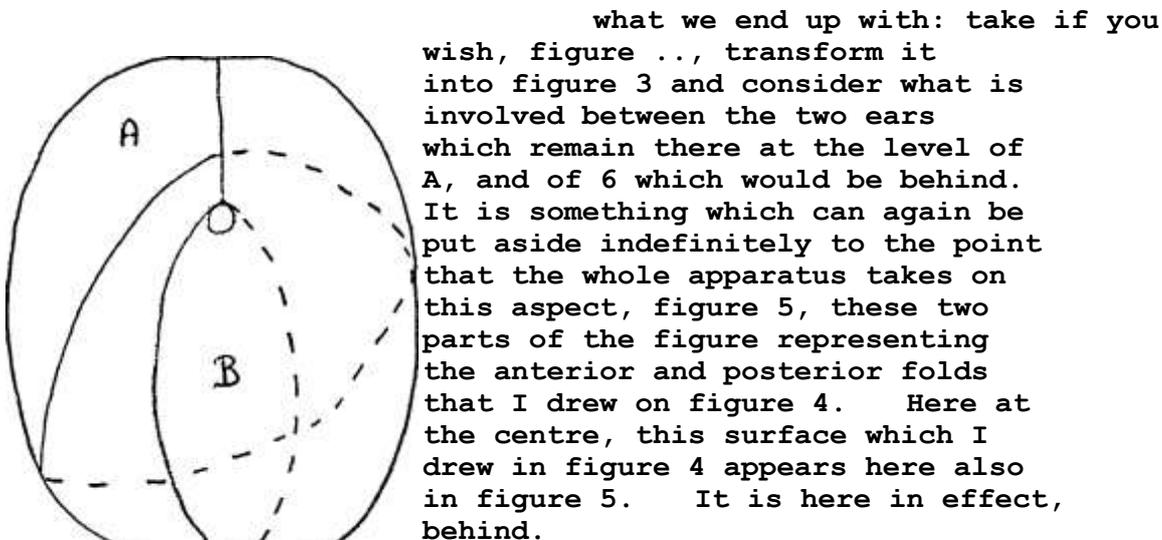
A very close discussion on the plane of the formalism of these

topological constructions would only go on forever and would perhaps weary you. If the line that I trace here in the form of a sort of interlacing of fibres, is something whose function you already know in the cross-cap, what I want to point out to you is that the point which terminates it, of course, is a mathematical point, an abstract point. We cannot give it any dimension. Nevertheless we cannot think about it except as a cut to which we must give paradoxical properties, first of all from the fact that we can conceive it as punctiform. On the other hand it is irreducible. In other words, to be even able to conceive of the surface we cannot consider it as filled. It is a hole-point, as one might say. What is more, if we consider it as a hole-point, namely made up of the coupling of two edges, it would be



in a way indivisible in the direction that traverses it and one could in effect illustrate it by this type of single cut that one can make on the cross-cap; there are those which are made normally to explain the functioning of the surface in technical books which are consecrated to it - if there is a cut which passes through this point, how ought we to conceive of it? Is it in a way homologous and uniquely homologous to what happens when you make one of the lines above pass, traversing the structural line of false penetration, namely in a way if something exists that we can call a hole-point so that the cut, even

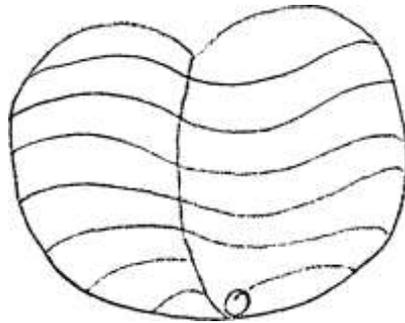
when it approaches it to the degree of being merged with this point, makes a circuit around this hole? This in effect is what (7) we must conceive because when we trace such a cut, here is



what we end up with: take if you wish, figure .., transform it into figure 3 and consider what is involved between the two ears which remain there at the level of A, and of 6 which would be behind. It is something which can again be put aside indefinitely to the point that the whole apparatus takes on this aspect, figure 5, these two parts of the figure representing the anterior and posterior folds that I drew on figure 4. Here at the centre, this surface which I drew in figure 4 appears here also in figure 5. It is here in effect, behind.

It remains that at this point something must be maintained which is in a way the initial stage of the mental fabrication of the

surface, namely with respect to this cut which is the one around which it is really constructed. Because it would be appropriate to conceive of this surface that you want to show, as a certain way of organising a hole, this hole whose edges are figured here. The initial stage is the point from which it is appropriate to start so that there can be made in a fashion which effectively constructs the surface in question, the edge-to-edge connections which are drawn here, namely that this edge here, after of course all the necessary modifications at its descent through the other surface, and this edge here comes to connect itself with the one that we have brought into this part of figure 4: a with a'. The other edge, on the contrary, must come to be connected, according to the general direction of the green arrow, with this edge there: d with d' is a connection which is only conceivable starting from the initial stage of something which signifies itself as the overlapping, as punctual as you would wish it to be, of this surface by itself at a point, namely of something which is here at a small point where it is split and where it has overlapped itself. It is around this that the process of construction takes place. If you do not have that, if you consider that the cut B that you have made here traverses the hole-point not by going around it as the other cuts with a circuit, but on the contrary by coming to cut it here in the way in which, in a torus, we can consider that a cut is produced (8) thus:



What does this figure become? It takes on another and quite different aspect. Here is what it becomes.

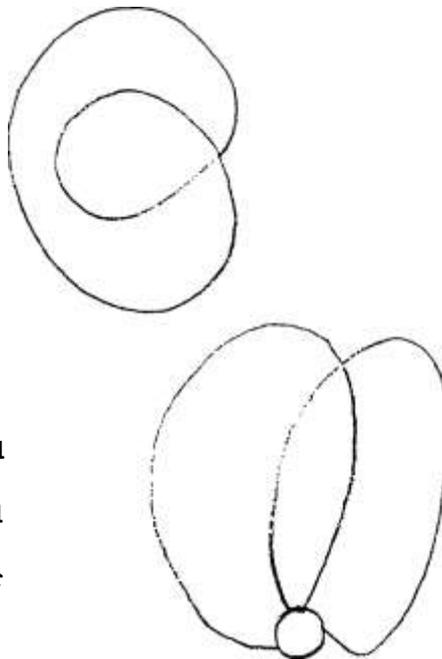


It becomes purely and simply the most simplified form of the folding back in front and behind of the surface figure 4, namely that what you have seen figure 4 organising according to a shape which comes to intersect itself edge by edge according to four segments, the segment a coming onto the segment a¹: this is a segment which would carry the number 1 with respect to another which would carry the number 3 with respect to the continuity of the cut drawn in this way; then a number 2 with segment number 4.

Here, the final figure, you have only two segments. They must be conceived of as being coupled to one another by a complete

inversion of one with respect to the other. It is very difficult to visualise. But the fact that what is on one side in one direction must be connected to what on the other side is in the opposite direction shows us here the pure structure, even though it is not visualisable, of the Möbius strip. The difference between what is produced when you carry out this simple cut on the projective plane and the projective plane itself, is that you lose one of the elements of its structure: you only make a pure and simple Möbius strip out of it, except that you see nowhere appearing what is essential in the structure of the Möbius strip: an edge. Now this edge is quite essential in the Möbius strip. In effect in the theory of surfaces - I cannot develop it in an entirely satisfying fashion - in order to determine properties such as the type, the number of connections, the characteristic, everything that is of interest in this topology, you ought to take into account that the Möbius strip has an edge and has only one, that it is constructed on a hole. It is not for the pleasure of the paradox that I say that surfaces are organisations of the hole. Here therefore, if it is a question (9) of a Möbius strip this signifies that, even though there is no way of representing it anywhere, it is necessary that the hole should remain. For it to be a Möbius strip you will put a hole here then, however small it may be. However punctual it may be, it will fulfill topologically exactly the same functions as that of the complete edge in this something that you can draw when you draw a Möbius strip, namely more or less something like the following:

As I pointed out to you a Möbius strip is as simple as that. A Möbius strip has only one edge. If you follow its edge you have gone right around everything that is edge on this strip and in fact it is only a hole, a thing which may appear as purely circular; by underlining the two sides, by inverting one with respect to the other coupling one, it will remain that it will be necessary in order for there to be question of a Möbius strip that we should preserve in as reduced a form as possible the existence of a hole. This indeed effectively is what indicates to us the irreducible character of the function of this point. And if we try to articulate it, to show its function we are led, by designating it as origin-point of the organisation of the surface on the projective plane, to rediscover in it properties which are not completely those of the edge of the



Möbius surface, but which are all the same something which is so much a hole that if one tries to suppress it by this operation of section by the cut passing through this point, it is in any case a hole that one makes appear in the most incontestable fashion.

What does that mean again? In order that this surface should function with its complete properties, and particularly that of being unilateral like the Möbius strip, namely that an infinitely (10) flat subject walking about on it, starting from some point or other, outside the surface, to return by an extremely short path and without having to pass through any edge to the reverse point of the surface from which he has started, in order that this can be produced, it is necessary that in the construction of the apparatus that we have called the projective plane there should be somewhere, however reduced you may suppose it to be, this sort of bottom which is represented here, this backside of the apparatus, there must remain a little piece however small it may be of the part which is not structured by interlacing otherwise the surface becomes something else and specifically no longer presents this property of functioning as unilateral.

Another way of highlighting the function of this point: the cross-cap cannot be drawn purely and simply as something which could be divided in two by a line where the two surfaces are supposed to intersect. It is necessary that there should remain here something which beyond the point surrounds it, something like a circumference, however reduced it may be, a surface that allows there to be put into communication the two upper lobes, as one might say, of the surface structured in this way. It is this that shows us the paradoxical and organising function of the point.

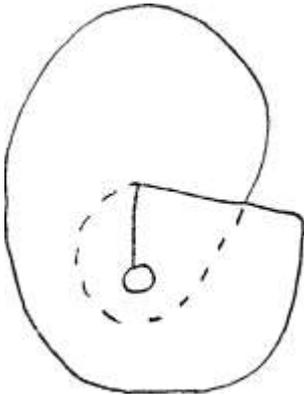
But what this allows us to articulate now, is that this point is made by the coupling of two edges of a cut, a cut which cannot itself be retraversed in any way, be divided, a cut which you see here in the way that I have imaged it for you, as deduced from the structure of the surface and which is such that one can say that if we were to define arbitrarily something as inside and as outside - by putting for example in blue on the drawing what is inside and in red what is outside - at one of the edges of this point the other would present itself in this way since it is made from a cut, however minimal you may suppose it to be, of the surface which has been superimposed on the other. In this privileged cut what will be confronted without being connected will be an outside with an inside, an inside with an outside.

—————	inside
- - - - -	outside
—————	inside
- - - - -	outside

Such are the properties that I present to you - one could express this in a more learned, more formalist, more dialectical way - in (11) a form which appears to me not alone sufficient, but necessary in order to be able subsequently to image the function that I intend to give it for our use.

I pointed out to you that the double cut is the first form of cut which introduces into the surface defined as the cross-cap of the projective plane the first cut, the minimal cut which obtains the division of this surface. I indicated to you the last time what this division culminated in and what it signifies. I showed you in these very precise figures all of which I hope you have noted, and which consisted in proving to you that this division has precisely as a result to divide the surface in 1, a Mobius surface namely a unilateral surface of the type of the figure here: [Missing in text]

This preserves, as one might say, in itself only a part of the properties of the surface called the cross-cap, and, precisely this particularly interesting and expressive part which consists in the unilateral property; and in the one which I always highlighted for you when I had circulated among you these little Mobius ribbons that I made, namely that it is a question of a left surface, which is, we will say in our language, specularisable, that its image in the mirror cannot be superimposed on it, that it is structured by a fundamental asymmetry. And the whole interest of this structure that I am showing you is that, on the contrary, the central part, what we will call the central piece, isolated by the double cut, while



being manifestly the one which carries with it the veritable structure of the whole apparatus called the cross-cap, it is enough to look at it, I would say to see it, it is enough to imagine that, in some fashion or other the edges here are joined to one another in the points of correspondence that they present visually in order that there should be immediately reconstituted the general shape of this projective plane or cross-cap.

But what appears with this cut is a surface which has this

aspect

that you can, I think, now consider as something which, for you, (12) has gained enough familiarity for you to project it into space, this surface which traverses itself according to a certain line which stops at a point. It is this line and it is above all this point which gives to the double circuit shape of this cut its privileged signification from the schematic point of view because it is this that we going to trust to give ourselves a schematic schema of representation of the relationship \$ cut of o, which we will not manage to grasp at the level of the structure of the torus namely of something which allows us to articulate schematically the structure of desire, the structure of desire in so far as we have already inscribed it formally in this something which we are saying allows us to conceive of the

structure of the phantasy \$ cut of o. S\$ o

We will not exhaust this subject today, but I will try to introduce today for you the fact that this figure, in its schematic function, is rather exemplary in order to allow us to find the relationship of \$ cut of o, the formalisation of the phantasy in its relationship with something which is inscribed in what is the remainder of the surface called the projective plane or cross-cap when the central piece is in a way enucleated. It is a question of a specularisable, fundamentally asymmetrical structure which is going to allow us to localise the field of this asymmetry of the subject with respect to the Other, especially concerning the essential function that the specular image plays in it.

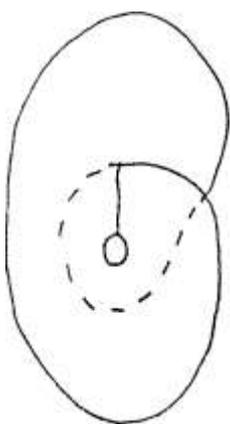
Here in fact is what is in question: the true imaginary function, as one might say, in so far as it intervenes at the level of desire, is a privileged relationship with o, object of desire, term of the phantasy. I say term because there are two of them, \$ and o, linked by the function of the cut. The function of the object of the phantasy, in so far as it is the term of the function of desire, this function is hidden.

What is most efficient, most efficacious in the relationship to the object, as we understand it, is marked by a maximal veiling in the vocabulary currently accepted in psychoanalysis. One could say that the libidinal structure, in so far as it is marked by the narcissistic function, is what covers and masks the relationship to the object for us. It is in so far as the narcissistic, secondarily narcissistic, relationship, the relationship to the image of the body as such is linked by something structural to this relationship to the object which is that of the fundamental phantasy, that it takes on all its weight, but this something structural of which I speak is a (13) complementary relationship, it is in so far as the relationship of the subject marked by the unary trait finds a certain support which is a lure, which is an error, in the image of the body as constitutive of specular identification that it has its indirect relationship with what is hidden behind it, namely the relationship to the object, the relationship to the fundamental phantasy. There are therefore two imaginaries, the true and the false; and the false is only sustained in this sort of subsistence to which there remain attached all the mirages of the mé-connaître (miscognition) - I already introduced this play on words, mé-connaissance: the subject miscognises himself in the mirror relationship. This mirror relationship in order to be understood as such, ought to be situated on a basis of this relationship to the Other which is the foundation of the subject, as long as our subject is the subject of discourse, the subject of language. It is by situating what \$ cut of o is with respect to the fundamental deficiency of the Other as locus of the word, with respect to what is the only definitive response at the level of enunciating, the signifier of (;J, of the universal witness in so far as it is lacking and that at a given moment it only has the function of a false witness, it is by situating the function of o at this point of failure, by showing the support that the

subject finds in this o which is what we aim at in analysis as an object which has nothing in common with the object of classical idealism, which has nothing in common with the object of the Hegelian subject.

It is by articulating in the most precise fashion this o at the point of lack of the Other, which is also the point where the subject receives from this Other, as locus of the word, its major mark, that of the unary trait, the one which distinguishes our subject from the knowing transparency of classical thinking as a subject entirely attached to the signifier in so far as this signifier is the turning point of his rejection, for him the subject, of the whole signifying realisation ... it is in showing, starting from the formula o as structure of the phantasy, the relationship between this object and the lack of the Other that we see how at a moment everything retreats, everything is effaced in the signifying function in face of the rise, the eruption of this object. It is towards this that we can advance even though it is the most veiled, the most difficult zone to articulate in our experience. Because precisely we have a check for it in the fact that by the ways which are those of our experience, paths that we take, most usually those of the neurotic, we have a structure which it is not at all a matter (14) of loading onto scapegoats. At this level, the neurotic like the pervert, like the psychotic himself, are only faces of the normal structure. I am often told after these lectures: when you speak about the neurotic and about his object which is the demand of the Other, unless his demand is the object of the Other, why do you not speak to us about normal desire! But precisely, I am talking about it all the time. The neurotic, is the normal in so far as, for him, the Other with a big O , is all-important. The pervert, is the normal in so far as for him the Phallus - the big ≤ 5 that we are going to identify with this point which gives to the central piece of the projective plane all its consistency - the Phallus is all-important. For the psychotic his own body, which is to be distinguished in its place, in this structuring of desire, his own body is all-important.

And these are only faces where something is manifested about this element of paradox which is the one which I am going to try to articulate before you at the level of desire.



Already, the last time, I gave you a foretaste of it by showing you what can be distinct in the function, in so far as it emerges, of the phantasy, namely of something that the subject foments, tries to produce at the blind place, at the masked place which is the one this central piece gives the schema of. Already in connection with the neurotic and precisely the obsessional, I indicated to you how it can be

conceived that the search for the object might be the true aim, in the obsessional phantasy, of this always renewed and always impotent attempt at destroying the specular image in so far as it is what the obsessional aims at, that he senses as an obstacle for the realisation of his fundamental phantasy. I showed you that this clarifies very well what happens at the level not of the sadistic phantasy but the Sadian one, namely the one that I had occasion to spell out previously, for you, with you, in the seminar on ethics, in so far as, being the realisation of an inner experience that one cannot entirely reduce to the contingencies of the knowable framework of an effort of thinking concerning the relationship of the subject to nature, it is by insulting nature that Sade tries to define the essence of human desire. And it is through this indeed that, today already, I can (15) introduce for you the dialectic involved. If somewhere we can still preserve the notion of knowledge, it is undoubtedly outside the human field. There is no obstacle to us thinking, we positivists, Marxists, anything you wish, that nature knows herself. She undoubtedly has her preferences. She does not take, for her part, just any materials whatsoever. This indeed is what has left the field open to us for some time, to find a whole load of other funny ones that she had funnily left to one side!

However she may know herself, we do not see anything to prevent it. It is quite certain that the whole development of science, in all its branches, is constructed for us in a fashion which renders more and more clear the notion of knowledge. Connaturality with whatever means there may be in the natural field, is what is most foreign, always more foreign to the development of this science. Is it not this that makes it so contemporary for us to advance into the structure of desire as our experience precisely, effectively makes us sense it everyday? The kernel of unconscious desire and what one might call its orienting, attracting, relationship, is absolutely central with respect to all the paradoxes of human miscognition. And does its foundation not depend on the fact that human desire is an acosmic function?

That is why, when I try to foment these plastics for you, you might think you are seeing an updating of ancient imaginary techniques which are the ones that I taught you to read in the form of Plato's sphere. You might say that to yourselves. This little double point, this stamp shows us that here is the field where there is ringed what is the veritable mainspring of the relationship between the possible and the real. What gives to classical logic all its charm, all its long-pursued seduction, the real point of interest of formal logic - I mean that of Aristotle - is what it supposes and what it excludes and what is really its pivotal point, namely the point of the impossible in so far as it is that of desire. And I will come back to it. Therefore you can say that everything that I am in the process of explaining to you here is the continuation of the preceding discourse. They are - let me use this formula - Theo-type contraptions. Because when all is said and done, it is as well to give a name to this God with whom we gargle a little bit too

romantically our throats in this proclamation that we have done very well in saying that God is dead. There is god and god. I already told you that some of them are quite real. We would be (16) wrong to overlook the reality. The God who is involved, the problem of whom we cannot elude since it is a problem which is our business, a problem in which we have to take part, this one, in order to distinguish terms, echoing Beckett who one day called him Godot, why not have called him by his true name, the supreme Being? If I remember rightly moreover, the good friend of Robespierre had this name as a proper name, I believe that she was called Catherine Theot. It is quite certain that a whole part of analytic elucidation and, in a word, the whole story of the father in Freud, is our essential contribution to the function of Theo in a certain field, very precisely in this field which finds its limits at the edge of the double cut in so far as it is what determines the structuring characteristics, the fundamental kernel of phantasy in theory as in practice. If something can be articulated which puts in the balance the domains of Theo, which prove not to be so totally reduced, nor reducible since we busy ourselves with them just as much, except for the fact that, for some time, we are losing, as I might say, their soul, their sap and their essence. One no longer knows very well what to say. This father seems to be reabsorbed in a cloud that is more and more withdrawn and at the same time leaves the import of our practice singularly in suspense. It is not at all superfluous for us to evoke that there is here in effect some historical correlative when it is a matter of defining what we have to deal with in our domain. I believe it is time. It is time because, already in a thousand concretised, articulated, clinical and practical forms a certain sector is being separated out in the evolution of our practice, which is distinct from the relationship to the Other, 0, as fundamental, as structuring the whole experience whose foundations we have found in the unconscious. But its other pole has all the value that I earlier called complementary, the one without which we wander, I mean without which we return, as a retreat, an abdication, to this something which was the ethics of the theological era, the one whose origins I made you sense as certainly conserving their whole price, all their value in this original freshness that Plato's dialogues preserves them in. What do we see after Plato, if not the promotion of something which is now perpetuated in the dust-covered shape of this distinction regarding which it is really scandalous that one can still find it written by an analyst, between ego-subject and ego-object! Speak to me about the rider and the horse, of the dialogue between the soul and desire, but precisely it is a matter of this soul and of this desire, of the referring back of desire to the soul at the moment precisely when only desire was in question, in short, everything that I showed you last year in Transference. It is a matter of (17) seeing this more essential clarity that we for our part can contribute to it: the fact is that desire is not on one side. If it appears to be this unmanageable thing that Plato describes in such a pathetic, moving fashion and that the superior soul is destined to dominate, to captivate, of course, it is because there is a relationship, but the relationship is internal, and to divide it, is precisely to surrender oneself to a lure, to a lure

which depends on the fact that this image of the soul which is nothing other than the central image of secondary narcissism as I defined it for you earlier and to which I will return, only functions as a way of access, a deceptive access path, but an access path oriented as such to desire. It is certain that Plato was not ignorant of it. And what renders his enterprise all the more strangely perverse, it is that he masks it from us. Because I will speak to you about the phallus in its double function, the one which allows us to see it as the common point of eversion as I might say, of evergence, if I may put forward this word constructed as the reverse of convergence; if I think I can articulate for you on the one hand the function of this phallus

at the level of the \$ of the phantasy
and at the level of o that it
authenticates for desire, from today I
will indicate to you the kinship of
paradoxes with this very image that this



because here $\overline{\quad\quad\quad}^J$ schema of the figure gives
| nothing other than this point
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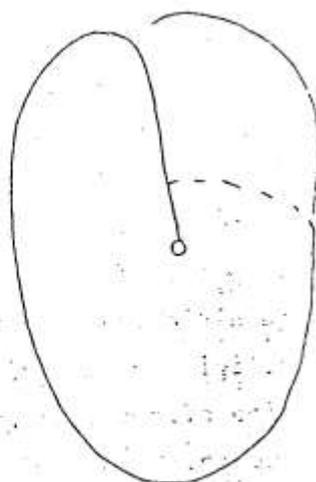
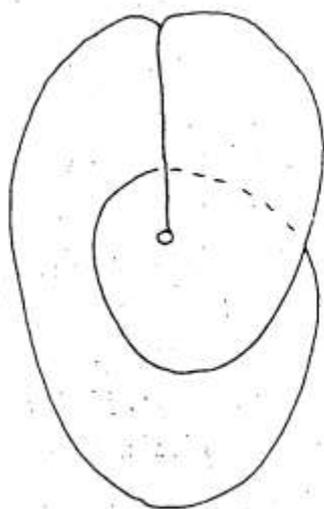
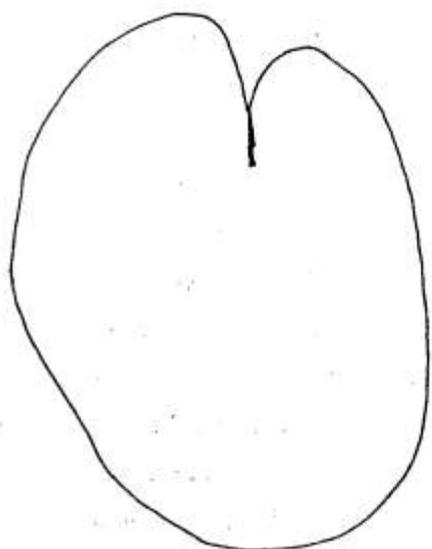
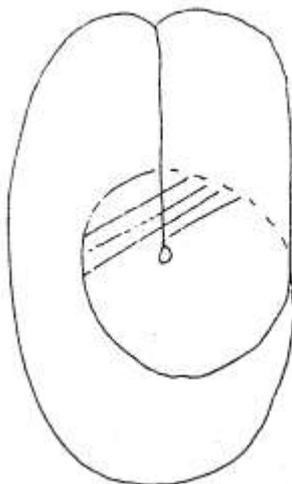
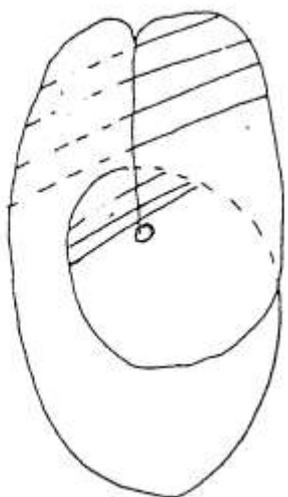
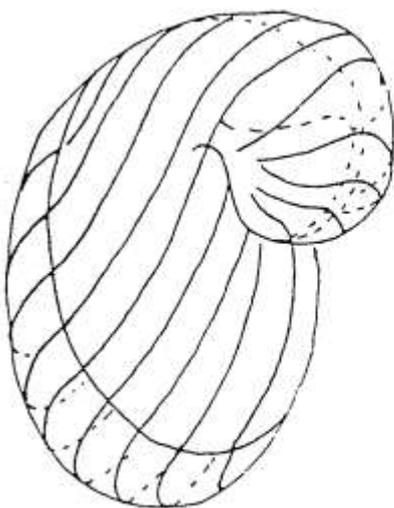
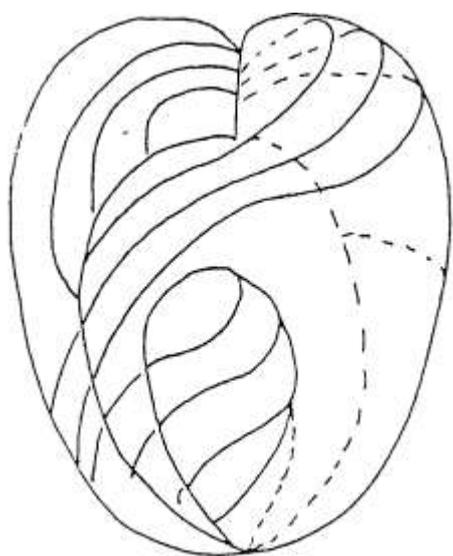


character as a unilateral surface, but
entirely guarantees it to it, making
truly of \$ the cut of o.

But let us not go too quickly, o, for its part, undoubtedly is the cut of f. The sort of reality that we are aiming at in this objectality or this objectiveness that we alone define, is truly for us what unifies the subject. And what have we seen in the dialogue between Socrates and Alcibiades? And what is this comparison between this man carried to the pinnacle of passionate homage and a box: this marvellous box, as always, has always existed wherever man has known how to construct for himself objects, figures of what for him is the central object, that of the fundamental phantasy, it contains what, Alcibiades says to Socrates? The agalma. Let us begin to see what this agalma is: something which should have not just a tiny relationship with this central point which gives its accent, its dignity to the object o. But things, in fact are to be inverted at the level of the object. This phallus, if it is established so paradoxically (18) that it is always necessary to pay great attention to what is its enveloping function and its enveloped function, I believe that it is rather at the heart of the agalma that Alcibiades seeks what he is appealing to, at this moment when the Symposium ends, in this something which we alone are able to read, even though it is obvious, because what he is looking for, what he prostrates himself before, what he makes this impudent appeal to is what? Socrates as desiring, whose avowal he wants. At the heart of the agalma what he is searching for in the object manifests itself as being the pure eron, because what he wants is not to tell us that Socrates is lovable, it is to tell us that what he desired most in the world was to see Socrates desiring. This most radical subjective implication at the heart of the object itself of desire where I think that all the same you find your bearings a little, simply because you could put it back into the old drawer of the desire of man and the desire of the Other. It is something that we are going to be able to highlight more

precisely. We see that what organises it is the punctual, central function of the phallus. And there, we have our old enchanter rotting or not, but certainly an enchanter, the one who knows something about desire, who sends off our Alcibiades on his way telling him what? To look after his soul, his ego, to become what he is not: a neurotic for the centuries to come, a child of Theo.

And why? What is this reply of Socrates to a being as admirable as Alcibiades? In that it is manifestly he who is it, the agalma, as I think I have manifested before you, it is purely and manifestly only Alcibiades who is the phallus. Only nobody can know whose phallus he is. To be phallus in that state, one must be made of the right stuff. Undoubtedly he has what it takes and the charms of Socrates have without any doubt no hold on Alcibiades. He passes in the centuries of ethical theology which followed towards this enigmatic and closed form, but that the Symposium nevertheless indicates for us the starting point with all the necessary complements, namely that Alcibiades, manifesting his appeal for a desirer at the heart of the privileged object, does nothing other than appear in a position of frantic seduction with respect to the one whom I called the fundamental idiot, whom as the supreme irony Plato connoted by the proper name of goodness itself: Agathon - the supreme good has no other name in his dialectic. Is there not here something which sufficiently shows that there is nothing new in our research? It returns to the beginning, in order this time to understand what has happened since.

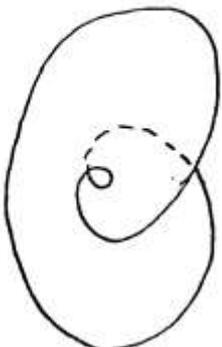
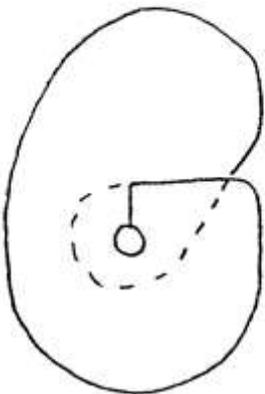
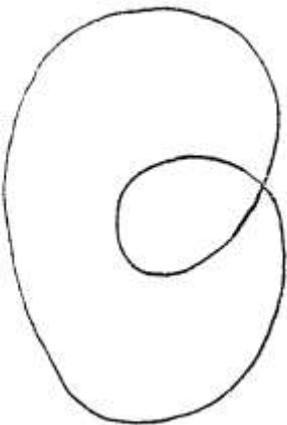


Wednesday 20 June 1962

The time for the end of this year is approaching. My discourse on identification has not of course been able to exhaust its field. Moreover I do not think I should experience any feeling of having failed you on that account.

This field in effect, someone at the beginning was a bit uneasy, not without reason, that I should have chosen a thematic which seemed to him would allow it to be the instrument for us of "everything is in everything"; I tried on the contrary to show you the structural rigour attached to it.

I did this starting from the second mode of identification distinguished by Freud, the one that I believe without false modesty to have henceforth rendered unthinkable for you except under the mode of the functioning of the unary trait. The field I have been on since I introduced the signifier of the interior eight is the one of the third mode of identification, this identification where the subject is constituted as desire and in which all our previous discourse prevented us from overlooking that the field of desire is only conceivable for man starting from the function of the big Other: the desire of man is situated at the locus (2) of the Other and is constituted precisely as this mode of original identification that Freud teaches us to separate out empirically - which does not mean that his thinking on this point is empirical - in the form of what is given in our clinical experience, most especially in connection with this so manifest form of the constitution of desire which is that of the hysteric.



To be content to say: there is the ideal identification and then there is the identification of desire to desire can suffice of course for a first clarification of things. As you can see clearly, Freud's text does not leave things there, and does not leave things there in so far as already within the major works of his third topography, he shows us the relationship of the object, which here can only be the object of desire, to the constitution of the ideal itself. He shows it on the plane of collective identification, of what is in short a sort of confluence of experience, through which the unarity of the trait, as I might say, my unary trait - this is what I wanted to say - is reflected in the unicity of the model taken as the one which functions in the constitution of this order of collective reality that is, as one might say, the crowd with a head, the leader.

This problem, however local it may be, is indeed no doubt the one which offered to Freud himself the best terrain to grasp, at the point that he was elaborating these things at the level of the third topography, something which for him, not in a structural fashion, but in a way linked to a sort of concrete point of confluence, collected together the three forms of identification. Since moreover, the first form, the one which will remain in short at the edge, at the end of our development this year, the one which is put as the first, the most mysterious also, even though apparently the first brought to light in analytic dialectic, the identification to the father, is here in this model of identification to the leader, to the crowd, and is here in a way implicated without being completely implicated, without (3) being at all included in its total dimension, in its entire dimension.

The identification to the father brings into question in effect something of which one can say that linked to the tradition of a properly historical adventure to the point that we can probably identify it to history itself, opens up a field which we have not even dreamt this year of bringing into our field of interest, for fear of being really completely absorbed in it.

To take at first as object the first form of identification would have been to engage our whole discourse on identification in the problems of Totem and taboo, the work which for Freud was, one could well say, what one could call die Sache selbst, the thing itself, and of which one can also say that it will remain so in the Hegelian sense, namely in so far as for Hegel die Sache selbst, the work, is in short everything which justifies, everything by which there merits to subsist this subject who never existed, who never lived, who never suffered, what matter, simply this essential extériorisation of a work, with a path traced by him. This indeed, in effect, is what one looks at and what it simply wants to remain, a phenomenon of consciousness in movement, and from that angle, one could say in effect that

we are right, that we would be wrong, not to identify the legacy of Freud, if it had to be limited to his writings, to Totem and taboo.

Because the discourse on identification that I pursued this year, with what it constituted as an operational apparatus - I am sure that you are only at the point of beginning to put it to use - you cannot yet before testing it appreciate its importance which cannot but be altogether decisive as regards everything that calls at the present time for an urgent formulation, in the first place phantasy.

I wanted to mark that it was the essential preliminary step, demanding absolutely a properly didactic preliminary history in order that there could be appropriately articulated the weakness, the fault, the loss that we are at to be able to refer with the slightest appropriateness to what is involved concerning the paternal function.

I am very precisely alluding to something which we could qualify as the soul of the year 1962, during which there appeared two (4) books by Claude Lévi-Strauss, Le Totémisme and La Pensée sauvage. I believe that not a single analyst read them without at once feeling himself - for those who follow the teaching here - fortified, reassured, and without finding in them the complement - because of course he had the leisure to explore fields that I can only bring in here by allusion, to show you the radical character of the signifying constitution in everything that belongs, let us say, to culture, even though, of course he underlines it, this is not to demarcate a domain whose frontier is absolute. But at the same time, within his very pertinent exhaustions of the classificatory mode, of which one could say that La pensée sauvage is less the instrument than in a way the effect, the function of Totem and Taboo appears entirely reduced to these signifying oppositions.

Now it is clear that this could not be resolved except in an impenetrable fashion, if we analysts are not capable of introducing here something which is at the same level as this discourse, namely, like this discourse, a logic.

It is this logic of desire, this logic of the object of desire whose instrument I have given you this year, by designating the apparatus through which we can grasp something which, to be worthwhile, cannot but have been for all time the veritable animating force of logic, I mean there where, in history in the history of its progress, it made itself felt as something which opened out to thinking. It nevertheless remains that this secret mainspring remained masked perhaps, because logic for its part did not involve, did not imply the movement of this world which is not nothing: it is called the world of thought, in a certain direction which, even though it was centrifugal, was nonetheless all the same determined by something which referred itself to a certain type of object which is the one that we are interested in for the moment.

What I defined the last time as the point, the point $\langle p \rangle$ in a certain new way of delimiting the circle of connotation of the object, is what puts us on the threshold, before parting this year, of having to pose the function of this ambiguous $\langle p \rangle$ -point, as I told you, not just simply in the mediation but in the constitution inherent to one and the other, not simply as the reverse which would be worth as much as the front (l'envers ... l'endroit) but as a reverse, I told you, which would be the same thing as the front, of the $\$$ barred and of the point o in the phantasy, in recognising what the object of human desire is, (5) starting from desire, in recognising the reason why in desire the subject is nothing other than the cut of this object.

And how individual history - this discoursing subject in which this individual is only included - is orientated, pivoting, polarised by this secret and perhaps in the final analysis, never accessible point, if there must be admitted with Freud for a time at least in the irreducibility of a Urverdrangung the existence of this navel of desire in the dream of which he speaks in the Traumdeutung, it is this whose function we cannot omit in any appreciation of the terms into which we decompose the faces of this nuclear phenomenon.

That is why, before rejoining clinical experience, always too easy to put us back into the rut of truths to which we accommodate ourselves very well in a veiled state, namely: what is the object of desire for the neurotic, or again for the pervert, or again for the psychotic? It is not that, this sampling, this diversity of suits which will never do anything except make us lose the interesting cards. "Become what you are", says the formula of classical tradition. It is possible. A pious wish. What is guaranteed, is that you become what you miscognise (meconnaitre). The way in which the subject miscognises the terms, the elements and the functions between which are played out the fate of desire, in so far precisely as there appears to him somewhere in an unveiled form one of these terms, is the way that each one of those whom we have named neurotic, perverse and psychotic is normal. The psychotic is normal in his psychosis, and moreover because the psychotic in desire has to deal with the body; the pervert is normal in his perversion because he has to deal with the phallus in its variety and the neurotic because he has to deal with the Other, the big Other as such. They are normal because these are the three normal terms of the constitution of desire.

These three terms are of course always present. For the moment, it is not a matter of their being in any one of the these subjects, but here in the theory. This is why I cannot advance in a straight line. It is because there comes to me at every step the need to make the point with you again, not so much because I am so worried that you should understand me "Are you all that keen to be understood?", I am asked from time to time, these are the kind remarks that I hear in my analyses. Obviously, yes. But what creates the difficulty, is the (6) necessity of making you see that you are included in this discourse; it is starting from there that it can be deceiving,

because you are included in it in any case; and errors can arise uniquely from the way in which you conceive that you are included in it.

I was very struck to read, yesterday morning, before the electricity strike started, the work of one of my students on phantasy. Not bad, by God. Of course, it is not yet the putting into action of the apparatuses of which I spoke, but the simple collation of passages in Freud where he speaks about phantasy in an absolutely inspired fashion. When one asks oneself what relevance, in the absence of everything that can be said, these initiatives have conditioned since, how the first formulation was able to find this relevance and remain in a way marked now by the very stamp which is the one that I am trying to isolate from things. This drive which makes itself felt from within the body, these schemas entirely structured from these topological prevalencies, it is only on this that there is agreement.

How define what functions from the arrival of the outside and from the arrival of the inside?

What incredible vocation to platitude was required in what one could call the mentality of the analytic community to believe that this is a reference to what is called "the biological agency"! Not that I am in the process of saying that a body, a living body, - I am not joking - is not a biological reality, only to make it function in the Freudian topology as topology and to see in it some biologism or other which is supposed to be radical, inaugural, co-extensive with the function of drive, is what gives here the whole breadth, the whole gap of what is called a misinterpretation, a misinterpretation absolutely manifest in the facts, namely that as there is no need to point out, until we hear differently, namely the revision that we await in biology, there has not been the trace of a biological or even physiological, nor even esthesiological discovery made through analysis (esthesiological means a sensorial discovery, something new that one might have been discovered in the way of sensing things); what constitutes the misinterpretation, can be defined very clearly, it is that the relationship of the drive to the body is everywhere marked in Freud; topologically, this does not have the same reference value, the idea of a direction, as a discovery in biological research.

(7) It is quite certain that this "what is a body", as you know, was not even an idea outlined in the consensus of the philosophising world at the time that Freud outlined his first topography; the whole later notion of Dasein is constructed to give us as I might say the primitive idea that one could have of what a body is, as a constituting there, as certain dimensions of presence - and I am not going to re-do Heidegger for you, because if I speak to you about him, it is because you are soon going to have this text which I told you was easy, you will have his own words. In any case the facility with which we read him now proves well that what he has launched into the current of things is well and truly in circulation; these dimensions of presence however they are described, the Mitsein, this being there and all

the rest, in der Welt sein, all the so different and so distinct mundanities; because it is a matter precisely of distinguishing them from space: latum, longum et profundum, which has no trouble showing us that this is only the abstraction of the object and because moreover this is proposed as such in this Descartes whom I put this year at the beginning of our account: the abstraction of the object as subsisting, namely already ordered in a world which is not simply a world of coherence, of consistency, but enucleated of the object of desire as such.

Yes, in Heidegger, all of this makes admirable irruptions into our mental world. Let me tell you that if there are people who should not in any way be satisfied with it, it is psychoanalysts, it is I. This no doubt suggestive reference to what I will call - you should not see in it any kind of attempt to belittle what is involved - an artisanal praxis, the foundation of the tool-object, as discovering undoubtedly at the highest level these first so subtly picked out dimensions of presence which are proximity, distancing, as constituting the first lineaments of this world; Heidegger owes a lot - he told me so himself - to the fact that his father was a cooper.

All this reveals to us something with which presence is concerned in a pre-eminent way and to which we would hold onto much more passionately by posing the question of what every instrument has in common: the primitive spoon, the first way of digging, of taking something out of the current of things, what does this have to do with the instrument of the signifier? But when all is said and done is everything not decentred for us from the beginning?

(8) If what Freud contributed has a meaning, namely that at the heart of the constitution of every object there is the libido, if this has a meaning, this means that the libido is not simply the surplus of our praxic presence in the world, which is the age-old thematic and the one that Heidegger re-introduces: because if Sorge is care, occupation is what characterises this presence of man in the world, that means that when care relaxes a little people start fucking. Which, as you know, is the teaching for example of someone whom I choose here really, without any scruple and in a polemical spirit, because he is a friend: Mr Alexander. Mr Alexander has moreover his very honourable place in this simply cacophonous chorus that one can call theoretical discussion in the American Psychoanalytic Society, he has his place by full right, because it is obvious that it would be a little extreme to allow themselves, in a society as large and officially established as this American association, to reject what really coincides moreover with the ideals, with the practices, of what is called a particular cultural space.

But it is clear that even to outline a theory of libidinal functioning as being constituted by the surplus part of a certain energy however we may categorise it - survival energy or other - is actually to deny the whole value, not simply the poetic one, but the raison d'etre of our function as therapists, as we define its terms and its goals.

That on the whole practically we adjust ourselves very well, we do our business (affaire) by bringing people back to theirs - affairs of course - only what is certain is that all the same when we pinpoint this result under the form of therapeutic success, we know at least this: it is either one thing or the other: either we have achieved it outside any kind of properly analytic path, and in that case what was amiss at the heart of the affair - because this is what is in question - is still amiss, or indeed if we have got to that, it is precisely in the whole measure - which is only the a-b-c of what we are taught - that we have not tried in any way to settle the affair, but we have been elsewhere, around what was amiss, what was happening at the centre, the libidinal knot.

It is for this reason that results that can be sanctioned in the (9) sense of adaptation - I apologise, I am making a little detour here through banalities, but there are banalities that must all the same be recalled, especially because after all, recalled in a certain fashion banalities may sometimes appear to have little banal about them - any therapeutic success, namely to lead people to the well-being of their Sorge, of their "little affairs" is always for us more or less, at bottom we know it, this is why we have no reason to boast about it - a last resort, an alibi, a misappropriation of funds, if I can express myself thus.

In fact, what is still much more serious, is that we prohibit ourselves from doing better, knowing full well that this action of ours of which we may boast from time to time as if it were a success, is carried out along paths which do not concern the result. Thanks to these paths, we bring about some modifications in a complementary place which is of no concern to them except by reverberation; it is the most that one can say. When do we manage to replace a subject in his desire? It is a question that I pose to those who here have some experience as analysts, obviously not to the others.

Is it conceivable that an analysis should result in making a subject enter into desire, as one speaks about entering into a trance, into rut or into religion? It is indeed for this reason that I allow myself to pose the question at a local point; the only one when all is said and done which is decisive, because we are not apostles, is whether this question does not deserve to be preserved when analysts are involved; because for the others, the problem posed is: what is desire for it to be able to subsist, to persist in this paradoxical position. Because after all it is quite clear that I am not in any way expressing a wish by this that the effect of analysis should go to rejoin the one filled from all ages by mystical sects whose famous, no doubt deceiving, often doubtful operations in any case most of the time, are not what I would especially ask you to interest yourselves in, except all the same in order to situate them as occupying this global place of leading the subject onto a field which is none other than the field of his desire.

And in a word, spending my last weekend in a series of rebounds,

trying to see the meaning of some words of Muslim mystical technique I opened some things that I worked on at one time, like everybody else. Who has not looked a little at these indigestible and deadening books on Hinduism, on philosophy, (10) about some asceticism or other, which are presented to us in a dust-laden and in general misunderstood terminology, I would say all the better understood when the transcriber is more stupid, this is why the English works are the best; above all I would ask you not to read the German works, they are so intelligent that it is immediately transformed into Schopenhauer. And then, there is René Guénon, of whom I speak because he is a curious geometrical place. I see from the number of smiles, the proportion of sinners! ... I swear that at any moment, at the beginning of this century of which I am a part - I do not know if it is still going on, but I see that this name is not unknown, so it must ^ still be going on - the whole of French diplomacy found in René Guénon, this imbecile, its maitre á penser. You see the result! It is impossible to open one of his works without really finding nothing to do with it because what he says the whole time, is that he ought to shut up.... This has a probably unextinguishable charm; because the result is that thanks to this all sorts of people who probably did not have a lot to do - as Briand said: "You know that we have no foreign policy, because a diplomat must be in an atmosphere that is a little unbreathable....!" - well, this has helped them to remain in their little carapace.

In short, all this is not intended to direct you towards Hinduism, but all the same, because I find myself I cannot say "rereading", because I never read them, Hindu texts, and as I tell you, it is always very disappointing from the beginning, but I have seen retranscribed, reassembled much more accessible things about Muslim mystical technique, by someone marvellously intelligent, although presenting all the appearances of madness, who is called M Louis Massignon - I say "the appearances" - and referring himself to boudhi; in connection with the elucidation of these terms, the point that he highlights about the term function - I mean that it is the second-last threshold to be crossed before the liberation sought for, before Hindu asceticism - the function that he gives to the boudhi, as the object - because that is what this means, which of course is nowhere written down, except in this text of Massignon, where he finds its equivalent in the man-sou (?) of Shiite mysticism - the function of the object as being the indispensable turning point of this concentration in order to come to the metaphorical terms of the subjective realisation that is in question, which when all is said and done is only the access to this field of desire that we (11) can call simply the desirer. And what is this desirer?

It is quite sure that those who have not gone there at all know nothing about it and this indeed is what annoys those who officiate in the already well-constituted domain which I called the last time that of Theo, quite naturally suspicion, exclusion, the smell of sulphur with which mystical asceticism is surrounded in all religions.

In any case, the relationship articulated at this stage, at the

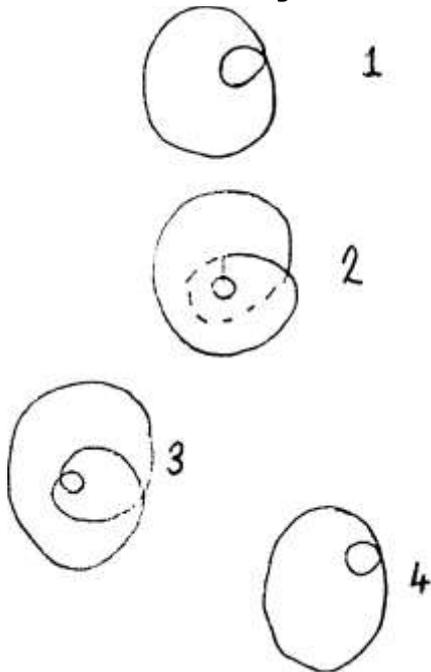
stage that one can describe as the completion of the involution, of the assumption of the subject into an object chosen moreover by mystical techniques in a very arbitrary order - it can be a woman - it can be a cork in a bottle - appeared to me to coincide perfectly with the formula:

$$\begin{array}{c} \$ \\ \frac{o}{\text{cut of}} \end{array}$$

as I formulate it for you as given, as the most simple formulization that we are allowed to reach in contact with the different forms of clinical work, namely that it is necessary to presume that the structure of this central point as we are able to construct it - the term is from Freud - and as we ought necessarily to construct it to account for the ambiguities of its effects.

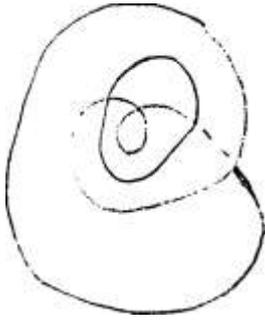
The work to which I alluded earlier, that I read yesterday morning, applied itself to taking up again - it is necessary for things to be digested - a field that I had treated a long time ago, namely the structure of the Wolfman, especially in the light of the structure of the phantasy; the thing is very well circumscribed in this work. Nevertheless, compared to the first formulations, those I constructed before bringing you the recent instruments, it does not mark much of an advance, but it designates for me the point at which after all you follow what I may show you here as a locus to be superseded.

Let us take it up therefore simply to highlight it - it is not a critique - this work, there would be many others to do and you should know what should be broadcast, what I would find suitable - the logical definition of the object that I will allow myself to call Lacanian on this occasion because it is not the same thing as speaking about the execrated lacanism of the object of desire; the logical function of this



object does not depend - this is what is designated by the novelty of the little circle (1) which I teach you to circumscribe by telling you that it is essentially constituted by the presence of this point which is here, either in its central field, or at the limit of this field, namely here, because these three cases 2 - 3 - 4, are the same as the final reduction of the field - its logical function does not depend either on its extension or on its comprehension; for its extension, if one can designate something by this term, depends on the structuring function of the point. The more this field is as I might say, punctual (4), the more effects there are and these effects are, as one might say, ones of inversion. In the light of this principle, there is no problem about what Freud provided us with as a reproduction of the Wolfman's phantasy.

You know this tree, this big tree and the wolves which are absolutely not wolves, there are five of them perched on this tree whereas elsewhere there is talk of seven of them.



If we had need of an exemplary image of what little o is here, at the limit of field (3) when its phallic radicality is manifested by a sort of singularity as accessible there where alone it can appear to us, namely when it approaches or when it may approach the outside field, (4) the field of what can be reflected, the field of that in which asymmetry may allow the specular error,

we have it here. Because it is clear at the same time that it is not of course the specular image of the Wolfman which is there before him, and that nevertheless - we have marked it moreover for a long enough time for this not to be a novelty - for the author of the work I am speaking about, it is the very image of that moment that the subject experiences as the primal scene. I mean that it is the very structure of the subject in front of this scene. I mean that before this scene, the subject makes himself into a wolf looking and makes himself into five wolves looking. What opens out suddenly to him from that night on, is (13) the return of what he essentially is in the fundamental phantasy.

No doubt the scene itself that is involved is veiled. We will return later to this veil. Of what he sees there only emerges this V, like a butterfly's wings, of the open legs of his mother or the Roman V of the time on the clock, this five o'clock of the hot summer when the encounter appears to have taken place. But the important thing, is what he sees in his phantasy, it is S barred itself in so far as it is cut of little o: the little o, are the wolves. And if I go through it today it is because alongside the difficult, abstract discourse that I do not despair of being able to carry, within the limits that we have, to its final details, this object of desire is illustrated here in a way that allows me to accede immediately to concrete elements of structure that I would have more didactic ways of exposing to you. But I do not have the time, and I pass here by way of this non-specular object which is the object of desire, this object which can be found at this frontier zone in function of the images of the subject - let us say to go quickly how many risks of confusion I have here - in the mirror which the big Other constitutes, let us say the space developed by the big Other; because it is necessary to take away this mirror to make of it this sort of mirror which is called, no doubt, not by chance, a witch's mirror. I mean mirrors with a certain concavity which involve in their inside a certain number of concentric ones in which you see your own image reflected as many times as there are mirrors in the big one. The fact is that this is what indeed happens. You have present in the phantasy something which is only definable, accessible along the paths of our experience or perhaps - I know nothing about it, and what is more I do not care about it - along the paths of experiences to which I alluded

earlier. What belongs to the nature of the object of desire and this is interesting because it is a logical reference the object connoted, circumscribed by the Eulerian circles - and I will show you the close structural relationship between the object of this function which is called class and the function of privation, I mean the first of the three terms that I articulated, as privation, frustration and castration. Only, what completely veils the veritable function of privation, even though one can approach it - it is from there that I started to give you the schema of universal and particular propositions. Remember, when I told you: "Every professor is literate" this does not mean that (14) there is only a single professor. The thing is still true for all that. The mainspring of privation, of privation as unary trait, as constituting the function of class is here sufficiently indicated.

But such is the function of dialectical reason - with all due respects to M Lévi-Strauss who believes that it is only a particular case of analytic reason - it is precisely that it does not allow his savage stages to be grasped except by starting with elaborated stages. Now this is not to say that the logic of classes is the savage state of the logic of the object of desire. If it has been possible to establish a logic of classes - I would ask you to consecrate our next meeting to this object - it is because there was the access that was refused to a logic of the object of desire; in other words, it is in the light of castration that one can understand the fruitfulness of the privative theme.

What I only wanted to indicate to you today, is this function which I mapped out for you a long time ago, to show it as exemplary of the most decisive, the cruelest incidences of the signifier in human life, when I told you: jealousy, sexual jealousy requires that the subject knows how to count. The lionesses of the little leonine group that I depicted for you in some zoo or other were manifestly not jealous of one another, because they did not know how to count. We put our finger here on something: it is that it is rather probable that the object as it is constituted at the level of desire, namely the object in function not of privation but of castration, is the only object that can really be numerical. I am not sure that this suffices to affirm that it is enumerable, but when I say that it is numerical I mean that it carries number with it as a quality.

One cannot be sure which one: here there are five in the schema and seven in the text; but what does it matter, there are surely not twelve! When I adventure into such indications, what allows me to do so? Here I tread softly; as in a hazardous interpretation: I await the response. I mean that in indicating this correlation to you, I am proposing to you to notice everything you may be letting pass in terms of the confirmation or of the eventual non-validation in what is presented, what is proposed to you.

(15) Of course you can trust me, I pushed a little bit farther the status of this relationship of the category of the object,

the object of desire with numeration.

But what makes me tread softly here, is that I can give myself time, content myself with telling you that we will see this subsequently, without it remaining for all that any less legitimate to indicate to you here a reference point which if you take it up may clarify certain facts. In any case in Freud's writings what we see at this level, is an image, the libido, he tells us, of the subject has emerged from the experience shattered, zersplittert, zerstort.

My dear friend Leclair does not read German, he did not put the German term in brackets and I did not have time to go and re-verify it. It is the same thing as the term splitting, refendu; the object manifested here in the phantasy carries the mark of what we have called on many occasions the splitting of the subject.

What we find, is undoubtedly here the same topological space which defines the object of desire, it is probable that this number being inherent is only the mark of the inaugural temporality which constitutes this field.

What characterises the double, is what one might call radical repetition; there is in its structure the fact of twice the circuit and the knot here constituted in this twofold circuit is at once this element of the temporal, temporal since in short the question remains open about the way in which developed time which forms part of our discourse is inserted into it; but it is also the essential term through which the logic constituted here is differentiated in an altogether veritable fashion from formal logic as it had subsisted intact in its prestige up to Kant. And this is the problem: where did this prestige come from, given its apparently absolutely dead character for us? The prestige of this logic was entirely in what we have reduced it to ourselves, namely the usage of letters.

The little a's and the little b's of the subject and of the predicate and of their reciprocal inclusion: it is all there. It never contributed anything to anybody; it never brought about the slightest progress in thinking, it remained fascinating (16) throughout the centuries as one of the rare examples which were given us of the power of thinking. Why? It is of no use, but it could serve for something. It would be enough - which is what we are doing - to re-establish the following which is a constitutive miscognition for it: $a = a$ is the principle of identity, this is its principle; we will not say 0 the signifier except to say that it is not the same big 0, the signifier is essentially different to itself, namely that nothing of the subject can be identified to it without excluding itself from it.

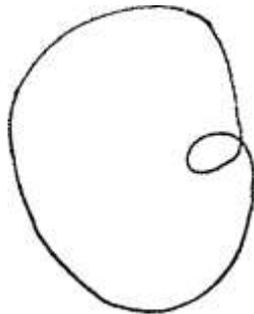
A very simple, almost obvious truth, which is enough just by itself to open up the logical possibility of the constitution of the object at the place of this splitting, at the very place even of this difference of the signifier to itself in its subjective effect.

How this object constitutive of the human world - because what it is a question of showing you, is that far from having the slightest aversion to this obvious psychological fact that the human being is likely to take, as one says, his desires for realities, it is here that we ought to follow him. Because since he is right at the beginning, it is only in the furrow opened by his desire that he can constitute any reality whatsoever which falls or not into the field of logic.

It is here that I will take things up the next time. (Applause)

Seminar 26: Wednesday 27 June 1962

Today in the context of the theoretical teaching that we have succeeded this year in going through together, I am indicating to you that I have to choose my axis, as I might say, and I will put the accent on the support-formula of the third type of identification which I noted for you a long time ago, since the time of the graph, under the form of $\$$ which you now know how to read as cut of big $i t o$ [or: cut of big O]. Not what is implicit, nodal in at namely the $\$$, the point thanks to which the eversion from one into the other can take place, thanks to which the two terms present themselves as identical, like the back and the front, not just any back whatsoever and not just any front. Otherwise I would not have needed to show you at the appropriate place what it is when it represents the double cut on this particular surface whose topology I tried to show you in the cross-cap.



This point designated here is the point (jj thanks to which the circle indicated by this little cut can be for us the mental schema of an original identification; this point - I believe I have sufficiently indicated its structural function in my last discourses - can, up to a certain point harbour for you too many satisfying properties; here is this phallus with this magical function which is indeed the one that our discourse for a long time now implies in it. It would be a little too easy to find (2) our final resting point here.

This is why today I want to put the accent on this point, namely on the function of o , the small o in so far as it is at the same time properly speaking what can allow there to be conceived the function of the object in analytic theory, namely this object which in psychical dynamics is what structures for us the whole progressive-regressive process, what we have to deal with in our relationships of the subject to his psychical reality, but is also our object, the object of analytic science.

And what I want to put in the foreground, in what I am going to say to you about it today, is that if we want to qualify this object in a properly logical perspective, I stress: logical (logicisante), we have nothing better to say about it except the fact that it is the object of castration. I mean by this, I specify, compared to the other functions of the object defined up to now. Because if one can say that the object in the world, in so far as it is discerned there, is the object of a privation, one can also say that the object is the object of frustration. And I am going to try to show you precisely how this object of ours is distinguished from it.

It is quite clear that if this object is an object of logic it cannot have been up to now completely absent, undisclosed in all the attempts made to articulate as such what is called logic.

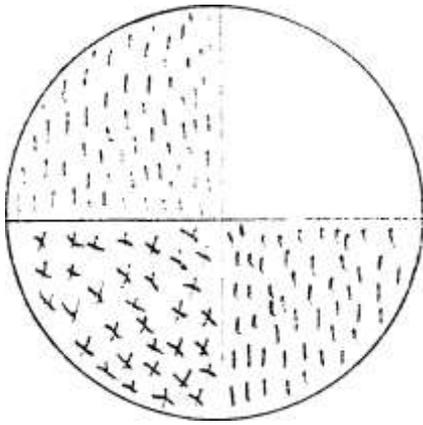
Logic has not always existed in the same form. The one which perfectly satisfied, fulfilled us up to Kant, who was still indulgent towards it, this formal logic, born one day from the pen of Aristotle exercised this captivation, this fascination until people devoted themselves, in the last century, to what could be revised in it in detail. It was noticed for example that many things were missing in it as regards quantification. It is certainly not what was added to it which is interesting, but the way it held us. And many of the things that people thought should be added to it only go in a singularly sterile direction.

In fact, it is in the reflection that analysis imposes on us as regards these powers of Aristotelian logic which were so (3) insistent for such a long time, that there can be presented for us the interest of logic. The gaze of someone who strips formal Aristotelian logic of all its so fascinating details must - I repeat to you - abstract itself from the decisive things it has contributed in terms of a cut in the mental world in order even to understand truly what preceded it, for example the possibility of the whole Platonic dialectic which is always read as if formal logic were already there, which completely distorts our reading of it. But let us leave this.

The Aristotelian object - because this indeed is what it must be called - has precisely, as I might say, the property of being able to have properties which belong to it alone: its attributes. And it is these that define classes.

Now this is a construction which he only owes to a confusion of what I would call - for want of anything better - the categories of being and having. This would deserve long developments and, in order to get you to take this step I am obliged to have recourse to an example which will serve as a support.

I already showed you this decisive function of the attribute in the dial: it is the introduction of the unary trait which distinguishes the phasic part where it will be said for example that every trait is vertical, which does not imply in itself the



existence of any trait, from the lexical part where there can be vertical traits, but in which there may not be any. To say that every trait is vertical must be the original structure, the function of universality, of universalisation proper to a logic founded on the trait of privation.

Pan is the whole, it evokes some echo or other of the God Pan; we have here one of these mental coalescences that I would ask you to make an effort to strike out of your papers. The name of the God Pan has absolutely nothing to do with the whole, and the panic effects at which he plays in the evening among the simple minds of the countryside have nothing to do with some mystical or other effusion.

The violent alcoholic impulse (raptus), described as panophobic by the old authors, is well named in the sense that something is also hunting him down, is disturbing him, and he jumps out the window. There is nothing to be put into it, it is an error of minds which are too Hellenic to bring to it this retouching with (4) which one of my old masters, whom I nevertheless was very fond of, brought us this rectification: "one ought to speak of pantophobic impulsive action (raptus)". Absolutely not, pan is indeed in effect the whole and, if this refers to something, it is to pagaodai, to possession. And perhaps I will find myself reprovéd if I link this step to the pos of possidero and of possum; but I have no hesitation at all in doing it.

The possession or not of the unary trait, of the characteristic trait, here is what the establishment of a new explicit classificatory logic of the sources of the Aristotelian object will revolve around. I am using this term "classificatoire" intentionally because it is thanks to Claude Lévi-Strauss that you have henceforth the corpus, the dogmatic articulation of the classificatory function at what he calls himself - I will leave the humorous responsibility of it to him - "the savage state", much closer to Platonic dialectic than to Aristotelian, the progressive division of the world into a series of halves, couples of antipodal terms which circumscribe it in types. Therefore, on this subject read La pensée sauvage, you will see that the essential depends on the following: what is not a hedgehog, but what you think should be a shrew or a marmot, is something else.

What characterises the structure of the Aristotelian object, is that what is not a hedgehog is a non-hedgehog. That is why I say that it is the logic of the object of privation.

This can take us much further, to this sort of evasion through which the problem is always posed sharply in this logic of the veritable function of the excluded middle which you know causes

problems at the heart of the most elaborated logic, of mathematical logic.

But we are dealing with a beginning, with a more simple kernel, which I would like to depict for you, as I told you, by an example. And I will not go looking for it very far, but in a proverb which presents in the French tongue a particularity which nevertheless does not spring to the eye, at least for French speakers, the proverb is the following: "All that glitters is not gold, tout ce qui brille n'est pas or".

In colloquial German for example, you must not believe that you can be satisfied with crudely transcribing it: "alles was glanz ist keine Gold". This would not be a good translation. I see Melle Uberfreit nodding approval as she listens to me; she approves of what I am saying: "nicht alles was glanz ist Gold".

(5) This may give greater satisfaction as regards its apparent meaning, putting the accent on the alles, thanks to an anticipation of the nicht which is not at all usual, which forces the genius of the tongue and which, if you reflect on it, misses the sense, because this is not the distinction that is involved.

I could use the Eulerian circles, the same ones that we used the other day in connection with the relationship of the subject to some case or other: all men are liars. Is it simply this that that signifies? The fact is, to recover myself here, a part of what glitters is in the circle of gold and another part is not there. Is that the meaning?



You must not believe that I am the first among the logicians to have paused at this structure and in truth, more than one author who has occupied himself with negation has paused in effect at this point, not at all so much from the point of view of formal logic, which, as you see, scarcely pauses at it except in order to miscognise it from the point of view of grammatical form, insisting on

the fact that the circuits are ordered in such a fashion that there is precisely put in question the "goldness", if I may express myself in this way, the golden quality of what glitters. The authenticity of the gold goes then in the direction of a radical putting into question; gold here is symbolic of what makes glitter, and if I can put it this way in order to make myself understood, I stress, what gives an object the fascinating colour of desire.

What is important in a formula like this, if I can express myself in this way - forgive me the play on words - is the point d'ORage [the eye of the storm, the golden point] around which there turns the question of what makes something glitter, and in a word, the question of how much truth there is in this glittering.

And, starting from there, of course no gold is going to be true enough to guarantee this point around which there subsists the function of desire.

Such is the radical characteristic of this sort of object that I call small o: it is the object put into question, in so far as one can say that it is what interests us, us analysts, as what (6) interests someone listening to any teaching. It is not for nothing that I saw nostalgia arising on the lips of the person who wanted to say: "Why does he not say", as someone put it, "the truth about the truth?". It is truly a great tribute to a discourse which takes place every week in this senseless position of being here behind a table in front of you articulating this sort of account which one is quite content normally to see always avoiding such a question.

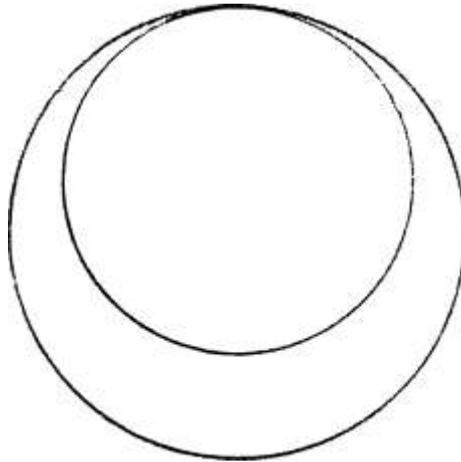
If it were not a matter of the analytic object, namely the object of desire, raising such a question would never even be dreamt of, except on the lips of a Huron who might imagine that when one comes to the University it is in order to know "the truth about the truth". Now this is what is involved in analysis. One could say that it is the mirage of this that we are, often in spite of ourselves, embarrassed to polish up in the spirit of those to whom we address ourselves. We find ourselves, I am really saying, embarrassed, like the poison of the proverbial apple; and nevertheless it is really what is there, this is what we are dealing with, it is on it, in so far as it is at the heart of the structure, it is on it that there is brought to bear what we call castration.

It is precisely in so far as there is a hard, suggestive structure which turns around a kind of cut - the one which I represented for you in this way - that there is at the heart of phantastical identification this organizing object, this inducing object. And it could not be otherwise as regards the whole world of anxiety with which we have to deal, which is the object defined as object of castration.

Here I want to remind you about the surface from which there is borrowed this part which I described for you the last time as enucleated, which gives the very image of the circle in terms of which this object can be defined. I want to image for you what the property of this circle with the double circuit is. Magnify progressively the two lobes of this cut so that they both pass, as I might say, behind the anterior surface. There is nothing new about that, it is the way I already demonstrated to you of displacing this cut. One has only in effect to displace it and one makes it appear very easily that the complementary part of the surface, with respect to what is isolated around what one can call the two central leaves, or the two petals, to make them connect up with one another - the inaugural metaphor of the cover of Claude Lévi-Strauss' book, with this very image - what remains is an apparent lotus-surface.

It is the same figure that you rediscover here. What is found in effect between the two poles displaced in this way from the

two loops (boucles) of the cut, at the moment that these two edges come close together, is a lotus-surface. But what I want to show you here, is that in order that this double cut should connect up, close on itself, which is what seems to be indicated in its very structure, you should spread little by little the interior loop of the interior eight. This indeed is what you hope for from it, it is that it will be satisfied by its own overlapping of itself, that it fits into some sort of norm, that one knows what one is dealing with, what is outside and what is inside, which this state of the figure shows you, because you clearly see how it must be seen.



This lobe has been extended from the other side, it has spread onto the other face 2; it visibly shows us that the outside loop is going, on this surface, to rejoin the inside loop on condition that it passes by the outside. The surface of projective planes is completed, closed, finished. The object defined as our object, the object which forms the world of desire only rejoins its intimacy by a centrifugal path.

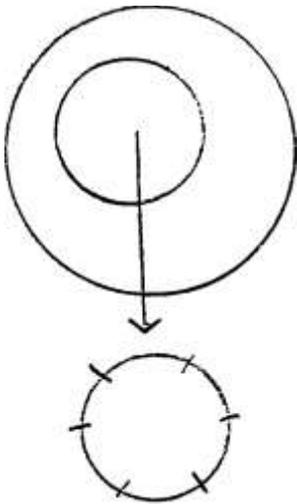
What does that mean? What do we find there? I am taking things from further back. The function of this object is linked to the relationship through which the subject is constituted in his relationship to the locus of the Other, big O, which is the locus where there is ordered the reality of the signifier. It is at the point where every significance is missing, is abolished, at the nodal point called that of the desire of the Other, at the phallic point, in so far as it signifies the abolition as such of all significance, that the object little o, the object of castration, comes to take its place.

There is therefore a relationship to the signifier, and that is why here again I must remind you of the definition from which I began this year concerning the signifier: the signifier is not the sign: and the ambiguity of the Aristotelian attribute, is (7) precisely to want to naturalise it, or to make the sign natural: "every tricoloured cat is female". The signifier, as I told you, is, contrary to the sign which represents something for

someone, what represents the subject for another signifier. And there is no better example than the seal.

What is a seal? The day after the day when I gave you this formula, it happened that a friend of mine who is an antique dealer put into my hands a little Egyptian seal, which, in an unusual way but one which is not rare either, was in the shape of a sole with, on the top, the toes and the back drawn in. The seal, as you will have understood, I found in the texts, it is indeed that: a trace as one might say - and it is true that nature abounds in them - but this can only become a signifier if you go around this trace with a pair of scissors and cut it out. If you extract the trace afterwards, it can become a seal. And I think that the example already sufficiently illuminates things for you: a seal represents the subject, the sender - not necessarily for the addressee: a letter can always remain sealed; but the seal is there: for the letter, it is a signifier.

Well then, the object little o, the object of castration participates in the nature thus exemplified of this signifier. It is an object structured like that. In fact, you will notice that at the end of what the centuries have been able to dream up about the function of knowledge, that is all we have in our hand. In nature, there is something of the thing (de la chose), if I can express myself in that way, which is presented with an edge. Everything that we can conquer in it, which simulates a knowledge is never anything more than detaching this edge and not to make



use of it, but to forget it in order to see the remainder which, a curious thing, finds itself completely transformed by this extraction, exactly as the cross-cap images it for you, namely, do not forget what a cross-cap is. It is a sphere. I already told you; it is necessary, one cannot do without the bottom of this sphere. It is a sphere with a hole, which you organise in a certain way, and you can very well imagine that it is by pulling on one of the edges that you make appear, more or less by holding onto it, this something which is going to block the hole provided you realise that each of these points is joined to the opposite point, which naturally creates

(8) considerable intuitive difficulties and ones which even obliged us to carry out the whole construction that I detailed before you, in the shape of the cross-cap imaged in space.

So what? What is the important thing? It is that, by this operation which is produced at the level of the hole, the remainder of the sphere is transformed into a Mobius surface by the enucleation of the object of castration. The entire world is ordered in a certain fashion, which gives us, as I might say, the illusion of being a world. And I would even say that, in a certain fashion, to make an intermediary state between this

Aristotelian object where this reality is in a way masked and our object that I am trying here to put forward for you, I would introduce into the middle this object which inspires in us at the same time the greatest mistrust because of the inherited prejudices of an epistemological education, but which is of course our great temptation - those of us in analysis, if we had not had the existence of Jung to exorcise it we would perhaps not even notice the degree to which we still believe in it - it is the object of Naturwissenschaft, it is the Goethean object, as I might say, the object which in nature reads, ceaselessly like an open book all the figures of an intention that would have to be called quasi-divine if the term God had not been so well preserved from another side.

This, let us say it, demonic rather than divine Goethean intuition which made him moreover read in the skull found on the Lido the completely imaginary shape of Werther or forge the theory of colours, in short leaves for us the traces of an activity of which the least one can say is that it is cosmogenic, engendering the oldest illusions of the micro-macroscopic analogy and nevertheless still captivating for a spirit so close to us.

What does that depend on? To what do we attribute the exceptional fascination that the personal drama of Goethe exercises on us if not to the flowering as central to that drama, in his case, of desire. "Warum Goethe liebt Frederique?" wrote, as you know, in an article, one of the survivors of the first generation, Theodor Reik.

The specificity and the fascinating character of Goethe's personality is that in it we read in all its presence the identification of the object of desire to what must be renounced (9) in order that the world as world should be delivered to us.

I very sufficiently recalled the structure of this case by showing in it the analogy with the one developed by Freud in the story of the Ratman, in "The individual myth of the neurotic". Or rather it was published somewhere without my consent, because I neither revised nor corrected this text, which makes it almost unreadable; nevertheless it has been hanging around here and there and one can find the broad lines of it

In this complementary relationship of o, the object of a constitutive castration where our object as such is situated, with this remainder and where we cannot read everything, and especially our figure i(o), it is this that I tried to illustrate this year for you at the high point of my discourse.

In the specular illusion, in the fundamental miscognition with which we always have to deal, does o takes on the function of specular image under the form of i of o even though, as I might say it has no similarity with it. It could not in any way read its image in it for the good reason that, if this \bar{i} is something, it is not the complement of small i factor of small o, it could just as well be the cause of it, we will say - and I am employing this term intentionally, because for some time

precisely, ever since the categories of logic have been shaken a little, cause - good or bad - has not in any case had a good press and people prefer to avoid speaking about it.

And in effect there is scarcely anybody but we who can find our way in this function whose ancient shade in short one cannot approach after the mental progress that has taken place, except by seeing in it some sort of identical of everything that is manifested as effects, but when they are still veiled. And of course this has nothing satisfying about it, except perhaps if precisely it is not by being at the place of something, by cutting all its effects, that the cause sustains its drama. If there is as well moreover a cause which is worth our while becoming attached to, at least by our attention, it is not always and in advance a lost cause.

Therefore we can articulate that if there is something on which we ought to put the accent rather than avoiding it, it is that (10) the function of the partial object could not in any way be reduced for us, if what we call partial object is what designates the point of repression because of its loss.

And it is starting from there that there takes root the illusion of the cosmicity of the world. This acosmic point of desire in so far as it is designated by the object of castration, is what we ought to preserve as the pivotal point, the centre of every elaboration of what we have to accumulate as facts concerning the constitution of the objectal world. But this object \circ that we see arising at the point of the failure of the Other, at the point of the loss of the signifier because this loss is the loss of this object itself, of the never rediscovered member of the dismembered Horus, how can we not give this object what I will call by way of parody its reflexive property, as I might say, because it is from it that it starts, that it is in as much as the subject is first of all and uniquely essentially cutting of this object that something can be born which is this interval between the flesh and the hide between Wahrnehmung and Bewusstsein, between perception and consciousness which is Selbstbewusstsein. It is here that it is worth stating its place in an ontology founded on our experience. You will see that it rejoins here a formula commented on at length by Heidegger, in its pre-Socratic origin.

The relationship of this object to the image of the world which orders it, constitutes what Plato called properly speaking the dyad provided we notice that in this dyad the subject $\$$ barred and the \circ are at the same side: to auto einai kai noiig. This formula which for a long time was used to confuse what is not sustainable, being and knowledge, means nothing other than that.

Compared to the correlative little \circ , to what remains when the constitutive object of the phantasy has separated itself, being and thinking are on the same side, on the side of \circ . Small \circ is being in so far as it is essentially missing in the text of the world. And that is why around little \circ there can slide everything that is called the return of the repressed, namely

that here there is betrayed the true truth which interests us and which is always the object of desire, in so far as the whole of humanity, the whole of humanism is constructed to make us miss it.

We know from our experience that nothing has any veritable weight in the world except something which makes an allusion to this object of which the Other, big O takes the place to give it a (11) meaning.

Every metaphor, including that of the symptom tries to make this object emerge in its signification, but all the pullulation of meanings that it may engender never manages to staunch what is involved in this hole in terms of a central loss.

Here is what regulates the relationships of the subject with the Other, O, what regulates secretly but in a fashion which is surely not less efficacious than this relationship of small o to the imaginary reflection which covers and surmounts it. In other words that on the road, the only one that is open to us to rediscover the incidence of this little o, we encounter first of all the mark of the occultation of the Other, under the same desire.

Such in effect is the way: o can be approached along this way which is that the Other, with a big O, desires in the failing subject, in the phantasy, the \$ barred. This is why I taught you that the fear of desire is experienced as equivalent to anxiety, that anxiety is the fear of what the Other in himself desires of the subject, this "in himself" founded precisely on the ignorance of what is desired at the level of the Other. It is from the side of the Other that the little o comes to light, not so much as lack but as to be.

This is why we come here to pose the question of its relationship to the thing, not the sacred one, but what I described to you as das Ding. You know that in leading you to this limit I did nothing other than indicate to you that here the perspective is inverted, this small i of small o which envelopes this access to the object of castration is here the very image which creates an obstacle in the mirror, or rather, in the way it happens in obscure mirrors - one must always think of this obscurity every time that in the ancient authors you see intervening a reference to the mirror - something can appear beyond the image that the clear mirror gives. It is to the image of the clear mirror that there is hooked on this barrier which I called at the time that of beauty. Moreover the revelation of little o beyond this image, even if it appears under the most horrible form, will always preserve its reflection.

And it is here that I would like to share with you the happiness (12) that I had in encountering these thoughts in the writings of someone whom I consider to be quite simply the poet of our literature, who has certainly gone further than anyone in the present or the past along the path of the realisation of the phantasy. I am talking about Maurice Blanchot whose death

sentence was for me for a long time the surest confirmation of what I was saying for a whole year in the seminar on Ethics about the second death.

I had not read the second version of his first work Thomas l'Obscur. I think that none of you, after what I am going to read you of it, will fail to test yourselves against such a small volume. Something is encountered there which incarnates the image of this object o, in connection with which I spoke about horror; it is the term that Freud uses when he is dealing with the Ratman. Here it is something about rats that is involved.

Georges Bataille wrote a long essay which turns around the well-known central phantasy of Marcel Proust, which also concerns a rat: Histoire de rat. But do I need to tell you that if Apollo riddles the Greek army with the arrows of the plague, it is because, as M Gregoire very well noted, if Aesclepius, as I taught you a long time ago is a mole - not so long ago I discovered the plan of a molehill in a tolos (?), a further one that I visited recently - if then Aesclepius is a mole, Apollo is a rat.

Here it is. I am anticipating, or more exactly I am taking Thomas l'Obscur a little earlier on - it is not by chance that he is called that -:

"And in his room, those who entered, seeing his book always open at the same pages, thought he was pretending to read. He read with an unsurpassable minuteness and attention. He was aware of every sign of the situation that the male finds himself in when the praying mantis is going to devour him. They were looking at one another. The words, issuing from a book took on there a mortal power, exercised on the look which touched them a soft and peaceful attraction. Each one of them, like a half-closed eye, allowed there to enter a too lively gaze that in other circumstances it would not have tolerated.

Thomas slipped along then towards these corridors which he approached without defence until the moment he was (13) glimpsed by the intimacy of the word. It was not yet terrifying, it was on the contrary an almost agreeable moment that he would have liked to prolong. The reader joyously considered this little spark of life which he did not doubt he had awoken. He saw himself with pleasure in this eye which saw him; his pleasure itself became very great, it became so great, so pitiless that he underwent it with a sort of terror and that having raised himself up, an intolerable moment, without receiving from his interlocutor a sign of complicity, he perceived the whole strangeness that there was in being observed by a word as if by a living being. And not alone by a word, but by all those which accompanied it and which in their turn contained in themselves other words, like a succession of angels opening out to infinity even to the very eye of the absolute."

I will pass over the steps which go by way of this "while perched on his shoulders the word it and the word I began their carnage", to the confrontation that I was aiming at in evoking this passage for you:

"His hands tried to touch an impalpable and unreal body. It was such a horrible effort that this thing which drew away from him and in drawing away tried to attract him, appeared to him the same as the one that got unspeakably closer. He fell to the ground. He had the feeling of being covered with impurities, each part of his body underwent an agony, his face was forced to touch evil, his lungs to breathe it. He was there on the floor, twisting himself, then entering into himself, then emerging. He crawled heavily scarcely different from the serpent that he would have wished to become in order to believe in the venom that he felt in his mouth. It was in this state that he felt himself bitten or struck, he could not know which, by what seemed to him to be a word but which resembled rather a gigantic rat, with piercing eyes, with pure teeth, an all-powerful beast. Seeing it a few inches from his face he could not escape from the desire to devour it, to draw it into the most profound intimacy with himself; he threw himself on it and digging his nails into its entrails, he tried to make it his own.

(14) The end of the night came. The light which shone through the shutters was extinguished. But the struggle with the terrible beast, which had finally revealed itself to be of an incomprehensible dignity and magnificence lasted for an immeasurable time. This struggle was horrible for the being lying on the floor grinding his teeth, frowning his face, tearing out his eyes in order to get the animal to enter, and who would have looked like a demon if he had not resembled a man. It was almost too beautiful for this sort of black angel, covered with red hairs, with sparkling eyes.

Sometimes one believed he had triumphed and he saw descending into himself with an ungovernable nausea, the word innocence defiling him; sometimes the other devoured him in his turn, dragged him back through the hole through which it had come, then rejected him like a hard and empty body.

On every occasion, Thomas was repulsed to the very foundations of his being by the very words which had haunted him and which he had pursued like his nightmare and like the explanation of his nightmare. He discovered himself still more empty and more heavy, he no longer stirred except with an infinite fatigue. His body, after such a struggle became entirely opaque and to those who regarded it, he gave the restful impression of sleep even though he had been ceaselessly awake."

You can read the rest yourselves.

And the path of what Maurice Blanchot uncovers for us does not stop there. If I took the trouble here to indicate this passage to you, it is because as the time comes for me to leave you this year I want to tell you that I am often aware of doing nothing here other than allowing you to advance with me to the point that all around us many of the best people have already got to.

Other people have noted the parallel between some of the researchs that are being carried on at present and the ones that we are elaborating here together. I would have no trouble reminding you that on other paths, the works and then the reflections on the works by himself of Pierre Klossowski converge with this path of research into phantasy as we have elaborated it (15) this year.

Small i of small o and small o, their difference, their complementarity and the mask that one constitutes for the other, this is where I have led you this year. Small i of small o, its image, is therefore not its image, it does not represent it, this object of castration. It is not in any way this representative of the drive on which repression is brought to bear electively. And for a double reason: the fact is that it is not, this image, either the Vorstellung because it is itself an object, a real image - consult what I wrote on this subject in my observations on the report of Daniel Lagache, - nor an object which is not the same as small o, which is not its representative either. i(o) and o.

Desire, you must not forget, is situated where in the graph? It aims at the phantasy \$ barred out of little o, in a mode analogous to that of e where the ego refers itself to the specular image. What does that mean, if not that there is some relationship of this phantasy to the desirer himself. \$4 o

But can we make of this desirer purely and simply the agent of desire? Let us not forget that at the second stage of the graph d, desire is a "who" who responds to a question, which is not aimed at a "who", but a "Che vuoi?". To the question: "Che vuoi?" the desirer is the response, the response which is not designated by the who of "who wants?", but the response of the object. What I want in the phantasy determines the object from which the desirer that it contains must avow himself as desirer.

Look for him always, this desirer, at the core of any object of desire, and do not put up necrophilic perversion as an objection because precisely this is the example where it is proved that on this side of (en-deca) the second death physical death still leaves something to be desired and that the body allows itself be grasped there as entirely caught up in the function of the signifier, separated from itself and a witness to what the necrophilic embraces: an ungraspable truth.

This relationship of the object to the signifier, before leaving you, let us come back to the point that these reflections are based on, namely to what Freud himself marked about the identification of desire (in parentheses in the case of the

hysteric) to the desire of the Other. The hysteric shows us clearly in effect the distance between this object and the signifier, this distance which I defined by the lack of the signifier but implying its relation to the signifier. In effect, it is to this that the hysteric identifies herself when, Freud tells us, it is the desire of the Other with regard to which she orientates herself and which started her hunting.

(16) And, it is on this that the affects, he tells us, the emotions considered here in his writing as entangled, if I may express myself in this way, with the signifier, and taken up as such. It is in this connection that he tells us that all the confirmed emotions, what I might call the conventional forms of emotion are nothing other than ontogenetic inscriptions of what he compares, of what he reveals as expressly equivalent to hysterical attacks, which is to come back to the relationship to the signifier.

The emotions are in a way the leavings (caduques) of behaviour, the fallen parts taken up as signifying. And what is most tangible, everything that we can see about them, is found in antique forms of fighting. Let those who have seen the film Rashomon remember the strange interludes which suddenly suspend the combatants who carry out each one separately three little circuits around themselves, make a paradoxical genuflection to some unknown part or other of space. This forms part of the fight, just as in the sexual parade Freud teaches us to recognise this type of interruptive paradox of incomprehensible scansions.

If something about emotions is shown to us in the case of the hysteric, it is precisely when she is on the track of desire, it is this clearly mimicked characteristic which is described as being out of place, which deceives you and from which you draw an impression of falseness. What does it mean, if not that the hysteric of course can do nothing other than seek the desire of the Other where it is, where it leaves its trace in the other, in Utopia, or indeed in atopia, distress, even fiction; in short it is along the path of display as one might expect, that all the symptomatic aspects are shown. And if these symptoms find this path already opened out, it is in liaison with this relationship that Freud designates to the desire of the Other.

I had something else to point out to you about frustration. Of course, what I brought you this year about the relationship to the body, what is only outlined in the way in which I gave you in a mathematical corpus the beginnings of all sorts of paradoxes concerning the idea that we can have of the body, finds its applications undoubtedly well designed to modify profoundly the idea that we may have of frustration as a sort of lack which concerns a gratification referred to what is supposed to be a so-called primitive totality as people would like to see it (17) designated in the relationships of the mother and the child.

It is strange that analytic thinking has never encountered on this path except as always in corners of Freud's observations - and here I am designating the word Schleier - this caul with

which the child is born and which hangs around analytical literature without it being ever dreamt that we had here the beginning of a very fruitful path: the stigmata.

If there is something which allows some primary narcissism or other to be conceived of as involving a totality - and here I can only regret that someone who posed me the question has absented himself - it is undoubtedly the reference of the subject, not so much to the body of the host mother, but to these lost envelopes where there is so well read this continuity between the inside and the outside, which is the one to which my model of this year introduced you, to which we will have to return.

Simply I want to indicate to you, because we will rediscover it subsequently, that if there is something in which there ought to be accentuated the relationship to the body, to incorporation, to Einverleibung, it is on the side of the father who is entirely left to one side that you should look.

I left him entirely to one side because I would have had to introduce you - but when will I do it - to a whole tradition which is called mystical and which undoubtedly, by its presence in the Semitic tradition, dominates the whole personal adventure of Freud.

But if there is something that one demands of the mother, does it not appear to you to be striking that it should be the only thing that she does not have, namely the phallus? The whole dialectic of these last years, up to and including the Kleinian dialectic, which nevertheless gets closest to it, remains falsified because the accent is not put on this essential divergence. The fact is moreover that it is impossible to correct it, impossible also to understand anything about what constitutes the impasse of the analytic relationship, and very especially in the transmission of analytic truth as didactic analysis carries it out. The fact is that it is impossible to introduce into it the relationship to the father, that one is not the father of one's analysand. I have said enough and done enough to ensure that no-one would dare any longer, at least in any entourage that is close to mine, risk advancing that one can be his mother. This nevertheless is what is involved.

(18) The function of analysis as it is inserted where Freud left it to us with its open future, its gaping trace, is situated where the pen fell from his hand in connection with the article on the splitting of the ego at the ambiguous point which brings the following; the object of castration is this term which is ambiguous enough for it to happen that at the very moment that the subject has busied himself with repressing it he establishes it more firmly than ever in an Other.

So long as we have not recognised that this object of castration is the very object through which we situate ourselves in the field of science, I mean that it is the object of our science as number or quantity may be the object of mathematics, the dialectic of analysis, not only its dialectic but its practice,

its relationship even and even the structure of its community will remain in suspense.

Next year, I will deal for you, pursuing strictly the point at which I left you today, with anxiety.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK V

The Formations of the Unconscious

1957 - 1958

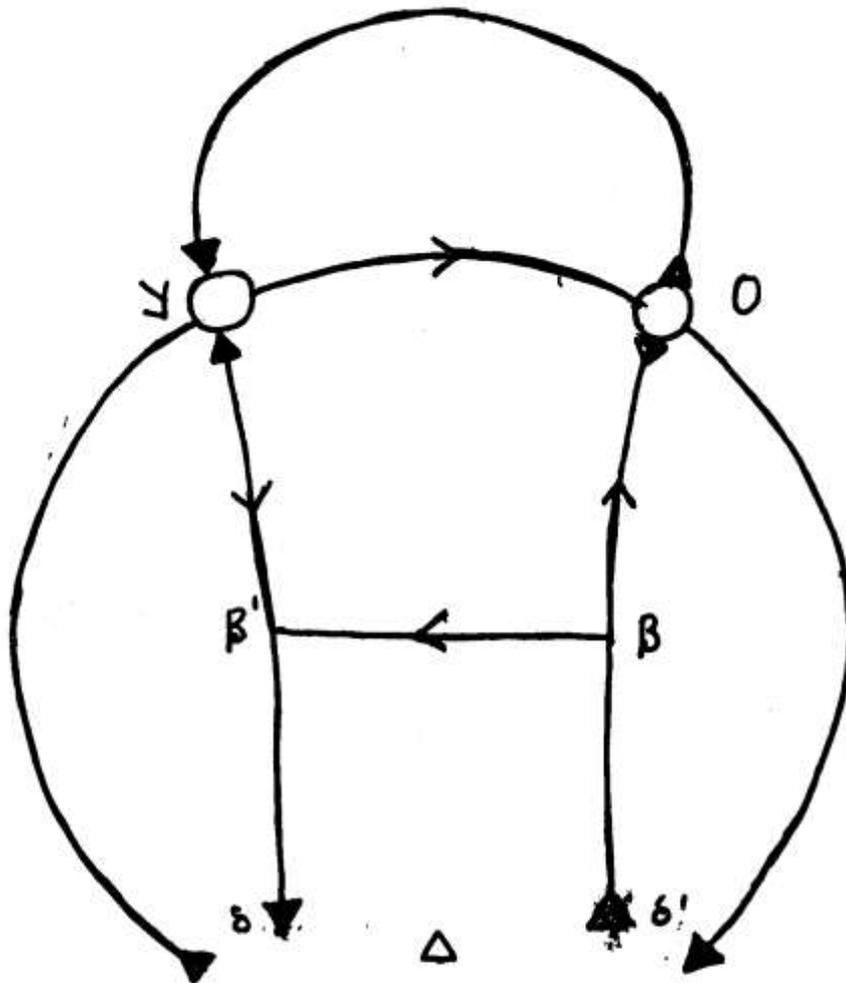
Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

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SCHEMA OF 6 November 1957.

from J.-B. Pontalis

Bulletin de Psychologie
1957-58, tome XI
n°4-5, pp 293-6



1st Application

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Circuit | $\delta y O \delta'$ | - | Signifying Chain |
| Circuit | $O \beta \beta' y$ | - | Chain of Discourse |
| | y | - | Message - Locus of METAPHOR |
| | O | - | Other - Locus of CODE |
| | β' | - | Metonymical Object |
| | β | - | "I" of Discourse |

Notes

-  INITIAL VECTORS
-  Terminal VECTORS
-  Intermediale VECTORS

Seminar 1; Wednesday 6 November 1957

This year we have taken the formations of the unconscious as the theme of our seminaire.

Those of you - I think it was the majority - who were at the scientific meeting last night are already on the correct wavelength, in the sense that you know the questions we are going to ask, this time directly, about the function in the unconscious of what we have in previous years elaborated as being the role of the signifier.

A certain number of you - I am only expressing myself in this way because my ambitions are modest - have I hope read the article in the third number of La Psychanalyse which I called "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious". Those who have had the courage to do so will be well placed, in any case better placed than the others, to follow what we shall be talking about. In a way it is a modest enough ambition for me to have that you who go (2) to the trouble of coming to listen to me should also go to the trouble of reading what I write, because after all it is for you that I write it. Those who have not done so would all the same be well advised to consult it, especially since I am going to be continually referring to it. I am obliged to take as known things that have already been stated.

Finally, for those who have made none of these preparations, I am going to tell you what I am going to limit myself to today, what is going to be the object of this introductory lecture to our subject matter.

First of all I am going to recall for you in a necessarily brief, necessarily allusive fashion - since I cannot begin everything over again - some points that punctuate, in a way, what the previous years have begun or have announced regarding what I have to say to you about the function of the signifier in the unconscious.

Then, in order to give some respite to those whom this brief recall may have left a little out of breath, I shall explain the meaning of this schema to which we shall have to refer for all our subsequent theoretical experience this year.

Finally, I will take an example, the first example that Freud uses in his book on jokes, not to illustrate it, but to introduce it, because a joke is always something particular, there is no such thing as a joke occurring in a vacuum, in the abstract.

(3) And I will begin to demonstrate in this connection how the

witticism turns out to be the best way of getting into our subject matter, which is the formations of the unconscious. Not only is it the best way of getting into the subject but I would also say that it is the most brilliant form in which Freud himself shows the relationship of the unconscious to the signifier and to its techniques.

Let me remind you then in the first place, since I have given you my three parts so that you can have a certain grasp of what I am going to explain and also economize your mental effort, that the first year of my séminaire consisted essentially, in the context of Freud's technical writings, in introducing you to the notion of the function of the symbolic as being the only function capable of accounting for what can be called the determination of meaning, this being the reality which we must hold onto as being fundamental in the Freudian experience

So that, if I may remind you, the determination of meaning in this case is nothing other than a rational definition. This rationality is at the foundation of the possibility of analysis. It is precisely because a thing has been bound to something like (4) a word that discourse can unbind it.

In this connection I stressed the distance that separates this word when it is full of the being of the subject from the empty discourse that drones on beneath human actions, that themselves are made impenetrable by the imagination of those motives which become irrational, precisely in so far as they have only been rationalized in the perspective of egoistic méconnaissance.

That the ego itself should be a function of the symbolic relation and can be affected by it in its density, in its synthetic functions, which are also the products of a captivating mirage, is, I also recalled to you in the first year, only possible because of the gap opened up in the human being by the original biological presence in him of death, due to what I have called the prematurity of birth.

This is the point of impact where the symbolic intrudes, and this is where we had arrived at the junction of my first and my second séminaire.

Let me recall that the second séminaire highlighted the factor of repetitive insistence as coming from the unconscious. A repetitive consistency which we identified with the structure of a signifying chain. This is what I tried to help you see by giving you a model in the form of a syntax called o(**8** Jf ^ in (5) which you have a statement that despite the criticisms, some justified, that it has received - there are two little lacks that must be corrected in a future edition - seems to me to be a brief resume of the subject matter of this syntax, which should be of assistance to you for a long time to come. I am even convinced that it will be modified as time goes by and that you will find fewer difficulties in it if you look at it in a few months time, or even at the end of this year, rather than now.

I am only recalling to you what was involved in this syntax to respond also to the praiseworthy efforts that some of your number have made to lessen its importance. It was in any case an opportunity for them to test themselves against it. Indeed this is precisely all that I am trying to achieve, so that in the end whatever impasse they found in it, it helped them to do that much. It assisted the mental gymnastics that we will confront again in this year's work. I would like to point out that of course, as those who have given themselves the trouble of doing all this work have stressed to me, and have even written, each one of these terms is marked by a fundamental ambiguity, but that it is precisely this ambiguity that gives the example its value.

Moreover, we have in this way made our entry into groups, onto the path of what in our day makes up the speculation of the (6) research into groups and sets, since their starting point is essentially based on the principle of beginning with complex structures, within which simple structures only appear as particular cases. Now in fact I am not going to remind you how these little letters originated, but it is certain that we end up after the manipulations that allow us to define them, at something very simple. Each one of these letters being defined by the relationship between one another of two couples each having two terms - the couple of the symmetrical and the asymmetrical, of the asymmetrical and the symmetrical, and then of the couple of the similar to the dissimilar, and of the dissimilar to the similar.

We have then the minimal group of four signifiers that have as a property that each one of them can be analysed in terms of its relations with three others. Namely, to confirm the path taken by analysts - Jacobson and also his own statement when I met him recently - that the minimal group of signifiers necessary to establish the initial elementary conditions for what can be called linguistic analysis.[?] But you will see that this linguistic analysis has the closest possible relationship with what we simply call analysis, and that they even overlap. They are not essentially different things, when we look at them closely enough.

(7) In the third year of my séminaire we spoke about psychosis in so far as it is based on a primordial signifying lack, and we showed how it comes about that the real is subverted when, drawn along by a vital invocation, it comes to take its place in that lack of the signifier which was spoken of last night under the name of Verwerfung, and which I agree is not a concept that is without its difficulties. That is why we shall have to come back to it this year, but I think that what you have learned in the séminaire on psychosis is, if not the final source, at least the essential mechanism of this reduction of the Other, the big Other, the Other as locus of the word, to the imaginary other; this substitution for the symbolic by the imaginary, and even the way that we can conceive the effect of total strangeness of the real that is produced in the moments of the breakdown of the delusional dialogue, which is the only way that the psychotic can

sustain in himself what we call a certain intransitivity of the subject, something that appears for us to be completely natural: "I think, therefore I am", we say intransitively. But of course this is the difficulty for the psychotic, precisely to the degree that a reduction occurs in the twofold nature of the Other and the other, of the Other as the locus of the word and the guarantor of the truth, and of the dual other who is the one before whom he discovers himself as being his own image. The (8) disappearance of this duplicity is precisely what makes it so difficult for the psychotic to maintain himself in human reality, that is to say in symbolic reality.

Let me finally recall that in this third year I illustrated the dimension of what I call dialogue in so far as it permits the subject to sustain himself, by the example of nothing other than the first scene of *Athalia*. It is a seminar that I would have liked to have gone back to in order to write it up, if I had had the time. Nevertheless I am sure that you have not forgotten the extraordinary dialogue of Abner who is put forward here as the prototype of the treacherous friend, the double agent. He comes as it were to sound things out in the first statement he makes:

"Yes, I have come into the temple"

This has overtones of a certain attempt at seduction. You have to admire it as something extraordinary. It is true of course that the reverential fashion that we have treated it makes us forget almost all these resonances. I stressed for you the way the high priest used some essential signifiers: "The gods remain faithful", "in all their threats", "the promise of heaven", and "why do you give up". The term heaven and some other wellchosen words are essentially nothing other than pure signifiers, and I stressed for you their absolute emptiness. You could say that he (9) skewered his adversary, in such a way that he makes of him from then on nothing more than this derisory worm who goes back to take up his place again, as I told you, in the ranks of the procession, and to serve as a lure for *Athalia* who, as you know, will end this little game by dying.

This relation of the signifier to the signified, so visible, so palpable in this dramatic dialogue, is something that I brought forward in referring to the famous schema of Ferdinand de Saussure: the flux, or more exactly the double parallel stream - this is how he represents it to us - of the signifier and the signified as being distinct and destined to slide perpetually one over the other. It was in this connection that I constructed the images of the technique of the upholsterer, of the buttoning point, since it is necessary that some point of the fabric of one should attach itself to the fabric of the other. So that we are able to grasp at least something about the possible limits of the sliding, the buttoning points allow some elasticity in the links between the two terms.

This is the point that we will take up again when I have evoked for you the function served by the fourth year of the séminaire, when I will have shown you in a way that is parallel and

symmetrical to this - and it was at this point that the dialogue between Joad and Abner culminated - that there is no true subject who can sustain himself, unless he speaks in the name of the word, in the name of speech. You will not have forgotten the (10) plane on which Joad speaks:

"Here is how God answers you through my mouth."

There is no subject other than in a reference to that Other. This is symbolic of what exists in every word worthy of the name.

In the same way in the fourth year of the seminaire, I tried to show you that there is no object that is not metonymical, the object of desire being the object of the desire of the other, and desire always being desire of something else, precisely of what is lacking in the object that has been primordially lost, in so far as Freud shows it as something that has always to be rediscovered. Likewise the only meaning that exists is metaphorical, a meaning that only arises from the substitution of a signifier for another signifier in the symbolic chain.

This is precisely what was meant in the work that I spoke about above, and that I invited you to consult, ^B "The agency of the letter in the unconscious". In the following symbols of metaphor and metonymy respectively, S is linked in the combination of the chain to S₁, and the whole with reference to which culminates in the fact the S, in its metonymical function, is in a certain metonymical relationship with s in signification

$$F (S \dots S_1) S_2 = S (-) s$$

Likewise, it is in the substitution of S with respect to S e relationship of substitution in the metaphor that we have the (11) following which is symbolized by the relation of capital to small s, which indicates here - it is easier to express in the case of metonymy - the function of the emergence, of the creation of meaning.

$$F \left(\frac{S_1}{S} \right) S = S (+) s$$

This then is where we are, and now we are going to approach what will be the object of our research for this coming year. To approach it I first of all constructed a schema for you, and I will now tell you what, at least for today, it will serve to connote for us.

If we have to find a way of approaching more closely the relationships of the signifying chain with the signified chain, it is by this crude image of the buttoning point. But obviously, if it is to be worthwhile, we must ask where the upholsterer is. He must clearly be somewhere; the place where we could put him in this schema might after all be a little bit too infantile.

You may be lead to the idea that since the essential aspect of the relation of the signifying chain in relation to the current of the signified is something like a reciprocal sliding, and that

despite the sliding we must grasp where the liaison is, the coherence between these two currents, you might come to the idea that this sliding, if there is a sliding, is necessarily a (12) relative sliding; that the displacement of each one produces a displacement in the other and also that it must be related to a sort of ideal present, to something like an intersection in the opposite direction of these two lines, that we should be able to find some sort of schema to serve as an example.

You can see that it is around something like this that we can organize our speculations.

This notion of the present is going to be extremely important, except that discourse is not simply, what I might call, a series of punctuations a la Russell. A discourse is something which leads somewhere, has a fabric, a texture, and not only does it take time, not only does it have a dimension in time, a certain density which means that we cannot in any way be satisfied with the instantaneous present, but in addition all our experience, everything that we have said and everything that we are capable of making present immediately by experience - it is quite clear for example that if I begin a sentence you will not understand its meaning until I have finished, since it is after all absolutely necessary (it is the very definition of a sentence) that I should say its final word if you are to understand the relevance of the first - this shows us in the most tangible way what we can call the retroactive action of the signifier, precisely what I repeatedly tell you is given in the text of the analytic experience itself, on an infinitely greater scale in the (13) story of the past.

In any case it is clear - that is one way to say it I - I think it is something that you have grasped, and besides I re-emphasized it in my article on the agency of the letter in the unconscious in a very precise fashion and I would ask you provisionally to consult it, something that I expressed in the form of what might be called a topological metaphor: it is impossible to represent the signifier, the signified and the subject on the same plane. This is neither mysterious nor opaque, it can be demonstrated in a very simple fashion with reference to the Cartesian cogito. I will refrain from going back on this now because later we will rediscover it in another form. This is simply to justify to you these two lines that we are now going to manipulate, and which are the following. The little bob means the beginning of a trajectory, and the tip of the arrow the end. You will recognize my first line here, and the other hooked on to it after having twice crossed over it. I would like to point out however that you cannot confuse what the two lines represent here, namely the signifier and the signified, with what they represent in this case which is slightly different, and you will see why.

In fact we are situating ourselves entirely on the plane of the (14) signifier. The effects on the signified are elsewhere, they are not directly represented on this schema. It is a matter of two states, of two functions of a signifying sequence that we can apprehend.

In the first moment of this first line, we have the signifying chain in so far as it remains entirely permeable to the properly signifying effects of metaphor and metonymy, and this implies the possible actualization of signifying effects at every level, in particular down to the phonematic level, to the level of the phonological element of what grounds the pun, the play on words, in short that which in the signifier is that something with which we analysts must continually operate, because I think that except for those of you who arrive here for the first time, you should be able to remember how all this happens in the play on words and in puns. Moreover it is precisely the way in which today we are going to begin our entry into the subject of the unconscious, by the witticism and the Witz.

The other line is that of rational discourse into which are already integrated a certain number of reference points, of things that are fixed, those things which as it happens cannot be grasped except at the level of what is called the usages of the signifier, that is to say that which concretely in the use of discourse constitutes the fixed points which, as you know, are far from corresponding in a univocal way to a thing. There is (15) not a single semanteme that corresponds to a particular thing or to things which for the most part are very different. We pause here at the level of the semanteme, that is to say at what is fixed and defined by a use.

This other line then is that of current, everyday discourse, as it is admitted into the code of the discourse, of what I would call the discourse of reality which is common to us all. It is also the level at which the fewest creations of meaning are produced, because the meaning is, in a way, already given, and because most of the time this discourse only consists in a rehashing of what are called received ideas. It is at the level of this discourse that there is produced the famous empty speech from which a number of my remarks on the field (parente) of language began.

You can see clearly then that this is the concrete discourse of the individual subject, of the person who speaks and who makes himself understood. It is the discourse that can be recorded on a record. The other is what all of that includes as a possibility of decomposition, of reinterpretation, of resonance, of metaphorical or metonymical effects. One goes in the opposite direction to the other for the simple reason precisely that they slide over one another. But they do intersect with one another, and they intersect at two points that are perfectly recognizable. (16) If we begin from the discourse, the first point at which the discourse meets the other chain which we shall call the properly signifying chain, is from the point of view of the signifier, what I have just explained to you, namely the collection of usages, in other words what we shall call the code; and this code must be somewhere if discourse is to be heard. This code is obviously in this capital O which is here, namely in the Other in so far as it is the companion of language. It is absolutely necessary that this Other should exist, and I would ask you to note in passing that there is absolutely no need to call it by

the imbecilic and delusional name of "collective consciousness". An Other is an Other, and a single one is sufficient for a tongue to be alive. And it is all the more sufficient that there should be just one, that this other can all by itself also be the first moment. If there is one who remains and who can speak his tongue to himself, this is sufficient and not only an Other, but even two others, in any case someone who understands him. One can continue to produce witticisms in a tongue, even though one is the only person who knows it.

This then is the first encounter at the level of what we have called the code. In the other, the second encounter which completes the loop, which properly speaking constitutes the meaning, constitutes it in terms of the code which it (17) encountered first, is the culminating point. You see two arrows which end here, and today I will spare myself the trouble of explaining the meaning of the second arrow that ends here at this point gamma; it is the result of the conjunction of the discourse with the signifier as a creative support of meaning - it is the message.

It is here that meaning is born; the truth that is to be announced, if there is any truth, is there in the message. Most of the time there is no truth enunciated, for the simple reason that the discourse in no way passes through the signifying chain, that it is the pure and simple droning of mere repetitiveness, of the word-mill (*moulin à paroles*), and that it passes through here in a sort of short-circuit between B and B', and that the discourse says absolutely nothing except to indicate to you that I am a speaking animal. It is the commonplace discourse of speech that says nothing, but thanks to it you reassure yourself that you are not face to face simply with what man is in his natural state, namely a savage beast.

These two points B and B' being the minimal nexuses on the short-circuit of discourse are very easily recognizable. One is the object precisely in the sense of the metonymical object that I spoke to you about last year; the other is the "I" in so far as it indicates in the discourse itself the place of the one who is speaking.

You should notice that in this schema you can see in a very (18) concrete way both what links and what distinguishes the truth that is perfectly and immediately accessible, from linguistic experience; this is something that the Freudian experience of analysis rejoins with the distinction that exists originally between this "I" which is nothing other than the place of the one who speaks in the chain of discourse, and which does not even need to be designated by an "I", and on the other hand the message, that is to say the thing that absolutely requires a minimum of the apparatus of this schema to exist. It is absolutely impossible to produce a message or any word whatsoever in a sort of concentric, radiating fashion coming from the existence of some subject or other, if there is not all this complexity. No word is possible for the very good reason that the word presupposes precisely the existence of a signifying

chain, which is something whose origins are far from simple to discover - we spent a year trying to arrive at it - and which presupposes the existence of a network of uses, in other words of the usage of a tongue; and which presupposes besides all this mechanism which ensures that whatever you say, whether you think about it or not, whatever you formulate, once you've got caught in the wheel of this word-mill, your discourse always says more than you are saying, and very obviously basing itself, by the simple fact that it is speech, on the existence somewhere of this term of reference that is the dimension of truth; of truth in so (19) far as it is distinct from reality and something that brings into play the possible emergence of new meanings being introduced into the world, which the truth (réalité) literally introduces into it - not the meanings that are there, but rather the meanings that it makes emerge.

Here you have, radiating out from the message on the one hand and from the "I" on the other hand, the meaning of these little wingtips that you see here; two diverging directions, one that goes from the "I" to the metonymical object and towards the Other, to which corresponds in a symmetrical fashion the message by way of the return of the discourse, the direction of the message towards the metonymical object and towards the Other; all of this is provisional and I would ask you to take it down. On the schema you will see that there is something which will be of great use to us and which might seem to you to require no explanation, the line that goes from "I" to the Other and the line that goes from "I" to the metonymical object, and you will see to what these two other extremely interesting lines correspond which go from the message to the code on the one hand, because in fact this return line does exist; if it did not exist, as the schema itself indicates, there would not be the slightest hope for the creation of meaning. It is precisely in the interplay between the message and the code, and also in the return of the code to the message, that the essential dimension into which the witticism immediately introduces us will have its effect. It is here I think we will remain for a certain number (20) of lectures in order to see all the extraordinarily suggestive and instructive things that can take place here. In addition this will give us a further opportunity to grasp the relationship of dependence in which the metonymical object is, this famous object that never is, that object which is always situated elsewhere, that is always something else, and which we began to concern ourselves with last year.

Now let us approach this Witz. What does this Witz mean? It has been translated by le trait d'esprit and also by le mot d'esprit. I will not go into the reasons why I prefer le trait d'esprit.

The Witz can also mean l'esprit. We must admit that l'esprit immediately introduces something that appears to be extremely ambiguous because in fact a witticism is something that is occasionally looked down on: it is frivolity, lack of seriousness, fantasy, capriciousness. But esprit by itself brings us up short, and we think twice before thinking of esprit in the same way. Nevertheless the spirit in the sense of un

homme spirituel has not got an excessively good reputation. However it is around this that the centre of gravity of the notion of l'esprit is to be found and it is better to allow it to keep all its ambiguities. This includes the spirit in the widest (21) sense, the spirit that all too often has the stamp of very shoddy goods, the spirit of spiritualism.

We can centre the notion of spirit on the witticism, that is to say on that which appears to be most contingent, most out of date, most open to criticism. It is really part of the genius of psychoanalysis to do something like this, and that is why we should not be surprised that it is in fact the only point in the work of Freud where he mentions the Spirit, this time ornamented with a capital letter. Nevertheless there still remains this relationship between the two poles of the term spirit, and it has always given rise to disputes about classification.

It really would be fun to evoke for you the English tradition in which the term used is wit, which is still more ambiguous than Witz and even than l'esprit in French - the discussions on the true, the genuine spirit, the good spirit to call him by his name; and then of the bad spirit, the one with which charlatans amuse people. How can we distinguish all of this? The only thing that we must really take as a reference-point is the difficulty that all the critics have found themselves in, and this continues after the 18th century with Addison, Pope, etc., up to the (22) beginning of the 19th century. In the English Romantic school the question of wit could not but be on the agenda and in a place of first importance, and in this respect the writings of Hazlitt are also very significant, and someone else that we will have to talk about, namely Coleridge, is the one who has gone farthest along this path.

I could equally well say this about the German tradition, and in particular about the link between the promotion of wit to its place of prime importance, and the literary Christianity which in Germany followed a strictly parallel evolution, and where the essential question of Witz is at the heart of all Romantic speculation in Germany. This is something which from a historical point of view, and also from the point of view of analysis, that we will have to reconsider again.

Something that is very striking is the extent to which the criticism concerning the function of Witz or of wit - to which I have to say there is nothing comparable in this country, and whether you are aware of this or not, the only people who were seriously concerned with it here in France were the poets, by which I mean that in this period of the 19th century, the question is not only alive, but is at the heart of Baudelaire and Mallarmé' - but in any case it was never considered even in essays except from the critical point of view, I mean from the point of (23) view of an intellectual formulation of the problem.

The decisive point is this. The fact is that whatever you read on the subject of the problem of Witz or of wit, you will always come up against very real impasses, which I cannot expand on for

you today due to lack of time - I will come back to it. I must omit this part of my lecture but it bears witness, as I will prove to you later on, to the leap forward, to the clear-cut difference of quality and results that is brought about by the work of Freud.

Freud did not carry out this inquiry that I have just been alluding to, that which would embrace the whole European tradition on the subject of Witz. I left to one side another one, the principal one, the Spanish tradition, because it is so important that we will certainly have to come back to it frequently. Freud did not do this. He tells us what his sources are. They are clear. They are three books, very sensible, very readable books, written by good German professors from small universities, who had time to calmly reflect on things, and who produced works that were not at all pedantic. Their names are ■ Kuno Fischer, Friedrich Theodore Vischer and T. Lipps, a Munich professor who certainly wrote the best work of the three and who goes a long way, in fact one could say that he really reaches (24) out, to meet up with Freud's investigation. If only Herr Lipps had not been so careful about the respectability of his Witz, if he had not wanted there to be a false and a true Witz, he would certainly have gone much further.

On the contrary this is something that did not hold Freud back at all. Freud was already in the habit of committing himself, and that is why he saw things much more clearly. It is also because he saw the structural relationships that exist between the Witz and the unconscious.

On what plane did he see them? Exclusively on what could be called the formal plane. I mean formal not in the sense of pretty forms, the confused notions of everything that tries to swamp you in the blackest obscurantism: I am talking about form in the sense that it is understood, for example, in literary theory. There is still another tradition that I have not spoken to you about, also because we will often have to come back to it, a tradition of recent birth, the Czech tradition. This is the group that formulated formalism which you may think is just a vague reference, not at all, it is only your ignorance that makes you think that; formalism is a school of literary criticism that has an extremely precise meaning, and that the organization of states that is situated over there in Sputnik-land has already been persecuting for some time past.

In any case, it is precisely at the level of this formalism, (25) namely of a structural theory of the signifier as such, that Freud situates himself from the beginning. There is no doubt either about the results - they are absolutely convincing. This is a key that will allow you to make much greater progress. After having asked you from time to time to read my articles, I hardly need to ask you, since we are talking this year about Witz, to read Freud's book. This does not seem to me to be demanding too much. When you look at how it is organized, you will see that is based on the fact that Freud starts from the technique of the joke, and that he constantly comes back to it.

and that it takes as support the technique of joking.

What does that mean for him? It means what is called verbal technique, something that I call more precisely the technique of the signifier.

It is because he speaks of the technique of the signifier, and because he comes back to it repeatedly, that he really works out the problem. He shows its different planes, which means that all at once you see with the greatest clarity what must be recognized and distinguished in order not to get lost in the perpetual confusions of the signified, and of thoughts, which gives absolutely no hope of ever clarifying matters. Right away, for example, you see that there is a problem of wit, and a problem of the comic which is not at all the same thing, any more (26) than the problem of the comic and the problem of laughter. It may well happen that from time to time these are found together, and indeed all three may become mixed up, but nevertheless it is not the same problem.

To clarify the problem of wit, Freud starts with the signifying technique. It is also from there that we will begin with him, and there is the very curious fact that all of this takes place at a level at which there is nothing at all to indicate at first that it is at the level of the unconscious, and it is precisely from this, and for profound reasons that concern the very nature of Witz, it is precisely by considering this that we will see most about what is not quite there, what is to one side, which is the unconscious, and which in fact cannot be clarified, does not betray itself, except when you look a little to one side.

Here you will discover also something that you will find all the time in the Witz, it is the nature of the Witz that appears thus when you look here, it is what allows you to look where it does not exist.

Let us begin then with Freud by means of the keys of the technique of the signifier. Freud did not go to very much trouble to find his examples, since all the examples he gives us, which may appear a bit banal to you and to be not all of the same quality, are taken from his professors, Fischer, Vischer and Lipps, which is why I told you that I hold them in considerable esteem.

(27) There is however another source that Freud has really explored. It is Heinrich Heine. It is from this source that he takes the first example, the marvellous mot that is put into the mouth of Hirsch-Hyacinth, an impoverished and half-starved Jewish collector from Hamburg, whom he comes across at the Baths of Lucca. If you want to make a thorough study of the Witz you must read the Reisebilder. It is amazing that this book is not a classic. You find in the Reisebilder a passage in the Italian section on the Baths of Lucca, and it is there that with this indescribable character Hirsch-Hyacinth, about whose attributes I hope I will have the time to tell you something, it is in speaking with him that he obtains the declaration, that he had

had the honour of treating the corns of the great Rothschild, Nathan the Wise, and that at the time he, Hirsch-Hyacinth, thought himself an important man because, while he was paring his corns, he thought that Nathan the Wise was thinking of all the courtiers that he would be sending to kings, and that if he, Hirsch-Hyacinth, pared his corns a bit too closely there would result an irritation in the upper regions, that would make Nathan too cut more deeply into the hide of the kings.

And, little by little, he goes on to tell us too of another Rothschild that he has known, Solomon Rothschild, and that one day when he announced himself as Hirsch-Hyacinth, he received a (28) reply in the most debonair language: "I too am a collector of I do not wish my colleague to have to eat in the kitchen. " And", cried Hirsch-Hyacinth, " he treated me quite famillionairely."

It is at this point that Freud pauses and goes on to ask very acutely: What is this? A neologism? A slip of the tongue? A witticism? It is certainly a witticism, but the fact that I could ask the other two questions already introduces us into an ambiguity, into the signifier, into the unconscious; and in fact what is Freud going to tell us? We recognize in it the mechanism of condensation materialized in the material of the signifier, a sort of collision, with the help of some machine or other, between two lines of the signifying chain: "Solomon Rothschild treated me quite familiarly (familiar)", and then beneath it - Freud too constructs a signifying schema - there is " millionaire (Millionar)", and thus there is ar in both, and also mil. They are condensed, and in the interval there appears "famillionaire" (famillonar).

Let us try to see what this gives on our schema. I must go a bit quickly, but there is still something to which I want to draw your attention.

The discourse is obviously something that begins in "I", and goes to the Other. This can be schematized here as going towards (29) the Other. More correctly we can also see that every discourse which begins from the Other, whatever we may think of it, begins and returns, is reflected in the "I," because it must play some part in the affair, and goes towards the message. This simply introduces in a second moment the invocation of the other originating chain of the discourse : "I was with Solomon Rothschild, quite familiarly", a return to the Other in a second moment.

Nevertheless because of the mysterious property of the mil and the ar, which are in both one and the other as correlatives - do not forget that these two lines are after all two lines that are only of interest to us if things are circulating at the same time on this line. If something stirs that gives rise to a vibration in the elementary signifying chain as such, and that here at the first moment of the outline of the message is going to be reflected onto the metonymical object which is "my millionaire", because the metonymical object of "my belonging" schematized here

is what concerns Hirsch-Hyacinth; it is his millionaire who at the same time is not his millionaire, because it is much more the millionaire who possesses him, so that things do not turn out as planned. It is precisely because this does not happen that the millionaire comes to be reflected in a second moment, that is to say at the same time as the other, the "quite familiarly", has arrived there.

(30) In the third moment millionaire and familiar have come to meet and to join with one another in the message, in order to produce famillionaire.

This may seem to you to be completely puerile as a discovery, especially since I constructed the schema myself. However when this has had its effect on you for a year, you will perhaps be able to say that this schema is of some use. It has, after all, one interesting feature, which is that thanks to what it presents in terms of topological necessity, it allows us to measure the steps that we take with regard to what concerns the signifier, namely that because of the way it is constructed, and whatever way you go around it, it limits every step we take. What I mean is that every time a step is required, it will necessitate that we take no more than three elementary ones.

You will see that it is towards this that the little bobs at the start and the arrow heads at the end tend, as well as the little ailerons that concern the segments which must always be in a secondary, intermediary position, the others being either initial or terminal.

Thus, in three moments the two chains, that of the discourse and that of the signifier, have managed to converge at the same point, at the point of the message. This is why Mr. Hirsch-Hyacinth was treated quite famillionairely. This message is quite incongruous in the sense that it is not received, not in (31) the code. That says it all! The message in principle is constructed to have a certain relationship distinguishing it from the code, but here it is on the plane of the signifier itself that it manifestly violates the code, from the definition of the witticism that I gave you, in the sense that it is a question of knowing what is happening, what is the nature of what is happening here, and the witticism is constituted by fact that the message that is produced at a certain level of signifying production. It contains by its difference, by its distinction from the code, it takes on from this difference, from this distinction, the value of a message. The message lies in its very difference from the the code.

How is this difference sanctioned? This is the second plane that is involved. This difference is sanctioned as a witticism by the Other. This is indispensable, and it is in Freud. Because there are two things in Freud's book on the witticism: there is the promotion of the signifying technique, and the express reference to the Other as a third party, which I have been drumming into you for years. It is articulated in an unquestionable way in Freud, very especially in the second part

of his work, but it has to be there from the beginning. For example, Freud continually emphasises for us that the difference between the witticism and the comic is determined by the fact that the comic is dual. As I have said, the comic is a dual (32) relationship, but this third Other is necessary for there to be a witticism. In fact the sanction of this third Other, whether it is supported by an individual or not, is absolutely essential. The Other returns the ball, that is to say ranks something in the code as a witticism; it says that in the code this is a witticism. This is essential, so that if nobody does it there is no witticism. In other words, if *famillionaire* is a slip of the tongue and nobody notices it, then it is not a witticism. The Other must codify it as a witticism.

And the third element of the definition? It is inscribed in the code, through this intervention of the Other, that the witticism has a function that is related to something that is profoundly situated at the level of meaning, and that is, I will not say a truth - I shall illustrate for you in connection with this example that it is not so much with regard to *famillionaire* that we can make subtle allusions about the psychology of the millionaire and of the parasite, for example.

This certainly contributes a good deal to our pleasure, and we will return to it, but I am laying down from today that the witticism, if we wish to discover it, and discover it with Freud, because Freud leads us as far as possible in the direction of finding the point of it, because it is a question of a point and (33) a point exists, and its essence depends on something that is related to something absolutely radical in the sense of truth, namely something that I called elsewhere (in my article on "The Agency of the Letter") something that depends essentially on the truth, that is called the dimension of the alibi of the truth, namely in a point that may enable us, by using a sort of mental diplopia, to better circumscribe the witticism.

What is in question, is what it is that expressly constructs the witticism in order to designate that which is always to one side, and which is seen precisely only by looking elsewhere. This is where we will begin again the next time. I am certainly leaving you on a note of suspense, with an enigma, but I think that I have at least been able to set out the very terms that we must necessarily hold onto, and this I hope to demonstrate in what follows.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 13 November 1957

Let us take up our account at the point we left it the last time, namely at the moment that Hirsch-Hyacinth speaking to the author of the Reisebilder whom he met at the Baths of Lucca, said to him: "And as true as God shall grant me all good things, I sat down quite as an equal, quite famillionairely."

This then is where we will begin, with the word famillionaire which has had its good fortune. It is known because Freud takes it as his starting point.

This then is where we will recommence, and it here that I am already going to try to show you the way that Freud approaches the witticism. The analysis is important for our purposes.

In fact, the importance of this exemplary point is to show us, because, alas, there is need for it, in an unmistakable fashion the importance of the signifier in what we can call with him the mechanisms of the unconscious.

(2) It is clearly very surprising to see already that the whole body of those whom their discipline does not especially prepare for it - I mean the neurologists - in the measure that they are working together on the delicate subject of aphasia, namely of speech deficits, are from day to day making remarkable progress in what is in question, what can be called their linguistic formation, while psychoanalysts whose whole art and technique is based on the use of the word, have not up to the present taken the least account of it, even though what Freud shows us, is not simply a type of humanistic reference manifesting his culture and the extent of his reading in the field of philology, but a reference that is absolutely internal and organic.

Because I hope that since the last day, most of you at least have opened Jokes and their relation to the unconscious, you can see for yourselves that his reference to the technique of the joke qua language-technique, is very precisely the point around which his argument always pivots; and that if what emerges in terms of meaning, in terms of signification in the joke is something that seems to him to deserve to be related to the unconscious, it is only - I want to hammer home that everything that I have to say about the witticism is related to this - founded on its very function of pleasure which pivots and turns always and uniquely

(3) because of analogies of structure that are only conceivable on the plane of linguistics, analogies of structure between what

happens in the joke, I mean the technical aspect of the joke, let us call it the verbal aspect of the joke, and what happens under different names that Freud discovered, moments under different names, which is the mechanism proper to the unconscious, namely the mechanisms such as condensation and displacement. I limit myself to these two for today.

Here then is where we are: Hirsch-Hyacinth speaking to Heinrich Heine; or Hirsch-Hyacinth, a fiction of Heinrich Heine, gives an account of what happened to him. Something happens at the beginning, to limit ourselves to the segment that I have just isolated, something particularly clear, raising in a way in order to put it on a plateau, to exalt it, what is to follow, this invocation of the universal witness and of the personal relationship of the subject to this witness, namely God. "As true as God shall grant me all good things", which is incontestably something that is at once significant by its meaning, and ironic because of what reality can show us as lacking in it, but starting from here the enunciation is made: "I was sitting beside Solomon Rothschild, quite as an equal." Here we have the emergence of the object; this "quite" carries with it something which is significant enough. Every time we invoke the "quite", the totality, it is because we are not altogether sure (4) that this totality is really closed, and in effect this can be discovered at many levels, and indeed at every level at which this notion of totality is used.

Here in effect he begins again with this "quite", and he says: "quite..... ", and it is here that the phenomenon is produced, the unexpected thing, the scandal in the enunciation, namely this new message, this something that we do not even yet know what it is, that we are not yet able to name, and which is "... f amillionairely", something of which we do not know whether it is a parapraxis or a successful act, an accident or a poetic creation. We will see. It can be all of these at once, but it would be well to lay stress on the formation on the strict signifying plane, of the phenomenon of what will taken up afterwards.

I will tell you what it is, and I already announced it the last day: in a signifying function which is proper to it qua signifier escaping from the code, that is from everything that had been accumulated up to this in terms of formations of the signifier in its functions as a creator of the signified, something new appears there, that can be linked to the very sources of what can be called the progress of a tongue, its changes.

We must pause first of all at this something in its very formation, I mean at the point at which it is situated in (5) relation to the formative mechanism of the signifier. We have to lay stress on it in order to be able even to continue in a valid way on what will turn out to be the consequences of the phenomenon, even of what accompanies it, even its sources, its reference points. But the essential phenomenon, is this nexus, is this point, at which appears this new paradoxical signifier.

this famillionaire from which Freud begins, and to which he repeatedly returns, on which he asks us to dwell, to which, as you will see up to the end of his speculation on the witticism, he does not fail to return as designating the essential phenomenon, the technical phenomenon that specifies the joke, and that allows us to discern what the central phenomenon is, that by which he teaches us on the plane that is our own proper plane, namely the relationship with the unconscious, and that which allows us also at the same time to illuminate from a new perspective everything that surrounds it, everything that leads it towards what can be called the Tendenzen, because it is the term Tendenz that is employed in this work, of this phenomenon that has different spheres of influences, the comic, laughter, etc...; phenomena that may radiate out from it.

Let us pause then at famillionaire. There are several ways to approach it, this is the aim, not just of of this schema, but of this schema in so far as it is provided to allow you to inscribe (6) the different planes of the signifying elaboration, the word elaboration being chosen here specially, because it is expressly chosen here, Freud introduces it specially.

Let us stress this, and in order not to surprise you too much, let us begin to perceive the direction in which it is going. What happens when famillionaire appears? It can be said that something is indicated there that we experience as a perspective opening out towards meaning; something tends to emerge from it that is ironical, even satirical, also something that is less evident, but which develops we might say, in the after-effects of the phenomenon, in what is going to be propagated from here into the world as a consequence. It is a type of emergence of an object, that itself tends rather in the direction of the comical, of the absurd, of the nonsensical. It is the famillionaire in so far as it derides the millionaire, by tending to take on the form of a figure, and it would not be difficult to indicate the direction in which in fact it tends to be embodied.

Moreover, Freud mentions in passing that in another place also, Heinrich Heine reduplicating his joke, calls the millionaire the millionnar, which in German means the idiotic millionaire, and can be translated in French following on the line of the substantivation of millionaire that I have just spoken to you (7) about, the fat-millionaire with a hyphen. This is to show you that we have here an approach which ensures that we do not remain inhuman.

Let us not go much further, because to tell the truth this is not the time, this is just the type of step not to taken too quickly, namely not to be too quickly understood, because by understanding too quickly, one understands absolutely nothing at all. This still does not explain the phenomenon that has just occurred in front of him, namely how it can be connected with what we can call the general economy of the function of the signifier.

On this point I must all the same insist that you get to know what I have written in what I called "The agency of the letter in the unconscious", namely the examples I gave in this text of two functions that I call the essential functions of the signifier, in so far as they are those through which one can say, that the ploughshare of the signifier opens up in the real what can be called the signified, literally evokes it, makes it emerge, manipulates it, engenders it; namely the functions of metaphor and metonymy.

It appears that for certain people, it is my style that bars the entry into this article. I am sorry. First of all I can do nothing about it, my style is what it is. I would ask them in that connection to make an effort, but I would simply like to add (8) that whatever the deficiencies that may intervene in it because of factors that are personal to me, there are also, notwithstanding, in the difficulties of this style, perhaps they can glimpse it, something that must correspond to the very object it is dealing with.

If it is in fact a question, in connection with the creative functions that the signifier exercises on the signified, of speaking about it in a worthwhile way, namely not simply of speaking about the word but to speak as one might say with the grain of the word, to evoke its very functions, perhaps the subsequent teaching this year will show you that there are internal necessities of style, conciseness for example, allusiveness, even some sting are perhaps the essential, decisive elements necessary to enter a field of which they control not only the avenues, but the whole texture.

We will return to this subsequently in connection precisely with a certain style that we will not even hesitate to call by its name, however ambiguous it may appear, namely mannerism, and in connection with which I will try to show you that it has behind it, not only a great tradition, but an irreplaceable function.

This is only a parenthesis in order to return to my text. In this text then you will see that which I call following the example of others - it is Roman Jakobson who invented it - the (9) metaphorical and the métonymieal function of language, are linked to something that is expressed very simply in the register of the signifier, the characteristics of the signifier being those, as I already stated several times in the course of the preceding years, of the existence of an articulated chain, and I added in this article, tending to form closed groups, namely formed from a series of rings latching on to one another to form chains, which themselves are taken up into other chains like rings, something that is also evoked somewhat by the general form of the schema, but is not directly represented.

The existence of these chains in their double dimension, implies that the articulations or the liaisons of the signifier contain two dimensions, the one which can be called the combination, the continuity, the concatenation of the chain, and that of the possibilities of substitution always implied in each element of

the chain.

This second absolutely essential element is the element which, in the linear definition that Freud gave of the relationship of the signifier to the signified, is omitted. In other words, in every act of language the diachronic dimension is essential, but there is an implied synchrony, evoked by the permanent possibility of substitution inherent in each of the terms of the signifier.

(10) In other words we have the two relationships indicated here:

$$F (S \dots S') S \quad \text{and,}$$

$$F \left(\frac{S}{S'} \right) S$$

one giving the link of combination of the signifier's link, and the other the image of the relationship of substitution always implicit in every signifying articulation.

You do not need to be extraordinarily intuitive to perceive that there must be at least some relationship between what we have just seen being produced, and what Freud schematizes for us concerning the formation of *famillionaire*, namely on two different lines: "I was sitting beside S. Rothschild in a quite familiar way", and underneath "millionaire". Freud completes this by asking: what does that mean? It can mean that there is something that has been dropped, which is eluded; in so far as one can permit it, or can realize or achieve it, a millionaire. Something has been dropped from the articulation of meaning, something has remained, the millionaire. Something is produced that has compressed, pushed together with one another, the familiar and the millionaire, to produce *famillionaire*.

Therefore there is something here that is a kind of particular case of the function of substitution; a particular case whose (11) traces remain in some way. Condensation, if you like, is a particular form of what can be produced at the level of the function of substitution.

It would be good if even now you kept in mind the long development that I made about one metaphor, the one about Booz's sheaf:

"His sheaf was not avaricious or spiteful"

showing that it is the fact that "his sheaf" replaces the term "Booz", that constitutes there the metaphor, and that thanks to this metaphor something concerning the person of Booz emerges which is a meaning, the meaning of the advent of his paternity, together with all those things that can radiate out and spring forth from the fact that he comes to it, as you well remember, in an unlikely, belated, unexpected, providential, divine fashion, that it is precisely this metaphor that is there to show this advent of a new meaning in connection with the person of Booz who seemed to be excluded, foreclosed from it, and that it is also essentially in a relationship of substitution that we should see it, the creative source, the creative force, the generating

force, we might even say, of the metaphor.

This is quite a general function, I would even say that it is in this way, that it is in this possibility of substitution that there can be conceived the very generation one might say, of the world, of meaning, that the whole history of the tongue, namely (12) the changes in function by means of which a tongue is constituted, that it is here and not elsewhere that we must grasp it; and that if there is any possibility of giving ourselves a type of model or example of what is the genesis of the appearance of a tongue in this unconstituted world that the world may be before speech, we must presuppose something irreducible and original which is certainly the minimum of signifying chains, but a certain minimum that I will not insist on today, even though it would be advisable to talk about it. But I have already given you enough indications on it, on this certain minimum, given that it is by way of metaphor, namely by the operation of the substitution of one signifier for another, at a certain place, that there is created not only the possibility of the development of the signifier, but also the possibility of the emergence of ever new meaning, going always in the direction of ratifying, of complicating and of deepening, of giving its sense of depth to what in the real, is only pure opacity.

I will let you search out an example of this to illustrate for yourselves, what can be called what happens in the evolution of meaning, and how we always more or less find in it this mechanism of substitution. As usual in these cases, I wait for chance to (13) provide me with an example. And sure enough an example did not fail to be provided for me in my own immediate entourage, by someone who, while struggling with a translation, had had to look up in the dictionary the meaning of the word "atterre", and who was surprised at the thought that he had never properly understood the meaning of the word "atterre", when he perceived that contrary to what he believed, "atterre" does not originally and in many of its uses, have the meaning of to be struck with terror, but rather of landing.

In Bossuet "atterre" means literally to land, and in other texts just a little bit later, we see this kind of accent of terror becoming more defined. For my part, I would say incontestably that the purists contaminate, pervert, the meaning of the word "atterre". However it remains true that here the purists are quite wrong, there is no contamination here of any sort, and even if after suddenly having had recalled for you the etymological meaning, of the word "atterre", some of you may have the illusion that "atterre" is obviously nothing else than to turn towards the land, to make touch land, or to cast down as low as the ground, in other words to strike with consternation, it nevertheless remains that in current usage the word implies this background of terror.

What does this mean? It means that if we begin with something that has a certain relationship with the original meaning by pure (14) convention, because nowhere is there an origin for the word "atterre", but that it is the word "abattu" in so far as it

evokes in fact what the word "atterre" in this supposedly pure sense, could evoke for us, the word "atterre" which is substituted for it first of all as a metaphor, a metaphor that does not appear to be one, because we begin from this hypothesis that originally they mean the same thing: to throw on the ground or to the ground, this is what I would like you to notice, that it is not in so far as "atterre" changes in any way whatsoever the meaning of "abattu", that it will be fruitful, generate a new meaning, namely what is meant when we say that someone is "atterre". In effect it is a new meaning, it is a nuance, it is not the same thing as "abattu", and even though it does imply terror, it does not mean terrorize either, it is something new.

About this new nuance of terror that this introduces into the psychological and already metaphorical meaning that the word "abattu" has, because psychologically we are neither "atterre" nor "abattu", there is something that we cannot say as long as the words do not exist, and these words come from a metaphor, namely what happens when a tree is "abattu", or when a wrestler is grounded, "atterre", second metaphor.

But notice that it is not at all because originally this is what (15) gives the matter its interest, that "ter" which is in "atterre" means terror, that terror is introduced; in other words the metaphor is not an injection of meaning as if that were possible, as if the meaning were somewhere, or as if it were in a reservoir. The word "atterre" does not bring about meaning insofar as it has a signification, but qua signifier, namely that having the phoneme "ter", it has the same phoneme which is in terror. It is by the signifying path, it by the path of equivocation, by the path of homonymy, namely by the most nonsensical thing possible, that it comes to engender this nuance of meaning, that it is going to introduce, going to inject into the already metaphorical meaning of "abattu", this nuance of terror.

In other words, it is in the relationship of ϵ , namely of a signifier to a signifier, that a certain relationship, namely of a signifier to a signified will be engendered. But the distinction between the two is essential, it is in the relationship of signifier to signifier, in something that links the signifier here to the signifier there, namely in something that is the purely signifying, namely homonymic relationship of "ter" and "terror", that there will be able to be exercised the action that is the generation of signification, namely a nuancing by terror of what already existed as meaning on an already metaphorical basis.

(16) This then exemplifies for us what happens at the level of metaphor. I would like simply to point out to you something that will show you how this rejoins by a faint pathway, something that is going to be very interesting for us from the point of view of what we see happening in the unconscious.

Everything, insofar as at the level of the normal phenomenon of the creation of meaning by way of substitution, by the

metaphorical way that governs both the evolution and the creation of the tongue, but at the same time the creation and evolution of meaning as such, I mean of meaning insofar as it is not simply perceived, but that the subject includes himself in it, namely insofar as meaning enriches our lives.

I want simply to point this out to you: I have already indicated that the essential signifying function of the hook "ter", namely of something that we must consider as being purely signifying, from the homonymic reserve with which, whether we see it or not, the metaphor works.

What also happens? I do not know whether you are going to grasp it properly right away, but you will grasp it better when you see the development. It is only the start of an essential path. It is that to the very degree that the nuance of the signification "atterre" is affirmed or is constituted, this nuance, you notice, implies a certain domination and a certain taming of terror. (17) This terror is here not only named, but is also attenuated, and it is moreover this that allows to be conserved, so that you can continue to maintain in your mind the ambiguity of the word "atterre". After all you tell yourself that "atterre" has really got a relationship with "terre", that the terror in it is not total, that "abattement" in the sense that it is unambiguous for you, keeps its prevalent value, that it is only a nuance, that to put it clearly, the terror is half hidden on this occasion.

In other words, it is to the very extent that the terror is not directly noticeable, is taken from the intermediary angle of depression, that what is happening is completely forgotten up to the moment at which, as I recalled for you, the model is itself, as such, out of commission. In other words, to the very extent that the nuance "atterre" is established in the usage in which it has become meaning and the usage of meaning, the signifier is presentified (presentified) to it, let us say the word: the signifier is properly speaking repressed. In any case, once the usage of the word "atterre" has been established with its contemporary nuance, the model, unless you refer to a dictionary, to the discourse of the learned, is no longer at your disposal. As far as the word "atterre" goes, it is like "terre", "terra", repressed.

I am going just a little bit too far here, because it is a style (18) of thinking to which you are not yet very accustomed, but I think it will save us the trouble of coming back on it again. You will see the extent to which what I call the start of something, is confirmed by the analysis of the phenomena.

Let us come back to our millionaire, to the point of metaphorical conjunction or condensation where we saw it being formed.

At this level, to separate the thing from its context, namely from the fact that it is Hirsch-Hyacinth, namely the mind of Heinrich Heine who engendered him, later on we will search for it much farther back in its genesis, in the antecedents of Heinrich

Heine, in the relations of Heinrich Heine with the Rothschild family. You would even have to read the whole history of the Rothschild family to be quite sure of not making a mistake, but we are not at that stage here.

For the moment we are at *famillionaire*. Let us isolate it for a moment. Let us restrict as far as we can, the field of vision of the camera around this *famillionaire*. After all it could have come to birth somewhere other than in the imagination of Heinrich Heine; perhaps Heinrich Heine constructed it at a moment other than the moment when he was sitting in front of his blank page with a pen in his hand; perhaps it was on the evening of one of the *perambulations* around Paris that we shall evoke, that it came to him out of the blue. There is even every chance that it was (19) at a moment of fatigue, at dusk. In fact this *famillionaire* might just as well be a slip of the tongue, this is even very likely.

I already mentioned a slip of the tongue I picked up as it blossomed on the lips of one of my patients. I have others, but I return to this one because you should always come back to the same things until they have been well used, and then pass on to something else. It is the patient who, while telling his story on my couch, or in the course of his associations, evoked the time when with his wife whom he had finally married in the presence of the Mayor, he was only living "*maritablement*".

You have all already seen that this can be written "*marिताlement*", which means that one is not married, and underneath something in which the situation of the married and the unmarried combines perfectly, "*miserablement*". This gives "*maritablement*". It is not said, it is much better than said. You see here the degree to which the message goes beyond, not the one I would call the messenger, because it is really the messenger of the gods who speaks through the lips of this innocent, but the support of the word, the context as Freud would say, completely excludes the possibility that my patient might have made a joke, and in fact you would not know about it if I had not been on that occasion the Other with a capital O, the listener, and not only the attentive listener, but the hearing listener, in the true sense of the word. Nevertheless, it (20) remains true that put in its place, precisely in the Other, it is a particularly outstanding and brilliant joke.

Freud gives us innumerable examples of this rapprochement between witticisms and slips of the tongue in the Psychopathology of everyday life, and on occasion he himself underlines it, and points out that it is something that is so close to the joke, that he himself is obliged to say, and we are obliged to take it on his word, that the context excludes that the male or female patient should have created it as joke.

Somewhere in the Psychopathology of everyday life, Freud gives the example of the woman who, speaking of the reciprocal situation of men and women, says: "Yes, a woman must be pretty if she is to please men," which is not she implies in her

sentence within everybody's power. "A man is much better off, as long as he has his five straight limbs he needs nothing more."

Such expressions are not always fully translatable, and I am often obliged to transpose them completely, that is to say to re-create the joke in French. Here you would almost have to use the term "tout raide". The word straight is not commonly used, so little used that it is not current in German either. (21) Freud has to make a between the four members and the five members, in order to explain the genesis of the thing which nevertheless gives you the slightly smutty tendency that is doubtless there.

In any case what Freud shows us, is that the mot does not reach its target all that directly, any more in German than in French, where it is translated by "cinq membres droits", and on the other hand he states textually that the context excludes that the woman should appear to be so crude. It is indeed a slip of the tongue, but you can see how it resembles a joke.

Therefore we see, it can be a joke, it can be a slip, I would even say further: it can be pure and simple stupidity, a linguistic naivete. After all when I qualify it the case of my patient who was a particularly nice man, it was not in his case really a slip, for him the word "maritablement" was well and truly part of his vocabulary; he did not think at all that he was saying anything extraordinary. There are people like that who carry on with their existence, who sometimes have very important jobs, and who come out with mots of this kind. A celebrated film producer, it appears, produced ones like this by the kilometre all day long. He would say for example in concluding one of his imperious sentences; "That's the way it is, it is signe* qua non."

(22) This was not a slip of the tongue, it arose simply from his ignorance and stupidity.

I just want to show you that it is important for us to pause for a moment at the level of this formation, and because we have in fact spoken about a slip of the tongue, which in all of this is what affects us most closely, let us see a little what occurs at the level of the slip of the tongue. Just as we have spoken about "maritablement", let us return to the slip that we have worked through on numerous occasions to underline precisely this essential function of the signifier, what I might call the original slip of the tongue, at the foundation of Freudian theory, the one that reinaugurates the Psychopathblogy of everyday life after having also been the first thing published in an earlier form, namely the forgetting of names.

At first sight forgetting is not the same thing as the things I have just been talking to you about, but if what I am trying to explain to you is important, namely if it is well and truly the mechanism, the metabolism of the signifier that is at the source and origin of the formations of the unconscious, we should find them all there, and what appears to be distinct at the outside should find its unity within. So that now instead of

having famillionaire, we have the opposite, we are missing something.

What does Freud's analysis of the forgetting of a name, of a (23) proper, foreign, name demonstrate?

These are only the beginning of things that I will be returning to, and that I will develop later, but I must indicate to you in passing the particularity of this case as Freud presents it to us.

The proper name is a foreign name. We read the Psychopathology of everyday life the way we read the newspaper, and we know so much about it that we think it is not worth our while to stop at things that were nevertheless the steps of Freud, while each one of these steps deserves to be retained, because each one of these steps carries lessons and is rich in consequences.

I indicate to you therefore in this connection, because we will have to come back to it, that in the case of a name, and of a proper name, we are at the level of the message. This is something whose importance we will rediscover later on. I cannot say everything all at once, like the contemporary psychoanalysts who are so learned that they say everything at the same time, who speak of the "I" and the "ego" as things that have no complexity, and who mix everything up.

What is important, is that we should dwell on what is happening. That it should also be a foreign name, is something different from the fact that it is a proper name. It is a foreign name in so far as its elements are foreign to Freud's native tongue, (24) namely that Signor is not a word that belongs to the German tongue. But if Freud points this out, it is precisely because we are here in a dimension that is different to the proper name as such, which one might say, was absolutely not proper and particular, would seem to have no fatherland. They are all more or less attached to cabalistic signs, and Freud stresses that this is not unimportant. He does not tell us why, but the fact that he isolated it in an opening chapter, proves that he thought that it was a particularly sensitive point of the reality he is approaching.

There is another thing that Freud also highlights right away, and on which we have become accustomed not to dwell, it is that what appeared remarkable to him in the forgetting of names as he begins to evoke them to approach the Psychopathology of everyday life, it is that this forgetting is not an absolute forgetting, a hōlē, a gap, that something else is presented instead, other names. It is here that there begins what is the beginning of all science, namely wonder. One cannot really wonder except at something which one has already begun if only in some small way to accept, otherwise one does not stop at it at all because one sees nothing. But Freud precisely prepared by his neurotic experience, sees something there, sees that in the fact that substitutions are produced, there is something worth dwelling on.

I must now go a little more quickly, and point out to you that (25) the whole economy of the analysis which is going to be made of this forgetting of a name, of this slip in the sense that we should give to the word slip the meaning that the name has dropped down.

Everything is going to centre around what we can call a metonymical approximation. Why? Because what will reemerge at first, are replacement words: Boltraffio, Botticelli.

How does Freud show us that he understands them in a metonymical fashion? We are going to grasp it in this fact, and this is why I am making this detour by way of the analysis of a forgetting, that the presence of these names, their emergence in place of the forgotten Signorelli, is situated at the level of a formation, it is no longer one of substitution, but of combination. There is no perceptible relationship between the analysis that Freud might make of the case between Signorelli, Boltraffio and Botticelli, except the indirect relationships linked solely to phenomena of the signifier. Botticelli he tells us, and I hold in the first instance to what he tells us.

I should say that it is one of the clearest demonstrations that Freud ever gave of the mechanisms of the analysis of a phenomenon of formation or deformation, linked to the unconscious. As regards clarity it leaves absolutely nothing to be desired. I am obliged for the clarity of my account, to present it to you in an indirect fashion by saying that this is what Freud says. What (26) Freud says makes its impact by its rigour, in any case what he says is of this order, it is namely that Botticelli is there because it is the remainder in its second half, is the "elli" of Signorelli left incomplete by the fact that Signor is forgotten; "bo" is the remainder, the something incomplete from Bosnia Herzogovina, in so far as the "Her" is repressed. Likewise for Boltraffio, it is the same repression of "Her" which explains that Boltraffio associates the "bo" of Bosnia Herzogovina with Trafoi, which is a locality immediately preceding the adventures of this journey, the place where he heard of the suicide of one of his patients for reasons of sexual impotence, namely the same term as the one evoked in the conversation that immediately preceded with the person who is in the train between Ragusa and Herzogivina, and who evokes those Turks, those Hohommadens who are such lovely people who, when the doctor has not succeeded in curing them, say to him: "Herr (sir), we know that you have done everything you could, but nevertheless etc " The "Herr", the particular weighting, the significant accent, namely this something that is at the limit of the sayable, this absolute "Herr" which is death, this death which as La Rochefoucauld says, "one cannot like the sun steadily regard it", and which effectively Freud, no more than anybody else, cannot steadily regard. While, it makes itself present to him through his role as a doctor on the one hand, by a certain liaison which is also manifestly present, it, on the other hand with a quite personal (27) accent.

This liaison at this moment in an unmistakable fashion in the

text, precisely between death and something which has a very close relationship with sexual potency, is probably not only in the object, namely in what is made present to him by his patient's suicide.

It certainly goes further. What does it mean? It means that all that we discover are metonymical ruins connected with a pure and simple combination of signifiers: Bosnia Herzogovina are the metonymical ruins of the object in question which is behind the different particular elements that have entered into play here, and in a very recent past which is behind that, the absolute Herr, death. It is to the extent that the absolute Herr passes elsewhere, effaces itself, retreats, is pushed back, is very properly speaking unterdrückt, that there are two words that Freud plays with in an ambiguous fashion. This unterdrückt, I have already translated for you as "falling into the nether regions", in so far as the "Herr" here at the level of the metonymical object, has gone off in that direction, and for a very good reason, that it was in danger of being too present after these conversations, that as an ersatz we rediscover the debris, the ruins of the metonymical object, namely the "bo" that succeeds here in linking up with the other ruin of the name that is repressed at that moment, namely "elli", so that it does not (28) appear in the other substitutive name that is given.

This is the trace, it is the index that we have from the metonymical level that allows us to rediscover the chain of the phenomenon in discourse, in what can be still made present in this point where, in analysis, is situated what we call free association, in so far as this free association allows us to track down the unconscious phenomenon.

But that is not all, it still remains that neither the Signorelli, nor the Signor, were ever there where we discover the traces, the fragments of the broken metonymical object. Because it is metonymical it is already broken up. Everything that happens in the order of language is always already accomplished. If the metonymical object already breaks up so well, it is because already qua metonymical object it is only a fragment of the reality that it represents.

If the Signor, itself, cannot be evoked, if it is what ensures that Freud cannot rediscover the name of Signorelli, it is because he is implicated. Obviously he is implicated in an indirect fashion, because for Freud the "Herr" which effectively had been pronounced at a particularly significant moment of the function that it can take on as absolute Herr, as the representative of that death which on this occasion is unterdrückt, it is because "Herr" can simply be translated as "Signor".

(29) It is here that we rediscover the substitutive level, because substitution is the articulation, the signifying means in which the act of metaphor is established. But this does not mean that substitution is metaphor. If I teach you here to go along every path in an articulated fashion, it is not precisely in

order that you should continually indulge in abuses of language. I tell you that the metaphor is produced within the level of substitution, that means that substitution is a way in which the signifier can be articulated, and that metaphor operates there with its function as creator of the signified at that place where substitution may be produced. They are two different things. Likewise metonymy and combination are two different things.

I specify this for you in passing, because it is in these non-distinctions that what is called an abuse of language is introduced, that is typically characterized by this, that in what one can define in logical-mathematical terms as a set or a sub-set, when there is only one single element, the set in question, or the sub-set, must not be confused with this particular element.

This may be of some use to those who have criticized my

Let us return then to what happens at the level of Signor and Herr. Simply something as simple as this, it is obviously what happens in every translation: the substitutive liaison in (30) question is a substitution which is called heteronymic. The translation of a term into a foreign language on the plane of the substitutive act, in the comparison necessitated by the existence at the level of the phenomenon of language of several linguistic systems, is called heteronymic substitution.

You may say that this heteronymic substitution is not a metaphor. I agree, I need only one thing, that is that it should be a substitution. I am only following what you are forced to admit in reading the text. In other words, I want you to draw out of your knowledge, precisely this that you should know it. What is more, I am not innovating, you have to admit all of this if you admit Freud's text.

Thus if Signor is implicated in the affair, it is because there **is** something that links it to something of which the phenomenon of metonymical decomposition is a sign, at the point at which it **is** produced, and which depends on the fact that Signor is a substitute for Herr.

I need no more in order to tell you the if the Herr has gone this way, the Signor, as the direction of the arrows indicates, has gone that way. Not only has it gone that way, but we can admit until I have come back to it, that it is here that it begins to turn, namely that it is sent back and forth like a ball between the code and the message, that it turns round and round (31) in what can be called - remember what I let you glimpse on another occasion regarding the possibility of the mechanism of forgetting, and at the same of analytic remembrance, as being something we should conceive of as being extremely close to the memory of a machine, of what is in the memory of a machine, namely of that which turns round and round until it reappears, until one has need of it, and that is forced to turn round and round in order to constitute a memory. One cannot realize

in any other way the memory of a machine, it is very curiously something that we find an application for in the fact that if we can conceive Signor as turning round and round indefinitely until it is rediscovered between the code and the message, you see there at the same time the nuance that we can establish between unterdrückt on the one hand and verdrängt on the other, because if the unterdrückt here needs only to be done once and for all, and in conditions to which being cannot descend, namely to the level of its mortal condition, on the other hand it is clear that it is something else that is at stake, namely that if this is maintained in the circuit without being able to re-enter it for a certain time, we must admit as Freud admits, the existence of a special force that contains it there, and maintains it there, namely of what can be properly called a Verdrängung.

(32) Nevertheless, after having indicated where I want to get to on this precise, particular point, I would like to indicate that even though in effect there is here indeed only substitution, there is also metaphor. Every time there is substitution, there **is** a metaphorical effect or induction. It is not quite the same thing for a German speaker, to say Signor or to say Herr. I would even go further: it is altogether different that those of our patients who are bi-lingual or who simply know a foreign language, and who at a certain moment when they have something to tell us, tell it to us in a foreign language. You can be certain that it always suits them much better; it is never without reason that a patient passes from one register to another. If he is really a polyglot it has a meaning, if he knows the language he **is** referring to imperfectly, that has naturally not got the same meaning, if he is bilingual from birth that has not the same meaning either. But in every case it has one, and in any case here provisionally in the substitution of Signor for Herr, there was no metaphor but simply heteronymic substitution.

I return to this point to tell you that on this occasion Signor on the contrary, despite the whole context that it **is** attached to, namely to Signorelli, namely precisely to the frescoes at Orvieto, namely that are as Freud himself tells us, (33) the evocation of the last things, historically represent the most beautiful elaboration there is of that reality impossible to affront, which is death. It is very precisely by telling ourselves a thousand fictions - taking fiction here in its truest sense - about the last things, that we metaphorise, that we tame, that we make enter into language this confrontation with death.

Therefore it is quite clear that the Signor here in so far as it is attached to the context of Signorelli, is something that really represents a metaphor.

Here then is what we arrive at. We arrive at this that we are approaching something that allows us to reapply point by point, because we find they have a common topography, the phenomenon of Witz. At the point at which there was produced the positive production of millionaire, there is a phenomenon of parapraxis, of a hole. I could take another one and demonstrate it for you again, I could give you as an exercise to refer for example to

the next example given by Freud in connection with the Latin phrase evoked by one of his interlocutors: "exoriare ex nostris ossibus". By arranging the words a little because the "ex" is between "nostris" and "ossibus", and by dropping the second word that is indispensable for the scansion, "aliquis", there results the fact that he cannot make "aliquis" emerge.

(34) You would really not be able to understand it without referring it to this same framework, to this same skeleton, with its two levels, its combinatory level with this privileged point at which is produced the metonymical object as such, and to the substitutive level with this privileged point at which there is produced at the encounter of the two chains of the discourse on the one hand, and on the other hand of the signifying chain in its pure state, at the elementary level, and which constitutes the message.

As we have seen, the Signor is repressed here in the message-code circuit, the Herr is unterdrückt at the level of the discourse, because it is the discourse that preceded, that caught this Herr, and what you rediscover, that which allows you to get back on the track of the lost signifier, are the metonymical ruins (ruses) of the object.

This is what we are given by the analysis of the example of the forgetting of a name in Freud. From now on it will appear more clearly to us what we can think of *famillionaire*.

The *famillionaire* is something which, as we have seen, has something about it that is ambiguous and altogether of the same order as the production of a symptom. If it can be referred to, superimposed on what happens in the signifying economy of the production of a language symptom, the forgetting of a name, we should be able to find at its level that which completes, what I (35) tried to make you understand a little while ago about its double function, its function of aiming in the direction of meaning, and its confusing, upsetting, neological function from the point of view of something that can be called a dissolution of the object, namely no longer: "He treated me quite as his equal, quite *famillionairely*", but this something from which emerges what we can call the *famillionaire* to the extent that as a fantastic and derisory character, it is like one of those creations in a certain poetry of fantasy that allows us to imagine something intermediary between the mad millionaire and the centipede, which would however also be a sort of human type that can be imagined as moving, living and growing in the interstices of things, a *melkose*(?) or something analogous, but even without going this far, might pass into the tongue in the way that for some time now a "respectueuse" means a whore.

These sorts of creations are something that has its own value of introducing us to something unexplored up to then. They give rise to this thing that we could call a verbal being, but a verbal being is also simply a being, that tends more and more to become incarnated. In the same way the *famillionaire* is something that it seems to me plays, or has played a number of

roles not simply in the imagination of poets, but also in history. I do not need to remind you that many things would go (36) still closer than this famillionaire.

Gide in his Prometheus ill-bound makes the whole story revolve around what is not really the god, but the machine, the banker, Zeus whom he calls the "miglionnaire", and I will show you in Freud what is its essential function in the creation of the joke. We do not know whether we should pronounce Gide's "miglionnaire" as Italian or French, but I myself believe that it should be pronounced as Italian.

In short, if we consider famillionaire we will then see in the direction I am indicating to you, which is not reached at the level of Heine's text at this time, that Heine does not at all give it its liberty, its independence, at the substantive state. If I even translated it above "as quite famillionairely", it is indeed to indicate to you that we remain there at the level of the adverb, because one can even play with words, attract the tongue from the manner of being (?), and in dividing things between the two, you see the whole difference there is between the manner of being and what I was in the process of indicating to you as a direction, namely, a manner of being.

We did not go as far as that, but you see that the two are continuous. Heine remains at the level of the manner of being, and he was himself careful in translating his own term, to translate it precisely, not as "quite as a famillionaire", but as (37) I did above, as "quite famillionairely".

What is supported by this "quite famillionairely"? Something that is, even though we do not in any way get to this poetical being, something that is extraordinarily rich, teeming, swarming, in just the way things happen in metonymical decomposition.

Here Heinrich Heine's creation deserves to be replaced in its text, in the text of the Baths of Lucca, in the text of that de facto familiarity in which Hirsch-Hyacinth lives with Baron Cristoforo Gumpelino, who has become a very fashionable man and spends himself on all kinds of courtesies and attentions to beautiful women, and to which must be added the fabulous, astonishing familiarity of Hirsch-Hyacinth hanging on to his coat-tails. The function of parasite, of servant, of domestic, of commissioner of this character, suddenly evokes for us another possible decomposition of the word famillionaire, without taking into account that behind - I do not want to go into the frightful and miserable function of women in the life of this caricature of a banker whom Heine produces for us here, but which certainly includes the aspect of craving associated with success, the hunger that is no longer the sacra fames, but the hunger to satisfy something that until the moment of his accession to the highest circles of life, had been refused him.

(38) This will allow us to follow the trace of another possible manner of decomposition, the possible signification of the word fat-millionaire. The fat-millionaire is at once Hirsch-Hyacinth

and Baron Cristoforo Gumpellino.... And it is indeed something else, because behind it there are all the relationships of the life of Heinrich Heine, and also his relationships with the Rothschilds, which were particularly famillionaire.

The important thing is that you see in this joke itself the two aspects of metaphorical creation: in one sense, in the sense of meaning, in the sense that this joke bears, stirs up, is rich in psychological signification, and in this instance hits the mark and gains our attention by a talent that borders on a poetic creation, and on the other hand on a sort of reverse side that is not necessarily immediately perceived by him, the mot by virtue of the combinations that we could extend here indefinitely, seethes with all the teeming needs that surround an object on this occasion.

I have already alluded to fames. There would also be fama, namely the need for brilliance and reputation which accompanies the personage of Hirsch-Hyacinth's master. There would also be the basic infamy of that servile familiarity that culminates in the scene at the Baths of Lucca, with the fact that Hirsch-Hyacinth gives his master one of those purgatives of which he has the secret, and that he is in the grip of agonizing stomach cramps at the precise moment that he finally receives (39) from his beloved lady the letter, that would in other circumstances have allowed him to realize all his dreams.

This grossly farcical scene reveals what can be called the underpinnings of this infamous familiarity, and is something which really gives its weight, its meaning, its connections, its open and hidden side, its metaphorical aspect and its metonymical aspect, to this formation of the joke, and which is nevertheless not its essence, because now that we have seen both its aspects, all the ins and outs, the creation of meaning of famillionaire which also implies a loss, is something which is repressed. It must necessarily be something that concerns Heinrich Heine, something that will begin like the Signor above to turn round and round between the code and the message. When on the other hand we also have on the side of the metonymical thing, those losses of meaning that are all the sparks, all the spatters produced around the creation of the word famillionaire, and which constitute its radiation, its weight, that which gives it for us its literary value, it nonetheless remains that the only important thing is the centre of the phenomenon, namely that which appears at the level of signifying creation, whatever ensures that this is precisely a witticism, and not everything that is there which is produced all about and puts us on the path of its function qua centre of gravity of this whole phenomenon, what gives it its accent and its weight, should be looked for at (40) the very centre of the phenomenon, namely at the level of the conjunction of signifiers on the one hand, and on the other hand, as I have already indicated, at the level of the sanction that is given by the Other to this creation itself, through the fact that it is the Other who gives to this signifying creation the value of a signifier in itself, the value of a signifier in relation to the phenomenon of signifying creation.

Here lies the distinction between the witticism compared to what is pure and simple phenomenon, the relating of a symptom, for example; it is in the passage to the second function that the witticism itself lies. But on the other hand if all that I have just told you today did not exist, namely what happens at the level of the signifying conjunction which is its essential phenomenon, and of what it develops as such, in so far as it participates in the essential dimensions of the signifier, namely metaphor and metonymy, there would be no sanction possible, no other distinction possible for the witticism. For example in comparison with the comic there would be none possible; or compared to the jest, or compared to the raw phenomenon of laughter.

In order to understand what is in question in the witticism qua signifying phenomenon, we had to isolate its aspects, its particularities, its attachments, all its ins and outs at the (41) level of the signifier, and that the fact that the Witz (S?), something that is at such an elevated level of signifying elaboration, was dwelt on by Freud in order to see in it a particular example of the formation of the unconscious, is also something that retains us, it is also this whose importance you should begin to see when I have shown you in this connection how it allows us to advance in a rigorous fashion into a phenomenon that is itself psychopathological as such, namely the parapraxis.

Seminar 3: 20 november 1957

We have approached our task then by way of the witticism, the first example of which we began to analyse the last day, the one that Freud made his own in the famillionaire joke, while at the same time attributing it to Hirsch-Hyacinth, himself a very significant poetic creation. It is not by chance that it is against this background of poetic creation that Freud chose his first example, and that we ourselves have found, as is usually the case, that this original example turned out to be particularly suitable to portray, to demonstrate, what we want to demonstrate here.

You have no doubt perceived that this brings us to the analysis of the psychological phenomenon that is in question in the witticism, at the level of a signifying articulation which, no doubt, even though it may interest you, at least I hope a good number of you, is nonetheless the object, as you can well (2) imagine, of something that might easily appear disturbing. I mean that without doubt this something that surprises, upsets your way of thinking is also at the very core of the renewal of the analytic experience that I am carrying on here with you, and concerns the place, I would say up to a certain point the existence, of the subject. Someone asked me about this, someone who is certainly far from being badly informed, nor indeed badly informed about the question itself, nor badly informed about what I am trying to contribute to it.

Someone asked me the question: "But what then becomes of the subject? Where is it?"

The reply is easy when you are dealing with philosophers, because it was a philosopher who asked me the question at the Philosophical Society where I was speaking. I was tempted to reply: "But on this point I could easily ask you to answer your own question, and say that I leave it to philosophers to speak about it. After all, I do not see why I should do all the work."

This question of the elaboration of the notion of the subject certainly needs to be revised as a result of the Freudian experience. If there is something that has to be modified in it, this is hardly a cause for surprise. In other words, if Freud has introduced something essential, should we still really expect to see intelligent people, particularly psychoanalysts, all the (3) more completely overwhelmed by a particular notion of the subject, embodied in a certain style of thinking, as being simply the ego - which is nothing but a return to what we can call the

grammatical confusions of the problem of the subject, the identification of the ego with a power of synthesis that certainly no data of experience can allow us to sustain. You could even say that there is no need to draw on the Freudian experience. There is no need to refer to it since a simple, sincere inspection of the life of any one of us helps us to see that this so-called power of synthesis is more than held in check; and that really, unless we are dealing in fiction, there is nothing more common in experience than what we can call not just the incoherence of our motives, but even more, I would say the sentiment of their profound lack of motivation, of their fundamental alienation. So that if Freud puts forward a notion of the subject that operates beyond this, this subject that is so difficult to grasp in ourselves, if he shows us its sources and its action, there is something that should always have given us pause, namely that this subject - in so far as it introduces a hidden unity, a secret unity into what is apparent to us at the most banal level of experience, our profound division, our profound fragmentation, our profound alienation with respect to (4) our own motives - that this subject is other.

Is it simply a kind of double, a subject that is perhaps a bad ego, as some have said, since in fact it conceals some rather surprising tendencies, or simply another ego, or as you might rather think I am saying, the true ego? Is that really what is in question? Is it simply an understudy, purely and simply an other whom we can conceive of as being structured like the ego of our experience?

That is the question, and that is also why we approach it this year at the level and under the title of formations of the unconscious.

The question is of course already present, and offers a response. It is not structured in the same way: in this experiential I (*moi*) something is presented that has its own laws. It has in fact an organization of its formations, and has not only a style but also a particular structure. Freud approaches this structure and deconstructs it at the level of neuroses, at the level of symptoms, at the level of dreams, at the level of parapraxes, at the level of the witticism. He recognizes it as being unique and homogeneous. The whole core of what he exposes to us at the level of the witticism, and this is the reason why I chose it as a point of entry, rests on this; it is his fundamental argument for making of the witticism a manifestation of the unconscious.

This means that it is structured, that it is organized according (5) to the same laws as those we find in the dream. He recalls these laws to us, he enumerates them, he articulates them, he recognizes them in the structure of the witticism. They are the laws of condensation; the laws of displacement; essentially and above all something of the other adheres to them; he also recognizes in them what I translated at the end of my article as égards aux nécessités de la mise en scene (tr: considerations of representability). He introduces this also as a third element.

But naming them is not what is important. The core of what he puts forward, the key to his analysis is this recognition of common structural laws. This, as he says, is how you recognize that a process has been drawn into the unconscious. It is what is structured according to the laws, structured according to their types. This is what is in question when the unconscious is in question.

What happens then? What happens at the level of what I am teaching you, is that we are now able, that is after Freud, to recognize this event that is all the more demonstrative because it is really extremely surprising. That these laws, this structure of the unconscious, that by which a phenomenon can be recognized as belonging to the formations of the unconscious is strictly identifiable with, overlaps, and I would even say further, overlaps in an exhaustive fashion what linguistic analysis allows us to detect as being the essential modes of the (6) formation of meaning, in so far as this meaning is engendered by combinations of signifiers.

The term signifier takes on its full meaning from a certain moment in the evolution of linguistics, that at which there is isolated the notion of the signifying element, a notion very closely linked in the actual history to the separating out of the notion of the phoneme. Since it is uniquely localized by its associations with this notion, the notion of signifier, in so far as it allows us to take language at the level of a certain elementary register, can be doubly defined, on the one hand as a diachronic chain, and, as a possibility within this chain, of a permanent possibility of substitution in the synchronic sense. This grasp at an elementary level of the functions of the signifier is a recognition at the level of this function of an original power which is precisely that in which we can localize a certain generation of something called meaning, and something that in itself is very rich in psychological implications, and that receives a kind of complement, without even needing to push any further its own way, its research, to plough any further its own furrow, in what Freud himself had already prepared for us at this point of conjunction between the field of linguistics and the proper field of psychoanalysis. It is to show us that these psychological effects, that these effects of the generation of (7) meaning are nothing other than this, and overlap exactly what Freud show us as being the formations of the unconscious.

In other words, we are able to grasp something that remained elided up to then in what can be called the place of man, and it is precisely this: the relationship that there is between the fact that for him there exist objects of a heterogeneity, of a diversity, of a variability that is truly surprising compared to the biological objects that we could expect as corresponding to his existence as a living organism, namely something particular that presents a certain style, a certain superabundant and luxuriant diversity, and at the same time something impossible to grasp as such as a biological object, something that comes from the world of human objects, something that is found in this instance to be closely and indissolubly related to the submission, to the subduction, of the human being by the

phenomenon of language.

This had of course already made its appearance, but only up to a certain point and masked in some way; masked in so far as what is graspable at the level of discourse, of the concrete discourse, always presents itself with respect to this generation of meaning in an ambiguous position; this language, in effect, being already turned towards objects that include in themselves something of the creation that they have received from language itself and (8) something that had already been the object precisely of a whole tradition, even of a whole philosophical rhetoric, that which asks the question in the most general sense of the critique of judgement: what is the value of language? What do these connections represent in relation to the connections at which they appear to culminate? That they should even put themselves forward as representing the connections that exist in the real order.

It is at all of this, in fact, that there culminates a critical tradition, a philosophical tradition, whose high point and summit we can define by Kant, and already we can in a certain way interpret, think of Kant's critique as the most profound questioning of every kind of reality, in so far as it is submitte

to a priori categories not only of aesthetics but also of logic. Here indeed is something that represents a pivotal point from which human meditation can begin again to rediscover that something that was not at all perceived in the way of asking the question at the level of discourse, at the level of logical discourse, at the level of the correspondence between a certain syntax of the the intentional circle in so far as it is closed in each sentence, to take it up again right through this book on the critique of logical discourse, to reconsider again the action of the word in this creative chain in which it is always capable of engendering new meanings, most obviously by means of metaphor; (9) and by way of metonymy in a fashion that - I will explain why in due course - has up to recent times always remained profoundly masked.

This introduction is already difficult enough to make me return to my example of famillionaire and to make us try here to complete it.

We only arrived at this notion in the course of an intentional discourse in which, while the subject presents himself as wishing to say something, something else is produced that goes beyond his wish, something that presents itself as an accident, as a paradox, as a scandal, a neo-formation, that appears with certain features that are not at all the negative ones of a sort of stumbling like in a parapraxis which is what it might have been - I showed some equivalent things that are very like it in the order of pure and simple parapraxes - but which on the contrary is found, in the conditions that the accident occurs, to be registered and given a value as a meaningful phenomenon; precisely of being a generation of meaning at the level of a Signifying neo-formation, of a sort of co-lapsing, of signifiers that in this instance, as Freud puts it, are compressed into one

another, stuck one against the other, and that this created meaning, and I showed you its nuances and its enigmatic qualities. Between what and what? Between a certain evocation of (10) a properly metaphorical manner of being: "he treated me quite famillionairely"; and a certain evocation of a particular type of being, a verbal being that is ready to take on the peculiar animation whose ghost I already brandished before you with the famillionaire; the famillionaire in so far as he makes his entry into the world as the representative of something that is very likely to take on for us a much more consistent reality and weight than the more hidden reality and weight of the millionaire, but which I also showed you as having a certain something in existence that is vivid enough to really represent a personage characteristic of a certain historical epoque. And I pointed out to you that Heine was not the only one to have invented it, I talked to you about Gide's Prometheus ill-bound and his "miglionnaire".

It would be very interesting to pause for an instant at the Gidean creation of Prometheus ill-bound. The millionaire in Prometheus ill-bound is the banker Zeus, and there is nothing more surprising than the way this character is elaborated. I do not know why in our memories of Gide's work, it is eclipsed perhaps by the ineffable brilliance of Palude, of which it is nonetheless a sort of correspondent and double. It is the same character who is involved in both. There are many features here (11) that overlap: the millionaire, in any case, is someone who is found to have rather peculiar relationships with his fellows, because it is here that we see emerge the idea of the gratuitous act. Zeus, the banker, who is incapable of having with any other person a true and authentic interchange, since he is identified one might say with absolute power, with this aspect of the pure signifier that there is in money, that questions one might say the existence of every possible kind of significant exchange, can find no other way of escaping from his solitude than to proceed in the following way: as Gide puts it, to go out on the street with in one hand an envelope containing what at the time was something of value, a five hundred franc note, and in the other hand a box in the ear, if one can put it like that; he lets the envelope fall and, when someone obligingly picks it up, asks him to write a name on the envelope, in return for which he gives him a blow in the face. And it is not for nothing that he is Zeus. It is a tremendous blow that leaves him dazed and hurt; then he goes off and sends the contents of the envelope to the person whose name had been written by the person whom he had just treated so roughly.

In this way he finds himself in the position of not having to make a choice, of having compensated, one might say for a gratuitous piece of badness by a gift that owes absolutely (12) nothing to him. His choice is to restore by his action the circuit of exchange into which he cannot introduce himself in any way or from any angle, to participate in it in this way by effraction, as it were, to engender a sort of debt in which he does not participate, and all of whose consequences, which will develop in the rest of the novel through the fact that the two

characters themselves never succeed in connecting what they owe to one another; one will become almost blind and the other will die of it.

This is the whole story of the novel and it seems that to a certain extent it is a very instructive and moral story that could be used at the level of what we want to demonstrate.

Here then we have our Heinrich Heine who has created this character as a background, and this character has produced with the signifier *famillionaire*, the double dimension of metaphorical creation, and on the other hand a sort of new metonymical object, the *famillionaire*, whose position you can situate here and here.

I showed you last day that to conceive of the existence of the signifying creation called the *famillionaire* we can find here, even though here of course attention is not drawn to this aspect of things, all the debris, all the ordinary waste from the reflection of a metaphorical creation on an object; namely, all (13) the underlying signifiers, all the signifying packets into which we can break the term *famillionaire*, the *fames*, the *fama*, the infamy, in fact anything you like, the *famulus*, everything that Hirsens-Hyacinth effectively is for his caricature of a boss, Cristoforo Gumpelino. And here in this place, we should systematically search every time we are dealing with a formation of the unconscious as such, for what I have called the debris of the metonymical object which certainly, for reasons that are altogether clear from experience, are shown to be naturally more important when the metaphorical creation, one might say, has not succeeded. I mean when it has culminated in nothing, as in the case that I have just shown you of the forgetting of a name; when the name Signorelli is forgotten to rediscover the trace of this hollow, of this hole that we find at the level of metaphor, the metonymical debris take on all their importance.

The fact that at the level of the disappearance of the term "Herr", it is something that forms part of the whole metonymical context within which "Herr" is isolated, namely the context of Bosnia Herzogovina, that allows us to restore it, takes on here all its importance.

But let us return to our *famillionaire*.

Our *famillionaire* is produced then at the level of the message. I (13) pointed out to you that we would find ourselves at the level of *f amillionaire* when we were dealing with the metonymical correspondences of the paradoxical formation that is produced at the level of the forgetting of a name. In the case of Signorelli we should also find something corresponding to the concealment, to the disappearance of Signor, in the case of the forgetting of a name. We should also find it at the level of the witticism.

This is where we stopped. How can we think, reflect on what happens at the level of *famillionaire*, given that the witty metaphor has succeeded in this case? There must be something that up to a certain point corresponds, marks in some way, the

residue, the refuse of the metaphorical creation.

A child would tell you right away. If we were not fascinated by the entifying aspect that always makes us handle the phenomenon of language as if it were an object, we would learn simply to say the obvious things in the way that mathematicians go about their work when they handle their little symbols of x , a and b , namely, without thinking of anything, without thinking of what they signify, because it is precisely that that we are looking for, this is what happens at the level of the signifier. In order to know what it signifies let us not try to find out what it signifies; it is absolutely clear that what is rejected, (15) what marks at the level of the metaphor the remainder, what emerges, what remains as a residue of the metaphorical creation, is the word familiar (familier).

If the word familiar did not emerge and if famillionaire came in its place, we must think of the word familiar as having gone somewhere, as having the same fate as that I designated for you the last time as being reserved for the Signor of Signorelli, that is of going to continue its little circuit somewhere in the unconscious memory. It is the word familiar.

We will not be at all surprised that this should be the case for the simple reason that this word familiar is precisely what on this occasion effectively corresponds to the mechanism of repression in its most usual sense, in the sense of what we experience at the level of something that corresponds to a past experience, to a personal experience, to a previous historical experience that goes back very far and of course in this case it is no longer a question of the being of Hirsch-Hyacinth himself, but of that of his creator, Heinrich Heine.

Even though the word famillionaire is particularly appropriate when spoken by Heinrich Heine's poetic creation, it is of little importance for us to know the circumstances in which he discovered it. Perhaps he found it during one of those night walks in Paris that he had to complete on his own, after the (16) meetings he had around the 1830's, with Baron James Rothschild who treated him as an equal, and quite "famillionairely". It was perhaps then that he invented it, rather than having it occur to him as he was sitting at his writing table. But it does not matter, it is enough that he made such a successful discovery.

In this I am saying no more than Freud. About a third of the way through the book, after the analysis of famillionaire, you see Freud taking up the example again at the level of what he calls the motives (tendances) of jokes, and identifying in this creation, in the formation of this witticism, identifying the ingenious invention of this creation of Heine. It is something that has its guarantee in his past, in his own personal family relations. Famillionairely is very familiar to him because behind Solomon Rothschild, whom he implicates in his fiction, there is another famillionaire who belongs to his own family, his uncle Solomon Heine, who played the most oppressive role in his

life, throughout his whole existence, treating him extremely badly, not only refusing him what he could have expected from him on the practical level, but far more: by being the man who refused him, who was an obstacle in Heine's life to the realization of his great love, the love he had for his cousin (17) whom he was not able to marry for a reason that was essentially *famillionaire*, because his uncle was a millionaire and he was not. So that Heine always considered as a betrayal, something that was only the consequence of this familial impasse so profoundly marked by "millionairedom".

We can say that this familiar is found here to be what has the major signifying function in the repression that corresponds to the witty creation, it is the signifier that in the case of Heine the poet, the artist of language, shows us in a clear-cut fashion an underlying, personal meaning in relation to this witty and poetic creation. This underlay is linked to the word, and not to the confused accumulation of permanent meaning in Heine's life, arising from a dissatisfaction and from a very particularly false position vis-a-vis women in general. If something intervenes here, it is through the signifier familiar as such. There is no other way in the example referred to, to come upon the action, the incidence of the unconscious, except by showing here the signification that is closely linked to the presence of the signifying term "familiar" as such.

Needless to say, these remarks are made to show you that when we have set out on the road of linking to the signifying combination (18) the whole economy of what is registered in the unconscious, it has many implications, and leads us in a regression that we can consider, not as being infinite, but as going to the origin of language. We should consider all human meanings as having been at some time metaphorically engendered by signifying conjunctions; and I should say that considerations like this are certainly not without interest. We always have a lot to learn from the examination of the history of the signifier.

This remark that I make in passing is made simply to give you an illustration while I am about it, in connection with the Identification of the term family as being what is repressed at the level of metaphorical formation, because after all, unless you have read Freud or unless there is a certain homogeneity between the way you think when you are in analysis and the way you read a text, you do not think of family in the term *famillionaire* as such. In the term "atterre" that I analysed for you the last day, the more the term "atterre" develops, the more it tends towards the meaning of terror, and the more terre is avoided even though it is the active element in the signifying introduction of the term "atterre".

(19) In the same way here, the further you go into the meaning of *famillionaire*, the more you think of *famillionaire*, that is to say of the millionaire who has become transcendent, something that exists in being, and no longer purely and simply a sort of sign; but the more family itself tends to be avoided as a term that is at work in the creation of the word *famillionaire*. But

if for a moment you begin to interest yourself in the term family, as I have done, at the level of the signifier, I mean by opening Littre's dictionary in which M. Chassé tells us Mallarmé got all his ideas - the joke is that he is right, but he is only right in a certain context, I would say that he did not get them there any more than his interlocutors; he has the feeling there that he has made a breakthrough. Of course he has made a breakthrough because it had not been said up to then. If in fact people thought about what poetry was, there would really be nothing surprising in perceiving that Mallarmé, was extremely interested in the signifier. But since nobody has ever really approached what poetry really is, since they oscillate between some vague and confused theory about comparison, or on the other hand a reference to some musical terms or other, an attempt is made to explain the supposed lack of meaning in Mallarmé, without at all seeing that there should be a way of defining poetry as a (20) function of relationships to the signifier, that there is perhaps a more rigorous formula, and that once one gives this formula, it is much less surprising that in his most obscure sonnets, Mallarme should be implicated.

I do not think that anyone is going to discover some day that I also get all my ideas in Littré's dictionary. The fact that I consult it does not mean that it is there that the question lies.

I open it then and I can tell you something that I suppose some of you may know, that in 1881 the term familial was a neologism. A careful reference to some good authors who have since devoted themselves to the question, allowed me to date the appearance of the word familial to 1865. That means that we did not possess the adjective familial before that year. Why not?

Here is something very interesting. In the final analysis the definition that Littré gives for it, refers to the family at the level of political science. In fact the word familial is much more closely linked to the context of family allowances than to anything else. It is because at a certain moment the family could be taken, could be approached as being an important object at the level of political reality, because precisely it no longer (21) had the same relationship, no longer had the same structural function for the subject that it had always had up to a certain epoch, namely that it was in some way included, grasped, in the very foundations, in the very basis of the discourse of the subject without anybody thinking of isolating it, that it was promoted to the level of a consistent object, of an object that could be subject to a particular technical kind of management, that something as simple as the adjective correlative to the term family came to be born; and in this you can hardly fail to see that it is also perhaps something that is not indifferent at the level of the very usage of the signifier family.

In any case, this remark is also made to make us think of the fact that we should not consider what I have just told you about the entry into the circuit of the repressed and of the term family in Heinrich Heine's day, as having an absolutely identical value to the one it may have today, because by the very fact that

the term familial is not only not usable in the same context, but did not even exist in Heine's day is enough to change what we might call the axis of the signifying function linked to the term family. This is a nuance that one can consider on this occasion as being far from negligible.

Besides, it is thanks to a series of oversights of this kind, (22) that we can imagine that we understand ancient texts in the **way** their contemporaries understood them. Nevertheless everything points to the fact that there is every chance that a naive reading of Homer does not at all correspond to the true meaning of Homer, and it is certainly not for nothing that there are people who devote themselves with an exhaustive attention to the Homeric vocabulary as such, in the hope of approximately restoring to its place the dimension of meaning that is contained in his poems. But the fact that they keep their sense, despite the fact that in all probability a good part of what is inaccurately called the mental world, the world of the meanings **of** Homer's heroes escapes us completely, and very probably escapes us in a more and more definitive fashion, it is all the same on the plane of this distance of the signifier from the signified that allows us to understand that a particularly well-made concatenation, is precisely what characterizes poetry; these signifiers to which we can still and shall probably indefinitely until the end of time be able to give plausible meanings.

Here we are then with our famillionaire, and I think that I have almost completed what can be said about the phenomenon of the creation of a witticism in its own order and register. This is perhaps something that will allow us to state more accurately the formula we can give for the forgetting of a name that I spoke to (23) you about last week.

What is the forgetting of a name? On this occasion it means that the subject has posed to the Other, and to the other himself qua Other, the question: "Who painted the frescoes at Orvieto?" And he finds nothing.

On this occasion I would like to point out to you the importance **of** the care I take to give you a correct formulation; on the pretext that analysis discovers that if he cannot evoke the name **of** the painter of Orvieto, it is because Signor is missing you **may** think that it is Signor that is forgotten. That is not true. First of all because it is not Signor that he is looking for, it is Signorelli that is forgotten, and Signor is the repressed signifying waste of something that is happening at the place at which Signorelli is not found.

Pay close attention to the absolutely rigorous character of what I **am** telling you. It is absolutely not the same thing to **remember** Signorelli and Signor. When you have given Signorelli **the** unity that it requires, that is when you have made of it the **proper** name of an artist, the designation of a particular name, you no longer think of Signor. If Signor has been separated out **from** Signorelli, isolated within Signorelli, it is because of the

action of decomposition proper to the metaphor, and in so far as Signorelli was caught in the metaphorical interplay that culminated in the forgetting of the name, a name that analysis (24) allowed us to reconstitute.

What analysis allows us to reconstitute, is the correspondence of Signor to Herr in a metaphorical creation that is directed towards the meaning that exists beyond Herr, the meaning that Herr took on in the conversation with the person who accompanied Freud at that time in his little trip towards the mouth of the Catarro, and that ensured that Herr became the symbol of something before which his medical mastery failed, of the absolute master, namely the illness that he does not heal, the person who commits suicide despite his treatment, and also the **death** and the impotence threatening Freud himself personally. It **is in** the metaphorical creation that there is produced this breaking up of Signorelli, that allowed the Signor which is in fact discovered as an element to go somewhere. You must not **say that** Signor is forgotten, it is Signorelli that is forgotten, **and** Signor is something that we find at the level of metaphorical **waste** in so far as the repressed is this signifying waste. Signor is repressed, but it is not forgotten, there is no need **for it** to be forgotten because it did not exist beforehand. **Besides** if it was able to fragment so easily and to detach itself from Signorelli, it is because Signorelli is precisely a word in a tongue that was foreign to Freud, and that it is very striking, remarkable and this is an experience that you can very easily perform provided you have some experience of a foreign tongue (25) that you much more easily discern the constitutive elements **of the** signifier in a foreign tongue than in your own. If you **begin** to learn a tongue you perceive the constitutive elements **between** the words, constitutive relationships that you completely overlook in your own tongue. In your own tongue you do not think **of** words by decomposing them into a radical and a suffix, while **you** do it in the most spontaneous way when you learn a foreign tongue. That is why a foreign word is much more easily fragmentable and usable in its signifying elements and decompositions, than is any word in your own tongue. This is only **an** element assisting a process that can also occur with the **words** of your own tongue, but if Freud began with this examination of the forgetting of a foreign word, it is because it **is** particularly accessible and demonstrative.

So what is there at the level of the place where you do not find **the** name Signorelli? It means precisely that there was an attempt at that place at a metaphorical creation. The forgetting **of the** name, what presents itself as the forgetting of a name, is **what** can be determined in place of millionaire. Nothing at all would have happened if Heinrich Heine had said: "He received me quite **as** an equal, quite..em..em ..em."

It is exactly what happens at the level that Freud searches for (26) the name Signorelli, it is something that will not emerge, **that is** not created, it is here that he searches for Signorelli **in an** excessive way. Why? Because at the level that he should search for Signorelli, because of the preceding conversation, a

metaphor is expected and summoned that concerns something that is destined to mediate between the subject-matter of the conversation that Freud had at that moment, and the part of it that he refuses, namely death. It is just this that is involved when he turns his thoughts towards the frescoes at Orvieto, namely to what he himself calls the "Four Last Things", what can be called the eschatological elaboration that is the only way that he can approach the sort of abhorrent term, this unthinkable term of his thoughts, this something on which he must nevertheless dwell. Death exists and limits his being as a man, limits his action as a doctor, and also provides an absolutely irrefutable limit for all his thoughts.

It is because no metaphor comes to him in the sense of the elaboration of these things as being the last things, because Freud refuses to accept any eschatology, except in the form of an admiration for the frescoes painted at Orvieto, that nothing comes, that at the place where he searches for the artist - because in the last analysis it is a question of the artist, of naming the artist - nothing is produced, because no metaphor (27) succeeds, no equivalent can be given at that moment for Signorelli, because Signorelli has taken on a necessity, is called at that moment into a very different signifying form than that of its own name, which at that moment is summoned to participate in the way that "atterre" plays its part by the radical "ter", that is to say it breaks up and is elided. The existence somewhere of the term Signor is the result of the unsuccessful metaphor that Freud calls at that moment to his aid. That is why you see the same effects that I pointed out to you as existing at the level of the metonymical object, namely, at that moment of the object in question, the represented, painted object of the last things. Freud withdraws it. "Not only did I not find the name of Signorelli, but I never remembered better, never better visualised than at that moment the frescoes at Orvieto, even though I am not", and we know it through all sorts of other features, by the form of his dreams in particular, "I am not all that imaginative."

If Freud made all these discoveries it is very probably because he was much more open, much more permeable to the interplay of symbols than to the interplay of images; and he himself notes this intensification of the image at the level of memory, this more intense reminiscence of the object in question, namely the (28) painting, and down to the face of Signorelli himself who is there in the posture in which the donors, and sometimes the artist, appeared in paintings of that epoch. Signorelli is in the painting and Freud visualizes him. There is not therefore a pure and simple, massive type of forgetting; on the contrary there is a relationship between the revival, the intensification of certain of its elements, and the loss of other elements, of signifying elements at the symbolic level, and we find at that very moment the sign of what happens at the level of the metonymical object, just as we can now formulate what happens in the formula of the forgetting of a name, more or less as follows:

$$\frac{X}{\text{Signor}} \cdot \frac{\text{Signor}}{\text{Herr}}$$

We rediscover here the formula of the metaphor in so far as it operates through the mechanism of the substitution of a signifier S for another signifier S'.

What happens as a result of this substitution of the signifier S for another signifier S'? What happens is this, that at the **level** of S' a change of meaning takes place, namely, that the meaning of S', let us call it s', becomes the new meaning that we **call** s, since it corresponds to the big S.

But in order that there should remain no ambiguity in your minds, (29) such as the idea that what is involved in this topology, is **that** s is the meaning of S, and that S must be in relation to S' **in** order for s to produce only in these conditions, what I call n". It is the creation of this meaning that is the end, the function of metaphor. The metaphor is always successful to the degree that when this is executed, when the meaning is realized, when the meaning has become a function in the subject, S and s **are** simplified out and cancelled, exactly like in a formula for **the** multiplication of fractions.

It is in so far as "atterre" ends up by signifying what it really **is for** us in practice, namely, more or less struck with terror **that** the "ter" that served as an intermediary between "atterre" and "abattu" on the one hand, that is properly speaking the most absolute distinction, there is no reason why "atterre" should replace "abattu", except that the "ter" that is here because it **served** as a homonym brought this terror with it, that "ter" in **the** two cases can be simplified out. It is a phenomenon of the **same** order that is produced at the level of the forgetting of **names**.

If you really want to understand what is involved, it is not a question of the loss of the name Signorelli, it is an X that I introduce to you here because we are going to learn to recognize **it and** to use it. This X is the summons of the significant (30) (significative) creation whose place we find in the economy of other unconscious formations. I can tell you right away, that this **is** what happens at the level of what is called the desire of **the dream**. I will show you how we will find it, but here we see **it in a** simple fashion at the place at which Freud should have **found** Signorelli. He finds nothing, not just because Signorelli **has** disappeared, but because at that level he must create something that satisfies what is the question for him, namely the last things, and it is in so far as this X is present, something **that is** the metaphorical formation that tends to be produced, and **lis can see** from this that the term Signor appears at the level of **tiio** opposing signifying terms, of two times the value S', and **that it is** under this heading that it undergoes repression as **Signor**, that at the level of X nothing is produced, and this is **ifrhy** he does not find the name, and why Herr plays the role from

the place it occupies as metonymical object, as an object that cannot be named, as an object that is only named by something that is connected to it. Death is the absolute Herr. But when one speaks of Herr one does not speak of death because one cannot speak of death, because death is precisely both the limit and probably also the origin of all speech.

(31) Here then is where we are lead by the comparison, the relating term by term of the formation of the witticism with that unconscious formation whose form you can now detect more clearly since it is apparently negative. It is not negative. To forget **a** name is not simply a negation, it is a lack, but a lack - we **always** tend to go too quickly - of that name. It is not because **this** name cannot be grasped that it is a lack, it is the lack of **this** name that means that searching for this name, the lack at **the** place where this name should be exercising this function, **where** it can no longer exercise it because a new meaning is **required**, that demands a new metaphorical creation. That is why Signorelli is not found, but that on the contrary the fragments **are** found where they should be found in the analysis, where they **exercise** the function of the second term of the metaphor, namely, **the** term elided in the metaphor.

This may be Chinese to you, but it does not matter if you simply allow yourselves to be led as things emerge. Because even though **it** may appear to be Chinese in a particular case it is very rich **in** consequences in that if you remember it as you should, it will **permit** you to clarify what is happening in the analysis of all **sorts** of unconscious formations, to account for them in a satisfying fashion, and on the contrary to perceive (32) that in **eliding** it, in not taking it into account, you are lead into what **are** called entifications or identifications that are quite crude, incomplete, or even the source of errors, or at least coming **together** and tending to sustain the errors of verbal identification that play such an important role in the construction of a certain lazy-minded psychology.

Let us come back once again to our witticism, and to what we must **make of** it. I would like to introduce you to another sort of distinction that brings us back in a way to that with which we began, namely the question of the subject.

The question of the subject, what does that mean? If what I told **you** a little while ago is true, if it is in so far as thought **always** tends to make of the subject the one who designates himself as such in the discourse, I would like you to notice that what distinguishes, what isolates, what opposes it, is something **that we** can define as the opposition between what I can call the **Statement** of the present and the present of the statement.

This looks like a play on words, it is not at all a play on words. The statement of the present means that what calls itself **fl" in the** discourse, in common besides with a series of other particles, with Herr we could now put here, now, and other taboo words **in** our psychoanalytic vocabulary, is the something that (33) **serves** to locate in the discourse the presence of the

speaker, that locates him in his actuality as speaker. It is enough to have the slightest knowledge or experience of language, to see that the present of language, of course, namely what is at present in the discourse, is something completely different to this localization of the present in the discourse. What happens at the level of the message, that is the present of the discourse. This can be read in all sorts of ways, on all sorts of registers, it has no relationship in principle to the present, in so far as it is designated in the discourse as the present of the one who supports it, namely something completely variable, and for whom besides words have really only the value of a particle. It has no more value here than in the here and now. The proof is that when you speak to me about the here or now, and that it is you my interlocutor who speaks about it, you are not speaking of the same here or now, you are speaking of the here or now that I am speaking of. In any case, your I is certainly not the same as mine. These are very simple words destined to fix the I somewhere in the discourse.

But the present of the discourse itself is something completely different, and I will immediately give you an illustration of it at the level of the witticism, the shortest one that I know, which will also introduce us at the same time to a dimension other than the metaphorical dimension.

(34) There is another one. If the metaphorical dimension is the one corresponding to condensation, I spoke to you some time ago about displacement. It has to be somewhere: it is in the metonymical dimension. If I have not already tackled it, it is because it is much more difficult to grasp, but in fact this witticism will be particularly favorable to help us to understand it, and I shall introduce it today.

The metonymical dimension, in so far as it can enter into the witticism, is the one that concerns the context and the use of the combinations of the chain, of horizontal combinations. It is something therefore that will operate by associating the elements that are already conserved in what can be called the treasury of metonymies; it is to the degree that a word can be linked in a different fashion, in two different contexts that will give it two completely different senses, that by taking it up in a certain way we are properly operating within the metonymical meaning.

I shall give you the first example for it also the next day, in the form of the witticism that I can introduce to you so that you can meditate on it before I talk to you about it. It is the one that takes place when Heinrich Heine is with the poet Frederic Soulie in a salon, and when the latter says to him, again a propos of a very rich person, this was very important at the time **(35)** as you see, and of whom he says, seeing him surrounded by people - it is Soulie who is speaking - "You see my friend that **the** worship of the golden calf is not over." "Oh!," replies Heinrich Heine, having looked at the personage, "for a calf he **seems** to me to be a little old."

Here is an example of a metonymical joke. I shall come back to **it** and deconstruct it the next day.

It is in so far as the word calf is taken in two different metonymical contexts, and only because of this, that it is a witticism, because it adds really nothing to the signification of **the** witticism to give it its meaning, namely, that this person is **an** animal. It is funny to say it this way, but it is a joke only because one corresponds to the other, calf has been taken in two different contexts and used as such.

If you are not convinced we shall come back to it the next day. **This** is only a way back to the witticism though which I want to **help you** to see what is at stake when I say that the witticism operates at the level of the interplay of the signifier, and that **it can** be demonstrated in an ultra-short form.

A potential young lady to whom we can accord all the qualities of **having** had a good education, that which consists in not using **dirty** words, but in knowing them all the same, is asked to dance (36) at her first surprise party by a lout who tells her after **some** moments of boredom and silence, during a far from perfect dancet "You must have noticed, mademoiselle, that I am a comte." - "Ah" she simply replies, "te!"

I am not making this up, I think you have seen it in a special **little** collection, and you may have heard it from the lips of the **author** who was very proud of it. But it nevertheless presents **some** particularly exemplary characteristics, because what you see **here** is precisely the essential embodiment of what I called the **present** of the discourse. There is no I, the I does not name **itself**. Nothing could exemplify better the present of the **statement** as opposed to the statement of the present, than the **pore and** simple exclamation. The exclamation is the very type of **the** presence of discourse in so far as the person that produces it **completely** effaces her present; her present is, we might say, **entirely** recalled in the present of the discourse.

Nevertheless at this level of creation the subject proves that **she has** presence of mind, because something like that cannot be **premeditated**, it comes out like that and this is how you **recognize** that a person has wit. She adds this simple modification to the code which consists in adding to it this **little** "te" which takes on all its value from the context, which (37) **is** that she is not content with her comte, except that the **comte**, **if** he is as I say so discontenting, might notice nothing. **It is** a completely gratuitous joke. Nevertheless you see here **the** elementary mechanism of the witticism, namely, that this **slight** transgression of the code is taken by itself as a new value **permitting** the instantaneous generation of the meaning that one **needs**.

What is this meaning? It may seem to you to be certain, but **after all** the well brought-up young lady did not tell her comte **that he** was what he was minus the "te", she told him nothing of **the kind**. The meaning that is to be created is precisely what is

situated somewhere in suspense between the ego and the Other. It is an indication that there is something lacking at least for the moment. On the other hand you see that the text is not transposable: if the individual had said that he was a marquis the creation would not have been possible.

It is evident that in the good old formula that our forefathers of the last century used to enjoy: "Comment vas-tu?" you were asked, and you were meant to reply "et toile a matelas", it was better not to reply "et toile a edredon". You will tell me that it was a time when they were satisfied with simple pleasures.

This "Ah! Te", you grasp it here in its shortest form, in what is incontestably a phonematic form, because it is the shortest way (38) of composing a phoneme. There have to be two distinctive features, the shortest form of the phoneme being: C V; a consonant supported by a vowel or a vowel supported by a consonant, but a consonant supported by a vowel is the classic formulation. Here it is a consonant supported by a vowel, and this is amply sufficient to constitute its message as having the value of a message, in so far as it is a paradoxical reference to the current use of words and directs the thought of the Other to something that is essentially the instantaneous grasp of meaning.

This is what is meant by being witty, it is also what for you initiates the properly combinatory element on which all metaphor rests, because if today I have spoken to you a good deal about metaphor, it is on the plane once again of the location of the substitutive mechanism, which is a mechanism with four terms, the four terms in the formula that I gave you in the "Agency of the letter", and in which you sometimes see so singularly what is the essential operation of intelligence at least in its form, namely, to formulate the correlative of what is established with the X of a proportion.

When you do intelligence tests this is what you are doing. Only it is not enough to say, all the same, that man is distinguished (39) from animals by his intelligence as crudely as that. He is perhaps distinguished from the animal by his intelligence, but perhaps in the fact that he is distinguished by his intelligence, the essential introduction of signifying formulations is primordial.

In other words to formulate things still better, to put in its place the question of the so-called intelligence of man as being the source of his reality plus X, we have to begin by asking intelligence of what? What is there to understand? With the real, is it so much a question of understanding? If it is purely and simply a question of relationship to the real, our discourse should surely succeed in restoring it to its existence in the real, that is to say, should end up with nothing. Which is what discourse does in general. If we end up with something else, if one can even speak of history as ending in a certain knowledge, it is in so far as discourse has brought an essential transformation to it.

This indeed is what it is all about, and perhaps it is about these four little terms linked in a certain fashion, that are called proportional relationships. These proportional relationships we tend once again to entify, that is to believe that we find them in objects; but where in the objects are these proportional relationships if we do not introduce them by means of our little signifiers? It remains that for any metaphorical interplay to be possible, it must be founded on something where there is something to substitute, on something that acts as a base, namely the signifying chain, the signifying chain as base, as principle of combination, as the locus of metonymy. This is what we will try to tackle the next day.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 27 November 1957

We left things the last day at the point at which in the analysis **of the** witticism - having in a first approach shown you one of **its** aspects, one of its forms, in what I called here the metaphorical function - we were going to take up a second aspect, which is the one introduced here in the register of the metonymical function.

Yon may be surprised at a way of proceeding that consists in starting from an example and developing successively functional relationships, which because of this seem at first not to be **linked** with our subject in a general way. This comes from a necessity proper to our subject, and you will see moreover that **we** will have the opportunity of showing its key element.

We can say that with regard to anything that is of the order of **the** unconscious in so far as it is structured by language, we find **ourselves** confronted by the phenomenon that it is not simply the (2) particular genus or class, but the particular example itself **that** allows us to grasp its most significant properties.

We have here a sort of inversion of our usual analytic **perspective**, I mean analytic not in the sense of psychoanalytic **but in the** sense of the analysis of mental functions. There is **here, if** I may put it this way, something that can be called the **failure of** the concept in the abstract sense of the term, or more **exactly**, the necessity of going through a form other than that of **the** conceptual grasp. That was what I was alluding to the day I **spoke about** Mannerism, and I would say that this feature is **something** very relevant to our field, to the area that we move **about in**; that it is rather by the usage of the concept, by the **usage of the** concetto that we are obliged to proceed in this **field**. **This** is precisely because of the dimension in which the **structures** we are talking about operate.

The term pre-logical is one that will only lead to confusion, and **X would** advise you to eliminate it in advance from your **categories**, given what has been made of it, namely a **psychological** property. It is rather a question of structural **properties** of language in so far as they are antecedent to any **Question** that we can pose to language on the legitimacy of what **language** itself proposes to us as an aim. As you know, it is **nothing other** than what in itself has been the object of (3) **anxious** interrogation by philosophers, thanks to which we **have arrived** at a sort of compromise which is more or less the **following**: that if language shows us that we cannot say an awful

lot about it, except that it is a being of language, it is certainly because in this perspective there is going to be realized for us a "for us" that is called objectivity.

This is no doubt a rather hasty way of summarizing for you the whole adventure that goes from formal logic to transcendental **logic**. But it is simply to situate, to tell you right away that **we** place ourselves in another field, and to indicate to you that Freud does not tell us when he speaks of the unconscious, that **this** unconscious is structured in a certain way. He tells it to **us in** a way that is at once discourse and verbal, in so far as **the** laws that he advances, the laws of composition, of articulation of this unconscious reflect, exactly overlap, certain of the most fundamental laws of the composition of discourse. That on the other hand, in this mode of articulating **the** unconscious, all sorts of elements are lacking, which are **also** the ones involved in our common discourse; the link of causality he tells us in connection with the dream, negation, and immediately after he goes on to show us that it is expressed in **some** way or other in the dream. It is this, it is this field **(4) that** has already been explored, in as much as it has already **been** staked out, defined, circumscribed, even ploughed up by **Freud**. This is what we are trying to return to in order to formulate, I would go further, in order to formalize more exactly **what** we have just called the primordial structural laws of **language**, since if there is anything that the Freudian experience **has** contributed, it is that we are determined by these structural **laws to** what, rightly or wrongly, can be called the condition of **the most** profound image of ourselves that can be signified, or **more** simply, that something in ourselves that lies beyond our **grasp** of ourselves, beyond the idea that we can construct of **ourselves**, on which we base ourselves, more or less hold on to, **and which** we sometimes forced a little too prematurely to make of **it the** synthesis, the totality, of the person. All terms, let us **not** forget, that precisely because of the Freudian experience, **are** objects of controversy.

In fact Freud teaches us - and I should, after all, put it here **as** a signed frontispiece - about something that we can call the distance, even the gulf, that exists between the structuring of **desire and** the structuring of our needs; because, even if the Freudian experience does precisely come to be referred in the **last analysis** to a metapsychology of needs, there is assuredly nothing obvious in this, it could even be said to be completely unexpected in relation to what appeared at first sight to be the **ease**.

(5) It is in function of this progress, of the detours that the **experience** instituted and defined by Freud forces us to, and **Shows** us the extent to which the structure of desires is determined by something other than need; the extent to which **these** needs only come to us in a way that is refracted, broken, **fragmented**, structured, precisely by all those mechanisms called condensation, called displacement, called according to their **poems**, the manifestations of the psychic life in which they are **reflected**, which suppose other intermediaries and mechanisms, and

in which we recognize, precisely, a certain number of laws which are the ones we are going to get to at the end of this year of seminars, and which we will call the laws of the signifier.

These laws are the laws that dominate here, and in the witticism we learn how they operate: a jeu d'esprit, with the question mark that the introduction of the term here requires. What is the spirit? What is ingenium? What is ingenio in Spanish, since **I** referred above to concetto? What is this something or other that intervenes here and is something other than the function of judgement? We can only situate it when we have properly carried out our procedures and elucidated it at the level of these procedures. What is in question here? What are these (6) procedures? What is their fundamental aim?

We have already seen, in connection with the ambiguity between the witticism and the slip of the tongue, the kind of fundamental ambiguity that emerges and is in a way constitutive of it, which means that what is produced according to the particular case, can be seen as a slip of the tongue, a sort of psychological accident that still perplexes us without Freudian analysis, or on the contrary, taken up, assumed by a certain way **of** listening by the Other, by ratifying it in a certain way at the level of signifying value, that which precisely on a particular occasion was assumed by the neological, paradoxical, scandalous term "famillionairely"; a particular signifying function that consists in designating something that is not simply this or that, but a sort of beyond, a certain relationship that has failed in this case. And this beyond is not just linked **to** the impasses of the relationship of the subject to the protecting millionaire, but to something that is signified here **as** fundamental. So that something is introduced into the consistency of human relationships, a type of essential impasse based on the following: that no desire can in fact be received, can be admitted by the Other, except by all sorts of arrangements that refract it, make it something other than it is, make it an object of exchange, and to speak plainly, already submit the processes of demand at their very origin to a sort of necessity **of** refusal.

Let me explain, and in a way because we are talking about the (7) witticism I will allow myself, in order to introduce the real level at which there is posed this question of the translation of **a** demand into something that produces an effect, to introduce it **by** a story which even though not very witty has a perspective, a register that does not limit it to the little spasmodic laugh.

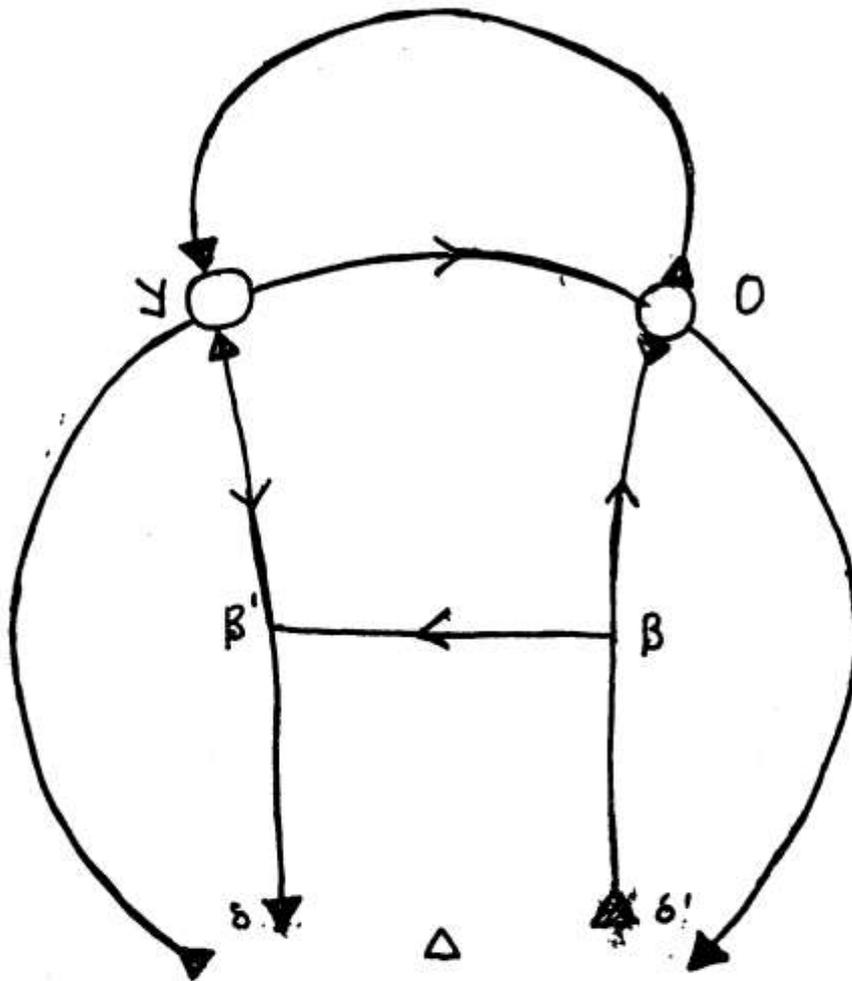
It is the story that no doubt you all know, the story of the masochist and the sadist: "Hurt me," says the former to the latter; to which the latter replies severely: "No".

I can see that it does not make you laugh. It does not matter, a few people are laughing all the same. This story is not there in the **final** analysis to make you laugh; I would like simply to point out to you that in this story something is suggested to us which develops to a level that no longer has anything witty about

SCHEMA of 6 November 1957.

from J.-B. Pontalis

Bulletin de Psychologie
1957-58, tome XI
n° 4-5, pp 293-6



1st Application

- Circuit $\delta y O \delta'$ - Signifying Chain
- Circuit $O \beta \beta' y$ - Chain of Discourse
- y - Message - Locus of METAPHOR
- O - Other - Locus of CODE
- β' - Metonymical Object
- β - "I" of Discourse

Notes

-  INITIAL VECTORS
-  Terminal VECTORS
-  Intermediate VECTORS

it, and is precisely this: who are better made to get on together than the masochist and the sadist? Yes. But, as you see in this story, provided they do not speak.

It is not out of badness that the sadist replies "no". It is in function of his quality as sadist, once he replies, and he is obliged to reply once speech has been used, at the level of the word. Therefore it is in so far as we have passed to the level

of the word that this something that should culminate, provided nothing is said, at the most profound agreement, ends up precisely at what I called above the dialectic of refusal, the (8) dialectic of refusal in so far as it is essential in order to sustain in its essence as demand, what is manifested by way of the word.

In other words, if you can see, it is here that there appears, I am not saying in the circle of the discourse, but in a way, at this dividing point, this switch point, that the subject expresses that something looping back on itself and which is an articulated sentence, a ring of discourse. If it is here at the point delta' that we situate need, need encounters by a sort of necessity of the Other the sort of response that we call for the moment refusal, namely, betrays the essential asymmetry between these two elements of the circuit, the closed loop and the open loop, which means that to directly take the circuit from his need towards the object of his desire, namely, following this trajectory, what is presented here as a demand ends up here with a no.

No doubt it would be worth investigating more fully what appears here only as a sort of paradox that our schema simply serves to situate. This is where we will take up again our sequence of propositions on the different phases of the witticism, and where today I shall introduce what I have called one of its metonymical manifestations. I have already pinpointed the idea, the example of it, in a form in which you can see the total difference there (9) is between it and millionaire.

It is the story of the dialogue between Heinrich Heine and the poet Frederic Soulie', who is more or less his contemporary, a dialogue that is reported in Kuno Fischer's book which, I believe, was rather well-known at the time: "Look," says Frederic Soulie to the man who was only a little older, and whom he admired so much, "Look how the 19th century adores the golden calf" - this in connection with the crowd gathered around an old gentleman who was no doubt basking in the reflected glory of his financial power. To which Heine, casting a disdainful eye on the object to which his attention had been drawn, replies: "Yes, but he seems to me to be too old for that."

What does this joke mean? Where does it get its spice and its power? You know that with respect to the joke Freud right away puts us immediately on the following plane: we shall look for the witticism where it is, namely in its text. There is nothing more striking in the work of this man to whom all sorts of psychological hypostases have been attributed than the way in

which on the contrary it is always from the opposite end, from the materiality of the signifier that he begins, treating it as a datum that exists in itself, and on the other hand we have a clear example of this only in his analysis of the witticism. Not only does he begin each time with the technique but he depends on (10) these technical elements to discover the source of its power.

What does he do then? What he calls "an attempt at reduction". By this he shows us at the level of the famillionaire joke, that by translating it into what might be called its developed meaning, the whole witty aspect vanishes, showing thus that it is in some way in the fundamentally ambiguous relationship that is proper to the metaphor, namely that it is in the fact that a signifier F SC-f:), namely that the function takes a signifier in so far as it is substituted for another one latent in the chain, that it is in this relationship of ambiguity on top of a sort of positional similarity or simultaneity, that we can see what is involved.

If we decompose what is involved, and if we then read it as follows, namely if we say "as familiar as one can be with a millionaire", all the wit disappears.

Freud then approached the witticism at the level of one of its metaphorical manifestations. Here he finds himself confronted with something that is palpably different, but for a moment - because Freud is not one to spare us the detours of his approach towards a phenomenon - he hesitates, and qualifies this new variety as a conceptual joke as opposed to a verbal joke. But he very quickly perceives that this distinction is completely (11) insufficient, that assuredly it is to something that can be called the "form", namely to the signifying articulation, that he must here have recourse; and once again he will try to subject this example to a technical reduction, in order to make it answer for what underlies in it the questionable form given by the subjective agreement that this is a joke. And we shall see that there he encounters something different.

First of all, it seems to him that there must be something metaphorical here. I repeat, we must follow all the approaches of his thinking. That is why he pauses for a moment at the protasis, at what was contributed by the person who is speaking to Heinrich Heine, namely Frederic Souli4. Besides in this he is only following Kuno Fischer who in fact remains at this level. There is in this golden calf something metaphorical, certainly the golden calf has a sort of double value: on the one hand it is the symbol of intrigue, and on the other hand the symbol of the reign of the power of money.

Does this mean that the gentleman receives all this homage because he is unquestionably rich? Do we not find here something that in a way reduces and causes to disappear the source of what is involved. But Freud quickly notices that after all this is only something quite fallacious. This means that it is worth (12) looking much more closely at the details to discover the

wealth of this example.

It is quite certain that there is something already involved in these first elements of the coming into play of the golden calf, something that can be called the material. Without exploring completely the way the verbal usage of an undoubtedly metaphorical term is established, it must be observed that if the golden calf is already something that in itself has the closest connection with the relationship of the signifier to the image, which is effectively the aspect on which idolatry is installed, it is in the last analysis in connection with a perspective that demands, one might say, in the recognition of the one who presents himself as: "I am who I am", namely the God of the Jews, that something particularly exigent sets its face against anything that poses itself as the origin of the signifier itself, the nomination par excellence of any imaged hypostases, because we have of course gone a little further than the idolatry that is purely and simply the adoration of a statue. It too is something that searches for its beyond, and it is precisely to the extent that this mode of searching for its essential beyond is refused in a certain perspective, that this golden calf takes on its value, and it is only by means of something that is already a sliding that this golden calf takes on a metaphorical usage: that what exists in the religious perspective of what can (13) be called in idolatry a topical regression, a substitution of the imaginary for the symbolic, here takes on secondarily a metaphorical value to express something else, something that can also be referred to the level of the signifier, namely something that people other than myself have called the fetichistic value of gold, namely something that also makes us touch on a certain signifying concatenation.

It is not for nothing that I am evoking it here, because it is precisely this function of the fetish that we are going to touch on immediately. It is only conceivable, it can only be referred to, precisely in the dimension of metonymy.

We are dealing here with something that is already charged with all the enmeshments, all the entanglements, of the symbolic imaginary function in connection with the golden calf, and is it here that the joke can or cannot be found, because Freud notes that it is not at all the place where it is situated.

The joke, as he understands it, lies in Heinrich Heine's riposte. And Heinrich Heine's riposte consists precisely in cancelling out one might say, in subverting, all the references in which this golden calf is maintained as a metaphorical expression, in order to make of it something else, which is purely and simply to designate somebody who is suddenly brought back to his true worth, and this does not happen by chance, in which context he no doubt deserves from a certain moment on to be the calf that is (14) worth so much a pound, if I can express myself in that way. The calf is suddenly taken for what it is, something alive, and in fact for something reduced here in the market instituted by the reign of gold, to being nothing but itself, sold as an animal, a calf's head, and in connection with it we have the

statement: "Surely he does not fall within the limits of the definition given by Littre", namely a calf in its first year, or one that I believe a purist in butchering would define as a calf that has not yet stopped suckling its mother, a refinement that I have pointed out is respected only in France. "For a calf, he is a bit too old." There is no way of submitting to a reduction the fact that in this case the calf is no longer a calf, that it is a rather old calf; this remains a witticism, whether or not you have the background of the golden calf.

Therefore Freud grasps here a difference between what is unanalysable and what is analysable, and yet both are witticisms.

What then can this mean, except that the experience of the witticism is doubtless to be referred to two different dimensions of the thing that we are trying to circumscribe more closely? And that what is presented as being in a way, as Freud himself says, fraudulent, a piece of trickery, faulty thinking, is the common feature of a whole other category of wit, in fact what (15) would be popularly described as taking a word in a different sense from the one intended.

The same feature also appears in another story, the one referring to the "premier vol de l'aigle" which became a joke in connection with a rather considerable confiscation of the wealth of the Orleans family by Napoleon III when he came to the throne. "C'est le premier vol de l'aigle" he said. And everyone was delighted with this ambiguity. No need to insist.

Here again is something that really there is no question of describing as a conceptual joke, it is in fact a verbal joke, in quite the same category as that presented here, taking a word apparently in another sense.

It is sometimes amusing to explore what underlies such words and if Freud takes care, because the joke is reported in French, to underline for those who do not know French the ambiguity between "vol" as an action, the movement of birds, with "vol" in the sense of taking away, of abduction, of the theft of property, it would be well to recall here what Freud passes over - I am not saying that he did not know it - namely, that one of these meanings was historically borrowed from the other, and it is from a usage of "vol" that the term "volerie" came to be used about the 13th or 14th century, because the falcon steals (vole) quail, (16) to describe a sin against one of the essential laws of property, called stealing (vol).

This is not an accident in French, I cannot say that it happens in every language, but it was already in Latin where "volare" had taken on the same meaning from the same origin, showing also on this occasion something not unrelated to what we are talking about, namely euphemistic modes of expression for what in the word must finally represent the violation of the word, precisely, or the violation of the contract. It is not for nothing that on this occasion the word "viol" is borrowed here from a completely different register, namely from the register of an abduction

which has nothing to do with what we can properly and juridically call stealing.

But let us stop here and take up that for which I introduced the term metonymy; and indeed I think that we should look beyond these fleeting ambiguities of meaning, for something else to serve as reference to define this second register in which the witticism is situated; this something else that will allow us to unify the source, the mechanism with the first type; to discover the common factor, the common source, the way to which is indicated by everything in Freud, without of course quite succeeding in formulating it.

(17) What would be the use of my talking about Freud if we do not attempt to draw the maximum profit from what he has contributed? It is for us to push forward a little bit further, I mean to give the necessary formalization; we will learn from experience if it is an appropriate formalization, if it is a correct formalization, if it is really in this direction that phenomena are organized. In any case it is a question that is rich in consequences, because assuredly for our whole way of treating things in the broadest sense, that is to say not simply of treating therapeutically but of conceiving the modes of the unconscious, the fact that there is a certain structure, and that this structure is the signifying structure in so far as it takes up, that it cuts across, that it imposes its grid on every human need, is something absolutely decisive and essential that we see when we confront metonymy.

I have already introduced this metonymy several times particularly in the article on "The agency of the letter in the unconscious". I deliberately gave you an example of it on a popular level taken from the experience you may recall of your studies in secondary school, in particular of your grammar. Metonymy is what at that time was called, in a kind of (18) perspective associated with an underrated Quintilian, because it is quite clear that if you were stuffed with anything it was not with figures of rhetoric; there was never much attention paid to them until now.

At the point that we are at in our conception of the forms of discourse I took this example of metonymy: "Thirty sails instead of thirty ships", noting in this connection that these thirty sails were not purely and simply what we were told, namely a taking of the part for the whole, in other words a reference to the real, because there are surely many more than thirty sails. It is rare for ships to have only one sail. But because here there is a literary background; you know that you find these thirty sails in a particular monologue of Le Cid.

It is simply a reference point or an introduction to what is to come.

Here we are then with our thirty sails, and we do not know what to do with them, because after all, either there are thirty and there are not thirty ships, or there are thirty ships and there

are more than thirty. Now what it means is that there are thirty ships, and it is certain that in indicating that it is in the word for word correspondence of what is involved that the direction of what can be called here the metonymical function must be sought, I am simply putting before you here a problematic aspect of the thing. But we must enter more deeply into the heart (19) of the difference between it and metaphor, because after all, you might say to me that it is a metaphor.

Why is it not one? That is the question. Moreover for some time now I hear that some of you, in the course of your everyday lives, are all of a sudden struck by an encounter with something that they no longer know how to classify in terms of metaphor or metonymy. This occasionally brings about disproportionate disorders in their organism, and leads to language that is sometimes a little strong about the starboard of metaphor and the port of metonymy and leaves some people a little seasick.

Let us try then to grasp more closely what is at stake because, after all I was also told in connection with Booz, that "his sheaf was neither greedy nor spiteful" could also be metonymy. I think I showed in my article what this sheaf was, and the degree to which this sheaf is something other than an item he possesses, it is something that in so far as it precisely substitutes for the father, makes emerge the whole dimension of biological fecundity that here underlies the spirit of the poem, and that it is not for nothing that at the horizon, and even more than at the horizon, in the firmament, there also appears the sharp edge of (20) the sickle which evokes the background of castration.

Let us return then to our thirty sails, and let ask ourselves, in the final analysis, so that it can be affirmed here once and for all, what is the meaning of what I call the metonymical function or reference.

I think I have said often enough, although it is still enigmatic, that the structural mainspring of metaphor lies essentially in substitution, in the function supplied to a signifier S, in so far as this signifier is substituted for another in the signifying chain.

Here is what metonymy is : a function that takes a signifier, also S, in so far as this signifier is related to another signifier in the contiguity of the signifying chain:

$$F S (S \dots S')$$

The function supplied to the sail in so far as it is related to **the** ship in the signifying chain, and not in a signifying substitution.

I thus transferred in the clearest fashion, and this is why the apparently formal representations, in so far as these formulae may naturally lead to further exigencies on your part. Someone reminded me recently that I had once said that what I was trying to construct for your use here, in order to circumscribe the

(21) things that we are concerned with, was a rubber logic. It was I myself who said it. It is in fact something of that kind that we are aiming at, a topical structuring that must sometimes necessarily leave gaps because it is constituted by ambiguities. But let me tell you in passing that we cannot avoid, even though we push this topical structuring pretty far, we will not escape from an additional requirement that still remains, in so far as your ideal on this occasion is that of a certain univocal formalization, because certain ambiguities are irreducible at the level of the structure of language as we are trying to define it.

Let me also say in passing that the notion of meta-language is very often used in the most inadequate manner, in so far as it overlooks the following: that either meta-language has formal exigencies that are such that they displace entirely the phenomenon of structuring in which it should be situated; or else that the meta-language itself must conserve these ambiguities of language. In other words that there is no meta-language; there are formalizations either at the level of logic or at the level of that signifying structure whose autonomous level I am trying to separate out for you. There is no meta-language in the sense that it would mean for example the complete mathematization (22) of the phenomenon of language; and this is the case precisely because here there is no way of formalizing beyond what is given as the primitive structure of language.

Nevertheless this formalization is not only required, it is necessary. It is necessary here, for example, because after all you must see that this notion of the substitution of a signifier for another, is a substitution within something whose place must already be defined; it is a positional substitution, and position itself requires a signifying chain, that is to say, a combinatory succession - I am not saying that it requires all its features, I mean that the fact that this combinatory succession is characterized by elements for example that I would call intransitivity, alternation, repetition.

If we go now to this original, minimal level of the constitution of a signifying chain, we will be drawn far away from today's subject. There are minimal requirements, and I do not claim that I have yet dealt with all of them. I have all the same given you enough to propose to you something that allows, I might say, a certain reflection to be supported and to begin in this connection from the particularity of the example which, in this domain, is something from which we should, for reasons that are (23) absolutely essential, draw all our teaching.

This is once again how we are going to proceed, and remark in connection with this example, that even if this seems like a play on words, these sails (voiles) given the function that they play on this occasion conceal (voilent) from us the living reality, in so far as they designate for us that these sails do not enter here with all their qualities of sails, that they do not enter under full sail into the usage that we make of them. These sails never grow slack; these sails are something reduced in their scope and in their sign.

This is something that can be found not only in the thirty sails but also in the village of thirty souls in which it soon appears that these souls are there as shadows of what they represent, that they are even less substantial than the term that suggests too much the presence of inhabitants, that these souls, as the title of a famous novel goes, may be much more than beings, may also be dead souls, souls that are not there.

In the same way as thirty fires (foyers) is also a usage of the term, and surely represents a certain degradation, a minimalization of meaning. I mean that these fires are also dead fires, they are fires about which you would certainly say that there is no smoke without fire, and that it is not for nothing that these fires are used in a way that says metonymically what they have come to stand for.

(24) You will no doubt say that here I am relying in the final analysis on a reference to meaning to show the difference. I do not think so, and you should note that what I began with, is that metonymy is the fundamental structure within which that something new and creative called metaphor can be produced; that even if something with a metonymical origin is placed in a position of substitution as in the case of the thirty sails, it is something other in its nature than metaphor; so that to speak plainly there would be no metaphor if there were not metonymy.

I mean that the chain with respect to which, and within which the places, the positions are defined in which the phenomenon of metaphor can be produced, is in this regard involved in a sort of sliding or equivocation. "There would be no metaphor if there were no metonymy", came to me as an echo, and not at all by chance because it has the closest possible relationship with the exclamation, the comical invocation that I am able to put on the lips of Pere Ubu. There would be no metaphor if there were no metonymy; likewise: "Long live Poland because without Poland there would be no Poles," as Pere Ubu also said.

Why is this a witticism? That is precisely the core of our subject. It is a witticism, and it is funny precisely in so far **as**

it is a reference to the metonymical function as such, because (25) you would be on the wrong track if you thought that this was a joke for example about the role the Poles have played in the all too familiar miseries of Poland. It is just as funny if I say : long live France, because without France there would be no French! Similarly if I say long live Christianity, because without Christianity there would be no Christians! And even long live Christ!

It is always just as funny, and one can legitimately ask why. I stress that here the metonymical function can absolutely not be overlooked, that every kind of relationship of derivation by the use of a suffix, of an affix, or of a designation in the case of inflected languages, is properly the utilization for signifying purposes of the dimension of the chain.

Here there is no ego whatsoever, and I would even say that all

the references cross-check with it. The experience of the aphasic for example shows us precisely that there are two cases of aphasia, and that when we are dealing with the troubles that can be called problems of contiguity, that is of the chain, those which the subject has most difficulty in distinguishing concern the relationship of the word with the adjective, of "bienfait" with "bienfaisant", or with "bienfaire" or with "bienfaisance"; (26) it is in the metonymical other that something is produced. It is precisely this flash that on this occasion, makes us consider this reference to be something that is not just comic, but even a piece of buffoonery.

I would like to stress that it is in fact important here to focus on what can be called a property of the signifying chain, and to grasp - I tried to find some reference points that would enable you to grasp it - as far as we are able, what I want to designate by this effect of the signifying chain, an effect essentially inherent to its nature as a signifying chain, with respect to what can be called meaning.

Do not forget that last year it was with an analogous reference that may seem to you to be metaphorical, but which I underlined clearly was not such, that it claimed to be taken literally in the metonymical chain, that I placed, indicated, situated, what is the essence of every kind of fetichistic displacement of desire, in other words the fixation of desire somewhere before, after, or to one side of, in any case at the threshold of its natural object, in other words the institution of an absolutely fundamental phenomenon that can be called the radical perversion of human desires.

Here I would like to indicate another dimension, what I would call the sliding of meaning in the metonymical chain. And I have (27) already indicated to you the relationship between this and the literary technique, usage, procedure, which is usually described as realism.

It is not realized that in this domain all sorts of experiments can be tried; I tried taking a novel from the age of realism in order to reread it to see the features that might help you to grasp this original something whose reference to the dimension of meaning can be linked to the metonymical usage as such of the signifying chain, and so amongst the novels of the age of realism, I turned at random to a novel by Maupassant called Belami.

In the first place it is a very pleasant read. You should try it some time. And once I had got into it, I was quite surprised to find in it exactly what I was looking for to designate as sliding, beginning at the top of rue Notre-Dame-de-Lorette where we see George Duroy starting out.

"Taking the change for his five-franc piece from the woman behind the till, Duroy left the restaurant. A well set-up man, with all the swagger of an ex-cavalry N.C.O., he drew himself up, twirled his moustache with a familiar soldierly

gesture and swiftly cast his eye round the room over the belated diners like a handsome young man looking for fish to catch."

This is how the novel begins. It seems quite innocuous but afterwards you go from moment to moment, from encounter to encounter, and you witness this sort of sliding in the clearest (27) and most obvious fashion. If we survey the whole progress of the novel we see something that ensures that a fairly basic human being, which is what I would say he has been reduced to at the beginning of the novel, since this five franc piece is his last, reduced to the most direct needs, to the immediate preoccupations of love and hunger, is progressively lead by a succession of chances, that are good and bad, but good in general because he is not only handsome but also lucky, is caught up in a circle of systems, of manifestations of exchange, of the metonymical subversion of these primary data, which once they are satisfied are alienated for him in a series of situations - for there is never any question of something in which he can find himself and be at rest - and carry him from success to success to an almost total alienation from what is his own person.

This does not matter, it is in the detail, I mean in the way that the aim is never to go beyond what happens in the succession of events and of their notation in terms that are as concrete as possible. At every instant the novelist shows us a sort of diplopia that puts us, and not just the subject of the novel, but everything around him, in a position that is always double with respect to what may even be the most immediate object.

I will take the example of the meal at the restaurant, which begins to be one of the first moments of the upturn of the (29) fortunes of this character:

"Succulent Ostend oysters were brought in, looking like dainty little ears enclosed in shells and melting between the tongue and the palate like salty tidbits

After the soup came a trout as pink-fleshed as a young girl; tongues began to wag.

They had reached the stage of witty suggestiveness, of words, veiled yet revealing, that are like a hand lifting up a skirt, the stage of clever allusions, skilfully hidden impropriety, shamelessly brazen hypocrisy, cryptic words that cover naked images and which fill the eye and the mind with a sudden vision of what dare not be said openly and enables smart society to enjoy a subtle, mysterious sort of lovemaking, a sort of marriage of impure minds, by simultaneously conjuring up, with words as sensual and disturbing as a sexual embrace, the secret, shameful desire for body to clasp body. The roast had now appeared, partridges..."

I can tell you that the roast, the partridges, the terrines de volaille, and all the rest:

"They had eaten it all without tasting it properly, without realizing what they were eating, immersed in thoughts of love."

These perpetual alibis, which bring it about that you do not know after all whether it is the flesh of a young girl or a trout that is on the table, and this in a perspective of what is called descriptive realism, are something that dispense not only with any reference to the abyss in any sense of the word, any transcendental meaning of any kind, whether poetic or moral or anything else, this is something that sufficiently illuminates, it seems to me, what I am indicating when I say that it is in the (30) perspective of this perpetual sliding of meaning that any discourse that aims at conveying reality, is obliged to remain, and that what gives it its value, and what ensures that there is no literary realism, is precisely that in this effort to come to close quarters with reality by talking about it in the discourse, the discourse always succeeds in showing what the introduction of discourse adds in terms of disorganization and perversity to this reality.

If some of this still seems to you to remain too much in an impressionistic mode, I would like to try out something else for you. You see we are trying to stay, not at the level at which the discourse responds to the real, when it simply claims to note it, to follow its relationship to the real, fulfilling the function of annalist with two n's. Look where this gets you. I have chosen an author of some quality, Felix Feneon, whom I do not have the time to present to you here, and his series "The news in three lines" (Nouvelles en trois lignes) published in Le Matin. It is not without reason that they have been collected; there is certainly a particular talent to be seen here. Let us try to see what it is.

Here are some examples of "The news in three lines" which at first we can take at random, afterwards we will try to take the most significant of them.

(31) "Because they threw a few stones at the police, three pious ladies were obliged to pay a fine by the judges at Toulens-Comblebourg."

"Paul, a school teacher at the lie Saint-Denis, rang the bell for the pupils to return."

"At Clichy, an elegant young man threw himself under a rubber-tired carriage; then, unhurt, under a truck which crushed him."

"A young lady was sitting on the ground at Choisy-le-Roi. The only identifying word that her amnesia allowed her to say: model."

"The body of a sixty-year-old.....hung on a tree at Arcueil wearing the notice: too old to work."

"In connection with the mystery at Luzarches, the instructing judge from Le Puy interrogated the prisoner But she is mad. "

"Behind a coffin, Mangin de Verdun-Chevigny. He did not reach the cemetery that day. Death surprised him en route."

"The valet..... installed at Neuilly, in the house of his absent master, an amusing lady, then disappeared taking everything except her."

"Pretending to look for rare coins in an ugly porcelain figure, two swindlers stole a thousand ordinary francs from Mademoiselle ... Ivry."

"At beach in Finistère, two ladies were drowning. A swimmer plunged in, so that Monsieur Etienne had to save three people."

What makes you laugh? Here we really have the notation of facts with impersonal rigour the whole art of which consists, I would say, simply in their extreme reduction. It is said with the fewest possible words.

If there is something comical, if we take one of the examples (32) above, what happens when we hear:

" Behind a coffin, Mangin de Verdun-Chevigny. He did not reach the cemetery that day. Death surprised him en route."

Here is something that touches in absolutely no way the journey we are all making to the cemetery, whatever the different ways in which we may make that journey. There is absolutely nothing of the kind here, and I would say up to a certain point that this would not appear if things were said at greater length, I mean if it were all drowned in a flood of words.

What I have called here the sliding of meaning, namely, something that means that we literally do not know where to pause at any moment in the sentence as it comes to us in its rigour, in order to give it its centre of gravity, its point of equilibrium - it is this that constitutes the whole art of editing "The news in three lines". It is what I would call here their decentering. There is no morality, there is a careful concealment of anything that could have an exemplary character; what can be called on this occasion, the art of detachment of this style.

Nevertheless what is said here is something, a sequence of events, and I would even go further, it is the other merit that it has, it gives their coordinates quite rigorously.

It is here then that there lies the thing that I am aiming at,

that I am trying to help you see by showing you the degree to which the discourse in its horizontal dimension, in its chain dimension, is properly a skating rink, just as useful to study as the skating patterns, on which this sliding of meaning occurs no doubt in a slight, tiny track that may perhaps be so slight that it appears to be nothing, but in any case presents itself and introduces itself in the order of the witticism in what we could call a derisory, a degrading, a disorganizing dimension.

It is in this dimension that the style of the "vol de l'aigle" witticism, can be situated and placed, at the encounter of the discourse with the signifying chain that is here at the same level as the millionaire, waiting at gamma, and that is produced here simply at little further on.

Here Frederic Soulie contributed something that obviously goes towards the "I" since the witticism is addressed to Heinrich Heine and he calls on him as a witness. There is always in the witticism this perspective, this appeal to the Other as locus of verification. "As true," begins* Hirsch-Hyacinth, "as true as God shall grant me all good things." And God here in this reference can also be ironical. It is fundamental here. Soulie invokes Heinrich Heine, a much more prestigious figure than himself - without going into the history of Frederic Soulie, (34) although the article on him in Larousse is very well done. Soulie says to him: "You see, my dear master " - something of that kind - "is it not amusing to see the 19th century". Here there is the appeal, the invocation, the pull towards the "I" of Heinrich Heine, who is the pivoting point present in this matter. " to see the 19th century still adoring the golden calf?"

We therefore went along this way (see the schema), and then we came back here in connection with the golden calf, to the locus of uses and of metonymy, because in the last analysis this golden calf is a metaphor, even though a worn-out one, that has passed into the language. We have shown above in passing its origins, and the way it was produced, but in fact it has become a platitude. And he sends his commonplace remark here to the locus of the message by the classic alpha-gamma route.

Here then we have two characters, and you know well that these two characters may also be just one, because the Other, by the very fact that the dimension of the word exists, is in everyone, so that as Freud remarks, if ^there had not already been something present in the mind of Soulie, something that made him qualify this character as a golden calf, it is a usage that for us no longer appears admissible; but I did find it in Littre. Littre (35) tells us then that we describe as a golden calf, a gentleman who is very wealthy, and who because of this is the object of universal admiration. There is no ambiguity, nor is there any in German.

At that moment, namely between gamma and alpha, the reference back from the message to the code, namely here on the line of the signifying chain, and in a kind of metonymical way, the term is taken up into something that is not the plane on which it was dispatched, is taken up in a fashion that certainly allows us to

fully perceive the sense of the loss of meaning, the reduction of meaning, the devaluation of meaning, and to be honest, this is what is in question, and at the end of today's lecture, this is what I want to introduce: it is that metonymy is, properly speaking the locus in which we must situate this primordial something, this primordial and essential something in human language, in so far as we are going to take it here in the opposite

sense, the dimension of meaning, namely in the diversity of objects already constituted by language into which there is introduced the magnetic field of the need of each person, with its contradictions, the response that I introduced above, this other thing that is something that will perhaps appear paradoxical, namely the dimension of value.

This dimension of value is properly something that has its dimension of meaning connected to it. It bases itself and imposes itself as being in contrast, as being another aspect, as (36) being another register.

If some of you are familiar enough, I will not say with the whole of Das Kapital - who has read Das Kapital ! - but with the first book of Das Kapital that almost everyone has read, I would ask you to refer to the page where Marx, at the level of the formulation of what is called the theory of the particular form of the value of merchandise, shows himself to be a precursor of the mirror stage. On this page Marx makes this very fruitful remark in this incredible first book, which shows him to be, something rare, someone who maintains an articulated philosophical discourse; he makes this proposition: that before any kind of study of the quantitative relationships of value, it must first be laid down that nothing can be set up, except first of all in the form of the establishment of a sort of fundamental equivalence which is not simply something to do with equal measures of cloth, but with half the number of clothes: that there is already something that must be structured in the equivalence cloth-clothes, namely that the clothes can represent the value of the cloth, namely that it is not in so far as clothes are something that you can wear, that there is something necessary at the very beginning of the analysis, in the fact that clothes can become the signifier of the value of the cloth. That in other words, the equivalence that is called value depends (37) precisely on the abandonment on the part of one or of both of those terms, of what is also a very important part of their meaning.

It is in this dimension that there is situated the effect of meaning of the metonymical line, that will subsequently allow us to discover the utility of the putting into operation of the effect of meaning of the two registers of metaphor and metonymy; how they relate to one another, through the fact of this common operation in a dimension, in a perspective that is the essential one that allows us to rejoin the plane of the unconscious. This is what makes it necessary for us to appeal precisely, and in a way centred about this, to the dimension of the Other in so far as it is the locus, the receiver, the necessary pivotal point of this exercise.

n. s i

This is what we will do next day.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 4 December 1957

When he gets to the synthetic part of his book on jokes, the second part, Freud poses himself the question of the origin of pleasure, of the pleasure procured by the joke.

Needless to say, it is more and more necessary - I recall it for those of you who might think themselves dispensed from it - that you should have at least read the text of Jokes. It is the only way you have of getting to know this work, unless I were to read the text for you here myself, and this is not I think something you would enjoy. I will choose certain pieces, but that brings about a noticeable lowering in the level of attention. It is the only way for you to realize that the formulae I put before you, or that I try to put before you, frequently follow line by line, I mean in the closest possible way, the questions asked by Freud.

(2) The questions Freud asks, he often asks them in a roundabout way, he refers to themes, psychological and other, which are more or less accepted; those to which he refers implicitly by using accepted themes, are also important, even more important than his explicit references. Those he refers to are the ones he has in common with his readers. The way he makes use of them - you would really want not to have opened the text not to see it - shows a dimension that was never even suggested previously.

This dimension is precisely that of the role of the signifier.

I would like to go straight to the subject that concerns us today, namely what is, Freud asks, the source of pleasure.

Does he tell us what the source of pleasure is? It is essentially, in a language that is too wide-spread today, and which some people use in describing The source of pleasure in the joke is essentially to be looked for in its formal aspect. Luckily, this is not the way Freud expresses himself, he expresses himself in an altogether more precise way: he goes so far as to say that the source of pleasure in the joke, is simply the jest. This truly is its proper source.

(3) Nevertheless of course, the pleasure that we take in telling jokes is centred elsewhere. Do we not perceive the direction in which this source lies, and throughout the whole of his analysis, the sort of ambiguity that is inherent in the very practice of

joking, which means that we do not see where our pleasure comes from, and it requires the whole effort of his analysis to show it to us? It is an element, a step that is absolutely essential.

In accordance with a system of references that will be more and more pronounced up to the end of the book, he refers this primitive source of pleasure back to a playful period of infantile activity, namely that it is something that can be referred to the first games with words, which in fact brings us back directly to the acquisition of language as pure signifier, because it is properly to verbal games, to a practice that we would say is almost purely, in order not just to say of transmission, purely the transmission of a verbal form, that he will relate pleasure, in its primitive and essential form.

Is it thus purely and simply a question of a sort of return to an exercise of the signifier as such, to a period before the control that criticism and reason will progressively make necessary through an education in all the lessons of reality, will force the subject to bring this control and criticism to the (4) usage of the signifier? Is it in this difference that the principal source of the exercise of pleasure in joking will consist? Matters certainly appear to be very simple, if what Freud contributed can be resumed in this way.

It is of course far from being what he limits himself to : he tells us that this is the source of pleasure, but he tells us also the way that this pleasure is utilized. This pleasure is used for a kind of operation that relates to the liberation of the old pathways in so far as they still are there in virtual potency, existing, still as it were sustaining something. And because of the fact that it passes along these pathways, makes them privileged compared to those brought into the foreground by the control of the subject's thinking in his progress towards the state of adulthood.

Rediscovering these privileged pathways, is something that makes us enter right away, and this is where his whole previous analysis of the source and the mechanisms of the joke intervene, into those very structuring pathways which are those of the unconscious.

In other words, the two aspects of the joke - it is he himself who speaks in this way - are on the one hand the aspect of the exercise of the signifier with that liberty that maximizes its (5) possibility of fundamental ambiguity, and even more its primitive character in relation to meaning, the essential polyvalence it has in relation to meaning, the creative function it has with regard to meaning, the arbitrary accent that it brings to meaning. That is one of its aspects.

The other is the fact that this exercise of itself introduces us to, directs us towards, evokes everything that is of the order of the unconscious; and this is sufficiently indicated to Freud's inspection by the fact that the structures that the joke reveals, the way its constitution, its crystallization function, are no

different from those he himself discovered in his first apprehensions of the unconscious, namely at the level of the dream, at the level of those faulty actions that are really successful, depending on how you look at them, even at the level of symptoms.

It is to this that we have tried to give a tighter, and more precise formulation, when under the form, under the rubric of metaphor and metonymy, we discovered their most general forms, in the forms that are equivalent to them in every exercise of language, and that we also find in anything in the unconscious that is structuring. These forms are then the most general forms of which condensation, displacement, and the other mechanisms that Freud stresses in the structures of the unconscious, are in a way only applications.

(6) This common measure of the unconscious with which we compare it, not just out of mental habit, but because there is effectively a dynamic in the relationship with desire, this common measure of the unconscious and of the structure of the word, in so far as it is regulated by the laws of the signifier, it is this that we try to approach more and more closely, to exemplify, to make exemplary by having recourse to Freud's work on jokes. This is what we are going to look at more closely today.

If we put the accent on what we can call the autonomy of the laws of the signifier, if we say that they are primary with regard to the mechanism of the creation of meaning, this does not of course dispense us from asking ourselves the question of how we should conceive not just the emergence of meaning but also, to parody a rather awkward formula produced in the logical-positive school, the meaning of meaning; not that this has a meaning. But what do we mean when we talk about meaning? Freud too evokes it in the chapter on the mechanism of pleasure, and refers to it continually, and he does not fail to take into account the formula so often mentioned in connection with the practice of joking: sense in nonsense, cited for a long time by the authors as the sort of formula that in some way accounts for the two (7) apparent aspects of pleasure; the way that it strikes us at first by its nonsense, and then on the other hand proceeds to hold on to us and to repay us by the appearance of some kind of secret meaning, always by the way very difficult to define, if we begin from this perspective, in the nonsense itself, in other words a path opened up by nonsense that at that moment stuns and bewilders us.

This is perhaps closer to the mechanism, and Freud is certainly much more prepared to concede more properties to it, namely, that nonsense has for an instant the role of deceiving us long enough for a meaning not grasped up to then, and which moreover also passes very quickly, fleetingly, in a flash, just like the bewilderment that retained us for a moment in the nonsense, to strike us through this grasp of the joke.

In fact if you look at things more closely you will see that

Freud goes as far as to repudiate the term nonsense, and it is on this that I would also like us to dwell today, because it is proper to these approximations that precisely allow the last term, the ultimate source of the mechanism that is operating to be avoided, to be content with formulae that no doubt have their psychological appearance and seduction, but that are not really the ones that are appropriate.

(8) I am going to propose that we should begin with something that will not be a recourse to children who can in fact as we know find some pleasure in verbal games, and to whom one can refer in order to give meaning and weight to a sort of psychogenesis of the mechanism of wit, but which after all if you think about it as other than a satisfaction, a routine established by the fact of referring to something like this primitive, far-distant, playful activity, to which after all one can attribute anything and everything, it is perhaps not something either that should satisfy us too much, because after all, it is not sure that the pleasure of wit in which a child only participates from a distance, is something that can be exhaustively explained by a recourse to fantasy (fantaisie).

But I would like to get to something that makes the link between the usage of the signifier and what we can call satisfaction or pleasure. Here it is I who will refer back to something that may appear elementary: that if we refer to the child it should all the same not be forgotten that at the beginning the signifier is made to have a particular use, it is made to express a demand.

Let us dwell then for a moment on the source of the demand. It (9) is that part of a need that is conveyed by means of a signifier which is addressed to another. I already told you the last day that it would be worth our while to investigate the different moments of this reference.

These moments are so little explored that I made an allusion to the fact in one of my articles. An eminently representative personage of the psychoanalytic hierarchy wrote a whole article of a dozen or so pages, to express his wonder at the power of what he called "wording", a word that in English corresponds to what we call more awkwardly in French passage au verbal or verbalisation. It is clearly more elegant in English than in French. He is astonished that a patient was particularly affected by an intervention that he made telling her something that meant more or less: "You have very peculiar or very strong demands", which in English has an even more insistent stress than in French, was literally overwhelmed as if by an accusation, as if by a denunciation, while when he took up the same term a few moments later using the word "need", that is besoin, he found her completely docile and ready to accept his interpretation.

The momentous character given by the author in question to this discovery, is well suited to show us the primitive state in which the art of wording still is within analysis, or at least in

(10) a certain circle of analysis. Because in fact this is the whole point: demand is something that of its nature is so related to the other, that if it is the other who accentuates it, he finds himself immediately in the position of accusing the subject himself, and of rejecting him, while if he evokes need he authenticates this need, he assumes it, he ratifies it, he takes it to himself, he begins to recognize it, and this is an essential satisfaction.

The natural mechanism of the demand is the fact that the other by his nature opposes it, or again one could say that the demand by its nature requires to be opposed, in order to be sustained as a demand, is linked precisely to the introduction of language into communication, and is illustrated at every instant by the way that the other accedes to the demand.

Let us consider this carefully. It is to the degree that the dimension of language comes to be remodeled here, but also comes to place the system of needs within the infinite complex of the signifier, that the demand is essentially something that by its nature poses itself as something that can be exorbitant. It is not for nothing that children ask for the moon. They ask for the moon because it is in the nature of a need which expresses itself through the intermediary of a signifying system, to ask for the moon; it is also indeed why we do not hesitate to promise it to (11) them; and also why we are almost on the point of getting it.

However we do not yet have the moon, and what is essential all the same is to see that, and to highlight it: after all in this demand for the satisfaction of a need, what is it purely and simply that happens? We respond to a demand, we give our neighbour what he asks of us. Through what mouse-hole must he pass? What reduction of his pretensions and of himself must he submit to for his demand to be accepted?

This is something that sufficiently shows the value of the phenomenon of need when it appears in its naked form. I would even say that to accede to it qua need we must refer beyond the subject to some Other called Christ who, for those who practice Christian charity, is identified with the poor; but even for others, for the man of desire, for Moliere's Don Juan, he gives the beggar what he asks of him, and it is not for nothing that he adds: "for the love of humanity". In the last analysis it is to an Other beyond the one who is face to face with you, that the response to the demand, the granting of the demand is referred, and the story that is one of those on which Freud makes his analysis of the joke pivot, the so-called "Salmon Mayonnaise" story, is a splendid story to illustrate this.

(12) A wealthy man is outraged, when having given a beggar some money that he needs to deal with some debt or other, with his creditors, he sees him making use of the object of his generosity, in a different way to the one intended by this small-minded individual. It is a genuinely funny story, when he discovers him the following day in a restaurant, treating himself to what is considered to be a sign of lavish expenditure, namely

salmon mayonnaise. With the little Viennese accent that gives the whole story its tone, he says to him: "Is that what I gave you money for? So that you could treat yourself to salmon mayonnaise!" To which the other, entering into the joke, replies: "But listen, I don't understand. When I have no money I can't have salmon mayonnaise, and when I have money I can't have it either! When then am I to eat salmon mayonnaise?"

Every example of the joke is made even more significant by the field that it takes place in, and it is made even more significant by the particularity that seems to be that special something in the story that cannot be generalized. It is by this particularity that we will come to the clearest source of the dimension within which we situate ourselves, and this story is no less pertinent than any other story and always puts us at the heart of the problem, at the relationship between the signifier (13) and desire, and the fact that desire has profoundly changed its accent, has been subverted, has been made ambiguous, by its passage through the paths of the signifier.

Let us be clear what that means. It is always in the name of a certain register that makes the Other intervene beyond the one making the demand, that any satisfaction is accorded, and precisely this profoundly perverts the system of demand and of the response to demand. "Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, visit the sick" I do not need to remind you of the seven or eight or nine works of mercy. It is striking enough in their very expression, that in clothing the naked, one could say that if the demand were something that should be directly sustained in its fullness, why not clothe the naked man or woman at Christian Dior's? This does happen from time to time but in general it is because one has begun by undressing them oneself.

The same goes for feeding the hungry. Why not let them get drunk? That is not done, that would harm them, they are used to sobriety, they must not be upset.

And as for visiting the sick, I recall Sacha Guitry's bon mot: "Paying a visit always gives pleasure, if it is not when one arrives, at least it will be when one leaves."

(14) The thematic connection of demand is at the heart of our subject today. Let us try then to schematize what happens at this moment in time that in a way shifts on to a sort of particular pathway to one side, the communication of the demand to its reception.

It is not therefore to something that is other than mythical, but something which is profoundly true, that I would ask you to refer in order to make use of this little schema. It goes as follows:

Let us presuppose something that after all must exist somewhere, even if only on our schema, a successful demand, because in the final analysis that is what it is all about. If Freud introduced a new dimension into our consideration of man, it is not I would say that nevertheless something gets through, but that this

something that is destined to get through, the desire that should get through, leaves somewhere not just traces, but an insistent circuit.

Let us then begin with something on the schema that might represent the demand that gets through. Let us imagine, since childhood exists, that the demand that gets through can take place then. This child who articulates something which is still for him only an uncertain articulation, but an articulation that gives him pleasure, to which Freud refers. He directs his demand. Let us say that it starts - happily it has not yet come (15) into play - something is adumbrated which leaves this point that we call delta or D, demand, and this.

What does this describe for us ? This describes the function of need: something is expressed which begins with the subject and which ends the line of his need. It is precisely what ends the curve of what we have isolated here as discourse, and this is done with the help of the mobilization of something that is préexistent. I did not invent the line of discourse, the coming into play of what is at this time a very limited stock, the stock of the signifier, since correlatively it articulates something.

Look at the facts. If you wish to show together on the two planes of intention, however confused you may suppose it to be, the young subject in so far as he directs his appeal, the signifier no matter how disorganized you may also imagine its usage, in so far as it is mobilised in this effort, in this appeal that it pushes forward at the same time, and if there is any meaning to the notion of growth, the usefulness of which I already noted for you in understanding the retroactive effect of the sentence that culminates at the end of the second moment. Note that these two lines do not yet intersect, in other words, that the one who says something says at once both more and less than he should say. The reference to the tentative character of (16) the first usage of the tongue by the child can be fully employed here.

In other words, if there progresses in a parallel manner here, on these two lines, the completion of that something that here is called the demand, it is likewise at the end of the second moment that the signifier will complete its loop on something which completes here in as approximate a manner as you wish, the meaning of the demand which is what constitutes the message: that something which the Other, let us say the mother, granting that from time to time there are good mothers, properly speaking evokes, and which coexists with the completion of the message.

Both are determined at the same time, one as message the other as Other, and in a third moment, from this double curve we will see something that reaches completion here, and also here something that we are going at least hypothetically to indicate how we are can name, situate them in this structuring of demand that we are trying to put right at the base, at the foundation of the first exercise of the signifier in the expression of desire.

I would ask you, at least provisionally, to admit as being the

most useful reference for what we are going to try to develop subsequently, to admit in this third moment the ideal case where the demand in some way encounters exactly something that prolongs it, namely the Other who takes it up in connection with its message.

(17) I think that what we should here consider, is something that cannot exactly be confused with satisfaction, because there is in the intervention, in the very operation of every signifier with respect to the manifestation of a need, something that transforms it and already brings to it through the contribution of the signifier, this minimum of transformations, of metaphors in fact, which means that what is signified is something that goes beyond raw need, something remodeled by the use of the signifier.

It is here that there begins to operate, to intervene, to enter into the creation of the signified, something that is no longer the pure and simple translation of need, but the taking up, the reassumption, the remodeling of need, the creation of a desire that is something other than need, a desire plus a signifier. As Lenin used to say: Socialism is probably a very nice thing, but the perfect community has electrification as well.

Here we have the signifier as well in the expression of need. And on the other side here, at the third moment, there is certainly something that corresponds to this miraculous apparition. We have supposed it to be miraculous, fully satisfying because of the satisfaction by the other of something, the something that is created here. It is this something that here normally culminates at what Freud presents to us as pleasure (18) in the exercise of the signifier, in fact of the exercise of the signifying chain as such, in this ideal case of success in the case where the Other appears here in the very prolongation of the exercise of the signifier. And this prolongs the effort of the signifier as such; it is the resolution here in a proper, authentic pleasure, the pleasure of the exercise of the signifier. You see it on some boundary lines.

I ask you for the moment to accept as a hypothesis what is properly speaking the hypothesis that will remain underlying all that we will try to conceive of as happening in the usual cases, in the cases of the real operation of the signifier. For the usage of the demand is something that will be underpinned by this primitive reference to what we can call the complete success, or the first success, or the mythical success, or the archaic, primordial form of the exercise of the signifier.

This full passage, this successful passage of the demand as such into the real, in so far as it creates at the same time the message and the Other, culminates in this remodeling of the signified on the one hand, which is introduced by the usage of the signifier as such, and on the other hand directly prolongs the exercise of the signifier in an authentic pleasure. They balance one another, there is on the one hand this exercise that we discover in fact with Freud right at the origin of verbal (19) play as such and which is an original pleasure always ready

to arise. And of course how always and everywhere we see what now happens in terms of what opposes it, and how masked on the other hand is this novelty which appears not simply in the response to the demand, but in the fact that in the verbal demand itself there is this something original that complicates, that transforms need, and puts it on the plane of what from now on we will call desire, desire being that something that is defined by an essential shift with respect to everything that is purely and simply of the order of the imaginary direction of need, which is something that introduces it by itself into a different order, into the symbolic order with all the perturbations that this can involve.

So that we here see arising in connection with the first myth to which I ask you to refer, because we have to depend on it for everything that follows, unless we want to make incomprehensible everything that Freud will articulate for us in connection with the proper mechanism of pleasure in the joke. I stress that this novelty which appears in the signified through the introduction of the signifier, is something that we find everywhere accentuated at every turn by Freud as an essential dimension in whatever is a manifestation of the unconscious.

(20) Freud occasionally tells us that something appears at the level of the formations of the unconscious, that can be called surprise. This is something that should be taken not as accidental to this discovery but as an essential dimension of its essence. There is something original, in the phenomenon of surprise, that it should be produced within an unconscious formation in so far as in itself it shocks the subject by its surprising character, but also if at the moment that you unveil it for the subject, you provoke in him this sentiment of surprise. Freud indicates it in all sorts of ways in the analysis of dreams, in the psychopathology of everyday life, and again at every instant in the book on jokes. This dimension of surprise is itself consubstantial with desire, in so far as it has passed over to the level of the unconscious. This dimension is what desire implies in terms of a condition of emergence that is proper to it as desire, is properly that by which it is even capable of entering the unconscious, because not every desire is capable of entering the unconscious. The only desires that can enter the unconscious are those which because they have been symbolized, can conserve in their symbolic form when they enter it, in the form of this indestructible trace, the example of which Freud takes up again in the Witz, desires that do not wear (21) away, that do not have the impermanent character proper to all dissatisfaction, but which on the contrary are supported by that symbolic structure that maintains them at a certain level of the circulation of the signifier, that I designate for you as being situated in this schema in the circuit between the message and the Other, that is occupying a function, a place that according to the case, according the incidences where it is produced, means that it is on the same paths that we should conceive of the turning circuit of the unconscious, in so far as it is always there ready to reappear.

It is in the action of the metaphor, in so far as certain original circuits impact on the everyday, banal, commonplace circuit of metonymy, that there is produced the emergence of new meaning, in so far as it is in the witticism that we can see in plain view that there is produced this ball that is sent back and forth between the message and the Other, that will produce the original effect of the witticism.

Let us now go into more detail to try to grasp it and conceptualize it. If we are no longer at this primordial level, at this mythical level of the first establishment of demand in its proper form, how are things brought about?

Let us refer to an absolutely fundamental theme that appears throughout the witty stories; all you see are beggars to whom (22) things are given, either that they are given what they are not asking for, or that when they are given what they do ask for they misuse it, or they behave vis-a-vis the person who granted it to them, in a particularly insolent way, reproducing here in the beggar-donor relationship, the blessed dimension of ingratitude. Otherwise it would be really intolerable to accede to any demand, because observe as our friend Mannoni pointed out very pertinently in an excellent work, that the normal mechanism of the demand that has been acceded to is to provoke continually renewed demands, because in the last analysis what is this demand, in so far as it encounters its hearer, the ear it is destined for?

Here let us do a little etymology, even though it is not in it that there resides the essential dimension that one should refer to in the usage of the signifier. A little etymology can nevertheless help us to clarify things.

This demand that is so marked by themes of exigency in its concrete practice, in its usage, in the use made of the term, and even more in Anglo-Saxon than in other languages, but also in other languages, is originally de-mandare, it is to entrust oneself, it is on a common level of register and of language as a giving over of one's whole self, of all one's needs to another.

(23) The signifying material of the demand is no doubt borrowed to take on another accent which is very specially imposed on it by the effective exercise of the demand.

But here the fact of the origin of the materials that are employed metaphorically, you see it in the progress of the tongue, is well fitted to teach us about the famous dependency complex that I evoked above by saying, in Mannoni's terms, that when the one who demands thinks that the other in fact has effectively accepted a demand of his, there is in fact no longer any limit: he can, he must, it is to be expected that he should entrust all his needs to him. Everything that I hinted at above about the benefits of ingratitude puts an end to things, puts an end to what otherwise would not be able to stop.

But we also see that the beggar, from experience, is not in the habit of presenting his demand in its naked state; there is

nothing confiding in his demand, he knows too well what he is dealing with in the mind of the other, and that is why he disguises his demand. That is to say that he demands something that he needs in the name of something else that he sometimes also needs, but which would be more easily admitted as a pretext for the demand; if necessary, if he does not have that other thing he can purely and simply invent it, and above all he will take into account in the formulation of his demand what the system of the other is, the one that I alluded to above. He will address himself in one way to the lady devoted to good works, in another way to the banker, all the characters described in such an amusing fashion; in another way to the match-maker, in still other ways to this or that person, which means that not only will his desire be taken up and remodeled in the system of the signifier, but in the system of the signifier as it has been set up, established, in the Other, namely according to the code of the Other, and his demand will simply begin to be formulated starting with the Other, so that first of all it is reflected on something that for a long time has become active in his discourse, on the "I^M here and there which proffers the demand in order to reflect it on the Other, and go by this circuit to be completed as a message.

What does that mean? This is the appeal, the intention, it is the circuit of the secondary need that as you see has as yet no need to be given too much of a rational accent, except that of being controlled, controlled by the system of the Other which of course implies already all sorts of factors that we will just on this occasion be justified in qualifying as rational. Let us say that if it is rational to take them into account, it is not yet implied in their structure that they effectively are rational.

(25) What happens on the signifying chain in accordance with the three moments that we see described here? Again it is something that mobilizes the whole apparatus, the whole mechanism, the whole machine in order to arrive here first of all at something, but something that does not go right away to the Other, that comes to be reflected here in something that, in the second moment, corresponded to the appeal to the Other, namely to the object in so far as it is an object admissible by the Other, that it is the object of what the Other may well desire, that it is the metonymical object, and it is by reflecting off this object to come to converge here in the third moment in the message, that we find ourselves here not in the happy state of satisfaction that we might have reached at the end of the three moments of the first mythical representation of demand and of its success with its surprising novelty, and its pleasure that was satisfying in itself. We find ourselves dwelling here on a message that bears in itself the character of ambiguity since it is the encounter of a formulation alienated from the beginning, in so far as it begins from the Other, and from this point of view is going to culminate in something which is in some way a desire of the Other, in so far as it is from the Other itself that the appeal had been evoked; and on the other hand to introduce into his very signifying apparatus all sorts of conventional elements that properly speaking are what we will call the character of

(25.1) community, or of displacement properly speaking of objects, in so far as objects are profoundly remodeled by the world of the Other. And we have seen that the discourse between these two culminating points of the arrow at the third moment, is something so striking that it is the very thing that can culminate in what we call a slip of the tongue, a stumbling in speech along the two pathways.

It is not certain that it is a univocal signification that is formed, so little is it univocal that the fundamental character of error and of méconnaissance of language, is one of its essential dimensions.

It is on the ambiguity of this formation of the message that the joke will work ; it is from this point under different headings, that the joke can be formed. I am not going to go over again for you today the diversity of forms in which this message can be taken up so that it is constituted in its essentially ambiguous form, in a form that is ambiguous in its structure because it has undergone a treatment that has, according to what Freud tells us, the aim of finally restoring the ideal pathway that should culminate in the surprise of a novelty on the one hand, and at the pleasure of the play of the signifier on the other hand. It is the object of the joke.

The object of the joke is to re-evoke for us this dimension through which desire if it does not recapture, at least indicates everything that is lost on the way along this path, namely all it (26) has left behind at the level of the métonymieal chain on the one hand, in terms of waste, and on the other hand whatever is not fully realized on the level of the metaphor, if we call natural metaphor what has happened above in that pure and simple, ideal transition of desire in so far as it is formed in the subject towards the Other who takes it up and accedes to it.

We find ourselves here at a more evolved stage, at the stage at which there have already intervened in the psychology of the subject these two things that are called the "I" on the one hand, and on the other hand the profoundly transformed object which is the métonymieal object. We find ourselves confronted by, not the natural metaphor, but the usual exercise of the metaphor, whether it succeeds or fails in this ambiguity of the message in which there is or is not a question of now finding its destiny in the conditions that remain at the natural state. We have a whole part of this desire which will continue to circulate in the form of the waste of the signifier in the unconscious. In the case of the witticism, by a sort of forcing, by a sort of happy shadow of astonishing success and conveyed purely by the signifier, of reflections of ancient satisfactions, something is going to happen that has very exactly as an effect the reproduction of the primary pleasure of the satisfied demand, at the same time as it accedes to an original novelty. It is this something that the witticism essentially realizes, and how does it realize it?

(27) What have we seen so far? We have said in effect that what is needed for that, is that this schema can help us to see this

something which is the completion of the primary curve of this signifying chain, and which is also something that prolongs whatever of the intentional need that passes into the discourse. How is that? By the witticism. But how is the witticism going to come to birth?

Here again we find the dimensions of sense and nonsense, but I think that we should circumscribe them a little more closely.

If something in what I told you the last day was intended as indicating a metonymical function, it is properly speaking the equalizing, the levelling out, the effacing and thus the reduction of meaning, produced in the simple unfolding of the signifying chain.

That does not mean that it is nonsense, it is something that by the very fact that I took the Marxist reference, that we put into operation two objects of need, in such a way that one becomes the measure of the value of the other, effaces in it what is precisely the order of need, and in this way introduces it into the order of value, from the point of view of meaning and by a sort of neologism that also presents an ambiguity, could be (28) called de-sens. Let us simply call it today the peu de sens and we will also see, once we have this key, the signification of the metonymical chain of this peu de sens.

There very precisely is what the majority of jokes operate on. A joke should highlight, should make emerge this character not of nonsense, we are not concerned with the jokes of those noble souls who immediately after the great desert of which [they] would claim to have revealed to us the great mysteries of general absurdity, the discourse of the beautiful soul, which if it did not succeed in ennobling our sentiments, recently e-nobled the dignity of the writer. But this discourse on nonsense is nevertheless the most useless discourse that we have ever heard. There is absolutely no nonsense in operation, but every time an equivocation is introduced, whether it is a question of the story of the calf, of that calf (yeau) which I amused myself with the last day by almost making Heinrich Heine's reply by saying that this calf is after all worth scarcely anything (ne vaut guere) at the time it was spoken about, and also everything you can find in the play on words, and especially those that are called conceptual word plays, consists in playing on the slightness of words for sustaining a full meaning.

It is this peu de sens as such that is taken up, and through which something happens that reduces to its dimension this (29) message in so far as it is at the same time success, failure, but a necessary form for any formulation of demand, and which comes to interrogate the other about this peu de sens that is here, and the dimension of the essential Other.

This is why Freud halts as before something that is taken as completely primordial, in the very nature of the joke, of the witticism, namely that there are no solitary witticisms, the witticism always is in solidarity with something, even when we

have invented it, forged it ourselves, if it really is the case that we invent the witticism and that it is not it that invents us. We feel the need to propose it to an other, it is the Other who is charged with its authentication.

Who is this Other? Why this Other? What is the need for this Other?

I do not know if we will have enough time to define it today, to give it its structure and its limits, but we will simply say this at the point that we have got to: that what is communicated in the witticism to the Other, is what operates essentially in a way that is particularly cunning and has a character that we must constantly keep before our eyes. What is always involved, is not to provoke this pathetic invocation of some fundamental absurdity or other which I mentioned above in referring to the work of one (30) of the great so-called geniuses of our time; it is rather this that must be suggested: the dimension of the peu de sens, while interrogating in a way value as such, and in summoning it as one might say, to realize its dimension of value, in summoning it to unveil itself as a true value, which is, you should carefully note, a ruse of language, because the more it unveils itself as true value, the more it will unveil itself as being supported by what I call the peu de sens. It can only reply in the sense of this peu de sens, and this is why it is in the nature of the message that is proper to the witticism, namely that in which here at the level of the message I take up with the Other the interrupted path of metonymy, and I put to him this interrogation: what does all this mean?

The witticism is only completed beyond this, namely in so far as the Other takes it on board, responds to the witticism, authenticates it as a witticism, namely perceives what in it conveys as such the question of the peu de sens, in terms of a demand for meaning, namely the evocation of a meaning beyond this thing that is incomplete, what in all of this has been lost en route, marked by the sign of the Other marking above all by its profound ambiguity every formulation of desire, binding it as such, and properly speaking to the necessities and ambiguities of the signifier as such, to homonymy properly so called, by which I (31) mean to homophony. It is to the degree that the Other responds to it, namely on the upper circuit, that which goes from 0 to the message, and authenticates what?

What we would call the nonsense in it. Here too I must insist. I do not think it is necessary to keep this term "nonsense" which has no meaning except in a perspective of reason and criticism, namely that this precisely is avoided in this circuit.

I propose the formula of the pas-de-sens; of the pas-de-sens in the same way as you say the pas-de-vis, the pas-de-quatre, the pas-de-suze, the Pas-de-Calais. This pas-de-sens is properly speaking what is realized in metaphor, because in metaphor it is the intention of the subject, it is the need of the subject, to find a satisfaction that goes beyond metonymical usage, beyond what finds satisfaction in the common measure, in accepted

values, and introduce precisely this pas-de-sens, this something that, taking an element at the place it is and substituting another one for it, I would almost say anyone at all, introduces this perpetual beyond of need with respect to any formulated desire that is at the origin of metaphor.

What is the witticism doing there? It indicates nothing more than the very dimension, the step properly speaking as such, the step I might say in its form, the step emptied of every kind of (32) need that here would all the same express that which, in the witticism, can manifest what is latent in me of my desire, which is something that may find an echo in the Other, though not necessarily.

The important thing is that this dimension of the pas-de-sens should be taken up, authenticated. It is to this that displacement corresponds. It is not beyond the object that the novelty is produced at the same time as the pas-de-sens, at the same time as for the two subjects. He who speaks is one who speaks to the Other, who communicates it to him as a witticism, it has passed along this segment of the metonymical dimension, it has made the peu de sens as such be accepted. The Other has authenticated the pas-de-sens, and the pleasure for the subject is complete. It is in so far as he has managed to surprise the Other with his witticism, which brings him the pleasure that is indeed the same primitive pleasure as that which the mythical, archaic, infantile, primordial subject I evoked above, had received from his first use of the signifier.

It is at this step that I shall leave you. I hope that it has not appeared too artificial or too pedantic for you. I apologise to those of you who get a pain in the head from this kind of little exercise on the trapeze. I think nevertheless that it is necessary - not that I do not think you have the wit to grasp these things, but I do not think that what I call your common (33) sense is something that has been so adulterated by the medical, psychological, analytical and other studies that you have pursued - that you cannot follow me along these paths simply by way of allusion. Nevertheless the laws governing my teaching do not make it inappropriate that we should separate out in some way the stages, the essential moments of the progress of subjectivity in the witticism.

Subjectivity. This is the word that I now come to, because up to the present and even today in manipulating with you the paths taken by the signifier, there is something missing in the midst of all this; you will see that there is a reason for this lack, it is not for nothing that in the midst of all of this we saw appearing today only subjects who were quasi-absent, kinds of supports to send back and forward the ball of the signifier. And yet what is more essential to the dimension of the witticism than subjectivity?

When I say subjectivity, I am saying that the object of the witticism can nowhere be grasped, because even what it designates beyond what it formulates, its character of essential allusion.

of internal allusion, is something that here alludes to nothing, except to the necessity of the pas-de-sens.

And yet in this total absence of the object there is something in (34) the final analysis that sustains the witticism, that is the most living part of living experience, that is most fully assumed of what is assumed, this something which in fact is properly speaking so subjective. As Freud says somewhere, this essential subjective conditionality, this sovereign word is there emerging between the lines. "...only what I allow," he says with that razor-sharp quality of formulae that one hardly finds in any literary author, I have never seen that written by anyone, "...only what I allow to be a joke is a joke" (SE 8 105), and yet I need the Other because the whole chapter that follows the one I have been speaking to you about today, namely the one on the mechanism of pleasure, and which is called the motive of jokes, the social tendencies promoted by wit - it has been translated in French as mobile, I have never understood why motif was translated as mobile in French - has this Other as an essential reference.

There is no pleasure in the joke without this Other, this Other also qua subject, these relationships of two subjects, of the one called the first person of the witticism, the one who produces it, and the one to whom as he says, it is absolutely necessary that it should be communicated, the order of the other that this suggests, and to speak plainly now the fact that this Other is properly speaking, and this with the characteristic traits that nowhere else can be grasped with such clarity, that this Other (35) is here what I call the Other with a capital O.

This is what I hope to show you the next day.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 11 December 1957

Today I have some very important things to say to you.

We left things the last day on the function of the subject in the witticism. I am sure that the weight that I give to the subject is not something you treat lightly, on the pretext that it is something that we make use of here. When one uses the word subject, it gives rise in general to lively reactions that are very personal, and sometimes emotional, among those who hold above all to objectivity.

On the other hand we had arrived at a sort of point of confluence situated here and that we call 0, in other words the Other qua locus of the code, the locus at which the message constituted by the joke arrives, by way of this path that in our schema can be taken at this level here, of the message to the Other, which is the path of the simple succession of the signifying chain in so (2) far as it is the foundation of what is produced at the level of discourse, namely along the path where in the text of the sentence is manifested the essential thing which emanates, which is what we have called the peu de sens.

This homologation of the peu de sens of the sentence, always more or less manifest in the witticism, by the Other, is what we indicated the last day without dwelling on it, contenting ourselves with saying that from the Other, what is here transmitted, is relaunched in a double operation which returns to the level of the message, which is what homologates the message, which is what constitutes the witticism, that is in so far as the Other has received what is presented as a peu de sens, it transforms it into what we ourselves have called, in an ambivalent, equivocal, fashion the pas-de-sens.

What we have underlined by this is not the lack of meaning, or nonsense, but something that is a step in the understanding of what meaning shows about its procedure, about the allusive, metaphorical aspect it always has, about the way need from the moment it has passed through the dialectic of demand introduced by the existence of the signifier, this need is in a way never rejoined. It is by a series of steps like those by which Achilles never catches up on the tortoise, that everything that belongs to language proceeds and tends to recreate this full meaning, this elsewhere meaning, this meaning that is nevertheless never attained.

(3) Here then is the schema at which we arrived in the last quarter hour of our discourse the last day, which it appears was a bit weary, as some people have told me. According to some I was not finishing my sentences. Yet in re-reading my text I did not find the ends missing. It is because I try to propel myself step by step into something that is difficult to communicate, that this stumbling must necessarily occur. I apologise if it happens again today.

We are at the point at which we must question ourselves about the function of this Other, of the essence of the Other in this breaking through that we call, we have pointed it out often enough, by the name of the pas-de-sens; this pas-de-sens in so far as it is in a way the partial regaining of that ideal plenitude of the demand as being purely and simply realized that we began from, as the starting point of our dialectic. By what transmutation, transubstantiation, subtle operation of communion as we might say, can this pas-de-sens be assumed by the Other? Who is this Other?

In fact this is something that is sufficiently indicated by the problematic stressed by Freud himself when he speaks about jokes, with this capacity for suspending a question that undoubtedly (4) the more I read - and I do not stint myself - of the different attempts that have been made throughout the ages to circumscribe this mysterious question of the joke, I really do not see, no matter what author I approach, even when I go to the fruitful period, the Romantic period, any author who has even assembled the primary, material elements of the question. Something like the following for example, that Freud focuses on here, one could say in two ways, that on the one hand he tells us with that sovereign tone he has and that cuts through the usual blushing timidity of scientific discourse, "only what I allow to be a joke is a joke", this is what he calls the irreducible subjective conditionality of wit, and the subject is indeed there the one that speaks, says Freud himself. And on the other hand, highlighting the fact that when I have in my possession something that is properly speaking of the order of wit, I have only a single concern, I cannot even fully appreciate the pleasure of the joke, of the story, unless I have tried it out on an other, and even more: unless I have in a way communicated its context.

It will not be difficult to show this perspective, this sort of game of mirrors by which, when I tell a story, if I am really looking for completion, for repose, the harmonizing of my (5) pleasure with the consent of the Other, there remains on the horizon the fact that this Other will tell the story in his turn, that he will transmit it to others, and so on.

Here we have the two ends of the chain: the joke is only what I myself recognize as such, but on the other hand my own consent is not sufficient in this respect; the pleasure of the witticism is only completed in the Other and by the Other. We could say, if we pay careful attention to what we say, I mean if we do not see here any kind of simplification that could be implied in the term, that wit (l'esprit) must be communicated, on condition that

we allow this term communication an openness which is to be filled by we know not what.

We find ourselves then in Freud's observation, confronted by something essential that we know already, namely the question of what is this Other which is in a way the correlate of the subject. Here we find this correlation affirmed in a requirement, in a veritable need inscribed in the phenomenon. But the form of the relationship of the subject to the Other, we know already; we know it since the time when we insisted here on the necessary mode in which our reflection proposes for us the term subjectivity.

I alluded to the sort of objection that could occur to minds (6) formed in a certain discipline, who try, on the pretext that psychoanalysis presents itself as science, to introduce the requirement that we should never speak except about things that are objectifiable, namely that can be agreed on from experience, and that by the very fact of speaking about the subject, it becomes a subjective thing that is not scientific, implying by this in the notion of the subject, something that is there at a certain level, namely that it is on this side of the object which allows it in a way to find its support. It is both beyond and behind the object, this [something] that presents to us that sort of unknowable substance, that something which resists the objectification the whole weaponry of which is in a certain way provided by your education, by your psychological formation.

This naturally leads to types of objections which are still more common. I mean the identification of the term subjective with the deforming effects of sentiment on the experiencing of another, introducing into it moreover nothing less than a sort of transparent mirage which bases it on a type of immanence of self-consciousness, which is resumed a little bit too quickly by resuming in it the theme of the Cartesian cogito; in short, a whole series of thickets that are only there to get between us and what we designate when we bring subjectivity into play in our experience. It cannot be eliminated from our experience as (7) analysts, and in a fashion that takes a path that is completely different to the path on which these obstacles are set up.

Subjectivity is for the analyst, for someone who proceeds by way of a certain dialogue, what he must take into account in his calculations when he is dealing with this Other who may introduce into his calculations his own error, and not try to provoke it as such.

Here is a formula that I propose to you, and which is certainly something tangible. The slightest reference to a game of chess, or even to the game of odds and evens, is enough to prove it. Let us say that in thus posing its terms, subjectivity emerges or seems to emerge - I already underlined all of this elsewhere, it would not be useful to take it up again here - in the dual State, namely once there is struggle or camouflage in a fight or in a parade. Nevertheless, we certainly seem again to see its

reflection at work in some way here. I illustrated this in terms that I think I do not need to go into again, by the approach and the phenomena of erectile fascination in fights between animals, or even in their intersexual parade.

In it we certainly see a sort of natural co-adaptation of which the character of reciprocal approach, of behaviour leading to intercourse, therefore at the motor level, at the level of what (8) is called behaviourism, in the quite striking appearance of animals, who seem to perform a dance.

This indeed is also something that lends a note of ambiguity to the notions of intersubjectivity in this case. The reciprocal fascination can be conceived as being simply subject to the regulation of an identifiable cycle in instinctual processes, that which after the appetitive stage allows for the achievement of the instinctual end that properly speaking is sought. We can reduce it to an innate mechanism, to a mechanism of innate relays, which without the problem of the function of this imaginary captation, ends up by being reduced to the general obscurity of living teleology, and which after having arisen for a moment from the opposition we might say of two subjects, can when one tries to objectify it, vanish once again, efface itself.

It is completely different once we introduce into the problem, any of the resistances in any form, of the signifying chain. The signifying chain as such introduces into this an essential heterogeneity - you should understand heterogeneity with the accent laid on the heteros which means inspired in Greek, and whose proper meaning in Latin is that of a remainder, of a residue. There is a remainder once we bring the signifier into play, once it is through the intermediary of the signifying chain (9) that one addresses and relates to an other, a subjectivity of a different order is established that relates to the locus of the truth as such, and that renders my behaviour no longer luring, but provocative with this that is included in it, namely this that even for a lie, must appeal to the truth and can make of the truth itself something that does not appear to belong to the register of the truth.

Remember this example: "Why do you tell me you are going to Cracow so that I'll think you're going to Lemberg when you're really going to Cracow?" This can make of the truth itself something that is required by the lie, and that taking things further makes the qualification of my good faith depend at the moment that I put my cards on the table, namely submits me to the judgment of the other, in that he thinks he has discovered my game precisely when I am trying to show it to him, and which subjects the discrimination of bluff and trickery to the mercy of the bad faith of the other.

These essential dimensions are simple experiences of everyday experience, but even though they are woven into our everyday experience, we are still inclined to elide them, to avoid them, and why is that?

For the reason that as long as analytic experience and the Freudian experience had not shown us the hetero-dimension of the signifier operating by itself, as long as we have not touched, (10) realized, this hetero-dimension, we can believe and we do not fail to believe - and the whole of Freudian thought is impregnated with this belief founded on something that marks the heterogeneity of the signifying function, namely the radical character of the relationship of the subject to the Other in so fa*

as he speaks; it had been masked until Freud by the fact that we take as given that the subject speaks, in accordance with his conscience, whether it be good or bad. This means that we think that the subject never speaks without the intention of signifying something. Intention lies behind his sincerity and his lies, it does not matter much, but this intention is derisory, namely that if it is taken as failed, I mean in thinking that he does so the subject tells me the truth, or if he deceives himself, even in an effort to make an avowal, it remains that the intention was until now confused on that occasion with the dimension of consciousness, because it seemed to us that this dimension of consciousness [was] inherent to what the subject had to say qua signification.

The very least that was thought to be affirmable up to now, was that the subject always had a signification to express, and because of this the dimension of consciousness seemed to be inherent to it. The obstacles, the objections to the theme of the Freudian unconscious always spring in the final resort from (11) this. How could the "Tra.....gung" as Freud presents them to us have been foreseen, namely that something which for ordinary intuition or apprehension, appear as thoughts that are not thought?

This is why a veritable exorcism is necessary at the level of the theme of thought. Needless to say the Cartesian cogito must still be reckoned with, but what I can call its harmfulness comes **I** might say here from the fact that it is always biased: I mean that this "I think therefore I am", is difficult to grasp at its very source, and after all perhaps it is only a witticism. But let us leave it at this plane, we are not trying to show the relationship between philosophy and the witticism. The Cartesian cogito is effectively experienced in the consciousness of each of us, not as an "I think therefore I am", but as an "I am as I think", and of course this supposes in the background an "I think as I breathe", naturally.

I think it is enough to reflect on the slightest experience of what supports the mental activity of those around us, and because we are intellectuals, let us mention those devoted to great scientific tasks in order to convince ourselves very quickly that there is on average no more thought at work in the totality of (12) this body of thinkers, than in any hardworking charlady Struggling with the most immediate necessities of existence. The term, the dimension of thought has absolutely nothing to do with the importance of the discourse that is conveyed; and furthermore, the more this discourse is coherent and consistent, the more it seems to lend itself to all kinds of absence with

respect to what can be reasonably defined as a question posed by the subject regarding his existence as subject.

So that in the last analysis we are once again confronted with the fact that in us a subject thinks, thinks according to laws that are found to be properly speaking the same as the laws of the organization of the signifying chain, of that signifier in action that in us is called the unconscious, designated as such by Freud, and made so original, so separate from everything that is the operation of a tendency, that Freud in a thousand forms repeats that what is in question is another psychological scene. The term is repeated at every instant in the Traumdeutung, and in fact is borrowed by Freud from Fechner.

I already underlined the singularity of the Fechnerian context which is far from being something that we can reduce to the observation of a psycho-physical parallelism, or even to the Strange extrapolations Fechner indulged in about the existence of the field of consciousness, affirmed by him.

(13) The fact that Freud from his thorough reading of Fechner, borrowed the term "another psychological scene", is something always correlated by him with the strict heterogeneity of the laws concerning the unconscious, compared to everything that can be related to the domain of the preconscious, namely to the domain of the comprehensible, to the domain of signification.

This Other that is in question here, and which is rediscovered by Freud, that he appeals to again with reference to the psychological scene in connection with the witticism, is the one we have to question today, is the one Freud continually brings us back to in connection with the paths and the very procedures of the joke. "For us," he says, "there is no possible emergence of a joke without a certain surprise" (cf. SE 8 154) - and in German it is even more striking, this something that makes the subject a Stranger to the immediate content of the sentence, this something that presents itself on occasion by means of apparent nonsense, of nonsense understood with respect to signification of which one can say for a moment, "I don't understand, I'm puzzled", this break, the assent of the subject compared to what he assumes, there is in a way no true content in this sentence.

This is the first stage, Freud tells us, of the natural preparation of the joke, and it is within this that there is (14) going to be produced this something that for the subject, will constitute precisely this sort of pleasure-generator, this pleurogenic thing that is the characteristic of the joke.

What happens at this level? What is in a way this order of the Other that is invoked in the subject? Because there is also something immediate in him, that is turned by means of the joke, the technique of this turning movement should tell us what is aimed at, what mode of the Other must be attained in the subject.

This is what we are going to consider today, and to introduce it, up to this I have never, or scarcely ever, referred to stories

other than those reported by Freud himself. I will introduce it now by a story that is not specially chosen either. When I decided to approach with you this year the question of the Witz or of wit, I began a little investigation. It should not surprise you that I began by questioning a poet, but a poet who precisely introduces into his prose and also on occasion into more poetic forms, in a very particular fashion this dimension of a specially lively wit that in a way runs right through his work, and that he brings into play even when on occasion he speaks - because he is also a mathematician - about mathematics. I am (15) speaking here of course about Raymond Queneau.

When we had exchanged our first remarks on the subject, he told me a story. As always, it is only within the field of analysis that you come upon things that fit like a glove. I had spent a whole year talking to you about the signifying function of the horse in phobias (trait d'esprit), and now the horse is going to return in quite a strange way into the field of our attention.

You will not have heard the story Queneau told me; he took it precisely as an example of long witty stories, as opposed to short ones. It is in fact a whole kind of primary classification, as we will see, that conditions what Jean Paul Richter calls somewhere, the body and the soul of wit, to which one can oppose the phrase of the monologue in Hamlet saying that if brevity is lavished by the joke, it is only its body and its adornment.

Both statements are true because both authors know what they are talking about. You will see whether in fact the term "long story" fits Queneau's story because the witticism occurs at a particular point.

Here then is the story. It is a story about an examination, the (16) baccalaureat if you like. There is the candidate, and there is the examiner.

- Tell me, says the examiner, about the battle of Marengo.

The candidate pauses for a moment, with a dreamy air: The battle of Marengo? The dead!.... Its terrible! The wounded I ... Its appalling

- But, says the examiner, could you not tell me something a bit more precise about this battle?.

The candidate reflects for a moment, and then replies: A horse rearing up on his hind legs, neighing.

- The examiner, surprised, wants to test him a little more; In that case, sir, can you tell me about the battle of Fontenoy?

The battle of Fontenoy? The dead! Everywhere The wounded! More and more of them. The horror of it

- The examiner, interested, says: But can you give me any more

precise details about this battle of Fontenoy?

Oh! says the candidate, a horse rearing up on his hind legs, neighing!

The examiner, to find some room for manoeuver, asks the candidate **to** tell him about the battle of Trafalgar.

He replies: The dead! It's a slaughter-house The wounded! In hundreds

- But my dear sir, can you not tell me something more specific about this battle?

A horse....

- Forgive me, sir, but I think I should tell you that the battle of Trafalgar was a naval battle.

Whoa! Whoa!, says the candidate, back up my beauty!

This story has a value in my eyes because it allows us to decompose, I think, what is involved in the witticism. I think that the whole witty side of the story, is in the punch-line. The story has no reason to finish, to come to an end, if it is **■** simply constituted by the sort of game or joust between the two interlocutors. Moreover no matter how far you take it, the effect is produced immediately. It is a story that makes us laugh because it is comic; it is comic, I do not want to go any further into the comic, because so many appalling things have **been** said about the comic and particularly obscure things ever **•** since Monsieur Bergson wrote a book on laughter, about which the **best** thing one can say is that it is readable. In what does the comic consist?

Let us limit ourselves for a moment to saying that the comic is (18) linked to a dual situation. It is in so far as the candidate is before an examiner that this joust in which the weapons are quite obviously so radically different, takes place, **end** something is provoked in us that can be called a lively amusement.

Is it properly speaking the ignorance of the subject that makes **qs** laugh? I am not so sure. Needless to say the fact that he p*its forward truths that are elementary for any battle, things that one would never say, at least when one is doing a history exam, merits a moment's reflection. But we cannot go into it. Because in fact this would involve us in questions bearing on the nature of the comic, and I do not know whether we will have the opportunity to go into it, except to complete our examination of Freud's book which effectively ends with a chapter on the comic **in** which it is striking to see all of a sudden that Freud falls **mmll** below his usual perspicacity, and we are more inclined to **ask** ourselves why Freud, just like the worst author dealing with the most elementary notion of the comic, in a way refused to ftackle it. This no doubt will make us more indulgent towards our

psychoanalytic colleagues who themselves also, lack any sense of the comic; it seems that it is excluded from the exercise of the profession.

(19) It seems then, that what is involved when we participate in a really comic incident, is something that is much more a preparation for war, and it is on this that the final stress should be laid, something that comes before this properly witty story.

I would ask you to carefully observe the following: that even if one or other of you is not particularly sensitive to what constitutes the wit in the story, the wit after all is concealed, it lies in the punch-line, namely in this sudden excursus beyond the boundaries of the test, namely when the candidate does something that is properly speaking unbelievable if we had for a moment taken the line that this story could be situated in any sort of living reality; for the subject it suddenly seems to go beyond the limits, by pulling on the reins of the kind of image that here, almost takes on a quasi-phobic value; a moment that is in any case homogeneous, it seems, in a flash, to what can be found in all sorts of infantile experiences, that make the phobia extend to all sorts of excesses in imaginary life, where there are similar things that we have moreover the greatest difficulty in understanding. It is not rare after all, for us to see reported in the whole anamnesis of the life of a subject, an attraction properly speaking for the big horse, for the same (20) horse who descends on his hind legs from a tapestry, the entry of this horse into a dormitory where the subject is with his fifty comrades.

This sudden emergence of the signifying phantasy of the horse is what makes of this story, this drole or poetic story - as you wish - that in any case deserves on this occasion to be called witty. If as Freud says, it is simply up to you to decide the matter, you can also qualify it as a funny story.

That it should converge by its content at something that is linked to a form that has been noticed, located at the level of unconscious phenomena, should not then surprise us; what moreover gives this story its value, is that this aspect is so clear. But does that mean that this is enough to make a witticism of it?

Here then we have decomposed in some way the two moments that I would call the preparation and the punch-line. Are we going to stop here? We could stop here at the level of what we call Freudian analysis. I do not think that it would be any more difficult in the case of any other story to show these two moments, these two aspects of the phenomenon, but here they are particularly well separated out.

In the final analysis I think that what creates not just the poetic or the drole character, but also the wittiness of the (21) story, is something that follows the retrograde or retroactive path, of what we designate here in our schema as the pas-de-sens. Fleeting and ungraspable though the point of the

story may be, it is nevertheless directed towards something. To articulate it, no doubt means forcing things a little, but to show its direction it is all the same necessary to articulate it. The fact is that this particularity to which the subject returns with something that in another context might no longer belong to wit, but to humour, namely this horse rearing up on his hind legs, and neighing, but it may well be that this gives the story its real spice.

Let us remind ourselves that of all the history that we have integrated into our experience, into our formation, into our culture that this is the most essential image and that we cannot take three steps in a museum, to look at paintings of battles, without seeing this horse rearing up on his hind legs, and neighing. Since it entered with such clat into the history of war - as you know the moment you had people sitting on a horse, or astride this animal that is represented as rearing up on his hind legs and neighing, is an important date in history. At the (22) time when it happened, namely somewhere between Echnos II and Echnos III, with the arrival of the Achaeans on horses, it brought about an enormous progress, namely that these people had suddenly an enormous tactical advantage compared with a horse harnessed to a chariot; until the war of 1914-18 when the horse disappeared behind other instruments that practically put it out of commission. Thus from theepoch to the 1914-18 war, the horse was effectively something absolutely essential in the relationship, in the human commerce that is called war, and the fact that it is also the central image of certain conceptions of history that we can call precisely battle-history, is already something that we are able to perceive, because this period has passed, as a phenomenon whose signifying character has properly speaking been decanted with the progress of history. In the final analysis a whole history is resumed in this image which appears futile to us in the light of that history, and the meaning indicated is something that means that after all there is not much point in agonizing about battles, whether that of H&rengo or of Fontenoy - perhaps the battle of Trafalgar is a little bit more relevant.

Needless to say all this is not in the story. It does not try to teach us in this connection any wisdom drawn from the lessons of (23) history, but the story aims at, is directed towards - it does not teach - it indicates in what sense this present pas-de-sens goes on this occasion in the direction of a reduction of value, of an exorcising of something fascinating.

In what way does this story work, and in what sense does it satisfy us, and give us pleasure?

Precisely in connection with this margin of the introduction of the signifier into our significations, which means that we remain subject to it from a certain point on, that something escapes us jafter all beyond what this chain of signifiers contains for us in terms of liaison with this something that can also be said to be right at the beginning of the story, namely "The dead! The •wounded!", and the very fact that this sort of repeated monodic

theme can make us laugh, also indicates to us the degree to which access to reality is refused to us, because we penetrate it from **a** certain angle which is properly speaking the angle of the signifier.

On this occasion this story should simply serve as a reference point for us. Freud underlines that there are always three persons involved, when we talk about the transmission of a joke **and** the satisfaction it brings us. For the comic the interplay between two people is enough; in the joke there are three. This Other who is the second is situated at different places: he is **(24)** sometimes here the second in the story, even though we do **not** know, and we do not need to know if he is the student or the examiner. He is also you, while I am telling you the story, namely, that during the first part, you let yourselves be lead along a little, I mean in the direction required by your differing sympathies, either for the candidate, or for the examiner who in a certain fashion fascinates you and creates in **you** an attitude of opposition with regard to something by which **you** see that in the story, is not so much our opposition that is **thought**, but simply a captivation in this game in which the candidate in the final analysis is immediately at close quarters **with** the examiner, and in which the examiner is going to catch **the** candidate out. And of course it is hinted at in other stories that are far more tendentious, in stories of the smutty **or** sexual type.

You can see that it is not so much a question of getting round your resistance or your repugnance in a certain way, but on the contrary to begin to activate it. In fact, far from extinguishing any objections you might have, a good story already indicates to you whether it is going to be smutty, already at the beginning something will indicate to you that we are going to **move** onto this area. Then you prepare yourself, either to consent, or to resist, but certainly something in you will oppose **(25)** it on the dual plane and let itself be carried along by this aspect of prestige or parade that introduces the register and the **order** of the story. Nevertheless something unexpected will **occur**, which is of course always on the plane of language in this story, the aspect of the play on words properly so called, is taken much further. Here it is almost so decomposed that we can see on the one hand a pure signifier, a horse on this occasion, **and** on the other hand we also see in the form of a cliché that is much more difficult to find here, the element of play properly speaking of signifiers, but nevertheless it is clear that there is nothing other than that in this story.

It is beyond, it is in so far as something that is a fundamental equivocation surprises you, the way that in the story there is a passage from one meaning to another by the intermediary of a signifying support - the examples that I gave previously suffice **to** indicate what I mean - that this hole, will make you reach the stage where what is communicated to you will strike you as being **a** joke, and that you are always struck somewhere other than the place where your attention, your assent, your opposition was attracted in the first place, whatever the effects were, whether

the effects of nonsense or comic effects, or the effects of smutty participation in something sexually exciting. Let us say (26) that it is never more than a preparation, than something by which one might say there is something imaginary, reflected, properly speaking sympathetic in the communication, the bringing into play of a certain tendency in which the subject is the second person, can divide himself into two opposing roles. This is only the support for, the preparation of the story. Likewise, everything that attracts the attention of the subject, everything that is aroused in him at the conscious level is only the basis destined to permit something to pass onto another plane; a plane that is presented always as something more or less enigmatic, surprising, in fact, and it is in this way that we find ourselves on this other plane at the level of the unconscious.

It seems to me therefore, that we can pose for ourselves the problem, since it is always a question of something that is purely linked to the mechanism of language as such, on this plane where the Other seeks and is sought, where the Other is rejoined, where the Other is aimed at, where the Other is touched in the witticism.

How can we define this Other? After all if we pause for a moment at this schema, we are going to be able to use it to say some elementary truths and some very simple things. This schema involves, even when it has been constructed, only something that is a framework, or a grid where one can essentially locate the (27) signifying elements as such.

When we take the different modes or the different forms in which the witticism can be classified, we find ourselves led to classifications like the following: the play on words, the pun properly so called, the play on words by transposition or displacement of meaning, the witticism by the transposition or displacement of meaning, the witticism by what is called a small ■edification in a word that is enough to highlight something and to give rise to an unexpected dimension ; indeed whatever Classifying elements we introduce into it, we have tended with Freud to reduce them to terms that can be inscribed in the register of the signifier.

Does this mean that in the final analysis a machine situated somewhere in O or in M , namely receiving from both sides for example the capacity to decompose the entry paths along which are formed the term *millionaire* in the first example we took, or on the contrary in the other example, that of the golden calf, the passage from the golden calf to the butcher's calf, is in some way able to authenticate, to ratify as such, if we suppose it to be sufficiently complex to make an exhaustive, complete analysis Of the elements of the signifier, if it is capable of acknowledging it and saying that this is a witticism, namely in a Certain way, equal to the message with respect to the code, is |«8t what is necessary for us to remain at least within the possible limits, of something that is called a witticism.

Heedless to say this invention is only produced here in a purely

humorous way. There is no question about it, it is self-evident. What does that mean? Is it enough for what we are saying, that we should find ourselves confronted with a man? Of course, this may be self-evident, and we would be very happy about it. If we say that, it corresponds to the bulk of our experience, but precisely because for us the term unconscious with its enigma exists, man, is precisely the sort of response that we must deconstruct.

We will begin by saying that we must be confronted with a real subject. This indicates that since it is in this direction of meaning that the witticism lies; this meaning that we have already indicated and affirmed, cannot be conceived of except in the interaction between a signifier and a need. In other words, the absence of this dimension of need for a machine is what creates the obstacle and the objection to its ratifying the joke in any way.

Therefore we see quite clearly that this situates the level of the question, but are we yet able to say that this real someone must have needs that are homogeneous with ours? This is not (29) something that is necessarily indicated from the beginning of our progress, because in fact in the witticism this need will nowhere be designated, and that what the witticism designates, what it tends towards, is something that is precisely a distance between need and that something that is brought into play in a certain discourse, and which from this very fact distances us by an infinite series of reactions from what is properly speaking need.

Here then is a first definition. This subject must be a real subject; god, animal, or man? In fact we do not know. And what I am saying is so true, that all the stories of the supernatural that do not exist without a reason in human folk-lore, in no way exclude that one can joke with a fairy or with a devil or even with a sphinx, with someone who is in a way posed as having completely different relationships with its real, from those defined by human needs.

You will no doubt tell me that these more or less verbal beings of thought, are nevertheless more or less woven out of human images. I do not disagree, and this is even the very point, because in fact we find ourselves between these two terms: first of all to have to deal with a real subject, namely a living (30) being; on the other hand with a living being who understands language, and even much more, who possesses a stock of the usages, the uses, the locutions, the terms that are exchanged verbally, in the absence of which of course there would be no question of our communicating with him in any way through language.

What is it that the witticism suggests to us and allows us in a **ley** to touch? It is that the images as they are in the human economy, namely in this state of disconnectedness, with this apparent freedom that allows to occur between them all the coalescences, the exchanges, the condensations, the

displacements, the juggling that we see at the basis of so many of the manifestations that constitute at once the richness and the heterogeneity of the human world compared to the biological real, that we too often take in the analytic perspective as a system of reference, that in this freedom of the images there is something that we do not wish to consider as primitive, namely as conditioned by a certain primary lesion in the inter-relationship **of** man to his entourage, this thing that we have tried to designate in the prematurity of birth, in the essential relationship that means that it is through the image of the other that man finds the unification of his most elementary movements, whether it is there or elsewhere that this begins, what is (31) certain, is that these images in their anarchic state characteristic of the human order, of the human species, are influenced, are caught up, are utilized by signifying management, and that it is under this heading that they take their place in what is involved in the witticism.

What is involved in the witticism, are these images in so far as they have become signifying elements more or less common, more or **less** ratified in what I have called the metonymical treasury, in what the Other is supposed to know about the multiplicity of their possible combinations, moreover completely abbreviated, elided, let us even say purified with regard to the signification. What is in question, are all the metaphorical implications that already from the beginning are piled up and compressed in language. It is language in so far as it bears within itself its moments of meaningful creation but in a **non**-active, latent state. This is what is going to be sought, this is what I invoke in the witticism, what I try to awaken in **the** Other, the support of which I entrust in a way to the Other, **and** in fact I only address myself to him to the extent that I suppose that what I bring into play in my witticism, is something **that** is already to be found in him. He has this metonymical treasury when, to take one of Freud's examples about a famous wit (32) in Viennese society, on the subject of a bad writer who was flooding the Viennese papers with his productions on the story of Xapoleon and his descendants. The person Freud is talking to us about has a physical peculiarity, that of being red-headed. The German mot can be translated into French by saying that this person says stupid things (fadaises), and that he is red-headed, this "rouquin filandreux" (red Fadian), as the French translation goes, who runs through the whole story of the Napoleonids, and Freud pauses to say: we see a possible decomposition on two planes; what on the one hand gives its spice to the story, is the reference to the red thread that runs through the whole diary, itself a poetic metaphor. As you know, Goethe borrowed it from **the** red thread that allows to be recognized the smallest piece of Cordage, even if it stolen, especially if it is stolen, from the ;vessels of his Britannic Majesty, at a time when sailing ships made great use of cordage, and which meant that thanks to this **red** thread something absolutely authenticates a certain type of ^material as having a certain provenance. So it is with this fmetaphor more celebrated for German speaking people than it may %he for ourselves, but I suppose that enough of you at least through this quotation have come to hear, perhaps even without

knowing it, about this passage from Goethe's Elective Affinities, which means you know what is in question, that in the interplay (33) between this red thread and the red-haired person who says stupid things, there is located this reply more or less in the style of the time. This can give rise to a good deal of laughter **at** a particular time, in a particular context, and that is where I will come to from another angle, in a certain context that can be called rightly or wrongly cultural, that ensures that something comes across as a point well made, as a witticism.

what Freud sometimes tells us on this occasion, is that under the protection of the witticism something is satisfied, which is this aggressive tendency of the subject that otherwise would not be manifested. It would not be allowable to speak so crudely about **a** literary colleague, if it were not possible to do so under the guise of a witticism. Needless to say it is only one aspect of the question, but it is clear that there is a great difference between purely and simply offering an insult, and the fact of expressing oneself in this register. To express oneself in this register is to appeal to all sorts of things in the Other, that are supposed to be part of his usage, part of his current code.

It was expressly to give you this perspective, that I took this example borrowed from a special moment in the history of Viennese society. It is in so far as this red thread is something that is (34) immediately accessible to everyone, and I would say up to a certain point flatters in everyone that something which is there **as a** common symbol, something it is a pleasure to recognize, everyone knows what it is about, and by evoking this red thread something else is indicated in the direction of the joke, that calls into question not simply the person, but also a very particular value that is very questionable and can be defined as follows: the people who are essayists or who consider history from a certain anecdotal point of view, are the very ones who are **also** in the habit of taking as a basic theme in it something that **shows** up only too well the limitations of the author, the poverty of his categories, even the weariness of his writing, in short a certain style of production at the limit of history, and precisely belonging to this sort of production that encumbers the journals. It is something that is sufficiently characterized, sufficiently indicated in this joke, to show us the same characteristics of direction, of meaning that does not reach its term, but is nevertheless precisely what is aimed at in the joke **and** gives it its importance and its value.

He are therefore now in a position to say in opposition to this fact, that the living being must be a real living being. This Other is essentially a symbolic locus, it is precisely that of the treasury, let us say of those sentences, even of those (35) "accepted" ideas without which the witticism cannot take on **Its** value and its importance. But let us note that at the same time it is not in him, even though it is precisely stressed as a signification, that it is aimed at; on the contrary something happens at the level of this common treasury of categories, and what we can call the abstract character of this common treasury - **I** am alluding precisely to the element of transmission which

ensures that there is here something that is in a certain way super-individual, linked by an absolutely undesirable community to everything that separated out from the origin of culture the singularly immortal character one might say, of what one addresses when one aims at the subject at the level of the equivocations of the signifier. It is something that is really the other term, the other pole between which the question is posed of who the Other is.

It is of course necessary for us that this Other should be quite real, that it should be a living being, of flesh, even though all the same it is not his flesh that I provoke; that on the other hand there is something quasi-anonymous there in that to which I refer in order to reach him and to arouse his pleasure as well as my own.

What is the mainspring between the two, between the real and the symbolic? The function of the Other which is properly speaking called into play. Assuredly there is enough to tell us (36) that this Other, is indeed the Other as locus of the signifier; but from this locus of the signifier I only give rise to a direction of meaning, only a pas-de-sens, in which is really found, and at the final term, the mainspring of what is at work.

I think we can say that in this respect the witticism is assuredly like a Spanish inn, or more exactly since one must bring one's food to it - the wine is there already - here it is rather the contrary, it is I who must bring the wine of the word, because I would not find it even if I consumed my adversary in a more or less farcical or comical way. But this wine of the word is always present, always there in all I say, I mean that usually the witticism is there ambient in all that I am talking about once I speak, and I speak necessarily in the double register of metaphor and metonymy. This peu de sens and this pas-de-sens intersect with one another all the time just as the thousand Shuttles, that Freud refers to somewhere in the Traumdeutung, cross and recross.

This wine of the word, I would say that usually it is poured out on the sand. What happens in the very special communion between the peu de sens and the pas-de-sens, that is produced in me and the Other in connection with the witticism, is indeed something {37} like a communion, and concerning our opposition, it is no doubt more specifically humanising than any other, but if it is humanising, it is because we start from a level that from both Sides is very inhuman.

It is in this communion that I indicate the Other. I would say that I have all the more need for his help in so far as there is in himself something of the vase, or the Grail, and it is precisely because this Grail is empty, I mean that I do not address myself to anything that is specified in him, I mean that which might unite us at that moment in some kind of communion or Other, towards some kind of harmonising of desire or of judgment, but that it is only a form, and a form constituted by what? Constituted by the thing that is always involved in the witticism, and which in Freud is called the inhibitions.

It is not for nothing that in the preparation of my witticism, I evoke something that tends in the Other to solidify him in a certain direction. This is still only a shell compared to something more profound that is precisely linked to the stock of metonymies without which I can certainly communicate absolutely nothing in this order to the Other.

In other words, in order that my witticism should make the Other laugh, there must be - as Bergson says somewhere - an exercise, a (38) tour-de-force, a piece of trickery, destined in the last analysis to give pleasure to the Other, to the big Other, who as I told you, does not give a damn about it.

Acting out is a different matter, and that is why it is interesting for us to consider it, because acting out is always **and** ever a message, and this is why it is of interest to us. When it occurs in an analysis, it is always addressed to the analyst, and to the analyst in so far as he is not too badly placed, but is not quite in his proper place either. In general **it** is a hint the subject gives us, which sometimes goes very far, **and** which is sometimes very serious, but it is a hint if the acting out occurs outside the confines of the treatment, I mean after the treatment. Clearly it is a hint that the analyst can scarcely take advantage of, but this is precisely what is serious **and** important about it, it is that every time we are lead to designate it in a precise fashion, something that has the character of this paradoxical act that we are trying to describe, that is called acting out, outside the confines of the treatment **it** is certainly this that is in question, it is in the last analysis to reach something articulated on this line, namely a clarification of the relationship of the subject to the demand, **in** so far as it reveals that every relationship to this demand is (39) fundamentally inadequate, and in so far as it is a question **of** the subject finally acceding to the effective reality of this effect of the signifier on the subject, namely of putting himself **on** the level of the castration complex as such, and strictly speaking, namely that it might have been missed, this can be missed, and this is what I will try to show you the next day, precisely to the degree that in this intervening space in which there are produced all these confused exercises going from exploit to phantasy, and from phantasy to a love of objects that **is** absolutely passionate, and partial, it has to be said, of the object, because Abraham never spoke about the partial object, but **of** partial love, of the object, it is in so far as in moving around in this intermediary space of the object, one has found illusory solutions, the one manifested in what is called homosexual transference within obsessional neurosis.

This is what I call an illusory solution, and I hope the next day to show you in detail why it is an illusory solution.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 18 December 1957

The last day I spoke to you about the Grail. It is you who are the Grail, that I solidify by awakening your contradictions in all kinds of ways, so that you may authenticate in spirit, if I may express myself in this way, that I am sending you the message, of which the essential consists in its very defects.

Since it is always a good thing to return a little even to what **is** best understood, I will try in some way to materialise on the board what I told you the last day.

What I told you last day concerned the Other, this blessed Other which in short will succeed in completing, in fulfilling in a certain fashion in the communication of the Witz, this something, this gap that constitutes the insolubility of desire.

In a way Witz restores its jouissance to the essentially **(2)** unsatisfied demand, under the double but identical aspect of surprise and of pleasure: of the pleasure of surprise and the surprise of pleasure.

I insisted the last day on this procedure of immobilising the Other, of the formation of what I called the empty Grail, which is represented in Freud by what he calls the facade of the joke, **this** thing that distracts the attention of the other from the path along which the joke will pass, the thing that fixes the inhibition somewhere, precisely to free up the pathway along which the witty word is going to pass.

Here then more or less is how things can be schematised. The pathway that is traced from a word that is here condensed in a **message**, that is addressed here to the Other, a message whose incompleteness, whose gaps, whose defects are authenticated by **the** Other as a joke, but in this way restoring essentially to the subject himself, and constituting the indispensable complement for the subject of the desire proper to the joke.

Here then is the schema that we habitually use and here is the **Other**, here at gamma the message, the I here, the metonymical object. But if the Other is indispensable for us - these are of course points that have already been made and that I am going to take as known - if the Other is indispensable for the completion **that** the discourse constitutes in so far as it arrives at the **(3)** message in a way that satisfies, at least symbolically the

fundamentally insoluble character of the demand as such; if therefore this circuit which is the authentication by the Other **of** this allusion to the fact that no part of the demand can be attained, once man has entered into the symbolic world, except by a sort of infinite succession of pas-de-sens, so that man, a new Achilles pursuing another tortoise, is destined because of the grip on his desire, in the mechanism of language, to this infinite never satisfied approach, linked to the integration, to **the** very mechanism of desire, of something that we shall simply **call** discursiveness.

Thus if this Other is there as an essential at the last symbolically satisfying step, constituting in an instantaneous moment, the joke as it passes by, it is only right that we should remember that this Other, itself also exists. It exists in the manner of what we have called the subject, which is circulating around somewhere like a ferret. You must not imagine that the subject is at the origin of need: need is not yet the subject. Where is it? Perhaps we will say more about it today.

The subject, is the whole system and perhaps something that reaches completion in this system. The Other is the same, it is constructed in the same way, and this indeed is the reason why **(4)** the Other can relay my discourse.

I am going to encounter some special conditions that should all **the** same not fail to be representable in it, if my schema is to be of any use. These conditions are the ones we mentioned the **last** time. Let us now note now what it is that distinguishes the vectors or the directions on these segments. Here they are then, **going** from the I to the object and towards the Other, going from **the** message towards the Other and towards the object because needless to say there is a very considerable symmetrical relationship between this message and this I, and a similar centrifugal one and another centripetal one between the Other as **Such**, as the locus of the treasury of metonymies, and this metonymical object itself in so far as it is constituted in the system of metonymies.

What did I do, what did I explain the last time, about what I can **call** the preparation of the joke? This preparation which is sometimes best made by omitting it; but it is clear that it is **not** a bad thing to make some, we have only to remind ourselves of **what** happened when I did not make any, you were sometimes left a **little** up in the air, for something as simple as the "Ah....tel" **which** I told you one day, and which it seems left some people puzzled. If I had made some preparation on the reciprocal attitudes of the little count and the well brought up young lady **(5)** you might have been alerted so that then the "te" might have **been** more easily able to break through something. Since you were paying very close attention to it, some of you took some time to understand it. On the contrary the story the last day about the horse, made you laugh much more easily because it involves a long preparation, and while you were being amused by the remarks of **the** examinee who appeared to you to be distinguished by the powerful insolence that dwells at the heart of ignorance, you

found yourselves in fact being sufficiently prepared for the entry of this flying horse which ends the story, which really gives it its spice.

What I produce, by this preparation is the other. It is assuredly something that in Freud is called Hemmung, inhibition. Something that is simply this opposition which is the fundamental basis of the dual relationship, to everything that I can as an object before you, oppose to you as objections. It is quite natural, you prepare yourself to withstand the shock, the approach, the pressure, something is organized which is usually called defence, which is the most elementary force. And this indeed is what is in question in these sorts of introductions which can just as well be made in a thousand ways. Sometimes it is nonsense that plays this role of introduction, it is a provocation that draws the mental attention in a certain **{6}** direction. It is a lure, this kind of corrida, sometimes it is the comic, sometimes the obscene.

In fact, what you must accommodate the other to, in a way goes in a direction contrary to the metonymy of my discourse, a certain fixation of the other in so far as he is himself discoursing about a certain metonymical object and in a certain fashion, we could say it does not matter which, it is not at all necessary that it should have the least relationship with my own inhibitions. It does not matter, anything will do provided that at that moment a certain object occupies the other.

This is what I explained to you the last time when I spoke to you about the imaginary solidification which is the first position in order for the joke to get across.

In fact what you see, is the homologue at the level of the other, **that** we take here as subject. That is why I construct another System which I sketch here in blue: it is the homologue of the line that we usually call **J3 jj!** ;^{the} relationship of the I to the metonymical object; what we will here call the first subject, and to indicate therefore the superposition of the system of the Other subject with respect to the system of the first one.

you see therefore what is involved, for a relay to be made from the Other towards the message authenticating the joke as such, it **ff)** is necessary that the relay should be taken up in its own Signifying system, namely I might say, that the problem should be returned, namely itself authenticate the message as a joke in its **own** system.

In other words my **<3?o<** presupposes that there is inscribed an insufficient parallelism with a **<J>C'**, something which is exactly noted on the schema, this necessity inherent in the joke **that** gives it this sort of perspective that theoretically can be reproduced to infinity, that the good story is meant to be told, **that** it is not complete until it is told and others have laughed **it** it, and that even the pleasure of telling it includes the fact ' **that** others in their turn can test it out on still more people.

But if there is no necessary relationship between what I should evoke in the other in terms of metonymical captivation, to clear the way for a witty remark, there is on the contrary a relationship necessary - this is made sufficiently obvious by this schema between the signifying chain as it must be organized in the other, the one that goes here from **A** or **A** to **A'**, just as here this goes from **A** to **A** - there has to be a relationship, and that is what I expressed the last time by saying that the other must be from the same parish. It is not enough that he should broadly speaking understand French, although this is already a first way of belonging to the parish. If I make a joke (8) in French, there are a lot of other things supposed known, in which he must participate, in order that one or other joke may get across and be successful.

Here then we have in fact represented on the schema two conditions that we could more or less write like this, that if you like, something that here would be , namely a certain inhibition provoked in the other. Here I make a sign composed of two little arrows going in opposite directions, which are in equal and opposite directions to my metonymy, namely to AoL . On the contrary there is a sort of parallelism between **w** oC and **00C'** , that can be expressed in the following way, that \$>ot can there find its homologation. We have expressed this by placing a rough breathing in parenthesis in O&Q' , namely that the Other homologates it as such, homologates it as message, authenticates it as a joke.

Bore at least is something that has the advantage of fixing your ideas, of visualising for you, because it is one of the mental organs most familiar to the intellectual, of visualising for you what I mean when I spoke to you the last day about two subjective conditions being necessary for the success of a joke, namely what it requires of the imaginary other so that on the interior of that cup that the imaginary other presents, the symbolic Other understands it.

X will leave it those of ingenious spirit to link this up with (9) what, curiously enough, I once before said in a metaphor, and X must have had a reason for that, to use almost the same formal schemas, when once before on a previous occasion I used the image of the concave mirror in connection with narcissism. At that time I was above all concerned with imaginary images, and with the conditions for the appearance of imaginary unity in a certain Organic reflection, by means of something whose formal tendencies make it ...

Let us not get involved in making a rapprochement that in any Case would be forced, even though it might be suggestive.

We are now going to make a little further use of this schema, because however interesting what I recall to you here may be, the meaning of what I said to you the last day, if it were not to take us any further than this, it would not amount to much.

I,

I want you at least once to clearly grasp this, that the initial

schema that we have been using since the beginning of the year is thus transformed into what we have here, in virtue of the fact that we develop the formula of the Other as subject, is transformed in the sense that we have **(DoC** for the subject here. |\$ |3, and beyond is reproduced this arrangement which gives p that the other, he also has a relationship to a métonymieal object, finds himself able to see reproducing itself at the 'QoL, following level the necessity for **ffiOC**, which here becomes **QoL**, (10) and so on indefinitely. The final loop, by which ther& passes essentially the return of the need towards something that is this indefinitely deferred satisfaction, is something that must in a way make the whole circuit of the others, before coming back here to the subject at its terminal point.

We are going moreover to have to use this schema again later on. For the moment let us pause at something which is a particular case, and which Freud envisages immediately after he has given this analysis of the mechanisms of the joke, of which this is nothing more than a commentary. He talks about what he calls the social motives of jokes, and from there he goes on to the problem of the comic.

This is what we are going to try to approach today, not to exhaust it, because Freud states expressly that he only approaches it from the point of view of the joke, that otherwise there is here a field that is far too vast for him even to think of approaching it, at least from his own experience. It is very striking that to introduce the analysis of the comic, he gives pride of place as being that which in the comic is closest to the joke, with that sureness of orientation and of touch that is fraud's, what is closest to the joke and what he presents to us as such, is precisely what might appear at first glance to be (11) furthest from wit, namely the naive.

The naive, he tells us, is realized through something that is based on ignorance, and naturally he gives examples of it borrowed from children, the scene that I believe I already evoked for you here, about the children who put on a pretty little play for the adults, and which consists in the fact that a couple separates, the husband going to seek his fortune and coming back after some years having succeeded in fact in becoming wealthy, and his wife greets him saying: "You see how well I have done, I have not been wasting my time either while you were away, " and She opens the curtain on a row of ten dolls. It is like a little puppet show, but naturally the children are astonished, or perhaps just surprised, perhaps on this occasion they know a bit more than you think, but in any case they are surprised by the laughter that explodes from the adults who have come to assist at this little play.

this gives the type of the drollery, of the good story, of the naive joke as Freud presents it to us. He presents it in a form that is still closer technically to what we call the procedures of language, in the story of the little girl who proposes for her brother who has a pain in his stomach, a Bubizin. The little girl had heard that she was to have a medicine, and since Madi in

(12) German means little girl, and Bubi little boy, she thinks that if there is a Medizin for little girls there should also be a Bubizin for little boys.

Here again is something that, on condition that one has the key **to** it, namely that one understands German, can easily be transformed into a funny story, or can be presented on the level of wit.

In truth, even though this reference to children is not of course **out** of place, the feature, we would not even describe it as ignorance, of this something that Freud describes very specially by what makes it have a character that can easily be of assistance in the mechanism of the joke, which comes from the **fact** that there is something, as he says, that pleases us in it, **and** which is precisely that which plays the same role as that **which** I earlier called metonymical fascination or captivation. What is important is that we feel that there is no inhibition in **the** speaker, and it is this, this absence of inhibition in the other that allows us to pass on to the other, the person to whom **we tell** it, and who is already himself fascinated by this absence of inhibition, to pass on to him the essence of the joke, namely **the** beyond that it evokes and which here in the child, in the cases that we have just evoked, does not consist essentially in (13) their funniness, but in the evocation of that childhood time **when** the relationship to language is something so close, that in this way it directly evokes in us the relationship of language to desire which is what in the joke, constitutes the satisfaction **proper** to it.

We are going to look at another example taken from adulthood, one **that** I think I already quoted once. One of my patients who is **not** distinguished by what are ordinarily called very advanced circumvolutions, and who was, as was often the case with him, telling one of his rather sad stories, explained that he had made **an** appointment with a lady whom he had met on his travels, and **that** the said lady, as often happened to him, had stood him up. **He** finished his story by saying : "I once again understood that **She** was a femme de non recevoir."

He was not making a joke, he was saying something very innocent, that nevertheless has a piquant character and satisfies in us something that goes well beyond the comical perception of the person in his disappointment, which on this occasion, if it evokes in us, and this is not at all certain, a sentiment of superiority, is certainly very inferior in this characteristic. Because in this characteristic I am alluding to one of the mechanisms often put forward, promoted, as supposedly belonging (14) to the mechanism of the comic, namely that which consists in **our** feeling ourselves superior to the other. This is very much **Open** to criticism, since there is nothing in it, even though it **Was** a man of considerable intelligence, namely Rops, who tried to sketch out the mechanism of the comic from this point of view, it **Can** be completely refuted that the essential pleasure of the **comic** lies here. If there is anybody who on this occasion remains completely superior, it is our friend who found on this

occasion a way of explaining a disappointment that is far from shaking his unbounded self-confidence. If therefore some superiority is hinted at in connection with this story, it is indeed rather a kind of lure, namely that for a time everything committed you for a moment to the mirage consisting of the way in which you yourself position yourself, or position the person who is telling the story, with regard to the text of desire and its disappointment, but what goes well beyond, is that precisely behind this term of femme de non recevoir, the fundamentally disappointing character per se of every approach, well beyond the fact that one or other particular approach may be satisfied.

In other words, what amuses us so much here, is the satisfaction found by the subject who in his disappointment uttered this innocent mot, namely that he thinks it sufficiently explained by what he thinks is an accepted expression, a metonymy that is just **(15)** right for such occasions, in other words who rediscovers it in the top-hat in the shape of a furry rabbit which he thinks is the living rabbit of the true explanation, and which is in fact itself, well and truly imaginary, this rabbit which constitutes his very disappointment, which is always ready to be reproduced, constant and unshaken, without otherwise being affected by it, **every** time he approaches the object of his mirage.

Here then, what you see, is that the witticisms of the ignorant **or** the naive, of the person who on this occasion to make a joke which this time is entirely one might say at the level of the other, I no longer have any need to provoke in the other anything that constitutes the solid cup, it is already totally given to me by the one who by elevating it to the dignity of a funny story, the one from whose lips I receive the precious word whose communication is going to constitute a joke, someone whom I elevate in a way to the dignity of master-fool by my story. This is in fact its mechanism, that the whole dialectic of the naive **joke** depends on this, that the whole dialectic of the naive joke is contained in the blue part of this schema, and that what has **to** be provoked in the other in the imaginary order, so that a **joke** in its ordinary form can get through and be received here, is in a way already constituted by his naivete, his ignorance, **416)** his very infatuation, and today it is enough to simply approach it, to have it homologated there by the third the big **Other** to whom I communicate it as such to have it pass to the rank and title of a joke.

Here naturally, nevertheless by the promotion of the imaginary other as such in this analysis of metonymies, in the pure and Simple satisfaction that he finds in language, and which helps him to not even perceive the extent to which his desire is lured, this introduces us, and this is why Freud places it at the function of the joke and the comic, this introduces us to the dimension of the comic as such, and makes us pose the question of it.

Here we are not at the end of our labours, because really on this Subject of the comic there has been no lack of ideas and theories, all more or less unsatisfactory, and it is certainly

not a vain question for us to ask ourselves, why these theories are unsatisfactory, and also why they have been advanced.

Of course it would be necessary for us to go through all the kinds of forms under which these theories have been presented, to go back over all of that. It would be impossible to spell them out; to add them up, describe their succession, their history as they say, would not I believe, lead us to or put us on the trail of anything fundamental. We can in any case say, that the (17) question of the comic has always been avoided every time an attempt has been made even to approach it, I will not say to resolve it, on the purely psychological level. Wit and the comic, are obviously easy to unify on the psychological level under the category of the laughable or of what provokes laughter. Of course you cannot help being struck, that up to now even while concluding that the joke may be more or less well received, understood by the fact that you sanction it with a discreet laugh or at least with a smile, I have not approached this question of laughter.

The question of laughter is far from being resolved. Of course every single person is happy to make of it an essential characteristic of what happens in wit, and in the comic as well, but when it is a matter of trying to link it up to what might be called on this occasion the expressive character of laughter, when it is a question of even simply connoting to what emotion might respond this phenomenon of which it is possible to say, even though it is not absolutely certain, that it is proper to man, one begins to get into things that generally speaking are extremely troublesome. I mean that even those whom one really feels are trying to approach it, who touch in a certain analogical, metaphorical fashion, a certain relationship between laughter and what is involved in the apprehension that corresponds to it, the best that can be said, is that those who (18) have advanced the most tenable, the most prudent propositions, scarcely do more than to note something that appears to be analogous to the phenomenon itself of laughter, namely the oscillating traces that it may leave somewhere, in the tense that it is a spasmodic movement accompanied by a certain mental oscillation that is supposed to be that of a passage for example, as Kant says, of something that is a tension to its reduction, to a nothing; the oscillation between a tension that has been awoken and its sudden collapse before a nothing, an absence of something which it is thought after its arousal of the tension, should have been able to resist it.

Bare is an example in which the sudden passage from a concept to its contradiction, appears first in a psychologist of the last centuries, Leon Dumont, whom Dumas talks about in his article on psychology. It is a typical Dumas article, very astute, very subtle, and with which that contented man did not go to a lot of trouble, but which is worth while reading, because even without going to too much trouble, he makes some very good points.

In short, laughter itself of course extends far beyond the question of both wit and the comic. It is not unusual to see

recalled that in laughter there is something that is for example **the** simple communication of laughter, laughter at laughter; laughter at something that is linked to the fact that you are not supposed to laugh, the laughing fits of children for example in (19) certain circumstances is also something that would be worthy of attention. There is also the anxious laugh, and even that before an imminent threat; the uneasy laugh of the victim who suddenly finds himself threatened with something that altogether exceeds the limits of what he expected; the laugh of despair. There is even a laugh that can come when you suddenly learn of a bereavement.

Are we going to deal with all these forms of laughter. This is **not** our subject, I just want to note here, because it is not my object to construct a theory of laughter for you, that in any case nothing is less likely to satisfy you than Bergson's theory **of** the mechanical arising in the midst of this kind of myth of vital harmony, of this something of which, to take them up here **In** a particularly schematic fashion, the so-called eternal newness, the permanent creativity of the elan vital, to be taken **ttp** again here in a particularly condensed fashion in this discourse on laughter. Bergson shows adequately, demonstrates clearly enough the properly character, because to formulate that one of the characteristics of the mechanical as Opposed to the vital is its repetitive character, as if life did **not** present us with any repetitive phenomena, as if we did not **piss** every day in the same way, as if we did not go to bed every (20) day in the same way, as if you re-invented sex every time **you** made love. What we have here is something that is really Unbelievable; this type of explanation by the mechanical is **itself** an explanation that right through the book is itself shown **to** be a mechanical explanation, I mean that it is the explanation **itself** that falls into a lamentable hysterotypicity that allows **what** is essential in the phenomenon to escape completely.

If it were really the mechanical that is at the origin of laughter, where would we be going? What would we make of the subtle remarks of Klaus about puppets which go completely against this supposedly laughable and inferior character of the mechanical? Because he very astutely stresses that it is an **Ideal** of grace that is really realized by these little machines Which though simply moved by some bits of wire, realize in themselves a kind of elegance of outline in their movements, linked to the constancy of the centre of gravity of their Contour, provided they have been carefully constructed, I mean following the strict example governing the characteristics of human articulations, so that finally, he underlines, no dancer **Can** attain the grace realized by a simple marionette that is manipulated with skill.

let us leave the Bergsonian theory to one side for now, remarking (21) simply the degree to which it leaves completely to one side what is given by the first, most elementary apprehension of the inchanism of laughter; I mean, before it gets involved in anything as elaborate as its connection with wit or its connection with the comic. I mean the fact that laughter touches

everything that is imitation, duplication, the phenomenon of the double, the mask, and if we look more closely at it, not only the phenomenon of the mask but that of unmasking, and this according to moments that deserve our attention.

You approach a child with your face covered by a mask: he laughs in a tense, nervous way. You approach him more closely, and something begins that is a manifestation of anxiety. You take off the mask: the child laughs. But if under this mask you have another mask he does not laugh at all.

I only want to indicate here how much all this at least deserves a study, which could only be an experimental study, but which could only be one if we begin to have a certain idea of the sense in which it should be directed, and in which everything, in any case, in this phenomenon as in others that I could give here to support my affirmation - I do not intend to stress it too much here - in which everything shows us that there is in any case a **(22)** very intense, a very close connection between the phenomena of laughter and the function of the imaginary in man, namely the captivating character of the image, captivating beyond the instinctual mechanisms that correspond to it, whether of fighting or of parade, sexual parade or combative parade, and to which there is added in man this accent which means that the image of the other is very profoundly connected to this tension that I spoke about a while ago, this tension that is always evoked by the object that one's attention is drawn to; an attention that consists in putting him at a certain distance from desire or from hostility, from that something which in man, is at the foundation and the very base of the formation of the ego, of that ambiguity which means that his unity is outside himself, that it is with reference to his fellow-man that he takes his stand and finds that unity of defence, which is that of his being qua narcissistic being.

It is in this field that the phenomenon of laughter should be situated, and to indicate what I mean, I would say that it is in this field that there are produced the drops in tension to which the authors who have interested themselves most especially in the phenomenon, attribute the momentary, instantaneous release of laughter. If someone makes us laugh simply because he falls down, it is in function of a more or less tense, a more or less (23) pompous image to which we do not even pay very much attention beforehand, as these phenomena of stature and of prestige which are in a way the warp and woof of our living experience, but to such a degree that we do not even grasp their prominence. It is, in fact, in so far as the imaginary personage continues his more or less affected progress, in our imagination, when what is his real support is there landed and sprawled out on the ground, it is to that degree that laughter explodes. It is always through something that is a liberation from the image.

You should understand liberation in the two ambiguous senses of the term, that something is liberated from the constraint of the image, and also that the image continues on by itself. There is

something comical about the duck whose head has been cut off and who still continues to take a few steps in the yard. This too is something of this order, and it is also the real reason why the comic enters into some sort of connection with the laughable, it is at the level of the direction of the I-object, {£ p or J^ZS'." It is certainly to the degree that the imaginary is somehow involved in this relationship with the symbolic, that we are going to see reappearing at a higher level which interests us infinitely more than the all the phenomena of pleasure, laughter in so far as it connotes, as it accompanies the comic.

To introduce the notion of the comic today, I would like to begin with an example. When Heinrich Heine in the story of the golden (24) calf replies to Soulie in a mot which is destined to achieve a witty communication, when he talks about the golden calf in connection with the banker, it is almost already a joke, or at least a metaphor that encounters Heinrich Heine's response: "For a calf, he seems to me to be a little old." Note that if Heine had said that literally, it would simply mean that he had understood nothing, that he would be like the ignorant patient I mentioned above, like the one who talked about the femme de non recevoir♦. The reply that Heinrich Heine gives him could be comical, in a certain way, and this is what constitutes the underpinnings of this joke; it is also something like this, I mean that it puts Soulie back in his box, puts him in his place (le mets dans ses petits souliers) I might say. After all Soulie had not said anything very funny and Heinrich Heine by taking his pawn, by showing him that things could be arranged in a different way, by setting up a metonymical object other the first calf, comes in and plays on the level of comical opposition.

Comical opposition in fact is linked to the following, that it is impossible not to perceive first of all an absolutely essential difference. It is that the comic, though we grasp it here in a fleeting state, in a witticism, in a flash, in a mot, in a passage of arms, is all the same something that goes well beyond (25) that, I mean that it puts in question, not purely and simply our encounter, a flash of something in which there is no need for S very long embrace for it to get across with a witticism. I am speaking to all of you, whatever may be your present position, without knowing where you are coming from, nor even who you are. For there to be a comical relationship between us, something is necessary that would involve each one of us much more with one another on the personal level, so that here you see outlined in the relationship between Soulie and Heinrich Heine, something that involves a mechanism of seduction. All the same there is something rebutted on Soulie's side, by Heinrich Heine's reply.

In short, for there to be the possibility of speaking about the comical relationship, we must place this relationship of the demand to its satisfaction, no longer in an instantaneous moment, but in something that gives it its stability and constancy, its pathway in its relationship to a particular other. Because what we have analysed in the underpinnings of the joke as being that essential structure of the demand in so far as it is taken up by the other and must be essentially unsatisfied, there is all the

same a solution which is the fundamental solution, that which every human being seeks from the beginning of their life until **the** end of their existence, because everything depends on the other. In fact the solution is to have another person completely **to** oneself. This is what is called love.

In this dialectic of desire it is a question of having another completely to oneself, the field of the full word as I formerly evoked it for you, is designated, defined on this schema by the very conditions that we have just seen that there can and should **be** realized something that is equivalent to the satisfaction of desire, the indication that it can precisely be satisfied only in **the** beyond of the word. It is the bond that unites others with this I, its metonymical object and the message. This is the arena, and the surface that the something that should be the full word should keep to, namely that the essential, characteristic message that constitutes it, this full word, which I imaged for **you** by the "you are my master" or "you are my wife" appears in fact **in** the form: "you, thou, the other, art my wife".

It is in this form, as I told you, that man gives the example of **the** full word in which he engages himself as subject, grounds himself as the husband of the one to whom he is speaking and announces it to her in this form, and says to her : "you are my wife."

I also showed you the strangely paradoxical character of this "you are my wife". It is that everything depends on something **that** should close the circuit; it is that the metonymy that this (27) involves, the passage from the other to this unique object **that** is constituted by the sentence, requires all the same that **the** metonymy should be accepted, that afterwards something goes from & to cL, namely that the "you" involved does not reply for example, purely and simply: "No, there's no question of it."

Even if she does not reply "No, there's no question of it", something else occurs much more commonly, it is that precisely **for** the reason that no preparation as skilful as that of the joke has succeeded in confusing this line |3 p", ' with the metonymy fi&DC , namely that these two lines remain completely independent, that is that the subject in question himself well **and** truly conserves his system of metonymical objects. We will **see** produced the contradiction established in the circle p\ &."!J\$/ namely that since everyone as they say, holds onto his own notions, this founding word runs up against what I would call. Because what we have here is a square, not the problem of the squaring of the circle, but of the circling of these metonymies **which** are well and truly distinct, even in the most ideal union: "There are only good marriages, there are no delightful ones ", **said** La Rochefoucauld.

Now, the problem of the other and of love is at the centre of the Comic. To realize this it would be well first of all to remember **that** if one wishes to inform oneself about the comic, it would (28) perhaps not be a bad thing for example to read some Comedies. Comedy has a history, comedy even has an origin that

has been much studied, and the origin of comedy is linked in the closest possible fashion to what can be called the connection between the self and language.

What is this self that we are now talking about? It is not of course purely and simply the original radical need, this need that is at the root of the individualization of the organism, this self is only grasped beyond every elaboration of desire in the network of language, this self is something that is only realized in the final analysis at the limit. Here human desire is not caught up at first in this system of language that puts it off indefinitely; there is no place for this self to constitute and to name itself. It is nevertheless beyond all this elaboration of language, which represents the realization of this first need, its form, and which at least in man, has no chance of even knowing itself. We do not know what the self of an animal is, and there is little chance that we shall ever know it; but what we know, is that man's self is entirely engaged in this dialectic of language: it is what conveys and conserves the first existence of the tendency.

Where does comedy come from? We are told that it is from the banquet where man in fact says yes in a kind of orgy - let us (29) leave this word with all its vagueness - from the same meal that is constituted by offerings to the gods, namely to the immortals of language. The fact that in the last analysis every process of the elaboration of desire in language, leads back to and can be associated with the eating of a banquet, in the fact that after all this detour is made in the last analysis to get back to louisance and to its most elementary form, here is the way that comedy makes its entry into what one can consider with Hegel, as being the aesthetic aspect of religion.

What does ancient comedy show us? It would be a good thing for you from time to time to dip into Aristophanes. It is always the Moment when the self takes advantage of language, puts itself in its shoes for its own most elementary uses, as you can see in The Clouds, where Aristophanes mocks Euripides and Socrates - especially Socrates. In what form does he present him to us? He shows him to us in this form that all the lovely dialectic will serve an old man to try to satisfy his desires by all sorts of tricks, to escape from his creditors, to arrange that he is given poney; or for a young man also to escape from his commitments, from all his duties, to complain about his ancestors, etc...

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this return of need in its most elementary form, this emergence to the forefront of what originally entered into the dialectic of §30) language, namely in a special way all sexual needs, and in general all the needs that are hidden. This is what you see being presented on the forefront of Aristophanes' stage, and this pees very far, and I would particularly recommend to your attention the plays concerning women and the way in which in this return to the character of elementary need as underlying the whole process, what special role is given here to women, in so far as it is by their mediation, that Aristophanes invites us for example to the moment of imaginary communion that is represented

by comedy, to perceive something that can only be perceived retroactively, that if the state exists, and the city, it is so that one can take advantage of it, it is in order that a feast, in which no one really believes, can be set up in the agora, it is so that one can come to be astonished at the contradictions to common sense brought about by the perverse emotions of the city which is subject to all the pulling and dragging of a dialectical process, in order that one should be brought back through the mediation of women, the only ones who really know what men need, one is brought back by women to common sense, and naturally all this takes on the most exuberant forms.

It has piquancy not only because of what it reveals to us in terms of the violence of certain images. It also makes us imagine pretty well a world where women were not perhaps quite (31) what we imagine from the authors who provide us with a well-polished view of antiquity. Women, it seemed to me, must have been - I am talking about real women, not about the Venus de Milo - must in antiquity have had a lot of hair and not have smelled very well, if one can believe the insistence that is put on the Use of the razor and of certain perfumes.

In any case, in the twilight of Aristophanes, especially in that Which deals with that vast insurrection of women, there are some images which are very beautiful and which do not fail to impress, even if we just take the one that is suddenly expressed in the sentence of one of the women before her comrades who are all in the process, not only of dressing themselves up as men, but of putting on beards which have an omnipotent aspect, only it would be a question of knowing which beard is meant, she suddenly starts laughing and says: "It's so funny, we look like a collection of cuttle-fish with beards!"

This penumbral vision is also something that appears to be of a kind to suggest the whole foundation of relationships in ancient society.

Towards what will this comedy evolve?

Towards the new comedy, and what is this new comedy? The new comedy is something that shows us people committed in general in the most fascinated and stubborn fashion, to some metonymical (32) object. All the human types of every kind are encountered there. There are the lustful, the characters that one will later rediscover in Italian comedy, characters defined by a certain relationship to an object, and around whom pivot all the new comedy, that which goes from Menander to our own day, around something which is substituted for the eruption of sex which is love, then there is love named as such, the love that we will call naive love, ingenuous love, the love that unites two young people who are generally rather dimwitted, which forms the pivot Of the plot; and when I say pivot, it is because love really plays this role, not of being comical in itself, but of being the axis around which turns all the comic of the situation, up to the époque that one can clearly characterize by the appearance of Romanticism, and which we will leave to one side for today.

Love is a comic sentiment. The high-point of comedy can be perfectly localized and defined, comedy in its proper sense, in the sense that I am putting it forward for you here, its high point is found in a unique masterpiece which is in some way the hinge of a passage from the presentation of relationships between the self and language, in the form of the taking possession of language by the self, to the introduction of dialectic as such, (33) of relationships of man to language which take place in a blind, closed way. In Romanticism it is very important, in the sense that Romanticism without knowing it, turns out to be a confused introduction to this dialectic of the signifier as such, of which in fact psychoanalysis turns out to be the articulated form. But in the line of what we can call classical comedy, the high point occurs at the moment when the comedy that I am talking about, which is by Moliere and which is called l'Ecole des Femmes, poses the problem in an absolutely schematic manner, because it is about love, but the love is there as an instrument of satisfaction.

Moliere proposes the problem to us in a fashion that absolutely gives it its framework with a limpidity comparable to one of Euclid's theorems. A gentleman called Arnolphe, who does not even need for the rigour of things, to be a man with a single idea, it is just found to be better like that, but in the way that in the witticism metonymy serves to fascinate us, is a gentleman, who in fact we see making his entry from the beginning with what we can call an obsession about not being cuckolded. It is his principal passion, it is a passion like any other, all passions are equivalent, all passions are equally metonymical. The principle of comedy is to pose them as such, namely to focus the attention on a self who believes completely in his (34) metonymical object; which means moreover that he believes in it. This does not at all mean that he is bound to it, because it is also one of the characteristics of comedy, that the self of the comic subject whoever he is, always comes out of it absolutely intact. Everything that happens during the comedy flows off him like water off a duck's back, whatever the paroxysms he gets into in the course of the comedy. L'Ecole des Femmes concludes with a "Phew!" from Arnolphe, and yet God knows what he has gone through. Here I will try to briefly recall the story for you.

Arnolphe then has declared himself for a little girl:

The gentle, meek expression which she wore
; Endeared Agnes to me when she was four.

He has then chosen his little wife, and has already expressed his "you are my wife". This is the very reason why he becomes so agitated when he sees that his dear little angel is going to be taken away from him. Because from his point of view, as he perceives, she is already his wife, and he has already socially established her as such, the one to whom he says: "you are my wife."

And he has resolved the question in an elegant fashion. He is a

man, his partner Chrysalde tells him, who has illuminations. This is said somewhere, and in fact he has so many illuminations that he has formulated the following: he has no need to be the monogamous personage that we spoke about at the outset. Away with monogamy, he is an educator. Old men have always been (35) preoccupied with the education of girls, and have even set out principles for it. Here he has found a very happy principle, he **says** himself that he has taken the necessary steps to ensure that **she** is kept in a state of complete idiocy. You cannot imagine, **he** tells his friend, the extent of it: there she was asking me **the** other day if children were conceived through the ear.

This is something that should have made him prick up his own ears, because if the girl had in fact a more healthy notion of physiology she would perhaps have been less dangerous.

"You are my wife", a full word, and metonymy. Everything that he gets little Agnes to read, namely the duties of marriage, is well and truly explained in a proper manner. She is completely idiotic, he says, and he believes that he can found on that, like all educators, his confidence of being able to construct her.

What does the whole development of the story show us? It could **be** called: "How wit (l'esprit) comes to girls". This is how wit comes to girls: the particularity of Agnes' character seems to **have** set a real enigma for the psychologists and the critics: is **she** a woman, a nymphomaniac, a flirt, a this, a that? Certainly not, she is a creature who has been taught to speak, and who **speaks** out. She is taken by the words of a character, who (36) incidentally is a complete dimwit, this is the character of **the** young man, Horace, who comes into question when in the major scene in which Arnolphe proposes to tear out his hair, she coolly replies:

"With two words, Horace could do more than you."

She stresses what has been stressed all through the play, namely that what has come to Agnes from her encounter with the character **in** question, is precisely this, that the person says things that **are** witty and ravishingly sweet to hear. What it is he says, she **is** quite incapable of telling us, or even of telling herself; but **it** is through the word, namely through something that breaks with **the** whole system of the word she has learned, the educative word, **that** she is captivated, and the kind of ignorance which is one of **the** dimensions that Moliere had already linked to the fact that precisely for her there is nothing other than this system of the **word**, when Arnolphe explains to her that he has kissed her hands, **her** arms. She asks: "Is there anything else?" She is very interested. She is a goddess of reason this Agnes; and so it is **the** term reasoning, reasoner that comes to suffocate Arnolphe at **a** given moment when he tries to reproach her for her ingratitude, her lack of dutiful feelings, her betrayal of him. She very pertinently replies: "But what do I owe you? If it is only the
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(37) fact that you have made me stupid, you will get your recompense." And the words reasoner and reasoning are what come to Arnolphe's lips.

In other words, we find ourselves at the outset with a reasoner confronting an innocent, and the source of the comic is that we see emerging, once wit has come to the girl, a new reasoner in the presence of a person who has himself, become an innocent, because now, in completely unambiguous words, he says that he loves her, and he tells her it in all sorts of ways, telling her up to the point that the culmination of his declaration consists in saying more or less the following: You can do exactly whatever you want, namely you can also have Horace on occasion if you wish, namely that the character overturns the very principle of his system, namely that in the final analysis he would still prefer to be cuckolded, which was the principal starting point of the whole affair, rather than to lose the object of his love.

Love, this is the point at which I said the summit of classical comedy is situated. There is love here, and it is very curious to see the degree to which we no longer perceive it except through all sorts of partitions that stifle it, romantic partitions. Love is an essentially comic motive. It is (38) precisely in this that Arnolphe is a true lover, much more authentic a lover than Horace who is always vacillating in this area. Love is comic precisely in that it is the love that is most authentically love that declares and manifests itself.

A whole change of perspective had to occur round the term love, for us not to have been able to think about it so easily. Because it is a fact: the more the play is acted, the more Arnolphe is played with the characteristics of Arnolphe, and the more people bow down and say: "Ah! that Holiere so noble and so profound, you laugh, when you should really weep"; namely the whole romantic change of perspective which means that people almost no longer find the comic compatible with the authentic and absolutely overwhelming expression of love as such.

Here then is the outline of the story that after all I had to give you. What completes it is this, that thanks to the Stupidity of the third character, namely the character of Horace who at times behaves like a proper baby, even to the point of placing the girl he has kidnapped into the hands of her legitimate possessor, without even having up to then identified the jealous man who tyrannizes Agnes, with the very person that he is entrusting himself to. It does not matter, this character is altogether secondary. Why is he there? So that the problem (39) can be posed in these terms, namely, that Arnolphe at every instant is kept up to date, hour by hour, minute by minute, with what is really happening, by the very man who is his rival, and on the other hand in an equally entirely authentic manner by his pupil herself, Agnes, who hides nothing from him. Effectively, as he wishes, she is completely idiotic, but only in the sense that she has absolutely nothing to hide, that she tells all, that she says it simply and in the most relevant manner, but that from ; the moment that she is in the world of the word, this is open to

her that whatever the power of educational formation, her desire is beyond, her desire is not only with Horace whom we can be sure she will in the future make endure the fate that Arnolphe was so much in dread of, but simply because of the fact that she is in the domain of the word, she knows that her desire is beyond that word. She is charmed by words, she is charmed by wit, it is in so far as something goes beyond the metonymical present that they tried to impose on her, that she escapes, that while continuing to tell Arnolphe the truth, nevertheless everything that she does is equivalent in fact to deceiving him. Horace himself perceives it and when he tells the story of the gravel and the stone, namely the girl who throws a stone out the window at him saying: **(40)** "Go away! I do not want to listen to your discourses any more, and here is my reply," and who appears to be saying : Look **at** this stone that I am throwing at you, but which also carries a little letter, this is something in fact, Horace stresses it very well, which for a girl who had been kept in the most extreme ignorance up to then, is not badly constructed as an ambiguity. It is the beginning of those double meanings, of all the games from which we can in the future expect a good outcome.

This then is the point at which I wished to leave you for today. **The** self of its nature goes beyond the hold that language has on **desire**. The relationship to the other is essential, in so far as **the** path of desire passes necessarily by way of the other, not in so far as the other is the unique object, but in so far as the Other responds to language, and by itself submits it to all its dialectic.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 8 January 1958.

I have the impression that last trimester - I had some feedback - I left you a little bit out of breath. I did not notice, otherwise I would not have done it. I also have the impression that I have been repeating myself, that I have not been making much progress. However this did not prevent perhaps some things that I wanted to tell from getting lost along the way.

It is worthwhile perhaps to go back a little, to take a look at the way that I tackled things this year. What I am trying to show you in connection with the witticism, of which I separated out a certain schema whose usefulness may perhaps not be immediately apparent to you, is its unity, how things fit together, how they mesh in with the preceding schema.

When all is said and done it is a question of something which you (2) should perceive as a constant in what I teach you. Again it would be appropriate that this constant should not simply be something like a little flag on the horizon, with regard to which you take your bearings. It is necessary that you should understand where this is leading you, into what detours it leads you. This constant is the remark which I believe to be absolutely fundamental for understanding what is in Freud, that of the importance of language, as we said first, and then of the word. And the more we approach our object the more we perceive where the difference is of the importance of the signifier in the economy of desire, or let us rather say in the formation, the informing of the signified.

You were able to see it last night, in listening to the interesting things Madame Pankow contributed to our scientific meeting. It happens that in America people are concerned with the same thing as I am explaining to you here. They are trying to introduce as essential into the determination of these psychic disturbances, these economic disturbances, the fact of communication and what they call in this instance the message. You were able to hear Madame Pankow telling you about someone who did not come down in the last shower, namely Mr. Bateson, an anthropologist and ethnographer, who has contributed something which makes us reflect a little bit beyond the tips of our noses (3) about therapeutic action. He tries to formulate something which is at the source of the genesis of psychotic problems, in something which is set up between the mother and the child, and which is not simply an effect of tension, of retention, of defence, of ratification, of frustration in the elementary sense

that I am specifying, of interhuman relationships, as if it were something which happened at the end of a piece of elastic, who tries from the beginning to put the notion of communication in so far as it is centred not simply on a contact, on a relationship, with an entourage, but on a signification, to put it at the origin of the originally discordant, disruptive thing which has happened in what links the child in his relationships with the mother, and when he designates, when he denotes as being the discordant element of this relationship, the fact that communication presents itself in the form of the double relationship as Madame Pankow told you very clearly last night, by telling you that in the same message which is the one in which the child has deciphered the behaviour of his mother, in the same message there are two elements which are not defined with respect to one another, in this sense simply that one presents itself as forbidding (defense) the subject what the other means, which is the usual notion that we have in what happens at the level of the mechanism of the defence that you analyse.

(4) You can say what the subject says, in order to overlook that there is some share of signification in him. He misleads himself just as he misleads you.

This is not what is in question. It is a question of something which concerns the other and which is received by the other in such a way that if he responds on one point, he knows by that very fact that he is going to find himself caught in the other.

As Madame Pankow told us last night, if I respond to the declaration of love which my mother makes to me, I will provoke her withdrawal, and if I do not hear her as such, namely if I do not respond to her, I will lose her.

You see therefore that we are thus introduced into this dialectic of double meaning, in the fact that already it involves a third element. It is not one behind the other, namely something which **is** beyond meaning, a meaning which would have this privilege of being the more authentic of the two simultaneous messages in the same emission, as one might say, of signification which creates **in** the subject a position such that he is in an impasse. This proves to you that even in America, enormous progress is being made.

Does that mean that it is fully sufficient? Madame Pankow last night underlined very well the basic, empirical nature of this attempt. Naturally it is not at all a question of empiricism. If in America there were not also studies which are very (5) important, which are conducted on the plane of what is called games strategy, they would not even have dreamt of introducing this something into analysis, which is all the same here a reconstruction of something which is supposed to have happened at the beginning, and determines this profoundly painful position of the subject who is in a false position vis-a-vis precisely what **is** constitutive in the message for the subject. If this position does not imply that the message is something constitutive for the subject, one can scarcely see how it would be possible to attribute such enormous effects to this primitive

double relationship.

Thus the question which arises is that of knowing what will be the situation, what will be the process of communication in so far as it does not succeed in being constitutive for the subject. It is another reference point that must be sought. Up to the present when you read and when you hear what Mr. Bateson means, you see that everything in fact is centred on the double message, no doubt, but on the double message qua double signification.

It is precisely here that the system fails, and precisely in what? In the following: it is that there is another way of conceiving things, of presenting them, than this one which precisely neglects the constitutive role of the signifier in signification.

Last night I took a note in passing, which I do not have now, (6) which I gathered from the very remarks of Madame Pankow, and which amounts to more or less this: There is no word, she said, which can ground the word qua act. And this is right along the path of what I am approaching now.

Among these words, there must be one which grounds the word qua act in the subject. It is in this sense that she showed her exactingness, her feeling that the system was insufficient. It is in this that Madame Pankow showed an exigency for the stabilisation of the whole system, from the fact that within the word there is somewhere something which grounds the word qua true. She addressed herself therefore in this sense to having recourse to the perspective of personality. This is what she contributed last night, and it is indeed something which has at least the merit of witnessing to a certain exigency corresponding to something which, in the system, leaves us uncertain, does not permit us a sufficient construction, or deduction.

I absolutely do not think that this is the way in which it can be formulated. I do not believe that this personalist reference is psychologically founded except in this sense that we cannot but sense that in this impasse which the significations create, in so (7) far as it is supposed to trigger off a profound disturbance in the subject when he is schizophrenic, we cannot help sensing that there is something which must be at the origin of this deficit. It is not simply the established, grasped, imprinted, experience of these impasses of meanings, but also something which is the lack of something which grounds signification itself, and which is the signifier, and something still more which is precisely what I am going to approach today, namely something which is grounded, not simply as personality, as something which grounds the word qua act, as Madame Pankow was saying last night, but something which is posed as what gives authority to the law.

We call law here, precisely what is articulated strictly at the level of the signifier, namely the text of the law.

It is not the same to say that there is a person who must be

there to sustain as one might say the authenticity of the word, and to say that there is something which authorises the text of the law, because this something which authorises the text of the law is something which is sufficient in itself at the level of the signifier, namely the name of the father, what I call the name of the father, namely the symbolic father. This is something which subsists at the level of the signifier. It is something which in the other in so far as it is the seat of the (8) law, represents this other in the other, the signifier which gives support to the law, which promulgates the law.

It is precisely what is explained by the myth that is necessary for Freud's thought, the myth of Oedipus. The reason why - pay very careful attention to this - it is necessary that he obtain for himself in this mythical form, the origin of the law, is so that there should be something which ensures that the law is grounded in the father. There must be the murder of the father. The two things are closely linked, namely that the father in so far as he promulgates the law is the dead father, namely the symbol of the father; the dead father is the name of the father, which is here constructed on the content.

This is altogether essential. I am going to take the opportunity of reminding you why.

Around what did I centre everything that I taught you about psychosis two years ago? Around something which I called Verwerfung. I tried to make you see it as something which is different to Verdrängung, namely the fact that the signifying chain continues, whether you know it or not, to be unfolded, to be arranged in the other, this being essentially the Freudian discovery.

But I told you that the Verwerfung was something which was not (9) simply beyond your reach, namely in the Other qua repressed and qua signifier. That is what Verdrängung is. But it is the Signifying chain, the proof of this is that it continues to act without you giving it the least signification. It determines the least signification without your knowing it as signifying chain.

I also told you that there is something else which in this instance is Verwerfung. There can be in the chain of signifiers a signifier or a letter which is missing, which is always missing in the typography, because it is a question of a typographical space. The space of the signifier, the space of the unconscious is a typographical space. We must try to define typographical space as something which constitutes itself in a line, in little squares. There are topological laws of the typographical space.

There is something missing in this chain of signifiers. You should understand the importance of the lack of the particular signifier that I have just spoken to you about, which is the name Of the father in so far as it grounds as such the fact that there is law, namely the articulation of the signifier in a certain order; the Oedipus complex, or the oedipal law, or the

law of the prohibition of the mother, for example the signifier which signifies that within this signifier, the signifier exists.

That is what the name of the father is, and as you see, it is an essential signifier within the other, it is around this that **I** tried to centre for you what happens in psychosis, namely how the subject must make up for the lack of this signifier, for the essential signifier which is the name of the father, and it is around this that I tried to order for you everything that I called the chain reaction, or the dispersal which occurs in psychosis.

What should I do here? Should I get involved right away in this reminder of what I told you about President Schreber? Or should I show you in a still more precise fashion what **I** am articulating, what **I** have just simply announced here, by showing you in detail what relationship I should articulate for you at the level of this year's schema, which to my great surprise, does not interest everybody; but which all the same interests some of you, and at the level of this year's schema, to try to articulate for you what I have just tried to indicate to you?

Do not forget that this schema was constructed to portray for you what happens at the level of something which deserves the name of technique, the technique of the witticism, which is something particular, quite singular because obviously it can be carried out in the most unintentional way in the world by the subject, that as **I** showed you, the witticism is sometimes only the other side of a parapraxis and that experience shows that many (11) witticisms arise in that way, you realize afterwards that you were witty. It happened all by itself. At first it could be taken in certain cases as being exactly the contrary, a sign of naivete. I made an allusion the last day to the naive witticism.

It was around the witticism and its result which is the satisfaction which is peculiar to it, that I tried last trimester, to organise this schema for you, to try to locate how we could conceive the origin of this special satisfaction that it gives. This made us go back to nothing other than the dialectic of the demand beginning from the ego.

Remember the schema of what I can call the primordial symbolic ideal, which is quite inexistent at the moment of the satisfied demand in so far as it is represented by the simultaneity of the intention, in so far as it is going to be manifested in a message, and the arrival of this message as such at the other, I mean the fact that the signifier, because this chain is the signifying chain, reaches the other. He sees as such whether there is a perfect identity, simultaneity, exact superposition between the manifestation of the intention, in so far as it is that of the ego, and the fact that the signifier is as such ratified in the other, this something which is at the source of the very possibility of the satisfaction of the word. We (12) suppose therefore - this is what I call the ideal primordial moment - that if this moment exists, it must be constituted by this simultaneity, this exact co-extension of the desire in so

far as it is manifested and the signifier in so far as it carries and implies it. If this moment exists, what follows, namely something which here is going to succeed to the message, is something which is going to succeed to its passage over into the other, which is going to correspond to what is necessary, and to what is realised in the other and in the subject in order that there should be satisfaction.

This is very precisely the necessary point of departure for you to understand that this never happens. Namely that it is of the nature and the effect of the signifier that what arrives here, is presented as signified, namely as something which is made up of the transformation, of the refraction of his desire by its passage through the signifier, and why? Because this is the reason why the two lines are intersecting; it is to make you see the fact that desire is expressed by and passes through the signifier, namely that it crosses the signifying line, and that at the level of this intersection of desire and the signifying line, it encounters what? It encounters the other.

We will see later, because it will be necessary to come back to it, what this other is in this schema. It encounters the other, (13)1 did not say to you as a person - it encounters the other as the treasury of the signifier, as the seat of the code. In other words, this is where the refraction of desire by the signifier happens. Desire arrives therefore as signified different from what it was at the beginning, and this is why not that your daughter is mute, but why your desire is always cuckolded.

It is because in the interval, what is in question shows you that it is rather you who are cuckolded; you are yourself betrayed in that your desire has slept with the signifier. This is essential. I do not know how I can articulate things better, to make you understand them. This is because of the fact that desire *qua* emanation, springs from a moment of this radical ego, from the very fact that it is this path here.

This is where the signification of the schema lies. It is there to visualise for you this concept that the passage across the chain of the signifier introduces of itself this essential change into the dialectic of desire.

So it is quite clear that for the satisfaction of desire, everything depends on what happens at that point first defined as the locus of the code, as this essential something which already by itself from the beginning, ab origine, by the very fact of its structure as signifier, brings about this essential modification of desire at the level of its crossing of the signifier. Here everything else is implied, because there is not (14) just the code, there is indeed something else. I am situating myself here at the most radical level, but of course there is the law, there are prohibitions, there is the super-ego, etc. But to understand how these different levels are built up, you must understand that already at the most radical level, in so far as once you speak to someone there is an other other in him.

qua subject of the code, already we find ourselves subjected to this dialectic of the cuckolding of desire.

Therefore everything depends, it appears, on what happens at this crossing point, at this level of breaking through.

It emerges that every possible satisfaction of human desire is thus going to depend on the harmony of the signifying system in so far as it is articulated in the word of the subject, and Monsieur de la Pallice would tell you, of the system of the signifier qua reposing in the code, or at the level of the other qua locus and seat of the code. A little child hearing that would be convinced of it, and I do not claim that what I have explained to you makes us take one step further. Still it must be articulated.

It is here that we are going to approach the connection that I want you to make between this schema and the essential things that I announced to you above concerning the important question of the name of the father. You are going to see it being prepared, being delineated, and not being generated, or especially not being generated by itself, but rather the jump (15) that it must take to arrive, because not everything happens at the level of continuity, the characteristic of the signifier being precisely to be discontinuous.

What does the technique of the witticism contribute to our experience? This is what I am trying to make you see, in all sorts of ways, it is something which while not involving any particular immediate satisfaction, consists in the fact that something happens in the other which is equivalent, which represents, which symbolises what can be called the necessary condition for every satisfaction, namely that you are precisely heard beyond what you say, because in no case can what you say really make you understood.

The witticism as such, develops in the dimension of metaphor, namely that it is beyond the signifier, in so far as through it you seek to signify something, that despite everything you always signify something else. It is precisely in something which is going to present itself as a stumbling of the signifier, that you are satisfied, simply in this that in that sign the other recognises this dimension beyond where there should be signified what is in question, and what you cannot as such signify.

This is the dimension that the witticism reveals to us, and it is important, it grounds in experience this schema because we necessarily had to construct it, to account for what happens in (16) the witticism, namely that this something which substitutes to the point of giving us a sort of happiness at the failure of the the communication of desire by way of the signifier, is something which, in the witticism, is realised in the following fashion: the fact is that the other ratifies a message as interrupted, as having failed, and by this very interruption as recognising the dimension beyond in which the true desire is situated, namely what does not manage to be signified because of the signifier.

You see that the dimension of the other here extends however little, because it is no longer simply here the seat of the code - here it intervenes as subject, ratifying a message in the code, complicating it, namely that here already it is at the level of the one who constitutes the law as such, because it is capable of adding to it this trait, this message as supplementary, namely as itself designating the beyond of the message.

That is why I began this year, when what was in question were the formations of the unconscious, by talking to you about the witticism.

Let us try to look more closely in a less unusual situation than that of the witticism, at this other in so far as we seek to discover in its dimension the necessity of this signifier, in so far as it grounds the signifier, namely in so far as it is the signifier which establishes the legitimacy of the law or of the code.

(17) To take up again our dialectic of desire, we are not always going to be expressing ourselves in witticisms, when we address ourselves to the other. If we could do so, we would be happier in a certain way. This is, for a short part of the discourse that I address to you, what I try to do. I do not always succeed. It may be your fault or it may be mine, but it is absolutely indistinguishable from that point of view.

But in fact on the down to earth plane of what happens when I address the other, there is a dimension which allows us to ground it in the most elementary fashion at the level of the conjunction of and this signifier of the other. It is a word which is absolutely marvellous in French, because of all the equivocations that it allows, and for all the puns that I myself blush at having made use of, even though in the most discrete fashion. Once I have said the word, you will remember immediately, the sort of evocation that I am referring to. It is the word tu.

This tu is absolutely essential in what I called on many occasions the full word, the word in so far as it grounds something in history, the tu of "thou are my master", or "thou art my wife". This tu, is the signifier of the appeal to the other, this other whom I showed you - and I remind those who (18) followed the whole chain of my seminars on psychosis the use that I made of it - the demonstration that I tried to bring to life before you in terms of the distance between tu es celui qui ae suivras, and the tu es celui qui me suivra. In other words, what I was already at that time approaching for you, what I was trying to get you to practice, is precisely what I am alluding to now, and what I had already given a name to.

There is in these two terms, with their difference, and more in one than in the other, and even completely in one and not at all in the other, an appeal. In the tu es celui qui me suivras, there is something which is not in the tu es celui qui me suivra. And this is called invocation. If I say tu est celui

qui roe suivras, I invoke you, I designate you, **I** designate you as being the one who follows me, **I** stimulate in you the "yes" which says "I am for you", "I dedicate myself to you", "I am the one who shall follow you". But if **I** say: tu est celui qui me suivra, I do nothing of the kind. **I** announce, I affirm, I objectify, and even on occasion **I** reject. That can mean: "You are the one who is still following me, and **I** am fed up with it". It is even in the most ordinary fashion, the most important in which this is pronounced, a refusal. Invocation is something which of course requires a whole other dimension, namely precisely that I should make my desire depend on your being, in (19) this sense that I call on it to enter onto the path of this desire whatever it may be, in an unconditional way.

It is this process of invocation, in this sense that it means that I appeal to the voice, namely to what supports the word, not to the word, but to the subject, precisely in so far as he carries it, and that is why at this level I am at the level of what I called above, in speaking about Madame Pankow, the personalist level. This indeed is why the personalists repeatedly put the tu, tu, tu before you all day long. Mr. Martin Buber for example, whose name Madame Pankow pronounced in passing, is in effect an eminent name in this register.

Of course there is here an essential phenomenological level, and **we** cannot avoid it. But neither must we yield to its mirage alone, namely prostrate ourselves, because it is here that effectively we encounter a little of this danger at the level of this personalist attitude which leads easily enough into mystical prostration. And why not? We do not refuse any attitude whatsoever to people, we simply demand the right to understand them, which moreover the personalists do not refuse us, but which **is** refused by the scientists, because if you begin to attach an authenticity to the subjective structure of what a mystic tells you, the scientist considers that you are also falling into a (20) ridiculous complacency.

While it seems to me that every subjective structure, whatever it **is**, in the measure that we can follow what it articulates, is strictly equivalent from the point of view of subjective analysis to any other, namely that only cretinous imbeciles of the style of Mr. Blondel (the psychiatrist), can bring forward as an objection, in the name of a so called ineffable, experienced "morbid consciousness" of the other, something which appears to **be** not ineffable, but articulated. This ought to be refused as such, because of the confusion which comes from the fact that it **is** believed that what is being articulated is precisely what is beyond, although it is nothing of the kind. It is what is beyond that articulates it.

In other words, it is wrong to talk about ineffable as regards this subject, whether he is deluded or mystical. We are at the level of the subjective structure of something which as such cannot present itself in a different way from the way that it does present itself, and which as such in consequence, presents itself with its entire value at its level of credibility.

If there is something ineffable in either the deluded or the mystical person, by definition he does not speak about it because it is ineffable. Therefore we do not have to judge what he articulates, namely his word on what he cannot talk about it. If it is supposable, and we are quite willing to suppose it, that (21) the ineffable does exist, we would never refuse in the name of the ineffable to grasp what appears as structure in a word, whatever it is. We can get lost in it, and then we give up on it; but if we do not get lost in it, the order that it demonstrates and that it unveils is to be taken as such, and we perceive in general that it is infinitely more fruitful to take it as such and to try to articulate the order that it poses, on condition that you have the proper reference points. This is what we are trying to do here: we start from the idea that it was essentially made to represent the signified. We are immediately swamped, because we again fall into the preceding oppositions, namely that we do not know the signified.

This tu that is in question is what we invoke, but in invoking it it is all the same this personal subjective impenetrability which of course will be involved, but it is not at this level that we try to reach it. We try to give it what is involved in every invocation. The word invocation has a historical usage, it is what made its appearance in a certain ceremony among the ancients, who had more wisdom on certain matters, that they performed before battle. This ceremony consisted in doing what was necessary, they probably knew it, to get the gods of the others on their side. This is exactly what invocation means, (22) and it is in this that there resides the essential relationship to which I now lead you, of this necessary second stage, of the appeal in order that desire and demand should be satisfied. It is not enough simply to say to him: tu, tu, tu, and to have it accompanied by a thrill, it is a question precisely of giving him the same voice that we desire him to have, to evoke this voice which is present precisely in the witticism, at least as its proper dimension. The witticism is a provocation which does not succeed by a great display of force, by the great miracle of invocation. It is at the level of the word, and in so far as it is a matter of this voice being articulated in conformity with our desire, that the invocation is situated.

We then rediscover at this level, the following which is that every satisfaction of demand, in so far as it depends on the other, is thus going to depend on what is happening here, namely in this revolving coming and going from the message to the code, and from the code to the message, which permits my message to be authenticated in the code by the other. We come back to the preceding point, namely to what constitutes the essence of the interest that together we are giving this year to the witticism.

I would just simply point out to you in passing that had you had this schema, namely if I had been able not to present it to you, but to construct it for you at that time, in other words, if we (23) had come together at the same time to this same witticism, I would have been able on this schema to picture for you what

essentially is happening to President Schreber, in so far as he had become the prey of, the subject absolutely dependent on his voices.

If you observe attentively the schema which is behind me, and if you simply suppose that there is Verwerfung, everything that can respond in the other in any way at all at this level, which I call the level of the name of the father, which incarnates, specifies, particularises, I know, but particularises what? What I have just delineated for you, which in the other should present the other, qua giving its import to the law.

If you suppose that it is absent, which is the definition that I gave you of the Verwerfung of the name of the father, you would perceive that the two meeting points that I circled here, namely the going and coming of the message to the code and of the code to the message, are by that very fact destroyed and impossible, and that this allows you to carry forward to this schema the two fundamental types of voice phenomena which appear as a substitution for this fault, for this lack in so far precisely as it was once evoked.

Here is the balancing point, the turning point which precipitates the subject into psychosis, and I am leaving to one side for the moment how and at what time, and why it is subsequently, in the (24) emptiness, in the vacuum brought about by the fact that precisely what is called for at a given moment at the level of the Tu es - nom du Pere, and that this name of the father, in so far as it is capable of ratifying the message, is the guarantor, that there appears what you can then see on this schema, namely what is produced as autonomous, and because of this fact, that the law as such appears as autonomous.

I began my discourse on psychosis that year in connection with a sentence in one of my case presentations which I told you about, in which one could grasp very well the moment at which the sentence murmured by the patient: "I have just come from the pork butcher", afterwards tipped over into these appositions which were no longer assumable by the subject, with the word "sow", which could no longer be integrated by the subject beyond, and by its own movement, through its own inertia as signifier, tipped over to the other side drawn by the reply, into the other. It was purely and simply elementary phenomenology.

It is a question of seeing why, and moreover after all one fails to see what it is a question of by excluding what happens between the message and the other, is going to have as a result the two major categories of voices and hallucinations which Schreber has, namely the emission here at the level of the other, of signifiers of the fundamental tongue, namely of what presents itself as such, therefore as the broken and original elements of the code, (25) which can be articulated only with respect to one another, because this fundamental language is organised in such a way, that literally it covers the world with its network of Signifiers, without anything else being sure and certain there, except that it is a question of the total essential

signification. Every one of these words has its own weight, its own accent, its importance as a signifier. The subject articulates them with respect to one another. Whenever they are isolated, the properly enigmatic dimension of signification, in so far as it is infinitely less evident than the certainty that it involves, is something quite striking.

In other words, the other only emits, as I might say, beyond the code without any possibility of integrating into it this something which can come from here, namely from the place where the subject articulates his message. And from another angle, especially provided that you replace the little arrows here, there is going to come this something which would not be in any case the authentication of the message, namely the return from the other qua support of the code regarding the message, in order to integrate, to authenticate it in the code with any intention whatsoever, but which of course will also come from the other like every message, because there is no way that a message can start, except from the other, even though it begins from us as a reflection of the other, because it is constructed with a tongue (26) which is the tongue of the other. This message therefore will begin from the Other here, and will leave this reference point in order to be articulated in this sort of remark: "And now I want to give you"; " Specifically I want for myself . . . " ; "And now this should nevertheless....".

What is lacking in all of this? The principal thought which is expressed at the level of the fundamental tongue, the voices themselves who understand all the theory, the voices themselves who also say: "We need to reflect more." That means that from the other there begin in effect messages of the other category of messages. It is properly speaking a message which as such, is not possible to ratify, a message which manifests itself also in the pure and broken dimension of the signifier, something which only implies its signification beyond itself, something which because of the fact of not being able to participate in this authentication by the "thou", presents itself as something which has no other object than to present as absent this position of the "thou" in which signification is authenticated, because of course the subject tries to complete this signification. He therefore gives the complements of his sentences: "I do not now want", say the voices, that is situated elsewhere. It is said elsewhere that he, Schreber, cannot admit that he is a whore, sine Hure.

Hot everything is pronounced, the message remains broken here in so far as precisely it cannot pass through the voice at all, it can only come to the level of the message as an interrupted (27) message.

I think that I have sufficiently indicated to you that the essential dimension which develops and which imposes itself on the other, in so far as he is the resting place, the treasury of the signifier, involves in order that he can fully exercise his function as other the following, that in the passage of the signifier, there should be this signifier of the other, qua other.

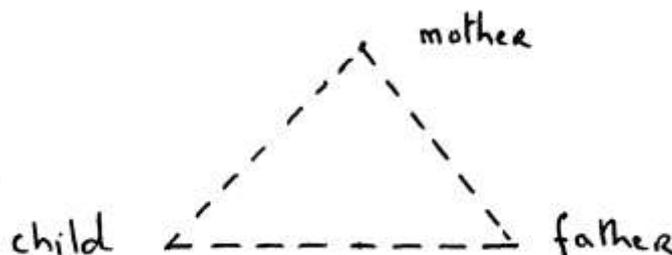
Why? I mean in so far as the other also has precisely beyond him this other, in so far as it is capable of giving a basis to the law. But it is a dimension which is of the order of signifier of course, which is incarnated in people who will or will not support this authority. But the fact for example that on occasion the people are missing, that there is a paternal lack in the sense for example that the father is too inept, is something which in itself is not the essential thing. What is essential, is that the subject, from somewhere or other, should have acquired the dimension of the name of the father.

Of course, what happens effectively, what you can pick up in biographical details, is that the father precisely is often there to do the dishes in the kitchen, wearing his wife's apron. This is not at all the kind of thing that is enough to determine a schizophrenia.

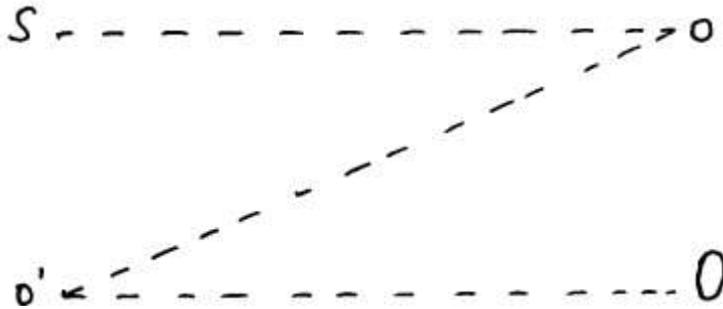
I am going to put forward to you the little schema by means of (28) which I want to introduce for the next time the following: it is what is going to enable us to make the connection between this distinction which may appear to you a bit academic between the name of the father, and the real father, between the name of the father in so far as it may on occasion be lacking, and the father who does not appear so much to need to be there in order not to be missing. I am going therefore to introduce what will be the object of my lecture the next day, namely what I entitle from today, the paternal metaphor.

The fact is that of course a name is never just a signifier like the others. It is very important to have it, but that does not mean for all that that one accedes to it any more than to the satisfaction of desire which in principle is cuckolded, about which I spoke to you above. That is why in the act, this famous act of speech that Madame Pankow spoke to us about yesterday, it is in the dimension that we call metaphorical, that there is going to be realised concretely, psychologically the evocation that I spoke to you about above.

In other words, it is necessary to have the name of the father, but it is also necessary to know how to use it, and it is from this, it is on that that the fate and the outcome of the whole affair may depend to a large extent. The real words which take place around the subject, specifically in his childhood, but the essence of the paternal metaphor that I am announcing to you today, we will speak about it at greater length the next time, (29) consists in a triangle:



And we have the schema:



and everything which is realised in the S, depends on the signifiers that are posed in O. The O, if it really is the locus of the signifier, must carry some reflection of this essential signifier which I represent for you here in this zig-zag, and which I called elsewhere (in my article on "The agency of the letter") the schema L.

It is necessary that something at least should be distinguished here, something which distinguishes at least these four cardinal points. We have three of them which are given by the three subjective terms of the Oedipus complex qua signifier, at each vertex of the triangle. And this is what I will come back to the (30) next time. I am asking you for the moment, this is just a question of whetting your appetite, to accept what I am saying to you.

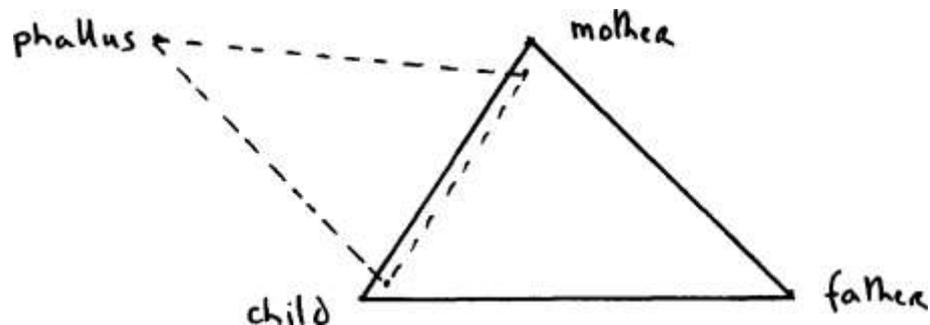
The fourth term, is in effect the S. But because it is him, and because he - not only do I grant it do you, but this is our starting point - is in effect unspeakably stupid, he does not have his own signifier. In the three vertices of the oedipal triangle he is outside, he depends on what is going to happen in this interplay, and he is the mort in the game. It is even because the game is structured like that, I mean that it is carried on not just as a particular game, but as a game establishing itself as the rule, that the subject is going to find himself depending on the three poles which are called the ego ideal, the super-ego, and reality.

But to understand this transformation of the first reading into the other, it is necessary to see that no matter how mort the subject is, because there is a subject, he is going to pay the price of this game, namely that at this unconstituted point that he is, it is going to be necessary for him to participate in it, if not with his money, perhaps he does not have any yet, at least with his hide, with his images, with all the consequences, with his imaginary structure. And the fourth term, the S, is going to be represented in something which is opposed, in the ternate to the signifiers of the Oedipus complex, namely in something which, in order for it to stick, must itself be (31) ternary, because of course in the inventory and the baggage of images - to realise this open the books of Mr. Jung and his school - you will see that there are an endless number of them, because they sprout and they grow everywhere, there is the

serpent, the dragon, tongues, the flaming eye, the green plant, the flower pot, the conciierge; all of these are really quite fundamental images, and undoubtedly full of signification.

Only there is nothing to be done about it, if you wander around at this level, except to get lost with your little candle in the vegetating forest of primitive archetypes, and to understand something about it, it is necessary to know that for this to involve us, namely the intersubjective dialectic, it is in so far as there are three chosen images - I am articulating my thought a little strongly - which take the role of guide in all of that, which is very precisely not difficult to understand, because we have already something absolutely all prepared, and all prepared in a way to be not only the homologue, but to be confused with the base of the mother-father-child triangle, it is the relationship between the fragmented body enveloped at the same time by many of the images that we were talking about above, with the unifying function of the total image of the body, in other words the relationship of the ego and the specular image.

This already gives us the base of the imaginary triangle. The (32) other point, it is here precisely that we are going to see the effect of the paternal metaphor, the other point, I told you about it last year in my seminar on object relations, but you are going to see it taking its place now in what we are entering into this year, namely in the formations of the unconscious, this point, I think that you have recognised it from the very fact of seeing it here in the third position with the mother and the child, but you see it in another relationship which moreover I did not mask from you at all last year because it was on that that we ended, namely the relationship with the name of the father, namely that which gave rise to the birth of the phantasy of the little horse in little Hans, this third point I finally name it, I am sure that you all have it on the tips of your tongue, is nothing other than the phallus, and this is why the phallus occupies such a central place as object in the Freudian economy.



which of itself is enough to show us that contemporary psychoanalysis is getting further and further away from it, and (33) that precisely this phallus qua fundamental function to which the subject imaginarily identifies himself, is completely avoided, by being reduced to the notion of partial object, which is absolutely not, in the Freudian economy, its original

function.

This phallus will bring us back at the same time to something which was not completely understood at least that is what I believe I have heard, at the end of my discourse the last time, namely to comedy.

I will leave you on this theme today. In ending I simply wanted to show you in what direction and along what path this complex discourse by which I am trying to assemble all the things that we have said, is harmonised and holds together.

THE PATERNAL METAPHOR -I

Seminar 9; Wednesday 15 January 1958

I announced that I would speak to you today about something to which I have, by way of exception, given a title called: "The paternal metaphor".

Not long ago, someone who was a little bit uneasy, I imagine, about the direction things might take asked me: "What are you going to talk to us about for the rest of the year?" And I replied: "I'm planning to approach some questions of structure." That way, I was not compromising myself.

nevertheless, this is really what I intend to talk to you about this year in connection with the formations of the unconscious, questions of structure, namely, to give things a simple name, questions that try to put things in their place, the things you talk about every day and in which you also get mixed up every day in a fashion that in the end does not even embarrass you.

The paternal metaphor, then, is something that will concern the examination of the function of the father, if you like, as it might be put in terms of inter-human relationships, and precisely the complications that you encounter, I mean every day, in the (2) way you may have to use it, use it as a concept of something that has even taken on a familiar aspect ever since I began to speak to you about it. It is really a question of knowing whether you are talking about it in terms of a discourse that is sufficiently coherent.

This function of the father has its place in the history of analysis, even a quite big place. It is at the heart of the question, needless to say, of the Oedipus complex. As a result, in the history of analysis, it is around the place given to the Oedipus complex that you see it appearing. Freud introduced it at the very beginning. The Oedipus complex appears with the ■ **Interpretation of Dreams**. What reveals the unconscious there, at the beginning, is first and foremost the Oedipus complex; the importance of the revelation of the unconscious, is infantile Banesia relating to what? Relating to the fact of infantile desires for the mother and to the fact that these desires are repressed, namely not only that they have been suppressed, but that the fact that they are primordial has been forgotten, and it is forgotten not only that they are primordial but that they are still there. It must not be forgotten that it was from here that analysis began and that it was around it that a certain number of questions were introduced by clinical work.

I tried to organize for you a certain number of directions of questions that had been posed in the history of analysis in (3) connection with the Oedipus complex. The first ones mark an epoch, it is when the question arose of whether precisely this Oedipus complex which had first been put forward as fundamental in neurosis about which Freud's work plainly showed the thinking of its author by making of the Oedipus complex something universal, namely something that exists not only in neurotics but also in normals, and for the good reason that this Oedipus complex, if it fails in neurosis, it fails in function of the fact that it is essential as a normalising function, that it is an accident in the Oedipus complex that provokes neurosis; this first question, around which I can centre one of the poles of the history of analysis concerning the Oedipus complex, is this: are there neuroses without the Oedipus complex?

It would appear, in fact, that certain observations presented themselves in such a way that the oedipal conflict, drama, had not played the essential role, that, for example, the exclusive relationship of the child to the mother was what was given in analysis as having to be accepted from experience, namely that there could be subjects who presented neuroses where there was no Oedipus complex whatever. "Nevrose sans oedipe" is the title of an article by Charles Baudoin.

This notion of neurosis without the Oedipus complex, you know (4) that it is essentially correlative in history to questions posed on the subject of what has been called the maternal super-ego - is the super-ego uniquely as Freud, already at the time when the question of neurosis without the Oedipus complex was posed, had formulated it at that time, namely that the super-ego has a paternal origin - the question was being posed: has it really got a paternal origin, is there not behind the paternal super-ego, this maternal super-ego which is even more exigent, even more oppressive, even more destructive, even more insistent in neurosis than the paternal super-ego? I do not want to go into this too much, we have a long journey before us.

The other centre around which things turn is this, it is the centre of the Oedipus complex, I mean the exceptional cases and the relationship between the paternal super-ego and the maternal super-ego.

" There was then the open question whether the whole field of our pathology, of the pathology that falls under our jurisdiction, which is presented to us, for our treatment, for our care, could not be dealt with independently of the question: whether the Oedipus complex is present or lacking in a subject, to what we shall call the pre-oedipal field. If the Oedipus complex exists, if this Oedipus complex is considered as representing a phase, if a maturity occurs at a certain essential moment in the evolution of the subject, this Oedipus complex is always there. Which is what Freud had himself very quickly proposed in the first phases of his work, five years after the Interpretation of Dreams, which (5) may mean that everything that comes out of the Three Essays on Sexuality was designed to make us understand that what happens before the Oedipus complex is also important.

Of course, in Freud, it takes on an importance, in the measure that it takes on an importance through the Oedipus complex. But already, or more exactly never, never, at this époque, does the notion of the retroaction of an Oedipus complex, to which as you know I continually call to your attention here in an insistent fashion, never is it given importance. It is a thing that seems to escape from the thought of the requirements of the temporal past of thought, from the moment that there were things that existed before the oedipal complex and if particular parts of our field referred especially to what was happening in our field of experience, in this field of the development of the subject, there was then really a question that was posed about pre-oedipal stages as such, and of their relationships with what? You know what: on the one hand perversion; this is what I might call the primary state, the state of the notion of perversion left fallow by some - we are, thank God, no longer quite at that point - but all the same for a certain time, and initially it was legitimate because it is only an approximation to the question, it is less so now, perversion was considered essentially as something whose etiology, whose cause, is to be specifically referred to the pre-oedipal field. It was from an abnormal fixation that (6) perversion took on its conditioning, its root. This is the reason, moreover, why perversion was therefore nothing but inverted neurosis, or more exactly the neurosis that had not been inverted, the neurosis that remained open to view; what was inverted in the neurosis could be seen openly in the perversion, the unconscious was there open to the skies; what was involved in perversion had not been repressed in the sense of not having passed through the Oedipus complex. This is a conception that nobody gives any weight to today.

This does not mean that for all that we are more advanced than it, but I would like to indicate, to point out, that therefore around the question of the pre-oedipal field are placed on the one hand, the question of perversion, on the other hand, the question of psychosis. Everything can become clearer for us now in different ways. For the moment, it is simply a matter of situating for you in what zone, from what angle of interest the questions around the Oedipus complex can be posed.

It is always a matter of the function of perversion on psychosis, jLn which the imaginary function, imaginary relationships, even without being especially introduced to the way we make use of it here for each of them, everyone will see that it is a matter of imaginary relationships, precisely in this sense that what concerns the image very especially in perversion just as much as in psychosis, is of course from different angles something else, is a more or less endophasic invasion, composed of words that are more or less heard, and is no doubt something different, with a (7) burdensome, parasitic, character, from an image in a perversion. But it is a matter here, in both one case and the Other, of pathological manifestations in which it is by the image that the field of reality is profoundly disturbed.

And the history of analysis also bears witness to this, it is therefore in a certain relationship with the Oedipus complex as

such because it is especially with regard to the pre-oedipal field that experience and the concern for coherence, the way that theory is constructed, hold together, it is thought to be precisely for this reason that the field of reality is disturbed for a time, sometimes profoundly, by the invasion of the imaginary, this seems to be a term that is more useful here than the phantastical, which would be equally inappropriate for talking about either psychosis or perversion. Here you have the orientation, in the sense of the exploration of the pre-oedipal field, of a whole direction in which analysis engaged itself, to the point that it could even be said that it is in this direction that all the essential advances since Freud have been made.

And I would like to point out that as regards this paradox, I mean the essentially paradoxical character of what we are approaching today is constituted by the testimony of the work of Mrs. Melanie Klein. In a work, as in everything produced in words, there are two planes, there is what she says, what she formulates in her discourse as such, what she wants to say (veut dire) because, in their meaning, separating the want and the saying, there is her intention. And then, it seems, we would not (8) be analysts in the sense that I am trying to get you to understand here, if we did not know that she sometimes says a little bit more about it that goes further. It is even in this that our approach usually consists, it is to see what she says beyond what she means to say. The work of Mrs. Melanie Klein says things that are moreover very important, and that are also even in their text, in their internal contradictions, from this fact alone subject to criticisms that have been made. Then there is also what she says without meaning to say it, and one of the most striking things in this connection, is that this woman who has brought us such profound, such illuminating perspectives on what happens not only in the pre-oedipal epoch, but on the children that she examines, that she analyses at a supposedly pre-oedipal stage, I mean through a first approximation of theory and in the measure that she approaches in these children themes that moreover necessarily lie behind, at the moment that she approaches them because it is often as verbal or preverbal in the history that she approaches them, almost at the moment speech appears, or just a little bit later, it is very striking that it in the very measure that she goes back to the supposedly pre-oedipal time of the history that she always sees the whole time the permanence of oedipal questions.

If you read her article precisely concerning the Oedipus complex, you will be surprised to see that she admits and even shows us by evidence in the equivocation of her experience, childrens' (9) drawings that are extremely precious, where it is just at the stage described as that of the formation of bad objects, at the stage when it is within the body of the mother, which seems in listening to her to play the predominant role in the evolution of the child's first relations to objects, where the child is entirely centred on the interior of the mother's body, and even at an earlier stage, the so-called paranoid phase, at the very precise phase linked to the appearance of the body of the mother in its totality. It is at a still earlier phase that.

basing herself on the drawings, on the statements, on a whole reconstruction of the psychology of the child at this stage, Mrs. Melanie Klein attests that among the bad objects present in the body of the mother, among which, as you know, there are all the rivals, the bodies of the brothers, the sisters, past, present and to come, there is very precisely the father represented in the form of his penis.

Here is something that makes it worthwhile for us dwell on the moment of the connection of the imaginary function in the first stages at which properly schizophrenic, psychotic functions in general and the Oedipus complex may come to be attached, I mean that it is curious to end up with this contradiction in Mrs. Melanie Klein's intention of first of all exploring the pre-oedipal states. The further back she goes, the more she finds herself on the imaginary plane, the more she recognises the precocity, a precocity, that if we keep to a purely historical (10) notion of the Oedipus complex is very difficult to explain, the precocity of the appearance of the ternary paternal term, and this from the first imaginary phases of the child. It is in this sense that I say that the work says more than she intends it to say.

Here then are two terms, two poles already defined of this evolution of interest in the Oedipus complex: which was at first concerned, as we said, with the question of the super-ego and of neuroses without an Oedipus complex, and then what centred the question of the Oedipus complex around the acquisition or more exactly the perturbations that are produced in the field of reality.

There is a third moment which is no less worthy of comment and is going to open our next chapter. It is the relationship of the Oedipus complex with something which is not the same thing, with genitalization, as it is called. The Oedipus complex, let us not forget it in the midst of so many explorations, questions, discussions, this has almost almost been pushed into the background in the history though it still remains implicit in all clinical work, the Oedipus complex has a normative function not simply in the moral structure of the subject nor in his relationships, but in his assumption of his sex, namely something which, in analysis, as you know, still remains somewhat ambiguous. There is the properly genital function and this function is quite obviously the object of a maturation, of a maturation as such. It is implicated as fundamental in the (11) analysis of a first phase, a first blossoming of maturation which is, it, properly organic, and is produced in childhood.

The question of the liaison of this first sexual surge for which, as you know, an organic, I mean anatomical, support has been sought in the double surge, for example, and which is produced at the level of the testicles in the formation of spermatozoa, the question of the relation of this and the existence in the human species of the Oedipus complex has remained a phylogenetic question that remains very obscure, to the point that nobody would any longer take the risk of writing articles on the subject.

However this has nevertheless been part of the history of psychoanalysis. The question of genitalisation is, therefore, a double one, it is that which on the one hand involves, of something which involves, an evolution, a maturation, and on the other hand involves something in the Oedipus complex that is realized, which is the assumption by the subject of his own sex, to call things by their name, which is the fact that a man assumes a virile type, that a woman assumes a certain feminine type, recognizes herself as a woman, identifies herself with her womanly functions. Virility and féminisation, here are the two terms that are essentially the function of the Oedipus complex.

I should say that we find ourselves here at the level where the Oedipus complex is directly linked to the function of the ego-ideal. There is no other meaning. Here then are the three **(12)** chapters in which you can classify all the discussions that have taken place in the course of the Oedipus complex, and at the same time around the function of the father, because it is one and the same thing. There is no question of an Oedipus complex **if** there is no father, there is no Oedipus complex; inversely, to speak about the Oedipus complex is to introduce as essential the function of the father.

Therefore, for those who are taking notes, on the subject of the historical evolution of the Oedipus complex, everything turns around three chapters : the Oedipus complex in connection with the super-ego, in connection with reality, in connection with the ego-ideal. The ego-ideal always containing genitalisation in so far as it is assumed, becomes an element of the ego-ideal. Reality, as a chapter heading, implies the connection between the Oedipus complex and the affections that involve an overwhelming **of** the relation to reality, perversion and psychosis.

Let us now try to go a little further. It is clear that here in the third chapter, namely around what concerns the function of the Oedipus complex in so far as it has a direct influence on the assumption of sex, there is the whole question of the castration complex in those aspects that are not all that elucidated, this **is** where we are going to advance.

In any case, then, since these broad, global, connections underlined by history are sufficiently present in all your minds, the question will now be asked: "And the father, what was the father doing all this time? How is the father implicated in the affair?" It is a matter of a real observation of each subject.

(13) The question of the presence or absence of the father, of the beneficial or harmful character of the father, is as you know, a question that is certainly not concealed. We have even seen recently the emergence of the term paternal lack, which was not an easy subject to tackle. The question of what was said about it and whether it stands up, is another question. But in fact, this paternal lack, whether it is called that or not called that, is in some way a subject that is on the agenda, precisely and above all in an evolution of analysis that is becoming more

and more environmentalist, as it is elegantly called. Namely, what is in question?

Naturally, thank God, not all analysts fall into this trap. Many analysts to whom you bring such interesting biographical details as the following: "But the parents did not get on well, there were misunderstandings in the marriage, that explains everything!" will reply - even those that I do not always agree with will reply: "So what? That proves absolutely nothing, we should not expect any particular kind of effect." And in this they would be correct.

Having said this, when one inquires, what is it in the father that one is interested in? When you talk about paternal lack, that can be grouped in a sort of biographical register. Was the father there or was he not there? Did he travel, was he away? (14) Did he come back often? Questions that represent the absence of the father. Can an Oedipus complex be properly constituted for example when there is no father? These are questions that are certainly very interesting in themselves, and I would even go further, that it is here that there are introduced, in fact, the first paradoxes, those that made you ask the subsequent questions. It was seen that it was not so simple, that an Oedipus complex could be quite well constituted even when the father was not there.

At the beginning even, it was still believed that it was through some excess, you might say, an excessive presence of the father that all the dramas were engendered, at the time when the image of the terrifying father was considered to be the damaging element. In neurosis, it was very quickly seen that it was still more serious when he was too nice. These lessons were learned slowly, and it is in this context, first of all, that I am talking to you about the question of where things are now, and it is in this context that I will try to bring a bit of order to see where the paradoxes are. We are now at the other end, as we question ourselves about paternal lacks.

There are what are called weak fathers, submissive fathers, battered fathers, fathers castrated by their wives, and finally, sick fathers, blind fathers, bankrupt fathers, everything you want.

It would be necessary all the same to see what can be separated out from a situation like that. We will try to find the minimal (15) formulae that will enable us to go forward. Firstly, the question of presence or absence, I mean in the concrete. If we place ourselves precisely at the level of these researches, namely at the level of reality, that is what is meant by environment, *qua* element of the environment one could say, one could say that it is quite conceivable, realized, touchable in experience, that he may be there even when he is not there. And this, already, should encourage in us a certain prudence concerning the function of the father, in using purely and simply the environmentalist point of view. Quite normal Oedipus complexes, normal in the two senses, normal in so far as they are

normalizing on the one hand, and normal also in so far as they denormalize, I mean by their neurotogenic effect, for example, establish themselves in a way that is exactly homogeneous with other cases, even in those cases where the father is not there; I mean that the child was left alone with his mother. This is the first thing that should attract our attention.

As regards the lack, I would just like to remark that when the father is lacking, and to the extent that one talks about lack, one never knows of what. Because if, in certain cases, one says that he is too nice, that would seem to mean that he should be cross. On the other hand, the fact that, manifestly he can be too cross implies that it might be better from time to time to (16) be nice. For a long time now, after all, we have gone full circle on this little merry-go-round. The problem of his lack was glimpsed not directly, directly concerning the subject, the child in question, but as was evident from the first approaches, it is as a member of the fundamental, ternary, trio of the family, namely as holding his place in the family, that one could begin to say something more effective about the lack.

But this did not mean that things were formulated any better. I do not want to spend too long on this. But we already spoke about it last year, in connection with little Hans, we saw the difficulties we have from the uniquely environmentalist point of view to be precise about what the lack was in a person who was far from lacking. We are going to be able to go further in the sense that this person was indeed far from being lacking in the family, he was there, alongside his wife, he played his role, he discussed things, his wife was just a little bit dismissive of him, but he gave a lot of time to the child, he was not absent, indeed he was so little absent that he had his child analysed. It is the best point of view that one can hope for from a father, at least in that sense.

I believe that we are going to come to this question of the lack of the father, we are going to come back to it, but one enters here into a world that is so much in movement that it is necessary to make the distinction that will allow us to see where (17) the research misses out. The research misses out not because of what it finds but because of what it seeks. I think that the mistake in orientation lies in this: that two things are confused which are connected but should not be confused. It is the connection between the father as normative and the father as normal. Of course, the father can be treated as normativizing in so far as he himself is not normal, but this is to push back the question to the level of the neurotic, psychotic structure of the father. Therefore, the question of the normal father is one question, the question of his normal position in the family is another.

And this other question is still not to be confused, this is the third point I am putting forward, which is important, is not to be confused with an exact definition of his normativizing role, because I will tell you something: to talk about his lack in the family is not the same as talking about his lack in the complex.

Because, to talk about his lack in the complex, it is necessary to introduce a dimension other than the realistic dimension, if I might put it that way, that which is defined by the characterological, biographical or other mode describing his presence in the family. This is the direction in which we will take the following step.

Let us come now to some remarks, some reminders which may allow us to introduce more correctly the question of the role of the father. If it is in his place in the complex that we can find the direction to advance, the direction to pose a correct formulation, let us now question the complex and let us begin (18) from the beginning, from the $b a = ba$.

At the start, as I told you: the terrible father. All the same, the image resumes something much more complex, as the name indicates. The father intervenes on several planes. Firstly, he prohibits (interdit) the mother. Here we have the foundation, the principle of the Oedipus complex, this is where the father is linked to the primordial law, the law prohibiting incest. It is the father, we are reminded, who is charged to represent this prohibition. He sometimes has to manifest it in a direct fashion, when the child gives himself over to his effusiveness, his manifestations, his tendencies. But he exercises his role far beyond this, it is by his whole presence, by the effects in the unconscious, that he exercises this prohibition of the mother.. You are waiting for me to say "under threat of castration". True, true, this must be said, but it is not all that simple. Agreed, castration comes in in an obviously manifest way and one moreover that will be more and more confirmed. The link between castration and the law is essential, but let us see how this is presented clinically, how the Oedipus complex first presents itself to us. I am obliged to recall it to you because it should evoke for you all sorts of textual evocations.

The relationship, let us take the boy first, between the child, the boy and the father, is determined, we all agree, by the fear (19) of castration. What is this fear of castration? How, from what end will we approach it? First of all in the first experience of the Oedipus complex under the form of what? Of a retortion. I mean that it is in the context of an aggressive relationship in so far as this aggression begins from the child, from the boy, in so far as his privileged object, the mother, is prohibited to him, it is in so far as the aggression is directed towards the father that the child then, on the imaginary plane in the dual relationship in the measure that he imaginarily projects into the father the aggressive intentions that are equivalent or reinforced compared to his own but whose origin is in his own personal aggressive tendencies. In short, the fear experienced before the father, is clearly centrifugal, I mean that it has its centre in the subject. This is in conformity both with experience, and the history of analysis. It is from this angle that, very soon, experience taught us that the fear of the father experienced in the Oedipus complex should be measured.

Castration, therefore, in so far as it is on the one hand profoundly linked to the symbolic articulation of the prohibition of incest and on the other hand, and this is much more in the foreground in all our experience, naturally, in the case of those who are its privileged objects, namely neurotics, is something that manifests itself on the imaginary plane, and where it has here a beginning which is not a beginning of the type of commandment, namely as is said in the law of Manou: "He (20) who sleeps with his mother shall cut off his genitals and holding them in his left or right hand" - I do not remember very clearly - "shall go off towards the west until he drops dead." That is the law. But this law has not come specially as such to the ears of our neurotics. In general it is even left a little bit obscure.

There are moreover other ways of solving the problem, but I have no time to expand on them today. Therefore, the way that neurosis embodies this castration threat is linked to the imaginary aggression of the subject, it is a retortion, in the sense that just as Jupiter is quite capable of castrating Chronos, our little Jupiters fear that Chronos himself will begin to do the work.

And then there is something else that the examination of the Oedipus complex contributes from the beginning, I mean the fashion in which it is articulated, presented by experience, by theory, by Freud, it is the delicate question of the inverted Oedipus complex. I do not know whether this appears to you as self-evident, but read Freud's article or any other article by any author, each time that the question of the Oedipus complex is approached, one is always struck by the extremely mobile, nuanced, disconcerting role played by the function of the inverted Oedipus complex.

This inverted Oedipus complex is never absent from the function of the Oedipus complex, I mean that the component of love for the father cannot be avoided, which means that it is what brings (21) the end of the Oedipus complex, the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, that it is a dialectic of love and identification that remains very ambiguous, namely of identification which is rooted in love, while not being the same thing. It is not the same thing. Nevertheless the two terms are closely linked and can in no way be dissociated.

Read the article that Freud wrote on "The dissolution of the Oedipus complex" with the explanation that he gives of the terminal identification that is its solution, it is in so far as the father is loved that the subject identifies with him and that he finds the solution, the term of the Oedipus complex, in this composition of amnesic repression; and on the other hand this acquisition in him of this ideal term thanks to which he becomes the father, he can become himself someone who, I will not say here and now, is a little male who - if I may say - has already got the deeds in his pocket, has a reserve on the business. When the time comes, if things go well, if the little pigs do not eat him up, at the moment of puberty, he has his penis all ready

with his certificate: "Daddy is the one who has conferred it on me at the right time."

It does not happen like that if a neurosis breaks out because precisely there is something irregular in the deeds in question. Only the inverted Oedipus complex is not so simple either in that if it is in this way, by way of love, that the inverted position properly so called can be produced, namely that the subject also **(22)** finds himself in the same way, on a given occasion not with a healthy identification, but with a nice little passive position on the unconscious level, which will also reappear in due time, namely which will make him a kind of bissector of the squeeze-panic angle, which will mean that he will find himself caught in a position that he has discovered all by himself, which is quite advantageous.

It is this father who is so formidable, who has prohibited so many things but who is also very nice, it is a matter of putting oneself in the right position to enjoy his favours, namely to be loved by him, but since to be loved by him consists apparently, consists first in joining the ranks of the women and one still keeps one's little virile pride, this is what Freud explains to us; making yourself loved by the father involves the danger of castration, from which comes the form of unconscious homosexuality that puts the subject in this essentially conflictual position, which has multiple consequences, and which is on the one hand the continual return of the homosexual position with regard to the father, and on the other hand of its suspension, namely of its repression because of the threat of castration that it involves. This is not all that simple. For what we are trying to do, is to approach something that will allow us to conceptualize it in a more rigorous fashion, which will mean that afterwards we will be able in each observation and in each particular case, to pose our questions better and more rigorously.

(23) To resume then. Just as above, the resume will consist in introducing a certain number of distinctions that are, I believe, a prelude to centering on the point that is going wrong. A little while ago we had already approached the following, that it was there, around the ego-ideal that the question had not been posed. ' Here, let us try to carry out the reduction that we have just recalled and approached. I propose the following to you: here and now, I do not think that it is going too far to say that the father comes in here all the same as an intruder who is not only in the way because of his volume, but is in the position of an intruder because he prohibits. What does he prohibit?

Let us go back and distinguish: he first of all prohibits the real satisfaction of the impulse. If we should bring into play the appearance of the genital impulse, that it is not there because it appears to intervene well before. But it is also clear that something is articulated around the fact that he prohibits the little child from making use of his penis at the moment when the aforesaid penis begins to manifest what we can call its velleities. This is the relationship of the father's

prohibition with regard to the real impulse.

Right away let us make a remark at this level: why the father? Experience proves that the mother does it just as well, remember the case of little Hans. The mother says: "Put that thing away, that's not done." And it is even most often the mother who says: "If you go on doing that, we'll call the doctor and he'll cut it off you. "

(24) Therefore, let us then clearly indicate that what happens is that the father, in so far as he prohibits at the level of the real impulse, is not all that necessary. Now, if you remember my table from last year - you see that these things are always useful in the long run - let us take up what I put forward then, the table with three levels: castration, frustration, privation.

What is in question here? I will draw your attention to it. It is a question then of the real intervention of the father about what? An imaginary threat because it is clear that it very rarely happens that it is really cut off. Therefore, we find what is happening precisely at the level of the threat of castration. I would like to point out that castration is a symbolic act, whose agent is someone real: the mother or the father who tells him: "It's going to be cut off", and whose object is an imaginary object. If the child feels himself cut, it is because he imagines it.

Now, I would like to point out, it is paradoxical because you could say to me: "This is properly speaking the level of castration, and you say that the father is not¹ all that useful." That indeed is what I am saying. It is indeed. On the other hand what does he prohibit, the father? Well, it is the point that we began from, namely: the mother, as object, she is his, she is not the child's.

It is on this plane that there is established, at least at one (25) stage, in boys as well as in girls, that rivalry with the father that all by itself engenders aggression. It is because the father well and truly frustrates the child with respect to the mother.

This is another stage, another level if you wish, I would like to point out that here the father intervenes then in virtue of his rights and not as a real person, namely that even if he is not there, if he calls the mother on the telephone for example, the result is the same. It is the father here qua symbolic who intervenes in a frustration, an imaginary act concerning an object that is real, who is the mother, to the extent that the child needs her.

Then there is the third stage that intervenes in this articulation of the Oedipus complex which is the father in so far as he makes himself preferred to the mother, because you are absolutely required to bring this dimension into the terminal function, that which is completed by the formation of the ego-ideal. It is in so far as the father becomes, from whatever

aspect, the aspect of strength or of weakness, an object who is preferable to the mother that the final identification can be established. The question of the inverted Oedipus complex and of its function is established at this level. I would say more, it is even here that there is centred the very important question of the difference of the effect of the complex on the boy and on the girl.

It is obvious that at this level there is no problem as far as the girl is concerned, and that is why it is said that the **(26)** function of the castration complex is asymmetrical for the boy and the girl. It is at the entry that this question is important and that at the end it facilitates the solution because the father has no trouble making himself preferred to the mother as the bearer of the phallus. For the boy, it is a different matter, and you see that it is always here that the gap remains open. Namely that to make himself preferred to the mother in so far as it is in this way that the Oedipus complex can find its issue, it so happens that we find ourselves confronted with the same difficulty of the establishment of the inverted Oedipus complex, and it then seems to us therefore, that for the boy the Oedipus complex must be something that always, and in every case is everything that is the least normativizing, even though it is nevertheless implied that it is the most, because it is by this identification with the father that we are told in the final analysis virility is assumed.

In the final analysis, the problem is to know how it comes about that this father who is essentially a prohibitor does not end up here at what is the very clear conclusion of the third plane, namely that it is in so far as the ideal identification is produced, that the father becomes the ego-ideal, that something happens, which is what? Which, in any case, tends to be for the boy as well as for the girl. But for the girl, it is a good thing that she should recognize that she has no phallus, whereas for the boy, this would be an absolutely disastrous outcome, and it sometimes is.

(27) In other words, what we come to focus on as being the normativizing outcome of the Oedipus complex produced at a point and in a relationship like this (formula written on the board) ... Namely that the child recognizes that he did not choose. He did not really choose what he has, as I told you.

What happens at the level of the ideal identification, the level at which the father makes himself preferred to the mother, an essential point and the exit point from the Oedipus complex, is something that must literally culminate in privation. While all of this is quite admissible and quite conforming, even though it is never completely realized in a woman as the outcome of the Oedipus complex because she always keeps a little hankering, what is called Penisneid, which proves therefore that it does not work out really rigorously, but in the case that it should work out, if we keep to this schema, the boy should always be castrated. Therefore there is something wrong, something lacking in our explanation.

Let us now try to introduce the solution. This is the solution: it is that the father, I am not saying in the family - in the family, he is whatever he likes, he is a shadow, he is a banker, he is or he is not everything that he should be, that is sometimes important but it may also not be - the whole question is to know what he is in the Oedipus complex. Well, the father is not a real object even though he must intervene as a real (28) object to embody castration. He is not a real object, so what is he? He is not a just an ideal object either, because accidents can arise from that object. Now, all the same, the Oedipus complex is not simply a catastrophe because it is the foundation and the basis of our relation to culture, as they say.

Now, naturally, you will tell me : "The father is the symbolic father, as you already said." But if I had only that to repeat to you, I have already said it often enough not to have to propose it again to you today. That which I propose to you today and that which, precisely, allows a little more precision to be brought to the notion of the symbolic father, is this: the father is a metaphor.

A metaphor, what is that? Let us say it right away in order to put it onto this table, and allow us to rectify the difficult consequences of the table. A metaphor, as I already explained to you, is a signifier that comes in place of another signifier. I say the father in the Oedipus complex, even if this may bewilder some who hear it. I am saying exactly that the father is a signifier substituted for another signifier. And this is the source, and the only essential mainspring of the father, in so far as he intervenes in the Oedipus complex. And if it is not here that you seek paternal lacks, you will find them nowhere else.

(29) The function of the father in the Oedipus complex is to be a signifier substituted for the signifier, that is for the first signifier introduced into symbolization, the maternal signifier. It is to the degree that the father comes according to the formula that I explained to you once as being that of the metaphor, comes in place of the mother: S in place of S' , which is the mother as being already linked to something which was x, namely something which was the signified in the relationship of the child to the mother. (Explanation of the formula on the blackboard.)

This is the mother who comes, who goes, because I am a little being already caught up in the symbolic, it is because I have learned to symbolize that one can say that she comes and goes. In other words, I sense her or I do not sense her. In fact, the world changes with her arrival and can then vanish. The question is: where is the signified? What does she want, that one, I would really like it to be me that she wants, but it is quite clear that it is not only me she wants, there is something else at work in her. What is at work in her, is the x, the signified.

In brief, to resume last year's seminar for you, the question is

not in object relations, to put that at the centre of object relations is pure stupidity. The child himself is the partial object. It is because, at first, he is the partial object that he is led to ask himself: what does this mean, her coming and (30) her going? This signified of the comings and goings of the mother, is the phallus. The child, with more or less astuteness, with more or less luck, may succeed very quickly in making himself a phallus, once he has understood. But the imaginary way is not the normal way, this is why moreover it involves what are known as fixations. It is also not normal because in the last analysis, as I will tell you, it is never pure, it is never completely accessible, it always leaves something approximate and unfathomed, even something dual, which results in all the polymorphism of perversion. But through the symbolic way, namely by the metaphorical way, I pose this first, I will explain how to you later, because we cannot go any quicker, but I pose this for you right away, because we are almost coming to the end of our conversation for today, it is the schema that will be our guide: it is in so far as the father is going to be substituted for the mother as signifier that this ordinary result of metaphor is going to be produced, that which is expressed in the formula on the board.

I am not saying that I am presenting the solution to you here in a form that is already transparent because I am presenting it in its final form, in its result, to show you where we are going. We are now going to see how to get there and what use it is to have gone there, namely all the things that it resolves.

Now, we have a choice between two things, either I leave you (31) there, holding onto this crude affirmation: the intervention of the father, I pose it, and I claim that by this everything can be resolved as being the following: the substitution of a signifier for another signifier, and you are going to see all the impasses of the Oedipus complexes clarifying themselves, or else I begin to explain the thing a little for you.

I will introduce the thing to you, I will make a remark that will, I hope, leave you an object for your dreams for this week because the next day, to tell you about the metaphor and its effect, I will have to tell you, I will have to recall, where it is situated, namely in the unconscious. I would like to point out this, that there is something really surprising, which is that the unconscious was not discovered sooner, because of course, it was always there and besides it is still there. It was necessary to know what was happening within to know that this locus existed.

But I would like simply to give you something so that you who go out through the world as - I hope - apostles of my word, will be able to introduce the question of the unconscious to the people who have never heard it spoken of. You will say to them: is it not astonishing that since the world began none of those people who call themselves philosophers dreamt of producing, at least in the classical period - now we have spread the news a little but (32) there is still a long way to go - this essential dimension

which is the one I spoke to you about under the name of what can be called: something other (autre chose).

I already said to you "the desire for something other". All the same you should sense that the desire for something Other is often there, not perhaps in the way that you feel it at the moment, the desire to go and eat a saucisson rather than listen to me, but in any case and no matter what it involves, the desire of something other as such.

Now, this dimension is not uniquely, simply present in desire. I would simply like to evoke the fact that it is present in many other states that are absolutely constant, permanent. Watching, for example, what is called a vigil. Not enough thought is given to this. Watching, you will ask me for what? Watching, is the thing, you know, that Freud does in the case of President Schreber, it is just the type of thing that reveals the extent to which Freud lived in this "something other". He talks to us about "Before Sunrise", if you have referred back to it, I spoke to you about the day, about the peace of the evening, and some other things like that which more or less got through to you, it was all completely centred around this indication. Before sunrise, is it properly speaking the sun that is going to appear? It is something other that is latent which is awaited, when you are keeping watch.

(33) And then, clausturation. It is all the same a dimension that is absolutely essential. Once a man arrives somewhere, in the virgin forest or in the desert, he begins by closing himself off, if necessary, as they say, he will bring two windows to have a draught between them, even if that is all he has. This clausturation is also a dimension that is also absolutely essential, it is a matter of establishing an interior, and then it is not simply a notion of interior and exterior, it is the notion of "the other", of that which is other as such, of what is not the place where one is nice and snug, and I would even say more, if you were to explore a little bit more profoundly the phenomenology, as they say, of clausturation, you would see how absurd it is to limit the function of fear to what is called a relationship with a real danger.

The close liaison between fear and security should have been manifested to you in the clearest fashion through the phenomenology of phobias. You see that, in the phobic person, his moments of anxiety, are when he perceives that he has lost his fear, at the moment when you begin to remove his phobia a little. It is then that he says to himself: "Oh! la, la! this won't do, I don't know any longer where the places are that I must stop at. In losing my fear, I have lost my security", in fact, all the things I told you last year about little Hans.

There is a moment that I am sure you do not think about enough, because you live in it, I might say, as in your native air, which (34) is called: boredom. You have perhaps never thought out the degree to which boredom is something that comes to formulate itself in the clearest fashion, that one would like "something

other". One may well eat muck everyday but not always the same muck. These are sorts of alibis, alibis that are formulated, already symbolized, of what is this essential connection with "something other".

I would like to end on that. You may think that I am, suddenly, falling into romanticism and sentimentality, you can see that : desire, clausturation, vigiling, I was almost going to say prayer while I was at it, and why not? Boredom, where does it lead to, what does it slide towards?

But no. What I wanted to draw your attention to, is to these different manifestations of the presence of "something other" in so far as - think about it - they are institutionalized. You can classify all human formations in so far as they make people feel settled wherever they may go, what are called collective formations, according to the satisfaction they give to the different modes of the relationship to "something other".

Once man comes to a place he makes , that is the place where desire really is, once he comes to a place he is waiting for something, a better world, a future world. He is there, he watches, he waits for the revolution, but above all and above (35) all when he arrives somewhere, it is extremely important that all his occupations should be steeped in boredom, in other words, an occupation only becomes serious when what constitutes it, namely in general regularity, has become utterly boring. And in particular, think of all the things that in your analytic practice, are very precisely made to ensure that you will be bored at it.

It is all there. A large part, at least, of the prescriptions, of what are called the technical rules to be observed by the analyst are fundamentally nothing other than what gives to this occupation all the guarantees of what is called its professional standard. If you look at things deeply enough, you will see that it is in the measure that they create, sustain and maintain at their core the function of boredom.

This is in a way a little introduction that does not allow you to really get into what I will tell you next day. I will take •things up again next day to show you precisely that it is at the level of this "other" as such that the dialectic of the signifier is situated and how it is from there that it approaches the function, the incidence, the precise pressure, the inductive effect of the name of the father, also as such.

THE PATERNAL METAPHOR - II

Seminar 10: 22 January 1958

We are going to continue our examination of what we have called "the paternal metaphor".

We had arrived at a point in it where I affirmed that it was in this structure, that we have put forward here as being the structure of the metaphor, that there resides any possibility of articulating clearly the Oedipus complex and its mainspring, namely the castration complex.

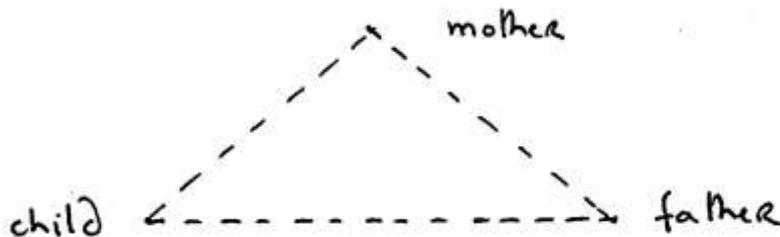
To those who may be astonished that we should have taken so long to articulate a question so central in analytic theory and practice, I would reply that it was impossible to do so without having proved to you in different areas, theoretical as well as practical, how inadequate are the formulae currently used in analysis, and above all without having shown you the way in which one can produce more adequate formulae, as I might say, to begin to articulate the problems first of all by getting you used to thinking in terms, for example, of "subject".

What is a subject? Is it something that is purely and simply confused with the reality in front of you when you say "the subject"? Or is it the case that from the moment you get him to **(2)** speak, something other is necessarily implied? I mean, whether speech is yes or no something that floats above him like an emanation or whether it develops of itself, whether it imposes of itself, a structure such as the one that I commented on at length, to which I accustomed you, and which says that once there is a speaking subject, it can never be a matter simply of reducing for him the question of his relationships in so far as he speaks to an other. There is always a third, this big "other" that we talk about and which is constitutive of the position of the subject in so far as he speaks, namely also of the subject in so far as you analyse him. This is not just one more theoretical necessity. It makes things much easier when it is a question of understanding where the effects you are dealing with are situated, I mean what happens when you encounter in the patient, in the "subject", exigencies, desires, a phantasy, which is not the same thing, and also something that appears to be in fact the most uncertain, the most difficult to grasp, to define: a reality.

We shall have the opportunity of seeing it at the point that we are now advancing to in order to explain how the term "paternal metaphor", namely, in that which had been constituted from a

primordial symbolization between the child and the mother, is properly the substitution of the father qua symbol, qua signifier (3) in place of the mother. And we shall see the meaning of this "in place of" , which constitutes the pivotal point, the motor nerve, I might say, the essence of the progress constituted by the Oedipus complex.

Let us recall that this is what is in question. Let us recall the terms that I proposed to you last year, concerning the mother-child relationship. But let us also recall first of all, over against this imaginary triangle, which I taught you to handle last year, with regard to the mother-child relationship, let us recall over against this that to admit the child-mother-father triangle as fundamental, is to bring in something that is real, no doubt, but which, already poses in the real, I mean as instituted, a symbolic relationship, the child-father-mother relationship (sketch of the triangle on the board) and if I may say, objectively, to make you understand, in so far as we can, ourselves, make an object of it, look at it.



The first relationships to reality takes shape between the mother and the child. It is there that the child will experience the first realities of his contact with the living milieu, the triangle, in so far as it has this reality only because we bring in, in order to begin to outline the situation objectively, we bring the father into it. For the child the father has not yet (4) made his entry. On the other hand, for us, the father "is", he is real. But let us not forget that, for us, he is only real because the institutions confer on him, I will not even say his role and his function as father, it is not a sociological question, but confer on him his "name" as father. I mean that we have to admit this: that the father, for example, is the true agent of procreation, something which is never a truth of experience, because at the time when analysts still discussed serious matters, it came to be remarked that, in some primitive tribe or other, procreation was attributed to something or other, a fountain, a stone, or the encounter with a spirit in a deserted place, to which **Mr.** Jones contributed this very pertinent remark: that it is quite unthinkable that intelligent beings - and we suppose that every human being has this minimum of intelligence - this truth of experience, it is clear, unless by way of exception, but a really "exceptional" exception, that a woman does not give birth if she has not had intercourse, and again within a very precise timespan. But, in making this remark which, I repeat, is very pertinent, **Mr.** Ernest Jones simply left to one side everything that is important in the question.

Because, what is important in the question, is not that people know perfectly well that a woman cannot give birth unless she has (5) had intercourse, it is that they sanction in a signifier that the one with whom she has had intercourse is the father.

Because, otherwise, given the way in which the order of the symbol, of the signifier is of its nature constituted, there is absolutely no objection to the fact that, nevertheless, the something which is responsible for procreation should not continue to be maintained in the symbolic system as identical to whatever you like, as we said above: namely a stone, a fountain, or the encounter with a spirit in a deserted place.

The position of the father as symbolic is something that does not depend on the fact that people have more or less recognised a certain sequence in events as different as intercourse and giving birth. The position of the name of the father, as such, the qualification of the father as procreator, is a matter that is situated at the symbolic level and which can serve, can again be connected up in accordance with cultural forms, because it does not depend on the cultural form; it is a necessity of the signifying chain as such; from the fact that you institute a symbolic order, something responds or not to this function defined by the name of the father, and within this function, you put the significations that can be different in different cases, but which, in no case depend on any other necessity than the necessity of the function of the father, which the name of the father occupies in the signifying chain.

I think **I** have insisted enough on this. Here therefore is what (6) we can call the "symbolic triangle" in so far as it is instituted in the real, from the moment that there is a signifying chain, that there is the articulation of a word.

I say that there is a relationship between this symbolic ternate and the ternate that **I** put forward here last year in the form of the imaginary ternate, which, it, is made up of the relationship of the child to the mother, in so far as the child finds himself depending on the desire of the mother, on the first symbolization of the mother as such, and on nothing other than that, namely that he separates out his effective dependence on her desire from the pure and simple living experience of that dependence, namely -that, by this symbolization something is instituted which is subjectified at a first, primitive level; this subjectification consists simply in posing her as the primordial being who can be there, or not be there. Therefore, in desire, the desire for **her**", for that being, is essential. This means that what the subject desires, is not simply the craving for her care, for her contact, even for presence, it is the craving for her desire.

In this first symbolization, the desire of the child is affirmed, begins all the future complications of symbolization in the following: "that he is desire of the the desire of the mother" and that, because of this, something opens out, by which virtually what the mother herself objectively desires qua being (7) who lives in the world of the symbol, in a world where the symbol is present, in a speaking world, and even if she only

lives in it in a quite partial manner, if she is herself, as sometimes happens, a being badly adapted to this world of the symbol, or who has refused certain of its elements, nevertheless opens up to the child beginning with this primordial symbolization, this dimension, that even on the imaginary plane the mother can, as they say, desire "something other" on the imaginary plane.

It is in this way that there enters in a still confused and completely virtual way this desire for "something other", that I talked about the other day, but not in a way that is in some way substantial so that we could recognize it as we did in the last seminar, in all its generality, but in a concrete fashion. There is in her the desire for something other than to "satisfy me, my desire as I begin to pulsate with life."

And, in this way, there is at once access and lack of access. How can we conceive that in some way, in this mirage-relationship by which a being first reads or anticipates the satisfaction of his desires in the incipient movements of the other, in this "dual" adaptation of image to image that occurs in all inter-animal relationships, how can it be conceived that one can read as in a mirror - as scripture says - this something "other" that the subject desires?

(8) It is undoubtedly both difficult to conceive of and accomplished with great difficulty because here is precisely the whole drama of what happens a certain level of the switching of points at the primitive level, which is called "the perversions". It is difficult to accomplish in the sense that it is accomplished in a faulty manner, but all the same it is accomplished, it is certainly not accomplished without the intervention of a little more than the symbolization which does not allow it to be constituted; the primordial symbolization of this mother who "comes and goes", who is called for when she is not there and who, as such, is pushed away again when she is there, so that she can be called back; there must be something more. This something more, is precisely the existence behind her of the whole of this symbolic order, on which she depends and which, since it is always more or less there, allows a certain access to this object, her desire, which is already an object so specialized, so marked by the necessity established by the symbolic system, whose prevalence is otherwise absolutely unthinkable and which is called the phallus. This phallus around which last year I made the whole of our dialectic of object-relations revolve.

Why? Why this privileged object, if is not because of something that it makes necessary there, in its place, in so far as it is privileged in the symbolic order? It is into this that we now

(9) want to enter in more detail, and that we are going to see how, not just simply by a simple symmetrical relationship, the one explained in this drawing and which means that here "phallus" is at the vertex of the imaginary ternate (schema R on the board), just as here, "father" is at vertex of the symbolic ternate, how it comes about that there should be this liaison

between the two and how it comes about that I can already advance that this liaison is of the metaphorical order?

Well, this is precisely what draws us into the interior of the dialectic of the Oedipus complex. It is in the Oedipus complex that we can become aware, I mean can try to articulate step by step - and this is what Freud does, and what others did after him, and is the thing that, in it, is not always altogether clear, nor altogether clearly symbolized - can try to push further along for you, not just simply for our intellectual satisfaction but because, if we articulate step by step this "genesis" which ensures that the position of the signifier of the father in the symbol is fundamental for the position of the phallus in the imaginary plane, if this demands one, two, three stages - as one might say - of the logical moments of the constitution of this phallus in the imaginary plane as prevalent privileged object, if these moments are clearly distinguished and if from their distinction it comes about that we can orientate (10) ourselves better, better question the patient when we are examining him and the meaning of our clinical experience and the conduct of the treatment, this then will justify our efforts and it seems to me that given the difficulties we encounter, precisely in clinical work, in assessment, in examination and in the handling of therapy, these efforts are here and now justified in advance.

Let us observe this "desire of the other", which is the desire of the mother, which involves this "beyond". I am saying that to reach this "beyond" - and already even to reach this beyond of the mother, the desire of the mother as such, a mediation is necessary - that this mediation is precisely given by the position of the father in the symbolic order.

Rather than proceeding dogmatically ourselves, let us question ourselves about the way in which, for us, the question is posed in the concrete. We see that there are states, cases, stages too in very different states, when the child identifies himself with the phallus. This was the whole object of the path we travelled along last year. We showed fetishism to be an exemplary perversion in the sense that, there, the child has a certain relationship with this object of the beyond of the desire of the mother, and in having remarked its prevalence and the mark of excellence - as one might say - that is attached to it, by way in short, of an imaginary identification with the mother; we have (11) also seen indicated that, in other forms of perversion, and notably in transvestism, that it is in the contrary position that the child will assume the difficulty of the imaginary relationship to the mother, namely that he identifies himself, it is said, with the phallicized mother. I believe that, more correctly, you should say that it is properly speaking with the phallus that he identifies himself in so far as this phallus is hidden under the mother's clothes.

I remind you of this to show you that this relationship of the the child to the phallus is essential since the phallus is the object of the mother's desire. In addition experience also

proves to us that this element plays an active essential role in the relations that the child has with the parental couple. Already, the last day, we recalled this on the theoretical plane in the account of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, in relation to the Oedipus complex that is called inverted. Freud underlines the cases, where in order to identify himself with the aother, I mean to the degree that he identifies himself with the mother, the child dreads, that having adopted this position which is at once meaningful and promising, dreads the consequences, therefore the privation that will result for him, if he is a boy, of his virile organ.

It is a path pointing to something, but which goes much further. Our experience proves that the father considered qua depriving the mother of this object, namely the phallic object, of her desire, plays an absolutely essential role in, I will not say (12) the perversions, but in all the neuroses, and I would say in the whole course, even the easiest, the most normal one, of the Oedipus complex. With experience you will find in analysis that the subject has taken up a position in a certain way on this point at a moment in his childhood, on this point of the role of the father, in the fact that the mother does not have a phallus. This moment is never elided, this moment which is the one which, in our reminder the last time, left open the question of the favourable or unfavourable outcome of the Oedipus complex suspended around the three planes of castration, of frustration, of privation exercised by the father. It was at the third level, that which at the same time posed the question for us, because it is the one at which it is most difficult to understand anything, and the one in which, nevertheless, we are told there lies the whole key to the Oedipus complex, namely its outcome, namely finally the identification of the child to the father. This level is that of the father who deprives someone of what, after all, she does not have, namely deprives her of something which exists only in the measure that you make it emerge into existence as a symbol.

It is quite clear that the father does not castrate the mother of something that she does not have. For it to be posed that she does not have it, it is necessary that, already, what is in question should be projected onto the symbolic plane as a symbol. But it is well and truly a privation, and all real privation is (13) something that necessitates the symbolization of what is patently lacking, it is therefore on the plane of the the mother's privation that, at a given moment of the evolution of the Oedipus complex, a question is posed for the subject of accepting, of enregistering, of himself symbolizing, of making significant this privation of which the mother appears to be the object. This privation, the childish subject either assumes or does not assume it, accepts or refuses it. This point is essential, you will find it at every cross-roads, every time you are lead by your experience to a certain point that we will now try to define as "nodal" in the Oedipus complex.

Let us call it the "nodal point", because that has just come to me, I do not hold on to it as essential, I mean by that that it

does not coincide, far from it, with the moment whose key we are searching for, which is the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, its result, its fruit in the subject, but there is a moment when the father takes on the function of depriving the mother, namely appears behind this relationship of the mother to the object of her desire as something, if you will, which "castrates", but I put it there only in quotation marks, because what is castrated, as it happens, is not the subject, it is the mother.

This point is not very new. What is new, is to focus it precisely, it is to turn your regard towards this point in the **(14)** measure that it allows us to understand from it what has gone before, something that we already have some illumination on, and what is going to come after.

Experience, in any case, you can be sure, and you can test it, confirm it, every time you have the opportunity to see it, experience proves that in the measure that the subject does not surmount this nodal point, namely does not accept the mother's privation of the phallus brought about by the father, one observes that as a rule, and I underline this "as a rule" because here, it does not simply have an importance as an ordinary correlation, but of a correlation founded on structure, it is to the very degree that the child maintains for himself a certain form of identification with this object of the mother, with this object that I represent for you from the beginning, to use the word that arises here, as "rival" object, as one might say, always in some way whether it is a question of phobia, neurosis or perversion, you will touch a link; it is a reference point (repere) - there is perhaps no better word - around which you can regroup the elements of observation beginning with this question which you will pose for yourselves in the particular case. What is the special configuration of this relationship to the mother, to the father, and to the phallus, which brings it about that the child does not accept that the mother should be deprived by the father of something that is the object of her desire, and in what measure, in a particular case, must it be **(15)** accentuated that correlatively with this relationship, the child, for its part, maintains its identification with the phallus?

There are degrees, of course. This relationship is not the same in neurosis and psychosis as it is in perversion. But this configuration is nodal, as you can see. At this level the question that is posed is: "to be or not to be" the phallus. On the imaginary plane, it is a matter for the subject of being or of not being the phallus, and the phase that has to be traversed is this: the subject will choose at a moment; when I say "will choose", put that will choose too in quotes, because, of course, the subject here is as much passive as active for the good reason that it is not he who pulls the strings of the symbolic order; the sentence was begun before him, was begun precisely by his parents, to which I am going to lead you, it is precisely to the relationship of each of his parents to that sentence that has begun and to the way in which it is required that the sentence should be sustained by a certain reciprocal position of those ents with respect to this sentence.

But let us say, because we have to express ourselves, that there is here, if you wish, in the neutral, an alternative: to be or not to be this phallus. You can easily see that there is here a considerable step to be taken to understand simply what is (16) involved between this being or not being the phallus, and what is involved at a particular moment, must all the same be waited for and discovered, something completely different, which is "to have or to have not", as can also be said, basing oneself on another literary quotation, in other words, to have or not to have the phallus.

It is not the same thing, between one and the other something must have been surmounted, and let us not forget, that what is involved in the castration complex, is that something which is never articulated, which makes itself almost completely mysterious, because we know that it is on the castration complex that these two happenings depend: that, on the one hand, the boy becomes a man, on the other hand, that the girl becomes a woman; but that this question of having or not having one is settled even for the one who, in the end, is entitled to have one, namely the man, through the intermediary of something that is called the castration complex, which consequently presupposes that, to have it, there must have been a moment when he did not have it. Namely that it would not be called the castration complex if, in some way, the following were not put in the foreground: that, in order to have it, it must first be posed that it is possible not to have it, that this possibility of being castrated is essential in the assumption of the fact of having it, the phallus.

This then is the step that must be surmounted, it is here that at (17) some moment the father must intervene, efficaciously, really, effectively, because you see that up to the present I was able - the very thread of my discourse showed it - I was able to speak to you about things just from the point of view of the subject; he accepts or he does not accept. In the measure that he does not accept, he is led, man or woman, into being the phallus.

But now, for the next step, it is essential to make the father effectively intervene, I am not saying that he does not already intervene effectively before this, but that my discourse, up to the present, was able to leave him in the background, or even to dispense with him. But from now on when there is a question of having or not having it, we are forced to take "him" into account, he who first of all must, I underline it for you, be already constituted as symbol outside the subject. Because if he is not constituted as symbol outside the subject, no one is going to be able to really intervene as vested with this symbol, but it is as a real person qua vested with this symbol that he is going to intervene now in an effective manner at the next stage.

This is where in the agency of the real father there are situated the different phases which we evoked the last day, namely the real father, to the degree that he can impose a prohibition: and we pointed out that, in the matter, for example, of prohibiting (18) the first manifestations of the sexual instinct which begins

to reach its first maturation in the subject, the first occasions that the subject makes something of his instrument, even exhibits it, puts it at the service of the mother, for this there is no need for the father. I would even go further on this point, what usually happens, which is something still very close to imaginary identification, namely that the subject shows himself to the mother, makes her offers, most of the time what happens, is something which, as we saw last year in connection with little Hans, happens on the level of comparison, of imaginary disparagement. The mother is quite sufficient to show the child the extent to which what he offers, is insufficient, and she is also sufficient to prohibit his use of the new instrument.

The father comes into play, it is quite certain, as bearer of the law, as prohibiting the object which is the mother. This, we know, is fundamental, but it is completely outside the question as it is effectively brought into play in regard to the child. We know that the function of the father, the name of the father is linked to the prohibition of incest, but no one has ever dreamt of putting in the forefront of the castration complex, the fact that the father, effectively, promulgates the law of the prohibition of incest. It is sometimes said, but it is never **(19)** articulated by the father, if I may say, as a legislator speaking ex cathedra. He is an obstacle between the child and the mother, he is the bearer of the law, if I may say, by right, but in fact, he intervenes in a different way, and I would say his lack of intervention is also manifested in a different way; this is what we are circumscribing more closely. In other words, the father in so far as he is the bearer, culturally, of the law, the father in so far as he is invested by the signifier of the father, intervenes in the Oedipus complex in a fashion that is more concrete, more graduated, I might say, which it is now a matter of articulating and which is what we wish, to articulate today.

And it is here that it appears that the "non-uselessness" of the little schema that I commented for you for the whole of the first trimestre, to the enormous weariness of some, it seems,.... does not seem however to be completely useless.

I recall for you what we must always return to, that it is because and in so far as the intention, I mean "the desire that has passed to the state of demand" in the subject, has gone through something which, here and now, is constituted, namely that as regards that to which he addresses himself, namely his object, his primordial object, the mother, the desire is something that articulates itself, and in a way its whole progress, its whole entry into this world, this lower world which is not simply a world in the sense that one can find in it ways **(20)** of saturating one's needs, but a world where the word reigns, in that it submits the desire of everyone to the law of the desire of the other, but by this very fact, in so far as it breaks through more or less successfully this line of the signifying chain, in so far as it is there, latent and already Structuring the mother, that the demand of the young subject, the first test he undergoes of his relationship to a first "other",

she who is his mother in so far as he has already symbolized her, it is in so far as he has already symbolized her that he addresses her in a way that is more or less of a wail, but which is already articulated because this first symbolization is linked to the first articulations, it is therefore in so far as this intention, this demand, has crossed the signifying chain that it can assert itself with regard to the maternal object

In this measure, the child who has constituted his mother as subject, on the basis of the first symbolization itself, finds himself entirely subjected to what we can call, but only by way of anticipation, "the law", but it is only a metaphor, I mean that the metaphor that is in the term "law" must be unfolded, to give its true position to this term at the moment that I am using it.

The law of the mother, is, of course, the fact that the mother is a speaking being and this suffices to legitimate my saying "the law of the mother". Nevertheless, this law is, if I may say so, an uncontrolled law. This law is in addition, in any case for (21) the subject, simply the fact that there is "law", namely that something in his desire is completely dependent on something which, without any doubt is already articulated, namely as such, and is of the order of law. But this law is entirely in the subject who is its support, namely in the good or bad will of the mother, the good or bad mother. And this is why I propose this new term which, you will see, is not all that new, it is enough to push it a little to rediscover in it something which the tongue did not find by chance. The principle that we put forward here, is that there is no subject if there is no signifier to ground him. It is in the measure that there have been these first symbolizations constituted by the signifying couple, the first subject and the mother that it is necessary to know what, with reference to these terms, is meant by reality or non-reality at the start of the child's life, autoerotism or non-autoerotism, you will see that things will become particularly clear from the moment that you ask these questions, therefore, with reference to this subject, the child, the one from whom the demand emanates, the one in whom desire is formed, and the whole of analysis is a dialectic of desire.

The subject delineates himself, sketches himself, as "a-subject"; he is an a-subject because he first experiences and senses himself as profoundly subjectivated (assujetti) to the the whim (22) of the one he depends on, even if this whim is an articulated whim. What I am putting forward to you is required in all our experience.

For example, I take the first example that occurs to me, you were able to see last year that our little Hans who found such an atypical outcome for his Oedipus complex, who namely did not find the outcome that we are now going to try to sketch out, who only finds a substitute, which requires this all-purpose horse, to make use of for everything that will be lacking for him at the the moment of break-through which is properly speaking the stage of the assumption of the symbolic as Oedipus complex, where

I am leading you today, who makes up therefore by means of this horse which is at once the father, the phallus, the little sister, anything you like, but which is essentially something which, precisely, corresponds to what I am going to show you now. Remember how he gets out of it and how it is symbolized in the last dream; what he summons in place of the father, namely this imaginary and all-powerful being who is called the "plumber"; this plumber is there, precisely, to "de-subjectivate" something. Because little Hans' anxiety, and it is essentially, I told you, the anxiety of being subjectivated in so far as, literally, he realizes, from a certain moment, because one does not know where he could be lead to, by being subjectivated in that way. You remember the schema, the schema of the cart that begins to move, (23) which embodies the centre of his fear; it is precisely from that moment that little Hans sets up in his life a certain number of centres of fear, these centres of fear around which precisely there will pivot the reestablishment of his security, fear, or something that has its source in the real. Fear is an element of the child's security, in so far as it is thanks to these fears, that he gives to the other, to that anxiety-making a-subjectivation that he experiences when there appears the lack of the external domain of the other plane, where it is necessary that something should appear so that he will not be purely and simply an a-subject.

This is where we have got to in it, it is here that there should be placed the remark that this "other" to whom he addresses himself, namely "the mother", has a certain relationship - this again, is said by everyone, has been said by everyone - a certain relationship which is a relationship with the father, and everyone has noticed that a lot depends on these relationships with the father. Experience has proved that the father, as they say, does not play his role, does not play his role - I do not need to recall that the last day I spoke to you about all the forms of paternal lack concretely designated in terms of inter-human relationships - experience proves, in fact, that this is the way it is, but nothing articulates sufficiently that what is in question, is not so much the relationships of the mother to (24) the father in a vague sense, where it would be a question of something that is of the order of a kind of rivalry of prestige between the two, which has, of course, come to converge on the subject of the child. This schema of convergence is not false. The duality of the two agencies is absolutely necessary, without it this ternate could not exist, but that is not enough, and, everyone agrees, that what happens between the two is what is essential.

And here, we come to what are called "the bonds of love and respect", the position of the mother - and we fall back into the rut of the sociological analysis of the environment - around which some particular authors make revolve the whole analysis of little Hans, namely if the mother had been nice enough, affectionate with the father, etc...

Without articulating what is essential, it is not so much a matter of personal relationships between the father and the

mother, and of knowing if one or other is up to it or not, it is properly a matter of a moment that should be lived as such and which concerns the relationships not just of the person of the mother with the person of the father, but of the mother with the word of the father, with the father in so far as what he says is not absolutely equivalent to nothing.

The function in which: 1) the name of the father intervenes, the only signifier of the father; 2) the articulated word of the father; 3) the law in so far as the father is in a more or less (25) intimate relationship with it, that is also very important. In other words the relationship within which the mother grounds the father as mediator of something that is beyond her own law, and her whims, which is purely and simply the law as such, the father therefore qua name of the father, namely as the whole development of the Freudian doctrine introduces and promotes him, namely as closely bound up with this enunciating of the law, that is what is essential and it is in this that he is accepted or not accepted by the child as the one who deprives or does not deprive the mother of the object of her desire.

In other words, we should, in order to understand the Oedipus complex, consider three moments that I will try to schematize for you with the help of our little diagram from the first trimestre. (Drawing on the board)

The first moment: What the child seeks, namely the desire of a desire, 'to be able to satisfy his mother's desire, namely "to be or not to be" the object of the mother's desire, and in the measure that he introduces his demand and where, here, there is going to be something that is its fruit, its result, and on the path of which there is posed this point that corresponds to what is the "ego", and which is here his other "ego", that which he identifies himself with, this something "other" that he will try to be, here, namely the satisfying object for the mother. Once something begins to stir at the bottom of his tummy he will start (26) showing it to her, namely, "am I indeed capable of doing something", with the disappointments that follow, he seeks it and he finds it in the measure and to the extent that the mother is questioned by the demand of the child. She is also something, herself, who is pursuing her own personal desire, and situates its constituents somewhere here (on the board).

In the first moment and at the first stage, this is what happens: it is in a way in a mirror that the subject identifies himself with what is the object of desire of the mother, and this is, what I might call, the primitive phallic stage, that in which the paternal metaphor acts of itself, in so far as, already, in the world, the primacy of the phallus is established by the existence of the symbol, of discourse and of the law.

But the child, himself, only grasps the results; to please the mother - if you will allow me to go quickly and to use picture words - it is necessary and sufficient to be the phallus and, at this stage, many things point in a particular direction, it is in the measure that the message here is realized in a satisfying

fashion that a certain number of problems and disturbances may take root, among them those identifications that we have qualified as perverse.

Second moment. I have told you that, on the imaginary plane, the father intervenes well and truly as one who deprives the mother, (27) namely that what is here addressed as a demand to the Other is referred on to a higher court, as I might put it, because in some ways that about which we question the other, always encounters in the other this other of the other, namely her own law in so far as it traverses every part of her. And it is at this level that something occurs which means that what comes back to the child is purely and simply the law of the father in so far as it is conceived imaginarily by the subject as depriving the mother. It is, I might say, the nodal and negative stage by which this something that detaches the subject from his identification attaches him at the same time to the first appearance of the law in the shape of this fact: that the mother is dependent on it, dependent on an object, on an object which is no longer simply the object of her desire, but an object that the other has or does not have.

The close liaison between this reference by the mother to a law that is not her own with the fact that in reality the object of her desire is sovereignly possessed by that same other to whose law she refers, here is the key of the relationship of the Oedipus complex and what constitutes the character which is so essential, so decisive of this relationship of the mother in so far as I ask you to isolate it as a relationship not to the father, but to the word of the father.

Remember little Hans last year. The father is the nicest man (28) imaginable, he is as present as you could wish, he is as intelligent as you could wish, he is as friendly with Hans as you could wish, he does not seem to have been in any sense a fool, he brought little Hans to Freud, which in those days was proof of how enlightened he was; nevertheless the father is totally inoperative, in so far as there is one thing that is completely clear, whatever the relations between the two parental figures, that whatever the father says he might as well be whistling, I mean as far as the mother is concerned. Note that, as regards little Hans, the mother is at the same time the one who prohibits, namely plays the castrating role which might be seen as attributed to the father, but on the plane of reality she says to him: "Don't touch that, it's disgusting", which does not stop her, on the practical plane, from completely admitting little Hans into her intimate life, namely that she permits him, encourages him to hold onto the function of imaginary object which is the way little Hans, effectively, is of the greatest use to her. He well and truly embodies her phallus for her and little Hans is as such maintained in the position of a-subject (assujet). He is subjectivated (assujetti) and this is the whole source of his anxiety and his phobia. It is in so far as and essentially in so far as the position of the father is put in doubt by the fact that it is not his word that lays down the law (29) for the mother that the problem is introduced. But that is

not all, it seems that in the case of little Hans, what is going to come now, namely the third moment, this third moment is essential and is also missing. This is why I stressed last year that the outcome of the Oedipus complex in the case of little Hans is a flawed outcome, that little Hans, even though he got out of it thanks to his phobia, will have a love life that is completely marked by a particular style, an imaginary style whose prolongations I indicated for you in connection with the case of Leonardo da Vinci.

This third stage is the following, and it is as important as the second, because it is on it that the outcome of the Oedipus complex depends; that which the father testified that he gave it in so far as, and only in so far as he is the bearer of the "law", it is on this that there depends the possession or non-possession of this phallus by the paternal subject. It is in so far as this second stage has been traversed that, in the second moment, that which the father, I might say, as "supporter" of the law, that which the father promised, he must keep to, he may give or refuse in so far as he has it, but he must prove at a given moment the fact that he has it, has the phallus; it is in so far as he intervenes at the third moment as the one who has the phallus and not as the one who is it, that something can be (30) produced that reinstates the agency of the phallus as the object desired by the mother and no longer just as an object of which the father can deprive her, the all-powerful father is the one who deprives, moreover it is on this level that up to a certain time the analyses of the Oedipus complex dwelt, at the time when it was thought that all the ravages of the Oedipus complex depended on the omnipotence of the father, this was the only moment that was considered, except that it was not underlined that the castration that was carried out there, was the privation of the mother, and not of the child.

The third moment is the following. It is in so far as the father can give the mother what she desires, can give it because he has it, and here there intervenes the fact precisely of power in the genital sense of the word, let us say that the father is a potent father, that, in this third moment, there is produced the restitution, if you like, of the relation of the mother to the father on the real plane, that the relation as such of the other who is the father with the ego (schema) of the mother and the object of her desire and that with which one can identify oneself at the lower level where the child is in the position of demander, that the identification can be made with this paternal agency which was realized here in these three moments:

1) In a veiled form where as not yet manifest, but a father existing in the realities of the world; I mean in the world, because of the fact that, in the world, the law of the symbol (31) reigns, already the question of the phallus is posed somewhere else in the mother, where the child must locate it.

2) By his privative presence in that he is the one who supports the law, and this occurs no longer in a veiled fashion but in a fashion mediated by the mother, who is the one who puts forward as the one who, for her, lays down the law.

3). The father in so far as he is revealed - he is revealed in so far as, he, "has it" - is the way out of the Oedipus complex and a favourable way out in so far as the identification with the father happens at this third moment, the moment that he intervenes as the one who "has it". It is an identification that is called the "ego-ideal", and which appears at this level in the symbolic triangle, precisely there, at the pole where the child is, and in the measure that it is at the maternal pole that everything that from now on will be reality begins to be constituted. And it is at the level of the father that everything that from now on will be the "super-ego" begins to be constituted.

It is in so far as the father intervenes as real and as a potent father in a third moment, that which succeeds the privation or the castration inflicted on the mother, on the mother as imagined at the level of the subject, in her own imaginary position of dependency, it is in so far as he intervenes at the third moment as the one who, for his part, has it, that he is interiorized as (32) ego-ideal in the subject and that, as I might say, let us not forget, at that very moment the Oedipus complex dissolves.

What does that mean? It does not mean that at that very moment the child is going to take up the exercise of all his sexual powers, as you know well. Quite the contrary. He does not exercise them at all. The way out of the Oedipus complex consists in this: in fact, one could say that apparently, he is stripped of the exercise of the functions which had begun to awaken.

Nevertheless, if everything that Freud articulated has a meaning, it means that he has in his pocket all the title-deeds for him to make use of in the future. Here the paternal metaphor plays a role that is really the one we could expect from a metaphor; it is to end up with the establishment of something which is of the order of the signifier which is there in reserve; its signification will develop later. The child has every right to be a man and what will later be contested in those rights at puberty, will be to the extent that there is something which has not completely fulfilled this metaphorical identification with the image of the father, in so far as it will have constituted itself, but through these three moments.

I will take this opportunity to remark that this means that in so far as he is virile a man is always more or less his own metaphor. This is even what attaches to the term virility a (33) certain shadow of ridicule, which must after all be taken into account.

I would also like to point out that the outcome of the Oedipus complex is different as everyone knows for the woman, because for her, this third stage, as Freud underlines - read his article on "The dissolution of the Oedipus complex" - for her things are much simpler, she does not have to make this identification nor keep these title-deeds to virility; she, she knows where it is, she knows where she has to go to get it, it is towards the

father, towards the one who has it, and that also shows you how it is that what is called femininity, a true femininity always has also a little dimension of alibi, real women always have something a little bit astray (égaré) about them, this is a suggestion I make simply to stress for you the concrete dimension in which this development is situated.

To come back and to conclude by justifying my term metaphor, you have gathered that today it is only a diagram. We will come back to each of these stages and we will see what is attached to it. Pay careful attention to the fact that what is in question here, is at the most fundamental level exactly the same thing as what is called on the maniac and common terrain in the study of the long metaphor, because the metaphor with the formula of it that I gave you means nothing but this: that the two chains, of S S S, S'S'S', S''S''S'' (writing on the board) which are signifiers (34) which are connected with all the walking signifieds that are in circulation because they are always on the point of slipping; the pinning down that I talk about or again the buttoning point is only a mythical business, because nobody has ever been able to pin a signification to a signifier; but, on the contrary, what you can do, is pin a signifier to a signifier and see what that produces.

But, in this case, something new is always produced which is sometimes as unexpected as a chemical reaction, namely the emergence of a new signification; in so far as the father is in the signifier, in the other, in the signifier which simply represents this: the existence of the link of the signifying chain as such; in that he places himself, as I might say, above the signifying chain, in a metaphorical position, it is to the degree that the mother makes of the father the one who sanctions by his presence the existence as such of the locus of the law, it is to the degree that she does this and only in that measure. And this then leaves an immense latitude as to the ways and means in which this can be realized, and this is also why it is compatible. It is in this measure that the third moment of the Oedipus complex can be gone through, namely in the identification stage, in which it is a question for the boy of identifying himself with the father qua possessor of the penis, for the girl, of recognizing the man qua the one who possesses it.

We will see what follows the next time.

Seminar 11; Wednesday 29 January 1958

I am talking to you about the paternal metaphor. I hope you have realized that I am talking to you about the castration complex. This is important, because the fact that I am talking about the paternal metaphor does not mean that I am talking to you about the Oedipus complex. If it was centred on the Oedipus complex, it would give rise to an enormous number of questions. I cannot say everything at once.

The schema that I brought forward, particularly the last day, as constituting what I tried to make you understand regarding the three moments of the Oedipus complex, this is something which I continually stress as being constituted elsewhere than in the subject's adventure, in the way that the subject has to introduce himself into this something which is constituted elsewhere, and which may be of interest under different headings, to (2) psychologists, namely those who project individual relationships into what can be called the inter-human, or inter-psychological, or social field, or group tensions can try to inscribe this on their schema if they are able.

Likewise for the sociologists, I have said enough to indicate that even they must take something else into account, and in particular structural relationships, which in this instance are what we have in common, for the simple reason that it is the ultimate root of social existence itself, because it is unjustifiable socially, I mean that it cannot be based on any social finality for even the social existence of the Oedipus complex.

But for our part, we find ourselves in the position of seeing how a subject has to introduce himself into the relationship which is that of the Oedipus complex.

It was not I who perceived, who invented, who began to teach that he does, not introduce himself into it without the male sexual organ playing a role of the first importance as the centre, the pivot, the object of everything that is related to this order of events, called the castration complex, which, it must be said, is very confused, very badly circumscribed. It continues nonetheless to be referred to in case studies, and elsewhere, in terms which, it must be said, are surprising in that they do not evoke more dissatisfaction in readers and listeners.

(3) I am trying in this sort of psychoanalytic fulmination, to give you a letter that will not become lost in the fog, I mean to distinguish in concepts the different levels of what is involved in the castration complex; this castration complex which will also be brought into play at the level of a perversion which I would describe as primary, on the imaginary plane, or of a perversion which we will, perhaps, be able to talk about a little more today, but which is as intimately linked to the completion of the Oedipus complex, as the word sexuality.

In order to see things more clearly, I will all the same take up again, because it is fairly new, the way in which I articulated the Oedipus complex for you the last day, taking as centre this phenomenon linked to the particular function as object which the male sexual organ plays in it. I think it is appropriate to go over these steps again, to make sure they are clear; and also, in this connection, I will try to show you, as I promised, how it throws at least some light on the well-known, but badly situated, phenomena of homosexuality for example.

You have to start with schemas directly extracted from the pith of experience. Once you start trying to establish moments, they are not necessarily chronological moments, but all the same there must be some reference to them, because chronological moments (4) also can only occur in a certain sequence.

You have then, as I told you, in a first moment, the relationship of the child, not as is said to the mother, but to the desire of the mother, a desire of desire. I had an opportunity to become aware of the fact that this is not a very usual formula, and that some people had some difficulty in accommodating themselves to this notion, that it is different to desire something and to desire the desire of the subject.

What you have to understand, is that of course this desire of desire, undoubtedly implies that one is dealing with something, with the first primordial object, which is in fact the mother. I mean that she has been constituted in such a way that her desire is something that can undoubtedly be another desire, specifically in the desire of the child.

Where is the dialectic of this first stage to be situated? Where you see that the child is particularly isolated, stripped of everything except the desire of this other whom he has already constituted as being the other, who can be present or absent.

Let us try today to circumscribe very exactly what the relationship is with what is involved. What is introduced here, namely the object of the mother's desire, what must in fact be surmounted, is this; it is something that we are going to call *d*, namely the mother's desire, and it must be seen that this desire (5) which is desired by the child, let us provisionally call it (*d*), is going to be able to rejoin this something which is constituted at the level of the mother in an infinitely more elaborated fashion. The mother is a little bit further advanced in existence than the child who is the object of her desire.

We have already posed that this object qua pivot of the whole subjective dialectic, is the phallus; the phallus qua desired by the mother, which supposes moreover different states from the point of view of the structure of the relationship of the mother to the phallus, because behind this phallus, in so far as it is for the mother an object linked to a primordial role in the structuring of her subjectivity, it can be, this is the very thing that is going to complicate everything that follows, in different states qua object, but for the moment let us be content with taking it.

I consider that we can only introduce some order, in the sense of correct and normal perspective into all analytic phenomena, in so far as by starting from the structure and the circulation of signifiers, we always have stable and secure reference points, because they are structural references linked to what could be called the paths of signifying construction. This is what serves us as guide, and that is why here we do not have to worry any further about what this phallus is for the mother, the real mother in a particular case. There is perhaps something here, (6) and we will come back to it, but by simply relying on our usual little schema, the phallus is situated here, it is a metonymical object.

In the signifier, we can content ourselves with situating it like that. It is a metonymical object essentially in this respect that it is in any case that which, because of the existence of the signifying chain, will circulate like a ferret everywhere in the signified. It is what results in the signified from the existence of the signifier, experience discovers, shows us that this signified plays a major role, and is in a way that of universal object for the subject.

This is the really surprising thing, this is what scandalizes those who would like the situation concerning the sexual object to be symmetrical; just as the man has to discover, and then adapt to a whole series of adventures, the use of his instrument, it would be the same for the woman, namely that in her case it would be the vagina that is at the centre of the whole dialectic.

It is nothing of the kind, and this is precisely what analysis discovered. In the same way we could say that it is the best sanction that there is a field in man which is the field of analysis, and which is not simply that of the discovery of a more or less vigorous instinctual development, but of everything that is superimposed on anatomy, namely on the real existence of individuals.,

How can one conceive what is at stake, namely that the child, who (7) has the desire to be the object of the mother's desire, reaches satisfaction? Obviously there is no other way than that of coming to the place of this object of her desire.

What does this mean? Here is the child whom we have had several occasions to represent in the form of this schema: the

relationship of his demand to this something which is not only in him, but which is first of all an encounter essentially in its first role, namely the existence of the signifying articulation as such.

Here there is still nothing, at least in principle. I mean that the constitution of the subject as "I" - I am talking about discourse - is not yet necessarily differentiated at all, it is already implied by the first signifying modulation. The "I" is not obliged to designate itself as such in the discourse, in order to be the support of that discourse. In an interjection, in an order : "come", in an appeal: "you", there is an "I", but there qua latent, this is what we will express here by putting simply a line of dots, just as the metonymical object is not yet constituted for the subject.

Here is the desire expected from the mother, and there what is going to be the result of the encounter between the child's appeal and the existence of the mother qua other, namely a message.

It is clear that in order for the child to arrive at this, to (8) coincide with the object of the mother's desire, namely with something that we can already at this level here represent as what is immediately within her reach, to be reached with, let us draw a dotted line, but for different reasons because that which is beyond the mother is completely inaccessible to him.

It is necessary and sufficient that this "I" which here in the child's discourse comes to be constituted at the level of that other who is the mother, that this "I" of the mother should become the child's other, and that what circulates here at the level of the mother in so far as she herself articulates the object of her desire, should come to fulfil here its function as message for the child. Namely in the final analysis that the child momentarily renounces anything whatsoever that might be his own word; it is not difficult for him, because his own word is at that time still very much at a formative stage, that the child should in fact receive in the form of a message, which is produced here, which is the completely raw message of the mother's desire, should receive here at a level which is metonymical compared to what the mother says absolutely, should receive at the metonymical level his identification with the mother's object.

This is extremely theoretical, but if it is not grasped from the start, it is altogether impossible to understand what must happen afterwards, namely precisely the coming into play, the introduction of this beyond of the mother which is constituted by (9) her relationship to another discourse which must be on this occasion that of the father.

Therefore it is to the degree that the child assumes, and he must assume it, but on the other hand he only assumes it in a sort of raw fashion in the reality of this discourse, first assumes the other's desire, that he is open to being able himself to become

master in place of the metonymy of the mother, namely to become what I called the last day her "a-subject".

You have seen in some way on what displacement this is based, precisely on what will be called by us on this occasion primitive identification, and which consists precisely in the sort of exchange which ensures that the "I" of the subject has arrived at the place of the mother qua other, while the "I" of the mother has become his other.

This is indeed what has happened in this sort of raising by a notch in the little ladder of our schema, which has just taken place in this second moment.

The central point, the pivotal point, the mediating point, or more exactly the moment when the father appears as mediated by the mother in the Oedipus complex, is very precisely that in which he now makes himself felt as prohibitor. I said that here he is mediated; he is mediated because it is as prohibitor that he is going to appear. Where? In the mother's discourse. I (10) would like to point out to you here, that just as a little while ago this discourse of the mother was grasped in the raw state in this first stage of the Oedipus complex, to say here that he is mediated, does not mean that we are again bringing into play what the mother as subject makes of the father's word, it means that this word of the father intervenes effectively in what results in the form of the mother's discourse. He appears therefore at this moment less veiled than in the first stage, but he is not completely revealed. This is what the use of the term mediated means on this occasion.

In other words, he intervenes at this stage here in terms of message for the mother, he is the one who is speaking now, and what he says, is a prohibition, it is a "not to" which is transmitted here at the level at which the child receives the expected message from the mother. It is a message about a message, and this particular form of a message about a message which I will tell you that, very surprisingly, the linguists do not distinguish as such; which shows us how important it is that we should perform our function with the linguists; a message about a message, is the message of prohibition. It is not just one for the child, and already at that epoque "Thou shalt not sleep with thy mother", is also for the mother : "Thou shalt not reestablish all the well known forms of what is called the (11) maternal instinct", which here encounters an obstacle: "Thou shalt not resume possession of what you yourself have produced". Everyone knows that the primitive form of the maternal instinct is manifested in certain animals, perhaps even more than in man, by resuming possession orally of what, as we so elegantly put it, has come out of the other end.

This is very precisely what is in question. This prohibition arrives here as such, just as one could say here that something appears which is precisely the father qua other, and in principle it is from this that there exists the potentiality, the virtuality which in the last analysis is salutary, which comes

from the fact that because of this the child is profoundly questioned, disturbed in his position as a-subject.

In other words, it is in so far as the object of the mother's desire is put in question by the paternal prohibition, that the paternal prohibition prevents the circle from closing in on him completely, namely that he should become purely and simply the object of the mother's desire, that the whole process which normally should stop there, namely that the symbolic relationship to the other has already implicitly the threefold aspect, that there exists in the child-mother relationship, because it is not her that he desires, but her desire. There is already this ternate. It is already a symbolic relationship. Nevertheless, everything about this desire of desire is put in question, from the moment that its first completion, its first success, namely his discovery of the object of the desire of the mother has (12) completely escaped because of the paternal prohibition, and leaves the child's desire of the mother's desire in the lurch.

This second stage, which contains somewhat fewer potentialities than the first, is quite observable and perceptible, but essentially one might say instantaneous, transitory, is nevertheless capital, because in the last analysis it is what is at the heart of what can be called the moment of privation of the Oedipus complex. It is to the degree that the child is himself ousted, and for his own greater good, that this ideal position which his mother and himself might be satisfied with, that he should fulfil this function of being her metonymical object. It is to the extent that he is ousted from it, that the third relationship, the following stage, can be established, the fruitful one in which he becomes something else. He becomes this something else that I told you about the last day, that which involves the identification with the father and the virtual title to have what the father has.

If I gave you the last day a kind of rapid sketch of the three moments of the Oedipus complex, it was in order not to have to begin again today, or more exactly to have plenty of time today to take it up again step by step.

Let us pause here for a moment, and then we will get to homosexuality. It is almost a parenthesis, but it is still important.

The way that the father intervenes at that particular time in the (13) dialectic of the Oedipus complex, is extremely important to reflect on, because it is there - and you will be able to see it more clearly in the last article that I wrote for the next issue of La Psychanalyse, which gives a summary of what I said the year we spoke about the Freudian structures of psychosis. The level of publication involved did not allow me to give this schema because it would have required far too many explanations in the article, but when you have read the article, in the not too distant future I hope, you can take up again in your notes what I am going to show you now, which consists in the following: that in so far as the name of the father, the father qua symbolic

function, the father at the level of what happens here between message and code, and between code and message, is precisely Verworfen, there no longer exists here what I represented by the dotted line, namely that by which the father intervenes qua Law, as a message of "not to" onto the mother's message to the child, but in a pure and simple, raw, fashion, and also as a completely raw source of a code which is beyond the mother, which you can see as tangible and perfectly localizable on this schema of the conduction of the signifiers, what happens when having been appealed to at an essential, vital, turning point to respond with the name of the father where it ought to be, namely at the place where it cannot respond because it has never been there. President Schreber sees arising instead very precisely this (14) structure realized by the real, massive, intervention of the father beyond the mother, but not absolutely supported by him qua supporter of the Law, which ensures that President Schreber hears at the major, fruitful moment of his psychosis, what? Very exactly two fundamental kinds of hallucination- which are of course never isolated as such in the classical manuals.

To understand something about hallucination, it would be better to read what is no doubt a remarkable and exceptional work by a psychotic like President Schreber, than to read all the best psychiatric authors who have approached the problem of hallucination, with already in their heads the famous academic series they learnt in philosophy : sensation, perception, perception without an object, and other idiocies, while President Schreber himself distinguishes very well two orders of things : the voices that speak in the fundamental tongue, and whose proper role it is, by speaking this fundamental tongue, to teach the subject its code by this very word. This means that everything that concerns, everything that relates to the messages he receives in the fundamental tongue, is at the same time made up of words which neological or not, they are that in their own way, consist in teaching the subject what they are in a new code, one which literally teaches him a new world, a signifying universe.

(15) In other words, there is a series of hallucinations that are messages about a neo-code, something therefore that presents itself as coming from the other. It is hallucinatory in a really terrible way, and in the form of a message about the code constituted as such in this other, and on the other hand, another type of message which presents itself essentially as interrupted messages, you remember these little bits of sentences ; "He must namely.....", "Now I wish.....", etc. You might say the beginnings of commands, and precisely in certain cases, even veritable principles : "Finish something when you have started it", and so on.

In short, these messages which essentially present themselves as pure messages, orders, or interrupted orders, as pure inductive forces in the subject, and also perfectly localizable from two dissociated aspects, message and code, into which the intervention of the father's discourse is resolved when-this something is abolished at its origins, and has never been in any way integrated into the life of the subject which is very

precisely what gives its coherence, its self-sanction to the father's discourse, namely that by which having finished his discourse, he comes back on it, he sanctions [it] as Law.

For the following stage which supposes in normal conditions that the father can come into play, we said the last day what was involved, namely that it is in so far as the father is going to (16) intervene to give, in so far as he has it, what is in question in the privation of the phallus, which has intervened as a central term of the evolution of the Oedipus complex, the three moments of the Oedipus complex. It is to the extent that he is going effectively to appear as an act of giving, no longer in the acts of the mother and therefore still half-veiled, but in discourse. The mother herself, in so far as the message of the father becomes the message of the mother, becomes the message which authorizes and permits, which will produce this something which you see clearly that my schema from last day means nothing other than this, that in so far as this message of the father is incarnated as such, it is able to produce something that is the raising of the schema by a notch, namely that the subject can receive from the father's message what he attempted to from the mother's message. But here, through the mediation, through the intermediary of the gift or the permission given to the mother, namely that what he has when all is said and done, and this is effectively realized by the phase of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, what he has is that he is allowed to have a penis for later on.

It really consists, as we said the last day, in having the title deed in his pocket. It is also, to evoke an amusing historical reference : a woman whose husband wanted to be sure that she was faithful to him, had given him a certificate in writing that she was faithful to him, and then she went off wherever she liked (17) saying: "Oh, what a fine letter La Chatre has!". Well this man Le Ch&tre and our castrated little man are of the same order, they also have at the end of the Oedipus complex this fine letter which is not nothing, because it is on this fine letter that there will consequently rest the fact that he can assume in all tranquillity, that is in the most successful case, the fact of having a penis, in other words of being someone identical to his father.

But it is precisely at this quite ambiguous stage, whose two aspects, as you can see, are always in a way likely to be turned one into the other, that there is something rather abstract, which is nonetheless dialectical in this relationship that exists between the two moments that I have just spoken to you about, that in which the father intervenes as prohibiting and depriving, and that on the other hand where he intervenes as permissive and giving, but giving at the level of the mother. He can skip everything else.

To see what can happen, we must now put ourselves at the level of the mother. At the level of the mother we must pose again for ourselves the question of the paradox that is represented by this central character of the phallic object, of the imaginary object

as such. The mother for her part, is a woman whom we suppose to have arrived at the plenitude of her capacities of feminine voracity, and it is quite clear that the objection which is made (18) to this imaginary function of the phallus is quite valid, is the mother, and this - but the phallus is not purely and simply that, this fine imaginary object - she has had a strong liking for for some time already; in other words, that the phallus at the level of the mother is not just a phallic object, it is also quite certainly something that has fulfilled its function by then at the instinctual level, at the level of its function as a normal instrument of an instinct, which it is, in other words, considered by the mother as the "inject" (l'injet), if I can express myself thus by a word that does not simply mean that she introduces herself to it, but that it is introduced into her, but that this "in" also indicates the relationship of this object to its function at the instinctual level. It is an object which has its instinctual function.

It is because man has to pass through the whole forest of signifiers to rejoin these primitive and instinctively valid objects, that we are confronted with this whole dialectic of the Oedipus complex. All the same, thank God, he gets there from time to time. Otherwise the whole thing would have died out long ago for lack of combatants, given the excessive difficulty of reaching the real object.

This is one of the possibilities from the mother's point of view. For the others, we must try to see, in order to be able to distinguish from this, to see what is the meaning for her, of (19) this something that consists then in her relationship to the phallus, in so far as like every human being, it is what is closest to her heart.

We can very easily distinguish alongside this inject function, the "adjunct" (adjet) function, namely the imaginary adherence of something which is or is not conferred on her as having permission to desire it as such at the level that we have got to, namely as something which, at the imaginary level, is given or not given to her, is lacking to her, and therefore intervening as lack, as something of which she has been deprived, as the object of that Penisneid, of that continually felt privation whose incidence we recognize in feminine psychology, or on the contrary as something that is all the same given to her from the place where it is, and you can clearly see that this is another function, that it is something different, even though it may be confused with the primitive inject in question, and which can already enter into the reckoning by itself in what I might call a fashion that is in a way very symbolic, and to the extent that the woman as such, while she has all the difficulties involved in the fact of seeing herself being introduced into the dialectic of the symbol in order to succeed in being integrated into the human family, has on the other hand complete access, this is absolutely certain, to this primitive and instinctual thing which establishes her in a direct relationship with what is the object, no longer here of her desire, but of her need. Having elucidated (20) this, let us talk now about homosexuals.

Homosexuals are talked about. Homosexuals are cared for. Homosexuals are not cured, and the most extraordinary thing, is that they are not cured, despite the fact that they are absolutely curable. Because there is something that emerges in the clearest fashion in case studies, it is that what is called masculine homosexuality, is very properly an inversion with respect to the object which is motivated, which is structured at the level of a full and completed Oedipus complex, namely at the level of an Oedipus complex that has arrived at this third stage that we spoke about just now, or more exactly at something which, in this third stage, while realizing it, noticeably modifies it so that it can be said that the male homosexual - the other one too, but today for reasons of clarity we are going to limit ourselves to the male - the male homosexual has fully realized his Oedipus complex, and you will tell me : "We knew that already. He has realized it in an inverted form". If you are satisfied with this way of putting it, you can always stay with it, I am not obliging you to follow me, but I consider that we have a right to be more exigent, than simply to say that the reason why your daughter is mute, is that the Oedipus complex is inverted.

(21) We have to explore in the very structure of what clinical practice shows us about homosexuals, whether we cannot understand much better at what precise point this completion of the Oedipus complex takes place,

- 1) his position with all its characteristics,
- 2) the fact that he holds in a very extreme way to this position, in the sense that the homosexual, if one gives him the slightest angle or opportunity, holds fast to his homosexual position, that his relationships with the feminine object are far from being abolished, but are on the contrary profoundly structured.

It is precisely this difficulty of disturbing his position, but even more the reason why analysis in general fails, and has thus been ousted, not because of an impossibility internal to his position, but precisely because of the fact that all kinds of conditions are necessary, of travelling along the detours by which his position has become essentially precious and primordial for him, that I believe only this conception and this way of schematizing the problem, allows us to point up.

There are a certain number of traits that can be seen in the homosexual. From the first it was said: a profound and perpetual relationship with the mother. The mother is described, in the average case, as someone who, in the parental couple, has a directive function, a superior function, who has looked after the child more than the father. This is already something different; (22) who has looked after the child, we are told, in a very castrating fashion, who is supposed to have taken very very great, meticulous care, for too long a time, of his education.

Nobody seems to suspect that in all of this not everything points in the same direction. We have to add some little supplementary links to be able to conceive that the effect of such a

castrating intervention, for example, should be in the child the overvaluing of the object, especially in this general form in which it appears in the homosexual, that no partner likely to be of interest to him can be deprived of it.

I do not want to keep you on tenterhooks, nor to appear to be posing you riddles. I think that the key to the problem of the homosexual is this; the homosexual being homosexual, with all the nuances that this implies, accords this predominant value to the blessed object, makes it a characteristic that is absolutely required in the sexual partner, in so far as in some form or other it is the mother who, in the sense that I have taught you to distinguish it, lays down the Law for the father. I have told you that the father intervened in the dialectic of desire in the Oedipus complex, in so far as the father lays down the Law for the mother. Here something which can appear in different forms, always comes down to this, that it is the mother who is found, at (23) a decisive moment, to have laid down the Law for the father.

That means what? You are going to see, that that means very precisely the following, that at a moment when through the intervention of the father, there should have occurred the phase of the dissolution of the relationship of the subject to the object of the mother's desire, namely because of the fact that for him the possibility of identifying himself with the phallus had in fact gone, had been cut off at the root by the prohibiting intervention of the father, at that very moment he finds, in the structure of the mother, the reinforcement, the support, the something that ensures that this crisis does not happen; namely, if you wish, that at the ideal time, at the dialectical moment at which the mother should be taken as deprived of that adjet as such, namely that the subject in this respect does not know where to turn, at that very moment he finds security.

It holds up perfectly, because of the fact that he feels that in fact it is the mother who is the key to the situation, that she does not allow herself to be either deprived, or dispossessed. In other words, that the father can always say whatever he likes, but for some reason or other this does not have the slightest effect on them.

This does not mean then that the father has not come into play. Freud, for a very long time - I would ask you to consult the Three essays on sexuality - had said: it is not rare, and when he says it is not rare, he is not making a random remark, it is (24) not because he is undecided that he says that it is not rare, it is because he has frequently seen it. Let us take it then in the sense of: it frequently happens, it is one of the possibilities that inversion may be determined by the downfall of an excessively prohibiting father.

In this there are two moments:

- 1) The prohibition, but also
- 2) that this prohibition has failed, in other words that here it is the the mother who in the last analysis has laid down the Law.

This also explains that in every other case, when the stamp of this prohibiting father is broken, the result is always the same, and in particular that in the case where the father loves the mother too much, when he appears because of his love to be too dependent on the mother, the result is exactly the same.

I am not telling you that the result is always the same, but that in certain cases it is the same. What is involved, is not to differentiate what happens when, because the father loves the mother too much, that gives a result other than homosexuality. I simply remark in passing that on such occasions I do not at all take refuge in the constitution, because there are differences to be established, for example of an effect of the obsessional neurosis type, and we will see it on another occasion, but for the moment I simply want to group together that different causes (25) may have a common effect, namely that in the cases where the father loves the mother too much, he in fact finds himself in the position of being the one for whom the mother lays down the Law.

Again there are cases, and this is the interest of adopting this perspective, it is to see how it can gather together different cases, cases in which the father, the subject will testify, has always remained a sort of very distant personage, whose messages only came through the intermediary of the mother. This is what the subject testifies to.

But in reality the analysis shows that he is far from being absent, namely in particular that behind the tense relationship, often marked by all sorts of accusations, of complaints, of manifestations of aggression, as they say, concerning the mother, which constitute the text of the analysis of a homosexual, one perceives that the presence of the father as rival, namely not at all in the sense of the inverted Oedipus complex, but of the normal Oedipus complex, is uncovered, and that in the clearest fashion, and in such cases one is satisfied to say that the aggressivity against the father has been transferred onto the mother.

Here we still do not have something which is altogether clear, but all the same we have the advantage of saying something that at least sticks to the facts. What has to be discovered is why it is like that.

(26) It is like that because in the critical position in which the father was effectively a threat for the child, the child has found his solution. But notice that in this schema, it appears to be the same as the one that consists in the identification represented by the homology, the similarity between the two triangles. He reckoned that the way to hold on, because it was the best way, because the mother did not allow herself to be shaken, was to identify himself with the mother. So that it is very precisely by being in the position of the mother, but as defined in this way, that he will find himself on the one hand, in so far as he addresses himself to a partner who is then the substitute for the paternal figure, namely, as frequently appears in the phantasies, the dreams of homosexuals, that the

relationship with him will consist in disarming him, in bringing him to heel, or even in a way that is quite clear in certain homosexuals, in making this substitute figure for the father, incapable of asserting himself with a woman or with women.

That on the other hand this phase contained in the requirement of the homosexual, of encountering the penile organ in his partner, corresponds very precisely to this that in the primitive position, that occupied by the mother who lays down the Law for the father, what precisely is put in question, not resolved but put in question, is namely whether the father really has or does (27) not have one, and it is very precisely this that is demanded by the homosexual of his partner, before anything else whatsoever, and in a fashion that predominates compared to anything else. This comes before anything else, after that he will see what is to be made of it, but above all to show that he has one.

I would even go further, I would even go as far as to point out here that the note of dependency that the excessive love of the father for the mother represents for the child, consists precisely in something that you might remember, and that I hope you do remember, chosen out for you: it is namely that to love, is always to give what one does not have, and not to give what one does have. I will not go back to the reasons why I gave you this formula, but you can be sure of it, and take it as a key formula, as a little rail, which if you keep your hand on it, will guide you, even if you do not understand a thing about it, and it is much better if you do not understand anything about it, which will guide you to the right level: to love is to give to someone who himself may or may not have what is at stake, but certainly to give what one does not have. To give on the other hand, is also to give, but it is to give what one has. That is the difference.

In any case, it is to the degree that the father shows himself to be truly loving towards the mother, that he is suspected of being suspect, of not having it, and it is from this angle that the mechanism comes into play. It is moreover the real reason for (28) this remark I make to you: truths are never completely hidden, nor unknown when they are not articulated, we always have •some inkling of them. I do not know to what degree you have noticed that this burning topic is never approached by analysts, even though it is at least as important to know whether the father loved the mother, as to know whether the mother loved the father. The question is always posed from this angle: the child had a castrating phallic mother, and all the rest, and she had an authoritarian attitude vis-à-vis the father: lack of love, of respect, etc.... But it is very curious to see that we never stress the relationship of the father to the mother. It is precisely in the measure that we do not know very well what to think of it, and where in short it does not appear possible for us to say anything very normative on this subject. So, at least for today, let us carefully leave this aspect of the problem to one side. I will very probably have to come back to it.

Another consequence: there is something which also appears very frequently, and which is not one of the lesser paradoxes in the analysis of homosexuals, it is something which at first sight, appears to be very paradoxical with respect to this demand for penis in the partner. It appears in the clearest fashion that there is one thing of which they are absolutely terrified, they are told that it is the sight of the female organ, because it (29) suggests ideas of castration to them. This may be true, not in the way you think, because what brings them to a halt * confronted with the female organ, is precisely that it is thought, in many cases - you come across this - to have ingested the father's phallus; that what is dreaded and feared in penetration, is precisely the encounter with this phallus.

There are dreams some of which I will cite for you, which are well recorded in the literature, and also in my practice, where it appears in the clearest fashion that at the turning point at which one can succeed in articulating what is involved in the relationship with women, it is this that emerges from time to time with regard to the possible encounter with a female vagina. It is very precisely a phallus in fact which develops as such, and which represents this insurmountable something before which the subject must not only pause, but encounter all his fears, and which gives to the danger of the vagina a completely different meaning than the one it was thought necessary to put under the rubric of the vagina dentata which also exists, but which with regard to the vagina, in so far as it contains the hostile phallus, the paternal phallus, the phallus which is at the same time phantastical, present and absorbed by the mother, whose real power is held by the mother herself, is there precisely in the feminine organ, this being an adequate articulation for all the complexity of the relationships of the homosexual with the (30) different terms which in a way....., and it is precisely because we have here, one might say, a stable situation, not at all a dual one, a fully secure situation, a situation with three legs, that it is never envisaged, except as being sustained, I might say, from the point of view of a dual relationship, that never in the labyrinth of the positions of the homosexual, and in consequence through the error of the analyst, the situation never succeeds in being entirely elucidated.

In other words, it is through a misrecognition that the situation, while having of course the closest links with the mother, only takes on importance with reference to the father in the way that the message of the law should be, and exactly completely the contrary, namely this something which, ingested or not, is definitively in the mother's hands, something that the mother holds the key to, but in a way, as you see, that is much more complex than simply by means of the global and massive notion that she is the mother, furnished with a phallus, that the homosexual is found to be identified with the mother, not at all in so far as she is purely and simply this something who has or does not have the adjet, but someone who holds the keys to this particular situation which is at the outcome of the Oedipus complex, namely that point at which a judgment must be made as to which of the two, when all is said and done, holds the power, not

just any power, but very precisely the power of love, and in so far as the complex links constructing the Oedipus complex, as (31) they are presented to you here, allow you to understand how this relationship to the power of the Law, corresponds to, metaphorically echoes, the relationship to the phantastical object which is the phallus qua object to which at a certain moment the identification of the subject as such must take place.

I will continue the next day with something that imposes itself here as a little appendix, namely the commentary on what have been called passivity states of the phallus, the term is Loewenstein's, as motivating certain disturbances of sexual potency. This fits in here too naturally for me not to do so.

Then I will take up again in a general fashion how we can, through these different avatars of the same object, from the origin, namely its function as the mother's imaginary object, up to the moment when it is assumed by the subject, how we can delineate the definitive classification of the different forms in which it intervenes. This is what we will do the next time, namely the 5th of next month.

And the following time, the 12th, after which I will leave you for a fortnight, we will conclude with something which will properly concern, in a way that will interest you less directly perhaps but to which I am very attached, the relationship of the subject to the phallus. I ended my last trimester on what I proposed to you about comedy. It was not assimilated very well, (32) when I told you that the essential in comedy, was when the subject took the whole dialectical affair in hand, and said: after all, all this dramatic stuff, the tragedy, the conflicts between the mother and the father, all that is not as good as love, and now let us amuse ourselves, let us have an orgy, let us put an end to all these conflicts. After all, all of this is made for man, for the subject. I was really astonished to have surprised some people who were scandalized at it. I will let you into a secret: it is in Hegel.

On the other hand, the new thing that I can contribute, and which appears to me to be much more demonstrative than all that has been able to be elaborated by the diverse phenomena of the spirit, is that by taking this path, one discovers a surprising confirmation of what I am in the process of putting forward, namely the crucial character for the subject and for his development, of the imaginary identification with the phallus, and it is there therefore on the last day of this period, that I invite you to show you how far this can be applied, how well it demonstrates, how remarkable it is for giving a key, a unique term, a univocal explanation of the function of comedy.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 5 February 1958

Everybody is preoccupied by symbolization. An article by Charles Rycroft appeared in May-June 1956, entitled "Symbolism and its relationship to the primary and secondary processes", in which he tries to give a contemporary meaning to the point that we are at in the analysis of symbolism. Those of you who read English, would obviously do well to read an article like this, because it will show you the difficulties that have always presented themselves about the meaning to be given in analysis, to the word symbolism, and I mean not simply to the word, but to the use that is made of it, to the way that the process of symbolism is conceived.

It is true that since 1916, when Mr. Jones wrote the first important comprehensive work on the subject, the question has passed through different phases, and it has encountered, and (2) it still encounters, very great difficulties in what today constitutes the most articulated position on the subject, namely that which emerges from the reflections of Mrs. Melanie Klein on the role of the symbol in the formation of the ego.

This has the closest bearing on what I am in the process of explaining to you, and I would like to make you aware of the importance of the point of view that I am trying to make you understand, for clarifying a little some obscure perspectives. I do not know what angle I am going to take it from today; I have no plan as regards the fashion I am going to present things to you. I would like, since it is a kind of ante-penultimate session that I had announced to the next seminar, devoted precisely to the phallus and comedy, I would like today simply to mark a sort of stopping place by showing you some important directions about which what I recounted to you at the beginning of this trimestre with regard to the castration complex, allows some questions to be asked.

I will begin then by taking the theses as they come. Today, with respect to this subject, a strict order cannot always be observed in something which should be considered above all today as a kind of crossroads.

(3) In Rycroft's title you have just seen mentioned the primary and the secondary process. This is something that I have never spoken about in your presence, even though some time ago, some of you expressed their astonishment at the fact. They came across this primary and secondary process in connection with a

vocabulary definition, and they found themselves a little bit surprised.

The primary and secondary process dates from the time of the Traumdeutung, and it is something which is not completely identical, but which overlaps the opposing notions of the pleasure principle and the reality principle.

I have alluded more than once in your presence to the pleasure principle and the reality principle, always in order point out to you that the use made of them is incomplete if they are not related to one another, that is to say if one does not sense the liaison between them, their opposition, as being constitutive of the position of each one of these terms.

I would like to tackle immediately the central core of what I have just stated.

The notion of the pleasure principle as principal sustenance of the primary process, when it is taken in an isolated fashion, ends up as follows: it is from this that Rycroft thinks he has to begin in order to define the primary process. He thinks he has to put aside all its structural characteristics, to put in the background the fact that dominates one of the constitutive (4) elements, which are effectively condensation, displacement, etc., everything that Freud began to tackle when he defined the unconscious, and he characterizes it fundamentally by what Freud put forward in the final elaboration of this theory in connection with the Traumdeutung, namely that the pleasure principle is essentially constituted by this: that there is a mechanism that originally and primordially, whether you understand the thing from the point of view of the historical stage or from the point of view of the underlay of a foundation upon which something of another kind had to develop, a type of base, of psychic depth, or even if you understand it as a sort of logical relationship, that it is from there that one has to start, there is supposed to be, we can say, in the human subject, there is evidently no question it seems, of anything else, but the point is not too well defined, there is supposed to be, in response to an instinctual stimulus, always the virtual possibility which is constitutive of the source of the position of the subject with regard to the world, a tendency to the hallucinatory satisfaction of desire.

I think that this does not surprise you. Abundantly expressed by all the authors, this reference to the fact that because of a primitive experience, and based on a model which is that of the reflection of every internal stimulus of the subject, there corresponds, before there corresponds in it something which is (5) the instinctual cycle, the movement, even though it may be uncoordinated, of appetite, then of searching, then of locating in reality what satisfies need through mnemonic traces of what has already answered desire, this brings satisfaction, satisfaction purely and simply tends to be reproduced itself on the hallucinatory plane.

This [notion] which has become almost consubstantial with our

analytic conceptions, so that if needs be we make use of it, I would almost say in an implicit fashion, every time we talk about the pleasure principle, does it not appear to you to a certain degree to be something exorbitant enough to deserve clarification, because after all, if it is in the nature of the cycle of psychic processes to create its own satisfaction for itself, I could almost say: why are people not satisfied by it?

Of course, it is because need continues to insist, because phantasy satisfaction is not able to satisfy every need, but we know only too well in the sexual order, that it is assuredly capable in every case of facing up to need, if it is a question of instinctual (pulsional) need. For hunger it is a different matter, and after all we can begin to glimpse on the horizon that it is about that, it is about the very possibly illusory character of the sexual object that, when all is said and done, there is question here.

This conception exists, and in a certain fashion it is in fact (6) motivated by the possibility of sustaining oneself at least at a certain level, at the level of sexual satisfaction. This is something which has so profoundly impregnated all analytic thinking, that in the measure that this relationship of need to its satisfaction, namely the primitive, primordial gratifications or satisfactions, or frustrations also which are considered as decisive at the origin of the subject's life, namely in the relationships of the subject to his mother, has come into the foreground, namely that in its totality, it is into a dialectic of need and of its satisfaction, that psychoanalysis has gone more and more in the measure that it became more and more interested in the primitive stage of the development of the subject, namely the relationship of the child to the mother. We have arrived at something whose significant, and also at the same time necessary character I would like to point out to you.

This is in the Kleinian perspective which is the one that I am designating for the moment, namely where all learning as one might say of reality by the subject, is in a way primordially prepared and sustained by the essentially hallucinatory and phantastical constitution of the first objects classified as good or bad objects, in so far as they fix in a way a first absolutely primordial relationship which will provide, for the rest of the subject's life, the principal types of the modes of relationship (7) of the subject to reality. We arrive at a sort of composition of the world of the subject which is constituted by a kind of fundamentally unreal relationship of the subject with objects which are only the reflection of his fundamental drives.

It is around the fundamental aggressivity, for example, of the subject that everything will be ordered in a series of projections of the needs of the subject. This world of phantasy, as used in the Kleinian school, is fundamental, and it is at its surface, that by a series of more or less successful experiences - it is desirable for this purpose that they should be successful - that the world of experience will permit a certain reasonable mapping-out of what in these objects is, as they say, objectively

definable as corresponding to a certain reality, the texture of unreality remaining in a way absolutely fundamental.

It is, I might say, this sort of construction that one can really call a psychotic construction of the subject, which ensures that in fact a normal subject is, in this perspective, a psychosis which has turned out well, a psychosis in a way successfully harmonized with experience, and this is not a reconstruction. The author about whom I am now going to speak about, Mr. Winnicott, expresses it precisely in this way in one of the texts that he wrote on the utilization of regression in analytic therapy.

(8) The fundamental homogeneity of psychosis with the normal relationship to the world, is there absolutely affirmed as such. This does not prevent very great difficulties from arising in this perspective, if only that of arriving at a notion of what is, because phantasy is only in a way the texture underlying the real world, to see what might be the function of phantasy recognized as such by the subject at the adult, fully grown state, when he has succeeded in constituting his real world. This is also indeed the problem that confronts every self-respecting Kleinian, I mean any avowed Kleinian, and also indeed one could say today almost every analyst, in so far as the register in which he inscribes the relationship of the subject to the world, becomes more and more exclusively that of a series of learning experiences about the world, constructed on the basis of a series of more or less successful experiences of frustration.

I would ask you to refer to Mr. Winnicott's text, "Primitive emotional development", which is to be found in Volume 26 of the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, in order to be able to motivate the emergence, to conceive how this world of phantasy in so far as it is consciously experienced by the subject, and gives an equilibrium to his reality, as we can see from experience, and this has to be ascertained in his own text. Those of you who are interested in this, can rely on a remark whose necessity you will (9) perceive in so far as it culminates in a quite curious paradox.

The emergence of the reality principle, in other words the recognition of reality, starting from the primordial relationships of the child with the maternal object, the object of his satisfaction, but also of his dissatisfaction, in no way allows us to see how there can emerge beyond the world of phantasy in what we could call its adult form, except by an artifice noticed by Mr. Winnicott, which certainly permits a coherent enough development of the theory, but whose paradoxical nature I would simply like you to grasp. It is this: he remarks that if fundamentally the hallucinatory satisfaction of need lies in the discord between this satisfaction and what the mother brings to the child, it is in this discord that there will open up the gap in which the child can constitute in some way a first recognition of the object, the object which is found despite appearances, one might say, to be disappointing.

So that to explain how there can in fact come to birth this something which resumes for the modern psychoanalyst everything that relates to the world of phantasy and imagination, namely what in English is called , he makes this remark : let us suppose that the maternal object arrives to fill in just at (10) the right moment, scarcely has the child begun to react in order to have the breast, than the mother gives it to him. Here Mr. Winnicott quite rightly pauses, and poses the following problem: in these conditions, what permits the child to distinguish between hallucination, the hallucinatory satisfaction of his desire, and reality?

In other words, with this point of departure we end up strictly speaking by stating the following equation: the fact is that at the beginning, hallucination is absolutely impossible to distinguish from fulfilled desire; it cannot but appear to you that the paradox of this confusion can scarcely fail to be striking.

In a perspective that rigorously characterizes the primary process as having to be naturally satisfied in a hallucinatory fashion, we end up with this: that the more satisfying reality is, as one might say, the less does it constitute a testing of reality, and that the origin of omnipotent thinking in the child, is essentially founded on everything that may have succeeded in reality.

This may hold up in some way, but you must admit that in itself it presents a somewhat paradoxical aspect, and that the very necessity of having to have recourse to something so paradoxical to explain in fact a pivotal point of the development of the subject, is something that may give rise to reflection, or even (11) to questions.

I will go right away in the opposite direction, to what can be presented over against this conception which I think you will not fail to see, while being quite paradoxical, and frankly paradoxical, is also bound to have certain consequences. It certainly has all sorts of consequences, I already pointed them out to you last year when I made an allusion to this same article by Mr. Winnicott, namely that the effect it has in his subsequent anthropology, is none other than to make him classify in the same order as the phantastical aspects of thinking, pretty well everything that can be called free speculation. I already told you last year, that there is here a complete assimilation between phantasy life and everything no matter how extraordinarily elaborated, from a speculative point of view, namely all the things that can be called convictions no matter what they are, political, religious or other. Which indeed is a sort of point of view that one can see fitting into a sort of Anglo-Saxon humour, in a certain perspective of mutual respect, of tolerance, and also of non-involvement. There are series of things which one only speaks about in quotation marks, or which are not spoken about at all among well brought up people, and they are nevertheless things that matter because they form part of the (12) internal discourse which we are far from being able to reduce to

But let us leave aside the end products of this approach. I would like simply to show you that over against this, another conception can be posited.

First of all, is it so obvious that one can purely and simply describe as satisfaction, what appears at the level of hallucination, namely in the different registers in which we can embody in some way this fundamental thesis of the hallucinatory satisfaction of the primordial need of the subject at the level of the primary process?

On this point I have already on many occasions introduced the problem. We are told: look at the dream, and people always refer to children's dreams. It is Freud himself who on this point showed us the way in the perspective that he had explored, namely by showing us the fundamental character of desire in the dream, he was led to give us purely and simply the example of children's dreams as the type of hallucinatory satisfaction.

Starting from there, everyone knows that the door is quickly opened. Psychiatrists had for a long time been trying to form an idea of the subject's disturbed relationships to reality in desire, by referring it for example to structures analogous to those of the dream. The perspective that we are introducing here does not permit us to contribute an essential modification to this. I think that it is very important at the point that we are (13) at, and in the very presence of the impasses and the difficulties that arise from this conception of a purely imaginary relationship of the subject to the world as being at the very source of the development of his relationship to a so-called opposing reality; this is something whose place I will show you in the little schema which I will not cease to make use of, which is this. I shall take it up again in its simplest form regarding which I recall, even though I may seem to be playing the same tune too often, what is in question: namely something here which can be called need, but which I here and now call desire, because there is no state of original or pure need, and because from the start need is motivated on the plane of desire, namely from something which in man is destined to have a certain relationship with the signifier, and because it is in the traversing by this desiring intention of what is posed for the subject as the signifying chain, either because the signifying chain has already imposed its requirements in his subjectivity, or because right at the beginning he only encounters it in this form, that it is here and now constituted in the mother, that it already imposes on him in the mother its necessity and its barrier; and you know that he first encounters it here in the form of the other, and that it culminates at this barrier in the form of the message, where in this schema it is naturally only a (14) question of seeing its projection there, and where the pleasure principle is situated on this schema, namely this something which in certain cases, under certain incidences, gives a primitive trait in the form of the the most primitive, the most confused dream, that/which we can see in the dog. We see that from time to time, when he is sleeping, a dog moves his paws: he Bust then indeed be dreaming, and he also has perhaps a

hallucinatory satisfaction of his desire.

How can we conceptualize them? In the same way, how can we situate them, and precisely in man? I propose the following to you, so that at least it exists as a term of possibility in your minds, and that when the opportunity arises you may realize that it can be applied in a more satisfactory manner.

The hallucinatory response to need is not the emergence of a phantastical reality at the end of the circuit inaugurated by the exigencies of need; it is the appearance at the end of this exigency, of this movement which begins to be stimulated in the subject, towards something which must for him have some outline features. It is the appearance at the end of this of something which, of course, is not unrelated to the need that he has; a relationship with what is called an object, but which is fundamentally, I would say, the origin, has this character of being something which has a relationship of such a kind with this (15) object, that it deserves to be called a signifier, I mean something that has essentially a fundamental connection with the absence of this object, which has already the character of being a discrete sign-element, and Freud himself can do nothing other than, when he articulates this mechanism, this birth of unconscious structures - you can already read the letter I already cited, Letter 52 to Fliess - at the moment at which a model of the psychic apparatus begins to formulate itself for him, which allows him to account for precisely the primary process. He has to admit from the beginning that this type of mnemonic inscription which will respond in a hallucinatory fashion to the manifestation of need, is nothing other than this: a sign, namely something that is not just characterized by a certain relationship with the image in the theory of instincts (instincts), and by this sort of lure which can suffice to awaken need, and not to fill it, but something which qua image, is already situated in a certain relationship with other signifiers, with the signifier for example, that is directly opposed to it, which signifies its absence with something that is already organized as signifier, already structured in that properly fundamental relationship which is the symbolic relationship in so far as it appears in this conjunction of an interplay of presence with absence, of absence with presence; an interplay that is itself ordinarily linked to a focal articulation which already (16) constitutes the appearance of discrete elements of signifier.

In fact what we find in experience, what appears at the level of the simplest rules in the case of the child, is not a satisfaction, in a way, when it is simply a question of hunger, of the needs of hunger, it is something that already presents itself with what I might call an excessive, exorbitant, character, it is just what the child has already been forbidden. The dream of the young Anna Freud: "Cherries, strawberries, raspberries, flan" everything that has already made its entry into a properly signifying mode because it is already what has been prohibited, and not just simply something that corresponds to a need, if needs be to the total satisfaction of hunger, which

consists in presenting itself as a feast of things which precisely go beyond the limits of what is the natural object of the satisfaction of need.

This quite essential trait is found at absolutely every level, at whatever level you take what presents itself as hallucinatory satisfaction. And indeed inversely, if you take things from the other end, when you are dealing with a delusion where you might be tempted, for lack of anything better, for a time before Freud, I might say to also search for something that might be something that corresponds to a kind of desire of the subject, you will arrive through some glimpses, some sidelong flashes, like this in (17) which something may seem to represent the satisfaction of desire.

But is it not obvious that the major, most striking, most massive, most intrusive phenomenon of all delusional phenomena, must not be just any phenomenon at all, must not be just something or other which is related to a type of reverie of the satisfaction of desire? It is something as clearcut as verbal hallucination, and before anything else, before thinking about whether this verbal hallucination takes place at this or that level, whether there is here in the subject something like a kind of internal reflection in the form of psycho-motor hallucination which is extremely important to determine, whether there is projection or something else, does it not appear from the first, that in the structuring of what presents itself as hallucination, that which dominates, and dominates from the first, and that which should serve as first element of classification, is its structure in the signifier? It is that they are phenomena structured at the level of the signifier, it is that the very organization of these hallucinations cannot even be thought about for an instant, without seeing that the first thing to be brought forward in this phenomenon, is that it is a signifying phenomenon.

Here then is something that should always remind us that if it is true that one can approach from this angle the characterization (18) of what can be called the pleasure principle, namely the fundamentally unreal satisfaction of desire, the differentiation, the characteristic that the hallucinatory satisfaction of desire exists, is that it is absolutely original, that it proposes itself in the domaine of the signifier, and that it implies as such a certain locus of the other which is not moreover necessarily an other, but a certain locus of the other in so far as it is required by the positing of this agency of the signifier.

You will note that in such a perspective, that of this little schema here, it is therefore here that we see coming into play in this kind of external part, when all is said and done, of the circuit which is constituted by the right-hand side of the schema, namely the need which is something that here is manifested in the form of a sort of end or tail of the signifying chain; something which of course only exists at the limit, and in which nevertheless you will still recognize, every time something

gets to this level of the schema, the characteristic of pleasure as being attached to it.

If it is at a pleasure that the witticism culminates, it is very precisely in so far as the witticism requires that something should be realized at the level of the other, who has a sort of virtual finality towards a sort of beyond of meaning, which nevertheless is something which in itself includes a certain (19) satisfaction. If therefore it is in this external part of the circuit that the pleasure principle can in some way be schematized, it is here likewise in this part here that we find the reality principle. It is not conceivable otherwise, as regards a human subject, in so far as we are dealing with him in our experience; there is no other possible apprehension or definition of the reality principle for the human subject, and in so far as he has to enter into it at the level of the secondary process, in so far as the signifier at the origin of the chain effectively comes into play in the human real as an original reality. There is a dimension of language, speech occurs in the world, and because of that there are a whole series of things, of objects, which are signified, which would absolutely not be otherwise. I mean if there were not in operation, if there were not in the world the dimension of the signifier.

And the' introduction of the subject to any reality whatsoever, is absolutely not conceivable in terms of a pure and simple experience of whatever it is that is in question, a frustration, a discordance, a knock, a burn, of whatever you like. There is no step by step spelling out by man of an Omwelt, which is supposed to be explored in an immediate, and if I may say tentative fashion, except that for an animal, thank God, instinct comes to his aid, because if it were necessary for an animal to (20) reconstruct the world, his whole life would not be long enough to do it, so that why would you want man, who has instincts that are very badly adapted, to experience the world, as it were, manually? The fact that there is a signifying dimension is absolutely essential, and the principal mediation of his experience of reality is reduced almost to a banality, to ridicule, if we say that is at this level. It intervenes all the same by the voice, it is naturally quite clear from the teaching he receives, from what the word of the adult teaches him, but the important margin that Freud conquers over this element of experience is this: it is that here and now, even before language-learning is elaborated on the motor plane, and on the auditory plane, and on the plane that understands what he is being told, there is already from the beginning, from his first relationships with the object, from his first relationship with the maternal object, in so far as it is the primordial, primitive object, the one on which depends his first survival, subsistence, in the world, this object is already introduced as such into the process of symbolization, it already plays a role that introduces into the world the existence of the signifier, this at an ultra-precocious stage.

You can be sure of this: once the child begins simply to be able to put two phonemes in opposition to one another, they are

already two vocables, and with two, the one who pronounces them (21) and the one to whom they are addressed, namely the object, namely his mother, there are already enough in four elements to contain virtually in itself the whole combinatory from which the organization of the signifier will emerge.

I will now move on to a new and different little schema, which moreover was already outlined here, and which will show you what its consequences will be, at the same time as you recall what I tried to get you to see in the last lecture.

We have said that primordially we had the relationship of the child to the mother, and it is true that it is along this axis that there is constituted the first relationship to reality, I mean that this reality cannot be deduced, and can only be reconstructed in our experience by means of perpetual sleights of hand, if we make its constitution depend solely on the relationships of the desire of the child to the object in so far as it satisfies or does not satisfy his desire.

If one can, at the extreme limit, find something that corresponds to that in a certain number of cases of early psychosis, it is always, in the final analysis, the so-called depressive phase of the development of the child that is referred to each time this dialectic is invoked. What is in question in reality, in so far as this dialectic involves a subsequent development that is (22) infinitely more complex, is something quite different, namely that the relationship at the beginning is not simply that of the desire of the child to the object that does or does not satisfy him, but thanks to something which has only a minimum of density, of unreality, that the first symbolization gives a mapping-out if you like of the child, that is already triangular, not at all in relation to what will contribute to the satisfaction of his need, but in relation to the desire of the maternal object that he has before him.

It is this, and solely in so far as something is already inaugurated in this dimension, represented here in terms of the axis which is called the ordinate axis in mathematical analysis. We have the dimension of the symbol, and because of this it can be conceived that the child, in the measure that he has to locate himself with respect to these two poles, and it is moreover around this that Mrs. Melanie Klein tries to feel her way, without being able to formulate it, it is in fact around a double pole of the mother - she calls it the good and the bad mother - that the child begins to take up his position. It is not the object that he situates, it is himself first of all that he situates, so that he will situate himself at all sorts of points which are along here in order to try to rejoin what is the object of the desire of the mother, to try to respond himself to the desire of the mother. This is the essential element, and it (23) can last for an extremely long time.

From that moment on, there really is no kind of dialectic possible. It is here that we must necessarily introduce, it is altogether impossible to consider the relationship of the child

to the mother, first of all because it is impossible to think and not to deduce anything from it, but it is equally impossible, going on experience, to conceive that the child is in this ambiguous world that the Kleinian analysts present to us, for example in which there is no reality other than that of the mother, and which allows them to say that the primitive world of the child is at once suspended from this object, and entirely auto-erotic in so far as the child does not wish to differentiate here in any way between an interior and an exterior for an object to which he is so closely bound that he literally forms a closed circle with it.

In fact, everyone knows - you only have to look at the life of a little child - that the little child is not at all auto-erotic, namely that he is normally interested like every other little animal, and a little animal after all more especially intelligent than the others, that he is interested in all sorts of other things in reality, obviously not in just any old thing, but there is all the same one to which we attach a certain importance, and which - because here the axis of the abscissa is the axis of (24) reality - appears altogether at the limit of this reality. It is not a phantasy, it is a perception. I leave to one side a particular enormity in Kleinian theory; I mean that for her - since she is a woman of genius - we can forgive her everything, but for her pupils who are particularly well informed on psychological matters, for someone like Suzanne Isaacs for example, who is a psychologist, it is unforgiveable. Following Mrs. Melanie Klein, she nonetheless manages to articulate a theory of perception such that there is no means of distinguishing a perception from an introjection in the analytic sense of the term. In this cursory account I cannot point out to you all the impasses of the Kleinian system; I am trying to give you a model which will allow you to articulate more clearly what is happening.

What happens at the level of the mirror stage? It is that the mirror stage, namely the encounter of the subject with something which is properly a reality, and at the same time not one, namely a virtual image playing an altogether decisive role in a certain crystallization of the subject that I call and which manifests itself - I put it in parallel with the relationship that manifests itself between the child and the mother. Broadly speaking, this is what is in question: the child conquers here a bridge-head in this thing at the limit of reality which presents itself for him one might say, in a perceptual (25) mode; which can on the other hand be called an image in the sense that this word has, in so far as the image has this property in reality, of being this captivating signal that is isolated in reality, which attracts on the part of the subject the capture of a particular libido, of a particular instinct thanks to which there are in fact a certain number of reference points, of psychoanalytic points in the world, around which the living being more or less organizes his behaviour.

For the human being, it seems indeed in the last analysis to be the only reference point that exists. It has a role here, and it

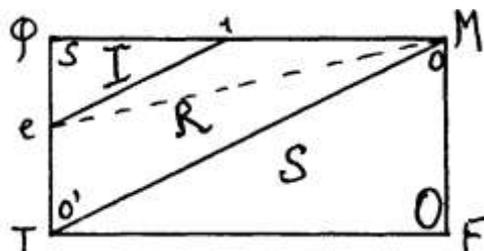
has a role in so far as it is precisely and properly speaking luring and illusory. It is in this respect that it comes to the assistance of an activity which is here and now for the subject in so far as he has to satisfy the desire of the other, an activity which already proposes itself in the perspective of itself deluding the desire of the other. The child, in so far as he will now constitute himself as the whole jubilatory activity of the child in front of his mirror, and at the same time conquer himself as something which at the same time exists and does not exist, and with reference to which he locates at the same time both his own movements and also the image of those who accompany him in front of the mirror.

It is around this possibility which is opened up for him by a certain privileged experience of reality, which has precisely this privilege of being an unrealized virtual reality, and (26) grasped as such, that the child is going to be able to conquer this something around which literally every possibility of human reality can be constructed.

It is not yet the case that the phallus, in so far as it is the imaginary object with which the child has to identify himself to satisfy the desire of the mother, can here and now be situated in its place, but the possibility of such a situating is greatly enriched by this cristallization of the ego in terms of a particular mapping out which, it, opens up the whole possibility of the imaginary.

And what in fact do we see happening? What we see happening is something which is a double movement, a movement through which the experience of reality has introduced in the form of the body-image, an illusory and alluring element as the fundamental basis of the mapping-out of the subject with regard to reality, and in all that measure, in the measure of that space, of that margin which is offered to the child by this experience, the possibility in the opposite direction for his first identifications of the ego, of entering into another field which is defined as homologous, and is the inverse of the one constituted by the triangle e-i-M, which is this one, the enigmatic one between e-M-I, which is the subject in so far as he has to identify, to define, to conquer, to subjectify himself and also the pole of the mother.

And what is that triangle? And what is that field? And how will (27) this journey which starts from the Urbild of the ego, permit the child to conquer himself, to identify himself, to make progress? How can we define it? In what way is it constituted?



It is very precisely constituted by this, that this Urbild of the ego, this first conquest or mastery of self that the child accomplishes in his experience, starting from the moment when he has reduplicated the real pole with respect to which he has to situate himself, makes him enter into this trapezium e-i-M-I, in so far as he identifies himself with the multiplied signifying elements in reality; I mean, where by means of all these successive identifications he is himself, he himself takes on the function, the role of a series of signifiers, which means : of hieroglyphs, of types, of forms and of presentations which are going to punctuate his reality with a certain number of reference points which already makes of it a reality shot through with signifiers.

In other words, what is here going to constitute the limit, is this formation which is called the ego ideal. You will see why it is important that I situate it for you like that, namely that with which the subject identifies himself by going in the direction of the symbolic, by starting from the imaginary, and in a way, instinctually preformed mapping-out of himself with respect to his own body, and in so far as he is going to engage himself in a series of signifying identifications in the (28) direction defined as such, as opposed to the imaginary, namely as using the imaginary as signifying. And the identification which is called ego ideal, is made at the paternal level. Why? Precisely because at the paternal level there is a greater detachment with respect to the imaginary relationship, than at the level of the relationship to the mother.

This little construction of schemas one upon the other, these little dancers standing astride, the legs of one on the shoulders of the other, this indeed is what we are dealing with, it is in so far as the third in this little scaffolding, namely the father in so far as he intervenes to prohibit, namely to make precisely what is the object of the mother's desire pass over to the properly symbolic status, namely that it is not only an imaginary object, but that it is also destroyed, prohibited, it is in so far as he intervenes as a real person, as "I" to perform this function, that this "I" will become something eminently signifying, and allow to be the kernel of the identification which is, when all is said and done, the last, supreme result of the Oedipus complex which ensures that that it is to the father that there is referred the formation called the ego ideal, and these oppositions of the ego ideal compared to the object of the mother's desire are expressed on this schema in that if the virtual and ideal identification of the subject with the phallus, (29) in so far as it is the object of the mother's desire, is situated there at the vertex of the first triangle of the relationship with the mother, it is situated there virtually, at once always possible and always threatened, so threatened that effectively it is necessary that it be destroyed at a given moment by the intervention of the pure symbolic principle represented by the name of the father, which is there in the state of veiled presence, but a presence which unveils itself, and unveils itself not at all progressively, unveils itself by an intervention decisive first of all in so far as it is the

prohibiting element, and precisely of this type of tentative search of the subject which would have culminated, and which culminates in certain cases in this exclusive relationship of the subject with the mother, not in a pure and simple dependency, but in something which manifests itself in all sorts of perversions, by a certain essential relationship with the phallus, either that the subject assumes it in different forms, or that he makes of it his fetich, in other words that we may be here at the level of what can be called the primitive root of the the perverse relationship with the mother. It is to the degree that in this identification beginning with the ego, the subject who can in a certain phase make in effect a movement of approach, of identification of his ego with the phallus, is essentially carried in the other direction, namely a structured one, constitutes a certain relationship which, it, is marked by end points which are expressed there in a certain relationship with (30) the image his own body, namely the imaginary pure and simple, namely the mother.

On the other hand, as a real term, his ego in so far as it is able, not only to recognize itself, but having recognized itself, to make of itself a signifying element, and no longer simply an imaginary element in its relationship with the mother, that there can be produced those successive identifications about which Freud in his theory of the ego, articulates for us in the firmest fashion, that this is the object of his theory of the ego, it is to show us that the ego is made up of a series of identifications - see the schema - of a series of identifications to an object which is beyond the immediate object, which is the father in so far as he is beyond the mother.

It is essential to hold on to this schema, because it also shows you that in order that this should be produced correctly, completely and in the right direction, there should be a certain relationship between its direction, its rectitude, its accidents, and thus the ever increasing development of the presence of the father in the dialectic of the relationship of the child with the mother.

This schema is, with its double to and fro motion, namely that reality is conquered by the human subject in so far as it arrives at a certain one of these limits in the virtual form of the body (31) image, that in a corresponding fashion, it is in so far as the subject introduces into his field of experience the unreal elements of the signifier, that he succeeds in enlarging to the measure that it is for the human subject, the field of this experience.

This is something that can be constantly utilized, and unless you refer to it, you will find yourself perpetually slipping into a series of confusions which involves making major mistakes, and in taking an idealization for an identification, an illusion for an image, all sorts of things which are far from being equivalent, and to which we will subsequently have to return, and by referring to this schema.

It is quite clear for example, that the conception that we can construct for ourselves of the phenomenon of delusion, is something which should easily indicate by means of the structure inscribed, put forward, manifested in this schema, in so far as we always see in delusion something which assuredly merits the term regressive, but not in the fashion of a type of reproduction of an earlier state which would really be totally excessive. To confuse with this phenomenon the notion that the child lives in a world of delusion for example, which seems to be implied by the Kleinian conceptions, is one of the things which it is hardest to accept, for the good reason that this psychotic phase, while it is required by the premisses of the Kleinian articulation, we (32) have no experience of any kind in the child of anything at all which represents a transitory psychotic state. On the contrary, one can very well conceive on the plane of a regression which is structural, and not genetic, that the schema allows to illustrate precisely by an inverse movement to that described here by the two arrows, the invasion into the world of objects of the body image which is so manifest - I am talking about delusions of the Schreberian type - and inversely here this something which assembles around the ego all the phenomena of the signifier, to the point that the subject is no longer in a way supported qua ego, except by this continual web of signifying verbal hallucinations, which then constitute a sort of retreat to an initial position of the genesis of his world of reality.

Let us see in sum what our project today has been, our project is to situate definitively the meaning of the question that we pose regarding the object. The question of the object, for us analysts, is fundamentally this, because we experience it constantly, it is all we have to do, to busy ourselves with it: what is the source and the genesis of the illusory object? It is a matter of knowing whether we can construct an adequate conception of this object qua illusory, simply by referring ourselves to the categories of the imaginary.

(33) My answer is no, it is impossible, because the illusory object, and this is the case because we know about it for a very long time, since there have been people who think, and philosophers who try to express what everybody experiences, everyone knows that the illusory object, it has been talked about for a long time, is the veil of Maya, it is the reason why it appears that a need such as the one that is called sexual need, clearly realizes aims that are beyond one might say anything whatever that is within the subject. We did not have to wait for Freud, already Mr. Schopenhauer and many others before him, saw in it that ruse of nature which ensures that the subject believes he is embracing a particular woman, and that he is purely and simply submitted to the necessities of the species.

This aspect of the fundamentally imaginary character of the object, very specially in so far as it is the object of sexual need, was recognized for a long time, and did not help us take a single step in the direction of this problem which is nonetheless the essential problem. Why does this same need which is supposed to be made up of what in fact broadly speaking, apparently, which

indeed appears to be reality by its character of lure, from the fact that the subject is only susceptible to the image of the female of his species, at least generally speaking; why does this not help us take a single step in the sense that for man a woman's slipper may very precisely be that which provokes in him (34) this surge of energy supposedly destined for the reproduction of the species? That is where the problem lies.

That is the problem, and the problem is only soluble to the degree that you perceive that the object in question in so far as it is an illusory object, performs its function in the human being, not qua image no matter how luring, no matter how well naturally organized as a lure you may suppose it to be, but in its capacity as a signifying element in a signifying chain. I will come back to it.

We are at the end today, of a lecture that is perhaps particularly abstract. I beg your pardon for that, but if we do not pose these terms, we can never succeed in understanding what is here and what is there, what I am saying and what I am not saying, what I am saying to contradict others, and what others say in all innocence, without seeing their contradictions. We must pass this way, through the function that is played by such and such an object of fetichism or not, but even simply all the instrumentation of a perversion. You really would have to have your head in the clouds to be content with terms like masochism and sadism for example, which of course naturally furnish all sorts of admirable considerations on the stages, the instincts, on the fact that there is some aggressive motor need or other (35) required by the fact of being able to simply arrive at the aim of the sexual embrace.

But after all, why is it that in this sadism and in this masochism the fact of being beaten - there are other ways of exercising sadism or masochism - the fact of being beaten very precisely with a cane, or something analogous, plays an essential role, and to minimize the importance in human sexuality of that very instrument especially which is usually called the whip, in a way that is to a greater or lesser extent elided, symbolic, generalized? This is all the same something deserving of some consideration.

Mr. Aldous Huxley depicts for us a world in the future where everything will be so well organized as regards the reproductive instinct, that one will purely and simply bottle the little foetuses after having chosen those who will be destined to provide them with the best seeds. Everything is going very well, and the world becomes something particularly satisfying, which Mr. Huxley because of his personal preferences, declares to be fundamentally boring. We are not taking sides, but what is interesting, is that an author who engages in these sort of entifications to which we do not attach any kind of importance for our part, causes the world that he and we know to be reborn, through the mediation of a girl who manifests her need to be whipped. It seems to him without any doubt that there is there (36) something which is closely linked to the human character of the world.

This is simply what I want to point out to you. I want to point out to you that what is accessible to a novelist and to someone who without any doubt has some experience of sexual life, is all the same also for us analysts, something we should dwell on, namely that if the whole turning-point for example of the history of perversion in analysis, namely the moment when we got away from the notion that perversion is purely and simply the drive emerging, namely the contrary of neurosis, we waited for the conductor's signal, namely the moment when Freud wrote "A child is being beaten", and that it is around this study of an absolutely total sublimity, because obviously everything which was said afterwards is only the small change of what is in it; if it is around the analysis of this phantasy of the whip that Freud really at that moment introduced perversion into its true analytical dialectic, there where it appears to be, not the manifestation of a pure and simple drive, but to be attached to a dialectical context just as subtle, just as composite, just as rich in compromises, just as ambiguous as a neurosis, it is starting with something which is going, not to classify perversion in a category of the instinct, of our tendencies, but in something which articulates it precisely in its detail, in its (37) material, and let us say the word, in its signifier. Every time moreover that you are dealing with a perversion, there is something which corresponds to a sort of méconnaissance of what you have before you, if you do not see the extent to which the perversion is attached in a fundamental fashion to a kind of web of a plot which moreover is essentially liable to be transformed, modified, developed and enriched. It is even the whole history of perversion, the fact that the perversion on the other hand is linked in certain cases in the closest fashion, I mean clinically in our experience, to the appearance, to the disappearance, to the whole compensatory movement of a phobia which it, evidently shows the term of back and front, but in quite a different sense, in the sense that two articulated systems are composed and are compensated, and alternate with one another. It is also something which is very appropriate to make us articulate the drive in a completely different domain to the pure and simple one of the tendency.

It is to this, it is to the accent of signifier to which the elements, the material of the perversion itself responds, that I draw your attention in particular, because for the moment it is a question of the signified, of what is involved as regards the object.

(38) What does all of this mean? The fact is that we have an object, a primordial object, which remains without any doubt to dominate the subsequent life of the subject. We have also certainly and without any doubt certain imaginary elements which play the crystallizing role, and particularly everything involving the material of the bodily apparatus, the members, and the reference of the subject to the domination of its members, the total image.

But the fact that the object is caught up in a function which is that of the signifier, and which ensures that in this

relationship constituted by the existence of a signifying chain such that we symbolize it by a series of S, S', S'', and that there are underneath this series significations which ensure that just as the the upper chain progresses in a certain direction, the something which is in the significations or underneath progresses in the opposite direction, it is a signification which always slides, slips away and conceals itself, ensuring that when all is said and done, the fundamental relationship of man to any signification is, because of the fact that the signifier exists, an object of a special type.

I call this object the metonymical object. I am telling you that its source in so far as the subject has a relationship with it, is to the extent that the subject himself, identifies himself imaginarily in an absolutely radical fashion, not to one or other of its functions as object which would correspond to this or that (39) partial tendency as is said, but to the extent that there is something which requires that there should be somewhere there a pole, namely in the imaqinary something which represents what always conceals itself, namely that which is induced by a certain current of the flight of the object into the imaginary, from the fact of the existence of the signifier.

That object there, it has a name, it is pivotal, it is central in the whole dialectic of the perversions, the neuroses and even purely and simply of all subjective development. It is called the phallus, and this is what I shall have to illustrate for you the next time.

Seminar 13 t Wednesday 12 February 1958

References :

Ernest Jones "The phallic phase" UP Vol 14
 Otto Rank "Perversions and Neuroses", Papers on
 psychoanalysis, Vol 4, part III.

This is in connection with the initial article on the theoretical development of analytic thinking on neuroses which followed on "A child is being beaten". This article is the signal given by Freud to an about face, or to a step forward in his own thinking, and at the same time to everything that followed concerning the study of perversion.

You will see that if one looks closely at what is happening at this time, the best formula that can be given for it is the one which alone allows to be given the register whose essential (2) agency in the formation of symptoms I am trying to show you here, namely the intervention of the notion of the signifier.

It appears clearly, once Freud had shown it, that in perversion, the instinct, the drive, have absolutely no right to be put forward or declared as more exposed as one might say, in perversion than in neurosis.

The whole of Hans Sachs' remarkable article on the genesis of perversions, shows that in any so-called perverse formation whatsoever, there is exactly the same structure of compromise, of evasion, of the dialectic of the repressed, and of the return of the repressed as there is in neurosis. This is the essence of the article and he gives absolutely convincing examples of it. There is always in perversion something that the subject does not want (veut) to recognize with all that this veut involves in our language, something which is not to be conceived of as being articulated there and nevertheless not just fundamentally overlooked by the subject, but repressed by the subject for reasons in fact of an essential articulation.

Here we have the source of the analytic mechanism, which would bring it about that were the subject to recognize it, he would be forced at the same time to recognize a series of other things, which are properly intolerable for him, and which is the source of repression, repression only being conceivable qua linked to an (3) articulated signifying chain. Whenever you have repression in neurosis, it is in so far as the subject does not want to recognize something which would necessitate - and this term necessitate always involves an element of signifying articulation

which is absolutely not conceivable otherwise than in the coherence of a discourse.

For perversion, it is exactly the same thing. Here is what, in 1923, following on Freud's article, all the psychoanalysts perceive : that perversion, essentially, if one looks closely at it, involves exactly the same mechanisms of the evasion of something which is fundamental to him, which forms part of the relationships of the subject to a certain number of essential terms which are well and truly the fundamental terms that we find in the analysis of neuroses, which are oedipal terms.

If there is, after all, some kind of difference, this difference deserves to be extremely closely circumscribed. It cannot in any case be content with an opposition so summary as that which would say that in neurosis, the drive is avoided, that in perversion it shows itself openly.

The drive appears, but it never appears except in a partial manner. It appears in something which, in relation to the instinct, is quite striking as being a detached element, a sign, (4) properly speaking, and we could even say a signifier of the instinct. That is why the last time in leaving you, I insisted for example on the instrumental element that there is for example in a whole series of so-called perverse phantasies, to limit ourselves for the moment to those, because it is best to begin with the concrete and not from a certain general idea that we may or may not have of the instinctual economy of an aggressive tension, of its reflections, of its ins and outs, of its refractions. This will still not account to us for the prevalence of certain elements whose character really not only emerges, but is properly speaking isolated in the prevalent, insistent, predominant form taken by these perversions in the form of phantasies, namely in the form of that through which they involve imaginary satisfaction.

These elements which have this privileged place - I spoke the last day about the shoe, I also talked about the whip - why are we not able to attach them purely and simply to something which arises from a pure and simple sort of biological economy of the instinct? The prevalent character of these elements which are isolated, of these instrumental elements which take a too obviously symbolic form for it to be overlooked for an instant, once one approaches the living reality of perversion, and this (5) constancy throughout the transformations in the course of the subject's life, shows the evolution of the perversion.

This constancy of a term which it, is always to be found, a point on which Hans Sachs also insists, is well of a nature to underline again for us the necessity of admitting as a final, irreducible element, an element whose place we must see in the subjective economy, but an element which must be retained as primordial, as essential to this signifier element in perversion.

So that, it is beginning with a phantasy isolated by Freud in a set of eight patients, six girls and two boys, with fairly

nuanced forms of neurosis, not all moreover neuroses, but a fairly important proportion statistically, it is beginning from the systematic and extremely careful study, followed step by step, with a scrupulousness which is precisely what distinguishes from all others, these investigations of Freud himself, when it is he who carries them out. It is through these subjects, however diverse they may be, by a search for the transformations of the economy, through the stages which are the stages of the Oedipus complex, of a particular phantasy, of the phantasy : a child is being beaten, that Freud begins to articulate fully what will subsequently develop as being the moment of the proper (6) investigation of perversions in his thinking, and I insist on it, which will show us more and more the importance in this economy, of something which is properly speaking, and as such, the operation of the signifier.

Moreover, there is something I can only point out in passing: I do not know if you have noticed that the last writings of Freud, one of his last articles, "Constructions in psychoanalysis", shows the central importance of the notion of the relationship of the subject to the signifier as being absolutely fundamental in forming a conception of everything that we are able to put together; and it is one of the last articles that Freud wrote, about what, when all is said and done, the mechanism of remembering represents as such in analysis, which is essentially linked as such to the signifying chain. It is quite clearly stated in this article, and the last article of Freud's that we have, the one which, in The Collected Papers, was translated under the title of "The splitting of the ego" - which I translate as division, or the break-up (*éclatement*) of the ego in the mechanism of the analytic symptom, the one on which it can be said that Freud stopped with the pen falling from his fingers; this article is unfinished, it is the last work that he bequeaths to us - closely links everything that is the economy of the ego with this dialectic of what we might call the perverse recognition of a certain theme with which the subject finds (7) himself confronted, closely links in an indissoluble knot, the function of the ego and the imaginary relationship as such, in the relationships of the subject to reality, and in so far as this imaginary relationship is utilized and integrated into the mechanism of the signifier.

Let us now take up the phantasy of "A child is being beaten".

Freud dwells on the subject of the meaning of this phantasy in which there appears to be absorbed, if not the entirety, at least an important part of the libidinal satisfactions of the subject. He insists, he saw it in the great majority of cases in feminine subjects, in fewer cases in masculine subjects.

It is not a question of just any sadistic or perverse phantasy, it is a question of those which culminate and are fixed in this form whose theme is approached by the subject in a very reticent fashion. It seems that a fairly large charge of guilt is linked for the subject, even to the communication of this theme which, once she has revealed it, given it, cannot for her be articulated differently, or otherwise than as : "a child is being beaten".

Is being beaten. This means that for the subject, it is not she who is beating, she is there as a spectator. Freud begins by analysing the matter as it occurs in the imagination of girls, in the feminine subjects who had to reveal this to him. It is a question of a person who considered in the totality of his characteristics, can be considered in the series of the successors of the person who has authority. It is not the (8) father, it is at times a primary school teacher, an all-powerful person, a king, a tyrant. Sometimes it is very romanticized; one recognizes, not the father, but something which is in a way the equivalent for us. We will be very easily able to situate him, and this really allows us to situate him right away in the completed form of the phantasy, not to content ourselves with this sort of homology with the father, not to assimilate him to the father, to place him in a certain point which is the beyond of the father, to situate him somewhere in this category of the name of the father which we take care to distinguish from the incidences of the real father.

It is a question of several children, of a kind of group, of a crowd, and they are always boys. This is something that gives rise to problems, and certainly so numerous that I could not even dream of covering them today. I ask you simply to refer to this article of Freud's. The first and fundamental of the readings that are involved, is the reading of Freud's own article, which appeared in the old Revue Française de Psychanalyse (Tome 6, no's. 3 & 4)

That it should finally for example always be boys who are beaten, namely subjects of a sex opposite to that of the subject of the phantasy, here is something on which one can speculate (9) indefinitely, try to refer in a way directly to themes like that of the rivalry between the sexes. For example it is on this that Freud will finish his article to show the apparent justifications of the profound incompatibility of theories, like for example that of Adler, to explain such a result. We are certainly not going to involve ourselves in this here, Freud's argumentation being purely and amply sufficient, and this is not where our principal interest lies. What interests us, is the way that Freud proceeds to tackle the problem. He gives us the results of his analyses, and he begins by talking about what happens in the girl because of the requirements of the presentation, in order not to have continually to state the two positions: this for the girl, this for the boy; then afterwards he takes up what moreover he has less material for, what happens in the case of the boy.

What does he tell us? He establishes invariabilities (constances). These invariabilities, he reports them to us. What seems essential to him, is the avatar of this phantasy, I mean the transformations that analytic investigation, the antecedents also that analytic investigation allows to be given to this phantasy, in fact the history of this phantasy, the underpinnings of this phantasy, and there he recognizes in it a (10) certain number of states in which something changes, something remains constant. It is a question of drawing a

teaching from this, of seeing what can represent for us this sort of result from this meticulous investigation, which also carries the same brand of precision and insistency, of coming back to work on his material, until he has really separated out what appear to him to be the irreducible articulations, which gives its originality to almost everything that Freud wrote.

But we especially, what we see in the five great psychoanalyses, in that admirable Wolfman in which he ceaselessly returns to the same theme which is to search out strictly the share of what can be called the symbolic origin and the real origin of what is the primitive chain in the history of the subject, is a very good example of it.

Here likewise, he separates out for us three stages, three moments. A first stage, he tells us, that one always finds on this occasion in girls, which is the following : the child who is beaten at a given moment of the analysis, unveils in every case, he tells us, its existence and its true features. It is a sibling, namely a brother or a sister. Therefore it is a little brother or a little sister whom the father beats. The signification of this, Freud tells us, is situated very clearly on two planes.

(11) What is the signification, he says to us, of this phantasy? It is very striking to see coming at this moment from Freud's pen this affirmation that there is here something of which we cannot say whether it is a question of something sexual, or of something sadistic. It is, he tells us, evoking there as he does, a literary reference, that of the response of one of the witches in Macbeth to Banquo, it is something which is composed in the same manner from which both, the sexual and sadistic, emerge.

We find ourselves well and truly here in the midst of what, in an article which will appear shortly afterwards, "The economic problem of masochism", Freud defines for us as really linked to this first step in which we must conceive that there is somewhere - this is absolutely required by the point that we are at, we are in 1923, namely after Beyond the pleasure principle - something like this point at which we must assume that there is primitively, at least for a major part, fusion of the instincts, liaison of the libidinal instincts, the life instincts with the death instincts ; that this fusion is something whose primitive state we must admit, so that we are lead to conceive instinctual evolution as involving a more or less precocious element of defusion of this instinct, that it was to the precocity of the defusion of this instinct, of the isolation for example of the (12) death-instinct, that we should attribute certain prevalent trends or certain stopping points in the evolution of the subject.

But at the same time Freud underlined that it is at the level of that the signification of this primitive phantasy is situated. It is in so far as of the father, and of the part of the father, he does not discover a higher stage of the phantasy; I mean a more archaic earlier stage; it is to the extent that on

the father's part something is refused, denied to this child, to the little brother or to the little sister who undergoes in the phantasy, the punishment on the part of the father, it is to the degree that there is a denunciation of the relationship of love, humiliation, that this subject is attacked in this phantasy in his existence as subject, that he is the object of a punishment and that this punishment consists in denying him as subject, in reducing to nothing his existence as desiring, in reducing him as such to something which qua subject, tends to abolish him.

This is the meaning of the primitive phantasy: my father does not love him; and this is what gives pleasure to the subject: the fact that the other is not loved, namely is not established in the relationship, which it, is properly symbolic. It is along this nerve, by this angle that the intervention of the father here takes on its primary, essential value for the subject, that on which everything that follows will depend.

(13) The second moment, Freud tells us - and this is no less important to consider than the articulation of the first moment (this first moment is discovered in the analysis, the other, he tells us, never is) - must be reconstructed.

What I put the accent on, and what I would ask you to dwell on, are the enormities of the Freudian deduction, of Freud's assertion, because that is the important thing. It is not simply to allow ourselves to be led, to follow him more or less blindfold, it is for us to grasp the importance of what he says.

This second moment must be reconstructed.

For the moment let us not stop to ask whether it is legitimate or not. It is very important for us to perceive what Freud is doing, and what he tells us to do, thanks to which the whole of his own construction can continue.

The second moment is this : the phantasy which is thus born in this triangular relationship, which I repeat, must be considered as archaic, primitive, and nevertheless is not between the subject and the mother and the child, but between the subject, the little brother or little sister, and the father. We are before the Oedipus complex, and nevertheless the father is there.

The second moment is linked to the relationship of the Oedipus complex as such, I mean for the little girl, and has this meaning of a privileged relationship of the little girl to her father. She is the one who is beaten and around this, the convergence of (14) the analytic material which requires the reconstruction of this state of the phantasy, but this phantasy has never emerged, Freud tells us, in the memory. On the contrary, the moment in the little girl, of the desire to be the object of desire of her father, with what that involves in terms of guilt, Freud admits that this could be the guilty return of this Oedipal desire which requires that she herself uniquely reconstructs the object of the punishment in this phantasy.

Freud speaks also in this connection of regression, namely that in so far as this message cannot be rediscovered in the memory of the subject, in so far as it is repressed, a correlative mechanism that in this connection he calls regression, can bring it about that it is to this previous relationship that the subject has recourse to express in a phantasy which is never brought to light, this relationship which the subject has at this moment with the father, a frankly libidinal relationship, already structured according to the oedipal mode.

In a third moment, and after the emergence from the Oedipus complex, there will remain nothing other than this general schema into which a new transformation will be introduced which is double: the figure of the father is superseded, transposed referred to the general form of the person who can beat, who is in a position to beat, an omnipotent and despotic person, and the subject herself will be presented there in the form of these multiple children who are no longer even of her own sex, (15) who are a kind of neutral series of children

Something which is in a way maintained, fixed, memorised one could say, in this last form of the phantasy, is this something which will subsequently remain for the subject invested with this property of constituting the privileged image upon which what the subject may experience properly speaking as genital satisfactions, will find their base, their support.

Here, it seems, is something which all the same merits our attention and our reflection.

What, in this schema, may the terms whose first usage I have tried to teach you here, come to represent?

I take up again my imaginary triangle and my symbolic triangle. The whole first dialectic of the symbolization of the relationship of the child to the mother, is essentially accomplished in terms of what is signifiable, that is in terms of what interests us. There are other things beyond, there is the object in fact which may present the mother as being as bearer of the breast, and the one who may bring certain immediate satisfactions to the child. But if there was only this, there would be no kind of development or of dialectic in the relationship of the subject to the child, nor any opening in the edifice. Subsequently, the relationship of the subject to the (16) child is not simply made up of a relationship of satisfaction or of frustration, it is constituted by this discovery of what is the object of the desire of the mother. It is essential for any understanding, and everything that I will subsequently tell you, will be there to demonstrate it. It is constituted at first from a recognition of what is the desire of the mother. It is to the degree that in a fashion which for the whole history of analysis, for the theory as for the practice, creates a problem, of knowing why at this privileged point of what constitutes the object of the desire of the mother, namely the world of the signified as it appears from the point of view of the subject, of the one who has to constitute himself in his

human adventure, of this little child we are speaking about, of the discovery that he has to make, which is about the privileged function in that which for the mother signifies her desire, the privileged function of the phallus.

When you read Jones' article on "The phallic phase", you will see the profound difficulties which arise from this affirmation of Freud's, that for both sexes there is something like an absolutely original, essential stage of what is closely linked to their sexual development, this stage at which for one and the other sex, the theme of the other as desiring other, is absolutely linked to the possession of the phallus.

This is what literally cannot be understood in a certain (17) register by almost all the people in Freud's entourage, even though they get into all sorts of contortions to admit it all the same, because the facts impose it on them in their articulation of something that happens in the history of the subject. It is because of the failure to understand that what Freud is posing here, is a pivotal signifier around which turns the whole dialectic of what the subject must conquer in himself, in his own being, because of which, for want of understanding that what is in question here is a signifier, and nothing else, the commentators exhaust themselves in rediscovering in the form of a thousand traces which of course correspond to their diverse experiences, something which is its equivalent, namely the reality against which, somewhere, the subject defends himself in the form of this belief in the phallus, and of course in this connection they collect an amount of extremely valuable facts, but never make of them any more than a particular case or a particular journey which still does not explain why this privileged, special element is taken as the centre and the pivot of the defence.

If you read particularly what Jones gives as the function of this belief in the phallus in the development of the boy, you will perceive that what he does in this connection, is very specially what happens at the level of the development of the homosexual, namely far from being the general development.

(18) It is the question here in effect of the most general form, and this most general form is only conceivable to the extent that one gives to this phallus the function - allow me a formula which is going to appear to you to be quite audacious, but we will never have to retract it, if you are willing to admit it for the moment in its condensed form for its operational use - I have told you that in a way within the signifying system, the name of the father has the function of the whole of the signifying system, the one who signifies, who authorises the signifying system to exist, who establishes its law. I am saying to you that frequently in the signifying system, we should consider that the phallus comes into play from the moment that the subject has to symbolize as such in this opposition of the signifier to the signified, the signified, I mean the signification.

What is important for the subject, what he desires, the desire qua desired, what is desired by the subject, when the neurotic or the pervert has to symbolise it, when all is said and done, it is literally with the help of the phallus. The signifier of the signified, is in general the phallus. This is essential. If you begin from there, you will understand a lot of things. If you do not start from there you will understand much less, and you will be forced to make considerable detours to understand extremely simple things.

This phallus is, here and now, what comes into play as such from (19) the first approach of the subject to the desire of the mother. This phallus is veiled and will remain veiled until the end of time for a simple reason, it is because it is a final signifier in the relationship of the signifier to the signified. There is in fact little chance that, when all is said and done, it will unveil itself otherwise than in its nature as signifier, namely that it will never really reveal itself, except qua signifier. It signifies.

Nevertheless we arrive at this: think of what happens in this case which is properly the one envisaged by Freud, and which we have not envisaged up to now, if at this place there intervenes something that is much less easy to articulate, to symbolize than anything imaginary, namely at this first phase which is indeed the one Freud designates for us, a real subject.

The desire of the mother is no longer simply the object of an enigmatic research in which the subject has, in the course of his development, to trace the sign, the phallus, so that subsequently of course this phallus enters into the symbolic dance, namely must subsequently be the precise object of castration, then is restored to him in another form, namely ensures that, first of all, there is a question about whether it is. It is, but we are right at the origin here, we are at the moment when he is confronted with the imaginary place in which the desire of the mother is situated, and this place is occupied.

(20) We cannot speak about everything at the same time, and besides it was a very good thing that we did not think of this from the beginning; if we had thought of this from the beginning, of this role which we all know to be decisively important in the onset of neuroses, it is enough to have the slightest experience in analysis to know how often the appearance of a little brother or a little sister has a really crucial role in the evolution of any neurosis. Only, if we stop first at this, that has exactly the same affect for us on our thinking as it has for the subject in his neurosis, namely that if we stop right away at this real relationship, this completely masks from us the function of this relationship, the namely that it is to the extent that this relationship comes in the place of what requires a quite different development, a development of symbolization, and that this complicates it and that this requires a quite different solution. That is the reason why this relationship to the brother or to the little sister, to any rival whatsoever, takes on its decisive value.

While here, what do we see in the case of the phantasy solution linked to the phantasy which on this occasion is called masochistic?

We see something whose nature Freud has articulated for us. This subject is abolished on the symbolic plane. It is in so far as he is nothing at all that he is something to which one refuses (21) any consideration as a subject, that the child finds in this particular case the beating phantasy. It is in this guise, and in so far as the child is going to achieve this solution of the problem at this level.

We only have to limit ourselves to the case in which this is what occurs, but to understand what happens in the case where it is like that, it is effectively a question of a symbolic act, and Freud firmly underlines it: what happens to this child, happens to the subject himself who believes himself to be someone in the family. A single smack, Freud tells us, often suffices to dislodge him from his belief in his omnipotence. It is indeed a question of a symbolic act, and I would say that the very form which comes into play in the phantasy, namely the whip, the cane, has something which in itself carries itself the character and the nature of something or other which, on the symbolic plane, is expressed by a stroke, by something which bars the subject. Before being anything else, or some, something which can be attributed to some sort of physical relationship of the subject with the one who opens himself; it is above all from something which strikes him out, which bars him, which abolishes him, that something of the signifier intervenes.

This is so true, that when the child later on - all of this is in Freud's article, I am following it line by line - effectively encounters the act of beating, namely when at school she sees (22) before her a child being beaten, says Freud, and simply on the basis of his experience of the same subjects from whom he extracted the story of this phantasy, she does not find this in the least bit funny. I mean that this inspires in her something of the order of indignation, (it is badly translated in French), namely an aversion, she turns her head away. The subject is obliged to put up with it, but she has nothing to do with it, she keeps herself at a distance from it. The subject is far from participating in what really happens when she is confronted with an actual scene of beating. So that in the phantasies - Freud comes to this also, and indicates it very precisely - the very pleasure of this phantasy is manifestly linked to its unserious, inoperative character that it does not touch what one might call the real or physical integrity of the subject. It is indeed its symbolic character as such which is eroticised, and this from the beginning.

Here the second moment, and this has its importance in order to give its value to this schema which I introduced to you the last time, is this: this phantasy in the second moment will take on a completely different value, and it is this indeed which is the enigma, which is the whole enigma. It is the essence of masochism, it is in the change of meaning of this phantasy as such, namely how this thing which served to deny love, is the very thing which will serve to signify it.

(23) When it is the subject that is in question, there is no way of getting out of this impasse, and I am not telling you that this is something which is easy to grasp as it is explained, as it is unfolded. We must hold on first of all to the fact, namely that this is the way it is, and after that we will try to understand why it should be that way; in other words, why the introduction of this radical signifier which divides into two things, a message: a child is being beaten, the subject receives the news, the little rival is a beaten child, namely a nothing at all, something that one can treat with contempt and then from this a signifier that must be isolated as such, namely with what this is. done.

The fundamental character in this effective existence of the masochistic phantasy in the existing subject, is not some kind or other of model, of ideal reconstruction of the evolution of the instincts. The fundamental character is the existence of the whip, it is something which in itself deserves to be stressed for us so that we may make of it something which is a signifier, which is something which in the series of our hieroglyphs, deserves to have a privileged place, for a simple reason, first of all it is because if you pay attention to hieroglyphs, you will see that there is a privileged place: the one who holds the (24) whip was from the earliest times the director, the governor, the master, and this is what is in question, it is a question of not losing sight of the fact that this exists, and that this is what we have to deal with.

This, at the second moment, also manifests therefore in its complicity a message, but a message which does not arrive. It is this: "my father beats me", does not reach the subject. This is how what Freud says at that moment must be understood: the message which at a moment meant: "the rival does not exist, he is nothing at all", is the same as that which means: "you exist and you are even loved." This is what emerges at this moment, in what we can call a regressive or repressed form. But it does not matter, it is this all the same which serves as a message, but as a message which does not arrive.

It is right that we should dwell on this enigmatic moment, because as Freud tells us, it is the whole essence of masochism, and from the moment when Freud tackled, fundamentally attacked, the problem of masochism as such, namely the beyond of the pleasure principle, from that moment when he searched for what was the radical value of masochism, of this masochism which he encounters as an opposition and a radical enemy, he was obliged to pose it in different terms, and we find there something in which it is certainly not for nothing that three years after writing Beyond the pleasure principle, he says that here is the (25) whole essence of masochism.

It is worth our while to dwell on this, even if we go at it precisely step by step. One must begin by seeing the paradox, and by seeing where it is. Here therefore we have the message, the one that does not come to the place of the subject, and the only thing which on the contrary remains as a sign, is the

material of the signifier, this object, the whip, remains. It remains as a sign to the end, and to the point of remaining as a sign, of becoming the pivot, I would almost say the model of the relationship with the desire of the other, because subsequently the last phantasy, that which remains, whose character of generality is very well indicated to us by the indefinite multiplication of subjects at that moment, means this: namely my relationship with the other, the others, the little others, with the little o, my relationship with those, in so far as this relationship is a libidinal relationship is linked to this, it is that human beings are as such all under the rod, that to be a human being who has entered into the world of desire, it is well and truly and in the first place to suffer from this something which exists beyond - that we should call it the father has no longer any importance here, it does not matter, it is the law.

Here is what in a particular subject, no doubt getting into the affair by particular pathways, how a certain line of evolution is defined, and what is the function of the final phantasy, for (26) manifesting an essential relationship of the subject to the signifier.

And now let us go a little further, and let us recall what Freud puts forward about masochism. Let us recall what the new thing introduced by Beyond the pleasure principle consists in, in the evolution of Freudian thought. It rests essentially on this remark that if we consider the mode of resistance or of inertia of the subject to a certain curative, normative, normalising intervention we are led to articulate in an absolute fashion the pleasure principle as this tendency of everything which is life, to return to the inanimate. The last resort of libidinal evolution, is to return to the stillness of the stones.

Here is what Freud, to the great scandal moreover of all those for whom the notion of libido had up to then been the law of their thought, brings forward, which presents itself as both paradoxically new, and even scandalous when it is expressed as I have just done, as not presenting itself otherwise than as a kind of extension of that which had been given as the very law of the pleasure principle, namely pleasure being characterised by the return of tension to zero. There is in fact no more radical return to zero than death. Simply you can notice, at the same time, that here, it is this formulation that we give to the first (27) source of pleasure. We are all the same forced to call it a beyond of the pleasure principle, in order to distinguish it.

One of the most unusual problems of his life and of his person, is the relationship Freud had to women, which perhaps we will one day have occasion to come back on, a fairly deplorable tendency to receive from the feminine constellation, which he had around him, in the females who continued or who helped his thought, a constellation which moreover is indeed in conformity with his very existence, therefore very deprived of women or depriving itself of them. We scarcely know more than two women connected with Freud: his wife and then his sister-in-law who lived in the shadow of the couple. We really do not have any trace of

anything else which might be a properly love relationship. On the other hand, it is enough for a person like Barbara Low to propose a term, I might say, so poorly adapted as the term Nirvana Principle, for Freud to give it his sanction.

The relationship between the Nirvana Principle and this notion of returning to inanimate nature, is pretty approximate, and Freud was satisfied with it. Let us be also satisfied with it.

If the Nirvana Principle is therefore the very rule and law of vital evolution as such, Freud recognises it. There must therefore be somewhere a device so that from time to time at (28) least it is not the falling off of pleasure which is pleasurable, but on the contrary its increase. It is here therefore that he expresses himself. He says the following: we are absolutely unable to say why. It must be something along the lines of a temporal rhythm, of a kind of agreement between terms. He allows there to appear at the horizon possibilities of recourse to explanations which, if they could be given, would certainly not be vague, but which are in any case well outside our reach. In fact, it is rather in the sense of the music, of the harmony of the spheres and of its pulsations. In any case it must be remarked, that it is all the same necessary from the moment that we have admitted that the principle of pleasure is to return to death, that effective pleasure, that with which we have to deal concretely, therefore requires another order of explanations which can only be in some device of life, namely to make subjects believe one might say, that it is indeed for their pleasure that they are there, namely that one goes back to the greatest philosophical banalities, namely that the veil of Maya only keeps us in existence thanks to the fact that it lures us, and then beyond the possibility of attaining, either this pleasure, or the pleasure of making all sorts of detours, the reality principle.

This, is the beyond of the pleasure principle, and it requires (29) nothing less for Freud than that to modify, to justify the existence of what he calls the negative therapeutic reaction. But nevertheless here we should all the same stop for a moment, because in fact the negative therapeutic reaction does not appear at the level of a kind of stoical reaction of the subject, it manifests itself in all sorts of things which are extraordinarily awkward, burdensome, and articulated, of extra trouble that it gives to us and to his entourage.

In other words, this "better not to have been born" (?) still appears to be one of the better fates which could befall a being, this "better not to have been born" on which the Oedipal drama terminates. It is something articulated. I would say that at the moment that Oedipus finishes by articulating it as the term and the end of his tragedy, to give us the meaning at which in the final analysis the whole tragic adventure culminates, it is all the same something which, very far from abolishing him, makes him eternal for the simple reason that if Oedipus had not been able to pronounce it, he would not have been this supreme hero that he is, and it is precisely in so far as he finally

articulates it, that he is this hero, namely in so far as one might say he eternalises himself.

What is at stake in what Freud discovers as the beyond of the pleasure principle, is that perhaps there is in fact this final term of the aspiration for repose and for eternal death. But I would point out to you, and this was the whole meaning of my (30) second year of seminars, that the way in which we have to deal with this, is in so far as it makes itself recognised, that it articulates itself in the final resistances with which we have to deal in these subjects who are more or less characterized by the fact of having been unwanted children, in this irresistible slide towards suicide, in this quite specific character of the negative therapeutic reaction, because of the fact that it is in the very measure that there is better articulated for them that which should make them approach their own history as subjects, they more and more refuse to play the game, they literally want to get out of it. They do not accept being what they are, and they do not want anything to do with this signifying chain into which they were only reluctantly admitted by their mother.

But this is something which is only there for us analysts, as being exactly that which is in the remainder. It is there, not just as the desire for recognition, but as the recognition of a desire, something that is articulated. The signifier is its essential dimension, and the more the subject affirms himself with the help of the signifier as wanting to get out of it, the more he enters and integrates himself into this signifying chain and becomes himself a sign of this signifying chain. If he abolishes himself, he is more of a sign than ever, for the simple (31) reason that it is precisely from the moment when the subject is dead that he becomes an eternal sign for others, and suicides more than anybody else. This is indeed the reason why suicide has at once this horrific beauty which makes it so terribly condemned by men, and this contagious beauty which brings it about that epidemics of suicide are something which are very obvious and very real in experience.

Once again therefore, that on which Freud puts the accent in Beyond the pleasure principle, is the desire for recognition as such, as being the basis of what constitutes our relationship to the subject. And after all, is there even anything other than this in what Freud calls the the beyond of the pleasure principle, namely this fundamental relationship of the subject to the signifying chain? Because, if you even think about it, at the point at which we are, this idea tends to the pretended inertia of inanimate nature in order to give us the model of that to which life aspires, and this is something which should make us smile. I mean that as a model of returning to nothingness, nothing is less assured, and Freud himself moreover on occasion, in a small little parenthesis which I would ask you to find in "The economic problem of masochism", when he evokes his own Beyond the pleasure principle", indicates to us that in so far as (32) inanimate nature, is this something which is effectively conceivable as the return to the lowest level of tension and of repose. In fact, at the point at which we are, we know a little

bit about it: this pretended point of view which is supposed to be the reduction to nothing of this thing which is supposed to have arisen and which is supposed to be life, there is nothing to indicate to us that in it too one might say, it is not active and that the pain of being which is there as its basis, I do not give rise to it, I do not extrapolate it. It is indicated by Freud as being that something which must be considered as the last residue of the liaison of Thanatos with Eros. Without any doubt Thanatos manages to liberate itself by the motor aggressiveness of the subject vis-a-vis his entourage. Nature is there, but there is something which remains well linked within it, this pain of being is something which appears really fundamental to him, as being linked to the very existence of the living being.

There is nothing to prove to us that this pain of being is something which is limited to living beings, after all that we know about a nature which is fermenting, stagnating, bubbling, animated, and even explosive as we can up to now imagine it.

But the relationship of the subject to the signifier, in so far as he is called on to constitute himself in the signifier, and that from time to time he refuses it, he says no, I will not be (33) an element of the chain, this on the contrary is something which is tangible for us, and which is well and truly the foundation, but the foundation, the bottom here is exactly the same thing as the top, because what does he do every time that he refuses in some way to pay a debt that he has not contracted? He does nothing other than to perpetuate it, namely by his successive refusals to make emerge again the chain of what is always still more linked to this signifying chain. It is well and truly through the eternal necessity of repeating the same refusal, that Freud shows us the final role of everything which from the unconscious, manifests itself in the form of symptomatic reproduction.

Therefore we see there, and nothing less than this is necessary, to understand why from the moment that the signifier is introduced, its value is fundamentally double, I mean how the subject can as himself, feel himself affected as desire, because after all here it is himself, it is not the other, the other with the whip, and he is abolished, but in contact with the whip he is imaginary, of course signifying, he feels himself as desire up against that which as such consecrates him and gives him a value in profaning him. There is even always in this masochistic phantasy this degrading aspect, this profaning aspect which at the same time indicates a dimension of recognition, and this mode (34) of relationship with the forbidden subject, with the paternal subject. This is indeed what constitutes the basis of the unrecognised part of the subject's phantasy.

Let us observe that this is going to have this radically double meaning aspect of the signifier, from the moment that it is introduced, and here again facilitated for the access of the subject by the following which I neither took into account, nor brought into play up to now in the schema in order not to stretch your minds too much. Because the last time there were terrible

complications from the moment that I introduced the parallel line i-e namely the existence at some given moment of the proper image of the body with the ego of the subject. It is however quite certain that we cannot overlook it, it is namely that of course this rival here has not intervened purely and simply into a triangular relationship, the radical obstacle to the mother of this something which, in The Confessions of St. Augustine, provokes in the young suckling who sees his milk brother with the mother, this deadly pallor that St. Augustine tells us about.

There is in fact there something radical, something really deadly for the subject, which is well expressed in this passage. But there is also the term of identification with the other. In other words, the fundamentally ambiguous character which links the subject to every image of the other, forms there the quite (35) natural introduction for the subject to this introduction to the place of the rival at the same place, or after him, in so far as it is he who is there. From that moment, the same message will arrive with a completely opposite sense in so far as it simply is the message.

What we will then see, is something which will make us better understand what is in question, it is that to the extent that a part of the relationship enters into liaison with the ego of the subject as such, that the subsequent phantasies can take on their organisation and their structure. I mean that it is not for nothing that it is here in this dimension, that which is the whole range of intermediaries in which there is constituted the reality between the primitive maternal object and the image of the subject, that all the others come to situate themselves in so far as they are the support of the significant object, namely of the whip. At that moment, the phantasy in its signification, I mean the phantasy qua beaten child, in so far as it becomes from that moment the relationship with the Other, with the Other that one must be loved by, in so far in fact as he himself is not recognised as such, situates himself somewhere here in the symbolic dimension between the father and the mother, between whom besides he effectively oscillates.

Today I have made you follow a path which was not less difficult (36) than the path I made you take the last time. To test its value and its validity, wait for what I will have to tell you later. To end with something which may introduce a little suggestive note in the applications of these terms, I would like to point out this to you, it is that it is taken as something common in analysis, that the relationship of the man to the woman and of the woman to the man especially, is a relationship which is said without going any further to involve on the part of the woman a certain masochism. This presents one of the characteristic errors of perspective to which we are led all the time by some slippage or other into a sort of confusion or rut of our experience. It is not because masochists manifest in their relationships with their partner certain signs or phantasies of a typically feminine position, that inversely the relationship of the woman to the man is a masochistic relationship. By that I mean that the notion of the relationship of the woman to the man

as being someone who is beaten, is something which may well be a perspective of the masculine subject, in so far as the feminine position interests him. But it is not because the masculine subject in certain perspectives, whether they are his own or whether they are those of his clinical experience, perceives a certain liaison between the taking up of the feminine position, and something which has more or less relationship with the signifier of the position of the subject, that effectively there (37) is there a position that is radically and constitutionally feminine.

This remark I make to you in passing, only in connection with what is called and with what Freud himself in the article on the economic problem of masochism introduces under the name of feminine masochism. It is very important to make such a correction.

I did not have time to approach what I had to say to you about the relationships of the phallus to comedy. I regret this, but I will put it off to our next meeting.

Seminar 14 t Wednesday 5 March 1958

My dear friends,

To take up again our discourse which has been interrupted for three weeks, **I** will begin with what we were quite rightly recalling last night, that our discourse should be a scientific discourse.

This having been said, it appears that to attain this end, the ways are not so easy when it is our object that is in question.

Last night **I** simply pointed out the originality of the moment that is constituted in the examination of human phenomena, by the putting in the foreground, the focussing constituted by the whole Freudian discipline on this privileged element which is called desire.

I pointed out to you that up to Freud, this element was in itself always reduced, and in some way prematurely elided, and this is what allows us to say that up to Freud, the whole study of human (2) affairs began to a greater or lesser extent from a concern about morality, about ethics, in the sense that it is less a question of studying desire than here and now of reducing and disciplining it. Now, it is with the effects of desire in a very broad sense, desire is not one of the ancilliary effects, the effects of desire, that we have to deal in psychoanalysis.

This is the meaning of everything that **I** try to recall to you here, about what manifests itself in these phenomena of human desire, namely its fundamental subduction, even subversion, by a .certain relationship which is the relationship of desire to the signif ier.

Today it is not so much this that **I** will be recalling to you again, even though we should go back to it to begin again from it, but **I** will show you what it signifies in a rigorous perspective, that which maintains the originality which conditions the desire of man, one that represents for him this something which is always for you more or less implicated in the way you handle this notion of desire and which deserves to be distinguished from it; **I** would say further: which cannot begin to be articulated except from the moment that we are sufficiently imbued with the notion of the complexity in which there are constituted this desire and this notion which **I** am talking about.

which is going to be the other pole of today's discourse. It is called jouissance.

(3) Taking up again briefly that which constitutes as such this deviation, alienation of desire in the signifier, we will try to end up with what can constitute in this perspective, this end-term which consists in the fact that the human subject in his world, tackles these very conditions which are imposed on him, as if these conditions were made for him, and as if he should be satisfied by them.

This, I indicate it to you right away, will make us end up - I hope to arrive at it today - at that which I already indicated at the beginning of the year, in taking things from the perspective of the witticism, at the nature of comedy.

Let us recall this briefly, that desire is essentially set up in a relationship to the signifying chain, that desire poses itself and proposes itself first of all in the evolution of the human subject as demand, that frustration in Freud is Versagung, that is refusal, or more exactly still, retraction.

No matter how far back we go with the Kleinians into genesis, observe that this exploration which certainly was a progress, which leads us in the majority of the problems of the evolution of the neurotic subject to the so called oral-sadistic satisfaction, observe simply that this satisfaction takes places in a phantasy, here and now and right away, in retortion to the phantasised satisfaction.

(4) We are told: everything begins from the need to bite, which is sometimes aggressive, of the little child with respect to the body of the mother. Let us all the same not forget that all this never consists in a real biting, that what we have here are phantasies and that none of this deduction can take even a step forward except by showing us that the fear of being bitten in return is here the essential core of what is involved, of the very thing that it is a question of demonstrating.

So that when I was talking last night with one of you who is trying to take up, after Susan Isaacs, some worthwhile definitions of the terra phantasy, he told me quite rightly of his .complete failure to make any deduction whatsoever from it which was founded purely and simply on the imaginary relationship between the subjects. It is absolutely impossible to distinguish in a valid way unconscious phantasies from this formal creation which is the operation of the imagination, if we do not see here and now that, the unconscious phantasy is dominated, structured by the conditions of the signifier.

The good and bad primordial objects, the primitive objects beginning from which the whole analytic deduction is remade, constitute a sort of battery in which there are outlined several series of substitutes here and now destined to equivalence: milk and the breast, subsequently become, on the one hand sperm and on the other hand, the penis. Here and now objects are, if

(5) I may express myself in this way, made into signifiers
(signifiantises) .

What is produced from the relationship with the most primordial object, the maternal object, operates right away, here and now, by means of signs, by means of what we could call to give an Image to what we mean, the small change of the desire of the other. And what I indicated to you the last time by looking as closely as was necessary in order to see it properly, this work which Freud considers as decisive, I underlined for you that it marked the inaugural step in the understanding by analysts, a real, authentic comprehension, of the problem of perversion; what we did then the last time, was of a nature to make you perceive that in these very signs, a division can take place. All these signs are more complicated, more exactly the totality of signs is not reducible to what we could call what I already indicated to you as being titles, kinds of the fiduciary values: to have this or that. They are not purely and simply representative values, small change as we just said above, and as it were signs constituted as such. There are among these signs which are constituting signs, I mean through which the creation of value is assured, I mean by means of which this something real which is engaged at every instant in this economy, is struck by this (6) bar (balle) which makes of it a sign.

This bar constituted the last time by this sign of the handle of a whip or of anything else that strikes, is this something through which even a disagreeable effect becomes the distinction and the establishment of the very relationship by which the demand can be recognised as such, that by which what was at first a means of cancelling out the rival reality of the brother, becomes secondarily this something through which the subject herself finds herself distinguished, through which she herself is recognised as something which can be either recognised, or cast into nothingness, this something which here and now presents itself therefore as the surface on which can be inscribed everything that can be subsequently given, a sort of blank cheque, I might say, with which every sort of gift is possible. And you can of course see that because all gifts are possible, it is just as well that it is not even a question of what can or cannot be given, because here it is question of this relationship of love which I tell you is constituted by what the subject essentially gives her, namely what she does not have. Everything that is possible in terms of this introduction to the order of love, supposes this fundamental sign by the subject, which can be either cancelled out, or recognised as such.

I asked you during this interval to do some reading. I hope that you have done it, I mean that you have at least occupied (7) yourselves a little with "The phallic phase" by Mr. Jones, and with the early development of feminine sexuality.

I only want, because I must advance to-day, to punctuate for you in connection with an example which is an altogether localised example, I discovered it in looking at what had been said for a certain anniversary commemorating Jones's fiftieth birthday, and

which coincided with the epoch when this phallic phase came to the forefront of the interest of English psychoanalysts, and in this number I re-read once more with great interest this article by Joan Riviere in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, Vol. X entitled: "Womanliness as a masquerade".

Pursuing the analysis of a specified case which is not the general case of the function of femininity, Joan Riviere shows how in a case that she situates with respect to diverse branches, the pathways that are possible in the accession to femininity, how one of these cases demonstrated for her, presented herself as having a femininity all the more remarkable in its apparently absolutely complete assumption, in that it was precisely in one of those subjects whose whole life could seem otherwise to be at the time, even much more than in our day, showed the assumption of every masculine function. In other words, it is a question of someone who had a perfectly independent, well-developed, free, (8) professional life and who nevertheless, which I repeat, was more striking at that time than in our own, manifested by a sort of correlative and maximal assumption, to the highest degree, what one can call her feminine functions; this not only in the open, public form, the functions of mistress of the house, in her relationships with her spouse, as everywhere showing the superiority of qualities which in our social situation are necessarily univocal cases, in all the social situations of what is the responsibility of women, and particularly in another register, very especially on the sexual plane, something entirely satisfying in her relationships to men, in other words in the louissance of that relationship.

Now, this analysis highlights behind this apparently total satisfaction with the feminine position, something very hidden which nevertheless constitutes its basis, something which without any doubt is what one discovers after one has been pushed towards it all the same by some tiny, some infinitely tiny discordance appearing at the surface of this state which in principle is completely satisfying.

This something hidden, it is interesting to show it, because you know the importance, the stress, which our experience has put on Penisneid, the exigency for the penis, in many of the disturbances of the development of feminine sexuality. Here what is hidden, is indeed the complete opposite, it is namely that this phallus is called for - I cannot go through the whole story of this woman, that is not our objective today - but the source of the fundamental satisfaction supports what apparently flourishes in this happy libido, is the hidden satisfaction of her supremacy over her parents.

This is the very term used by Joan Riviere, and it is considered by her to be at the very source of what appears with a character which is not all that certain in the evolution of feminine sexuality, because it is not noticed in this case. The source of the satisfying character of the organ itself, is the proof that precisely from the detection of this hidden source of the personality in the subject herself, procures, if only in a

transitory fashion, this effect of profoundly disturbing what had been acquired or appeared in the subject as a complete, mature and happy relationship, having even brought about for a time the disappearance of the favourable outcome of the sexual act.

Therefore what we find ourselves in the presence of, underlines Joan Riviere, is this: that it is in function of the need in the subject to avoid on the part of men the retortion for this surreptitious subtraction from the other of the source and very symbol of their power, which to the degree that the analysis (10) unfolds, that the analysis advances, appears to be more and more obviously guided, and dominated, and given the meaning of the relationship of the subject with persons of either sex. It is in the measure that this is necessary in order to avoid the punishment, the retortion on the part of the men who are aimed at here, that the subject in a scansion which is very subtle, but which appears all the more clearly as the analysis advances, which however was already perceptible in these little anomalous features of the analysis, every time in fact that the subject gave proof of her constituted phallic power, she precipitates herself into a series of steps, either of seduction or even of sacrificial procedures, to do everything for others, and precisely apparently adopting here the most elevated forms of feminine devotedness, as something which consists in saying: "but look, I do not have the phallus, I am a woman, and purely a woman", masking herself especially in the measures which immediately follow with regard to men, in those professional duties for example, in which she shows herself to be highly qualified, suddenly adopting by a sort of avoidance, the attitude of someone extremely modest, even anxious, about the quality of what she does, and in reality playing a completely coquettish role, as Joan Riviere puts it, which at that moment serves, not so much to reassure as to deceive in her mind what might often be offended at this something which in her appears essentially and (11) fundamentally as aggression, as the need and jpuissance of supremacy as such, as profoundly structured on a whole history which is that of rivalry with her mother first of all, and then with her father.

In short, in the case of an example like this, however paradoxical it may appear, we can indeed see that what is at Stake in an analysis, in the understanding of a subjective structure, is always something which shows us the subject engaged as such in a process of recognition, but of the recognition of what? Let us understand it properly, because the subject is unconscious of this need for recognition, and this is why we must situate somewhere this other necessity in every relationship of recognition,, situate it in the alterity of a quality which we have not known up to now, nor up to Freud, that which makes of it the pure and simple place of signifier by which a being is divided from her own existence, which makes of the fate of the human subject something essentially linked to her relationship with this sign of being which is made up of this sign of being the object of all sorts of passions which make death present in this very process, in that it is in her link to this sign that the subject is sufficiently detached from herself to have this

relationship apparently unique in the creation to her own (12) existence, which is the final form of that which in analysis, we call masochism, namely this something through which the subject apprehends the pain of existing.

This division in which the subject finds himself constituted from the first as existence. Why? Because elsewhere his being has to represent itself in the sign, and the sign itself is in a third place. This is what from the unconscious level, structures the subject in this decomposition of himself without which it is impossible for us to ground in any valid way what is called the unconscious.

Take the smallest dream you like, you will see, on condition that you analyse it correctly, by referring to the Traumdeutung that it is not in what presents itself in the dream as articulated signifier, even when the first decipherment has been done, that the unconscious is embodied. In every case Freud comes back to it, and underlines it. There are dreams, he tells us, which are hypocritical, they are nonetheless the representation of a desire, even if it is only the desire to deceive the analyst. Remember what I underlined for you from this fully articulated passage in the analysis a case of female homosexuality.

But this discourse, itself unconscious, but which is not the last word on the unconscious, is supported by what is really the final (13) source of the unconscious. It cannot be articulated otherwise than as desire for recognition by the subject, even if it is through a lie articulated here and now at the level of mechanisms which escape from consciousness, a desire for recognition which the lie itself sustains on this occasion, which may present itself in a false perspective as a lie of the unconscious.

This gives you the meaning and the key to the necessity in which we find ourselves of posing at the origin of every analysis of the complete subjective phenomenon, as it is given to us by analytic experience, this schema in terms of which I try to advance the authentic pathway of the experience of the formations of the unconscious, and it is the one which I put forward before you recently in this form which I can today present for you in fact in a more simple fashion. It is of course the simplest forms which should be the last to be brought forward.

Here what have we got in this triangle (angle) with three poles which constitutes the position of the subject?

The subject in so far as in his relationship with a triad of terms which are the signifying foundations of his whole progress, namely the mother in so far as she is the first object to be symbolized, as her absence or her presence are going to become for the subject the sign of the desire onto which his own desire is going to fasten, in other words what is going to make or not make of him, not simply a child who is satisfied or not, but a child who is desired or not desired.

(14) This does not constitute an arbitrary construction. You should recognize that I am setting up here something that our experience has taught us to discover step by step. We have learned by experience the cascading consequences, the almost infinite déstructuration, that is involved in the fact for a subject of having already been, before his birth, a child who was or was not desired.

This term is essential, it is more essential than to have been at one or other moment a more or less satisfied child. The term "desired child" is the one which responds to the constitution of the mother as locus of desire. To this there corresponds all this dialectic of the relationship of the child to the desire of the mother, which I tried to show you, and which can be resumed, which can be concentrated in this, in the primordial fact of the symbol of the desired child, and here the term "father", in so far as it is in the signifier, this signifier by which the signifier itself is posed as such, and it is for this reason that the father is essentially creator, I would even say absolute creator, the one who creates with nothing. It is in so far as he can contain in himself the signifier in its original dimension, that he can define himself as the emergence of this signifier.

It is with respect to this that something essentially confused, indeterminate, not separated out from its existence, and (15) nevertheless made to be separated out from it, this subject in so far as he must be signified, has to locate himself.

If identifications are possible, it is always in the measure in that something is structured for the subject within this triadic relationship constituted at the level of the signifier, and if he can manage within his own lived experience to give such and such a meaning to this something which is given to him by his particular human physiology, it is in this relationship that this is constituted. Now, I do not need to come back to the fact of the homology of terms of what constitutes this homology at the level of the signified, from the aspect where the subject is in relation to these three symbolic terms. I demonstrated it in part; when all is said and done, that is in part all that I am doing here. I would ask you until you have fuller information, a fuller demonstration, to follow me on this. It is in the relationship to his own image that the subject rediscovers the duplicity of the maternal desire for him as a desired child, who is only symbolic. He feels it, he experiences it in this relationship to the image of himself onto which so many things can come to be superimposed, this something which can be illustrated by an example. I will do it right away.

Last night I alluded to the fact that I had looked rather closely at the history of the childhood of Gide as Jean Delay presents it to us in a really exhaustive fashion, in the pathographical study that he has published on this case. It is quite clear that (16) Gide, the unfortunate child as the author says somewhere at the sight of a photograph before which he felt himself trembling, that Gide, the unfortunate child, the child given over in his eroticism, primitive autoeroticism, to the most

disorganised images, because he tell us, he was able to have orgasm by his identification with situations that were in some way catastrophic, very early on he found his enjoyment in the reading of some terms, in reading Madame de Segur for example, whose books are really fundamental in terms of the ambiguity of primordial sadism, but in which the sadism is not perhaps very elaborated, in which he took the form of a beaten child, of a servant girl who lets something fall with a great crash and destroys what she was holding in her hands; or the identification with the character Gribouille in an tale by Andersen, who lets himself be swept away by the river and ends up by arriving at a distant bank, transformed into a dead rat, that is to say in the least humanly constituted forms of this pain of existing. Undoubtedly we can learn here nothing other than this bottomless thing which is constituted in his first relationship with a mother who we know had both very high and very remarkable qualities, and also something totally elided in her sexuality, in (17) her feminine life, which assuredly places the child in her presence in his first years in a totally unsituated position.

The turning point, the point at which the life of the young Gide takes on what one might call a human meaning and organization, is in this crucial moment of entification which is given to us as clearly as it is possible to be, in his memory, and which leaves in an undoubted fashion its mark on all his existence, because he also conserved its pivotal point and object throughout his whole existence, in this identification to his young cousin whose term it is not enough to give in this vague form. It is certainly identification, he tells us as much. When? At this moment whose singular character is not sufficiently dwelt on, when he discovers his cousin in tears on the second floor of this house where he has hurried, not so much drawn by her as by his taste, by his love for the clandestine which is rampant in this house, after having crossed the first landing where he sees the mother of this cousin, his aunt, or more exactly glimpses her more or less in the arms of a lover, he finds his cousin in tears and then it is all intoxication, enthusiasm, love, distress and devotion. He devotes himself to the protection of this child, he tells us later. Let us not forget that he was older than her; at that time Gide was thirteen years old and Madeleine was four.

.(18) At that moment there happens something whose meaning we can absolutely not understand if we do not situate it in this third relationship in which the young Andre find himself, not just with his cousin, but with the person who on the floor below is in the midst of a passionate scene, and if we do not remember the previous event that Andre Gide tells us about in La Porte Btroite, namely an attempt at seduction carried out by the aforesaid mother of his cousin.

What then happens, is something which can be described how? He, Andre Gide, has become the desired child at the moment of this seduction from which moreover he fled in horror, because in effect there is nothing there to bring in this element of mediation, this element of approach which makes of it something

other than a trauma, he found himself for the first time nevertheless in the position of a desired child.

This moment produces as an outcome this new situation, which in a certain way is going to be salvific for him, which is going nevertheless to fix him in a profoundly divided position because of the tardy, and I repeat unmediated way in which this encounter occurs.

What will he hold onto in the constitution of this symbolic term which up to then was lacking for him? He will hold on to nothing other than the place of the desired child which he will (19) finally be able to occupy through the intermediary of his cousin, at that place where there was a hole there is now a place, but nothing more, because at that place of course he refuses, he can not accept the desire of which he is the object, but on the contrary his ego incontestably is not to identify itself, and this without ever knowing it, to the subject of the desire on which he is now dependent, it is for himself to be always in love, and until the end of his existence, to be always in love with this little boy that he was for a moment in the arms of his aunt, of this aunt who caressed his neck, his shoulders and his chest. And we will see that his whole life is in what we can affirm, namely in what he admits to us, namely that beginning with his honeymoon, everyone is amazed at this and is scandalized by it, and almost in front of his wife, he thinks of the tortured delight - as he expresses itself - of the caressing of the arms and the shoulders of young boys that he meets on the train. Here we have a celebrated piece of writing, which forms part of literature, in which Gide shows what for him remains the privileged point of every fixation of his desire.

In other words, that which at the level of what becomes for him his ego ideal, that which was withdrawn here, namely the desire of which he is the object and which he cannot bear, he assumes for himself, he becomes forever and eternally in love with this same caressed little boy that he himself had not wanted to be.

(20) In other words what we grasp here is this: that between this term of desired child where something must be elaborated, where it is necessary to rejoin this signifier which primordially constitutes the subject in his being, it is necessary that this .ego, this point X where it is, rejoins it in some way or other, that there should be constituted here this ego ideal which marks the whole psychological development of the subject. This ego ideal is marked:

1) by the sign of the signifier;

2) by the knowledge that it can start from, namely by progression beginning with the ego, or on the contrary without the ego being able to do anything other than to submit through a series of accidents, given over to adventures which begin with the signifier itself, in other words to recognise that what happens without the subject knowing it, by a simple succession of accidents, from what allows him to subsist in his signifying

position of a child who is more or less desired, this something is there which shows us that it is at the same place depending on whether this is produced by way of consciousness or by way of unconsciousness, it is at the same place that there is produced what we call in one case, the ego ideal, and in the other case, perversion.

Andre Gide's perversion does not depend so much on the fact that he can only desire little boys, only the little boy that he had (21) been. Andre Gide's perversion consists in this: it is that here he can only constitute himself by perpetually telling himself, by submitting himself in this correspondence which for him is at the heart of his work, to being the one who can only assert himself in the place occupied by his cousin, the person whose every thought is turned towards her, the person who gives her literally at every moment everything that he does not have, but nothing more than that, who constitutes himself as a personality in her, by her, and with reference to her, which puts him with respect to her, in this sort of fatal dependency which makes him cry out somewhere: "You cannot possibly know what the love of a clerk (un buraliste) is like! It is something like an embalmed love."

This entire projection of what is his very essence into what is the basis, is in fact the heart and the root in him of his existence as a man of letters, a man who is entirely in the signifier, and in its relationships, and in what he communicates, this is how he is seized in his interhuman relationships, that for him this undesired woman can in effect be the object of the supreme love which is essentially bound to her, and that when this object with which he has filled this hole of love without desire, when this object has disappeared, he emits this miserable cry whose relationship with the comic cry par excellence I showed, indicated last night in what I said to you: "My money box! My lovely money box!" - the money box of the miser.

(22) All the passions in so far as they are alienations of desire in an object, are on the same footing. Of course the money box of the miser makes us laugh more easily, at least if we have in us some note of humanity, which is not always the case, than the disappearance of Gide's correspondence, of this correspondence of Gide with his wife. Obviously it would have been for all of us something of eternal value. It remains nevertheless that fundamentally it is the same thing, and that the cry of Gide at the disappearance of this correspondence, is the same cry as the one in the comedy, as that of the miser Harpagon.

This comedy that we are talking about, what is it?

Comedy is something which comes to us from a thousand different angles. Comedy is not the comic. Every comedy should be able, if we give a correct theory of comedy, if we believe that at least for a time comedy was the production before the community, before the community in so far as it represents a group of men, namely as constituting above itself the existence as such of a man, if comedy has been what it seems to have been at a time when

the representation of the relationship of man to woman was the object of something which had a ceremonial value, of something which means that I am not the first to compare theatre to the (23) mass; everyone who has approached the question of the theatre has noticed that undoubtedly in our epoch, only the drama of the mass essentially represents that which at a certain moment of history, was represented by the complete development of the functions of the theatre.

If on the one hand therefore, at the time of the great epoch of Greek theatre, tragedy presented this relationship of man to the word in so far as it takes him up into its fatality and into a conflictual fatality, and in so far as the chain and the link of man to the signifying law, is not the same at the level of the family and at the level of the community. This is the essence of tragedy.

Comedy represents the following: that it is, and not without a link with tragedy because as you know, a comedy always completed the tragic trilogy, we cannot consider it independently, and this comedy, I will show you that we will find its trace and shadow to the fore right up to the marginal commentary on the Christian drama itself. Of course, not at our epoch of constipated Christianity where one would not dare to accompany the ceremonies with these robust farces which were constituted by what was called the "risus pascalis". But let us leave this to one side.

Comedy presents itself as the moment at which the subject and man try to take up this relationship to the word as no longer being its engagement, its disguise in these opposing requirements, but (24) as being after all not only his affair, but something in which he has to articulate himself as one who profits from it, who enjoys it, who consumes it, and who in fact, is the one who is destined to absorb substance and matter from this communion

Comedy, one might say, is something like the representation of the end of the communion meal by which the tragedy had itself been evoked. It is man, when all is said and done, who consumes what was presentified there in terms of its common substance and flesh and it is a question of knowing what will result from this.

To understand what will result from this, I think that there is .absolutely no other way than to refer to ancient comedy, of which all the comedies which have followed are only a sort of degradation where the traits are always recognisable, to the comedies of Aristophanes, to those comedies like The Assembly of Women, like Lysistrata, like the Thesmophoriazousae, which you must refer to to see where this leads us, and of course it was to these that I referred when I began to indicate to you in what sense comedy manifests by a sort of internal necessity, this relationship of the subject, from the moment that it is his own signified, namely the fruit of the result of this relationship to the signifier, which must effectively come onto the stage of the (25) fully developed comedy. It is this term which necessarily designates him qua signified, that is to say in so far as he gathers, as he assumes, as he enjoys the relationship to a fact,

which it is fundamentally in a certain relationship with the signifying order, the appearance of this signified which is called the phallus.

It happens that since I put forward this term for you, I had only to open something which in the days which followed the rapid sketch that I gave you of Moliere's The School for Wives, as representing this essentially comic relationship as something which I believe can be considered as a very special resurgence of a really extraordinary masterpiece of comedy, if what I believe I can read in the comedy of Aristophanes is correct, and which is nothing other than Le Balcon by Jean Genet.

What is Jean Genet's Le Balcon?

You know that there was some fairly lively opposition even to the fact that it should be put on. We should not of course be surprised at such things given a state of the theatre where one can say that its substance and its interest consist principally in that on the stage actors should assert themselves in different ways, and which of course fills the audience with comfort and pleasure by identifying themselves with this sort of exhibition; (26) you have to call things by their name.

If the theatre is something other than that, I think that a play like that articulated by Jean Genet is undoubtedly just the thing to make us realise it, but it is not certain either that the public is in a condition to hear it. It appears to me to be difficult nevertheless not to see its dramatic interest, which I will try to expose to you.

You see, Genet speaks about something which means more or less the following. I am not saying that he knows what he is doing, it is absolutely unimportant whether he knows or whether he does not know. Corneille probably did not know either what he was writing as Corneille, nevertheless he did it with a very great rigour. Here human functions in so far as they refer to the symbolic, the power of the one who as they say, binds and unbinds, namely what was conferred by Christ on the posterity of St. Peter and on all the bishops, binds and unbinds the order of sin, of transgression, or the power of the one who condemns, who judges and punishes, namely that of the judge, or the power of the one who assumes command in the great phenomenon which goes infinitely further, that of war, and who therefore is the commander-in-chief, more commonly the general, if all these persons represent therefore functions with respect to which the subject finds himself in some way alienated with respect to this (27) word of, which he finds himself to be the support, in a function which goes well beyond his particularity, if these persons are going all of a sudden to be submitted to the law of comedy, namely if we try to represent for ourselves what it is to enjoy (jouir de) these positions, disrespectful positions no doubt, to pose the question in that way, but the disrespectfulness of comedy is not something you should stop at without trying to see what results from it a little further on.

Of course it is always in some period of crisis, it is at the supreme moment of distress for Athens precisely because of the aberration of a series of bad choices and by a submission to the law of the city, which seem literally to be leading it to its destruction, that Aristophanes sets off this alarm which consists in saying that after all people are exhausting themselves in this pointless war, that there is nothing like staying nice and warm in one's own house and going back to one's wife. This is not something which is properly speaking posed as a morality, it is a restatement of the essential relationship of man to his condition which is suggested, without our having to know moreover whether the consequences are more or less salubrious.

Here then we see the bishop, the judge and the general put forward before us beginning with this question: what can it really mean to enjoy one's state of being a bishop, a judge or a general? And indeed this explains to you the artifice by means (28) of which this Balcón is nothing other than what is called a house of illusions, namely that if effectively what is produced at the level of the different forms of the ego ideal that I situated here somewhere, is something which effectively is not the way one believes it to be, the effect of a sublimation in the sense that this would be the progressive neutralisation of functions rooted within, but quite the contrary something which is always more or less accompanied by an eroticisation of the symbolic relationship, the assimilation can be made of the person who in his position and in his function as bishop, as judge or as general, enjoys his position and you get this something which all the proprietors of houses of illusion know, namely the little old man who comes to satisfy himself from a strictly calculated position, which will put him for a moment in the strangest diversity of positions assumed with respect to a complicitous partner who is willing to take on the role of being his partner for the occasion.

Thus we see someone who is employed in some financial institution, coming here to don priestly vestments in order to obtain from a compliant prostitute a confession which of course it is only an imitation, and which it is necessary for him that to some degree, it should approach the truth, in other words that something in the intention of his accomplice allows him to (29) see in it this relationship to a guilty jouissance in which it is necessary at least to believe that she participates, and it is not the least singularity of the art, of the lyricism with which the poet Jean **Genet** is able to pursue before us this dialogue of the character who is certainly more grotesque than can be expressed, by enlarging him to dimensions which are even more grotesque: he puts him on skates in order that his caricatural position is still more heightened, and without which we see the perverse subject certainly satisfying himself by looking for his satisfaction in this something with which he puts himself in relationship, with an image, with an image however in so far as it is the reflection of something essentially signifying.

In other words. Genet, in three major scenes. **Genet** makes present

for us, incarnates for us on the plane of perversion, that which from that moment takes its name, namely that in crude language we can on the day of general disorder call the whole bordel in which we live, in so far as it is like any other society, always more or less in a state of degradation, because society cannot define itself otherwise than by a more or less advanced state of degradation in the culture; the whole bordel, namely all this confusion which is established in the relationships which are supposed to be sacred and fundamental to man and to the word; the whole bordel is represented here in its proper place, and we know what it is averting its gaze from.

(30) So what is involved? It is a question of something which embodies for us the relationship of the subject to the functions of faith in their diverse forms and in their most sacred forms, as being themselves something which is carried on by a series of degradations in which the jump is made for a moment, namely that it is nothing other than the bishop himself, the judge and the general that we see here in the position of specialists, as is said in terms of perversion, and who put in question the relationship of the subject with the function of the word.

What happens? What happens is that this relationship, is an adulterated relationship, since it is a relationship in which everyone has failed and where no one can locate himself, it remains nevertheless that this relationship continues to be sustained, however degraded it may be, to be presented here before us, it nevertheless remains this relationship, namely purely and simply to subsist, if it is not as legitimate dependence and recognition of this relationship, at the very least as something which is linked to the fact that it exists, to what is called its order.

Now, this relationship to the maintenance of order, to what is it reduced if a society has come to its most extreme state of disorder? It is reduced to something which is called the police. This sort of last recourse, of the ultimate law, of the last argument of order which is called the maintaining of order, (31) which is created by establishing as being, when all is said and done, at the centre of the community what appears also at its origin, namely the three crossed pikes, and at the centre of the store, this reduction of everything in the matter of order to its maintenance, this is embodied in the pivotal character, central to **Genet**'s drama, namely the chief of police.

This is the hypothesis, and it is really a very attractive one: it is that the chief of police, namely the one who knows essentially that it is on him that there reposes this maintenance of order, and that he is in a way its final term, the last resort of all power, the image of the chief of police has not yet been raised to a sufficient nobility for any of the little old men who come to the brothel to demand to have the uniform, the attributes, the role and the function of chief of police. There are those who know how to play the judge, before a little prostitute, so that she will admit that she is a thief, and who go to great lengths to obtain this avowal, because "how would I

be a judge if you were not a thief?" says the judge. But I pass over what the general says to his mare. On the contrary no one has asked to be the chief of police.

This of course is pure hypothesis, I do not have enough experience of brothels to know whether effectively the chief of police has for a long time been elevated to the dignity of (32) those characters in the role of whom one can take enjoyment. But the chief of police, because here the chief of police is a good friend of the proprietress of the whole brothel - here I am not at all trying to construct a theory, any more than I have said that it is a question here of concrete things - the chief of police comes and then asks anxiously: "Is there even one person who has asked to be the chief of police?"

And this never happens. Just as there is no uniform for a chief of police. We have seen the clothes spread out, the judge's wig the general's kepi as well as his trousers, but there is no one who has got into the role of the chief of police in order to make love.

It is this that is the pivot of the drama. Now you should know that everything that happens inside the brothel happens while all around there is a revolution raging. Everything that happens, and I will spare you the details, you will have a lot of the pleasure of discovery in reading this comedy, everything that is happening inside - and it is far from being as schematic as what I am telling you, there are cries there are blows, in short everyone is having great fun - is accompanied by the stutter of machine guns on the outside, and the town is in revolt, and of course all these women are waiting to die a beautiful death, massacred by the dark and virtuous workers who are here supposed to represent the whole man, the real man, the one who does not doubt that his desire can arrive at completion, namely assert (33) itself as such and in a harmonious fashion. Proletarian consciousness has always believed in the success of morality; it may be right or it may be wrong. It does not matter, what matters is that Jean G-enSt shows us the outcome of the adventure - I am forced to go a bit quickly - in this that the chief of police, himself, has no doubts, because it is his function, just as it is his function it is because of this that the play develops as it develops, the chief of police has no doubts that .after just as before the revolution, it will always be a bordel. He knows that the revolution in this sense is a game, and in fact with a clever knack that I will not describe to you, because there is here again a very fine scene, in which the true blue diplomat comes to throw light for the amiable group which is found here at the centre of the house of illusion, on what is happening at the royal palace, namely in the most legitimate part of the state; the queen is embroidering or she is not embroidering; the queen is snoring, she is snoring or she is not snoring; the queen is embroidering a little handkerchief. It is a question of knowing what there will be in the middle of all this, namely a sign, a sign about which one does not yet know whether it will be on the sea, on a lake or in a cup of tea. I will pass over therefore what concerns the final vanishing of the

symbol, but what appears and the one who makes herself the voice, the word of the revolution, namely one of the prostitutes who had been kidnapped by a virtuous plumber and who finds herself filling the role of the woman in the phrygien bonnet on (34) the barricades, with in addition the fact that she is a sort of Joan of Arc, namely that she will know, she knows her way around the intricacies of masculine dialectic, because she has been there where one hears it being developed in all its phases, she knows how to talk to them and to reply to them our Chantal, because that is her name in this play, and she is removed by a piece of trickery, that is to say that she is shot and that immediately afterwards power appears embodied by the mistress of the house in question, Irma, the proprietress of the brothel who assumes, and with what superiority, the functions of the queen. Is she not also someone who has passed over to the pure state of symbol, because as is said somewhere, nothing about her is real, except her jewels?

And from that moment on we come to something which is the incorporation of the characters, the perverts whom we have seen exhibit themselves throughout the first act, well and truly into the authentic, integral role, into the assumption of the reciprocal functions that they incarnated in their different little loving transports.

At that moment a dialogue of considerable political immaturity takes place between the character of the chief of police who naturally needs them to represent what must be substituted for the preceding order which has been overthrown, and to make them assume their functions, which moreover is not something they do (35) without repugnance, because they understand very well that it is one thing to enjoy when you are nice and warm and protected by the walls of one of those houses about which it is not sufficiently realised that it is the very place where order is most meticulously observed, namely in order to put them at the mercy of the winds, even indeed the responsibilities that these functions involve when they are really assumed.

Here obviously we are involved in open farce, but it is the theme, it is the conclusion of this high class farce, which I would finally like to stress.

.It is that in the middle of all this dialogue, the chief of police keeps on worrying: "Has anyone come to ask to be the chief of police? Has anyone sufficiently recognised my greatness?" It must be recognised that there perhaps, for a moment at least, his imaginary place in this encounter has a satisfaction that is difficult to, obtain.

What happens? What happens first of all is this: it is that discouraged by waiting indefinitely for the event which would be for him the sanction of this accession to the order of functions which are respected, because they are profaned, the chief of police first of all refers to what he has now come to demonstrate: that he alone is the order and the pivot of everything, namely that, when all is said and done, this means

that nothing else matters when it comes down to it except the (36) fist, and here we find something which does not lack signification, in so far as the discovery of ego ideal coincided more or less in Freud with the inauguration of the type of person who offers to the political community a unique and simple identification, namely the dictator.

The chief of police consults his entourage on the subject of the suitability of a sort of uniform, and also the symbol which will be the symbol of his function, and not without shyness in this case; in fact he shocked the ears of his listeners a little: he proposes a phallus. Would the church have any objection to it, and he bows towards the bishop who in fact nods his head a little and shows some hesitation, but suggests that after all if it was changed into the dove of the Holy Spirit, it would be more acceptable. In the same way the general proposes that the figure should be painted in the national colours, and some other suggestions of this kind make us think that of course we are going to come pretty quickly to what is called on this occasion a concordat.

It is at this moment that the coup de theatre erupts. One of the girls whose role I passed over in this play which is really swarming with significations, appears on the stage her voice still broken by the emotion of what has just happened to her, and which is nothing less than the following: the character who was (37) the friend - and this turns out to be very significant - of the saviour of the prostitute, who has come to be a revolutionary symbol, the character therefore of the plumber, who is known in the house, has come to her and has asked her what is required to resemble the character of the chief of police.

Generalized emotion. Tightness of the throat. We are at the end of our troubles. We have everything, up to and including the wig of the chief of police which falls off: "How did you know?" He is told: "You are the only one who believed that no one knew that you wore a wig", and the character once invested with all the attributes of the one whose figure is really the heroic figure of the drama, sees this gesture which the prostitute makes, of throwing in his face, after having cut it off, that with which, she says modestly, he will never deflower anybody again.

At that moment the chief of police who was just ready to reach the peak of his happiness, all the same rapidly moves to control what still remains to him. Something in fact still remains for him, and his passage to the state of a symbol in the form of the proposed phallic uniform, has now become useless. In effect it becomes clear from this that the one who represents simple desire, pure and simple desire, this need that man has to rejoin in a fashion that can be authenticated and directly assumed, his own existence, his own thought, a value which is not purely (38) distinct from his flesh, it is clear that it is in so far as this subject who is there representing man, the one who has fought so that something which we have called up to the present the bordel, rediscovers its foundation, its norm and its

reduction to something which can be accepted as fully human, that this very person cannot be reintegrated into it, that he can only offer himself to it when he has passed the test, on condition precisely that he is castrated, namely ensures that the phallus is something which is once again promoted to the state of signifier, to this something which can or not give or take away, confer or not confer, the thing which at that moment is confused, and in the most explicit fashion, namely that it is on this that the comedy ends, is confused with and rejoins the image of the creator of the signifier of our father, of our father who art in heaven.

It is on this that in a fashion which we can of course if we like describe as blasphemous, or as properly speaking comic, that the comedy ends.

I will take up again and I will refer again to these terms. You will see how for us it can serve in what follows as a reference, as a reference point in this essential question of desire and of jouissance the first little morsel of which I wanted to give you today.

Seminar 15; Wednesday March 12 1958

You know that what we are trying to do here, namely in the difficulties, in the impasses, in the contradictions which are the fabric of your practice - it is the most elementary presupposition of our work that you should be aware of it - is to try to bring you back always to the point where these impasses and these difficulties can also show themselves to you with their full significance, and because of this elude you if you refer to these partial theories, indeed these avoidances, these slippages of meaning in the very terms that you employ, which are also the locus of all sorts of alibis.

The last day we spoke about desire and about jouissance. Today I would like to show you, by going further in the very text of what Freud puts forward on a point, when he sees the difficulties that this creates for those who follow him, and the way in which (2) in trying to circumscribe things more closely, beginning moreover from certain preconceived exigencies, something emerges which goes further in the sense of the difficulty, and how perhaps we can take a third step. It is a question about Freud, regarding the phallic position in women, or more exactly about what he calls the phallic phase.

I remind you of the point that we have got to, what we have been stressing, what the meaning is of what in our last three or four sessions, we have begun to articulate, this desire which as such and by name, is placed at the heart of the meditation of analytic experience. We have formulated it here in order to gather together, to concentrate what we have said as a signified demand. Here are two terms which are really only one: when I demand, I signify my demand to you, as we say, I signify an order to you, I signify a decree to you. This demand therefore, implies the other, the one from whom it is demanded, but also as the one for whom this demand has a meaning, an other who among other dimensions, has that of being the locus in which this signifier has its effect.

We know this, already: the first term, signified demand, in the sense that I signify something to you, I signify my will to you, here is the important point that I was especially thinking about.

Now this signified implies in the subject the structuring action (3) of the signifier established with respect to need, with respect to this desire, in an essential alteration. In comparison with need, this alteration is constituted by something which is the entry of desire into the demand.

I pause for a moment to make a parenthesis. We have up to the present, for reasons of time and economy, left to one side this year, in which nevertheless we are talking about formations of the unconscious, the dream. You know that the essential of Freud's affirmation about the dream, is that the dream expresses a desire. But after all we have not even begun to ask ourselves what this desire of the dream is, whether this desire of which we speak, and there is more than one in the dream, it is the desires of the day which provide them with their opportunity, with their material, and everyone knows that what is important for us, is unconscious desire.

Why in fact did Freud recognise this unconscious desire in the dream? By what authority? In what respect is it recognised? There is nothing in the dream apparently, manifestly, which corresponds grammatically to that by which desire manifests itself. There is no text in the dream, except apparently, namely requiring to be translated into a more - profound articulation, but at the level of this articulation, which is masked, which is latent. What is it that distinguishes, what is it that puts the accent on what the dream articulates? Of course nothing, apparently.

(4) Observe that when all is said and done, in the dream, what Freud recognises as desire, is indeed [recognised] by means of what I am telling you about, namely it is by the alteration of need that it signals itself, it is in so far as what is fundamental is masked, articulated into something which transforms it, which transforms it into what? Into the fact that it passes through a certain number of modes, of images which are there qua signifiers. It is therefore through the coming into play of a whole structure which no doubt is the structure of the subject, in so far as there must operate a certain number of agencies.

But this structure of the subject, we only recognise it through the fact that what happens in the dream, is submitted to the modes and to the transformations of the signifier, to the structures of metaphor and metonymy, of condensation and of displacement. Here what gives the law of the expression of the desire in the dream, is indeed the law of the signifier, it is through an exegesis of what is particularly articulated in a dream that we uncover this something which when all is said and done is what? Something which we suppose as wanting to bring to recognition something which participates in a primordial adventure which is inscribed there, and which is articulated, since we always refer it back to something original which happened in childhood and which has been repressed.

It is to this when all is said and done that we attribute the (5) primacy of meaning, in what is articulated in the dream. It is that here something appears which is absolutely fundamental as regards the structuring of the desire of the subject. From now on we are able to articulate it, it is the desire, the primordial adventure of what has happened in connection with a desire which is the infantile desire, its essential desire which is the desire

of the desire of the other, or the desire to be desired. This is what has been marked, inscribed in the subject in connection with this adventure which here remains permanent, underlying, and which gives the last word to what in the dream, interests us as an unconscious desire which expresses itself through what? Through the mask of what will on some occasion have given its material to the dream, with something which here is signified for us by means of the particular conditions which always impose on desire the law of the signifier.

What I am trying to teach you here, is to substitute for everything that in the theory, is more or less confused because it is always partial, namely for the mechanics, for the economy of gratifications, of care, of fixations, of aggressions, this fundamental notion of the primordial dependence of the subject with respect to the desire of the other, with respect to what has always structured itself through the intermediary of this mechanism which ensures that the desire of the subject is already as such modelled by the conditions of demand, inscribed throughout the history of the subject in its structure, the (6) wanderings, the vicissitudes of the constitution of this desire, in so far as it is submitted to the law of the desire of the other, makes one might say of the most profound desire of the subject, of the one that remains suspended in the unconscious, the sum, the integral we might say, of this capital D, of this Desire of the other, is what alone can give a meaning to the evolution of analysis, which has, as you know, ended up by putting such a stress on this primordial relationship to the mother, to the point of apparently avoiding the whole subsequent dialectic, even the Oedipal dialectic.

There is here something which at the same time goes in the right direction and formulates it inexactly. It is not just frustration as such, namely something more or less in the real order which has been given or which has not been given to the subject, which is the important point; it is the way that the subject has aimed at, has located this desire of the other which is the mother's desire, and with respect to this desire it is to make him recognise, or pass, or propose to become with respect to something which is an X of desire in the mother, to become or not the one who responds, to become or not the desired being.

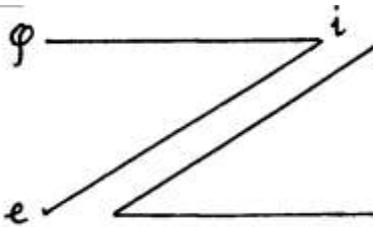
This is essential, because by neglecting it while at the same time approaching it, by penetrating as closely as possible by ways which are first of all ways of access which are as close as possible to what happens in the child, Melanie Klein, as you know, discovered many things; but by formulating it simply as one (7) might say in terms of the affronting, the confrontation of the subject, of the child, to the person of the mother, she ends up with this sort of really specular, mirror relationship, which ensures that the body as one might say, because it is already very striking, this is in the foreground, the maternal body becomes in a way the enclosure and the dwelling place of what can be localised in it, projected into it in terms of the drives of the child, these drives being themselves motivated by the aggression caused by a fundamental disappointment. And when all

is said and done, in this dialectic, nothing can get us out of a sort of mechanism of illusory projection, of a construction of the world originating from primordial phantasies in a sort of autogenesis; the genesis of the exterior as locus of the bad remains purely artificial, and in a way submits every subsequent accession to reality, to a pure dialectic of phantasy.

To complete this Kleinian dialectic, it is necessary to introduce this notion that the exterior for the subject is given from the first, not as something which is projected from the interior of the subject, from his drives, but as the place, the locus in which is situated the desire of the other, and where the subject has to go to meet it.

This is essential, and it is the only way in which we can find the solution for the aporias which are engendered by this Kleinian way which has shown itself to be so fruitful in many (8) respects, but which ends up by making disappear, by completely eluding, or by reconstructing in a more or less implicit fashion, which she herself does not perceive, but in a fashion that is equally illicit because it is not motivated, the primordial dialectic of desire, as Freud discovered it, which is in a third relationship, namely that which makes intervene beyond the mother, even through her, the presence of the desired or rival person, of the third person who is the father.

It is here after all that we find the justification for the schema which I tried to give you in telling you that it is necessary to pose the fundamental symbolic triad, namely the mother, the child and the father, in so far as the absence of the mother or her presence offers to the child posed here as a symbolic term, simply by the introduction of the signifying dimension, offers to the child, it is not the subject, it is by the simple introduction of the signifier and of the symbolic term, the fact that the child will be or not a wanted child (un enfant demande).



And this third essential term which is in a way that which permits all of this, or prohibits it, that which poses itself (9) beyond this absence or presence of the mother qua present, signifying meaning, that which allows her to manifest herself, or not. It is with respect to this that once the signifying order comes into play, the subject has to situate himself; the subject offers to it his real concrete life, in something which of course here and now involves desires in the imaginary sense, in the sense of capture, in the sense that images fascinate him, in the sense that with respect to these images he has to feel himself as ego, as centre, as master, or as dominated by this imaginary relationship, in which as you know, in the case of man there

enters into play with a primordial accent the self-image, the image of the body which comes in a way to dominate everything.

Of course this elective position of the image in the case of man is something which is profoundly linked to the fact that he is open to this dialectic of the signifier that we have been talking about. Here, the reduction as one might say of the captivating image to this central fundamental image which is the image of the body, is not unrelated to this fundamental relationship in which the subject is with respect to the signifying triad. But this relationship to the signifying triad introduces for the subject this third term, this third term by means of which the subject, beyond this dual relationship, of this relationship of captivation to the image, the subject if I may put it this way, demands to be signified.

It is for this reason that there are three poles on the imaginary plane, just as in the minimal constitution of the symbolic field (10) beyond the ego and my image, because of the fact that I have to enter into the conditions of the signifier, there is a point, something which must mark that my desire must be signified, in so far as it necessarily passes through a demand that I signify on the symbolic plane. In other words, there is the exigency for a general symbol for this margin which always separates me from my desire, which ensures that my desire is always marked by this alteration by the entry into the signifier. There is a general symbol of this margin, of this fundamental lack that is necessary to introduce my desire into the signifier, to make of it the desire with which I have to deal in the analytic dialectic, this symbol by which the signified is designated in so far as it is always signified, altered, even inexactly signified.

This is what we see in the schema that I give you. This is in the subject at the level of the imaginary. Here is his image, here the point at which the ego is constituted. That is what I designate for you here by the letter **(J)**, in so far as it is the phallus. It is impossible to deduce the constituting function of the phallus qua signifier in the whole dialectic of the introduction of the subject purely and simply to his existence, and to his sexual position, if we do not make of it the following: that it is the fundamental signifier through which the desire of the subject has to make itself recognised as such, whether we are dealing with a man or dealing with a woman.

(11) This is expressed as meaning that, whatever the desire may be, there must be in the subject this reference that it is no doubt the desire of the subject, but in so far as the subject himself has received his signification, that the subject with his power as subject must hold this power from a sign, and that he only obtains this sign by mutilating himself of something through whose lack everything will take on a value.

This is not something that can be deduced. This is given by analytic experience. This is the essential of Freud's discovery. This is why Freud in writing "Feminine sexuality" in 1931, affirms something which is no doubt problematic at first sight.

which is no doubt inadequate, which no doubt demands an elaboration which calls forth responses from all the psychoanalysts, the women first, Helena Deutsch, Karen Homey, among others, and Melanie Klein, and Josine Miller, and summarising all of this, and articulating it in a way that seems to be more or less compatible with Freud's articulation, Jones replies to all of this. This is what we are going to examine today.

Let us take up the question at its most paradoxical point. The paradox appears at first, one might say, on the plane of a sort of natural observation. It is as a naturalist that Freud says to us: what my experience shows me, is that in women also, and not (12) only in men, this phallus which in the case of men he showed us in accordance with the general formula that I tried to give you a moment ago, that in the case of man the introduction of the subject into the dialectic that will allow him to take his place, take his position in this transmission of human types, which will allow him to become in his turn the father, that nothing will be realized without what I called a moment ago this fundamental mutilation thanks to which the phallus will become the signifier of potency, the signifier, the sceptre, but also that something thanks to which this virility will be able to be assumed.

Up to this of course we have understood Freud. But he goes further, and shows us how at the centre of the feminine dialectic the same phallus appears.

Here a gap appears to open up, in that up to now it was in terms of struggle, of biological rivalry, that we could at the limit understand the introduction of man by the castration complex, into his accession to the quality of manhood. In the case of women, this assuredly presents a paradox, and Freud says it to us first of all purely and simply as an observed fact; which would seem to coincide also with something supposedly presenting itself therefore like everything else that is observed, as being part of nature, as being natural. This is indeed the way that he seems in fact to present things to us when he tells us that the girl (13) like the boy, first of all desires the mother; let us tell it the way it is written. There is only one way to desire. The girl thinks at first that she has a phallus, just as she thinks also that her mother has a phallus, and here is what that means: it is that the natural evolution of the drives ensures that from transference to transference throughout the instinctual phases, it is to something that has the form of the breast through the intermediary of a certain number of other forms, culminating in this phallic phantasy through which when all is said and done it is in a masculine position that the girl presents herself in relation to the mother, and that something complex, more complex for her than for the boy, must intervene for her to recognize her feminine position. She is presumed, not by anything that is there in principle, she is presumed in Freud's articulation, to lack at the beginning this recognition of the feminine position.

It is no mean paradox to propose to us something that goes so much against nature, which after all would suggest to us that by

a sort of symmetry, with respect to the position of the boy, it is as vagina, as someone has said, as a vaginal mouth. We have observations that even allow us to affirm, and I would say in contradiction to the Freudian data, that there are primitive living experiences whose primordial trace we can rediscover in (14) the young subject, which show that contrary to the affirmation of this primitive miscognition, that something can as a consequence be known by the subject, at least as a consequence it seems, during the process of nursing, I mean in the little girl who is still at the breast, who shows some emotion, vague no doubt, but which it is not absolutely unreasonable to refer to a profound bodily emotion, which is no doubt difficult to localize by means of memories, but which in brief would permit the equation by a series of transmissions from the mouth involved in suckling, to the vaginal mouth, just as moreover at the fulfilled, developed state of femininity, this function of an absorbing, or even a sucking organ, is something that can be localized in experience, and which would provide in a way the continuity by which, if it were only a question of a migration as one might say, of the erogenous drive, we would see traced, we might say, the royal road of the evolution of femininity at the biological level, and this is in fact the thing of which Jones makes himself the advocate, and the theoretician, when he thinks that it is impossible, for all kinds of reasons of principle, to admit that the evolution of sexuality in women should be something destined to this detour and this artificiality.

He proposes to us in a theory that is opposed in a way point by (15) point to what Freud articulates for us as an observed datum, proposing that the phallic phase in the little girl reposes on a drive whose natural supports he explains and shows to us in two elements: the first element being the admitted one of primordial biological bisexuality, but which, it must be said, is purely theoretical and distant, and of which we could say, as Jones well says, that it is after all pretty far from being accessible to us.

But there is something else, the presence of a beginning of the phallic organ, of the clitoral organ of the first pleasures, linked in the little girl to clitoral masturbation, and which can give in a way the beginning of the phallic phantasy which plays the decisive role that Freud tells us. And it is in fact what Freud does: the phallic phase is a clitoral phallic phase; the phantastical penis is an exaggeration of the little penis effectively given in female anatomy.

It is in the disappointment and the outcome that as such is engendered by the disappointment of this detour, which is nevertheless founded for him on a natural mechanism, that Freud gives us the source of the entry of the little girl into the feminine position, and it is at this moment, he tells us, that the Oedipus complex plays the normative role that it must essentially play; but in the case of the little girl it plays it (16) in a way that is the inverse of that in the boy. The Oedipus complex gives her access to this penis that she lacks, by

the intermediary of the apprehension of the penis of the male, whether she discovers it in some companion, or whether she situates it, or also discovers it in the father.

It is through the mediation of the disappointment, of the disillusionment of something in herself compared to the phantastical phase of the phallic phase, that the little girl is introduced into the Oedipus complex, as Mrs. Lampl de Groot, one of the first analysts to follow Freud onto this terrain, theorised. She noted very pertinently: the little girl enters the Oedipus complex through the inverted phase of the Oedipus complex; she presents herself at first in the Oedipus complex in a relationship to her mother, and it is in the failure of this relationship to the mother that she discovers the relationship to her father, with what will subsequently become normatived for her by the equivalence, first of all of this penis that she will never possess, with the child. She can in fact have one, she from her own position can give.

Let us observe here a certain number of reference points with regard to what I have taught you, in order to distinguish this Penisneid which is found to be to be here the essential articulation of the entry of the woman into the oedipal dialectic; this Penisneid which as such, and therefore like (17) castration in the man, is found at the heart of this dialectic, which no doubt through the criticisms that I will subsequently formulate for you, those put forward by Jones, will be put in question, and of course it seems from the outside, when one begins to approach analytic theory, that it is presented as something artificial.

Let us pause for a moment, first of all to underline, as we should, the ambiguity with which throughout the different moments of the girl's oedipal evolution - it is moreover highlighted by Jones' discussion - this Penisneid is employed: what is it?

There are three modes of going through the entry into and the outcome of the Oedipus complex, which Freud shows us in connection with the phallic phase.

There is Penisneid in the sense of the phantasy, namely this wish, this long-entertained wish, sometimes entertained all through life, and Freud insists sufficiently on the irreducible character of this phantasy when it is what is kept in the forefront; the phantasy that the clitoris is a penis. This is a first meaning of Penisneid.

There is another meaning: Penisneid as it intervenes when what is desired is the father's penis, namely the moment when the subject sees in the reality of the penis, the place where the possession of the penis is to be sought, that the Oedipus complex is not only the situation that is prohibited, but also the physiological (18) impossibility of which the situation, the development of the situation has frustrated her.

Then there is the function of this evolution in so far as it gives rise in the little girl to the phantasy of having a child by the father, namely of having this penis in a symbolic form.

Remember now the distinctions I taught you to make in connection with the castration complex: between castration, frustration and privation.

In these three forms, which corresponds to each of these three terms?

I have told you. A frustration is something imaginary directed towards an object that is quite real. This is really why the fact that the little girl does not receive her father's penis is a frustration.

A privation is something quite real, and which is only directed towards a symbolic object, namely that when the little girl does not have a child by the father, after all there was never any question that she would have had it. She is quite incapable of having one. Besides the child is only there as a symbol, and the symbol precisely of what she is really frustrated, and it is in fact really under the heading of privation that the desire for the father's child intervenes at a moment in the evolution.

There remains then what corresponds to castration, namely to what (19) symbolically cuts the subject off from something imaginary, and in this instance from a phantasy, corresponds well. In any case, Freud is on the right track here, when he tells us that the position of the little girl in relation to her clitoris, is in so far as at a given moment she must renounce this clitoris, at least in so far as she held on to it as a sign of hope, namely, that sooner or later it would become something as big as a penis.

It is indeed at this level that what corresponds structurally to castration is found, if you remember what I thought it necessary to articulate when I spoke to you about castration, at the point where it is particularly manifest, namely in the boy.

It can be argued whether everything in the girl effectively revolves around the clitoral drive. One can explore the detours of the oedipal adventure, as you are now going to see it through Jones' critique that the whole affair appears to be artificial. But we cannot fail to remark from the beginning the rigour, from the structural point of view, of the point that Freud designates as being that which corresponds to castration. It is really something that must be found at the level of what is happening, of what can happen in terms of relating to a phantasy, and in so far of course as this relation to a phantasy takes on a signifying value. It is at this point here that the point of (20) symmetry should be found.

It is a matter now of understanding how this happens. It is not of course just because this point is used that it is the point that gives us the key to the whole business. It does apparently give it to us in Freud, in so far as Freud gives the impression

of showing us here a history of instinctual (pulsionelle) anomaly, and this is what is going to outrage, to make a certain number of people revolt, precisely in the name of biological pre-conceptions. But you are going to see what, in the very articulation of their objections, they come to say. They are forced in the nature of things to articulate a certain number of points, of features which are precisely those that will allow us to take the step forward, to understand properly what is in question, to go beyond the natural drive theory, to see that the phallus well and truly effectively intervenes in what I said to you here at the beginning, in what I could call the premises of today's lecture, and which is nothing other than the reminder of what we have come to circumscribe by other routes, namely that the phallus intervenes here qua signifier.

But let us now come to the response, to the articulation given by Jones. There are three important articles by Jones on the subject: one called "Early female sexuality" written in 1935, which we are going to talk about today, and which had been (21) preceded by the article on "The phallic phase", presented at the Innsbruck Congress eight years earlier (September 1927), [Tr: The Wiesbaden Congress, September 1932] and finally: "Early Development of Female Sexuality", [Tr: The Innsbruck Congress, September 1927) .

It is to the latter that Freud, in his article of 1931, makes allusion when he refutes in a few lines, and I must say very disdainfully, the positions taken by Jones. Jones replies in "The phallic phase", and tries to respond and to articulate his position, in short, against Freud, while at the same time trying to remain as close as possible to the letter of Freud. The third article on which I am going to base myself today, is extremely significant for what we want to demonstrate. It is also the most advanced point of Jones' articulation, it is situated in 1935, four years after Freud's article on feminine sexuality. It was delivered at the request of Federn who was at that time vice-president or president of the Viennese Society, and it is in Vienna that it was pronounced in order to propose to the Viennese circle what Jones formulated simply as being the point of view of the London analysts, namely what already was centred around the Kleinian experience.

Jones tells us that it would be well to begin with the experience of the London analysts, which is the only opposing one, and he draws the oppositions in a more definite fashion so that the account gains in purity, in clarity, as a basis for the (22) discussion. He makes a certain number of remarks, and we have every interest to dwell on them, by referring as much as possible to the text.

It must be remarked from the start that experience shows us that it is difficult, when one approaches the child, to grasp this so called masculine position which is supposed to be that of the little girl with respect to her mother at the phallic phase. The more one goes back towards the origin, the more we find ourselves confronted with something that is critical here. I

apologise if in following this text, we are going to find ourselves before a certain number of objects which appear to be, with respect to the line that I am trying to sketch out for you here, among positions which are sometimes a little bit marginal, but which are worth while raising because of what they reveal.

The suppositions of Jones, I mention it right away, are essentially directed towards something which he clearly articulates at the end of the article: Is a woman a being who is born, namely born as such, as a woman? Or is she a being who is made, constructed as a woman? And it is here that he situates his interrogation. It is here that he rebels against the Freudian position.

There are two terms which are going to be, in a way, the point towards which his journey advances, something which has come out of a sort of resume of the facts which, in the concrete experience of the child, allows him, either to object to, or (23) sometimes also to confirm, but in every case to correct the Freudian conception.

But what animates his whole demonstration, is what he poses at the end as a question, a type of yes or no which for him is absolutely redhibitory of even a possible choice. There cannot be in his perspective a position such that half of humanity is made up of beings who in some way are "made", that is to say constructed in the defiles of the Oedipus complex.

He does not seem to notice that the oedipal defiles, after all, do not construct any the less, if this is what is in question, men. Nevertheless the fact precisely that women enter it with a baggage which in fact is not theirs, appears to constitute for him a sufficient difference from the boy, for him to claim something which in substance will consist in saying: it is true that we observe in women, in the little girl at a certain moment of her evolution, something which represents this putting into the forefront, this exigence, this desire which manifests itself in the ambiguous form of Penisneid, and which for us is so problematic.

But what is it? It is in this that there will consist everything that he has to say to us. It is a defensive formation, it is a detour, it is something, he explains, comparable to a phobia and the emergence from the phallic phase, (24) is essentially something which should be conceived of as being the curing of a phobia which is, it is claimed, in fact a very widespread phobia, a normal phobia, but essentially of the same order and with the same mechanism.

There is something here, you see it because in fact the approach I am taking is to plunge right into the heart of his demonstration, there is something here which for us is all the same extraordinarily favourable for our reflection, in the measure that you still remember perhaps the fashion in which I tried to articulate for you the function of the phobia.

If effectively it is indeed in this way that the relationship of the little girl to the phallus should be conceived, surely we are getting closer to the conception that I try to give you, namely that it is in the name of a privileged signifying element, that there intervenes in the Oedipus complex the relationship of the little girl to the phallus.

Does that mean that with this we are going to rally to Jones' position? Surely not. If you remember the difference that I drew between phobia and fetich, we would much rather say that here the phallus plays the role of fetich, rather than the role of phobia. But we will come back to this later.

Let us take up the start of Jones' criticism, his articulation, and let us say where he begins from, where this phobia is going to be constituted from. This phobia, for him, is a defensive (25) construction against something, against a danger engendered by the primitive drives of the child, of the child whom he follows here at the level of the little girl, but who finds herself at this level in the same position and who has the same destiny as the little boy. But here it is a question of the little girl, and he remarks therefore that originally the relationship of the child - and it is on this that I dwelt a little while ago in telling you that we would encounter quite exceptional things - to the mother, is a primitive masculine position. He says she is far from being the way a man is with respect to a woman: "Her mother she regards not as a man regards a woman, as a creature whose wishes to receive something it is a pleasure to fulfil."

It must be recognised that to bring to this level a position as elaborate as the relationships of man to woman, is to say the least paradoxical. It is quite certain that when Freud speaks of the masculine position of the little girl, he does not in any way take into account this most completed effect, if in fact it is really reached, of civilisation where the man is there to fulfil all the desires of the woman. But from the pen of someone who proceeds in this domain with such naturalist pretensions at the beginning, we cannot fail to notice this as being what I might call one of the difficulties of the terrain, for him to stumble (26) at this point in his demonstration, and this is right at the beginning of his demonstration, namely to oppose in it rather the position of the child, and doubtless not correctly, not at all therefore as a man here, but it is a question of the mother as the child regards her.

You will have recognised here the milk jug of the mother, and the child as she is seen by Melanie Klein, namely - I translate Jones - : as "a person who has been successful". This "successful" is very important because it implies in the maternal subject this something, and Jones does not perceive it, that by aligning things with the text of what we find in the child, that it is indeed a desiring being that is in question here. It is the mother because she has been successful enough to succeed in filling herself, with just the things that the child desires so badly, namely with this pleasant material of both a solid and a

liquid kind.

One cannot fail to see that just by representing to us that in a primitive experience of the child, namely one to which one has access no doubt with a magnifying glass, but by getting as close as possible to the place by analysing children of three or four years old, which is what Melanie Klein does, at that time we already discover a relationship to the object which is structured in this form that I called the empire of the maternal body, that (27) something which you find in connection with what Melanie Klein calls in her "Contributions", the ultra-precocious Oedipus complex of the child, with the drawings that she gives us, this something which I called both the field of the maternal empire and what it involves within in terms of what I called, with a reference to Chinese history, the warring kingdoms, namely what she shows us, that the child is capable of drawing as signifiers in the interior that she locates, the brothers, the sisters, the excrements, everything which cohabits in this maternal body with in addition everything which already is within the maternal body. What she allows us to distinguish, is what effectively the dialectic of the treatment allows to be articulated as the paternal phallus, namely this something which here and now appears to be introduced there as an element which is both particularly harmful, and particularly rivalling with respect to the exigency for possession of this child with respect to the contents of this body. It also appears very difficult for us to see here something other than data which accentuate, which deepen for us the problematic character of the so-called natural relationships, in so far as we do not see them here and now as structured, by what I called the last day a whole signifying battery already showing a relationship between them, which is articulated in such a fashion that no natural biological relationship can really motivate them.

(28) So the very fact that Melanie Klein could introduce into the dialectic of the child, namely into that which constitutes the entry on the scene of the phallus at the level of this primitive experience, this reference which is really given by her as being in a way read in what the child offers, but which nevertheless remains fairly stupefying, the introduction of the penis as being a breast that is more accessible, more convenient and in a way store perfect, here is something to be admitted as a datum of experience.

Of course if this is a datum, it is valid. But it remains nonetheless that it is not at all something which one might say is self-evident, that it is something which precisely in itself allows us to pose the question of who can offer this penis, as something which is effectively more accessible, more convenient more pleasurable than the primordial breast? This indeed is the question of what this penis signifies, namely of the implication here and now, through the intermediary of what? It is this of course which is going to be put in question, namely the introduction of the child already into a signifying dialectic.

So that moreover everything that follows, in Jones' demonstration

will only pose in an ever more urgent fashion, this question, in so far as he explains to us that if the little girl after therefore having possibly, he does not settle the question, but (29) it is required by the very data from which he starts, and he settles the question all the same simply in this respect, by telling us that the phallus can only intervene as the means and the alibi of a kind of defence. He presupposes therefore that at the origin it is with respect to a certain primitive apprehension of her own organ, of her own feminine organ, that the little girl finds herself involved from a libidinal point of view. But he will try to explain to us why it is necessary that this apprehension of her vagina is repressed by her. He tells us of course, that this is of a nature to evoke in the relationship of the feminine child to her own sex, a greater anxiety than that evoked in the little boy with regard to his sex, because the organ is more interior, more diffused, at a deeper level the proper source of these first movements. The clitoris will therefore play, he articulates - I am sure that he articulates it to show you the necessities implied in what he articulates in a relatively naive fashion, namely that the clitoris in so far as it is exterior, serves the anxieties that are projected on to it, is not moreover any more easily an object of reassurance on the part of the subject, by the fact that she can test by, for example, her own manipulations, even at a push by looking, the fact that it is still there.

This is what Jones means. And he will show that subsequently it will always be towards more exterior objects, namely towards her (30) appearance, towards her clothes, that the woman in her subsequent evolution, will direct what he calls the need for reassurance, this something which is displaced, in other words in the anxiety which can be tempered by directing its object onto something which is not the point, very especially in that it is for that very reason overlooked in its origin.

You can see clearly, that what is in question, is that we should find there once more the implied necessity that it is indeed in the name, says Jones, of something that can be exteriorised, represented, that the phallus comes to the forefront in the guise of an element, of a limiting term, of a point at which anxiety stops, and of course this is where its dialectic is. We are going to see if this is sufficient. It is by this dialectic that he admits that the phallic phase should be presented as a phallic position, as something that permits the child in a way to distance, by centering them on something accessible, the fears and the anxieties of retortion that her own oral or sadistic desires have directed towards the interior of the mother's body, and which immediately appear to her as a danger capable of threatening herself within her own body.

Such is the genesis that Jones gives for what he calls the phallic position qua phobia. It is certainly as a phantasied, (31) but accessible, exteriorised organ, that the phallus comes into play, that subsequently moreover it is also capable of disappearing again from the scene, because the fears linked to hostility can be tempered, also referred elsewhere, onto other

objects, that the mother for example, that the erotogeniety and the anxiety in so far as they are linked to deep seated organs, may also by the very process of a certain number of masturbatory activities, also be displaced, and that in the last analysis, he says, the relationship to the feminine object will become less partial, that it can be displaced onto other objects, that subsequently the anxiety which is in fact unnameable, the original anxiety, linked to the feminine organ, which is what in the child, in the last analysis, in the girl child, what corresponds to the castration anxieties of the boy, can subsequently vary through this fear of being deserted, which according to Jones' statements, will become what is most characteristic of feminine psychology.

This then is what we find ourselves confronted with. To resolve it, look at Freud's position, the position of an observer, which presents itself therefore as a natural observation. The liaison with the phallic phase is of an instinctual (pulsionelle) nature. The entry into femininity is produced from a libido which of its nature, let us say to specify things exactly, and not at all in (32) the rather caricatural criticism that Jones makes of it, is active, and which will culminate in the feminine position in the measure that this disappointed position will come by a series of transformations and equivalences to make of the subject a demand, and accept from someone other than the paternal person, something which will succeed in fulfilling her desire.

When all is said and done, the presupposition moreover fully articulated by Freud, is that the primordial infantile exigency is, as he says without an aim. What it requires, is everything, and it is by the disappointment as one might say of this requirement, which of course is impossible to satisfy, that the child enters little by little into a more normative position.

There is here undoubtedly something which however problematic it may be, includes this openness which is going to allow us to articulate the problem in terms of desire and demand which are those on which I myself am trying here to lay stress for you.

To this, Jones replies: this is natural history, an observation by a naturalist which is not all that natural, and I, I am going to make it more natural for you.

He says this explicitly. The business about the phallic phobia is only a detour in the passage to a position already primordially determined. The woman is "born", she is born, she is born as such, into a position which already in advance is that (33) of the position of a mouth, of an absorbing mouth, of a sucking mouth. She will rediscover this after the reduction of her phobia, which is only a simple detour with respect to her primitive position. That which you call phallic drive is purely and simply the artificiality of a contradicted phobia, evoked in the child by her hostility and her aggression towards the mother. All that we have here is a pure detour in a cycle that is essentially instinctual (instinctuel), and the woman will afterwards re-enter as of right into her position which is a

vaginal position.

To reply to this, I try to articulate for you that the phallus is absolutely inconceivable in terms of Kleinian dynamics or mechanics, unless it is implied in advance as being the signifier of a lack, the signifier of this distance of the demand of the subject from her desire, which means that in order that this desire should be rejoined, a certain deduction must always be made from this necessary entry into the signifying cycle, that if the woman must pass by way of this signifier, however paradoxical it may be, it is to the degree that what is involved for her, is not purely and simply to realize a sort of primitive datum of a position that is purely and simply female, but to enter into a dialectic which is excluded for the man by the existence of signifiers, by all the prohibitions that constitute the oedipal relationship; in other words, to make her enter into the cycle of (34) exchanges of alliance and of kinship, namely to become herself in it this object of exchange.

The fact that what is demonstrated effectively for us, because every correct analysis of what fundamentally structures this oedipal relationship, is that the woman should propose herself, or more exactly accept herself as an element of this cycle of exchanges, is something which is in itself in fact something infinitely more outrageous from the natural point of view than anything that we have been able to remark up to the present in terms of anomalies of her instinctual (instinctive) evolution, and which in this respect fully justifies in fact our finding for it at the imaginary level, at the level of desire, a sort of representative in the fact of the complicated pathways by which she herself must enter it.

That which punctuates in her case the fact of having, just like a man, to inscribe herself in the world of the signifier, is this need directed towards a desire, directed towards something which qua signified, must always remain at a certain distance, at a certain margin from anything that can be referred to a natural need, in so far as precisely in order to be introduced into this dialectic, something of this natural relationship must be amputated, must be sacrificed, and to what end? Precisely so that it can become the very signifying element of this introduction into the demand.

But something is at once rather, I would not say surprising, but (35) is going to show us the return of this observed necessity which I have just expressed to you with all the brutality that this sociological remark founded on everything that we know, more recently articulated on the necessity for a part, effectively half, of humanity to become the signifier of exchange. This is indeed the way that Lévi-Strauss articulates in the Elementary structures, that by which women, through the diversely structured laws in the elementary structures that are assuredly much more simply structured, but involving much more complex effects in the complex structures of kinship.

What we observe in the dialectic of the entry of the child into

the system of the signifier, is in a way the other side of this passage of the woman as such, as signifying object, into what we can call in quotation marks "the social dialectic", because of course the term social should be placed here with the whole accent which shows it as depending precisely on the signifying and combinatory structure. What we see on the other side, is this result that for the child to enter into this signifying dialectic, what do we observe? Very precisely this: that there is no other desire on which she depends more closely and more directly, than the desire of what? Of the woman, of the desire of the woman in so far as it is precisely signified by what she (36) is lacking, by the phallus.

What I have shown you, is that everything that we meet in terms of a stumbling, of an accident, in the evolution of the child, and this goes for the most radical of these stumblings and these accidents, is linked to the fact that the child does not find herself alone before the mother, but before the mother and something which is precisely the signifier of this desire, namely the phallus. We find ourselves here confronted with something which will be the object of my lecture the next time. It is this: it is that you have to choose: either the child enters into the dialectic, namely that she makes herself an object in this current of exchanges, namely at a given moment renounces her father and her mother, namely the primitive objects of her desire, but it is to the whole extent that she keeps her objects, namely where she maintains this something which is for her much more important than their value, because value precisely is what can be exchanged and what exists, from the moment she reduces them to signifiers, but to the full extent that she holds onto these objects qua objects of her desire, it is always here in so far as the oedipal attachment is maintained, namely where the Oedipus complex, or the infantile relationship to the parental objects does not pass away, it is in the measure that it does not pass away, and strictly in this measure that we see happening, (37) what? In a very general form, let us say these inversions or these perversions of desire which show that within the Imaginary relationship to the oedipal objects, no normatization is possible, there is no normatization possible very precisely for this reason, that there is still whole and entire with respect even to the most primitive relationship, the relationship of the child to the mother, this phallus qua object of desire for the mother, namely that which confronts the child with this sort of uncrossable barrier to the satisfaction of its own desire, which is to be the exclusive desire of the mother.

It is this therefore which pushes it towards a series of solutions which will always be the reduction or the identification of this triad, from the fact that it is necessary that the mother should be phallic, or that the phallus should be put in the place of the mother herself, as in the case of fetishism; or that he himself should reunite in himself in a way in an intimate fashion, this joining up of the phallus and of the mother, without which nothing for him can be satisfying, and this is transvestism. In short, it is precisely in the measure that the child, namely the being in so far as he enters with his

natural needs into this dialectic, does not renounce his object, that his desire cannot find a way to be satisfied and it can only find its satisfaction in renouncing in part, the need, the desire for everything, which is essentially what I articulated at the beginning, in saying that he must become demand, namely desire (38) qua signified, signified by the intervention and the existence of the signifier, namely in part alienated desire.

Seminar 16; Wednesday 19 March 1958

I would like today to begin to introduce the question of identifications. For those who were not there the last time, and also for those who were here, I recall the meaning of what was said. I tried to direct your attention to the difficulties that are posed by the notion of the phallic phase, to show that what Freud separated out from experience, even though one experiences some difficulty in including it in a biological rationality, immediately takes on more clarity, if we pose that the phallus is taken up into a certain subjective function which must fulfil a certain role, which I call a role of signifier. Of course this phallus qua signifier does not come straight down to us from heaven. On the other hand it is necessary that there should be at its origin, which is an imaginary origin, some property for fulfilling this signifying function which is not an indifferent one, which is a function of the signifier more (2) especially adapted than another to what happens in the hooking up of the human subject into the totality of the signifying mechanism.

It is in a way a crucial signifier, a signifier towards which converges more or less what happens in the insertion of the human subject into the signifying system, in so far as it is necessary for his desire to pass through this system in order to make itself recognised, and that it is profoundly modified by it. This is an experimental datum; from this it emerges that we encounter this phallus in literally every corner of the field of our experience, of our experience of the oedipal conflict, of the oedipal drama. It is its entry into the oedipal drama and the outcomes of the oedipal drama, and even in a certain problematic fashion, overflowing this oedipal drama because also one cannot help being struck by the problem that is posed by the presence of this phallus, and of the paternal phallus, namely in the primitive Kleinian phantasies, in so far as it is precisely its presence which poses the question of knowing in what register we are going to insert these Kleinian phantasies?

In the register of the way that Melanie Klein herself has proposed it, namely in the admission of a sort of ultra-precocious type of oedipal conflict, or on the contrary by admitting its primitive imaginary functioning which we are going to classify as pre-oedipal?

(3) One could almost say that the question can be left in suspense, at least provisionally.

To clarify this function which presents itself here in a quite general fashion, precisely because it presents itself essentially as a function of the signifier, as a symbolic function, we should, even before pushing forward our formulae to their final term, see in what signifying economy this phallus is implicated, in other words, this something which Freud's exploration articulated under this form of the emergence from the Oedipus complex, after the repression of oedipal desire, the subject emerges new, provided with what? The answer is: with an ego ideal.

In the normal Oedipus complex, the repression which results from this breakthrough, from the "passing" to the beyond of the Oedipus complex, from the emergence from the Oedipus complex, there is constituted in the subject something which is in a properly speaking ambiguous relationship vis-a-vis himself.

On this, it is still appropriate for us to proceed step by step, because one always goes too quickly. There is a thing in any case which separates itself out in a univocal fashion, I mean in one way only, from what Freud approaches, and on this all the authors cannot but pose it as a minimal formula: it is that it is an identification distinct from the identification of the ego, in so far as here it is in a certain relationship of the subject to (4) the image of his counterpart that we see being separated out the structure which is called the ego.

That of the ego-ideal poses a problem which is proper to itself: the ego-ideal is not proposed - it is almost banal to say it - as an ideal ego. I have often underlined that the two terms are distinct in Freud in the very text on narcissism, and this is something that we should closely examine under a microscope: we perceive that in the text it is very difficult to distinguish. First, it is not correct, but even if it were, that we should perceive by convention that there is no synonymy between what is attributed from experience in Freud's texts to the function of the ego-ideal, and the meaning that we can give to the image of the ego however exalted an idea we may have of it, when we make an ideal image of it, that to which the subject identifies himself as a successful composition of himself, a model, as one might say, of himself, that with which the subject is confused, is himself reassured about his wholeness. For example, [we must distinguish] what is threatened, what is affected when we allude to the necessities of narcissistic reassurance, to the fears of narcissistic injuries to his own body, something that we can place in the register of this ideal ego; we know the ego-ideal because it intervenes in functions which are often depressive, indeed aggressive functions with regard to the subject. Freud brings it into different forms of depression. You know that he (5) has an agency (tendance) at the end of the chapter which in Group psychology and the analysis of the ego is called an Ich-ideal which is precisely the first time he introduces in a decisive and articulated fashion this notion of the ego-ideal. He has a tendency to put all depressions under the heading and in the register, not of the ego ideal, but of some vacillating relationship, of some conflictual relationship between the ego

and the ego-ideal.

Let us admit that one can take everything that will happen under this depressive register, or on the contrary relationships of exaltation, from the angle of a hostility opened up between the two agencies, as one might say, from whatever agency the declaration of hostilities begins, whether it is the ego which revolts, or that the ego ideal becomes too severe with what is involved in the consequences and repercussions of every disequilibrium in this excessive relationship.

Therefore this ego ideal in any case is something which has its problems for us. We are told: the ego ideal emerges from an identification, from a late identification linked to the relationship, threefold in every case which is that of the Oedipus complex, a relationship in which there are mixed up in a complex fashion the relationships of desire with the relationships of rivalry, of aggression, of hostility. Something is at stake, and the outcome of the conflict is an object which is in the balance. It is certain that the outcome (6) of the conflict appears in any case as having brought about a subjective transformation: that the introduction, the introjection as is said, within a certain structure, of this something which is found with respect to the subject to be in future a part of himself, has nevertheless conserved a certain relationship with an external object. If the two things were not there, if here we could not put our finger on what analysis teaches us that intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity cannot be separated, namely that within the subject, in the functions that he carries everywhere with himself, whatever may be the modifications that intervene in his entourage and his milieu, what is acquired as ego ideal is indeed something which is in the subject as the exile carries his native soil on the soles of his shoes; his ego ideal really belongs to him, it is something acquired. It is not an object, it is something additional in the subject. I mean then that this insistence on the notion that intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity should remain linked in every correct analytic procedure, means that the relationships between the agencies in question, and this is proved by current usage, by the least necessities of language when we speak of the relationships between the ego and the ego ideal, these are relationships, let us say, ordinarily in analysis, and they are (7) spoken of as relationships which can be good or bad, conflictual or harmonious. What is left in parenthesis, or what is not completely formulated in what should be formulated: this is that these relationships between the two agencies are structured, articulated like intersubjective relationships.

Within the subject there is reproduced, and of course as you well see, can only be reproduced from a signifying organisation, the same mode of relationships as exists between subjects. We cannot think, even though we say it, and you can get by with saying it, that the superego is effectively something severe which spies on the ego at every turning, to inflict atrocious miseries on it. It is not a person, it functions within the subject as a subject behaves with respect to another subject, and

precisely in this that there is a relationship between the subjects which does not imply for all that the existence of the person. The conditions introduced by the existence, the functioning as such of the signifier, are sufficient for intersubjective relationships to be established.

It is this intersubjectivity therefore within the living person which is the thing we have to deal with in analysis. It is in this intersubjectivity that we should get an idea of what is this function of the ego ideal. As you know, you will not find this function in a dictionary, and you will not get a univocal response for it, you will find there the greatest confusion.

(8) This function is assuredly not confused with that of the super ego, it came almost at the same time, it is certainly in the terminology, but it is by this very fact distinguished from it, it is also in part confused, it can have the same agencies. Nevertheless it is more oriented towards something which, in the desire of the subject, plays a typifying function which perhaps appears to be altogether linked to neither more nor less than the assumption of the sexual type in so far as it is implied in a whole economy, which on this occasion here we can call, social, in the assumption of the masculine and feminine functions, not just simply in so far as they culminate at the act necessary for reproduction to occur, but for a whole mode of relationships between men and women.

What is the interest of what analysis has learned on this subject?

It is to have been able to penetrate into something which only shows itself in a certain way at the surface, and by these results to have penetrated into it from the angle of cases where the result is missing, and it is precisely the well known method called psychopathological, which consists in deconstructing for us, in disarticulating a function by grasping it where it is found to be slightly off course, deviant, and from this very fact, that which is usually inserted more or less normally as a complement into the entourage, appears to us as having its roots, its framework.

(9) I would like to deal with the experience that we have grasped of the incidence which is lacking, or that we suppose provisionally to be lacking, of the identification of a certain type of subject with what one can call their regular type, their satisfactory type. We will see here how we can choose, because we must choose, a particular case. Let us take therefore the case of women, of what has been called the "masculinity complex", the masculinity complex in the fashion that it is articulated with the existence of the phallic phase. We can do it, because I have shown you first of all the problematic aspect of the existence of this phallic phase.

Is this something instinctual? A sort of flaw in instinctual development, one which means that in a way we might be told, the existence of the clitoris would by itself alone be responsible, be the cause of what might be expressed at the end of the chain by the existence of the masculinity complex?

Here and now we are prepared to understand that it must not be so simple, and that also indeed if one looks closely at it, in Freud it is not so simple, and in any case the debate which followed is there to show us that it is not so simple, even if the debate was badly inspired, namely even though it began in a way by begging the question, namely that it could not be like that. It (10) nevertheless remains a question that it saw that it was not like that, that it was not purely and simply a question of a detour which is required in feminine development because of a natural anomaly, or simply because of the famous bisexuality that there is question of, that it is undoubtedly more complex, that we are not for all that capable of immediately and simply formulating what it is, but that undoubtedly what we see, is that in the vicissitude of what appears as the masculinity complex in the woman, there is something which shows us here and now a connection with this phallic element, an operation, a usage of this phallic element which in every case deserves to be held onto, because in any case the reason why an element may be put to use is all the same something which can clarify for us what this element is, fundamentally.

What then do the analysts tell us, especially the feminine analysts who have tackled this subject?

We will not say today all that they tell us. I refer very especially to two of these analysts who are in the background of Jones' discussion of the problem, who are Helene Deutsch and Karen Horney. Those of you who read English can on the one hand consult an article by Helene Deutsch which is called: "The significance of masochism", (UP, January 1930, Part 1, Vol♦ 13), (11) on the other hand an article by Karen Horney (Vol. 5, January 1924) .

Let us take Karen Horney. What does Karen Horney tell us?

Karen Horney, whatever one might think about the formulations of the final terms at which she ended up, both in theory and in technique, was on the clinical level, from the beginning and up to the middle of her career, without question a creator, and one who saw things which conserve all their value however poor the value of what she deduced from them concerning the anthropological situation of psychoanalysis. It nevertheless remains that her discoveries conserve all their value.

What does she highlight in this article on the castration complex?

What she highlights can be expressed in a brief fashion as follows: it is that she remarks the liaison, the clinical analogy between the formation in the woman of everything that is organized around the idea of castration, with all that this involves in terms of resonances, of clinical traces in that which the subject in analysis articulates in terms of claiming, properly speaking, the organ as something which she lacks.

She shows by a series of clinical examples, and it would be well

for you to refer to this text, that there is no difference in nature, the cases continue on imperceptibly from those which (12) appear as certain types of feminine homosexuality, namely those in which what the subject identifies herself with in a certain position with respect to her partner, is the paternal image. The moments are composed in the same fashion, the phantasies, the dreams, the inhibitions, the symptoms are the same. It seems to be only a form, one cannot even say an attenuated one, of the other, simply which has or has not gone past a certain frontier, which itself remains uncertain.

The point which in this connection Karen Homey finds herself accentuating, is the following: what happens in these cases encourages us to concentrate our attention on a certain moment of the Oedipus complex which is not the first, which is not even the middle, which is very far towards the end because it supposes that there is already reached this moment in which not alone is the relationship to the father constituted, but at which it is so well constituted that it takes form in the little girl subject under the guise of an express desire for the paternal penis, of something, we are told, and it is very properly underlined for us, which implies therefore a recognition of this reality of the penis, not even phantastic, not even in general, not in this ambiguous half-light which makes us ask ourselves at every instant what is the phallus, on this plane, on the plane of the (13) question: is it imaginary or is it not? And of course in its central function it implies this imaginary existence, this phallus which at different phases of the development of this relationship, the feminine subject can despite everything maintain that she possesses it, while at the same time knowing very well that she does not possess it. She possesses it simply qua image, either because she might have had it, in what she says, or that she should have it, as is frequently the case.

It is a question here of something quite different, we are told. It is a question of a penis realised as real, as being waited for as such. I would not even be able to advance this, if already in modulating the three moments of the Oedipus complex, I had not pointed out to you that it happens in different ways in each of these three moments, and that the father qua possessing the real penis, is something which intervenes at the third moment. I told you this especially with regard to the boy. Here then .things are perfectly well situated for the little girl.

What happens, according to what we are told?

We are told that in the cases in question, it is from the privation of, what is expected here that there will result this phenomenon which was not invented by Karen Homey, which is put into operation the whole time in the text of Freud, which is this transformation, this change of direction, this mutation which brings it about that what was love is transformed into (14) identification, that it is in the measure that the father disappoints an expectation oriented therefore in a certain fashion, which already involves an advanced maturation of the situation, that it is in the measure that this exigency of the

subject who has in fact arrived one might say in a certain fashion at the acme of the Oedipal situation - if precisely its function did not consist in the fact that it should be superseded, namely that it is in superseding it that the subject must find this satisfactory identification, that of her own sex - there appears this something which is revealed (qui revel and which is articulated as such, as a problem, as posing a mystery. In Freud himself it is underlined that this interplay that we admit as being the possibility par excellence of the transformation of love into identification, is something which is not self-explanatory.

Nevertheless it is this that we admit in this case for a first reason initially that we affirm, that it is at this moment that there is a question of articulating it, of giving a formula which allows us to conceive what this identification is as such linked to a moment of privation.

It is for this that I would like to try to give you some formulae, because I think that they are useful to distinguish what is that from what is not that; in other words to introduce (15) this essential element of dialectic, of signifying articulation which I am not giving you here for the fun of it, as I might say, because of a taste for finding ourselves lost in words, but on the contrary so that the use that we habitually make of words and of signifiers, is not a usage like that which could be called taking illusion for reality, namely things that are insufficiently articulated for things sufficiently illuminating in themselves. It is by articulating them properly that we can effectively measure what is happening, and what happens in one case from what happens in another.

What happens when the subject in question, the feminine subject has taken up a certain position of identification to the father?

The situation, if you like, is the following: here is the father here, something was expected here at the level of the child, in fact the paradoxical, unusual result is that from a certain angle and in a certain fashion, we are told that the child becomes qua ego ideal, this father. Of course she does not really become the father, and here always a woman in this case can really talk about her relationships to her father, it is sufficient to hear her in the most open way, saying, for example, "I cough like him". What is involved is certainly something which is an identification. Let us try to see then what is happening, let (16) us try to see step by step the economy of the transformation.

The little girl is not for all that transformed into a man. What we find as signs, as stigmata of this identification, are things which are expressed in part, which can emerge like these, which may even be noticed by the subject, of which the subject may boast in a certain fashion. What is it?

Indeed here there is no doubt. They are signifying elements. If a woman says: "I cough like my father", or: "I am putting on

weight or a tummy like him", it is all the same signifying elements that are provisionally in question. More exactly, to separate out what is in question, we will give them a special term because they are not signifiers which are themselves put into operation in a signifying chain. We will call them the "insignia" of the father.

The psychological attitude here shows the following on the surface: it is that the subject in fact, to call things by their name, presents herself under the mask, or bases herself on something which is the partially undifferentiated side that there is in every subject as such, bases herself on the insignia of masculinity.

It is perhaps necessary to pose the question, with the slowness which is always that which here should protect us from error, of what becomes of desire when this step is taken?

(17) Where did all of this begin? The desire, after all, was not itself a virile desire. What becomes of the desire, in so far as the subject has taken on here at this level the insignia of the father? These insignia are going to be employed vis-a-vis whom? Vis-a-vis some third thing, vis-a-vis something of which we will be told that it takes, because experience proves it to us, the place of that which in the primitive evolution of the Oedipus complex, was at that third place, namely the mother. Even the analysis of a case like this one, will show us that which from the moment of the identification, namely from the moment when the subject invests herself with the insignia of that with which she is identified, there is therefore a transformation of the subject in a certain sense which, is of the order of a passage to the state of a signifier, of something which is that, the insignia. But the desire which comes into play is no longer the same as if it were what was expected in this relationship to the father, if it was something that we can suppose at the point that things have got to, at this point that we are at in this moment in the Oedipus complex, something extremely close to a passive genital position, to a passionate desire, to a properly feminine appeal. It is quite clear that it is no longer the same thing that is there after the transformation.

We leave in question for a moment how to know what has happened .to this desire. A little while ago we have said privation. It "(18) is worth our while to come back to this because one could just as well say frustration. Why privation rather than frustration? I am pointing out here that we are leaving this loose thread.

In any case, what is going to be established in so far as the subject who here has also come there, in so far as there is an ego ideal, that something could have passed to within herself, which is structured as it is in intersubjectivity, this subject is going to exercise a certain desire which is what? On this schema, what appears, are the relationships of the father to the mother. It is quite clear that what we find in an analysis, in the analysis of a subject like this at the moment that we are

analysing here, is not the double, the reproduction of what has happened between the father and the mother, for all sorts of reasons, if it is only because the subject only acceded quite imperfectly to it, that experience shows on the contrary that what is going to come into the relationship, is the whole past, all the vicissitudes of extremely complex relationships which up to then have modulated the relationships of the child to the mother, namely everything which from the origin, from the frustrations, the disappointments linked to what necessarily exists in terms of mishaps, hiccups in the relationships of the child to the mother, with everything that it brings with it in terms of an extraordinarily complicated relationship, and namely let us bring in with a very special accent aggressive (19) relationships, the aggressive relationships in their most original form, the relationships also of rivalry, all the incidences for example of the arrival of elements foreign to the trio, namely of all the brothers or sisters who may have intervened more or less inopportunistly in the evolution of the subject and in her relationships to her mother.

All of this will contribute its trace and its reflection to temper or to reinforce what will then be presented as a claim for the insignia of masculinity. This is what is going to be projected into the relationships to her object which, in the young subject, will from then on be determined from this point of identification where the subject in fact takes on the insignia of that with which she is identified, in so far as it has become or that it plays for her the role and the function of ego ideal.

Of course this is a way of imagining the places that I am speaking about, but that presupposes obviously, if you wish to understand it, a sort of coming and going. These insignia, the subject brings them with her in accordance with the oscillatory movement that is in question. She finds herself constituted in a certain fashion and with a new desire.

This formula, this mechanism of transformation, with therefore what it involves, namely the intervention at the beginning of an element which must first of all be libidinal, and secondly of the existence to one side of a third term with which the subject is in a relationship which the distinction of this third term (20) permits, and which for this requires in any case that in the .past of the relationship with this third term, there has intervened this radically differentiating element which is called competition, and thirdly this something which ensures that a sort of exchange is produced. That which was the object of the libidinal relationship becomes something else, is transformed for the subject into signifying functions, and her desire passes onto another plane, on to the plane of the desire previously established with this third term, this emerges in the operation as basically the same, I mean the other desire, that which comes to substitute for the repressed desire. The same and none the less transformed. This is what constitutes the process of identification.

It is necessary that there should be first of all the libidinal

element pointing to a certain object qua object. This object becomes in the subject a signifier to occupy the place which will henceforth be called the ego ideal. The desire on the other hand undergoes this something which involves a It is another desire that comes in the place of the first. This other desire is not a desire which comes from nothing, it is not nothingness, it existed before, it concerned the third term, and it emerges from that transformed.

Here is the schema that I ask you to keep in mind, because it is in a way the minimal schema for any process of identification in the proper sense, of identification at the secondary level, of (21) identification in so far as it grounds the ego ideal. None of these three terms is ever lacking, and the formal dance as I might call it, which results from the transformation on the one hand of a transsignifying object, of the taking up of a place that this signifier realises at that moment in the subject, and which constitutes properly speaking the identification, is this something that we find at the basis of what constitutes an ego ideal, and this is always also accompanied by this thing that we can call transference of desire, namely that another desire arrives from elsewhere which is in relationship with a third term which had nothing to do with the first libidinal relationship that was called into question, and that this desire which comes to substitute for the first is in this substitution and by this substitution, transformed.

This is absolutely essential. We can explain it again, but in a different way.

Let us say to take up our schema in the form that we present habitually, the child in a first relationship with the primordial object - this is the general formula - finds herself taking the position symmetrical to that of the father. She enters into rivalry; she situates herself at the opposite with respect to the primitive relationship to the object, at a point X. It is to the degree that there she becomes something which can take on the insignia of that with which he enters into rivalry, that she (22) rediscovers afterwards the place where he necessarily is, namely opposite this point X where the things happened, and where she comes to constitute herself under this new form which is called the ego ideal. She retains something of this passage in the most general form.

There it is a question of something where you see well that it is no longer a question either of father, nor of mother, it is a question of relationships with the object. The mother, is the primitive object, the object par excellence. What she retains in this case, in this coming and going which makes her enter into rivalry with a third term, with respect to the object, is something which is characterized by what one can call the common factor which results from the existence of signifiers, from the fact that in the human psyche, in so far as people have to deal with the world of the signifier, and that it is the signifiers themselves which are the necessary condition, the defile through which their desire must necessarily pass; in this coming and

going there is always something which will imply this factor common to the incidence of the signifier in desire, to that which signifies it, to that which makes of it necessarily a signified desire. This common factor, is precisely the phallus. It is because it is always part of it, that it is the lowest common denominator of this common factor, that we always find it there in every case, whether it is a question of man or woman.

(23) In other words, this is why we place here, in this X, the phallus, the small o ; the fact is as you see, what results from it, is that it is always in relation to the ego, namely this something which is established there in a relationship of the subject to itself, and always more or less fragily constituted, compared in fact to primitive identification, and it in effect always more or less ideal, which the subject makes of himself with an image that is more or less always contested, which has nothing to do with this fundamental relationship that she has with that to which she has addressed her demands, namely the object.

The ego-ideal is constituted in this coming and going always in opposition, as one might say, to this virtual point where the competition, the contesting of the third term appears. It is opposing it that there is always a certain relationship with this common metonymical factor which is the phallus, which is found everywhere, and of course what happens at the level of the ego ideal consists essentially in having at least this common factor, and composed of course in a fashion which does not allow it to be seen, or which allows it to be seen only as something which always slips between our fingers, this something which exists at the basis of every kind of signifying assumption.

There is this fact: it is that this signifier in any case engages (24) with the signified. The ego-ideal is constituted in this relationship with the father, it always implies the phallus. Here it is the father who is the third term, he always implies the phallus, he implies it always and uniquely in so far as this phallus is the common factor, is the pivoting factor of this agency of the signifier.

Once again, for example, what does someone like Helene Deutsch tell us?

Karen Homey has shown us the continuity of the castration complex with feminine homosexuality. Helene Deutsch will speak to us about something else, she too will tell us that the phallic phase does indeed play the role that Freud tells us about except for this, that what is important for her, is to also take note of its subsequent vicissitude, this vicissitude, she will see in this: it is that the adoption, she says, of the masochistic position which is essential, constitutive, she says, of the feminine position (opposition), is based on this plane that it is in so far as the clitoral jouissance is found to be prohibited to the little girl, that she will be found to find her satisfaction from a position which will no longer therefore be uniquely a passive position, but a position of jouissance, assured by this very privation which is imposed on her with respect to clitoral

jouissance.

There is some paradox here, but a paradox that Helene Deutsch sustains on the basis of something which in her case carries over into technical precepts, affirmations drawn from experience and (25) which go very far in their paradox. I mean that I am bringing you here the experiential data of an analyst submitted no doubt as such to a certain choice of material, but which is worthwhile dwelling on.

For Helene Deutsch, the question of feminine satisfaction is something which presents itself in a complex enough fashion, for her to consider that a woman in her womanly and feminine nature, can find a complete enough satisfaction in which nothing appears which presents itself as neurotic or atypical in her behaviour, in her adaptation to her functions as a woman, without there appearing for her, under any very accentuated form, properly genital satisfaction.

I repeat, this is the position of Mrs. Deutsch. Namely that in fact the accomplishment of the satisfaction of the feminine position, can entirely be found on the plane of the maternal relationship especially of what belongs to all the stages of the accomplishment of the function of reproduction, namely in the satisfactions proper to the state of pregnancy, of nursing and of the maintaining of the maternal position, the maturation of the satisfaction, linked to the genital act itself of orgasm, to call it by its name, being something which is sufficiently linked to this dialectic of phallic privation, for Helene Deutsch to formulate that in the subjects, she has encountered in a more or (26) less advanced fashion, in a more or less extreme fashion, this involvement in the phallic dialectic, namely that it is with respect to the man, with respect to a certain degree of masculine identification, that there has been constituted an equilibrium of the personality that is necessarily conflictual and therefore precarious. A too extreme reduction of this complex relationship, an advance to a too extreme degree of analysis is likely to frustrate the subject of what she had up to then more or less successfully realized in terms of jouissance on the genital plane, and goes as far as involving for her the indication, in a way, of leaving to the subject the penis of her identifications which are more or less realised, in any case .acquired, on this plane; and not, through an analysis that is taken too far, to reduce as one might say, to deconstruct, to analyse these identifications, at the risk of putting her in the position of a loss with respect to what these analyses reveal as being the foundation, the structure, of the jouissance acquired, conquered up, to then, up to the analysis in so far as it is supposed to be linked, is acquired, on the plane of genital jouissance, to something which is precisely the past of the subject with respect to her identifications in so far as the jouissance may consist in the masochistic frustration of a certain position which was conquered at a certain moment, and in order that the frustration should be maintained necessitates at the same time the maintenance of positions from which this frustration can be exercised.

(27) In other words, in certain conditions, the reduction of identifications which are properly masculine identifications, can constitute a danger for what has been conquered by the subject on the plane of jouissance in the very dialectic of this identification.

This is worth what it is worth. The question is simply here that this could have been put forward, that this was put forward, by someone who is certainly in no way inexperienced, and who even if it is only by her reflections, undoubtedly shows herself to be someone who reflects on her trade and on the consequences of what she does. On the contrary it is under this heading, and under this heading alone that this is worth maintaining in the question.

I repeat, and to resume the position of Mrs. Deutsch, it is in fact in the beyond of the genital act as it appears effectively in interhuman relationships, I am not saying that it appears in the same way in the robin or in the praying mantis, but in the human species it would seem that the centre of gravity, the major element of satisfaction of the feminine position would be found in this beyond of the genital relationship as such. In a way, everything that can be found there by the woman, would be essentially bound up to a dialectic which we do not have any reason to be surprised to see intervening here.

What does that mean?

(28) That means that this something which is also well manifested in the position of man vis-a-vis the genital act, namely the extreme importance of what is called forepleasure, is here what gives perhaps simply in a more accentuated fashion, the libidinal materials to be put in question, but that these libidinal materials come into play effectively because of their hold on the history of the subject, in a certain signifying dialectic implying the intrusion of the possible identification to the third object who is the father on this occasion, and that therefore everything that comes in under the title of phallic claims, and of identification to the father complicated by the relationship of the woman to her object, is simply only the signifying elaboration of that from which are found to be borrowed the satisfactions which appear properly in the genital .act, namely that which I called just now: forepleasure; the orgasm itself, and as such, I mean in so far as it is identified with the high point of the act itself, posing effectively from experience the problem in the woman of something which deserves in effect to be posed, given everything that we know physiologically about the absence of a nervous organisation directly established to provoke pleasure in the vagina.

This leads us to try to formulate this question of the (29) relationship of the ego ideal to a certain vicissitude of desire, and to formulate it like this: we have therefore both in the boy and in the girl at a given moment, a relationship to a certain object whatever it may be, to an object already constituted, constituted in its reality as object, and this

object is going to become something which is the ego ideal. It is going to become it through its insignia.

Why has the desire which is in question in this relationship to the object been called on this occasion privation?

It has been called privation on this occasion, because what constitutes its characteristics is not, as they say, that it concerns a real object, it is of course necessary that the father at the moment that he intervenes in the first example that I gave in the evolution of the girl, should in effect be a real enough being in his physiological constitution, so that the phallus shall have passed to a stage of evolution which goes beyond the purely imaginary function, which it can conserve for a long time in Penisneid. This is certain.

What constitutes the privation of desire is not that it is aimed at something real on this occasion, but that it aims at something which can be demanded. There cannot be and be established properly speaking a dialectic of privation, except when it is a question of something that the subject can symbolize. It is in so far as the paternal penis can be symbolized, can be demanded, (30) that there is produced what happens at the level of the identification that we are dealing with today.

There is here something which is altogether distinct from what intervenes at the level of the prohibition which is nevertheless constituted for example regarding phallic jouissance. Clitoral jouissance, to call it by its name is perhaps at a given moment of the evolution, prohibited.

What is prohibited throws the subject back into something where she no longer finds anything in which to signify herself. This is what gives it its properly speaking painful character, and it is to the degree that the ego can, for example, on occasion find itself in this position of being rejected by the ego ideal, that there is established properly speaking the melancholic state.

We shall return to the nature of this rejection, but you should understand here and now that what I am alluding to here can be put into relation with the same German term which is in our vocabulary what I related to this rejection, namely the term .Verwerfung. It is in so far as on the part of the ego ideal the subject in her living reality can find herself in this position of exclusion from all possible signification, of exclusion, that there is established the depressive state as such.

But what is in question in the formation in the ego ideal, is a (31) quite opposite procedure: it consists in fact in this, that this object which finds itself confronted with something which we have called privation, in so far as it is a negative desire, that it is something that can be demanded, that it is on the plane of demand that the subject sees herself being refused this desire, this liaison between the desire qua refused, and the object. It is this which is at the start the constitution of this object as a particular signifier which takes a particular place, that there

is substituted for the subject who becomes a metaphor of the subject, that which is produced in the identification to the object of desire, in the case where the girl identifies with her father. This is what it is: this father whom she has desired and who has refused her the desire of her demand, becomes something who is in her place. The metaphorical character of the formation of the ego ideal is an essential element, and just as in the metaphor what results, is the modification of something which has nothing to do with the desire which is involved in the constitution of the object, which is a desire which is elsewhere at that moment, the desire which had linked the girl to her mother, let us call it in comparison to the capital D, the little d. All the preceding adventure of the girl with her mother, comes here to take its place in the question and undergoes the consequences of this metaphor. It becomes bound.

We find there the formula of the metaphor that I have given to (32) you, in so far as it is, as you know.

$$\frac{S}{S'} \sim S\left(\frac{I}{d}\right)$$

namely something which results from a change of signification. After the metaphor, this change of signification is something which is produced in the relationships established up to then by the history of the subject, because in fact we are still talking about the first example of the little girl to the mother. That which from then on will model her relationships with her object, will be this history, this history modified by the establishment of the new function in her which is called the ego-ideal.

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$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 d & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond o & \rightleftharpoons & i(o) & \leftarrow & e \\
 D & \rightarrow & O \diamond d & \rightleftharpoons & s(O) & \leftarrow & I \\
 \Delta & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond D & \rightleftharpoons & s(\phi) & \leftarrow & \Phi
 \end{array}$$

I am writing this on the board at the beginning, to avoid writing it incorrectly or incompletely when I have to refer to it. I hope at least to be able to clarify all three of these formulae between now and the end of our lecture today.

To take up things more or less where I left them the last time, I was able to ascertain not without satisfaction, that certain of my propositions did not fail to provoke some emotion, in (2) particular because I seemed to endorse the opinions of one or other female psychoanalyst who believed she had to advance the opinion that certain analyses of women do not necessarily gain anything by being pushed to the very end, for the reason for example that the very progress of the analysis could deprive the aforesaid subjects in analysis, of a certain point that had been reached in their properly sexual relationships, I mean that the progress or the advance of the analysis could threaten a certain jouissance which had been conquered and acquired. Following on this I was asked if I endorsed this formula, namely whether the analyst should in fact stop at a certain point, for reasons which would in a way be situated outside the laws of its very progress.

I shall reply to this that everything depends on what one considers as being the aim of analysis, not its external aim, but that which regulates it as one might say theoretically. It is quite certain that a perspective on analysis which is that of an adjustment to reality, this adjustment to reality being considered as something which is implied in the very notion of the development of the analysis, I mean that it is supposed to be a given in the condition of the man or the woman that a full elucidation of this condition should necessarily lead them to an adaptation which is in a way preformed, harmonious.

This is a hypothesis, and a hypothesis which in truth nothing in (3) experience appears to justify. In other words, to nail my colours to the mast and employ terms which are the very ones which will recur today, this time in a quite concrete sense.

because it is a question of the woman, and in truth there is here an extremely sensitive point in analytic theory, namely that of her development, of her personal adaptation to a certain order, and which undoubtedly is pure as far as the human order is concerned. Does it not appear immediately quite certain that it is appropriate, as regards the woman, not to confuse what she desires - I give to this term desire its full meaning - with what she demands; not to confuse either what she demands with what she wants (veut), in the sense in which one says that what a woman wants, God wants ("Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut")?

These simple reminders, which if they are not self-evident are at least derived from experience, may serve to show that the question that is being asked, namely what it is a question of realizing in analysis, is not a simple one.

The last time, even though this came in a sort of lateral fashion into our discourse, into what we were talking about, what I was trying to lead you to, that to which I am going to bring you back today in order to give it a more generalized formula, and which will serve me subsequently as a reference point in the critique of fundamental, normative identifications, (4) precisely of man and woman, that to which I led you the last time, was a first glimpse of what we should consider as being this sort of identification which produces the ego-ideal; the ego ideal in so far as it is the point of emergence, the pivotal point, the culminating point of this crisis of the Oedipus complex around which analytic experience began, and around which it does not cease to turn, even though it is taking up positions which are more and more centrifugal. And I insisted on something which could be said this way: that every identification of the ego-ideal type of identification was a certain putting into relationship of the subject to certain signifiers in the Other, which I called insignia, and this relationship came in fact to graft itself onto a desire other than the desire which had confronted the two terms of the subject and the Other, in so far as he is the bearer of these insignia.

Here is how this could be summarized, more or less, and of course it did not satisfy everybody, even though speaking to one or other person I only gave as reference the following. Do you not see for example something which moreover is indicated as being in the foreground by Freud, as well as by all the authors, that it is in the measure that a woman identifies with her father, that in her relationships with her husband she gives him all the trouble that she had given to her mother?

(5) Here is something where it is not simply a question of being fascinated by the example. There are of course other forms in which we rediscover the same formula. But here is something exemplary, which illustrates what I have just said to you: It is in the measure that the identification is made by the assumption of certain signs, of characteristic signifiers of the relationships of a subject with another.

This overlaps and implies the emergence into the foreground of the relationships of desire between this subject and a third. You find again the subject S, the capital O and the little o. Where is the capital O, where is the little o? Here. It does not matter! The important thing is that there are two of them.

Let us begin again from this remark which I try to bring you back to, which is something about which one could say that it shares in the maxim of La Rochefoucauld concerning the things that one cannot steadily regard: the sun and death. In analysis there are things like that. It is rather curious that it is precisely the central point of analysis that is looked at more and more obliquely, and that one looks at it by the intermediary which are more and more distant. The castration complex is one of those.

Look at what is happening, and what has happened since the first understandings that Freud had. There was here something (6) pivotal, something essential in the formation of the subject, namely this strange thing, it must be said, and which had never been put forward until then, never articulated in the formation of the subject. This step, is something about a threat which is quite precise, particular, paradoxical, archaic, even properly speaking horror provoking, and a decisive moment, pathogenic no doubt, but also normative revolving around a menace which is not there all by itself, which is not there in isolation, which is coherent, with this relationship which is called the oedipal relationship, between the subject, the father, the mother, the father here acting as the bearer of the threat, the mother the object of the aim, of the goal of a desire itself profoundly hidden.

You will discover there right at the origin, that which precisely has to be elucidated. That it is in this third relationship that there is going to be produced the assumption of these relationships to certain insignia already indicated in fact in this castration complex, but in an enigmatic fashion because in a way these insignia are themselves placed in a special relationship with regard to the subject. They are, it is said, threatened, and at the same time they are the very things that it is a question of accepting, of receiving, and this in a relationship of desire concerning a third term which is that of the mother.

At the beginning this indeed is what we find, and when we have (7) said that, we are precisely before an enigma, before something which is to be articulated, which is then to be coordinated by practitioners. We have this relationship which is complex by definition and in its essence, complex to grasp, to articulate, and we encounter it in the life of our subject.

What are we going to find? A thousand forms, a thousand reflections, a sort of dispersing of images, of fundamental relationships, to allow us to grasp all its incidences, all its psychological reflections, all the multiple psychological tasks

which emerge in the experience of the neurotic subject. And then what happens?

What happens is this phenomenon which I would call that of psychologizing motivation, which will ensure that by looking into the individual, into the subject himself, for the origin, the meaning of this fear of castration, we arrive at a series of displacements, of transpositions in the articulation of this fear of castration which only more or less - I am going to resume what I said - measure out in this way this trace of castration which is first of all, in relation with the object of the father, the fear of the father. We are first of all led to consider it in its incidence, and to perceive its relationship with a tendency, a desire of the subject, that of his corporal integrity, and it is around this notion of narcissistic fear that that of the fear of castration is going to be put forward, (8) then, still following a line which is necessarily genetic, namely which goes back to the origins, once we look into the individual himself for the genesis of that which develops afterwards, we find put forward, placed in the foreground, because one always has material which of course is clinical to grasp the incarnations, as one might say, of a certain effect, we find the fear of the feminine organ, in a fashion that is moreover ambiguous, either that it is it which become the locus of the threat against the incriminated organ, or on the contrary, that it is the model of the disappearance of this organ.

Further on, we are going to find at the origin of the fear of castration by a further withdrawal, where you are going to see, in the last analysis it seems to me quite striking and singular in its outcome, that what is going to be feared as having castration as a final term, is the term at which we have progressively arrived, and I will not go back over for you today the list of the authors that we find, but as regards the last you know that it is Melanie Klein; what is at the origin of the fear of castration, is the phallus itself which is hidden within the maternal organ, which is perceived by the child right at the beginning as being the paternal phallus, as having its locus within the maternal body, this is what is dreaded by the child, and by the subject. And believe me, it is already pretty (9) striking to see appearing in a type of mirror reflection before the threatened organ, this threatening, and in a way, I would say more and more mythical organ, to the extent that it is pushed further and further back. But here for the last step to be taken, it is in fact necessary that the paternal organ within the maternal organ, should be considered as threatening. It is because the subject himself made of it at the sources of what are called his primordial aggressive tendencies, his primordial sadistic tendencies, made of it the ideal weapon, and everything comes back, when all is said and done, to a sort of pure reflection of the phallic organ, being considered as the support for a primitive tendency which is that of pure and simple aggression, the complex of castration isolating itself in fact, reducing itself to the isolation of a primordial partial aggressive drive, at the same time disconnected, it then seems.

And in fact it is indeed the whole effort of the authors, that which gave them the greatest possible difficulty from then on, to reintegrate what concerns the castration complex into its context as a complex, namely what it set out from, and which profoundly motivated this central character in the subjective economy that was in question at the origin of the exploration of the neuroses, and of course we know the effort that the authors make to restore all the same, to resituate in its place which when all is said and done, appears in fact when we look at (10) things as being a pure and simple and vain turning back on itself of a system, of a set of concepts, because when all is said and done, if we examine attentively the economy of what Melanie Klein articulates as happening at the level of this precocious Oedipus complex, which is still something of a sort of contradiction in its terms, it is a way of saying a pre-oedipal Oedipus complex, the Oedipus complex in so far as it is the Oedipus complex before any of the personages of the Oedipus complex have appeared. We simply find articulated in the interpretative signifiers that she makes use of to give a name to these drives that she encounters, or that she believes she encounters in the last analysis in the child, the fact is that she implies in her own particular signifiers, exactly the whole dialectic that there is question of at the beginning, namely the question that is at stake and that must be taken up from the start and in its essence, which is the following:

If castration has this essential character, if we take it in so far as it is put forward by analytic theory and experience, and by Freud, right from the beginning, let us now try to see what it means.

Before being feared, before being experienced, before being psychologized, what does it mean?

Castration is not a real castration. This castration is linked as we have said, to a desire. It is even linked to the evolution, to the progress, to the maturation of desire in the (11) human subject. If it is castration, it is quite certain on the other hand that the link to this organ, so difficult moreover to properly centre in the notion of castration complex, because it has often been remarked what does that mean? It is not a castration addressed to the genital organs in their totality. This moreover is the reason why in the woman it does not take on the aspect of a threat against female genital organs, as such, but as something else, precisely qua phallus. In the same way in the case of the man, it was possible legitimately to pose the question of whether it was necessary in this notion of the castration complex to isolate the penis as such, or to include in it the penis and the testicles. In fact, of course this is precisely what indicates that what is in question is something other than this or that, it is something which has a certain relationship with the organs, but a certain relationship of whose precisely signifying character, already from the beginning, there can be no doubt, and it is this signifying character which dominates.

We can say that at the very least a minimum should be retained in what the castration complex is in its essence, the relationship to a desire on the one hand, and on the other hand to what I will call on this occasion a mark.

In order that desire, Freudian experience and analytic theory tell us, should successfully traverse certain phases, should (12) reach maturity, it is necessary that something as problematic to situate as the phallus, should be marked by this something which ensures that it is only maintained, conserved, to the degree that it has traversed the threat of castration properly speaking, and this must be maintained as the essential minimum beyond which we go off into synonyms, we go off into slippages, we go off into equivalences, we go off at the same time into obscurities.

We literally do not know any longer what we are saying if we do not retain these characteristics as essential, and is it not better first of all and above all to direct ourselves towards the relationship of these two poles, we say, of desire to the mark, before trying to go searching for it in the different ways in which this is incarnated for the subject in the reason for a liaison which from the moment that we leave this point of departure, is going to become more and more enigmatic, more and more problematic, and soon more and more evaded?

I insist on this character, this character of a mark which moreover has in all the other manifestations as well as the analytic, interpretative, significant manifestations, and quite certainly in everything that is embodied ceremonially, ritually, sociologically, this character of being the sign of everything that supports this castrating relationship whose anthropological emergence we began to perceive through the mediation of (13) analysis.

Let us not forget that up to then the religious signs, incarnations, for example in which we recognize this castration complex, circumcision for example, to give it its name, or again one or other form of inscription, of mark in the rites of puberty, of tattooing, of everything which produces marks, impresses on the subject, in connection with a certain phase which in an unambiguous fashion is presented as a phase of accession to a certain level, to a certain stage of desire. All these things make their appearance always as a mark and an impression.

And you will tell me: there you are, we've got it! It is not difficult to encounter the mark. Already in our experience, when there are flocks, every shepherd has his little mark in order to distinguish his sheep from those of others, and it is not such a stupid remark. There is indeed a certain relationship, even if it only because of this: it is that in any case we shall already grasp in this that the mark presents itself all the same with a certain transcendence with respect to the constitution of the flock.

Should this satisfy us? It is quite true in a certain fashion, for example that circumcision presents itself as constituting a certain flock, the flock of the elect, of the sons of God.

Is all we are doing here rediscovering this?

(14) Surely not. What analytic experience, and what Freud from the beginning contributes, is that there is a close, intimate relationship between desire and the mark. The fact is that the mark is not there simply as a sign of recognition for the shepherd, whose position we would find it difficult to know in this instance, but that when we are dealing with man, this means that the marked living being here has a desire which is not without a certain intimate relationship with this mark.

It is not a question of advancing too quickly, nor of saying what this mark is which modifies desire. There is perhaps from the beginning in this desire a gap which permits this mark to take on its special incidence, but what is certain is that there is the closest relationship between that which characterizes this desire in the case of man, and the incidence, the role and the function of the mark. We rediscover this confrontation of the signifier and of desire which is that on which we should here bring all our questioning to bear.

I do not want to get too far away, but here all the same a little parenthesis: let us all the same not forget that the question here leads on quite obviously to the function of the signifier in man, and that it is not here that you will be hearing is spoken of for the first time. If Freud wrote Totem 15) and Taboo, if it was for him an essential need and satisfaction to articulate this Totem and Taboo, consult Jones' text to see the importance that this had for him, and which was not simply an importance in terms of applied psychoanalysis to rediscover enlarged to the dimensions of the heavens, the little human animal with whom he was dealing in his office, it is not the heavenly dog compared to the terrestrial dog like in Spinoza, it is a myth that is absolutely essential for him, it is such an essential myth that for him it is not a myth; what does it mean, this Totem and Taboo?

The fact is that we are necessarily led, if we wish to understand something which is the particular questioning of Freud, at the level of this experience of the Oedipus complex in his patients, the fact is that we are necessarily led to this theme of the murder of the father.

Of course you know that here Freud does not question himself. What can it really signify that to conceive in effect of a passage which is the passage from nature to humanity, it should be necessary that one passes through the murder of the father?

According to his method which is the method of an observer, of a naturalist, he groups, he multiplies around this sort of point of confluence, this crossroads at which he arrives, all the documents, everything that ethnological information brings to

(16) him, and of course what is it that we see multiplying in pride of place? The particular contribution of his experience, is the point at which his experience encounters the ethnological material. It does not matter that it is more or less out of date. Today it is of no importance, that it is the function of the phobia with the theme of the totem which is here the point at which he finds his bearings, where he is satisfied, where he sees being linked up the signs whose trail he is following. All of this clearly shows that this is absolutely indistinguishable from a progress which puts in the foreground this function of the signifier.

The phobia, is a symptom in which there comes to the fore, in an isolated fashion and promoted as such, the signifier. I spent last year explaining it to you, showing you the degree to which the signifier of a phobia is something which has a thousand significations for the subject, it is the key point, it is the signifier which is lacking for the significations to remain a little bit peaceful, at least for a while. Without this the subject is literally submerged by them.

In the same way, this is what the totem also is, the all-purpose signifier, the signifier as key, the signifier thanks to which everything can be organised, and principally the subject, because in this signifier the subject finds what he is, and it is in the name of this totem that for him also an order is put (17) on what is prohibited.

But what is it that this, as one might say, veils, hides from us, when all is said and done? It is this murder of the father itself, in order that around it there can be made the conversion, the revolution thanks to which the young males of the horde are going to see organized something which is going to be the primitive law, namely the prohibition of incest.

This hides from us simply the close link that there is between death and the appearance of the signifier, because all the same do not forget this, that in the ordinary course of events, everybody knows that life hardly pauses at the corpses that it produces. Big fish eat little fish, or even having killed them, do not eat them, but it is certain that the movement of life, I would say levels down what it must abolish in its path, and this is already the whole problem of knowing in what sense a dead person is remembered, even if this remembering is something which remains in some way implicit, namely if as everything makes it appear for us, it is in the nature of this remembering that it should be forgotten by the individual, whether it is a question of the murder of the father or of the murder of Moses. It is essentially and of its nature to forget what remains absolutely necessary as the key, as the pivotal point around which our spirit should turn. It is that a certain link has (18) been made a signifier, which ensures that this dead person exists differently properly speaking in the real, in the burgeoning of life. There is no existence of death, there are the dead, and that is all, and when they are dead, the living person pays no further attention to them.

In other words, what is it that causes both Freud's passion when he is writing Totem and Taboo, and the devastating effect of the production of a book which appears and which is very generally rejected and vomited out? Namely that everybody starts saying: what is this man trying to tell us? Where is he from? By what right does he say these things to us? We ethnographers have never seen that. Which does not prevent it being one of the altogether capital events of our century, and that around it effectively the whole inspiration of critical, ethnological, literary, anthropological work has been profoundly transformed.

What does this mean, if not that Freud conjugates here two things: he conjugates desire with the signifier; he conjugates them as one says one says one conjugates a verb. He makes the category of this conjugation enter into the heart of a thinking which with respect to man, remained up to him a thinking which I would call academic thinking, designating by that a certain ancient philosophical affiliation which, from Platonism up to the Stoical and Epicurean sects, and passing through (19) Christianity, profoundly tends to forget, to evade this organic relationship of desire with the signifier, to situate it, to exclude it from the signifier, to reduce it, to explain it, to motivate it in a certain economy of pleasure, to evade what there is in it of the absolutely problematic and irreducible and properly speaking perverse, to evade what is the essential, living character of the manifestations of human desire, in the foreground of which we should put this character not just of being inadapted, inadaptable, but fundamentally perverted, marked.

It is the situation of this bond between desire and the mark, between desire and the insignia, between desire and the signifier, that we are in the process here of struggling to make.

Here are the three little formulae that I have written out for you:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 d \rightarrow \$ \diamond o \rightleftarrows i(o) \longleftarrow e \\
 D \rightarrow O \diamond d \rightleftarrows s(O) \longleftarrow I \\
 \Delta \rightarrow \$ \diamond D \rightleftarrows s(\phi) \longleftarrow \Phi
 \end{array}$$

Today I would simply like to introduce them, to tell you what they mean because we shall not be able to go any further. But these formulae are in my opinion those around which you will be (20) able to try not only to articulate something about the problem that I have just proposed to you, but even to articulate all the complications, and even all the vagaries of analytic thinking with respect to that which always remains our fundamental problem. Let us not forget that, when all is said and done, it is the problem of desire.

Let us begin first of all by saying what the letters which are there mean. The little d, is desire. The is the subject,

the little o, is the small other, it is the other in so far as he is our counterpart, it is the other in so far as his image holds us, captivates us, supports us, and around which we constitute this first order of identifications which I defined for you as being narcissistic identification which is the little e, the ego.

This first line puts you in a certain relationship which as the arrows indicate to you, cannot be taken to the end by beginning from each extremity, that it stops starting from each extremity at the precise point at which the directing arrow itself encounters another one with an opposite sign, but puts into a certain relationship egoistic or narcissistic identification with on the other hand the function of desire.

I will comment on it more fully later on.

The second line, that on which I articulated the whole of my discourse at the beginning of this year, in so far as I tried to (21) make you see in the witticism a certain fundamental relationship of desire, not with the signifier as such, but with the word, that is to say with the demand. The D written here means the demand. The capital O which follows, is the big Other, the big Other in so far as it is the locus, the seat, the witness to whom the subject refers in his relationship with any little o whatsoever as being the locus of the word. There is no need to recall here how for such a long time, and by coming back to it incessantly, I articulated the necessity of this big Other as being the locus of the word which is articulated as such. Here we find again the little d. Here you encounter a sign for the first time, it is the little s(0). The little s has here the same signification that it usually has in our formulae, namely that of the signified. The little s(0) means that which is signified in the Other, and signified with the help of the signifier, that which in the Other will, for me the subject, take on the value of the signified, namely that which properly speaking we have called above the insignia. It is in relationship with these insignia of the Other that there is produced the identification which has as its fruit and result the constitution in the subject of the capital I which is the ego ideal.

Already with nothing more than by the constitution of these formulae, you have sensed that there is an accession of signs to (22) the identification of the ego ideal, only when the term of the big Other has entered into the reckoning. You rediscover here the little d.

The third line, otherwise called delta, is that which concerns the problem that I am trying to articulate for you today, namely, that it tries to articulate in a reference chain like the preceding ones, the following; the delta, is precisely what we are questioning ourselves about, namely the very source by means of which the human subject is placed in a certain relationship to the signifier, this in his essence as subject, as total subject, as subject in its completely open,

problematic, enigmatic character and this is what this formula expresses. You see here the subject returning again in his relationship with the fact that his desire passes through demand, that he speaks it, and that that has certain effects. This simply is what is symbolized here. Here you have the capital S which is as usual the letter by which we designate the signifier. This formula explains that capital S(^) is something which I am going to try to tell you, and precisely that which \$,the phallus, realizes, in other words that the phallus is the signifier which introduces into 0 something new, and which only introduces it into 0, and at the level of 0, and which is the thing thanks to which this formula will become clear from the effects of the signifier at this precise point of (23) incidence on the Other, namely what this formula will allow us to clarify from what comes about through the existence of the relationships which are thus articulated.

Let us now take up again what we are dealing with.

The relationship of man to desire is not a pure and simple relationship of desire, it is not in itself a relationship to an object. If this relationship to the object was here and now established, there would be no problem for analysis. Men, as the majority of animals are supposed to do, would go towards their object, there would be no secondary relationship, as I might say, of man to the fact that he is a desiring animal, and with regard to whom everything that happens at the level that we call perverse, consists in the fact that he enjoys (jouit de) his desire. If the whole evolution from the origins of desire revolves around these experiential facts that are called masochistic relationships, it is this which we are obliged in the genetic order to bring forward in the first place, but one comes to it by a sort of regression as I might say, that which offers itself as being the most exemplary, as being the most pivotal, it is the so-called sadistic relationship, or the scopophilic relationship.

But if it is quite clear that it is by a reduction and a manipulation and a secondary artificial decomposition of what is given in experience, that we isolate them under the form of drives which are substituted one for the other, and which are (24) equivalent, the scopophilic relationship, in so far as it combines exhibition and voyeurism, is always ambiguous: the subject sees himself being seen, or sees the subject as seen, but does not of course see him purely and simply. It is in jouissance, in the type of radiation or of phosphorescence which emerges from the fact that the subject finds himself, in a position coming from some primitive gap or other, in some way extracted from his relationship of implication to the object, and because of this he fundamentally grasps himself as undergoing this relationship, whence the fact that we find at the basis of this analytic exploration of desire, masochism. The fact is that the subject grasps himself as suffering, as one might say, his existence as living being, as suffering there, as being a subject of desire.

Where is the problem now?

This is the aspect which will forever remain only in its irreducible character, the altogether false aspect of human desire understood as any reduction and adaptation, and any analytic experience will go against it, the subject does not simply satisfy a desire, he enjoys desiring, and this is an essential dimension of his jouissance, and to omit this sort of primitive given on which I must say that the so-called existentialist investigation has thrown some light, has illuminated in a way what I articulate here for you as I am (25) able, and simply thinking that you sufficiently refer to our everyday experience, for this to have a meaning, which is developed throughout unevenly magisterial pages by Mr. Sartre, in Being and Nothingness. It is not always absolutely rigorous from a philosophical point of view, but it certainly shows an undoubted literary talent. What is striking, is that things of this order could only be articulated and developed with such eclat since precisely analysis had in a way established the rights of this dimension of desire.

Mr. Jones in "L'utilite et la fonction dans l'analyse", would seem, in function directly proportional to what he did not understand, to have tried very quickly to articulate the castration complex by giving it an equivalent. To be honest, the phallic signifier was for him, throughout his existence as writer and analyst, the object of what one could call perhaps in his case a real phobia, because really the best thing that he wrote, which culminates in his article on the phallic phase, consists precisely in trying to articulate, to say why this blessed phallus which is found there under our feet at every instant, why should we privilege this object which is moreover so inconsistent, when there are things that are just as interesting? The vagina for example. And in fact the man is right. It is quite clear that this object is no less (26) interesting than the phallus, as we know. Only what astonishes me, is that the one and the other do not have the same function. He was strictly condemned to understand nothing about it, in the very measure that from the beginning, once he tried to articulate what this castration complex was for Freud, he felt the need to give it an equivalent.

Already one sees the start of the first impulse which arises here instead of retaining what is perhaps toughest, irreducible in the castration complex, namely the signifier phallus. He was not without a certain sense of orientation here. He made perhaps only one mistake, which was to think that this phrase on which he ends his article on "The phallic phase", namely that God created them man and woman, that is how he concludes, showing clearly the biblical origins of his conviction, because God created man and woman, therefore they are well made to go together, and it is necessarily at this that things should end up, or they should say why.

However, we are precisely in analysis in order to see that when one demands that it should say why, one enters into all sorts of

complications, and this is the reason that at the beginning he substituted for the term castration complex, this term aphanisis which he went looking for in the Greek dictionary, and which, it must be said, does not appear as one of the words (27) most utilized by the authors, and which means disappearance; disappearance of what? Disappearance of desire. This is what the subject is supposed to dread in the castration complex, according to Mr. Jones, and then nimble as a Shakespearean character, he does not seem to be at all aware that it was already an enormous problem that a living being could be in doubt about, be intimidated as by a danger, not by the disappearance, the lack, the weaning of his object, but of his desire, because there is no other means of making of aphanisis an equivalent of the castration complex, except to define it as he defines it, namely: the disappearance of desire.

Is there not here therefore something which is absolutely unfounded? But that it is already something of the third or the fourth degree compared to what we can call a relationship that is conceivable in terms of need, is what seems to be not in doubt, and that which he does not give the slightest appearance of being aware of.

This having been said, even if we admit already that all the complications which are suggested by the simple situating of the problem in these terms are resolved, it remains that the problem is to know how in this relationship of the subject to the other, in so far as it is in the other and in the gaze of the other - it is not for nothing that I put the scopophilic position at the heart of things, it is because effectively it is at the (28) heart of this position, but just as much in the attitude of the other, I mean that there is no such thing as a sadistic position which in a certain way is not accompanied, in order to be qualified properly speaking as sadistic, by a certain masochistic identification.

Therefore the problem is to know that which, in this relationship to his being, itself detached, where the human subject is, which puts him in this quite special position vis-a-vis the other, where what he grasps, where what he enjoys, is something other than the relationship to the object, but a relationship with his desire. It is a question of knowing in the last analysis what the phallus as such is doing in all of this. This is where the problem lies, and before trying to engender, to imagine by a genetic reconstitution based on references which are what I would call the fundamental references of modern obscurantism, namely formulae like the following, which are in my opinion much more imbecilic than anything that you can find in these little books that you are taught under the guise of religious instruction, or catechism, namely for example: "ontogenesis reproduces phylogenesis". When our great grandchildren come to realize that in our day this was enough to explain all sorts of things, they will say: "all the same man is a funny creature", and they will not notice moreover what they then will have in its place.

It is a question therefore of knowing what the phallus is doing here.

For today let us pose the following: that the existence of this third line, namely that the phallus in effect is something which plays a certain role, a role of signifier. What does that mean?

Let us begin from the second line which means this: that if there is a certain relationship of man to the little other which is structured, constituted like what we have just called human desire in the sense that this desire is already fundamentally something perverse, all his demands will be marked by a certain relationship. This is the meaning of what we see in this new little diamond-shaped symbol which you repeatedly find in this formula, and which simply implies that everything that is in question here is commanded by something that is precisely this quadratic relationship which we have always put as the basis of our articulation of the problem, and which poses S, which says that no S can be conceived of, or articulated, or possible without this ternary relationship $o \ o'0$. That is all that this means: in order that the demand, as one might say, should exist, should have a chance, should be something, it is necessary that there should be therefore a certain relationship between 0, qua locus of the word, and this desire as it is structured, $0 \ 4 \ d$, (30) in so far as it is structured in the first line.

What the composition of these lines implies is this: that just as narcissistic identification, namely that which constitutes the ego of the subject, is constructed in a certain relationship of which we have seen all the variations, all the differences, all the nuances of prestige, of display, of domination in a certain relationship with the image of the other, there is here the correspondent, the correlative of that which from the other side of the turning point of this table, namely the line of double equivalence which is there in the centre, associates this very possibility of the existence of an ego with this fundamentally desiring character linked to avatars of desire, which is what is articulated here in the first part of the first line.

In the same way, every identification which is an identification with the insignia of the Other, that is to say of the third as such, depends on what? On the demand; on the demand and on the relationships of the Other to desire, and this is quite clear and evident, and it is this which allows there to be given its full value to the term that Freud himself calls, what we call in a very imprecise fashion - and I will rearticulate, and I will come back to why this term is quite improper - the term frustration. What it is is Versagung. We know by experience that it is in the measure that something is versagt, that there appears in the subject this phenomenon of secondary (31) identification or of identification to the insignia of the Other.

What does this imply?

This implies that in order that there should be something that can be established, I mean for the subject, between the big Other as locus of the word, and this phenomenon of his desire which is placed on a quite heterogeneous plane, because there is a relationship with the little other in so far as the little other is his image, something must be introduced into the Other, into the Other qua locus of the word, this same relationship to the little other, which is required, which is necessary, which is phenomenologically tangible, to explain human desire qua perverse desire. It is the necessity of an articulation of the problem that we have proposed today.

This may seem obscure to you. I will only say one thing to you: it is that in not posing anything at all, not only are we going to notice that this becomes more and more obscure, but in addition everything becomes confused, instead of what is the question, namely that if we pose this, we are going to be able to make a bit of order emerge. We pose that 5 the phallus, is this signifier through which there is introduced into 0 qua locus of the word, the big 0, the big Other through which is introduced the relationship to the other, little o, qua small other, through which this relationship is introduced, that is (32) not everything, in so far as the signifier has a part to play in it.

There you are. This looks as if it is biting its own tail, but it is necessary that it should bite its own tail. It is clear that the signifier has some part to play in it, because this signifier we meet it precisely at every step. We met it at first at the beginning. There would be no beginning, not of culture, but of that which is moreover the same thing, if we distinguish culture and society, there would therefore be no entry of man into culture if this relationship to the signifier was not at the origin.

What we want to say here, is that just as we have defined the paternal signifier as the signifier which, in the locus of the Other, poses, authorises the play of signifiers, there is this other privileged signifier which is the signifier which has for effect the establishment in the Other of this thing which changes its nature, namely that this is why here it is barred, this Other. This thing which changes its nature, namely that it is not purely and simply the locus of the word, but that it is something which, like the subject, is implicated in this dialectic situated on the phenomenal plane of reflection with respect to the small other which poses that the Other is implicated in this, and which adds to it, it is purely and simply as signifier that this adds to it, that this relationship (33) exists, in so far as it is the signifier which inscribes it.

I would ask you, whatever difficulties it gives you, to keep this in mind, to stay with this for today. I will show you in what follows what this allows us to articulate and illustrate.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 9 April 1958

If the human affairs that we in principle concern ourselves with, are marked by man's relationship to the signifier, we cannot use the signifier to speak about these things as if we were speaking about things in which the signifier is less involved.

In other words, there must be a difference in the fashion that we speak about human affairs, and the fashion in which we speak about other things.

We know of course that things are not indifferent to the approach of the signifier; that their relationship to the order of the logos should be studied, and that we, more than our predecessors, are in a position to be aware that the fashion in which, when all is said and done, language penetrates things, criss-crosses them, raises them up, upsets them however little, gives rise to many questions.

But anyway we are now in a position where we know, or at least we suppose, unless we are mistaken, that things, in themselves, are not developed in language.

(2) At least it was from there that a start was made for the work of science as it is constituted for us today, the science of

To aim first at purifying language, namely to reduce it to the minimum necessary for that grasp on things to be obtained, this is what is called transcendental analysis. For things, indeed, we have managed to reduce language to its interrogative function.

In fact one has as much as possible, and naturally not totally, separated it out from things in which it was profoundly engaged up to a certain epoch which corresponds more or less to the beginning of modern science.

Now, of course, everything becomes complicated. Do we not notice on the one hand peculiar convulsions in things, which are certainly not unrelated to the fashion that we question them? And on the other hand, curious impasses in language which, when we are speaking about things, become strictly incomprehensible for us.

But that is not our concern. For our part we are dealing with man, and there, all that I am pointing out to you, is that language has not up to the present been separated out, language is not separable from what is being questioned, in the way that we think it is separated, namely when we engage in an academic.

(3) or a psychological/psychiatric discourse about human affairs. Up to the present, it is the same thing. We ourselves are very well able to perceive the poverty of the constructions that we are committed to, and moreover their immutability, because to tell the truth for the century that we have been talking about hallucinations in psychiatry, we have hardly taken a step forward, we still do not know, we still cannot define except in a derisory fashion what hallucination is in psychiatry.

Moreover the whole language of psychology/psychiatry, bears this same handicap of making us experience in fact its profound lack of progress, and of making us feel what we are expressing here: we say that one or other function is reified, and we experience the arbitrariness of these reifications, even when we are speaking in a Bleulerian language of discordance in schizophrenia. We have the impression that we know what we are talking about when we say reify.

What does it mean? It is not at all that we reproach this psychology for making a thing of man - would to heavens that it did make a thing of him - this after all is the goal of a science of man. But precisely it makes of him a thing which is nothing other than one of prematurely frozen language, which substitutes (4) over-hastily its own form of language for something which is already woven into language.

What we call in fact formations of the unconscious, what Freud presented to us as formations of the unconscious, are nothing other than this grasp on something primary. Moreover it is for this reason that he called it the primary process; this grasp on something primary in language. Language marks this primary thing, and this is why Freud's discovery, the discovery of the unconscious can be said to have been prepared by the questioning of this primary thing, in so far as first of all its language structure is detected.

When I say prepared, it was able to permit the preparation of the questioning of this primary thing, the introduction of a proper interrogation of primary tendencies. But we have not arrived at this point so long as we have not arrived at the point of what it is first of all a question of recognizing, namely that this primary thing is first and foremost woven like language. This is why I bring you back to it, and this is also why those who up to now promise you, try to fascinate you with the synthesis of psychoanalysis and biology, show you clearly by the fact that there is absolutely nothing in this sense that has even begun, demonstrate for you, that it is only a lure, and we will even go further by affirming that given the state of our knowledge, to (5) promise it, is a swindle.

We are therefore at the stage of trying to situate, to project, to manifest before you what I call the texture of language. That does not mean that we exclude this primary thing. Indeed it is in a search for it, in so far as it is something other than language, that we advance in it.

In the preceding lectures we were at the point of touching what I have called for you the dialectic of desire and demand. I told you that in the demand identification is made with the object, we can more or less say, of feeling. Why, when all is said and done, is it this way? Precisely in the measure that in order for anything intersubjective to be established at all, it is necessary that the Other with a capital O, should speak; or again to put it differently, because it is in the nature of speech to be the speech of the Other; or again because it is necessary that everything which is part of the manifestation of primary desire should be at some moment, should install itself on what Freud, after Fechner, calls "the other scene", that this is necessary for the satisfaction of man, in so far precisely as being a speaking being, an altogether major part of his satisfactions must pass through the intermediary of the word.

It must be remarked right away that because of this fact alone, an absolutely initial ambiguity is introduced. If desire is obliged to go through this mediation by the word, and if, as is (6) altogether manifest, this word owes its status, installs itself, only develops of its nature in the Other (with a capital O), as locus of the word, it is altogether clear, that there is no reason why the subject should be aware of this. I mean that the distinction between the Other and himself is one of the things which, at the beginning, is the most difficult of distinctions to make.

So that, I do not need to underline what Freud, for example, well underlined, namely the symptomatic value of this moment of childhood when the child believes that his parents know all his thoughts. Freud explains very well at this very moment the link between this phenomenon and the word, with the fact that his thoughts, after all, are formed in the speech of the Other, and it is quite natural that at the beginning his thoughts should belong to this speech.

Between him and this other there is at the beginning only a weak leading string, but one that is marked precisely by what happens in the narcissistic relationship; an ambiguous leading string in this sense that it goes beyond itself, I mean that the narcissistic relationship is quite open to a sort of permanent transitivity. This is what the experience of the child also shows us.

But the two modes of ambiguity of meaning, that which happens (7) here on the imaginary plane, and that which belongs to the symbolic order, namely the first that I have just reminded you of, that by which desire is founded on the word of the Other, the two limits, the two kinds of breakthrough which bring about the alienation of the subject, are not to be confused, and it is in the discordance between them that there is established a first possibility, as experience shows us, for the subject of distinguishing himself of course most particularly on the imaginary plane, he establishes himself with his counterpart in a position of rivalry with respect to a third object.

But there still remains the question of what happens when there are two of them, namely when it is a question of him sustaining himself in the presence of the Other.

This dialectic which in fact is close to what is called recognition, you recognise at least, you glimpse a little bit, thanks to what at least for some among you, thanks to what I have communicated here about it. You know that this dialectic of recognition, was sought by a man called Hegel in the conflict of jouissance and along the path of a fight called a fight to the death in which he shows us his whole dialectic of the master and the slave.

All of this is very important to know, but it is clear that this does not entirely cover the field of our experience for the best (8) of reasons, because the fact is that there is something else besides the dialectic, besides the fight, between the master and the slave: there is the relationship of the child to its parents, there is precisely what happens at the level of recognition, in so far as what is at stake, is not fighting or conflict, but precisely demand.

It is in fact a question of seeing that if the desire of the subject is alienated in the demand, is profoundly transformed by the fact of having to pass through the demand, how desire at some moment can reintroduce itself, as it must. The things I am talking to you about today are simple. Primitively the child in his impotence, finds himself entirely depending on the demand, namely on the word of the Other which modifies, restructures, profoundly alienates the nature of his desire.

What we are alluding to here, corresponds more or less to this dialectic of the demand that is rightly or wrongly called pre-oedipal, and certainly rightly called pre-genital, that here because of this ambiguity, because of the limits between the subject and the Other, we see being introduced into the demand the oral object which, to the degree that it is demanded on the oral plane, is incorporated, (and) the anal object which becomes the support of this dialectic of the primitive anal gift, (9) essentially linked in the subject to the fact of whether or not he satisfies educative demands, namely in the last analysis, whether or not he accepts to release a certain symbolic object.

In short, this profound remodelling of early desires by demand, is what we continually touch on in connection with what we call this dialectic of the oral, and particularly the anal object.

We see what results from this, namely that this Other as such, with whom the subject is dealing in the relationship of demand, is herself submitted to a dialectic of assimilation, of incorporation, or of rejection. There is something different which can and should be introduced, that by which the originality, the irreducibility, the authenticity of the desire of the subject is reestablished, I do not think that it is anything else that is meant by the so-called progress to the genital stage, which consists in the following: the fact is that

the subject installed in the first, pregenital dialectic of the demand, has to deal at a given moment with another desire, a desire which up to then had not been integrated, which cannot be integrated into the remodellings still more critical and profound than for the early desires, and that the ordinary way by which this desire is introduced for him, is qua desire of the Other. He recognises a desire beyond demand, a desire qua not adulterated by demand, he meets it, he situates it in the beyond (10) of the first Other to whom he addressed his demand - to fix our ideas, let us say the mother.

What I am saying here is only a way of articulating, of expressing what has always been taught. The fact is that it is through the Oedipus complex that genital desire is assumed, comes to take its place in the subjective economy. But that to which I wish to draw your attention, is the function of this desire of the Other, in permitting once and for all the true distinction between the subject and the Other.

In other words, the situation of reciprocity which ensures that if the desire of the subject depends entirely on the demand of the Other, namely on the other reciprocal situation, that which is expressed in the relationships of the child to the mother by the fact that the child also knows very well that he has something, that he can refuse the demand of the mother, for example in acceding or not to requests for anal or excremental discipline.

There is therefore in this relationship between two subjects around the demand, something, an original relationship so that a new dimension may be introduced which completes this first one, which ensures that the subject is nothing other than a subject in the relationship of dependency, and of whom the relationship of (11) dependency constitutes the essential being. What has to be introduced, what is there of course from the beginning, what is latent from the start, is this: it is that beyond what the subject demands, beyond what the Other demands of the subject, there has to be the presence and the dimension of the Other's desire. This is something which at first is profoundly veiled from the subject, but which nevertheless is there imminent in the situation, and which is going little by little to develop in the oedipal experience.

This is essential in the structure, more originally, more fundamentally, than the perception of the relationships between the father and mother which I developed in what I called the paternal metaphor, even than the perception of any point whatsoever, of what culminates in the castration complex, namely the thing that will be a development of this beyond of the demand. Just in itself, the fact that the desire of the subject is first of all found, first of all located, in the existence as such of the desire of the Other, in so far as desire is distinct from demand, it is that which I wish to illustrate today by means of an example and by the first example that is required, namely that if this is an introduction in a way to everything which belongs to this structuring of the unconscious of the subject in

his relationship to the signifier, we should find it immediately. And first of all I already made an allusion to you to what we can highlight in the first observations of hysteria that Freud made.

Let us pass on to the time where Freud for the first time talks about desire. He talks to us about it in connection with dreams. I have already given you a commentary on what Freud draws out in connection with the inaugural dream of Irrea, the dream of the injection. I will not go back to it.

Let us take the second dream, because Freud in the Traumdeutung also analyses some of his own dreams, it is the dream of Uncle Joseph. I will analyse it another day, because it is quite demonstrative, in particular to illustrate the schema of the two interlocked loops, because there is nothing which really shows more the two levels on which a dream develops: the properly signifying level which is speech, and the imaginary level where in a way the metonymical object is embodied. We will not go into this.

I take the third dream that Freud analysed in the fourth chapter: "Distortion in dreams". It is the one we call "the butcher's beautiful wife" (La belle bouchere). Here is the dream:

"I wanted to give a supper party, but I had nothing in the house but a little smoked salmon. I thought I would go out and buy something, but remembered then that it was Sunday afternoon and all the shops would be shut. Next I tried to ring up some caterers, but the telephone was out of order. So I had to abandon my wish to give a supper party." (SE IV 147)

(13) This is the text of the dream. Freud notes scrupulously the way in which the text of the dream is articulated, is verbalised, and it is always from this verbalisation of a kind of written text of the dream, that the analysis of the dream always and uniquely appears conceivable for him.

"I answered of course," says Freud, "that analysis was the only way of deciding on the meaning of the dream" In fact the patient had proposed it to him saying: "You are always saying to me that a dream is a fulfilled wish. Here I had the greatest difficulties in realising my wish." "I admitted that at first sight it seemed sensible and coherent and looked like the reverse of a wish-fulfilment."

"But from what material did the dream arise, as you know the instigation to a dream is always to be found in the the events of the previous day," he says to his patient. "My patient's husband, an honest and capable wholesale butcher, had remarked to her the day before that he was getting too stout and therefore intended to start on a course of weight reduction. He proposed to rise early, do physical exercises, keep to a strict diet and above all accept no more invitations to supper. She laughingly added that her husband at the place where he regularly lunched, had made the acquaintance of a painter, who had pressed him to be allowed to paint his portrait, as he had never seen such expressive

features. Her husband however had replied in his blunt manner (14) that he was much obliged, but he was sure the painter would prefer a piece of a pretty young girl's behind to the whole of his face. "

"She was very much in love with her husband now and teased him a lot. She had begged him, too, not to give her any caviare. I asked her what that meant; and she explained that she had wished for a long time that she could have a caviare sandwich every morning but had grudged the expense." This is how Mr. Meyerson translates it, but it is not quite that: "She does not give herself that liberty." Expense is not mentioned in it. "Of course her husband would have let her have it at once if she had asked him. But on the contrary, she had asked him not to give her any caviare so that she could go on teasing him about it."

Here Freud puts in brackets:

("This explanation struck me as unconvincing. Inadequate reasons like this usually conceal unconfessed motives. They remind one of Bernheim's hypnotised patients. When one of these carries out a post-hypnotic suggestion and is asked why he is acting in this way, instead of saying that he has no idea, he feels compelled to invent some obviously unsatisfactory reason. The same was no doubt true of my patient and the caviare.")

"I saw that she was obliged to create an unfulfilled wish for (15) herself in her actual life. And the dream represented this putting aside, this adjournment of her desire, this renunciation of her desire as having been put into effect. But why was it that she stood in need of an unfulfilled wish?")

This remark is Freud's, and it is in brackets.

"The associations which she had so far produced had not been sufficient to interpret the dream. I pressed her for some more. After a short pause, such as would correspond to the overcoming of a resistance, she went on to tell me that the day before she had visited a woman friend of whom she confessed she felt jealous because her (my patient's) husband was constantly singing her praises. Fortunately this friend of hers is very skinny and thin and her husband admires a plumper figure. I asked her what she had talked about to her thin friend. Naturally, she replied, of that lady's wish to grow a little stouter. Her friend had enquired, too "When are you going to ask us to another meal? You always feed one so well". "The meaning of the dream was now clear and I was able to say to my patient: "It is just as though when she made this suggestion you said to yourself: "A likely thing! I am to ask you to come and eat in my house so that you may get stout and attract my husband still more! I'd rather never give another supper party". What the dream was saying to you was that you were unable to give any supper parties, and it was thus fulfilling your wish not to help your friend to grow plumper. The fact that what people eat at parties makes them stout had been brought home to you by your husband's decision not (16) to accept any more invitations to supper in the interests of

his plan to reduce his weight." All that was now lacking was some coincidence to confirm the solution."

"The smoked salmon in the dream had not yet been accounted for. "How," I asked, "did you arrive at the salmon that came into your dream?" "Oh," she replied, "smoked salmon is my friend's favourite dish." I happen to be acquainted with the lady in question myself and I confirm the fact that she grudges herself salmon no less than my patient grudges herself caviare."

It is at this point that Freud introduces this dream which involves another more subtle interpretation, and which enters into the dialectic of identification. It is in this connection that he makes the following remarks:

"She had identified' herself with her friend. The circumstance of her having brought about a renounced wish in real life was evidence of this identification."

I think that you should already see being outlined in this simple text the features that I could have found in opening any page whatsoever of the Traumdeutung. We would have found the same dialectic. I think that in taking the first dream which comes to hand, the one which is going to show us in a particularly simple fashion, because this dialectic is particularly simple in the hysteric, the dialectic of desire and of demand. But let us (17) continue, in order to pursue up to the end what this very important text articulates for us, because in fact it is one of the first clear-cut articulations, by Freud, of what hysterical identification signifies. He clarifies what its meaning is.

I will pass over a few lines, in order not to be too long. It is a matter of discussing what is called in this connection imitation, sympathy; and he criticises with a good deal of energy the simple reduction of hysterical contagion to what is supposed to be pure and simple imitation.

"This process" he tells us, "is a little more complicated than the common picture of hysterical imitation; it consists in the unconscious drawing of an inference, as an example will make clear. Supposing a physician is treating a woman patient, who is subject to a particular kind of spasm, in a hospital ward among a number of other patients. He will show no surprise if he finds one morning that this particular kind of hysterical attack has found imitators. The psychical infection has occurred along some such lines as these. As a rule, patients know more.

You have to see the import of such a remark, I am not simply saying at the time that it was made, but still for us today.

"...know more about one another than the doctor does about any of them; and after the doctor's visit is over they turn their (18) attention to one another."

An essential remark. In other words, the human object continues

to live his own particular little relationship to the signifier, even after the observer whether behaviourist or not, has interested himself in his photograph.

"Let us imagine that this patient had her attack on a particular day; then the others will quickly discover that it was caused by a letter from home, the revival of some unhappy love affair, or some such thing. Their sympathy is aroused and they draw the following inference, though it fails to penetrate into consciousness: "If a cause like this can produce an attack like this, I may have the same kind of attack""

The articulation of the symptom in its elementary form, to an identification of discourse, to a situation articulated in the discourse.

"since I have the same grounds for having it." If this inference were capable of entering consciousness, it might possibly give rise to a fear of having the same kind of attack. But in fact the inference is made in a different psychical region, and consequently results in the actual realisation of the dreaded symptom. Thus identification is not simple imitation but assimilation (appropriation) on the basis of a similar aetiological pretension; it expresses a resemblance and is derived from a common element which remains in the unconscious."

The term appropriation is not really properly translated. It is (19) rather: "taken as one's own" (pris comme propre).

"A hysterical woman identifies herself in her symptoms most readily with people with whom she has had sexual relations or with people who have had sexual relations with the same people as herself. Linguistic usage takes this into account, for two lovers are spoken of as being one", says Freud.

Of course the relationship of identification to the jealous friend, is the problem that Freud raises here.

I want to draw your attention to this: in this text Freud underlines as a first problem, that the desire which we meet at first, from the first steps of the analysis, the one from which the solution of the enigma is going to unfold, is that the patient was preoccupied at the time of this dream, with creating for herself an unsatisfied desire. What is the function of this unsatisfied desire?

Because if we read in this dream, the satisfaction of a wish, what we discover in connection with the satisfaction of this wish, is the underlay of a situation which is very properly the fundamental situation of man between demand and desire, that to which I try to introduce you, and that to which I effectively introduce you through the intermediary of the hysteric, because let us put things more or less like this: one can say that the hysteric is suspended at this first stage, at this necessary (20) cleavage, the necessity of which I tried to show you above, between demand and desire. Here nothing is clearer.

What does she demand? I am talking about before her dream. In her life. This patient very much in love with her husband, what does she demand? It is love, and hysterics like everybody else, except that in them it is more of an encumbrance, demand love. What does she desire? She desires caviare. You just have to simply read it. And what does she want (veut)? She wants not to be given caviare.

The question is precisely to know why it is necessary, in order that a hysteric should maintain a love affair which satisfies her, first of all that she desires something else, that the caviare here has no other role than to be that other thing, and in the second place, in order that this other thing should fulfil properly the function that it is its mission to fulfil, precisely that she should not be given it, because her husband would ask for nothing better than to give her caviare. Life would probably be more peaceful, he imagines.

But what Freud tells us formally, is that she wants him not to give her caviare so that they can go on madly loving one another, namely teasing one another, teasing one another unmercifully and indefinitely.

These structural elements which have nothing, apart from the fact that we dwell on them, all that original, there is all the same (21) something which begins to take on a meaning here. You see that what is expressed here, is a structure which well beyond its comical aspect, must represent a necessity. If the hysteric is precisely, as we know, the subject for whom the constitution of the other qua capital Other, qua bearer of the spoken sign, is that with which it is difficult to establish the relationship which permits him, the hysteric, and this is the very definition that one can give of it, to hold on to his place as subject, and the male or female hysteric, is, to speak plainly, so open to the suggestion of speech, that there must be something in that.

Somewhere in Group Psychology and the analysis of the Ego, Freud asks himself the question of the way in which this hypnosis originates. Its relationship to sleep is far from being transparent, and the enigmatic electivity which assimilates it to it, I mean is satisfied with it, or which on the contrary for other persons, opposes it to it, radically distances it from it, shows that there is a certain unknown moment which must be realised in hypnosis, and which perhaps of itself makes possible in the subject originally, the purity of "libidinal situations". I would say rather "libidinal attitudes".

It is a question precisely of places, of positions that we are trying to clarify, and this unknown element that Freud speaks (22) about, revolves around this articulation of demand and desire. This is what we will try to demonstrate more fully.

This preoccupation therefore, this necessity for the subject to create an unsatisfied desire in relation with what is necessary in order that there should be constituted for the subject a real other, namely an other who is not entirely imminent to the

reciprocal satisfaction of demand, namely to the entire capture of the desire of the subject by the word of the other, that this desire which is in question should be in its nature the desire of the Other, this is very precisely what the dialectic of the dream introduces us to, because this desire for caviare, the patient does not want it to be satisfied in reality.

Where is it represented in the dream which is in effect incontestably a dream which tends to satisfy the patient with regard to the solution of the problem that she pursues? This desire for caviare, what is it going to be represented by in the dream? By the fact that the person involved in the dream, the one with whom, Freud points out the signs, she identifies herself with, is also there, whether she is a hysteric or not does not matter. Everything is as pure as can be, and everything is as hysterical as can be. For the hysterical patient, of course the other is also one, and this all the more easily in that as I have just told you, the hysterical subject constitutes herself almost (23) entirely from the desire of the other. The desire which the subject takes into account here, is also the preferential desire of the other, and this is even all she has when she is not going to be able to give a supper party. All she has left is smoked salmon, namely that which indicates both the desire of the other, and that which indicates it as being able to be satisfied, but only for the other: Do not worry, however, there is some smoked salmon! The dream still does not say that things will go as far her giving it to her friend, but the intention is there.

The intention is there. Contrariwise of course the demand of her friend which is the element generating the dream, namely that she had demanded to come to dine with her where one eats so well, and where besides one can meet the handsome butcher, the loving husband who speaks always so well of this friend. He also must have some little desire at the back of his head, the young girl's behind so promptly evoked in connection with the kind proposition of the painter who proposes to sketch him, to draw his so expressive and interesting face, is certainly there to demonstrate it. Every one, to tell the truth, has his little extra desire simply more or less intensified.

What is important in the case of the hysteric, is that she shows us that for her this desire qua beyond every demand, namely qua (24) having to occupy a function qua refused desire, plays for her a role of the highest importance, and these things are quite usable. You will never understand anything about a male or a female hysteric, if you do not begin from this recognition of this first structural element.

Since on the other hand hysteria in the relationship of man to the signifier, is a quite primordial structure, if you do not know at what point of the structure, if it happens that you have pushed the dialectic of the demand far enough, you must always at a given moment encounter this Spaltung of demand and desire, with the risk also of making major errors, namely of making the patient hysterical, because of course everything that we are analysing there, is unconscious for the subject. In other

words, the hysteric herself does not know that she cannot be satisfied in the demand, but on the other hand it is very essential for you, that you should know it.

This, at the point that we have got to, is going therefore to allow us to begin to point up what the little diagram that I gave you the last day means, and whose thrust and interpretation I could not even of course put forward, because it was a little premature to do so, but we are going to come to it now.

Here we are. I have told you, it revolves around something like this, namely around a relationship of what manifests itself as a (25) need which must pass by way of demand, namely address itself to the Other, which we see here, through the intermediary of an encounter which happens or which does not happen, but which occupies more or less what we can call the place of the message, namely what is signified from the Other, that there appears this remainder of the demand which consists in the alteration of what is manifested at the still unformed state of the desire of the subject, and which can, which in principle manifests itself in the form of the identification of the subject.

I will take this up again if you wish, the next time, text in hand. The first time that Freud speaks in a completely articulated fashion about identification, you can already refer to it if you wish, before I speak to you about it the next time. You will see how Freud articulates it, and you will see that primitive identification is not articulated otherwise than the way I mark it for you here.

On the other hand you know the degree to which here on the path in which the narcissistic relationship or short circuit is situated, there is introduced already a possibility, an opening, a sort of sketch of a third, in this relationship of the subject to the other.

The essential of what I have brought forward for you in describing the function of the phallos, the function of the phallos in so (26) far as it is this particular signifier which marks what the Other desires, in so far as it is marked by the signifier. The phallos is this particular signifier which marks that which the Other desires in so far as he as real other, as another human being, is within its economy, this is the formula that we are precisely in the process of studying, namely that he is marked by the signifier. It is precisely in the measure that the other is marked by the signifier that the subject must, cannot fail to recognize because of this through the intermediary of this other, the fact that he also in fact is marked by the signifier, namely that there is always something which remains beyond what can be satisfied through the intermediary of this signifier namely by the demand, and that this cleavage created around the action of the signifier, this irreducible residue linked to the signifier, also has its proper sign, but its sign which here is going to be identified with this mark in the signified, and that it is there that he must encounter his desire.

In other words, it is to the extent that the desire of the Other is barred, that he is going to recognise his barred desire, his own unsatisfied desire, and it is at the level of this barred through the intermediary of the other, that there is created his encounter with his most authentic desire namely genital desire. That is the reason why genital desire is marked by castration, in other words by a certain relationship with the signifier phallos. (27) What we have here are two equivalent causes.

It is from a certain relationship with what corresponds to a demand at a first stage, namely to the word of the mother, it is beyond that, namely from a relationship of that word to a law which is beyond and which I have shown you to be incarnated by the father. This is what constitutes the paternal metaphor. But you have quite correctly the right - and I think that it is indeed this kind of lack which must have left you yourselves also desiring when I explained it to you - to think that everything is not reduced to this sort of grading of the word, and beyond the word the super-word, whatever way one denotes it, namely the law of the father; that when all is said and done there is certainly something else required, and of course naturally at the same level at which this law is situated, there is introduced precisely this elective signifier, namely the phallus which ensures that in normal conditions, what is produced here, is encountered at a second degree of the meeting with the other, this is what in my little formulae, I called the signifier of 0, namely very precisely what I have just defined as being the function of the signifier phallus, namely that which marks what the other desires qua marked by the signifier, namely qua barred. Just as that which was produced here from the moment that the (28) subject is properly speaking constituted, and not ambiguous, not perpetually inclined towards the word of the other, the completed subject, the subject which remains just as much on this side of the specular, dual relationship, to the little other as to the relationship with the word. The subject - that which is here in the Z-shaped formula - the completed subject, is the subject in so far as the bar is introduced into it, namely in so far as it also is marked somewhere by the relationship to the signifier. And it is for that reason that it is here that there appears the relationship of the subject to the demand as such.

This is the necessary stage through which is normally realised the integration of the Oedipus complex and the castration complex, namely the structuring through their mediation of the desire of the subject.

How is this produced? This has been developed on this diagram. The fashion in which there is introduced the necessity through the intermediary of the signifier phallus, of this beyond of the relationship to the word of the Other, but of course once this is constituted, it does not remain at that place, I mean that it is integrated with the word of the Other, once the phallus is there qua desire of the Other. This is why the signifier phallus, with everything that it involves, right away, comes here to take the primitive place of the relationship of the word to the mother. It is here that it comes to play its function.

(29) In other words, what happens one might say, if we develop it, if we explain it, what happens for us who are trying to delimit the stages of this integration of a word which permits desire to find its place for the subject, (is that) this remains, as I might say, unconscious. I mean that from now on it is here that the dialectic of demand is going to unfold for him, that he will not know that this dialectic of demand is possible only in so far as what is his desire, his true desire, only in so far as this desire finds its place in an unconscious relationship, in something which for him remains unconscious in (au) the desire of the Other.

In other words, these two lines normally interchange. From the very fact that they must interchange, all sorts of accidents happen in the interval. These accidents, we meet them in different forms. What I would like simply for today, is to indicate to you that in the hysteric, what simply manifests itself, what comes to fulfill the function of this, is by reason of certain elements of lack which are always present. We will try to point it up later on, but it is already easy to evoke today that that which is produced is something more or less like this: this beyond of the desire of the Other, is produced first (30) and foremost in the pure state in Dora, and we can put our finger right away on why a part of the battery of elements is lacking. There is absolutely nothing said about the mother. You have perhaps noticed in Dora that she is completely absent, Dora is confronted with her father. It is quite clear that it is from her father that she wants love, she wants the love of her father, and it must be said, that before the analysis Dora's life is very well balanced. I mean that up to the moment when as you know, the drama explodes, she had found a very satisfactory solution to her problems. It is to her father that her demand is addressed, and things go very well because her father has a desire, and the desire even goes all the better in this affair, because this desire is an unsatisfied desire. Dora, as Freud does not conceal from us, knows very well that her father is impotent and that the desire for Madame K is a barred desire.

But what we also know, is that Madame K - we know it with some delay, Freud only knew it a little bit too late - is the object of Dora's desire, is the object of Dora's desire precisely in function of the fact that it is the desire of the father, and the barred desire.

In order to maintain this equilibrium only one thing is necessary, it is that Dora should be somewhere, it is that Dora should achieve somewhere this base, this equilibrium, this self- (31) identification which allows her to know where she is, and this in function of this demand, which is not satisfied, the demand made for the love of her father, but which would hold up well like that as long as there is a desire, and a desire that as such cannot be satisfied, either for Dora or for her father.

All of this depends on where there is going to be produced the identification which is called the ego-ideal. You see it here at the origin, it always happens after a certain breakthrough, a

double breakthrough of the line of the Other here. It is the same except for the fact that the desire of the father represents the second line, and it is after this double breakthrough of the two lines that there is going to be realised here the hysterical identification, namely no longer the identification with the father as when the father is purely and simply the one to whom the demand is addressed. Do not forget, there is now beyond, and this suits the hysteric very well for her satisfaction and her equilibrium, the desire of the father, it is another who is in a position to satisfy desire, Mr. K, the husband of Mrs. K, of Mrs. K so seductive, so charming, so brilliant, the true object of Dora's desire. He is here because she is a hysteric, because in the case of a hysteric the process cannot go any further. Why? Because desire is the element which all by itself is (32) given the task of taking the place of this beyond which is located here by the position of the subject herself with respect to the demand. But because she is a hysteric, she does not know what she is demanding, simply she needs there to be somewhere this desire beyond. But in order that she can lean on this desire, complete herself in it, find her own identification, her ideal, it is necessary that there at least there there should be at the level of the beyond of the demand, an encounter which allows her to be at peace, to locate herself on this line, and it is there where Mr. K. is, that she finds, as is absolutely clear through the whole case history, her other in the sense of the little o, the one in whom she recognises herself. And this is of course the reason why she is both extremely interested in him, and that at first she deceives the people around her, namely Freud on this occasion who believes that she loves this Mr. K. She does not love him, but he is indispensable to her and it is still more indispensable for her that Mr. K. should be the one who desires Madame K and as I already noted for you a hundred times, this is more than demonstrated by the fact that the whole circulation entirely short-circuits, namely that vis-a-vis the other, the little o, she falls back into a situation of explosive aggression which manifests itself on this occasion by a ferocious slap, namely the fury against the other in so far as he is your (33) counterpart, and that being your counterpart he quite simply steals your existence from you. From the moment that Mr. K speaks the fatal word to her, namely that he is not there at all, without knowing what he says, the poor unfortunate, to support Dora's identification, for a simple reason, which is that his wife means nothing to him. It is precisely this that Dora cannot tolerate. Why can she not tolerate it?

It is quite true as we are told, Dora is also structured, as it is incompletely put, just as manifestly in a homosexual fashion as the hysteric is. She should normally be quite happy with it. Not at all, this is precisely what unleashes her fury, precisely because at that moment, her lovely hysterical construction of identification to the mask, to the insignia of the other very specifically on this occasion, to the full masculine insignia that Mr. K offers her, and not her father, unfortunately collapses, namely that she comes back at this moment to the pure and simple demand, to the pure and simple claim for the love of her father, and to the quasi-paranoiac state that she entered

when she saw herself for what in effect she is, much more objectively, on the part of her father, an object of exchange, namely someone who amuses Mr. K, who occupies him while he, her father, can busy himself however vainly it may be. That is (34) sufficient for him, because precisely on this occasion you grasp the very function and nature of desire, as long as he is attending to Mrs. K.

But at that very moment our hysteric falls from a height, and returns to the quite primitive character of demand, namely that at that moment she purely and simply insists that her father should attend only to her, in other words that he should give her love, in other words that he should give her, according to our definition, everything that he does not have.

Here is why today I have made you take a first little exercise on the bar to try to show you what is the meaning and precisely in connection with the hysteric, of this relationship of desire and demand. To the degree that you get used to it, this will allow you to go much more surely and much further.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 16 April 1958

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 d & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond O & \rightleftarrows & i(o) & \leftarrow & e \\
 D & \rightarrow & O \diamond d & \rightleftarrows & s(O) & \leftarrow & I \\
 \Delta & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond D & \rightleftarrows & s(\phi) & \leftarrow & \Phi
 \end{array}$$

I would like to bring you back to some original understanding of the object of our experience, namely the unconscious, my plan in fact being to show you the ways and the possibilities that the discovery of the unconscious opens up for us, but also not to let you forget what this discovery represents in terms of the limits of our power, in other words, to show you in what perspective, along what avenue there can be glimpsed the possibility of a normatization, a therapeutic normatization.

(2) But do not forget, because the whole analytic experience is there to remind us of it, that this normatization runs into the contradictions, into the antimonies, inherent in every normatization of the human condition. It even allows us to understand more fully the nature of these limits.

One cannot all the same help being struck that one of Freud's last articles, the one that is wrongly translated as "Analysis terminable or interminable", in reality concerns the finite or the infinite. It is a question of analysis in so far as it ends or in so far as it should be situated on a sort of infinite range. This is what is in question, and Freud designates for us the projection of its aim to infinity in the clearest fashion, quite at the level of concrete experience as he says, namely that, when all is said and done, there is something irreducible for the man in the castration complex, for the woman in the Penisneid, namely in a certain fundamental relationship with the phallus.

On what did analysis, the Freudian discovery at its beginning, on what did it put the accent? On desire. What Freud essentially discovers, what Freud apprehended in symptoms whatever they are, whether it is a question of pathological symptoms or whether it is a matter of what he interpreted in what appeared up to then as being more or less reducible to (3) normal life, namely the dream, for example, is always essentially a desire.

But even more again in dreams, for example, he speaks to us not

simply of desire, but of the fulfilment of desire, and this should certainly strike us, namely that it is precisely in the dream that he talks about the satisfaction of desire. He indicates on the other hand that in the symptom itself there is indeed something which resembles this satisfaction, but the problematic character of this satisfaction already seems to me to be fairly well marked, because it is also a sort of inside-out satisfaction (satisfaction a l'envers).

Right away therefore it appears in experience that desire is linked to something which is its appearance, and to say the word, its mask, that the close link that desire as it presents itself to us in analytic experience, has with something that clothes it in a problematical fashion, is indeed what at the very least encourages us to dwell on it as an essential problem.

I underlined several times on these last occasions, the fashion in which desire in so far as it appears to consciousness, manifests itself under a paradoxical form in analytic experience, or more exactly how much analytic experience has promoted this character which is inherent in desire qua perverse desire, which is to be a sort of desire at a second degree of puissance of desire qua desire.

(4) In a general fashion, on the whole, all that analysis allows us to perceive about the function of desire, it is not it that discovers it, but it shows us how deeply goes the fact that human desire is not in a way implicated in a direct fashion in a pure and simple relationship with the object that it satisfies, but that it is linked to a position that the subject takes up in the presence of this object, to a position that the subject takes up outside of his relationship with the object which ensures that nothing is ever purely and simply exhausted in this relationship to the object.

On the other hand analysis is also well fitted to recall what has always been known, namely the vagabond, fleeting, ungraspable, character escaping precisely from the synthesis of the ego, that desire is, leaving to this synthesis of the ego, the outcome that it brings of being at every instant, in a way an illusory affirmation of synthesis. I recall that it is always I (moi) who desires, and who in me (moi) can only be grasped in the diversity of its desires.

Behind what we might call this phenomenological diversity, behind this contradiction, this anomaly, this aporia of desire, it is certain on the other hand that there is manifested a deeper relationship, a relationship of the subject to life, (5) a relationship of the subject, as they say, to instincts, and because it is also situated in this path of analysis that advances have made us make in the situation of the subject in relationship to his position as a living being, but precisely analysis teaches us, makes us experience behind every mediation of the realisation of the goals, of the ends of life, and perhaps also of what is beyond life, some teleology or other of primary vital ends, what Freud envisaged as a beyond of the

pleasure principle, namely the last ends towards which life would be directed, which is the return to death. All of this, this analysis has permitted us, I do not say to define, but to glimpse.

It is indeed in the measure that it has also permitted us to follow on its journeyings the accomplishment of these desires.

This human desire in its profound, internal relationships to the desire of the other, had always been glimpsed, and you only need to refer to the first chapter of Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit, to rediscover the ways in which already a deep enough reflection would permit us to engage in this research.

The novelty that Freud introduces, the originality, the new phenomenon which allows us to throw such an essential light on the nature of desire, is in so far as over against the path that (6) Hegel takes in his first approach to desire, which of course is far from being uniquely a deductive approach as it is thought to be from outside, but which is a grasp of desire through the intermediary of the relationships of self-consciousness with the constitution of the self-consciousness in the other, and the interrogation, the question which arises: how can there be introduced through this intermediary the dialectic of life itself? Which assuredly in Hegel can only be transmitted by a sort of leap which he calls synthesis in this instance.

The Freudian experience shows us another way, and very curiously, very remarkably also, by the way that desire appears as being very profoundly linked to this relationship to the other as such, and presenting itself nevertheless as an unconscious desire.

This is the reason why it is important to put oneself on the level of what was in the experience of Freud himself, this approach to unconscious desire.

Undoubtedly, this is something that we must depict for ourselves, from the first moments at which Freud encountered this experience. We must portray it for ourselves in its character as a surprising novelty, I would not say of intuition, but rather of divination of something which already is portrayed (7) in a human experience, that of Freud, as something which appears as the apprehension of something which is beyond a mask.

We are able, now that psychoanalysis is established, that it has developed into such a widespread and such a mobile discourse, to portray it for ourselves, but we portray rather badly, what the import was of what Freud introduced when he began to read in the symptoms of his patients, in his own dreams, and when he began to introduce us to this notion of unconscious desire, this is precisely moreover what we are lacking in order to appreciate at their just value the interpretations that are presented in Freud. We are always very astonished by the character which very often appears to us in the light of what we allow ourselves by way of interpretation, and I would say in the light of what

we can, and cannot any longer allow in it, as being the extraordinarily interventionist character of Freud's interpretations. One could even add, up to a certain point as the inexact character of his interpretations. Have I not pointed out to you a thousand times in connection with Dora's case for example, in connection with his intervention or his interventions in the analysis of a female homosexual whom we spoke about at length here, the degree to which Freud's interpretations, and Freud himself recognises it, were as it (8) were linked precisely to his incomplete knowledge of the psychology, for example, of homosexuals in general. The degree to which this inexact interpretation, the degree to which this interpretation linked to an insufficient knowledge that Freud had at that moment of the psychology, especially of homosexuals, but also of hysterics, is something which ensures that for us Freud's interpretations in more than one case, present themselves with a character which is at once too directive, and almost forced, with a precipitous character which in fact gives to this term of inexact interpretation (interpretation a cote), its full value.

Nevertheless it is certain that these interpretations at that time were what undoubtedly appeared as the interpretation needing to be made up to a certain point, the efficacious interpretation for the resolution of the symptom. What does that mean?

Obviously this poses a problem for us which, in order to clear the ground, we must call to mind that when Freud made interpretations of this order, he found himself before a situation which is completely different from the present situation. It must be literally realised that everything which, in a verdict-type interpretation, which leaves the lips of the analyst in so far as there is properly speaking interpretation, this verdict, what is said and proposed, given as being true, in this instance takes on its value from what is not said. I mean against what background of the unsaid is the (9) interpretation proposed?

At the time when Freud made his interpretations to Dora, when he told her for example that she loved Mr. K, that when all was said and done, he indicated to her without ambiguity that it was with him that normally she should remake her life, there was there something which surprises us, all the more because of course there could be no question of it for the best of reasons, namely that when all is said and done Dora wants to have absolutely nothing to do with it. Nevertheless an interpretation of this order at the moment that Freud made it, is presented against a background of something which, on the part of the subject, of the patient, of Dora, did not involve any sort of assumption that Freud was there to rectify, as one might say, her understanding of the world, to ensure that something in her should be brought to maturity in her relationship to the object. There was nothing yet of what one could call in this instance a sort of cultural ambiance of something which ensures that the subject expects something quite

different from the lips of the analyst, that in reality Dora does not know what she is to expect, she is led by the hand and Freud says to her: "Speak!", and there is nothing else appearing in a way on the horizon, from an experience directed in this way, unless it is implicitly just by the fact that she is told to speak, that in fact there must really be something else in operation, which is of the order of the truth. The situation is far from being similar for us, when the subject already comes (10) as one might say to analysis with the notion that the maturation of the personality, of the instincts, of object relations, is something which is already organised, normativated, of which the analyst represents in a way the measure. He is in possession of ways and of secrets of some sort which already appear as a network of relationships, if not all known to the subject, whose major lines at least come to him at least in this notion that he has major lines, that a progress should be accomplished, that the arrests in his development are something which can be conceptualised, in short that a whole background, a whole implication concerning the normativated of his person, of his instincts - you can make this embrace whatever you wish - implies that the analyst when he intervenes, intervenes in the position as they say, of judgement, of sanction. There is a still more precise word which we will indicate later.

This certainly gives quite a different import to his interpretation. But to grasp properly what is in question when I talk to you about the unconscious desire of the Freudian discovery, we must go back to those fresh times where nothing was implied about the interpretation of the analyst, unless it was this detection in the immediate behind something which appeared paradoxically as something absolutely closed, of (11) something which is beyond, and here everyone waffles on about meaning. I do not believe that the term meaning is anything else here than a type of weakening of what was in question at the beginning.

The term desire, in so far as it may be able to tie together, to assemble [what is] identical to the subject, gives all its import to what is encountered there in this first apprehension of analytic experience, and it is to this that we should go back if we are to try to gather together both the point at which we are at, and that which signifies essentially, not alone our experience, but its possibilities; I mean, that which makes it possible. It is also what should protect us as I might say on this occasion, from sliding down this slope, into this bias, I would almost say, into this trap in which we are ourselves implicated with the patient whom we introduce into an experiment full of presuppositions, to induce him to take a path which would depend in a way on a certain number of questions being begged, I mean on the idea that when all is said and done a final solution to his condition may be given which would permit him at the end of the day to become, let us say the word, entirely identical to some object or other.

Let us come back therefore to this problematical character of desire as it presents itself in analytic experience, namely in

the symptom, whatever symptom it may be.

I am talking here about symptom in its most general sense, as much the morbid symptom as a dream, or whatever else may be analysable. What I call symptom, is what is analysable.

The symptom presents itself, let us say, in a masked way, presents itself under a paradoxical form: the pain of the first hysterics that Freud analyses, here is something which appears first of all in a fashion that is quite closed in appearance, and something which Freud little by little, thanks to a sort of patience which may really here be inspired by a sort of bloodhound instinct, refers back to as something which is the prolonged presence of this patient to her sick father, and the occurrence while she was caring for her father, of something else which he glimpses first of all in a sort of fog, namely the desire which was able to connect her at that moment to one of her childhood friend of whom she hoped, let us say, to make a husband, then afterwards to something which appears also in a badly clarified form, namely to her relationships with her two brothers-in-law, namely with two persons who have respectively married two of her sisters, and whom the analysis allows us to glimpse that in different forms, they represented something important for her here: one was detested for some humiliation or other, some vulgarity, some piece of male boorishness; the other (13) on the contrary who seems to have, let us say, completely seduced her. It seems in fact that the symptom was precipitated around a certain number of encounters, and from a sort of oblique meditation about the very successful relationships, of this brother-in-law with one of her younger sisters.

I take this up to fix your ideas in a sort of example.

It is clear that at this time we are at a kind of primitive epoch of analytical experience, and that we now feel after all the experiments that have been carried out subsequently, that the fact of saying, as Freud did not fail to say to the patient, that she was for example purely, in the the last case, purely and simply in love with her brother-in-law, and that it is around this repressed desire that the symptom had crystallized, namely on this occasion the pain in the leg. We sense of course, we know, that in a hysteric this has something just as forced as to have told Dora that she was in love with Mr. K.

What we see when we approach an observation like this one, is that we put our finger on, and Freud expresses the view that I have proposed to you above, there is no need to overthrow Freud's observation to reach it, because without Freud formulating the diagnosis in this way, without him discerning (14) it, he gives all its elements in the clearest fashion, I would say up to a certain point the composition of his case-study allows it to appear, beyond the words that he articulates in his paragraphs, in a fashion still infinitely more convincing than all he says, because what is he going to highlight? He is going precisely to highlight in connection

with this experience of Elizabeth von R, that which according to his statement and his experience, links in many cases the appearance of hysterical symptoms to this experience so difficult in itself, of being totally devoted to helping a sick person, to playing the role of nurse, and still more to the importance that this function takes on when the role of nurse is assumed by a subject vis-a-vis one of her relatives, namely where even more because all the laws of affection, of the passion which links the carer to the cared, the subject finds herself in the position of having to satisfy more than on any other occasion, that which can be designated there with the fullest possible accent, as demand.

The total submission, the abnegation even, of the subject with respect to the demand which is imposed on her, is really given by Freud as one of the essential conditions of the situation in so far as in this instance it turns out to be hysterogenic.

This is all the more important because in this particular (15) hysteric, as opposed to others whom he also gives us as examples, the personal as well as the familial antecedents in this sense are extraordinarily evasive, unemphasised, and that in consequence the term here of hysterogenic situation takes all its weight. Besides Freud fully indicates it.

On the other hand, the thing which we can see correlatively to this condition, to which the term, which I isolate here in the middle one of these three formulae: demand-function, we will say that it is in function of this basic position that the something that is in question, and that Freud's only mistake as one might say is, drawn along in a way by the necessities of language, to orient in a premature fashion, to put the subject, to implicate the subject in too definite a fashion in this situation of desire. What is in question, is above all essentially the interest taken by the subject in a situation of desire, it is an interest which is taken, we cannot say since she is a hysteric, and now that we know what a hysteric is, we cannot say completely, from what angle she takes it, because moreover to say already from what angle she takes it, is already to imply in a relationship that one might say is all of a piece,, that she is interested in her brother-in-law from the point of view of her sister, or in her sister from the point of view of her (16) brother-in-law. The fact is precisely that we now know that what can subsist in a fashion correlative to the identification of the hysteric, is double here. Let us say that she is interested, that she is implicated, in the situation of desire, and this indeed is what is essentially represented here by a symptom, which reintroduces the notion of mask.

The notion of mask, namely that this desire in this ambiguous form which precisely does not allow us to orient the subject with respect to this or that object of the situation, is the interest of the subject in the situation as such, namely in the relationship of desire, which is expressed by this something which appears, namely what I call the element of mask of the

symptom, and at least it is the case that in Freud's observation, Freud who informs us and who says in this connection that the symptom speaks in the session, the Id which I am always telling you about speaks, it is there from the first articulations of Freud, expressed in the text. Later on he said that the stomach rumblings of his patients came to make themselves heard and to speak in the session, and had the signification of words.

But here what he tells us, is that in the session itself the pains in so far as they reappear, as they become sharper, as they become more or less intolerable during the session itself, form part of the discourse of the subject, that he measures by the tone, by the modulation of his subjects, the degree of (17) weight, of importance, of revelatory value of what the subject is in the course of avowing, of expressing, in the session, the track and the direction of this track, and the centripetal direction, the progress in fact of the analysis is measured by Freud in the very modulation, in the very intensity of the fashion that the subject professes during the session a greater or lesser intensification of her symptom.

I would say therefore that we find ourselves here - and I took this example, I could just as well have taken others, I could just as well take the example of a dream - before something which allows us to centre where the problem of the symptom and of unconscious desire lies, of the link of the desire itself, in so far as the desire itself remains a question mark, an X, an enigma, to the symptom with which it clothes itself, namely with the mask, to permit us in fact to formulate the following: we are told that the symptom qua unconscious is in short something which in itself speaks up to a certain point, of which one can read, with Freud, and with Freud from the beginning, that it articulates itself. The symptom is therefore something which goes in the direction of the recognition of desire, but this symptom in so far as it is there to make this desire recognised, before Freud arrived, and therefore after him, the whole crowd of his disciples, the analysts. It is a recognition which tends (18) to come to light, which seeks to know, but which precisely because it comes to birth, only manifests itself by the creation of what we have called the mask, namely of something closed; this recognition of desire, is a recognition by no one, which is aimed at no one, because up to the moment when its key begins to be learned, no one is able to read it. It is essentially a recognition which presents itself under a form closed to the other. A recognition of desire therefore, but a recognition by no one.

And on the other hand, if it is desire for recognition, in so far as it is desire for recognition, it is something other than desire. Besides, this is what we are clearly told: this desire is a repressed desire. This is the reason why our intervention adds something more than a simple reading. This desire, is a desire which the subject excludes in so far as the subject wishes to make it recognised as a desire for recognition. It is perhaps a desire, but in the last analysis a desire for

nothing. It is a desire which is not there, it is a desire which is rejected, it is a desire which is excluded.

It is this double character of unconscious desire which, by identifying it with its mask, makes of it something other than anything whatsoever that is directed towards an object. This is what we should never forget, and this is what permits us literally to read the meaning of what is presented to us as (19) being the analytic dimension of the mapping out of the most essential discoveries, when Freud speaks to us of this debasement, of this Erniedrigung, of love-life which belongs to the depths of the Oedipus complex, when he talks to us of the desire of the mother as being at the source of this for certain subjects, those precisely of whom he says that they have not abandoned the incestuous object, namely the mother, I mean that they have not abandoned it sufficiently, because in the last analysis what we learn, is that the subject never completely abandons it.

Of course there must be something which corresponds to this greater or lesser abandonment, and we call it the diagnostic fixation (diagnostico-fixation) to the mother. It is the case where Freud presents us with the dissociation of love and desire. These are the subjects who are unable, Freud tells us, to envisage approaching a woman, in so far as she enjoys for them her full status of a lovable person, of a human being, of a being in the full, completed sense that this being has, as they say, who can both give, and give herself. In this case there is no desire, therefore, in so far as the object is there, we are told, which means of course that it is there under a mask, because it is not to the mother that this desire is addressed, it is to the woman, we are told, who succeeds her, who takes her place, and then indeed there is no longer desire.

And on the other hand, Freud tells us, this subject will find (20) desire, where? With prostitutes. And what does that mean? Here of course when we are at this kind of first exploration of the darkness surrounding the mysteries of desire, we say: it is in so far precisely as it is completely the opposite of the mother.

Is that fully satisfactory, because it is precisely the opposite of the mother that he can subordinate it (?) We have since made enough progress in our knowledge of images, phantasies of the unconscious, and their characteristics, to know that what the subject is going to look for in prostitutes on this occasion, is nothing other than what Roman antiquity showed us well and truly sculptured and represented at the door of brothels, namely the phallus, the phallus in so far as it is precisely that which dwells in the prostitute.

We know now that what the subject is going to search for in the prostitute, is the phallus of all the other men, it is the phallus as such, it is the anonymous phallus. To be explicit it is also, something which is under an enigmatic form, a mask, something problematical, something which links desire with a

privileged object, with something which is here in a certain relationship in the sense that we have only too well learned to see the whole importance of the phallic phase, of its defiles through which subjective experience must pass, in order that the (21) subject may rejoin his natural desire.

In short, we find ourselves, in connection with what we call in this instance desire of the mother, which is here a sort of label, of symbolic designation of something that we verify in the facts, namely the correlative and broken putting forward of the object of desire in two irreconcilable halves, and which on occasion and even in our interpretation, can propose itself as being its object, namely the substitutive object, the woman in so far as she is the inheritor of the function of the mother, finding herself dispossessed, frustrated of the element of desire, the element of desire being itself linked to something other which is extraordinarily problematical, and which presents itself also with a character of mask and of mark, with a character let us say the word, of signifier, as if precisely we were to find ourselves, once it is a question of unconscious desire, in the presence of a necessary mechanism, of a necessary Spaltung which brings it about that the desire which we knew for a long time, and which we presumed to be alienated in a quite special relationship to the other, appears here as marked not only by the necessity of this going through the other as such (ce truchement a l'autre comme tel), but of going through the other by means of the mark of a special signifier, of an elective signifier which is found here to be the necessary way to which, as one might say, the advance of the vital force of (22) desire must adhere on this occasion, and the problematical character in this instance of this particular signifier, the phallus. It is here that there is the question, it is here that we should pause, here is what is proposed in all sorts of difficulties introduced for us by the conception, the very fact of being able to conceive how it happens that we encounter on the path of what is called genital maturation, this obstacle which is not simply an obstacle, which is an essential defile which ensures that it is through the mediation of a certain position taken up with respect to the phallus, by the woman qua lack, by the man qua threatened, that what presents itself as being let us say the most successful outcome must necessarily be realized.

Therefore what we see here, is that in intervening, in naming something, we always do something more, whatever we do, whatever we think we are doing, that in interpreting, the word that I wanted to give you above, the precise word that I called authorised, sanctioned, permit above, is to homologize. We identify the same with the same; we say: "That's it"; we substitute for this person to whom the symptom is addressed in so far as it is there on the way to the recognition of desire, we still fail to see also up to a certain degree the desire which wants to make itself recognised, to the extent that to a (23) certain degree we still assign it its object, since it is not of an object that it is desire, but it is desire of this lack which in the other, designates another desire.

This introduces us to the second chapter, if you like, to a second line of what I proposed to you here in these three formulae, namely to the chapter on demand.

I think that the fashion in which I approach these things and the fashion in which I take them up again, I mean in which I try to articulate for you the originality of the desire that we are dealing with at every moment of analysis, is not in the control that we can have of it in the name of a more or less theoretical idea about the way everyone matures. I think that you should begin to understand that if I talk about the agency of the word, or of the letter in the unconscious, it is certainly not to eliminate this something irreducible, unformulatable, not to prefer the method to the discovery that we can make with it, which is desire. I simply make this remark which up to now the philosophers do not seem to have taken into account; I say it in connection with a remark which someone who was very badly inspired on that occasion took it on himself to make recently about the fact that certain psychoanalysts, as if there were a whole lot of them in this instance, gave too much importance to (24) language, in view of this famous unformulated which, I do not know why, certain philosophers have come to value as being their personal property.

I say that contrary to this formula which consisted in the person whom I qualify on this occasion as being very badly inspired, which is the least I might say about him, and which made someone say that the formula was not perhaps unformulatable, I would answer him with the following, which he would be better off paying attention to than trying to involve everyone in these internal squabbles. It is in a perspective which is quite the opposite, it is not a reason why something is not articulatable, namely desire, for it not to be articulated, I mean in itself, desire is articulated in so far as it is linked to the presence of the signifier in man, and this does not mean for all that, precisely because it is a question essentially of this link with the signifier, it is not a reason, far from it, it is even precisely the reason why in a particular case it is never fully articulatable.

Let us come back now to this second chapter which is that of the demand.

Here we are dealing with the articulated which is articulatable, with what is actually articulated. It is indeed the link between desire and demand that is in question for the moment, (25) and we will not arrive today at the end of this discourse, but the next time I want to show you how between these two terms of desire and demand, and the paradoxes which we have designated above in this desire as being essentially masked desire, to show you how this is certainly and necessarily articulated in the demand, and that it is precisely because we cannot approach it except by way of some demand, that once the patient approaches us and comes to us, it is to ask something of us, and we already go an enormously long way in terms of engaging with, of clarifying the situation by saying to him simply: "I'm listening."

So we must now start again with what we can call the premises of the demand, with what makes demand after demand, with what makes the situation of the demand, and the fashion in which it meshes into an individual life.

Here we must go back to what establishes it at the beginning. I am not going to go over again the dialectic of ".....". Demand is linked first and foremost to this something which is in the very premises of language, namely in the existence of an appeal which is at once the source of presence and the term which permits it to be rejected, the game of presence and absence, and which ensures from the first articulation through which the object is summoned, the something (26) because of which it is already more than an object, a symbol, that it becomes what desire for presence makes of it, not as is said, an object. The primary dialectic is not that of the partial object of the mother as breast, or of the mother as food, or of the mother as total object as if it were a question of a kind of conquest made little by little: the child at the breast perceives that the breast extends into an armpit, into a neck and on to hair: the object that is in question, is the symbolic bracketing of this presence within which there is the sum of all the objects that it can bring, which means that this symbolic bracketing is right away more precious than any good, and that any one of the goods that it contains, cannot in itself and all by itself satisfy what is the appeal for presence, that as I already expressed for you on several occasions, none of these good things in particular can serve, and only serves in this instance, to crush as one might say the source of this appeal, namely that the child feeds himself perhaps and begins to sleep. At that moment obviously it is no longer a question of an appeal, all the relationships to any so-called partial object whatsoever, within the maternal presence, are here only substitutes, crushings of desire, not satisfactions as such, and this, namely the primordial character of this symbolisation of the object here in so far as it is object of an (27) appeal, is here and now marked by the fact that we ourselves have also read, but as always, we do not know how to draw to their ultimate conclusions the consequences of what we read, that here and now in the object, in the object of which there is question, in the object of presence, the dimension of the mask appears.

What does our good friend, Mr. Spitz have to say, if it is not that? It is that first of all what is recognised is this kind of direct frontal, framework, this mask, and the character of beyond which characterises this presence, qua symbolised, namely of a seeking beyond for this presence, in so far as it is masked, as it is symptomatised, symbolised; it is this beyond which the child designates to us in his behaviour, that he has its dimensions, because it is sufficient. I already spoke in another connection of the very particular reaction of the child before the mask, I mean the game with the child, as I told you already: the joy that the fact of taking off the mask gives him, and this particularly anxious character of what happens if underneath the mask, another mask appears, because then he does

not laugh any longer. But there is no need even to give oneself over to these sort of little exercises, it is enough to observe a child to perceive that before the word, the communication, the first communication, you would have to have never simply observed a child in his development in the first (28) months, in order not to perceive, that the first communication qua true communication, namely communication with the beyond of what you are before him as symbolised presence, is laughter. Before any word, the child laughs. He laughs when the laugh is of course linked to smiling and to relaxation, and the whole physiological mechanism of laughter is always linked to a certain satisfaction. People have spoken about this outline of a smile of the satiated child, but the child in so far as he laughs at you, laughs at you precisely in a certain relationship of course with his satisfaction of desire, but above and beyond this satisfaction, in so far as it is still present and alert, and that it is to this beyond of this presence in so far as it is capable of satisfying him, that it contains in itself something that accords with his desire, that laughter appears and that the familiar presence, the presence that he is used to and knows to be able to satisfy his desires in all their diversity, is there summoned, apprehended, recognised in this modality which is so specific, so special as are in the infant before speech, these first laughs in the presence of certain presences which look after him, which nourish him, which respond to him.

Laughter corresponds also moreover to all these maternal games which are the first exercises in which modulation, articulation as such are put before him. Laughter, in so far as precisely (29) it is linked to what I called during all the first articulations of this year's lectures, the witticism, is beyond, beyond the immediate, beyond any demand. Desire in so far as it is properly speaking linked to a signifier, in this instance the signifier of presence, it is to the beyond of this presence to the subject behind it that the first laughs are addressed, and we find there from that moment on, from the origin as one might say, the root of identification, because identification in so far as it will successively occur in the course of the development of the child with one or other person, with the mother first of all, with the father afterwards, and I am not saying that this step exhausts the question, but that we find here a root of it, identification is very exactly the correlative of this laughter, because the opposite of laughter of course is not tears. Tears express colic, express need, tears are not a communication, tears are an expression. But laughter, in so far as I am forced to articulate why, is a communication.

On the contrary, what corresponds to the opposite of laughter? In so far as laughter affirms, communicates, is addressed to the one who beyond this signified presence, is the mainspring, the source of the pleasure, the identification? It is the contrary, there is no more laughter, one is as serious as a pope or as a daddy, and one lets nothing on because the one who is (30) there and who presents you with a certain wooden

expression, because no doubt it is not the time to laugh, it is not the time to laugh because at this particular time needs are not to be satisfied, desire as they say, is modelled on the one who holds the power of satisfying it, who opposes the resistance of reality, as they say, which is perhaps not quite what they say it is, but which assuredly appears here in a certain form, and to be explicit, here and now in this dialectic of demand. We see according to my old schema, being produced what is in question when the demand comes here to its right destination, namely beyond the mask, encounters here, not satisfaction, but the message of this presence, in the fashion in which the subject realises that he really has before him the source of all good, here laughter certainly explodes, and in this case the process does not need either to be continued here any longer.

But it may have to be continued further on, because the wooden expression shows that the demand has been refused, and then as I have told you, what is at the origin of this need and desire, appears here in a transformed form, the wooden expression transfers itself in the circuit to come here; moreover to a place where it is not for nothing that it is there that we encounter the image of the other, and that there is given here (31) this transformation of demand which is called the ego ideal, while, in fact on the signifying line, the source, the place is beginning to appear of what is called prohibition and super ego, of what as such articulates itself as coming from the other.

All the difficulties that analytic theory always has to reconcile the existence, the co-existence, the co-dimensionality of the ego ideal and the super ego; but they undoubtedly correspond to different formations and productions. It would be enough to make the essential distinction that there is between need and the word which demands it, to understand how these two products can be at once co-dimensional and different. It is on the line of signifying articulation, namely of prohibition, that the super ego is formulated, even in its most primitive forms, while it is in the line of the transformation of desire in so far as desire is always linked to a certain mask, that the ego ideal is produced.

In other words, the link in demand of satisfaction with the mask, of their opposition which ensures that the mask is constituted in dissatisfaction, and through the intermediary of the demand which refuses, this is the point to which I wished to lead you today. But then what would result from it? It is that there would be in fact as many masks as there are forms of dissatisfaction.

(32) Yes, this indeed is how things appear, and you will be able to guide yourself on this with certitude, that in the psychological dimension which unfolds, which is deployed starting from frustration which is so alive in certain subjects, you will be able to notice in their very declarations, this sort of relationship between dissatisfaction and the mask, which will

mean that up to a certain degree, there are as many masks as dissatisfactions. This plurality of relationships of the subject to the other, according to the diversity of his dissatisfactions, is indeed here something which poses a problem, and precisely one of which one can say that up to a certain point, it will make of every personality a type of moving mosaic of identifications, and I would say that it is precisely in the intervention of the third dimension which I will leave to one side for today, which I reserve for the next time, that which is not introduced as people say it is, by genital maturation, nor the gift, nor oblativity, nor other moralising banalities which are quite secondary characteristics of the question, but by something of which we will say that there intervenes in fact from a certain moment, a desire; a desire which is not need, but which is Eros, a desire which is not autoerotic, but as they say, allo-erotic, because they are exactly ways of saying the same thing.

(33) Only it is not enough to say that, because in truth this genital maturity is not enough to bring about the subjective modifications which are going to be decisive modifications, which are going to allow us to grasp the link between desire and the mask. We will see the next time this characteristic, this essential condition which links to a prevailing, privileged signifier, which we call not by chance, but because concretely it is this signifier, namely the phallus, this level, and we will see paradoxically that it is precisely at this level that there is realised both this something which allows the subject to rediscover himself as one through the diversity of these masks, but which on the other hand makes him fundamentally divided, fundamentally marked by an essential Spaltung between what in him is desire, and what is mask.

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It is a matter of continuing to deepen this distinction between desire and demand, which we consider to be so essential for the proper conduct of an analysis, and in the absence of which we believe it slides inevitably around a practical speculation based on the terms of frustration on the one hand and of gratification on the other hand, which in our eyes constitute a veritable deviation from its path.

It is a matter then of continuing in the direction of something to which we have already given a name: the distance between desire and demand. It is not some sort of Spaltung, it is not a term that I use by chance, a term which was, if not introduced, at least strongly accentuated in Freud's very last essay, the (2) one in the course of which as one might say, the pen fell from his hand, because it was simply snatched from him by death.

This Ich-spaltung as a real point of convergence towards which Freud's final meditation, as one might say led him and brought him back, is something of which we have no longer any more than a fragment, some pages which are in Volume 17 of the Gesammelte Werke.

Delusion, to stimulate in you the presence in Freud's mind of the question that it raises. You will also see there with what force he accentuates that the synthetic function of the ego is far from being the whole story when it is a question of the psychoanalytic Ich.

The last time then, to take up again what we have said, because I believe that we will not be able to progress here except by taking three steps forward and two back, and to recommence and each time to gain a little step, and I am going to try to recall all the same fairly quickly what I insisted on the last time in speaking on the one hand about desire and on the other hand about demand, namely in terms of what there is in desire of what I called its character of being bound to, of being inseparable from the mask, I illustrated it for you very especially by recalling the following: that it is an over-simplification to distinguish the symptom as being a simple underlay to something external.

(3) I spoke to you about the patient Elizabeth von R, about whom

I told you in fact that simply by reading Freud's text, one could say, and Freud says it, articulates it, that her pain high up on her right thigh, is the desire of her father, and the desire of the friend of her youth, that it is every time that she evokes in the history of her illness, the moment that she was entirely subjected to the desire of her father, to the demand of her father, and when scarcely on the margin there was being exercised this attraction of the desire of the friend of her youth which she reproached herself for taking into consideration; and that the pain in her left thigh, is the desire of her two brothers-in-law, in so far as one represents the good masculine desire, the one who had married her younger sister, and the other the bad who besides has been considered by all of these women, as a very bad man.

Beyond this remark, namely of what must be considered before understanding what our interpretation of desire means, the fact is that in the symptom, and that is what conversion means, desire is identical with the somatic manifestation which is its front just as it is its back.

On the other hand I introduced, because also if we have advanced, it is because things are only introduced in a problematical form, (4) this problematic of desire in so far as analysis shows it to us as determined by an act of signification; but that desire should be determined by an act of signification, does not at all give us its meaning in any complete sense. It may be that desire is a by-product, if I can express myself in this way, of this act of signification. In one of the articles which I quoted as being constitutive of the veritable introduction to the question of perversion, in so far as it also appears as a symptom, and not just as a pure and simple manifestation of an unconscious desire, representing for us the moment when the authors perceive that there is just as much *Verdrangung* in a perversion as in a symptom; in one of these articles published in the International Journal, Volume 4 "Perversion and Neurosis", there is question of the case of a neurotic subject, and the author dwells on this fact that a subject, after having satisfactorily achieved his first act of intercourse, does not mean that other things will not subsequently happen, but immediately after this first act of intercourse he carries out this mysterious, really unique act: coming home, returning from the house of the lady who has accorded him her favours, he gives himself over to this particularly successful exhibition - I think moreover I already alluded to it in one of my seminars - particularly successful in this sense that it is carried out with (5) the maximum of completeness, and on the other hand of security: he takes down his pants and exhibits himself along a railway track, and in the light of a passing train he finds himself thus able to exhibit himself to a whole crowd without, of course, running the slightest risk, and this act is interpreted by the author in the general economy of the neurosis of the subject, in a more or less successful way.

I am not going to develop this side of things, but I am going to pause at something which is the following: that this, for an

analyst, is what is called a signifying act, is sure and certain, but what is its signification? What does it mean to say that it even has one?

I repeat that he had just copulated for the first time. What does it mean that he still puts at everyone's disposition, what has now, as it were, become his personal property? What does he mean in a way by showing it? Does he wish by showing it to efface himself behind what he shows, to be no longer anything more than the phallus?

All of this is equally plausible, and even within one single act, one single subjective context, that which appears here to be extremely important and worth accentuating, I would say more than anything else, and that it is well underlined, confirmed by the statements of the patient, by the context of the observation, even by what subsequently happens, that this first coitus was (6) completely satisfying.

What the act in question shows first and foremost, before any other interpretation, is that he has had and has realised his satisfaction; this act indicates what is left over to be desired beyond satisfaction.

I simply recall this little example to fix your ideas on what I mean, on the problematic of desire in so far as it is determined by an act of signification, and in so far as it is distinct from any meaning that can be grasped. I also wish to recall in this connection, and to add it to what I said the last time, that considerations of this kind, those which show the profound coherence, coalescence of desire with the symptom, the mask, with what appears in its manifestation, is something which puts in their place, many useless questions that are always being asked about hysteria, but much more about all sorts of sociological, ethnographical and other facts, where one always sees people getting completely confused about the question.

Let us take an example. There has just appeared an excellent booklet as a number in a small little collection: L'homme, which is published by Plon. It is a book by Michel Leiris on the effect of possession and on the theatrical aspects of possession, something that he develops in terms of his experience among the (7) Ethiopians of Gondar. In reading this excellent volume, one sees how well trance events of an incontestable consistency, go along with, are perfectly married with a certain externally typified, determined, expected, located in advance, known, character of "spirits" who are thought to do away with the subjectivity of the persons who manifest all these singular manifestations, who observe the ceremonies which are called , because this is what is in question in the country we are talking about, and much more, that this is not simply that conventional part which can be noticed, which is manifested, which is reproduced in connection with the manifestation of the incarnation of this or that spirit. It is the disciplined character of these manifestations, and up to a certain point so disciplined, that the subjects perceive it as something which is

a training of the spirits, who are nevertheless the ones who are thought to be taking them over. But matters are reversed: these spirits are in fact trained to conduct themselves properly.

The phenomenon of possession, with all that it involves in terms of phenomena powerfully inscribed in the emotions, in a whole passivity in which the subject is entirely possessed throughout the time of the manifestation, is perfectly compatible with this whole richness linked to the insignia of the god, of the spirit, (8) and which create in only a completely artificial way, a sort of problem which our mentality might try to situate as a type of simulation, imitation, or other terms of this kind. The very identity of the desiring manifestation with these forms, is quite tangible there.

The other point, the other term in which there is inscribed this dialectic, this problematic of desire, is that on which on the contrary I insisted the last time, it is this eccentricity of desire with respect to any satisfaction, which allows us to understand what in general is its profound affinity with pain. This is to say that at the limit, that which desire purely and simply approaches, no longer in its developed forms, in its masked forms, but in its pure and simple form, is this pain of existence which represents the other pole, the space we might say of the interior area from which its manifestation appears to us.

At the opposite therefore of this problematic, in describing thus what I call the area of desire, its eccentricity with respect to satisfaction, in describing it thus I do not claim of course to resolve it, it is not an explanation that I am giving here, it is a positioning of the problem, and this indeed is what we have to go further into today.

I recall on the other hand the other element of the diptych, of (9) the opposition which I proposed the last time, it is the one which is linked to the character of the identifying function, the idealizing function in so far as it is found to depend on the dialectic of the demand, in so far as the identification of everything which happens in this register, is based on a certain relationship to the signifier, in the other signifier here which is in general characterized, and in connection with the demand, as being the sign of the presence of the other, and how there is also established there something which must be related to the problem of desire, which is the way in which this sign of presence comes to dominate the satisfactions that this presence brings, the way it comes about that the human being so fundamentally pays with fine words (se paye de paroles), in such a widespread, constant fashion, just as much or at least as much in a tangible, very measured proportion compared to the more substantial satisfactions, there is simply recalled the fundamental characteristic which refers to what I have just recalled.

Does that mean moreover that it is only human beings? Here again a supplementary parenthesis to what I said the last time: it is absolutely not just the human being who pays with words.

To a certain degree, we know that certain domestic animals, and it is not false to think this way, have some satisfactions linked (10) to human speech. I do not need to evoke things here, but we do learn some strange things. It seems to have the degree of credibility that one can give to the statements of those who are called, in a more or less appropriate fashion, specialists. I have been told that mink who are kept in captivity for money, namely for the profit that can be gained from their fur, grow sickly and only give fairly mediocre products to the furriers if they are not spoken to. This apparently makes the rearing of mink very onerous and increases its costs.

It would seem therefore that in any case something is manifested here whose problematic we do not have the means of getting any further into either, but which certainly must be linked to the very fact of their being enclosed, because mink in their wild state do not, to all appearances, have the possibility, as far as we know, of encountering this sort of satisfaction.

To be explicit, I would simply like to indicate the relationship, the direction in which we can see in relationship to our problem, the Pavlovian studies of conditioned reflexes. In the last analysis, what are conditioned reflexes?

In their most widespread forms, those which are the most widely experienced, conditioned reflexes are the intervention into a (11) cycle which is more or less predetermined, innate, a cycle of instinctive behaviour. All these little electric signals, these little bells, these little ringings with which one deafens these little animals, to succeed in making them secrete to order their different physiological productions, their gastric juices, are all the same signifiers, and nothing else. They are fabricated by humans. In every case, the experimenters, for whom the world is quite clearly constituted by a certain number of objective relationships, among which those one can justly isolate as properly signifying, constitute a large part of this world.

In addition, moreover, it is with the purpose of showing along what kind of way, of progressive substitution, psychical progress is conceivable, that all these things are constructed and elaborated.

Up to a certain point, one could ask the question why, when all is said and done, this does not amount to teaching these animals who are so well trained a certain type of language. It is not the only thing that deserves to be noticed, it is precisely that the leap is not made, and that when the Pavlovian theory comes to take cognisance of what appears in man in connection with language, he/it (Pavlov or the theory), takes the very correct (12) approach of talking about language, not as the prolongation of the system of significations as it is put into operation in conditioned reflexes, but as a second system of significations, namely of implicitly recognising what is perhaps not fully articulated in the theory, but of recognising that there is something different between one and the other. And what is different, we will say that we can try to define this

distinction, this difference in the fact that it must be situated in what we call the relationship to the big Other, in so far as this constitutes the locus of a unitary signifying system, or again we would say that what is lacking in this discourse of signals, is concatenation for the subject who is involved, that is to say for the animal.

When all is said and done, what would formulate it simply, we would announce it in this form of saying that in fact, no matter how far these experiments are taken, what is not found, and perhaps what there is no question of finding, is the law under which these signifiers which are brought into play, are ordered, and which amounts to saying that it is the law which in the long run animals obey.

It is quite clear in fact that there is no trace of a reference to such a law, namely to anything which is beyond a signal, or (13) that from a short chain of signals once established, no sort of legalizing extrapolation, is perceptible in it, and this is indeed why one can say that one never succeeds in establishing the law. I repeat: this is not to say for all that that there is no dimension of the Other with a capital O for the animal. Nothing is effectively articulated within qua discourse.

Therefore what we arrive at, if we resume what is in question in the relationship of the subject to the signifier in the other, namely what happens in the dialectic of the demand, is essentially that which characterises the signifier, not as substituted, which is the case in conditioned reflexes, as substituted for the needs of the subject, but the signifier itself as being able to be substituted for itself, as being essentially of a substitutive nature, and it is in this direction that we see the dominance of what is involved, namely the place which it occupies in the Other. What we see pointing in this direction, is what I try to formulate here in different ways as essential to the signifying structure, namely this topographical not to say typographical space, which constitutes precisely the law of its substitution, this numbering of places, these numbered places which give the fundamental structure of a signifying system as such.

(14) It is to the degree that the subject, it is in so far as he senses his presence within a world thus structured in the position of the Other, that this something - it is a fact highlighted by experience - which is called identification, is produced. It is to the degree that in the absence of satisfaction, it is to the subject who can accede to the demand that the subject identifies himself.

I left you the last time, posing the question: Then why is there not the greatest multiplicity of identifications? As many identifications as there are unsatisfied demands? As many identifications as there are others who pose themselves in the presence of the subject as being the one who responds or does not respond to the demand?

The key to this distance, to this Spaltung which is here found reflected by the construction of this little schema which I put on the blackboard for you today for the first time, and which constitutes something which we should discover in the three lines which I already repeated for you twice. I think that you have them in your notes, but I can recall them to you namely the line which links the little d of desire on one side, through the intermediary of this relationship of the subject to little o, to the image of o and to e, that is to say the ego; the second line representing precisely the demand, in so far as it goes from demand to identification, passing through the position of the (15) Other with respect to desire, which means that you see here the Other being decomposed in so far as it is beyond it that desire exists, and in passing by way of the signified of the Other which at this level would be placed here, I mean in a first stage of the schema which was the one that I made for you the last time, that is to the fact that it only corresponds to demand, and which precisely, because of something which is what we are searching for in a second moment, is going to be divided in this relationship which is not single, but double, which I moreover already began in other ways, in two signifying chains: the first which is here when it is alone and single at the level of demand, being here in so far as it is a signifying chain through which demand has to reveal itself. Something else is going to intervene which doubles this signifying relationship, it is this doubling of the signifying relationship, in so far as you can for example, among other things, but naturally not in a univocal fashion, identify it, as has been done up to present, with the response of the mother.

As far as the lower line goes, that is to say as regards what happens in short at the level of demand, at the level where the reply of the mother lays down the law all by itself, namely in fact submits the subject to her arbitrariness, the other line representing the intervention of another agency corresponding to (16) the maternal presence and to the way in which its function makes itself felt beyond the mother, and of course it is not so simple, and if everything in fact was a question of Mammy and Daddy, I can scarcely see how we could account, at least for the facts with which we have to deal.

It is therefore to the question of this Spaltung which is purely and simply that which is identical, responsible for this gap between desire and demand, for this discordance, for this divergence which is established between desire and demand, that we are now going to be introduced, and that is why we must once again come back to pose again the question of what a signifier is.

I know that every time we part you ask yourselves: "What, when all is said and done, is he trying to say?" You are right to ask yourselves that, because undoubtedly if it is not said like that, it is not something of any great interest.

Let us take up the question of what a signifier is at the elementary level.

I propose that you should let your thoughts dwell on a certain number of remarks. For example do you not believe that we are touching here something which is at least some example or other, something perhaps in connection with what one could call (17) emergence? If we notice what is specific in the fact, not of a trace, because a trace is a imprint, it is not a signifier, one senses however that there could be a connection, and that in truth what one calls the material of the signifier always participates a little bit in the fleeting character of the trace. This seems to be one of the conditions for the existence of this signifying material. This however is not a signifier, even the footprint of Friday which Robinson Crusoe discovers during his walk around the island, is not a signifier, but on the contrary, if we suppose that he, Robinson, for whatever reason, effaces this trace, there we clearly introduce the dimension of signifier. It is from the moment that one effaces, where it has a meaning to efface it, that the something which is a trace is clearly constituted as signified.

One sees in effect that if here the signifier is a melting pot (creuset) in so far as it bears witness to a presence that is past, and that inversely in what is signifying, there is always in the fully developed signifier which the word is, there is always a passage, namely something which is beyond each one of the elements which are articulated, and which are of their nature fleeting, vanishing, that it is the passage from one to the other which constitutes the essential of what we call the signifying chain, (18) and that this passage qua vanishing, is this very thing which can be trusted (qui se fait foi).

I do not even say signifying articulation. It may be that it is an articulation which remains enigmatic, but that that which sustains it can be trusted; it is also at this level that there emerges what corresponds to what we have first of all designated in the signifier as testifying to a presence which is past inversely in a real passage which manifests itself, it is something which deepens it, which is beyond and which can be trusted.

In fact there again what we rediscover, is that just as after it is effaced, what remains, if there is a text, namely if this signifier is inscribed among other signifiers, what remains, is the place where it has been effaced, and it is indeed this place also which sustains the transmission, which is this essential thing thanks to which that which succeeds it in the passage takes on the consistency of something that can be trusted.

There we are really only at the level and at the point of emergence, but a point that is essential to grasp: that which ensures that the signifier as such, is something that can be effaced, which leaves nothing more than its place, that is to say that one can no longer find it. The fact is that this property which is essential, and which means that if one can speak about emergence, one cannot speak about development. In reality the (19) signifier contains it in itself. I mean that one of the fundamental dimensions of the signifier, is to be able to cancel

itself out. There is a possibility for this which we can in this instance qualify as a mode of the signifier itself, and which is materialised by something very simple and which we all know, and whose originality we cannot allow to be dissimulated by the triviality of usage, it is the bar. Every signifier of any kind is of its nature something which can be barred.

There has been a lot of talk, ever since there are philosophers who think, about the Aufhebung, and they have learned to make use of it in a more or less cunning way. This word means both cancellation, and essentially this is what it means: for example I cancel my subscription to a newspaper, or my reservation somewhere; it also means, thanks to an ambiguity of meaning which makes it precious in the German language, to raise to a higher power or situation. It does not seem to me that sufficient attention is paid to the following, that to be able properly speaking to talk about being cancelled, there is only properly speaking only one kind of thing, I would say roughly speaking, which can be, that is a signifier, because to tell the truth, when we cancel anything else, whether it is imaginary or real, it is simply because strictly speaking in doing so, and by that very (20) fact, we not only cancel what is in question, we raise it by a grade, to the qualification of signifier.

There is therefore within the signifier, in its chain and in its manoeuvring, in its manipulation, something which is always capable of stripping it of its function in the line or in the lineage. The bar is a sign of bastardy by stripping it as such, by reason of this properly signifying function, of what we will call general consideration. I mean of that in which in the given of the signifying battery, in so far as it constitutes a certain system of available signs, and in an actual, concrete discourse, the signifier falls out of the function which constitutes its place which I extracted from this consideration or constellation which the signifier institutes by applying itself to the world, by punctuating it, and that from there it falls from consideration into designation, namely that it is marked precisely by the fact that it leaves something to be desired.

I am not playing with words to amuse myself. I simply mean by this use of words, to indicate for you a direction along which we get closer to this link between the signifying manipulation of our object which is that of desire, and its opposition between consideration and desideration marked by the bar of the signifier, being here of course only destined to indicate a direction, a beginning.

(21) This of course does not resolve the question of desire, whatever may be the economy to which this conjunction of two terms in the Latin etymology of the word desire in French lends itself. It remains that it is properly speaking in so far as the signifier presents itself as cancelled, as marked by the bar, that we have properly speaking, what can be called a product of the symbolic function, produced in so far precisely as it is isolated, as it is distinct from the general chain of the signifier and of the law that it institutes. It is only from

the moment that it can be barred, that any signifier whatsoever has its proper status, namely that it enters into this dimension which ensures that in principle every signifier, to distinguish here what I mean, comes from the cancelling which is so essential.

The term employed in Freud is in quite funny places where no one seems to have gone to the trouble of locating it. As well as that if all of a sudden it is Freud who uses cancellation, that does not mean it has the same resonance. In principle every signifier can be revoked. So that something results once we have made these remarks which are the following, namely that for everything that is not signifier, namely in particular on this occasion for the real, the bar becomes one of the surest and the (22) shortest modes of its elevation to the dignity of signifier, and this I already pointed out to you in an extremely precise manner in connection with the phantasy of the beaten child when I pointed out to you that in the second stage of the evolution of this phantasy, namely the one that Freud points out as having to be reconstructed, and as having never been perceived, except from an angle and in exceptional cases, this sign which at the first stage was that of the humiliation of the hated brother, namely that he was beaten by the father.

In the second moment, and when it is a question of the subject herself, it becomes on the contrary the sign that she is loved, she, the subject, accedes in fact to the the order of love, to the state of being loved, because she is beaten, which all the same poses us a problem given the change of meaning that this action has taken on in the interval, and this is not properly speaking conceivable except in the case precisely where this same act which, when it is a question of the other, is taken as a punishment and is perceived as such by the subject as the sign that the other is not loved, when it is the subject who becomes its support at a certain given moment of her position with respect to the other, this act takes on its essential value, and through its function as signifier, it is because it is in the measure that in this act the subject herself is found raised to this dignity of signifying subject, that she is caught up at that (23) moment in its positive register, in its inaugural register, it establishes her properly speaking as a subject with whom there can be a question of love.

This is what Freud - we must always come back to Freud's phrases, they are always absolutely lapidary - in "Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes", expresses: "The child who is thus beaten becomes loved, appreciated on the plane of love" (Das Kind, das da geschlagen - geliebt wird..... " GW XIV 26; cf. SE XIX 254). And it is precisely at this moment, namely in this article that I am talking to you about, that Freud introduces the remark which was simply implicit in: "A child is being beaten", namely what I began by an analysis of the text, but which Freud formulates there quite literally, he formulates it absolutely without motivating it, but orienting it with this type of prodigious flair which is his, and which is all that is in question in this

dialectic of the recognition of this beyond of desire. He says:

"The peculiar rigidity which struck me so much in the monotonous formula a child is being beaten' can probably be interpreted in a special way: the child who is beaten here is because of this fact appreciated." (ibid.)

In this study he is dealing with little girls, and what Freud recognises by this Starrheit, the word is very difficult to translate in French because it has an ambiguous meaning in German, it means both fixed in the sense of a fixed stare, and (24) rigid. It is not absolutely related, even though what we have here is a contamination of two meanings, they have an analogy in history, and this is what is in question, it is a question for us of seeing indicated here this something whose place I already marked for you as a knot which it is now a matter of untying, namely this relationship that there is between the subject as such, the phallus here as problematical object, and the essentially signifying function of the bar, in so far as it comes into play in the phantasy of the beaten child.

For this it is not sufficient for us to be content with this clitoris which in so many respects, leaves much to be desired. It is a matter of seeing why it is in a certain position, is so ambiguous that in the long run, if Freud recognises it in what is beaten, in this instance the fact is that the subject on the contrary does not recognise it as such. It is a question of the phallus in so far as it occupies a certain place in the economy of the development of the subject, in so far as it is the indispensable support for this subjective construction, in as much as it pivots around the castration complex and the Penisneid, and it is now a matter of seeing how there comes into play in this relationship, this hold, this grip of the signifier on the subject, or inversely of what is meant by this signifying (25) structure whose essential terms I have recalled here.

For this it is appropriate for us to dwell for a moment on what in the last analysis is the mode under which the phallus can be considered. Why do we talk about the phallus, and not purely and simply about the penis? Why moreover do we effectively see it as something different to the mode in which we make the phallus intervene? The fashion in which the penis succeeds in supplying for it in a more or less satisfactory fashion, both for the masculine subject and for the feminine subject, is a different matter. Also in what measure is the clitoris on this occasion involved in what we can call the economic functions of the phallus?

Let us look at what the phallus, the phallos, originally is. The place where we see it attested for the first time in the texts, is namely in Greek antiquity, where, if we go to look for the texts where they are, in different parts of Aristophanes, of Herodotus, etc., we see first of all that the phallus is in no way identical to the organ as an appurtenance of the body, a prolongation, a member, a functional organ as one might say; the phallos, this is the fashion which dominates by far, is employed

in connection with a simulacrum, with an insignium, whatever the mode in which it is presented, whether it is a question of a (26) raised staff from which the virile organs are appended, or a question of an imitation of the virile organ, whether it is a question of a piece of wood, of a piece of leather, or of a series of varieties in which it is presented, it is something which is a substitutive object and at the same time it has the property that this substitution is in a way very different from substitution in the sense we have just heard about it, from sign substitution. One could say that almost and up to including the usage of this substitution, it has all the characters of a real substitute, this type of object that we call on in good stories, and always with more or less of a smile, which treat of the most singular objects as one might say, by the remarkable character that there is in human industry. It is all the same something which we cannot but take into account as regards its existence and its very possibility.

The lisbos in Greek is often confused with the phallos. In short, what is striking in the very special function of this object which, for the ancients, beyond any doubt, played the role in the mysteries, of the object around which as one might say, there was placed, and also it seems, to such a point that initiation lifted the last veils, namely of an object which for the revelation of meaning, was considered as a final significant (27) character.

Does not all of this put us on the right path of what is in question, namely that in short this prevalent economic role of the phallus as such, namely as that which represents in fact desire in its most manifest form?

I would oppose it term by term to what I said about the signifier which is essentially hollow, that it is fully introduced into the world. Inversely what is manifested in the phallus is that which in life is manifested in the purest fashion as tumescence, as growth, and we really feel the image of the phallus at the very basis of all the terms we use, which means for example that in French it is under the form of pulsion that the German term Trieb was able to be translated, this privileged object, as one might say, of the world of life, which moreover in its Greek appellation is linked to everything which is of the order of flux, of sap, even of luck itself, because it seems that there is the same root in and in phallos. It seems therefore that things are so arranged that the most manifest, the most manifested point of desire in its vital appearances, is precisely what finds itself unable to enter into the arena of the signifier, except as one might say by unleashing the bar in it. Everything that is of the order of intrusion, of the vital surge (28) as such, will find itself, in the measure that it comes to a point here, maximised in this form or in this image, will be something - this is what experience shows us, all we are doing here is reading it - which inaugurates as such everything which presents itself, either as connotation of an absence where it does not have to be, because it is not, namely that which makes the human being who does not have the phallus be considered as

castrated, and inversely which for the one who has something which can claim to resemble it, as menaced by castration.

Effectively because I am alluding to the ancient mysteries, it is quite striking to see that on the murals, the rare frescoes that we have conserved in a remarkable integrity, those of the Villa of Mysteries at Pompeii, it is very precisely just beside the place where there appears the unveiling of the phallus that there arise represented with a very impressive size, these life size personages, these sort of demons that we can identify through a certain number of overlaps. There is one on a vase in the Louvre, and in some other places. These demons, winged, booted, not helmeted, but almost, and in any case armed with a flagellum, are beginning to apply the ritual punishment to one of the (29) aspirants, the initiates who are in the image, namely give rise to the phantasy of flagellation in its most direct form, in the most immediate connection with the unveiling of the phallus.

It is also quite clear, that by all sorts of tests, of attestations which are brought to us by an experience which is not proven, and which does not demand any kind of investigation into the depths of the mysteries, that in the ancients cults, it is in the very measure that one approaches the cult, namely the signifying manifestation of the fruitful potency of the great goddess, that everything which refers to the phallus is the object of amputations, of marks of castration, or of more and more accentuated prohibitions, the eunuch character of the priests of the great goddess, the Syrian goddess, being one of the most recognised, established things in all sorts of texts.

It is in so far therefore as the phallus finds itself situated, always covered by something which is castration, the bar put on its accession to the signifying domain, namely on its place in the Other with a capital O, something by which in development, castration is introduced. It is never - observe it directly in the case histories - by way of the prohibition on masturbation for example. If you read the case of little Hans, you will see (30) that the first prohibitions have no effect on him. If you read the story of Andre Gide, you will see that his parents struggled for all his early years to stop him doing it, and that Professor Brouhardel, showing him the big needles and the big knives that he had, because it was already the fashion among doctors to surround themselves with impressive implements, promised him that if he began again, it would be cut off. And the young Gide reports very clearly that he did not believe for a single instant in such a threat, because in fact it seemed to him to be exaggerated, in other words, nothing other than the episodic manifestation of the phantasies of Professor Brouhardel himself.

This is not what is in question at all. As the texts and the case studies also indicated to us, it is in so far as the one being in the world, after all on the plane of reality, who would have the least reason to be presumed to be castrated, namely the one who had the occasion to be, that is the mother, it is

nevertheless from this angle, namely at the level of the Other, at the place where castration manifests itself in the Other, where it is the desire of the other which is marked by the signifying bar of capital \$ here, it is along this path essentially that for men just as for women, there is introduced the specific thing which functions as complex of castration.

(31) When we spoke about the Oedipus complex at the beginning of the last trimestre, I stressed this by putting it in the form that first and foremost the first person to be castrated in the intra-subjective dialectic, is the mother. It is there that the position of castration is first encountered, it is because of this, that in accordance with destinies which are different for men and for women, in the little girl because castration is first of all encountered in the Other, that the little girl first links up this perception with what the mother has frustrated her of, namely that at first it is in the form of a reproach to the mother that what is perceived in the mother as castration is therefore also like a castration for her. It is in the mode of this recrimination, which comes to be added to the other antecedent frustrations, that the castration complex - Freud insists on it - first appears in the girl.

And it is because the father only comes here in the position of replacement for what she finds herself first of all frustrated of, that she goes on to the level of the experience of privation. It is because already it is at the symbolic level that there appears the real penis of the father which we are told she expects as a substitute for what she has perceived she is frustrated of, that we can talk at that moment of privation, and (32) the crisis that this privation engenders, and the choice that it offers to the subject of renouncing, either her object, namely the father, or her instincts, namely to identify herself with the father.

From this there results a curious consequence: it is that the penis, precisely because it has been introduced into the castration complex of the woman in this form of symbolic substitute, is at the source in women of all sorts of conflicts of the type that are called conflicts of jealousy, or again of the infidelity of the partner. This is experienced as a real privation, I mean with an accent completely different from what the same conflict can represent seen from the man's side.

I am passing quickly over this, I will come back to it, but there is one thing that we must see, it is that if the phallus is found under the barred form in which it has its place as indicating the desire of the Other, everything that follows in our development is going to show us how the subject is going to have to find her place as desired object with respect to this desire of the Other, and in consequence it is always, as Freud indicates in connection with his remarkable insight on "a child is being beaten", it is always in so far as she has not the phallus, that the subject must, when all is said and done, be situated, that she will find her identification as subject, in so (33) far - as we will see - as the subject is as such herself a

subject marked by the bar.

This is manifested in a clear fashion in the woman the incidences on whose development with respect to the phallus I approached today by a simple indication. The fact is that in fact the woman - the man also indeed - finds herself caught in an insoluble dilemma which is the one around which there must be placed all the typical manifestations of femininity, neurotic or not. It is as I indicated to you, in terms of finding her satisfaction, namely first of all the man's penis, then afterwards by substitution the desire for the child. This is classical. I am only indicating here what is commonplace in analytic theory.

What does that mean? It is that, when all is said and done, to rediscover such a deepseated, such a fundamental satisfaction as maternity - just as exigent indeed, just as instinctual - the fact is that she only finds what satisfaction is along the paths of the substitutive line. It is in as much, I would say, as the penis is first of all a substitute, I would go as far as to say a fetish, then afterwards that the child also from a certain angle is a fetish, that the woman rejoins what is, let us say, her instinct and its natural satisfaction.

Inversely, for everything that is on the line of her desire, she finds herself bound to the necessity implied by the function of (34) the phallos, to be, to a certain degree that is variable, but to be this phallos, in so far as it is the very sign of what is desired, and it is indeed effectively to this that there correspond , which are the function of the phallos, that which in what is considered as properly speaking femininity, and the whole exhibitionist phase, namely the way in which the woman proposes herself as object of desire, everything that in the feminine function, to the degree that she exhibits herself and proposes herself as object of desire, identifies her in a latent and secret fashion to the phallos, namely in fact situates her being as subject as desired phallos, as signifier of the desire of the Other, situates this being, beyond what can be called the feminine masquerade, because, when all is said and done, everything that she shows of her femininity is precisely linked to this profound identification to a signifier which is the most closely linked to her femininity.

We see appearing there the role and the root of what one can call in the completion of the subject along the path of the desire of the Other, her profound Verwerfung, her profound rejection qua being, of that in which she appears as properly speaking in the feminine mode. Her satisfaction therefore passes along a substitutive path, and her desire manifests itself on a plane where it can only end up with a profound Verwerfung, at a (35) profound estrangement from her being, from the way in which she must appear.

You should not believe that for man the situation is any better. It is even more comic. He, the poor unfortunate, has the phallos, and it is in fact knowing that his mother does not have

it which traumatises him, because then since she is much stronger, where are we going to end up? It is there, in this primitive fear of women, that Karen Horney showed one of the most essential sources of the disturbances of the castration complex. Just as the woman was caught in one dilemma, the man is caught in another. It is along the line of satisfaction that the masquerade is established for him, because in the last analysis he will resolve the question of the danger which threatens what he effectively has, by what we know well, namely the pure and simple identification with the one who has its insignia, with the one who to all appearances has escaped the danger, namely the father, and, when all is said and done, the man is never virile except by an indefinite series of proxies: these come to him from all his grandparents and from all his ancestors, passing through the direct ancestor.

But inversely, along the line of desire, namely in so far as he has to find his satisfaction from a woman, he too will search for the phallos, and we have all the clinical and other testimonies (36) - I will come back to it the next day - and it is precisely because this phallos, is not found by him where he searches for it, that he searches for it everywhere else.

In other words, the symbolic penis for the woman is within, as one might say, the field of her desire, whereas for man it is outside it; this in order to explain to you why men in a relationship always have centrifugal tendencies.

It is to the degree therefore, that in the last analysis she is not herself, to the degree that she is in the field of her desire, namely in so far as in the field of her desire she must be the phallos, that the woman will experience the Verwerfung, that the subjective identification of the one who produces at the level of the second line, that which ends there in a delta; and it is in so far as he is not himself either, in so far as he satisfies, namely that he provides the satisfaction of the other, that man finds himself in love outside his other. Therefore it is in so far, I would say, as he perceives himself only as instrument of satisfaction, and this is the reason that, when all is said and done, the problem of love is the problem of this profound division that it introduces within the activities of the subject, it is always because what is in question, according to the very definition of love, is to give what he does not have, it (37) is for man, to give what he does not have to a being who does not have what he does not have, namely who does not have the phallus.

Seminar 21; Wednesday 7 May 1958

We are going to begin from the current event which those of you who were present last night at the scientific communication of the Society were able to appreciate. You heard an address on the subject of the heterosexual relationship.

This is just what I also am going to try to speak about.

The heterosexual relationship showed itself in this perspective as essentially formative. It was in brief a primary given of the evolutionary tension between the parents and the child.

The thing which appears in another perspective, which is exactly my point of departure, and is without any doubt in conformity with a primary experience, is that it is just that which is in question: is the heterosexual relationship between human beings something simple?

In truth, if we hold with our experience, it does not appear to be. If it were simple, it seems that it would at least be (2) capable of constituting within the human world a series of islands of harmony, at least for those who would have managed to remove the unpleasant briars from it. It does not seem that up to the present we can consider that there is unanimity on the part of analysts, and after all is there any need to invoke analysts on the question, that even when it has arrived at its fullness, the heterosexual relationship for man presents itself as something , because precisely its whole problem, the least that can be said - take the writings of Balint for example, which are fairly well centred on it since it is in the very title of the collection on Genital Love - revolves around this. There is attested the coexistence of an altogether terminal Spaltung, the juxtaposition of the current of desire and the current of tenderness. It is in terms of this juxtaposition that the whole problem of the heterosexual relationship is composed.

This does not take away the interest of what was said to us last evening, far from it, if it were only for the terms of reference which were employed, and for example of this aesthetic condition, this conscious and aesthetic valorisation, to take up the terms of the lecturer, which constitute a fundamental stage according to her perspective, in the oedipal relationship.

His sexual organ, his symbol appears, Madame Dolto told us, as a (3) beautifully proportioned form (une belle et bonne forme). The sexual organ is beautiful, she added. What we have here

obviously is a perspective of the person who is speaking, which is certainly very flattering for the bearers of this male sexual organ. At any rate one which it does not seem to be a datum that we can adopt in a univocal fashion, I mean if we refer to all the reservations of one of the people who intervened, with authority, on this subject, who gave us the benefit of what one can call ethnological observations, all the same if we refer to the savages, to the good savages who are always a reference point for anthropologists, it does not really seem that it is a primary datum, if indeed this savage is the first example of this beautifully proportioned form of the phallus. To tell the truth, all the the documents - I am not talking about learned documents, about the things that are afterwards elaborated in the ethnographer's office, but about the experience that one can find in those ethnographers who have been in the field, who have been among these so-called savages, whether good or bad - it seems precisely that it is really a foundation and a principle of the relationships between the sexes, even in the most backward tribes, that at least the erection of the phallus is hidden. The existence, even among the tribes which only possess the most primitive style of dress, (4) of something which consists precisely in hiding the phallus, of the cache-sexe for example, sometimes demonstrated by the general public as the strict residue of what remains as clothing, is something quite striking.

On the other hand, a good number of ethnographers have testified to the sort of irritation that persons of the female sex experience in the presence of manifestations concerning the erection of the phallus as being a really primary reaction. For example in the very rare cases where no clothes at all are worn - among the Nambikoina whom as you know our friend Lévi-Strauss visited on many occasions, and about whom he has spoken at length - Lévi-Strauss testified to this when I questioned him on this matter - and moreover what I am telling you now reflects what was said and what he himself says in his book - that he never observed in front of the group, and in a fashion that he himself could see, an erection in the male. Sexual relations take place without any special concealment, a couple of feet from the group, in the evening around the camp fire, but erection, either during the day, or at that time, is not seen in public, and does not appear.

This is not altogether a matter of indifference for our subject.

On the other hand this notion of the beautifully proportioned (5) form, if the signification of the phallus has to be situated like that, is a perspective which we will see to be rather onesided. On the other hand, I know well that there is the beautifully proportioned form of the woman. It undoubtedly is valorised by every civilized group, but one cannot say that here, if only because of its individual diversity, we can talk about a beautifully proportioned form in a univocal fashion. Let us say that in practice this beautifully proportioned form in any case allows more variation than the other one. No doubt behind every woman there appears in silhouette the form of Venus

de Milo, or of the Aphrodite of Eucnide, but it is not always with results that are univocally favourable. Daumier was much reproached for having given to the gods of Greece, the slightly sloppy forms, of the male and female bourgeoisie of his epoch. He was reproached as if he had committed a sacrilege. It is precisely here that there is situated the problem that I am indicating: it is that obviously if it is so deplorable to humanize gods, it is because humans are not always so easily divinized.

In brief, it is quite clear that if the necessity of perpetuating the human race is given over to the subject of the beautifully proportioned form, on the whole the indication seems to be that we should be satisfied with average requirements that (6) the term beautifully proportioned form is perhaps not entirely destined to fulfil, or remains in any case rather enigmatic.

In fact, everything that was said in a timely and remarkable way to valorise this beautifully proportioned form of the phallus, is precisely what is in question here, which of course does not eliminate its prepossessing, dominant form, but the discourse that we are pursuing here, and in so far as it is founded, as it directly prolongs, not alone the Freudian discourse, but the Freudian experience, is there to give us a different idea of the signification of the phallus.

The phallus is not a form, is not an objectal form, in so far as it remains the captivating form, the fascinating form, at least in a sense, because the problem still remains in the Other. The attraction between the sexes, is an infinitely more complex thing, as the whole economy of the analytic doctrine reveals to us, and what we are engaged in, is to give it a solution, according to this formula which naturally is itself nothing more than a formula which must be developed in order to be understood: it is that the phallus is neither a phantasy, nor an image, nor an object, even a partial one, even an internal one, that it is a signifier, and that the fact that it is signifier, is the only thing which allows us to articulate, to conceive of (7) the different functions that it takes on at different levels of the inter-sexual encounter.

A signifier. It is not enough to say that it is a signifier. Which one? It is a signifier, it is the signifier of desire, and of course this poses again a question which goes further: the signifier of desire, what does that mean? It is quite certain that the import of this affirmation that it is the signifier of desire, implies that we should know, and that we should say, that we should articulate first of all what is in its formula, what desire is.

Desire in fact is not something which is self-explanatory in the function that it occupies in our experience. It is not simply the inter-sexual appetite, the inter-sexual attraction, the sexual instinct, it is of course understood that this does not eliminate either the existence of what are tendencies more or

less accentuated, variable according to individuals, which have this primary character of manifesting themselves as something which is, let us say in general, the greater or lesser potency of one or other individual, with respect to sexual union, that this is something which in no way resolves the question of the constitution of desire as we see it in such and such an individual, whether he is neurotic or not. The constitution of his desire is something other than what he has, if you wish, in (8) terms of sexual potency.

This is why we are going, as a way of setting out again after the disorientation that we may perhaps have suffered from the perspectives of last evening, we are going quite simply to take up Freud's text again.

I should say that I did not wait until today to make the remark, but I communicate it to you today: people have marvelled at the existence of this text of the Traumdeutung, people have marvelled at it as a sort of miracle, because it is really not too much to say that one can read it as something which is thought on the march. But it is even much more: matters are introduced according to moments which correspond to a composition with several overdetermined planes. This is indeed where the word would be applicable, which means that in simply taking as I told you I was doing the last time, namely the first dreams, the import of what comes first goes far beyond the reasons which are given for putting them first in the chapter headings. It is in connection with the memories of the previous day, in so far as they are taken into account in the determination of dreams, that certain of these first dreams, the one for example that I commented on the last day for you, namely the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife, as I called it, appear there.

You have seen that from another angle it is really to approach (9) the question of demand and desire - it is not I who put them into the dream, they are there, demand and desire are there, and Freud does not put them there, it is Freud who read them there, he saw that the patient needed to create an unsatisfied desire, it is Freud who says it, and already just by itself, with everything that we know since, and Freud of course when he wrote it, was not completely in the dark when he gave the name, he had already taken a certain perspective on the matter. If he put things in this order, it is because he is pushed by a requirement in the approach and in the composition which may go well beyond the division of his chapters, and makes of this dream something which is really a special introduction to the problem which is fundamental in the perspective that I am trying here to promote for you, therefore desire and demand.

It is hardly necessary to say that it also is everywhere, because if the dream has been produced, it is because a friend has asked to come to dine in her house. Moreover in the dream itself, the demand is there in its clearest form. The patient knows that everything is closed that day, that she cannot make up for the inadequacy of her material, of provisions, to tackle

a supper party that she must give, and then she demands in the clearest, the most isolated fashion, that one can present a demand, she demands over the telephone, which at the time - this (10) is part of the first edition of the Traumdeutung - was not in widespread use, it is really there with its full symbolic power.

Let us go a little further. What are the first dreams that we are going to encounter?

We enter therefore into "The material and sources of dreams" and we encounter first of all the dream of the botanical monograph which is one of Freud's dreams. I will pass over it, but it is not because it does not contribute exactly what we are now waiting for, namely what I am going to try to show you today, precisely the functioning of the relationships of the phallic signifier with desire, only, because it is one of Freud's dreams, naturally it would be a little bit longer, and a little bit more complicated to show it to you. I will do it if I have the time. It is absolutely clear, structured exactly according to the little schema that I gave you the last time, which I began to sketch out for you in connection with the desire of the hysteric, the last time. But Freud is not purely and simply a hysteric; if he has with hysteria the relationship which every relationship with desire involves, it is in a slightly more elaborated way.

We will skip therefore the dream of the botanical monograph, and we arrive at a patient who Freud tells us is a hysteric, and we take up again the desire of the hysteric.

(11) "An intelligent and cultivated young woman, reserved and undemonstrative in her behaviour reported as follows: I dreamt that I arrived too late at the market and could get nothing either, from the butcher or from the woman who sells vegetables. An innocent dream, no doubt; but dreams are not as simple as that, so I asked to be told in greater detail. She thereupon gave me the following account. She dreamed that she was going to the market with her cook, who was carrying the basket. After she had asked for something, the butcher said to her: That's not obtainable any longer, and offered her something else, adding this is good too. She rejected it and went to the woman who sells vegetables, who tried to get her to buy a peculiar vegetable that was tied up in bundles but was of black colour. She said: I don't recognise that; I won't take it." (SE IV 183)

Freud's commentary is essential here, because we were not the ones who analysed this patient. What is in question, is to see what Freud believes he himself can do, in a work which at the time is a little bit as if the first work on the atomic theory had come out, without any type of liaison with, nor any preparation by the physics which preceded it. Moreover it was in fact received by an almost total silence. It is therefore in the first pages of his book, that in order to speak about the (12) presence of what is recent and indifferent in the dream.

Freud calmly adds on for his readers the following commentary:

(He tries to attach this dream to the events of the previous day): "She had actually gone to the market too late and had got nothing. The meat-shop was closed."

But he does not say that it was the patient who said that, he has already gone rather quickly in saying that it must be like that.

"I pulled myself up: was not that, or rather its opposite, a vulgar description of a certain sort of slovenliness in a man's dress"

In other words, it seems that in the language of Vienna, one would say that about someone who had forgotten to button his fly, and that it would be common, at least using familiar language, to indicate it to him by the phrase: "Your meat-shop is not closed." However the dreamer had not employed this phrase, Freud tells us, and he adds:

"She may perhaps have avoided using it. Let us endeavour then to arrive at an interpretation of the details of the dream. When anything in a dream has the character of direct speech, that is to say, when it is said or heard and not merely thought (and it is easy as a rule to make the distinction with certainty) "

It is a question therefore of words in so far as they are inscribed in the dream as if on a banner. They are not simply (13) implied in the situation. It is a question of what can be distinguished with certainty, Freud tells us, namely the language element which Freud invites us to take always as an element which is valid in itself.

"It is derived from something actually spoken in waking life - though, to be sure, this something is merely treated as raw material and may be cut up and slightly altered and, more especially, divorced from its context. In carrying out an interpretation, one method is to start from spoken phrases of this kind. What then was the origin of the butcher's remark 'That's not obtainable any longer?' (Das ist nicht mehr zu haben).

This sentence is taken up by Freud when he is writing the Wo Ifman, as a proof that he gives the reader that for a long time he had been interested in this question of the difficulty that there is of re-constructing what is pre-amnesic in the life of the subject, of what there is from before infantile amnesia. It is indeed in this connection that he told this to the patient:

"The answer was that it came from me myself. A few days earlier I had explained to the patient that the earliest experiences of childhood were not obtainable any longer as such', but were

replaced in analysis by 'transferences' and dreams. So I was the butcher and she was rejecting these transferences into the (14) present of old habits of thinking and feeling. What, again, was the origin of her own remark in the dream "I don't recognise that; I won't take it?"

Which in French is translated by adding: ca.

"For the purpose of the analysis this had to be divided up. I don't recognise that was something she had said the day before to her cook, with whom she had had a dispute; but at the time she had gone on: Behave yourself properly! (Benehmen Sie sich anständig!) "

It does not matter what she said to her cook, because this is taken under the guise of an element of the sentence, and as Freud says, it is precisely in the measure - "Das kenne Ich nicht, das nehme Ich nicht" (GW II/III 190) - that what is retained from this phrase is precisely the part which does not have signification, that precisely which the censorship tends to exclude, is what is also said to the servant. Freud remarks that it is in the measure that this is retained in what is dreamt, that the meaning corresponds to: "Das kenne Ich nicht, das nehme Ich nicht."

One could add something else again, if one were more rigorous, like: "Das kenne Ich nicht, benehmen Sie sich anständig."

"At this point there had clearly been a displacement. Of the two phrases that she had used in the dispute with her cook....it (15) was only the suppressed one. Behave yourself properly that fitted in with the rest of the content of the dream: these would have been the appropriate words to use if someone had ventured to make improper suggestions and had forgotten to close his meat-shop."

The French translation is not very correct, because it omits the notion of improper suggestions and forgetting to close his meat shop. The translation is pure fantasy.

"The allusions underlying the incident with the vegetable-seller were a further confirmation that our interpretation was on the right track. A vegetable tied up in bundles and is also black could only be a dream combination of asparagus and black (Spanish) radishes. No knowledgeable person of either sex will ask for an interpretation of asparagus. But the other vegetable also seems to hint at...."

The word allusion [French translation] is not in the German text. "It refers", says the German text, "to a sexual term."

"...this same sexual topic which we suspected at the beginning, when we felt inclined to introduce the phrase about the meat shop being closed into the original account of the dream. We need not enquire now into the full meaning of the dream. So much is quite clear: it had a meaning and that meaning was far from innocent."

(16) I apologise if this seems to you to be a bit long. I simply wished to re-centre things on this little dream, now that we know so much, that we tend to read a little bit quickly.

Here there is represented in the clearest fashion, another relationship of the hysteric with something which is this super-ego. We focus for a moment on our goal. The last time I indicated that the hysteric, in her dreams and in her symptoms, requires that there be marked somewhere the place of desire as such. Here something else is in question, it is the place of the signifier phallus.

Let us blend in our theoretical discourse with these references to the dream concerning the hysteric, in order to vary things a little for you, and also to relax your attention.

There are three other dreams of the same patient that follow, and we will make use of them when it is appropriate. Let us pause for a moment at what it is now a question of highlighting.

It is the same problem, the same phenomenon of which there was question the other day, namely the place to be given to desire. But here it is not a place which is marked in the field outside the subject, of a desire as such, in so far as she refuses it for herself beyond the demand, in so far as in the dream she assumes it as being the desire of the other, of her friend. It is a question of desire in so far as it is supported by its (17) signifier, the signifier phallus by hypothesis, because that is what we are talking about.

It is a question of knowing what function the signifier plays on this occasion.

Freud, as you see here, introduces without any kind of hesitation, without any kind of ambiguity, the signifier phallus, which is what is at stake when we are dealing with something which is the only element that he did not highlight as such in his analysis, because he had to leave us something to do, but which is quite striking. In fact, the whole ambiguity of the behaviour of the subject with regard to the phallus, since the phallus is not the object of desire, but the signifier of desire, all this ambiguity will reside in this dilemma, namely that the subject can have or can be this signifier. It is because it is a signifier that this dilemma is proposed, and this dilemma is absolutely essential, it is it which is at the root of all the slippages, of all the transmutations, of all the sleights of hand, I might say, of the castration complex.

Why does the phallus come into this dream? I do not think that we are going beyond anything in an inappropriate way from this perspective, if we say that this dream is actualised, that the phallus is actualised as such in the dream of this hysteric, around Freud's phrase: *Das ist nicht mehr zu haben*. ("That's (18) not obtainable any longer"; "on ne peut plus en avoir").

I had the usage of avoir (to have) confirmed for me, I mean in

the absolute sense, as it manifests itself in linguistic usage, which makes us say l'avoir, or not, or better still in French: en avoir, or not, which also has a certain import in German. It is a matter here in this phrase, of the phallus in so far as it arises as the object which is lacking, the object which is lacking to whom? This is of course what it is important to know, but nothing is less certain than that it is purely and simply the object which is lacking to the subject as a biological subject. Let us say that first and foremost all of this is presented in signifying terms, and in so far as it is a sentence which introduces it, a sentence articulated as something which is linked to the sentence which articulates: Das ist nicht mehr zu haben, that this, is what one can no longer have. It is not a frustrating experience, it is a signification, it is a signifying articulation of the lack of the object as such.

This of course accords with the notion which is the one that I put here on the one hand in the foreground, it is that the phallus is the signifier here, in so far as who does not have it? As the Other does not have it, because it is a question of something which is articulated on the plane of language, and which situates itself as such on the plane of the Other. It is the signifier of desire in so far as desire is articulated as (19) the desire of the Other.

I will come back to this in a while.

We are now going to take the second dream.

The second dream that there is question of, from the same patient is a so-called innocent dream. "Her husband asked her: Don't you think we ought to have the piano tuned? And she replied: It's not worth while (Es lohnt nicht)." - That means something like: "It does not pay." - "The hammers need reconditioning in any case." "This was a repetition of a real event of the previous day. But what was the explanation of her dreaming it? She told me that the piano was a disgusting old box, that it made an ugly noise, that it had been in her husband's possession before their marriage, and so on. This last was a substitute for the opposite idea, as the course of the analysis will make clear. Namely that her husband did not have it before his marriage."

"But the key to the solution was only given by her words: It's not worth while." She had said them the previous day, says Freud, while she was visiting a friend, she had been invited to take off her jacket, but had refused with the words: "Thank you but it's not worth while; I can only stop a minute. As she was telling me this, I recollected that during the previous day's analysis she had suddenly caught hold of her jacket, one of the buttons having come undone. Thus it was as though she were saying: Please don't look; it's not worthwhile." In the same (20) way the box was a substitute for a chest; and the interpretation of the dream led us back at once to the time of her physical development at puberty, when she had begun to be

dissatisfied by her figure. We can hardly doubt that it led back to still earlier tiroes, if we take the word disgusting into account and the ugly noise, and if we remember how oftenthe lesser hemispheres of a woman's body are used for the larger ones." (SE IV 185-6; GW II/III 191-2)

Here we find ourselves dealing with the other side of the question. If the phallus is the signifier of desire, and of the desire of the Other, here is the other aspect of the problem for the subject, at the first step in this dialectic of desire: It is a question of being or of not being the phallus.

Let us trust squarely in this function of signifier that we accord to the phallus, saying the following: just as one cannot be and have been, one cannot either be and not be, and if it is necessary that what one is not is what one should be, there remains not to be what one is, namely to reject what one is into the apparent (le paraître), which is very exactly what the position of the woman is in hysteria. As woman she makes herself mask, she makes herself mask precisely in order behind this mask, to be the phallus, and all the behaviour of the hysteric, this behaviour in so far as it manifests itself by putting a hand on a button whose meaning the eye of Freud a long, long time ago helped us to see, but accompanied by the phrase: "It is not worth while." Why is it not worth while? (21) Because of course it is a question of you not looking behind, because behind, what is of course in question is that the phallus should be there. But it is really not worth while to go looking there, because precisely one will not find it there. What is in question for the hysteric, as Freud immediately tells us in a note addressed to those whom he calls : Die Wissbegierige, which is translated in French by "to those who wish to go deeper". That means, more precisely : "to lovers of knowledge", to be more rigorous. (SE IV 185 ni)

This carries us into the heart of what perhaps I already designated by this term borrowed from a morality which despite everything remains marked by a human experience which is perhaps richer than many others, the theological morality which is called the Cupido Sciendi, which gives us the term which we can choose to translate desire. These are delicate questions, these equivalences between languages relating to desire, I know that I already obtained from my German-speaking pupils, Begierde. You find it in Hegel, but some find that it is too animal. It is funny that Hegel should have employed it in connection with the Master and the Slave, which is not too marked with animality.

"I may add", says Freud, "that the dream concealed a fantasy of my behaving in an improper and sexually provocative manner, and (22) of the patient putting up a defence against my conduct."

In short, he indicates again for us what is in fact a fundamental behaviour of the hysteric, but at the same time in this context we see its meaning. The hysteric's provocation, is precisely something which tends to constitute desire, but beyond

what is called defence, to indicate the place beyond this appearance, this mask, something which is essentially what is presented to desire, and which it of course cannot accede to because it is something which is presented behind a veil, but on the other hand of course not being able to be found there. It is not worth your while opening my bodice, because you will not find the phallus there, but if I put my hand to my bodice, it is so that you may designate, behind my bodice, the phallus, namely the signifier of desire.

This leads us perhaps to begin to ask ourselves how we must define this desire in all strictness, in order all the same to give you a proper sense of what we are talking about, I mean not to limit ourselves to what someone in a dialogue with me, has called - appropriately enough in my opinion - in connection with the little interwoven lines that I put before you from time to time, and which you should not lose sight of, has called a little Calder mobile. Why?

(23) Let us try to articulate what we mean by desire as such. We pose desire in this dialectic as something which is found on the little mobile, beyond the demand. Why is there need for a beyond of the demand? There is need for a beyond of the demand in so far as I told you, that demand by the necessities of its articulation, deflects, changes, transposes need. There is therefore the possibility of a residue. It is in so far as man is caught in the signifying dialectic, that there is something which does not succeed, whatever may be thought by the optimistic people who no doubt point out to us the successful discovery of the other sex, which happens between children and parents. There is only one thing missing, it is that things should go just as smoothly between the parents. Now, here precisely is the whole level at which I approach the question.

There is therefore a residue. How does it appear? How must it necessarily appear? It is no longer now a question of sexual desire. We will see why sexual desire must come to this place. But from the moment that there is a general relationship of a need in man with the signifier, we find ourselves before the following, namely whether something makes good the margin of deviation marked by the incidence of the signifier on needs, and how this beyond appears, if it does appear?

(24) Experience proves that it does appear, and that it is this that we call desire, but as a possible form of its appearance, here is more or less how we can articulate it.

The fashion in which desire must appear in the human subject, depends on what is determined by the dialectic of demand. If demand has a certain effect on needs, it has on the other hand its own characteristics. These proper characteristics, I have already articulated them here. It is that the demand fundamentally in its existence, by the very fact that it is articulated as demand, poses even if it does not expressly demand it, the other as absent or present, and giving or not this absence or this presence, namely as demand for love, for

this something which is nothing, not any particular satisfaction, which is what this subject contributes by a pure and simple reply to the demand.

It is here that there is situated the originality of the introduction of the symbolic under the form of demand. It is in this unconditionality of demand, namely that is was, that it is demand, that it is against the background of a demand for love, that there is situated the originality of the introduction of demand with respect to need.

If this involves some loss with respect to need, under any form (25) whatsoever, must this be rediscovered beyond demand? It is quite clear that if this must be rediscovered beyond demand, namely beyond what in fact introduces distortion into need, this dimension of demand, it is to the extent that beyond we should rediscover something where the Other loses its prevalence, or if you wish, need in so far as it originates in the subject, regains the primary place.

Nevertheless, because need has already passed through the filter of demand to the plane and the stage of unconditionality, it is in the guise, as one might say, of a second negation that we are going to find beyond, what it is precisely a question of finding, which is the margin of what is lost in this demand, and the beyond is precisely the character of absolute condition which is in desire, what presents itself in desire as such is this something which is of course borrowed from need. How could we construct our desires, if not by borrowing the raw material from our needs? But this passes over to a state of being unconditioned, not because it is a question of something borrowed from a particular need, but of an absolute condition out of all proportion to the need for any object whatsoever, and in so far as this condition is perhaps called for precisely in this, that it abolishes here the dimension of the other, that it is a requirement in which the other does not have to reply yes (26) or no. It is this which is the fundamental dimension, character of human desire as such.

Any desire whatsoever, at the state of pure desire, is this, it is something extracted from the soil of needs, which takes the form of absolute condition with respect to the other. It is precisely the margin, the result of the subtraction as one might say, of the exigency of need with respect to the demand for love. That is to say that inversely desire is going to present itself as that which in the demand for love is a pointer to any reduction to a need, because in reality that satisfies nothing other than one's self, namely desire as absolute condition.

It is for this reason that sexual desire will come to this place, precisely in the measure that sexual desire presents itself with respect to the subject, with respect to the individual, as essentially problematical, and on the two planes, on the plane of need - Freud is not the first to underline this, from the beginning of time people have been asking themselves how the human being who is a being who has the property of

recognising what is advantageous for him, how he can take on, how he can admit a need which incontestably pushes him to aberrant extremes, because it does not correspond to any need which can be immediately rationalised, but which introduces into the individual, let us say what has been called the dialectic of (27) the species.

Of its nature sexual need will already present itself with a certain problematic for a subject who is precisely what we have just said, even if the philosophers have articulated it otherwise, namely someone who can rationalise his needs, namely articulate them in terms of equivalence, namely of the signifier.

On the other hand, with regard to the demand for love, the expression of sexual desire will precisely become desire, and it will be called desire because it can only place itself there, at the level of desire as we have just defined it. Even though at first sexual desire presents itself with respect to the demand for love, in a problematical fashion, whatever may be said about it, and whatever holy water one tries to throw on it by using the term oblativity, the question of desire with regard to the formulation of what is called in every tongue, formulating one's demand, is problematical in as much as to express things in the form of language, the most usual thing, which is revealing here, it is a question, when all is said and done, whatever may be the mode in which the demand is formulated, that the following emerges: it is that the other comes into play from the moment that sexual desire is in question in the form of instrument of desire.

This is the reason why it is at the level of desire as we have (28) thus defined it, that sexual desire is posed in so far as it is a question, namely in so far as it is a question, that it cannot really be articulated. There is really no word (mot), hear it from my own lips, because it perhaps will not do any harm for me to say that everything is not reducible to language. I have always said it, of course, but if it has not been heard, there is no word to express something, and something which has a name, and it is precisely desire, to express desire, as popular wisdom knows very well, there is only empty talk.

The question of the signifier of desire is therefore posed as such, and it is for that reason that what expresses it is not a signifier like the others. It is something which in fact is borrowed from a dominant form of the surge of the vital flux in this order, but which is no less caught up in this dialectic as a signifier, with this passage to the register of the signifier which involves the mortification that affects everything which accedes to this dimension of signifier. Here the ambiguous mortification appears very precisely under the form of the veil, of the veil which we see being reproduced every day in the form of the hysteric's bodice, namely the fundamental position of woman with respect to man concerning desire, namely that above all you must not look behind the blouse, because of course there (29) is nothing, there is nothing except the signifier. Which

is precisely not nothing, but the signifier of desire.

Behind this veil, there is either something which must not be shown, and it is in this that the demon whom I spoke to you about the last time or the second last time in connection with the unveiling of the phallus in the antique mysteries, is presented and articulated, and is named as the demon of shame, and shame has a different meaning and import in man and in woman. I made an allusion to that, whatever its origin may be, whether it is the horror that the woman has of it, or whether it is something which arises quite naturally from the delicate soul of men. I alluded to this veil which in man very regularly covers the phallus. It is exactly the same thing which covers more or less normally the totality of the being of the woman, in so far as what there is a question of there being behind, what is veiled, is the signifier of the phallus. And the unveiling of something which would only show nothing, namely the absence of what is unveiled, it is very precisely to this that there is attached what Freud called in connection with the feminine sexual organs, the Grauen in connection with the head of Medusa, or the horror which corresponds to absence revealed as such (GW XVII 47; SE XVIII 273).

When all is said and done, what is in question in this perspective, namely in this interplay of the subject of desire (30) and the signifier of desire, is something which is not exhausted, at the point that we have got to, which has only begun, but you can see well, that it completely reverses a notion for example like that which obscures the whole dialectic of the contribution of the Other in the sexual relationship, and that supposedly matured by the sexual relationship, progress would be from a partial object to a total object.

There is here properly speaking one might say, a veritable camouflage, avoidance, because to be blunt, it would rather be the problem which arises from the fact that in acceding to the place of desire, the other does not at all become as we are told, the total object, but the problem is the following: it is that he becomes totally object, qua instrument of desire. This indeed is what he becomes, and it is a question of maintaining as compatible, this position of the other qua Other, namely qua locus of the word, the one to whom the demand is addressed, and the one whose radical irreducibility as Other is manifested in so far as he can give love, that is to say something which is all the more totally gratuitous, because there is no support for love, that as I have told you: to give one's love, is very precisely and essentially to give as such nothing of what one has, because it is precisely in so far as one does not have it that there is question of love.

(31) It is a question of this discordance between what is absolute in the subjectivity which gives or does not give love, and the fact that one's access to him as object of desire, makes it very precisely necessary that he should become totally object. It is in this essentially vertiginous, essentially nauseous, discrepancy to call it by its name, that there is

situated the difficulty of access in the approach to sexual desire.

Freud alludes somewhere in the most precise fashion to the symptom, which, in the hysteric is manifested in the form of nausea and of disgust, by relating it to the phenomena of vertigo in so far as It is not Freud who says it, but it is in Breuer's text (SE JEI 210 n3). Breuer's text refers to Mach and to the works of Mach on motor sensations, in order to point out with some intuition that it is in the discordance between optical sensations and motor sensation that there lies the essential source of this labyrinthic phenomenon which is supposed to manifest itself, which we see emerging the series: vertigo, nausea and disgust.

Effectively it is perfectly observable, and I have already observed it in more than one person, that the realisation, the perception of the contribution of the Other in desire, in the form of the signifier phallus with this sort of short circuit which results at the point where the analysis of such a thing is (32) possible, this short circuit which is set up between this signifier phallus and this something which then at this moment in the subject, can only appear as empty, namely at the place which the organ should normally occupy, I mean the place between the two legs, which at that moment is only evoked as a place, is something which is accompanied, and I would have ten observations to propose to you on this subject, in all sorts of forms, which are either clear, crude and raw, or in various symbolic forms, the subject despite everything saying quite clearly, that it is in so far as the other as object of desire, is perceived as phallus, and that as such she is perceived as lack at the place of her own phallus, that he experiences something which resembles a very curious vertigo, that someone went so far as to relate to me to a sort of metaphysical vertigo experienced in other circumstances, the rarest ones encountered in subjects in connection with the notion of being itself, in so far as it underlies everything that is.

This is where I will end today. We will come back therefore to this dialectic of being or having of the hysteric. We will go further. You will see where this will take us in the obsessional.

I am telling you right away that you should all the same clearly sense that this is not unrelated to a whole dialectic, a (33) different imaginary one whose theory has only been proposed to you, but which is imposed in a more or less forced fashion on patients in a certain technique concerning obsessional neuroses, and in so far as the phallus as imaginary element plays the dominant role in it. We will see the rectifications that can be brought about, in theory and in technique, by the consideration of the phallus, no longer as image or as phantasy, but as signifier.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 14 May 1958

<u>Forderung</u>	for	Demand
<u>Begehren</u>	for	Desire
<u>Bedurfnis</u>	for	Need

in this dialectic

We are going to try to continue to advance along this path where, as you see, the theme of the phallus plays a quite essential role, in so far as it leads us to circumscribe more closely what is said in analysis, what is put forward there, and the way in which the notion of object effectively is used.

You should be beginning to sense clearly that we should normally both get closer to, centre our attention on the effective function that this relationship to the object has in current (2) analytic practice, and that at the same time, by focusing the fashion in which it is employed, the uses it is put to, attempt a more elaborated articulation of what in fact we designate simply in a precise fashion by talking about the phallus, which also permits us to criticise this use of object-relations.

If we take a report which has taken on a historical value with the passage of time, and which appeared in the Revue Française de Psychanalyse on "Le moi dans la névrose obsessionnelle", a quite inadequate title because in reality it is only a question of object-relations in the obsessional, it would perhaps be something to explore, we will get an idea from it, namely why the author wanted to mention the ego in obsessional neurosis, in his title, because in fact nothing is really said about it in obsessional neurosis, except that it is weak, or that it is strong. On this point the author all things considered prompted by something which he understood at that time, remained in an attitude of prudence which one can only find praiseworthy. But what dominates this report in which two previous articles by the same author culminate, namely the first which dates from December 1949 and appeared in 1950 in the Revue Française de Psychanalyse : "Incidences thérapeutiques de la prise de conscience de l'envie de penis dans la névrose obsessionnelle féminine". This was his first clinical report on the function (3) of the penis in obsessional neurosis. It is the freshness of this first approach which gives a quite important value to this article, in so far as it shows how things went rather downhill afterwards, because undoubtedly at the level at which

in an experience which was still new this penis envy in the female obsessional neurosis has something which reflects a freshness of experience which is extremely interesting.

Afterwards there is another article which is published in the Revue Française de Psychanalyse (July-September 1948), which is on the homosexual relationship in the transference.

The third article is a report on the ego in obsessional neurosis.

I believe that we have here three things which ought to be read because there are not all that many articles written in French on the subject. In fact this indicates rather well the level that things have come to here with respect to these problems. On the other hand rereading it carefully cannot fail to make an overall impression which will give in a way a background to what we ourselves can arrive at here, it seems to me, by approaching the exact articulation of what allows us to situate in sum the value and the importance of a therapy which is centred in such a way. Because when all is said and done one can see there very clearly that there is something of the blind window about these (4) object-relations which are articulated in the synoptic tables where we see the progressive constitution of the object in subjects. I do not believe that the genital object, or the pre-genital object are very significant or important things here, except for the beauty of these aforesaid synoptic tables. But in the last analysis what gives to these object-relations their value, what is their pivot, is that which in fact introduced the notion of object into the analytic dialectic. It is first and foremost what is called the partial object, a term borrowed from the vocabulary and the terms of Abraham, in a fashion moreover that is not quite exact, because what Abraham spoke about, is the partial love of the object, which is obviously not quite the same thing, and already this slippage of itself has some significance.

This partial object, there is no need for a great effort to recognise it, to identify it purely and simply with this phallus that we are talking about, that we should be able to speak about all the more easily because we have precisely given it its importance, which at the same time spares us any kind of embarrassment in making use of it as a privileged object. We know why it merits this privilege, it is precisely under the heading of signifier, it is precisely because of this extraordinary embarrassment of giving this privilege to a particular organ, that the authors have precisely ended up by no (5) longer talking about it at all, while on the contrary it is quasi-omnipresent in the whole of analysis.

Effectively you will be able to verify, if you reread these articles, the absolutely manifest usage; it is an outstanding fact, of the first order, which runs through all these pages, that it is taken by the psychoanalyst, not only by the psychoanalyst in question, but by all those who listened to him. It is taken at the level of phantasy, namely that one can

say that in the perspective of the author whose three articles I have just cited, the treatment of obsessional neurosis entirely revolves around an incorporation - these are the terms that the author employs - or of an imaginary introjection of this phallus which appears in the analytic dialogue, is referred to in all these phantasies under the form of the phallus attributed to the analyst.

There would therefore be two phases here: a first where the phantasies of the incorporation, the devouring of this phantastical phallus are supposed to have a clearly aggressive, sadistic character as they say, at the same time as being felt as horrible and dangerous. Even this phantasy therefore is supposed to have a value that is quite revelatory of something which is supposed to belong to the very position of the subject with respect to what is called in the perspective of object - relations, the corresponding object, the constitutive object of his stage, namely in this instance of a particular second phase **(6)** of the anal-sadistic stage in which one is supposed to pass from tendencies fundamentally destructive of the object to something which would begin to respect the autonomy of this object at least under this partial form.

In fact the whole dialectic of the moment where there is situated the subjective moment, as we would say here, where there is situated the sufferer of the obsessional neurosis, would be as the author explains to us, dependent on the maintenance of a certain form of this partial object around which can be established a world which would not be entirely destined to fundamental destruction, because of the stage immediately underlying this precarious equilibrium at which the obsessional is supposed to have arrived. The obsessional is really represented to us as always ready to tip over into a destruction of the world, because just as these things can only be thought of in terms of the relationship of the subject to his environment, in the perspective within which the author expresses himself, and it is by the maintenance of this partial object, a maintenance which requires of course a whole edifice, a whole scaffolding which is precisely what constitutes the obsessional neurosis, that the obsessional is supposed to avoid tipping over into the psychosis which is always threatening him.

This is very certainly considered, by the author, to be the very basis of the problem.

One cannot fail all the same to object here that whatever may be (7) the parapsychotic symptoms, the symptoms for example of depersonalisation, of ego disturbance, of feelings of strangeness, of a clouding of the world, sentiments which obviously touch on the complexion, even perhaps on the structure of the ego, despite all that we cannot avoid remarking that cases of transition between obsession and psychosis have always existed, but have always been extremely rare.

The authors have seen for a long time that on the contrary there was indeed a sort of false hope of incompatibility between

the two mental conditions, and on the other hand, it is indeed when we are dealing with a true obsessional neurosis, the thing we run the least risk of in psychoanalysis. There is a danger that one will not cure an obsessional, but the danger of seeing him tip over into psychosis, is really a risk which seems to me extraordinarily phantasmatic in itself, because it is extremely rare. The obsessional who for whatever reason has tipped over into psychosis in the course of analysis, or even during an unfortunate or even wild therapeutic intervention, is very very rare. Personally I have never seen one in my practice. Thanks be to God! I never had the impression either that it was a risk that I was running with these patients.

There must be something in a judgement like that, which betrays something a little more than clinical experience.

(8) This necessity for the coherence of the theory which takes the author further than he wishes, or even very probably something which goes further, a certain position of his own before the obsessional, which cannot then fail to open up problems onto something which one cannot describe of course as being those of any particular person. Naturally there is no question here of talking about countertransference in the personal sense, but of countertransference in a more general sense where one can consider it as being constituted by what I often call the prejudices of the analyst, in other words the background of things said or not said against which his discourse is articulated.

To begin to situate what can be represented therefore by a practice, which is led to pivot entirely in the particular therapy of obsessional neurosis around this phantasy of the imaginary incorporation of the phallus, and of the phallus of the analyst, in showing really a little mysteriously, because one does not see very well at what moment, nor why this reversal comes about, if it is not by what one can suppose to be a sort of effect of attrition, of the acceptance of something by the subject, because there is a moment, we are told, when by reason of a, of insistence of the treatment, of its presence as treatment, the incorporation of this tragic phantasy is something which appears to the subject as having a phallic value.

(9) A quite different value, namely the introduction into him of something which is suddenly of a different nature, which appears to have been the incorporation of an object which is dangerous and rejected in a way in the phantasies, becomes the welcomed object, an object which is the source of power. The source, it should be noted - the word is there, it is not I who constructed the comparisons and the metaphors.

Does not this sort of introjection which plays a preservative role, have features in common with religious communion, we are told on page 172? At least in the obsessional neurosis where one swallows without chewing, he adds, because it is a question of commenting on the sentiments of happiness in this phantasy

which involves no destruction comparable to the phantasies of sucking and of melancholy that Abraham speaks about. This sort of introjection which one could qualify as passive, seems to preserve better the name preservative. "Does it not have features in common with religious communion, where one swallows without chewing?"

What we have here are not features chosen, I would say, in a tendentious fashion. Abraham's melancholia. It is indeed in terms of something which we sense is happening, in terms of a sort of practice or acesis operating principally on phantasies, that no doubt with a careful dosing, with barriers, with an application of the brakes, with stages, with all the precautions that are involved in the technique, we see being realised this (10) something which would permit the subject of obsessional neurosis to adopt relationships which when all is said and done we cannot really see the reason for, but which undoubtedly concern what is called the distance taken from the object. In sum, if I understand it properly, it is a question of allowing the subject to approach more closely on the plane of phantasy, to pass through a phase where this distance is cancelled out in order no doubt, at least it must be hoped, to be reconquered afterwards; this distance from an object which has successively concentrated in itself all the forces of fear, and danger, in order subsequently to become in fact the symbol through which there is established a libidinal relationship which is considered to be more normal, which is described as genital.

In fact we remain perhaps, when we have a particular perspective, namely our own, a little bit more severe than the author in applauding the fact of having reached this goal when, speaking of a female patient, he received at the end of a certain number of months of treatment, the following declaration (p. 164):

"Now she told me this: I had an extraordinary experience, that of being able to enjoy (jouir de) the happiness of my husband. I was extremely moved in ascertaining his joy, and his pleasure made mine."

I would ask you to weigh these terms. They are certainly not without value. They describe very well a sort of experience (11) which absolutely does not imply, I must say, any removal of the previous frigidity of the said patient; the extraordinary experience of being able to enjoy the happiness of one's husband, is something which is frequently observed, but this does not mean for all that that the patient has in any way reached orgasm. In fact we are told, the patient remains, we are told, semi-frigid. This is why one is perhaps a little bit surprised that there is immediately added afterwards:

"Is this not the best way to characterise adult genital relationships?"

This notion of adult genital relationships is evidently what gives to this whole perspective what I call the construction of

blind windows in the adult genital relationship. One cannot see very well what that really means, when one looks closely at it. We have seen that once the authors try to explain it, they do not seem to have found there either the simplicity or the unity that all this seems to imply.

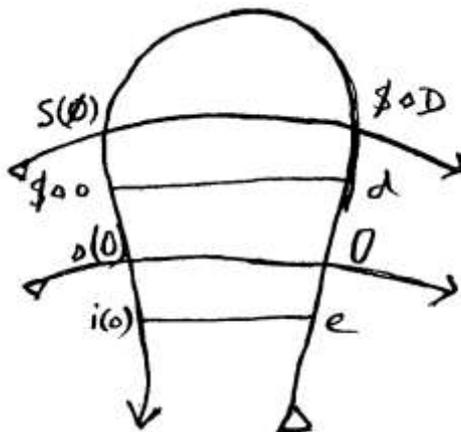
"As regards the affirmation of the coherence of the ego, it emerges not alone from the disappearance of the obsessional symptomatology and the phenomena of depersonalisation, but also expresses itself by the accession to a feeling of liberty, of unity, which is a new experience for these subjects."

These optimistic approximations perhaps do not quite represent (12) either something which at least for me corresponds in my experience to what really represents a progress and a cure in obsessional neurosis.

This having been said, we can see clearly the kind of mountain, of wall, of ready made conceptions we have to deal with when it is a question of situating somewhere, of appreciating what is an obsessional constitution, an obsessional structure, the way in which it is lived and the way in which it evolves.

Here we are trying to articulate things in a completely different register, because we believe that even though it is not any more complicated than others - I do not believe that if you succeed in familiarising yourselves, in counting the number of measures that we bring into play here, you will find when all is said and done that it involves many more things, simply that it is perhaps articulated differently, in a multilinear fashion, even though, of course, the desire to have a synoptic table corresponding to or opposing that of Madame Brunswick, is deep in the heart of many listeners. We will get to it perhaps one day, but obviously before reaching it it would perhaps be appropriate to go step by step and to see what we mean when we think that this action of the partial object of the phallus must be re-criticised, and must be put in its place in order to be (13) put to use, and perhaps to also see the dangers of a certain usage which is the current usage.

It is this place that we try to articulate by this little schema. We could cover the whole of this with signs and equations, but I do not wish to give you the impression of artificiality, even though these things are things which I tried as far as possible to reduce to their essential necessity.



We have already placed here the capital O of the big Other, where the code is found and which receives the demand, and we have seen that it is in the passage here from O to the point where the message is, that the signified of the Other is produced, after which the need begun here is found there in a state of transformation at different levels, is qualified differently, which, if we take this line as being the line of (14) the realisation of the subject, is expressed here by something which always more or less culminates in an identification, namely in the passage, in the remodelling, in the transformation also, in the passage when all is said and done of the subject's need into the defiles of the demand.

We know that this is not sufficient to constitute a satisfactory subject, a subject who is based on the number of supporting points that are necessary for him, let us say four, and who knows? It is precisely in this beyond of the demand that there is articulated a Verdrangt. We have already tried to define it the last time by qualifying it as of desire, at its topological place where it was formally in this way that I presented it to you, where there is in a way a necessity linked to this topology, that it must be in this field of the beyond of the demand that there comes to be situated, and at the same time to be necessarily articulated, to be subjected to the particular articulation of this beyond, sexual desire.

There is here in fact a coincidence between the place where the sexual drive, the tendency as such can find its place, and the structural necessity which links it to being at this place in the beyond of the demand. It is in sum to the degree that there intervenes this something which in the totality of signifiers on which there comes to be superimposed to make of it a signified, namely that we usually put underneath the bar of (15) our articulation, capital S over little s, here the / signified which is first of all an a-signified (un assignifie) .

The phallus is indeed therefore this particular signifier which in the body of signifiers, is specialised to designate as such the totality of the effects of the signifier on the signified, as such, namely in so far as they are the effects of the signifier on the signified.

This goes very far, and there is no way of going less far if we wish to give the phallus its signification, namely this something which ensures that it occupies here this privileged place in what is going to appear as such as signifier, in this beyond which is here called the beyond of desire. Namely the whole field which is here beyond the field of demand.

In so far as this beyond of desire is symbolised, it is there, and in so far as it is thus that we see the possibility, it is a simple articulation of the meaning of what we are saying, the possibility of there being here a relationship of the subject to the demand as such, because it is quite obvious that for there to be a relationship of the subject to the demand, he must not be completely included until this beyond is constituted, if it

is the case that by hypothesis he is constituted by articulating himself thanks to the signifier phallus. It is at this moment that here, beyond the pure and simple Other who up to then (16) totally lays down the law of the constitution of the subject, simply in his bodily existence, by the fact that the mother is a speaking being, the fact that she is a speaking being is something absolutely essential, whatever contemporary analysts may think. It is not just little cuddles and dabs of Eau de Cologne that need to be given to the infant in order to constitute a relationship to the mother. It is necessary that the mother should speak to him. Everybody knows that. Not only that she should speak to him, but everyone knows that the child has a very particular relationship, and that a mute nurse will not fail to produce some fairly visible consequences in the development of the infant.

Beyond this Other, if there is here something of the signifier which is constituted which is called the beyond of desire, we have the possibility of this relationship D, namely the subject as such, a less complete subject, namely that he is barred. This means that a complete human subject is never a pure and simple subject, the subject of knowledge as he is constructed by the whole of philosophy, well and truly corresponding to the percipiens of this perceptum which is the world. We know that there is no human subject who is pure subject of knowledge, unless it is the human subject in so far as we reduce him to something or other like a photo-electric cell or an eye, or again to what can be called in philosophy a consciousness. But because we are analysts, we know that there (17) is always a Spaltung, namely that there are always two lines on which he constitutes himself, and it is for this reason moreover that all the problems of structure that we have originate.

Here, what must be constituted? It is precisely what I have called no longer the signified of 0, but the signifier of **0**, **S(0)**, in so far as he knows this Spaltung, that he is himself structured by this Spaltung, in other words in so far as he, 0, has already undergone the effects of this Spaltung. Here this is reversed, that means: the one who is signified by the signifier phallus is already marked by this effect of the signifier. It is therefore the **0** if you wish, in so far as the phallus is barred in it, raised to the state of signifier. It is the Other qua castrated, which here is represented at the place of the message. The message of desire, is that.

The message of desire, is that. This is not to say for all that that it is easy to receive because precisely the whole problem of this difficulty of articulating desire which ensures that there is an unconscious, in other words that in fact what appears here as being at the upper level as one might say of the schema, is on the contrary ordinarily something that we must imagine as being at the lower level, as not being articulated in the consciousness of the subject, even though it is well and truly articulated in his unconscious, and it is even because it (18) is articulated in his unconscious that it can up to a

certain point - it is precisely a matter of knowing which, it is the question that we pose here - be articulated in the consciousness of the subject.

What does the hysteric whom we spoke about the last day show us? The hysteric of course is not psychoanalysed, otherwise she would no longer be hysterical by hypothesis. The hysteric, we have said, poses, situates this beyond in the form of a desire qua desire of the other.

To fix your ideas, I will justify this for you a little bit more in what follows, but right away, because it is necessary, if one tries to articulate something, to begin by articulating, by giving a commentary on it, I shall say that things happen in the following way, that just as here in the first loop, the subject by the manifestation of need, of his tension, causes this path of the first signifying line of demand to be crossed over, in the same way it is here that we can, to topologise things, put the relationship which is that of the ego to the image of the other as such, and in the same way it is here, namely in sum in so far as that which in the Other as such, qua capital O, not in the other qua little o, in the imaginary other, that which in the Other qua capital O permits the subject to tackle this beyond of the signified which is precisely the field that we are in the process of exploring, that of his desire, this little d (19) of desire occupies the same place as the little e occupies with respect to the subject, which expresses the following, simply and precisely it is in this place where the subject has sought to articulate his desire that he will encounter the desire of the other as such, and what we express is precisely something which is founded on experience, and which I already for a long time articulated for you in other forms, but which I also articulated for you in this one that the desire that is in question, namely desire in its unconscious function is the desire of the Other. This indeed is what we saw when we spoke the last time about the hysteric in connection with the dream. These are not selected dreams, any more than I give you selected texts from Freud. I assure you, if, as is apparently beginning to happen, you set about reading Freud, I cannot advise you too strongly to read him completely, otherwise it is you who run the danger of coming upon passages which will be perhaps not selected, but which will be none the less the source of all sorts of errors, or even of mistaken identity, if you do not see the place at which one or other text is situated in I would not say the development of a thought, even though this strictly speaking would be what should be said, but ever since people have spoken about thought, it has become such a bizarre term that no one ever knows too well what is being spoken about, it is not enough to talk about thought for one to be able to say (20) that one is speaking about the same thing. It is even the development of a research, of an effort by someone who himself, has a certain idea of its magnetic pole, as one might say, and who can only reach it by a certain detour, and it is in terms of the whole journey that each one of these detours must be judged.

Therefore I did not choose the two dreams of the last day of the

patient, of the hysteric, at random. I explained to you how I chose them. I took the first dream because I encountered it after the other dreams having explained to you the reasons why I did not take them first. I will return to them. Namely, because the dream of the Botanical Monograph, which may be something which helps us to understand what has to be demonstrated, is one of Freud's dreams which it will be more convenient to explain later.

I continue first the articulation of the dream of the hysteric. What the hysteric has shown us, is that she finds her supporting point - these are not terms which are reserved to me, if you read Mr. Glover writing about obsessional neurosis, you will see that he employs exactly the same term to say that it appears that when one has removed their obsession from obsessional neurotics, they lack for example a supporting point. You see that the usage which I make here of terms, is a usage which I (21) have in common with the other authors, namely that we try to metaphorise our experience, our little impressions - we have said that the hysteric takes her point of support in a desire which is the desire of the other. This is essential, this creation of a desire beyond demand. It is something that we have, I believe, sufficiently articulated.

One could mention here a third dream which I did not have time to tackle the last time, but which I may as well read for you now.

"She was putting a candle into a candlestick; but the candle broke so that it wouldn't stand up properly. The girls at her school said she was clumsy; but the mistress said it was not her fault."

In this case again, here is how Freud relates this dream to real events:

"The day before she had actually put a candle into a candlestick, though it did not break. Some transparent symbolism was being used in this dream. A candle is an object which can excite the female genitals; and, if it is broken, so that it cannot stand up properly, it means the man is impotent"

And Freud underlines:

"It was not her fault. But how could a carefully brought up young woman, who had been screened from the impact of anything ugly, have known that a candle might be put to such use?" In (22) this connection we learn that while they were in a rowing boat she had heard a very vulgar student song about the use that the Queen of Sweden, behind closed shutters, made of Apollo candles. She had not understood the last word. Her husband had of course explained behind closed shutters, the meaning of Apollo, and all of this is rediscovered and appropriately felt in this instance.

The important thing is that here we then see appearing in its

naked and isolated state as I might say, in the state of a partial, even a flying object, the signifier phallus, and that the point which is important, is of course that we do not know from what moment of the analysis of this patient, because it is certainly a patient who is in analysis, the subject of this dream was taken. The important point is obviously here in the it was not her fault.

This it was not her fault is the fact that it is at the level of others. It is before all the others, it is in function of the mistress that all her fellow pupils no longer mock her. Here the symbol is evoked, and this is what I want to get to, which overlaps and confirms as one might say what was already in the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife, it is namely that the accent is to be put on the fact that for the hysteric, and the hysteric in sum is a constitutive mode of the subject concerning precisely her sexual desire, is the mode upon which she adopted (23) what is to be stressed in the case of the hysteric. It is of course the dimension of desire in so far as it is opposed to that of demand. But it is first and foremost in the term desire of the Other (with a capital O), the position, the place in the other which is to be underlined.

I reminded you how Dora lived up to the moment when her hysterical position came apart. She is very much at ease, apart from a few little symptoms, but which are precisely those which constitute her as hysterical, and which are read in the relationship of the distinction, the Spaltung between these two lines. We will return to the way in which we can articulate the overdetermination of the symptom. It is linked to the existence of two signifying lines as such. But what we showed the other day, is that what Dora wanted, is that in sum she should subsist as a subject in so far as she demands love, no doubt like every good hysteric, but that she sustains the desire of the Other as such. It is she who sustains it. It is she who is its support. Things go very well in so far as the things happening between her father and the aforesaid Madame K proceed most successfully, and without anyone needing to see in it, the term that she sustains, the desire of the Other is here the term which best fits the style of her action and of her position with respect to her father, to Madame K, and it is here (24) that I indicated something to you; it is in as much as she is able to identify with Mr. K, that the whole little construction is possible. It is in a certain relationship to the other, in this case the imaginary other, as such; it is in as much as faced with this desire she sustains him at this place, namely at the place which corresponds to her own.

You have clearly seen that in fact there is sketched out a little square whose four vertices are represented by the ego, the image of the other, the relationship of the subject thus constituted to the imaginary other as such, and here desire. We thus find here the four legs on which a human subject constituted as such can normally be based, that is to say one who is neither more nor less aware of the mechanism and of the strings pulling the puppet of another there where she sees.

namely where she is capable or more or less capable, of locating herself in this essential component.

It is here and at that level, faced with the desire of the other, and besides I showed it the last time, without for all that things going beyond, because after all one could say that in the hysteric the return line was more effaced. Moreover this is the reason why the hysteric has all sorts of difficulties with her imaginary world, here represented in the image of the other, and is likely to see produced in it the effects of fragmentation, of different disintegrations, which are strictly speaking what are of service to her in her symptoms.

(25) I am simply recalling this at the hysterical level - how are we going to be able to articulate what happens at the level of the obsessional? I mean in an obsessional structure.

The classical theory, I tell you, tells you how it is articulated in Freud, and how it is articulated in Freud in the final word of Freud on obsessional neurosis. Obsessional neurosis, is clearly a bit more complicated than hysterical neurosis, but not all that much. If one can manage to focus things on the essential, it can be articulated, but if one does not focus things on the essential, which is certainly the case of the author about whom I spoke to you above, one literally gets lost in it, namely one splashes around between the sadistic, the anal, the partial object, incorporation, the distance from the object. One literally does not know any longer where to turn, to find one's bearings in it. Now it is extremely varied from a clinical point of view, as the author shows us in observations which it seems scarcely possible to unify under one clinical heading, under the names of Pierre and of Paul without counting the Moniques and the Jeannes who are in the background. But I would like to say that in the author's clinical material, at the level of the report on the ego, there are only Pierre and Paul. Pierre and Paul are manifestly completely different subjects from the point of view of the (26) texture of a single object. One can scarcely put them under the same heading, which of course is not in itself an objection either, because we are not particularly well able either to articulate for the moment, different nosological headings.

It is very very striking to see how, after having spent so much time on obsessional neurosis, we are incapable of dismembering it as clinical work manifestly requires us, given the diversity of the aspects which it presents to us. You remember in Aristotle what is called the correct path of the cook's knife, of the good cook, the one who knows how to cut along the joints. In the present state of things, nobody, particularly those who have occupied themselves with obsessional neurosis, is capable of correctly articulating it. It is a sure sign of some theoretical deficiencies.

Let us take things up at the point that we have got to.

What does the obsessional do, in order to consist qua subject? He is also like the hysteric, and as you can suspect, there is not such a profound relationship between the hysteric and the obsessional neurotic, that already before any kind of serious elaboration, namely before Freud, a Mr. Janet could produce this very curious kind of work of geometrical superposition as one (27) might call it of point by point correspondence, of images which are called in geometry I believe, transformations of figures, which means that the obsessional is really conceived as something which is the transformed face of a hysteric as one might say.

The obsessional is also oriented of course towards desire. If there was not a question in all of this, first and foremost of desire, there would be no kind of homogeneity between the neuroses.

Only look at the classical theory, Freud's theory, Freud's final articulations. What does he tell us? That obsessional neurosis - he said many things in the course of his career, he had first of all discovered that what one can call the primitive trauma is different to the primitive trauma of the hysteric. In the hysteric it is a sudden seduction, an intrusion, an eruption of the sexual into the life of the subject. He saw very clearly that in as much as this psychic trauma can stand up to the critique of reconstruction, it is a question on the contrary of something in which the subject had had an active role, as he said, in which he had taken pleasure.

That was the first approximation. Then subsequently there is the whole development in the Ratman, namely the appearance of the extreme complexity of the affective relationships of the obsessional, and namely the stressing, the focusing of the accent on affective ambivalence, on the fundamental (28) active/passive, masculine/feminine oppositions, and the most important thing, the love/hate antagonism. The Ratman moreover should be reread like the Bible. The Ratman is still rich in everything which is still to be said about obsessional neurosis, it is a topic to work on.

Finally what did Freud end up with as a last metapsychological formulation? The fact is, he says, there had been at that time clinical experiences and metapsychological elaborations which had brought to light the aggressive tendencies and which had already caused Freud to make this fundamental distinction of life instincts and death instincts, which are still tormenting psychoanalysts.

What Freud tells us, is that there was precocious defusion, separation, of the life instincts and the death instincts. In other words, that the detachment of the destructive tendencies as such, happened at too early a stage in the obsessional not to mark his whole subsequent development, namely his installation in his own particular subjectivity, as obsessional.

How is this going to be inserted into this dialectic? Much

more immediately, concretely, tangibly, it seems to me. If these terms of demand and desire, begin to seem logical to your (29) minds, you will find them of use every day, and in any case quite usable in your day-to-day analytic practice. I mean that you can make some habitual use of them before they become worn out, but you will always find yourself asking here whether it is a question of desire and demand, or of desire or of demand.

What does what we have just recalled regarding the instincts of destruction mean here, namely something which is manifest in experience, in an experience which must first be taken at the popular, common level of what we know about obsessionals, but not even the obsessionals that we analyse, the obsessionals that simply as knowledgeable psychologists, we can see around us and on whose behaviour we are able to measure its effects?

It is quite certain that the obsessional tends to destroy his object. This is something which is almost a truth of experience. It is a matter simply of not contenting oneself with that, to see what is this destructive activity of the obsessional.

Here is what I propose to you. I propose to you to consider that unlike the hysteric, who lives entirely at the level of the other - the accent for her is to be at the level of the other, (30) and it is for this reason that she needs a desire of the other, because without that, what would the other be, if not the law? But it is first of all at the level of the other that there is posed as one might say the centre of gravity of the constitutive movement of the hysteric.

For reasons which are not at all impossible to articulate, and which are in fact identical with what Freud tells us in speaking of the precocious effusion and defusion of instincts, it is the seeking, the aiming at desire itself, at the beyond of the demand which is constitutive of the obsessional.

I would like you to have had some little experience of what a child who is going to become an obsessional is like. I believe that there are no young subjects in whom we see more tangibly what I tried to articulate for you the last time when I argued that in this margin of need which is necessarily of a limited range, as one talks about a company with limited responsibilities, need is always something with a limited range. In this margin between need and the unconditional characteristics of the demand for love, there is situated this something which I called desire, and how did I define this desire as such? As something which precisely because it must be situated in this beyond, as I might say, denies the element of alterity which is included in the demand for love.

(31) But to preserve this unconditioned character by transforming it into the character of the absolute condition of desire, into desire as such in a pure state, the other is denied, but need from the fact that the subject has had to break through, to know this final, limiting character of the

unconditionally of the demand for love, we see that this character remains transferred onto need as such.

The young child who will become an obsessional, is the young child of whom the parents say - here is a convergence of common language with the language of the psychologists - : "He has fixed ideas". He does not have ideas that are more extraordinary than any other child, if on the contrary we focus on the material of his demand, namely that he demands a little box. A little box is really not such an important thing, and there are many children on whom one will not pause for a single instant when they demand the little box, except of course psychoanalysts, who will see all sorts of subtle allusions in it. In fact they would not be wrong, but I find it more important to see that there are certain children among others, who demand little boxes, from whom their parents find this demand for the little box to be properly speaking an intolerable demand, and it is intolerable.

One would be quite wrong to believe that it is enough to send (32) the aforesaid parents to a school for parents so that they can get over it, because contrary to what is said, parents are of course involved in it too. That means that it is not for nothing either than one is an obsessional. For that to happen there must be a model somewhere. Of course, but in the reception itself, the fixed idea aspect that the parents notice is quite discernible, and always immediately discerned even by people who do not form part of the parental couple.

In this very particular exigency which manifests itself in the way that the child demands a little box, what is strictly speaking intolerable for the other, on this occasion is precisely what people call in an approximate way fixed ideas, namely that it is not a demand like the others, in other words that it has the character of absolute condition which is what I designated for you as being that of desire. And the obsessional, is precisely a child who for reasons whose correspondence you see with what is called in this instance the defusion of drives which are very strong in this instance, which is going to be the element I might say of the first foundation of this tripod which must afterwards in order to be able to stand firmly, have four legs: in his case the stress is put on desire, not only on desire, but on desire as such, namely that in its constitution it involves this destruction of the other. (33) It is the unconditioned form of need, need which has passed over to the state of absolute condition, and precisely in as much as it is beyond this unconditioned exigency of love of which on occasion it can come to be a test, but as such it is something which denies the other as such, and it is this indeed when acquired which makes it, like the little child's desire for the small box, so intolerable.

Pay close attention, because you should understand that I am not saying the same thing when I say that the desire is the destruction of the other, and when I say the hysteric is going to search for her desire in the desire of the other.

When I say that the hysteric searches for her desire in the desire of the other, it is the desire that she attributes to the other as such.

When I say that the obsessional gets his desire across, this means above all precisely that he is going to look for it in a beyond by aiming for it as such in its constitution as desire, namely in as much as he destroys the other as such. And this is the secret of this profound contradiction that there is between the obsessional and his desire. It is that aimed at in this way, desire carries in itself this internal contradiction which makes of it the impasse of the desire of the obsessional, which the authors try to express by talking about these kinds of perpetual and instantaneous comings and goings, between introjection and projection.

(34) I must say that this is something which is extremely difficult to portray for oneself, especially when one has sufficiently indicated as the author does in certain places, the extent to which the mechanism of introjection and the mechanism of projection are unrelated. I articulated it for you more strongly than this author, but you must all the same begin with this, namely that the mechanism of projection is imaginary, and that the mechanism of introjection is a symbolic mechanism. They are absolutely unrelated.

On the contrary it seems to me, you can conceive, and moreover discover in experience if you carefully observe your obsessionals, that the obsessional is inhabited by desires which are precisely all those that you see, on condition that you familiarise yourself a little with it, which you see swarming like a kind of extraordinary vermin which, in a particularly suitable kind of cultural milieu, if you in fact direct, it does not require a great effort, it is enough to have the elements of your transference that I spoke about a while ago, if you direct the culture of the obsessional neurosis into the culture of the phantasy, you will see the aforesaid vermin proliferating almost everywhere. That is why the culture of the obsessional neurosis does not last very long.

But in fact, if you try to see the essential, namely what happens when the obsessional from time to time, taking his (35) courage in his hands, sets himself to try to break through the barrier of the demand, namely to head off to find the object of his desire, first of all he does not find it easily, but there are many things all the same, because he has already had the practice, there are many things which can serve him as a support for it, even if it is only the little box.

It is quite clear that it is on this route that the most extraordinary accidents happen to him, namely something that people will try to find the motive for at different levels by the intervention of the superego and of a thousand other things which of course do exist.

But much more radically than all that, the obsessional in so far

as his fundamental movement is directed towards desire as such, and above all in its constitution as desire, implies in every movement towards the attainment of this desire what we call the destruction of the other, even though it is in the nature of desire as such to require this support of the other. This desire of the other is not a way of access to the desire of the subject, it is quite simply the place of desire, and every movement in the obsessional towards his desire runs into something which is absolutely tangible in, what I may call, the movement of their libido. The more something plays the role in the psychology of an obsessional of object, even a momentary one, of desire, the more the law of approach as one might say of (36) the obsessional with respect to this object, will be conditioned by something which manifests itself literally in what one can call a veritable lowering of libidinal tension at the moment that he approaches it, and to the extent that at the moment that he holds this object of his desire, for him nothing more exists.

You will see this. It is absolutely observable.

I will try to articulate it for you, to show you by examples. The whole problem for the obsessional, is therefore to give to this desire which for him conditions this destruction of the other, when desire itself has disappeared, the only thing which can give it this appearance of support; namely this corresponding point that the hysteric for her part, thanks to her identifications, occupies so easily, and which on this occasion, because precisely from the fact that there is no Other, no big Other here, I mean of course in so far as it is a question of desire, I am not saying that the big Other does not exist for the obsessional, I am saying that when it is a question of his desire, there is none, and it is for this reason that he is searching for the only thing which can maintain in its place this desire as such, outside this reference point. It is something which is opposite, which comes to take this place, which is the other formula of £ with respect to little o. What takes the place of the identification of the hysteric - it is its function in the obsessional - is an object, and this (37) object is always in a veiled form, no doubt, but is always perfectly equivalent, identifiable and reducible to the signifier phallus.

This is where I must end today. You will see subsequently what this involves as regards the behaviour of the obsessional vis-a-vis this object, and also his behaviour vis-a-vis the small other. You will see, I will show you the next time, how a certain number of much more current truths can be deduced from it, namely for example that the subject cannot really show his desire except by opposing himself to what we will call an absolute virility, and that on the other hand, in so far as he must show his desire, because it is for him the essential exigency, he can moreover only show it, where it exists, and very precisely show it in something where he must perform some exploit, I mean that the performance aspect of the activity of the obsessional is something which finds here its reasons and its motives.

Seminar 23t Wednesday 21 May 1958

Through the exploration that we are pursuing of the neurotic structures in so far as they are conditioned by what we call the formations of the unconscious, we came the last day to talk about the obsessional. We finished our discourse on the obsessional by saying in fact that he has to constitute himself somewhere in face of his evanescent desire. We began to indicate in the formula of desire as being the desire of the other, why in the case of the obsessional this desire is evanescent. This desire is evanescent because of a fundamental difficulty in his relationship with the Other, with the big Other as such, this big Other in so far as it is the locus where the signifier orders desire.

It is this dimension that we are trying to articulate here, because we believe that it is for lack of this dimension that there are introduced, both difficulties in the theory and also (2) deviations in practice.

We would like in passing to weave in a way into this discourse, to make you experience - it is the meaning of the whole of Freud's work if you look at it after having gone through it sufficiently - that this discovery is the signifier which orders desire. But of course within this phenomenon, the subject tries to express, to manifest in an effect of the signifier as such, what happens in his own approach to the signified.

Up to a certain point the work of Freud can itself be inserted in this effort. There has been a lot of talk in connection with Freud's work about a naturalism, an effort to reduce human reality to nature. This is not the case at all. Freud's work is an attempt to make a pact between this being of man and nature, and a pact which undoubtedly is sought elsewhere than in a relationship of innateness. It is by starting from the fact that man has been constituted, is constituted, qua subject of the word, qua I of the act of speech, that man is always experienced in Freud's work, and how can this be denied because precisely in analysis he is never experienced otherwise? He therefore finds himself essentially before nature in a posture other than that of an immanent bearer of life. It is within this experience which (3) makes of him the subject of the word, that the link, his relationship with nature has to be articulated, to be formulated.

It is this relationship to life, which is found to be symbolised

in this sort of lure that he extracts from the forms of life in the signifier of the phallus, and it is here that there can be found the central point, the most tangible, the most significant of all these signifying crossroads that we explore during the analysis of the subject. The phallus is in a way the summit, the point of equilibrium, the signifier par excellence of this relationship of man to the signified, and of course by this very fact, it is in a position, we would say, with respect to which the insertion of man into the dialectic of sexual desire is destined to be absolutely specially problematic. The first [problem] is that it has to find its place in something which preceded it, which is the dialectic of demand in so far as demand always demands something which is more than, and beyond satisfaction, to which it appeals, - hence as one might say, the ambiguous character of the place where desire must be situated, this place which is always problematic, and is beyond the demand, it is of course beyond in so far as the demand aims at the satisfaction of need, and is on this side of the demand. Yes, it is on this side in so far as the demand, because of the fact that it is articulated in symbolic terms, is a demand which goes (4) beyond all the satisfactions it calls for in so far as it is a demand for love, in so far as it is a demand aiming at the being of the other, at obtaining from the other this essential presence (presentification) which means that the other gives this something which is beyond all possible satisfaction, which is his very being, which is precisely what is aimed at in love.

It is in this virtual space between the appeal for satisfaction and the demand for love, that desire has to organise itself, has to find its place, and it is for this reason that in order to situate desire we find ourselves always in this double position, which with respect to demand makes of it something which is at once beyond it and on this side of it, according to the face or the aspect under which we envisage the demand, namely qua demand connected with a need, or demand qua structured in signifying terms, which as such always supercedes any kind of response which is at the level of satisfaction, which of itself calls for a sort of absolute response which then is going to project its essential character of absolute condition onto everything that is going to be organised in this interval, this interval within as it were the two planes of the demand, the signified plane and the signifying plane of the demand, where desire has to be articulated, to take its place.

It is precisely because it has to be articulated and to take its (5) place in this place, that once the subject approaches this desire, the other becomes the relay, the other qua locus of the word, and precisely in so far as it is to him that the demand is addressed, is going also to be the locus where desire must be discovered, where there must be discovered the possible formulation of desire. It is here that the contradiction operates at every instant, because within this other in so far as he is possessed by a desire, by a desire which in fact from the beginning and fundamentally is foreign to the subject, the difficulties in the formulation of this desire are those on which the subject is going to come to grief, and going all the more

significantly come to grief, precisely because we see him develop the structures which are those which analytic discovery has allowed to be delineated.

We have said that these structures are different, depending on whether the accent is put upon the character of the unsatisfaction essential to desire - this is the way by which the hysteric approaches its field and its necessity - or whether the accent is put on the essential dependency on the other, in order to accede to this desire, and this is the fashion in which this approach is proposed to the obsessional.

We said as we were finishing the last day, that something happens here which is different to this hysterical identification, this (6) hysterical identification which comes essentially from the fact that the hysteric, in order to envisage this desire which for her is an enigmatic point, is something to which we always bring as I might say, a sort of forced interpretation which is the one which characterises all the first approaches that Freud made in the analysis of hysteria. Freud did not say that desire is situated for the hysteric, in such a position that to say to her: here is the man or woman whom you desire, is always a forced interpretation, always an inexact interpretation, always an interpretation that misses the point. There is no example where a hysteric, either in Freud's first observations, or later, or in the case of Dora, or even if we extend the meaning of hysteria to the homosexual case that we commented on at length here, where Freud did not in a way make a error, and did not in any case end up without exception at the refusal of the patient to accede to the meaning of her desire, of her symptoms and of her acts, every time that he proceeded in this fashion. In fact the desire of the hysteric is essentially and as such not the desire of an object, but the desire of a desire, the effort to maintain herself before this point where she calls her desire, the point where the desire of the other is. On the contrary she identifies herself with an object. Dora identifies herself with (7) Mr. K. The woman that I spoke to you about, Elizabeth von R also identifies herself with different persons in her family or in her entourage. It is the point from which she identifies herself with someone for whom the term of ego or ego ideal are equally inappropriate in the case of the hysteric, someone who becomes for her her alter ego, precisely this object whose choice as object of identification was always expressly articulated by Freud in a fashion that is in conformity with what I am telling you, namely that it is in so far as he or she recognises in another man, or in another woman, the indices as one might say of their desire, namely that he or she is faced with the same problem of desire as him or her, that identification is produced, and all the forms of contagion, of crisis, of epidemic, of symptomatic manifestation which are so characteristic of hysteria.

The obsessional has different solutions, because the problem of the desire of the other appears to him in a quite different way. In order to articulate it we are going to try to accede to it by the stages which experience has furnished us with concerning the

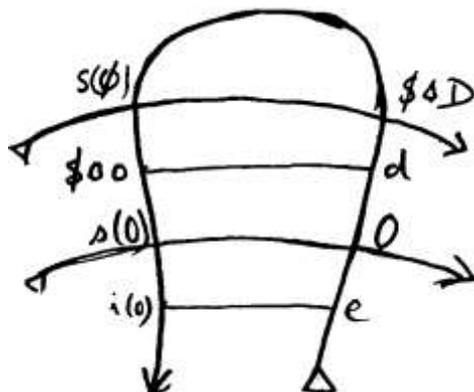
obsessional.

I would say that in one way, it does not matter from what end we take the living experience of the obsessional. What is in question, is not to forget its diversity. The ways traced by analysis, the path along which what must be called our tentative (8) experience has encouraged us to resolve, to find the solution of the problem of the obsessional, the ways are partial and incomplete: of themselves they of course give us material, the way in which this material is utilised, we can explain in different ways with respect to the results which have been obtained.

First of all we can also criticise them in themselves. This critique should be in a way a convergent one. The impression that we have when we spell out this experience as it has become oriented in practice, is undoubtedly that the theory like the practice tends to be centred on the utilisation of the phantasies of the subject. This role of phantasy in the case of obsessional neurosis has something enigmatic about it, in so far as the term phantasy is never defined. We have spoken here a good deal, and for a long time about the imaginary relationships of the function of the image as a guide as one might say, of instinct, as a channel, an indication along the path of instinctual realisations. On the other hand we know the degree to which this use of the function of the image is reduced, is diminished, is impoverished in the case of man, in as much as one can detect it with certainty, because it seems to be reduced to the narcissistic image, to the specular image, is, I would say, reduced to an extremely polyvalent function; I am not saying neutralised because also functioning on the plane of aggressive (9) and erotic relationships.

How can we articulate the undoubtedly essential, prevalent, imaginary functions of which everybody speaks, which are at the heart of analytic experience, those of the phantasy, at the point that we have arrived at?

I believe that in this connection we should see that the schema presented here opens up for us the possibility of articulating, of situating the function of the phantasy. It is no doubt through a sort of intuitive approach to this topology, that I ask you to begin in the first instance to represent it for yourselves. It is not a question of course of a real space, but it is a question of something in which homologues can be delineated.



(10) If the relationship to the image of the other is constituted in effect somewhere at the level of an experience which is integrated into the circuit of demand, to the primitive circuit of demand, that in which the subject addresses himself in the first instance to the other for the satisfaction of his needs, and if it is somewhere on this circuit that there is constituted this sort of transitive accommodation to a striking presence (d'effet de prestance) which puts the subject in a certain relationship to his counterpart as such, if therefore the relationship to the image is found there at the level of the experiences and of the very moments of entry into the operation of the word at the limit of the passage from the infans state to the speaking state, we will say this: in this field where we search for the pathways of the realisation of the desire of the subject through the access to the desire of the other, it is in a homologous point that there is found the function and the situation of the phantasy.

The phantasy we will define, if you wish, as the imaginary which is taken up into a certain signifying usage. So this is important and is manifested and is observed in a characteristic fashion, if only in the fact that when we speak about phantasies, sadistic phantasies for example, which play such an important role in the economy of the obsessional, it is not enough to qualify these manifestations as phantastical by the fact that they represent something which is a tendency qualified as (11) sadistic, in connection with a certain literary work which itself does not present itself as an investigation of instincts, but as an operation which the term imaginary would be far from sufficient to describe, because it is a literary work, that there are scenes, in fact .that there are scenarios, that it is something which is profoundly articulated in the signifier that is in question. And all things considered, I believe that every time that we speak about the phantasy, we must not overlook this scenario aspect, this story aspect which forms an essential dimension of it. It is not, as one might say, a sort of blind image of the destructive instinct; it is not something where the subject as one might say - I will try to give you an image myself to explain what I mean - all of a sudden sees red in front of the prey that it is in question. It is something which the subject not only articulates in a scenario, but in which the subject brings himself into play in this scenario.

The formula S with the little bar, namely the subject at the most articulated point of his presentification with respect to little o, is indeed here something valid in every kind of properly phantastical deployment of what we are calling in this instance the sadistic tendency, in so far as it may be implied in the economy of the obsessional.

(12) You will notice that there is always a scene in which the subject is presented as such in differently masked forms in the scenario, in the form of implications in diversified images of the other in which an other qua counterpart, and also qua reflection of the subject, is here made present. I would say further: not enough stress is put on the character of presence of

a certain type of instrument. I already made an allusion, following Freud, to the importance for example of the phantasy of flagellation, this phantasy which Freud especially articulated in so far as it seemed to play a very particular role. It was one of the aspects of his article, of the precise communication that he made on this subject. It is on its role in the female psyche. He made it because he approached it from this angle, and from a certain angle of his experience.

This phantasy is of course far from being limited to the field and to the cases that Freud spoke about on this occasion, but if one looks closely at it, it is its quite legitimately limited field in as much as this phantasy plays a particular role at a certain turning point of development, and a particular point in the development of feminine sexuality, and very precisely in so far as the intervention of the function of the signifier phallus which plays its particular role within obsessional neurosis, and (13) in all the cases where we see emerging what are called sadistic phantasies.

The presence, the predominance of what is, when all is said and done, this enigmatic element gives its prevalence to this instrument which one cannot say is explained properly in any way in terms of biological functions. One can imagine in it or find in it some relationship or other to superficial excitations; the stimulation of the skin. You sense the degree that this would be incomplete, almost artificial and obvious in character; that in the function of this element which appears so often within this phantasy, that to this function there is attached a signifying multivalency which puts the whole weight of the balance much more on the side of the signified than of anything which might be attached to a deduction of the biological order, of the order of needs, of any order whatsoever.

This notion of phantasy therefore as something which no doubt participates in the imaginary order, but which only takes up its function of phantasy in the economy, and wherever it is articulated, through its signifying function, is something which appears to me - it has not been formulated up to the present like this - which seems essential to me in order to talk about the phantasy. I would say more: I do not believe that there is another way of conceiving what are called unconscious phantasies. (14) What are unconscious phantasies, if not the latency of something which - we know it through everything that we have learned about the organisation, about the structure of the unconscious - is quite possible qua signifying chain? That there are in the unconscious signifying chains which subsist as such, and which from their structure, act on the organism, influence what appears from the outside as a symptom, this is the whole basis of analytic experience. It is much more difficult to conceive of the unconscious agency and incidence of something that is imaginary, to put the phantasy itself at the level of that which by common measure is what appears for us at the level of the unconscious, namely at the level of the signifier. The phantasy is essentially an imaginary taken up into a certain signifying function.

I cannot articulate this approach any further for the moment. It is a certain way simply of proposing to you what will later be articulated in a more precise fashion, namely the situating at the point $\$$ with respect to little o , of the phantastical event, the phantastical fact, being in fact itself an articulated and always complex relationship, a scenario. This is its characteristic, it is something which consequently can do without, and remain latent for a long time at a certain point, (15) something unconscious which nevertheless is already organised like a dream for example which cannot be conceived of without the function of the signifier being the only thing to give it its structure and its consistency, and at the same time its insistence.

These sadistic phantasies for example which it is a part of common experience from the beginning of the analytic investigation of obsessionals to have seen the place they occupy in the obsessional; that they occupy, but that they do not necessarily occupy in an obvious and open manner, but only in the obsessional transformation metabolism, the attempts that the subject as such makes towards a re-equilibrium of what is the object of his research, an equilibrium, namely of something which is to recognise himself in relation to his desire. Of course when we see a raw obsessional, in his natural state, as happens or is supposed to happen in the published cases, what we find, is someone who speaks above all about all sorts of hindrances, of inhibitions, of barriers, of fears, of doubts, of interdictions. We also know that here and now this is not the moment that he will speak to us about this phantasy life. We also know that it is in the obsessionals with regard to whom, either therapeutic interventions, or autonomous attempts at a solution, a way out, (16) an elaboration of their own properly obsessional difficulty, that we will see appearing in a more or less predominant fashion, the invasion in his previous life, in his psychic life of these phantasies which we qualify on this occasion by the simple etiquette of sadistic, namely of those phantasies which already propose to us as one might say their enigma in so far as we cannot be content with articulating them as manifestations of a tendency, but of an organisation itself signifying relationships of the subject to the other as such.

You know on the other hand the degree to which these phantasies can take on in certain subjects a really invasive, absorbing, captivating form, which can swallow up as one might say parts, whole areas of their psychical life, of their living experience, of their mental preoccupations. It is a question indeed in this instance of trying to construct for ourselves a formula for the economic role of this phantasy in so far as it is articulated and subsistent here.

These phantasies have the characteristic of being phantasies which remain in these subjects at the state of phantasies, which are not realised except in an altogether exceptional fashion, and which in any case are moreover always disappointing for the subject, in as much precisely as we ourselves observe on this occasion the mechanics of this relationship of the subject to

(17) desire, namely in the measure that he may try in ways which are proposed to him, to approach, it is precisely to this degree that the approach to his desires comes to be extinguished, to be deadened and to disappear. The obsessional is a Tantalus, I might say, if Tantalus were not an image which is presented to us by the authentic and fairly rich infernal iconography, as an image which is above all oral. But it is nevertheless not for nothing that I present it to you, and as such, because we will see that this oral underlay to what constitutes the point of equilibrium, the level, the situation of the phantasy of the obsessional as such, must all the same exist because after all it is this plane which on the phantastical plane is rejoined by the therapist, by the analyst himself, in as much as, as you have seen, I referred to it in connection with the therapeutic line which is traced in the series of three articles, it is to a sort of phantastical absorption that certain therapists and a major part of analytic practice has committed itself, with no doubt certain results which remain to be criticised, has committed itself to finding the way in which a new mode of equilibrium, a certain tempering as one might say is made accessible to the obsessional along this path of the realisation of his desire.

(18) Let us observe nevertheless that by taking things from this angle, we only see one aspect of the problem. From the other aspect, we must deploy this range successively, and of course we are not overlooking what appears in the most obvious fashion in the symptoms of the obsessional, that which is usually presented in the form of what is called the exigencies of the super ego.

We are now going to deal with the fashion in which we should conceive of these exigencies, the root of these exigencies in the obsessional. I believe that we can indicate and read what happens in the obsessional, at the level of this schema in a fashion which I believe will reveal itself subsequently to be no less fruitful.

One could say that the obsessional is always in the process of asking for permission. This I believe is something that you will find at the concrete level, at the level of what the obsessional tells you in his symptoms. This is even inscribed, and very often articulated. He is always in the process of asking for permission, and we will see what the next step is, but the fact that if we trust this schema, what happens at this level is important. To ask for permission, is precisely to have as subject a certain relationship with one's demand. A permission (19) for the obsessional is after all the reinstatement of this Other (with a capital O) who is precisely what we have said, in order to enter into this dialectic which was threatened, put in question, even put in danger, to place himself in the most extreme dependence with respect to the Other (with a capital O), namely with the Other in so far as he speaks. This already is something which indicates for us the degree to which it is essential for the obsessional to maintain this place. I would even say that it is indeed here that we see the pertinence in Freud of what he always calls Versagung, refusal, refusal and permission moreover implied at the basis, the pact of something

which is refused, as one might say, against a background of promise, instead of talking about frustration.

It is not at the level of the pure and simple demand that the problem of relationships to the Other is posed when you are dealing with a completed subject. It is posed in this way when we try to have recourse to development, when we imagine for ourselves a little child more or less powerless before its mother, namely when we ourselves make an object of someone who is at the mercy of someone else. But once the subject is in this relationship which we have defined with the Other through the word, there is beyond any response of the Other, and very precisely in so far as the word creates this beyond of his (20) response, there is a virtual point somewhere, no doubt it is not only virtual, but in fact if there had not been analysis, we could not answer for the fact that anyone gets there, except by this sort of masterful and spontaneous analysis which we always suppose to be possible for someone who could realise perfectly the "Know thyself". But it is certain for us that we have every reason to think that this point has never been delineated up to the present in a strict fashion except in analysis.

What the notion of Versagung delineates is in itself properly speaking this situation of the subject with respect to demand, and here what I want to stress, is this, and I would say that it is a little step which I only ask you to make on the same line of advance as the one which I asked you to make in connection with the phantasy. What are we talking about when we talk about the fundamental stages of relationship to the object, that we qualify as oral, as anal, even as genital? There is here a kind of mirage which is established by the fact that reprojecting all of this into development, we get the idea, but which is never anything except a notion that is reconstructed in retrospect, that a certain type of relationship structuring the Umwelt of the (21) subject around a central function, is what defines by development his relationship with the world.

By giving to everything which comes to him from his environment, a special signification, usually there is not even articulated in as elaborated a fashion, precisely the fact that all these actions for example from the environment are supposed to undergo as one might say refraction through the typical oral, anal and genital object: this is very often evaded. People speak purely and simply about an object, then alongside it they speak about environment, and do not dream for a single instant of seeing the difference that there is between this typical object of a certain relationship defined by a certain stage of rejection in the subject, and the concrete environment with its multiple incidences, namely the plurality of this object to which the subject whoever he is, is always submitted, and this whatever may be said about it, from his earliest childhood.

The so-called absence of objects, the so-called lack of objects of the suckling is something about which in the present state of our knowledge we should be very doubtful about. I must tell you as regards myself here and now if you wish to believe me, you

will consider this notion as purely illusory, because it is a matter of having recourse to the direct observation of the tiniest infants, namely that there is no question of it, that the objects in the world are both multiple as well as being interesting and stimulating for him.

(22) What then is in question?

The discoveries that we have made, we can define them and articulate them as being in effect a certain style of the subject's demand. Where have we discovered them, these manifestations which have caused us to speak about relationships to the world which are successively oral, anal, even genital? We have discovered them in analyses, in the analyses which were carried out on people who had long ago superseded the stages in question, qua stages of infantile development, and we say that the subject regresses to these stages.

What do we mean when we say that he regresses to these stages?

I believe that to say that there is anything at all which resembles a return to the same imaginary stage, if they are even conceivable, but let us suppose that they can be accepted, which are those of childhood, is something which deceives us and which does not give us the true nature of the phenomenon. When we speak about fixation for example at a certain stage in the neurotic subject, what might we try to articulate that would be more satisfying than what we are usually offered? If effectively what is in question, what is our goal, what is in every case our path, is in fact what we see in analysis, namely that the subject articulates in the course of regression, and we (23) will subsequently see better what this term regression then means, articulates his present demand in analysis, in terms which allow us to recognise a particular relationship which is respectively oral, anal, genital, with a particular object.

Do you not see that this means that at a certain stage, it is in so far as they have passed to the function of signifier, that the relationships of the subject were able to exercise a decisive influence on the whole subsequent development? It is in so far as at a certain level which is the level of the unconscious, that the subject articulates his demand in oral terms, that the subject **J** is in a certain relationship here at the level of a virtual signifying articulation, which is that of the unconscious, it is in so far as it is in terms of absorption that the subject articulates his desire, that we can talk both of something that will present itself at a moment in our exploration with a certain value called fixation to a particular stage, and that on the other hand it will be important to get to this stage, to make the subject regress to this stage so that something essential can be elucidated from the mode in which his subjective organisation appears. But it is only in so far as what interests us, is not to give to what was more or less correctly called, at a given moment, the dissatisfaction of the subject on the plane of an oral, anal or other demand, the dissatisfaction on (24) which the subject is supposed to have come to a halt, to

which we have to give compensation, gravitation, even symbolic return. It is in so far as it is at this moment of his demand that there are posed for him in a certain fashion the problems of his relationship to the Other, in so far as they are going subsequently to be altogether determining for the putting in position, the putting in place of his desire. It is in that respect only that this interests us.

In other words, everything which belongs to the demand in what has been effectively lived by the subject, is once and for all and from now on a thing of the past. The satisfactions, or the compensations which we cannot give him will never be after all but symbolic, and to give them can even be considered to be an error. It is an only an error to the extent of course that it is not completely impossible. We will see why it is not altogether impossible, precisely thanks to the intervention of phantasies, of this something more or less substantial as one might say, which is supported by the phantasy. But I believe that it is an error of orientation in analysis, because when all is said and done at the end of the analysis it leaves the question of the relationships to the Other still to be accounted for.

I am saying that the obsessional, just like the hysteric, needs an unsatisfied desire, namely a desire beyond a demand.

(25) The obsessional resolves the question of the evanescence of his desire by making of it a prohibited desire. He has it supported by the Other, and precisely by the prohibition of the Other. Nevertheless this fashion of having one's desire supported, sustained by the Other, is ambiguous. It is ambiguous, because a prohibited desire does not mean for all that a stifled desire. The prohibition is there to sustain the desire, but in order that it should be sustained, it must present itself. So this is what the obsessional does, and it is a matter of knowing how.

The fashion in which he does it, is as you know, very complex. He both shows it and does not show it at the same time, to put it plainly he camouflages himself, and it is easy to understand why. His intentions, as one might say, are not pure. This, it has already been seen, is what has been designated precisely by the aggressivity of the obsessional, that fundamentally every emergence of his desire would be for him the occasion of this projection or of this fear of retortion which would precisely inhibit all the manifestations of his desire.

I believe that this is a first approach to the question, but that it is not all, and that it is to overlook what is at stake right at the very foundation, to simply say that the obsessional rocks himself on a sort of swing which goes from the manifestation of a (26) desire which by going too far, becomes an aggressive desire, and which from there goes down again and swings back into a disappearance as one might say, into a disappearance which would be linked to this fear of effective retortion on the part of the other, of this aggressivity, namely of undergoing from him a

destruction equivalent to that of the desire that he manifests.

I think that it is appropriate to take a more global view of what is in question in this instance, and to do it it is almost necessary to pass by way of the illusions which this relationship to the other develops within ourselves, I mean us analysts, the analytic theory itself.

In the final analysis this notion of the relationship to the other is always solicited by a slippage which tends to reduce desire to the problem of demand. If desire is effectively what I articulated here, namely this something which is produced in the gap that the word opens up in demand, and therefore as such beyond every concrete demand, it is clear that every attempt to reduce desire to something whose satisfaction one demands, comes up against an internal contradiction. I would say up to a certain point that the term oblativity, namely the recognition of the desire of the other as such, that in which analysts almost with one accord, at present, place the summit and acme of a (27) successful realisation of the subject, of what they call genital maturity, and of which I gave you an example the other day in a passage from the author whom I put in question, namely of this profound satisfaction taken in the satisfaction given to the demand of the other, to speak plainly what is called commonly altruism, is precisely this something which allows to escape what is effectively to be resolved in the problem of desire.

To tell the truth, I think that the term oblativity, as it is presented to us in this moralising perspective, can be called without forcing the terms, an obsessional phantasy. It is quite certain that in analysis, to all appearances hysterical temperaments - I am speaking of those which the discipline theorises about for reasons which are very easy to understand - are much more rare than obsessional natures. A part of analytic indoctrination is carried out along the line, along the pathways of obsessional wishes: the illusion, the phantasy even which is within the reach of the obsessional, is that in the final analysis the other as such should consent to his desire.

This involves in itself extreme difficulties, because it is necessary that he should be consenting, but in a completely different way, to the response to any satisfaction, to a response to a demand. But it is completely evaded, the problem is to (28) give us the solution in a short circuit. This is preferable to thinking that all things considered it is enough to be in agreement, and that in order to find happiness in life, it is enough not to inflict on others the frustrations of which one has oneself been the object. One part of the unfortunate and quite confused outcomes of analysis, finds the demand from a certain moment the subject exalted by the perspective of good intentions which are those which are established rapidly in a certain number of presuppositions for the successful termination of analytic treatment, but surrendering oneself to something which is one of the most common penchants of the obsessional, namely this something which is explained more or less: do not do to others what you would not wish to be done to you yourself.

This undoubtedly categorical imperative is quite essential and structuring in morality, but is not always of practical use in existence. It is assuredly completely beside the point when it is a question of a realisation like sexual union.

The order of relationship to the other which consists in putting oneself in his place, is something which certainly is a tempting deviation, all the more tempting in that the analyst being precisely vis-a-vis this other who is the small other, his counterpart, in an aggressive relationship, is quite naturally (29) tempted to be in this position of sparing him, as one might say. Sparing the other, is indeed what is at the basis of a whole series of ceremonials, of precautions, of detours, in short of all the intrigues of the obsessional. If it is in order to indoctrinate, to construct a kind of generalisation of what manifested itself no doubt not without reason in a much more complicated fashion in his symptoms, to make of it a kind of moralising extrapolation, and to propose to him as the goal and the way out of his problems, what can be called the oblativeway out, namely submission to the demands of the other. I believe that it was really not worth the trouble to make this detour, because in fact it is really nothing other than to substitute as experience shows, a symptom, and a very serious symptom, because it does not fail of course to engender what is going to be produced, namely the reemergence in other more or less problematic forms, of desire and the question of desire which has never been, and which could never be resolved in any way whatsoever, by these methods.

It is quite clear that in this perspective one can say that the ways that the obsessional himself finds, the ways that he finds and in which he seeks the solution to the problem of his desire, are much more adequate even though they are not adapted, because (30) the problem can at least be read there in a clear fashion. For example there are several methods of solution, there are methods of solution precisely at the level of an effective relationship with the other. The way in which the obsessional conducts himself with his counterpart when he is still capable, when he is not submerged by his symptoms, and it is rare that he is completely submerged, is something which in itself is characteristic enough and ends up no doubt in a blind alley, but gives all the same an indication which is not so bad as regards direction. For example I have spoken to you about the exploits manifested by the obsessional. What is this exploit?

For there to be exploit, it is necessary that there must be at least three, because one does not perform one's exploit all alone. There must be at least two for there to be something which resembles it, for there to be a winning performance, a sprint; then it is necessary that there should also be someone who registers it and who is the witness. It is quite clear that what the obsessional tries to obtain in the exploit, is very precisely this: he tries to obtain what we have called a little while ago the permission of the other, in the name of something which is very polyvalent. One can say because of the fact, that he had well deserved what he tried to obtain, satisfaction is not

something which is classified at all on the terrain where he has well deserved it. Observe the structure of our obsessionals.

(31) What is called an effect of the super-ego, means what? It means that they inflict on themselves all sorts of particularly difficult, particularly testing tasks, that moreover they succeed at them, that they succeed at them all the more easily because precisely they desire to do so, but here they succeed very very brilliantly, and in the name of this they will have the right to a little holiday during which they can do what they wish, hence the well known dialectic of work and holidays. For the obsessional work has power, being there to liberate the time of the long sail which is that of the holidays, and the time spent on holidays usually revealing itself as time that is more or less lost. Why? Because of course what was in question, was to obtain the permission of the other, and since the other - I am speaking about the other as the other who exists - is absolutely uninterested in all this dialectic, for the simple reason that the real other is far too occupied with his own other, he has no reason to fulfil this mission of giving to the exploits of the obsessional their little reward, namely this something which would be precisely the realisation of his desire in so far as this desire has nothing to do with the terrain on which he has demonstrated all his capacities.

(32) This is certainly a very tangible phase, whose humorous side it is well worth the trouble of exposing. But it is not limited to that, it is precisely the interest of concepts like those of the big Other and the little other, that they are applicable to, can structure living relationships in much more than one direction. One could also say from a certain point of view, that in the exploit the subject dominates, and this has been said by other people besides myself, tames, even domesticates what is called a fundamental anxiety, and here again I believe that a dimension of the phenomenon is overlooked, namely that the essential is not in this expertise, in this risk which is run which is always in the case of the obsessional a risk run within certain strict limits, I mean in the fact that a wise economy strictly distinguishes all that the obsessional risks in his exploit, from anything which resembles what can be called the risk of death in the Hegelian dialectic.

There is something in the exploit of the obsessional which remains irremediably fictitious, for the reason that death, I mean the place where the real danger lies, is somewhere quite other than in the adversary which he seems effectively to be defying. It is precisely on the side of this invisible witness, of this Other who is there as spectator, the one who keeps the

(33) score, and the one who is going to say about the other: "Really," - as is said somewhere in Schreber's delusion - "he is quite a stud." But this sort of exclamation was encountered as a way of acknowledging the success, as implicit, as latent, as wished for in all this dialectic of the exploit. The obsessional here puts into a certain relationship the existence of the other as being his counterpart, as being the one in whose place he can put himself, and it is precisely because he cannot put himself in his place that there is in reality no kind of

essential risk in the display he puts on, in its effects of cutting a fine figure, of playing a sport, of risks that are more or less taken, this other with whom he plays, is never in the long run anything more than an other who is himself, another who already in any case leaves him the palm, from whatever aspect he approaches things. But the other before whom all of this happens, he is one one who is important, it is he also who must at all costs be preserved, is the point, the locus in which there is registered as one might say the exploit, it is there that there is inscribed as one might say his history, this point which must be maintained at all costs, and which makes him adhere to such an extent to everything which is of the verbal order, to every thing which is of the order of computation, of recapitulation, of inscription, of falsification also, and which means that what the obsessional wants above all to maintain (34) without appearing to do so, while appearing to aim at something else is this Other (with a capital O) in whom things are articulated in terms of signifier.

Here therefore is a first approach by which we can begin to approach this wish, because beyond every demand and what he desires, it is a question of seeing at what the behaviour of the obsessional is aimed in its totality. It is certain that this maintenance of the Other (with a capital O), is for him the essential aim, because it is the first aim, the preliminary aim within which alone there can be given this validation of his desire which is so difficult. What is this validation and what will it be? This is what we will subsequently have to articulate. But first of all it is necessary that the four corners as one might say of the behaviour, should be fixed in such a fashion that the trees as one might say do not hide the forest from us, and that when we see one or other of these little mechanisms, we will not in a way be brought to a halt, fascinated by this mechanism making of it a species, because it has a certain style, finding there this satisfaction. Obviously that one has always to dwell on a particular detail of an organism, is not a completely illegitimate satisfaction, because a detail always reflects well in fact, at least in the domain of natural phenomena, something of the totality, but in a material which is (35) so little organised in a natural way as that of the relationships of the subject to the signifier, we cannot entirely depend on the reconstruction of the whole obsessional organisation, starting from one or other mechanism of defence, because of course all of this, you could find yourself expressing it in a catalogue of mechanisms of defence.

I am trying to do something different. I am trying to help you find the four cardinal corners around which each of the defences of the subject is oriented and polarised.

Here already are two for today, namely this corner that we tackled first, the role of the phantasy. We now see in connection with the exploit that this presence of the other as such, is something which is quite fundamental. There is another point whose chapter heading I would at least like to introduce you to. In hearing me talking about exploit, you have of course

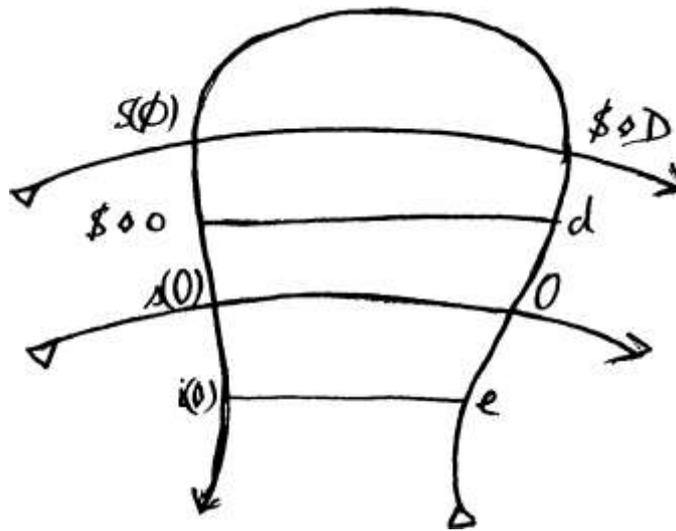
thought about all sorts of behaviour of your obsessionals. There is an exploit which does not perhaps deserve to be put under the same heading, it is what is called in analysis acting out. In this connection I have devoted myself - you will devote yourselves also I hope, following my example, even if it is only to confirm what I am advancing - to some investigations of the literature. It is very surprising, to the extent that there is no getting out of it. One person has written the best article (36) on this subject, namely , with the title: "General Problems of Acting Out". It is quite a remarkable article in that it shows that up to the present nothing of value has been articulated on the subject.

I believe that we must limit these problems. I believe that it is quite impossible to limit it, if one holds for example to the general notion that it is a symptom, that it is a compromise, that it has a double meaning, that it is an act of repetition, because this is to drown it in all sorts of repetition compulsions in their most general forms. I believe that if it has a meaning, it is always something which arises in the course of an attempt at resolving this problem of demand and desire, and this is why these sorts of acts that one calls acting out, are produced in a most preferential fashion during analysis, because all the same, whatever one effectively does in analysis, there are always attempts at the solution of the problem of the relationship of desire and demand. Acting out certainly appears along the way, in the field of this realisation of unconscious desire in analysis. It is extremely instructive, because if we examine closely what characterises the facts of acting out, we will find there all sorts of absolutely necessary components which ensure for example that it is this which absolutely (37) distinguishes them from what is called a parapraxis (un acte manqué), namely from what I call here in a more appropriate fashion, a successful act, I mean a symptom in so far as it allows a to clearly appear.

Acting out is something which for example always involves a highly signifying element, and precisely in the fact that it is enigmatic. We will never call acting out anything except an act which appears with this character of being especially unmotivated. This does not at all mean that it does not have a cause, but that precisely from a psychological point of view it cannot be given a motive, because it is always a signified act.

The role on the other hand of an object in acting out, of an object in the material sense of the term, namely that which I will be led to come back the next time, to show you precisely the limited function that should be given in all this dialectic to the role of the object, there always exists in acting out on the other hand the function and the relationship, almost the equivalence that there is between phantasy and acting out, I mean that acting out is in general structured in a way which is very close to that of a scenario. It is in its way something which is at the same level as the phantasy. There is something which distinguishes it from the phantasy and which also distinguishes it from the exploit which is that if the exploit is
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Seminar 24t Wednesday 4 June 1958



Freud, in Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, devotes a chapter to identification.

In the last few seminars which remain to us this year, we are going to advance into this field of topography opened up by Freud after the First War, around the 1920's. Because, what (2) we have gone over this year in trying to give a dimension of the formations of the unconscious, of what that represents, is the only thing which will allow us not to go astray along the other paths that are usually taken in dealing with topography.

We shall therefore be led to indicate at least what this topography means, and very especially why it came to the forefront of the function of the ego in a quite other, manifestly different, and much more complex sense, than the use that has been made of it since. This is just to show you the direction.

For the moment I am retaining from this chapter on identification - of course you have to read it, you will have to see in what sense it is applicable to the accounts that I will give you of three types of identification which are distinguished by Freud, on the schema here, and in fact which should have for you at the point at which we have reached, precisely a mediating value, of a schema articulating, even interpreting what the structure of the unconscious is, in so far as the structure of the unconscious is fundamentally structured like a word, like a language, and on the other hand of what emerges from it in terms of topography. This is precisely what you are going to see immediately.

Freud distinguishes three types of identification. This is

clearly articulated, and in a particular paragraph it is clearly (3) summarised.

"First, identification is the original form of emotional tie with an object;"

The second form is the one which he develops most particularly in this chapter, which moreover is the concrete basis of all Freud's reflection about identification, fundamentally linked to everything connected with the topography.

Let us all the same not forget as a primary fact, before appreciating the different organs as one might say of the Freudian topic, in as much as they emerge from this famous schema in the form of an egg with an eye, which is the schema which you imagine, in which you intuit the relationships of the id, the ego and the superego, an eye and somewhere a sort of pipette which is supposed to enter into the substance which is thought to represent the superego. It is obviously a very handy schema. The inconvenience of it is precisely, that in order to represent topological things, one uses spatial schemas. It is a necessity from which I myself do not escape, since I too represent my topography by a spatial schema. I try to do it with the fewest possible inconveniences, because what distinguishes topography from a spatial schema, is that this schema, this one here for example, my little network, picture this for yourselves: for example if you were to take it and (4) crumple it up, if you were to make a little ball of it and put it in your pocket. In principle the relationships always remain the same, they are relationships of linking, of order. It is obviously more difficult to do it with the schema of the egg because it is entirely oriented towards this spatial projection.

So you imagine for yourselves that by the Id Freud means to designate something which is somewhere, which is an organ on which there is this kind of protuberance which is represented by the ego, which in fact appears there like an eye. But read the text: he makes no allusion to anything at all which appears with this substantial character, something which allows it to be represented as a sort of organised differentiation. The development of bodily organs, is something quite different. The term identification means something completely different. It is on these identifications that there are supported these differentiations which are of another kind, of a quite different order to organic differentiations.

It is very important all the same to recall this, if only because this can go very far. After all there are really people who imagine that when they do anatomy, they are taking out a slice of the superego. And not only do they believe it, but they write about it and they do it with this thought in their heads.

(5) Let us see how Freud articulates the second term of identification: "Secondly, in a regressive way it becomes a

substitute for a libidinal object tie, as it were by means of introjection of the object into the ego;".

I repeat, this second form of identification is the one which throughout Freud's discourse in Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, but also in , poses most problems for him, its ambiguous relationship with the object. It is here also that all the problems of analysis come together, the problem of the inverted Oedipus complex in particular.

Why at a moment, in certain cases, and in the form of the inverted Oedipus complex, does the object which is an object of libidinal attachment become the object of identification?

In some cases it is more important to sustain the problem which has been posed than to resolve it at all costs. We are absolutely not obliged to construct a representation of any sort of possible solution to this question. This question may after all be the central question, the question that we are always condemned to remain on this side of, the one constituting the pivotal point. There must be one somewhere, because wherever we place ourselves to consider that all the questions are resolved, there will always remain this question: Why are (6) we there? And how have we got to the point where everything is clear?

It is clear that there must be a point which ensures that precisely we remain plunged in the question. I am not saying that this point here, is the point in question, but however, it is clear that Freud himself, in any case, turns around it and does not claim anywhere to have resolved it.

What is important on the contrary, is to see how the coordinates as one might say of this point o vary. I repeat, this is the essential question, that of the relationship between the love for an object and the identification which is fundamentally given by experience as resulting from it.

Here Freud introduces in the clearest fashion the distinction and the opposition which is the one that at the end of one of our last seminars in which I alluded to the problem of the relationship to the phallus, to the opposition in sum of being and of having. This is how he articulates the difference that there is between erotic libidinal attachment to the loved object, and identification to this same object.

But Freud tells us clearly, in any case what his experience teaches him, which is that this identification is always regressive in nature. The coordinates, the correlates of this transformation of a libidinal attachment into identification, are coordinates which show that there is a regression.

(7) I think that all the same you know enough about it for me not to have to dot the i's. In any case I already articulated in the preceding sessions, what a regression bears witness to. You know of course, but it is a question of knowing how one

articulates it here. We articulate it as follows: it is the choice of signifiers which always clearly indicates it. What we call regressing to the anal stage with all its nuances and varieties, even to the oral stage, is always the fact that we see in the present the opposition of regressive signifiers in the discourse of the subject.

There is no other regression in analysis. It sometimes happens that the subject starts crying on your couch like a child, or even imitates its behaviour. But we are not accustomed to see in this the true regression that you see in analysis. This sort of imitation on the part of the patient does happen, but it is generally not in cases which have a good prognosis, and that is not what you are usually accustomed to call regression.

At the point that we have got to with these two forms of identification, we are going to try to apply them on our schema and to see what they mean.

If the two lines which, when we place ourselves here, namely at the level of the need of the subject - the term is employed by (8) Freud. I point out to you in passing that Freud, and precisely in connection with the same reflection concerning the emergence of identification and its relationships with object cathexis, tells us in a certain sentence:

"We can only suppose that later on object-cathexes

I would like to point out to you in passing that Jankelevitch's translation of these chapters, makes them quite unintelligible, and sometimes makes them say exactly the contrary of Freud's text. The term object-cathexis is translated there by concentration sur l'object, which is unbelievably obscure.

"..... object-cathexes proceed from the Id which feels erotic trends as needs."

You see that the Es is here something which is proposed as very ambiguous. It perceives erotic stimulations, pressures, erotic tensions as need.

Whatever may be the case from the perspective of need, these lines give therefore the two horizons of demand, namely of demand here qua articulated, a demand for the satisfaction of a need, in so far as every demand for the satisfaction of a need must pass through the defiles of articulation which are made necessary by language, and on the other hand, by the very fact of passing onto the plane of the signifier, as one might say in its existence and no longer in its articulation, what results (9) from it at the level of the one to whom the demand is addressed, namely of the other, from this unconditional demand for love in so far as it is linked to the fact that the one to whom one thus addresses oneself is herself symbolised, namely that she appears as a presence against a background of absence, that she may be rendered present qua absent, namely this other horizon.

Before an object can be loved in the erotic sense of the term, in the sense that the eros of the loved object can be perceived as need, the establishment, the position of the demand creates the horizon of the demand for love.

These two lines, are separated on this schema, the one of the demand as demand for the satisfaction of a need, and the one of the demand for love. They are separated for a reason of topological necessity, but the remarks made above apply. That does not mean that they are not one and the same line, namely what the child articulates in the mother.

In other words, the ambiguity, the simultaneity as one might say, of the unfolding of what happens on these two lines in so far as they are lines where what belongs to the need of the subject is articulated as signifier, this superposition, this simultaneity, this ambiguity is something which is always presented to us in a permanent state. You are going to see an immediate application of it: this ambiguity is very precisely (10) the ambiguity which the notion of transference as such, I mean the action of transference in analysis, maintains throughout the whole work of Freud, in a permanent fashion, with that of suggestion. Freud tells us the whole time that after all transference is a suggestion, that we use it as such, but he adds: except that we make something completely different of it, because we interpret this suggestion.

But what does that mean, if not that yes, we can interpret suggestion? The fact is that a background is provided to suggestion as such, that as I might say, transference is potentially there. We know very well that this exists and I am going to give you an example of it immediately.

The potential transference is already analysis of suggestion, it is itself the possibility of this analysis of suggestion, it is a second articulation of what, in suggestion, is purely and simply imposed on the subject. In other words, the line on the horizon on which suggestion is based, is there, it is very essentially at the level of demand, of the demand that the subject makes to the analyst, by the very fact that he is there.

What are these demands? How can we situate them? It is very important to make the point from the beginning, because it is extremely variable. There are really people for whom the (11) demand to be cured is there present at every moment. Others better informed, know that it has to be postponed until tomorrow. There are others who are there for something other than to demand a cure, they have come to have a look. There are those who are there to become analysts. What importance does this have for knowing the place of demand, because from the fashion in which the analyst even by not replying to it, established like that, replies to it, is constitutive of all the effects of suggestion, but do not tell me that it is enough to say that the transference is here something thanks to which suggestion can operate. This is usually the idea that people have of it, not alone is it the usual idea, but I would say that

up to a certain moment of his text, Freud writes that if it is appropriate to allow the transference to become established, it is because it is legitimate to use the power of what? Of suggestion which transference gives, transference conceived here as the hold and the power of the analyst on the subject, as the affective link which makes the subject depend on him; that it is legitimate for us to use it so that an interpretation can get across.

What is this, if not to enunciate at this level in the clearest fashion, that we use suggestion? It is because the patient, to call things by their names, has come to love us, that our interpretations are accepted. We are on the plane of (12) suggestion. Now, of course Freud does not mean to limit himself to this. But when people say: yes, we are going to analyse the transference, pay careful attention to the bifurcation which appears at this level. It is a bifurcation which appears at this level, it is a bifurcation which causes the transference to vanish completely in so far as it is, let us say - I underline the terms, because they are not mine, but those which are implicit in every discussion of this subject of transference understood as an affective hold on the subject, because if we consider that at that moment we distinguish ourselves from the one who bases himself on his power over the patient in order to get across the interpretation that he suggests, by the fact that we are going to analyse this effect of its power, what else are we doing but deferring the question to infinity. Therefore namely that it is once again from transference that we will analyse what has happened from the fact that the subject has accepted the interpretation. For example there is no reason to get out in this way from the infernal circle of suggestion. Now, we suppose precisely that something different is possible. The fact is therefore that transference is something other than the use of a power, transference is already an open field, the possibility of another and a different signifying articulation from the one which locks the subject into demand.

This is why it is legitimate, whatever its content may be, to (13) place at the horizon the following which is called here, not the line of suggestion, but the line of transference, namely this articulated something which is potentially beyond what is articulated on the plane of demand.

Now, if what is there on the horizon, is what produces demand as such, namely the symbolisation of the other, namely the unconditional demand for love, it is here that the object comes to lodge itself subsequently, but qua erotic object. It is there that it is aimed at by the subject, and to say that the identification succeeding in him to this aiming at the object as loved, that the identification in replacing it is a regression, means precisely that what is in question, is the ambiguity between this line of transference, as I might say, and the line of suggestion, because we know - and I articulated this for a long time, right from the beginning, and Freud articulates it for us here - that on this line of suggestion identification is

constructed in its primary form, this identification that we know well, this identification to the insignia which ensure that the other qua subject of demand, the one who has the power to satisfy it or not to satisfy it, and who marks this satisfaction at every instant by something which of course is in the foreground, her language, her word, the spoken relationships of the child with the mother - I underlined their importance, they (14) are essential - and which ensure that all the other signs, all the pantomime of the mother as was said last evening, is something which is articulated in terms of signifiers are crystallised in the conventional character of these so called emotional mimics which are the things with which the mother communicates with the child, and which give to every kind of expression of emotions in mankind, this conventional character which ensures that the so called expressive spontaneity of emotions is revealed to examination, and this without one necessarily having to be a Freudian for that, as not only altogether problematic, but completely uncertain; namely that which in a certain area of signifying articulation of emotions signifies a certain emotion, would have in another area - it is a reference - a quite different value from the point of view of the expression of emotions.

Therefore identification as such, if it is regressive, it is precisely in so far as the ambiguity remains permanent between the line of transference and the line of suggestion.

In other words, we should not be surprised that in what follows, in the development, in the detours of analysis, we see the regressions being punctuated by a series of identifications which are correlative to them, which mark their times, their (15) rhythms. Moreover they are different. You cannot have regression and identification at the same time. The latter are the arrests, the stoppages of the former. But it remains that if there is transference, it is very precisely in order that this should be maintained on a different plane to that of suggestion, namely that this should be aimed at, not as something to which no satisfaction of demand responds but as such, as a signifying articulation, and this is what distinguishes one from the other.

You will say to me: what is the operation which ensures that we keep them distinct? Precisely our operation is the abstinent or abstentionist one, which consists in never gratifying the demand as such. This we know, but this abstention, even though it is essential, is not sufficient in itself. Obviously, it is because it is in the nature of things that these two lines remain distinct, that they can remain so. In other words, it is because for the subject they are distinct, and that precisely between the two there is a whole field which, thank God, is not slight, namely which is never abolished, and which is called the field of desire, that they can remain distinct.

In other words everything that is asked of us, is through our presence there as other, not to favour this confusion, because of course it is enough that we should listen there as other,

(16) and especially in the way that we enter it, with what we call the permissive character of analysis, but permissive only on the verbal plane. But that is enough, it is enough that things should be permissive on the verbal plane. Why? Not at all of course for the patient to be satisfied, because he is all the same satisfied by that, but he is not satisfied in the elements of the real. But it is enough that he should be satisfied on the plane of demand in order that confusion should be irremediably established between these two planes: the one which I call the line of transference, and the one which I call the line of suggestion.

We are therefore, through our presence, and in so far as we listen to the patient, what tends to make the line of transference become confused with the line of demand, we are therefore harmful in principle, and that is what that means.

Regression is our way, but it is a descending way, it is a way which with respect to the end of our action, does not designate its goal, but the detour, and it is this that we must continually keep in mind. Thank God there is something which prevents this irremediable confusion from being established again, that there is a whole technique of analysis which has no other goal and no other end than to establish this confusion, and that is the reason that it ends up in a transference

(17) neurosis, and that you afterwards see it written in a journal called La Revue Française de Psychanalyse, that in order to resolve what is called the question of transference, there is only one thing to do: sit the patient down, show him the nice things, show him what is beautiful in the outside world, and to tell him to leave your office slowly, in order not to disturb the flies; and this by a great technician!

Fortunately there is between the two lines which oppose this confusion, between the line of transference and the line of suggestion, there is between the two precisely desire and all that, they are such obvious things, that the hypnotists, let us say simply those who are interested in hypnosis, know very well, that no suggestion, however successful, completely takes over the subject.

What resists? Very precisely this: I would not even say one or other desire of the subject, it is obvious, but very essentially the following: it is the desire to have one's desire. It is still more obvious, but that is not a reason for not saying it.

These are for the subject the forms for the necessary maintenance of desire, thanks to which he remains what belongs to the very nature of the human subject as such, a divided subject. If he is no longer a divided subject, he is mad; he remains a divided subject because there is here a desire whose (18) field after all must not be all that easy to maintain either, because what I am explaining to you, is that the reason why a neurosis is constructed the way it is constructed, a hysterical neurosis, an obsessional neurosis, is in order to

maintain something articulated which is called desire.

And this is well defined. Neurosis, is not more or less strength or more or less weakness, or fixation understood in this kind of intuitive sense which also consists in imagining fixation as something which has come to a point where the subject has put his foot in a pot of glue; fixation, is obviously something different. If it resembles anything, it is rather these pegs for maintaining something which otherwise would escape.

What is called the quantitative element, the strength of desire in neurotics, is very variable and I would say that it is one of the more convincing things for ensuring the autonomy of what is called structural modification in the neurosis. The fact is that it is obvious from experience that neurotics who have the same form of neurosis are people who are differently gifted from the point of view of what one of the authors in question regarding obsessional neurosis, calls somewhere "the exuberant and precocious sexuality" of one of his patients.

(19) I must say that the exuberant and precocious sexuality of a patient who is the one of whom it is said somewhere that "he masturbated by lightly pinching the peripheral part of the foreskin, convinced, at the time that irreparable lesions would be produced He did not dare to wash away the secretionsbecause he dreaded wounding himself and losing something. The advice of his doctor gave him more precise ideas about sexual matters he had had to consult a doctor because of repeated failures in the attempts to have intercourse".

We know well that these are all symptoms. The subject will reveal himself in the milieu at least where the author takes his analysis, quite capable of satisfying his wife and of fulfilling his duties as a husband. But still...but still...We are not after all going to talk about an exuberant sexuality which is that which by whatever strength we may suppose the symptoms to be supported, allows itself all the same to languish, to be lured to the point that one can give such a description of a subject who has already reached an advanced age. Which does not mean that on the other hand, another obsessional neurotic might not show you a different picture, for example that of a sexuality which one could in fact qualify as exuberant, even as precocious.

It is precisely this quite tangible difference in clinical cases, which moreover does not prevent us from recognising that it is a question in all these cases of one and the same obsessional neurosis, which shows us that the reason why (20) it is an obsessional neurosis, is to be situated quite elsewhere than in this quantitative element of desire. If it intervenes, it is uniquely, and in as much as it will precisely have to pass into what I call the defiles of the structure. But what characterises the neurosis in this instance, is the structure, namely that something for example in the case of the

obsessional, which ensures that his desire, whether his desire is weak, whether he is in the middle of puberty, or whether he comes to us when he is forty or fifty years old, and he wants to understand a little about what has happened, namely about what he has understood nothing of up to then in his existence, namely at a time when all the same his desire is declining. This is what in all these cases will present itself not at all as the weakness or the strength of desire, but in the fact that on the contrary, weak or strong, the obsessional throughout the whole duration of his existence is preoccupied with putting his desire in a strong position, with constituting a fortress for desire, and this on the plane of relations which are essentially signifying relationships. In this fortress, there dwells a weak desire or a strong desire.

That is not where the question lies. There is one thing certain, it is that in all these cases these fortresses are double edged; the fortresses which are constructed against the (21) outside are much more troublesome still for those who are inside, and that is where the problem is.

You see therefore that the first form of identification is defined for us by the first link to the object, namely at the level of that identification that takes place, if you wish, to schematise identification, to the mother.

The other form of identification, is identification to the loved object qua regressive, namely in so far as it must be produced completely elsewhere, at a point on the horizon which of course is not altogether easy to reach because precisely being unconditional, or more exactly submitted to the sole condition of the existence of signifier, because without the existence of the signifier, there is no openness possible to the dimension of love as such. It is entirely dependent, being the only condition for the existence of the signifier, but within this existence of any particular articulation, if it is not from the fact that there is the existence of the articulation, and this is the reason that it is not altogether easy to formulate because in fact nothing is able to complete it, to fulfil it, that not even the totality of my discourse in my whole existence, because it is in addition the horizon of my discourses.

Which precisely poses the question of what this capital *i* means, but at this level. In other words, what subject is in question? (22) There is no need to be astonished that this never constitutes anything but a horizon, namely that the whole problem is to know what is going to be constructed, to be articulated, to be articulated in this direction, in this interval. This direction in which what is articulated, is articulated for the neurotic in sum, is the right one, the neurotic who lives out what? Who lives out the paradox of desire exactly like everybody else, because there is no human being inserted in the human condition who escapes from it. The only difference between what is called a normal relationship of desire and the neurotic, is not simply this paradox, because

this paradox of desire is fundamental, it is that the neurotic is open to the existence of this paradox as such, which of course, does not simplify his existence for him, but all the same does not put him in too bad a position compared to a certain point of view, that we can in this instance squarely articulate [as] the point of view of the philosopher.

The point of view of the philosopher is not clear either. In other words, that it can very well be questioned in the same way as the point of view of the neurotic. One does not even know if he has occasion to do it.

Whether this is valid or not, it is sure that it is in the nature of things that it should be so, because it is all the same on something, on a path, on a line, on an opening that he (23) has some relationship with what the philosopher articulates, or at least what he should articulate, because in fact have you seen this problem of desire well and truly, and carefully, and correctly, and powerfully articulated in a philosophical way. Up to the present, one of the things that appears to me as most characteristic of philosophy, is that this is what is most carefully avoided in philosophy.

This would push me to open another parenthesis on the philosophy of action, and which would culminate in the same conclusions, namely that the action that is continually being spoken about, namely when one sees in it some intrusion or other of spontaneity, of the originality of man in so far as he succeeds here in transforming the data of the problem, in transforming the world as they say. It is very peculiar that what is never highlighted is what nevertheless for us is this truth of experience, namely this profoundly paradoxical character and quite related to the paradox, of desire to action, those traits and those features that I began to introduce you to the last time by alluding to the character of exploit, of performance, of demonstration, of action, even of a despairing outcome.

All these terms that I employ are not my own, because the term Verwerfell [?] is employed by Freud to designate the quite (24) paradoxical action, quite generalised action, human action. Human action is especially there when one pretends to designate it, in accordance with history, as the passage of the Rubicon. My friend Kojève [?] speaks of it as something which is the point of agreement, the harmonious solution between the present, the past and the future of these souls, even though the last time I passed that way, I always saw it dry. It was immense, and at the time when I was there, it was dry. It was not the same season as when Caesar crossed it; and even in the fact that Caesar crossed the Rubicon with Caesar's genius, in the fact of passing the Rubicon, there is always something which involves one taking the plunge since it is a river.

In other words, human action is not something all that harmonious, and for us analysts, it is indeed the most astonishing thing in the world that no one in analysis has proposed, or has tried to articulate the question of action.

precisely in this paradoxical perspective in which we continuously see it, which we never see otherwise. Which moreover gives us plenty of trouble in properly defining what is called strictly speaking acting out, acting out in a certain sense, in this respect, being an action like another, but precisely taking on its characteristics by being provoked by the fact that we use transference, namely that we do something (25) extremely dangerous, and all the more dangerous in that as you see according to what I suggest, we do not have a very precise idea of what it is.

Perhaps this is an indication in passing, which will clarify for you what I mean, if I say that resistance, and resistance in a quite tangible and natural manner, namely resistance in as much as the subject in some cases does not accept the interpretations as we present them to him precisely on the plane of regression, and something which seems to fit in so well at first sight, namely that for him it does not at all seem to fit in like that, and if the subject resists, he will end up by leaving us if we insist, since we are always ready to play on the chord of suggestion.

This resistance, in so far as it expresses the necessity of maintaining the point at which it is a question precisely of articulating desire differently, namely on the plane of desire, this resistance, what value does it have? Very precisely the value that Freud in certain texts gives it. If he calls it: Übertragungswiderstand, it is because it is the same thing as transference, transference in the sense that I am talking about for the moment, where no doubt what it is a question of maintaining, is the other line, the line of transference, the line where articulation has another exigency than the one which (26) we give it immediately, in response to demand.

I would like to tell you, after this reminder which only corresponds to the facts, but to facts which I believe all the same I believe need to be articulated, to tell you that the second identification means the point at which is judged what happens qua regressive, that it is this transference appeal which permits this confusion of signifiers which is called regression, and which should lead us to something beyond itself which is what we are trying to aim at for the moment, namely how to operate with transference, but which quite naturally tends to be degraded into something which we can always satisfy at its regressive level in a certain fashion, namely in constructing for ourselves a certain conception of analysis, the one precisely which allows itself to be fascinated by the notion of frustration, and by different articulations which in this instance are expressed in a thousand fashions in object-relations.

All the fashions, if I might say, of articulating analysis, always tend to become degraded, which does not prevent analysis from being something different, all the same.

The third form of identification, Freud articulates for us like

this:

"... it may arise with any new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of the sexual (27) instinct."

Where is this third identification situated?

Freud exemplifies it for us in a fashion which allows no kind of ambiguity in the way of responding to it on this schema. He gives as an example the identification of the hysteric. He articulates it for us exactly. As I have been telling you all this time, in Freud it is always said in the clearest fashion: for the hysteric the problem is to fix somewhere in the sense that an optical instrument allows a point to be fixed, to fix her desire, this desire which for her comes to present some special difficulties.

Let us try to articulate this more precisely. This desire, is all the same for her destined to reach some impasse or other, because she cannot realise this fixation of the point of her desire except on the condition of identifying herself to anything at all, to a small trait. Freud writes: when I say an insignium, a trait, a single trait, he says, it does not matter which, of someone else in whom she can sense that there is the same problem of desire, namely that her impasse, for the hysteric, opens wide for her the doors of the other, at least wide open from the point of view of all the others, namely of all possible hysterics, even of all the hysterical moments of everyone else, in so far as she senses in them for a moment the same problem which is that of this question about desire.

(28) Here therefore is how Freud situates it. I will show it to you: the question, even though it is articulated a little differently, is from the point of view of the relationship of topology, exactly the same for the obsessional, and for good reasons!

In other words, this identification that is in question is the one which is here, namely the locus where I designated the phantasy for you the last day in the obsessional. It is in so far as there is a point where the subject has to establish a certain imaginary relationship with the other, not in itself as I might say, and why? Namely in so far as it is this imaginary relationship which brings him satisfaction. It is made quite precise for us that it is a question here of a person or of an object who has no relationship with any something else, it is a support, if you wish it is a puppet of the phantasy. I gave to this word phantasy all the extension that you could wish. It is question of the phantasy as I articulated it the last time, and as I will return to it, in so far as the phantasy can be an unconscious phantasy. Here the other only serves, which is not a small thing, to allow the subject to hold a certain position which avoids this collapse of desire, which avoids the problem of the neurotic.

It is

Here is a third form of identification which is quite essential. (29) Since I do not know where it would lead us, because it always takes longer than one thinks, to get into a reading of the observation of the article which appeared in the Revue Française de Psychanalyse - which contains my report on aggressivity in psychoanalysis - (July/September 1948, observation 2 of the article called: "Importance de l'aspect homosexuel du transfert". I am asking you to read it. I will come back to it, but I want in this connection to articulate today the point where I designate the technical error of analysing the current homosexual transference in an obsessional neurosis.

What is produced, in so far as the phallic object appears in the phantasies, and notably the phallic object in so far as it is phantastically the phallus of the analyst, is something which appears there at the proliferating point already established, but which can always be stimulated, namely there where the subject qua obsessional, maintains by his phantasy the possibility of maintaining himself which is much more risky and much more dangerous for the hysteric faced with her desire.

It is here that there appears, the phantastical phallus in so far as in this technique that I am indicating, it is here that the analyst is going to make his present interpretations, insisting, that the subject should in some way consent to commune, to swallow, to incorporate phantastically this partial object.

(30) I am saying that this is an error of plane, that it is very strictly to put onto the plane of suggestive identification, onto the plane of demand, what is being put in question there at that moment; that it is to favour a certain imaginary identification of the subject by taking advantage, as I might say, of the hold given by the suggestive position opened to analysis on the basis of transference; that it is to give a false, deviant, inexact solution to what is in question, I am not saying in his phantasies, but in the material that the subject effectively brings to the analyst, and this can be read in the observations themselves where one sees being constructed on this a whole doctrine, a whole theory of partial objects, of the distance from the object, of the introjection of the object, and everything that results from it, and in order just to introduce what I will continue with the next time in detail, I am going to give you an example of it.

At every moment in this observation, there is the tangible, perceptible fact that the problem which is the solution of the analysis of the obsessional, is that the obsessional discovers castration for what it is, namely as the law of the other. It is the other who is castrated, and for reasons which are those of his faulty implication in this problem, the subject feels himself threatened by this castration, to such an intense degree, that he cannot approach his desire without feeling its effects.

(31) What I am in the process of saying, is that this horizon of the Other, of the big Other as such, and qua distinct from the small other and from the fact that the problem is there, is tangible at every instant in this observation. From the beginning in his anamnesis, this subject who the first time that he has an encounter with a little girl, flees, hurrying away in anxiety and going to confide it to his mother, and feeling himself completely reassured from the moment that he says to her: "I will tell you everything". You only have to take this material literally.

There is only one reference and one support which of course is a virtual support, a project, only a desperate reference to the Other as locus of the verbal articulation in which the subject is in future going to invest himself entirely. It is the only possible refuge for the panic that he experiences at the approach of his desire. It is already inscribed. It is a matter of seeing what is beneath.

When after all sorts of solicitations from the analyst, certain phantasies come to light, we come to a dream that the analyst interprets. He describes it immediately and strictly, as the fact that the passive homosexual tendency of the subject is becoming obvious. Here is the dream:

"I am accompanying you to your private residence. In your room there is a large bed. I lie down on it. I am extremely embarrassed. There is a bidet in the corner of the room.

(32) I am happy, though uneasy."

We are told that after a preparation of this subject by a previous period of the analysis, the subject does not experience much difficulty in admitting the passive homosexual signification of this dream.

To your eyes does that seem sufficient to articulate it? Undoubtedly in taking up this observation again, one can show all the indices which prove that it does not suffice, but there is one thing certain, it is that the text itself of the dream shows that the subject has put himself, it is the least that can be said, in the place of the other; he says it: "I am at your private residence. I am lying in your bed."

Why passive homosexual? From what we see, nothing appears there which in this instance makes of the other an object of desire. On the other hand I see here in a completely clear fashion, also designated in a third position, and in a corner, something which is fully articulated and to which nobody seems to pay attention, which is still not there for nothing. It is the bidet. Namely something which at once hints at the phallus and does not show it, because I do not foresee that in the dream that it is indicated that anybody is in the process of using it. The bidet is here indicating that what we are dealing with, what is problematic, it is in fact something which is present in the (33) question. It is not for nothing that this famous partial object comes. It is the phallus, but the phallus is posed there

precisely as I might say, qua question: does the other have it or does he not have it? It is the opportunity to show it. Is the other it or is he not it? This is what is in the background. In short, it is the question of castration, the very question if you wish, for this obsessional beset by all sorts of obsessions about cleanliness which show well the degree to which on occasion, this instrument can be a source of danger.

And these obsessions about cleanliness, it is not for nothing that I evoke them here, because I read you this little piece about the bidet which shows that the bidet for him, for a long time, presentified the phallus, at least his own. It is the question about the phallus, and about the phallus in so far as it comes into play, and at the level of the other as being the object of this essentially symbolic operation which ensures that in the other, and at the level of the other, and at the level of the signifier, the phallus is the signifier of what is struck by the action of the signifier, of what is subject to castration.

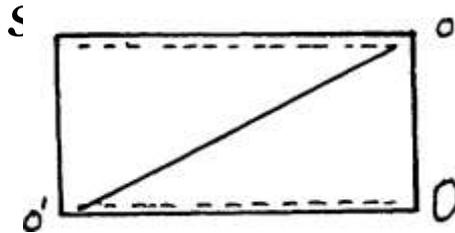
It is in this essential articulation, namely in so far as the aim is not to know whether at the end the subject will feel himself strengthened by the assumption of a superior power, by the assimilation to one that is stronger than him, but to know (34) how he will have effectively resolved the question which is implicit at the horizon on the very line of what indicates the structure of the neurosis indicates, namely the acceptance or not of the castration complex, in so far as being realised, it is realised in its signifying function.

It is here that one technique is distinguished from the other, and I will show you why, independently of the legitimacy linked to the structure, linked to the very meaning of the existence of the desire of the obsessional, independently of that, the therapeutic solution itself, if you wish, the knot, the completion, the scar let us say, that is obtained, leaves absolutely no doubt that a certain technique is not favourable, does not correspond to what one can call a cure, nor even to an orthopedics, even a clumsy one, that the other alone can give, not only the correct solution, but the effective solution.

Seminar 25: Wednesday 11 June 1958

We are going to continue our account still with the help of our little schema.

Some of you are asking questions about the little diamond shaped sign as it is employed for example when I write: $\hat{\text{}}$ in front of o , the small other. This does not seem to me to be very complicated. But after all because some of you are asking the question, I recall that the diamond in question, is the same thing as the square of a much older and much more fundamental schema:



in which there is inscribed the relationship of the subject to the other qua object of the word, and qua message of the other in this first approximation that we made of what comes from the (2) other and encounters the barrier of the relationship $\text{o} - \text{o}'$, which is the imaginary relationship.

What does that mean?

That means that it expresses the relationship of the barred or unbarred subject as the case may be, namely qua marked by the effect of the signifier, simply that we consider as a subject still quite simply undetermined, still not split by the Spaltung which results from the action of the signifier, the relationship therefore of this subject to something which is determined by this quadratic relationship, and which, when I write it like that, is not otherwise determined as regards the vertices of the quadrangle in question in this frame, for example of the small other, that is of the counterpart, of the imaginary other.

If I write $\$$ with regard to demand, or $\hat{\hat{D}}$, it is the same thing. One does not prejudge the point in the little square at which the demand as such will intervene, namely the articulation of a need in the form of the signifier.

Here we have therefore a line which is a signifying line, and undoubtedly as such, articulated. Because it is produced at the horizon of any signifying articulation, it is the fundamental backdrop for every articulation of a demand. Here (second line)

(3) it is articulated in general. However bad it may be, we have a precise articulation, a succession of signifiers, of phonemes.

Behind, that is in the beyond of every signifying articulation, this represents or corresponds to the effect of the signifying line, of the signifying articulation qua caught up in its totality, from the fact that by its simple presence it makes something symbolic appear in the real. It is in its totality, and in so far as it is articulated that it makes this horizon or this possibility of demand appear, this power of the demand which is that it is essentially and of its nature a demand for love, a demand for presence, this naturally with all its ambiguities.

I say love in order to fix something. Hate in this instance has the same place. It is uniquely on this horizon that the ambivalence of hate and of love can be conceived; it is also in this horizon that we can see coming to this same point this third term really homologous to love and to hate with respect to the subject, and precisely which I found in a text and elsewhere: ignorance.

It is here then that there is found the signifier of 0, qua marked by the action of the signifier, namely of 0 barred, namely that at this precise point which is the homologue of the point where on the line of demand there appears in this fundamental schema of every demand, this return of the passage of the (4) demand through the other which is called the message. If you like, in a homologous fashion, what has to be produced at the point of the message in the second line, is precisely this message of a signifier, signifying that the other is marked by the signifier.

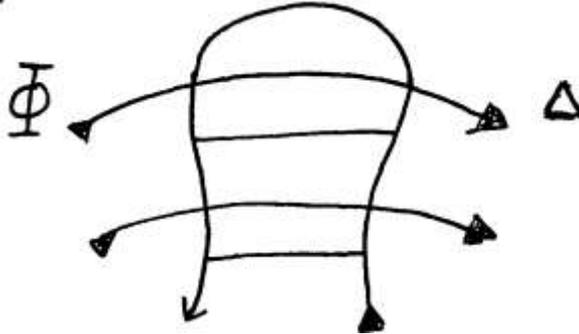
That does not mean that this message is produced. It is there at a homologous point as the possibility of being produced. And on the other hand, a point homologous to this point at which the demand arrives at the other, namely where it is submitted to the existence of the code in the other, at the locus of the other, at the locus of the word.

You also have at this horizon, what can be produced which is called this reference, which is called this conscious awareness (prise de conscience). But it is not simply conscious awareness, this articulation by the subject qua speaker of something which is his demand as such, and with respect to which he situates himself.

That this should be capable of being produced, is the fundamental presupposition of analysis itself. It is what is produced in the forefront of analysis. It is not, not essentially and as a first step, the renewal by the subject of his demands. Of course in a certain fashion it is a renewal, but it is an articulated renewal; it is in his discourse that the subject in a certain fashion makes appear, either directly, or in filigree (5) running through his discourse, which is undoubtedly much more important for us when it is in filigree than when it is renewed directly by the form and the nature of his demand, namely by the

signifiers in which this demand is formulated. And it is in so far as this demand is formulated in archaic signifiers than we talk about anal, or oral regression, for example.

I remind you that the last time, what I articulated, what I wished to introduce, is that everything that is produced which is properly speaking of the nature of transference, depends on the existence of this line behind, of this line which begins from a point whose start we can give by m , and which ends with a $\hat{}$, whose meaning we will make more precise subsequently with respect to this line $w \text{ - } \backslash$ of which it is the origin, the foundation.



The foundation of this effect of the signifier as such in the subjective economy, it is in so far as something is situated with respect to this line that one can talk about transference, namely that everything which is of the order of transference, according to the action or the inaction of the analyst, according to his abstention or his non-abstention, always tends to operate in this (6) intermediary zone, and can always in a certain fashion be brought back to the articulation of the demand.

In a certain fashion, of course at every instant it is I would say normal, it is in the nature of verbal articulation in analysis, that something should be articulated on the plane of demand. But if precisely the analytic law is that no demand of the subject shall be satisfied, it is precisely for no other reason than that we speculate on the fact that in analysis something will be produced which will tend to make this line of demand operate, not on the plane of a precise, formulated, satisfied or not satisfied, demand. Everybody agrees: it is not because we frustrate the subject of what he may demand of us on occasion, whether it is the extreme case of wanting to kiss our hands, or whether it is simply to answer him; it is not that which operates, it is a more profound frustration, belonging to the nature, to the essence of the word in so far as it itself causes to arise this horizon of demand, and it is always in sum at the level of this horizon which I called very simply, to fix your ideas, the demand for love, and which, as you see, may also be a demand for something else, maybe a certain demand concerning the recognition of his being, with all the conflicts that this (7) gives rise to, in as much as the analyst by his presence and qua counterpart, denies it.

The Hegelian negation of the relationship of consciences, is also glimpsed here on this occasion: the demand to know. This naturally exists at the horizon of the analytic relationship.

The reason why this interests us, the reason why this is involved in the symptoms, the reason why this serves for the resolution of neuroses, is to the extent that it is in this topological relationship with these two lines in so far as they are formed by every articulation of the word in analysis, that there are situated the four vertices of this other locus of reference of the subject to the other which is the imaginary locus of reference; in so far as here they are only false vertices. They are realised by the narcissistic or specular relationship of the ego to the image of the other, in so far as it is already on this side, anterior to, entirely implied in the first relationship of demand, and that beyond it is in the intermediary zone between the articulated demand and its essential horizon, also articulated of course, because it is the zone of all the articulations that are involved, also articulated as such because it is supported by what is articulated; but which does not of course mean articulatable, because here what is at the horizon, and strictly speaking this last term in so far as nothing suffices to formulate it in a completely satisfying fashion, (8) except by the indefinite continuation of the development of the

It is in this intermediary zone that there is situated this something which is called desire, desire in so far as it interests us, desire in so far as it is desire which is properly speaking put in question in the whole economy of the subject, and can be involved in what is revealed in analysis, namely in everything that in the word begins to move in this oscillating interplay between what I might call the down-to-earth signifiers of need, and all that results beyond the articulation of this signifier, from the constant presence of the signifier qua present in the unconscious of the subject, namely in so far as it has already moulded, formed, structured the subject, it is here in this intermediary zone, and I have told you why, that desire is situated, the desire of man in so far as it is the desire of the other, namely that it is beyond the passage of the articulation of man's need in this necessity to make it known to the other, this desire in the form of absolute condition, of something which is beyond every satisfaction of need, and which is produced in the margin which exists between the demand for the satisfaction of need and the demand for love, which is situated there. It is the problematic of this desire in so far as the desire of man is always to be sought by him in the locus of the other and which means that desire is a desire structured in this (9) locus of the other as such, and in so far as the locus of the Other is the locus of the word, which creates the whole problematic of desire, of human desire, and which makes it subject to the formations of the unconscious, to the dialectic of the unconscious, which means that we deal with it, that we can have an influence on it by the fact that it is or not articulated in the word in analysis. There would be no analysis if there were not this fundamental situation.

This having been said, we have what is, as one might say, its correspondent, its support, the point where it fixes its object which far from being some sort of natural object, is an object

that is always constituted by a certain position taken up by the subject in relation to the other. It is with the help of this relationship which is phantastical in its essence, in its nature, that man finds himself and situates his desire, hence the importance of phantasies, hence the fact that in Freud you will see how rarely the term instinct is employed. It is always a question of drives, in other words of something which is a technical term given to this desire, in so far as the word isolates it, fragments it and puts it in this problematic and disjointed relationship with its proper goal, namely what is called the distinction (direction) between the tendency and its object.

On the other hand you know that it is essentially made up of substitution, of displacement, indeed all the forms of (10) transformation and equivalence essentially subjected to the word.

We had arrived the last time at the attempt to centre the problems more closely around something which must have a relationship with what is said there, because after all elements of it come through in the studies, especially of the nature of obsessional neurosis which I advised you on several occasions to get to know by your own efforts, and it is certain that certain elements: term, distance from the object, phallic object, relationship to the object, which are involved in it, cannot fail, at least in the report after these studies, to provoke us to see how we can judge them, assess them in the light of what this brings.

The last time therefore I took from the point of view of the treatment relationship, two cases of obsessional neurosis, in the article: "Importance de l'aspect homosexuel du transfert" (the case of Catherine, a false obsessional).

I pointed out to you how problematic in a certain way there appears the result of one or other of the suggestions, we could say directives, or even let us say strictly speaking interpretations, which are given in this phantasy. I pointed out to you in connection with a dream for example, how because of certain presuppositions one finds simplified in the system, one (11) comes to avoid certain outstanding elements, and therefore the dream itself. Mention was made of a homosexual transference dream, as if this itself could have a meaning when the dream itself gives the image of what is involved, namely a relationship which is far from being a dual one, in as much as I showed you in the quite piquant presence here in the form of an object, of an object which is in this instance the famous bidet mentioned in this dream, the subject then who in this dream was transported into the bed of the analyst, who is both at his ease there, in an attitude which one can describe, in accordance with the manifest content of the dream, as one of expectation, but with the quite articulated and essential presence of this bidet (lit).

One may be all the more astonished that the analyst does not pay attention to this, because another text of the same analyst

shows that he is far from ignoring the strictly phallic signification of what certain analysts have called the hollowed out or cup-like penis, in so far as it is one of the forms under which the signifier phallus can present itself at the level of the assumption of the phallic image by the feminine subject. In fact this sort of grail which is presented here for us in the dream, is clearly something which is at the very least destined to stimulate the attention, indeed to give rise to some prudence in someone who interprets this dream in terms of a twofold relationship.

(12) I would go further: this observation No.2, I reread it once more, I also read the one which precedes it. It really seems to me that this is not the most important thing, for one to criticise, because it is really taken to this really obvious level. I would simply ask you to reread this, observation. Let us take all the same at random for example this sentence:

"I alluded then to a second phase of the analysis, when an intervention of this kind had previously taken place, but I come back to it because in a way the subject who had been really been drawn by the fact to a deepening of the transference the transference situation became more and more precise. It was necessary to insist in order to overcome certain silences. The transference became then frankly homosexual I alluded therefore to the fact that if it exists, it is a question of facilitating affectionate relationships between men which are designated by the name of friendship, and that everybody knows that these relationships always take on a certain passive character for one of the partners, when the one who finds himself in the necessity of having to receive directives At that difficult moment I had the idea of using an analogy which could be understood right away by this ex-officer. Why do men go to their death for a leader whom they love,.... because they accept orders and commands with an absolute sense of obedience; they (13) thus experience the feelings and the thoughts of their leader so strongly, that they identify with him and sacrifice their lives as he himself would do if he found himself in their place."

You see that an intervention of this kind should demand a fairly serious piece of silence.

"They can only act in this way because they love their leader passively."

"This remark did not cause all reservations to disappear immediately, but it allowed him to continue to be objective, even though he was going to re-live with me other homosexual situations, more precise than these."

And in effect this does not fail to occur.

In fact it is quite clear that the fact of orienting, of facilitating, of opening the door to a whole imaginary elaboration in what is called the twofold relationship between

the analyst and the analysand, in a fashion which is shown by the observation itself to be not simply systematic, but really insistent, and in these two terms, on the two planes it chooses everything which, in the material, goes in the simplifying direction of elaborating the twofold relationship in so far as it is provided with an analytic signification.

Here it is not even a question of this element on which I will subsequently insist, namely the role of the stamp given to interpretation by the introduction of a signifier. Here (14) interpretation, namely what makes it necessary that interpretation should be something that of its nature should be brief, is precisely this: it is that it essentially is, and that it should be essentially centred on the handling of the signifier.

What do we have here? We have manifestly an intervention in the very paragraph we are considering. It shows the meaningful, comprehensive, persuasive character which consists in inducing the subject to live precisely this relationship which as such is articulated and considered at this level of the work of the author as a twofold relationship, exactly for him to articulate the notion of the analytic situation as such, as a simple relationship which he elsewhere calls a two-fold relationship.

Here we find ourselves in the clearest fashion - everyone can put his finger on it, you do not even need to be an analyst to perceive it - before something which of its nature is close to suggestion, which in any case by the very fact that it chooses a signification to which it returns on three occasions, even in this observation which is about six pages long, shows us the essential stages of this relationship of the analyst to the person in analysis, and presents itself in the form of a facilitation of the understanding of the twofold situation in (15) terms of homosexual relationships, as they are classically presented to us in the Freudian doctrine as being this something libidinal which underlies every relationship considered from a social angle, namely in this highly ambiguous form which does not allow to be distinguished what is strictly speaking the homosexual drive in so far as it is distinct in the choice of an erotic object, that of the sex opposite to the one which the norm
j may wish for.

There is here something of a different nature to the use of the term homosexual in connection with this libidinal underpinning. This no doubt poses all sorts of problems, but their use in the form of an indoctrination within the therapy, I am not saying
1 that it is illegitimate in itself, I am saying that the fact that
j it is systematic assuredly poses the problem of the whole
j orientation, of the whole direction of the treatment. Because in
j fact we see clearly the degree to which this can have an effect,
I but do you not at the same time also see that there is here a
j choice in the mode of intervention in connection with obsessional
neurosis, and that everything that you otherwise know about
, obsessional neurosis, clearly reminds you that this relationship
] of the subject to himself, to his existence in the world, which

is called an obsessional neurosis, is something infinitely more complex in every way, than a relationship of libidinal attachment to a subject of his own sex, at whatever level he manages to (16) articulate it.

Everyone knows, since Freud's first observations, the role played by the destructive drive directed against the counterpart and redirected by this very fact against the subject himself. Everyone knows that many other elements are involved in it; these elements of regression, of fixation in libidinal evolution which are moreover far from being as simple, and I would say even embarrassing, as the famous link between the sadistic and the anal, is not something which of itself can be held to be simple, or even to have been simply elucidated at some moment or other.

In short, everything shows that if such an orientation or direction of the treatment pursued has an effect, it is precisely something with a much wider perspective on what is in question, something which comes to be articulated. I do not say that this is entirely sufficient, but already it permits us to organise better the different planes and registers on which things can effectively be organised.

At the level of this plane, we can see, we can in effect situate this something which is a detail in the economy of the obsessional, namely the role played at one point of this economy, by the identification to an other who is a small o, an imaginary other, and that it is one of the modes thanks to which he balances more or less well or badly his economy as an (17) obsessional.

To go too far as one might say in this direction, to give him this sort of satisfaction which is the ratification of this relationship, there appears in the history of the subject, the frequency, I would say the consistency in the history of the obsessional, of an other in so far as he is the one to whom he refers, whose approbation and criticism he demands, with whom he identifies as someone. The author in question articulates it as someone stronger than him, and on whom literally one can say that he bases himself, a sort of dream.

This is something that is well known: the fact of sanctioning as one might say this mechanism, which is undoubtedly strictly speaking a mechanism of defence in this instance, the way in which the subject balances the problematic of his relationship to the desire of the other, is something which can have some therapeutic effect, but far from having one all by itself, and moreover does not the subsequent development of the works of the author show that things pushed in this sense, which more and more put the accent on what he calls on this occasion the distance from the object, this is incarnated in something which is produced, which is very specially centred around the phantasy of fellatio; the fellatio of a phallus, not just any phallus but very precisely the phallus which is a part of the imagined body of the analyst. This culminates in the elaboration in a way of (18) a sort of phantasy in which this sort of imaginary support

based on the counterpart and in the homosexual other, is incarnated, is materialised in this imaginary experience which is proposed to us as being as such comparable to Catholic communion, to the consumption of a host. We see here that always along the same line, along a certain line of the elaboration of the phantasy, this time still more exaggerated, that there is produced something where we then undoubtedly see, where we can materialise it on the schema that we are dealing with. It is a question of the production of what happens at the level of the original phantastical productions.

I am going to show you that it is exactly from the subject himself, of the passage from this, namely from the relationship $P\$o$, in so far as it is at the level of the phantasy, namely of the phantastical production which allowed the subject to situate himself, to reach an arrangement with his desire, of the passage from this to the level of the message strictly speaking, of the message which is that of the reply to the demand, of the message, in so far as it is situated - it is not for nothing that in the observation, you are going to see it - is articulated in this fashion, we see at that moment appearing the image of the good mother, of the benevolent mother, and that we are told about the allaying of the infantile feminine superego. In effect it is in so far as it is at the level of the signification of the signified of the Other (0).

(19) Ratifying this phantastical production of the subject, in a way it is this which we can literally only properly express except as a reduction of the complexity of the formations in the subject which desire is, as a reduction of this to the relationship of demand, of demand articulated in the direct relationship of the subject to the analyst.

You will say to me: but if it succeeds? In effect, why not? Do we not even have here a certain notion that one can have of analysis?

I reply: not only does it not suffice, but we have in these observations, moreover in the most perceptible fashion, in what we are given, we also have in addition documents which allow us to see by experience what the result of this is.

Undoubtedly this has certain effects, but on the other hand what is produced is something which is very far from representing the healing that we could expect, or the pretended genital maturation which is supposed to be realised. How can we fail to see the paradox that is represented by the fact of speaking about genital maturity when in fact it is frankly articulated here that genital maturity is represented on this occasion by the fact that the subject allows himself to be loved by his analyst?

There is all the same something extraordinary here; far from (20) genital maturity being realised by a process, we see here on the contrary very obviously the occurrence of a subjective reduction of symptoms by the mediation of a process which of its nature, has something regressive about it, not regressive only in

the temporal sense but regressive from the topographical point of view, in as much as there is a reduction to the plane of demand of everything that is of the order of the production, of the organisation, of the maintenance of desire. And effectively, what is produced in these stages, far from being interpretable as it sometimes is in the direction of an amelioration, in the sense of a normalisation of relationships with the other, shows itself as brusque explosions, or acting out - I showed it to you last year in connection with an observation, the observation of relationships in a subject strongly marked by perverse tendencies, and where things ended up in a true acting out with the subject going to observe through toilet doors, women urinating, namely literally going to find the woman precisely qua phallus, namely by a sort of brusque explosion of something which, under the influence of the demand is excluded, and which here re-enters in the form of something which strictly speaking in this quite isolated act in the life of the subject, has all the compulsive forms of acting out, and the presentifying of a (21) signifier as such.

Many more testimonies still show us in other forms, sometimes for example in the form of a falling in love which itself has this paradoxical aspect in these subjects that there is no reason for considering them in themselves as being dissident homosexuals; the homosexuality they have, they have or do not have any more than what one can see of it in a sudden falling in love with one's counterpart, in a problematic falling in love, I would say in a really artificial production of these sorts of interventions, in a falling in love which in effect takes on the appearance of a homosexual falling in love, and which is only in fact the forced production as one might say of this relationship \$ with respect to o, which in this sort of way of orienting, of directing an analysis, is properly speaking what was forced by the reduction to demand.

I would therefore say that at this level of this practice, this fashion really which at that moment one can say lacks all criticism, all subtlety, there is something which discourages any commentary, and that is also why I would like to take something which is still earlier, and which, as I told you once, in the work of the author in question, always seemed to me much more interesting and suitable for showing what development perhaps might have taken place, if his elaboration of these subjects had been differently oriented.

(22) It is the one which concerns the therapeutic incidences of conscious awareness (prise de conscience). It is the very title of "L'envie du penis dans la nevrose obsessionnelle feminine".

This observation is very interesting because we do not have many analyses of obsessional neuroses in women, and also for those who may approach the problem of the sexual specificity of neurosis, namely who think that it is for reasons connected with their sex, that subjects choose one or other angle of neurosis.

We will see all the same in this instance of feminine obsessional

neurosis, how everything that is of the order of structure in neurosis, is something which allows very little place to the determination that the sexual position, in the sense of natural sexual position, in the sense of natural, biological sex, can have.

Here in fact this famous prevalence of the phallic object as such that we saw operating in the observations concerning masculine obsessional neuroses, is found again, and in a very interesting fashion.

Here is how the author on this occasion, conceives, discovers, develops the progress of the analysis. He articulates it himself in the following fashion:

"Like the masculine obsessional, the woman needs to identify (23) herself in a regressive way with the man in order to free herself from the anxieties of early childhood. But while the former depends on this identification in order to transform the infantile love object into a genital love object

This corresponds strictly to what I remarked above about the paradox of the identification of the masculine subject to the analyst in this instance, because just by itself it constitutes this passage from the infantile love object to the object of genital love. There is certainly here something which at least poses a problem:

"She (the woman) bases herself at first on this same identification and tends to abandon this first object and to orientate herself towards a heterosexual fixation, as if she could proceed to a new feminine identification, this time onto the person of the analyst".

It is therefore said with an ambiguity that is undoubtedly striking, but necessary, that it is the identification to the analyst articulated here as such, which is defined as such. It is noted that he is of the masculine sex, that it is this identification which in the first case, of itself, is simply supposed as self-evident, this identification, assures the access to genitality, whence it results, if one has this presupposition, this hypothesis, that in the case of the woman, if we obtain what is given as being the case, however not without some prudence, because in this observation no extraordinary amelioration is (24) noted, but undoubtedly it is established that in the very measure of this identification to the analyst, it is established not without a certain embarrassment, not without a certain surprise even, that this identification will be successively carried out in fact in two modes: in a first mode which will be first of all conflictual, namely of complaints against men, of hostility even with respect to men, then in the very measure that this relationship, we are told, allays, a particular problematic.

It is always because of the necessity of conceiving in a certain fashion this progress of a feminine identification, which is

admitted as possible, by reason, we are told, of the fundamental ambiguity of the person of the analyst. We are certainly not satisfied for all that with this explanation.

"...a new identification, this time feminine, this time onto the person of the analyst. It goes without saying that the interpretation of transference phenomena is particularly delicate here, if the personality of the masculine analyst is first apprehended as that of a man, with all the interdictions, the fears, the aggressivity that this involves, shortly after the desire for phallic possession

And this is what we are going to have to talk about, and what we are going to have to estimate.

"... and correlatively for the castration of the analyst."

(25) And he adds:

"...and that because of this fact, the aforementioned effects of relaxation were obtained, the personality of the masculine analyst is assimilated to that of a benevolent mother".

And he adds again:

"Does this assimilation not show that the essential force of anti-masculine aggressivity is found in the initial destructive drive of which the mother was the object?".

Here a Kleinian horizon can always give some support.

"The conscious awareness of the one brings about the right to the free exercise of the other, and the liberating power of this conscious awareness of the desire for phallic possession becomes then obviously comprehensible, as well as the passage from one identification to the other in function of the fundamental ambiguity."

Here we find again the sentence pronounced above.

In fact it is all there. You are going to see, this is based first of all on the interpretation of what is involved, both on a requirement or on a desire for phallic possession, and correlatively for the castration of the analyst.

If we look at things more closely, this is far from representing what is effectively presented in the observation.

I will take up the observation in the order that it is presented (26) to us.

The patient is a fifty year old woman; healthy, mother of two children, exercising a paramedical profession. She has come because of series of obsessional phenomena which are altogether commonplace: the obsession of having contracted syphilis. This is important, in so far as she sees in this some prohibition or

other directed against the marriage of her children, which however she was not able to oppose, in the case of her eldest son. Obsessions of infanticide, of poisoning, in short a whole series of obsessions which are I would say quite banal, especially in the type of obsessional manifestations in women.

Before even giving us the list, it is the author himself who speaks to us in a prevalent fashion about obsessions with a religious theme. There are of course all sorts, as in all obsessions with a religious theme, insulting scatological phrases which impose themselves on the subject, in formal contradiction to her convictions.

Let us begin to look at what presents itself as one of the elements which the author himself underlines right away, in the relationships of the subject to religious reality, especially to the reality which for her, because she is a Catholic, is the presence of the body of Christ in the host.

She also represents in her imagination male genital organs, (27) without there being any question of a hallucinatory phenomenon, we are told, in the place of the host. A few lines further on an important detail concerning this principal religious schématisation of these obsessionals is pointed out to us: it is that her mother alone was responsible for her Catholic education, and her conflict with her was able to be referred onto the spiritual plane, we are told, which moreover was always of an obligatory and constraining character. I do not dispute it. This is a very important fact.

Before reflecting on the mode of the interpretations which are subsequently given, I would like you to dwell for a moment on this symptom. This symptom in itself is altogether of a nature to encourage us to make some remarks.

The genital organs, we are told, appear in front of and in the place of the host.

What can that mean for us? For us, I mean for us analysts. Here all the same there is a case where this place, this superposition, should be given its value, if we are analysts.

What do we call repression, and especially the return of the repressed, if not something which appears as something which discolours from beneath, which arises to the surface as the scriptures describe it, or like a stain which rises or which (28) with time returns to the surface?

Here is a case, where if we wish to accord their textual importance to things, as our position as analysts requires us to do, we should try to articulate what it returns from.

We know that for this woman who has received a religious education, Christ should at least have a religious sense, as for all of those who are in the Christian religion, and it is not a matter of indifference. Christ, is the Word, the Logos, and

this is drummed into us in Catholic education, and that he is the incarnate Word, is something which is not in the least doubted, it is the most abbreviated form of what one can call a creed. We see in sum that if we refer to this Logos, what he is, namely if we are told that he is the Word, he is the Word; he is the Word, namely the totality of the Word. We see appearing through him, substituting itself for him, in his place, something which is what we, in what in a converging fashion with respect to all our exploration, we try to formulate about the analytic experience. We have been led to call this privileged signifier unique, in so far as it is defined by the fact that it designates the effect, the mark, the imprint of the signifier as such on the signified.

(29) What is produced therefore in this symptom, is the substitution for a relationship which is given to us as that of the relationship of the subject to the word, to the word in its essence, to the total word, to the incarnate word even, the substitution for the totality of this word of a privileged signifier which is properly speaking that of the signifier which serves to designate the effect, the mark, the imprint, the wound of the totality of the signifier which bears on this human subject in so far as through the agency of the signifier there are in him things which come to signify.

We are going through the observation. What are we going to find further on?

To are going to find the following: that the subject is going in this instance to find herself saying that she has dreamed, that she crushed the head of Christ with her kicks, and this head, she adds, was like your own. She is speaking to the analyst. And in association, she makes the following remark: "Every morning in order to get to work, I pass in front of an undertaker's shop where four images of Christ on the cross are exposed. Looking at them I have the sensation that I am walking on their penises. I experience a sort of intense pleasure and anxiety."

Here once again, what do we find? We find manifestly the identification of this something which is the Other, the big Other, undoubtedly in this instance the Other qua locus of the (30) word. On this occasion what we are given, is that the subject crushes the face of Christ with her heel. Let us not forget that here Christ is materialised by an object, namely a crucifix. That this object itself in this instance should be in its totality as one might say, the phallus, is again something which cannot fail to strike us, especially if we continue to pursue the details that are given in the observation, namely the following: the fact is that something very peculiar is going to intervene in the relationships of the analysand with the analyst: the reproaches that she is going to address to the analyst, about the difficulties that he introduces into her existence by his treatment, are going to be materialised in the fact that she cannot buy shoes for herself.

The analyst of course could not be so unaware as not to recognise here the phallic value of the shoe, in other words that the shoe,

and especially the heel of which great use is made, very precisely on this occasion in order to crush the head of Christ, is something which has here all its import.

Let us remark in this connection that this occurs within an analysis, that fetishism, especially shoe fetishism in a woman is practically never seen, the appearance of this something which is referred to the shoe with this phallic signification. On the other hand in the course of the elaboration of an observation as (31) it is carried out in analysis, is something which here takes on all its value. Let us try to understand it.

In order to understand it it is not necessary to go very far. While the analyst does everything at that moment to suggest to the subject that it is a question here of a need, of a desire to possess the phallus, which is perhaps not in itself the worst thing that he could say, if it were not for the fact that for him this represents, as he also says, the desire of the subject to be a man. Which the subject does not fail to object to, to contest with the greatest energy up to the end. She never had the desire to be a man, and in truth in fact it is perhaps not the same thing to desire to possess the phallus and to desire to be a man, because analytic theory itself supposes that matters can be resolved in a very natural fashion, and who would not take it into account?

But here is what the analysand replies in this instance. She replies:

"When I am well dressed, men desire me, and I say to myself with a very real joy: There's another one who's going to pay for it. I am happy to think that they are suffering because of it."

In short, she brings the analyst back to solid, economic earth, namely, if there is a relationship to the phallus in her relationships with men, what is it?

(32) Let us try now to articulate it ourselves.

Here more or less is how I propose to you to articulate it precisely: there are several elements here: there is the relationship to the mother, the relationship to the mother of course about which we are told that it is profoundly essential, a really coherent relationship between the real subject and this mother whose problematic relationships with the father we are shown, and we will subsequently come back to her relationships with the father, and to the relationships of the patient with her father, that this mother in any case showed herself in several ways, and in particular in the following way: that the father was not able to overcome the attachment of his wife to a first love, which was moreover a Platonic one. For something like this to be pointed out in the observation, means that it must have had a certain place.

We see here on the other hand that the relationships of the

subject to the mother are these: she judges her favourably in every way, more intelligent than the father, etc..., fascinated by her energy, etc...:

"The rare moments when her mother relaxed filled her with an unspeakable joy..... she had always considered that her younger sister was preferred to her As well as that however anybody who interfered with this union with her mother was the object of a death wish, as is demonstrated by a large amount of material, (33) either from dreams, or from childhood, relating to the desire for the death of her sister".

Is this not enough to demonstrate that first and foremost everything that in this instance is in question in the relationships of the subject to her mother, is precisely what I underlined for you as being the relationship of the subject to the desire of the mother. The fashion in which the problem of desire is introduced into the life of the subject is precocious and particularly manifest, precisely in the history of the obsessional.

This desire which culminates in the fact that the subject sees being outlined as an end, the end not of having this or that, but first of all of being the object of the desire of the mother, with what this involves, namely of deducing what exists, but is unknown. The object of the desire of the mother, is precisely that on which there depends everything which from now on links for the subject the approach of her own desire to a destructive effect, and that which at the same time subordinates, defines as one might say, the approach of this desire as such to the signifier which is precisely by itself the signifier of the effect of desire in the life of the subject, namely the phallus.

I am articulating things afresh: the problem is not for the subject in question of knowing whether the mother, as in the case of the phobic for example, has or does not have the phallus. It is to know what is the effect in the other of this something which is X, which is desire. And in other words, what comes (34) to the forefront for the subject, is to know what she will be, whether she is or is not, that which the desire of the other is.

What we see here coming to the forefront, and very precisely in this connection, it is very nice to see it on this occasion is the substitution at this point and at this level of the signifier phallus as such for the incarnate Logos, namely for the other, for the other in so far precisely as the word marks him.

In other words, I will articulate my thought still further: Freud saw and designated the frontiers of analysis as stopping, as I might say, at this point which in certain cases, he says, proves to be irreducible, there descends on the subject a sort of wound which for the man is the castration complex, and which keeps all its predominant manifestations, which in short can be resumed as follows: that he cannot have the phallus except against the background of not having it, which is exactly the

same thing as what appears in the woman, namely that she does not have the phallus except against the background of the following: that she has it, because otherwise how could she be so enraged by this irreducible Penisneid. Do not forget that Neid in German, does not simply mean a wish, Neid means that which literally enrages me. All the underlay of aggression and of anger are indeed in this original Neid, in modern German and much more (35) still in the old forms of German, and even of Anglo-Saxon.

If Freud in a certain fashion marked here what he called on a certain occasion the infinite character, projected to infinity, which is badly translated by interminable, of what can happen in analysis, it is because he does not see, because after all there were things in the face of which he did not have the opportunity of doing, even though many things indicate, especially in the last article on the Spaltung of the ego to which I will return, he does not see that the solution to the problem of castration in man as in woman, is not about this dilemma of having or of not having the phallus, because it is only starting from the moment when the subject perceives that there is one thing which in any case must be recognised and stated, that he is not the phallus, and it is starting from this realisation in analysis that the subject is not the phallus, that he can normalise what I would call this natural position, that either he has it, or that he does not have it.

This is therefore effectively the final term, the signifying relationship around which there can be resolved the imaginary impasse engendered by the function that the image of the phallus comes to take on at the level of the signifying plane, and this indeed is what happens in our subject when, under the effect of the first manifestations of being taken up into the mechanism of (36) transference, namely of a more elaborated articulation of symptomatic effects that there is produced in her something which is produced in an entirely recognisable fashion in what I have just quoted for you today, namely the following: I am saying that the phantasy qua presentified in the analysis, which is linked to the possession or the non-possession of shoes, of feminine shoes, of phallic shoes, of shoes which we will on this occasion call fetishistic, what function does it take for a masculine subject in so far as in his perversion, what he refuses, is that the woman should be castrated?

This is what the fetishistic perversion means for the masculine subject: the perversion, is to affirm that the woman has it against the background of what she does not have. Without this there would be no need for an object, to present her with an object over and above, manifestly independent of the woman's body.

If the woman begins to develop in the course of the transferential elaboration, something which is apparently the same thing, namely that she has it, because what she underlines is that she wishes to have it in the form of clothes, in the form of those clothes which are going to excite men's desire, and thanks to which she can disappoint them in their desire. She is

the one who articulates it in that way. Undoubtedly she is apparently stating the same thing, but it is something quite (37) different when it is posed by the subject herself, namely by the woman, rather than by the man who confronts her, and also for her on this occasion, what she shows, is that by wishing to present herself as having what she herself knows perfectly well she does not have, it is a matter there of something which for her has a quite different value, namely what I called the value of a masquerade, and that through which, for all that, she makes of her femininity precisely a mask.

What is in question, is that starting from the fact that this phallus which is for her the signifier of desire, what is in question is that she should present its appearance, that she should appear to be it. What is in question, is that she should be the object of a desire, and of a desire that she herself knows very well she can only disappoint. She expresses it formally at the moment that the analyst interprets what is in question to her as a desire for the possession of the phallus. It is a question here of something which once more shows us the divergence which is established, and which is essential, between being this something which is the object of the desire of the other, and the fact of having or of not having the organ which bears its mark.

We come therefore to the following formula: the original desire, is: I want to be what she, the mother, desires. In order to be it I must destroy that which for the moment is the object of her desire. The subject wishes to be what this desire is. (38) What she must be led to see in the treatment, is that it is not in himself that the man is it, the object of this desire; it is to show her precisely that the man is no more the phallus than the woman. What causes her aggressivity - I will show it to you better the next time - with regard to her husband qua man, is in so far as she considers that he is, I do not say that he has, that he is the phallus, and it is under this heading that he is her rival, it is under this heading that his relationships with her are marked by the sign of obsessional destruction.

That this desire of destruction is turned against herself in accordance with the essential form of the obsessional economy, this indeed in effect is the goal of the treatment, it is namely to make her see that: you yourself are what you wish to destroy, in so far as you also wish to be the phallus; and what is done in a certain way of carrying on the treatment?

Notice the difference: you are what you wish to destroy; it is replaced by: you wish to destroy what in this instance is taken up into quite improbable and fleeting phantasies. The details of the observation will show you this destruction of the phallus of the analyst. You wish to destroy this, says the analyst, and I myself give it to you. In other words, the treatment is entirely conceived as being the fact that the analyst phantastically gives, consents as one might say, to a desire for (39) phallic possession. Now, that is not what is in question, and one proof among others that one can give that it is not that, is the fashion in which, at the quasi-terminal point to which the

analysis seems to have been pursued then, we are told that the patient holds on to all her obsessions, apart from the fact that she no longer has but one of them. They have all been ratified, in block, by the analysis, of course, but the fact that they still exist has all the same some importance.

What does the patient do? This is said in the observation with a complete ignorance. She intervenes with all her energy with her eldest son of whom she has always been terrified, because in fact he is the only one whose masculine reactions she had never completely succeeded in mastering, telling him that he must as a matter of urgency go and have himself analysed in his turn, namely that this phallus that the analyst believes to be the solution of the situation, in so far as taking, as he says himself, the position of the benevolent mother, he gives the phallus to this patient; she gives it back to him, namely at the only point at which she effectively has the phallus, she gives it back to him. What is lent must be repaid.

The analyst has entirely oriented the analysis towards the term that the person in analysis wishes to be a man. Up to the end the person in analysis is not entirely convinced. Undoubtedly (40) however, something which is involved, namely that it is true that the possession or not of this phallus was calmed down in this case. But the basis, the essential, the signification of the phallus in so far as it is that of desire, remains unresolved.

Seminar 26 ; Wednesday 18 June 1958

The 18th of June is also the anniversary of the foundation of the Société Française de Psychanalyse. There was a moment when we too said no.

The last time I had begun to comment on the observation of a female obsessional who was being treated by one of our colleagues, and I had begun to outline some of the principles which can be deduced about the way in which we try to articulate things as regards the good or bad direction, the correct or incorrect character of the conduct of a treatment centred on something which obviously presents itself as existing in the content of what emerges in the analysis, namely the conscious awareness (prise de conscience) of penis envy.

I think that in general you can see the importance of the use that we make of it. There are of course always some little delays when you are upset because the schémas which you were concentrating on, the oppositions which seemed to you to be easy (2) to hold on to, find themselves somewhat shaken or put in question by what is revealed as we make further progress..

We only have to ask ourselves for example if there is not a contradiction between what I put forward the last time, and a principle on which some people wanted to concentrate. I said that in fact for the woman, her sexual development passed necessarily through something which could be described as: she must be the phallus against the background of not being it, I said. For the man it is the castration complex which can be formulated as follows: that he has the phallus against the background of the fact that he does not have it, or is threatened with not having it. Obviously these are schémas which from a certain angle, and when one speaks of, when one opposes sexual development at one or other phase, may well show a certain opposition. It is quite insufficient to stop at this because it is also the case that this dialectic of being and of having holds for both.

The man also must realise that he is not it. It is even in fact in this very direction that we can see situated one part of the problems brought into operation by the solution of the castration complex and of penis envy. We are going to examine it in greater detail, and I hope that little by little you will put in their place things which are not false in themselves, but which are partial views.

(3) To do this let us start again today from our schema.

It is extremely important to articulate correctly the different lines on which analysis is situated. There is an article which I would recommend you to read, it is the article by Glover which is called: "The therapeutic effect of inexact interpretation" (October 1931, Vol. 12, Art. 4 of the UP)

It is one of the most remarkable and most intelligent articles which could be written on such a subject. It is really in fact the starting base from which the question of interpretation can be approached.

In fact the basis of this article and of the problem that it poses, is something which can more or less be situated as follows: at the point in time that Glover wrote it, we are still at a time when Freud is alive, but at which the great change of analytic technique around the analysis of resistances and of aggressivity has happened. Glover articulates that this analysis of resistances and of the transference is something which with the experience and the development of notions acquired in analysis, is something which implies going over, covering as one might say, in the sense that ground must be covered by the analytic progress the totality of the systemes fantasmatiques - let us translate "phantasy systems" in this way: the systems of phantasies - which we have learned to recognise in analysis. It (4) is clear that at that time more had been learned, more was known than right at the beginning of analysis, and the question which is posed, is: what was our therapy when we did not know the whole extent, the whole range, of these phantasy systems?

Does it mean that what we did at that time, were incomplete therapeutic treatments, less worthwhile than those which we are carrying out now? It is obviously a very interesting question, in connection with which he is led in a way to draw up a kind of general report on all the positions articulated, taken up, by the one who finds himself in the position of being consulted about any difficulties whatsoever. In a certain way he generalises, he extends the notion of interpretation to every articulated position taken by the person who is consulted, and he draws up a table of the different positions of the doctor with regard to the patient.

There is here an anticipation of the doctor-patient relationship, as it is called today, but really articulated in a way which makes me regret that it was not developed in this direction which sets out a sort of general approach. The fact is very precisely that in so far as we overlook the truth included in the symptom, we find ourselves by this very fact collaborating with the symptomatic formation.

(5) He takes this first from the position of the general practitioner who says to the patient: "get a grip on yourself, take a holiday, change your job", in fact who puts himself in the position of miscognition. Right away he occupies a certain place, which is not an ineffective one because it is one which is

situated, can be very precisely located at the very place that certain symptoms are formed. He immediately occupies a certain function with respect to the patient which can be situated in the very terms of analytic topography. I will not insist on this.

He remarks at one point that the whole trend of "modern psychoanalytic therapy" in his time, is the direction of interpreting both what he calls sadistic systems and guilt reactions. He remarks that up to recent times, all this was not stressed. The patient was no doubt relieved of his anxiety, but there were undoubtedly left unresolved in him, unsuppressed, and at the same time repressed, this famous sadistic system.

Here for example is an example of the direction in which, he does not conclude his remarks, but begins them, and it is this that in our own day it would be interesting to take up again.

In this precise connection I will make a remark. It would be in sum a question of situating what is meant by the advent of the analysis of aggressivity. For a certain time, analysts were so (6) impressed by the discovery that they had made of it, that it had become a sort of answer to everything. Our aggressivity was so well analysed that the words that analysts in formation encountered one another with tell the story.

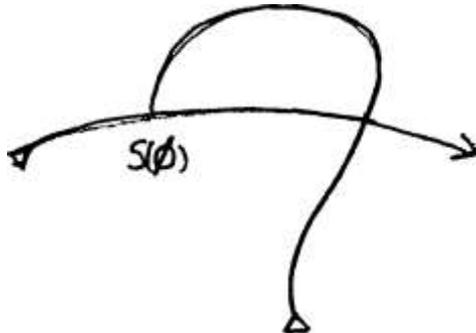
It would be a question of knowing what in effect this discovery represented, and I think that we can situate it somewhere on our fundamental schema. This is what I tried to do above, because in fact we too can pose certain questions about it. I often remarked how much ambiguity remained at the time that I was teaching you, that I was talking to you about the narcissistic system as such, as fundamental in the formation of aggressive reactions, that aggressivity, the one that is provoked in the imaginary relationship to the small other, an is not something that can be confused with the totality of aggressive power, as a vital function, an imaginary relationship.

On the other hand, it is clear, to recall very obvious things, that violence is indeed what is essential in aggression, at least if we situate ourselves on the human plane. It is not the word, it is even exactly its contrary, it is violence or the word which can appear in an interhuman relationship, if violence is something in its essence which is distinguished from the word, (7) the question can be posed of knowing in what measure violence as such - I say violence in order to distinguish it from the use that we make of aggressivity - can be repressed because if we follow what we have here posed as a principle, that in principle there can only be repressed what is revealed as illuminated by the structure of the word, namely by a signifying articulation, this is a question that must be posed.

In effect, from the imaginary angle, it is from the angle of this murder of the counterpart which is latent in the imaginary relationship as such, that what is of the order of aggressivity comes to be symbolised, and as such taken up in the mechanism of repression, of what belongs to the unconscious, of what is

analysable, of what is even, you can say in a general fashion, interprétable.

Let us take things up properly once again. If we follow and if we begin again, if we spell out again our little schema, our schema in its simplest form:



namely in the intersection of the tendency, the drive if you wish (8) in so far as it represents an individualised need, and this something which is the signifying chain in which it must come to articulate itself.

By itself what is it? This already gives us some elements and allows us to make some remarks.

Let us make a supposition: let us suppose that for the human being there is only reality; this famous reality that we make use of in all sorts of circumstances. Let us suppose that there is only that. It is not unthinkable that something signifying should articulate this reality. To fix your ideas, let us suppose that as they sometimes like to put it in some schools, the signifier is simply a conditioning, I would not say of reflexes, but of this something which is reducible to reflexes, as if language was not something of a different order to what we artificially create in the laboratory with animals, by teaching them to secrete gastric juices at the sound of a bell. The sound of the bell is a signifier, and one can suppose a human world that is entirely organised around a coalescence of each of the needs which have to harmonise with a certain number of predetermined signs. If the signs are valid for all, in principle this should give us a society which functions in a perfectly ideal fashion. Every instinctual discharge of the order of need will be associated with something which we will call, if you wish, the differently varied sounds of the bell, (9) which will function in a fashion appropriate to the one who hears it, so that immediately he may satisfy the aforesaid need. We thus arrive at the ideal society.

I would like to point out what I am outlining, is what has always been dreamed of by **Utopians**: a society functioning perfectly, and culminating in the satisfaction of each one according to his needs, with everyone, it is added, participating in it according to their merits. This is where the problem begins.

In fact if this schema remains at this level of the intersection of the signifier and the pressure or the tendency of the need, what does it culminate in? At the identification of the subject to the Other, in so far as this Other articulates the distribution of what can respond to need, the distribution of resources.

This is precisely what already shows you that it is not like that, namely that it is absolutely necessary that this background of demand should be taken into account, simply in order to take into account what happens in this articulation of the subject, in the subject's taking up a position in an order which exists beyond the order of the real, and which we call the symbolic order, which complicates it, which is superimposed on it, which does not belong to it.

Here and now however at this level, at this simple state of the (10) schema we can see that at this level already something is happening, something in the natural order, in the organic order, let us say at least in man, which complicates this schema simply at this stage that is here described on the blackboard, and which consists in the following: it is that here we have the subject, this mythical child, let us stress, whom we use as a sort of background for our psychoanalytic speculations, this child in the presence of his mother who begins to manifest his needs.

It is here that he encounters the mother as a speaking subject. It is here that his message culminates, namely at the point where the mother satisfies him. As I pointed out to you, it is not when the mother does not satisfy him, frustrates him, that the problems begin. This would be too simple, even though of course people constantly try to come back to it, precisely because it is simple. I told you the interesting problem, one which did not escape someone like Winnicott for example, whom we know to be someone whose thinking and whose practice covers the whole breadth of the present day development of psychoanalysis and its techniques, up to and including an extremely precise consideration of the phantasy systems which are at the limit, at the frontier with psychosis. Winnicott, in his article on transitional objects, which I brought to your attention, shows (11) with the greatest precision that the essential problem, is how the infant emerges from satisfaction, and not from frustration, to construct a world.

The fact is that in so far as a world is articulated for the human subject, which involves a beyond of demand, when the demand is satisfied, and not when it is frustrated, this is what he calls transitional objects, namely these small objects that we very early see taking on an extreme importance in the relationship with the mother, namely a piece of a blanket that he jealously pulls on, a piece of anything at all, a trinket. And the importance of this transitional object in the developmental system of the child, is something absolutely essential to see and to situate and to understand in its precociousness.

This having been said, let us focus on this frustration, namely

on the fact that here the message does not arrive there after a date that we tried to fix when we were interested, three years ago, in the mirror stage. It has not evaporated since. I really like those of you who tell me: every year it is something different, the system changes. It does not change. I am simply trying to make you go over the whole field.

What we find, is that what happens in this relationship with the mother, in so far as here the mother imposes what I called more (12) than once her law, her omnipotence or her caprice, complicated by the fact that the child, the human child, and not every little animal, and we know it from experience, is open to a certain relationship of the imaginary order which is the relationship to the image of his own body, and to the image of the other, namely in so far as we see it on our schema, in the beyond of what happens on the return line of the satisfied or unsatisfied need. Namely that he experiences, reactions for example of disappointment, of malaise, of vertigo, in his own body, compared to an ideal image that he has of it and which takes on for him an altogether predominant value because of a feature of his organisation which we have linked more or less correctly to the prematurity of his birth.

In short, from the beginning you see, if you wish interfering, interacting between one another, two circuits, the first of which is the symbolic circuit, to fix your ideas, to hang things on a clothes-stand that you already know, the infantile feminine superego, and on the other the imaginary relationship to this ideal self-image which is found in him when he is frustrated or disappointed, more or less affected, even injured.

In other words, from the beginning the circuit is found to act on two planes: the symbolic plane and the imaginary plane; the relationship to the image of the primordial object, the mother, the Other in so far as she is the locus where there is situated (13) the possibility of articulating need in the signifier, and on the other hand the image of the other, small o in so far as it is the point where the subject has this sort of link with himself, with an image which represents what we can call the line of his completion - imaginary completion of course.

In what has all we have said since the beginning of the year consisted, since we began to take things at the level of the witticism?

In having the opportunity of putting forward this schema, of showing you its pertinence, its inevitable character in mental states, I told you that in fact no mental life could be organised, which corresponds to what we are given in experience, to what experience articulates in analysis, if there is not beyond this other primordially placed in the position of omnipotence through its power, not of frustration, because that is insufficient, but of Versagung, with the ambiguity of promise and of refusal that is contained in this term Versagung. That there is I might say, the other of this other, namely what permits this other locus of the word, which the subject perceives

it as itself symbolised, namely that there is this other of the other. On the occasion when we take the system of the family oedipal triangle, if you wish, you see clearly that there is something more radical, more fundamental than anything that is (14) given by social experience, this term family, and this indeed is what constitutes the permanence, I mean the constancy of this oedipal triangle and of the Freudian discovery.

I told you that here the Father (with a capital F) in so far as he is never a father, but much more rather the dead father, the father qua bearer of a signifier as such, a second degree signifier, of a signifier which authorises and founds the whole system of the signifier, which ensures that in a way the first other, namely the first subject to which the speaking individual addresses itself, is herself symbolised.

It is uniquely at the level of this other, of the other of the law properly speaking, and of a law, I am going to insist on it, that is incarnated, that the articulated, human world, can take on its proper dimension as we see it operating in experience, and such that experience shows it to be absolutely indispensable this backdrop of an other with respect to the other without which the universe of language as it shows itself efficacious in the structuring, not only of needs, but of this new thing whose original dimension I am trying to make you understand to demonstrate to you this year, and which is called desire, to be articulated.

It is at this level that there is perceived, at the level of the other qua locus of the word, this other which could be purely and simply the locus of the sound of the bell that I talked to you about above, which would not therefore properly speaking be an (15) other, but simply the organised locus of this system of signifiers, introducing its order and its regularity into the vital exchanges within a certain species. It is hard to see who could have organised it, and after all one can envisage that in a particular society, men who are full of benevolence spend their time organising it and making it function. It can even be said that it is one of the ideals of modern politics.

Only the other is not that. It is precisely not purely and simply the locus which is this something perfectly organised, fixed, rigid. It is an other which is itself symbolised. This is what gives it its appearance of liberty. It is a fact that it is symbolised, and that what happens at this level of the other of the other, namely of the father in this instance, of the locus where the law is articulated from the point of the perspective of (ou) him, who depends on an other; this other is itself subjected to signifying articulation, more than subjected to signifying articulation, marked by something which is the denaturing effect - let us strongly underline it - of our thinking, of this presence of the signifier which is still far from having arrived at this state of perfect articulation that we take here as a sort of starting hypothesis, simply to illustrate our thought, of this effect of the signifier on the other as such, of this mark of it that it was subjected to at this level.

It is this mark that represents castration as such.

If we have formerly, in the castration-frustration-privation triad, clearly marked in castration that the action is symbolic, that the agent is real, that one needs a real father, that castration exists, that castration, is a symbolic action, and that it bears on something imaginary. We find here the necessity for this: it is in so far as something passes from the real to the level of the law, a more or less inadequate father, it does not matter, or something which replaces him, but something which holds his place, that this is produced: the fact is that there is reflected in the system of demand, in the system of demand where the subject establishes himself, this something which is its background, namely which marks in this system of demand, far from being articulated, far from being perfect, but far from being fully productive or fully used, which marks in its background, this something which is called the effect of the signifier on the subject, the marking of the subject by the signifier, the lack, the dimension of lack introduced into the subject by this signifier.

This lack which is introduced, is symbolised as such in the system of the signifier as being the effect of the signifier on the subject. The signified properly speaking, the signified which does not come as one might say so much from the depths, as if life abounded in significations, but which comes from (16) elsewhere, from language and from the signifier as such, in order to imprint on it this sort of effect which is called signified.

This is symbolised primitively as is indicated by what we have put forward about castration. The fact that what emerges as a support for the symbolic action properly speaking, which is called castration, is an image, an image chosen as one might say in the imaginary system to be its support, this something in which the symbolic action of castration chooses its sign. It is borrowed from the imaginary domain, something in the image of the other is chosen to carry the mark of a lack which is this very lack through which the living being perceives himself, because he is human, namely because he is in relationship with language, perceives himself as excluded from the totality of desires, as something limited, local, as a creature, in this instance as a link in the chain of life, as only being one of those through whom life passes, unlike the animal, who is only effectively one of those who realises the type who in this sense can be considered by us as in relationship to the type, each individual as already dead.

We ourselves are also already that for them. We are already dead with regard to the movement itself, this movement itself of life, which because of language we are capable of projecting in its totality, and even more, in its totality as having arrived at its end.

(18) It is exactly what Freud articulates in the notion of death instinct. He means that for man, life here and now is projected as having arrived at its term, namely at the point at which it

returns to death.

This articulation by Freud of the death instinct, is the articulation of a position essential to an animal being who is caught up and articulated in a signifying system which permits him to dominate his immanence as a living being, and to perceive himself as already dead.

It is exactly what precisely he does only in an imaginary fashion; I mean here as virtual, as at the limit, as speculative. There is no experience of death, of course, which can correspond to it, and this is the very reason that it is symbolised in a different fashion. It is symbolised on this point and on this precise organ where there appears in the most obvious fashion the thrust of life. That is the reason that it is the phallus in so far as it represents simply the rise of vital power which takes its place in the order of signifiers, in order to represent for the human individual in his existence, that which is marked by the signifier, that which is struck by the signifier with this essential caducity in which there can be articulated the signifier itself, this lack of being whose dimension the signifier introduces into the life of the subject.

This is what allows us to understand the order in which things (19) were presented for analysis, once someone simply did not start from academic considerations in order to approach the phenomenon, but simply started with the phenomena as he saw them manifesting themselves in neurotics, a privileged terrain for manifesting this articulation in its essence, simply because of the fact that it shows it in its disorder. And experience has proved that it was always in disorder that we should learn to find rather easily the machinery and the articulations of order.

We can say that what is first given by Freud to an experience, an experience which immediately put in the foreground, promoted to the underpinning of the castration complex as such, this is something which everyone knows, started from the apprehension and the perception of the symptoms of the subject.

What does the symptom mean? Where it is situated in this schema?

It is situated somewhere in $s(0)$, which is produced at the level of signification. It is essentially the whole of what Freud put forward; it is a symptom, it is a signification. A symptom is a signified, it is a signified which is very far from involving only the subject. It is his history, his whole anamnesis that is implied. That is the reason that one can legitimately symbolise it at this place by a little $s(0)$. Which means: a signifier (sic) of the Other coming as such from the locus of the word.

(20) But what Freud taught us also, is that the symptom is never simple: the symptom is always over-determined. There is no symptom whose signifier is not brought from a previous experience, precisely from an experience situated at the level where it is a question of what is suppressed (reprime) and of what is the heart of all that is suppressed in the subject,

namely the castration complex, of this signifier of *fi* which is something which without any doubt is articulated in the castration complex, but which is not necessarily nor always totally articulated there. The famous trauma from which we started, the famous primitive scene, what is it, if it is not precisely something which enters into the economy of the subject, and which operates at the heart, at the horizon of the discovery of the unconscious, always as a signifier, a signifier in so far as it is defined in its incidence as I began to articulate it above, namely that life, I mean the living being grasped as living, *qua* living, but with this separation, this distance which is precisely what constitutes this autonomy of the signifying dimension, the trauma or the primitive scene.

What is it therefore if not this life which grasps itself in a horrible perception of itself, in its total strangeness, in its opaque brutality as pure signifier of an existence intolerable (21) for life itself, once it separates itself from it to see the trauma and the primitive scene. This is what appears of life to itself as signifier in the pure state, namely as something which cannot yet in any fashion be resolved, be articulated. This necessity, this backdrop of the signifier with respect to signified, this is the something which from the beginning, once Freud began to articulate what a symptom is, is implicated by him in the formation of every symptom, and what have we recently seen in the hysteric, if it is not this which permits us to situate where the problem of the neurotic is found?

It is a problem of the relationship of the signifier with his position as subject depending on the demand. It is that in which the hysteric has to articulate something which we will provisionally call her desire, and the object of this desire, in so far precisely as it is not the object of need. That is the reason that I insisted somewhat on what I called the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife.

What is it that we are dealing with? It appears there in quite a clear fashion, and Freud says it in the beginning, from the very dawn of psychoanalysis, that it is a question for the hysteric of setting up, of making the object of desire subsist as distinct and independent from the object of any need.

This relationship to desire, to the constitution, to the (22) maintenance in its enigmatic form of desire as such as a backdrop to every demand, this is the problem of the hysteric, and everyone knows that this, namely if you like something which we have called X, the unsayable desire.

What is the desire of my hysteric? It is that I should open up for her, I will not say the universe, but a whole world which is already vast enough, namely the dimension that can be called the dimension of hysteria latent in every human being in the world, namely everything that can present itself as a question about his own desire.

Here is what the hysteric finds herself communicating with on an

equal footing, first of all of course with everything of this order which can be happening among all her hysterical brothers and sisters, namely that it is on this, as Freud articulates for us, that hysterical identification reposes. To every hysteric there echoes everything which, in actuality, is posed in some others, whether it is as questions about her own desire, especially and in so far as this other is hysterical, but also in so far as it is only a hysterical mode of posing a question in someone who may only occasionally and even in a latent fashion be hysterical.

The world is opened up to the hysteric through this question about her desire; a world of identification which puts her, as one might say, properly speaking in a certain relationship with the mask, I mean with everything which can in any way, fix, (23) symbolise according to a certain type, this question about desire which relates it to the hysteric, let us say here to the appeal to hysterics as such, which makes her essentially identified to a sort of general mask under which stir all the possible modes of lack.

We have now come to the obsessional. The structure of the obsessional, as I am trying to advance in it, I told you, is also designated by a certain relationship with desire which is not this relationship ***V*** which is a different relationship which I already indicated to you as being essential for him, which we will call if you wish, today, d_0 .

The relationship of the obsessional to his desire is subject to something which we have long known, thanks to Freud, namely the precocious role played in him by what is called Triebentmischung, the defusion of the drives, the isolation of something which is called destruction. It is in so far as the first approach of the desire of the obsessional subject was as for every subject, the contribution of the desire of the other, and that this desire of the other was first of all and as such destroyed, cancelled, that the whole structure of the obsessional is entered into, and that it is as such and uniquely through this, I am not saying anything terribly new, in saying that, I am simply articulating it in a new fashion, that it is determined as such and from that starting point.

When you are dealing with obsessionals, and those who are already (24) dealing with them, may know that it is an essential trait of its condition, of its structure, that not only as I already announced and said, his own desire dims, flickers, vacillates and vanishes for him to the degree that he approaches it, carrying here the mark of this: that desire was first approached as something which is to be destroyed because first of all the reaction of the desire of the other was presented to him as something which was his rival, as something which immediately bore the mark to which he reacted with the style of destructive reaction which is the reaction underlying the relationship of the subject to the image of the other as such, to this image of the other in so far as it dispossesses and ruins him.

There is therefore this mark which remains in the approach by the

obsessional to his desire which ensures that every approach makes it vanish.

This is what the author of whom I am speaking, and let us say whom I criticise on occasion in what I am in the process of unfolding before you for the past few lectures, this is what the author perceives in the form of what he calls distance from the object, and which he confuses with something that he calls the destruction of the object. I mean that the idea that he constructs of the psychology of the obsessional is that of someone who has perpetually to protect himself from madness; from madness defined as the destruction of the object.

(25) This is only - I will explain why - a projection by the aforesaid author, of something which is, given the perspective from which he himself operates and wants to get to, to the resolution of this problem of desire in the obsessional along the path where he passes, where he conceives it, not only in function of his inadequacies on the theoretical plane, inadequacies of his thought on the theoretical plane, but also because of personal factors, because this is only a phantasy, a phantasy that in a way is necessary. I will show you how through the imaginary perspective in which he tackles the solution of this problem of desire in the obsessional, but it is obvious, commonplace in experience that there is not in typical obsessionals, the least danger of psychosis, or that you will lead them to it, and I will tell you why when the time comes; I will be able to tell you why, in the measure that matters are articulated in a way which will show you the degree to which an obsessional differs in his structure from a psychotic.

On the contrary, what is perceived in it, precisely although badly expressed, is effectively the following: that the obsessional only maintains himself in a possible relationship with his desire at a distance. What must be maintained for the obsessional, is the distance from his desire, and not the distance from the object. The object, as we shall see, has in this instance a quite different function, and what experience (26) shows us in the clearest fashion, is that precisely he must keep himself at a certain distance from his desire for that desire to subsist. But there is another aspect to this which is the following: it is that in so far as the obsessional - observe this in the clinic and in the concrete - establishes with the other a relationship which, in a certain fashion, is fully articulated at the level of demand, that it is a question of the mother first of all, but in everything else subsequently, and in particular with respect to his spouse, because what does analysis mean for us, what can this term spouse mean, if not something which is fully articulated at the level of things where we try to situate them? It is namely the one with whom in some way or other one must willy-nilly come back to being the whole time in a certain relationship of demand, someone with whom one is all the time, even if one's keeps one's mouth shut on a whole series of things, it is never without pain. The demand demands to be pushed to the limit.

What happens on the plane of the relationships of the obsessional with his spouse? It is very exactly the following which is very subtle to see, as you will notice it, as you will observe it, when you take the trouble to do so. The fact is that the obsessional spends his time destroying the desire of the other. Every approach into the interior, as one might say, of the domain of the obsessional, culminates in the normal case, if one allows (27) oneself be taken in by it in a silent attack, a permanent wearing away which tends in the other, and by the doing of the obsessional, to culminate in the abolition, in the devaluation, in the depreciation of what is his own desire.

These are nuances, terms undoubtedly whose handling demands a certain practice. But outside these terms, nothing else will permit us even to perceive the true nature of what is happening. I already said, I already marked on the other hand in the obsessional's past, in the childhood of the obsessional, the very particular and accentuated character that the articulation of demand precociously takes on for him.

On this schema you are beginning to be able to understand and to situate it, because what I already stressed for you by portraying this little child who is always demanding something, and who, a surprising thing, has this characteristic among all children who in fact spend their time demanding something, of being the one from whom this demand is always felt, and by the best intentioned of those in his entourage, to be strictly speaking unbearable, the demanding (tanant) child, as we say. It is not that he demands more extraordinary things than the others, it is in his way of demanding, it is in the relationship of the subject to demand that there lies this specific or precocious character of the articulation of the demand of the one who already at the time (28) that this manifests itself at the period for example just of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, in what is called the latency period. This is what is in question.

As regards our hysteric, we have seen that to sustain her enigmatic desire, something in her case is used as an artifice, which we can represent, if you wish, by the formation of two parallel and identical tensions at this level of the idealising, identifying formation with the small other. Think of the feeling of Mr. K. for Dora. Every hysteric moreover, in one of the phases of her history, has a similar support which comes to play here the same supportive role as 0.

The obsessional does not take the same route, the same path. He is even centred on the fact that to manage this problem of his desire he must start with different elements, he must start from elsewhere. What I am beginning to show you, is how - precociously and essentially - it is in a certain relationship to his demand that he can in his relationship to the other manifest the specificity and the place, maintain as one might say the necessary distance from that which is possible somewhere, but from a distance, the position of this desire cancelled out in its essence, of this sort of blind desire as one might say, which is the one whose position it is a question of maintaining.

We are going to go over, to circumscribe this relationship of the obsessional to his desire. A first trait of it is this specific (29) relationship of the subject to his demand. There are others.

Let us observe the following. What is obsession? You know the importance of the verbal formula in it, to the point that one can say that the obsession is always something verbalised. On this point Freud had no doubts, even when he is dealing with what one might call latent obsessional behaviour; he considers that it has only revealed its proper structure, in so far as it takes on the form of a verbal obsession. He goes so far as to say that in fact one has only properly articulated the first steps, even in the treatment of an obsessional neurosis, when one has made the subject give to his symptoms, what one calls their whole development, which can present itself clinically as a worsening, and what is involved, is a kind of destruction of all the obsessional forms in something well and truly articulated.

Besides is it necessary to insist on the character of verbal, verbal-style cancellation, which is going to start from the structure of the obsession itself? And everyone knows that what in fact constitutes the essence and its phenomenologically anxiety-provoking power for the subject is this: it is that it is a question of a verbal destruction by the word and by the signifier. The subject finds himself prey to this destruction that is called magical, I do not know why - why not say quite simply verbal? - of the other, which is given in the very (30) structure of the symptom.

This also introduces us to a phenomenology that it is essential to go over in order to understand its necessity.

I would say that just as you have seen here in fact the circuit of the hysteric which culminates on the two planes, namely at an idealisation or identification in the schema at this upper level, which is only the parallel and the symbolisation which occurs on the imaginary plane here. If I allowed myself to use this schema to the limit, I would say that for the obsessional the circuit is more or less something like this, just as we find it here.

I will explain myself: the schema of verbal obsession, this schema which is destructive of the relationship with the other, this fear of causing harm by thoughts, we may as well say by words, because they are spoken thoughts, to the other, this obsession of blasphemy also is something which introduces us to a whole phenomenology which it would be well to dwell on for a little longer.

Blasphemy itself, I do not know if you ever took an interest in it. In itself it is a very good introduction to verbal obsession, this theme of blasphemy.

What does it mean to blaspheme? I would really like some theologian to give me an answer on this point. Let us say

undoubtedly that it is something which causes the collapse of an outstanding signifier regardingg which it is a question of seeing at what level of signifying authorisation as one might say, where (31) there is undoubtedly situated its relationship with that supreme signifier which is called the unknown (meconnu) Father, it is absolutely not to be confused (with it) even if it plays a homologous role, that God has a relationship with signifying creation as such, is not to be doubted, and that blasphemy in its essence is something which is absolutely situated only in this dimension, namely in something which causes the collapse of the signifier to the rank of object, which identifies in a way the logos with its metonymical effect, which makes it go down a notch, is something which doubtless is not the right answer, the complete answer to the question of blasphemy, but it is undoubtedly an essential approach for what is involved in obsession, verbal sacrilege, I mean in the phenomenon which is established in the obsessional.

Remember the episode of the Ratman, this furious anger against his father which possessed him at the age of four, if I remember rightly, where he began to roll around on the ground crying out: "You towel, you plate, etc..." As always it is again in Freud that we find the most colossally exemplary things, a real collision and collusion between the essential thou of the other and this something inert, this collapsing effect as one might say of the introduction of the signifier into the human world which is called an object, and especially an inert object, an object in (32) so far as it is only of itself an object of exchange, of equivalence, also moreover the whole litany of the child's rage sufficiently indicates it: it is not a question of knowing whether he is a lamp, a plate or a towel, it is a question of the thou dropping, being destroyed to the rank of object.

You will tell me that what is in question in this destruction of the other in verbal obsession is something, and I hope you will permit me to end with this, because we will be obliged to remain there for today, I would say that this something which is happening here and whose whole structure we will see the next time, this something which brings it about that it is only in a certain signifying articulation that the obsessional subject manages to preserve the other, that the destructive effect towards which he aspires, to sustain him thanks to a signifying articulation, and think about this, you find here the very texture of this world that the obsessional lives in, the obsessional is a man who lives in the signifier, he is very solidly installed in it, there is absolutely nothing to fear, this signifier suffices for him to preserve the dimension of the other but it is a dimension which is in a way idolatrised, and its schema gives us this theme which I recall to you from the observation on the Ratman, I would say that French allows us to articulate it in a way which moreover I began here once, it will not be a surprise for you, at the level of the relationship to (33) the other, and of the thou which begins here; what the subject articulates to the other is a: "Thou art the one who 's me." (Tu es celui qui me)

And for the obsessional it stops there. The full word which is that in which there is articulated the engagement of the subject in a fundamental relationship with the other cannot be completed except by this sort of repetition which a humorist portrayed in the famous "to be or not", and the chap scratches his head in order to be able to continue: "to be or not", "to be or not " And it is in repeating that he finds the end of the sentence: "Thou art the one who 's me", "Thou art the one who 's me", "Thou art the one who kills me". (Tu es celui qui me tues)

The French tongue here gives us this fundamental schema of this relationship with the other. This relationship with the other is founded on an articulation which in a way is itself formed on the destruction of the other, but because of the fact that it is articulation, and signifying articulation, makes him subsist.

It is within this articulation that we are going to see what is this relationship, this place of the signifying phallus as regards being it and as regards having it, the thing we stopped at at the end of this last session, which will allow us to see the difference that there is between the solution which would allow the obsessional to be shown what- is truly involved in his relationship to the phallus qua signifier of the desire of the other, or of satisfying it in a sort of imaginary mirage of conceding to the demand for symbolisation by the analysis of the imaginary phantasy, this something in whose dimension as you know this whole observation unfolds, that which consists in fact in saying to the woman: "You have a penis envy? Well then... " as Mr. Casimir Perier said to a chap stuck up against a lamp post, a little bit disturbed, : "What to you want?" And the chap replies: "Liberty!" - "Well then you have it", said Casimir Perier to him, and he passes between his legs, and goes off leaving him completely stunned. It is perhaps not exactly what we can expect from an analytic solution. The very termination of this observation, this kind of euphoric, intoxicated identification of the subject, the description which completely includes a masculine ideal found in the analyst, is perhaps something which brings to the subject a change of equilibrium, but certainly not the one which is the genuine response to the question of the obsessional.

Seminar 27 : Wednesday 25 June 1958

We arrived the last time at the point at which we tried to begin to designate concentrically the constellation of the desire of the obsessional, and I announced to you for today that within what I began to approach in speaking to you about the position of demand in the obsessional, this demand so precociously felt by the other as having this special accent of insistence which makes it so difficult to tolerate; on the other hand this need for the destruction of the desire of the other in the obsessional; in the same way also something which already began our propositions for today, namely the function of certain phantasies.

It is obviously not in vain that in the work of the author whom I chose to take as a basis, less for a critique in the polemical sense of the word, than of a critique in the sense of a (2) systematic analysis, an examination of what emerges from it, of what the author himself articulates, it is not in vain that this phallic phantasy in the form, specifically in the 1950 article (Revue Française de Psychanalyse, No. 2, 1950, April-June), namely therefore in this article, this phallic phantasy appears in the form of the special examination of the importance that penis envy takes on in a woman during the analysis of an obsessional neurotic.

It is obviously not all the things that I am teaching you, among them naturally the importance of the signifier phallus, which can be used as proof that an exaggerated importance is given here to this element. It is a question of seeing how it is being used, and it is not a question either of course, of engaging in the facile little game of criticising the outcome of a treatment which moreover is presented as incomplete, and of judging from outside something into which one has not entered.

Simply in this observation, the important thing is that nothing that I put before you as an element marking, in some way let us say the hesitations of the direction, indeed a direction frankly opposed to the one that might appear logical to us. If we do it, it is never - I mean it is not beginning from the observation itself considered as a succession and account of facts - but beginning from the articulations of the author himself, I mean: either from the questions that he poses himself, which you can always find expressed at the proper place, because of course the

(3) property of the human spirit called common sense, in particular, is indeed as has been rightly said, and not without irony, the least common thing in the world, and there is no doubt that what creates an obstacle for us here has already been an obstacle in the minds of the authors, and what is more it is a fact that in this observation, these obstacles are fully articulated. There are interrogations; I would say even more: there are remarks concerning the paradoxical outcome, the non-emergence of what was being sought for. There are finally contradictions to which the author himself does not give all the importance that they should have, but which undoubtedly can be qualified as such because they are written in black and white in his text.

Therefore to come to what we are going to try to formulate today concerning what constitutes the general direction of this treatment, the fashion in which it is articulated, we are going first of all to try to go to the heart of the matter, namely to pose the difference that exists between something which presents itself as articulated and not as articulatable, and then what is aimed at and effectively done.

Let us take our schema as a starting point, and let us begin by making of it the locus of a certain number of positions that it fully constitutes, which will also allow us to situate ourselves on what we have the most familiar knowledge of, and which is (4) found represented there in a certain order and a certain topology.

What - asking the question once more - is this signifying line, the line at the top of our schema? It is a signifying line, we have said, in that it is structured like a language. On the other hand although it is structured like a language, it is precisely the sort of sentence that the subject cannot articulate, and that we should help him to articulate.

How is it situated in this schema? How can we understand it? What it structures is in fact, we are going to say, the totality of the neurosis, neurosis being here identical, not to an object, to a sort of parasite, to something which would be foreign to the personality of the subject, but which is precisely the whole analytic structure of his acts, of his behaviour.

In short, in the measure that the progress of our conception of neurosis advanced, we perceived that it is made up not only of decomposable elements in its signifying elements, in the signified effects of this signifier, because this is the way that I learned to retranslate what Freud articulates, but that the whole of his personality in a certain fashion bears the mark of these structural relationships, is something that goes well beyond what the word personality involves in a kind of first (5) acceptance, its static nature, namely in what is called character. It is not that, it is personality in the sense that it designates in its behaviour, in its relationships to the other and to others, a certain movement which is always found to be the same, a scansion, a certain mode of passage from the other to the

other; and indeed to an other who is always and continually rediscovered which forms the basis, the modulation if you wish, of obsessional action.

This means that all obsessional behaviour, and moreover even hysterical, if we say that it is structured like a language, I would say that this does not mean that beyond the articulated language which is called discourse, it is something which, taking all the acts of the subject, would have this sort of equivalence to language which exists in what is called a gesture, because a gesture is not simply a well-defined movement, the gesture is signifying. This would not be sufficient for what it includes; one could almost employ the expression in French, which fits perfectly, of: une geste in the sense that it is employed in the chanson de geste, the geste de Roland, namely the sum of his history.

When all is said and done it is, if you wish, a word, and in a certain fashion the sum total of the neurotic's behaviour presents itself as a word, and even as a full word, I would say, in the sense that we have seen the primitive mode of this full (6) word which takes shape in the form of a discourse, of a full word also, but of a word in the entirely cryptographic sense, unknown to the subject as regards its meaning, even though in fact he pronounces it with all his being, by everything that he manifests, by everything that he evokes and has ineluctably realised along a certain path of achievement and non-achievement, if nothing intervenes in it which is of the order and oscillation of what is called analysis; therefore a word pronounced by this barred subject, this subject barred to himself which we call consciousness.

It is this that we represent in the form of a sign. Here it is indeed this that is in question. In sum what you see being discerned in this distinction that we are in the process of making, is that we have defined the Other with a capital O as the locus of the word, the Other establishes itself and takes shape by the sole fact that the subject speaks. Because he uses the word, this big Other comes to birth as the locus of the word. This does not mean that for all that it is realised as subject in its alterity. The Other is invoked every time there is a word.

I think that I do not need to go back on this. I already insisted enough on it, but then this beyond which you see here, which is precisely the one which is articulated in the top line of our schema, is in sum the other of the other. It is this word which is articulated at the horizon of the other as such, (7) it is this other of the other that is in question, and regarding which we will say that there is no reason why this other of the other, namely the locus where the word of the other is delineated as such, should be closed to us. It is even the principle of the intersubjective relationship as such, that this Other as locus of the word, is immediately and effectively given as subject, namely as a subject which thinks of us ourselves as his other. Here we have the principle of all strategy. When you play chess with someone, you attribute to him as many

calculations as you make.

Why, because we therefore dare to say that this other of the Other, which should be the most transparent element for us, is given in a way along with the dimension of the Other, that it is in this very other of the Other that the discourse of the unconscious is articulated, this articulated thing which is not articulatable by us. Why must we do it? Why have we a right to do it?

It is extremely simple: this other to whom in experience and because of the conditions of human life, which ensure that human life precisely is pledged to the condition of the word, this other to whom we are submitted by the condition of demand, we do not know what our demand means to him, and why do we not know it? What gives him this opacity?

(8) Now the things I am saying here are obvious: but still obvious things whose data are precisely not the least useful things to articulate. We are always happy to obscure them in the guise of premature objectifications. Why is it therefore that we do not know how this other is going to receive our demand? In other words, why in our strategy is he going to become, and realise this paradoxical position of his discourse?

That is what I mean when I tell you that the unconscious is the discourse of the Other. This is what happens virtually at this horizon of the other of the Other, in so far as it is there that the word of the Other is produced, and this word of the Other in so far as it becomes our unconscious, namely something which comes to be presentified in us necessarily by the simple fact that in this locus of the word we bring alive an other capable of responding to us. That is the very reason why he is opaque to us, it is because there is something in him that we do not know, and which separates us from his response to our demand, and it is nothing other than what is called his desire.

This is enough to make us perceive something immediately, it is that the essential point of this remark which is only apparently obvious, takes its value in function of the following: that this desire precisely is situated there between the Other as pure and (9) simple locus of the word, and the other qua being of flesh and blood at whose mercy we are for the satisfaction of our demand. But that this desire is situated there, is precisely what conditions its relationship with something which is precisely of the order of the word, which is this symbolisation of the action of the signifier on the subject as such, this thing which makes in fact what we call a subject, which we symbolise with this soi-même; I mean what is called in an elegant English word, the fact of saying it in English, of isolating it allows what it means to be well distinguished, it is the self, namely what is irreducible in this presence of the individual to the world, this something becomes subject properly speaking, and a barred subject in the sense that we symbolise it, in so far as it is marked by

this condition which subordinates it, not just to the Other qua locus of the word, it is the subject defined as a moment, not of a certain relationship to the world, of a relationship of the eye to the world, of the subject-object relationship which is that of knowledge in the subject in so far as it comes to birth at the moment of the emergence of the human individual into the conditions of the word, and in so far therefore as he is marked, as I told you, by the other, not just simply qua locus of the word, but as itself. This other is conditioned and marked by (10) these conditions of the word.

What do we see therefore at this horizon rendered opaque in this way by the obstacle of the desire of the Other? This is the thing which refers the subject thus marked back to his own demand, which puts him in a certain relationship, the relationship designated here by the symbol of a little diamond which I explained for you the last day, to his demand, in so far very precisely as the Other, as one might say no longer answers as they say. Here the big O no longer answers, something which is very celebrated under other initials. At the level of the subject, what tends to be produced at the horizon, is this confrontation, this reference back of the subject to his own demand in the forms as one might say of signifiers that are englobing with respect to the subject, these signifiers of which the subject himself becomes the sign. It is at the horizon of this non-response of the Other that we see being taking shape in analysis, and in so far precisely as at first the analyst, in so far as he comes at first to be nothing other than the locus of the word, than an ear which listens and which does not reply, is going in fact to push the subject to detach himself, to oppose himself to something which experience will show you as showing up in filigree in his discourse, namely precisely these forms of demand which appear in the form of what we call the anal phase, the oral phase, whatever kind of phase you wish, but which is characterised in a way by what? What do we mean when we speak of (11) these phases? Let us not forget all the same that our subject does not progressively return before our eyes to the state of a suckling. We are not involved in some sort of fakir-like operation. I think you would have to see the subject going back through time and reducing himself in the end to the seed which engendered him. What is in question, are signifiers. What we call the oral phase, the anal phase, is the fashion in which the subject articulates his demand by the appearance in his discourse, here in the largest sense, in all the ways in which his neurosis makes itself present before us, of signifiers which have been formed at one or other stage of his development, which were the signifiers which were of service to him either in the more recent, or in the oldest phases for articulating his demand.

What is called in other words, fixation for example, is the prevalence kept by one or other form of oral, anal or other signifier, with all the nuances that you have learned to articulate. That is what this means, it is the special importance that certain signifying systems have kept, and which is called regression. This is what happens, in so far as the signifiers are rejoined by the opening therefore to the discourse

of the subject, precisely of this, to be simply qua word, without there being anything special to demand, it takes shape in the dimension of the demand, and this is the reason why the whole (12) perspective on what the subject lived from his earliest and most tender childhood, namely precisely the condition of the demand, is retroactively covered.

It is a question of knowing what we make of this regression. That is the whole question. We are there to answer it, or to say what happens when we do not answer it, and what else we can do. This is the goal that is worth reaching.

Here I point out to you in passing that in sum the signifiers which are involved here in this regression of discourse, should therefore be considered as being in the structure of the discourse itself, since it is always there moreover that we discover them, in these two successive signifying lines:

$$\begin{array}{c} S_1 \dots S_2 \dots S_3 \dots S_4 \dots \\ \hline s_1 \dots s_2 \dots s_3 \dots s_4 \dots \end{array}$$

the significations being always produced according to the law of the signifying chain. If you wish, these two things are equivalent because of an anticipation of the signifying succession, every signifying chain opening out before it the horizon of its own completion, and at the same time by a retroaction, once there has come naturally the signifying term which, as one might say, overtakes the sentence, which means that what it produced at the level of the signified always has what (13) one might call this retroactive function. Here S_2 already takes shape once S_1 has started, and is only completed when S_4 retroacts on S_1 . The signifier and the signification are always out of phase to a certain degree, that is even what gives to every signification, in so far as it is not a natural signification, not linked to this completely momentary outline of the agency of need in the subject, which makes of it this something which is essentially metonymical, namely always linked to what links the signifying chain in itself to what constitutes it as such, to those links, to those knots which we can here precisely call momentary, and to distinguish them from a certain sigma if you wish, namely this beyond of the signifying chain to which we attempt to reduce it, these signifiers precisely that we find in this confrontation of the subject to demand, in this sort of reduction of his discourse to these elementary signifiers which we discern in filigree in everything that we evoke, and which is precisely what forms the basis of our experience, that through which we rediscover the same structural laws in all the behaviour of the subject, in the mode in which he expresses it to us sometimes, even down to its very scansion, to the motor fashion that he articulates it, in as much as a stuttering, a stammering, or any stumbling over words as I expressed it elsewhere, can be significant for us of something which, (14) fundamentally, is of the order of a signifier of demand as

an oral or an anal lack.

What does this already permit us to conceive of in passing? That this is really what is in question, and is what ensures as a little study group, directed by the most friendly of my colleagues, namely Lagache, discovered with an astonishment which must have been motivated by a kind of permanent misunderstanding, namely that in all the places where in French we see the word instinct, the fact is that in referring to the German text, and this was one of the surprises for this group, nothing other is ever found than the term Trieb; Trieb, or pulsion, as we translate it, and in truth pulsion rather obscures things. The English term is "drive", and if we wished to find something in French, we have scarcely anything which allows us, given the true sense of Trieb, to translate it. I would say that it is a word that would have to be chosen among scientific words and which is tropism, which is specially constructed to designate the irresistible elements of certain attractions considered as irreducible to physico-chemical attraction as it is exercised in animal behaviour, and which would allow us precisely to exercise the more or less finalistic aspect that there is in the term instinct. I would say that it is something which when all is (15) said and done is also of this order that we encounter here in our Freudian notion of Trieb. Let us translate it if you wish, by the French word attirance which I used just now to talk about those tropisms except for the fact that what would be in question here, is something which situates the human subject in a certain necessary dependence on something which of course - I cannot say that the human being is not the obscure subject in gregarious forms of organic attraction towards the element of climate for example, or something of a different nature; it is obviously not there that our own interest develops, in the field that we are called on to explore in analysis, it is something which makes us speak of these different oral, anal, genital, and other phases, and what do we see?

The fact is that in analytic theory, there is a certain necessity, a certain relationship which puts him in a relationship of subordination, of dependency, of organisation and attraction with respect to what? To signifiers borrowed from what? From the register, from the battery of a certain number of his own organs.

It means nothing else to say that an oral or an anal fixation survives in an adult subject, if it is not precisely to make it depend on what? On a certain imaginary relationship. But without any doubt what we in addition articulate here, is that this is raised to the function of signifier. If it were not (16) isolated as such, mortified as such, it could not have the economic action that it has in the subject, for a very simple reason, which is that images as such are never linked except precisely to the arousal or the satisfaction of need. This even does not fail to be expressed on occasions, when it is a question purely and simply of need; if the subject remains in a way attached to these images, outside their text, both oral ones, where there is no question of food, and anal ones where there is

no question of excrement, it is all the same because these images have indeed taken on another function. It is the signifying function that is in question. The drive as such, is precisely the manageable expression of concepts which are valid for us, and which are precisely those which express to us this dependence of the subject with regard to a certain signifier.

What is important is this: it is that this desire of the subject encountered as the beyond of the demand, is what makes him opaque to our demand and what also installs his own discourse as something which is absolutely necessary for our structure, but which is in certain aspects impenetrable for us, which makes of it an unconscious discourse.

This desire therefore which is its condition, is itself submitted to the existence of a certain effect of the signifier, which I explained to you at the beginning of this year, I mean beginning in January, under the name of the paternal metaphor. This (17) signifies that it is in so far as the name of the father appears on the horizon, qua itself being the support of the signifying chain, of the order established by the signifying chain; it is uniquely in so far as this metaphor of the primitive desire, of the opaque desire, of the obscure desire which represents the desire of the mother is established, of this something which first of all is completely closed off for the subject, and which can only remain closed off except because of the formula of the metaphor, namely the one that I already symbolised by the relationship of two signifiers, one being in two different positions

$$\frac{S}{S'} \quad \frac{S'}{X}$$

the name of the father over the desire of the mother, and the desire of the mother over its symbolisation.

Its determination as a signified is something which is produced by a metaphorical effect, and I told you, that where the name of the father is lacking, is precisely where this metaphorical effect is not produced. I cannot manage to bring to birth this thing which causes to be designated the X, namely the desire of the mother as being properly the signifier phallus:

$$S \quad \frac{(S)}{(phallus)}$$

This indeed is what happens in psychosis, in so far as the name of the father is rejected, I mean is the object of a primitive (18) Verwerfung which does not enter into the cycle of signifiers, and it is also why the desire of the other and in particular the desire of the mother, is not symbolised in it. It is very precisely that which on this schema, if we had to represent the position of psychosis, would make us say that this desire as such, I do not mean qua existing, everyone knows that even the mothers of psychotics have a desire, even though it is not always sure, but undoubtedly it is not symbolised in the system of the subject, and its not being symbolised, is what

allows us to see what we see, namely that for the psychotic the word of the Other does not pass in any way into his unconscious; the Other speaks to him unceasingly, the Other qua the locus of the word. This does not necessarily mean you or I, it means more or less the sum of what is offered to him as a field of perception. This field naturally speaks to him about us, and also to take an example, the first one to come to mind, the well known one, the one repeated last night by Stein [?] in what he told us, that in delusions the red colour of a car can mean that he is immortal. Everything speaks to him because nothing of the symbolic organisation destined to dispatch the other to where he ought to be, namely to his unconscious, nothing of that order is realised, and that is why I could say, the Other speaks in a fashion that is entirely homogeneous to this first primitive word (19) which is that of the demand. That is why everything is sonorised, that the Id which is in the unconscious for the neurotic subject speaks, is outside for the psychotic subject. That the Id speaks, and that it speaks aloud in the most natural fashion, is not a cause for astonishment. If the Other is the locus of the word, it is there that the Id speaks (c;a parle), and resounds from every side.

Naturally we find the extreme case at the point of the outbreak of the psychosis, where as I have always formulated it for you, what is Verworft, or rejected from the symbolic, reappears in the real. This real which is in question, is precisely the hallucination in this case, that is to say the Other in so far as he speaks. It is always in the Other of course that the Id speaks, but here it takes on the form of the real. The psychotic subject does not doubt it: it is the other who is speaking to him, and speaks to him through every possible signifier, and it is enough to stoop down to collect them by the shovelfull in the human world. Advertisements, etc., everything that surrounds us has a character marked by the signifier. The character of loosening, of dissolution is more or less great according to the state of the psychosis. Everything that we see, and what Freud articulates for us as being the reason why the psychosis is organised, is articulated, being constructed precisely to supply for this absence in its organised point, I mean depending on the signifying structure of the desire of the Other, because what do the most benign forms of psychosis present (20) us with, if it is not of course fundamentally, and right at the extreme state of dissolution, a pure and simple discourse of the Other, namely that that comes to be stressed here in the form of signification, namely as I showed you two years ago, these very curious sorts of decompositions of the word which, by the very structure of what is presented to us here - I could not show it to you then - necessarily proved themselves to be a message-code (code de messages). On the code what is sent back from O is then all that the subject has at his disposition to vivify the discourse of the Other.

You remember Schreber, the fundamental tongue, every word which is given to him involves in itself this kind of definition whose advent comes about with the giving of the word itself. It is a message code on the code, and inversely these phrases: "How is it that..... " , "You only have to" .

Perhaps he will want, and again will want too much in the sentence. But that is all there is, namely a series of messages which only aim at what in the code refers to the messenger, that which in the code designates these particles, these personal pronouns, these auxiliary verbs, designates the place of the messenger.

This can be strictly referred back to this graph. I do not want to say too much, you will see it in my article on the psychoses which is going to appear, where I have made a sort of synthesis (21) of my course two years ago and the one I am giving you this year. I do not want to insist on it now, what I want to say to you in this connection, is that it is quite evident that something like the delusion of jealousy as Freud himself articulated it as the subject's negation of the "I love him", the "I love him" being less the homosexual subject than the fellow subject, who is of course homosexual as such; Freud says: "It is not me that he loves, it is her." What does that mean, if it is not precisely that the delusions (desire) of jealousy, in so far as they create an obstacle to this pure and simple unloosing of the word, of interpretation, is precisely the thing that he is trying to restore, to reestablish, the desire of the Other, the structure of the delusions (desire) of jealousy, is precisely to attribute to the Other a desire which is this sort of desire that is outlined, delineated in the imaginary, which is that of the subject. It is attributed to the Other: "It is not me that he loves, the subject, the rival, it is my spouse." As psychotic I try to establish in the Other this desire which is very precisely this function, this essential relationship which is not given because I am psychotic, because nowhere has there been produced this essential metaphor which gives to the desire of the Other this primordial signifier, this signifier which is called the signifier phallus, and whose use we are now going to see in connection with what is done for this patient.

(22) It remains however that there is something rather obscure in admitting this signifier phallus as being essential, and in a certain way preferential with respect to all sorts of other objects, which besides we see playing a homologous role on occasion, the equivalences which have been made between the signifier phallus and the excremental signifier for example, the signifier exactly the tip of the breast, the object of every suckling, certainly exist. Which means that what makes it privileged is that it is open to all sorts of equivalences. It can be very difficult for us to perceive what. It is very obviously this something which puts it in a certain place with respect to something which has the highest functions in the relationship of the individual to the species, namely what is called the genital phase.

Of course. But it is precisely for that reason that it is more especially dependent than any other on a function of significance, the fact is that the other objects, the maternal breast, or that part of the body which in the form of excrement, sometimes appear as being able to be the occasion for the subject of an essential loss. All that, is something which up to a

certain degree is given on the outside, qua object. It is a currency, as one might say, in the loving exchange, which of course needs to pass to the state of signifier to act as means, but nevertheless just like pieces of lava or shells which serve in certain tribes who precisely are far away from objects of (23) exchange, it is nevertheless something which already exists in the natural order.

Note carefully that for the phallus, however, things are not quite the same, because in the end for the phallus in its real organic form, the penis, or the something which corresponds to it in the woman, after all much more is required than for the predetermined objects, for the subject to make an object of it, and whether in phantasy or otherwise, a detachable object. We can never insist enough on the enigmatic articulation that is involved in the castration complex or penis envy, namely that this something which is after all well and truly something which belongs to the body, and which after all nothing threatens any more than any other member, or arm, or leg, even the nose or the ear, this element which after all is only a pleasure-point on one's body.

This is how the subject first discovers it. Masturbatory auto-eroticism which in effect plays such a major role in the history of the subject, is not at all of a nature, as you know, in itself to unloose such catastrophes, as we know from experience, in so far, and to the degree that the organ as such is not taken up precisely into the signifying interplay, into the paternal metaphor, into the maternal or paternal interdiction. In other words, it is precisely because this organ which at the beginning (24) is nothing other for the subject, and in so far as it only has as a relationship to himself, than a pleasure-point in his own body, certainly much less subject to caducity than all the other elements which took on the role of signifier in his previous demand, that this element, this point of his body, of his organic relationship to himself, is more than any other, only the hold of a metaphorical chain in the paternal metaphor, specifically as such, which must play its role in order to make of it a signifier which at the same time becomes an altogether privileged signifier of this relationship to the other of the other, which makes of it an altogether central signifier of the unconscious.

So that we grasp that the whole dimension that the analysis of this subject has opened up for us, was precisely this something new, this something completely unexpected compared to everything that had been formulated up to then, which shows us, if I can really articulate what I mean to say here, that it is in so far as this thing is only an organ with which the subject entertains relationships which after all are innocent; let us not forget that in our brother species, the monkeys, it is enough for you to have gone to one of the little moats which surround a certain platform of the zoo at Vincennes, to see with what tranquillity into which we would be wrong to project our own anxieties onto this honest and courageous tribe of baboons and others who spend (25) their day playing with their reddened sexual organs without

worrying in the least what their neighbours are going to think, except to help them on occasion in their collective enjoyment.

You can see all the same the world of difference there is between this relationship of a certain animal species more or less upright in stature to what is hanging from the bottom of his belly, and that which in man all the same makes, essentially and primitively of the phallus, and historically of the phallus the object of a cult, which means that it is linked for us from the earliest times to something which makes of erection as such, a signifier, and which makes us all realise that it is not for nothing that in our very ancient cultures, the raised stone has all its import, all its incidence as a signifier in the groupings of the human collectivity.

Therefore this role of the phallus here is fundamental, essential, it is its passage, its emergence which is certainly not primordial, but dependent on something else, its metaphorical emergence to the rank of signifier, which is that on which there is going to depend any possible situating of the desire of the Other as such, in so far as the subject must find in it the place of his own desire. It is within the accidents of the encounter of the desire of the subject with this desire of the Other in so far as it is at the level of the desire of the Other that he must manage to signify his desire, it is there and it is very naturally there of course, that we are going to see the (26) signifier phallus functioning, and that we are going to see that the subject, the subject placed in atypical, abnormal, deficient, pathological conditions, the neurotic, but nevertheless in a complete and not an uncompleted constellation, that would make him a psychotic, namely before the four cardinal points that are posed of the definition of desire, is going to have to develop himself.

The obsessional, we have said, is the one in whom in this relationship to the desire of the Other there is found primordially, primitively, the defusion of instincts. It is by finding himself in a position such that the first outcome, the initial outcome, the one which is going to condition all his subsequent difficulties, is going to be that this desire of the Other is cancelled out.

What does that mean, if we give its full meaning to what we have just said?

To cancel out the desire of the Other, is not the same thing as having through the lack, the deficiency of the metaphorical signifying act of the father, of the name of the father, been incapable of grasping the desire of the Other. On the other hand, in a more or less delusional real, the desire of the Other is established, it is symbolised, it is even symbolised by the phallus, but it is denied as such. The primitive relationship of the obsessional subject to his own desire is something which is founded on the denegation of the desire of the Other. The term Verneinung as such applies here in the sense in which (27) precisely Freud shows us its two aspects, that it is

articulated, symbolised, but secondly it is provided with a "no" sign.

Here is something before which the obsessional finds himself confronted as the very basis of his position, and the one to which he must respond by formulas of substitution, of compensation. I am not saying anything new here, I am simply applying the triad put forward by all the authors about the formation of the obsessional: cancellation, isolation, defensive reaction. It is this that I am in the process of re-articulating for you. Simply notice the following: that to be able to speak about cancellation of anything at all at the level of the subject, it must be a question of the signifier, because one cannot cancel anything which is not a signifier. There is not the least trace of cancellation, that is even conceivable, at the animal level, and if we find something which resembles it, we will say that there are the beginnings of symbolic formation, but the term cancellation which is not simply there what I spoke to you about when it was a question of the effacing of a track, but on the contrary the taking up of something elementary and signifying within the parenthesis of something which says that it is not, but which saying that it is not, puts it forward all the same as signifying. It is indeed always essentially the signifier that is in question.

In fact it is indeed this that is in question, if the obsessional is led to cancel so many things, it is because they are things (28) which are formulated.

Things that are formulated, means what? We know very well: it is a demand, only it is a demand for death, and every one knows that a demand for death, especially when it is precocious, having for result precisely the destruction of the Other, and in the first place the desire of the Other, naturally destroying with the Other at the same time everything within which the subject may himself be able to articulate himself, it is all the more necessary to isolate the parts of the discourse which can be conserved compared to those parts of the discourse which must absolutely be effaced and cancelled, in order that the subject should not be at the same time be himself destroyed. And it is at this perpetual game of yes and no, of separation, of sorting out, of what in the word, in his demand itself destroys him compared to what can conserve him, which is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Other as such, because the Other only exists as such at the level of signifying articulation.

It is in this contradiction that the obsessional subject is constantly caught, and this indeed as you know is what constantly preoccupies him precisely to maintain the Other, to maintain the subsistence of the Other with respect to all these language formulations with which he more than anyone else is preoccupied, and which are precisely established here to sustain the Other who is perpetually in danger of collapsing, of succumbing under the (29) demand for death; this Other who is nevertheless the essential condition for his maintenance of himself as subject. He could not even subsist as a subject if this Other as such were effectively cancelled out.

While if anything presents itself at the signifying level as being very especially cancelled out, namely that which marks the place of the desire of the Other as such, namely the phallus, if here the d_e which I spoke to you about the last time, which situates the desire of the obsessional, is something which is equivalent to the cancellation of the phallus, we really sense that in effect it is around something which has the closest relationship with this signifier that everything is going to be played out.

What I am in the process of explaining to you, the division which is presented between a coherent method, one which would take into account this function of the phallus as signifier, and the one which for lack of having elucidated it, is reduced to groping around something which in effect operates around this signifier phallus in the subject, here is what this difference consists in, here is what will be for you the golden rule, if you take the trouble to read this article which I have referred you to, at the risk of an excessive demand for it, but perhaps this risk is not too great, the demand for the aforesaid number in the Presses Universitaires.

This rule which will allow you to discern what is done in a certain fashion by this conduct of the treatment from something (30) different, resides in the following: what does a full, complete relationship of a subject to his own desire involve on this basis and on these premises? The subject, I have told you, the human subject, in so far as he must assume as human subject, and not just as animal, his genital desire, must realise as essential signifier of his desire, the function of the signifier phallus. It is because the signifier phallus is there in the circuit, in the circuit of the unconscious articulation of the subject, that the human subject can be human even when he copulates.

This does not mean that on occasion the human subject cannot copulate like an animal, it is even a sort of ideal which trembles somewhere in the depths of the hopes of every human subject. I do not know if it happens very frequently; some people have boasted of having arrived at it. I do not see why one would not believe them, but it is of little importance.

For us, what we know, experience has simply shown us, that it is subject to much greater difficulties, and these difficulties are signifying difficulties. This also explains to you for example the perpetual ambiguities which occur in connection with: has one reached the genital or the phallic stage? At a given moment has the child arrived at the genital stage before the latency period, or is it simply a phallic stage?

(31) That is what it revolves around. Perhaps things would be less obscure if it were perceived that the phallic stage in this instance simply means the following: access to the level of the signification of genital desire. The two things are different when, in a first approach it was said that the child only managed to accede to the phallic stage, this was probably true, although

of course one can argue about auto-erotic activity, whether or not it is properly speaking genital. It is also true after all, but what is important in any case for us, what has an essential incidence, is not the characteristic that is more or less physiologically characterised as genital, it seems to appear in effect as the representative of a first surge of physiological evolution, the question is about its structuring on the phallic plane, and this is what is decisive for the subsequent course of the neurosis.

After all, what is in question? What is in question is that if it is true as I have told you that something must be realised at the level of the unconscious, which is equivalent as one might say to a full word, namely there where discourse is articulated at the locus of the Other, and returns as a signified to the subject, by involving the ego of the subject as such, which the subject of himself had concretely located in relation to the image of the other. Here any kind of completion of unconscious (32) articulation means nothing other than this: that this circuit which begins from the confrontation of the subject to his completed demand, is formulated in a desire articulated as such, satisfying for the subject, to which the subject is identical, and which comes to culminate at a certain place in this circuit, at the place which is precisely the place of the other qua human being marked by language, qua human being marked by the proper drama of the castration complex, qua really an other myself, and comes here, I would not say to formulate himself in an "I am identical to the phallus", but precisely the contrary, not: "I am the phallus" but "I am at the very place it occupies in the chain, in the signifying articulation." The meaning of Wo Es war, soli Ich werden is that it is in so far as the subject caught up in the movement of the signifier must come to conceive that that to which he had been precociously confronted, this signifier of desire which withdrew from him the total object of the mother, this phallus, he is not it, but that he is subjected to the necessity which brings it about that this phallus occupies a certain place that the subject has come to realise, that he is not it, and that starting from there and only starting from there, he can accept what had been everywhere the process profoundly put in question, namely to know if he has it or if he does not have it, and accepts to have it when he has it, and not to have it when he does not have it.

It is here at this place, and in the articulation of the basic (33) signifying chain, in the elucidation of this relationship of the subject to the phallus, in so far as he is not it, but that he must come to its place, that an ideal completion such as the one that Freud articulates in the Wo Es war, soli Ich werden is conceivable.

This is the necessary condition for us to orient our interventions and our technique, this will be the object of my seminar next year, which I will call properly speaking: "Desire and its interpretation", how one can do it. Such are the directions and the directives which allow us to see the modes of access to this last message the one in which the Freudian

formula, with its lapidary presocratic turn, is articulated, that the object of what we will try to articulate next year, will be what happens, everything that happens that is different to that, it is very precisely what neurosis or any other anomalous form of evolution, realises spontaneously, what neurosis in the case of obsessional neurosis, realises, just as the place of desire situated in a profound uncertainty in the hysteric and fixed by the hysteric through a certain detour which he or she describes on the model of what permits him or her to situate their ego.

The hysteric, like every subject, well knows that it is by a certain detour, and in so far as she fixes herself with respect (34) to the image of the other, that she finds that she has fixed the place of her ego, the place of desire. She obtains it in exactly the same way at the upper level as one might say, as if the hysteric separates herself, turns herself away from the other and from the signified of the other, manages to situate herself in a certain ideal type, in a certain image to which she identifies herself. It is likewise by an analogous detour, as I explained to you already, that Dora identified herself to Mr. K. She finds the place of this desire whose point she is trying to situate, namely how can one, if it is a woman, desire a woman when one is impotent. This is the case for Dora.

For the obsessional, the procedure is the same, except that just as it is at the level of the ideal of the mask of identification that the hysteric tries to locate the difficulties of her position, it is on the contrary on what can be called the stronghold of his ego that the obsessional situates himself to try to find the place of his desire. That is why I say that he will also as we know by all our experience, [construct] somewhere these famous Vauban fortifications that I spoke about elsewhere, the sorts of fortresses in which a desire that is always threatened with destruction barricades itself, it is something which does so on the model of his ego, and of course with respect to the image of the other.

(35) This relationship to the image of the other consists very precisely in the signifying phallus, this signifying phallus always threatened with destruction because it is caught up in a negation by being discovered in the relationship with the other, namely this something which for example you see signalled in all the observations of the author about whom I am speaking in this instance, namely that always in every obsessional, man or woman, you see playing an essential, fundamental role, the appearance at a given moment of their history, in this identification to the other (with a small o) a counterpart, a friend, a brother who is barely their elder, a friend who is a contemporary, but who all have, and in every case, the prestige for them of being the one who is more virile than themselves, the one who has the power.

Here the phallus appears not in its signifying, not in its symbolic form, but in its imaginary form, imaginary as a complement to an image stronger than themselves, to an image of power. It is not I who articulate this, you will find it properly speaking articulated in the article that I am quoting.

This person affirms at the proper place the very terms that I am citing. It is recognised by the very people who are influenced by their experience of these subjects that there is here something which is functionally essential. The accent is put, if you wish, on the image of the other in so far as imaginarily (36) the form, this time in the imaginary sense, the phallic form is here accentuated, underlined, that it is it which here takes on the value and the function, no longer of the symbolisation of the desire of the other, but of this imaginary relationship of prestige, of bearing, of impressiveness whose function we have already stressed at the level of the narcissistic relationship.

This is what is produced as such in the obsessional symptom, in the history of the obsessional, and it is this which marks the special function taken on in phantasies by the relationship of the subject as such to this imaginary other who is his counterpart. This distinction between the presence of the Other (with a capital O) and the presence of the other (with a small o), is tangible in the very evolution of the observation. If you read this observation with attention, namely the observation of the woman in question, you will see for example a very curious evolution between the beginning of the treatment when she is not able to speak, and subsequently when she does not wish to speak, because first of all it is at the level of the word that the relationship of the analysand with the analyst is established, and at that level she refuses and the analyst perceives very well that she refuses because, it is not the way he expresses it, it is as if all the same this that her demand can only be a demand for death.

Of course afterwards something else happens, and it is very funny to see that the analyst perceived very well that there (37) was a difference: relationships improved. Nevertheless she still does not speak: now she does not wish to speak. The difference between the two, is that when she does not wish to speak, it is because of the presence of the Other (with a capital O). Only what is precisely disturbing in this, is that if she cannot speak, it is because what has come in place of this Other (with a capital O), is precisely the other (with a small o) that the analyst has done everything to presentify. He has done everything to presentify the other (with a small o), for what reason? He has done everything to presentify it because following all the same the scent, the trace of things, he sees clearly from the content of what the subject brings him, the place that the phallic phantasy plays here. Of course it is with this the subject defends herself, he spends his time drumming into her, that she wants to be a man.

That depends on how one understands it. It is true that the subject, at the imaginary level, in effect makes a breast of this phallus, that the condition of man qua provided with a phallus, and uniquely qua provided with a phallus, is something which represents a certain element of power.

What it is a question of knowing, is precisely why she has such a need for this reference and for this element which is found to be

an element of power, which is the phallus. From another angle (38) she quite authentically absolutely denies that she has the slightest desire to be a man. Only she is not let go with that, I mean that there are interpreted in the summary terms of aggressivity, even of the desire to castrate men, things which are articulated in a much more complex fashion, which should be articulated quite differently, if we follow here what we are in the process of trying to delineate.

The whole evolution of the treatment, the way in which it is directed, and it is here that there is posed the whole ambiguity that there exists between interpretation and suggestion, tends on the contrary to indicate this term, not to use others with reference to this something which is quite different, and no one doubts it, I may say that the author himself underlines it sufficiently in the fashion that he articulates his own action, and in other ways, that it is a benevolent mother, that it is an other who is much nicer than the other with whom the subject had to deal, who intervenes to tell her, according to the very formula that the author employs elsewhere in the terms which are more or less those which I am going to tell you: "This is my body, this is my blood, this phallus, you can trust me as a man, consume it, I allow you to do so, this phallus is what should give you strength and vigour, it is the thing which should resolve for you all your obsessional difficulties."

In fact, what is given at the end of the treatment as being its result, is literally the following, that not a single one of the (39) obsessions really gave way, that she simply is subjected to them, but experiences them without guilt. This is strictly modelled on what I am in the process of telling you, which should normally be the result of such a mode of intervention.

Inversely, as I have told you, it is equally striking to see the treatment terminating with the fact that at the point at which it has been left, the patient sends the analyst her own son. It is certain that this action is rather astonishing, because the fact that the subject, we are told, experienced right through her life a holy terror before this son which one feels, in the context, the perspective, the images which the analyst constructs about it, which one feels comes from the fact that there has always been a problem with this son. It is the least that can be said.

Is it not precisely the fact that in this instance this son is offered to the analyst at the end, which marks, like acting out, which marks what precisely had been missed? Namely that it is at this point, at this mediating point where the phallus is something quite different to an appurtenance of power, where it is truly this means, this mediation through which at the signifying level, what happens between man and woman is symbolised. Is this child, of whom moreover analytic experience, and I mean what Freud articulated concerning the (40) relationships of the woman to the father, showed us the equivalence between this desire for the symbolic gift of the phallus and this child which comes to be substituted for it afterwards? It is very precisely in so far as the child

occupies the same place, this place which has not been worked over, which has not been elucidated in the treatment, namely a symbolic place, it is in so far as the subject despite herself, and certainly in an unconscious fashion, but in quite the same fashion as an acting out appears when something has been missed in the analysis, that the subject shows that something else should have been realised, that that which culminates in the treatment with this kind of intoxication of power, of goodness, a quasi-manic intoxication which is the usual case and the sign of those treatments which end with an imaginary identification, which is what when all is said and done? Nothing other than a certain fashion of posing in their final consequence, to facilitate as one might say by way of suggestive approval what is already found in the mechanisms of the obsession, namely this consumption or this incorporation of the phallus at the imaginary level. It is already that which is one of the mechanisms of obsession, it goes along the same path, if you wish to choose among the defence mechanisms of obsession, that the solution one might say is given by something which is the additional approval of what is now a good mother, a mother who permits the consumption of the phallus.

Should we content ourselves, for the solution of a neurosis, (41) with something which is only put there after from among the constitutive components of the neurosis as such, a more successful symptom, separated out as I might say from the others?

I do not think that we can hold ourselves to be entirely satisfied with this. I do not think either than I have said everything that could be said about this treatment in this connection, and today once more the clock has caught up with us. Between now and the next time, at least, I will pick out the three or four points in the observation which will again better highlight what I have tried to articulate for you today. Then we will say some concluding words about the formations of the unconscious to resume the circuit that we have gone through this year, after which we will only have to wait to engage ourselves in a new stage next year.

Seminar 28: Wednesday 2 July 1958

We are coming to the end of this year's seminar to which I gave the title of Formations of the Unconscious. Perhaps you are now able at least to see the appropriateness of this title: formations, forms, relations, perhaps topology. I had my own reasons for avoiding frightening you right away with those words.

I think that if something should remain as a step, as a step forward, more exactly as something on which one can put one's foot in order to climb to the level above next year, it is something which shows you that there is no way of articulating anything at all that belongs properly speaking to the mechanisms of the unconscious which are the foundation of Freud's experience and discovery, solely by taking into account tensions considered as being in themselves only the object of a sort of progress in maturity in the register which develops within the range of the pregenital and the genital, this is one side of the matter, nor can one simply talk about relationships of identification as they (2) are apparently - I say apparently - presented to us in the course of Freud's work.

If one wished to reduce [them] to this relationship, to a sort of collection of characters, if you wish in the style of Italian comedy, in which there would come into the foreground for example terms like the mother and the father, even if some others are added on.

What I wanted to show, is that it is impossible to articulate anything, either in the progress of the fixation of desire, or on the other hand in this intersubjectivity which in effect is in the forefront of our experience and our preoccupations in analysis, if we do not situate them in relation to something called the conditions, the necessary relationships that are imposed not only on human desire, but on the subject as such, by the relationships of the signifier.

That is why throughout the whole of this year, I tried to make you familiar with this little graph which it seemed, in my opinion, appropriate to put to use for a time to support my experiments, to distinguish things which for example, to take this signifier which is encountered everywhere, and for good reason because it cannot fail to be involved in a direct or indirect fashion, every time that there is question not of any signification whatsoever, but of signification in so far as it is expressly engendered by the conditions imposed on the organism, this living organism which has become the support, the prey,

(3) indeed the victim of the word, which is called man.

I will take this up again today, simply to put you on the brink of this multipresence, I would say, of the signifier phallus in a particular case, still the same one, the one which has occupied us for some sessions, and in order simply to indicate that it is extremely important to distinguish the places where the signifier phallus makes its appearance in the subject.

To say of course that becoming conscious of penis envy is of prime importance in an analysis of a feminine obsessional neurotic, is to say something self-evident, because if one had never encountered the phallus in an analysis of an obsessional neurotic, whether a female or not, and indeed in any neurosis whatsoever, it would really be very strange.

It is possible that by pushing the analysis in a certain direction, the one that is articulated in the so-called Psychanalyse d'aujourd'hui, namely the reduction of phantastical productions of transference to what is called this so simple reality, namely the analytic situation, namely that there are here two people who of course have nothing to do with these phantasies, when one has managed to reduce things totally to this schema, one will perhaps be able completely to neglect the phallus in the interpretation of an analysis. But up to now we (4) still have not got there, because all of these things are incomplete formulations, and in fact no analysis takes place up to now as it is schematised in this book.

Obviously we have to do something with this signifier phallus, and to say that becoming conscious of it is the key in this instance to the solution of obsessional neurosis, is naturally not saying very much, because everything of course depends on the way that one will interpret it, situate it, understand it, at the different points that it appears, and at the points that it appears it does not play a homologous function either, nor is all of this reducible to a penis envy in the sense that it is is a question of rivalry with the male, as really it is finally formulated when all is said and done in this observation, namely: to assimilate the relationships of the patient with her husband, with her analyst, with others in general, which is contradicted by the observation itself.

It is obviously not from this angle that the phallus appears. It appears at several points. We are going to try simply, without claiming of course to give an exhaustive analysis of an observation which moreover is presented as an unfinished analysis, and on the other hand after all as we only have partial documents, but undoubtedly all the same well enough established to allow us to get a correct idea of it.

(5) I would like first of all to begin by making certain remarks which will introduce you to certain other properties of the graph that we are using.

There is something which appears in this observation which is

signaled to us as being the very lively guilt feeling which accompanies the patient's obsessions, for example her religious obsessions, and what one might call the paradox that is represented by the so clearly marked appearance of guilt feelings in obsessional neurosis, when it would undoubtedly seem that the subject could consider these thoughts as parasitic ones which are imposed on her, which moreover she does in a correlative fashion, as things which are foreign to her, of which she is more victim than responsible.

This will perhaps allow us to try to articulate something about this guilt feeling.

In short, for some time people scarcely speak about anything except the term superego which seems here to have covered everything. One cannot really say that it has clarified things very much, because in fact if you wish to look at things more closely, and very precisely to consider what has been contributed by the notion that the superego is something much older, more archaic as a formation, than was thought at first, in fact it was (6) thought at first that the superego could be considered as the creation corresponding to the two Oedipus complexes, and to be explicit as people have written, to the introjection of the person considered as eminently the prohibitor (interdicteur) in the Oedipus complex, namely the paternal personage. You know that all our experience has forced us to show that there was a scarcely older superego, or that this something which from some aspects imposed on us this older origin, was not unrelated, either on the one hand to the effects of introjection, nor on the other hand to the effects of prohibition (interdiction).

But let us try all the same to look at things more closely.

Here is the obsessional neurosis, and as in every neurosis, what we have to bring to light first of all precisely in so far as we are not hypnotists, that we do not treat people by suggestion, but that it is at a point beyond that we in a way invite the subject to meet us, and at this point which is portrayed here by the second line, the upper line, the horizon if you wish of signifying articulation, and from there the subject, as I explained to you at length the last time, is confronted with his demand.

It cannot mean anything else when we speak about this alternating process of successive regression and identification, the two alternating because in the measure that while regressing he (7) encounters one of them, he stops on the path of a regression which is entirely inscribed in short in this retroactive covering which opens out to the subject once he simply articulates his word, namely in so far as the word gives rise to all the background and all the history back as far as its origin, of this demand in which the whole life of speaking man is inserted.

If we look closely at it, and without moreover doing anything else here than rediscovering what has always been articulated about obsessional neurosis, there is a fundamental form for

obsessional neurosis that we find in this demand, at the horizon of every demand of the subject, and precisely what creates for her the greatest obstacle to the articulation of this demand, it is this something which experience teaches us to qualify as aggressivity, which carries us more and more towards the consideration of and the entry into what one can call a death wish.

The inaugural difficulty, the major difficulty before which one might say the demand of the obsessional is broken, is fragmented, is disjointed, which motivates the cancellation of all defences, and very primordially in very serious obsessionals, this silence often so prolonged that you have the greatest trouble in the world sometimes in conquering it in the course of an analysis, and I evoke it here because it is precisely what is evoked for us (8) in the case that I am basing myself on, is indeed that this demand is a demand for death.

In fact it is very striking to see absolutely exposed to view, repeated throughout the whole observation, but without ever being properly speaking articulated, as if the thing formed part of some natural expression or other of a tension which is very basic, the relationship of this demand for death with the very difficulty of articulation itself which nevertheless is connoted here in the same pages, within a few lines, and which is absolutely never highlighted. And nevertheless is this not something which demands that we should dwell on it?

If this demand is a demand for death, if this demand is what outlines the horizon of the obsessional's demand, namely that his first relationships with the Other, as Freud's theory teaches us, were essentially made up of this contradiction that the demand which is addressed to the Other on whom everything depends, culminates, has as horizon, for a reason which moreover at this moment is attached to the hook of the question mark, because we must not rush things, we will see later why and how this can be conceived. It is not all that simple to talk as Mrs. Melanie Klein does about the primordial aggressive drive, if we start from there. Let us leave there what sort of army, a sort of primordial badness of this suckling regarding whom the Marquis de Sade underlines for us that his first impulse was after all, if (9) he had been able to do so, to bite and to tear his mother's breast.

Of course in fact this articulation of the problem of desire in its fundamental perversity, is indeed something which has not led us back in vain to this horizon of the divine Marquis, who as you know was not the only one in his time to have posed in a very intense and very sharp fashion, this question about the relationships of desire and of nature, about this fundamental harmony or disharmony which constitutes in fact the basis of this passionate interrogation which is absolutely inseparable from all the philosophy of the so-called Erklärung, and which marked all the literature of the time on which in my old seminars, I think of my first seminars, I based myself to show an analogy to which I will come back next year in connection with desire, to this

link between the first interrogation and the interrogation about the limit to its philosophical clarity, but also to everything that accompanies it, to its whole theme of literary eroticism which in fact is its absolutely indispensable correlate.

Therefore we do not know where this demand for death comes from. Before telling ourselves that it arises from the most primordial instincts, from a nature turned against itself, let us begin simply by situating it where it is, namely at the level at which it is - I would not say articulated - but where it prevents every (10) articulation of the subject's demand, where it is an obstacle to the discourse of the obsessional, just as much when he is alone by himself as when he begins his analysis, when he finds himself in this disarray that our analyst on occasion describes, namely this sort of impossibility of speaking that his patient has at the beginning of the analysis, which is only expressed in reproaches, indeed in insults, even in the setting forth, the articulation of everything that creates an obstacle for a patient to speak to a doctor:

"I know enough about doctors to know that among themselves they make fun of their patients."

"You are better educated than me.....It is impossible for a woman to talk to a man."

It is a flood which simply shows here the emergence correlative to the activity of the word, to this difficulty of simple articulation, of something which cannot in any fashion evoke at the horizon the basis of the demand that is already there in the fact of entering into the field of analytic therapy, which is here in fact what appears right away.

This demand for death, if it is situated where we have put it, namely at this horizon of the word, in this implication which forms the basis of every possible articulation of the word, and if it is what creates the obstacle, I think that this schema will show you perhaps a little better that this logical articulation (11) can also be made, but not without some suspensions or stoppages of thought, that if the demand for death is something which represents for the obsessional subject this sort of impasse from which there results what is inaccurately called ambivalence, which is rather this movement of seesawing or swinging in which the obsessional is sent back as it were to the two end points of an impasse from which he cannot escape. If effectively this demand for death is this something which, as the schema articulates it, requires to be formulated in the locus of the other, in the discourse of the other, it is not simply because of a history of something or other involving for example the mother as having been the object of this death wish in connection with some frustration, it is essentially and in an internal fashion, the demand for death in so far as it concerns this other, because this other is the locus of demand, implies the death of demand.

The demand for death cannot be sustained in the obsessional, namely in so far as he is organised according to the laws of

signifying articulation, without in itself implying this sort of destruction which we call here the death of demand. It is condemned to this endless seesawing which ensures that once it begins its articulation, this articulation dies out, and this indeed is what constitutes the basis of the difficulty of articulating the position of the obsessional.

(12) This indeed is also what makes us say that between the relationship of the obsessional, of the obsessional subject to his demand, and this maintenance of the other which is so panic-strickenly necessary for him, but which maintains him, because without that he would be something other than an obsessional, we find this desire cancelled out in itself, but with its place maintained, this desire which we have characterised by a Verneinung, because it is expressed, but in the negative form, that in which we see it effectively appear in analysis, when the person in analysis says to us: "I am not thinking of something or other", that he is articulating for us what is an aggressive, disapproving, depreciating desire with respect to ourselves. He manifests here in effect something which is indeed his desire, but he cannot manifest it. This is the fact which the experience concerning the Verneinung gives us. He manifests it against the background of denial.

How does it happen that this denied form must nonetheless be correlative to a guilt feeling, since in sum it is denied? It is here I believe that our schema is going to allow us to make some distinctions which will subsequently be of use to us again.

I think that the obscurities concerning the incidences of the superego which have corresponded to the extension of our experience concerning this distance, come very essentially from (13) this: that it is important to distinguish concerning guilt which after all preserves the following, that there is a relationship of the subject to the law, that guilt is without any kind of reference to this law. This on the other hand is the fact that analytic experience has contributed.

In other words, what one might call the naive step from the dialectic of the relationship of sin to the law, ever since it has been articulated for us in the words of St. Paul, namely that it is the law which makes sin, from which there follows - I already insisted on it formerly in evoking the phrase of old Karamazov: "If God does not exist, then everything is permitted."

It is quite clear that analysis was necessary for us to see what comes to us in experience. It is quite naturally one of the strangest things of all, that what experience shows us, is that there is no need for any reference at all, either to God, or to his law for man to be literally bathed in guilt. It seems even that one could formulate the contrary expression, namely that if God is dead, the world said: "Nothing is permitted any longer." I already talked about all that at one stage.

How then are we going to be able to try to understand and to

articulate this relationship which is called the appearance of guilt feelings as they arise in the life of the neurotic subject?

(14) Let us refer back to the first steps of analysis in this direction. In what connection did Freud first show it as fundamental, as concerning an essential subjective manifestation of the subject?

It is in connection with the Oedipus complex, it is very exactly in so far as the contents of analysis gave rise to what? The relationship of a desire which was not an indifferent one, which was a desire profoundly hidden up to then, which was the desire for the mother, and with it the intervention of a destructive person who is this father as he emerged from the first apprehensions of the Oedipus complex, and this father who namely intervenes in the form of complexes first given by phantasies of castration, also discovered by analysis, a discovery of which there had not been the slightest suspicion before analysis, a discovery whose link I believe I articulated for you this year with the necessary unthinkability, outside the fact that the phallus has very precisely this role of being raised to the signification of signifying an image, a privileged, vital image, namely the image of the phallus, but which here takes on the function of this something which in fact is going to mark this sort of incidence, of impact, in which desire is struck by prohibition.

In fact if we want to distinguish the three stages which correspond strictly to those which are schematised here,

(15) 1, 2, 3, in which everything which is related in our experience to the superego, must be articulated, we will say at the level of this line on the horizon which precisely is the one which is not formulated in the neurotic. It is precisely for that reason that he is neurotic. Here the commandment reigns, call it what you will, call it the ten commandments in this instance, why not? Because I told you that the ten commandments were very probably the commandments which are the laws of the word, namely that all the disorders begin to enter into the functioning of the word from the moment that the ten commandments are not respected. Let us take them here in any form whatsoever. It is a question of the demand for death, and it is obviously the "Thou shalt not kill" which is there at the horizon to make a drama of it. But you see that it is not either because of what begins as a reply in this place to punish the person who kills, that the commandment effectively has its impact, it is very precisely because the demand for death, for reasons which belong to the structure of the other for man, that the demand for death is equivalent to the death of the demand.

This is the level of the commandment. This level of commandment exists, it exists so well that in fact it emerges, it emerges all by itself. Do not forget that if you read the notes that Freud took on his case of an obsessional, the Ratman, he will tell you - I am talking about the supplement published in the Standard

(16) Edition - in this very interesting complement where we see in the notes certain chronological elements appearing here, which

are very valuable to know, he will tell us that first of all what the subject talks to him about in terms of obsessional content, are the commandments that he receives, and you know the importance of these commandments, these commandments which the subject receives: "You must pass your examinations before such a date", or "What would happen", he says, "if I received the command: you must cut your throat", and you know the state of panic that he gets into when there comes into his mind the command: "You must cut the throat of the old woman" who at that moment was keeping his beloved far away from him.

We also see these commandments appearing in another context, and in the clearest fashion, in psychotics, who as you know receive commands, and it is one of the terminal points in the classification of the psychotic, to know the degree to which he obeys them.

In short, the autonomy of this function at the horizon of the relationship of the subject to the word of command is something which we can only take as fundamental.

This commandment can therefore remain veiled. It is veiled, it is fragmented, it only appears in fragments in our obsessional. Where are we going to situate guilt?

(17) Guilt, as Monsieur de La Pallice would say, is a demand experienced as prohibited, and in fact one habitually experiences it there, and I would say that everything is drowned in this term prohibition, the notion of demand being avoided although it seems that the two should go together. It is not certain however, as we are going to see, but there is something whose essential dimension I would ask you to hold on to phenomenologically, and with regard to which one is really stupefied by the fact that no analyst, nor any phenomenologist, has paid attention to it. Why is it experienced as prohibited? If it were purely and simply experienced as prohibited because as is said, it is forbidden (*défendu*), there would be no problem of any kind. How do we see it appearing in clinical work at the level of the point where we usually say that guilt intervenes? The distinctions we have made, we have made them in order to articulate what is in question, and they will help us perhaps to articulate what is called neurotic guilt, which consists in what?

In what does neurotic guilt consist? It is a fact all the same that it is not articulated as such, and that it is not made a criterion. Now, it is essential to make a criterion of it. The demand is experienced as prohibited, a demand, or more exactly a guilt feeling, in so far as it is in connection with such an approach, the approach of a demand, and it is precisely (18) what distinguishes it from the diffuse anxiety which you know is very different to a demand, and experienced as a prohibition which is called the arousal of the guilt feeling, in so far as it is experienced as prohibited because it kills desire. It is in the relationship of desire to demand, in the fact that everything which goes in the direction of a certain formulation of the demand is accompanied by an agency, by a

mechanism whose features we see here, the wires drawn on this little graph on the blackboard, but which precisely because it is in this little graph, precisely for this reason, cannot be experienced, determined in its living source, in its source by the subject, because the subject is himself condemned to be always at one or other of these places, but he cannot be at any of these places all at the same time. This is what guilt is. It is this something where the prohibition appears, not this time in so far as it formulates, but in so far as it strikes the desire, that it makes it disappear, that it kills it.

Here then is something clear. It is in so far as the obsessional is condemned to wage his battle for the salvation of his subjective autonomy, as they say, at the level of desire, that everything that appears at this level of desire, even in a denied form, is linked to this guilt, and what beneath this, (19) namely at the third level, at the level of what we will call on this occasion, no one will contest this location, that of the superego; what is called, I do not know why, in the observation that we have been following in the Revue de Psychanalyse, the feminine superego. Why the feminine? Let us say the maternal. Indeed it is usually considered as the maternal superego in all the other texts of the same register. There is here an anomaly inherent to the observation itself, and to a certain sort of obsession engendered by the fact that it is a question here of penis envy, and of something which interests the woman as such.

This maternal super-ego then, this archaic superego, this superego to which are attached the effects of the primordial superego that Melanie Klein talks about, is something of course which we now understand has been put as one might say in the same perspective, in the same setting as what is produced at the level of the commandment of guilt, linked in fact as you see, to the other of the other. It is to the first other in so far as it is the pure and simple support of the first demands, what I might call the emerging demands, I would say the almost innocent demands of the subject at the level of these first wailing articulations of his need, at the level on which people insist so much today, of the first frustrations.

What do we have here? We have what has been called dependency. And in fact it is indeed around this something which is called dependency, that everything belonging to the maternal superego is (20) articulated.

Here why is it that we can put it on the same register? Put it on the same register, and not fundamentally distinguish it. It means that already this two-level structure which we see here, must be involved. If at the beginning there were only the suckling and the mother, if the relationship were a dual one, it would be something quite different to what we have articulated in the commandment relationship, in the relationship of guilt.

It is very precisely because it has to be admitted from the beginning that from the very fact that it is a question of the signifier, there are these two horizons of demand, which I

explained by telling you that even behind the most primitive demand, that for the breast, and the object which represents the maternal breast, there is behind this reduplication created in the demand by the fact that the demand is a demand for love and a demand which symbolises the other as such, which distinguishes therefore the other as real object, capable of giving such and such a satisfaction, from the other qua symbolic object who gives or who refuses what is called presence or absence, and who is the matrix within which there are going to crystallise these fundamental relationships which are at the horizon of every demand, and which are called on the one hand, love, on the other hand hate, and of course ignorance.

(21) It is because the first relationship of dependency is linked to this threat which is called the loss of love, and not simply to the threat which is called hunger, or privation of maternal care, that it is something which already in itself is homogeneous to what will be subsequently organised, articulated in the perspective of commandment, namely in the perspective of the laws of the word. They are here and now already pressing, virtual, preformed, from the time of the first demand. They are not completed, they are not articulated, and that is why a suckling does not begin to be an obsessional from the moment that he is first suckled; but from the time he is first suckled he can already very well begin to create this gap which will bring it about that it will be precisely in the refusal to feed himself that he will find the evidence he requires of the love of his maternal partner.

In other words, we can see appearing very precociously manifestations of anorexia nervosa.

What is it that specifies the case of the obsessional? The case of the obsessional which therefore hangs precisely on the precocious formation at this horizon of the relationship to demand, of what we have here first of all articulated as a demand for death; a demand for death is not purely and simply, and in itself, a death bearing tendency. It is an articulated demand, it is an articulated demand, and from the very fact that it is articulated, it is precisely for that reason that it is not produced at this level of the relationship to the other, that it (22) is not a dual relationship, that it aims beyond the other to his being, his symbolised being, and this is always why moreover it is felt, experienced by the subject in its return. The fact is that the subject cannot injure the Other, because he is a speaking subject, and solely because of this, without injuring himself, and that the demand for death is the death of demand.

It is within this that there is going to be situated everything that I would call the avatars of the signifier phallus, because in fact I see no way of not collapsing into amazed astonishment, when one sees it in effect - once one knows how to read - re-emerging at every point in the phenomenology of the obsessional, nothing else allows there to be conceived this type of omnipresence of the signifier phallus, at the level of different symptoms, if one does not essentially make of it, if

one does not find there the confirmation of the function of the phallus as signifier of the incidence of the signifier on the living being, in so far as by his relationship to the word, he is destined to be fragmented into all sorts of effects of the signifier.

What do we find? We are told that this woman is possessed by penis envy. I quite agree, but then why does the first thing that we encounter in the observation itself concern her obsessions, and the first that is cited for us is the obsessional (23) fear of having contracted syphilis, which leads her, we are told, vainly to oppose the marriage of her eldest son, this son whose signification throughout the whole course of this observation I have made so much of.

Here then when all is said and done we have the following. It is simple enough, the miracles and the conjuring tricks which we would always do well to pay attention to as such, to tell you that it would be well from time to time to polish up a little, to give a shine to our capacity for astonishment. What do we see in male obsessional subjects? The fear of being contaminated and of contaminating. It is something which is shown by everyday experience to be extremely important. The male obsessional has in general been initiated rather precociously into the dangers of so-called venereal diseases, and everyone knows the place that this can have in his psychology in a large number of cases. I am not saying that it is constant, but we are used to interpreting it as something which goes well beyond the relational aspect of the matter. This as always is in Hegel, and matters are going so well for some time past thanks to some medical interventions, the fact remains nevertheless that the obsessional remains very obsessed about anything which could engender his impulsive acts in the libidinal order, and that we ourselves are used to considering it as something which is what? Namely that beneath (24) this libidinal impulse, the aggressive impulse appears, that in some way the phallus is something dangerous.

If we hold on to the notion of it that, if the subject is in a relationship of what one might call narcissistic exigency with regard to the phallus, it appears to me very difficult to motivate it. Why? Precisely because at this level she makes this use of it which is strictly equivalent to the one a man would make of it, namely that through the intermediary of her son, this woman considers herself to be dangerous. She presents him on this occasion as being in a way an extension of herself, namely that as a result she is not brought to a halt by any Penisneid. She has it in the form of this son, she well and truly has this phallus because it is on him that she will crystallize the same obsession that a male patient would construct for himself in this instance.

The obsessions of infanticide which follow, even the obsessions about poisoning and the others, I will not go on about it here indefinitely, what can be said, is that something will arise very quickly in the observation and in all its implications, to confirm what I am putting forward on this subject, and this I

read out because it is worth while:

"The very violence of her complaints against her mother bore witness to the immense affection that she had for her", we are (25) told, after making a few curtsies to the possibility or not of a true oedipal relationship, by bringing forward arguments which are completely irrelevant to the question.

"She found her to be from a higher social milieu than her father, judged her to be more intelligent, was especially fascinated by her energy, her character, her decisive spirit, her authority".

This is the first part of a paragraph where it is a question of making us see something which undeniably exists, namely the disequilibrium of the parental relationship, what I would call the oppressed, indeed the depressed aspect of the father who may have been virile before, in the presence of the mother. This is how the fact that the subject requires in a way that the phallic attribute should be attributed to her is interpreted.

"The rare moments when the mother relaxed filled her with an unspeakable joy. But up to this there had never been a question of an openly sexualised desire to possess the mother."

There is no trace of anything at all that even resembles it.

Here is how it is expressed:

"Renee was bound to her on an exclusively sado-masochistic plane. And now there came to light the mother-daughter alliance which operated here with great rigour, and every transgression of the pact provoked an impulse of extreme violence, which up to (26) recently had never been objectified. Anyone involving himself in this union was the object of a death wish".

This point is really important, and you will find it not just in obsessional neurotics, but these powerful bonds of daughter to mother, from whatever angle we see their incidence in our analytic experience, this sort of knot where we find ourselves once more before something which goes beyond a kind of distinction; I would say beyond the carnal distinction between people, which means that what is expressed there, is exactly this ambiguity, this ambivalence as I called it above, which renders equivalent the demand for death and the demand for the demand, but which shows us in addition that the demand for death is there.

I am not saying anything new, because Freud saw it very clearly on occasion; the demand for death which Mrs. Melanie Klein will try to refer to the primordial aggressive drives of the subject. But the observation shows us that the demand for death is not simply the bond which unites the subject to the mother, it is the demand of the mother herself, it is in so far as the mother carries in herself this demand for death, and the whole observation shows it to us, that she exercises on this unfortunate paternal person, a sergeant in the gendarmerie, who

despite the goodness and the kindness that the patient speaks about at first, shows himself all through his life as sad, depressed, taciturn, not managing to overcome the rigidity of the (27) mother, or to triumph over the attachment of his wife for a first love, which moreover was platonic, a jealous man who only broke out of his autism to make a demand from which he always emerged defeated. Nobody doubts of course that the mother had some part in this.

We are told that this is expressed from the angle and in the form of what is called the castrating mother. On this occasion perhaps there is reason to look at things more closely and to see in fact here the term of the demand for death, namely much more than castration, privation, for this man, from the loved object who seems to have been the mother, and the establishment in him of this depressive position which indeed is the one Freud taught us to recognise as being determined by a death wish against oneself, but against oneself in so far as it aimed at what? An object loved and lost, in short this dialectic of the demand for death in so far as it is already here present in the previous generation, is it the mother who embodies it? It is this demand for death in so far precisely as it is not mediated here by nothing, not at the level of the subject, because if it were not mediated by nothing at the level of the subject, if there were not this oedipal horizon in fact which allows this demand to appear at the horizon of the word, and not in its immediacy, we would not have an obsessional, but a psychotic.

On the contrary, in the relationship between the father and the (28) mother, this demand for death for the subject is in no way mediated by nothing which bears witness here to a respect for the father, to a putting into a position of authority and of support for the law by the mother with respect to the father. The demand for death that is in question at the level that the subject experiences it, sees it being exercised between the father and the mother, is a demand for death directly exercised, directly manifested in this something by means of which the father turns against himself aggression, sadness, quasi-deafness and depression, it is quite different from that demand for death that can be in question, that is always in question in every intersubjective dialectic, and which is expressed before a court when the prosecutor says "I demand the death sentence", and he does not demand it from the subject in question, he demands it from a third person who is the judge, and this is the normal oedipal position.

Here then is the context in the midst of which the Penisneid, or what is called such, of the subject, is led to play its role. We see it there in the form of this dangerous weapon. What does that mean? It is there only as the signifier of the danger manifested by every arousal of desire in the context of this demand, and similarly we see this character of signifier, even in the details of some of the subject's obsessions, in one of her first obsessions which was a very interesting one: it was that she was afraid of putting pins in her parents bed, and why? (29) In order to prick her mother, not her father.

Here is the first level of the appearance of the phallic signifier. Here what is it? It is the signifier of this desire *qua* dangerous, of this desire *qua* guilty. It seems to me that this is not the same function as the one in which it appears for example at another moment. Moreover it does not appear in the same form, but it appears in quite a clear fashion, namely here properly speaking under the form of an image. After all, everywhere I showed it to you there, it is veiled, it is in the symptom, it comes from elsewhere, it is a phantastical interference, namely that it is to us as analysts that it suggests the place where it exists as phantasy, but it seems to me that it is something different when this phallus appears in a quite different function which is namely when it is projected as one might say for the subject before the image of the host. I already alluded to these sorts of profanatory obsessions, that, where the subject is possessed and that there it seems to us in effect if for all that religious life in this profoundly restructured form, infiltrated by symptoms when it is present in the obsessional, and to which moreover, by a sort of curious conformity, this religious life, and especially this sacramental life, shows itself to be so suitable for giving to the symptoms of the obsessional the path, the furrow in which they flow so easily, it is all the same in as much as especially in the

(30) Christian religion - I have not much experience of obsessions among Muslims for example, but it would be worth while to see how they deal with things, I mean what office in this instance at the horizon of their beliefs as it is structured in Islam, manages to implicate itself in obsessional phenomenology. Certainly in Christianity one cannot fail to see, and every time that Freud had an obsessional, whether it was the Ratman or the Wolfman, who had a Christian formation, he showed clearly its importance in their evolution and in their economy, one cannot all the same fail to see that by its articles of faith, the Christian religion places us before this really astonishing, daring, solution, which is daring to say the least, of effectively causing to be supported by something which is man-God, an incarnate person, to be precisely supported by him this function, because he is the word, this function of the signifier in which we say that there is precisely marked the action of the signifier on life as such.

The Christian logos in so far as he is the incarnate logos, gives a precise solution to this mystery of the relationships between man and the word, and it is not for nothing precisely that the incarnate God is called the Word.

That it should be at the level of the ever renewed symbol of this incarnation that the subject makes appear the signifier phallus (31) which for her is substituted for it, and which of course does not form part as such of the religious context; we should not be surprised, if what we say is true, to see it appearing at this place. But when the subject sees it appearing at this place, it is certain that it plays there a quite different role than at the place where we have first seen it interpreted, and I think that it is quite wrong afterwards at a subsequent point of the observation, to interpret the function of the signifier

phallus as homogeneous to the angle under which it intervened here for example at the level of the symptom, when at a much more advanced period of the observation, the subject communicates to her analyst this phantasy:

"I dreamt that I was crushing the head of Christ with my kicks, and this head resembled your own."

It is certain that at this moment the function of the phallus is identified here, not in the way it is said, to the analyst, in so far as the analyst is supposed to be the bearer of the phallus, but in so far as it is obviously at this level of transference, at this point of the history of transference, that the analyst is identified with the phallus. He is identified with the one who, at this moment, incarnates for the subject precisely this effect of the signifier, this relationship to the word which she is beginning at that moment to project a little more through the effect of a certain number of manifestations of relaxation, and (32) to interpret it in a homogeneous fashion in terms of Penisneid, at this time is precisely to miss the opportunity of relating the patient to what is most profound in her situation, namely of grasping the relationship perhaps which in a far-off time, was made by her between this X which fundamentally provoked with respect to the other, to this demand of the other, the death of the demand, and the first perception, the form in which for her the intolerable rivalry first appeared, namely in this instance the desire of the mother for this distant love which distracted her both from her husband and from her child for example.

In any case no doubt the fact that the phallus, and in a repeated fashion, because there is a second example which is given afterwards, appears here in this position, namely somewhere which, may, must be situated at the level of the signifier of the Other as such, qua struck, qua barred, qua identical to the most profound signification with which the Other may be struck for the subject should not be neglected as such. And on the other hand when the phallus appears at another moment of the analysis, at a moment of the analysis which is slightly later, because at that time many interpretations have to be taken into account which made it come to light from this angle, namely in these dreams where the patient - it is one of the most common dreams observed (33) in I would say in the majority of neuroses - where the patient realises herself as a phallic being, namely sees one of her breasts replaced by a phallus, indeed a phallus situated between her two breasts. It is one of the most frequent dream phantasies that one can meet up with in every analysis.

The question, I must say, seems to me to be linked to something quite different in this instance, than to a desire, as they say, "for masculine identification and possession of the phallus". In effect there is some speculation here about whether she sees her own breasts transformed into a penis. "Does she not refer onto the man's penis the oral aggressivity primitively directed against the maternal breast?"

It is one way of reasoning. But on the other hand if one observes the extreme extension given under its form, from the fact that on the other hand its forms themselves can be, as is well known, essentially polyphallic, I mean that once there is more than one phallus, I would almost say that we find ourselves before an altogether fundamental image which the Diana of Ephesus sufficiently provides for us in this sort of streaming of breasts of which her whole body is in a way composed.

Here then, because the analyst had already at that moment pointed out the equivalence of the shoe and the phallus, what this patient sees, what immediately follows - I mean that this (34) immediately follows the first two attempts, and is moreover considered as confirming them.

"I am having my shoe repaired by a shoemaker. Then I get up on a stage decorated with blue, white, red stage lights, where there are only men. My mother is in the crowd and admires me".

Can we content ourselves by talking about Penisneid? Is it not obvious here that the relationship to the phallus is here of a different order, that the dream itself that is in question, both indicates that it is linked to a relationship of exhibition; of exhibition not before those who have it, the other men who are there with her on the stage, and regarding whom it is almost too clever to say it, the blue, white, red lights evoke here for us all sorts of different obscene backgrounds, and that it is before her mother, and as such, that she exhibits herself; in other words, that here we find ourselves before this phantastical, compensatory relationship, of which I spoke the last time, this power relationship no doubt, but power in relation to the third person who is the mother, and this is something which is produced at this level in the relationship that the subject has with the image of her own counterpart, of the small other, of the image of the body, and that what is to be studied, precisely the function of this phantastical relationship in the equilibrium of the subject, that to interpret it and to assimilate it purely and simply to the function and to the appearance of the phallus, at (35) the other points, is also something which bears witness, I would say to a lack of criteria in the orientation of interpretations, because when all is said and done, what will all the interventions of the analyst in this observation tend towards? Towards facilitating in her what he calls the conscious awareness of some lack, some nostalgia or other for the penis as such, and in facilitating for her the outcome of her phantasies, by centering on this phantasy as such, as being a phantasy of lesser power, even though most of the facts go against this interpretation.

What does the analyst do in restoring to the patient or to the subject, what I might call, the legitimate phallus? Its meaning is changed for her. I mean by that that one does something which amounts more or less to teaching her to love her obsessions, because in fact this is what is presented to us as the sum total of this therapy: the obsessions have not diminished, simply that the patient no longer feels guilty about

them, which is brought about by a certain intervention essentially centred on the texture of phantasies, and on the valorisation of this phantasy, as a phantasy of rivalry with men, supposedly, by a simple supposition, transferred from some aggressivity or other against the mother whose root is in no way reached.

It is something which culminates in the following: in fact the texture of the obsessions is, through the authorisation given by the analyst, separated from this fundamental demand for death. (36) But I would say that by operating in this way, namely by legitimating when all is said and done, because one can only legitimate in a block to the degree that the phantasy is authorised by interpretation, the obsession of the genital relationship is consumed as such, I mean that from the moment that the subject learns to love her obsessions as such, in so far as they are invested with the whole signification of what happens to her, we see developing here at the end of the observation all sorts of intuitions which are no doubt extremely elating.

I would ask you to refer to it, because it is too late for me to read it for you today. But undoubtedly this has altogether the appearance of this style of narcissistic effusion that some people have highlighted as a phenomenon coming at the end of analyses, and regarding which moreover the author does not have many illusions.

"The positive feature", he writes, "is precisely with these characteristics of a strongly genitalised Oedipus complex"

And it is on this note of profound incompleteness, and I must say of few illusions concerning a really genital solution, as it is expressed concerning the outcome of this analysis, that he himself concludes.

What does not seem to have been seen at all in this is precisely that this is closely correlated with the very mode of interpretation, the centring of interpretation on something (37) which when all is said and done aims at the reduction of demand, rather than at its fundamental elucidation, and this is all the more paradoxical in our day, when one is used to showing for example, the importance of the interpretation of aggressivity as such. Perhaps this term precisely is too vague for practitioners still to find their way about in it, and that the term of demand for death which might be substituted for it, which might be advantageously substituted in German, is what is required to be reached as a level of subjective articulation of demand.

I would like in concluding, because I alluded above to something which is called the commandments, to draw your attention to something, because I also spoke about Christianity, which is precisely not one of the least mysterious commandments of what one could call, not a morality, because in reality it is not a moral commandment, it is a commandment precisely founded on identification, it is the one which at the horizon of all the

commandments, is put forward by the Christian articulation in the words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself".

I do not know if you have ever dwelt on what that involves. It involves all sorts of rather surprising objections. First of all the beautiful souls will cry: "As thyself 1 Surely more! Why as (38) thyself? That is not very much!" On the other hand people with more experience will say: "But after all, is it so sure that one loves one's self? Experience proves that we have the most contradictory sentiments as regards ourselves, the most unusual ones, and after all this reference to a thyself which seems all of a sudden in fact to place in a certain perspective, if one takes it from a certain perspective, is fundamentally egoism, and how can you make it the measure, the module, the paragon of love". This all the same is one of the most surprising things.

I think that in fact these objections which are in a way quite valid, and that one could in fact very easily incarnate by the impossibility of responding to this sort of challenge in the first person, no one ever supposed that to this "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", an: "I love my neighbour as myself" could answer, because obviously the weakness of this formulation is clear to everyone.

In fact, I believe that if something allows us to dwell on this formulation as something which interests us, which profoundly interests us and which in a way illustrates what I called here the horizon of the commandment, the horizon of the word, it is indeed this something which ensures that if we articulate it from (39) where this must start, namely from the locus of the other, if symmetrically and parallel to the point: "Thou art the one who kills me" (Tu es celui qui me tues) which I showed you here underlying the position of the other at the simple level of the first demand, the "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", is a circle, and thou has led us in this "thyself" not to recognise anything else than the thou at the level of which the commandment itself articulates by ending on an "as thyself", as thyself you are at the level of the word, the one whom you hate in the demand for death, whom you hate because you do not know him. It is at this level that the Christian commandment rejoins the one which gives us the point at the horizon where Freud's instruction is articulated: Wo Es war, soll Ich werden. It is the same thing again that another wisdom expresses in the "Thou art" (Tu es) which must when all is said and done end an authentic and full assumption of the subject in his own word, that he should recognise where he is, at this horizon of the word which is that without which nothing in analysis can be articulated, except to produce false routes and miscognitions.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK VI

Desire and its Interpretation

1958 - 1959

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY

Seminar It 12 November 1958

We are going to speak this year about desire and its interpretation.

An analysis is, it is said, a therapy; let us say a treatment, a psychical treatment which relates at different levels of the psyche, at first this was the primary scientific object of its experience, to what we call marginal or residual phenomena, dreams, parapraxes, witticisms, I stressed that last year, to symptoms.

On the other hand, if we get into this curative aspect of the treatment with regard to symptoms in the broadest sense, in so far as they manifest themselves in the subject by inhibitions, are constituted in symptoms and sustained by these symptoms, on the other hand this treatment which modifies structures, these structures which are called neuroses or neuro-psychoses which Freud in reality first structured and qualified as neuropsychoses (2) of defence.

The psychoanalyst intervenes in order to deal at different levels with these diverse phenomenal realities in so far as they bring desire into play. It is specifically under this rubric of desire, as signifying desire that the phenomena which I called above residual, marginal, were first of all apprehended in Freud, in the symptoms which we see described from one end to the other of Freud's thought, it is the intervention of anxiety, if we make of it the key point of the determination of symptoms, but in so far as such and such an activity which is going to enter into the operation of symptoms is eroticised, or to put it better: is namely caught up in the mechanism of desire.

Indeed, what does the very term defence signify in connection with the neuropsychoses, if it is not a defence against what? Against something which is not yet anything other than desire.

And nevertheless this analytic theory at the centre of which it is sufficient to indicate that the notion of libido is situated, which is nothing other than the psychical energy of desire, is something, if we are dealing with energy, in which, as I already indicated in passing, remember earlier the metaphor of the factory, certain conjunctions of the symbolic and the real are necessary for the notion of energy even to subsist. But I do not wish here, either to stop or to dwell too long on this.

(3) This analytic theory therefore rests entirely on this notion of libido, on the energy of desire. But notice that for some time we see it more and more oriented towards something which those very people who sustain this new orientation, themselves articulate very consciously, at least the more aware of them who have borrowed it from Fairbairn, he writes frequently, because he continuously articulates and writes, particularly in the collection which is called Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality that the modern theory of analysis has changed somewhat from the axis which Freud first gave it by bringing it about or by considering that for us the libido is no longer "pleasure-seeking", as Fairbairn expresses it, that it is "object-seeking".

This is to say that Mr. Fairbairn is the most typical representative of this modern tendency.

What this tendency orienting the function of the libido in function of an object which is supposed to be in some way predestined for it signifies, is something to which we have alluded a hundred times and whose incidences on analytic theory and technique I have shown you in a thousand forms, together with what I believed could often be pointed out in them in terms of practical deviations, some of which have dangerous consequences.

(4) The importance of what I want to point out to you in order to allow you to approach the problem today, is in short this veiling of the very word desire which appears in the whole manipulation of analytic experience, and in a way the impression I would not say of renewal, I would say of bewilderment, that we produce by reintroducing it; I mean that instead of talking about libido or about the genital object, we talk about genital desire. It will immediately perhaps appear much more difficult for us to consider as obvious that genital desire and its maturation imply just by themselves this sort of possibility or of openness, or of the plenitude of realisation of love which seems to have become so doctrinal, from a certain perspective of the maturation of the libido; tendency and realisation, and the implication as regards the maturation of the libido, which appear all the same all the more surprising since they make their appearance at the heart of a doctrine which was precisely the first not alone to highlight, but even to explain, what Freud has classified under the title of debasement in the sphere of love, which means that in effect desire seems to bring with it a certain quantum in effect of love, it is indeed very precisely, and very often of a love which presents itself to the personality as conflictual, of a love which is not avowed, of a love which even refuses to avow itself.

(5) On the other hand, what if we also reintroduce this word desire there where we see being currently employed as affectivity, as a positive or negative sentiment, in what one can call a sort of disgraceful way of proceeding, forces which are still efficacious, and particularly by means of the analytic relationship, by means of the transference. It seems to me that by the simple fact of using this word, a cleavage will be produced which will of itself have something clarifying about it.

It is a question of knowing whether transference is constituted, no longer by an affectivity or by positive or negative sentiments which this term involves in a vague and veiled way, but it is a question, and here the desire that is experienced is named by a single one, sexual desire, aggressive desire with respect to the analyst, which will show itself to us right away and at first glance. These desires are by no means everything in the transference, and because of this very fact the transference must be defined by something other than by more or less confused references to the notion of positive or negative affectivity; and so that indeed if we pronounce the word desire, the final benefit of this full usage is that we will ask ourselves what desire is.

It is not a question that we will have to or be able to respond to. It is only that, if I were not caught up here by what I could call the urgent rendezvous that I have with my practical experiential requirements, I would have allowed myself some (6) questions on the subject of the meaning of this word desire, in the company of those who have been the most qualified to valorise its usage, namely the poets and the philosophers.

I will not do this, first of all because the usage of the word desire, the transmission of the term and of the function of desire in poetry, is something which I would say, we will discover retrospectively if we pursue our investigation far enough. If it is true, because this will be the whole progress of my development this year, that the situation of desire is profoundly marked by, tied up to, riveted to a certain function of language, to a certain relationship of the subject to the signifier, analytic experience will carry us, at least I hope so, far enough in this exploration for us to find enough time to be helped perhaps by the properly poetic evocation that can be made of it, and indeed also to understand more profoundly at the end the nature of poetic creation in its relationships with desire.

Only I would point out that the fundamental difficulties of the game of hide-and-seek that you will see to be at the basis of what our experience will show us, appear already in the fact for example that precisely one sees clearly in poetry how the poetic relationship to desire is poorly accommodated, as one might say, to the depiction of its object. I would say that in this regard figurative poetry - I am almost evoking the roses and lillies of beauty - always has something which only expresses desire in a (7) particularly cold register; that on the contrary the law properly speaking of this problem of the evocation of desire, is in a poetry which curiously presents itself as that poetry which is called metaphysical and for those who read English, I will only refer here to the most eminent of the metaphysical poets in English literature, John Donne, so that you can refer to him in order to confirm the degree to which it is very precisely the problem of the structure of the relationships of desire which is evoked there in a celebrated poem, for example "The Ecstasy", and whose title sufficiently indicates the first steps, the direction in which there is poetically elaborated at least on the lyrical plane, the poetic approach to desire when it itself is properly speaking sought and aimed at.

I am leaving to one side something which certainly goes much further in presenting desire, the work of the poet when it is supported by dramatic action. It is very precisely the dimension to which we will have to come back this year. I am announcing it to you already because we approached it last year, it is the direction of comedy.

But let us leave the poets there. I only mentioned them there as a sort of preliminary indication, and to tell you that we will rediscover them later more or less diffusely. I want to dwell more or less on what has been in this regard the position of the philosophers, because I think that it has been very instructive (8) in terms of the point where the problem is situated for us.

I was careful to write for you up there these three terms: "pleasure-seeking", "object-seeking", in so far as they are seeking pleasure, in so far as they are seeking the object. This indeed is the way that it has been posed from the beginning for reflection and for morality - I mean theoretical morality, the morality which is announced in precepts and in rules, in the operations of philosophers, very especially it is said of moral philosophers (ethiciens). I pointed out to you already - notice in passing when all is said and done the foundation of every morality which could be called physical, as one could see the way in which the term has the same meaning, the way in which medieval philosophy speaks about the physical theory of love, precisely in the sense that it is the opposite of the ecstatic theory of love. The basis of every morality which has been expressed up to the present, up to a certain point in the philosophical tradition, comes back in fact to what could be called the hedonistic tradition which consists in establishing a sort of equivalence between these two terms of pleasure and object, in the sense that the object is the natural object of libido, in the sense that it is a benefit, when all is said and done, to admit pleasure to the rank of the goods sought by the subject, even indeed to refuse it once one has the same criterion of it, to the rank of sovereign good.

This hedonistic tradition of morality is something which is (9) certainly not capable of ceasing, except by remembering that from the moment that one is in a way engaged in academic dialogue, that one no longer perceives its paradoxes, because when all is said and done, what is more contrary to what we will call the experience of practical reason, than this supposed convergence of pleasure and the good?

When all is said and done, if one looks closely at it, if one looks for example at what these things involve in Aristotle, what do we see being elaborated? And it is very clear, things are very pure in Aristotle. It is undoubtedly something which only succeeds in realising this identification of pleasure and of the good within what I may call an ethic of mastery, or something whose flattering ideal, the terms of temperance or of intemperance, namely something which is associated with the subject's mastery with respect to his own habits. But the inconsistency of this theorisation is quite striking. If you

re-read these celebrated passages which concern precisely the use of pleasures, you will see there that nothing comes into this moralising point of view which does not belong to the register of this mastery of a morality of the master, from the fact that the master can discipline, can discipline many things, principally involving, relative to, his habits, namely to the management and to the usage of his ego. But as regards desire, you see the degree to which Aristotle himself must admit, he is very lucid and very (10) aware that what results from this practical and theoretical moral theorisation, is that the epitheumiai, the desires, appear very quickly beyond a certain limit which is precisely the limit of mastery and of the ego in the domain of what he calls precisely bestiality.

Desires are exiled from the proper field of man, if it is a fact that man is identified with the reality of the master; on occasion it is even something like perversions, and moreover he has in this regard a particularly modern conception of the fact that something in our vocabulary could express well enough by the fact that the master is not to be judged on this, which almost amounts to saying that in our vocabulary, he cannot be recognised as responsible.

These texts are worthwhile recalling. You will clarify things for yourselves by referring to them.

Opposed to this philosophical tradition, there is someone whom I would wish all the same to name here, to name as being in my eyes the precursor of this something which I believe to be new, which we must consider as new, in let us say the progress, the direction of certain relationships of man to himself, which is that of the analysis that Freud establishes.

It is Spinoza, because after all I think that it is in him, (11) in any case with a very exceptional accent, that one can read a formula like the following: "That desire is the very essence of man". In order not to isolate the beginning of the formula from what follows, we will add: "in so far as it is conceived from one of his affections, conceived as determined and dominated by any one of his affections to do something".

One could already do a lot starting from there to articulate that which in this formula still remains, what I might call, unrevealed; I say unrevealed because of course you cannot translate Spinoza into Freud. He is all the same very singular, and I offer him to you as a very singular testimony, no doubt personally I have perhaps a greater propensity than someone else, and many years ago I spent a lot of time working on Spinoza. I do not think for all that that this is the reason why in rereading him from the point of view of my experience, it seems to me that someone who participates in the Freudian experience can find himself also at ease in the texts of the man who wrote "De Servitute Humana", and for whom the whole human reality and its structures are organised in function of the attributes of the divine substance.

But let us also leave to one side for the moment this indication, provided we return to it. I want to give you a much more accessible example, one on which I will close this philosophical reference concerning our problem. I took it here at the most (12) accessible level, indeed at the most popular way into it that you could have. Open the dictionary of the late charming Lalande, his Vocabulaire de la philosophie, which is always, I must say, in every kind of exercise of this nature, that of making a dictionary, always one of the most dangerous and at the same time one of the most fruitful things, to such an extent does language dominate all these problems. One is sure that in organising a dictionary one will always do something suggestive. Here we find the following: "Desir (Begehren, Verlangen)" - it is not irrelevant to recall what desire articulates on the plane of German philosophy - "a spontaneous and conscious tendency towards an end that you imagine".

"Desire is therefore based upon tendency of which it is a particular and more complex case. On the other hand it is opposed to will or to volition in so far as it superimposes: 1. the coordination of the tendencies, at least momentarily; 2. the opposition of the subject and the object; 3. the consciousness of one's own efficacy; 4. the thought of the means through which the willed-for end will be realised".

These reminders are very useful, only it should be remarked that in an article which is trying to define desire, there are two lines to situate it with respect to tendency and that this whole development is referred to the will. It is effectively to this that the discourse on desire in the dictionary is reduced, except (13) that there is added on again:

"Finally, according to certain philosophers, there is also in the will a fiat of a special nature which is irreducible to the tendencies, and which constitutes liberty".

It is striking to see coming over this philosophical author some air of irony or other in these last lines. As a note: "Desire is the tendency to procure an emotion that has been already experienced or imagined, it is the natural will for a pleasure" (quotation from Roque). This term of natural will being very interesting as a reference.

To which Lalande personally adds: "This definition appears too narrow in that it does not take into account sufficiently the anteriority of certain tendencies with respect to their corresponding emotions. Desire seems to be essentially the desire of an act or of a state without there being necessary in every case a representation of the affective character of this end".

I think that this means of the pleasure, or of something else. In any case, it certainly poses the problem of knowing what is in question, whether it is the representation of the pleasure, or if it is the pleasure.

Certainly I do not think that the task which is done by means of a dictionary, to try to circumscribe the signification of desire, is a simple task, all the more because you will not be able for the task either by means of the tradition to which it (14) reveals itself as absolutely prepared. After all is desire the psychological reality, resistant to every organisation, and when all is said and done is it by the subtraction of the characteristics that are indicated as being those of the will that we can manage to approach what the reality of desire is?

We will then have the contrary of what has left us with the non-coordination of tendencies, even momentarily, the opposition of the subject and the object, would really be withdrawn. Likewise we would be here in a presence, a tendency unaware of its own efficacy, without thinking of the words by which it will realise the desired end. In short, we are certainly here in a field in which in any case analysis has introduced certain more precise articulations, because within these negative determinants, analysis outlines very precisely the drive at the level, at its different levels, in so far as it is precisely the following: the non-coordination, even momentarily, of the tendencies, the phantasy in so far as it introduces an essential articulation, or more exactly an altogether characteristic species within this vague determination of the non-opposition of the subject to the object.

This year our aim here will be to try precisely to define what phantasy is, perhaps even a little more precisely than the analytic tradition up to now has managed to define it.

(15) For the rest, the final terms of idealism, of pragmatism, which are implied here, we will only retain for the moment one thing: very precisely how difficult it seems to situate desire and to analyse it in function of purely objectal references.

We are going to stop here to enter properly speaking into the terms within which I hope to articulate for you this year the problem of our experience, in so far as they are specifically those of desire, of desire and its interpretation. Already the internal link, the link of the coherence in analytic experience between desire and its interpretation, presents in itself something which only habit prevents us from seeing how suggestive the interpretation of desire already is by itself, and something which seems to be linked in an internal fashion, it seems, to the manifestation of desire.

You know the point of view from which, I will not say we are beginning, we are continuing, because we did not come together yesterday, I mean that we have already spent five years trying to designate the features of the comprehension of our experience by certain articulations. You know that these features have come to converge this year on this problem which is perhaps the problem at which there converge underneath, these points, some distant from one another, whose approach I wish first of all to (16) prepare for you.

Psychoanalysis - and we have gone along together for the last five years - psychoanalysis essentially shows us what we will call man's capture in the components of the signifying chain.

That this capture is no doubt linked to the reality (fait) of man, but that this capture is not coextensive with this reality in the sense that no doubt man speaks, but that in order to speak he must enter into language and into its pre-existing discourse. I would say that this law of subjectivity which analysis especially highlights, its fundamental dependence on language is something which is so essential that it brings all the psychologies together.

We are saying that there is a psychology which is served, in so far as we may define it as the totality of studies concerning what we could call in a broad sense a sensibility in so far as it is a function of the maintenance of a totality or of a homeostasis, in short, the functions of sensibility in relation to an organism. You see that here everything is implicated, not alone all the experimental data of psychophysiology, but also everything that can contribute in the most general order, the putting into operation of notions of form as regards the apprehension of the means for the maintenance of the constancy of the organism. A whole field of psychology is inscribed here, (17) and personal experience sustains this field in which the research is carried on.

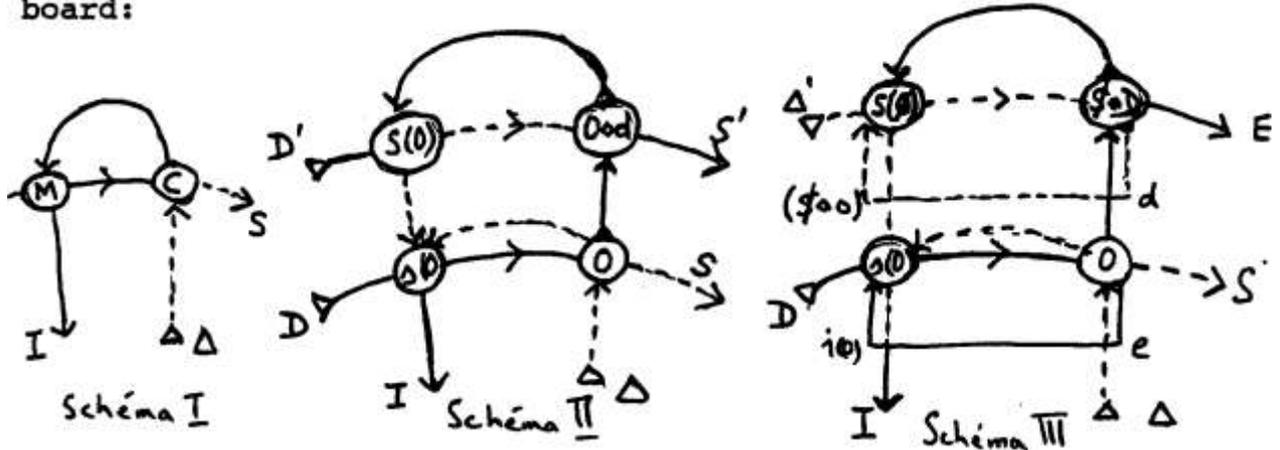
But the subjectivity that is in question, in so far as man is captured by language, in so far as he is captured, whether he wishes it or not, and in so far as he is captured away beyond the knowledge that he has of it, is a subjectivity which is not immanent to a sensibility in so far as here the term sensibility means the couple stimulus-response, for the following reason: It is because the stimulus here is given in function of a code which imposes its order, if needs be must be translated into it.

I am articulating here the emission, and not of a sign as one could say at a pinch, at least in the experimental perspective, in the experimental testing of what I call the stimulus-response cycle. One could say that that it is a sign which from the external milieu forces the organism to respond, to defend itself. If you tickle the sole of a frog's foot, it notices a sign, it responds to it by a certain muscular relaxation.

But in so far as subjectivity is captured in language, there is the emission, not of a sign, but of a signifier, namely be sure to remember the following which appears simple: that something, the signifier which takes on value not as is said when one speaks in communications theory of something, which takes on its value in relation to a third thing, that this sign still represents quite recently, this can be read with three terms: they are the (18) minimal terms, there must be a, the one who hears, after that a signifier is enough, there is no need even to speak about an emitter, it is enough to have a sign and to say that this sign signifies a third thing, that it simply represents. This is a false construction, because the sign does not take its

value with respect to a third thing that it represents, but it takes on its value with respect to another signifier which it is not.

As regards these three schemas which I have just put on the board:



I wish to show you, I would not say their genesis because you should not imagine that it is a question of a stage, even though something could be discovered here of a stage effectively realised by the subject, the subject must after all take his place here, but you should not see here a stage in the sense that it would be a question of a typical stage, of a stage of development, it is rather a question of a generating, and to be more explicit, of a logical anteriority of each one of these schemas with respect to the one which follows.

(19) What is represented by this thing which we shall call D, because it begins from a capital D? It represents the signifying chain. What does that mean? This basic fundamental structure, subjects every manifestation of language to the condition of being ruled by a succession, in other words by a diachrony, by something which unfolds over time. We will leave to one side the temporal properties that are involved. We will have to come back to them perhaps at the appropriate time. Let us say that undoubtedly the whole fullness of temporal material, so to speak, is not at all applied here. Here things can be summarised in terms of the notion of succession, with what this can already involve and imply in terms of the notions of scansion. But we have not even got that far yet. The single discrete, that is to say differential element, is the base on which there is going to be established our problem of the implication of the subject in the signifier.

This implies, given what I have just pointed out to you, namely that the signifier is defined by its relationship, its meaning, and takes on its value in relation to another signifier, from a system of signifying opposition, this develops in a dimension which also and at the same time implies a certain synchrony of signifiers.

It is this synchrony of signifiers, namely the existence of a certain signifying battery concerning which one can pose the

(20) problem of knowing what is the minimal battery. I tried to work at this little problem. It will not be taking you too far from your experience to know whether after all one can make a language with a battery which seems to be the minimal battery, a battery of four. I do not think that it is unthinkable. But let us leave this to one side.

It is clear that in the present state of affairs, we are far from being reduced to this minimum. The important thing is the following which is indicated by the dotted line which has come to intersect from the front to the back the line representing the signifying chain, by cutting it at two points, namely the way in which the subject has to enter into the operation of the signifying chain. The thing that is represented by the dotted line represents the first encounter at the synchronic level, at the level of the simultaneity of signifiers. Here we have what I call the point of encounter with the code. In other words, it is in so far as the child addresses himself to a subject whom he knows to be a speaking subject, whom he has seen speaking, who has penetrated him with relationships ever since the beginning of his awakening to the light of day; it is in so far as there is something which operates as the operation of the signifier, as the word-mill, that the subject has to learn very early on that there is here a path, a defile through which essentially the manifestations of his needs must stoop in order to be satisfied.

(21) Here the second point of intersection is the point at which the message is produced, and it is constituted by the following: the fact is that it is always by a retroactive operation of the succession of signifiers that the signification is affirmed and made precise, namely that it is retroactively that the message takes shape from the signifier which is there ahead of it, from the code which is ahead of it, and which inversely it, the message, while it is being formulated at every instant, anticipates, draws on.

I indicated to you already what results from this process. In any case what results from it and what can be marked on the schema, is the following: it is that what is at the origin in the form of the birth of need, of the tendency, as the psychologists call it, which is represented here on the schema, here at the level of this Id which does not know what it is, which being captured in language, does not reflect itself by (de) this innocent contribution of language in which the subject at first becomes discourse. There results from this that even reduced to the most primitive forms of apprehension by the subject of the fact that he is in relationship with other speaking subjects, there is produced this something at the end of the intentional chain which I here called for you the first primary identification, the first realisation of an idea regarding which one can not even say at this moment of the schema that it is a question of an ego ideal, but that undoubtedly the subject has here received the first sign, signum, of its (22) relationship with the other.

The second stage of the schema can overlap in a certain fashion a

particular evolutionary stage, on the simple condition that you do not consider them as clearly distinguished. There are things clearly distinguished in evolution, it is not at the level of the stages of the schema that these caesuras are found here. These caesuras, as Freud remarked somewhere, are marked at the level of the judgement of attribution compared to simple nomination. This is not what I am talking to you about now, I will come back to it later.

In the first part of the schema and in the second, it is a question of the difference within an infans level of discourse, because it is perhaps not even necessary yet for the child to speak in order that already this mark, this imprint put on need by demand, already operates at the level of alternating wails. That may be enough.

The second part of the schema implies that even if the child cannot yet sustain a discourse, he knows all the same how to speak, and this comes very early. When I say knows how to speak, I mean that it is a question, at the level of the second stage of the schema, of something that goes beyond the capture in language. There is properly speaking a relationship in so far as there is an appeal to the other as presence, this appeal to the other as presence, as presence against a background of meaning; at this moment signalled by the fort-da which impressed (23) Freud so vividly at a date that we can fix as 1915, having been called to one of his grandsons, who himself became a psychoanalyst, I mean the child who was the object of Freud's observation.

This is what makes us pass to the level of the second stage of the realisation of the schema, in this sense that here, beyond what the chain of discourse as existent articulates, beyond the subject and imposing on him, whether he wishes it or not, its form, beyond this apprehension, which one might call an innocent one of the form of language by the subject, something else is going to appear which is linked to the fact that it is in the experience of language that there is founded his apprehension of the other as such, of this other who can give him the answer, the answer to his appeal, this other to whom fundamentally he poses the question which we see in Cazotte's Le diable amoureux, as being the roar of the terrifying form which represents the apparition of the super-ego, in response to the one who has evoked him in a Neapolitan tavern: "Che vuoi? What do you want?" The question posed to the other of what he wants, in other words, from the place where the subject meets desire the first time, desire being first of all the desire of the other, the desire thanks to which he perceives, he realises, as being this beyond around which turns the the fact that that the other will bring it about that one signifier or another will be or not be in the presence of the word, that the other gives him the experience of (24) his desire at the same time as an essential experience because up to the present it was in itself that the battery of signifiers was there, in which a choice could always be made, but now in experience this choice appears as commutative, that it is within the power of the other to bring it about that one or other

of the signifiers should be there, that there should be introduced into experience, and at this level of experience, the two new principles which have just been added to what was at first the pure and simple principle of succession implying this principle of choice. We now have a principle of substitution, because - and this is essential - it is this commutativity from which there is established for the subject what I call, between the signifier and the signified, the bar, namely that there is between the signifier and the signified this co-existence, this simultaneity which is at the same time marked by a certain impenetrability, I mean the maintenance of the difference, of the distance between the signifier and the signified.

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It is a curious thing, that the theory of groups as it is learned in the abstract study of sets, shows us the absolutely essential link between any commutativity and the very possibility of using what I call here the bar sign which is used for the representation of fractions.

(25) Let us leave this to one side for the moment. It is an indication that is marginal to what we are dealing with.

The structure of the signifying chain from the moment that it has realised the appeal of the other, namely when the enunciating, the process of enunciating is superimposed, is distinguished from the formula of the enunciated, by demanding as such something which is precisely the capture of the subject, the capture of the subject which at first was innocent, but which here - the nuance is nevertheless there, it is what is essential - is unconscious in the articulation of the word.

From the moment that the commutativity of the signifier here becomes an essential dimension for the production of the signified, namely that it is in an effective and striking fashion in the consciousness of the subject, of the substitution of a signifier for another signifier, will be as such the origin of the multiplication of these significations which characterise the enrichment of the human world.

Another term also emerges, or another principle which is the principle of similarity, in other words which brings it about that within the chain, it is in relation to the fact that in the sequence of the signifying chain, one of the signifying terms will be or not similar to another, that there also operates a certain dimension of things which is properly speaking the metonymical dimension.

(26) I will show you later that it is essentially in this dimension, in this dimension that there are produced the effects which are characteristic and fundamental of what can be called the poetic discourse, the effects of poetry.

It is therefore at the level of the second stage of the schema that there is produced something which allows us to place at the same level as the message, namely on the left hand side of the schema, that which the message in the first schema, the apparition of what is signified about the Other in opposition to the signifier given by the Other which it produces on the chain, the dotted one because it is a chain which is only articulated in part, which is only implicit, which here only represents the subject in so far as he is the support of the word.

I told you, that it is in the experience of the other qua other having a desire, that this second stage of experience is produced. Desire, starting with its apparition, its origin, is manifested in this interval, this gap which separates the pure and simple linguistic articulation of the word, from the thing which marks that the subject realises in it something of himself which only has import, meaning in relation to this production of the word and which is properly speaking what language calls his being.

It is between the avatars of his demand and what these avatars have made him become, and on the other hand this exigency for (27) recognition by the other which can be called exigency for love on this occasion, that there is situated a horizon of being for the subject of whom there is question, namely of knowing whether the subject can reach it or not. It is in this interval, in this gap that there is situated an experience which is that of desire, which is first of all apprehended as being that of the desire of the other, and within which the subject has to situate his own desire. His own desire as such cannot be situated elsewhere than in this space.

This represents the third stage, the third form, the third phase of the schema. It is constituted by the following: the fact is that in the primitive presence of the desire of the other as opaque, as obscure, the subject is without recourse. He is hilfloss, Hilflosigkeit. I use Freud's term, in French this is called the détresse of the subject. What we have here is the foundation of that which in analysis, was explored, experienced, situated as the traumatic experience.

What Freud has taught us by taking the path which allowed him to finally situate the experience of anxiety in its true place, is something which has nothing of this character which I consider to be diffuse in certain ways, of what is called the existential experience of anxiety. That if it has been possible to say by referring to philosophy that anxiety is something which confronts us with nothingness, these formulas are undoubtedly justifiable (28) in a certain perspective of reflection, you should know that on this subject Freud has an articulated, positive teaching; he makes of anxiety something which is clearly situated in a theory of communication. Anxiety is a signal. It is not at the level of desire, even though desire must be produced at the same place where at first helplessness (détresse) originates, is experienced; it is not at the level of desire that anxiety is produced. We will take up this year attentively, line by line,

the study of Freud's Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety. Today in this first lecture the only thing I can do is to initiate for you some major points in order to be able to rediscover them subsequently, and namely the following. Freud tells us that anxiety is produced as a signal in the ego, on the foundation of which it as a signal is called on to remedy.

I know that I am going too quickly, that to talk to you about this would deserve a whole seminar, but I cannot talk to you about anything if I do not begin by showing you the outline of the journey that we have to take.

It is in so far therefore as there intervenes at this third stage the specular experience, the experience of the relationship to the image of the other in so far as it is fundamental to the Urbild of the ego that we are in other words going to rediscover a way of using in a context which will give it a completely different resonance, what we articulated at the end of our first (29) year about the relationships between the ideal ego and the ego ideal, it is in so far as we are going to be led to rethink all that in the context of the symbolic action which I show you here to be essential.

You will see the use it can finally have. I am not alluding here only to what I said and articulated about the specular relationship, namely the confrontation in the mirror of the subject with his own image; I am alluding to the schema called '00', namely to the use of the concave mirror which allows us to think about the function of a real image itself reflected, and which can only be seen as reflected from a certain position, from a symbolic position which is that of the ego ideal.

What is in question is the following: in the third stage of the schema we have the intervention as such of the imaginary element of the relationship of the ego to the other as being what is going to permit the subject to guard against this helplessness in relation to the desire of the other, by what? By something which is borrowed from the game of mastery which the child at a particular age has learned to handle in a certain reference to his counterpart as such.

The experience of the counterpart, in the sense that he is gaze, that he is the other who looks at you, that he brings into play a certain number of imaginary relationships among which (30) in the forefront relationships of prestige, and also the relationships of submission and of defeat. It is by means of this in other words as Aristotle says, that man thinks. You must say that man thinks, you must not say that the soul thinks, but man thinks with his soul. You must say that the subject defends himself. This is what our experience shows us. With his ego he defends himself against this helplessness, and with this means that the imaginary experience of the relationship to the other gives him, he constructs something which is the difference between the flexible specular experience with the other, because what the subject reflects, are not simply games of

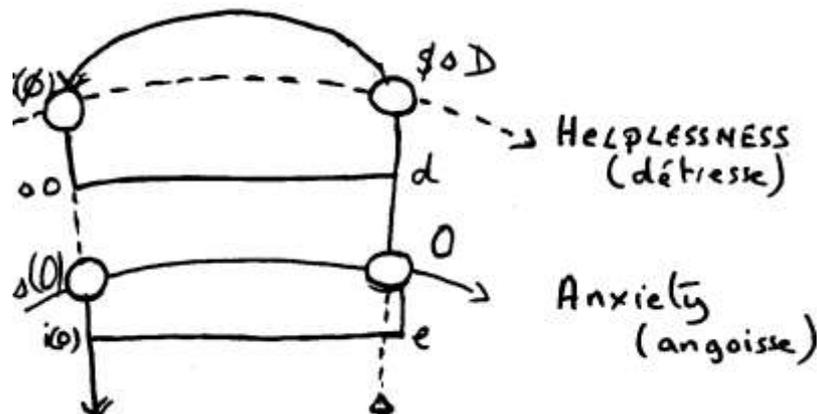
prestige, it is not his opposition to the other in prestige and in pretence, it is himself as speaking subject, and this is why what I designate for you here as being this way out, this locus of reference by means of which desire is going to learn to situate itself, is the phantasy. This is why I symbolise the phantasy for you, I formulate it for you by means of these symbols, the S here. I will tell you in a little while why the S is barred, namely the subject as a speaker, in so far as he refers himself to the other as gaze, to the imaginary other.

Every time that you have to deal with something which is properly speaking a phantasy, you will see that it can be articulated in these terms of reference of the subject as speaking to the imaginary other. This is what defines the phantasy, every (31) phantasy is articulated in terms of the subject speaking to the imaginary other.

This is why human desire is adjusted (coapte) not to an object, but to a phantasy. It is a fact of experience that analysis has articulated in the course of its experience.

Perversion, deviation, even delusion are articulated in an objectification which ties the imaginary and the symbolic together.

Let us illustrate our remarks, because it is a question of the relationships of the the subject to the signifier, let us see the use that can be made of the schema in terms of communicating matters which are rather obscure.



(32) This then was why I began with that. I am not saying that for all that I have made your experience any easier, that is the reason why now, in order to relax this experience, I would like to give you right away little illustrations. These illustrations, I will take one of them first of all and really at the simplest level because it is a question of the relationships of the subject to the signifier, the least and the first thing that can be required of a schema, is to see the way in which it can help in connection with the fact of commutation.

I remembered something that I had read once in Darwin's book on expression in men and in animals and which I must say, amused me a good deal. Darwin tells how a man called Sydney Smith who, I

suppose must have been someone in the English society of his time, and about whom he says the following: Darwin poses a question, he says: I heard Sydney Smith at a soiree, saying quite calmly the following sentence "I hear that dear old Lady Cock has been overlooked". In reality overlook means that the supervisor did not spot her, the etymological meaning. Overlook is commonly used in the English language. There is nothing that corresponds to it in our current usage. That is why the knowledge of languages is at once so useful and so harmful, because it allows us to avoid making an effort, to make this (33) substitution of signifiers in our own tongue, thanks to which we can manage to aim at a certain signified, because it is a question of changing the whole context in order to obtain the same effect in an analogous society. This could mean: l'oeil lui est passe au-dessus and Darwin marvels at the fact that it was absolutely perfectly clear to everyone, without the slightest doubt that that meant that the devil had forgotten her, I mean that he had forgotten to carry her into the tomb, which seems to have been at that moment in the mind of the listener her natural, even wished-for place. And Darwin really leaves the question open: How did he achieve this effect, says Darwin? You know, I am really unable to say.

However, we can be grateful to him for having marked the experience that he has there in a fashion that is particularly significant and exemplary of his own limitations in approaching this problem. That he took on the problem of emotions in a certain way, by saying that the expression of emotions is all the same involved, precisely because of the fact that the subject shows none, that he says this placidly, is perhaps taking things too far. In any case Darwin does not do it, he is really very astonished at this something that must be taken literally, because as always when we study a case, we must not reduce it by (34) making it vague. Darwin says: everyone understood that the man was talking about the devil, even though the devil is nowhere mentioned, and what is interesting is that Darwin tells us that the shadow of the devil passed through the gathering.

Let us try now to understand it a little.

We are not going to delay on Darwin's own mental limitations, we will necessarily come to them all the same, but not immediately. What is certain, is that there is from the first approach something which is part of a striking knowledge, because after all there is no need to have posed the principles of the metaphorical effect, namely of the substitution of a signifier for a signifier, in other words there is no need to demand of Darwin to have had a premonition of them for him to have understood right away that the effect in any case comes first of all from the fact that he does not even articulate, from the fact that a sentence which begins when one says Lady Cock, normally terminates with "ill": "I heard it being said all the same that things are not going too well", therefore that the substitution of something which appears that what is expected is news about the health of the old woman, because when one is talking about old ladies it is always with their health that one

is concerned, is replaced by something different, indeed by something which from a certain point of view is irreverent.

He does not say, that she is either at death's door, nor that she (35) is quite well. He says that she has been forgotten.

Here then what intervenes in order that this metaphorical effect, namely in any case something other than that would mean if overlook were expected? It is in so far as it is not expected, that it is substituted for another signifier, that a signified effect is produced which is new, which is neither along the line that one has tried, nor along the line of what is unexpected. If this unexpected had not precisely been characterised as unexpected, it is something original which in a certain way had to be realised in the mind of each person according to his own angles of refraction. In any case there is the fact that there is an opening up of a new signified by this something which ensures for example that Sydney Smith is on the whole thought to be a wit, namely does not express himself in clichés.

But why the devil?

If we refer to our little schema, it will all the same help us a good deal. The reason why one makes schemas is in order to make use of them. One can however arrive at the same result without them, but the schema in a way guides us, shows us very obviously what is happening there in the real, the thing that presents itself, is properly speaking a phantasy, and by what mechanisms? It is here also that the schema can go further than what is permitted, I would say, by a kind of naive notion that things are (36) made to express something which in short would communicate an emotion as they say, as if the emotions in themselves did not pose so many other problems, namely what they are, namely if they themselves do not already have a need for communication.

Our subject, we are told, is perfectly placid, namely that he presents himself in a way in the pure state, the presence of his word being its pure metonymical effect; I mean his word qua word in its continuity as word, and in this continuity of word precisely he makes the following intervene: the presence of death in so far as the subject may or may not escape it, namely to the degree that he evokes this presence of something which has the closest relationship with the birth of the signifier itself, I mean that if there is here a dimension in which death, or the fact that there is no more, can be both directly evoked, and at the same time veiled, but in any case incarnated, become immanent in an act, it is indeed that of signifying articulation. It is therefore to the degree that this subject who speaks so easily about death, it is quite clear that he does not wish this lady particularly well, but that on the other hand the perfect placidity with which he speaks of it implies precisely that in this regard he has dominated his desire, in so far as this desire as in Volpone, can be expressed by the lovable formula: "May you (37) stink and die!"

He does not say that, he simply articulates serenely the level that this is worth to us each one in his turn which is here forgotten for a moment. But that, if I may put it this way, is not the devil, and the will come one day or other, and at the same time this personage, poses himself as someone who does not fear to meet on equal terms the one he is talking about, to put himself at the same level, under the influence of the same fault, of the same terminal legislation by the absolute master who is here made present.

In other words, the subject here reveals himself at the place of what is veiled by language as having this sort of familiarity, of fullness, of plenitude in the handling of language which suggests what? Precisely something on which I wish to terminate, because this is what was lacking in everything that I said in my development in three stages, for what is the mainspring, the highlight of what I wished to articulate for you to be complete.

At the level of the first schema we have the innocent image. It is of course unconscious, but it is an unconsciousness which is only asking to become knowledge. Let us not forget that in the unconscious this dimension of being conscious, even in French, implies this notion.

At the level of the second and of the third stage of the schema, I told you that we had a much more conscious use of knowledge, I (38) mean that the subject knows how to speak and that he speaks. This is what he does when he calls the other, and nevertheless it is here properly speaking that the originality of the field discovered by Freud and which he called the unconscious is to be found, namely this something which always puts the subject at a certain distance from his being, and which means precisely that this being never rejoins him, and it is for this reason that it is necessary, that he can not do otherwise than reach his being in this metonymy of being in the subject which is desire.

And why? Because at the level at which the subject is himself engaged, himself inserted into the word and because of that into the relationship to the other as such, as locus of the word, there is a signifier which is always lacking. Why? Because it is a signifier, and the signifier is specially assigned to the relationship of the subject with the signifier. This signifier has a name, it is the phallus.

Desire is the metonymy of being in the subject; the phallus is the metonymy of the subject in being. We will come back to this. The phallus, in so far as it is the signifying element subtracted from the chain of the word, in so far as it involves every relationship with the other, this is the final principle which means that the subject in everything, and in so far as he is implicated in the word, falls under the sway of something that develops with all its clinical consequences, under the name of (39) the castration complex.

What is suggested by I would not say every pure, but perhaps more every impure usage of the words of the tribe, every kind of

metaphorical unveiling, provided it is audacious and challenges what is always veiled by language, and what it always veils at the final term, is death. This always tends to give rise to, to make emerge this enigmatic figure of the missing signifier, of the phallus which appears here, and as always of course under the form that is called diabolical, the ear, the skin even the phallus itself, and if in this usage of the wager, the tradition of English wit, of this something contained which none the less does not dissimulate the most violent desire, but this usage is enough in itself to make appear in the imaginary, in the other who is there as a spectator in the small o, this image of the subject in so far as he is marked by this relationship to the special signifier which is called prohibition, here on this occasion in so far as it violates a prohibition, in so far as it shows that beyond the prohibitions which make up the law of languages, this is not the way to talk about old ladies.

Here all the same is a gentleman who intends to speak quite placidly and who makes the devil appear, and this is the point that our dear Darwin asks himself: how, in the name of the devil, did he do that?

I will leave you with that today. The next time we will take up (40) a dream in Freud, and we will try to apply our methods of analysis, and this will at the same time allow us to situate the different modes of interpretation.

Seminar 2: 19 November 1958

I would like first of all to set out the limits of what I want to do today, I mean in this particular lecture, to state what I will show you today, and first of all by tackling the example of the interpretation of a dream, as well as the use of what we have called conventionally for some time the graph.

Since I am not carrying on this discourse, if I can express myself in this way, simply above your heads, I would like there to be established through it a certain communication, as they say. I had some echo of the difficulties which you yourselves experienced the last time, namely at a moment which was far from being a novelty, and that the setting out again of this graph still constituted for some of you. For many however it remains, let us not yet say manageable because in truth this graph is not extraordinary, we constructed it together last year, namely put it together progressively, in a way you saw it being built up from the needs of a certain formulation centred around what I (2) called the formations of the unconscious. There is no need to be surprised that you are not able, as some of you have remarked, to perceive that its usage is not yet univocal for you, because precisely a part of what we will have to articulate this year about desire will show us its usefulness, and at the same time will teach us to handle it.

First of all then it is a question of comprehension. It is even this which seems to create for a certain number in different degrees, perhaps even less than they themselves say, which seems to create difficulties.

In connection with this term comprehension, I would like to point out - I assure you that there is no irony intended - that it is a problematical term. If there are those among you who always understand in every circumstance and at every moment what they are doing, I congratulate them and I envy them. This does not correspond, even after twenty five years of practice, to my experience, and in fact it shows us well enough the dangers that it involves in itself, the danger of illusion in all comprehension, so that I do not think there is any doubt that what I am trying to show you, is not so much to comprehend what I am doing, as to know it (le savoir). It is not always the same thing, they may not even go together, and you will see precisely that there are internal reasons why they should not go together, namely that you can in certain cases know what you are doing, know where you are at, without always being able to understand, (3) at least immediately, what is in question.

The graph is made precisely in order to be of use in finding your bearings, it is destined to announce something right away. I think today, if I have the time, that I will be able to begin to

see for example how this graph, and I think only by this graph or of course by something analogous - it is not to the uniform in which it may be presented that you must attach yourselves - will appear to you very useful to distinguish - I am saying this to arouse your interest - to distinguish for example three things, in order to distinguish by their positions, their different situations, three things which I should say, one very frequently finds confused to the point that one slips without warning between one and the other: the repressed for example. We will have things to say, or simply to take the fashion in which Freud himself defines it. The repressed, desire and the unconscious.

Let us go over it again in baby steps before applying it, so that there will be no doubt that what is represented at least by what we will call the two stages, even though of course, it is not even that which is the difficulty for many of you, these two stages do not correspond in any way to what habitually is presented to you at the level of what I could call the architectonics of the superior and inferior functions, automatism (4) and the function of synthesis. It is precisely because you do not find it there that these two stages confuse you, and that is why I will try to re-articulate them for you, because it seems that the second stage of the construction, a stage which obviously is defined abstractly, because since this graph is a discourse, one cannot say everything at the same time, this second stage is not necessarily a second phase, creates difficulties for some.

I therefore take things up again. What is the aim of this graph? It is to show the relationships which are essential for us, even though we are analysts, of the speaking subject with the signifier.

When all is said and done, the question around which these two stages are divided, is the same for the speaking subject - it is a good sign - is the same for him and for us. I was saying just now: do we know what we are doing? Well in his case too does he know or not what he is doing when he speaks? Which means: can he effectively signify for himself his action of signification?

If it is precisely around this question that these two stages are apportioned and regarding which I tell you right away, because this seems to have escaped some of you the last time, I tell you right away, in this connection you must realise that both function at the same time in the smallest act of speech, and you (5) will see what I mean, and how far I extend the term act of speech (acte de parole).

In other words, if you think of the process of what happens in the subject, in the subject in so far as the signifier intervenes in his activity, you must think the following, which I had the opportunity of articulating for one of you, to whom I was giving a little extra explanation after my seminar, and if I underline it for you it is because my interlocutor pointed out to me what he had not perceived; what I am going to tell you, is namely for example the following: what you must consider, is that the

processes in question start at the same time from the four points, delta, 0, d and D, namely - you are going to see that this is the contribution of my lecture today - in this relationship respectively the intention of the subject, the subject qua speaking, the act of demanding and this which we will call by a certain name a little later on and which I leave here for the moment in reserve.

The processes therefore are simultaneous along these four paths: d-delta-I-S(,#) . I think that this is well enough supported.

There are therefore two stages in the fact that the subject does something which is in relation to the dominant action, the dominant structure of the signifier. At the lower stage he receives, he undergoes this structure. This is particularly obvious. Pay careful attention to everything that I am saying, because there is nothing improvised in it, and that is why those (6) who are taking notes are doing the right thing.

This takes on its value by being especially - not uniquely but especially - illustrated. I mean that it is there that it is especially comprehensible, but at the same time it is also this which at first may mean that you do not see all its generality, namely that this engenders a certain lack of understanding. You can say to yourselves right away: every time that you understand, that is where the danger begins. It is especially the case that this takes on its value in the context, I say the context of the demand, it is in this context that the subject in so far as he is here at this level, at this stage, the line of the intentionality of the subject, of what we supposed to be the subject, a subject in so far as he has not become the speaking subject, in so far as he is the subject of whom one always speaks, of whom I would say, he is still spoken about, because I do not know that anyone has ever really properly made the distinction as I am trying here to introduce it to you, the subject of knowledge, to speak plainly the subject correlative to the object, the subject around whom turns the eternal question of idealism, and who is himself an ideal subject, has always something problematical namely that after all as has been pointed out, and as his name indicates, he is only supposed.

It is not the same thing, as you will see, for the subject who speaks, who imposes himself with complete necessity.

(7) The subject therefore in the context of the demand, is the first and I might say unformed state of the subject we are dealing with, the one whose conditions of existence we are trying to articulate by this graph. This subject is nothing other than the subject of need, because this is what he expresses in the demand, and I do not need to go back over this again. My whole point of departure consists in showing how this demand of the subject is at the same time profoundly modified by the fact that need must pass through the defiles of the signifier.

I will insist no further on this because I am supposing it known, but in this connection I would simply point out the following to

you: that it is precisely in this exchange which is produced between the primitive unconstituted position of the subject of need and the structural conditions imposed by the signifier, that there resides what is produced and what is represented here on this schema by the fact that the line D - S is unbroken up to 0, while further on it remains fragmented; that inversely it is in so far as it is anterior to $s(0)$ that the so-called line of intentionality, on this occasion of the subject, is fragmented and that it is only unbroken afterwards, let us say especially in this segment, and even provisionally because it is secondarily that I will have to insist on that in this case, in so far as you do not have to take into account the line $O - O^d - S(O) - s(0)$.
(?)

(8) Why are things this way? All the same I had better not delay forever on this graph, especially since we will have to come back to it.

In other words what is represented by this continuity of the line up to this point 0 which you know is the locus of the code, the locus where there lies the treasury of the tongue in its synchrony, I mean the sum of the thematic or taxematic elements, without which there is no means of communication between beings who are submitted to the conditions of language.

What is represented by the continuity of the line D - S up to the point 0 is the following: it is that it is this synchrony of the systematic organisation of the tongue, I mean that synchronically, and it is given here as a system, as a set within which each of these elements has its value qua distinct from the others, from the other signifiers, from the other elements of the system. Here we have, I repeat it for you, the starting point of everything that we articulate about communication. This is what is always forgotten in theories of communication, it is that what is communicated is not the sign of something else, and it is simply the sign of what is in the place where another signifier is not.

It is from the solidarity of this synchronic system qua established at the locus of the code, that the discourse of (9) demand qua anterior to the code takes on its solidity, in other words, that in the diachrony, namely in the development of this discourse there appears something which is called the minimal duration necessary for satisfaction, even for what is called a magical satisfaction, at least of refusal, namely the time to speak.

It is because of this relationship that the line of signifying discourse, of the signifying discourse of the demand which of itself, because it is composed of signifiers, must appear here and be represented in the fragmented form that we see subsisting here, namely in the form of a succession of discrete elements, separated therefore by spaces; it is in function of the synchronic solidity of the code from which these successive elements are borrowed that there is conceived this solidity of diachronic affirmation and the constitution of what is called in the articulation of the demand, the time of the formulation.

It is therefore before the code, or on this side of the code, that this line is presented as continuous. On the contrary what is it that this graph represents here by the fragmented line which is that of the intentionality of the subject? Let us observe that already the fact of affirming the context of the demand simplifies the supposed diversity of the subject, namely the thing that presents itself as essentially moving from moments, from variations of this point. You know that the problem of the continuity of the subject has been posed to the (10) psychologists for a long time, namely why a being essentially given over to what one can call intermittency, not just of the heart as has been said, but of many other things, can pose itself and affirm itself as ego. This is the problem that is in question, and undoubtedly already the putting into play of a need in the demand is already something which simplifies this subject with respect to the more or less chaotic, more or less random interferences between the different needs.

What the apparition on this schema of the fragmented form which represents the first part of the line delta - I here up to this 0, is something different, it is the retroactivity on this changableness (mouyance) which is at once continuous and discontinuous, confused no doubt, we must suppose it to be that of the primitive form, of the primitive manifestation of the tendency. It is the retroaction on it precisely of the form of discrete elements which discourse imposes on it; it is what it will undergo too actively from discursivity, it is why in this line, it is on this side not of the code, but of the message itself that the line appears in its fragmented form. What is produced beyond, is something that I have already sufficiently underlined at other moments to pass quickly over it now, it is the following: it is the identification which results from it of the subject to the other of the demand in so far as she is (11) all-powerful.

I do not think that I need to go back over the theme of the omnipotence now of thought, now of the word, in analytic experience, except to say that I pointed out how wrong it was to put it in the depreciated position that the psychologist usually takes in so far as he is always more or less, in the original sense of the term, a pedant, to attribute it to the subject when the omnipotence that is in question, is that of the other in so far as she disposes quite simply of the totality of signifiers.

In other words, to give the sense that we are not getting away from the concrete in articulating things in this way, I shall very expressly designate what I mean by that in the evolution, in the development, in the acquisition of language, in the child-mother relationships, to finally come to it, it is very precisely this: that this something that is in question and on which there reposes this primary identification that I designate by the segment $s(0)$, the signified of 0, and which culminates in the first nucleus, as this is currently expressed in analysis in the writings of Mr. Glover, you will see this articulated: the first nucleus of the formation of the ego, the kernel of the identification in which this process here culminates, is a question of what is produced in so far as the mother is not

simply the one who gives the breast (sein) - as I told you - she (12) is also the one who gives the sign (seing) of signifying articulation, and not only in so far as she speaks to the child as she obviously does, and well before she can presume that he understands anything of it, just as he understands things well before she imagines he does, but in so far as all sorts of the mother's games, the games of hide-and-seek for example which so quickly give rise in the infant to a smile, even to a laugh, are properly speaking already a symbolic action in the course of which what she reveals to him, is precisely the function of the symbol qua revelatory. In these hiding games she reveals to him how to make something disappear and to make it reappear, to make his own face disappear, or to make it reappear, or to hide the face of the child, and to rediscover it; she reveals to him the revelatory function. It is already a second degree function that we are dealing with.

It is in the midst of this that there are made these first identifications to what is called on this occasion the mother, the mother as all-powerful, and as you see, this has an import other than the pure and simple satisfaction of need.

Let us pass on to the second stage of this graph, the one therefore whose presentation the last day seems to have given rise for some of you to some difficulties. This second stage of the graph is something other than the subject in so far as he passes through the defiles of signifying articulation. It is (13) the subject who assumes the act of speaking; it is the subject qua I, although here I must articulate some essential reservations.

After all, this I, is not something I will delay on, I am going to point out to you at the beginning, this I, although I alluded to it in some development, is not our business, it is nevertheless the I of the "I think therefore I am". Just realise that this is a parenthesis. All the difficulties that were submitted to me, were made in connection with the "I think therefore I am", namely that this had no conclusive value because the I had already been put in the "I think" and that after all there is only a cogitatum, it thinks, and why therefore would it be in that?

I think that all the difficulties here have arisen precisely from this non-distinction between two subjects, as I articulated it for you at the beginning, namely that more or less at the beginning I think that more or less wrongly one refers back in this experience which the philosopher confides to us, to the confrontation of a subject with an object, consequently with an imaginary object among which it is not surprising that the I does not prove to be an object among others. If on the contrary we push the question to the level of the subject defined as speaking, the question is going to take on a quite different import, as the phenomenology which I will simply indicate to you (14) now is going to demonstrate.

For those who want references concerning this whole discussion

about the I, the cogito, I remind you that there is an article I already mentioned by M. Sartre in Les Recherches Philosophiques.

The I that is in question is not simply the I articulated in the discourse, the I in so far as it is pronounced in the discourse, and which linguists call at least for some time, a shifter. It is a semanteme which has no use that can be articulated in function of the code, I mean in function purely and simply of the code as lexically articulatable. Namely that as the simplest experience shows, the I can never be referred to something which can be defined in function of other elements of the code therefore as a semanteme, but simply in function of the act of the message. The I designates the one who is the support of the message, namely someone who varies from instant to instant.

It is no more complicated than that, but I would point out that what results from it, is that this I is essentially distinct therefore from this moment, as I will make you see very quickly, from what one can call the true subject of the act of speaking as such, and this is even what gives to the simplest I-discourse, I would say always a presumption of indirect discourse, I mean that this I could very easily be followed in the very discourse by (15) parenthesis: "I who am speaking", or "I say that", which moreover is made very obvious as other people have remarked before me, that a discourse which formulates "I say that", and which adds on afterwards: "and I repeat it", does not say in this "I repeat it" something useless because it is precisely to distinguish the two I's which are in question, the one who had said that and the one who adheres to what the one who has said something has said. In other words again, I want simply, if other examples are necessary to make you grasp it, to suggest to you the difference that there is between the I of "I love you", and the I of "I am here".

The I in question is particularly tangible, precisely, because of the structure that I am evoking, where it is fully hidden and where it is fully hidden is in these forms of discourse which realise what I shall call the vocative function, namely those which only cause the addressee to appear in their signifying structure and absolutely not the I. It is the I of "Take up thy bed and walk", it is the same fundamental I which is rediscovered in any form of imperative vocative and a certain number of others. I put them all provisionally under the title of vocative, it is if you wish the evocative I, it is the I that I spoke to you about already during the seminar on President Schreber, because it was essential to show, I do not know if at (16) that time I really achieved it, I did not even take it up again in what I wrote in my resume of my seminar on President Schreber; it is the I underlying the "You are the one who will follow me" (tu es celui qui me suivra), on which I insisted to such an extent, and which you see moreover to be part of the whole problem of a certain future within the vocative properly speaking, the vocatives of vocation.

I recall for those who were not there, the difference that there is in French, it is a refinement which not every tongue allows to

demonstrate, between "You are the one who shall follow me" (tu es celui qui me suivras) and "you are the one who will follow me" (tu es celui qui me suivra). This difference of the performative power of the tu in this case is effectively a real difference of the I in so far as it operates in this act of speaking which it represents and which is a question of showing once again and at this level that the subject always receives his own message, namely what is here to be avowed, namely the I in an inverted form, namely through the mediation of the form that it gives to the tu.

This discourse, the discourse therefore which is formulated at the level of the second stage, and which is the same discourse as always - we only arbitrarily distinguish the two stages - this discourse which as always is the discourse of the other, even when it is the subject who pronounces it, is fundamentally at this second stage an appeal to be that is more or less forceful, (17) it always contains, and here again we have one of the marvellous homophonique equivocations that French contains, it always contains more or less a soit, in other words a fiat, a fiat which is the source and the root of what beginning from the tendency, becomes and is inscribed for the speaking being in the register of willing, or again of the I, in so far as it is divided into the two terms that have been studied of the one and the other, of the imperative, of the "take up thy bed and walk" which I spoke about above, or in relation to the subject, of the setting up of his own ego.

You see now the level at which there must be placed the question, as I might put it, the one which the last time I articulated here in the form of the Che vuoi? This Che vuoi?, which is, as one might say, the response of the other to this act of speech of the subject, this question responds, I would say that as always this response responds before the question to the following, to the redoubtable question in which my schema articulates this very act of speech. Does the subject, when he is speaking, know what he is doing? This is precisely what we are in the process of asking here, and it is as a reply to this question that Freud said no.

The subject, in the act of speaking, and in so far as this act of speaking of course goes well beyond just his word, because his whole life is captured in acts of speech, because his life as (18) such, namely all his actions, are symbolic actions if only because they are recorded, they are subject to being recorded, they are often actions to register something, and after all, everything that he does as they say, is contrary to what happens, or more exactly just like everything that happens before the examining magistrate, everything that he does can be held against him, all his actions will be imposed on a context of language and that his very gestures are gestures which are never anything but gestures chosen in a pre-established ritual, namely in an articulation of language.

And Freud, to this; "Does he know what he is doing"? replies no.

It is nothing else that is expressed by the second stage of my graph, namely that this second stage only takes on its importance from the question of the other, namely Che vuoi?, what do you want, that up to the time of that question we remain of course in a state of innocence and foolishness.

I am trying here to prove that didactics do not necessarily pass by way of foolishness. Obviously I cannot base myself on you to demonstrate this I

It is therefore where the second stage of the schema, with respect to this question and in the responses, articulates where there are placed the points of intersection between the true discourse which is maintained by the subject and what manifests itself as willing (youloir) in the articulation of the word (19) where these points of intersection are placed, this is the whole mystery of this symbol which seems to be so opaque for some of you.

If this discourse which presents itself at this level as an appeal for being, is not what it seems to be, as we know from Freud, and this is what the second stage of the graph tries to show us. At first sight one can only be surprised that you do not recognise it, because what did Freud say, what are we doing every day, if not the following: showing that at this level, at the level of the act of the word, the code is given by something which is not the primitive demand, which is a certain relationship of the subject to this demand in so far as the subject has remained marked by its avatars. That is what we call the oral, anal and other forms of unconscious articulation, and this is why it does not seem to me to give rise to much discussion. I am speaking quite simply about the admission of the premises that we situate here at the level of the code. The formula: the subject qua marked by the signifier in the presence of his demand as giving the material, the code of this true discourse which is the true discourse of being at this level.

As regards the message that he receives, this message - I already alluded to it several times - I gave it many forms, all of them, not without good reason, more or less slippery, since this is the (20) whole problem of the analytic perspective, namely what is this message. I can leave it for today, and at this moment at least of my discourse, at the problematical stage, and symbolise it by a presumed signifier as such. It is a purely hypothetical form, it is an X, a signifier, a signifier of the Other because it is at the level of the Other that the question is posed of a different mark, of a part which is precisely the problematical element in the question concerning this message.

Let us sum up. The situation of the subject at the level of the unconscious, as Freud articulates it, it is not I, it is Freud who articulates it, is that he does not know what he speaks with, one has to reveal to him the properly signifying elements of his discourse, and that he does not know either the message which really comes to him at the level of the discourse of being, let us say truly if you like, but I in no way object to really.

In other words, he does not know the message that comes to him from the response to his demand in the field of what he wants. You already know the response, the true response: it can be only one, namely the signifier of nothing other, which is specially deputed precisely to designate the relationships of the subject to the signifier.

I have told you, I want to express it all the same, why this signifier was the phallus. I would ask even those who are (21) hearing it for the first time, to accept this provisionally. This is not the important thing, the important thing is that this is the reason why he cannot have the response because since the only possible response is the signifier which designates the relationships with the signifier, namely if it were already in question in the very measure that he articulates this response, he, the subject is abolished and disappears. It is precisely this which ensures that the only thing about it that he can be aware of, is this threat directly aimed at the phallus, namely castration or this notion of the lack of the phallus which, in both sexes, is this something at which analysis terminates, as Freud - as I pointed out to you - has articulated it.

But we are not here to repeat these basic truths. I know that it gets on some people's nerves that for some time we have been juggling a bit too much with being and having, but they will get over that because this does not mean that on the way we have not harvested something precious, something clinical, something which even allows there to be produced within my teaching something with all the characteristics of what I would call the medical stamp.

It is now a question in the midst of all of this of situating what desire means.

We have said that there is therefore at this second stage also (22) a synchronic treasury, there is a battery of unconscious signifiers for each subject, there is a message which announces the response to the Che vuoi? and it announces itself, as you can see, dangerously.

Even, I point this out in passing, as a way of evoking in you some vivid memories, what makes of the story of Abe lard and Heloise the most beautiful of love stories.

What does desire mean? Where is it situated? You can see that in the completed form of the schema, you have here a dotted line which goes from the code of the second stage to its message through the intermediary of two elements, d signifies the place from which the subject descends and \$ in front of o signifies - I said it already, therefore I repeat it - the phantasy.

This has a form, a disposition homologous to the line which, from 0, includes in the discourse of the ego, the e in the discourse, let us say the person filled out with the image of the other, namely this specular relationship which I posed for you as being fundamental for the establishment of the ego.

There is here in the relationship between the two stages, something which deserves to be more fully articulated. I am not doing it today, not just because I do not have the time, because I am prepared to take all the time necessary to communicate what I have to say to you, but because I prefer to do things in an (23) indirect fashion, because it appears to me to be a likely way of making you experience its import. Even at this point you are not incapable of guessing how fruitful is the fact that it should be a certain reproduction of an imaginary relationship at the level of the field of the gap determined between the two discourses, in so far as this imaginary relationship reproduces homologously the game of prestige which is established in the relationship with the other. You are not incapable of sensing even now, but of course it is altogether insufficient to sense it. I mean simply before fully articulating it, to make you dwell for a moment on what is involved in the term desire, situated, planted within this economy.

You know that Freud introduced this term from the beginning of analysis. He introduced it in connection with dreams and in the form of the Wunsch, namely by right, something which is articulated on this line. The Wunsch is not in itself, all by itself desire, it is a formulated desire, it is an articulated desire.

What I would like to make you dwell on for a moment is the distinction which deserves to be drawn between what I am establishing and introducing this year, and which is called desire, and this Wunsch. You have of course read The interpretation of dreams, and this moment that I am talking to you about it marks the moment that we ourselves are going to begin speaking about it this year. Just as last year we began (24) with the witticism, we are beginning this year with the dream. You have not failed to notice from the first pages, and to the very end, that if you think of desire in the form as I might say that you have to deal with it all the time in analytic experience, namely one that gives you a lot of work to do because of its excesses, its deviations, because, after all let us say it, most often because of its deficiencies, I mean sexual desire, that which by turns, even though in the whole analytic field there has always been brought to play on it a quite remarkable pressure to put it in the shade, a pressure that is increasing in analysis; you must therefore notice the difference, on condition of course that you really read, namely that you do not continue thinking about your own little affairs while your eyes are glancing through the Traumdeutung. You will see that it is very difficult to grasp this famous desire, which is supposed to be found everywhere in each dream.

If I take the inaugural dream, the dream of Irma's injection which we have already spoken about on several occasions, about which I wrote something, and which I will write something about again, and about which we could spend an excessively long time talking; remember what the dream of Irma's injection is; what does it mean exactly? It remains very uncertain, even in what happens. Freud himself, in the desire of the dream,

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(26) in a way laterally, in a derivative way. It is a question precisely of knowing why, but in order to know why I wish simply for a moment to dwell here at those obvious things which the use and usage of language gives us, namely what does it mean when one says to someone, whether it is a man, or a woman, and which we must choose to be a man and this is going to involve a certain number of contextual references, what does it mean when one says to a woman: "I desire you"? Does that mean, in accordance with the moralising optimism within analysis against which you see me waging war from time to time, does that mean: "I am ready to grant to your being as much if not more rights than to my own, to anticipate all your needs, to think of your satisfaction: Lord, let your will be done in preference to my own?" Is that what it means?

I think it is enough to evoke this reference to provoke in you the smiles which happily I see spreading among the audience. Moreover no one, when one is using words appropriately, can make any mistake about what the aim of a term like this is, however genital that person may be.

The other response is the following: "I desire", we can say to use words that are completely unsubtle, "to go to bed with you". . . . It is much more true, you must admit, but is it all that (27) true? It is true in what I would call a certain social context, and after all given the extreme difficulty of giving its exact outcome to this formulation: "I desire you", one cannot find after all any better way to prove it.

Believe me: it is perhaps enough that this word is not bound to the unmeasurable embarrassment and upset that statements which have a meaning involve, it is enough perhaps for this word to be only spoken within for you to grasp immediately that if this term has a meaning, it is a meaning that is much more difficult to formulate. "I desire you", articulated within, as I might say, concerning an object, is more or less the following: "You are beautiful", around which there is fixed, there is condensed

all these enigmatic images whose profusion is called by me my desire, namely: "I desire you because you are the object of my desire", in other words: "you are the common denominator of my desires", and God knows, if I can put God into the affair, and why not, God knows what desire brings in its wake, is something which in reality mobilises, orientates in the personality, something quite different than that towards which by convention its precise goal appears to be ordered.

In other words, to refer to a much less poetically indefinite experience, it also seems that I do not need to be an analyst to evoke how quickly and immediately at this level, in connection (28) with the slightest distortion as it is said of the personality or of images, how quickly and how prominently there emerges in connection with this implication in desire what can, what can most often, what by right appears to be prevalent there, namely the structure of phantasy.

To say to someone: "I desire you", is very precisely to say to her - but this is not always obvious in experience, except for the courageous and instructive little perverts, big and little ones - is to say: "I am implicating you in my fundamental phantasy".

This is where, because I decided that this year I would not go beyond a certain time - I hope I will always stick to this - the trial of asking you to listen to me, it is here, namely well before the point where I thought I would conclude today, that I will stop. I will stop in designating this point of the phantasy which is an essential point, which is the key point around which I will show you the next day therefore how to situate the decisive point at which there must appear, if this term of desire has a meaning different to that of wish in the dream, where there must appear the interpretation of desire.

This point then is here, and you can see that it forms part of the dotted circuit the one with this sort of little tail which is found at the second stage of the graph.

I would simply like to tell you, as a way of whetting your (29) appetite a little, that this little dotted line, is nothing other than the circuit within which we can consider that there turn - this is why it is constructed like that - it is because it turns, once it is fed at the beginning it turns within indefinitely - that there turn the elements of the repressed. In other words, it is the locus on the graph of the unconscious as such, it is about this, and about this alone that Freud spoke until 1915 when he concluded with the two articles which are called respectively: "The Unconscious" and "Repression".

This is where I will take things up again in order to tell you to what degree there is articulated in Freud in a fashion which supports, which is the very substance of what I am trying to make you understand about the signifier, namely that Freud himself well and truly articulates in the least ambiguous way something which means: nothing is ever, nothing can ever be repressed

except signifying elements. It is in Freud, the word signifier is all that is missing. I will show you unambiguously that what Freud is talking about in his article on the unconscious, concerning what can be repressed, is designated by Freud. It can only be signifiers.

We will see that the next time and therefore you see here two opposed systems: the system here in dots, we have said that it is this that is in question, it is the locus of the unconscious and the locus where the repressed turns round and round up to the (30) point that it makes itself felt, namely when something of the message at the level of the discourse of being, comes to upset the message at the level of demand, which is the whole problem of the analytic symptom.

There is another system, it is the one which prepares what I call here the little platform, namely the discovery of the avatar, a discovery that because there had already been so much trouble getting used to the first system Freud gave us the fatal benefit of making the following step himself before his death, namely that Freud in his second topology had discovered the register of the other system in dots: a little platform this is precisely what the second topology corresponds to. In other words, it is concerning what happens, it is in the measure that he is interested in what happens, at the level of the pre-discourse subject, but in function of this very fact that the subject who speaks did not know what he was doing when he spoke, namely from the moment that the unconscious is discovered as such, that Freud had, if you wish, to schematise things, sought out here at what level of this original place from where it speaks, at what level and in function of what, precisely in relation to an aim which is that of the culmination of the process in I, at what moment the ego is constituted, namely the ego in so far as it has to locate itself with reference to the first formulation, the first capturing of the Id in demand. It is also there that Freud (31) discovered this primitive discourse qua purely imposed, and at the same time qua marked by its fundamental arbitrariness, that it continues to speak, namely the super-ego. It is there also of course that he left something open, it is there, namely in this fundamentally metaphorical function of language, that he left us something to discover, to articulate, which completes his second topology, and which permits to restore it, to re-establish it, to re-situate it in the totality of his discovery.

Seminar 3 ; 26 November 1958

I begin by keeping my promises. The last time I mentioned to you the article by Sartre called: "La Transcendance de l'ego", an outline of a phenomenological description. This article is found in the sixth volume of Recherches Philosophiques, an excellent review which stopped publication with the outbreak of war and with the death of its editor, Boivin. Pages 85 to 103.

The remark made by Freud that the assertion that "all dreams have a sexual signification", more exactly "require a sexual interpretation, against which critics rage so incessantly, occurs nowhere in my Traumdeutung. In the seven editions of this book" - this is naturally written in the seventh - "it contradicts in a particularly striking way the rest of the content of what is found in it." (Gesammelte Werke II/III, which contain the (2) Traumdeutung, on page 402, cf SE V 397).

[The remainder of p.2 and some of p.3 are missing]

(3) Many of you heard last evening the clinical report by one of our friends who is an excellent psychoanalyst, on the subject of the obsessional. You heard him speaking about desire and demand.

We are trying to highlight here, because it is not just a theoretical question, but is linked to the essentials of our practice, this question which is the one around which there is played out the problem of the structure of desire and demand, and which is something immediately applicable no doubt to clinical work, brings it to life, I would say makes it comprehensible. I would almost say that it is a sign, that when you see it handled too much at the level of understanding, you experience some feeling of its insufficiency, and it is true moreover, because the level of understanding is far from exhausting the principles of the structure that we are trying to penetrate, because it is on it that we are trying to work and the key around which we should make this distinction between demand and desire pivot, in (4) so far as it immediately clarifies demand, but that on the contrary it situates in its correct place namely at its strictly enigmatic point, the position of man's desire. The key to all of this is the relationship of the subject to the signifier. What characterises the demand, is not just that it is a relationship of a subject to another subject, it is that this relationship is made through the mediation of language, namely through the mediation of a system of signifiers.

Because we are now tackling - as I announced to you - the question of what desire is, in so far as it is the foundation of the dream, and you know that it is not easy to know right away what this desire is, if it is the motor of the dream; you know at least that it is twofold, that this desire is first of all directed towards the maintenance of sleep, Freud articulated it in the most explicit manner, namely of this state in which reality is suspended for the subject. Desire is the desire for death, it is this also and at the same time, and in a perfectly compatible way, I would say in so far as it is often through the mediation of the second desire that the first is satisfied. The desire being that in which the subject of the Wunsch is satisfied, and this subject, I would like to put in a sort of parenthesis: we do not know what the subject is, and it is a question of knowing who is the subject of the Wunsch, of the dream.

(5) When some people say the ego, they are mistaken. Freud certainly affirmed the contrary. And when one says the unconscious, that means nothing. Therefore when I say: the subject of the Wunsch is satisfied, I put this subject in parenthesis, and all that Freud tells us, is that it is a Wunsch which is satisfied.

With what is it satisfied? I would say that it is satisfied with being, meaning with being that is satisfied. That is all we can say, because in fact it is quite clear that the dream does not bring with it any other satisfaction than satisfaction at the level of the Wunsch, namely what one might call a verbal

satisfaction. The Wunsch is here content with appearances, and it is quite clear if we are dealing with a dream and moreover also the character of this satisfaction is here reflected in the language by which it has expressed it to us, by this "satisfied with being" (satisfait de l'être) as I expressed myself just now, and in which there is betrayed this ambiguity of the word being (être) in so far as it is there, that it slides around everywhere, and that also by formulating itself in this way in the grammatical form of a reference to being, being satisfied, I mean: can it be taken for this substantial aspect? There is nothing substantial in being except the word itself, it is satisfied with being, we can take it for what being is, if not literally (au pied de la lettre).

When all is said and done it is indeed in effect something of the (6) order of being which satisfies the Wunsch. In short it is only in the dream, at least on the plane of being, that the Wunsch can be satisfied.

I would almost like to do here something that I often do, give a little preamble if you wish, a backward glance, a remark which would allow you to wake up from something or other which involves nothing less than the whole history of psychological speculation, in so far as it is linked, in so far as modern psychology began by formulating, as you know, in terms of psychological atomism, here all the Everyone knows that we are no longer at that stage, at associationism at it is called, and that we have made considerable progress since we have begun to consider the demand for totality, the unity of the field, intentionality and other forces. But I would say that the matter is not at all settled, and it is not at all settled precisely because of Freud's psychoanalysis, but it is not at all seen how the mainspring of this settling of accounts, which is not really one, has operated in reality, I mean that its essence has been allowed to escape completely, and at the same time also the persistence of what has been supposedly reduced in it.

At the beginning it is true, the associationism of the tradition of the English school of psychology, where we have an articulated game and a vast misunderstanding, if I can express myself thus, (7) where I would say the field of the real is noted, in the sense that what is in question is the psychological apprehension of the real, and where it is a question of explaining in short, not just simply that there are men who think, but that there are men who move around the world apprehending in it in a more or less appropriate fashion the field of objects.

Where therefore is this field of objects, its fragmented structured character? Where does it come from? Quite simply from the signifying chain, and I will really try to choose an example to try to make you grasp that there is nothing else in question, and that everything that is brought forward in the so-called structured theory of associationism to conceptualise the progressiveness of psychological apprehension from the emergence up to the organised constitution of the real is in fact nothing other than the fact of endowing from the outset these fields of the real with the fragmented and structured character of the

signifying chain.

From then on of course it is perceived that there is going to be a mistake and that there must be what one might call more original relationships with the real and for that one starts from the notion of proportionality, and one makes one's way towards all the cases in which this apprehension of the world is in some way more elementary, precisely less structured by the signifying chain, without knowing that this is what is in question, one goes towards animal psychology, one evokes all the stigmatic features (8) thanks to which the animal can manage to structure his world and try to find in it the reference point.

One imagines when one has done that one has resolved in a type of theory of animated field, of vector of primordial desire, that one has reabsorbed these famous elements which were a first false apprehension of the grasp of the field of the real by the psychology of the human subject. One has simply done exactly nothing, one has described something else, one has introduced another psychology, but the elements of associationism quite completely survive the establishment of the more primitive psychology, I mean the one which seeks to grasp the level of the cohabitation of the subject with his Umwelt, with his entourage, in the sensori-motor field. It nevertheless remains that everything that is related, that all the problems given rise to in connection with associationism survive this perfectly well, that there has been no reduction at all, but a kind of displacement of the field of perspective, and the proof of this is precisely the analytic field in which all the principles of associationism continue to reign, because up to this nothing has stifled the fact that when we began to explore the field of the unconscious, we did it, we re-do it every day following on something which is called in principle free association, and up to the present in principle, even though of course it is an approximate, inexact term for designating analytic discourse, (9) the perspective of free association remains valid and that the original experiments conceal word associations (des mots induits), and still have, even though of course they do not have any therapeutic or practical value, but they still keep their value in orienting the exploration of the field of the unconscious, and this of itself would be enough to show us we are in a field where the word reigns, where the signifier reigns.

But if this is still not enough for you, I will complete this parenthesis because I want to do it to recall to you on what the associationist theory is founded, and on the basis of this experience, what happens afterwards, what is coordinated in the mind of a subject at such a level, where to take up again the exploration as it is carried on in this first experimental relationship, the elements, the atoms, the ideas as they say, no doubt approximately, inadequately, this first relationship, presents itself, not without reason, in this form.

How, we are told, do these ideas make their entry at the origin? It is a question of relationships of continuity. Go and see, follow the texts, see what is spoken about, the examples on which

it is based, and you will recognise perfectly that the continuity is nothing other than this discursive Combination on which there is based the effect that we call here metonymy. Continuity no doubt between two things which have arisen in so far as they are (10) evoked in memory on the plane of laws of association.

What does that mean? This signifies how an event has been lived in a context which we could broadly speaking call a random context. A part of the event having been evoked, the other will come to mind constituting an association of continuity, which is nothing other than an encounter. What does that mean? That means in sum that it is broken up, that its elements are caught up in the same narrative text. It is in so far as the event evoked in memory is a narrated event, that the narration forms its text, that we can speak at this level about continuity.

A continuity moreover which we distinguish for example in a word-association experiment. One word will come with another: If in connection with the word "cherry" I evoke obviously the word "table", this will be a relationship of continuity because on such a day there were cherries on the table. But a relationship of continuity if we speak of something which is nothing other than a relationship of similarity. Even a relationship of similarity, is also always a relationship of signifiers in so far as the similarity is the passage from one to the other by a similarity which is a similarity of being, which is a similarity of one to the other, between one and the other in so far as one being different to the other, there is some subject (11) of being which makes them alike.

I am not going to go into the whole dialectic of the same and the other, with all its difficulties and the infinitely greater richness than there appears there at first glance. I refer those who are interested in this to Parmenides, and they will see that they will spend some time there before exhausting the question.

What I am simply saying here and what I want you to experience, is, because I spoke above about cherries, that in connection with this word there are other usages besides the metonymical usage, I would say precisely to serve a metaphorical usage, I can use it to speak about lips saying that these lips are like cherries, and give the word "cherry" as a word-association in connection with the word "lip". Why are they linked here? Because they are both red, alike in some of their attributes. It is not just this, or because they both have the same form analogically, but what is quite clear, is that whatever is happening, we are immediately, and this can be sensed, in the quite substantial effect which is called the metaphorical effect. There is no kind of ambiguity whatsoever when I speak in a word-association experiment of cherries in connection with lips. We are on the plane of the metaphor in the most substantial sense that is included in this effect, this term, and on the most formal plane, (12) this always presents itself as I have reduced it for you to a metaphorical effect, to an effect of substitution in the signifying chain.

It is in so far as the cherry can be put into a structural context or not in connection with the lip, that the cherry is there. At which point, you could say to me: the cherry can come into connection with the lips in a function of continuity; the cherry has disappeared between the lips, or she has given me a cherry to take on my lips. Yes, of course it can also present itself like that, but what is in question? It is a question here of a continuity which precisely is that of the narrative that I spoke about above, because the event in which this continuity is integrated, and which brings it about that the cherry is in fact for a short time in contact with the lips, is something which of course from the real point of view, should not deceive us. It is not that the cherry has touched the lips which is important, it is that it is swallowed; in the same way it is not the fact that it is held between the lips in the erotic gesture I evoked, it is that it is offered to us in this erotic movement itself which counts. If for an instant we stop this cherry in contact with the lips it is in function of a flash which is precisely a short exposure of the narrative, in which it is the sentence, or it is the words which for an instant suspend this cherry between the lips, and it is moreover precisely because this dimension of (13) narrative exists in so far as it establishes this flash, that inversely this image in so far as it is created by the suspension of the narrative, effectively becomes on this occasion one of the stimulants of desire to the degree that in imposing a tone which is only here the implication of the language of the act, language introduces retrospectively into the act this stimulation, this stimulating element properly speaking which is arrested as such and which comes on this occasion to nourish the act itself through this suspension which takes on the value of the phantasy, which has an erotic signification in the detour of the act.

I think that this is sufficient to show you this agency of the signifier, in so far as it is at the basis of the very structuring of a certain psychological field which is not the totality of the psychological field, which is precisely this part of the psychological field which to a certain degree is by convention within what we can call psychology, to the degree that psychology is constituted on the basis of what I would call a sort of unitary intentional or appetitive theory of the field.

This presence of the signifier, is articulated, is articulated in an infinitely more insistent, infinitely more powerful, infinitely more efficacious way in the Freudian experience, and this is what Freud reminds us of at every instant, it is also (14) what tends to be forgotten in the most exceptional way, in so far as you want to make of analysis something which would go in the same direction, in the same sense as the one in which psychology has come to situate its interest, I mean in the sense of the clinical field, of an intentional field where the unconscious is supposed to be something like a kind of well, a borehole as one might say, parallel to the general evolution of psychology and which is also supposed to go by another way to the level of these most elementary tensions, to the level of the depths, in so far as there occurs something more reduced to the vital, to the elementary aspect of what we see at the surface

which is supposed to be the so-called field of the preconscious or the conscious.

This, I repeat, is an error. It is very precisely in this sense that everything that we are saying takes on its value and its importance, and if some of you were able the last time to follow my advice and refer to the two articles which appeared in 1915, what were you able to read there? You were able to read and to see the following: that if you refer for example to the article "Das Unbewusste", the point which is most tangible in it, to the point I would say against which in a superficial description in which it would be a question of something other than signifying elements, of things which those who understand absolutely nothing about what I am saying here, articulate and call every day an (15) intellectualist theory. We will therefore go and put ourselves at the level of unconscious emotions, since Freud speaks about them, because of course it is naturally objected to all of this that instead of speaking about the signifier, this is not emotional life, this is not dynamic. I am of course far from wanting to contest this because it is to explain it in a clear fashion that I take this route to the level of the Unbewusste.

What do you see Freud articulating for us? He articulates for us very exactly the following: it is the third part of "Das Unbewusste"; Freud explains the following very clearly, that the only thing that can be repressed, he tells us, is what is called Vorstellungsrepräsentanz. It is only this, he tells us which can properly speaking be repressed. This therefore means a representative, in the representation of what? Of the instinctual movement which is called here Triebreung. There is no ambiguity possible in the text at this point. He tells us explicitly that the Triebreung, itself in any case, is a concept and as such aims at what can even be called more precisely the unity of instinctual motion, and in this case there is no question of considering this Triebreung, as either unconscious or as conscious.

This is what is said in the text. What does that mean? That simply means that we should take what we call Triebreung as an (16) objective concept. It is an objective unity in so far as we look at it, and it is neither conscious nor unconscious, it is simply what it is, an isolated fragment of reality which we will conceive of as having an incidence from its own action.

It is only all the more remarkable in my opinion that it should be its representative in the representation. This is the exact value of the German term, and only this representative of the drive that is in question, Trieb, can be said to belong to the unconscious in so far as it precisely implies what I set out above with a question mark, namely an unconscious subject. I do not have to go much further here, I mean that you should begin to sense, it is precisely to specify what is this representative in the representation, and of course you see already, not where I want to get to, but where we necessarily get to, namely that the Vorstellungsrepräsentanz, even though Freud in his time and at the point that things could be said in scientific discourse this

Vorstellungsrepräsentanz is strictly equivalent to the notion and to the term of signifier. It is nothing else, even though it is only being introduced, and of course the demonstration has, it seems to me, already been introduced, because otherwise what is the use of everything that I said above. This of course will always be further demonstrated, this is precisely what is in question.

That Freud on the contrary is opposed to this, is also articulated in the most precise fashion by himself. What does Freud say about everything that can be connoted under the terms of feelings, emotion, affect, which he himself reunites? He says that it is by a carelessness of expression which has, or which cannot, or which is not according to the context, some difficulties, like every carelessness, but there is a certain looseness when one says that it is unconscious. In principle, he says, it never can be, he formally denies it any possibility of an unconscious incidence.

This is expressed and repeated in a way which involves no doubt, no kind of ambiguity. Affect, as in talking about an unconscious affect, this means that it is perceived, but known; but known in what way? In its attachments, but not that it is unconscious, because it is always perceived, he tells us, simply it has gone and attached itself to another representation, which is not repressed. In other words, it had to accommodate itself to the context existing in the preconsciousness, which allows it to be considered by consciousness, which on occasion is not difficult, as a manifestation of its last context.

This is articulated in Freud. It is not enough for him to articulate it once, he articulates it a hundred times, and in every connection he comes back to it. It is precisely here that there enters in the enigma of what is called the transformation (18) of this affect, of what proves in this connection to be particularly plastic, and that by which all the authors moreover once they approach this question of affect, namely every time they see it, have been struck, I mean to the extent that no one dares to touch the question, because what is altogether striking is that I who practice an intellectualist psychoanalysis, am going to spend the year talking about it, but that on the contrary you can count on the fingers of one hand the articles in analysis devoted to the question of affect, even though psychoanalysts are always full of it when they are talking about a clinical observation, because of course they always have recourse to affect. There is to my knowledge a single worthwhile article on this question of affect, it is an article by Glover which is spoken about a good deal in the writings of Marjorie Brierley. There is in this article an attempt to take a step forward in the exploration of this notion of affect which leaves something to be desired in what Freud said on the subject. This article is moreover detestable, like the whole of this book which, devoting itself to what are called the tendencies of psychoanalysis, gives a rather nice illustration of all the really impossible places that psychoanalysis is trying to lodge itself, in passing by morality, personalism, and other such

eminently practical perspectives around which the blah of our epoch likes to spend itself.

On the contrary if we come back here to the things which concern us, namely to serious things, what do we read in Freud? We read the following: the affect; the problem is to know what becomes of it, in so far as it is disconnected from the repressed representation, and it thenceforth depends only on the substitutive representation which it is able to become attached to.

To what is disconnected there corresponds this possibility of annexation which is its property, and which is the way the affect presents itself in analytic experience as something problematic, which ensures for example that in the living experience of a hysteric, it is from this that analysis starts, it is from this that Freud starts when he begins to articulate analytic truths; it is that an affect arises in the ordinary, comprehensible, communicable text of the everyday experience of a hysteric and the fact that this affect is there, which moreover seems to fit in with the totality of the text, except to a more exigent eye, this affect which is there is the transformation of something else, and it is something which deserves that we should dwell on it; of something which is not another affect, which might be supposed to be in the unconscious. This Freud denies absolutely. There is absolutely nothing like that, it is the transformation of the purely quantitative factor; there is absolutely nothing which at that moment is really in the (20) unconscious this quantitative factor in a transformed form, and the whole question is to know how these transformations in the affect are possible, namely for example how an affect which is in the depths is conceivable in the restored unconscious text as being such and such, presents itself in a different form when it appears in the preconscious context.

What does Freud tell us?

First text: "The whole difference arises from the fact that ideas (Vorstellungen) are cathexes - basically of memory traces - whilst affects and emotions correspond to processes of discharge, the final manifestations of which are perceived as feeling." (SE 14 178; GW 10 277) Such is the rule for the formation of affects.

It is also indeed the fact that as I told you, the affect refers to the quantitative factor of the drive, the one in which he understands that it is not just movable, mobile, but subject to the variable which constitutes this factor, and he again articulates it precisely in saying that its fate can be threefold: "Either the affect remains, wholly or in part, as it is; or it is transformed into a qualitatively different quota of affect, above all into anxiety;" - this is what he writes in 1915, and one sees there the beginnings of a position which the article Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety will articulate in the topology - "or it is suppressed, i.e. it is prevented from (21) developing at all."

"But in comparison with unconscious ideas (Vorstellungs-repräsentanz)," he tells us, "there is the important difference that unconscious ideas continue to exist after repression as actual structures in the system Ucs, whereas all that corresponds in that system to unconscious affects is a potential beginning which is prevented from developing", writes Freud.

This is an altogether inevitable preamble before entering into the mode in which I intend here to pose the question connected with the interpretation of desire in the dream. I told you that for that I would take a dream from Freud's text, because after all it is still the best guide to be sure about what he intends to say when he speaks about the desire of the dream. We are going to take a dream which I will borrow from this article which is called "Formulierungen", "Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning", from 1911, which appeared just before the Schreber case.

I take this dream and the fashion in which Freud speaks of it and treats it, from this article, because it is articulated there in a simple, exemplary, significant, unambiguous fashion and to show how Freud understand the manipulation of these Vorstellungs-repräsentanz, in so far as it is a question of the formulation of unconscious desire.

What can be extracted from the totality of Freud's work concerning the relationships of this Vorstellungsrepräsentanz (22) with the primary process, is not open to any kind of doubt. If the primary process is entitled in so far as it is subject to the first principle, which is called the pleasure principle, there is no other way of conceiving the opposition which is marked in Freud between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, except by perceiving that what is given to us as the hallucinatory arousal in which the primary process, namely desire at the level of the primary process, finds its satisfaction, does not simply concern an image, but something which is a signifier, it is moreover a surprising thing that this was not noticed in other ways, I mean starting from clinical observation. One It was never noticed in other ways, it seems, precisely to the degree that the notion of signifier was something which was not elaborated at the time of the great expansion of classical psychiatry, because after all in the massiveness of clinical experience, under what forms are there presented to us the major, problematic, most insistant forms in which there are posed for us the question of hallucination, if not in verbal hallucinations or in verbal structures, namely in the intrusion, the immixtion in the field of the real not of something indifferent, not of an image, not of a phantasy, not of what is often simply supposed to support hallucinatory processes?

But if an hallucination poses us problems which are proper to (23) itself, it is because it is a question of signifiers and not of images, not of causes, not of perceptions, indeed of false perceptions of the real as people say it is. But at Freud's level there is no doubt about this and precisely at the end of

this article, - to illustrate what he calls der neurotischen Wahrung (SE 12 225;GW Q238), namely - it is a term to retain, the word Wahrung means to last; it is not very common in German, it is linked to the verb wahren which is a durative form of the verb wahren, and this idea of duration, of valorisation, because it is its most common usage: if the word Wahrung refers to duration, the most common usage which is made up of it, is value, valorisation - to talk to us about a properly neurotic valorisation, namely in so far as the primary process erupts into it, Freud takes as an example a dream, and here is this dream.

It is the dream of a subject who is mourning for his father, who had, he tells us, nursed him through a long and painful mortal illness.

This dream is presented as follows: "His father was alive once more and he was talking to him in his usual way. But he felt it exceedingly painful that his father had really died, only without knowing it." (SE 12 225) It is a short dream, it is a dream which as always, Freud tackles at the level of its transcription, because the essential of Freudian analysis is always based on the (24) narrative of the dream, first of all in so far as it is articulated. This dream then was repeated insistently in the months which followed the death of his father, and how is Freud going to tackle it?

There is no doubt of course that Freud never thought at any time that a dream, if only because of this distinction that he always made between the manifest content and the latent content, in referring himself immediately to what can be called and which one does not fail to call at every instant in analysis by this term which has not, I think, an equivalent, of wishful thinking. It is this that I would almost like to give back some sound of equivalence with alarm. This just by itself should make an analyst suspicious, even defensive, and persuade him that he is taking the wrong road.

There is no doubt that for a moment Freud teases this "wishful", and tells us that it is simply because he needs to see his father and that that makes him happy, because it is not at all enough, for the simple reason that it does not seem at all to be a satisfaction, and that this happens with the elements and in a context whose painful character is sufficiently marked, to make us avoid this sort of precipitous step which I mention here to show that at the limit it is possible. When all is said and done I do not think that a single analyst could go that far when it is a question of a dream. But it is precisely because one (25) cannot go so far when it is a question of a dream, that psychoanalysts are no longer interested in dreams.

How does Freud tackle things? We will stay with his text: "The only way," he writes in this article, right at the end, "the only way of understanding this apparently nonsensical dream is by adding 'as the dreamer wished' or 'in consequence of his wish' after the words that his father had really died', and by further adding 'that he (the dreamer) wished it' to the last words. The

dream-thought then runs: it was a painful memory for him that he had been obliged to wish for his father's death and how terrible it would have been if his father had had any suspicion of it I"

This leads you to give its weight to the fashion that Freud treats the problem. It is a signifier. These are things which are clausulae (?) and we are going to try to articulate on the linguistic plane what they are, the exact value of what is given here as permitting access to the understanding of the dream. They are given as such, and as the fact that putting them in place, their adaptation in the text, gives the meaning of this text.

Please understand what I am saying. I am not saying that this is interpretation, and in effect it is perhaps interpretation, but I (26) am not saying it yet, I am suspending you at this moment where a certain signifier is designated as being produced by its lack. What is the phenomenon of the dream that is in question? It is by replacing it in the context of the dream that we accede right away to something which is given as being the understanding of the dream, namely that the subject finds himself in the familiar case, this reproach by which one reproaches oneself about someone who is loved, and this reproach leads us back in this example to the infantile signification of the death wish.

We are here therefore before a typical case where the term transference, Übertragung, is employed in the primitive sense that it is first used in the Interpretation of dreams. It is a question of carrying forward something which is an original situation, the original death-wish on this occasion, into some different, current thing, which is an analogous, homologous, parallel wish which is similar in some fashion or other, and introduces itself to revive this archaic wish that is in question.

It is naturally worthwhile dwelling on this, because it is starting from there simply that we can first try to elaborate what interpretation means, because we have left to one side the interpretation of "wishful".

To complete this interpretation there is only one remark to be made. If we are unable to translate wishful thinking by "pensée désireuse, pensée désirante" it is for a very simple reason: (27) It is that if "wishful thinking" has a meaning, of course it has a meaning, but it is employed in a context in which this meaning is not valid. If you wish to test every time that this term is employed, the suitability, the pertinence of the term "wishful thinking", you only have to make the distinction that "wishful thinking" does not mean taking one's desire for reality, as it is put, it is the meaning that thinking in so far as it slides, as it bends, therefore one should not attribute to this term the signification: taking one's desires for reality, as it is usually expressed, but taking one's dream for reality, on this one condition precisely that it is quite inapplicable to the interpretation of the dream, because this simply means on this

occasion if my dream, is to this type of understanding of the dream, this simply means in this case that one has dreamed, in other words that one dreams because one dreams, and this indeed is the reason why this interpretation at this level is in no way applicable at any time to a dream.

We must then come to the procedure described as the adding on of signifiers, which presupposes the previous subtraction of the signifier; I am speaking about what is presupposed in Freud's text, subtraction being at that moment exactly the meaning of the term that he makes use of to designate the operation of repression in its pure form, I would say in its Unterdrangung (28) effect.

It is then that we find ourselves brought to a halt by something which as such, presented for us an objection and an obstacle, which if we had not decided in advance to find everything good, namely if we had not decided in advance to believe, to believe as Monsieur Prevert says, one should all the same dwell on the following: that the pure and simple restoration of these two terms: "nach seinem Wunsch" and "dass er es wunschte", namely that the son wished for this death of his father, the simple restoration of two clausulae from the point of view of what Freud himself designates to us as the final goal of interpretation, namely the re-establishment of unconscious desire, gives us strictly nothing because in that case what is restored? It is something that the subject knows perfectly well. During the extremely painful illness, the subject had effectively wished for his father's death as being the solution and the end of his torment and his pain, and effectively of course he did not show him, he did everything to hide from him, the desire, the wish which was in its context, in its recent experienced context, perfectly accessible to him. There is no need even in this connection to speak about preconsciousness but of conscious memory, perfectly accessible to the continued text of awareness.

Therefore if the dream subtracts from the text something which is (29) in no way removed from the consciousness of the subject, if it subtracts it, it is, as I might say, this phenomenon of subtraction which takes on a positive value, I mean that this is the problem, it is the relationship of repression, in so far as without any doubt it is a question here of Vorstellungs- repräsentanz, and even a quite typical one, because if anything merits this term, it is precisely something which is, I would say in itself, a form empty of meaning "as he wished", isolated in itself. This means nothing, this means "as he wished", that we have previously spoken about, that he wished what? This also depends on the sentence which comes before, and this is the direction in which I want to lead you to show you the irreducible character of what we are dealing with compared to any conception which arises out of the sort of imaginary elaboration, even the abstraction of the objectal data of a field, when it is a question of the signifier and what is supposed to be the originality of the field which, in the psyche, in experience, in the human subject, is established by it and by the action of the signifier. This is what we have, these signifying forms which

in themselves cannot be conceived of, cannot be sustained excepted in so far as they are articulated with other signifiers, and this in fact is what is in question. I know that I am here getting into something which would suppose a much longer articulation than anything we are dealing with. This is linked to all sorts of experiments which have been carried on with great (30) perseverance by a school called the Wurzburg school, called the school of imageless thought, and a kind of intuition that in the work of this school which was carried out in a completely closed little circle of psychologists, they were led to think without images these kinds of forms which are different to just signifying forms without a context and at the nascent state, to the notion of Vorstellung, and very specially in connection with the problems which we are facing here make it worth while remembering that for two years Freud, and we have unambiguous proof of this, attended Brentano's classes, and that Brentano's psychology, in so far as it gives a certain conception of the Vorstellungen is indeed there to indicate the exact weight that the term Vorstellung could have taken on in Freud's mind, and not simply in my interpretation.

The problem is precisely of the relationship that there is between repression, if repression is said to apply exactly and as such to something that is of the order of the Vorstellung, and on the other hand this fact of something which is nothing other than the appearance of a new meaning which is different for us at the point that we are progressing to, which is different from the fact of repression, which is what we can call in the context, in the context of the preconscious, the elision of two clausulae. Is (31) this elision the same thing as repression? Is it exactly its counterpart, its contrary? What is the effect of this elision? It is clear that it is an effect of meaning, I mean that in order for us to explain ourselves on the most formal plane, we should consider this elision, and I say elision and not allusion, it is not, to use everyday language, a representation (une figuration), this dream does not make allusions, far from it, to what has gone before it, namely to the relationships of the son to the father, it introduces something which sounds absurd, which has its import as signification on the manifest, quite original plane. It is indeed a question of a figura verborum, of a figure of speech, of terms, to use the same term which is the counterpart of the first, it is a question of an elision, and this elision produces a signified effect; this elision is equivalent to a substitution for the missing terms of a plane, of a zero, but a zero is not nothing and the effect in question could be qualified as a metaphorical effect. The dream is a metaphor. In this metaphor something new arises which is a meaning, a signified, a signified which is no doubt enigmatic, but which is all the same something that we have to take into account as being I would say one of the most essential forms of human experience, because it is this very image which for centuries put human beings, at one or other turn in their grief at their existence, on the more or less hidden paths which led (32) them to the necromancer and what he gave rise to in the circle of incantation was this something called a shade, before which there happened nothing other than what happened in this

dream, namely this being which exists there without one knowing how he exists, and before whom literally one can say nothing, because he of course speaks. But it does not matter, I would say that up to a certain point what he says is also what he does not say. We are not even told it in the dream, this word only takes on its value from the fact that the one who has called the beloved being from the kingdom of shades can tell him literally nothing of what is truly in his heart.

This confrontation, this structured scene, this scenario, does it not suggest to us in itself that we should try to situate its import? What is it? Has it this fundamental structured and structuring value that I am trying to define for you this year under the name of phantasy? Is it a phantasy? Are there a certain number of characteristics required in order that in such a presentation, in such a scenario, that in this scenario we should recognise the characteristics of phantasy?

This is a first question which unfortunately we can only begin to articulate the next time. You should understand that we will give it quite precise replies, which will allow us to approach (33) the way in which effectively it is a phantasy, and the way it is a dream-phantasy, namely, I articulate it for you right away, a phantasy which has very particular forms, I mean that a dream-phantasy, in the sense that we can give a precise sense to this word phantasy, has not the same import as a waking phantasy, whether it is unconscious or not.

Here is a first point on which I will give a reply the next time, to the question that is posed here.

The second point, is in connection with and beginning from this, namely from this articulation of the function of phantasy, how we should conceive where there lies the incidence of what one can call, of what Freud called the mechanisms of the dream-work, namely its relationships on the one hand with the supposedly antecedent repression, and the relationship of this repression with the signifiers regarding which I have shown you the degree to which Freud isolated them and articulated the incidence of their absence in terms of pure signifying relationship.

These signifiers, I mean the relationships there exist between the signifiers of the narrative: "He had died", on the one hand; "he did not know it" on the other hand; "in consequence of his wish" in the third place. We will try to position them to place them, to make them function on the lines, the paths of the chains which are called respectively the chain of the subject and signifying chain, as they are here posed, repeated, insisting (34) before us in the form of our graph, and you will see both the use that can be made of this which is nothing other than the topological position of elements and of relationships without which there is no possible functioning of discourse, and how only the notion of structures which allow this functioning of discourse can also allow us to give a meaning to the fact that the two clausulae in question can be said up to a certain point, to be really the content, as Freud says, the reality, the "real verdrangten" , what is really repressed.

But this is not enough, we must also distinguish how and why the dream here makes use of these elements which without any doubt are repressed, but precisely there at a level at which they are not, namely where the immediately antecedent experience brought them into play as such, as clausulae, and where far from being repressed, the dream elides them; why? To produce a certain effect of what? I would say of something which is not so simple either because in short it is to produce a signification, there is no doubt, and we see that the same elision of the same wish may have according to different structures, quite different effects. In order simply to awaken a little, to stimulate your curiosity, I would like simply to remark to you that there is perhaps a relationship between the same elision and the same (35) clausula, "in consequence of his wish" and the fact that in other contexts which are not those of the dream, but of psychosis for example, this can culminate at the méconnaissance of death. The "he did not know", or "he did not want to know anything about it" being articulated simply differently with the "he had died", or even in a still different context, have perhaps the interest of being distinguished at first sight, as the Verwerfung is distinguished from the Verneinung. In this instance this can culminate at so - called feelings of invasion, of eruption, or at these fruitful moments of psychosis where the subject thinks that he has before him effectively something much closer again to the dream image than we can even expect, namely that he has before him someone who is dead, that he is living with a dead person, and simply that he is living with a dead person who does not know that he is dead, and we could even say perhaps up to a certain point, that in quite normal life, the one that we live every day, it can happen perhaps more often than we believe, that we have in our presence someone who while having all the appearances of a socially satisfying behaviour, is someone who at the same time desires for example from the point of view of interest, from the point of view of what permits us to be in accord with a human being, is well and truly, we know more than one of them, from the moment that I point it out to you seek it out in your relationships, someone who is well and truly dead, and a long (36) time dead, dead and mummified, who is only waiting for a little tip of something or other like it, to be reduced to that sort of woodenness which will bring about his end.

Is it not also true that in the presence of this something which after all is perhaps much more diffusely present than one thinks in subject-to-subject relationships, namely that there is also this aspect of half-death, and that what is half-dead in all sorts of living beings, is also something which leaves our conscience quite tranquil, and that a large part of our behaviour with our neighbours is something perhaps which we must take into account when we take on the charge of listening to the discourses, the confidences, the free discourse of a subject in the analytic experience, it produces perhaps in us a reaction much more important to measure, always much more present, effective, essential which in ourselves corresponds to this sort of precaution that we must take in order not to remark to the

half-dead person that where he is, where he is in the process of speaking to us, he is half the prey of death, and this also because in our case intervening on this subject or taking such an audacious approach would also have some consequences for us, which are very precisely those against which we are defending ourselves the most, namely what is most fictitious, most repeated in us, namely also half death.

(37) In short, you see, that rather than being answered the questions are multiplying, to the point that we arrive at the end of this discourse today, and without any doubt if this dream should bring you something about the question of the relationships of the subject to desire, it is because it has a value which should not surprise us, given that its protagonists, namely a father, a son, the presence of death, and as you will see, the relationship to desire. It is not by chance then that we have chosen this example and that we will have to exploit it again next time.

Seminar 4: 3 December 1958

The article by Glover in Brierley's book, I.J.P., XX, July-October 1939 (namely No. 3 of Volume XX) - pp.299-308.

I left you the last day with a dream, this extremely simple dream, at least in appearance. I told you that we would work on it or in connection with it, in order to articulate the proper meaning that we give to this term of dream-desire, and the meaning of what an interpretation is.

We are going to take this up again. I think that on the theoretical plane it also has its value.

These days I have become immersed in re-reading, after having done it so many times, this Interpretation of dreams which I told you was the first thing we were going to query this year in connection with desire and its interpretation, and I must say that up to a certain point I found myself making this reproach that it is a book, and this is well known, whose ins-and-outs are (2) very badly known in the analytic community. I would say that this reproach, indeed like any reproach, has a kind of other aspect which is an aspect of excuse, because to tell the truth it is still not enough to have gone over it hundreds and hundreds of times in order to retain it, and I think that there is here a phenomenon - this has struck me more especially these days - that we are very familiar with. In fact every one knows the way in which everything which concerns the unconscious is forgotten, I mean for example that it is very tangible, in a very significant way, and really inexplicable, without the Freudian perspective, how one forgets funny stories, good jokes, what are called witticisms. You are meeting some friends and someone makes a witty remark, or even tells a funny story, makes a pun at the beginning of the meeting or at the end of lunch, and then when you are having your coffee you say to yourself: what did that person on my right say just now that was so funny? And you cannot get hold of it. It is almost a stamp that what is precisely a witticism escapes to the unconscious.

When one reads or re-reads The interpretation of dreams, one has the impression I would say of a magical book, if the word magical did not unfortunately lend itself in our vocabulary to so much ambiguity, or even error. One really goes through The interpretation of dreams like a book of the unconscious, and that is why one has so much trouble, in holding together something (3) which is so articulated. I think that there is here a phenomenon which deserves to be pointed out at this point, and

especially the fact is that there is added to this the really almost senseless deformation of the French translation, and the more I go on the more I find that all the same one cannot really excuse its blatant inexactitudes. Some of you are asking me for explanations, and I refer immediately to the texts. There is in the fourth part of the chapter on dream-work, a section entitled "Considerations of representability" whose French translation from the first page is more than a tissue of inexactitudes, and has no relationship with the German text. That is confusing and upsetting. I will not go on about it.

Obviously all of this does not make the access of French readers to The interpretation of dreams especially easy.

To return to our dream of the last day which we began to decipher in a fashion which did not perhaps appear very easy to you, but was all the same intelligible, at least I hope so. To see clearly what is in question, to articulate it in function of our graph, we are going to begin with a few remarks.

It is a question therefore of knowing if a dream interests us in the sense that it interested Freud, in the sense of the fulfilment of desire. Here desire and its interpretation is first of all desire in its function in the dream, in so far as the dream is its fulfilment. How are we going to be able to (4) articulate it?

I am going first of all to put forward another dream, a first dream which I gave you and whose exemplary value you will see. It is really not well known, you have to go looking for it in a corner. There is there a dream whose existence is known to everybody: it is at the beginning of Chapter III which is entitled "A dream is the fulfilment of a wish", and it deals with the dreams of children in so far as they are put forward as what I would call a first state of desire in the dream.

The dream that is in question is here, from the first edition of the Traumdeutung, and it is given to us at the beginning of his appellation before his then readers, Freud tells us, as the question of the dream. One must also see this aspect of exposition, of development in the Traumdeutung, which explains a lot of things for us, in particular that things may be put forward first of all in a sort of massive way, which involves a certain approximation. When one does not examine this passage very attentively, one remains at what he says about the direct, undeformed, non-Einstellung'd character of the dream; this simply designating the general form which ensures that the dream appears in an aspect which is profoundly modified with respect to its deeper content, its thought content, while in the case of the child it is supposed to be simple: here desire is supposed to go (5) directly in the most direct fashion to what it desires, and Freud gives us several examples of it, and the first one of course naturally is worth retaining because it really gives us its formula.

"My youngest daughter" - this is Anna Freud - "then nineteen

months old, had an attack of vomiting one morning and had consequently been kept without food all day. During the night after this day of starvation she was heard calling out excitedly in her sleep: "Anna F-eud Erdbeer" - (which is the childish way of pronouncing strawberries) - "Hochbeer" - (which also means strawberries) - "Eir(s)peis" - which corresponds more or less to the word omelette - and finally "Papp" - (pudding). And Freud tell us: "At that time she was in the habit of using her own name to express the idea of taking possession of something. The menu included pretty well everything that must have seemed to her to make up a desirable meal. The fact that strawberries appeared in it in two varieties" - Erdbeer and Hochbeer - I have not succeeded in placing Hochbeer, but Freud's commentary indicates two varieties - "was a demonstration against the domestic health regulations. It was based upon the circumstance, which she had no doubt observed, that her nurse had attributed her indisposition to a surfeit of strawberries. She was thus retaliating in her dream against this unwelcome verdict." (SE j[130;GW 2/3 135). I leave to one side the dream of his nephew, (6) Hermann, which poses different problems. But on the contrary I am happy to draw attention to a little note which is not in the first edition because it was elaborated in the course of discussions, namely feedback from his pupils, to which Ferenczi contributed by bringing to the rescue the proverb which says the following: "Pigs dream of acorns and geese dream of maize", and in the text also Freud had then at that time also drawn attention to a proverb which, I believe, is not so much taken from the German context given the way maize is written: "What do geese dream of? - Of maize."; and finally the Jewish proverb: "What do hens dream of? - Of millet".

We are going to dwell on this, we are even going to begin by making a little parenthesis, because when all is said and done it is at this level that there must be taken the problem which I evoked last night in connection with Granoff's communication on the essential problem, namely the difference between the directive of pleasure and the directive of desire.

Let us go back a little on the directive of pleasure, and once and for all, as rapidly as possible let us dot the i's.

Obviously, this has also the closest relationship with the questions which are posed to me or which are posed in connection with the function which I give, in what Freud called the primary processes, to the Vorstellung. To state it quickly, this is only a detour, you must have a clear idea of this: the fact is that (7) in a way by entering into this problem of the function of the Vorstellung, into the pleasure principle, Freud cuts things short, in short we could say that he is lacking an element to reconstruct what he perceived in his intuition. Indeed it must be said that what is proper to intuitions of genius is to introduce into thought something which up to then had absolutely not been perceived; we do not perceive at all what is original in this distinction of the primary process as being something' separate from the secondary process. We can always go on thinking like that that it is something which is in a way

comparable through the idea that it is in the internal agency in so far as in their synthesis, in their composition this has absolutely no role to play. The primary process signifies the presence of desire, but not just any desire, of desire where it presents itself as most fragmented, and the perceptual element that is in question, this is how Freud is going to explain things, is going to make us understand what is in question.

In sum remember the first schemas that Freud gives us about what happens when the primary process alone is in operation. The primary process, when it alone is in operation, culminates in hallucination, and this hallucination is something which is produced by a process of regression, of regression which he calls very precisely topical regression. Freud constructed several (8) schemas of what motivates, of what structures the primary process. But they all have the following in common that they presuppose as their foundation, something which is for him the circuit of the reflex arc, a way of receiving and discharging something which is called sensation; a way of receiving and discharging something which is called motor activity.

On this path, in what I would call a terribly questionable way, perception is placed as something which accumulates, which accumulates somewhere on the side of the sensorial part, of the influx of excitation, of the stimulus from the external milieu, and being placed at this origin of what happens in the act, all sorts of other things are supposed to come afterwards, and namely it is there that he would insert the whole series of super-imposed layers which go from the unconscious passing through the preconscious and the rest, to end up here at something which passes or which does not pass towards motor activity. Let us see clearly what is in question every time he speaks to us about what is happening in the primary process. A regressive movement occurs. It is always when the door towards the motor activity of the excitation is for some reason or other barred, that there is produced something which is of the regressive order and that there there appears a Vorstellung, something which is found to give to the excitation in question a properly speaking hallucinatory satisfaction.

Here is the novelty that is introduced by Freud.

(9) This is worthwhile literally above all if one thinks of the order, of the quality of articulation of the schemas that are in question, they are schemas which are put forward because of their functional value, I mean to establish - Freud states it expressly - a sequence, a succession which he underlines is still more important moreover to consider as a temporal sequence than as a spatial sequence. This takes on its value, I would say, through its insertion into a circuit, and if I say that in short what Freud describes to us as being the result of the primary process, is in a way that on this circuit something lights up. I will not make a metaphor of this, I will only say in substance what Freud draws from the explanation on this occasion, from the translation of what is in question, namely to show you on this circuit which

always implicitly has homeostasis as its goal, the notion of reflexometry and to distinguish this series of relays and the fact that something is happening at the level of these relays, something which in itself takes on a certain value as a terminal effect in certain conditions, is something which is quite identical to what we see being produced in any machine whatsoever in the form of a series of bulbs, as I might put it, and the fact that one of these becomes active indicates precisely, not so much what appears, namely a luminous phenomenon, but a certain voltage, something which is produced moreover in function of a (10) resistance and indicates at a given point the state of the whole circuit.

And therefore, let us say the word, this in no way corresponds to the principle of need, because of course no need is satisfied by a hallucinatory satisfaction. To be satisfied, need requires the intervention of the secondary process, and even of secondary processes because there is a great variety of them, which processes, can of course only be satisfied, as the name indicates with reality; they are submitted to the reality principle.

If secondary processes are produced, they are only produced because there have been primary processes. Only it is no less evident that this fencing off, that this separation makes instinct impossible no matter how one conceives it. It vanishes into thin air in this instance because look at the direction in which all the researches on instinct are going, and especially the most elaborate the most intelligent modern researches. What are they aimed at? To give an account of how a structure which is not just purely preformed - we are no longer at that point, let us not look at instinct like Monsieur Fabre, it is a structure which engenders, which sustains its own chain - how these structures outline, in the real, paths towards objects which have not yet been experienced.

(11) This is the problem of the instincts, and it is explained to you that there is an appetitive stage of behaviour, of seeking. The animal at one of these phases, puts himself into a certain state where motor activity is expressed by an activity going in all sorts of directions. And at the second stage, at the second phase, there is a stage of a specialised release, but even if this specialised release finally culminates in a behaviour which disappoints them, namely if you wish to the realisation of the fact that they have got hold of some coloured cloths, it nevertheless remains true that they had detected these cloths in the real.

What I want to indicate here, is that hallucinatory behaviour is distinguished in the most radical fashion from a homing behaviour that the regressive investment, as one might say, of something which is going to be expressed by the illumination of a lamp on the conducting circuits. This can at the limit illuminate an object that has already been experienced; if this object is perchance already there, it in no way shows its path, and still less of course if it shows it even when it is not there, which is what in effect is produced in the hallucinatory phenomenon, because at the very most the seeking-mechanism can begin from

this, and this indeed is what happens. Freud also articulates it for us starting from the secondary process, which in sum fulfils the role of instinctive behaviour, but from another point of view is absolutely distinguished from it because due to the (12) existence of the primary process this secondary process is going to be, Freud articulates it - I do not subscribe to all of this, I am repeating to you the sense of what Freud articulates - a behaviour that tests the reality of this Wahrnehmung first ordered as the effect of a bulb in the circuit. This is going to be a judgement behaviour; the word is put forward when Freud explains things at this level.

When all is said and done according to Freud, human reality is constructed on a previous foundation of hallucination, which is the universe of pleasure in its illusions, in its essence, and this whole process is openly avowed, I am not even saying betrayed, is openly articulated in the terms that Freud continually makes use of every time he has to explain the series of borrowings into which the term is decomposed, and in the Traumdeutung at the level that he is speaking about the processes of the psychic apparatus, he shows this series of layers where there is imprinted, and it is not even imprinted, there is inscribed every time he speaks in this text and in all the others, it is terms like niederschreiben, and which recorded on the sequence of layers, are organised there. He articulates them differently according to the different moments of his thought. On the first layer for example it is by relationships of simultaneity; on others, piled up one on the other; on other levels they they will be ordered.

(13) These impressions, through other relationships, separate the schema into a series of inscriptions, of Niederschriften which are superimposed on one another in a word which cannot be translated by a sort of typographical space, which is how there ought to be conceived all the things which happen originally before arriving at another form of articulation which is that of the preconscious, namely very precisely in the unconscious.

This veritable topology of signifiers, because you cannot escape from it once you follow closely Freud's articulation, is what is in question, and in Letter 52 (6.12.96) to Fliess, one sees that he is necessarily led to presuppose at the origin a type of ideal Wahrnehmungen which cannot be taken as simple freshly taken Wahrnehmung. If we translate it literally, this topology does not reach a Begriffen, it is a term that he continually uses, a grasp of reality, it does not reach it at all by an eliminatory sorting out, by a selective sorting out, of anything that resembles what was put forward in the whole theory of instinct as being the first approximate behaviour which directs the organism along the paths of successful instinctual behaviour.

This is not what we are dealing with, but with a sort of real recurrent critique, with a critique of these signifiers evoked in (14) the primary process, which critique of course, like every critique, does not eliminate the previous thing on which it is brought to bear, but complicates it, complicates it by connoting

it with what? With indices of reality which themselves belong to the signifying order. There is absolutely no way of escaping from this accentuation of what I articulate as being what Freud conceives and presents to us as the primary process. You will see, provided you refer to any of the texts that Freud wrote, that at the different stages of his doctrine he articulated, repeated, every time he had to approach this problem, whether he is dealing with the Traumdeutung or with what is, in the introduction of the Interpretation of dreams, and subsequently with what he took up later when he brought forward the second mode of presenting his topography, namely starting with the articles grouped around the psychology of the ego and the beyond of the pleasure principle.

You will allow me for a moment to image, by playing with etymologies, what is meant by this fresh way of looking at things which would lead a sort of ideal subject to the real; but the alternatives by which the subject brings the real into his propositions, Vorstellungen, here I decompose it by articulating it as follows: these Vorstellungen have a signifying organisation. If we wish to talk about them in terms other than the Freudian ones, in Pavlovian terms, we would say that they form part from the beginning, not of a first system of (15) significations, not of something connected to the tendency of need, but of a second system of significations. They are like the lighting up of a bulb in a slot machine when the ball has fallen into the proper hole, and the sign that the ball has fallen into the proper hole Freud also articulates: the proper hole means the same hole into which the ball has previously fallen. The primary process is not directed towards the search for a new object, but for an object which is to be rediscovered, and this by means of a Vorstellung which is re-evoked, because it was the Vorstellung corresponding to a first pathway so that the illumination of this bulb entitles you to a prize, and there is no doubt about this, and that is what the pleasure principle is. But in order that this prize should be honoured, there must be a certain reserve of money in the machine, and the reserve of money in the machine on this occasion is pledged to this system of processes which are called the secondary processes. In other words, the lighting up of the bulb is only a satisfaction within the total convention of the machine in so far as this machine is that of the gambler, from the moment that he begins to gamble.

Starting with this, let us again take up Anna's dream. This dream of Anna is presented to us as a dream of desire in its naked form. It seems to me that it is quite impossible to evade, to elide in the revelation of this nakedness, the mechanism itself (16) by which this nakedness is revealed, in other words the mode of this revelation cannot be separated from this nakedness itself.

I have the idea that we only know about this so-called naked dream by hearsay, and when I say by hearsay, that does not at all mean what some people quoted me as saying that in sum it was a question here of a remark about the fact that we never know that someone dreams except through what he tells us, and that in sum that everything which refers to the dream should be included in

the fact, in the parenthesis of the fact that he reports it.

It is certainly not indifferent that Freud accords so much importance to the Niederschrift which constitutes this residue of the dream, but it is quite clear that this Niederschrift refers to an experience that the subject is telling us about. It is important to see that Freud is a long long way from retaining even for a single instant the nevertheless obvious objections which arise from the fact that a spoken narrative is one thing, and a lived experience is something else, and it is starting from there that we can connect the remark that the fact that he sets aside with such vigour, and even that he agrees with, that he explicitly makes the starting point of all his analysis even to the point of advising that it should be a technique of the Niederschrift, of what is there lying in the writings of the dream, shows us precisely what he thinks fundamentally about this lived experience, namely that there is everything to be said for approaching it in this way because he did not try of course, to (17) articulate it; it is itself already structured in a series of Niederschriften, in a kind of palimpsest-writing as one might say.

If one could imagine a palimpsest where the different superimposed texts have a certain relationship, it would still be a question of knowing which, with one another; but if you search for it, you would see that it is a relationship that is to be sought much more in the form of the letters than in the meaning of the text.

Therefore this is not what I am talking about, I am saying that on this occasion what we know about the dream, is properly speaking what we actually know about it at the moment that it is happening as an articulated dream, in other words that the degree of certainty that we have concerning this dream is something linked to the fact that we would also be much more sure what pigs and geese dream about if they themselves told us about it.

But in this original example we have more, namely that the dream discovered by Freud has this exemplary value that it is articulated aloud during sleep, which is something that allows no kind of ambiguity about the presence of the signifier in its actual text.

In this case it is not possible to throw any doubt on a phenomenon concerning the added-on character of what one might call information on the dream which might be taken by the word. (18) We know that Anna Freud is dreaming because she articulates: "Anna F-eud, Er(d)beer, Hochbeer, Eier(s)peis, Papp". The dream images of which we know nothing on this occasion, find here an affix, if I may express myself in this way with the help of a term borrowed from the theory of complex numbers, a symbolic affix in these words where we see the signifier presenting itself in a way in a flocculent state, namely in a series of nominations, and this nomination constitutes a sequence whose choice is not indifferent because, as Freud tells us, the choice is precisely of everything which has been prohibited to her.

inter-dit; of the things which when she demanded them she was told no, that she could not have them, and this common denominator introduces a unity into their diversity, without preventing us also from noticing that inversely this diversity reinforces this unity, and even designates it. It is in sum the unity that this series completely opposes to the special satisfaction of need, such for example of the desire imputed to the pig and the goose, the desire moreover, you only have to reflect on the effect that this would have if instead, in the proverb, of saying that the pig dreams of Kukuruz (of maize) we were to set about enumerating everything that the pig is supposed to dream about, you would see that this has a quite different effect, and even if one wished to claim that it was only an insufficient education of the glottis that prevented the pig and (19) the goose from letting us know as much, and even if one could say that we could manage to make up for it by perceiving in both cases and by finding the equivalent if you wish of this articulation by detecting some quivering of their mandibles, it still remains that it would be very unlikely that the following would happen, namely that these animals would name themselves as Anna Freud does in the series. And even if we admit the pig is called Toto and the goose Bel Azor, even if something of that order occurred, it would turn out that they are naming themselves in a language which would evidently moreover, neither more or less evidently than in the case of man, but in the case of man that is seen less clearly, that this language has precisely nothing to do with the satisfaction of their needs because this is the name they would have in the farmyard, namely in a context of human needs and not their own.

In other words, I would like you to focus on the fact, and we said it above, that

1. Anna Freud articulates that there is the mechanism of motor activity, and we would say in effect that it is not absent from this dream, because this is the way that we get to know it. But this dream reveals by the signifying structuring of its sequence that, 2., we would like to dwell in this sequence on the fact that at the beginning of this sequence literally there is a message, which you can see being illustrated if you know how (20) communication takes place inside one of these complicated machines of our modern era, for example between the front and the back of a plane. When one telephones from one cabin to another one begins by announcing what? One announces oneself, one announces who is speaking. Anna Freud at nineteen months, during her dream, announces, she says: "Anna F-eud", and she goes on with her series. I would almost say that there is only one thing missing, after having heard her articulating her dream, it is that at the end she should say: "over and out".

Here we are introduced then to what I call the topology of repression, in its clearest, also its most formal and most articulated way, regarding which Freud underlines for us that this topology can in no way be considered, since it is that of another locus which had so struck him when reading Fechner, to the extent that one senses that this was for him a type of

lightening bolt, of illumination, of revelation, but at the same time at the very moment that he talks to us at least twice, in the Traumdeutung about the anderer Schauplatz, he always underlines that it has nothing to do with another neurological locus. We are saying that this other locus is to be sought in the structure of the signifier itself. Now what I am trying to show you here, is that the structure of the signifier itself once the subject is engaged in it, I mean with the minimal hypotheses (21) that are required by the fact that a subject enters into its game. I mean once the signifier is given and the subject is defined as that which is going to enter into the signifier and nothing else. Things are necessarily organised starting from this necessity, and all sorts of consequences are going to flow from this, that there is a topology which it is necessary and sufficient for us to conceive of as constituted by two superimposed chains, for us to account for it, but it is absolutely required in order that we should account for it, that there are these two superimposed chains, and it is towards this that we are advancing.

Here at the level of Anna Freud's dream, how do things appear? It is true that they appear in a problematic, ambiguous fashion, which permits, which makes it legitimate up to a certain point for Freud to distinguish a difference between children's dreams and adults dreams.

Where is the chain of nominations which makes up the dream of Anna Freud situated? On the upper chain or on the lower chain? It is a question regarding which you have been able to notice that the upper part of the graph represents this chain in a dotted form, putting the accent on the element of discontinuity of the signifier, while we represent the lower chain of the graph as continuous, and on the other hand I told you that of course in every process the two chains are involved.

(22) What does the lower chain mean at the level that we are posing the question? The lower chain at the level of demand, and in so far as I told you that the subject qua speaking took on this solidity borrowed from the synchronic solidarity of the signifier, it is quite obvious that it is something that participates in the unity of the sentence, of this something which has made people talk and which gave rise to so much discussion, about the function of the sentence as holophrase in so far that is as the holophrase exists. There is no doubt about it, the holophrase has a name: it is the interjection.

If you like, to illustrate at the level of the demand what the function of the lower chain represents, it is: "Foodl", or "Help!"; I am speaking about universal discourse, I am not talking about the child's discourse for the moment. This form of sentence exists, I would even say that in certain cases it takes on a quite pressing and demanding value. This is what is in question, it is the articulation of the sentence, it is the subject in so far as this need which of course must pass by way of the defiles of the signifier qua need, is expressed in a fashion which is deformed, but at least which is monolithic.

except that the monolith that is in question, is the subject himself at this level which constitutes him.

What happens on the other line, is quite different. What can be (23) said about it is not easy to say, but for a good reason, which is that it is precisely what is at the basis of what happens on the first line, the lower one; but undoubtedly what we see, is that even in something which is given to us as being as primitive as this child's dream, Anna Freud's dream, something marks for us that here the subject is not simply constituted in the sentence and by the sentence, in the sense that when the individual, or the crowd, or the mob cries: "Foodl", one knows very well that in this case the whole weight of the message is on the emitter, I mean that it is the dominant element and one even knows that this cry just by itself is sufficient precisely in the forms that I have just evoked, to constitute this emitter, as being well and truly a unique subject, even if it has a hundred mouths, a thousand mouths. It does not need to introduce itself, the sentence introduces it sufficiently. Now all the same we find ourselves confronted with the following, that the human subject when he operates with language, takes himself into account, and to such a degree is it his primitive position that I do not know if you remember a certain text by Monsieur Binet, namely the difficulties that the subject has in going beyond this stage which I for my part find much more suggestive than any of the stages indicated by Monsieur Piaget, and this stage, I am not going to tell you about it because I do not want to get into details, appears as distinctive and consists in the fact that the (24) subject perceives that there is something wrong with the sentence: "I have three brothers, Paul, Ernest and me". Up to a fairly advanced stage this seems to him quite natural, and for a very good reason, because to tell the truth everything about the implication of the human subject in the act of speech is there: the fact is that he takes himself into account in it, that he names himself in it, and that consequently this is what I might call the most natural the most coordinated expression. The child simply has not found the proper formula which would obviously be the following: "We are three brothers, Paul, Ernest and me", except that we would be very far from reproaching him for giving it the ambiguities of the function of being and having. It is clear that a step must be taken in order that in sum what is in question, namely the distinction between the I qua subject of the enunciation and the I qua subject of the enunciating, can be made, because this is what is in question.

What is articulated at the level of the first line when we take the following step is the process of enunciation: in our dream of the other day: "he had died". But when you announce something like that, in which I would point out to you in passing, the whole novelty of the dimension that the word introduces into the world, is already implied, because to be able to say: "He had died", this cannot be said otherwise than in a completely different perspective to that of the statement (du dire) "He had died", means absolutely nothing (ne veut absolument rien dire); (25) "He had died", means: he no longer exists, therefore there is no need to say it, he is no longer there in order to say he is

dead, he must already be a being supported by the word. But no one is being asked to perceive this, of course, but simply on the contrary the following, that the act of enunciating: "He had died", usually requires in the discourse itself all sorts of reference points which are distinct from the reference points that are taken from the enunciation of the process.

If what I am saying there were not obvious, the whole of grammar would vanish. I am simply in the process of pointing out to you for the moment the necessity of using the future perfect, in so far as there are two reference points to time: a reference point to time concerning the act that is going to be in question: "by that date I will have become her husband" for example, and it is a question of locating what is going to be transformed by marriage into the enunciation; but on the other hand, because you express it in terms of the future perfect, it is the present point from which you speak from the act of enunciating which locates you. There are therefore two subjects, two I's, and the stage that the child must go beyond at the level of this test of Binet's, namely the distinction between these two I's, seems to me to be something which has literally nothing to do with this famous reduction to reciprocity which Piaget considers to be the essential pivot as regards grasping how to use personal pronouns.

But let us leave this then to one side for the moment. What have (26) we arrived at? To a grasp of these two lines as representing one which is referred to the process of enunciating, the other the process of the enunciation.

The fact that they are two, does not mean that each represents one function, but that every time we are dealing with the functions of language we should always discover this duplicity. Let us say again that not only are they two, but that they will always have opposing discontinuous structures, here for example for one when the other is continuous, and inversely.

Where is Anna Freud's articulation situated?

I am not going to tell you how this topology can be used, I mean I am not going to say just like that all at once because it might suit me, or even because I may be able to see a little bit further, given the fact that I was the one who constructed this contraption, and because I know where I am going, so that I should tell you: it is here or it is there. The fact is that the question arises: the question arises of what this articulation represents on this occasion which is the aspect under which the reality of Anna Freud's dream is presented to us, and that in the case of this child who was quite capable of perceiving the meaning of the sentence of her nurse - true or false - Freud implies it, and Freud supposes it, and quite correctly because of course, a child of nineteen months understands very well that her nurse has messed her about - there (27) is articulated in what I called this flocculated form, this series of signifiers in a certain order, this something which takes its form from being stacked up, by being superimposed as I might say, in a column, from the fact of substituting for one

another these things in so far as each one is a metaphor for the other, which it is then a question of making emerge, namely the reality of satisfaction qua prohibited (inter-dite) and we shall go no further with Anna Freud's dream.

We will nevertheless take the next step. So that once we have sufficiently begun to clarify this matter by asking ourselves now, because it is a question of the topology of repression, the way in which what we are beginning to articulate is going to help us when it is a question of an adult dream, namely how, what is the real difference between what we can clearly see to be a certain form which the child's desire takes on on this occasion in the dream, and a form which is undoubtedly much more complicated because it is going to give much more trouble, in any case as regards interpretation, namely what happens in a adult's dream.

In this matter there is no ambiguity in Freud. He has no difficulty with it, it is enough to read the usage and the function of what intervenes, it is in the order of censorship. Censorship operates very exactly in a way that I was able to illustrate during my previous seminars. I do not know if you remember the famous story which we enjoyed so much, the one (28) about: "The king of England is an idiot, therefore everything is permitted," says the typist who is caught up in the Irish revolution. But this was not what was in question. I gave you another application of it, namely what Freud says to explain punishment dreams. We had very specially put forward the law: whoever says that the king of England is an idiot will have his head cut off, and as I told you: the following night I dreamt that I had my head cut off.

Freud also articulates even more simple forms. Because I have been persuaded to read Tintin for some time past, I will borrow an example from him. I have a way of breaking through the censorship by using my Tintinesque qualities, I can say aloud: anyone who says in my presence that General Tapiocca is not a better man than General Alcazar, will have to deal with me. Now, it is quite clear that if I articulate something like this, neither partisans of General Tapiocca, nor those of General Alcazar would be satisfied, and I would say that what is much more surprising, is that the least satisfied will be those who are the partisans of both.

Here then is what Freud explains to us in the most precise fashion: it is in the nature of what is said to confront us with a very very particular difficulty which at the same time also opens up very special possibilities. What is in question is (29) simply the following:

What the child had to deal with, was the prohibition (inter-dit), a saying, no. The whole process of education, some principles of censorship, go therefore to form this saying no, because it is a question of operations with the signifier in an inexpressible way (en indieible), and this also supposes that the subject perceives that the saying no, if it is said, is said, and even if

it is not executed, remains said. Whence the fact that not saying it is distinct from obeying not to do it, in other words that the truth of desire is all by itself an offence against the authority of law.

So that the way out proposed to this new drama is to censure this truth of desire. But this censorship is not something which, however it is exercised, can be sustained with the stroke of a pen, because here it is the process of enunciating which is aimed at, and because to prevent it some foreknowledge of the process of the enunciation is necessary, and that every discourse destined to banish this enunciation from the process of enunciating is going to find itself offending more or less openly with its end. It is the matrix of this possibility which at this level, is given on our graph, and it will give you a lot of other matrices. The subject, because of the fact that he articulates his demand, is captured in a discourse in which he cannot but be himself constructed qua agent of enunciating, which is why he cannot renounce it without this enunciation, because that is to efface himself completely as a subject knowing what is in question.

(30) The relationship to one another of these two lines of the process of enunciating and the process of the enunciation is quite simple, it is the whole of grammar, a rational grammar which is articulated in these terms; if you find it interesting I will tell you where and how, in what terms and in what context this has been articulated, but for the moment what we have to deal with is the following: it is the fact that we see when repression is introduced, it is essentially linked to the absolute necessity of the subject being effaced and disappearing at the level of the process of enunciating.

How, by what empirical paths does the subject accede to this possibility? It is quite impossible, even to articulate it if we do not see what the nature of the process of enunciating is. As I told you: every word begins from these points of intersection which we have designated by the point 0, namely that every word in so far as the subject is implicated in it, is the discourse of the Other. That is the precise reason why at first the child is quite convinced that all his thoughts are known, it is because the definition of thought is not as the psychologists say, something like the beginning of an act. Thought is above all something which participates in this dimension of the unsaid which I have just introduced by the distinction between the process of enunciating and the process of enunciation, but for this unsaid to subsist, naturally in so far as in order that it (31) should be an unsaid it must be said, it must be said at the level of the process of enunciating, namely qua discourse of the Other, and that is why the child does not doubt for an instant that what represents for him this locus where this discourse is carried on, namely his parents, know all his thoughts. In any case this is his first movement, it is a movement which will subsist as long as he is not introduced to something new which we have again articulated here concerning this relationship of the upper line with the lower line, namely what keeps them outside

grammar at a certain distance.

I do not need to tell you how grammar keeps a distance between sentences like "I do not know whether he is dead", "He is not dead, as far as I know", "I did not know that he was dead", "I was afraid that he was dead". All these subtle taxemes which go from the subjunctive here to a ne that Monsieur Lebidoy calls in a fashion that is really incredible for a philologist who writes in Le Monde, the expletive ne. All of this is done to show us that a whole part of grammar, the essential part, the taxemes, are there to maintain the necessary gap between these two lines.

The next time I will project for you onto these two lines the articulations in question, but for the subject who has not yet learned these subtle forms, and it is quite clear that the (32) distinction between the two lines is made well before. There are required conditions, and these form the basis of the interrogation that I am bringing before you today. This distinction is very essentially linked, like every time of course that you see that it is a question of something which is not a temporal reference point, but a tensional point, namely of a difference in tenses between these two lines, you can clearly see the relationship that there can be between this and the situation, and the topology of desire.

This is where we are. For a time the child is in sum entirely caught up in the interplay between these two lines. What is necessary here in order that repression may be produced? I would say that I am hesitating before committing myself to a path which after all I would like not to appear for what it nevertheless is, a path of concession, namely that I appeal to notions of development properly speaking, I mean that everything is implicated in the empirical process at the level at which this is produced, of an intervention, of an empirical and certainly necessary incidence, but the necessity to which this empirical incidence, this empirical accident, the necessity in which it comes to reverberate, which it precipitates in its form, is of a different nature.

In any case, the child perceives at a given moment that these adults who are supposed to know all his thoughts, and here precisely he is not going to go beyond this stage, in a certain (33) fashion he will be able to reproduce later on the possibility which is the fundamental possibility of what we call in brief and rapidly the so-called elementary form of hallucination, that there appears this primitive structure of what we call this background of the process of enunciating, parallel to the current enunciation of the existence of what is called the echo of acts, the echo of expressed thoughts.

That the knowledge of a Verwerfung, namely of what, of what I am going to talk to you about now, has not been realised and which is what? Which is the following: it is that the child at a moment perceives that this adult who knows all his thoughts, does not know them at all. The adult does not know, whether it is a question in the dream of he knows or he does not know that he is

dead. We will see the next time the exemplary signification on this occasion of this relationship, but for the moment we do not need to link up these two terms for the reason that we are not yet advanced enough in the articulation of what is going to be affected in repression, but the fundamental possibility of what cannot but be the end of this repression if it is successful, namely not just simply that it gives to the unsaid the sign "no", which says that it is not said, while at the same time letting it be said, but effectively the unsaid is such a thing, there is no doubt this negation is such a primitive form that there is (34) absolutely no shadow of doubt that Freud puts the Verneinung which seems nevertheless to be one of the most elaborated forms of repression for the subject, because we see it in subjects who are highly developed psychologically, that all the same Freud puts it immediately after the primitive Bejahung, therefore it is indeed as I am in process of telling you, through a possibility, through a genesis, and even through a logical deduction that he proceeds, as I am proceeding for the moment before you, and not a genetic one. This primitive Verneinung is what I am telling you about in connection with the unsaid, but the "He does not know" is the following stage, and it is precisely through the intermediary of this "He does not know" that the other who is the locus of my word, is the lodging place of my thoughts, and that there can be introduced the Unbewusste into which there is going to enter for the subject the contents of repression.

Do not make me go further or faster than I am going. If I tell you that it is following the example of this other that the subject proceeds in order that the process of repression should be inaugurated in him, I did not tell you that it was an easy example to follow. Initially already I indicated to you that there is more than one mode because in this connection I mentioned the Verwerfung and that I made reappear there - I will articulate it again the next time - the Verneinung.

The Verdrängung, repression, cannot be something which is so easy to apply, because if fundamentally what is in question is that (35) the subject should be effaced, it is quite clear that what is quite easy to show in this order, namely that the others, the adults, know nothing, naturally the subject who is entering into existence does not know that they know nothing, the adults, as everyone knows, it is because they have gone through all sorts of adventures, precisely the adventures of repression. The subject knows nothing about it, and it must be said that it is not easy to imitate them because for a subject to do away with himself as a subject, is a conjuring trick which is a little bit harder than many of the others that I present before you here, but let us say that essentially and in a fashion which is absolutely sure, if we have to rearticulate the three modes in which the subject wants to do it in Verwerfung, Verneinung and Verdrängung, the Verdrängung is going to consist in the following that to affect in a way which is at least possible, if not durable, the part of this unsaid which must be made disappear, the subject is going to operate in the way which I have called for you the way of the signifier. It is on the signifier, and on the signifier as such that he is going to operate, and this is

why the dream that I put forward the last time, around which we continue to turn here even though I did not completely re-evoke it in the seminar today, the dream of the dead father, and that is why Freud articulates in this connection that repression bears (36) essentially on the manipulation, the elision of two clausulae, namely "nach seinem Wunsch", and "he did not know that it was as he had wished", that it happened this way "in consequence of his wish".

Repression is represented in its origin, at its root as something which in Freud is articulated by: it cannot be articulated otherwise than as something which bears on the signifier.

I did not take you very far today, but it is a further step, because it is the step which is going to allow us to see what sort of signifier this operation of repression is brought to bear on. All signifiers are not equally breakable, repressible, fragile; that it was already on what I called two closulae that it came to bear, already has an essential importance, all the more essential in that it is going to allow us to delineate what is properly speaking in question when one talks first of all about dream-desire, and then about desire in itself.

Seminar 5: 10 December 1958

Anderer Schauplatz: GW 2/3 50-51; (SE 4 48);
GW 2/3 541 (SE 5 535)

I left you the last day on something which tends to approach to our problem, the problem of desire and its interpretation, a certain organisation of the signifying structure, of what is stated in the signifier as involving this internal duplicity of the enunciation; the process of the enunciation and the process of the act of enunciating.

I stressed for you the difference that exists between the I qua implicated in some enunciation or other, the I in so far as in the same way as some other, it is the subject of an enunciated process for example, which is not moreover the only word of enunciation either of the I in so far as it is implicated in all enunciating, but all the more in so far as it announces (2) itself as the enunciating I.

This mode under which it introduces itself as the I of the enunciating, this mode under which it introduces itself is not indifferent, if it introduces itself by naming itself as little Anna Freud did at the beginning of the message of her dream.

I pointed out to you that there remains here something ambiguous, namely whether this I as the I that is enunciating is authenticated or not at this moment. I gave you to understand that it is not yet and this is what constitutes the difference that Freud proposes to us as being the one which distinguishes the dream-desire in the child from the dream-desire in the adult, the fact is that something is not yet completed, precipitated out by the structure, is not yet distinguished in the structure, namely this something whose reflection and trace I proposed to you elsewhere; a delayed trace because it appears at the level of a test which of course already presupposes conditions very defined by experience, which does not allow us to prejudge fundamentally how much of it is in the subject, but the difficulty which still remains for a long time for the subject of distinguishing this enunciating I from the I of the enunciation, and which is expressed by the belated failure in a test which chance and his flair as a psychologist made Binet choose in the form of: "I have three brothers, Paul, Ernest and me."^M

The difficulty that there is in the fact that the child does not (3) see this enunciation as coming from elsewhere as he should, namely that the subject does not yet know how to deduct himself (se decompter). But this trace which I marked out for you is something, an index, and there are others, this essential element which constitutes the distinction, the difference for the subject between the I of the enunciating and the I of the enunciation. Now I told you, that we take things, not by way of deduction, but by a way which I cannot say to be empirical because it was already traced out, it was already constructed by Freud when he told us that the dream-desire in the adult is a desire which is loaned to him, and which is the mark of a repression, of a repression which at this level he brings forward as being a censorship.

When he enters into the mechanism of this censorship, when he shows us what a censorship is, namely the impossibilities of a censorship, because this is what he stresses, this is what I tried to get you to focus your reflection on for an instant by telling you of a type of internal contradiction which is that of everything that is unsaid at the level of the enunciating, I mean this internal contradiction which structures the "I am not saying that

I told you about it the last day in different humorous forms: anyone who says such and such a thing about such and such a person whose words must be respected, who must not be offended, will, I said, have to deal with. me. What does this mean, if not (4) that in putting forward this taking of sides which is obviously ironic, I am pronouncing, I find myself pronouncing precisely what should not be said, and Freud himself underlined sufficiently when he shows us the mechanism, the articulation, the meaning of the dream, how frequently the dream takes this path, namely that what it articulates as not to be said is precisely what it has to say, and that through which there passes what is effectively said in the dream.

This takes us to something which is linked to the deepest structure of the signifier. I would like again to dwell on it for a moment, because this element, this principle of "I am not saying" as such, it is not for nothing that Freud in his article on the Verneinung places it at the very root of the most primitive phase in which the subject constitutes himself as such and constitutes himself especially as unconscious. The relationship of this Verneinung with the most primitive Bejahung, with the access of a signifier into the question, because this is what a Bejahung is, is something which begins to pose a question. It is always a question of knowing what is posited at the most primitive level: is it for example the couple good and bad according to whether we choose or we do not choose one or other of these primitive terms? Already we are opting for a whole theorisation, for a whole orientation of our analytic thinking, and you know the role that has been played by the terms of good (5) and bad in a certain specification of the analytic path; they are certainly a very primitive couple.

I will pause for a moment on this unsaid and on the function of the not (ne) of the not in the "I am not saying", before taking a further step because I think that this is the essential articulation. This sort of "not" in the "I am not saying" which ensures that precisely in saying that one is not saying it one says it, something which almost appears as a sort of proof by absurdity, is something at which we must pause by recalling what I have already indicated to you as being what one must call the most radical property of the signifier, and if you remember, I already directed your attention to an image, to an example by showing both the relationship that there is between the signifier and a certain type of index or of sign which I called the trace which already itself bears the mark of some kind of reverse side of a borrowing from the real.

I spoke to you about Robinson Crusoe and about the footstep, the trace of Friday's footprint, and we dwelt a little while on the following: is this already the signifier, and I told you that the signifier begins, not with the trace, but with whatever effaces the trace, and it is not the effaced trace which constitutes the signifier, it is something which poses itself as being able to be effaced, which inaugurates the signifier. In (6) other words, Robinson Crusoe effaces the trace of Friday's footprint, but what does he put in its place? If he wants to preserve the place of Friday's footprint, he needs at least a cross, namely a bar and another bar across it. This is the specific signifier. The specific signifier is something which presents itself as being itself able to be effaced and which subsists precisely in this operation of effacing as such. I mean that the effaced signifier already presents itself as such with the properties proper to the unsaid. In so far as I cancel the signifier with the bar, I perpetuate it as such indefinitely, I inaugurate the dimension of the signifier as such. Making a cross is properly speaking something that does not exist in any form of locating that is permitted in any way. You must not think that non-speaking beings, the animals, do not locate things, but they do not do it intentionally with something said, but with traces of traces. We will come back when we have time to the practice of the hippopotamus, we will see what he leaves behind him for his fellows. What man leaves behind him is a signifier, it is a cross, it is a bar, qua barred, qua overlaid by another bar which indicates on the one hand that as such it has been effaced.

This function of the not of the not in so far as it is the signifier which cancels itself, is undoubtedly something (7) which just of itself would deserve a long development. It is very striking to see the extent to which the logicians, because they are as always too psychological, in their classification, in their articulation of negation, have left strangely to one side the most original one.

You know, or you do not know, and after all I have no intention of introducing you into the different modes of negation, I simply want to tell you that more originally than anything which can be articulated in the order of the concept, in the order of what

distinguishes the meaning of negation, of privation, etc., more originally it is in the phenomenon of the spoken, in experience, in linguistic empiricism that we should find originally what is most important for us, and it is for that reason that I will dwell only on this, and here I cannot at least for a moment not take into consideration some researches which have the value of being experiential, and in particular the one made by Edouard Pichon who was as you know, one of our predecessors in psychoanalysis, who died at the beginning of the war from a serious heart illness, Edouard Pichon in connection with negation made the following distinction which you should at least have seen, have some notion about, have some idea about. He noticed something, he would have liked as a logician, obviously he wanted to be a psychologist, he tells us that what he is doing is a sort of exploration from words to thought.

(8) Like a lot of people, he is open to illusions about himself, because luckily this is precisely the weakest part of his work: his pretension of going back from words to thought. But on the contrary he happened to be a wonderful observer, I mean that he had a sense of the stuff of language which means that he taught us far more about words than about thought. And as regards words, and as regard this usage of negation, it is especially in French that he dwelt on this usage of negation, and there he could not avoid making this discovery which is made by this distinction, which is articulated in this distinction that he makes between the forclusive and the discordant.

I am going to give you examples right away of the distinction that he makes between them. Let us take a sentence like: "There is nobody here" (il n'y a personne ici). This is foreclosure, that anybody should be there is excluded for the moment. Pichon dwells on the remarkable fact that every time we have to deal with a pure and simple foreclosure in French, we must always use two terms: A ne and then something which here is represented by the personne, and which could be by the pas: Je n'ai pas ou loger (I have nowhere to stay), Je n'ai rien a vous dire (I have nothing to say to you) for example.

On the other hand I notice that a great number of the usages of ne and precisely the most indicative here as always, those which (9) pose the most paradoxical problems, always manifest themselves, namely that first of all a pure and simple ne is never, or almost never, used to indicate pure and simple negation, what for example in German or in English would be embodied in the "nicht" or the "not". The ne by itself, left to itself, expresses what he calls a discordance, and this discordance is very precisely something which is situated between the process of enunciating and the process of the enunciation.

To be clear and to illustrate right away what is in question, I am going precisely to give you the example which Pichon in fact focused most on, because it is specially illustrative, it is the use of those ne's that people who understand nothing, namely people who want to understand, call the expletive ne. I am saying this to you because I already began it the last time, I

alluded to it in connection with an article on the so-called expletive ne which appeared in Le Monde and which appeared to me to be quite scandalous. This expletive ne which is not an expletive ne, which is a ne that is quite essential to the usage of the French tongue, is the one which is found in the sentence: Je crains qu'il ne vienne (I am afraid that he will come). Everyone knows that the Je crains qu'il ne vienne means: I am afraid that he will come and not I am afraid that he will not come, but in French one says: Je crains qu'il ne vienne.

In other words, French at this point of its linguistic usage lays (10) hold, as I might say of the ne somewhere at the level as one might say of its straying, of its descent from the process of enunciating where the ne refers to the articulation of the enunciating, refers to what is called the pure and simple signifier in act. "I am not saying that..." (je ne dis pas que ...), "I am not saying that I am your wife" for example, of the ne of the enunciation where it is, "I am not your wife". No doubt we are not here to work out the genesis of language, but something is implied even in our experience.

This is what I want to show you which in any case indicates for us the articulation that Freud gives of the fact of negation, implies that negation descends from the enunciating to the enunciation, and how could we be surprised at this because after all every negation in the enunciation involves a certain paradox, because it asserts something in order to assert it at the same time, let us say in a certain number of cases as not existing somewhere between the two, somewhere between the enunciating and the enunciation, and on this plane where the discordances are established, where something in my fear anticipates the fact that he may come, and hoping that he will not come, what can it do other than articulate this "I am afraid that he will come" as a "je crains qu'il ne vienne", hooking on in passing as I might say, this ne of discordance which is distinguished as such in negation from the forclusive ne.

You will say to me: this is a phenomenon that is peculiar to the (11) French tongue, you evoked it yourself just above in talking about the German "nicht" and the English "not". Of course, only the important thing is not that, the important thing is that in the English tongue for example where we articulate analogous things, namely that we perceive, and I am not able to demonstrate this to you because I am not here to give you a course on linguistics, that it is something analogous which is manifested in the fact that in English for example negation cannot be applied in a pure and simple fashion to the verb in so far as it is the verb of the enunciation, the verb designating the process in the enunciation; one does not say: "I eat not...", but "I don't eat..."

In other words, it appears that we have traces in the articulation in the English linguistic system of the following: it is that for anything that is of the order of negation, the enunciation is led to borrow a form which is modelled on the use of an auxiliary, the auxiliary being typically what introduces

the dimension of the subject into the enunciation. "I don't eat", "I won't eat", or "I won't go" which is properly speaking je n'irai pas, which does not simply imply the fact, but my resolution as a subject not to go, the fact that for every negation in so far as it is a pure and simple negation, something like an auxiliary dimension appears, and here in the English tongue models it on this something that essentially links (12) negation to a sort of original position of the enunciating as such.

The second moment or phase of what I tried to articulate for you the last time, is constituted by the following: that to show you by what path, by what way the subject is introduced to this dialectic of the other, in so far as it is imposed on him by the very structure of this difference between the enunciating and the enunciation, I brought you along a path which as I told you I made deliberately empirical. It is not the only one, I mean that I introduce into it the real history of the subject. I told you that the following step of the way in which at the origin the subject is constituted in the process of the distinction between this I of the enunciating and the I of the enunciation, is the dimension of knowing nothing about it (n'en rien savoir), in so far as he experiences, that he experiences in the fact that it is against the background of the fact that the other knows all his thoughts, because at the origin his thoughts are by nature and structurally this discourse of the other, that it is in the discovery that it is a fact that the other knows nothing about his thoughts, that there is inaugurated for him this way which is the one that we seek, the way by which the subject is going to develop this contradictory exigency of the unsaid and find the difficult path by which he has to bring about this unsaid in his being and become this sort of being with whom we have to deal, namely a subject which has the dimension of the unconscious, because this is the essential step that psychoanalysis makes for (13) us in man's experience; it is the following: it is that after long centuries in which I would say in a way philosophy persisted more and more in taking always further this discourse in which the subject is only the correlate of the object in the relationship of knowledge, namely that the subject is that which is supposed by the knowledge of objects, this sort of strange subject about which I said somewhere or other that it might do as a Sunday philosophy because the rest of the week, namely during work of course everyone can completely neglect it, this subject which is only the shadow in a way and the understudy of objects, this something which is forgotten in this subject, namely that the subject is the subject who speaks. It is only from a certain moment that we can no longer forget it, namely the moment when his domain as a subject who speaks stands on its own, whether he is there or whether he is not there.

What completely changes the nature of his relationships to the object, is this crucial point of the nature of his relationships to the object which is precisely called desire. It is in this field that we are trying to articulate the relationships of the subject to the object in the sense that they are relationships of desire, because it is in this field that analytic experience

teaches us that there is something to be articulated. The relationship of the subject to the object is not a relationship of need, the relationship of the subject to the object is a (14) complex relationship which I am precisely trying to articulate before you. For the moment let us begin to indicate the following: it is because this relationship of the articulation of the subject to the object is situated there, that the object is found to be this something which is not the correlate and the correspondent of a need of the subject, but this something which supports the subject precisely at the moment at which he has to confront as one might say his own existence, which supports the subject in his existence, in his existence in the most radical sense, namely precisely in this that he exists in language, namely that he consists in something that is outside himself, in something that he can only grasp in its proper nature as language at the precise moment when he, as subject, must efface himself, vanish, disappear behind a signifier, which is precisely what one might call the panic point around which he must attach himself to something, it is precisely to the object qua object of desire that he attaches himself.

Somewhere, someone whom I will not immediately name today, in order not to confuse matters, someone quite contemporary, who is dead, has written:

"If one managed to learn what the Miser came to know, what the Miser lost when his money-box was stolen from him, one would learn a great deal."

It is exactly what we have to learn, I mean learn it for ourselves and teach it to others.

(15) Analysis is the first place, the first dimension in which one can respond to this statement, and of course because the miser is ridiculous, namely much too close to the unconscious for you to be able to support it, I will have to find another more noble example to help you to grasp what I mean.

I could begin to articulate it for you in the same terms as above as regards what concerns existence, and in two minutes you would take me for an existentialist, which is not what I desire. I am going to take an example in La Regie du Jeu, a film by Jean Renoir. Somewhere the character who is played by Dalio, who is the old character as he is seen in real life in a certain social milieu, and you must not think that it is even limited to this social milieu; he is a collector of objects, and more especially of music boxes. Remind yourselves, if you still remember this film, of the moment when Dalio, in front of a large audience, makes his latest discovery, a particularly beautiful music box. At that moment the character is literally in this position which we could call and which we should call exactly that of shame: he blushes, he effaces himself, he disappears, he is very embarrassed. He has shown what he has shown, but how could those present understand that we find ourselves here at this level, at (16) this point of oscillation that we grasp, which shows itself in its extreme form in this passion of the collector for the

object. It is one of the forms of the object of desire. What the subject shows is nothing other than the most important, most intimate point of himself. What is supported by this object, is precisely what he cannot unveil, even to himself, it is this something which is at the very edge of the greatest secret.

That is it, it is along this path that we should seek to know what his money box is for the miser. We must certainly take a step further to get quite to the level of the miser and that is the reason why the miser can only be treated by comedy.

But what is therefore in question, that by which we are introduced is the following: it is that what the subject finds himself committed to from a particular moment, is the following, it is to articulate his wish qua secret. How is the wish, how is what is in the wish expressed? In these forms of the tongue to which I alluded the last time, for which according to the tongue, different modes, different registers, different chords, have been invented. In this matter you must not always trust what the grammarians say. The subjunctive is not as subjunctive as it looks, and the type of wish - I am searching in my memory something which will be able in some way to give you an image of it, and I do not know why there has come back from the depths of (17) my memory this little poem which I had some trouble in recomposing, indeed in re-situating:

"Etre une belle fille
Blonde et populaire.
Qui mette de la joie dans l'air
Lorsqu'elle sourit,
Donne de l'appetit
Aux ouvriers de Saint-Denis."

This was written by someone who is a contemporary of ours, a discreet female poet, one of whose characteristics is that she is small and dark, and who no doubt expresses in her nostalgia to sharpen the appetite of the workers of Saint-Denis, something which can be strongly enough attached to one or other moment of her ideological reveries. But one cannot say either that this is her ordinary occupation.

What I would like you to dwell on for a moment in terms of this phenomenon which is a poetic phenomenon, is first of all the fact that we find in it something fairly important as regards the temporal structure. This perhaps is the pure form, I am not saying of the wish (yoeu), but of what is wished (souhaite), namely of that which in the wish is stated as wished. Let us say that the primitive subject is elided, but this means nothing, she is not elided because what is articulated here, is the wished for, it is something which is presented in the infinitive as you see, and which if you tried to introduce yourselves into the interior of the structure, you will see that this is situated in a position, a position of being in front of the subject and (18) determining her retroactively. It is not a question here either of a pure and simple aspiration, or of a regret; it is a question of something which poses itself in front of the subject

as determining it retroactively in a certain type of being.

This is situated completely up in the air. It nevertheless remains that this is how what is wished for is articulated, giving us already something that it would be well to retain when we try to give a meaning to the sentence with which the Interpretation of dreams concludes, namely that the indestructible desire models the present on the image of the past. This thing whose drone we hear as something which we attribute right away to the effects of repetition or of deferred action, is perhaps not certain if we look very closely at it, namely that if the indestructible desire is now modelled on the image of the past, it is perhaps like the donkey's carrot, it is always ahead of the subject, always producing retroactively the same effects.

This introduces us at the same time to the ambiguity of this enunciation through its structural characteristics, because after all what one might call the gratuitous character of enunciating this has some consequences which nothing prevents us from getting involved in, I mean that nothing prevents us from getting involved in the following remark, that this poetically expressed wish, entitled as it happens, since I referred to the text, Voëu secret, this then is what I discovered in my memory after some (19) twenty five or thirty years, in looking for something which would take us to the secret of the wish, this secret wish of course which is communicated, because this is the whole problem: how to communicate to others something which is constituted as secret? In reply: through some lie, because when all is said and done for those of us who are a little bit more clever than the others, this can be translated: "As true as I am a beautiful blond popular girl, I want to make everybody happy and sharpen the appetite of the workers of Saint-Denis", and it is not said that every being, even one who is generous or poetic or even a female poet, is all that eager to make everybody happy. After all, why? Why, if not in phantasy, if not in phantasy and to demonstrate the extent to which the object of phantasy is metonymical, namely that it is happiness which is going to circulate like that? As regards the workers of Saint-Denis, they can put up with it. Let them divide things up among themselves, in any case there are already too many of them for one to know to whom one should address oneself.

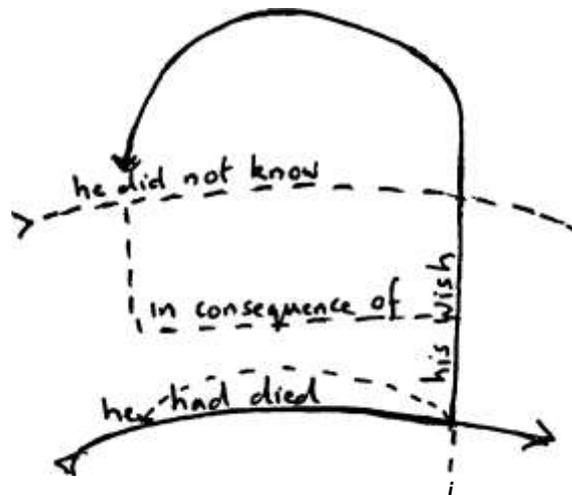
With this digression I introduce you to the structure of the wish by way of poetry; we can now enter into it by way of serious things, namely by the effective role that desire plays, and this desire which we have seen, as might have been expected, that it should in fact have to find its place somewhere between this (20) point from which we started by saying that the subject alienates himself essentially in the alienation of the appeal, of the appeal of need, in that he has to enter into the defiles of the signifier, and this beyond in which there is going to be introduced as essential the dimension of the unsaid, it must be articulated somewhere. We see it in the dream that I chose, this dream which is undoubtedly one of the most problematic of dreams in so far as it is a dream of the apparition of a dead

person, this dream of the apparition of a dead person which Freud on page 433 of the Traumdeutung in the German edition, page 381 and on page 382 of the La Science des Reves concerning the apparition of the dead, is very far from having yet given us their whole secret (SE V 430-1) . Even though already he articulates a lot of things in it, that this is essential, and it is in this connection that Freud marked with the greatest accent right through this analysis of dreams in the Traumdeutung, the depths there are in what was the first approach to the psychology of the unconscious, namely the ambivalence of feelings with respect to those who are loved and respected. It is something moreover by which the dream which I chose to begin to try to articulate before you the function of desire in the dream, is again approached.

You can see that recently I have been re-reading the Traumdeutung in its first edition with certain goals in view, and that at the same time the last time I made an allusion to the fact that in (21) the Traumdeutung one always forgets what is in it. I had forgotten that in 1930 this dream was added to it. It was first of all added on in a note a short time after its publication in the "Formulierungen", and then in the 1930 edition it was added to the text. Therefore it is in the text of the Traumdeutung.

I repeat then, that this dream is made up as follows: the subject sees his father appearing before him, this father whom he had just lost after an illness which had been a long and painful one for him. He sees him appearing before him and he is pierced, the text tell us, with a profound sadness at the thought that his father is dead and that he does not know it; a formulation on whose character of absurd reasoning Freud insists, and of which he says: it is completed, it is understood if one adds that he had died "in consequence of the dreamer's wish", that he did not know that it was in consequence of his wish of course that he had died.

This is what I inscribe on the graph, according to the following levels:



(22) "He did not know", refers essentially to the dimension of the constitution of the subject, in so far as it is over against a useless "he did not know" that the subject has to situate

himself, and that here we have what precisely it is that we are going to try to see in detail from experience, that he has to constitute himself as not knowing, the only way out that is given to him in order that what is unsaid effectively takes on the import of the unsaid.

It is at the level of the enunciation that this is done, but there is no doubt that no statement of this kind can be made unless it is supported by the underpinning of an enunciating, because for any being who does not speak, we have the proof, that "he had died" means nothing; I would say more: we have the test in the immediate indifference that most animals show towards remainders, towards the corpses of their fellows once they have become corpses. In order that an animal should be attached to a dead person, the example of dogs is cited, it is necessary precisely that the dog should be in this exceptional position of showing that if he does not have an unconscious, he has a super-ego, namely that something has come into play which allows there to be something of the order of a certain delineation of signifying articulation. But let us leave that to one side.

That this "he had died" already supposes the subject introduced to something which is of the order of existence, existence being nothing other than the fact that the subject from the moment that (23) he establishes himself in the signifier can no longer be destroyed, that he enters into this intolerable concatenation which for him unfolds immediately in the imaginary, which means that he can no longer conceive himself, except as constantly re-emerging in existence.

This is not the construction of a philosopher, I have been able to observe among those who are called patients, and I remember one for whom one of the turning points of her internal experience, was a particular dream precisely where she touched without any doubt, and not at an indifferent moment of her analysis, something that was apprehended, grasped in a dream state, which was nothing other than a sort of pure feeling of existence, of existing as one might say in an indefinite fashion, and from the heart of this existence a new existence always re-emerged for her, and this extended for her inner intuition, as one might say, as far as she could see, existence being apprehended and felt as something which of its nature could not be extinguished except in order to emerge further on, and this was accompanied for her precisely by an intolerable pain.

This is something which is quite close to what the content of the dream gives us, because what indeed do we have? We have here a dream which is the dream of a son. It is always good to point out in connection with a dream, that the one who constructs it, is the dreamer. One must always remember that when one begins to (24) speak about the person in the dream.

What do we have here? The problem of what one calls identification is posed here in a particularly apt way, because in the dream there is no need for dialectic to think that there is some relationship of identification between the subject and his

own dream fantasies.

What do we have? We have the subject who is there confronting his father, pierced by the deepest pain and before him we have the father who does not know that he is dead, or more exactly, because we must put it in the tense in which the subject apprehends it and communicates it to us, he did not know. I insist on this without being quite able to insist on it to the limit for the moment, but I always intend not to offer you approximate things which sometimes lead to obscurity, because this rule of behaviour also prevents me from putting things before you in any but an approximate way, and because I cannot immediately specify them, that naturally leaves some doors open. Nevertheless it is important, as regards the dream, for you to remember that the fashion in which it is communicated to us is always an enunciation: the subject gives us an account of what? Of another enunciation, but it is not at all sufficient to say that, of another enunciation that he presents to us as enunciating, because it is a fact that the subject tells us about the dream precisely in order that we should look for the key, the meaning, namely what he means, namely for something quite (25) different to the enunciation that he reports to us, the fact therefore that this: "he did not know", is said in the imperfect is quite important in this perspective. "He did not know", in what I am enunciating to you, this for those whom the question of the relationships of the dream to the word by which we get to know about it, can approach in the drawing the first level of splitting.

But let us continue. Here then is how things are divided up: from one aspect, from the aspect of what appears in the dream as subject, what? An affect, pain, pain about what? That he had died. And from the other aspect corresponding to this pain: "He did not know", what? The same thing, that he had died.

Freud tell us that it is here there is found its meaning and implicitly its interpretation, and this seems to be quite simple. I have already pointed out to you often enough that it is not.

3

As a complement: "in consequence of his wish":

pain (douleur)	■	he did not know
that he had died	•	that he had died

(In consequence of his wish)

But what does this mean? If we are, as Freud formally indicates (26) that we should be, not simply in this passage, but in the one about repression that I asked you to refer to, we are at the

level of the signifier, you should immediately see that we can make more than one usage of this "in consequence of his wish". He had died in consequence of his wish. Where does this take us? I think that some of you at least may remember the point that I formerly brought you to, that of the subject who having exhausted the way of desire in all its forms, in so far as it is not known to the subject, is the punishment of what crime? Of no other crime than that of having precisely existed in this desire, he finds himself brought to the point where he can make no other exclamation than this final but, this "not to have been born", at which existence culminates when it has arrived very precisely at the extinction of his desire, and this pain which the subject feels in the dream, let us not forget that he is a subject of whom we know nothing more than this immediate antecedent that he has seen his father die in the torment of a long and agonising illness.

This pain is close by in the experience of this pain of existence when there is nothing else in him than this existence itself, and when everything in this excessive suffering tends to abolish this ineradicable term which is the desire to live.

This pain of existing, of existing when desire is no longer (27) there, if it has been lived by any one, has been lived by the one who is far from being a stranger to the subject. But in any case what is clear, is that in the dream the subject knew this pain.

We will never know if the one who experienced it in the real knew or did not know the meaning of this pain, but on the contrary what is tangible, is that neither in the dream of course, nor certainly outside the dream before interpretation leads us to it, does the subject know that what he is assuming is this very pain as such, and the proof is that he can only articulate it in the dream in a faithful, cynical fashion, which corresponds absurdly to what? Freud replies to this, if we refer to the little chapter in the *Traumdeutung* where he talks about absurd dreams, especially in connection with this dream, and it is a confirmation of what I was trying to articulate for you here before rereading it, we will see that he specifies that if the feeling of absurdity is often linked in dreams to this sort of contradiction, linked to the structure of the unconscious itself, and which ends up in something laughable, in particular cases this absurd, and he says it in connection with this dream, is introduced into the dream as an element of what? As an element expressing a particularly violent repudiation of the meaning that is designated here, and in fact undoubtedly the subject can see that his father did not know the wish, he, the subject had that his father should die in order to be done with his suffering. (28) Namely that at this level the subject himself knows what his wish is. He may see or not see, everything depends on the point of analysis that he has got to, that this wish which was his in the past, that his father should die, and not for his father's sake, but for his, the subject who was his rival. But what he cannot see at all, at the point that he has got to, is that by assuming the pain of his father without knowing it, what is being

aimed at, is to keep before him in the object this ignorance which is absolutely necessary for him, that which consists in not knowing that it is better not to have been born. There is nothing at the final term of existence, than the pain of existing; it is better to assume it as that of the other who is there and who continues to speak, as I the dreamer continue to speak, than to see being laid bare this final mystery which is nothing other, when all is said and done, than the most secret content of this wish, the one of which we have no element in the dream itself, except what we know by knowledge. What the content of this wish is is, namely, the wish for the father to be castrated, namely the wish par excellence which at the moment of the father's death is turned back onto the son, because it is his turn to be castrated, namely something that must not be seen at any price, and I am not in the process of posing for the moment the terms of the point or the moment or the times when an interpretation should therefore be made, it would be easy already (29) to show you on this schema that there is a first interpretation which is made right away. Your father is not at all concerned, he did not know, in consequence of your wish of enunciating the wish.

We are here at the level of what is already in the direct line of the subject's word, and it is a good thing that it is so, but it is necessary that a certain introduction by the analyst should be such that already something problematic is introduced into this remark which is of a nature to make emerge what up to then is repressed and in dots, namely that he had already died a long time ago in consequence of his wish, in consequence of the oedipal wish, and to make this as such emerge from the unconscious.

But it is a question of knowing, of giving its full import to this something which as above goes well above the question of what this wish is, because this wish to castrate the father with its reversal onto the subject, is something which goes well beyond any justifiable desire. If it is, as we say it is, a structuring necessity, a signifying necessity, and here the wish is only the mask of what is most profound in the structure of desire as such as the dream reveals it, it is nothing other, not than a wish, but than the essence of the "in consequence of", of the relationship, of the necessary enchainment which prevents the subject from escaping from this concatenation of existence in so (30) far as it is determined by the nature of the signifier.

This "in consequence of", this is the point of what I want to point out to you, it is when all is said and done in this problematic of the effacement of the subject which on this occasion is his salvation in this final point where the subject should be destined to a final ignorance, the mainspring, the Verdrangung, this is the meaning into which I tried to introduce you right at the end the last time, reposes entirely, this sort of Verdrangung on, not the repression of something full, of something which is discovered, of something which is seen and which is understood, but in the pure and simple signifying elision, of the "nach", of the "in consequence of", of that which

indicates agreement or disagreement, accord or disaccord between the enunciating and the signifier, between what is in the relationship in the enunciation and what is in the necessities of the enunciating. It is in terms of the elision of a clausula, of a pure and simple signifier, that everything subsists, and that in the last analysis what is manifested in the desire of the dream, is the fact that he did not know.

What does the fact mean in the absence of any other signification that we have at our disposition? We will see only when we take a dream of someone whom we know better, because next time we will take one of Freud's dreams, the one which is quite close to this one, the dream that Freud had also about his father, the one he (31) has when he sees him in the form of Garibaldi; there we will go further and we will really see what Freud's desire is, and those who reproach me here for not paying enough attention to anal erotism will get their money's worth. But for the moment let us stop here with this schematic dream at this dream of the subject's confrontation with death.

What does that mean? In summoning this shade, blood is going to flow, because it means that this dream means nothing other than that he is not dead. He may suffer in the place of the other. But behind this suffering, is the only lure onto which at this crucial moment he can still hold on to, precisely that of the rival, of the murder of the father, of imaginary fixation, and it is also here that we will take things up the next time, around the explanation of what I think I have sufficiently prepared by today's articulations: the elucidation of the following formula as being the constant formula of the phantasy in the unconscious:

o

This relationship of the subject in so far as he is barred, cancelled, abolished by the action of the signifier, and who finds his support in the other, in that which defines for the subject who speaks, the object as such, namely that it is with the other that we try to identify, that we will very quickly identify, because those who attended the first year of this Séminaire heard it spoken about for a trimester, this other (32) this predominant object of human erotism, is the image of one's own body in the broad sense that we will give to it. It is here on this occasion in this human phantasy which is the phantasy of himself, which is no longer numbered, it is here that the subject maintains his existence, maintains the veil which ensures that he can continue to be a subject who speaks.

I mentioned the last time the French grammar written by Jacques Damourette and Edouard Pichon (Editeur D'Artrey). What I said about negation, foreclosure and discordance is dealt with in two places in this grammar, in the second volume where there is assembled a whole article on negation, which fixes the data of foreclosure and discordance. This foreclosure which is so particularly embodied in the French language by its pas, point or personne, rien, goute, ni, which bear in themselves this sign of their origin in the trace as you see, because all of these, are words which designate the trace. This is where the action of foreclosure, the symbolic axis of foreclosure is rejected to in French, the ne being reserved for what it is more originally, discordance.

Negation in its origin, in its linguistic root, is something which spreads from the enunciating to the enunciation, as I tried (2) to show you the last time. I tried to show you how it could be represented on this little graph that we are using.

We remained the last time at this putting into place of the terms, of the elements of the dream, that "he did not know that he had died", and it was around this "in consequence of", of the "in consequence of his wish" that we designated the real point of incidence, in so far as the dream both marks the desire and carries it.

It now remains for us to continue to advance in order to ask ourselves how and why such an action is possible, and I had, in finishing, showed the way in which I intended to interrogate this function of desire as it is articulated in Freud, namely specifically at the level of unconscious desire. I intended to question it around this formula which is the one to which everything that we have shown about the structure of this dream, about what it consists in, namely about this confrontation, the subject is an other, a small o on this occasion, the father reappears alive in connection with the dream and in the dream, and is found to be in relationship to the subject, in this relationship whose ambiguities we had begun to question, namely that the one who ensures that the subject charges himself with what we have called the pain of existing, the one whose soul he has seen in its last agony, for whom he had wished death; wished (3) death in so far as nothing is more intolerable than existence reduced to itself; this existence beyond everything which can sustain it, this existence sustained precisely in the abolition of desire.

And we have indicated that by sensing here that in this division, of what I would call intrasubjective functions, which ensures that the subject takes upon himself the pain of the other, rejecting onto the other what he does not know, which is nothing other on this occasion than the subject's own ignorance, the ignorance that it is precisely in the dream-desire that he desires to sustain himself, that he desires to maintain himself, and that here the desire for death takes on its full meaning which is the desire not to wake up, not to wake up to the message, which is precisely the one which is most secret, which is carried by the dream itself, and which is the following: that the subject through the death of his father is from now on wrongly confronted, with what the presence of the father protected him from up to then, namely with this something which is linked to the function of the father, namely this something which is there present in this pain of existing, this something which is the pivotal point around which there turns everything that Freud discovered in the Oedipus complex, namely the X, the signification of castration. Such is the function of castration.

What does it mean to assume castration? Is castration ever really assumed? This sort of point against which have broken the last waves of what Freud called finite or indefinite analysis (4) is what? And up to what point in this dream and in connection with this dream is the analyst not only right, but also in a position, potentially, to be able to interpret it?

It is at this point that at the end of what we were saying the last time about this dream, I had left posed the question: the three ways open to the analyst of reintroducing the "in consequence of his wish", the way that accords with the word of the subject, is in accord with what the subject had wished, and which he remembered perfectly well, which is not at all forgotten, namely that "in consequence of his wish" re-establishes there at the level of the upper line of "in consequence of his wish", re-establishes there at the level of the hidden enunciation of unconscious memory, the traces of the Oedipus complex, of the infantile desire for the death of the father, which is the thing Freud tells us is the capitalist in every formation of the dream, this infantile desire finds its entrepreneur on this occasion in a current desire which has to express itself in the dream, and which is far from being always an unconscious desire.

Is not this "in consequence of his wish" re-established at the level of the infantile desire, something which is found there in short in the position of going in the direction of the dream-desire, because it is a question of interposing at this crucial moment of the subject's life which is realised by the death of the father, because it is a question in the dream of interposing this image of the object and incontestably presents (5) it as the support of a veil, of a perpetual ignorance, of a prop to what was in short up to then the alibi of the desire, because indeed the very function of the prohibition conveyed by the father, is indeed something which gives to desire its

enigmatic, even unfathomable form, this something from which the subject finds himself separated, this protection, this defence when all is said and done, which is as Jones very well glimpsed, and we will see today that Jones had some very extraordinary perceptions from certain points of view about this psychic dynamism, this moral pretext never to be affronted in his desire.

Could we not say that the pure and simple interpretation of this oedipal desire is here something which in short attaches itself to some intermediary stage of the interpretation of the dream?

By permitting the subject to do what? Properly speaking this something whose nature you are going to recognise when it is designated as identifying with the aggressor. Is it anything other than the interpretation of oedipal desire, at this level and in these terms: that you had wished for the death of your father at such a date and for such a reason. In your childhood, somewhere in your childhood there is identification to the aggressor. Have you not typically recognised that this is essential, because it is one of the forms of defence? Is it not (6) something which is put forward at the very place where the "in consequence of his wish" is elided? Are the "in consequence" and its meaning not essential for a full interpretation of the dream? There is no doubt about this, apart from the opportunities and the conditions which allow the analyst to get to this point, they will depend on the moments of the treatment, on the context of the response of the subject in dreams, because we know that in analysis the subject responds to the analyst, or at least to what the analyst has become in the transference, by his dreams.

But essentially, I mean in the logical position of the terms, is a question not posed to the "in consequence of his wish", to which we always run the risk of giving some over-hasty form, some over-hasty response, some premature response, some avoidance offered to the subject about what is in question, namely the impasse that he is put in by this fundamental structure which makes of the object of every desire the support of an essential metonymy, and something in which the object of human desire as such is presented in a vanishing form, and of which we can perhaps glimpse that castration is what we could call the final tempering.

Here then we are led to take up at the other end, namely at the one which is not given in dreams, to question more closely what is meant by, what is signified by human desire, and whether this (7) formula, I mean this algorithm, this S confronted, put in the presence of, put face to face with the o, with the object, and in this connection we have introduced into these dream-images, and of the meaning which is revealed to us in them. Is it not something that we cannot attempt to test in the phenomenology of desire, as it is presented to us, curiously enough, of desire which is there, which is there since, which is at the heart of

Let us try to see in what form this desire presents itself to us

analysts.

This algorithm is not going to be able to lead us together along the path of a questioning which is that of our common experience, of our experience as analysts, of the way in which in the case of the subject, in the subject who is not necessarily or always the neurotic subject regarding whom we have no reason to presume that on this point his structure is not included, because it reveals a more general structure. In any case there is no doubt that the neurotic finds himself situated somewhere along what represents the prolongations, the processes of an experience which for us has a universal value. This indeed in the point around which the whole construction of Freudian doctrine unfolds.

Before entering into a questioning about some of the ways in which this dialectic of the relationships of the subject to his (8) desire have already been tackled, and in particular what I announced above about Jones' thinking, a thinking which remained unfinished and which, as you will see undoubtedly glimpsed something. I would like to refer to something taken from the most ordinary clinical experience, to an example which came to me fairly recently in my experience, and which seems to me to be rather appropriate to introduce what we are trying to illustrate.

It was the case of somebody who was impotent. It is not a bad thing to start from impotence in order to begin to question oneself about what desire is. We are sure in any case that we are at the human level. This was a young person who of course, like many people who are impotent, was not impotent at all. In the course of his existence he had made love very normally and he had had some liaisons. He was married and it was with his wife that it did not work. This is not to be described as impotence because it was precisely localised with respect to the object with whom the subject most wished to have sexual relationships, because he loved his wife. The term does not seem to be appropriate. So here more or less is what emerged at the end of a certain time of analytic work from the remarks of the subject.

It was not that he lacked absolutely all elan, but if he let himself be led on by it one evening, and however unrelated it was to the period of analysis he was currently living through, would he be able to sustain this elan? The conflict brought about by (9) this lack (carance) which he had just gone through had taken matters to extremes. Had he any right to impose again on his wife some new trial, some new mishap in his attempts and in his failures? In short, was this desire which could certainly be felt to be not at all absent, in terms of its presence and in the possibility of its being accomplished, was this desire legitimate? And without being able here to take the reference to this precise case any further, I cannot of course give you the history here for all sorts of reasons, including the fact that it is an analysis that is still in progress, and for many other reasons also, and this is always the problem about alluding to current analyses, I will borrow from other analyses this term which is quite decisive in certain evolutions sometimes leading to deviations, even to what are called perversions which have a

greater structural importance, than what operates here openly, as one might say, in the case of impotence.

I will evoke therefore this relationship which from experience appears in certain cases, in the life of subjects, and which comes to light in analysis, an experience which can have a decisive function, but which, as in other places, reveals a structure, the point at which the subject poses himself the question, the problem: Does he have a big enough phallus?

From a certain angle, from a certain point of view, this question (10) just by itself may entail in the subject a whole series of solutions, which by becoming superimposed on one another, by succeeding one another and by adding to one another, may draw him a long way from the field of the normal execution of that for which he has all the elements.

This big enough phallus, or more exactly this phallus which is essential for the subject, is foreclosed at a moment of his experience, and it is something that we rediscover in a thousand forms, not always of course obvious or manifest, latent, but it is precisely in the case in which as Monsieur de La Palice would say, this moment of this phase is open to view, that we can grasp it and touch it, and also understand its import.

We see the subject, I might say, more than once confronting, referring to this something which we must grasp there at the moment of his life, often at the turning point at the awakening of puberty, when he encounters its sign, the subject is then confronted with something which, as such, is of the same order as what we have evoked above: does desire find itself legitimated, sanctioned by something else, and in a certain fashion already what appears here in a flash itself in the phenomenology in which the subject expresses it, the phenomenology in which he expresses it, can be assumed under the following formula: does the subject have or not have the absolute weapon? Because if he (11) does not have the absolute weapon, he is going to find himself drawn into a series of identifications, of alibis, of games of hide-and-seeK which I repeat - we cannot develop its dichotomies here any further - can go very far.

The essential is the following: it is that I want to point out to you how desire finds the origin of its ups and downs from the moment that there is a question that the subject has it qua alienated in something which is a sign, in a promise, in an anticipation involving moreover as such a possible loss; how desire is linked to the dialectic of a lack subsumed into a moment which as such is a moment which is not there, any more than the sign on this occasion is a desire.

What desire has to confront, is this fear that it will not maintain itself under its present form, that as an artefact (artifex), if I may thus express myself, it will perish. But of course this artefact which is the desire that man feels, experiences as such, this artefact can only perish with regard to the artifice of his own speech. It is in the dimension of

speech that this fear is elaborated, and is stabilised.

It is here that we encounter this term, so surprisingly and so curiously abandoned in analysis, which is the one that Jones put forward as a support for his reflections, and which is called (12) aphanisis. When Jones dwells on, meditates on the phenomenology of castration; a phenomenology which remains as you can see in experience, and in publications, more and more veiled in modern psychoanalytic experience, Jones, at the stage of analysis at which he finds himself confronted with all sorts of tasks which are different from those given by modern experience, a certain relationship to the patient in analysis, which is not the one which has been since reoriented according to other norms to a certain necessity in the interpretation, the exegesis, the apologetics, the explanation of Freud's thought. Jones one might say, tries to find the method, the means of making it understood in connection with the castration complex, that what the subject fears he will be deprived of, is his own desire.

You must not be surprised that this term aphanisis which means that, a disappearance and specifically of desire, in Jones' text you will see that this is what is in question, that this is what he articulates, this term which serves him as an introduction because of a problem which worried the poor man a lot; it is the one about the relationships of the woman to the phallus, a question in which he never managed to find his bearings. Right away he uses this aphanisis to put under the same common denominator the relationships of man and of woman to their (13) desire, which involved him in an impasse, because this is to overlook precisely that these relationships are fundamentally different and simply because this is what Freud discovered, by reason of their asymetry with respect to the signifier phallus.

I think that I have already made you sense this well enough, for us to consider, at least provisionally today, that this is something that has been learned. So that the use of aphanisis, whether it is at the origin of the invention, or whether it is merely its consequence, marks in a way a sort of inflection which is short directs its author away from what is the real question, namely what is signified in the structure of the subject by this possibility of aphanisis? Namely does it not force us precisely towards a structuring of the human subject precisely as such, in so far as it is a subject for whom existence can be supposed and is supposed beyond desire, a subject who ex-sists, which sub-sists outside what is his desire.

The question is not of knowing whether we have to take into account objectively desire in its most radical form, the desire to live, the life instincts as we say. The question is quite different, it is what analysis shows us, shows us as being brought into play in the life of the subject; it is this very thing, I mean that it is not only that human life is sustained, (14) which of course we are not doubting, by desire, but that the human subject takes it into account, as I might say, that he counts on this desire as such, ^ that he is afraid if I may express myself in this way, that the elan vital, this beloved elan

vital, this charming incarnation - we would be right here to talk about the anthropomorphism of human desire in nature - that precisely this famous élan with which we try to sustain this nature about which we do not understand very much, the fact is that when it is a question of himself, the human subject sees this élan vital in front of him, he is afraid that he will lack it.

Just by itself this clearly suggests all the same the idea that we would do well to have some structural exigencies, because after all it is a question here of something other than reflections of the unconscious (sic); I mean of this subject-object relationship which is imminent in the pure dimension of knowledge, and that once we are dealing with desire, as moreover is proved to us by experience, I mean Freudian experience, this is all the same going to pose us slightly more complicated problems.

In effect we can, because we started with impotence, go to the other extreme. If impotence fears neither potency nor impotence, the human subject in the presence of his desire also (15) manages to satisfy it, he comes to anticipate it as satisfied. It is also very remarkable to see these cases where, when he is able to satisfy it, namely when he is not affected by impotence, the subject dreads the satisfaction of his desire, and it is most often that in his turn he dreads the satisfaction of his desire as making it depend in future precisely on the man or woman who is going to satisfy it, namely on the other.

The phenomenological fact is a common one, it is even the habitual text of human experience. There is no need to go to the great dramas which have been taken as the example and illustration of this problematic, to see how a biography throughout its whole duration spends its time unfolding in a successive avoidance of what has always been punctuated in it as the most pregnant desire.

Where is this dependence on the other, this dependence on the other which in fact is the form and the phantasy in which there is presented what the subject dreads, and which makes him deviate from the satisfaction of his desire? It is perhaps not simply what one could call the fear of the caprice of the other, this caprice which, I do not know if you are aware of it, is not very much related with the popular etymology, that of the Larousse dictionary which refers it to the goat (chèvre) and to the chameleon. Caprice, capriccio, means shudder in Italian, from (16) which we have borrowed it; is nothing other than the same word so beloved by Freud, which is called sichsträuben, to bristle up. And you know that throughout his whole work, it is one of the metaphorical forms in which for Freud there is incarnated at every turn, I am talking about the most concrete remarks, when he speaks about his wife, when he speaks about Irma, when he talks in general about the subject who is resisting, it is one of the forms in which he incarnates in the most tangible fashion his appreciation of resistance. It is not so much the way that the subject is essentially dependent.

because he represents the other as such in terms of his caprice; it is precisely, and this is what is veiled, that the other does not mark this caprice with signs and there is not a sufficient sign of the goodwill of the subject, except the totality of signs in which he subsists, that in fact there is no other sign of the subject except the sign of his abolition as subject.

It is this that is written as follows: $S(0)$; this shows you that in short as regards his desire man is not in the truth, because however little or however much courage he demonstrates, the situation escapes radically from him; that in any case this vanishing, this something which someone who after may last seminar called, when he was speaking with me afterwards, this umbilication of the subject at the level of his willing, and I (17) accept very willingly this image of what I wanted to make you see in terms of the \bar{I} in the presence of the object o , all the more so because it is strictly in conformity with what Freud designates when he speaks about the dream, the point of convergence of all the signifiers, in which the dream finally is implicated so much in what he calls himself the unknown, has not recognised that this Unbekannte, a very strange term for Freud to use, is precisely only this point by which I tried to indicate to you what constituted the radical difference of the Freudian unconscious, which it is not that it is constituted, that it is established as unconscious, simply in the dimension of the innocence of the subject with respect to the signifier which organises it, which is articulated in his place. It is that there is in this relationship of the subject to the signifier this essential impasse, this one, and I have just reformulated that there is no other sign of the subject than the sign of his abolition as subject.

You can well imagine that matters do not stop there, because after all if it were only a question of an impasse as it is said, that would not take us very far. The fact is that it is precisely the property of impasses to be fruitful, and this impasse is only of interest in that it shows us what it develops in terms of ramifications which are precisely those in which effectively desire is going to become engaged. Let us try to see this.

(18) This aphanisis, there is a moment to which it is necessary that in your experience, I mean this experience in so far as it is not simply the experience of your analysis, but also the experience of the mental modes in which you are led to think about this experience at the point of the Oedipus complex where it appears in a flash, which is when you are told that in the inverted Oedipus complex, namely at the moment when the subject glimpses the solution to the oedipal conflict in the fact of purely and simply drawing to himself the love of the more powerful one, namely of the father, the subject escapes, we are told, in so far as his narcissism is here threatened, in so far as he receives this love of the father which for him involves castration.

This is self-evident, because of course when one cannot resolve a

problem, one considers it to be comprehensible, this is what ensures that usually it is not all the same as clear as it appears, that the subject links this moment of a possible solution, a solution all the more possible since in part it will be the way that is taken because the introjection of the father under the form of the ego ideal, is indeed something which resembles it. There is a participation of the so-called inverted function of the Oedipus complex in the normal solution, that there is all the same a moment that is highlighted in a series of experiences, of perceptions, especially in the (19) problematic of homosexuality where the subject feels this love of the father as essentially threatening, as involving this threat which we will qualify, for want of being able to give it a more appropriate term, and after all this term is not all that inappropriate, in analysis terms have happily kept enough of their meaning and fullness in terms of their dense, weighty, and concrete character, for this to be when all is said and done what directs us. One can sense, one can pick up that narcissism is involved somewhere, and that this narcissism is involved at this moment of the Oedipus complex.

Above all this will be confirmed for us by the subsequent pathways of the dialectic, when the subject has been drawn along the paths of homosexuality. These are, as you know, much more complex of course than being a pure and simple summary exigency for the presence of the phallus in the object, but fundamentally it is concealed here.

It is not this that I want to get involved in. Only this introduces us to this proposition that to face up to this suspension of desire, at the very origin of the problem of the signifier, the subject is going to have before him more than one trick, if I can put things that way. These tricks are of course essentially concerned first of all with the manipulation of the object, of the o in the formula. This capture of the object in the dialectic of the relationships of the subject and the signifier should not be put at the origin of all the (20) articulations of the relationship that I tried to perform with you these last years, because one sees it everywhere all the time. Is there any need to remind you of this moment in the life of little Hans where he asks himself about every object: does it or does it not have a phallus? It is enough first of all to have a child perceive this essential function in all its forms which can be clearly seen there. In the case of little Hans it is a question of the widdler, of the Wiwimacher. You know at what period and in what connection and at what moment, at the age of two, this question is posed for him in connection with every object, defining a sort of analysis which Freud incidentally indicates as a mode of interpretation of this form.

This of course is not a position which in any way only expresses the presence of the phallus in the dialectic. This gives us no information whatsoever, either about the usage, the end which at one time I tried to make you see, or the stability of the procedure. What I want simply to point out to you, is that all the time we have evidence, that we are not going astray namely

that the terms in question are indeed the following: the subject, and this because of his disappearance, his confrontation with an object, something which from time to time reveals itself as being the essential signifier around which is played out the fate of (21) this whole relationship of subject to object, and now rapidly to evoke in what sense, in the most general sense, there is directed this incidence concerning the object, I mean the small o of our algorithm, from the point of view of what could be called instinctual specificity from the point of view of need.

We already know what happens in an impossible relationship, rendered impossible as one might say to the object by the presence, by the intervention of the signifier, in so far as the subject has to maintain himself there in the presence of the object. It is quite clear that the human object undergoes this sort of volatilisation which is what we call in our concrete practice the possibility of displacement, which does not simply mean the human subject, like all animal subjects, sees his desire being displaced from object to object, but that this very displacement is the point at which there can be maintained the fragile equilibrium of his desire.

After all, what is in question? It is a question I would say of envisaging from a certain point of view the prevention of satisfaction while still continuing to hold onto an object of desire. In a way it is again a mode as one might say of metonymically symbolising satisfaction, and here we are led straight away to the dialectic of the money box and the miser. It is far from being the most complicated one, even though one can scarcely see what is in question. The fact is that it is (22) necessary that desire should subsist on this occasion, by a certain retention of the object as we say, bringing into play the anal metaphor. But it is in so far as this retained object is not itself the object of any other jouissance, that we can see that juridical phenomenology carries the traces of this retention of the support of desire: it is said that one has the enjoyment (jouissance) of a good; what does that mean, if it is not precisely that it is humanly quite conceivable to have a good which one does not enjoy, and that it is someone else who enjoys it? Here the object reveals its function of what one might call a pledge or even indeed a hostage of desire, and if you would like me here to bridge the gap with animal psychology, I will evoke what has been said in terms of ethology, by one of our more exemplary, one of our more graphic brothers. For my part I am very inclined to believe it. I recognised myself, I met myself, in someone who has just published a small book. I was not going to say it to you because this is going to distract you. This booklet has just come out, it is called L'ordre des choses. Luckily it is a small book, written by Jacques Brosset, someone who up to this has been completely unknown, and it is published by Plon.

It is a kind of little natural history. That is how I interpret (23) it for you. A little natural history geared to our time. I mean that:

1. It restores for us what is so subtle and so charming in the writings of Buffon, and which we no longer find in any scientific publication, even though all the same we could try this exercise now that we know much more about the behaviour, about the ethology of animals, than Buffon knew. In specialist journals it is unreadable.
2. What is said in this little book, you will see expressed in what I would call a very very remarkable style. You will read especially something in the middle which is called: "parallel lives", the life of the cicada, the life of the ant.

I thought about this little book, because the author has this in common with me that for him the question of mammals has been resolved. Apart from man, who is an essentially problematical mammal, you have only to see the role that the mammae play in our imagination, among mammals there is apart from man only one really serious mammal, and this is the hippopotamus. Every one agrees on this, if they are sensitive at all. The poet T.S. Eliot who has really bad metaphysical ideas, but who is all the same a great poet, at a first attempt symbolised the Church militant by the hippopotamus. We will come back to this later.

(24) Let us return to the hippopotamus. What does this hippopotamus do? The difficulties of his existence are underlined for us. They are great, it seems, and one of the essential things, is that he protects the domain of his pasturage, because it is necessary all the same that in the long run he should have some resources in reserve. This is an essential point: therefore he maps out what one can call his territory delimiting it by a series of relays, of points which should sufficiently mark for those who ought to recognise it, namely his fellows, that this is his. This is to show you that I know very well that there are the beginnings of symbolic activity in animals. As you see, in the mammal it is a very specially excremental symbolism.

If in short the hippopotamus is found to protect his pasturage with his excrement, we find that the progress realised by man, and in fact this would really not have arisen, if we did not have this particular mediation of language, which comes from we know not where, but it is what causes to intervene here the essential complication, namely that it has led us to this problematic relationship with the object, that for man on his part it is not his pasturage that he protects with shit; therefore it is his shit that he protects as a pledge of the essential pasturage, (25) of the pasturage which is essentially to be determined, and this is the dialectic of what is called anal symbolism, of this new revelation of the chymical wedding, if I can express myself thus, of man with his object which is one of the dimensions revealed to us by Freudian experience which was absolutely unsuspected up to then.

After all I simply wanted to indicate to you here the direction in which, and why there appears something in short which is the

same question that in his polemic with Proudhon, Marx, without resolving it, and of which we are able all the same to give a little account (époque) by way of explanation, how it happens that human objects pass from having a use value to an exchange value. You should read this piece of Marx, because it is a good mental education. It is called Philosophie de la misère, misère de la philosophie. It addressed to Proudhon, and the several pages during which he mocks poor Proudhon, for having decreed that this passage from one to the other is brought about by a sort of pure decree of cooperators and it is a question of knowing why they have become cooperators and with what purpose in view. The way in which Marx savages him for a good twenty or thirty pages, without taking the rest of the book into account, is something that is healthy and educative for the mind.

(26) Here therefore everything which happens to the object, of course, and the meaning of this volatilisation, of this valorisation which is also a dévalorisation of the object, I mean the extraction of the object from the field of pure and simple need, this is something which after all is only a reminder of the essential phenomenology, of the phenomenology of the good properly speaking, and picture this in every sense of the word good.

But let us leave this for the moment today simply in its initial stages. Let us simply say that from the moment that what is involved as object is the other, is others, is especially the sexual partner, this of course brings in its train a certain number of consequences. They are all the more tangible when we were dealing above with the social plane. It is quite certain here that what is in question is at the very basis of the social contract, in so far as it has to take into account the elementary structures of thinking, in so far as the feminine partner in a form which is not all that obvious and which involves an exchange, is here, as Lévi-Strauss has shown us, an object of exchange. This exchange is not self-evident. In fact we could say that as an object of exchange, the woman is as one might say, a very bad bargain for those who carry out the operation, because all of this also engages us in what one might call this real (27) mobilisation, of what is called the loan, the hiring of the services of the phallus. We are naturally putting ourselves here in the perspective of social utilitarianism, and this as you know, is not without its difficulties. And it is even from these that I started above.

That in this the woman undergoes a very disturbing transformation from the moment that she is included in this dialectic, namely as a socialised object, this is something about which it is very amusing to see how Freud can talk in the innocence of his youth, on page 192-193 of Vol. I of Jones. The way in which, in connection with the talk about the emancipation of women in Mill, whom as you know Freud translated at one time, as the request of Gomperz in which Mill discusses the theme of emancipation and concerning which in a letter to his fiancée herself he puts forward to her what a woman, a good woman, is for. This letter is highly entertaining, when one thinks that he was at the height

of his passion, and it ends up with the fact that a woman should stay in her place and perform all the services which are no different from the famous: "Kinder, Kirche, Kuche".

I think of this time when he eventually seemed to be willing to make himself the of his wife. And the text ends on a passage which I should read for you in English, because this text has never been published in any other language:

"Law and custom have much to give women that has been withheld from them, but the position of women will surely be what it is: In youth an adored darling" - an adorable little ornament, a heavenly piece of porcelain - "and in mature years a loved wife" (Jones 1[^] 193)

Here is something which is not at all without interest for us and which shows us the experience from which Freud began, and also helps us to see how far he had to go.

The other possible aspect, it is not for nothing that we have entered here into the social dialectic, the fact is that in face of this problematical position, there is another solution for the subject. The other solution for the subject, we have it also from Freud: it is identification, identification with what? Identification with the father, identification with the father why? I already pointed it out to you: in so far as he is the one who in some way is perceived as being the one who has succeeded in really overcoming this impossible bind, namely the one who is thought to have really castrated the mother, I would say who is thought, because of course he is thought, and because moreover there is here something which essentially presents itself. This is where the problematic of the father lies, (29) and perhaps if I come back to insist so much on it today, it is because it is along the lines of something that was discussed last night as our scientific meeting, namely precisely the function of the father, the lordship of the father, the imaginary function of the father in certain spheres of culture.

It is certain that there is here a problematic which allows every sort of slippage as a possibility, because what must be seen, is that the solution prepared here is, as one might say, a direct solution: the father is already a type, in the proper sense of the term, a type present no doubt with temporal variations. We would not be so interested in the fact that such variations may not exist, except for the fact that we cannot conceive the thing in this case otherwise than in its relationships with an imaginary function, by denying the relationship of the subject to the father, this identification to the ideal of the father, thanks to which perhaps when all is said and done, we can say that, on average, wedding nights succeed and turn out rather well, even though the statistics have never been done in a strictly rigorous fashion.

This is obviously linked to what is de facto given, but also to the imaginary data, and does nothing to resolve the problematic for us nor indeed of course for our patients and perhaps on this

(30) point we are indistinguishable, it does nothing to resolve for us the problematic of desire. We are going to see in fact that this identification to the image of the father is only a particular case of what we must now tackle as being the most general solution, I mean in the relationships, in this confrontation of *f* with the *o* of the object; the introduction in the most general form in the imaginary function; the support, the solution, the way to a solution which the dimension of narcissism offers to the subject, which means that human eros is engaged in a particular relationship with a particular image, which is nothing other than a particular relationship to his own body, and in which there is going to be produced this exchange, this inversion in which I am going to try to articulate for you the way in which the problem of the confrontation of $\$$ with the *o* appears. N

It is on this point that we will take things up again, because it is already a quarter to two, after the holidays. I will take things up again on the 7th January, because today I was not able to advance things any further. You will see how in connection with this little *o* that we are going finally to have the opportunity of specifying in its essence, in its function, namely the essential nature of the human object in so far as I already introduced it for you at length in the previous seminars, every human object is fundamentally marked by a narcissistic structure, (31) by this profound relationship with narcissistic eros♦

How this human object qua marked by this, is found in the more general structure of the phantasy, to receive normally the most essential of the Ansätzen of the subject, namely neither more nor less than his affect in the presence of desire, this fear, this immanence in which I designated for you above the thing which of its essence maintains the subject at the edge of his desire? The whole nature of phantasy is to transfer it onto the object.

This we will see in studying, in taking up again a certain number of phantasies whose dialectic we have developed up to now, and even if it is only starting from a fundamental one, because it was one of the first to be discovered, from this phantasy: "A child is being beaten", in which you will see the most essential traits of this transference of the affect of the subject, in the presence of his desire, onto his object qua narcissistic. Inversely what becomes the subject, the point at which he structures himself; why he structures himself as ego and ego ideal. This cannot after all be revealed to you, namely be seen by you in its absolutely rigorous structural necessity, except as being the return, the sending back of this delegation that the subject made of his affect, to this object, to that *o*, which we (32) have never yet really spoken about, as being what is returned: I mean how he must himself necessarily pose himself, not as *o*, but as the image of *o*, the image of the other, which is one and the same thing as the ego, this image of the other being marked by this index, by a capital I, by an ego ideal in so far as it is itself heir to a first relationship of the subject, not with his desire, but with the desire of his mother, the ideal taking the place of that which, in the subject, was experienced

as belonging to a desired child.

This necessity, this development, is that by which he comes to be inscribed in a certain tracing, formation of the algorithm which I can already write on the board to introduce it to you for the next time: $I(o) (I) O o (S)$. In a certain relationship with the other, in so far as he is affected by an other, namely of the subject himself, in so far as he is affected by his desire. This we will see the next time.

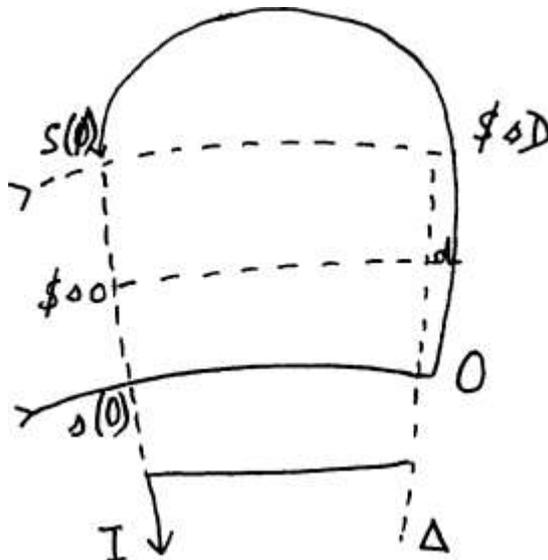
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...This experience confronts us between that which in the subject we must call desire, and the function in the constitution of this desire, in the manifestation of this desire, in the contradictions which during treatments break out between the discourse of the subject and his behaviour. A distinction, which I say is essential, between desire and demand.

If there is something which not just the original data, the Freudian discourse, but precisely all the development of the Freudian discourse holds subsequently, namely the contradictions which are going to appear, it is above all about the problematic character that demand plays in it, because after all everything by which the development of analysis has been directed since Freud has granted more and more importance to what has been given different names and which in the final analysis converges towards a general notion of neurosis, of dependency, namely what has been hidden, what has been veiled behind this formula. It is indeed the accent put by a sort of convergence of the theory and its slippages, and its failures, and also of the practice, namely a certain conception concerning the reduction which is to be obtained by therapy. This indeed is what is hidden behind the notion of neurosis, of dependency.

The fundamental fact of the demand with its imprinting, restraining, oppressing effects on the subject who is there and of whom it is precisely a question of seeing whether with regard to this function which we reveal as being formative, according to the formation of the genesis of the subject, whether we are adopting the correct attitude, I mean the one which in the final analysis is going to be justified. Namely the elucidation on the one hand and the removal at the same time of the symptom. It is in fact clear that if the symptom is not simply something which we should consider as being the legacy of a sort of (2) subtraction, of suspension which is called frustration, if it is not simply a sort of deformation of the subject, however he is envisaged, under the influence of something which is measured out in function of a certain relationship to the real - as I have said it is always to something real that an imaginary frustration is referred - if it is not that, if between what we discover effectively in analysis as its results, its consequences, its effects, indeed its lasting effects, its impressions of frustrations and the symptom there is something else, involving an infinitely more complex dialectic, and which is called desire; if desire is something which can only be grasped and understood

at the most tightly knotted point, not from some impressions left by the real, but at the most subtle point where there is knotted together, for the real man, the imaginary and its symbolic meaning. Which is precisely what I tried to show. And this is why the relationship of desire to phantasy is expressed here in the intermediary field between the two structural lines of every signifying enunciation.



(3) If desire is really here, if it is from here what we can call metaphorical phenomena begin, namely the interference of a repressed signifier on a patent signifier which constitutes the symptom, it is clear that one misses the whole point by not trying to structure, to organise, to situate the place of desire. This we began to do this year by taking a dream which I dwelt on for a long time, a singular dream, a dream which Freud highlighted on two occasions, I mean included secondarily in the Traumdeutung after having given it a particular and very useful place in the article: "The two principles of mental functioning", desire and the reality principle, an article published in 1911. This dream is the one about the apparition of the dead father. We have tried to situate its elements on the double chain whose structural distinction I showed and articulated at length in what can be called the graph of the inscription of the elementary biological subject, of the subject of need, in the defiles of the demand. I set out for you how we should consider this fundamentally twofold articulation in so far as it is never a demand for some thing, in so far as in the background of every specific demand, of every demand for satisfaction, the very fact of language, by symbolising the other - the other as presence and as absence - as being able to be the subject of the gift of love that he gives by his presence, and by his presence alone, I mean in so far as he gives nothing else, namely in so far as precisely what he gives is beyond everything that he can give, that what he gives is precisely this nothing which is everything in the determination of this presence-absence.

We have articulated this dream by referring it in a didactic

(4) fashion to this duplicity of signs, to something which allows us to grasp in the structure of the dream the relationship which is established by this phantasy-production whose structure Freud tried to elucidate throughout the majestic life of the Traumdeutung, and we are trying to see its function, for this son who is mourning for a father who was certainly loved, watched over until the end of his final agony, whom he resurrects in conditions which the dream articulates with an exemplary simplicity: namely that this father appears as he was when he was alive, that he speaks, and that before him the son is mute, dumbstruck, constrained, in the grip of pain - the pain, he says, of thinking that his father had died and that he does not know it. Freud tells us, it must be completed. He had died, in accordance with his wish. What was it that he did not know? That it was in accordance with his wish.

Everything therefore is here, and if we try to enter more closely into the construction, the structure of this dream, we notice the following: that the subject confronts himself with a certain image and under certain conditions. I would say that between what is assumed in the dream by the subject, and this image to which he confronts himself, a distribution, a division is established which is going to show us the essence of the phenomenon.

We have already tried to articulate it, to circumscribe it as I might say, by dividing up on the signifying scale the signifying, characteristic themes. On the upper line, the "he did not know", which is in its essence an essentially subjective reference which goes to the foundation of the structure of the subject. "He did not know", as such, does not concern anything factual. It is something which involves the depths, the dimension of the subject; and we know that here it is ambiguous. Namely that what he did not know, we are going to see, is not solely and purely attributable to the one to whom it is implied, paradoxically, absurdly, in a way which involves contradictory reasoning, and even in a way which is nonsensical for the one who (5) is dead, just as much as it in the subject. And he participates in this ignorance. This something precisely is essential.

Moreover, see how the subject situates himself in what I might call the suspension of the articulation of the dream. The subject himself, as he situates himself, as he assumes himself, knows as one might say, because the other does not know, the subjective position of the other. And here of being in default as one might say. That he is dead, of course, is a statement that after all cannot touch him. Every symbolic expression like this one, of the being dead, makes him subsist, preserves him when all is said and done. It is precisely indeed the paradox of this symbolic position: the fact is that there is no being to being, no affirmation of the being dead which in a certain fashion does not immortalise him. And this indeed is what is in question in the dream. But this subjective position of the being who is in default, this subjective lesser value, is not directed at the fact that he is dead, it is essentially directed

at the fact that he is the one who does not know. This is how the subject situates himself before the other. In addition this sort of protection exercised with respect to the other which means that not only does he not know, but that at the limit I would say that he must not be told that, is something which is always found more or less at the root of every communication between people, what one can and what one cannot let him know. Here is something whose incidence you should always weigh every time you are dealing with an analytic discourse. There was some talk last night about those who could not speak, express themselves, about the obstacles, about the resistances that are (6) properly speaking involved in discourse. This dimension is essential to relate this dream to another dream which is borrowed from the last page of Trotsky's Journal at the end of his stay in France at the beginning of the last war I think. It is a particularly moving dream. It is at the moment when, perhaps for the first time, Trotsky begins to experience in himself the first intimations of some diminution of the vital energy which was so inexhaustible in this man. And he sees appearing in a dream his companion Lenin, who congratulates him on his good health, and on his indomitable character. And the other, in a fashion which takes its value from this ambiguity that there always exists in dialogue, gives him to understand that perhaps this time there is something in him which is not now at the same level that his old companion had always known. But what he thinks about, is how to spare this old companion who emerges in this way in such a significant fashion at a critical, decisive moment of his vital evolution. And wanting to recall something which precisely referred to the moment when even he, Lenin, had slackened in his efforts, he says, to indicate to him the moment when he died: the time when you were very very ill. As if a precise formulation of what was in question would by its very breath, dissipate the shade before whom Trotsky, in his dream at this decisive moment of his existence, maintains himself.

Now then, if on the one hand, in this division between the two forms that are confronted, ignorance is imposed on the other to whom it is imputed, how can we not see that inversely there is something there which is nothing other than the ignorance of the subject himself who does not know. Not just what the signification of his dream is, namely everything that underpins (7) it, in terms of what Freud evokes, namely his unconscious history, the old deadly wishes against his father, but much more that it is the nature of the very pain in which at this moment the subject participates, namely this pain - which in searching for its paths and its origin we have recognised as the pain that was experienced, glimpsed in the sharing of the father's last moments - of existence as such, in so far as it subsists at the limit in this state where nothing more of it can be apprehended, the fact of the inextinguishable character of this very existence, of the fundamental pain which accompanies it when all desire has been effaced from it, when all desire has vanished from it.

It is precisely this pain which the subject assumes, but as being a pain which he also gives an absurd motive to, because he

motivates it uniquely by the ignorance of the other, by something which when all is said and done if one looks very closely at it is no more a motive of what it accompanies as motivation than the emergence, the affect, in a hysterical crisis which is organised apparently from a context into which it is extrapolated, but which in fact is not motivated by it.

This pain, it is precisely by taking it on himself that the subject blinds himself to its proximity, to the fact that in the agony and in the death of his father it is something which threatens himself that he has lived through and from which he now separates himself by this image which is re-evoked, this image which attaches him to this something which separates and which calms man, in this sort of abyss or vertigo which opens up before him every time he is confronted with the final term of his (8) existence. That is to say precisely what he needs to interpose between himself and this existence, namely on this occasion a desire. He does not cite just any support for his desire, just any desire, but the closest and the most urgent, the best one, the one which has dominated him for a long time, the one which has now struck him down. It has to be brought to life imaginarily for a certain time, because in this rivalry with the father, in what is there in terms of a foundation of power in the fact that after all he triumphs, because of the fact that the other does not know, while he does know, here is the slender footbridge thanks to which the subject does not experience himself as being directly invaded, directly overwhelmed, because the gap, the pure and simple confrontation with the anxiety of death which opens up before him, such that we know in fact that the death of the father, every time it occurs, is experienced by the subject as the disappearance - in a cruder language - of this sort of shield, of interposition, of substitution that the father is for the absolute master, namely for death.

One begins to see being outlined here a sort ofwhich is constituted by what? The formula which I am trying to present to you as being the fundamental formula for what constitutes the support, the essential intrasubjective relationship in which every desire must as such be inscribed, is in this simplest form, the one which is inscribed here, this relationship separated out in the quadrilateral relationship, that of Schema L, that of the subject to the big Other in so far as this partially unconscious discourse which comes from the big Other comes to interpose itself in him. The tension $o o'$, that one can still in certain relationships call the tension of the image of o with respect to o' ; according to whether it is a question of the relationship jUo , of the subject to the object, of the relationship of the image of o with respect to the Other', (9) in so far as it structures this relationship. It is precisely the absent (?) which, as being characteristic of the relationship of desire to the relationship of the subject with the imaginary functions, which is expressed in the formula $\epsilon \diamond o$, in this sense that desire as such, and with respect to every possible object for man, poses for him the question of his subjective elision. I mean that in so far as the subject, in the register, in the dimension of the word, in so far as he

inscribes himself there qua demander, to approach this something which is the more elaborated, the more evolved object, that which more or less appropriately the analytic conception presents us as being the object of oblativity - this notion the difficulties of which I have often stressed, it is with this too that we are trying to confront ourselves, that we are trying to formulate in a more rigorous fashion - the subject, to the degree that as desire, namely in the fullness of a human destiny which is the destiny of a speaking subject, in approaching this object finds himself caught up in this sort of impasse which means that he himself can not reach this object, as object, except in some way by finding himself as subject, subject of the word, either in this lesion which leaves him in the darkness of trauma, in what is properly speaking beyond anxiety itself, or by finding himself having to take the place, to substitute himself, to subsume himself under a certain signifier which is found - I am purely and simply articulating it for the moment, I am not justifying it because it is our whole development which must justify it, and the whole of psychoanalytic experience is there to justify it - to be the phallus.

It is from this that by the fact that in every assumption of the mature position, of the position that we call genital, something is produced at the level of the imaginary which is called (10) castration, and has its incidence at the level of the imaginary. Why? Because the phallus, among other things - it is only in this perspective that we can understand the whole almost infinite problematic that the fact gave rise to, and it is impossible to get out of otherwise - the question of the phallic phase for analysts, the contradiction, the Freud-Jones dialogue on this ^subject which is particularly pathetic, this whole sort of impasse into which Jones enters when, rebelling against the oversimple conception which Freud constructed of the phallic function as being the univocal term around which there pivots the whole concrete, historical development of sexuality in man and in woman, he highlights what he calls the defensive functions that are linked to this image of the phallus. When all is said and done both one and the other are saying the same thing, they approach it from different points of view. They cannot meet one another undoubtedly because of the lack of this central, fundamental notion, which requires that we should conceive the phallus as being, on this occasion, taken away, withdrawn as one might say, from the imaginary community, from the diversity, from the multiplicity of images that corporal functions come to assume, and isolated in the face of all the others in this privileged function which makes of it the signifier of the subject.

Here let us clarify still more our position and let us say the following: that in short on the two planes, which are the first immediate, apparent, spontaneous plane which is the appeal, which is the "Help!", which is "Food!", which is a cry when all is said and done, which is in any case something where, in the most complete fashion, the subject is for a moment identical with this need, all the same must articulate himself at the soliciting (11) level of the demand, which it is found in the first

relationship, in the experience between the child and the mother, a function of what is articulated and which will be of course more and more articulated in the relationship of the child to the mother, with everything which will be substituted for it from the totality of the society which speaks his own tongue. Between this level and the votive level, namely where the subject, throughout the course of his life, has to rediscover himself, namely has to discover what has escaped him because being beyond, outside everything, that the form of language more and more, and in the measure that it develops, allows to pass, allows to be filtered, rejects, represses that which at first tended to be expressed, namely from his need. This articulation at the second degree is that which as a being precisely shaped, transformed by his word, namely this attempt, this effort to pass beyond this transformation itself, this is what we are doing in analysis, and that is why one can say that just as everything that resides, of what must be articulated, at the soliciting level is there at 0, as a predetermined account, pre-existing the experience of the subject, as being that which in the other is open to the operations of language, to the first signifying homeland that the subject experiences in so far as he learns to speak.

What are we doing in analysis? What do we encounter, what do we recognise when we say that the subject is at the oral stage, the anal stage, etc.,... nothing other than what is expressed in this mature form whose complete element must not be forgotten: namely that it is the subject qua marked by the word and in a certain relationship with his demand; it is literally this that in one or other interpretation in which we make him sense the oral, anal or other structuring of his demand we do not simply make him (12) recognise the anal character of the demand, we confront the subject with this anal or oral character, we are not interested simply in something which is immanent in what we articulate as being the demand of the subject, we confront the subject with this structure of his demand. And it is here precisely that the accentuation of our interpretation should balance, oscillate, vacillate. Because accentuated in a certain way we teach him to recognise something which as one might say, is at this superior, votive level, the level of what he wants, of what he wishes, in so far as they are unconscious. We teach him as one might say to speak, to recognise himself in what corresponds to at this level. But for all that we do not give him the answers. By maintaining interpretation entirely in this register of the recognition of the hidden unconscious signifying supports in his demand, we are doing nothing other if we forget what is in question, namely to confront the subject with his demand, we do not perceive that what we produce is precisely the collapse, the effacing of the function of the subject as such in the revelation of this unconscious vocabulary. We solicit the subject to efface himself and to disappear. And this is well and truly what happens in many cases. That is to say that in a certain apprenticeship that one can undergo in the analysis of the unconscious, in a certain fashion what disappears, what flees, what is more and more reduced is nothing other than this exigency which is that of the subject to manifest himself in his being

beyond all of this; by bringing him back incessantly to the level of the demand one ends up indeed in some way - and this is what is called in a certain technique of the analysis of resistances - (13) by purely and simply reducing what is his desire.

Now if it is simple and easy to see that in the relationship of the subject to the other, the response is made retroactively and somewhere other than here: something turns back on the subject to confirm him in the sense of the demand, to identify it on occasion to his own demand, it is also clear at the level at which the subject tries to situate himself, to recognise himself precisely in what he is beyond this demand that there is a place for the response; that this place for the response schematised there by S signifier of 0 barred, namely the reminder that the other is himself also marked by the signifier, that the other is himself also abolished in a certain fashion in the discourse, this is only to indicate a theoretical point and we will see later the form it must take. This form is essentially, precisely the recognition of what is castrated in everything which, because it is a living being, attempts to approach the living being as it is evoked by language. And of course it is not at all this level that we can at first reply.

But on the contrary, to respect, to aim at, to explore, to use what is already expressed beyond this locus of the response in the subject, and which is represented by the situation of the imaginary in which he himself establishes himself, maintains himself, suspends himself as if in a sort of position which undoubtedly participates from certain points of view in the artifices of defence, this indeed is what constitutes the ambiguity of so many manifestations of desire, of perverse desire for example.

It is the degree that something is expressed here that is the most essential point in which the being of the subject attempts to affirm itself. And this is all the more important to consider because it is precisely there, at this very locus that there should be produced what we so easily call the completed (14) object, genital maturation; in other words everything that will constitute, as Mr. Jones biblically expresses it somewhere, the relationships of man and woman, will find itself, because man is a speaking subject, marked by the structural difficulties which are those expressed in the relationship of the \$ with the o.

Why? Because precisely if one can say that up to a certain moment, a certain state, a certain time in development, the vocabulary, the code of demand can pass through a certain number of relationships, which involve an interchangeable object, namely food for the oral relationship, excrement for the anal relationship - to limit ourselves for the moment to these two when it is a question of the genital relationship it is quite evident that it is only by a kind of imprint, of prolongation, of this signifying fragmentation of the subject in the relationship in the demand that something can appear to us, and appears to us in effect, but in a morbid guise, in the guise of all these

symptomatic incidences; namely the phallus. For a very good and simple reason, that the phallus is well and truly not this interchangeable object, that it only becomes it by its passage to the rank of signifier, and that everything that is involved in a complete genital maturation reposes on the fact that everything that, in the subject, should present itself as being here the completion of his desire is indeed to put matters clearly, something which cannot be demanded.

And the essence of neurosis, and what we have to deal with, consists precisely in the fact that what cannot be demanded on this level is precisely what the neurotic demands. Or the (15) neurotic phenomenon, namely what appears in a more or less sporadic fashion in the evolution of all the subjects who participate in the structure of neurosis, consists precisely - one always discovers this structure - in the fact that what is of the order of desire is inscribed, is formulated, in the register of demand.

In the course of a re-reading of Mr. Jones that I was carrying out recently, I took up again everything that he wrote about; what he brings forward at every moment from his very subtle, very direct experience is very striking.

"I could relate cases of a number of male patients whose failure to achieve manhood - in relation to either men or women - was strictly to be correlated with their attitude of needing first to acquire something from women, something which of course they never actually could acquire." "Why?", asks Mr. Jones. And when he says why in his article and in its context it is a real why, he does not know why, but he notes it, he punctuates it as a point on the horizon, an opening, a perspective, a point at which guide-rails are lacking. "Why should imperfect access to the nipple give a boy the sense of imperfect possession of his own penis? I am quite convinced that the two things are intimately related, although the logical connection between them is certainly not obvious." (The phallic phase, 580) In any case not obvious to him.

At every moment we find these details in the most graphic phenomenology. I mean the necessary sequences through which a (16) subject slips, in order to arrive at the full activity of his desire, the preliminaries which are necessary for him. We can reconstitute it, rediscover what I will call the labyrinthic pathways on which are marked the essential fact of the position that the subject has taken in this reference, in this relationship which is structural for him, between desire and demand. And if the maintaining of the incestuous position in the unconscious is something which has a meaning, and which effectively has consequences, which are destructive in different ways of the manifestations of desire, of the accomplishment of the desire of the subject, it is precisely for no other reason than the following: it is that what the so-called incestuous position preserves somewhere in the unconscious, is precisely this position of demand.

The subject at a moment, it is said, and this is how Mr. Jones expresses it, has to choose between his incestuous object and his sex. If he wants to preserve one he must renounce the other. I would say that what he has to choose between and what he has to choose at this initial moment, is between his demand and his desire.

Let us now take up, after these general indications, the path into which I want to introduce you to show you the common measure there is in this structuring of desire, and how effectively it finds itself implicated. The imaginary elements, in so far as they they must be inflected, they must be taken up in the necessary interplay of the signifying game, in so far as this interplay is determined by the double structure of the votive and the volitional.

Let us take the most banal, the most common phantasy, the one which Freud himself studied, to which he accorded a particular attention, the phantasy: "A child is being beaten". Let us take it up again now from the perspective that we are approaching in (17) order to try to grasp how there can be formulated the necessity of the phantasy qua support for desire.

Freud, speaking about these phantasies as he had observed them in a certain number of subjects at the time, a majority of them being women, tells us that the first phase of the Schlagfantasie is restored, in so far as it comes to be re-evoked either in phantasies, or in the memories of the subject, by the following phrase: Per Vater schlaqt das Kind, and that the child who is beaten on this occasion is, with regard to the subject the following: "The father is beating the child whom I hate".

Here then we are taken by Freud to the initial point that is at the very heart of something which is situated in the most quality of love and of hate, the one which is directed at the other in his being. And in so far as this being on this occasion is subjected to the greatest fall from grace, in his symbolic valorisation by violence, by the paternal whim. The injury here, if it is called narcissistic is something which, in short, is total. It is directed in the hated subject, at what is demanded, beyond every demand. It is directed at the fact that he should be absolutely frustrated, deprived of love. The character of a subjective fall from grace which is linked for the child to his encounter with the first corporal punishment leaves different traces according to the diverse ways it is repeated. And anyone can observe in our own day, when great care is shown to children, that if it happens that a child who has never been beaten, becomes the object of some punishment, even if it is justified, at least relatively late in his life, one can hardly (18) imagine the really shattering consequences that this experience has for the child at least at that moment.

In any case, we can consider as given that the primitive experience is indeed what is in question, as Freud expresses it: "Profound transformations have taken place between this first phase and the next." In fact Freud expresses this second phase

for us as follows: "The person beating remains the same (that is, the father); but the child who is beaten has been changed into another one and is now invariably the child producing the phantasy. The phantasy is accompanied by a high degree of pleasure, and has now acquired a significant content, with the origin of which we shall be concerned later", and with good reason.

"Now, therefore the wording runs: I am being beaten by my father." But Freud adds in connection with this phase, that it is "the most important and the most momentous of all. But we may say of it in a certain sense that it never had a real existence. It is never remembered, it has never succeeded in becoming conscious. It is a construction of analysis, but it is no less a necessity on that account."

I believe that we do not sufficiently weigh the consequences of such an affirmation by Freud. When all is said and done, because we do not encounter this most significant phase, it is all the same very important to see that the phase in question, because it culminates in a third phase, it is necessary that we should conceive of this second phase as and sought for by the subject. And of course this something which is sought, is of the greatest interest to us because it is nothing other than the formula for primordial masochism, namely precisely (19) this moment that the subject is going to seek most closely her own realisation as a subject in the signifying dialectic.

Something essential, as Freud quite correctly says, has happened between the first and the second phase, namely other than this something in which she saw the other being cast down from his dignity as a subject set up as a little rival. Something has opened up in her which makes her perceive that it is in this very possibility of subjective cancellation that there resides her whole being qua existing being; and it is there, in having the closest brush with this abolition, that she measures the very dimension in which she subsists as a being subject to willing, a being who can express a wish.

What does the whole phenomenology of masochism show us, the material that we must all the same go looking for in masochistic literature whether we like it or not, whether it is pornographic or not? Let us take a famous novel, or a recent novel put out by a semi-clandestine publisher. What after all is the essence of the masochistic phantasy? It is the representation by the subject of something, of a slope, of a series of imagined experiences, whose bank, whose edge essentially consists in the fact that at the limit she is purely and simply treated as a thing, as something which at the limit is haggled over, is sold, is mistreated, is cancelled out as regards every kind of properly speaking votive possibility of grasping herself autonomously. She is treated like a phantasy, like a dog we could say, and not just any dog: a dog who is mistreated, precisely like an already mistreated dog.

(20) This is the point, the pivotal point, the foundation of the

supposed transformation in the subject who seeks to find where this point of oscillation, this point of equilibrium, this product of this barred S is, which is what he has to enter into if he enters, if once having entered into the dialectic of the word he must somewhere formulate himself as subject. But when all is said and done the neurotic subject is like Picasso, he does not search, he finds. Because this is how Picasso once expressed himself. A really splendid formula. And in fact there is a type of person who searches, and there is a type who finds. Believe me, neurotics, namely everything that is spontaneously produced from this embrace between man and his word, find. And I would point out that trouver comes from the Latin tropus, very precisely from what I speak about incessantly, the difficulties of rhetoric. It is very curious that the word which in the Romance languages designates trouver, contrary to what occurs in the Germanic languages where another root is used, is borrowed from the language of rhetoric.

Let us pause for an instant at this third moment of the point where the subject has "found". This we have immediately. It is perhaps worthwhile dwelling on it. In the - phantasy: "A child is being beaten", what do we have? It is "One" who beats. It is quite clear, and Freud insists on it. There is nothing to be done about it, she is asked: But who is beating? It is somebody or other. The subject is really evasive. It is only after a certain interpretative elaboration, when one has rediscovered the first phase that one can rediscover a certain paternal figure or image beneath this form, the form in which the subject has found her phantasy, in so far as the phantasy serves as a support for (21) her desire, for her masturbatory performance. At that very moment the subject is perfectly neutralised. It is One. And what is beaten so much, it is no less difficult to grasp, is multiple. [German quotation] Several children, boys when it is a question of the girl, but not necessarily with an obligatory relationship between the sex of the child who is phantasised and the sex of the phantasised image.

The greatest variations, the greatest uncertainties also reign around this theme in which we know well that, from whatever angle it may be, o or o', whether it is i(o) or o, the child participates up to a certain point, because it is she who constructs the phantasy. But in fact the child never situates herself in a precise fashion, in an univocal fashion, in a fashion which is not precisely oscillating indefinitely.

But what we would like to put the accent on here, is something very close to what I called above the distribution between the intrasubjective elements of the dream. On the one hand in the sadistic phantasy, this one here, and in the phantasy that one can observe in their almost complete development.

I will ask where the accentuated affect is? The accentuated affect, just as in the dream it was referred to the dreaming subject, this form of pain is undoubtedly a sadistic phantasy, refers to the phantasised image, but of the partner. What is in

suspense in the sadistic phantasy - and the sadistic phantasy, provided it is a little conscious and refined, is often very well able to dwell on it - is the expectation of the partner. It is the partner, not so much in so far as he is beaten, in so far as he is going to be, or that he does not even know how he is going to be. This extraordinary element to which I will return in (22) connection with the phenomenology of anxiety, and in connection with which I will already indicate to you this distinction which is in Freud's text, but to which naturally no one has ever paid the least attention in connection with anxiety, between the nuances which separate the pure and simple loss of the subject in the night of subjective indétermination, and this something which is quite different and which is already the warning, the arousal as one might say of the subject before the danger, and which as such is articulated by Freud in Inhibitions symptoms and anxiety, where Freud introduces a still more astonishing distinction, because it is so phenomenologically subtle, that it is not easy to translate it into French, between abgewarten (?) which I will try to translate by undergo (subir) to be able to do nothing except to accept it, and vorhergesehen (?) which is to expect it. (tr: GW xiv 199; SE 2J) 166)

It is in this register, in this range that there is situated the accentuated affect in the sadistic phantasy, and in so far as it is attached to the other, to the partner, to the one who is face to face with us, little o on this occasion.

After all where is this subject who, on this occasion, is the prey to something which he lacks precisely to know where he is? It would be easy to say that he is between the two. I will go further, I will say that in the final analysis the subject is to such a degree, really between the two, that if there is one thing here to which he is identical, or that he illustrates in an exemplary fashion, it is the role of that with which one strikes, it is the role of the instrument. It is to the instrument that he is here, in the last analysis, identical, because here the instrument reveals to us, and always to our stupefaction - and (23) always with more reason to our great astonishment, except that we do not wish to see it - that it intervenes very frequently as the essential character in what we are trying to articulate as the imaginary structure of desire.

And this indeed is what is the most paradoxical, the most full of warning for us. It is the fact that in short it is under this signifier, here completely unveiled in its nature as signifier, that the subject manages to abolish himself in so far as he grasps himself on this occasion in his essential being. If it is true that with Spinoza we may say that this essential being is his desire.

And in effect it is to this same crossroads that we are led every time that the problematic of sexuality is posed for us. If the pivotal point from which we began two years ago, which was precisely that of the phallic phase in the woman, is constituted by this relay station to which Jones always comes back in the course of his discussion, in order to begin again from it to

elaborate it, to really it.

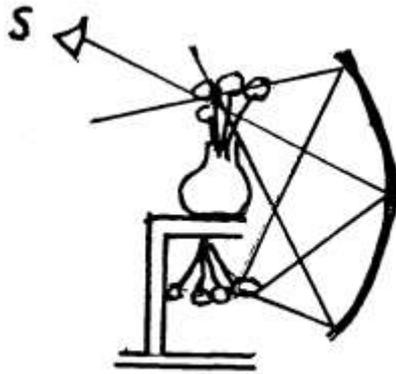
Jones' text on this subject has the value of being an analytical elaboration. The central point is the relationship between the hatred for the mother and the desire for the phallus. It is from this that Freud began. It is around this that he sees beginning the really fundamental, genetic character of the exigency for the phallus at the emergence from the Oedipus complex for the boy, at the entry into the Oedipus complex for the woman. This is the connecting point. Hatred for the mother, desire for the phallus. Which is the proper meaning of this Penisneid.

Now Jones, quite correctly, underlines the ambiguities which are met every time we make use of it. Whether it is a desire to have (24) a penis with respect to an other, namely a rivalry, it is all the same necessary that it should present itself in an ambiguous way which shows us that it is beyond that its meaning must be sought. The desire for the phallus, means desire mediated by the mediating phallus. An essential role that the phallus plays in the materialisation of desire.

This leads us to pose, to introduce what we are going to have to develop subsequently in our analysis of the construction of phantasy, at a crossroads which is the following: namely that the problem when all is said and done is to know how there is going to be sustained this relationship of the signifier phallus in the imaginary experience which is her's, in so far as it is profoundly structured by the narcissistic forms which organise her relationships with her counterpart as such. It is between S as speaking subject, little o, namely this other which the subject has in herself. Little o, it is to this then that we have identified her today. It is the imaginary other, it is what the subject has in herself as "drive", in the sense that the word drive is put in inverted commas, where it is not yet the developed drive, caught up in the signifying dialectic, where it is the drive in its primitive character where the drive presents one or other manifestation of need in the subject.

An image of the other, namely that in which, through the mediation of the specular reflection of the subject in situating her needs, is at the horizon something different, namely what I called at the beginning the first identification to the other, in the radical sense, the identification to the insignia of the other, namely the signifier of capital I over o. (?)

(25) I am going to give a schema which those who followed the first year of my seminar will recognise. We have spoken about narcissism. I gave the schema of the parabolical mirror thanks to which one can make appear on a platform, in a vase, the image of a hidden flower, lit up either from underneath, or from the plate, and which thanks to the property of spherical rays comes to be projected, to be outlined here as a real image. I mean to produce for an instant the illusion that there is in the vase precisely this flower.



It may appear mysterious to see that one can imagine that it is necessary here to have a small screen to receive this image in space. This is not necessary at all. I pointed out that this illusion, namely the sight of the setting up in the air of this real image, can only be perceived from a certain spatial field which is precisely determined by the diameter of the spherical mirror,, mapped out with respect to the centre of the spherical mirror. Namely that if the mirror is narrow, it is necessary of course to place oneself in the field where the rays which are reflected from the mirror have recrossed its centre, and consequently in a certain expansion of a zone in space, to see the image.

The trick of my little explanation at the time was the following: it was to say, if anyone wants to see this image being produced, phantastically, inside the pot, or a bit to one side, it does not matter, to see it being produced somewhere in the space where (26) there is already a real object, and if this observer is there, he can make use of the mirror. If he is in a symmetrical position with respect to the mirror, the virtual position of the one who is in front of the mirror will be, in this tilting of the mirror, to come to situate himself within the cone of visibility of the image which is to be produced here.

That means that he will see the image of the flower precisely in this mirror at the symmetrical point. In other words what is produced, if the luminous ray which is reflected towards the observer is strictly symmetrical with the visual reflection, of what is happening on the other side, it is because the subject virtually will have taken the place of what is on the other side of the mirror that he will see in this mirror the vase - which is to be expected because it is there - and on the other hand the real image, as it is produced at the place where he cannot see it.

The relationship, the interplay between the different imaginary elements and the elements of symbolic identification of the subject can be illustrated in a certain fashion in this optical apparatus, in a fashion that I do not think is untraditional because Freud formulated it somewhere in the Traumdeutung. He gives somewhere the schema of successive lenses in which there is refracted the progressive passage of the unconscious, of the preconscious. He was looking at analogous reference points, optical ones he says precisely.

It effectively represents this something which, in the phantasy.

tries to rejoin its place in the symbolic. This consequently makes of S something other than an eye. It is only a metaphor. (27) If it designates that it wishes to rejoin its place in the symbolic, it is in a specular fashion, namely with respect to the other who, here, is the capital O. This mirror is only a symbolic mirror, it is not a question of the mirror in front of which the little child busies himself.

This means that in a certain reflection which is constructed with the help of words in the first learning of language the subject learns to regulate somewhere, at the right distance, the insignia with which he identifies himself, namely something which is inclined towards the other side, which corresponds to him in these first identifications of the ego. And that it is within this, in so far as there is already something at once preformed, open to fragmentation, but which only enters into this game of fragmentation, and in so far as the symbolism exists which opens up its field for him, it is within this that there is going to be produced this imaginary relationship in which the subject will find himself caught, and which, I pointed out, means that in the erotic relationship to the other, however complete, however advanced one supposes it to be, there will always be a point of reduction which you can grasp as extrapolations of the early erotic outline between the subjects. The fact is that there is a transformation of this first relationship of o to o' the image of o, of this fundamentally specular relationship which regulates the relationships of the subject to the other. There is a transformation of that, and a distribution between on the one hand the group of the fragmented elements of the body, those that we have to deal with in so far as we are a marionette and in so far as our partner is a marionette. But the marionette is only missing one thing, the phallus. The phallus is occupied elsewhere, in the signifying function.

(28) This is why there is always, I am not saying at the heart of which are always opposed, but which can be rediscovered at any moment of the interpretative of the situation. The subject, in so far as he identifies himself with the phallus in face of the other, fragments as himself in the presence of something which is the phallus. And to dot the i's I would say that between man and woman, I would ask you to dwell on the fact that in the most loving relationship between a man and a woman, to the very degree that desire takes desire finds itself on the part of the man beyond the loving relationship. I mean that in so far as the woman symbolises the phallus, that man finds in her the complement of his being. It is what I might call the ideal form.

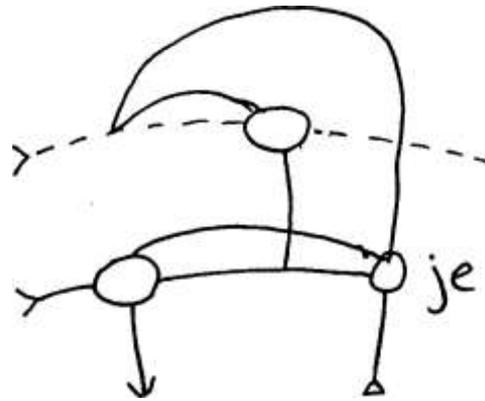
It is precisely in the measure that man, in love, is really alienated, that this phallus, the object of his desire, which nevertheless reduces the woman in the erotic act to being an imaginary object, that this form of desire will be realised.

And this indeed is why there is maintained, at the very heart of the most profound, the most intimate loving relationship, this duplicity of the object on which I have so often insisted in

connection with the famous genital relationship. I come back to the idea that precisely if the loving relationship is complete here, it is to the degree that the other will give what he does not have, which is the very definition of love.

On the other hand the relationship of the woman to the man, which everyone is happy to believe to be much more monogamous, is (29) something which presents no less ambiguity, except that what the woman finds in the man, is the real phallus, and therefore as always her desire finds its satisfaction there. Effectively she finds herself in the right position and sees a relationship of satisfying jouissance.

But precisely it is in the measure that the satisfaction of desire appears in the real order that what the woman effectively loves, and not desires, is this being who is beyond the encounter with desire and who is precisely the other, namely the man in so far as he is deprived of the phallus, in so far precisely because of his nature as a completed being, a speaking being, he is castrated.



Seminar 8: 14 January 1959

Because we have spoken a lot on the last occasions about desire, we are going to begin to tackle the question of interpretation. The graph should be of some use to us.

I want to introduce what I am going to say today about an example, namely about the interpretation of a dream, by some remarks on what results from the indications that Freud gives us precisely about the interpretation of dreams.

Here in fact is more or less the meaning of the remark of Freud that I am now concerned with. It is in chapter VI where he is interested in intellectual feelings about the dream. For example while the subject is reporting a dream, he has the feeling that there is something missing in it that he has forgotten, or that something is ambiguous, doubtful, uncertain. In all these cases, Freud tells us, what is affirmed by the subject in connection with the dream, in terms of its uncertainty, its doubtfulness, its ambiguity: namely it is either this or that, I no longer remember, I can no longer say, even its degree of reality, namely the degree of reality with which it was seen, whether it was something which is affirmed in the dream with such a degree of reality that the subject notices it, or on the contrary that it was a..... dream, all of this Freud tells us, in all these cases, should be taken as enunciating what Freud calls one of the latent thoughts of the dream.

What in short is said by the subject in a marginal note about the text of the dream, namely all the accents about tonality, that which in music is accompanied by annotations like allegro, crescendo, decrescendo, all of this forms part of the text of the dream.

I do not think that for the greater number of you whom I suppose to have already got to know the Traumdeutung, and the technique, (2) that this is new. This is something really fundamental as regards the interpretation of a dream. Therefore I am only reminding you of it because I do not have the time to give the examples which are in Freud, and I refer you to the text of the Traumdeutung♦ You will see the use that Freud makes of this essential reminder.

He interprets the dream by integrating the feeling of doubt for example that there is in this dream at the moment that the

subject recounts it, as one of the elements of the dream without which the dream could not be interpreted.

We begin then from the Freudian interpretation, and we ask the question of what this involves by way of implications. It is not sufficient to accept this fact, or this rule of conduct, as having to be religiously accepted as many of Freud's disciples did, without trying to see any further, putting their trust in the unconscious in some way. What does it imply that Freud should tell us: it is not only the tension of your unconscious (sic) that is there at the moment that your memory of the dream disappears, or on the contrary is placed under a certain rubric given a certain accent?

He says: this forms part of the latent thoughts of the dream itself. It is here therefore that what we have agreed to call the graph allows us to specify, to articulate in a more evident, a more certain fashion what is in question when Freud gives us a rule of conduct like this for the interpretation of dreams.

Here in effect is what we can say. What do we do when we (3) communicate a dream, whether this is done inside or outside analysis? (We did not have to wait for analysis in order to be able to give to the enunciating of a dream a formula which specifies it among the totality of possible enunciations as having a certain structure with regard to the subject). Within what we can put forward in a discourse as an enunciation of events we can legitimately distinguish the following that among the enunciations concerning events, there are some which have a value that is altogether worthy of being distinguished with regard to the signifying register. They are enunciations that we can put under the general rubric of belonging to indirect discourse; they are the enunciations that concern the enunciations of other subjects; they involve the reporting of the signifying articulations of someone else. And many things are introduced because of this, including other enunciations, namely hearsay, I was told, someone or other testified that this or that has happened, which is the form, one of the most fundamental forms of the universal discourse, most of the things that we ourselves can talk about being part of what we have gathered from the tradition of others. Let us say therefore a pure and simple, factual, report of an enunciation for which we assume responsibility; and on the other hand this involving in a latent fashion the dimension of enunciating which is not necessarily highlighted, but which is highlighted once it is a question of reporting the enunciation of someone else. It could also be something of our own that we are dealing with. We can say that we have said such a thing, that we have given evidence before someone else, and we ourselves can even enunciate that we have produced an enunciation which is completely false. We can testify that we have lied.

(4) One of the possibilities is the one which retains our attention for the moment. What are we doing in enunciating a dream? We are doing something which is not unique in its class, at least in the way that we are now going to have to define it. Because in a way it is interesting to underline what is the

spontaneous attitude one has vis-a-vis a dream, before we get into disputes between experts - namely the dream has no meaning, it is a product of the decomposition of psychical activity, which is the so-called scientific position which was held during a fairly short period of history. (Freud himself pointed out that he was only rejoining tradition) . What we have put forward just now is already something considerable, namely that tradition never failed at least to pose concerning the dream, a question mark as regards its signification.

In other words, what we are enunciating in producing the enunciation of the dream, is something to which is given, in the very form in which we produce it from the moment that we recount our dream to someone else, this question mark which is not just any question mark, which presupposes that there is something beneath this dream, of which the dream is the signifier. I mean, we can write this in our formalisation, that it is a matter of enunciating a which itself has an index of enunciating, which is itself supposed to take on a value, which is not of course factual, an event.

(5) We must add a supplementary accent to it in order to recount it in a fashion and in a dimension which is purely descriptive. The attitude which remains spontaneous, the traditional and how ambiguous attitude of the little child who begins to tell you his dreams, who tells you, last night I dreamt. If one observes things, it is as if, at a certain moment, the child discovered the possibility of expressing these things, and to such a degree that very frequently one cannot really know, at the age that there begins this confiding activity of the child concerning his dreams, whether after all everything that he tells you is really something that he dreamt, or whether it is something that he brings to you because he knows that one dreams and that one can talk about dreams.

These dreams of the child have the character of bordering on confabulation, as you can see from your contact with a child. But precisely, if the child produces it like this, and tells it is this way, it is with this character of this little index e of enunciating, $E(e)$, something beyond. With this precisely he plays with you a game of questioning, of fascination. And in fact, the formula for every kind of reporting of a dream, whether it is within or outside analysis being the following, $E(e^{\wedge})$, which we will say is the general form of something which, therefore, is not particular to the dream, is that of the riddle.

Starting from there, what is signified by what Freud means? Let us look at it on our little graph which is proposed on this occasion as following, namely that if we suppose that the (6) production of the dream..... To see how we are going to make use of this graph to project onto it the different elements of this formalisation. There can be several ways. The interest of the graph from the structural point of view, is that it is a structure which allows us to map out the relationship of the subject with the signifier, to the degree that necessarily, once the subject is caught up in the signifier - and it is essential

that he should be caught up in it - this is what defines him, the relationship of the individual with the signifier. A structure and a network are imposed at that moment which always remain in some way fundamental.

Let us try here to see how we can distribute the different functions involved in the enunciating of the dream on the aforesaid graph in this case. What is in question, the pivotal point, what I would call the total enunciation, the dream in this fact that as a spontaneous creation it presents itself as something which in its first appearance has a character of relative totality, it is made up of a certain block. One says: "I had a dream", and one distinguishes it from the other dream which followed and which is not the same. It has the character of this discourse, it is reflected in so far as nothing causes there to appear in it, at the moment we are having it, this fragmentation, this decomposition of the signifier about which we have all sorts of retroactive indices; that this fragmentation has its incidence in the function of every discourse.

But discourse, in so far as the subject maintains himself in it, suspends our choice at every instant, when we are delivering a discourse. If this were not the case, our way of communicating would be altogether more arduous.

(7) This dream is presented to us as a whole. It is this enunciation which is produced, as I might say, at the lower level of the graph. It is a signifying chain which presents itself in a form which is all the more global because it is closed, because it presents itself precisely in the usual form of language, because it is something about which the subject has to make a report, an enunciating, has to situate himself with respect to, has to transmit to you precisely with all these accents that he has to add to it of a greater or lesser adherence to what he is telling you. Namely that it is in short at the level of the discourse for the other, which is also the discourse where the subject assumes this dream, that there is going to be produced this something which accompanies the dream, and comments on it in a way from the position that has been more or less assumed by the subject. Namely that here, during the narrative of what has happened, he presents himself already within it as the enunciation of the dream. It is here, in the discourse which this subject assumes for you to whom he is telling it, that we are going to see appearing these different elements, these different accentuations which are always accentuations of greater or lesser assumption by the subject. "It seems to me". "It appeared to me that at this moment that happened".

At that moment it is just as if the subject were at the same time someone else, or was being transformed into someone else. This is what I called above accents; these different modes of assumption of the experience of the dream by the subject are situated here on the line which is that of the I of the enunciating, in so far as precisely vis-a-vis this psychical event he assumes it more or less in his enunciating.

(8) What does that mean, except that what we have here is precisely that which on our graph is presented in the form of the fragmented, discontinuous line, that it shows you as being the characteristic of what is articulated at the level of the enunciating in so far as this involves the signifier. Because note this. If it is true that what justifies the lower line, the one on which at one time we placed this retroactivity of the code onto the message which at every moment gives the sentence its meaning - this phrasal unity is of different sizes; at the end of a long discourse, at the end of my seminar or at the end of all my seminars, there is something which retroactively closes the meaning of what I stated for you before but to a certain degree in each one of the parts of my discourse, in each one of the paragraphs there is something which is changed in shape.

It is a question of knowing what is the smallest degree that we must stop at in order that this effect which we call an effect of signification, in so far as it is something essentially new, which goes beyond what are called the usages of the signifier, constitutes a sentence, constitutes precisely this creation of signification brought about in language. Where does it stop? It stops obviously at the smallest possible unit, which is the sentence, precisely at this unit which on this occasion is presented here in quite a clear fashion in the report of the dream, in the form of the fact that the subject assumes it or does not assume it, either believes it or does not believe it, either reports something, or is doubtful about what he is telling us.

What I mean on this occasion, is that this line or loop of enunciating, is made up of sentence-fragments which can be shorter than the totality of what is being told. The dream, in connection with one or other part of the dream, brings an 9) assumption by the subject, an enunciatory position (une prise nonciative) of a shorter range than the totality of the dream. In other words, it introduces a possibility of a fragmentation which is much shorter at the upper level of the graph than at the lower level.

This puts us on the track of what Freud implies in saying that this accent of assumption by the subject forms part of the latent thoughts of the dream. This is to tell us that it is at the level of enunciating and in so far as it implies this type of highlighting of the signifier which is implied in free association; namely that if the signifying chain has two aspects, one which is the unity of its meaning, the phrasal signification, the monolithism of the holophrastic sentence, or more exactly namely that a sentence may be taken as having a single meaning, as being something which forms a signifier, let us say a transitory one, but which, while it exists, stands as such all by itself; and the other phase of the signifier which is called free association involves that each one of the elements of this sentence goes as far as is possible in terms of decomposition, stopping strictly at the phonetic element. Something can intervene which by getting rid of one of the signifiers implants there in its place another signifier which supplants it and it is

in this that there lies the property of the signifier; it is something which refers to this aspect of the willing of the subject. Something, an incident, intersects with it at each moment which implies, without the subject knowing it, and in a way that is unconscious for him, that even in his deliberate discourse, beyond his intention, something intervenes in the choice of these elements whose effects we see emerging at the (10) surface, in the most elementary form for example of a phonematic lapse, whether it is a question of a syllable that is changed in a word, which shows there the presence of another signifying chain, which can intersect with the first, and grafts onto, implants in it another meaning.

Freud indicates to us that that which, at the level of enunciating, at the apparently most developed level therefore of the assumption of the subject, at the point at which the I poses itself as conscious with respect to, we will not say its own production because precisely the riddle remains entire - from whom does this enunciation that we are talking about come? - the subject does not decide, if he says "I dreamt" it is with its own connotation and accent which means that the one who dreamt is all the same something which with respect to him presents itself as problematic. The subject of this enunciating contained in the enunciation that we are dealing with, and with a question mark, was for a long time considered to be God before becoming the self of the subject. It is more or less with Aristotle...

To return to this beyond of the subject which is the Freudian unconscious, a whole oscillation, a whole vacillation is produced which still leaves a permanent question about its otherness. And what the subject takes up from this afterwards, has the same fragmentary nature, has the same value of signifying element as what is produced in the spontaneous phenomenon of substitution, of the deranging of the signifier, which is what Freud on the other hand show us to be the normal way to decipher the meaning of the dream.

In other words, the fragmentation which is produced at the level of enunciating, in so far as enunciating is the assumption of the dream by the subject, is something which Freud tells us is on the (11) same plane and of the same nature as the following, which the rest of his doctrine shows us to be the way of interpreting a dream, namely the maximum signifying decomposition, the spelling out of signifying elements in so far as it is in this spelling out that there will reside the highlighting of the possibilities of the dream, namely of these intersections, of these intervals that it leaves and which only appear to the degree that the signifying chain is related to, is recut, is intersected by all the other chains which in connection with each of the elements of the dream may be interlaced, intermingled with the first.

In other words it is to the extent, and in a more exemplary fashion in connection with the dream than in connection with any other discourse, it is to the degree that in the discourse of the subject, in the actual discourse, we allow to vacillate, we allow to be detached from the actual signification the signifier that

is involved in this enunciating, it is in this way that we approach that which in the subject is called in the Freudian doctrine unconscious.

It is in the measure that the signifier is involved, it is in the possibilities of rupture, in the points of rupture of this unconscious that there lies the thing we are tracking down, what we are there to look for, namely the essential thing that has happened in the subject which keeps (maintenant) certain signifiers in repression. And this something is going to allow us to follow precisely the path of his desire, namely this something in the subject which is maintained in this capture by the signifying network, must so to speak in order to be revealed pass through this mesh, be subject to this filtering, to this (12) sifting of the signifier and which is what we have as our aim to replace and to restore in the discourse of the subject.

How are we able to do it? What does the fact that we are able to do it signify? I told you, desire is essentially linked, by the doctrine, by the practice, by the Freudian experience, in this position, it is excluded, enigmatic, or it is posed with respect to the subject as being essentially linked to the existence of the signifier, which is repressed as such, and its reinstatement, its restoration is linked to the return of these signifiers. But this does not mean that the reinstatement of these signifiers purely and simply enunciates the desire. What is articulated in these repressed signifiers, and what is always a demand, is one thing, the desire is something else, in so far as desire is something through which the subject situates himself, because of the existence of discourse, with respect to this demand.

It is not what he demands that is in question, it is what he is in function of this demand, and what he is in the measure that this demand is repressed, is masked. And this is what is expressed in an obscure fashion in the phantasy of his desire. It is his relationship to a being of which there would be no question if there did not exist demand, discourse, which is fundamentally language, but of which there begins to be question from the moment that language introduces this dimension of being, and at the same time conceals it from him. The reinstatement of the meaning of the phantasy, namely of something imaginary, comes between the two lines, between the enunciation of the intention of the subject, and this something in which in a decomposed (13) fashion he reads that this intention is profoundly fragmented, cut up, refracted by language; between the two is this phantasy where he habitually suspends his relationship to being.

But this phantasy, more than anything else, is always enigmatic. And what does it want? The following: that we should interpret it. To interpret desire, is to reinstate something to which the subject can not accede all by himself: namely the affect which designates at the level of this desire which is his - I am speaking about the precise desire that intervenes in one or other incident of the life of the subject, of the masochistic desire, of the suicidal desire, of the oblativ desire, on

different occasions. What is at stake is that this thing which is produced in this closed off form for the subject, should by-regaining its place, its meaning with respect to this masked discourse which is involved in this desire, regain its meaning with respect to being, confront the subject with respect to being, regain its true meaning, that which is for example defined by what I would call the positional affects with respect to being. This is what we call essentially love, hate, or ignorance, and many other terms still whose description and catalogue we should go through. In the measure that what is called affect is not this something which is purely and simply opaque and closed off which is supposed to be a sort of beyond of discourse, a kind of totality, of living kernel which comes straight down to us from some unknown heaven, but to the extent that affect is very precisely and always something which is connoted in a certain position of the subject with respect to being. I mean with respect to being in so far as that which is proposed to it in its fundamental dimension is symbolic, or (14) rather that on the contrary that it represents an extremely deranging eruption of the real within this symbolic.

And it is very difficult not to perceive that a fundamental affect like that of anger, is nothing other than that: the real which arrives at the moment that we have constructed a very nice symbolic framework, where everything is going well, order, law, our merit and our goodwill. One notices all of a sudden that things do not hang together. This is the normal operation of the affect of anger: everything appears fine on the bridge of the boats on the Bosphorus, but then there is storm which makes the sea rise.....Anger is always a matter of making the sea rise.

And then again it is also something which refers to the intrusion of desire itself, and this is also something which determines a form of affect to which we will return. But affect is essentially, and as such, at least for a whole fundamental category of affects, a connotation characteristic of a position of the subject, of a position which is situated, if we essentially see the possible positions in this putting into operation, putting to work, activation of himself, with respect to the necessary lines that are imposed on him, as such, by his envelopment in the signifier.

Here now is an example. I took this example from one of Freud's descendants, it allows us to articulate properly what analysis is. And to proceed in a fashion which does not give rise to a particularly arbitrary choice, I took Chapter V of Ella (15) Sharpe's Dream analysis, in which the author takes as an example the analysis of a simple dream. I mean a dream that she takes as such, by pushing as far as possible its analysis to the limit. You know of course that in the preceding chapters she showed a certain number of perspectives, of laws, of mechanisms, for example the incidence of the dream in analytic practice, or even further the problems posed by the analysis of the dream, or of what happens in the dreams of people being analysed. The pivotal point of this book, is precisely the chapter in which she

gives us a singular example of an exemplary dream in which she brings into play, into operation, she illustrates, everything which on the other hand she wants to tell us about the way analytic practice shows us how we should be effectively guided in the analysis of a dream and particularly this essential thing, which is the new thing that this practitioner contributes after the Traumdeutung, that a dream is not simply something which is revealed to have a significance (that is the Traumdeutung), but something which in the analytic communication, in the analytic dialogue, comes to play its current role, and not in the same way at one moment of analysis as at another, and that precisely the dream comes in an active, determined fashion to accompany the analytic discourse in order to clarify it, to prolong its pathways, that the dream is a dream when all is said and done which is meant not just for analysis, but often for the analyst.

Within analysis, the dream is found in short to be the bearer of a message. The author in question does not draw back. Any more than the authors who since then have had occasion to speak (16) about the analysis of dreams.

It is a matter only of knowing what weight, what accent we will give to it. And as you know, I drew attention to it in my Royaumont report, it is not the least important question that is posed by the question of thinking with respect to dreams, that certain authors think that they can avoid it in so far as they see in it something like an activity; at least undoubtedly it is something...

I mean that the fact in effect that the dream presents itself as a material for discourse, as a material for discursive development, is something which, if we do not perceive that the unconscious is nowhere other than in the latencies, not of some psychic gap or other where it is supposed to be in an unconstituted state, but well and truly qua unconscious on this side of or - this is another question - immanent to the formulation of the subject, to a discourse about himself, to his enunciating. We will see how legitimate it is to take the dream, as it has always been considered to be, as the royal road to the unconscious.

Here therefore is how things present themselves in this dream which the author presents us with. I will begin by reading the dream itself, I will show the way that problems are posed with regard to it. She gives us first of all a brief note on the subject about which we will have a lot to say. The whole chapter moreover should be re-read, criticised in order to allow us to grasp how what she enunciates is both more applicable to our reference points than to any other register, and at the same time how these reference points may perhaps allow us to orientate ourselves better.

(17) That day the patient arrived at his session in certain conditions which I will remind you of later. It is only after some associations, which you will see are very important, that he remembers: "That reminds me" - I will come back to these natural

associations. "I do not know why I should now think of my dream last night" he says. "It was a tremendous dream. It went on for ages and ages. I shall not bore you with it all for the simple reason that I cannot recall it but it was an exciting dream, full of incident, full of interest. I woke hot and perspiring." (132)

He says that he does not remember this infinitely long, vast dream, but what emerges, is the following: a fairly short scene that he is going to recount to us. "I dreamt I was taking a journey with my wife". There is here a very nice nuance which is perhaps not sufficiently accentuated as regards the normal order of complements in the English tongue. I do not think however that I am making a mistake in saying that: "I was taking a journey with my wife around the world", is something which deserves to be noted. There is a difference between "a journey around the world with my wife", which would seem to be the normal French order of circumstantial complements and "I was taking a journey with my wife around the world". I think that in this the sensitivity of the ear in English must be the same.

"We arrived in Czechoslovakia where all kinds of things were happening. I met a woman on a road, a road that now reminds me of the road that I described to you in the two other dreams lately in which I was having sexual play with a woman in front (18) of another woman."

At this point the author quite rightly changes the typeface, because it is an additional reflection: "So it happened in this dream." "This time," he takes up the narration of the dream, "my wife was there while the sexual event occurred. The woman I met was very passionate looking". And here quite rightly we have a change of typeface, because it is a commentary, it is already an association. "I am reminded of a woman I saw in a restaurant yesterday. She was dark and had very full lips, very red and passionate looking." The same expression, the same passionate aspect. "And it was obvious that had I given her any encouragement she would have responded. She must have stimulated the dream, I expect. In the dream the woman wanted intercourse with me and she took the initiative which as you know is a course which helps me a great deal." And he comments: "If the woman will do this I am greatly helped. In the dream the woman actually lay on top of me; that has only just come to my mind. She was evidently intending to put my penis in her body. I could tell that by the manoeuvres that she was making. I disagreed with this, but she was so disappointed I thought that I would masturbate her." And here we have a further commentary: "It sounds quite wrong to use that verb transitively. One can say 'I masturbated' and that is correct, but it is all wrong to use the word transitively." The peculiarity of the English verb is that it does not have the reflexive form that it has in the French tongue. When I say '*I masturbate', in English that means Je me masturbe. This is quite correct, but it is quite incorrect, (19) he remarks, to use the word transitively.

The analyst does not fail to react to this remark of the subject.

And the subject in connection with it makes in fact some confirmatory remarks. He begins to give associations about his own masturbation. However he does not remain there.

Here is the enunciation of the dream. It should give rise to some interest for what we are going to say. I must say that it is a mode of presentation that in a certain way is quite arbitrary; I could by-pass it. Do not think either that this is the systematic way that I would advise you to rely on for the interpretation of a dream. It is only a matter of taking a step to show you what we are going to try to see, and to demonstrate.

Just as in Freud's dream, taken from Freud, the dream of the dead person that we spoke about, we were able to designate in a fashion which you could at the same time see was not without artifice, what the signifiers are of "in consequence of the dreamer's wish", that his son wished it, in the same way in a certain fashion one will see here, the point at which the dream-phantasy effectively culminates, "I disagreed with this, but she was so disappointed I thought I would masturbate her", together with the remark that the subject immediately makes that it is quite odd to use the verb transitively... . The whole analysis of the dream is going to show us that it is effectively in re-establishing this intransitivity of the verb that we find the true sense of what is in question.

What is she disappointed about? It seems that the whole text (20) of the dream sufficiently indicates it: the fact that our subject does not really want to get involved even though he indicates that everything in the dream is there to stimulate him. Namely that he would normally be greatly helped in such a position. No doubt this is what is in question, and we will say that the second part of the sentence falls into what Freud articulated for us as being one of the characteristics of the formation of the dream, namely secondary elaboration, that is presents itself as having an understandable content.

Nevertheless the subject himself points out to us that this is not self-evident, because the very verb that he employs is one which he indicates to us does not sound proper when it is used in this way. In accordance with the very application of the formula that Freud gives us we should retain this remark of the subject as one which puts us on the path, on the track of what is in question. Namely the dream-thoughts. And that is where the desire is. In telling us that "I thought" should involve as a consequence that the sentence should be reinstated in the following form: "I thought she could masturbate" which is the normal form in which the wish would present itself: "Let her masturbate if she is not satisfied". The subject points out to us here with sufficient energy that masturbation concerns an activity which is not transitive in the sense of going from the subject to another person, but as he expresses it, intransitive. Which means in this case an activity of the subject on himself. He well and truly underlines it: when one says "I masturbated" that means Je me suis masturbe.

(21) It is a method of presentation, because the important thing is not of course to settle the subject, even though, I repeat, it is important to notice that here, already immediately, the first indication that the subject gives us is an indication in the sense of the rectification of the signifying articulation.

What does this rectification allow us to do? It is more or less the following: everything that we are now going to have to consider, is first of all the coming into play of this scene, of this session. The author presents it to us by means of a description which is not necessarily a general description of the behaviour of her subject. She has even gone so far as to give us a little preamble about his psychical constellation. In short we will have to come back to this because what she has said in these preliminary remarks will be discovered in her results, and because we will have to criticise these results.

To go immediately to the essential, I mean to what will allow us to advance, we will say that she points out to us that this subject is an extremely gifted subject, and that his behaviour - we will see it better and better in the measure that we focus things. He is a subject of a certain age, already married, and practising at the Bar. And she tells us, it is worthwhile taking this in the very terms that the subject uses, that when the subject began his professional practice he developed severe phobias.

Briefly, what we are told about the mechanism of the phobia is limited to this.

(22) " This meant," she says, - and we have great confidence in her because she is one of the best analysts, one of the most intuitive and penetrating who ever existed - "not that he dare not work successfully, but that he must stop working in reality because he would only be too successful." (127)

The note that the analyst puts in here, that it is not a matter of a love of failure that is in question, but that the subject stops, as one might say, before the immediate possibility of the highlighting of his abilities, is something which deserves to be remembered. You will see the use that we will subsequently make of it.

Let us leave to one side what, from the beginning, the analyst indicates as being something which can here be related to the father. We will come back to it. We need only know that the father died when the subject was three years old. And that for a very long time the subject did not refer to the father except precisely to say that he was dead. Something which, quite rightly, retains the attention of the analyst, in the sense that she understands by that, something quite obvious, that he did not want to remember at all that his father had lived. It seems to me that this can hardly be contested - and that when he remembers his father's life, she tells us that it was undoubtedly "a startling moment" (126). It produces in him a sort of fright.

Very quickly the position of the subject in analysis will imply that the death-wishes that the subject might have had towards his father is the mainspring of his forgetting, and of the whole articulation of his desire, in the measure that the dream reveals (23) it to him. We should understand however that nothing, as you are going to see, indicates to us in any way an aggressive intention in so far as it would be the origin of a fear of retortion. It is precisely what an attentive study of the dream is going to allow us to specify.

In fact what does the analyst tell us about this subject? She tells us the following: That day, like every other day, I did not hear him coming upstairs. Here, there is a very brilliant little paragraph about the extra-verbal production of the subject, and which corresponds to a certain observation. Namely all the little incidents in his behaviour that someone who has an eye knows how to spot. I never hear this man coming, she tells us. We understand in the context that one gets to her office by climbing a stairs. "One patient comes up two stairs at a time and I hear just the extra thud" The English word "thud" has no equivalent in French and means a dull muffled sound, the sound of a foot on the step of a stairs which is covered by carpet, and which becomes a little bit louder because he takes two steps at a time. "Another hurries and I detect the hustle". The whole chapter is like that and from a literary point of view it is something to savour. However it is nothing but a detour, because the important thing is what the patient does.

The patient's attitude is one of perfect correctness which is a little stilted and never changes. "He always ggets on the couch one way. He always gives a conventional greeting with the same (24) smile, a pleasant smile, not forced or manifestly covering hostile impulses". (130) Here the analyst's tact knows very well, there is nothing that reveals that such a thing exists. Nothing is left to chance, "no clothes awry;... no hair out of place." He lies down, he puts one hand over the other across his chest and makes himself easy. And there is no sign of any immediate or upsetting event as for example that his maid did something just before he left to keep him late. One does not hear about this for a long time, right at the end of the session, or even at the next session. "He talks the whole hour, clearly, fluently, in good diction, without hesitation and with many pauses. He speaks in a distinct and even voice for it expresses thinking and never feeling." (130)

What must be thought about this distinction between thinking and feeling - of course all of us would be of the same opinion before a presentation like that, the important thing is obviously to know what this particular mode of communication signifies. Every analyst will think that there is in this subject something that he dreads, a sort of sterilisation of the text of the session, something must make the analyst desire to have something more alive in the sessions. But naturally the fact of expressing oneself like that must also have a meaning. And the absence of feeling, as she expresses it, is all the same not something which has nothing to do with the chapter, with the

heading of feelings.

I spoke above about affect as concerning the relationship of the (25) subject to being and revealing it. We should ask ourselves in this case how being can communicate along this path. It is more appropriate to ask this because indeed it is at this point, that the session opens. And the discordance there is between the way in which the analyst tackles this problem of this sort of before her, and the way in which, she notes it herself, surprises it, what sort of supplementary basis is to be given to the usual position of the analyst, precisely to appreciate what is special in this case. Because what begins to open up here we will see being opened up more and more up to the final intervention of the analyst and its stupefying result. Because it is stupefying not only that it should be produced, but that it should be reported as an exemplary interpretation from the point of view of its fruitfulness and satisfaction for the analyst.

That day the analyst is struck by the fact that in the middle of this picture which is distinguished by a severe rectitude, the subject's cautious bearing, something happens which she had never heard up to then. He arrives at her door, and just before entering he goes, hm, hm. It is still not a lot, it is the discreetest of coughs. She was a very impetuous woman, everything in her style indicates it; she was something like a primary school teacher before being an analyst and it is a very good starting point for the penetration of psychological facts: and she is certainly a woman of very great talent. She hears this little cough as if it were the arrival of the dove into Noah's ark.

This cough is a harbinger. Somewhere behind there is the place where feelings are alive. "I would never talk to him about it, because if I said a word he would just smother everything."

(26) It is the classical position in such a case, never to make a remark to the patient, at a certain stage of his analysis, when you think you know what he is at, about their physical behaviour, their way of lying down, of buttoning or of unbuttoning their coat, everything that involves the attitude of reflex motor activity on their own behaviour in so far as it can have the value of a signal, because this profoundly touches something belonging to the narcissistic register.

This is what distinguishes the power, the dimension of analysis in so far as it extends, as it spreads over everything belonging to the vocal register; the fact is that the same rule does not apply at all to something like a little cough, because even though it is only a cough, and independently of the fact that this does not give the impression of being a purely somatic event, it belongs to the same register as those "hm, hms", those grunts, which certain analysts sometimes use decisively, and which can have the effect of restarting somebody. The proof, is that to her great surprise this is the first thing that the subject talks to her about. He says to her very exactly, in his customary even and deliberate voice: "I have been considering that little cough that I give just before I enter the room. The

last few days I have coughed I have become aware of it, I don't know whether you have. Today when the maid called me to come upstairs I made up my mind I would not cough. To my annoyance, however, I realised I had coughed just as I had finished. It is most annoying to do a thing like that, most annoying that (27) something goes on in you or by you that you cannot control, or do not control. One would think some purpose is served by it, but what possible purpose can be served by a little cough of that description is hard to think." (131)

The analyst advances with all the prudence of the serpent and says back to him: "What purpose could be served?" "Well, it is the kind of thing that one would do if one were going into a room where two lovers were together." He tells how he did something similar in his childhood before going into the room where his brother was with his girlfriend. He coughed before going in because he thought that they might be embracing, and that it would be better if they stopped beforehand, and that way they would feel less embarrassed than if they had been surprised.

So she replies: "And why cough before coming in here?" "That is absurd" he says "because naturally I should not be asked to come up if someone were here. There is no need for a cough at all that I can see. It has, however, reminded me of a phantasy I had of being in a room where I ought not to be, and thinking someone might think I was there, and then I thought to prevent anyone from coming in and finding me there I would bark like a dog. That would disguise my presence. The "someone" would then say (28) 'Oh, it's only a dog in there'." "A dog?" the analyst replies prudently.

"That reminds me", continues the patient easily enough, "of a dog rubbing himself against my leg, really masturbating himself. I'm ashamed to tell you because I did not stop him. I let him go on and someone might have come in. (The patient then coughed)." And it is at this point that he begins his dream.

We will take this up the next time, but already there is something we do not see namely that here the very memory of the dream came immediately after a message which in all probability - and moreover the author of course is quite sure of it, and will bring it into the analysis of the dream and give it a role of first importance - This little cough was a message, but it is a question of knowing of what. But it was on the other hand, in so far as the subject had spoken about it, namely in so far as it introduced the dream, a second degree message. Namely in the most formal and not unconscious fashion: a message that it was a message, because the subject did not simply say that he coughed.

Had he even said: "I coughed" this already would have been a message. But in addition he says: "I coughed, and that means something", and immediately afterwards he begins to tell us stories which are particularly suggestive. This obviously means: I am here. If you are doing something that amuses you, and if it would not amuse you that this should be seen, it is time to put an end to it.

(29) But we would not see precisely what is in question if we were not also to take into account what is brought along at the same time. Namely something which is presented as having all the appearances of a phantasy. First of all because the subject presents it as such, and as a phantasy developed in his childhood, and also because perhaps if the phantasy is with respect to another object, it is quite clear that nothing realises it better than this phantasy, the one he speaks to us about when he says: I thought of concealing my presence - I would say as such, as the presence of my being seen, me the subject, in a room - very precisely by doing something which it is quite obvious is designed to draw attention to him, namely to bark.

This indeed has all the characteristics of the phantasy which best fulfils the forms of the subject in so far as he finds himself adorned by the effect of the signifier. Namely by the use that the child makes of what presents itself as being already natural signifiers because they serve as attributes for something which it is a question of signifying. The child calls a dog "bow-wow". In this case we are involved in a phantasy-activity. It is the subject himself who attributes the "bow-wow" to himself. If in fact he signals his presence here, in fact he signals it precisely in so far as in the phantasy - this phantasy being quite inapplicable - it is by its very manifestation, by his very word that he is supposed to make himself other than he is, to remove himself even from the domain of the word, to make an animal of himself, to absent himself, to literally naturalise himself. No attempt will be made to verify that he is there (30) because he will have made himself, presented himself, articulated himself well and truly in the most elementary of signifiers as not being there: there is nothing there, but literally: there is no person. It is really, literally, what the subject announces in his phantasy: in so far as I am in the presence of the other I am nobody. It is the "where is he" of Ulysses and the Cyclops.

These are only elements. But what we are going to see in pushing the analysis further, is what the subject by associating to his dream which is going to allow us to see how things appear, namely in what sense, and how he is not a person. There are some correlates on the side precisely of the other whom it is a question of warning here; namely who happen to be in this case, as in the dream, a woman. This relationship with the woman as such, is certainly not a matter of indifference in the situation. What it is going to allow us to articulate concerning the something that the subject is not, does not wish to be, cannot be, as you will see, is something which will direct us as we have said towards the most fundamental of the symbols that concern the identification of the subject. If the subject absolutely wishes that, as everything indicates, his feminine partner should masturbate herself, should look after herself, it is undoubtedly so that she will not pay attention to him. Why he does not want her to pay attention to him, and how he does not wish it, is also what the normal end of the time which is assigned for this session today will not allow us to articulate, and what we will put off till the next time.

Seminar 9: 21 January 1959

We stopped the last day right in the middle of the analysis of what Ella Sharpe calls the singular, unique dream to which she devotes a chapter on which the ascending part of her book converges, then afterwards the complements that she adds. Her book has the originality of being an important book on dreams, written after thirty years of general analytic experience.

Let us consider that these seminars of Ella Sharpe represent experiences which refer to the preceding thirty years.

This dream, which was the subject of one of her patient's sessions, is an extremely interesting dream. And the developments that she gives, the connection that she establishes not only between what are properly speaking the associations of the dream, even the interpretation, but the whole message of the session in its totality - she is to be commended for this because it indicates her great sensitivity to the direction, to the sense of analysis.

It is all the more striking to see that this dream - whose terms I will recall - she interprets it as you will see line by line as she ought - is interpreted by her in the sense of a desire linked to a wish for omnipotence in her patient. This we will see in detail. It may be justified or not, but already you must be thinking that if this dream interests us it is from this angle here where I tried to show you the ambiguity, and the lure of this unilateral notion; what is involved in this wish for omnipotence, in terms of the possibilities, the perspectives of power, what can be called the neurotic wish.

(2) Is it always a question of the omnipotence of the subject? I introduced here this notion. It is quite obvious that the fact that the omnipotence in question is the omnipotence of discourse in no way implies that the subject feels himself to be its support and its depository. That if he is dealing with the omnipotence of discourse, it is through the mediation of the other that he profers it. This is forgotten, particularly in the orientation that Ella Sharpe gives to her interpretation of the dream. And to begin with the end - you are going to see how we will probably not manage to complete it in this lesson because there is a whole world beneath a work as elaborated as this; all the more of a world when one perceives that when all is said and done almost nothing has been said, even though every day this is

the very terrain on which we operate.

I will begin therefore by indicating what is going to appear at the end. We will see in detail how she remonstrates with her patient on the subject of his omnipotent wish. And his aggressive omnipotent wish, Ella Sharpe underlines. It is this patient, all of whose coordinates she certainly does not give us, but who is found to have in the foreground major difficulties in his profession - he is at the Bar; difficulties whose neurotic character is so evident; which she defines in so nuanced a fashion because she specifies that it is not so much a question of failure as of a fear of being too successful.

She had underlined, in the very modulation of the definition of the symptom, something which deserved to retain us by the distinction, the obvious subtlety of the nuance that is introduced here into the analysis. The patient therefore, who has other difficulties besides those appearing in his work, who has, she herself indicates them, difficulties in the totality of his relationships with other subjects - relationships which go beyond his professional activities, which may specially express themselves in games, and particularly in the game of tennis as we will see in the indications that she subsequently gives us about some other sessions - she points out the difficulty he has in doing what would be necessary for him when he is winning a set or a game, to corner his opponent, to drive him back into a corner of the court so as to put the ball in the other corner where he is not going to reach it. (cf 146)

It is the type of example of the difficulties which this patient undoubtedly has. And the fact that symptoms like that can be highlighted by the analyst lend no little support to confirming that in the patient it is a question of a difficulty of manifesting his potency, or more exactly his power. She will intervene therefore in a certain fashion, will find herself in fact overjoyed at a certain number of reactions which are going to follow, which is really going to be the high point where she is going to point up, where she desires - really in the sense that we define it - one could almost point out that what she is aiming at is precisely what we would localise in a certain reference with respect to demand. As you will see this is precisely it. Only she interprets this desire in a certain fashion, in the sense of an aggressive conflict. She puts it on the plane of an essentially and profoundly dual reference of imaginary conflict.

(4) I will also show how she justifies tackling things from this angle. Only here I pose the question: can we consider as a sanction for the suitability of this type of intervention two things which she herself is going to declare exist. The first, following the first outline of her interpretation of the dual type, of the type of interpretation of the aggressivity of the subject founded on a return, on a transference of the omnipotent wish. She notes something striking, bewildering in an adult subject, that the subject brings her this result that for the first time since he was a tiny boy he had wet the bed. (147) We will come back to this in detail, to point out where the

difficulties are posed. And in the few days which followed this session that she chose because the subject reported a very fine dream, but also a dream which occurred at a crucial moment of the analysis, on the tennis court, where precisely he happens to have the problems which are well known to all tennis players who have the opportunity to observe the way that they put their capacities to work, and from whom also there escapes sometimes the final recompense of a superiority they know they have, but that they are not able to demonstrate, his usual partners, with that sensitivity to difficulties, the unconscious impasses which when all is said and done are the stuff of this character game, the ways in which there occurs between the subjects the fencing of dialogue, of mocking, of joking, of gaining the upper hand, tease him as usual about the lost game, and he gets angry enough to get hold of his opponent around the neck and cornered him in a corner (5) of the court and warned him never to tease him again.

I am not saying that there is no basis for the direction, the order in which Ella Sharpe pushes her interpretation. You will see that, on the basis of the finest dissection of the material, the elements that she uses are situated, are established for her. We will also attempt to see what a priori ideas, what preconceived ideas, often based - after all an error never emerges except from a certain lack of truth - based on something else that she does not know how to articulate, even though she gives us - and this is what is precious in this observation - the elements of it, of the other register - but she does not dream of handling the other register.

The centre, the point at which she is going to bring her interpretation to bear, at a lower degree of complexity - you will see here what I mean, even though I think I am saying enough about it, for you to understand - by putting it on the plane of the imaginary rivalry of a power struggle she leaves to one side something that is now in question, by properly speaking making a selection in her own text.... It is her text which is going to show us, I think in a striking fashion, what she allows to be lost and what manifests itself with such coherence to be in this case what is in question in this analysed session - and the dream which is its centre - so that we should obviously try to see whether the categories which I have been proposing for a long time and whose map, whose topological schema, I have tried to (6) give in this graph that we use, whether we will not manage all the same to centre things better.

I remind you that we are dealing with a dream in which the patient is taking a journey with his wife around the world. He arrives in Czechoslovakia where all sorts of things are going to happen to him. He stresses that there was a whole world of things before this little moment that he is going to recount fairly rapidly - because this dream only occupies one session. It is only the associations that he gives It is a very short dream to recount. And among the things which happen, he meets a woman on a road which reminds him of the one which he had already described twice to his analyst, when something happened, "sexual play" with a woman in front of another woman. This

happens again, he adds, in this dream. And he continues "This time my wife was there while the sexual event occurred. The woman I met was very passionate looking and I am reminded of a woman I saw in a restaurant yesterday. She was dark and had very full lips, very red and passionate looking, and it was obvious that had I given her any encouragement she would have responded. She must have stimulated the dream, I expect. In the dream the woman wanted intercourse with me and she took the initiative which as you know is a course which helps me a great deal." He repeats by way of commentary: "If the woman will do this I am greatly helped. In the dream the woman actually lay (7) on top of me, that has only just come to my mind. She was evidently intending to put my penis in her body. I could tell that by the manoeuvres she was making. I disagreed with this, but she was so disappointed I thought that I would masturbate her." (132-133)

Immediately after this remark which can only really be understood in English: "It sounds wrong to use that verb transitively. One can say *I masturbated' and that is correct". We will subsequently see in the text another example which shows that when one employs "to masturbate" it is a question of masturbating oneself. This primitive reflexive character of the verb is sufficiently striking for him to make this remark which is properly speaking a philological one. And it is obviously not for nothing that he makes it at this moment.

I have said, that in a certain fashion we could complete if we wished to proceed as we have done for the preceding dream, complete this sentence in the following fashion by reinstating the signifiers that have been avoided - we will see that what follows will confirm it -: She was very disappointed not to have my penis (or a penis) that I thought "She should masturbate" and not "I should". Let her masturbate.

You will see in what follows what it is that allows us to complete things in this way.

After this we have a series of associations. It is not very long, but it amply suffices for our meditation. There are almost three pages, and in order not to weary you, I will only (8) take them up again after having given the dialogue of the patient which follows the dream.

Ella Sharpe wrote this chapter for a pedagogical purpose, she draws up the catalogue of what the patient in fact brought to her. She is able to show those whom she is teaching, the material in which she is going to make her choice, firstly for the interpretation of what she has before her, secondly what she is going to transmit to the patient of this interpretation, indicating, insisting herself on the fact that the two things are far from coinciding because what there is to be said to the patient is probably not at all everything that is to be said on the subject. From what the patient provides her with there are things that are good to say and things which are not.

Since she finds herself in a didactic position, she is going

first of all to draw up an account of what is to be seen, of what is to be read in this session.

"1. The cough." (136)

The last time I told you what was in question. It is a question of this little cough which the patient gave that day before coming into the room; this little cough in which Ella Sharpe, given the way in which the patient behaves himself, so contained, so controlled, so manifestly defensive, which she is far from accepting in the first place as a defence of the order: a defence against his own feelings, sees something which comes from a presence which is more immediate than this attitude in which everything is reflected on, where nothing reflects.

(9) And indeed it is to this that this little cough refers us. It is something on which others would perhaps not have dwelt. However little it is it is something which makes her hear in it the introduction, literally like an olive branch after some earthquake or other. And she says to herself, let us respect it.

Now, precisely it is just the contrary that happens. It is the patient himself who says it to her. He gives a long discourse on the subject of this little cough. I pointed out the last time, and we are going to come back both to the way in which Ella Sharpe understands it, and how to my way of thinking it should be understood.

Here in effect is how she herself analyses what she learns from the patient, following on this little cough. Because the subject is far from immediately bringing forward the dream. It is after a series of associations which have come to him after the remark which he himself made about this little cough: that it had escaped from him and that no doubt it meant something. That he had even said to himself that he would not do it again because it is not the first time that this had happened to him. After having climbed the stairs which she does not hear him climbing because he is so discreet, he gives this little cough. He uses the word himself, and he questions himself about it. We are now going to take up what he said in the perspective of the way that Ella Sharpe herself records it. She draws up a catalogue of what she calls: "Ideas concerning the purpose of a cough" (136)

(10) Here is how she records it.

First of all this little cough "brings thoughts of lovers being together."

What had the patient said? The patient, having spoken about his cough, and asked the question: "What purpose can it serve?" says "Well, it is the kind of thing that one would do if one were going into a room where two lovers were together. If one were approaching such a place one might cough a little discreetly and so let them know they were going to be disturbed. I have done

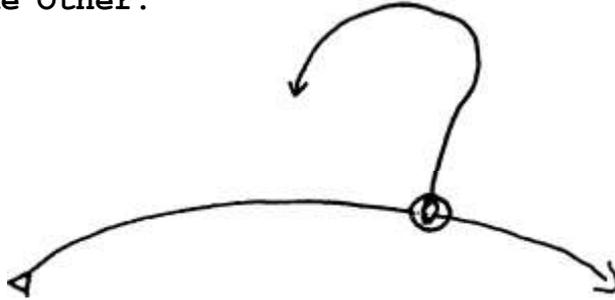
that myself when, for example, my brother was with his girl in the drawing room. I would cough before I went in so that if they were embracing they could stop before I got in. They would not then feel as embarrassed as if I had caught them doing it" (131)

It is not a matter of indifference to underline in this connection, that first of all the cough, as the patient shows, and we do not doubt it because everything that follows has developed it for us, the cough is a message. But let us immediately note something which already appears in the fashion in which Ella Sharpe analyses things, the fact is that she does not grasp, that she does not highlight - this may appear to you a little finical, a little scrupulous as a remark, but nevertheless you are going to see that it is from this order of remark that I am going to introduce that everything else is going to follow, namely what I called the lowering of level which will mark Ella Sharpe's interpretation - that if the cough is a message, it is evident - it emerges from Ella Sharpe's very text - that what is (11) important to note is that the subject did not simply cough, but precisely - it is she who underlines it to her great surprise - the fact that the subject should say, it is a message.

This she elides, because she indicates in her catalogue of what she has bagged - we have not yet got to what she is going to choose and this will depend on what she has recognised. Now it is clear that she elides something which she herself has explained to us, the fact that in the first place there is of course the cough, but that the subject - this is the important point about this cough-message, if it is a message - speaks about it by saying "what is its purpose? What does it introduce?". The subject, exactly, begins by saying about this cough - he says it literally - that it is a message. He signals it as a message. And still more, in this dimension where he announces that it is a message he poses a question: What is the purpose of this message?

This articulation, this definition that we are trying to give of what happens in analysis, by not forgetting the structural texture of what rests on the fact that what happens in analysis is above all a discourse, which is here without going into any particular refinement of it, being properly speaking disarticulated, analysed. And we are going to see what its importance is. I would even say that up to a certain point we are able from now on to begin to locate ourselves on our graph. When he poses this question: what is this cough?, it is a second degree question about the event. It is a question that he poses (12) starting from the other, because also it is in the measure that he is in analysis that he begins to pose it; that he is into it I would say in this case - it can be seen in Ella Sharpe's surprise - much further than she herself imagines, a little like the way in which parents are always behind on the subject of what children understand or do not understand. Here the analyst is behind as regards the fact that the patient has for a long time understood the game, namely that it is a matter of questioning oneself about the symptoms of what happens in analysis, about the

smallest snag which gives rise to a question. In short, this question in connection with "it is a message", is indeed here with its interrogative form in the upper part of the graph. I am putting in the lower part in order to allow you to locate where we are. It is precisely this part which I defined in another connection by saying that it was the level of the discourse of the Other.



Here in the measure that it is indeed the analytic discourse into which the subject enters. And it is literally a question about the other who is in him, about his unconscious. It is at this level of articulation which is always pressing in each subject, in so far as the subject asks himself: "But what does it want?", but which here is in no doubt about the distinction between the first verbal plane of the innocent enunciation, in so far as an enunciation that is made within analysis is not innocent. And that here the locus to which this interrogation points is indeed the one where we place what should finally be the shibboleth of analysis, namely the signifier of the Other in so far as he himself is marked by the signifier, but which is precisely what is veiled to the neurotic, and veiled to the precise extent that he is not aware of this incidence of the signifier on the other, and that in this case not only does he recognise it, but that what he is questioning himself about is far from being the response, it is the questioning. It is effectively: "What is this signifier of the Other in me?"

In a word let us say at the outset of our presentation that he is far, and with reason, from having recognised the power, of being able to recognise that the other is castrated anymore than himself. For the moment simply he is questioning himself about this innocence or learned ignorance which is constituted by the fact of being in analysis, about the following: what is this signifier, in so far as it is signifier of something in my unconscious, as it is signifier of the Other?

In Ella Sharpe's progress this is elided. What she is going to enumerate are ideas concerning the cough. This is how she takes things. Of course they are ideas concerning the cough, but they are ideas which already say a lot more than a simple mere chain of ideas which, as we know, is specifically located here on our graph. Namely that already something is being delineated.

(14) She says to us, what does this little cough contribute? It brings first of all thoughts of lovers being together. I have read for you what the patient said. What did he say? He said

something which cannot it seems to me be in any way summarised in this fashion, namely that this brings the idea of lovers being together. It seems to me that in listening to him the idea that he brings is that of the person who arrives as a third among these lovers who are together. He arrives as a third in not just any way because he arranges things so that he will not arrive as a third in too embarrassing a fashion.

In other words it is very important, from the first, to point out that there are three persons, putting them together involves variations in time, and coherent variations, namely that they are together while the third is outside. When the third has entered, they no longer are. This is obvious.

You can be certain that if it requires, as it is going to require two seminars to cover the material that this dream and its interpretation brings, a week of meditation to get to the bottom of what the patient brings us, the analysis may appear to be something insurmountable, especially as things will not fail to expand and we will be quickly swamped. But in reality this is not a valid objection at all for the good reason that to a certain degree in this schema which is already taking shape, namely that when the third is outside the two are together, and that when the third is inside the two are no longer together, I (15) am not saying that all of what we are going to see in this connection is already there, because it would be a little simple, but we are going to see this being developed, being enriched, and in a word becoming involuted on itself as a leit-motif that is indefinitely reproduced and by enriching itself at every point of the plot, constitutes the whole texture of the totality. And you are going to see which.

What does Ella Sharpe next point to as being the consequence of the cough?

- a) He tackled ideas concerning lovers who are together;
- b) Rejects a sexual phantasy concerning the analyst.

Is that something which accounts for what the patient has brought? The analyst had posed him the question "And why cough before coming in here?" (131), just after he had explained what its purpose was if it was lovers who were inside. He says, it is absurd because naturally I have no reason to ask myself that question, "I should not be asked to come up if someone were here, and I do not think of you in that way at all. There is no need for a cough at all that I can see. It has, however, reminded me of a phantasy I had of being in a room where I ought not to be."

It is there that what Ella Sharpe is aiming at stops. Can we say that there was here rejection of a sexual phantasy concerning the analyst? It seems that there was absolutely no rejection, but that there was rather an admission. Certainly a roundabout admission, an admission by the associations which are going to follow. One cannot say that in the proposition of the analyst concerning this subject, that the subject purely and simply rejects, that he is in a position of pure and simple negation.

(16) This seems on the contrary very typically the type of the appropriate interpretation, because this is going to involve everything that is going to follow and what we are going to see.

Now precisely this question of the sexual phantasy which is being pursued on the occasion of this entrance into the analyst's office where the analyst is supposed to be alone, is something which is indeed in effect what is in question, and regarding which I think it is going to appear rather quickly that there is no need to be a great scholar to clarify it.

The third element that these associations bring is, Ella Sharpe tells us, the phantasy. The phantasy of being where he ought not to be and barking like a dog to put people off the scent. It is a metaphorical expression which is found in the English text: "To put people off the scent" (136).

It is never a matter of indifference that one metaphor should be used rather than an other one, but here there is no trace of a scent in what the patient tells us. We have no reason to settle the question of whether or not it is repressed. I am saying that because the scent is the icing on the cake in some forms of analysis. Let us be satisfied here with what the patient tells us.

In connection with the questioning that the analyst has addressed to him, he says to her: this reminds me of the phantasy I had of being in a room where in fact - this conforms to the analyst's summary - I had no reason to be. Or more exactly where I ought not to be. And thinking someone might think I was there.

(17) There is a double structure; the reference to the subjectivity of the other is absolutely constant. It is on this that I am going to put the accent because this is incessantly what is in question and it is here and here alone that we can centre where the desire it.

This is what is evaded all the time in the account given by Ella Sharpe, and in the way in which she is going to take into account the different incidence of tendencies.

He says then: I thought someone might think. "I had this phantasy that someone might think that I was there, and then I thought to prevent anyone from coming in and finding me there I would bark like a dog. That would disguise my presence. The * someone' would then say, 'Oh it's only a dog in there'" (132). The paradoxical character of this phantasy of the subject very probably calls up - he says himself that the memories are those of late childhood, of adolescence. The incoherent, even absurd character of certain phantasies is nonetheless perceived with all its value, namely as being worth something, and as such retained by the analyst.

She tells us then, in the sequence of associative ideas that come to her, that it is a phantasy of being where he should not be, and barking like a dog to put people off the scent. This is

correct, except that if he imagines that he is where he ought not to be, the purpose of the phantasy, the meaning of the phantasy, the obvious content of the phantasy is to show that he is not where he is. It is the other phase. A very important phase (18) because as we are going to see, this is going to be the characteristic, the very structure of every subjective affirmation on the part of this patient, and that to cut in under such conditions by telling him that at such a point he is in a situation where he had wished to kill his counterpart, and that this is the reversal and the revenge is certainly to take sides, and to take sides in conditions where the chances of both error and success, namely of effectively making the patient adopt in a subjective fashion what you have settled on, are particularly obvious. And this is what gives this text its interest.

If on the other hand we can see that this is to highlight what is announced here in its structure, namely the meaning of what has already appeared in the phantasy, namely that he is not where he is, and we are going to see the meaning that this has perhaps, perhaps this can also lead us, as we shall see, to a quite different interpretation.

In any case, he does not assume just any ego in order to make himself not be where he is. It is of course more than clear that from the point of view of reality this phantasy is not sustainable, and that to start barking like a dog in a room where one ought not to be, is not the best way to escape attention. Let us of course leave to one side this sentence whose only value is to make us notice that we are not here in the comprehensible, but in the imaginary structure, that after all one hears things like that during a session, and one is content after all to (19) believe that one understands because the patient appears to understand. I have told you that what is proper to every affect, to this whole margin, this accompaniment, these fringes of internal discourse, at least especially as we can reconstitute it when we have the feeling that this discourse is precisely not a discourse that is as continuous as one believes, the fact is that the continuity is in effect and principally by means of the affect. Namely that the less motivated the affects are, the more - it is a law - they appear comprehensible to the subject.

This is not for us a reason to follow him, and that is why the remark that I made there, however evident it may appear, has all the same its importance. What we have to analyse, is the phantasy, without understanding it, namely by rediscovering in it the structure that it reveals. Now, what does it mean this phantasy. Just as above the important thing was to see that the subject was saying in connection with his cough, it is a message, it is important to perceive that this phantasy has really no meaning, the totally unreal character of its eventual efficacy. It is that the subject by barking says quite simply, "It's a dog". Here too he makes himself other, but this is not the question. He does not ask himself what is this signifier of the other in him. He constructs a phantasy there - and that is all the same precious enough when it comes to us for us to perceive what we are being given. He makes himself other with the help

of what: of a signifier precisely. The barking here, is the signifier of what is not. He is not a dog, but thanks to this (20) signifier the result for the phantasy is perfectly well obtained, he is other than he is.

I am going to ask you here, because we have not exhausted what is brought forward in simple association to the cough, there is a fourth element that we will see later, and in connection with this, namely on this occasion with the function of the signifier in the phantasy - because it is clear that the subject considers himself as being sufficiently covered by this phantastical barking - to make a parenthesis.

I am no longer talking to you about the dream, but about a certain elementary little clinical remark. At the end of a recent scientific communication I alluded to the fact that I wanted to bring this to your attention here.

It must be said that in such an abundance of material, what is there to be taught is so immeasurable compared to what is taught, namely what is so tiresomely repeated, that really some days I feel myself crushed to a ridiculous degree by the task that I have undertaken.

Let us take up this "It's a dog". I want to draw your attention to something about child psychology, to what is called genetic psychology. One tries to construct, with this child that one wishes to understand, this psychology which is called genetic, and which consists in asking oneself how this little darling who is so stupid begins to acquire his ideas. And then one asks oneself how the child proceeds. Primitively his world is supposed to be autoerotic, objects are supposed to come later. (21) I hope, please God, that you all have, if not directly the experience of children, at least enough patients who are able to tell you the story of their little child to see that there is nothing that is more interested in objects, in the reflection of objects than a tiny little child. Let us leave this to one side.

For the moment it is a matter of your perceiving how there comes into play in him the operation of the signifier. I mean that we can see in the child, at the source, at the origin of his grasp on the world which is offered to him and which is above all the world of the voice, a world where people speak to him, which is obviously a rather stupefying confrontation, how he is going to enter into this world.

I already alluded to something which people can notice provided they simply have an attentive ear, and do not necessarily find confirmed the preconceived ideas with which they may begin to approach the child. A friend remarked to me recently that having himself taken on the task of looking after his child to whom he devotes a lot of time, he had never spoken about a dog except as a dog. And he did not fail to be a little bit surprised at the fact that the child, who had perfectly well noted what had been named by the primitive nomination of the

adult, began to call it a "bow-wow". Other people who may on occasion talk to me in a way that I would not say is directly illuminated by the projects for investigation that I give them, but solely because of my teaching, have pointed out to me something else that not only does the child limit to the designation of the dog this "bow-wow" which is something which is primitively chosen in the dog among all his characteristics - and how could we be surprised at it, because the child is obviously (22) going to begin already by qualifying his dog, but indeed before being able to handle any kind of attribute, he begins by bringing into play what he can say about him, namely that by which the animal presents itself as itself producing a sign which is not a signifier. But notice that here it is by the approach, by the chance that is presented to him by what there is in what is manifested, precisely the presence of an animal, something which is isolated enough to furnish its material, something which is an emission of the larynx, that the child lays hold of this element. As what? As something which, because it replaces the "dog" which he has already perfectly understood and heard to the point of being able both to direct his regard towards the dog when one names the dog, and towards an image of this dog when one says dog, and replaces it by a "bow-wow", which is to construct the first metaphor. So that it is here that we see beginning, and in a fashion which is in the closest conformity to the true genesis of language, the operation of predication.

It has been remarked that in the primitive form of language what plays the function of adjective are metaphors. This is confirmed here in the subject, except that we do not find ourselves here before some mysterious primitive operation of the spirit, but before a structural necessity of language which requires that in order that something should be engendered in the order of the signified, there must be the substitution of a signifier for another signifier.

You will say to me: what do you know about it? I mean why do you affirm that the essential is the substitution of "bow-wow" (23) for dog. First of all I would say to you that it is a common observation - and it was brought to me not too long ago - that from the moment that the child has been able to call a dog "bow-wow", he will call "bow-wow" a whole lot of things which have absolutely nothing to do with a dog, therefore immediately showing by this that what is in question is indeed effectively the transformation of the sign into a signifier which one puts to the test of all sorts of substitutions with respect to that which at that moment has no further importance whether it is other signifiers or units of the real. Because what it in question is to put the power of the signifier to the test.

The high point of this is marked in this decisive moment at which the child - it was about this that I made the remark at the end of the scientific communication that I was speaking about - declares with the greatest authority and the greatest insistence: the dog goes "miaow", or the cat goes "bow-wow". An absolutely decisive point because it is at this moment that the primitive metaphor, which is constituted purely and simply by signifying

substitution, by the exercise of signifying substitution, engenders the category of qualification.

You should understand what I am saying, we can in this case formalize that if you wish, and say that the step, the progress that is accomplished consists in the fact that first of all a monolinear chain is established which says: "Dog" = "bow-wow", that what is in question and what is demonstrated in the clearest fashion by the fact that the child superimposes, combines one chain with another, is that he has managed to make cross over with respect to the chain, the dog goes "bow-wow", the chain, the cat goes "miaow"; that in substituting the "miaow" for the "bow-wow" he is going to bring into play the possibility of the crossing over of one chain with another, namely of a redivision of each one of the chains in two parts, what will provisionally be fixed and what no less provisionally will be mobile, namely of something of the chain which will remain, around which will turn what can change in it.

$$\begin{array}{c} S' \cdot S \\ \hline S \cdot S' \end{array}$$

In other words it is only from the moment at which there is associated the S' of the cat, in so far as it is signified by this sign with the S, the "bow-wow" signifier of the dog. And that this supposes that underneath - and to begin with there is no underneath - the child links the two lines, namely that the signified of "bow-wow", the dog, produces S' the "miaow" signifier of the cat. Only from the moment that this exercise has been accomplished, and the importance that the child gives to this exercise is quite evident and demonstrated by the fact that if the parents are tactless enough to intervene, to correct him, to reprimand him, or to chide him for saying such stupid things, the child has very lively emotional reactions, in a word he cries because he knows well what he is in the process of doing, as against the adults who think that he is being stupid.

Because it is only from that moment on, and in accordance with the formula which I already gave of the metaphor which consists very essentially in the following: it is that something at the level of the upper line is displaced, is elided, with respect to (25) something which in the lower line of the signified is also displaced. In other words, it is to the degree that from the point of view of the graph (scaf) from the moment that this game has been introduced, the "bow-wow" can be elided, that there comes in the underpinnings of the enunciating about the dog - that this enunciating becomes properly a signifying enunciating, and not a simple imitative connection with respect to reality. Whether the dog is indicated or named amounts to the same thing. But literally the fact that when the qualification, the attribution of a quality to the dog is given to him, that is not on the same line, it is on the one of quality as such: there are those who go "bow-wow", there are those who go "miaow", and all

those who make other noises are implicated here in the verticality, in height, in order that there should begin to be born from the metaphor the dimension of adjective.

You know that it is not just yesterday that these things have been seen. Darwin had already dealt with them, except that for lack of the linguistic apparatus things remained very problematic for him. But it is a phenomenon that is so general, so essential, so functionally dominant in the development of the child that even Darwin who was inclined rather towards naturalist explanations did not fail all the same to be struck by the following: it was quite funny all the same that a child whose intelligence was already so remarkable that he could isolate the quack from the duck - this is how it is in Darwin's text, the cry of the duck that the child takes up is put in phonetic form - (26) that this quack is referred by him to a whole series of objects whose generic homogeneity is sufficiently noted by the fact that if I remember properly there were among these objects wine and a sous. I am not too sure what this sous designates, whether it designates a penny or something else. I have not verified what that meant in Darwin's day, but it was a coin because Darwin in his embarrassment does not fail to remark that this coin had the stamp of an eagle in the corner.

It may appear that the explanation which would unify the relationship of the quack to a general species of flying creatures on the pretext that an image as ambiguous as that of an eagle with open wings on a coin is something which we could consider as having to be homogenised by the child to his perception of the duck. Obviously that of wine, of liquid, would still create a problem. Perhaps we could simply think to ourselves there is some relationship between wine, something which would be let us say the liquid element in so far as the duck paddles in it.

We see in any case that what is once again in question is much more designated as marked by the passage of the signifying element as such; here let us admit it in the contiguity of perception if we want to admit in effect that the liquid quality is what is in question when the child applies to it the quack of the duck. You can see that it is in any case in the register of the signifying chain that we are able to grasp the fundamental thing that is established in the child in his grasp of the world as a world structured by the word.

(27) He is not one either to look for the meaning or the essence of birds, of fluid or of sous. The fact is that he finds them literally by the use of nonsense. Because when all is said and done if we have the time we will pose ourselves questions about what nonsense is technically. I mean non-sense. In the English tongue it is a specific genre. The English tongue has two outstanding example of nonsense, specifically Edward Lear a writer of nonsense which he defined as such, and Lewis Carroll among whose works you at least know I think The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland.

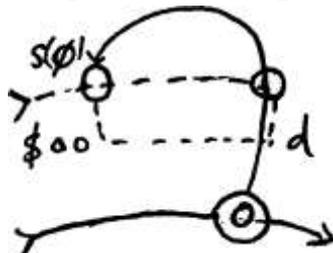
I must say if I had to recommend a book as an introduction to someone who was going to be a child psychiatrist or a child analyst, rather than any one of the books of Mr. Piaget, I would advise him to begin by reading Alice in Wonderland, because he would grasp effectively something which I have the best of reasons for thinking, given everything that we know about Lewis Carroll, to be something which is based on a profound experience of children's jokes, and which effectively shows us the value, the incidence, the dimension of the operation of nonsense as such.

Here I can only begin this indication. I began it in parenthesis, and in connection with the: "It is a dog" of our subject. I mean, from the formulated, signifying fashion in which one should interpret the phantasy that is outlined here and whose title you will easily note here I think in the term phantasy; I mean that in this phantasy: It is a dog, only a dog.

You will rediscover what I gave you as being the formula of the phantasy, namely that what the subject appears to elide is not (28) himself in so far as there is another one there. An imaginary other, o. A first indication of the suitability of this schema for helping you locate the validity of the phantasy as such.

I come to the fourth associative element which Ella Sharpe gives us in this case. Dog again brought the memory of a dog masturbating - the intransitive use naturally (cf 136). It is a question of a dog who is masturbating, as the patient told it, namely that as immediately after the schema a dog "That reminds me of a dog rubbing himself against my leg, really masturbating himself. I'm ashamed to tell you because I did not stop him. I let him go on and someone might have come in." (132)

Is the connotation of this as an element to be put in the sequence of the chain by the analyst, namely: the memory of a dog who is masturbating, something which should completely satisfy us here? I do not believe so. Because this element allows us to advance again a little further into what is in question in this message bringing the dream. And to show you the first loop which was gone through by the associations of the patient, and to show you the place that it is, I would say that nothing is more obvious on this occasion than the associative line. It is precisely what I am drawing here for you in dots.



(29) in so far as it is in the enunciating of the subject; these broken signifying elements are going to pass into ordinary and normal speech by these two points that have been mapped out

of the message and the code, and the message and the code being here something of a quite different nature than the partner who speaks the same tongue who is in question in the term of the other 0.

And what we see here in this associative line that has been travelled, is precisely first of all the fact that we have got there in the form: it is a question of the signifier of the other who is in me. That is the question. And what the subject in this connection begins to unwind here is nothing less than to pass by this point here to which we will come back subsequently, then here at d, at the level where there is the question of his desire.

What is he doing by giving this little cough, namely at the moment he enters a place where there is something that he does not know anything about; a sexual fantasy (fantaisie) involving the analyst... What shows itself by pushing his own phantasy, namely he himself there, if he were at the place of the other he would first of all think of not being there. Or more exactly of being taken for someone other than himself. And now we arrive at what? Very exactly at what happens. The scene here is all of a sudden exposed, developed by the patient. What happens is what: this dog in so far as it is himself he is not there. Here this dog is no longer phantastical, but well and truly this time in reality it is an other, no longer a signifier in any way, but an image, a companion in this room, and a companion all the more obviously close to him, assimilated to him, that it is against his own leg, to the patient that the dog comes to masturbate.

(30) What is the schema of what happens at this moment? It is essentially founded on the fact that the other, here the animal qua real, and which we know to have a relationship to the subject because the subject took care previously to inform us of it, he could imaginarily be this animal on condition that he takes on the signifier barking. This other who was present is masturbating. He shows him something, very precisely by masturbating. Is the situation determined here? No, as the patient himself tells us, there is the possibility that someone might enter, and then what shame, the situation would no longer be sustainable. The subject would literally disappear with shame before this other witness of what is happening.

In other words, what is articulated here: show me what I must do, on condition that the other in so far as he is the big Other, the third, is not there. I look at the other who I am, this dog, on condition that the other does not come in, otherwise I would disappear with shame. But on the contrary this other that I am, namely this dog, I look on him as an ego-ideal, as doing what I am not doing, as an ideal of potency as Ella Sharpe will later say, but undoubtedly not in the sense that she intends because precisely that has nothing to do with the words. Here it is to the degree precisely that the dog is not himself a speaking animal that he can here be the model and the image, and that the subject can see in him what he desires to see, namely

that he is shown what he should do, what he can do, and this in so far as he is out of sight of the other, the someone who might come in, and of the one who speaks.

(31) And in other words, it is in so far as I have not yet gone to my analyst that I can imagine her, namely Ella Sharpe the poor woman, showing me by masturbating, and I cough in order to warn her that she has to take up a normal position.

It is in this game between the two others, the one who does not speak that one imagines, and the one to whom one is going to speak, that he is asked to be careful lest the confrontation should happen too quickly, lest the subject should begin to disappear. This is the point, the level. Where all of a sudden the memory of the dream is going to emerge. Well we will take up the dream the next time so that we can see that the interest of what the dream and the phantasy is going to show us is very precisely that it is the contrary of this phantasy that is forged in the waking state whose features we have today been circumscribing.

Seminar 10; Wednesday 28 January 1959

This research, this exercise which we are carrying out is to show you how in the use that we already make in our experience, practically, of the notion of desire, we presuppose without knowing it a certain number of relationships, of coordinates which are the ones that I am trying to situate by showing you that they are always the same, that it is therefore important to recognise them, because by failing to recognise them thinking always slips a little more to the right, a little more to the left, gets attached to coordinates that are badly defined, and that this is not without giving rise to problems in the way interpretation is practised.

Today I am going to continue the analysis of the dream that I chose in Ella Sharpe precisely for its exceptionally well elucidated character. And we are going to see things from these two aspects: the degree to which what she says, and the sharp, subtle, remarkable things that she says in this observation of the session in which the dream is analysed and the two sessions which follow - what is most remarkable in it is that it is something which is so well inscribed in the categories whose usage I am trying to teach you, that it is thanks to this that one can give to these elements all their value - and the degree to which by failing precisely to distinguish the originality of these elements, she manages to reduce in some way their importance, allows their colour and their features to fade a little, by mixing them, by reducing them to more impoverished, more summary notions which prevent her from getting everything that she could from what she has in her hands.

(2) But here and now, to fix if you wish in your minds something which is destined to take shape always more precisely and a little better, I think that you are beginning to glimpse what the two stories of the graph mean. In sum this route of analytic enuntiating which returns on itself in so far as it is I would say liberated by the principle, the rule of free association, tends towards what? To highlight as far as possible what is included in every discourse, a signifying chain of everything that each one knows qua fragmented, namely of interpretable elements.

And these interpretable elements, qua fragmented, appear precisely in the measure that the subject tries to reconquer himself in his originality, to be beyond what demand has fixed.

has imprisoned in him in terms of his needs. And in so far as the subject, in the expression of his needs, primitively finds himself caught up, moulded in the necessities which are proper to the demand, and which are essentially founded on the fact that already the form of the demand is altered, alienated by the fact that we must think in this form of language, it is already in the register of the other as such, in the code of the other that it must be inscribed.

It is at that level that there is produced the primitive separation, the primitive distance of the subject with respect to something which in its roots is his need, but which cannot, when it arrives, be the same thing, because it is going to be reconquered at the arrival, but only conquered beyond the demand, only in something realised by language, in the form of the subject who speaks, and that this something which is called what (3) the subject wants is something which is referred to the fact that the subject is going to constitute himself as being in a relationship that is no longer in a way immanent, completely included in his living participation, but on the contrary as declaring, as being, and therefore in a certain relationship to being.

In this interval - it is between language which is purely and simply questioning (quesitif), and language which is articulated, in which the subject responds to the question of what he wants, in which the subject constitutes himself with respect to what he is - it is in this interval that there is going to be produced this something which is going to be called specifically desire. And this desire, in this double inscription of the graph, is something which has some homology with this desire in so far as it is situated somewhere in the upper part of its coordinates, and the function that the ego has in so far as this discourse of the other corrects itself, and that the appeal to the other for the satisfaction of a need is constituted with respect to the other in what I sometimes called the full word, the committed word, in a relationship such as the following in which the subject constitutes himself with respect to the other, when he says to the other, "You are my master, you are my wife", this relationship which takes the ego and which establishes it with respect to an object in order to return here in the form of a message.

There is some homology between this relationship in which the ego is captured in the discourse of the other and the simple fact that someone speaks about me as me, about himself as himself; there is something articulated in a fragmentary way, which requires a (4) deciphering of a special order of desire. Just as the ego is constituted in a certain imaginary relationship to the other, so also desire is established, is fixed somewhere in the discourse of the other, halfway to this discourse, in which the subject by his whole life tends to complete himself in something in which his being halfway declares itself.

Desire is a reflection, a return in this effort by which the subject situates himself somewhere before what I designate for

you as phantasy - namely the relationship of the subject qua evanescent, in so far as he vanishes in a certain relationship to an elective object, the phantasy always has this structure; it is never simply an object relation. The phantasy is something which cuts, a certain vanishing, a certain signifying fainting of the subject in the presence of an object. The phantasy satisfies a certain accommodation, a certain fixation of the subject, something which has an elective value. The electivity of this value, is what I am trying to show you this year with the help of a certain number of examples.

In this opposition of the subject to a certain object there is something which is implicit in the phantasy, in as much as it is the preface, the prelude to the dream enunciated by the subject. I think I already gave you a sense of it the last time.

The subject arrives and begins to speak about his cough, a message about a message, about this cough which is given as a mysterious warning before going into a room where two others might be, two others who might be making love, to warn them that it is time (5) to separate. On the other hand, in the associations, we see that this cough is something which is very close to a phantasy which he gives right away. Namely that he imagined in an old phantasy that if he were somewhere, and did not want to be found there because he ought not to be in this somewhere, he could bark like a dog, and everyone would say, oh, it's a dog.

The barking reveals itself, as being the signal by which the subject profoundly absents himself from the place where he is, signals himself as being other. And the correlation of the cough with the fact that a couple of others among whom a third association shows us that the subject is also included - because this dog whom he has been in order to bark, namely to make himself other than he is, we see now that in a third memory, this time of a real event, he tells us that this dog is a dog which came to masturbate against his leg: and what would have happened if the two of them had been surprised? In short we see being outlined something which, from the structural order, is essential.

When the two who are within a certain enclosure are confronted there face to face with one another in a properly imaginary relationship which means that what is in question is fairly well marked by the fact that this dog masturbates against his leg, this dog on this occasion, by the very phantasy in connection with which he is introduced, is himself also imaginary, the one who shows himself masturbating, so that he is not absent from the couple of lovers.

(6) But what is essential is not simply to describe that the subject's identification, as one might expect, is everywhere. It is just as much with the subject who is outside, and who announces himself, as with the subject who is inside and who is caught up in the relationships of the couple with what it involves in terms of common imaginary fascination. Either the two elements of the imaginary, dual couple remain joined in the

common fascination here of the act, between embracing, intercourse and the specular fascination; either they remain joined and the other should not be there, or the other shows himself and then the others separate and break up.

It is the structure which it is important to highlight. It is what alters the problem, because when all is said and done what does the subject tell us: that he gave a little cough before going into his analyst even though it is clear that if he has been asked to come up it is because there was nobody else there, because she is all alone; that besides these are not the things, he says, which I would allow myself to think about in connection with you. However this indeed is the problem.

The subject by coughing, namely on the one hand by carrying out this act whose signification he himself does not know because he poses the question of its signification, in making himself by this cough like the dog with its bark other than he is he does not himself know what is this message, and nevertheless he announces himself by this cough. And in announcing himself what does he imagine? What does he imagine there is inside the room (7) for this cough that he signals for us as being in this case an impulse, a compulsion, something which annoys him because it overcame him - it is he himself who signals it, and I highlighted in this connection how striking it is that Ella Sharpe thought that in this connection she should not speak about it, that the subject was not conscious of it and that he should not be made conscious of it, even though it is he himself who introduces these questions, who says that it is a message, about what I do not know, but it is very clear - what does he imagine there is inside, what is the object that is there while he is outside, and announces himself in this fashion which alienates him, by this message which he does not understand? By this message whose association with the dog's bark is there to show that it is to announce himself as another, as someone other than himself that this condition manifests itself.

And notice that after making this loop, a first circuit in which he speaks to us first of all about his cough as a message, then of this phantasy in which he imagined himself to be a dog, we have pointed out in reality the linking of himself with a dog in a room, having in a way traced this passage in an indefinite, ambiguous fashion because he passes consecutively through something which reflects his desire, then embodies his phantasy, he comes back after having completed the loop somewhere. Because from that moment he is going to change register.

(8) At the very moment that my last lecture ended, the subject, the analyst tells us, coughs again, he gives a little cough, as if he were punctuating. (132) After this little cough he tells the dream which I already read.

What I want to tell you is what, starting from this, and in this dream, in connection with this dream, our aim is going to be. I told you that what is manifested in the dream about the relationship of desire to phantasy is manifested with an

accentuation which is exactly the opposite of the one which was given in the phantasy which came in the associations. There what was accentuated was that the subject himself barks. He barks, it is a message, an announcement. He announces himself as essentially other. It is on the plane of a relationship which disguises him in so far as he barks like a dog that he does not understand why he proceeds in this way, that he should put himself in the position either of not being there, or if he is there of announcing himself as an other, and in such a way that the others at that moment, namely what is there to be seen, separate, disappear, no longer show what is there to be shown.

The enigma, is obviously what he imagines. The enigmatic character being well underlined by the fact that in effect what can he have to announce, desire to announce for him to give this cough at the moment that he enters his analyst's office? What is veiled is that aspect of the relationship with this object x who is on this occasion I would not say his analyst, but what is in the room.

(9) In the dream what we are going to see being put completely in the foreground, is something which is here. It is an imaginary element as we are going to see, which is not an indifferent one. And as you might expect, being in a dream it is marked by a certain function. What I have taught you about dreams would have no meaning if this function were not a signifier-function. We know well that what belongs to this aspect of the relationship in the phantasy of the subject, is also something which must have a complex function, not be just an image, but something signifying. But this remains veiled, enigmatic for us. We cannot articulate it as such.

All that we know, is that from the other side of the relationship, the subject has announced himself as other. Namely as a subject marked by the signifier, as a barred subject. In the dream, it is the image that we have, and what we do not know, is what is on the other side, namely: what is he, in this dream, namely what Ella Sharpe, in her interpretation of the dream, is going to try to articulate for him.

We now take the associations connected with the dream. Immediately after the subject has made this remark which concludes the dream, about the usage of the verb "to masturbate" which he had used in a transitive sense, and regarding which he points out that he should have used it intransitively in order to use it in a correct fashion, that having said: "She was so (10) disappointed I thought that I would masturbate her."

It is obviously something else that is in question, either it is a question of the subject masturbating himself - this indeed is what the analyst thinks, and this is what she is going to suggest to him immediately by underlining what the subject himself has remarked, namely that the verb should have been used intransitively. In this connection the subject remarks that in effect that it was very rare for him to masturbate anybody. He only did it once with another boy. "That is the only time I can

remember." And he continues: "The dream is in my mind vividly. There was no orgasm. I see the front of her genitals, the end of the vulva." And he describes something large and projecting hanging downwards like a fold on a hood. "Hoodlike it was, and it was this that the woman made use of in manoeuvring" (it is the term that he had used in the dream). "The vagina seemed to close around my finger. The hood seemed strange." (133)

The analyst replies: "What else do you think of - let the look of it be in your mind." The patient replies: "I think of a cave. There is a cave on the hillside where I lived as a child. I often went there with my mother. It is visible from the road along which one walks. It's most remarkable feature is that it has an (11) overhanging top to it which looks very much like a huge lip." (134) Something like the grotto of the cyclops at Capri where the coast is littered with things like that. A cave with a part of it projecting forward.

In this connection he makes a very remarkable association. "There is some joke about the labia running crosswise and not longitudinally, but I don't remember how the joke was arranged, some comparison between Chinese writing and our own, starting from different sides, or from bottom to top. Of course the labia are side by side, and the vagina walls are back and front, that is one longitudinal and the other crosswise. I'm still thinking of the hood", he says.

These jokes, which in English are a sort of part of the cultural heritage, are well known, they are generally in the form of limericks. The limerick is something which is very important and revealing. I am only mentioning that. I searched in a fairly large collection of some three thousand limericks. This limerick certainly exists, I saw others which were close to it. I do not even know why the theme of China seems precisely to be considered - there was this sort of inversion of the written line - evoked, every time something comes close to a certain assimilation, and at the same time an opposition between the line (12) of the genital slit and that of the mouth, which is transversal, with also what is supposed to be behind the line of the genital slit in terms of the transversality of the vagina.

This goes to show that all of this is very very ambiguous. The closest thing to it, and something which is amusing because of the fact that one cannot see why especially China should come into this association, is the following, limerick 1381 of a work on limericks (English quotation):

"There was a young woman from China
 who thought her mouth was her vagina
 She covered her enormous clitoris with rouge
 And put lipstick on her labia minora" (?)

This loses its its spice in translation, but it is pretty remarkable that it is in any case something which is extremely close to what we are dealing with, and its author underlines for us that the superpositioning of two images, one which is here an

image of the mouth, the other which is a genital image, is very-essential .

What am I going to call attention to here? It is in connection with something with regard to which analytic thought slips right away towards imaginary elements, namely the assimilation of the mouth to the vagina, the mother's womb considered as the primitive element of engulfing or of devouring - and we have all sorts of different testimonies from ethnology, folklore, psychology which show this primitive relationship, as being that of container to contained, that the child may have with respect to what one can call the maternal image.

(13) Does it not seem to you that at this level something deserves to be retained of which I would say that it has quite the same accent as the point that I stopped you at the other time when it was a question of the big and the small giraffe. It was not simply the element between the small and the big, between the mother and the phallus; these elements were what little Hans made of them; one could sit on them, crumple them up; they were symbols, they were already in phantasy things transformed into paper.

One could say in a fashion that is more nuanced, more interrogative, more subject to confirmation, but let us say to punctuate what we are dealing with that this is not nothing, that it is not invalid to introduce there something concerning this very remarkable represented imaginary element which is in the dream and which was depicted for us as something very precisely described, "the fold on a hood". This is not nothing. It is something which already has a certain structure, which covers, which caps, which is also dreaded; and the finger introduced - "to close round" - into this element, this sudden fright is also something which gives us something quite precise as an image, something which should not be lost in a simple general structure of envelopment or of devouring or of swallowing up. It is already put into a certain relationship, precisely with the subject's finger. And I would even say that this is the whole question. Does he or does he not put his finger there? It is (14) certain that he puts his finger there and that he does not put anything else, in particular that he does not put there his penis, which is there present; that this relationship with what has enveloped, gloved the hand is something which is here quite prevalent, put forward, pushed forward at the outcome of the representativity as Freud says to designate the third element active in the dream-work (Traumarbeit).

It is a question of knowing what we should make of this. Whether we should immediately resolve it into a series of readymade, preformed significations, namely everything that one is going to be able to put under that heading, ourselves introduce into this kind of conjurer's hat everything that we are used to finding in it, or whether we should dwell on this, respect it as something which has here a specific value.

You must see, when I say specific value, provided you have a

little bit more than book-knowledge about what a phantasy-life like this can be, that after all that it is quite appropriate that we should not lose this in the very general notion for example of the interior of the mother's stomach of which there is so much talk in phantasies.

Something which is so well developed in the dream deserves to be dwelt on. What we have here before us, is certainly not the interior of a uterus, it is overhanging, this edge which is projecting. And moreover, because she is extremely subtle, Ella Sharpe underlines further on, in a passage which we may (15) subsequently have to encounter, that we are before something remarkable. It is a projection, she says, and immediately afterwards in the passage she announces it is equivalent to a penis. (144)

This is possible, but why hurry one's self. All the more because she also underlines at this moment that it is difficult to make of this projection something linked to the presence of the vagina. It is sufficiently accentuated in the dream, and by the very manoeuvre to which the subject lends himself, I would say substitutes for himself by putting his finger there and not his penis. How could one not see that very precisely this something is localised as one might say in this phantasy which is in effect, as the subject articulates it, something which has the closest relationship with the front and back walls of the vagina; that in a word for a doctor whose profession it is to practice medicine - which was not the case of Ella Sharpe who was a teacher of literature, and this gave her great openings into psychology - it is a prolapse, something which happens in the wall of the vagina in which there occurs this projection of the front wall more or less followed by projections of the back wall and which at a still further stage makes the tip of the cervix appear at the genital orifice. It is something extremely frequent which poses all sorts of problems for a surgeon.

This is not what is in question. Naturally there is here something which brings into play immediately the question and the phantasy of the phallic woman, it is so true that I remembered (16) for your benefit - I was not able to verify the passage (it is a fact that is well enough known for it not to be new for some of you) that Queen Christina of Sweden, the friend of Descartes, who was a tough woman like all the women of that epoch - one could not insist too much on the influence on history of the women of that marvellous half of the eighteenth century. Queen Christina herself one day saw appearing at the orifice of the vulva the tip of a uterus which, without us knowing the reasons for it, happened at that moment of her existence to gape open in a quite characteristic case of uterine collapse (or prolapse). It was then that giving way to a gross flattery her doctor fell at her feet saying: "It is a miracle, Jupiter has finally rendered to you your true sex". Which proves that the phantasy of the phallic woman does not date from yesterday even in the history of medicine or of philosophy.

This is not what is in the dream, nor should it be understood -

the analyst remarks on it later in the observation - that the subject's mother for example had a prolapse. Although why not because in the articulation of her understanding of what is happening the analyst remarks that the subject very probably saw all sorts of things from underneath, that some of his imaginings make us think that there could have been, that there even must have been, in order that her interpretation should be coherent, something analogous, namely a certain apprehension from underneath (17) the skirt of the genital organ (and of that of his mother). But why not go in this direction?

But that is not it. We will be much more entitled to do it in this sense than the analyst herself, in so far as in a little while she is going to pass necessarily by way of this supposition. For our part we have not yet got there. I point out simply that once there is question of references to images of the body - they are going to be brought into play in the interpretation - one would not be precise, why would one not distinguish the haunting memory, or the desire, or the fear of returning into the maternal womb, and the relationship very especially with the vagina which after all is not something of which, as can be seen clearly in this simple explanation, the subject could not have some direct or indirect apprehension.

What I simply wish to underline here, after having marked the special accent of this image of the dream, is that in any case something retains us. It is the fact that the subject associates it right away with something of a quite different order, with this poetic or verbal game which I gave you an example of and not simply to amuse myself - it is to give an idea of the extremely rigorous literary style; it is a genre which has the strictest of laws - and it does not matter whether it is a joke or a limerick, bearing on a story defined literally, and itself bearing on a game concerning writing. Because what we (18) have not found in the limerick that we dug up, is something that the subject affirms that he has heard: it was in referring to the different direction of lines of writing in our way of writing and the Chinese that he evokes at that moment something which is not all that obvious in this association: namely precisely something which puts him on the track of a link between the orifice of the genital lips and the lips of the mouth.

Let us take it that this link as such belongs to this symbolic order. What are more symbolic are the lines of Chinese characters, because it is something which is there, which designates to us that in any case this element here in the dream is an element which has a signifying value, that in this sort of adaptation, of assimilation, of accommodation of desire in so far as it constructs itself somewhere in relation to a phantasy which is between the signifier of the other and the signified of the other - because that is the definition of phantasy - in so far as desire has to accommodate itself to it.

And what am I saying there if not expressing in a more articulated fashion what our experience is when we are seeking to focus what the desire of the subject is. It is that, something

which is a certain position of the subject face to face with a certain object in so far as he puts it in an intermediary position between a pure and simple signification, a thing assumed, clear, transparent for him, and something else which is not a phantasy at all, which is not a need, which is not a (19) pressure, a rope (filin), but something which is always of the order of the signifier qua signifier, something closed, enigmatic. Between the two there is a thing which appears here in the form of a representation which is tangible, extremely precise, imaged. And the subject, warns us by his very associations: this is what is significant.

What am I going to do now? Am I going to go into the way in which the analyst interprets? I must therefore let you know all the material that we have.

What does this analyst say at that moment as she continues: "What else do you think of ... " She replies to the fact that the subject takes up after having coughed, comes back to the hood.

"I'm still thinking of the hood." "Yes, how now?", says the analyst. "A funny man" he says, "at one of the earliest golf courses I remember. He said he could get me a golf bag cheaply and the material would be motor hood cloth'." At this point he gives an imitation after having said: "It was the accent I remember. Imitating him like that reminds me of a friend who broadcasts impersonations which are very clever," ("broadcast" is the important word), "but it sounds swank, to tell you as swanky as telling you what a marvellous wireless set I have. It picks up all stations with no difficulty." "My friend has a splendid memory," he says. "She remembers her childhood too, but mine is (20) so bad below eleven years. I do remember, however, one of the earliest songs we heard at the theatre and she imitated the man afterwards." It is a typical English music hall song which goes as follows: "Where did you get that hat, where did you get that tile?" The tile designates more particularly what is called in this case a topper, a top hat. It can also signify simply lid, or galurin.

"My mind," he continues, "has gone to the hood again and I am remembering the first car I was ever in," but at that time of course it was not called a car but a motor, because the subject is fairly old.

"Well! The hood of this motor was one of its most obvious features. It was strapped back when not in use. The inside of it was lined with scarlet." And he continues: "The peak of speed for that car was about sixty," he speaks about this car as if he were speaking about the life of a car, as if it were human. "I remember I was sick in that car, and that reminds me of the time I had to urinate into a paper bag when I was in a railway train as a child. Still I think of the hood." (134-135)

We are going to stop here in the associations. They do not go very far yet, but I want all the same to counterpoint what I

am bringing you here with the way in which the analyst begins to interpret this. "The first thing of importance" she says, "is to find the cardinal clue to the significance of the dream."

(21) She says quite rightly: "We can do that by noting just the moment when it came to the patient's mind." (138) And then she begins to speak about the dog which masturbated against his leg, about the moment when just before he spoke about the dog to say that he himself imitated this dog, then the cough, then the dream from which he awoke perspiring.

"The deduction," she says, "concerning the significance of the whole dream is that it is a masturbation phantasy." (138) I am in complete agreement with this.

That is of first importance, we agree with her completely. "The next thing to notice," she says, "in connection with this masturbation phantasy is the theme of potency." She does not understand it in the sense of sexual potency, but in the sense of potency in the most universal meaning of the term, as she would say further on, of omnipotence.

"He is travelling round the world. It is the longest dream he has ever had." (This is what the subject says). "It would take a whole hour to relate. Correlate with that his deprecation of 'swank' regarding his friend's impersonations which are broadcast for the whole world", the analyst adds, "and his own wireless which picks up every station. Note his own imitation of the man whose accent had attracted him, a strong colloquial accent, and incidentally he said with regard to this man he had once been a butcher'."

"Impersonation here, whether via friend or himself, has the (22) significance of imitating a stronger or better known person." Is she wrong here? "This is again a further clue to the meaning of the masturbation phantasy, that is, a phantasy in which he is impersonating another person, one of immense power and potency." (139) Here therefore is what is held by the analyst to be self-evident. Namely that the simple fact of these mimed incarnations intervening more or less in connection with - the masturbation phantasy being supposed to be at the root of what happens - the very fact that the subject excused himself for swanking, for boasting, for pushing himself too much, signifies that we have a phantasy of omnipotence which should be put in the foreground.

And is this something that we can subscribe to right away? Once again I would simply ask you here to notice that the least that can be said is that there is perhaps some confusion in saying that it is a matter of an omnipotence that is wished for, or more or less secretly assumed by the subject, even though it seems that this subject, if we keep to the first approach of the dream, its manifest content in this case is rather on the contrary to reduce, to minimise. And the analyst herself underlines it on another occasion about the hood. The analyst is in fact so much further on than her own interpretation under the influence of a certain apprehension of that, of this reduced

aspect of the subject in his whole presence in this phantasy, that she always says that he saw or perceived that when he was a tiny child.

(23) In fact what do we see? We see rather the subject making himself small. In the presence of this kind of vaguely testicular appendix which at the very most he dares approach with a finger which he should perhaps cap, cover, protect, in any case distancing from himself and from the proper exercise of his potency, in any case sexual potency, this signifying object, it is perhaps going a little far, and it is always the same confusion, to confuse the omnipotence imputed to the subject as even more or less denied, with what is on the contrary quite clear on this occasion, the omnipotence of the word.

But the fact is that there is a world between the two because it is precisely in contact with the word that the subject is in difficulty. He is a lawyer, he is very talented, he is seized by the most severe phobias every time he has to appear, to speak. We are told at the beginning that his father died when he was three years old, that the subject had the greatest trouble in bringing him to life a little bit in his memories; but what is the only memory which remains absolutely clear for him: there has been transmitted to him in the family that the last word of his father had been: "Robert must take my place" (127) In what sense is the death of the father dreaded? Is it in so far as the father is dead or in so far as the dying father spoke, said, "He must take my place. Namely be where I am, where I am dying?"

The difficulty of the subject with respect to the word, this distance which means that he uses the word precisely to be (24) elsewhere, and that inversely there is nothing harder for him than not just speaking, but making his father speak - that was only recently reached and it was a startling moment for him the analyst tell us to think that his father spoke - it is not something which at least ought to encourage us to accentuate for him more than for someone else this division between the other qua speaking and the other qua imaginary. Because to be honest, is there not a certain prudence required at this level.

The analyst finds a confirmation of the omnipotence of the subject in the immense character of the dream. The immense character of the dream we can only know about it from the subject. It is he who tells us that he has had a tremendous dream, that there was a huge story beforehand, that there was a whole tour around the world, a hundred thousand adventures which would take an enormous time to tell, that he not going to bore the analyst with. But when all is said and done the mountain gives birth to a little story, to a mouse. If there is here also a notion of something which is indicated as a horizon of omnipotence, it is a narrative but a narrative which is not told. The omnipotence is always on the side of the other, on the side of the world of the word as such. Should we right away see the subject in this case as in terms of what is supposed, and what will immediately be implied in the thinking of the analyst, as

being the structure of the subject, not alone this phantasy as omnipotent, but with the aggressivity that this involves?

(25) It is at this that we should first of all stop to situate precisely what I am in the process of trying to get you to notice, namely the partiality that sometimes appears to occur in the interpretations in the measure that there is ignored a difference of plane which, when it is sufficiently accentuated in the structure itself, must be respected. It is on this condition alone that we know that this difference of plane exists.

What is the question that is posed immediately afterwards, says the analyst : it is "why this phantasy of extreme power?" The answer is given in the dream. He is going around the world. I would put as commensurate with this idea the actual memory that came to him when he was describing the hood in the dream which was so strange, for it brought out not only the fact that he was describing a projection, a fold of a hood, but that the hood was also overhanging like the lip of a cave. So that we get directly the hood and lips of the vulva compared with the great cave on the hillside to which he went with his mother. Hence the masturbation phantasy is one associated with immense potency because he is dreaming of compassing mother earth, of being adequate to the huge cave beneath the protruding lips. That is the second thing of importance" (139)

You see how the analyst's thinking proceeds on this occasion.

(26) Incontestably you cannot avoid sensing a leap here. That there is a relationship because of the association, this is demonstrated, between this memory of the child where he himself was covered, as they say, and the one that is in question, mainly the signifying value of the phantasy that I would call the prolapse phantasy, this of course is not to be excluded. That the subject should be considered by this very fact as being the classical subject as I might say, of the oedipal relationship, namely the subject who raises himself to the level of this embracing of the mother which here becomes the very embracing of mother earth of the whole world, there is here something which seems to me to be a step that is taken too quickly, especially when we know the way, beside this classic, grandiose, schema of the oedipal hero, in so far as he shows himself to be able for the mother, the degree to which opposed to this schema we can see the fact that separated out so well from a phase of the evolution of the child, namely the moment when very precisely the integration of his organ as such is linked to a feeling of inadequacy - contrary to what the analyst says - as regards what would be in question in an enterprise such as the conquest or the embracing of the mother. Effectively this element can play a role, plays an incontestable role, manifested in an altogether immediate way in a great number of observations concerning precisely this narcissistic relationship of the subject to his penis in so far as it is considered by him to be more or less insufficient, too small.

There is not only the relationship with his counterparts, the

(27) masculine rivals, coming into play. Clinical experience shows us on the contrary that the inadequacy of the penis with respect to the feminine organ which is supposed to be quite enormous with respect to the masculine organ, is something too important for us to go so quickly here.

The analyst continues: "Next I would draw your attention to the associations concerning lips and labia. The woman who was a stimulus for the dream had full red passionate lips. In the dream he had a vivid picture of the labia and the hood. The cave had an overhanging lip. He thinks of things longitudinal like labia and then of crosswise things - where I would now suggest the mouth as compared with vulva." This without commentary. "He thinks, moreover, of the first motor he was in and of its hood and of the scarlet lining in that motor. He then thinks immediately of the speed of the car, and says the peak of its speed was so many miles an hour, and then speaks of the life of the car and notices that he talks of a car as if it were human." From that, "I should deduce that the memory of the actual cave which he visited with his mother also acts as a cover memory. I would deduce that there is projected onto the motor with its scarlet lined hood this same forgotten memory and that the peak of speed has the same significance as the projection in the genitals in the dream - it is the peak of the hood. I infer there is an actual repressed memory of seeing the genitals of someone much older than himself; of seeing them when he was tiny

(28) and I infer this from both the car and the cave and going around the world in conjunction with the immense potency required. The peak, the hood, I interpret as the clitoris."

(140)

Here all the same, a little like the way I said above that the mountain announced by the dream gave birth to a mouse, there is something analogous to be seen in what I would almost call the mumblings of the analyst.

I am willing to accept that this peak of speed is identifiable with the hood, but if it is really something so pointed, so enormous, how can it be associated with a real memory, experienced in childhood. There is all the same some exaggeration in concluding so daringly that it is a question here for the subject of a screen memory concerning an effective experience of the feminine genital organ in so far as it is a question of the clitoris. This indeed in effect is what nevertheless the analyst resorts to in mentioning at that moment as a key element the fact that his sister is eight years older than him, and the references he made to the woman's voice and to the voice of the impersonated man, which are alike by imitation. "Considering that the reference to her is in connection with male impersonation, I deduce that at least when he was very tiny he saw her genitals, noticed the clitoris and heard her urinate." She has to however immediately afterwards further evoke, considering all the work in analysis so far done, that "in addition there was some babyhood situation in which he had a quite definite opportunity of seeing his mother's genitals." (29) All the details suppose that in his memories, in these

images, that he would have been at that moment lying on the floor, when he saw something or other.

I am going all the same to punctuate for you here something which will indicate to you at least where I want to get to in these criticisms in which I am teaching you to look for, to spell out as one might say the sense in which a certain number of inflections in the understanding of what is presented to us are going, which are not destined I believe to increase its likelihood, nor indeed above all, you will see this when we get to it, give it its proper interpretation.

I must all the same make my position clear. I mean tell you where I am trying to get to, what I intend to say in opposition to this tunnel within which the thinking of the analyst is engaged. And you will see that these interpretations are in this regard extremely active, even brutal, suggesting that the root of the question is the aggressive character of his own penis. You will see that it is his penis qua aggressive organ, qua an organ which brings into play the dangerous and deleterious character of the water that it emits, namely the urination which you have seen evoked in this case, and to which we will have occasion to come back, since the analyst obtains an effect which we need not be surprised at in that an adult subject, and one who is rather old, wet his bed the following night. But let us leave this to one side.

What I mean is the following: I believe that this dream, if I may anticipate a little what I believe I am going to be able to (30) demonstrate for you by continuing this painful and slow work of line by line analysis of what is presented to us Where is the question posed in what can be called the fundamental phantasy of the subject in so far as it is presentified? The subject imagines something, we do not know what, concerning his analyst - I will tell you what the analyst herself thinks about the point reached in the transference. This transference is at that moment a transference of a clearly imaginary type. The analyst is focussed, centred as something which is essentially, with respect to the subject, in the relationship of an other ego. The whole rigid, measured, attitude of defence, as the analyst very well senses it, in the presence of Ella Sharpe, is something which indicates a very tight specular relationship with the analyst. And contrary to what Ella Sharpe says, it is very far from being an indication that there is no transference. It is a certain type of transference from a dual imaginary source.

This analyst, in so far as she is the image of him, is in the process of doing what? This imposes itself already. It is quite clear that what the subject warns her against by his little cough, is that she is dreaming of masturbating. This is what she is thought to be in the process of doing. But how do we know it? We do not know it immediately, and this is very important. How could we know it: it is to the degree that in the dream the matter is then quite clear because it is precisely what the subject is saying: namely that there is someone masturbating.

The analyst recognises quite correctly that it is a question of (31) the subject masturbating, that it is he who is dreaming. But that the dream is the manifested intention in the subject of masturbating her - adding that this is an intransitive verb - is enough to put us on the track of the following: that the signifying phantasy that is in question is that of the close link between a male and female element taken along the theme of a sort of enveloping. I mean that the subject is not simply captured, contained in the other. In so far as he masturbates her, he masturbates himself, but also he does not masturbate.

I mean that the fundamental image that is in question, which is presentified there by the dream, is of a sort of sheath, a glove. They are moreover in fact the same words. Sheath (gaine) is the same word as vagina (vagin)

Here are two linguistic encounters which are not without signification. There would be a lot to say from the linguistic point of view about the sheath, the glove, the scabbard (fourreau), because I think there is here a whole chain of images which it is extremely important to locate, because they are much more constant you will see, and present, not just in this particular case but in many other cases.

What is in question is that the imaginary, signifying person is something in which the subject sees in a way, enveloped, captured, every sort of possibility of his sexual manifestation. It is with respect to this central image that he signifies his desire and that his desire is in a way stuck.

I am going to try to show it to you because I must do a little (32) more to justify the following notion: in the sequence of associations there is going to appear an idea which crossed the subject's mind, the analyst tells us, during the recent associations. The subject in the course of his duties must go to a place where the king and queen are to be present. He is haunted by the idea of having a breakdown in the middle of the road, and by this of blocking the passage of the royal motor car. The analyst sees here once more the manifestations of the omnipotence dreaded by the subject for himself, and even goes so far as to see in it - we will see this in detail the next time - the fact that the subject had the opportunity, during some primitive scenes of intervening in this fashion, of stopping something, the parents, during this primitive scene.

What on the contrary seems to me to be very striking, is precisely the function of the car to which we will return. The subject is in a car, and far from separating anything by this stopping - he no doubt stops the others; we know well that he stops everything because this is what is in question; that is why he is in analysis; everything stops, he stops the others, the royal, parental couple on this occasion in a car and well and truly in a single car which envelops them like the hood of his car, which he evoked by his associations, reproducing the character of the covering cave.

We are at the time when Melanie Klein is beginning to show (33) the relationship between it and sexual consumption (consumption) . There was some of it in his childhood. But where was he? He was in bed, and you will see him severely restricted by pins put in the sheets. There are other elements which also show us the subject in his pram with a harness and straps.

The question for the subject, as it is presented to us here, is the following: in the very measure that he is bound, that he himself is stopped, he can enjoy his phantasy precisely, and participate in it by this supplementary activity, this derived, displaced activity, which is compulsive urination. In the very measure that he was bound at this moment even this sort of supplement, of false jouissance which this urination gives him that we note so frequently precisely in subjects in relationship to the proximity of parental intercourse. At that moment he becomes what? Precisely this partner whom he tells us needs so much for him to show her everything, and that it is necessary that he must do everything, that he must feminise himself. In so far as he is impotent, as one might say, he is male. And that this has compensations on the level of ambitious potency, is something we will come back to it the next time, but in so far as he is liberated he feminises himself.

It is in this sort of game of hide-and-see, this double game, of the non-separation of the two aspects in him of femininity and masculinity, in this type of unique, fundamentally masturbatory phantastical apprehension, that the apprehension of sexual desire remains for him that the problem lies; and I hope to show the next time the degree to which we are justified in orienting our interpretations in this sense to allow the subject to take a step forward.

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We have come then to the moment of trying to interpret this dream of Ella Sharpe's subject. An undertaking naturally which we can only attempt, moreover in a purely theoretical way, as a research exercise, because of the exceptionally well-developed character of this dream which occupies, according to Ella Sharpe whom we trust on this point, a crucial point in the analysis.

The subject, who had a tremendous dream which would take hours to recount, which he says he has forgotten, that there only remains this event which happens on a road in Czechoslovakia on which he find himself because he had undertaken a journey around the world with his wife. I even underlined that he said: "A journey with my wife around the world." He found himself on a road and what happens there is that he is in short involved in sexual events with a woman who, I point out, appears in a certain fashion which is not said in the first text of the dream. The subject says: I see at the same time that she is above me, she was doing everything she could to get my penis, (cf 133) This is an expression which we will have to come back to later on.

Of course says the subject, I did not agree with this at all, to the point that I thought that she was so disappointed that I should masturbate her. He makes a remark here on the fundamentally intransitive nature of the verb "to masturbate" in English, which we as well as the author have already taken an interest in - even though the author did not accentuate less (2) directly its basis on what was a sort of grammatical remark by the subject - by remarking that it was a question of course of a masturbation of the subject.

We highlighted the last time the value of what appears even less in the associations than in the development of the image of the dream: namely that is formed by this fold, this pinned hood like the fold of a hood of which the subject speaks. And we have shown that undoubtedly the recourse to the stock of images taken into consideration by the classical doctrine, and which are obviously derived from experience, when they are brought into play in a way as so many separate objects, without locating their function very well in relation to the subject, tends perhaps towards something which can be forced, regarding which we underlined the last time the paradoxes that there can be in the too hasty interpretation of this singular appendix, of this protrusion of the feminine genital organ as being already the sign that what is in question is the mother's phallus. (144)

And also moreover something like this does not fail to encourage another leap in the analyst's thinking, so true is it that an imprudent step can only be rectified, contrary to what is said, by another imprudent step, that error is much less erudite than is believed because the only chance of saving oneself from an error is to commit another one which compensates for it.

We are not saying that Ella Sharpe erred completely. We are trying to articulate better modes of direction which would have (3) been able to permit a more complete accommodation. This is subject to every reservation of course because we will never have the crucial experience.

But the next leap that I spoke about is that what is in question is again much less the phallus of the partner, of the partner in this case imagined in the dream, than the phallus of the subject. This we know; we admit the masturbatory nature of the dream, matched by many other things in all that appears afterwards in the statements of the subject. But this phallus of the subject, we are already led to consider it as being this instrument of destruction, of aggression, of an extremely primitive type, as it emerges from what could be called imagery. And it is in this sense that the thinking of the analyst, Ella Sharpe in this case, is already oriented. And even though she is far from communicating all her interpretation to the subject, the point on which she is immediately going to intervene is in this sense that she tells him, it is after having pointed out to him the elements that she calls omnipotent - according to her interpretation what appears according to her in the dream is: secondly masturbation, thirdly this masturbation is omnipotent in the sense that it is dealing with this boring and biting organ which is the subject's own phallus. (146)

It must be said that there is here a real intrusion, a real theoretical extrapolation on the part of the analyst, because in fact nothing, either in the dream or in the associations, gives any kind of basis for bringing immediately into the (4) interpretation this notion the subject has that the phallus here intervenes as an organ of aggression, and that what might be dreaded would be in a way the return, the retortion of the aggression that is implied on the part of the subject.

One cannot help underlining here that it is hard to see at what moment the subject passes from these intrusions to the analysis of what she had effectively before her eyes and which she senses with such detail and finesse. It is clear that it is a question of theory. It is enough to read this formula to perceive that after all nothing justifies it except something that the analyst does not tell us. But again she has sufficiently informed us, and with enough care, about the antecedents of the dream, about the patient's case in its broad details, for us to say that there is undoubtedly here something which constitutes a leap.

That this might have appeared necessary is indeed after all something that we will willingly concede to her, but it also

appears necessary to us, it is on this point that we pose the question and that we are going to try to take up this analysis again, not in a way to substitute for the imaginary equivalents, for the interpretations in the sense that it is understood properly speaking, something which is a given and should be understood like that

It is not a question of knowing at one or other moment what each element of the dream means on the whole. On the whole one can only say that these elements are more than correctly judged. (5) They are based on a tradition of analytic experience at the time Ella Sharpe is working. And on the other hand they are certainly perceived with great discernment and with great finesse. That is not the question. It is to see whether the problem cannot be clarified by being formulated, articulated in a fashion which better links the interpretation with this thing on which I am trying to put the accent for you here, namely the intersubjective topology, which in different forms is always the one which I am trying here to construct before you, to reinstate in so far as it is the very one of our experience: that of the subject, of the small other, of the big Other, in so far as their places should always, at the moment of every phenomenon in analysis, be marked by us if we wish to avoid this sort of tangle, this knot which has been really entwined like a thread which no one can unknot and which forms, as one might say, the daily stuff of our analytic explanations.

We have already gone through this dream under many forms and we can all the same begin to articulate something simple, direct, something which is even not at all absent from the observation or which can be extracted from this reading that we have carried out. I would say at the stage of what precedes, what the subject brings, and of the dream itself, there is a word which with everything that we have here in terms of a vocabulary in common seems to be the one which comes first, and it cannot be ruled out that at that time it may have come to Ella Sharpe's mind. It is not at all a question of bringing into play a notion which was not within her range? we are in the English milieu which is (6) dominated at that time by discussions such as those being developed for example between people like Jones and Joan Riviere whom we already brought up here in connection with her article: "On womanliness as a masquerade". I spoke to you about it in connection with the discussion concerning the phallic woman (or phase) and the phallic function in feminine sexuality.

There is a word that he gives importance to at a particular moment, which is the moment which is really necessary for Jones to enter into the understanding of what is indeed the most difficult point to understand, not simply to bring into play, in analysis, namely the castration complex. The word that Jones uses is the word aphanisis, which he introduced in an interesting fashion into the analytic vocabulary, and which we must not at all consider as being absent from the English milieu, because it makes a great deal of it.

Aphanisis means disappearance, in so far as he understands it in

that way. And what he means by that we will see further on. But for the moment I am going to make a quite different use of it; what is really an impressionistic use for what is really there all the time throughout the material of the dream, its surrounds, the behaviour of the subject, everything that we have already tried to articulate in connection with what is presented, with what is proposed to Ella Sharpe.

This very subject who, before presenting himself to her in a fashion which she so finely describes, with this sort of profound absence which of itself gives her the feeling that there is no remark of the subject, nor any of his gestures (7) which is not entirely thought out, and that nothing corresponds to anything connected with feeling. This subject who is so cautious, who moreover does not announce himself, who appears, but who once he appears is more elusive than if he were not there; this subject who himself has put to us in the preliminaries of what he brought forward about his dream, this question which he posed in connection with his little cough. And this little cough is given in order to do what? To make something which must be there at the other side of the door disappear. We do not know what. He says it himself: in the case of the analyst, what is there to make disappear? He evokes in this connection the warning given in other circumstances, in another context, that it is a question of them separating, of disuniting, because the situation might be embarrassing if he entered. And so on.

In the dream we are in the presence of three characters, because it must not be forgotten that his wife is there. Once the subject has said it he does not speak about it any more. But what exactly happens with the sexual partner, the one in fact whom he evades. Is it all that sure that he is evading her? What follows in what he says proves that he is far from being completely absent; and he put his finger, he tells us in this sort of protruding, inside-out vagina, this sort of prolapsed vagina on which I laid stress. Here again questions are posed and we are going to pose them. Where is what is at stake, where is the important thing in this scene? That which in so (8) far as one can pose this question in connection with a dream - and we can only pose it in so far as the whole Freudian theory obliges us to pose it - what will be produced immediately afterwards in the associations of the dream, is something which involves this friend, mediated by a memory which came to him concerning the hood that constitutes the feminine sexual organ of someone who on a golf course offered him something in which his clubs could be put, and whom he found to be a really funny person. He speaks about him with a kind of amused pleasure. And one can clearly see what is happening around this real character. He is really the sort of person who makes you ask where he came out of.

This is the way he speaks about him. With that face, and that glibness what could he have been. Maybe a butcher, he says. God knows why he says a butcher. But the style and the general atmosphere, the ambiance of impersonation in connection with

this character - immediately afterwards he is going to start imitating him - shows that here it is a question of

This moreover is the way that the notion of imitation is introduced, and the association with his friend who impersonates men so well, who is so talented, and who exploits that talent by broadcasting. And in this connection the first idea that comes to the subject is that he is talking too much about her, that he seems to be boasting by speaking about a relationship with somebody so remarkable, to be "swanking". I checked the (9) English word that he uses: it is quite a new word, that can almost be considered to be slang, and that I have tried to translate here by la ramener. He uses it to say: I feel guilty to be swanking like that. In a word he disappears, he makes himself very small, he does not want to take too much space on this occasion.

In short, what forces itself on us the whole time, what recurs as a theme, as a leitmotif in all the discourse, the remarks of the subject, is something for which the term aphanisis appears to be here much closer to "to make disappear" than "to disappear". It is something that is a perpetual game in which we sense that in different forms something - let us call this if you wish the object of interest - is never there.

The last time I insisted on this. It is never where it is expected, it slips from one point to another in a sort of conjuring trick. I am going to insist on it again, and you are going to see where this will take us, what is the essential, the characteristic at every level of the confrontation before which the analyst finds herself.

The subject cannot put anything forward without immediately, in some way, subtilising what is essential in it as one might say. And I would point out that in Jones also this term aphanisis is a term which is open to a critique which would end up with a denunciation of some inversion of perspective.

Jones remarked in his subjects that with the approach of the castration complex what he senses, what he understands, what he sees in them, is the fear of aphanisis, of the disappearance of desire. And in a way what he tells us, is that castration - he (10) does not formulate it this way because he does not have the apparatus - is the symbolisation of this loss.

We have underlined what an enormous problem it is to see in some genetic perspective, how a subject, let us presuppose in his development at some moment or other, at a sort of animal level of his subjectivity, begins to see the tendency being detached from itself in order to become the fear of its own loss. And Jones makes of aphanisis the substance of the fear of castration.

Here I would point out that it is exactly in the opposite sense that things should be taken. It is because there can be castration, it is because there is the interplay of signifiers implied in castration, that in the subject there can be

elaborated this dimension in which he can be afraid, alarmed, about the future possible disappearance of his desire.

Let us note carefully that if we give to something like desire a full meaning, the meaning of tendency, at the level of animal psychology, it is difficult for us to conceive of it as something altogether accessible in human experience. The fear of the lack of desire is all the same a step which has to be explained. To explain it he tells you: the human subject in so far as he has to inscribe himself in the signifier finds there a position from which effectively he puts in question his need in so far as his need is caught up, modified, identified in (11) demand. And in that way everything can be very satisfactorily conceptualised, and the function of the castration complex in this case, namely the way in which this taking up of a position by the subject in the signifier implies the loss, the sacrifice of one of his signifiers among others, is what we are leaving to one side for the moment.

What I want simply to say, is that the fear of aphanisis in neurotic subjects corresponds, contrary to what Jones believes, to something which should be understood in the perspective of an insufficient formation, articulation, of a partial foreclosure of the castration complex. It is in so far as the castration complex does not protect the subject from this sort of confusion, distraction, anxiety which manifests itself in the fear of aphanisis which we see effectively in neurotics. And this is something we are going to be able to check in connection with this case.

Let us continue, and let us come back to the text itself, to the text of the dream, and to these images that we spoke about the last time, namely the presentation of the feminine sexual organ in the form of this prolapsed vagina.

In the images of the subject, this sort of scabbard, this sort of bag, or sheath, which creates such a strange image here that one cannot all the same - even though it is not at all a unique and exceptional case, but not one which is frequently met with, which has not been described in a very well-defined way in the (12) analytic tradition. Here one can say that in the very image which is employed in the signifying articulation of the dream - namely what does this mean between the characters who are present - the image even takes on its value from what happens, from what it is used for.

In fact what we see, is that the subject, as he says, is going to put his finger in it. He will not put his penis in it. Certainly not. He will put his finger in it. He turns outside-in, he re-ensheaths, he re-invaginates what is devaginated here, and it is just as if what happens here is a conjuring trick. Because when all is said and done he puts something instead of what he should put there. But also he shows that something can be put there. And although something can effectively be suggested by the form of what is presented, namely the feminine phallus, everything happens as if - this

phallus which is in effect in question in the clearest fashion ("to get my penis") - we were entitled to ask what the subject is in the process of showing us because much more than an act of copulation it is a question here of an act of exhibitionism. This happens let us not forget in front of a third person. The gesture is there, the gesture is already evoked of the conjurer performing what is called in French, le sac a l'oeuf. Namely this woollen sack in which the conjurer alternately makes the egg appear and disappear, makes it appear when it is not expected, and shows that it has disappeared when one expected to see it. One also says "the bag of the eggs" (sic) in English.

(13) The gesture, what one might call the showing that is in question is all the more striking because in the subject's associations, what we have seen is very precisely always to give a warning at the moment that he appears, so that nothing is going to be seen of what was there before, or again to have himself taken, as he says in his phantasy, for a dog by barking, so that people would say there is nothing there except a dog. Yes, always the same conjuring away without our knowing what it is that is conjured away. And undoubtedly it is above all the subject himself who is conjured away. But the dream points out to us, and allows us to specify that in any case if we seek to specify what is localised in the dream as being what is at stake in this conjuring away, it is certainly the phallus, the phallus that is in question: "To get my penis" (133).

And we are I would say so habituated, so hardened to this by analytic routine, that we scarcely stop at this datum of the dream. Nevertheless the choice by the subject of "to get" to designate what the woman is trying to do here - it is a verb that is used in a very polyvalent way. It is always in the sense of obtaining, of gaining, of capturing, of seizing, of joining to one's self. It is a question of something that is broadly speaking obtained in the general sense. Naturally we understand this with the note and the echo of femina curem et benim (ou penim) devorem, but it is not so simple.

Because after all what is being questioned in this case is something which when all is said and done is far from belonging (14) to this register. And also the question, whether in effect it is a matter in any form at all, real or imaginary, of obtaining the penis, the first question to be asked is namely: this penis where is it? Because it seems to be self-evident that it is there. Namely that on the pretext that what has been said, that the subject in the account of the dream said that she was manoeuvring "to get my penis", it seems to be believed that because of this it is there somewhere in the dream. But literally, if one looks at the text carefully, there is absolutely nothing to indicate it.

It is not enough that the partner's imputation is given there for us to deduce that the subject's penis is there, is sufficient in a way to satisfy us on the subject of this question: where is it? It is perhaps completely elsewhere than

at the place where this need that we have to complete things in a scene where the subject is supposed to evade It is not so simple. And from the moment that we pose this question we clearly see in effect that it is here that the whole question is posed, and that it is also from there that we can grasp what is the singular discordance, the strangeness that is presented by the enigmatic sign that is proposed to us in the dream. Because it is certain that there is a relationship between what is happening and a masturbation.

What does that mean, what does that underline for us in this case? It is worthwhile picking it up in passing. Because even though it is not elucidated, it is very instructive. I (15) mean even though it is not articulated by the analyst in her remarks. Namely that the masturbation of the other, and the masturbation of the subject are the same thing, that one can even go pretty far, and say that everything that is in the grasp of the other by the subject himself which resembles a masturbation, effectively supposes a secret narcissistic identification which is less that of body to body than of the body of the other to the penis. That a whole part of the activities of caressing - and this becomes all the more evident because it takes on a character of a more detached, a more autonomous, a more insistent pleasure, bordering even on something which is called more or less correctly on this occasion a certain sadism - is something which brings into play the phallus to the degree that as I have already shown you it is already profiled imaginarily in the beyond of the natural partner. That the phallus is involved as signifier in the relationship of the subject to the other, means that it appears there as something which can be sought in this beyond of the embrace of the other with which there begins, there takes hold every kind of typical form more or less accentuated in the sense of perversion.

In fact, what we see here, is that precisely this masturbation of the other subject is completely different from this taking of the phallus in the embrace of the other which would allow us to make strictly equivalent the masturbation of the other and the masturbation of the subject himself, that this gesture whose meaning I showed you, which is almost a gesture of verifying (16) that what is there is undoubtedly something that is very important for the subject, it is something that has the closest relationship with the phallus, but it is something also which demonstrates that the phallus is not there, that the "to get my penis" that is in question for the partner is something which slips away, which escapes, not simply through the subject's will, but because some structural accident which really is what is in question, what gives its style to everything that comes back in the sequence of the association, namely also that this woman whom he tells us about who behaves herself so remarkably in the fact that she impersonates men perfectly, that this sort of unbelievable trickster whom he remembers years afterwards, and who offers him with an incredible glibness something which remarkably is again one thing for another, to make a covering

for something with a covering which is made for something else, namely the cloth that is meant to make a hood for a car, and to make what? To allow him to put his golf clubs in it. This sort of tricky gentleman, this is what will come back again.

Everything has always this character, whatever element is in question, that it is never quite what presents itself that is in question. It is never with the real thing that we are dealing. Things present themselves always in a problematic form.

Let us take what comes immediately afterwards, and what is going to play its role. The problematic character of what insists in front of the subject immediately continues, and by means of a (17) question which emerges in connection with, which is going to arise from childhood memories. Why the devil did he have at another moment another compulsion than the one he had at the beginning of the session, namely the cough. Namely cutting his sister's straps. "I dislike thinking it was a compulsion; that's why the cough annoys me. I suppose I cut up my sister's sandals in the same way. I have only the dimmest memory of doing it. I don't know why nor what I wanted the leather for when I had done it. I thought I wanted the strips to make something useful but I expect something quite unnecessary." (135) To my way of thinking it was very useful, but there was no serious reason for it.

Here again we find ourselves before a sort of flight within which still another flight is going to follow, namely the remark that he suddenly thinks of the straps that tied back the hood of the motor car. Or "rather" that makes him think of the straps that one sees a child fastened in by in a pram.

And at that moment in a curious fashion, in a negative fashion, he introduces the notion of pram. He thinks that there was no pram in his family. But of course nothing could be more silly, he says himself, to say there was no pram in our house. There must have been one because there were two children.

Always the same style of something which appears under the form of something that is missing, and which dominates the whole style of the subject's associations. The following step, directly linked to this one is what? "I suddenly remembered I meant to send off letters admitting two members to the Club. I (18) boasted of being a better secretary than the last and yet here I am forgetting to give people admission to enter the Club." (135-136) In other words, I did not write to them. And linked on immediately, and indicated in inverted commas in Ella Sharpe's text even though she does not make much of it, because for an English reader these lines do not even need to be put in inverted commas, the citing of a sentence which is found in what is called the General Confession, namely one of the prayers from The Book of Common Prayer, from the book of prayers for everybody which form the foundation of the religious duties of people in the Church of England.

I should say that my relations with The Book of Common Prayer do

not date from yesterday and I will only evoke here the very beautiful object which was created twenty or twenty five years ago in the surrealist community by my friend Roland Penrose who made use of The Book of Common Prayer for the initiates of the circle. When one opened it, on each side of the inner cover there was a mirror.

This is very instructive, because this is the only fault that one can find with Ella Sharpe for whom undoubtedly this text was much more familiar than for us, because the text of The Book of Common Prayer is not exactly the same as the quotation that the subject gives from it. "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done" instead of "We have undone those things (19) we ought to have done" (as the subject says). It is a small thing, but afterwards there is missing a whole sentence which is in a way the counterpart in the text of the prayer of the General Confession "and we have done those things which we ought not to have done". (136,142)

The subject does not feel any need at all to confess this. For the good reason that when all is said and done it is really always a question for him of not doing things. But doing things is not his business. This indeed is what in fact is in question, because he adds that he is quite incapable of doing anything at all, for fear of being too successful, as the analyst has underlined for us.

And then, because it is not the least important thing, this is what I want to get to, the subject continues the sentence: "There~is" no good thxngT:n^us"". This is a "pure invention by the subject, because in The Book of Common Prayer there is nothing like this. There is: "And there is no health in us". I think that the "good thing" that he put in instead is indeed what is in question. I would say that this good object is not there, this indeed is what is in question, and it confirms for us once again that it is a question of the phallus.

It is very important for the subject to say that this good object is not there. Again we find the term: it is not there. It is never where one expects it. And it is undoubtedly a good thing which is for him something of extreme importance, but it is no less clear that what he tends to show, to demonstrate is (20) always one and the same thing, namely that it is never there. There where what? There where one could get it, make off with it, take it. And it is indeed this which dominates the totality of the material that is in question.

That in the light of what we are going to advance here, the bringing together of the two compulsions, that of the cough and that of having cut strips of leather from his sister's sandals, seems less surprising - because it is really the most common type of analytic interpretation; the fact of cutting the strips of leather which hold together his sister's sandals has a relationship that we will be satisfied here, like everybody else, to approximate in general to the theme of castration.

If you take up Mr. Fenichel, you will see that braid cutters are people who do this in function of their castration complex (Fenichel 349). But how can we say, except by weighing each case precisely, whether it is the retortion of castration, the application of castration to a subject other than themselves, or on the contrary the taming of castration, the carrying out on an other of a castration which is not a real castration, and which therefore shows itself to be not so dangerous as that; the domestication as one might say, or the lessening in value, the devaluation of castration, in the course of this exercise; all the more because when braids are cut it is always possible, conceivable, that the aforesaid braids will grow again, namely give reassurance against castration.

This is naturally all that the sum of analytic experience allows (21) to be developed from this subject, but which in this case only appears to us as hiding But there is no doubt that there is a link here with castration.

But now what is in question, if we force ourselves not to go more quickly, and to sustain things at the level where we have sufficiently indicated them, namely that here castration is something which forms part as one might say, of the context of the report, but that nothing allows us up to the present to bring into play in as precise a fashion as the analyst has done the indication of the subject postulated on this occasion in order to articulate something as being a primitive aggressive intention turned back against himself. But after all what do we know about it. Is it not much more interesting to pose, to ceaselessly renew the question: where is this phallus? Where is it in effect, where must it be conceived of?

What we can say, is that the analyst is going very far, is pushing things a good deal in saying to the subject it is somewhere very far back in you, it forms part of an old rivalry with your father, it is there at the principle of all your primordial omnipotent wishes, it is there at the source of an aggression whose retortion you are undergoing in this case. Since there is nothing properly speaking which allows there to be taken from the text something which is articulated in this way.

Let us try for our part, after all, to ask ourselves the question a bit more daringly than we would naturally tend to. (22) We cannot it seems, propose in connection with a printed, written observation like this, something which we would demand of one of our pupils. If it was one of my pupils I would speak about it much more severely. I would say what possessed you to say something like that. In such a case I would ask the question: where is the countertransference element?

Here it would seem to be rash to pose such a question about the text of an author who after all is someone to whom we have every reason to accord the greatest trust at that date, namely Ella Sharpe. I smiled at myself when I asked myself that question because it really seemed to me a little bit exorbitant. But

one is never wrong when all is said and done to be a little bit too daring in this way. It may happen that this is the way that one will find what one is looking for. And in this case I searched before I found. I mean that I had read in an almost distracted way the first pages of this book. I mean that as always one never reads well, and nevertheless there was there something extremely fine.

Immediately after having spoken about the dead father, about this father whom she cannot manage to bring to life in the subject's memory, but which she has managed to move a little bit recently: you remember how startled the subject was that his father must at one time have spoken - immediately afterwards she remarks that it is the same difficulty as regards herself, namely "He has no thoughts about me" (126). There was already there something which should have held our attention. "He feels (23) nothing about me". He cannot believe in that. It must be said that it is disturbing. That the subject is not aware of it as such, does not mean that there is no manifestation of it, because there is "a dim stirring of anxiety of some kind" on one or other occasion. This is where I had badly remembered something that is expressed here. But when one reads that one thinks that it is a general dissertation of the kind that he sometimes addresses to the analyst.

"I think" she says, this indeed is what is in question, "that the analysis might be compared to a long-drawn-out game of chess and that it will continue to be so until I cease to be the unconscious avenging father who is bent on cornering him, checkmating him, after which there is no alternative to death" (127).

This curious reference to chess on this occasion, which really is not implied by anything, is all the same what deserves on this occasion to hold our attention. I would say that at the time I read this page I effectively found it to be very nice, because I did not immediately dwell on its value in the transference order. I mean that during the reading what that gave rise to in me was: that's very fine.

One should compare the whole development of an analysis to a game of chess. And why? Because what is most beautiful and what stands out most in the game of chess is that it is a game which can be described as follows: there are a certain number of elements which we will characterise as signifying elements. (24) Each one of the pieces is a signifying element. And in short in this game which is played by means of a series of answering moves founded on the nature of the signifiers, each one having its own move characterised by its position as signifier, what happens is the progressive reduction of the number of signifiers which are involved. And one could after all describe an analysis in that way: that it is a question of eliminating a sufficient number of signifiers so that there only remain in play a reduced number of signifiers so that one can sense properly where the position of the subject is within them.

Because I subsequently came back to it I believe in effect that this can take us a good way. But what is important is the following: it is that Ella Sharpe - effectively everything that I know or came to know from from other sources about her work indicates it - effectively has this conception of analysis, that there is in her interpretation of analytic theory this kind of profound highlighting of the signifying character of things. She put a stress on metaphor in a way which is absolutely not out of harmony with the things that I am explaining to you. And all the time she knows how to highlight what is properly speaking this element of linguistic substitution in symptoms, which means that she brought it to bear in her analysis of literary themes which constitute an important part of her work. And all the technical rules that she gives share also in something which is quite profoundly marked by a kind of experience, of apprehension of the interplay of signifiers as such.

(25) So that the thing which, in this case, one can say that she overlooks, I would say are her own intentions which are expressed in this register, on the plane of the word of which there is question in the forefront of this observation, of cornering. She brings "cornering" in here for the first time. It is only in the sessions following the interpretation that she gave of this dream that we will see the same word appearing in the discourse of the patient, and I will tell you later in what connection.

This is why, as you already know, I pointed out to you what also happened two sessions later. Namely how impossible he finds it to corner his partner also in a game, the game of tennis, to corner him in order to put in the final shot, one that the chap would not be able to reach. What is in effect in question is the following that it is on this plane that the analyst manifests herself. And I am not at all in the process of saying that the subject perceives this.

It is of course understood that she is a good analyst. She says it in all sorts of ways: it is a case in which you will have noticed, she says to the students, that I said very little, or that I was silent. Why, she says? Because there is absolutely nothing in this subject which does not indicate to me in all sorts of ways that his claim to want to be helped means exactly the contrary, namely that above all he wants to remain sheltered, and with his little covering, the hood of the car over him.

(26) The hood, is really a quite fundamental position. She senses that. Everything that happens in connection with the memory of the pram which is effaced, is all the same the fact that he was pinned into his bed, namely pinned down. Moreover it seems that he has very specific notions about what the fact of being tied down can provoke in a child, even though there is nothing particular in his memory which permits him to evoke it, but undoubtedly this bound position is very important for him.

Therefore she is far from allowing this countertransference element to appear, namely something which would be too interventionist in the game. An aggressive move in this game of chess. But what I am saying, is that because she senses so well the import of this notion, this aggressive exercise of the analytic game, she does not see its exact import, namely that what is in question is something which has the closest relationship to the signifiers.

Namely that if we ask where the phallus is, it is in this direction that we should search for it. In other words, if you wish, in the quadrangle of the schema of the subject, of the other, of the ego qua image of the other, and of the big Other this is what is in question: the place from where the signifier as such can appear. Namely that this phallus which is never where we expect it, is there all the same. It is there like the purloined letter, where one least expects it, and there where nevertheless everything designates it.

To express it as the metaphor of chess really allows us to articulate it, I would say that the subject does not want to (27) lose his queen, and I will explain. In the dream it is not the subject who is there looking at the phallus. This is not where the phallus is. Because in effect for this subject - as the analyst dimly perceives it through a veil in her interpretation the subject has a certain relationship with omnipotence, or simply with potency, with power. His power, in this case the phallus, what he must preserve at all costs to keep out of the game because in the game he could lose this phallus, is here represented in the dream quite simply by the person that one would least think represents it, namely his wife who is there and who has, far from being the apparent witness that she is - because in fact it is nowhere indicated that this function of seeing is something which is essential

In this subject as in many other subjects, and I would ask you to retain this because it is such an obvious clinical fact that one is absolutely stupefied that it is not a commonplace in psychoanalysis, the feminine partner qua other is precisely what represents for the subject what is in a way most taboo in his potency, and also who is at the same time found to dominate the whole economy of his desire. It is because his wife is his phallus that I would say that he makes this kind of tiny lapse that I noted for you in passing, namely "taking a journey with my wife around the world" and not "around the world with my wife" (132).

The accent of omnipotence is put on "around the world", by our analyst. I think that the secret of omnipotence in this (28) subject is in the "with my wife", and that what is in question is that he should not lose that, namely that he does not perceive precisely that this is what is to be put in question, namely to perceive that his wife on this occasion is the analyst.

Because when all is said and done this is what is in question.

The subject we would say does not want to lose his queen, like those bad chess players who imagine that to lose the queen is to lose the game, even though to win at chess means when all is said and done to arrive at what one calls an end game, namely with the subject the simplest and most reduced facility for displacement and the minimum of rights - I mean that he has not the right to occupy a space which is put in check by another - and with that to find the advantage of the position.

On the contrary it is greatly to one's advantage on occasion to sacrifice one's queen. This is what the subject does not want to do under any circumstances because the signifier phallus is for him identical with everything that happened in the relationship with his mother.

And it is here that there appears, as the observation clearly allows to transude the inefficient and defective character of what the father was able to contribute in this case. And of course we come back to something, back to an already known aspect of the relationship of the subject to the parental couple. The important thing is not that. The important thing is effectively to accentuate this very hidden, very secret relationship of the subject to his partner, because it is the most important thing to highlight at the moment that he appears (29) in analysis. In the analysis where in short the subject, by his discreet coughing, warns his analyst about what is happening inside if perchance she had, as it happens in the dream, turned her bag or her game inside out, that she should put it away before he arrives because to see that, to see that there is nothing but a bag he stands to lose everything.

This is the prudence that the subject demonstrates and which in a way maintains, in a tight bond with all the pram-pinned position of his childhood, the subject in a relationship with his desire which can only be phantastical, namely that it is necessary for him to be himself tied into a pram or something else and well and truly held and tightly wrapped so that there can be elsewhere the signifier, the image of an omnipotence that is dreamt of.

And this is also the way that we must understand the capital role of omnipotence for him, this whole story and this observation about the automobile. The automobile, this problematic instrument of our civilisation, whose relationship everyone can clearly see on the one hand with power (the horsepower, the speed, the peak of speed), and everyone obviously talks about phallic equivalence, the equivalence of a power to help the impotent. But on the other hand everyone well knows its extremely coupling, feminine character also. Because it is not for nothing that an automobile is spoken of as feminine, that we give this car on occasions all sorts of little nicknames which also have the character of a partner of the opposite sex. Well this automobile on this occasion, (30) about which he makes such problematic remarks: namely, "strange how one speaks of the life of a car as if it were human" (135).

These of course are banalities, but it is very curious that this automobile, is so obviously this thing in which there is reproduced this sort of signifying ambiguity which ensures that it is both what protects him, what binds him, and envelops him, that which in relation to him has exactly the same position as the projecting hood in the dream - it is moreover the same word which is used in the two cases - as in the dream this bizzare sexual protuberance on which he finds himself putting his finger, as on the other hand - I well underlined something that I translated badly. I should not have said "streaked with scarlet", but "lined with scarlet". But what does the analyst tell us? The analyst has made no mistake here. The moment, she tells us, that she made her decisive intervention is not the moment that she began to put him on the path of his aggression, with as a result for the subject moreover a very curious manifestation that one could call psychosomatic, whose character she does not quite pick up, that namely instead of the cough, the following day he had a little colicky pain before entering.

God knows whether he tightened his for that, but as I said above he has everything to lose at the moment of entering the psychoanalyst's office for the following session. But Ella Sharpe's own interpretation appears to be very illuminating. It is at the second session after this interpretation when the subject tells her that he again had had a colicky pain on leaving (31) the session the last time. He then talks to her about what? He says, I was unable to use my car because the garage man had not finished with it. I was not able to be angry with him because he is so kind that it is impossible to blame him, he is very very good. And then the car is not a necessity. And he adds with an accent of imitation, but all the same I really want it, I like it, I love it. (cf 146)

And she makes no mistake. For the first time, she says, I was able to deal with the libidinal wishes. Here it is a question of libido. We are therefore in complete accord with her. If I am doing a critique of Ella Sharpe, it is because I find her at every point, in this observation, to be admirably sensitive. She understands the importance of that, namely what is present in the life of a subject as desire properly speaking, desire being characterised by its non-motivated character - he has no need of this car; the fact that he declares his desire to her, that it is the first time that she hears such a discourse, is something which presents itself as unreasonable in the discourse of the subject.

She tells us that she hops on it, namely that she underlines it for him. It is a curious thing, here we have something like a kind of wobble of the projector. While she was always so good at telling us what she said to the subject, even the most daring things, the most risky things, here we do not know exactly what she said to him. It is very annoying. What she tells us, is that she was really overjoyed to have the opportunity of telling him: there you are admitting that you desire something. But what (32) it is she might have told him, we will never know.

We know simply that she might all the same have told him something rather oriented in the sense of what she had told him before, to explain why it is precisely after what she told him that the following day the subject came to tell her, not quite content, a bit dissatisfied that that night he had wet the bed.

We cannot consider that this is, as I told you already, in itself a symptom, which, however transitory it may be, and however significant it may be of the fact that a blow had been delivered which certainly had its effect, is all the same something which absolutely confirms us in what I could call the sense of the proper direction of the statement if there is a statement (dire) Namely that if we have the notion about this thing that enuresis represents, it is certainly what I would call the personal implementation of the penis.

But again it is not when all is said and done a genital implementation. It is precisely the penis as real which very frequently intervenes as an echo - this is what clinical work shows us in the case of children - of the sexual activity of the parents; it is to the degree that the subjects, whether masculine or feminine children are in a period when they are very profoundly interested by the sexual relations of the parents that there occur enuretic manifestations which on occasion are the bringing into play on the plane of the real of the organ as such. But the organ as such, as real, no longer as signifier, which is indeed something which shows us that on this occasion Ella Sharpe's intervention had in effect a certain import.

(33) Is this import appropriate? This is of course what remains to be looked at more closely. It is quite clear that what follows, namely the arrival, the emergence, certain reactions which the subject seems to regard with a certain feeling of satisfaction, and which is the fact that when he is playing he no longer allows his companions to tease him, namely that he caught one of them around the neck and held him in a strangle hold in a corner with sufficient force for him not to want to start again, can in no way be considered as something which is really along the line of what is to be obtained.

Let us not forget all the same that if there is something the subject is to be allowed, namely to corner the other in a game, this is absolutely not the same thing as "cornering him" by the throat about this game. This is precisely an inadequate reaction, one which does not render him for a moment any more capable of cornering him in the game, namely where relationships with others occur, the other as the locus of the word, as locus of the law, as locus of the conventions of the game. It is precisely this which is found to have failed because of this slight lowering of the act of analytic intervention.

I think that today we have pushed things fairly far. The next time I will give the last seminar of what is grouped here around the literary analysis of desire and its interpretation, and I will try to gather for you in some formulae how we should

conceive of this function of the phallic signifier in its most (34) general form in connection with the relationship and the fashion in which the subject situates himself in desire. I will try to collect around these notions that I am trying to articulate here with the help of the graph the function which we should very precisely give to the phallic signifier.

I will also try to show you where exactly there is situated, how in terms of mapping things out in our exercise of analysis you can try to situate the phallic signifier in this schema. In a word, and to give you something which is borrowed from the work of a writer to whom I already alluded here, Lewis Carroll, I will show you what Lewis Carroll says somewhere more or less in the following terms: he thought that he had seen a garden gate - this famous gate of paradise of the interior of the maternal womb around which there are currently centred, or even engulfed all the analytic theories - which could be opened with a key. He looked more closely and perceived that it was a double rule of three. The next time I will show you what this rule of three is.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 11 February 1959

I announced the last time that I would finish this time the study of this dream that we have particularly well gone into from the point of view of its interpretation, but I will be obliged to devote one more session to it.

I recall rapidly that it is this dream of a patient, a lawyer who has great difficulties in his job. And Ella Sharpe approaches him prudently, the patient having every appearance of being cautious, without it however being a question of rigidity, in his behaviour. Ella Sharpe did not fail to underline that everything that he recounts comes from thinking, never from feeling. And at the point that we are at in the analysis, he has a remarkable dream which was a turning point in the analysis and which is briefly reported to us. It is a dream that the patient concentrates in a few words even though it was, he says, a tremendous dream, so tremendous that if he remembered it it would take hours to relate it.

There emerges from this something which to a certain degree presents the characteristics of a repeated dream, namely a dream that he already had. Namely that somewhere in this journey that he had taken as he says, with his wife around the world - and I underlined that - at a point that is in Czechoslovakia - it is the only point on which Ella Sharpe will tell us she did not obtain enough light because she did not question the patient about what the word Czechoslovakia signifies; and after all she regrets it because after all we may have some ideas about this Czechoslovakia - sexual play takes place with a woman, in front (2) of his wife. The woman with whom this sexual play takes place is someone who is presented as being in a superior position in relation to him. On the other hand it does not immediately appear in his account, but we discover in his associations, that it is a question for her of manoeuvring, "to get my penis".

I pointed out the very special character of the verb "to get" in English. "To get", is to obtain, in all the possible fashions of the verb obtenir ♦ It is a much less limited verb than obtenir. It is to obtain, to catch, to grasp, to finish off. And "got" if the woman got my penis, that would mean that she has it.

But this penis comes so little into play that the subject tells us that the dream ends with this wish that before the disappointment of the woman he thought that she should masturbate

herself.

And I explained to you that what was in question here obviously is the key meaning, the secret meaning of the dream. In the dream this manifests itself by the fact that the subject says: "I thought I would masturbate her." In fact there is a real exploration of something which is interpreted in the observation with a great deal of insistence and of care by Ella Sharpe as being the equivalent of the hood.

When one looks at it closely this something deserves to hold our attention. It is something which shows that the feminine organ is here a sort of inside-out, or prolapsed vagina. It is a (3) question of a vagina, and not of a hood. And everything continues as if this pseudo masturbation of the subject was nothing other than a sort of verification of the absence of the phallus.

This is the sense in which I said that the imaginary structure, the manifest articulation of the should at least oblige us to delimit the character of the signifier. And I pose in short the question of whether by a more prudent method, one that could be considered as being more strict, we might not arrive at greater precision in the interpretation, on condition that the structural elements which we have committed ourselves to getting to know are sufficiently brought into the picture in order precisely to differentiate what the meaning of this case is.

And we are going to see that in doing this - we are going to see that as always the most particular cases are the cases which have the most universal value, and what this observation shows us is something which should not be neglected, because it is a question of nothing less than of specifying, on this occasion, this character of signifier without which one cannot give its real position to the function of the phallus (which remains at once always so important, so immediate, so central in analytic interpretation) instead of finding ourselves at every moment of its management in impasses whose most striking point is expressed, betrayed by the theory of Mrs. Melanie Klein who as we know has made the object phallus the most important of objects.

(4) The object phallus is introduced into Kleinian theory, and into its interpretation of experience, as something she says, which is the substitute, the first substitute which enters the experience of the child - whether it is a question of a little girl or of a boy - as being a more convenient, more manageable, more satisfying sign. This is something to provoke questions about the role, the mechanism How are we to conceive this outcome of an altogether primordial phantasy as being that around which there is already going to be organised this profoundly aggressive conflict which puts the subject in a certain relationship with the body of the mother as container. In so far as from this container he covets, he desires - all the terms are unfortunately always used with difficulty, namely they are juxtaposed - he wishes to extract these good and bad objects which are there in a sort of primitive mixture within the body of

the mother. And why the privilege accorded to this object phallus within the body? Undoubtedly if all of this is put to us with the great authority, the style of description so clear-cut, in a sort of dazzlement caused by the determined character of the style, I would almost say not open to any discussion, of Kleinian statements, one cannot fail also to pull oneself up after having heard it affirmed, and ask oneself at each moment: what is she aiming at?

Is it effectively the child who testifies to this prevalence of (5) the object phallus, or on the contrary is it she herself who gives us the signal of the character as having the meaning of phallus? And I must say that in many cases we are not illuminated about the choice that must be made as regards the interpretation.

In fact I know that some of you are asking yourselves where this sign of the phallus must be placed in the different elements of the graph around which we are trying to orientate the experience of desire and its interpretation. And I have some echoes of the form taken by the question for some of you: what is the relationship between this phallus and the Other, the big Other that we speak about as being the locus of the word.

There is a relationship between the phallus and the big Other, but it is certainly not a relationship beyond, in the sense that the phallus would be the being of the big Other even though someone posed the question in those terms. If the phallus has a relationship to anything, it is much more with the being of the subject. Because, I believe that this is the new, important point that I am trying to get you to grasp in the introduction of the subject into this dialectic which is the one that is pursued in the unconscious development of different stages of identification, through the primitive relationship with the mother, then with the coming into play of the Oedipus complex and of the operation of the law.

What I highlighted here is something which is at once very tangible in the observations - especially in connection with the (6) genesis of perversions - and which is often veiled in what one links with the signifier phallus. The fact is that there are two very different things according to whether it is a question for the subject of being this phallus with respect to the other, or indeed by some ways, principles or mechanisms which are precisely those that we are going to take up in the subsequent evolution of the subject, but which are already, these relationships, installed in the other, in the mother. Precisely the mother has a certain relationship with the phallus, and it is in this relationship with the phallus that the subject has to valorise himself, has to enter into competition with the phallus.

It is from there that we began two years ago when I began to revise this relationship.

What is in question about the function of the signifier phallus with respect to the subject, the opposition of these two

possibilities for the subject with respect to the signifier phallus to be it or to have it, is here something which is an essential distinction. Essential in so far as these incidences are not the same, that it is not from the same moment of the relation of identification (identificatory) that being and having come, that there is between the two a real line of demarcation a line of discernment, that one cannot be it and have it, and in order that the subject should in certain conditions manage to have it it is in the same way necessary that there should be a renunciation of being.

Things in fact are much less simple to formulate if we try to (7) stick as closely as possible to the dialectic that is in question. If the phallus has a relationship to the being of the subject it is not to the pure and simple being of the subject, it is not with respect to this subject who is supposed to be the subject of knowledge, the noetic support of all objects, it is to the speaking subject, to a subject in so far as he assumes his identity and as such, I would say - this is why the phallus plays its essentially signifying function - that the subject at once is it and is not it.

I apologise for the algebraic character that matters are going to take, but we have to learn to fix ideas because for some people there are questions which arise.

If in our notation something presents itself - and we are going to come back to it later - as being the barred subject in front of the object (Soo), namely the subject of desire, the subject in so far as in his relationship to the object he is himself profoundly put in question - and that it is what constitutes the specificity of the relationship of desire in the subject himself; it is in so far as the subject is in our notation the barred subject that one can say that it is possible in certain conditions to give him the phallus as signifier. This in so far as he is the speaking subject.

He is and he is not the phallus. He is it because it is the signifier in which language designates him, and he is not it in so far as language - it is precisely the law of language on another plane - takes it away from him. In fact things do not (8) happen on the same plane.

If the law takes it away from him, it is precisely to arrange things, it is because a certain choice is made at that moment. The law when all is said and done introduces into the situation a definition, a redistribution, a change of plane. The law reminds him that he has it or that he does not have it. But in fact what happens is something which is played out entirely in the interval between this signifying identification and this redistribution of roles. The subject is the phallus, but the subject, of course, is not the phallus.

I am going to put the accent on something which the very form of the operation of negation in our tongue will allow us to grasp in a formula in which there occurs the slippage that concerns the

use of the verb to be. One can say that the decisive moment, the one around which there turns the assumption of castration is the following: yes one can say that he is and that he is not the phallus, but he is not without having it (il n'est pas sans l'avoir).

It is in this inflection of, it is not that he does not (de n'être pas sans) it is around this subjective assumption which is inflected between being and having that the reality of castration operates. Namely that it is in so far as the phallus, as the penis of the subject, in a certain experience, is something which has been put in the balance, which has taken on a certain function of equivalence or of standard in the relationship to the object, that it takes on its central value and that up to a certain point one can say that it is in proportion to a certain renunciation of his relationship to the phallus that the subject enters into possession of this sort of infinity, of plurality, or allness of the world of objects which characterises the world of man.

(9) You should carefully note that this formula, whose modulation, accent, I would ask you to hold onto is found in other forms in every tongue. Il n'est pas sans l'avoir has a clear correspondent. We will come back to it in what follows.

The relationship of the woman to the phallus and the essential function of the phallic phase in the development of feminine sexuality is articulated literally in the different, opposing form which suffices to distinguish clearly this difference of starting points of the masculine subject and the feminine subject with respect to sexuality.

The only exact formula, the one which allows us to get out of the impasses, the contradictions, the ambiguities around which we turn concerning feminine sexuality, is that she is without having it (c'est qu'elle est sans l'avoir). The relationship of the feminine subject to the phallus, is to be without having it. And it is to this that she owes the transcendence of her position; and this is what we will come to. We will manage to articulate concerning feminine sexuality and this relationship which is so particular, so permanent, on whose irreducible character Freud insisted, and which is expressed psychologically in the form of Penisneid.

In sum we would say, to push things to the limit and to make them clearly understood, that for man his penis is restored to him by a certain act which at the limit one could say deprives him of it. It is not exact, this is to make you open your ears wide. Namely that those who have already heard the preceding formula should not degrade it into the second accent that I give it.

(10) But this second accent has its importance because it is here that there is made the junction first of all with the developmental element from which one usually starts, and which is the one that I am going to try to revise now with you by asking ourselves how we can formulate with the algebraic elements that we make use of, what is in question in these famous first

relationships of the child with the object - particularly with the maternal object, and how starting from there we are able to conceive how there comes about the junction with this privileged signifier that is in question and whose function I am trying to situate here.

The child, in what is articulated by the psychiatrists, specifically Mrs. Melanie Klein, has a whole series of first relationships which are established with the body of the mother conceived, represented here in a primitive experience which we grasp badly from the Kleinian description: the relationship of symbol and of image... And every one knows that this is what is in question in the Kleinian text: the relationship to the symbol form. Even though it is always an imaginary content which is put forward here.

In any case we can say that up to a certain point something which is symbol or image, but which undoubtedly is a sort of one - we find here almost an opposition which tallies with philosophical oppositions, because what always constitutes the operation of the famous Parmenides between the one and being - we can say that the experience of the relationship to the mother is an experience (11) entirely centred around an apprehension of unity and of totality.

All the primitive progress that Melanie Klein articulates for us as being essential to the development of the child is that of a relationship of a fragmentation to something which represents outside himself, both the totality of all those fragmented, broken-up objects which seem to be there in a sort not of chaos, but of primitive disorder, and on the other hand which will progressively teach him to grasp from these relationships of these different objects, of this plurality in unity of the privileged object which is the paternal object, to grasp the aspiration, the progress, the path towards his own unity.

The child, I repeat, grasps the primordial objects as being contained in the body of his mother, this universal container which is presented to him and which is supposed to be the ideal locus as one might say of his first imaginary relationships.

How can we try to articulate this? There are obviously here not two terms, but four terms. The relationship of the child to the body of the mother, which is so primordial, is the framework in which there come to be inscribed these relationships of the child to his own body which are those which for a long time I tried to articulate for you in terms of the notion of the specular affect - to the degree that this is the term which gives the structure of what one can call the narcissistic affect. It is in so far as from a certain moment the subject recognises himself in an original experience as separated from his proper image, as having a certain elective relationship with the image of his own body, a specular relationship which is given to him either in specular experience as such, or in a certain relationship of transitivist (12) captivation (castration transtif) in games with the other close to him in age, very close and which oscillates within a

certain limit, which cannot be superseded, of motor maturation - it is not with just any type of little other (here the word little meaning the fact that it is a question of little friends) that the subject can have this experience, these games of prestige with the other his companion; age here plays a role on which I insisted at one time.

The relationship of this with an eros, the libido, plays a special role; here there is articulated the whole measure in which the couple of the child to the other who represents for him his own image come to be juxtaposed, to interfere, to be made dependent on a larger and more obscure relationship between the child in his primitive endeavours - the tendencies coming from his needs - and the body of the mother in so far as it is effectively in effect the object of primitive identification. And what happens, what is established, lies entirely in the fact that what happens namely the unconstituted form in which there appears the first wails of the child, the cry, the appeal of his needs, the fashion in which there are established the relationships of this still unconstituted primitive state of the subject with respect to something which is presented then as a one at the level of the other, namely the maternal body, the universal container, is what is going to regulate in an altogether primitive fashion the relationship of the subject in so far as he is constituted in a specular fashion, namely as ego - and the ego is the image of the other - with a certain other (13) which must be different from the mother (in the specular relationship it is the little ousus?).

But as you are going to see, it is a question of something completely different, given that it is in this first quadripartite relationship that there are going to be made the first accommodations of the subject to his own identity. Do not forget that it is at that moment, in this most radical relationship that all the authors, of one accord, place, situate the locus of psychotic or parapsychotic anomalies of what one can call the integration of such and such a term of autoerotic relationships of the subject to himself on the frontiers of the body image.

The little schema that I formerly made use of and which I recently recalled, the one of the famous concave mirror, in so far as it allows it to be conceived that there can be produced, on condition that one places one's self at a predetermined favourable point - I mean within something which prolongs the limits of the concave mirror from the moment that one makes them pass through the centre of the spherical mirror - something which is imaged by the experience that I brought to your attention at that time, the one which provokes the appearance - which is not a phantasy, but a real image - which can be produced in certain conditions which are not very difficult to produce; the one which is produced when one gives rise to a real image of a flower within a perfectly existing vase thanks to the presence of this spherical mirror, provided one looks at the totality of the apparatus from a certain point.

It is an apparatus which allows us to imagine what is in (14) question, namely that it is in so far as the child identifies himself with a certain position of his being in the powers of his mother that he realises himself. It is indeed on this that the accent of everything that we have said about the importance of the first relationships concerning the mother is brought to bear. It is in so far as he integrates himself in a satisfying manner into this world of insignia which all the behaviours of the mother represent. It is from there, to the degree that he will situate himself here in a favourable fashion that there can be placed, either within himself, or outside himself, or lacking to him as one might say, this something which it is hidden from himself: namely his own tendencies, his own desires; that he will be able to be from the first relationship in a more or less faulty, deviated relationship with his own drives.

It is not too complicated to imagine this. Remember what it was I made the explanation of narcissism turn around: a manifest, crucial experience described a long time ago, the famous example put forward in the Confessions of St. Augustine, that of the child who sees his milk-brother in possession of the maternal breast: Vidi ego et expertus sum zelantem parvulum; nondum loquebatur et intuebatur pallidus amaro aspectu conlactaneum suum", which I translated as: "I have seen jealousy in a baby and know what it means. He was not old enough to talk, but whenever he saw his milk brother at the breast, he would grow pale with envy." Amaro has a different accent to the French amer; one could translate it by poisonous, but that does not satisfy me either.

Once this experience is formalised you are going to see it (15) appearing with all its absolutely general import. This experience is the relationship to his own image which, to the extent that the subject sees his counterpart in a certain relationship with the mother as ideal primitive identification, as the first form of the one, of this totality of which following on explorations concerning this primitive experience analysts take so much into account that they only speak about totality, about the notion of the conscious awareness of totality, as if by focusing on this aspect we should begin to forget in the most persistent way that precisely that which experience shows us is pursued to the most extreme limits of everything that we see in the phenomena: the fact is that in the human being there is no possibility of acceding to this experience of totality; that the human being is divided, torn, and that no analysis restores this totality to him because precisely something else is introduced into its dialectic which is precisely what we are trying to articulate because it is literally imposed on us by experience, and in the first place by the fact that the human being, in any case, cannot consider himself as any more in the final analysis than as a being in whom there is something missing, a being - whether it is male or female - who is castrated. That is the reason why it is to the dialectic of being, within this experience of the one that the phallus is essentially referred.

But here we have then this image of the small other, this image of the counterpart, in a relationship with this totality that the (16) subject has ended up by assuming, and not without delays. But it is indeed on this, around this that Melanie Klein makes pivot the evolution of the child. It is the moment called the depressive phase which is the crucial moment, when the mother as totality was realised at a moment. It is with this first ideal identification that we are dealing.

And face to face with this what do we have? We have the conscious awareness of the desired object as such, namely that the other is in the process of possessing the maternal breast. And it takes on this elective value which makes of this experience a crucial experience on which I would ask you to dwell as being essential for our formalisation.

To the extent that in this relationship with this object which on this occasion is called the maternal breast, the subject becomes aware of himself as deprived, contrary to what is articulated in Jones - every privation he says somewhere (and it is always in terms of the discussion of the phallic phase that this is formulated) engenders the sentiment of frustration - (it is exactly the contrary), it is in the measure that the subject is imaginarily frustrated, that he has here the first experience of something which is in front of him in his place, who usurps his place, who is in this relationship with the mother which should be his own, and in which he senses this imaginary gap as frustration - I say imaginary because after all there is nothing to prove that he is himself deprived; an other can be deprived, (17) or he can be looked after in his turn - that there comes to birth the first apprehension of the object; in so far as the subject is deprived of it.

It is there that there begins, that there opens out something which is going to allow this object to enter into a certain relationship with a subject regarding which we do not know effectively whether it is an *s* to which we should add the index *i*, a sort of passionate self-destruction adhering absolutely to this pallor, to this decomposition which is shown to us here by the literary paintbrush of the one who tells us about it, namely St. Augustine, or whether it is something which already we can conceive of as being properly speaking an apprehension of the symbolic order, namely what does this mean; namely that already in this experience the object should be symbolised in a certain fashion, take on a full, signifying value, that already the object in question, namely the mother's breast, not only can be conceived of as being or not being there but can be related to something else which can be substituted for it. It is starting from there that it becomes a signifying element.

In any case Melanie Klein, without realising the import of what she is saying at that moment, takes this option by saying that there can be something better there, namely the phallus. But she does not explain to us why. This is the point which remains mysterious.

Now, everything depends on this moment at which there is born the activity of a metaphor which I pointed out to you as being so essential to uncover in the development of the child. Remember what I told you the other day about these particular forms of the (18) activity of the child before which adults are at once so disconcerted and awkward; the one in which the child not satisfied to have begun to call "bow-wow", namely by a signifier that he has invoked as such, what you have persisted in telling him is a dog, begins to decree that the dog goes "miaow" and the cat goes "bow-wow". It is in this activity of substitution that there lies the whole role, the mainspring of symbolic progress. And this is much more primitive of course than when the child articulates it.

What is in question, is in any case something which goes beyond this emotional (passionnelle) experience of the child who feels himself frustrated, namely precisely the one we can formalise by saying that this image of the other is going to be substituted for the subject in his destructive passion, in this case in his jealous passion, and to find itself in a certain relationship to the object in so far as he is also in a certain relationship with the totality which may or may not concern him.

But it is to the extent that the object can be substituted for this totality, to the extent that the image of the other can be substituted for the subject, that we enter properly speaking into symbolic activity, into what makes of the human being a speaking being, into what is going to define all his subsequent relationship to our object.

$$\frac{i(o)}{\$} \diamond \frac{o}{I}$$

(19) This having been said, in the case that we are dealing with, how can distinctions that are so fundamental, which remain of such a primitive character, help us to orientate ourselves? I mean to create the discriminations which allow us precisely to extract the maximum profit from these facts which are given in the experience of the dream and of the particular subject whose case we are analysing.

Let us see whether we ought at every instant propose to ourselves to closely grasp this relationship to desire, this relationship called desire, this relationship to the object in so far as it is relationship of human desire, and whether it is always required that we should find there this relationship to an object in so far as the subject proves to be at the limit abolished there. If S in relation to o is the formula of desire, and if all of this is inscribed in this fourfold relationship which ensures that the subject, in the image of the other, namely in the successive identifications which are going to be called ego, finds to substitute for himself a form for this fundamentally pallid, fundamentally anguished thing which is the relationship of the subject in desire.

What do we find in the different symptomatic elements which are brought to us here in this observation? We can take from many angles this material which is brought to us by the patient. Let us take it as far as possible from the angles which are most distinct, from the symptomatic angle.

There is a moment when he tells us that he used to cut the thongs, the straps of his sister's sandals. This comes during the analysis of the dream, that is to say after a certain number (20) of interventions, which are no doubt minimal but nevertheless not nothing, by Ella Sharpe his analyst; simple responses made him come little by little, one thing following on another, after the hood - the fact that the hood is the form of the feminine genital organ in the report of the dream - after the hood of the car, the straps that were used to fix, to tie back this hood, then the straps that he used to cut at a certain time from his sister's sandals, without still being able to account for the objective which he was no doubt pursuing, which seemed quite useful to him even though he cannot really show in any way the necessity for this.

These are very exactly the same terms that he uses about his own car which, in a session following on this session of dream interpretation, he tells the analyst the garage had not given back to him - and which he does not dream of making an issue of and which is something which he does not need, is something he would like, even though it was not a necessity. He says that he likes it.

Here it seems are two forms of the object with which the subject has of course a relationship whose singular character he himself articulates; namely that in the two cases it does not answer any need. And it is now we who are saying it. We are not saying, modern man does not need his car - even though everyone who looks at it carefully perceives that it is only too obvious. Here it is the subject who says it: I do not need my car, but I like it, I desire it. And as you know it is here that Ella Sharpe seized (21) with the action of a hunter before her prey, the object of the search, tells us that she intervened with great energy, without telling us, which is a curious thing, the terms in which she did so.

Let us begin to describe a little the things that are in question. And because I wanted to start from what was the most simple, the most easily locatable thing in an old equation; the thongs, or the straps is the o. There was a time where he made a collection of these straps.

Let us oblige ourselves to follow a little our own formulae, because if we set them up it is in order that they should be of some use to us. The image of o, it is quite clear that here it is his sister about whom not much has been said, because nobody doubts how complex it is to bring up the slightest thing when it is a question of explaining what we are dealing with.

His sister is the elder, she is eight years older than him.

This we know, it is in the observation. She does not make great use of the fact that she is eight years older than him, but what is certain is that if she is eight years older than him, she was eleven years old when he the subject was three years old at the time that he lost his father. A certain taste for the signifier has the advantage of making us do some arithmetic from time to time. It is not something that is unwarranted because there is absolutely no doubt that in their earliest years children are (22) continually doing it concerning their age and their relative age. The rest of us, thank God, forget that we have passed fifty, we have reasons for that, but children are very attached to knowing their age. And when one makes this little calculation one perceives something that is very striking: it is that the subject tells us that he only begins to have memories after the age of eight or eleven. (134)

This is in the observation. Not a lot is made of it, but it is not simply a kind of random discovery that I am giving you here, because if you now read the observation, you will see that it goes much further than this: namely that it is at the very moment that this is brought to our notice by the subject - I mean that he had a bad memory for anything below eleven years - that he talks immediately afterwards about his girlfriend who is very gifted, a girl who is very clever at impersonating, namely at imitating anybody and particularly men, in a brilliant fashion because she is used by the BBC.

It is striking that he talks about that just at the moment that he is speaking about something that seems to be of another register, namely that below eleven years there is just a black hole. We have to believe that this is not unrelated to a certain relationship of imaginary alienation of himself in this sisterly personage. i(o), is indeed his sister and this can explain a lot of things for us, including the fact that he will afterwards elide the existence in his family of a pram, of a baby carriage. On that level it is the past, it is his sister's (23) business.

Again, there is a moment that he caught up as one might say once again with this sister, namely that he has come to meet her at the same point that he left her concerning an event that is crucial. Ella Sharpe is right to say that the death of the father is crucial. The death of the father left him confronted with all sorts of elements except one which would probably have been very precious for him in order to surmount the different captivations.

Here in any case it is the point which of course is going to be a little bit mysterious for us, because the subject himself underlines it: why these straps? He does not know. Thank God we are analysts and we can easily guess what is there at the level of the f ... I mean that it can be required that we should have a little idea about what is there, because we know other observations. It is something which obviously has a relationship not with castration - if castration were well assimilated, well recorded, assumed by the subject, there would

not have been this little transitory symptom; but at that moment it is all the same indeed around castration that this revolves - but that we have no right, for the present, to extrapolate, and

<u>His sister</u>	◇	<u>the straps</u>
\$		x

which is is I here. Namely that which is related to something regarding which for the present we can allow ourselves to suspend a little our conclusions. If we are in analysis (24) it is precisely to attempt to understand a little and to understand what it is about, namely what is the I of the subject, his ideal, this extremely particular identification on which I already indicated the last time it would be well to dwell.

We are going to see how we can specify it in a relationship that he has with respect to something more evolutionary. This must be something referring to the actual situation in the analysis, and concerning the relationship with the analyst.

So let us begin again to pose ourselves the questions concerning what the situation is at present. There would be many ways to pose this problem because in this case one can say that all roads lead to Rome. One can start with the dream, and from this mass of things that the subject contributes as material in reaction to the interpretations that the analyst makes of it. We agree with the subject that the essential thing is the car. The car and the straps, they are obviously not the same thing. There was something which meanwhile had evolved. The subject had taken up positions; he himself had made reflections about this car, and reflections which are not without their trace of irony: it is funny the way one speaks of a car as if it were something human. I do not have to insist on it. One senses, I already pointed it out the last time that the obviously symbolic character of the car has its importance.

(25) It is certain that in the course of his existence the subject found in this car an object more satisfying it seems than the straps. For the simple reason that he still understands nothing about the straps while he is all the same capable of saying that obviously the car does not serve to satisfy a need, but that he is very attached to it. And then he operates it, he is the master of it. He feels fine inside his car.

What are we going to find here at the level of the image? At the level of the image of o we find things which are evidently different according to whether we take things at the level of the phantasy and of the dream, or at the level of what one could call the phantasies of the dream and of the daydream. In the daydream, which has its own value, we know what the image of the other is. It is something vis-a-vis which he has taken up particular attitudes. The image of the other, is the couple of lovers, which on the pretext on not disturbing, note, he never fails to disturb in the most effective fashion, namely calling on

them to separate.

The image of the other, is this other of which everyone will say - remember this curious phantasy which he says he had again not long ago - 'oh, there is no need to check who is in the room, it is only a dog'. In short, the image of the other, is something which leaves in any case very little room for sexual union, which requires either separation, or on the contrary (26) something which is really quite out of place, an animal phallus, a phallus which is completely outside the limits of the game. If there is a phallus, it is a dog's phallus.

This situation, at you see, seems to have progressed in the direction of disintegration. That is to say that if for a long time the subject was someone who took his support from a feminine identification, we observe that his relationship with the possibilities of union, the fact of embracing, of genital satisfaction, presents itself in a way which in any case leaves wide open, the problem of what the phallus is doing there. It is very certain in any case that the subject is not at ease. The question of double or single is there. If it is double it is separated, if it is single it is not human. In any case it does not work out so well.

And as regards the subject in this case there is one thing quite clear: we do not have to ask ourselves like in the other case what he is or where he is. It is quite clear, there is no longer anybody. It really is the Outis which we noted in other circumstances. Whether it is the dream, where the woman does everything "to get my penis", where literally there is nothing in fact - one can do everything one wishes by hand, even indeed show that there is nothing up one's sleeve, but as regards him nobody, and as regards his phantasy, that is namely what is there in this place where he should not be: in effect there is no one. There (27) is no one, because if there is a phallus, it is the phallus of a dog who masturbated in a place where he would have been very embarrassed if anyone had entered. In any case not him.

And here what is there at the level of I. One could say, it is certain that there is Ella Sharpe, and that Ella Sharpe is not unrelated to all of this. Ella Sharpe is warned in advance by a little cough to reverse the formula, not to put her finger either between the tree and the bark. That is to say that if she is in the process of doing something more or less suspect to herself, she has to cover herself before the subject arrives. It is necessary, in a word, that Ella Sharpe should be completely protected from the subject's blows. This is what I described the last time, referring myself to Ella Sharpe's own comparison of analysis considered as a game of chess, as the subject not wanting to lose his queen.

He does not want to lose his queen because no doubt his queen is the key to all of this; and all of this can only hold together because it is on the side of the woman that nothing should be changed. Because it is on the side of the woman that omnipotence lies. The strange thing, is that Ella Sharpe senses

this idea of omnipotence and recognises it everywhere to the point of telling the subject that he believes himself to be omnipotent. On the pretext that he had had a tremendous dream, even though he is not capable of saying any more than this little bit of adventure which happens on a road in Czechoslovakia.

But it is not the subject who is all powerful. What is all- (28) powerful is the other. And this indeed is why the situation is to be specially dreaded. Let us not forget all the same that we are dealing with a subject who is unable to plead. He is unable, and it is all the same something very striking.

The key to the question is the following: is it or is it not true that the subject cannot manage to plead because the other, in the position and place of whom we place ourselves every time we have to plead, for him is someone who must not be touched. In other words the other him, and in this case it is the woman, the other must not in any case be castrated. I mean that the other carries in herself this signifier which contains all the values. And this indeed is where the phallus must be considered - I am not the only one; read page 272 of Melanie Klein about the evolution of the little girl; she says very well that the signifier phallus primitively concentrates on itself all the tendencies that the subject was able to have in all the orders, oral, anal, urethral, and that even before one can speak about the genital already the signifier phallus concentrates in itself all the values, and specially the instinctual values, the aggressive tendencies that the subject may have developed.

It is entirely in the measure that the subject cannot bring the signifier phallus into play, where the signifier phallus remains inherent in the other as such, that the subject finds himself in a state which is the state of breakdown which we see. But what is altogether striking is that here, as in every case where we find ourselves in the presence of a resistance of the subject, (25) this resistance is that of the analyst.

Because effectively if there is something which Ella Sharpe prohibits herself severely in this case - she does not know why, but it is certain that she admits as such that she prohibits it to herself - it is to plead. In this case where precisely there is presented a barrier to be overcome which she could overcome, she forbids herself to overcome it; she refuses to allow herself this because she is not aware that what the subject is taking so many precautions against, is not - as she thinks - something which could concern a supposed paternal aggression - the father is dead, well and truly dead for a long time, and it was extremely difficult to reanimate him a little bit within the analysis; it is not to encourage the subject to use the phallus as a weapon that in question, it is not a question of his homosexual conflict; it is not that he proves himself to be more or less courageous, aggressive in the presence of people who tease him while he is playing tennis because he is not able to play the final shot; this is not at all what is in question. It is on this side of that moment where he must consent to perceive that the woman is castrated.

I am not saying that the woman is not the phallus, which she shows quite ironically in the dream phantasy, but that the other as such, because of the very fact that he is in the other of language, is subjected to this: as regards the woman, she is without having it (est sans l'avoir). Now this is precisely (30) what cannot be admitted by him in any case.

For him she should not be without having it, and this is why he does not want her at any price to put it at risk. His wife is outside the interplay of the dream, do not forget. She is the one who in appearance does not play any role there. It is not even underlined that she is looking. It is there, as I might say, that the phallus is protected. The subject himself does not even have to put the phallus at risk because it is entirely in play in a corner where nobody would dream of looking for it. The subject does not go so far as to say that it is in the woman, and nevertheless it is indeed in the woman that it is.

I mean that it is to the extent that Ella Sharpe is there. It is not particularly inappropriate that she is a woman. It could even be quite appropriate if she perceived what should be said to the subject, namely that she is there as woman, and this poses questions, for the subject to dare to plead his case before her. It is precisely what he does not do. It is precisely what she perceives that he does not do, and it is around this that turns the critical moment of the analysis.

At that moment she encourages him to use his phallus as a weapon; she says, this phallus is something which has always been extremely dangerous, do not be afraid, this indeed is what is in question, it is "a biting and a boring thing" (146).

There is nothing in the material which gives us an indication of the aggressive character of the phallus. And it is nevertheless in this sense that she intervenes by her word. I do not think (31) that this is the best thing to do. Why? Because the position the subject has, and which according to all appearances he has kept, which he will keep in any case all the more after the intervention of Ella Sharpe, is precisely the one he had at a moment of his childhood which indeed is the one which we are trying to specify in the phantasy of the cut straps, and everything which is attached to it in terms of identifications to his sister and of the absence of prams. It is something which appears, you will see it if you re-read the associations very attentively. It is something that he is sure he has experienced: it is himself tied down, pinned in bed. (141) It is himself in so far as he has certainly been contained, maintained in positions which are not unrelated to what we can presume, to some repression of masturbation, in any case to some experience which was linked for him to the first approaches of erogenous emotion, and which we have every reason to think was traumatic.

This is the sense in which Ella Sharpe interprets it. Everything that the subject produces, is something which must have played a role, she says, in some primal scene, with his parents coupling. There is no doubt that he interrupted this coupling, either by

his cries, or by some intestinal trouble. It is here that she even rediscovers the proof that this little colicky pain which replaces the cough when he is going to knock is a confirmation of her interpretation.

This is not certain. The subject, whether he is small, or to (32) the extent that something occurs as an echo as a transitory symptom in the course of analysis, releases what he has within his body. That is what a colicky pain is. This does not for all that settle the question of the function of this incontinence. This incontinence, as you know, will be reproduced at the urethral level, no doubt with a different function. And I already said how important it was to notice the echo character of the presence of the parents in the process of consummating the sexual act in every kind of enuretic manifestation.

Let us be careful here, it is important not to give always a univocal finality to what can in effect have certain effects, to be subsequently used secondarily by the subject as constituting in effect a whole intervention on interparental relationships.

But here the subject, quite recently, namely at a time quite close to this dream in analysis, had a quite special phantasy, which in this case Ella Sharpe makes a great deal of to confirm the notion of this relationship with parental union. It was that he was afraid one day that he would have a breakdown in his famous car, really more and more identified with his own person, and to have it blocking, neither more nor less, the way that the royal couple had to pass - as if it were there as an echo for us of the chess game. But every time you find the king think less of the father than of the subject.

(33) In any case this phantasy, this little anxiety that the subject manifests: provided he himself must also go to this little inaugural function where the royal couple - we are in 1934, the English crown is not a queen with a little consort, it is indeed a king and a queen who are going to find themselves blocked there by the subject's car.

What we should be satisfied purely and simply with saying in this case, is: here is something which renews imaginarily, phantastically, purely and simply, an aggressive attitude of the subject, an attitude of rivalry comparable indeed to what one can give to the fact of wetting his bed. It is not certain. If this should awake some echo in us, it is all the same that the royal couple are not just in any condition: he is going to find himself in his car, stopped, exposed to view. It seems that what is in question in this case is all the same something which is much closer to this desperate search for the ferret of the phallus which is nowhere, and which it is a question of finding, and which one can be very sure that one can never find. Namely that if the subject is here in this hood, in this protection constructed for a long time around his ego by the hood of the car - it is also the possibility of escaping with a peak of speed, a burst of speed - the subject is going to find himself in the same

position in which we have formerly heard reverberating the laughter of the Olympians: it is Vulcan who captures Mars and (34) Venus in one net. And everyone knows that the laughter of the assembled gods on this occasion still resonates in our ears and in the verses of Homer.

Where is the phallus? It is still indeed the major source of the comic; and after all let us not forget that this phantasy is above all a phantasy about a notion of incongruity much more than anything else. It accords in the closest fashion with the same fundamental situation which is going to give its unity to the dream and everything that is around it, namely an aphanisis not in the sense of the disappearance of desire, but in the proper sense that the word deserves if we make of it the substantive aphanisos and which is not so much to disappear, as to make disappear.

Quite recently a talented man, Raymond Queneau, put as an epigraph to a very fine book, Zazi dans le metro, ho plasas efanisen: the person who has done this has carefully dissimulated his sources.

This indeed is what is in question when all is said and done. The aphanisis that is in question here, is the concealment of the object in question, namely the phallus. It is in so far as the phallus is not put in , that the phallus is reserved, that it is preserved, that the subject cannot gain access to the world of the other. And as you will see, there is nothing more neurotogenic not than the fear of losing the phallus, or the fear of castration - this is the altogether fundamental mainspring - but than not wanting that the other should be castrated.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 4 March 1959

I think that we have taken the structural analysis of the model dream which is found in Ella Sharpe's book far enough for you to see at least the contribution this work makes to the goal we are trying to reach, namely what we should consider desire and its interpretation to be.

Even though some people have said that they were not able to find the reference to Lewis Carroll that I gave the last time I am surprised that you did not remember the double rule of three, because that was where I finished in connection with the two stages of the more or less fetishistic relationship of the

subject to the object, what was finally expressed as $\left(\frac{i(o)}{\$} \diamond \frac{O}{I} \right) \text{Capita}$
I,

the ideal identification which I intentionally left open for the first of the two equations, the one of the straps of his sister's sandals. The one where instead of the I we have an x.

I do not think that anyone of you failed to see that this x, as might be expected, is the thing called the phallus. But the important thing is the place where this phallus was. Precisely at the place of I, of the primitive identification, of the identification to the mother, precisely at that place where the subject does not want to deny the phallus to the mother. The subject wants, as the doctrine has always taught us, wants to maintain the mother's phallus. The subject refuses the castration of the other.

The subject, as I told you, does not want to lose his queen, since there was question of a game of chess. He does not want, (2) on this occasion, to put Ella Sharpe in any other position than that of the idealised phallus which is the one he warns her about by a little cough before coming into the room in order to make the disappear so that he does not, in any way, have to bring them into play.

We will perhaps have occasion this year to come back to Lewis Carroll; you will see that it is a question literally of nothing else in the two great Alice books: Alice in Wonderland and Journey through the Looking Glass. These two Alices are almost a poem of phallic avatars. You can start reading them now, to prepare yourselves for something that I may be led to say about

them.

One thing may have struck you in what I told you about the position of this subject with respect to the phallus, which is what I underlined for you: the opposition between being and having. When I told you that it was because for him it was a question of being that was posed, that he would have had to be it without having it - which is the way that I defined the feminine position - you could not have heard this being and not being the phallus, without it giving rise in you to an echo which really even imposes itself right through this case of the "to be or not to be" which is still so enigmatic, which has become almost a joke, which gives us the style of Hamlet's position and which, if we go through this door will only bring us back to one of the (3) most primitive themes of Freud's thought, of this something in which there is organised the position of desire, where there is demonstrated the fact that from the first edition of the Traumdeutung the theme of Hamlet was promoted by Freud to an equivalent rank to that of the oedipal theme which appeared then for the first time in the Traumdeutung. We know of course that Freud had been thinking about it for some time, but only from letters that were not destined for publication. The Oedipus complex makes its first appearance in the Traumdeutung in 1900. Hamlet at that time is also published in 1900 in the form that Freud left it afterwards, but in a note, and it was in 1914 that it passed into the body of the text.

I think that the theme of Hamlet can help us to reinforce this sort of elaboration of the castration complex. How is the complex articulated in the concrete, in the development of the analysis?

The theme of Hamlet, after Freud, was taken up on several occasions. I probably will not make the rounds of all the authors who took it up. You know that the first one was Jones. Ella Sharpe also put forward a certain number of things about Hamlet which are not uninteresting, Shakespeare's thought and Shakespeare's work being right at the centre of her formation. We may have an opportunity to come back to it.

It is a question today of beginning to decipher this field. By asking ourselves what Freud himself meant by introducing Hamlet, and what has been demonstrated by what is subsequently said in the work of other authors.

Here is Freud's text which it is worthwhile reading at the (4) beginning of this research. I am giving the French translation.

After having spoken about the Oedipus complex for the first time, and it is not superfluous to point out here that he introduced the Oedipus complex into the Interpretation of dreams in connection with dreams of the death of persons of whom we are fond, namely in connection with what this year served us as a point of departure and a first guide for highlighting something which presented itself first of all quite naturally in this dream which I chose because it was one of the simplest referring to a

dead person; this dream which served to show us how here was established on two lines of intersubjectivity which are superimposed, reduplicated with respect to one another, the famous "He did not know", that we placed on one line, the line of the position of the subject - the paternal subject in this case being what is evoked by the dreaming subject - namely the somewhere where there is situated, in a form that is in a way incarnated by the father himself, and at the place of the father in the form of "He did not know", precisely the fact that the father is unconscious and incarnates here the image, the very unconsciousness of the subject, and of what? His own wish, of his death-wish against his father.

Of course he is aware of another wish, a sort of benevolent wish, calling for the consolation of death. But precisely this unconsciousness which the subject has about his oedipal death-wish is in a way incarnated in the image of the dream in this form that the father should not even know that the son had a benevolent death-wish for him.

(5) "He did not know," says the dream absurdly "that he had died." This is where the text of the dream stops. And what is repressed for the subject, which is not unknown to the phantastical father, is the "according to his wish" which Freud tells us is the signifier which we should consider as repressed.

"Another of the great creations of tragic poetry", Freud tells us, "Shakespeare's Hamlet, has its roots in the same soil as Oedipus Rex. But the changed treatment of the same material reveals the whole difference in the mental life of these two widely separated epochs of civilisation: the secular advance of repression in the emotional life of mankind. In the Oedipus the child's wishful phantasy that underlies it is brought into the open and realised as it would be in a dream."

He had in effect insisted a good deal on the fact that oedipal dreams are here in a way like the offspring, the fundamental source of the unconscious desires that always reappear, and the Oedipus (I am speaking about the Oedipus of Sophocles or the Greek tragedy) as the construction, the elaboration of what always emerges from these unconscious desires. This is how, literally, things are articulated in the Interpretation of dreams.

"In Hamlet it remains repressed; and - just as in the case of neurosis - we only learn of its existence from its inhibiting consequences." (German quotation). "Strangely enough, the overwhelming effect produced by the more modern tragedy has turned out to be compatible with the fact that people have remained completely in the dark as to the hero's character. The play is built up on Hamlet's hesitations over fulfilling the task (6) of revenge that is assigned to him; but its text offers no reasons or motives for these hesitations and an immense variety of attempts at interpreting them have failed to produce a result. According to the view that was originated by Goethe and is still the prevailing one today, Hamlet represents the type of man whose

power of direct action is paralysed by an excessive development of his intellect. (He is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"). According to another view, the dramatist has tried to portray a pathologically irresolute character which might be classed as neurasthenic. The plot of the drama shows us, however, that Hamlet is far from being represented as a person incapable of taking any action. We see him doing so on two occasions: first in a sudden outburst of temper, when he runs his sword through the eavesdropper behind the arras"

You know that this was Polonius, and that it was at the time that Hamlet is having with his mother a conversation which is far from being crucial because nothing in this play ever is, except its fatal ending where in a few moments there is piled up in the form of corpses everything which was delayed up to then by the complications of the action.

"And secondly in a premeditated and even crafty fashion, when, with all the callousness of a renaissance prince, he sends the two courtiers," (these are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who represent the kinds of false friends), "to the death that had been planned for himself. What is it, then, that inhibits him in fulfilling the task set him by his father's ghost?"

You know that the play opens on a platform before the castle in Elsinore with the apparition of this ghost to two guards who soon let Hamlet know about it.

(7) "The answer, once again, is that it is the peculiar nature of the task. Hamlet is able to do anything - except to take vengeance on the man who did away with his father and took that father's place with his mother, the man who shows him the repressed wishes of his own childhood realised. Thus the loathing which should drive him on to revenge is replaced in him by self-reproaches, by scruples of conscience, which remind him that he himself is literally no better than the sinner whom he is to punish. Here I have translated into conscious terms what was bound to remain unconscious in Hamlet's mind" (SE 4_ 265) .

This first contribution by Freud is presented with this type of balanced precision which, I may say, keeps us on the right path in order to situate, to maintain Hamlet in the place where he has put him. That is quite clear here. But it is also with respect to this first outline of Freud's perception that there should be subsequently situated all the digressions and the embroiderings that have been imposed on it - sometimes as you will see in a rather distant way.

The authors according precisely to the advance of analytic exploration centring their interest on points which moreover are sometimes quite validly found in Hamlet, but to the detriment of this sort of rigour with which Freud situates it from the beginning. And I would say that at the same time, and this is the characteristic which is the least exploited, the least questioned, everything here is something which is found to be situated on the plane of scruples of conscience. Something

which in any case cannot be considered as being only an elaboration.

If it is presented to us as being what takes place, the way in which one can express on the conscious plane what remains (8) unconscious in the soul of the hero, it seems that we are quite right to ask how it can be articulated in the unconscious. Because one thing that is certain, is that a symptomatic elaboration like a scruple of conscience is not all the same in the unconscious. If it is in consciousness, if it is constructed in some way by defensive methods, we must all the same ask ourselves what corresponds in the unconscious to the conscious structure.

This therefore is what we are in the process of trying to do. I will finish the little that remains of Freud's paragraph. He does not take long in any case to throw what will be a bridge across the abyss of Hamlet. It is in fact quite striking in effect that Hamlet remained a complete literary enigma up to Freud. This does not mean that it is not still one, but there is this bridge. This is true for other works. The Misanthrope is the same kind of enigma.

"The distaste for sexuality ... fits in very well with this" (symptom) "the same distaste that was destined to take possession of the poet's mind more and more ... and which reached its extreme expression in Timon of Athens." I am reading this passage to the end, because it is important, and in two lines opens the way for those who subsequently tried to organise the whole of Shakespeare's work around the problem of personal repression. This effectively is what Ella Sharpe tried to do; which is indicated in what was published after her death in the form of "An unfinished paper", in her Hamlet which first appeared (9) in the International journal of psychoanalysis and which is something like an attempt to take the whole evolution of the work of Shakespeare as signifying something which I believe that by wanting to give it a certain schematic form Ella Sharp certainly did something imprudent, and in any case something which can be criticised from the point of view of method, which does not exclude that effectively she discovered some valuable things.

"For it can of course only be the poet's own mind which confronts us in Hamlet. I observe in a book on Shakespeare by Georg Brandes (1896) a statement that Hamlet was written immediately after the death of Shakespeare's father (in 1601), that is under the immediate impact of his bereavement, and, as we may well assume, while his childhood feelings about his father had been freshly revived. It is known, too, that Shakespeare's own son who died at an early age bore the name of Hamnet, which is identical with Hamlet" (SE 4 264-266).

I think we will finish here with this passage which shows to what point Freud already by his simple indications takes very far the things that the authors have since been engaged in.

Here I would like to tackle the problem in the way that we are

able to do it beginning from the data which I put forward before you from the beginning of this year. Because I think that these data allow us to reassemble in a more synthetic, in a more striking form the different principles of what is happening in Hamlet, to simplify in a way this multiplicity of agencies with which we often find ourselves confronted in the present situation. I mean which gives some character or other of (10) reduplication to analytic commentaries on whatever observation we are dealing with when we see taken up simultaneously for example in the register of the opposition between the unconscious and defence, then afterwards of the opposition between the ego and the id, and I think of everything that can be produced when the agency of the superego is added to it, without these different points of view ever being unified, which sometimes give to these works a sort of vagueness, a sort of overloading which is not something which is designed to be of use to us in our experience.

What we are trying to grasp here are guides-lines which, by allowing us to resituate these different organs, these different stages of the mental apparatus that Freud has given us, allow us to resituate them in a way that takes into account the fact that they are semantically superimposed on one another, in a partial way. It is not by adding them to one another, by making of them a sort of unity and totality that one can make them function normally.

It is if you wish by bringing to them the more fundamental skeleton map that we are trying to construct in such a way that we will know what we are doing with each one of these orders of reference when we bring them into play.

Let us begin to spell out this great drama of Hamlet. However evocative the text of Freud may have been, I must all the same recall what we are dealing with. We are dealing with a play which opens a short time after the death of the king who was, his (11) son Hamlet tells us, a very admirable king, the ideal king and father, and who has died mysteriously. The version of his death that has been put about is that he was stung by a serpent in an orchard (the orchard which is again interpreted by analysts). Then very quickly, a few months after this death, Hamlet's mother marries her brother-in-law, Claudius, this Claudius who is the object of the execration of the central hero, Hamlet, and the one who bears not alone the motives of rivalry that Hamlet may have had in his regard, Hamlet who in short was barred from the throne by this uncle, but also everything that he glimpses, everything that he suspects about the scandalous character of this substitution. What is more, the father who appears as a ghost to tell him in what conditions of dramatic betrayal there took place what the ghost tells him, was well and truly an assassination. Namely - it is in the text and it has not failed either to exercise the curiosity of analysts - that there was poured into his ear while he was asleep, a poison mysteriously named hebenon. Hebenon which is sort of made-up, constructed word - I do not know whether it is found in any other text. People have tried to give it an equivalent, a word which

is close to it and which designates it in the fashion that it is ordinarily translated, that is by jusquiane.

It is quite certain that this assassination through the ear would not in any way satisfy a toxicologist, but gives lots of material for interpretation to the analyst.

Let us look right away at something which appears to us as something striking, I mean if we start from the criteria, the articulations that we have highlighted. Let us use these keys, (12) however specific their emergence may have seemed to you. They were constructed for a very particular, very specific purpose, but this does not exclude, and this is one of the clearest aspects of analytic experience, that the particular is what has the most universal value.

It is quite clear that what we highlighted by writing the "he did not know that he had died" is undoubtedly something quite fundamental. In the relationship to the Other as such, the ignorance in which this other is kept about a particular situation is something absolutely original as you well know because you have learned even that one of the revolutions that occurs in the soul of the child is the moment that the child, after having believed that all his thoughts - "all his thoughts" is something that should always urge us to be very cautious, I mean we are the ones who call them thoughts. As regards the experience of the subject, the thoughts are everything that exists - everything that is known by his parents, his slightest internal movements are known - he perceives that it is possible for the other not to know. It is indispensable to take into account this correlation of: not knowing in the other, with precisely the establishment of the unconscious. The one is in a way the opposite of the other. And it is perhaps its foundation. Because in effect this formulation is not enough to establish them but indeed there is something which is quite clear, and which serves us as a guide, which is that in the drama of Hamlet we are going to try to give some body to this (13) historical notion, which is all the same a little bit superficial, in the atmosphere, in the style of the times, that we are dealing with some modern construction or other; compared to the status of the ancients these are poor degenerates; we are in the style of the 19th century.

It is not for nothing that Georg Brandes is quoted here. And we will never know whether Freud at this epoch, even though it is probable, knew Nietzsche. But this, this reference to the moderns, may not satisfy us. Why should the moderns be more neurotic than the ancients? In any case it is begging the question.

What we are trying to see, is something which will take us further than this begging of the question, or this explanation by the explanation: things are going badly because things are going badly. What we have before us is a work whose fibres, whose first fibres, we are going to begin to separate.

The first fibre, the father here knows very well that he has died, died in consequence of the wish of the one who wanted to take his place, namely Claudius who is his brother-in-law (or his brother?). The crime is undoubtedly hidden from the centre stage, for those who are on the stage. This is an absolutely essential point, without which of course the drama of Hamlet would have nowhere to situate itself or to exist. And this is what is highlighted in Jones' accessible article "The death of Hamlet's father", namely the essential difference that Shakespeare has introduced compared to the primitive saga in which the massacre of the one who in the saga bears a different name, but who is the king, takes place before everybody in (14) virtue of a pretext which concerns in effect his relations to his wife. This king too is butchered by his brother, but everybody knows it. Here, in Hamlet, the thing is hidden, but, this is the important point, the father knows it, and he is the one who comes to tell it to us "There needs no ghost, my lord," - Freud quotes it on several occasions because it has become a proverb - "there needs no ghost, my lord come from the grave to tell us this" (I v 125). And in effect if it is a question of the oedipal theme we ourselves already know a good deal about it. But it is clear that in the construction of the theme of Hamlet we have not yet got to the stage of knowing it. And there is something significant in the fact that in the construction of the fable, it should be the father who comes to say it, that he the father knows it.

I think that there is here something quite essential. And it is a first difference in the fibre between the situation, the construction, the first fundamental elaboration of the drama of Oedipus. Because Oedipus does not know. Once he knows the whole drama is unleashed which leads to his self-punishment, namely his liquidation of the situation. But the oedipal crime is committed by Oedipus in the unconscious. Here the oedipal crime is known, and it is known by whom? By the other, by the one who is in effect its victim, and who has risen in order to make it known to the subject.

In short you see the path along which we are advancing, in a method which might be called one of comparison, of correlation between the different fibres of the structure, which is a classical method, one which consists in an articulated whole - and nowhere is there more articulation than in the domain of the (15) signifier. The very notion of articulation, as I ceaselessly underline, is consubstantial with it. After all one only speaks about articulation in the world because the signifier gives a meaning to this term. Otherwise there is nothing but continuity or discontinuity, but never articulation.

We are trying to see, to grasp by a sort of comparison homogenous fibres in one or other phase, of Oedipus and of Hamlet, in so far as Freud brought them together, which is going to allow us to conceptualise the coherence of things. Namely, how, in what measure, why, it is conceivable that in the very measure that one of the keys of the keyboard is found in a sign opposed to the one where it is in the other of these two dramas, a strictly

correlative modification is produced. And this correlation is what should put us before the articulation of the sort of causality that is in question in these dramas. It is to begin with the very idea that it is these correlative modifications which are the most instructive for us, which allow us to gather together the resources of the signifier in a manner which is more or less usable by us. There must be a relationship which is graspable and finally notable in a quasi-algebraic fashion between these first modifications of the sign of what is happening.

If you wish, on this top line, of "he did not know", here it is "he knew that he had died". He had died in accordance with the murderous wish, that of his brother, which had pushed him into the grave. We are going to see what the relationships are with the hero's drama.

(16) But before launching ourselves in a fashion that is always overhasty along the line of the superimposition of identifications, which is in the tradition: there are some concepts, and the most useful are the least elaborated, and God knows what has been done with identifications. And Claudius when all is said and done, what he has done, is a form of Hamlet, is Hamlet's desire. This is easy to say because to situate Hamlet's position vis-a-vis this desire we find ourselves in the position of having to bring into play here all of a sudden scruples of conscience. Namely something which introduces into the relationships of Hamlet to this Claudius a double, profoundly ambivalent position which is that of a rival but a rivalry which one really senses is a singular one, a second degree rivalry, the one who in reality has done what he did not dare to do. And in these conditions he finds himself surrounded by some mysterious protection which has to be defined.

In the name of scruples of conscience it is said? With reference to what is imposed on Hamlet, and which is all the more imposed on him after the first encounter with the ghost, namely literally the command to avenge the ghost, in acting against the murderer of his father Hamlet is full of all sorts of feelings. He has been dispossessed, a feeling of usurpation; a feeling of rivalry; a feeling of vengeance; and more than all these the express order of his father whom he admired more than anybody. Surely everything in Hamlet is in agreement for him to act, and (16) he does not act.

Obviously it is here that the problem begins, and that the way to advance must be accompanied by the greatest simplicity. I mean that always what causes our downfall, what makes us go astray, is to substitute ready-made keys for the solution of the question. Freud tell us: it is a question here of the conscious representation of something which must be articulated in the unconscious; what we are trying to articulate, is to situate somewhere and as such in the unconscious what is meant by a desire.

In any case, let us say with Freud that there is something wrong from the moment that things are engaged on in such a way. There

is something wrong with Hamlet's desire. Here is the path that we are going to choose. This is not easy because we are not much further along the road than the point that people have always got to.

Here we must take Hamlet, his behaviour in the tragedy, as a whole. And because we have spoken about Hamlet's desire, we must notice something which has not escaped analysts naturally, but is not perhaps of the same register, of the same order: it is a question of situating what there is in Hamlet in terms of which for us is the soul, the centre, the touchstone of desire. It is not exactly that. Namely Hamlet's relations to what is the conscious object of his desire.

Here, the author refuses us nothing. We have something in the play which acts like a barometer for Hamlet's position with (18) respect to desire. We have it in the most obvious and clearest fashion in the form of the Ophelia character.

Ophelia is very obviously one of the most fascinating creations which has been proposed to human imagination. Something which we can call the drama of the feminine object, the drama of desire, of the world which makes its appearance at the dawn of civilisation in the form of Helen. It is remarkable to see it at a point which is perhaps also a high point, incarnated in the drama and the misfortune of Ophelia. You know that it was taken up in many forms of aesthetic, artistic creation, either by poets, or by painters, at least in the Preraphaelite period, to the extent of giving us these finical paintings in which the very terms of the descriptions that Shakespeare gives of this Ophelia in her dress floating in the river into which she had allowed herself to slip in her madnessbecause the suicide of Ophelia is ambiguous.

What happens in the play is, immediately, correlatively in short to the drama - it is Freud who points this out to us - we see this horror of femininity as such. Its terms are articulated in the most proper sense of the term. Namely, what he uncovers, what he highlights, what he brings into play before the very eyes of Ophelia as being all the possibilities of degradation, of variation, of corruption, which are linked to the evolution of a woman's very life in so far as she allows herself to be drawn into all the actions which little by little make a mother of her. It is in the name of this that Hamlet rejects Ophelia in the fashion which appears in the play extremely sarcastic and extremely cruel.

(19) We have here a first correlation of something which marks well the evolution and the an evolution and a correlation as essential for something which carries the case of Hamlet into its position with respect to desire. Notice that here immediately we find ourselves confronted in passing with a wild analyst, Polonius, Ophelia's father who immediately puts his finger on it: Hamlet's melancholy comes from the fact that he wrote love letters to his daughter and that he, Polonius, not failing in his duty as a father, made his daughter give a sharp

reply. In other words our Hamlet is love-sick.

This caricatural character is put here to represent for us the ironic accompaniment of the easy option that is always provided by the external interpretation of events. Things are structured altogether differently as everyone knows. It is of course a question of something which concerns the relations of Hamlet to what? Essentially to his act. But of course the profound change of his sexual position is altogether capital, but it has to be articulated, to be organised just a little differently. It is a question of an act which must be performed, and he depends on it in his position as a whole. And very precisely in this something which is manifested right through this play, which this play makes of this fundamental position with respect to the act which in English is a much more commonly used word than in French, it is what in French is called ajournement, retardement, and which is expressed in English by procrastinating, putting off until tomorrow.

This in effect is what is in question. Our Hamlet, right (20) through the play procrastinates; it is a question of knowing what is meant by each of the different procrastinations of the act every time he has an opportunity for it, and what is going to be determining at the end in the fact that he is going to actually accomplish this act. I believe that in any case there is something to highlight here. It is precisely the question of what is signified by this act which is proposed to him.

The act which is proposed to him has nothing to do, when all is said and done, and this is sufficiently indicated in what I pointed out to you, with the oedipal act of a revolt against the father. The conflict with the father, in the sense that it is creative in the psyche. It is not the act of Oedipus, in so far as the act of Oedipus sustains the life of Oedipus, and makes of him the hero he is before his downfall, as long as he knows nothing, which makes Oedipus conclude in a dramatic way. For Hamlet, it is that he is guilty of being. He cannot tolerate being. Before the drama of Hamlet even begins Hamlet is aware of the crime of existing. And it is starting from this beginning that he must choose. And for him the problem of existing starting from this beginning is posed in terms which are his own: namely the "to be or not to be" which is something which engages him irredeemably in being as he very clearly articulates it.

It is precisely because for him the oedipal drama is open at the beginning, and not at the end, that the choice between being and not being is proposed. And it is precisely because there is established this either/or, that he is in any case taken up into (21) the chain of the signifier, into something which means that he is in any case the victim of this choice.

I will give Letourneur's translation which I think is the best one.

"To be, or not to be - that is the question.
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
 And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep -
 No more, and by a sleep to say we end
 The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to." (Ill, i)

I do not think these words are meant to leave us unmoved.

"To die, to sleep -
 To sleep - perchance to dream. Aye, there's the rub,
 For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come
 when we have shuffled off this mortal coil"

This "mortal coil" does not quite mean envelope. It is this kind of tortion of something rolled around us.

"must give us pause. There's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life.
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin?" (Ill i 56ff)

What Hamlet finds himself confronted with in this "to be or not to be", is the encountering of the place taken by what his father (22) has said to him. And what his father has said to him qua ghost, is that he had been surprised by death "in the blossoms of my sin" (I v 76). It is a matter of encountering the place taken by the sin of the other, the unpaid sin. The one who knows is on the contrary, contrary to Oedipus, someone who has not paid for this crime of existing. Moreover the consequences for the following generations are not negligible. The two sons of Oedipus thought only of butchering one another with all the vigour and the conviction that could be wished for, while for Hamlet it is completely different. Hamlet can neither pay in his own place, nor leave the debt unpaid. In the last analysis he must have it paid, but in the conditions in which he is placed the blow passes through himself. And it is by the very weapon after a grim drama which we will have to greatly expand on, that Hamlet is wounded by, only after he Hamlet has received a deathly wound, that he can strike the criminal who is within his reach, namely Claudius.

It is this community of knowing, of the fact that the father and the son both know, which is here the mainspring which creates the whole difficulty of the problem of the assumption of this act by Hamlet. And the paths by which he can rejoin it, which will make possible this act which in itself is impossible, in the very measure that the other knows, it is by roundabout ways which will finally make it possible for him to accomplish what must be

accomplished, it is these paths which should be the object of our interest because these are what will be instructive for us. Because this is the real problem, which it was a question of introducing today. It is necessary that I should take you in a (23) way to the end of things, I mean to how finally, and by what ways, Hamlet manages to accomplish his act. Let us not all the same forget that if he manages to do it, if Claudius is finally struck down, it is nevertheless a botched piece of work. It is nothing less than after having run through the body of someone who has certainly, as you will see, plunged into the abyss, namely the friend, the companion, Laertes, after his mother has poisoned herself by mistake with the very cup which should have served her as a backup murder weapon if the tip of the poisoned foil did not wound Hamlet, it is after a certain number of other victims, and not before he himself has been mortally wounded that he can deliver his blow. There is all the same something here which should pose a problem for us.

If effectively something is accomplished, if there was in the last resort a sort of rectification of desire which made the act possible, how was it accomplished? This is precisely what holds the key, which ensures that this play of genius has never been replaced by a better one. Because in short what are these great mythical themes which the creations of poets tackle throughout the ages if not a kind of long approximation which ensures that the myth by circumscribing its possibilities in the closest possible way ends up by entering properly speaking into subjectivity and psychology. I maintain, and I would maintain unambiguously - and I think I am in accord with Freud in saying it - that poetic creations engender rather than reflect psychological creations. This diffuse map of something which is vaguely outlined in this primordial relationship of rivalry (24) between father and son is something which here gives all its prominence and is the true heart of this play Hamlet. It is in the measure that something is equivalent to what has been lacking - to what has been lacking precisely because this original, initial, situation is distinct from Oedipus - namely castration, precisely because of the fact that in the play things are presented as a kind of slow zig-zag progress, this slow coming to birth by roundabout ways of the necessary castration, in the very measure, and in the very measure that this is finally realised, that Hamlet makes emerge the final action in which he dies and in which things were taken to such an extent of not being able to the others, the Fortinbras, always ready to collect the inheritance, would come to succeed him.

Seminar 14; Wednesday 11 March 1959

Since the last time then we have been dealing with Hamlet. Hamlet does not come in here by chance, even though I told you that it was introduced at this point by the formula of being and not being which came to me in connection with Ella Sharpe's dream.

I was lead to re-read a part of what has been written about Hamlet on the analytic plane, and also of what was written before. The authors, at least the better ones, have obviously not neglected what was written before. And I must say that we have gone a good distance, despite the fact that I got a little lost from time to time, although not without some enjoyment, and the problem is to gather together what is in question in view of your particular goals.

Our precise goal being to give, or to give again its meaning to the function of desire in analysis and analytic interpretation. It is clear that this should not give us too much trouble because I hope to make you see, and I am making my statement here right away, I believe that what distinguishes the tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark, is essentially that it is the tragedy of desire. Hamlet which - we cannot be absolutely sure, but according to the most rigorous studies - was first presented at London during the Winter season of 1601; Hamlet of which the first quarto edition, this famous edition which was almost what could be called a pirate edition at the time, namely that it was not done under the control of the author, but borrowed from what were called [actors' copies], booklets used by the prompter. This edition - it is interesting all the same to know these little bits of literary history - was unknown until 1823, (2) when a few filthy copies were found - ones which had been handled a good deal, probably taken to the performances. And the Folio edition, the great edition of Shakespeare, only began to appear after his death in 1623, preceding the great edition in which the plays are divided into acts. Which explains why the division into acts is much less decisive and clear in Shakespeare than elsewhere.

In fact it is not believed that Shakespeare intended to divide his plays into five acts. This is important because we are going to see how this play is divided.

Winter 1601, is two years before the death of Queen Elizabeth. And in effect one may think approximately that Hamlet, which is of capital importance in the life of Shakespeare, reduplicates as one might say the drama of this joining up of two epochs, two aspects of the poet's life, because the tone changes completely when James I comes to the throne, and already something is hinted at as one author says, which breaks the crystalline charm of Elizabeth's reign, of the virgin queen, she who makes a success of those long years of miraculous peace after what constituted in the history of England, as in many countries, a period of chaos into which it will promptly return with all the drama of the puritan revolution.

In short, 1601 already announces the queen's death, which one could not fail to foresee, with the execution of her lover, the Earl of Essex which takes place in the same year as the play Hamlet.

There is a point in evoking these reference points, since we are (3) not the only ones to have tried to resituate Hamlet in its context. What I am telling you here is something that I have not seen stressed by any analytic author. These are nevertheless the kind of basic facts which are important.

To tell the truth what has been written by analytic authors can not be said to have been enlightening. And today I will not put forward my criticism of what a certain line-by-line interpretation of Hamlet has directed itself towards. I mean, I am trying to rediscover one or other element, without in fact one being able to say otherwise than that the more the authors insist the further we get from the comprehension of the totality, from the coherence of the text.

I must also say that Ella Sharpe, whom I esteem greatly, in this respect, in her essay which it is true is unfinished, which was discovered after her death, greatly disappointed me. I will mention it all the same because it is significant. It is so much along the line that we are trying to explain regarding the tendency which we see being taken by analytic theory, that it is worth highlighting it. But we will not begin with it.

We will begin with Jones' article, which appeared in 1910 in the American Journal of Psychology which gives us a date and a monument, and it is essential to have read it, it is not easy to get hold of it nowadays. And in the little reedition that he made of it Jones has I think added on something else, some complements to his theory of Hamlet in this article: The Oedipus complex as an explanation of the Hamlet mystery.

(4) He adds as a subtitle: "A study on motive". In 1910 Jones tackles the problem which was masterfully indicated by Freud as I showed you the last time in this half-page in which one could say that when all is said and done everything is already there, because even the points on the horizon are marked namely the relationships of Shakespeare with the meaning of the problem which is posed for him: the signification of the feminine object.

I believe that we have here something that is absolutely central. And if Freud points us to Timon of Athens on the horizon this undoubtedly is the path that Ella Sharpe tried to take. She made the whole of Shakespeare's work into a sort of vast cyclothymic oscillation by showing in it the ascending plays, namely the ones that could be seen as optimistic, the plays in which aggression is directed outwards, and those in which aggression turns back onto the hero or the poet, those of the descending phase. Here is how we can classify Shakespeare's plays, and sometimes even date them.

I do not believe that we have here something entirely valid, and we are going to remain for the moment at the point that we are at, namely first of all at Hamlet in order to try - I will perhaps give some indications about what follows it or what precedes it, Twelfth Night, and Troilus and Cressida because I think it is almost impossible not to take them into account, they greatly clarify the problems that we are first going to introduce with the text of Hamlet alone.

(5) With the grand style of documentation which characterises his writings - there is in Jones a solidity, a certain sweep of style in the documentation which distinguishes his contributions to a high degree - Jones gives a sort of summary of what he very correctly calls, the mystery of Hamlet. There are two possibilities, you are either aware of the dimensions that this question has taken, or you are not aware of it. For those who are not aware of it, I am not going to repeat here what is in Jones' article. Inform yourselves about it one way or another. I have to tell you that the mass of writings on Hamlet has no equivalent. The abundance of the literature is something unbelievable. But what is still more unbelievable, is the extraordinary diversity of interpretations which have been given to it. I mean that the most contradictory interpretations have followed on one another, have unfolded throughout history, setting up the problem of the problem: namely why is everybody trying so hard to understand something; and they give the most extravagant, the most incoherent, the most diverse results. One cannot say that this goes very far. We will have to come back to it in what I am going to rapidly recall about the aspects of this explanation that Jones summarises in his article.

Almost everything has been said, and to go to one extreme, there is a Popular science monthly, which must be some sort of popular magazine dealing with medical matters, which published something (6) in 1860 called "The impediment of adipose". At the end of Hamlet we are told that Hamlet is "fat and scant of breath", and in this journal there is a whole development about Hamlet's adipose.

There is a certain Vining who in 1881 discovered that Hamlet was a woman disguised as a man, whose aim throughout the whole play was to seduce Horatio; and it was to touch Horatio's heart that Hamlet manufactured his whole story. All the same it is a good enough story. And at the same time we cannot say that it has absolutely no echo for us. It is certain that Hamlet's

relationships with people of his own sex are all the same intimately interwoven with the problem of the play.

Let us come back to serious things, and recall with Jones that these efforts of criticism are grouped around two aspects. When there are two aspects in logic, there is always a third aspect, contrary to what is believed, the third is not all that much excluded. And it is obviously the third which in this case is interesting.

The supporters of the two aspects were not lightweights. For the first aspect there are those who have in short questioned Hamlet's psychology. These are obviously the ones who have the primacy, who must be given pride of place in our esteem. Here we encounter Goethe, Coleridge who in his Lectures on Shakespeare took up a very characteristic position which I think Jones could have taken a little more into account. Because it is a curious (7) thing that Jones, above all launched into an extraordinarily full commentary of what had been done in German, material that had proliferated and was even prolix.

The positions of Goethe and Coleridge are not identical. They have however a very close relationship which consists in putting the accent on the spiritual form of Hamlet's character. In general, let us say, that for Goethe it is action paralysed by thought. This as you know has a long line of descendants. It has been recalled, and not of course in vain, that Hamlet had lived rather a long time in Wittenberg. And this term, referring the intellectual and his problems to an excessive attendance at Wittenberg presented with good reason as one of the centres of a certain style of formation of young German students, is something which has had a long posterity. Hamlet is in short the man who sees all the elements, all the complexities, the motives in the game of life, and who is in short suspended, paralysed in his action by this knowledge. It is properly speaking a Goethean problem, and it has had profound repercussions, especially if you add to it the charm and seduction of Goethe's style and person.

As regards Coleridge, in a long passage that I have not time to read for you, he takes the same line, with a much less sociological, a much more psychological character. There is something in my opinion which dominates here in the whole passage from Coleridge which I would like to recall. "I must admit that I experience in myself some taste for the same thing". This is what for him described the psychasthenic character, the (8) impossibility of committing oneself to a path, and once having entered on it, engaged on it, remaining on it to the end.

The intervention of hesitation, of multiple motives, is a brilliant piece of psychology which gives us the essential, the mainspring, the sap of its essence, in this remark made in passing by Coleridge: after all I have a taste for that myself. This means, I can see myself in it. He admits this in passing, and he is not the only one. One finds an analogous remark in someone who is more or less Coleridge's contemporary, and who

wrote some remarkable things about Shakespeare in his Essays on Shakespeare, namely Hazlitt, whom Jones is wrong not to mention at all because he is someone who wrote the most remarkable things on the subject at that time.

He goes still further, he says that in the last analysis to talk about this tragedy..... We have heard so much about this tragedy, that we scarcely know how to criticise it, any more than we would know how to describe our own face. There is another note which makes the same point. And here we have lines that I am going to take very much into account.

I will pass very quickly over the other aspect, the one about an external difficulty, which was established by a group of German critics the two principal ones being Klein and Werder who wrote at the end of the 19th century in Berlin. This is more or less how Jones groups them. He is right. It is a question of highlighting the external causes of the difficulty of the task that Hamlet has set himself, and the forms that Hamlet's task are supposed to have. This is supposed to be to make his people (9) recognise the guilt of Claudius, the man who after having killed his father, and married his mother, is reigning over Denmark. There is something here which does not support the criticism, because the difficulties that Hamlet would have had in accomplishing his task, namely in having the guilt of the king recognised, well there are two possibilities, to intervene already in the way that he intervened when he did intervene, by murdering him, and then to be in a position to justify this murder, are evidently very easily removed by a simple reading of the text.

Hamlet never poses himself such a problem. The principle of his action, namely that the vengeance he must take on the one who is the murderer of his father, and who at the same time took his throne and his place with the wife whom he loved above everything else, must be purged by the most violent action, and by murder, is not only never put in question by Hamlet, but I think that on this point I will read you passages that will show you that he treats himself as a weakling, as a coward. He foams with despair on the stage because he cannot decide to take this action.

But the principle of the thing is never in doubt. He does not pose himself the slightest problem about the validity of this act, of this task. And on this point there is a man called Loening, whom Jones makes a lot of, who made a remark at the same period discussing the theories of Klein and Werder in a very decisive fashion. I point out in passing that Jones warmly commends these remarks. In effect he quotes some which appear to (10) be very penetrating.

But all this does not have an extraordinary importance because the question is really superseded once we take the third position, the one by which Jones introduces the analytic position.

These delays in my presentation are necessary, because they have to be followed if we are to have the background against which the problem of Hamlet is posed.

The third position is the following: it is that even though the subject does not doubt for a moment that he has a task to accomplish, for some reason unknown to him this task is repugnant to him. In other words, it is the task itself and not what is happening either in the subject or outside him. There is no need to say that there can be much more subtle versions of what is happening outside than the ones that I gave you at first to clear the ground.

There is therefore an essentially conflictual position with regard to the task itself. And it is in short in this very solid fashion, which gives us a lesson in method, that Jones introduces the analytic theory. He shows that the notion of conflict is not at all new, namely: the internal contradiction in the task had already been brought forward by a certain number of authors who saw very clearly, like Loening, if we are to believe the quotations that Jones gives from him, that one can grasp the problematic, conflictual character of the task, by certain signs which did not have to await analysis for their indicative character to be seen: namely the diversity, the multiplicity, the contradiction, the false consistency of the reasons that the (11) subject gives in order to postpone this task, not to carry it out at the moment when it is offered to him. The notion in short of the superstructural, rationalised, rationalising character of the motives that the subject gives, had already been perceived by psychologists well before analysis. And Jones knows very well how to highlight it, to give it its relief.

Only it is a question of knowing where the conflict lies and the authors who are on this path do not allow it to be glimpsed that there is something which appears in the forefront, and a sort of underlying difficulty which without being properly speaking articulated as unconscious is considered as being more profound, and in part unmastered, neither completely elucidated nor perceived by the subject.

And the discussion by Jones presents this character which is quite characteristic of what in his case is one of the traits that he knew well how to make use of in his articles which played a great role in making the very notion of the unconscious a valid one for a large intellectual public. He powerfully articulates that what these authors, some of them very subtle, had highlighted is that the underlying, contrary motive for the action of Hamlet, is for example a motive of right. Namely, has he the right to do this.

And God knows the German authors have not failed, especially since this was happening in the full Hegelian period, to notice all sorts of registers which Jones has a fine time ironising about, showing that if something must come into unconscious principles, they are not motives of an elevated order, of a lofty character of abstraction, bringing into play a morality, a

(12) State, absolute knowledge, but that there must be something much more radical, more concrete, and that what is in question is precisely what Jones is going then to produce, because it is more or less about that year that there begins to be introduced into America Freudian points of view - this is the same year that he publishes a review of Freud's theory of dreams, that Freud publishes his article on the origins and development of psychoanalysis, directly written in English if I remember rightly because what is in question are the famous lectures at Clark University.

I believe that one cannot put one's finger on, in an analysis which really goes as far as it is possible to go at that epoch, which highlights in the text of the play, in the unfolding of the drama, to show its oedipal signification, which highlights what we can call the mythical structure of the Oedipus myth

I must say that we are not so mentally clean and tidy as to be all able to smile so easily at seeing brought forward in connection with HamletTelephos, Amphion, Moses, Pharaoh, Zoroaster, Jesus, Herod - everyone gets into the act - and finally what is essential, two authors writing more or less around 1900 published "Hamlet in Iran" in a very well known journal, a reference of the Hamlet myth to the Iranian myths which are about the legend of Cyrus, which another author also made great play of in an unknown and unfindable journal.

The important thing is that in Jones' introduction, in 1910, of a new criticism of Hamlet, and of a criticism which is going to consist entirely in leading us to this conclusion: " So we reach (13) the apparent paradox that the hero, the poet, and the audience are all profoundly moved by feelings due to a conflict of the source of which they are unaware" - they have not woken up, they do not know what is going on.

I think it is essential to notice the step that has been taken at this level. I am not saying that it is the only step possible, but that the first analytic step consists in transforming a psychological reference not into a reference to a more profound psychology, but into a reference to a mythical arrangement which is thought to have the same meaning for all human beings. And there must all the same be something more, because Hamlet is not all the same Syrrhos Sage, a story about Cyrus and Cambyses, nor about Perseus and his father Acrisios, it is all the same something different.

If we are speaking about it it is not only because there have been a myriad of critics, but also because it is interesting to see what that makes of Hamlet. When all is said and done you have not the slightest idea because through some kind of effect which is quite curious I think I can say from my own experience that it cannot be done in French. I have never seen a good Hamlet in French. Nor anyone who plays Hamlet well. Nor a text one could really listen to.

For those who read the text, it is something that knocks you over backwards, makes you bite the carpet and roll on the ground.

it is something unimaginable. There is not a verse of Hamlet, nor one of his replies which does not have in English a percussive power, a violence of language which makes of it something at which one is at every moment absolutely stupefied. You could believe that it was written yesterday, that one could not write things like that three centuries ago.

In England, that is to say where the play is played in its own tongue, a production of Hamlet is always an event. I would even go further - because after all one cannot really measure the psychological pressure of the public except at the booking office - and I would say what it is for the actors, which proves it to us again, first of all because it is quite clear that to play Hamlet is for an English actor the crowning of his career, and that when it is not the crowning of his career it is really what he wants in order to retire happily by giving his farewell performance, even if his role consists in playing the first Gravedigger.

There is here something which is important, and we will have to see what it means, because I am not making this remark at random.

There is a curious fact, which is that when after all an English actor comes to play Hamlet he plays it well. They all play it well. A still stranger thing is that people speak of this or that person, as many Hamlets as there are great actors. The Hamlet of Garrick, the Hamlet of Kean, etc. are still evoked. This too is something extraordinarily indicative.

If there are as many Hamlets as there are great actors, I think (15) that it is for analogous reasons - it is not the same because it is a different thing to play Hamlet and to be involved as a spectator and critic But the point of convergence of all that, what is particularly striking and what I would ask you to keep in mind, is that it can be thought that in the final analysis it is because of the structure of the problem that Hamlet as such poses about desire, namely the thesis that I am putting forward here that Hamlet brings into play the different planes, the very framework that I am trying to introduce you to here, in which desire comes to situate itself.

It is because this place is exceptionally well articulated here, so well I would say and in such a fashion that each and every person finds his own place in it, can recognise himself in it, that the machinery, the net of the play Hamlet is this kind of network, of birdcatcher's net in which the desire of man is essentially articulated here, in terms precisely of the coordinates that Freud uncovers for us, namely its relationship to the Oedipus complex and to castration.

But this presupposes that it is not simply another edition, another version of the eternal type, drama, conflict, of the hero's struggle against the father, against the tyrant, against the good or the bad father. Here I am introducing things that we are going to see being developed subsequently. It is that things are pushed by Shakespeare to such a point that what is

important here is to show the atypical characteristics of the conflict, the modified fashion in which there is presented the fundamental structure of the eternal Saga that one rediscovers (16) from the beginning of time, consequently in the function in which in a certain fashion the coordinates of this conflict are modified by Shakespeare in such a way as to show how in these atypical conditions there comes to operate, in all its most essentially problematic character, the problem of desire in so far as man is not simply possessed, invested, by it but that he has to situate, has to find this desire. Has to find it at all costs, and in great suffering, to the point of not being able to find it except at the limit, namely in an action which cannot be completed, be produced by him, except by being fatal.

This encourages us to look more closely at the unfolding of the play. I do not want to make you wait too long, but I must all the same give its most salient aspects.

Act I, concerns something that could be called the introduction to the problem, is here all the same a point of overlapping, of accumulation, of confusion around which the play turns. It is necessary all the same for us to come back to something simple which is in the text. We are going to see that this composition deserves to be retained, that it is not something vague, or something which deviates to the right or to the left.

As you know things begins with a guard, a changing of the guard on a platform of Elsinore. And I must say that it is one of the most magisterial beginnings of all Shakespeare's plays, because not all of them begin so magisterially. It is at midnight that the change takes place, a change in which there are some very fine, very striking things. For example it is the ones who are (17) coming on guard who ask: "Who's there?", when it should be the other way round. The fact is that in effect everything happens in an unusual way. They are all anxiety-ridden because of something they are waiting for. And the thing arrives in fewer than forty verses. Even though it is midnight when the change takes place, one o'clock sounds when the ghost appears.

And from the moment the ghost appears we have entered into a very rapid movement with rather curious stagnations.

Immediately afterwards there is the scene where the king and the queen appear, the king saying it is time to get over our mourning, we may weep with one eye, but let us laugh with the other (I ii 12), and in which Hamlet who is there manifests his feelings of revolt against the rapidity of the remarriage of his mother and the fact that she has married somebody who, compared to his father, is an absolutely inferior character. At every instant in Hamlet's remarks we see highlighted the exaltation of his father as a being on whom he would say later: "...every god did seem to set his seal to give the world assurance of a man" (III iv 61). It is much later in the text that this phrase will be pronounced by Hamlet. But from the first scene there are analogous words. It is essentially in terms of this sort of betrayal, and also this falling off - sentiments which his

mother's conduct inspired in him, this hasty marriage, two months we are told, after the death of his father - that Hamlet presents himself. There is the famous dialogue with Horatio: "Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables" (I ii 180). I do not need to remind (18) you of the celebrated themes.

Then, immediately, we have the introduction of two characters: Ophelia, and Polonius, and this in connection with a sort of little dressing down that Laertes, who is a very important character in our story of Hamlet, who has been seen as - we will come back to it - someone who plays a certain role with respect to Hamlet in the mythical unfolding of the story, and quite correctly of course, addresses to Ophelia who is the girl with whom Hamlet, as he tells us himself, was in love, and whom now in the state that he is in he rejects with all sorts of sarcasms. Polonius and Laertes come one after another to the unfortunate Ophelia to give her all sorts of sermons on prudence, to urge her not to trust this Hamlet.

There then comes the fourth scene. The encounter on the platform of Elsinore between Hamlet, who has been rejoined by Horatio, and the ghost of his father. In this encounter he shows himself passionate, courageous, because he does not hesitate to follow the ghost wherever the ghost leads him, in order to hold with him a rather horrifying dialogue. And I underline that the character of horror is articulated by the ghost himself (I v 80). He cannot reveal to Hamlet the horror and the abomination of the place in which he lives, and what he suffering, because his mortal organs would not be able to tolerate it. And he gives him an order, a command. It is interesting to note right away that the command consists in the fact, that however he manages it, he has to stop the scandal of the queen's "luxury"; and that in all of this moreover he should (19) restrain his thoughts and his movements; that he should not let himself be carried towards some excess or other concerning his thoughts with respect to his mother.

Naturally the authors have made a lot of this kind of disturbed background to the orders given by the ghost to Hamlet, of having in short to restrain himself in his relationships with his mother. But there is one respect in which it seems that what is in question has not been articulated, that in short already, and immediately it is about a question that must be resolved: what is to be done about something, which appears here to be the essential, despite the horror of what is articulated, the accusations formally pronounced by the ghost against the character of Claudius, namely the assassin. It is here that he reveals to his son that he has been killed by him.

The order that the ghost gives is not an order in itself; it is something which already puts in the foreground, and as such, the mother's desire. This is absolutely essential, moreover we will come back to it.

The second act is constituted by what one can call the

organisation of the surveillance around Hamlet. In short, we have a sort of preamble to it in the form - it is rather amusing, and this shows the character of reduplication of the group Polonius, Laertes, Ophelia, over against the group Hamlet, Claudius and the queen - of instructions that Polonius, the prime minister, gives to someone for spying on his son who has gone to Paris. He tells him how to proceed in order to get information about his son. Here we have a purple passage in the style of (20) the eternal truths about the police which I do not need to insist on. Then there intervene, it has already been prepared in the first act, Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, who are not simply the lightweight characters that people think. They are people who are old friends of Hamlet. And Hamlet distrusts them, mocks them, derides them, routs them, and plays with them an extremely subtle game under the cover of madness - we will also see what is meant by this problem of the madness or the pseudo-madness of Hamlet - really appeals at one moment to their old and ancient friendship, with a tone and an accent which also deserves to be highlighted if we have the time, and which also deserves to be retained, which proves that he does it without any confidence. And he does not for a single moment give up his position of rusing, of playing, with them. Nevertheless there is a moment when he speaks to them with a certain tone.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are the vehicles, they come to sound him out for the king and this indeed is what Hamlet senses and what he urges them truly to admit to him. Were you sent to me? What are you doing around me? And the others are sufficiently shaken for one of them to ask the other: what are we to say to him (II ii 300). But that passes because everything always passes in a certain fashion. Namely that one never breaks through a certain wall which would relax a situation which appears essentially, from beginning to end, essentially knotted up.

At this moment Rosencrantz and Guildenstern introduce the players they have met on the way, and whom Hamlet knows. Hamlet has always been interested in the theatre and he is going to welcome (21) these actors in a really remarkable fashion. Here again you should read the first samples that they give of their talent.

The important thing is that a tragedy concerning the end of Troy, the murder of Priam - and concerning this murder we have a very beautiful scene in English, where we see Pyrrhus raising a sword above the person playing Priam, and remaining thus:

"So as a painted tyrant Pyrrhus stood.
And like a neutral to his will and matter.
Did nothing." (II ii 502)

Since it is one of the fundamental themes of the affair, this deserves to be highlighted as a first image, that of an actor, in connection with whom there is going to come to Hamlet the idea of using them in what is going to constitute the body of the third act - this is absolutely essential - what the English call in a stereotyped way, the play scene: theatre within theatre. Hamlet

then concludes:

"The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king." (II ii 635)

This kind of crash of cymbals which ends here a long tirade of Hamlet's which is entirely written in blank verse - I point this out - and in which we find this rhyming couplet, is something which has all its value as an introduction. I mean that it is on this that the second act ends and that the third, in which the (22) play scene is going to be put on, is introduced.

This monologue is essential. In it we see, both the violence of Hamlet's sentiments, and the violence of the accusations that he makes against himself on one hand:

"Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? Breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie i' the throat
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Hah!" (II ii 598ff)

This gives the general style of this play which is enough to convulse you with laughter. And immediately afterwards he talks about his present step-father:

"Swounds, I should take it. For it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal."

We spoke about these kites, in connection with Leonardo da Vinci and a memory of his childhood. I think that it is a kind of milan. It is a question of his step-father and this victim, of (23) this slave who is made precisely to be offered up as a victim to the muses. And there begins here a series of insults

"Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!"

But these cries, these insults, are addressed as much to himself as to the one meant in the context. This point is absolutely important, it is the culmination of the second act. And what constitutes the essential of his fury is the fact that he saw the actors weeping as they described the sorry lot of Hecuba before whom Priam her husband is being cut into little pieces. Because after having for a long time stayed in a fixed position, his sword suspended, Pyrrhus takes malicious pleasure - this is what the text tells us:

"When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport

In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs," (II ii 536)

In cutting up - mincing is I think the same word as emincer in

French - in front of this woman who is described for us as rolled up with some sort of blanket around her lank loins, Priam's body. The theme is all of this for Hecuba. But what does Hecuba mean to these people? Here are people who can rise to the heights of emotion for something which does not concern them at all. This is what unleashes in Hamlet this despair at not feeling something equivalent. This is important to introduce what is in question, namely the play scene for which he gives the reason. As if (24) caught by the atmosphere, he seems to see all of a sudden the use he can make of it.

What is the reason that pushes him? There is undoubtedly here a rational motivation: to catch the conscience of the king. Namely: by putting on this play together with some modifications introduced by himself, to see what is going to move the king; make him betray himself. And this indeed is how things happen. At a certain moment, with a great noise, the king can no longer hold out. The crime that he committed is represented to him in such an exact fashion, together with Hamlet's commentaries that he brusquely cries out: "Give me some light" and he goes off with great noise. And Hamlet says to Horatio there is no longer any doubt.

This is essential. And I am not the first to have posed, in the analytic register which is our own, what the function is of this play scene. Rank did it before me in a book which is called Das Schauspiel in Hamlet, Psychoanalytik, which appeared in the International Psychanalytik in 1919 in Vienna-Leipzig (p.72-85).

The function of this Schauspiel was articulated by Rank in a certain fashion to which we will have to return. It is clear in any case that it poses a problem which goes beyond its functional role in the articulation of the play. Many details show that it is a question all the same of knowing up to what point and how we can interpret these details. Namely whether it is enough to do what Rank contented himself with doing, namely picking out from (25) it all the traits which show that in the very structure of the fact of watching a play there is something which evokes the first observations made by the child of parental copulation. This is the position that Rank takes up; I am not saying that it does not have a value, or even that it is wrong; I believe that it is incomplete, and that in any case it deserves to be articulated within the whole movement, namely in that by which Hamlet tries to organise, to give a structure, to give precisely what I call somewhere this dimension of disguised truth its structure as fiction with reference to which alone he managed to reorient himself, beyond the more or less efficacious character of the action for making Claudius unveil himself, betray himself. There is something here, and Rank has touched on something important in what concerns his own orientation with respect to himself. I am only indicating it here to show the interest of the problems that this gives rise to.

Things do not just simply happen, and the third act does not finish without the consequences of this articulation appearing in

the following form: the fact is that he - Hamlet - is summoned very urgently to his mother who of course cannot stand any more. These are literally the words that are used: "Oh Hamlet, speak no more" (III iv 90). And that in the course of this scene he sees Claudius, when he is going towards his mother's apartment, in the process of coming, if not to resipiscence, at least to repentance, and that we assist at a whole scene which is called that of the repentant prayer of this man who finds himself here in a way caught up in the very nets that he is holding onto, the fruits of his crime, and who lifts up to God some prayer or other to have the energy to free himself from it.

(26) And catching him literally on his knees and at his mercy, without being seen by the king, Hamlet has vengeance within his reach. This is where he stops and makes this reflection: by killing him now is he not going to send him straight to heaven, while his father had insisted a great deal on the fact that he suffered all the torments of some hell or purgatory or other, is he not going to be sending him straight to eternal happiness? This is precisely what I must not do.

Here he had an opportunity to settle things. And I would even say that everything here is about this "to be or not to be" which, I introduced it for you the last time, it is not for nothing that it is essential to me. The essential is in fact here in its entirety. I mean that because of the fact that what has happened to the father is precisely the fact of having come back to tell us that he is fixed forever in this moment, this bar drawn at the bottom of the account of life which ensures that he remains in short identical to the sum of his crimes; this is also what Hamlet comes to a stop before with his "to be or not to be". Suicide is not so simple. We are not so much dreaming with him of what happens on the other side, but simply this, that to put in the final full stop in something does not prevent the being remaining identical to everything that he has articulated by the discourse of his life, and that here there is no "to be or not to be", that the "to be" whatever it is, remains eternal.

And it is precisely for him also, for Hamlet, to be confronted with this, namely not to be purely and simply the vehicle of the drama, the one through whom pass the passions, the one who like Eteocles and Polyneices continue in the crime that the father has (27) completed with castration; it is precisely because he worries about the eternal "to be" of this Claudius, that in a quite consistent fashion in effect he does not at that moment even draw his sword from the scabbard.

This in effect is a key point, an essential point. What he wants, is to wait, to surprise the other in "incestuous pleasure", in other words in the situation always defined with respect to this mother, who is the keypoint, namely this desire of the mother, and that he is in effect going to have with the mother this pathetic scene, one of the most extraordinary things ever performed, this scene in which there is shown to her the mirror of what she is, and in which between this son who undoubtedly loves his mother as his mother loves him - this we

are told - more than he can express, there is produced this dialogue in which he urges her properly speaking to break the bonds of what he calls this damned monster of habit.

"That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat.
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this.
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery
That aptly is put on. Refrain tonight,"

All of this is told to us in a marvellously crude way -

"And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence, the next more easy." (III iv 161)

This is the point that I wanted to introduce you to, there are two replies which appear quite essential to me. I have not yet spoken much about poor Ophelia. It is all around this that it is going to revolve; there is a moment when Ophelia says to him: "You are as good as a chorus, my lord." Namely, you are giving a very good commentary on the play. He replies: "I could (28) interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying" (III ii 255). Namely as regards what is happening on the stage. It is in any case a question of something which is happening "between you and your love".

Likewise, in the scene with the mother, when the ghost appears, because the ghost appears at a moment when precisely the objurgations are beginning to weaken, he says:

"Oh, step between her and her fighting soul.
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet." (III iv 114)

Here the ghost, who appears just to him in this case - because usually when the ghost appears everybody sees it - says to him: "Step between her and her fighting soul".

"Conceit" is univocal. Conceit is used all the time in this play, and precisely in connection with what belongs to the soul. Conceit is precisely the concetti, the point of the style, and it is the word which is used to speak about a precious style. "Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works. Speak to her, Hamlet".

This place where Hamlet is always being asked to enter, to operate, to intervene, is here something which gives us the real situation of the drama. And despite the intervention, the (29) signifying summons. It is signifying to us because this is what is in question for us, what intervening means for us: "Between her and her"; that is our work. "Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works", it is to the analyst that this appeal is addressed.

Here once more Hamlet weakens and leaves his mother saying: after all let yourself be caressed, he will come, he will give

you a greasy kiss on the cheek and caress your neck. He abandons his mother, he literally allows her to slip, to return as one might say to the abandonment of her desire. And here is how this act finishes, except that meanwhile the unfortunate Polonius had the misfortune to make a movement behind the arras, and Hamlet has run his sword through his body.

We come to the fourth act. There is something here that begins very nicely, namely the hunt for the body. Because Hamlet has hidden the body somewhere, and really there is question at the beginning only of a hunt for the body that Hamlet seems to find very amusing. He cries: They are playing catch the fox and everybody is running after him. Finally he says to them, do not worry, in a fortnight you will begin to smell him. He is there under the stairs, we will say no more about it.

Here he makes a reply which is important and to which we will return:

"The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing - " (IV ii 29)

This is one of Hamlet's schizophrenic remarks. It also (30) contributes something to the interpretation for us. We will see it in what follows.

This act is an act in which a lot of things happen, rapidly: the sending of Hamlet to England; his return before anyone has had time to turn around - we know why, he had uncovered the secret plot, that he was being sent to his death - his return is accompanied by some drama, namely that Ophelia in the meantime has become mad, let us say because of the death of her father, and probably something else as well; that Laertes has revolted and has mounted a little coup; that the king has prevented a revolt by saying that Hamlet is the guilty one, that no one can be told this because Hamlet is too popular, but that matters can be quietly settled by arranging a contrived duel in which Hamlet will perish.

This indeed is what is going to happen. The scene of the final act is established by the churchyard scene. I referred a little while ago to the first Gravedigger; you will all more or less remember the extraordinary remarks that are exchanged between these characters who are in the process of digging Ophelia's grave and who at every word uncover a skull, one of which is picked up by Hamlet who makes a speech about it.

Because I was talking about actors, in the memory of a theatre dresser, there has never been a Hamlet and a first Gravedigger who were not at daggers drawn. The first Gravedigger has never been able to tolerate the tone in which Hamlet speaks to him, which is a little trait that is worthwhile noting in passing, and which shows us the point to which the power of the relationships brought into play in this drama can go.

(31) Let us come to something to which I will draw your attention

the next time: this is that it is after this long and powerful preparation that there is effectively found in the fifth act the thing that is in question; this desire which always collapses, this something exhausted, incompleted, uncompletable that there is in Hamlet's position, why are we going to see it all of a sudden made possible? Namely why are we going all of a sudden to see Hamlet accepting, in the most unlikely conditions, the challenge of Laertes. In conditions which are all the more curious in that he is the champion of Claudius. And we see him defeating Laertes in every round - he touches him four or five times even though the bet made was that he would touch him at most five times against twelve - and becoming impaled as was intended on the poisoned tip, not without there being a sort of confusion in which this tip comes into his hand and he also wounds Laertes; and it is in the measure that both are mortally wounded that there comes the final blow which is delivered against the one who from the beginning it was a question of killing, Claudius.

It is not for nothing that I evoked the last time a sort of picture by with Ophelia floating on the river. I would like to propose another one to you to finish our remarks today. I wish someone would paint a picture in which one would see a cemetery on the horizon, and here the hole of the grave, people going away like people at the end of the oedipal tragedy dispersing and covering their eyes in order not to see what is happening, namely something which with respect to Oedipus is more (32) or less the liquefaction of Mr. Valdemar.

Here it is something else. Something has happened to which not enough importance is attached. Hamlet who has disembarked in a hurry thanks to the pirates who have allowed him to escape from assassination, happens on Ophelia's burial. This is the first news he has had of it, he did not know what had happened during his brief absence. We see Laertes tearing his breast, and leaping into the grave to embrace for a final time the body of his sister crying aloud his despair. Hamlet, literally, not only cannot tolerate this manifestation towards a girl whom as you know he had very badly mistreated up to then, but he precipitates himself after Laertes after having given a great roar, a warcry in which he says the most unexpected thing. He concludes by saying: who is giving these cries of despair in connection with the death of this young girl. And he says: the one who is crying "is I Hamlet the Dane" (V i 280).

We have never heard him saying that he is a Dane; he hates the Danes. All of a sudden we see him absolutely converted by something which I can say is absolutely significant with regard to our schema. It is in the measure that something S is here in a certain relationship with o that all of a sudden he makes this identification which makes him discover for the first time his desire in its totality.

They pass some time struggling in the grave. We see them disappearing into the hole and finally they are pulled out in order to be separated. This is what would be seen in the picture: this hole from which one would see things escaping. We shall see how we can conceive of what that would mean.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 18 March 1959

The principle of analysis is all the same that in order to reach your goal you must not be in a hurry. Perhaps some of you think - I do not believe that there are many of that kind - that we are a long way from clinical practice. That is not at all the case. We are right in the middle of it because since what is in question is how to situate the meaning of desire - of human desire - this method of finding our bearings in what is moreover from the beginning one of the great themes of analytic thinking is something which should in no way distract us from what is most urgently required of us.

Many things have been said about Hamlet, and I alluded to them the last time. I tried to show the magnitude of the accumulation of commentaries on Hamlet. In the meantime I got hold of a document for which I was pining in my desire for perfection, namely the Hamlet and Oedipus of Ernest Jones.

I read it and saw that in short Jones had kept his book up to date with what had happened since 1909. And it was no longer Loenig that he alluded to as a reference to be recommended, but to Dover Wilson who wrote a good deal about Hamlet and who wrote very well. Meanwhile since I had myself read part of Dover Wilson's work, I think I have more or less given you the essentials of it.

It is now rather a question of standing back a little from all of that, from Jones' speculation which, I must say, is very penetrating, and one could say, on the whole, of a different (2) style to anything which, in the analytic family, has been written, added to the subject.

He makes very correct remarks which I find myself simply repeating on occasion. In particular he makes this simple common-sense remark that Hamlet is not a real person, and that all the same to pose ourselves the most profound questions about the character of Hamlet is perhaps something which deserves a more serious reflection than we usually accord to it.

As usual when we are in a domain which concerns on the one hand our exploration, and also on the other hand an object, there is a twofold path to be followed. Our right to engage ourselves in a certain speculation founded on the idea that we form of an

object. It is quite obvious that there are things, which are I would say to be cleared away from the beginning, in particular for example that what we are dealing with in works of art, and especially in dramatic works, are characters, in the sense that this is understood in French.

Characters, namely something that we suppose the author possesses in all their depth; that he has made up someone, a character, and he is supposed to move us by transmitting characteristics of this character. And by this simple description we are supposed already to be introduced to a kind of supposed reality which would be beyond what we are given in the work of art.

I would say that Hamlet already has this really very important property of making us sense the degree to which this point of (3) view, which is very common, and which we apply the whole time, spontaneously, when we are dealing with a work of art, is all the same to be if not refuted, at least suspended, because in fact in any art there are two points which we can solidly hold onto as being absolutely certain reference points, which are that it is not enough to say as I said, that Hamlet is a kind of mirror where everyone reader and spectator has seen himself in his own way. But let us leave to one side the spectators whose depths cannot be sounded.

In any case the diversity of critical interpretations of it which have been given, suggest that there is here some mystery, because the totality of what has been put forward, affirmed, in connection with Hamlet is properly speaking irreconcilable, contradictory. I hope I have already sufficiently demonstrated this the last time. I articulated that the diversity of interpretations was strictly of the order of contrary to contrary. I also indicated a little what Hamlet is for actors. It is a domain to which we will perhaps have to return a little later, which is very significant. I said it was the role par excellence, and that at the same time one spoke about the Hamlet of such and such a person. Namely that there are as many Hamlets as there are actors who have a certain personal power.

But this goes further. Some people have gone to the point of sustaining - and in particular Robertson - at the time of the third centenary, supported a little no doubt by the sort of "rush" at that time about Shakesperian themes, the passionate (4) exaltation with which the whole English literary world revived this theme, some people brought forward an opposing point of view by saying that strictly speaking Hamlet was a vacuum, that it did not hold up; that there was no key for Hamlet, that Shakespeare did what he could to patch together a theme the philological exploration of which - which has been taken fairly far - shows - it was known that there was already a Hamlet which was attributed to Kyd, which had been played twelve years before this autumn of 1601 when we can be more or less certain that this Hamlet appeared for the first time - it was even said - and I would say that it is on this that the first chapter of Jones' book ends - it was properly speaking articulated, up to the time of Grillparzer, an Austrian playwright to whom Freud on occasion

makes a very important reference, and who says that the impenetrability of Hamlet is its raison d'etre, which is all the same a rather curious opinion.

The fact that it was possible to put this forward - one could not say that this is not strictly speaking an anti-Aristotelian opinion, in so far as the homoiios character of the hero compared to us is what is put in the foreground to explain, on the very basis of the Aristotelian explanation of the effect of comedy and of tragedy - the fact that all of this could be put forward about Hamlet has its importance.

It must be said that there is here a whole range of opinions which are not equivalent, which present a whole series of nuances (5) concerning what can be said about it, and that it is not the same thing to say that Hamlet is a failed play - you should remember that no less a person than T. S. Eliot who in a certain milieu is looked on as more or less the greatest modern English poet, also thinks, and he has said it, that Shakespeare was not equal to his hero. I mean that if Hamlet is someone who is unequal to his task, Shakespeare too was unequal to the articulation of the role of Hamlet.

These are opinions which one can all the same say are problematical. I am enumerating them for you to lead you towards what? Towards what is in question - it is the most nuanced and I believe the most correct opinion - it is that there is in the relationship of Hamlet to the person who grasps it, either as a reader or as a spectator, something which is of the order of an illusion.

This is not the same thing as saying that Hamlet is simply a vacuum. An illusion is not a vacuum. In order to produce on the stage a ghostly effect of the order of what if you wish my little concave mirror would represent, with the real image which arises and which can only be seen from a certain angle and from a certain point, a whole machinery is necessary.

That Hamlet is an illusion, the organisation of the illusion, here is something which is not of the same order of illusion as if everyone was dreaming about a vacuum. It is all the same important to make this distinction.

What is sure, in any case, is that everything confirms that there is something of this order. This gives - this is the first (6) point - the handle that we can solidly hold on to. For example Trench who is quoted by Jones, we will see in what terms, writes something like the following: "We find it hard, with Shakespeare's help, to understand Hamlet: even Shakespeare, perhaps, found it hard to understand him: Hamlet himself" - you see that this passage is amusing, the pen or the thought finds itself slipping into the following - "Hamlet himself finds it impossible to understand himself. Better able than other men to read the hearts and the motives of others" (The end of this sentence refers not to myself nor to Shakespeare but to Hamlet.

You know that Hamlet all the time plays this deconstructing game with his interlocutors, with those who come to question him, he sets traps for them.) "... he is yet quite unable to read his own" (Jones 50).

I point out to you immediately afterwards, Jones who has precisely begun by being full of reservations saying that we must not allow ourselves to be drawn into talking about Hamlet as if he were a real person - we must look elsewhere for the articulation - and that beyond him we should find Shakespeare - this is the traditional position for analytic interpreters but which I believe contain some error, some fallacy, to which I will first of all draw your attention; Jones makes this remark and after this quotation does not fail himself to slip into something which can be expressed more or less as follows: "I know of no more authentic statement than this in the whole literature on the (7) Hamlet problem

In another place the same Jones will tell us that in short "the hero, the poet, and the audience are all profoundly moved by feelings due to a conflict of the source of which they are unaware" (Jones 51).

There is here then something which allows us to put our finger on the strict equivalence of certain terms of the question, namely the poet and the hero, with something which it is enough to dwell on for a moment in order to see it, the fact is that they are only really there through their discourse.

If it is a question of something which is the communication of what is in the unconscious of those who are put forward here as being the first terms, namely the poet and the hero, one cannot say that this communication of the unconscious can in any case be conceived of, nor presentified here by anything other than the articulation of the dramatic discourse.

We will not speak about the hero who, to tell the truth, if you follow me along the path that I am trying to lead you, is not strictly identical to these words. Especially if we begin to have the feeling that what gives its highest dramatic value, on this occasion, to this hero is a style (?). This indeed is the second handle that I would ask you to hold on to. It is of the same order as this aspect which escapes from everything that we can say about its consistency. In other words, here Hamlet becomes the exemplary work.

That the mode in which a work touches us, touches us precisely in the most profound fashion, namely on the unconscious plane, is (8) something which has to do with an arrangement, a composition of the work which no doubt ensures that we are interested very precisely at the level of the unconscious; but that this is not because of the presence of something which really supports before us an unconscious.

I mean that we are not dealing, either, contrary to what is thought, with the poet's unconsciousness, even if it bears witness to its presence through some unintentional aspects of his

work, by parapraxes, by symbolic elements not perceived by him. This does not interest us in a major way. One can find some traces of it in Hamlet. In the final analysis, this was what Ella Sharpe worked on as I told you the last time, namely she is going to try to polish up here and there what in Hamlet's character can allow there to be glimpsed some hang-up, some fixation of the metaphor around feminine themes, or oral themes. I assure you that with respect to the problem that Hamlet poses, this is really something which appears as secondary, almost puerile, without being completely uninteresting naturally.

In many works, by searching also from this angle some traces, something which can give you information about an author, you are carrying out a biographical investigation of the author, you are not analysing the import of the work as such. And in the foreground the import that Hamlet takes on for us is what gives it the structural value equivalent to that of Oedipus.

Something which may allow us to interest ourselves at the deepest (9) level of the texture of what for us allows us to structure certain problems, is obviously something other than one or other fleeting admission. It is quite obviously the totality, the articulation of the tragedy in itself which is what interests us. It is what I am in the process of accentuating. Its value comes from its organisation, through the fact that it establishes superimposed planes within which the proper dimension of human subjectivity can find its place. And what ensures that, if you wish, in this machinery, or again in these armatures to metaphorise what I want to say to you, in the necessity for a certain number of superimposed planes the depth of a play, of a room, of a scene, the depth is given within which there can be posed in the fullest fashion the problem of the articulation of desire for us.

You clearly understand me then. I am saying then that if Hamlet, this is the essential point, has a privileged import for us, I mean if Hamlet is really the greatest drama, or one of the greatest dramas of modern tragedy putting Faust on the other side, it is not simply because there is a Shakespeare who is as much of a genius as we suppose him to be, and a particular turning point in his life - because obviously we can also say that Hamlet is a point at which something happened in Shakespeare's life. This can be summed up perhaps in the fact that all that we can say about it, because we know the thing that has happened, it is the death of his father, and to be satisfied with that means that we are satisfied with very little. And we also suppose that around this event there must also have been (10) other things in his life, because the veering, the orientation, the turnabout of his production is really obvious. Before there was nothing except this succession of comedies, or these historical dramas which are really two genres that in both cases he pushed to their highest degree of beauty, of perfection, of ease. Up to then he is almost an author with two great specialities on which he plays with a mastery, a brio, a happiness which puts him among the authors enjoying popular success. From Hamlet on the whole skyscape has altered, and we

touch things which are beyond all limits, which no longer have anything to do with any kind of canon, which are no longer of the same order. After Hamlet, we have King Lear, and still more things before we end with The Tempest.

We sense here something completely different, a human drama which develops on a completely different register. It is when all is said and done the Shakespeare who is the jewel of human history and of the human drama, who opens up a new dimension on man. Therefore something has certainly happened at that moment. But is it enough for us to be certain of that to think that that is what it is? Of course in some way. But let us observe all the same that if Hamlet is the play which most presents itself as an enigma, it is only too obvious after all that not every play which poses a problem is for all that a good play. A really bad play can be one also. And in a bad play there is probably, on occasion, an unconscious just as present, and even more present, than there is in a good play. If we are moved by a piece of theatre, it is not because of the difficulty of effort that is represented by it, or because of what the author allows to pass into it unknown to himself. It is because, I repeat, of the (11) dimensions of development that it offers to the place to be taken up by us in what properly speaking the problematic of our own relationship with our own desire conceals in us.

And this is only offered to us in such an outstanding fashion in a play which from certain points of view realises to the maximum these necessities of dimension, this order and this superimposition of planes which gives its place to what should here, in us, begin to reverberate.

It is not because Shakespeare is at that moment caught up in a personal drama - if we push things to their final limit, we think we have grasped this personal drama and it slips away; people have gone so far as to say that it was the drama which was in his Sonnets, the relationships with his protector and his mistress. You know that he was deceived twice over by his friend and by his mistress. People have gone so far as to say, even though the drama at that moment very probably happened at a more temperate period of Shakespeare's life (there is no certainty about his history, and we only have the testimony of the Sonnets which itself is particularly elaborated).

I think that it involves some cause other than that. What is at stake is not the presence, the point behind Hamlet of everything that we can on occasion dream about, it is the composition of Hamlet.

No doubt the author has succeeded in pushing this composition to a high degree of maturity, of perfection, which makes of Hamlet something which is distinguished from all the pre-Hamlets that we have been able to discover with our philology by means of an articulation which is so singular, so exceptional that it is (12) precisely what ought to be the object of our reflection.

If Shakespeare was capable of bringing it to this point, it is

probably because of a deepening which is just as much the deepening of the author's craft, as the deepening of the lived experience of a man who undoubtedly lived, and whose life was happy, since everything indicates that his life was not untouched by every sort of demand and every sort of passion. That the drama of Shakespeare exists behind Hamlet is secondary with regard to what makes up the structure of Hamlet. It is this structure which corresponds to the effect Hamlet has, and this all the more that Hamlet himself, as the authors put it metaphorically, all the more that Hamlet himself is a character whose depths we do not know and not simply because of our ignorance. He is effectively a character who is composed of something which is the vacuum for situating - because this is the important thing - our ignorance.

A situated ignorance is different to something purely negative. This situated ignorance, after all is precisely nothing other than this presentification of the unconscious. It gives to Hamlet its import and its force.

I think that I have succeeded in communicating to you with all the nuances, without omitting anything, without denying the properly psychological dimension involved in a playwright, which is a question of what is called applied psychoanalysis, even (13) though it is completely the contrary at the level that we are at, it is theoretical psychoanalysis that is really in question, and with regard to the theoretical question which is posed by the adaptation of our analysis to a work of art, any kind of clinical question is a question of applied psychoanalysis ...

There are people here who are listening to me and who will no doubt need me to say a little bit more along a certain direction about which they will pose me questions.

If Hamlet is really what I am telling you, namely a composition, a structure of a kind in which desire can find its place, sufficiently correctly, sufficiently rigorously posed, for every desire or more exactly for all the problems of the relationship of the subject to desire to be projected into it, it should be enough in a way to read it.

I am alluding therefore to the people who may here pose me the question of the function of the actor. Where is the function of the theatre, of the production? It is clear that it is not at all the same thing to read Hamlet and to see it produced. I do not think either that this should be a problem for you for too long, and that in the perspective that I am trying to develop before you concerning in short the function of the unconscious - the function of the unconscious that I defined as discourse of the Other - one could not better illustrate it than in the perspective which we are given by an experience like that of the relationship of the audience to Hamlet. It is clear that here the unconscious is presentified in the form of the discourse of the Other which is a perfectly composed discourse. The hero is (14) present here only through this discourse, just as the poet.

who is long dead, when all is said and done bequeaths his discourse to us.

But naturally this dimension that is added by the production, namely the actors who are going to play this Hamlet, is strictly analogous to that by which we ourselves are involved in our own unconscious. And if I tell you that what constitutes our relationship to the unconscious, is the thing by which our imaginary, I mean our relationship with our own bodies - it seems that I ignore the existence of the body, I have an incorporeal theory of analysis; this is what is being discovered at least if one hears about the effect of what I am articulating here at a certain distance.

To say the word, it is we who provide the signifier with its material - this is the very thing that I teach and that I spend my time telling you; it is with our own members - this is what the imaginary is - that we compose the alphabet of this discourse which is unconscious, and of course each one of us in different relationships because we do not make use of the same elements in order to be caught up in the unconscious. And this is the analogy, the actor lends his members, his presence, not simply as a puppet, but with his unconscious which is well and truly real, namely the relationship of his members to a certain history which is his own.

Everyone knows that there are good and bad actors, it is in the measure I believe that the unconscious of an actor is more or less compatible with this loan of his puppet, whether he lends himself to it or does not lend himself to it. This is what makes an actor have more or less talent, genius, indeed that he is more or less compatible with certain roles - why not. Even (15) those who have the most extensive range can after all play certain roles better than others.

In other words, the actor of course is there; it is in the measure of the appropriateness of something which in effect may well have the closest relationship to his unconscious, to what he has to represent to us that he gives to this a point which undoubtedly adds something, but is far from constituting the essential of what is communicated to us, the representation of the drama.

This I believe would open to us pretty far the door towards the psychology of the actor. Of course there are laws of general compatibility. The relationship of the actor to the possibility of the show is something which poses a problem of psychology peculiar to the actor, the problem which has been tackled of the relationship between certain psychological textures and the theatre. Someone, a number of years ago, wrote a rather promising article about what he called hysteria and the theatre. I read it again recently. We will perhaps have the opportunity to speak about it with interest, indeed with a certain amount of agreement.

Having closed this parenthesis, let us take up the thread of our

own remarks. What then is this structure around which there is composed the essential putting into place in which I am trying to make you understand the effect of Hamlet. This setting up of the interior, within which desire can and must take its place.

From the first point of view, we are going to see that what is said about it commonly in the analytic register, in terms of articulation, comprehension, of what Hamlet is, is something (16) which seems to go in following direction.

Am I making you all these introductory remarks in order to rejoin themes which are quite classical, even banal? You will see that this is not at all the case. Nevertheless let us begin by approaching things by what is usually presented; I do not think that it is all that simple, nor so univocal. And a certain rectitude is what is most difficult for the authors themselves to maintain in the development of their thought, because all the time there is a sort of flight, of oscillation, some examples of which you are going to see in what I am going to enounce to you.

In a first approximation which is one that everyone agrees with, Hamlet is the person who does not know what he wants, the one who pauses bitterly when he sees marching off the troops of the young Fortinbras who pass for a moment on the horizon of the stage, and who is suddenly struck by the fact that here are people who are going to perform a great action for nothing, for a little piece of Poland, and who are going to sacrifice everything, their lives - while he has "cause, and will, and strength, and means to do 't", as he himself says: "Why yet I live to say ¹this thing's to do" (IV iv 44).

Here is the problem that is posed for everyone. Why does Hamlet not act? Why is this will, this desire, this wish, something which remains suspended in him, which if you like rejoins what Racamier writes about the hysteric.

Some say he does not want to; he says he is not able. What is (17) in question is that he is not able to will. What does the analytic tradition say to us about this? The analytic tradition says that everything reposes on this occasion on the desire for the mother. That this desire is repressed, that this is the cause which means that the hero cannot advance towards that action which is commanded him, namely to take revenge on a man who is the current possessor, illegitimately because criminally, of the maternal object, and that he cannot strike one whom he is designated to prosecute, in the measure that he himself in short has already committed the crime that it is a question of avenging.

It is to the extent, we are told, that in the background there is the memory of the infantile desire for the mother, of the oedipal desire for the murder of the father, it is in this measure that Hamlet finds himself in a way the accomplice of the present possessor, that this possessor is in his eyes a lucky possessor, that he is his accomplice, that he cannot therefore attack this

possessor without attacking himself. But is this what is meant, or is it that he cannot attack this possessor without awakening in himself this ancient desire, namely a desire experienced as guilty, a mechanism which all the same is more tangible.

But after all does all this not allow us, fascinated by something unfathomable linked to a schema which for us is surrounded by a sort of untouchable, non-dialectical character so that could we not say that all this in short is reversed. I mean one might just as well say, that if Hamlet immediately hurled himself on his step-father, that he would find here after all the opportunity for allaying his own guilt by finding outside of (18) himself the really guilty party. That all the same, to call things by their name, everything pushes him to act in the opposite direction, and goes in the same direction, because the father comes back from the beyond in the form of a ghost to command him to prosecute this act. There is no doubt about this. The commandment of the super-ego is here materialised in a way, and provided with all the sacred character of the very person who comes from beyond the grave, together with what is added to it by the authority of his greatness, his seductiveness, the fact of being a victim, the fact of really having been dispossessed in an atrocious way not only of the object of his love, but of his power, of his throne, of his very life, of his salvation, of his eternal happiness.

There is this, and also there comes to operate in the same sense something which could be called on this occasion Hamlet's natural desire. If it is something which he has not been able to experience while he is still separated from this mother, that undoubtedly the least that can be said to count for him is that he is fixed on his mother - it is the most certain and the most obvious thing in Hamlet's role. Therefore this desire which on this occasion I call natural, and not unintentionally, because when Jones was writing his article on Hamlet he is still at the stage of having to plead before the public for this dimension of repression and of censorship, and every page he writes on this occasion tends to give to this censorship a social origin.

It is all the same curious - curiously enough - he says, that the things that are obviously the most censored by social organisation, are the most natural desires. In truth this does (19) in effect pose a question. Why after all is society not organised to satisfy these most natural desires, if it is really from society that there emerges the dimension of repression and of censorship? This might take us perhaps a little further, namely that it is something quite tangible that this never seem to be perceived, that the necessities of life, of the life of the group, the sociological necessities are not at all exhaustive in order to explain this sort of prohibition from which there emerges in human beings the dimension of the unconscious.

This suffices so little that Freud had to invent an original, pre-social myth which we should not forget because it is what

founds society, namely Totem and taboo can explain the very principles of repression. And Jones' commentary at the date he wrote it, and in which curiously he unfortunately preserves this sociological genesis of prohibitions at the level of the unconscious, more exactly of censorship, very exactly of the source of the Oedipus complex, is an error on Jones' part.

It is perhaps a rather deliberate, apologetic error, the error of someone who wants to convince, who wants to conquer a certain public of psycho-sociologists; it is not at all something which does not pose problems for us.

But let us come back to our Hamlet. We see him when all is said and done with two tendencies; the over-riding tendency which is doubly commanded him by the authority of his father and the love which he bears him; and the second of wanting to defend his mother, and of wanting to keep her for himself, which ought to make him go in the same direction and kill Claudius. Therefore (20) two positive things, this is a curious thing, will give a zero result.

I know well that this happens. I found a very fine example of it at a time when I had broken my leg: a shortening, then another shortening - that of the other leg - and there is no longer any shortening. It is a very good exercise for us, because we have to deal with things of this order.

Is this what is in question? No, I do not think so. I believe rather that we are engaging ourselves in an illusory dialectic, that we are satisfying ourselves with something which after all cannot be justified at all, namely that Hamlet is there, that he has to be explained. That we touch all the same on something essential, namely that there is a relationship which makes this action difficult, which makes this task repugnant to Hamlet, which puts him effectively in a problematic character vis-a-vis his own action, and that this is his desire; that in a way it is the impure character of this desire which plays here the essential role, but without Hamlet knowing it; that in a way it is because his action is not disinterested, that is it not motivated in a Kantian way, that Hamlet cannot accomplish his act, I think that in general there is here something in effect which we can say, but which in truth then is almost accessible before analytic investigation, and we have traces of this - the interest of Jones's bibliography is that it shows this.

Some people, well before Freud, even began to articulate it in the writings of 1880 or 1890, some authors had glimpsed it.

Nevertheless I believe that we can formulate analytically something more correct, and go further than that to which I believe what has been formulated analytically on this plane has (21) been reduced. And I believe that to do it we only have to really follow the text of the play and see what will follow from it.

What will follow from it consists in remarking to you that what

Hamlet has to deal with, all the time, what Hamlet is grappling with, is a desire which should be regarded, considered where it is in the play, namely very different, very far from his own, that it is not the desire for his mother, but the desire of his mother.

This is really all that is in question. The pivotal point, the whole scene which I should read with you, is that of the encounter with his mother after the play scene, the scene of the play that he has had acted, and with which he has surprised the conscience of the king, and at which everyone, more and more disturbed about Hamlet's intentions, decided to have him called, to have a conversation with his mother.

Hamlet himself desires nothing more. On this occasion he is going he tells us to turn the knife in the wound. He speaks about daggers, in his mother's heart. And there takes place this long scene which is a kind of highpoint of the theatre, this something about which the last time I told you that to read it brings you to the limit of what you can tolerate, where he is going to adjure his mother pathetically to become aware of the point that she is at - I regret not being able to read the whole of this scene, but do it yourselves, and as one does it at school, pen in hand. He explains to her: what sort of a life are you living; and then, you are not in the first flush of youth all the same. Your blood should be a little tamer (cf III iv 69).

It is things of this order that he tells her in this admirable language. These are things which one does not believe could be (22) heard in a more penetrating fashion, or one which responds better to the fact that Hamlet has gone like a dart to tell it to his mother, namely things which are destined to open her heart, and which she experiences as such. Namely that she herself tells him: "...thou hast cleft my heart in twain" (III iv 156). And she literally groans under the pressure.

We are more or less certain that Hamlet is thirty years old. This may be argued, but one can say that in the graveyard scene there is an indication, something from which one can deduce that Hamlet is thirty years old. His mother is at least forty-five, even if Hamlet is a little bit younger. It is quite clear that as he remembers poor Yorick who died about thirty years earlier, and whose lips he has kissed, one can say that he is thirty years old. It is important to know that Hamlet is not a little young man.

Afterwards he compares his father to Hyperion the one on whom the gods have all set their seals. And alongside him we have this rubbish, a kind of shreds and patches, a filth, a peasant, a tout, this other, and it is with him that you roll about in the filth. This is all he talks about, and it is well to articulate it. You will see further on what is in question. But in any case it is a question of the desire of the mother, of an adjuration by Hamlet which is a demand of the style: take a certain path, dominate yourself, take, as I told you the last time, the proper moral path, begin by no longer sleeping with my

uncle - this is the way things are said. And then everyone knows, he says, that the more you get the more you want, that this monster custom who binds us to the worst of things also acts (23) in the opposite way; namely: by learning to behave better, it will become more and more easy for you. (cf III iv 157ff)

What do we see? The articulation of a demand which is made by Hamlet manifestly in the name of something which is the order not simply of the law, but of dignity, and which is delivered with a force, a vigour, even a cruelty, of which the least one can say is that it causes some embarrassment. Then having arrived at that, while the other is literally gasping, to the point that one can ask whether the apparition of the ghost who then appears - because you know that the ghost reappears in the bedchamber scene - is not something which consists in saying to Hamlet no doubt: Tally ho! Tally ho! on you go, more of it, but also to a certain degree to call him to order, to protect the mother against some kind of aggressive excess before which the mother herself at a certain moment begins to tremble: "What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?" (III iv 21). Then his father comes to remind him of the following: "Step between her and her fighting soul" (III iv 112).

And having got to this summit that is in question, there is in Hamlet a sudden collapse which makes him say: And then after all, now that I have said all that to you, do whatever you want, and go and tell all of this to Uncle Claudius. Namely you are going to let him give you a little kiss on the cheek, tickle your neck a little, scratch your tummy a little, and the pair of you are going to end up in bed as usual. This is exactly what is said by Hamlet.

(24) Namely that we see here the oscillation between this which, at the moment of the collapse of Hamlet's discourse is something which is in the words themselves, namely the disappearance, the dying away of his appeal into something which is a consenting to the desire of his mother, laying down his arms before something which seems ineluctable to him; namely that the mother's desire here takes on again for him the value of something which in no case, and by no method can be raised up.

I have been going much more slowly than I thought possible. I will be forced to stop at a point which you see is going to leave us confronted with the programme of the decipherment of Hamlet for perhaps two more of our meetings.

To conclude today I will try to show you the relationship between what I am in the process of articulating and the graph. What I am trying to lead you to, is the following, that beyond the elementary discourse of the demand, in so far as it submits the need of the subject to the consent, to the caprice, to the arbitrariness of the other as such, and thus structures human tension and intention in terms of the fragmentation of the signifier, if what is happening beyond the other, if the discourse of the subject which is the one that is carried on, in so far as beyond this first stage, of this first relationship to

the other, what he has to find in this discourse which models him, which structures him in this already structured discourse, is to rediscover within this what he really wants ... because this is the first stage and the fundamental stage of any mapping out of the subject with respect to what is called his will; his own volonte.

(25) His own will, is first of all that most problematic thing as we analysts know, namely what he really desires. Because it is quite clear that beyond the necessities of demand, in so far as it fragments and fractures this subject, the rediscovery of desire in its ingenuous form is the problem that we are constantly dealing with. Analysis tells us that beyond this relationship to the other, this questioning of the subject about what he wants is not simply that of the question mark which is here drawn on this second level of the graph, but that there is above it something in order to rediscover oneself.

Namely that as in the first stage there is installed somewhere a signifying chain which is called properly speaking the unconscious, and which already gives to that its signifying support; that one can rediscover oneself there somewhere.

There is here inscribed a code which is the relationship of the subject to his own demand. There is already a register which is established, thanks to which the subject can perceive what? Not as it is said that his demand is oral, or anal, or this or that, because this is not at all what is in question. That he is in a certain privileged relationship, qua subject. And this is why I inscribed in this way, with a certain form of demand, this line beyond the other in which there is posed the subject's question. It is a conscious line. Before there was analysis or analysts, human beings asked the question, and ceaselessly posed it, you can believe, just as in our time, just as since Freud, of where their true will was.

(26) This is why we make this line a continuous one. It belongs to the system of personality, whether you call it the conscious or the preconscious, for the moment I am not going to get into any further detail.

But what does the graph indicate to us here? It is that it is obviously on this line that there is going to be situated somewhere the x which is desire; that this desire has a relationship with something which must be situated on the return line, opposite this intentional line. It is in this respect that it is homologous to the relationship of the ego to the image. The graph teaches us that this desire which, floating here somewhere, but always in this beyond of the other, this desire is submitted to a certain regulation, to a certain height as one might say of fixation which is determined. Determined by what? By something which is here delineated thus: namely by a return path of the code of the unconscious, $\wedge 0 D$, towards the message of the unconscious on the imaginary plane. That this dotted circuit, in other words the unconscious, which begins here and which passing to the level of the unconscious message, $S(\$)$, goes

to the level of the unconscious \$ over against demand, returns to the desire, and from that towards the phantasy; that in other words it is essentially with respect to what regulates on this line the height, the situation of desire, and on a path which is a return path with respect to the unconscious - because if you notice how the graph is made, you will see here that there is no return arrow; it is in this direction that there is produced the circuit of the formation of desire at the level of the unconscious.

(27) What can be articulated in this very connection, and by keeping ourselves to this scene of Hamlet face to face with his mother? It is essentially the fact that there is never a moment when, in a more complete way, and precisely in a way to further cancel out the subject, this formula that the desire of man is the desire of the other, is not here tangible, manifest, complete.

In other words what is in question is that in the measure that it is to the other that the subject addresses himself, not with his own will, but with the one of which he is at that moment the support, and the representative, namely that of the father, and also that of order, and also that of modesty, of decency - I will come back on these terms, they are not just there for effect; I already brought into play the demon of modesty, and you will see the place it will hold in what follows - and that it is in so far as he holds before his mother this discourse beyond herself, and that he falls back from it, namely that he falls back to the strict level of this other before whom he cannot bow, can only trace out as one might say the movement of this scene is more or less as follows, that beyond the other, the adjuration of the subject tries to rejoin, at the level of the code of the law, and that he falls back not towards a point where something stops, where he meets himself with his own desire - he has no further desire. Ophelia has been rejected, and we will see the next time the function of Ophelia in all of this - but everything that happens if you wish, to schematise, as if this return path (28) returned purely and simply onto the articulation of the other, as if he could no longer receive any other message than the signified of the other here, namely the reply of the mother: I am what I am, there is nothing to be done with me, I am a real genital character - in the sense of the first volume of Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui - mourning means nothing to me.

The funeral meats served the following day for the wedding banquet, thrift, thrift - the remark is Hamlet's. As regards her, she is simply a gaping cunt. When one goes, another arrives. This is what is in question. The drama of Hamlet, the articulation of Hamlet if it is the drama of desire, is - we have seen it right throughout this scene - the drama - why not say it; it is very curious that one all the time uses words like object, but that the first time one encounters it one does not recognise it - from the beginning to the end this is all that is spoken about: there is a worthy object, and an unworthy object.

"A little propriety, please; there is all the same a difference

between this god and that filth." This is what is in question, and no one has ever spoken about object-relations in connection with Hamlet. People are still baffled by it.

This however is all that is in question. The discourse to which I alluded a little while ago concerning the veritable female, or the veritable male genital character, is a coherent discourse, because you can read in it that the characteristic of the genital character is that he does not mourn very much. This is written in the same first volume of Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui. It is a (29) marvellous commentary for the dialectic of Hamlet.

However one cannot but be struck by this - I am going a little quickly because I must give you a glimpse of the horizons towards which I am tending - that if it is indeed a problem of mourning that is in question, here we see coming in through the mediation, and linked to the problem of mourning, the problem of the object. Which will perhaps allow us to give a further articulation to what has been contributed in Trauer und Melancolie namely that if mourning takes place - and we are told that it is. because of an introjection of a lost object - in order for it to be introjected perhaps there is a preliminary condition, namely that it is constituted qua object; and that thenceforward the question of the constitution qua object is not perhaps purely and simply linked to the conception, to the co-instinctual stages as they are given to us.

But there is something which already indicates that we are here at the heart of the problem. It is this something on which I ended the last session, and on which the whole of the the next of our meetings will centre, it is the following: it is that the key point, the decisive point at which Hamlet as one might say took the bit between his teeth - because in effect it has been very appositely remarked that after having hung around for a long time, all of a sudden Hamlet cuts loose, he launches himself into a business which is presented under most unlikely conditions; he has to kill his step-father, it has been proposed to him to support a sort of a wager by this step-father which is going to consist in fighting a fencing match with the gentleman about whom (30) he knows that the least that can be said is that at the time that this is happening this gentleman does not wish him particularly well, it is neither more nor less than the brother of Ophelia who has ended her life because of a disturbance that clearly he is partly responsible for; he knows in any case that this gentleman blames him for it, Hamlet is very fond of this gentleman, he says it to him, and we will return to this, and nevertheless it is with him that he is going to cross swords for the sake of someone who in principle he has to butcher. And at this moment he reveals himself as a real killer, with absolutely no precedent, he does not allow the other person to even touch him - it is a real headlong flight forward which is here altogether manifest, the point at which Hamlet takes the bit between his teeth, is the one on which I ended with my little plan of the graveyard and these people grappling with one another at the bottom of a grave, which is all the same a strange scene, which is entirely due to Shakespeare because in the early

Hamlets there is no trace of it.

What is happening, and what was Hamlet doing there? Because he could not tolerate seeing someone other than himself demonstrate or manifest precisely an overwhelming grief. These words which I am speaking each one of you is going to have to support them by reading Hamlet, because it is too long for me to do it. There is not one of my words which is not supported by something which is in substance in the text. He says it: "But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me into a towering passion." (V ii 78) He explains it afterwards in order to excuse himself for (31) having been so violent. Namely confronted with what Laertes had done, jumping into the grave into the grave of his sister, he must also leap after him to embrace It must be said that one has a curious idea of what is happening inside. I suggested it to you the last time with my little imaginary painting.

It is by way of mourning in other words, and of a mourning assumed in the same narcissistic relationship as there is between the ego and the image of the other, it is in function of what there is represented all of a sudden for him in this passionate relationship of a subject to an object which is at the bottom of the painting, the presence of \$ which it puts before him all of a sudden as support in which this object which for him is rejected because of a confusion of objects, of an inmixing of objects, it is in the measure that something here all of a sudden grabs him that this level can all of a sudden be reestablished which for a short instant is going to make a man of him. Namely something which is going to make of him someone capable, for a short moment no doubt, but a moment which is enough to end the play, capable of fighting, and capable of killing.

What I want to tell you is not that Shakespeare, of course, said all these fine things to himself, it is that if he has put somewhere in the articulation of his play something as singular as the character of Laertes in order to have him play at the high point, the crucial point of the play, this role of example and of support towards which Hamlet precipitates himself in a passionate (32) embrace, and from which he emerges literally other, this cry accompanied by commentaries which are so much along the line that I am giving you that you have to read them, that it is here in Hamlet that there is produced the moment at which he can lay hold again of his desire.

Which proves to you that we are here at the heart of the economy of what is in question. Naturally this has almost only a marginal interest, after all, and to show us to what point are drawn all the avenues of the articulation of the play and it is along these avenues that at every moment for us our interest is suspended. This is what ensures our participation in the drama of Hamlet. Naturally it is only interesting that things have come to this because beforehand there were four acts which preceded the graveyard scene. In these four acts there were other things which we are now going to see by going back over them.

In the forefront, there is the role of the play scene. What is this production; what does it mean? Why did Shakespeare conceive of it as indispensable? It has more than one motive, more than one pretext, but what we will try to see is its most profound pretext.

In short I think that I have today sufficiently indicated to you in what sense of the experience, of the articulation of structure there is posed for us the problem of the study of Hamlet, namely what we, when we have finished, will keep of it as being usable, as being manageable, as schematic for our own mapping out of desire - I will tell you what. The desire of the neurotic at (33) every moment of its incidence. I will show you this desire of Hamlet. It has been said that it is the desire of a hysteric. This is perhaps quite true. One could say it is the desire of an obsessional. It is a fact that he is full of even quite severe psychasthenic symptoms. But that is not the question.

In fact he is both. He is purely and simply the place of this desire. Hamlet is not a clinical case. Hamlet of course, it is too obvious to recall it, is not a real person. It is a drama which permits to situate if you wish, like a turning plate where a desire is situated, where we can find all the traits of desire, namely orientated, interpreted in the sense of what happens at the outcome of a for the desire of the hysteric, namely this desire that the hysteric is forced to construct for himself. It is for this reason that I would say that the problem for Hamlet is closer to the desire of the hysteric, because in a way the problem of Hamlet is to rediscover the place of his desire.

This resembles a good deal what a hysteric is capable of doing, namely of creating for himself an unsatisfied desire.

But it is just as true that it is the desire of the obsessional in so far as the problem of the obsessional, is to support himself on an impossible desire. It is not quite the same thing.

Both are true. You will see that we will make the interpretation of Hamlet's remarks and acts also veer from one side to the other.

What you must come to grasp, is something more radical than the desire of one or other, than the desire with which you pick out (34) an hysteric, or an obsessional.

.....when he addresses the character of the hysteric says that everyone knows that an hysteric is incapable of loving. When I read things like that, I am always tempted to say to the author, and you, are you capable of loving. He says that an hysteric lives in the unreal, and himself? The doctor always talks as if he were well settled at home, at home with regard to love, to desire, to willing, and all the rest. It is all the same a curious position, and for some time now we ought to know

that it is a dangerous position. It is thanks to this that one takes up counter-transference positions thanks to which one understands nothing about the patient one is dealingg with. This is exactly the order of things, and that is why it is essential to articulate, to situate the place of desire.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 8 April 1959

"Let me be given my desire". This is the meaning that I told you Hamlet had for all those, critics, actors or spectators, who lay their hands on it. I told you that it was this way because of the exceptional, the inspired structural rigour at which the theme of Hamlet arrives after an obscure elaboration which begins in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with Saxo Grammaticus, then subsequently in the romantic version of Belieforest, and no doubt in an outline by Kyd, and also in a first draft, it appears, by Shakespeare, to end up with the form of it that we have.

This form is characterised in our eyes, with the method that we use here, by something which I call the structure which is that precisely to which I am trying to give you a key which will allow you to find your bearings with certainty in this topological form which I have called the graph, which one perhaps could also call the gramme.

Let us take up again our Hamlet. I am sure that since I have spoken to you about it three times, you have at least read it once. Let us try to regasp, in this movement which is at once simple and profoundly marked by all the detours which have allowed so much human thinking to lodge there, this movement of Hamlet. If it can be both simple and never ending, it is not very difficult to know why. The drama of Hamlet, is the encounter with death.

Others have insisted - I moreover alluded to them in my earlier approaches - on the prodigiously gripping, striking character of the first scene on the platform of Elsinore, of this scene about (2) the return of something that the sentries have seen once already. It is the encounter with the ghost, with this form from below: one does not yet know what it is, what it is bringing, what it wants to say. Coleridge says in his notes on Hamlet which are so well done and which are easily found in his Lectures on Shakespeare - I am coming back to it because I may have given you the impression that I thought badly of it. I mean that in telling you that after all Coleridge only found himself there, I seemed to minimise what he said about it. He is the first person who sounded, as in many other domains, the depths of what there is in Hamlet - in connection with this first scene that Hume himself, who was so much against ghosts, believed in this one, in whom the art of Shakespeare managed to make him believe

despite his resistance. The energy that he deployed against ghosts, he says, is like that of a Samson. And here Samson is defeated.

It is clear that it is because Shakespeare came very close to something which was not the ghost, but which was effectively this encounter not with a dead person, but with death, which in short is the pivotal point of this play. Hamlet's going in front of death, this is where we should begin from to conceive of what is promised to us from this first scene when the ghost appears at the very moment when he is said to have appeared, "the bell then beating one" (I i 39).

We find this "one" at the end of the play when, after a (3) complicated journeying, Hamlet finds himself very close to performing the act which ought at the same time complete his destiny, and where in a way he advances with closed eyes towards the one whom he must strike, saying to Horatio - and it is not at an indifferent moment that he ends by saying to him: What is it to kill a man, "And a man's life's no more than to say One" (V ii 74).

Obviously in order to get here he takes strange paths, you could say that he plays truant. Which allows me to borrow a word which is in the text. It is a question of Horatio who, all modesty and all kindness, when he comes to bring him his help, says I am a "truant" scholar; I am being idle (I ii 169). No one believes him, but it is in effect what has always struck the critics: that Hamlet idles. That he does not go straight at things.

In short what we are trying to do here, to investigate, is why things are so. On this point what we are doing is not something like taking a wrong road. It is a road which is different to the one followed by those who have come before us, but it is different in so far as it perhaps takes the question a bit further. What they have said does not for all that lose its importance. What they sensed is what Freud immediately put into the foreground; it is that in this action which is in cause, the action of bringing death, and regarding which one does not know why an action which is so urgent, and in the last analysis so quick to carry out, demands so much time from Hamlet.

What we are told first of all about it, is that this action of (4) killing encounters in Hamlet the obstacle of desire. This is the discovery, the reason and the paradox, because what I showed you and what remains the unsolved riddle of Hamlet, the riddle that we are trying to resolve, is precisely this thing on which it seems the spirit should dwell, it is that the desire in question, because it is the desire discovered by Freud, the desire for the mother, desire in so far as it stirs up rivalry with the one who possesses her, this desire God knows should go in the same direction as the action.

In order to begin to decipher what this means, therefore in the last analysis the mythical function of Hamlet which makes of it a

theme equal to that of Oedipus, what appears to us first of all is that what we read in the myth, the intimate link that there is in short between this murder which is to be done, this just murder, this murder that he wants to carry out - there is no conflict in him about law and order, involving as some authors have suggested, as I reminded you, the basis of the execution of justice. There is no ambiguity in him between public order, the hands of the law, and his private tasks; there is no doubt for him that this murder is the whole law; there is no question about this murder - and his own death. This murder will only be executed when Hamlet has already received a fatal wound, in this short interval that remains to him between the death blow he has received and the moment that he dies.

It is from this then that we must begin. From this rendezvous to which we can give its name, to which we can give all its meaning. Hamlet's act projects itself, situates itself at its (5) term at the final rendezvous of all rendezvous, at this point with respect to the subject as we are here trying to articulate it, to define it, to the subject in so far as it has not yet come to birth, - its advent is delayed in the properly philosophical articulation - to the subject as Freud tells us it is constructed. A subject which is distinguished from the subject about which occidental philosophy has been speaking ever since theories of knowledge exist, a subject which is not at all the universal support of objects, and in a way its negative, its omnipresent support, to the subject in so far as it speaks and in so far as it is structured in a complex relationship with the signifier which is very precisely the one that we are trying to articulate here.

And to represent it once again, if it is true that the point of intersection of the intention of the demand and the signifying chain occurs the first time at the point 0 which we have defined as the big Other qua locus of the truth, I mean qua locus where the word is situated by taking place, establishes this other order evoked, invoked every time the subject articulates something, every time he speaks and does this something which is distinguished from all the other immanent forms of captivation or of the one with respect to the other, there is nothing equivalent to the fact that the word always establishes this third element, namely this locus of the Other in which the word, even when it is lying, is inscribed as desire.

This discourse for the other, this reference to the other, is further prolonged, in the fact that it is taken up again, starting from the other in order to constitute the question of: "what do I want?" or more exactly the question which is proposed (6) to the subject in a form which is already negative: "what do you want?"; the question of what beyond this alienated demand in the system of discourse in so far as it is there, reposing in the locus of the other, the subject prolonging his elan asks himself here what he is as subject, and where he has in short to encounter what? Beyond the locus of the truth that which the genius itself - not of the tongue but of the extreme metaphor which tends to be formulated before certain significant

spectacles, which is called by a name which we will recognise here in passing: the moment of truth.

Because let us not forget, at a time when the whole of philosophy is engaged in articulating what it is that links time to being, that it is quite simple to see that time, in its very constitution, past-present-future (those of grammar) refers itself to the act of the word - and to nothing else. The present, is the moment at which I speak and nothing else.

It is strictly impossible for us to conceive of a temporality in an animal dimension. Namely in a dimension of appetite. The abc of temporality requires even the structure of language. And in this beyond of the other, in this discourse which is no longer discourse for the other, but discourse of the other properly speaking, in which there is going to be established this broken line of signifiers of the unconscious; in this Other into whom the subject advances with his question as such, what he is aiming at in the final term, is the moment of this encounter with himself, of this encounter with his willing, of this encounter with something which we are going in the final term to try to (7) formulate, and of which we cannot even give all the elements immediately, even though all the same certain signs represent them for us here and are in a way for you the reference point, the prefiguring of what awaits us in what can be called the necessary steps, the necessary stages of the question.

Let us note all the same that if Hamlet, who I told you is not this or that, is not an obsessional for the good reason first of all that he is a poetic creation - Hamlet does not have a neurosis; Hamlet demonstrates some neurosis to us, and this is a completely different thing than being one - if Hamlet by certain sentences when we look into Hamlet from a certain mirror-like light, appears to us to be closer to the structure of the obsessional, it is already because of the fact that the function of desire - because this is the question that we are posing about Hamlet - appears to us precisely in the fact, which is revelatory of the essential element of the structure which is the one precisely highlighted to the maximum by obsessional neurosis - it is that one of the functions of desire, the major function in the obsessional, is to keep at a distance, to wait for, this desired moment of encounter.

And if I employ the term offered by Freud in Inhibitions symptoms and anxiety, namely Erwartung, which he expressly distinguishes from [vorhergesehen], to offer one's back; Erwartung, waiting in the active sense is also to make it wait ... This game with the moment of encounter essentially dominates the relationship of the obsessional. Hamlet no doubt shows us this whole dialectic, all this unfolding which plays with the object, in many other aspects (8) also, but this is the most obvious one, the one which appears on the surface, which strikes us, and which gives its style to this play, and which has always constituted its enigma

Let us now try to see in other elements the coordinates that the play gives us. What is it that distinguishes Hamlet's position

with respect in short to a fundamental texture? What is it that makes of it this variant of the Oedipus complex which is so striking in its character of variation? Because in the case of Oedipus, he did not go into all these complications as Freud very clearly remarked in the little explanatory note to which one has recourse when one does not know the answer. God knows things are getting worse, we moderns are in a period of decadence, we get into all sorts of knots before doing what the others, the good, courageous ancients, did right away. This is not an explanation; this reference to the idea of decadence should make us suspicious; we can take things from a different angle.

I think that it is appropriate to take the question further. If it is true that we moderns are at that point, there must be a reason for it, at least if we are psychoanalysts, other than the reason: our nerves are not as good as those of our fore-fathers. No, already something that I drew your attention to is essential. Oedipus in his case, did not have to spend all this time talking before acting, he had done it without even thinking about it, and without knowing it. The structure of the oedipal myth is essentially constituted by this.

(9) Now it is quite clear and obvious that there is something here; something which is precisely that by which I introduced you this year - and it is not by chance - into this initiation to the gramme as a key to the problem of desire. Remember the very simple dream from "the desire principle and the reality principle", the dream in which the dead father appears. And I marked for you on the upper line, the line of enunciating in the dream: "He did not know"; the blessed ignorance of those who are plunged in the necessary drama which follows from the fact that the subject who speaks is subject to the signifier, this ignorance is here.

I point out to you in passing that no one explains why to you. Because indeed if the father sleeping in the garden was murdered because there had been poured into his ear - l'oneille as it is called in Jarry - this delicate sap, hebenon, it seems that he should not have been aware of this, because there is nothing to tell us that he woke up and recognised the damage, that the scabs which covered his body were ever seen except by those who discovered his corpse. And therefore this supposes that in the domain of the beyond one has very precise information about the way in which one got there, which can in effect be a hypothesis in principle, which is not something either which we should right away hold to be certain.

All of this to underline the arbitrariness of the initial revelation, the one from which there begins the whole great movement of Hamlet; the revelation by the father of the truth about his death distinguishes essentially a coordinate of the (10) myth from what happens in the Oedipus myth.

Something is lifted, a veil, the one which weighs precisely on the articulation of the unconscious line; this veil which we ourselves are trying to lift, but not without as you know a

certain amount of difficulty. Because it is clear that it must indeed have an essential function. I mean for the security of the subject in so far as he speaks, so that our interventions to reestablish the coherence of the signifying chain at the level of the unconscious present all these difficulties, receive on the part of the subject all this opposition, these refusals, this is something which we call resistance and which is the pivot of the whole history of analysis.

Here the question is solved. The father knew, and from the fact that he knew, Hamlet also knows. Namely that he has the answer. He has the answer, and there can only be one response. It is not necessarily sayable in psychological terms; I mean that it is not necessarily a comprehensible response, and still less one that gets you in the gut; but it is none the less a response of a quite fatal type. We are trying to see what this response is. This response is in short the message at the point that it is constituted on the upper line, on the line of the unconscious; this response which I already symbolised for you in advance, and not of course without being forced because of this to ask you to trust me. But it is easier, more honest to ask someone to trust (11) you on some point which at first makes no sense. This does not commit you to anything, except perhaps to look for it, which all the same allows you the freedom to create it by yourselves; this response I began to articulate in the following form: signifier $S(\$)$; what distinguishes the response at the level of the upper line, from that at the level of the lower line. At the level of the lower line the response is always the signified of the other, $s(0)$, it is always with respect to this word which unfolds at the level of the Other and which shapes the meaning of what we have wanted to say. But who would have wanted to say that at the level of the Other?

This signified at the level of the simple discourse, but at the level of the beyond of this discourse, at the level of the question the subject poses to himself which means in the final analysis: "What have I become in all of this?". The response as I told you, is the signifier of the Other with the bar, $S(\$)$.

There are a thousand fashions to begin developing for you what is included in this symbol. But today we choose, because we are in Hamlet the clear, obvious, pathetic, dramatic path. And this is the value of Hamlet that it allows us to gain access to the meaning of $S(\overline{0})$.

The meaning of what Hamlet learns from his father, is here before us very clearly, it is the irredeemable, absolute, unplumbable betrayal of love. Of the purest love, the love of this king who perhaps of course, like any man, may have been a great rogue but (12) who with this being who was his wife would go so far as to keep the wind away from her face. At least according to what Hamlet tells us (cf I ii 141)..

It is the absolute falseness compared to what appeared to Hamlet as the very witness of beauty, of truth, of the essential.

Here there is the response. The truth of Hamlet is a hopeless truth. There is not a trace in the whole of Hamlet of a raising up towards something which could be described as the beyond, atonement, redemption.

We are already told that the first meeting came from below. This oral, infernal relationship to the Acheron which Freud had chosen to move since he was not able to bend the higher powers, is here what situates Hamlet in the clearest fashion. But this of course is only a quite simple, quite obvious remark which it is rather curious to see that the authors, by some modesty or other - sensitive souls must not be disturbed - scarcely highlight in connection with Hamlet. I put it to you after all only as a step in the order of the pathetic, in the order of the tangible, however painful it may be. There must be something in which there can be formulated more radically the reason, the motive of this whole choice, because after all, every conclusion, every verdict, however radical it may be, by taking on a more accentuated form in the order of what is called pessimism, is still something which is made to veil from us what is in question.

S(\$) does not mean everything that is happening at the level of 0 is worthless; namely that every truth is fallacious. This is something which may make you laugh in the periods of amusement (13) which follow the post-war, in which for example people produce a philosophy of the absurd which is of use particularly in cellars.

Let us try to articulate something more serious, and lighter. So then what does S(\$) with the bar, what does this mean essentially? I think that this is the time to say it, even though of course this is going to appear from a very particular angle; but I do not believe that it is contingent.

S(\$) means the following: it is that if 0, the big Other is not a being but the locus of the word, S(,6) means that in the locus of the word, in which there reposes in a developed form, or in a form the totality of the system of signifiers, namely of a tongue, something is missing. Something which can be only a signifier is lacking to it.

The signifier which is lacking at the level of the Other, and which gives its most radical value to this S(0), is the following which is as I might say the great secret of psychoanalysis, that through which psychoanalysis contributes something, through which the subject who speaks, in so far as the experience of analysis reveals him to us as necessarily structured in a certain fashion is distinguished from the usual subject, from the subject to which a philosophical evolution which after all may well appear to us in a certain point of view of fruitful delusion, but of delusion in retrospect.

This is the great secret: there is no Other of the Other. In other words for the subject of traditional philosophy, this (14) subject subjectivises himself indefinitely. If I am in

everything I think, I am in so far as I think that I am, and so on, this has no reason to stop. The truth is that analysis teaches us something quite different. The fact is that it has already been glimpsed that it is not so sure that I am in so far as I think, and that one can only be sure of one thing, which is that I am in so far as I think that I am. Certainly that. Only what analysis teaches us is that I am not the one who precisely is in the process of thinking that I am, for the simple reason that because of the fact that I think that I am, I think in the locus of the Other; I am different to the one who thinks that I am.

But the question is that I have no guarantee of any kind that this Other, through what there is in his system, can give me if I may express myself in this way, what I gave him: his being and his essence as truth. There is no, I have told you. Other of the Other. There is not in the Other, any signifier which is able on this occasion to answer for what I am. And to say things in a transformed way, this hopeless truth that I spoke to you about a while ago, this truth which is the one that we encounter at the level of the unconscious, is a faceless truth, is a closed truth, is a truth which can be bent in every direction. We only know it too well. It is a truthless truth.

And this indeed is what creates the greatest obstacle for those who approach our work from outside, and who before our (15) interpretations, because they are not on the path with us where they are meant to have their effect which is only conceivable in a metaphorical fashion, and in so far as they play and reverberate always between these two lines, cannot understand what is in question in analytic interpretation.

If we talk about this signifier, that the Other does not have at its disposition, it is all the same because it is - of course - somewhere.

I set up this little gramme for you so that you would not lose your bearings. I made it as carefully as I could, but certainly not to increase your confusion. You can recognise, everywhere the bar is, the hidden signifier, the one that the Other does not have at its disposition, and which is precisely the one which concerns you; it is the same one which makes you enter the game in so far as you, poor simpletons, since you were born, were caught up in this sacred logos business. Namely the part of you which in this is sacrificed, and sacrificed not purely and simply, physically as they say, really, but symbolically. And this is not nothing, this part of you which took on a signifying function. And this is why there is only one; and there are not ninety nine of them. It is very exactly this enigmatic function that we call the phallus which is here, this something of the organism of life, of this sprouting, or vital surge which you know I do not think should be used on all sorts of occasions, but which once it is well circumscribed, symbolised, put where it is, and especially where it is of use, there where effectively it is (16) caught up in the unconscious, takes on its meaning. The phallus, the vital tumescence, this enigmatic, universal

something more male than female and nevertheless of which the female herself may become the symbol, this is what is in question, and that which, because it is not at the disposition of the Other, that which, even though it is this very life which the subject makes signifying, nowhere comes in to guarantee the signification of the discourse of the Other.

In other words, though it may be sacrificed, this life is not given back to him by the Other.

It is because Hamlet starts from there, namely from the response of the given, that the whole path can be cleared, that this radical revelation is going to lead him to the final rendezvous. To reach it we are now going to take up what happens in the play Hamlet

The play Hamlet is as you know the work of Shakespeare, and we should therefore pay attention to what he added to it. It was already a long time on the road, but it must have offered - and it was enough for it to be offered for it to be taken - a long enough path still to be travelled to show us what can be called the genuine article, for Shakespeare to have travelled it.

I pointed out to you the last time the questions that are posed by the play scene, the players⁷ scene. I will return to it. I would like today to introduce an essential element; essential because it concerns what we are getting close to after having established the function of the two lines, namely what lies in the interval, that which, as I might say, constructs for the (17) subject the distance that he can maintain between the two lines in order to be able to breathe there while he is still alive; and this is what we call desire. I

I told you what pressure, what abolition, what destruction this desire undergoes in so far as what is encountered with this something of the real Other, of the mother in so far as she is a mother like so many others, namely something structured by this something which is less desire than gluttony, even engulfment, this something which obviously, we do not know why, but after all it does not matter, at this level of Shakespeare's life had been a revelation for him.

The problem of the woman, undoubtedly, had never not been present in the whole of Shakespeare's work, and there were fine strapping women before Hamlet, and such abysmal, ferocious and sad ones only appear after Hamlet. Troilus and Cressida which is a pure marvel, and certainly one that has not been highlighted enough, allows us perhaps to go further into what Hamlet thought at that time. The creation of Troilus and Cressida is I think one of the most sublime that one can meet with in dramatic work. At the level of Hamlet and at the level of the dialogue which one could call the paroxysm of the play between Hamlet and his mother, I told you the last time the meaning of this movement of adjuration vis-a-vis the mother, which is more or less: do not destroy the beauty, the order of the world, do not confuse Hyperion himself - it is his father whom he designates thus -

with this most abject of beings; and the collapse of the adjuration before what he knows to be the fatal necessity of this (18) sort of desire which sustains nothing, which retains nothing.

The quotations that I could give you here of what Shakespeare's thought is in this regard are very numerous. I will only give you the following one which I picked up during the holidays in a quite different context. It is a question of someone who is rather in love, but also it must be said rather bizarre; who is moreover a decent man; it is in Twelfth Night. The hero, in a dialogue with the girl who to win him, and again with nothing in the hero, the Duke as he is called, putting in doubt that his leanings are towards women - because it is his passion that is in question - approaches him disguised as a boy, and which all the same is a peculiar way to promote oneself as a girl because she loves him. It is not for nothing that I am giving you these details, it is because it is a contribution to something which I am going to introduce now namely the creation of Ophelia. This woman Viola, is precisely before Ophelia. Twelfth Night is about two years before the production of Hamlet, and here we see exactly the example of the transformation of what is happening in Shakespeare on the level of his feminine creations, which as you know are among the most fascinating, the most attracting, the most captivating, the most disturbing also, which create the really immortally poetic character of a whole aspect of his (19) genius.

This girl-boy or boy-girl, here is the very type of creation in which there flowers, in which there is revealed something which is going to introduce us to what is now going to be our topic, our next step, namely the role of the object in desire.

After having taken this occasion to show you the perspective in which there is inscribed our question about Ophelia, here is what the Duke, without knowing that the person in front of him is a girl, and a girl who loves him, responds to the specious questions of the girl who, while he despairs of himself, says to him: How can you complain. If there was someone near you who was sighing after your love, and whom you had no desire to love - which is the case, this is what he is suffering from - how could you welcome her. You must not therefore blame others for what you would undoubtedly do yourself.

He is like a blind man, and greatly puzzled, tells her at that moment something about the great difference between feminine desire and masculine desire.

"There is no woman's side
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart: no woman's heart
So big to hold so much; they lack retention....(II iv)

And his whole development is in effect about something which makes of desire essentially this distance that there is, this particular relationship to the object sustained as such, which is

something precisely, which is what is expressed in the symbol (20) which I put for you on this return line of the x of the will. Namely the relationship \$ \$ o, to the object in so far as it is as one might say the cursor, the level at which there is situated, there is placed that which in the subject is properly speaking desire.

I would like to introduce the character of Ophelia by profiting from what the philological and textual criticism has brought us about as I might say her predecessors. I saw on a page by some cretin or other a lively movement of good humour which came to him one day not especially suddenly because he must have known it for some time, when he noticed that in Belleforest there is something which corresponds to the role of Ophelia.

In Belleforest one is all the same embarrassed by everything that happens to Hamlet, namely that he really does seem to be mad; but all the same people are not all that more reassured by that, because it is clear that this madman knows well enough what he wants; and what he wants is what is not known, it is a lot of things; and what he wants is the question for all the others. They send him a prostitute who is meant, by drawing him off into a corner of the forest, to capture his confidences while someone who is listening may come to know something more. The stratagem fails, of course, thanks I think to the girl's love. What is certain, is that the critic in question was quite content to find this sort of proto-Ophelia in order to uncover there the reason for the ambiguities in Ophelia's character.

(21) Naturally I am not going to reread Ophelia's role; but this character who is so eminently pathetic, overwhelming, of whom one could say that she is one of the great figures of humanity, presents herself as you know with extremely ambiguous traits so that no one has ever yet been able to declare if she is innocence itself, who speaks about or who alludes to her most carnal movements with the simplicity of a purity which does not know modesty, or if on the contrary she is a shameless hussy who is ready for anything.

The texts about it are a real mish-mash. You can find everything in them. And in truth you find particularly in them a great charm, in which the mad scene is not the least important moment. Things are quite clear in effect. If on the one hand Hamlet behaves towards her with a quite exceptional cruelty, which is embarrassing, which people describe as painful, and which makes a victim of her, on the other hand one senses that she is not at all, and far from being, the disincarnated or uncarnal creature that the Pre-Raphaelite paintings which I have evoked have made of her. She is something quite different.

In truth it is surprising that prejudices about the type, the nature, the signification, the morals to speak plainly of women are still so strongly anchored that one can ask such a question about Ophelia. It seems that Ophelia is quite simply what every girl is whether or not she has broken through, after all we do not know anything about it, the taboo step of the breaching of

her virginity. The question does not seem to be posed in any way about Ophelia. On this occasion it is a question of knowing why Shakespeare brought forward this character who seems to (22) represent a kind of extreme point on the curve which goes from his first heroines, the boy-girls, to something which is going to be formulated subsequently, but transformed into a different nature.

Ophelia, who seems to be the summit of his creation of the type of the woman, at the exact point at which she is herself a bud which is ready to blossom, and which is menaced by the insect gnawing at the heart of this bud. This vision of life ready to blossom, and of life which carries all lives, it is thus moreover that Hamlet qualifies it, situates it, in order to reject it: you will be the mother of sinners, this image precisely of vital fecundity, this image to speak plainly, illustrates for us more I think than any other creation the equation I noted in my lectures, the equation Girl = Phallus. There is obviously here something which we can very easily recognise.

I will not take into account things which in fact appear to me to be simply a curious encounter. I had the curiosity to look up the derivation of "Ophelia", and in an article by Boissade in the Dictionnaire étymologique grec, I found a Greek reference. Shakespeare did not have at his disposition the dictionaries that we use, but one finds in the authors of that epoch things so stupefying alongside extraordinary ignorance, such penetrating things, which resemble the constructions of the most modern criticism, that I can on this occasion tell you the following - which is in the notes which I have forgotten.

I believe that it is in Homer, if I remember rightly there is Ophelio, in the sense of to make pregnant, to impregnate; that Ophelio is used for this moulting, vital fermentation, which is (23) described more or less as allowing something to change, or to thicken. Funnier yet, one cannot take it into account, is that in the same article Boissade who is an author who sifts rather severely the organisation of his signifying chains, thinks it necessary to make express reference in this connection to the verbal form of Ophallos. To the phallus.

The confusion between Ophelia and Phallos does not require similarities in order to be obvious to us. It appears to us in the structure. And what it is now a question of introducing, is not the way in which Ophelia can be the phallus, but if she is as we say truly the phallus how Shakespeare made her fulfil this function.

Now this is the important thing. Shakespeare carries onto a new plane what is given in the legend of Belieforest, namely that in the legend as Belieforest reports it, the prostitute is the bait destined to tear his secret from him. Well, transposing that to a higher level which is the one at which the real question is sustained, I will show you the next time that Ophelia is there to question the secret, not in the sense of sinister plans which it is a question of making Hamlet avow to those who surround him and who do not know very well what he is capable of, but the secret

of desire.

In the relations with the object Ophelia, in so far as they are punctuated throughout the play by a series of moments on which we will dwell, something is articulated which allows us to grasp, in (20) a particularly lively way, the relations of the subject in so far as he speaks, namely of the subject in so far as he is submitted to the rendezvous with his destiny, with something which must take on in analysis, and through analysis, a different meaning. This meaning around which analysis turns, and regarding which it is not for nothing that it is the turning point which it is approaching in connection with this term of object which is so predominant, and certainly much more insistent and present than it ever was in Freud, and to the point that some people have said that analysis has changed meaning in so far as libido the pleasure-seeker, has become object-seeking.

I have told you, analysis has engaged itself along a false path in so far as it articulates this object and defines it in a fashion which misses its goal, which does not sustain what is really involved in the relationship which is inscribed in the formula $\$ O o$, S castrated, S subjected to something which I will describe for you the next time, and which I will teach you to decipher under the name of the fading of the subject, which is opposed to the notion of the splitting of the object, of this relationship of the subject to the object as such. What is the object of desire? One day which was I think the second session of this year, I gave you a quotation by someone whom I hope someone has identified since, who said that what the miser regrets in the loss of his moneybox would teach us a good deal, if we knew it, about human desire. It is Simone Weil who said that.

It is this that we are going to try to circumscribe in terms of this thread which runs right through the tragedy between Ophelia and Hamlet.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 15 April 1959

I announced as a kind of lure that today I would in fact speak about the kind of lure Ophelia is. And I think that I will keep my word.

This object, this theme, this character, comes in here as an element in our exposition, the one that we have already been presenting for four of our meetings, whose purpose is to show in Hamlet the tragedy of desire. To show that if it can properly speaking be thus qualified, it is in the whole measure that desire as such, or human desire, the desire that we have to deal with in analysis, the desire which we are in a position, according to the style of our outlook with respect to it, to weaken, even to confuse with other terms, this desire can only be conceived of, can only be situated with respect to fixed coordinates in subjectivity which Freud demonstrated to be of such a nature that they fix at a certain distance from one another the subject and the signifier, which places the subject in a certain dependence on the signifier as such.

This means that we cannot account for analytic experience by starting from the idea that the signifier is for example a pure and simple reflection, a pure and simple product of what are called on occasion interhuman relationships. And it is not only an instrument, it is one of the initial, essential components of a topology without which one sees the totality of phenomena being reduced, being leveled down in a way which does not allow us, us analysts, to account for what one can call the presuppositions of our experience.

I started on this path, taking Hamlet as an example of something (2) which betrays to us a very lively dramatic sense of the coordinates of this topology, and which means that it is to this that we attribute the exceptional power of captivation that Hamlet has, which makes us say that if the tragedy of Hamlet has this predominant role, in the preferences of the critical public, that if it is always so seductive for those who approach it, this is because of something which shows that the poet has put into it from some angle some glimpses of his own experience. And this is indicated by the sort of turning point that Hamlet represents in Shakespeare's work. Also indeed that his experience as a poet, in the technical sense of the term, had little by little shown him the way to it.

It is because of certain detours that we think we can interpret here in function of certain of our reference points, of those which are articulated on our gramme, that we can grasp the import of this study which is certainly very essential. A sudden change in fortune is noted in a way which distinguishes Shakespeare's play from preceding plays or from the narratives of Saxo Grammaticus, of Belieforest, as plays that we only have fragmentary glimpses of. This detour is that of the character of Ophelia who is certainly present in the story from the beginning - Ophelia as I told you, is the trap -; from the beginning of the legend of Hamlet it is the trap into which Hamlet does not fall, first of all because he has been warned, then because the lure itself, namely the Ophelia of Saxo Grammaticus, does not lend herself to it, since she has been in love for a long time, Belieforest's text tells us, with Prince Hamlet.

Out of this Ophelia, Shakespeare constructed something completely different; in the plot perhaps he has only deepened this (3) function, this role that Ophelia has in the legend, destined as she is to take hold of, to captivate, to surprise Hamlet's secret. She is perhaps something which becomes one of the most intimate elements of the drama of the Hamlet that Shakespeare constructs for us, of the Hamlet who has lost the way, the path to his desire. She is an essential articulating element in this journey which makes Hamlet go to what I called the last time the moment of his fatal rendezvous, of the accomplishment of an act which he accomplishes in a way in spite of himself.

We will see even more today the degree to which Hamlet is indeed the image of this level of the subject at which one can say that it is in terms of pure signifier that destiny is articulated, and that the subject is in a way nothing but the reverse side of a message which is not even his own.

The first step then that we took along this path, was to articulate the degree to which the play, which is the drama of desire in relation to the desire of the other, the degree to which it is dominated by this Other who is here desire in the least ambiguous fashion, the mother, namely the primordial subject of demand. The subject whom I showed you to be the true omnipotent subject that we are always talking about in analysis. This is not the for the woman which has in itself this dimension which is the omnipotence called omnipotence of thought. It is the omnipotence of the subject as subject of the first demand that is in question, and it is to her that this omnipotence should always be referred, I told you this when we were taking our first steps.

It is a question of something, at the level of the desire of the other which is presented to Prince Hamlet, namely to the (4) principle subject of the play, as such a tragedy, the drama of a subjectivity. Hamlet is always there, and one could say much more than in any other drama.

The drama always presents itself in a twofold fashion, its

elements being at once inter-subjective and intra-subjective. Therefore in the very perspective of the subject, of Prince Hamlet, this desire of the other, this desire of the mother presents itself, essentially as a desire which between an eminent object, between this idealised, exalted object who is his father, and this disparaged, contemptible object who is Claudius, the criminal and adulterous brother, does not choose.

She does not choose because something of the order of instinctual voracity is present which means that in her case this sacrosanct genital object of our recent terminology presents itself as nothing other than the object of a jouissance which is really the direct satisfaction of a need.

This dimension is essential; it is the one which forms one of the poles between which Hamlet's adjuration of his mother vacillates. I showed it to you in the scene where confronted with her, he launches this call for abstinence to her at the moment when in terms, which are moreover of the crudest, the cruelest sort, he transmits the essential message which the ghost, his father, charged him to transmit. Suddenly this appeal fails and turns back on itself; he sends her off to the bed of Claudius, to the caresses of the man who will not fail to make her yield yet again.

(5) In this sort of collapse, of abandonment at the end of Hamlet's adjuration, we find the very term, the model which allows us to conceive of the way in which his desire, his natural movement towards an action which he burns to accomplish, so that the whole world becomes for him a living reproach for never being equal to his own will, this action collapses in the same way as the adjuration that he addresses to his mother. It is essentially in this dependence of the desire of the subject with respect to the other subject that there is presented the major approach, the very accent of the drama of Hamlet, what one can call its permanent dimension.

It is a question of seeing how, in a more articulated fashion, by entering into a psychological detail which would remain I must say fundamentally enigmatic if it were not, this detail, submitted to this total vision which gives the meaning of the tragedy of Hamlet, the way this reverberates at the very core of Hamlet's willing, into this something which in my graph is the hook, the question mark of the Che vuoi? of the subjectivity constituted in the Other, and articulating itself in the Other.

This is the meaning of what I have to say today. What one can call the imaginary regulation of what constitutes the support of desire, of that which face to face with an undetermined point, a variable point here at the origin of the curve, and which represents this assumption by the subject of his own essential willing, which is regulated on something which is somewhere opposite, and in a way one can say, immediately at the level of the conscious subject, the culmination, the abutment, the term of what constitutes the question of the subject, is something that we symbolise by this f in the presence of o , and which we call

the phantasy, which in the psychic economy represents something (6) that you know. This something ambiguous in so far as it is effectively in consciousness, when we approach it in a certain phase, a final term, this term which makes of all human passion in so far as it is marked by one of those traits which we call traits of perversion.

The mystery of phantasy, in so far as it is in a way the final term of a desire, and always more or less presents itself in a fairly paradoxical form because it properly speaking motivated the ancient rejection of its dimension as belonging to the order of the absurd, and this essential step which was taken in the modern epoch of psychoanalysis constitutes the first turning point which tends to interpret, to conceive of this phantasy qua perverse - and that it could not be conceived of except in so far as it was organised with respect to an unconscious economy; and if it appears to be the abutment in its final term, in its enigma, if it can be understood in function of an unconscious circuit, or which articulates it through another signifying chain profoundly different to the chain that the subject commands in so far as it is this one, the one which is below the first one, and at the level firstly of demand. And this phantasy intervenes, and it also does not intervene.

It is in the measure that something which normally does not get there by that path, does not return to the level of the message, of the signified of the Other, which is the module, the sum of all the significations such as they are required by the subject in the interhuman exchange and complete discourse. It is in so far as this phantasy gets through or does not get through in order to arrive at the message, that we find ourselves in a normal situation or in an atypical situation.

It is normal that it should not get through this path, that it remain unconscious, that it be separated. It is also essential that at certain phases, and phases which are inscribed more or (7) less in the pathological order, that it should also get through. We will give their name to these moments of breakthrough, these moments of communication which can only happen, as the schema indicates to you, in one direction. I am indicating this essential articulation because it is in order to advance in short in the handling of this apparatus that we call here the gramme, that we are here.

We are going to see simply for the moment what is meant by, and how there functions in Shakespearean tragedy, what I called the moment of craziness of Hamlet's desire, in so far as it is to this imaginary regulation that it should be referred.

Ophelia, in this mapping out, is situated at the level of the letter o; the letter o in so far as it is inscribed in this symbolisation of a phantasy. The phantasy being the support, the imaginary substratum of something which is called properly speaking desire, in so far as it is distinguished from demand, as it is distinguished also from need. This o corresponds to something towards which the whole modern articulation of analysis

is directed when it tries to articulate the object and object-relations .

There is something correct in this research, in this sense that the role of this object is no doubt decisive as it articulates it. I mean the common notion in object-relations as it articulates it when it articulates it as that which fundamentally structures the mode of apprehension of the world. Simply in object-relations as it is most usually explained to us today in (8) most of the treatises which give a greater or lesser place to it, whether it is a volume which appeared fairly close to us to which I allude as the most caricatural example, or others more elaborated like those of Federn [Fairbairn?] or one of the others, the error and the confusion consists in this theorisation of the object qua object, which itself is called the pregenital object.

A genital object is also specifically within diverse forms of the pregenital object, and the diverse forms of the anal object, etc. It is precisely what is materialised for you on this schema in the fact that this is to take the dialectic of the object for the dialectic of the demand. And this confusion is explicable because in both cases the subject finds himself at a moment, in a position with regard to the signifier, which is the same. The subject is in an eclipsed position. In so far as in these two points of our gramme, whether it is a question of the code at the level of the unconscious, namely of the series of relationships that he has with a certain apparatus of demand, or whether it is a question of the imaginary relationship which constitutes him in a privileged fashion in a certain position also defined by his relationship to the signifier before an object o, in these two cases the subject is in an eclipsed position.

He is in this position which I began to articulate the last time by using the term fading. I chose this term for all sorts of philological reasons etc., and also because it has become quite familiar in connection with the utilisation of the communication machines which we have. Fading is exactly what happens in a machine for communicating, for reproducing the voice, when the voice disappears, subsides, vanishes, in order to reappear at the (9) whim of some variation in the support itself of the transmission.

It is in so far therefore as the subject is at a like moment of oscillation which is the one which characterises - we will naturally come to give its support and its coordinates to what is only a metaphor -before the demand and in the object that the confusion can be produced, and that in fact what is called a relation to the object is always a reference to the subject in this privileged moment which is called the fading of the subject from - not objects as is said - signifiers of demand.

And in so far as the demand remains fixed, it is by the mode, by the signifying apparatus which corresponds to the different types, oral, anal and others, that one can articulate something which in effect has a sort of clinical correspondence. But there is a great drawback in confusing what is a relationship to

the signifier with what is a relationship to the object, because this object is different, because this object, qua object of desire has a different meaning, because all sorts of things make it necessary that we should not overlook that we should even give all their primitive determining value, as we are doing, to the signifiers of demand in so far as they are oral, anal, signifiers - with all the subdivisions, all the differences of orientation and of polarisation that this object as such can take on with relation to the subject - (which object-relations as they are currently articulated overlook), precisely this correlation to the subject which is expressed in this way in so far as the subject is marked by the bar.

This is what brings it about that the subject, even when we consider him at the most primitive stages of the oral period, as it has been articulated for example in an extremely tight, extremely rigorous, exact fashion by Melanie Klein - we find (10) ourselves, you should notice in the very text of Melanie Klein, in the presence of certain paradoxes, and these paradoxes are not inscribed in the pure and simple articulation that one can construct of the subject as being put face to face with the object corresponding to a need, specifically the nipple, the breast on this occasion.

Because the paradox appears in the fact that from the beginning another enigmatic signifier presents itself at the horizon of this relationship. This is perfectly demonstrated by Melanie Klein, who has only one merit on this occasion which is to have no hesitation in plunging ahead, namely to ratify what she has found in clinical experience and for want of an explanation to content herself with very poor explanations. But undoubtedly she testifies that the phallus is already there as such, and as properly speaking destructive with respect to the subject.

She makes of it from the beginning this primordial object which is at once the best and the worst, that around which there are going to revolve all the phenomena of the paranoid period and the depressive period.

All I am doing here of course is indicating, recalling.

What I can articulate further in connection with this and in so far as it interests us not in so far as it is confronted with, related to the demand, but with this element which we are going to try this year to more closely circumscribe, which is represented by the o; the o, an essential object, the object around which revolves as such the dialectic of desire, the object around which the subject experiences himself in an imaginary otherness, before an element which is otherness at the imaginary level as we have already articulated and defined it on several occasions. It is image, and it is pathos.

And it is through this other which is the object of desire that there is fulfilled a function which defines desire in this double (11) coordinate which means that he does not understand, not at all an object which is as such the satisfaction of a need, but an

object in so far as it is itself relativised, I mean placed in a relationship with the subject - the subject who is present in the phantasy.

This is something obvious phenomenologically, and I will return to it later.

The subject is present in the phantasy. And the function of the object, which is the object of desire only in the fact that it is a term of the phantasy ... the object takes the place, I would say of that of which the subject is symbolically deprived.

This may appear a little abstract to you. I mean, for those who have not gone through all the earlier stages of this path with us. Let us say for them that it is in so far as in the articulation of the phantasy the object takes the place of that of which the subject is deprived. Which is what? It is from the phallus that the object takes on this function that it has in the phantasy, and that desire, with the phantasy as a support constitutes itself.

I think that it is difficult to go further to the extremes of what I mean concerning what we must call properly speaking desire and its relationship with the phantasy. It is in this sense, and in so far as this formula that the object of phantasy is this otherness image and pathos through which an other takes the place of what the subject is symbolically deprived, you see clearly that it is in this direction that this imaginary object finds itself in a way in a position of being able to condense in itself what can be called the virtues or the dimension of being, that it can become this veritable lure of being, which the object of (12) human desire is; this something before which Simone Weil stops when she points out the most dense, the most opaque relationship which can be presented to us of man with the object of his desire, the relationship of the Miser with his moneybox in which there seems to culminate for us in the most obvious fashion this character of fetish which is that of the object of human desire, and which is also the character or one of the aspects of all his objects.

It is rather comical to see, as recently happened to me, a gentleman who came to explain to us the relationship between the theory of signification and Marxism, say that one cannot approach the theory of signification without taking interhuman relations as a starting point. This went rather far. Within three minutes we were learning that the signifier was the instrument thanks to which man transmitted to his neighbour his private thoughts - we were told this textually by someone whose authority was Marx. By not referring things to this foundation of interhuman relations we would fall it appears into the danger of fetishising what was in question in the domain of language.

Undoubtedly I am prepared to admit that in effect we must encounter something that is very like a fetish. But I ask myself whether this something which is called a fetish, is not precisely one of the very dimensions of the human world, and

precisely the one that must be taken into account. If we see the whole thing being rooted in interhuman relations we end up with only one thing, which is to refer the fact of the fetishisation of human objects to some interhuman (13) misunderstanding, which itself therefore supposes a reference back to significations. Just as the private thoughts that are in question - I think in a genetic way of thinking - are enough to make us smile, because if the private thoughts are there, what is the use of looking any further.

In brief it is rather surprising that this reference, not to human praxis, but to a human subjectivity given as essentially primitive, should be sustained in a doctrine which qualifies itself as Marxist, because it seems to me that it is enough to open the first volume of Kapital to see that the first step in Marx's analysis is very properly speaking, in connection with the fetish character of merchandise, to tackle the problem very exactly at the proper level and as such, even though the term as such is not mentioned, at the level of the signifier.

The signifying relationships, the relationships of value are given first, and all subjectivity, even that of fetishisation, come to be inscribed within this signifying dialectic. There is no shadow of doubt about this.

This is not a simple parenthesis, a reflection that I pour into your ears about my occasional indignations, and the annoyance I feel at having wasted my time.

Now let us try to make use of this relationship of \$ in the presence of o which for us is the phantastical support of desire. We must articulate it clearly, because this o this imaginary other, what does that mean?

That means something fuller than what a person may include in it, a whole chain, a whole scenario. I do not need to return on this occasion to what last year I put forward here in connection (14) with the analysis of Jean Genet's Le Balcon. It is enough to give a meaning to what I mean on this occasion to refer to what we can call the diffused bordel in so far as it becomes the cause of what we call the sacrosanct genital

What is important in this properly structural element of the imaginary phantasy in so far as it is situated at the level of o, is in part this opaque character, the one which specifies it in its most accentuated form as the pole of perverse desire, in other words what makes of it the structural element of perversions, and shows us then that perversion is characterised by the fact that the whole accent of the phantasy is put on the aspect of the properly imaginary correlative of the other, o, or of the parenthesis in which something which is o plus p plus q etc. - it is the whole combination of; the most elaborated find themselves reunited here according to the adventure; the sequelae, the residues in which there has come to be crystallised the function of a phantasy in a perverse desire.

Nevertheless what is essential, and is this element of phenomenology to which I alluded above, is that you should recall that no matter how strange, how bizarre the phantasy of perverse desire may be in appearance, desire is always in some fashion involved in it. Involved in a relationship which is always linked to the pathetic, to the pain of existing as such, of purely existing, or of existing as a sexual term. It is obviously in the measure that the one who suffers injury in the sadistic phantasy is something which involves the subject in so far as he himself can be open to this injury that the sadistic phantasy subsists. And one can only say one thing about this (15) dimension, which is that one cannot but be surprised that it has been thought possible to elude it for a single instant by making of the sadistic tendency something which in any way could be referred to a pure and simple primitive aggression.

I am dwelling a good deal on this subject. If I do so, it is only to properly accentuate something which is that towards which we must now articulate the veritable opposition between perversion and neurosis.

If perversion is then something well and truly articulated, and exactly at the same level, as you are going to see, as neurosis, something interpretable, analysable, in so far as in the imaginary elements something is discovered of an essential relationship of the subject to his being, in an essentially localised, fixed form as has always been said - neurosis is situated by putting an accent on the other term of the phantasy, namely at the level of the \$.

I told you that this phantasy as such is situated at the extreme, at the tip, at the level of the abutment of the reflection of subjective interrogation in so far as the subject attempts to grasp himself there in this beyond of the demand, in the very dimension of the discourse of the Other in which he has to rediscover what was lost by this entry into the discourse of the Other. I told you that in the final analysis it is not the level of truth, but the moment of truth that is in question.

This in effect essentially is what shows us, what allows us to designate what most profoundly distinguishes the phantasy of neurosis from the phantasy of perversion. The phantasy of perversion I told you, can be named, it is in space, it suspends some essential relationship or other. It is not properly (16) speaking atemporal, it is outside time. The relationship of the subject to time in neurosis, is precisely something of which little is said, and which is nevertheless the very basis of the relations of the subject to his object at the level of phantasy.

In neurosis the object is charged with this signification which is sought for in what I call the moment of truth. The object here is always at the moment before, or at the moment after. If hysteria is characterised by the foundation of a desire qua unsatisfied, the obsessional is characterised by the function of an impossible desire. But what is beyond these two terms is

something which is a double and inverse relationship in one case and the other with this phenomenon which blossoms, which emerges, which manifests itself in a permanent fashion in this procrastination of the obsessional for example, founded on the fact moreover that he always anticipates too late. Just as for the hysteric there is the fact that he always repeats what there was initially in his traumas, namely a certain too soon, a fundamental immaturity.

It is here because of this fact that the foundation of a neurotic behaviour, in its most general form, is that the subject always tries to read his moment in his object, and even as one might say that he learns to tell the time, it is at this point that we rediscover our Hamlet. You will see why Hamlet can be gratified, that he can take on at the whim of each all the forms of neurotic behaviour however far you push it, namely even (17) character neurosis. But also, just as legitimately - for this there is a reason which runs right through the whole plot, and which constitutes really one of the common factors of the structure of Hamlet - just as the first term, the first factor was dependence with respect to desire of the other, to the desire of the mother, here is the second common character which I would now ask you to rediscover by reading or by re-reading Hamlet.

Hamlet is always suspended on the other's time, and this up to the end.

Do you remember one of the first turning points that I stopped you at in the beginning in order to decipher the text of Hamlet, the one after the play scene, the scene of the players, in which the king was disturbed, visibly denounced himself in everybody's eyes in connection with what was produced on the stage, his own crime, because he could not tolerate the spectacle. Hamlet triumphs, exults, jeers at the one who has thus denounced himself; and on the way leading to the rendezvous already made, before the play scene, with his mother, and which everyone is encouraging his mother to have as quickly as possible; on the way to this meeting in which there is going to take place the major scene which I already accentuated so often, he encounters his step-father, Claudius, at prayer, Claudius shaken to his foundations by what has touched him by showing him the very face, the scenario of his action. Hamlet is there before his uncle who everything in the scene seems to indicate is even not only little disposed to defend himself, but does not even see the threat which hangs over his head, and he stops because it is not the time.

(18) It is not the other's time. It is not the time that the other should have to give an account of himself before the eternal. It would be too good a thing on the one hand, or too bad on the other; this would not be enough to avenge his father, because perhaps in this gesture of repentance, of prayer, there would be opened up to him the way to salvation. In any case there is one thing certain: it is that Hamlet who has just made this capture of the king's conscience - "Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king" - that he proposed for himself, stops

short. He does not think for a single instant that his time is now. Whatever may happen afterwards, it is not the other's time and he suspends his gesture. In the same way it will always and ever be, everything that Hamlet does, he will only do it in the other's time.

He accepts everything. Let us not forget all the same at the beginning, and in the disgust that he felt even before the encounter with the ghost, and the unveiling of the background to the crime, simply because of his mother's remarriage, he only thought of one thing, leaving for Wittenberg. This is what someone illustrated recently in order to comment on a certain practical style which tends to be establishing itself in contemporary mores. He pointed out that Hamlet was the finest example of the fact that one avoids a lot of trouble by providing passports in good time. If he had been given his passport for Wittenberg this drama would never have occurred.

It is in his parents' good time that he remains there. It is on the time of other people that he suspends his crime; it is in his step-father's time that he embarks for England; it is in (19) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's time that he is led, evidently with an ease which astonished Freud, to send them to their death thanks to a piece of trickery which is carried out very cleverly. And it is all the same in Ophelia's time also, at the time of her suicide, that this tragedy is going to come to a close at a moment when Hamlet, who has just discovered it seems that it is not difficult to kill someone, the time to say one... He will not have the time to say ouch! And still there has just been announced to him something which does not seem to be at all an opportunity for killing Claudius. There has just been proposed to him a very fine tournament, all the details of which have been minutely minuted, prepared, and whose stakes are constituted by what we will call in the collector's sense of the term, a series of objects which all have the character of precious objects, of collector's items. You should take up the text, there are even refinements in it, we are entering into the domain of collectors; it is a matter of swords, of carriages, of things which only have value as de luxe objects. And this is going to be the stake for a sort of joust in which Hamlet in fact provoked on the theme of a certain inferiority an advantage for which is accorded to him in the challenge. It is a complicated ceremony, a tournament which of course for us is the trap into which he must fall, which had been engineered by his step father and by his friend Laertes, but which for him, let us not forget is nothing other than once more accepting to play truant. Namely he is going to have a lot of fun.

Nevertheless he experiences in his heart a little warning. There is something in this which moves him. The dialectic of the (20) presentiment of the hero's moment comes here for an instant to give its accent to the drama. But all the same, essentially, it is still at the moment of the other, and in a yet more striking fashion, to support the wager of the other - because it is not his goods that are engaged; it is for his step-father's benefit, and himself as representative of his step-father, that

he will find himself getting into this courtly battle in principle with someone who is presumed to be a better fencer than he, and as such is going to give rise in him to sentiments of rivalry and honour thanks to which it has been calculated he is surely going to be caught.

He plunges therefore into the trap. I would say that what is new at that moment, is only the energy, the heart with which he plunges into it. Up to the final term, up to the last moment, up to the moment which is so determining that it is going to be his own moment, namely that he is going to be mortally wounded before he is able to kill his enemy, it is at the other's time that the chain of the tragedy always continues and is accomplished. This is, in order to conceive of what is in question, an absolutely essential framework.

It is in this that the resonance of the character and the drama of Hamlet, is the very metaphysical resonance of the question of the modern hero, in so far as in effect something has changed for him in his relationship to his destiny.

As I told you, what distinguishes Hamlet from Oedipus, is that Hamlet knows. And this moreover more than anything else explains, when we have taken it to this central point, what we have designated as being surface traits. For example Hamlet's madness. There are tragic heroes, in ancient tragedy who are (21) mad, but as far as I know there are none - I mean in tragedy I am not talking about legendary texts - who act mad as such.

Could it not be said that everything in Hamlet's madness is resumed in acting mad? This is the question that we are now going to pose ourselves. But he acts mad because he knows he is the weaker one. And it is interesting to point this out - you see that however superficial it may be I now point it out - not because it takes us any further along our path, but only because it is secondary.

It is not however secondary in the following: we have to reflect on this; if we want to understand what Shakespeare wanted in Hamlet, the fact is that this is the essential trait of the original legend, which is in Saxo Grammaticus, and in Belieforest.

Shakespeare chose the subject of a hero who is constrained in order to follow the paths which will lead him to make his gesture to act mad. It is a properly modern dimension. The one who knows is in such a dangerous position as such, so marked out for failure and sacrifice, that he has to take the path as Pascal says somewhere, of being mad along with the others.

This fashion of acting mad is one of the teachings, one of the dimensions of what I could call the politics of the modern hero. It is something which deserves not be neglected if we think that it is what Shakespeare is gripped by at the moment that he wants to write the tragedy of Hamlet. What the authors offer him, is essentially that. And this is all that is in question, namely

what has this madman got in the back of his head. That
(22) Shakespeare should have chosen his subject from within this
is an absolutely essential point.

We have now arrived at the point at which Ophelia has to fulfil
her role. If the play contains everything that I have already
developed for you in its structure, what after all is the good of
this character Ophelia.

I recall that some people have reproached me for having advanced
only with a certain timidity. I do not think I have demonstrated
an exceptional timidity. I would not like to encourage you
towards these foolish utterances which literally swarm in
psychoanalytic texts. I am only astonished that it has not been
written that Ophelia is ho phallos, because we find things which
are just as gross and just as striking, by people who do not have
bats in the belfry, simply by opening the unfinished paper on
Hamlet which Ella Sharpe has perhaps regrettably left unfinished
before her death, and which perhaps it was a mistake to publish.

But Ophelia is obviously essential. She corresponds to that,
and is linked throughout the centuries to the figure of Hamlet.

I would simply like, because it is rather late for me to finish
with Ophelia today, to punctuate for you what happens throughout
the play. We hear Ophelia first spoken of as the cause of
Hamlet's unhappy state. This is the psychoanalytic wisdom of
Polonius. If he is sad, it is because he is not happy; if he is
not happy, it is because of my daughter. You do not know her;
she is the peak of perfection, and of course, I her father would
(23) not tolerate that.

We see her appearing in connection with something which already
makes of her a very remarkable person, namely in connection with
a clinical observation, and she was the one who had the good
fortune to be the first person that Hamlet met after the
encounter with the ghost. Namely that scarcely had he emerged
from this encounter in which all the same some rather upsetting
things had occurred, when he met Ophelia. And the way in which
he behaved with Ophelia is something which I believe is worth
reporting.

"My lord, as I was sewing in my closet.
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced.
No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled,
Ungartered and down-gyved to his ankle.
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other.
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of Hell
To speak of horrors he comes before me

He took me by the wrist and held me hard.
Then goes he to the length of all his arm.
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow
He falls to such perusal of my face

As he would draw it. Long stayed he so.
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm.
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down.
 He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
 And end his being. That done, he lets me go.
 And with his head over his shoulder turned,
 (24) He seemed to find his way without his eyes;
 For out o' doors he went without their helps.
 And to the last bended their light on me." (II i 75)

So Polonius immediately cries: "It's love!"

This observation, and I think this interrogation, this distance taken from the object as if to carry out some sort of identification which is now difficult, this vacillation in the presence of what up to now had been the very object of exaltation, is something which gives us the first phase, estrangement as one might call it.

We cannot say any more about it. Nevertheless I believe that up to a certain point we are not forcing things in designating what is happening at that moment as properly pathological, testifying as it does to a great disorder of Hamlet in his dress, and making it similar to one of these periods of eruption, of subjective disorganisation of one kind or another. It happens in so far as something vacillates in the phantasy, allows its components to appear, allows them to appear and be received as something which manifests itself in the symptoms as what is called an experience of depersonalisation, and which is that by which the imaginary limits between the subject and the object find there to be changed, in the proper sense of the term the order of what is called the phantastical.

It is properly when something in the imaginary structure of the phantasy manages to join up, to communicate with that which arrives much more easily at the level of the message, namely that which comes from below, at this point here which is the image of the other in so far as this image of the other is my ego. This is the way in which authors like Federn [Fairbairn?] mark with a great deal of finesse the necessary correlation between the sentiment of one's own body and the strangeness of what happens in a certain crisis, in a certain rupture, in a certain attack on (25) the object as such and at a specific level which we find here.

Perhaps I was forcing things a little in order to interest you, in order to show you the way these things link up with elective experiences of our clinical work. We will no doubt come back to it. You can however be sure that it is impossible in any case, without this reference to this pathological schema, to this drama, to properly situate what was put forward for the first time by Freud at the analytic level under the name of It is not linked, as some have thought, to all sorts of eruptions from the unconscious. It is linked to this sort of disequilibrium which is produced in the phantasy, and in so far as the phantasy, breaking through the limits which are first of all assigned to it, is decomposed and comes to rediscover that by

which it rejoins the image of the other. In fact this is only a hint.

In the case of Hamlet we find afterwards something in which Ophelia is completely dissolved qua love-object. "I did love you once", says Hamlet (III i 116). And things happen in his relations with Ophelia in this style of cruel aggression, of sarcasm pushed to such an extreme which makes of it one of the not least strange scenes in the whole of classical literature.

Because if this note has been struck in really extreme plays, in something which is situated with this really central aspect in the middle of the tragic scene of the Hamlet play, a scene like that which takes place between Hamlet and Ophelia is not a banal scene.

(26) That is what characterises this attitude in which we find the trace of what I was indicating above as the disequilibrium of the phantastical relations in so far as it tilts towards the perverse aspect of the object. It is one of the traits of this relationship. Another of the traits, is that the object in question, is no longer treated as she should be, as a woman. She becomes for him the bearer of children and of every sin, the one who is designated to engender sinners, and the one who is designated afterwards as having to succumb to all sorts of calumnies. She becomes the pure and simple support of a life which in its essence becomes condemned for Hamlet. In short, what is produced at that moment, is this destruction or loss of the object which is reintegrated into its narcissistic framework. For the subject it appears as I might say outside; what it is equivalent to according to the formula that I used above, what it takes the place of, and what cannot be given to the subject except at the moment when literally he sacrifices himself when he is no longer it himself, when he rejects it with all his being, is indeed and uniquely the phallus.

If Ophelia is at that moment the phallus, it is because of this, and in so far as here the subject exteriorizes the phallus qua signifying symbol of life and as such rejects it. This is the second phase of the relation to the object.

Since time is passing I feel a bit scrupulous about giving you all the coordinates, and I will come back to it.

That it is indeed this that is in question, namely a transformation of the formula $S \ 0 \ \langle p$ ($\langle p$ the phallus) and in the form of rejection, this is demonstrated once you have glimpsed by means of something that is quite different to the etymology of (27) Ophelia. First of all because it is not only that that is in question, namely fecundity. Conception is a blessing says Hamlet to Polonius but look to your daughter (II ii 185). And the whole dialogue with Ophelia is indeed about woman conceived here uniquely as the bearer of this vital tumescence which it is a question of cursing and putting an end to. A nunnery could just as well at the time designate a brothel. Semantic usage shows it.

On the other hand the attitude of Hamlet to Ophelia in the play scene is also something in which there is designated this relation between the phallus and the object. Here because he is in front of his mother, and expressly in so far as he is in front of his mother, telling her that here there is a metal which attracts me more than you, he is going to place his head between Ophelia's legs: "Lady shall I lie in your lap?" expressly asking it of her (III ii 117,119).

The phallic relationship of the object of desire is also clearly indicated at that level, and I do not think either that it is superfluous to point out, because iconography has made so much of it, that among the flowers with which Ophelia is going to drown, there is expressly mentioned that the "dead-men's-fingers" that are in question are designated in a more or less vulgar fashion by the common people (IV vii 172). The plant in question is the orchie mascula. It is a question of something which has some relationship with the mandrake which means that this has some relationship with the phallic element. I looked for this in the New English Dictionary but I was very disappointed because even though it is quoted in the references to the term finger, there is no allusion to what Shakespeare alludes to by this appellation.

(28) The third phase is the one to which I have led you on several occasions and on which I am going once more to leave you, the phase of the graveyard scene. Namely the link in operation between something which is posed as a reintegration of o and the final possibility for Hamlet of looping the loop, namely of finally precipitating himself towards his destiny.

This third phase, in so far as it is entirely gratuitous, absolutely capital because this whole graveyard scene is composed in order that this something should happen which Shakespeare found nowhere else, this sort of furious fight at the bottom of a grave upon which I insisted; this designation as it were of a point of the function of the object as being here reconquered only at the price of mourning and of death, it is on this that I think finally I will be able to finish the next time.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 22 April 1959

Hamlet, as we have said, cannot endure rendezvous. The rendezvous is always too soon for him, and he postpones it. This element of procrastination cannot, in any way - even though certain authors in a literature which I have explored more and more, in the course of this study - be set aside. Procrastination remains one of the essential dimensions of the tragedy of Hamlet.

When, on the other hand, he acts, it is always precipitously. He acts when all of a sudden it seems that an occasion presents itself, when some call or other of the event beyond himself, of his resolution, of his decision, seems to present to him some ambiguous opening or other which is properly for us analysts what has introduced into the dimension of performance this perspective which we call flight (la fuite).

Nothing is clearer than the moment when he precipitates himself on something which moves behind the arras, when he kills Polonius. And other moments also, the quasi-mysterious fashion, I would say almost in a dissociated state, when he wakes up at night on this boat in a storm, and checks out the messages, breaks the seal of the message that Guildenstern and Rosencrantz are the bearers of, and also the quasi-automatic fashion in which he substitutes one message for another, restores the royal seal with his ring, and is going also to meet this extraordinary chance of being taken by pirates and parting company with his guards who no doubt will go to their own execution.

(2) We have here something of a real phenomenology, because we must call things by their name, whose easily recognisable accent we all know, since it is almost familiar in our experience, as well as in our conceptions, in relation to the life of the neurotic.

This is what I tried to get you to see the last time beyond these very tangible characteristics, in this structural reference which runs right through the play: Hamlet always keeps to the time of the Other. Of course this is only a mirage, because the time of the Other - this too is what I explained to you when I described the final response in this signifier of the Other as barred; there is I told you no Other of the Other. There is in the signifier itself no guarantee of the truth dimension established by the signifier. It has only its own time. And there is also

then only one time, it is the time of his destruction. And the whole tragedy of Hamlet is to show us the implacable journeying of Hamlet toward this time.

What specifies his destiny, what gives it its highly problematical value, is what then? Because this rendezvous with the moment of his destruction is not just the common lot which is significant for every human destiny. The fatality of Hamlet has a particular sign because otherwise it would not have for us this eminent value. Here then is where we are. This is where we had got to at the end of our discourse the last time.

What does Hamlet lack? And up to what point does the plan of the tragedy of Hamlet as Shakespeare composed it allow an articulation, a mapping-out of this lack which will go beyond the approximations that we are always satisfied with, and which also, because we content ourselves with their approximate character, (3) also give the vagueness, not only of our language, of our behaviour, of our suggestions - it has to be said - when we are dealing with patients.

Let us begin all the same with this approximation that is in question. It can be said, that what is lacking at every moment, in the case of Hamlet, is what we could call in a communicable language, in everyday language, this sort of fixation on a goal, of an object in his action, which always involves some degree of what is called arbitrariness.

Hamlet, as we have seen, we have even begun to explore why, is someone who, as women say, does not know what he wants. And in a way this sort of first dimension is presented by him, in the discourse that Shakespeare makes him hold. It is presentified at a certain turning point which is moreover very significant. It is the turning point of his eclipse in his tragedy. I mean for the short while that he is not there, when he is going to take this sea voyage from which he comes back extremely quickly, after scarcely having left port, when he, always obedient, is going to make this journey towards England on the orders of the king. He meets the troops of Fortinbras who is evoked from the beginning in the background of the tragedy, and who at the end comes to clean things up on the stage, collect the dead, put the damage in order. And here is how our Hamlet speaks about Fortinbras. He is struck by the sight of these valiant troops who are going to conquer a few acres of Poland in the name of some more or less stupid warlike pretext which gives him an opportunity to reflect on himself.

- (4) "How all occasions do inform against me
 And spur my dull revenge 1 What is a man
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
 Sure, He that made us with such large discourse.
 Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and godlike reason
 To fust in us unused." (IV iv 32)

What the translator transcribes as la raison, is the great discourse, the fundamental discourse, what I would call here concrete discourse. "Looking before and after, gave us not that capability and god-like reason...."

Here the word raison is in its rightful place. God has surely not given us this divine gift for it to rust in us for lack of use. "Now", says our Hamlet "whether it be bestial oblivion". Bestial oblivion is one of the key words of the dimension of his being in the tragedy -

".... or some craven scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on the event -
 A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
 And ever three parts coward - I do not know
 Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do,"
 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
 To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me.
 Witness this army, of such mass and charge.
 Led by a delicate and tender prince
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puffed
 Makes mouths at the invisible event.
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death, and danger dare.
 Even for an eggshell. Rightly to be great
 (5) Is not to stir without great argument.
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 And honour's at the stake. How stand I then.
 That have a father killed, a mother stained.
 Excitements of my reason and my blood.
 And let all sleep while to my shame I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men
 That for a fantasy and trick of fame
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause.
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain? Oh, from this time forth.
 My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth!" (IV iv 30)

Such is Hamlet's meditation on what I would call the object of human action. This object which here leaves the door open to what I would call all the particularities on which we dwell. We shall call this oblativity: spilling one's blood for a noble cause, honour. Honour is also mentioned: to be committed by one's word. We shall call this the gift. Qua analysts effectively we cannot fail to encounter this concrete determination, not be gripped by their weight, whether it is of flesh or of commitment.

What I am trying to show you here is something which is not simply a common form, the lowest common denominator, of all that. (6) It is not just a question of a position, of an articulation which could be characterised as a formalism. When I write the formula \$ 0 o put at the end of this question that the subject poses in the Other, which being addressed to him is called the "What do you want?", this question which is the in which

the subject is looking for his final word, and which has no chance, outside the exploration of the unconscious chain in so far as it travels around the circuit of the upper signifying chain, but which is not, outside the special conditions that we call analytical, something which can effectively be opened up to investigation without this help of the unconscious chain in so far as it has been uncovered by the analyst, by the Freudian experience.

What we are dealing with, is this something to which there can accord, in an imaginary short circuit, in the relationship half-way between this circuit of desire and what is opposite it, namely the phantasy and the structure of the phantasy, its general structure is what I express, namely a certain relationship of the subject to the signifier, this is what is expressed by the $\$ O o$ it is the subject in so far as he is irreducibly affected by the signifier, with all the consequences that this involves, in a certain specific relationship with a certain circumstance which is imaginary in its essence, o , not the object of desire, but the object in desire.

It is this function of the object in desire that we must now (7) approach, since it is because the tragedy of Hamlet allows us to articulate it in an exemplary fashion that we devote this insistent interest to the structure of Shakespeare's work.

Let us get closer. $\$ O o$ as such signifies the following: it is in so far as the subject is deprived of something of himself which took on the value of signifier by its very alienation. This something is the phallus. It is therefore in so far as the subject is deprived of something which belongs to his very life, because this took on the value of what attaches him to the signifier; it is in so far as it is in this position that a particular object becomes object of desire.

To be an object of desire is something essentially different from being an object of any need. It is this subsistence of the object as such, of the object in desire, in time, that it has taken the place of what to the subject remains masked by its very nature. This sacrifice of himself, this pound of flesh engaged in its relationship to the signifier, it is because something comes to take the place of that, that this something becomes object in desire.

And this is so profoundly enigmatic because it is fundamentally a relationship to the hidden, to the occulted, it is because it is thus, it is because - if you will allow me a formula which is one of the ones I have written in my notes, and which comes back to me here but do not make of it a doctrinal formula, take it at most as an image - it is in so far as human life might be defined as a calculation whose zero is irrational. This formula is only a mathematical metaphor, and you have to give here to the (8) irrational its mathematical meaning. I am not alluding here to some unplumbable affective state or other, but to something which manifests itself at the very interior of mathematics in a form equivalent to what is called an imaginary number which is

the square root of minus one. Because there is something which does not correspond to anything that can be intuited, and whose full function must nevertheless be maintained. It is this relationship I say of the object to this hidden element of the living support, of the subject in so far as in taking on the function of the signifier he cannot be subjectivated as such.

It is because this is the way things are that this structure, in the same way, in the same relationship that we are with the root of minus one which is something that in itself does not correspond to anything real also in the mathematical sense of the term It is precisely also because of this that we can grasp the veritable function of the object only by going around a series of its possible relationships with jfc, namely with the S which, at the precise point where the o takes on the maximum of value, cannot but be occulted.

And it is precisely this tour of the functions of the object - it would be a lot to say, that the tragedy of Hamlet takes us completely around it; but undoubtedly in any case it allows us to go much further than has ever been gone along any other path.

Let us begin from the end, from the point of encounter, the time of the rendezvous, from this act where, when all is said and done - you should take carefully into account that the terminal act, the one in which he finally throws, as a price for his completed action, the whole weight of his life, this act deserves to be called an act that he activates and that he undergoes. There is indeed about this act an aspect of being in at the (9) death. At the moment that his gesture is performed he is also the hart of Diana at bay. He is the one around whom there tightens the conspiracy that has been hatched, I do not know if you are aware of it, with an incredible cynicism and wickedness, between Claudius and Laertes, whatever may be the reasons each one of them has, there being also implicated in it probably this sort of tarantula, this ridiculous courtier who comes to propose to him the tournament in which the conspiracy is concealed.

This is the structure. It is extremely clear. The tournament which is proposed to him puts him in the position of being another's champion. I already insisted on that. He is the representative of the bet, of the wager, of his uncle and step-father Claudius. There happens something which I insisted on already the last time. Namely as regards the stakes, the objects, o, which are characterised there with all their eclat, namely that like any object and any stake they are essentially at first in the world of human desire characterised by what the religious tradition, in exemplary representations, teaches us to name as a vanitas, a sort of finely worked tapestry. It is the accumulation of all these precious objects which are there and placed in the balance over against death.

He has wagered six Barbary horses with Laertes against which this other has put in the balance six French rapiers and poniards; namely all the trappings of a dueller, with everything that is related to it, with what is used to wear them, their scabbards I

think. And in particular there are three which have what the (10) text calls carriages. This word carriage is a particularly precious way of expressing a sort of buckle on which the sword is supposed to hang. It is a collector's word, which causes an ambiguity with the gun carriage, so that there takes place a whole dialogue between Hamlet and the person who comes to bring him the conditions of the tournament. Throughout a fairly long dialogue everything is done to display before your eyes the quality, the number, the panoply of the objects, giving all its accent to this sort of test whose paradoxical, even absurd character I pointed out to you, this tournament which has been proposed to Hamlet.

And nevertheless Hamlet seems once more to stick his neck out as if nothing in him can oppose in short a sort of fundamental availability. His response is quite significant. "Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please His Majesty, it is the breathing-time of day with me. Let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can. If not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits" (V ii 179).

Here therefore is something which in the final act, shows us the very structure of the phantasy. At the moment that he is at the point of his resolution, indeed as always just on the eve of his resolution, here he is hiring himself literally to another and again for nothing, again in the most gratuitous fashion, this other being precisely his enemy, and the one whom he should kill. And this he puts in the balance against these worldly things, first of all which scarcely interest him, namely at that moment (11) it is not all these collector's items which are his major worry, but that he is going to try to win for another.

No doubt at the stage below there is something with which the others think they are going to captivate him, and to which of course he is not completely indifferent, not as the others think, but all the same on the same plane as the others are situated, namely that he is interested in honour, namely at a level of what Hegel calls the struggle for pure prestige, interested from the point of view of honour in something which is going to oppose him to a rival whom on the other hand he admires.

And we cannot fail to dwell for a moment on the sureness of the connection which is put here, put forward by Shakespeare. You will recognise in it something which is already long-standing in our discourse, in our dialogue, namely the mirror stage. That Laertes at this level is his counterpart, is something which is expressly articulated in the text. It is articulated in an indirect fashion, I mean within a parody. It is when he replies to this very stupid courtier called Osric, who has come to propose the duel to him, by beginning to display before his eyes the eminent quality of the one to whom he will have to show his merit. He cuts him short by doing still better than him. "Sir, his defilement suffers no perdition in you, though I know to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail." It is an (12) extremely precious, very finely spun discourse that he

pursues, which parodies in a way the style of his interlocutor, and which he concludes by saying: "I take him to be a soul of great artifice, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage - nothing more" (V ii 117).

In brief, the reference to the image of the other, as being that which cannot but completely absorb the one who contemplates it, is here, in connection with the merits of Laertes, certainly presented inflated in a very over elaborate, conceited way, is something which has all its value at that moment. All the more since, as you are going to see, it is with this attitude that Hamlet is going to approach Laertes before the duel. It is on this footing that he approaches him and it only becomes more significant that it is at this paroxysm of imaginary absorption formally articulated as a specular relationship, a mirror reaction, that it is here there is also situated by the playwright the manifest point of aggressivity.

The person you most admire is the one that you fight. The one who is the ego-ideal, is also, according to the Hegelian formula of the impossibility of co-existences, the one you must kill.

This Hamlet only does on a level that we must describe as disinterested, the level of the tournament. He commits himself to it, in a fashion which we can qualify as formal, even as fictitious. It is without his knowledge that he enters in reality all the same into the most serious game.

(13) What does that mean? That means that he has not entered into it, let us say with his phallus. That means that what presents itself for him in this aggressive relationship, is a lure, is a mirage, that it is despite himself that he is going to lose his life in it, that it is without knowing it that he is going precisely at that moment, at once to encounter the accomplishment of his act and of his own death which is going to coincide with it to the nearest instant.

He has not entered into it with his phallus, is a way of expressing what we are trying to seek, namely where the lack is, where the particularity of this position of the subject Hamlet is in the drama.

He has all the same entered into it, because if the foils have their tips covered, that is only part of the lure. In reality there is at least one which is not covered, which at the moment of the distribution of foils is already in advance carefully marked in order to be given to Laertes. This one has a real point, and what is more it is a poisoned point.

What is striking, is that here the lack of constraint of this screen writer rejoins what can be called the formidable intuition of the dramatist. I mean that he does not trouble himself too much to explain to us that this poisoned weapon is going to pass in the fight, God knows how, - this must be one of the difficulties of production - from the hand of one of the

adversaries into the hand of the other. You know that it is in the sort of hand-to-hand in which they grapple after Laertes had delivered the blow from which Hamlet cannot recover, and from which he must perish. In a few moments it happens that this same point is in the hands of Hamlet. Nobody has gone to any trouble to explain such an astonishing incident during the session. Nobody in fact has to worry himself in the slightest. Because what is in question is precisely this and it is to show that here the instrument of death, on this occasion the most veiled instrument of the drama, the one that Hamlet can only receive from the other, the instrument which causes death, is something which is elsewhere than what is here immaterially representable.

Here one cannot fail to be struck by something which is literally in the text. It is clear that what I am in the process of telling you, is that beyond this parade of the tournament of the rivalry with the one who is his most beautiful counterpart, the myself that he can love, beyond this there is played out the drama of the accomplishment of Hamlet's desire, beyond this there is the phallus.

And when all is said and done, it is in this encounter with the other that Hamlet is going to identify himself with the fatal signifier. Well then, it is a very curious thing, it is in the text. There is talk of foils at the moment of distributing them: "Give them the foils young Osric. Cousin Hamlet, you know the wager?" And earlier Hamlet says "Give us the foils". Between these two terms where there is question of foils, Hamlet makes a play on words: "I'll be your foil, Laertes. In mine ignorance your skill shall, like a star in the darkest night, stick firey off indeed" (V ii 266). Foil means fleuret in the context. Here foil cannot have this meaning, and it has a (15) meaning that is perfectly locatable, it is a meaning that is well attested at the epoch, even rather frequently used. It is the sense in which foil, which is the same word as the French word feuille in old French, is used in a precious form to designate the leaf in which something precious is carried, namely a jewel case. Here it is used to say: Here I am only going to be something to highlight your starlike brilliance in the blackness of the sky by fighting with you.

Moreover these are the very conditions in which the duel is engaged; namely that Hamlet has no chance of winning, that he will have done well enough if the other takes only three points in twelve against him. The wager is engaged at nine against twelve, namely that Hamlet is given a handicap.

I would say that in this play on the word foil we legitimately find something which is included in the underpinnings of the pun... I mean that it is one of Hamlet's functions to be all the time playing on words, punning, making double entendre's, playing on the equivocal. This play on words is not there by chance. When he tells him, I will be your ecrin [jewel-case], he is using the same word, he makes a play on words with what is at stake at that moment, namely the distribution of foils. And very

precisely in Hamlet's pun there is when all is said and done this identification of the subject to the fatal phallus in so far as it is present here.

He says to him, I will be your ecrin so that your merits may shine, but what is going to come, in a moment, is well and truly (16) Laertes rapier, in so far as this rapier is the one which has wounded Hamlet to death, but is also the same one that he will himself find in his hand in order to finish his journey and to kill at the same time, both his adversary, and the one who is the final object of his mission, namely the king whom he must destroy immediately afterwards.

This verbal reference, this play on the signifier is certainly not there by chance. It is legitimate to bring it into play. It is not in effect an accident in the text. One of the dimensions in which Hamlet is presented, and its texture, is in effect this one throughout the text:

Shakespeare, - and this just by itself would deserve a development You see playing an essential role in it these different characters who are called clowns, whether they are called the court fools, who are those who, having a right to speak frankly, can allow themselves to unveil the most secret motives, the character traits of people which politeness does not allow to be approached directly. It is something which is not simply cynicism, and a more or less insulting style of discourse; it is essentially by way of equivocation, by metaphor, by playing on words, by a certain usage of concetti, of a precious style of speaking, of these substitutions of signifiers whose essential function I insisted on here. They give to the whole of Shakespeare's theatre a style, a colour, which is absolutely characteristic of his style, and which essentially creates its psychological dimension.

(17) The fact that Hamlet is a character who is more agonising than any other one should not dissimulate from us that the tragedy of Hamlet is the tragedy which from a certain point of view, literally, brings this fool, this clown, this player on words down to zero. If for some reason one had to remove this dimension of Hamlet from Shakespeare's play, more than four fifths of the play would disappear as someone has remarked.

One of the dimensions in which the tension of Hamlet is accomplished, is this perpetual equivocation, the one which is in a way dissimulated from us, by what I could call the mask or the appearance of the affair. I mean, that which is played out between Claudius, the tyrant, the usurper, and the murderer, Hamlet. That is to say the unmasking of Hamlet's tensions, namely why he acts mad. But what must not be forgotten, is the way in which he acts mad; this style which gives to his discourse this quasi-maniacal aspect; this style of catching ideas on the wing, the opportunities for equivocation, the opportunities to make shine for a moment before his adversaries this sort of flash of meaning.

In this regard there are in the play, texts in which they themselves begin to construct, even to plot. This strikes them not as something discordant, but as something strange which they see as being especially pertinent. It is in this game, which is not just a game of dissimulation, but a jeu d'esprit, a game which is established at the level of signifiers, in the dimension of meaning, that there belongs what can be called the very spirit of the play.

It is within this ambiguous disposition which makes of all Hamlet's remarks, and at the same time of the reaction of those around him, a problem in which the spectator himself, the listener, is lost and continually questions himself, it is there that the base must be situated, the plane on which the play (18) Hamlet takes on its import.

I am recalling it here only to indicate to you that there is nothing either arbitrary or excessive in giving all its weight to this little play on the word foil.

Here then is what is characteristic of the constellation in which the final act is established: the duel between Hamlet and the one who here is a sort of counterpart or double more beautiful than himself. We have insisted on this element, i(o), which is in a way at the lower level of our schema, which is found by Hamlet to be remodelled for an instant that he for whom no man or woman is anything more than an inconsistent and putrid shadow finds here a rival who is in his own class. Let us say it, this remodelled counterpart, the one who is going to allow him at least for a moment to sustain in his presence the human wager of being himself also a man, this remodelling is only a consequence, it is not a starting point. I mean that it is the consequence of that which is manifest in the situation, namely the position of the subject in the presence of the other as object of desire, the immanent presence of the phallus which can only appear here in its formal function with the subject's own disappearance. What makes possible the fact that the subject himself succumbs before even taking it in hand in order to become himself the murderer?

We return once more to our crossroads. This very singular crossroads of which I have spoken, whose essential character in Hamlet I have marked: namely what happens in the graveyard; namely something which ought to greatly interest one of our colleagues who in his work happens to have treated eminently well both jealousy and mourning. This something which is one of the (19) most striking points of this tragedy: the jealousy of mourning.

Because I would ask you to refer to this act with which the graveyard scene ends. The one to which I led you three times in the course of my exposition. Namely the following which is absolutely characteristic: it is that Hamlet cannot tolerate parade or ostentation, and he articulates as such what is intolerable in the attitude of Laertes at the moment of his sister's burial. This ostentatious mourning in his partner,

this is the very thing by which he finds himself torn away from himself, upset, shaken to his foundations to the point of not being able to tolerate it as such.

And the first rivalry, this one much more authentic - because if it is with all the apparatus of courtliness and with a covered foil that Hamlet approaches the duel, it is at Laertes' throat that he leaps in the hole into which the body of Ophelia has just been lowered, to tell him:

"'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do.
 Woo't weep? Woo't fight? Woo't fast? Woo't tear thyself?
 Woo't drink up eisel? Eat a crocodile?
 I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
 To outface me with leaping in her grave?
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I.
 And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth
 I'll rant as well as thou." (V i 297).

And everybody is scandalised by this, and hurries to separate these enemy brothers who are trying to strangle one another. And Hamlet again makes one of these remarks speaking to his partner: "What is the reason that you use me thus? I loved you ever. But it is no matter, let Hercules himself do what he may, (20) the cat will mew and the dog will have his day" (V i 313). Which is moreover a proverbial element which here seems to me to take on all its value from certain rapprochments that some of you may be making. But I cannot delay on this.

The essential thing is that when he is talking to Horatio he explains to him: "... the bravery of his grief did put me into a towering passion" (V ii 78). Here we are brought to the heart of something which is going to open up a whole problematic for us.

What relationship is there between what we have brought forward in the form of *p O o*, concerning the constitution of the object in desire, and mourning? Let us observe the following: let us approach by its most manifest characteristics which may also appear the furthest from the centre of what we are here searching for, what is presented to us.

Hamlet has behaved towards Ophelia in the most contemptible and cruel fashion. I insisted on the character of devaluating aggression, of humiliation ceaselessly imposed on this person who has suddenly become the very symbol of the rejection as such of his desire. We cannot fail to be struck by something which for us completes once more, in another form, in another trait, the structure for Hamlet. It is that suddenly this object is going to take on again for him its presence, its value. He declares: "I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love, make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?" (V i 292) .

It is in these terms that there begins the challenge addressed to Laertes. It is in a way in the measure that the object of his (21) desire has become an impossible object that it becomes for him once again the object of his desire. Once again we believe that we have found here a familiar detour, namely one of the characteristics of the desire of the obsessional. Let us not stop too quickly at these over-obvious appearances. For the obsessional, it is not so much the fact that the object of his desire is impossible which characterises him, even though by the very structure of the foundations of desire there is always this note of impossibility in the object of desire. What characterises it, is not then that the object of his desire is impossible, because it would then only be, and through this trait in this case only one of the especially manifest forms of an aspect of human desire, it is that the obsessional puts the accent on the encounter with this impossibility.

In other words, he arranges things so that this object of his desire takes on the essential value of a signifier of this impossibility. This is one of the notes through which we can already approach this form. But there is something more profound which solicits us.

Mourning is something that our theory, that our tradition, that the Freudian formulae have already taught us to formulate in terms of object-relation. Can we fail from a certain point of view to be struck by the fact that from the time psychologists began to think, it was Freud who highlighted the object of mourning for the first time.

The object of mourning is in a certain relationship of identification, which he tried to define more closely, by calling it a relationship of incorporation with the subject, that it takes on its import, that there are grouped together, that there are organised, the manifestations of mourning. So, are we not able to try, to re-articulate more closely, in the vocabulary which we have learned to handle here, what this identification of mourning may be? What is the function of mourning?

(22) If we advance along this path we are going to see, and uniquely in function of the symbolic apparatuses that we employ in this exploration, appearing from the function of mourning consequences which I think are new, and eminently suggestive for you. I mean destined to open up to you glimpses which are efficacious and fruitful to which you cannot gain access by another path.

The question of what identification is should be clarified from the categories which I have been putting forward here before you for years; namely those of the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

What is this incorporation of the lost object? In what does the work of mourning consist? We remain in a state of vagueness, which explains the blockage of any speculation around this path which nevertheless was opened up by Freud about mourning and

melancholia, because of the fact that the question is not appropriately articulated. Let us stick with the first, most obvious aspect of the experience of mourning. The subject is plunged into the vertigo of suffering, and finds himself in a certain relationship, here in some way illustrated in the most manifest fashion by what we see happening in the graveyard scene, Laertes leaps into the grave, and the fact that he embraces, beside himself, the object whose disappearance is the cause of this suffering, which makes of it in time, at the point of this branching off, in the most obvious fashion, a sort of existence which is all the more absolute in that it no longer corresponds to anything at all.

In other words, the hole in the real provoked by a loss, a real loss, this sort of unbearable loss for the human being, which (23) provokes mourning in him, is found in the real, is found by that very function in this relationship which is the inverse of the one that I put forward before you under the name of Verwerfung.

Just as what is rejected in the symbolic reappears in the real, that these formulae should be taken in the literal sense, likewise the Verwerfung, the hole of the loss in the real of something which is properly speaking the intolerable dimension presented to human experience which is, not the experience of one's own death, which nobody has, but that of the death of someone else, who is for us an essential being.

This is a hole in the real, it is found in the real, and because of this fact is found, and because of the same correspondence which in the one that I articulated in the Verwerfung, to offer the place where there is projected precisely this missing signifier, this essential signifier, o, as such, in the structure of the Other, this signifier whose accent makes the Other powerless to give you your response. This signifier which you cannot pay for except with your flesh and your blood, this signifier which is essentially the phallus under the veil.

It is because this signifier finds its place there, and at the same time cannot find it, because this signifier cannot be articulated at the level of the Other, that there come, as in psychosis - and this is the way in which mourning is like psychosis - to proliferate instead of it all the images that the phenomena of mourning give rise to, the phenomena in the foreground being those through which there is manifested not one or other particular madness, but one of the most essential (24) collective madneses of the human community as such, namely that which is put here in the forefront, given pride of place in the tragedy of Hamlet, namely the ghost, the fantome, this image which can surprise the soul of each and every one of us.

If with respect to the dead person, the one who had just died, something has not been performed which are called rites: rites destined when all is said and done for what? What are funeral rites? The rites through which we satisfy what is called the memory of the dead person, what are they if not the total.

massive intervention from earth to heaven of the whole symbolic operation. I would like to have the time to do some seminars with you on this subject of funeral rites by way of ethnological investigation. I remember, it is many years ago, spending some time on a book which is a really admirable illustration of this, and which takes on all its exemplary value for us, because it comes from a civilisation distant enough from our own for the features of this function to appear really in a striking way.

It is the Li Ki, one of the sacred Chinese books. The macrocosmic character of funeral rites, namely the fact that in effect there is nothing which can fill with signifier this hole in the real, except the totality of the signifier, the work accomplished at a level of the logos - I say this in order not to say at the level of the group or of the community (naturally it is the group and the community qua culturally signified that are its supports) - the work of mourning presents itself in the first place as a satisfaction made to what is produced in terms of disorder because of the insufficiency of all the signifying elements to face up to the hole created in existence by the total bringing into play of the whole signifying system for the least (25) bereavement (deuil).

And this is what explains to us that all the beliefs of folklore essentially set up the closest relationship between the fact that something was lacking, elided, or refused in terms of this satisfaction to the dead person, and the fact that there are produced these phenomena which correspond to the ascendancy, to the coming into play, to the putting into operation of ghosts and of the spirits of the dead at the place left free by the signifying rite.

And here there appears to us a new dimension of the tragedy of Hamlet. I told you at the beginning, it is a tragedy of the subterranean world. The ghost rises up because of an unexpiatable offence. Ophelia appears in this perspective, neutral, nothing other than a victim offered up for this primordial offence. The murder of Polonius and the ridiculous dragging of his corpse by the feet, by Hamlet who becomes suddenly literally wild, and amuses himself by flouting everyone who asks him where the corpse is, and who amuses himself by proposing a whole series of enigmas in very bad taste the high point of which culminates in the formula "Hide fox, and all after", (IV ii 33), which is obviously a reference to a kind of game of hide-and-seek. Which means, the fox is hidden, let us run after him; the murder of Polonius and and this extraordinary scene of the corpse hidden in defiance of the sensitivities, and the worries of the whole entourage is again only a mockery of what is in question, namely an unsatisfied mourning (deuil).

(26) We have here, in something the last word on which as you see I was not able to give you today, this perspective, this relationship between the formula \$ o o, the phantasy, and something which appears paradoxically distant from it, namely the relation to the object in so far as mourning allows us to clarify it.

Next day we are going to continue in detail, by showing, by taking up the detours of the play Hamlet in so far as it allows us to satisfy the economy which is closely linked here of the real, the imaginary and the symbolic.

Perhaps in the course of this many of your preconceived ideas will break down, will even I hope be shattered, but I think you will be well enough prepared for this by the fact that because we are commenting on a tragedy in which there is no shortage of corpses, this sort of purely ideational damage will appear to you, when compared to the damage left behind him by Hamlet, as not amounting to much, and that to speak plainly you will console yourselves about the difficult path that I make you follow with this Hamlet-like formula, on ne fait pas d'hamlet sens casser des oeufs.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 29 April 1959

If the tragedy of Hamlet is the tragedy of desire, it is time to notice - this is where I had led you to at the end of my last lecture - as we come to the end of our course what is always noticed at the end, namely what is most obvious - I do not know in effect whether any author has dwelt simply on this remark which is all the same difficult to overlook once it has been formulated - that from the beginning to the end of Hamlet there is talk of nothing but mourning (deuil).

Hamlet's first remark concerns this scandal, his mother's precipitous marriage. This marriage which the mother herself in her anxiety, her anxiety to know what is troubling her beloved son, herself calls "our o'erhasty marriage": "I doubt it is no other but the main, his father's death and our o'erhasty marriage" (II ii 56). No need to remind you of those words of Hamlet about the left-overs of the funeral meal which are used for the wedding breakfast: "Thrift, thrift, Horatio I" (Economie, economie), indicating with this term something which reminds us that in our exploration of the world of the object, in this articulation which is that of modern society between what we call use-value and exchange-value with all the notions that are engendered around it, there is something perhaps that the analysis overlooks - I mean the Marxist, economic analysis, in so far as it dominates the thinking of our epoch - and whose power and breadth we meet at every moment, which are ritual-values.

Again because we pick them up unceasingly in our experience, it would perhaps be useful to separate them out, to articulate them as essential. I already alluded the time before last, to this function of ritual in mourning. It is by means of this (2) mediation which ritual introduces to what bereavement (deuil) opens up in terms of a gap somewhere; more exactly in the way in which it comes to coincide, to put at the centre of an essential gap, the major symbolic gap, the symbolic lack, the point x in short about which one can say that when Freud alludes somewhere to the navel of the dream perhaps he is evoking precisely the psychological correspondent of this.

So that on the question of mourning we cannot but be struck that in all these major bereavements, which are put in question in Hamlet, this always returns: that the rites were abbreviated, clandestine.

and articulate this principle in a fashion which throughout analysis is never presented as complete, concluded, accomplished, satisfying. This perpetual movement, dialectical slipping, which is the movement and the life of analytic research, is something which bears witness to the specificity of the problem that this research is grappling with.

In the presence of this, everything that our research involves in terms of mistakes, of confusion, of uncertainty even in its principles, everything that this brings into its practice in terms of ambiguity - I mean of always finding not only before oneself, but in one's very practice what is precisely its principle, what one wanted to avoid, namely suggestion, persuasion, construction, even mystagogy - all these contradictions in the analytic movement only serve to accentuate further the specificity of the Freudian thing.

(3) This thing we envisage this year by hypothesis, sustained by the whole concentric progress of our previous research, in the following form, namely that this thing is desire. And at the same time, at the moment that we articulate this formula, we notice a kind of contradiction coming from the fact that our whole effort seems to be working in the direction of making this desire lose its value, its original accent, without however our being able to put our finger on, indeed ensure that experience shows us, that it is indeed with its original accent that we have to deal with it.

Desire is not something that we can consider as reduced, normalised, functioning through the exigencies of a sort of organic preformation which would lead us in advance onto the traced-out path and way on which we would have to make it enter, bring it back to. Desire, from the origin of the analytic articulation by Freud, is presented with this characteristic that lust in English means convoitise as well as luxure, the same word which is in Lustprinzip. And you know that in German it conserves all the ambiguity of pleasure and of desire.

This something which presents itself at first in experience as disturbance, as something which disturbs the perception of the object, a something also which the maledictions of poets and of moralists show us also degrades this object, disorganises it, debases it, in any case shakes it, sometimes goes so far as to dissolve the very person who perceives it, namely the subject.

(4) This accent is certainly articulated as a principle of the Freudian position in the measure that the placing of Lust in the foreground as it is articulated in Freud is presented to us in a radically different fashion from anything that was previously articulated concerning the principle of desire. And it is presented to us in Freud as being opposed in its origin and its source to the reality principle. The accent of the original experience of desire is preserved in Freud as being opposed, contrary to the construction of reality. Desire is specified as being marked, accentuated by the blind character of its search;

as something which is presented as being the torment of man, and which effectively includes a contradiction in the search for what up to then, for all of those who had tried to articulate the meaning of the ways of man in his searchings, of everything that up to then had always been articulated in principle as being man's search for his good.

The pleasure principle, throughout all philosophical and moralistic thinking, throughout the centuries, in every original definition by which every moral theory of man is proposed, was always affirmed - whatever it was - as hedonistic. Namely that man fundamentally sought his good, whether he knew it or whether he did not know it, and at the same time that it was only through a sort of accident that there emerged the experience of this error of his desire, of its aberrations.

It is in principle, and as fundamentally contradictory that for the first time in a theory of man pleasure finds itself (5) articulated with a different accent. And in the measure that the term pleasure in its very signifier in Freud, is contaminated by the special accent with which there is presented Lust, lust, convoitise, desire.

Desire therefore is not organised, is not put together in a sort of preformed harmony with the map of the world, as after all a harmonic, optimistic idea of human development might suppose. Analytic experience teaches us that things go in a different direction. As you know, as we have stated here, it shows us something which is precisely the thing which is going to engage us in a way of experience which is also by its very development something in which we are going to lose the accent, the affirmation of this primordial agency (instant).

Namely that the history of desire is organised in a discourse which develops in senselessness - this is what the unconscious is - in a discourse whose displacements, whose condensations are without any doubt the displacements and condensations to be recognised in discourse, namely metonymies and metaphors. But metaphors which as opposed to metaphor do not engender any meaning. Displacements which do not carry any being, and in which the subject does not recognise something which is being displaced. It is around the exploration of this discourse of the unconscious that the experience of analysis has developed.

It is therefore around something whose radical dimension we can call the diachrony of discourse. What constitutes the essence (6) of our research, the place where there is situated what we are trying to grasp again in terms of what this desire is, is our effort to situate it in synchrony. We are introduced to this by something which makes itself heard every time we approach our experience. We cannot help seeing, help grasping - whether we read the account, the textbook of the most original experience of analysis, namely Freud's Interpretation of dreams, or whether we refer to any session whatsoever, to a succession of interpretations - the character of indefinite deferment (renvoi) that there is in every exercise of an interpretation which never

presents desire to us except in an articulated form, but which supposes in principle something which requires this mechanism of deferment from wish to wish in which the movement of the subject is inscribed, and also the distance that he finds himself from his own wishes.

This is why it seems to me that we can legitimately formulate the hope that the reference to structure, a linguistic reference as such, in so far as it reminds us that there cannot be a symbolic formation if alongside, and fundamentally, primordially in every exercise of the word which is called discourse there is not necessarily a synchrony, a structure of language as a synchronic system. This is where we are trying to detect what the function of desire is.

Where is desire situated in this relationship which ensures that this x thing which in future we call man in the measure that he is the subject of the logos, that he is constituted in the signifier as subject ... Where in this relationship as synchronic is desire situated? What I think will make you sense the primordial necessity of this renewal, is something (7) we see analytic research becoming engaged in, in so far as it overlooks this structural organisation.

In effect at the very moment I articulated earlier the contrary function established fundamentally at the origin by the Freudian experience between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, could you not at the same time perceive that we are precisely at the point at which the theory tries to articulate precisely in the very terms in which I said that we could say desire is not composed. It is nevertheless composed in the appetite that the authors have to think and feel about it, in a certain fashion in a certain harmony with the song of the world.

Everything is done to try to deduce from a convergence of experience with a maturation what is at least to be wished for as a completed development. And at the same time it is quite clear that all of this means that the authors themselves have abandoned any contact with their experience if they can effectively articulate analytic theory in these terms, namely find anything at all that is satisfying, classical, in the ontological adaptation of the subject to his experience.

The paradox is the following: it is that the further one goes in the direction of this exigency towards which one goes by all sorts of errors - revelatory errors it must be said; revealing precisely that it is necessary to try to articulate things differently - the more one goes along the direction of this experience, the more one arrives at paradoxes like the following. I take an example, and I take it from one of the best authors, from one of those most concerned precisely with a correct articulation not only of our experience, but also of the totality of its data, in an effort also to make an inventory of our terms, (8) the notions that we make use of, our concepts, I am talking about Edward Glover whose work is undoubtedly one of the most useful for anyone who wishes to try - first of all in analysis

this is absolutely indispensable, more than elsewhere - to know what he is doing, and also the mass of whose experiences has been included in his writings I take an example from one of the numerous articles which you should read, the one which appeared in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, of October 1933 (the fourth volume of that year): "The relation of perversion-formation to the development of reality-sense".

There are many things in this article which are important to discuss, even the starting terms that he gives us with the intention of correctly handling what he wants to show us, in particular the definition of reality-sense as being that faculty whose existence we infer by examining the process of reality-testing. It is very important that from time to time things should be formulated.

The second thing is what he calls efficient reality-testing, which for any subject who has passed the age of puberty, is the capacity to retain psychic contact with the objects that promote gratification of instinct, including here both modified and residual infantile impulses.

Thirdly, objectivity is the capacity to assess correctly the relation of instinctual impulse to instinctual object, whether or not the aims of the impulse are, can be or will be gratified.

These are fundamental data which are extremely important, (9) and which undoubtedly cannot fail to strike you as giving to the term objectivity in any case a character which is no longer the one which is habitually assigned to it.

This characteristic is going to give us the idea that in effect something is not lost to the original dimension of Freudian research, because something can be overturned in what precisely up to then appeared to us to be the categories and the orders required by our view of the world. One cannot but be all the more struck by what our involves with such a starting point. It involves in this case a research into what the perverse relationship signifies; this being understood in the widest sense, with reference to reality-sense. I tell you, the spirit of the article implies that perversion-formation is conceived by the author as being when all is said and done a means for the subject of warding off the rents, the flaws, the things which say nothing to him in terms of a coherent reality.

Perversion is very precisely articulated by the author as being the way to salvation for the subject to assure a continuity to this reality. Undoubtedly we have here again an original way of looking at things. I pass over the following: the fact is that there results from this form of articulation a sort of omnipresence of the perverse function. Because also, taking on the task of retracing as one might say the chronological insertions, I mean for example where it would be appropriate to place it in a system of before and after in which we would see set out in steps psychotic problems as being more primitive than neurotic problems and in between the role that drug addiction

plays in Glover's system in so far as he makes of it something that corresponds to an transitional stage, chronologically (10) speaking, between the points of attachment, the historically fruitful points, the points in development that the origin of these different afflictions go back to.

We cannot here get into detailed critique of this point of view which is certainly open to criticism as always happens when one tries a pure and simple genetic mapping out of analysable afflictions.

But from all of this I want to pick out a paragraph to show you to what degree of paradox one is led by any attempt which in a way starts out from a principle of reducing the function that we are dealing with at the level of desire, at the level of the principle of desire, to something like a preliminary stage, something preparatory, not yet informed by adaptation to reality, to a first form of relation with reality as such. Because it is by starting out from this principle of classifying perverse-formation with respect to reality-sense that Glover here as elsewhere develops his thought.

I will indicate to you what this involves simply by something which you will recognise moreover in a thousand other writings, which here takes its interest by being presented in a form which is picturesque, literary, paradoxical and really expressive. You will recognise in it something which is nothing other than really what one can call the Kleinian period of Glover's thought. So that this period is not so much a phase of the battle that he thought he had to wage against Melanie Klein on the theoretical plane. On several points one could say that this thinking has many points in common with the Kleinian system. It is a question of the period which, he says, appears at the (11) moment when the so-called paranoid phase of the subject is found to end up with this system of reality which he calls oral, anal, and which is supposed to be the one that the child finds himself living out at this epoch. He characterises it as an external world which represents " a combination of a butcher's shop, a public lavatory," in other words a urinal or even something more elaborated," under shell-fire, and a post-mortem room," a morgue.

He explains that the particular outcome which results from what is the pivot and the central point of his intention at this moment transforms this world which is as you see in effect rather disturbed, catastrophic, "into a more reassuring and fascinating chemist's shop, in which, however," there is this reservation, "the poison cupboard is left unlocked."

This very nice and very picturesque view is of a nature to suggest that there is all the same some difficulty in conceiving that effectively the approach to reality is something which we should see in a living experience as profound, as immersed, as implicit, as we suppose it to be for the small child, as being that of a butcher's shop, a public convenience under bombardment, and a cold storage room.

There is here undoubtedly something which we should not reject in principle just because it is presented to us in a way that is shocking at first sight, but which can at the same time make us legitimately express some doubt as to the exactitude of this formulation, which in a certain, manifest fashion, cannot cover in a regular fashion the development of the small child, to the degree that one should consider it as characteristic of the modes (12) of adaptation of the subject to reality.

Such a formulation necessarily contains at least the articulation of a twofold reality, one in which the behaviourist experience could be inscribed and another one. The in which we will be obliged, reduced to observe the eruptions in the behaviour of the subject, namely effectively to reinstate from the beginning something which implies the autonomy, the originality of another dimension which is not primitive reality, but which is from the beginning a beyond of the living experience of the subject.

I am going perhaps to have to excuse myself for having laid stress for so long a time on a contradiction which after all, once it is articulated, becomes so obvious, but neither can we fail to perceive what is involved in the fact that it is masked in certain formulations. In effect, we end up with something which involves a serious ambiguity about the term reality.

If reality is considered as having for us anything at all which permits it to be harmonised with a development parallel to that of instincts - and this is the most commonly accepted truth - we end up with strange paradoxes which do not fail to have repercussions in practice.

If desire is there, it is necessary precisely to speak about its original form, and not its masked form, namely the instinct of what is involved in the evolution of what we have to deal with in our analytic experience. If this desire is inscribed in a homogeneous order, in so far as it can be entirely articulated and assured in terms of reality, if it is of the same order of reality, then in effect one understands this paradox implied (13) in formulations which are derived from the most day-to-day analytic experience. The fact is that desire situated in this way involves that it is its maturation which allows the world to be completed in its objectivity. This constitutes more or less a part of the credo of a certain type of analysis.

I want simply here to pose the question of what this means concretely. What is a world for us living beings? What is reality in the sense in which for example Adlerian psychoanalysis, the one which gives the whole share that they deserve to the structuring elements which are involved in the organisation of the ego, in so far as the ego is adapted to make its way in an efficient fashion in established reality, in a world which is more or less identical for the moment to at least an important field of our universe. This means that the most typical, the most complete, form of this world - I too would like

to allow myself to give images which will make you sense what we are talking about - adult reality, we shall identify, to fix our ideas, to a world of American lawyers.

The world of American lawyers seems to me to be today the most elaborated, the most developed that one can define concerning the relationship with what in a certain sense we agree to call reality: namely that nothing is lacking in it from a range which begins from a certain fundamental relationship of essential violence, marked, always present in order that reality should be here something which we can say is nowhere elided, and extends to these refinements of procedure which allows there to be inserted in this world all sorts of paradoxes, of novelties which are essentially defined in relationship to the law, the relationship to the law being essentially constituted by the detours necessary (14) to obtain its most perfect violation.

Here is the world of reality. What relationship is there between this world and what one can call a mature desire; what is a mature desire in the sense that we understand it, namely genital maturation? The question undoubtedly can be settled in several fashions of which one, which is the way of experience, namely the sexual behaviour of the American lawyer.

Nothing seems, up to now, to confirm that there is a relationship, an exact correlation between the perfect achievement of a world so well kept in hand in the ordering of all its activities, and a perfect harmony in relationships with one's counterpart, in so far as this involves success on the plane of what one calls loving harmony. Nothing proves it, and there is scarcely a person who would dream of sustaining it - so that this is after all only a global, illustrative fashion of showing where the question is posed.

The question is posed in the following, that a confusion is maintained at this level in connection with the term object between reality, in the sense that we have just articulated it, where it is supposed to be situated, and the relationship of the subject to the object in so far as it implies knowledge, in a latent fashion, in the idea that the maturation of desire is something which involves at the same time a maturation of the object, it is a question of a quite different object to the one that we can effectively situate here. An objective mapping out permits us to characterise the relationships to reality.

This object that is in question is one we have known for a long (15) time. Even though it is completely masked, veiled here, it is this object which is called the object of knowledge, the object which is the goal, the aim, the term of a long research throughout the ages, of what is there behind the fruits it has obtained at the end of what we call science, but which for a long time had to traverse the ways of a non-refinement, of a certain relationship of the subject to the word. Refinement, I mean on the philosophical plane of something which we cannot deny as being that on whose terrain science was able at a particular moment begin from originally. And it is precisely that which.

now, distinguishes it like a child who takes on his independence, but which for a long time was nourished by it, by this relationship to meditation, traces of which remain to us under the name of theory of knowledge, and which in this order approached this term as far as can be, this thinking of a relationship of the object to the subject by means of which knowing involves a profound identification, the relationship to a connaturality through which any grasp on the object manifests something of a fundamental harmony.

But this, let us not forget, is only the result of a specialised experience, historically definable in several branches. But we will content ourselves with referring to the spirit, by articulating it, on this branch which is our own, which is that of Greek philosophy. This effort of asserting, of circumscribing this something which is called an object, involves a fundamental attitude which one would be completely wrong to consider that we can now, once the results have been obtained, elide, as if its position as a principle was without importance on its effect.

Undoubtedly we analysts are capable of introducing the question (16) of what was implied about a position of desire in this effort of knowledge. We will, here as elsewhere, only rediscover something which did not go unnoticed by religious experience which, in so far as it can indicate for itself other ends, individualised this desire as the desire to know, cupido sciendi. That we should find a more radical basis for it in the form of some ambivalent drive of the scopophilic type, indeed even oral incorporation, is a question to which we will only add our little touch, but there is one thing certain, which is that in any case this whole development of knowledge, with what it involves in terms of carrying these implicit notions of the function of the object, is the result of a choice.

Every establishment, every introduction to the philosophical position has never failed throughout the ages to propose itself as being a position of sacrificing something. It is in so far as the subject enters into the order of what is called disinterested research - after all its fruit, objectivity, is never defined except as reaching a certain reality in a disinterested perspective - in the exclusion at least in principle of a certain form of desire, it is in this perspective that there is constituted the notion of object which we are reintroducing because we do not know what we are doing, because it is implicit in what we are doing when we reintroduce it, when we suppose that in all our investigation of desire we can, as virtual, as latent, as having to be rediscovered, as having to be obtained, establish a correspondence of the object as object naturally of what we have explored in the perspective of desire.

(17) It is by means of a confusion therefore between the notion of object, such as it has been the fruit of the elaboration of centuries in philosophical research, the object satisfying the desire for knowledge, and what we can expect of the object of any desire, that we find ourselves led to pose so easily the

correspondence of a certain constitution of the object with a certain maturation of the drive.

It is in opposition to this that I try to articulate things differently for you, and in a fashion that I claim is more in conformity with our experience, namely to allow you to grasp at every instant what is the true articulation between desire and what one calls on this occasion its object. This is what I call the synchronic articulation, which I am trying to introduce you to, of the relationship of desire to its object. It is the true form of so-called object relations as they have been articulated for you up to now.

This symbolic formula $\hat{a} O o$, in so far as it allows you to give a form to what I call phantasy - I call it fundamental here but that means nothing other except that it is in the synchronic perspective which assures the minimal structure to what must be the support of desire. In this minimal structure, two terms whose relationship to one another constitute the phantasy, which is itself complex in so far as it is in a third relationship with this phantasy that the subject constitutes himself as desire.

We are taking today the third perspective of this phantasy in making the assumption of the subject pass through o . Which is just as legitimate as making it pass through \hat{a} it being given that it is in the relationship of confrontation to $\$ O o$ that desire is maintained.

(18) You have already heard things being articulated far enough not to be, I think, in any way astonished, upset, or surprised, if I put forward that the object o is first of all defined as the support which the subject gives himself in so far as he is failing (défaillance).

Let us stop here for a moment. Let us begin by saying something approximate so that this speaks to you in the sense, as I might say, that he fails in his certitude as a subject. And then I will come back to say it in another term which appeals too little to intuition so that I did not fear to bring it forward to you at first, which is nevertheless the exact term: in so far as he fails in his designation as subject.

Because what is in question rests entirely on what happens in so far, as I have told you, as the subject has as such this desire in the other. It is in so far as in the other, in this discourse of the other which is the unconscious, something is lacking to the subject - we will come back to it later, we will come back to it as often as necessary, we will come back to it up to the end - it is in so far as something, because of the very structure that establishes the relationship of the subject to the other qua locus of the word, something is lacking at the level of the other which permits the subject to identify himself there as precisely the subject of this discourse that he is holding, this something which ensures that the subject disappears in it as such in so far as this discourse is the discourse of the unconscious, that the subject employs for this designation something which is

precisely taken at his cost - at his cost not as subject constituted in the word, but as real subject, well and truly living, namely as something which all by itself is not at all a subject - that the subject paying the necessary price for this mapping of himself qua failing is introduced to this dimension (19) always present every time desire is in question, namely of having to pay castration.

Namely that something real, on which he has a hold in an imaginary relationship, is raised to the pure and simple function of signifier. It is the final meaning, it is the most profound meaning of castration as such. The fact that castration is involved as soon as desire as such clearly manifests itself, is the essential discovery of Freudianism, it is the thing which up to then was overlooked, it is the thing which has permitted us to give all sorts of historical views and insights to which diverse mythical expressions had been given, expressions which themselves people subsequently tried to reduce in developmental terms.

The fecundity of this dimension was not in doubt. It should not dispense us from searching in a different dimension than this diachronic one, namely in the synchronic dimension. What is here the essential relationship which is involved?

The relationship which is involved is the following: namely that the paying subject - I am trying here to be as picturesque as possible, I am not always putting forward the most rigorous terms - paying with his person must supply for this relationship which is the relationship of the subject to the signifier where he cannot designate himself, where he cannot name himself as subject. He intervenes with something whose analogue we can find in the function of certain symbols of language, in so far as the linguists distinguish them under the term of shifter symbols, in particular, I have alluded to it, to the personal pronoun, in so far as the symbolic notion, in the lexical system ensures that it is something that designates the one who speaks when it is the I.

(20) In the same way on the plane of the unconscious, which it is not a symbol, which is a real element of the subject, o, is what intervenes to support this moment, in the synchronic sense, when the subject fails to designate himself at the level of an agency which precisely is that of desire.

I know how tiring the mental gymnastics of an articulation raised to this level must be for you. So in order to give you some respite I will only illustrate some terms which are part of our concrete experience.

I said that the o was the effect of castration. I did not say that it was the object of castration. We call this object of castration the phallus. What is the phallus? It must be recognised that in our experience, when we see it appearing in what I called the last time the artificial phallophanes of the analysis - it is here also that analysis proves itself to have been an absolutely unique, original experience; we have not seen

it appearing in any kind of alchemy, therapeutic or not, in the past. In Hieronymus Bosch we see a whole lot of things, all sorts of dislocated members, we see the flatus in which Mr. Jones later thought he had rediscovered its prototype. And you know that it is nothing other than a smelly flatus. We find all of that spread over the images in the most obvious way. You cannot help noticing that one does not often see the phallus.

But we see it. We see it and we also perceive that it is not very easy either to designate it as being here or there. I only want to give one reference to this, that for example of our experience of (21) homosexuality.

Our experience of homosexuality was defined from the time that homosexuals began to be analysed. At the beginning they were not analysed. Professor Freud tells us, in the Three essays on sexuality, that masculine homosexuality - he cannot go any further at that time - is manifested by this narcissistic exigency that the object cannot be deprived of this attribute which is considered by the subject as being essential.

We begin to analyse homosexuals. I would ask you to refer at that moment to the work of Boehm as it began to organise itself between the years from 1929 to 1933 and beyond. He was one of the first. I am indicating this because it is quite exemplary. Moreover, I indicated the bibliography of homosexuality when I spoke to you of the importance of articles. The development of analysis shows us that homosexuality is far from being a primordial instinctual exigency. I mean, identifiable with a pure and simple fixation or deviation of the instinct.

We are going to find in a second stage that the phallus, whatever the fashion it intervenes in the mechanism of homosexuality is far from being that of object. That the phallus in question is a phallus that one identifies perhaps hastily with the paternal phallus in so far as this phallus is found in the woman's vagina. And because it is there it is, there it is dreaded, that the subject finds himself carried to extremes and to homosexuality.

Here therefore is a phallus with a quite different import, with a quite different function, and on a quite different plane to the (22) one we first saw.

That is not all. After rejoicing, as I might say, at having caught this hare by the ears, on we go with the analysis of homosexuals, and we perceive that in fact - this is where I refer very specially to the works of Boehm which are particularly clear and confirmed by a vast experience - the image that we will encounter at a later date, in the analytic structurings of homosexuality, is an image which although it presents itself as an appendix - we attribute it in a first sketch to the woman, in so far as she is not yet supposed to be castrated - shows itself when it is circumscribed in a more detailed way as being something which is what one can call evagination, the extra-position from the interior of this organ.

That this phantasy, which precisely we have encountered in the dream, and which I analysed at such length for you, whose analysis I took up at such length with you, this dream of the inverted hood, of an appendix made up of something which is in a way the exteriorisation of the interior, this is something which in a certain investigative perspective proves to be the final imaginary term with which the homosexual of whom there is now question - and there are several analysed by Boehme - finds himself confronted when it is a question of showing him the day-to-day dialectic of his desire.

What does this mean if not that here the phallus presents itself indeed in a radical form in which it is something, in so far as this something is to show in the exterior what is in the imaginary interior of the subject, and that in the last analysis one should almost not be surprised that a certain convergence is established between the imaginary function of what is here in the imaginary in a posture of extraposition, of extirpation, almost (23) detached, but still not detached from the interior of the body, and which most naturally finds itself being able to be raised to the function of symbol, without nevertheless being detached from its radical insertion, from what makes it be felt as a menace to the integrity of the self-image.....

Having given this glimpse, I do not want to leave you there, because this is not what is going to give you the sense and the function of o qua object in all its generality. I have told you; the object in the phantasy, namely in its most completed form, in so far as the subject is desire, as the subject is therefore on the brink of this castrating relationship, the object is what gives its support to this position. Here I would like to show you the synchrony in which this can be articulated. I underline synchrony, because the requirements of discourse will also necessarily give you a formula which is a little diachronic. Namely that you are going to be able to confuse what I am going to give you here with a genesis. It nevertheless has nothing to do with that.

What I want to indicate to you by the relationships of the letters which I am now going to write on the board is something that permits us to situate this acquisition in its place, and this object in its relationship to the subject who is in the presence of imminent castration in a relationship that I will provisionally call the relationship of ransom to that position, because I must also accentuate what I mean by talking about a relationship of support.

How is this synchronic support engendered? It is done in the following way. If we begin from the most original subjective position, that of demand as we find it at the level which is illustrated as illustration, the example which is manifested in (24) the behaviour which allows us to grasp in its essence how the subject is constituted in so far as he enters into the signifier, the relationship is the following: it is going to be established in the very simple algorithms which is that of division. It is essentially constituted by this vertical bar.

O	D
S ^r	D ^s
O'	S
o	S
O	S
O''	S
O'''	S

The horizontal bar being joined to it on this occasion, but not being essential because one can repeat it at every level.

Let us say that it is in the measure that there is introduced by the most primordial relationship of the subject, the relationship to the Other qua locus of the word, to the demand, that there is established the dialectic whose residue is going to bring us the position of o, the object.

As I told you, by the very fact that it is in terms of signifying alternation that there is articulated primordially, at the start of the process, which is the one which interests us here, that there is primordially articulated the need of the subject, that there is established everything which is going subsequently to structure this relationship of the subject to himself which is called desire.

The Other, in so far as she is here someone real, but who is evoked in the demand, finds herself in the position of raising this demand, whatever it may be, to another value which is that of the demand for love as such, in so far as it refers purely and simply to the presence-absence alternative.

I could not help being surprised, touched, even moved, to rediscover in Shakespeare's Sonnets, literally, this term of presence and absence, with a hyphen, when there is question for him of expressing the love-relationship.

Here then the subject constituted qua Other is a real person, as being the one through whom the signification of the demand itself is changed. The one through whom the demand of the subject (25) becomes something different from what it demands, in particular the satisfaction of a need. There is no subject except for a subject - this is a principle which we always have to maintain as a principle. It is in so far as the Other has been primordially posed as the one who in the presence of the demand is able or is not able to play a certain part, it is already in terms of a tragedy that the other is established as subject. From then on, it is from that moment that the introduction of the subject, of the individual, into the signifier takes on the function of subjectivating him.

It is in so far as the other is a subject as such, that the subject at that moment establishes himself, and can set himself up as subject, that there is established at this moment this new relationship to the other by which he has, in this other, to make himself recognised as subject. No longer as demand, no longer as love, as subject.

You must not think that I am in the process of attributing here to some larva or other all the dimensions of philosophical meditation. This is not what is in question. But neither is it a question of this as hidden. It is a question of this in a concrete and quite real form, namely this something by means of

which every kind of function and of functioning of the other in the real, as responding to his demand, that in which this has to find its guarantee, the truth of this behaviour whatever it may be, namely precisely this something which is concretely at the base of truth as intersubjectivity, namely that which gives its full sense to the term truth in English, which is employed not simply to express the truth with a capital T but also what we call in a decomposition of language which is found to be the (26) result of a language system, faith or the word. In other words, what makes it possible to count on the other.

That is what is in question. When I tell you that there is no Other of the other, what does that mean if it is not precisely that no signifier exists which might guarantee the concrete consequence of any manifestation of the signifier. This is where there is introduced this term which is manifested in the fact that at the level of the other something is manifested as a guarantee before the pressure of the demand of the subject before which this something is realised from the beginning and primordially in terms of the lack with respect to which the subject is going to have to locate himself. You should note that this lack, is produced at the level of the Other qua locus of the word, not at the level of the other qua real. But nothing real on the side of the other can supply for it except by a series of additions which will never be exhausted, but which I put in the margin namely the o or the c qua other, in so far as he will manifest himself to the subject throughout his existence by his gifts and by his refusals, but which he will never situate except on the margin of this fundamental lack which is found as such at the level of the signifier.

The subject will be involved historically through all these experiences with others; the maternal other on this occasion. But none of this will be able to exhaust the lack which exists at the level of the signifier as such, at the level where it is at this level that the subject has to locate himself to constitute himself as subject, at the level of the other.

It is here in so far as he himself finds himself marked by this (27) failure, by this non-guarantee, at the level of the truth of the other that he will have to establish this something which we already tried to approach above in the form of its genesis, this something which is o; this something which finds itself submitted to this condition of expressing his final tension, which is the remainder, which is the residue, that which is in the margin of all these demands, and which none of these demands can exhaust; this something which is destined as such to represent a lack and to represent it with a real tension of the subject.

This is as I might say the core of the function of the object in desire. This is what comes as a ransom for the fact that the subject cannot situate himself in desire without castrating himself, in other words without losing what is most essential in his life. And indeed it is also that around which is situated this form, which is one of the most exemplary of desire, that

which already the remarks of Simone Weil presented to us as follows: if one knew what the miser locks up in his money box one would know, she says, a lot about desire.

Of course, it is precisely to protect his life that the miser - and this you should note is an essential dimension - locks up in something, in an enclosure, o, the object of his desire; and regarding this you are going to see that because of this very fact this object is found to be a mortified object. It is in so far as what is in the money box is outside the circuit of life, is withdrawn from it and preserved as being the shadow of nothing that it is the miser's object. And as well that there is sanctioned here the formula that whoever saves his life will lose it. But this is not to say too quickly that the one who consents to lose it will find it just like that, directly.

(28) What we try to see subsequently is where he will find it. Undoubtedly it is not one of the least valuable aspects of the path that we have taken today to make us see that the path that he takes to rediscover it is going to present him in any case with what he consents to lose, namely the phallus. If there is a moment when he has mourned it, we have indicated this as being an essential step, he can only perceive it, envisage it as a hidden object.

That the term o, qua opaque term, qua obscure term, qua term participating in a nothing to which he is reduced, it is beyond this nothing that he is going to seek the shadow of his life lost at the beginning, this highlighting of the functioning of desire which shows us that it is not only the primitive object of the primordial impression in a genetic perspective which is the lost object to be rediscovered, that it is of the very nature of desire to constitute the object in this dialectic is what we are going to take up the next time.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 13 May 1959

We are talking about desire. During this fortnight's interruption, I tried myself to recentre this path which we are taking this year, and which forces us, like every path, sometimes to make long detours.

In my effort to grasp again the origin, as well as the aim of what we are about, I believe I have also tried to bring about for you again this refocusing which is only one more way to concentrate oneself as our attention progresses.

In short it is a question, at the point that we have got to, of trying to articulate where our rendezvous is. It is not simply the rendezvous of this seminar, nor indeed the rendezvous of our daily work as analysts, it is moreover the rendezvous of our function as analyst and the meaning of analysis.

One cannot but be surprised at the persistence of a movement like analysis, if it were only, among others which have appeared in history, a therapeutic enterprise that is more or less grounded, more or less successful. There is no example of any theorisation, of any psychical orthopaedics whatsoever which has had a career lasting longer than half a century. And undoubtedly one cannot help feeling that what is responsible for the duration of analysis, what ensures its place beyond its medical use and function - which no one when all is said and done dreams of contesting - is that there is in analysis something that concerns man in a completely new, serious, authentic fashion. New in what it contributes, serious in its import, authenticated by what: surely by something other than results (2) which are often debatable, sometimes precarious.

I think that what is most characteristic in the phenomenon, is the feeling that one has about this thing which I once called "The Freudian thing", that it is something that is being spoken 4 about for the first time. I would go further and even say that what constitutes the proof and the most certain manifestation of the authenticity that this thing has, the proof of it is shown every day by the extraordinary amount of verbiage there is about it.

If you take the mass of analytic productions, what strikes you, is this effort of the authors who when all is said and done are always slipping away from grasping the principle of its activity.

and articulate this principle in a fashion which throughout analysis is never presented as complete, concluded, accomplished, satisfying. This perpetual movement, dialectical slipping, which is the movement and the life of analytic research, is something which bears witness to the specificity of the problem that this research is grappling with.

In the presence of this, everything that our research involves in terms of mistakes, of confusion, of uncertainty even in its principles, everything that this brings into its practice in terms of ambiguity - I mean of always finding not only before oneself, but in one's very practice what is precisely its principle, what one wanted to avoid, namely suggestion, persuasion, construction, even mystagogy - all these contradictions in the analytic movement only serve to accentuate further the specificity of the Freudian thing.

(3) This thing we envisage this year by hypothesis, sustained by the whole concentric progress of our previous research, in the following form, namely that this thing is desire. And at the same time, at the moment that we articulate this formula, we notice a kind of contradiction coming from the fact that our whole effort seems to be working in the direction of making this desire lose its value, its original accent, without however our being able to put our finger on, indeed ensure that experience shows us, that it is indeed with its original accent that we have to deal with it.

Desire is not something that we can consider as reduced, normalised, functioning through the exigencies of a sort of organic preformation which would lead us in advance onto the traced-out path and way on which we would have to make it enter, bring it back to. Desire, from the origin of the analytic articulation by Freud, is presented with this characteristic that lust in English means convoitise as well as luxure, the same word which is in Lustprinzip. And you know that in German it conserves all the ambiguity of pleasure and of desire.

This something which presents itself at first in experience as disturbance, as something which disturbs the perception of the object, a something also which the maledictions of poets and of moralists show us also degrades this object, disorganises it, debases it, in any case shakes it, sometimes goes so far as to dissolve the very person who perceives it, namely the subject.

(4) This accent is certainly articulated as a principle of the Freudian position in the measure that the placing of Lust in the foreground as it is articulated in Freud is presented to us in a radically different fashion from anything that was previously articulated concerning the principle of desire. And it is presented to us in Freud as being opposed in its origin and its source to the reality principle. The accent of the original experience of desire is preserved in Freud as being opposed, contrary to the construction of reality. Desire is specified as being marked, accentuated by the blind character of its search;

as something which is presented as being the torment of man, and which effectively includes a contradiction in the search for what up to then, for all of those who had tried to articulate the meaning of the ways of man in his searchings, of everything that up to then had always been articulated in principle as being man's search for his good.

The pleasure principle, throughout all philosophical and moralistic thinking, throughout the centuries, in every original definition by which every moral theory of man is proposed, was always affirmed - whatever it was - as hedonistic. Namely that man fundamentally sought his good, whether he knew it or whether he did not know it, and at the same time that it was only through a sort of accident that there emerged the experience of this error of his desire, of its aberrations.

It is in principle, and as fundamentally contradictory that for the first time in a theory of man pleasure finds itself (5) articulated with a different accent. And in the measure that the term pleasure in its very signifier in Freud, is contaminated by the special accent with which there is presented Lust, lust, convoitise, desire.

Desire therefore is not organised, is not put together in a sort of preformed harmony with the map of the world, as after all a harmonic, optimistic idea of human development might suppose. Analytic experience teaches us that things go in a different direction. As you know, as we have stated here, it shows us something which is precisely the thing which is going to engage us in a way of experience which is also by its very development something in which we are going to lose the accent, the affirmation of this primordial agency (instant).

Namely that the history of desire is organised in a discourse which develops in senselessness - this is what the unconscious is - in a discourse whose displacements, whose condensations are without any doubt the displacements and condensations to be recognised in discourse, namely metonymies and metaphors. But metaphors which as opposed to metaphor do not engender any meaning. Displacements which do not carry any being, and in which the subject does not recognise something which is being displaced. It is around the exploration of this discourse of the unconscious that the experience of analysis has developed.

It is therefore around something whose radical dimension we can call the diachrony of discourse. What constitutes the essence (6) of our research, the place where there is situated what we are trying to grasp again in terms of what this desire is, is our effort to situate it in synchrony. We are introduced to this by something which makes itself heard every time we approach our experience. We cannot help seeing, help grasping - whether we read the account, the textbook of the most original experience of analysis, namely Freud's Interpretation of dreams, or whether we refer to any session whatsoever, to a succession of interpretations - the character of indefinite deferment (renvoi) that there is in every exercise of an interpretation which never

presents desire to us except in an articulated form, but which supposes in principle something which requires this mechanism of deferment from wish to wish in which the movement of the subject is inscribed, and also the distance that he finds himself from his own wishes.

This is why it seems to me that we can legitimately formulate the hope that the reference to structure, a linguistic reference as such, in so far as it reminds us that there cannot be a symbolic formation if alongside, and fundamentally, primordially in every exercise of the word which is called discourse there is not necessarily a synchrony, a structure of language as a synchronic system. This is where we are trying to detect what the function of desire is.

Where is desire situated in this relationship which ensures that this x thing which in future we call man in the measure that he is the subject of the logos, that he is constituted in the signifier as subject ... Where in this relationship as synchronic is desire situated? What I think will make you sense the primordial necessity of this renewal, is something (7) we see analytic research becoming engaged in, in so far as it overlooks this structural organisation.

In effect at the very moment I articulated earlier the contrary function established fundamentally at the origin by the Freudian experience between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, could you not at the same time perceive that we are precisely at the point at which the theory tries to articulate precisely in the very terms in which I said that we could say desire is not composed. It is nevertheless composed in the appetite that the authors have to think and feel about it, in a certain fashion in a certain harmony with the song of the world.

Everything is done to try to deduce from a convergence of experience with a maturation what is at least to be wished for as a completed development. And at the same time it is quite clear that all of this means that the authors themselves have abandoned any contact with their experience if they can effectively articulate analytic theory in these terms, namely find anything at all that is satisfying, classical, in the ontological adaptation of the subject to his experience.

The paradox is the following: it is that the further one goes in the direction of this exigency towards which one goes by all sorts of errors - revelatory errors it must be said; revealing precisely that it is necessary to try to articulate things differently - the more one goes along the direction of this experience, the more one arrives at paradoxes like the following. I take an example, and I take it from one of the best authors, from one of those most concerned precisely with a correct articulation not only of our experience, but also of the totality of its data, in an effort also to make an inventory of our terms, (8) the notions that we make use of, our concepts, I am talking about Edward Glover whose work is undoubtedly one of the most useful for anyone who wishes to try - first of all in analysis

this is absolutely indispensable, more than elsewhere - to know what he is doing, and also the mass of whose experiences has been included in his writings I take an example from one of the numerous articles which you should read, the one which appeared in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, of October 1933 (the fourth volume of that year): "The relation of perversion-formation to the development of reality-sense".

There are many things in this article which are important to discuss, even the starting terms that he gives us with the intention of correctly handling what he wants to show us, in particular the definition of reality-sense as being that faculty whose existence we infer by examining the process of reality-testing. It is very important that from time to time things should be formulated.

The second thing is what he calls efficient reality-testing, which for any subject who has passed the age of puberty, is the capacity to retain psychic contact with the objects that promote gratification of instinct, including here both modified and residual infantile impulses.

Thirdly, objectivity is the capacity to assess correctly the relation of instinctual impulse to instinctual object, whether or not the aims of the impulse are, can be or will be gratified.

These are fundamental data which are extremely important, (9) and which undoubtedly cannot fail to strike you as giving to the term objectivity in any case a character which is no longer the one which is habitually assigned to it.

This characteristic is going to give us the idea that in effect something is not lost to the original dimension of Freudian research, because something can be overturned in what precisely up to then appeared to us to be the categories and the orders required by our view of the world. One cannot but be all the more struck by what our involves with such a starting point. It involves in this case a research into what the perverse relationship signifies; this being understood in the widest sense, with reference to reality-sense. I tell you, the spirit of the article implies that perversion-format ion is conceived by the author as being when all is said and done a means for the subject of warding off the rents, the flaws, the things which say nothing to him in terms of a coherent reality.

Perversion is very precisely articulated by the author as being the way to salvation for the subject to assure a continuity to this reality. Undoubtedly we have here again an original way of looking at things. I pass over the following: the fact is that there results from this form of articulation a sort of omnipresence of the perverse function. Because also, taking on the task of retracing as one might say the chronological insertions, I mean for example where it would be appropriate to place it in a system of before and after in which we would see set out in steps psychotic problems as being more primitive than neurotic problems and in between the role that drug addiction

plays in Glover's system in so far as he makes of it something that corresponds to an transitional stage, chronologically (10) speaking, between the points of attachment, the historically fruitful points, the points in development that the origin of these different afflictions go back to.

We cannot here get into detailed critique of this point of view which is certainly open to criticism as always happens when one tries a pure and simple genetic mapping out of analysable afflictions.

But from all of this I want to pick out a paragraph to show you to what degree of paradox one is led by any attempt which in a way starts out from a principle of reducing the function that we are dealing with at the level of desire, at the level of the principle of desire, to something like a preliminary stage, something preparatory, not yet informed by adaptation to reality, to a first form of relation with reality as such. Because it is by starting out from this principle of classifying perverse-formation with respect to reality-sense that Glover here as elsewhere develops his thought.

I will indicate to you what this involves simply by something which you will recognise moreover in a thousand other writings, which here takes its interest by being presented in a form which is picturesque, literary, paradoxical and really expressive. You will recognise in it something which is nothing other than really what one can call the Kleinian period of Glover's thought. So that this period is not so much a phase of the battle that he thought he had to wage against Melanie Klein on the theoretical plane. On several points one could say that this thinking has many points in common with the Kleinian system. It is a question of the period which, he says, appears at the (11) moment when the so-called paranoid phase of the subject is found to end up with this system of reality which he calls oral, anal, and which is supposed to be the one that the child finds himself living out at this epoch. He characterises it as an external world which represents " a combination of a butcher's shop, a public lavatory," in other words a urinal or even something more elaborated, " under shell-fire, and a post-mortem room," a morgue.

He explains that the particular outcome which results from what is the pivot and the central point of his intention at this moment transforms this world which is as you see in effect rather disturbed, catastrophic, "into a more reassuring and fascinating chemist's shop, in which, however," there is this reservation, "the poison cupboard is left unlocked."

This very nice and very picturesque view is of a nature to suggest that there is all the same some difficulty in conceiving that effectively the approach to reality is something which we should see in a living experience as profound, as immersed, as implicit, as we suppose it to be for the small child, as being that of a butcher's shop, a public convenience under bombardment, and a cold storage room.

There is here undoubtedly something which we should not reject in principle just because it is presented to us in a way that is shocking at first sight, but which can at the same time make us legitimately express some doubt as to the exactitude of this formulation, which in a certain, manifest fashion, cannot cover in a regular fashion the development of the small child, to the degree that one should consider it as characteristic of the modes (12) of adaptation of the subject to reality.

Such a formulation necessarily contains at least the articulation of a twofold reality, one in which the behaviourist experience could be inscribed and another one. The in which we will be obliged, reduced to observe the eruptions in the behaviour of the subject, namely effectively to reinstate from the beginning something which implies the autonomy, the originality of another dimension which is not primitive reality, but which is from the beginning a beyond of the living experience of the subject.

I am going perhaps to have to excuse myself for having laid stress for so long a time on a contradiction which after all, once it is articulated, becomes so obvious, but neither can we fail to perceive what is involved in the fact that it is masked in certain formulations. In effect, we end up with something which involves a serious ambiguity about the term reality.

If reality is considered as having for us anything at all which permits it to be harmonised with a development parallel to that of instincts - and this is the most commonly accepted truth - we end up with strange paradoxes which do not fail to have repercussions in practice.

If desire is there, it is necessary precisely to speak about its original form, and not its masked form, namely the instinct of what is involved in the evolution of what we have to deal with in our analytic experience. If this desire is inscribed in a homogeneous order, in so far as it can be entirely articulated and assured in terms of reality, if it is of the same order of reality, then in effect one understands this paradox implied (13) in formulations which are derived from the most day-to-day analytic experience. The fact is that desire situated in this way involves that it is its maturation which allows the world to be completed in its objectivity. This constitutes more or less a part of the credo of a certain type of analysis.

I want simply here to pose the question of what this means concretely. What is a world for us living beings? What is reality in the sense in which for example Adlerian psychoanalysis, the one which gives the whole share that they deserve to the structuring elements which are involved in the organisation of the ego, in so far as the ego is adapted to make its way in an efficient fashion in established reality, in a world which is more or less identical for the moment to at least an important field of our universe. This means that the most typical, the most complete, form of this world - I too would like

to allow myself to give images which will make you sense what we are talking about - adult reality, we shall identify, to fix our ideas, to a world of American lawyers.

The world of American lawyers seems to me to be today the most elaborated, the most developed that one can define concerning the relationship with what in a certain sense we agree to call reality: namely that nothing is lacking in it from a range which begins from a certain fundamental relationship of essential violence, marked, always present in order that reality should be here something which we can say is nowhere elided, and extends to these refinements of procedure which allows there to be inserted in this world all sorts of paradoxes, of novelties which are essentially defined in relationship to the law, the relationship to the law being essentially constituted by the detours necessary (14) to obtain its most perfect violation.

Here is the world of reality. What relationship is there between this world and what one can call a mature desire; what is a mature desire in the sense that we understand it, namely genital maturation? The question undoubtedly can be settled in several fashions of which one, which is the way of experience, namely the sexual behaviour of the American lawyer.

Nothing seems, up to now, to confirm that there is a relationship, an exact correlation between the perfect achievement of a world so well kept in hand in the ordering of all its activities, and a perfect harmony in relationships with one's counterpart, in so far as this involves success on the plane of what one calls loving harmony. Nothing proves it, and there is scarcely a person who would dream of sustaining it - so that this is after all only a global, illustrative fashion of showing where the question is posed.

The question is posed in the following, that a confusion is maintained at this level in connection with the term object between reality, in the sense that we have just articulated it, where it is supposed to be situated, and the relationship of the subject to the object in so far as it implies knowledge, in a latent fashion, in the idea that the maturation of desire is something which involves at the same time a maturation of the object, it is a question of a quite different object to the one that we can effectively situate here. An objective mapping out permits us to characterise the relationships to reality.

This object that is in question is one we have known for a long (15) time. Even though it is completely masked, veiled here, it is this object which is called the object of knowledge, the object which is the goal, the aim, the term of a long research throughout the ages, of what is there behind the fruits it has obtained at the end of what we call science, but which for a long time had to traverse the ways of a non-refinement, of a certain relationship of the subject to the word. Refinement, I mean on the philosophical plane of something which we cannot deny as being that on whose terrain science was able at a particular moment begin from originally. And it is precisely that which.

now, distinguishes it like a child who takes on his independence, but which for a long time was nourished by it, by this relationship to meditation, traces of which remain to us under the name of theory of knowledge, and which in this order approached this term as far as can be, this thinking of a relationship of the object to the subject by means of which knowing involves a profound identification, the relationship to a connaturality through which any grasp on the object manifests something of a fundamental harmony.

But this, let us not forget, is only the result of a specialised experience, historically definable in several branches. But we will content ourselves with referring to the spirit, by articulating it, on this branch which is our own, which is that of Greek philosophy. This effort of asserting, of circumscribing this something which is called an object, involves a fundamental attitude which one would be completely wrong to consider that we can now, once the results have been obtained, elide, as if its position as a principle was without importance on its effect.

Undoubtedly we analysts are capable of introducing the question (16) of what was implied about a position of desire in this effort of knowledge. We will, here as elsewhere, only rediscover something which did not go unnoticed by religious experience which, in so far as it can indicate for itself other ends, individualised this desire as the desire to know, cupido sciendi. That we should find a more radical basis for it in the form of some ambivalent drive of the scopophilic type, indeed even oral incorporation, is a question to which we will only add our little touch, but there is one thing certain, which is that in any case this whole development of knowledge, with what it involves in terms of carrying these implicit notions of the function of the object, is the result of a choice.

Every establishment, every introduction to the philosophical position has never failed throughout the ages to propose itself as being a position of sacrificing something. It is in so far as the subject enters into the order of what is called disinterested research - after all its fruit, objectivity, is never defined except as reaching a certain reality in a disinterested perspective - in the exclusion at least in principle of a certain form of desire, it is in this perspective that there is constituted the notion of object which we are reintroducing because we do not know what we are doing, because it is implicit in what we are doing when we reintroduce it, when we suppose that in all our investigation of desire we can, as virtual, as latent, as having to be rediscovered, as having to be obtained, establish a correspondence of the object as object naturally of what we have explored in the perspective of desire.

(17) It is by means of a confusion therefore between the notion of object, such as it has been the fruit of the elaboration of centuries in philosophical research, the object satisfying the desire for knowledge, and what we can expect of the object of any desire, that we find ourselves led to pose so easily the

correspondence of a certain constitution of the object with a certain maturation of the drive.

It is in opposition to this that I try to articulate things differently for you, and in a fashion that I claim is more in conformity with our experience, namely to allow you to grasp at every instant what is the true articulation between desire and what one calls on this occasion its object. This is what I call the synchronic articulation, which I am trying to introduce you to, of the relationship of desire to its object. It is the true form of so-called object relations as they have been articulated for you up to now.

This symbolic formula $\dot{a} O o$, in so far as it allows you to give a form to what I call phantasy - I call it fundamental here but that means nothing other except that it is in the synchronic perspective which assures the minimal structure to what must be the support of desire. In this minimal structure, two terms whose relationship to one another constitute the phantasy, which is itself complex in so far as it is in a third relationship with this phantasy that the subject constitutes himself as desire.

We are taking today the third perspective of this phantasy in making the assumption of the subject pass through o . Which is just as legitimate as making it pass through \dot{a} it being given that it is in the relationship of confrontation to $\$ o o$ that desire is maintained.

(18) You have already heard things being articulated far enough not to be, I think, in any way astonished, upset, or surprised, if I put forward that the object o is first of all defined as the support which the subject gives himself in so far as he is failing (défaillie).

Let us stop here for a moment. Let us begin by saying something approximate so that this speaks to you in the sense, as I might say, that he fails in his certitude as a subject. And then I will come back to say it in another term which appeals too little to intuition so that I did not fear to bring it forward to you at first, which is nevertheless the exact term: in so far as he fails in his designation as subject.

Because what is in question rests entirely on what happens in so far, as I have told you, as the subject has as such this desire in the other. It is in so far as in the other, in this discourse of the other which is the unconscious, something is lacking to the subject - we will come back to it later, we will come back to it as often as necessary, we will come back to it up to the end - it is in so far as something, because of the very structure that establishes the relationship of the subject to the other qua locus of the word, something is lacking at the level of the other which permits the subject to identify himself there as precisely the subject of this discourse that he is holding, this something which ensures that the subject disappears in it as such in so far as this discourse is the discourse of the unconscious, that the subject employs for this designation something which is

precisely taken at his cost - at his cost not as subject constituted in the word, but as real subject, well and truly living, namely as something which all by itself is not at all a subject - that the subject paying the necessary price for this mapping of himself qua failing is introduced to this dimension (19) always present every time desire is in question, namely of having to pay castration.

Namely that something real, on which he has a hold in an imaginary relationship, is raised to the pure and simple function of signifier. It is the final meaning, it is the most profound meaning of castration as such. The fact that castration is involved as soon as desire as such clearly manifests itself, is the essential discovery of Freudianism, it is the thing which up to then was overlooked, it is the thing which has permitted us to give all sorts of historical views and insights to which diverse mythical expressions had been given, expressions which themselves people subsequently tried to reduce in developmental terms.

The fecundity of this dimension was not in doubt. It should not dispense us from searching in a different dimension than this diachronic one, namely in the synchronic dimension. What is here the essential relationship which is involved?

The relationship which is involved is the following: namely that the paying subject - I am trying here to be as picturesque as possible, I am not always putting forward the most rigorous terms - paying with his person must supply for this relationship which is the relationship of the subject to the signifier where he cannot designate himself, where he cannot name himself as subject. He intervenes with something whose analogue we can find in the function of certain symbols of language, in so far as the linguists distinguish them under the term of shifter symbols, in particular, I have alluded to it, to the personal pronoun, in so far as the symbolic notion, in the lexical system ensures that it is something that designates the one who speaks when it is the I.

(20) In the same way on the plane of the unconscious, which it is not a symbol, which is a real element of the subject, o, is what intervenes to support this moment, in the synchronic sense, when the subject fails to designate himself at the level of an agency which precisely is that of desire.

I know how tiring the mental gymnastics of an articulation raised to this level must be for you. So in order to give you some respite I will only illustrate some terms which are part of our concrete experience.

I said that the o was the effect of castration. I did not say that it was the object of castration. We call this object of castration the phallus. What is the phallus? It must be recognised that in our experience, when we see it appearing in what I called the last time the artificial phallophanes of the analysis - it is here also that analysis proves itself to have been an absolutely unique, original experience; we have not seen

it appearing in any kind of alchemy, therapeutic or not, in the past. In Hieronymus Bosch we see a whole lot of things, all sorts of dislocated members, we see the flatus in which Mr. Jones later thought he had rediscovered its prototype. And you know that it is nothing other than a smelly flatus. We find all of that spread over the images in the most obvious way. You cannot help noticing that one does not often see the phallus.

But we see it. We see it and we also perceive that it is not very easy either to designate it as being here or there. I only want to give one reference to this, that for example of our experience of (21) homosexuality.

Our experience of homosexuality was defined from the time that homosexuals began to be analysed. At the beginning they were not analysed. Professor Freud tells us, in the Three essays on sexuality, that masculine homosexuality - he cannot go any further at that time - is manifested by this narcissistic exigency that the object cannot be deprived of this attribute which is considered by the subject as being essential.

We begin to analyse homosexuals. I would ask you to refer at that moment to the work of Boehm as it began to organise itself between the years from 1929 to 1933 and beyond. He was one of the first. I am indicating this because it is quite exemplary. Moreover, I indicated the bibliography of homosexuality when I spoke to you of the importance of articles. The development of analysis shows us that homosexuality is far from being a primordial instinctual exigency. I mean, identifiable with a pure and simple fixation or deviation of the instinct.

We are going to find in a second stage that the phallus, whatever the fashion it intervenes in the mechanism of homosexuality is far from being that of object. That the phallus in question is a phallus that one identifies perhaps hastily with the paternal phallus in so far as this phallus is found in the woman's vagina. And because it is there it is, there it is dreaded, that the subject finds himself carried to extremes and to homosexuality.

Here therefore is a phallus with a quite different import, with a quite different function, and on a quite different plane to the (22) one we first saw.

That is not all. After rejoicing, as I might say, at having caught this hare by the ears, on we go with the analysis of homosexuals, and we perceive that in fact - this is where I refer very specially to the works of Boehm which are particularly clear and confirmed by a vast experience - the image that we will encounter at a later date, in the analytic structurings of homosexuality, is an image which although it presents itself as an appendix - we attribute it in a first sketch to the woman, in so far as she is not yet supposed to be castrated - shows itself when it is circumscribed in a more detailed way as being something which is what one can call evagination, the extra-position from the interior of this organ.

That this phantasy, which precisely we have encountered in the dream, and which I analysed at such length for you, whose analysis I took up at such length with you, this dream of the inverted hood, of an appendix made up of something which is in a way the exteriorisation of the interior, this is something which in a certain investigative perspective proves to be the final imaginary term with which the homosexual of whom there is now question - and there are several analysed by Boehme - finds himself confronted when it is a question of showing him the day-to-day dialectic of his desire.

What does this mean if not that here the phallus presents itself indeed in a radical form in which it is something, in so far as this something is to show in the exterior what is in the imaginary interior of the subject, and that in the last analysis one should almost not be surprised that a certain convergence is established between the imaginary function of what is here in the imaginary in a posture of extraposition, of extirpation, almost (23) detached, but still not detached from the interior of the body, and which most naturally finds itself being able to be raised to the function of symbol, without nevertheless being detached from its radical insertion, from what makes it be felt as a menace to the integrity of the self-image

Having given this glimpse, I do not want to leave you there, because this is not what is going to give you the sense and the function of o qua object in all its generality. I have told you; the object in the phantasy, namely in its most completed form, in so far as the subject is desire, as the subject is therefore on the brink of this castrating relationship, the object is what gives its support to this position. Here I would like to show you the synchrony in which this can be articulated. I underline synchrony, because the requirements of discourse will also necessarily give you a formula which is a little diachronic. Namely that you are going to be able to confuse what I am going to give you here with a genesis. It nevertheless has nothing to do with that.

What I want to indicate to you by the relationships of the letters which I am now going to write on the board is something that permits us to situate this acquisition in its place, and this object in its relationship to the subject who is in the presence of imminent castration in a relationship that I will provisionally call the relationship of ransom to that position, because I must also accentuate what I mean by talking about a relationship of support.

How is this synchronic support engendered? It is done in the following way. If we begin from the most original subjective position, that of demand as we find it at the level which is illustrated as illustration, the example which is manifested in (24) the behaviour which allows us to grasp in its essence how the subject is constituted in so far as he enters into the signifier, the relationship is the following: it is going to be established in the very simple algorithms which is that of division. It is essentially constituted by this vertical bar.

O	D
S ^r	D
O'	S
O	\$
O''	
O'''	

The horizontal bar being joined to it on this occasion, but not being essential because one can repeat it at every level.

Let us say that it is in the measure that there is introduced by the most primordial relationship of the subject, the relationship to the Other qua locus of the word, to the demand, that there is established the dialectic whose residue is going to bring us the position of o, the object.

As I told you, by the very fact that it is in terms of signifying alternation that there is articulated primordially, at the start of the process, which is the one which interests us here, that there is primordially articulated the need of the subject, that there is established everything which is going subsequently to structure this relationship of the subject to himself which is called desire.

The Other, in so far as she is here someone real, but who is evoked in the demand, finds herself in the position of raising this demand, whatever it may be, to another value which is that of the demand for love as such, in so far as it refers purely and simply to the presence-absence alternative.

I could not help being surprised, touched, even moved, to rediscover in Shakespeare's Sonnets, literally, this term of presence and absence, with a hyphen, when there is question for him of expressing the love-relationship.

Here then the subject constituted qua Other is a real person, as being the one through whom the signification of the demand itself is changed. The one through whom the demand of the subject (25) becomes something different from what it demands, in particular the satisfaction of a need. There is no subject except for a subject - this is a principle which we always have to maintain as a principle. It is in so far as the Other has been primordially posed as the one who in the presence of the demand is able or is not able to play a certain part, it is already in terms of a tragedy that the other is established as subject. From then on, it is from that moment that the introduction of the subject, of the individual, into the signifier takes on the function of subjectivating him.

It is in so far as the other is a subject as such, that the subject at that moment establishes himself, and can set himself up as subject, that there is established at this moment this new relationship to the other by which he has, in this other, to make himself recognised as subject. No longer as demand, no longer as love, as subject.

You must not think that I am in the process of attributing here to some larva or other all the dimensions of philosophical meditation. This is not what is in question. But neither is it a question of this as hidden. It is a question of this in a concrete and quite real form, namely this something by means of

which every kind of function and of functioning of the other in the real, as responding to his demand, that in which this has to find its guarantee, the truth of this behaviour whatever it may be, namely precisely this something which is concretely at the base of truth as intersubjectivity, namely that which gives its full sense to the term truth in English, which is employed not simply to express the truth with a capital T but also what we call in a decomposition of language which is found to be the (26) result of a language system, faith or the word. In other words, what makes it possible to count on the other.

That is what is in question. When I tell you that there is no Other of the other, what does that mean if it is not precisely that no signifier exists which might guarantee the concrete consequence of any manifestation of the signifier. This is where there is introduced this term which is manifested in the fact that at the level of the other something is manifested as a guarantee before the pressure of the demand of the subject before which this something is realised from the beginning and primordially in terms of the lack with respect to which the subject is going to have to locate himself. You should note that this lack, is produced at the level of the Other qua locus of the word, not at the level of the other qua real. But nothing real on the side of the other can supply for it except by a series of additions which will never be exhausted, but which I put in the margin namely the o or the c qua other, in so far as he will manifest himself to the subject throughout his existence by his gifts and by his refusals, but which he will never situate except on the margin of this fundamental lack which is found as such at the level of the signifier.

The subject will be involved historically through all these experiences with others; the maternal other on this occasion. But none of this will be able to exhaust the lack which exists at the level of the signifier as such, at the level where it is at this level that the subject has to locate himself to constitute himself as subject, at the level of the other.

It is here in so far as he himself finds himself marked by this (27) failure, by this non-guarantee, at the level of the truth of the other that he will have to establish this something which we already tried to approach above in the form of its genesis, this something which is o; this something which finds itself submitted to this condition of expressing his final tension, which is the remainder, which is the residue, that which is in the margin of all these demands, and which none of these demands can exhaust; this something which is destined as such to represent a lack and to represent it with a real tension of the subject.

This is as I might say the core of the function of the object in desire. This is what comes as a ransom for the fact that the subject cannot situate himself in desire without castrating himself, in other words without losing what is most essential in his life. And indeed it is also that around which is situated this form, which is one of the most exemplary of desire, that

which already the remarks of Simone Weil presented to us as follows: if one knew what the miser locks up in his money box one would know, she says, a lot about desire.

Of course, it is precisely to protect his life that the miser - and this you should note is an essential dimension - locks up in something, in an enclosure, o, the object of his desire; and regarding this you are going to see that because of this very fact this object is found to be a mortified object. It is in so far as what is in the money box is outside the circuit of life, is withdrawn from it and preserved as being the shadow of nothing that it is the miser's object. And as well that there is sanctioned here the formula that whoever saves his life will lose it. But this is not to say too quickly that the one who consents to lose it will find it just like that, directly.

(28) What we try to see subsequently is where he will find it. Undoubtedly it is not one of the least valuable aspects of the path that we have taken today to make us see that the path that he takes to rediscover it is going to present him in any case with what he consents to lose, namely the phallus. If there is a moment when he has mourned it, we have indicated this as being an essential step, he can only perceive it, envisage it as a hidden object.

That the term o, qua opaque term, qua obscure term, qua term participating in a nothing to which he is reduced, it is beyond this nothing that he is going to seek the shadow of his life lost at the beginning, this highlighting of the functioning of desire which shows us that it is not only the primitive object of the primordial impression in a genetic perspective which is the lost object to be rediscovered, that it is of the very nature of desire to constitute the object in this dialectic is what we are going to take up the next time.

Seminar 21; Wednesday 20 May 1959

Today we are going to take up our account at the point at which we left it the last time, namely at the point where what is in question is a sort of operation which I formalised for you in terms of a subjective division in demand.

We are going to take this up again in so far as it leads us to an examination of the formula of the phantasy in so far as it is the support of an essential relationship, of a pivotal relationship, the one which I am trying to promote for you this year in the functioning of analysis.

If you remember, the last time I wrote down the following letters for you: imposition, proposition of the demand at the locus of the other as being the ideal primary stage. It is of course a reconstruction, and nevertheless nothing is more concrete, nothing is more real, because it is in the measure that the demand of the child begins to be articulated that the process is engendered, or that we claim at least to show that the process is engendered, from which there is going to be formed this Spaltung of the discourse which is expressed in the facts of the unconscious.

If you remember the last time we alluded, following on this first position of the subject in the act of the first articulation of the demand, to what can be separated out from it as nevertheless necessary concerning the position of the real other as the one who is omnipotent in order to respond to this demand. As I told you, it is a stage that we have evoked, which is essential for the comprehension of the foundation of the first relationship to the other, to the mother, as giving in the other the first form of omnipotence.

(2) But as I told you, it is in..... what happens at the level of the demand that we are going to continue the process of the logical generation which is produced starting from this demand. So that what I expressed the other day in the form that made the other intervene as real subject - I do not remember if it was in this form or in another form that I wrote on the blackboard the fact that the demand here takes on a different import, that it becomes a demand for love, that in so far as it is a demand for the satisfaction for a need it is invested at this level with a sign, with a bar which essentially changes its import.

It does not matter whether I used these letters or not - these are in fact the ones I used - because this is very precisely what can engender a whole kind of which is that of the real experiences of the subject, in so far as they are going to be inscribed in a certain number of responses which are gratifying or frustrating, and which are obviously very essential so that there can be inscribed there a certain modulation of his history.

But this is not what is pursued in the synchronic analysis, the formal analysis which is the one that we are pursuing now. It is in the measure that, at a stage subsequent to the one of the position of the other as real other who responds to the demand, the subject questions her as subject, namely where he himself appears to himself as subject in so far as he is subject for another, it is in this relationship of the first stage in which the subject constitutes himself in relationship to the subject who speaks, locates himself in a fundamental strategy which is established once the dimension of language appears, and which only begins with the dimension of language, it is in the measure that the other being structured in language, by this fact becomes (3) the possible subject of a tragedy with respect to which the subject himself can constitute himself as subject recognised in the other, as a subject for a subject. - There can be no other subject than a subject for a subject, and on the other hand the first subject can only establish himself as such as a subject who speaks, as subject of the word;- it is therefore in so far as the other herself is marked by the necessities of language, that the other establishes herself not as a real other, but as other, as locus of the articulation of a word, that there is brought about the first possible position of a subject as such, of a subject who can grasp himself as subject, who grasps himself as subject in the other, in so far as the other thinks of him as subject.

You see, as I pointed out to you the last time, nothing more concrete than that. It is not at all a stage of philosophical meditation, it is this something primitive which is established in a relationship of trust. In what measure, and up to what point can I count on the other? What is viable in the behaviour of the other? What results can I expect from what she has already promised, this indeed is something on which the most primitive conflicts, the most primitive no doubt from the point of view that interests us, of the relationship of the child to the other, is something around which we see turning, the very establishment and basis of the principles of his history, and also that this is repeated at the most profound level of his destiny, of what commands the unconscious modulation of his behaviour. It is elsewhere than in a pure and simple frustration of gratification.

(4) It is in the measure that something can be based on the other, that, as you know, there is established what we find in analysis, indeed in the most day-to-day experience of analysis, the most radical thing that we find in the unconscious modulation of the patient, neurotic or not.

It is therefore in the measure that before the other as subject of

the word, in so far as it is primordially articulated, it is with respect to this other that the subject himself is constituted as subject who speaks. Not at all as primitive subject of knowledge, not at all the subject of philosophers, but the subject in so far as he poses himself as regarded by the other, as being able to respond to him in the name of a common tragedy, as a subject who can interpret everything that the other articulates, designates, about her most profound intention, her good or bad faith.

Essentially at this level, if you will allow me a play on words, the S is really posed not alone as the S which is inscribed as a letter, but also at this level as the Es of the topographical formula that Freud gives of the subject, ca. C a in an interrogative form, in the form also that if you put here a question mark the S is articulated. S, this is all that at this level the subject still formulates of himself. He is at the state of being born in the presence of the articulation of the other in so far as it responds to him, but as it responds to him beyond what he formulated in his demand.

S, it is at this level that the subject is suspended, and that at the following stage, namely in so far as he is going to take this step in which he wants to grasp himself in the beyond of the word, and himself as marked by something which primordially divides him from himself qua subject of the word; it is at this level qua barred subject that he can, that he must, that he (5) intends to find the response, that that also he does not find it in so far as he encounters in the other at this level this hollow, this emptiness which I articulated for you by saying that there is no other of the other, that no possible signifier guarantees the authenticity of the sequence of signifiers, that he depends essentially for that on the good will of the other, that there is nothing at the level of the signifier which guarantees, authenticates in any way the signifying chain and word.

And it is here that there is produced on the part of the subject this something which he draws from elsewhere, that he brings from elsewhere, that he brings in from the imaginary register, that he brings in from a part of himself in so far as he is engaged in the imaginary relationship to the other. And this ... which comes here, which emerges at the place at which there is brought to bear, in which there is posed the interrogation of the ... about what he really is, about what he really wants. It is there that there is produced the emergence of this something which we call o, o in so far as it is the object, the object no doubt of desire, and not in so far as this object of desire might be directly coadapted with respect to desire, but in so far as this object comes into play in a complex which we call the phantasy; the phantasy as such; namely in so far as this object is the support around which, at the moment when the subject faints before the lack of the signifier which corresponds to his place at the level of the other, finds his support in this object.

Namely that at this level the operation is division. The

subject tries to reconstitute himself, to authenticate himself, to rejoin himself in the demand directed towards the other. The operation stops. It is in so far that here the quotient (conscient) that the subject tries to attain, in so far as he has to grasp himself, reconstitute and authenticate himself as (6) subject of the word, remains here suspended in the presence, at the level of the other, of the appearance of this remainder through which he himself, the subject, supplies, pays the ransom, manages to replace the lack at the level of the other, of the signifier which corresponds to him.

It is in so far as this quotient (conscient), and this remainder, remain here in the presence of one another, and as one might say are sustained one by the other, that the phantasy is nothing other than the perpetual affronting of this S; of this S in so far as it marks this moment of fatigue of the subject in which the subject finds nothing in the other which guarantees him in a fashion that is sure and certain, which authenticates him, which allows him to situate himself and to name himself at the level of the discourse of the other, namely qua subject of the unconscious. It is responding to this moment that there emerges, as supplying for the signifier which is lacking, this imaginary element which we call in the most general form, as a correlative term of the structure of the phantasy, of support for S as such at the moment that he tries to indicate himself as subject of the unconscious discourse.

It seems to me that here I have no more to say about this; that I am nevertheless going to say more about it to remind you what this means in the Freudian discourse; for example the "Wo Es war soil Ich werden". "I must come to be where it was". It is very precise, it is this Ich which is not das Ich which is not the ego, which is an Ich, the Ich used as subject of the sentence. Where it has been, the place where it speaks. Where it speaks, namely where a moment before there was something which is unconscious desire, I must designate myself there, there I must be this I which is the goal, the end, the term of analysis (7) before it is named, before it is formed, before it is articulated, if indeed it ever is, because as well in the Freudian formula this soil Ich werden, this "it must be, this I must become", is the subject of a becoming, of a duty which is proposed to you.

We must reconquer the lost field of the being of the subject as Freud says in the same sentence in a nice comparison, like the reconquest by Holland from the Zuider Zee of lands which could be peacefully conquered. This field of the unconscious which we must win in the great analytic work, is indeed what is in question. But before this is done there where it has been, what designates for us the place of this I which must come to birth? What designates it for us, is the index of what? Very exactly of what is in question, of desire. Of desire in so far as it is the function and the term of what is in question in the unconscious.

And desire is here sustained by the opposition, the coexistence of two terms which are here the i, the subject in so far as

precisely at this limit he loses himself, as there that the unconscious begins - which means that there is not purely and simply the privation of something which might be called consciousness. The fact is that another dimension begins in which it is no longer possible for him to know, where he is no longer consciousness (consciencia).

Here every possibility of naming oneself comes to a stop. But this stopping point is also the index, the index which is put forward, which is the major function whatever may be the appearances of what at that moment is sustained before him as the object which fascinates him, but which is also what keeps him from being purely and simply cancelled out, losing consciousness (8) of his existence. And this is what constitutes the structure of what we call the phantasy.

This is what we are going to dwell on today. We are going to see what this formula of the phantasy involves in its general application. So we are going to take it, because we said the last time that it was in its synchronic function, namely because of the place it occupies in this reference of the subject to himself, of the subject to what he is at the level of the unconscious when - I will not say he questions himself about what he is - when he is in short carried by the question about what he is. Which is the definition of neurosis.

Let us pause first of all at the formal properties, as analytic experience allows us to recognise them, of this object *o* in so far as it intervenes in the structure of the phantasy.

The subject, we say, is on the brink of this failing nomination which is the structural role of what is aimed at at the moment of desire. And he is at the point where he undergoes, as I might say, to the maximum, to the highest point, what can be called the virulence of the logos in so far as he encounters himself at the high point of the alienating effect of his implication in the logos.

This grip on man within the fundamental combinatory, which gives its essential characteristic to the logos is a question which people other than myself have to resolve in terms of what it means. I mean, what does it mean that man is necessary for (9) this action of the logos in the world. But here what we have to see, is what the result is for man, and how man faces up to it, how he sustains it.

The first formula which may come to us, is that he must sustain it really, that he must sustain it in his reality, of himself as real; namely indeed with what always remains most mysterious in him.

A detour would not be out of place here. It is for us to try to apprehend - it is moreover what some of you have been asking yourselves for a long time - what in the last analysis the meaning of this use that we make here of the term real may be, in so far as we oppose it to the symbolic and the imaginary.

It must be said that if psychoanalysis, if the Freudian experience comes at the right time in our epoch, it is certainly not indifferent to state that it is in so far as there has arisen for us with the greatest insistence what I can describe as a crisis of the theory of knowledge, or of knowledge itself. Indeed this point to which the last time I already tried to draw your attention, namely what the adventure of science signifies, how it was created, grafted onto, linked into this long culture which was a rather biased or what we could call an incomplete standpoint, which was this withdrawal of man to certain positions of being present to the world which were first of all contemplative positions, those which implied not the position of (10) desire - I pointed it out to you no doubt - but the choice, the election of a certain form of this desire; a desire, I said, for knowledge, a desire to know. Undoubtedly we can specify it as a discipline, an acesis, a choice, and we know what has emerged from it, namely science, or modern science, or science in so far as one can say that it is distinguished for us by this exceptional hold on the world which in a certain way reassures us when we are speaking about reality.

We know that we have some hold on the real, but what is it in fact? Is it a hold derived from knowledge - and here I can only indicate the questions for you - does it not seem at the first approach, at the first apprehension that we have of what results from this process, is that undoubtedly at the point that we have got to, at the point especially of the elaboration of the physical sciences, which is the form where the greatest success has been achieved of the hold of our symbolic chains on something which we call the experiment, the constructed experiment, does it not seem that we have less than ever the feeling of attaining this something which in the ideals of early philosophy, of philosophy at its beginnings, was proposed as the end, the recompense of the effort of the philosopher, of the wise man, namely this participation, this knowledge, this identification to being which was aimed at, and which was represented in the Greek perspective, in the Aristotelean perspective as being what was the end of knowledge, namely the identification by thought of the (11) subject, who was not at that time called the subject, of the one who thought, of the one who pursued knowledge, to the object of his contemplation?

At the end of modern science what do we identify ourselves to? I do not even think that there is a single branch of science, whether it is the one where we have arrived at the most perfect results, the most advanced results, or whether it is those where science is trying to make a beginning, to take the first steps, as in the terms of a psychology which is called behaviourist so that we are sure to be disappointed at the final term as regards what there is to be known, that even when we find ourselves in one of the forms of this science which is still at the stammering stage, which claims to imitate, like the little character in Durer's Melancholia, the little angel which alongside the great Melancholia begins to describe his first circles, when we begin a psychology which claims to be scientific, we pose at the beginning that we are going to do

simple behaviourism, namely that we are going to be content to look, especially that we are going to refuse at the very beginning any aim which involves this assumption, this identification to what is there in front of us beyond the method, this is going to consist at first in refusing to believe that we can, at the end, arrive at what is in the ancient ideal of knowledge.

There is no doubt here something which is really exemplary, and which is of a nature to make us meditate on what happens when on (12) the other hand a psychology which it, of course if we do not pose it and do not articulate it as a science, is all the same something which poses itself as paradoxical compared to the method defined up to now as being a scientific contribution, Freudian psychology, it tells us that the real of the subject is not to be conceived of as correlative to a knowledge.

The first step where there is situated the real as real, as term of something in which the subject is involved, is not situated with respect to the subject of knowledge because something in the subject is articulated which is beyond his possible knowledge, and which nevertheless is already the subject, and what is more the subject who recognises himself in the fact that he is subject of an articulated chain. That something which is of the order of a discourse from the beginning, which sustains therefore some support, some support which it is not excessive to qualify with the term being, if after all we give to this term being its minimal definition which, if the term being means something, is the real in so far as it is inscribed in the symbolic, the real involved in this chain which Freud tells us is coherent and determines, beyond all the motivations that are accessible to the operation of knowledge, the behaviour of the subject ... It indeed is something which in the complete sense deserves to be named as belonging to the order of being, because it is already something which is posed as a real articulated in the symbolic, as a real which has taken its place in the symbolic, and which has taken this place beyond the subject of knowledge.

It is at the moment I would say, and this is where the parenthesis that I opened above comes to an end, it is at the (13) moment that in our experience of knowledge something is concealed from us in what has developed on the tree of knowledge, that something in this branch which is called science proves itself, manifests itself to us as being something which has disappointed the hopes of knowledge - even though on the other hand one could say that this has gone much further perhaps than any kind of effect that was expected from knowledge - it is at the same time, and at this moment that in the experience of subjectivity, in the one that is established in analytic confidences, in the confidence of analysis, that Freud designates for us this chain where things are articulated in a way which is structured in a fashion that is homogeneous with every other symbolic chain, with what we know as discourse which nevertheless is not accessible to contemplation, is not accessible to the subject, in so far as he might repose himself there as the object in which he recognises himself.

Quite the contrary, he fundamentally does not know himself. And in the whole measure that he tries in this chain to approach, that he tries there to name himself, to locate himself, it is precisely there that he does not find himself. He is only there, in a way which in the intervals, in the cuts (coupires), ... every time he wants to grasp himself he is always only in an interval.

And this indeed is why the imaginary object of the phantasy on which he is going to seek to support himself, is structured as it is. This is what I want to show you now. There are many other things to be demonstrated in this formalisation of ϕ \circ , but I want to show you how \circ is made.

I told you, it is as cut, and as interval, that the subject encounters himself at the end point of his questioning. It is as well essentially as a form of cut that the \circ , in all its (14) generality, shows us its form.

Here I am going simply to regroup a certain number of common traits that you know already, concerning the different forms of this object. For the people here who are analysts I can go quickly. Afterwards I will go into greater detail, and comment on it again.

If what is in question is that the object in the phantasy is something which has the form of a cut, how are we going to recognise it. Frankly I would say that at the level of the result I think that you are already ahead of me. At least I hope so.

In the relationship which brings it about that the S, at the point where he questions himself as S, can only manage to support himself in a series of terms which are those which we here call \circ , qua object in the phantasy, we can in a first approximation give three examples of it. This does not imply that it is completely exhaustive. It almost is. I say that it is not completely in so far as to take things at the level of what I would call the result, namely of the constituted \circ , is not a really legitimate step. I mean that to begin there is simply to start you from a terrain which is already known in which you will be able to find your bearings to make your path easier. It is not the most rigorous path, as you will see when we have to rejoin this term by the more rigorous pathway of structure. Namely the path that begins from the subject in so far as he is barred, in so far as it is he who brings up, who gives rise to the term of object. But it is from the object that we will start because it (15) is there that you will be able to find your bearings.

There are three kinds of references to it in analytic experience, well and truly identified up to now as such.

The first kind is the one which we habitually call, rightly or wrongly, the pregenital object. The second kind is this sort of object which is involved in what is called the castration complex. And you know that in its most general form it is the phallus. The third kind, is perhaps the only term which will

surprise you as being a novelty, but in truth I think that those of you who have been able to study carefully enough what I wrote about psychoses will not find themselves all the same essentially upset by it, since the third kind of object fulfils exactly the same function with respect to the subject at his point of failing, of fatigue, is nothing other, and neither more nor less, than what is commonly called a delusion, and is very precisely the reason why Freud, from almost the beginning of his first apprehensions, was able to write: "These people love their delusion as they love themselves" (Sie lieben also den Wahn wie sich selbst) [Draft H 24.1.1895].

We are going to take up these three forms of the object in so far as they allow us to grasp something in their form which allows them to fulfil this function, to become the signifiers which the subject draws from his own substance to sustain before himself precisely this hole, this absence of the signifier at the level of the unconscious chain.

(16) Qua pregenital object what does the o mean?

In animal experience, in so far as it is structured in images should we not here evoke the very term in which more than one materialist reflection comes to resume what after all the functioning of an organism is, however human it may be, at the level of material exchanges. Precisely namely - I am not the one who invented the formula - this animal, however human he may be, is after all only a tube with two orifices, one through which things enter, and the other through which things leave.

And also indeed, this is how the so-called pregenital object is constituted, in so far as it manages to fulfil its signifying function in the phantasy. It is in the measure that that from which the subject nourishes himself cuts itself off from him at a certain moment, indeed that on occasion, it is the reverse of this position, the oral-sadistic stage, he himself cuts it off, or at least makes an effort to cut it off, and bites. It is therefore the object qua object of weaning. Which means properly speaking the object of a cut on the one hand, and on the other hand, at the other extremity of the tube, in so far as what he rejects is cut off from him, and also indeed the whole apprenticeship he must undergo of the rites and the forms of cleanliness, so that he may learn that what he rejects is something he cuts off from himself?

It is essentially in so far as that which in ordinary analytic experience we see as the fundamental form of the so-called oral and anal phases, namely the nipple, this part of the breast that the subject can hold in his oral orifice, is also what he is separated from - it is also indeed this excrement which also becomes for the subject at a different moment the most significant form of his relationship to objects ... are taken, (17) chosen very precisely in so far as they are particularly exemplary, showing in their form the structure of the cut, that they are involved in playing this role of support at the level at which the subject himself finds himself situated as such in the signifier in so far as it is structured by the cut. He is

himself, on this occasion, the cut.

And it is this that explains to us why these objects, among others and in preference to others, should be chosen. Because it could not be overlooked that if it were a question of the subject eroticising one or other of his functions, simply as vital functions, why should there not be also a more primitive phase than the others, and what looks like a more fundamental one, which is that it would be attached to a function just as vital from the point of view of nutrition as the one which passes through the mouth and ends up by being excreted through the intestinal orifice, this is respiration.

Yes, but there is in respiration no part of this element of cutting. Respiration is not cut off, or if it is cut off it is in a fashion which does not fail to generate some drama. There is no element of cutting inscribed in respiration except only in an exceptional fashion. Respiration is rhythmical, respiration is pulsation, respiration is vital alternation, it is not something which allows there to be symbolised on the imaginary plane precisely what is in question, namely the interval, the cut.

(18) This is not to say however that there is nothing which passes through the respiratory orifice which cannot, as such, be punctuated, because precisely it is by this same orifice that there is produced the emission of the voice, and that the emission of the voice is something which is cut, which is punctuated. And this indeed is also why we will rediscover it later on, and precisely at the level of this third type of o, which we have called the delusions of the subject.

In so far as this emission precisely is not punctuated, in so far as it is simply pneuma, flatus, it is obviously very remarkable - and here I would ask you to refer to Jones' studies - to see that from the point of view of the unconscious it is not individualised at the most radical point as being something which belongs to the order of respiration, but precisely just because of this imposition of the form of cutting referred to the most profound level of experience that we have of it in the unconscious - and it is the merit of Jones to have seen it - to the anal flatus which is found paradoxically, and through this sort of unpleasant surprise that the analytic discoveries have brought us, is found symbolised in the depths of what is in question each time that at the level of the unconscious the phallus is found to symbolise the subject.

At the second level, and this of course is only a teaching artifice, because there is no first, nor second level, at the point that we are dealing with here all the o's have the same function.

(19) They have the same function: it is a question of knowing why. They take on one or other form, but in the form that we describe in synchrony, what we are trying to separate out are common traits and characteristics.

Here, at the level of the castration complex, we find a different form for it which is that of mutilation. In effect if it is a question of cutting it is necessary and sufficient that the subject should separate himself from some part of himself, that he should be capable of mutilating himself. And after all the thing, as the analytic authors have perceived, does not even imply a modality that is all that new at first sight, because they recalled in connection with mutilation, in so far as it plays such an important role in all the forms, in all the manifestations of the access of man to his own reality, in the consecration of his fullness as man - we know by history, we know by ethnography, we know by the accounts of all sorts of initiatory procedures through which man searches in a certain number of forms of stigmatisation, to define his access to a higher level of realisation of himself, we know this function of mutilation as such. And this is not the place that I am going to remind you of this whole range and catalogue.

It is simply necessary, and it is sufficient, for me to remind you here simply in order to allow you, on this occasion, put your finger on the fact, that in a different form it is again here a question of something which we can call cutting, and well and truly, in so far as it establishes the passage to a signifying function, because what remains from this mutilation, is a mark. (20) This is what ensures that the subject who has undergone mutilation as a particular individual in the flock from now on carries on him the mark of a signifier which withdraws him from a first state in order to raise him up, to identify him to the power of being different, superior. This is the meaning of every kind of experience of initiatory transition in so far as we rediscover its signification at the level of the castration complex as such.

But also this does not, I point it out to you in passing, exhaust the question. Because since the time I have been trying with you to approach what is in question at the level of the castration complex, you must have perceived the ambiguities which reign around the function of the phallus. In other words, that if it is simply the result of seeing that from some angle it is what is marked, it is what is raised to the function of signifier, it remains that nevertheless the form of castration is not entirely implied in what we can have externally in the results of ceremonies which culminate in one or other deformation, circumcision.

The mark which is made on the phallus is not some kind of extirpation, of a particular function of negating brought to the phallus in the castration complex. We cannot grasp this at this level of exposition. We will come back to it I think the next time, when we will have to explain that which, I am simply indicating it to you today, is the problem which is posed now that we are tackling things again, that we are again making an inventory. It is the question of how, and why Freud could from the start do this extraordinary thing which is to link the castration complex to this something to which an attentive

examination shows that it is not all that solidary, namely to the dominating, cruel, tyrannical function of a sort of absolute (21) father.

Undoubtedly this is a myth. And like all Freud's contributions, it is a really miraculous fact, it is myth which holds up, and we are trying to explain why.

It nevertheless remains that in their fundamental function the initiatory rites, which are marked, which are inscribed in a certain number of forms of stigmatisation, of mutilation, at the point here where we are approaching them today, namely in so far as they play the role of o, in so far as they are seen by the subjects themselves who experience them, as being destined to bring about a change in nature in what in the subject up to then, in the freedom of the pre-initiatory stages which characterise primitive societies, had been left to a sort of indifferent operation of natural desires.

The initiatory rites take the form of changing the meaning of these desires, of giving them, precisely from then on, a function in which there is identified, in which there is designated as such the being of the subject, in which it becomes as one might say a man, but also a woman, in the full exercise of their powers, in which mutilation serves here to orientate desire, to make it take on precisely this function of index, of something which is realised and can only be articulated, be expressed in a symbolic beyond, and a beyond which is the one that we call today being, a realisation of being in the subject.

One could on this occasion make some lateral remarks, and perceive that if something is offered up to the effect, to the signifying mark of the initiatory rite, it is not of course by chance that it should be everything which here may offer itself as appendage.

(22) You know as well that the phallic appendage is not the only one which which on occasion is employed, that without any doubt also the relationship that the subject may establish in any reference to himself, and which is the one in which we can conceive that the experiential apprehension may be most remarkable, namely the relationship of tumescence, designates of course in the first place the phallus as something which offers itself in a privileged fashion, to this function of being able to be exposed to cutting, and as well in a fashion which will undoubtedly be more than in any other object dreaded, and at risk.

It is here that in so far as the function of narcissism is the imaginary relationship of the subject to himself, it should be taken as the supporting point in which there is inscribed at the centre this formation of the signifying object. And here also we can perhaps perceive how what is here important in the experience that we have of everything that happens at the level of the mirror stage, namely the inscription, the situation in which the subject can place his own tension, his own erection with respect to the image beyond himself which is in the other, allows us to perceive how legitimate were certain approaches that the

tradition of philosophical psychologists had already made in this apprehension of the function of the ego.

I am alluding here to Maine de Biran's contribution in his very subtle analysis of the role of the feeling of effort. The feeling of effort, in so far as it is thrust forward, being grasped by the subject from two sides at once in so far as he is (23) the author of the thrusting, but as he is also the author of what contains it, nevertheless in the fact that he embraces this thrusting of his as being as such within himself, here is something which when linked to this experience of tumescence makes us perceive the way there can be situated there, and be brought into play at this same level of experience as something through which the subject experiences himself, without nevertheless ever being able to grasp himself, because here also there is properly speaking no mark possible, no cut possible, something whose link I think should here be located in so far as it takes on here a symbolic, symptomatic value at the same level of experience which is the one that we are trying to analyse here, which is the very paradoxical experience of fatigue.

If effort cannot be in any way of use to the subject, for the reason that nothing allows it to be imprinted with a signifying cut, inversely, it seems that this something whose mirage-like character, whose unobjectifiable character at the level of erotic experience, which is called the fatigue of the neurotic, this paradoxical fatigue which has nothing to do with any of the muscular fatigues that we can record on the level of facts - this fatigue, in so far as it corresponds, is in a certain way the inverse, the sequel, the trace of an effort which I would call signifyingness (signifiantite).

It is here that we can find - and I think that it is important to note it in passing - this something which in its most general form is that which at the level of tumescence, of the thrusting as such of the subject, gives us the limits in which the possible consecration in the signifying mark has vanished.

(24) We come to the third form of this little o, in so far as it can here serve as an object. Here I would not like to be misunderstood, and undoubtedly I do not have enough time in front of me to be able to accentuate what I am going to try to isolate here in all its details. What I think is the most propitious way of showing you what is in question, and how I understand it outside an attentive reading that I would ask you to undertake of what I have written on the subject of "On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis", namely what I articulated regarding what Schreber's delusion allows us to articulate in such an advanced, such elaborated fashion, is what is going to allow us to grasp the function of the voice in the delusion as such.

I think that it is in so far as we should try to see the way in which the voice, corresponds very particularly in delusion to the formal exigencies of this o, in so far as it can be raised to the signifying function of the cut, of the interval as such, that we

will understand the phenomenological characteristics of this voice.

The subject produces the voice. And I would further say we will have to make this function of the voice intervene in so far as we bring into play the weight of the subject, the real weight of the subject in the discourse. In the formation of the agency of the super ego, the big voice is to be brought into play as something which represents the agency of another manifesting himself as real.

Is it the same voice that is in question in the voice of the deluding person? Is the voice of the deluding person this something whose dramatic function Cocteau tried to isolate under the title La voix humaine? It is enough to refer ourselves to this experience that we can have of it in effect in an isolated (25) form, in the place where Cocteau, with a lot of relevance and flair himself showed us its pure incidence, namely on the telephone. What does the voice tell us as such, beyond the discourse that it holds on the telephone? There is undoubtedly no need here for you to vary, and to make a little kaleidoscope of the experiences that one can have of it. It should be enough for you to evoke that in trying to demand a service in any commercial or other type of enterprise, you find at the end of the line one of these voices which teach you enough about the character of indifference, of bad will, of a will set up to evade whatever may be personal or present in your demand, and which is very essentially this type of voice which already lets you know that you can expect nothing from the one you are appealing to; one of these voices that we will call the voice of an overseer (contremaître). This term so magnificently constructed by the genius of the tongue. Not that he is against the master (contre le maître) but that he is the opposite (le contraire) of the true master.

This voice, this sort of embodiment of vanity, of inexistence, of bureaucratic emptiness that certain voices can sometimes give you, is this what we designate when we speak about the voice in the function that we make it intervene at the level of o? No, absolutely not. If here the voice presents itself well and truly, and as such, as pure articulation - and this indeed is what constitutes the paradox of what the deluding person communicates to us when we question him, and that something that he has to communicate about the nature of these voices always seems to conceal itself in a very particular way - there is nothing more firm for him than the consistency and the existence of the voice as such. And of course it is precisely because it (26) is reduced in its most trenchant form to the pure point at which the subject cannot take it except as imposing itself on him.

And so I also put the accent, when we were analysing President Schreber's delusion, on this character of cutting which is highlighted to such an extent that the voices heard by Schreber are exactly the beginning of sentences : Sie sollen werden etc., and precisely the words the signifying words, which are

interrupted, which are pushed forward, allowing the appeal to signification to arise after they have been cut off.

The subject is involved here in effect, but properly speaking in so far as he himself disappears, succumbs, is entirely swallowed up in this signification which is only aimed at him in a global fashion. And indeed it is in this word: it involves him (il l'interesse) that I would resume today, as I am about to leave you, this something which I tried to apprehend and to grasp for you today.

I agree that this session has been perhaps one of the most difficult of all of those that I have addressed to you. I hope you will be rewarded for it the next time. We will be able to proceed along less arid paths. But I asked you today to sustain yourselves around this notion of interesse. The subject is as being in the interval, as being what is in the interval of the unconscious discourse, as being properly speaking the metonymy of this being which is expressed in the unconscious chain.

If the subject feels himself highly interested by these voices, by these sentences without head or tail of the delusion, it is for the same reason as in all the other forms of this object that (27) I enumerated for you today it is at the level of the cut, it is at the level of the interval that he is fascinated, and that he fixes himself to sustain himself in this instant at which properly speaking he envisages himself and he questions himself as being. As a being of his unconscious.

It is around this indeed that we pose the question here. And all the same I do not want to finish, at least for those who come here for the first time, without making them sense what the import is of such an analysis, of this little link which my discourse today is, with respect to those which have succeeded one another for days. The fact is that what is in question here also is to see what we should do with respect to this phantasy. Because I showed you here the most radical, the most simple forms of this phantasy, those in which we know it constitutes the privileged objects of the unconscious desire of the subject. But this phantasy is mobile; if one teases it out one must not think that it can, like that, drop one of its members. There is no example where a phantasy which has been properly attacked does not react by reiterating its form as phantasy.

So that we know what complicated forms this phantasy can reach in so far precisely as in what is called its perverse form it insists, it maintains, it complicates its structure, it tries harder and harder to fulfil its function. Does interpreting this phantasy, as it is said, to be purely and simply leading the subject back to a present of which we are the measure, the (28) present of a reality that we can define as men of science, or as men who imagine that after all everything is reducible to terms of knowledge?

It seems indeed that this is something towards which a whole direction of analytic technique is tending to reduce the subject

to the functions of reality, this reality which I reminded you the last day, this reality which for certain analysts does not seem to be able to be articulated otherwise than as being that of what I called a world of American lawyers. Is it not no doubt the case that the enterprise is outside the range of the means of a certain persuasion? Does not the place occupied by the phantasy require of us to see that there is another dimension where we have to take into account what one can call the true exigencies of the subject? Precisely this dimension not at all of a reality brought about by a reduction to the common world, but of a dimension of being, of a dimension where the subject carries in himself something, by God, which is perhaps just as uncomfortable to carry as Hamlet's message, but which also indeed even though perhaps it promises him a fatal destiny is not something either which we analysts, if it is the case that we analysts find in the experience of desire something more than a simple accident, than something which after all is really inconvenient, and regarding which there is nothing to do but wait until it passes and old age comes so that the subject can rediscover quite naturally the paths of peace and of wisdom ... This desire designates for us analysts something other. Regarding this other thing that it designates for us, how can we operate with it, what is our mission, what is when all is said and done our duty? This is the question that I pose in speaking about the interpretation of desire.

Seminar 22; Wednesday 27 May 1959

Today we are going to continue the study of the place of the function of phantasy as it is symbolised in the relationships of the subject, provided, from the subject, qua marked by the effect of the word with respect to an object o which we tried, the last time, to define as such. This function of the phantasy, as you know is situated somewhere at that level. This relationship which we have tried to inscribe on what we call the graph is something very simple in fact because the terms are resumed at the four points, as I might say, situated at the intersection of two signifying chains by a loop which represents the subjective intention, this intersection, therefore, determining these four points which we have called code points, which are those on the right, here, and two other message points, this in function of the retroactive character of the effect of the signifying chain with respect to signification.

Here therefore are the four points which we have learned to furnish with the following significations, they are the loci where there comes to be situated the encounter of the intention of the subject with the concrete fact, the fact that there is language here.

(2) The two other signs that we will have to come to today are S in the presence of D, and S signifier of O. The two signifying chains, as you know, this has been elucidated for a long time, represent respectively the lower chain, that of the concrete discourse of the subject, in so far as it is, as such, let us say, accessible to consciousness. What analysis teaches us, is that in so far that it is accessible to consciousness, it is perhaps, it is surely because it begins from illusions which we affirm to be entirely transparent to consciousness. And if, for several years, I insisted before you from every angle from which it could be suggested on the illusory aspects of this effect of transparency, if I tried to show by every sort of fable, which perhaps you still remember, how, at the limit we were able to try, in the form of an image in a mirror which became efficacious, beyond any subsistence of the subject, by what persistent mechanism, in the subjective nothingness realised by the destruction of all life, if I try to give you, there, the image of a possibility of subsistence of something absolutely specular independently of any subjective support, it is not for

the simple pleasure of such a game, but this rests on the fact that a structured montage, like that of a signifying chain, can be supposed to last beyond any subjectivity of supports.

(.3) Consciousness, in so far as it gives us this feeling of being me (moi) in the discourse, is something which, in the analytic perspective, the one which makes us put our finger constantly on the systematic méconnaissance of the subject, is something which precisely our experience teaches us to refer to a relationship, showing us that this consciousness in so far as it is first of all experienced, as it is first of all felt in an image which is an image of one's counterpart, is something which, rather, covers over with an appearance of consciousness what is included there in the relationships of the subject to the primary, naive signifying chain, to the innocent demand, to the concrete discourse, in so far as it is perpetuated from mouth to mouth, organises what discourse there is in history itself, what rebounds from articulation to articulation in what effectively happens at a more or less greater distance from this concrete, common, universal discourse, which englobes every real, social activity of the human group.

The other signifying chain is the one which is positively given to us in analytic experience as inaccessible to consciousness. You can indeed sense all the same that if already, for us, this reference to the consciousness of the first chain is suspect, a fortiori this single characteristic of the inaccessibility to consciousness is something which, for us, poses questions about what the meaning of this inaccessibility is.

So that we should consider - and I will come back to this -
 (4) we should carefully specify what we mean by that. Should we consider that this chain, inaccessible to consciousness as such, is made up as a signifying chain? But this is what I will come back to later. Let us pose it, for the moment, in the way it presents itself to us. Here, the dotted line on which it is presented signifies that the subject does not articulate it qua discourse, what he actually articulates is something else, what he articulates at the level of the signifying chain is situated at the level of the intentional loop. It is in so far as the subject locates himself as acting in the alienation of significance with the operation of the word that the subject articulates himself as what? As enigma, as question, very exactly what is given to us in experience from what is tangible in the evolution of the human subject, in a moment of childish articulation, namely that beyond the first demand with all the consequences that it involves, there is a moment at which he is going to try to sanction what he has before him, to sanction things in the order inaugurated by significance. As such, he is going to say what and he is going to say why. It is within this that there is the express reference to discourse, this is what presents itself as continuing the first intention of the demand, carrying it to the second intention of discourse as discourse, of the discourse which questions itself, which questions things with (5) respect to itself, with respect to their situation in the discourse which is no longer exclamation, interpolation, the cry

of need, but already nomination. This is what represents the second intention of the subject and if I make this second intention begin from the locus 0 it is in so far as if the subject is entirely in the alienation of significance, in the alienation of the spoken articulation as such and that it is there and at that level that there is posed the question which I called, the last time, subject as such of S with a question mark. So that, it is not that I enjoy the operations of ambiguity but it is also quite coherent with the level at which we are proceeding, at the point that we are articulating. It is within this questioning, of this internal questioning, to the established locus of the word, to discourse, it is within this that the subject must try to situate himself as subject of the word, again demanding there: is it, what, why, who is speaking, where is it speaking. It is precisely in the fact that that which, at the level of the signifying chain, is articulated, is not articulatable at the level of this S, of this question, which constitutes the subject once he is established in the word, it is in this that there consists the fact of the unconscious (la conscience).

Here, I would simply like to recall for the benefit of those who may here be disturbed as if it were an arbitrary construction, by this identification of the unconscious chain which I present (6) here, with respect to the questioning of the subject being in the same relationships as those of the first discourse, of the demand to the intention which arises from need. I would like to remind you of this: the fact is that if the signifier, if the unconscious (la conscience) has a meaning, this meaning has all the characteristics of the function of the signifying chain as such, and here I know that in giving this brief reminder I should, for the majority of my listeners, make an allusion to what I know they have already heard from me when I already spoke about this signifying chain in so far as it is illustrated in the story that I published elsewhere, the fable about the white discs and the black discs, in so far as it illustrates something structural in the relationships of subject to subject in so far as one finds three terms there. In this story a distinctive sign permits there to be identified, to be discriminated, with respect to a black or white couple, the relationship with the other subjects; for those who do not remember it, I will limit myself to telling them to refer to what I wrote on this subject, with reference to this succession of oscillations through which the subject locates himself with respect to what? With respect to the research of the other which is carried out in function of what the others see of himself and of what determines them in a conclusive fashion namely what I will call here the , that by which the subject decides that he is effectively white or black, proves that he is ready to declare that for which the fable is constructed.

(7) Do you not find here very exactly that which we are accustomed to use in the structure of the unconscious (l'incursion) namely this fact of relative identification, this possibility of denegation, of refusal of articulation, of defence, which are as coherent to the impulse as the back and front of the same thing, and which conclude with something which

becomes for the subject the mark, the choice in such conditions, in such situations, what he always chooses first, this power of repetition, which is always the same, which we try to call, according to the subjects, a masochistic tendency, a penchant for failure, the return of the repressed, the fundamental evocation of the primal scene. All of this is one and the same thing, the repetition in the subject of a type of sanction whose forms go way beyond the characteristics of the content. Essentially, unconsciousness always presents itself for us as an indefinitely repeated articulation and this is why it is legitimate for us to situate, it in this schema in the form of this dotted line. Why do we make it dotted here? As we said, in so far as the subject does not gain access to it and we say, more precisely, in so far as the fashion in which the subject can name himself there, can situate himself in so far as he is the support of this sanction, in so far as he can designate himself there, in so far as he is the one who will after all carry the mark, the stigmata of what remains for him not only ambiguous, but properly speaking inaccessible up to a certain end point which is the one, (8) precisely, that analytic experience gives. No operation of his can be articulated at this level, but the experience presents itself as if it comes from outside and that it is already a lot that it comes, he can read it, as a ca parole. There is here a distance of which it is not even said, even though Freud's commandment allows us to envisage it, that the subject can reach its goal in any way whatsoever.

The import, therefore, at this level, of what is called the code point, in so far as we symbolise it here by the confrontation of | with the demand, signifies what? Very precisely the following: it is that this and nothing other than this point that we call the code point and which is only carried away in so far as analysis begins to decipher the coherence of the upper chain, it is in so far as the subject S qua subject of the unconscious, namely qua the subject who is constituted in the beyond of the concrete discourse, qua subject sees, reads, hears, I say retroactively, we can suppose him here as the support for the articulation of the unconscious (la conscience), encounters what? Encounters that which in this chain of the word of the subject in so far as he asks questions about himself encounters the demand.

What role does the demand play at this level? At this level, and this is what the sign between *d* and *D* means, at this level demand is affected with its properly symbolic form, demand is (9) utilised in so far as beyond what it requires in terms of the satisfaction of need, it poses itself as this demand for love or this demand for presence, through which we have said demand establishes the other to whom it is addressed as the one who can be present or absent. It is in so far as demand plays this metaphorical function, qua demand, whether it is oral or anal, becomes the symbol of the relationship to the other, that it plays here the function of code, that it allows there to be constituted the subject as being situated at what we call, in our language the oral or anal phase for example.

But this can also be called the correspondence of the message, namely because of the fact that with this code the subject can

respond to or receive as message what the question is which, in the beyond, gives the first grasp on the signifying chain. It is presented here also in dots and as coming from the other, the question of Che vuoi?, what do you want? This is what the subject, beyond the other, poses for himself under the form of S? The response is the one here symbolised on the schema by the significance of the other qua s. We have given this significance of the other qua at this level, a meaning which is the most general meaning, this meaning in which there is going to run the adventure of the concrete subject, his subjective history. The most general form is the following: it is that there is nothing in the other, there is nothing in significance which can suffice at this level of signifying articulation.

(10) There is nothing in significance which is the guarantee of truth. There is no other guarantee of the truth than the goodwill of the other, namely something which is always posed for the subject in a problematic form.

Does that means that the subject remains stuck with his question, of this entire regarding what for him gives rise to the kingdom of the word? It is precisely here that we arrive at our phantasy. Already the last time, I showed you that the phantasy in so far as it is the concrete abutment by which we tackle at the limits of consciousness, how this phantasy plays, for the subject, this role of imaginary support, precisely of this point at which the subject finds nothing which is able to articulate him qua subject of his unconscious discourse.

It is to this then that we must return today, to question more closely what this phenomenon is about. I remind you of what I said the last time about the object, as if the object played here the same role of mirage as at the lower stage the image of the specular other plays with respect to the ego. Therefore then, over against the point where the subject is going to situate himself to accede to the level of the unconscious chain here there is proposed the phantasy as such. This relationship to the object as it is in the phantasy leads us to what, to a phenomenology of the cutting from the object in so far as it can support, on the imaginary plane, this relationship of cutting which is the one at which at this level the subject has to support himself.

(11) We have seen this object qua imaginary support of this relationship of cutting at the three levels of pregenital object, of castrating mutilation and also of the hallucinatory voice as such, that is to say less in so far as it is an embodied voice than discourse qua interrupted, qua cut off from the interior monologue, qua cut off in the text of the interior monologue.

Let us see today whether a whole lot more does not remain to be said if we come back to the meaning of what is expressed there, because also what is in question, with respect to something which I already introduced the last time, namely from the point of view of the real, from the point of view of knowledge. At what level are we here since we are introduced to the level of an esse? Is

this esse something other than an ambiguity, which is open to being filled up with any meaning whatsoever. Where are we going to stop, in its verbal belonging by conjugation, to the verb to be. Something was already contributed to this the last time. It is a question in effect of knowing at what level we are here as regards the subject in so far as the subject does not locate himself simply in terms of discourse, but also indeed in terms of some realities.

I am saying the following: if something is presented, is articulated which we might, in a coherent fashion, entitle reality, I mean the reality that we take into account in our analytic discourse, I would situate its field on this schema (12) here in the field which is beneath the concrete discourse, in so far as this discourse englobes it and encloses it, is a reserve of a knowledge, of a knowledge which we can extend as far as everything that can speak for man. I mean that he is not for all that obliged, at every instant, to recognise what he has already included of his reality, of his history in his discourse, that everything that is presented, for example, in the Marxist dialectic, as alienation can here be grasped and articulated in a coherent fashion.

I would go further. The cut, let us not forget - and this is already indicated to us in the type of the first object of the phantasy, the pregenital object. What am I alluding to as objects which can here support phantasies, if not to real objects in a close relationship with the vital drive of the subject, in so far as they are separated from him. It is only too obvious that the real is not an opaque continuum, that the real is of course made up of cuts, just as much and well beyond the cuts of language and it is not today or yesterday that the philosopher Aristotle spoke to us about the "good philosopher", which means, as I understand it, just as much someone who knows in all its generality, who can be compared to the good cook, he is the one who knows how to insert the knife in the right place, cutting at the articulations, knowing how to penetrate without injuring them.

The relationship of the cutting of the real to the cutting of language is something therefore which, up to a certain point, (13) appears to satisfy the thing in which the philosophical tradition has always been installed, namely that it is only a question of the overlapping of a system of cutting by another system of cutting. The reason I say that the Freudian question comes at the right time, is in so far as the journey which has now been accomplished by science allows us to formulate that there is in the adventure of science something which goes well beyond this identification, this overlapping of natural cuts by the cuts of some discourse or other, something which by an effort which has essentially consisted in voiding every scientific articulation of its mythological implantations and we will see, later, something which from there has led us to the point that we are now at and which seems to me to be sufficiently characterised without being any more dramatic about it by the term of the disintegration of matter. This indeed is something which might

suggest that we should see in this adventure only pure and simple pieces of knowledge. This, the fact is that by placing ourselves on the plane of the real, or, if you wish, provisionally, of something which I will call, on this occasion with all the necessary accent of irony, because it is certainly not my inclination to call it this, the great whole. From this point of view science and its adventure present themselves as the real, referring its own cuts to itself, but as elements creating something new and which take the path of proliferating in a fashion which here, undoubtedly, we cannot deny to ourselves, as (14) men, that our mediating function, our function as agents does not allow us to pose the question of whether the consequences of what manifests itself do not go a little bit beyond us.

Man in fact, enters perhaps into this game at his own expense. There is no need here, for us, to go any further. Because this discourse which I am deliberately making sober and restrained, but I suppose whose dramatic and contemporary accent does not escape you, what I want to say here, is that this question about the adventure of science is different to anything that has been articulated, with even these extreme consequences of science, with all the consequences of the human drama, qua inscribed in the whole of history. Here, in this case the particular subject is in relationship with this sort of cut that is constituted by the fact that with respect to a certain conscious discourse he is not, that he does not know what he is. This is what is in question, it is a question of the relationship of the real of the subject as entering into the cut and this coming of the subject to the level of the cut has something which must be called real, but which is symbolised by nothing. It may seem perhaps excessive to you to see delineated at the level of what we have called above a pure manifestation of this being, the elective point of the relationship of the subject to what we can here call his pure being as subject, that by means of which, from then on, the phantasy of desire takes on its function of designating this point.

(15) This is why, at another moment, I was able to define this function that is fulfilled by the phantasy as a metonymy of being and identify as such, at this level, desire. Let us be quite clear that at this level the question remains entirely open as to whether we can call the one who indicates himself in this fashion, man. For, what can we call man if not the one who is already symbolised as such and who as well, every time he is spoken about, finds himself therefore charged with all the recognitions that we can call historical. The word humanism usually designates nothing at this level. But there is of course in him something real, something real which is necessary and sufficient to assure in experience itself this dimension which we call, I believe, rather inappropriately usually, depth, let us say a beyond, which means that a being is never identifiable to any of the roles, to employ the term that is currently used, that he assumes.

Here therefore, the dignity, as I might say, of this being is defined in a relationship which is neither, in anything, that is

is cut, if I may express myself thus, with all the backgrounds, especially the castrating references, if you are able along with other experiences to include in it not someone who is guilty (coupable) if I may make a play on words, but the cut (coupure) as such, namely when all is said and done what presents itself to us as being the last structural characteristic of the symbolic as such; regarding which, I only want simply to indicate in passing (16) that what we find there, is the direction in which I already taught you to look for what Freud called the death instinct, the way in which this death instinct may find itself converging with being.

At this point, there may be some difficulties, I would like to try to fill things out.

In the last number of the Psychoanalytic Quarterly, there is a very interesting, and temperate article, by Mr. Kurt Eissler called "The function of detail in the interpretation of works of art". It is to a work of art, and to the work of art in general, in effect, that I am going to try to refer to illustrate what is in question here. Kurt Eissler begins his discourse, and finishes it moreover, with a remark which I would say can be differently described according to whether one considers it as confused or as simply undeveloped. Here, in effect, is more of less what he articulates. The term detail seems to him to be particularly significant in connection with the work of an author who is moreover completely unknown outside the Austrian circle. He is an author-actor, and if I refer to this, it is because I am going to come back, later, to Hamlet. The actor-author in question is a little unknown Shakespeare.

Dealing with this Shakespeare who lived at the beginning of the last century in Vienna, Eissler has composed one of these very pretty little stories, which are quite typical of what is called (17) applied psychoanalysis, namely that once again, he has found, throughout the life of this person, a certain number of indicative, paradoxical elements, which allow questions to be introduced which will always remain unresolved, namely whether had been quite specially affected, five years before he wrote one of his major works, by the death of someone who was for him a sort of model, but a model he had assumed to such a degree that all sorts of questions arise in connection with paternal, maternal, sexual identification, everything that you can imagine. The question, in itself, leaves me fairly cold, it is an example of one of these gratuitous works which, in this style, are constantly renewed with a value of repetition which keeps also its value of conviction, but this is not what is in question.

What is in question is the following. It is the kind of distinction that Eissler wants to establish between the function of what he calls in English more or less the relevant details, let us call it the detail which does not fit in, and the pertinent detail. In effect, it is in connection with something in a rather well-written play called , it is in

connection with something which is completely out of place there, which is absolutely not implied by anything, that Kurt Eissler pricks up his ears, and step by step, he manages to rediscover a certain number of biographical facts whose interest is absolutely obvious. Therefore, what is in question is the value of the irrelevant detail as a guide. And here Eissler draws up a sort (18) of opposition between what happens clinically and what happens in the so-called applied analyses which are usually made in the analysis of a work of art. He repeats twice something - if I had the time I should read out the text for you to give you a sense of its rather opaque character - he says in short, that it is more or less the same role that is played by the symptom and this inappropriate detail, except that in analysis, we begin with the symptom which is given as an element that is essentially irrelevant for the subject. It is in its interpretation that we progress to its solution. In the other case, it is the detail which introduced us to the problem, namely that in the measure that in a text - he does not even go to the stage of formulating this notion of text - in a text we grasp something which not being particularly implicated in it, being discordant, we are introduced to something which can lead us to the personality of the author.

There is here something which, if one looks at it more closely, will not stand up as a relationship of contrast. It seems that it should be enough for you to reflect on it in order to see it. If there is a contrast, there is also of course a parallel, that on the whole, the thing towards which it seems this remark should lead him, is undoubtedly that the discordance in the symbolic, in the symbolic as such in a written work, and here in any case, (19) plays a functional role, completely identifiable to a real symptom, in any case from the point of view of the progress, if this progress can be considered as a progress, in knowledge concerning the subject. From this point of view, in any case, the comparison has a real interest. Simply the question is then posed for us of knowing if in the work of art, I would say it is only the typing error that is going to be significant. And after all why? Because if it is here that in the work of art, what one can call the typing error, you understand of course that I mean something which is presented to us as a discontinuity, can lead us to some knowledge that is useful for us, serve as an indication in which we find in their major illuminations, in their unconscious impact, one or other incident in the past life of the author - this is what happens effectively in this article - is it not a fact that in any case the thing introduces us to the following, that the dimension of the work of art should be illuminated for us. In effect, from then on, and starting from this single fact - we will see it well beyond this fact - we can posit that the work of art, henceforward, can no longer be for us in any way affirmed as representing this transposition, this sublimation, call it what you will, of reality. It is not a question of something which operates as largely as possible by imitation, it is a question of something which operates just as largely as possible in the order of

(20) This can therefore be applied just as well to the following which is moreover the general case namely that the work of art always undergoes a profound reworking, this does not put in question, even the fact which I think we have already gone beyond, but this is not the point that I intend to draw your attention to. The fact is that the work of art is limited for us to a type of work of art. For the moment, I will limit myself to the written work of art. The work of art, far from being something which transfigures, in any way whatsoever, however broadly you may understand it, reality, introduces in its very structure this fact of the advent of the cut in so far as there is manifested in it the real of the subject qua beyond what he says. He is the unconscious subject because if this relationship of the subject to the advent of the cut is prohibited to him in so far as this precisely is where his unconscious is, it is not prohibited to him qua subject to the experience of the phantasy, namely that he is animated by what is called this relationship of desire and that by the simple reference to this experience and in so far as it is intimately woven into the work, something becomes possible through which the work is going to express this dimension, this real of the subject in so far as we have called it above the advent of being beyond any possible subjective realisation and that it is towards the virtue and the form of the work of art, the one which succeeds and also the one which fails, that it involves this very dimension, this dimension as I might say, if I may use the (21) topology of my schema to give you a sense of it, this transversal dimension which is not parallel to the field created in the real by human symbolisation which is called reality, but which for its part is transversal in so far as the most intimate relationship of man to the cut in so far as he goes beyond all the natural cuts, that there is this essential cut of his existence, namely that he is there and he must situate himself in this very fact of the advent of the cut, that this is what is in question in the work of art and especially in the one that we have tackled most recently because it is in this respect the most problematic work, namely Hamlet.

There are also all sorts of irrelevant things in Hamlet. I would even say that this is the way that we progressed but in a completely enigmatic fashion. We could not help, at every moment, questioning ourselves about the following: what does this irrelevance mean. Because there is one thing that is clear, which is that it cannot be excluded that Shakespeare intended it. If rightly or wrongly, it does not matter, Kurt Eissler, in the work of , can find it odd that there should be brought in, at a particular moment, a period of five years that nobody had previously spoken about - it is the irrelevant detail which is going to put him on the path of a certain research - it is clear that we have not proceeded in at all the same fashion about what happens in Hamlet, because, in any case, we are sure that this tissue of irrelevancies cannot, in any case, be purely (22) and simply resolved by us by the fact that Shakespeare here let himself be led by his genius. We have the sense that he had some part in it, and after all if for no other reason than as regards the most profound manifestation of his unconscious, in

any case here it is the architecture of these irrelevancies which shows us what he arrives at, it is essentially to deploy himself in the major affirmation which we distinguished above, namely in this type of relationship of the subject, to his most profound level, as speaking subject, namely in so far as he brings to birth his relationship to the cut as such.

This indeed is what the architecture of Hamlet shows us in so far as we see what in Hamlet fundamentally depends on a relationship which is that of the subject to the truth. Which is different to the dream of the dead father, which we started from this year, in our exploration, the dream of the dead father who appeared before the son transfixed with sorrow. Here the father knows that he is dead and lets his son know it and what distinguishes the scenario, the articulation of Shakespeare's Hamlet from the story of Hamlet as it appeared in the story of , is precisely, that they are the only two to know. In the story the murder has taken place publicly and Hamlet acts like a mad-man to dissimulate his intentions. Everyone knows that there has been a crime.

(23) Here, it is only the two of them that know, and one of them is a ghost. Now what is a ghost if not the representation of this paradox as a work of art alone can produce it and it is here that Shakespeare is going to render it entirely credible for us. Other people besides myself have shown the function that is fulfilled by this arrival of the ghost in the foreground. The function of the ghost is necessary from the beginning of Hamlet. And what does this ghost say? He says very strange things and I am astonished that no one has even approached, I will not say the psychoanalysis of the ghost, but has not by some questioning put the accent on what the ghost says. There is no doubt in any case about what he says: he says "The betrayal is absolute, there was nothing greater, more perfect, than my faithful relationship to this woman. There is nothing more total than the betrayal of which I was the object". Everything that is posed, everything that is affirmed in terms of goodwill, fidelity and vow, is therefore posed for Hamlet. Not simply as revocable but as having been literally revoked. The absolute cancelling out of this unfolds at the level of the signifying chain and is something quite different from this lack of something which might act as guarantee. The term which is guaranteed is the non-truth, this sort of revelation, as one might say of the lie. This is something which would deserve to be followed up, represents the spirit of Hamlet, this sort of stupor that he enters into after the paternal revelations. It is something which in Shakespeare's text is expressed in a quite remarkable way, namely that when he is asked what he has learned, he does (24) not want to say, and with good reason, but he expresses it in a quite particular fashion: "There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark but he's an arrant knave" (I v 123), namely that he expresses himself on the level of tautology.

But let us leave this to one side. These are only details and anecdotes. The question is elsewhere. The question is the

following: where are we deceived. It is generally accepted that a dead person cannot lie. And why? For the same reason, perhaps, that the whole of our science still preserves the postulate that Einstein has explicitly underlined. He said, from time to time, things which were not all that superficial, as philosophical statements. He said: God is subtle certainly, but he is honest. And can we say as much about a father who tells us in a categorical fashion that he is suffering all the torments of the flames of hell, and this for absolutely infamous crimes. There is here, all the same, something which cannot fail to alert us, there is some discordance and if we follow the effects in Hamlet of what is presented as the eternal damnation of the truth always condemned to be concealed from him, if we conceive that Hamlet remains then locked into this affirmation of the father, cannot we ourselves, up to a certain point, question ourselves about what is signified, at least functionally, by this (25) word, with respect to the genesis and the unfolding of the whole drama? Many things could be said, including the following: that Hamlet's father says the following:

" But virtue, as it never will be moved
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of Heaven,
 So lust, though to a radiant angel linked
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed
 And prey on garbage." (I v 53ff)

It is moreover a bad French translation because one should say:
"Ainsi le vice quoique lie a un ange radieux."

What radiant angel are we talking about? If it is a radiant angel who introduces vice, in this relationship of broken love in which the whole blame is visited on the other, could it be here more than anywhere else that the person who always comes to bear testimony to the insult that has been undergone does not have some part in it? This, of course, is the key which can never be turned, the secret that can never be revealed?

But is there not something here that emerges to put us on the track of the word in which we should understand something. Well indeed, it is here, as elsewhere, the phantasy. Because the eternally unsolved enigma, however primitive we may suppose to be, and with good reason, the brains of Shakespeare's contemporaries, all the same what a curious choice is this vial of poison poured into the ear of the ghost who is the father, who is Hamlet the father, do not forget it, because they are both called Hamlet.

(26) The analysts have not really gone into this area. There have been a good number who have indicated that, perhaps, some symbolic element should be recognised in it. But it is something which, in any case, can be situated, according to our method; in the form of the block that it forms, of the whole that it forms, of the impenetrable enigma that it constitutes. There is no need to underline, I have done so already, the paradox of this revelation, and also its consequences.

The important thing is the following: we have here a structure which is not only phantastical, which fits in so well with what is happening, namely that in any case there is someone who is poisoned through the ear, it is Hamlet, and here what functions as a poison, is the word of his father. From then on, Shakespeare's intention becomes a little clearer, namely that what he has shown us from the beginning is the relationship of desire to this revelation. For two months, Hamlet remains under the influence of this revelation and how is he going to reconquer little by little the use of his limbs? Well, precisely by a work of art. The actors come to him at the right time for him to make of them the testing ground for the conscience of the king, the text tells us. What is certain, is that it is by way of this text that he is going to be able to enter into action, into an action which is going to unfold necessarily from the first consequences, namely, first of all that this person who, since the paternal revelation has only wished for his own (27) dissolution:

"Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt.
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!" (I ii 129ff).

At the end of the play, we see him seized by a drunkenness which has a quite precise name, it is that of the pyrotechnist, he is wild with joy at having succeeded in doing his worst, he can no longer be contained and Horatio has to hold on to his coat-tails to limit this excessive exuberance. When he says to him: "Would not this get me a fellowship in a cry of players...?" Horatio replies: "Half a share" (III ii 288ff). He knows the limits that should be observed. In effect everything is far from being reconquered with this affair. It is not because he is a pyrotechnist that he has once again found his role. But it is enough that one should know that he is a pyrotechnist to understand that he will take on the first role that he finds. He will carry out what he is, when all is said and done, commanded to do.

I will read for you another time the text of this passage. "A poison ingested by a rat" - and you know that the rat is never very far away, especially in Hamlet - "gives him this thirst which is the very thirst he will die of, because it will dissolve completely in him, this mortal poison as Hamlet was first inspired by it"

Something is added to what I have just told you which allows its (28) whole accent to be given to it. An author named was astonished by a fact which the audience should have perceived long since,, which is that Claudius shows himself so insensitive to what precedes the play scene, the one in which Hamlet presents before Claudius the very scene of his crime. There is a sort of prologue which consists in a pantomime in which one sees, before this whole long scene of the protestations of fidelity and love by the queen in the play to the king in the play, beforehand, the gesture of pouring the poison into the ear in the very context of the orchard, of the garden, is made practically in front of

Claudius who literally does not give a peep.

Whole lives have been spent on this point. Mr said something like the fact that the ghost tempted, something which, with God's help, I will not talk about. And Mr has written big books to explain how it could happen that Claudius who is so obviously guilty might not have recognised himself in the scene that was put on. And he has constructed all sorts of minute and logical things to show that if he did not recognise himself, it was because he was looking somewhere else. It is not indicated in the stage directions and, perhaps, after all, it is not worth spending one's whole life working on it. Can we not suggest that Claudius has undoubtedly some part to play in it, he admits it himself, he shouts it to the heavens in a sombre (29) story in which there is upset not only the conjugal equilibrium of Hamlet the father, but something more again, even his very life, and that it is quite true that his crime gives off a bad odour to the point of stinking to high heaven. Everything indicates that at a particular moment he feels himself really cut to the quick, in the depths of himself, he reacts at the moment that Hamlet says what to him? He says to him: The one who coming onto the stage is Lucianus, he is going to poison the king, he is his nephew. One begins to understand that Claudius who, for some time, senses that there is something, the smell of sulphur in the air, he has moreover asked: is there anything offensive in it? Not the least offence Hamlet had replied. Claudius, at that moment, senses that things have gone a bit too far.

In fact, we are left in a completely ambiguous situation, namely that if everyone is scandalised, if the whole Court, from that moment on considers that Hamlet is particularly impossible, because everyone is on the king's side, it is undoubtedly for the Court because they have recognised there Claudius' crime, because no one knows anything and no one knew anything up to the end, outside Hamlet and his confidant, about the way that Claudius had exterminated Hamlet the father. The function of the phantasy seems therefore to be indeed something different from that of the methods as they say in detective stories and this something becomes much clearer if we think, as I believe I am showing you, (30) that Shakespeare has gone further than anybody, to the point that his work is the work itself and is the one where we can see described a sort of cartography of all possible human relationships, with this stigma which is called desire as touchstone, that which irreducibly designates his being, that by which, miraculously, we can find this sort of correspondence.

Does it not seem absolutely wonderful to you that someone whose work crosschecked throughout presents this unity of correspondence, that someone who has certainly been one of the people who have gone furthest in this direction of the oscillations should have himself, no doubt, lived an adventure, the one which is described in the Sonnets which allow us to crosscheck exactly the fundamental positions of desire. I will come back to it later. This surprising man traversed the life of Elizabethan England undoubtedly, he could hardly fail to be noticed with his forty plays and with something of which we have

all the same some traces, I mean some evidence. But read a very well-written work which summarises at the present time almost everything that has been done in terms of research on Shakespeare. There is something absolutely surprising: it is that apart from the fact that he certainly existed, we are able to say nothing about him, about his attachments, about everything that surrounded him, about his love affairs, about his friendships. Everything has passed away, everything has (31) disappeared without a trace. Our author presents himself to us analysts as the most radically vanished, dissolved, lost enigma that we can find in our history.

(Applause
)

Seminar 23: Wednesday 3 June 1959

I am continuing my attempt to articulate for you what should regulate our action in analysis in so far as we are dealing, in the subject, with the unconscious. I know that this is not an easy thing, and also I am not taking too many liberties in the sort of formulation that I would like to lead you to. It sometimes happens that my detours are linked to the feelings that I have of having to make you aware of the steps that must be taken. For all that I do not necessarily always succeed in helping you not to lose your sense of the road we are taking.

Nevertheless I am asking you to follow me, to trust me. And to begin again from the point that we were at the last time I articulate more simply - obviously not without precautions, not without trying to avoid ambiguities - what I formulated in putting the term of being in the foreground.

And to hammer it out, I ask myself, however hazardous such a formula may seem to you, the reinstatement, the reintegration into our daily concepts of terms which are so massive that for centuries nobody dares to touch them any more except with a sort of tremor of respect - I want to speak about being and about the one - let us say - naturally it is only their use which will demonstrate their coherence - that what I call being, and what up to a certain point I even went so far as to qualify the last time as pure being, at a certain level of its emergence, is something which corresponds to the terms according to which we take our bearings, specifically to the real and the symbolic. And that here being is quite simply the fact that we are not idealists, (2) that for us, as they say in philosophy books, we are among those who think that being comes before thought, but in order to take our bearings we need nothing less than this here in our work as analysts.

I regret having to stir up for you here the heavens of philosophy, but I must say that I only do it with a sense of constraint and obligation, and after all because I find nothing better in order to operate.

Being, we will say then that it is properly the real in so far as it manifests itself at the symbolic level. But let us be quite clear that it is at the level of the symbolic - for us in any case we do not have to consider elsewhere this thing which

appears quite simple - from the fact that there is something added on once we say it is that, and that this aims at the real, and in so far as the real is affirmed or rejected or denied in the symbolic.

This being is nowhere else - let this be well understood - except in the intervals, in the cuts, and there where properly speaking it is the least signifying of signifiers, namely the cut. That it is the same thing as the cut presentifies it in the symbolic. And we are speaking about pure being. I am going to say it more crudely because the last time it seems - and I willingly admit this to you - that certain formulae which I put forward appeared circumlocutious, or even confused to some of you. The pure being that is in question, is this same being of which I have just given the general definition, and this in so far as under the name of unconsciousness the symbolic, a signifying chain subsists according to a formula which you will allow me to put forward, every subject is one (tout sujet est un).

(3) And here I must ask your indulgence, namely to follow me. Which simply means that you should not imagine that what I am putting forward here is something that I am putting forward with fewer precautions than when I put forward being. I would ask you to give me the credit that before speaking to you I have already noticed that what I am now going to put forward, namely the one, is not a univocal notion, and that the dictionaries of philosophy will tell you that there is more than one use for this term, namely that the one, which is the whole, is not the same in all its uses, in the way it is employed, as the one in numbers, namely the one which supposes the sequence and the order of numbers and which is separated out from it as such. Because it indeed seems in effect, to all appearances, that this one is secondary to the institution of numbers as such, and to make a correct deduction - empirical approaches in any case leave this in no doubt (English psychology tries to establish the empirical entry of number into our experience; and it is not for nothing that I refer here to the most down-to-earth attempt at an argumentation). I already pointed out to you that it is impossible to structure human experience, I mean this most common affective experience, without starting from the fact that the human being counts, and that he counts himself.

I would say in an abbreviated fashion - because it is necessary, to go further, for me to suppose as having been acquired through a certain time of reflection what I have already said - that desire is closely linked to what is happening in so far as the (4) human being has to articulate himself in the signifier, and that qua being it is in the intervals that he appears at a level that we will try, perhaps, a little further on, to articulate in a fashion which there I will deliberately make more ambiguous than that of the one which I have just introduced, because I do not think that an attempt has yet been made to articulate it properly as such in its very ambiguity. It is the notion of pas un.

It is in so far as this S appears here as this pas un, that we

are going to take it up again and look at it again, it is what we are going to have to deal with today.

But let us take things up at the level of experience. I mean here at the level of desire. If desire plays this role of serving as an index to the subject to the point at which he can designate himself without vanishing, we will say that at the level of desire the subject counts himself (se compte). He values himself (se compte), to play on the ambiguities, in the tongue, it is to this first of all that I want to draw your attention: I mean to the tendency that we always have to forget what we are dealing with in experience, the experience of our patients, of those whom we have the cheek to take responsibility for; and this is why I refer you to yourselves. In desire, we value ourselves in cash (nous nous comptons comptant).

Here is where the subject appears in full truth not in the calculation, but where it is said he has to face up to what in the last analysis constitutes him as himself.

It is time all the same to remind analysts that there is nothing (5) which more constitutes the final term of the presence of the subject, in so far as this is what we are dealing with, than desire.

That starting from there the handling of the cash (comptant) begins to be subject to all sorts of transactions which dissolve it into different fiduciary equivalents, is obviously quite a problem, but there is all the same a moment when one must pay cash. If people come to see us, it is in general for this reason, it is that something is not working at the moment when they have to pay up what is in question, namely sexual desire, which is action in its fullest and in its simplest sense.

It is here that the question of the object is posed. It is clear that if the object were simple, not only would it not be difficult for the subject to face up to the price of his feelings, but if you will allow me this play on words he would more often be content (content) with the object instead of having to put up with it (s'en contenter), which is quite different.

This is obviously linked to the fact which is also worth recalling because it is the principle of our experience, that at this level of desire, the object, to satisfy it, is not, to say the least, of easy access, and that we would even say that it is not easy to encounter it, for structural reasons which are precisely the ones that we will now try to go into more fully.

(6) We do not appear to be going quickly, but it is because it is hard, even though I repeat it is our daily experience.

If the object of the most mature, the most adult desire, as we express ourselves from time to time, in this sort of drivelling intoxication which is called the exaltation of genital desire ... we would not have to constantly point out the division which is

introduced into it regularly, and that we are indeed forced to articulate at the very moment that we speak to this very conciliatory, more or less problematic subject, between the two planes which constitute this object as object of love, or as it is said, of tenderness, or of the other to whom we present the gift of our oneness, and the same other considered as the instrument of desire.

It is quite clear that it is the love of the other which resolves everything. But by this single remark one sees clearly that here perhaps we are going outside precisely the limits of our blue-print, because after all it is not to our dispositions, but to the tenderness of the other that there is reserved the fact that at the cost no doubt of a certain decentring of himself he could satisfy in the most exact possible way what on the plane of desire is proposed for us as object.

Finally it seems indeed that, in a more or less disguised way we quite simply the old distinctions of religious experience being introduced. Namely the distinction between the loving tendency, in the concrete or what is called the passionate, carnal sense of the term, and the love of charity. If this is really the case why not send our patients to the (7) pastors who would preach to them much better than ourselves.

Moreover we have had some warnings of the fact that this language would not be tolerated very well, and that from time to time there are no better people than our patients to anticipate the slidings of our language in this direction, and to tell us that after all if it is fine moral principles that we have to preach to them, they could go and look for them elsewhere, but that curiously it has already happened that this gets on their nerves to such an extent that they do not want to be listening to it again.

It is very easy to be ironical about this. But it is not pure and simple irony. I would go further. I would say that when all is said and done that there is no outline of a theory of desire - I mean of a theory of desire in which we could recognise ourselves If I dot the i's, the very figures through which I now intend to articulate it for you, except religious dogmas; and that it is not by chance that in the religious articulation of desire - this no doubt in hidden corners, access to which is of course reserved, is not wide open to common mortals, or the common faithful; but in these corners which are called mysticism, there is well inscribed as such the satisfaction of desire - is linked to a whole divine organisation which is the one which in common parlance is presented in the form of mysteries - probably also for the others (I do not need to name them). And you have to see what is represented for the believer in the tangible ladder of sufficiently vibrant terms like that of incarnation, or redemption.

(8) But I would go further: I would say that we would be greatly mistaken to think that the most profound of all, which is called the Trinity, is not something which at least is not without some relationship with the number three with which we always have to

deal since we perceive that there is no proper access, or equilibrium that can possibly be acquired for what we will call a normal desire, without an experience which brings into play a certain subjective triad.

Why not say these things because they are there in an extremely simple form. And for me I am not reluctant to do it, what is more I am just as well satisfied with such references as with those referring to more or less confused apprehensions of primitive ceremonies, whether they are totemic or otherwise, among which the best we find are not very different to these elements of structure.

Naturally, it is precisely in the measure that we try to tackle in a fashion which though it is not exhaustive is not taken from the angle of mystery, that I think that it is interesting for us to engage ourselves along this path. But then I repeat that certain questions which I would describe as coming from the moral, or even the social horizon, are not superfluous to recall on this occasion: namely to articulate the fact which appears quite clearly in contemporary experience, that there can be no satisfaction of each without the satisfaction of all, and that this is at the principle of a movement which, even if I have not become as powerfully involved in it as others, pressures us from every side, and no doubt sufficiently to be almost on the point of upsetting a lot of our comforts.

Again it is a question of recalling that the satisfaction in question deserves perhaps to be questioned. Because is it (9) purely and simply satisfaction of needs? The very people that I am speaking about - let us put them here under the rubric of the movement which is inscribed in the Marxist perspective, and which has nothing other as its principle than what I have just expressed: there is no satisfaction for each except in the satisfaction of all - would not dare to claim that, because precisely that which is the goal of this movement and of the revolutions that it involves, is in the last analysis to allow this all to accede to a liberty which is no doubt in the distance, and posed as having to be post-revolutionary.

But this liberty then, what other content can we give it than that of being precisely the free disposition for each of his desire. It remains nevertheless that the satisfaction of desire, in this perspective, is a post-revolutionary question. And we perceive this every day. This does not settle anything. We cannot defer the desire that we are dealing with to a post-revolutionary stage, and everyone knows moreover that I am not in the process here of criticising one or other mode of life, whether it is on this side of or beyond a certain limit.

The question of desire remains in the very foreground of the preoccupations of the powers that be. I mean that there must be some social, collective manner of dealing with it. This is no easier of this side of a certain curtain than on the other. It is always a question of tempering a certain discontent, the discontents in culture as Freud called them. There are no other

discontents in culture than the discontents of desire.

To hammer a final nail into what I mean, I would pose to you the (10) question of whether each of you, not qua analysts who are too given - less here than elsewhere - to believe yourself destined to lord it over the desires of others ... to ask yourselves about what the term means for each one of you at the heart of your existence: what does realising one's desire mean?

That exists all the same. There are all the same things which are achieved. They have gone a bit to the right, or a bit to the left, they are twisted, messed up, and more or less unsatisfactory, but they are all the same things which at a certain moment we can pull together in this bundle at one or other moment - this went in the direction of the satisfaction of my desire.

But if I ask you to articulate what it means to realise one's desire, I am willing to bet that you will not articulate it very easily. That nevertheless if I may be permitted - I would cross this with the religious reference which I advanced today - to refer to this extraordinary creation of black humour which the religion to which I referred above, the one which is quite alive here. Christian religion, put forward under the name of the last judgement, I ask you the question simply whether this is not one of the questions which we should project as it were into its most appropriate locus - the locus of the last judgement; the question as to whether on this day of the last judgement what we can say on this subject, what in our unique existence we will have done in this sense of realising our desire, will not weigh as heavily as the one which does not refute it in any degree, which does not counterbalance it in any way, namely whether we will have or not have done what are called good works (le bien).

(11) But let us come back to our formula, our structure of desire, to see what makes of it no longer just the function of the object, as I tried to articulate it two years ago, nor yet that of the subject in so far as I tried to show it to you which is distinguished in this keypoint of desire by this fainting of the subject in so far as he has to name himself as such, but in the correlation which links the one to the other, which means that the object has this function precisely of signifying this point at which the subject cannot name himself, where modesty I would say is the royal form of what is translated in the symptoms as shame and disgust.

And I would ask you again for some time before entering into this articulation, to point out to you this something which I am forced to leave here as a mark, namely as a point which I was not able to develop as I would have wished at the time, because of the programme we were following, which is that of comedy.

Comedy, contrary to what empty minded people may think, is what is most profound in this access to the mechanisms of the stage in so far as it allows to the human being the spectral decomposition of what his situation in the world is. Comedy is beyond this

modesty. Tragedy ends with the name of the hero, and with the total identification of the hero. Hamlet is Hamlet, he is such and such a name. It is even because his father was already Hamlet that when all is said and done everything is resolved here, namely that Hamlet is definitively abolished in his desire. I think I have said enough now about Hamlet.

But comedy is a very curious trap for desire, and that is why every time a snare for desire functions we are in comedy. It is desire in so far as it appears where it is not expected. The (12) ridiculous father, the hypocritical bigot, the virtuous man in the throes of an adulterous enterprise, these are the people with whom one makes comedy. But there must be of course this element which ensures that desire does not avow itself. It is masked and unmasked. It is jeered at, it is punished on occasion, but it is for appearances sake, because in real comedies, the punishment does not even touch the wing of the crow of desire, which escapes absolutely intact.

Tartuffe is exactly the same after the policeman has put his hand on his shoulder. Arnolfe, goes 'phew', namely that he is still Arnolfe, and that there is no reason why he should not begin again with a new Agnes. And Harpagon is not cured by the more or less artificial conclusion of Moliere's comedy. Desire, in comedy, is unmasked, but not refuted.

I am only giving you an indication here. Now I would like to introduce you to something which will serve to situate our behaviour with regard to desire in so far as experience has taught us, in analysis, to see it, as one of our great poets said, even though he is a still greater painter, here we can catch this desire by the tail; namely in the phantasy.

The subject therefore, in so far as he desires, does not know where he is with respect to the unconscious articulation, namely to this sign, to this scansion that he repeats in so far as it is unconscious.

Where is this subject as such? Is he at the point where he desires? This is the point of my articulation today. He is not (13) at the point where he desires, he is somewhere in the phantasy. And this is what I want to articulate today, because it is on this that there depends all our behaviour in interpretation.

I once gave an account here of an observation which appeared in a sort of little bulletin in Belgium, concerning the appearance of a transitory perversion at a moment in the treatment of something which was inappropriately labelled as a sort of phobia, even though it was very clearly a question and as the author herself was aware in her questionings - I must say that this text is precious, it is very conscientious and of great use because of the questionings that the author herself highlights, namely the woman who carried out this treatment, and who no doubt if she had been better directed herself had all the qualities necessary to see things much more clearly and go much further. It is

clear that this observation, in which one can say that in the name of certain principles, "reality" principles on this occasion the analyst allow herself to play with the desire of the subject as if it were a question here of the point which should be put in place for him.

The subject, not without reason no doubt, starts phantasising that his cure will coincide with the fact of being able to sleep with the analyst. No doubt it is not by chance that something so clear, so crude, comes to the forefront in an analytic experience; it is a result of the general orientation given to (14) the treatment, and of something which is clearly well perceived by the author herself as having been the crucial point, namely the moment where there was question of interpreting a phantasy, and of identifying or not an element of this phantasy, which happily is very magnificently, and at this moment, I will not say a man in armour, but a suit of armour which advances behind the subject. A suit of armour armed with something which is fairly easily recognisable because it is a can of Flytox, namely the thing which can be produced as the most comic and also the most characteristic representation of the phallic apparatus as destructive.

And this to the greatest retrospective embarrassment of the author. It is indeed on this that a lot of things depended, and she senses that it was on this that there subsequently hung the whole unleashing of the artificial perversion. Everything depends on the fact that this was interpreted in terms of reality, of an undoubtedly real experience of the phallic mother. And not in the case of the subject of the fact, which emerges quite clearly from a certain point of the view of the observation once one is willing to take it, that the subject makes emerge here the necessary and lacking image of the father as such in so far as he is required for the stabilisation of his desire. And nothing all the same could give us greater pleasure than the fact that this missing person appears then in the form of a montage, as something which gives the living image of the subject in so far as he is reconstituted with the help of a certain number of cuts, of articulations of the suit of armour, in so far as they are joints, and pure joints as such.

(15) It is in this sense, and in a quite concrete fashion that one could reconstruct the type of intervention which would have been necessary; that perhaps what is called on this occasions a cure could have been reached with less trouble than by this detour of a transitory perversion played out no doubt in the real, and which undoubtedly allows us to put our finger in a certain practice on the way in which the reference to reality represents a regression in the treatment.

I will now clearly specify what I am trying to get you to sense about the relationships of \$ and o. I will first of all give you a model which is only a model, the Fort 1 Dat, namely something which I need make no further commentary on, namely this moment which we can consider as being theoretically the first in the introduction of the subject into the symbolic in so far as it

is in the alternation of a signifying couple that there resides this introduction in relation to a little object whatever it may be, let us say a ball, or just as easily a little piece of cord, something frayed at the end of the bed, provided it holds up, and that it can be rejected and brought back. Here therefore is the element in question, and in which that which is expressed is something which is just before the appearance of S, namely the moment at which the S questions himself with respect to the other qua present or absent.

It is therefore the locus through which the subject enters at this level into the symbolic, and makes emerge at the beginning this something for which Mr. Winnicott, because of the requirements of a thought completely oriented towards primary experiences of frustration, introduced the term which is (16) necessary for him in the possible genesis of any human development as such, the transitional object. The transitional object is the little ball of the Fort I Da!.

From when can we consider that this game is promoted to its function in desire? From the moment that it becomes a phantasy, namely when the subject no longer comes into play, but anticipates himself in this game (je), where he short-circuits this game (je) where he is completely included in the phantasy. I mean, where he grasps himself in his disappearance.

He will never of course grasp himself without difficulty, but what is required for what I am calling phantasy, qua support of desire, is that the subject should be represented in the phantasy in this moment of disappearance. And I would like to point out to you that I am not saying anything extraordinary here. Simply I am articulating this angle, this flash, this moment that Mr. Jones dwelt on when he tried to give its concrete meaning to the term castration complex, and from which for reasons required by his personal understanding he does not depart, because this is the way that for him things are phenomenologically tangible.

People are brought to a halt all the same by the limits of understanding when they try to understand at all costs; this is what I am trying to get you to go beyond a little by telling you that one can go a little further by stopping oneself trying to understand. And it is for this reason that I am not a phenomenologist.

(17) And Jones identifies the castration complex with the fear of the disappearance of desire. It is exactly what I am in the process of telling you in a different form. Because the subject fears that his desire will disappear, this must indeed signify something, which is that somewhere he desires himself desiring. This, pay careful attention, is what constitutes the structure of the neurotic's desire.

This is why I will not go directly to the neurotic, because this may appear to you too easily as a simple reduplication: I desire myself desiring, and desire myself desiring as desired etc. This is not at all what is in question, and this is why it is useful

to spell out again the perverse phantasy. And if today I can not go any further I will try to do so by taking one of the most accessible phantasies, and one which is moreover closely related to what I alluded to above in the observation that I evoked, namely the phantasy of the exhibitionist; of the voyeur also, because you are going perhaps to see that it would be well not to be satisfied with the fashion in which the structure in question is usually reported.

We are usually told, it is very simple, this perverse phantasy is very nice, the impulse. Of course one likes to look, or one likes to be looked at, these charming vital drives as Paul Eluard said somewhere. In short there is something there, the drive, which takes pleasure in what Eluard's poem expresses very prettily in the formula Donner a voir, a manifestation of the form offering itself spontaneously to the other.

(18) And in sum, I would point out to you, that it is not nothing to say this. This no longer seems so simple to us. It implies, because this is the level that we were at last evening, namely the implicit subjectivity there can be in an animal life, it implies all the same a certain subjectivity. It is scarcely possible even to conceive of this giving a look at (donner a voir), without giving to the word "to give" the fullness of the virtues of the gift, all the same a reference, an innocent, unawakened one no doubt, of this form to its own richness.

And we also have quite concrete indications of it in the ostentation demonstrated by these animals in the manifestations of the captivating parade, principally of sexual parade. I am not going to start wriggling the stickleback in front of you again, I think that I have spoken to you about it at enough length to give a meaning to what I am in the process of telling you. It is simply to say that in the sweep of a certain behaviour, however instinctual we may suppose it to be, something may be implied which is this little movement of return, and at the same time of anticipation which is there in the sweep of the word. I mean a temporal projection of this something which is in the exuberance of the drive to show oneself, as we can rediscover it at the natural level.

Here I can only incidentally, and for those who were at the scientific session last night, urge the person who intervened on this subject to see that it would be appropriate precisely in this temporal anticipation to modulate what is perhaps (19) expectation no doubt in the case of the animal in certain circumstances, with this something which allows us to articulate the disappointment of this expectation as a deception. And the medium I would say, at least until I am convinced of the contrary, seems to me to be constituted by a promise.

Whether the animal promises himself the success of one or other of his behaviours, this is the whole question for us to be able to speak about deception instead of a disappointment of expectation.

Let us come back now to our exhibitionist. Is he inscribed in any way in this dialectic of what is shown, even in so far as this shown is linked to the pathways of the other? I can here simply point out to you all the same that in the exhibitionistic relationship to the other - I am going to employ rough and ready terms to make myself understood; they are certainly not the best, the most literary ones - that the other must be struck at the level of his complicitous desire - and God knows the other is so at times - by what is happening here, and by what is happening as what: as a breach (rupture).

Notice that this breach is not an indifferent one. It is essential that this breach should thus be the trap for desire. It is that it is a breach which passes unnoticed for what we can call on this occasion the most part. And it is perceived by the one that it is addressed to qua unnoticed elsewhere. So that everyone knows that there is no real exhibitionism, except of course for some supplementary refinement, in privacy. In order precisely that it should be, that there should be pleasure in it, it must happen in a public place.

(20) And then we come to this structure in our big boots and we say to him: my friend if you show yourself at such a distance it is because you are afraid to approach your object: come closer, come closer. I ask you what sort of a joke is this. Do you think that exhibitionists do not copulate? Clinical experience is completely against this. They are sometimes very good husbands to their wives except that the desire which is in question is elsewhere. They require of course other conditions; these are conditions which it would be well to dwell on here.

One can clearly see that this manifestation, this elective communication which is produced here with the other, satisfies a certain desire only in so far as there are put into a certain relationship a certain manifestation of being and of the real in so far as it involves a symbolic framework as such. This moreover is what makes a public place necessary: one has to be quite sure that one is in a symbolic framework. Namely: I point this out for the people who reproach me with not daring to approach the object, of giving way to some fear or other - that I put as a condition for the satisfaction of their desire precisely the maximum of danger. Here again people will go in the opposite direction, without worrying about the contradiction, and they will say that it is danger that they are looking for. It is not impossible.

Before going that far let us try all the same to notice a structure: the fact is that on the side of what here plays the part of object, namely those who are involved, one or several little girls for whom we should in passing shed a tear to show (21) our good intentions, it can happen that the little girls, especially if there are several of them, enjoy themselves a lot while this is going on. This even forms part of the pleasure of the exhibitionist; it is a variant.

The desire of the other is there then as an essential element in

so far as it is surprised, as it is involved beyond modesty, that on occasion it is complicitous. The variations are possible.

On the other hand what do we have here? We have here something whose structure I have already pointed out to you sufficiently just now. There is no doubt what he shows, you will tell me. But for my part I would say to you that what he shows on this occasion is rather variable; what he shows is more or less magnificent; but what he shows is something redundant which hides rather than unveils what is in question. One must not be deceived by believing that what he shows testifies only to the erection of his desire, the difference there is between that and the apparatus of his desire. The apparatus is essentially constituted by what I underlined as what is glimpsed in the unnoticed, which I called quite crudely a trousers which is opened and closed, and to speak plainly is constituted by what we can call the split (fente) in the desire.

This is what is essential. And there is no erection however successful one may suppose it to be, which supplies here for what is the essential element in the structure of the situation, namely this split as such. It is here also that the subject as such designates himself. This is what you must hold onto to see (22) what is in question. And very probably what it is a question of making good. We will come back to it later because I want to check this against the correlative phenomenology of the voyeur.

I can, I think, go more quickly now. And nevertheless to go too quickly is as always to allow ourselves to dodge what is in question. This is why I approach here with the same circumspection, because what is essential, and what is omitted in the scopophilic drive, is to begin also with the split. Because for the voyeur this split is found to be an absolutely indispensable element of the structure. And even though the relationship between the seen and the unseen is divided here differently it is nonetheless distinct.

What is more I want to go into detail. Namely because it is a question of the support that is taken from the object, namely from the other in the specifically voyeuristic satisfaction in this case, the important thing is that what is seen is involved in the affair. This forms parts of the phantasy. Because without any doubt what is seen can very often be seen without knowing it. What we call the feminine object, because it seems that it is not for nothing that it is in this direction that this research is carried out, the feminine object does not know of course that she is being seen, but in the satisfaction of the voyeur, I mean in what supports his desire, there is the fact that it is in lending oneself as one might say innocently - something in the object lends itself to this function of spectacle - that it is open, that she participates in potency in this dimension of indiscretion; and that it is in the measure that something in her gestures may allow it to be suspected that (23) from some angle she is capable of lending herself to it that the jouissance of the voyeur attains its true and proper level.

The creature who is surprised will be all the more erotic I would say, because something in her gestures may reveal her to us as offering herself to what I would call the invisible hosts of the air. It is not for nothing that I evoke them here. They are what are called the angels of Christianity which M. Anatole France had the gall to involve in this affair. Read La Revolte des Anges. You will see in it at least the very precise link which unites the dialectic of desire with this sort of virtuality of an eye which is ungraspable but always imaginable. And the references made to the book of the comte de Cabanis concerning the mystical marriages of men with the sylphs and the water sprites were not put there for nothing in a text whose intentions are very well centred as is the case with one or other of Anatole France's books.

Therefore it is in this activity in which the creature appears in this secret relationship with herself, in these gestures in which there is betrayed the permanence of the witness before whom one does not avow oneself, that the pleasure of the voyeur reaches its peak.

Do you not see that here, in the two cases, that the subject reduces himself to the artifice of the split as such. This artifice takes his place and shows him effectively reduced to the miserable function which is his; but he indeed is the one in question, in so far as in the phantasy he is the split.

The question of the relationship of this split to what is (24) symbolically the most intolerable thing in our experience, namely the form which responds to it in the place of the feminine sexual organs, is another question which we will leave open here for the future. But now let us take up the whole thing and let us begin from the poetic metaphor of the celebrated "I saw myself seeing me" of the Jeune Pargue.

It is quite clear that this dream with its perfect closure of completed sufficiency, is realised in no desire, if not the superhuman desire of the poetic virgin. It is in so far as he puts himself at the place of "I saw myself", that the voyeur and the exhibitionist are introduced into the situation which is what? Precisely the situation in which the other does not see the "I saw myself" a situation of unconscious jouissance of the other. The other, in a way, has his third part decapitated here, he does not know that he can potentially be seen, he does not know what is represented by the fact that he may be shaken by what he sees, namely by the unusual object which the exhibitionist represents to him, and which has its effect on this other only in so far as it is effectively the object of his desire but does not recognise it at that moment.

He establishes therefore the sharing out of a double ignorance, because if the other does not realise at this level, what is supposed to be realised in the mind of the one who exhibits himself, or of the one who sees himself as a possible manifestation of desire, inversely in his desire the one who exhibits himself or who sees himself does not realise the

function of the cut which abolishes him in a clandestine automation, which crushes him in a moment whose spontaneity he (25) absolutely fails to recognise in so far as it designates what is said there as such, and which is there at its height again known as present but suspended.

He himself is only aware of this shameful animal manoeuvre, this oblique manoeuvre, this manoeuvre which exposes him to being beaten. Nevertheless this split, in whatever form it is presented, a shade, or a telescope, or some screen or other, this split is here what makes him enter into the desire of the other; this split is the symbolic split of a more profound mystery which is the one which has to be elucidated, namely its place at a certain level of the unconscious, which allows us to situate the pervert, at this level, as being in a certain relationship with

This indeed is the structure of desire as such, because it is the desire of the other as such reproducing the structure of his own that he is aiming at.

The perverse solution to this problem of the situation of the subject in the phantasy is precisely the following: it is to aim at the desire of the other and to believe that one sees in it an object.

It is late so I will stop here. This is also a cut. Its only drawback is that it is arbitrary. I mean it does not allow me to show you the originality of this solution compared to the neurotic solution. You should simply know that it is this which makes it interesting to compare them, and starting from this fundamental phantasy of the pervert to help you to see the function which the neurotic subject plays in his own phantasy. Luckily I already indicated it to you above. As I told you he desires himself desiring. And why then because he cannot desire, is it so necessary that he should desire? Everyone knows there is something involved in this which is properly speaking the phallus. Because after all up to the present (26) you have been able to see that I have allowed to be reserved in this economy the intervention of the phallus, this good old phallus of long ago.

On two occasions in taking up the Oedipus complex last year, and in my article on the psychoses I showed it to you as being bound to the paternal metaphor, namely as coming to give to the subject a signified. But it was impossible to reintroduce it into the dialectic in question if I had not posited for you first of all this structural element through which the phantasy is constituted in something whose symbolism I am going to ask you to make a last effort to accept in future as we part today.

I mean that in future the $\$$ in the phantasy qua confronted and opposed to this o which you have well understood that I showed it to you today as being much more complicated than the three forms that I gave you at first as an approach, because here the o is the desire of the other in the case that I am presenting.

You see therefore that all the forms of the cut, including precisely the ones which reflect the cutting of the subject, are indicated. I am asking you to accept the following notation. I would even allow myself to be so ridiculous as to refer to a notation of concerning the imaginaries. I left you on the brink of this pas un in this fainting of the subject. It is at this pas un, and even at this as pas un, in so far as it is what gives us our opening onto the oneness of the subject that I will take things up the next time. But if I ask you to take it down in this way it is precisely so that you will not see in it the most general form, and at the same time the most confused (27) form of negation. If it is so difficult to speak about negation, it is because no one knows what it is. Already I nevertheless indicated at the beginning of this year an opening in the difference there is between foreclosure and discordance. For the moment I am indicating to you in an closed, shut off, symbolic, but precisely because of this decisive form, another form of this negation. It is something which situates the subject in another order of magnitude.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 10 June 1959

In our last conversation I developed the structure of the phantasy in so far as it is in the subject what we call the support of his desire. The phantasy, there where we can grasp it in a structure sufficiently complete to serve subsequently in a way as a sort of turning plate for that whose different structures we are going to be lead to refer to it, namely for the relationship of the desire of the subject to what for a long time I have designated for you as being its reference, its essence in the analytic perspective, namely the desire of the other.

Today, as I announced, I am going to try to situate for you the position of desire in what we can call the different nosological structures, those drawn from experience, at the first level of neurotic structure.

The perverse phantasy, because it was the one that I chose the last time to allow you to pick out in it what corresponds to the function of the subject and to that of the object in the phantasy in so far as it is the support, the index of a certain position of the subject, just as it is the image of the other which is the starting point and the support - at least at this point where the subject qualifies himself as desire there is this more complex structure which is called the phantasy and into which paradoxically I was led the last time, by taking up a particular, especially exemplary form, not without having a profound motive that of the exhibitionist and of the voyeur, to show you that contrary to what is too often said, these are not two positions which are reciprocal in some way, as a sort of hasty thinking (2) leads it to be formulated, the one who shows, and the one who sees complementing one another.

As I told you, these two positions are on the contrary strictly parallel, and that in the two cases, the subject, in the phantasy, finds himself indicated by something which we have called the split, the gap, something which is in the real both a hole and a flash in so far as the voyeur spies behind his shutter, that the exhibitionist half opens his screen, that he is indicated there in his proper place in the act which is nothing other than this flash of the object of which one speaks. And experienced, perceived by the subject through the opening of this gap, through this something which it situates him as open. Open to what? To a desire other than his own. His own which is

profoundly affected, shaken, struck by what is glimpsed in this flash.

It is the emotion of the other beyond her modesty (pudeur); it is the openness of the other, the virtual expectation in so far as she does not sense herself as being seen, and that nevertheless she is perceived as offering herself to view; it is this that characterises in the two cases this position of the object which is so fundamental in this structure because when all is said and done analytic experience locates it at the starting point of what it found at first along the path of the causes and the generating stigmata of the neurotic position, specifically the scene that is glimpsed, what is called the primitive scene.

It participates in this structure, namely by a reversal no doubt of this structure which means that the subject sees something (3) opening which is this gap suddenly glimpsed, something which quite obviously in its traumatic value has a relationship to the desire of the other glimpsed, perceived as such, which remains there as an enigmatic kernel until subsequently, in a deferred way, he will be able to reintegrate this moment that is experienced into a chain which will not necessarily be a correct chain, which will in any case be the chain which generates a whole unconscious modulation, a core generator in the case of neurosis.

I would ask you to dwell on this structure of the phantasy. It is understood that it is a suspended moment, as I underlined, which gives it its value. This is what gives it its value, it is a pause. A pause which has this value of an index corresponds to a moment of action in which the subject cannot establish himself in a certain fashion x which is precisely what we designate as desire here, what we are trying to isolate in its function as desire, properly speaking on condition, that this subject loses the meaning of this position.

Because the fact is that the phantasy is opaque to him. We, for our part, are able to designate his place in the phantasy. Perhaps he himself is able to glimpse it, but the meaning of the position namely the reason why what comes to birth of his being is there, this the subject cannot say. This is the essential point: aphanisis. No doubt the term is a happy one and is useful to us, but unlike the function that Jones gives it in the interpretation of the castration complex, its form is enigmatic.

(4) We see in the phantasy that aphanisis, at least there where the word disappearance, fading as I also said, is useful to us, it is not qua the aphanisis of desire, it is in so far as at the point of desire there is aphanisis of the subject. The subject, in so far as he is supposed to situate himself at this place, supposed to articulate himself as I where it speaks in the unconscious chain, in so far as he cannot indicate himself there except qua disappearing from his position as subject.

From this we can see what is going to be in question. In so far as we have defined this extreme point, this imaginary point in

which the being of the subject resides with its maximal density - these are only images so that your minds can hold on to a metaphor - from the moment that we see, or that we define this imaginary point in which the being of the subject in so far as he is the one who is to be articulated, to be named in the unconscious, cannot in any case, in the last analysis, be named, but simply indicated by something which reveals him to himself as a cutting, as a split, as a structure of cutting in the phantasy, it is around this imaginary point - and this is i legitimate in every domain if we can articulate its structure by what starts from it - that we are going to try to situate what effectively happens in the different forms of the subject which are not at all necessarily homogenous forms, forms which are comprehensible from one side by the one who is on the other side.

(5) We know only too well in this respect what can deceive us in the understanding of a psychosis. For example we should be careful not to understand even though we try to reconstruct, to articulate its structure. And this in fact is what we are trying to do here. Thus starting from there, from this structure in which the subject, in his moment of disappearance - and I repeat that this is a notion whose trace we can find when Freud speaks about the navel of the dream, the point at which all the associations converge in order to disappear, in order to be no longer linked to anything except to what he calls the Nabel; this is what is in question. In this regard, the subject sees opening out before him what? Nothing other than a gap which, at the limit, would engender a reference to the infinity of desire, towards an other desire.

As we see in the phantasy of the voyeur and the exhibitionist, it is on the desire of the other that he finds himself dependent. He finds himself offered up to the mercy of the desire of the other. This is concrete. We find it in experience. It is not because we do not articulate it that we do not commonly that it is not very easy to grasp.

When I spoke to you at length, two years ago about little Hans' neurosis, it was nothing other than this that was in question. It is in so far as at a moment of his evolution little Hans finds himself confronted with something which goes much further than the undoubtedly critical moment of a rivalry with the new arrival, with his little sister, with something much more serious than this novelty which is for him the outline of sexual

(6) maturation which makes him capable of having erections, even indeed, for specialists the question is still open, of having orgasms. It is neither at the interpsychological level, properly speaking, nor at the level of the integration of a new tendency that the crisis opens up. I well underlined and articulated and even laboured it at that time.

It is in so far as by a closing at that moment of the situation he finds himself effectively and especially confronted as such with the desire of his mother, and that he finds himself in the presence of this desire without any recourse. The Hilflosigkeit, that Freud, in his article on the unconscious, the

article of 1917 It is this most primitive of all positions of being without recourse, and with respect to which anxiety is already the beginnings of an organisation in so far as it is already an expectation. If one does not know of what, if in any case one does not articulate it right away, in any case it is before everything (Urbartut?) Freud tells us. But first there is the following: Hilflosigkeit, having no recourse.

Having no recourse before what? That which cannot be defined, centred in any other fashion than before the desire of the other.

It is this relationship of the desire of the subject, in so far as it has to situate itself before the desire of the other which nevertheless literally sucks him in, and leaves him without recourse, it is in this drama of the relationship of the desire of the subject to the desire of the other that there is constituted an essential structure, not only of neurosis, but of every other structure defined analytically.

We will begin with the neurosis; we have gone far enough from (7) perversion for you to be able to glimpse that perversion is linked to it also. Nevertheless let us underline it. We have brought in this perversion only in this instantaneous moment of the phantasy, due to the phantasy, in so far as the passage a l'acte in perversion, and in perversion alone, reveals it.

In neurosis, in which we are trying to circumscribe more closely for the moment that which is related to this structure which I am articulating before you, it is this fruitful moment of the neurosis that I am aiming at in the case of little Hans, because it is a question there of a phobia, namely the simplest form of neurosis, the one in which we can put our finger on the character of the solution, the one which I already articulated for you at length in connection with little Hans by showing you the coming into play of this object, the phobic object, in so far as it is an all purpose signifier.

It is there to occupy at this place, between the desire of the subject and the desire of the other, a certain function which is a function of protection or of defence. On this there is no ambiguity about the Freudian formulation. The fear of the phobic object is intended to protect the subject from what? (It is in Freud) from the approach of his desire. And it is by looking more closely at things that we see what is in question: from his desire in so far as it is weaponless with respect to what in the other, the mother on this occasion, opens up for Hans as the sign of his absolute dependency.

She will lead him to the ends of the earth, she will lead him still further; she will lead him as far and as often as she herself disappears, is eclipsed. That she is the person who at (8) that moment can appear to him not only as the one who could respond to all his demands. She appears to him with this supplementary mystery of being herself opened to a lack whose meaning appears at that moment to Hans to be in a certain

relationship to the phallus, which phallus nevertheless he does not have.

It is at the level of the want-to-be of the mother that there opens out for Hans the drama that he can only resolve by giving rise to this signifier of the phobia whose plurivalent function I showed you to be a sort of universal key, and all-purpose key which serves him at that moment in protecting himself against that which in a univocal fashion every experienced analyst has perceived, against the arousal of an anxiety more terrifying again than the fear linked to, than the fear fixed to the phobia. This moment, in so far as it is relationship to desire, that it is something which is going in the structure of the phantasy, in the opposition $\$$ to o , to give to this $\$$ something which will alleviate the part of it which sustains the presence of the object, which is something which the subject can hold onto, this point where in fact the symptom is going to be produced.

The symptom at the deepest level in the neurosis, namely in so far as it involves in the most general fashion the position of the subject. This is what deserves to be articulated here.

If you do not mind we will proceed in this order: to be articulated first of all, then to ask ourselves if this structure of the phantasy is so fatal, how something which is on the brink of this point of being lost, of this point of disappearance indicated in the structure of the phantasy, as this something which is on the brink, which is sustained at the entrance to the (9) vortex of the phantasy, how this something is possible. Because it is quite clear that it is possible.

The neurotic has access to the phantasy. He has access to it in certain privileged moments of the satisfaction of his desire. But we all know that this is only a functional utilisation of the phantasy that its relationship on the contrary to his whole world, and especially his relationship to others, to the real others - this is where we are getting to now - is profoundly marked by what? It has always been said, by a repressed drive.

This repressed drive, it is its relationship that we are trying to articulate a little better, in a more rigorous fashion, in a fashion also that is clinically more evident. We are simply going to see how this is possible.

We are going all the same to indicate how this presents itself. Let us take the obsessional, if you wish, and the hysteric. Let us take them together since in a certain number of features we are going to see one being illuminated by the other.

The object of the phantasy, in so far as it ends up at this desire of the other, it is a question of not approaching it, and for that obviously there are several solutions. We have seen the one which is linked to the promotion of the phobic object, to the object of prohibition. Prohibition of what? When all is said and done of a jouissance because it opens up before the subject the abyss of desire as such.

There are other solutions. I already indicated them to you in (10) these two schematic forms in the Royaumont report. The desire of the subject can be sustained by the subject before the desire of the other. He sustains it in two ways, as unsatisfied desire, this is the case of hysterics. I remind you of the example of the butcher's beautiful wife where this structure appears in such a clear fashion, this dream in whose associations there appears as it were the avowed form of the operation of the hysteric.

The butcher's beautiful wife desires to eat caviare, but she does not want her husband to buy it for her, because it is necessary that this desire should remain unsatisfied. This structure which is pictured there in a little manoeuvre which forms moreover the warp and woof of the daily life of these subjects, goes much further in fact. This story gives the meaning of the whole function that the hysteric gives herself. It is she who is the obstacle. It is she who does not want. Namely that in this relationship of the subject to the object in the phantasy she comes to occupy this same third position which above was devolved on to the phobic signifier, but in another fashion.

It is she who is the obstacle, it is she who is at stake in reality. And here jouissance is precisely to prevent desire in situations that she herself constructs. This is one of the fundamental functions of the hysterical subject; in the situations that she constructs her function is to prevent desire coming to term in order that she herself will remain what is at stake.

She takes the place of what we could call using an English term a , namely something like a manikin. has a broader, more general sense. It is a false likeness. The (11) hysteric, in so far as in a situation so frequently observed that it is really clearly recognisable in the observations - it is enough to have the key which is that of her position between a shadow which is her double, a woman who is in this hidden fashion this point precisely where there is situated or inserted her desire in so far as she must not see it - the hysteric establishes, presents herself in this case, as the mainspring of the machine, the one who suspends and situates them with respect to one another like kinds of puppets for she has to sustain herself in this sort of reduplicated relationship which is that of \$ O o.

The hysteric is nevertheless in the game herself in the form of the one who when all is said and done is the stake.

The obsessional has a different position. The difference between the obsessional and the hysteric is that he remains outside the game. His true desire you will observe - place your trust in these formulae when you have to deal with the subject who can be clinically described in this way - the obsessional is someone who is never really at the place where something is at stake which could be qualified as his desire. The place where apparently he is risking something is not where he is. It is of this very disappearance of the subject, the at the point of

approach of desire, that he makes as you might say his weapon and his hiding place. He has learned to make use of this in order to be elsewhere.

And observe it carefully. This of course he can only do, because there is no other place than the one which was reserved up to now for the instantaneous, relational structure of the hysteric, he can only do it by deploying in time, by (12) temporalising this relationship, by always putting off to tomorrow his engagement in this real relationship of desire. It is always for tomorrow that the obsessional reserves engaging with his true desire.

This is not to say that while waiting for this term he does not get engaged in anything; far from it, he proves himself. What is more he can go so far as to consider these proofs, what he does, as a means of acquiring merit. Merit for what: for the reverence of the other with respect to his desires. You will find these things being well and truly acknowledged throughout the whole field, even if the obsessional does not recognise the mechanism as such. But it is important that you should be capable of recognising it, in order to designate it.

Because after all it is an important thing here, I am saying, to smash this mechanism in the form of what it drags along in its wake, namely all these intersubjective relationships which can only be conceived of as ordered with respect to this relationship or to these fundamental relationships as I am trying here to articulate them here for you.

When all is said and done what does this mean? I mean, even before asking yourselves how this is possible, what do we see emerging in this neurotic position? It is clear that what we see emerging is at least the following: the cry for help of the subject in order to sustain his desire, but to sustain it in the presence and in the face of the desire of the other, in order to constitute himself as desiring. This is what I indicated to you the last time, the fact is that the only thing that he does not (13) know, is that in constituting himself as desiring his steps are profoundly marked by something which is there behind, namely the danger which is constituted by this slope of desire. So that in constituting himself as desiring he does not perceive that in the constitution of his desire he is protecting himself against something, that his very desire is a defence, and cannot be anything else.

Again in order that this may be sustained it is clear that in every case he summons as a help something which presents itself in a third position with respect to this desire of the other, something where he can place himself so that the sucking in, disappearing relationship of the $\$$ before the o is tenable. It is in the relationship to the other, to the real other, that we see there being sufficiently indicated the role of what permits the subject to symbolise. Because it is a question of nothing else than of symbolising his situation, namely of maintaining in act something in which he can recognise himself as subject.

satisfy himself as subject, astonished though he may finally be to see that this subject which is sustained, finds itself the prey of all sorts of contorted, and paradoxical attitudes which designate him to himself once he is able to have the slightest look at his own situation, as a neurotic who is a prey to his symptoms.

Here there intervenes this element which analytical experience has taught us to put at a key point in signifying functions, and which is called the phallus. If the phallus has the key position which I am now designating, it is very evidently qua signifier, qua signifier linked to something which has a name in Freud, and whose place in the unconscious economy itself was (14) absolutely not dissimulated by Freud, namely the law.

In this regard, every kind of attempt to reduce the phallus to something which can be balanced against, which is related to some other functional correspondent in the other sex is something which of course from the point of view of the interrelationships of the subject, has what one might call its genetic value, but which can only be exercised, be carried out on the condition of overlooking what is quite essential in the valorisation of the phallus as such.

It is not purely and simply an organ. Where it is an organ it is the instrument of a jouissance. It is not at this level integrated into the mechanism of desire, because the mechanism of desire is something which is situated at another level, that to understand what is the mechanism of desire it is necessary to define it as seen from the other side, namely once cultural relationships have been established, and from the myth of the primordial murder or not.

Desire is distinguished from all demands in the fact that it is a demand submitted to the law. This almost looks like breaking through an open door, but this is all the same what is in question when Freud makes the distinction for us between demands which correspond to what are called preservation needs in the species or in the individual, and those which are on another plane. This is why to tell us that those which are on this other plane are distinguished from the first in the sense that they can be postponed . . . , but after all if sexual desire can be postponed in its effects, in its passage to action in man, it is undoubtedly in an ambiguous fashion.

(15) It can be postponed? How can it be more so in man than in animals where after all it does not suffer postponements all that much? It is because no doubt of a genetic flexibility; it is also and essentially - because nothing is articulated in analysis if one does not articulate it at this level - in so far as on this sexual desire itself there is constructed the primordial order of exchanges which found the law through which there enters in a living form number as such into human interpsychology. What is called the law of alliance and of kinship through which we see the following appearing: it is that the phallus fundamentally is the subject qua object of this desire; this

object being submitted to what we will call the law of fecundity.

And also this is the way that there is brought into play in a more or less unveiled, a more or less initiatory fashion the phallus, that it is unveiled to those who participate in this initiation. If the function of the father for the subject, qua source of his life as it is said, is only the signifier of what I call here the law of fecundity, in so far as it regulates, as it ties desire to a law, effectively this fundamental signification of the phallus is that which, by all the dialectic of desire, in the measure that desire in so far as there is expressed in it the being of the subject at the point that he is lost interposes itself on the trajectory of this functionalisation of the subject qua phallus, of this thing through which the subject presents himself in the law of exchange defined by the fundamental relationships regulating the prohibitions of desire in culture, it is in the measure that the subject is, in so far as from a certain moment he no longer is, he wants-to-be, he can no longer (16) grasp himself.

It is from the encounter of this with his phallic function, with his phallic function in the real links of relationships with the real others of the real generation of the line of descendents, it is here that there is produced the point of equilibrium which is the one that we dwelt on at the end of the dream of Ella Sharpe's patient.

If I connected up the whole big digression about Hamlet at this level, it is in the measure that this subject presented to us in his dream, in the purest form, this alternation of to be or not to be, which I made so much of. Namely this subject who qualified himself as no one. This subject at the moment that he approaches his desire, when he is just about to put his finger on it, when he has to choose to be no one, or to be caught, entirely absorbed in the devouring desire of the woman, that immediately afterwards he is summoned "to be or not to be", to bring to birth the "to be" of the second part which has not the same meaning as in the first, the "not to be" of the primordial structure of desire, is seen to have an alternative. To be, that is to be the phallus, he must be the phallus for the other, the marked phallus; to be what he can be as subject he is exposed to the menace of not having it.

If you will allow me to use here what is called a logical sign which is the v, which is used to designate the either-or of the distinction, the subject sees opening out before him the not to be - not to be the phallus - or if he is it, not to have it, namely to be the phallus for the other, the phallus in the intersubjective dialectic. This is what is in question. And (17) it is in this game that the neurotic experiences the approach, the integration of his desire as a threat of loss.

The pas un by which the \$ designates himself in the fundamental structure of desire, is transformed into a one too many (un en trop), either something extra or something missing, in the threat of castration for the man or in the phallus experienced as

absence for the woman. That is why one can say that at the outcome of the analytic *démystification* of the position of the neurotic, something seems to remain in the structure, at least what Freud testifies to us in his own experience which presents itself as a remainder, as something which for the subject causes him to remain in any case in an inadequate position, that of the phallus in peril, for the man, that of the absence of the phallus for the woman.

But also it is perhaps in so far as in the angle adopted first of all for the solution of the neurotic problem, the transversal dimension, the way in which the subject in his desire is dealing with the manifestation to him of his being as such, as possible author of the cut, this dimension is neglected; that in other words the aim of the analyst is directed towards the reduction of the neurotic position of desire, and not towards the disengagement from the position of desire as such beyond the entanglement of this particular dialectic which is that of the neurotic.

How can I come back again on these points to make you sense their articulation still better? Undoubtedly I have introduced it here along its purest cutting edge. It is quite certain that this draws along with it not only all the anecdotes of the (18) history of the subject, but also other structural elements in this past. I mean what we have manifested, highlighted at the proper moment, which is everything that refers as such to the drama of narcissism, to the relationship of the subject to his own image.

Of course when all is said and done it is here that there is inserted for the subject - Freud underlined it several times when it was appropriate and in specific terms - the fear of the loss of the phallus, the feeling also of the lack of the phallus. The ego, in other words, is involved, but let us notice then at this level that if it intervenes, if it can intervene at this place at which the subject may have to sustain himself in this complex dialectic in which he is afraid that he will lose his privilege in his relationship to the other, and indeed this is certainly not if the narcissistic relationship to the image of the other intervenes by reason of something which we could call the weakness of the ego, because after all in all the cases where we note such a weakness, what we are assisting at, is on the contrary a dispersal of the situation, even indeed a blocking of the situation.

After all I have only to make an illusion here to something which is familiar to all of you, which has been I think been translated in the Revue, to Melanie Klein's famous case, namely of this child who was well and truly introduced as such to this relationship of desire to the signifier, but who found himself with respect to the other, to the possible relationship on the imaginary plane, on the living plane of gesture and communication with the other, completely suspended, as Melanie Klein describes it to us.

We do not know everything about this case, and after all we (19) cannot say that Melanie Klein has done anything other than present us here with a remarkable case. And what this case demonstrates, is that undoubtedly this child who did not speak is already so open and so sensitive to the spoken interventions of Melanie Klein that for us, in our register, in the one that we are trying to develop here, his behaviour is really remarkable.

The only structures of the world which are accessible, tangible, manifest, manifestable for him from the first moments with Melanie Klein, are structures which carry in themselves all the characteristics of the relationship to the signifying chain. Melanie Klein designates them for us. There is the little chain of the train, namely of something which is made up of a certain number of elements hooked on to one another. There is a door which opens and closes. One might as well say, that which, when I was trying to show you in the possible uses of one or other cybernetic schema for our handling of the symbol, that which is the most simple form of the yes or no alternation which conditions the signifier as such. A door must be opened or closed.

The whole behaviour of the child is limited to this. The fact is nevertheless by simply touching on this in words which are all the same sentences and something essentially verbal, that from the first moments what does the child obtain from the intervention of Melanie Klein? His first reaction is in my opinion almost amazing for its exemplary character: it is to go and put himself - and it is in the text - between two doors. (20) Between the inner and outer door of the room, in a dark space regarding which it is surprising that Melanie Klein, who in some way saw so well the structural elements, like those of introjection and of expulsion, namely this limit between the exterior world and what one can call the interior darkness with respect to a subject, did not grasp the import of this intermediate zone which is nothing other than the one that we are distinguishing here: the one where desire is situated, namely this zone which is neither the exterior, nor the interior, articulated and constructed, so reduced in this subject, but that which one can call, because in certain structures of the primitive village we find the sort of cleared zones between the two, the zone of "no man's land", between the village and virgin nature, which is indeed the place where the desire of the little subject has broken down.

It is here that we possibly see the ego intervening, and of course it is in the whole measure that this ego is not weak, but strong, that there will come to be organised, as I have repeated already a hundred times, the resistances of the subject. The resistances of the subject in so far as they are the forms of the very coherence of the neurotic construction, namely of that in which he organises himself in order to subsist as desire, not to be the place of this desire, to be sheltered from the desire of the other as such, to see being interposed between its most profound manifestation as desire, and the desire of the other, this distance, this alibi which is the one in which he

constitutes himself respectively as phobic, hysterical, obsessional.

(21) I will come back, it is necessary, to a developed example of a phantasy that Freud gives. It is by no means futile to come back to it after having taken this detour. It is the phantasy, a child is being beaten. Here one can grasp the moments which allow us to rediscover the structural relationship that we are trying to articulate today.

What do we have: the phantasy of obsessionals; girls and boys use this phantasy to arrive at what: at masturbatory jouissance. The relationship to desire is clear; what is the function of this jouissance? Its function here is that of any satisfaction of need in a relationship with the beyond that the articulation of a language determines for man. That is to say that the masturbatory jouissance is here not the solution to desire, it crushes it; exactly the way the child at the breast in the satisfaction of nursing crushes the demand for love with respect to the mother.

And as well this is almost marked by historical testimony. I mean, because we have made allusions from time to time to the hedonistic perspective, to its inadequacy for qualifying human desire as such - let us not forget after all the exemplary character of one of these points which are paradoxical as such, obviously left in the shadows of the opinion of those who have presented themselves in history as wise men, and wise men of a discipline whose end, qualified as philosophical, was precisely, for reasons which are after all valid because they are methodical, the choice, the determination of a posture with respect to desire, a posture which consists also from the beginning in excluding it, in making it And any perspective which is properly hedonistic participates in this (22) position of exclusion as is demonstrated by the paradoxical example which I will remind you of here, namely the position of the Cynics for whom in a quite categorical way - the tradition, from the mouth of Chrysippus if I remember rightly, testifies to it - namely that Diogenes the Cynic openly claimed, to the point of doing it in public as a demonstratory act, and not as an exhibitionistic one, the solution to the problem of sexual desire was, as I might say, within hand's reach for everybody, and he demonstrated it brilliantly by masturbating.

The phantasy of the obsessional is therefore something which of course has a relationship to jouissance, of which it is even remarkable that it can become one of its conditions, but whose structure Freud demonstrated for us has a value of what I designate as being its value as an index, because what this phantasy points to is nothing other than a feature of the subject's history, something which is inscribed in his diachrony. Namely that the subject in a past which is consequently forgotten, has seen, Freud's text tell us, a rival - whether he is of one sex or the other does not matter - being punished by the beloved being, on this occasion the father, and has found in this original situation her happiness.

How does the phantastical agency (instant) perpetuate as one might say this privileged instant of happiness? It is here that the intermediate phase that is designated for us by Freud takes on its demonstrative value. It is to the extent that at a time Freud tell us which can only be reconstructed - this is indicated (23) by the fact that in Freud we only find the testimony of certain unconscious moments which are properly speaking inaccessible as such. Whether he is right or wrong in the precise, particular case is not in question for the moment. As a matter of fact he is not wrong, but the important thing is that he designates this intermediate stage as something which can only be reconstructed.

And this intermediate stage between the historical memory in so far as it designates the subject in one of his moments of triumph, a historical memory which at the worst is only repressed, and which can be brought to light, which is why the phantastical agency (instant) plays there the role of index, eternalises this moment as one might say by making of it a point of attachment to something quite different, namely the desire of the subject; and this indeed only happens in relation to an intermediate moment which I would call here, even though it may be a point at which it can only be reconstructed, properly speaking metaphorical.

Because what is in question in this intermediate moment? This second phase which Freud tells us is essential for the understanding of the functioning of this phantasy? It is the following: it is that for the other, the rival brother who is the object of the anger and the punishment inflicted by the beloved object, the subject substitutes herself. Namely that in this second moment she is the one who is chastised.

We find ourselves here before the naked enigma of what this metaphor, this transference involves. What is the subject looking for here? What a strange path to subsequently give to her triumph is this fashion of herself passing in her turn (24) through the Caudine forks of what had been inflicted on the other. Do we not find ourselves here before the final enigma - and Freud also does not hide it - of what comes to be inscribed in the analytic dialectic as masochism, and whose predicament one sees after all presented here in a pure form. Namely that something in the subject perpetuates the happiness of the initial situation in a hidden, latent, unconscious situation of unhappiness.

What is involved in the second hypothetical moment is in sum an oscillation, an ambivalence, more precisely an ambiguity of what the act of the authoritarian person, on this occasion the father, involves by way of recognition. The jouissance taken here by the subject is that towards which she slides from an accident of her history to a structure in which she is going to appear as being, as such. The fact is that it is in the fact of being alienated, namely of substituting oneself here for the other as victim, that there consists the decisive step in her jouissance in so far as it culminates in the phantastical agency (instant)

at which she is no longer herself only one. In part instrument of alienation in so far as it is dévalorisation.

It is "is beaten", on the one hand, and that is why up to a certain point I was able to tell you that it becomes purely and simply the phallic instrument in so far as it is here the instrument of her cancellation. Confronted with what? With "a child is being beaten", a faceless child, a child who is no longer anything but the original child, and not either the child that she herself was at the second moment, whose sex is not determined in any even special way. The examination of the (25) sequence of successive phantasies Freud speaks to us about shows this. He is confronted with what one can call a sort of extract of the object.

It is nevertheless in this relationship of the phantasy that we see emerging at this moment that which constitutes for the subject the privileged instant of his jouissance. We will say that the neurotic - and we will see the next time how we can oppose to it something very particular, not perversion in general, because here perversion plays a pivotal role in what we are exploring as structure, but where we can oppose to it something very special, and whose common factor does not seem to have been found up to now, namely homosexuality.

But to keep today to the neurotic, his most common, fundamental structure resides when all is said and done in the fact that if he is this desire desiring what?, something which when all is said and done is simply what permits him to sustain in its precariousness, his desire as such, without knowing that the whole phantasmagoria is constructed for that, namely that it is his very symptoms which are the locus in which he his jouissance. These symptoms which are nevertheless so little satisfying in themselves.

The subject therefore presents himself here as I would not say at all a pure being (un être pur), that which I began from to indicate what was meant by the relationship of this particular manifestation of the subject to the real, but a being for (un être pour). The ambiguity of the position of the neurotic is entirely here, in this metonymy which ensures that it is in this being for that there resides all his fear of being (son peur être).

Seminar 25t Wednesday 17 June 1959

12.30

There is something instructive, I would not go so far as to say in the errors, but even, especially, in the errors - or in the meanderings, if you wish ... You see being fairly constantly used the very hesitations, even the impasses, which manifest themselves in analytic theory, as being by themselves revelatory of a structure of the reality with which we have to deal.

In this respect, it is clear that there is something interesting, remarkable, significant for us in works which are not all that old because the one, for example, to which I will refer is from 1956 (the July - October number of the International journal of psychoanalysis, Vol. 37).

It is an article, I believe, by some of our Parisian colleagues; I will not designate them by name, because it is not their position as personal that I am aiming at in this way. It is an effort to clarify the meaning of perversion. And it is clear that in this article, extremely curiously reserved in its (2) conclusions, and from which there really only emerges this formally articulated conclusion, that there is not, consequently, any specific unconscious content in sexual perversions, because the same ... discoveries can be recognised in the case of neuroses and psychoses.

There is here something rather striking, which the whole article illustrates, and one cannot say in a fashion which is absolutely convincing, because, without even needing to stand back very far, it can be perceived that the whole article begins from a confusion - really constantly maintained - between perverse phantasy and perversion.

From the fact that there are conscious and unconscious phantasies which overlap, that phantasies manifest themselves, with the appearances of overlapping, in neuroses and in perversions, the conclusion is drawn - with an astonishing ease - that there is no fundamental difference, from the point of view of the unconscious, between neurosis and perversion.

We have here one of these very astonishing things, where certain reflections which, themselves, are presented without guarantees, rather free from the analytic tradition and are presented as a

sort of revision of values and principles.

The only conclusion, indeed, that is finally come to, is that it (3) is an abnormal relationship that is eroticised in perversion.

It is therefore not at all a question of a relationship with an object, but rather a valorisation of a relationship for relationships as such eroticism - which, all the same, after any sort of serious examination, after rereading it, can appear as nothing other than something which is a cause of normative virtue. This corresponds to the object. That it is eroticised, is not in doubt!

In fact, it is indeed with this question of the relationship of phantasy and perversion that we ourselves are led to work on today, after what we approached the last time, namely: we began to indicate the most general terms of the relationship of phantasy to neurosis.

A little word on history: what has happened in analysis - and it is important to recall it here - and I would say, in the light of our progress, perhaps to circumscribe it in a more rigorous fashion - is essentially the following: it is that in short, a very short time after having articulated the functions of the unconscious, this quite particularly in connection with hysteria, neuroses and the dream, Freud was led to pose the presence in the unconscious of what he called polymorphously perverse tendencies (in German: Polymorph-perverse Neigungen).

It comes from there, and it is there, for a certain time - long (4) superseded, of course! - that people remained. And what it seems failed to be articulated, is that what is in question, this notion of polymorphously perverse tendency, is nothing other than the following: it is the fact that he had discovered the structure of unconscious phantasies.

The structure of unconscious phantasies resembled the relational mode which opened out, which spread itself out in clear view, which shows itself in the perversions; and, thus, the notion of the consciousness of the polymorphously perverse tendency was posed at first.

When all is said and done - this could be said - this came from the fact that the form of these unconscious phantasies covered what? Something which is a part of perversion, which presents itself to us in perversion, under the following appearance, which we can try to articulate, namely: something which occupies the imaginative field, the desire, the one which constitutes the desire of the pervert; and this something which, in short, the pervert plays out, this something which means that this is presented in its obvious aspect, in clinical practice, is something which for us, with what we know, with the relationship that we have drawn between these phantasies and the history of the subject, where we succeed in attaching him, if you wish, to this history, is, in sum, that the phantasy of the pervert presents itself as something which one could call a sequence, I

mean, as one could call it using an empty word in cinema films, I mean: a sequence cut off from the development of the drama like something that one sees appearing under the name - I am not sure of the term - of a "rush" this piece which in trailers appears to us on the screen as a few illuminating images which are designed to whet our appetite to come back next week to see the film, which precisely is announced in this way.

What is seductive in these images, really depends, in effect, on this aspect of their not being inserted into the chain, of having been broken off from the theme, and it is indeed something of this order that is in question in the phantasy of the pervert.

This we know, in so far as what analysis has taught us to see in it, is, in effect, something which, up to a certain degree, replaced in its context, in its dramatic sequence, that of the subject's past, can in different degrees, indeed at the cost of some modifications, retouching, reverse transformations, take up again its place and its meaning.

So that, this relationship that the phantasy of the pervert has to his desire, it is not for nothing - I mean that it really is in the highlighting of what we already, in our formulation, have already situated in terms of the value, of the position of desire (6) with respect to the subject, I mean this beyond of the nameable, this beyond of the subject in which is situated this desire, here are - I say it retrospectively and in passing - these few things which explain to us the particular quality the phantasy is invested with when it is avowed, whether it is that of a pervert or not, namely: this sort of embarrassment which must be specifically named, one which effectively holds back for a long time, often, the subjects who have been delivered from it, namely: this ridiculous aspect, which can only be explained, can only be understood if already we have been able to perceive the relationships that we have drawn between desire in its proper position and the field, the domain of comedy. This is only a reminder.

And having recalled this position, this function of the phantasy especially in connection with the pervert, and the problems that they have therefore posed immediately as regards what their real nature was, whether it was a sort of radical, natural nature, whether this nature of the perverse phantasy was a final term, or whether one should not see in it other things just as complex, just as elaborated, in fact just as significant as the neurotic symptom.

This indeed is why a whole elaboration which was carried out, was integrated into the problem of perversity, and which took on an essential part in the elaboration of what is called "object (7) relations" or of the relationship to the object, as having to be defined in an evolutionary fashion, in a genetic fashion, as regulating the stages, the phases of the development of the subject, not just simply in function of the "momentariness" of man, therefore sensual "phase-erogenic" of the subject, but between the mode of a relationship and the mode

which each one of these phases defines.

It is from this that there were constructed - as much by Abraham as by Ferenczi and others - I do not need to remind you here of the people who began this - that there were constructed these tables of so-called empty correlative phases, on the one side, of reservoirs of dependency, libidinal forms of the ego, on the other hand. In this form of the libido, this structure of the ego seemed to correspond to and to specify a type of special relationship to reality.

You know what on the one hand, this sort of elaboration contributed by way of clarification, indeed enrichment, and what on the other hand it posed by way of problems. It is enough to refer to the least of the works, to the least of the concrete works, which try effectively to articulate in connection with a precise case, a precise form, to rediscover the correspondence, always established in a slightly theoretical way, to perceive that the problem is sometimes of itself, in its development (8) suggestive of something, of an estimation which it lacks.

I remind you therefore that it is to this, to this theme: "research into the totality of object relations", this is what we say, this is what I am designating (desire) when it is a question, for example, of an opposition like that between partial object and total object which appears in an elaborated form, which in our opinion is inappropriate; in the most recent elaborations, for example that of the famous notion of the "distance from the object", so dominant in the works, in the technical rules, to which I often alluded here, this notion of distance from the object, is one that a certain French author in particular wants to make decisive in the relationships of obsessional neurosis; as if it were not evident, and much more evident still that, for example, this notion of distance plays a decisive role, when one is simply trying to articulate, to articulate certain perverse positions, those of fetishism for example, in which the distance from an object is much more obviously manifested by the very phenomenology of fetishism. Many other forms can obviously be articulated in this sense.

And the first of the truths that we would have to contribute to this is that undoubtedly this notion of distance is even so (9) essential that after all, it may indeed perhaps be impossible to eliminate it as such from desire itself - I mean necessary for the maintenance, for the support, for the very safeguarding of the dimension of desire.

It is enough, in effect, to consider that if something is indeed able to correspond to the myth of relationship without distance to the object, it is in effect hard to see how what is properly speaking desire could be sustained. There is here something which, as I say, has a properly mythological form, that of a sort of accord. I would say that there are two aspects, two mirages, two appearances. - Of what I would call animal accord on the one hand; one could also say, moreover on the other hand, of what

we must call mystical accord - is it not so? - with the object, which indeed is a residue within analytic elaboration of something which in no way coincides with the data of experience.

Also, moreover, what is indicated in analytic technique as what ought to correct, to rectify this so called bad distance maintained from the object by the obsessional. Everyone knows in the clearest fashion that this is indicated as something which should be overcome in the analytic relationship, and this by an ideal, indeed an idealising identification with the analyst, himself considered, on this occasion, as not the object, (10) but the prototype of a satisfying relationship to the object. We will have reason to come back to what such an ideal may correspond to exactly, in so far as it is realised in analysis. I already approached it, but we will have reason perhaps to situate it, to articulate it differently a little later.

In effect these problems were approached in a much more rigorous and much more serious fashion, still along the same path, in other contexts, in different groups, and I would put - as I already indicated to you here - in the first rank the articulations of Glover. I remind you of the place of the article - which I already quoted - in Vol. 14 of the International journal of psychoanalysis October 1933 on "The relation of perversion-formation to the development of reality-sense".

This is the preoccupation which is, for him, pursued in the sense of a genetic elaboration of the relationships of the subject to this world, the reality which surrounds him, and of an evolution which must be more closely circumscribed as much by reconstruction, by the analyses of adults, as by the direct apprehension of the behaviour of the child, carried out as rigorously as possible in a perspective that is renewed by analysis, that Glover tries to situate these perversions somewhere with respect to a chain.

He had already established a chain involving the dates, as one might say, of insertion of different psychic anomalies with which (11) analysis has to deal, and which led him to construct a series, the order of which lends itself, as is usually the case, to criticism, but which, without insisting any more, is constituted by the primitive, primordial character of psychotic disturbances, paranoid disturbances to be specific, after which there follow different forms of neurosis, which are articulated, are situated in a progressive order - I mean from before to after, from the origins towards what comes later - beginning with the obsessional neurosis which is found then exactly at the limit of paranoiac forms.

It is in so far as he placed there, somewhere, in the interval, in a previous article - the one from Vol. 13, namely of July 1932, part three of Vol. 13 of the International journal - "On the etiology of drug-addiction", in other words what we call les toxicomanies, that he thought he could situate with sufficient precision the relationships between paranoiacs and neurotics.

that he tries to situate there what the function of perversions could be, at what stage, at what date, with what mode of relationship of the subject to the real; in so far as the paranoiac form is linked to quite primitive mechanisms of projection and interjection, he is at that time, let us state it clearly, working altogether on the same plane, and expressly in (12) accord, moreover, with a fashion formulated with

You know that he became a spectacular opponent - it is on this plane that he adheres to the Kleinian elaboration and it is in so far as a mode of relationship to the object, very specific to this paranoid-type stage, considered as primitive, exists, that he situates, that he elaborates, articulates, understands the function of drug-addiction.

It is to this that there must be referred the passage which I read for you a few sessions ago, namely: the passage in which, in a very brilliant metaphorical fashion, where in a very instructive way, he does not hesitate to compare the primitive world of the child to something which resembles a butcher's shop, a public lavatory under shell-fire and a post-mortem room combined, to which undoubtedly a more benign organisation is brought by the transformation of this initial, inaugural spectacle of life, by the progress to the stage of a chemist's shop with its reserves of objects, some beneficent, the others maleficent.

This is therefore articulated in the clearest fashion, and is instructive, in so far as it signifies for us the direction in which research about the function of phantasy is carried on. In the direction of its functioning, as structural, as organiser of the discovery, of the construction of reality by the subject. (13) In this, there is no difference, in effect, between Glover and Mrs. Melanie Klein. And Mrs. Melanie Klein specifically articulates it for us as follows: the fact is that in short objects are successively conquered by the child, in so far - this is articulated in the article on "Symbol formation in the development of the ego" - in so far as, in the measure that objects less close to the needs of the child are apprehended, are charged with the anxiety linked to their use in the fundamentally aggressive, sadistic, relationships, which are, at the beginning, those of the child to his entourage, as a consequence of any frustration.

It is in so far as the subject displaces his interest onto more benign objects - which, in their turn, will be charged with the same anxiety - that the extension of the world of the child is conceived of as such.

Notice what this represents: this represents the notion that we should search for in a mechanism, in short, that we could call contraphobic, namely: that it is in so far as objects have first of all and primitively a phobic-object function, and the phobic object - as one might say - is looked for elsewhere, it is by a progressive extension of the world of objects in a contraphobic dialectic, this is the very mechanism of the conquest of reality.

Whether or not this corresponds to clinical experience, is really (14) not a question that is directly here within the field that we are dealing with. I think that directly, and in clinical experience, that there are many things which go against it, that there is a unilateral, a partial view of a mechanism which undoubtedly does come into the conquest of reality, but which does not constitute it properly speaking.

But it is not our goal here to criticise the 's theory, because it is compared to 's; every other point of view, we will take into account, we will bring into play; it is with respect to something, and the function which is desire.

Now this is something which immediately shows its consequences. The fact is that Glover ends up with a paradox which undoubtedly seems more instructive for him that for us, because it is not really something which should astonish us. He ends up with the following: he tries concretely to situate the different perversions with respect to his dialectic, to this mechanism as he tries to elaborate it, to reconstitute it, to reintegrate it into the notion of a regular development of the ego, in so far as it is supposed to be parallel to the modifications of the libido; in so far as one can inscribe, in fact, the destiny, the structuring of the subject, in terms of a pure individual experience of the conquest of reality. Everything is there, in (15) effect.

The difference between the theory that I give you of phobias for example, and the one that you will see in certain recent French authors, in so far as they try to indicate the genesis of phobia in structural forms of infantile experience, for example of the way in which the child has to arrange his relationships with those who surround him, of the passage from clarity to obscurity, it is a question of a purely experimental genesis, of an experience of fear, from which there is engendered and deduced the possibility of the phobia - the difference between this position and the one which I teach you is typically the following: it is to say that there is no kind of direct deduction of the phobia, if one does not admit the function, the exigency as such of a function of the signifier, which supposes its own proper dimension which is not that of the relationship of the subject to his entourage, which is not that of the relationship to any reality, except to the reality and the dimension of language, as such, from the fact that he has to situate himself as subject in the discourse, to manifest himself there as being, which is different.

There is something quite striking, about the appraisal of these phobias, even in the case of someone as perspicacious as Glover. He tries to explain the genesis, the stabilisation of a phobia, when he declares that it is undoubtedly more advantageous to (16) suffer from a tiger-phobia, when one is a child living in the streets of London, than to find the same phobia if one were living in the middle of the Indian jungle.

One may ask oneself if one could not retort that, effectively, it is not on this register that the problem is posed; that is to say: that after all one could even reverse the proposition, and say that a tiger-phobia in the Indian jungle is, on the contrary, it seems, more advantageous to adapt the child to a real adaptation, and that, on the contrary, it is very burdensome to suffer from a tiger-phobia, in so far as we know what is correlative to it, namely: that the behaviour of the child, indeed of the subject who is as advanced as possible in his development, at the moment that he is the prey of a phobia, is undoubtedly more encumbered, and is indeed without any relationship with the real.

In fact, something presents itself, which poses for Glover his problem in these terms: it is that he sees that the greatest possible diversity of reality-distortions is produced in perversions, and to be able to say that he cannot situate perversion in a genetic perspective except by fragmenting it, interpolating it at all the supposed or presupposed stages of development, namely: to admit just as much the existence of very archaic perversions, more or less contemporaneous with the (17) paranoid epoch, even theepoch, as other perversions which must be situated at very advanced stages, even indeed ones that are just phallic, but properly speaking at the phallic or indeed genital stages of development.

This does not seem to him to be an objection for the following reason: the fact is that he ends up giving to perversion the following definition: it is that in short perversion is one of the forms, for him - he cannot end up at anything else given the perspective that he has begun from - is one of the forms of of reality testing.

It is to the extent - according to Glover - that, somewhere, something in the testing of reality does not come to fruition, fails, that perversion helps to patch over this flaw, this hole - is that not it - by a particular mode of the apprehension of the real as such, of the real whose occasion is a psychic real, a real projected, and on the other hand, introjected, that it is therefore properly speaking as a function of maintaining, of preserving a reality which is supposed to be threatened in its totality, it is in so far as perversion serves, if you wish, one might say, both as a patching, in the sense of a cloth, in the sense that one says that a cloth is patched, or again the keystone of a vault, which is something of a substitute one, somewhat shakey, somewhat (18) threatening, compromising the equilibrium of the whole of reality for the subject; in brief, it is only in a non-ambiguous fashion, as a form of salvation with respect to a supposed menace of psychosis, that perversion is conceived by Edward Glover.

This is a point of view. Perhaps certain observations can effectively show us something which appears to illustrate it, but there are many elements which demand that we should distance ourselves from it; besides the fact, that it seems quite paradoxical to make of perversion something which has this economic role, this economic role which many elements contradict.

were it only something which indicates to us that it is certain that the precariousness of the pervert's edifice, is not something, either clinically or in analytic experience, which strikes us, at least at first sight.

To indicate something here, I will not abandon this Kleinian dialectic without pointing out how it rejoins and initiates the problem that we are posing.

In effect, if we seek what is in question in the Kleinian dialectic, namely: the two stages that she distinguishes between the paranoid phase, then afterwards, the depressive phase, which is characterised, as you know, with respect to the first, by the relationship of the subject to his major predominant object: the mother, as a whole.

Previously, it is with these disjointed elements that he has to deal (19) between good and bad objects, with everything that this is going to establish in him which is that of projection and of introjection. This is how the paranoid barrier is characterised.

Now, what can we say in our perspective? I mean: let us try to understand, by means of the perspective that we ourselves articulate what is in question in this process.

This altogether inaugural process, placed at the beginning of the life of the subject, is that in short the reality of the first apprehensions of the object, as Mrs. Klein shows it, arises from the following: the fact is in short that the object - and, first of all, beyond the fact that it may be good or bad, profitable or frustrating - the fact is that it is significant.

Because the notion, the distinction which, if the opposition, as such, is strict - and I would say without nuance, without transition, without perceiving in any fashion that it is the same object which can be good or bad, at different times, namely: the mother - that there is here not the experience of the young subject, nor everything that it can involve in terms of transitional attitudes, but that there is clear opposition, a passage of the object, as such, to a function of signifying opposition which is at the basis of the whole Kleinian dialectic, and regarding which it is too little perceived - it seems to me - (20) that however well founded it may be, it is completely opposite, on the opposite side, on the opposite pole, that it is the contrary of this other element highlighted by our experience, namely: the importance of living communication, just as essential at the beginning for development, which is expressed, is manifested in the dimension of maternal care.

There is here something from another register which is contemporaneous, but which cannot be confused, and what Melanie Klein brings us, is a sort of primitive algebra, which one can say completely rejoins, in effect, what we are trying here to highlight under the name of the function of the signifier.

They are the primary, primitive forms of this function of the signifier, as such, which are rightly or wrongly, whether it is effectively present at that date or simply a Ruckphantasie, a phantasy, but a retrospective one; this is - we only have to record it - what Melanie Klein describes for us.

From then on, what value is going to be taken on by this limiting phase between the paranoid period with its organisation of good objects, which are as such interiorised, "internalised" - she says - by the subject, which are rejected

What is happening? How can we describe what is happening, from the moment that there intervenes the notion of the subject as a (21) whole, which is essential in order that the subject himself should consider himself as having an inside and an outside. Because when all is said and done, it is only from then on that it is conceivable that there should be manifested, be defined the processes of internalisation and externalisation, of introjection and of projection, which are going to be - for Melanie Klein - decisive for this structuration of the primitive animal.

With our points of reference, we see that what is in question is something which resituates this relationship, this primitive esquisse - as she herself has put it - of objects into good and bad with respect to this other register of the inside and the outside of the subject.

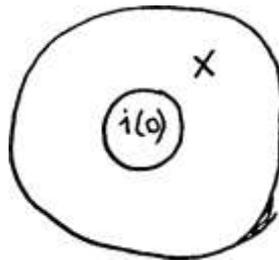
This something, which I think that we can without being too attracted to the Kleinian perspectives, which we can refer to what we call the mirror stage, it is in so far as the image of the other gives to the subject this form of the unity of the other, as such, that there can be established somewhere this division of inside and outside, with reference to which the good and the bad objects are going to be reclassified - the good in so far as they ought to come inside, the bad in so far as they should remain outside.

Well! What comes to be defined here in the clearest fashion - because it is imposed by experience - is the same thing as we can (22) say in our own discourse; namely it is: that the discourse which really organises the world of objects - I would say according to the being of the subject, at the beginning - extends beyond the one in which the subject himself recognises himself in narcissistic testing, the testing belonging to what is called "stage number one", namely: in which he recognises himself as mastery and as unique ego, in which he recognises himself therefore in a "narcissist" or narcissistic relation of identification of one image to another, in which he recognises himself as mastery of an ego.

It is in so far as something defines him in a first identification, in the one which is expressed here (explanations on the blackboard)

at the level of the first identification, to the mother, as object of the first identification to the insignia of the other, it is in so far as this preserves for the subject an assimilating value which extends beyond what he is going to be able to put within himself in so far as this within is defined by his first experiences of mastery, of prestige, in so far as he is $i(o)$ of the other $i(o)$, typically and ideally, of this young counterpart, with whom we see him in the clearest possible fashion carrying out his experiences of mastery, it is in so far as what is referred , it is in so far as the two (23) experiences do not overlap, that - I do not say, me: the whole experience of development is organised - that necessarily we must admit this to understand what it is in question in what Melanie Klein describes for us.

In effect what defines this difference, this field X or I which is here, (explanations on the blackboard)



which is at once part of the subject and, at the same time, not part of this subject, is what? It is this object whose paradoxical nature seems to surprise no one, beginning with the first fruits, or the premises that Melanie Klein poses; it is what she calls the "bad" internal object. The "bad" internal object presents itself for us right away in the Kleinian dialectic, in the most manifest fashion, as the problematic object, in the sense that, seen - as one might say - from outside where the subject is not subject, but where we should take it as a real being, we can ask ourselves: this bad object, to which the subject supposedly identifies itself, when all is said and done, is the subject it, or is he not it?

Inversely, seen from within, seen from the point of view of the subject, of the mastery of the first exercises of the subject to maintain himself, to affirm himself as subject, to contain himself, we should ask ourselves whether he has or he does not have this bad object, whose absolutely decisive role we know (24) from then on. The question which poses itself, is: does he have it or does he not have it?'

Because if we have defined "good" and "bad" objects as determinant of the process of the structuring by which the subject interiorises the good objects, and primitively makes them a part of himself, and rejects the bad as being what is not him, all the others, the paradox of the interiorised bad object comes to the forefront. What is meant by this sum (or this zone) of the first object in so far as the subject internalises it, as he both makes it his own, and in a way denies it as virtually bad?

It is clear that here the subsequent function of prohibition is precisely that which has the value of denying, thanks to which the bad object ceases to propose itself as a kind of permanent enigma, an anxiogenic enigma with respect to the being of the subject. Prohibition is precisely what introduces within this problematic function of the bad object this essential denying - this is what constitutes its prohibitory function - the fact is that if he is this bad object, he does not have it; in so far as he is it, is identified with it, it is forbidden for him to have it - the euphony in French between the subjunctive of the verb to have (il l'ait) and the indicative of the verb to be (il est) (25) should be used: in other words: "in so far as he is it, he does not have it; in so far as he has it, he is not it" (en tant qu'il l'est, il ne l'a pas; en tant qu'il l'a, il ne l'est pas).

In other words, the fact is that at the level of the bad object the subject experiments. It is - if I may express myself in this way - the servitude of his mastery. It is that the true master - everyone knows that he is beyond any face that he is somewhere in language, even though he cannot even be nowhere in it - the true master is the one who delegates the limited usage of the bad object as such, namely: of an object which is not situated with respect to the demand for an object which one cannot demand.

Because it is from there, in effect that the whole import of our data begins.

Beforehand, may I indicate to you that what can be read in a gripping fashion in the precise cases that are presented to us by Melanie Klein, is that in so far as he is manifestly in this impasse, in this field of the "nondemandable" as such, that we find this particularly inhibited child with whom she is dealing, and whom she presents to us in the article on "Symbol formation in the development of the ego".

Is it not clear that what she obtains, once she begins to speak to this child, is something which immediately crystallizes in a demand, a panic-stricken demand "Is the nurse going to come?" (26) and that, immediately afterwards, in the measure that the child is going to allow himself to get into contact again with his objects, which he appears from the beginning, in the experiment, to be singularly prepared for, there is something which she signals to us as a very astonishing, very decisive fact....because, as you remember, it is in the exercise of a sort of little cutting, of scratching with the help of the scissors by the child, who is far from being awkward, because he makes use of all sorts of elements, such as the door handles.... He had never been able to hold scissors. Here, he holds them, and in order to try to detach - and he manages it I - a little piece of coal from something which is not without signification either, because it is an element of the chain of the train, with which she has succeeded in getting him to play, namely a tender - without even wanting to go into here curious games and terms which could be constructed around this tender - which is also tender in English.... it is not the weather map... but la carte

du tendre which here is offered to us - and it is in this little piece that the child, in truth, isolates, defines, situates himself in this something that he can detach from the signifying chain; it is in this remainder, in this tiny little pile, in this outline of an object, which only appears here under the form of little pieces, of a little piece, the very one which will provoke (27) all of a sudden his panicky sympathy, when he sees it in the form of pencil shavings on Melanie Klein's lap and, for the first time, will be moved in the presence of this other crying out: "poor Mrs. Klein".

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Therefore desire is not there

It is from this first intuition that we start: which brings us back to the original conditions in which a subject comes to see us: desire is not demand. When the subject says "why is this happening?", what is he demanding? In principle, satisfaction and happiness. Except for the fact that every satisfaction does not involve happiness for him, far from it.

... to organise the history of the subject, as the history of analysis, as the history of technique, in the sense of something which ought to respond to this demand for satisfaction. In what way? By a way which is the following, namely: in trying to respond to the demand for satisfaction of the subject by a reduction of his desires to his needs.

Now, is there not here a paradox, since, on the other hand, all our experience - one could say - is sustained in this dimension, as obvious moreover for the subject as for us - for us, because everything that we have articulated is going to be resumed in (28) what I am going to say; and, for the subject, because, when all is said and done, the subject knows it very well when he comes to see us - I am told that someone is in the process of writing a very important thesis on "the social signification of analysis" and I am led to understand that in it there will be elements extremely rich from the point of view of experience and extremely well developed; I really hope so, because I think effectively that the social representation of analysis is much less distorted in the community as a whole than one imagines, that what will emerge from it in the clearest fashion is this thing which is frankly at the basis, at the very principle of what a subject implies in front of us by his very presence is what; it is that in the data of his demand there is the following: "that he does not trust his desire".

The common factor with which subjects approach us is the following: it is that "his desire, he does not trust it".

Though he may, as a result of these new contrivances, follow on after us in his reference, if needs be to desire, indeed even to its sublimation along the elevated pathways of love, it remains, at the beginning, that what characterises desire, is that there is something which, as such, cannot be demanded, and in connection with which the question is posed, and that that is (29) what is, properly speaking, the field and the dimension of desire.

You know that to introduce this division, this dialectic of

desire - which is something I did at a very precise date, namely: two and a half years ago now - I started from what? - from what Freud said about the Oedipus complex in women.

Is not this, is not what I have just articulated legible in the fact that, at the level of analytic experience, at the level of unconscious experience, there is a place for separating out the following, what the woman demands at the beginning, that through which - Freud tells us - she enters into the Oedipus complex?

It is not to have a satisfaction, it is to have what she does not have, as such.

It is a question, as you know, of the phallus.

It is nothing other than the source which gives rise to all the problems which will arise to try to reduce the dialectic of the maturation of desire in women to something natural; the fact is that, whether we arrive or not at this reduction, what we have to overcome is a fact of experience; a fact of experience which is the following, that the little girl, at a moment of her development - after all, it does not matter to us whether it is a primary or a secondary process; it is a striking and irreducible process - what she demands to have is namely; the phallus, it is (30) to have it at this critical moment of development that Freud highlights, it is to have it at the place where she should have it if she were a man. This indeed is what is in question; there is no ambiguity about it; and the whole discussion about what happens implies that in fact, even when she manages to get it - because the woman is in a very privileged position compared to the man - this phallus, which is a signifier, I really mean: a signifier she can really have. This is even what constitutes her advantage and the relative simplicity of her affective problems, compared to those of men.

But we must not allow this relative simplicity to blind us, because it nevertheless remains, because of the starting point, that this real phallus that she can have, namely: that it is introduced into her dialectic, into her evolution, as a signifier, she will always have it at least at one level of her experience. (I am always reserving the limiting possibility of the perfect union with a being, namely: of something which completely blends, in an embrace, the beloved being with his organ.) But what constitutes the test of our experience and the very difficulties that we have to deal with in the sexual order, is situated precisely by this: it is that this ideal, poetic, indeed apocalyptic moment of the perfect sexual union, is only situated at the limit, and that with which, in fact, in the ordinary (31) testing of experience, the woman has to deal, even when she has arrived at the realisation of her femininity, is the phallic object, always qua separated. It is even because she is operating, as such, and in this register, that her action, her incidence may be perceived by the man as castrating.

Moreover, this, of course, remains for her, until analysis, unconscious, just as there remains unconscious the following: the

fact that this phallus which she does not have, symbolically she is it, in so far as she is the object of desire of the other. But she does not know the first of these things any more than the second.

This specific position of the woman is valid in so far as it is unconscious to her, which means in so far as it is only valid for the other, for the partner; she (il?) remains nevertheless from the formula, the very particular formula in which her relationship is resumed, his phallus; the fact is that paradoxically in the unconscious she both is it and has it.

We have here one of the most singular effects of the relationship to discourse; the fact is that it is at this position that at the ideal end point, the ideal relationship of the woman, in her phantastical world, in the unconscious, in the best of cases she is it and she has it - except for the fact that she does not know it, except by her desire.

(32) And through her desire of this there results - you will see it in the continuation of what I am developing - that there is a singular similarity between her formula, if one can express oneself in this way, between her transsubjective formula, her unconscious formula, and that of the pervert.

If everything that we have discovered about the unconscious economy of the woman consists in the symbolic equivalences between the phallus and all the objects that can be separated from her, including in the first place the most natural object to be separated from her, namely: her infant, - if it is here that she finds herself having to situate herself, in a series of phallic equivalents by which I am only reproducing here the test of analytic doctrine, we are going to find ourselves in the presence of the following: that for her, in the most natural way in the world, natural objects end up by realising this function of object of desire, in so far as they are objects from which one is separated.

And it is this which explains, I think, the lesser frequency of perversion in the woman. It is that inscribed in the cultural context - there is no question of it being elsewhere - her natural satisfactions naturally find - if I may express myself in this way - a way to situate themselves in the dialectic of separation, as such.

In the dialectic of the object signifier of desire, and this is what the analytic authors - there is more than one of them - (33) have expressed very clearly, and in a fashion which will appear no doubt much more concrete than what I have just said, by saying that if there is less perversion in women than in men, it is because in general they satisfy their perverse affects (?) in their relationships with their children. (Smiles) This is why not that your daughter is mute, but why there are some children that we - as analysts - have to deal with.

We come back, as you see, to first truths, but it is not a bad

thing to come back to them by a path which is clear and correct. I will take the opportunity also to indicate something to you: to indicate something to you destined, at least for the masculine part of my audience, to temper the astonishment, even the impatience they may feel before one of the singular properties of their relationships with their partners of the other sex. I would like to talk about what is usually called jealousy.

As usual, the analyst, who has brought so much clarity, has also of course brought just as much obscurity. "No progress", said Nestroy, who was so appreciated by Freud "is half as great as one imagines it to be".

The problem of jealousy, and especially of feminine jealousy (34) has been submerged in analysis in the quite different form of masculine jealousy.

Feminine jealousy which in clear-cut dimensions, dimensions as distinct as the style of love in the two different sexes, is really something which, I believe, can really not be situated except at the most radical point.

And if you remember my little drawing of the demand for a relationship to the other, of the subject who questions this relationship and who, as I might say, strikes the other in it with a signifying collapse so that he appears himself as collapsed in the presence of something which is the remainder of this division, this something irreducible, undemandable, which is precisely the object of desire, it is in so far as for the subject, who in so far as she makes herself an object of love, the woman, on this occasion, sees clearly in this remainder this something which is the most essential in her, that she accords so much importance to the manifestation of desire.

Because, indeed, it is quite clear that, in experience, love and desire are two different things, and that one must all the same speak clearly and say that one can love one being very much and desire another.

It is precisely in the measure that the woman occupies this position, and that she knows very well the value of desire, (35) namely: that beyond all the sublimations of love, desire has a relationship to being even in its most limited, its most shortsighted, its most fetishistic and let us say the word, its most stupid form.

Even in the extreme form, in which in the phantasy the subject is presented and in which the subject is literally no longer anything but a support and a sign, the sign of this signifying remainder of relationships with the other, it is nevertheless to this that when all is said and done the woman will attach the value of final proof that it is indeed to her that one is addressing oneself.

The beloved, with all the tenderness and devotion one can imagine... it nevertheless remains that if a man desires another

woman, she knows that even if what the man loves is only her slipper, or the hem of her dress, or the paint that she has on her face, it is nevertheless here that the homage to being is produced.

It is necessary from time to time to recall the first truths, and it is for this reason that I think you will excuse me the perhaps exaggerated tone which I gave given to this digression.

And, now, let us see where things go, namely with respect to this zone of the object in which there is established this ambiguity, and what is the function as such of the phallus?

Already it cannot but appear to you but as particularly outlined (36) in what I have just said concerning the bad internal object.

That if it can be said that if the paternal metaphor - as I called it - establishes there, in the form of the phallus, a dissociation which is exactly that which overlaps the general form, as might be expected, which I gave to you as being that of prohibition, namely that: either the subject is not it, or the subject does not have it.

This means that if the subject is it, the phallus - and this is illustrated immediately in this form, namely: as object of the mother's desire - then he does not have it, namely he does not have the right to make use of it, and this is the fundamental value of the law which is called the prohibition of incest, - and that, on the other hand/ if he has it - namely if he has realised the paternal identification - then there is one thing certain, it is that he is not this phallus.

This is what is signified, at, what I would call the most radical symbolic level, by the introduction of the dimension of the Oedipus complex. And everything that will be elaborated around this subject will come back always to this: "either.... or...." which introduces an order at the level of the object that one cannot demand.

How is the neurotic to be characterised? - Well! The neurotic, of course, uses this alternation: it is in so far as he situates (37) himself fully at the level of the Oedipus complex, at the level of the signifying structuring of the Oedipus complex, as such, that he makes use of it, and in a fashion that I would call metonymical, and which I would even call, in so far as here he is not it, presents itself as primary, with respect to "she does not have it", which I would call a regressive metonymy. I mean that the neurotic is the one who uses the alternative; in this metonymical form, in the fact, that, for him, "not to have it" is the form in which he affirms himself: and in a masked fashion: "to be it" - I mean the phallus.

He does not have the phallus, in order to be it, in a hidden, unconscious fashion. And in order not to have it, in order to be it - it is the rather enigmatic "being for" (pour être) around which I organised, I think, our last conversation - it is

"another who has it", while he "is it" in an unconscious way.

Pay careful attention to this: the fact is that the basis of neurosis is constituted by this: it is that in his function as desirer, the subject takes on a substitute.

Take the obsessional, and look effectively at what happens at the the end of his complicated procedures; he is not the one who enjoys (jouit). In the same way for the hysteric, she is not the one who enjoys. The imaginary substitution that is in question, and, precisely, the substitution for the subject, at the level that I teach you here to situate him, namely....., it is (38) the substitution of his ego, as such, for this subject concerning the desire that is in question.

It is in so far as he substitutes his ego for the subject that he introduces demand into the question of desire. It is because someone - who is not him, but his image - is substituted for him in the dialectic of desire that when all is said and done he can demand - as experience allows us constantly to put our finger on - only substitutes.

What is characteristic in the experience of the neurotic, and what is on the same level as his own feeling, is that everything that he demands, he demands for something else.

And the result of this scene, through which the imaginary, in short, as you see, comes here to play this role in what I called the regressive metonymy of the neurotic, has another consequence, because in this domain it cannot be stopped: the subject is substituted for himself, at the level of his desire; he can only demand substitutes, while believing that he is demanding what he desires.

And, further on again, we know from experience that because of the very form that is in question, namely of the ego in so far as it is the reflection of a reflection, and the form of the other, he substitutes himself also for the one from whom he demands.

Because it is quite clear that, nowhere more than in the neurotic, does this separated ego as easily come to take the (39) place of this separated object which I designated for you as being the original form of the object of desire.

The altruism of the neurotic, contrary to what one says, is permanent. And there is no more common path to the satisfactions he is seeking than what one can describe as "devoting oneself then to satisfying, as far as one can for the other, all the demands, which he well knows, however, constitute in his case a perpetual failure of desire" or, in other words: "to blind oneself in one's devotion to the other to one's own dissatisfaction".

These are not, I think, things which are comprehensible, outside the perspective that I am trying to articulate for you here, namely when all is said and done, that the formula $S(0)$ is

transformed into something, if you wish, with reservations and summarily, of the identification of his unconscious being; and this is why we will give to it the same sign as to S barred (S), namely the phallus barred; namely: that in the presence of an object it is the most general form of an object of desire, which is that other in so far as he is situated there, and rediscovers himself there.

We must now pass on to perversion.

But I it is late. I will put off therefore till the next time the rest of this discourse. If I cannot make it advance more (40) quickly, you should not see in this any more than the effect of the difficulties in which we have to make our way.

(Prolonged applause).

14.10

Seminar 26: 24 June 1959

The difficulty that we are dealing with does not date from today or yesterday. It is one of those after all about which the whole moralistic tradition has speculated, namely those of fallen desire (desir dechu). I do not need to evoke for you from the distant past the bitterness of wise men or of pseudo-wise men about the disappointing character of human desire.

The question takes on an explicit form in analysis in so far first of all as the first analytic experience shows us the in their partial nature, the relationship to the object supposing a complexity, a complication in the incredible risk there is in the fitting together of these partial drives, and making the contingency of the object depend on this fitting together; the combination of partial drives really shows us the fundamentally problematic character of any access to the object which to spell it out shows us a theory, only at the cost of showing it to be completely contrary to what we might think in a first approach to the notion of instinct which in any case, even if we keep its finalistic hypothesis extremely flexible, remains nevertheless - every theory of instinct whatever it may be is a theory as one might say of the centring of the object. Namely that the processes in the living organism ensure that an object is progressively fixed in a certain field, and is captured there by a certain behaviour, a process which of itself is presented under the form of the progressive concentration of the field.

The process, the dialectic which analysis shows us is completely different: that one progresses on the contrary by the addition, by the combination of these partial drives, and which comes to (2) conceive of the advent of a satisfying object, the one which corresponds to the two poles of masculinity and of femininity at the cost of the synthesis of all sorts of interchangeable, variable drives, and of combinations that are necessary to arrive at very diverse types of success.

This is why in a certain fashion you may think that in defining by the \$ of o, placed here in the schema or the graph which we make use of to explain, to expose the position of desire in a speaking subject, that what is there is nothing other than a simple notation. In desire what is required is the relationship of the subject to the object; that o is the object.

The capital S is the subject, and nothing more. There is

nothing more original in this notation than this little bar which recalls that the subject, at this high point which is represented by the presentation of desire, is himself marked by the word. And after all it is nothing other than this something which recalls that the drives are fragmented.

It should be carefully noted that the import of this notation is not limited to that. This notation does not designate a relationship of the subject to the object, but the phantasy, a phantasy which sustains this subject as desiring, namely at this point beyond his discourse where it is a question of This notation signifies that in the phantasy the subject is present as subject of the unconscious discourse. The subject is here present in so far as he is represented in the phantasy by (3) the function of cutting which is essentially his own, of cutting in a discourse, and which is not just any discourse, which is a discourse which escapes him: this discourse of the unconscious.

This is essential, and if you follow the thread you cannot fail to be struck by the extent to which it highlights a dimension always omitted when we are dealing with perverse phantasies.

I already indicated to you the other day the prudence with which what we call the perverse phantasy should be approached. The perverse phantasy is not perversion. The biggest mistake is to imagine that we all understand perversion in so far as we are, namely in so far as we are more or less neurotic in some way, in so far as we have access to these perverse phantasies. But the comprehensive access that we have to perverse phantasy does not for all that give the structure of perversion, even though in a way it calls for its reconstruction.

If you will allow me to take a few liberties in my discourse today, namely to take a little gambol outside it, I would evoke for you this book marked by this stamp of our contemporary epoch which is called Lolita. I am not requiring you to read this book any more than a series of others which seem to indicate a certain constellation of interest precisely around this mainspring of desire. There are better things written than (4) Lolita on what one could call the theoretical plane. But Lolita is all the same an exemplary enough production.

For those of you who open it there will be nothing obscure as regards the function devolved onto a And obviously in a way that is all the more unambiguous since one can say that curiously the author positions himself in a quite articulate opposition to what he calls Freudian charlatanism, and nevertheless on several occasion, in a fashion which he really does not perceive, gives the clearest witness to this symbolic function of the image of the Including the dream which he has a little while before approaching it in a decisive fashion and which makes it appear to him in the form of a hairy hermaphrodite monster.

But this is not what is important. The important thing in the

structure of this work which has all the characteristics of the relationship of the subject to desire, to what is properly speaking a neurotic phantasy, for the simple reason which explodes in the contrast between the first and the second volume, between the sparkling character of desire while it is being meditated on while it occupies some thirty years of the life of the subject, and its prodigious collapse bogged down in a reality, with no means of even reaching the partner, which constitutes the second volume, and the miserable journey of this couple across America the beautiful.

What is important, and in some way exemplary, is that simply in virtue of a constructive coherence, the pervert properly speaking shows himself, appears in an other, an other who is no longer the double of the subject, who is something quite different, who appears there literally as his persecutor, who appears in the (5) margin of the adventure as if - and in effect this is what is most openly admitted in the book - the desire that is in question in the subject can only live in an other, and where it is literally impenetrable and completely unknown.

The character who is substituted for the hero at a given moment of the plot, the character who is properly speaking the pervert the one who really has access to the object, is a character the key to whom is given in the last groans that he gives when he collapses from the shots of the hero's revolver. This sort of negative of the principal character who is the person in whom there effectively reposes the relationship to the object has here something quite exemplary which may serve us as a schema to understand that it is only at the cost of an extrapolation that we can produce the perverse structure.

The structure of desire in neurosis is something of a quite different nature to the structure of desire in perversion, and all the same these two structures oppose one another. In fact the most radical of these perverse positions of desire, the one that is put by the analytic theory at the most original point, at the basis of development, and also at the terminal point of the most extreme regressions, namely masochism, this can we not recall here, allows us to put our finger, in a proof obtained through the phantasy, on the degree to which the levels are ignored in the fashion in which we precipitate ourselves in analysis to formulate in these telescoped formulae the nature of what we are in the presence of.

(6) I take masochism here because it will serve us as a pole for this approach to perversion. And everyone knows that the attempt is being made to reduce masochism in its diverse forms to a relationship which, in the final term, would present itself as a quite radical relationship, of the subject in his relationship to his own life; to integrate it, in virtue of valid and precious indications that Freud gave on this subject, with a death instinct through which it is supposed to make itself felt in an immediate fashion and at the very level of the drive of the vital force considered as organic, something which is contrary to the organisation of the instincts.

No doubt there is here something which, at the limit, presents an a way of aiming, a perspective on which no doubt it is not at all indifferent to fix oneself in order to pose certain questions.

In short do we not now see, by posing as it is situated here by the letters which indicate its relationship on the schema, the essential position of desire in a division of the relationship of the subject to discourse, something that appears in a glaring way, and which it is wrong to neglect within the phantastical aspect of what is called masochism. Of this masochism about which, while making of it something that emerges from the most radical of instincts, the analysts are without any doubt in agreement in perceiving that the essential of masochistic jouissance cannot go beyond a certain limit of maltreatment. Some features or other, because they are highlighted are destined to bring us some illumination I think at least on a medium, on something which allows us to realise there the relationship of the subject, and this is essential, to something which is properly speaking the discourse of the other.

(7) Is it necessary to have heard the confidences of a masochist, is it necessary to have read the least of the numerous writings which are consecrated to it, some more or less good examples of which have come out recently, in order to recognise an essential dimension of masochistic jouissance linked to this sort of particular passivity that the subject experiences and enjoys, in representing his fate as being played out above his head between a certain number of people who are there around him, and literally without taking his presence into account, everything that is being prepared about his fate being discussed before him without him being in the least taken into account.

Is this not one of the features, one of the most obviously striking, perceptible dimensions on which moreover the subject insists as being one of the constituents of the masochistic relationship.

Here therefore in short is the thing in which there is grasped, in which there appears something one can put one's finger on, that it is in the constitution of the subject qua subject, and in so far as this constitution is inherent to the discourse, and in so far as the possibility is pushed to the extreme, that this discourse as such here develops in the phantasy, takes the subject as nothing, that we find one of the first steps. This indeed is a rather important step because it is on this, from this, that a certain number of symptomatic manifestations will develop. A step which will allow us to see at the horizon the relationship that there can be between the death instinct considered as one of the most radical agencies, and this something in the discourse which gives this support without which (8) we would in no way have access to it, this support of this non-being which is one of the original, constitutive, implicit dimensions at the very roots of all symbolisation.

Because we have already for a whole year, the year that we consecrated to Beyond the pleasure principle, articulated this

function proper to the symbolisation which is essentially in the foundation of this cut, therefore that by which the current of the original tension, whatever it may be, is caught up in a series of alternatives which introduce what one can call the fundamental machine which is properly what we rediscover as detached, as disengaged at the source of the subject's schizophrenia, in which the subject identifies himself to the discordance of this machine compared to the vital current, to this discordance as such.

In this sense, I point out to you in passing, you put your finger here, in an exemplary fashion, which is at once radical and quite accessible, on one of the most prominent forms of the function of the Verwerfung. It is in so far as the cut is both constitutive and at the same time irredeemably external to the discourse in so far as it constitutes him, that one can say that the subject, in so far as he identifies himself with the cut, is Verworfen. This is how he apprehends himself, and perceives "himself as real.

All I am doing here is to indicate to you in a different form, not I believe a fundamentally distinct one, but undoubtedly articulated and deepened differently, of the "I think therefore I am". I mean that it is in so far as the subject participates in this discourse - and the only thing that is added to the Cartesian dimension, is that this discourse is a discourse which escapes him, and which helps him without knowing it - it is in so far as he is in the cut of this discourse that he is to the supreme degree an "I am" which has this singular property in this reality which is really the last one in which the subject grasps himself, namely the possibility of cutting the discourse somewhere, of punctuating it. This property where his essential being lies, his being in which he perceives himself in so far as the only real intrusion that he brings radically into the world as subject, does not exclude however from all other living relationships, to the point that all the detours that we analysts know about are required, for "I" to be reintegrated into it.

We spoke briefly the last time about the way things happen for neurotics. As we said, for the neurotic the problem passes by way of the paternal metaphor, by way of the fiction, real or not, of the one who peacefully enjoys the object, at the price of what? Of something perverse. Because as we have said, this metaphor is the mask for a metonymy. Behind this metaphor of the father, as subject of the law, as peaceful possessor of jouissance, is hidden the metonymy of castration. And if you look at it carefully, you will see that the castration of the son is here only the continuation and the equivalence of the father's castration.

Like all the myths behind the primitive Freudian myth of the father - and the primitive myth of the father indicates it well enough: Chronos castrates Jupiter, Jupiter castrates Chronos before coming into his heavenly kingship.

The metonymy in question depends in the final analysis on the following: the fact is that there is only ever one phallus in

the game; and this is precisely what in the neurotic structure (10) must be prevented from being seen. The neurotic cannot be the phallus except in the name of the other. There is therefore someone who has it, who is the one on whom his being depends. He does not have what everyone knows is called the castration complex. But if nobody has it he naturally has it still less.

The desire of the neurotic, if you will allow me this formula which is a little summary for something that I would like to give you a sense of here, it is in so far as it is entirely dependent, as the whole development of Freud's work indicates to us, on this mythical guarantee of the good faith of the signifier to which the subject must attach himself in order to be able to live other than in a state of vertigo. This allows us to arrive at the formula that the desire of the neurotic - and everyone knows that there is a close, historical relationship between the anatomy that Freudianism gives to this desire, and something that is characteristic of a certain epoch that we are living, and regarding which we cannot know under what human form, vaguely vaticinated by prophets of different dimensions, it will culminate, or collapse... but what is certain, is that something is tangible for us in our experience, provided we are not afraid to articulate it: it is that the desire of the neurotic, I would say in a condensed fashion is what arises where there is no god.

You must not think that I am saying what I have not said, namely that the situation is simpler when there is one. The question is the following: that it is at the level of the suspension of (11) this supreme guarantee which is what the neurotic hides within himself, that there is situated and comes to a halt, and is suspended this desire of the neurotic. This desire of the neurotic is something which is only a desire at the horizon of all his behaviour.

Because - and you will allow me to communicate to you one of these formulae which will allow you to recognise the style of a behaviour, we will say that with respect to this desire in which he situates himself, the neurotic is always at his own horizon, that he prepares its advent. The neurotic, if you will allow me an expression which I believe faithfully represents all sorts of things that we see in daily experience, is always preoccupied with packing his bags, or examining his conscience - it is the same thing - or with organising his labyrinth - it is the same thing. He gets his bags together, he forgets them or he puts them in the left luggage, but it is always a question of bags for a journey that he never takes.

This is absolutely essential to consider if we wish to perceive clearly that there is a total contrast, whatever may be said about it by a lazy form of thinking which drags itself like a snail along the phenomenon, without having the will to gather together in it at any moment a perspective, some perspective or other. It is question of opposing to this the structure of perverse desire.

In the case of the pervert of course it is also a question of a gap. There cannot also but be a question, because this is the fundamental relationship, of the subject suppressing his being in the cut. It is a question of knowing how in the case of the pervert this cut is experienced, is supported.

(12) Well here undoubtedly the work, throughout the years, of analysts, in so far as their experiences with perverse patients have allowed them to articulate theories which are sometimes in contradiction, out of tune with one another, but suggestive of the order of difficulty that they have to deal with, is something that we can in a way take into account. I mean that we can speak about as a material which itself betrays certain structural necessities which are those properly speaking which we are trying to formulate here.

I would say therefore that in this attempt that we making here to establish the real function of desire, we can include even this discrete delusion, even this well organised delusion to which those who have approached this subject have been lead way of these , I mean, psychoanalysts. I am going to take an example of this.

I believe that at the present time taking every thing into account no one has better spoken I believe about perversion than a very discreet man and one who is personally full of humour, I mean Mr. Gillespie. I recommend to those who read English, they will get a lot out of it, the first study by Gillespie who approached this subject in connection with fetishism in the form of an article called "A contribution to the study of fetishism" (I.J.P. October 1940), then the notes that he devoted to the "Analysis of sexual perversions", in No. 23 (1952) Part 4, and finally the last one he wrote in the issue of July-October 1956 (No. 37, Part 4 and Part 5): "The general theory of perversions".

(13) Something will stand out from this for you: it is that someone who in short is so free, and judges rather well the different avenues along which attempts have been made to approach the question, which is clearly much more complex naturally than can be imagined in a summary perspective, the one which would see perversion as being purely and simply the drive showing itself itself openly. This is not to say either, as has been said, that perversion can be resumed in a sort of approach which tends in short to make it homogeneous with neurosis. I will go straight to what it is a question of expressing, to what will serve us in future as a reference point for questioning perversion in different ways. The notion of splitting is essential to it, already showing something which we can congratulate ourselves on - and do not think that I am going to rush into it right away as something which overlaps in a way the function, the identification of the subject to the split or the cut of discourse, which is the one where I teach you to identify the subjective component of the phantasy. This is only precisely the kind of haste that is implied in this recognition, which has already been put forward, and which has already provided on occasion a sort of glimpse which is a little shameful

of himself in the case of one of the writers who have busied themselves with perversion.

In order to testify to this I need only refer to the third case to which Mr. Gillespie refers in the second of the articles. It is the case of a fetishist. I will sketch this case out for you briefly. It is the case of a 30 year old fetishist whose phantasy expressly proves itself after analysis to be that of (14) being split in two by the mother's split whose penetrating prow as I might say is represented here by his bitten breasts, as well as by the split that he has just penetrated and which suddenly changes into a In short a whole return to a decomposition, a recomposition by what Mr. Gillespie calls castration anxiety, is referred to a series of unfoldings where there also intervenes the primitive exigency for the mother or the primitive regret for the mother, and on the other hand a conception, not demonstrated I must say, but supposed when all is said and done at the end of the analysis by the analyst, a kistanist (?) conception with identification to the split.

We can say that at the end of the article Mr. Gillispie writes with this type of glimpse or half-assumed, interrogative, questioning intuition, but which is really in my opinion quite indicative of the extreme point to which is lead someone who follows attentively, I mean after this development over time, after this explanation which analysis alone gives us of what is found at the depths of the perverse structure: "The configuration of the material at this point led me to a speculation about the phantasy associated with the split ego..." The split ego (L'ego refendu), if we accept this term of refendu which is used freely enough to speak about this splitting upon which Freud in a way ended his work. Because you know I think, the unfinished article of Freud on the splitting of the ego, the pen fell from his hand as one might say and he left unfinished this article (14) which was found after his death.

This splitting of the ego "led me to a speculation about the phantasy associated with the split ego and the split object". It is the same word that we can use if we use this term. It is the split ego and the split object.

"Is not the female genital" - it is Gillespie who asks the question - "the split object par excellence, and cannot the phantasy of a split ego arise from an identification with this split genital? I am aware", he says, "that when we speak of the splitting of the ego and of the object we are referring to mental mechanisms which we assume to underlie the phenomena... ", I mean by that that we are doing science, that we are dealing with scientific concepts, "... and that phantasies pertain to a different level of discourse."

The order of interrogation that Mr. Gillespie poses here is interesting.

"... nevertheless, phantasies, our own no less than our patients' must always play a part in the way that we conceptualise these

underlying processes. It seems to me, therefore, that the phantasy of being oneself split in pieces just as the vulva is split may well be very relevant to the mental mechanism of splitting of the object and introjection of the split object, leading to splitting of the ego."

"It is implicit, of course, in such a phantasy of the vulva as a split object that it was once intact, and that the splitting is the result of a sadistic attack, whether by the father or by oneself."

(16) It is quite clear that we find ourselves here before something which, for a mind as prudent and measured as that of Mr. Gillespie, can scarcely fail to strike us as something where he himself is playing at and going to the extremes of a line of thought by reducing in a way to a sort of completely primordial identificatory schema what can then serve us as an explanation for something which is on this occasion nothing less than the very structure of the personality of the subject, because what is in question throughout this whole article - there is not only this case to be quoted - is this something so tangible and which decomposes itself in the transference in the case of perverts, namely splittings which are what one could call on this occasion veritable divisions of the personality. To trace in a way the division of the personality of the pervert upon the two valves of the original organ of phantasy, is something which is sure on this occasion to make us smile, or even to baffle us.

But in fact what we find in effect, and here this should be grasped at every level and in extremely different forms of the formation of the personality of the pervert, is something that I have already indicated for example in one of my articles, the one that I wrote in connection with the case of Andre Gide which has been studied in such a remarkable way by Professor Delay. It is something also which is presented as an opposition between two identificatory aspects. The one more especially linked to the narcissistic image of oneself $i(o)$, on the one hand, which is what regulates in the case of this illustrious patient whose confidences we have in a thousand forms in a work - and of course we should take into account the dimensions of this work, because (17) it adds something to the equilibrium of the subject, and I do not want to develop fully in this connection what I am indicating to you here, because after all our time is almost up this year, I have to give, to throw out a few indications about what will come later what our point of view allows us to approach: it is the relationship that there is in the title which I gave it, which in the first place is particularly striking here, between precisely what this schema articulates, namely desire and the letter.

What does this mean, if not that it is in this direction that there should be sought properly speaking in the reconversion of desire to this production which is expressed in the symbol, which is not the super-reality that it is believed to be, but on the contrary is essentially due to its breaking up, to its partly signifying decomposition; I am saying that it is in the

reconversion of the impasse of desire into this signifying material that we should situate, and we should do this if we wish to give an appropriate meaning to the term, the process of sublimation as such.

Our Andre Gide, undoubtedly, deserves to be situated in the category that is posed for us by the problem of homosexuality. And what do we see: we see this double relationship to a divided object in so far as it is the reflection of this graceless, even disgraced, boy as one writer has put it, that the little Andre Gide was at the beginning; and that in this furtive relationship to a narcissistic object the presence of the phallic attribute is essential. Gide is homosexual. But it is impossible, it is the merit of this work to have shown it, it is completely impossible to

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(19) that our friend Gribouille has become.

"An absurd fact", the writer cried to his interlocutor. "But this is just the reason why I am recounting it. It is the truth. And no doubt the grandmother scarcely thought that she was writing here something disgusting. But I bear witness to the fact that no page of Aphrodite could have disturbed any schoolboy as much as this metamorphosis of Gribouille into a vegetable

disturbed the little ignorant boy that I was."

I will add in order to come back to it later, because its dimension should not be overlooked, the other example that he gives us of this phantasy which provoked this primitive jouissance.

"There was also in a stupid little piece by Mme. de Segur: Les diners de Mile Justine, a passage in which the domestics took advantage of the absence of their masters to have a good blow out. They go through all the cupboards, and they guzzle away while Justine quietly bends and lifts a pile of plates from the cupboard. The coachman catches her around the waist. Justine who is ticklesome drops the pile, and the plates are broken. The damage made me swoon."

If you need more to grasp the relationship, the phantasy of the second with this quite primordial thing that it is a question of articulating in the relationship of the subject to the cut, I would cite for you the following which is something quite common in the case of such subjects, that one of the fundamental phantasies in masturbatory initiation was also for example the phantasy of a verbal revelation concerning more precisely something which is the thing imagined in the phantasy, namely for example a sexual initiation taken as theme of the phantasy in so (20) far as it exists.

The relationship uncovered in the first of these phantasies of the subject to something which is detached and which progressively blossoms is remarkable in so far as it presentifies for us something which is demonstrated in a hundred analytic observations, namely the theme which is now admitted and seen as habitual, the order of identification of the subject to the phallus in so far as it arises from phantasing an object inside the mother. This structure is commonly met and nowadays there is no difficulty in it being accepted and recognised as such by any analyst.

The important thing is that here, we see it, manifested as such in the phantasy, taken up in the phantasy as a support for something which represents for the subject one of the experiences of his early erotic life as a , and that what is important for us, is to know more precisely what sort of identification we are dealing with.

We have said that the metonymy of the neurotic is essentially constituted by the following: it is that he is it only at the limit, namely at a point that he will attain from the fleeting point of view of symptoms in so far as he does not have it, the phallus. And this is what must not be revealed. That is to say that we encounter in him, the further the analysis progresses, a growing castration anxiety.

There is in perversion something that we can call a reversal of the processes of proof. What has to be proved by the neurotic, namely the subsistence of his desire, becomes here in perversion.

the basis of proof. You can see here something like this sort (21) of return in a position of honour of what in analysis we call reasoning per absurdum.

For the pervert the circumstance, this fact which unites into one term by introducing this slight opening which permits a quite special identification to the other, which unites in one term the "he is" and "he has". For that it is enough that this "he has" should be on occasion "she has". Namely the object of primitive identification.

He will have the phallus, the object of primitive identification, whether it is this object which is transformed into a fetish in one case, or into an idol in the other. We have the whole span between the fetishistic form of his loves, the homosexual, and the idolatrous form illustrated by Gide. The link is established, as one might say, in the natural support.

We will say that perversion presents itself as a sort of natural simulation of the cut. It is in this that Gillespie's intuition serves as an index. What the subject does not have, he has in the object. What the subject is not, his ideal object is. In short a certain natural relationship is taken as material for this subjective split which is what it is a question of symbolising in perversion as in neurosis. He is the phallus, qua object within the mother, and he has it in his object of desire.

This is more or less what we see in the male homosexual. In the female homosexual, remember the case articulated by Freud, and which we have analysed here by comparing it with the case of Dora. What is happening at the turning point at which Freud's young patient is precipitated into homosexual idealisation? She (22) is certainly the phallus, but how? Also qua object within the mother. And this is seen in a very clear fashion when at the height of the crisis, she throws herself over the railway bridge, Freud recognises that in this Niederkommen there is something which is the identification to this maternal attribute. She makes herself be in this supreme effort of a giving to her idol which is what her suicide is. Why does she fall like an object? In order to give her the object of love, to give her what she does not have, to bring about the maximum of idealisation, to give her this phallus which is the object of her adoration to which the homosexual love for the singular person who is the object of her loves is identified.

If we try to introduce this in connection with each case, if we make an effort to question ourselves in each case, we will find here what I claim to be putting forward as a structure. You can always rediscover, not just in perversion but especially in this form to which it is objected, with a good degree of pertinence, that it is extremely polymorphous, namely homosexuality, especially with the use that we make of the term homosexuality, how many different forms of experience in fact does it not present us with... But then again would it not also be of interest to us after all to be able to situate at the level of

perversion something which could constitute a centre as such of something which while admitting all sorts of peripheral intermediate forms between perversion and for example let us say psychosis, drug addiction, or one or other form in our nosographical field, homosexuality compared to what the last time for example we were trying to formulate as being the point on (23) which the desire of desire which is the neurotic is based, namely this relationship to the image of the other thanks to which there can be established this whole interplay of substitution in which the neurotic has never to prove that what is in question, namely that he is the phallus, is well and truly

We would say that we have here something which is a certain relationship of primitive identification I with the narcissistic, specular identification, which is $i(o)$.

It is in so far as something already exists, that a schism is already delineated between the accession of the identificatory symbolic subject, primordial relationship to the mother, and the first Verwerfung; it is in so far as this is articulated with the second imaginary identification of the subject to his specular form, namely $i(o)$, this is what is used by the subject to symbolise that which with Gillespie we will call the split. Namely, the thing in which the subject intervenes in his phantastical relationship.

And here the phallus is the essential signifying element in so far as it is what arises from the mother as symbol of her desire, this desire of the other which terrifies the neurotic, this desire in which he senses that he is running all sorts of risks. It is this which constitutes the centre around which there is going to be organised the whole construction of the pervert.

And nevertheless the desire of the other is also what experience shows us in the form that is furthest back, and most difficult to reach. It is precisely this which constitutes the depth and the difficulty of these analyses which we have been able to undertake thanks to the access that has been given to us through our experience with children of the constructions and speculations that are particularly linked to primitive objectal identifications.

(24) Obviously even if Gide had presented himself at his own risk to make this sort of effort there is nothing to prove that the enterprise would have gone far enough. Gide did not present himself for analytic exploration. Nevertheless, however superficial when all is said and done may have been an analysis which only developed in the so-called sublimated dimension, we have some strange indications on this point. I believe that nobody to my knowledge has given its importance to this little trait which appears as a sort of singularity in behaviour which almost signs with its symptomatic accent what is in question, namely the beyond of the maternal personage, or more exactly her interior, her very heart. Because this core of primitive identification is rediscovered at the basis of the structure of

the perverse subject himself.

If in the neurotic desire is at the horizon of all the demands which have been deployed for so long and are literally interminable, one can say that the desire of the pervert is at the heart of all his demands. And if we say that its unfolding is undeniably woven around aesthetic requirements, nevertheless nothing is more striking than what I would call the modulation of themes around which it is pursued.

And you will see that what appears from the first lines, is the relationships of the subject to a fragmented vision, a kaleidoscope which occupies the six or seven first pages of the volume. How can you not sense that you are being carried to the furthest experience of fragmentation.

But there is more, the notion, the perception that he grasps at a particular moment, and which himself articulates in the fact that there are no doubt, he says, reality and dreams, but that there (25) is also a second reality. And further on again - this is what I want to get to - it is the tiniest of indications, but everyone know that for us these are the most important ones, he tells us the story known as the knot in the wood of a door. In the wood of this door, somewhere in Uzes, there is a hole because a knot has been removed. And what is at the bottom of it he is told is a little marble that your father put there when he was your age. And he recounts, to the wonder of students of character, that from his holidays on he spent a year letting the nail of his little finger grow in order to have it long enough at the next meeting to go and remove this little marble in the hole of the wood.

And in effect he manages to get it, only to discover that what he has is a greyish object that he would be ashamed to show to anyone,, so that - I think this is what he says - he returns it to its place, cuts his nail of his little finger, and tells nobody about it, except us, the posterity who **are** going to immortalise this story.

I think that it is difficult to find a better introduction to the notion rejected in a magnificent everything shows the perseverance of something which presents to us the figure of the form in which there is presented the relationship of the perverse subject to the internal object. An object which is at the heart of something. The relationship to this object as such, in so far as it is the imaginary dimension of desire, on this occasion of the primordial desire of the mother, which comes to play the decisive role, the symbolising, central role which allows us to consider that here at the level of desire the pervert is identified to the imaginary form of the phallus. It is to this that next time we will devote our final class on desire, this year.

Seminar 27: Wednesday 1 July 1959

We come to the end of this year which I have devoted, with all its risks and perils for me as well as for you, to this question of desire and its interpretation.

You have been able to see in effect that it is on the question of the place of desire in the economy of the analytic experience that I have remained without budging because I think it is from there that there should begin every particular interpretation of any desire whatsoever.

It has not been easy to circumscribe this place. That is why today I would like simply, by way of conclusion, to point out the major terms, the cardinal points with respect to which there is situated something whose importance I have managed, I hope, to make you sense this year: the specificity to be given to this function of desire as such.

As you know, the slightest experience that you may have of modern analytic work, and especially of what is constituted for example by an analytic observation, will show you a constant feature - I am talking about any observation that people care to communicate - in the period of analysis that we are living through and which began already about twenty years ago - these are cases which are called in contrast to the typical neuroses of the old literature, neurotic characters, cases which are borderline as regards neurosis. What is it that we encounter in this way of approaching the subject?

I read a certain number of them recently, in order to get a clear idea about where analytic thinking is as regards what constitutes the essential of the progress applied from experience. Well in general one can say that with surprising constancy the present state of things - namely at the period of analysis that we are (2) at - is dominated from whatever angle it takes its guidelines, by object-relations. It converges towards object-relations .

What is attached under this rubric to the Kleinian experience appears after all more like a symptom than as a centre of diffusion. I mean a zone in which everything that relates to it has been particularly investigated. But fundamentally any one of the other centres of organisation of analytic thought which structures research is not all that far from it fundamentally. Because object-relations have come to dominate the whole

conception that we have of progress in analysis.

This is not the least striking of the observations that present themselves to us on this occasion. Nevertheless in the concrete case of an observation reported with the aim of illustrating some structure or other in which the field of our nosological object is situated, analysis appears to be pursued for some time now along the lines of what one could call moralising normativation.

I am not saying that it is in this sense that the intervention of the analyst directly takes place. It depends on the case. But it is in this perspective that the analyst himself chooses his reference points. The very fashion in which he articulates the particularities of the subject with respect to his surroundings, to this object, will always be in terms of an appreciation of the apprehension of the object by the subject that he has in analysis. And the deficiencies of this apprehension of the object as measured by a supposedly normal approach to the other as such, where in short we will be shown that the mind of the analyst is essentially dwelling on the degradations of this (3) dimension of the other who in short is seen as being always overlooked, forgotten, fallen in the subject from its proper condition as an independent autonomous subject of the pure other, of the absolute other. That is all.

This is a mapping out which is worth as much as any other; for what is taken as essential, what is granted its full value in terms of this appreciation of the other in his autonomy, his profile.

What is striking is not so much this despite all the cultural presuppositions that it implies. It is an implicit rallying to what one can call a system of values which even though it is implicit is no less present in it. What is striking is what one might call the precipitation of a certain turning point which is that after having elaborated at length with the subject the insufficiencies of his affective apprehension as regards the other, we see in general, either that this expresses directly some turning point or other in the concrete analysis, or simply that it may be by a sort of haste to resume in what appears to the analyst to be the final terms of experience, we see a whole essentially moralising articulation of the observation falling in a way brusquely to a lower stage, and finding this final term of reference in a series of extremely primitive identifications, those which whatever way they are named always approximate more or less to this notion of good and bad objects, internal, introjected, internalised, or external, externalised, projected.

(4) There are always some Kleinian leanings in this reference to the experiences of primordial identification. And the fact that it is masked on other occasions by the highlighting of final principles to which fixations are attributed, whether they are described on this occasion in older terms, in instinctual terms of reference, by referring for example to oral sadism as having profoundly deviated the oedipal relationship, and with the subject motivating in the last resort this accident of the

oedipal drama, the oedipal identification, it is always to something of the same order that it is a question of referring oneself in the last analysis. Namely final identifications to which we refer in short the whole development of the subjective drama, whether it is in neurosis, or even in perversion; namely these identifications which leave the very notion of subjectivity profoundly ambiguous.

The subject appears here essentially as identification to what he can consider as coming from himself, more or less, and the therapy is presented as a rearranging of these identifications in the course of a experience which takes its principles in a reference to reality, in what the subject has in short to accept or to refuse of himself, in something which from then on takes on an aspect which may seem to be extremely hazardous because when all is said and done this reference to reality is nothing other than one reality. And the reality (5) supposed by the analyst, when all is said and done, which returns in an even more implicit form this time, still more masked this time, may be quite risky, especially by implying an ideal normativity which is properly speaking that of the ideals of the analyst as being the final measure to which the conclusion of the subject is urged to rally and this is an identificatory conclusion.

I am when all is said and done what I recognise as being the good (le bon et le bien) in me, I aspire to conform myself to an ideal normativity which however hidden, however implicit it may be is nevertheless the one which after so many detours I recognise as being designed for me.

By means of a subtle, more subtle than most, but when all is said and done a no different suggestive action is found to be here in this relationship the action, the analyzed interaction.

What I am trying to indicate here in this discourse which I have pursued before you this year, is the way in which this experience, because of having organised itself through a sort of progressive slippage away from the primordial Freudian indications, is an experience which conceals in itself in a fashion that is more and more masked the question which I believe is the essential question without which there is no proper appreciation of our analytic action, and which is that of the place of desire.

Desire as we articulate it has the effect of bringing back to the forefront of our interest, in a way which is unambiguous, but really crucial, the notion of what we are dealing with, which is a subjectivity. Is desire subjectivity or is it not?

(6) This question did not have to wait for analysis to be posed. It has always been there, since the origin of what one can call moral experience. Desire is at once subjectivity, it is what is at the very heart of our subjectivity, what is the most essentially subject, it is at the same time something which is its direct contrary which is opposed to it as a resistance, as a

paradox, as a rejected core, as a core that is refutable. It is starting from that - I have insisted on it several times - that the whole ethical experience developed in a perspective at the end of which we have the enigmatic formula of Spinoza that desire - cupiditas - is the very essence of man.

Enigmatic in so far as his formula allows what follows to remain open: if what he defines is indeed what we desire, or what is desirable, he leaves open the question of knowing whether or not this is the same thing. Even in analysis the distance between what is desired and what is desirable is wide open. It is starting from there that analytic experience is established, and is articulated. Desire is not simply exiled, rejected to the level of the action and principle of our servitude; which it is up to now? It is interrogated as being the very key, or the mainspring in us of a whole series of actions and behaviors which are understood as representing the deepest part of our truth. And this is the high point, the summit from which at every moment experience tends to redescend.

(7) Does that mean, as one might have thought for a long time, that this desire we are dealing with is a pure and simple recourse to a vital gushing forth? It is quite clear that it is nothing of the kind because from the first spelling out of our experience, what we see is that in the very measure that we go deeper into this desire we ^see it confusing itself less and less with this pure and simple elan. It is decomposed, it is disarticulated into something which presents itself as always more distant from a harmonic relationship. No desire presents itself to us in the regressive tracing-back which constitutes analytic experience; it presents itself to us more as a problematic, dispersed, polymorphous, contradictory element, and to tell the truth, far from any oriented co-adaptation.

It is therefore to this experience of desire that it is a question of referring as something which we cannot leave without deepening it, to the point that we will be able to offer something which fixes its meaning for us, which will prevent us from turning away from what is absolutely original, absolutely irreducible in it. Everything, of course, in the fashion that I said analytic experience is articulated, is designed to hide from us this meaning of desire.

This separating out of the paths towards the object in the experience of transference only shows us in a way the negative of what is in question, the experience of transference, if we define it as an experience of repetition obtained through a regression itself dependent on a frustration, leaves to one side the (8) fundamental relationship of this frustration to demand. There is however no other in analysis. And only this way of articulating the terms will allow us to see that the demand regresses because the elaborated demand, as it presents itself in analysis, remains without response.

But already an analysis, taking an inappropriate path, involves itself in giving the response in order to guide the analysand

towards the object from which he is coming. With all sorts of unbelievable ideas one of the examples of which I frequently had to criticise is constituted by this regulation of the distance that I spoke about because perhaps it plays a greater role here in the French context, this regulation of the distance from the object, which if I may say so, sufficiently shows by itself in what sort of contradictory impasse one becomes involved, along a certain path, that of analysis when it is narrowly centred on object-relations, in so far as undoubtedly any relationship whatsoever, however we are meant to conceive of the normal one, seems indeed to presuppose the maintenance, whatever people say, of a certain distance, and to tell the truth we can recognise here a kind of short application, and in fact a misinterpretation of some considerations about the relationship to the mirror stage, to the narcissistic relationship as such, which have constituted in the case of the authors who have put in the foreground the reference to analytic action, which served as a theoretical baggage at a time when he was not able to situate its place in a larger system of references... In fact every kind of reference to analytic experience contains something which, in the (9) final analysis is supposed to be based on the so-called reality of the analytic experience taken as a measure, as a standard of what it is a question of reducing in the transferential relationship; everything which would also put in the place complementary to this action of analytic reduction a more or less advanced, a more or less analysed, more or less criticised distortion of the ego with the notion of this

With reference to this distortion of the ego, with reference to what exists in the ego as a possible alibi for the reduction of analysis to a reality, everything that is organised in these terms only reestablishes this separation of the doctor from the patient on which there is founded a whole classical nosography, which in itself is not an objection, but also the inoperancy of a subjective therapy which is that of pre-analytic psychotherapy surrendering as one might say to the omnipotent norm of the judgement of the doctor what is in question in the experience of the patient, making of the relationship of the doctor to the patient the following: namely submitting it to a subjective structuring which is no doubt that of a counterpart, but of a counterpart who is on the wrong path, with all that this involves precisely in terms of distance, and of oversights that are impossible to reduce.

What analysis establishes is an intersubjective structuring which is strictly distinguished from the preceding one in that however far the subject, the patient, may be from our norms - and this up to the limit of psychosis, of madness, we do not presuppose that he is this counterpart to whom we are linked by links of charity, of respect for our image.

(10) No doubt there is here a relationship which has its foundation with regard to this something which constitutes an advance, which undoubtedly constituted an advance, and an historical advance in the fashion of behaving vis-a-vis the mentally ill patient. But the step forward established by

analysis which emerges as decisive, is that we consider it essentially in its nature, in its relationship with him as a speaking subject, namely as such caught just like ourselves whatever his position may be in the consequences and risks of a relationship to the

This is enough to completely change our relationships to this subject, who is passive in analysis. Because if we start from here desire is situated beyond the feeling of a pressure which is obscure and radical as such, because if we consider this pressure, the drive, the cry, this pressure is only valid, only exists, is only defined, is only articulated by Freud as caught up in a temporal sequence of a special nature, this sequence which we call the signifying chain, and whose properties whose incidences upon everything that we have to deal with as a pressure, as a drive, is that it essentially disconnects this pressure from everything which defines it, and situates it as vital; it renders it essentially separable from everything which establishes it in its living consistency.

It makes possible, as the Freudian theory articulates from the beginning, that the pressure should be separated from its very source, from its object, from its tendency as one might say. It itself is separated from itself because it is essentially recognisable in this very tendency, that it is in an inverse form.

(11) It is primitively, primordially, decomposable, decomposed to tell the truth in a signifying decomposition.

Desire is not the sequence, it is a mapping out of the subject with respect to this sequence in which it is reflected in the dimension of the desire of the other. Let us take an example. Let us take in the most primitive form of what is presented to us by analytic experience, the relationship of the subject to the newcomer into the familial constellation; what we call aggression in this instance is not aggression, it is a death wish, namely however unconscious we may suppose it to be, it is something which is articulated: "May he die".

And it is something which can only be conceived in the register of articulation, namely where signifiers exist. It is in so far as it is in signifying terms, however primitive we may suppose them to be, of aggression vis-a-vis the rival counterpart that the aggression towards the rival counterpart is articulated. The little counterpart practices aggression, and pretends to bite, pushes them even shoves them away from the place where they can get their food.

The passage of primitive rivalry into the unconscious is linked to the fact that something however rudimentary we may suppose it to be is articulated which is not essentially different in this nature from spoken articulation: "May he die". And that is the reason why this "May he die" wants to remain beneath the "Isn't he lovely", or the "I love him" which is the other discourse which is superimposed on the preceding one.

(12) It is in the interval between these two discourses that there is situated what we have to deal with as desire, it is in the interval that there is constituted, if you wish, what the Kleinian dialectic has articulated as being the bad object, and we can see how there can come to converge the rejected drive on the one hand, from the introjected object in a similar ambiguity.

Nevertheless it is about the fashion in which there is structured in the interval this relationship, this imaginary function in so far as it is suspended from, as it depends on both chains of the discourse, the repressed chain and the patent, manifest chain, it is here that we are summoned essentially to specify what must be saved in the articulation in order to know at what level desire is situated.

You may have on one or other occasion thought, suggested, that I am giving here a phallogocentric conception of desire. Of course it is quite evident that the phallus plays an absolutely essential role in it, but how can we really understand this function of the phallus if not within the ontological reference points which are the ones that we are trying to introduce here.

How can we conceive of the usage that Melanie Klein makes of the phallus. I mean at the most primary, the most archaic level of the experience of the child. Namely when the child is caught up in one or other of the difficulties of development which can on occasion be severe. First of all Mrs. Melanie Klein will interpret for him this little toy that he is manipulating and (13) with which he is going to touch some other element that is part of the game which is used to set up the experiment by saying to him "this is Daddy's penis".

It is a fact that no one, at least if he comes from outside into such an experiment, can avoid being disconcerted by the perfectly brutal daring of the intervention, but still more disconcerted by the fact that when all is said and done it works. I mean that the subject who in certain cases can certainly resist, but if he resists it is undoubtedly as Melanie Klein herself has no doubt because something is operating here about whose future comprehension we have no reason to despair - and God knows she allows herself on occasion (I have been given reports of experiments all seen from the outside, but reported in a very faithful way) to be insistent. It is clear that the phallic symbol comes into the game at this ultra-precocious period as if the subject was expecting nothing else.

That Mrs. Melanie Klein sometimes justified this phallus as being the model of a simple which is more manageable and more convenient, is something that we can see here as a singular begging of the question.

That which in our register, in our vocabulary remains, and justifies such an intervention, can only be expressed in these terms: it is that the subject accepts, it is clear in any case, this object of which in most cases he has only the most indirect experience, only as a signifier; and that it is as a signifier

that the incidence of this phallus is justified in the clearest fashion. Whether the subject takes it in as such at the age (14) that he is at is perhaps an unanswerable question. But undoubtedly if Melanie Klein takes this object, whether she knows it or not, it is because she cannot find a better one as a signifier of desire in so far as it is desire of the desire of the other.

If there is something that the phallus signifies - I mean itself in the position of signifier - it is precisely this: it is the desire of the desire of the other. And it is for this reason that it will take up its privileged place at the level of the object.

But I think that far from maintaining ourselves in this phallogocentric position, as is expressed by those who remain at the appearance of what I am in the process of articulating, this allows us to see where the veritable problem is. The veritable problem is the following: it is that the object with which we have to deal from the beginning, concerning desire, far from being in any way this preformed object, this object of instinctual satisfaction, this object which is destined to satisfy according to some vital preformation the subject as his instinctual complement, the object of desire is absolutely not distinct from the following which is: it is the signifier of the desire of desire.

The object as such, the object *o*, if you wish, of the graph, is as such the desire of the other in so far as I would say as it comes - if the word has a meaning - to the knowledge of an unconscious subject. It is namely, of course, with respect to this subject, in the contradictory position: the knowledge of an unconscious subject. Which is not at all unthinkable. But it is something open.

(15) This means that if it comes to something of the unconscious subject, it comes to it in so far as it is a wish to recognise it, that it is signifier of its recognition. And this is what that means. It is that desire has no other object than the signifier of its recognition. The character of the object in so far as it is the object of desire, should then be sought by us where human experience designates it for us, indicates it for us in its most paradoxical form, I am referring to what we usually call the fetish, this something which is always more or less implicit in everything which usually constitutes the objects of interhuman exchange, but is there no doubt masked by the regular, or regularised character of these exchanges.

People have spoken about the fetishistic aspect of merchandise, and after all this is not something which is simply caused by homophony, I mean of homophony. There is indeed a shared meaning in the use of the word fetish, but for us what should put in the foreground the accent which we must maintain about the object of desire, is this something which defines it first and foremost as being borrowed from signifying material.

"I saw the devil the other night", Paul Jean Poulet says somewhere, "and under his hide there peeped out his two ..."

This ends: the fruits of science do not fall all at once. And even though they do not all fall for us on this occasion, and that we perceive that what is important is not so much the hidden fruits as the mirage that is present to desire, that precisely the hide, the fetish is characterised by the fact that it is the hide, the hem, the fringe, the bauble, the thing which hides, the (16) thing which depends precisely on the fact that nothing is better suited for the function of signifier of what is in question, namely of desire of the desire of the other. Namely what the child primitively has to deal with in his relationship to the subject of the demand, is that he cannot decipher what this desire of the mother as such is outside demand, except in the most virtual fashion by means of this signifier which we analysts, whatever we may say in our discourse, refer to this common measure, to this central point of the signifying homeland which is on this occasion the phallus because it is nothing other than this signifier of the desire of desire.

Desire has no other object than the signifier of its recognition. And it is in this sense that it allows us to conceive what is happening, what we ourselves are the dupes of when we perceive that in this subject-object relationship, at the level of desire, the subject has passed to the other side. He has passed to the level of o in so far precisely as at this final term he himself is nothing more than the signifier of this recognition, he is nothing more than the signifier of the desire of desire.

But precisely what is important to maintain is the opposition starting from which this exchange operates, namely the grouping of \$ in front of o of a subject who is no doubt imaginary, but in the most radical sense, in the sense that he is the pure subject of the disconnection, of the spoken cut in so far as the cut is the essential scansion in which the word is built up. The grouping I say of this subject with a signifier which is what? Which is nothing other than the signifier of the being with which the subject is signified in so far as this being is itself marked (17) by the signifier.

That is to say that the o, the object of desire, in its nature is a residue, is a remainder. It is the residue which the being with which the speaking subject is confronted as such leaves to any possible demand. And this is the way that the object rejoins the real. This is how it participates in it. I am saying the real, and not reality because reality is constituted by all the halts that human symbolism, in a more or less perspicacious fashion, passes through the of the real in so far as it makes of them the objects of its experience.

Let us remark, the specific property of objects of experience is precisely to leave in some way, as Monsieur de La Palisse would say, everything that escapes from it in the object. This is the reason why contrary to what is believed, experience - so-called experience, is double edged. That is to say that when you

attach yourself to experience to resolve an historical situation for example, you have just as good a chance of erring or of making a serious mistake as the opposite, for the very simple reason that by definition if you tie yourself to experience it is precisely in this way that you overlook the new element that there is in the situation.

The object in question, in so far as it rejoins the real, participates in it because the real presents itself precisely as what resists the demand, what I would call the inexorable.

The object of desire is inexorable as such, and if it rejoins the real, this real to which I alluded when we were doing our analysis of Schreber, it is in this form of the real that this inexorable is best incarnated, this form of the real which presents itself in the fact that it always comes back to the same (18) place. And this is why it is in the stars that curiously we have seen the prototype.

How can one explain otherwise the presence at the origin of cultural experience of this interest for the object which is really the least interesting which exists for anything vital, that is to say the stars. The culture and the position of the subject as such in the domain of desire, in so far as this desire is established, is set up fundamentally in the symbolic structure as such. This is explained by the fact that of all reality, it is the most purely real that there is starting on one condition, it is that the shepherd in his solitude, the one who first began to observe something which has no other interest except that as having been detected as returning always to the same place, he locates it with respect to that with which he sets himself up radically as object, with respect to a form however primitive you may suppose it to be of slit which allows it to be seen when it returns to this same place.

Here then is what we arrive at: it is to pose that the object of desire is to be defined fundamentally as signifier. As signifier of a relationship which itself is a relationship which reverberates indefinitely in some way. Desire, if it is the desire of the desire of the other, opens out on to the enigma of what is the desire of the other as such. The desire of the other as such is articulated and structured fundamentally in the relationship of the subject to the word, namely in the disconnection of everything that is vitally rooted in the subject.

(19) This desire is the central point, the pivotal point of the whole economy with which we have to deal in analysis. By not showing its function we are necessarily led to discover as a reference point only what is effectively symbolised by the term reality. The existing reality of the social context. And it then seems that we overlook another dimension in so far however as it is introduced into our experience, as it is reintegrated into human experience, and especially by Freudianism as something absolutely essential.

It is here that we can see the value of the facts on which I have

often based myself of what the result is in analysis of any intervention which tends to the transferential experience with respect to what is called this so simple reality, this present reality, of the analytic session, as if this reality was not a complete contrivance, namely the condition in which normally, and with good reason, because this is what we expect of it, there must be produced on the part of the subject all these things that we have no doubt to respond to, but certainly not by reducing them to any reality that is supposed to be immediate. And this is why I have often insisted in different forms on the common character of what is produced every time the interventions of the analyst, in a too insistent, even brutal fashion, claim to prove in this reactualisation of an objectal relationship considered as typical in the reality of the analysis, what is produced with a regularity which I must say is proved by several observations, has not it seems to me always been identified by the analysts.

(20) In any case, to remain with something which we have criticised here, the famous observation in the Bulletin of the Belgian analysts to which I referred once, I am referring to it again in so far as I find in it a remarkable overlap precisely in one of Glover's articles the one in which he himself tries already to pose the function of perversion in relation to the reality-system of the subject.

One cannot help being struck by this: if it is in the measure that the woman analyst, I mentioned the first observation because she is the author, in connection with the phantasies of the subject. Namely phantasies which the subject develops of sleeping with her. She literally responds to him as follows: you are frightening yourself about something that you know is not going to happen. This is the way in which the analytic intervention is presented marking on this occasion something that we do not need to specify concerning the personal motivations of the analyst in question.

No doubt they were justified for her by something, for the analyst. And the analyst was an analyst who was being supervised by someone who is precisely someone to whom I already alluded in my discourse today, specifically concerning the theme of distance.

It is clear that whatever such an intervention represents in terms of panic with respect to the analyst, one could attempt to justify it by a proper apprehension of, namely the relationships of the objects which are present. It is certain (21) that the relationship is decisive and that it is immediately after this style of intervention that there occurs what forms the object of the communication, namely this rejection, this kind of brutal overcast in the subject - a subject who perhaps is not very well specified from the diagnostic point of view, who seemed to me to be undoubtedly closer to the beginnings of a kind of paranoid illusion than really the one that is given, namely of a phobia. This subject arrives in effect absolutely haunted by the shame of being too tall, and there are here a whole series of

themes close to depersonalisation whose importance cannot be exaggerated.

What is certain is that it is a neo-formation. This moreover is the object of the observation, I am not the one who says this, to see this subject involving himself in what is called a transitory perversion, namely rushing towards the geographical point where he had found circumstances that were particularly favourable for observing through a slit people, especially females, in a cinema, while they are in the process of satisfying their urinary needs.

This element, which up to then had had no place in the symptomatology, is of interest to us only because on page 494 of the International Journal, Vol. 14, Oct. 1933, article 4, on "The relation of perversion-formation to the development of reality-sense", namely Glover's article on the functions of perversion, in the presence of a subject very close to the preceding one in this sense that he. Glover, goes for a paranoid (22) diagnosis, while I inversely would rather attach it to a phobia. Glover, because of interventions which are no doubt analogous, realises, produces a scenario analogous to a transitory and occasional perverse explosion. (Glover 223-225)

There is no essential difference between these two cases and the thing for example that I stressed in the discourse on the function of the word and the field of language, namely the intervention of Ernest Kris, who, in dealing with the phobic fear of plagiarism, explains that he is not a plagiarist at all, as a result of which the other rushes outside and asks for a plate of fresh brains to the great happiness of the analyst who sees in this a really significant reaction to his intervention, but of which we can say that in an attenuated form this represents as one might say, the reaction, the reforming of the proper dimension of the subject every time the intervention tries to reduce it, to telescope it, to compress it in a pure and simple reduction to data which are called objective, that is to say to data coherent with the prejudices of the analyst.

If you will allow me to end on something which introduces the place in which we analysts, in this relationship to desire, should situate ourselves, this is undoubtedly something which is not going to work out, if we do not construct for ourselves a certain coherent conception of what precisely our function is in relation to social norms - these social norms, if there is an experience which should teach us the degree to which they are (23) problematic, the degree to which they ought to be questioned, the degree to which their determination is situated somewhere other than in their function of adaptation, it appears to be that of the analyst.

If in this experience of ours of the logical subject we discover this dimension which is always latent, but also always present, which is sustained beneath every intersubjective relationship, and which is found therefore in the relationship of interaction, of exchange with everything which because of that is crystallized

in the social structure, we must arrive more or less at the following conception.

It is that we will call something culture - I do not like that word, in fact I do not like it at all; what I mean by it are certain stories of the subject in his relationship to the logos whose agency no doubt was able to remain masked for a long time in the course of history, and it is difficult not to see in our own day - this is why Freudianism exists in it - the gap, the distance it represents compared to a certain social inertia.

The relationship of what happens between culture and society we can provisionally define as something which would be well enough expressed in a relationship of entropy. In so far as something of what is happening in culture is produced in society which always includes some function of disaggregation, which is presented in society as culture, in other words in so far as it has entered under different headings into a certain number of stable conditions, themselves also latent, which are what one can (24) call conditions of exchange within the flock - and something which sets up a movement, a dialectic, leaving open the same gap within which we try to situate the function of desire; it is in this sense that we can qualify what is produced as perversion as being the reflection, the protest at the level of the logical subject of what the subject undergoes at the level of identification, in so far as identification is the relationship which organises, which establishes the norms of the social stabilisation of different functions.

In this sense we cannot fail to make the rapprochement that exists between every structure similar to that of perversion and that which Freud somewhere, specifically in the article "Neurosis and Psychosis", articulates in the following fashion "it will be possible for the ego to avoid a rupture in any direction by deforming itself, by submitting to encroachments on its own unity and even perhaps by affecting a cleavage or division of itself. "In this way," says Freud, in one of these glimpses by which his texts are always illuminated, compared to the texts that we usually have to deal with in the literature of analysis, "in this way the inconsistencies, eccentricities and follies of men would appear in a similar light to their sexual perversions, through the acceptance of which they spare themselves repressions." (SE 1f 152-3) - "Damit rückten die Inkonsequenzen Verschrobenheiten und Narrheiten der Menschen in ein ähnliches Licht wie ihre sexuellen Perversionen, durch deren Annahme sie sich ja Verdrängungen ersparen" (GW 13, 391)

He pinpoints in the clearest fashion, precisely, everything which in the social context presents itself as paradox, (25) inconsistencies, confusional forms, and the form of madness - the Nar is the madman - in what constitutes the most ordinary and the most common text of social life. So that we could say something like a turning circuit is established between what we can call conformity, or a socially conforming form, so-called cultural activity - here the expression becomes an excellent one to define everything which from culture is exchanged and

alienated in society -

Here, at the level of the logical subject of perversion, in so far as it represents by a series of degradations everything which in conformity presents itself as a protest properly speaking in the dimension of desire in so far as it is the relationship of the subject to his being - it is this famous sublimation which we will begin perhaps to speak about next year, because here in fact we have indeed the most extreme notion, and the one which most justifies everything that I am trying to advance before you, and which is the one that Freud contributed, namely this sublimation.

What is it in effect? What could this sublimation be? What must it be if we are to be able with Freud to define it as a sexual activity in so far as it is desexualised? How can we even conceive of it - because here it is no longer a question either of the source, nor of the direction of the tendency, nor of the object, it is a question of the very nature of what is called on this occasion the energy that is involved. It will be enough I think for you to read the article by Glover in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis in which he tries to approach with the critical preoccupations that he has, the notion of sublimation.

(26) What is this notion if we cannot define it as the very form into which desire flows, because what is pointed out to you is precisely that it can empty itself of the sexual drive as such, or more exactly that the very notion of drive far from confusing itself with the substance of the sexual relationship, is this form itself, that it is the interplay of the signifier, that normally it cannot be reduced to this pure interplay of the signifier. And it is also indeed as such that we can define sublimation. It is something through which, as I wrote somewhere, desire and the letter can become equivalent; if all the same here we can see in a point as paradoxical as perversion, namely in its most general form that which in the human being resists every normalisation, there being produced this discourse, this apparently empty elaboration which we call sublimation, which is something which of its nature, in its productions, is distinct from the social valorisation which is subsequently given to it - the difficulties that there are in attaching the notion of social value to the term sublimation are particularly well highlighted in this article by Glover that I am talking to you about.

Sublimation as such, namely at the level of the logical subject, is where there is unfolded, established, instituted all this work which is properly speaking creative work in the order of the logos. And it is here that there comes more or less to be inserted, more or less to find its place at the social level, what is called cultural activity, and all the incidence and the risks that it involves, up to and including the remodelling, (27) even the explosion of previously established conformisms.

And it is in the closed circuit which these four terms constitute that we can at least provisionally indicate something which

should for us leave on its proper plane, on its animating plane what is involved concerning desire. Here we come to the problem which is the same, on which I left you last year in connection with the congress at Royaumont.

This desire of the subject, qua desire of desire, opens onto the cut, onto pure being, here manifested in the form of lack. This desire of the desire of the other, is when all is said and done what desire is he going to confront in analysis, if not the desire of the analyst? It is precisely the reason why it is so necessary for us to maintain ourselves in front of this dimension on the function of desire. Analysis is not a simple reconstitution of the past, nor is analysis a reduction to preformed norms, analysis is not an epos, analysis is not an ethos, if I were to compare it to something, it is a narrative which would be such that the narrative itself is the locus of the encounter that is in question in the narrative.

The problem of analysis is precisely this that the desire which the subject has to encounter, which is this desire of the other, our desire, this desire which is only all too present in what the subject supposes we are demanding of him, this desire finds itself in this paradoxical situation that we must guide this desire of the other which for us is the desire of the subject not towards our desire, but towards an other. We mature the desire (28) of the subject for someone other than ourselves, we find ourselves in this paradoxical situation of being procurers, midwives, those who preside at the advent of desire.

How can this position be held? It can undoubtedly only be held by maintaining an artifice which is that of the whole analytic rule. But the final mainspring of this artifice, does it not contain something which allows us to grasp where there can take place in the analysis this openness onto the cut which is the one without which we cannot conceive of the situation of desire? As always it is undoubtedly both the most trivial and the most hidden truth. The essential thing in the analysis of this situation in which we find ourselves, of being the one who offers himself as a support for every demand, and who responds to none of them; is it only in this non-responding which is far from being an absolute non-responding that there is found the principle of our presence? Should we not give some essential share to what happens at the end of each session, but which is imminent in the whole situation itself in so far as our desire should limit itself to this aim, to this place that we leave to desire in order that it may situate itself there, to the cut? To the cut which is no doubt the most efficacious mode of analytic intervention and interpretation.

And that is why it is one of the things on which we should most insist, this cut which we turn into something mechanical, which we understand as limited by a prefabricated time. It is quite elsewhere not alone that we effectively put it. It is one of the (29) most efficacious methods by which we can intervene; it is also one of those to which we should most apply ourselves. But in this cut there is something, this same thing that we have

learned to recognise in the form of this phallic object latent to every relationship of demand as signifier of desire.

I would like to end my lesson for this year, and to recall in some way or other what will inaugurate my lessons next year in the form of a praelectio, conclude with a sentence that I will offer to you as an enigma, and from which it will be seen whether you are any better at deciphering spoonerisms than I have found to be the case in the course of experiments carried out with some people who visited me. A poet Desire Viardot in a Brussel's review, in '51 or '52, proposed under the title of Pantomas this little inscrutable enigma - we will see if a shout from the audience is going to give us the key to it right away -: the woman has in her skin a grain of phantasy, this grain of phantasy which is undoubtedly what is in question when all is said and done in what modulates and models, the relationships of the subject to the one from whom she demands - whoever she may be, and no doubt it is not nothing that at the horizon we have found the subject who contains everything, the universal mother, and that we can on occasion make a mistake about this relationship of the subject to the tower which is supposed to be what you are given by analytic archetypes.

But it is indeed something different that is in question. It is the opening, it is the gap onto this radically new thing that every cut of the word introduces. Here it is not only from the woman that we have to wish this grain of phantasy or this grain of poetry, but from analysis itself.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK VIII

Transference

1960 - 1961

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY

Seminar 1: Wednesday 16 November 1960

I announced for this coming year that I would deal with transference, with its subjective oddity (sa disparate subjective). It is not a term that was easily chosen. It underlines essentially something which goes further than the simple notion of asymmetry between subjects. It poses in the very title... it rebels, as I might say from the beginning, against the idea that intersubjectivity can by itself alone provide the framework in which the phenomenon is inscribed. There are words which are more or less appropriate in different tongues. I am looking for some equivalent for the word impar, for the subjective oddity of transference, for the oddity that it contains essentially. There is no term, except the very term imparite which is not used in French, to designate it. "In its supposed situation" (dans sa pretendue situation) my title also says, indicating by that some reference to this effort over the last years in analysis to organise, around the notion of situation, what happens in analytic treatment. The very word supposed is there again to say that I dispute the validity of, or at least that I take up a corrective position with respect to this effort. I do not believe that one can say purely and simply about psychoanalysis that what we have here is a situation. If it is one, it is one of which one could also say: it is not a situation or again, that it is a false situation.

Everything that presents itself as technique must be inscribed as referring to these principles, to this search for principles which is already evoked by pointing out these differences, and in a word in a correct topology, in a rectification of what is in question, of what is commonly implied in the use that we make every day theoretically of the notion of transference, namely as something which when all is said and done it is question of referring to an experience, which it, we nevertheless know very well, at least to the extent that in some way or other we have some practical experience of analysis. I would like to point (2) out that I took a long time to reach what is this heart of our experience. Depending on how you date this seminar in which I have been guiding a certain number of you for several years, depending on the date that you consider it to have begun, it is in the eighth or tenth year that I am tackling transference. I think that you will see that there are reasons for this long delay.

Let us begin then... at the beginning, everyone charges me with having referred myself to some paraphrase of the formula: "In the beginning was the Word", somebody else said "In Anfang war die

Tat", and for a third, at first (namely at the beginning of the human world), at first there was praxis. Here are three enunciations which appear to be incompatible.

In fact, what is important from the position we are in to settle the matter, namely from analytic experience, what is important is not their value as enunciations, but as I might say their value as enunciations, or again as annunciations, I mean the way in which they bring to light the ex nihilo proper to all creation and show its intimate liaison with the evocation of the word. At this level, all manifest obviously that they fall within the first enunciation: "In the beginning was the Word". If I evoke this, it is to differentiate it from what I am talking about, this point from which I am going to begin to affront this most opaque term, this kernel of our experience which is transference.

I intend to begin, I want to begin, I am going to try, by beginning with all the necessary awkwardness, to begin today around this, that the term "In the beginning" certainly has another meaning. At the beginning of analytic experience - let us remember - was love. This beginning is something different to this self-transparency of the enunciating which gave their meaning to the above mentioned formulae. Here it is a dense, confused beginning. It is a beginning not of creation but of formation - and I will come back to this later - at the historical point at which there is born what is already psychoanalysis and what Anna O. herself baptised, in the initial observation of Studien über Hysterie, with the term of talking cure or again of chimney sweeping.

But before getting to this I want to recall for a moment, for those who were not here last year, some of the terms around which there turned our exploration of what I called The ethics of psychoanalysis. What I wanted to explain before you last year is - as one might say - to refer to the term of creation which I mentioned above, the creationist structure of the human ethos as (3) such, the ex nihilo which subsists at its heart which constitutes to use a term of Freud's, the kernel of our being, Kern unseres Wesen. I wanted to show that this ethos is enveloped around this ex nihilo as subsisting in an impenetrable vacuum. In order to approach it, to designate this impenetrable character, I began - as you remember - by a critique whose end consisted in rejecting expressly what you will allow me to call (at least those who heard me will let it pass), Plato's Schwärmerei. Schwärmerei in German, for those who do not know it, designates reverie, phantasy directed towards some enthusiasm and more especially towards something which is situated or which is directed towards superstition, fanaticism, in brief the critical connotation in the order of religious orientation which is added by history. In the texts of Kant the term Schwärmerei clearly has this inflection. What I call Plato's Schwärmerei, is to have projected onto what I call the impenetrable vacuum, the idea of the sovereign good. Let us say that this is simply to indicate the path taken, that with more or less success of course I tried to pursue with a formal intention; ... what results from the rejection of the Platonic notion of the sovereign good occupying the centre of our being.

No doubt to rejoin our experience, but from a critical point of view, I proceeded in part from what one can call the Aristotelian

conversion with respect to Plato who without any doubt has been superseded for us on the ethical plane; but at the point that we are at of having to show the historical fate of ethical notions beginning with Plato (undoubtedly the Aristotelian reference), the Nicomachean Ethics is essential. I showed that it is difficult to follow what it contains as a decisive step in the construction of an ethical reflection, not to see that although it maintains this notion of sovereign good, it profoundly changes its meaning. It makes it consist by an inverse movement of reflection in the contemplation of the stars, this most exterior sphere of the existing world which is absolute, uncreated, incorruptible. It is precisely because for us it is decisively volatilised into the dust of the galaxies which is the final term of our cosmological investigation, that one can take the Aristotelian reference as a critical point of what in the traditions of antiquity, at the point that we have got to in them, the notion of sovereign good is.

With this step we came up against a wall, the wall which is always the same ever since ethical reflection has tried to develop itself; it is that we must assume or not what ethical reflection, ethical thinking has never been able to free itself from, namely that there is no good (bon. gut), no pleasure, unless one begins from there. We are still looking for the principle of the Wohltat, the principle of good action. What it infers allows us to say that it is not perhaps simply a question of the good deed, even if it were raised to the Kantian power of the universal maxim. If we have to take seriously the Freudian denunciation of the fallacy of these so called moral satisfactions, in so far as an aggressivity is concealed within them which succeeds in stealing his nouissance from the person (4) who practices it, while at the same time making its ill effects reverberate endlessly on his social partners (what these long circumstantial conditionals indicate is exactly the equivalent of Civilisation and its discontents in Freud's work), so that one ought to ask oneself how one can operate honestly with desire; namely how to preserve desire with this act in which it ordinarily collapses rather than realising itself and which at best only presents to it (to desire) its exploit, its heroic gesture; how to preserve desire, preserve what one can call a simple or salubrious relationship of desire to this act.

Let us not mince words about what salubrious means in terms of the Freudian experience: it means to be rid of, to be as rid as possible of this infection which to our eyes, but not only to our eyes, to eyes ever since they were opened to ethical reflection... this infection which is the teeming foundation of every social establishment as such. This of course presupposes that psychoanalysis, in its very manual of instructions, does not respect what I would call this opaque spot, this newly invented cataract, this moral wound, this form of blindness which constitutes a certain practice from what is called the sociological point of view. I am not going to expand on this. And even, to recall what a recent encounter which presentified to my eyes the useless and scandalous conclusions come to by this sort of research which pretends to reduce an experience like that of the unconscious to the reference of two, three, even four so-called sociological models, the great irritation I felt has since calmed down, but I will leave the authors of such exercises at the pons asinorum which is only too willing to receive them. It

is quite clear also that in speaking in these terms about sociology I am not referring to this sort of meditation where the reflection of Lévi-Strauss is situated in so far - consult his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France - as it expressly refers, in dealing with societies, to an ethical meditation about social practices. The double reference to a cultural norm situated more or less mythically in neolithic times, and on the other hand to the political meditation of Rousseau, is sufficiently indicative of this. But let us leave it, this is of no concern to us. I will only recall that it was along the path of the properly ethical reference which is constituted by the wild reflections of Sade, and that it is along the offensive paths of Sadian iouissance that I showed you one of the possible access points to this properly tragic frontier where the Freudian Oberland is situated, and that it is at the heart of what some of you have baptised the between-two-deaths (a very exact term to designate the field in which there is expressly articulated as such everything that happens in the proper universe delineated by Sophocles and not only in the adventure of King Oedipus), that there is situated this phenomenon regarding which I think I can say that we have introduced a reference point in the ethical tradition, in the reflection on the motives and the motivations of the good. This reference point, in so far as I properly designated it as being that of beauty in so far as it ornaments, has the function of constituting the last barrier before this (5) access to the last thing, to the mortal thing, to this point at which Freud's meditation came to make its final avowal under the term of death instinct.

I ask your pardon for having thought it necessary to delineate, even though in an abbreviated fashion but constituting a long detour, this brief summary of what we said last year. This detour was necessary to recall, at the origin of what we are going to have to say, that the term on which we dwelt concerning the function of beauty (because I do not need I think, for most of you, to evoke what is constituted by this term of the beautiful and of beauty at this point of the inflection of what I called the platonic Schwärmerei) that provisionally I ask you, as a hypothesis, to see as leading to the level of an adventure which is if not psychological at least individual, to see it as the effect of mourning which one can really see is immortal, because it is at the very source of everything which has since been articulated in our tradition about the idea of mortality, of the immortal mourning of the one who incarnated this wager of sustaining his question which is none other than the question of everyone who speaks, at the point where he, this person, received it from his own demon (according to our formula in an inverted form), I am talking about Socrates. Socrates thus put at the origin, let us say right away, of the longest transference (something which would give to this formula all its weight) that the history of thought has known. Because I am saying it to you right away, I am trying to get you to sense it, the secret of Socrates will be behind everything that we will say this year about transference. Socrates admitted this secret. But it is not just because one has admitted it that a secret ceases to be a secret. Socrates claims to know nothing, except to be able to recognise what love is and, he tells us (I come to a testimony of Plato, specifically in the Lysis) namely to recognise infallibly, wherever he encounters them, where the lover is and where the beloved. I think that it is in paragraph 2 04c. There are

multiple references to this reference of Socrates to love.

And now we have been brought back to our starting point in so far as I want to accentuate it today. However chaste or however indecent may be the veil which is kept half open on this inaugural accident which turned the eminent Breuer aside from giving to this first really extraordinary experience of the talking cure the development it deserved, it remains quite obvious that this accident was a love story, that this love story did not exist only on the side of the patient is absolutely also not in doubt.

It is not enough to say, in the form of these exquisitely correct terms which we use (as Mr. Jones does on one or other page of his first volume of Freud's biography) that undoubtedly Breuer must have been the victim of what we call, says Jones, a rather marked counter-transference. It is quite clear that Breuer loved his (6) patient. We only see as its most obvious proof what in such a case is the properly bourgeois result: the return to a conjugal fervour which had been reanimated in this connection, the sudden trip to Venice with even as a result something that Jones tells us about, namely the fruit of a new little girl being added to the family, whose end many years afterwards Jones rather sadly tells us in this connection is mixed up with the catastrophic invasion of the Nazis into Vienna. There is no need to ironise about these sorts of accidents, except of course in so far as they present us with something typical with respect to a certain so-called particularly bourgeois style relating to love, with this need, this necessity of an awakening in place of this heartlessness which harmonises so well with the type of abnegation within which bourgeois need is inscribed.

This is not what is important. But it does not matter whether he resisted or not. What we should rather bless in that moment is the divorce already inscribed more than ten years ahead of time (because this happens in 1882, and it is only ten years later, then fifteen years, that will be required, for Freud's experience to culminate in the work of Studien uber Hysterie written with Breuer) bless the divorce between Breuer and Freud. Because everything is there: the little eros whose malice first struck the first, Breuer, with the suddenness of his surprise, forced him to flee, the little eros finds his master in the second, Freud. And why? I might say - allow me to amuse myself for a moment - that it was because for Freud his retreat was cut off: an element from the same context where he was the votary of intransigent loves (as we know since we have his correspondence with his fiancée). Freud encounters ideal women who respond to him in the physical mode of the hedgehog. Sie streben dagegen (as Freud wrote in Irma's dream, in which the allusions to his own wife are not evident or avowed) they are always being rubbed up the wrong way. There appears in any case an element of the permanent outline that Freud gives us of his thirst, the Frau Professor herself, an object on occasion of Jones' wonder, who nevertheless, if I may believe my sources, knew how to keep her head down. It might be a curious common dominator with Socrates, who as you know also had to deal at home with a shrew who was not at all easy to handle. Even though the difference between the two is obvious, it would be one between the ceremonial otter whose profile Aristophanes shows us, a profile of a Lysistran weasel whose powerful bite we can

appreciate in the replies of Aristophanes. A simple difference (7) of odour. That is enough about this subject. And all the same I would say that I think that there is here only a particular reference and that, in a word, this datum, as regards your conjugal existence is not at all indispensable - everybody can relax - for your good behaviour.

We must search further on the mystery that is in question. Over against Breuer, for whatever reason, Freud took the step that made of him the master of the redoubtable little god. He chooses like Socrates to serve him in order to make use of him. Here indeed is the point where problems are going to begin for all of us. Again is it indeed a question of underlining this "making use of eros". And to make use of it for what purpose? Here indeed is why it was necessary for me to recall to you the reference points of our articulation from last year: to make use of it for good. We know that the domain of eros goes infinitely further than any field that this good may cover, at least we can take this as understood. You see that the problems that transference poses for us are only beginning here. And it is moreover something perpetually presented to your spirit (it is the current language, the common discourse about analysis, about transference): you should indeed not have in any preconceived or permanent way, as a first term of the end of your action the supposed good or not of your patient, but precisely his eros.

I do not think I should fail to recall once more here that which joins in the most risky way the Socratic initiative and the Freudian initiative, by bringing together their outcome in the reduplication of these terms in which there is going to be expressed in a condensed fashion more or less the following: Socrates chose to serve eros in order to make use of it or by making use of it. This led him very far - you should note this - to a very far which people try to camouflage by making a pure and simple accident of what I called above the teeming foundation of social infection. But is this not to do him an injustice, not to give him credit for believing it, for believing that he did not know perfectly well that he was going against the current of this whole social order in the midst of which he inscribed his daily practice, this really senseless, scandalous behaviour with whatever merit the devotion of his disciples afterwards tried to invest it, by highlighting the heroic aspects of Socrates' behaviour. It is clear that they could not but record what is the major characteristic which Plato himself qualified by a word which has remained celebrated among those who have approached the problem of Socrates, it is his atopia (in the order of the city there are no healthy beliefs if they are not verified). In everything which assures the equilibrium of the city, not only does Socrates not have a place, but he is nowhere.

And how can one be surprised if an action so vigorous in its unclassifiable character, so vigorous that it still vibrates down to our own time, took its place. How can one be surprised at the fact

that it culminated in this death sentence, namely in real death in the clearest fashion, qua inflicted at a moment chosen in advance with the consent of all and for the good of all, and after all without the centuries having been ever able to decide since whether the sanction was just or unjust. From here where goes the destiny, a destiny which it seems to me it is not excessive to consider as necessary and not extraordinary, of Socrates?

(8) Freud on the other hand, is it not in following the rigour of his path that he discovered the death instinct, namely something also very scandalous, less costly no doubt for the individual? Is there a real difference here? Socrates as formal logic has repeated for centuries, and there must be a reason for its insistence, Socrates is mortal, therefore he had to die one day. It is not the fact that Freud died quietly in bed that is important for us here. I tried to show you the convergence between what is delineated here and the Sadian aspiration. There is here distinguished this idea of eternal death, of death in so far as it makes of the being itself its detour without our being able to know if we have here sense or nonsense and also indeed the other, that of the body. The second is that of those who uncompromisingly follow eros, eros by means of which bodies are joined, with Plato into one soul, with Freud without any soul at all, but in any case in a single eros in so far - as it unifies unitively. Naturally you could interrupt me here. Where am I leading you? This eros of course - you will grant me this - is indeed the same in the two cases, even if it intolerable to us. But these two deaths, why do you have to bring those back to us, this boat from last year? Are you still thinking about it, to make us pass over what? The river which separates them? Are we talking about the death instinct or about dialectic? My answer to you is yes! Yes, if both one and the other gives rise to astonishment in us. Because of course I am quite willing to grant that I am straying, that it is not my job after all to carry you to the final impasses, that I will make you be astonished, if you are not so already, if not about Socrates, at least about Freud at the starting point. Because people will prove to you that these very impasses are simple to resolve if precisely you are willing to be astonished by nothing. It is enough for you to take as a starting point, something as simple as "Good day", as clear as spring water, intersubjectivity for example. I intersubjectivate you, you intersubjectivate me I swear that the first one who laughs will get a smack, and one that is well deserved!

Because as people say, who does not see that Freud overlooked that there is nothing other in sadomasochistic constancy? Narcissism explains everything. And people address themselves to me saying: "Were you not almost saying that?" It must be said that at that time I was already rather reticent about the function of the narcissistic wound but it does not matter! And I would also be told that my inconvenient Socrates should also have come back in his turn to this intersubjectivity. Because Socrates in fact made only one mistake, it was to violate the procedure according to which we should always regulate ourselves, not to return to the law of the masses, who everyone knows will take a long while to lift a little finger on the terrain of justice, because the masses will always necessarily arrive the day after. This is how astonishment is regulated, made into a fault; errors will never be anything but judicial errors, this without prejudice to personal motivations.

What there may be in me in terms of this need I have always to add to things, and which, of course, is to be looked for in my taste for making things beautiful - we have found our feet again - is my perverse leaning, therefore my sophistry may be (9) superfluous. Therefore we are going to restart by proceeding from 0 and I will take up again in coming down to earth, the force of the litotes in order to aim without your being slightly astonished. Is it intersubjectivity, namely what is most foreign to the analytic

encounter, which for its part stresses that we should flee from it, in the certainty that it must be avoided? The Freudian experience becomes rigid once it appears, it only flourishes in its absence. The doctor and the patient - as we are told - this famous relationship which gets people so excited, are they going to become intersubjective and who is going to do it best? Perhaps, but one can say that in this sense both one and the other take precautions; "He is telling me this for his own comfort or to please me?" thinks the one; "Is he trying to trick me?", thinks the other. Even the shepherd-shepherdess relationship, if it engages in this way, is badly engaged. It is condemned, if it remains there, to end up with nothing. This is precisely why these two relationships, doctor-patient, shepherd-shepherdess, must at all costs be different to diplomatic negotiation and the ambush.

What is called poker, -this theoretical poker, with all due respects to Mr. Henri Lefebvre, is not to be looked for in the work of Mr. von Neumann even though he recently affirmed it, which means that given my benevolence I can only deduce one thing: that all he knows about von Neumann's theory is the title in Hermann's catalogue. It is true that at the same time Henri Lefebvre places on the same register of poker the very philosophical discussion we were dealing with. Obviously if after all it is not his right I can only leave him to reap the rewards that he merits.

To come back to thinking about our intersubjective couple, my first concern as an analyst will be not to be put myself in the position that my patient has even to share such reflections with me and the simplest way to spare him this is precisely to avoid any attitude which lends to an imputation of comforting, and a fortiori of seduction. I will even absolutely avoid, if it happens to escape from me as such, and if I see it happening, in any case I can only intervene to the degree that I underline that I suppose that he is doing this without realising it. Again, it is necessary for me to take precautions to avoid any misunderstanding, namely of appearing to be charging him with a piece of trickery however uncalculated it may be. Therefore this does not even mean that intersubjectivity is to be taken up in analysis only in the movement which would carry it to a second degree, as if the analyst were waiting for the analysand to transfix himself on it in order that he, the analyst, could turn the sword.

(10) This intersubjectivity is properly set aside, or better again put off sine die, in order to allow there to appear a different hold whose characteristic is precisely to be essentially transference. The patient himself know it, he calls for it. Moreover he wants to be surprised. You may say that it is another aspect of intersubjectivity, even, a curious thing, in the fact that it is I myself who am supposed to have opened up the path here. But wherever one places this initiative, it is a misinterpretation to attribute it to me.

And in fact, if I had not formalised in the position of bridge players the subjective othernesses which are involved in the analytic position, you would never have been able to pretend that you saw me taking a step that converged with the mistakenly daring schema that someone like Rickman thought up one day under the name of two-body psychology. Such theories always have a certain success given the state of amphibious respiration with which analytic thought sustains itself. For them to succeed, two

conditions are enough. First of all, that they are supposed to come from honourable areas of scientific activity from which there may return in the present, from something moreover which may be shop-soiled psychoanalysis, a cheap gloss. This was the case here.

Rickman was a man who had, shortly after the war, this sort of benevolent aura of having been involved in the Russian revolution, thought of putting it at the heart of interpsychological experience.

The second reason for this success was that it did not disturb in any way the routine of psychoanalysis. And also of course a track is remade for the mental switching points which bring us back to the garage. But at least the name of two-body psychology might all the same have had some sense: to wake us up. This precisely is what is completely elided - you should notice - in the way its formula is used. It should evoke the role played by the attraction of bodies in the supposed analytic situation. It is curious that we would have to pass by way of the Socratic reference to grasp its import. In Socrates, I mean when words are lent to him, this reference to the beauty of bodies is permanent. It is as one might say the animator of this movement of interrogation into which - you should notice - we have not even entered into yet, in which we do not even yet know how the function of the lover and the beloved are divided up (although there, all the same, things are called by their name and in terms of these we are able to make some useful remarks).

If effectively something, in the passionate, dialectical interrogation which animates this starting point is related to the body it must be said that, in analysis, this is underlined by features whose accentuated value takes its weight from its particularly negative incidence. That analysts themselves - I hope that nobody here will think that he is being got at - do not recommend themselves by their corporeal charm is something to which Socratic ugliness gives its most noble ancestry, at the same time moreover as it recalls to us that it is not at all an obstacle to love. But we must all the same underline something, which is that the physical ideal of the psychoanalyst, at least as it is modelled according to the imagination of the masses, involves adding on an obtuse density and a narrow minded (11) boorishness which really brings with it the whole question of prestige.

The cinema screen - as I might say - offers the most sensitive revelation of this. If we simply make use of Hitchcock's last film, you can see the form in which the one who solves the riddle is presented, the one who is presented here to finally settle matters when all the other recourses have been exhausted. Frankly he carries all the marks of what we will call an element of the untouchable! So that here moreover we put our finger on an essential element of the convention because we are dealing with the analytic situation. And in order for it to be violated, let us take again the same term of reference, the cinema, in a way that is not revolting, it is necessary that the one who plays the role of the analyst..... let us take Suddenly Last Summer, we see here the personage of a therapist who pushes charity to the point of nobly returning the kiss that an unfortunate woman places on his lips, he is a handsome man, here it is absolutely necessary that he should be. It is true that he is also a neurosurgeon, and that he is promptly sent back to his trepanning. It is not a situation which could last. In short analysis is the only praxis in which charm is a disadvantage. It would break the spell. Who has ever heard tell of a charming analyst?

These are not remarks which are altogether useless. They may seem to be things which might only amuse us. It is important that they should be evoked at the level they are at. In any case it is just as important to note that in the management of the patient this very access to the body, which a medical examination would seem to require, is usually sacrificed according to the rule. And it is worthwhile noting this. It is not enough to say: "It is to avoid the excessive effects of transference". And why should the effects be more excessive at that level? Of course it cannot be accounted for either by a kind of anachronistic prudishness the traces of which one sees subsisting in rural areas, in Islamic gynaeceums, and in that incredible Portugal where the doctor can only auscultate through the clothes of the beautiful stranger. We go even further than this, and however necessary an auscultation may appear at the beginning of a treatment (or in the course of one) it is a way of breaking the rule. Let us look at things from another angle. There is nothing less erotic than that reading - as one might call it - of the instantaneous states of the body that certain psychoanalysts excel at. Because all the characters of this reading is in terms of signifiers - one could say that these states of the body are translated. The distant focus which this reading adapts itself to demands on the part of the analyst just as much interest, let us not settle too quickly the meaning of all of this. One could say that this neutralisation of the body (which seems after all the primary end of civilisation) has to deal here with a greater urgency and so many precautions suppose the possibility of abandoning it. I am not so sure. Only I introduce here the question of what the body is. Let us remain for a moment at that remark. In any case it would be a bad (12) appreciation of things not to recognise at the beginning that psychoanalysis demands from the first a high degree of libidinal sublimation at the level of collective relationships. The extreme decorum that one can say is maintained in the most ordinary fashion in the analytic relationship leads one to think that if the regular confinement of the two people involved in the analytic treatment in a room where they are protected from any indiscretion only rarely culminates at a lack of bodily constraint of one on the other, it is because the temptation which this confining would involve in any other occupation is less here than elsewhere. Let us remain at this point for the moment.

The analytic cell, even if it is a comfortable one, let it be whatever you wish, is all but (n'est rien de moins que) a bed of love and this I think comes from the fact that, despite all the efforts that one makes to reduce it to the common denominator of a situation, with all the resonances that we can give to this familiar term, it is not a situation to come to it - as I said above - it is the falsest situation imaginable. This allows us to understand, it is precisely the reference that we will try to take up the next time to what is in the social context the situation of love itself. It is in the measure that we can circumscribe more closely, dwell on what Freud touched on more than once, what the position of love is in society, a precarious position, a threatened position let us say right away, a clandestine position, it is in this very measure that we can appreciate why and how, in this most protected of all positions, that of the analytic office this position of love becomes here even more paradoxical.

Here I arbitrarily suspend this process. Let it suffice for you to see in what sense I intend that we should take up the question. Breaking with the tradition which consists in abstracting, in

neutralising, in emptying of all its meaning whatever is involved at the basis of the analytic relationship, I intend to begin from the extremes of what I am supposing: to isolate oneself with another to teach him what? What he is lacking!

A still more formidable situation, if we think precisely that by the very nature of transference "what he is lacking" is going to be learned by him as a lover. If I am here for his good, it is not in the completely restful sense in which the Thomist tradition articulates it (Amare est velle bonum alicui) because this good is already a term which is more than problematic - if you were following me last year - superseded, I am not there when all is said and done for his good, but in order that he should love. Does that mean that I must teach him how to love? Undoubtedly, it seems difficult to elide from it the necessity that as regards loving and what love is it must be said that the two things must not be confused. As regards loving and knowing what it is to love, I must all the same, like Socrates, be able to testify on my own behalf that I know something about it.

(13) Now it is precisely, if we enter into analytic literature, that about which least is said. It seems that love in its primordial ambivalent coupling with hate, is a term which is self-evident. You should see nothing other, in my humorous remarks of today, than something destined to tickle your ears.

There is nevertheless a long tradition which speaks to us about love. The final term at which it has culminated is this enormously laborious work by Anders Nygren, which radically splits it into these two terms unbelievably opposed in his discourse of eros and agape.

But behind that, for centuries people spent their time discussing and debating about love. Is this again not another subject for astonishment that we analysts who make use of it, who have this word continually on our lips, that we could say that with respect to a certain tradition we present ourselves really as impoverished, having made no attempt - even a partial one - I will not say to revise, to add to what has been pursued throughout the centuries about this term, but even of something which simply is not unworthy of this tradition. Is there not something surprising here?

In order to show it to you, to make you sense it, I took as the object of my next seminar the recalling of what is really a monumental, original term of interest with respect to this whole tradition of ours on the subject of the structure of love which is the Symposium. If anyone who felt himself sufficiently interested or wanted to have a dialogue with me about the Symposium. I think there would be a lot of advantages in it. Undoubtedly a rereading of this monumental text which is so full of enigmas where everything tends to show us at once how much - as one might say - the very mass of religious lucubration which penetrates all our fibres, which is present in all our experience, owes to this sort of extraordinary testament, the Schwarmerei of Plato, what we can find in it, deduce from it in terms of essential references and - I will show you - up to the history of this debate, of what happened in the first analytic transference. That we can find in it every possible key, is something that I think, when we have put it to the test, you will not doubt. Undoubtedly these are not terms which I would easily allow to be so conspicuous in some published account. Nor are they

formulae whose echoes I would like to see going to nourish elsewhere the usual buffooneries. I would intend that, this year, we should know who we are working with and who we are.

Seminar 2; Wednesday 23 November 1960

It is a question today of entering into an examination of the Symposium. This at least is what I promised you the last time.

What I told you the last time seemed to have had different destinies among you. The tasters are tasting. They are asking themselves: will it be a good year? Only I would like you not to dwell too much on what may appear as approximate in some of the touches with which I tried to light up our path. I tried the last time to show you the supports of the stage on which there is going to take place what we have to say about transference. It is quite certain that the reference to the body, and specifically to what can affect it in the order of beauty, was not simply an opportunity to make jokes about the transference. Occasionally there is the objection that it sometimes happens in the cinema that the psychoanalyst is a handsome man and not alone in the exceptional case that I remarked on. It should be noted that it is precisely at the moment when in the cinema analysis is taken as a pretext for comedy. In short, you are going to see that the principal references to which I referred the last time find their justification in the path that we are going to have to take today.

It is not easy to give an account of what the Symposium is all about, given the style and the limits which are imposed on us by our place, our particular object which - let us not forget it - is particularly that of analytic experience. To set about giving a proper commentary on this extraordinary text is, perhaps, to force ourselves to make a long detour which would not then leave us enough time for the other parts of the field, given that we choose the Symposium in the measure that there seemed to us to be in it a particularly illuminating introduction to our study.

Therefore we are going to have to proceed using a form which is obviously not the one that would be used in what could be called a university style commentary of the Symposium. On the other hand, of course, I must necessarily suppose that at least some of you have not really been initiated into Plato's thought. I am not telling you that I consider myself to be fully armed from

this point of view. Nevertheless I have all the same enough experience of it, a good enough idea of it to believe that I can allow myself to isolate, to concentrate these spotlights on the Symposium while respecting a whole background. I would moreover (2) ask those who are in a position to do so to supervise me from time to time, to let me know what may be not so much arbitrary - this illumination is necessarily arbitrary - but that which in its arbitrariness may appear to be forced or biased.

On the other hand I do not object to, and I even believe that one must highlight a certain rawness, newness, in approaching a text like that of the Symposium. That is why I hope you will excuse me for presenting it to you at first in a rather paradoxical form or one that may appear to you to be such. It seems to me that someone who reads the Symposium for the first time, if he is not absolutely dulled by the fact that it is a text belonging to a respectable tradition, can hardly fail to experience a feeling which can be described more or less as being stunned. I would say more: if he has a little historical imagination it seems to me that he must ask himself how such a thing could have been preserved for us throughout what I would be happy to call the generations of scribblers, of monks, of people who do not seem to have been destined to transmit something to us; ... which it seems to me that it can hardly fail to strike us, at least in one of its parts (by its end) as belonging rather - why not say it - to what is called in our own days a special type of literature, a literature which can be the object... which can become subject to enquiries by the police.

To tell the truth if you simply know how to read - it seems to me you can speak all the more freely in so far as, I believe that one swallow does not make a summer, many of you, following my announcement the last time have acquired this work and therefore have been able to dip into it - you can hardly fail to be struck by what happens in the second part at least of this discourse between Alcibiades and Socrates outside the limits of the banquet itself. In so far as we will see later that it is a ceremony which has its rules, a sort of ritual, of an intimate competition between members of the elite, a society game... this society game this Symposium we see is not a pretext for Plato's dialogue, it refers to customs, to habits that are differently regulated according to the locality in Greece, the level of culture we would say, and the rule that is imposed there is not something exceptional: that everyone should bring his share in the form of a little contribution of a discourse determined by a subject (194d). Nevertheless there is something which was not foreseen, there is what one might call a disturbance. The rules were even given at the beginning of the Symposium that there should not be too much drinking; no doubt the pretext is that most of the people there already have a hangover because they had drunk too (3) much the night before. One also notices the importance of the serious character of this elite group that is made up that evening by fellow drinkers.

This does not prevent that at a moment, which is a moment at which not everything is finished, far from it, one of the guests,

Aristophanes, has something to say in the order of a rectification of the agenda, or a demand for explanation. At that very moment there enter a group of people, who are completely drunk, namely Alcibiades and his companions. And Alcibiades, who is pretty high, takes over the chair and begins to make statements which are exactly the ones whose scandalous character I intend to highlight for you.

Obviously this presupposes that we have some idea of what Alcibiades is, of what Socrates is and this takes us very far. All the same I would like you to take into account what Alcibiades is. In any case, for the usual version, you should read in the Nine Greek Lives what Plutarch wrote about him, this to help you to take into account the stature of the personage.

I know well that this again is going to demand an effort from you. This life is described for us by Plutarch in what I would call the Alexandrian atmosphere, namely at a funny moment in history, in which all the personages seem to pass to the state of a sort of shadow. I am speaking about the moral accent of what comes to us from this epoch which involves a sort of emergence of shadows, a sort of nekuia as it is called in the Odyssey.

Plutarch's construction, with what they contain moreover as a model, as a paradigm, for a whole moralistic tradition which followed, have this something or other which makes us think of the being of zombies: it is difficult to see blood flowing through their veins. But try to imagine from this singular career that Plutarch outlines for us, what this man must have been; this man coming here before Socrates, Socrates who elsewhere declares that he was protos erastes, the first to have loved him, Alcibiades, this Alcibiades who on the other hand is a sort of pre-Alexander, a personage no doubt whose political adventures are all marked with the sign of defiance, of extraordinary exploits, of an incapacity to situate himself or to come to a halt anywhere, and wherever he passes upsetting the situation and making victory pass from one camp to the other wherever he goes, everywhere hunted, exiled and, it must be said, because of his misdeeds.

It seems that if Athens lost the Peloponnesian War, it is in so far as it felt the need to recall Alcibiades right in the middle of hostilities to make him account for an obscure story, the one described as the mutilation of Hermes, which appears to us to be (4) as inexplicable as it is ridiculous as we look back on it, but which surely involved fundamentally a character of profanation, of properly speaking insulting the gods.

Nor are we at all able to consider the memory of Alcibiades and his companions as settled. I mean that it is surely not without reason that the people of Athens brought him to book for it. In this sort of practice which evokes, by analogy, some sort of black Mass or other, we cannot fail to see against what kind of background of insurrection, of subversion with respect to the laws of the city, that there emerges a personage like Alcibiades. A background of rupture, of contempt for forms and for

traditions, for laws, no doubt for religion itself... This is the disturbing thing that this personage carries with him. But he carries with him just as much a very singular seduction wherever he goes. And after this suit by the people of Athens, he does neither more nor less than pass over to the enemy, to Sparta, to this Sparta moreover that he Alcibiades has some responsibility in making the enemy of Athens, because, previously, he did all in his power in short, to make the peace negotiations fail.

So he goes over to Sparta and he immediately finds nothing better, nor more worthy of his memory, than to make the queen pregnant, something which everybody saw and knew about. It happens to be very well known that the king Agis has not slept with his wife for ten "months for reasons which I will pass over. She has a child, and right away Alcibiades will say: in any case, it was not for the pleasure of it that I did this, it is because it seemed appropriate to my dignity to ensure that my descendants would have a throne, and in that way to honour the throne of Sparta with one of my own race. This sort of thing, as you can well imagine, may be captivating for a certain time, but it is not forgiven. And naturally as you know Alcibiades, having contributed this present and some ingenious ideas about the manner of conducting hostilities, is going to change quarters again. He can hardly fail to go to the third camp, to the Persian camp, to the one represented by the power of the king of Persia in Asia Minor, namely Tissaphernes who, Plutarch tells us, was a bitter enemy of Greece. To be frank he hates them, but he is seduced by Alcibiades.

It is from there that Alcibiades is going to set about reestablishing the fortunes of Athens. He does it in conditions whose story of course is also extremely surprising because it seems that it is really in the midst of a sort of network of double agents, of permanent betrayal, all the warnings he gives to the Athenians are immediately reported through a circuit to Sparta and to the Persians themselves who make it known to the specific person of the Athenian fleet who passed on the information; so that at the same time he in his turn comes to know, to be informed, that it is perfectly well known in the highest places that he is a traitor.

Each of these personages sorts himself out as best he can. It is certain that in the midst of all this Alcibiades redresses the fortunes of Athens. After all that, without our being able to be absolutely sure of the details, in the way that the ancient (5) historians reported them, we must not be astonished if Alcibiades comes back to Athens with what we could call a really outstanding triumph which, despite the joy of the Athenian people, is going to be the beginning of a change of opinion.

We find ourselves in the presence of someone who cannot fail at every instant to provoke what can be called public opinion. His death is also quite a strange business. There are many obscurities about who is responsible for it; what is certain, is that it seems, that after a succession of reversals of fortune.

of reversions each more astonishing than the other, (but it seems that in any case, whatever difficulties he find himself in, he is never disheartened), a sort of enormous confluence of hatreds is going to culminate in the destruction of Alcibiades by means of procedures which are those, which legend, myth say must be used against the scorpion: he is surrounded by a circle of fire from which he escapes and it is from a distance with javelins and arrows that he must be brought down.

Such is the singular career of Alcibiades. If I have shown you the level of a power, of a penetration of a very active, exceptional mind, I would say that the most outstanding trait is still the reflection which is added to it by what is described not alone as the precocious beauty of Alcibiades as a child (which we know is closely linked to the story of the type of love then reigning in Greece namely, the love of children) but this beauty preserved for a long time which meant that at a rather advanced age it makes of him someone who seduces as much by his form as by his exceptional intelligence.

Such is the personage. And we see him in a gathering which reunites in short learned, serious men (although, in this context of Greek love on which we are going to put the accent later on which already contributes a background of permanent erotism from which these discourses on love are going to emerge) we see him therefore coming to recount to everybody something which we can summarise more or less in the following terms: namely the vain efforts that he made when he was a young man, at the time Socrates loved him, to get Socrates to have sex with him.

This is developed at length with details, and in short with a considerable crudity of language. There is no doubt that he made Socrates lose control, show how disturbed he was, yield to these direct corporal invitations, to a physical approach. And this which is publicly [reported] by a drunken man no doubt, but by a drunken man the whole extent of whose remarks Plato thinks it worthwhile reporting to us - I do not know if I am making myself fully understood.

Imagine a book which might appear, I am not saying in our day, because this appears about fifty years after the scene which is (6) reported, Plato produces it at that distance, suppose that after a certain time, to soften things a little, a personage like for example Mr. Kennedy, in a book composed for the elite, a Kennedy who would have been at the same time James Dean, comes to tell how he did his best while he was at the university to be made love to by ... (let us say some kind of professor), you can choose the personage yourself. It is not absolutely necessary that he should belong to the teaching profession, because Socrates was not quite a professor. But he was all the same a rather special one. Imagine that it is somebody like Mr. Massignon and who at the same time is Henry Miller. That would produce a certain effect. It would lead to some difficulties for Jean-Jacques Pauvert who would have published this work. Let us recall this at the moment when it is a question of noting that this astonishing work has been transmitted to us throughout

the centuries by the hands of what we should call in different ways different kinds of benighted friars, which means that we have without any doubt the complete text.

Well! That is what I thought, not without a certain admiration, in leafing through this admirable edition which Henri Estienne gave us of it in a Latin translation. And this edition is definitive enough for there still to be now, in all the different learned, critical editions, it is already, this edition, the perfect critical one whose pagination is given to us. Those who are coming to this for the first time, should know that the little 272a or others, by which you see noted the pages to which you should refer, is only the pagination of Henri Estienne (1578). Henri Estienne was certainly not benighted, but one finds it difficult to believe that someone who was capable (this was not all he did) of devoting himself to producing such monumental editions [had an] openness to life such that he could fully appreciate the contents of what there is in this text, I mean in so far as it is above all a text about love.

At the same epoch - that of Henri Estienne - other people were interested in love and I can tell you quite frankly: when I spoke to you last year at length about the sublimation of the love of women, the hand which I was holding invisibly was not that of Plato nor of some erudite person, but that of Marguerite of Navarre. I alluded to it without insisting. You should know, for this sort of banquet, of sumposion also which her Heptameron is, she carefully excluded these sort of people with dirty nails who were emerging at the time and renewing the content of the libraries. She only wants knights, lords, personages who, in speaking about love speak about something that they had time to live. And also in all the commentaries which have been given about the Symposium it is indeed this dimension which often seems to be lacking that we thirst after. It does not matter.

(7) Among those people who never doubt that their understanding - as Jaspers says - attains the limits of the concrete-tangible-comprehensible, the story of Alcibiades and Socrates has always been difficult to swallow. As testimony I will only take the following: that Louis le Roy, Ludovicus rejus, who is the first translator into French of these texts which were just emerging from the orient for western culture, quite simply stopped there, at the entry of Alcibiades. He translated nothing after that. It seemed to him that enough beautiful discourses had been made before Alcibiades entered. Which indeed is in fact the case moreover. Alcibiades appeared to him as something added on, apocryphal, and he is not the only one to have behaved in this way. I will spare you the details. But Racine received one day from a lady who had been working on a translation of the Symposium a manuscript to look over. Racine who was a sensitive man had considered that as untranslatable and not alone the story of Alcibiades but all the Symposium. We have his notes which prove that he had looked very closely at the manuscript which had been sent to him; but as regards redoing it, because it was a question of nothing less than redoing it (it needed somebody like Racine to translate the Greek), he refused. A small thing for

him. Third reference. I have the good luck to have found a long time ago, in a corner, handwritten notes from the course given by Brochard on Plato. It is very remarkable, these notes are very well taken, the writing is exquisite. In connection with the theory of love, Brochard of course refers to all the appropriate things: the Lysis, the Phaedrus, the Symposium. Above all the Symposium. There is a very well done operation of substitution when one arrives at the Alcibiades affair. He links up, he switches things onto the Phaedrus which, at that moment takes up the baton. He does not take responsibility for the story of Alcibiades.

This reserve after all deserves rather our respect. I mean that it is all the same the feeling that there is here something which poses questions. And I prefer that than to see it resolved by the singular hypotheses which frequently appear. The prettiest of them - this is one among thousands - Mr. Leon Robin sides with it (and this is astonishing) is that Plato here wanted to justify his master. The scholars have discovered that someone called Polycrates brought out [a pamphlet] some years after the death of Socrates. You know that he was brought down under different accusations which were made by three personages one of whom was called Anytus a certain Polycrates is supposed to have effectively put that in the mouth of Anytus, an indictment the principal body of which was constituted by the fact that Socrates is supposed to have been responsible precisely for what I spoke to you about above, namely for what one can call the scandal, the sowing of corruption; he is supposed to have dragged Alcibiades after him throughout his life, with all the procession of problems indeed of catastrophes which he brought with him.

(8) It must be admitted that the idea that Plato justified the morals if not the influence of Socrates by confronting us with the scene of public confession by this character, is really a backhanded way of doing things. One must really ask what the people who produce such hypotheses are thinking about. That Socrates should have resisted Alcibiades' attempts, that this by itself can justify this piece of the Symposium as something destined to elevate the sense of his mission in public opinion, is something which, as far as I am concerned, leaves me flabbergasted.

It is all the same necessary that either we are confronted with the consequence of reasons that Plato does not tell us about or that this piece has in effect a function, I mean that this irruption of this personage who has all the same the closest relationship with what is in question: the question of love.

To see then what is involved, and it is precisely because, what is involved is precisely the point around which there turns everything that is in question in the Symposium, the point around which there is going to be clarified at the deepest level not so much the question of the nature of love as the question which interests us here, namely, of its relationship with transference. It is because of this that I am going to focus the question on this articulation between the text which is

reported to us of the discourses pronounced in the sumposion, (416BC) and the irruption of Alcibiades.

At this point I must outline for you at first something about the meaning of these discourses, first of all the text of them that is transmitted to us, the narrative. What in fact is this text? What does Plato tell us?

First of all one can ask oneself that question. Is it a fiction, a fabrication, as many of his dialogues manifestly are which are compositions which obey certain laws (and God know that on this point there would be much to say)? Why this genre? Why this law of dialogue? We are going to have to leave these things to one side; I am only indicating to you that there is on this point a whole range of things to be known. But this has all the same a different character, a character moreover which is not altogether foreign to the mode in which we are shown certain of these dialogues.

To make myself understood, I would say the following: if we can take the Symposium as we are going to take it, let us say as a sort of account of psychoanalytic sessions (because effectively it is something like this that is in question) because in the measure that there progress, that there succeed one another these contributions of the different participants in this sumposion something happens which is the successive clarification of each one of these flashes by the one which follows, then at the end something which is really reported to us as the sort of raw even inconvenient happening, the irruption of life into it, the presence of (9) Alcibiades. And it is for us to understand the meaning precisely of this discourse of Alcibiades.

So then, if this is what is in question, we would have according to Plato a sort of recording of it. Since there was no tape recorder, we will say that it is a brain recording. Brain recording is an extremely old practice, which sustained - I would even say - the way of listening for long centuries of people who participated in serious matters, as long as writing had not taken on this function of a dominant factor in the culture which is the one it has in our day. Since things can be written down, the things that must be remembered are for us in what I have called kilograms of language namely, piles of books and heaps of papers. But when paper was rarer, and books much more difficult to fabricate and to diffuse, it was an extremely important thing to have a good memory, and - as I might say - to experience everything that had been heard in the register of the memory which conserves it. And it is not only at the beginning of the Symposium but in all the traditions that we know that we can see the testimony that the oral transmission of science and of wisdom is absolutely essential there. It is because of this moreover that we still know something about it, it is in the measure that writing does not exist that oral tradition functions as a support. And it is indeed to this that Plato referred in the mode in which he presents to us... in which the text of the Symposium comes to us. He has it recounted by someone who is called Apollodorus. We are aware of the existence of this

personage. He exists historically and this Apollodorus who is made to speak by Plato (because Apollodorus speaks) is supposed to come at a time dated at about a little more than thirty years before the appearance of the Symposium if one takes the date of about 370 for the publication of the Symposium. It is before the death of Socrates that there is placed what Plato tells us is said at that moment that there is to be transmitted by Apollodorus this account about what happened, again fifteen years earlier than the moment when he is supposed to have received it because we have reasons for thinking that it was in 416 that there took place this so called sumposion at which he assisted.

It is therefore sixteen years after that a personage extracts from his memory the literal text of what is supposed to have been said. Therefore, the least that can be said, is that Plato takes all the measures necessary to make us believe at least in what was commonly practised and which is still practised in these phases of culture, namely what I called brain recording. He underlines that this same personage, Aristodemus ... that some of (10) the tape had been damaged, that there may be gaps at certain points. All of this obviously does not at all settle the question of historical veracity but has nonetheless a great verisimilitude. If it is a lie, it is a beautiful lie. Since on the other hand it is obviously the work of love, and that, perhaps we will come to see there being highlighted for us the notion that after all only liars can appropriately reply to love, even in this case the Symposium would respond certainly to something which is like (this on the contrary is bequeathed to us without ambiguity) the elective reference of the action of Socrates to love.

This indeed is why the Symposium is such an important testimony. We know that Socrates himself testifies, affirms that he really does not know anything (no doubt the Theages in which he says it is not one of Plato's dialogues but it is all the same a dialogue of someone who wrote about what was known about Socrates and what remained of Socrates) and Socrates in the Theages is attested to have expressly said that he knew nothing in short except "this little bit of science, smikrou tinos mathematos" which is that of "ton erotikon, the things of love". He repeats it in these very terms, in terms which are exactly the same at a point in the Symposium.

The subject then of the Symposium is this... the subject had been proposed, put forward by a personage called neither more nor less Phaidros. Phaidros will also be the one who has given his name to another dialogue, the one to which I referred last year in connection with the beautiful and in which there is also question of love (the two are linked in Platonic thought). Phaidros is said to be pater tou logou, "the father of the subject" (177d), in connection with what is going to be dealt with in the Symposium, the subject is the following: in short what use is it to know about love? And we know that Socrates claims to know nothing about anything else. It is all the more striking to make this remark which you will be able to appreciate with its

proper value when you refer to the text: you will see that Socrates says almost nothing in his own name. This "almost nothing" I will tell you if we have time today, it is important. [Line missing in Master Copy] to tell you, almost without nothing, is no doubt the essential. And it is around this "almost nothing" that the stage really turns, namely that people begin to really speak about the subject in a way that one would have expected.

Let us say right away that when all is said and done, in the type of adjustment, of arranging the level at which things are to be taken, you will see that when all is said and done Socrates does not set it particularly high with respect to what the others say: (11) it consists rather in centring things, in adjusting the lights so that one can properly see what is the average height. If Socrates tells us something it is, undoubtedly, that love is not something divine. He does not rate it very highly, but that is what he loves, he only loves that. That having been said, the moment at which he begins to speak is also worthwhile underlining, it is just after Agathon. I am obliged to bring them in one after another, in accordance with the rhythm of my discourse, instead of bringing them all in from the beginning namely Phaidros, Pausanias, Aristodemos who had come there I should say as a toothpick, namely that he met Agathon, Socrates, and Socrates brought him; there is also Eryximachos who is a colleague of most of you, who is a doctor; there is Agathon who is the host, Socrates (who brought Aristodemos) who arrives very late because on the way he had what we could call an attack. The attacks of Socrates consist in coming to a sudden halt, and standing on one leg in a corner. He stops in the house next door where he has no business. He is planted in the hallway between the umbrella stand and the coatstand and there is no way of waking him up. You have to give a little bit of atmosphere to these things. They are not as you will see the boring stories that you thought they were at secondary school.

I would like one day to give a discourse in which I would take my examples precisely in the Phaidros, or again in a certain play of Aristophanes, on something absolutely essential without which there is all the same no way of understanding how there is situated, what I would call in everything that is proposed to us by antiquity, the enlightened circle of Greece.

We ourselves live all the time in the midst of light. The night is in short carried on a stream of neon. But imagine all the same that up to an epoch which there is no need to refer to the time of Plato, a relatively recent epoch, night was night. When someone comes to knock, at the beginning of the Phaidros, to wake up Socrates, because he has to get up a little bit before daybreak (I hope that it is in the Phaidros but it does not matter, it is at the start of one of Plato's dialogues) it is quite a business. He gets up, and he is really in the dark, namely that he knocks things over if he tries to take a step. At the beginning of a play by Aristophanes to which I also alluded, when one is in the dark one is really in the dark, it is here that one does not recognise the person who touches your

hand.

To take up what was still happening at the time of Marguerite de Navarre, the stories of the Heptameron are full of stories of this sort. Their possibility rests on the fact that at that time, that when one slipped into a woman's bed at night, it is considered to be one of the things that is most possible, provided you keep your mouth shut, to have oneself taken for her (12) husband or for her lover. And this it appears was frequently practised. This completely changes the dimension of relationships between human beings. And obviously what I would call in a quite different sense the diffusion of lights changes many things because of the fact that night is no longer for us a consistent reality, the fact that you can no longer pour it from a ladle, make of blackness something dense, removes certain things, many things from us.

All of this to come back to our subject which is the one that we must come back to, namely what is signified by this illuminated circle in which we are, and what is in question as regards love when one speaks about it in Greece. When one speaks about it, well... as M. de la Palisse would say, we are dealing with Greek love.

Greek love, you have to get used to this idea, is the love of beautiful boys. And then, hyphen, nothing else. It is quite clear that when one speaks about love one is not speaking about something else. All the efforts that we make to put this in its place are destined to fail in advance. I mean that in order to see exactly what it is we are obliged to move the furniture around in a certain way, to reestablish certain perspectives, to put ourselves in a certain more or less oblique position, to say that this was not necessarily all there was... obviously... of course...

It nevertheless remains that on the plane of love there was nothing but that. But then on the other hand, if one says that, you are going to tell me that love for boys is something which was universally accepted. Well no! Even when one says that it nevertheless remains that in a whole part of Greece a very poor view was taken of it, that in a whole other part of Greece - Pausanias underlines it for us in the Symposium - it was very well regarded, and since it was the totalitarian part of Greece, the Boeotians, the Spartans who belonged to the totalitarians (everything that is not forbidden is obligatory) not alone was it very well regarded, it was what was commanded. One could not stand apart from it. And Pausanias says: there are people who are much better. Among us, Athenians, it is well regarded but it is prohibited all the same, and naturally that reinforces the value of the thing. This is more or less what Pausanias tells us.

All of this, of course, fundamentally, does not teach us very much, except that it was more credible on a single condition, that we should understand more or less what it corresponds to. To have an idea of it, you must refer to what I said last year

about courtly love. It is not of course the same thing, but it occupies an analogous function. I mean that it is quite obviously of the order and of the function of sublimation, in the sense that I tried last year to contribute to this subject a slight rectification in your minds about what is really involved in the function of sublimation.

(13) Let us say that there is nothing involved here which we [cannot] put under the register of a kind of regression on a collective scale. I mean that this something which analytic doctrine indicates to us as being the support of the social bond as such, of fraternity among men, homosexuality, attaches it to the neutralisation of the bond. . It is not a question of dissolving this social bond, of returning to the innate form, it is quite obviously something else. It is a cultural happening and it is also clear that it is in the milieu of the masters of Greece, amongst people of a certain class, at the level at which there reigns and at which there is elaborated culture, that this love is put into practice. It is obviously the major centre for the elaboration of interhuman relationships.

I recall in a different form, the thing that I already indicated at the end of the last seminar, the schema of the relationship of perversion with culture in so far as it is distinguished from society. If society brings with it by its censoring effect a form of disintegration which is called neurosis, it is in a contrary sense of development, of construction, of sublimation - let us say the word - that perversion can be conceived when it is produced by culture. And if you wish, the circle closes in on itself: perversion contributing elements which torment society, neurosis favouring the creation of new elements of culture. However much a sublimation it may be, this does not prevent Greek love from being a perversion. No culturalist point of view should predominate here. We cannot tell ourselves on the pretext that it was an accepted, approved, even celebrated perversion... homosexuality remains nevertheless what it was: a perversion. That to want to tell us in order to arrange things that if, we, for our part, treat homosexuality, it is because in our day homosexuality is something quite different, it is no longer the fashion, and that in the time of the Greeks on the contrary it played its cultural function and as such is worthy of all our respect, this really is to evade what is properly speaking the problem. The only thing which differentiates the contemporary homosexuality with which we have to deal and the Greek perversion, God knows, I believe that one can scarcely find it elsewhere than in the quality of objects. Here, schoolboys are acned and cretinised by the education they receive and these conditions are not really favourable for them to become the object of our homage; it seems that one has to go searching for objects in out of the way places, the gutter, that is the whole difference. But there is no difference in the structure itself.

(14) Naturally this causes scandal, given the outstanding dignity with which we have invested the Greek message. And then there are the fine sentiments with which one surrounds oneself for this purpose, namely that we are told: all the same you must not

believe that for all that women did not receive appropriate homage. Thus Socrates, do not forget, precisely in the Symposium, where, as I told you, he says very little in his own name - but what he speaks is extraordinary - only he makes a woman speak in his place: Diotima. Do you not see that the testimony, that the supreme homage comes back, even in the mouth of Socrates, to the woman? Here at any rate is what right thinking people never fail at this point to highlight for us; and in addition, you know that from time to time he would go to visit Lais, Aspasia - historians collect all sorts of gossip - Theodota who was Alcibiades' mistress. And as regards the famous Xanthippes, about whom I spoke to you the other day, she was there the day he died as you know, and she even gave out the most deafening cries. There is only one problem... this is attested for us in the Phaedo, in any case, Socrates suggests that she should be put to bed immediately, that she should be got out as quickly as possible so that they can talk calmly, there are only a few hours left.

Except for this, the function of the dignity of women will be preserved. I have no doubt in fact about the importance of women in antique Greek society, I would say even more, it is something very serious whose import you will subsequently see. It is that they had what I would call their true place. Not alone did they have their true place, but this means that they had a quite outstanding weight in love relationships and we have all sorts of testimonies of this. It appears in fact, provided always that one knows how to read - one must not read the antique authors with wire netting on one's glasses - that they had this role which is veiled for us but nevertheless is very outstandingly their own in love: simply the active role, namely that the differences between the antique woman and the modern woman is that she demanded her due, that she attacked the man. This is something that you can, I believe, put your finger on in many cases. In any case when you have woken up to this point of view on the question you will notice many things which otherwise, in ancient history, seem strange. In any case Aristophanes who was a very good music-hall producer, did not dissimulate from us how the women of his time behaved. There has never been anything more characteristic and more crude concerning the enterprises - as I might say - of women. And it is precisely for that reason that learned love - as I might call it - took refuge elsewhere.

We have here in any case one of the keys for the question which should not astonish psychoanalysts too much.

(15) This may appear perhaps quite a long detour to excuse the fact that in our enterprise (which is to analyse a text whose object is to know what it means to know about love) we take something obviously, we take what we know, that it refers to the time of Greek love, this love as I might say of the school, I mean of schoolboys. Well, it is for technical reasons of simplification, of example, of a model which allows to be seen an articulation that otherwise is always elided in what is too complicated in love with women, it is because of this that this

love of the school can be of use to us, can legitimately be of use to all (for our object) as a school for love.

This of course does not mean, that this is something to be relaunched. I would like to avoid any misunderstanding, because soon people will be saying that I am setting myself up here as a proponent of Platonic love. There are many reasons why this can no longer serve as a school for love. If I were to tell you about them, this would again be a question of giving great sword thrusts through curtains when one does not know what there is behind - believe me - in general I avoid it. There is one reason why there is no reason to begin again, because of which it is even impossible to begin again, and one of the reasons which will astonish you perhaps if I put it forward before you is that, for us, at the point that we are at, even if you have not realised it yet you will realise it if you reflect a little bit, love and its phenomenon and its culture and its dimension has for some time become disengaged from beauty. That may astonish you, but that is the way it is.

You can verify that from both sides. From the side of beautiful works of art on the one hand, from the side of love also, and you will see that it is true. It is in any case a condition which renders difficult... and it is precisely for this reason that I make this whole detour to accustom you to what is in question... we return to the function of beauty, to the tragic function of beauty because this is what I put forward last year - the dimension - and this is what gives its veritable meaning to what Plato is going to tell us about love.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that at the present time it is not at all at the level of tragedy, nor at another level of which I will speak in a moment that love is bestowed, it is at the level of what in the Symposium is called, in Agathon's discourse, the level of Polymnie. It is at the level of lyricism, and in the order of artistic creations, at the level of what presents itself indeed as the most vivid materialisation of fiction as essential, namely what we call the cinema. Plato would have been delighted by this invention. There is no better illustration for the arts of what Plato put at the origin of his vision of the world, than this "something" which is expressed in the myth of the cave that we see illustrated every day by those (16) dancing rays which are able to manifest on the screen all our feelings in a shadowy way.

It is indeed to this dimension that there belongs most outstandingly in the art of our day the defence and the illustration of love. This indeed is the reason that one of the things that I told you - which will nevertheless be the one around which we are going to centre our progress - one of the things I told you and which does not fail to arouse a certain reticence, because I said it quite incidentally: love is a comic sentiment. All the same, an effort is required for us to come back to the proper point of adaptation which gives it its import.

There are two things which I noted in my former discourse about

love and I recall them. The first is that love is a comic sentiment, and you will see what will illustrate it in our investigation. We will complete in this connection the loop which will allow us to bring forward what is essential: the true nature of comedy. And it is so essential and indispensable that it is for this reason that there is in the Symposium, something which since that time the commentators have never been able to explain, namely, the presence of Aristophanes. He was, historically speaking the sworn enemy of Socrates; nevertheless he is there.

The second thing that I wanted to say - as you will see - that we rediscover at every moment, which will serve us as a guide, is that love is to give what one does not have. This you will also see arriving at one of the essential hinges of what we will have to encounter in our commentary.

In any case, to enter into this subject, into this dismantling through which this discourse of Socrates about Greek love will be something illuminating for us, let us say that Greek love allows us to separate out in the love relationship the two partners in a neutral way (I mean at this something pure which is actually expressed in the masculine gender), it is to allow there to be articulated at first what happens at the level of this couple who are respectively the lover and the beloved, erastes and eromenos.

What I will tell you the next time consists in showing you how, around these two functions of lover and beloved, the process of what unfolds in the Symposium is such that we are going to be able to attribute respectively, with all the rigour that analytic experience is capable of, what is in question..... in other words we will see there articulated clearly, at a time when analytic experience as such was lacking, when the unconscious in its proper function with respect to the subject is undoubtedly a dimension which is not even suspected, and therefore with the limitation that this involves, you will see articulated in the (17) clearest fashion this something which comes to meet the summit of our experience; that which I tried throughout all these years to unfold before you under the double rubric, the first year of Object Relations, the year which followed, of Desire and its interpretation you will see clearly appearing and in formulae which are probably those to which we have come: the lover as subject of desire (and taking into account all the weight that we give to the word desire) the eromenos, the beloved, as being the one who in this couple is the only one to have something.

The question of knowing whether "what he has" (because it is the beloved who has it) has a relationship I would say even any relationship whatsoever with that which the other, the subject of the desire lacks. I would say the following, the question of the relationships between desire and the one before whom desire is fixed - as you know - has already led us around the notion of desire qua desire for something else. We arrived at it by means of an analysis of the effects of language on the subject. It is strange that a dialectic of love, that of Socrates, which is

precisely made up entirely by means of dialectic, by a testing of the imperative effects of questioning as such, does not lead us to the same crossroads. You will see that indeed far from leading us to the same crossroads it will allow us to go beyond, namely, to grasp the moment of tipping over, the moment of reversal where from the conjunction of desire with its object qua inadequate, there must emerge the signification which is called love.

It is impossible, without having grasped this articulation, the conditions it involves in the symbolic, the imaginary and the real... not to grasp what is in question, namely in this effect so strange in its automatism which is called transference, to measure, to compare what is the part, the proportion between this transference and love, what there must be attributed to each one of them and reciprocally, in terms of illusion or of truth. In this the path and the investigation that I introduced to you today is going to prove to be of inaugural importance for us.

Seminar 3; Wednesday 30 November 1960

We stopped the last day at the position of the erastes and the eromenos, of the lover and the beloved, as the dialectic of the Symposium will allow us to introduce it as what I have called the basis, the turning point, the essential articulation of the problem of love. The problem of love interests us in so far as it is going to allow us to understand what happens in transference, and I would say up to a certain point, because of transference.

To justify such a long detour as this one which may appear to those of you who are newly come this year to this seminar and which may after all appear to you as a superfluous detour, I will try to give you the grounds, to presentify to you the meaning, which you should immediately apprehend, of what our research involves.

It seems to me that at whatever level of his formation he may be, something should be present to the psychoanalyst as such, which may strike him, catch him by the coat-tails at many a turning point (and is not the most simple the one which it seems to me is difficult to avoid after a certain age and which for you it seems must already involve in a very live way just by itself what the problem of love is). Have you never been struck at this turning point by the fact that, in what you have given - I mean to those who are closest to you - there was something missing, and which not only was missing, but which has left those mentioned, those closest to you irremediably lost to you? And what is it? it is that precisely those closest to you (with them) one does nothing but turn around the phantasy whose satisfaction you have more or less sought for (in them), which (for them) has more or less substituted its images or its colours. This being of which you may suddenly be reminded by some accident whose resonance can be best understood by death, this veritable being, which is what I am evoking for you, already distances itself and is already eternally lost. Now this being is all the same the very one that you are trying to rejoin along the paths of your desire. Only that being is yours, and as analysts you know well that it is, in some way or other, because of not wanting it, that you have also more or less missed it.

But at least here at the level of your sin and your failure you are exactly the measure.

(2) And those others whom you have cared for so badly, is it because you have made of them as people say simply your objects? Would to God that if you had treated them as objects whose weight, whose taste, whose substance is appreciated, you would today be less disturbed by their memory, you would have done them justice, rendered them homage and love, you would at least have loved them like yourself, except for the fact that you love badly (but it is not even the fate of the unloved that we have had our share of) you would have made of them no doubt as they say, subjects as if this was the end of the respect that they merited, the respect as it is said of their dignity, the respect owed to our fellows (nos semblables). I am afraid that this neutralised use of the term our fellows, is indeed something different to what we are dealing with in the question of love and, as regards these fellows that the respect that you give them may go too rapidly towards respect for the similar, leaving them to their quirks of resistance, to their stubborn ideas, to their congenital stupidity, indeed to their own concerns... let them sort it out for themselves! This is, I believe, the foundation of this coming to a halt before their liberty which often directs your behaviour, the liberty of indifference it is said, but not so much of theirs as of yours.

And it is indeed here that the question is posed for an analyst, namely what is our relation to this being of our patient? Nevertheless we know well all the same that this is what is in question in analysis. Is our access to this being one of love or not? Has our access some relation with what we know about the point we place ourselves at as regards the nature of love? This as you will see will lead us rather far, precisely to know that which - if I may express myself in this way by using a metaphor - is in the Symposium when Alcibiades compares Socrates to some of these tiny objects which it seems really existed at the time, to little Russian dolls for example, these things which fitted into one another; it appears that there were images whose outside represented a satyr or a Silenus, and, within we do not really know what but undoubtedly some precious things.

What there should be, what there may be, what there is supposed to be, of this something, in the analyst, is indeed what our question will tend towards, but right at the end.

In approaching this problem of this relationship which is that of the analysand to the analyst, which manifests itself by this very curious phenomenon of transference which I am trying to approach in a fashion which circumscribes it more closely, which evades as little as possible its forms (at once known to all, and which people try more or less to make into abstractions, to avoid their proper weight), I believe that we cannot do better than begin (3) from a questioning of what this phenomenon is supposed to imitate to the highest degree, or even to become confused with.

There is as you know a text of Freud, celebrated in this sense.

which is found in what are usually called The papers on technique, with that to which it is closely linked, namely let us say that something has ever since always remained suspended to something in the problem of love - an internal discord, some duplicity or other which is precisely what we should circumscribe more closely namely perhaps clarify by this ambiguity of this other thing, this substitution en route which after some time of the seminar here you should know to be all the same what happens in analytic action, and which I can summarise in this way.

The person who comes to see us in principle with this supposition that he does not know what is wrong with him (there is already there a whole implication of the unconscious, of the fundamental "he does not know" and it is through this that there is established the bridge which can link our new science to the whole tradition of "know thyself"; of course there is a fundamental difference, the accent of this "he does not know" is completely displaced) - and I think that I have already said enough about this to you for me not to have to do any more than indicate the difference in passing..... but what is it? What he truly has in himself, what he is demanding to be, not only formed, educated, released, cultivated according to the method of all the traditional pedagogies, (he puts himself under the mantle of the fundamentally revelatory power of some dialectics which are the offspring, the offshoots of the inaugural step taken by Socrates in so far as it is a philosophical one) is it towards this that we are going, in analysis, to lead whoever comes to see us as an analyst?

Simply as readers of Freud, you should all the same already know something of that which in its first appearance at least may present itself as the paradox of what presents itself to us as end, telos, as the completion, the termination of analysis. What does Freud tell us if not when all is said and done that what the one who follows this path will find at the end is nothing other essentially than a lack? Whether you call this lack castration or whether you call it Penisneid this is the sign, the metaphor. But if this is really what analysis comes up against, is there not there already some

In short by recalling this ambiguity to you, this sort of double register between what in principle is the beginning and the starting point and this end (at first sight it may appear so (4) necessarily disappointing) a whole development is inscribed, this development, is properly speaking this revelation of something entire in its text which is called the unconscious Other.

Of course all of this, for someone who hears it spoken about for the first time - I do not believe that this is the case for anybody here - cannot be understood except as an enigma. This is not at all the way in which I am presenting it to you, but as the collecting together of terms in which our action as such is inscribed. It is also to illuminate right away what I could call, if you wish, the general plan according to which our journey is going to unfold, when it is a question after all of

nothing other than immediately apprehending, of seeing there in fact the analogy there is between this development and these terms and the fundamental starting point of love. [This situation] even though it is after all evident, has never been, as far as I know, also, situated in any terms, placed at the starting point in these terms that I am proposing to you to articulate immediately, these two terms from which we are beginning: erastes, the lover, or again eromenos, the loving one and eromenos, the one who is loved.

Is everything not already better situated at the start (there is no need to play hide-and-peek). Can we not see immediately in such a gathering what characterises the erastes, the lover, for all those who have questioned him, who approach him, is it not essentially what he is lacking? And we for our part can immediately add, that he does not know what he is lacking, with this particular accent of unknowing which is that of the unconscious. And on the other hand the eromenos, the beloved object, is he not always situated as the one who does not know what he has, the hidden thing he has, what gives him his attraction? Because is not this "what he has" that which in the love relation is called on not only to reveal itself, [but] to become, to be, to presentify, that which up to then is only possible?

In short with the analytic accent, or without this accent, he also does not know. And it is something else that is in question. He does not know what he has.

Between these two terms which constitute, as I might say, in their essence, the lover and the beloved, you should notice that there is no coinciding. What is lacking to the one is not this "what he has", hidden in the other. And this is the whole problem of love. Whether one knows this or not is of no (5) importance. One encounters at every step in the phenomenon, its splitting apart, its discordance and a person has no need for all that to dialogue, to engage in dialectics, dialektikeuesthai about love, it is enough for him to be involved, to love, in order to be caught up in this gap, in this discord.

Is that all there is to say? Is it sufficient? I cannot do any more here. I am doing a lot in doing what I am doing, I am exposing myself to the risk of a certain immediate incomprehension, but I assure you, I have no intention here of leading you on, I am putting my cards on the table immediately. Things go further than that. We can propose, in the terms that we use, that which the analysis of the creation of meaning in the signifier-signified relationship already indicated (we will see, provided we see how it is to be handled, the truth in what follows) already indicated about the question, namely that precisely love as signification, (because for us it is one and it is only that), is a metaphor, in the measure that we have learned to articulate metaphor as substitution, and this is where we enter into obscurity and that I would ask you for the moment simply to admit, and to keep what I am here putting forward as what it is in your hands: an algebraic formula.

It is in so far as the function where it occurs of the erastes, of the loving one, who is the subject of lack, takes the place of, substitutes itself for the function of the eromenos who is the object, the beloved object, that there is produced the signification of love. We will spend a certain time perhaps in clarifying this formula. We have the time to do it in the year before us. At least I will not have failed to give you from the beginning this reference point which may serve, not as a riddle, at least as a point of reference to avoid certain ambiguities (when I will have developed it).

And now let us enter into this Symposium of which in a way the last time I gave you the setting, presented the personages, the personages who have nothing primitive about them as regards the simplification of the problem that they present to us. We must really admit that they are extremely sophisticated personages! And here, to retrace one of the aspects of what I spent my time telling you the last time, I will resume it in a few words, because I think it important that its provocative character should be expressed, articulated.

There is all the same something rather humorous [after] twenty-four centuries of religious meditation (because there is not a single reflection on love throughout these twenty-four centuries, either among free-thinkers or among priests, there is not a (6) single meditation on love which has not referred to this inaugural text) [this text] after all (taken in its external aspect) for someone who enters into it without being warned, represents all the same a sort of tonicity, as they say, between people who we must all the same remind ourselves (for the peasant who emerges there from his little garden around Athens) are a collection of old queens. Socrates is fifty-three, Alcibiades still handsome it appears, is thirty-six and Agathon himself in whose house they are gathered, is thirty. He had just won the prize of the competition for tragedies; this is what allows us to date the Symposium exactly. Obviously one must not stop at these appearances. It is always in salons, namely in a place where people have nothing particularly attractive in their appearance, it is in the houses of duchesses that the most subtle things are said. There are lost forever of course but not for everyone, not for those who say them in any case. Here we are lucky enough to know what all these personages, in turn, exchanged that evening.

Much has been said about this Symposium, and there is no need to tell you that those whose job it is to be philosophers, philologists, Hellenists have examined it microscopically, and that I have not exhausted everything that they have said. But it is not inexhaustible either, because it always turns around one point. However little inexhaustible it may be, there is all the same no way in which I could put before you the totality of these tiny debates which are carried on about one or other line; first of all it cannot be assumed that it is the way not to allow something important to escape. It is not very comfortable for me who am neither a philosopher, nor a philologist, nor a Hellenist, to put myself in this role, to put myself in this

position and give you a lecture on the Symposium.

What I can simply hope, is to give you first of all a first grasp of this something which I would ask you to believe does not just like that depend on a first reading. Trust me, and credit me in your thinking that it is not the first time and simply for this seminar that I have gone into this text. And do me the credit also of believing that I have taken some trouble to refresh the memories I had about the works that are consecrated to it, indeed to inform myself about the ones that I may have neglected up to now.

This in order to excuse myself for having (and all the same because I believe it is the best way) tackled things from the end; namely that which, simply because of the method that I teach you, should be the object for you of a sort of reserve, namely what I understand of it. It is precisely here that I am running the greatest risks; you should be thankful to me that I am running them in your place. Let this serve you simply as an introduction to the criticisms which are not so much to be aimed (7) at what I am going to tell you that I understood here, as at what there is in the text, namely that which in any case is subsequently going to appear to you as being that which my understanding latched onto. I mean that which explains, makes necessary, this true or false understanding, and as a text then, as an impossible signifier, even for you, even if you understand it differently, impossible to distort.

I will pass over then the first pages, which are these pages which always exist in Plato's dialogues. And this is not a dialogue like the others, but nevertheless this kind of situation constructed to create what I have called the illusion of authenticity, these withdrawals, these indications of the transmission of the one who repeated what the other had told him. It is always the way in which Plato intends, at the beginning, to create a certain depth, which no doubt is of use to him to give a wide-spread repercussion to what he is going to say.

I will pass over also the regulations to which I alluded the last time, the laws of the Symposium. I pointed out to you that these laws were not simply local, improvised, that they referred to a prototype. The sumposion was something which had its laws. No doubt not quite the same ones in different places; they were not quite the same in Athens or in Crete. I will pass over all these references.

We will come then to the carrying out of the ceremony which will involve something which in short should be called by a name, and a name which lends itself - I point it out to you in passing - to discussion: the praise of love. Is it encomion, is it epainesis? I will pass over all of this which has its interest, but which is secondary. And I would like simply today to situate what I would like to call the progress of what is going to unfold around this sequence of discourses which are first of all that of Phaidros, that of Pausanias.... Phaidros is another quite curious personage, you would have to trace out his

character. It is not very important. For today you should simply know that it is curious that it is he who should have given the subject, that he is the pater tou logou, the father of the subject (177d). It is curious because we know him a little bit from elsewhere through the beginning of Phaedros, he is a curious hypochondriac. I am telling you this right away, it will perhaps be of use to you subsequently.

While I think of it I must also right away apologise to you. I do not know why I spoke to you about the night the last time. Of (8) course I remembered that it is not in Phaedrus that things begin at night, but in Protagoras. Having corrected this let us continue.

Phaidros, Pausanias, Eryximachos and before Eryximachos, it should have been Aristophanes, but he has a hiccup, he lets the other go before him and he speaks afterwards. It is the eternal problem in this whole story to know how Aristophanes, the comic poet, found himself there with Socrates, whom as everyone knows he did more than criticise, whom he ridiculed, defamed in his comedies and who, generally speaking, historians hold in part responsible for the tragic end of Socrates, namely his condemnation. I told you that this implies no doubt a profound reason, whose final solution I am not giving you any more than anybody else but perhaps we will try first of all to start throwing a little light on things.

Then comes Agathon and, after Agathon, Socrates. This constituting what is properly speaking the Symposium, namely everything that happens up to this crucial point which, the last time, I pointed out to you should be considered as essential, namely the entry of Alcibiades, to which corresponds the subversion of all the rules of the Symposium, if only because of the following: he comes in drunk, and he puts himself forward as being essentially drunk and speaks as such in drunkenness.

Let us suppose that you were to say to yourselves that the interest of this dialogue, of this Symposium, is to manifest something which is properly speaking the difficulty of saying something about love which hangs together. If it were only a question of this we would be purely and simply in a cacophony but what Plato - at least this is what I claim, it is not particularly daring to claim it - what Plato shows us in a fashion which will never be unveiled, which will never be revealed, is that the contour that this difficulty outlines is something which indicates to us the point at which there is the fundamental topology which prevents there being said about love something which hangs together.

What I am telling you there is not very new. Nobody dreams of contesting it. I mean that all of those who have busied themselves with this "dialogue" - in quotes - because it is scarcely something which deserves this title, because it is a succession of praises, a sequence in short of comic songs, of drinking songs in honour of love, which take on all their importance because these people are a little bit smarter than the

others (and moreover we are told that It is a subject which is not often chosen, which at first sight may astonish us).

We are told then that each one expresses the affair with his own tone, at his own pitch. We do not really know moreover why for example Phaidros is going to be charged to introduce it (we are told) from the angle of religion, of myth or even of ethnography. (9) And in effect there is some truth in all of this. I mean that Phaidros introduces love to us by telling us that he is a megas theos, he is a great god (178a). That is not all he says, but in fact he refers to two theologians, Hesiod and Parmenides, who from different aspects spoke about the genealogy of the gods, which is all the same something important. We are not going to feel ourselves obliged to refer to the Theogony of Hesiod and to the Poem of Parmenides on the pretext that a verse of them is quoted in the discourse of Phaidros.

I would say all the same that two or three years ago, four maybe, something very important was published on this point by a contemporary, Jean Beaufret, on the Poem of Parmenides. It is very interesting to read it. Having said that, let us leave it to one side and let us try to take account of what there is in this discourse of Phaidros.

There is then the reference to the gods. Why to the gods in the plural? I would like simply all the same to indicate something. I do not know what meaning "the gods" have for you, especially the antique gods. But after all there is enough said about them in this dialogue for it to be all the same useful, even necessary that I should respond to this question as if it were posed by you to me. What after all do you think about gods? Where are they situated with respect to the symbolic, to the imaginary and to the real? It is not at all an empty question. Up to the end the question that is going to be dealt with, is whether or not love is a god, and one would at least have made the progress, at the end, of knowing with certitude that it is not one.

Obviously I am not going to give you a lecture on the sacred in this connection. Quite simply, like that, let us pin down some formulae on the subject. The gods, in so far as they exist for us in our register, in the one which we use to advance in our experience, in so far as these three categories are of some use to us, the gods it is quite certain belong obviously to the real. The gods are a mode of revelation of the real. It is for this reason that all philosophical progress tends in some way, by its own necessity, to eliminate them. It is for this reason that Christian revelation finds itself, as Hegel very well remarked, on the way to eliminating them, namely that in this register, Christian revelation finds itself a little bit further on, a little bit more profoundly on this path which goes from polytheism to atheism.....that with respect to a certain notion of the divinity of the god as the high point of revelation, of lumen, as radiation, aspiration, (it is a fundamental, real thing) Christianity incontestably finds itself on the path which goes towards reducing, which goes in the final analysis towards abolishing the god of this very revelation in so

far as it tends to displace him, as dogma, towards the word, towards the logos as such, in other words finds itself on a path parallel to that which philosophy follows, in so far as I told you above its destiny is to deny the gods.

(10) These same revelations then which are met with up to then by man in the real, (in the real in which that which is revealed is moreover real)... but this same revelation, it is not the real which displaces it (this revelation) he is going to seek in the logos. He is going to seek it at the level of a signifying articulation.

Every interrogation which tends to articulate itself as science at the beginning of Plato's philosophical progress, teaches us rightly or wrongly, I mean truly or untruly, that this was what Socrates was doing. Socrates required that this thing with which we have this innocent relationship which is called doxa (and which of course is sometimes true) should not satisfy us, but that we should ask why, that we should only be satisfied with this certain truth which he calls episteme, science, namely which gives an account of its reasons. This Plato tells us was the business of Socrates' philosophiein.

I spoke to you about what I called Plato's Schwärmerei. We have to believe that something in this enterprise finally fails in order that [despite] the rigour, the talent deployed in the demonstration of such a method (so many things in Plato which afterwards all the mystagogies profited from - I am speaking above all about Gnosticism, and let us say that in which Christianity itself has still remained gnostic), it nevertheless remains that what is clear is that what pleases him is science. How could we blame him for having taken this path from the first step to the end?

In any case then, the discourse of Phaidros refers, to introduce the problem of love, to this notion that he is a great god, almost the oldest god, born immediately after Chaos says Hesiod. The first one of whom the mysterious Goddess, the primordial Goddess of Parmenides discourse, thought.

It is not possible here for us not to evoke at this level (in Plato's time) for us not to attempt (this enterprise may moreover be impossible to carry out) to determine all that these terms could have meant in Plato's time, because after all try to start from the idea that the first time that these things were said (and this was in Plato's time) it is completely impossible that all of this should have had an air of pastoral stupidity (that this has for example in the seventeenth century in which when people speak about Eros they are play-acting, all of this is inscribed in a completely different context, in a context of (11) courtly culture, echoing L'Astree, and everything that follows it namely words that carry no weight) here the words have their full importance, the discussion is really theological. And it is also to make you understand this importance that I found no better way than to tell you in order to really grasp it, to get hold of the second of Plotinus' Enneads, and see how he

speaks about something which is placed more or less at the same level. It is also a level of eros, and it is only about that. You could not, provided you have read a little a theological text on the Trinity, have failed to glimpse that this discourse of Plotinus (by simply... I think there would have to be three words changed) is a discourse (we are at the end of the third century) on the Trinity.

I mean that this Zeus, this Aphrodite, and this Eros, are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This simply to allow you to imagine what is in question when Phaidros speaks in these terms about Eros. To speak about love, in short, for Phaidros is to speak about theology. And after all it is very important to see that this discourse begins with such an introduction, because for a lot of people still, and precisely in the Christian tradition for example, to speak about love is to speak about theology. It is all the more interesting to see that this discourse is not limited to that, but goes on to an illustration of its subject. And the mode of illustration that is in question is also very interesting, because we are going to hear about this divine love, we are going to hear about its effects.

These effects, I underline, are outstanding at their level through the dignity that they reveal with the theme which has become a little bit worn out since in the developments of rhetoric, namely the fact that love is a bond against which every human effort will come to grief. An army made up of lovers and beloveds (and here the underlying classical illustration by the famous Theban legion) would be an invincible army and the beloved for the lover, just as the lover for the beloved would be eminently suitable to represent the highest moral authority, one that one does not yield on, one that one cannot dishonour.

This culminates in the extreme case, namely at love as principle of the final sacrifice. And it is not without interest to see emerging here the image of Alcestis, namely in a reference to Euripides, which illustrates once more what I put forward to you last year as delimiting the zone of tragedy, namely properly speaking this zone of between-two-deaths. Alcestis, the only one among the whole family of the king Admetus, a man who is happy but whom death all of a sudden warns, Alcestis the incarnation of love, is the only one (and not his old parents as Admetus says who have such a short time to live in all (12) probability and not the friends and not the children, nobody), Alcestis is the only one who substitutes herself for him to satisfy the demands of death. In a discourse which deals essentially with masculine love, this is something which may appear remarkable to us, and which is worth our while retaining. Alcestis therefore is proposed to us here as an example. Saying this has the interest of giving its import to what is going to follow. Namely that two examples succeed that of Alcestis, two which according to the orator also advanced into this field of the between-two-deaths.

Orpheus, who succeeded in going down to Hell in order to seek out his wife Eurydice, and who as you know came back empty-handed

because of a sin which he had committed, that of turning back before the permitted moment, a mythical theme reproduced in many legends of civilisations other than the Greek. There is a celebrated Japanese legend. What interests us here is the commentary that Phaidros has given it.

And the third example is that of Achilles. I can hardly push things further today than to show you what emerges from the bringing together of these three heroes, which already puts you on the path of something which is already a first step along the path of the problem.

The remarks first of all which he makes about Orpheus, what interests us is what Phaidros says (it is not whether he gets to the bottom of things or whether it is justified we cannot go that far) what matters to us is what he says, it is precisely the strangeness of what Phaidros says which ought to retain us. First of all he says about Orpheus, Oïagros' son, that the gods did not at all like what he had done (179d). And the reason that he gives for it is in a way given in the interpretation that he gives of what the gods did for him.

We are told that the gods (for someone like Orpheus who was not in short someone all that good, but a weakling - we do not know why Phaidros blames him, nor why Plato does so) did not show him a real woman, which I think sufficiently echoes that through which I introduced above my discourse about the relationship to the other, and the difference there is between the object of our love in so far as it overlaps our phantasies, and that which love questions in order to know whether it can reach this being of the other.

In this way it seems according to what Phaidros says, we see here that Alcestis really substituted herself for him in death... you will find in the text this term which cannot be said to have been put there by me huper... apothanein (179b) here the substitution-metaphor of which I spoke to you above is realised in the literal (13) sense, that it is in place of Admetus that Alcestis authentically places herself. This huperapothanein, I think that M. Ricoeur who has the text before his eyes can find it. It is exactly at 180a, where this huperapothanein is enunciated to mark the difference there is, Orpheus then being in a way eliminated from this race of merit in love, between Alcestis and Achilles.

Achilles, is something else. He is epapothanein, the one who shall follow me. He follows Patroclos in death. You should understand what this interpretation of what one could call Achilles' gesture means for a man of antiquity, it is also something which would deserve much commentary, because all the same it is less clear than for Alcestis. We are forced to have recourse to Homeric texts from which it results that in short Achilles is supposed to have had the choice. His mother Thetis told him: if you do not kill Hector (it was a question of killing Hector uniquely to avenge the death of Patroclos) you will return home in all tranquility, and you will have a happy and quiet old

age, but if you kill Hector your fate is sealed, death is what awaits you. And Achilles was so sure about this that we have another passage in which he makes this reflection to himself in an aside: I could go back peaceably. And then this is all the same unthinkable, and he says for one or other reason. This choice is by itself considered as being just as decisive as the sacrifice of Alcestis; the choice of moira the choice of destiny has the same value as this substitution of being for being. There is really no need to add to that (as M. Mario Meunier does for some reason or other in a note - but after all he was very erudite - to the page that we are speaking about) that afterwards apparently Achilles killed himself on the grave of Patroclus.

I have given a good deal of attention these days to the death of Achilles because it was worrying me. I cannot find anywhere a reference in the legend of Achilles which would permit there to be articulated something like that. I saw many modes of death attributed to Achilles, which, from the point of view of Greek patriotism attribute curious activities to him, because he is supposed to have betrayed the Greek cause for love of Polyxenes who is a Trojan woman, which would take something from the importance of Phaidros' discourse. But to remain at, to stay with Phaidros discourse, the important thing is the following: Phaidros devotes himself to a lengthily developed consideration concerning the reciprocal function of Patroclus and Achilles in their erotic bond.

(14) He undeceives us at a point which is the following: you must not at all imagine that Patroclus, as was generally thought, was the beloved. It emerges from an attentive examination of the characteristics of the personages Phaidros tells us in these terms, that the beloved could only have been Achilles who was much younger and beardless. I am noting this because this business is always coming up, of knowing at what moment one should love them, whether it is before the beard or after the beard. People talk about nothing else. One meets this business about the beard everywhere. One can thank the Romans for having rid us of this business. There must be a reason for it. So that Achilles had no beard. Therefore, in any case, he is the beloved.

But Patroclus, it appears, was about ten years older. From an examination of the texts he is the lover. What interests us is not that. It is simply a first indication, this first mode in which there appears something which has a relationship with what I gave you as being the point to be aimed at towards which we are going to advance, which is that whatever the case may be, what the gods find so sublime, more marvellous than anything else, is when the beloved behaves in short as one would have expected the lover to have behaved. And he opposes strictly on this point the example of Alcestis to the example of Achilles.

What does that mean? Because it is the text, one cannot really see why he should go through all this business which takes two pages if it were not important. You think that I am exploring the map of tenderness (la carte du Tendre), but it is not I, it

is Plato and it is very well articulated. It is necessary also to deduce from it what imposes itself, namely then, because he expressly opposes him to Alcestis, and because he makes the balance of the prize to be given to love by the gods tip in the direction of Achilles, which is what that means. That means therefore that Alcestis was, for her part, in the position of the erastes. Alcestis, the woman, was in the position of the erastes, namely of the lover, and it is to the extent that Achilles was in the position of the beloved that his sacrifice (this is expressly said) is much more admirable.

In other words this whole theological discourse of the hypochondriacal Phaidros ends up by showing us, by indicating that it is at this there ends up what I called above the signification of love, the fact is that the apparition of it which is most sensational, most remarkable, sanctioned, crowned by the gods, gives a very special place in the Islands of the Blest to Achilles (and everyone knows it is an island which still exists at the mouth of the Danube, where they have now stuck an asylum or something for delinquents). This reward goes to Achilles, and very precisely because of the fact that a beloved behaves like a lover.

(15) I am not going to take my discourse any further today. I am going to end on something suggestive, which is going perhaps all the same to allow us to introduce here a practical question. It is the following: it is that in short it is from the side of the lover, in the erotic couple, that there is found, as one might say, in the natural position, the activity. And this will be full of consequences for us if, by considering the couple Alcestis-Admetus, you are willing to glimpse the following which is particularly within your reach by what we discover from analysis about what the woman can as such, experience about her own lack; we do not at all see why at a certain stage we do not conceive that in the couple, the heterosexual one in this instance, it is at once on the side of the woman that we say the lack exists, no doubt, but also at the same time the activity.

In any case, Phaidros, for his part, does not doubt it. And that on the other hand it is from the side of the beloved, of the eromenos, or, put it in the neuter, of the eromenon because in so far as one eromene's, what one ere's, what one loves in this whole business of the Symposium is what? It is something which is always said and very frequently in the neuter form, it is ta paidika. It is called in the neutral form the object. This is indeed what it designates as such, wherever we see associated with this function of the eromenos or of the eromenon, of that which is loved, of the beloved object, a neutral function: it is that it is on its side that the strong term is. You will see this subsequently when we will have to articulate what ensures, as one might say, that the problem is at a superior more complex stage when it is a question of heterosexual love, this thing which is seen so clearly at that level, this dissociation of the active and of the strong will be of use to us. It was in any case important to point out at the moment at which this is found so manifestly illustrated by the example precisely of Achilles

and of Patroclos. It is the mirage that the strong is supposed to be confused with the active. Achilles because he is obviously stronger than Patroclos is not supposed to be the beloved. This indeed is what is denounced here, in this corner of the text, the teaching that we have to retain here in passing. Having got to this point of his discourse Phaidros hands over to Pausanias.

As you will see - I will recall it to you - Pausanias was taken throughout the centuries as expressing Plato's opinion about the love of boys. I have reserved some very particular care for Pausanias; I will show you that Pausanias who is a very curious personage, who is far from meriting this esteem of being on this occasion... (and why would he have put him there in the second place, immediately) from meriting the imprimatur. He is I believe quite an episodical personage. He is all the same important from a certain point of view, in so far as the best thing, as you will see, to put as a commentary in the margin of the discourse of Pausanias, is precisely this truth of the gospel that the kingdom of heaven is prohibited to the rich. I hope to show you the next time why.

Seminar 4; Wednesday 7 December 1960

Epithumian men diaplasiasthe'isan erota einai
Erota de diaplaxasthenta manian gignesthai

[A desire redoubled is love.
 But redoubled love becomes delusion]

I am going to try today to advance in the analysis of the Symposium which is the path that I have chosen to introduce you this year to the problem of transference. Remember where we had got to the last time at the end of the first discourse, Phaidros' discourse. I would not like each one of these discourses, as they succeed one another: that of Pausanias, that of Eryximachos, that of Aristophanes, that of Agathon who is the host of this Banquet which was witnessed by Aristodemos, and which Apollodoros tells us about by reporting what he got from Aristodemos. Therefore from beginning to end it is Apollodoros who is speaking, repeating what Aristodemos said. After Agathon comes Socrates, and you will see the singular path he takes to express what he, for his part, knows love to be. You also know that the final episode is the entry of Alcibiades, a sort of public confession which is astonishing and almost indecent which is the one presented to us at the end of this dialogue and which has remained an enigma for all the commentators. There is also something afterwards, which we will come to. I would like to avoid your having to take this whole journey step by step, or your finally going astray or becoming wearied and forgetting the goal we are aiming at, the meaning of this point that we are heading for.

And this is why the last time I introduced my discourse by those words about the object, about this being of the object which we can always say (always more or less correctly but always correctly in some sense) we have missed, I mean we have missed out on. This reaching towards which it was appropriate for us to seek while there was time, this being of the other, I will come back to it by specifying what is in question as compared with the two terms of reference of what are called on this occasion intersubjectivity, I mean the accent put on the fact that we should recognise in this other a subject like ourselves and that it would be in this "I", in this direction that there lies the essential of this getting to the being of the other. In another direction also, namely what I mean when I try to

articulate the role, the function of desire in this apprehension of the other, as it emerges in the erastes-eromenos couple, the (2) one which has organised all the meditation on love from Plato up to the Christian meditation. This being of the other in desire, I think I have pointed it out enough already, is not at all a subject.

The eromenos is, I would say eromenon for that matter ta paidika in the neuter plural: things connected with the beloved child, it could be translated. The other properly, in

so far as he is aimed at in desire, is aimed at I have said, as beloved object. What does that mean? It is that we can say

that what we missed in the one who is already too distant for us to recover from our failure, is indeed his quality as object, I mean that essentially what initiates this movement (which is what is in question in the access that love gives us to the other) is this desire for the beloved object which is something that, if I wanted to image it, I would compare to the hand that is put out to grasp the fruit when it is ripe, to draw towards us the rose which has opened, to poke the log which suddenly catches fire.

Listen carefully to the rest of what I am going to say. [What] I am doing, in this image which will stop there: I am outlining before you what is called a myth, and you are going to see the miraculous character of what follows the image. When I told you

the last time that the gods from which one begins (megas theos Love is a great god, Phaidros says at the beginning) the gods, are a manifestation of the real . . . every passage from this manifestation to a symbolic order distances us from this revelation of the real. Phaidros tells us that Love, who is the

first god conceived by the Goddess of Parmenides (on whom I cannot dwell here) and who Jean Beaufret in his book on Parmenides identifies, I believe, more correctly than to any other function, to truth, truth in its radical structure - and on this consult the way I spoke in "The Freudian Thing": the first conception, invention of truth, is love - and moreover it is presented to us here as being without father or mother. "Parents Love has none" (178b). Nevertheless the reference is already

made in the most mythical forms to Hesiod. In the presentation of the gods something is organised which is a genealogy, a kinship system, a theogony, a symbolism.

At this halfway point of which I spoke to you which goes from theogony to atheism, this halfway point which is the Christian god, you should notice from the point of view of his internal organisation, what this triune god, this "one and three" god is, the radical articulation of kinship as such in what is its most irreducible, mysteriously symbolic, most hidden relationship and, as Freud says, the least natural, the most purely symbolic, the relationship of Father to Son. And the third term remains present there under the name of love.

This is where we started from, from Love as god, namely as reality which reveals itself in the real, which manifests itself in the real and as such we can only speak about it in a myth. It is for this reason that I am also authorised to fix before you the goal, the orientation of what is in question when I try to direct you towards the metaphor-substitution formula of erastes for eromenos. It is this metaphor which engenders this

signification of love.

I have the right in order to introduce it here, to materialise it before you, to complete its image, to really make a myth of it. And as regards this hand which stretches towards the fruit, towards the rose, towards the log which suddenly bursts into flame, first of all to tell you that its gesture of reaching, of (3) poking, is closely linked to the maturation of the fruit, to the beauty of the flower, to the flaming of the log, but that, when in this movement of reaching, of drawing, of poking, the hand has gone far enough towards the object, if from the fruit, from the flower, from the log, a hand emerges which stretches out to encounter your hand, and that at that moment it is your hand which is fixed in the closed fullness of the fruit, the open fullness of the flower, in the explosion of a hand which bursts into flame, what is produced at that point is love! Again it is important not to stop even there and to say that we are face to face with love, I mean that it is yours when it was you who were first of all the eromenos, the beloved object, and that suddenly you become the erastes, the one who desires. Look at what I am trying to accentuate by this myth: every myth refers to the inexplicable of the real, it is always inexplicable that anything should respond to desire. The structure in question, is not this symmetry and this return. So that this symmetry is not really one. In so far as the hand stretches out, it is towards an object. It is in the hand which appears from the other side that the miracle lies; but we are not there to organise miracles, quite the contrary, we are there to know. And what it is a question of accentuating, is not what passes from there to the beyond, it is what is happening there, namely this substitution of the erastes for the eromenos or for the eromenon. In other words I underline it, some people thought, I believe, that there was some uncertainty in what I articulated the last time on the one hand about the substitution of the erastes for the eromenos, a metaphorical substitution, and wanted in a way to see in this some contradiction in the supreme example to which the gods themselves give the accolade, before which the gods themselves are astonished agasthentes (179d), this is the term used, namely that Achilles, the beloved epapothanein: dies - we are going to see what that means - let us say to remain imprecise: dies for Patroclos. It is in this that he is superior to Alcestis when she alone was willing to die in place of her husband whom she loved: huper tou autēs andros apothanein. The terms used in this connection by Phaidros, huperapothanein as opposed to epapothanein..... huper.... apothanien Phaidros says earlier in the text: she dies in place of her husband. Epapothanein, is something different. Patroclos is dead. Alcestis changes places with her husband whom death demands, she crosses over this space mentioned above, which is between the one who is there and the other. She already performs there something which undoubtedly is destined to extract from the gods this disarmed testimony before this extreme act which will make her, before all human beings, receive this singular prize of having come back from among the dead. But there is still better. This indeed is what Phaidros articulates. What is better is that Achilles should have accepted his tragic destiny,

his fatal destiny: the certain death which is promised him instead of returning to his country with his father to his fields, if he pursues the vengeance of Patroclos. Now Patroclos was not his beloved. It is he who was the beloved. Rightly or wrongly it does not matter to us, Phaidros articulates that Achilles, in the couple, was the beloved, that he could only have had that position, and that it was because of that position that his act (which is in short to accept his destiny as it is written) if he does not remove something from it, if he puts himself, not in place of, but following after Patroclos, if he makes of the destiny of Patroclos the debt for which he himself has to answer, which he himself must face... it is to this that to the eyes of the gods the most necessary, the greatest admiration is given, that the level reached in the order of the manifestation of love is, Phaidros tells us, more elevated, that as such Achilles is more honoured by the gods in so far as it is (4) they who have judged something to which their relationship, let us say in passing, is only a relationship of admiration, I mean of astonishment; I mean that they are overwhelmed by this spectacle of the value of what human beings bring them in terms of the manifestation of love. Up to a certain point the gods, impassible, immortal, are not meant to understand what happens at the level of mortals. They measure as if from the outside something which is like a distance, a miracle in what happens as a manifestation of love.

There is indeed therefore in what Phaidros* text means, in the epapothanein, an accent put on the fact that Achilles, an eromenos, transforms himself into an erastes. The text says it and affirms it: it is as as erastes that Alcestis sacrifices herself for her husband. This is less of a radical, total, spectacular manifestation of love than the change of role which is produced at the level of Achilles when, from being an eromenos he transforms himself into an erastes.

It is not a question therefore in this erastes over eromenon of something whose humorous image - as I might put it - would be given by the lover over the beloved, the father over the mother, as Jacques Prevert says somewhere. And this is no doubt what inspired this sort of bizarre error of Mario Meunier that I spoke to you about, which says that Achilles kills himself on the tomb of Patroclos. It is not that Achilles as eromenos manages in some way to substitute himself for Patroclos, it is not a question of that because Patroclos is already beyond anybody's reach, anybody's attacks, it is that Achilles who is himself the beloved transforms himself into a lover. It is this which is in itself the properly miraculous event. It is through this that there is introduced into the dialectic of the Symposium the phenomenon of love.

Immediately afterwards we enter into Pausanias' discourse. We should punctuate Pausanias' discourse. We cannot take it in all its detail, line by line, as I told you because of time. Pausanias' discourse - you have generally enough read the Symposium for me to say it to you - is something which is introduced by a distinction between two orders of love. Love,

he says, is not one and, to know which we are to praise.... there is there a nuance between encomion and epainos (I do not know why the last time I made the word epainesis out of epainein). The meaning of epainos is the praise of love: the praise of Love should begin from the fact that Love is not one. He makes the distinction from its origin. Aphrodite he says is never without Love, but there are two Aphrodites. The essential distinction between the two Aphrodites is the following, that one has nothing to do with women, that she is motherless, that she is born from the spattering onto the earth of the rain engendered by the castration of Uranus. It is by this primordial castration of Uranus by Kronos, it is from this that there is born the Uranian Venus who owes nothing to the duplication of sexes. The other Aphrodite is born shortly after the union of Zeus and Dione who is a Titaness. The whole history of the advent of the one who governs the present world, of Zeus, is linked - for this I refer you to Hesiod - to his relationships with the Titans, the Titans who are themselves his enemies. Dione is a Titaness. I will not insist on it. This Aphrodite is born of man and woman (5) arrenos. This one is an Aphrodite who is not called Uranian but Pandemian. The depreciatory and contemptuous accent is expressly formulated in Pausanias' discourse. It is the Common Venus. She belongs entirely to the people. She belongs to those who confuse all loves, who seek them at levels which are inferior to them, who do not make of love a superior element of domination, which is what is contributed by the Uranian Venus, the Uranian Aphrodite.

It is around this theme that there is going to develop Pausanias¹ discourse which, contrary to the discourse of Phaidros (which is a discourse of a mythologist, which is a discourse about a myth), is a discourse - one could say that we are not forcing anything - of a sociologist.... this would be exaggerated.... of an observer of societies. Everything in appearance is going to be based on the diversity of positions in the Greek world with regard to this superior love, this love which takes place between those who are at once the strongest and who have most spirit, those who are also the most vigorous, those who are also agathoi, those who know how to think (181e) namely between people placed at the same level because of their capacities: men.

Custom, Pausanias tells us, varies greatly between what happens in Ionia or among the Persians, where this love (the testimony about this we have from him) is supposed to be disapproved of, and what happens elsewhere in Elis or among the Lacedaimonians where this love is highly approved of, where it seems to be very bad for the beloved to refuse his favours, charizesthai, to his lover (182b), and what happens among the Athenians which appears to him the superior mode of apprehension of the ritual, as one might say, of giving a social form to love relationships.

If we follow what Pausanias says about it, we see that if he approves the Athenians for imposing obstacles, forms, interdictions to it (as least it is in this way in a more or less idealised form that he presents it to us) it is with a certain goal, with a certain end, it is in order that this love should

manifest itself, prove itself, establish itself over a certain duration, indeed more, over a duration formally expressed as being comparable to conjugal union. It is also in order that the choice which follows the competition of love (agonotheton he says somewhere speaking about this love) presides at the struggle, at the competition between the postulants of love by putting to the test those who present themselves in the position of lover (184a). Here the ambiguity is particularly well sustained for a whole page. Whence is there placed this quality, this function of the one who chooses? Because also the one who is loved (even though he would want him to be a little bit more than a child already capable of some discernment) is all the same the one of the two who knows least, who is least capable of judging the quality of what one could call the profitable relationship between the two (it is something which is left to a sort of ambiguous testing, a testing between the two of them). It is moreover in the lover namely in the mode in which his choice is directed according to what he seeks in the beloved, and what he is going to seek in the beloved, is something to give him. The conjunction of the two, their encounter on what he calls somewhere the point of encounter of the discourse, both are going to meet at this point at which there is going to be a meeting place (184e).

It is a question of what? It is a question of this exchange which will mean that the first (as Robin has translated it in the text which is in the Budé collection) being thus able to (6) contribute something for wisdom and virtue in general, the other desiring to get this for education and wisdom in general (184e), are here going to meet in order according to him to constitute the couple and from an association which - as you see - is in short at the highest level: kai ho men aúnamenos eis pronesin ten alien areten sumballesthai, ho de deomenos eis paidensin kai ten alien sophian ktasthai,... ..it is on the plane of ktaomai, of an acquisition, of a profit, of an acquiring, of a possession of something, that there is going to be produced the meeting between the terms of the couple which is going forever to articulate this love which is called superior, this love which will remain, even when we will have changed its partners, which will be called for the centuries that follow "Platonic love".

But it seems that it is very difficult in reading this discourse, not to sense, not to see the register to which all this psychology belongs. The whole discourse - if you reread it - is elaborated in function of a quotation, of a search for values, I would say of quoted shares (valeurs cotees). It is well and truly a question of investing the psychic investment funds that one has. If Pausanias demands somewhere that rules, severe rules - let us go back a little in the discourse - should be imposed on this development of Love, in courting the beloved, these rules are justified by the fact that it is appropriate that polle spoude (181e), a great deal of earnestness (it is indeed a question of this investment that I spoke about above) might not have been spent, wasted on these little boys who are not worth the trouble. Moreover it is for this reason that we are asked to wait until they are better formed, so that we know what we are

dealing with. Further on again he will say that is is savages, barbarians, who introduce into this order of seeking for merit, disorder, that in this respect access to the beloved should be preserved by the same sorts of interdictions, of laws, of reservations, thanks to which we try to prevent, he says, access to freeborn women in so far as they are the ones through whom there are united two families of masters, that they are in a way in themselves, representative of everything you want in terms of name, of a value, of a firm, of a dowry, as we say today. Under this title they are protected by this order. And it is a protection of this order which should prohibit to those who are not worthy of it access to desired objects.

The more you advance in this text, the more you see affirmed this something which I indicated to you in my discourse the last time in so far as it is properly speaking the psychology of the rich man. The rich man existed before the bourgeois. Even in a still more primitive agricultural economy, the rich man exists. The rich man exists and manifests himself from the beginning of time, even if it is only in the fact whose primordial character we have seen, by periodic manifestations in the matter of festivals, of ostentatious spending which is what constitutes the first duty of the rich man in primitive societies.

It is curious that in the measure that societies evolve this duty seems to pass to a lower plane, or at least a clandestine one. But the psychology of the rich man reposes entirely on the fact that what is in question for himself, in his relationship with the other, is worth (la valeur): it is about what can be evaluated in accordance with modes that are open to comparison, (7) on a scale, between what can be compared in an open competition which is properly speaking that of the possession of goods.

What is in question, is the possession of the beloved because he is a good security, the term is there: chrestos, and that a whole life would not be enough to make the most of this security (183e). So that Pausanias, some years after this Symposium (we know this through the comedies of Aristophanes) will go a little further precisely with Agathon, who is here as everyone knows his beloved, even though there is already a payment because he has what I called here a beard on his chin, a term which has here all its importance. Agathon here is thirty and has just taken the prize at the tragedy competition. Pausanias is going to disappear some years later into what Aristophanes calls the domain of the blessed. It is a remote place, not just out in the country but in a distant land. It is not Tahiti but it is in Macedonia. He will remain there as long as his security is assured.

The ideal of Pausanias in the matter of love is - I might say - the capital that is put to one side, the putting in a safe of what belongs to him by right as being that which he was able to discern of what he is capable of making the best use of.

I am not saying that there are no sequelae to this personage, as

we glimpse him in the Platonic discourse, in this other type whom I will rapidly designate for you because he is in short at the end of this chain, who is someone that I have met, not in analysis - I would not tell you about it - but whom I met enough for him to open up to me what was in what served him for a heart. This personage was really well-known and known for having a lively sentiment of the limits that are imposed in love precisely by what constitutes the position of the rich man. He was an extremely rich man. He had if I can express myself in this way - it is not a metaphor - strong boxes full of diamonds (because one never knows what might happen... it was immediately after the war... the whole planet might have gone up in flames).

This is nothing. The fashion in which he conceived it... because he was a rich Calvinist - I apologise to those here who may belong to that religion - I do not think that it is the privilege of Calvinism to create rich people, but it is not unimportant to indicate it here, because in a word all the same it can be noted that Calvinist theology had the effect of making appear, as one of the elements of moral direction, that God fills with good things those he loves on this earth (elsewhere also perhaps, but starting from this earth), that the observation of laws and commandments has as fruit worldly success, which has not been without its fruitfulness moreover in all sorts of enterprises. In any case the Calvinist in question treated exactly the order of merits that he would acquire from this earth for the future world in the register of a page of accounts: on such a day this was bought. And there also all his actions were directed towards acquiring for the beyond a well-filled safe.

I do not wish in making this digression to seem to be recounting a too facile apologue, but nevertheless, it is impossible not to complete this picture by outlining what his matrimonial fate was. One day he knocked down somebody on the street with the bumper of his big car. Even though he always drove very carefully. The (8) person knocked down shook herself. She was very pretty, she was the daughter of a concierge, which is not at all impossible when one is pretty. She received his excuses coldly, and still more coldly his propositions for damages, still more coldly again his propositions that they should dine together. In short, in the measure that the difficulty became greater of gaining access to this miraculously encountered object, the notion grew in his mind. He told himself that there was here a real asset (valeur). And it was for this very reason that all of this led him into marriage.

What is in question is properly speaking the same theme which is proposed to us by the discourse of Pausanias. It is namely that to explain to us the degree to which love is a value - judge for yourselves - he tells us: "Love is forgiven everything. For if, wishing to get money from someone or to win public office or to get any other power, a man should behave as lovers do towards their beloved he would reap the greatest disgrace". He would be guilty of what is called low morals, aneleutheria, because that is what that means, flattery, kolakeia. He would flatter, "something which is not worthy of a master, to obtain what he

desires" (183b). It is by measuring something as going beyond the danger level that we can judge what love is. This indeed is the same register of reference that is in question, the one which led my Calvinist accumulator of goods and of merits to have in effect for a certain time a lovable wife, to cover her of course with jewels which every evening were removed from her body to be put back in the safe, and arrive at this result that one day she went off with an engineer who was earning fifty thousand francs a month.

I would not like to appear to be overdoing things on this subject. And after all in introducing this discourse of Pausanias (which is particularly presented to us as the example of what there is supposed to be in antique love in terms of some kind of exalting of the moral quest) I do not need to have got to the end of this discourse to perceive that this shows the flaw that there is in any morality, which in any fashion attaches itself uniquely to what one can call the external signs of value. The fact is that he cannot end his discourse without saying that if everybody accepted the primary, prevalent character of these beautiful rules by which assets are only accorded to merit, what would happen? "In this case even to be deceived is not ugly. . . . for if one in pursuit of riches gratifies a lover supposed to be rich, and is deceived and gets no money because the lover turns out to be poor, it is no less ugly; for such a one is thought to show, as far as in him lay, that for money he would do anyone and everyone any and every service, and that is not beautiful. By the same argument observe that even if one gratifies another as being good, expecting to be better himself because of his affection for the lover, but since the other turns out to be bad (*kakos*) and not possessed of virtue, he is deceived, nevertheless the deceit is beautiful." (184e-185b)

One sees there generally something in which curiously people would like to find, to recognise the first manifestation in (9) history of what Kant called right intention. It seems to be that this is really to share in a singular error. The singular error is not to see rather the following: we know by experience that this whole ethic of educative love, of pedagogical love in the matter of homosexual love and even of the other, is something in itself which always shares - we see it from experience - in some lure which in the end cannot completely conceal itself. If it has happened to you, because we are on the plane of Greek love, to have some homosexual brought to you by his protector (it is always undoubtedly, on his part, with the best of intentions), I doubt that you have seen in this order some very manifest effect of this more or less warm protection with regard to the development of the one who is put before you as the object of this love which would like to present itself as a love for the good, for the acquisition of the greatest good. This is what allows me to say to you that it is far from being Plato's opinion. Because scarcely has the discourse of Pausanias - rather suddenly I must say - concluded on something which says more or less the following: "all the others were and those who were not should betake themselves to the Pandemian Venus, the goddess of easy virtue who is not one either, let them

go and screw themselves if they want! It is on this, he says, that I would conclude my discourse on love. As for the plebs, in other words for popular love, we have nothing more to say about it.

But if Plato agreed, if this were really what was in question, do you believe that we would see what happens immediately afterwards? Immediately afterwards Apollodoros begins to speak again and says to us: Pausaniou... pausamenou, Pausanias paused upon this clause (185c), it is difficult to translate into French and there is a little note which says: "there is no corresponding French expression, because the numerical symmetry of the syllables is important, it is probably an allusion, see the note...."

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I will pass over it. M. Leon Robin is not the first one to react to it. Already in the edition of Henri Estienne there is a marginal note. Everybody has reacted to this Pausaniou... pausamenou because people saw an intention there. I think that I am going to show you that they have not seen what it is, because in fact, immediately after this little bit of cleverness - it is well underlined for us that it is a bit of cleverness - because in parenthesis the text tells us: "that's how the stylists teach me to jingle!" Didaskousi gar me isa legein outosi oi sophoi "the masters have taught me to speak that way isologically", let us say... a play on words, but isology is not a play on words, it is really a technique. I will pass over all the ingenious efforts that have been made to discover what master, is it Prodicus, is it not a Prodicus? Is it not rather Isocrates because also in Isocrates there is an iso and it would be particularly iso to isologize Isocrates. This leads to problems! You cannot imagine the amount of research that this has engendered! Were Isocrates and Plato pals....?

I have been reproached for not always quoting my sources, and starting from today I have decided to do it, here it is Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. I am telling you this because he is a sensational character. If you can put your hands on them, if you can read German, get his books (there is book on Simonides that I would really like to have) he lived at the beginning of this century and he was an erudite gentleman of his time, a (10) considerable personage whose works on Plato are absolutely illuminating. He is not the one I am blaming in connection with Pausaniou... pausamenou, he did not waste his time on this sort of trivial gossip.

What I wanted to tell you is the following, it is that I do not believe on this occasion in a particularly distant reference to the way in which Isocrates handles isology when it is a question of demonstrating for example the merits of a political system. The whole development that you will find in the preface to this book of the Symposium as it has been translated and commented by Leon Robin appears to me to be something undoubtedly interesting but unrelated to this problem and here is why. My conviction was already formed no doubt concerning the import of the discourse of Pausanias, and I even gave it all to you the last

time in saying that the discourse of Fausanias is truly the image of the Gospel's malediction: what is really worthwhile is forever refused to the rich. Nevertheless it happens that I think I found here a confirmation which I propose to your judgement. Last Sunday I was - I am continuing to quote my sources - with someone, and I would be angry with myself if I have not already told you how important he was in my own formation, namely Kojeye. I think that some of you all the same know that it is to Kojeye that I owe my introduction to Hegel.

I was with Kojeye with whom, of course, because I am always thinking of you, I spoke about Plato. I found in what was said to me by Kojeye (who is doing something completely different to philosophy now because he is an eminent man who all the same writes from time to time two hundred pages on Plato, manuscripts that make their way into different places)... He shared with me a certain number of things about his very recent discoveries in Plato, but he was not able to say anything to me about the Symposium because he had not reread it. This did not form part of the economy of his recent discourse. It was a little bit then as if I had gone to some trouble for nothing, even though I was very encouraged by many of the things that he said to me about other points of the Platonic discourse, and particularly by the fact that it is quite certain (which is altogether obvious) that Plato essentially hides what he thinks from us just as much as he reveals it and that it is according to the measure of the capacity of each one (namely up to a certain limit very certainly not supersedable) that we can glimpse it. You must not blame me then if I do not give you the last word on Plato because Plato was quite determined not to tell us this last word.

It is very important, at the moment at which perhaps everything that I am telling you about Plato will make you open Phaedo for example, that you might have the idea that perhaps the object of Phaedo is not quite to demonstrate, despite appearances, the immortality of the soul. I would even say that its end is very obviously the contrary. But let us leave this to one side.

On leaving Kojeye I said to him that we had not spoken very much after all about the Symposium, and since Kojeye is a very superior sort of person, namely a snob, he answered me: "In any case you will never interpret the Symposium if you do not know why Aristophanes had a hiccup!"

I already told you that it was very important because it is obvious that it is very important. Why would he have had a hiccup if there were no reason for it? I had no idea why he had a hiccup, but all the same encouraged by this little push, I said to myself, moreover with a great weariness, that I expected nothing less annoying than to discover again speculations about (11) hiccuping, sneezing, the antique or even the psychosomatic value that this might have.... very distractedly I reopen my copy and I look at this text at the place Pausaniou... pausamenou because it is immediately afterwards that there is going to be a question of Aristophanes (he is the one who is supposed to speak) and I noticed the following which is that for sixteen lines all

that is dealt with is stopping this hiccup (when will this hiccup stop - will it stop - will it not stop - if-it-will-not-stop-you-take-this-or-theJ -sort-of-thing-and-it-will-end-up-by-stopping) in such a way that the terms pausai, pausomai, pause, pausethai, pausetai, if we add Pausaniou...pausamenou give seven repetitions of paus, in these lines, or an average of two lines and a seventh interval between these eternally repeated paus ...; if you add here the fact that this will or will not achieve something and that when all is said and done I will do what you said I should do, namely that the term poieso is added to it, repeated with an almost equal insistence, which reduces to a line and a half the homophonies, indeed the isologies, that are in question, it is all the same extremely difficult not to see that if Aristophanes has a hiccup, it is because during the whole of the discourse of Pausanias he is convulsed with laughter - and so is Plato! In other words, that if Plato says something to us like Pausaniou...pausamenou: "The louse tried everything" (toto a tout tente) that he then repeats to us for these sixteen lines the word "tendant" (trying) and the word "tente (tried), should all the same make us prick up our ears, because there is no other example in any text of Plato of a passage which is so crudely like something out of l'almanach Vermot. Here too of course is one of the authors in whom I was formed in my youth. It was there even that the first time I read a Platonic dialogue which was called Theodore cherche des allumettes, by Courteline, which was really a prize morsel!

Therefore I think it is sufficiently affirmed that for Plato himself, in so far as it he is who speaks here under the name of Apollodoros, the discourse of Pausanias is indeed something derisory.

Well.... because we have got to a rather late hour, I will not analyse for you today the discourse of Eryximachos which follows. Eryximachos speaks instead of Aristophanes who should have spoken then. We will see the next time what the discourse of Eryximachos, the doctor, means as regards the nature of love. We will also see - because I think it is much more important - the role of Aristophanes and we will see in his discourse that Aristophanes will make us take a step, the first really illuminate --- one for us, if not for the ancients for whom the discourse of Aristophanes has always remained enigmatic like an enormous farce. It is a question of dioecism of this dioecism? Miemei. As it is put, of separation in two. It is a question - < of this Spaltung, of this splitting which, even though it is not identical to the one I am developing for you on the graph, has undoubtedly some relationship to it.

After the discourse of Aristophanes I will look at the discourse of Agathon. What I want starting from now so that you will know where you are going while you are waiting for the next time... if you look closely at this text (there is in any case one sure (12) thing, and here I do not need a learned preparation to give it greater value), at whatever moment of analysis you tackle this text you will see that there is one thing and one thing only that Socrates articulates when he speaks in his own name, it is first

of all that Agathon's discourse, the discourse of the tragic poet, is utterly worthless.

It is said: it is to spare Agathon's feelings that he is going to have himself replaced as I might say, by Diotima, that he is going to give his theory of love through the mouth of Diotima. I do not see at all how you can spare the feelings of someone who has been executed. This is what he does to Agathon. And starting from now - even if it is only to object to me if there is reason for it - I would ask you to highlight what is in question, which is that what Socrates is going to articulate after all the beautiful things that Agathon in his turn will have said about Love, which is not alone here all the goods of Love, all the profit that one can draw from Love but, let us say, all its virtues, all its beauties... there is nothing too beautiful to be accounted for by the effects of Love... Socrates in a single flash undermines all of this at the base by bringing things back to their root which is the following: Love, love of what?

From love we pass to desire and the characteristic of desire, if it is a fact that Eros, era, that Eros desire's is what is in question, namely what it is supposed to bring with it, the beautiful itself, is lacking to it endes, endeia, in these two terms it is lacking, it is identical of itself to the lack in these two terms. And the whole contribution of Socrates in his personal name in this discourse of the Symposium is that starting from there something is going to begin which is very far [from] reaching something that you can catch hold of, how is this conceivable. . . up to the end we plunge on the contrary progressively into a darkness and we will find here the antique night is always greater. . . And everything that there is to be said about the thought of love, in the Symposium begins here.

Seminar 5; Wednesday 14 December 1960

In order to see correctly the nature of the enterprise that I am involved in, in order that you may be able to tolerate the wearisome aspects of these detours - because after all you do not come here to hear a commentary on a Greek text, we are drawn into it, I do not claim to be exhaustive - I assure you that after all I have done the greater part of the work for you, I mean in your place, in your absence, and the best service that I can give you is in short to encourage you to refer to this text. Without any doubt, if you have referred to it as I suggested, it will happen perhaps that you will read it to some degree at least through my spectacles, this no doubt is better than not reading it at all. All the more so because the goal that I was seeking, what dominates the whole enterprise - and the way in which you can accompany it in a more or less commented fashion - is that it is highly appropriate not to lose sight of what we are destined to arrive at, I mean something which responds to the question from which we begin.

This question is simple, it is that of the transference, I mean that it is proposed [starting from] terms which are already elaborated. A man, the psychoanalyst, from whom one comes to seek the knowledge of what is most intimate to oneself (because this is the state of mind in which one approaches him usually) and therefore of what should be supposed from the beginning to be the thing most foreign to him and moreover that one supposes at the same time to be most foreign to him (we encounter this at the beginning of analysis) is nevertheless supposed to have this knowledge. Here is a situation which we are proposing here in subjective terms, I mean in the disposition of the one who comes forward as the demander. We do not have for the moment even to bring into it all that this situation involves, sustains objectively namely, what we should introduce into it about the specificity of what is proposed to this knowledge namely, the unconscious as such. The subject has not the slightest idea about this, whatever else he may have.

How can this situation, by simply being defined objectively in this way, engender something, which in a first approximation

resembles love (because this is the way transference can be defined)? Let us put it better, let us say further, which puts love in question, puts it in question profoundly enough for us, for analytic reflection, because it has introduced into it as an essential dimension, what is called its ambivalence; let us say it, a new notion compared to a certain philosophical tradition which it is not vain for us to search for here right at the origin. This close coupling of love and of hate, is something that we do not see at the beginning of this tradition, because this beginning (because we must choose it somewhere) we choose as Socratic, even though... we are going to see it today, there is something earlier from which precisely it starts.

Naturally, we could not advance so daringly in posing this question if already in some way the tunnel had not already been opened up at the other end. We are setting out to meet something. We have already rather seriously circumscribed the (2) topology of what the subject, as we know, ought to find in analysis in place of what he seeks. Because as we know, if he sets out to seek what he has and does not know about, what he is going to find is what is lacking to him. It is indeed because we have articulated, posed this earlier in our journey that we can dare to pose the question that I formulated at first as being that in which there is articulated the possibility of the emergence of transference. We know well then that it is as what he lacks that there is articulated what he finds in analysis, namely his desire, and the desire not being therefore a good in any sense of the term, nor quite precisely in the sense of a ktesis, treasure, this something which under some title or other he might have. It is in this moment, in this birth of transference-love, this moment defined in the double chronological and topological sense that there should be read this inversion, as one might say, of the position which, out of the search for a good, produces properly speaking the realisation of desire.

You understand of course that this discourse supposes that the realisation of desire is specifically not the possession of an object, it is a matter of the emergence to reality of desire as such. It is indeed because it seemed to me, and not because of a chance encounter but in a way when I was seeking (in order to begin as it were from the heart of the field of my memories, guided by some compass which is created from an experience) where to find as it were the central point of the articulated things that I had been able to retain in what I had learnt... it seemed to me that the Symposium was, however distant from us it was, the locus in which there was debated in the most vibrant fashion the meaning of this question. Properly speaking in this moment which concludes it when Alcibiades - one could say strangely, in every sense of the term - moreover which is the work at the level of the composition by Plato in which manifestly he broke off there on this supposed stage and the succession of organised, programmed discourses which is all of a sudden broken off by the irruption of the real feast, by the disturbance of the order of the feast... And in its very text, this discourse of Alcibiades (because it is a matter of the avowal of his own disconcertment)

everything that he says is really about his suffering, how disturbed he is by an attitude of Socrates which still leaves him, almost as much as at the time, wounded, eaten by some strange wound or other. And why this public confession? Why in this public confession this interpretation by Socrates which shows him that this confession has an altogether immediate goal: to separate him from Agathon, the occasion right away for a sort of return to order? All of those who have referred to this text, since I have been speaking to you about it, have not failed to be struck by how consonant this whole strange scene is with all sorts of situations, of instantaneous positions which are liable to happen in transference. Again of course, this is only an impression, there is question here of something which must be related to it. And of course it is in a tighter, more subtle analysis that we will see what is given to us by a situation which in any case is not obviously to be attributed to something which is supposed to be a sort (as Aragon says in Le Paysan de Paris) of foreshadowing of chicanalyse. No! But rather an (3) encounter: a sort of apparition of some features in it should be revelatory for us here.

I believe, and this is not simply because of a sort of stepping back before a leap (which ought to be like the one Freud attributes to the lion, namely unique) that I am delaying showing it to you, because to understand what this advent of the Alcibiades-Socrates scene fully means, we must thoroughly understand the general design of the work, namely of the Symposium.

And this is where we are advancing. It is indispensable to set out the terrain. If we do not know what Plato meant by bringing in the Alcibiades scene, it is impossible to situate exactly its import, and that is the reason why. Today we are at the beginning of the discourse of Eryximachos, of the doctor, let us hold our breath for a moment.

That it is a doctor should all the same interest us. Does that mean that the discourse of Eryximachos should lead us into a research about the history of medicine? It is quite clear that I cannot even outline it, for all sorts of reasons, first of all because it is not our business because this detour, itself, would all the same be rather excessive, and then because I do not really think it is possible. I do not believe that Eryximachos is really specified, that Plato is thinking of a particular doctor in bringing us this personage. All the same there are fundamental traits in the position that he brings forward (which are the ones which are to be distinguished, and which are not necessarily a historical feature, except in function of a very general dividing line), but which perhaps is going to make us reflect for a moment in passing about what medicine is.

It has already been remarked that there is in Socrates a frequent almost pervasive reference to medicine. Very frequently, Socrates, when he wants to bring his interlocutor onto the plane of dialogue where he wants to direct him towards the perception of a rigorous step, refers himself to some art of the technician.

I mean: "If you want to know the truth about such or such a subject, who would you address yourself to?" And among them the doctor is far from being excluded and he is even treated with a particular reverence, the level at which he is put is certainly not that of a lower order in Socrates' eyes. It is nevertheless clear that what regulates his progress is something which is far from being able to be reduced in any way to what one could call a mental hygiene.

The doctor in question speaks as a doctor, and immediately even promotes his medicine as being the greatest of all the arts: medicine is the great Art (186b).... Immediately after having begun his discourse, and here I will only briefly note the confirmation given to what I told you the last time about the discourse of Pausanias in the fact that, beginning his discourse Eryximachos expressly formulates the following: "Because Pausanias, hormesas, began well", it is not a good translation "but ended feebly" - not in an appropriate fashion. It is a litotes, it is clear that for everybody (and I even believe that the degree of it should be underlined here) there is implied as obvious this something - to which it must be said that our ear is not exactly attuned - we do not have the impression that this discourse of Pausanias ended all that badly, we are so used to hearing idiocies of this kind about love. It is very strange the degree to which, in his opinion, this feature in the discourse of Eryximachos really appeals to the consent of everybody, as if in short, the discourse of Pausanias had really revealed itself to everyone as feeble, as if it were obvious that all these rude jokes about the pausamenou, on which I insisted the last time, were obvious for the reader in antiquity.

(4) I believe it is rather essential for us to refer to what we can glimpse about this question of tone, to which after all the ear of the mind always latches on, even if it does not always openly make a criterion of it, and which is so frequently invoked in the Platonic texts as something to which Socrates refers at every instant. How often before beginning his discourse, or beginning a parenthesis in a discourse of another, does he not invoke the gods in a formal and express way in order that the tone may be sustained, may be maintained, may be harmonised. As you are going to see, this is very close to what concerns us today.

I would like, before entering into the discourse of Eryximachos, to make some remarks a distance from which, even if it leads us to altogether primary truths, is nonetheless something which is not all that easily given. Let us observe the following, in connection with the discourse of Eryximachos.... I will demonstrate to you in passing that medicine has always thought of itself as scientific. Eryximachos makes remarks which refer - because in short, it was instead of you, as I said above, that I had to spend these days trying to disentangle this little chapter in the history of medicine.... in order to do it I had to leave the Symposium and refer to different points of the Platonic text. There are a series of schools which you have heard about, however

neglected this chapter of your formation in medicine may have been: the most celebrated, the one everybody knows about, the school of Cos. You know that there was a school, before the school of Cnidos, in Sicily, which is earlier again, whose great name is Alcmeon and the Alcmeonians, Croton is the centre of it. What must be realised, is that it is impossible to dissociate its speculations from those of a scientific school which flourished at the same time, at the same place, namely the Pythagorians. See where that leads us. We have to speculate on the role and the function of Pythagorism on this occasion, and moreover, as everyone knows, it is essential in order to understand Platonic thought. We see ourselves here engaged in a detour in which we would literally lose ourselves. So that I am going rather to try to separate out its themes, as they concern very strictly our concerns, namely that towards which we are advancing, the meaning of this episode of the Symposium, I mean of this discourse, the Symposium in so far as it is problematic.

Here we will retain only one thing, which is that medicine ...; whether it is that of Eryximachos (we do not, I believe, know very much about the personage of Eryximachos in himself) or that of the people who are supposed to have taught a certain number of other personages whom we know something about, personages who intervene in the discourses of Plato and who are directly attached to this medical school through the Alcmeonians, in so far as they were attached to the Pythagoreans: we know that Simmias and Cebes, the people who dialogue with Socrates in the Phaedo are disciples of Philolaus (who is one of the masters of the first Pythagorean school). If you refer to the Phaedo, you (5) will see what is contributed by Simmias and Cebes in response to the first propositions of Socrates, specifically about what should assure the soul about its immortality, that these responses refer to the same terms exactly as the ones which I am going to talk to you about here, namely those which are put in question in the discourse of Eryximachos, in the first rank of which there is the notion of harmonia, of harmony, of concord (187a).

Medicine therefore, as you can notice here, always believed itself to be scientific. It is moreover how it has always shown its weaknesses. Through a sort of necessity within its position, it has always referred to a science which was that of its time, whether it was good or bad (how can you know from the point of view of medicine whether it is good or bad?). As for us, we have the feeling that our science, our physics, is always thought to be a good science, and that, throughout the centuries, we had a very bad physics. This is indeed quite certain. What is not certain, is what medicine has to do with this science, namely how and through what opening and what end it is to deal with it, as long as something is not elucidated for medicine itself, and which is not as you are going to see, the least important thing, because what is in question is the idea of health.

Very exactly: what is health? You would be wrong to think that even for modern medicine which, with regard to all the others,

believes itself to be scientific, the matter is altogether certain. From time to time the idea of the normal and of the pathological is proposed as a thesis-subject to some student; it is a subject which is in general proposed to them by people who have a philosophical formation, and on this we have an excellent work by M. Canguilhem. Obviously, it is a work whose influence is very limited in properly medical circles.

Now there is something in any case (without trying to speculate at a level of Socratic certitude about health in itself) which by itself shows us especially as psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, the degree to which the idea of health is problematical: it is the means themselves that we employ to get back to the state of health; these means show us, to put things in the most general terms that, whatever about nature, about the successful form which is supposed to be the form of health, at the heart of this successful form we are led to postulate paradoxical states - it is the least that one can say about them - the very ones whose manipulation in our therapeutics is responsible for the return to an equilibrium which remains on the whole, as such, rather uncriticised.

Here then is what we find at the level of postulates which are the least accessible to demonstration from the medical position as such. It is precisely the one which is here going to be promoted in the discourse of Eryximachos under the name of harmonia. We do not know the harmony that is in question, but the notion is very fundamental to every medical position as such, all that we should seek, is concord. If we have not advanced very much compared to the position in which someone like Eryximachos situates himself about what constitutes the essence, the substance of this idea of concord, namely something borrowed from an intuitive domain to the sources of which he is simply closer, it is historically more defined and tangible when here we expressly perceive that it is referred to the musical domain in so far as here the musical domain is the Pythagorean model and form. Moreover everything which in one way or another refers to (6) this according of tones, even of the most subtle kind, even if it is the tone of the discourse to which I alluded above, brings us back to this same appreciation - it is not for nothing that I spoke in passing about the ear - to this same appreciation of consonance which is essential for this notion of harmony. This is what introduces, as you will see provided you enter into the text of this discourse - which I will spare you the boredom of reading line by line, which is never very possible in the midst of such a large audience - you will see in it the essential character of this notion of concord in order to understand what is meant by, how there is introduced here this medical position, and you will see that everything that is articulated here has the function of a support which we can neither exhaust, nor in any way reconstruct, namely the thematic of discussions which in advance we can suppose here to be present in the minds of the listeners.

Let us not forget that we find ourselves here at the historic culminating point of a particularly active, creative epoch: these

Vlth and Vth centuries of the great period of Hellenism abound in mental creativity. There are good works to which you can refer. For those who read English there is a big book of the kind that only English editors can give themselves the luxury of producing. It is part of a philosophical testament because it is Bertrand Russell in his old age who has written it. This would be a very good book for the New Year, because I assure you - you only have to read it - it is studded with wonderful drawings in colour in its large margins, drawings of extreme simplicity addressed to the imagination of a child, in which there is after all everything that should be known starting from this fruitful period to which I am referring today (which is the pre-Socratic epoch) up to our own day, to English positivism; and no one really important is left but. If you really want to be unbeatable when you dine out, when you have read this book you will know really everything, except of course the only things that are important, namely those that are not known. But I would all the same advise you to read it. It will fill in for you, for each and every one of you, a considerable number of the almost necessary lacunae in your information.

Let us therefore try to put a little order in what is delineated when we engage ourselves along the path of trying to understand what Eryximachos means. The people of his time found themselves always faced with the same problem as the one that we find ourselves faced with, except that, for want of having as great an abundance as we have of tiny facts with which to furnish their discourse (I am giving here moreover a hypothesis which arises from allurement and illusion) they go more directly to the essential antimony which is the same as the one that I began to put before you a while ago, which is the following: that we cannot in any case be content to take any concord at its face value. What experience teaches us, is that something is concealed at the heart of this concord, and that the whole question is to know what can be required from this underpinning of concord; I mean from a point of view which cannot be settled simply by experience, which always involves a certain mental a priori which cannot be posed outside a certain mental a priori.

At the heart of this concord must we require the similar or can we be content with the dissimilar? Does every concord suppose some principle of concord or can concord emerge from discordance, from conflict? You must not imagine that it was only with Freud (7) that such a question emerges for the first time. And the proof, is that it is the first thing that the discourse of Eryximachos brings before us. This notion of what is concordant or discordant - for us, let us say, of the function of anomaly compared to the normal - comes in the first place in his discourse (186b, around line 9). "In fact what is unlike desires and loves things unlike. Then," continues the text, "there is one love in the healthy, and another in the diseased. So you see just as, according to what Pausanias said just now, it is beautiful to gratify good men, and ugly to gratify the intemperate,"

We have been brought now to the question of physique of what this

virtue and this disorder signify, and immediately we find a formula which I note, which I can only pin-point on the page. It is not that it gives us very much, but that it should all the same for us analysts be the object of a type of interest in passing, when there is some sort of surface noise that interests us. He tells us that "medicine is knowledge of the body's loves: episteme ton tou somatos erotikon" (186c). One could not give a better definition of psychoanalysis, it seems to me. And he adds "pros plesmonen kai kenosin, for filling and emptying" the text translates brutally. It is indeed a question of the evocation of two terms of the full and of the empty the role of which two terms we are going to see in the topology, in the mental position of what is in question at this meeting point of physics and the operation of medicine.

It is not the only text, I can tell you, where this full and this empty are evoked. I would say that the role of these terms is one of the fundamental intuitions that would have to be extracted, to be highlighted in the course of a study on the Socratic discourse. And anyone who engaged himself in this enterprise would not have to go very far to find a further reference. At the beginning of the Symposium, when Socrates, as I told you, who had delayed in the hallway of the house next door where we can suppose him to be in the position of a gymnosophist, standing on one foot like a stork and immobile until he had found the solution to some problem or other, he arrives at Agathon's after everybody has been waiting for him: "Well! you have found what you were looking for, come near me", Agathon says to him. At which Socrates gives a little speech to say: "What a blessing it would be, Agathon, if wisdom could run from the fuller among us to the emptier, while we touch one another, as when two cups are placed side by side a bit of wool conveys water from the fuller to the emptier!" (175d) We must suppose that this amusing physical operation was, for some reason or other, frequently practiced, because that probably served as an image for everybody. Effectively, this passage from within one vase to another, this transformation from the full into the empty, this communication of the content is one of the fundamental images of something which regulates what one could call the fundamental covetousness of every philosophical exchange, and it is to be retained to understand the meaning of the discourse that is proposed to us.

A little further on, this reference to music as being at the beginning of the concord which is the foundation of what is going to be proposed to us as being the essence of the function of love between beings, is going to lead us on the page that follows - namely in paragraph 187 - to encounter in a living way in the discourse of Eryximachos this choice which I told you above was primordial on the subject of what is conceivable as being at the beginning of concord, namely: the similar and the dissimilar, order and conflict. Because here in passing we see, when it is question of defining this harmony, Eryximachos noting that no (8) doubt we encounter from the pen of an author about a century earlier, Heraclitus of Ephesus, a paradox when it is to the opposition of contraries that Heraclitus refers expressly as

being the principle of the composition of all unity. "The One," Eryximachos tells us, "at variance with itself is brought together again, like a harmony of bow and lyre." This hosper harmonian toxou te kai luras (187a) is extremely celebrated, if only because it was cited here in passing - and it is cited by many other authors. It has come to us in these few scattered fragments that the German scholars have collected for us about pre-Socratic thinking. This one, among those which remain to us from Heraclitus, remains really dominant. I mean that, in Bertrand Russell's book which I recommended you to read above, you will find there effectively represented the arc and its cord, and even the simultaneous drawing of a vibration from which the movement of the arrow begins.

What is striking is this bias, the reason for which we cannot see very clearly in passing, which Eryximachos demonstrates concerning the Heraclitean formulation: he finds fault with it. It seems to him that there are exigencies here whose source we cannot clearly fathom, because we find ourselves here at a confluence where we do not know what share to accord to prejudice, to a priori's, to choices made in function of a certain consistency of time in a whole theoretical ensemble, or to psychological aspects which really we are unable (especially when it is a matter of personages who are ghosts from the past) to give an origin to. We have to be satisfied with noting that effectively (something whose echo we find in many other places in the Platonic discourse) some aversion or other is shown at the idea of referring to any conjunction of the opposition of contraries (even if in some way it is situated in the real) the birth of something which does not appear to him to be in any way assimilable - namely the creation of the phenomenon of concord, something which is affirmed and is posed, is experienced, is assented to as such. It seems that even in its very principle the idea of proportion when it is a question of paying attention to that of harmony, to speak in medical terms of diet or of dosage, with everything that this involves in terms of measure, of proportion, must be maintained [but] that in no way can the Heraclitean vision of conflict as creator in itself, for some minds, for some schools - let us leave the matter in suspense - be sustained.

There is here a bias which for ourselves, to whom of course all sorts of models in physics have brought the idea of the fruitfulness of contraries, of contrasts, of oppositions and of the absolute non-contradiction of the phenomenon with its conflictual principle (in a word that the whole of physics tends much more towards the side of the image of the wave than - whatever modern psychology has made of it - to the side of the form, of the Gestalt, of the good form)... we cannot help being surprised, I was saying, as much in this passage as in many others of Plato, to even see sustained the idea of some impasse or other, of some aporia or other, of some choice or other to be made, of some preference or other to be given which would be on the side of the necessarily conjoined, fundamental character, of concord with concord, of harmony with harmony.

As I have told you, this is not the only passage and, if you refer to a dialogue which I must say is extremely important to read as an underpinning for our understanding of the Symposium, namely the Phaedo you will see that the whole discussion with Simmias and Cebes is based on that. That, as I was telling you the other day, the whole pleading of Socrates in defence of the (9) immortality of the soul is presented there in the most obvious fashion in the form of a sophism which is properly speaking the following (which is none other than the one around which I have been making my remarks about the discourse of Eryximachos revolve), namely that the very idea of the soul qua harmony does not suppose there to be excluded that there should enter into it the possibility of its rupture. Because when Simmias and Cebes object that this soul, whose nature is constant, whose nature is permanence and duration, might well vanish at the same time as its elements are dislocated, these elements which are corporeal elements, whose conjunction creates the harmony Socrates gives nothing else as an answer, except that the idea of harmony in which the soul participates is in itself impenetrable, that it would hide itself, that it would flee before the very approach of anything that would put its constancy in question. The idea of the participation of anything that exists in this sort of incorporeal essence which is the Platonic idea, openly demonstrates its fiction and its lure and to such a degree in this Phaedo that it is really impossible not to tell oneself that we have no reason to think that Plato did not see this lure any less than ourselves. This unimaginable, extraordinary pretension that we have of being more intelligent than the personage who has developed the Platonic oeuvre has something really bewildering about it!

This indeed is why when, after the discourse of Pausanias, we see developing that of Eryximachos (he gives out his patter, this does not immediately have obvious consequences), we are nevertheless entitled to ask ourselves by making succeed to one another in this order this series of tirades among which we have at least seen that that of Pausanias which immediately precedes is derisory. And if, after all, we hold onto the general characteristic, the overall tone which characterises the Symposium, we are legitimately entitled to ask ourselves if what is in question is not properly speaking something which is consonant with a comic work as such: in dealing with love, it is clear that Plato has taken the path of comedy. All that follows will confirm it - and I have my reasons for beginning to affirm it now - at the moment when there is going to come on the scene the great comic, the great comic Aristophanes about whom people have always been puzzled as to why Plato had him come to the Symposium. It is scandalous because, as you know, this great comic is one of those responsible for the death of Socrates. If Phaedo, namely the drama of the death of Socrates, is presented to us with this lofty character which gives it the tragic tone that you know (and besides it is not so simple, there too there are comical things, but it is quite clear that tragedy dominates and that it is represented before us), the Symposium already teaches us that there is not (and including the ever-so-brief discourse of Socrates in so far as he speaks in his own name) a

single point of this discourse which is not put before us with this suspicion of the comic. And I would even say that this point, in order to leave nothing out and to respond specifically to one of my listeners whose presence does me the greatest honour, with whom I had on this subject a brief exchange.... I would say specifically that even the discourse of Phaidros at the beginning which not unreasonably, not without a motive, not incorrectly he thought he understood me to be taking at its face value as opposed to the discourse of Pausanias, I would say that this goes just as much in the direction of what I am here affirming precisely: the fact is that precisely this discourse of Phaidros by referring to the judgement of the gods on the subject of love, also has an ironic value. Because the gods are unable, precisely, to understand anything about love. The expression of a divine stupidity is something which to my way of thinking ought to be more widespread. It is often suggested by the behaviour of those people to whom we address ourselves precisely on the (10) terrain of love. To take the gods to testify at the bar about what is in question concerning love appears to me to be something which in any case is not heterogeneous for what follows in Plato's discourse.

We have now arrived at the brink of the discourse of Aristophanes. Nevertheless, we are not yet going to enter into it. I would simply like to ask you yourselves, using your own means, to complete what remains to be seen in the discourse of Eryximachos. For M. Lion Robin it is an enigma that Eryximachos takes up again the opposition between the theme of Uranian love and Pandemic love given precisely what he tells us about the physical medical handling of love. He does not see very clearly what justifies it. And in fact I believe that our astonishment is really the only attitude which is appropriate to respond to that of the author of this edition. Because the thing is clarified in the very discourse of Eryximachos confirming the whole perspective in which I tried to situate it for you.

If he refers, concerning the effects of love (par. 188a-b) to astronomy, it is indeed in so far as what is in question, this harmony, to which it is a question of bringing together, of according, concerning the good order of the health of mankind, is one and the same as that which reigns over the order of the seasons and that, when on the contrary, he says, violent love (hubris, something excessive), has more power on the seasons of the year, it is then that there begin disasters, and confusion, the prejudices (as he calls them), damage, among which of course there are pestilences, but at the same level are placed hoar frosts and hails and blights and a whole series of other things.

This to replace us in the context where I believe all the same that the notions that I am putting forward before you as the fundamental, radical categories to which we are forced to refer to pose a worthwhile discourse for analysis namely, the imaginary, the symbolic and the real, are utilisable here.

People talk about primitive thinking, and there is astonishment that a Bororo identifies himself with an ara. Does it not seem

to you that it is not a question of primitive thinking, but of a primitive position of thinking concerning that with which for everyone, for you as for me, it has to deal? When we see that man interrogating himself not about his place, but about his identity, has to locate himself not at all within the limited enclosure which is supposed to be his body, but has to locate himself in the total and raw real with which he has to deal - and that we do not escape from this law from which it follows that it is at the precise point of this delineation of the real in which the progress of science consists that we will always have to situate ourselves. At the time of Eryximachos, it is completely outside the question, for want of any knowledge whatsoever about what a living tissue as such is, that the doctor could make, let us say of humours, something heterogeneous to humidity in which (11) in the world natural vegetations are able to proliferate; the same disorder which will provoke in man such and such an excess due to intemperance, to violence, is the one which will lead to the disorders in the seasons which are enumerated here.

Chinese tradition represents for us at the beginning of the year the emperor, the one who can with his hand accomplish the major rites on which depends the equilibrium of the whole Middle empire, tracing the first furrows whose direction and rectitude are destined precisely to ensure during the year the equilibrium of nature.

There is not, I dare say, in this position anything that is not natural. The one to which Eryximachos attaches himself here, which is to call it by its name, that to which is attached the notion of man as microcosm, is namely what? Not at all that man is in himself a resume, a reflection, an image of nature, but that they are one and the same thing, that one can only dream of constituting man from the order and the harmony of cosmic components. Here is a position with which simply I wished to leave you today with this question of whether it does not preserve, despite the limitation within which we believe we have reduced the meaning of biology, some traces in our mental pre-suppositions. . . . undoubtedly, detecting them is not so important as to perceive where we place ourselves, in what zone, more fundamental level we place ourselves, we analysts, when we bestir ourselves to understand for our part notions like the death instinct, which is properly speaking as Freud did not fail to recognise, an Empedoclean notion. Now it is to this that the discourse of Aristophanes is going to refer. What I will show you the next time, is that this gag which is manifestly presented as the entry of the clowns going head over heels in a scene from Athenian comedy, refers expressly as such - I will show you the proofs for this - to this cosmological conception of man. And starting from there I will show you the surprising opening of what results from it, the opening left gaping wide about the idea that Plato was able to construct of love, I am going that far - concerning the radical derision which the simple approach to the problems of love brought to this incorruptible, material, supra-essential, purely ideal order, participating in the eternal and the uncreated which is the one, ironically perhaps, that his whole work uncovers to us.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 21 December 1960

Our account, I hope, will today with the celestial conjunction pass through its winter solstice; I mean that drawn along by the orb that it involves, it may have seemed to you that we are getting further and further away from our subject of transference. Reassure yourselves then. We will reach today the lowest point of this ellipse and I believe that from the moment that we glimpsed - if this is to be proved valid - something to be learned from the Symposium, it was necessary to push forward to the point to which we are going to push it today the analysis of the important parts of the text which might seem not to have a direct relationship with what we have to say. In any case what does it matter! Here we are now engaged in the enterprise and, when one has begun on a certain path of discourse, it is precisely a sort of non-physical necessity which makes itself felt when we want to take it to its term.

Here we are following the guide of a discourse, the discourse of Plato in the Symposium, the discourse which has around it all the charge of significations (like a musical instrument or even a music box), all the significations that it made resonate throughout the centuries. A certain aspect of our effort is to return as closely as possible to the meaning of this discourse. I believe that to understand this text of Plato, to judge it, one cannot avoid evoking in what context of discourse it is, in the sense of the universal concrete discourse. And here again, let me make myself clearly understood! It is not a question properly speaking of resituating it in history. You know well that it is not at all our method of commentary and that it is always for what it makes us ourselves understand that a discourse (even when pronounced at a very distant epoch when the things that we have to understand were not at all to be seen) is questioned by us. But it is not possible, as regards the Symposium, to avoid referring to something which is the relationship of discourse and history namely, not how discourse is situated in history, but how history itself arises from a certain mode of entry of discourse into the real.

And so I must remind you here (at the time of the Symposium at which we are at, in the second century from the birth of concrete discourse about the universe)... I mean that we must not forget

this philosophical efflorescence of the VIth century, which is so strange, so singular moreover because of the echoes or other modes of a sort of terrestrial choir which make themselves heard at the same epoch in other civilisations, without any apparent relationship.

But let us leave that to one side; it is not the history of the philosophers of the VIth century, from Thales to Pythagoras or to Heraclitus and so many others that I wish even to outline. What I want you to sense, is that it is the first time that in this occidental tradition (the one to which this book by Russell which I recommended you to read refers) this discourse is formed there as expressly aiming at the universe for the first time, as aiming at rendering the universe discursive. Namely that at the (2) beginning of the step of science as being wisdom, the universe appears as a universe of discourse. And, in a sense, there will never be anything but a universe of discourse. Everything that we find at that epoch including the definition of elements, whether there are four or more, has something which carries the brand, the mark, the stamp of this petition, of this postulate that the universe should surrender itself to the order of the signifier. Naturally, of course, it is not at all a question of finding in the universe elements of discourse but [elements] linking together like a discourse. And all the steps that are articulated at that epoch among the supporters, the inventors of this vast questioning movement, show clearly that if, one cannot discourse in a fashion coherent with the laws of discourse about one of these universes which is forged, there are radical objections. Remember the mode of operation of Zeno, the dialectician when, in order to defend his master Parmenides, he proposes sophistical arguments which are meant to throw his adversary into inextricable confusion.

Therefore in the background of this Symposium, of this discourse of Plato, and in the rest of his work, we have this grandiose attempt in its innocence, this hope which dwelt in the first philosophers who are called physicists of finding under the guarantee of discourse, which is in short the whole of their experimental instrumentation, the final grasp on the real.

I ask your pardon if I avoid it. This is not the place where I could maintain a discourse on Greek philosophy before you. I propose to you, to interpret a special text, the minimal thematic that it is necessary for you to have in mind in order to judge this text properly. And this is why I must remind you that this real, this grasp of the real was not conceived at that epoch as correlative to a subject, even a universal one, but as the term which I am going to borrow from Letter VII of Plato, where in a short digression there is said what is sought by the whole operation of the dialectic: it is quite simply the same thing that I had to take into account last year in our account of the Ethics and which I called "la Chose", here to pragma [which] you should understand precisely in the sense that it is not Sache, an affair (une affaire); understand it if you wish as the great affair, the final reality, that on which there depends the very thought which confronts it, which discusses it and which is only.

as I might say, one of the fashions of putting it into practice. It is the essential to pragma, the thing, the praxis. You can be certain that the theory, which term comes to birth at the same epoch (however contemplative it may affirm itself to be and it is not simply contemplative as the praxis from which it emerges, the Orphic practices, sufficiently demonstrate) is not, as our use of the word theory implies, the abstraction from this praxis, nor its general reference, nor the model, however one may imagine it of what is supposed to be its application, when it makes its appearance it is this praxis itself. The theoria is itself the exercise of the power of the to pragma, the great affair.

(3) One of the masters of this epoch who is the only one I have chosen to quote, Empedocles, because he is thanks to Freud one of the patrons of speculation, Empedocles, in his no doubt legendary guise (because also what is important is that it is this guise that has been bequeathed to us), Empedocles is someone all-powerful. He advances as master of the elements, capable of resurrecting the dead, a magician, lord of the royal secret on the same terrain where the charlatans, later, will present themselves with a similar style. Miracles are demanded of him and he produces them. Like Oedipus, he does not die, he re-enters the heart of the world in the fire of the volcano and the yawning chasm.

All of this, as you are going to see, remains very close to Plato, moreover it is not by chance that it is, taking it from him, at a much more rationalist epoch, that quite naturally we borrow the reference of the to pragma.

But Socrates? It would be quite singular that the whole historical tradition should have been mistaken in saying that over against this background he contributes something original, a rupture, an opposition. Socrates explains himself, in so far as we can trust Plato at the place where he presents him to us more manifestly in the context of a historical testimony concerning him. It is a movement of withdrawal, of lassitude, of disgust with respect to the contradictions manifested by these first attempts as I have just tried to characterise them for you. It is from Socrates that there proceeds this new essential idea: it is first necessary to guarantee knowledge and the path of showing them all that they know nothing, is in itself a revelatory path - revelatory of a virtue which, despite its privileged successes, does not always succeed. And that which Socrates himself calls episteme, science, what he discovers in short, what he separates out, what he detaches, is that discourse engenders the dimension of truth. The discourse which is assured of an inner certainty as regards its very action assures, where it can, the truth as such. It is nothing other than this practice of discourse.

When Socrates says that it is the truth, and not himself, that refutes his interlocutor, he shows something whose most solid aspect is its reference to a primitive combinatory which is always the same at the basis of our discourse. From which it results, for example, that the father is not the mother and that it is in the same respect, and in this respect alone, that one

can declare that the mortal should be distinguished from the immortal. Socrates refers back in short to the domain of pure discourse the whole ambition of discourse. He is not, as is believed, as is said, very specially the one who leads man back to man, nor even all things to man (it is Protagoras who had given that slogan: man is the measure of all things), Socrates brings the truth back to discourse. He is in short, as one might say, the super-sophist, and it is in this that his mystery lies - because if he were only a super-sophist he should not have engendered anything more than the sophists, namely what remains of them, namely a doubtful reputation.

It is precisely something other than a temporal subject which inspired his action. And here we come to the atopia, to this unsituatable aspect of Socrates which is precisely the question which interests us since we sense in it something which may illuminate us about the atopia which is demanded of us. It is this atopia, from this nowhere of his being that he certainly provoked, because history attests it to us, this whole line of researches whose destiny is linked in a very ambiguous fashion to a whole history which can be fragmented, the history of (4) consciousness, as it is said in modern terms: the history of religion... of morality, of politics certainly at the limit, and less of art. To designate this whole ambiguous, I am saying, diffuse and living line I would only have to point out to you (through the question most recently renewed by the most recent imbecile: Pourquoi des philosophes) whether we did not experience this line, as solidary with a flame transmitted in fact, which is foreign to everything that it illuminates, whether it be the good, the beautiful, the true, the same, which it takes pride in occupying itself with.

If one tries to read, through testimonies which are near at hand as well as through the distant effects - near, I mean in history - as through the effects which are still there of the Socratic posterity, there might come to us in effect the formula of a sort of perversion without object. And in truth, when one tries to accommodate, to approach, to imagine, to fix for oneself what effectively this personage might be, believe me, it is tiring and I believe that I could not better formulate the effect of this tiredness than in words which came to me one Sunday evening: this Socrates is killing me! It is a curious thing, I woke up the following morning feeling much livelier.

It seems all the same (in order to try to say things about this) impossible not to start by taking literally what is attested to us by the entourage of Socrates, and this even on the eve of his death, that he is the one who said that after all we have nothing to fear from a death of which we know nothing. And specifically we do not know, he adds, whether it might not be a good thing. Obviously, when one reads that... one is so used to reading only fine words in classical texts that one does not pay attention to them any more. But it is striking when we make that resonate in the context of the last days of Socrates, surrounded by his last followers, he gave them this last look from under his brows which Plato photographs on the document (he was not there) and

which he calls the look of a bull.... and his whole attitude at his trial. If The Apology of Socrates reproduces exactly for us what he said before his judges it is difficult to think, hearing his defence, that he did not expressly wish to die. In any case he repudiates expressly and as such the whole pathetic aspect of the situation, thus provoking his judges who are used to the ritual, classical, supplications of the accused.

Therefore what I am aiming at here as a first approach to the enigmatic nature of a desire for death which no doubt can be held to be ambiguous (he is a man who is supposed, after all, to have spent seventy years to obtain the satisfaction of this desire), it is quite sure that it cannot be taken in the sense of a tendency to suicide, nor to failure, nor to any sort of masochism, moral or otherwise; but it is difficult not to formulate this tragic minimum linked to the maintenance of a man in a zone of no man's land, of a sort of gratuitous entre-deux-morts.

You know that when Nietzsche discovered Socrates it went to his head. The birth of tragedy and all Nietzsches' subsequent work came from there. The tone in which I am speaking to you about it should mark clearly some personal impatience. One cannot all the same not see that undoubtedly (Nietzsche put his finger on it... it is enough to open at random a dialogue of Plato) the profound incompetence of Socrates every time he touches on this subject of tragedy is something quite tangible. Read Gorgias. (5) Tragedy is dealt with there is three lines among the arts of flattery, a rhetoric like another, with nothing more to be said about it (Gorgias 502 b e d) .

No tragic, no tragic sentiment, as it is put in our days, sustains this atopia of Socrates. Only a demon, the daimon - do not forget it, because he speaks to us about it ceaselessly - which hallucinates him it seems in order to allow him to survive in this space; he avoids the holes into which he might fall: do not do that. And then, in addition, a message from a god whose function he himself testifies to us in what one can call a vocation, the god of Delphi, Apollo, that a disciple of his had the rather absurd idea of telling him to go and consult. And the god had replied: "There are some wise men, there is one who is not too bad, namely Euripides, but the wisest of all, the best of all, the sacred one, is Socrates." And from that day forward Socrates said: "I must realise the oracle of the god, because I did not know that I was the wisest, but because he said it, I must be." It is exactly in these terms that Socrates presents to us the sharp turn of what one could call his passage to public life. He is in short a madman who believes that he is at the service, at the command of a god, a messiah, and what is more in a society of chatterboxes. No other guarantee of the word of the Other (with the capital O) than this word itself, and there is no other source for the tragic than this destiny which may well appear to us from a certain aspect to be that of nothingness.

With all that, he is led to surrender the terrain about which I

spoke to you the other day, the terrain of the reconquest of the real, of the philosophical, namely the scientific conquest, to surrender a good part of the terrain to the gods. It is not in order to make paradoxes as certain have confided in me: "You were very amused to have surprised us when you asked: what are the gods?" Well, as I told you, the gods belong to the real! - Everyone expected me to say: to the symbolic. Not at all! - "You were really joking, you said: they belong to the real." Well, not at all! Believe me, I am not the one who invented it. For Socrates, manifestly they belong only to the real. And this real has nothing to do with the principle of his own behaviour, Socrates himself aims only at the truth. He satisfies himself with obeying the gods on occasion, provided that he himself defines this obedience. Is this really to obey them or is it not rather acquitting oneself ironically vis-a-vis beings which have themselves their own necessity? And in fact we do not sense any necessity which does not recognise the supremacy of internal necessity in the deployment of the true, namely science.

We may be surprised at the seduction exercised by such a severe discourse. In any case this seduction is attested to us in the course of one or other of the dialogues. We know that the discourse of Socrates, even repeated by children, by women, exercises a charm which one could call bewildering. We could really say: thus spoke Socrates. A force is transmitted in it "which raises up those who approach it" the Platonic texts always say, in short, that the simple murmur of his word, some say "at its contact". Notice again, there are no disciples, but rather friends, the curious also, and then the bewitched (struck by some secret or other), ... as they are called in the stories of Provence and then, the disciples of others also come knocking at the door.

(6) Plato is none of these, he is a late-comer, much too young to have seen anything but the end of the phenomenon. He was not among those who were there at the end. And this indeed is the ultimate reason - it has to be said in passing very quickly - for this obsessional cascade of testimonies which he latches onto every time he wants to speak about his strange hero: "Such a person heard it from such a person who was there, from one or other visit when they carried on such and such a debate. I have what was recorded on their brains, here in a first, there in a second edition." Plato is a very particular kind of witness. One could say that he lies and on the other hand that he is truthful even when he lies because, in interrogating Socrates, it is his own question that, he, Plato explores. Plato is something completely different. He does not go around barefoot; he is not a wanderer; no god has either spoken to him nor called him and, in truth, I think that for him, the gods do not amount to much. Plato is a master, a true one; a master at the time when the city is breaking apart, swept away by the winds of democracy, prelude to the time of the great imperial unifications. He is a sort of Sade but funnier. One cannot even, naturally, like anybody else.... one cannot even imagine the nature of the powers that are reserved for the future. The great mountebanks of the world tribe: Alexander, Seleucides,

Ptolemy, all of that is still properly speaking unthinkable. One cannot yet imagine mystical soldiers! What Plato sees at the horizon, is a communal city just as revolting to his eyes as to our own. A stud farm, this is what he promises us in a pamphlet which has always been a bad dream for all those who with their sentiment of the good cannot get over the ever-accentuated discord of the order of the city. In other words, this is called The Republic and everybody took it seriously. People believe that it is really what Plato wanted!

Let us pass over some other misunderstandings and some other mythical lucubrations. [If] I were to tell you that the myth of Atlantis seems to me to be rather the echo of the failure of Plato's political dreams (it is not unrelated to the adventure of the Academy) perhaps "you would find that my paradox would need to be better fleshed out, that is why I am passing over it.

What he himself wants in any case, is all the same the thing, to pragma. He is relaying with the magi of the previous century at a literary level. The Academy is a sort of reserved city, a refuge for the best people. And it is in the context of this enterprise, whose horizon certainly went very far... what we know about what he dreamt of in his voyage to Sicily (curiously to the same places where his adventure is in a way a sort of echo of the dream of Alcibiades who, for his part, clearly dreamt about a Mediterranean empire with Sicily as its centre) bore a sign of the most lofty sublimation: it is like a sort of Utopia of which he thought he could be director. From the heights of Alcibiades, obviously all of this is reduced to a level that is certainly less elevated.

Perhaps it would go no further than a high point of masculine elegance. But it would all the same be to depreciate this metaphysical dandyism not to see the range of which it was in a way capable. I think that one is right to read the text of Plato from the angle of what I am calling dandyism: they are writings for the outside, I would even go so far as to say that he throws to the dogs that we are tiny scraps which may be good or bad, the debris of an often rather infernal humour. But it is a fact, that he has been understood differently. The fact is (7) that Christian desire, which has so little to do with all these adventures, this Christian desire whose core, whose essence is in the resurrection of bodies (you have to read St. Augustine to glimpse the place that that holds)... that this Christian desire recognised itself in Plato for whom the body must dissolve into a beauty that is super-terrestrial and reduced to an extraordinarily incorporeal form, of which we are going to speak in a little while, is the sign obviously that there is here a complete misunderstanding.

But it is precisely that which brings us back to the question of transference and to this delusional character of such a taking-up of the discourse into another context which is properly speaking contradictory to it. What is in it, if not that the Platonic phantasy, which we are going to approach as closely as possible - do not believe that these are only general considerations - is

already affirmed as a transference phenomenon. How did the Christians for whom a God reduced to the symbol of the Son had given his life as a sign of love allow themselves to be fascinated by the speculative stupidity - I remind you of the term I used above - offered as intellectual food by the most disinterested of men: Socrates? Must we not recognise here the effect of the only tangible convergence between the two thematics which is the Word presented as object of adoration? This is why it is so important (over against the Christian mystique, in which one cannot deny that love produced rather extraordinary fruits, follies according to the Christian tradition itself) to delineate what the import of love is in the transference which is produced around this other, Socrates who, himself, is only a man who claims to know about love but who only leaves of it the most simply natural proof, namely that his disciples tease him for losing his head from time to time before a beautiful young man and, as Xenophon testifies to us, to have one day - this does not amount to much - touched with his shoulder the naked shoulder of the young Cristobulos; Xenophon himself tells us the result of it: it left him with neither more nor less than an ache - which is not nothing, for such an experienced cynic! Because already in Socrates there are all the figures of the cynic. This proves in any case a certain violence of desire, but it leaves, it must be said, love in a rather instantaneous position.

This explains to us, makes us understand, allows us to situate that in any case for Plato these love stories are simply farce, that the final mode of union with the to pragma, the thing, is certainly not be sought in the direction of the effusion of love in the Christian sense of the term. And there is no need to seek the reason for this elsewhere than in the Symposium, the only one who speaks appropriately about love, is a clown (un pitre) - you will see what I understand by this term.

Because Aristophanes for Plato is nothing else, a comic poet for him is a clown. And one sees very well how this gentleman who is very distant - believe me - from the crowd, this man, this obscene Aristophanes about whom I do not need to remind you of what you can find by opening the least of his comedies... the least thing that you can see being produced on stage, for example the one in which the parent of Euripides is going to disguise himself as a woman in order to expose himself to the fate of Orpheus, namely to be cut to pieces by the gathering of women instead of Euripides in this disguise... we are made to assist (8) on the stage at the burning of the hairs of his ass because women, as they still do today in the Orient, pluck their hair. And I will spare you all the other details. All that I can tell you is that all of this goes beyond anything that one can see today except on the stage of a London music hall, which is saying quite a lot! Simply the words are better, but they are not more distinguished for all that. The term of "gaping asshole" is one which is repeated in ten replies one after another to designate those among whom should be chosen those whom we would today call in our language candidates who are most apt for all the progressive roles, because these are the people that Aristophanes particularly hates.

So then, that it should be a personage of this type (and what is more - as I already said - who had the role you know about in the defamation of Socrates) that Plato chooses to make him say the best things about love should make us use our loaves a little!

To make clearly understood what I mean in saying that he gives him the best things to say about love, I am going to illustrate it for you immediately. Moreover someone as reflective, as measured in his judgements, as prudent, as the learned university man who produced the edition that I have before my eyes, M. Leon Robin, even he, cannot fail to be struck by it. It draws tears from his eyes.

He is the first one who speaks about love, God knows, as we speak about it, namely that" he says things which grab you by the throat and which are the following. First of all this rather subtle remark (one might say that this is not what is expected from a clown, but it is precisely for that reason that it is put into the mouth of a clown) he is the one who makes the remark: "No one," he says, "could suppose that it is he ton aphrodision sunousia", which is translated: "la communauté de la jouissance amoureuse" (192c), I must say that this translation appears detestable to me; I believe moreover that M. Leon Robin made another one for La Pléiade which is much better, because really this means: it is not for the "pleasure of being in bed together as if this could make anyone delight in another¹'s company so seriously as all that," in Greek outos epi megales spoudes it is the same spoude that you found last year in the Aristotlian definition of tragedy; of course, spoude means solicitude, care, readiness, it also means seriousness; because in fact, these people who love one another, have a strangely serious air.

And let us leave to one side this psychological note to show all the same, to designate where the mystery is. Here is what Aristophanes says: "Plainly the soul of each wants something else - what, it cannot say, but it divines and riddles what it wants. And as they lie together suppose Hephaistos" (namely Vulcan, the character with the hammer and the anvil) "were to stand beside (9) them with his tools, and ask: What do you want from each other, men?" (the object of your wishes) "Is it only that you desire to be together as close as possible, and not to be apart from each other night or day? For if that is what you desire, I am ready to melt you and weld you together, so that you two may be made one, and as one you may live together as long as you live, and when you die you may die still one instead of two, and be yonder in the house of Hades together. Think if this is your passion, and if it will satisfy you to get this. If that were offered, we know that not a single one would object, or be found to wish anything else, he would simply believe that he had heard that which he had so long desired, to be united and melted together with his beloved, and to become one from two!" (192c-192e).

This is what Plato has Aristophanes say. Aristophanes does not say only that. Aristophanes says things that raise a laugh, things moreover which he himself had announced as operating

between the laughable and the ridiculous, in so far as there is divided between these two terms the fact that the laugh is directed at what the comic aims at, or at the comedian himself.

But what is Aristophanes making a laugh of? Because it is clear that he raises a laugh and that he gets past the barrier of the ridiculous. Is Plato going to make him make us laugh at love? It is quite evident that this already bears witness to the contrary. We would even say that, nowhere, at any moment of these discourses, is love taken so seriously, or so tragically. We are exactly at the level that we moderns impute to this love, after courtly sublimation and after what I could call the romantic misinterpretation of this sublimation, namely the narcissistic overvaluing of the subject, I mean of the subject supposed in the beloved object. Because this is the romantic misunderstanding compared to what I taught you last year about courtly sublimation. Thanks be to God, in Plato's time, we have not yet got to that point, except for this strange Aristophanes, but he is a clown.

Rather are we involved in a sort of zoological observation of imaginary beings, which takes its value from what they evoke from what can undoubtedly be taken in a derisory sense in real beings. Because this indeed is what is in question in these beings who are sliced in two like a hard-boiled egg, one of these bizarre beings like the ones we find on a sandy bottom, a flatfish, a sole, a plaice are evoked here (190e, 191d), which appear to have all that is necessary, two eyes, all these even organs, but which are flattened in a way that they seem to be half of a complete being. It is clear that in the first behaviour which follows the birth of these beings which are born from such a division in two, what Aristophanes shows us at first and what is the underpinning of what immediately comes here in a light which for us is so romantic, is this kind of panicky fatality which is going to make each one of these beings seek above all his half, and then, clinging to it with a tenacity, which one might say has no way out, effectively makes them perish side by side because of their incapacity to rejoin one another. Here is what he depicts for us in these long developments, which is given with all the details, which is extremely vivid, which naturally is projected onto the plane of myth, but which is the way in which, there is forged, by the sculptor who the poet is here, his image of the love relationship.

But is it in this that there lies what we must suppose, what we must put our finger on, that this is something laughable? Quite obviously not. This is inserted into something which (10) irresistibly evokes for us what we can still see in our day on the circus mat when the clowns enter, as is sometimes done, embracing or hooked on in some way or other two by two, coupled belly to belly with a great whirling of four arms, of four legs and of their two heads going head over heels for one or more circuits. In itself, it is something that we would see going very well with the style of fabrication of this type of choir which gave, in a different genre, The Wasps, The Birds, or again The Clouds, about which we will never know under what kind of

screen these plays were produced on the stage in antiquity.

But here what kind of ridicule is in question? Is it simply the rather cheerful character of the image all by itself? It is here that I will begin a little development for which I ask your pardon since it may involve us in a rather long detour, because it is essential.

If you read this text, you will see the degree to which, to the degree that this also strikes M. Leon Robin - it is always the same thing, I am not the only one who knows how to read a text - in an extraordinary way, he insists on the spherical character of this personage. It is difficult not to see it, because this spherical, this circular, this sphaira is repeated with such insistence, we are told that the "shape of man was quite round, back and ribs, pleuras kuklo echon, passing about it in a circle" (189e) And we must see this, as I told you above, as the two wheels perched on one another and all the same flat, while here it is round. And this annoys M. Leon Robin who changes a comma that no one has ever changed saying: "I am doing that because I do not want too much stress on the sphere; the important thing is the slicing." And I am not the person to diminish the importance of this slicing, we are going to come back to it a little later. But it is difficult all the same not to see that we are before something very singular and whose term, whose final word I am going to give you immediately, it is that the derision that is in question, what is put under this ridiculous form, is precisely the sphere.

Naturally this does not make you laugh, because the sphere does not affect you in the least! Only be very sure of this, that for centuries it was not that way. You only know it under the form of this fact of psychological inertia which is called good form. A certain number of people, Mr. Ehrenfels and others perceived that there was a certain tendency in forms towards perfection, to rejoin in a doubtful state the sphere, that in short it was this that gave pleasure to the optic nerve. This of course, naturally is very interesting and only makes a start at the problem, because I would point out to you in passing that these Gestalt notions into which people venture so lightly only relaunch the problem of perception. Because if there are such (11) good forms, it is because perception must consist, as one might say, in rectifying them in the sense of the bad ones which are the true. But let us leave to one side the dialectic of the good form on this occasion.

This form has a quite different sense to this properly psychological objectification which has a limited interest. At the time and at the level of Plato, and not only at the level of Plato, but well before him, this form, Sphairos as Empedocles also says, whose verses time prevents me from reading to you, Sphairos in the masculine is a being who, "from every side is similar to itself, and without limit on any side. Sphairos kukloteres, Sphairos which has the form of a ball, this Sphairos reigns in its royal solitude filled by its own contentment", its

own sufficiency. This Sphairos haunts the thinking of antiquity. It is the form that takes, at the centre of the world of Empedocles, the phase of gathering together what he himself calls, in his metaphysics Philie or Philotes, Love. This Philotes which he calls elsewhere "shedune Philotes, the Love which gathers together, which agglomerates, which assimilates, which agglutinates"; exactly agglutinated, it is the kresis, it belongs to the kresis of love.

It is very singular that we have seen re-emerge from Freud's pen this idea of love as the pure and simple power of unifying and, as one might say, of attraction without limits in order to oppose it to Thanatos; while we have correlatively and - as you can sense - in a discordant fashion, a very different and very much more fruitful notion in the love-hate ambivalence.

We rediscover this sphere everywhere. I was speaking to you the other day about Philolaos, he admits the same sphere at the centre of a world in which the earth has an eccentric position, already at the time of Pythagoras it was suspected for a very long time that the earth was eccentric, but it is not the sun which occupies the centre, it is a central spherical fire to which we, the face of the inhabited earth, always have our backs turned. With respect to this fire we are the way the moon is with respect to our earth and this is why we do not feel it. And it seems that it was in order that we should not nevertheless be burned by the central radiation that this person called Philolaos invented this lucubration which already perplexed the people of antiquity, even Aristotle himself: antichton, the anti-earth. What indeed could have been, apart from that, the necessity of this invention of this strictly invisible body (which was supposed to conceal all the powers opposed to those of the earth, which played at the same time, it appears, the role of fireguard), this is something - as they say - which would need to be analysed.

(12) But this is only intended to introduce you to this dimension (to which you know I accord a very great importance) of what one can call the astronomical, or again the Copernican revolution; and to definitively dot the i's on this point, namely - as I have pointed out to you - that it is not the geocentrism supposedly dismantled by Canon Koppernigk (Copernicus) which is the most important thing, and this is even the reason why it is rather false, rather vain, to call it a Copernican revolution. Because, if in his book On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres, he shows us a form of the solar system which resembles our own (also the ones you find in the text books for the first year of secondary school) in which one sees the sun in the middle and all the stars turning around in the orb, it must be said that it was not at all a new schema, in the sense that everyone knew at the time of Copernicus (we are not the ones who discovered this) that, in antiquity, there was someone called Heraclitus, then Aristarchus of Samos, this has been absolutely confirmed, who had made the same schema.

The only thing which could have made of Copernicus something

other than a historical phantasy, because he was nothing other than that, is if his system were, not just closer to the image that we have of the real solar system, but more true. And more true, that means more disencumbered from imaginary elements which have nothing to do with the modern symbolisation of the stars, more disencumbered than the system of Ptolemy. But this is not at all the case. His system is just as full of epicycles.

And what are epicycles? They are something invented and moreover no one could believe in the reality of epicycles; do not imagine that they were stupid enough to think that they would see, in the way you see when you open your watch, a series of little wheels. But there was this idea that the only perfect movement that one could imagine to be conceivable was the circular movement. Everything that was seen in the heavens was damned hard to interpret, because - as you know - these little wandering planets got into all sorts of irregular interloopings between themselves, whose zig-zags it was a question of explaining. People were not satisfied until each of the elements of their circuit could be reduced to a circular movement. The singular thing is that a better result was not arrived at, because, by combining turning movements with turning movements one might in principle think that one could manage to account for everything. In reality it was well and truly impossible for the reason that in the measure that they were better observed it was perceived that there were more things to explain, if only, when the telescope appeared, their variation in size. But it does not matter. The system of Copernicus was just as laden down with this kind of imaginary redundancy which encumbered it, weighed it down, as the system of Ptolemy.

What you must read during this vacation and - you are going to see that it is possible - for your pleasure, is namely how Kepler beginning from elements in Plato from the same Timaeus which I am going to speak to you about, namely from a purely imaginary conception - with the accent that this term has in the vocabulary that I use with you - of the universe entirely regulated according to the properties of the sphere articulated as such, as (13) being the form which carries within itself the virtues of sufficiency which mean that it can essentially combine in itself the eternity of the same place with eternal movement; it is around speculations which are moreover very refined of this kind because to our stupefaction he brings in the five perfect solids (as you know there are only five of them) inscribable within the sphere. And starting from this old Platonic speculation (already displaced thirty times, but which already was coming back into fashion at this turning point of the Renaissance) and from the reintegration into the occidental tradition of Platonic manuscripts, literally in the head of this personage (whose personal life, believe me, in the context of the Peasants' Revolt, then of the Thirty Years' War, is something special and which as you will see I am going to give you the means of referring to) the aforesaid Kepler, searching for these celestial harmonies, and by prodigious tenacity - one really sees the hide-and-seek of unconscious formations - manages to give the first grasp that we have had of something which is that in which

there really consists the birth-date of the science of modern physics. In searching for a harmonic relationship, he comes to this relationship of the velocity of the planet on its orb to the area of the surface covered by the line which links the planet to the sun. Namely that he perceived at the same time that planetary orbits are ellipses.

And - believe me because people are talking about it everywhere - Koestler has written a very fine book which is called The Sleepwalkers, published by Johns Hopkins, which has been recently translated. And I asked myself what could Arthur Koestler make of it since he is not always considered to be an author whose inspiration is all that sure. I assure you that it is his best book. It is phenomenal, marvellous! You do not even need to know elementary mathematics, you will understand everything through the biography of Copernicus, of Kepler and of Galileo - with a bit of partiality as regards Galileo, it must be said that Galileo is a communist, he himself admits.

All of this to tell you that, communist or not, it is absolutely true that Galileo never paid the slightest attention to what Kepler discovered (however much of a genius Galileo was in his invention of what one can really call modern dynamics, namely to have discovered the exact law for the fall of bodies, which was an essential step) and of course despite the fact that it was always about this affair of geocentrism that he had all his problems, it nevertheless remains that Galileo was here, just as backward, just as reactionary, just as attached to the idea of perfect circular movement therefore the only possible one for celestial bodies, as the others. To speak plainly, Galileo had not even broken through what we call the Copernican revolution which as you know does not belong to Copernicus. You see then the time that truths take to make their way in the presence of a prejudice so solid as that of the perfection of circular movement.

I could talk to you about this for hours, because it is all the same very amusing to consider effectively why this is so, namely what are really the properties of circular movement and why the Greeks made of it the symbol of the limit, peirar as opposed to apeiron♦ A curious thing, it is precisely because it is one of the things most prepared to tip over into the apeiron, it is for this reason that I must do a little bit here to enlarge, to decrease, to reduce to a point, to infinitise this sphere for you. You know moreover that it served as a usual symbol for (14) this famous infinity. There is a lot to be said. Why should this form have privileged virtues? Naturally, this would plunge us into the heart of the problems concerning the value of the function of intuition in mathematical construction.

I would simply like to tell you that before all of these exercises which made us exorcise the sphere, so that its charm has continued to be exercised on dupes, the fact is that it was something all the same to which, as I might say, the philia of the spirit itself also stuck and nastily like some funny adhesive. And in any case, for Plato, here is where I would

like to refer you to the Timaeus, and to the long development on the sphere; this sphere that he depicts for us in all its details corresponds curiously like an alternating strophe with everything that Aristophanes says about these spherical beings in the Symposium. Aristophanes tells us that they have feet, little members which point, which turn round and around.

But there is a relationship such that, from another side what Plato (with a kind of accentuation which is very striking as regards geometrical development) experiences the need to point out to us in passing, it is that this sphere has everything that it needs within: it is round, it is full, it is content, it loves itself, and then above all it does not need either eye nor ear because by definition it is the envelope of everything which might be living - but because of this fact it is Living Reality (le Vivant) par excellence. And what Living Reality is, all of that, is absolutely essential to know in order to give ourselves the mental dimension in which biology was able to develop. The notion of form as being essentially what constituted Living Reality was something which we should take in an extremely strict imaginary spelling out. So it has neither eyes, nor ears, it has no feet, no arms and a single movement was reserved to it, the perfect movement, one on itself; there are six of them; upwards, downwards, to the left, to the right, forward and backwards.

What I mean, is that from a comparison of these texts, the result is that through this kind of double-triggered mechanism, of making play the clown a personage who, for him, is the only one worthy of speaking about something like love, what we arrive at is that Plato seems to be amusing himself in the discourse of Aristophanes by engaging in a clowning, a comic exercise about his own conception of the world and of the soul of the world. The discourse of Aristophanes, is the deriding of the Platonic Sphairos, of the proper Sphairos articulated in the Timaeus. I am constrained by time and, of course, there would be many other things to say about it. So that the astronomical reference may be sure and certain, I am going to give you all the same - because it may seem to you that I am amusing myself - the proof: Aristophanes says that these three types of spheres that he has imagined, the all-male one, the all-female one, the male and female one (they each have all the same a pair of genitals) the heramphrodites as they are called, have origins and that these origins are in the stars. The first, the males, come from the sun; the others, the all-females, come from the earth, and the hermaphrodites from the moon. In this way there is confirmed the lunar origin of those, Aristophanes tells us (because it means nothing else than to have a composite origin) who have a tendency to adultery.

Does something here not highlight, and in a fashion I believe is sufficiently clear, in this relationship, this fascination illustrated by this contrast of this spherical form as being the form which it is a matter of not touching, a matter of not even (15) contesting. For centuries it left the human spirit in this error that there was a refusal to think that in the absence of

any outside action, of any outside impulsion, the body is either at rest, or in a rectilinear uniform movement; the body at rest was supposed not to be able to have, outside the state of rest, anything other than a circular movement. All dynamics was barred by that.

Do we not see, in this sort of striking illustration which is given by the pen of this someone whom one can also call a poet, Plato, what is in question in these forms where nothing overlaps, where nothing allows itself to be hooked onto; nothing other than no doubt something which has its foundations in the imaginary structure - and I told you a little while ago that one could comment on it - but the adhesion, to which in so far as it is affective depends on -what... on nothing other than the Verwerfung of castration.

And it is so true that we also have it within the discourse of Aristophanes. Because these beings separated in two like half pears which are going, for a time which is not specified for us moreover because it is a mythical time, to die in a vain embrace as they try to rejoin one another and fated to these vain efforts of procreation in the earth (I will pass over also this whole myth of procreation from the earth, of beings born from the earth, this would take us too far). How will the question resolve itself; Aristophanes speaks to us here exactly like little Hans: they are going to have the genital organ which is in the wrong place unscrewed (because obviously it was at the place where it was when they were round, outside) and it is going to be screwed on to their stomachs, exactly like the tap in the dream which you know from the observation to which I am alluding.

The possibility of loving pacification is referred (which is something unique and stupefying from the pen of Plato) to something which which undoubtedly has a relationship, to say the least, with an operation on the subject of the genitals. Whether or not we put that under the rubric of the castration complex, it is clear that what the detour of the text insists on here, is on the passage of the genitals to the anterior face, which does not simply mean that they come there to offer the possibility of coupling with, of rejoining the beloved object, but that literally the passage of the genitals comes with the beloved object into this kind of relationship as superimpression, as superimposition almost. It is the only point at which there is betrayed, at which there is expressed... how can one fail to be struck by it, in a personage like Plato whose apprehensions manifestly (concerning tragedy, he gives us a thousand proofs for it) did not go much further than those of Socrates, how can we fail to be struck by the fact that here, for the first time, the unique time, he brings into play in a discourse, and in a discourse concerning an affair which is a serious affair, that of love, the genital organ as such. And this confirms what I have told you to be the essential mainspring of the comic, which is always at bottom concerned with this reference to the phallus, it is not by chance that it is Aristophanes who says it. Only Aristophanes can talk like that. And Plato does not perceive that in making him talk about that he makes him talk about what

is found here to bring us the see-saw, the hinge, the something which is going to immediately make all that follows in the discourse take on a different aspect. This is the point at which we will take things up the next time.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 11 January 1961

A little pause before making you enter into the great enigma of transference-love. A pause - I have my reasons for pausing from time to time. It is in effect a question of understanding one another, of not losing our bearings.

Since the beginning of this year, then, I feel the need to remind you that I think, in everything that I am teaching you, that all I have been pointing out to you is that the doctrine of Freud implicates desire in a dialectic. And there already I must pause for you to note that the branch road has already been taken; and already because of this, I said that desire is not a vital function, in the sense that positivism has given its status to life.

Therefore desire is taken up into a dialectic, because it is suspended - begin a parenthesis, I have said the form in which it was suspended: in the form of metonymy - suspended on a signifying chain, which is as such constitutive of the subject, that through which the subject is distinct from individuality taken simply in the hie et nunc - because do not forget that this hie et nunc is what defines it.

Let us make the effort to penetrate into what individuation might be, the instinct of individuality then, in so far as individuation is supposed for each of the individualities to have to reconquer, as is explained to us in psychology, through experience or through teaching, the whole real structure (which is not after all an easy matter) and moreover, something one is not able to conceive of without the supposition that it is more or less prepared for that by an adaptation, a cumulative adaptation. Already the human individual, qua knowledge, is supposed to be the flower of consciousness at the end of an evolution, as you know, of thought, something I put profoundly in doubt; not after all because I consider that this is a fruitless, or a pointless direction, but only in so far as the idea of evolution mentally habituates us to all sorts of elisions which are very damaging for our reflection - and I would say especially for us analysts, for our ethic. In any case, to return to these elisions, to show the gaps which the whole theory of evolution leaves open in so far as it always tends to cover up, to facilitate the understandableness of our experience, to reopen

these gaps is something which to me seems essential. If evolution is true, in any case one thing is certain, which is that it is not, as Voltaire said speaking about something else, so natural as all that.

As regards desire, in any case, it is essential to refer ourselves to its conditions, which are the ones given by our experience upsets the whole problem of data which consist in the fact that the subject preserves an articulated chain outside consciousness, inaccessible to consciousness, a demand and not a pressure, a discontent, an imprint or whatever it may be that you attempt to characterise as being definable in the order of primitive tendencies. But on the contrary there is (2) traced there a trace, as I might say, invested with a trait, isolated as such, raised to a power that one could call ideographic, on condition that this term "ideographic" is well underlined as being in no way an index which can be brought to bear on anything isolated whatsoever, but always linked to the concatenations of the ideogram on a line with other ideograms themselves invested with this function which makes them signifying. This demand constitutes a claim eternalised in the subject, although latent and inaccessible to him: - a statute, a book of charges, (not at all the modulation which would result from some phonetic inscription of the negative inscribed on a film, a tape), - a trace, but one which fixes a date forever, - a recording (enregistrement) yes, but if you put the accent on the term recristre, one filed in the dossier, - a memory, yes, but in the sense that this term has in an electronic machine.

Well, it is the genius of Freud to have designated the support of this chain. I think that I have shown it sufficiently to you and I will show it again especially in an article which is the one I thought I should re-do around the Royaumont Congress and which is going to appear. Freud designates its support when he speaks about the Id (Ca) in the death drive itself, in so far as he designated the deathlike character of the automatism of repetition. Death (this is here articulated by Freud as tendency towards death, as desire in which an unthinkable subject presents itself in the living being in whom the it (ca) speaks) is responsible precisely for what is in question, namely for this eccentric position of desire in man which has always been the paradox of ethics, a paradox it seems to me quite insoluble in the evolutionary perspective. In what one could call their transcendental permanence, namely the transgressive character which is fundamental to them, why and how would desires be neither the effect nor the source of what they constitute, namely after all a permanent disorder in a body supposedly submitted to the statutes of adaptation whatever may be the incidence under which one admits the effects of this adaptation?

There, as in the history of physics, all that has been attempted up to now is "to save the appearances" and I believe that I have made you sense, have given you the occasion to understand more fully the accent of what "to save the appearances" means when it is a question of the epicycles of the Ptolemaic system. You must not imagine that the people who taught this system

throughout the centuries, with the proliferation of epicycles that it required (from thirty to seventy-five according to the exigencies of exactitude that were put into it) really believed in epicycles! They did not believe that the heavens were constructed like little armillary spheres. Moreover you see them, they fabricated them with their epicycles. I recently saw in a corridor of the Vatican a lovely collection of these epicycles regulating the movements of Mars, of Venus, of Mercury. You had to put a certain number around the little ball to make it (3) correspond to the movement! Nobody ever seriously believed in epicycles. And "to save the appearances", simply meant giving an account of what one saw in function of a fundamental exigency, of a prejudice regarding the perfection of this circular form.

Well, it is more or less the same when one explains desires by the system of needs, whether they are individual or collective (and I hold that nobody believes it anymore in psychology, I mean a psychology which goes back to a whole moralistic tradition) even at the time when people were occupied with them, nobody ever believed in epicycles. "To save the appearances", in one case as in the other, signifies nothing other than wanting to reduce to forms which are supposedly perfect, supposedly required at the basis of the deduction, and which one cannot in any way from a common sense point of view bring into it.

It is therefore the topology, the fundamental topology of this desire, of its interpretation and in a word, of a rational ethics, that I am trying to establish with you. In this topology, you have seen being separated out in the course of last year this relationship called no man's land (l'entre-deux-morts) which is not as I might say, all the same in itself so difficult to swallow, because it means nothing other than the fact that there is not for man a coincidence between the two frontiers which refer to this death. I mean the first frontier (whether it is linked to a fundamental outcome which is called old age, growing old, going downhill, or to an accident which breaks the thread of life), the first frontier, the one in effect where life ends and is unravelled... well, the situation of man is inscribed in the fact that this frontier - it is obvious and has always been so, that is why I say that it is not so difficult to swallow - is not confused with the one which one can define in its most general formula by saying that man aspires to annihilate himself in it in order to be inscribed in it in terms of being; if man aspires, this is obviously the hidden contradiction, the little drop you have to swallow, if man aspires to destroy himself in the very fact that he eternalises himself.

This you will rediscover everywhere inscribed in this discourse as well as in the others. In the Symposium you will find traces of it. After all, I took great care to illustrate this space for you last year in showing you the four corners within which is inscribed the space where tragedy is played out. Something of this tragic space (to say the word) had been historically stolen from the poets in the tragedy of the XVIIth century, for example the tragedy of Racine (and take any one at all of his tragedies),

you will see that it is necessary, in order that there should be the semblance of tragedy, that from some angle or other this space of l'entre-deux-morts be inscribed. Andromacrué. Iphigénie. Baiazet - do I need to recall the plot to you? - if you show that something subsists here which resembles a tragedy, it is because, however they may be symbolised, these two deaths are always there. Andromache situates herself between the death of Hector and that suspended over the head of Astyanax, this of course is only the sign of another duplicity. In a word, the fact that the death of the hero is always between this imminent menace towards his life and the fact that he affronts it "in order to be remembered", is here only a derisory form of the problem of posterity. This is what is signified by the two terms always rediscovered from this duplicity of the death-bearing drive.

Yes, but it is clear that even though this may be necessary to maintain the framework of tragic space, it is a question of how this space is inhabited. And all I want to do in passing is to carry out this operation of tearing away the spider's web which (4) separates us from a direct vision in order to encourage you - however rich in poetic resonances they remain for you because of all their lyrical resonances - to refer to the high points of Christian tragedy, to the tragedy of Racine, in order to see - take Iphigénie for example - everything that is happening; everything that happens there is irresistibly comic. Test it out: Agamemnon is here in short fundamentally characterised by his terror of the conjugal scene: "There, there are the cries that I feared I would hear"; Achilles appears there in an unbelievably superficial position with regard to everything that is happening. And why? I will try to highlight it for you a little later, precisely in function of his relationship with death, this traditional relationship for which always he is brought back, quoted in the foreground by one of the moralists of the most intimate circle around Socrates. This story of Achilles, who deliberately prefers death which will make him immortal to the refusal to fight which would leave him his life, is everywhere re-evoked there; in the Apology of Socrates itself, Socrates makes much of it to define what is going to be his own behaviour before his judges; and we find the echo of it in the very text of Racine's tragedy - I will quote it for you later on - illuminated in a much more important way. But this belongs to the commonplaces which, throughout the centuries, ceaselessly reverberate, rebound always growing in this resonance which is always more empty and swollen.

What then is missing in tragedy, when it is carried on outside the field of its limits, limits which gave it its place in the respiration of the ancient community? The whole difference reposes on some shadows, obscurities, concealments which refer to the commandments of the second death. In Racine, these commandments no longer cast any shadow for the reason that we are no longer in the text where the Delphic oracle can even make herself understood. It is nothing but cruelty, vain contradiction, absurdity. The characters cavil, dialogue, monologue in order to say that in the final analysis there is

surely something amiss.

This is not at all the way it is in ancient tragedy. The commandment of the second death, because it is there under this veiled form, can be formulated there and be received there as arising from this debt which accumulates without a guilty party and is discharged on a victim without this victim having merited the punishment; this "he did not know", in a word, which I inscribed for you at the top of the graph on what is called the line of fundamental enunciating of the topology of the unconscious, here is what is already reached, prefigured - I would say, if it was not an anachronistic word in ancient tragedy - prefigured with regard to Freud who recognises it at once as referring to the raison d'etre that he had just discovered in the unconscious. He recognises his discovery and his domain in the tragedy of Oedipus, not because Oedipus had killed his father, nor because he wanted to sleep with his mother. A very entertaining mythologist (I mean who has made a vast collection, a vast gathering together of myths which is quite useful.... it is a work which has no reputation, but is of good practical use) who has reunited in two little volumes published by Penguin Books the whole of ancient mythology, believes he can act the smart alec about the Oedipus myth in Freud. He says: why does Freud not seek out his myth in Egyptian mythology where the hippopotamus is famous for sleeping with his mother and crushing his father? And he says: why did he not call it the hippopotamus complex? And with that, he believes that he has given Freudian mythology a good kick in the backside!

(5) But that is not why he chose it. There are many other heroes besides Oedipus who are the locus of this fundamental conjuncture. The important thing, and the reason why Freud rediscovers his fundamental figure in the tragedy of Oedipus is because "he did not know...." that he had killed his father and had slept with his mother.

Here then we have recalled these fundamental terms of our topology because it is necessary in order for us to continue the analysis of the Symposium, namely in order that you should perceive the importance of the fact that it should now be Agathon, the tragic poet, who comes to give his discourse on love.

I must again prolong this little pause to clarify my account, on the subject of what little by little I am promoting before you throughout this Symposium, about the mystery of Socrates, a mystery about which I was telling you the other day, that for a moment, I had this feeling of being killed by it. I do not think it is unsituatable, not only do I not think it is unsituatable, but it is because I believe that we can perfectly well situate it which justifies our having started from it for our research of this year. I recall this therefore in the same annotated terms which are the ones which I have just rearticulated before you, I recall it, in order that you may go and confront it with the texts of Plato about which (in so far as they are our primary document) for some time I have been

remarking that it is no longer in vain that I refer you to these readings. I would not hesitate to tell you that you should reduplicate the reading of the Symposium which almost all of you have done, with a reading of Phaedo which will give you a good example of what the Socratic method is and why it interests us.

We will say then that the mystery of Socrates, and you must have first hand experience of this document to make its originality shine for you again, is the establishment of what he himself calls science, episteme, whose meaning you can check out by referring to the text. It is quite obvious that this does not have the same resonance, the same accent as for us.....that there was not the slightest beginnings of what has been articulated for us under the rubric of science. The best formula that you can give of the establishment of this science in what? In consciousness, in a position... in the dignity of something absolute or more exactly in a position of absolute dignity, it is a question of nothing else than what we can, in our vocabulary, express as the promotion to this position of absolute dignity of the signifier as such. What Socrates calls science, is what is necessarily imposed on all interlocution in function of a certain manipulation, of a certain internal coherence, linked, or which he believes is linked, to the pure and simple reference to the signifier.

You will see it being pushed to its final term by the incredulity of his interlocutors who, however compelling his arguments may be, do not manage - any more than anybody else - to completely yield to the affirmation by Socrates of the immortality of the soul. What Socrates is going to refer himself to in the final analysis (and naturally in a way which for everybody, at least for us, is less and less convincing) is to properties like those of odd and even. It is from the fact that the number three could never in any way receive the qualification of evenness, it is on points like that that there rests the demonstration that the soul cannot accept, because it is at the very principle of life, the qualification of destructibility (Phaedo 103d-106d). You can see to what point what I am calling this privileged reference promoted as a sort of cult, of essential rite, the reference to (6) the signifier, is all that is in question as regards the new, original, striking, fascinating, seductive thing - we have historical testimony for it - contributed by the emergence of Socrates in the midst of the Sophists.

The second term to be extracted from what we have of this testimony, is the following, it is that, through Socrates and through what this time is the total presence of Socrates, through his destiny, through his death and what he affirms before dying, it appears that this promotion is coherent with this effect which I showed you in a man, of abolishing in him, in what appears to be a total fashion, what I would call in a Kierkegaardian term "the fear and trembling" before what? Precisely not before the first but before the second death. There is no hesitation for Socrates on this. He affirms to us that this second death incarnated (in his dialectic) in the fact that he raises to absolute power, to the power of being the only foundation of

certitude this coherence of the signifier, it is here that he, Socrates, will find without any doubt whatsoever his eternal life.

I will allow myself almost in the margin to sketch as a sort of parody - provided of course you do not give it more weight than what I am going to say - the picture of Cotard's syndrome: this tireless questioner seems to me to overlook the fact that his mouth is flesh. And that is why this affirmation, one could not say this certitude, is coherent. We are here almost before a sort of apparition which is foreign to us, when Socrates (do not have any doubt about it, in a very exceptional fashion, in a fashion which to employ our language and to make myself understood and to go quickly - I would call in a fashion which is of the order of a psychotic core) implacably unfolds his arguments which are not really arguments, but also this affirmation, more affirming perhaps than any that one has ever heard, to his disciples the very day of his death concerning the fact that he, Socrates, serenely leaves this life for a truer life, for an immortal life. He does not doubt that he will rejoin those who, let us not forget, still exist for him, the Immortals. Because the notion of Immortals cannot be eliminated, reduced for his thinking; it is in function of the antimony (the Immortals and the mortals) which is absolutely fundamental in ancient thought - and no less, believe me, in our own - that his living, experienced testimony takes its value.

I summarise then: this tireless questioner, who is not a speaker, who rejects rhetoric, the metrical, the poetic, who reduces metaphor and who lives entirely in the game not of the forced card but of the forced question and who sees in it his whole subsistence, engenders before you, develops throughout the whole time of his life what I would call a formidable metonymy whose result as is also attested - we are beginning from historical attestation - is this desire which is incarnated I would say in this set, sad, affirmation of immortality "black and wreathed immortality" Valery writes somewhere, this desire for infinite (7) discourse. Because in the beyond, if he is sure of rejoining the Immortals, he is also more or less sure he says of being able to continue throughout eternity with interlocutors who are worthy of him (those who have preceded him and all the others who will come to rejoin him), his little exercises, which, you have to admit is a conception which, however satisfying it may be for people who love allegory or an allegorical picture is all the same a conception which has a singular odour of delusion. Arguing about odd and even, of justice and injustice, of mortality and immortality, of the hot and the cold and of the fact that the hot cannot admit the cold into itself without weakening it, without withdrawing to one side in its essence as hot (as is explained to us at length in the Phaedo as principle for the reasons of the immortality of the soul), to argue about this throughout eternity is truly a very singular conception of happiness!

We have to set things off against their background: a man experienced in that way the question of the immortality of the

soul, I would say further, of the soul as we are still manipulating it and I would say as we are still encumbered with it. The notion of the soul, the figure of the soul that we have, which is not the one which has developed throughout all the generations of traditional heritage (I mean the soul that we have to deal with in the Christian tradition), the soul has as apparatus, as framework, as metallic rod in its interior, the side-product of Socrates' delusion of immortality. We are still living off it. And what I want simply to put before you, is the highlighting, the energy of this Socratic affirmation concerning the soul as immortal. Why? It is obviously not for the import that we habitually accord it. Because if we refer to this import, it is quite obvious that after some centuries of exercises, and even of spiritual exercises, the rate as I might say, what can be called the level of belief in the immortality of the soul among all of those whom I have before me - I would dare say - believers or unbelievers - is very tempered in the way one says a scale is tempered. This is not what is in question, this is not the interesting thing, to refer you to the energy, to the affirmation, to the highlighting, to the promotion of this affirmation of the immortality of the soul at a date and on certain foundations (by a man, who in his wake, stupefies in short his contemporaries by his discourse), it is so that you may interrogate yourselves, that you may refer yourselves to something which is very important: in order that this phenomenon could have been produced in order that a man should have been able to say... as we say: "Thus spake..." (This personage has the advantage over Zarathoustra of having existed)what must have been, to Socrates, his desire?

Here is the crucial point that I believe I can highlight for you, and all the more easily, in specifying all the better its meaning because I described at length before you the topology which gives its meaning to this question.

If Socrates introduces this position regarding which I would ask you to open after all any passage, any dialogue whatever of Plato (which refers directly to the person of Socrates) in order to verify the cogency, namely the decisive, paradoxical position of his affirmation of immortality and that on which there is founded this idea he has about science, in so far as I deduce it as this pure and simple promotion to absolute value of the function of the signifier in consciousness to what does this respond... to what atopie, I would say - the word, as you know, regarding Socrates is not mine - to what atopia of desire?

(8) The term atopia, atopos, to designate it, atopos, an unclassifiable, unsituatable case... we do not know where to shove this atopia, boys! This is what is in question, this is what the discourse of his contemporaries muttered about Socrates. For me, for us, this atopie of desire which I am questioning, does it not in a certain fashion coincide with what I could call a certain topographical purity, precisely in the fact that it designates the central point where, in our topology, this space of the entre-deux-morts is as such in its pure and empty state the place of desire as such, desire being there nothing more than

its place - in so far as it is no longer for Socrates anything but the desire for discourse, for the revealed discourse, forever revealing? From which there results of course the atopia of the Socratic subject himself, if it is the case that never before him had there been occupied by any man, in such a purified way, this place of desire.

I am not answering this question. I am posing it, because it is likely, that it at least gives us a first reference point to situate what our question is, which is a question that we cannot eliminate from the moment that we have once introduced it. And after all I am not the one who introduced it. It is, already, introduced from the moment that we perceived that the complexity of transference could in no way be limited to what is happening in the subject who is called the patient, namely the analysand. And in consequence the question is posed of articulating in a slightly more advanced way than has ever been done up to now what the desire of the analyst should be.

It is not sufficient now to speak about catharsis, the didactic purification, as I might say, of the greater part of the analyst's unconscious, all of this remains very vague. We must give credit to analysts that for some time they have not been satisfied with it. We must also notice, not to criticise them, but to understand the sort of obstacle that we have to deal with, that we have not even made the slightest beginning in what one could articulate so easily in the form of questions concerning what must be acquired by someone for him to be an analyst: he is now supposed to know a little bit more about the dialectic of his unconscious? When all is said and done what exactly does he know about it? And above all how far must what he knows have gone concerning the effects of knowledge? And simply I pose you this question: what must remain of his phantasies? - You know that I am capable of going further, of saying "his" phantasy, if indeed there is a fundamental phantasy. If castration is what must be accepted at the final term of analysis, what ought to be the role of his scar to castration in the eros of the analyst?

These are questions of which I would say it is easier to pose them than to resolve them. That indeed is the reason why they are not posed. And, believe me, I would not pose them either like that in a vacuum, like that as a way simply of tickling your imagination, if I did not think that there must be a method, an indirect, even oblique, even roundabout method, of throwing some light on these questions to which it is obviously impossible for us for the moment to respond all at once. All that I can tell you is that it does not seem to me that what one calls the doctor-patient relationship (with what it involves in terms of presuppositions, of prejudices, of a swarming syrup, which looks like cheese worms), is something which allows us to advance very far in this sense.

It is a question then of trying to articulate, in accordance with reference points which are, which may be designated for us starting with a topology that had already been sketched out as the coordinates of desire, what must be, what is fundamentally

the desire of the analyst.

(9) And if it is a question of situating it, I believe that it is neither by referring oneself to the articulations of the situation for the therapist or observer [nor] to any of the notions about situation as a phenomenology elaborates them for us, that we can find our proper reference points. The desire of the analyst is not something that can content itself, be satisfied with a dyadic reference. It is not the relationship with one's patient through a series of eliminations, of exclusions, which can give us the key to it. It is a question of something more intrapersonal. And, of course, I am not telling you either that the analyst must be a Socrates, or a die-hard, or a saint. No doubt these explorers, like Socrates or the die-hards or the saints, can give us some indications about the field that is in question, and not just some indications, but precisely this is the reason that on reflection we refer to it, for our part, all our science, I mean experimental science, in the field in question. But it is precisely starting from the fact that the exploration is carried on by them, that we can perhaps articulate, define in terms of longitude and of latitude the coordinates that the analyst should be capable of attaining simply to occupy the place which is his own - which is defined as the place that he must offer as vacant to the desire of the patient in order that he may realise himself as desire of the Other. This is why the Symposium interests us, it is because by this altogether privileged place that it occupies concerning the testimonies about Socrates (in so far as it is considered to place before us Socrates tackling the problem of love), the Symposium is for us a useful text to explore.

I believe I have said enough about it to justify our tackling the problem of transference, by beginning with the commentary on the Symposium. I believe also that it was necessary for me to recall these coordinates at the moment that we are going to enter into what occupies the central or quasi-central place of these celebrated dialogues, namely the discourse of Agathon.

Is it Aristophanes, or is it Agathon who occupies the central place? It is not important to decide. Between the two of them, in any case, they undoubtedly occupy the central place, because everything that had previously been according to all appearances demonstrated is considered by them as right away rejected, devaluated, because what it going to follow will be nothing other than the discourse of Socrates.

On this discourse of Agathon, namely the tragic poet, there would be a world of things to be said which are not simply erudite, but which would draw us into a detail, indeed into a history of tragedy which you have seen that I highlighted for you a little while ago, this is not the important thing. The important thing is to make you perceive the place of Agathon's discourse in the economy of the Symposium. You have read it. There are five or six pages in the French translation by Robin published by Guillaume Bude. I am going to take it near its high point, you will see why: I am here not so much to give you a more or less

elegant commentary on the Symposium as to lead you to the way in which it can or must be of use to us.

After having given a discourse of which the least one can say is that it has always struck every reader by its extraordinary "sophistry", in the most modern, the most common, pejorative sense of the word. The very type for example of what you can call this sophistry, is to say that: "Love wrongs not and is not wronged, wrongs no god and is wronged by none, wrongs no man (10) and is wronged by none." Why? Because - "nothing that happens to him comes by violence for violence touches not love;" - therefore - "nothing he does is violent, for everyone willingly serves Love in everything," Agathon tells us - "and what a willing person grants to a willing is just - so say the city's king, the laws'" (196c) The moral: love is then what is at the principle of the laws of- the city, and so on. . . since love is the strongest of all desires, irresistible voluptuousness, it will become confused with temperance, because temperance being what regulates desires and pleasures by right, love ought then to be confused with this position of temperance.

Obviously we are having fun. Who is having fun? Is it just we, the readers? I think that we would be quite wrong to believe that we are the only ones. Agathon is here in a posture which is certainly not secondary if only by the fact that, because, at least in principle, in the terms, in the position of the situation, he is the beloved of Socrates. [I believe] that Plato - we will give him this much credit - is also having fun with what I would call already - and you will see that I am going to justify it still more - the macaronic discourse of the tragedian on love. But I believe, I am sure and you will be sure of it once you have also read it, that we would be quite wrong not to understand that it is not we, nor Plato alone who are amusing ourselves here about this discourse.

It is quite clear... (contrary to what the commentators have said) it is completely out of the question that the one who is speaking, namely Agathon, does not himself know very well what he is doing.

Things are taken so far, things are so extreme, that you are simply going to see that at the high point of this discourse Agathon is going to tell us: "And I am moved to speak something of him in verse myself", and he expresses himself

eirenen men en anthropois peleagei de galenen (197c)

... "eirenen men en anthropois, peace among men," says M. Leon Robin; which means: love brings troubles to an end; a singular notion it must be said because we really had not the slightest suspicion of it until this idyllic modulation; but in order to dot the i's, he adds to it, peleagei de galenen, which means absolutely: "Nothing is working, dead calm on the deep". In other words, you must remember what calm weather on the sea meant for the ancients, that meant: nothing is working any more, the vessels remain blocked at Aulis and, when that happens to you in

mid-ocean, it is very embarrassing, just as embarrassing as when that happens to you in bed. So that when one evokes pelagei de galenen in connection with love, it is quite clear that one is having a little giggle. Love is what makes you break down, it is what causes you to make a fiasco of things.

And then that is not all. Afterwards he says, "respite from winds"... love is put aside... there is no more love nenemian anemon, this sounds moreover like what are always comic verses in a certain tradition. It is like two verses by Paul-Jean Toulet:

(11) "Sous le double ornement d'un nom mol ou sonore,

Non, il n'est rien que Nanine et Nonore."

We are in that register. And in addition koiten, which means in bed, "coucouché panier", nothing in the bed, "no more wind in the winds, all the winds have gone asleep" [and then] hupnon t'eni kedei a singular thing, -love brings us "in trouble rest and sleep", one might translate at first glance. But if you look at the sense of the occurrences of this kedos, the Greek term, always rich in underpinnings (which would allow us to revalorise in a particular way what one day - with no doubt a lot of benevolence towards us, but perhaps lacking despite everything by not following Freud in something essential - M. Benveniste, for our first number, articulated about the ambivalences of signifiers), kedos is not simply trouble, it is always kinship. The hupnon t'enikedei gives us an outline of kedos as "a relation by marriage of an elephant's thigh" somewhere in Lévi-Strauss and thus hupnos, "peaceful sleep", t'eni kedei "in relationships with the family-in-law", seems to me to be something worthy of crowning these verses which are undoubtedly constructed to shake us up, if we have not yet understood that Agathon is making fun.

Moreover from that moment on literally he cuts loose and tells us that love, is that which literally frees us, "empties us of estrangement, and fills us with friendliness" (197d).

"Naturally when you are possessed by love, you realise that we all form part of a big family, it is really from that moment on that one feels warm and comfortable." And so on... It continues for lines... I will leave you the pleasure of licking your chops over it some evening.

(12) In any case, if you agree that love "provides gentleness and banishes savagery; ...loves to give goodwill, hates to give illwill"; - there is here an enumeration on which I would like to spend a long time with you - the fact is that it is said to be the father of what? The father of Truphe, Habrotos, Chiide, Charites, Himeros and of Pothos. we would need more time than we have at our disposal here to draw the parallel of those terms which one could initially translate as "Luxury, Daintiness, Delicacy, Grace, Longing, Desire", and to do the double work that would consist in confronting them with the register of blessings, of honesty in courtly love as I recalled it for you last year.

It would be easy for you then to see the distance, and to see that it is quite impossible to satisfy oneself with the rapprochement which M. Leon Robin makes in a note with the Carte du Tendre or with the knightly virtues in La Minne: moreover he

does not evoke it, he only speaks about the Carte du tendre.

Because what I would show you text in hand, is that there is not one of these terms (Truphe for example, which people are happy to connote as Wellbeing) which has not been used by the majority of authors, not simply comic authors, with most disagreeable connotations. Truphe for example in Aristophanes, designates that which in a woman, in a wife, is introduced all of a sudden into the life, into the peace of a man, in terms of intolerable pretension. The woman who is said to be trupheros or truphera, is an intolerable little snob: she is the one who never stops for a single instant making the most in front of her husband of the superiorities of her rank and the quality of her family and so on....

There is not a single one of these terms which is not habitually and for the major part, conjoined, juxtaposed by the authors (whether it is a question this time of tragedians, even the poets like Hesiod) juxtaposed (chlide. delicacy for example), with the use of authadia, signifying this time one of the most intolerable forms of hubris and of infatuation.

I only want to point these things out to you in passing. It continues: love is "careful of good things, careless of bad things; in hardship, in fear, in the heat of passion and in talk a pilot..." (197d). These are translations which signify absolutely nothing, because in Greek you have: en pono, en phobo, en logo; en pono, that means in trouble; en phobo in fear; in logo, in speech, kubernetes, epibates, is the one who holds the rudder, the one also who is always ready to direct. In other words, its all a big joke. Pono, phobo, logo are in the greatest of disorder. What is in question, is always to produce the same effect of irony, indeed of disorientation which, in a tragic (13) poet, has really no other meaning than to underline that love is really what is unclassifiable, that which comes to put itself crosswise in all significant situations, that which is never in its place, that which is always out of season.

That this position is really something which is defensible or not, in rigorous terms, this of course is not the high point of the discourse, concerning love in this dialogue; this is not what is in question. The important thing is that it should be in the perspective of the tragic poet that we are given on love precisely the only discourse which is openly, completely derisive. And moreover, to underline what I am telling you, to seal the cogency of this interpretation you only have to read when Agathon concludes: "This, Phaidros, is my speech," he said; "may the god accept my dedication partly play, partly modest seriousness, and the best that I am able to do" (197e). The discourse itself is marked, as one might say, by its connotation as an amusing discourse, the discourse of someone who wishes to amuse.

And it is none other than Agathon as such, namely as the one whose triumph at the competition for tragedy is being

celebrated - let us not forget it, we are on the day following his success - who has the right to speak about love.

It is quite certain that there is nothing there which ought to disorient at all events. In every tragedy situated in its full context, in the ancient context, love always figures as an incident in the margins and, as one might say, lagging behind. Love, far from being the one who directs and who runs ahead, only lags behind here, to take up the very terms that you will find in the discourse of Agathon, lagging behind the thing to which curiously enough he compares it in a passage, namely the term which I put forward before you last year under the function of Ate in tragedy (195d).

Ate, misfortune, the thing that has been crucified and which can never be exhausted, the-calamity which is behind every tragic adventure and which, as the poet tells us - because it is to Homer that on this occasion reference is made - "Tender are her feet; she comes not near the ground, but walks upon the heads of men.", this is the way Ate passes, rapid, indifferent, and forever striking and dominating and bending heads, driving them mad; that is what Ate is. It is a singular thing, that in this discourse it should be under the reference of telling us that, like Ate, Love must have very tender feet, for it also not to be able to move except upon the heads of men! And on this point, once again, to confirm the phantastical character of this discourse, some jokes are made about the fact that after all not all the skulls are as tender as all that! (195e)

Let us come back one more time to the confirmation of the style of this discourse. All our experience of tragedy and you will see it more especially in the measure that, because of the Christian context, the vacuum (which is produced in the fundamental fatalism of antiquity, in the inscrutability, the incomprehensibility of the fatal oracle, the inexpressibility of the commandment at the level of the second death) can no longer be sustained because we find ourselves before a god who is not capable of giving senseless or cruel orders; you will see that love comes to fill this vacuum.

(14) Iphigenie by Racine is its most beautiful illustration, in a sense a sort of incarnation. It was necessary for us to have arrived at the Christian context for Iphigenia not to suffice as tragic. She has to have Eriphile as understudy, and properly so, not simply in order that Eriphile can be sacrificed in her place, but because Eriphile is the only true lover with a love which is presented to us as terrible, horrible, bad, tragic in order to restore a certain depth to the tragic space and regarding which we also see clearly that it is because love which, moreover sufficiently occupies the play (principally with Achilles), every time it manifests itself as pure and simple love, and not as black love, the love of jealousy, is irresistibly comic.

In short, we have arrived at the crossroads where, as will be recalled at the end of the final conclusions of the Symposium, it

is not enough in order to speak about love to be a tragic poet, it is also necessary to be a comic poet. It is at this precise point that Socrates receives the discourse of Agathon and, to appreciate how he welcomes it, it was necessary, I believe - you will see it in what follows - to articulate it with all the accent that I believed I had to give to it today.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 18 January 1961

We have arrived then, in the Symposium, at the moment when Socrates is going to begin to speak in the epainos or the encomion. I told you in passing, these two terms are not altogether equivalent. I did not want to dwell on their difference which would have drawn us into a rather eccentric discussion. In terms of praising love, it is said, affirmed by himself - and the word of Socrates cannot be contested in Plato - that if Socrates knows anything, if there is something that he is not ignorant of, it is the business of love (198d). We should not lose sight of this in everything that is going to happen.

I underlined for you, in a sufficiently convincing fashion I think, the last time, the strangely derisive character of the discourse of Agathon. Agathon, the tragedian speaks about love in a way which gives the feeling that he is clowning ... of a macaronic discourse. At every instant, it seems that the expression that is suggested to us, is that he a little. I underlined, in the content, in the body of the arguments, in the style, in the very details of elocution, the extremely provocative character of the little verses in which he himself expresses himself at a particular moment. It is rather disconcerting to see the theme of the Symposium culminating in such a discourse. This is not new, it is the function, the role that we give it in the development of the Symposium which may be, because this derisive character of the discourse has always struck those who have read and commented on it. To such a degree that, to take for example what a personage of German science at the beginning of this century - whose name, the day I mentioned it to you, made you laugh, I do not know why - Wilamowitz Moellendorff, following in this the tradition of almost all those who preceded him, states that the discourse of Agathon is characterised by its Nichtigkeit, its emptiness.

It is quite strange that Plato should have put this discourse then into the mouth of the one who is going to immediately precede the discourse of Socrates, in the mouth of the one who is, let us not forget it, currently and on this occasion the beloved of Socrates, at the time of the Symposium.

Moreover the way Socrates is going to introduce his intervention, is by two points. First of all, even before Agathon speaks, there is a sort of interlude where Socrates himself said something like: "After having heard all that we have heard and, if Agathon now adds his discourse to the others, how am I going

to be able to speak?" (194a). Agathon for his own part excuses himself. He also announces some hesitation, some fear, some intimidation at speaking before what we could call such an (2) enlightened, such an intelligent, emphrones public. And the beginnings of a sort of discussion, of debate, takes place with Socrates who begins at that moment to question him a little in connection with the remark which had been made that, if Agathon, the tragic poet, had just triumphed on the tragic stage, it is because on the tragic stage he is addressing a crowd, and that here it is a question of something else. And we begin to be engaged on a slope which could be ticklish. We do not know where we might be led when Socrates begins to question him. It is more or less the following: "Would you be ashamed of something in which you might eventually show yourself to be inferior, only in front of us? In front of the others, in front of the crowd, in front of the mob, would you feel yourself more at ease in advancing themes which might be less certain..." (194c). And here, God knows, we do not know very well what we are getting involved in: whether it is a sort of aristocratism, as one might call it, of dialogue or if, on the contrary, Socrates' goal is to show (as seems more likely and as his whole practice bears witness) that even a slave, that even an ignorant person, is capable, if appropriately questioned, to show in himself the germs of truth, the germs of a sound judgement.

But on this slope someone intervenes, Phaidros who, interrupting Agathon, does not allow Socrates to draw him along this path. He knows well that Socrates does not care about anything, as he says expressly, except conversing with someone he loves, and that if we get into this dialogue, we will never get finished....

Then at that Agathon begins to speak, and Socrates finds himself in the position of reproving him. He reproves him. In order to do it, he has as one might say the best of roles and the method immediately shows itself to be of striking superiority, as regards the ease with which it shows up in the middle of the discourse of Agathon what has split apart dialectically, and the procedure is such that here it can be nothing other than a refutation, than an annihilation of the discourse of Agathon, properly speaking, in a way that denounces its ineptitude, its Nichtigkeit, its emptiness. [So that] the commentators and specifically the one whom I evoked above, think that Socrates himself is reluctant to push too far the humiliation of his interlocutor and that here we have a reason for what we are going to see. The fact is that at a given moment Socrates stops and allows to speak in his place (takes as an intermediary someone who is going to be a prestigious figure for the rest of the story) Diotima, the foreigner from Mantinea; that if he allows Diotima to speak and if he allows himself to be taught by Diotima, it is in order not to remain any longer, vis-a-vis the one to whom he has dealt a decisive blow, in the position of magister. And he allows himself to be taught, and he relays himself through this imaginary personage in order to mitigate the disarray into which he has thrown Agathon. I am completely against this position. Because if we look at the text more closely, I believe that we cannot say that this is altogether its meaning. I would say that, just as people want to show, in the discourse of Agathon, a sort of avowal of his (3)

going astray: "I fear, Socrates, I knew nothing of what I said!" (201b), the impression that remains with us in hearing him is rather that of someone who might respond: "We are not on the same level, I spoke in a fashion that had a meaning, in a fashion which was well grounded, I spoke let us say at the limit even, in enigmas"; let us not forget that ainos with ainittomai, leads us straight to the etymology of the enigma: "What I said was said in a certain tone".

And so we read, in the discourse-response of Socrates, that there is a certain fashion of conceiving praise that for a moment Socrates devaluates, namely to place, to wrap around the object of praise everything good that can be said. But is this really what Agathon did? On the contrary, it seems, in the very excesses of this discourse, that there was something which it appears was only waiting to be heard. In a word for an instant we can, by listening in a certain fashion - and in fashion which I think is the correct one - to the response of Agathon, we have the impression at the limit that by introducing his critique, his dialectic, his mode of interrogation, Socrates finds himself in the pedantic position.

I mean that it is clear that Agathon says something, which has its share of irony and it is Socrates who, arriving there with his big boots, simply changes the rules of the game. And in truth, when Agathon says again: ego, phanai, o Socrates, soi ouk an dunaimen antilegein, "Socrates, I really could not contradict you; let it be as you say." (201c) there is there someone who disengages himself and who says to the other: "Now let us pass on to the other register, to the other fashion of acting with the word!"

But one could not say, like the commentators and even the one whose text I have before my eyes, Leon Robin, that it is a sign of impatience on the part of Agathon. In a word, if the discourse of Agathon can truly be put between the quotation marks of this really paradoxical game, of this sort of sophisticated tour de force, we only have to take seriously - which is the proper way - what Socrates himself says about this discourse which, to use the French term which corresponds best to it, bewilders him (le sidère), méduse's him as it is put expressly, because Socrates makes a play on words on the name of Gorgias and the figure of the Gorgon. Such a discourse closes the door to the operation of dialectic, petrifies Socrates and transforms him, he says, into stone.

But this is not an effect to be disdained. Socrates brought things onto the plane of his method, of his interrogative method, of his way of questioning, of his way also (shown to us by Plato), of articulating, of dividing the object, of operating according to this diairesis, thanks to which the object is presented to examination to be situated, articulated in a certain fashion whose register we can locate with the progress constituted by a development of knowledge suggested at the origin by the Socratic method.

(4) But the import of Agathon's discourse is not for all that annihilated. It belongs to another register, but it remains

exemplary. It plays in a word an essential function in the progress of what is demonstrated for us by way of a succession of paeans about love. No doubt it is significant, rich in teaching for us, that it should be the tragic which, as one might say produced the comic romancero about love or on love, and that it should be the comic Aristophanes who spoke about love with an almost modern accent, in its sense of passion. This is eminently rich in suggestions, in questions for us. But the intervention of Socrates intervenes as a rupture, and not as something which devaluates, reduces to nothing what had just been enounced in the discourse of Agathon. And after all can we consider as nothing, and as a simple antiphrase, the fact that Socrates puts all the accent on the fact that it was - he says it properly speaking: kalon logon, "a beautiful discourse", that he spoke very beautifully (198b).

Often the evocation of the ridiculous has been made, of that which may provoke laughter in the preceding text. He does not seem to say to us that it was in any way ridicule that was in question at the moment of this change of register. And at the moment when Socrates brings forward the wedge that his dialectic has driven into the subject in order to bring to us what one expects from Socratic illumination, we have a feeling of discord, not of a balancing which would entirely cancel out what had been formulated in the discourse of Agathon.

Here we cannot fail to remark that, in the discourse of Socrates, what is articulated as being properly method, his interrogative method, which means that, if you will allow me this play on words in Greek, the eromenos, the beloved, is going to become erotomenos (the one interrogated), with this properly Socratic interrogation, Socrates only makes emerge one theme which is the one which from the beginning of my commentary I announced on several occasions namely: the function of lack.

Everything that Agathon says most especially, that beauty for example belongs to it, is one of its attributes, saying all of this succumbs before the interrogation, before this remark of Socrates: "Is Love such as to be a love of something, or of nothing?" "Is it when he has what he desires and loves that he desires and loves it, or when he has not?" (199d - 200a). I will pass over the detail of the articulation of this question properly so-called. He turns it, returns it, with an acuity which as usual makes of his interlocutor someone whom he manipulates, whom he manoeuvres. This indeed is the ambiguity of the questioning of Socrates: the fact is that he is always the master, even where, for us who are reading it, in many cases there may appear to be a way of escape. It does not matter either to know what on this occasion ought or can be developed in strict rigour. It is the testimony that is constituted by the essence of the Socratic interrogation that is important to us here, and also what Socrates introduces, expressly wishes to produce, that of which he conventionally speaks for us.

We are assured that the adversary cannot refuse the conclusion, (5) namely, as he expressly expresses it: "Then he, and every other who desires, desires what is not in his possession, tou me hetoimou, kai tou me parontos, and not there, kai ho me echei.

what he has not, kai ho me estin autos, and what he is not himself" - it is translated- "kai hou endees esti, what he lacks? Toiaut' atta estin on he epithumia te kai ho eros estin, those are the sort of things of which there is desire and love" - the text is certainly translated in a weak fashion - "epithumei he desires tou me hetoimou" - is properly speaking - "what is not ready-made, tou me parontos what is not there, what he does not have, ho me echei kai ho me estin autos, that he is not himself, that which he is lacking, that which he essentially lacks" in the superlative (200e). Here is what is articulated by Socrates in what he introduces to this new discourse, this something which he says is not to be placed on the plane of verbal games - through which we would say that the subject is captured, captivated, is fixated, fascinated (199b).

The thing that distinguishes it from the sophistical method, is that it makes there reside the progress of a discourse which he tells us he pursues without any search at all for elegance in words in this exchange, this dialogue, [in] this consent obtained from the one to whom he addresses himself, and in this consent presented as the emergence, the necessary evocation in the one to whom he addresses himself of knowledge that he already has. Here, as you know, is the essential articulating point on which the whole Platonic theory, of the soul and also of its nature, of its consistency, of its origin, reposes. All this knowledge is already in the soul and it is enough to have the correct questions in order to re-evoke, to reveal it. This knowledge is there from all time and bears witness in a way to the precedence, the antecedent nature of knowledge; from the fact that not only has it always existed, but that because of it we can suppose that the soul shares in an infinite anteriority, it is not only immortal, it has always existed. And this is what gives rise and lends credence to the myth of metempsychosis, of reincarnation, which of course on the plane of myth, on a different plane to that of dialectic, is all the same what accompanies in the margin the development of Platonic thought.

But there is one thing here which is likely to strike us, it is that having introduced what I called a little while ago this wedge of the notion, of the function of lack as essential, constitutive of the relationship of love, Socrates speaking in his own name remains there. And it is no doubt a correct question to ask oneself why he substitutes the authority of Diotima for himself.

But it also seems to me that it is a very facile way of resolving this question to say that it is to spare the self-love of Agathon. Things are the way we are told: namely that Plato has only to produce a quite elementary piece of judo or jiu-jitsu: "I fear I knew nothing of what I said, my discourse is elsewhere" (201b), as he says expressly. - It is not so much Agathon who is in difficulty as Socrates himself. And as we cannot suppose, in (6) any way, that what was conceived here by Plato, is to show Socrates as a heavy-handed pedant, after what was undoubtedly an airy, if only because of its amusing style, discourse given by Agathon, we must believe that if Socrates hands over in his discourse, it is for another reason than the fact that he himself

would not have been able to continue, and we can immediately situate this reason: it is because of the nature of the affair of the thing, of the to pragma, that we are dealing with.

We can suspect - and you will see that it is confirmed by what follows - that it is because it is love that is being spoken about that this path must be taken, that he is led to proceed in this fashion. Let us note in effect the point upon which his question was brought to bear. The efficacy that he had put forward, produced, being the function of lack, and in a very obvious fashion, the return to the desiring function of love, the substitution of epithumei, he desires, for era, he loves. And in the text, one sees a moment when, interrogating Agathon on the fact: whether he thinks or not "that love is love of something"... there is substituted the term: love or desire of something (199d - 199e).

It is quite obviously in so far as love is articulated in desire, is articulated in a fashion which here is not properly speaking articulated as substitution, that substitution is not - one can legitimately object - the very function of the method of Socratic knowing, it is precisely because the substitution is here a little rapid that we have a right to point it out, to notice it.

That is not to say that for all that there is any mistake, because it is indeed around the articulation of Eros, Love and of eros, desire, that there is going effectively to turn the whole dialectic as it develops in the dialogue as a whole. Again it is appropriate that something should be pointed out in passing. Here, let us remark again that it is not for nothing that what is properly speaking the Socratic intervention is isolated in this way. Socrates goes very precisely to the point where what I called the last time his method, which is to bring the effect of his questioning to bear on what I called the consistency of the signifier, is properly speaking manifest, visible in the very delivery, in the fashion in which he introduces his question to Agathon:

einai tinos ho Eros eros, e oudenos?

"Yes or no, is Love such as to be a love of something (de quelque chose), or of nothing?" And here he specifies, because the Greek genitive tinis [of something] like the French genitive has its ambiguities: quelque chose can have two meanings, and these meanings are in a way accentuated in an almost massive, caricatural fashion and in the distinction that Socrates makes: tinis can mean: to come from someone, to be the descendant of someone, "I do not mean to ask," he says, "if he is a love of such a mother or such a father" but what is behind it.

This is precisely all the theogony of which there was question at the beginning of the dialogue. It is not a question of knowing from what love descends, from whom it comes - as one says: "My kingdom is not of (de) this world" - in a word from what god love comes? It is a question of knowing, on the plane of the interrogation of the signifier, of what, as signifier, love is the correlative. And this is why we find marked... we cannot for our part, it seems to me, not notice that what Socrates opposes to this way of posing the question: from whom does this

love come? What is in question is the same thing, he says, as this name of the Father - we rediscover it here because what we (7) rediscover is the same father, it is the same thing as to ask: when you say Father, what does that imply, not in terms of the real father, namely what he has as a child, but when one speaks about a father one necessarily speaks about a son. The Father is father of a son by definition, qua father. "You would say, I suppose, if you wanted to answer right" - translates Leon Robin - "that the Father is father of son or daughter" (199d)

We are here properly speaking on the terrain which is the very one on which there develops the Socratic dialectic of interrogating the signifier about its consistency as signifier. Here he is very able.,, Here he knows what he is doing. And even that which permits this rather rapid substitution that I spoke about between eros and desire, is that. It is nevertheless a process, a progress which is marked, he says, by his method.

If he hands over to Diotima, why should it not be because, concerning love, things could not go any further with the properly Socratic method. I think that everything is going to demonstrate this and the discourse of Diotima itself. Why should we be surprised about it, I would say already: if there is a step which constitutes compared to the contemporaneity of the sophists the beginning of the Socratic procedure, it is that a knowledge (the only sound one Socrates tells us in the Phaedo), can affirm itself from the simple consistency of this discourse which is dialogue which is carried on in terms of the necessary apprehension, the apprehension as necessary of the law of the signifier.

When one speaks about odd and even, with which, do I need to remind you that in my teaching here, I think I took enough pains, exercised you for long enough to show you that it is a question here of the domain which is entirely closed off in its own register, that the odd and the even owe nothing to any other experience than that of the operation of signifiers themselves, that there is no odd or even, in other words nothing countable, except what is already raised to the function of an element of the signifier, of the texture of the signifying chain. One can count words or syllables, but one can only count things because of the fact that words and syllables are already counted.

We are on this plane, when Socrates begins to speak, outside the confused world of the discussion, of the debate of physicists who like the sophists preceded him who, at different levels, in different ways, organise what we might call in an abbreviated fashion - you know that I would only accept it with the greatest of reservations - the magical power of words. How does Socrates affirm this knowledge which is internal to the operation of the signifier: he posits, at the same time as this knowledge which is entirely transparent of itself, that this is what constitutes its truth.

Now is it not on this point that we have taken the step which makes us disagree with Socrates; in this no doubt essential step which assures the autonomy of the law of the signifier, Socrates,

for us, prepares this field of the word precisely, properly speaking, which, for its part, has permitted the whole critique of human knowledge as such.

But the novelty, if what I am teaching you about the Freudian revolution is correct, is precisely the fact that something can be sustained in the law of the signifier, not simply without this involving a knowledge but by expressly excluding it, namely by constituting itself as unconscious, namely as necessitating at its level the eclipsing of the subject in order to subsist as unconscious chain, as constituting what is fundamentally irreducible in the relationship of the subject to the signifier. All this to say that this is why we are the first, if not the only ones, not to be necessarily surprised that the properly Socratic discourse, the discourse of episteme, of knowledge transparent to itself, cannot be pursued beyond a certain limit (8) with regard to a particular object, when this object, if indeed it is the one on which Freudian thought has been able to bring new light, this object is love.

In any case, whether you follow me in this or whether you do not follow me, with respect to a dialogue whose effect, throughout the ages, has maintained itself with the force and the constancy, the interrogative power and the perplexity which develop around it, Plato's Symposium, it is clear that we cannot satisfy ourselves with such miserable reasons as saying that if Socrates allows Diotima to speak, it is simply to avoid too greatly irritating the self-love of Agathon.

If you will allow a comparison which keeps all its ironic value, suppose that I have to develop for you the totality of my doctrine on analysis verbally and that - verbally or in writing does not matter - in doing it, at a certain point, I hand over to Françoise Dolto, you would say: "All the same there is something... why, why is he doing that?" This, naturally supposing that if I hand over to Françoise Dolto this is not to have her say stupid things! This would not be my method and, moreover, I would have great trouble making her say such things.

This embarrasses Socrates much less, as you are going to see, because the discourse of Diotima is characterised precisely by something which at every instant allows there to appear gaps which undoubtedly allow us to understand why Socrates does not assume them. What is more, Socrates punctuates these gaps with a whole series of replies which are in a way - it is tangible, it is enough to read the text - more and more amused. I mean that there are first of all very respectful replies, then more and more of the style: "Do you really think that?", then afterwards: "Very well, let us go as far as you are leading me", and then, at the end, that becomes clearly: "Have fun, my girl, I'm listening, talk away!". You must read this discourse in order to understand that this is what is in question.

Here I cannot avoid making a remark which it seems has not struck the commentators: Aristophanes, in connection with Love, had introduced a term which is transcribed quite simply in French under the name of dioecisme (193a). It is a question of nothing other than this Spaltung, of this division of the completely

round primitive being, of this kind of derisory sphere of Aristophanes' image whose value I told you about. And this dioecisme, he describes in this way by comparing it to a practice which, in the context of community relations, of relations in the city, was the mainspring on which there depended the whole of politics in Greek society, [this practice] consisted [in the fact], when one wished to destroy an enemy city - this is still done in our own day - in dispersing the inhabitants and putting them into what are called reassembly camps. This had been done not long before, at the time that the Symposium appeared and it is even one of the reference points around which turns the date that we can attribute to the Symposium. There is here, it appears, some anachronism or other, the thing to which Plato was alluding, namely an initiative of Sparta, having happened after the text, the supposed meeting of the Symposium and its unfolding around the praise of love. This dioecisme is very evocative for us.

It is not for nothing that I used the term Spaltung above, a term evocative of subjective splitting, and what, at the moment that - this is what I am in the process of exposing before you - in the measure that something which, (when it is a question of the (9) discourse of love) escapes the knowledge of Socrates, ensures that Socrates is effaced, is split (se dioecise) and allows a woman to speak in his place. Why not the woman who is in him?

In any case, no one contests it and certain people, Wilamowitz Moellendorff in particular, have accentuated, underlined that there is in any case a difference of nature, of register, in what Socrates develops on the plane of his dialectical method and what he presents to us in terms of myth throughout everything that the Platonic testimony transmits, restores to us of it. We should always... (and in the text it is always quite clearly separated out) when one comes (and in many other fields besides that of love) to a certain term of what can be obtained on the plane of episteme, of knowledge, in order to go beyond (we can easily conceive that there is a limit in so far as on the plane of knowledge there is only what is accessible to the pure and simple operation of the law of the signifier). In the absence of well-advanced experimental conquests, it is clear that in many domains - and in domains which we for our part can pass over - there will be a pressure to let myth speak.

What is remarkable, is precisely this rigour which ensures that when one engages with, one locks into the plane of myth, Plato always knows perfectly well what he is doing or what he makes Socrates do and that one knows that one is in the realm of myth. I do not mean myth in its common usage, muthous legein is not what that means, muthous legein, is the common discourse, what is said, that is what it is. And throughout the whole Platonic work we see in the Phaedo, in the Timaeus, in the Republic, myths emerging, when they are required, to supply for the gap in what cannot be assured dialectically.

Starting from there, we are going to see better what one could call the progress of the discourse of Diotima. Somebody here once wrote an article which he called, if I remember rightly: "Un desir d'enfant". This article was entirely built on the

ambiguity of the term: desir de l'enfant, in the sense that it is the child who desires; désir d'enfant, in the sense that one desires to have a child. It is not a simple accident of the signifier that things are that way. And the proof, is that you have all the same been able to notice that it is around this ambiguity that there is precisely going to pivot the wedge-like attack on the problem by Socrates.

When all is said and done what did Agathon tell us? It was that Eros was the eros of beauty, the desire of Beauty, I would say in the sense that one might say that the god Beauty desires. And what Socrates retorts to him, is that a desire for beauty implies that one does not possess beauty.. These verbal quibbles have not the vain, pinpricking, confusing character which would tempt one to turn aside from them. The proof, is that it is around these two terms that the whole discourse of Diotima is going to develop.

And first of all, to clearly mark the continuity, Socrates is going to say that it is on the same plane, that it is with the same arguments that he had used with regard to Agathon that Diotima introduced her dialogue with him. The stranger from (10) Mantinea who is presented to us in the personage of a priestess, and magician (let us not forget that at this turning point of the Symposium we are told a good deal about these arts of divination, of how to operate, in order to make oneself heard by the gods in order to move natural forces), is a woman who is wise in the matter of witchcraft, of divination as the comte de Cabanis would say, of all sorts of sorcery (goétie). The term is Greek, goetia, and is in the text (203a). Moreover, we are told something about her which I am astonished to find not much is made of in reading this text, which is that she is supposed to have succeeded by her artifices in putting off the plague for ten years, and what is more at Athens! It must be admitted that this familiarity with the powers of the plague is all the same something to make us reflect, to make us situate the stature and the style of the figure of the person who is going to speak to you about love.

It is on this plane that things are introduced and it is on this plane that she takes up the thread about that which Socrates, who at that moment acts naive or pretends to be foolish, poses her the question: "If Love is not beautiful, then it must be ugly?" (201e) Here in effect is where there ends up the results of the method called through more or less, of yes or no, of presence or absence, proper to the law of the signifier (what is not beautiful is ugly), here at least is what is implied in all rigour by the pursuit of the ordinary mode of interrogation of Socrates. At which the priestess is able to respond to him: "My son" - I would say - "you must not blaspheme! And why should everything that is not beautiful be ugly?"

In order to say it, she introduces to us the myth of the birth of Love which is all the same worth our while dwelling on. I would point out to you the myth exists only in Plato that, among the innumerable myths, I mean the innumerable mythical accounts about the birth of Love in ancient literature - I took the trouble of studying a certain amount of it - there is not a trace of this

thing which is going to be enounced here. It is nevertheless the myth which has remained, as I might say, the most popular one. It appears then, it seems, quite clear that a personage who owes nothing to tradition in the matter, to speak plainly a writer of the epoch of the Aufklärung like Plato, is quite capable of forging a myth, and a myth which makes its way throughout the centuries in an altogether living way in order by functioning as a myth, because who does not know since Plato told us, Love is the son of Poros and of Penia.

Poros, the author whose translation I have before me - simply because it is the translation which is opposite the Greek text - translates it in a way which is not properly speaking irrelevant, by Expedient. If expedient means resource, it is undoubtedly a valid translation, cleverness also, if you wish, because Poros is the son of Metis which is again more Ingenuity than wisdom. Over against him we have the feminine person in the matter, the one who is going to be the mother of Love, who is Penia, namely Poverty, even destitution, and in an articulated fashion in the text who is characterised by what she knows well about herself, aporia namely that she is without resources, this is what she knows about herself, that she is without any resources! And the word aporia, which you recognise, is the same word that serves us concerning the philosophical process, it is an impasse, it is something before which we have to give in, we are at the end of our resources.

(11) Here then the female Aporia face to face with the male Poros, Resource, which seems rather illuminating for us. But there is something which is very fine in this myth, which is that in order that Aporia should engender Love with Poros, there is a necessary condition which it expresses, which is that at the moment this happened, it was Aporia who was staying awake, who had her eyes wide open and had, we are told, come to the feast for the birth of Aphrodite and, like any good self-respecting Aporia in this hierarchical epoch, had remained on the steps, near the door, she had not of course entered, because she was aporia, namely having nothing to offer, she did not enter the festive hall.

But the good thing about feasts is precisely that at them there happen things which upset the ordinary order and that Poros falls asleep. He falls asleep because he is drunk, which is what allows Aporia to make herself pregnant by him, namely to have this offspring which is called Love and whose date of conception coincides then with the birth-date of Aphrodite. This indeed is why it is explained to us that Love will always have some obscure relationship with beauty, which is what is in question in the whole development of Diotima, and it is because Aphrodite is a beautiful goddess.

Here then the matter is clearly put. The fact is that on the one hand it is the masculine which is desirable and that, it is the feminine which is active, this at least is how things happen at the moment of the birth of Love and, when one formulates "love is giving what one does not have", believe me, I am not the one who is telling you this in connection with this text in order to produce one of my hobby horses, it is quite evident that this

is what is in question here because the poor Penia, by definition, by structure has properly speaking nothing to give, except her constitutive lack, aporia. And what allows me to tell you that I am not forcing things here, is that if you refer to number 202a of the text of the Symposium you will find the expression "to give what one does not have" literally written there in the form of the development which starting from there Diotima is going to give to the function of love, namely: aneu tou echein logon dounai - it fits exactly, in connection with the discourse, the formula "to give what one does not have" - it is a question here of giving a discourse, a valid explanation, without having it. It is a question of the moment when, in her development, Diotima is going to be led to say what love belongs to. Well, love belongs to a zone, to a form of affair, a form of thing, a form of pragma, a form of praxis which is at the same level, of the same quality as doxa, namely the following which exists, namely that there are discourses, ways of behaving, opinions - this is the translation that we give to the term doxa - which are true without the subject being able to know it.

The doxa in so far as it is true, but is not episteme, it is one of the commonplaces of the Platonic doctrine to distinguish its field, love as such is something which forms part of this field. It is between episteme and amathia, just as it is between the beautiful and the true. It is neither one nor the other. To remind Socrates that his objection (a naive pretended objection no doubt, that if love lacks the beautiful then it must be ugly, but it is not ugly)... there is a whole domain which is, for example, exemplified by the doxa to which we ceaselessly refer in the Platonic discourse and which can show that love, according to the Platonic term, is metaxu, "between the two".

That is not all. We cannot be satisfied with such an abstract, indeed negative definition of the intermediate. It is here that (12) our speaker Diotima, brings into play the notion of the demonic: the notion of the demonic as intermediate between immortals and mortals, between gods and men, is essential to evoke here in so far as it confirms what I told you about the way we must think of what the gods are, namely that they belong to the field of the real. We are told this, these gods exist, their existence is not at all contested here and the demoniacal the demon, to diamonion, there are many others besides love, is that through which the gods make their message heard by mortals, "whether they are awake or asleep" (203a) a strange thing which does not seem either to have caught people's attention much is that: "whether they are awake or asleep" if you have heard my phrase, who does this refer to, to the gods or to men? Well, I can assure you that in the Greek text there is some doubt about it. Everybody translates, according to the norms of commonsense, that this refers to men, but it is in the dative which is precisely the case in which the theios are in the phrase, so that it is another little riddle on which we will not dwell very long.

Simply, let us say that the myth situates the order of the demonic at the point where our psychology speaks about the world of animism. It is calculated in a way also to encourage us to rectify what is over-hasty in this notion that the primitive has

an animist world. What we are told here, in passing, is that it is the world of what we would call enigmatic messages, which means simply for us messages in which the subject does not recognise his own part. The discovery of the unconscious is essential in that it has allowed us to extend the field of messages which we can authenticate - the only ones that we can authenticate as messages, in the proper sense of this term in so far as it is founded in the domain of the symbolic - namely that many of those which we would believe to be opaque messages of the real are only our own, this is what has been conquered from the world of the gods, this is also what at the point that we have got to, has still not been conquered.

It is around this thing which is going to develop in the myth of Diotima that we will continue with from beginning to end the next time; and having gone right through it we will see why it is condemned to leave opaque that which is the object of the praises which constitute the sequence of the Symposium, condemned to leave it opaque and to leave as a field in which there can be developed the elucidation of its truth only what is going to follow after the entry of Alcibiades.

Far from being an addition, a useless part which is to be rejected, this entrance of Alcibiades is essential, because it is from it, it is in the action which develops with the entry of Alcibiades, between Alcibiades, Agathon and Socrates, that there can only be given in an efficacious fashion the structural relationship. It is even there that we will be able to recognise what the discovery of the unconscious and the experience of psychoanalysis (specifically the transference experience), allows us for our part, finally, to express in a dialectical fashion.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 1 February 1961

I left you the last time, as a kind of staging-post in our account, on the word to which I also told you I would leave until the next occasion all its enigmatic value, the word agalma.

I did not think that what I said would turn out to be so true. For a great number, the enigma was so total that people were asking: "What was that? What did he say? Do you know?". Well, for those who manifested this unease, one of my own family was able at least to give this response - which proves at least that in my house secondary education has its uses - that means: "ornament, adornment". In any case, this response was only in effect a first level response about something that everyone should know: agalma, from agallo, "to adorn, to ornament", signifies in effect - at first sight - "ornament, adornment". First of all the notion of ornament, of adornment is not that simple; it can be seen immediately that this may take us very far. Why, and with what does one adorn oneself? Or why does one adorn oneself and with what?

It is quite clear that, if we are here at a central point, many avenues should lead us to it. But I finally retained, in order to make of it the pivot of my explanation, this word agalma. You should not see in it any taste for rarity but rather the fact that in a text which we suppose to be extremely rigorous, that of the Symposium, something leads us to this crucial point which is formally indicated at the moment at which I told you the stage revolves completely and, after these games of praising regulated as they had been up to then by this subject of love, there enters this actor, Alcibiades, who is going to change everything. As proof I only need the following: he himself changes the rules of the game by making himself the presiding authority. From that moment on he tells us, it is no longer a question of praising love but the other person and specifically each one is to praise his neighbour on the right. You will see that this is important for what follows, that it is already a lot to say about it, that, if it is a question of love, it is in act in the relationship of one to the other that it is here going to have to manifest itself (213e, 214d).

I pointed out to you the last time, it is noteworthy that from the moment that things get started on this terrain, with the experienced producer whom we suppose to be at the source of this

dialogue (which is confirmed for us by the incredible mental genealogy which flows from this Symposium, whose second-last echo I highlighted for you the last time in connection with Kierkegaard's banquet - the last, I already named for you: it is Eros and Agape by Anders Nygren, all this is still dependent on the framework, the structure of the Symposium) well then, this experienced personage can do nothing else... once it is a question of bringing the other into play, there is not just one of them, there are two others, in other words there are a minimum (2) of three. This, Socrates does not allow to escape in his reply to Alcibiades when, after this extraordinary admission, this public confession, this thing which is somewhere between a declaration of love and almost one might say a malediction, a defamation of Socrates, Socrates replies to him: "It was not for me that you were speaking, it was for Agathon" (222c,d). All of this makes us sense that we are getting into a different register.

The dual relationship of the one who, in the ascent towards love, proceeds by way of identification (if you wish, moreover by the production of what we have indicated in the discourse of Diotima) being helped in it by this marvel of beauty and, coming to see in this beauty itself identified here at the end with the perfection of the work of love, finds in this beauty its very term and identifies it to this perfection.

Something else therefore comes into play here other than this univocal relationship which gives to the term of the work of love this goal, this end of identification to what I put in question here last year, the thematic of the sovereign good, of the supreme good. Here we are shown that something else is suddenly substituted in the triplicity, in the complexity, which shows us, presents itself to reveal to us that in which, as you know, I maintain the essential of the analytic discovery is contained, this topology in which fundamentally there results the relationship of the subject to the symbolic in so far as it is essentially distinct from the imaginary and its capture. This is our term, this is what we will articulate the next time to bring to a close what we will have to say about the Symposium. It is with the help of this that I will make re-emerge old models which I have given you of the intrasubjective topology in so far as this is the way that we should understand the whole of Freud's second topography.

Today therefore, what we are highlighting, is something which is essential in order to rejoin this topology, in the measure that it is on the subject of love that we have to rejoin it. It is about the nature of love that there is question, it is about a position, an essential articulation too often forgotten, elided, and to which we analysts nevertheless have contributed the element, the mainspring which allows its problematic to be defined, it is on this that there should be concentrated what I have to say to you today about agalma.

It is all the more extraordinary, almost scandalous that this should not have been better highlighted up to now, that it is a

properly analytic notion that is in question, is what I hope to be able to make you sense, put your finger on in a little while.

Agalma, here is how it is presented in the text: Alcibiades speaks about Socrates, he says that he going to unmask him - we will not today get to the end of what the discourse of Alcibiades signifies - you know that Alcibiades goes into the greatest detail about his adventure with Socrates. He tried what? To make Socrates, we will say, manifest his desire to him because he knows that Socrates has a desire for him; what he wanted was a sign.

Let us leave this in suspense, it is too soon to ask why. We are only at the beginning of Alcibiades* approach and, at first sight, this approach does not seem to be essentially distinguished from what was said up to then. At the beginning there was question, in the discourse of Pausanias, of what one was going to look for in love and it was said that what each one sought in the other (an exchange of proper procedures) was what he contained in terms of eromenon, of the desirable. It indeed is the same thing that appears ... that seems to be in question now. Alcibiades tells us that Socrates is someone whose "amorous dispositions draw him towards beautiful boys...". - this (3) is a preamble - "he is ignorant of everything and knows nothing, agnoei; that is his pose!" (216d) - and then, he goes into the celebrated comparison with the Silenos which has a double import. I mean first of all that this is what he appears like, namely with nothing beautiful about him and, on the other hand, that this Silenos is not simply the image that is designated by this name, but also something which is its usual aspect: it is a wrapping, a container, a way of presenting something - these things must have existed. These tiny instruments of the industry of the time were little Silenos which served as jewel boxes, as wrapping to offer presents and precisely, this is what is in question.

This topological indication is essential. What is important, is what is inside. Agalma can indeed mean "ornament or adornment", but it is here above all "a precious object, a jewel, something which is inside". And here expressly, Alcibiades tears us away from this dialectic of the beautiful which was up to then the path, the guide, the mode of capture on this path of the desirable and he undeceives us in connection with Socrates himself.

"Iste hoti, you should know," he says, "Socrates apparently loves beautiful boys, oute ei tis kalos esti melei auto ouden, whether one or other is beautiful, melie auto ouden, does not matter a straw to him, he does not give a hang, on the contrary he despises it, kataphronei", we are told, "as no one would ever believe, tosouton hoson oud'an eis oietheie you could not even imagine...". and that really, the aim that he pursues - I am underlining it because after all it is in the text - it is expressly articulated at this point that it is not alone external goods, riches for example, which everyone up to then (we are delicate souls) has said that it was not what one sought in

others, "nor any of the other advantages which might seem in any way to procure makaria, happiness, felicity, hupo plethous to anyone whatsoever;" one is quite wrong to interpret it here as a sign that it is a question of disdain for goods which are goods "for the mob". What is rejected, is precisely what had been spoken about up to then, good things in general (216e).

"On the other hand", Alcibiades tells us, "do not pause at his strange appearance if, eironeuomenos, he pretends ignorance, he questions, he plays the fool in order to get a response, he really behaves like a child, he spends his time making fun. But spoudasantos de autou" - not as it is translated - "when he decides to be serious" - but - it is - "you, be serious, pay careful attention to it, and open this Silenos, anoichthentos, opened out, I don't know if anyone has ever seen the agalмата which are inside, the jewels" about which right away Alcibiades states that he really doubts whether anyone has ever been able to see what he is talking about.

We know that this is not alone the discourse of passion, but the discourse of passion at its most quaking point, namely the one (4) which is in a way entirely contained in the origin. Even before he explains himself, he is there, charged with the most fundamental aspect of everything that he has to tell us, what is going to begin. Therefore it is indeed the language of passion.

Already this unique, personal relationship: no one has ever seen what is in question, as I once happened to see; and I saw it!" "I found them, these agalмата already so divine, chrusa", c'est chou, "it was golden and all beautiful and wonderful, that there remained only one thing to do, en brachei, as soon as possible, by the quickest means, do whatever Socrates commands, poieteon, what is to be done"; what becomes duty, is whatever Socrates is pleased to command (217a).

I do not think it useless for us to articulate a text like this a step at a time. This is not to be read as one reads France-Soir or an article in the International journal of psychoanalysis. It is indeed something whose effects are surprising. On the one hand we are not told for the present what these agalмата (in the plural) are and, on the other hand, this involves all of a sudden this subversion, this falling under the influence of the commandments of the one who possesses them. You cannot fail to find here all the same something of the magic which I already highlighted for you around the Che vuoi? What do you want? It is indeed this key, this essential cutting edge of the topology of the subject which begins with: what do you want? - In other words: is there a desire which is really your will?

"And" - Alcibiades continues - "as I thought he was in earnest when he spoke about hora, eme hora" - this is translated by - "youthful bloom...", and there begins the whole seduction scene.

But as I told you, we will not go any further today, we will try to make you sense that which renders necessary this passage from the first phase to the other one, namely why it is absolutely

necessary that at any price Socrates should unmask himself. We are only going to stop at these agalmata. I can honestly tell you that it is not - give me credit for this - to this text that there goes back for me the problematic of agalma, not that this would be in the least inappropriate because this text suffices to justify it, but I am going to tell you the story as it is.

I can tell you, without being really able to date it, that my first encounter with agalma is an encounter like every encounter, unexpected. It is in a verse of Euripides' Hecuba that it struck me some years ago and you will easily understand why. It was all the same a little while before the period when I introduced here the function of the phallus, with the essential articulation that anaJLytic experience and Freud's doctrine shows us that it has, between demand and desire; so that in passing, I did not fail to be struck by the use that was given to this term in the mouth of Hecuba. Hecuba says: "Where am I going to be brought, where am I going to be deported?"

As you know, the tragedy of Hecuba takes place at the moment of the capture of Troy and, among all the places that she envisages in her discourse, there is: "Might it be to this at once sacred and plague-stricken place... Delos?" - As you know no one had the right either to give birth there or to die there. And then, at the description of Delos, she makes an allusion to an object which was celebrated, which was - as the fashion in which she speaks about it indicates - a palm tree of which she says that (5) this palm tree, is odinos agalma dias, namely odinos, of the pain, agalma dias, the term dias designates [Leto], it is a question of the birth of Apollo, it is "the agalma of the pain of the divine one". We rediscover the thematic of giving birth but all the same rather changed because here this trunk, this tree, this magical thing erected, preserved as an object of reference throughout the ages, is something which cannot fail - at least for us analysts - to awaken the whole register that there exists around the thematic of the [female] phallus in so far as its phantasy is, as we know, at the horizon and situates this infantile object [as a fetish].

The fetish that it remains can hardly fail either to be for us the echo of this signification. But in any case, it is quite clear that agalma cannot be translated here in any way by "ornament, adornment", nor even as one often sees it in the texts, "statue" - because often theon agalmata, when one is translating rapidly one thinks that it fits in, that it is a question in the text of "statues of the gods". You see right away, the point I am keeping you at, the reason why I believe that it is a term to highlight in this signification, this hidden accent which presides over what must be done to hold back on this path of banalisation which always tends to efface for us the true sense of texts, the fact is that each time you encounter agalma - pay careful attention - even if it seems to be a question of "statues of the gods", if you look closely at it, you will perceive that it is always a question of something different.

I am giving you already - we are not playing at riddles here -

the key to the question in telling you that it is the fetish-
 accent of the object in question that is always stressed.
 Moreover of course, I am not giving here a course of ethnology,
 nor even of linguistics. And I am not going, in this
 connection, to link up the function of the fetish nor of those
 round stones, essentially at the centre of a temple (the temple
 of Apollo for example). You very often see (this thing is very
 well known) the god himself represented, a fetish of some people,
 tribe at the loop of the Niger; it is something unnamable,
 formless, upon which there can be poured out on occasion an
 enormous lot of liquids of different origins, more or less
 stinking and filthy and whose accumulated superimposition, going
 from blood to shit, constituted the sign that here is something
 around which all sorts of effects are concentrated making of the
 fetish in itself something quite different to an image, to an
 icon, in so far as it might be a reproduction.

But this occult power of the object remains at the basis of the
 usage whose accent, even for us, is still preserved in the term
 idol or icon. In the term idol, for example in the use
 Polyeuctus makes of it, it means: it is nothing at all, it is to
 be thrown away. But all the same if you say about one or other
 person: "I have made him my idol", that means all the same that
 (6) you do not simply make of him the reproduction of yourself or
 of him but that you make of him something else, around which
 something happens.

Moreover it is not a question for me here of pursuing the
 phenomenology of the fetish but of showing the function that this
 occupies in its place. And in order to do this I can rapidly
 indicate to you that I tried, as far as my strength allowed me,
 to make a survey of the passages which remain of Greek literature
 where the word agalma is employed. And it is only in order to
 go quickly that I will not read each one to you.

You should simply know for example that it is from the
 multiplicity of the deployment of significations that I extract
 for you what is in a way the central function that must be seen
 at the limit of the usages of this word; because naturally, it is
 not our idea - I think here along the line of the teaching I give
 you - that etymology consists in finding the meaning in the root.

The root of agalma is not all that easy. What I want to tell
 you, is that the authors, in so far as they link it to agauos
 from this ambiguous word agamai, "I admire" but just as much "I
 am envious, I am jealous of", which is going to give agazo, "what
 one tolerates with difficulty", going towards agaiomai which
 means "to be indignant", from which the authors looking for roots
 (I mean roots which carry a meaning with them, which is
 absolutely contrary to the principle of linguistics) separate out
gal or gel the gel of gelao the gal which is the same in glene,
 "the pupil", and galene - the other day, I quoted it for you in
 passing - "it is the sea which shines because it is perfectly
 unified": in short, that it is an idea of eclat which is hidden
 here in the root. Moreover aglaos, Aglae, the Brilliant is
 there to provide us with a familiar echo. As you see, this does

not go against what we have to say about it. I only put it here in parentheses, because also this is rather only an occasion to show you the ambiguities of this idea that etymology is something which carries us not towards a signifier but toward a central signification.

Because one could just as well interest oneself not in gal, but in the first part of the phonematic articulation, namely aga which is properly the reason why agalma interests us with respect to agathos. And along this path, you know that if I do not jib at the import of the discourse of Agathon, I prefer to go frankly to the great phantasy of the Cratylus you will see that the etymology of Agathon is agastos, admirable, therefore God knows why one should go looking for agaston, the admirable that there is in thoon, rapid! This moreover is the way in which everything is interpreted in the Cratylus, there are some rather fine things; in the etymology of anthropos there is "articulated language". Plato was really someone very special.

(7) Agalma, in truth, it is not to that aspect that we have to turn to give it its value; agalma, as one can see, had always referred to images on condition that you see clearly that, as in every context, it is always a very special type of image. I have to choose among the references. There are some in Empedocles, in Heraclitus, in Democritus. I am going to take the most popular, the poetic, the ones that everybody knew by heart in antiquity. I am going to look for them in an interlined edition of the Iliad and of the Odyssey. In the Odyssey for example there are two places where one finds agalma.

It is first of all in Book III in the Telemachus section and it is a question of sacrifices which are being made for the arrival of Telemachus. The pretenders, as usual, make their contribution and there is sacrificed to the god a boos which is translated by "a heifer", which is a specimen of the bovine species. And it is said that there was specially invoked someone called Laerkes who is a goldsmith, like [Hephaistos] and who is charged with making "a golden ornament", agalma for the horns of the beast. I will spare you all the practicalities of the ceremony. But what is important, is not what happens afterwards, whether it is a question of a voodoo-type sacrifice, what is important is what it is said they expect from agalma; agalma in effect is involved in this, we are expressly told it. The agalma, is precisely this golden ornament, and it is as an offering to the goddess Athena that this is sacrificed, so that having seen it, she may be kecharoito, "gratified" - let us use this word, because it is a word from our own language. In other words, the agalma appears indeed as a kind of trap for the gods; the gods, these real beings, there are contraptions which catch their eye.

You must not believe that this is the only example that I would have to give you of the use of agalma, for example when, in Book VIII of the same Odyssey, we are told what happened at the fall of Troy, namely the famous history of the big horse which contained in its belly the enemies and all the misfortunes. [The horse] who

was pregnant with the ruin of Troy, the Trojans who had dragged it inside the walls question themselves and ask themselves what they are going to do with it. They hesitate and we have to think that this hesitation was what was fatal for them, because there were two things to do - either, to open the belly of the hollow wood to see what is inside - or, having dragged it to the summit of the citadel, to leave it there to be what? Mega agalma. It is the same idea, it is the charm. It is something which is here as embarrassing for them as for the Greeks. To tell the truth it is an unusual object, it is this famous extraordinary object which is so much at the centre of a whole series of preoccupations which are still contemporaneous - I do not need to evoke here the surrealist horizon.

What is certain is that, for the ancients also, the agalma is something in terms of which one can in short capture divine attention. There are a thousand examples of it that I could give you. In the story of Hecuba (again in Euripides), in another place, there is recounted the sacrifice to Achilles' manes, of her daughter Polyxenes. And it is very well done: we (8) have there the exception which is the occasion for evoking in us erotic mirages: it is the moment that the heroine herself offers her admirable breast which is we are told "like an agalma, hos agalmatos". Now it is not sure... there is nothing to indicate that we should be satisfied here with what that evokes, namely the perfection of the mammary organs in Greek statuary. I indeed rather believe that what is in question, given that at the epoch it was not about objects in a museum, is indeed rather about something the signs of which we see everywhere moreover in the use that is made of the word when it is said that in the sanctuaries, in temples, in ceremonies people "hang up anapto, agalmata". The magical value of objects which are evoked here is indeed linked rather to the evocation of these objects which we well know which are called ex voto. In a word, for people much closer than we are to the differentiation of objects at the origin, it is as beautiful as ex voto breasts; and in effect ex voto breasts are always perfect, they are machine-turned, moulded. Other examples are not lacking, but we can stay with that.

What is in question, is the brilliant sense, the gallant sense, because the word galant comes from galer in old French; it is indeed, it should be said, the function of this that we analysts have discovered under the name of partial object. One of the greatest discoveries of analytic investigation is this function of the partial object. The thing which on this occasion should astonish us most, us analysts, is that having discovered such remarkable things our whole effort should always be to efface their originality.

It is said somewhere, in Pausanias, also in connection with a usage of agalma, that the agalmata which referred in such and such a sanctuary to sorceresses who were there expressly to hold back, to prevent Alcmenes from giving birth were amudroteros amudrota, "a little bit effaced". Well, that's it!

We ourselves have also effaced, as far as we were able, what is meant by the partial object; namely that our first effort was to interpret what had been a marvellous discovery, namely this fundamentally partial aspect of the object in so far as it is pivot, centre, key of human desire, this would have been worth (9) dwelling on for a moment... But no, not at all! This was directed towards a dialectic of totalisation, namely the only one worthy of us, the flat object, the round object, the total object, the spherical object without feet or paws, the whole of the other, the perfect genital object at which, as everyone knows, our love irresistibly comes to term! We did not say to ourselves in connection with all of this that - even by taking things in this way - perhaps that qua object of desire, this other is the addition-of a whole lot of partial objects (which is not at all the same at a total object), that what we ourselves perhaps, in what we elaborate, have to handle in this foundation which is called our Id, is perhaps a question of a vast trophy of all these partial objects.

At the horizon of our ascesis, of our model of love, we have placed the other... which is not altogether wrong, but of this other, we have made the other to whom there is addressed this bizare function which we call oblativity: we love the other for himself - at least when one has arrived at the goal and at perfection, at the genital stage which blesses all of this!

We have certainly gained something by opening up a certain topology of relationships to the other which moreover, as you know, is not simply our privilege because a whole contemporary speculation which is personalist in different ways turns around it. But it is funny all the same that there is something that we have left completely to one side in this affair - it has to be left to one side when one approaches things from this particularly simplified perspective - and which supposes, that with the idea of pre-established harmony, the problem is resolved: that in short it is enough to love genitally to love the other for himself.

I did not bring - because I dealt with it elsewhere and you will see it coming out soon - the incredible passage which, on this, is developed on the subject of the characterology of the genital person, in this volume which is called La Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui. The sort of sermonising which takes place around this terminal idealness is something whose ridiculousness I have, I believe, for a long time made you sense. There is no need for us to dwell on it today. But in any case, it is quite clear that to come back to the starting point and to sources, there is at least one question to pose on this subject. If this oblativity love is truly only in a way the homologue, the development, the flowering of the genital act in itself (which would be enough, as I would say, to give its secret, its pitch, its measure), it is clear that the ambiguity persists as regards whether our oblativity is what we dedicate to this other in this love which is all-loving, all for the other, whether what we are seeking is his jpuissance (as seems self-evident from the fact that it is a question of genital union) or indeed his perfection.

When one evokes such high-flown moral ideas as that of oblativity, the least that can be said about it, which is something that reawakens old questions, is all the same to evoke the duplicity of these terms. After all these terms, in such a worn down, simplified form can only be sustained by what is underlying, namely the altogether modern supposition of the subject and the object. Moreover once an author who is a little bit careful to write in a style which is permeable to the (10) contemporary audience develops these terms, it will always be around the notion of the subject and the object that he will comment on this analytic theme: we take the other as a subject and not at all purely and simply as our object. The object being situated here in the context of a value of pleasure, of enjoyment, of jpuissance, the object being supposed to reduce this uniqueness of the other (in so far as he should be for us the subject) to this omnivalent function (if we make of him only an object) of being after all any object whatsoever, an object like others, to be an object which may be rejected, changed, in short to be profoundly devalued.

Such is the thematic which underlies this ideal of oblativity, as it is articulated, when it is made for us into a type of ethical correlative necessary for acceding to a true love which is supposed to be sufficiently connoted by being genital.

You should note that today I am less in the process of criticising - this is also why I dispense myself with recalling the texts - this analytic foolishness, than of putting in question that on which it reposes, namely that there is supposed to be some superiority or other in favour of the beloved, of the love partner in the fact that he is thus, in our existential-analytic vocabulary, considered as a subject. Because I do not know whether after having accorded a pejorative connotation to the fact of considering the other as an object, anyone has ever made the remark that to consider him as a subject is no better. Because if one object is as good as another according to its thinking, on condition that we give to the word object its initial meaning (that there are objects in so far as we distinguish them and can communicate them), if it is deplorable therefore that the beloved should ever become an object, is it any better that he should be a subject?

To respond to this it is enough to make the remark that if one object is as good as another, for the subject it is still worse, because it is not simply another subject that he is as good as. A subject strictly speaking is another! The strict subject, is someone to whom we can impute what? Nothing other than being like us this being who enarthron echein epos, "who expresses himself in articulated language", who possesses the combination and who therefore can respond to our combination by his own combinations, whom we can bring into our calculations as someone who combines like us.

I think that those who are formed according to the method that we have introduced, inaugurated here are not going to contradict me on this, it is the only sound definition of the subject, in any

case the only sound one for us - the one which permits there to be introduced how a subject obligatorily enters into the Spaltung determined by his submission to this language. Namely that starting from these terms we can see how it is strictly necessary that something happens, which is that in the subject there is a part where it (c_a) speaks all by itself, this thing from which nevertheless the subject remains suspended. Moreover - it is precisely what it is a question of knowing and how is it possible to forget it - what function there can be occupied in this rightly elective, privileged relationship that the love relationship is by the fact that this subject with whom among all others we have this bond of love... the way precisely this question has a relationship with the fact that he is the object of our desire. Because if one suspends this mooring point, this turning point, this centre of gravity, of hooking-on of the love (11) relationship, if one highlights it and if, in doing so, one does not do it in a distinctive way, it is really impossible to say anything at all that is not a conjuring trick as regards the love relationship. It is precisely by that, by this necessity of accentuating the correlative object of desire in so far as this is the object, not the object of equivalence, of the transitivity of goods, of the transaction about things that are coveted, but this something which is the aim of desire as such, that which accentuates one object among all as being without equivalence to the others. It is with this function of the object, it is to this accentuating of the object that there responds the introduction into analysis of the function of the partial object.

And moreover in fact everything which gives, as you know, its weight, its resonance, its accent to metaphysical discourse, always reposes on some ambiguity. In other words, if all the terms you make use of when you are doing metaphysics, were strictly defined, had each only a univocal signification, if the dictionary of philosophy triumphed in any way (the eternal goal of professors!) you would no longer have to do metaphysics at all, because you would no longer have anything to say. I mean that you perceive that as regards mathematics, it is much better there, one can move about signs that have a univocal sense because they do not have any.

In any case, when you speak in a more or less passionate way about the relationships of the subject and the object, it is because under subject you put something other than this strict subject that I spoke to you about above and, under object, something other than the object which I have just defined as something which, at the limit, is confined to the strict equivalence of an unequivocal communication of a scientific object. In a word, if this object impassions you it is because within, hidden in it there is the object of desire, agalma (the weight, the thing that makes it interesting to know where this famous object is, to know its function and to know where it operates just as much in inter- as in intrasubjectivity) and in so far as this privileged object of desire, is something which, for each person, culminates at this frontier, at this limiting point which I have taught you to consider as the metonymy of the

unconscious discourse where it plays a role that I tried to formalise - I will come back to it the next time - in the phantasy.

And it is always this object which, however you have to speak about it in analytic experience - whether you call it breast, phallus, or shit -, is a partial object. This is what there is question of in so far as analysis is a method, a technique which advanced into this abandoned field, into this discredited field, into this field excluded by philosophy (because it is not managable, not accessible to its dialectic and for the same reasons) which is called desire. If we are not able to highlight, highlight in a strict topology, the function of what there is signified by this object at once so limited and so fleeting in its shape, which is called the partial object, if therefore you do not see the interest of what I am introducing today under the name of agalma (it is the major point of analytic experience) and I cannot believe it for an instant given that, however misunderstood this is, the force of things brings it about that the most modern things that are done, said in the analytic dialectic turn around this fundamental, radical function, the Kleinian reference of the object qua good or bad, which indeed is considered in this dialectic as a primordial given. It is indeed on this that I would ask you to allow your minds to dwell for an instant.

We bring into play a lot of things, a lot of functions of identification: identification to the one from whom we demand something in the appeal of love and, if this appeal is rejected, (12) identification to the very one to whom we address ourselves as the object of our love (this very tangible passage from love to identification) and then, in a third sort of identification (you should read a little Freud: the Essais de psychanalyse), the function of third which this certain characteristic object takes on in so far as it may be the object of the desire of the other to whom we identify ourselves. In short, our subjectivity is something we entirely construct in plurality, in the pluralism of these levels of identification which we will call the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, which we will also call the desiring Ego.

But it is all the same necessary to know where in this articulation there functions, there is situated the partial object. And there you can simply remark, with the present development of analytic discourse, that this object, agalma, little o, object of desire, when we search for it according to the Kleinian method, is there from the beginning before any development of the dialectic, it is already there as object of desire. The weight, the intercentral kernel of the good or the bad object (in every psychology which tends to develop itself and explain itself in Freudian terms) is this good object or this bad object that Melanie Klein situates somewhere in this origin, this beginning of beginnings which is even before the depressive phase. Is there not something there in our experience, which by itself alone is already sufficiently descriptive?

I think that I have done enough today in saying that it is around

this that concretely, in analysis or outside analysis, there can and there should be made the division between a perspective on love which, it, in a way, drowns, diverts, masks, elides, sublimates everything that is concrete in experience (this famous ascent towards a supreme Good whose cheapened vague reflections it is astonishing to see being still kept in analysis by us, under the name of oblativity, this sort of loving in God, as I might say, which is supposed to be at the basis of every loving relationship), or whether, as experience shows, everything turns around this privilege, around this unique point constituted somewhere by what we only find in a being when we really love. But what is that.... precisely agalma, this object which we have learned to circumscribe, to distinguish in analytic experience and around which, the-next time, we will try to reconstruct, in its triple topology (of the subject, of the small other and of the big Other), at what point it comes into play and how it is only through the Other and for the Other that Alcibiades, like each and every person, wants to make his love known to Socrates.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 25 January 1961

We arrived the last time at the point where Socrates, speaking about love, makes Diotima speak in his place. I stressed with a question mark this astonishing substitution at the acme, at the point of maximum interest of the dialogue, namely when Socrates after having brought about the decisive turning point by producing lack at the heart of the question about love (love can only be articulated around this lack because of the fact that there can only be lack of what it desires), and after having brought about this turning point in the always triumphant, magisterial style of this questioning in so far as it is brought to bear on this consistency of the signifier - I showed you that it was what was essential in Socratic dialectic - the point at which he distinguishes from all other sorts of knowledge, episteme, science, at this point, in a singular fashion, he is going to allow to speak in an ambiguous fashion the person who, in his place, is going to express herself by what we have properly speaking called myth - myth about which on this occasion I pointed out to you that it is not as specified a term as it is in our tongue - with the distance that we have taken about what distinguishes myth from science: muthous legein, is at once both a precise story and the discourse, what one says. This is what Socrates is going to rely on by letting Diotima speak.

And I underlined, accentuated with a stroke, the relationship there is between this substitution and the dioecisme whose form, essence Aristophanes had already indicated as being at the heart of the problem of love; by a singular dividing up it is perhaps the woman, the woman who is in him I said, that Socrates from a certain moment allows to speak.

You all understand that this totality, this succession of forms, this series of transformations - employ it as you wish in the sense that this term takes on in combinations - is expressed in a geometrical demonstration; this transformation of figures in the measure that the dialogue advances, is where we are trying to rediscover the structural reference points which, for us and for Plato who is guiding us here, will give us the coordinates of what is called the object of the dialogue: love.

That is why, reentering the discourse of Diotima, we see that something develops which, in a way, is going to make us slip

further and further from this original trait that Socrates introduced into his dialectic by posing the term lack which Diotima is going to interrogate us about; what she is going to lead us to takes its beginnings already around an interrogation, about what is envisaged by the point at which she takes up Socrates' discourse: "What is lacking to the one who loves?"

And there, we find ourselves immediately brought to this dialectic of goods for which I would ask you to refer to our discourse of last year on Ethics. "Why does the one who loves love these good things?" And she continues: "It is in order to (2) enjoy them" (205a). And it is here that the arrest, the return takes place: "Is this dimension of love going to arise then from all these goods?" And it is here that Diotima, by making a reference also worth noting to what we have accentuated as being the original function of creation as such, of poiesis, is going to take it as her reference in order to say: "When we speak about poiesis, we are speaking about creation, but do you not see that the use we make of it is all the same more limited, because it is to these sorts of creators who are called poets, this sort of creation which means that it is to poetry and to music that we are referring, just as in all the good things there is something which is specified for us to speak of love..." (205d), this is how she introduces the theme of the love of beauty, of beauty as specifying the direction in which there is exercised this appeal, this attraction for the possession, for the enjoyment of possessing, for the constitution of a ktema which is the point to which she will lead us in order to define love (204c-206a).

This fact is tangible in the rest of the discourse, something is sufficiently underlined in it as a surprise and as a leap: this good thing, in what way does it refer to what is called and what is specially specified as beauty? Undoubtedly, we have to underline at this turning point of the discourse this feature of surprise which means that it is at this very passage that Socrates bears witness in one of his replies to a marvelling, to the same bewilderment which had been evoked for the sophistical discourse, and regarding which he tells us that Diotima demonstrates the same priceless authority as that with which the Sophists exercise their fascination; and Plato warns us that at this level Diotima expresses herself just like a Sophist and with the same authority (206b-208b).

What she introduces is the following, that this beauty has a relationship with something which concerns not having, not anything which can be possessed, but being, and being properly speaking in so far as is it that of the mortal being. What is proper to a mortal being is that he perpetuates himself by generation. Generation and destruction, such is the alternation which rules the domain of what is perishable, such also is the mark which makes of it an inferior order of reality, at least this is the way that this is ordered in the whole perspective which unfolds in the Socratic line of descendants, both in Socrates and in Plato.

This alternation of generation and corruption is here what is striking in the very domain of the human, this is what ensures that it finds its eminent rule elsewhere, at a higher level, where precisely neither generation nor corruption attack the essences, in the eternal forms in the participation in which alone what exists is assured in its foundation as being.

Beauty therefore, says Diotima, is that which in short in this movement of generation (in so far, she says, as it is the mode in which the mortal is reproduced, that it is only by this that he approaches the permanent, the eternal, that this is his fragile mode of participation in the eternal), beauty is properly speaking that which in this passage, in this participation at a distance, what helps him, as one might say, to get through the difficult points. Beauty is the way of a sort of giving birth, not without pain but with the least pain possible, this painful manoeuvring of all that is mortal towards what it aspires to, namely immortality.

The whole discourse of Diotima properly articulates this function of beauty as being first of all - it is properly in this way that she introduces it - an illusion, a fundamental mirage through which the perishable, fragile being is sustained in its (3) relationship, in its quest for everlastingness which is its essential aspiration. Of course, there is in this almost shamelessly an opportunity for a whole series of slippages which are so many conjuring tricks. And in this connection, she introduces as being of the same order this same constancy in which the subject recognises himself as being in his life, his short individual life, always the same, despite - she underlines this remark - the fact that when all is said and done there is not a point or a detail of his carnal reality, of his hair and even his bones, which is not the locus of a perpetual renewal. Nothing is ever the same, everything flows, everything changes (the discourse of Heraclitus underlies this), nothing is ever the same and nevertheless something recognises itself, affirms itself, says that it is always itself. And it is to this that she refers significantly in order to tell us that it is analogously, that when all is said and done it is of the same nature as what happens in the renewal of beings by way of generation: the fact that one after another these beings succeed one another by reproducing the same type. The mystery of morphogenesis is the same as that which sustains in its constancy the individual form.

In this first reference to the problem of death, in this function which is attributed to this mirage of beauty as being that which guides the subject in his relationship with death (in so far as he is at once both distanced from and directed by the immortal), it is impossible for you not to make the rapprochement with what last year, I tried to define, to approach, concerning this function of beauty in this effect of defence in which it intervenes, of a barrier at the extreme point of this zone which I defined as being that of the entre-deux-morts. In short what beauty appears to us to be destined to cover over in the very discourse of Diotima is, if there are two desires in man

which capture him in this relationship to eternity with generation on the one hand, corruption and destruction on the other, it is the desire for death qua unapproachable that beauty is designed to veil. The thing is clear at the beginning of Diotima's discourse.

One finds this phenomenon which we brought out in connection with tragedy in so far as tragedy is at once the evocation, the approach of the desire for death as such which is hidden behind the evocation of Ate, of the fundamental calamity around which there turns the destiny of the tragic hero and of the fact that, for us, in so far as we are called to participate in it, it is at this maximal moment that the mirage of tragic beauty appears.

Desire of beauty, desire for beauty, it is this ambiguity around which the last time I told you there was going to operate the sliding of the whole discourse of Diotima. I am leaving you here to follow it yourselves in the development of this discourse. Desire of beauty, desire in so far as it is attached, as it is captured in this mirage, this is what corresponds to what we have articulated as corresponding to the hidden presence of the desire for death. The desire for beauty, is that which, in a way, reversing the function, brings it about that the subject chooses the traces, the appeals of what his objects offer him, certain of his objects.

It is here that we see operating in the discourse of Diotima this slippage which, from this beauty which was there, not medium but transition, a mode of passage, makes it become, this beauty, the very goal which is going to be sought. By dint, one might say, of remaining the guide, it is the guide which becomes object, or (4) rather which substitutes itself for the objects which can be its support, and not without also the transition being extremely marked by it in the discourse itself. The transition is forced. We see Diotima, after having gone as far as possible in the development of functional beauty, of beauty in this relationship to the goal of immortality, as having gone as far as paradox here because she is going (evoking precisely the tragic reality to which we referred ourselves last year) as far as to give this enunciation which does not fail to provoke some derisive smiles: "Do you think that those who show themselves capable of the most beautiful actions, Ascestis" - about whom I spoke last year in connection with the entre-deux-morts of tragedy - "in so far as she accepted to die in place of Admetus did not do it so that people would speak about her, so that discourse would make her immortal forever?" (208d).

It is to this point that Diotima brings her discourse and she stops, saying: "Perhaps even you may become an initiate; but as for the higher revelations (epopteia), I do not know if you could ever become an adept" (210a). Evoking properly speaking the dimension of the mysteries, she takes up her discourse again on this other register (what was only a transition becomes the goal) in which, developing the thematic of what we could call a sort of Platonic Don Juanism, she shows us the ladder which is proposed to this new phase which develops as an initiatory one,

which makes objects resolve themselves in a progressive ascent to what is pure beauty, beauty in itself, beauty without admixture. And she suddenly passes to something which seems indeed to have no longer anything to do with the thematic of generating, namely that which goes from love (not just simply of a beautiful young man, but of this beauty that there is in all beautiful young people) to the essence of beauty, from the essence of beauty to eternal beauty and, by taking things at a very high level, grasping its operation in the order of the world of this reality which turns around the fixed plane of the stars which - as we have already indicated - is that by which knowledge, in the Platonic perspective, rejoins properly speaking that of the Immortals.

I think that I have sufficiently made you sense this sort of conjuring through which beauty, in so far as it finds itself as first defined, encountered as a prize on the path of being, becomes the goal of the pilgrimage, how the object which was presented to us at first as the support of beauty becomes the transition towards beauty, how really - if we bring it back to our own terms - one could say that this dialectical definition of love, as it is developed by Diotima, encounters what we have tried to define as the metonymical function in desire.

It is something which is beyond all these objects, which is in the passage from a certain aim, from a certain relationship, that of desire through all the objects towards a limitless perspective; this is what is in question in the discourse of Diotima. One might believe, from numerous indications, that this is in the final analysis the reality of the discourse. And more or less, it is indeed what we are always used to considering as being the perspective of eros in the Platonic doctrine. The erastes, the eron, the lover, in search of a distant eromenos is led by all the eromenoi, everything that is lovable, worthy of being loved (a distant eromenos or eromenon, is moreover a neutral goal) and the problem is what is signified, what can (5) continue to be signified beyond this breakthrough, this leap which is stressed by that which, at the beginning of the dialectic, presented itself as ktema, as the goal of possession.

No doubt the step that we have taken sufficiently marks that we are no longer at the level of having as term of what is envisaged, but at that of being and that moreover in this progress, in this ascesis, it is a transformation, a becoming of the subject that is in question, that it is a final identification with what is supremely lovable that is in question (the erastes becomes the eromenos). In a word, the further the subject directs his aim, the more he is entitled to love himself - in his Ideal Ego as we would say - the more he desires, the more he himself becomes desirable. And it is here again moreover that theological articulation raises a finger to tell us that the Platonic eros is irreducible to what Christian agape has revealed to us, namely that in the Platonic eros the lover, love, only aims at his own perfection.

Now the commentary on the Symposium that we are carrying out

seems to me to be precisely of a nature to show that it is nothing of the kind, namely that this is not the point at which Plato remains, on condition that we are prepared to see after this highlighting what is signified by the fact that first of all that instead of Socrates precisely he allowed Diotima to speak and then to see afterwards what happens once Alcibiades arrives on the scene.

Let us not forget that Diotima had introduced love at first as being not at all of the nature of the gods, but of that of demons in so far as it is, an intermediary between the immortals and the mortals (202e). Let us not forget that in order to illustrate it, to give a sense of what is in question, she made use of nothing other than the comparison with this intermediary between episteme, science in the Socratic sense, and amathia, ignorance, this intermediary which in the Platonic discourse, is called doxa, true opinion in so far no doubt as it is true, but in a way that the subject is incapable of accounting for it, that he does not know why it is true. And I underlined these two very striking formulas - that of the aneu tou echein logon dounai which characterises the doxa, "to give the formula, the logos, without having it", of the echo there is in this formula with what we give here in this place as being that of love which is precisely "to give what one does not have", and the other formula, the one which confronts the first, no less worthy of being underlined - in the court as I might say - namely looking from the side of amathia, namely that "this doxa is not ignorance either, oute amathia, because that which by chance reaches the real, to gar tou ontos tugchanon, that which encounters what there is, how could it also be complete ignorance?" (202a).

This indeed is what we must sense, for our own part, in what I could call the Platonic staging of the dialogue. It is that Socrates, even given the only thing in which he says he has some ability, (it is concerning the affairs of love), even if it is posed at the start that he knows about it, precisely he cannot speak about it except by remaining in the zone of the "he did not know".

(6) Although knowing, he speaks, and not being himself who knows able to speak, he must make speak someone in short who speaks without knowing. And this indeed is what allows us to resituate the intangibility of Agathon's response when he escapes from the dialectic of Socrates by quite simply saying to him: "I fear I knew nothing of what I said" (201b). But it is precisely for that reason, this is precisely what gives the accent that I developed on this extraordinarily derisive mode that we have underlined, that which gives its import to the discourse of Agathon and its special import, to have precisely been delivered from the mouth of a tragic poet. The tragic poet, as I showed you, can only speak about it in the style of a clown, just as it was given to Aristophanes the comic poet to accentuate these passionate traits which we confuse with the tragic approach.

"He did not know...". Let us not forget that this is what gives its meaning to the myth that Diotima introduced about the birth

of Love, that this Love is born of Aporia and Poros. It is conceived during the sleep of Poros, the omniscient, the son of Metis, the ingenious one par excellence, the omniscient-and-omnipotent, resource par excellence. It is while he is asleep, at a time when he no longer knows anything, that there is going to be produced the encounter from which Love is going to be generated. And the one who at that moment insinuates herself by her desire to produce this birth, Aporia, the feminine Aporia, here the erastes, the original desiring one in the true feminine position which I underlined on several occasions, she is well defined in her essence, in her nature all the same before the birth of Love and very precisely by what is missing, it is that she has nothing of the eromenon about her. Aporia, absolute Poverty, is posed in the myth as being in no way recognised by the banquet which is being held at that moment, that of the gods on the birthday of Aphrodite, she is at the door, she is in no way recognised, she does not have in herself, as absolute Poverty, any good which gives her a right to be at the table of beings. This indeed is the reason why she is before love. It is because the metaphor where I told you that we would recognise always that it is a question of love, even in a shadow, the metaphor which substitutes the eron, the erastes for the eromenon is missing here through lack of the eromenon at the start. The step, the stage, the logical time before the birth of love is described in this way.

On the other side, the "he did not know..." is absolutely essential for the other step. And here let me give an account of what came to my mind while I was trying last night to highlight, to punctuate for you this articulating moment of the structure, it is nothing less than the echo of this poetry, of this admirable poem - which you will not be astonished at because it was intentionally that in it I chose the example in which I tried to demonstrate the fundamental nature of metaphor - this poem which all by itself would be sufficient, despite all the objections that our snobbery may have against him, to make to Victor Hugo a poet worthy of Homer, Booz endormi and the echo which suddenly came to me of it as if always having had it, of these two verses:

Booz ne savait pas qu'une femme était là,
Et Ruth ne savait point ce que Dieu voulait d'elle.

Reread the whole of this poem so that you may perceive that all the givens of the fundamental drama, that everything which gives to the Oedipus complex its eternal meaning and weight, that none of these givens are lacking, even including the entre-deux-morts evoked a few strophes before in connection with the age and the widowhood of Booz:

(7) Voilà longtemps que celle avec qui j'ai dormi,
O Seigneur! a quitté ma couche pour la vôtre;
Et nous sommes encor tout mêlés l'un à l'autre,
Elle à demi vivante et moi mort à demi.

Nothing is lacking to the relationship of this entre-deux-morts

with the tragic dimension which is indeed the one evoked here as being constitutive of the whole paternal transmission; nothing is lacking to it, and that is why this poem is the very locus of the presence of the metaphorical function which you will ceaselessly discover in it. Everything, even including as one might say the aberrations of the poet is here pushed to extremes, to the point of saying what he has to say by forcing the terms that he uses:

Comme dormait Jacob, comme dormait Judith,

Judith never slept, it was Holofernes, it does not matter, he is the one who is correct after all because what is outlined at the end of this poem, is what is expressed by the formidable image with which it ends:

(...) et Ruth se demandait,

Immobile, ouvrant l'oeil a moitié sous ses voiles,
 Quel Dieu, quel moissonneur de l'éternel été'
 Avait, en s'en allant, négligemment jeté
 Cette faucille d'or dans le champ des étoiles.

The billhook with which Kronos was castrated could not fail to be evoked at the end of this complete constellation composing the paternity complex.

I ask your pardon for this digression on the "he did not know". But it seems to me to be essential in order to make understandable what is in question in the position of the discourse of Diotima in so far as Socrates can only pose himself here in his knowledge by showing that, there is no discourse about love except from the point where he did not know, which, here, appears to be the function, the mainspring, the starting point of what is meant by this choice of Socrates of his style at this moment of teaching what he is at the same time proving. Neither do we have here something that allows us to grasp what is happening about what the love-relationship is: but it is precisely what is going to follow, namely the entry of Alcibiades.

As you know, it is after (without in fact Socrates appearing to resist it) this marvellous, splendid oceanic development of the discourse of Diotima and, significantly, after Aristophanes had raised his finger to say: "All the same let me put in a word...". Because in this discourse allusion has been made to a certain theory and in effect it was his that the good Diotima has carelessly pushed away with her foot, in what should be noted as a quite significant anachronism (because Socrates says that Diotima had recounted all that to him in the past, but that does not prevent Diotima speaking about the discourse given by Aristophanes). Aristophanes, and with good reason, has his word to say and it is here that Plato gives an indication, shows that there is someone who is not satisfied... so that the method of sticking to the text is going to make us see whether precisely what is going to develop subsequently does not have some relationship with this indication, even if, this raised finger,

says it all, he is interrupted by what? By the entry of Alcibiades.

(8) Here there is a change of perspective and we must carefully set up the world into which all of a sudden, after this great fascinating mirage, all of a sudden he replunges us. I say replunge because this world is not the world beyond, precisely, it is the world as it is where, after all, we know how love is lived out and that, however fascinating all these beautiful stories appear, an uproar, a shout, a hiccup, the entry of a drunken man is enough to bring us back to it as it really is.

This transcendence where we have, seen played out in a ghostly way the substitution of another for another, we are now going to see incarnated. And if, as I teach you, three and not just two are necessary to love, well here we are going to see it.

Alcibiades enters and it is not a bad thing for you to see him emerging in the shape in which he appears, namely with the big bloated face which gives him not alone his state of being officially intoxicated, but the pile of garlands that he is wearing and which, manifestly has an outstanding exhibitionistic signification, in the divine state that he holds as a leader of men. You should never forget what we lose by no longer having wigs! Imagine what learned and also frivolous discussions must have been in the conversations of the XVIIth century when each of these personages shook at each word this sort of lion-like rig-out which was moreover a receptacle for dirt and vermin, imagine then the wig of the Grand Siecle, from the point of view of its mantic effect! If we are lacking this, Alcibiades does not lack it and he goes straight to the only personage whose identity he is capable in his condition of discerning (it is, thank God, the master of the house!) Agathon. He goes to lie next to him, without knowing where that puts him, namely in the metaxu position, "between the two", between Socrates and Agathon, namely precisely at the point that we are at, at the point at which the debate is in the balance between the operation of the one who knows, and knowing, shows that he must speak without knowing and the one who, not knowing, spoke of course like a bird-brain, but who nevertheless spoke very well as Socrates underlined: "You said some very beautiful things". This is where Alcibiades places himself, but not without jumping back when he perceives that this damned Socrates is there again.

It is not for personal reasons that today I am not going to push you to the end of the analysis of what is contributed by the whole of this scene, namely the one which develops after this entry of Alcibiades; nevertheless I must propose to you the first highlights of what this presence of Alcibiades introduces: well, let us call it an atmosphere like the Last Supper. Naturally, I am not going to accentuate the caricatural aspect of things. Incidentally, I spoke in connection with this Symposium, of a gathering of old queens, given that they are not all in the first bloom of youth, but all the same, they are people of some stature, Alcibiades is all the same someone! And when Socrates asks for protection against this personage who does not allow him

to look at anyone else, it is not because the commentary on this Symposium throughout the centuries has been carried on in respectable university chairs with all that that involves in terms of nobility and of redundancy, this is all the same not a reason for us not to perceive - as I already underlined - the really scandalous style of what is happening here.

(9) The dimension of love is in the process of showing before us this something in which we must all the same recognise being delineated one of its characteristics, and first of all that it does not tend, wherever it manifests itself in the real, towards harmony. It does not seem after all that this beauty towards which the procession of desiring souls seems to be ascending is something that structures everything into this sort of convergence. Curiously, it is not given in the modes, in the manifestations of love, to call on all to love what you love, to blend themselves with you in the ascent towards the eromenon. Socrates, this most lovable of men, because he is put before us from the first words as a divine personage, after all, the first thing that is in question, is that Alcibiades wants to keep him for himself. You will say that you do not believe it and that all sorts of things go to show it, that is not the question, we are following the text and this is what is at stake. Not only is this what is at stake, but it is properly speaking this dimension which is introduced here.

If the word competition is to be taken in the sense and with the function that I gave it (in the articulation of these transitivisms in which there is constituted the object in so far as it establishes communication between the subjects), something indeed is introduced here of a different order. At the heart of the action of love there is introduced the object, as one might say, of a unique covetousness, which is constituted as such: an object precisely from which one wishes to ward off competition, an object that one does not even wish to show. And remember that this is how I introduced it three years ago now in my discourse, remember that in order to define the object of phantasy for you I took the example, in La Grande Illusion by Renoir, of Dalio showing his little automaton and the feminine blushing with which he effaces himself after having directed his phenomenon. It is the same dimension in which there unfolds this public confession linked to some embarrassment or other which Alcibiades himself is aware that he is developing as he speaks.

Of course we are in the dimension of the truth that comes from wine and this is articulated in the In vino Veritas which Kierkegaard will take up when he too recreates his banquet. No doubt we are in the dimension of the truth that comes from wine, but all the boundaries of shame must have been broken to really speak about love as Alcibiades speaks about it when he shows what happened to him with Socrates.

What is behind it as the object which introduces into the subject himself this vacillation? It is here, it is at the function of the object in so far as it is properly indicated in the whole of

this text that I will leave you today in order to introduce you to it the next time, it is around a word which is in the text. I think I have rediscovered the history and the function of this object in what we can glimpse about its usage in Greek around a word: agalma, which we are here told is what Socrates, this type of hirsute Silenus, conceals. It is around this word agalma, whose closed-off enigma in the discourse itself I will leave you with today, that I will make revolve what I have to say to you the next time.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 1 February 1961

I left you the last time, as a kind of staging-post in our account, on the word to which I also told you I would leave until the next occasion all its enigmatic value, the word agalma.

I did not think that what I said would turn out to be so true. For a great number, the enigma was so total that people were asking: "What was that? What did he say? Do you know?". Well, for those who manifested this unease, one of my own family was able at least to give this response - which proves at least that in my house secondary education has its uses - that means: "ornament, adornment". In any case, this response was only in effect a first level response about something that everyone should know: agalma, from agallo, "to adorn, to ornament", signifies in effect - at first sight - "ornament, adornment". First of all the notion of ornament, of adornment is not that simple; it can be seen immediately that this may take us very far. Why, and with what does one adorn oneself? Or why does one adorn oneself and with what?

It is quite clear that, if we are here at a central point, many avenues should lead us to it. But I finally retained, in order to make of it the pivot of my explanation, this word agalma. You should not see in it any taste for rarity but rather the fact that in a text which we suppose to be extremely rigorous, that of the Symposium, something leads us to this crucial point which is formally indicated at the moment at which I told you the stage revolves completely and, after these games of praising regulated as they had been up to then by this subject of love, there enters this actor, Alcibiades, who is going to change everything. As proof I only need the following: he himself changes the rules of the game by making himself the presiding authority. From that moment on he tells us, it is no longer a question of praising love but the other person and specifically each one is to praise his neighbour on the right. You will see that this is important for what follows, that it is already a lot to say about it, that, if it is a question of love, it is in act in the relationship of one to the other that it is here going to have to manifest itself (213e, 214d).

I pointed out to you the last time, it is noteworthy that from the moment that things get started on this terrain, with the experienced producer whom we suppose to be at the source of this

dialogue (which is confirmed for us by the incredible mental genealogy which flows from this Symposium, whose second-last echo I highlighted for you the last time in connection with Kierkegaard's banquet - the last, I already named for you: it is Eros and Agape by Anders Nygren, all this is still dependent on the framework, the structure of the Symposium) well then, this experienced personage can do nothing else... once it is a question of bringing the other into play, there is not just one of them, there are two others, in other words there are a minimum (2) of three. This, Socrates does not allow to escape in his reply to Alcibiades when, after this extraordinary admission, this public confession, this thing which is somewhere between a declaration of love and almost one might say a malediction, a defamation of Socrates, Socrates replies to him: "It was not for me that you were speaking, it was for Agathon" (222c,d). All of this makes us sense that we are getting into a different register.

The dual relationship of the one who, in the ascent towards love, proceeds by way of identification (if you wish, moreover by the production of what we have indicated in the discourse of Diotima) being helped in it by this marvel of beauty and, coming to see in this beauty itself identified here at the end with the perfection of the work of love, finds in this beauty its very term and identifies it to this perfection.

Something else therefore comes into play here other than this univocal relationship which gives to the term of the work of love this goal, this end of identification to what I put in question here last year, the thematic of the sovereign good, of the supreme good. Here we are shown that something else is suddenly substituted in the triplicity, in the complexity, which shows us, presents itself to reveal to us that in which, as you know, I maintain the essential of the analytic discovery is contained, this topology in which fundamentally there results the relationship of the subject to the symbolic in so far as it is essentially distinct from the imaginary and its capture. This is our term, this is what we will articulate the next time to bring to a close what we will have to say about the Symposium. It is with the help of this that I will make re-emerge old models which I have given you of the intrasubjective topology in so far as this is the way that we should understand the whole of Freud's second topography.

Today therefore, what we are highlighting, is something which is essential in order to rejoin this topology, in the measure that it is on the subject of love that we have to rejoin it. It is about the nature of love that there is question, it is about a position, an essential articulation too often forgotten, elided, and to which we analysts nevertheless have contributed the element, the mainspring which allows its problematic to be defined, it is on this that there should be concentrated what I have to say to you today about agalma.

It is all the more extraordinary, almost scandalous that this should not have been better highlighted up to now, that it is a

properly analytic notion that is in question, is what I hope to be able to make you sense, put your finger on in a little while.

Agalma, here is how it is presented in the text: Alcibiades speaks about Socrates, he says that he going to unmask him - we will not today get to the end of what the discourse of Alcibiades signifies - you know that Alcibiades goes into the greatest detail about his adventure with Socrates. He tried what? To make Socrates, we will say, manifest his desire to him because he knows that Socrates has a desire for him; what he wanted was a sign.

Let us leave this in suspense, it is too soon to ask why. We are only at the beginning of Alcibiades' approach and, at first sight, this approach does not seem to be essentially distinguished from what was said up to then. At the beginning there was question, in the discourse of Pausanias, of what one was going to look for in love and it was said that what each one sought in the other (an exchange of proper procedures) was what he contained in terms of eromenon, of the desirable. It indeed is the same thing that appears ... that seems to be in question now. Alcibiades tells us that Socrates is someone whose "amorous dispositions draw him towards beautiful boys...". - this (3) is a preamble - "he is ignorant of everything and knows nothing, agnoei; that is his pose!" (216d) - and then, he goes into the celebrated comparison with the Silenos which has a double import. I mean first of all that this is what he appears like, namely with nothing beautiful about him and, on the other hand, that this Silenos is not simply the image that is designated by this name, but also something which is its usual aspect: it is a wrapping, a container, a way of presenting something - these things must have existed. These tiny instruments of the industry of the time were little Silenos which served as jewel boxes, as wrapping to offer presents and precisely, this is what is in question.

This topological indication is essential. What is important, is what is inside. Agalma can indeed mean "ornament or adornment", but it is here above all "a precious object, a jewel, something which is inside". And here expressly, Alcibiades tears us away from this dialectic of the beautiful which was up to then the path, the guide, the mode of capture on this path of the desirable and he undeceives us in connection with Socrates himself.

"Iste hoti, you should know," he says, "Socrates apparently loves beautiful boys, oute ei tis kalos esti meleis auto ouden, whether one or other is beautiful, melie auto ouden, does not matter a straw to him, he does not give a hang, on the contrary he despises it, kataphronei", we are told, "as no one would ever believe, tosouton hoson oud'an eis oietheie you could not even imagine. . .". and that really, the aim that he pursues - I am underlining it because after all it is in the text - it is expressly articulated at this point that it is not alone external goods, riches for example, which everyone up to then (we are delicate souls) has said that it was not what one sought in

others, "nor any of the other advantages which might seem in any way to procure makaria, happiness, felicity, hupo plethous to anyone whatsoever;" one is quite wrong to interpret it here as a sign that it is a question of disdaining goods which are goods "for the mob". What is rejected, is precisely what had been spoken about up to then, good things in general (216e).

"On the other hand", Alcibiades tells us, "do not pause at his strange appearance if, eironeuomenos, he pretends ignorance, he questions, he plays the fool in order to get a response, he really behaves like a child, he spends his time making fun. But spoudasantos de autou" - not as it is translated - "when he decides to be serious" - but - it is - "you, be serious, pay careful attention to it, and open this Silenos, anoichthentos, opened out, I don't know if anyone has ever seen the agalmata which are inside, the jewels" about which right away Alcibiades states that he really doubts whether anyone has ever been able to see what he is talking about.

We know that this is not alone the discourse of passion, but the discourse of passion at its most quaking point, namely the one (4) which is in a way entirely contained in the origin. Even before he explains himself, he is there, charged with the most fundamental aspect of everything that he has to tell us, what is going to begin. Therefore it is indeed the language of passion.

Already this unique, personal relationship: no one has ever seen what is in question, as I once happened to see; and I saw it!" "I found them, these agalmata already so divine, chrusa", c'est chou, "it was golden and all beautiful and wonderful, that there remained only one thing to do, en brachei, as soon as possible, by the quickest means, do whatever Socrates commands, poieteon, what is to be done"; what becomes duty, is whatever Socrates is pleased to command (217a).

I do not think it useless for us to articulate a text like this a step at a time. This is not to be read as one reads France-Soir or an article in the International journal of psychoanalysis. It is indeed something whose effects are surprising. On the one hand we are not told for the present what these agalmata (in the plural) are and, on the other hand, this involves all of a sudden this subversion, this falling under the influence of the commandments of the one who possesses them. You cannot fail to find here all the same something of the magic which I already highlighted for you around the Che vuoi? What do you want? It is indeed this key, this essential cutting edge of the topology of the subject which begins with: what do you want? - In other words: is there a desire which is really your will?

"And" - Alcibiades continues - "as I thought he was in earnest when he spoke about hora, eme hora" - this is translated by - "youthful bloom...", and there begins the whole seduction scene.

But as I told you, we will not go any further today, we will try to make you sense that which renders necessary this passage from the first phase to the other one, namely why it is absolutely

necessary that at any price Socrates should unmask himself. We are only going to stop at these agalmata. I can honestly tell you that it is not - give me credit for this - to this text that there goes back for me the problematic of agalma, not that this would be in the least inappropriate because this text suffices to justify it, but I am going to tell you the story as it is.

I can tell you, without being really able to date it, that my first encounter with agalma is an encounter like every encounter, unexpected. It is in a verse of Euripides' Hecuba that it struck me some years ago and you will easily understand why. It was all the same a little while before the period when I introduced here the function of the phallus, with the essential articulation that analytic experience and Freud's doctrine shows us that it has, between demand and desire; so that in passing, I did not fail to be struck by the use that was given to this term in the mouth of Hecuba. Hecuba says: "Where am I going to be brought, where am I going to be deported?"

As you know, the tragedy of Hecuba takes place at the moment of the capture of Troy and, among all the places that she envisages in her discourse, there is: "Might it be to this at once sacred and plague-stricken place... Delos?" - As you know no one had the right either to give birth there or to die there. And then, at the description of Delos, she makes an allusion to an object which was celebrated, which was - as the fashion in which she speaks about it indicates - a palm tree of which she says that (5) this palm tree, is odinos agalma dias, namely odinos, of the pain, agalma dias, the term dias designates [Leto], it is a question of the birth of Apollo, it is "the agalma of the pain of the divine one". We rediscover the thematic of giving birth but all the same rather changed because here this trunk, this tree, this magical thing erected, preserved as an object of reference throughout the ages, is something which cannot fail - at least for us analysts - to awaken the whole register that there exists around the thematic of the [female] phallus in so far as its phantasy is, as we know, at the horizon and situates this infantile object [as a fetish].

The fetish that it remains can hardly fail either to be for us the echo of this signification. But in any case, it is quite clear that agalma cannot be translated here in any way by "ornament, adornment", nor even as one often sees it in the texts, "statue" - because often theon agalmata, when one is translating rapidly one thinks that it fits in, that it is a question in the text of "statues of the gods". You see right away, the point I am keeping you at, the reason why I believe that it is a term to highlight in this signification, this hidden accent which presides over what must be done to hold back on this path of banalisation which always tends to efface for us the true sense of texts, the fact is that each time you encounter agalma - pay careful attention - even if it seems to be a question of "statues of the gods", if you look closely at it, you will perceive that it is always a question of something different.

I am giving you already - we are not playing at riddles here -

the key to the question in telling you that it is the fetish-
 accent of the object in question that is always stressed.
 Moreover of course, I am not giving here a course of ethnology,
 nor even of linguistics. And I am not going, in this
 connection, to link up the function of the fetish nor of those
 round stones, essentially at the centre of a temple (the temple
 of Apollo for example). You very often see (this thing is very
 well known) the god himself represented, a fetish of some people,
 tribe at the loop of the Niger; it is something unnamable,
 formless, upon which there can be poured out on occasion an
 enormous lot of liquids of different origins, more or less
 stinking and filthy and whose accumulated superimposition, going
 from blood to shit, constituted the sign that here is something
 around which all sorts of effects are concentrated making of the
 fetish in itself something quite different to an image, to an
 icon, in so far as it might be a reproduction.

But this occult power of the object remains at the basis of the
 usage whose accent, even for us, is still preserved in the term
 idol or icon. In the term idol, for example in the use
 Polyeuctus makes of it, it means: it is nothing at all, it is to
 be thrown away. But all the same if you say about one or other
 person: "I have made him my idol", that means all the same that
 (6) you do not simply make of him the reproduction of yourself or
 of him but that you make of him something else, around which
 something happens.

Moreover it is not a question for me here of pursuing the
 phenomenology of the fetish but of showing the function that this
 occupies in its place. And in order to do this I can rapidly
 indicate to you that I tried, as far as my strength allowed me,
 to make a survey of the passages which remain of Greek literature
 where the word agalma is employed. And it is only in order to
 go quickly that I will not read each one to you.

You should simply know for example that it is from the
 multiplicity of the deployment of significations that I extract
 for you what is in a way the central function that must be seen
 at the limit of the usages of this word; because naturally, it is
 not our idea - I think here along the line of the teaching I give
 you - that etymology consists in finding the meaning in the root.

The root of agalma is not all that easy. What I want to tell
 you, is that the authors, in so far as they link it to agauos
 from this ambiguous word agamai, "I admire" but just as much "I
 am envious, I am jealous of", which is going to give agazo, "what
 one tolerates with difficulty", going towards agaiomai which
 means "to be indignant", from which the authors looking for roots
 (I mean roots which carry a meaning with them, which is
 absolutely contrary to the principle of linguistics) separate out
gal or gel the gel of gelao the gal which is the same in glene,
 "the pupil", and galene - the other day, I quoted it for you in
 passing - "it is the sea which shines because it is perfectly
 unified": in short, that it is an idea of eclat which is hidden
 here in the root. Moreover aglaos, Aglae, the Brilliant is
 there to provide us with a familiar echo. As you see, this does

not go against what we have to say about it. I only put it here in parentheses, because also this is rather only an occasion to show you the ambiguities of this idea that etymology is something which carries us not towards a signifier but toward a central signification.

Because one could just as well interest oneself not in gal, but in the first part of the phonematic articulation, namely aga which is properly the reason why agalma interests us with respect to agathos. And along this path, you know that if I do not jib at the import of the discourse of Agathon, I prefer to go frankly to the great phantasy of the Cratylus you will see that the etymology of Agathon is agastos, admirable, therefore God knows why one should go looking for agaston, the admirable that there is in thoon, rapid! This moreover is the way in which everything is interpreted in the Cratylus, there are some rather fine things; in the etymology of anthropos there is "articulated language". Plato was really someone very special.

(7) Agalma, in truth, it is not to that aspect that we have to turn to give it its value; agalma, as one can see, had always referred to images on condition that you see clearly that, as in every context, it is always a very special type of image. I have to choose among the references. There are some in Empedocles, in Heraclitus, in Democritus. I am going to take the most popular, the poetic, the ones that everybody knew by heart in antiquity. I am going to look for them in an interlined edition of the Iliad and of the Odyssey. In the Odyssey for example there are two places where one finds agalma.

It is first of all in Book III in the Telemachus section and it is a question of sacrifices which are being made for the arrival of Telemachus. The pretenders, as usual, make their contribution and there is sacrificed to the god a boos which is translated by "a heifer", which is a specimen of the bovine species. And it is said that there was specially invoked someone called Laerkes who is a goldsmith, like [Hephaistos] and who is charged with making "a golden ornament", agalma for the horns of the beast. I will spare you all the practicalities of the ceremony. But what is important, is not what happens afterwards, whether it is a question of a voodoo-type sacrifice, what is important is what it is said they expect from agalma; agalma in effect is involved in this, we are expressly told it. The agalma, is precisely this golden ornament, and it is as an offering to the goddess Athena that this is sacrificed, so that having seen it, she may be kecharoito, "gratified" - let us use this word, because it is a word from our own language. In other words, the agalma appears indeed as a kind of trap for the gods; the gods, these real beings, there are contraptions which catch their eye.

You must not believe that this is the only example that I would have to give you of the use of agalma, for example when, in Book VIII of the same Odyssey, we are told what happened at the fall of Troy, namely the famous history of the big horse which contained in its belly the enemies and all the misfortunes. [The horse] who

was pregnant with the ruin of Troy, the Trojans who had dragged it inside the walls question themselves and ask themselves what they are going to do with it. They hesitate and we have to think that this hesitation was what was fatal for them, because there were two things to do - either, to open the belly of the hollow wood to see what is inside - or, having dragged it to the summit of the citadel, to leave it there to be what? Mega agalma. It is the same idea, it is the charm. It is something which is here as embarrassing for them as for the Greeks. To tell the truth it is an unusual object, it is this famous extraordinary object which is so much at the centre of a whole series of preoccupations which are still contemporaneous - I do not need to evoke here the surrealist horizon.

What is certain is that, for the ancients also, the agalma is something in terms of which one can in short capture divine attention. There are a thousand examples of it that I could give you. In the story of Hecuba (again in Euripides), in another place, there is recounted the sacrifice to Achilles' manes, of her daughter Polyxenes. And it is very well done: we (8) have there the exception which is the occasion for evoking in us erotic mirages: it is the moment that the heroine herself offers her admirable breast which is we are told "like an agalma, hos agalmatos". Now it is not sure... there is nothing to indicate that we should be satisfied here with what that evokes, namely the perfection of the mammary organs in Greek statuary. I indeed rather believe that what is in question, given that at the epoch it was not about objects in a museum, is indeed rather about something the signs of which we see everywhere moreover in the use that is made of the word when it is said that in the sanctuaries, in temples, in ceremonies people "hang up anapto, agalmata". The magical value of objects which are evoked here is indeed linked rather to the evocation of these objects which we well know which are called ex voto. In a word, for people much closer than we are to the differentiation of objects at the origin, it is as beautiful as ex voto breasts; and in effect ex voto breasts are always perfect, they are machine-turned, moulded. Other examples are not lacking, but we can stay with that.

What is in question, is the brilliant sense, the gallant sense, because the word galant comes from galer in old French; it is indeed, it should be said, the function of this that we analysts have discovered under the name of partial object. One of the greatest discoveries of analytic investigation is this function of the partial object. The thing which on this occasion should astonish us most, us analysts, is that having discovered such remarkable things our whole effort should always be to efface their originality.

It is said somewhere, in Pausanias, also in connection with a usage of agalma, that the agalmata which referred in such and such a sanctuary to sorceresses who were there expressly to hold back, to prevent Alcmenes from giving birth were amudroteros amudrota, "a little bit effaced". Well, that's it!

We ourselves have also effaced, as far as we were able, what is meant by the partial object; namely that our first effort was to interpret what had been a marvellous discovery, namely this fundamentally partial aspect of the object in so far as it is pivot, centre, key of human desire, this would have been worth (9) dwelling on for a moment... But no, not at all! This was directed towards a dialectic of totalisation, namely the only one worthy of us, the flat object, the round object, the total object, the spherical object without feet or paws, the whole of the other, the perfect genital object at which, as everyone knows, our love irresistibly comes to term! We did not say to ourselves in connection with all of this that - even by taking things in this way - perhaps that qua object of desire, this other is the addition of a whole lot of partial objects (which is not at all the same as a total object), that what we ourselves perhaps, in what we elaborate, have to handle in this foundation which is called our Id, is perhaps a question of a vast trophy of all these partial objects.

At the horizon of our ascesis, of our model of love, we have placed the other... which is not altogether wrong, but of this other, we have made the other to whom there is addressed this bizare function which we call oblativity: we love the other for himself - at least when one has arrived at the goal and at perfection, at the genital stage which blesses all of this!

We have certainly gained something by opening up a certain topology of relationships to the other which moreover, as you know, is not simply our privilege because a whole contemporary speculation which is personalist in different ways turns around it. But it is funny all the same that there is something that we have left completely to one side in this affair - it has to be left to one side when one approaches things from this particularly simplified perspective - and which supposes, that with the idea of pre-established harmony, the problem is resolved: that in short it is enough to love genitally to love the other for himself.

I did not bring - because I dealt with it elsewhere and you will see it coming out soon - the incredible passage which, on this, is developed on the subject of the characterology of the genital person, in this volume which is called La Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui. The sort of sermonising which takes place around this terminal idealness is something whose ridiculousness I have, I believe, for a long time made you sense. There is no need for us to dwell on it today. But in any case, it is quite clear that to come back to the starting point and to sources, there is at least one question to pose on this subject. If this oblativity love is truly only in a way the homologue, the development, the flowering of the genital act in itself (which would be enough, as I would say, to give its secret, its pitch, its measure), it is clear that the ambiguity persists as regards whether our oblativity is what we dedicate to this other in this love which is all-loving, all for the other, whether what we are seeking is his jouissance (as seems self-evident from the fact that it is a question of genital union) or indeed his perfection.

When one evokes such high-flown moral ideas as that of oblativity, the least that can be said about it, which is something that reawakens old questions, is all the same to evoke the duplicity of these terms. After all these terms, in such a worn down, simplified form can only be sustained by what is underlying, namely the altogether modern supposition of the subject and the object. Moreover once an author who is a little bit careful to write in a style which is permeable to the (10) contemporary audience develops these terms, it will always be around the notion of the subject and the object that he will comment on this analytic theme: we take the other as a subject and not at all purely and simply as our object. The object being situated here in the context of a value of pleasure, of enjoyment, of jouissance, the object being supposed to reduce this uniqueness of the other (in so far as he should be for us the subject) to this omnivalent function (if we make of him only an object) of being after all any object whatsoever, an object like others, to be an object which may be rejected, changed, in short to be profoundly devalued.

Such is the thematic which underlies this ideal of oblativity, as it is articulated, when it is made for us into a type of ethical correlative necessary for acceding to a true love which is supposed to be sufficiently connoted by being genital.

You should note that today I am less in the process of criticising - this is also why I dispense myself with recalling the texts - this analytic foolishness, than of putting in question that on which it reposes, namely that there is supposed to be some superiority or other in favour of the beloved, of the love partner in the fact that he is thus, in our existential-analytic vocabulary, considered as a subject. Because I do not know whether after having accorded a pejorative connotation to the fact of considering the other as an object, anyone has ever made the remark that to consider him as a subject is no better. Because if one object is as good as another according to its thinking, on condition that we give to the word object its initial meaning (that there are objects in so far as we distinguish them and can communicate them), if it is deplorable therefore that the beloved should ever become an object, is it any better that he should be a subject?

To respond to this it is enough to make the remark that if one object is as good as another, for the subject it is still worse, because it is not simply another subject that he is as good as. A subject strictly speaking is another! The strict subject, is someone to whom we can impute what? Nothing other than being like us this being who enarthron echein epos, "who expresses himself in articulated language", who possesses the combination and who therefore can respond to our combination by his own combinations, whom we can bring into our calculations as someone who combines like us.

I think that those who are formed according to the method that we have introduced, inaugurated here are not going to contradict me on this, it is the only sound definition of the subject, in any

case the only sound one for us - the one which permits there to be introduced how a subject obligatorily enters into the Spaltung determined by his submission to this language. Namely that starting from these terms we can see how it is strictly necessary that something happens, which is that in the subject there is a part where it (fa) speaks all by itself, this thing from which nevertheless the subject remains suspended. Moreover - it is precisely what it is a question of knowing and how is it possible to forget it - what function there can be occupied in this rightly elective, privileged relationship that the love relationship is by the fact that this subject with whom among all others we have this bond of love... the way precisely this question has a relationship with the fact that he is the object of our desire. Because if one suspends this mooring point, this turning point, this centre of gravity, of hooking-on of the love (11) relationship, if one highlights it and if, in doing so, one does not do it in a distinctive way, it is really impossible to say anything at all that is not a conjuring trick as regards the love relationship. It is precisely by that, by this necessity of accentuating the correlative object of desire in so far as this is the object, not the object of equivalence, of the transitivity of goods, of the transaction about things that are coveted, but this something which is the aim of desire as such, that which accentuates one object among all as being without equivalence to the others. It is with this function of the object, it is to this accentuating of the object that there responds the introduction into analysis of the function of the partial object.

And moreover in fact everything which gives, as you know, its weight, its resonance, its accent to metaphysical discourse, always reposes on some ambiguity. In other words, if all the terms you make use of when you are doing metaphysics, were strictly defined, had each only a univocal signification, if the dictionary of philosophy triumphed in any way (the eternal goal of professors!) you would no longer have to do metaphysics at all, because you would no longer have anything to say. I mean that you perceive that as regards mathematics, it is much better there, one can move about signs that have a univocal sense because they do not have any.

In any case, when you speak in a more or less passionate way about the relationships of the subject and the object, it is because under subject you put something other than this strict subject that I spoke to you about above and, under object, something other than the object which I have just defined as something which, at the limit, is confined to the strict equivalence of an unequivocal communication of a scientific object. In a word, if this object impassions you it is because within, hidden in it there is the object of desire, agalma (the weight, the thing that makes it interesting to know where this famous object is, to know its function and to know where it operates just as much in inter- as in intrasubjectivity) and in so far as this privileged object of desire, is something which, for each person, culminates at this frontier, at this limiting point which I have taught you to consider as the metonymy of the

unconscious discourse where it plays a role that I tried to formalise - I will come back to it the next time - in the phantasy.

And it is always this object which, however you have to speak about it in analytic experience - whether you call it breast, phallus, or shit -, is a partial object. This is what there is question of in so far as analysis is a method, a technique which advanced into this abandoned field, into this discredited field, into this field excluded by philosophy (because it is not managable, not accessible to its dialectic and for the same reasons) which is called desire. If we are not able to highlight, highlight in a strict topology, the function of what there is signified by - this object at once so limited and so fleeting in its shape, which is called the partial object, if therefore you do not see the interest of what I am introducing today under the name of agalma (it is the major point of analytic experience) and I cannot believe it for an instant given that, however misunderstood this is, the force of things brings it about that the most modern things that are done, said in the analytic dialectic turn around this fundamental, radical function, the Kleinian reference of the object qua good or bad, which indeed is considered in this dialectic as a primordial given. It is indeed on this that I would ask you to allow your minds to dwell for an instant.

We bring into play a lot of things, a lot of functions of identification: identification to the one from whom we demand something in the appeal of love and, if this appeal is rejected, (12) identification to the very one to whom we address ourselves as the object of our love (this very tangible passage from love to identification) and then, in a third sort of identification (you should read a little Freud: the Essais de psychanalyse), the function of third which this certain characteristic object takes on in so far as it may be the object of the desire of the other to whom we identify ourselves. In short, our subjectivity is something we entirely construct in plurality, in the pluralism of these levels of identification which we will call the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, which we will also call the desiring Ego.

But it is all the same necessary to know where in this articulation there functions, there is situated the partial object. And there you can simply remark, with the present development of analytic discourse, that this object, agalma, little o, object of desire, when we search for it according to the Kleinian method, is there from the beginning before any development of the dialectic, it is already there as object of desire. The weight, the intercentral kernel of the good or the bad object (in every psychology which tends to develop itself and explain itself in Freudian terms) is this good object or this bad object that Melanie Klein situates somewhere in this origin, this beginning of beginnings which is even before the depressive phase. Is there not something there in our experience, which by itself alone is already sufficiently descriptive?

I think that I have done enough today in saying that it is around

this that concretely, in analysis or outside analysis, there can and there should be made the division between a perspective on love which, it, in a way, drowns, diverts, masks, elides, sublimates everything that is concrete in experience (this famous ascent towards a supreme Good whose cheapened vague reflections it is astonishing to see being still kept in analysis by us, under the name of oblativity, this sort of loving in God, as I might say, which is supposed to be at the basis of every loving relationship), or whether, as experience shows, everything turns around this privilege, around this unique point constituted somewhere by what we only find in a being when we really love. But what is that... precisely agalma, this object which we have learned to circumscribe, to distinguish in analytic experience and around which, the~next time, we will try to reconstruct, in its triple topology (of the subject, of the small other and of the big Other), at what point it comes into play and how it is only through the Other and for the Other that Alcibiades, like each and every person, wants to make his love known to Socrates.

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There are therefore agalmata in Socrates and this is what has provoked Alcibiades' love. We are now going to return to the scene in so far as it puts on stage precisely Alcibiades with the discourse he addressed to Socrates and to which Socrates - as you know - is going to respond by giving to it what is properly speaking an interpretation. We shall see how this appraisal can be touched up, but one can say that structurally, at first sight, the intervention of Socrates is going to have all the characteristics of an interpretation, namely: "All the extraordinary, extravagant, impudent things that you have said there, everything that you have unveiled in speaking about me, was said for Agathon" (222c,d)

In order to understand the meaning of the scene which unfolds between one and the other of these end points (from the eulogy that Alcibiades gives about Socrates to this interpretation by Socrates and to what will follow) we have to take things up from a higher viewpoint and in detail, namely we have to see the meaning of what is happening starting with the entry of Alcibiades, between Alcibiades and Socrates.

I told you, from that moment on there has taken place this change which means that it is no longer a question of praising love but an other designated in order, and the important thing is precisely the following, it is that it is going to be a question of praising the other, epainos. And it is precisely in this, as regards the dialogue, that the passage of the metaphor resides. Praise of the other is substituted not for praise of love but for love itself, and this from the start. Namely that Socrates addressing himself to Agathon, says to him: "...the love of this person" - Alcibiades - "has become quite a serious thing for me!" - Everyone knows that Alcibiades was Socrates' great love - "From the time I fell in love with him" - we will see the meaning that must be given to these terms, he was erastes of him - "I am no longer allowed to look at or talk with a handsome person, not even one, or this jealous and envious creature treats me outrageously, and abuses me and hardly keeps his hands off me. If he uses force, defend me," he says to Agathon "for I'm fairly terrified at his madness and passion, philerastian" (213d).

It is after this that there takes place the dialogue with

Eryximachos from which there is going to result the new order of things. Namely that it is agreed that each one in turn will praise the person to his right. This is established during the dialogue between Alcibiades and Eryximachos. The epainos, the eulogy of which there is then going to be question has - as I (2) told you - this metaphorical, symbolic function of expressing something which from one to the other (the one about whom one is speaking) has a certain function as metaphor of love; epainein, "to praise" has here a ritual function which is something that can be translated in these terms: "to speak well of someone". And even though one cannot make the most of this text at the time of the Symposium, because it is much later, Aristotle in his Rhetoric, Book I, Chapter 9, distinguishes epainos from encomion. I told you that up to the present I did not want to get into this difference between the epainos and the encomion, however we will come back to it nevertheless drawn along by the force of things.

The difference to epainos is very precisely in the fashion in which Agathon had introduced his discourse. He speaks about the object starting from its nature, from its essence in order subsequently to develop its qualities, it is a deployment as one might say of the object in its essence, while the encomion - which we have difficulty in translating, it appears, and the term komos which is implied in it is of course responsible for some of that - encomion - if this is to be translated by something equivalent in our tongue - is something like "panegyric" and, if we follow Aristotle, it would be a question then of weaving together a wreath of the acts, of the great deeds of the object, a point of view which extends beyond, which is eccentric with respect to envisaging his essence which is that of epainos.

But the epainos is not something which presents itself without ambiguity from the beginning. First of all it is at the moment when it is decided that it is going to be a question of epainos, that Alcibiades begins to retort that the remark Socrates made about what we can call his ferocious jealousy, does not contain a word of truth.

"Don't you know that the truth is exactly the opposite of what he stated? For if I praise anybody in his presence, god or man other than himself, this man will not keep his two hands off me" - and he takes up the same metaphor that was used above - "to cheire, with great violence (a bras raccourcis)!" (214d). There is then a tone, a style, a sort of discontent, of complication, a kind of embarrassed response, an almost panicky "shut up" from Socrates. Shut up: "won't you hold your tongue?" - as it has been rather well translated" - "By Poseidon!", replies Alcibiades - which is quite something - "you need not make any objection, I forbid you to do so! You know that I would not praise a single other person in your presence!" - "Very well", says Eryximachos, "do this if you like, praise Socrates." And what then happens is that, in praising Socrates, "Am I to have at the man and punish him before your faces..." in praising him must I unmask him? This is how his development will subsequently proceed. And in effect it is not at all without unease, as if it were at once required by the situation and also an implication of the

style: that the praise might in its terms go so far as to make people laugh at the person in question.

Moreover Alcibiades proposes a gentleman's agreement: "Must I tell the truth?" Which Socrates does not refuse: "I invite you to tell it". Very well, says Alcibiades, I leave you free, if I go beyond the bounds of the truth in what I say, to say: "You are lying. . . . But if I speak higgledy-piggledy trying to remember, don't be surprised for it is not easy to set out all your (3) absurdities" - we find here again the term atopia, "unclassifiable" - "nicely in order, katarithmein" (215a). And then the eulogy begins.

The last time I indicated to you the structure and theme of the eulogy. Alcibiades in effect says that he is of course going to get into the gelos, geloios more exactly, into the "laughable" and . . . undoubtedly by beginning to present things by the comparison which - I note this for you - will return in short three times in his discourse, every time with a quasi-repetitive insistence, in which Socrates is compared to this crude and derisory envelope which is constituted by the satyr. It must in a way be opened in order to see inside what he calls the first time agalmata theon, "the statues of the gods" (215b). And then subsequently he takes up in the terms that I told you about the last time, by calling them once again agalmata theia, "divine", thaumasta, "admirable" (216e). The third time, we will see him employing further on the term aretas, agalmata aretas, "the finest images of virtue", the marvel of marvels (222a).

On the way, what we see, is this comparison which, at the moment that it is established, is pushed very far forward at that moment, when he is compared to the satyr Marsyas. . . . and despite his protestations - eh, he is undoubtedly not a piper! - Alcibiades comes back, gives another push and here compares Socrates to a satyr not simply in the form of a box, of a more or less derisory object, but specifically to the satyr Marsyas, in so far as when he gets into action every one knows from the legend that the charm of his song emerges. The charm is such that this Marsyas made Apollo jealous. Apollo flayed him alive for having dared to rival the supreme music, the divine music. The only difference, he says, between Socrates and him, is that in effect Socrates is not a piper; it is not through music that he works and nevertheless the result is exactly of the same order. And here we should refer to what Plato explains in the Phaedo concerning what we may call the superior states of inspiration such as they are produced by going beyond the boundaries of beauty. Among the diverse forms of this going beyond which I am not going to take up here, there are those which are deomenous which "have need" of gods and initiations; for those, the journey, the path consists in means among which that of intoxication produced by a certain music producing in them this state described as possession. It is to neither more nor less than this state that Alcibiades refers when he says that this is what he, Socrates, produces by words, "by words" which are, for their part, "unaccompanied, without instruments"; he produces exactly the same effect by his words. "When we hear an

orator", he says, "speaking about such subjects, even quite a good orator, nobody cares a jot. But when one hears you, or your words recited by another, even a very poor speaker, panu phaulos, "a worthless man", let a woman hear, or a man hear, or a boy hear, we are overwhelmed and enraptured - and properly speaking katechometha, we are possessed by them!" (215c).

Here is the determination of the point of experience which makes Alcibiades consider that in Socrates there is this treasure, this altogether undefinable and precious object which is going to fix, (4) as one might say, his resolve after having unleashed his desire. It is at the source of everything that is going to be subsequently developed in his terms, his resolution, then his business with Socrates-. And it is on this point that we should dwell.

Here in effect is what he is going to describe for us. He has had an adventure with Socrates which is far from banal. The fact is that having made up his mind, knowing that he was getting onto a terrain that was in a way rather safe (he knows the attention that for a long time Socrates has paid to what he calls his hora people translate it as they can - really his sex-appeal), it seems to him that it would be enough that Socrates should declare himself in order to obtain from him precisely everything that is in question, namely what he defines himself as: "everything he knows, pant akousai hosaper houtos edei" (217a). And then we have the narrative of the steps he took.

But after all can we not already pause here? Because Alcibiades already knows that he has Socrates' desire, why can he not better and more easily presume his complicity? What is meant by this fact that as regards in a way on what he, Alcibiades already knows, namely that for Socrates he is a beloved, an eromenos, why does he need to have Socrates give a sign of desire on this subject? Because this desire is in a way recognised (Socrates has never made a mystery of it in the past) recognised and because of this fact known and therefore one might think already avowed, what is meant by these seductive manoeuvres developed with a detail, an art and at the same time an impudence, a challenge to the hearers? - moreover so clearly felt as something which goes beyond the limits that what introduces it is nothing less than the phrase which is used at the origin of the mysteries: "You others who are there, clap strong doors on your ears!" (218b). It is a question of those who have no right to hear, and still less to repeat, the servants, the uninitiated, those who cannot hear what is going to be said as it is going to be said; it is better for them not to hear anything.

And in effect, to the mystery of this exigency of Alcibiades, to this mystery there responds, corresponds after all Socrates' behaviour. Because if Socrates has always shown himself to be the erastes of Alcibiades, of course it would seem to us (in a post-Socratic perspective we would say: in another register) that there is great merit in what he shows, in what the translator of the Symposium highlights in the margin under the term of "his temperance". But this temperance is not at all in this context

something which is indicated as necessary. That Socrates here is showing his virtue... perhaps! But what relationship is there with the subject in question, if it is true that what we are shown at this level is something about the mystery of love.

In other words, you see what I am trying to encompass (this situation, this game that develops before us in the actuality of the Symposium) in order to grasp properly speaking the structure. Let us say right away that everything in Socrates* behaviour indicates that the fact that Socrates in short refuses to enter himself into this game of love is closely linked to the fact, which is posed at the origin as the terms of debate, which is that he knows, it is even, he says, the only thing he knows; "Love is the only thing I profess to know about." And we will say that it is because Socrates knows, that he does not love.

(5) And moreover with this key we give their full meaning to the words with which, in Alcibiades' narrative, he welcomes him, after three of four scenes in which the growth of Alcibiades' attacks is put before us in an ascending rhythm. The ambiguity of the situation is always close to what is properly speaking the geloios, "the laughable, the comic". In effect, these dinner invitations are a really farcical scene which end with a gentleman who leaves very early, very politely, having come late, who returns a second time and who escapes again, and with whom it is under the sheets that there occurs the dialogue: "Asleep, Socrates?" - "Not at all!" (218c).

There is here something which, in order to come to its final terms, makes us take paths well designed to put us at a certain level. When Socrates responds to him at the end, after Alcibiades has really explained his position, had gone so far as to say to him: "This is what I desire and I would certainly be ashamed in front of people who did not understand; I am explaining to you what I want", Socrates replies to him: "My dearest Alcibiades, you are really and truly no bad hand at a bargain, if what you say is really true about me, and if there is in me some power which can make you better; you must see some inconceivable beauty in me" - a different quality of beauty, something different - "If then you spy it there and if you are trying to do a deal and exchange beauty for beauty, and at the same time" - here in the Socratic perspective of science against illusion - "instead of an opinion of beauty" - the doxa which does not know its function, the deception of beauty - "you want to exchange the truth", and in fact, God knows, "that would mean nothing other than exchanging bronze for gold. But!", says Socrates - and here we should take things as they are said -, "don't be deceiving yourself, examine things more carefully ameinon skopei so as not to deceive yourself, and you will see that I" - properly speaking - "am nothing. Because obviously", he says, "the eye of the mind begins to see sharp when the sight of the eyes is losing its keenness, and you are far from that still" (219a). But be careful, at the place where you see something, I am nothing.

What Socrates refuses at that moment, if it is definable in the

terms that I told you about with regard to the metaphor of love, what Socrates refuses (in order to show himself what he had already shown himself to be, I would say, almost officially in all the outbursts of Alcibiades, in order that everyone would know that Alcibiades in other words had been his first love) what Socrates refuses to show to Alcibiades is something which takes on a different meaning, which would be properly the metaphor of love in so far as Socrates would admit himself as loved and I would say further, would admit himself as loved, unconsciously. (6) It is precisely because Socrates knows, that he sets his face against having been, in any justified or justifiable way whatsoever, eromenos, the desirable, what is worthy of being loved.

The reason why he does not love, why the metaphor of love cannot be produced, is because the substitution of the erastes for the eromenos (the fact that he manifests himself as erastes at the place where there was eromenos) is what he must set his face against, because, for him, there is nothing in him which is lovable, because his essence is this ouden, this vacuum, this hollow (to use a term which was later used in the Neo-Platonic and Augustinian meditation) this kenosis which represents the central position of Socrates. This term kenosis is so true, emptiness opposed to the fullness - of whom? Precisely of Agathon! - is right at the origin of the dialogue when Socrates, after his long meditation in the porch of the house next door, finally arrives at the banquet and sits next to Agathon. He begins to speak, people think that he is joking, that he is poking fun, but in a dialogue as rigorous and also as austere in its unfolding can we believe that there is nothing there in the state of being refilled. He says: "You Agathon are full and as there is conveyed from a full vessel to an empty vessel something, a liquid, with the help of a piece of wool along which the liquid flows, in the same way I am going to....." (175d) Irony no doubt but which is directed at something, which intends to express something, which is precisely also what Socrates - I repeated it for you on several occasions and it is in the mouth of Alcibiades - presents as constitutive of his position which is the following: the principal thing is that he knows nothing, except about the affairs of love, amathia, inscientia, as Cicero translated by forcing the Latin tongue a little. Inscitia is brute ignorance, while inscientia, is this not knowing constituted as such, as emptiness, as appeal of the emptiness at the centre of knowledge.

Therefore you can well grasp, I think, what I mean to say here; it is that the structure constituted by the substitution, the realised metaphor constituting what I called the miracle of the apparition of the erastes at the very place where there was the eromenos, it is this whose lack ensures that Socrates cannot but set his face against giving to it, as I might say, a simulacrum. Namely that he poses himself before Alcibiades as not then being able to show him the signs of his desire in so far as he takes exception to having been himself, in any way, an object worthy of the desire of Alcibiades, or indeed of anybody's desire.

So that you should observe that the Socratic message, even though it involves something which refers to love, is certainly not in itself fundamentally something which begins, as one might say, from a centre of love.

Socrates is represented to us as an erastes, as a desirer, but nothing is further from the image of Socrates than the radiation of love which emanates, for example, from the message of Christ. Neither effusion, nor gift, nor mysticism, nor ecstasy, nor simply commandment flow from it. Nothing is further from the message of Socrates than "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", a formula which is remarkably absent from the dimension of what Socrates says. And this indeed is what has always struck the exegetes who, when all is said and done, in their objections to the asceticism (ascese) proper to eros, say that what is commanded is: "Thou shalt love above all in thy soul what is most essential to you."

(7) Naturally this is only an appearance, I mean that the Socratic message as it is transmitted to us by Plato is not making an error there because the structure, as you are going to see, is preserved. And it is even because it is preserved that it allows us also to glimpse in a more correct way the mystery hidden beneath the Christian commandment. And moreover, even though it is possible to give a general theory of love under every manifestation which is a manifestation of love even if this may appear surprising to you at first sight, you can assure yourselves that once you have its key - I am speaking about what I call the metaphor of love - you find it absolutely everywhere.

I have spoken to you through Victor Hugo. There is also the original book of the story of Ruth and Booz. If this story maintains itself in front of us in a fashion that inspires us differently (except for the bad minds who make of this story a story of a libidinous old man and a little servant girl) it is because moreover we suppose here this lack of knowledge:

"Booz did not know that there was a woman there"

already unconsciously Ruth is for Booz the object he loves. And we also suppose, and this in a formal fashion:

"And Ruth did not know what God wanted of her;"

that this third, that this divine locus of the Other in so far as it is there that there is inscribed the fatality of Ruth's desire is what gives to her nocturnal vigil at the feet of Booz its sacred character. The underlay of this lack of knowledge in which already there is situated, in an anteriority veiled as such, the dignity of the eromenos is here for each one of the partners the reason for the whole mystery of the signification of love in the proper sense which the revelation of their desire takes on.

Here then is how things happen. Alcibiades does not understand. After having heard Socrates he says to him: "Listen, I have said

all that I have to say, it's up to you to decide what you should do." He confronts him, as they say, with his responsibilities. At which Socrates says to him: "We will talk about all of that... until tomorrow, we still have a lot of things to say about it!" (219a). In short, he places things within the continuation of a dialogue, he engages him on his own paths. It is in so far as Socrates absents himself at the point marked by the covetous desire of Alcibiades... and this covetousness, can we not say that it is precisely a covetousness for what is best? But it is precisely the fact that it is expressed in these terms of object - namely that Alcibiades does not say: "It is under the rubric of my good or of my harm that I want this thing to which nothing can be compared and which in you is agalma", but "I want it because I want it, - whether it is for my good or whether it is for my harm" - it is precisely in this that Alcibiades reveals the central function ... in the articulation of the love relationship, and it is precisely in this also that Socrates sets his face against responding to him himself on this plane.

I mean that by his attitude of refusal, by his severity, by his austerity, by his noli me tangere he implicates Alcibiades on the path to his good. The commandment of Socrates is: "Look after your soul, seek your perfection." But is it even sure that we should not allow some ambiguity around this "his good". Because after all, precisely what is put in question ever since this dialogue of Plato has been having an effect, is the identity of this object of desire with "his good". Should we not translate "his good" by the good as Socrates conceives it, traces out its path for those who follow him, he who brings into the world a new discourse?

Let us observe that in the attitude of Alcibiades there is something, I was going to say sublime, in any case absolute and passionate which is close to something of a different nature, of (8) another message, the one where in the gospel we are told that the one who knows that there is a treasure in a field - it is not said what this treasure is - is capable of selling everything he has in order to buy this field and enjoy this treasure. It is here that there is situated the margin of the position of Socrates with respect to that of Alcibiades. Alcibiades is the man of desire. But then you will tell me: why does he want to be loved? In fact, he already is, and he knows it. The miracle of love is realised in him in so far as he becomes the desirer. And when Alcibiades manifests himself as loving, as someone who would say that it is not rubbish! Namely that precisely because he is Alcibiades, the one whose desires know no limits, this preferential field in which he engages himself which is properly speaking for him the field of love is something in which he displays what I would call a very remarkable case of the absence of castration fear - in other words a total lack of this famous Ablehnung der Weiblichkeit. Everyone knows that the most extreme types of virility of the ancient model are always accompanied with a perfect disdain for the eventual risk of being treated, even if only by their soldiers, as a woman, as happened, as you know to Caesar.

Alcibiades here puts on a feminine scene in front of Socrates. He remains nonetheless Alcibiades at his own level. This is why we should attach all its importance in going beyond the complement that he gave to the eulogy of Socrates, namely this astonishing portrait destined to complete the impassive figure of Socrates - and impassive means that he cannot even tolerate being taken in the passive sense, loved, eromenos. The attitude of Socrates (or what is unfolded before us as his courage at war) is caused by a profound indifference to everything that is happening around him, even what is most dramatic.

Thus, once there has been gone through the whole end of this development in which in short there culminates the demonstration of Socrates as a being- without equal, here is how Socrates responds to Alcibiades: I think you have all your wits about you!... And in effect, it was under the shelter of a "I don't know what I'm saying" that Alcibiades had expressed himself. Socrates, who knows, says to him: "You seem to me to have all your wits about you! Nephein moi dokeis" (222c), namely that even though you are drunk I read something in you, and what? It is Socrates who knows it, it is not Alcibiades.

Socrates highlights what is in question, he is going to speak about Agathon. At the end of the discourse of Alcibiades in effect, Alcibiades had turned towards Agathon in order to say to him, "that is a warning to you, not to be deceived by this man. You see how he is capable of treating me. Don't get into it!" (222b) "And it is as a postscript..." - because in truth the intervention of Socrates would have no meaning if it was not on this postscript that the intervention was brought to bear in so far as I called it an interpretation - What he tells us, is that Agathon was being aimed at throughout all the circumlocutions of the discourse, that it was around him that the whole of his discourse was entwined... "as if your whole discourse" - it should be translated and not language - "had no (9) other goal" but what? To enunciate that "I am obliged to be your lover and love no one else, and Agathon should be your beloved and loved by no one else!" And this, he says, is quite transparent, katadelon, in your discourse. Socrates says indeed that "he reads through the apparent" discourse. And very precisely, it is this business of "the drama of your invention", as he calls it, this metaphor, here is where it is altogether transparent. "To saturikon sou drama touto kai silenikon, your satyric and silenic drama has been shown up" (222d), this is where things can be seen.

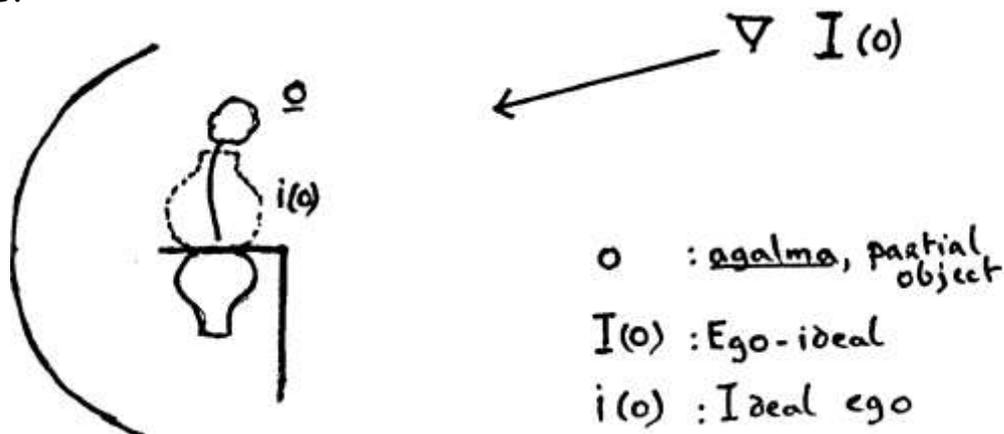
Well let us try in effect to recognise its structure. Socrates says to Alcibiades: "If what you want when all is said and done is for you to be loved by me and for Agathon to be your object... - because otherwise there is no other meaning to be given to this discourse except the most superficial of psychological meanings, the vague stirring up of jealousy in the other - there is no question of it!" The fact is that effectively this is what is in question. Alcibiades, Socrates admits it, manifesting his desire to Agathon and demanding in short from Agathon that which first of all Alcibiades himself

demanded from Socrates. The proof is that, if we consider all the parts of the dialogue as a long epithalamium and if what all this dialectic culminates in has a meaning, what happens at the end, is that Socrates eulogises Agathon.

That Socrates should sing the praises of Agathon is the response not to the past but the present demand of Alcibiades. When Socrates eulogises Agathon, he gives satisfaction to Alcibiades. He gives him satisfaction for his present act of public declaration, of putting on the plane of the universal Other what had happened between them behind the veils of modesty. The response of Socrates is: "You can love the one I am going to praise because, by praising him, I Socrates would be able to get across the image of you loving qua the image of you loving; it is through this that you are going to enter upon the path of superior identifications which the path of beauty traces out."

But it would be well not to overlook the fact that here Socrates, precisely because he knows, substitutes something for something else. It is not beauty, nor ascesis, nor the identification to God that Alcibiades desires, but this unique object, this something which he saw in Socrates and from which Socrates diverts him because Socrates knows that he does not have it. But Alcibiades, for his part, always desires the same thing and, what Alcibiades is seeking in Agathon, you can be sure, is this same supreme point where the subject is abolished in the phantasy, his agalmata† Here Socrates, in substituting his lure for what I would call the lure of the gods, does so quite authentically in the measure that precisely he knows what love is and it is precisely because he knows that he is destined to deceive himself about it, namely to overlook the essential function of the object aimed at, constituted by the agalma.

He were told last night about a model, a theoretical model. I would say that it is not possible not to evoke in this connection even if it is only as support for our thought, the intrasubjective dialectic of the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, and precisely the partial object. the little schema which I formerly gave you of the spherical mirror, in so far as it is in front of it that there is created this phantasy of the real image of the vase as it emerges hidden in the apparatus and that this (10) illusory image can be supported, perceived by the eye as real in so far as the eye accommodates itself with respect to that around which it has been realised, namely the flower that we have placed there.



I taught you to note in these three terms (the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, and little o, the agalma of the partial object) the something denoting the supports, the reciprocal relationships of the three terms that are in question every time there is constituted what? Precisely what is in question at the end of the Socratic dialectic, something which is destined to give consistency to what Freud - and it is in this connection that I introduced this schema - enounced to us as being the essential of being in love, Verliebtheit, namely the recognition of the foundation of the narcissistic image in so far as it is what gives its substance to the Ideal Ego.

The imaginary incarnation of the subject, this is what is in question in this triple reference. And you will allow me to finally come to what I mean: Socrates' demon is Alcibiades. It is Alcibiades, exactly as we are told in the discourse of Diotima that love is not a god, but a demon, namely the one who sends to mortals the message which the gods have to give him and this is why we could not fail in connection with this dialogue to evoke the nature of gods.

(11) I am going to leave you for two weeks and I am going to give you some reading: De natura deorum by Cicero. Reading this did me a lot of damage a very long time ago with a celebrated pedant who, having seen me plunged in this, thought that it augured very badly as regards the focussing of my professional occupations. Read this De natura deorum in order to bring yourselves up to date. You will see in it first of all all sorts of extremely droll things and you will see that this Mr. Cicero, who is not the nit-picker that people try to depict for you by telling you that the Romans were people who simply followed, is someone who articulates things which go straight to your heart. You will also see in it some amusing things. Namely that, in his time, people went to Athens to look in a way for the shades of the great pin-ups of the time of Socrates. People went there saying: I am going to meet Charmides there on every street corner. You will see that our Brigitte Bardot can align herself with the effects that these Charmides had! They were even goggle-eyed at the little street urchins! And in Cicero you see funny things. And specifically a passage which I cannot give you, which goes something like this: "It must be admitted that beautiful lads, those whom all the same the philosophers taught us that it was very good to love, are not easy to find! Of course here and there you can find one who is beautiful." What does that mean? Does the loss of political independence have as an irremediable effect some racial decadence, or simply the disappearance of this mysterious eclat, this himeros enarges, this brilliance of desire that Plato speaks about in Phaedo? We will never know anything about it.... But you will learn still more things in it. You will learn that it is a serious question to know where the gods are localised. And it is a question which has not lost for us, believe me, its importance. If what I am telling you here may one day when, with a tangible slipping of certitude, you find yourself between two stools.... if it is of use to you in any way, one of the things will have been to recall to you the real existence of gods.

So then why should we also not dwell on this scandalous object which the gods of antique mythology were and, without trying to reduce them to packets of filing cards or to groupings of themes, but by asking ourselves what could be meant by the fact that after all these gods behaved in the way you know, and of whom stealing, cheating, adultery - I wont talk about impiety, that was their affair - was all the same the most characteristic style. In other words, the question of what a love of god is is something which is frankly actualised by the scandalous character of antique mythlogy. And I ought to tell you that all the same the high point is there at the origin, at the level of Homer. There is no way of behaving oneself in a more arbitrary, more unjustifiable, more incoherent, more derisory fashion than these gods. And read the Iliad; there they are all the time mixed up in, ceaselessly intervening in the affairs of men. And one cannot all the same help thinking that the stories which, when all is said and done might in a certain perspective... but we do not take it - nobody can take it, not even the thickest of the Homeridae - and say that they are tall stories. No, they are there and well and truly there! What could it mean that the (12) gods in short only manifest themselves to men in that way?

It must all the same be seen what happens when they are seized by the love of a mortal for example. There is no stopping them, even if the mortal, in despair, transforms herself into a laurel tree or a frog. There is no way of stopping them. There is nothing all the same which is further removed from these sorts of tremors of being confronted with love than the desire of a god - or moreover a goddess - I do not see why I should not bring them into it also.

It needed Giraudoux to restore for us the dimensions, the resonance of this prodigious myth of Amphitryon. This great poet could not but allow there to radiate onto Jupiter himself something which may resemble a sort of respect for the sentiments of Alcmene, but it is indeed in order to make the thing possible for us. It is quite clear that for the one who knows how to understand, this myth remains in a way a sort of high point of blasphemy, one might say, and nevertheless it was not at all like that that the ancients understood it. Because there things go further than ever. It is divine debauchery which is disguised as human virtue. In other words, when I say that nothing stops them, they are going to practice deception even in what is the best of things and it is here indeed that there lies the whole key to the affair. The fact is that the best, the real gods, push impassivity to a point of which I spoke to you above as not even tolerating the qualification of passive.

To be loved is necessarily to enter onto this ladder of the desirable from which the theologians of Christianity had great trouble as we know extricating themselves. Because if God is desirable, he can be more or less so; henceforth there is a whole ladder of desire and, what do we desire in God if not the desirable but... plus God - so that it is at the moment when an effort was being made to give to God his most absolute value that people found themselves trapped in a vertigo from which they

emerged only with difficulty to preserve the dignity of the supreme object.

The gods of antiquity did not shilly-shally about it: they knew that they could only reveal themselves to men in the rock of scandal, in the agalma of something which violates all the rules as pure manifestation of an essence which, it, remained completely hidden, the enigma of which was entirely behind, hence the demonic incarnation of their scandalous exploits. And it is in this sense that I say that Alcibiades is the demon of Socrates.

Alcibiades gives the true representation, without knowing it, of what is implicated in—the Socratic ascesis. He shows what is there which is not absent, believe me, from the dialectic of love as it was later developed in Christianity.

It is indeed around this that there comes to grief this crisis, which in the XVth century, overbalances the whole long synthesis which had been sustained and, I would say, the long equivocation concerning the nature of love which had caused it to unfold, to develop in the whole of the Middle Ages in such a post-Socratic perspective. I mean that for example the God of Scotus Erigena does not differ from the God of Aristotle, in so far as he dies as eromenon, they are consistent: it is by his beauty that God makes the world go around. What a distance there is between this perspective and the one which opposes it! But it is not opposed to it - this is the sense of what I am trying to articulate - this is articulated on the opposite side as agape in so far as agape expressly teaches us that God loves us as (13) sinners: he loves us just as much for our evil as for our good. This is the meaning of the overbalancing which took place in the history of the feelings of love, and curiously, at the precise moment where there reappears for us, in its authentic texts, the Platonic message: the divine agape qua addressing itself to the sinner as such, here is the centre, the heart of the Lutheran position.

But you must not believe that this is something which was reserved to a heresy, to a local insurrection in Catholicism, because it is enough to glance even superficially at what followed the counter-reformation, namely the eruption of what has been called Baroque art, to perceive that this signifies exactly nothing other than the proclaiming, the erection as such of the power of the image properly speaking in its seduction, and, after the long misunderstanding which had sustained in the divinity the trinitarian relationship of the knower to the known and remounting from the known to the knower through knowledge, we see here the approach of this revelation which is ours, which is that things go from the unconscious towards the subject which is constituted in its dependency, and remount towards this core-object which we call here agalma.

Such is the structure which regulates the dance between

Alcibiades and Socrates. Alcibiades shows the presence of love but only shows it in so far as Socrates who knows, can be deceived by it and only accompany him by being deceived about it. The lure is reciprocal. It is just as true for Socrates, if it is a lure and if it is true that he is lured, as it is true for Alcibiades that he is caught in the lure. But who is the most authentically lured if not the one who follows, firmly and not allowing himself to drift, what is traced out for him by a love which I would call terrifying.

You must not believe that the one who is placed at the origin of this discourse, Aphrodite, is a goddess who smiles. A pre-Socratic, who is I believe Democritus says, that she was there all alone at the origin. And it is even in this connection that for the first time there appears in the Greek texts the term agalma. Venus, to call her by her name, is born every day. The birth of Aphrodite is every day and, to take up from Plato himself an equivocation which, I believe, is a veritable etymology, I would conclude this discourse by these words: Kalemera, "good day", kalimeros, "good day and beautiful desire"! About the reflection on what I have brought you here concerning the relationship of love to something which has always been called eternal love.... may it not be too difficult for you to think about, if you remember that this term of eternal love is put by Dante expressly at the gates of Hell!

Seminar 12: Wednesday 1 March 1961

As I think most of you will still remember, we have arrived then at the end of the commentary on the Symposium, in other words the Platonic dialogue which, as I have if not explained at least indicated on several occasions, happens to be historically at the start of what one can call more than one explanation in our cultural era, of love, at the start of what one can call a development of, in short, the most profound, the most radical, the most mysterious function of relationships between subjects. At the horizon of what I pursued before you as a commentary, there was all the development of antique philosophy (an antique philosophy, as you know, is not simply a speculative position, entire zones of society were oriented in their practical action by the speculation of Socrates)... it is important to see that it is not at all in an artificial, fictitious fashion that in some way Hegel made of positions like the Stoic, Epicurean positions the antecedents of Christianity.

Effectively these positions were lived by a large group of subjects as something which guided their life in a fashion that one could say was effectively equivalent, antecedent, preparatory with respect to what was brought to them subsequently by the Christian position. To perceive that the very text of the Symposium continued to mark profoundly something which in the Christian position also extends beyond speculation, because one cannot say that the fundamental theological positions taught by Christianity failed to have an effect, to profoundly influence everyone's problematic, and specifically that of those who found themselves in this historical development to be in the lead by the position of example that they assumed under different headings (either by their remarks, or by their directive action) of what is called sanctity, this could naturally only be indicated at the horizon and, in a word, that is enough for us.

That is enough for us, because if it was from this starting point that we had ourselves wished to expedite what we have to say, we would have taken it at a subsequent level. It is precisely in the measure that this initial point which the Symposium is can conceal in itself something altogether radical in this mainspring of love whose title it bears, which it indicates as being its purpose, it is for this reason that we have carried out this

commentary on the Symposium.

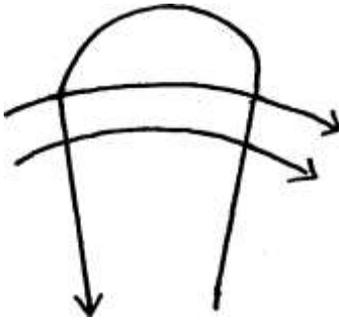
We concluded it the last time by showing that something - I do not believe that I am exaggerating in saying this - had been neglected up to now by all the commentators of the Symposium, and that in this respect our commentary constitutes (in the sequence of the history of the development of indications, of virtualities that there are in this dialogue) an epoch. If, in so far as we (2) believe we have seen in the very scenario of what happens between Alcibiades and Socrates the last word of what Plato wants to tell us concerning the nature of love, it is certain that this supposes that Plato had deliberately, in the presentation of what one could call his thought, made a place for enigma, in other words that his thought, is not entirely open, betrayed, developed in this dialogue.

Now I believe that there is nothing excessive in asking you to admit this for the simple reason that, in the opinion of all the commentators, ancient and especially modern, of Plato - the case is not a unique one - an attentive examination of the dialogues shows very evidently that in this dialogue there is an exoteric and esoteric element, a closed-off element, and that the most singular modes of this closing-off - up to an including the most characteristic traps which can go so far as to be lures - touch on the difficulty produced as such so that those who are not supposed to understand do not understand and this is really structuring, fundamental in everything that has remained to us from Plato's expositions. Obviously to admit such a thing is also to admit how risky it always is for us to advance, to go further, to try to pierce, to guess in its final principle what Plato indicates to us.

It appears that as regards this thematic of love to which we have limited ourselves, as it is developed in the Symposium, it would be difficult, for us analysts, not to recognise the bridge, the hand that is stretched out to us in this articulation of the last scenario of the scene of the Symposium, namely what happens between Alcibiades and Socrates.

I articulated and made you sense this in two moments by showing you the importance of the declaration of Alcibiades, in showing you what we cannot but recognise in what Alcibiades articulates around the theme of the agalma, the theme of the object hidden within the subject Socrates. It would be very difficult for us not to take seriously that in the form, in the articulation that this is presented to us, these are not metaphorical remarks, pretty images to say that in general he expects a lot from Socrates there is revealed there a structure in which we can rediscover what we ourselves are capable of articulating as altogether fundamental in what I would call the position of desire.

Here of course - and I excuse myself to the newcomers here - I can suppose known by my audience in its general characteristics the elaborations which I already gave of this position of the subject, those which are indicated in this topological summary



constituted by what we call here conventionally the graph. Its general form is given by the splitting, by the fundamental reduplication of two signifying chains in which the subject is constituted, in so far as we admit that it has already been demonstrated that this reduplication of itself required by the logical, initial, inaugural relationship of the subject of the signifier as such, from the existence of an unconscious signifying chain, flows from the sole position of the term (3) subject as a being determined as subject by the fact that it is the support of the signifier.

No doubt...let those for whom this is only an affirmation, a proposition that still has not been demonstrated reassure themselves, we will have to come back to it. But we have to announce this morning that this has been previously articulated. Desire as such presents itself in a position (with respect to the unconscious signifying chain as constitutive of the subject who speaks), in the position of what cannot be conceived of except on the basis of metonymy, determined by the existence of the signifying chain by this something, this phenomenon which is produced in the support of the subject of the signifying chain which is called metonymy and which means that, from the fact that the subject undergoes the mark of the signifying chain, something is possible, something is fundamentally established in him which we call metonymy - which is nothing other than the possibility of the indefinite sliding of significations under the continuity of the signifying chain.

Everything that happens to be associated at one time by the signifying chain (the circumstantial element with the element of activity and the element of the beyond of the term at which this activity ends up), all of this is in the position of finding itself in appropriate conditions as being able to be taken as equivalent one for the other - a circumstantial element being able to take on the representative value of the term of the subjective enunciating of the object to which it is directed, or moreover, of the action itself of the subject.

It is in the measure that something presents itself as revalorizing the sort of infinite slipping, the dissolving element that the signifying fragmentation brings of its own accord into the subject, that something takes on the value of privileged object and stops this infinite slipping. It is in the measure that an object o takes on with respect to the subject this essential value which constitutes the fundamental phantasy, f^*o , in which the subject himself recognises himself as arrested, what we call in analysis - to remind you of more familiar notions - fixated with respect to the object in this privileged function, and which we call o .

Therefore it is in the measure in which the subject identifies himself to the fundamental phantasy that desire as such takes on

consistency and can be designated, that the desire we are dealing with is rooted by its very position in the unconscious, namely also, to rejoin our terminology, that it is posed in the subject as desire of the Other, the big 0 - 0 being defined for us as the locus of the word, this locus always evoked once there is a word, this third locus which always exists in relationships to the other, small o, once there is signifying articulation. This big 0 is not an absolute other, an other who would be the other of what we call in our moral verbosity the other respected qua subject, in so far as he is morally our equal. No, this Other, as I teach you here to articulate it, at once necessitated and necessary as locus but at the same time perpetually submitted to the question of what guarantees it, is a perpetually vanishing Other and, by this very fact, one which puts us ourselves in a perpetually vanishing position.

Now, it is to the question posed to the Other of what he can give us, of what he has to respond to us, it is to this question that there is attached love as such; not that love is identical to each one of the demands with which we assail him, but that love is situated in the beyond of this demand in so far as the Other can respond to us or not as final presence. And the whole question is to take note of the relationship which links this Other to whom there is addressed the demand for love with the apparition of this term of desire in so far as it is no longer (4) this Other, our equal, this Other to whom we aspire, this Other of love, but that it is something which, with respect to that, represents properly speaking a falling away from it - I mean something which is of the nature of object.

What we are dealing with in desire is an object, not a subject. It is precisely here that there lies what one can call this terrifying commandment of the god of love which is precisely to make of the object that he designates for us something which, firstly is an object and secondly that before which we falter, we vacillate, we disappear as subject. Because this collapse, this depreciation that is in question, it is we as subject who have to assume it. And what happens to the object is precisely the contrary, namely - I am using terms here in order to make myself understood, they are not the most appropriate, but it does not matter, it is a question of getting it across and making myself understood - this object, for its part, is overvalued and it is in so far as it is overvalued that it has this function of saving our dignity as subject, namely of making of us something other than this subject submitted to the infinite slipping of the signifier, to make of us something other than subjects of the word, this something unique, inestimable, irreplaceable when all is said and done which is the true point at which we can designate what I have called the dignity of the subject.

The equivocation, if you wish, that there is in the term individuality, is not that we are something unique as body which is this one and not another, individuality consists entirely in this privileged relationship at which we culminate as subject in desire.

All I am doing here after all is giving an account once more of this merry-go-round of truth on which we are turning since the origin of this seminar. It is a question this year, with transference, of showing what are its consequences at the most intimate level of our practice. How does it happen that we are coming so late to this transference, you will ask me... Of course, the fact is that the property of truths is never to show themselves entirely, in a word, that truths are solids of a rather perfidious opacity. They do not even have, it seems, this property that we are capable of producing in solids, of being transparent, and of showing us at the same time their anterior and posterior bone structure; it is necessary to go right around them and even I would say, to do some conjuring tricks with them.

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For transference then, as we are tackling it this year, you have seen that whatever the charm with which I may have succeeded in leading you on for a certain time by making you pay attention with me to love, you must all the same have perceived that I approached it from an angle, a pitch which not only is not the classical angle, or pitch, but is moreover not the one by which up to the present I have even approached this question of transference before you. I mean that, up to the present, I always reserved what I advanced on this theme by telling you that one had to be terribly mistrustful of what is the appearance, the phenomenon most habitually connoted under the terms for example of positive or negative transference, of the order of the collection of terms in which not only a more or less well informed public, but even ourselves, in this daily discourse, connote transference.

I always reminded you that one must start from the fact that transference, in the final analysis, is the automatism of repetition. Now it is clear that if since the beginning of the year I have done nothing other than make you pursue the details, the movement of Plato's Symposium, On Love, love is the only thing that is dealt with, it is quite obviously to introduce you into transference from another angle. It is a question therefore of joining up these two methods of approach.

(5) So legitimate is this distinction that one reads very singular things in the authors, and that precisely for want of the lines, the guidelines which I provide for you here, people arrive at quite astonishing things. It would not displease me at all if some lively person gave us here a brief report so that we could really discuss it - and I even wish it for reasons that are quite local, precise at this turning point of our seminar of this year, on which I do not want to spend too much time and to which I will return - it is certainly necessary that some people should be able to mediate between this rather heterogeneous assembly that you compose and what I am in the process of trying to articulate before you, should be able to mediate in so far as it is obviously very difficult for me to advance very far into this mediation, in a subject matter which is going to do nothing less than put right at the point of what we are articulating this year the function as such of desire not only in the analysand,

but essentially in the analyst. One asks oneself for whom this involves the greater risk: for those who for some reason know something about it or for those who are still not in a position to know anything about it. In any case, there ought to be all the same a method of approaching this subject before a sufficiently prepared audience, even if it does not have the experience of analysis.

This having been said, in 1951, an article by Hermann Nunberg which is called "Transference and reality" is something quite exemplary (as moreover is everything which has been written on transference) of the difficulties, the avoidances which are produced for want of an approach which is sufficiently illuminated, sufficiently oriented, sufficiently methodical of the phenomenon of transference, because it is not difficult to find in this short article of exactly nine pages, that the author goes so far as to distinguish as being essentially different transference and the automatism of repetition. They are, he says, two different things. This is going a bit far all the same. And it is certainly not what I am telling you. I will ask someone then for the next time to give a report in ten minutes of what there seems to him to emerge from the structure of the enunciation of this article and the fashion in which it can be corrected.

For the moment let us carefully mark what is in question. At the origin transference is discovered by Freud as a process which, I underline, is spontaneous, a spontaneous process certainly disturbing enough (since we are in history at the beginning of the appearance of this phenomenon) to divert from the first analytic investigation one of the most eminent pioneers: Breuer. And very quickly it is referred, linked to what is most essential in this presence of the past in so far as it is discovered by analysis. These terms are all carefully weighed. I would ask you to record what I am retaining to fix the principle points of the dialectic that is in question. Very quickly also it is admitted first of all in a tentative way, then confirmed by experience, that this phenomenon, qua linked to what is most essential in the presence of the past discovered by analysis, can be handled by interpretation.

Interpretation already exists at this moment, in so far as it has manifested itself as one of the mainsprings necessary for the realisation, for the completion of remembering in the subject. It is seen that there is something other than this tendency to remember, without really knowing yet what it is, in any case, it is the same thing. And this transference is admitted immediately as manageable by interpretation therefore, if you (6) wish, permeable to the action of the word, which immediately introduces the question which will remain, which still remains open for us, which is the following: this phenomenon of transference is itself placed in the position of a support for this action of the word. At the same time as transference is discovered it is discovered that, if the word has an effect as it had an effect up to then before it was perceived, it is because transference exists.

So that up to the present, in the final analysis - and the subject was treated and re-treated at length by the most qualified authors in analysis - I signal very particularly the article by Jones, in his Papers on psychoanalysis; "The action of suggestion in psychotherapy", but there are innumerable others. The question remaining on the agenda is that of the ambiguity which still remains, which in the present state of things nothing can reduce. This is that transference, however interpreted it may be, preserves in itself as a kind of irreducible limit, the following, the fact is that in the central, normal conditions of analysis, in neuroses, it will be interpreted on the basis and with the instrument of transference itself, which could not be done except with that accent; it is from the position that transference gives him that the analyst analyses, interprets and intervenes on the transference itself.

What must be called an irreducible margin of suggestion remains from outside as an always suspect element not of what happens from outside - one cannot know that - but of what the theory is capable of producing. In fact, as they say, these difficulties do not prevent us from advancing. It nevertheless remains that one must fix the limits of the theoretical aporia and perhaps this introduces us to a certain possibility of subsequently going further.

Let us carefully observe all the same what is involved in it, I mean as regards what is happening, and perhaps we will be able to perceive already the ways in which one can go beyond it.

The presence of the past therefore, such is the reality of transference. Is there not already something which imposes itself, which allows us to formulate it in a more complete fashion? It is a presence, a little more than a presence, it is a presence in act and, as the German and French terms indicate, a reproduction. I mean that what is not sufficiently articulated, not sufficiently highlighted in what is ordinarily said, is the way in which this reproduction is distinguished from a simple passivity of the subject.

If it is a reproduction, if it is something in act, there is in the manifestation of transference something creative. It appears to me to be absolutely essential to articulate this element and, as always, if I highlight it, this is not to say that its indications are not already noticeable in a more or less obscure fashion in what the authors have already articulated.

Because if you refer to an epoch-making report by Daniel Lagache, you will see that this is what constitutes the core, the point of this distinction that he introduced - which to my mind remains a little vacillating and unclear because it does not see the final point.... - of the distinction that he introduced of the opposition around which he wanted to make there turn his distinction of transference between repetition of need and need of repetition. Because however didactic may be this opposition which in reality is not included, is not even for a single (7) instant really in question in what we experience of

transference - there is no doubt that it is question of the need for repetition - we are not able to formulate otherwise the phenomena of transference than in this enigmatic form: why is it necessary for the subject to repeat perpetually this signification, in the positive sense of the term, which he signifies to us by his behaviour. To call that need, is already to inflect in a certain direction what is in question and in this respect one understands in effect that the reference to an opaque psychological datum like the one connoted purely and simply by Daniel Lagache in his report, the Zeigarnik effect, after all better respects what is to be preserved in what constitutes the strict originality of what is in question in transference.

For it is clear that everything on the other hand indicates to us that if what we do in so far as transference is the repetition of a need (of a need which may manifest itself at one or other moment to manifest the transference) is something which could manifest itself there as need, we arrive at an impasse - because in other respects we spend our time saying that it is a shadow of a need, a need which has for a long time been superseded, and that it is for that reason that its repetition is possible.

And moreover we arrive here at the point where transference appears as properly speaking a source of fiction. The subject in transference pretends, fabricates, constructs something and it then seems that it is not possible not to integrate immediately into the function of transference this term which is first of all: what is the nature of this fiction, what on the one hand is its source, and on the other hand its object? And if it is a question of fiction, what is being pretended and, because it is a question of feigning, for whom? It is quite clear that if one does not respond immediately: "For the person to whom one is addressing oneself", it is because one cannot add "...knowingly". It is because one is already greatly distanced by this phenomenon from any hypothesis even of what one can call massively by its name: simulation.

Therefore it is not for the person to whom one addresses oneself in so far as one knows it. But it is not because it is the contrary, namely that it is in so far as one does not know it, that it must be believed for all that that the person to whom one is addressing oneself is here all of a sudden volatilized, vanished. Because everything that we know about the unconscious from the very start, from dreams, indicates to us and experience shows us that there are psychic phenomena which are produced, are developed, are constructed to be understood, therefore precisely for this other who is there even when one does not know it, even if one does not know that they are there to be understood; they are there to be understood, and to be understood by another.

In other words, it seems to me impossible to eliminate from the phenomenon of transference the fact that it manifests itself in the relationship to someone to whom one is speaking. This is constitutive of it, constitutes a frontier and indicates to us at the same time that we should not swamp this phenomenon in the

general possibility of repetition which the existence of the unconscious constitutes. Outside analysis there are repetitions linked of course to the constancy of the unconscious signifying chain in the subject. These repetitions, even if they can in certain cases have homologous effects, are to be strictly distinguished from what we call transference and, in this sense, justify the distinction into which - as you will see - the very remarkable personage that Herman Nunberg is allows himself to slip into from a quite different angle, but from an erroneous angle.

(8) Here I am going for a moment to slip in again, in order to show you its invigorating character, a piece, a segment of our exploration of the Symposium.

Remember the extraordinary scene - and try to situate it in our terms - constituted by the public confession of Alcibiades. You should indeed sense the quite remarkable weight that is attached to this action. You should properly sense that there is something here which goes well beyond a pure and simple account of what happened between him and Socrates, it is not neutral, and the proof, is that, even before beginning, he himself puts himself under the protection of some invocation of the secret which is not simply aimed at protecting himself. He says: "Let those who are not capable or worthy of hearing, the slaves who are there, block up their ears!" because there are things which it is better not to hear when one is not in a position to understand them.

He makes his confession before whom? The others, all the others, those who, by their agreement, their body, their council, their plurality, seem to constitute, to give the greatest possible weight to what one can call the tribunal of the Other. And what gives the confession of Alcibiades its value before this tribunal is a report in which precisely he tried to make of Socrates something completely subordinated, submitted to a value other than that of the relationship of subject to subject, where he had, vis-a-vis Socrates, manifested an attempt at seduction, in which what he wanted to make of Socrates, and in a fashion openly avowed, is someone instrumental, subordinated to what? To the object of his desire, to that of Alcibiades, which is agalma, the good object. And I would say further, how can we analysts fail to recognise what is in question because it is said clearly: it is the good object that he has in his belly.

Socrates is no longer there anything but the envelope of what is the object of desire. And it is indeed to mark clearly that he is nothing more than this envelope, it is for this reason that he wanted to show that Socrates is with respect to him the slave of desire, that Socrates is subjected to him by desire, and that even though he knew it he wanted to see Socrates' desire manifesting itself as a sign in order to know that the other object, agalma, was at his mercy.

Now for Alcibiades it is precisely the fact of having failed in this enterprise that covers him with shame and makes of his

confession something so heavily charged. The fact is that the demon of Aidos, of Shame, of which I gave an account before you at one time in this connection is what intervenes here, this is what is violated. It is that before everybody there is unveiled in its most shocking trait, secret, the final mainspring of desire, this something which forces it to be always more or less dissimulated in love, the fact is that its aim is this collapse of the Other, capital O into the other, little o, and that, in addition on this occasion, it appears that Alcibiades failed in his enterprise, in so far as this enterprise was specifically to knock Socrates off his perch.

What could be closer in appearance to what one could call, to what one could believe, to be the final term of a seeking for the truth, not at all in its function of blueprint, of abstraction, of neutralisation of all the elements, but on the contrary in what it brings in terms of a resolution, of an absolution of everything that is in question and which you clearly see is (9) something quite different from the simple phenomenon of an incomplete task, as people say it is, it is something different.

Public confession with all the religious weight that we attach to it, rightly or wrongly, is indeed what seems to be in question here. As it is constructed up to its final term, does it not also seem that on this striking testimony given about the superiority of Socrates there should be completed the homage rendered to the master, and perhaps that which certain people have designated as being the apologetic value of the Symposium? Given the accusations with which Socrates remained charged even after his death, because the pamphlet by someone called Polycrates again accuses him at the time - and everyone knows that the Symposium was constructed in part in relation to this libel, we have some quotations from other authors - of having as one might say - led astray Alcibiades and many others also, of having indicated to them that the way to the satisfaction of all their desires was clear, while what is it we see? It is that, paradoxically, before this revelation of a truth which seems in a way to be sufficient in itself, but about which each and every person senses that there is still a question... why all of this, to whom is it addressed, who is it a question of instructing at the moment that the confession is produced (it is certainly not Socrates' accusers), what is the desire that pushes Alcibiades to undress himself in this way in public? Is there not here a paradox which it is worth highlighting and which as you will see is not so simple if you look closely at it.

The fact is that what everyone perceives as an interpretation by Socrates is in fact such. Socrates retorts to him: "Everything that you have just done here, and God knows it is not obvious, is for Agathon. Your desire is more secret than all the unveiling which you have given yourself over to and is now aimed at still another: small o - and this other - I designate him for you, is Agathon."

Paradoxically, in this situation, it is thus not something phantastical, something which comes from the depths of the past

and which no longer has any existence that is here by this interpretation of Socrates put in the place of what is manifested, here, it is well and truly the reality - if we listen to Socrates - which would serve as what we would call a transference in the process of the search for the truth.

In other words, so that you may well understand me, it is as if someone were to say during the trial of Oedipus: "Oedipus only pursues in such a breathless fashion this search for the truth which must lead him to his death because he has only a single goal, it is to go away, to escape, to flee with Antigone..." This is the paradoxical situation before which Socrates' interpretation places us. It is quite clear that all the shimmering of details., the angle through which this may serve to dazzle the groundlings by performing such a brilliant act, by showing what one is capable of, nothing of all of this, when all is said and done nothing holds up. There is well and truly a question of something about which one asks oneself then up to what point Socrates knew what he was doing. Because Socrates replying to Alcibiades seems to fall under the accusations of Polycrates because Socrates himself, learned in the matters of love, designates to him where his desire is and does much more than designating it because he is in a way going to play the game of this desire by procuration and he Socrates, immediately afterwards will lend himself to singing the praises of Agathon who all of a sudden as the camera stops is whisked away - we are completely hoodwinked by it - by a new entry of revellers. Thanks to this the question remains enigmatic.

(10) The dialogue can turn back on itself indefinitely and we will not know what Socrates knows about what he is doing or indeed whether it is Plato who at that moment is substituted for him (no doubt, because he is the one who wrote the dialogue, he knows a little more about it) namely allowing the centuries to go astray about what he, Plato, designates for us as the true reason for love which is to lead the subject towards what? The rungs which indicate to him the ascent towards a beauty more and more confused with supreme Beauty... that's the real Plato.

This having been said it is not at all towards this, in following the text, that we sense ourselves forced. At most, as analysts, we might be able to say that if the desire of Socrates, as seems to be indicated in his remarks, is nothing other than to lead his interlocutors towards gnoti seauton (which is translated in another register by look after your soul) at the limit, we may think that all of this is to be taken seriously. That, on the one hand, and I will explain by what mechanism, Socrates is one of those to whom we owe the fact of having a soul, I mean of having given consistency to a certain point designated by Socratic interrogation with, as you will see, all that this engenders in terms of transference and qualities. But if it is true that what Socrates designates in this way is, without knowing it, the desire of the subject as I define it and as effectively it is manifested before us... making of itself what must really be called its accomplice, if that is it and he does it without knowing it, then Socrates has a place that we can

completely understand and understand at the same time how when all is said and done he inflamed Alcibiades.

Because if desire at its root, in its essence is the desire of the Other, it is here properly speaking that there lies the mainspring of the birth of love, if love is what happens in this object towards whom we stretch out our hands by our own desire and who, at the moment that it breaks into flame, allows there to appear for an instant this response, this other hand, the one which stretches out towards you as his desire. If this desire always manifests itself in so far as we do not know - "And Ruth did not know what God wanted of her..." because she did not know what God wanted of her, it was necessary all the same that there should be a question of God wanting something of her and if she knows nothing about it this is not because it is not known "what God wanted of her" but because by reason of this mystery God is eclipsed but always there.

It is in the measure that Socrates does not know what he desires and that it is the desire of the Other, it is in this measure that Alcibiades is obsessed by what? By a love of which one can say that Socrates' only merit is to designate it as transference love, to refer it back to his true desire.

These are the points that I wanted to refix, replace today in order to pursue the next time what I think I can clearly show, which is the degree to which this apologue, this final articulation, this almost mythical scenario of the final term of the Symposium allows us to structure, to articulate this situation around the position of two desires. We will then be able to really restore the one-to-one situation to its true sense, to two reals, the situation of the analysand in the presence of the analyst and at the same time put exactly in their place the sometimes ultra-precocious phenomena of love, which are so upsetting for those who approach these phenomena, precocious, then progressively more complex in the measure that they constitute later on in the analysis, in short, the whole content of what happens on the plane of what is called the imaginary for (11) which the whole development of modern theories of analysis believed it necessary to construct, and not without good reason, the whole theory of object-relations, the whole theory of projection in so far as this term is effectively far from being sufficient in itself, the whole theory when all is said and done of what the analyst is during the analysis for the analysand - which cannot be conceived of without a correct positioning of the position the analyst himself occupies with respect to the desire constitutive of analysis and that with which the subject starts into analysis: what does he want?

Seminar 13: Wednesday 8 March 1961

I ended the last time, to your satisfaction it seems, on the point of what constituted one of the elements, perhaps the fundamental element of the position of the subject in analysis. It was this question which for us crosschecked with the definition of desire as the desire of the Other, this question which is in short the one which is marginal, but in this way is indicated as fundamental in the position of the analysand with respect to the analyst even if he does not formulate it: what does he want?

Today we are again going to take a step backwards after having advanced to this point and propose to ourselves to centre on the one hand what we had announced at the beginning in our remarks last time, to advance in the examination of the modes in which theoreticians other than ourselves, from what can be clearly seen of their praxis, manifest in short the same topology as I am in the process of deploying, of trying to establish before you, a topology in so far as it makes transference possible.

It is not necessary, in effect, that they should formulate it like us in order to bear witness to it - this seems obvious to me - in their own way. As I wrote somewhere, one does not need to know the plan of an apartment in order to knock one's head against the walls. I would even go further, for this operation one can rather easily do without the plan, normally. On the contrary, the reciprocal is not true in this sense that contrary to a primitive schema of reality testing, it is not enough to knock one's head against the walls in order to reconstruct the plan of an apartment, especially if one carries out this experiment in the dark. You have an example which I like, Theodore cherche des allumettes, which illustrates it for you in Courteline's work. This having been said, it is perhaps a rather forced metaphor, perhaps not either as forced as it may appear to you, and this is what we are going to see by putting it to the test, to the test of what is currently happening, in our own day, when analysts speak about what? We are going I believe straight to the most current aspect of this question as it poses itself for them, and ... the same place as you can clearly sense I am centring it this year, from the side of the analyst. And in a word, it is properly speaking that which they best articulate when they - the theoreticians and the most advanced, the most lucid theoreticians - tackle what is called the

question of counter-transference.

(2) On this I would like to remind you of some primary truths. It is not because they are primary that they are always expressed and if they go without saying, they go even better when they are said.

For the question of counter-transference, there is first of all the common opinion, that of anyone who has approached the problem a little, where he first situates it, namely the first idea that was had of it; I would also say the first, the most common that has been given of it but also the oldest approach to this question.

There was always present in analysis this notion of counter-transference. I mean very early, at the beginning of the elaboration of this notion of transference, everything that in the analyst represents his unconscious qua unanalysed, let us say, is dangerous for his function, for his operation as analyst in so far as starting from there we have the source of unmastered responses - and especially in the opinion that was had of them - of blind responses from which, in the whole measure that something has remained in the shadows (and this is why people insisted on the necessity of a complete didactic analysis, one pushed very far.... we are beginning with vague terms to begin with) as has been written somewhere, there will result from this neglect of one or other corner of the analyst's unconscious veritable blind spots. From which there is supposed to result - and I put it in the conditional, it is a discourse which is effectively maintained that I put in inverted commas, with reservations, to which I do not right away subscribe but which is admitted - eventually one or other more or less grave, more or less unfortunate occurrence in the practice of analysis, in terms of non-recognition, of a missed intervention, of the inopportuneness of some other intervention, even indeed of error.

But on the other hand one cannot fail to relate to this proposition the following, that it is said that it is on the communication of unconscious¹s that when all is said and done one must best depend for there to be produced in the analyst the most decisive perceptions, the best insights. It is not so much from a long experience, from an extensive knowledge of what he can encounter in the structure that we should expect the greatest relevance - this lion's spring that Freud tells us about somewhere and which in the best of cases only happens once. He are told that it is with the communication of unconscious's that there emerges that which, in concrete, existential analysis goes furthest, to the deepest level, has the greatest effect and that no analysis ought to lack one or other such moment. It is in short directly that the analyst is informed about what is happening in the unconscious of his patient, by means of a transmission path which remains rather problematic in the tradition. How ought we to conceive of this communication of unconscious's?

I am not here in order, even from an eristic, even critical point

of view, to sharpen antinomies and to fabricate impasses which would be artificial. I am not saying that there is here something unthinkable, namely that it is supposed to be at once in so far as at the limit there would remain nothing of the unconscious in the analyst and at the same time in so far as he is supposed still to preserve a good deal of it, that he would (3) be, that he ought to be the ideal analyst. This would really be to make oppositions, I repeat, which would not be founded.

Even to push things to the extreme one can glimpse, conceive of an unconscious "reservation" and it must indeed be conceived, there is no exhaustive elucidation in anybody of the unconscious. However far an analysis may be pushed, one can very well conceive, once this reservation of the unconscious is admitted, that the subject whom we know to have been alerted precisely by the experience of didactic analysis should know in a way how to play on it like an instrument, like the drum of a violin of which moreover he knows the chords. It is not after all a raw unconscious, it is a flexible unconscious, an unconscious plus the experience of this unconscious.

Subject to these reservations, it remains all the same legitimate for us to feel the necessity of elucidating the point of passage at which this qualification is acquired. That which is fundamentally affirmed by the doctrine as being inaccessible to consciousness (because it is as such that we ought always to pose the foundation, the nature of the unconscious) it is not a question of it being accessible to men of good will, it is not, it remains within strictly limited conditions it is under strictly limited conditions that we can get at it, by a detour and by this detour of the Other which makes analysis necessary, which limits, reduces in an unbreakable way the possibilities of self-analysis. And the definition of the point of passage where what is thus defined can nevertheless be utilised as a source of information, included in a directive praxis, to pose the question of this is not to construct a useless antimony.

What tells us that this is the way that the problem is posed in a valid fashion, I mean that it is soluble, is that it is natural that things should be presented in this way. In any case for you who have the keys there is something which immediately gives you the recognisable access to it, it is this thing which is implied in the discourse that you hear, that logically - there is a logical priority for this - it is first of all as unconscious of the other than every experience of the unconscious is had. It is first of all in his patients that Freud encountered the unconscious.

And for each one of us, even if this is elided, it is first of all as unconscious of the other that there opens out for us the idea that such a contraption can exist. Every discovery of one's own unconscious presents itself as a stage of this ongoing translation of an unconscious that is first of all the unconscious of the other. So that there is no need to be very astonished that one can admit that, even for the analyst who has

pushed very far this stage of the translation, the translation can always be taken up again at the level of the Other. Which obviously removes much of the import from the antinomy which I evoked above as being able to be constructed, by indicating immediately that it can only be constructed in an improper manner.

Only then, if we start from there, something immediately appears. It is that in short in this relationship to the other which is going to remove, as you see, a part, which is going to exercise in part this fear which we may experience of not knowing enough about ourselves - we will come back to it, I am not claiming to urge you to dispense yourselves entirely from any worry in this regard. This is very far from my thought - once this is admitted, it remains that we are going to encounter here the second obstacle that we encounter with ourselves in our analysis when it is a question of the unconscious, namely what? The positive power of miscognition - an essential, not to say (4) historically original feature of my teaching - there is in the prestige of the ego or, in the largest sense, in the capture of the imaginary.

What it is important to note here is precisely that this domain, which in our experience of personal analysis is completely intermingled with the deciphering of the unconscious ... when it is a question of our relationship as psychoanalyst to the other has a position which must indeed be described as different. In other words, there appears here what I would call the Stoical ideal which is constructed about the apathy of the analyst.

As you know, people first of all identified feelings, which we can describe in general as negative or positive, that the analyst may have vis-a-vis his patient, with the effects in him of an incomplete reduction of the thematic of his own unconscious. But if this is true for himself, in his relationship of self-love, in his relationship to the small other in himself, inside himself, I mean that by which he sees himself as other than he is (which had been discovered, glimpsed, well before analysis), this consideration does not at all exhaust the question of what legitimately happens when he is dealing with this small other, with the other of the imaginary, outside.

Let us dot the i's. The path of Stoical apathy, the fact that he remains indifferent to the seductions as well as to the eventual brutality of this little other outside in so far this little other outside always has some power, small or great, over him even if it is only the power of burdening him with his presence, does this mean that this can all by itself be imputed to some inadequacy in the preparation of the analyst as such? In principle absolutely not.

Accept this stage of my progress. That does not mean that I am going to end with it, but I simply propose this remark to you. From the recognition of the unconscious, we have no reason to say, to pose that it by itself puts the analyst beyond the reach of his passions. This would be to imply that it is always and

essentially from the unconscious that there comes the total, global effect, the whole efficiency of a sexual object or of some other object capable of producing some physical aversion or other. Why should this be required, I ask, except for those who commit the gross confusion of identifying the unconscious as such with the sum of vital powers? This is what radically differentiates the import of the doctrine that I am trying to articulate before you. There is of course a relationship between the two. There is even question of elucidating how this relationship can be made, why it is the tendencies of the life instinct which are presented in this way - but not just any of them, especially among those which Freud always and tenaciously circumscribed as sexual tendencies. There is a reason why these are particularly privileged, captivated, captured by the mainspring of the signifying chain in so far as it is what constitutes the subject of the unconscious.

But this having been said, why - at this stage of our interrogation the question must be asked - why an analyst, under the pretext that he is well analysed, should be insensible to the fact that this or that person provokes in him reactions of hostile thinking, that he sees this presence - it must be tolerated of course in order that something of this order may be produced - as a presence which is evidently not like the presence of a patient but the presence of a being who takes up room... and the more precisely we suppose him to be imposing, full, normal, the more legitimately may there be produced in his (5) presence all possible kinds of reactions. And likewise, on the intrasexual plane for example, why in itself should the movement of love or of hatred be excluded, why should it disqualify the analyst from his function?

At this stage, in this way of posing the question there is no other response than the following: in effect why not! I would even go further, the better he is analysed, the more it will be possible for him to be frankly in love or frankly in a state of aversion, of repulsion with regard to the most elementary modes of relationships of bodies between one another, with respect to his partner.

If we consider all the same that what I am saying there is a bit strong, in this sense that it embarrasses us, that it does not settle things, that there must be all the same something well founded in this exigency for analytic apathy, it is because it must be necessary for it to be rooted elsewhere. But in that case, it must be said, and we are, ourselves, in a position to say it. If I could say it to you immediately and easily, I mean if I could immediately make you understand it after the journey that we have already taken, of course I would say it to you. It is precisely because there is a journey that I still want you to take that I cannot formulate it in a completely strict fashion. But already there is something which can be said about it up to a certain point which may satisfy us; the only thing that I ask of you, is precisely not to be too satisfied with it before giving it its formula and its precise formula. It is that if the analyst realises, as the popular image or also as the

deontological image conceives of it, this apathy, it is precisely in the measure that he is possessed by a desire stronger than the one that is in question, namely to get to the heart of the matter with his patient, to take him in his arms, or to throw him out the window... that happens... I would even dare to say that it would augur badly for someone who never felt something like that.

But after all it is a fact that except for the possibility of the thing, this should not happen in the typical case. This ought not to happen, not from the negative point of view of a kind of total imaginary discharge of the analyst - which is a hypothesis we do not need to pursue any further even though this hypothesis would be interesting - but because of something which is what I am posing the question about here this year. The analyst says: "I am possessed by a stronger desire". He is established qua analyst, in so far as there has been produced in a word a mutation in the economy of his desire.

It is here that Plato's texts can be evoked. From time to time something encouraging happens to me. This year I carried out for you this long discourse, this commentary on the Symposium with which I must say I am not dissatisfied. I had a surprise... someone in my circle surprised me - you should understand this surprise in the sense that this term has in analysis, it is something which is more or less related to the unconscious - by pointing out to me somewhere, in a note at the end of a page, the quotation by Freud of a part of the discourse of Alcibiades to Socrates, regarding which it must indeed be said that Freud could have sought out a thousand other examples to illustrate what he is trying to illustrate at that moment, namely the desire for death mingled with love. You only have to bend (6) down, as I might say, to gather them up by the shovel. And I communicate to you here a testimony, it is the example of someone who, in a cry from the heart, flung at me one day this ejaculation: "Oh! How I wish that you were dead for two years". There is no need to go looking for that in the Symposium. But I consider that it is not indifferent that at the level of the Ratman, namely at an essential moment in the discovery of the ambivalence of love, that it should be to Plato's Symposium that Freud should have referred. It is not all the same a bad sign, it is not a sign that we are wrong in going there ourselves to seek our references....

Well then, in Plato, in the Philebus, Socrates expresses somewhere this thought that among all the desires the strongest desire must be the desire for death, because the souls which are in the Erebe remain in it. It is an argument which is worth what it is worth, but which here takes on value illustrative of the direction in which I already indicated to you that there could be conceived this reorganisation, this restructuring of desire in the analyst. It is at least one of the mooring, fixation, attachment points of the question with which we surely will not be satisfied.

Nevertheless we can further say that, in this detachment from the automatism of repetition which would constitute a good personal

analysis in the analyst, there is something which ought to go beyond what I would call the particularity of its detour, go a little bit beyond, engage upon the detour, which I would call > specific, upon what Freud envisages, what he articulates when he poses the fundamental repetition of the development of life as conceivable as being only the detour, the derivative of a compact, abyssal drive, which is the one which is called at this level the death drive where there no longer remains anything but this ananke, this necessity for the return to zero, to the inanimate.

A metaphor no doubt, and a metaphor which is only expressed by this sort of extrapolation, before which certain people retreat, from what is brought by our experience, namely the action of the unconscious signifying chain in so far as it imposes its mark on all the manifestations of life in the subject who speaks. But indeed an extrapolation, a metaphor which is not all the same constructed by Freud for absolutely no reason, in any case which permits us to conceive that something may be possible and that effectively there can be some relationship of the analyst - as one of my pupils wrote in our first number, in a beautifully highflown tone - with Hades, with death.

whether he plays or not with death (la mort) in any case - I wrote somewhere else that, in this game of analysis which is certainly not analysable uniquely in terms of a game for two - the analyst plays with a dummy (un mort) and there, we rediscover this trait of the common exigency that there must be something capable of playing dead (jouer le mort) in this small other which is in him.

(7) In the position of the game of bridge, the S, which he is has opposite him his own small other, that with which he is in this specular relationship with himself in so far as he is, constituted as Ego. If we put here the designated place of this Other who speaks, the one he is going to hear, the patient, we see that this patient in so far as he is represented by the barred subject, by the subject qua unknown to himself, is going

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to be found to have here the image place of his own little o - let us call the whole thing "the image of little o two", and is

going to have here the image of the big Other, the place, the position of the big Other in so far as it is the analyst who occupies it. That is to say that the patient, the analysand has, for his part, a partner. And there is no need for you to be astonished at finding conjoined at the same place the analysand's own Ego and this Other; he must find his truth which is the big Other of the analyst.

The paradox of the analytic bridge game, is this abnegation which brings it about that, contrary to what happens in a normal game of bridge, the analyst must help the subject to find out what is in his partner's hand. And to conduct this game of "the loser wins" at bridge the analyst, for his part, does not require, should not in principle complicate his life with a partner. And this is why it is said that the i(o) of the analyst should behave like a dead person. That means that the analyst should always know what has been dealt there.

But behold, this kind of solution to the problem whose relative simplicity you are able to appreciate, at the level of commonplace, exoteric explanation, for those outside because it is simply a way of talking about what everyone believes - someone who might have dropped in here for the first time might find in it all sorts of reasons for satisfaction when all it said and done and go back to sleep, namely in the fact that he had always heard it said that the analyst is a superior being for example... - unfortunately this does not fit together! This does not fit together and the testimony for that is given to us by the analysts themselves. Not simply in the form of a tearful lamentation: "We are never equal to our function". Thank God, even though this sort of declaration still exists we have been spared it for a certain time, it is a fact, a fact for which I am not responsible here, which I have only to register.

(8) The fact is that for some time what is effectively admitted in analytic practice, I am speaking about the best circles, I am alluding specifically for example to the Kleinian circle, I mean to what Melanie Klein has written on this subject, to what Paula Heimann wrote in an article, "On counter-transference", and which you will easily find... it is not in one or other article that you have to search for it, today everyone considers as accepted, as admitted what I am going to say (it is more or less frankly articulated and above all people understand more or less well what is being articulated, that is the only thing, but it is admitted), it is that the analyst must take into account, in his investigation and in his manoeuvring, not of the feelings that he inspires but that he experiences in analysis.

Counter-transference is no longer considered in our day as being in its essence an imperfection, which does not mean that it cannot be of course, but if it does not remain an imperfection, it nevertheless remains something which makes it deserve the name counter-transference. You are going to see it again, in so far as it is apparently of the same nature as the other aspect of transference which last time I opposed to transference conceived of as automatism of repetition, namely that on which I intended

to centre the question, the transference in so far as it is called positive or negative, in so far as everyone understands it as the feelings experienced by the analysand with respect to the analyst.

Well the counter-transference that is in question, which it is admitted we must take into account - if there remains disagreement about what we should make of it and you are going to see at what level - it is indeed counter-transference that is in question, namely feelings experienced by the analyst in analysis, determined at every instant by his relations to the analysand.

We are told.... I am choosing a reference almost at random but it is a good article all the same (one never chooses something completely at random), among all those that I have read, there is probably a reason why I feel inclined to communicate to you the title of this one; this is called precisely - it is in short the subject that we are treating today - "Normal counter-transference and some of its deviations" by Roger Money-Kyrle, who obviously belongs to the Kleinian circle and is linked to Melanie Klein through the intermediary of Paula Heimann.

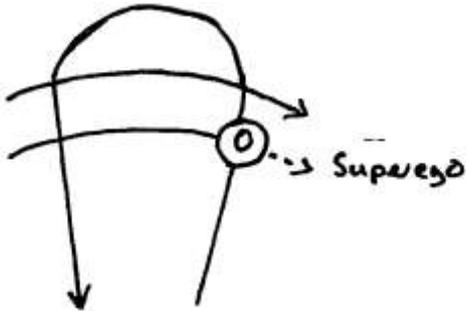
You will see in it that the state of dissatisfaction, the state of preoccupation that Paula Heimann writes about is even a presentiment In her article she gives an account of the fact that she found herself confronted with something which it is not necessary to be an old analyst in order to experience, confronted with a situation which is too frequent namely that the analyst may be confronted in the first phases of an analysis with a patient who precipitates himself in a fashion manifestly determined by the analysis itself, even if he himself is not aware of it, into premature decisions, into a long-term liaison, even a marriage. She knows that this is something to analyse, to interpret, to counter in a certain measure. She notes at that moment a quite uncomfortable feeling that she experiences in this particular case. She notes it as something which, all by (9) itself, is the sign that she is right to be particularly worried about it. She shows how it is precisely what allows her to better understand, to go further.

But there are many other feelings which may arise and the article for example of which I am speaking really takes into account feelings of depression, of a general fall-off in interest for things, of disaffection, of disaffection that the analyst may even experience with respect to everything that he touches.

It is a nice article to read because the analyst does not simply describe for us what results from the beyond of a particular session in which it seems to him that he had not been able to respond sufficiently to what himself calls a demanding patient. It is not because you see here an echo of la demande that you can consider that you understand the accent in English. Demanding, is more, it is a pressing exigency. And he notes in this connection the role of the analytic superego in a fashion which undoubtedly, if you read this article, will appear to you to present indeed some gap, I mean would not really find its true

import unless you refer to what is given you in the graph and in so far as the graph (in so far as you introduce the dotted lines) is presented in such a way that, on the lower line, it is beyond the locus of the Other that the dotted line represents the Superego for you.

I am putting in the rest of the graph for you so that you may be able to take into account in this connection how it can be of use to you. It is to understand that



it is not always because of this when all is said and done opaque element (with this severity of the superego) that one or other demand may produce these depressive effects or even worse in the analyst; it is precisely in the measure that there continuity between the demand of the other and the structure that is called the

superego. You should understand that it is when the demand of the subject has been introjected, has passed as an articulated demand into the one who is its recipient, in such a fashion that it represents his own demand in an inverted form (for example, when a demand for love coming from the mother happens to encounter in the who has to respond his own demand for love going to the mother) that we find the strongest effects which are called hypersevere effects of the superego.

I am only indicating it to you here because this is not where our path goes, it is a lateral remark. What is important, is that an analyst who appears to be someone particularly agile and gifted in recognising his own experience goes so far as to note, to present to us as an example something which worked, and in a fashion which appeared to him to merit a communication not as a blunder nor as an accidental effect more or less well corrected, but as a procedure that can be integrated into the doctrine of analytic operations.

He says that he himself had noted the feeling that he had located as being related to the difficulties that the analysis of one of his patients presented to him; he says that he himself had, and during a period connoted by what is picturesquely permitted in (10) English life, had himself during his weekend been able to note after a rather agitated period concerned with the problematic, unsatisfying things that had been left to him from what he had been able to do that week with his patient... he had undergone without at all having seen the link, himself, a kind of bout of exhaustion - let us call things by their name - which made him during the second half of his weekend find himself in a state which he cannot recognise except by formulating it himself in the same terms as his patient had done as a state of disgust at the limits of depersonalisation, from which there had begun the whole dialectic of the week - and to which precisely (it was moreover accompanied by a dream from which the analyst had drawn clarification in order to respond to him) he had the feeling of

not having given the right response, rightly or wrongly, but in any case based on the fact that his response had really made the patient fume, and that from that moment on he had become extremely nasty with him.

And behold, he, the analyst, discovers himself recognising that when all said and done what he is experiencing, is exactly what at the beginning the patient described to him about one of his states. It was not, for the patient himself, very new, nor new for the analyst to perceive that the patient could be subject to these phases at the limit of depression with slight paranoid effects.

Here is what is reported to us and what the analyst in question (here again with a whole circle, his own, the one which I am calling on this occasion a Kleinian circle) right away conceives as representing the effect of the bad object projected into the analyst in so far as the subject, whether in analysis or not, is liable to project it into the other. It does not seem to be a problem in a certain analytic field - with respect to which we must after all admit that there must all the same be a reason why one slips so easily into the degree of quasi-magical belief that this supposes - that this bad projected object is to be understood as having quite naturally its effect, at least in the case of the person who is coupled with the subject in such a close, such a consistent relationship as the one which is created by an analysis which has already gone on for some time. As having all its effect in what measure? The article also tells you, in the measure that this effect proceeds from an incomprehension on the part of the analyst, of the patient. The effect in question is presented to us as the possible utilisation of deviations from the normal counter-transference. Because as the beginning of the article articulates it, this normal counter-transference is already produced by the to-and-fro rhythm of the introjection of the discourse of the analysand and of something which admits as normal the possible projection - you can see how far he goes - onto the analysand of something which is produced as an imaginary effect in response to this introjection of his discourse.

This counter-transference effect is said to be normal in so far as the introjected demand is perfectly understood. The analyst has no trouble locating himself in what is then produced in such a clear fashion in his own introjection; he only sees the consequences of it and he does not even have to make use of it. What is produced is really there at the level of $i(o)$ and completely mastered. And as regards what is produced on the side of the patient, the analyst has no reason to be surprised that it is produced; he is not affected by what the patient projects onto him.

It is in so far as he does not understand that he is affected by it, that it is a deviation from normal counter-transference, that things can reach a stage that he becomes effectively the bearer of this bad object projected into him by his partner. I mean (11) that he experiences in himself the effect of something quite

unexpected in which only the reflection carried out elsewhere allowed him, and again perhaps only because the occasion was favourable, to recognise the very state that his patient had described for him.

I repeat, I am not taking responsibility for the explanation in question, I am not rejecting it either. I am putting it provisionally in suspense in order to go a step at a time, in order to lead you to the precise angle that I must lead you to in order to articulate something. I am simply saying that if the analyst does not understand it himself, he nevertheless becomes, according to the remarks of the experienced analyst, effectively the receptacle of the projection that is in question and feels in himself these projections as a foreign object; which evidently puts the analyst in a singular position as refuse dump. Because... if this happens with a lot of patients like that you see where that may lead to, when one is not in a position to decide with regard to which of them are produced these happenings which present themselves in the description that Money-Kyrle gives of them as disconnected. That may pose some problems.

In any case I am taking the following step. I am taking it with the author who tells us, if we go in this direction which does not date from yesterday or today (already Ferenczi had put in question the point up to which the analyst should share with his patient what he, the analyst, himself was experiencing in reality, in certain cases as a means of giving to the patient access to this reality), nobody in our day dares to go that far and specifically not in the school to which I am alluding. I mean, for example, Paula Heimann will say that the analyst ought to be very severe as regards his log-book, his daily hygiene, to be always to be in a position to analyse what he himself may experience of this order, but it is his own affair with himself, and with the intention of trying to race against time, namely to overcome the delay he may have undergone in the comprehension, the understanding of his patient.

Money-Kyrle, without being Ferenczi nor as reserved as that, goes further on this particular point of the identity of the state experienced by him with the one his patient had brought along to him at the beginning of the week. He is all the same going, on the particular point, to communicate it to him and to note, this is the object of his article - or more exactly of the communication he gave in 1955 at the Geneva Congress which this article reproduces - to note the effect (he does not tell us about the long-term effect but about the immediate effect) on his patient, which is one of obvious jubilation, namely that the patient deduces nothing other than the following: "Well, is that so? I am very glad to hear it because the other day when you gave an interpretation about this state," says the patient - and in effect he had made one which he recognises was a bit woolly, a bit vague - "I thought that what you were saying referred to yourself and not at all to me."

We have here then, if you wish, a full-scale misunderstanding and I would say that we are satisfied with it. At least the author

is satisfied with it because he leaves things there, then he tells us, starting from there the analysis restarts and presents him, we can only believe him, with all sorts of possibilities for further interpretations.

(12) The fact that what is presented to us as a deviation of counter-transference is here posed as an instrumental means to be codified which, in such cases, is to strive to retrieve the situation as quickly as possible (at least by the recognition of its effects on the analyst and by means of modified communications proposing to the patient something which, undoubtedly on this occasion, has the character of a certain unveiling of the analytic situation in its totality), to expect from it something like a restart which unknots that which apparently presented itself as an impasse in the analytic situation - I am not in the process of approving the appropriateness of this way of proceeding - simply I am remarking that if something of this order may be produced in this fashion it is certainly not linked to a privileged point .

What I can say, is that in the whole measure that there is a legitimacy in proceeding in this fashion, in any case it is our categories which allow us to understand it. My opinion is that it is not possible to understand it outside the register of what I have highlighted as being the place of *o*, the partial object, the agalma in the desire relationship in so far as it itself is determined within a larger relationship, that of the exigency for love. It is only here, it is only in this topology that we can understand such a way of proceeding, in a topology which allows us to say that, even if the subject does not know it, by the simple objective supposition of the analytic situation, it is already in the Other that small *o*, the agalma functions. And what is presented to us on this occasion as normal counter-transference or not, has really no special reason to be qualified as counter-transference, I mean that all that is in question there is an irreducible effect of the transference situation simply by itself.

The fact that there is transference is enough for us to be implicated in this position of being the one who contains the agalma, the fundamental object that is in question in the analysis of the subject as bound, conditioned by this relationship of vacillation of the subject that we characterise as constituting the fundamental phantasy, as establishing the locus in which the subject can fix himself as desire.

It is a legitimate effect of transference. There is no need here for all that to introduce counter-transference as if it were a question of something which was his own personal part, and much more again the faulty part of the analyst. Only I believe that in order to recognise it it is necessary that the analyst should know certain things, it is necessary that he should know in particular that the criterion of his correct position is not that he understands or does not understand. It is not absolutely essential that he should not understand but I would say that up to a certain point this may be preferable to a too great

confidence in one's understanding. In other words, he should put in doubt what he understands and tell himself that what he is trying to reach, is precisely that which in principle is what he does not understand. It is in so far certainly as he knows what desire is, but that he does not know what this subject with whom he is embarked on the analytic adventure desires, that he is in a position to have in himself the object of this desire. Because only this explains certain of these effects which are still so particularly frightening, it appears.

I read an article that I will designate more precisely for you the next time, where a gentleman, who nevertheless is very experienced, asks himself what one ought to do when from the first dreams, sometimes before the analysis begins, the (13) analysand is put forward to the analyst himself as an object characterised by love. The reply of the author is a little more reserved than that of another author who for his part says: when things begin like that it is useless to continue further. There are too many relationships to reality.

So, is it even in this way that we should say things when for us, if we allow ourselves to be guided by the categories that we have produced, we can say that the principle of the situation is that the subject is introduced as worthy of interest, worthy of love, as eromenos. It is for him that one is there but that is what one can call the manifest effect. If we admit that the latent effect is linked to his not knowing, to his unknowing, his unknowing is an unknowing of what? Something which is precisely the object of his desire in a latent, I mean objective, structural fashion. This object is already in the Other and it is in so far as things are that way that, whether he knows it or not, virtually, he is constituted as erastes, fulfilling because of this single fact this condition of metaphor, of substitution of the erastes for the eromenos which we have said constitutes by itself the phenomenon of love - and whose inflaming effects it is no surprise for us to see in transference love from the beginnings of analysis. There is no need for all that to see here a contra-indication for analysis.

And it is indeed here that there is posed the question of the desire of the analyst and up to a certain point of his responsibility for, to tell the truth, it is enough to suppose one thing for the situation to be - as the notaries express it in connection with contracts - perfect. It is enough that the analyst, without knowing it, for an instant, places his own partial object, his agalma in the patient with whom he is dealing, it is here indeed that one can speak about a contra-indication. But as you see, nothing less than localizable, nothing less than localizable in the whole measure that the situation of the desire of the analyst is not specified.

And it will be enough for you to read the author I am indicating to you in order to see that of course he is obliged by the necessity of his discourse to pose the question of what interests the analyst. And what does he tell us? That two things are important in the analyst when he is carrying out an analysis, two

basic drives. And you are going to see that it is quite strange to see qualified as passive drives the two that I am going to tell you: the reparative, he tells us textually, which goes against the latent destructiveness of each one of us and, on the other hand the parental drive.

Here is how an analyst from a school certainly as advanced, as elaborated as the Kleinian school has formulated the position that an analyst as such must take up. After all I am not going to cover my face nor shout aloud about it. I think that, for those who are familiar with my seminar, you see the scandal of it clearly enough. But after all, it is a scandal in which we participate more or less because we ceaselessly talk as if this were what was in question - even if we know well that we do not know that we should not be the parents of the analysand - we will say in a thinking about the field of psychoses.

And the reparative drive, what does that mean? That means an enormous number of things, that has all sorts of implications of course in all our experience. But perhaps, is it not worth the trouble in this connection to articulate how this reparative ought to be distinguished from the abuses of therapeutic ambition for example? In short, the putting into question not of the absurdity of such a thematic but on the contrary what justifies it. Because of course I credit the author and the whole school (14) that he represents with aiming at something which has effectively its place in the topology. But it must be articulated, said, situated where it is, explained differently.

It is for that reason that the next time I will rapidly summarise what I happen in an apologetic fashion to have done in the interval between these two seminars, before a philosophy group, an exposition of the "Position of desire". It is necessary that once and for all there should be situated the reason why an experienced author can talk about this parental drive, this parental and reparative drive in connection with the analyst and say at the same time something which must on the one hand have a justification, but which, on the other hand urgently requires it.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 15 March 1961

For those who as one might say fall among us today from the moon I give a brief set of reference points. After having tried to pose again before you in more rigorous terms than has been done up to the present what one can call the theory of love, this on the basis of Plato's Symposium, it is within what we succeeded in situating in this commentary that I am beginning to articulate the position of transference in the sense that I announced it this year, namely in what I called above all "its subjective disparity". I mean by that that the position of the two subjects present is not equivalent in any way. And it is for this reason that one can speak, not about situation, but of an analytic pseudo-situation, of "a so-called situation".

Approaching therefore on these last two occasions the question of transference, I did it from the side of the analyst. This is not to say that I am giving to the term counter-transference the sense in which it is currently received of a sort of imperfection of the purification of the analyst in relation to the analysand. Quite the contrary, I intend to say that the counter-transference, namely the necessary implication of the analyst in the transference situation means that in short we should beware of this incorrect term. The existence of counter-transference is a necessary consequence purely and simply of the phenomenon of transference itself if one analyses it correctly.

I introduced this problem by the current fact in analytic practice that it is accepted in a rather widespread fashion that what we may call a certain number of affects, in so far as the analyst is touched by them in analysis, constitute if not a normal at least a normative mode of mapping out the analytic situation. And even I am saying, not alone of the analyst's investigation in the analytic situation, but even a possible element of his intervention by the communication that he may eventually make of it to the analysand.

And, I repeat, I am not lending my authority to the legitimacy of this method. I note that it was able to be introduced and promoted, that it was admitted, accepted among a very large field of the analytic community and that this just by itself is sufficiently indicative of our path, for the moment, which is to analyse how the theoreticians who understand in this way the

usage of counter-transference legitimate it. They legitimate it in so far as they link it to moments of incomprehension on the part of the analyst, as if this incomprehension in itself were the criterion, the dividing point, the aspect on which something (2) is defined which obliges the analyst to pass to a different mode of communication, to a different instrument in his way of locating himself in what is in question, namely the analysis of the subject.

It is therefore around this term comprehension that there is going to pivot what I intend to show you today in order to allow there to be circumscribed more closely what one may call, according to our terms, the relationship of the demand of the subject to his desire, it being understood that we have put at the origin the way in which we have shown that the return is necessary, it is to put in the foreground that what is in question in analysis is nothing other than the bringing to light of the manifestation of the desire of the subject.

Where is understanding when we understand? When we think we understand, what does that mean? I affirm that this means in its most certain form, I would say in its primary form, that the understanding of anything at all that the subject articulates before us is something that we can define in this way at the level of consciousness, that in short we know what to answer to what the other demands. It is in the measure that we believe we can answer the demand that we have the feeling of understanding.

Nevertheless we know a little bit more about the demand than this immediate approach, precisely from the fact that we know that the demand is not explicit, that it is even much more than implicit, that it is hidden for the subject, that it needs to be interpreted. And it is here there lies the ambiguity in so far as we who will interpret it answer the unconscious demand on the plane of a discourse which for us is a conscious discourse. It is here indeed there is the bias, the trap so that always we tend to slide towards this supposition, this capture that our answer. . . . The subject in a way should be content because we bring to light by our answer something with which he should be satisfied. We know that it is here that there is always produced nevertheless some resistance.

It is from the situation of this resistance, from the fashion in which we can qualify the agencies to which we have to refer it, that there have flowed all the stages, all the steps of the analytic theory of the subject - namely the different agencies with which we have to deal in him.

Nevertheless is it not possible to go to a more radical point, without of course denying the part that these different agencies have in resistance, to see, to grasp that the difficulty of the relationships of the demand of the subject to the answer which is given him is situated further on, is situated at an altogether original point. To this point, I tried to bring you by showing you what there results in the subject who speaks, from the fact, as I thus expressed myself, that his needs must pass through the

defiles of the demand - that from this very fact, at this altogether original point, there results precisely this something in which there is founded the fact that everything which is natural tendency, in the subject who speaks, has to situate itself in a beyond and in a hither of demand. In a beyond it is the demand for love, in a hither it is what we call desire, with what characterises it as condition, as what we call its absolute condition in the specificity of the object which concerns it, little o, this partial object, (this something which I tried to show you as being included from the beginning in this fundamental text about the theory of love, this text of the Symposium as agalma) in so far as I also identified it to the partial object of analytic theory.

(3) It is this that today, by briefly going through again what is most original in analytic theory, the Triebe, "the drives and their vicissitudes", I intend to make you put your finger on, before we are able to deduce from it what flows from it as regards what is important to us, namely the point on which I left you the last time of the drive involved in the position of the analyst. You remember that it is on this problematic point that I left you in so far as an author, the one precisely who expresses himself on the subject of counter-transference, designates in what he was calling the parental drive, this need to be a parent, or the reparative drive, this need to go against the supposedly natural destructiveness in every subject qua analysable analysand.

You have immediately grasped the boldness, the daring, the paradox of advancing things like that because moreover it is enough to dwell on it for a moment to perceive, as regards this parental drive, if it is indeed what should be present in the analytic situation, that how then would we dare even to speak about the transference situation, if it is really a parent that the subject in analysis is faced with? What is more legitimate than that he should fall again in this situation into the same position that he had throughout his whole formation with respect to subjects around whom there were constituted for him the fundamental passive situations which constitute in the signifying chain the automatisms of repetition. In other words, how can we not perceive that we have here a direct contradiction, that we are going straight onto the reef which allows us to affirm it? Who will contradict us by saying that the transference situation, as it is established in analysis, is discordant with the reality of this situation - which some people imprudently express as being such a simple situation, that of the situation in analysis, in the hie et nunc of the relationship to the doctor? How can we not see that if the doctor is armed here with the parental drive, however elaborated we may suppose it to be in terms of an educative position, there will be absolutely nothing which distances the normal response of the subject to this situation from everything that can be enounced in it as the repetition of a past situation.

It must indeed be said that there is no means of even articulating the analytic situation without at least posing

somewhere the contrary exigency.

And for example in chapter III of Beyond the pleasure principle, when effectively Freud, taking up again the articulation that we are dealing with in analysis, discriminates between remembering and the reproduction of the automatism of repetition, Wiederholungszwang, in so far as he considers it as a semi-failure of the remembering aims of analysis, as a necessary failure going so far as to attribute to the structure of the ego (in so far as he sees the necessity at this stage of his elaboration of establishing its agency as being in great part unconscious) to attribute and to assign, not the whole (because of course the whole article is written to show that there is a margin) but the most important part of the function of repetition, to the ego's defence against the repressed memory, considered as the true term, the final term, even though perhaps at this moment considered as impossible, of the analytic operation.

It is therefore by following the path of something which is the resistance to this final aim, the resistance situated in the unconscious function of the ego, that Freud tells us that we must pass this way that "the physician cannot as a rule spare his patient this phase of the treatment. He must get him to re-experience some portion of his forgotten life, but must see to (4) it, on the other hand, that there is maintained some degree von Überlegenheit, of aloofness, so that it can be recognised, in spite of everything, that what appears to be reality, die auscheinende Realität, is in fact only a reflection of a forgotten past". God knows the abuses of interpretation to which this highlighting of this Überlegenheit has lent itself. It is around this that the whole theory of alliance with what is called the healthy part of the ego was able to be constructed. There is nevertheless in such a passage nothing of the kind and I cannot sufficiently underline what must have appeared to you in passing, it is in a way the neutral character, ne-uter, neither on one side or the other, of this Überlegenheit. Where is this aloofness? Is it on the side of the doctor who, let us hope, keeps his wits about him? Is this what is to be understood on this occasion or is it something on the side of the patient?

A curious thing, in the French translation - which, with respect to others, is as bad as those which have been made under different other patronages - the thing is translated: et doit seulement veiller a ce que le malade conserve un certain degre de sereine superiority - there is nothing like this in the text - qui lui permette de constater, malgre tout, que la realite de ce qu'il reproduit n'est qu'apparente. So that indeed must we not situate the question of the situation of this Überlegenheit which is no doubt required, which we are dealing with, in a fashion which, I believe, can be infinitely more precise than everything that is elaborated, in these so-called comparisons by the current aberration of what is being repeated in the treatment with a situation which would be presented as perfectly known.

Let us rebegin then from the examination of the phases and the

demand, from the exigencies of the subject as we approach them in our interpretations, and let us simply begin in accordance with this chronology, in accordance with this diachrony called the phases of the libido, with the most simple demand, the one to which we refer so frequently, let us say that it is a question of an oral demand. What is an oral demand? It is the demand to be fed which is addressed to whom, to what? It is addressed to this Other who hears and who, at this primary level of the enunciating of the demand, can really be designated as what we call the locus of the Other, the Other... on, the Autron I would (5) say in order to make our designations rhyme with the familiar designations of physics. Here then to this abstract, impersonal Autron there is addressed by the subject, more or less without his knowing it, this demand to be fed.

As we have said, every demand, from the fact that it is word, tends to structure itself in the fact that it summons from the Other its inverse response, that it evokes because of its structure its own form transposed according to a certain inversion. To the demand to be fed there responds, because of the signifying structure, at the locus of the Other, in a fashion that one may say to be logically contemporaneous with this demand, at the level of the Autron, the demand to allow oneself to be fed (de se laisser nourrir).

And we know well, in experience this is not the refined elaboration of a fictitious dialogue. We know well that this is what is in question between the child and the mother every time there breaks out in this relationship the slightest conflict in what seems to be constructed to meet, to fit together in a strictly complementary fashion. What in appearance better responds to the demand to be fed than that of allowing oneself to be fed? We know nevertheless that it is in this very mode of confrontation of two the demands that the lies this tiny gap, this beance, this slit in which there can insinuate itself, in which there is normally insinuated the discordance, the preformed failure of this meeting consisting in the very fact that precisely it is not the meeting of tendencies but the meeting of demands. It is into this meeting of the demand to be fed and of the other demand to allow oneself to be fed that there slips the fact, manifested at the first conflict breaking out in the feeding relationship, that a desire overflows this demand and that it cannot be satisfied without this desire being extinguished there. It is in order that this desire which overflows this demand should not be extinguished that even the subject who is hungry (from the fact that to his demand to be fed there responds the demand to allow oneself to be fed) does not allow himself to be fed, refuses in a way to disappear as desire by being satisfied as demand because the extinction or the crushing of the demand in satisfaction cannot happen without killing desire. It is from here that there emerged these discordances of which the most vivid is that of the refusal to allow oneself to feed, of the anorexia more or less correctly described as nervosa (mentale).

We find here this situation which I cannot better express than by

playing on the equivocation of the sonorities of French phonematics, the fact is that one cannot avow the following to the most primordial Other: "tu es le desir_f, you are the desire", without at the same time saying to her: "tuer le desir, kill the desire" without conceding to her that she kills the desire, without abandoning to her desire as such. And the first ambivalence proper to every demand is that in every demand there is also implied that the subject does not want it to be satisfied, aims in itself at the safeguarding of desire, testifies to the blind presence of the unnamed, blind desire.

What is this desire? We know it in the most classical and most original fashion, it is in so far as the oral demand has another meaning than that of the satisfaction of hunger that it is a sexual demand, that it is fundamentally, Freud tells us since the Three essays on the theory of sexuality, cannibalistic and that cannibalism has a sexual sense (he reminds us that here is what (6) is masked in the first Freudian formulation) that to feed himself is for man linked to the goodwill of the other. Linked to this fact by a polar relationship, there exists also this term that it is not only from the bread of her goodwill that the primitive subject has to feed himself, but well and truly from the body of the one who feeds him. Because things must be called by their name, what we call sexual relationship, is that by which the relationship to the other leads on to a union of bodies. And the most radical union is that of the original absorption to which there points, there is aimed the horizon of cannibalism and which characterises the oral phase for what it is in analytic theory.

Let us carefully observe here what is in question. I took things from the most difficult end by beginning at the origin, even though it is always retroactively, by going backwards that we ought to discover how things are constructed in real development.

There is a theory of libido against which as you know I rebel even though it is one put forward by one of our friends, Alexander, the theory of libido as a surplus of energy which manifests itself in the living being when the satisfaction of needs linked to preservation has been obtained. It is very convenient but it is false because sexual libido is not that. Sexual libido is indeed in effect a surplus but it is this surplus which renders vain any satisfaction of need there where it is placed and, if necessary - it must be said - refuses this satisfaction to preserve the function of desire.

And moreover all of this is only something evident which is everywhere confirmed, as you will see by going back and starting again from the demand to be fed; as you will immediately put your finger on it in the fact that from the simple fact that the tendency of this mouth which is hungry, through this same mouth expressing a signifying chain... well then, it is in this way that there enters into it the possibility of designating the food that it desires. What food? The first thing which results from it, is that this mouth can say: "Not that!" Negation, the pushing aside, the "I like that and not anything else" of desire

already enters there where there explodes the specificity of the dimension of desire. Hence the extreme prudence that we should have concerning our interventions, our interpretations, at the level of this oral register. Because as I said, this demand is formed at the same point, at the level of the same organ where the tendency emerges. And it is indeed here that there lies the confusion, the possibility of producing all sorts of equivocations by responding to him. Of course, from the fact that he is responded to there results all the same the preservation of this field of the word and the possibility therefore of always discovering in it the place of desire - but also the possibility of all the suggestions of those who try to impose on the subject that since his need is satisfied he should be content with it, from which there results compensated frustration and the end of analytic intervention.

I want to go further and today I really have, as you are going to see, my reasons for doing so. I want to pass on to what is called the stage of anal libido. Because moreover it is here that I believe I can encounter, get to and refute a certain (7) number of confusions which are introduced in the most common fashion in analytic interpretation.

By tackling this term by way of what is the demand at this anal stage, you all have I think enough experience for me not to illustrate any more what I would call the demand to retain excrement, founding no doubt something which is a desire to expel. But here it is not so simple because also this expulsion is also required by the educating parent at a certain moment. Here it is demanded of the subject to give something which would satisfy the expectation of the educator, the maternal one on this occasion.

The elaboration which results from the complexity of the demand is worth our while dwelling on because it is essential. Observe that here is no longer a question of the simple relationship of a need with the liaison to its demanded form but of the sexual surplus. It is something else, it is a disciplining of need that is in question and sexualisation is only produced in the movement of return to need which, as I might say legitimates this need as gift to the mother who is waiting for the child to satisfy his functions which are going to make emerge, make appear something which is worthy of general approbation. Moreover this gift-character of excrement is well known from experience and was spotted from the beginning of analytic experience. To such an extent is an object experienced here in this register that the child, in the excess of his occasional outbursts uses it, one might say, naturally, as a means of expression. The excremental gift forms part of the most antique thematic of analysis.

I would like in this connection to give in a way its final term to this extermination - for which I have always been striving - to the myth of oblativity by showing you here what it really refers to. Because from the moment that you have once seen it, you will no longer be able to recognise otherwise this field of anal dialectic which is the real field of oblativity.

For a long time in different forms I have tried to introduce you to this mapping out and specifically by having always pointed out to you that the very term oblativity is an obsessional phantasy. "Everything for the other" says the obsessional and this indeed is what he does. Because the obsessional being in the perpetual vertigo of the destruction of the Other, can never do enough to allow the other to maintain himself in existence. But here we see its root, the anal stage is characterised by the fact that the subject satisfies a need uniquely for the satisfaction of an other. He has been taught to retain this need uniquely in order that it should be founded, established as the occasion of the satisfaction of the other who is the educator. The satisfaction of babyhood of which wiping the bottom forms a part is first of all that o_f the other.

And it is properly in so far as something that the subject has is demanded from him as a gift, that one can say that oblativity is linked to the sphere of relationships at the anal stage. And note the consequence of this, which is that here the margin of the place which remains to the subject as such, in other words desire comes to be symbolised in this situation by what is carried away in the operation: desire literally goes down the toilet. The symbolisation of the subject as that which goes into the pot or into the hole on occasion is properly what we encounter in experience as most profoundly linked to the position of anal desire. It is indeed what makes of it both the and also in many cases the avoidance, I mean that we do not always succeed in bringing the insight of the patient to this (8) term. Nevertheless you can assure yourselves each time, in so far as the anal stage is involved, that you would be mistaken not to mistrust the relevance of your analysis if you have not encountered this term.

For that matter moreover, I assure you that from the moment that you have touched on what must be called this precise, neuralgic point, which is just as valuable because of the importance that it has in experience as all the remarks about the good or bad primitive oral objects, as long as you have not located at this point the fundamental, deep-seated relationship of the subject as desire with the most disagreeable object, you will not have taken any great step in the analysis of the conditions of desire. And nevertheless you cannot deny that this reminder is given at every instant in the analytic tradition.

I think that you would not have been able to remain deaf to it for so long except for the fact that things have not been highlighted in their fundamental topology as I am trying to do it for you here.

But then, you will say to me, what about the sexual here and the famous sadistic drive that is conjugated - with the help of a hyphen - to the term anal as if that went simply without saying? It is quite clear that here some effort is necessary of what we cannot call understanding except in so far as it is a question of understanding at the limit. The sexual can only enter in here in a violent fashion. This indeed is what happens here in

effect because moreover it is a sadistic violence that is in question. This still preserves in itself more than one enigma and it would be well for us to dwell on it.

It is precisely in the measure that the other here as such, fully takes over dominance in the anal relationship that the sexual is going to manifest itself in the register which is proper to this stage. We can approach it, we can glimpse it by recalling its antecedent qualified as oral-sadistic (a reminder that in short life fundamentally is devouring assimilation as such) and moreover that this theme of devouring was what was situated at the preceding stage in the margin of desire, this presence of the open maw of life is moreover what is going to appear to you here as a sort of reflection, of phantasy, the fact that when the other is posed as the second term, he must appear as an existence offered up to this gap. Will we go so far as to say that suffering is implied in it? It is a very particular suffering. To evoke a sort of fundamental schema which, I believe, is the one which will best give you the structure of the sado-masochistic phantasy as such, I would say that it is a suffering expected by the other, that it is this suspension of the imaginary other as such above the gulf of suffering which forms the point, the axis of sado-masochistic eroticisation as such, that it is in this relationship that what is no longer the sexual pole but what is going to be the sexual partner is established at the level of the anal stage and that therefore, we can say that it is already a sort of reappearance of the sexual.

What in the anal stage is constituted as sadistic or sado-masochistic structure is, starting from a point of maximum eclipse of the sexual, from a point of pure anal oblativity, the re-ascent towards that which is going to be realised at the genital stage. The preparation of the genital, of human eros, of desire emitted in normal fullness (in order that it may be able to situate itself not as tendency, need, not as pure and simple copulation but as desire) takes its beginnings, finds its starting point, finds its point of reemergence in relationship to the other as undergoing the expectation of this suspended threat, of this virtual attack which founds, which characterises, which (9) justifies for us what is called the sadistic theory of sexuality whose primitive character we know in the great majority of individual cases.

What is more, it is in this situational feature that there is founded the fact that in the origin of this sexualisation of the other that we are dealing with, he must as such be delivered to a third in order to be constituted in this first mode of his apperception as sexual and it is here there lies the origin of this ambiguity, which we know, which ensures that the sexual as such remains, in the original experience which the most recent theoreticians of psychoanalysis were the discoverers of, indeterminate between this third and this other. In the first form of libidinal perception of the other, at the level of this point of re-ascent from a certain punctiforme eclipse of the libido as such, the subject does not know what he most desires, from this other or from the third who intervenes, and this is

essential for the whole structure of sado-masochistic phantasies.

Because the one who constructs this phantasy, let us not forget it, if we have given here a correct analysis of the anal stage, this subject-witness to this pivotal point of the anal stage is indeed what he is, I have just said it: he is shit! And what is more he is demand, he is shit which only demands to be eliminated. This is the true foundation of a whole radical structure that you will find, especially in the phantasies, in the fundamental phantasy of the obsessional in so far as he devalues himself, in so far as he puts outside himself the whole game of the erotic dialectic, that he pretends, as someone has said, to be its organiser. It is on the foundation of his own elimination that he grounds the whole of this phantasy. And things here are rooted in something which, once they are recognised, allow you to elucidate quite commonplace points.

Because if things are really fixed at this point of the identification of the subject to the excremental little o, what are we going to see? Let us not forget that here it is no longer to the organ itself involved in the dramatic knot of need to demand that there is entrusted, at least in principle, the task of articulating this demand. In other words, except in the paintings of Jerome Bosch, one does not speak with one's behind. And nevertheless, we have curious phenomena of cutting, followed by explosions of something which make us glimpse the symbolic function of the excremental ribbon in the very articulation of the word.

Once upon a time, it is a very long time ago and I think there is nobody here who would remember it, there was a sort of little personage... - there have always been little significant personages in infantile mythology which in reality is of parental origin, in our own day people talk a lot about Pinocchio - at a time which I am old enough to remember there existed Bout de Zan. The phenomenology of the child as precious excremental object is entirely in this designation where the child is identified with the sweetish substance of what is called liquorice, glukurrhiza "the sweet root", which it appears is its Greek origin.

And no doubt it is not in vain that it should be in connection with this word liquorice that we are able to find one of the really - it must be admitted - sugary examples, of the perfect ambiguity of signifying transcriptions. Allow me this little parenthesis. This pearl which I found for your use along my path, this did not happen yesterday, I have kept this for you for a long time but because I meet it in connection with Bout de Zan I am going to give it to you; liquorice (reglisse) then, we are told, is originally glukurrhiza. Of course, this does not come directly from the Greek, but when the Latins heard that, they made of it liquiritia by making use of liqueur whence, in old French, this became licorice, then ricolice by metathesis. Ricolice met up with regle, regula is thus what gives us (10) réglisse. You must admit this encounter of licorice with la regie is really superb. But this is not all, because the conscious etymology at which all of this culminated, on which the

last generations finally came to rest indeed, is that réglisse should be written reygalisse, because réglisse is made from a sweet root which is only found in Galicia, the rai [radix] of Galicia, here is what we get back to after having started - and there is no mistake about it - from the Greek root.

I think that this little demonstration of signifying ambiguities will have convinced you that we are on a solid ground in giving all its importance to it.

When all is said and done, as we have seen, we should more than elsewhere be reserved at the anal level as regards the understanding of the other, precisely because any formulation of his demand implicates Jiim so profoundly that we should look at it twice before going to meet it. And what am I telling you there, if not something which rejoins what you all know, at least those of you who have done a little bit of therapeutic work, namely that with obsessionals you must not give them the least bit of encouragement, of déculpabilisation indeed even of interpretative commentary which goes a little bit too far because then you have to go much further and that, what you would find yourself coming to and conceding to your own great disadvantage, is precisely to this mechanism through which he wants to make you eat, as I might say, his own being as a shit. You are well taught by experience that this is not a process in which you will be of any use to him, quite the contrary.

It is elsewhere that in placing symbolic introjection for oneself in so far as it has to restore the place of desire in him and moreover because - to anticipate what is going to be the next stage - what the neurotic most usually wants to be is the phallus, it is certainly to shortcircuit inappropriately the satisfactions to be given to him to offer him this phallic communion against which as you know that, in my seminar on Desire and its interpretation, I already brought forward the most precise objections. I mean that the phallic object as imaginary object cannot in any case lend itself to revealing in a complete fashion the fundamental phantasy. To the demand of the neurotic, it can only in fact respond by something which we can call in general an obliteration, in other words a way which is offered to him of forgetting a certain number of the most essential principles which played a part in the accidents of his access to the field of desire.

In order to mark a pause in our journey and what we have put forward today we are saying the following, that if the neurotic is unconscious that is to say repressed desire, it is above all in the measure that his desire undergoes the eclipse of a counter-demand. This locus of the counter-demand is properly speaking the same as the one where there is placed, where there is built up subsequently everything that from the outside may be added on as a supplement to the construction of the super-ego. A certain fashion of satisfying this counter-demand every premature mode of interpretation in so far as it understands too quickly, in so far as it does not perceive that what is most important to understand in the demand of the analysand is what is

beyond this demand - it is the incomprehensible margin which is that of desire - it is in this measure that an analysis stops prematurely and in a word, fails.

(11) Of course the trap is that in interpreting you give the subject something to feed himself on, the word even the book which is behind it, and that the word remains all the same the locus of desire, even if you give it in such a way that this locus is not recognisable, I mean that if this locus remains, for the desire of the subject, uninhabitable.

To respond to the demand for food, to the frustrated demand in a nourishing signifier is something which leaves elided the following, that beyond any food of the word, what the subject really needs is what it signifies metonymically, it is that which is not at any point of this word and therefore that each time you introduce - no doubt you are obliged to do it - the metaphor, you remain on the same path which gives consistency to the symptom, no doubt a more simplified symptom but still a symptom, in any case with respect to the desire that it is a question of separating out.

If the subject is in this singular relationship to the object of desire, it is because he himself was first of all an object of desire which was incarnated. The word as locus of desire, is this Poros in whom there is every resource. And desire - Socrates originally taught you to articulate it - is above all lack of resource, aporia. This absolute aporia approaches the sleeping word and becomes pregnant with its object. What does that mean, if not that the object was there and that it was what demanded to come to light.

The Platonic metaphor of metempsychosis, of the wandering soul which hesitates before knowing where it is going to dwell, finds its support, its truth and its substance in this object of desire which is there before its birth. And Socrates, without knowing it, when he praises, epainei, eulogises Agathon, does what he wants to do, to bring back Alcibiades to his soul by bringing to light this object which is the object of his desire, this object which is the goal and end for each one, limited no doubt because the "all" is beyond, cannot be conceived of except as beyond this end of each.

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We are again going to wander, I feel inclined to say, through the labyrinth of the position of desire. A certain returning to, a certain labouring of the subject, a certain Durcharbeitung, as they say, appears necessary to me - I already indicated this the last time and indicated why - for an exact positioning of the function of transference.

This is why I will come back today to underline the meaning of what I told you the last time by bringing you back to the examination of what are called the phases of the migration of the libido in the erogenous zones. It is very important to see the measure in which the naturalist view implied in this definition is resolved, is articulated in our way of enunciating it in so far as it is centred on the relationship of demand and of desire.

From the beginning of this journey I have stressed that desire preserves, maintains its place in the margin of demand as such; that it is this margin of demand which constitutes its locus; that, to highlight what I mean here, it is in a beyond and a hither in this double hollow which is already delineated once the cry of hunger passes to the stage of being articulated; that at the other extreme we see that the object which is called the nipple in English, the tip of the breast, the mamelon, takes on at the term of human eroticism its value as agalma, as marvel, as precious object becoming the support of this pleasurable sensation, of this pleasure of a nibbling in which there is perpetuated what we can truly call a sublimated voracity in so far as it takes this Lust, this pleasure and moreover these Lüste, these desires (you know the equivocation that the German term preserves in itself which is expressed in this sliding of signification produced by the passage from the singular to the plural) therefore this oral object takes its pleasure and its desires, its covetousness, from elsewhere.

This is why, by an inversion of the usage of the term sublimation, I have the right to say that here we see this deviation as regards the goal in the inverse direction to the object of a need. In effect, it is not from primitive hunger that the erotic value of this privileged object here takes its substance, the eros which dwells in it comes nachtraglich, by retroaction and only in a deferred manner, and it is in the

oral demand that the place of this desire has been hollowed out. (2) If the demand with the beyond of love that it projects did not exist, there would not be this place hither, of desire, which constitutes itself around a privileged object. The oral phase of sexual libido requires this place hollowed out by demand.

It is important to see whether the fact of presenting things in this way does not involve some specification which one could brand as being too partial. Should we not take literally what Freud presents to us in one or other of his enunciations as the pure and simple migration of an organic, mucous erogeneity as I might call it; and moreover could one not say that I am neglecting natural facts, namely for example instinctual, devouring motions which we find in nature linked to the sexual cycle (cats eating their young); and moreover the great phantastical figure of the praying mantis which haunts the analytical amphitheatre is presented there as a mother-image, as a matrix of the function attributed to what is so boldly, perhaps after all so inappropriately, called the castrating mother.

Yes, of course, I myself in my analytic initiation was happy to take on the support of this image, so richly echoing for us the natural domain, which is presented for us in the unconscious phenomenon. To meet this objection you can suggest to me the necessity of some correction in the theoretical line - I believe I can satisfy you as well as myself.

I dwelt for a moment on what this image represents and asked myself in a certain fashion what in effect a simple glance thrown on the diversity of animal ethology shows us, namely the luxuriant richness of perversions. Someone well-known, my friend Henri Ey, has looked carefully at this subject of animal perversions which go further after all than anything that human imagination has been able to invent: I believe that he even devoted an edition of L'evolution psychiatrique to it. Taking things in this register, do we not see ourselves brought back to the Aristotelian point of view of a sort of field outside the human field as the basis of perverse desires? This is where I would stop you for a moment by asking you to consider what we are doing when we dwell on this phantasy of natural perversion.

I am not overlooking that in asking you to follow me onto this terrain how fastidious, speculative such a reflection may appear to you but I believe that it is necessary in order to decant what is both founded and unfounded in this reference. And moreover through this we are going - you are going to see it right away - to find ourselves rejoining what I designate as fundamental in subjectivation, as the essential moment in the whole establishment of the dialectic of desire.

To subjectivise the praying mantis on this occasion, is to suppose for it, which is not excessive, a sexual jouissance. And after all we do not know anything about it, the praying mantis is perhaps, as Descartes did not hesitate to say, a pure and simple machine - a machine, in his language, which precisely supposes the elimination of all subjectivity. We have no need,

for our part, to limit ourselves to these minimal positions, we grant it this jouissance..... this jouissance, this is the next stop, is it a jouissance of something in so far as it destroys it? Because it is only starting from there that it can indicate for us the intentions of nature.

(3) In order to highlight immediately what is essential, in order that it should be for us some sort of model of what is in question, namely oral cannibalism, or primordial eroticism, I designate this right away, it is necessary properly speaking that we should imagine here this jouissance correlative to the decapitation of the partner which it is supposed in some degree to recognise as such. I do not disdain this because in truth it is animal ethology which for us is the major reference for maintaining this dimension of knowing that all the progress of our knowledge nevertheless renders for us, in the human world, so vascillating as to be identified properly speaking to the dimension of miscognition, of Verkennung as Freud says; a simple remark, the observation elsewhere in the field of living things of this imaginary Erkennung, of this privilege of the counterpart which goes so far in certain species as to reveal itself for us in its organogenic effects. I will not return to this old example around which I oriented for you my exploration of the imaginary at the time when I was beginning to articulate something of what is coming, after years, to maturity - to maturity before you, my doctrine of analysis - the female pigeon in so far as she does not reach completion as a pigeon except by seeing her pigeon image for which a little mirror in the cage may suffice, and also the cricket who does not go through his stages unless he has encountered another cricket.

There is no doubt that not only in what fascinates us, but in what fascinates the male of the praying mantis, there is this erection of a fascinating form, this deployment, this attitude from which for us it draws its name, the praying mantis, it is singularly from this position (not of course without opening the way for us to some vacillating reversal or other) which presents itself to our eyes as that of prayer. We notice that it is before this phantasy, this incarnated phantasy, that the male yields, that he is taken, summoned, aspirated, captivated in the embrace which for him is going to be fatal.

It is clear that the image of the imaginary other as such is here present in the phenomenon, that it is not excessive to suppose that something is revealed here about this image of the other. But does it mean for all that that there is already some préfiguration, a sort of inverse blue-print of what would therefore be presented in man as a sort of remainder, of sequel, of defined possibility of variations in the operation of natural tendencies? And if we ought to accord some value to this properly speaking monstrous example, we cannot all the same do other than remark the difference to what is presented in human phantasy (that from which we can begin with certainty from the subject, there alone where we are assured of it, namely in so far as it is the support of the signifying chain), we cannot therefore fail to remark that in what nature presents us with

there is, from the act to its excess, to that which overflows and accompanies it, to this devouring surplus which signals it for us as the example of another instinctual structure, the fact is that there is synchrony here: the fact is that it is at the moment of the act that there is exercised this complement exemplifying for us the paradoxical form of instinct. Henceforward, is there not outlined here a limit which allows us to define strictly the way in which what is exemplified is of service to us, but is only of service to us in order to give us the form of what we mean when we talk about a desire.

If we talk about the jouissance of this other who is the praying (4) mantis, if it interests us on this occasion, it is because, either it enjoys (jouit) there where the male organ is, and also it enjoys elsewhere, but wherever it enjoys - something we will never know anything about, but it does not matter - that it should enjoy elsewhere only takes on its meaning from the fact that it enjoys - or it does not enjoy, it does not matter - there. Let her enjoy where she likes, this has no meaning, in the value that this image takes on, except from the relationship to a there of virtual enjoying. But when all is said and done in synchrony (whatever may be in question), it will never after all be, even in a deviant way, anything but a copulatory jouissance. I mean that, in the infinite diversity of instinctual mechanisms in nature, we can easily discover all the possible forms, including the one in which the organ of copulation is lost in loco in the consummation itself. We can moreover consider that the act of devouring is there one of the numerous forms of the bonus which is given to the individual partner of copulation in so far as it is ordered to its specific end in order to keep him in the act which it is a question of allowing.

The exemplary character therefore of the image that is proposed to us only begins at the precise point that we have no right to go to, namely that this devouring of the cephalic extremity of the partner by the praying mantis is something which is marked by the fact that this is accomplished by the mandibles of the female partner which participate as such in the properties which constitute, in living nature, the cephalic extremity, namely a certain collection of the individual tendency as such, namely the possibility in some register that it exercises a discernment, a choice. In other words, the praying mantis likes the head of her partner better than anything else, there is here a preference, malle, mavult, that is what she likes. And it is in so far as she likes that that for us, in the image, she shows herself as enjoying (jouissant) at the expense of the other, and in a word, that we begin to put into natural functions what is in question, namely some moral sense, in other words, that we enter into the Sadian dialectic as such.

This preference for jouissance to any reference to the other is revealed as the dimension of essential polarity in nature. It is only too clear that it is we who contribute this moral sense, but that we contribute it in the measure that we discover the meaning of desire as this relationship to something which, in

the other, chooses this partial object. Here again let us pay a little more attention. Is this example fully valid as a way of illustrating for us this preference for the part rather than the whole, precisely illustratable in the erotic value of the extremity of the nipple of which I spoke above? I am not so sure, in so far as it is less, in this image of the praying mantis, the part which would be preferred to the whole in the most horrible fashion allowing us already to short-circuit the function of metonymy, than rather the whole which is preferred to the part.

Let us not in effect omit that, even in an animal structure so distant from us in appearance as that of the insect, the value of concentration, of reflection, of totality represented somewhere in the cephalic extremity undoubtedly functions and, that in any case, in phantasy, in the image which attracts us, there operates with its particular accentuation this acephalisation of the partner as it is presented to us here. And, in a word, the value of the praying mantis as a fable (the one which underlies what it represents effectively in a certain mythology or simply a folklore) in everything that Caillois put the accent on under the (5) register of the myth and the sacred, which is his first work.... it does not appear that he sufficiently highlighted that we are here in poetry, in something whose accent does not depend simply on a reference to the relationship to the oral object as it is delineated in the koine of the unconscious, the common tongue, but in something more accentuated, in something which designates for us a certain link of acephalousness with the transmission of life as such.

In designating the fact that there is, in this passing of the flame from one individual to another, in a signified eternity of the species, that the telos is not passed on by the head, this is what gives to the image of the mantis its tragic sense which, as you see, has nothing to do with the preference for what is called an oral object which, does not on any occasion, in human phantasy in any case, refer to the head.

It is something quite different that is in question in the liaison with the oral phase of human desire. That which is outlined as a reciprocal identification of the subject to the object of oral desire, is something which is on the way - experience shows it to us immediately - to a constitutive fragmentation, to these fragmentary images which were recently evoked during our journées provinciales as being linked to some primitive terror or other which seemed, I do not know why for the authors, to take on some value as a disturbing designation, even though it is indeed the most fundamental, the most widespread, the most common phantasy at the origin of all the relationships of man to his somatic existence. The fragments from the anatomy building which people the celebrated image of St. George de Carpaccio in the little church of Sainte-Marie-des-Anges in Venice are indeed that which, I believe, with or without analysis, never fail to present themselves at the level of the dream in every individual experience, and moreover in this register, the head which walks around all by itself continues

very well, as in Cazotte, to tell its little stories.

This is not what is important. And the discovery of analysis, is that the subject, in the field of the Other, encounters not simply the images of his own fragmentation but, already from the beginning, the objects of the desire of the Other, namely of the mother, not just in their fragmented state but with the privileges that the desire of the mother accords them. In others words, that there is one of these objects that he encounters, and which is the paternal phallus already encountered with the first phantasies of the subject, Melanie Klein tells us, at the origin of the fandum, he must speak, he is going to speak. Already in the inner empire, in this interior of the body of the mother where there are projected the first imaginary formations, something is perceived which distinguishes itself as more specially accentuated, even dangerous: the paternal phallus. On the field of the desire of the Other, the subjective object already encounters identifiable occupants at whose ell, as I might say, at whose rate he has already to value himself and to weigh himself, and pose these differently modelled little weights which are in use in primitive tribes of Africa where you see a little twisted-up animal, or even indeed some phalloform object as such.

(6) At this phantastical level therefore, the privilege of the image of the mantis is uniquely the fact - which is not after all so certain - that the mantis is supposed to eat her males one after another, and that this passage to the plural is the essential dimension through which it takes on for us a phantastical value.

Here then there is defined this oral phase. It is only within the demand that the Other is constituted as the reflection of the hunger of the subject. The Other therefore is not at all simply hunger, but articulated hunger, hunger which demands. And the subject by this is open to becoming object, but, as I might say, of a hunger which chooses. The transition is made from hunger to eroticism along the path of what I called above a preference. She likes something, that especially, in what one might call a gluttonous way... here we find ourselves reintroduced into the register of original sins. The subject has placed himself on the a la carte menu of cannibalism which everyone knows is never absent from any communion phantasy.

Read this author whom I speak to you about throughout the years returning in a sort of periodical way, Baltasar Gracian. Obviously only those of you who understand Spanish will be able to find in it, unless they have it translated, their complete satisfaction. Translated very early, as people translated at the time, almost instantaneously throughout Europe - all the same some things remain untranslated. It is a treatise about communion, el Comulgatorio, which is a good text in this sense there is revealed there something which is rarely admitted, the pleasures of consuming the Corpus Christi, the body of Christ, are detailed there. And we are asked to dwell on this exquisite cheek, on this delicious arm, I will spare you the rest in which

spiritual concupiscence is satisfied, lingers on, revealing to us in this way what always remains implied in even the most elaborated forms of oral identification.

In opposition to this thematic in which you see there being deployed by the virtue of the signifier in a whole field already created to be inhabited secondarily, the most original tendency, it is really in opposition to this that the last time I wanted to show you a meaning of the anal demand ordinarily little or badly articulated, by showing you that it is characterised by a complete reversal of the initiative for the benefit of the other. It is properly here that there lies - namely at a stage not so obviously advanced or certain in our normative ideology - the source of the discipline - I have not said the duty - the discipline, as people say, of cleanliness (proprete*) in which the French tongue so nicely marks the oscillation with proprietorship (propriete), with that which properly belongs, education, good manners as I might say. Here the demand is exterior, and at the level of the other, and is posed, articulated as such.

The strange thing is that we have to see and recognise here, in what has always been said and which it seems no one has really dealt with, that here there properly comes to birth the gift-object as such, and that what the subject can give in this metaphor is exactly linked to what he can retain, namely his own waste, his excrement.

It is impossible not to see something exemplary, something which it is properly speaking indispensable to designate as the radical point at which there is decided the projection of the desire of the subject into the other. There is a point of the phase at which desire is articulated and is constituted, at which the other is properly speaking its rubbish dump. And one is not surprised to see that the idealists of the theme of a "hominisation" of the cosmos - or as they are forced to express it in our day, of the planet... one of the phases of the (7) "hominisation" of the planet, is that the man-animal makes of it properly speaking a refuse dump, a rubbish dump. The most ancient testimonies that we have of human agglomerations as such, are enormous pyramids of broken shells, which has a name in Scandanavian. It is not for nothing that things are so. What is more it seems that if it is necessary some day to reconstruct the mode by which man has introduced himself to the field of the signifier, it is in these first heaps that it will have to be designated.

Here the subject designates himself in the evacuated object as such. Here is, as I might say, the zero point of desire. It reposes entirely on the effect of the demand of the Other. The Other decides about it, and indeed it is here that we find the root of this dependency of the neurotic. Here is the tangible point, the tangible note through which the desire of the neurotic is characterised as pregenital. It is in so far as he depends to such a degree on the demand of the Other that what the neurotic demands from the Other in his neurotic demand for love, is that he should be allowed to do something from this place of

desire, that it is this place of desire which manifestly remains to a certain degree dependent on the demand of the Other. Because the only sense that we could give to the genital stage in so far as at this place of desire there might reappear something which would have the right to call itself a natural desire - even though given its noble antecedents it can never be it - the fact is that desire must indeed one day appear as that which is not demanded, as aiming at what one does not demand. And then do not rush to say that it is what one takes for example, because anything you say will never do anything except make you fall again into the little machinery of demand.

Natural desire has, properly speaking, this dimension of never being able to be said in any way, and this indeed is the reason why you will never have any natural desire, because the Other is already installed at the place, the Other with a big O, as the one where there reposes the sign. And the sign is enough to set up the question: Che vuoi? What do you want? To which at first the subject can respond nothing, always delayed by the question in the response that it solicits. A sign represents something for someone and, for want of knowing what the sign represents, the subject becomes that question, when sexual desire appears, loses the someone to whom the question is addressed namely himself - and gives birth to the anxiety of little Hans.

Here there is delineated this something which, prepared by the furrow of the fracture of the subject by the demand, is set up in the relationship that for an instant we are going to consider as it is often considered, isolated, of the child and the mother. The mother of little Hans - and moreover all mothers, "I am calling on all mothers", as someone once said - distinguishes her position in the fact that she marks, for that which begins to appear as a little wagging, as a little trembling not to be doubted in the first wakening of sexual genitality as such in Hans: "That's really dirty", desire is disgusting, this desire that he cannot describe. But this is strictly correlative to an interest which is no less doubtful in something which is here the object, the one to which we have learned to give all its importance, namely the phallus.

In what is no doubt an allusive but not ambiguous fashion, how many mothers, all mothers, confronted with little Hans' little tap, or something else, however it is called, will have thoughts like: (8) "My little son is very well endowed", or indeed: "You will have lots of children". In short, the appreciation qua brought to bear on the object, it well and truly partial, again here is something which contrasts with the refusal of desire. Here, at the very moment of the encounter with what solicits the subject in the mystery of desire, the division is established between this object which becomes the mark of a privileged interest, this object which becomes the agalma, the pearl at the heart of the individual (who here trembles around the pivotal point of his advent to living plenitude) and at the same time of a debasement of the subject. He is appreciated as object, he is depreciated as desire.

And it is around this that there is going to turn this establishment of the register of having, that the affair is going to be played out. The matter is important enough for us to dwell on it, I will go into further detail.

The thematic of having I have been announcing to you for a long time by formulae such as the following, love is giving what one does not have, of course, because you see clearly that, when the child gives what he has, it is at the preceding stage. What does he not have, and in what sense? It is not towards the phallus (even though one could make the dialectic of being and having revolve around it) that you ought to direct your gaze to understand properly what is the new dimension that the entry into the phallic drama introduces. What he does not have, what he does not dispose of at this point of birth, of revelation of genital desire, is nothing other than his act. He has nothing but a draft on the future. He establishes the act in the field of project.

I would ask you to notice here the force of linguistic determinants through which, just as desire took on in the conjunction of Romance languages this connotation of desiderium, of mourning and of regret, it is not nothing that the primitive forms of the future should have been abandoned in favour of a reference to having. Je chanterai, is exactly what you see written: je chanter-ai, effectively this comes from cantare habeo. The decadent Romance tongue found the surest path the true sense of the future: I shall make love later, I have making love as a draft on the future, je desirer'ai. And moreover this habeo leads on to the debeo of the symbolic debt, to a habeo that is deprived. And it is in the future that this debt is conjugated when it takes the form of commandment: "Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother", etc.

But - and it is here that I want today only to keep you on the verge of what results from this articulation, which no doubt is slow, but done precisely so that you will not rush too quickly into it - the object in question, separated from desire, the object phallus, it is not the simple specification, the homologue, the homonym of the imaginary little o into which there collapses the fullness of the Other, of the big O. It is not a specification which has finally come to light of what had previously been the oral object, the anal object. It is something - as I indicated to you from the start, at the beginning of this discourse today, when I marked out for you the first encounter of the subject with the phallus - it is a privileged object in the field of the Other. It is an object which comes by way of deduction from the status of the Other, of the big Other as such. In other words, the little o, at the level of genital desire and of the castration phase, whose precise articulation all of this as you clearly perceive is constructed in order to introduce you to, the little o is the 0 minus phi, $o = 0 - \phi$. In others words it is from this angle that the © (phi) comes to symbolise what is lacking to the 0 in order to be the noetic 0 , the 0 in full exercise, the Other in so far as one can trust its response to the demand. The desire of

this noetic Other is an enigma, and this enigma is tied into the (9) structural foundation of its castration. It is here that there is going to be inaugurated the whole dialectic of castration.

Pay attention now not to confuse either this phallic object with this same sign which would be the sign at the level of the Other of its lack of response, the lack of which there is question here is the lack of the desire of the Other. The function that this phallus is going to take on in so far as it is encountered in the field of the imaginary, is not to be identical to the Other, as designated by the lack of a signifier, but to be the root of this lack. It is the Other who is constituted in what is certainly a privileged relationship to this object (ϕ), but a complex relationship. It is here that we are going to find the point of what constituted the impasse and the problem of love which is that the subject cannot satisfy the demand of the Other except by lowering it again, by making of him, this other, the object of his desire.



Seminary 16; Wednesday 12 April 1961

It is not because one" may seem to have diverted from what is at the centre of your preoccupations that one does not rediscover it at the extreme periphery. This is what, I believe, happened to me almost without my noticing it in the Borghese Gallery in the most unexpected place. My experience has always taught me to look at what is near the lift, which is often significant and which people never look at. The experience transferred to the museum of the Borghese Gallery (which is quite applicable to a museum) made me turn my head on leaving the lift thanks to which I saw something - at which people really never stop, I have never heard anyone ever speak about it - a picture by someone called Zucchi.

He is not a very well known painter, even though he has not completely escaped from the meshes of the critical net. He is what is called a Mannerist from the first period of Mannerism, in the XVIth century. His dates are approximately 1547-1590, and what is in question is a painting called "Psyche surprises Amore", namely Eros.

It is the classical scene of Psyche raising her little lamp on Eros who for some time has been her never glimpsed nightly lover. You have of course, I think, some idea of this classical drama. Psyche favoured by this extraordinary love, that of Eros himself, enjoys a happiness which could have been perfect if she had not been overtaken with curiosity to see who was involved. It is not that she had not been warned by her lover himself never to try, under any circumstances, to throw light on him, without him being able to say what sanction would result from it, but the insistence is extreme. Nevertheless Psyche cannot do otherwise than end up doing it and, at that moment, the misfortunes of Psyche begin. I cannot tell you them all. I would like first of all to show you what is in question, because moreover this is what is important in my discovery. I obtained two copies of it and I am going to pass them round. I reduplicated these two reproductions with a sketch done by a painter who even those who do not know my family relationships will I hope recognise, and who was kind enough this morning, because of a wish to please me, to make for you this sketch which will allow me to highlight what is in question in the demonstration. You see that the sketch corresponds in its significant lines at least to what I am in the process of circulating.

(2) I thought I should see this place on the Palatine that Commandant Boni, about fifty years ago I think, thought he could identify with what the Latin authors call the Mundus■ I managed to go down into it, but I'm afraid that it is nothing more than a cistern, and I managed to get a sore throat there....

I do not know if you have already seen the subject of Eros and Psyche treated in this fashion. For my part what struck me (this has been treated in innumerable ways, both in sculpture and in painting) I never saw Psyche appearing armed in a work of art, as she is in this picture, with what is represented there very vividly as a little cutting instrument and which is precisely a scimitar in this picture. On the other hand, you will notice that what is here significantly projected in the form of the flower, and of the bouquet of which it forms a part and of the vase also in which it is inserted, you will see in the picture in a very intense, very marked fashion, that this flower is properly speaking the visual mental centre of the picture. It is so in the following fashion, this bouquet and this flower are put in the foreground and are seen, as they say, against the light, namely that this looks here like a black mass; it is this which is treated in a fashion that gives to this picture the character that one can call Mannerist. It is drawn in an extremely refined way. There would certainly be things to say about the flowers which are chosen in this bouquet.

But around the bouquet, coming from behind the bouquet, there radiates an intense light which falls on the elongated thighs and the stomach of the personage who symbolises Eros. And it is really impossible not to see here, designated in the most precise fashion and as it were by the most solidly supported index, the organ which must anatomically be concealed behind this mass of flowers, namely very precisely the phallus of Eros. This is seen in the very manner of the picture, accentuated in such a fashion that it cannot be a question here of an analytic interpretation, that there cannot fail to be presented in the representation the thread which unites this menace of the cutting instrument to what is properly speaking designated for us here. In a word, it is worthwhile designating the thing precisely because of the fact that it is not frequent in art. Judith and Holofernes have been frequently represented for us, but all the same for Holofernes, it is not what is in question here, it is "off with his head". In such a way that the very gesture, stretching out, of the other arm which holds the lamp is something which is also made in order to evoke for us all the resonances precisely of this type of other picture to which I am alluding. The lamp is there suspended above the head of Eros. You know that in the story it is a drop of oil spilt in a rather sudden movement by a very emotional Psyche, which has woken Eros causing him, the story moreover specifies it for us, a wound from which he suffers for a long time.

Let us observe in order to be scrupulously careful that, in the reproduction that you have before your eyes, you can see that there is something in effect like a luminous trait which starts from the lamp and goes towards the shoulder of Eros.

Nevertheless the obliqueness of this trait does not allow it to be thought that it is a question of this drop of oil, but of a shaft of light. Some people will think that there is here (3) something which is in effect quite remarkable and which represents on the part of the artist an innovation, and therefore an intention which we could unambiguously attribute to him, I mean that of representing the threat of castration applied to the circumstances of loving. I think we would have to beat a hasty retreat if we were to advance in this direction.

We would have to beat a hasty retreat from it because of the fact that I highlighted for you... a point already highlighted, but which I hope has already struck some of you, it is that this story is only known to us, despite its diffusion in the history of art, through a single text, the text of Apulius, in The golden ass. I hope for your own pleasure that you have read The golden ass, it is, I must say, a very exciting text. If, as has always been said, certain truths are included in this book, I can tell you in a mythical and picturesque form veritable esoteric and initiatory secrets, it is a truth wrapped up in the most shimmering, not to say the most arousing, the most titillating appearances. Because as it first appears, it is in fact something which has not yet been superseded, even by the most recent productions with which we have been regaled in France these last years in the most characteristic erotic genre, with the whole nuance of sadomasochism which constitutes the most common aspect of the erotic novel.

It is in effect in the middle of a horrible story about the kidnapping of a young girl, accompanied by the most terrifying threats to which she finds herself exposed in the company of the ass (the one who speaks in the first person in the novel) it is in an interlude, something included within this very spicy story, that an old woman, in order to distract for a moment the girl in question, the kidnap victim, recounts to her at length the story of Eros and Psyche.

Now what I highlighted for you above, is that it is as a result of the perfidious insistence of her sisters who will not rest until they lead her to fall into the trap, to violate the promises that she had made to her divine lover, that Psyche succumbs. And the final method of her sisters is to suggest that what is in question is a terrifying monster, a serpent of most hideous aspect, that undoubtedly she is in some danger with him. After which the mental short-circuit is produced namely that, noticing the recommendations, the extremely insistent prohibitions to which her nocturnal interlocutor has recourse, imposes on her by enjoining that in no case should she violate his very severe prohibition not to try to see him, she can only too clearly see the coincidence between this recommendation and what her sisters are suggesting to her. And it is then that she takes the fatal step.

In order to take it, given what has been suggested to her, what she thinks she is going to find, she arms herself. And in this sense we can say - despite the fact that the history of art does

not give us any other testimony as far as I know, I would be grateful if someone stimulated now by my remarks brought me proof to the contrary - [that if Psyche] has been represented at this significant moment as armed, it is indeed from the text of Apuleius that the Mannerist in question, Zucchi, has therefore borrowed what constituted the originality of the scene.

What does that mean? Zucchi represents for us this scene the story of which is very widespread. At the time already it is very widespread for all sorts of reasons. If we have only a single literary testimony, we have many in the order of plastic and (4) figurative representations. It is said for example that the group which is in the museum of the Offices in Florence represents an Eros with a Psyche, both winged this time (you can notice that here if Eros has them, Psyche does not). Psyche herself winged with the wings of a butterfly. I have in my possession for example Alexandrian objects in which Psyche is represented under different aspects and frequently furnished with butterfly's wings; the butterfly's wings on this occasion are the sign of the immortality of the soul. The butterfly having been for a very long time (given the phases of the metamorphosis that it undergoes, namely born at first in the shape of a caterpillar of a larva, it envelops itself in this sort of tomb, of sarcophagus, enveloped in a fashion which is even going to recall the mummy where it remains until it reemerges into the light in a glorified form)... the thematic of the butterfly, as signifying the immortality of the soul had already appeared since antiquity, and not only in different peripheral religions, but moreover was even used and still is in the Christian religion as symbolic of the immortality of the soul.

It is in fact very difficult to deny that it is a question of what one can call the misfortunes or the misadventures of the soul in this story of which we have only, as I am telling you, a mythological text as basis, foundation of its transmission in antiquity, the text of Apuleius. In this text of Apuleius, whatever may be thought of it by authors accentuating in different ways the religious and spiritual significations of the thing and who, gladly, would find that in Apuleius we only find what is properly speaking a debased, romantic form which does not permit us to reach the original import of the myth, despite these allegations, I think on the contrary that the text of Apuleius - if you refer to it you will see it - is on the contrary extremely rich. In the sense that this point that is in question, the one that is represented here in this moment by the painting, is only the beginning of the story, despite the fact that already we have the previous phase of what one can call not only the happiness of Psyche, but a first test namely that Psyche is at the beginning considered as being as beautiful as Venus and that it is already through the effects of a first persecution by the gods that she finds herself exposed to the fact from a rock (another form of the myth of Andromeda), to something which is going to seize her, which must be a monster and which is found in fact to be Eros (to whom Venus had given the charge of delivering her over to the one of whom she must be the victim). But he, in short, seduced by the one to whom he has been delegated by the cruel orders of his

mother, takes her away and installs her in this profoundly hidden place where she can enjoy in short the happiness of the gods.

The story would have ended there if poor Psyche did not have a different nature than the divine nature and did not show among other weaknesses the most deplorable family feelings, namely that she will not rest before having obtained from Eros, her unknown spouse, permission to see her sisters again - and you see that here the story takes up again... Therefore, before this moment there is a short period, a short moment previous to the story, but the whole story stretches out afterwards. I am not going to go right through it with you because this goes beyond our subject.

(5) What I want simply to say to you, is that when Jacopo Zucchi produces this little masterpiece for us, it was not unknown, neither more nor less than through the brush of Raphael himself because, for example, you know that it is displayed on the ceiling and on the walls of this charming Farnese palace. They are lovely scenes, almost too lovely. We are no longer, it seems, able to tolerate a sort of prettiness in which for us there seems to be degraded that which ought to have appeared, the first time that the type emerged from the brilliant brush of Raphael, as a surprising beauty. In truth, one must always take into account the fact that, when a certain prototype, a certain form appears, it must make a completely different impression from what it is when it has been not only reproduced thousands of times but imitated thousands of times. In short, these paintings of Raphael at the Farnese give us a development, scrupulously based on the text of Apuleius, of the misadventures of Psyche.

In order that you should not doubt that Psyche is not a woman, but indeed the soul, let it suffice for me to tell you that, for example, she is going to have recourse to Demeter who is presentified here with all the instruments, all the weapons of her mysteries (and in fact here it is a question of the mysteries of Eleusis) and that she is rejected by her. Demeter desires above all not to get into the bad books of her sister-in-law Venus. And all that is in question is the following, it is that in short, the unfortunate soul, because she has fallen and committed at the beginning a faux pas of which she is not even guilty (because at the beginning this jealousy of Venus comes from nothing other than the fact that she is considered by Venus as a rival) finds herself tossed out, repelled from any help, even religious sources of help. And one could even carry out a little phenomenology of the unhappy soul compared to that of the conscience qualified by the same name.

In connection with this very pretty story of Psyche, we must not therefore deceive ourselves in this regard, the thematic of which there is question here is not that of the couple. It is not a question of the relationships of man and woman, it is a question of something which - you really have only to be able to read in order to see that this is only really hidden because it is in the foreground and too obvious, as in "The purloined letter" - is

nothing other than the relationships of the soul to desire.

It is in this that the composition - I do not believe I am forcing things in saying that it is extremely gripping - of this picture, could be said to isolate for us in an exemplary fashion this tangible character imaged by the intensity of the image which is produced here, to isolate what could be a structural analysis of the myth of Apuleius which still remains to be done. You know enough about it, I told you enough about what a structural analysis of a myth is for you to know at least that such a thing exists. In Claude Lévi-Strauss the structural analysis of a certain number of North American myths is carried out, I do not see why one would not give oneself over to the same sort of analysis with regard to the fable of Apuleius.

Naturally we are, it is a curious thing, less well served for the things that are closest to us than for others which appear to us to be more distant as regards sources, namely that we have only one version of this myth, when all is said and done that of Apuleius. But it does not seem to be impossible, within the myth, to operate in a sense which would allow there to be thrown (6) into relief in it a certain number of significant opposing couples. By means of such an analysis, I would say, without the help of the painter, we would perhaps run the risk of allowing there to go unnoticed the really primordial and original character of the moment, of nevertheless the best known moment, moreover everyone knows that what has remained in the collective memory about the meaning of the myth is indeed the following, it is that Eros flees and disappears because little Psyche had been in short too curious and what is more disobedient.

what is in question, what is concealed, what is hidden behind this well-known moment of the myth and of the story, would be if we are to believe what the intuition of the painter reveals to us here, nothing other therefore than this decisive moment. Certainly, it is not the first time that we see it appearing in an antique myth, but whose value as an accent, whose crucial character, whose pivotal character had to wait in short for many long centuries before being, by Freud, put in the centre of the psychical thematic. It is for this reason that it is not a waste of time, having made this discovery, to tell you about it, because in short it happens to designate - in the tiny image which will remain, because of the very time that I am consecrating to it this morning, imprinted in your spirits - it happens to illustrate that which today I can scarcely designate otherwise than the meeting point of two registers, that of the instinctual dynamic in so far as I have taught you to consider it as marked by the effects of the signifier, and to permit therefore to accentuate also at this level how the castration complex ought to be articulated, cannot even be fully articulated except by considering this instinctual dynamic as structured by this mark of the signifier. And at the same time, this is the value of the image, to show us that there is therefore a super-imposition or a super-impression, a common centre, a vertical direction at this point of production of the castration complex into which we are now going to enter. Because you see that it

is here that I left you the last time having taken up the thematic of desire and demand in the chronological order, but in repeating to you at every instant that this divergence, this splitting, this difference between desire and demand which marks with its stroke all the first stages of libidinal evolution, and is determined by the nachtraglich action, by something retroactive coming from a certain point where the paradox of desire and of demand appears with the minimum of eclat, and which is really that of the genital stage, in so far as it appears that the same desire and demand should at least be able to be distinguished there.

They are marked by this stroke of division, of explosion which, for analysts, consider it carefully, must still be, if you read the authors a problem, I mean a question, an enigma more avoided still than resolved and which is called the castration complex.

Thanks to this image, you have to see that the castration complex, in its structure, in its instinctual dynamic is centred in such a way that it overlaps exactly what we could call the point of the birth of the soul.

For when all is said and done if the myth of Psyche has a meaning, it is the fact that Psyche only begins to live as Psyche not simply as provided with an extraordinary initial gift (that of being equal to Venus), nor indeed with a masked and unknown favour (that in short of an infinite and unplumbable happiness) but in so far as Psyche, qua subject of a pathos which is (7) properly speaking that of the soul - at that very moment when precisely the desire which had fulfilled her is going to flee from her, is going to disappear, it is from that moment that the adventures of Psyche begin.

I once told you, Venus is born every day and, as the myth tells us, this time the Platonic one, it is therefore because of this we have also every day the conception of Eros. But the birth of the soul is, in the universal and in the particular, for each and every person, a historic moment. And it is from that moment that there develops in history the drama which we have to deal with in all its consequences.

When all is said and done, one can say that if analysis, with Freud, went straight to this point I would say that, if the Freudian message ended on this articulation - consult Analysis finite and infinite - it is because there is a final term - the thing is properly articulated in this text, at which one arrives when one manages to reduce in the subject all the avenues of his re-emergence, of his reliving, of unconscious repetitions, when we have managed to make them converge towards this rock - the term is in the text - of the castration complex, the castration complex in man as in woman - the term Penisneid is only among others in this text the pinpointing of the castration complex as such. It is around this castration complex and as I might say starting again from this point, that we should put to the test again everything that has in a certain fashion been discovered starting from this stumbling point.

For, whether it is a question of highlighting the quite decisive and primordial effect of what emerges from the agencies of the oral for example, or again of the bringing into play of what is called the aggressivity of primordial sadism, or again of what has been articulated in the different developments which are possible around the notion of the object (of the decomposition and the deepening of this relationship, up to the point of highlighting the notion of good and bad primordial objects), all of this cannot be resituated in a proper perspective unless we regasp in a divergent fashion that from which this effectively diverged, from this point unsustainable to a certain degree in its paradox, which is that of the castration complex. An image like the one that I am taking care, today, to produce before you is in a way to incarnate what I mean in speaking about the paradox of the castration complex.

In effect, if the whole divergence which has been able to appear to us up to the present in the different phases that we have studied, motivated by the discordance, the distinction between what constitutes the object of demand (whether it is in the oral stage the demand of the subject as in the anal stage the demand of the other) and that which in the Other is at the place of desire (which would be in the case of Psyche masked, veiled up to a certain point although secretly perceived by the archaic, infantile subject), would it not seem that what one can massively call the third phase - which is currently described under the name of the genital phase - is this conjunction of desire in so far as it may be involved in some demand or other of the subject, is it not properly speaking that which ought to find its reference, its identical in the desire of the Other? If there is a point where desire presents itself as desire, it is indeed there where precisely the first accentuation of Freud was constructed to situate it for us, namely at the level of sexual desire revealed in its real consistency and no longer in a contaminated, displaced, condensed, metaphorical fashion. It is no longer a question of the sexualisation of some other function, we are dealing with the sexual function itself.

(8) To make you measure the paradox that it is a question of pinpointing, I sought this morning an example to incarnate the embarrassment of psychoanalysts in what concerns the phenomenology of this genital stage, I came across an article by Monchy on the castration complex in the International Journal. To what is an analyst who in short interests himself again in our day - because there are not many of them - in the castration complex led in order to explain it? Well, to something that you would never guess. I will summarise it for you very briefly. The paradox naturally cannot fail to strike you that without the revelation of the genital drive it is necessarily marked by this splitting which consists in the castration complex as such, the Trieb is for him something instinctual.

We are dealing with someone who begins with a certain baggage (von Uexkull and Lorenz), he speaks to us at the beginning of his article of what are called congenital reaction schemes, which evokes for us the fact that in the case of little birds who have

never been subjected to any experience it is enough to have a lure projected, the shadow identical to that of a hawk, of a faucon in order to provoke all the reflexes of terror, in short the imagery of the lure as the author of this article - which is written in English - puts it in French l'attrape. Things are very simple: the primitive attrape must be sought for in the oral phase. The biting reflex, namely that because the child may have these famous sadistic phantasies which culminate at a section of the object, more precious than any other, of the mother's nipple, it is here that there is to be sought the origin of that which in the subsequent genital phase is going to manifest itself by the transference of phantasies of fellatio, as this possibility of depriving, of wounding, of mutilating the partner of sexual desire under the form of his organ. And this is why, not that your daughter is mute, but why the genital phase is marked by the possible sign of castration.

The character of such a reference, of such an explanation is obviously significant of this sort of reversal which has been brought about and which has made there be put progressively, under the register of primary drives, drives which become it must be said more and more hypothetical in the measure that one makes them retreat into the original foundation which, when all is said and done, culminate at an accentuation of the constitutional thematic, of something or other innate in primordial aggressivity. It is undoubtedly rather significant of the present orientation of analytic thinking.

Are we not spelling out things correctly in dwelling on something which experience - I mean the problems which experience gives rise to for us - in a way really proposes habitually for us. I already noted before you what is articulated in Jones' writings, in a certain need to explain the castration complex, in the notion of aphanisis, a common Greek term put on the agenda in the articulation of Freud's analytic discourse, and which means disappearance. It is a question of the disappearance of desire and of the fact that what is in question in the castration complex is supposed to be, in the subject, the fear given rise to by the disappearance of desire.

Those who follow my teaching for a long enough time cannot fail, I hope, to remember - in any case those who do not remember it (9) can refer to the excellent summaries made of it by Lefebvre-Pontalis - that I already took it further by saying that if this is a way of looking at things, there is all the same a singular reversal in the articulation of the problem, a reversal which clinical facts allow us to highlight. It is for this reason that I analysed at length for you, carried out a critique of Ella Sharpe's famous dream which is precisely what my seminar analysed the last time. This dream of Ella Sharpe turns entirely around the thematic of the phallus. I would ask you to refer to this summary because I cannot be repeating myself and because the things which are there are absolutely essential. The meaning of what is in question on this occasion is this thing that I highlighted which is that, far from the fear of aphanisis being projected as one might say into the image of the castration

complex, it is on the contrary the necessity, the determination of the signifying mechanism which, in the castration complex in most cases pushes the subject, not at all to fear aphanisis but on the contrary to take refuge in aphanisis, to put his desire in his pocket. Because what analytic experience reveals to us, is that something is more precious than desire itself: to preserve its symbol which is the phallus. This is the problem which is proposed to us.

I hope that you have carefully noted this picture. The flowers which are here in front of the sexual organ of Eros, they are precisely not at all distinguished by such an abundance that one cannot see that precisely there is nothing behind. There is literally no place for the least sexual organ, so that what Psyche is here on the point of cutting literally has already disappeared from the real. And moreover if something strikes us as being opposed to the proper form, to the beautiful human form of this effectively divine woman here in this image, it is the extraordinarily composite character of the image of Eros. This face is one of a child, but the body has something Michaelangelesque about it (its muscles) and already almost which begins to be marked, not to say lose shape... without mentioning the wings. Everyone knows that people argued for a long time about the sex of angels. If people argued for such a long time, it was probably because they did not know very well where to stop. In any case the apostle tells us that, whatever may be the joys of the resurrection of the body, once the celestial feast has come, there will no longer be anything done in heaven of the sexual order, either active nor passive. So that what is in question, what is concentrated in this image, is indeed this something which is the centre of the paradox of the castration complex.

The fact is that, far from the desire of the Other, in so far as it is approached at the level of the genital phase, being able to be, be in fact ever accepted in what I would call its rhythm which is at the same time its fleetingness (as regards the child, namely that it is still a fragile desire, that it is an uncertain, premature, anticipated desire) this masks from us when all is said and done what is in question, that it is quite simply the reality at whatever level it may be of sexual desire to which, as one might say, the psychical organisation is not adapted in so far as it is psychical; the fact is that the organ (10) is not taken up, brought, approached, except as transformed into a signifier and that, because it is transformed into a signifier, it is in this that it is cut off. And reread everything that I taught you to read at the level of little Hans. You will see that there is question only of that: is it rooted? Can it be taken away? At the end he arranges things, it can be unscrewed, it is unscrewed and one can put others in its place.

This therefore is what is in question. What is striking in it, is that what is shown to us, is the relationship of this elision thanks to which it is no longer here anything but the sign itself that I am saying, the sign of absence. Because what I have taught you is the following: it is that if ϕ , the phallus

as signifier has a place, it is very precisely that of supplying at the point, at this precise level where significance disappears in the Other, where the other is constituted by the fact that there is somewhere a signifier lacking. Hence the privileged value of this signifier which one can of course write, but which one can only write in parenthesis, by saying indeed precisely the following: that it is the signifier of the point where the signifier is lacking $S(\overline{6})$. And it is for this reason that it can become identical to the subject himself to the point that we can write him as barred subject, namely at the only point where we analysts can place a subject as such - for us analysts, namely in so far as we are linked to the effects which result from the coherence of the signifier as such when a living being makes himself its agent and its support. We see the following, that from then on the subject has no other possible efficacy (if we admit this determination, this overdetermination, as we call it) than from the signifier which makes him vanish. And that is why the subject is unconscious.

If one can even speak, and even when one is not an analyst, of double symbolisation, it is in this sense that the nature of the symbol is such that two registers necessarily spring from it, the one which is linked to the symbolic chain and the one which is linked to the disturbance, to the disorder that the subject was capable of bringing to it, because it is here that when all is said and done the subject situates himself in the most certain fashion. In other words the subject only affirms the dimension of truth as original at the moment that he makes use of the signifier to lie.

This relationship therefore of the phallus with the effect of the signifier, the fact that the phallus as signifier (and this means therefore transposed to a completely different function than its organic function) is precisely what it is a question of considering as centre of every coherent apprehension of what is in question in the castration complex, it is to this that I wanted this morning to draw your attention. But again to open up, not again in an articulated and rational but in a picturesque fashion, what we will bring forward the next time and which is, as I might say, represented with genius thanks to the very Mannerism of the artist who made this painting. Has it occurred to you that by putting in front of this phallus as lacking and, as such, raised to a major significance this vase of flowers, Zucchi can be seen to have anticipated by three and a half centuries - and I assure you up to the last few days without my knowing it - the very image of which I made use in the form of what I called "the illusion of the inverted vase" in order to articulate the whole dialectic of the relationships of the ideal ego and the ego-ideal. I said this a long time ago, but I entirely redid it in an article which should appear soon. This relationship of the object as object of desire, as partial object (11) with the whole narcissistic accommodation is the thing whose different parts I tried to articulate in this system which I called "the illusion of the inverted vase" in an amusing physics experiment.

The important thing is to project into your spirit this idea that the problem of castration as mark (in so far as it marks, in so far as it is at the centre of the whole economy of desire as an analysis has developed it) is closely linked to this other problem which is that of how the Other in so far as he is the locus of the word, in so far as he is the subject as of right, in so far as he is the one with whom we have at the limit relationships of good or bad faith can and ought to become something exactly analogous to what can be encountered in the most inert object, namely the object of desire, o. It is this tension, it is this levelling down, it is this collapse, collapse at a fundamental level which becomes the essential regulation of everything that in the case of man is the problematic of desire, it is this that is in question in analysis. I hope the next time to be able to articulate it for you in the most exemplary fashion.

I ended what I taught you in connection with the dream of Ella Sharpe with these words: "This phallus" - I said, speaking about a subject caught up in the neurotic situation which is more exemplary for us in so far as it was that of aphanisis determined by the castration complex - "this phallus, is and is not. This interval - to be and not to be - the tongue allows us to perceive in a formula where the verb to be slides: he is not without having it, (il n'est pas sans l'avoir) '. It is around this subjective assumption between being and having that the reality of castration operates. In effect, the phallus" - I then wrote - "has a function of equivalence in the relationship to the object: It is in proportion to a certain renunciation of the phallus that the subject enters into possession of the plurality of objects which characterise the human world. In an analogous formula, one could say that the woman 'is without having it, (est sans l'avoir)¹, which can be experienced very painfully in the form of Penisneid" - but which, I am adding this to the text, is also a great force. "This is what Ella Sharpe's patient does not consent to see: he 'shelters' the signifier phallus..." and I concluded: "No doubt there is something more neurotogenic than the fear of losing the phallus, it is not to wish that the Other should be castrated."

But today, after we have gone through the dialectic of transference in the Symposium, I am going to propose to you another formula, which is the following, this desire of the Other essentially separated from us by this mark of the signifier, do you not now understand what Alcibiades, having perceived that there is in Socrates the secret of desire, demands, in an almost impulsive fashion, with an impulse which is at the origin of all the wrong paths of neurosis or of perversion, this desire of Socrates, which he knows to exist in another connection because it is on this that he bases himself, to see it as sign. It is moreover why Socrates refuses. Because this is of course only a short-circuit.

To see desire produced as a sign is not for all that to be able to enter on the path through which desire is caught up in a certain dependency which is what it is a question of knowing.

So that you see being initiated here what I am trying to show you and to trace as a path towards that which ought to be the desire (12) of the analyst. In order that the analyst should have what the other lacks he must have nescience qua nescience, he must be in the mode of having, that he must also be also without having it, that he must be lacking in nothing for him to be as nescient as his subject. In fact, he also is not without having an unconscious. No doubt it is always beyond anything the subject knows, without being able to say it to him. He can only give him a sign, to be that which represents something for someone is the definition of the sign. Having here in short nothing other which prevents him from being this desire of the subject, except precisely knowledge, the analyst is condemned to a false surprise. But you can be sure that he is only efficacious by offering himself to the true which is untransmissible, of which he can only give a sign. To represent something for someone, is precisely here what is to be stopped, because the sign that is to be given is the sign of the lack of the signifier. It is, as you know, the only sign which is not tolerated because it is the one which provokes the most unspeakable anguish. It is nevertheless the only one which can allow the other to gain access to what is the nature of the unconscious, this "knowledge without consciousness" which you will understand perhaps today before this image in what sense, not negative but positive, Rabelais says that it is "the ruin of the soul".

Seminar 17: Wednesday 19 April 1961

I take up again before you my difficult discourse, more and more difficult because of the aims of this discourse. To say for example that I am leading you today onto unknown terrain would be inappropriate because, if I begin today to lead you onto a terrain, it is necessarily because from the beginning I already began. Moreover to speak about unknown terrain when it is a question of our own, of the one which is called the unconscious, is still more inappropriate because what is in question, and what constitutes the difficulty of this discourse, is that I can say nothing about it which does not take on all its weight precisely from what I do not say about it.

It is not that one should not say everything, the fact is that in order to speak with precision we cannot say everything, even about what we can formulate, because there is already something in the formula which - as you will see, we grasp it at every instant - precipitates what is in question into the imaginary, which is essentially what happens because of the fact that the human subject as such is prey to the symbol. At the point that we have got to in it, this "to the symbol", be careful, should it be put in the singular or the plural? Undoubtedly in the singular in so far as the one which I introduced the last time is properly speaking as such the unnamable symbol - we are going to see why and how - the symbol ϕ (big phi), precisely this point at which I must today take up my discourse again in order to show you how it is indispensable for us in order to understand the incidence of the castration complex on the mainspring of transference. There is a fundamental ambiguity between symbolic phallus and imaginary phallus, concretely involved in the psychical economy. The place where we encounter it, where we first encountered it, particularly where the neurotic lives it out in a fashion which represents his particular mode of manoeuvring, of operating with this radical, fundamental difficulty that I am trying to articulate before you through the usage that I give to this symbol ϕ (big phi) which the last time and many times previously, I briefly designated, I mean in a rapid, abbreviated fashion as the symbol which corresponds to the place where there is produced the lack of signifier.

If I have unveiled anew from the beginning of this session this image which served us the last time as a support to introduce the

paradoxes and the antinomies linked to these diverse slippages, so subtle, so difficult to retain in their different moments and nevertheless indispensable to sustain, if we want to understand what is in question in the castration complex (and which are the displacements and the absences, and the levels and the substitutions where there intervenes what analytic experience shows us more and more), this phallus in its multiple, quasi-ubiquitous formulae, you see it in experience, if not re-emerging, at least you cannot deny that it is re-evoked at every instant in theoretical writings under the most diverse forms and even up to the final term of the most primitive investigations on what happens in the first pulsations of the (2) soul - the phallus which you see at the final term identified, for example, with the force of primitive aggressivity in so far as it is the worst object encountered at the end in the mother's womb and that it is moreover the most dangerous object.

Why this ubiquity? I am not the one who introduces it here, who suggests it, it is everywhere manifest in the writings of any attempt pursued to formulate on an old plane as well as on a new, renovated one of analytic technique. Well, let us try to put some order in it and to see why it is necessary for me to insist on this ambiguity, or on this polarity if you wish, polarity with two extreme terms, the symbolic and the imaginary, concerning the function of the signifier phallus. I say signifier in so far as it is used as such but when I speak about it, when I introduced it above, I said the symbol phallus and, as you will see, it is perhaps in effect the only signifier which merits, in our register and in an absolute fashion, the title of symbol.

I have therefore unveiled again this image (which undoubtedly is not the simple reproduction of the original one of the artist) of the painting from which I began as the properly speaking exemplary image, which appeared to me to be charged in its composition with all the sorts of riches that a certain art of painting can produce and whose Mannerist principle I examined. I am going to pass it around again rapidly, if only for those who were not able to see it. I wish simply, and by way I could say of a complement, to clearly mark, for those who perhaps were not able to understand in a precise fashion, what I intend to underline about the importance here of what I would call the Mannerist application. You are going to see that the application must be employed moreover in the proper sense as well as in the figurative sense. It is not I but studies which already exist which have made the rapprochement in this painting between the use that is given by the presence of the bouquet of flowers here in the foreground... it covers what is to be covered which I told you was less again the threatened phallus than Eros surprised and uncovered here through an initiative of the question of Psyche: "What is there to be said about him? De lui qu'en est-il?" Here this bouquet covers the precise point of an absent presence, of a presentified absence.

The technical history of the painting of the epoch invites us, not by my voice but by the voice of critics who started from

premises quite different to those which on this occasion guide me here. They have underlined the kinship there is because of the very fact of the probable collaborator who is the one who especially made the flowers. Certain things indicate to us that it is not, probably, the same artist who at work in the two parts of the painting and that it is a different person, Francesco, a brother or cousin of the artist, instead of Jacopo who, by reason of his technical skill, was asked to be the one to produce this piece of bravura of the flowers in their vase at the appropriate place. This is related by the critics to something which I hope a certain number of you know, namely the technique of Arcimboldo which, a few months ago, was brought to the knowledge of those who inform themselves a little about the different returns to the present of aspects which are sometimes elided, veiled or forgotten in the history of art.

This Arcimboldo is distinguished by this singular technique which produced its latest off-shoot in the work for example of my old friend Salvador Dali, which consists in what Dali has called paranoiac drawing. In the case of Arcimboldo, it is to represent the face for example of the librarian (he worked mainly at the court of the famous Rudolph II of Bohemia who also left many other traces in the tradition of the rare object) of Rudolph II by a clever putting together of the primary implements of the librarian's function, namely a certain fashion of (3) arranging books in such a way that the image of a face, of a visage is here much more than suggested, really imposes itself. In the same way the symbolic theme of a season incarnated in the form of a human face will be materialised by all the fruits of this season whose assemblage will itself be realised so that the suggestion of a face also imposes itself in the form produced. In short this production of that which in its essential shape presents itself as the human image, the image of another, will be realised in the Mannerist method by the coalescence, combination, the accumulation of a pile of objects the total of which will be charged with representing what henceforth manifests itself at once as substance and illusion because, at the same time as the appearance of the human image is sustained, something is suggested which can be imagined in the disaggregation of objects which, by presenting in a way the function of the mask, show at the same time the problematic of this mask. That with which in short we always have to deal every time we see coming into play this so essential function of the person, in so far as we see it all the time in the foreground in the economy of human presence, is the following: if there is a need for a persona it is because behind, perhaps, every form slips away and vanishes.

And undoubtedly, if it is from a complex assemblage that the persona results, it is indeed in effect here that there lies at once the lure and the fragility of its subsistence and that, behind, we know nothing about what can be sustained, because a reduplicated appearance is imposed on us or suggests itself essentially as reduplicated appearance, namely something which when questioned leaves a vacuum, the question of knowing what there is behind in the final analysis.

It is indeed therefore in this register that there is affirmed, in the composition of the painting, the maintaining of the question of knowing (because this is what we should now maintain, sustain essentially before our minds) what is happening in the act of Psyche. The fulfilled Psyche questions herself about what she is dealing with and it is this moment, this precise, privileged instant that Zucchi has held onto, perhaps well beyond what he himself could, would have been able to articulate about it in a discourse - there is a discourse on the antique gods by this personage, I was careful to consult it, without any great illusion, there is nothing much to be drawn from this discourse - but the work speaks sufficiently for itself. And the artist has in this image grasped this something instantaneous which I called the last time this moment of the apparition, of the birth of Psyche, this sort of exchange of powers which ensures that she becomes embodied, and with all this cortege of misfortunes which will be her's in order that she should loop a loop, in order that she should rediscover in this instant this something which, for her, is going to disappear the instant after, precisely what she had wanted to grasp, what she had wanted to unveil: the face of desire.

What justifies the introduction of the symbol ϕ (phi) as such, since I put it forward as that which comes in place of the missing signifier? What does it mean that a signifier should be lacking? How many times have I told you that once given the battery of signifiers beyond a certain minimum which remains to be determined - regarding which I told you that at the limit four should be enough for all significations - there is no tongue, however primitive it may be, where finally everything cannot be expressed, except of course for the fact that, as the Vaudois proverb puts it: "Everything is possible for man, what he cannot do he leaves undone", that what cannot be expressed in the aforesaid tongue, well quite simply it will not be felt. It will not be felt, subjectivated, if to subjectivate is to take up a place in a subject that is valid for another subject, namely to pass to this most radical point where the very idea of (4) communication is not possible. Every signifying battery can always say everything because what it cannot say will signify nothing at the locus of the Other and because everything that signifies for us always happens at the locus of the Other. In order that something should signify, it is necessary that it should be translatable at the locus of the Other.

Imagine a tongue, as I already pointed out to you, which has no future, well then it will not express it, but it will signify it all the same, for example by the procedure of ought or to have. And this is moreover what happens in fact, because I do not need to come back on this, I pointed it out to you, this is how in French and in English one expresses the future: cantare habeo, je chanter-ai, tu chanter-as, it is the verb avoir which is declined, I mean originally, in a well attested fashion; I shall sing, is also, in a roundabout way, to express that which English does not have, namely the future.

There is no signifier lacking. At what moment does there

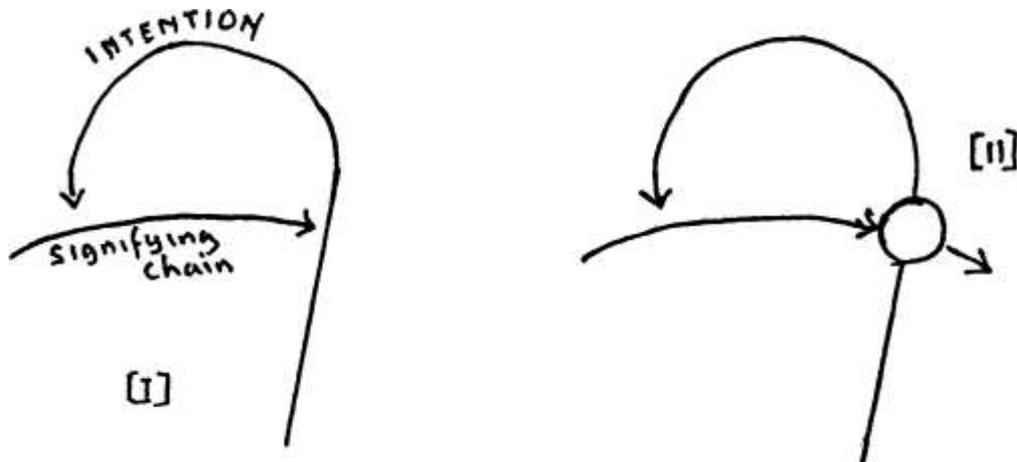
possibly begin to appear the lack of signifier? At that proper dimension which is subjective and which is called the question. I remind you that at one time I took into account sufficiently the fundamental, essential character of the apparition in the child (already well known, picked up of course by the most day-to-day observation) of the question as such, this moment so particularly embarrassing because of the character of these questions which is not an indifferent one, one where the child who knows how to deal with the signifier introduces himself to this dimension which makes him pose to his parents the most importunate questions, the ones that everyone knows provoke the greatest disarray and, in truth, responses that are almost necessarily impotent. What does running mean? What does kicking mean? What is an imbecile?

What makes us so incapable of giving a satisfactory answer to these questions, what forces us to respond to them in such a specially inept fashion... as if we did not know ourselves that to run is to walk very quickly - it is really to spoil the work - that to kick, is to be angry - is really to say something absurd. I am not insisting on the definition that we may give of imbecile.

It is quite clear that what is in question at that moment is a standing back of the subject as regards the usage of the signifier itself and that, the passion of what is meant by the fact that there are words, that one speaks and that one designates a thing so close to what one is dealing with by this enigmatic thing which is called a word, a term, a phoneme, this indeed is what is at stake. The incapacity felt at that moment by the child is, formulated in the question, of attacking the signifier as such at the moment when its action is already marked on everything, indelible. Everything that will come as question, in the historical continuation of his pseudo-philosophical meditation, will only when all is said and done collapse because, when he has got to "What am I?" he will not have got much further in it, unless of course he is an analyst. But if he is not - it is not in his power to be one for all that long - [when] he has got to the stage of posing himself the question "What am I?", he cannot see that precisely by putting himself in question in this form, he veils himself, he does not perceive that it is to break through the stage of doubt about being to ask oneself what one is, for by simply formulating the question in this way, he is going headlong (except for the fact that he does not perceive it) into metaphor. And it is all the same the least of the things that we, we analysts, should remember in order to help him to avoid renewing this ancient error always threatening in its innocence under all its forms and to prevent him from answering himself, even with our authority: (5) "I am a child", for example. Because of course this is the new reply that the indoctrination of psychologising repression in its renewed form will give him and with it in the same packet and without him noticing it, the myth of the adult who, for his part, is no longer supposed to be a child, thus making remultiply again this sort of morality about a pretended reality to which, in fact, he allows himself to be led by the nose by all sorts of

social swindles. Moreover, we did not have to wait for analysis, nor for Freudianism, for the formula "I am a child" to introduce itself as a corset designed to make anyone, who in any way finds himself in a slightly irregular position, hold himself straight. If beneath the artist there is a child, it is the rights of the child that he represents among people who of course are considered to be serious, who are not children. As I told you last year in my lessons on The ethics of psychoanalysis, this tradition dates from the beginning of the Romantic period, it begins more or less at the time of Coleridge in England (to situate it in a tradition) and I do not see why we should charge ourselves with taking it on.

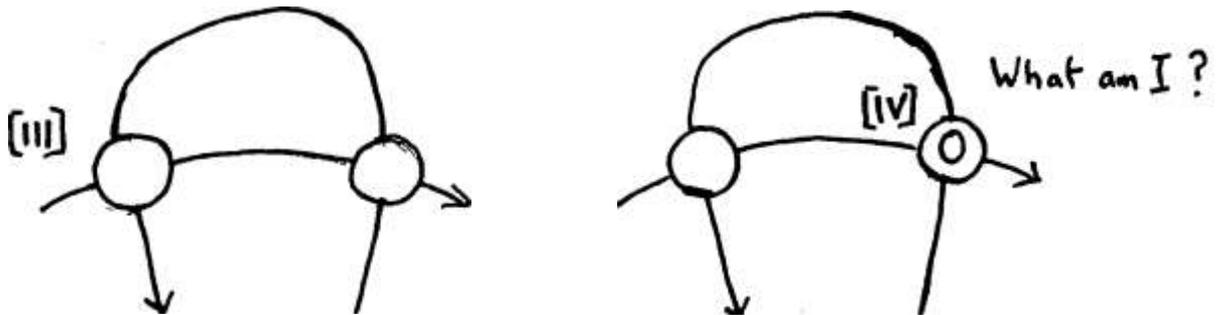
What I want to help you to grasp here, is what happens at the lower level of the graph. That to which I alluded during the journées provinciales when I wanted to draw your attention to the fact that the way in which the double intersection of these two beams, of these two arrows is constructed, is meant to draw our attention to the fact that simultaneity, as I said, is not at all synchrony. Namely that, supposing that there develop correlatively, simultaneously the two tensors, the two vectors in question, that of intention and that of the signifying chain [I],



you see that what is produced here [II] as an inception of this stepping, of this sequence which will consist in the sequence of different phonematic elements for example of the signifier, this develops very far before encountering the line on which that which is summoned to being (namely the intention of signification or even of the need, if you wish, which is concealed there) takes its place. Which means the following, that when this double intersection takes place in the last analysis simultaneously - because if nachträglich signifies something, it is that it is at the same instant, when the sentence is finished, that the meaning emerges - in passing no doubt the choice was already made. But the meaning can only be grasped in the successive piling up of signifiers [which] have come to take their place each one in its (6) turn [III], and which unfold, here if you wish, in the inverse form, "I am a child" appearing on the signifying line in the order that these elements are articulated [IV].

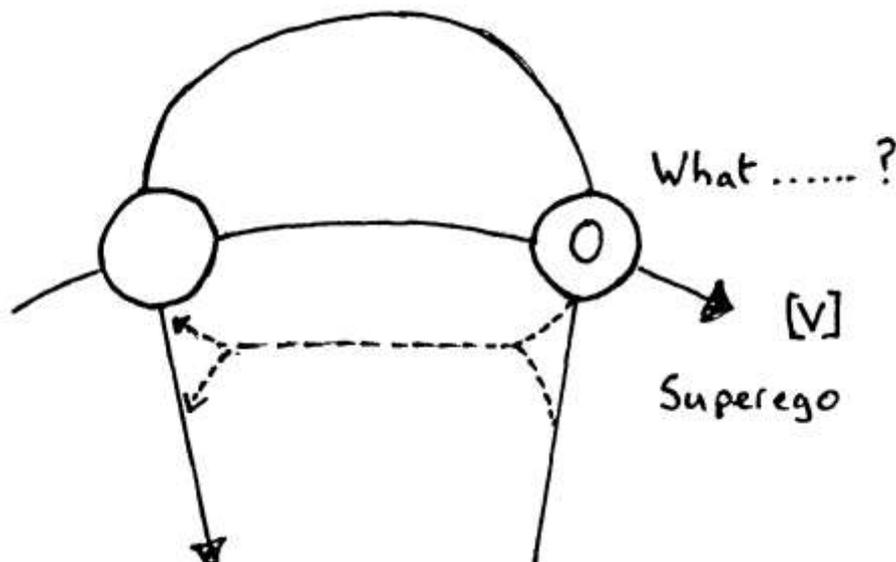
What is happening? What is happening is that, when the meaning

is complete, when that which is always metaphorical in every



attribution: I do not know anything except that, I who am speaking, currently, "I am a child", to say it, to affirm it realises this grasp, this qualification of meaning thanks to which I conceive of myself in a certain relationship with objects which are infantile objects. I make myself other than any way in which I could have at first grasped myself. I incarnate myself, I idealise myself, I make an ideal ego of myself, and in the final analysis very directly, in the sequence, in the process of the simple signifying inception as such, in the fact of having produced signs capable of being referred to the reality of my word. The beginning is in the "I" and the term is in the "child".

What remains here as after-effect, something that I may see or not see, is the enigma of the question itself. It is the "what?" which demands to be taken up here subsequently at the



(7) level of the big 0. To see that what follows, the after-effect, "What I am" appears in the form that it remains as question, where it is for me the point aimed at, the correlative point where I ground myself as ego-ideal, namely as a point where the question has an importance for me, where the question summons me in its ethical dimension, where it gives this form which is the very one that Freud conjugates with the superego and from which the name which qualifies it in a varyingly legitimate fashion as being that something which branches directly, as far

as I know, onto my signifying inception namely: a child.

But what is to be said in all of this? It is that this precipitate, premature response, this something which ensures that in short I elude the whole central operation which has been carried out, this something which makes me precipitate myself as a child, is the avoidance of the true response which ought to begin much earlier than any term of the sentence. The response to the "Who am I?" is nothing else that can be articulated, in the same form as I told you that no demand is supported, to the "Who am I?" there is no other response at the level of the Other than "Let yourself be, laisse-toi etre". And the whole precipitation given to this response, whatever it may be in the order of dignity, child or adult, is only the something in which I flee the meaning of this "Let yourself be."

It is clear therefore that it is at the level of the Other and of what is meant by this adventure at the degraded point that we grasp it, it is at the level of this "what?" which is not "What am I?" but which analytic experience allow us to unveil at the level of the Other, in the form of the Other, in the form of the "What do you want?", in the form of that which alone can stop us at the precise point of what is in question in every formulated question, namely what we desire in posing the question, it is here that it ought to be understood; and it is here that there intervenes the lack of signifier that is in question in the g (big phi) of the phallus.

We know, something analysis has shown us, has found, that what the subject has to deal with, is the object of the phantasy in so far as it presents itself as alone being capable of fixing a privileged point - what must be called with the pleasure principle an economy regulated by the level of jpuissance.

What analysis teaches us is, that to refer the question to the level of "What does it want, what does it want here inside?" what we encounter is a world of hallucinated signs, that the testing of reality is presented to us as this kind of way of tasting the reality of these signs which have emerged in us according to a necessary sequence in which there consists precisely the dominance over the unconscious of the pleasure principle. What is in question therefore, let us carefully observe it, is undoubtedly in the testing of reality to verify a real presence, but a presence of signs.

Freud underlines it with the greatest energy. It is not at all a question in the testing of reality of verifying whether our representations correspond indeed to a real (we know for a long time that we do not succeed any better in that than the philosophers) but of verifying that our representations are well and truly represented, Vorstellungsrepresentanz. It is a question of knowing if the signs are indeed there, but qua the signs (because they are signs) of this relationship to something else. And this is all that is meant by what the Freudian articulation contributes to us that the gravitation of our unconscious is referred to a lost object which is only ever

rediscovered, that is to say never re-discovered. It is never anything other than signified and this because indeed of the (8) chain of the pleasure principle. The veritable, authentic object that is in question when we speak about object, is not grasped, transmissible, exchangeable in any way. It is at the horizon of that around which our phantasies gravitate and it is nevertheless with that that we must make objects which, for their part, are exchangeable.

But the affair is very far from being on the way to being settled. I mean that I underlined enough for you last year what was in question in what is called utilitarian morality. It is undoubtedly a question of something quite fundamental in the recognition of objects, that one can describe as constituted by the market of objects: they are objects which can be used by everyone and, in this sense, what is called utilitarian morality is more than founded, there is no other. And it is indeed precisely because there is no other that the so-called difficulties that it is supposed to present are in fact perfectly soluble. It is quite clear that the utilitarians are quite right in saying that, every time we are dealing with something which can be exchanged with our fellows, the rule about it is utility, not ours but the possibility of use: utility for all and for the greatest number. This indeed is what creates the gap between what is in question, in the constitution of this privileged object which emerges in the phantasy, and every kind of object in what is called the socialised world, the world of conformity.

The world of conformity is already consistent with a universal organisation of discourse. There is no utilitarianism without a theory of fictions. To pretend in any way that it is possible to have recourse to a natural object, to pretend even to reduce the distances at which objects are sustained by common accord, is to introduce a confusion, one further myth in the problematic of reality.

The object in question in analytic object-relations is an object which we ought to locate, make emerge, situate at the most radical point at which there is posed the question of the subject as regards his relationship to the signifier. The relationship to the signifier is in effect such that if we are dealing, at the level of the unconscious chain, only with signs, and if it is a question of a chain of signs, the result is that there is no stopping-place in the reference of each of the signs to the one which succeeds it. Because what is proper to communication by signs is to make of this very Other to whom I address myself (in order to urge him to aim in the same way as myself) the object to whom this sign refers. The imposition of the signifier on the subject fixes him in the position proper to the signifier. What is in question, is to find the guarantee of this chain, that which transmits itself from sign to sign and must stop somewhere, which gives us the sign that we have a right to operate with signs. It is here that there emerges the privilege of the phallus in all signifiers. And perhaps it will appear too simple you to underline what is in question on this occasion

about this signifier. This signifier always hidden, always veiled, so that one is astonished to throw into relief the enormous undertaking of having its form represented in art, it is more than unusual to see it brought into play in a hieroglyphic chain or in cave art and nevertheless, this phallus, which plays its role in human imagination well before psychoanalysis, is only all the more frequently elided therefore from our signifying constructions. What does that mean? The fact is that of all (9) possible signs, is it not the one that reunites in itself the sign and the mode of action, and the very presence of desire as such, namely that in not allowing it to come to light in this real presence, precisely what is of a nature, not only to bring to a stop all this referring-on in the chain of signs, but even to make them enter into some shadow or other of nothingness. Of desire, there is doubtless no surer sign, on condition that there is nothing more than desire. Between the signifier of desire and the whole signifying chain there is established an "either... or" relationship.

Psyche was quite happy in this certain relationship with what was not at all a signifier, what was the reality of her love with Eros. But there you are! She is Psyche and she wants to know. She poses herself the question because language exists already and because one does not simply spend one's life making love but also gossiping with one's sisters. By gossiping with her sisters, she wants to possess her happiness. This is not such a simple thing. Once one has entered into the order of language, to possess one's happiness is to be able to show it, it is to be able to give an account of it, it is to arrange one's flowers, it is to be equal to one's sisters in showing that she has something better than they and not simply something different. And this is why Psyche emerges in the night, with her light and also her little cutting instrument. She will have absolutely nothing to cut off, as I told you, because it has already been done. She will have nothing to cut off, as I might say, except (and she would be well advised to do it as soon as possible) the current, namely that she sees nothing other than a great dazzling light and that what is going to be produced is, quite against her will, a prompt return to darkness the initiative for which she would do well to take before her object is definitively lost, before Eros remains sick of it for a long time, and is only to be rediscovered after a long series of trials.

The important thing for us in this painting, what makes it what it is for us, is that Psyche is illuminated and - as I have taught you for a long time now concerning the gracile form of femininity at the limits of puberty and pre-puberty - that it is she who, for us, in the scene, appears as the phallic image. And at the same time there is incarnated the fact that it is not the woman or the man who, in the final analysis, are the support of castrating action, it is this image itself in so far as it is reflected, as it is reflected in the narcissistic form of the body.

It is in so far as this unnamed because unnamable relationship, it is because the unsayable of the subject with the pure

signifier of desire is going to project itself onto the localisable, precise, situatable organ somewhere in the totality of the corporal edifice, is going to enter into the properly imaginary conflict of seeing itself as deprived or not deprived of this appendix, it is in this second imaginary moment that there is going to reside everything around which there is going to be elaborated the symptomatic effects of the castration complex.

I can here only initiate it and indicate it, I mean recall, summarise what I already touched on for you in a more or less developed fashion when I spoke to you on several occasions naturally about what constitutes our object namely neuroses.

What does the hysteric do? What does Dora do at the final term? I have taught you to follow its paths and its detours in the complex identifications, in the labyrinth where she finds herself confronted with that in which Freud himself stumbles and is lost. Because what he calls the object of her desire, you know that he is mistaken there precisely because he looks for the reference of (10) Dora qua hysteric first of all and above all in the choice of her object, of no doubt an object little o. And it is quite true that in a certain fashion Mr. K. is the object little o and after him Freud himself and, that in truth, this is indeed the phantasy in so far as the phantasy is the support of desire. But Dora would not be a hysteric if she were satisfied with this phantasy. She is aiming at something else, she is aiming at something better, she is aiming at the big O. She is aiming at the absolute Other, Mrs. K., I have explained to you a long time ago that Mrs. K. is for her the incarnation of this question: "What is a woman?" And because of this, at the level of the phantasy, it is not $\hat{\diamond} o$, the relationship of fading, of vacillation which characterises the relationship of the subject to this little o which is produced but something else, because she is a hysteric, \mathfrak{J} it is a big O as such, O, that she

believes in contrary to a paranoiac.

"What am I?" has for her a meaning which is not that of the moral or philosophical wanderings mentioned above, it has a full and absolute meaning. And she cannot fail to encounter there, without knowing it, the \mathbf{O} (\mathfrak{J} ϕ) sign perfectly closed, always veiled which responds here. And it is for this reason that she has recourse to all the forms that she can give of the closest substitute, you should carefully note it, of this $\hat{\phi}$ (big ϕ) sign. Namely that, if you follow the operations of Dora or of any hysteric, you will see that it is never a question for her of anything but a sort of complicated game through which she can, as I might say, subtilize the situation by slipping in where it is necessary the \mathfrak{J} (small ϕ) of the imaginary phallus. Namely that her father is impotent with Mrs. K.? Well what does it matter! She will be the copula, she will pay with her own person, she will sustain this relationship. And because this is still not enough, she will bring into play the image substituted for herself - as I showed and demonstrated for you a long time ago - of Mr. K. whom she will cast into the abyss, whom she will

repel into exterior darkness, at the moment that that animal says the only thing that he should not say: "My wife means nothing to me", namely that she does not give me an erection. If she does not give you an erection, then what use are you? Because everything that is in question for Dora, as for every hysteric, is to be the procuress of this sign in the imaginary form. The devotion of the hysteric, her passion for identifying with every sentimental drama, to be there, to support in the wings anything thrilling that may be happening and which nevertheless is not her business, this is the mainspring, this is the principle around which there waxes, proliferates all her behaviour.

If she always exchanges her desire against this sign, do not look elsewhere for the reason for what is called her mythomania. It is that there is something else that she prefers to her desire; she prefers that her desire should be unsatisfied so that the Other should hold the key to her mystery. It is the only thing that is important to her and this is the reason why, in identifying herself with the drama of love, she strives to reanimate this Other, to reassure him, to complete him, to restore him.

When all is said and done this is what we have to be aware of: any reparational ideology in our initiative as therapists, our analytic vocation. It is certainly not the hysteric's path which is the most easily available to us, so that it is not there either that the warning takes on its greatest importance.

There is another, that of the obsessional, who, as everyone knows, is much more intelligent in his way of operating. If the formula of the hysterical phantasy can be written thus: $Q \gg ()$.

o, the substitutive or metaphorical object, over something which is hidden, namely-d) (minus phi), his own imaginary castration in his relationship with the Other, today I will only introduce and (11) begin for you the different formula of the obsessional phantasy.

But before writing it I must give you a certain number of touches, of points, of indications which will put you on the path. We know the difficulty of handling the (phi) symbol in its unveiled form. It is, as I told you above, what is intolerable in it which is nothing other than the following: it is that it is not simply sign and signifier, but presence of desire. It is the real presence of desire. I am asking you to grasp this thread, this indication that I am giving you - and which, given the time, I can only leave here as an indication in order to take it up the next time - it is that at the basis of phantasies, of symptoms, of these points of emergence where we might see the hysterical labyrinth in a way lowering its mask, we will encounter something which I would call the insult to the real presence. The obsessional, for his part also has to deal with the $G \gg$ (big phi) mystery of the signifier phallus and for him also it is a question of making it manageable. Somewhere an author, about whom I must speak the next time, who has approached in a fashion that is certainly instructive and fruitful for us,

if we know how to criticise it, the function of the phallus in obsessional neurosis, somewhere for the first time has gone into this relationship in connection with a female obsessional neurosis. He underlines certain sacrilegious phantasies, the figure of Christ, even his phallus itself walked on, from which there arises for her an erotic aura which is perceived and admitted. This author immediately rushes into the thematic of aggressivity, of penis envy, and this despite the protestations of the patient.

Do not a thousand other facts which I could multiply here before you show us that we ought to dwell much more on the phenomenology, which is not an indifferent one, of this phantasizing that we too briefly call sacrilegious. We will remember the phantasy of the Ratman, imagining in the middle of the night his dead father resurrected, coming to knock on his door, and that he shows himself to him while he is masturbating: an insult here also to the real presence.

What we will call aggressivity in the obsession is always present as an aggression precisely against this form of apparition of the Other which I called at another time phallophanie - the Other in so far precisely as he may present himself as phallus. To hit out at the phallus in the Other in order to cure symbolic castration, to hit out at it on the imaginary plane, is the path the obsessional chooses in order to abolish the difficulty that I designate under the name of the parasitism of the signifier in the subject, to restore, for him, its primacy to desire but at the price of a degradation of the Other which makes him essentially a function of something which is the imaginary elision of the phallus. It is in so far as the obsessional is at this precise point of the Other where he is in a state of doubt, of suspension, of loss, of ambivalence, of fundamental ambiguity that his correlation to the object, to an always metonymical object (because for him it is true the other is essentially interchangeable), that his relationship to the other object is essentially governed by something which has a relationship to castration which here takes a directly aggressive form: absence, depreciation, rejection, refusal of the sign of the desire of the Other as such, not abolition or destruction of the desire of the Other, but rejection of its signs. And it is (12) from this that there emerges and is determined this very particular impossibility which hits at the manifestation of his own desire.

Undoubtedly to show him, as the analyst to whom I alluded above insistently did, this relationship with the imaginary phallus in order, as I might say, to familiarise himself with his impasse, is something which we cannot say is not on the path to the solution of the difficulty of the obsessional. But how can we not further retain in passing this remark that after one moment, one stage of the working through of imaginary castration, the subject, this author tells us, was not at all freed from her obsessions but only of the guilt that pertained to them.

Of course, we can tell ourselves that nevertheless the question

of this method of therapy is judged by that. What does this introduce us to? To the $\hat{\phi}$ (big phi) function of the signifier phallus as signifier in the transference itself. If the question of "how the analyst himself situates himself with respect to this signifier?" is here essential it is, here and now, because it is illustrated by the forms and the impasses that a certain therapy oriented in this sense demonstrates to us. This is what I will try to tackle for you the next time.

Seminar 18 ; Wednesday 26 April 1961

I found myself on Saturday and Sunday opening for the first time for me the notes taken at different points of my seminar these last years, to see if the reference points that I gave you under the rubric of Obj ect-relations and then of Desire and its interpretation converged without too much uncertainty towards what I am trying this year to articulate before you under the term of transference. I realised that in effect in all that I put before you and which is there, it seems, somewhere in one of the presses of the Society, there are a lot of things that you might find, I think, sometime when we have the time to get it out again, which at that time will make you say to yourselves that in 1961 there was someone who taught you something.

It will not be said that in this teaching there was no allusion to the context of what we are living through at the present time. I think that there would be something excessive in that. And also in order to accompany it I will read for you a little fragment of what I encountered the same Sunday last in Dean Swift whom I had only too little time to speak to you about when already I approached the question of the symbolic function of the phallus, even though in his work the question is in a way so omnipresent that one could say that to take his work as a whole it is articulated there as such. Swift and Lewis Carroll are two authors to whom, without my having the time to give a running commentary on them, I believe that you would do well to refer to in order to find there a good deal of the material which refers very closely, as closely as possible, as closely as it is possible in literary works, to the thematic which I am closest to at the moment.

And in Gulliver's Travels which I was looking at in a charming little edition from the middle of the last century, illustrated by Grandville, I found in "A voyage to Laputa" which is the third part, which has the characteristic of not being limited to "A voyage to Laputa"... It is in Laputa, an incredible anticipation of the space station, that Gulliver takes a journey in a certain number of kingdoms in connection with which he communicates to us a certain number of significant views which preserve for us all their riches, and specifically in one of these kingdoms, when he comes there from another one, he speaks (2) to an académicien and tells him that: "...in the kingdom of

Tribnia, by the natives called Langden, where I had long sojourned, the bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of ministers and their deputies" - let us pass over this thematic; but the way in which the informers operate is explained to us - "...effectual care is taken to secure all their letters and other papers, and put the owners in chains. These papers are delivered to a set of artists very dexterous in finding out the mysterious meanings of words, syllables and letters" - it is here that there begins the point at which Swift goes at it with a joyous heart, and as you are going to see it is rather fine as regards the marrow of its substance. - "For instance, they can decipher a close-stool to signify a Privy Council,

A flock of geese a senate,
 A lame dog an invader,
 A cod's-head a -,
 The plague a standing army,
 A buzzard a prime minister,
 The gout a high priest,
 A gibbet a secretary of state,
 A chamber pot a committee of grandees,
 A sieve a court lady,
 A broom a revolution,
 A mousetrap an employment,
 A bottomless pit, the Treasury,
 A sink the Court,
 A cap and bells a favourite,
 A broken reed a court of justice.
 An empty tun a general,
 A running sore the administration.

When this method fails, they have two others more effectual, which the learned among them call acrostics and anagrams. First they can decipher all initial letters into political meanings.

Thus N. shall signify a plot.
 B. a regiment of horse,
 L. a fleet at sea.

Or secondly by transposing the letters of the alphabet in any suspected paper, they can lay open the deepest designs of a discontented party. So, for example, if I should say in a letter to a friend, Our brother Tom has just got the piles, a man of skill in this art would discover how the same letters which compose that sentence may be analysed into the following words; Resist; a plot is brought home, the tour" - all is in readiness for sedition.

I think it is not a bad way to resituate at their paradoxical foundation, so manifest in all sorts of features, contemporary things using a text which is not all that old. Because in truth, since I was woken up last night in an untimely way by someone who communicated to me something that you all have more or less seen, a false report, my sleep was for a moment disturbed

(3) by the following question: I asked myself if I were not overlooking in connection with these contemporary events the dimension of tragedy. In truth this constituted a problem for me after what I explained to you last year about tragedy. I did not see appearing anywhere in it what I described for you as the reflection of beauty.

This effectively prevented me from getting back to sleep for some time. I then fell asleep again leaving the question in suspense. This morning on awaking the question had lost a little bit of its pregnancy. It appeared that we were still on the level of farce and, as regards the questions I was posing myself, the problem vanished at the same time.

This having been said, we are going to take things up at the point at which we left them the last time, namely the formula $p\$fy(o, o', o'^1, o''')$ which I gave you as being that of the phantasy of the obsessional. It is quite clear that presented in this way and in this algebraic form, it must be quite opaque for those who have not followed our preceding elaboration. I am going to try however, in speaking about it, to restore its dimensions to it.

You know that it is opposed to that of the hysteric as I wrote for you the last time. $jfl \ Q$, namely: Jf^\wedge in the relationship which can be read in several ways, desire for, is a way of saying it, big 0. It is a question therefore for us of specifying what are the respective functions attributed in our symbolisation to $^\wedge$ (big phi) and to $\langle p$ (little phi).

I strongly urge you to make the effort not to precipitate yourselves onto analogical slopes to which it is always easy, tempting to yield and to tell yourselves for example that $\langle \Pi$ (big phi), is the symbolic phallus, Ψ (little phi), is the imaginary phallus. It is perhaps true in a certain sense, but to remain there would be completely to expose yourselves to overlooking the interest of these symbolisations which we take no pleasure, believe me, in multiplying in vain and simply for the pleasure of superficial analogies and mental facilitations, which is not properly speaking what teaching aims at. It is a question of what the two symbols represent. It is a question of knowing what they represent in our intention. And you can already foresee, estimate their importance and utility by all sorts of indices. The year for example began with a very interesting lecture by our friend M. Georges Favez who, speaking to you about what the analyst was and at the same time his function for the analysand, gave you a conclusion like the following: that when all is said and done the analyst, for the analysand, the patient, takes on the function of his fetish. Such is the formula, in a certain respect around which he had grouped all sorts of convergent facts, at which his lecture culminated.

It is certain that this was here a very subjective view and one which, moreover does not leave it completely isolated as a formulation. It was a formulation prepared by all sorts of

other things that are found in diverse articles on transference but which one cannot say is not presented in a somewhat astonishing and paradoxical form. I told him moreover that the things that we were going to articulate this year would respond in some way to the question that he had posed here.

When we read on the other hand, in a body of work which has now come to an end, an author who tried to articulate the special function of transference in obsessional neurosis, and who in short bequeaths us a body of work which, beginning from a first (4) consideration of "Therapeutic incidences of the conscious awareness of penis envy in feminine obsessional neurosis, Incidences thérapeutiques de la prise de conscience de l'envie du pénis dans la névrose obsessionnelle féminine", culminates in an action, a quite generalised theory of the function of distance from the object in the handling of transference, this function of distance quite especially elaborated around an experience which is expressed in the progress of analyses (and especially the analyses of obsessionals) as being something whose principal, active efficacious mainspring in the subject's retaking possession of the meaning of the symptom (especially when he is obsessional), of the imaginary introjection of the phallus, is very precisely incarnated in the imaginary phantasy of the analyst's phallus, I mean that there is here a question which presents itself. Already, especially in connection with the works of this author and especially, I would say, in connection with his technique, I began before you the positioning and the critique which today, in a way that is closer to the question of transference, we are going to be able to circumscribe still further.

This, it is incontestable, demands that we should enter into a quite precise articulation of what the function of the phallus is, and specifically in the transference. It is this that we are trying to articulate with the help of terms symbolised here, Φ (big phi) and ϕ (little phi). And because we well understand that it is never a question in the articulation of analytic theory of proceeding in a deductive fashion - from high to low as I might say, because there is nothing which begins more from the particular than analytic experience, something remains valid in an articulation like that of the author, to which I alluded above. It is indeed because his theory of transference, the function of the phallic image in transference begins from a quite localised experience which, one could say, may in certain aspects limit its import, but exactly in the same measure gives it its weight, it is because he began from the experience of obsessionals, and in a quite sharp and accentuated fashion, that we have to consider and discuss what he concluded from it.

It is moreover from the obsessional that we will begin today and it is for this reason that I have produced, at the beginning of what I wanted to say to you, the formula in which I try to articulate his phantasy.

I have already told you a lot of things about the obsessional, it is not a question of repeating them. It is not a question of

simply repeating the fundamentally substitutive, the perpetually avoided, this sort of Hey presto! which characterises the whole way in which the obsessional proceeds in his way of situating himself with respect to the Other, more exactly of never being at the place where for the moment he seems to designate himself.

That to which there very precisely alludes the formulating of the second term of the phantasy of the obsessional, ϕ (o, o', o'', o'''....), is the fact that objects, for him, qua objects of desire, are in a way expressed as a function of certain erotic equivalences, that which is precisely in this something that we usually articulate in speaking about the eroticisation of his (5) world, and especially his intellectual world, that to which there tends precisely this fashion of noting this expressing as a function by ϕ (small phi) which designates this something. It is enough to have recourse to an analytic observation, when it is well done by an analyst, in order to perceive that ϕ (small phi) - we will see little by little what that means - is precisely what underlies this equivalence established between objects on the erotic plane. The ϕ (small phi) is in a way the unit of measurement to which the subject accommodates the small o function, the function of the objects of his desire.

To illustrate this, I have really to do nothing other than to look at the prime observation on obsessional neurosis, but you will find it moreover in all the others provided they are valid observations. Remember this feature of the thematic of the Rattenmann, of the Ratman. Why moreover is he called the rats* man, in the plural, by Freud even though in the phantasy where Freud approaches for the first time this kind of internal view of the structure of his desire, in this sort of horror seen on his face of a jpuissance he was unaware of, there are no rats, there is only one rat in the famous Turkish torture to which I will have to return later.

If one speaks about the rats' man, it is indeed because the rat makes his way in a multiplied form into the whole economy of these singular exchanges, the substitutions, this permanent metonymy of which the symptoms of the obsessional are the incarnated example. The formula, which comes from him, "so many rats, so many florins", this in connection with the payment of fees in the analysis, is here only one of the particular illustrations of this sort of permanent equivalence of all objects grasped one after another in this sort of negotiation. This metabolism of objects in the symptoms is inscribed in a more of less latent fashion in a sort of common unit, of gold unit, of standard unit, that the rat symbolises here, holding properly speaking the place of this something that I am calling ϕ (small phi), in so far as it is a certain state, a certain level, a certain form of reducing, of degrading in a certain fashion - we will see why we can call it degradation - the function of a signifier: Φ (big phi).

It is a question of knowing what Φ (big phi) represents, namely the function of the phallus in its generality, namely in all the subjects who speak and who because of this fact have an

unconscious, in order to grasp it starting from the point of view that we are given in the symptomatology of obsessional neurosis. Here we can say that we see it emerging in these forms that I am calling degraded, emerging, you should carefully note in a fashion which we describe - in conformity with what we know and with what experience shows us in a very manifest fashion in the structure of the obsessional - as being at the conscious level. This expressing as a function of the phallus is not repressed, namely profoundly hidden, as it is in the hysteric. The $\langle D$ (ϕ), which is there in the position of expressing as a function all the objects instead of the little f of a mathematical formula, is perceptible, avowed in the symptom, conscious, really perfectly visible. Conscious, consci, that means fundamentally, originally, the possibility of complicity of the subject with himself and therefore also of a complicity with the other who observes him. The observer has almost no trouble being complicitous in it.

(6) The sign of the phallic function emerges everywhere at the level of the articulation of the symptoms. It is indeed in this connection that there can be posed the question of what Freud tries, not without difficulty, to depict for us when he articulates the function of the Verneinung. How can things be at once both said and so overlooked! Because when all is said and done, if the subject were nothing other than what is wanted by a certain psychologism which, as you know, even at the heart of our Societies always maintains its rights, if the subject were seeing the other seeing you, if it were only that, how could we say that the function of the phallus is in the position of being overlooked in the obsessional? Because it is perfectly obvious and nevertheless one can say that even in this obvious form it participates in what we call repression in the sense that, however avowed it may be, it is not, without the help of the analyst, and without the help of the Freudian register, recognised or even recognisable by the subject. It is here indeed that we put our fingers on the fact that to be a subject is something other than to be a gaze before another gaze, according to the formula which I called above psychologistic, and which goes so far as to include in its characteristics moreover the existing Sartrian theory.

To be a subject is to have one's place in the big O , at the locus of the word. And here it is to allow there to be seen this possible accident that at the level of the big O there is exercised this function which is designated by the bar in the big O , namely that there is produced this lack of the word of the Other as such at the precise moment specifically where the subject here manifests himself as the function of $\langle p$ (ϕ) with respect to the object. The subject vanishes at this precise point, does not recognise himself, and this is precisely as such through a failure to recognise that the méconnaissance is automatically produced, at this point of lack where there is found covered, unterdrückt, this function of phallicism. There is produced instead this mirage of narcissism which I would really call frenetic in the obsessional subject, this sort of alienation of phallicism which manifests itself so visibly in the

obsessional in phenomena which can be expressed, for example in what one calls difficulties of thinking in the obsessional neurotic, in a fashion that is particularly clear, articulated, avowed by the subject, experienced as such: "What I am thinking", the subject tells you, in an implicit fashion in his discourse very sufficiently articulated for the hyphen to be inserted and the addition be made in his declaration, "it is not so much because it is guilty that it is difficult for me to sustain it, to make progress in it, it is because it is absolutely necessary that what I am thinking should come from me, and never from my neighbour, from another." How often do we hear that! Not alone in the typical situations of the obsessional, in what I would call the obsessionalised relationships that we in a way produce artificially in a relationship as specific as that precisely of analytic teaching as such.

I spoke somewhere, specifically in my Rome report, about what I designated as being backed up against the wall of language. Nothing is more difficult than to bring the obsessional to the point of being backed up against the wall of his desire. Because there is something which I do not know whether it has really been highlighted and which nevertheless is a very illuminating point, I will take it up in order to illuminate the term of which you know I have already made one use, the term introduced by Jones in a fashion whose ambiguities I have marked, aphanisis, disappearance - as you know this is the meaning of the word in Greek - disappearance of desire.

People have never it seems to me highlighted this thing which is so simple, and so tangible in the stories of the obsessional, especially in his efforts when he is on a certain path of autonomous research, of self-analysis if you wish, when he situates himself somewhere on the path of his research which is (7) called the realisation of his phantasy in some form or other, it seems that people have never dwelt on the function which is quite impossible to avoid of the term aphanisis. If it is employed, it is because there is a quite natural and ordinary aphanisis which is limited by the power that the subject has of what can be called holding, holding an erection. Desire has a natural rhythm and, before even evoking the extremes of the incapacity of holding, the most disturbing forms of the brevity of the act, one can remark the following: what the subject has to deal with as an obstacle, as a reef where literally something which is profoundly fundamental about his relationship to his phantasy is shipwrecked, is properly speaking what there is when all is said and done in him about always terminating, the fact is that, as regards the erection then the collapse of desire, there is a moment when the erection vanishes.

Very exactly, precisely this moment signals that, God knows, in general he is not provided with neither more nor less than what we will call a very ordinary genitality - rather even a fairly soft one I thought I could remark - and that in a word, if it were something that was situated at this level that was in question in the avatars and the torments that the hidden mainsprings of his desire inflict on the obsessional, we would

have to bring our effort to bear elsewhere. I mean that I am always evoking as a counterpoint that which precisely is absolutely not our business, but which astonishes people - why do people not ask themselves why we do not make it our business - the perfecting of palaestras for sexual intercourse, to bring the body to life in the dimension of nudity and guts. I am not aware that apart from a few exceptions, one of which as you know well was very much reprovved, namely that of Reich, I am not aware that this is a field to which analysts have directed their attention. As regards what he is dealing with the obsessional can expect more or less this support, this handling of his desire. It is a question in short of morals in an affair where things, in analysis or not, are kept in the domain of the clandestine, and where- consequently cultural variations do not matter very much. What is in question is situated therefore quite elsewhere, is situated at the level of the discordance between this phantasy (in so far precisely as it is linked to this function of phallicism) and the act in which he aspires to incarnate it, which with respect to this always falls short, . And naturally it is on the side of the effects of the phantasy, this phantasy which is entirely phallicism, that there develop all the symptomatic consequences which are designed to lend to it, and for which precisely he includes everything that lends itself to it in this form of isolation so typical, so characteristic as a mechanism, and which had been highlighted as a mechanism at the birth of the symptom.

If therefore there is in the obsessional this fear of aphanisis that Jones underlines, it is precisely in the measure and uniquely in the measure that it is the testing, which always turns into a defeat, of this ^ (big phi) function of the phallus as we are trying for the moment to approach it. In a word, the result is that the obsessional when all is said and done dreads nothing more than that to which he imagines he aspires, the liberty of his acts and his deeds, and the natural state if I can express myself in this way. The tasks of nature are not his strong point, nor indeed anything that leaves him sole master on (8) board, if I may express myself in this way, with God, namely the extreme functions of responsibility, pure responsibility, what one has vis-a-vis this Other in whom there is inscribed what we are articulating.

And, I am mentioning it in passing, this point which I am designating is nowhere better illustrated than in the function of the analyst, and very properly at the moment when he articulates the interpretation. You see that in the course of my remarks today that I am ceaselessly inscribing, correlatively to the field of experience of the neurotic, the one that analytic action very specially uncovers for us, in so far as necessarily it is the same because this is where "you have to go at it".

At the horizon of the experience of the obsessional, there is what I would call a certain fear of being deflated which is properly speaking related to something that we could call phallic inflation in so far as in a certain fashion the function in him of the phallus $\langle \phi \rangle$ (big phi) could not be better illustrated than

by that of the fable of The frog who wanted to make himself as big as an ox: "The miserable creature," as you know, "puffed himself up until he burst." It is a moment in experience that is ceaselessly renewed in the real stumbling point to which the obsessional is brought at the limits of his desire. And it seems to me that there is a value in underlining it, not simply in the sense of accentuating a derisory phenomenology, but moreover in order to allow you to articulate what is in question yi this §(big phi) function of the phallus in so far as it is the one which is hidden behind his cashing-in at the level of the © (phi) function.

I already began to articulate the last time this ^ (big phi) function of the phallus by formulating a term which is that of the real presence. This term, I think your ear is sensitive enough for you to see that I am putting quotation marks around it. Moreover I did not introduce it by itself, and I spoke about "the insult to the real presence" so that already no one could be mistaken, and we are not at all dealing here with a neutral reality.

It would be quite strange that if this real presence fulfilled the function which is the radical one that I am trying here to make you approach, had not already been located somewhere. And naturally I think that you have already perceived its homonymy, its identity with what religious dogma (the one to which we have access, I mean from our birth, in our cultural context) calls by this name. The real presence, this couple of words in so far as it constitutes a signifier, we are habituated, in a near or distant way, to hear it being murmured for a long time into our ears in connection with the Roman Catholic and Apostolic dogma of the Eucharist.

I assure you that there is no need to search very far in order to perceive that this is really on the same level as in the phenomenology of the obsessional. I assure you that it is not my fault.... I spoke above about the work of someone who busied himself with focussing the research of the obsessional structure on the phallus, I am taking his principal article, the one whose title I gave above: "Therapeutic incidences of the conscious awareness of penis envy in feminine obsessional neurosis". I begin to read it, and naturally, from the first pages, there arise for me all the possibilities of critical commentary concerning for example specifically that: "like the masculine obsessional, the woman needs to identify herself in a regressive way to the man in order to liberate herself from the anxieties of early childhood; but while the former will base himself on this (9) identification, in order to transform the infantile love object into a genital love object, she, the woman, basing herself first of all on this same identification, tends to abandon this first object and to orientate herself towards a heterosexual fixation, as if she could proceed to a new feminine identification, this time to the person of the analyst." - And further on that - "a short time after the desire for phallic possession, and correlatively for the castration of the analyst,

is revealed, and because of this fact, the aforementioned effects of relaxation were obtained, this personality of the male analyst was assimilated to that of a benevolent mother." - Three lines further on, we again come on this famous "initial destructive drive of which the mother is the object", namely on the major coordinates of the analysis of the imaginary in the analysis at present being conducted.

I have only punctuated in passing in this thematic, simply the difficulties at the leaps that are supposed to have been overcome by this initial interpretation which in a way summarises here as an exordium everything that subsequently is supposedly going to be illustrated. But I do not need to go beyond a half page to enter into the phenomenology of what is in question and into what this author (whose first writing it was and who was a clinician) finds to tell us, to recount to us in the phantasies of his patient who is situated in this way as obsessional. And there is really nothing else before. The first thing which comes before our eyes is the following: "She pictured for herself in imagination masculine genital organs," it is specified, "without it being a question of hallucinatory phenomena". We are quite sure of it. In effect, everything that we see accustoms us in this material to know well that it is a question of something quite different to hallucinatory phenomena.... "she pictured for herself in imagination masculine genital organs, in place of the host." It is in the same observation that, further on, we borrowed the last time the sacrilegious phantasies which consist precisely, not simply in superimposing in such a clear fashion the masculine genital organs - here it is specified for us "without there being a question of hallucinatory phenomena", namely well and truly as such in a signifying form - to superimpose them for that which is also for us, in the most precise symbolic fashion, identifiable to the real presence. what it is a question of is to reduce in a way this real presence, to break it, to pulverise it in the mechanism of desire, this is what the subsequent phantasies, those that I already quoted the last time, will be enough to underline.

I am sure that you do not imagine that this observation is unique. I will quote for you among tens of others, because the experience of an analyst never goes much beyond a hundred in a domain, the following phantasy which occurred in an obsessional at a point of his experience - these attempts at incarnating desire can in their case reach an extreme erotic pitch, in the circumstances when they can encounter in the partner some deliberate or fortuitous complaisance with what is involved precisely in this thematic of the degradation of the big Other into the small other in the field of which there is situated the development of their desire. At the very moment that the subject believed he would be able to limit himself to this sort of relationship which in their case is always accompanied with all the correlatives of an extremely threatening culpability, and which can be in a way balanced by the intensity of desire, the subject fomented the following phantasy with a partner who represented for him, at least momentarily, this very satisfying complementarity: to make the sacred host play a role so that,

placed in the vagina of the woman, it found itself capping the (10) penis of the subject, his own, at the moment of penetration. You must not believe that what we have here is one of these refinements that one only finds in a specialised literature, it is really common currency in its register. This is the way it is in fantasy, especially obsessional fantasy.

So how can this not be remembered... to precipitate all of this into the register of a canalization such as that of a supposed distance from the object in so far as the object in question is supposed to be the objectivity (this indeed is what is described for us, the objectivity of the world as it is recorded by the more or less harmonious combination of spoken enumeration with common imaginary relationships, the objectivity of the form as it is specified by human dimensions) and to speak to us about the frontiers of the apprehension of the external world as threatened by a disturbance which is supposed to be that of the delimitation of the ego from what one can call the objects of common communication... how can it not be remembered that there is here something of another dimension: it is a question of situating the real presence somewhere and in a different register to that of the imaginary.

Let us say that it is in so far as I teach you to situate the place of desire with respect to the function of man qua subject who speaks, that we glimpse, we can designate, describe this fact that in man desire comes to inhabit the place of this real presence as such and to people it with its ghosts.

But then what does this $\hat{\phi}$ (big phi) mean? Am I summing it up by designating this place of the real presence in so far as it can only appear in the intervals of what the signifier covers, that from these intervals, if I may thus express myself, it is from there that the real presence threatens the whole signifying system? It is true, there is truth in that, and the obsessional shows it to you at every point in what you call the mechanisms of projection or of defence, or more precisely phenomenologically of incantation - this fashion that he has of filling in everything that may present itself as interspace in the signifier, this fashion that Freud's obsessional, the Rattenmann, has of obliging himself to count up to so many between the flash of lightning and the sound of thunder. Here there is designated in its true structure what is meant by this need to fill in the signifying interval as such, in this way there can be introduced everything that is going to dissolve the whole phantasmagoria.

Apply this key to twenty-five or thirty of the symptoms with which the Rattenmann and all the observations of obsessionals literally swarm, and you put your finger on the truth that is in question, and what is more at the same time, you situate the function of the phobic object which is nothing other than the simplest form of this filling in.

Here, what I reminded you about the other time in connection with little Hans, the universal signifier that the phobic object realises is that, and nothing else. Here it is is at an advance

post as I told you, well before one approaches the hole, the gap realised in the interval where the real presence threatens that a unique sign prevents the subject from approaching. This is why the role, the mainspring and the reason for the phobia is not, as people who have nothing but the word fear on their lips believe, a vital danger or even a narcissistic one. It is very precisely, according to certain privileged developments of the position of the subject with respect to the big Other (in the case of little Hans, to his mother) this point where what the subject dreads meeting is a certain sort of desire of a nature to make return into the previous nothingness the whole of creation the whole signifying system.

(11) But then, why the phallus, at that place and in that role? It is here that I want today to advance far enough to make you sense what I would call its suitability, not the deduction because it is the experience, the empirical discovery which assures us that it is there, something that makes us see that it is not irrational as an experience. The phallus therefore, it is experience which shows it to us, but this suitability that I want to highlight, I want to put the accent on this fact that it is properly speaking determined in so far as the phallus, as I said, in so far as experience reveals it to us is not simply the organ of copulation but is taken up into the perverse mechanism as such.

Understand carefully what I mean. What it is a question now of accentuating is that, from the point which as structural Φ presents the accents of the signifier, something, the phallus, Φ (big phi), can function as the signifier. What does that mean? What defines as signifier something of which we have just said that by hypothesis, definition and from the start, it is the signifier excluded from the signifier, therefore which cannot enter into it except by artifice, contraband and degradation and this indeed is why we never see it except in function of the imaginary ϕ (small phi). What is it then that allows us to speak about it as signifier and to isolate Φ (big phi)? It is the perverse mechanism.

If we make of the phallus the following natural schema, what is the phallus? The phallus, under the organic form of the penis, is not a universal organ in the animal kingdom. The insects have other ways of clinging onto one another and, without going that far, the relationships between fish are not phallic relationships. The phallus presents itself at the human level among others as the sign of desire, it is also its instrument, and also its presence. But I hold onto this sign to make you pause at an element of articulation essential to hold onto: is it simply through that that it is a signifier? It would be to go beyond a limit a little bit too rapidly to say that everything can be resumed in that because there are all the same other signs of desire. It must not even be believed that what we note in the phenomenology, namely the easier projection of the phallus because of its more pregnant form onto the object of desire, onto the feminine object for example, which made us articulate several times in perverse phenomenology the famous equivalence of a girl

in the simplest form, in the setting up of the phallus, in the erect form of the phallus... that is not enough, even though we might conceive of this sort of profound choice whose consequences we encounter everywhere as sufficiently motivated.

A signifier, is it simply to represent something for someone, which is the definition of the sign? It is that but not simply that, because I added something else the last time when I recalled for you the function of the signifier, which is that this signifier is not simply, as I might say, to make a sign to someone, but in the same moment of the signifying principle, of the signifying agency, to make a sign of someone. To ensure that the someone for whom the sign designates something assimilates this someone to himself, that this someone himself also becomes this signifier. And it is in this moment that I designate as such, expressly as perverse, that we put our finger on the agency of the phallus. Because, if the phallus which shows itself has as an effect to produce in the subject to whom it is shown the erection of the phallus also, this is not a (12) condition which satisfies in any way a natural exigency.

It is here that there is designated that which we call in a more or less confused fashion the homosexual agency. And it is not for nothing that at this etiological level it is always at the level of the male sex that we highlight it. It is in so far as the result, the fact is that the phallus as sign of desire manifests itself in short as object of desire, as object of attraction for desire, it is in this mainspring that there lies its signifying function because of which it is capable of operating at this level in this zone, in this sector where we ought both to identify it as signifier and understand what it is thus led to designate. It is nothing which is directly signifiable, it is what is beyond any possible signification - and specifically this real presence onto which today I wished to draw your thoughts to make of it the continuation of our articulation.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 3 May 1961

As you know, I am trying this year to put back in its place the fundamental question that is posed to us in our experience by transference by orienting our thinking towards what should be, in order to respond to this phenomenon, the position of the analyst in this affair. I am striving to highlight it at the most essential level, at the point of what I am designating before this appeal of the patient's most profound being at the moment that he comes to ask for our aid and our help, that which in order to be rigorous, correct, impartial, in order also to be as open as is indicated by the nature of the question which is posed to us: what the desire of the analyst should be. It is certainly not adequate in any way to satisfy ourselves with thinking that the analyst through his experience and his science, through the doctrine that he represents, is someone who would be in a way the modern equivalent, the authorised representative through the power of a research, of a doctrine and of a community, of what one could call the law of nature - someone who would redesignate for us anew the path of a natural harmony, accessible through the detours of a renewed experience.

If this year I began again before you from the Socratic experience, it is essentially in order to centre you, from the start, around this point through which we are interrogated qua "knowing", even the bearers of a secret, which is not the secret of everything, which is a unique secret and which nevertheless is worth more than everything one is ignorant of and that one may continue to be ignorant of. This is given from the start, from the condition, from the setting up of the analytic experience. However obscurely, those who come to find us already know, and if they do not know, they will be rapidly oriented by our experience towards this notion that the secret, that we are supposed to possess, is precisely as I say more precious than everything that one is ignorant of and that one will continue to be ignorant of, precisely because of the fact that this secret has to answer for the partiality of what one knows. Is it true, is it not true? It is not at this point that I have to settle it.

It is in this way that analytic experience proposes itself, offers itself, that it is approached. It is in this way that there can, in a certain respect, be defined what it introduces anew into the horizon of a man, the one that we are along with

our contemporaries. In the depths of each and every one among us who tries out this experience, from whatever aspect we tackle it, analysand or analyst, there is this supposition that at least at a level that is really central, more, essential for our conduct, there is this supposition - when I say supposition I can even leave it marked with a dubitative accent, it is as an attempt that the experience can be taken on, that it most usually is taken on by those who come to us - the supposition that the impasses due to our ignorance are perhaps only determined in fact because we deceive ourselves about what one can call the power relationships of our knowledge, that in short we are posing ourselves false problems. And this supposition, this hope - I would say, with what it involves in terms of optimism - is favoured by the fact - that it has become part of common consciousness that desire does not present itself with its face uncovered, that it is not even simply at the place that the secular experience of philosophy, to call it by its name, has designated in order to contain it, to exclude it in a certain fashion from the right to domineer over us.

Very far from it, desires are everywhere and at the very heart of our efforts to make ourselves master of them; very far from it, that even in combatting them we are scarcely doing anything more than satisfying them (y satisfaire) - I say there and not them because to satisfy them would still be to consider them too much as graspable, being able to say where they are - to satisfy there is said here as one says, in the opposite sense, to get out of something or not to get out of it (y couper ou de n'y pas couper), in the very measure of a fundamental plan precisely to get out of it. Well there is no getting out of it and so little indeed that it is not enough to avoid them in order not to find ourselves feeling more or less guilty about them. In any case, whatever we may be able to testify as regards our project, that which analytic experience teaches us in the first place, is that man is marked, disturbed and disturbed by anything that we can call a symptom in so far as the symptom is that, it is, with regard to these desires whose limits or whose place we cannot define, to satisfy there always in some respect and, what is more, without pleasure.

It seems that such a bitter doctrine ought to imply that the analyst is the possessor, at some level, of the strangest measure. Because, if the accent is put on such a great extension of fundamental méconnaissance (and not at all as was done up to then in a speculative form from which it might arise in a way in the question of knowing) and in a form - that I believe that I cannot do better than describe at least for the moment as it comes to me - a textual form in the sense that it is really a méconnaissance woven into the personal construction in the broadest sense, it is clear that in making this supposition the analyst ought . . . , and for many is supposed if not to have, at least to have the duty of overcoming the mainspring of this méconnaissance, to have destroyed in himself this stopping point that I designated for you as that of the Che vuoi? What do you want? There where there is supposed to come to a halt the limit of all self-knowledge.

At the very least this path of what I would call the proper good, in so far as it is the accord of self to self on the plane of the authentic, should be open to the analyst for himself and, that at least on this point of particular experience, something could be grasped about this nature, about this natural, about this something which is supposed to be sustained by its own naivete - this something about which as you know elsewhere other than in analytic experience some scepticism or other, not to say some disgust, some nihilism or other, to use the word by which the moralists of our epoch have designated it, has seized the totality of our culture as regards what one can designate as the measure of man. There is nothing further from modern, contemporary thought precisely, than this natural idea so familiar throughout so many centuries to all those who, in any way, tended to direct themselves towards a just measure of (3) conduct, to whom it did not even seem that this notion could be argued.

What is supposed about the analyst at this level should not even be limited to the field of his action, have a local import in so far as he practices, as he is here hie et nunc as they say, but be attributed to him as habitual if you give to this word its full meaning - the one which refers more to the habitus in the scholastic sense, to this integration of oneself to the consistency of act and of form in one's own life, to that which constitutes the foundation of all virtue - more than to habit in so far as it is oriented towards the simple notion of imprinting and of passivity.

Do I need to discuss this ideal before we put a cross on it. Not of course indeed that one could not evoke examples of a kind of purity of heart in the analyst. Do people think then that it is thinkable that this ideal should be required at the beginning in the analyst, could be in any way delineated and, if one bore witness to it, let us say that it is neither the usual thing, nor the reputation of the analyst. Moreover we could easily designate the reasons for our disappointment with these weak-minded formulae which escape us at every moment whenever we try to formulate in our magisterium something which reaches the value of an ethic.

It is not for pleasure, you may well believe me, that I pause at one or other formula of a supposedly analytic characterology in order to show their weaknesses, the character of blind window, of puerile opposition, when I am trying to make shine out before you recent efforts, which are always meritorious, of mapping out the ideals of our doctrine. I see indeed one or other formulation of the genital character as an end, as an identification of our goals with the pure and simple lifting of the impasses identified at the pregenital sufficient to resolve all its antinomies, but I would ask you to see what is supposed, involved in the consequences of such a display of impotence at thinking out the truth of our experience.

It is in a quite other relativity that there is situated the problem of human desire. And if we ought to be, in the

patient's search, something more than simple companions of this search, that at the very least we should never lose sight of this measure which makes of the desire of the subject essentially, as I teach it to you, the desire of the other with a big O.

Desire is such that it cannot be situated, be put in its place and at the same time be understood except in this fundamental alienation which is not simply linked to the battle of man with man, but to the relationship with language. This desire of the Other, this genitive is at once subjective and objective, desire at the place where the Other is, in order to be able to be this place, the desire of some otherness and, in order to satisfy this search for the objective (namely what is this desire this other which comes to find us), it is necessary that we should lend ourselves here to this function of the subjective, that in some way we should be able for a time to represent not at all the object as is believed - well you must admit how derisory it would be and how simplistic also that we should be it - not at all the object that the desire is aiming at but the signifier. It is at once much less but also much more to think that it is necessary for us to hold this empty place where there is summoned this signifier which can only be by cancelling out all the others, this ϕ whose position, whose central condition in our experience I am trying to show you.

Our function, our power, our duty is certain and all the (4) difficulties are resumed in this: it is necessary to know how to occupy one's place in so far as the subject ought to be able to locate in it the missing signifier. And therefore through an antinomy, through a paradox which is that of our function, it is at the very place that we are supposed to know that we are called to be and to be nothing more, nothing other than the real presence and precisely in so far as it is unconscious. At the final term, I am saying at the final term of course, at the horizon of what our function is in analysis, we are there as that, that precisely which remains silent and remains silent in that he wants-to-be. We are at the final term in our presence our own subject at the point where it vanishes, where it is barred. It is for that reason that we can occupy the same place where the subject as subject effaces himself, subordinates himself and subordinates himself to all the signifiers of his own demand, ϕ O D.

This is not produced simply at the level of regression, at the level of the signifying treasures of the unconscious, at the level of the vocabulary of the Wunsch in so far as we decipher it in the course of the analytic experience, but at the final term at the level of the phantasy. I say at the final term in so far as the phantasy is the only equivalent of the instinctual (pulsionnelle) discovery through which it may be possible for the subject to designate the place of the response... it is a question of knowing whether, in order that in the transference we should ourselves enter for the passive subject into this phantasy at the level of this supposes that in a certain fashion we should really be this ϕ , that we should be in the final term the ones who see little o, the object of the phantasy, that we should

be able in any experience whatsoever, even the experience most foreign to us, to be when all is said and done this seer, the one who can see the object of desire of the other, however distant this other may be from himself.

It is indeed because this is the way things are that you see me, throughout this teaching, interrogating, surveying all the aspects in which not only experience but tradition can be of use to us, as regards this question of what the desire of man is. And in the course of this path which we have taken together, alternate from the scientific definition - I mean in the widest sense of this term science - which has been attempted of it since Socrates, to something quite opposite (in so far as it is graspable in monuments of human memory), to its tragic experience, whether it is a question like two years ago of the journey that I made you take around the original drama of modern man, Hamlet or, like last year, this glimpse that I tried to give you of what is meant in this respect by antique tragedy.

It seemed to me because of an encounter that I had, it must be said, by chance, with one of these formulations which are neither more nor less good than those that we habitually see in our circle about what phantasy is, because of having encountered in the last Bulletin de Psychologie an articulation, which I may say once again startled me by its mediocrity, of this function of the phantasy.... But after all the author, because he is the very person who wished, at one time, to form a great number of mediocre psychoanalysts, will not I think take too much offence at this evaluation. It is indeed that which gave me again - I cannot say the courage, something more is necessary - a type of (5) rage, to go once again through one of these detours whose circuit I hope you will have the patience to follow, and to seek out whether there is not in our contemporary experience something on which there could be hung what I am trying to show you, which must always be there and I would say more than ever at the time of analytic experience which is not after all conceivable as having been simply a miracle which emerged because of some individual accident or other which might be called the Viennese petit bourgeois Freud.

Naturally of course in a whole group, there are in our epoch all the elements of this theatrical art which ought to allow us to put at its own level the drama of those with whom we have to deal, when it is a question of desire and not to be satisfied with true-life stories, the stories you hear from medical students. One can gather here in passing this theme that I cited for you above of phantasy identified with the fact, certainly a lying one moreover, because one sees it clearly in the text, this is not even a case which has been analysed. It is the story of a stall-keeper who, all of a sudden, from the day that he was told that he only had twelve months to live was freed from what is called in this text his phantasy, namely the fear of venereal diseases and who, from that moment on - as the author puts it, although one has to ask oneself where he got this vocabulary because it is difficult to imagine it on the lips of the subject who is being quoted - from that moment on the one

whose story is being told is supposed to have had his money's worth. Such is the uncriticised level, to a degree which is enough to make it more than suspect for you, to which there is brought the level of human desire and of its obstacles.

There is another thing which has decided me to make you take a tour, once again around tragedy in so far as it touches us and I am going to tell you immediately which one, because I will also tell you what chance leads me to refer to it. In truth modern tragedy, this time I mean contemporary, exists in more than one example, but it is not all that common. And if my intention is to bring you through a trilogy by Claudel, I will tell you what decided me on it.

It is a long time since I reread this trilogy, the one composed of The hostage, Hard bread, and The humiliated father, (L'otage, Le pain dur, Le pere humilié). I was led to it a few weeks ago by a chance whose accidental side I will tell you about - because after all it is amusing at least for the personal use that I make of my own criteria. And because moreover I told you in a formula, the value of formulae is that one can take them (6) literally, namely as stupidly as possible and that they ought to lead you somewhere, this is true for mine as well as for the others; what is called the operational aspect of formulae, is that and and it is just as true for mine, I do not pretend that only the others are operational. So that in reading the correspondence between Andre Gide and Paul Claudel, which between ourselves is a very powerful one, I recommend it to you, but what I am going to say to you has no relation to the object of this correspondence from which Claudel does not emerge with any greater stature, which does not prevent me here from putting Claudel in the first rank that he deserves, namely as one of the greatest poets who have existed... It happens that in this correspondence where Andre Gide plays his role as director of the Nouvelle Revue Française - I mean not only of the Revue but of the books that it edits at that epoch, at an epoch which is before 1914 - it is a question precisely of the publication of The hostage. And pay careful attention, not so much as regards the content but as regards the role and the function that I have given to it - because this indeed is the efficient cause of the fact that you are going to hear me talking for one or two sessions about this trilogy which is like no other - it is that one of the problems in question for two or three letters (and this in order to print The hostage) is that it is going to be necessary to cast a character that does not exist, not simply in the printing press of the Nouvelle Revue Française, but in any other: the U with a circumflex accent. Because never at any point of the French tongue was there need for a U with a circumflex accent. It is Paul Claudel who, by calling his heroine Sygne de Coufontaine and at the same time in virtue of his own discretionary power, with an accent on the u of Coufontaine, proposes this little difficulty to typographers for introducing the replies into a correct, readable edition of what is a play. As the names of the characters are printed in capital letters, that which at the limit would not cause a problem at the level of the lower case u, causes one at the level

of the capital.

At this sign of the missing signifier I said to myself that there must be something in the wind and that to reread The hostage would at the very least take me a good deal further.

This led me to reread a considerable part of Claudel's theatre. I was, as you might well expect, rewarded for it.

I would like to draw your attention to the following. The hostage, to begin with this play is a work of which Claudel himself, at the time he wrote it and when he was as you know an official in foreign relations, representing France in some capacity or other, let us say something like a counsellor, probably more than an attache* - anyway it does not matter he was an official of the Republic at a time when that still had a meaning - wrote to Andre Gide: it would be better all the same, given the very reactionary style - it is he who expresses himself (7) in this way - of the thing, that it should not be signed Claudel. Let us not smile at this prudence, prudence has always been considered a moral virtue. And believe me we would be wrong to think that because it is no longer in season perhaps, that we should for all that despise the last people who gave proof of it.

It is certain that to read The hostage I would say that the values which are debated there, which we would call faith values... I remind you that it deals with a sombre story which is supposed to happen at the time of the emperor Napoleon I. A lady who begins to become the tiniest little bit of an old maid, do not forget it, since the time that she has devoted herself to a heroic work which is that... let us say that it has lasted for ten years because the story is supposed to happen at the acme of Napoleonic power, that what is in question - it is naturally arranged, transformed for the needs of the drama - is the story of the constraint exercised by the Emperor on the person of the Pope. This puts us then a little more than ten years from the time when the trials of Sygne de Coufontaine began. You have already perceived, given the resonance of her name that she forms part of the ci-devants, of those who were, among other things, dispossessed of their privileges and their goods by the Revolution. And therefore since that time, Sygne de Coufontaine who remained in France, while her cousin has emigrated, has given herself over to the patient task of reassembling the elements of the Coufontaine domain. This in the text is not simply the result of a greedy tenacity, this is represented for us as consubstantial, codimensional with this pact with the land which, for the two personages, for the author also who makes them speak, is identical to the constancy, to the value of nobility itself. I would ask you to refer to the text, we will continue to speak about it. You will see the terms, which are moreover admirable, in which there is expressed this bond to the land as such, which is not simply a bond of fact, but a mystic bond, which is also the one around which is defined a whole order of allegiance which is properly speaking the feudal order, which unites in a single cluster this bond which one can call the bond of kinship with a

local bond around which there is ordered everything that defines lords and vassals, birthright, the bond of patronage. I can only indicate all these themes to you in a few words. This is not the object of our research. I think moreover that you will have plenty of it if you refer to the text.

It is in the course of this enterprise therefore, founded on the dramatic, poetic, exaltation created before us of certain values which are values ordered according to a certain form of the word, that there comes to interfere the vicissitude constituted by the fact that the emigrant, absent cousin, who moreover in the course of the preceding years had on several occasions made an appearance clandestinely to Sygne de Coufontaine, once more reappears accompanied by a personage whose identity is not (8) unveiled to us and who is none other than the Supreme Father, the Pope, whose whole presence in the drama will be defined for us as that to be taken literally as the representative on earth of the Celestial Father. It is around this fugitive, escaped person, because it is with the help of Sygne de Coufontaine that he finds himself here beyond the power of the oppressor, it is around this person that there is going to be played out the drama, because here there emerges a third personage, the one described as Baron Turelure, Toussaint Turelure, whose image is going to dominate the whole trilogy.

The whole figure of this Toussaint is delineated in a way to make us regard him with horror, as if it were not already sufficiently villainous and evil to come to torment such a charming woman, but what is more to come to blackmail her: "Mademoiselle I have desired you and have loved you for a long time but today because you have this old eternal daddy in your house, I will trap him and I will wring his neck if you do not yield to my demands..." It is not unintentionally, as you can clearly see that I connote with a touch of Punch and Judy this core of the drama. As if he were not evil enough, villainous enough, old Turelure is presented to us with all the attributes not alone of cynicism but of ugliness. It is not enough that he should be evil, he is shown to us also as lame, a bit twisted, hideous. What is more he is the one who had the head cut off all the people in the family of Sygne de Coufontaine in the good old days of ninety three, and this in the most open fashion, so that he has still to make the lady go through that. What is more he is the son of a sorcerer and of a woman who was the nurse, and then the servant of Sygne de Coufontaine who therefore, when she marries him, will marry the son of the sorcerer and of her servant.

Are you not going to say that what we have here is something which goes a little bit too far in a certain sense to touch the heart of an audience for whom these old stories have all the same taken on a rather different relief, namely that the French Revolution has all the same shown by its consequences that it is not uniquely to be judged by the measure of the martyrdom undergone by the aristocracy. It is quite clear that it is not in effect from this angle that it can in any way be received as I believe The hostage is received by an audience. I still cannot say that this audience extends very far in our nation but one

cannot say either that those who attended the production, rather late moreover in the history of this play, were uniquely composed of - I cannot say the partisans of the comte de Paris, because as everyone knows the comte de Paris is very progressive - let us say those who regret the time of the comte de Chambord. It is rather an advanced, cultivated, educated audience which before The hostage of Claudel, experiences the shock, which we can describe as tragic on this occasion, that is involved in the sequence of events. But to understand what this emotion means (namely that not only does the public go along with it, but moreover, I promise you, in reading it you will have no doubt that we are dealing here with a work which has in the tradition of theatre all the rights and all the merits assignable to the greatest thing that could be presented to you), what can be the secret of what makes us experience it through a story which is presented with this aspect of a wager pushed, I insist, to the extremes of a sort of caricature, let us go further. You must not stop here at the idea that it is a question here of what the suggestion of religious values always evokes in us, because moreover it is on this that we must now dwell.

(9) The mainspring, the major scene, the centre accentuated in the drama is that the one who is the vehicle of the request to which Sygne de Coufontaine is going to yield is not the horrible and you are going to see not only horrible personage, so important for all the rest of the trilogy, Toussaint [^]Turelure. It is her confessor, namely a sort of saint, the cure Badilon.

It is at the moment when Sygne de Coufontaine is not simply there as the one who has carried out through all sorts of difficulties her work of maintenance but who what is more, at the moment when her cousin has come to find her, has learnt at the same time from him that he has just experienced in his own life, in his person, the most bitter betrayal. He has realised after many years that the woman he loved was simply the occasion for him of being duped for many years, he himself being the only one not to know it; that she had been, in other words, the mistress of the one who in Paul Claudel's text is called the Dauphin - there never was an emigre Dauphin but this is not something that should worry us.

What is in question, is to show in their disappointment, their really tragic isolation, the major personages, Sygne de Coufontaine and her cousin. Some measles or whooping cough had swept away not simply the interesting personage of the cousin's wife, but the young children, his descendants. And he arrives there therefore, deprived by destiny of everything, deprived of everything except his steadfastness to the royal cause. And, in a dialogue which is in short the tragic point of departure of what is going to happen, Sygne and her cousin had become engaged to one another before God. Nothing, either in the present or in the future, will permit them to make this engagement take effect. But they have pledged their word to one another beyond everything that is possible and impossible. They are consecrated to one another.

When the cure Badilon comes to demand of Sygne de Coufontaine not

something indifferent but that she should consider the following, that by refusing what the evil Turelure has proposed to her already, she would find herself in short the key to this historical moment when the Father of all the faithful is to be delivered over to his enemies or not, undoubtedly the holy Badilon does not properly speaking impose any duty on her. He goes further, it is not at all to her strength that he appeals - he says and Claudel writes - but to her weakness. He shows her, open before her, the abyss of this acceptance through which she will become the agent of a sublime act of deliverance, but where, you should carefully note, everything is done to show us that in doing this she must renounce in herself something which goes much further of course than any attraction, than any possible pleasure, even any duty, but what is her very being, the pact which has always bound her to her fidelity to her own family. She must marry the exterminator of her family, [renounce] the sacred engagement that she had just made with the one whom she loves, something which carries her properly speaking, not to the limits because we know that she is a woman who would willingly, as she has shown in her past, sacrifice her life, but that which for her as for every being is worth more than her life, not simply her reasons for living but the thing in which she recognises her very being.

(10) And we find ourselves, through what I am provisionally calling this contemporary tragedy, carried properly speaking to the limits which are the ones I taught you last year to approach with Antigone to the limits of the second death, except that here it is demanded of the hero, of the heroine to go beyond them.

Because if I showed you last year what is signified by tragic destiny; if I was able to manage I believe to locate it for you in a topology that we called Sadian, namely in this place which was baptised here, I mean by my listeners, as l'entre-deux-morts; if I showed that this place is superseded by going not as people say in a sort of ritual formula beyond good and evil (which is a nice phrase for obscuring what is in question), but beyond the Beautiful properly speaking; if the second death is this limit which is designated and which is also veiled by what I called the phenomenon of beauty, the one that explodes in the text of Sophocles at the moment when Antigone having passed beyond the limit of her condemnation - not simply accepted but provoked - by Creon, the choir bursts into the song "Eros anikate machan, Eros invincible in combat..." . I remind you of these terms in order to show you that here, after twenty centuries of the Christian era, it is beyond this limit that the drama of Sygne de Coufontaine carries us. There where the antique heroine is identical to her destiny, Ate, to this law for her divine law which carries her towards the test, it is against her will, against everything that determines her, not simply in her life but in her being, that the other heroine by an act of liberty must go against everything that belongs to her being even down to its most intimate roots.

Life is left far behind here because, you must not forget, there is something different, which is accentuated by the dramatist in

all its force: it is that given what she is (her faith-relationship with human things), accepting to marry Turelure could not simply be to yield to a constraint. Marriage, even the most execrable one, is an indissoluble marriage, which again is not nothing... involves adhering to the duty of marriage in so far as it is the duty of love. When I say, life is left far behind, we will have the proof of this at the point of the denouement to which the play leads us. Things consist in the following, Sygne therefore has yielded, she has become the baronne de Turelure. It is on the day of the birth of the little Turelure - whose destiny as you will see will occupy us the next time - that there is going to occur the vicissitude, the acme and the end of the drama. It is in occupied Paris that the baron Turelure who has come here to occupy the centre, to be the historic figure of this whole great Punch and Judy show of the Maréchaux whose faithful and unfaithful oscillations around the great disaster we know about from history, it is that day that Turelure must on certain conditions give the keys of the great city to King Louis XVIII.

The one who is the ambassador for this negotiation will be, as you might expect, as is necessary for the beauty of the drama, none other than Sygne's cousin in person. Naturally, all the most odious things that could be in the circumstances of the encounter do not fail to be added to it. Namely that among the conditions for example that Turelure puts on his good and profitable betrayal - the thing is not presented to us in any other way - there will be in particular that the prerogatives of Coufontaine, I mean the shadow of things but also what is (11) essential to it, namely the name de Coufontaine will pass to the descendants of this improper alliance.

Things of course having been brought to this degree, you will not be at all astonished that they end with a little assassination attempt with a pistol. Namely that once the conditions have been accepted the cousin (who himself moreover is far from being without beauty) prepares himself and decides to finish off, as they say, the aforementioned Turelure; who of course, having all the traits of trickery and malignity, has foreseen this and also has a little revolver in his pocket; in the time it takes the clock to strike three times, the two revolvers go off, and it is naturally not the villain who is left for dead. But the essential is that Sygne de Coufontaine throws herself in front of the bullet which is going to strike her husband and that she is going to die, in the moments that follow, through in short preventing his death.

Suicide, we would say, and not without justification, because moreover everything in her attitude shows us that she has drunk the chalice without finding in it anything other than it is, absolute dereliction, the abandonment experienced by divine powers, the determination to push to the end that which, to this degree, scarcely deserves any more the name of sacrifice. In short, in the last scene, before the gesture in which she is killed, she is presented to us as agitated by a facial tic and, in a way, showing in this way the intention of the poet to show

us that this term, that last year I designated for you as respected by Sade himself (that beauty is insensible to outrage), here finds itself in a way superseded, and that this grimace of life which suffers is in a way more of an attack on the status of beauty than the grimace of death and the protruding tongue that we can evoke on the face of the hanged Antigone when Hemon discovers her.

So what happens right at the end? On what does the poet leave us in suspense as the end of this tragedy? There are two endings and this is what I would ask you to retain.

One of these endings consists in- the entrance of the King. A clownish entrance where Toussaint Turelure naturally receives the just recompense for his services and where the restored order takes on the aspects of this sort of caricatural affair, all too easy to make acceptable to the French public after what history has taught us about the effects of the Restoration. In short a sort of really derisory holy picture, which moreover does not leave us in any doubt on the judgement the poet makes with respect to any return of what can be called the Ancien Regime....

The interest lies precisely in the second ending, which is, linked by an intimate equivalence to what the poet is capable of leaving us in this image, the death of Sygne de Coufontaine, not that of course it is evaded in the first ending.

Just before the figure of the King, it is Badilon who reappears to exhort Sygne, and is not able up to the end to obtain from her anything but a "no", an absolute refusal of peace, of abandonment, of the offering of herself to God who is going to receive her soul. All the exhortations of the saint, himself torn apart by the final consequences of what he was the craftsman of, fail before the final negation of one who cannot find, from any angle, anything whatsoever which reconciles her with a fatality which I would ask you to notice goes beyond everything that one can call ananke in antique tragedy, what Mr. Ricoeur, whom I noticed was studying the same things as I in Antigone more or less at the same time, calls the function of the evil god. The evil god of antique tragedy is still something which is linked to man through the intermediary of ananke, of this named, (12) articulated aberration of which it is the orderer, which is linked to something, to this Ate of the other as Antigone says properly speaking, and as Creon says in Sophocles tragedy even though neither one or other of them came to the seminar. This Ate of the other has a meaning in which the destiny of Antigone is inscribed.

Here we are beyond all meaning. The sacrifice of Sygne de Coufontaine only culminates in an absolute mockery of her goals. The old man whom it was a question of snatching from the claws of Turelure, will only be pictured for us up to the end of the trilogy, even though he is the Supreme Father of the faithful, as an impotent father who, faced with the ideals that are coming to the fore, has nothing to offer them except the empty repetition of traditional words without their force. The so-called

restored legitimacy is nothing but a lure, a fiction, a caricature and, in reality, a prolongation of the subverted order.

What the poet adds to this in the second ending is this twist in which there intersects again as one might say his challenge of having Sygne de Coufontaine exhorted with the very words of her coat of arms, her motto, which is for her the meaning of her life: Coufontaine Adsum, Cofifontaine here I am, by Turelure himself who, before his wife who is unable to speak or is refusing to speak, tries at least to obtain some sign or other, even if it were only her consent to the arrival of the new being, of recognition of the fact that the gesture she had made was to protect him, Turelure. To all of this the martyr makes no reply, until she dies, except a "no".

What does it mean for the poet to have brought us to this extreme of the default, of the mockery of the signifier itself as such? What does it mean that such a thing should be presented to us? Because it seems to me that I have sufficiently brought you through the degrees of what I would call this enormity. You will tell me that we have thick skins, namely that after all you are sufficiently confronted with all sorts of things not to be surprised by anything, but all the same..... I know that there is something in common between the measure of Claudel's poetry and that of the Surrealists [but] what we cannot doubt in any case is that Claudel, at least, imagined that he knew what he was writing. In any case it is written, such a thing was able to be born of human imagination. For us, the listeners, we know well that if it were only a question here of representing for us in a picturesque way a thematic which moreover our ears have been deafened with about the sentimental conflicts of XIXth century France.... We know well that it is something else that is in question, that this is not what touches us, grips us, leaves us in suspense, attaches us, projects us on from The hostage to the subsequent sequence of the trilogy. There is something else in this image before which words fail us. What is presented to us here according to the formula that I gave you last year di eleou kai phobou to employ Aristotle's terms, namely, not "by terror and by pity" but through all the terror and all the pity that have been superseded puts us here further on again. It is an image of a desire with regard to which again only the Sadian reference seems to have validity.

This substitution of the image of the woman for the Christian sign of the cross, does it not seem to you that it is not simply designated there - you will see it, in the most express fashion in the text because the image of the crucifix is on the horizon from the beginning of the play and we will rediscover it in the following play - but again are you not struck by the coincidence of this theme qua properly erotic with what is here specifically (and without there being something else, another thread) another reference point which allows us to transfix the whole plot and the whole scenario, that of the superseding, of the breach made beyond any value of the faith. This play in appearance by a believer and from which the believers - and the most eminent of

them, Bernanos himself - turn away as if from a blasphemy, is it not for us the index of a new meaning to be given to the human tragedy? This is what the next time with the two other terms of the trilogy, I will try to show you.

Seminar 20; Wednesday 10 May 1961

Please excuse me if, in this place which is open to all, I ask those who are united by the same friendship to direct their thoughts for a moment towards a man who was their friend, my friend, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who was taken away from us last Wednesday, the evening of my last seminar, in an instant, and whose death I heard about a few hours after this instant. It went straight to my heart. Maurice Merleau-Ponty followed his path, pursued his research which was not the same as mine. We began from different points, we had different aims and I would even say that from quite opposite aims that we both found ourselves in a position to teach. He always wished and desired - and I can say indeed that it was despite me - that I should occupy this chair. I can also say that we did not have enough time, because of this mortal fatality, to bring closer together our formulae and our enunciations. His position, with respect to what I am teaching you was one of sympathy. And I believe after the past eight days, when, you may believe me, the effect of this profound mourning that I experienced about it made me question myself about the level at which I can occupy this place, and in such a way that I can put myself in question before myself, at least, it seemed to me that from him, by his response, by his attitude, by his friendly remarks every time he came here, I draw this aid, this comfort that I believe that we had in common this idea about teaching which eliminates as far as possible every principle of infatuation, and in a word, all pedantry.

You will excuse me therefore also if today what I was going to tell you and with which I had counted on finishing this detour the reasons for which I gave you the last time, this detour through a contemporary tragedy by Claudel, you will excuse me therefore if today I do not push things further than I manage to push them. In effect, you will forgive me by reason of the fact that I had of course to forego the preparation that I usually devote to you.

We had left things, the last time, at the end of The hostage and at the emergence of an image: the image of Sygne de Cofifontaine who says "No". Having said this, this "no" at the very place to which a tragedy, that I would provisionally call a "Christian tragedy", pushes its heroine... one needs to dwell on each of these words.

I spoke to you enough about tragedy for you to know that for Hegel when he situated it in the Phenomenology of the spirit, it may be thought that these words of Christian tragedy are in a way (2) linked to reconciliation, the Versöhnung that the redemption implies being in the eyes of Hegel that which at the same time resolves the conflict of tragedy or the fundamental impasse of Greek tragedy and, in consequence, does not allow it to establish it on its proper plane, at the very most it establishes the level of what one can call a "divine comedy", the one in which the threads are in the final analysis all held by the One in whom all Good, even though it is beyond our knowledge, is reconciled. No doubt, experience goes against this noetic grasp where no doubt the Hegelian perspective fails through a certain partiality, because moreover there is reborn afterwards this human voice, that of Kierkegaard, "which comes to contradict it.

And moreover the testimony of Shakespeare's Hamlet, on which as you know we dwelt for a long time two years ago, is there to show us something else, another dimension which subsists which, at the very least, does not allow us to say that the Christian era brings to an end the dimension of tragedy. Is Hamlet a tragedy? Certainly. I think I showed you that. Is it a Christian tragedy? It is here indeed that Hegel's interrogation would catch up with us again because, in truth, as you know, in this Hamlet there does not appear the slightest trace of a reconciliation. Despite the presence on the horizon of the dogma of Christian faith, there is not in Hamlet, at any moment a recourse to the mediation of any redemption whatsoever. The sacrifice of the son in Hamlet remains pure tragedy. Nevertheless, we can absolutely not eliminate something which is no less present in this strange tragedy, what I called above the dimension of the dogma of Christian faith, namely that the father, the ghost, the one who beyond death reveals to the son both the fact that he had been killed and how and by whom, is a damned father. Strange, I have said of this tragedy all of whose resources I undoubtedly did not exhaust in my commentary before you, strange therefore this further contradiction on which we did not dwell, which is that it is not put in doubt that it is the flames of hell, of eternal damnation, that the father bears witness to. Nevertheless, it is as a sceptic, as a pupil of Montaigne, it has been said that this Hamlet questions himself: "To be or not to be, to sleep, perchance to dream", does the beyond of life deliver us from this cursed life, from this ocean of humiliation and of servitude which is life?

And moreover, we cannot avoid outlining the progression which is established of this range which, from antique tragedy to Claudelian drama, could be formulated in this way: at the level of the Oedipus complex, the father already killed without the hero even knowing it, "he did not know" not alone that it was through him that the father had died but even that he was dead and nevertheless the basis, the texture of the tragedy implies that he already is, at the level of Hamlet, this damned father, what can that mean for us beyond the phantasy of eternal damnation? Is this damnation not linked for us, to the emergence of the fact that here the father begins to know?

Undoubtedly he does not know the whole scope, but he knows more about it than is believed, he knows in any case who killed him and how he died. I left open for you in my commentary this mystery left gaping by Shakespeare, by the dramatist, of what is signified by this orchard in which death surprised him, the text (3) tells us "in the blossom of my sin" and this other enigma that it was through the ear that the poison was poured into him. What enters through the ear if not a word and what is, behind this word, this mystery of sensual pleasure?

Does not, responding to the strange iniquity of maternal jpuissance, some hubris respond here, which betrays the form that to the eyes of Hamlet the ideal of the father has, this father in connection with whom, in Hamlet, 'nothing is said except that he was what we could call the ideal of the knight of Courtly Love - this man who carpeted with flowers the path the queen would walk on, this man who would not allow, the text tells us, "the winds to visit her face too roughly." Such is the strange dimension in which there rests, and uniquely for Hamlet, the eminent dignity, the ever-boiling source of indignation in the heart of Hamlet. On the one hand, nowhere is he evoked as king, nowhere is he discussed, one could say, as authority. The father is there a sort of ideal of man and this deserves no less to remain a question for us, because at each of these stages we can only hope for the truth from a further revelation. And moreover - in the light of what appears, to us analysts, natural to project through the story as the question repeated from age to age about the father - you should pause for a moment to observe the degree to which, before us, this function of the father was never questioned in a way at its core.

The very figure of the father of antiquity, in so far as we have invoked him in our imagery, is the figure of a king. The figure of the divine father poses, throughout all the biblical texts, the question of a whole research: at what point does the god of the Jews become a father, at what point in history, at what point in the prophetic elaboration? All these things stir up such profound thematic, historical, exegetical questions that to evoke them here is not even to pose them. It is simply to remark that it was necessary that at some moment the theme of the problem of the father, of the "What is a father?" of Freud, must have been singularly narrowed for it to have taken on for us the obscure form of the not simply mortal but murderous knot, in which it is fixed for us under the form of the Oedipus complex. God, Creator, Providence, this is not what is involved for us in the question of the father, even though all these harmonics form the basis for it. If they form the basis of it, what we have questioned is whether this basis, through what we have articulated, is going to be illuminated retrospectively..

Henceforth is it not opportune, necessary, whatever may be our tastes, our preferences and what the work of Claudel may represent for each of us, is it not imposed on us to ask ourselves what the thematic of the father may be in a tragedy, when it is a tragedy which has appeared at the epoch when, because of Freud, the question of the father has profoundly

changed?

And moreover we cannot believe that it is by chance that in Claudel's tragedy there is question only of the father. The last part of this trilogy is called The humiliated father (Le pere humilie), completing our series, a little while ago the father already killed, the father in the damnation of his death (4) ... the humiliated father, what does that mean, what does Claudel mean by the term humiliated father? And first of all the question could be posed in Claudel's thematic: where is this humiliated father? "Find the humiliated father", as they say on postcard riddles "find the robber" or indeed the policeman. Who is the humiliated father? Is it the Pope in so far as, even though he remains Pius, there are two of them in the play, in the space of the trilogy. The first, a fugitive, even less than a fugitive, kidnapped, to the point that here also with the ambiguity bearing always on the terms of the titles one can ask oneself if he is not The hostage, and then the Pius at the end, of the third drama, the Pius who goes to confession, an extremely touching scene and well made to exploit the whole thematic of a properly Christian and Catholic feeling, that of the Servant of the servants, the one who makes himself smaller than the smallest, in short this scene which you can read in the The humiliated father, where he goes to confession to a little monk who himself is only a goose-herd or a pig-herd it does not matter and, of course, carries within himself the ministry of the most profound and the most simple wisdom.

Let us not dwell too much on these beautiful images where it seems Claudel conforms rather to what is infinitely more exploited in an English dandyism in which catholicity and Catholicism are for the English authors, from a certain date which goes back almost two hundred years now, the acme of distinction. The problem is quite elsewhere. The humiliated father, I do not believe that it is this Pope, there are many other fathers, there is nothing but that in question throughout these three dramas. And moreover, the father one sees most of, the father in a stature which verges on a sort of obscenity, the father of a properly speaking impudent stature, the father in connection with whom we cannot avoid noting precisely some echoes of the gorilla-like form where the myth of Freud makes him appear to us right at the horizon, the father is indeed here, Toussaint Turelure, whose drama and whose murder will constitute not simply the pivot but the object, properly speaking, of the central play Hard bread (Le pain dur).

Is the humiliation of the father which is shown to us in this figure which is not simply impulsive or simply depreciated - I will come back to it and show it to you - which will go to the most extreme form of derision, a derision which even verges on the abject? Is this what we can expect from an author professing to be Catholic and to be reviving, reincarnating before us traditional values? Is it not even strange that more scandal was not aroused by a play which, when it comes out all by itself three or four years after The Hostage, pretends to hold, to captivate our attention by this episode in which I found a

sort of sordidness with Balzacian echoes only emerges from an extreme, from a paroxysm, from a breaking through here also of every limit?

I do not know whether I should ask those who have not read Hard bread since the last time to raise their hands. I think that it is not enough for me to put you on a trail for you to rush onto it right away. I believe myself to be obliged, briefly, to summarise, to remind you of what is in question.

Hard bread opens with the dialogue of two women. More than twenty years have certainly passed since the death of Sygne, on the day of the baptism of the son that she gave to Toussaint Turelure. The man, who was already not very fresh at that time, has become a rather sinister old man. We do not see him, he is hidden in the wings but what we see are two women, one of whom, (5) Sichel, had been his mistress and the other Lumir, his son's mistress. The latter has come back from a land which has since taken on a certain current interest, Algeria, where she has left Louis de Coufontaine - because of course he is called Louis, in honour of the restored sovereign.

Let me not lose the opportunity of slipping in here for you a little amusing story, a little remark which it may be that someone here has already made. The origin of the word Louis, is Ludovicus, Ludovic, Lodovic, Clodovic of the Merovingians and it is nothing other - when it is written one sees it better - than Clovis with the C removed, which makes of Clovis the first Louis. One could ask oneself if everything would not have been changed if Louis XIV had known that he was Louis XV! Perhaps his reign would have changed style, and indefinitely.... anyway, with this little amusing story which is meant to cheer you up, let us pass on.

Louis de Coufontaine is still, at least people believe, on Algerian soil, and the woman who comes back to the house of Toussaint, his father, comes to reclaim from him some money that had been lent by her. It is this story which gave such great entertainment to two authors of books of celebrated parodies; parodying Claudel, it is this scene of claiming back from the old Toussaint which served as the theme for the celebrated A la manière de... It is in this connection that a commentary is given for the generations that follow of the famous reply well worthy, truer than Claudel himself, imputed to the parodied personage when he is asked to hand back this sum which he is supposed to have robbed from an unfortunate woman: Il n'y a pas des petites économies. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves". The savings (économies) in question, are not at all the savings of the girl who has come to demand them back from Toussaint Turelure, they are nothing less than the fruit of the sacrifices of Polish emigrants.

The sum of ten thousand francs (it is even more than ten thousand francs) which was loaned by the young woman - regarding whom you are going to see in what follows the role and the function it is appropriate to give her - is what is the object of her request.

Lumir comes to claim back from the old Toussaint, not that it was to the old Toussaint that she had made the renunciation of it or the loan but to his son - the son is now insolvent not alone for these ten thousand francs but for another ten thousand. It is a question of obtaining from the father the sum of twenty thousand of these francs in the middle of the last century, namely at a time when a franc was a franc, believe me, and it was not earned in a second.

The young woman who is there encounters another one, Sichel. Sichel is the titular mistress of old Toussaint and the titular mistress of old Toussaint is someone rather thorny. It is a position which presents some coarseness, but the person who occupies it is up to it. In short, what is in question very quickly between these two women, is how to have the old man's skin. If it were not a question, before having his skin, of having something else, it seems that the question would be resolved still more quickly. Which means in short that the style is absolutely not that of tenderness, nor of the highest idealism. These two women, each one in her own way as you will see, I will come back to it, might easily be qualified as "ideals"; for us, spectators, they do not fail to depict one of the singular forms of seduction.

(6) It is necessary that I indicate to you everything that is woven in terms of calculations and of extreme calculations into the position of these two women, in the face of avarice, "this avarice which is only equalled by his licentiousness, the which is only exceeded by his dishonesty", as the aforementioned Sichel expresses herself textually speaking about Turelure. The Polish woman Lumir - pronounce it Loumyir as Claudel explicitly tells us her name is to be pronounced - is ready to go, to reconquer what she considers as a good, as a sacred law for which she is responsible, which she has alienated but which she must absolutely restore to those to whom she feels a faithful and unique allegiance (all the emigrants, all the martyrs, even the dead of this extremely passionate, emotional, thrilling cause which is the cause of Poland divided, of Poland parcelled out)... the young woman is determined to go as far as one can go, to the extent of offering herself, to the extent of yielding to what she knows to be the desire of old Turelure. Old Turelure, [she] knows in advance what can be expected of him, it is enough that a woman should be his son's wife for it to be already sure that she is not, far from it, for him, a forbidden object.

We rediscover again another trait which only very recently has been introduced into what I could call the common thematic of certain functions of the father. The other, the partner in the dialogue, Sichel - I named her above - a smart lady, knows well the components of the situation. Moreover here we have a novelty, I mean something which, in the operation of this singular game which we call the Oedipus complex, is added in Claudel. Sichel is not the mother, you should notice. The mother is dead, outside the game, and no doubt this arrangement of Claudel's drama is here something perhaps in the nature of a

favour, to bring out the elements liable to interest us in this frame, in this topology, in this fundamental theatrical art, in so far as something common at the same epoch links it from one creator to another: a reflective thinking to a creative thinking. She is not the mother, she is not even the wife of the father, she is the object of a tyrannical, ambiguous desire. It is sufficiently underlined by Sichel that if there is something which attached the father to her, it is something which is a desire quite close to the desire to destroy her, because moreover he has made of her his slave and he is capable of speaking of the attachment that he bears her as having taken its origin in some charm that emerged from her talent as a pianist and from a little finger which played so well the notes of the keyboard. This piano, moreover, she has been no longer able to open since she started keeping old Toussaint's accounts.

This Sichel has therefore her own idea. This idea, we will see it flowering in the form of the sudden arrival of the aforementioned Louis de Coufontaine at the point when the drama comes to a head. Because this arrival is not without provoking a real upset, a real weakening of abject fear in the old father: "Is he really coming?" he suddenly cries, forgetting the beautiful language which a minute before, he had been using to describe the poetic sentiments that united him to Sichel, to the young woman of whom I have just spoken, "Is he really coming?" He does indeed come, and he comes because of a behind-the-scenes operation, summoned by a little warning letter from the aforementioned Sichel.

He comes to the centre and the play will culminate in a sort of singular four-sided game, as one might say, if there were not added to it the character of Sichel's father, the old Ali Habenichts (nicht, habenicht having nothing, is a play on words), (7) the old usurer who is a sort of double of Toussaint Turelure, who is the one through whom he negotiates this complicated operation which consists in taking back piece by piece and bit by bit from his own son, the goods of Coufontaine which Louis had made the mistake of claiming from him on stamped paper as an inheritance, when he reached his majority. You see how everything ends up. It is not for nothing that I evoked the Balzacien thematic. The circulation, the metabolism, the conflict on the plane of money well reduplicates affective rivalry. Old Turelure sees in his son this something precisely to which the Freudian experience has drawn our attention, this other himself, this repetition of himself, this reborn figure of himself, in whom he can only see a rival. And when his son tenderly tries at a moment to say to him: "Am I not a true Turelure?" he roughly replies to him: "Yes no doubt, but there is already one, and that's enough. As regards Turelure I am well able to fill his role".

Another thematic where we can recognise this something introduced by the Freudian discovery. Moreover this is not all, and I will say what comes to a head after a dialogue where it was necessary for Lumir, the mistress of Louis de Coufontaine, to straighten him out by all sorts of whiplash insults directly

addressed to his self-love, to his narcissistic virility as we would say, to unveil before the son the propositions that she was object of on the part of the father, of this father who by his plots, wants to push him to this term of bankruptcy that he finds himself reduced to when the drama begins and who is not only going to steal away from him his land that he is going to buy cheaply thanks to his usurious intermediaries but moreover is going to ravish his wife from him, in short, to arm Louis de Coufontaine's hand against his father. And we witness on the stage this murder so well prepared by the urgings of the woman herself, who finds herself here not alone the temptress but the one who plots, who constructs the whole artifice of the crime around which there is going to occur the advent of Louis de Coufontaine himself to the function of father.

And this murder that we see unfolding on the stage, the other stage of the murder of the father, we are going to see it taking place in the following fashion in which the two women are found in short to have collaborated. Because as Lumir says somewhere, "It is Sichel who gave me this idea". And in effect, it is during their first conversation that Sichel gives rise in the imagination of Lumir to this dimension, namely that the old man who is here animated by a desire which, for the personage that Claudel puts before us of this father who is jeered at - as I might say of this father - who is made game of; this father who is made game of in a sense which is the fundamental theme of classical comedy, but here you must understand making game of which goes further again than the lure and derision, he is made game of, as one might say, with dice, he is made game of because he is when all is said and done a passive element in the game. As is expressly evoked in this text in connection with the replies which end the dialogue of the two women, having fundamentally and mutually opened their thinking to one another, one says to the other: "Each one of us is now playing her game against death". It is precisely at this moment that Toussaint Turelure re-enters: "What were you talking about? - We were (8) talking about the game of whist last evening, the game where we were discussing strong and weak hands." And at this old Toussaint, who moreover is unaware of what is in question replies, with this very French elegance which is all the same alluded to ("He is a real French man" Sichel had said to Lumir, "oh! he is incapable of refusing a woman anything, he is an authentic French man, except for money, as regards money forget it!") by making some jests about what he was left with in this game, namely naturally the honours.

This image of the four-handed game, in another sense, which is that of whist, the one to which I alluded on several occasions myself to designate the structure of the analytic position, is it not striking to see it reemerging? The father, before the scene of the drama happens, is already dead, or almost. You only need to puff on him. And it is indeed in effect what we are going to see after a dialogue in which the codimensionality of the tragic and the clownish would make it worth our while for us to read it together. For, in truth, it is a scene which deserves to be retained in universal literature as after all rather unique in

this genre, and the vicissitudes also would merit our dwelling on them, if all we had to do here was literary analysis, unfortunately I have to go a bit more quickly than I would wish if I were to make you savour all these detours.

In any case, it is really beautiful to see one of these detours. The son adjures the father to give him this famous twenty thousand francs which he knows (and with good reason because he worked out the whole affair a long time ago through the intermediary of Sichel) he has in his pocket, that they give him a hump, to leave them to him, to give them over to him in order to permit him in short, not only to honour his engagements, not simply to reconstitute a sacred debt: [he envisages] not only losing what he the son possesses, but seeing himself reduced to being no more than a slave on the very land to which he had committed all his passion. Because this land near Algiers that is in question, it is there that Louis de Coufontaine had gone to seek the shoot - in the sense of something which has sprung up again and which sprouts again - of the offspring of his being, the shoot of his solitude, of this dereliction in which he has always experienced himself, he who knows that his mother never wanted him, that his father had never, he says, seen him grow up except with uneasiness; it is to the passion for a land, it is by returning towards this something from which he finds himself hunted from any recourse to nature, this is what is in question.

And in truth, there is here a theme which would be well worth looking at again in the very historical genesis of what is called colonialism. It takes its root in an emigration which not only opened up colonised countries but also virgin lands; the source provided by all these lost children of Christian culture is indeed something which would be worth isolating as an ethical principle which one would be wrong to neglect at the moment when one is measuring its consequences.

It is at the moment therefore that this Louis sees himself at the point when this trial of strength between his father and himself (9) that he draws his pistols, the pistols with which he has been armed, and he had been armed with them by Lumir. There are two pistols. I would also ask you to dwell for a moment on this refinement. It is the artifice of dramatic art properly speaking, it is the cleverness of this refinement thanks to which that with which he has been armed are two pistols. Two pistols, I will tell you right away, which will not go off even though they are loaded.

It is the contrary of what happens in a celebrated passage by the sapper Camember. A letter from the general is given to Private Pidou. "Look," he says, "this letter is not loaded...." It is not that the general does not have the means, but it is not loaded, well "that will not prevent it from going off all the same!" Here it is the contrary. Despite the fact that they are both loaded with care by Lumir, these pistols do not go off. That does not prevent the father from dying, he dies of fright, the poor man, and it is indeed what was always expected, because moreover it is expressly for this reason that Lumir had entrusted

to the hero, Louis de Coufontaine, one of the pistols, the little one, saying to him: "This one is loaded but with a blank, it will only make a noise and it is possible that this will be enough to kill this fellow; if it is not enough then, you can use the big one which has a bullet in it".

Louis had learnt his lessons on the soil of a land which one reclaims but also which one does not acquire - this is very well indicated in the text - without some manoeuvres involving rather crude dispossession and undoubtedly, for the second shot, there is no need to fear that the hand of the one pulling the trigger will tremble any more than the first one. As Louis de Coufontaine will say later he does not like postponements. It is not with a light heart that he will go that far, "but because one is in the middle of it", he says, the two pistols will be drawn at the same time. Now, as I told you, whether one or both are loaded or not neither of them goes off. There is only a noise but this noise is enough as the indication of the scenario in the text describes very nicely: the old man stops with eyes popping out of his head, his jaw sunken. It is very pretty. We spoke about some kind of grimace of life the last time, here the grimace of death is not elegant and, my goodness, the business is finished.

I told you, and you see it, that all the refinements, as regards the imaginary dimension of the father, are here very well articulated in this sense that even in the order of efficaciousness the imaginary is enough. It is demonstrated to us by the image. But in order that things should be still more beautiful, the aforementioned Lumir reenters at that very moment.

Naturally the lad is not completely calm. There is absolutely no doubt that he is indeed a parricide, because first of all he had really wanted to kill his father and because, in fact, he has done it. The terms and the style of the concluding remarks which are exchanged at this level are worth dwelling on - I would ask you to refer to them - they do not lack a certain crudeness, a great pungency. I was able to observe that to certain ears and not the least, and who are not without merit, Hard bread, like The hostage may appear to be a little boring as plays. I (10) admit that for my part I do not find all these detours at all boring. It is rather sombre, which upsets us, the fact is that this sombreness operates exactly at the same time as a sort of comicality whose quality it must be said may appear a little bit too acid for us. But nevertheless these are no small merits. The only question is all the same where he intends to lead us. What thrills us in all of that? I am quite sure after all that this kind of Punch and Judy demolition of a father slaughtered in a clownish style is not something which is of a nature to give rise in us to feelings which are clearly localised, localisable.

What is rather nice all the same, is to see what this little scene ends on, namely that Louis de Coufontaine says stop, halt. Once the act has been done, while the girl steals the wallet from the father's pocket: "One minute, a detail, allow me to verify

something". He reverses the little pistol, he fiddles inside it with things that were used at that time to load these weapons and he sees that the little pistol was also loaded, which he points out to the delightful person who had armed him. She looks at him and she has no other response than a gentle little laugh.

Is this also not of a nature to give rise to some problems for us? What does the poet mean? We will learn it undoubtedly in the third act when we see being admitted the true nature of this Lumir whom we have only seen here after all in traits that were neither sombre nor fanatical. We will see what is the nature of the desire of this Lumir. That this desire can go for her (who considers herself as destined and in a fashion that is certain) as far as the supreme-sacrifice (to be hanged which is the way she will certainly end up and which the remainder of the story indicates us as the way which she in effect ends up) does not exclude that her passion for her lover, the one who is really for her her lover, Louis de Coufontaine, goes as far as to wish for him a tragic ending, for example on the scaffold.

This thematic of love linked to death and, properly speaking, of the sacrificed lover, is something which, at the horizon of the story of de La Mole, of the decapitated de La Mole whose wife is supposed to have collected his head and that of Julien Sorel whose remains a Mademoiselle de La Mole this one imaginary is also going to rejoin, is there to illuminate for us in a literary way this thematic.

The extreme nature of the desire of Lumir is indeed what should be remembered here. It is on the path of this desire, of this love which aims at nothing other than to consume itself in an extreme instant, it is towards this horizon that Lumir summons Louis de Coufontaine.

And Louis de Coufontaine, a parricide in so far as he has entered into his inheritance by murdering his father, in a different dimension to the one he had known up to then, is going to become henceforth another Turelure, another sinister personage whose (11) caricature Claudel will not spare us either in what follows - and notice carefully that he becomes an ambassador. You would be wrong to believe that all these reflections are lavishly dispensed by Claudel without one being able to say that he is involved at his own foundations in some ambivalence. Louis refuses therefore to follow Lumir and it is because he does not follow Lumir that he will marry his father's mistress, Sichel.

I will not tell you the end of the play. It is namely how there takes place this sort of resumption, of transmutation which makes him not alone put on the dead man's shoes, but also go into the same bed as him. It is a matter of sombre stories of acknowledging debts, of a whole trafficking, of a whole insurance that the father, always astute, had made or taken before his death to ensure that those who would bind themselves to him, and specifically if it were Lumir, would not have too much of an interest in his death. He arranged things in order that his wealth might appear to be owed, to be written in the book of

debts of his obscure associate, Ali Habenichts. It is in the measure that Sichel will restore this debt to him that she will acquire for him this really abnegatory title. He abnegates (as Paul Valéry said) his title by marrying her. And it is on this that the play ends: the engagement of Louis de Coufontaine and of Sichel Habenichts, the daughter of his father's companion in usury.

One can question oneself still more after this ending, about what the poet means - and specifically at the point that he himself and his own thinking are involved - when he forges for us what can well be called, properly speaking, now that I have recounted it to you in the way I have, this strange comedy. At the heart of Claudel's trilogy just as at the beginning there was a tragedy which split the canvas, which went beyond anything thought possible, in terms of the exigency imposed on the heroine (and on the place that her image occupies at the end of the first play) at the end of the second, there can be nothing but the total obscurity of a radical derision - going as far as something of which certain echoes may after all appear rather antipathetic to us in so far as for example the Jewish position finds itself, one really cannot say why, involved.

Because the accent is put there on Sichel's feelings. Sichel articulates what her position in life is. We must advance without any more reluctance into this element of Claudel's thematic, because moreover I am not aware that anyone whatsoever has ever imputed to Claudel feelings about this that we might qualify in any way as suspect. I mean that the exalted grandeur of the Old Law, more than respected by him, never ceased to dwell in the least personages who may be attached to it in his dramatic work. And every Jew, essentially, for him is attached to it, even if he is a Jew who precisely finds himself rejecting this Old Law and saying that it is the end of all these old laws that he wishes for and aspires to, that what he is going towards, is the sharing by all of this something which alone is real and which is jouissance. This indeed in effect is the language of Sichel and this is how she presents herself to us before the murder, much more again after, when she offers to Louis de Coufontaine the love which it is revealed had always animated her in his regard.

Is there not here again a further problem which is proposed to us in this strange arrangement? I see that in letting myself be drawn into, and it was necessary that I should do so, telling you the central story of Hard bread (today I will scarcely do more (12) than in short propose this to you) a play that perhaps will be produced again, which has been put on a number of times, and of which one cannot say either that it is badly constructed, nor that it does not hold our attention.... Does it not seem to you that to see it closing after this strange vicissitude that you find yourself here before the figure - as one speaks of a figure in ballet, in a scenario - of a cipher which essentially proposes itself to you in a really unprecedented way through its opacity, by the fact that it only appeals to your interest on the plane of the most total enigma.

Time does not permit me, in any way, even to approach what would allow us to resolve it, but understand that if I propose it to you, or if simply I remark that it is not possible not to take notice of such a construction in - I would not say the century - in the decade of the bringing to birth of our thinking about the Oedipus complex You should understand why I am bringing it forward here and that which, with the solution that I think that I am going to contribute to it, justifies my sustaining it for such a long time, in such a detailed fashion, before your attention: the father.

If the father came at the beginning of analytic thinking in this form all of whose scandalous traits precisely comedy is well made to bring out for us; _if Freud had to articulate as being at the origin of the law a drama and a figure the problem of which it would be enough for you to see brought onto the contemporary stage in order to measure, not simply the criminal character, but the possibility of caricatural, even abject deconstruction as I said above, this is why this was required by the only thing which justifies us, ourselves, in our research, and which is moreover our object. What makes it necessary that this image should have emerged at the horizon of humanity if not its consubstantiality with the highlighting, the bringing into operation of the dimension of desire, in other words, the following which we tend to reject always more from our horizon, indeed to deny in our experience, paradoxically more and more, we analysts, the place of the father. Why? Simply because it is effaced in the whole measure that we lose the sense and the direction of desire, where our action with regard to those who entrust themselves to us would tend to put on this desire some gentle halter or other, some soporific or other, some fashion or other of suggesting which brings it back to need.

And this indeed is why we always see more, and more and more, at the foundation of this Other that we evoke in our patients, only the mother, there is unfortunately something that resists, it is that we call this mother castrating. And why, thanks to what is she that? We know it well in experience and this is the cord which keeps us in contact with this dimension that must not be lost. It is this, from the point that we are at and from the point of the reduced perspective which we have by the same token, it is that the mother is all the more castrating in that she is no longer occupied with castrating the father. It is in the measure - and I would ask you to refer to your clinical experience - [that] the mother entirely occupied with castrating the father, that exists but we see it or not or indeed there is nothing to be castrated, but from that moment on there would be no reason to bring into play the mother as castrating if there were not this neglected or absent possibility, the maintenance of the dimension of the father, of the drama of the father, of this function of the father around which as you clearly see there is debated for us, for the moment, what interests us in the position of transference.

(13) We know well that we cannot operate either in our position as analysts the way Freud, who took on in analysis the position

of the father, operated - and this is what stupefies us in his way of intervening. And it is for this reason that we no longer know where to hide ourselves because we have not learned to rearticulate, henceforth, what our own position should be. The result, is that we spend our time telling our patients: "You are taking me for a bad mother" which is not all the same the position that we should adopt either.

What I am searching for before you and the path which (with the help of Claudel's drama as you will see) I am trying to put you back on, is to resituate at the heart of the problem of castration, because castration and its problem are identical with what I would call the constitution of the subject of desire as such - not the subject of need, not the frustrated subject, the subject of desire. Because, as I have stressed it enough before you, castration is identical to this phenomenon which means that the object of its lack, for desire, because desire is lack, is in our experience identical to the very instrument of desire, the phallus. I am indeed saying that the object of its lack, for desire, whatever it may be, even on a different plane to the genital one, because it is characterised as object of desire and not of one or other frustrated need, must necessarily come to the same symbolic place that has been occupied by the very instrument of desire, the phallus, namely this instrument in so far as it is raised to the function of signifier.

This is what I will show you the next time to have been articulated by the poet, by Claudel, even though he had, even though of course he had absolutely no suspicion of the formulation into which his creation might one day be put. It is only more convincing. Just as it is altogether convincing to see Freud, in The interpretation of dreams, enunciate in advance the laws of metaphor and metonymy.

And why is this instrument raised to the function of signifier? Precisely to occupy this place which I have just spoken about, a symbolic one. What is this place? Well! Precisely it is the place of the dead point occupied by the father qua already dead. I mean that from the simple fact that he is the one who articulated the law his voice behind cannot but lose its strength. Because moreover either he is lacking as a presence, or as a presence he is only too much there. It is this point where everything that is enunciated repasses through zero between the yes and the no. I am not the one who invented this radical ambivalence of being neither fish nor fowl, and in order not to be speaking Chinese, between love and hatred, between complicity and alienation.

The law, in a word, in order to establish itself as law requires as an antecedent the death of the one who supports it; that there should be produced at this level the phenomenon of desire, is what it is not simply enough to say. This is the reason why I force myself before you to foment these topological schemas which allow us to locate this radical gap. It develops itself and completed desire is not simply this point, it is what one can call a totality in the subject, this totality of which I am

trying to mark for you not simply the topology in a paraspatial sense (the thing which is illustrated) but also the three moments of this explosion at the end of which there is realised the configuration of desire, an appeal to the first, and you can see it marked in the generations. And it is for this reason that (14) there is no need, in order to situate the composition of desire in a subject to go back in a perpetual recurrence to our father Adam. Three generations suffice.

In the first, the mark of the signifier, this is what is illustrated in an extreme and tragic way in Claudel's composition by the image of Sygne de Coufontaine, carried to the destruction of her being by having been totally torn away from all her attachments of word and faith.

In the second moment, what results from it, because even on the poetic plane things do not stop at poetry, even the personages created by Claudel's imagination, this culminates with the apparition of a child. Those who speak and who are marked by the word engender, there slips into the interval something which is first of all infans. And this, is Louis de Coufontaine, in the second generation the totally rejected object, the undesired object, the object qua not desired.

How is there composed, is there delineated before our eyes, in this poetic creation, what is going to result from it in the third generation, I mean at the only real one, I mean that it is there also at the level of all the others, the others are artificial deconstructions of it naturally, they are the antecedents of the only one that is in question. How desire composes itself between the mark of the signifier and the passion for the partial object, this is what I hope to articulate for you the next time.

Seminar 21: Wednesday 17 May 1961

"Coufontaine, I am yours! Take and make of me what
you will.
Whether I am wife, or already beyond life, where the
body no longer serves,
Our souls are welded together without alloy!"

I wanted to indicate to you, throughout the text of the Trilogy,
the recurrence of a term which is the one which articulates love
in it. It is to these words of Sygne, in The hostage, that
Cofifontaine is going to respond immediately:

"Sygne, last to be found, do not deceive me like the
rest. Is there therefore to be at the end for me
Something solid for me outside my own will?"

And everything is there in effect. This man that everything has
betrayed, that everything has abandoned, who leads, he says:
"this life of a hunted animal, without a safe hiding place,"
remembers what the Indian monks say, "that this whole evil life

Is vain appearance, and only remains with us because we
move along with it,
And that it would be enough simply for us to sit and be
still
For it to pass from us.
But these are vile temptations; I at least in this
collapse of all
Remain the same, with the same honour and duty.
But you, Sygne, think of what you say. Do not grow
weak like the rest, at this hour when I am reaching my
end.
Never deceive me...."

Such is the beginning which gives its weight to the tragedy.
Sygne finds herself betraying the very person to whom she has
committed herself with all her soul. We rediscover this theme
of the exchange of souls - and of the exchange of souls
(2) concentrated into an instant, later on, in Hard bread - in
the dialogue between Louis and Lumir - Loum-yir as Claudel
expressly indicates to us the name of the Polish woman should be
pronounced - when, the parricide accomplished, the dialogue is
engaged between her and him, in which she tells him that she will

not follow him, that she will not return with him to Algeria, but that she invites him to come and consummate with her the mortal adventure which awaits her. Louis who, at that moment had just undergone precisely the metamorphosis which is consummated in him by the parricide, refuses her. There is nevertheless still a moment of oscillation in the course of which he addresses Lumir passionately, telling her that he loves her as she is, that there is only one woman for him, to which Lumir herself, captivated by this appeal of death which gives the meaning of her desire, responds to him:

"Is it true that there is only one woman for you? Ah, I know it is true! Ah, say what you will! There is still in you something which understands me and which is my brother!

A rupture, a weariness, an emptiness which cannot be filled.

You are no longer the same as any other. You are alone. You will never be able to cease to have done what you have done, (softly) parricide!

We two are alone in this horrible desert.

Two human souls in the nothingness who are capable of giving themselves to one another,

And in a single second, like the explosion of all time annihilating itself, to replace everything with one another!

Is it not good to be without any prospects? Ah, if life were long.

It would be worthwhile being happy. But it is short and there are ways of making it still shorter.

So short that eternity is held within it!"

Louis: "I have only to create eternity."

Lumir: "So short that eternity is held within it! So short that this world which we want nothing of and this happiness that people make so much of is contained in it!

So small, so straitened, so strict, so shortened, that nothing other than we two is contained in it!"

And she goes on later:

"And I, I shall be the Homeland between your arms, the Sweetness once abandoned, the land of Ur, the antique Consolation!

There is only you and I in the world, there is only this single moment indeed when we will have seen one another face to face!

Accessible to the end to this mystery we enclose.

There is a way of drawing one's soul from one's body like a sword, loyal and full of honour, there is a way of breaking the wall.

There is way of making an oath and of giving oneself entirely to this other who alone exists.

Despite the horrible night and the rain, despite that

which surrounds us like nothingness.
 Like honest men!
 To give oneself and to believe entirely in the other!
 To give oneself and to believe in a single lightning
 flash!
 - Each of us for the other and for that alone!"

Such is the desire expressed by the one who, after the parricide, is put aside by Louis in order to marry, as it is said: "the mistress of his father". This is the turning point of the transformation of Louis, and it is this which is going, today, to allow us to question ourselves about the meaning of what is going to be born of him, this Pensée de Coufontaine, a feminine figure who, at the dawn of the third phase of the Trilogy, corresponds to the figure of Sygne and by means of whom we are going to question ourselves about what Claudel meant to say here.

Because indeed, if it is easy and customary to rid oneself of any word that is articulated outside the paths of routine by saying: "That's by so-and-so" - and you know that people do not fail to say it about the person who is now speaking to you - it seems that no one even dreams of being astonished at the poet whom here (4) people are content to accept in his singularity. And before the strange things in a theatre like that of Claudel, no one dreams of questioning any more the improbabilities, the scandalous features into which he draws us, that which, after all, emerges from the contrast between what may well be his Christian vision and his design.

In the third play, The humiliated father, what is the meaning of Pensée de Coufontaine? We are going to question ourselves about the meaning of Pensée de Coufontaine as we would a living personage. It is a question of Pensee's desire - thought's desire - and in Pensee's desire, we are going to find, of course, the very thought of desire. Naturally, you must not believe that this is, at the level that Claudel's tragedy is maintained, an allegorical interpretation. These personages are symbols only in so far as they operate at the same level, at the heart of the incidence of the symbolic on a person. And this ambiguity of the names, which are conferred, given them by the poet, is there to indicate to us the legitimacy of interpreting them as moments of this incidence of the symbolic on flesh itself.

It would be quite easy to amuse ourselves by reading into the very orthography given by Claudel to this singular name of Sygne, which begins with an S which is really there as an invitation to recognise it as sign, with in addition precisely, in this imperceptible change in the word, this substitution of the y for the i, what that means, this superimposition of the mark, and to recognise in it, through some convergence or other a cabalistic mater lectionis, something which comes to meet our S by means of which I showed you that this imposition of the signifier on man is at once both what marks him and what disfigures him.

At the other end, Pensée. Here the word is left intact. And in order to see what is meant by this thought of desire, we must

Indeed begin again from what is signified, in The hostage, by the passion Sygne undergoes. That on which the first play of the Trilogy left us gasping, this figure of the sacrificed woman who makes the sign "no", is indeed the mark of the signifier raised to its supreme degree, the refusal raised to a radical position that we must investigate.

In investigating this position, we rediscover a term which is one which belongs to us, through our experience, to the highest degree if we know how to question it, because if you remember (5) what I taught you at one time, here and elsewhere, in the Seminar and at the Society and, on several occasions if I asked you to revise the usage which is made today in our experience of the term frustration, it is to encourage you to come back to what is meant, in Freud's text where this term frustration is never employed, by the original term of Versagung, in so far as its accent can be placed well beyond, at a far deeper level than any conceivable frustration.

The term Versagung in so far as it implies the failure to keep a promise, and the failure to keep a promise for which already everything had been renounced, this is the exemplary value of the personage and of the drama of Sygne. What she is asked to renounce, is that to which she has already committed all her energy, to which she has already bound her whole life, to what was already marked with the sign of sacrifice. This second-degree, most profound dimension of refusal, which, through the operation of the word, can at once be required, can be opened out to an abyssal realisation, this is what is proposed to us at the origin of Claudel's tragedy, and it is moreover something to which we cannot remain indifferent. It is something which we cannot simply consider as extreme, excessive, paradoxical in a sort of religious folly, because quite the contrary, as I am going to show you, it is there precisely that we have placed ourselves, we, men of our time, in the very measure that this religious folly is absent for us.

Let us carefully observe what is in question for Sygne de Coufontaine. What is imposed on her is not simply order and constraint. What is imposed on her is to engage herself, and freely, in the path of marriage with the one whom she calls the son of her servant and of the sorcerer Quiriace. As regards what is imposed on her, there is nothing which is not linked for her to something accursed. Thus the Versagung, the refusal from which she cannot loose herself, becomes indeed what the structure of the word implies: Ver-sagung, the refusal concerning what is said. And if I wanted to equivocate in order to find the best translation: perdition. Here everything which is condition becomes perdition, and this is why the "not to say" becomes the "not-saying" (le dit-non).

We have encountered this extreme point, and what I want to show, is that here it is superseded. We have encountered it at the end of the Oedipal tragedy, in the me phunei of Oedipus at (6) Colonos, this "may I not be" which all the same means not to be born, where, I remind you in passing, we find the true place

of the subject in so far as he is the subject of the unconscious. This place, is the me or this very particular ne of which we only grasp the vestiges in language at the moment of its paradoxical apparition in terms like "je crains qu'il ne vienne" or "avant qu'il n'apparaisse", where it appears to grammarians as an expletive, even though it is precisely there that there is shown the point where there is designated, not the subject of the enunciated which is the I, the one who is actually speaking, but the subject in which there originates the enunciating, this "ne sois-je", or this "ne fus-je", "ne fiam", or to be closer this "n'etre" which so curiously equivocates in French with the verb of being born (naitre), here is where we have got to with Oedipus. And what is designated there, if not that, because of the imposition on man of a destiny, of a burden of parental structures, something has covered him which already makes of his entry into the world the entry into the implacable operation of a debt. When all is said and done, it is simply this burden, that he receives, from the debt, from the Ate, which precedes him, that he is guilty of.

Something else has happened since, the Word has become incarnate for us, he has come into the world and, against the word of the Gospel, it is not true that we have not recognised him. We have recognised him and we are living out the consequences of this recognition. We are at one of the terms of one of the phases of the consequences of this recognition. Here is what I would like to articulate for you. It is that for us the word is not at all simply the path we insert ourselves into in order each one of us to carry our burden of this debt which is our destiny, but that it opens up for us the possibility of a temptation from which it is possible for us to curse ourselves, not at all simply as a particular destiny, as a life, but as the very way on which the Word engages us, and as encounter with the truth, as moment (heure, heurt) of truth.

We are no longer simply within the range of guilt because of the symbolic debt, it is for having the debt to our charge that we can be - in the closest (proche) sense that the word indicates - reproached. In short, it is because the debt itself where we have our place can be taken away from us, that we can experience ourselves as totally alienated from ourselves. The antique Ate, no doubt, rendered us guilty of this debt, of yielding to it, but (7) by renouncing it, as we are now able to do, we are burdened with an unhappiness which is still greater because this destiny is no longer anything. In short, what we know, what we touch in our everyday experience, is the guilt that remains with us, what we put our finger on in the neurotic. It is what must be paid precisely because the God of destiny is dead. That this God is dead is at the heart of what is presented to us in Claudel. This dead God is here represented by this outlawed priest who is no longer made present for us except under the form of what is called The hostage - the hostage, which gives its title to the first play of the Trilogy, a shadowy figure of what the antique faith was is only a hostage in the hands of politics for those who want to use him for the goals of the Restoration.

But the other side of this reduction of the dead God is the fact that it is the faithful soul who becomes the hostage, the hostage of this situation where there is properly reborn, beyond the end of Christian truth, the tragic, namely that everything vanishes from it if the signifier can be captive. The only one who can be hostage, naturally, is the one who believes, Sygne, and, because she believes, must bear witness to what she believes in and precisely by that is caught, captivated in the situation which it is enough to imagine, to forge in order for it to exist. The fact is that by being called to rivet herself to the negation of what she believes, she is held as hostage in the negation, even undergone, of what is best in her. Something is proposed to us which goes much further than the misfortune of Job and his resignation. To Job there is reserved the whole weight of the misfortune that he has not deserved, but the heroine of the modern tragedy is asked to assume as a jpuissance the very injustice which fills her with hcrpr.

This is what ppens up as a pssibility before the being who speaks, the fact of being the support of the Word at the moment when she is asked to guarantee this Word. Man has become the hostage of the Word because he has told himself or moreover in order that he should tell himself that God is dead. At that moment, there opens out this gap where nothing more, nothing else can be articulated than what is only the very beginning of the ne fus-je, "may I not have been", which can no longer be anything other than a refusal, a no, a ne, this tic, this grimace, in short, this weakening of the body, this psychosomatic occurrence which is the term at which we have to encounter the mark of the signifier.

(8) The drama, as it is pursued throughout the three moments of the tragedy, is to know how from this radical position a desire can be reborn and which one.

It is here that we are brought to the other end of the Trilogy, to Pensee de Co&fontaine, to this incontestably seductive figure, manifestly proposed to us spectators - and what spectators, we are going to attempt to say - as properly speaking the object of desire. And one only has to read The humiliated father, one only has to listen to those who find this story deadly dull - for what could be more deadly dull! What harder bread could be offered to us than that of this undertaking, this father who is put forward in the figure of an obscene old man and whose murder depicted before us is the only thing which leads to the possibility of a pursuit of something which is transmitted and which is only the most degraded, degenerate face - that of Louis de Covtfontaine - of the figure of the father.

One only has to listen to what has struck everyone, the ingratitude that is represented by the apparition, at a night festival in Rome, at the beginning of The humiliated father, of the figure of Pensee de Coufontaine, in order to understand that it is presented to us here as an object of seduction. And why and how? What is she balancing? What is she compensating for? Is something going to come back to her because of Sygne's

sacrifice? Is it in the name of her grandmother's sacrifice that she, in a word, is going to merit some respect? Certainly not. If, at a moment, an allusion is made to it, it is in a dialogue of two men - who are going to represent for her the approach of love - with the Pope, and an allusion is made to this old family tradition as to an ancient story that is told. It is in the mouth of the Pope himself, addressing himself to Orian, who is the one in question, who is at stake in this love, that there is going to appear in this connection the word superstition: "Are you going to yield, my son, to this superstition!". Is Pensee even going to represent something like an exemplary figure of a renaissance of the Faith eclipsed for an instant? Far from it.

Pensee is a "free thinker", if one can express oneself in this way, with a word which is not here the Claudelian term, but this indeed is what is in question. Pensee is only animated by a single passion that, she says, of a justice which for her goes beyond all the exigencies of beauty itself. What she wants, is Justice, and not just anyone whatsoever, not ancient justice, that of some natural right to a distribution or a retribution. (9) This justice that is in question, absolute justice, justice which animates the movement, the noise, the progress of the Revolution, and which forms the background noise of the third drama, of The humiliated father, this justice is indeed precisely the reverse of all that which, in the real, of all that which, in life, is felt by the Word as offending justice, felt as a horror for justice. It is of a justice which is absolute in all its power to shake the world that there is question in the discourse of Pensee de Coufontaine.

As you see, it is indeed the thing which may appear to us as the furthest thing from the preaching we might expect from Claudel, the man of faith. It is indeed what is going to allow us to give its meaning to the figure towards which converges the whole drama of The humiliated father. In order to understand it, we must dwell for a moment on what Claudel made of Pensee de Coufontaine, represented as the fruit of the marriage of Louis de Coufontaine with the one in short that his father had given him as wife, through the simple fact that this woman, Sichel, had already been his wife, an extreme, one might say, paradoxical, caricatural point of the Oedipus complex.

This obscene old man who is presented to us forces this son... - this is the limiting point, the frontier of the Freudian myth which is proposed to us - he forces his sons to marry his wives and, in the very measure that he wants to steal their own, another more advanced and here more express way of accentuating what comes to light in the Freudian myth. This does not produce a better quality father, this produces another blackguard and it is indeed in this way that Louis de Coufontaine, is represented to us throughout the drama. He marries whom he wants, for his part, as object of his jouissance. He marries this singular figure of the woman, Sichel, who rejects all the burdens of the law, and specifically of her own, of the Old Law, of the holy spouse, the figure of the woman in so far as it is that of

patience, the one indeed who brings to light her will to encompass the world.

What is going to come to birth from this? What is going to come to birth from this in a singular way, is the renaissance of the very thing which the drama of Hard bread shows us to have been set aside, namely this same desire in its absoluteness which was represented by the figure of Lumir. This Lumir - as singular name, one should dwell on the fact that Claudel, in a little note, indicates to us that it should be pronounced Loum-yir; this must be referred to what Claudel tells us about the fantasies of (10) the old Turelure of always bringing to each name this little derisory modification which means, that he calls Rachel "Sichel", which means, the text tells us, in German: the sickle, this name being the one that the crescent of the moon figures in the heavens, a singular echo of the figure which terminates the Ruth and Booz of Hugo; Claudel carries out unceasingly this same game of altering names, as if he himself here assumed the function of old Turelure - Lumir, this is what we will rediscover later in the dialogue between the Pope and the two personages of Orso and Orian, like the light (lumiere) - "the cruel light!". This cruel light illuminates us about what the figure of Orian represents, because however faithful he may be to the Pope, this cruel light he mentions, makes him, the Pope, start. "Light," the Pope tells him, "is not cruel." But there is no doubt that it is Orian who is right when he says it. The poet is on his side. Now, the one who is going to incarnate the light obscurely sought without knowing it by her mother herself, this light sought with a patience ready to serve everything and accept everything, is Pensee, Pensee her daughter, Pensee who is going to become the incarnated object of the desire of this light. And this flesh and blood Pensee, this living Pensee, the poet can do nothing other than to imagine that she is blind and to represent her to us as such.

I think I should pause for a moment. What does the poet mean by this incarnation of the object, of the partial object, of the object in so far as it is here the reemergence, the effect of the parental constellation, as a blind person? This blind person is going to be paraded before our eyes throughout this third play and, in the most moving fashion, she appears at a masked ball, where there is represented the end of a period of this Rome which is on the eve of its being taken by the Garibaldians. It is a sort of end also which is celebrated in this night festival, that of a noble Pole who, pushed to the limits of his solvency, is going to see the bailiffs entering his property on the following day. This noble Pole is here moreover in order, for a moment, to recall to us, under the form of a figure on a cameo, a person whom we have heard being talked about on many occasions and who died very sadly. Let us mark this with a cross, let us not speak about it any more. All the spectators understand clearly that it is a question of the aforementioned Lumir, and also this noble, completely burdened with the nobility and the romanticism (11) of martyred Poland, is all the same the type of nobleman who always finds himself inexplicably always having a villa to sell off.

It is in this context that we see the blind Pensée walking as if she could see clearly. Because her surprising sensitivity allows her, in a brief preliminary visit, by means of her subtle perception, to be aware of echoes, approaches, movements, once she has taken a few steps... to map out the whole structure of a place. If we, spectators, know that she is blind, throughout a whole act, those who are with her, the guests at this feast, could be in ignorance of it, and especially the one that her desire is directed towards. This personage, Orian, is worth presenting in a word for those who have not read the play.

Orian, reduplicated by his brother Orso, bears this very Claudelian name, which seems, by its sound and by the same construction, slightly deformed, accentuated as regards the signifier by a peculiarity which is the same as the one we rediscover in so many of the personages of Claudelian tragedy - remember Sir Thomas Pollock Nageoire - of Homodarmes. That has as nice a sound as the one in the text about the suits of armour, by André Breton, in "Le peu de réalité". These two personages Orian and Orso are at stake. Orso is the honest lad who loves Pensée. Orian, who is not quite a twin, who is the big brother, is the one towards whom Pensée has directed her desire. Why towards him, if not because he is inaccessible. Because, to tell the truth, for this blind person, the Claudelian text and myth indicate to us that she can scarcely distinguish them by voice, to the point that at the end of the drama, Orso, for a moment, will be able to sustain the illusion of being the dead Orian. It is indeed because she sees something different for it to be the voice of Orian, even when it is Orso who is speaking, which can make her fail.

But let us dwell for a moment on this blind girl. What does she mean? Does it not seem to us, in order to see at first what she projects before us, that she is thus protected by a sort of sublime figure of modesty which is based on the fact that, not being able to see herself being seen, she seems to be protected from the only gaze which unveils her?

And I do not think that it is an eccentric remark to bring in this dialectic that I formerly put before you around the theme of the perversions which are called exhibitionistic and voyeuristic, (12) when I pointed out to you that they could not simply be grasped with respect to the one who sees and who shows himself to a partner who is simply other, object or subject, that what is involved in the phantasy of the exhibitionist as in that of the voyeur, is a third element which implies that in the partner there may blossom a complicitous consciousness which receives what he is given to see; that what flowers in her apparently innocent solitude offers itself to a hidden gaze; that thus it is the desire itself which sustains its function in the phantasy which veils from the subject his role in the act; that the exhibitionist and the voyeur in a way themselves enjoy as seeing and as showing, but without knowing what they are seeing and what they are showing.

For Pensée, here she is then, she who cannot be surprised, as I

might say, because she can be shown nothing which submits her to the small other, nor can she be seen without the one who spies being, like Acteon, struck with blindness, beginning to be torn to pieces by the bites of the pack of his own desires.

The mysterious power of the dialogue which takes place between Pensee and Orian - Orian which is only except for a letter precisely the name of one of one of the hunters that Diana metamorphised into a constellation - this mysterious admission with which this dialogue ends: "I am blind" has, just by itself, the force of an "I love you" because it avoids any awareness in the other of the "I love you" being said, in order to go straight and place itself in him as a word- Who could say: "I am blind", except from where the word creates the night? Who, in hearing it, would not feel coming to birth in himself this depth of night?

Because it is there that I want to lead you: it is to the distinction, to the difference there is between the relationship of "seeing oneself" and the relationship of "hearing oneself". Naturally, it is remarked and it has been long remarked that it is proper to phonation to resonate immediately in the subject's own ear according as it is emitted, but this does not mean that the other to whom this word is addressed, has the same place or the same structure as that of visual unveiling, precisely because the word, for its part, does not give rise to sight because it is, itself, blindness. One sees oneself being seen, that is why one escapes from it, but one does not hear oneself being heard. Namely that one does not hear oneself where one is heard, namely in one's head, or more exactly those who are in this situation - there are in effect those who hear (13) themselves being heard and these are the mad, the hallucinators, it is the structure of verbal hallucination - could not hear themselves being heard except at the place of the Other: there where one hears the Other sending back your own message in its inverted form. What Claudel means by the blind Pensee, is that it is enough that the soul, because it is the soul that is in question, should close its eyes to the world - and this is indicated through all the dialogue of the third play - in order to be able to be that which the world lacks, the most desirable object in the world. Psyche who can no longer light the lamp, pumps, as I might say, sucks into her the being of Eros which is lack.

The myth of Poros and of Penia is reborn here under the form of spiritual blindness, because we are told that Pensee here incarnates the figure of the synagogue itself, as it is represented in the porch of the cathedral at Reims: blindfold.

On the other hand, Orian who confronts her is indeed the one whose gift cannot be accepted precisely because it is superabundance. Orian is another form of refusal. If he does not give Pensee his love, it is, he says, because his gifts are owed elsewhere, to everyone, to the divine work. What he overlooks, is precisely what is demanded of him in love: it is not his Poros, his resources, his spiritual riches, his

superabundance, nor even, as he expresses it, his joy, it is precisely what he does not have. He may be a saint of course, but it is rather striking that Claudel shows us here the limits of sanctity. For, desire is stronger here than sanctity itself, because it is a fact that Orian, the saint, in the dialogue with Pensee weakens and yields and loses the game and, in a word, to call things by their name, that he well and truly screws little Pensee. And this is what she wants and right through the drama and the play, she has not lost a half a second, a quarter of a line in order to operate in this direction along paths which we would not call the shortest, but undoubtedly the straightest, the surest ones.

Pensee de Coufontaine is truly being reborn here from all the fatalities which begin with debauchery, continue with the bill drawn on honour, through misalliance, abjuration, Louis (14) Philippism - which someone or other called le second t'en-pire - in order to be reborn as it were before sin, like innocence, but not for all that nature.

This is why there has to be seen the scene on which this whole drama culminates, this scene, the final one, the one where Pensee has confined herself with her mother who stretches over her her protective wing and does so because she has become pregnant through the work of the aforementioned Orian. Pensee receives the visit of the brother Orso, who comes here to bring her, from the one who has died, the final message, but which the logic of the play and the whole previous situation have created, because the whole effort of Orian had been to make both Pensee and Orso accept an enormous thing: that they should marry. Orian, the saint, does not see any obstacle to his good and honest little brother, for his part, finding happiness, it is at his level.

He is brave and courageous. And moreover the declarations of the lad leaves us in no doubt, he is capable of undertaking marriage with a woman he does not love, something can always be worked out. He is courageous, that is his business. He fought first on the left, he was told that he was mistaken, he fights on the right: he was with the Garibaldians, he has rejoined the Pope's zouaves. He is always there, sure-footed and clear-eyed, he is a man you can depend on. Do not laugh too much at this idiot, he is a trap, and we are going to see later for whom and how. Because, in truth, in his dialogue with Pensee, we no longer dream of laughing.

Who is Pensee in this final scene? The sublime object surely, the sublime object in so far as already we have indicated its position, last year, as substitute for the Thing (la Chose). As you heard in passing, the nature of the Thing is not too far from that of the woman, if it were not true that for all the ways that we have to approach this Thing, the woman proves to be quite another thing again - I say the least woman - and, in truth, Claudel does not show us anymore than anybody else that he has the slightest idea of it, far from it. This heroine of Claudel's this woman that he foments for us, is the woman of a certain desire. All the same let us do him this much justice

that elsewhere, in Partage de midi, Claudel has made for us a woman, Yse, who is not so bad, she resembles very much what a woman is.

Here we are in the presence of the object of a desire. And what I want to show you, which is inscribed in its image, is that it is a desire which no longer has at this level of destitution anything other than castration to separate it radically from any (15) natural desire. In truth, if you look at what is happening on the stage, it is rather beautiful, but in order to situate it exactly, I would ask you to remember the anamorphic cylinder which I presented to you well and truly in reality - the tube on this table - namely this cylinder on which there was projected a figure by Rubens, that of "The Crucifixion", by the expedient of a sort of shapeless drawing which was cleverly inscribed on the base of this cylinder. From that, I constructed for you from this mechanism the image of the reflection of this fascinating figure, of this beauty erected in such a way that it projects itself to the limit in order to prevent us from going further to the heart of the Thing.

If it is the case that here the figure of Pensee, and the whole line of this drama, is constructed to bring us to this still further limit - what do we see, if not the figure of a divinised woman because she is again here, this woman, crucified, the gesture is indicated in the text as it recurs with insistence at so many other points of Claudel's work, from the Princess of T&te d'or to Sygne herself, to Yse, to the figure of Dona Prouheze - this figure bears in herself what? A child no doubt, but let us not forget what we are told: it is that for the first time this child has begun to show life in her, to move. This moment is the moment at which she has taken into herself the soul, she says, of the one who has died.

How is this capture of the soul represented, depicted for us? It is a real act of vampirism, she closes herself off, as I might say, with the wings of her coat over the basket of flowers that the brother, Orso, had sent her, these flowers growing in a mould which the dialogue has just revealed to us - a macabre detail - contains the eviscerated heart of her lover, Orian. It is the symbolic essence of this that, when she stands up again, she is supposed to have caused to pass into her, it is this soul that she poses, with her own, she says, on the lips of this brother who has just become engaged to her in order to give a father to the child, while saying that he will never be her spouse. And this transmission, this singular realisation of this fusion of souls is the one which in the two first quotations that I gave you at the beginning of this discourse, from The hostage on the one hand, from Hard bread on the other, is indicated to us as being the supreme aspiration of love, it is from this fusion of souls that in short Orso, whom we know is going to rejoin his (16) brother in death, is here the designated carrier, vehicle, messenger.

What does that mean? I told you above, this poor Orso who makes us smile even in this function that he ends up with, of make-

believe husband, should not deceive us, we should not allow ourselves to be taken in by his ridiculousness. Because the place he occupies is the very one after all in which we are led to be captivated here. It is to our desire, and as a revelation of its structure, that there is proposed this phantasy which reveals to us what this magnificent power is which draws us in the woman, and not necessarily, as it is said, towards higher things, that this power is tertiary and it is the one which cannot be ours except by representing our destruction.

There is always in desire some delight in death, but of a death that we cannot inflict on ourselves. We rediscover here the four terms which are represented, as I might say, in us as in the two brothers, o - o', and to us the barred subject, ^, in so far as we understand nothing about it, and this figure of the Other incarnated in this woman. Between these four elements, all sorts of varieties of this inflicting of death are possible among which it is possible to enumerate all the most perverse forms of desire.

Here, it is only the most ethical case in so far as it is the true man, the completed man who affirms himself and maintains himself in his virility, Orian, who pays the price for it by his death. This reminds us that, it is true, he always pays this price in every case, even if from the moral point of view, it is the most costly way for his humanity, if he debases this price, to the level of pleasure.

So ends the plan of the poet. What he shows us, is indeed, after the drama of the subject qua pure victim of the logos, of language, what happens here to desire and for that, he makes this desire visible to us. The figure of the woman, of this terrible subject who is Pensee de Coufontaine, is the object of desire. She deserves her name, Pensee: she is thought about desire. The love of the other, this love that she expresses, is the very thing by which by fixating herself on it she becomes the object of desire.

(17) Such is the topology at which the long journey of the tragedy is completed. Like every process, like every progress of human articulation, it is only retrospectively that there is perceived that which converges in the lines traced in the traditional past, that which one day comes to birth when, throughout the tragedy of Euripides, we find as a sort of shoe that pinches, as a which exasperates him, the relationship to desire, and more especially to the desire of the woman. What is called the misogyny of Euripides, this sort of aberration, of madness which seems to affect all his poetry, we can only grasp and understand from what it has become, from the fact that it has been elaborated through all the sublimations of the Christian tradition.

These perspectives, these extremes, these quartering points of terms whose crossing for us necessitates effects with which we have to deal, those of neurosis in so far as in Freudian thought they affirm themselves as more original than those of the golden

mean, than those of the normal, it is necessary that we should touch them, that we should explore them, that we should know their extremes, if we want our action to be situated in an oriented fashion, not the captive of some mirage or other, always within our reach, of the good, of mutual aid, but because of what may have to be required in the other, even in the most obscure forms, by the fact that we have the audacity to accompany him in transference.

Extremes touch, someone or other has said. There must be at least an instant that we touch them in order to see what is here my end, to locate exactly what should be our place at the moment when the subject is on the only path that we ought to conduct him to, the one where he must articulate his desire.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 24 May 1961

What business have we with Claudel in a year when we have no longer enough time to formulate what we have to say about transference? Our remarks, from certain points of view, might give you this feeling, or at least someone who was less well informed. All the same, everything that we have said has a common axis which I think I have articulated sufficiently for you to have seen that it is what is essential in my aims this year.

And to designate this point, I will try to specify it for you as follows. There has been a lot of talk about transference since analysis exists, people are still talking about it. It is clear that it is not simply a theoretical hope, that we should all the same come to know what it is we are ceaselessly moving about in, what it is that enables us to sustain this movement.

I would say to you that the axis of what I am designating for you this year is something which could be expressed as follows: how should we consider ourselves to be concerned by transference? This kind of displacement of the question does not signify for all that that we consider as resolved the question of what transference itself is. But is it precisely because of very profound differences of points of view which manifest themselves in the analytic community, not only today, but in the stages of what has been thought about transference - there appear in this very tangible divergences - that I believe that this displacement is necessary for us to be able to become aware of the cause of these divergences, which allows us by understanding the "for lack of which" they are produced, is what may also allow it to be understood that we always consider it as certain that each of these points of view on transference has its truth, is usable.

(2) The question that I am posing is not that of countertransference. What has been put under the rubric of countertransference is a kind of vast lumber-room of experiences which involves or seems to involve pretty well everything that we are capable of experiencing in our trade. To take things in this way is really to make the notion quite unusable from then on, because it is clear that this brings all sorts of impurities into the situation. It is clear that we are human and, as such, affected in a thousand ways by the presence of the sick person and even the problem of what is to be done in a case defined by

its very particular coordinates. To put all of this under the register of countertransference, to add it to what ought really be considered essentially as our participation in transference, is really to make it impossible to continue.

This participation of ours in transference, how can we conceive it and is this not what is going to allow us to situate very precisely what is at the heart of the phenomenon of transference in the subject, the analysand? There is something which is perhaps suggested as a "perhaps", at least "why not?", if you wish, which is that it may be that the simple necessity of responding to transference is something which involves our being, that it is not simply the definition of a behaviour to be adhered to, of a handling of something outside ourselves, of a how to do?, comment faire?, it may be, and, if you have been listening to me for years, it is certain that all that is implied by what I am leading you towards, is that what we are, what is in question in our implication in the transference, is something which is of the order of what I have just named in saying that it involves our being.

And, after all even, it is so evident that even what may be most opposed to me in analysis - I mean what is least articulated in what reveals itself about the ways to approach the analytic situation, just as much at its starting point as at its end point, in the way that I may have the greatest aversion to - it is all the same from that side that there was one day heard a sort of massive remark - it was not transference that was in question but the action of the analyst - "that the analyst acts less by what he says and by what he does than by what he is". Make no mistake about it, this way of expressing oneself is one I take great offense to, in the measure precisely that it says (3) something correct and that it says it in a way which immediately closes the door, it is well designed precisely to infuriate me.

In fact, from the beginning this is the whole question. What is given when one defines the situation "objectively", is the fact that for the patient the analyst plays his transference role precisely in the measure that for the patient he is what he is not... precisely, on the plane of what one could call reality. This allows us to judge the degree, the angle of deviation of the transference, precisely in the measure that the phenomenon of transference is going to help us to make the patient realise, from this angle of deviation, how far he is from the real because of what he produces, in short with the help of the transference, in terms of fictions.

And nevertheless there is some truth in it. It is certain that there is some truth in it in that the analyst intervenes through something which is of the order of his being, it is first of all a fact of experience. Since it is all the same something which is highly probable, why would there be any need for this rectification, for this correction of the subjective position, for this research into the formation of the analyst, of this experience where we try to make him descend or ascend, if it were

not in order that something in his position is called on to function in an efficacious fashion, in a relationship which is in no way described by us as being able to be entirely exhausted in a manipulation, even a reciprocal one?

Moreover everything which has developed since Freud, after Freud, concerning the import of transference brings into play the analyst as an existent. And one could even divide these articulations of the transference in a rather clear fashion which does not exhaust the question, which overlaps rather well the tendencies, if you wish the two tendencies, as people say, of modern psychoanalysis - whose eponyms I have given, but in a fashion which is not exhaustive, it is only to pinpoint them - with Melanie Klein on one side and Anna Freud on the other.

I mean that the Melanie Klein tendency has tended to put the accent on the object-function of the analyst in the transference relationship. Naturally, this is not where the position begins, but it is in the measure that this tendency remained the most faithful one - you can even say if you wish (4) that it is Melanie Klein who is the most faithful to Freudian thought, to the Freudian tradition - that she was led to articulate the transference relationship in terms of object-function for the analyst. I will explain. In the measure that, from the beginning of analysis, from the first steps, from the first words, the analytic relationship is thought of by Melanie Klein as dominated by unconscious phantasies which are here immediately what we should aim at, what we have to deal with, what from the beginning I am not saying that we ought, but we could interpret, it is in this measure that Melanie Klein was led to make the analyst, the analytic presence in the analyst, the intention of the analyst function for the subject as good or bad object.

I am not saying that this is a necessary condition, I believe even that it is a consequence which is only necessary in function of the shortcomings of Kleinian thought. It is precisely in the measure that the function of phantasy, even though perceived in a very pregnant fashion, was insufficiently articulated by her - it is the great shortcoming of the Kleinian articulation - the fact is that even among her better acolytes or disciples who certainly have tried to do it a number of times, the theory of phantasy has never really been completed.

And nevertheless there are many extremely usable elements. The primordial function, for example, of symbolisation has been articulated, accentuated here in a fashion which, from certain points of view, goes so far as to be very satisfactory. In fact, the whole key to the correction required by the theory of phantasy in Melanie Klein is entirely in the symbol that I give you of the phantasy $S \bar{\diamond} o$, which can be read as: S barred desire of o. It is a question of knowing what the o is, it is not simply the noetic correlative of the object, it is in the phantasy. Naturally, it is not easy, unless you take the journey that I have made you retake through a thousand ways of approaching, through a thousand ways of exercising this

experience of phantasy. It is in what the approach to this experience necessitates that you will better understand, if already you believe that you have glimpsed something or simply if up to now this appears obscure to you, that you will understand what I am trying to promote with this formalisation.

But let us continue. The other aspect of the theory of transference is the one which puts the accent on the following, which is no less irreducible and is also more evidently true, (5) that the analyst is involved in the transference as subject. It is evidently to this aspect that there refers the accent put, in the other mode of thinking about the transference, on the therapeutic alliance.

There is a real consistency between this and what accompanies it, this correlate of the analyst, in the second mode of conceiving transference, the one for which I pinpointed Anna Freud - which in fact designates it rather well, she is not the only one - who puts the accent on the powers of the ego. It is not simply a question of recognising them objectively, it is a question of the place that is given to them in therapy. And here, what are you going to be told? It is that there is a whole first part of the treatment where there is not even a question of speaking, of thinking of bringing into play what is properly speaking on the plane of the unconscious.

First of all you have only defences, this is the least of what you will be told, this for a good amount of time. This is more nuanced in practice than in the doctrine, it is to be guessed at through the theory that is constructed of it.

It is not altogether the same thing to put in the foreground, as is more than legitimate, the importances of defences and to arrive at theorising things in a way that makes of the ego itself a kind of inertial mass which could be even conceived of - and this is what is proper to the school of Kris, Hartmann and the others - as afterwards involving, let us say, elements which are for us irreducible, uninterpretable when all is said and done.

This is where they end up and things are clear, I am not putting words in their mouths, they say it themselves. And the further step, is that after all it is fine like that and that one should even make it more irreducible, this ego - after all, it is a conceivable mode of conducting an analysis - add defences to it. I am not at all, at this moment, in the process of even giving it the connotation of a rejecting judgement, that is how it is. What one can say in any case, is that, that, compared to what the other trenchant aspect formulates, it does not seem that this side is the more Freudian one, this the least that can be said.

But we have something else to do, do we not, in our remarks today, this year, than to return to this connotation of eccentricity to which we gave, in the first years of our teaching, so much importance. People have seen in it a (6) polemical intention, even though I assure you that this is very far from my mind. But what is in question, is to change

the level of accommodation of thinking - things are not altogether the same now, but these deviations were really taking on in the analytic community a really fascinating value which was getting to the point of removing the feeling that there were questions - to restore a certain perspective. A certain inspiration having been brought to light again thanks to something which is nothing other also than the reestablishing of the analytic tongue, I mean of its structure, of what served to make it emerge at the beginning in Freud, the situation is different. And the simple fact even, for those who may feel themselves a little bit at a loss because of the fact that we were going at full blast at a place in my seminar into Claudel, that they have the feeling all the same that this has the closest relationship with the-question of transference, well proves simply by itself that there is something sufficiently changed, that there is no longer a need to insist on the negative aspect of one or other tendency. It is not the negative aspects that interest us, but the positive aspects, the ones through which they may be of service to us moreover and at the point that we have got to as building blocks.

So then, what service can be rendered us, for example, by what I would call in a short word, this "Claudelian mythology"? It is amusing.... I should tell you that I was surprised myself in rereading these last days a piece that I had never reread because it was published uncorrected. It was Jean Wahl who did it at the time that I was giving little discourses open to all at the College Philosophique. It was something on obsessional neurosis which was entitled I do not remember what - The neurotic's myth, I think, you see that we are already at the heart of the question - The neurotic's myth where in connection with the Ratman I showed the function of mythical structures in the determinism of symptoms. As I had to correct it, I considered the thing to be impossible. With time, bizarrely, I read it without too much dissatisfaction and I was surprised to see in it - if I were to have my head cut off, I would not have said it! - that I spoke in it about The humiliated father. There must be reasons for these things. It is not after all because I had encountered the u with the circumflex accent that I am telling you about it. So let us take it up again.

(7) What does the analysand come looking for? He comes looking for what is to be found or, more exactly, if he is looking, it is because there is something to be found. And the only thing that there is to be found properly speaking, is the trope par excellence, the trope of tropes, what is called his destiny. But if we forget that there is a certain relationship between analysis and this kind of thing which is of the order of the figure, in the sense that the word figure can be employed to say "figure of destiny", as one says moreover "figure of rhetoric" and that it is for this reason that analysis was not even able to take a step without myth emerging, that means that one simply is forgetting one's origins.

There is a piece of luck, which is that parallel.... In the evolution of analysis itself, there is a sort of slippage which

is the result of a practice always more insistent, always more pregnant, exigent about producing of results, so then the evolution of analysis risks making us forget the importance, the weight of this formulation of myths, of the myth at the origin. Luckily, elsewhere people continued to be very interested in it, so that it is a detour, something which comes back to us, perhaps more legitimately than we believe - we perhaps have some responsibility for this interest in the function of the myth.

I made an allusion to it, more than an allusion, I articulated it a long time ago, ever since the first work before the seminar began - the seminar had all the same begun, there were people who came to work with me, in my house - on the Ratman. It is already the functioning, the bringing into play of the structural articulation of the myth as it has been applied since - and in a persistent, systematic, developed fashion by Lévi-Strauss for example in his own seminar - I already tried to show you the value, the functioning of it to explain what was happening in the story of the Ratman.

For those who have left things or who do not know it, the structuralist articulation of the myth, is something that takes a myth in its totality, I mean the epos, the story, the way that this is recounted from one end to the other in order to construct a sort of model which is uniquely constituted by a series of oppositional connotations within the myth, the functions involved in the myth, for example, the father-son relationship, incest, for example, in the Oedipus myth. I am schematising, naturally, I want to reduce things in order to tell you what is in question. (8) One realises that the myth does not stop there, namely that at the following generation - if it is a myth, this term generation cannot be conceived as simply the next phase of the entrance of the actors, there must always be some there: when the old have died, there are little ones who come back in order that things can begin again - there is a signifying consistency in what is produced in the new mythological constellation, and it is this consistency which interests us. Something happens that you can connote as you wish, brother-enemies, then on the other hand the function of a transcendent love which goes against the law, like incest, but manifestly situated opposite it in its function, in any case having relationships that we could define through a certain number of oppositional terms with the figure of incest, in short, what happens at the level of Antigone. It is a game in which there is question precisely of detecting in it the rules which give it its rigour - and remark that there is no other rigour conceivable than precisely the one established in games. In short, what allows us in the function of the myth, in this game in which the transformations operate according to certain rules and which are found because of this fact to have a revelatory value, creating higher configurations, illuminated by cases for example, in short to demonstrate this same sort of fecundity that mathematics has, this is what is in question in the elucidation of myths.

And this involves us in the most direct fashion, because we cannot approach the subject that we have to deal with in analysis

without encountering this function of myth. It is a fact proved by experience. In any case, from the first steps of analysis, Freud was sustained by this reference to myth, from the time of the Traumdeutung and the letters to Fliess: the Oedipus myth. It is not possible either... the fact that we elide it, that we put it in parenthesis, that we try to express everything, the function for example of the conflict between the primordial tendencies down to the most radical ones and the defences against it, the whole articulation connoted in a topographical way by the accent of the ego, in the thesis on narcissism the function of the ego ideal, of a certain Id as permitting there to be articulated the whole of our experience in an economic mode as it is put, it is not possible that to go in this direction and to lose the other pole of reference should not represent properly speaking what in our experience should be noted as properly speaking, in the positive sense that this has for us, a (9) "forgetting". This does not prevent the experience that continues on from being an analytic experience, it is an analytic experience which forgets its own terms.

You see that I come back, as I often do and I almost always do after all, to articulate alphabetical things. This is not uniquely for the pleasure of spelling them out, even though that exists, but this allows there to be posed in their quite raw character the true questions. The true question which is posed, there where it begins, is not simply the following: is that what analysis is, when all is said and done, an introduction of the subject to his destiny? Of course not. This would be to place us in a demiurgic position which has never been the one occupied by the analyst.

But then, to remain at this level which is simply a general starting point, there is a sort of formula which indeed takes on its value because it is separated out quite naturally from those ways of posing the question which are as good as many others. It is..... Before, that we should have believed ourselves clever enough and strong enough to talk about something or other which is supposed to be "normal" - in fact, we have never believed ourselves to be so strong or so clever not to feel our pen trembling ever so little any time we attacked this subject of what a normal person is. Jones has written an article about it, it must be said that he had a nerve, it must also be said that he managed it rather well, but one sees the difficulty.

In any case, we have to put the accent on this, that it is really only by a piece of trickery that we can even bring into play any notion whatsoever, in analysis, of normalisation. It is a theoretical partiality: it is when we consider things from a certain angle, when we start, for example, talking about instinctual maturation, as if this were all that were in question. We give ourselves over then to these extraordinary ratiocinations bordering on moralising sermons which are so likely to inspire mistrust and withdrawal! To bring in, without anything else, a normal notion of anything at all that has any relationship whatsoever with our praxis, while precisely what we discover in it, is the degree to which the so-called normal

subject is precisely what inspires in us, as regards what permits this appearance, the most radical and the most well founded suspicion. As regards these results... We must all the same (10) know whether we are able to employ the notion of normal for anything whatsoever within the horizon of our practice.

So let us limit ourselves for the moment to the question: does the effort of deciphering something which maps out the figure of destiny, what destiny is... can we say that the mastery that we have gained of it allows us to obtain what? Let us say the least possible drama, the inversion of the sign? If the human configuration that we attack is drama, tragic or not, can we be satisfied with aiming at the least drama possible? A well informed subject - a good man well informed is worth two - will manage to get by unscathed. After all, why not? A modest pretension. This has never corresponded either, as you well know, to our experience. This is not it.

But I claim that the door through which we can enter in order to say things which have simply some sense, I mean that we have the feeling of being on the track of what we have to say, is the following which as always is a point closer to us than this point where quite stupidly the supposedly obvious is captured, what is called common sense where quite simply there is initiated the crossroads, namely in the present case of destiny, of the normal. There is all the same something, if we have discovered, if we have learned to see in the figure of symptoms something which has a relationship to this figure of destiny, there is all the same something, which is that we did not know it before and now we know it, this does not therefore come from outside. And, in a way from the fact that we can, through this knowledge, neither allow ourselves, nor allow the subject to put himself to one side and that this continues for those who continue to walk in the same direction, this is an altogether absurd and gross schema for the reason that the fact of knowing or of not knowing is essential to these figures of destiny, that this implication in the language of the developed figures that myths are does not refer to a language, but to the implication. Language being caught up in the operation of the word and, to complicate the affair, in its relationships with some Umwelt or other, there develop figures where there are necessary points, irreducible points, major points, points of intersection which are those that I tried to picture in the graph for example.

(11) An attempt which it is a not a question of knowing whether it might not be jimcrack, whether it might not be incomplete, whether it might not be, be perhaps much more harmoniously, adequately constructed or reconstructed by someone else, whose aims I wish simply to evoke here because this aim of a minimal structure of these four, of these eight points of intersection appears to be necessitated by the simple confrontation of the subject and the signifier. And it is already a lot to be able to sustain here the necessity, because of this simple fact, of a Spaltung of the subject.

This figure, this graph, these points mapped out, through the

eyes also, the attention, is what allows us to reconcile with our experience of development the true function of what trauma is. A trauma is not simply that which at a moment has erupted, has cracked somewhere a sort of structure which appears to be imagined as total - because this is what the notion of narcissism was used for by some people - it is that certain events come to be situated at a certain place in this structure, they occupy it, they take on in it the signifying value holding that place in a subject who is determined, this is what gives its traumatic value to an event.

Hence the importance of returning to the experience of myth. You can be sure that, as regards the Greek myths, we are not so well placed because we have many variants, we even have a great number of them, but, as I might say, they are not always good variants. I mean that we cannot guarantee the origin of these variants. In a word, they are not contemporary, nor even co-local variants. They are more or less allegorical, fictional rearrangements and, of course, they are not usable in the same way as one or other variant collected at the same time as what is provided when collecting a myth in a population from North or South America, as for example the material contributed by a Franz Boas or others allows us to do.

And moreover to go looking for the model of what becomes of the oedipal conflict when there enters into it precisely at one or other point knowledge as such within the myth, moreover to go completely elsewhere, in the Shakespearean fabrication of Hamlet, as I did it for you two years ago and as moreover I had every (12) licence to do because, from the beginning, Freud had taken things from that angle. You have seen what we believe we were able to connote in it: it is that something is modified in it at another point of the structure, and in a very exciting fashion, because it is from a quite particular, aporetic (aporique) point of the subject with respect to desire, that Hamlet proposed to reflection, to meditation, to interpretation, to research, the structural puzzle that it represents. We succeeded well enough in bringing to awareness the specificity of this case through this difference that, contrary to the father of oedipal murder, he, the father killed in Hamlet, it is not that "he did not know" that should be said, but he knew. Not alone did he know, but this intervenes in the subjective incidence that interests us, that of the central personage, of the personage of Hamlet alone. It is a drama entirely included in the subject Hamlet. It has been brought clearly to his knowledge that the father was killed, it has been brought to his knowledge sufficiently for him to know a good deal about what what is involved namely by whom. In saying that, I am only repeating what Freud said from the beginning.

Here is the indication of a method through which it is demanded of us to measure what our knowledge about the function of the structure introduces into this structure itself. To say things in a very general way and in a fashion which allows me to locate the root of what is in question, if, at the origin of every neurosis - as Freud said from his first writings - there is, not

what has been since interpreted as a frustration, something like that, an arrears left open in something unformed, but a Versagung, namely something which is much closer to a refusal than to frustration, which is as much internal as external, which is really put by Freud in a position - let us connote it by the term which at the very least has a popular resonance through our contemporary language - in an existential position. This position does not put the normal, always with an original Versagung beyond which there would be a bifurcation, either towards neurosis or towards the normal, one being worth neither more nor less than the other with respect to this beginning of the possibility of the Versagung. And that which the term sagen implied in this untranslatable Versagung is obvious, it is only possible in the register of the sagen, I mean in so far as the sagen is not simply the operation of communication, but the (13) stating (le dire), the emergence as such of the signifier in so far as it allows the subject to refuse himself.

What I can tell you, is that it is not possible to get out of this original, primordial refusal, this power which is prejudicial with respect to all our experience, in other words, we analysts, we only operate - and who does not know this - in the register of Versagung, and this all the time, and it is in so far as we conceal ourselves - who does not know this - that our whole experience, our technique is structured around something which has been expressed in a quite stammering fashion in this idea of non-gratification which is to be found nowhere in Freud. It is a question of deepening the sense of what this Versagung specifies. This Versagung implies a progressive direction which is the one that we bring into play in the analytic experience.

I will recommence by taking up again the terms that I believe to be usable in the Claudelian myth itself in order to allow you to see how in any case it is a spectacular fashion of picturing how we are the messengers, the vehicles of this specific Versagung.

I believe that you no longer doubt any more that what is happening in Hard bread is the Oedipus myth. That you might find in it almost my play on words, that it is precisely at the moment that Louis de Coufontaine and Turelure - it is at the very moment that there is formulated this kind of demand for tenderness, it is the first time that this happens, it is true that it is ten minutes before he kills him - are face to face, where Louis says to him: "All the same you are the father (tu es le pere)", really reduplicating this "kill the father (tuez le pere)" that the desire of the woman, of Lumir, has suggested to him, it is superimposed and literally superimposing in a fashion which, I assure you, is not simply the good fortune of French. So what is meant by what is represented to us here on the stage? What that means in an explicit fashion, is that at that moment, and through that, little Louis becomes a man. Louis de Coufontaine, as he is told, will not have a long enough life to carry this parricide, but also from that moment on he is no longer the couldn't-care-less individual who fails in everything and who allows his land to be taken away from him by a crowd of evil little operators. He will become a very fine ambassador.

capable of all sorts of dirty tricks, there is some correlation here.

(14) He becomes the father. Not only does he become him, but when he speaks about him later, in The humiliated father, in Rome, he will say: "I knew him very well" - he had never wanted to hear a word about him - "he was not the man people think", allowing there to be understood no doubt, the treasures of sensitivity and experience that had accumulated under the skull of this old scoundrel. But he became the father: what is more, it was his his only chance to become it and for reasons which are linked to the previous level of the dramatic work, things had not got off to a good start.

But what is made tangible by the construction, the plot, well, is that at the same time and because of this he is castrated. Namely that the desire of the little boy, this desire sustained in such an ambiguous fashion, which binds him to the aforementioned Lumir, well, it will go nowhere - even though this is nevertheless easy, quite simple. He has her within his grasp, he only has to bring her back with him to Mitidga and everything will turn out fine, they would even have lots of children, but something happens. First of all we do not know too well whether he desires it or whether he does not desire it, but there is one thing certain, it is that the lady in question, does not want it. She has said to him: "You shoot Daddy", she goes off towards her own destiny which is the destiny of a desire, of a true desire as befits a Claudelian personage.

Because, let us say it, the importance there is in introducing you into this theatre, even if it has for one or other person, according to his leanings, a smell of the sacristy about it which may please or displease - the question is not there - it is because it is all the same a tragedy. And it is quite droll that this has led this gentleman to positions which are not positions designed to please us, but we must accommodate ourselves to it and if necessary try to understand him. It is all the same from beginning to end, from Tete d'or to Soulier de satin, the tragedy of desire. So the personage who is at this generation its support, the aforementioned Lumir, drops her previous companion, the aforementioned Louis de Coufontaine, and goes off towards her desire which we are quite clearly told is a desire for death. But through this, it is she - it is here that I would ask you to dwell on the variant of the myth - who gives him precisely what? It is not the mother obviously - the mother is Sygne de Coufontaine and she has a place which is obviously not that of the mother when she is called Jocasta. No, there is another one who is the "father's woman", because the father, as I showed you, is always at the horizon of this story in a clearly marked fashion. And this incidence of desire is (15) what has rehabilitated our excluded son, our undesired child, our wandering partial object, what rehabilitates him, reinstates him, recreates with him the ruined father, well, the result, is to give him the father's woman.

You see clearly what I am showing you. There is here an

exemplary deconstruction of the function of that which, in the Freudian, oedipal myth is conjugated under the form of this kind of hollow, of centre of aspiration, of vertiginous point of the libido that the mother represents. There is a structural deconstruction.

It is late, but I would not like all the same to leave you without indicating to you - it is time which forces us to cut off at the point that we are at - that towards which I will leave you. After all, it is not a story designed to astonish us so much, we who are already a little hardened by experience, that castration, in short, should be something fabricated like that: withdraw his desire from someone and, in exchange, it is he who is given to someone else, on this occasion to the social order. It is Sichel who has the fortune: it is quite natural, in short, that she should be the one he marries. What is more, the aforementioned Lumir saw very clearly what was happening, because if you read the text she had very clearly explained to him: "There is only one thing for you to do, it is to marry your father's mistress". But the important thing is this structure. And I am telling you that it looks simple because we know it in a way habitually, but it is rarely expressed like that. You have clearly understood, I think, what I have said: one removes a subject's desire from him and in exchange one sends him into the marketplace where he becomes part of the public auction.

But is it not the case that it is precisely this - and illustrated then in a quite different way, which is designed, this time, to awaken our sleeping sensitivity - is it not this which at the beginning, at the stage above, the one perhaps which can enlighten us more radically about the beginning, is this not what happens at the level of Sygne, and that in a fashion well made to move us a little more? Everything is taken away from her, it would be too much to say that it was for nothing - we will leave that - but it is also quite clear that it is in order to give her, in exchange for what is taken away from her, to what she most abhors.

(16) You will see, I am led to end in a fashion that is almost too spectacular by making of it a game and an enigma, it is much richer than what I am in the process of putting before you as a question mark - you will see it, the next time, articulated in a much deeper fashion, I want to leave you something to dream about - you will see at the third generation, that people want to do the same thing to Pensee, only behold, we do not have the same starting point, we do not have the same origin and this is what will be instructive for us and even what will allow us to pose questions about the analyst. People want to do the same thing to her, naturally there the characters are nicer, they are all excellent people, even the one who wants to do the same thing to her, namely the aforementioned Orian - it is certainly not for her harm, it is not for her good, either - and he wants to give her also to someone else - whom she does not desire, this time the girl does not let herself be had, she catches her Orian in passing, illicitly no doubt, just at the time that he is no longer anything but a soldier of the pope, but... cold. And

then the other, my word, is a very gallant man.... and so he resists.

What does that mean? I already told you that it was a beautiful phantasy, it had not said its last word. But indeed it is all the same enough for me to leave in suspense a question about what we are going precisely to be able to make of it concerning certain effects which are those which come from the fact that we ourselves, we count for something in the destiny of the subject.

There is all the same something that I must pinpoint before leaving you, that it is not complete to summarise, in a way, in this fashion the effects on man of the fact that he becomes subject of the law. "It is not simply because everything that is at the heart of himself is taken away from him and that he is given in exchange to the daily grind, this web which binds the generations together, the fact is that in order precisely that it should be a web which ties the generations together, once there is closed this operation whose curious conjugation you see of a minus which is not reduplicated by a plus, well, something is still owing, once this operation is closed.

It is there that we will take up the question again the next time.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 31 May 1961

In order to situate what the place of the analyst should be in the transference, in the double sense that I told you the last time this place must be situated: where is the analysand situated, where should the analyst be in order to respond appropriately to him? It is clear that this relationship - what is frequently called this situation as if the starting situation was constitutive - this relationship or this situation can only be engaged on the basis of a misunderstanding. It is clear that there is no coincidence between what the analyst is for the analysand at the beginning of analysis and what precisely the analysis of the transference is going to allow us to unveil as regards what is implied, not immediately, but what is truly implied, by the fact that a subject engages in this adventure, which he does not know about, which is analysis.

You may have understood, in what I articulated the last time, that it is this "truly" dimension implied by the openness, the possibilities, the richness, the whole future development of the analysis, which poses a question from the side of the analyst. Is it not at least probable, is it not tangible that he ought, for his part, already put himself at the level of this "truly", to be truly at the place that he ought to arrive at at this term of analysis which is precisely the analysis of transference, can the analyst consider himself as in a way indifferent to his veritable position? Let us throw some more light on the matter, this may after all seem to you almost not to be in question, does his science not supply for it, however he may formulate it for himself.

Something, in the facts, that he may know the ways and the paths of analysis is not enough, whether he likes it or not, to put him in this place. But the fact is that divergences in this (2) technical function, once it is theorised, make it nevertheless appear that there is here something which is not sufficient. The analyst is precisely not the only analyst, he forms part of a group, of a crowd (masse), in the proper sense that this term has in Freud's article Ich-Analyse und Massen-psychologie. It is not by pure chance that if this theme is tackled by Freud, it is at the moment that there is already a Society of analysts, it is in function of what is happening at the level of the relationship of the analyst with his own

function that a part of the problems that he has to deal with - everything that is called the second Freudian topography - is articulated. This is an aspect which even though it is not obvious deserves no less to be very specially looked at by us analysts.

I referred to it on several occasions in my writings. We cannot, in any case, go through the historical moment of the emergence of Freud's second topography, whatever degree of internal necessity we may attribute to it, without going into the problems which are posed to Freud. This is attested, you only have to open Jones at the right page in order to see that at the very moment that he brought to light this thematic, and specifically what is contained in this article Ich-Analyse und Massen-psychologie, he was thinking of nothing at that stage except the organisation of the analytic Society.

I made an allusion above to my writings, I highlighted there, in an infinitely sharper fashion perhaps that I am in the process of doing for the moment, all the drama that this problematic gave rise to for him. It is necessary all the same to indicate what emerges, in a clear enough fashion, in certain passages quoted by Jones, about the notion of a sort of Komintern, a secret committee even, which is conceived romantically as such within analysis. The idea of this is something to which he clearly committed himself in one or other of his letters. In fact, it is indeed in this way that he envisages the functioning of the group of seven in which he really placed his trust.

Once there is a crowd or an organised mass, those who are in this analyst-function pose themselves all the problems that Freud effectively raises in this article and which are, as I also, at the proper time, clarified, the problems of the organisation of the mass in its relationship to the existence of a certain discourse. And it would be necessary to take up this article by applying it to the evolution of the analytic function, of the (3) theory that analysts have constructed, have put forward about it, to see the necessity that makes converge - it is almost immediately, intuitively, tangible and comprehensible - the gravity that pulls the function of the analyst towards the image that he may construct of it, in so far as this image is going to situate itself very precisely at the point that Freud has taught us to separate out, whose function Freud brings to its term at this moment of the second topography, and which is that of the Ichideal, translated: ego-ideal.

From then on there is an ambiguity with regard to these terms. Ichideal, for example, in an article to which I will refer later, on "Transference and love", which is very important for us, which was read at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society in 1933 by its authors and which was published in Imago in 1934 - I happen to have it, it is not easy to get copies of Imago, it is easier to get The Psychoanalytic Quarterly of 1939 where it was translated into English under the title of "Transference and love" - l'Idéal du Moi is translated in English by ego-ideal.

This operation of the place in different tongues of the determiner with respect to the determined, in a word, of the order of determination is something which plays a role which is not at all a random one. Someone who does not know German might think that Ichideal means Moi Ideal (ideal ego). I pointed out that in the inaugural article where there is mention of the Ichideal, of the ego-ideal, Einführung zur Narzissmus, there is from time to time Idealich. And God knows that for all of us it is an object of debate, I for my part saying that one cannot even for an instant neglect such a variation from the pen of Freud, who was so precise about the signifier, and others saying that it is impossible from an examination of the context to reach any conclusion about it.

However there is one thing certain, which is that first of all even those who are in the second position will be the first, as you will see in the next number of L'Analyse which is going to appear, to distinguish effectively on the psychological plane the ego-ideal from the ideal ego, I am talking about my friend Lagache, who as you will see, in his article on the "Structure of the personality", makes a distinction which I would say, without at all diminishing it for all that, is descriptive, extremely subtle, elegant and clear. In the phenomenon, this has absolutely not the same function. Simply, you will see in a reply that I have produced quite intentionally for this number, developed around what he gives us as thematic about the structure (4) of the personality, I remarked on a certain number of points, the first of which is that one could object that there is here an abandonment of the method that he himself announced as being the one he proposed to follow in the matter of metapsychology, as regards the elaboration of the structure, namely as a formulation, as he expresses it which is at a distance from experience, namely which is properly speaking metapsychological - the clinical and descriptive difference between the two terms ego-ideal and ideal ego being insufficiently described in the register of the method that he proposed for himself. You will soon see that all of this has its place.

Perhaps I am going to be able to anticipate today already the quite concrete metapsychological fashion in which one can situate, within this big economy, the economic thematic introduced by Freud around the notion of narcissism, to specify quite effectively the function of the one and the other.

But I am not yet at that point. Simply, what I designate for you is the term of Ichideal, or Ideal du moi, in so far indeed as it has been translated in English by ego-ideal - in English this place of the determiner, of the determinant, is much more ambiguous in a group of two terms like ego-ideal - that we already find in it, as one might say the semantic trace of what has happened in terms of a sliding, in terms of an evolution of the function given to this term when people wanted to employ it to mark what the analyst became for the analysand.

Very early on it was said: "The analyst takes for the analysand the place of his ego-ideal". This is true or it is false, it is

true in the sense that it happens, it happens easily, I could even say further, I will give you an example later, how convenient it is, the degree to which in a word a subject can establish there positions which are both strong and comfortable and quite of the nature of what we call resistances, it is perhaps truer still than is marked by the occasional and obvious position that certain analyses run foul of. That does not at all mean that this exhausts the question, nor of course, in a word, that the analyst can in any way be satisfied with it - I mean be satisfied with it within the analysis of the subject - that he can in other words push the analysis to its term without dislodging the subject from this position that the subject takes (5) up in so far as he gives him the position of ego-ideal. Therefore that even poses the question of what this truth shows what should be the case in the future. Namely whether, at the end and after the analysis of the transference, the analyst should be elsewhere, but where? This is what has never been said.

Because, when all is said and done, what is revealed by the article that I spoke to you about above is something which, at the moment that it comes out, is not even that much of a research position - 1933 compared to the 20's which gave rise to the "turning point" of analytic technique, as everyone puts it, they had time all the same to reflect on it and to be clear about it.

There is in this article that I cannot go through in all its details with you, but to which I would ask you to refer - it is moreover something that we will speak about again, we are not going to stop at that - all the more since what I wanted to tell you is the following which refers to the English text and that is why it is that one I have with me here, even though the German text is more lively, but we are not considering the articulations of the German text.... We are at the level of the semantic sliding which expresses what has happened, in effect, at the level of an internal critique addressed to the analyst in so far as he the analyst, sole master on board, is put face to face with his action, namely for him the deepening, the exorcism, the extracting from oneself that is necessary for him to have a correct perception of his own proper relationship to this function of the ego-ideal, of the Ideal du Moi, in so far as for him, as analyst, and consequently in a particularly necessary fashion, it is sustained within what I called the analytic crowd.

Because if he does not do it, what is produced - and what has effectively been produced - namely through a sliding, a sliding of meaning which is not at this level a sliding which can in any way be perceived of as semi-exterior to the subject, in a word as an error, a sliding which implicates him profoundly, subjectively and which is testified to by what happens in the theory. Namely that if, in 1933, an article on "Transference and love" is made to pivot entirely around a thematic which is properly that of the ego-ideal and without any kind of ambiguity, twenty or twenty-five years afterwards, what is in question, in a fashion, I am saying, theorised in articles which say it openly concerning the (6) relationships of the analysand and the analyst, are the

relationships of the analysand in so far as the analyst has an ego which can be called ideal, but in a sense quite different that of the ego-ideal as well as to that of the concrete meaning to which I alluded above and which you can give - I will come back to it and illustrate all of this - to the function of the ideal ego. The ego of the analyst is an ideal ego, as I might say, which is realised, and an ideal ego in the same sense as one says that a car is an ideal car: it is not an ideal of the car, nor the dream of the car when it is all alone in the garage, it is a really good and solid car. This is the meaning that is finally taken by... - if it were only that, of course, a literary thing, a certain fashion of articulating that the analyst has to intervene as someone who knows a little bit more about it than the analysand, it would all be simply of the order of platitude, would perhaps not have such import. But the fact is that it expresses something quite different, it expresses a veritable subjective implication of the analyst in this very sliding of the meaning of this couple of signifiers: ego and ideal. We have no reason at all to be surprised at an effect of this order, it is only a patching together. It is only the final term of something whose source is much more constitutive of this adventure than simply this local, almost caricatural point, which as you know is the one that we confront all the time, that is all we are here for.

Where has all this come from? From the "turning point" of 1920. Around what does the turning point of 1920 turn? Around the fact that - the people of the time said it, the heroes of the first analytic generation - interpretation no longer functioned as it had functioned, the atmosphere no longer allows it to function, to succeed. And why? This did not surprise Freud, he had said it a long time before. One could highlight the one of his texts where he says, very early on, in the Technical papers: "Let us take advantage of the openness of the unconscious because it will soon have found some other trick".

What can that mean for us who want nevertheless to discover from this experience - which has involved a sliding on our part also - some reference points? I mean that the effect of a discourse - I am talking about that of the first analytic generation - which, while dealing with the effect of a discourse, the unconscious, does not know that this is what is in question, because, even though it was there - since the Traumdeutung - as I teach you to (7) recognise, to spell out, to see that what is constantly in question under the term mechanisms of the unconscious is nothing but the effect of discourse... it is indeed this, the effect of a discourse which, dealing with the effect of a discourse which, the unconscious, does not know it, necessarily culminates at a new crystallisation of the these effects of the unconscious which makes this discourse opaque. A new crystallisation, what does that mean? That means the effects that we note, namely that it no longer has the same effect on patients when they are given certain glimpses, certain keys, when certain signifiers are manipulated before them.

But, pay careful attention to this, the subjective structures

which correspond to this new crystallisation, do not need, for their part, to be new. Namely these registers, these degrees of alienation, as I might say, that we can specify, qualify in the subject under the terms for example of ideal ego, ego-ideal, it is like stationary waves - whatever is happening - these effects which repulse, immunise, mithridatize the subject with respect to a certain discourse, which prevents it from being the one which can continue to function when it is a question of leading him where we ought to lead him, namely to his desire. It changes nothing about the nodal points where he, as subject, is going to recognise himself, establish himself. And this is what Freud notes at this turning point.

If Freud tries to define what these stationary points, these fixed waves are in the subjective constitution, it is because this is what appears very remarkably to him, to be a constant, but it is not in order to consecrate them that he occupies himself with them and articulates them, it is to remove them as obstacles. It is not in order to establish, as a type of irreducible inertia, the supposedly synthesising Ich function of the ego, even when he speaks about it, puts it in the foreground, and it is nevertheless in this way that this was subsequently interpreted. It is to the extent that precisely we have to reconsider that as the artefacts of the self-establishment of the subject in his relationship to the signifier on the one hand, to reality on the other. It is in order to open up a new chapter of analytic action.

It is as a crowd organised by the analytic ego-ideal as it has effectively developed under the form of a certain number of mirages, in the forefront of which is the one for example which is put into the term of strong ego, so often wrongly implied at points where one believes one recognises it... . I am attempting here to do something of which one could say, with all the (8) reservations that this implies, say that it is an effort of analysis in the proper sense of the term, that to reverse the coupling of terms which form the title of Freud's article, to which I referred above, one of the aspects of my seminar could be called Ich-Psychologie und Massenanalyse. It is in so far as there has come, there has been promoted to the forefront of analytic theory the Ich-Psychologie which has acted as a jam, which has acted as a dam, which has created an inertia, for more than a decade, to any restarting of analytic efficacy, it is in so far as things are at that point that it is appropriate to interpellate the analytic community as such by allowing each one to look at what has come to alter the analytic purity of his position vis-a-vis the one for whom he is the guarantor, his analysand, in so far as he himself is inscribed, is determined by the effects which result from the analytic mass, I mean the mass of analysts, in the present state of their constitution and their discourse.

Let no one be in any way deceived about what I am in the process of saying, it is a question here of something which is not of the order of a historical accident, the accent being put on the accident. We are in the presence of a difficulty, of an impasse

which results from what you have heard me earlier putting at the high point of what I was expressing: analytic action.

If there is a place where the term action - for some time, in our modern epoch, put in question by philosophers - can be reinterrogated in a fashion which may perhaps be decisive, it is, however paradoxical this affirmation may appear, at the level of the one who may be thought to be the one who most abstains from it, namely the analyst.

On several occasions, these last years in my seminar, remember, in connection with the obsessional and his style of performance, indeed of exploit - and you will rediscover it in the written form that I gave to my Royaumont report. In its definitive form, I put the accent on what our very particular experience of action as acting out, in the treatment, ought to allow us to introduce as a new, original aspect to all thematic reflection about action. If there is something that the analyst can stand up and say, it is that action as such, human action, if you wish, is always implicated in the attempt, in the temptation to respond to the unconscious. And I propose to whoever is occupied in any way whatsoever with what merits the name of action, to the (9) historian specifically in so far as he does not renounce this thing which many fashions of formulating make it difficult to make up our mind about, namely the meaning of history, I propose to him to take up again in function of such a formulation the question of what we cannot all the same eliminate from the text of history, namely that its meaning does not drag us along purely and simply like the famous dead dog, but that in history there occur actions.

But the action that we have to deal with is analytic action. And as regards it, it cannot all the same be contested that it is an attempt to respond to the unconscious. And it cannot be contested either that in our subject what happens, what our experience habituates us to, this thing that makes an analyst, what ensures that we know what we are saying, even when we do not know very well how to say it, when we say: "That is an acting out...", in a subject in analysis. It is the most general formula that one can give of it and it is important to give the most general formula. Because here, if one gives particular formulae, the meaning of things is obscured, if one says: "It is a relapse of the subject" for example or if one says: "It is an effect of our stupidities" one draws a veil over what is in question, naturally it can be that, to the highest degree, these are particular cases of these definitions that I am proposing concerning acting out. The fact is that, because the analytic action is an attempt, is a temptation also in its way of responding to the unconscious, acting out is this type of action through which at one or other moment of the treatment, no doubt in so far as he is very specially solicited - it is perhaps through our stupidity, it may be through his, but this is secondary, it does not matter - the subject requires a more exact response.

Every action, acting out or not, analytic action or not, has a

certain relationship to the opacity of the repressed and the most original action to the most original repressed, to the Urverdrangt. And then we ought also... this is the importance of the notion of Urverdrangt - which is in Freud and which can appear there as opaque, that is why I am trying to give it a meaning for you - it depends on something which is the same thing as what, in a certain fashion, I tried the last time to articulate for you when I told you that we cannot help engaging ourselves in the most original Versagung, it is the same thing (10) which is expressed on the theoretical plane in the following formula that, despite all appearances, there is no metalanguage.

There can be a metalanguage on the blackboard, when I am writing little signs, a, b, x^{Kappa} , it works, it is all right and it functions, it is mathematics. But as regards what is called the word, namely that a subject engages himself - in language one can no doubt speak about the word, and you see that I am in the process of doing so, but in doing so all the effects of the word are engaged, and this is why you are told that at the level of the word there is no metalanguage or, if you wish, that there is no metadiscourse. There is no action, to conclude, which definitively transcends the effects of the repressed. Perhaps, if there is one in the final analysis, at the very most it is the one in which the subject as such dissolves, is eclipsed, and disappears. It is an action about which nothing can be said. It is, if you wish, the horizon of this action which gives its structure to my notation of the phantasy. And my little notation, this is why it is algebraic, why it can only be written with chalk on the blackboard, that the notation of the phantasy is $24o$, which one can read, \bigcirc . desire of little o , the object of desire. You will see that all of this will lead us perhaps all the same to perceive in a more precise fashion the essential necessity there is for us not to forget this place unsayable precisely in as much as the subject disintegrates there, that the algebraic notation alone can preserve in the formula that I give you of phantasy.

In this article, "Transference and love", by the already mentioned Jekels and Bergler, they said then in 1933, while they were still in the Vienna Society... There is a brilliant clinical intuition which gives, as is usually the case, its weight, its value to this article, this throwing into relief, this tone which ensures that this makes of it an article belonging to what one can call the first generation. So that now still, what pleases us in an article, is when it contributes something like that. This intuition, is that there is a relationship, a close relationship between the term of the present-day romantic ideal love, and guilt (culpa-bilite).

Jekels and Bergler tell us, contrary to the pastoral scenes in which love is bathed in beatitude: "Just observe what you see, it is not simply that love is often guilty, but that one loves in order to escape guilt". That, obviously, is not the sort of (11) thing that is said every day. All the same, it is a little bit embarrassing for people who do not like Claudel, for me it is of the same order when we are told things like that. If one

loves, in short, it is because there is still somewhere the shadow of the one that a very funny woman with whom we were travelling in Italy called il vecchio con la barba, the one you can see everywhere among the primitives. Well then, there is very well sustained this thesis that, at bottom, love is the need to be loved by whoever might make you guilty. And precisely, if one is loved by her or by him, it feels much better.

It is one of these analytic glimpses that I would qualify as being precisely of the order of these truths of good alloy, which are also naturally of bad, because it is an alloy, in other words an alloying that it is not really distinguished, that it is a clinical truth, but it is as such, as I might say, a collaborator-type truth, there is here a kind of collapsing of a certain articulation. It is not a taste for the romantic that makes me want to separate out again these two metals, love and guilt on this occasion, it is that the importance of our discoveries reposes entirely on these piling-up effects of the symbolic in the real, in the reality as they say, with which ceaselessly we have to deal. And it is with this that we progress, that we show the efficacious mainsprings, those with which we have to deal.

And it is quite clear, certain that if guilt is not always and immediately involved in the unleashing, in the origins of a love, in the lightning flash, as I might put it, of falling in love, of love at first sight, it remains no less certain that even in unions inaugurated under such poetic auspices, with time it happens that there comes to be applied, to be centred on the beloved object all the effects of an active censorship. It is not simply that around him there come to be regrouped the whole system of prohibitions, but moreover that it is to him that one comes in this behaviour-function, so constitutive of human behaviour, which is called asking permission.

The role, I am not saying of the ego-ideal, but well and truly of the super-ego, as such and in the most opaque and most upsetting form, the incidence of the superego in very authentic forms, in the best quality forms of what is called the loving relationship, is something which it not at all to be neglected.

(12) And then, there is, on the one hand, this intuition in the article of our friends Jekels and Bergler, and then on the other there is a partial utilisation and truly one that is as brutal as a rhinoceros of what Freud contributed in terms of economic glimpses under the register of narcissism.

The idea that the whole finality of the libidinal equation aims in the last resort at the restoration of a primitive integrity, at the reintegration of all that is, if I remember rightly, Abtrennung, everything that the subject had been led at a certain moment by experience to consider as separated from him, this theoretical notion, itself, is extremely precarious because it is applied in every register and at every level. The question of the function that it plays at the time of "An introduction to narcissism", in the thought of Freud, is a question.... It is a

question of knowing whether we can trust it, of knowing whether, as the authors say in clear terms - because they knew the whole compass of the aporias of a position in that generation when people were not formed on the assembly line - one can formulate this under the name of "The miracle of object cathexis". And, in effect, in such a perspective, it is a miracle. If the subject is truly, at the libidinal level, constituted in such a fashion that his goal and his aim are to be satisfied from an entirely narcissistic position, well then, how does he not manage in general and on the whole to remain in it? In a word, that if anything can make this monad throb to the slightest degree in the sense of a reaction, one can very well conceive theoretically that his whole goal is all the same to return to this starting position. It is very difficult to see what could condition this enormous detour which, at the very least, constitutes all the same a complex and rich structuration which is the one that we have to deal with in the facts.

And this indeed is what is in question and what the authors try to respond to throughout this article. To do that they engage, rather servilely I must say, on the paths opened by Freud, which are the following, that the mainspring of this complexification of this structure of the subject - which you see to be that which today gives its equilibrium, its unique theme to what I am developing for you - this complexification of the subject, namely the coming into play of the ego-ideal, Freud, in the "Introduction to narcissism", indicates to us to be the artifice through which the subject is going to be able to maintain his ideal, let us say to be brief because it is late, of omnipotence.

(13) In this inaugural text of Freud's, especially if one reads it, this comes, this happens and then it already sufficiently illuminates things at that particular moment for us not to demand any more of him. It is quite clear that, since Freud's thought has gone a certain distance since then, our authors find themselves confronted with a rather serious complexification of this first differentiation, that they have to face up to the distance, the difference between it and an ego-ideal which would be when all is said and done entirely constructed precisely to restore to the subject - you see in what sense - the benefits of love. The ego-ideal, is this something which, because it itself originated in the first lesions of narcissism, becomes retained when it is introjected. This moreover is what Freud explains to us. For the super-ego, it will be seen that it is all the same necessary to admit that there must be another mechanism, because even though it is introjected, the super-ego does not become for all that much more *bénéficient*. And I will stop there, I will take it up again.

What the authors are necessarily led to, is to have recourse to a whole dialectic of Eros and Thanatos which is no small thing at that time. They really make a lot of it and it is even rather nicely done, consult this article, you will get your money's worth.

But before leaving you, I would like all the same to suggest to

you something lively and amusing, intended to give you an idea of what a more exact introduction to the function of narcissism allows, I believe, to better articulate in a way that all analytic practice has confirmed ever since these notions were introduced.

Ideal ego and ego-ideal have of course the closest relationship with certain exigencies of the preservation of narcissism. But what I proposed to you subsequently, following on the track of my first approach to a necessary modification of analytic theory as it was engaging itself along the path on which I showed you above the ego was being used, is indeed this approach which is called, in what I teach you or taught you, the mirror stage. What are the its consequences as regards this economy of the ideal ego, of the ego-ideal and of their relationship to the preservation of narcissism.

Well then, because it is late, I will illustrate it for you in a way that I hope you will find amusing. I spoke above about a car, let us try to see what the ideal ego is. The ideal (14) ego, is the son and heir at the wheel of his little sports' car. And with that he is going to show you a bit of the countryside. He is going to play the smart Alec. He is going to indulge his taste for taking risks, which is not a bad thing, his love of sport, as they say. And everything is going to consist in knowing what meaning he gives to this word sport, whether sport cannot also be defying the rules, I am not simply saying the rules of the road, but also those of safety. In any case, this indeed is the register in which he will have to show himself or not show himself and namely how he is going to show himself as being better than the others, even if this consists in saying that they are going a bit far. That is what the ideal ego is.

I am only opening a side door - because what I have to say, is the relationship to the ego-ideal - a side door to the fact that he does not leave the ideal ego alone and without object, because after all if on one or other occasion - not on all - he indulges in these risky exercises, it is for what? To catch a girl. Is it as much in order to catch a girl as for the way of catching a girl? The desire is less important here perhaps than the way of satisfying it. And this indeed is the reason why, as we know, the girl may be quite incidental, or even be absent. In a word, from this angle which is the one at which this ideal ego comes to take its place in the phantasy, we see better, more easily than elsewhere what regulates the pitch of the elements of the phantasy, and that there must be something here, between the two terms, which slides for one of the two to be so easily elided. This term which slides is one we know. No need here to note it with any more commentary, it is the small Q>, the imaginary phallus, and what is in question, is indeed something which is being put to the test.

What is the ego-ideal? The ego-ideal which has the closest relationship with this operation and this function of the ideal ego is well and truly constituted by the fact that at the

beginning as I told you, if he has his little sports' car, it is because he is the son and heir and he is a Daddy's boy and that in order, to change register, if Marie-Chantal, as you know, joins the Communist party, it is to "get up Daddy's nose". As regards whether she does not overlook in this function her own identification to what it is a question of obtaining in "getting up Daddy's nose", is still another side door that we will avoid pushing. But let us say clearly that one and the other, Marie-Chantal and Daddy's boy at the wheel of his little car, (15) would be quite simply enveloped in this organised world like that by the father if there were not precisely the signifier father, which makes it permissible, as I might say, to extricate oneself from it in order to imagine oneself, and even to succeed in getting up his nose. Which is what is expressed by saying that he or she introjects on this occasion the paternal image.

Is this not also to say that it is the instrument thanks to which the two personages, masculine and feminine can extroject themselves for their part from the objective situation? Introjection, in short, is that, to organise oneself subjectively in such a way that the father, in effect, under the form of the not too cross ego-ideal, should be a signifier from which the little person, male or female, comes to contemplate his or herself without too much disadvantage at the wheel of their little car or waving their Communist Party card. In short, if from this introjected signifier the subject falls under a judgement which disapproves of him, he takes on from that the dimension of outcast which, as everyone knows, is not so disadvantageous from a narcissistic point of view.

But then, there results from this that we cannot talk so simply about the function of the ego-ideal as realising in a sort of massive fashion the coalescence of benevolent authority and of what is narcissistic benefit as if it were purely and simply inherent to a single effect at the same point.

And in a word, what I am trying to articulate for you with my little schema from another time - which I will not do again because I do not have the time, but which is still present, I imagine, in a certain number of memories - which is that of the illusion of the inverted vase in so far as it is from one point only that one can see emerging around the flowers of desire this real image, let us notice, of the vase produced through the intermediary of the reflection of a spherical mirror, in other words that the particular structure of the human being in terms of the hypertrophy of his ego seems to be linked to his prematurity.

The necessary distinction between the locus where there is produced the narcissistic benefit and the locus where the ego-ideal functions forces us to interrogate in a different way the relationship of both one and the other to the function of love - this relationship to the function of love which should not be introduced, and less than ever at the level we are at in the analysis of transference, in a confused fashion.

(16) Allow me again, to end, to tell you about the case of a patient. Let us say that she takes more than her freedom with the rights, if not the duties of the conjugal bond and that, by God, when she has a liaison, she knows how to push its consequences up to the most extreme point of what a certain social limit, that of her husband's self-respect, commands her to respect. Let us say that she is someone, in a word, who knows admirably well how to hold and deploy the positions of her desire. And I would prefer to say that with time she has been able, within her family, I mean as regards her husband and her lovable offspring, to maintain quite intact the field of force of exigencies strictly centred on her own libidinal needs. When Freud speak to us somewhere, if I remember rightly about the neue morale, which means the morality of noodles in what concerns women, namely the satisfactions required, you must not believe that this always fails. There are women who succeed extremely well, except for the fact that she, for her part has all the same need of an analysis.

What was it that for a whole period of time I was realising for her? The authors of this article will give us the response. I was indeed her ego-ideal in so far as I was indeed the ideal point where order is maintained, and in a fashion all the more required in that it is starting from there that all the disorder is possible. In short, it was not a question at that epoch of her analyst being an immoral person. If I had been stupid enough to approve one or other of her excesses, one would have had to see what would have resulted from it. Much more, what she was able to glimpse about one or other atypical feature of my own familial structure or about the principles in which I brought up those who were under my control did not pass without opening up for her all the depths of an abyss quickly closed up again.

You must not believe that it is so necessary for the analyst effectively to supply, thank God, all the ideal images that are formed about his person. Simply, she signalled to me on each occasion all the things that, in my regard, she wanted to know nothing about. The only really important thing, is the guarantee that she had, you can certainly believe me, that as regards her own person I would be unbending.

What does all this exigency for moral conformity mean? The mainstream moralists have, as you may well imagine, the reply quite naturally that this person in order to be leading such a full life must not exactly be from a working class environment. (17) And therefore, the political moralist will tell you that what it is a question of preserving, is above all a lid on the questions that one might pose concerning the legitimacy of social privilege. And this all the more because, as you may well imagine, she was the tiniest bit progressive.

Well then, as you see, in considering the true dynamic of forces, it is here that the analyst has his little word to say. The open abysses, one might deal with them as pertaining to what concerns the perfect conformity of ideals and the reality of the analyst. But I think that the true thing, the one which ought

to be maintained in any case beyond any argument, is that she had the prettiest breasts in town, which as you may well imagine, is something that the girls selling brassieres never deny!

Seminar 24: Wednesday 7 June 1961

We are going to continue our account in order to formulate our goal, perhaps a daring one, of this year, to formulate what the analyst should truly be in order to respond to the transference, which also henceforth implies the question of knowing what he ought to be, what he can be, and this is why I have qualified this question as "daring".

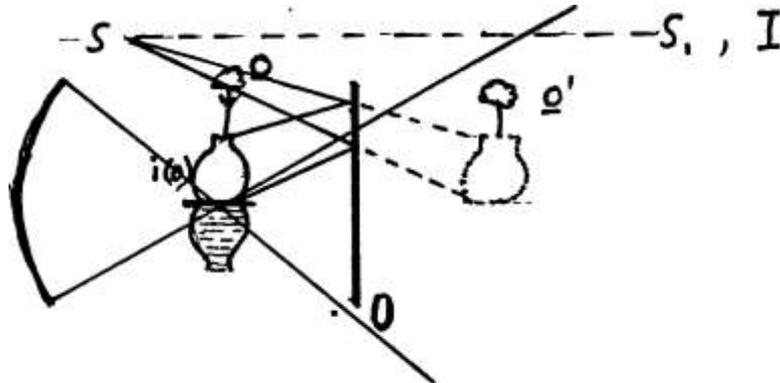
You saw it being delineated the last time, in connection with the reference that I gave you in connection with the article by Jekels and Bergler, in Imago, in 1934, namely a year after they made this communication at the Viennese Society, that we were led to pose the question in terms of the function of narcissism involved in every possible libidinal cathexis. You know on this subject of narcissism what authorises us to consider this domain as already opened up, amply dusted down in a fashion that recalls the specificity of the position which is ours: I mean the one that I have taught you here in so far as it is directly involved and we are going to see the way in which it enlarges, it generalises the one which is habitually given or accepted in analytic writings. I mean moreover that when generalised, it allows there to be perceived certain traps included in the particularity of the position ordinarily put forward, articulated by the analysts.

I indicated to you the last time, in connection with Übertragung und Liebe, that one could find in it what were therefore, if not all, at least certain of the impasses that the theory of narcissism risks bringing for those who articulate them. One could say that the whole work of a Balint turns entirely around the question of the so called primordial autoeroticism and the fashion in which it is compatible both with observed facts and (2) with the necessary development applied to the field of analytic experience.

That is why, as a support, I have just drawn for you on the blackboard this little schema that is not new, that you will in any case find much more carefully done, perfected, in the next number of La Psychanalyse.

I did not want to draw all its details for you here - I mean the details which recall its pertinence in the optical domain - as much because I am not particularly inclined to tire myself as because I believe that on the whole it would have made this schema more confused, simply I remind you of this old business

described as the illusion, in classical experiments of fundamental physics, of the inverted bouquet by means of which there is made to appear, thanks to the operation of the spherical mirror placed behind a certain apparatus, the real, I underline it, image - I mean that it is not a virtual image seen through space, deployed through a mirror - which arises, provided certain lighting conditions are respected, all around, with sufficient precision, above a support, a bouquet which in reality is found hidden in the underpinnings of this support. These are artifices which are moreover employed in all sorts of tricks that conjurers present from time to time. One could present in the same way something quite other than a bouquet.



Here, it is the vase itself, for reasons of presentation and of metaphorical utilisation, that we make use of, a vase which is (3) here, under this flesh and blood support, with its authentic pottery. This vase would appear in the form of a real image, on condition that the observer's eye is sufficiently far away and on the other hand in the field, naturally, of a cone which represents a field determined by the opposition of lines which join the edges of the spherical mirror to the focus of this mirror, the point at which there can be produced this illusion. If the eye is sufficiently far away, it will follow that tiny displacements will not make the image itself noticeably vacillate and will also allow these tiny displacements, to be appreciated as something whose contours, in short, are maintained alone with the possibility of visual projection in space. It will not be a flat image, but one which will give the impression of a certain volume.

This then is used for what? To construct an apparatus which, for its part, has a metaphorical value and which is founded on the fact that, if we suppose that the eye of the observer is linked, through topological, spatial conditions by being in some way included in the spatial field which is around the point that the production of this illusion is possible, if it fulfils these conditions, it will nevertheless perceive this illusion while being at a point which makes it impossible for him to see it. There is an artificial way to arrange that, which is to place somewhere a plane mirror which we call big 0 - because of the metaphorical utilisation that we will subsequently give it - in which he can see the same illusion being produced in a reflected fashion under the form of a virtual image of this real image. In other words, he sees being produced there something which is,

in short, in the reflected form of a virtual image, the same illusion which would be produced for him if he placed himself in real space, namely at a point symmetrical with respect to the mirror to the one he occupies, and looked at what was happening at the focus of the spherical mirror, namely the point where there is produced the illusion formed by the real image of the vase.

And, in the same way as in the classical experiment, in so far as it is the illusion of the bouquet that is in question - the vase has its usefulness in this sense that it is this which allows the eye to fix itself, to accommodate itself in such a fashion that the real image appears to it in space - inversely we might suppose the existence of a real bouquet that the real image of the vase would come to surround at its base.

(4) We call this mirror 0 , we call the real image of the vase $i(o)$, we call the flowers o . And you are going to see the way this is going to be of use to us for the explanations that we have to give concerning the implications of the function of narcissism, in so far as the ego-ideal plays in it the role of a mainspring that Freud's original text on "An introduction to narcissism" introduced and which is the one which was so much taken into account when we were told that the mainspring of the ego-ideal is moreover the pivotal point, the major point of this sort of identification which is supposed to intervene as fundamental in the production of the phenomenon of transference.

This ego-ideal, for example in the article in question, which is really not chosen at random - as I told you, the other day - which is chosen on the contrary as altogether exemplary, significant, well articulated and representing, at the date that it was written, the notion of the ego-ideal as it had been created and generalised in the analytic milieu ... therefore, what idea do the authors form of it when they begin to elaborate this function of the ego-ideal which is a great novelty because of its topographical function in the conception of analysis? Consult in a cursory fashion the clinical works, the therapeutic accounts or the case discussions, that is enough to grasp the idea the authors had of it at that time. One encounters difficulties both in applying it ... And here in part at least is what they elaborate. If one reads them with sufficient attention, it emerges that, in order to see what the efficacy of the ego-ideal is, in so far as it intervenes in the function of transference, they are going to consider this ego-ideal, as a field organised in a certain fashion inside the subject. The notion of inside being an altogether capital topological function in analytic thinking - even indeed introjection which refers to it - it is therefore an organised field which is considered rather naively in a way, in the measure that distinctions are not at all made at that time between the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

This state of imprecision, of indistinction that is presented in the topological notions, we are indeed forced to say that in general we must represent it in a spatial or quasi-spatial way, let us say - the thing is not highlighted, but it is implied in

the way we are told about it - like a surface or like a volume, in one or other case, as a form of something which, (5) because it is organised in the image of something else, is presented as giving the support, the foundation to the idea of identification. In short, within a certain topographical field, it is a differentiation produced by the particular operation called identification.

It is about functions, identified forms that the authors are going to pose themselves questions. What is to be made of them in order that they should be able in short to fulfil their economic function? We are not required, because it is not our project nor our object today - it would take us too far afield - to give an account of what necessitates for the authors the solution that they are going to adopt which, at the moment that it emerges here, is rather new. It has not yet been - as you will see - completely popularised, it is put forward here perhaps for the first time. In any case, it is naturally only a matter of promoting it in an accentuated fashion, because in effect, in certain remarks of Freud's text to which they refer, lateral remarks in the context from which they are borrowed, there are the beginnings of a solution.

To say what is in question, it is the supposition that the property of this field is to be invested with a neutral energy, which means the introduction into the analytic dynamic of a neutral energy, namely, at the point of the evolution of the theory that we are at, of an energy which distinguishes itself - it cannot mean anything else: as being neither one thing nor the other, which is what neutral means - from properly libidinal energy in so far as Freud's second topography obliged him to introduce the notion of an energy distinct from libido in the Todestrieb, the death instinct and into the function, from then on pinpointed by the analysts under the name of Thanatos - which certainly does not contribute to the clarification of the notion - and, in a contrary manipulation, to couple the terms Eros and Thanatos. It is, in any case, under these terms that the new dialectic of libidinal cathexis is handled by the authors in question. Eros and Thanatos are discussed here as two altogether primordial fates behind the whole mechanics and dialectics of analysis. And the destiny, the purpose, what is at stake in this neutralised field, here is what is going to be developed for us in this article, the vicissitude - das Schicksal, to recall the term used by Freud about the drive and to explain to us how we can imagine it, conceive of it.

(6) In order to conceive of this field, with the economic function that we will be led to reserve for it to render it usable both in its proper function as ego-ideal and in the fact that it is in the place of this ego-ideal that the analyst will be called on to function, this is what the authors are led to imagine. Here we are at the highest, the most developed stage of metapsychology. They are led to conceive the following: that the concrete origins of the ego-ideal and this in so far above all as they are unable to separate them, as it is legitimate to do, from those of the super-ego, which are distinct and nevertheless, in all the theory, linked together - they can only

- and after all we have nothing to envy them, as I might say, with what the developments of Kleinian theory have since brought us - they can only conceive of its origins in the form of a creation of Thanatos.

In effect, it is quite certain that, if one begins from the notion of an original perfect narcissism in what concerns libidinal cathexis, if one conceives that everything which is of the order of the primordial object is primordially included by the subject in this narcissistic sphere, in this primitive monad of jouissance to which the baby is identified in a rather rash way, it is difficult to see what might be involved in a subjective escape from this primitive monadism. The authors, in any case, have no hesitation themselves in considering this deduction to be impossible. Now, if in this monad there is also included the devastating power of Thanatos, it is perhaps here that we can consider there to be the source of something which obliges the subject - if one can express it briefly in this way - to emerge from his self-envelopment.

In short, the authors have no hesitation - I am not taking responsibility for this, I am commenting on them and I would ask you to refer to the text in order to see that it is indeed the way I am presenting it - in attributing to Thanatos as such the creation of the object. They are moreover struck enough by it themselves to introduce, at the end of their explanations, in the last pages of the article, a sort of humorous little question: "However apt it might be, we are not malicious enough to state that object relationship in the service of the discharge of aggression is the most respectable of which the human being is capable."

(7) In truth, even though they question themselves in this way in order to allow a certain tempering, to give a certain touch of humour to what they themselves have developed, there is nothing after all to correct, in effect, this quite necessary framework, this feature, if one has to follow the path of these authors. I am pointing this out to you in passing. For the moment moreover, it is not so much this that creates problems for us, but the following which is conceivable at least in a localised, dynamic way, as marking a significant moment in early infantile experiences: it is in effect, that it is indeed perhaps in a burst, in a moment of aggression that there is situated the differentiation, if not of every object, in any case of a highly significant object. Then this object, once the conflict has broken out, it is the fact that it may afterwards be introjected to a degree that will give it its price and its value. Moreover we rediscover here Freud's classic and original schema. It is from this introjection of an imperative, prohibitive, essentially conflictual object - Freud always tells us - it is in the measure in effect that this object - the father for example, on a particular occasion, in a first summary and rough schématisation of the Oedipus complex - it is in so far as this object has been interiorised that it will constitute this super-ego which constitutes on the whole a progress, a beneficent action from the libidinal point of view because, since it is reintrojected, it reenters - this is a first Freudian thematic - into the sphere

which, in short, if only because it is interior, from this fact alone, is sufficiently narcissised to be for the subject the object of libidinal cathexis.

It is easier to make oneself loved by the ego-ideal than by what was for a moment its original, the object. It remains nonetheless that, however introjected it may be, it continues to constitute an inconvenient agency. And it is indeed this character of ambiguity which leads the authors to introduce this thematic of a neutral field of cathexis, a field of struggle which will in turn be occupied, then evacuated in order to be reoccupied by one of the two terms whose Manicheism we must admit embarrasses us a little, those of Eros and Thanatos.

And it would be in particular in a second moment - or more exactly it is in experiencing the need to punctuate it as a second moment - that the authors are going to realise what Freud had from the first introduced, namely the possible function of the ego-ideal in Verliebtheit, as well as in hypnosis. As you (8) know "Being in love and hypnosis", is the title of one of the articles that Freud wrote in which he analysed Massenpsychologie. It is in so far as this ego-ideal, this Ideal du moi already constituted, introjected, can be reprojected onto an object - reprojected, let us underline here once again how the fact of not distinguishing, in the classical theory, the different registers of the symbolic, the imaginary and real ensures that these comings and goings of introjection and projection, which are after all, not obscure, but arbitrary, suspended, gratuitous, given over to a necessity which can only be explained in terms of the most absolute contingency...it is in so far as this ego-ideal can be reprojected onto an object that, if this object happens to be favourable to you, to regard you propitiously, it will be for you this object of loving cathexis to the highest degree in so far as here the description of the phenomenology of Verliebtheit is introduced by Freud at a level such as to make possible its almost total ambiguity with the effect of hypnosis.

The authors clearly understand that following on this second projection, there is nothing to stop us - in any case nothing stops them - from implying a second reintroduction which means that in certain more or less extreme states, among which they have no hesitation in putting at the limit manic states, the ego-ideal itself, even if it is carried away by the enthusiasm of the outpouring of love implied in the second phase, in the second projection, the ego-ideal can become for the subject completely identical, playing the same function as that established in the relationship of total dependency of Verliebtheit. With respect to an object, the ego-ideal can itself become something equivalent to what is called for in love, to what can give its full satisfaction to the "wanting to be loved", to the geliebt werden wollen.

I think that it is not at all evidence of an exaggerated requirement in conceptual matters to feel that, if these descriptions, especially when they are illustrated, carry with them certain glimmers of perspectives, flashes of which we

rediscover in clinical work, we cannot, in many respects, be completely satisfied with them.

In order to punctuate immediately what I can believe I can say is articulated in a more elaborated fashion by a schema like that of (9) the little montage which has not, like any other description of this kind, like those of the topographical order that Freud himself constructed, of course, any kind, not alone of pretention, but even of possibility of representing anything whatsoever of the organic order, let it be well understood that we are not one of those who, as one nevertheless sees being written, imagine, that with a suitable surgical operation, a lobotomy, one removes part of the super-ego with a little spoon. There are people who believe that, who have written, that one of the effects of lobotomy was, that one removed the super-ego, that one put it to one side on a plate, that is not what is in question. Let us observe what is articulated by the functioning implied in this little apparatus. It is not for nothing that it reintroduces a metaphor of an optical kind, there is certainly a reason for that which is not simply one of convenience: it is structural.

It is indeed in so far as that which is of the order of the mirror goes much further than the model as regards the properly imaginary mainspring, that here the mirror intervenes. But beware, it is obviously a schema a little bit more elaborated than that of the concrete experience which occurs in front of the mirror.

In effect something happens for the child in front of a real surface which effectively plays the role of mirror. This mirror, usually a plane mirror, a polished surface, is not to be confused with what is represented here as a plane mirror. The plane mirror which is here has a different function. This schema has the value of introducing the function of the big Other - whose figure, under the form of 0, is put here at the level of the apparatus of the plane mirror - of introducing the function of the big Other in so far as it must be implicated in these elaborations of narcissism respectively connoted, which must be connoted in a different fashion as ego-ideal and as ideal ego.

In order not to give you a description of this which might in a way be dry, which, at the same time would run the risk of appearing what it is not, namely arbitrary, I will therefore have to give it first of all under the form of a commentary which involves the authors to which we are referring, in so far as they were guided, obligated by the need to face up to a problem of thinking, of mapping out. It is certainly not in this (10) connotation in order to accentuate the negative effects but much more rather - it is always more interesting - what is positive in it.

Let us observe therefore that according to them, the object is supposed to be created by what? Properly speaking by the destructive instinct, Destruktionstrieb, Thanatos, as they call it, let us say, why not, hatred. Let us follow them. If it is true that things are that way, how can we conceive of it? If it

is the need for destruction which creates the object, is it further necessary that there should remain something of the object after the destructive effect, it is not at all unthinkable. Not alone is it not unthinkable, but we indeed rediscover here what we ourselves elaborate in a different manner at the level of what we call the field of the imaginary and the effects of the imaginary. Because, as one might say, what remains, what survives of the object after this libidinal effect, this destructive Trieb, after the properly thanatogenic effect which is thus implied, is precisely what eternalises the object under the aspect of a form, it is what fixes it forever as a type in the imaginary.

In the image, there is precisely something which transcends the movement, the changeable in life, in this sense that it survives it. It is in effect one of the first steps of art, for the antique nous, in so far as in statuary the mortal is eternalised.

It is moreover, as we know in a certain way, in our elaboration of the mirror, the function which is fulfilled by the image of the subject in so far as something is suddenly proposed to him in which he does not simply receive the field of something in which he recognises himself, but of something which already presents itself as an Urbild-Ideal, as something which will always be, something which subsists of itself, as something before which he essentially experiences his own fissures as a premature being, as a being who experiences himself as not yet even - at the moment that the image comes to his perception - sufficiently coordinated to respond to this image in its totality.

It is very striking to see the little child - sometimes still enclosed in one of these little contraptions with which he begins to try to make the first attempts to walk, and where again even the gesture of taking the arm or the hand, things which are marked by a certain assymetrical, inappropriate style - to see this being who is still insufficiently stabilised, even at the level of the cerebellum, nevertheless wave, incline towards, bend, twist himself around with all sorts of expressive babbling (11) in front of his own image provided one has put within his range a low enough mirror and showing, in a way, in a living fashion the contrast between this thing which can be sketched of something which is projected in front of him, which attracts him, with which he persists in playing, and this incomplete thing which is manifested in his own gestures.

And here, my old thematic of the mirror stage, in so far as I suppose in it, as I see in it an exemplary point, a highly significant point which allows us to presentify, to depict for ourselves the key points, the nodal points where there can come to light, be conceived the renewal of this sort of possibility always open to the subject, of a self-breaking, of a self-tearing, of a self-biting before this thing which is both himself and another.

I see in this a certain dimension of conflict in which there is no other solution than that of an: either ... or ... He either has to put up with it as an intolerable image which steals him

from himself, or he has to break it immediately, that is to say to reverse the position, to consider as cancelled, as cancellable, breakable the one he has before him, and to preserve of himself that which is at that moment the centre of his being, the drive of this being through the image, this image of the other whether it is specular or incarnated, which can be evoked in him. The relationship, the bond between the image and aggressivity is here quite articulatable.

Is it conceivable that a development, such a thematic could culminate at a sufficient consistency of the object, at an object which allows us to conceive of the diversity of the objectal phase as it develops in the course of the individual's life, is such a development possible?

In a certain fashion, one could say that it has been tried. In a certain fashion, one could say that the Hegelian dialectic of the conflict of consciences is after all nothing other than this attempt at elaborating the whole world of human knowledge starting from a pure conflict which is radically imaginary and radically destructive in its origin. You know that I have already highlighted its critical points, the points where gaps appear on different occasions and that this is not what I am going to do again today.

(12) For us, I think that there is no possibility, beginning from this radically imaginary starting point, of deducing everything that the Hegelian dialectic believes it can deduce from it. There are implications, unknown to itself, which allow it to function, which can in no way be satisfied with this support.

I would even say that if the hand which stretches out - and it is a hand which can be the hand of a very young subject, believe me, in the most direct, the most common observation - that if the hand which is stretched out towards the figure of its fellow armed with a stone - the child does not need to be very old in order to have, if not the vocation, at least the gestures of Cain - if this hand is stopped, even by another hand, namely of the one who is threatened, and that if, henceforth, they put down this stone together, it will constitute in a certain fashion an object, perhaps an object of accord, of dispute, that it will be in this respect the first stone, if you wish, of an objectal world, but that nothing will go beyond, nothing will be built upon it. This is indeed the case evoked as an echo in a harmonic which is called: the one who must throw the first stone and even in order that something should be constituted and come to a halt there, it is necessary, in effect, first of all that nothing should have been thrown and, not having thrown it the first time, it will not be thrown for any other reason.

It is clear that it is necessary that beyond the register of the Other, of the big O, should intervene for something to establish itself which opens out on a dialectic. This is what is expressed by the schema, in the measure that it means that it is in so far as the third, the big Other, intervenes in this relationship of the ego to the small other, that something can

function which involves the fecundity of the narcissistic relationship itself.

I say, in order to exemplify it again in a gesture of the child before the mirror, this gesture which is well known, quite possible to come across, to find, of the child who, in the arms of the adult, is deliberately confronted with his image - whether the adult understands or not, it is clear that this amuses him. All its importance must be given to this movement of the head of the child who, even after having been captivated, interested by these first outlines of the game that he is playing before his own image, turns back towards the adult who is carrying him, without one being able to say of course what he is expecting from him, whether it is of the order of an accord, of a testifying. But what we mean here, is that this reference to the Other comes (13) to play an essential function in it, and that it is not forcing this function to conceive it, to articulate it, and that we can put in its place what is going to be attached to the ideal ego and to the ego-ideal respectively in the subsequent development of the subject.

From this Other, in so far as the child in front of the mirror turns back towards him, what can come? We advance and we say: there can only come the sign, the image of o, i(o). This specular image, desirable and destructive at the same time, is, or not, effectively desired by the one towards whom he turns back, at the very place where the subject at that moment identifies himself, sustains this identification to this image. From this first original moment on, we find in a tangible way what I would call the antagonistic character of the ideal ego, namely that already, in this specular situation, there are reduplicated, and this time at the level of the Other - for the Other and through the Other, the big Other - the desired ego - I mean desired by him - and the authentic ego, das echte Ich - if you will allow me to introduce this term which has nothing especially new about it in the context in question - except for the fact that you should notice that, in this original situation, it is the ideal which is there - I am talking about the ideal ego, not the ego-ideal - and that it is the authentic ego which, for its part, is to come.

And it will be through the evolution, with all the ambiguities of this word, that the authentic will come to birth, that it will be this time loved in spite of everything, ouk echon, even though it is not perfection itself. This is moreover how there functions in the whole process the function of the ideal ego: with this character of progress, it is against the wind, in risk and defiance that there will be made all its subsequent development.

What is the function here of the ego-ideal? You will tell me that it is the Other, the big O, but you surely sense here that it is originally, structurally, essentially implicated, involved uniquely as the locus from where there can be constituted in its pathetic oscillation this perpetual reference to the ego - of the ego to this image which offers itself, to which it identifies itself, presents itself and sustains itself as problematical, but uniquely starting from the gaze of the big Other. For this gaze

of the big Other to be interiorised in its turn, does not mean that it is going to be confused with the place and the support which here already are constituted as ideal ego, it means something else, which goes very far. Because, this is to suppose an Einfühlung relationship which, by being admitted as (14) having to be necessarily as global as what is involved in the reference to a fully organised being - the real being who supports the child before his mirror - goes very far.

You see clearly that the whole question is here and that already I am highlighting the way in which, let us say, my solution differs from the classical solution, it is simply in something that I am going to say immediately even though it is our goal and the end on this occasion: it is from the first step that Freud takes in the articulation of what is Identifizierung, identification, in the first two forms in which he introduces it.

1 - A primitive identification which is extraordinarily important to remember in the first steps of his article - to which I will come back later, because they constitute all the same something that one cannot avoid - namely that Freud implies, as anterior to the very outline of the Oedipus situation, a first possible identification to the father as such. His head was full of the father. So that one allows him to make a first stage of identification to the father around which he develops a refined set of terms. He calls this identification "typically masculine", exquisit männlich. This takes place in development, I have no doubt about it. It is not a logical stage, it is a stage of development before the Oedipus complex has become engaged, to the point that in short he goes so far as to write that it is starting from this primordial identification that there would arise the desire towards the mother and, from then on, by a reversal, the father would be considered as a rival.

I am not in the process of saying that this stage is clinically grounded. I am saying that the fact that it should have appeared necessary for Freud's thinking should not, for us, at the time that Freud wrote this chapter, be considered as a sort of extravagance, as nonsense. There must have been a reason which necessitated for him this previous stage, and this is what my subsequent discourse will try to show you, I pass on.

2 - He then speaks about regressive identification, the one which results from the love relationship: in the measure that the object refuses love, the subject, by a regressive process - and you see there, it is not the only reason highlighted for which effectively it was necessary for Freud that there should have been this primordial stage of identification - the subject, by a (15) regressive process, is capable of identifying himself to the object which, in his call for love, disappoints him.

3 - Immediately after having given us these two modes of identification in the chapter, Die Identifizierung, it is the good old method that has been known for ages, since the Dora observation, namely the identification which comes from the fact that the subject recognises in the other the total, global situation in which it lives: hysterical identification par

excellence. It is because the young girl has just received that evening, in the room where there are assembled rather neurotic and disturbed subjects, a letter from her lover that our hysteric has an attack. It is clear that it is identification, in our vocabulary, at the level of desire, let us leave it to one side.

Freud deliberately pauses in his text to tell us that, in these two modes of identification, the two first fundamental ones - one being the earliest of all modes of Einfihlungs Bindung - identification always occurs through ein einziger Zug.

Here is something which, both alleviates many difficulties for us in more than one respect, in respect first of all of the conceivability - which, is not something that should be despised - of a single trait. Second point, this thing which for us converges towards a notion that we know well, that of the signifier - that does not mean that this einzigiger Zug, this single trait, is, by that alone, given as such, as signifier. Not at all. It is rather probable, if we begin from the dialectic that I am trying to outline before you, that it is possibly a sign. In order to say that it is a signifier, more is needed: we require its subsequent utilisation in a signifying battery or as something which is related to a signifying battery. But the pinpoint character of this point of reference to the Other, at the origin, in the narcissistic relationship, this is what is defined by this ein einziger Zug. I mean that it is what gives the response to the question: how is there interiorised, this gaze of the Other which, between the two twin brother enemies, of the ego or of the specular image - of the small other - which can of every instant tip the balance of preference?

This gaze of the Other, should be considered by us as being interiorised through a sign, that is enough, ein einziger Zug. There is no need for a whole field of organisation, for a massive (16) introjection. This point i of the single trait is a sign of the Other's assent, of the love-choice upon which the subject precisely can adjust his setting in the subsequent operation of the mirror, it is there somewhere, it is sufficient that the subject should coincide there in his relationship with the Other in order that this little sign, this einzigiger Zug, should be at his disposition.

The radical distinction between the ego-ideal - in so far as there is no particular reason to suppose another possible introjection - and the ideal ego, is that one is a symbolic introjection like every introjection: the ego-ideal, while the ideal ego is the source of an imaginary projection. That what happens at the level of the one, that narcissistic satisfaction should develop in the relationship to the ideal ego, depends on the possibility of being referred to this primordial symbolic term which can be monoformal, monosemantic, ein einziger Zug. This is capital for the whole development of what we have to say and, if you will still grant me a little time, I will begin then to recall simply what I can call, what I should consider as taken here from our theory of love.

Love, we have said, can only be conceived of in the perspective of demand. There is no love except for a being who can talk. The dimension, the perspective, the register of love develops, is outlined, is inscribed in what can be called the unconditional of the demand. It is what comes from the very fact of demanding, whatever one demands, simply in so far, not as one demands something, this or that, but in the register and the order of demand qua pure, that it is only a demand to be heard. I would go further, to be heard for what? Well, to be heard for something which could well be called "for nothing". This is not to say that this does not take us very far for all that. Because, implied in this "for nothing", there is already the place of desire.

It is precisely because the demand is unconditional that what is in question is not the desire of this or of that, but is simply desire. And that is the reason why, from the beginning, there is implied the metaphor of the *désirer* as such. And that is why when we began this year, I made you approach it from every angle. (17) The metaphor of the *désirer* in love implies what it is substituted for as metaphor, namely desire.

What is desired, is the *désirer* in the Other, which cannot happen unless the subject is conversed with as desirable, this is what he demands in the demand for love. But what we should see at this level, this point that I cannot omit today because it will be essential in that we will find it in our subsequent remarks, is something which we should not forget, it is that love as such - I always told you this and we will find it again required from every angle - is to give what one does not have. And that one cannot love except by becoming a non-haver, even if one has. That love as response implies the domain of not-having, is something that was invented not by me but by Plato, who discovered that Poverty alone, Penia, can conceive Love, could have the idea of becoming pregnant on the evening of a festival. And in effect, to give what one has is a festival, it is not love.

From which it follows - I am leading you on a little quickly, but you will see that we will fall on our feet - from which it follows, for the rich man - that exists and is even thought about - to love, that always requires a refusal. This is even the annoying thing. It is not only those who are refused who are annoyed, those who refuse, the rich, are not any more comfortable. This Versagung of the rich man is everywhere, it is not simply the mark of avarice, it is much more constitutive of the position of the rich man, whatever one may think of it.

And the thematic of folklore, of Griselda with all her seduction, even though she is all the same rather revolting - I think you know the story - is there to remind us of it. I would even go further while I am at it, the rich do not have a good press. In other words, we progressives, we do not like them very much. Let us beware, perhaps this hatred for the rich participates, by a secret path, quite simply in a revolt against love, in other words at a negation, at a Verneinung of the virtues of poverty which could well be at the origin of a certain méconnaissance of

what love is. The sociological result is moreover rather curious. It is that obviously in that way one facilitates the rich a good deal in their function, their role is made much easier, with that there is tempered in them or more (18) exactly they are given a thousand excuses to avoid their function of festival-givers. That does not mean that they are any the happier for that.

In short, it is quite certain, for an analyst, that it is very difficult for a rich man to love. This is something about which a certain preacher from Galilee has already made a little remark in passing. It would be more appropriate perhaps to pity him on this point, than to hate him, unless after all this hating, which again is quite possible, is a way of loving. What is certain, is that riches tends to render impotent. Long experience as an analyst allows me to tell you that in general I take this fact as given. And this is what explains things all the same, the necessity for example of detours. The rich man is forced to buy because he is rich, and in order to recover himself, in order to rediscover potency, he tries by buying at a discount to devalorize - it is from him that that comes, it is for his convenience - to achieve this, the simplest method for example, is not to pay. In this way sometimes he hopes to provoke what he can never acquire directly, namely the desire of the Other.

But that is enough about the rich. Leon Bloy once wrote La femme pauvre. I am very embarrassed, because for some time I am speaking all the time about Catholic authors, but it is not my fault if I spotted in it a long time ago some very interesting things. I would like if someone, one day, became aware of the awful, the extraordinary things in terms of psychoanalytic benefits, that are hidden in La femme pauvre which is a book that can scarcely be tolerated that only an analyst can understand - I have never yet seen any analyst interest himself in it - but he would have done well also to write: La femme riche. It is certain that only a woman can incarnate in a dignified way the ferocity of riches, but after all that is not enough and that poses, for her and very specially for the one who solicits her love, very particular problems. This would require a return to feminine sexuality. I apologise, I will be forced simply to indicate this to you as a sort of first indication.

I would like all the same because in short we cannot go any further today, to highlight from now, because what is in question when we talk about love is very specifically to describe the (19) field in which we will have to say what our place ought to be in the transference, to highlight before leaving you something which is not at all unconnected with these remarks about riches.

A little word about the saint. It is not completely out of place, because we have not finished with our Claudel. As you know, right at the end, in the solution given to the problem of desire, we have a saint, Orian by name, of whom it is expressly said that if he wants to give nothing to little Pensee, who happily is sufficiently armed to take it from him by force - it is because he has much too much: Joy, nothing less than that, Joy in its entirety, and that there is no question of debasing such

riches for a little adventure - this is said in the text - this sort of thing which happens like that, a matter of three nights in an hotel. It's a funny business. It is all the same a little superficial to apply psychology to creativity and to think simply that he is someone very repressed. But what poetic creativity signifies, namely the function that Orian has in this tragedy, namely that what interests us, is something quite different and this is what I want to highlight by pointing out to you that the saint is a rich man.

He does everything he can to look poor, it is true, at least in more than one country, but it is precisely that which makes him rich, and particularly stingy among the others because his is not a riches that one can easily get rid of. The saint lives entirely in the domain of having. The saint renounces perhaps some small things but it is to possess everything. And if you look very carefully at the lives of saints, you will see that he can only love God as a name of his jouissance. And his jouissance, in the final analysis, is always rather monstrous.

We have spoken in the course of our analytic remarks here about some human terms among which is the hero. This difficult question of the saint, I am introducing here only in an anecdotal fashion, and rather as a support, one of those that I believe altogether necessary to map out our position. Because, naturally, as you can well imagine, I am not placing us among the saints! That still has to be said. Because, by not saying it, it would still remain for many that this would be the ideal, as they say. There are many things that one is tempted, in our (20) connection to say would be the ideal. And this question of the ideal is at the heart of the problems of the position of the analyst, this is what you will see being developed in what follows, and precisely everything that it would be appropriate for us to abandon in this category of the ideal.

Seminar 25: Wednesday 14 June 1961

I woke up this morning with an appalling headache. That never happens to me, I don't know where it could have come from.

I read, while I was having my breakfast, an excellent work by Conrad Stein on primary identification. It is not every day that I get things like that from my students...! What I am going to say today will show him that his work was well orientated. But I no longer know where we were the last time and, as they say, I have not prepared my seminar well. We are going to try to advance. I had intended to read Sappho in order to find there things which might illuminate you. This is going to take us to the heart of the function of identification. Since it is still a question of locating the position of the analyst, I thought that it would be no harm to take things up again.

Freud wrote Hemmung, Symptom und Ankrst. in 1926. It is the third phase of putting his thought together, the first two were constituted by the stage of the Traumdeutung and the second topography. We are going, right away, to go the heart of the problem evoked by him, which is that of the meaning of anxiety. We are even going to go further because, right away, we are going to start from the economic point of view. The problem is to know from where there is taken, he tells us, the energy for the signal of anxiety. In the Gesammelte Werke, XIV, page 120, I read the following sentence: Das Ich zieht die (vorbewusste) Besetzung von der zu verdrängenden Triebreprä'sentanz ab und verwendet sie für die Unlust - (Angst) - entbindung. Translated "The ego withdraws its (preconscious) cathexis from the instinctual representative" - that which is representative in the drive - "that is to be repressed and uses that cathexis for the purpose of releasing unpleasure (anxiety), Unlust-(Angst-)."

(2) It is obvious that it is not a question of falling on a sentence of Freud's and then of beginning to intellectualise. If I put it before you right away, it is after mature reflection.

It is a carefully deliberated choice which is meant to encourage you to reread this article as soon as possible.

As regards our own purposes, let us apply it, let us transport it right away to the heart of our problems. I have told you enough about it for you to suspect that the structuring formula of the phantasy ^Oo must be involved at this moment of orientation that we are at. This phantasy, is something I have not simply

formulated, but evoked, approached even, closely dogged even in every possible way. In order to show the necessity of this formula, it is necessary to know that, in this support of desire, there are two elements whose respective functions and functional relationship cannot in any way be verbalised by any attribute which would be exhaustive, and this is why I must give them as a support these two algebraic elements and accumulate around these two elements the characteristics that are in question.

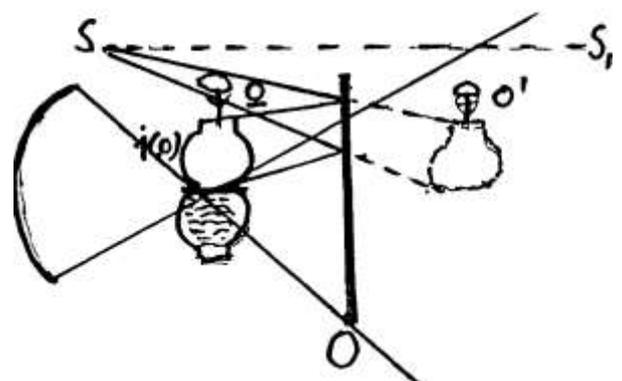
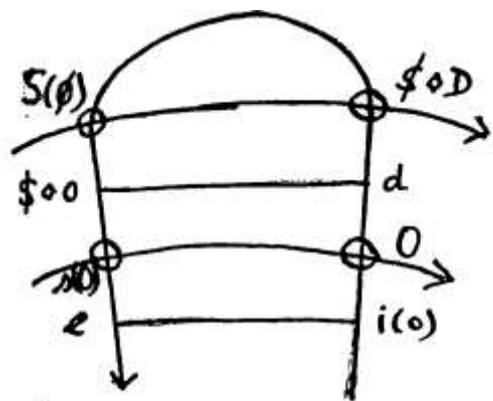
You know enough about it to know that $j!$ is related to something which is called the fading of the subject and that the small other, which is the small o , has something to do with what is called the object of desire. This symbolisation has already the importance and the effect of showing that desire does not present itself in a simple subjective relationship to the object - even a reflexive one - the subject "thinking himself" in a relationship of knowledge to the object. The theory of desire is constructed to put in question again this theory of knowledge and the Cartesian "I think, therefore I am", which is something others have already done.

Let us take up this sentence and let us try to apply it to that. I will not give you the last word right away, in this way I am bringing you halfway in order to give you the illusion of searching.

What is meant by Freud's little sentence concerning the decathexis of the Triebreprezentanz in order that anxiety should be produced? That means that the cathexis of o is directed back onto the subject.

This subject is only graspable as that. He cannot be conceived of except as a place, because it is not even this point of reflexivity of the subject which could be grasped as desiring. Because the subject does not grasp himself in any way as desiring. But, in the phantasy in which he might do it, this place is always reserved. It is even reserved to such an (3) extent that it is ordinarily occupied by what is produced homologically at the lower stage of the graph, $i(o)$ the image of the specular other, namely that it is not necessarily, but ordinarily occupied by that.

This is what is expressed, in the little schema which you saw above and which we have rubbed out, by the function of the real image of the vase in the illusion of the inverted vase, this vase which has been produced in order to appear to be surrounding the base of these floral stems which elegantly symbolise the little p , this is what is in question, it is the image, the narcissistic $ghcst$ which comes to fill, in the phantasy, the function of coadapting oneself to desire, the illusion of grasping one's object, as one might say. Henceforth, if $\$$ is this place which can from time to time be found to be empty, namely that nothing comes to be produced there which is satisfying as regards the emergence of the narcissistic image, we can conceive



that it is indeed that to which there responds at its summons the production of the signal of anxiety.

I am going to try to show this extremely important point which one can say the final article of Freud on this subject really gives us all the elements to resolve - without giving it properly speaking the final twist. For the moment, the screw is still not tightened.

Let us say, with Freud, that the signal of anxiety is indeed something which is produced at the level of the ego. Nevertheless, we perceive here, thanks to our formalisations, that we are going perhaps to be able to say a little bit more about this "at the level of the ego". Our notations are going to allow us to deconstruct this question, to articulate it in a more precise fashion and this is what will (4) allow us to go beyond some of the points where, for Freud, the question ended up in an impasse.

Here, I am going right away to make a leap, Freud says, at the moment that he speaks about the economy, about the transformation necessary for the production of a signal of anxiety, that it ought not to require a very great quantity of energy to produce a signal. Freud indicates to us already that there is here a relationship between the production of this signal and something which is of the order of Verzicht - of renunciation, close to Versagung - because of the fact that the subject is barred. In the Verdrängung of the Triebreprasentanz, there is this correlation of the concealment of the subject which well confirms the correctness of our notation of the S barred, $f >$. The leap consists in designating here for you what I have announced to you for a long time as the place which the analyst really holds to - that does not mean that he occupies it all the time - but the place where he waits - and this word "to wait" takes on here all its import, what we will rediscover about the function of waiting, of the Erwartung - for the subject to constitute, to structure this signal. This place is precisely the place of ^ in the phantasy.

I said that I was taking a leap, namely that I am not proving it right away, I am indicating where I am leading you. Now, let us take the steps which are going to allow there to be understood what is in question. One thing therefore is given to us, it is that the signal of anxiety is produced somewhere, this somewhere that may be occupied by i(o), the ego qua image of the other, the ego qua fundamentally a function of miscognition. It occupies this place, not at all in so far as this image occupies it, but qua place, namely in so far as on occasions this image may be dissolved there. Observe carefully that I am not saying that it is the lack of the image which makes anxiety emerge. Observe carefully that what I have always said is that the specular relationship, the original relationship of the subject to the specular image is set up in what is called a reaction of aggressivity. In my article on the mirror stage, I already indicated this same specular relationship, I defined it, established it, as not being unrelated to anxiety, I even indicated that the way to grasp aggressivity in a slice, transversally, was to see that one had to orientate oneself in the direction of the temporal relationship. In effect, there is no spatial relationship which refers itself to the specular image to the other as such, namely that, when it begins to come to (5) life, when it becomes the incarnated other, there is a temporal relationship: "I can't wait (i 'ai hate) to see myself like him, otherwise where will I be?".

But, if you refer to my texts, you will also see that I am more prudent there and that, if I do not push the formula to its extremes, there is a reason for it. The function of haste in logic, those who are very aware of what I have written know that I dealt with it somewhere in a kind of little sophism which is the one of the problem of the three discs. This function of haste, namely this way in which man precipitates himself into his resemblance to man, is not anxiety. In order that anxiety should be constituted, there has to be a relationship at the level of desire. This indeed is why it is at the level of phantasy that I am leading you today by the hand in order to approach this problem of anxiety. I am going to show you well in advance where we are going and we will come back again in order to make a few detours around the kernel of the problem.

Here therefore is where the analyst is supposed to be in the relationship of the subject to desire, to an object of desire which we suppose on this occasion to be this object which carries with it a menace, of which there is question and which determines the zu verdrängen, the to be repressed. All of this is not definitive.

Let us pose ourselves the following question. If this is the way that we are tackling the problem, what would the subject expect of an ordinary companion who dared, in ordinary conditions, to occupy this same place? If this object is dangerous, because this is what is in question, the subject would expect him to give him the signal: "Danger", the one which, in the case of real danger, makes the subject scamper away. I mean that what I am introducing at this level, is something which one regrets Freud did not introduce into his dialectic, because it was something that should have been done. He tells us that the internal danger is altogether comparable to an external danger and that the subject strives to avoid it in the same way as one avoids an external danger. But then, look at what this offers us in terms of an effective articulation, think of what really happens in animal psychology.

Among social animals, among herd animals, everyone knows the role played by the signal before the enemy of the herd: the cleverest and the best of the herd animals is there to smell him, to scent him, to pick him out. The gazelle, the antelope lift their (6) noses, give a little bell and there is no delaying: everyone heads off in the same direction. The notion of signal in a social complex, the reaction to a danger, here is where we grasp at the biological level what exists in an observable society. Here it can be perceived that this signal of anxiety, it is indeed from the alter ego, from the other who constitutes his ego, that the subject can receive it.

There is something that I would like to highlight here. For a long time you have heard me warning you about the dangers of altruism. Beware, I said to you implicitly and explicitly of the snares of Mitleid, pity, of what prevents us from harming the other, the poor kid, so that one ends up marrying her and both spend a long time being sick of one another. I am schematizing: these are the dangers of altruism. Only, if these are dangers about which it is only humane to warn you, that does not mean that this is the final resort. This moreover is the reason why I am not, with regard to X to whom I speak from time to time, the devil's advocate who brings him back to the principles of a healthy egoism and who would turn him away from this quite attractive course which would consist in not being wicked.

The fact is that this precious Mitleid, this altruism, for the subject who does not know himself, is only the cover for something else, and you will always observe it, on condition all the same of being on the analytic plane. Work a little on the Mitleid of an obsessional: and here the first phase is to notice, with what I am highlighting for you, with what moreover the whole moralist tradition permits on occasion to be affirmed, namely that what he respects, what he does not want to touch in the image of the other, is his own image. But why is this in the final analysis? It is because if it were not carefully preserved, this unstainability, untouchability of his own image, what would arise from all that would be well and truly anxiety, and anxiety before what? Not before the other around whom he turns, the one whom I called above "the poor kid" - who is that only in his imagination, because she is always much tougher than you can imagine - and it is before "the poor kid" that he is anxious, before o, not the image of himself, but before the other, o, as object of his desire.

I am saying this to clearly illustrate something very important, which is that if anxiety is produced topographically at the place (7) defined by i(o), namely - as Freud's last formulation articulates it for us - at the place of the ego, there is no signal of anxiety, except in so far as it refers to an object of desire, this object of desire in so far as it disturbs the ideal ego, i(o), the one which takes its origin in the specular image.

What is meant by this link which is absolutely necessary to understand the signal of anxiety? That means that the function of this signal is not exhausted in its Warnung, its warning that you should scamper away. The fact is that, while accomplishing its function, this signal maintains the relationship with the object of desire. This is what is the key and the mainspring of what Freud, in this article and elsewhere, in a repeated fashion and with this accent, this choice of terms, this incisiveness which is so illuminating in him, accentuates for us, characterises for us by distinguishing the situation of anxiety from that of danger, Gefahr, and from that of Hilflosigkeit. In Hilflosigkeit. helplessness, being without recourse, the subject is simply turned inside out, overwhelmed by an erupting situation which he cannot face up to in any way. Between that and taking flight, what is the solution which, although it is not heroic, is the one which Napoleon himself found to be the truly courageous solution when it was a question of love: between that and flight, there is something else. And this is what Freud highlights for us in underlining, in anxiety, this character of Erwartung, of waiting, this is the central feature. That we can make of it secondarily the reason for decamping, is one thing, but it is not its essential character. Its essential character, is the Erwartung and this is what I am designating in telling you that anxiety is the radical mode under which there is maintained the relationship to desire. When, for reasons of resistance, of defence, etc.... everything that you can put in the order of mechanisms of cancelling out the object, when nothing but that remains and when the object disappears, vanishes, but not what can remain of it, namely the Erwartung, the direction towards its empty place - the place that it is henceforth missing from, where there is no longer question of anything but an unbestimmt Objekt, or again, as Freud says, we are in the relationship of Objektlosigkeit - when we are at that point, anxiety is the final mode, the radical mode under which it continues to sustain, even if it is in an unbearable way, the relationship to desire.

(8) There are other ways of sustaining the relationship to desire which concern the unsustainability of the object, this indeed is why I explain to you that hysteria, obsessionality can be characterised by these statuses of desire that I called, for you, unsatisfied desire and sustained as impossible desire, established in its impossibility.

But it is enough for you to turn your gaze towards the most radical form of neurosis, phobia, which is that around which there turns Freud's whole discourse in this article, phobia which cannot be defined otherwise than as follows: it is constructed to sustain the relationship of the subject to desire under the form of anxiety. The only thing that is to be added to fully define it, is that, just as the complete definition of the hysteric as regards phantasy is oO/ the metaphor of the other at the point that the subject sees himself as castrated, confronted with the big Other - Dora, in so far as it is by the mediation of Mr K that she desires, but that he is not the one she loves, it is through the mediation of the one she desires that she orientates herself towards the one that she loves, namely Madame K - which means that it is necessary for us to complete the formula for phobia also: therefore phobia, is indeed the following, the sustaining, the maintaining of the relationship to desire in anxiety with something supplementary, more precise. It is not the relationship of anxiety alone, it is that the place of this object, in so far as it is aimed at by anxiety, is required because of what I explained to you at length, in connection with Little Hans, to be the function of the phobic object, namely big phi,⁵ the symbolic phallus in so far as it is the joker in the pack, namely that there is indeed question, in the phobic object, of the phallus, but it is the phallus that will take on the value of all the signifiers, that of the father on this occasion. What is remarkable in this observation, is at once his lack and his presence: lack in the form of the real father - Hans' father - presence under the form of the encroaching symbolic father - Freud. If all of this can play the same place on the same plane, it is of course, because already, in the object of the phobia, there is this infinite possibility of considering a certain function lacking, deficient, which is precisely that before which the subject was going to succumb if there did not arise at that place anxiety.

Having made this little circuit, I think that you can grasp that, if the function of the signal of anxiety warns us of something, (9) and of something very important in clinical, analytic practice, it is because the anxiety to which your subjects are open is not at all uniquely, as is believed, as you always look for it, an anxiety whose sole source would be, as I might say, internal to himself. It is proper to the neurotic to be, in this respect, as Monsieur Andre' Breton called it, a vase communicant. The anxiety with which your neurotic has to deal, anxiety as energy, is an anxiety that he is much in the habit of searching for with a magnifying glass right and left in one or other of the big O's with whom he has to deal. It is just as valid for him, just as usable for him as what he generates himself.

If you do not take this into account in the economy of an analysis, you will make serious mistakes. You will be at the stage, in many cases, of scratching your head to know from where there comes on one or other occasion this little re-emergence of anxiety at the moment when you least expected it. It is not necessarily from his own, from the one that you are already aware of through the practice of the previous months of analysis, that of the neighbours also counts,

and then your own. You think that there, of course, you have found your bearings again. You know well that you have already been warned about this. I am afraid that this does not warn you about very much, because precisely a question introduced starting from this consideration, is that of knowing what this warning implies, namely that your own anxiety, should not come into play, that the analysis ought to be aseptic as regards your own anxiety. What can that mean, on the plane that I am trying to sustain you for a whole year, on the synchronic plane, that which does not allow the invasion of diachrony, namely that you have already largely overcome your own anxiety in your previous analysis, which resolves nothing? Because what it is a question of knowing, is the status in which you ought currently to be, you yourself as regards your desire, in order that there should not emerge in you, in analysis, not simply the signal, but also the energy of anxiety, in so far as it is there, if it emerges, ready-made to tip over into the economy of your subject, and this in the measure that he is more advanced in the analysis, namely that it is at the level of the big Other that you are for him that he is going to search out the path of his desire. Such is the status of the analyst in the synchrony involving anxiety.

(10) In any case, in order to loop this first loop, which makes intervene the function of the Other, big O as being concerned in the possibility of the emergence of anxiety as signal, you see both that the reference to the herd, in so far as this signal is exercised within a function of imaginary communication, is necessary - because it is through this that I want to make you sense that, if anxiety is a signal, this means that it can come from another - it nevertheless remains, in so far as it is a question of a relationship to desire, that the signal is not exhausted in the metaphor of the danger of the enemy of the herd, and precisely in this which distinguishes the human herd from the animal herd, that for each subject, as everyone knows, except entrepreneurs in collective psychology, the enemy of the herd is himself.

In this reference to the reality of the herd, we find an interesting transposition of what Freud articulates for us under the form of "internal danger". We find here confirmation of what I am always telling you about with regard to the universal in man. The individual and the collective are one and the same level. What is true at the level of the individual, this internal danger, is also true at the level of the collective. It is the same internal danger to the subject which is the internal danger to the herd. This comes from the originality of the position of desire as such, in so far as desire has just emerged to fill up the lack of certitude, the lack of guarantee to which the subject finds himself confronted with respect to what is important to him in so far as he is not simply a herd animal - he is that perhaps, only this elementary relationship, which surely exists, is gravely disturbed by the fact that it finds itself included, just as much at the collective level as at the individual level, in the relationship to the signifier.

The social animal, for his part, at the moment that he decamps with the signal that the watching animal or the loving animal gives him, is the herd. The speaking being, for his part, is essentially the want-to-be which has arisen from a certain relationship to the discourse, from a poetry, if you wish. This want-to-be, is something he cannot fill - I already articulated and indicated it for you - except through this action which - you sense it better in this context and in this parallel - takes on so easily, perhaps always takes on radically this character of headlong flight. But

precisely, fundamentally, this very action does not suit the herd at all. It does not operate at all on the plane of coherence or of collective defence. In a word, in (11) principle, the herd scarcely accommodates itself to his own action, or even does not want anything to do with it, and not only the herd, reality does not want anything to do with his action either, because reality - I am not saying the real - is precisely the sum total of certitudes accumulated by means of the addition of a series of previous actions, whereas the new one is always unwarranted.

This is what allows us to situate correctly, namely in a way which overlaps experience, namely - which is all the same surprising and nevertheless always more or less obvious - this little surge of anxiety which is produced every time the desire of the subject is really in question. We are there at the common place, at the root, at the kernel of everything that our experience gives us.

If analysis was not of some use in making men understand that their desire, firstly, is not the same thing as their need and, secondly, that desire in itself has a dangerous character, which is this danger whose character is quite obviously from the menace that it involves for the herd, I ask myself then what use analysis ever was.

It is a matter of climbing something and, because we are engaged on the path adopted today and perhaps more directly than the royal road which I did not prepare today, we are going to continue in the same way. We are going to pose an insidious question. I already prepared the question of what the Versagung of analysis should be, but there frankly I did not tell you much more about it. I pose the same question to you, is not the fruitful Versagung of analysis to refuse to the subject the analyst's own anxiety, to leave bare the place where he is in short summoned naturally, as Other, to give the signal of anxiety?

Let us see there being outlined this something of which I already gave you, at least the last time, the indication in telling you that the pure place of the analyst, in so far as we can define it in and through the phantasy, would be the place of the pure desirer, erastes or eron, which would mean this somewhere where there is always produced the function of desire, namely to come in place of the eromenos or of the eromenon - because this is the reason why I made you, at the beginning of the year, undertake this long investigation of the Symposium and of the theory of (12) love. One must succeed in conceiving that some subject is capable of holding the place of pure desirer, of abstracting himself, of removing himself, in the relationship to the other, from any supposition of being desirable.

What you have read of the remarks, of the responses of Socrates in the Symposium, should give you an idea of what I am in the process of telling you, because, if something is incarnated and signified by the episode with Alcibiades, it is indeed that. On the one hand, Socrates affirms that he does not know anything, except about what appertains to love. Everything we are told about him is that he is an put and put, inexhaustible desirer. But when it is a question of showing himself in the position of the desired one, namely in face of the public, scandalous, uncontrolled, drunken aggression of Alcibiades, what we are shown is that there is literally no longer anything there. This, I am not saying that it resolves the affair, but it at least illustrates what I am talking to you about. This

has a meaning which has, at least, been incarnated somewhere, because it is not only to me that Socrates appears to be a human enigma - a case like no other that has been seen and which one does not know what to do about, no matter what kind of tweezers one tries to seize him with - it is to everybody, every time that someone has really, in connection with Socrates, posed the question: what was this guy made of? Why did he wreck havoc everywhere simply by appearing and by telling little stories which seem to be about everyday affairs?

I would like us to pause a little at the place of the desirer. This has an echo, this rhymes with something that I would call the place of the prayer, in prayer. Because, in prayer, the prayer sees himself in the process of praying, there is no prayer unless the prayer sees himself in the process of praying.

I thought this morning- of Priam. He is the type of the prayer who entreats from Achilles the body of the last of his sons who are too many for him to count - he had fifty of them, it appears that this is more or less the last one: in any case, this Hector is very important to him. What does he tell Achilles? He cannot talk too much about Hector and that for several reasons. First of all because it is not easy to speak about him in the state that he is at that moment. Then, as it appears, every time there is question of the living Hector, Achilles, who is not an easy person to deal with, nor the master of his impulses, becomes furious again, even though he had received divine instructions, (13) namely that his mother Thetis had come to tell him: "The big boss wants you to give Hector back to his father, Priam. He came to visit me expressly for that". He is within a hair's breadth of not giving him back.

The important thing, is that Priam does not play the psychologist all that much. By the very fact that he is in the position of prayer, he is going to presentify in his very demand the personage of the prayer. I mean that Priam's prayer, the one which has resonated from the beginning of our age - because, even if you have not read the Iliad, this episode is circulating there among all of you as a model through the mediation of all the other models that it engendered - he raises, he reduplicates this praying personage that he is with another who is described, who is inserted into his prayer in the form of someone who is not there, namely Peleus, the father of Achilles whom he represents. It is he who prays, but in his prayer, it is necessary that this prayer should pass through something which is not even the invocation of Achilles' father - he traces out for him the figure of a father, who, for his part, is perhaps at this very moment, he says, very troubled because his neighbours are teasing him unmercifully. He knows that he has still a son who is someone of value, Achilles here present. You will rediscover in every prayer what I am calling the place of the prayer at the very interior of the demand of the one who is praying. The desirer - this is why I am making this detour, this is not the same, I mean that the desirer, as such - can say nothing of himself, except to abolish himself as desirer. Because, this is what defines the pure place of the subject qua desiring, it is that at every attempt at articulating oneself there emerges nothing other than a fainting of language and an impotency to speak because, once he speaks he is nothing but a beggar, he passes to the register of demand, and this is something else.

This is no less important if we have to formulate in some way that which, in this response to the other which constitutes analysis,

constitutes the specific form of the place of the analyst.

In order to finish today on something which will add perhaps a little more a formula from which there is no escape to all of those which already I seem to be serving you with, it is this one which has indeed some interest in so far as it completes the elements whose compass I have just sketched out, it is that, if (14) anxiety is what I told you it was, this relationship of sustaining desire where the object is missing, we rediscover this other thing of which we have experience, the fact is that, to reverse the formula - this is constantly seen in practice - desire is a remedy for anxiety. The most insignificant neurotic person knows as much about this, or even more than you. The support found in desire, however inconvenient it may be with its whole train of guilt, is something all the same much easier to hold to than the position of anxiety, so that in short, for someone who is - a little astute and experienced - I say that for the analyst - it would be a question of always having within one's reach a little well-polished desire in order not to be exposed to bringing into play into analysis a quantum of anxiety which would be neither opportune or welcome.

Is it then towards this that I intend to lead you? Surely not. In any case it is not easy to locate by hand the walls of the corridor. The question that is involved is not about the expedient of desire, it is of a certain relationship with desire which is not sustained in this way a week at a time.

At our next meeting, we are going to come back to the distinction, inaugurated the last time, of the relationship of the subject to the ideal ego and to the ego-ideal. This will allow us to orientate for ourselves in the true topography of desire, the function of the einziaer Zug, from what fundamentally differentiates the ego-ideal in such a way that it is only from there that one can distinguish, define the function of the object in its relationships with the narcissistic function.

This is what I hope to complete at our next meeting, by placing it under the title of the formula of Pindar "Man, the dream of a shadow, skias onar anthropos", he wrote in the last verse of the eighth Ode. This relationship between the dream and the shadow, between the symbolic and the imaginary, is that around which I will make our decisive remarks turn.

Seminar 26: Wednesday 21 June 1961

We are going to try today to make some remarks on the subject of identification in the measure that you have grasped, I hope, that we are led to it as the final term of the precise question around which we have made revolve this year our whole attempt at the elucidation of transference. I already announced to you the last time that I would begin again under the sign of the celebrated ejaculation of Pindar, in the eighth Pythian Ode composed for Aristomenes, the wrestler from Agina, the winner at the Games, "man, the dream of a shadow".

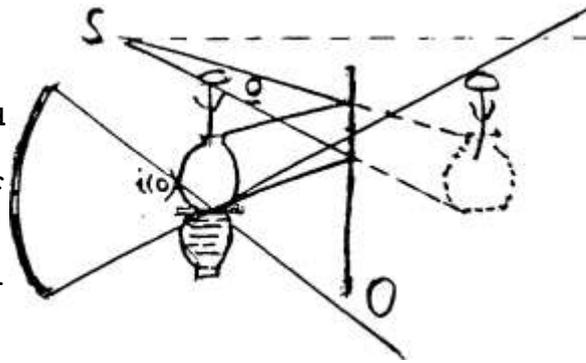
We will take up here again our reference to this relationship, the one to which, for your sakes, I tried to give the support of a model, between two concrete levels of identification - it is not by chance that I am putting the accent on the necessary distinction between them, an obvious distinction, phenomenologically within everyone's range. The ideal ego is not to be confused with the ego-ideal, this is something that the psychologist can discover of his own accord, and which moreover he does not fail to do. That the thing is just as important in the articulation of the Freudian dialectic, is indeed what will be confirmed for us, for example by the work to which I alluded the last time, that of M. Conrad Stein on primary identification.

This work ends with the recognition that what still remains obscure, is the difference between the two series that Freud distinguishes, underlines and accentuates as being the identifications of the ego and the identifications of the ego-ideal .

Let us take up therefore this little schema with which you are beginning to become familiar and which you will rediscover when you begin to work after a little rest on the number of the journal La Psychanalyse which is about to appear (see the schema).

(2) The illusion here represented, which is called that of the inverted vase can only be produced for an eye which is situated somewhere within the cone thus produced by the point of junction of the edge of the spherical mirror with the focal point where there is produced the so-called illusion of the inverted vase. You know that this illusion, a real image, is what we use to metaphorise something which I call $i(o)$, regarding which you know that what is in question is that it is the support for the

function of the image. In it is the image as such and its tone, its accent, its power of fascination, the proper to it in of this libidinal well distinguished by the term of narcissistic cathexis. The function $i(o)$ is the central function of narcissistic cathexis.



specular other words, specular charged with special of cathexis the register cathexis

Freud under

These words are not enough to define all the relations, all the incidences under which we see appearing the function of $i(o)$. What we are going to say today will allow you to specify what is in question, it is moreover what I call also the ideal ego function cm a opposed and distinct from that of the ego-ideal.

Over against the bringing into play of the Other, the big O , the Other in so far as he is the Other of the speaking subject, the Other in so far as through him, the locus of the word, there comes to operate for every subject, for every subject with whom we, for our part have to deal as analysts, the incidence of the signifier, we can here fix the place of what is going to function as ego-ideal. In the little schema, as you will see it published in the journal which is going to appear, you will see that this purely virtual S is only there as a figuration of a function of the subject which is, as I might say, a necessity of (3) thought, this same necessity which is at the source of the theory of knowledge. We could not conceive of anything as object supported by the subject which does not precisely have this function of the subject whose real existence, as analysts, we put in question because what we, as analysts, bring to light, by the fact that the subject with whom we have to deal is essentially a subject who speaks, this subject cannot be confused with the subject of knowledge - because it is really a banal truth to have to remind analysts that the subject, for us, is not the subject of knowledge, but the subject of the unconscious. We could not speculate about it as the pure transparency of thought to itself because - this is precisely what we rise up against - it is pure illusion that thought is transparent.

I know the insurrection I may provoke at a turning point like this in the mind of a philosopher. Believe me, I have already had serious enough discussions with supporters of the Cartesian position to say that there is all the same a way for us to understand one another. I am therefore leaving to one side the discussion itself which is not what interests us today. This subject therefore, this S which is here in our schema, is in a position to use an artifice, of being only able to use an artifice, of only acceding by means of an artifice to the grasping of this image, the real image which is produced at $i(o)$, and this because he is not there. It is only through the mediation of the mirror of the Other that he comes to place himself there. Since he is nothing, he cannot see himself there, moreover it is not himself qua subject that he is looking

for in this mirror. A very long time ago, in the "Discourse on psychic causality" the Bonneval discourse shortly after the war, I spoke about this "mirror without... surface in which nothing is reflected".

This enigmatic remark might then have led to a confusion with some more or less mystical ascetic practice. You should recognise today what I meant or, more exactly, begin to sense the point on which there can be centred the question of the function of the analyst as mirror - it is not the mirror of specular assumption that is in question - I mean as regards the place that he the analyst has to hold, even if it is in this mirror that there must be produced the virtual specular image. This virtual image which is here at i' (o), here it is and it is indeed in effect what the subject sees in the other, but he only (4) sees it there in so far as he is in a place which is not confused with the place of what is reflected.

No condition binds him to be at the place of i (o) in order to see himself at i' (o). Certain conditions bind him to be all the same in a certain field which is the one sketched by the lines limiting a certain conical volume.

Why then, in this original schema, did I put S at the point that I put it, where you will find it in the figure that I published, nothing implies that it should be there rather than elsewhere? In principle, it is there because, with respect to the orientation of the figure, you see it appearing, in a way, behind i (o) and that this position behind is not without its phenomenological correspondent which is expressed well enough by an expression which is not there by chance: "an idea in the back of one's head". Why therefore should ideas, which are generally the ideas which sustain us, be qualified as ideas at the back of one's head? It should also be clearly understood that it is not for nothing that the analyst stays behind the patient. Moreover, this thematic of what is in front and what is behind, is one that we are going to rediscover later on.

In any case, it would be well for you to note the degree to which the fact that the position of S in so far as it is not located, as it is only locatable somewhere in the field of the Other, in the virtual field that the Other develops by his presence as ' field of reflection of the subject, only in so far as this position of S is found there at a point big I and in so far as it is distinct from the place where i^* (o) is projected, it is only in so far as this distinction is not alone possible, but that it is commonplace that the subject can apprehend what is fundamentally illusory in his identification in so far as it is narcissistic.

There is skias, the shadow, der Schatten, Freud says somewhere and precisely in connection with what? Das verlorene Objekt, the lost object in the work of mourning. Der Schatten, the shadow, that which the narcissistic structure of the world contributes in terms of essential opacity in the relationship to the object, if it is surmountable, it is in so far as the subject through the Other can identify himself elsewhere. In effect, if this is where I am in my relationship to the Other, in so far as we have imaged it here, under the form of a mirror under the form that existentialist philosophy grasps it and grasps it to the

exclusion of everything else, and this is what constitutes its (5) limitation, to say that the other, is the one who sends us back our image - in effect, if the other is nothing other than the one who sends me back my image, I am only indeed, in effect, nothing other, than what I see myself to be. Literally, I am the big Other as other in so far as he himself, if he exists, sees the same thing as I, he also sees himself at my place. How can I know if what I see myself to be there is not the whole affair because, in short, if the Other is this mirror, it is enough for us - which is the simplest of hypotheses, because he is the Other - to suppose him, for his part, to be a living mirror, in order to conceive that he, for his part, sees just as much as I do and, in a word, when I look at him, it is he in me who looks at himself and who sees himself at my place, at the place that I occupy in him. It -is he who grounds the truth of this look if he is nothing other than his own look.

To dissipate this mirage, something I represented for you the other day, is enough, is necessary, happens every day, like this movement of the head of the little child who turns back towards the one who is carrying him. It hardly requires that much, a nothing, a flash - that is saying too much, because a flash of lightning was always considered to be something, the very sign of the father of the gods, no less, and it is moreover the reason why I am advancing it - but a fly flying past is enough, if it passes in this field and goes bzz, to make me locate myself elsewhere, to draw me out of the conical field of visibility of i(o) .

Do not believe that I am amusing myself if I introduce here the fly or the wasp who goes bzz, or anything whatsoever that makes a noise, that surprises us. You know well that this is the elective object which is sufficient in its minimal character to constitute that I call the signifier of a phobia. It is precisely in that that this sort of object can have an operational, instrumental function which is quite sufficient to put in question the reality, the consistency of the illusion of the ego as such. It is enough that anything whatsoever should shift in the field of the Other, become the point of support of the subject for there to be, on the occasion of one of these gaps, dissipated, made uncertain, put in question the consistency of the Other, of what is there qua field of narcissistic cathexis. Because, if we follow the teaching of Freud rigorously, this field is central, essential, this field is that around which the whole destiny of human desire is played out. But there is not only this field, the proof is that already in Freud, at the beginning of the introduction of this field, in Zur Einführung des Narzissmus, it is distinguished from another, from (6) the relationship to the archaic object, from the relationship to the nourishing field of the maternal object. It takes on its value in the Freudian dialectic by being distinguished first of all as being of a different order.

What I am introducing to you once again by telling you that this other field, which if I understand correctly what M. Conrad Stein identified in his work under the term of primary identification, is structured for us in an original, radical fashion by the presence of the signifier as such It is not simply for the pleasure of contributing a new articulation in what is indeed always the same field, it is that by highlighting this function-

of the signifier as decisive, as that through which what comes from that field is simply what opens out for us the possibility of emerging from the pure and simple capture in the narcissistic field, it is only by highlighting it in this way, by highlighting as essential the function of the signifying element that we can introduce clarifications, possibilities of distinctions which are those necessitated - as you will see, I will show it to you, I hope - imperiously necessitated by clinical questions which are the most concrete possible. Outside of which, this introduction of which I am speaking, the articulation of the signifier as such in the structuring of this field of the Other, of the big Other, there is no salvation. It is uniquely through it that there can be resolved clinical questions which up to now have remained unresolved and which, because they have remained unresolved, lead equally to irreducible confusions.

In other words, this 'skias onar anthropos, man, the dream of a shadow" is my dream, it is by moving about in the field of the dream in so far as it is the field of the wanderings of the signifier that I can glimpse that I can dissipate the effects of the shadow, that I will be able to know that it is only a shadow.

Of course, there is something which I can still not know for a long time, it is that I am dreaming, but it is already at the level and in the field of the dream. If I know how to question it properly, if I know how to articulate it properly, not alone do I triumph over the shadow, but I gain my first access to the idea that there is something more real than the shadow, that there is, first of all and at least, the real of desire from which this shadow separates me. You will say that precisely the world of the real is not the world of my desires, but it is also the Freudian dialectic which teaches us that I only make my way (7) in the world of objects by means of the path of obstacles placed to my desire. The object is present, it is through objects that the object is found.

The first step towards reality is made at the level of and in the dream and, of course, for me to reach this reality presupposes that I wake up. It is not sufficient to define awakening topologically by saying that, in my dream, there is a little too much reality, and that this is what wakes me. Awakening is produced, in fact, when there comes, in the dream, something which is the satisfaction of the demand - this is not usual, but it does happen.

On a plane which is that of the analytic journeying of the truth about man contributed by analysis, we knew what awakening is, we glimpse where the demand is going. The analyst articulates what man is demanding. With analysis man wakes up. He perceives that, for the million years that the species is around, he has always eaten dead bodies. This is the last word of that which, under the name of primary identification, the first species of identification, Freud articulates: man has never ceased to eat his dead, even when he dreams, for a short period of time, that he had radically repudiated cannibalism, this is what will be shown to us by what follows.

It was important, at that moment, to highlight that it is precisely along this path - where we are shown that desire is a dream-desire, that desire has the same structure as the dream - that the first correct step is taken in terms of what is a

journeying towards reality, that it is because of the dream and in the field of the dream that we first prove ourselves to be stronger than the shadow.

Now that I have in this way highlighted, articulated in a way that I apologise for, even though you are not able to see right away its clinical correlates, the relationships of i(o) with the big I, we are going to show - and it is already implied in my preceding discourse - everything that is enough to guide us in the relationships to i(o), because what is important for us, are the relationships of this operation coupled with small o, the object of desire.

I will return in what follows to that which, outside this massive experience of the dream, justifies the accent that I placed on the function of the signifier in the field of the Other. The identifications to the ego-ideal as such, every time they are invoked, and specifically for example in the introjection which (8) is that of mourning around which Freud made revolve an essential step of his conception of identification.... You will always see that by looking carefully at the case, the clinical articulation that is in question, that it is never a question of what I might call a massive identification, of an identification which could be compared to narcissistic identification, that it comes to counter-attack, as enveloping from being to being and, in order to illustrate what I have just said, because the image comes to me just now, in the relationship that, in Christian icons, the mother is with respect to the child that she holds before her on her knees - a figuration which is in no way a matter of chance, you can well believe me - : she envelops him, she is bigger than him. The two relationships of narcissistic identification and of anaclitic identification.... if it were this opposition that was in question between the identifications, it would be like a vast container with respect to a more limited interior world which reduces the first by its fulness.

I tell you right away that the most demonstrative things to be read in this regard is Versuch einer Entwicklungsgeschichte der Libido which you should read. It is the history of the development of the libido - by Karl Abraham, 1921, where there is question of nothing but that: the consequences to be drawn from what Freud had just contributed as regards the mechanism of mourning and the identification that it fundamentally represents.

There is not a single example, among the very numerous clinical illustrations given by Abraham of the reality of this mechanism, where you will not grasp unambiguously that it is always a question of the introjection, not of the reality of an other in so far as it is enveloping, full, even confusing on occasion, massive, but always of an einziger Zug, a single trait. The illustrations that he gives of it go a long way because in reality, under the title of Versuch.... "A short study of the development of the libido", there is question of nothing but that: of the function of the partial in identification. And concurrently - one could say: under the cover of this research, unless this research is only an excuse or a subdivision of it - it is in this work that Karl Abraham introduces the notion which has since circulated through the whole of analysis and was the foundation stone of a considerable edifice concerning neuroses and perversions and which is wrongly called the conception of the partial object.

(9) You are going to see what this is about. Before even being able to come back to the striking illustrations that are given of it, it is enough for me to indicate the place and for you to seek things where they are in order to perceive that there is no retortion to be given to what I am formulating here, namely that this article only takes on its meaning and its importance in so far as it is the illustration, on every page, of this trait of identification that is in question as ego-ideal identification, that it is an identification through isolated traits, by traits which are each one unique, by traits having the structure of the signifier.

This is also what obliges us to look a bit more closely at a relationship and what must be distinguished in it, if one wishes to see clearly, namely that in the same context, and not without reason, Abraham finds "himself introducing what I mentioned above and designated as the function of the partial object. And it is precisely this that is going to be in question concerning the relationships of $i(o)$ with small o .

If you read Abraham, you will read the following: first of all he never wrote in any way that it was a question of a partial object - he describes die Obieketes partial Liebe, which means "the objects of partial love, l'amour partiel de l'obiet". You will see that what he accentuates, when he speaks about what is its most exemplary object, the only veritable object - even though others can be inscribed in the same structure - is the phallus. How does he conceive of - and I intend to bring it to you in his text - this rupture, this disjunction which gives its value as a privileged object to the phallus? On every page, he has produced for us what is in question in the following fashion: "the objects of partial love", what does that mean for him? That means, not the love of this something which has fallen from the operation under the name of phallus, it means the love ready to accede to this normal object of the genital relationship, the other, that of the other sex in so far as there is precisely a stage which is this phallic stage, in which there is effectively love of the other, as complete as possible, minus the genitals. That is what is meant by "the objects of partial love".

But the important thing is in a note, I give you the reference right away: p.9 of the original edition and, in the Selected Papers, p.495. All the clinical examples that have been given lead to it, namely the example of two hysterical women in so far as they certainly had relationships with the father entirely (10) founded on variations of the relationship which manifest themselves at first, for example, in so far as the father is only apprehended... is only taken, following on a traumatic relationship, for his phallic value. After which, in dreams, the father appears with his complete image, but censored at the level of genitals under the form of the disappearance of pubic hair. All the examples go in the same direction, partial love of the object being the love of the object minus the genitals. And that to find there the foundation of the imaginary separation of the phallus as henceforth intervening as central exemplary function, pivotal function, I would say, may permit us to situate what is different, namely o , in little o , qua little o , the general function as such of the object of desire. At the heart of the function of little o , allowing there to be grouped, to be situated the different possible modes of the object, in so far as

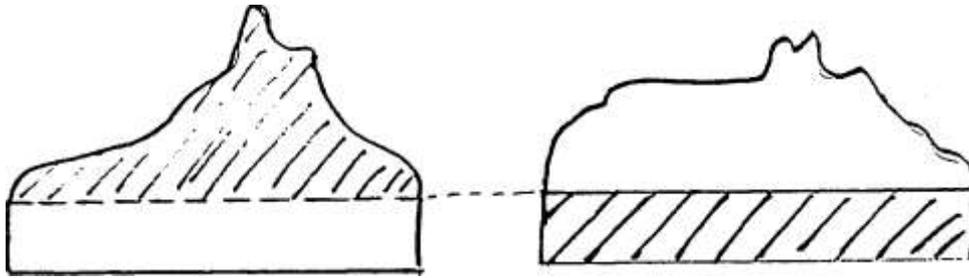
they intervene in the phantasy, there is the phallus. You should carefully understand that I have said that it is the object which allows the series to be situated, it is, if you wish, for us, an original point behind and ahead of a certain idea.

I read what Abraham wrote in the little note underneath: "Such a stage of object-love with genital exclusion seems to coincide in time with Freud's phallic stage in the psychosexual development of the individual, and moreover to have close internal relations with it," He adds "We may look upon hysterical symptoms as the obverse of those libidinal impulses which belong to object-love with genital exclusion and to the phallic organisation."

I must say that it is a long time since I read that text, having left it to two of you to look after it. It is perhaps not a bad thing for you to know-that the algebraic formula that I give of the hysterical phantasy is manifest here: $\wedge \times \langle \rangle 0 \ll$ But the next step that I want you to take, is something different which is also found in the text but at which I believe no one has yet paused. I quote: Wir müssen ausserdem in Betracht Ziehen, dass bei jedem Menschen das eigene Genitale starker als irgendein anderer Korperteil mit narzisstischer Liebe besetzt ist. The fact is that "we must," he says, "not forget, too," - and at what moment: at the moment that he has asked himself, in the preceding lines, why things are that way, why this reluctance, why this rage, in a word, which already arises at the imaginary level, to castrate (11) the other to the quick, it is to this that there responds Grauen: horror, the preceding lines ought to justify the term rage that I introduced - "We must not forget, too, that the genitals are more intensely cathected by narcissistic love than any other part of the subject's own body", in order that there should be no ambiguity about his thought, it is precisely "Thus everything else in the object," anything at all, "can be loved sooner than the genitals."

I do not know whether you really appreciate what such a notification - which is not isolated like that as if it were a slip of the pen, but which everything here demonstrates to be the very underpinning of this thought - implies. I do not feel myself able to take that in my stride as if it were a commonplace truth, namely, despite the obviousness and the necessity of such an articulation, I do not know whether it has been highlighted by anyone up to the present.

Let us try to represent things a little more for ourselves. It is of course understood that the only reason for having introduced narcissism, is to show us that it is on the avatars of narcissism that there depends the process, the progress of objectal cathexis. Let us try to understand. Here is the field of one's own body, the narcissistic field, let us try to represent, for example, something which corresponds to what we are told, that nowhere is the cathexis stronger than at the level of the genitals. This presupposes that, whether we take the body from one side or from another, we end up with a diagram of the following kind:



(12) What Abraham's sentence implies, if we are to give it its value as a reason, as a consequence, is that, if this represents for us the profile of narcissistic cathexis, contrary to what one might think at first, it is not from on high that the energies are going to be withdrawn in order to be transferred to the object, it is not the-most cathected regions which are going to be discharged in order to begin to give a small cathexis to the object, I am saying - if we are speaking about the thinking of Abraham in so far as it is required by his whole book, in other words this book no longer has any meaning - it is on the contrary at the levels of the lowest cathexes that the energy we are faced with is going to be taken, in the world of the object, a certain cathexis, objectile cathexis, the object existing as object. Namely that it is in so far as in the subject - this is explained to us in the clearest fashion - the genitals remain cathected that in the object they are not. There is absolutely no way of understanding it otherwise.

Reflect a little whether all of this does not lead us to something much vaster and more important than you may believe. Because there is a thing which does not seem to be perceived about the function which is in the mirror stage, that of the specular image, which is that if it is in this mirror relationship that there occurs this something essential which regulates communication - the reversal or the warping or the transposing of what happens between the narcissistic object and the other object - should we not show a "little imagination and give some importance to the following which results from it: if effectively the relationship to the other as sexual or as not sexual is governed, organised in the case of man - the organising centre of this relationship in the imaginary takes place at the specular stage and moment - does this not make it worth the trouble to pause a little at the following, which is that there is a much more intimate relationship - it is never remarked - with what we call the face, the face-to-face relationship. We often use this term with a certain accent, but it does not seem that people have found the point about what is original in it.

One calls the genital relationship a tergo, a relationship more ferarum, it must not be that way for cats, if I may express myself in this way. It must indeed be the case. It will be enough for you to think about these lady cats to tell yourselves (13) that perhaps there is something decisive in the imaginary structuring which brings it about that the relationship with the object of desire is essentially structured, for the great majority of species, as having to come from behind, as a relationship to the world which consists in covering or in being covered, or indeed, in the rare species for whom this thing must come from the front, a species for whom a tangible moment of the apprehension of the object is a decisive moment - if you believe

both in the experience of the mirror stage and what I always tried to find there, to define there as a capital fact - as this object which is defined by the fact that in the case of the erect animal something essential is linked to the apparition of his ventral face, it does not seem to me that enough value has yet been given to all the consequences of this remark in what I would call the different fundamental positions, aspects of erotism. It is not only here and there that we see its traits and that the authors for a long time have remarked that almost all the primal scenes evoke, reproduce, are linked up around the perception of a coitus a tercero, why?

There are a certain number of remarks which could be organised in this direction, but what I want to point out to you, is that, in this reference, it is rather remarkable that the objects which are found to have, in the imaginary composition of the human psyche, an isolated value, and very specially as partial object, should be, as I might say, not only put out in front, but emerging in a way, if we take a vertical surface as measure, regulating in a way the depth of what is in question in the specular image, namely a surface parallel to the surface of the mirror, raising up with respect to this depth that which comes forward as emerging from libidinal immersion - I am not simply speaking of the phallus, but moreover of this essentially phantastical object which are called breasts.

The memory has come to me, in this connection, in a book by this splendid Mme Gyp, which is called Le petit Bob, an extraordinary epistle about the mapping out by little Bob, at the seaside, on a lady who smooths the way for him, of two little "sugar lumps" as he expresses it, whose appearance he discovers with a sense of wonder - and one cannot fail to notice a certain complacency in the author. I believe that one never fails to draw profit from reading authors who spend their time collecting childrens' (14) remarks. This one is certainly taken from life and, after all, the fact that this woman, whom we know to have been the mother of a now dead neurosurgeon who was no doubt himself the prototype of little Bob, was - it has to be said - was a bit of a numbskull. This does not prevent what results from it being of any lesser profit for us, on the contrary.'

Moreover, we will see better perhaps in the objectal relationship, the true function to be given to what we call nipple, the tip of the breast, we see it also in this Gestalt-like isolation against a background and, by this fact, of exclusion from this profound relationship with the mother which is that of feeding. If this were not the way things were, one would perhaps not often have such difficulty in getting the suckling to take hold of the bit in question, and perhaps also the phenomena of anorexia nervosa would have a different twist.

What must be said, what I want to say on this occasion, is therefore a little schema that it would be well for you to keep in mind concerning the mainspring of what happens in terms of reciprocity between narcissistic cathexis and object cathexis by reason of the liaison which justifies the denomination and the isolation of the mechanism. Not every object is to be defined as such as being purely and simply an object determined at the beginning, fundamentally, as a partial object, far from it. But the central characteristic of this relationship of one's own body

to the phallus must be taken as essential in order to see what it conditions retrospectively, nachtraglich, in the relationship to all objects, even the most primitive, whose character of being separable, possible to lose, would be different if there were not at the centre the destiny of this essential possibility of the phallic object emerging as a blank on the image of the body, as an island, like the islands of marine charts where the inside is not represented, but the periphery - namely that in the first place, in what concerns all the objects of this desire, this character of isolation as Gestalt at the beginning is essential. Because one will never sketch what is in the interior of the island. One will never enter under full sail into the genital object. The fact of characterising the object as genital does not define the "post-ambivalent" nature of the entry into this genital stage or then no one has ever entered it!

(15) Putting once again into your mental imagery, what I said today about the ventral image, brought to me the idea of the hedgehog. I read Le herisson. I would mention that at the moment when I was dwelling on the relationship between man and the animals, the idea of reading that came to me. How do they make love? It is clear that a tergo must present some problems. I will telephone Jean Rostand!

I am not going to dwell on this episode. .The reference to the hedgehog is a literary reference.

Archilochus expresses himself somewhere in this fashion: "The fox knows a lot, he knows all sorts of tricks. The hedgehog has only one, but it's a very good one". Now, what is in question concerns precisely the fox. Recalling or not recalling Archilochus, Giraudoux in Bella refers to the lightning style of a gentleman who has a marvellous contraption that he attributes to the fox - and perhaps it is the association of ideas which influenced it. Perhaps the hedgehog also knows that trick. It would, in any case, be important for him to know it, because it is a question of getting rid of his vermin, an operation which is extremely problematic for the hedgehog. As regards Giraudoux' fox here is how he proceeds: he enters very gently into the water beginning with the tail. He slips gently into it, he lets himself be submerged until there is nothing above the water but the tip of his nose on which the last fleas dance their final ballet, then he plunges into the water in order to be radically cleansed of everything that embrarrasses him.

Let this image illustrate for you that the relationship of anything narcissistic is conceived of as a root of castration.

Seminar 27: Wednesday 28 June 1961

As the time comes for-me to make my final remarks before you this year, there comes to my mind Plato's invocation, at the beginning of the Critias. It is indeed here in effect that there is to be found, in so far as he speaks about tone as an essential element in the arrangement of what is to be said - may I, in effect, be able to maintain this tone. In order to do this, Plato invokes that which is the very object of what he is going to speak about in this incomplete text: nothing less than that of the birth of the Gods. A cross-checking which could not fail to please me, because, moreover, in a side-long way no doubt, we were very close to this theme to the point of hearing someone - whom you could consider from certain aspects as professing atheism - speaking to us about the gods as something which is found in the real.

It happens that what I tell you here is each time received by many as something addressed to themselves, to themselves as private persons (particulier) - I say private persons, not individuals - not certainly by whoever I wish because many, if not all, receive it, nor collectively either by the same token, because I notice that, from what is received, there is room between each one for contestation, if not for discordance. There is therefore a large place left between different people. This is perhaps what is called, in the proper sense, "speaking in the desert". It is certainly not that I have to complain this year about any desertion - as everyone knows in the desert there can be almost a crowd, the desert is not constituted by emptiness. The important thing, is precisely the following, which I dare to hope for: it is that it is a little in the desert that you have come to find me. Let us not be too optimistic, nor too proud of ourselves all the same, let us say that you have all had, however numerous you may be, a little worry about the boundaries of the desert. This indeed is the reason why I ensure that what I tell (2) you, is never in fact an obstacle to the role in which I find myself and which I have to hold with respect to a certain number of you, which is that of analyst.

In a word, it is in so far as my discourse, in the measure that on the path I took this year it is aimed at the position of the analyst - and that I distinguish this position in so far as it is at the heart of the response, of the satisfaction to be given by the analyst to the power of transference - in so far as at that very place which is his own, the analyst should distance himself

from any ideal of the analyst. In so far as my discourse respects this condition, I believe that it is able to allow this necessary conciliation, for some, of my two positions: that of analyst and that of one who speaks to you about analysis.

Under different titles, under different rubrics, one can formulate something, of course, which may be of the order of the ideal, there are the qualifications of the analyst, this is already enough to constitute an average in this order. The analyst, for example, should not be completely ignorant of a certain number of things, but it is not at all here that there exists what comes into play in his essential position as an analyst. Here, certainly, there opens up the ambiguity that exists about the word-knowledge (savoir). Plato, in this evocation at the beginning of the Critias, refers to knowledge, to the guarantee that, as regards what he is approaching, the tone will remain measured. The fact is that in his time the ambiguity was much less great. The meaning of the word knowledge there is much closer to what I am aiming at when I try to articulate for you the position of the analyst and it is indeed here that there is motivated, that there is justified, this beginning starting from the exemplary image of Socrates which is the one that I chose this year.

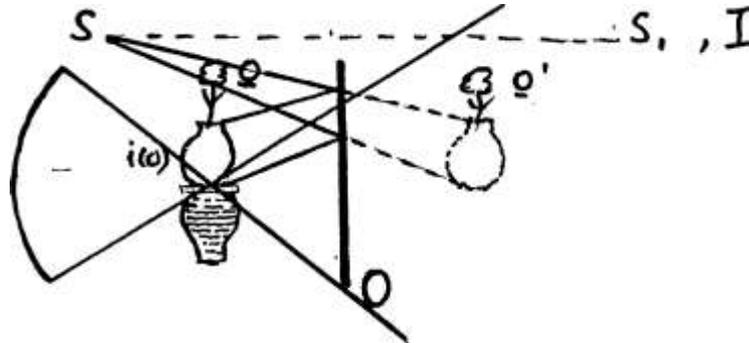
Here then I had arrived, the last time, at this point which I believe to be essential, a turning point in what we will have to enounce subsequently, about the function of the object *o* in my schemas in so far as it is what I have least elucidated up to now. I did so in connection with this function of the object in so far as it is a part which presents itself as a separated part - a partial object as they say - and, leading you back to the text which I would urgently ask you during these holidays to consult in detail and with attention, I pointed out to you that the one who introduced this notion of partial object, Abraham, understands by it in the most formal fashion a love of the object from which precisely this part is excluded, it is the object minus this part. This is the foundation of the experience around which there revolves this coming into play of the partial object, (3) of the interest that has been accorded it ever since. In the final analysis, the speculations of Winnicott, as an observer of infant behaviour, on the transitional object, refer back to the meditations of the Kleinian circle.

For a long time now, it seems to me that those who listen to me, if they are listening to me, may have had more than a suspicion regarding the most formal precisions of the fact that this partiality of the object has the closest possible relationship with what I have called the function of metonymy which lends itself in grammar to the same equivocations. I mean that there also you will be told that it is the part taken for the whole, which leaves everything open, at once as truth and as error:

- as truth, we are going to clearly understand that this part taken for the whole in the operation is transformed: it becomes its signifier,

- as error, if we attach ourselves simply to this aspect of part; in other words, if we refer ourselves to a reference to reality to understand it.

I sufficiently underlined this elsewhere, I am not coming back to it. The important thing is that you should remember that which, the last time, around the schema on the blackboard and of another one which I am going to take up again in a simpler form ...

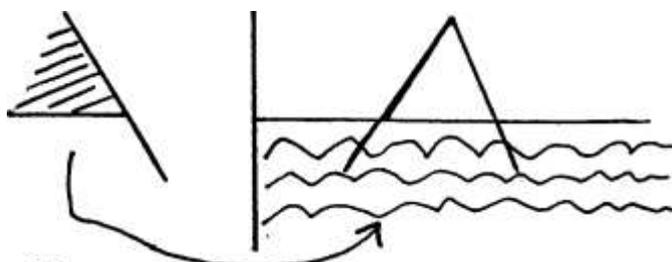


that you should know the relationship there is between the object of desire - in so far as, from the beginning, I underlined, articulated, insisted before you on this essential trait, its structuring as partial object in analytic experience - the relationship there is here and which I highlighted the last time, with the libidinal correspondent, because of that, is precisely (4) what remains most irreducibly cathected at the level of one's own body: the fundamental fact of narcissism and its central core.

The sentence that I extracted from Abraham, namely that it is in so far as the real phallus remains, unknown to the subject, that around which the maximum cathexis is conserved, preserved, kept, it is in this very relationship that this partial object finds itself elided, left blank in the image of the other qua cathected - the very term of cathexis taking on all the ambiguous meaning that it involves in the German besetzt - not simply with a charge, but with something which surrounds this central blank. And moreover, if we must attack something else that is obvious, is it not tangible that the image that we can erect at the high point of the fascination of desire is that precisely which, from the Platonic theme to the paintbrush of Botticelli, is renewed with the same form, that of the birth of Venus, Venus Aphrodite, the daughter of the foam, Venus emerging from the waves, this body erected above the waters of bitter love, Venus and Lolita as well.

What does this image teach us analysts, if we have been able to identify it precisely in the symbolic equation, to employ Fenichel's term, of girl = phallus? Because the phallus, what does it teach us if not that there is articulated here, not in a different way, but properly speaking in the same, nothing but the phallus, where we see it symbolically is precisely where it is not, where we suppose it to be manifesting itself under the veil in the erection of desire, is on this side of the mirror: where it is, is where it is not. If it is there before us in this dazzling body of Venus, it is precisely in so far as it is not

there and that this form is cathected, in the sense that we said earlier, with all the attractions, with all the Triebregungen which circumscribe it from outside, the phallus for its part with its charge remaining on this side of the mirror, within the narcissistic enclave.



(5) If the mirror is there, we have the following relationship, what emerges as a fascinating form is what finds itself cathected with the libidinal waves which come from the place from which it has been drawn, from the base, from the foundation, as I might say, from the narcissistic foundation, from which there is extracted everything which comes to form as such the objectal structure, on condition that we respect its relationships and its elements, that which constitutes the Triebregung as a function of desire. Desire in its privileged function - in the proper relationship which is called desire, which is distinguished from demand and from need - has its seat in this remainder to which corresponds in the image this mirage through which it is precisely identified to the part it lacks and whose invisible presence gives to what is called beauty precisely its brilliance, which means the antique himeros, which I approached on several occasions even to the extent of playing on its equivocation with hemera, the day.

Here is the central point around which there is played out what we have to think about the function of o and, of course, it is appropriate to come back to it again and to remind you of the myth from which we started. I say myth, this myth which I fabricated for you, this year, during the Symposium of the hand which stretches out towards the log. What strange heat must this hand carry with it in order that the myth should be true, in order that at its approach there should shoot forth this flame through which the object takes fire, a pure miracle against which all right-thinking people rise up, because however rare this phenomenon may be, it must again be considered as unthinkable that one cannot, in any case, prevent it. It is, in effect, the complete miracle that in the middle of this fire which has been induced a hand appears: such is the quite ideal image of a phenomenon imagined as being that of love. Everyone knows that the fire of love burns with only very little noise. Everyone knows that the damp log can contain it for a long time without anything being revealed outside. Everyone knows, in a word, what is entrusted, in the Symposium, to the nicest of the blockheads to articulate in a quasi-derisory fashion that the nature of love is the nature of dampness, which means precisely at bottom exactly the same thing as what is here on the blackboard: that the reservoir of objectal love, in so far as it is the love of something living, is precisely this Schatten, this narcissistic

shadow.

The last time, I put forward to you the presence of this shadow and today I would be quite willing to go so far as to call this stain of mildew (moi-sissure), of moi-si, perhaps better named than is believed, if the word "moi" is included in it. We would (6) be rejoining here the whole speculation of the tender Fenelon, he also, as they say, fluctuating when he also makes of the ego (moi) the sign of some "M.R.P. Alliance" with the Divinity! I would be just as capable as anyone else of pushing this metaphor very far and even so far as to make of my discourse a messenger of your sense of smell. This smell of dead rat which comes from a towel, provided one leaves it hanging on the edge of a bath, ought to allow you to see in it an essential human sign. My style of analyst, it is not uniquely by preference that I prefer for him ways that are qualified, that are stigmatised as abstraction, this may be simply to regulate in you a sense of smell that I could tickle you with as well as anyone else.

In any case, you see there being delineated behind this mythical point - which is surely indeed that born of libidinal evolution - that analysis, without ever knowing very well how to situate it on the scale, has circumscribed around the urinary complex with its obscure relationship to the action of fire, antinomical terms, one struggling against the other, involving the primitive ancestor. As you know - what a different ancestor! - analysis discovered that his first playful reflex with respect to the apparition of flame must have been to piss on it - renewed in Gulliver; the profound relationship of the uro, I burn, to urino, I piss on. All of this is inscribed at the foundation of infantile experience, the operation of drying sheets, the dreams of enigmatically starched linen - rather than the erotic nature of the laundress - in Mr Visconti. Those who are able to go to see the splendid production of of all the possible whites illustrating on the stage, materialising for us the fact that and the reason why Pierrot is in white. In short, it is a very human little milieu which see-saws around the ambiguous moment between enuresis and the first pollutions.

It is around this that there is played out the dialectic of love and desire at its most tangible roots. The central object, the object of desire - without wanting to push any further this myth placidly incarnated in the first images in which there appear for the child what is called the first little geographical map, the little Corsica on the sheets that every analyst knows so well - the object of desire presents itself there at the centre of this phenomenon as an object rescued from the waters of your love. The object finds itself at a place which is precisely - and this (7) is the function of my myth - to be situated in the midst of this same burning bush where one day there was announced what there is in its opaque response: "I am who I am", at the same point where, for want of knowing who is speaking there, we are always at the stage of hearing the interrogation of the Che vuoi? whinnied by the devil of Cazotte, a strange metamorphosised camel's head from which moreover there may emerge the faithful little bitch of desire.

This is what we have to deal with in the small o of desire, this is the high point around which there pivots the reason why we have to deal with it right throughout its structure. But as regards the never superseded libidinal attraction, I mean that what comes before it in development, namely the first forms of the object, qua separated - the breasts, the faeces - only take on their function in so far as nachträglich, they are taken up as having played the same game, at the same place. Something enters the dialectic of love, from primitive demands, from the feeding Trieb which was established from the beginning: because the mother speaks, there is an appeal to the beyond of what can satisfy him, of this object which is called the breast, immediately taken up as an instrumental value, in order to distinguish this ground-, this background that the breast is not simply what is repulsed, what is refused because already one wants something else. It is also around the demand that the faeces - where the analyst recognised the value of the first gift - are held onto or given as response to the demand. Here therefore are these levels of anteriority where we have structured in the "oral" and "anal" relationship the function - where having is confused with being or serves as a summons for being - of the mother, beyond everything that she may contribute as an anaclitic support.

As I told you, it is starting from the phallus, from its advent into this dialectic, that there opens up precisely, because it has been reunited in it, the distinction between being and having. Beyond the phallic object the question - and make no mistake about it - opens up with respect to the object in a different way. What it presents here, in this emergence of the island (cf schema), this phantasy, this reflection in which precisely it incarnates itself as object of desire, manifests itself precisely in the image, I would almost say the most sublime one in which it can incarnate itself, the one that I put forward above, as object of desire: it incarnates itself precisely in what is lacking to it. It is starting from there that there originates everything that is going to be the (8) subsequent relationship of the subject to the object of desire. If it captivates by what is lacking to it here, how can that by which it captivates be found? The consequence and the horizon of the relationship to the object, if it is not above all a relationship of preservation, is, as I might say, to interrogate it about what it has in its stomach or what continues along the line where we are trying to isolate the function of little o, namely the properly Sadian line through which the object is interrogated to the depths of its being, through which it is solicited to turn itself back into what is most hidden in order to come to fill this empty form in so far as it is a fascinating form.

What is demanded of the object, is how far it can support this question. And after all, it can indeed only support it up to the point at which the final want-to-be is revealed, up to the point at which the question is confounded with the destruction of the object. It is because this is the term of this barrier that I

put in place for you last year, the barrier of beauty or of form, that through which the exigency of preserving the object is reflected back onto the subject himself.

Somewhere in Rabelais, Gargantua goes off to war: "Protect this thing which is the most beloved", says his wife designating with her finger that which, at the time, was much easier to designate unambiguously than in our time, because you know that this piece of clothing which was called the cod-piece had at that time its glorious character. That means: it cannot be kept at home. The second thing is properly speaking full of wisdom - this is never missing in any of Rabelais' remarks - it is the following: "Commit everything, in the battle everything can go, but this, protect it radically at-the centre", this indeed is what there is no question of putting at risk.

This allows a see-saw to occur in our dialectic. Because all of this would be very nice if it were so simple to think about desire starting from the subject, if we were to rediscover, at the level of desire, this myth which developed at the level of knowledge of making of the world this sort of vast web entirely drawn from the belly of the spider-subject. What does that mean, is it so simple for the subject to say: "I desire"? Not so simple, a lot less simple, as you know in your experience, than to say: "I love oceanically", as Freud so prettily expresses it in connection with his critique of religious effusions. I love, (9) I bathe, I dampen, I flood and what is more I dribble! And moreover, all this by mackling, more often scarcely enough to dampen a handkerchief especially since this happens more and more rarely! The great dampers are disappearing since the middle of the XIXth Century. If someone were to show me in our own time somebody like Louise Colet, I would go out of my way to go and see something else.

To be desiring, is something different. It rather seems that this leaves the I well in suspense, it leaves it so well stuck in any case in phantasy that I would defy you, to find this I of desire elsewhere than where M. Genet highlights it in Le balcon. I already spoke to you about M. Jean Genet the desire, this dear about which I one day did a whole big seminar for you. You will easily find the passage in Le balcon of this play of phantasy where Genet admirably highlights something which girls know well, which is that whatever may be the lucubrations of these gentlemen who are parched with wanting to incarnate their phantasy, there is a trait common to all, which is that it is necessary that through some trait in the execution, this does not appear to be true because otherwise perhaps, if this became altogether true, one would no longer know where one was in it. There would perhaps not be, for the subject, a chance of surviving it. This is the place of the signifier S barred, S, in order that it may be known that here there is nothing but a signifier.

This indication of the inauthentic, is the place of the subject qua first person in the phantasy. The best way I find to

indicate it - I already suggested it several times somewhere - is to restore to its true form the cedilla of the c_a in French. It is not a cedilla, it is an apostrophe. It is, xn the apostrophe of c'est, the first person of the unconscious and you can even strike out the t at the end: c'es, here is a way of writing the subject at the level of the unconscious, the subject of phantasy. It must be said that this does not facilitate the passage from the object to objectality. As you see - one speaks in the same way about the displacement of certain lines in the spectrum - there is a whole shifting of the object of desire with respect to the real object, in the measure that we may mythically aspire to it, that is fundamentally determined by the negative character of the apparition of the phallus. It was nothing other than this that I was aiming at earlier in making this circuit of the object for you - from its archaic forms up to its horizon of destruction - from the orifice-object, from the anificiel object, if I can express myself in this way, of the infantile past to the object (10) of the fundamentally ambivalent aim which remains that of desire up to the end. Because it is a pure lie - since moreover this is in no way required from a critical point of view - to speak in the relation of desire to the object of a so-called post-ambivalent phase.

Moreover, this fashion of ordering the ascending and concurring ladder of objects with respect to a phallic peak, is indeed what allows us to understand the similarity of level there is, for example, between a sadistic attack in so far as it is not at all a pure and simple satisfaction of a supposedly elementary aggression, but a way as such of questioning the object in its being, a way of deriving from it the "either" introduced at the phallic peak between being and having. That we find ourselves after the phallic stage just as full of ambivalence as before is not the worst misfortune. It is that by developing things in this perspective, what we can remark is that we never get very far, namely that there is always a moment when we are going to lose this object qua object of desire, precisely because we do not know how to pursue the question.

To force a being - since this is the essence of the o beyond the phallus - is not within everybody's competence. It is not simply this allusion that there are natural limits to constraint, to suffering itself, but that even to force a being towards pleasure is not a problem that we so easily resolve and for a good reason, which is that it is we who lead the dance, it is because we are the ones in question. Sade's Justine, everyone marvels at the fact that she resists, in truth, indefinitely to all the bad treatment, to such an extent that it is really necessary for Jupiter himself to intervene and fire off a thunderbolt in order to make an end of it. But it is because precisely Justine is only a shadow. Juliette is the only one who exists, because she is the one who is dreaming, as such and dreaming, it is she who must necessarily - read the story - expose herself to all the risks of desire and to ones which are no less than those which Justine herself runs. Obviously, we scarcely feel ourselves to be worthy of such company, because it goes a long way. Not too much should be made of it in polite

conversation. The people who are interested only in their own little selves find only a very minimal interest in it.

(11) We are brought back therefore to the subject. How then is it from the subject that this whole dialectic of desire can be carried on, if he is nothing, for his part, but an apostrophe inscribed in what? In a relationship which is above all the relationship to the desire of the Other? It is here that there intervenes the function of I, the signifier of the ego-ideal and very precisely in so far as I told you that it is from it that there is preserved $i(o)$, the ideal ego, this precious thing that one attempts to take from this humidity, this ceramic, this little pot which has always been the symbol of the created thing in which everyone tries to give some consistency to himself. Everything converges on it, of course, all the notions of form and of model. We have here, in the reference to the other, this construction of this support around which there is going to be able to be played out the grasp of the flower or not. Why? The fact is, of course, that there is no other means for the subject to subsist. What does analysis teach us, if not that the character, the analogically radical function of the image of the phobia, is what Freud was able to unearth in the ethnographic formation of that time under the rubric of the totem which is now rather shaken.

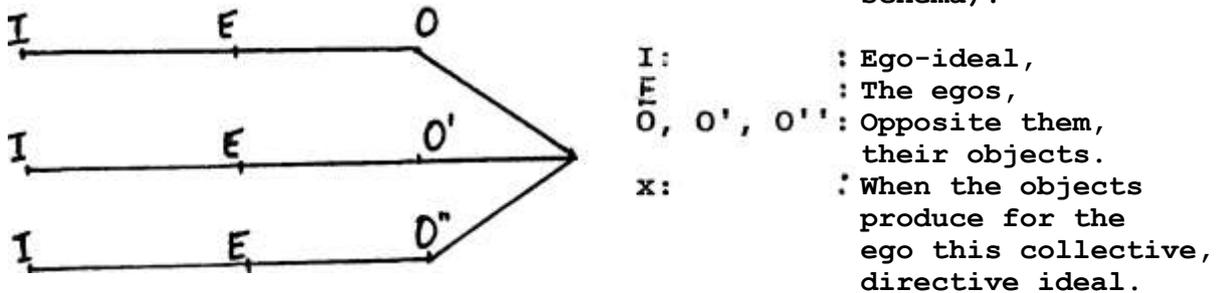


But what remains of it? Nothing other than the fact that one is quite prepared to risk everything for desire, for the fight, for the prestige, even one's life, but not without a certain limiting image, not the dissolution of the bank (rivage) which rivets the subject to this image. That a fish, a tree do not have phobias. That a Bororo is not an Ara is not a phobia of the Ara. Even if this apparently involves analogous taboos, the single common factor between the two is the image in its function of circumscribing and discerning the object, it is the ideal ego. This metaphor of the desirer in almost anything whatsoever can, in effect, always become urgent again in an individual case. Remember little Hans? It is at the moment when what is desired finds itself without defence with respect to the desire of the Other, when it threatens the bank, the limit, $i(o)$, it is then that the eternal artifice is reproduced and that the subject constitutes it, makes it appear as enclosed in "the bear's skin before having killed it", but it is in reality an inside-out bear-skin, and it is within that the phobic protects what? The other aspect of the specular image. The specular image has a cathexis aspect, of course, but also a defence aspect, "a dam against the Pacific" of maternal love. Let us simply say that the cathexis of the other is, in short, defended by the ideal ego and that the final cathexis of his own phallus is defended by the (12) phobic. In a certain fashion, I would go so far as to say that phobia is the light that appears to warn you that you are driving on the reserves of your libido. One can still drive a certain time with that. This is what the phobia means and this indeed is why its support is the phallus as signifier.

I will not need, in this connection, to recall to you, in our previous experience, everything that illustrates, everything that

confirms this way of envisaging things. Simply remember the subject of "The analysis of a single dream" by Ella Sharpe, this little cough when he warns the analyst before coming into her office, everything that is hidden behind this, everything that emerges with his stories, his familiar reveries: "What would I do if I were in a place where I did not want to be found? I would give a little bark. People would say: it's only a dog". Everyone knows the other associations: the dog who, one day, masturbated along his leg, I mean the patient's leg. What do we find, in this exemplary history? That the subject, more than ever in a defensive position at the moment of entering the analytic office, pretends to be a dog. He pretends to be it, it is all the others who are dogs before he enters. He warns them to take on again their -human appearance before he enters. You must not imagine that this corresponds in any way to a special interest in dogs. In this example, as in all the others, to be a dog has only one meaning, that means that one goes "bow-wow", and nothing else. I would bark, people would say - those who are not there - "it's a dog", the value of the einziger Zug.

And moreover, when you take up the schema through which Freud gives us the origin of the identification which is properly that of the ego-ideal, from what angle does he take it? From the angle of Group Psychology. What happens, he tells us, anticipating the great Hitlerian explosion, to make everyone enter into this sort of fascination which allows the massing, the solidification of what is called a crowd to take place? (see the schema).



element. In order that collectively all the subjects, at least for an instant, should have this same ideal which permits anything and everything for a rather short time, what is necessary, he says to us? It is that all these exterior objects, äusseres Objekt should be taken as having a common trait, the einziger Zug

Why does this interest us? It is because what is true at the collective level is also true at the individual level. The function of the ideal, in so far as it is around it that there is accommodated the relationship of a subject to his objects, it is very precisely in so far as, in the world of a subject who speaks, it is a pure and simple matter of a metaphorical attempt to confer on all of them a common trait. The world of the subject who speaks, which is called the human world, corresponds to the following: it is that for all objects, to take them in this animal world that analytic tradition has made the exemplary operation of defensive identifications, it is a pure matter of decree to fix this trait common to the diversity of objects,

whether they are dogs, cats, badgers or deer. To decree that in order to subsist in a world where the i(o) of the subject is respected they all, whatever they are, go "bow-wow", this is the function of the einziger Zug.

It is essential to keep it structured in this way. Because, outside this register, it is impossible to conceive of what Freud means in the psychology of mourning and melancholia. What is it that differentiates mourning from melancholia? With my guidelines you will clarify it.

For mourning, it is quite certain that it is around the metaphorical function of traits conferred on the love object in so far as they then have narcissistic privileges, that there is going to unfold all the length and difficulty of mourning. In other words and in a fashion all the more significant that he says it as if he were surprised at it, Freud insists clearly on what is in question: the real loss, the mourning (14) consists in authenticating piece by piece, bit by bit, sign by sign, big I element by big I element to the point of exhaustion, when that has been done, finished. But what does that mean, if this object was an o, an object of desire, if not that the object is always masked behind its attributes, almost made banal.

But the business begins, as one might expect, only if we start from pathology, namely from melancholia where we see two things: the fact is that the object is - a serious thing - much less graspable because it was certainly more present and because it unleashed infinitely more catastrophic effects, because they go so far as the drying up of this Trieb which Freud describes as the most fundamental one, that which attaches you to life. You have to read, to follow this text, understand what Freud indicates about some disappointment or other that he does not know how to define. And there, what are we going to see for such a masked, such an obscure object? It is none of the traits of an object which are not seen that the subject can attack, but in so far as we follow him, we analysts, we can identify some of them through those that he aims at, namely the characteristics that he himself has: "I am nothing, I am only a....." Note that it is never a question of the specular image. The melancholic does not tell you that he looks bad or that he has a bad taste in his mouth or that he is twisted in some way. He is the lowest of the low, he draws catastrophes down on all his kin: he is entirely, in his self-accusations, in the domain of the symbolic. And to it you can add having: he is ruined.

Is this not designed to put you on the path of something? I am only indicating it to you today by marking out for you a specific point which, with respect to these two terms of mourning and melancholia, marks to my eyes at least for the moment, a converging point: it is the one I would call, not of the mourning, nor of the depression of the subject about the loss of an object, but of a certain type of remorse, in so far as it is unleashed by a certain type of event which we will signal as being of the order of the suicide of the object. Remorse,

therefore, in connection with an object who has entered, under some heading, into the field of desire and who, because of that fact or of some risk that he ran in the adventure, has died.

Analyse these cases, the way has already been traced for you by Freud. Already, in normal mourning, he indicates to you that this drive that the subject turns against himself could well be (15) with respect to the object, an aggressive drive. Investigate this dramatic remorse in the cases where it occurs. You will see perhaps how great is the force from which there returns, against the subject himself, a power of insult which can be related to that of melancholia. You will find its source in the fact that with this object, which has thus vanished, it was therefore not worth the-trouble to have taken, as I might say, so many precautions. It was therefore not worth the trouble to have turned aside from one's true desire, if the desire of the object was, as it seems, that one should go so far as to destroy it. This extreme example - which it is not so rare to see, with the waning of such a loss, after what happens between desiring subjects in the course of these long embraces that are called the oscillations of love - is something which carries us to the heart of the relationship between the big I and the small o.

Undoubtedly this limit on something around which there is always put in question the security of the limit, here is what is in question at this point of the phantasy which is the one about which we should know what to do. This supposes undoubtedly, in the analyst, a complete mental reduction of the function of the signifier, in so far as he ought to grasp by what principle, by what angle, by what detour it is always what is in question when it is a question of the position of the ego-ideal.

But there is something else which I can only, arriving here at the end of my discourse, indicate and which concerns the function of small o: what Socrates knows and what the analyst should at least glimpse, is that with the small o the question is completely different fundamentally to that of the access to any ideal. What is at stake here, what happens on this island, this field of being that love can only circumscribe, is something which the analyst can only think can be filled by any object whatsoever, that we are led to vacillate about the limits at which this question is posed: "Who are you" with any object whatsoever which has once come into the field of our desire, that there is no object which has a greater or lesser price than another. And here is the mourning around which there is centred the desire of the analyst.

Agathon, towards whom, at the end of the Symposium, Socrates' praise is going to be directed, is a royal idiot. He is the biggest idiot of them all, he is even the only complete idiot! And it was on him that there was conferred the honour of saying, in a ridiculous form, the truest thing about love. He does not (16) know what he is saying, he plays the fool, but that has no importance and he is no less the beloved object: Socrates says to Alcibiades: "Everything that you are saying there to me is for him".

The function of the analyst, with what it involves in terms of a certain mourning, but, and after all, what does that mean, if not that we rejoin there this truth that Freud himself left outside the field of what he could understand. A singular thing and probably due to these reasons of comfort - let us say those that I have exposed to you to-day under the formula of the necessity of protecting the china - it does not yet seem to have been understood that this is what "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" means - people do not want to translate it, because this would probably not be Christian, in the sense of a certain ideal but it is a philosophical ideal, believe me: Christianity has not yet said its last word! - that means: with respect to anybody whatsoever, to pose the question of the perfect destructiveness of desire.

With respect to anybody whatsoever, you can have the experience of knowing how far you dare to go in questioning a being, with the risk for yourself of disappearing.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK X

ANXIETY

1962 - 1963

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

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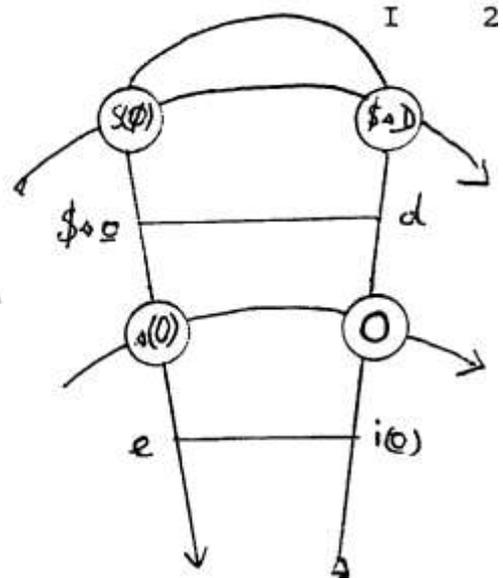
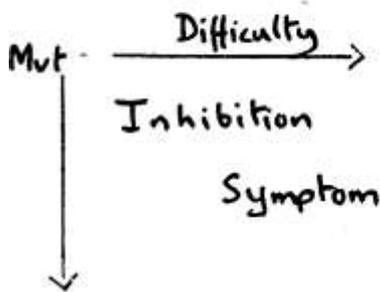
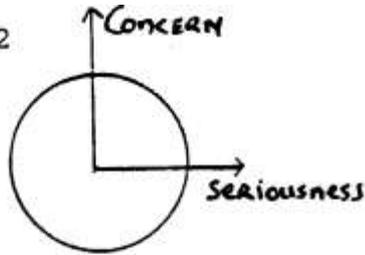
Seminar 1: Wednesday 14 November 1962

I am going to speak to you this year about anxiety. Someone who is not at all distant from me in our circle, nevertheless let me see the other day his surprise at the fact that I chose this subject which did not seem to him to be something that had all that much to offer. I must say that I will have no trouble in proving the contrary to him. In the mass of questions that are proposed to us on this subject, I will have to make very severe choices. That is why I will try from today to throw you into the work. But already this question seemed to me to preserve the trace of some naivety or other which has never been checked because it seemed to indicate a belief that it is by choice that each year I pick on a subject, like that, which appears interesting to me to continue on some sort of idle chatter. No. As you will see, I think, anxiety is very precisely the meeting point where you will find waiting everything that was involved in my previous discourse and where, together, there await a certain number of terms which may appear not to have been sufficiently connected up for you up to the present. You will see on this terrain of anxiety how, by being more closely knotted together, each one will take its place still better. I am saying still better, because recently it became clear to me, in connection with what was said about phantasy at one of these so-called provincial meetings of our Society, that something concerning this very essential structure called phantasy, had effectively (2) taken its place in your minds. You will see that that of anxiety is not far from it, because it is well and truly the same. I have put on the blackboard for you - even though, after all, a blackboard is not very big - a few little signifiers to guide you or to help your memory: perhaps not all the ones that I would have wanted, but after all it is just as well not to overdo the schemas.

You will see this becoming clearer in a little while. They form two groups, this one and that one - this one which I will complete. On the right, this graph which I apologise for pestering you with for so long, but which it is all the same necessary - because its value as a reference point will I think appear ever more efficacious for you - for me to recall the structure that it ought to evoke to your eyes.

Moreover its choke-pear shape which perhaps has never struck you is not perhaps evoked here by chance; on the other hand, even though last year in connection with the little topological

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which I made so much of, some people could see being suggested to their minds some forms of the folding back of embryological leaves, even the layers of the cortex, nobody, in connection with the at once bilateral and interlinked arrangement of orientated intercommunication of this graph, nobody has ever evoked in this connection the solar plexus. Of course I am not claiming by that to deliver its secrets to _____-you, but this curious little homology is perhaps not as external as one might think and deserved to be recalled at the beginning of a discourse on anxiety.

Anxiety, I would say, up to a certain point the remark by which I introduced my discourse a little earlier, the one made by one of the people close to me, I mean in our Society, anxiety does not seem to be what stifles you, I mean as psychoanalysts. And nevertheless, it is not too much to say that it ought to in, what I might call, the logic of things, namely of the relationship that you have with your patient. After all to sense what the subject can tolerate, in terms of anxiety, is something that puts you to the test at every instant. It must therefore be supposed that, at least for those among you who are formed in the technique, the thing has ended up by slipping into your way of regulating matters in the most imperceptible way, it must be said. It is not excluded, and thank God for it, that the analyst, provided he is already disposed to it, I mean by very good dispositions to be an analyst, that the analyst at the beginning of his practice should experience some anxiety from his first relations with the patient on the couch.

Again it would be well to touch in this connection on the question of the communication of anxiety. Is this anxiety that you are able, it appears, to regulate so well in yourselves, to damp down the fact that it guides you, is it the same as that of the patient?

Why not? It is a question that I am leaving open for the moment, (4) perhaps not for very long, but which it is worthwhile opening up from the beginning, even if it is necessary to have recourse to our essential articulations in order to give it a valid response, therefore to wait for a moment at least, in the distances, in the detours that I am going to propose to you and which are not absolutely beyond the capacity of those who are my

listeners to forecast. Because if you remember, already precisely in connection with another series of so-called Journées provinciales which were far from having given me as much satisfaction, in connection with which in a sort of inclusion, parenthesis,- anticipation, in my discourse of last year I thought I should warn you and project ahead a formula indicating the relation between essential anxiety and the desire of the Other. For those who were not there, I recall the fable, the apologue, the amusing image of it which I thought I ought to present before you for a moment: putting on the animal mask which the wizard of the grotto of the three brothers covers himself with, I imagined myself before you confronted with another animal, this one real and supposed to be gigantic on this occasion, that of the praying mantis. And moreover since I did not know what kind of mask I was wearing you can easily imagine that I had some reason not to be reassured, in the case where by chance this mask would not have been unsuitable for drawing my partner into some error about (5) my identity, the thing being well underlined by the fact that I had added that in the enigmatic mirror of the ocular globe of the insect I did not see my own image. This metaphor preserves all its value today and it is what justifies the fact that at the centre of the signifiers that I put on this blackboard, you see the question which I introduced a long time ago as being the hinge between the two levels of the graph in so far as they structure this relationship of the subject to the signifier which as regards subjectivity appears to me to be the key of what introduces into Freudian doctrine the Che vuoi?, "What do you want?". Push a little bit more the functioning, the insertion of the key, and you have "What does he want of me?. Que me veut-il?, with the ambiguity about the me that French permits between the indirect and direct complement: not just only "What does he want from me?, Que veut-il à moi?", but something in suspense which directly concerns the moi which is not like "How does he want me?, Comment me veut-il?", but which is "What does he want with respect to this place of the ego? Que veut-il concernant cette place du moi?", which is something in suspense between the two levels, $\$ o) - d$ and $e - i(o)$, the two points of return which in each one designates the characteristic effect and the distance which is so essential to construct at the source of everything into which we are now going to advance, a distance which renders at once homologous and so distinct the relation between desire and narcissistic identification. It is in the operation of the dialectic which links these two levels so closely that we are going to see there being introduced the function of anxiety, not that it is in itself the mainspring of it, but that it is by the (6) phases of its appearance what allows us to orientate ourselves in it. So therefore when I posed the question of your relations as an analyst to anxiety, a question which precisely leaves in suspense this one: who are you sparing? The other, no doubt, but also just as much yourself and even though these two sparings overlap they should not be allowed to become confused. This is even one of the aims which at the end of this discourse will be proposed to you. For the moment I am introducing this indication of method that what we are going to have to draw in terms of a teaching from this research on anxiety, is to see the privileged point at which it emerges. It is to be modelled on an

orography of anxiety which leads us directly to a relief which is that of the term-to-term relationships which is constituted by this more than condensed structural attempt which I thought I should make the guide of our discourse for you.

If you know then how to come to terms with anxiety, it will already make us advance to try to see how, and moreover, I myself would not be able to introduce it without coming to terms with it in some way or other - and that is the danger perhaps: I must not come to terms with it too quickly: this does not mean either that in any way whatsoever, by some psychodramatic game or other, my goal ought to be to throw you (vous jeter) into anxiety with the play on words that I already made about this je of the jeter. Everyone knows that this projection of the I into an introduction to anxiety is for some time the ambition of a philosophy described as existentialist to give it its name. There are no (7) lack of references since the time of Kierkegaard, Gabriel Marcel, Chestov, Berdiaef and some others; not all of them have the same place nor are they all as usable. But at the beginning of this discourse, I would like to say that it seems to me that this philosophy in so far as, from its patron, the first named, to those whose names I advanced later, it is undoubtedly marked by a certain degradation. It seems to me that I see this philosophy marked, I would say, by some sort of haste unrecognised by itself, marked, I would say, by a certain disarray with respect to a reference which is the one to which at the same epoch the movement of thought was very close to, the reference to history. It is from a disarray (désarroi), in the etymological sense of this term, with respect to this reference that there is born and is precipitated existentialist reflection.

The horse of thought, I would say, to borrow from little Hans the object of his phobia, the horse of thought which imagines itself for a time to be the one pulling the coach of history, bucks all of a sudden, goes mad, collapses and gives itself over to this great Krawall machen to refer ourselves again to little Hans who gives one of these images to his favourite fear. This, is indeed what I am calling here the movement of haste in the bad sense of the term, that of disarray. And it is for that reason that it is far from being what interests us most in the line of descendance, the line of descendance of thought that we have pin-pointed just now, like everyone else moreover, by the term existentialism.

(8) Moreover one could remark that the latest comer, and not one of the least great, Monsieur Sartre, exerts himself quite explicitly not simply to get this horse back on his feet, but -co put him again between the shafts of history. It is precisely in function of this that Monsieur Sartre has busied himself a good deal, has questioned himself a good deal, about the function of seriousness (du sérieux). There is also someone whom I did not put in the series and therefore, because I am simply approaching, and touching at the start on what is in the background of the picture, the philosophers who take note of the point that we have got to: "Will the analysts be able to measure up to what we say about anxiety?", there is Heidegger. It is quite certain that with the use that I made above of the pun on the word jeter, it

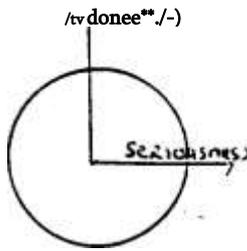
was indeed to him, to his original dereliction that I was closest.

The being for death, to call it by its name, which is the access path by which Heidegger, in his broken-off discourse, leads us to his present, enigmatic interrogation on the being of the existent, I believe, does not really pass by way of anxiety. He has named the living reference of the Heideggerian question: it is fundamental, it is about everything, it is about the one, it is about the omnitude of the human everyday: it is concern (le souci). Of course, from this point of view it could not be foreign to us, any more than concern itself. And since I have called here two witnesses Sartre and Heidegger, I will not deprive myself from calling on a third, in so far as I do not believe him unworthy to represent those who are here in the (9) process also of observing what he is going to say, and it is myself. . I mean that after all from the testimonies that I had again in recent hours, of what I would call the expectation - it is not just your's that I am speaking about in this case - therefore undoubtedly, I had these testimonies, but that there came to me last evening a work whose text I had asked one of you for, indeed to orientate myself in connection with a question that he himself had posed me, a work which I had told him I was waiting for before beginning my discourse here.

The fact that it was thus brought to me in a way on time, even if I have not been able to get to know it in the interval, since after all I also come here on time to respond to your expectation, is this a movement that is likely in itself to give rise to anxiety? Without having questioned the person concerned, I do not believe it with regard to myself. Indeed, I can respond, in the face of this expectation which is nevertheless designed to weigh me down with some sort of weight, that this is not, I believe I can say it from experience, the dimension which in itself gives rise to anxiety. I would even say on the contrary that I wanted to make this last reference, which is so close that it may appear problematic to you, in order to indicate to you how I intend to put you to what is my question from the beginning, at what distance to speak to you about it without putting it immediately into a cupboard, without leaving it in a crazy state either, at what distance is this anxiety to be put?

(10) Well then, faith, at the right distance, I mean the one which does not in any case place us too close to anyone, at precisely this familiar distance which I evoked for you by taking these last references, the one to my interlocutor who brought me my paper at the last minute and the one to myself who must here take a risk in my discourse on anxiety.

We are going to try to tuck this anxiety under our arms. It will not be any more indiscreet for all that. This will really leave us at the opaque distance, believe- me, which separates us from those who are closest to us. So then, between this concern and this seriousness and this expectation, are you going to believe that this is the way that I wanted to circumscribe it, to corner it? Well then, disabuse yourselves. If I traced out in the

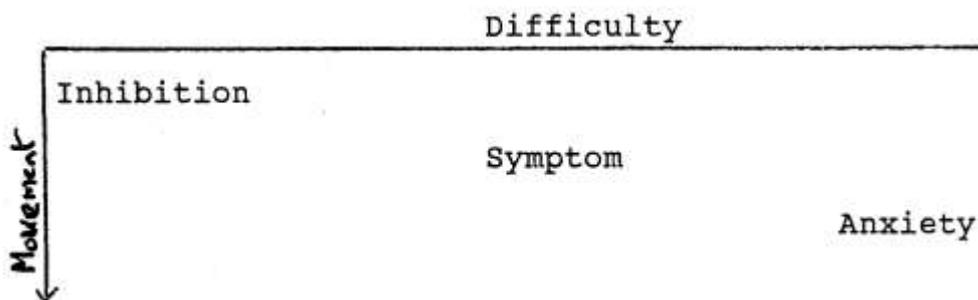


middle of three terms a little circle with its separated arrows, it is to tell you that if it is there that you look for it, you will quickly see that the bird has flown if indeed it was ever there. It is not to be sought in the middle. Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety, such is the title, the slogan

beneath which for the analyst there appears in his memory, there remains marked the final term of what Freud articulated on this subject.

Today I am not going to go into the text of Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety because as you have seen from the beginning I have decided today to work without a net, and there is no subject where the net of the Freudian discourse is closer, in short, to giving us a false sense of security; because precisely, when we (11) go into this text, you will see what is to be seen in connection with anxiety, that there is no net, because precisely as regards anxiety, each mesh, as I might appropriately put it, has no meaning except precisely by leaving the void in which anxiety is.

In the discourse, thank God, of Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety, everything is spoken about except anxiety. Does that mean that one cannot speak about it? Working without a net evokes a tight rope walker. I am taking as a rope only the title Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety. It leaps, as I might say, to understanding that these three terms are not at the same level. They look irregular and that is why I have written them in this way on three lines and staggered.



In order for it to work, for one to be able to understand them as a series, it is really necessary to see them as I have put them there, on a diagonal, which implies that the empty squares have to be filled in. I am not going to delay in proving to you something which is immediately obvious, the difference between the structure of these three terms which each, if we wish to situate them, have absolutely not the same terms as context, as entourage. Inhibition, is something which is, in the broadest sense of this term, in the dimension of movement and, what is more, Freud speaks about locomotion when he introduces it.

I am not going to go into the text. All the same you remember enough about it, to see that he cannot do otherwise than speak about locomotion when he introduces this term. In a broader (12) sense, this movement to which I refer, movement exists in every function, even if it is not locomotory. It exists at least metaphorically, and in inhibition, it is the stopping of movement

that is involved.

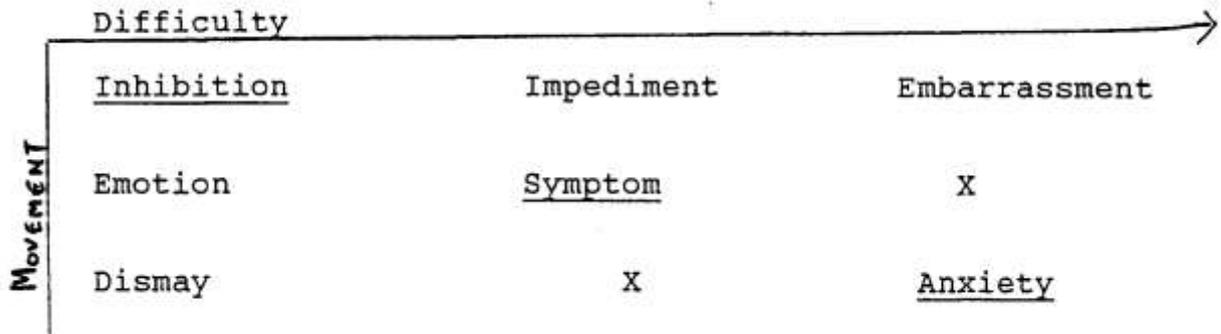
Stopping: does that mean that this is all inhibition is designed to suggest to us. You will easily object, braking too, and why not, I grant it to you. I do not see why we should not put into a matrix which ought to allow us to distinguish the dimensions involved in a notion so familiar to us, why we should not put on one line the notion of difficulty, and, on another coordinate axis, the one that I have called that of movement. This is even what is going to allow us to see more clearly, because it is also what is going to allow us to come down to earth, to the earth of what is not veiled by the learned word, by the notion, indeed the concept with which one can always come to terms with.

Why should one not use the word "to impede, empêcher", that is after all what is involved. Our subjects are inhibited when they speak to us about their inhibition and when we speak about it at scientific congresses; and every day, they are impeded. To be impeded, is a symptom; and inhibited, is a symptom that has been put in the museum; if one looks at what that means, to be impeded - be very clear about it - does not imply any superstition from the etymological point of view - I make use of it when it is of use to me - impedicare all the same means to be caught in a trap. And that is an extremely precious notion, (13) because it implies the relationship of a dimension to something different which comes to interfere with it and which entangles (empêtre) what interests us, which brings us closer -co what we are trying to know: not at all the function, the term of reference of difficult movement, but the subject, namely what happens under the form, under the name of anxiety.

If I put impediment (empêchement) here, as you see: I am in the symptom column; and right away I point out to you what we will of course be led to articulate about it much further on, namely that the trap is narcissistic capture. I think that you are no longer altogether at a rudimentary level about narcissistic capture, I mean that you remember what I articulated about it at the final term, namely the very precise limit that it introduces as regards what can be invested in the object, and that the residue, the broken fragment, what does not manage to invest itself, is going to be properly what gives its support, its material, to the signifying articulation that is going to be called on the other plane - the symbolic one - castration. The impediment which has come about is linked to this circle which means that in the same movement by which the subject advances towards jouissance, namely towards what is farthest from him, he encounters this intimate break very close at hand, and why? Because of allowing himself to be captured en route by his own image, by the specular image. That is the trap.

But let us try to go further, because we are still here at the (14) level of the symptom. As regards the subject, what term should be brought forward here in the third column? If we push further the questioning about the meaning of the word inhibition (inhibition, impediment), the third term which I propose to you, still in the sense of bringing you back to the ground of lived

experience, to the derisory seriousness of the question, I propose to you the beautiful term of embarrassment (embarras).



It will be all the more precious for us because today the etymology satisfies me to the full; obviously I have the wind to my back, if you see that embarras is very exactly the subject S invested with the bar, that the etymology imbarrare (imbarricare?) makes properly speaking the most direct allusion to the bar (bara) as such and that moreover this is the image of what is called the most direct lived experience of embarrassment. When you no longer know what to do with yourself, when you do not find anything behind which to barricade yourself, what is indeed involved is the experience of the bar; and moreover this bar can take on more than one form. The curious references that one finds, if what I have been told is correct, in numerous dialects where the embarrassed person, the embarazada - there are no Spaniards here, it does not matter because I have been told that the embarazada, without having recourse to dialect, means a pregnant woman in Spanish. Which is another quite significant form of the bar in its place.

So there we are for the dimension of difficulty. It culminates at this sort of slight form of anxiety which is called embarrassment. In the other dimension, that of movement, what are the terms that we are going to see sketched out? Descending (15) towards the symptom it is emotion. Emotion - you will forgive me for continuing to trust in an etymology which has been so favourable to me up to now - emotion from an etymological point of view refers to movement, except that we will give it a little push by putting into it the Goldsteinian meaning of throwing out, ex, of the line of movement, the movement which disintegrates, the reaction which is described as catastrophic. It is useful for me to indicate to you the place where it should be put, because after all, there have been people who have told us that the catastrophic reaction was anxiety. I believe of course that it is not unrelated. What is not related to anxiety? It is a matter precisely of knowing when it really is anxiety. The fact for example that the same reference has been made - and that without any scruple - to the catastrophic reaction to designate the hysterical crisis as such, or again anger in other cases, sufficiently proves all the same that it could not be enough to distinguish, to pinpoint, to highlight where anxiety is. Let us take the next step: we always remain at the same respectful distance from two great traits of anxiety, but is

there in the dimension of movement something which responds more precisely to the stage of anxiety? I am going to call it by its name which I- have held in reserve for a long time, in your interest, as a delicacy. Perhaps I have made a fleeting allusion to it, but only particularly sharp ears were able to pick it up: it is the word émoi (dismay). Here etymology favours me in a literally, [^]fabulous way. It delights me. That is why I will not hesitate, when I have told you first everything that it brings me, to further abuse it. In any case, let's go.

Linguistic sensibility, as it is put by Messrs Bloch and Von Wartburg to whose article I am expressly asking you to refer - I apologise if it duplicates what I am going to tell you now, duplicates it all the more because what I am going to tell you is a literal quotation from it, I take things where I find them, and I hope nobody minds - Messrs Bloch and Von Wartburg say then that linguistic sensibility has linked this term to the correct word, to the word émouvoir (to move, to affect). But disabuse yourselves, this is not the case. Émoi has nothing to do with emotion for someone who knows how to use it. In any case, realise - I will go quickly - that the term esmayer, that before it esmais and even properly speaking esmoi - esmais, if you are interested is already attested to in the thirteenth century - only knew, to put it in the authors' words, only triumphed in the sixteenth. That esmayer means troubler (to disturb, to frighten) and also se troubler (to show disturbance). That esmayer is effectively still used in dialects and leads us to the popular Latin exmagare which means to make lose one's power, one's energy, and that this, this popular Latin, is linked to a grafting of a western German root which reconstituted gives us magan and which one moreover has no need to reconstitute because in high German and in Gothic, it exists in this same form, ^and that, provided you are German speakers, you can refer to mogen to the English may - mogen in German. In Italian smagare exists I hope? Not really. It comes from Bloch and Von Wartburg - and means, according to them, to become discouraged. A doubt exists therefore. Since there are no Portugese here, I would have no objection to accepting, not what I am putting forward, but Bloch and Von Wartburg, to bringing into play esmaqar which means to crush, which until I learn otherwise I will hold onto as having for what follows a considerable interest. I will pass over Provencal.

In any case, it is certain that the translation which has been accepted, of Triebregung by émoi pulsionnel (instinctual impulse) is quite incorrect and precisely because of the whole distance that there is between emotion and émoi. Émoi is perturbation, collapse of power, Regung is stimulation, the call to disorder, even to a riot. I will fortify myself also with this etymological quest to tell you that up to a certain time, more or less the same as the one that is called in Bloch and Von Wartburg the triumph of émoi, émeute (riot) - precisely had the meaning of emotion and only took on the sense of popular movement more or less from the seventeenth century on.

All of this to make you properly sense that here the nuances,

indeed the linguistic versions evoked, are designed to guide us through something, namely, that if we wish to define by dismay a third place in the sense of what is meant by inhibition if we try to connect it with anxiety, dismay, perturbation, being disturbed as such, indicates to us the other reference which though it (18) corresponds, let us say, to a level equal to that of embarrassment, does not concern the same aspect. Dismay is the most profound form of being disturbed in the dimension of movement. Embarrassment is the high point reached by difficulty. Does this mean that for all that we have rejoined anxiety? The boxes of this little table are there to show you that precisely we are not claiming that. We have filled in here emotion, dismay, these two boxes here, impediment, embarrassment, these ones here. It remains that this one here and that one are empty. How can they be filled? It is a subject which greatly interests us and I am going to leave it for you for a while as a riddle. What is to be put in these two boxes? This is of the greatest interest as regards what is involved in the handling of anxiety. Having posed this little preamble from the reference to the Freudian triad of inhibition, symptom and anxiety, the ground has been cleared to speak about it, I would say, doctrinally. Having been brought back by these evocations to the level of experience itself, let us try to situate it in a conceptual framework. What is anxiety? We have ruled out its being an emotion. And to introduce it, I would say: it is an affect.

Those who follow the movements of affinity or of aversion of my discourse by frequently letting themselves be taken in by appearances, think no doubt that I am less interested in affects than in anything else. This is quite absurd. On occasion, I have tried to say what affect is not: it is not Being given in (19) its immediacy, nor is it the subject in some sort of raw form. It is not, to say the word, protopathic in any case. My occasional remarks on affect mean nothing other than this. And that is precisely why it has a close structural relationship with what is, even traditionally, a subject; and I hope to articulate it for you in an indelible fashion the next time. What on the contrary I did say about affect, is that it is not repressed; and that is something that Freud says just like me. It is unmoored, it goes with the drift. One finds it displaced, mad, inverted, metabolised, but it is not repressed. What is repressed are the signifiers which moor it. This relationship between affect and signifier would require a whole year on the theory of affects. I already allowed there to appear on one occasion the way in which I understood it. I said it to you in connection with anger. Anger, I told you, is what happens in subjects when the little pegs no longer go into the little holes. What does that mean? As regards the level of the Other, of the signifier, it always concerns faith and trust, someone is not playing the game. This is what gives rise to anger. And moreover to leave you today on something which preoccupies you, I am going to make a simple remark. Where best does Aristotle deal with the passions? I think that all the same there are a certain number of you who know already: it is in Book Two of his Rhetoric. The best thing (20) about the passions is caught up in the reference, in the net, in the network of the Rhetoric. It is not by chance. This

is the net. This indeed is why I spoke to you about the net in connection with the first linguistic references that I tried to give you. I- did not take the dogmatic path of giving a general theory of affects before what I had to say to you about anxiety. Why? Because here we are not psychologists, we are psychoanalysts. I am not developing for you a direct logical psychosis, a discourse about this unreal reality which is called the psyche but a praxis which merits a name: erotology. Desire is what is involved, and the affect by which we are urged perhaps to make emerge everything that it involves as a universal, not general, consequence on the theory of affects, is anxiety. It is on the cutting edge of anxiety that we have to maintain ourselves and it is on this cutting edge that I hope to lead you further the next time.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 21 November 1962

Blackboard

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As I continue today to get into my discourse on anxiety a little more, I can legitimately pose before you the question of what a teaching is here.

The notion that we may have of it ought all the same to undergo some effect - if here we are in principle, let us say, analysts for the most part, if the analytic experience is supposed to be my essential reference when I address the audience composed of yourselves - from the fact that we cannot forget that the analyst is, as I might say, an interpreter (un interprétant). He plays on this so essential moment which I already accentuated for you on many occasions starting from several subjects of "he did not know", "I did not know" and to which we will leave therefore an indeterminate subject by collecting them into a "one did not know, on ne savait pas".

As regards this "one did not know", the analyst is supposed to know something. Why not even admit that he knows a good deal? The question is not to know - it would be at least premature - whether he can teach it - we can say that up to a certain point, the simple existence of a place like this and of the role that I play in it for some time now, is a way of settling the question well or badly, but of settling it - but to know "what is it to teach it?, qu'est-ce que Renseigner?" .

What does teaching it mean when it involves precisely what it is a matter of teaching, to teach it not simply to the one who does not know, but - it must be admitted that up to a certain point we (2) are all in the same boat here - to. the one who, given what is involved, to one who cannot know.

Observe carefully where, as I might say, the false door leads. An analytic teaching, if there were not this false door, this seminar itself could conceive itself as being in the line, in the prolongation of what happens for example in a supervision where it is what you know, what you are supposed to know, that is brought along, and where I would only intervene to give what is analogous to interpretation, namely this addition by means of which something appears which gives meaning to what you think you know, which makes appear in a flash what it is possible to grasp beyond the limits of knowledge.

It is all the same in the measure that a knowledge exists in this work of development of analysis that we describe as communal rather than collective among those who have experience of it, the analysts, that this knowledge is constituted, that a work of putting it together is conceivable, which justifies the place taken by a teaching like the one which is carried out here. It is because, if you wish, there has already been secreted by analytic experience a whole literature which is called analytic theory that I am forced - often quite against my will - to give it here so much space, and it is what necessitates me doing something which has to go beyond this piecing together, and precisely in the sense of our getting closer, through this piecing together of analytic theory, to what constitutes its source, namely experience.

Here an ambiguity appears which depends not simply on the fact that here some non-analysts are mixed in with us. There is no great inconvenience in this because moreover even the analysts come here with positions, postures, expectations which are not necessarily analytic, and already very sufficiently conditioned by the fact that in the theory that is constructed in analysis there are introduced references of every kind, and much more so than may appear at first sight, that one can qualify as extra-analytic, as psychologising for example. By the simple fact then (3) that I have to deal with this material, the material of my audience, the material of my teaching object, I will be led to refer to this common experience which is the one thanks to which there is established all communication in teaching, namely not to be able to remain in the pure position that I called earlier interpreting, but to pass to a broader communicating position, namely to engage myself on the terrain of "making things understood, faire comprendre", to appeal in you to an experience which goes well beyond that of strict analytic experience.

This is important to recall because "making things understood" is at the same time that which, in psychology in the broadest sense, is really the stumbling block. Not so much because the accent ought to be put on what at one time for example appeared to be the great originality of a work like that of Blondel on La

conscience morbide, namely that there are limits to understanding: let us not imagine for example, that we understand, as they say, the real authentic lived experience of the sick. But it is not the question of this limit which is important for us; and at a time when I am speaking to you about anxiety, it is important to point out to you that it is one of the questions that we suspend, because the question is much rather to explain why, by what right we can speak about anxiety, when we subsume under this rubric the anxiety into which we can introduce ourselves following one or other meditation guided by Kierkegaard, the anxiety which can lay hold of us at one or other para-normal or even frankly pathological moment, as being ourselves subjects of an experience that is more or less situatable from a psychopathological point of view, the anxiety which is the one we deal with in our neurotics, the ordinary material of our experience, and for that matter the anxiety that we can describe and localise at the source of an experience that is more peripheral for us, that of the pervert for example, even that of the psychotic.

If this homology is justified by a kinship of structure, it can (4) only be so at the expense of the original understanding which nevertheless is going necessarily to increase with the danger of making us forget that this understanding is not that of a lived experience but of a mainspring, and of presuming too much about what we can assume about the experiences to which it refers, specifically those of the pervert or of the psychotic. In this perspective it is preferable to warn someone that he should not believe too much in what he can understand. It is here indeed that the signifying elements take on their importance, denuded as I try to make them by their notation of understandable content and whose structural relationship is the means by which I try to maintain the level necessary for understanding not to be deceptive, while at the same time allowing there to be located the diverse significant terms into which we make our way, and this especially when what is involved is an affect. Because I have not refused this element of classification: anxiety is an affect. We see that the style of approach of such a theme: "anxiety is an affect" is proposed to us from the point of view of the teacher, in accordance with the different paths that one can, I believe, rather summarily, - namely by effectively summing them up - define under three headings, those of the catalogue, namely as regards affect to work out not simply what it means, but what was meant in constituting such a category, a term which undoubtedly puts us in a position of teaching something about the subject of teaching in its broadest sense, and necessarily here to harmonise what is taught within analysis with what is contributed from outside in the widest sense as category, and why not? Very considerable contributions have come to us from there and, you will see, to take a median reference which will come into the field of our attention, there is as regards what occupies us this year - if it is true that, as I said, I am far from refusing to insert this central object of anxiety into the catalogue of affects, into the different theories which have been produced about affect - well then, to take things, I told you, at <5) a kind of median point of the cut, at the level of Saint

Thomas Aquinas to call him by his name, there are some very good things concerning a division which he did not invent concerning affect between" the concupiscent and the irascible, and the long discussion with which he weighs up, in accordance with the formula of scholastic debate, proposition, objection, response, namely which of the two categories is primary with respect to the other, and how he settles it and why. Despite certain appearances, certain references, the irascible is inserted somewhere in the chain of the concupiscent which is already there, which concupiscent therefore is primary with respect to it, this is something which will not fail to be of use to us; because in truth might it not be in the final analysis entirely suspended on a supposition about a Sovereign Good, against which, as you know, we already have substantial objections to make - for us it would be very acceptable; we will see what we can preserve of it, what it clarifies for us. The simple fact is that we can - I would ask you to refer to it - I will give you the references at the appropriate time - we can undoubtedly find here a considerable amount of material to nourish our own reflection. More, paradoxically, than what we can find in recent, modern developments - let us call things by their name: the nineteenth century - of a psychology which claimed to be, without no doubt being fully entitled to do so, more experimental. This again, this path, has the inconvenience of pushing us in the direction, into the category of the classification of affects, and experience proves that too great an abandon in this direction only culminates for us - and even however centrally we may bring it, with respect to our experience, to that part to which a little earlier I gave the trait, the accent of theory - in obvious impasses a lovely testimony of which for example is given by this article which appears in Tome 34, the third part of 1953 of the International Journal, where Mr David Rapaport attempts a psychoanalytic theory of affect.

(6) This article is really exemplary for the properly dismaying evaluation, at which as a matter of fact it culminates, without the author dreaming of hiding it, namely the astonishing result that an author who announces by this title an article which after all could not fail to allow us to hope for something new, original, to come out of it as regards what the analyst can think about affect, should finally culminate only in him also, staying strictly within analytic theory, giving a catalogue of the acceptations in which this term has been used, and seeing that within the very theory itself these acceptations are irreducible to one another, the first being that of affect conceived of as constituting substantially the discharge of the drive, the second within the same theory, and, to go even further, supposedly from the Freudian text itself: affect being nothing but the connotation of a tension at its different phases, usually conflictual, affect constituting the connotation of this tension in so far as it varies, a connotation of the variation of tension, and a third term equally marked as irreducible in Freudian theory itself: affect constituting in a properly topographical reference the signal at the level of the ego concerning 'something happening elsewhere, the danger coming from elsewhere.' The important thing is that he notes that there

still subsists, in the debates of the most recently emerging authors in analytic discussion, divergent claims about the primacy of each one of these three meanings, so that nothing can be resolved about it. And that the author in question can say no more to us about it, is all the same indeed the sign that here the method described as "cataloguing" cannot here be marked indeed by any profound gain, since it culminates in impasses, even indeed in a very special type of infecundity.

There is, differentiating itself from this method - I apologise for going on so long today about a question which is nevertheless of great interest as a preamble, as regard the timeliness of what we are doing here, and it is not for nothing that I am

(7) introducing it, as you will see as regards anxiety - the method that I would call, using a need for consonance with the preceding term, the method of analogy, which will lead us to discern what one can call levels. I saw in a work which I will not otherwise quote today, an attempted gathering together of this kind, where one sees, in separate chapters, anxiety conceived as it is put - it is an English work - biologically, then socially, sociologically, then as far as I know culturally, culturellement, as if it were enough in this way to reveal, at supposedly independent levels, analogical positions, to succeed in doing anything more than separating out, no longer what I called earlier a classification, but here a sort of type.

We know what this method culminates in: in what is called an anthropology. Anthropology, to our eyes, is something which, of **all** the paths to which we might commit ourselves, involves the greatest number of the most hazardous presuppositions. What such **a** method culminates in, no matter how eclectic it is, is always **and** necessarily what we, in our familiar vocabulary, and without making of this name or of this title the index of someone who has **even** occupied such an eminent position, is what we call Jungianism.

On the subject of anxiety, this will necessarily lead us to the theme of this central core which is the absolutely necessary thematic at which such a path culminates. This means that it is very far from what is involved in experience. Experience leads **us** to what I would call here the third way which I would place under the index, under the heading of the function of what I would call that of the key.

The key is what opens, and what functions because it opens. The (8) key **is** the form according to which there should operate or **not** operate the signifying function as such, and what makes it legitimate for me to announce it and to distinguish it and dare **to** introduce **it** as something to which we can trust ourselves, is **net** something which **is** marked here by presumption, for the reason **that** I think that it will be for you, and for those here who **belong to** the teaching profession, a 'sufficiently convincing **ireJIfrence**, **it is** that this dimension is absolutely connatural to **any** teaching, analytic or not, for the reason that there is no **leaching**, I would say - and I would say, for my part, whatever astonishment may result from it among some people as regards what

I teach, and nevertheless I will say it - there is no teaching which does not refer itself to what I would call an ideal of simplicity.

If, earlier, something was enough to give rise for us to an objection in the fact that a cat literally cannot find her kittens as regards what we think, we analysts, by going to the texts on affect, there is something here profoundly unsatisfying, and that it is necessary that, as regards any title whatsoever, we should satisfy ourselves as regards a certain ideal of simple reduction. What does that mean and why? Why, why ever since people have done science - because these reflections are concerned with something quite different and with much vaster fields than that of our experience - has one required the greatest possible simplicity? Why should the real be simple? What could permit us for a single instant to suppose it to be so?

Nothing indeed, nothing other than this subjective initium on which I put the accent here throughout the whole of the first part of my teaching last year, namely that there is no conceivable appearance of a subject as such except from the primary introduction of a signifier, and from the simplest signifier which is called the unary trait.

The unary trait comes before the subject. "In the beginning was the word", means: in the beginning is the unary trait. Everything that is teachable ought to preserve the stigmata of this ultra-simple initium which is the only thing which can justify to our eyes the ideal of simplicity.

(9) Simplicity, singularity of the trait, this is what we bring into the real, whether the real wants it or does not want it. But one thing is certain, it is that it enters, that it has already entered before us because already it is along this path that all the subjects who, for some centuries all the same, have been engaged in a dialogue and have to come to terms as best they can with this condition precisely that there is between them and the real this field of the signifier; it is already by this apparatus of the unary trait that they have constituted themselves as subjects. How could we for our part be astonished at finding its mark in our own field, if our field is that of the subject?

In analysis, there is something which is prior to everything that we can elaborate or understand, and this I will call the presence of the Other. There is no self-analysis; even when one imagines it, the Other is there. I recall it because it is already on this path and on the same path of simplicity that I placed what I had to tell you, what I indicated to you, what I began to indicate to you about something which goes further, namely that anxiety is this certain relationship which I have only imaged up to now. I recalled for you the last time the image, with the sketch I re-evoked of my presence, my very modest and embarrassed presence in the presence of the giant praying mantis, I already told you more therefore in saying to you: this is related to the desire of the Other.

This Other, before knowing what my relationship with its desire means when I am in a state of anxiety, I first of all put the Other there. -To get closer to his desire, I will take, God knows, paths that I have already opened up. I told you: the desire of man is the desire of the Other. I apologise for not being able to go back, for example, to a grammatical analysis that I made during the last Journées Provinciales - that is why I am so keen that this text should come to me intact, so that it can be distributed at a suitable time - the grammatical analysis of what is meant by the desire of the Other and the meaning of this (objective) genitive; but after all those who up to now have (10) been at my seminar may all the same, I think, have enough elements to situate themselves sufficiently.

From the pen of someone, who is precisely the author of this little work to which I alluded at the beginning of this year's teaching the last time, which had been brought to me that very morning o.i a subject which was none other than the one that Lévi-Strauss approaches, that of the suspending of what one could call dialectical reason, at the structuralist level at which Lévi-Strauss places himself, someone making use of it to clarify this debate, to enter into its detours, to disentangle its skein from the analytic point of view, and referring of course to what I said about phantasy as support of desire, does not in my opinion take enough notice of what I am saying when I speak about the desire of man as desire of the Other.

What proves it, is that he believes he can content himself with recalling that this is a Hegelian formula. Now if there is, I **think**, someone who makes no mistake about what The phenomenology of the spirit has brought us, it is myself. If there is nevertheless a point at which it is important to mark that it is tieirfe that I mark the difference and, if you wish, to employ the term, the progress - I would like still better the leap - which is ours with respect to Hegel, it is precisely concerning this function of desire. I am not in a position, given the field that I have to cover this year, to take up again with you step by step the Hegelian text. I am alluding here to an author who, I hope, will see this article published and who shows a quite sensitive knowledge of what Hegel says on this point.

I am not all the same going to follow him onto the plane of the quite original passage which he very well recalled on this occasion. But for the totality of those who are listening to me and with what has already passed, I think, to the common level of this audience concerning the Hegelian reference, I will say immediately, in order to make you sense what is involved, that in Hegel, as regards this dependence of my desire with respect to the desirer who is the Other, I am dealing, in the most certain J11) and most articulated fashion, with the Other as consciousness. The Other is the one who sees me - how that involves **my** desire, you know, you already glimpse sufficiently, but I will come back to it later, for the moment I am making massive oppositions - the Other is the one who sees me and it is on this plane, on this plane that you see that there is launched all by itself, according to the basis with which Hegel

inaugurates The phenomenology of the spirit, the struggle on the plane of what he calls "pure prestige", and my desire is involved in this.

For Lacan, because Lacan is an analyst, the Other is there as unconsciousness constituted as such, and he involves my desire in the measure of what he is lacking and that he does not know. It is at the level of what he is lacking and that he does not know that I am involved in the most pregnant fashion, because for me there is no other detour, to find what I am lacking as object of my desire.

That is why there is for me not alone no access, but no possible sustentation of my desire which is pure reference to an object, whatever it may be, unless by coupling it, by linking it with the following which is expressed by the which is this necessary dependence on the Other as such. This Other is of course the one that throughout these years, I think I have accustomed you to distinguish at every instant from the other, my fellow. It is the Other as locus of the signifier. It is my fellow among others of course, but not simply that, because of the fact that it is also the locus as such at which there is established the order of the singular difference of which I spoke to you at the beginning.

Am I now going to introduce the formulae which I marked for you on the right which I do not pretend - far from it, given what I said to you right at the beginning - are going to surrender their malice to you immediately. I would ask you today, like the last time - that is why this year I am writing these things on the blackboard - to take them down. You will see how they function afterwards. The desire of desire, in the Hegelian sense, is therefore desire of a desire which responds to the appeal of the subject.

(12) It is desire of a desirer. Why does he need this desirer, who is the Other? It is because from whatever angle you place yourself, but in the most articulated fashion in Hegel, he needs him in order that the Other should recognise him, in order to receive recognition from him. What does that mean? That the Other as such is going to establish something, "o", which is precisely what is involved at the level of what desires - this is the, whole impasse - in requiring to be recognised by him. There where I am recognised as object, because this object in its essence is a consciousness, a Selbstbewusstsein, there is no mediation other than that of violence. I obtain what I desire, I **am** object and I cannot tolerate myself as object, I cannot tolerate myself unless I am recognised in my world, the only mode of recognition that I can obtain, must necessarily therefore at any, price be settled between our two consciousnesses. This is **tfre**, f^te.Pf desire in Hegel. The desire of desire in the Lajcknian or analytic sense, is the desire of the Other in a ff^hipn that is much more fundamentally (princiellement) open t\$# sort of mediation. At least that is the way it looks at first, japproach. Because desire here - you will see it in the verybformula/ the signifier, that I put here on the blackboard,

2, that I am going rather far in the sense of going against, I mean of contradicting what you may now be expecting - is desire qua supporting-image of this desire, a relationship therefore of $d \cdot (\text{£} > -)$ to what I write, to what I do not hesitate to write: $i(o)$, even and precisely because that creates an ambiguity with the notation that I usually designate of the specular image (here we do not know yet, when, how and why the specular image can be, but it is undoubtedly an image; this is not a specular image, it is of the order of image, it is the phantasy, which I do not hesitate on occasion to overlap with this notation of the specular image). I am saying therefore that this desire is desire in so far as its supporting image is the equivalent - that is why the two points (:) which were here are there - is the equivalent of the desire of the Other. But here the Other is (13) connoted because it is the Other at the point where it is characterised as lack. The two other formulae 3 and 4 (because there are only two, this one and then the second one; you see included in a bracket for the second, two formulae which are only two ways of writing the same thing, in one direction, then in the palindromic direction by returning after being like that, by returning in this way; that is all that is written in the third line).

I do not know then whether I will have the time today to get to the translation of these two final formulae. You should know already however that they are one and the other constructed, the first to highlight that anxiety is what shows the truth of the Hegelian formula, namely that if the Hegelian formula is partial and false and makes a false door of the whole beginning of the Phenomenology of the Spirit as I indicated to you on several occasions already by showing you the perversion which results, and which goes very far and even into the political domain, from this too narrow starting point centred on the imaginary because it is all very well to say that the servitude of the slave is full of consequences and leads to Absolute Knowledge. But it also means that the slave will remain a slave until the end of time.

It is Kierkegaard who gives the truth. It is not Hegel's truth, but the truth of the anxiety which leads us to our remarks about desire in the analytic sense.

Remarks: in the two formulae, that of Hegel and mine, in the first term of the formulae (above,), however paradoxical it may **appear**, it is an object o which desires. Although there are differences, there is something in common between the Hegelian concept of desire and the one that I am promoting. It is at a **moment**, the point of an unacceptable impasse in the process.

{,14) Selbstbewusstsein in Hegel, is an object, namely this something where the subject, being this object, is irremediably marked by finiteness, it is this object which is affected by desire. This is the way in which what I am producing before you **has** something in common with the Hegelian theory, except that at pur analytic level, which does not require the transparency of Selbstbewusstsein - it is a difficulty of course, but not of a

kind to make us retrace our steps, nor for that matter to engage ourselves in a fight to the death with the Other - because of the existence of the unconscious, we can be this object affected by desire.

It is even qua thus marked by finiteness that for us, as subjects of the unconscious, our lack can be desire, finite desire, indefinite in appearance, since the lack, always involving some void, can be filled in several ways at first, even though we know* very well because we are analysts, that we do not fill it in ninety-nine different ways. And we will see why and which ones.

What I would call the classical, moralistic, not so much the theological, dimension of the infinity of desire is in this perspective to be completely reduced. Because this pseudo-infinity depends on only one thing which luckily a certain part of the theory of the signifier, which is none other than that of whole numbers, allows us to image. This false infinity is linked to this sort of metonymy which, as regards the definition of integers, is called recurrence. It is quite simply the law that we have, I believe, powerfully accentuated last year in connection with the repetitive One. But what our experience (15) shows us - I will articulate it for you - is that in the different fields that are proposed to it, specifically and distinctly, the neurotic, the perverse, indeed the psychotic, is that this One to which there is reduced in the final analysis the succession of signifying elements, the fact that they are distinct and that they succeed one another does not exhaust the function of the Other. And this is what I am expressing here starting from this originating Other as locus of the signifier, of this still inexistent S which by situating itself as determined by the signifier, under the form of these two columns which are those under which as you know one can write down the operation of division.

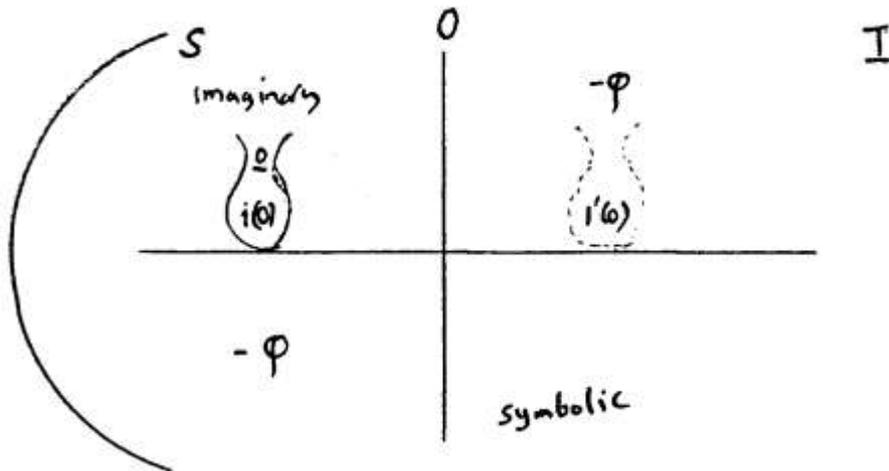
o	S
\$	φ
o	
Other's side	my side

With respect to this Other, depending on this Other, the subject is inscribed as a quotient, he is marked by the unary trait of the signifier in the field of the Other. Well, it is not for all that, as I might say, that he cuts the Other into slices. There is a remainder in the sense of division, a residue. This remainder, this final other, this irrational, this proof and sole guarantee when all is said and done of the otherness of the Other, is the o. And this is why the two terms, f and Q , the subject as marked by the bar of the signifier, the little object o as residue of the putting into condition, if I can express myself in this way, of the Other, are on the same side, both on the objective side of the bar, both on the side of the Other. The phantasy, the support of my desire, is in its totality on the side of the Other, $\$$ and Q . What is on my side now, is precisely what constitutes me as unconscious, namely j , the Other in so far as I do not reach it.

Am I going to lead you any further here? No, because I have run out of time. And in order not to leave you on a point which is so closed off as regards the continuation of the dialectic which is going to be inserted into it and which, as you will see, requires that the next step that I have to explain to you is what I am committing to the affair, namely that in the subsistence of the phantasy I will image the sense of what I have to produce with a reminder of an experience which I think will be for you - God knows in what is most interesting for you, I am not the one who said it, it is Freud -: of some use in the experience of love.

(16) I want to point out to you, at the point that we are at, that in this theory of desire in its relationship to the Other you have the following key: the fact is that, contrary to the hope that the Hegelian perspective may give you, the mode of the conquest of the other, is the one, alas, too often adopted by one of the partners: "I love you, even if you don't want it". You must not believe that Hegel did not glimpse this prolongation of his doctrine. There is a very precious little note where he indicates that he could have made his whole dialectic pass along this path. It is the same note where he says that, if he did not take this path, it is because it seemed to him to lack seriousness. How right he was! Try it out. Let me know how successful it is! There is nevertheless another formula which if **it** does not demonstrate any better its effectiveness, it is perhaps only because it is not articulatable, but that does not mean that it is not articulated. It is "I desire you, even if I do not know it". Wherever it succeeds, however inarticulatable **it** may be, in making itself heard, this one, I assure you is irresistible. And why? I will not leave this as a riddle for you. If this were sayable, what would I be saying by it? I would be saying to the other that, desiring him without knowing **it of** course, still without knowing it, I take him as the object unknown to myself of my desire, namely in our conception of desire that I identify him, that I identify you, you to whom I am speaking, you yourself, to the object which is lacking to yourself, namely that by this circuit that I have to take to **reach** the object of my desire, I accomplish precisely for him what he is looking for. It is indeed in this way that innocently **or** not, if I take this detour, the other as such, object here - you should note - of my love, will fall necessarily into my toils. I will leave you on this, on this recipe, and I will see you the next time.

Seminar 3 : Wednesday 28 November 1962



You will have noticed that I am always happy to latch onto some current event in our dialogue.

When all is said and done, there is nothing except what is current, that is why it is so difficult to live in what we could call the world of reflection. It is because in truth not much happens there. I sometimes inconvenience myself to see if somewhere some little question mark is not appearing somewhere. I am rarely rewarded. That is why people pose me serious questions; well then, you will not blame me for taking advantage of it.

So I continue my dialogue with the person to whom I already alluded twice in my preceding seminars, in connection with the fashion, which I punctuated the last time, regarding the difference there is between the conception of the Hegelian articulation of desire and mine. I am being urged to say more about what is textually designated as a beyond to be accomplished in my own discourse, a more precise articulation between the mirror stage and, as the Rome report puts it, between the specular image and the signifier. Let us add that some hiatus (2) seems to remain there, not without my interlocutor glimpsing that perhaps here the use of the word hiatus, cut or split, is nothing other than the expected response. Nevertheless under this form, it might appear to be what it would be in effect: an eluding, or an elision. And that is why I will try quite willingly today to respond to him, and this all the more because we find ourselves there strictly on the path of what I have to describe for you this year concerning anxiety: anxiety is what is going to allow us to go over again, I am saying go over again the articulation thus required of me. I say go over again because those who have followed me these last years and even without

necessarily having been assiduous here at every point, those who have read what I wrote, have already more or less the elements to fill our, to make this cut, this hiatus function, as you are going to see from the few reminders with which I am going to begin.

In truth, I do not believe that there ever were two phases in what I taught: one phase which is supposed to be centred on the mirror stage, on something highlighted in the imaginary, and then after, with this moment of our history that is located by the Rome report, the discovery which I suddenly made of the signifier. In a text which I believe is no longer easy to get hold of but which can after all be found in any good psychiatric library, a text which appeared in L'évolution psychiatrique called Propos sur la causalité psychique, a discourse which takes us back, if I remember correctly, to just after the war in 1946, I would ask those who are interested in the question which is thus posed to me to consult it; they will see there things which will prove to them that it is not just now that the interplay between these two registers was closely woven by me.

In truth if this discourse was followed by a rather long silence, let us say that this should not astonish you too much. There was a road to travel afterwards to open a certain number of ears to this discourse, and you must not believe that at the time when - if that interests you, re-read these "Propos sur la causalité psychique" - that at the time when I made these remarks that it was easy to find ears to understand them.

(3) In truth, since it was at Bonneval that these Remarks were made and that a more recent meeting at Bonneval manifested to a certain number the distance that had been travelled since, you should be aware that the reactions to these first Remarks were rather astonishing. The modest term of ambivalence which we make use of in the analytic milieu, is the best way to characterise the reactions which I recorded to these Remarks, and even, because I am going to be queried about this subject, I do not find it absolutely useless to note that at a time, which a certain number of you were already sufficiently formed to remember, that at a time which was the time after the war and of some movement of renewal or other that one might have hoped from it and, I cannot help remembering all of a sudden, when I am brought back to that epoch, the fact indeed that those who were certainly not individually the least disposed to hear a discourse which was very new then, who were the people situated somewhere indeed that is called politically on the left, and even the extreme left, the Communists in fact to call them by their name, very specially demonstrated on this occasion the sort of thing, this reaction, this mode, this style, which I must pinpoint with a term that is in current use, which one should pause for a moment before putting forward - it is a very unjust term with respect to those who invoked it originally, but it is a term which ended up by taking on a meaning which is unambiguous, we will perhaps have to come back to it in what follows, I am employing it here in the courtly sense - it is the term of Pharisaism.

I would say that on that occasion, in this little glass of water which is our psychiatric milieu, Communist Pharisaism really operated flat out in the sense of what we saw being used for at least our present generation here in France, namely to ensure the permanence of this body of good or bad habits in which a certain established order finds comfort and security. In short, I cannot but bear witness to the fact that it was from the very special reservations that they showed, that I understood at that time that my discourse would take a long time to make itself heard. Hence the silence in question and the work that I have put in by devoting myself to making it penetrate simply the milieu whose experience rendered it most apt to hear it, namely the analytic (4) milieu. I will spare you the adventures that followed.

But this may make you re-read the Propos sur la causalite psychique. You will see, especially after what I told you today, that already the framework existed in which each one of the two perspectives that my interlocutor quite rightly distinguishes, was inscribed. These two perspectives are punctuated here by these two coloured lines, the vertical one in blue, the horizontal one in red - which the sign (I) of the imaginary and (S) of the symbolic respectively designate here.

There are many ways of reminding you that the articulation of the subject to the small other and the articulation of the subject to the big Other do not exist separately in what I am demonstrating to you. There is more than one way of showing it to you. I am going to remind you a certain number of moments which have already been illuminated, punctuated as essential in my discourse. I point out to you that what you see here on my blackboard, in the other lines that have been drawn, - you are going to see the elements involved being placed - is nothing other than a schema already published in the remarks that I thought I should make on the report of Daniel Lagache at Royaumont. And this drawing in which there is articulated something which has the closest relationship with our subject, namely the function of dependency of what - taking it from this report of Daniel Lagache but also from a previous discourse that I had given here in the second year of my seminar - of what I called respectively the ideal ego and the ego-ideal, yes, let us recall then how the specular relationship is inserted, finds itself therefore taking its place, finds itself depending on the fact that the subject is constituted in the locus of the Other. He constitutes himself from his mark in relationship to the signifier. Already, simply in the little exemplary image from which the demonstration of the mirror stage begins, in this so-called jubilatory moment when the infant assumes himself as a functioning totality as such in his specular image, have I not always recalled the essential relationship to this moment, of this movement which ensures that the little child who has just grasped himself in this inaugural experience of recognition in the mirror, turns back towards the one who is carrying him, who is supporting him, who sustains him, who is there behind him, towards the adult - turns back in a movement that is really so (5) frequent, I would say, so constant that each and every one of you, I think, may have the memory of this movement - turns back

towards the one who is carrying him, towards the adult, towards the one who here represents the big Other, as if to call in a way on his assent to what at this moment the child, the content of whose experience we are trying to assume, the sense of which moment we reconstruct in the mirror stage by referring it to this movement of the rotation (mutation) of the head which turns back and which returns towards the image, seems to demand of him to ratify the value of this image. Of course this is only an indication that I am recalling to you, given the inaugural link between this relationship to the big Other and the advent of the function of the specular image thus noted as always by $i(o)$. But do we have to remain at that? And, since it is within a work which I had asked of my interlocutor concerning the doubts which had come to him in connection specifically with what Claude Lévi-Strauss had put forward in his book La pensée sauvage, whose relation as you will see is really - I referred above to current events - close to what we have to say this year, for, I believe, what we have to tackle here, in order to mark this sort of progress which the usage of psychoanalytic reasoning constitutes, is something which happens to respond precisely to this gap where more than one of you for the moment have come to a halt, the one which throughout his development Claude Lévi-Strauss shows in this sort of opposition between what he calls analytic reasoning and dialectic reasoning.

And it is indeed in fact around this opposition that I would finally like to establish, at the present time, the following introductory remark which I have to make to you on my path today: what have I picked out, extracted, from the inaugural step constituted in the thinking of Freud by The interpretation of dreams if not the following - which I remind you of, which I stressed - that Freud first introduces the unconscious in connection with the dream precisely as a locus that he called eine anderer Schauplatz, a different scene of action (scène)? From the beginning, from the coming into play of the function of the unconscious, this term and this function are introduced into it as essential.

(6) Well then, I believe in effect that this is a constituting mode of what is, let us say, our reason, of this path that we are looking for to discern its structures, to make you understand what I am going to say to you. Let us say without further ado - it will be necessary to come back to it, because we do not yet know what it means - what the first phase is. The first phase, is: there is the world. And let us say that analytic reason, to which the discourse of Claude Lévi-Strauss tends to give the primacy, concerns this world as it is and grants it with this primacy a singular homogeneity, which is indeed what offends and disturbs the most lucid among you, who cannot help pointing out, discerning what this involves in terms of a return to what one could call a sort of primary materialism in the whole measure that at the limit, in this discourse; the very operation of the structure, of the combinatory, so powerfully articulated by the discourse of Claude Lévi-Strauss only rejoins for example the very structure of the brain, indeed the structure of matter, only represents, in accordance with the form described as the

materialism of the eighteenth century, the doublet, not even the understudy (doublure). I know well that this is only a perspective at the limit that we can grasp, but that it is worthwhile grasping it since it is in a way expressly articulated.

Now the dimension of the stage (*scène*), its separation from the locus, whether worldly or not, cosmic or not, where the spectator is, is there indeed to image to our eyes the radical distinction between this locus where things, be they the things of the world, where all the things of the world come to be spoken, to be staged in accordance with the laws of the signifier which we cannot in any way hold from the beginning to be homogeneous with the laws of the world. The existence of discourse and what ensures that we are implicated in it as subjects, is there only too obviously a long time before the advent of science, and the effort marvellous in its hopelessness that Claude Lévi-Strauss makes to homogenise the discourse that he calls that of magic with the discourse of science, is something which is admirably instructive, but which he cannot for a single moment push as far as the illusion that there is not here a moment, a cut, a difference; and I am going to emphasise in a little while what I mean by this and what we have to say about it.

(7) Therefore, first phase, the world. Second phase, the stage upon which we construct this world. And this is the dimension of history. History has always this character of a staging. It is indeed in this respect that the discourse of Claude Lévi-Strauss, specifically in the chapter where he responds to Jean-Paul Sartre, the final development that Jean-Paul Sartre establishes to realise this operation which I called the last time putting history back between its shafts.

The limitation of the range of the historical game, the reminder that the time of history is to be distinguished from cosmic time, that dates themselves take on all of a sudden a different value whether they are called 21 December or 18 Brumaire, and that ix. is not even the same calendar that we are dealing with as the one that you tear the pages off every day. The proof is that these dates have for you a different meaning, that they are re-evoked, when it is necessary, like any other day of the calendar as giving them their mark, their characteristic, their style of difference or of repetition. So then, once the stage has taken priority, what happens, is that the whole world is placed on it, that with Descartes, one can say: "I advance onto the stage of the world", as he does, "masked", and that starting from there the question can be posed of what the world owes, what we have called at the beginning quite innocently the world, what the world owes to what has come down to it again from this stage. And that which everything that we have called the world in the course of history and whose residues are superimposed on one another, piled up without moreover the slightest worry about contradictions, and that which culture brings us as being the world, which is a piling up, which is a warehouse of unclaimed objects, of worlds which have succeeded one another and because they are incompatible live only too comfortably together within

each one of us, a structure whose pregnancy and depth the particular field of our experience allows us to measure especially in that of the obsessional neurotic regarding whom Freud himself long ago remarked the degree to which these, these cosmic worlds, could co-exist in a fashion which apparently gives rise to no objections in him, while at the same time manifesting the greatest heterogeneity at a first approach, a first examination.

(8) In short, the putting into question of what the cosmic world is in the real is entirely legitimate, once we have referred to the stage. Is what we believe we have to deal with as world, not quite simply the accumulated remainders of what came down from the stage when - as I might put it - the stage was on tour? Well then, this reminder, this reminder is going to introduce to us a third remark, a third phase which I ought to recall to you as a prior discourse, and all the more, perhaps this time in an insistent way that it is not a phase, that I did not have enough time then to accentuate it. Because we are talking about a stage, we know what function precisely the theatre holds in the functioning of the myths which allow us analysts to think. I bring you back to Hamlet and to this crucial point which has already given rise to questions for a number of authors and more particularly for Rank who wrote on this point an article that was in every way, given the early period he produced it, an admirable article in every way, it is the attention that he drew to the function of the stage on the stage.

What does Hamlet, the Hamlet of Shakespeare, the Hamlet who is a stage character, what does Hamlet bring onto the stage with the players? No doubt the Mousetrap, the souriciere, with which, he tells us, he is going to lay hold of, to trap, the conscience of the king. But besides the fact that very strange things happen on it and in particular something which at the time, at the time when I was speaking to you at such length about Hamlet, I did not want to introduce to you because it would have oriented us towards a literature at bottom even more Hamletic - you know that this exists, that it exists to the point that there is enough of it to cover these walls - more Hamletic than psychoanalytic and that very strange things happen in it, including the following, namely that when this scene is mimed as a prologue before the players begin their speeches, well then, this does not seem to disturb the king much, even though nevertheless the presumed gestures of his crime are there pantomimed before him. On the contrary there is something very strange, it is the real overwhelming, the crisis of agitation which seizes Hamlet from a certain moment when there comes on the stage after a few speeches, when there comes the crucial moment, the one at which (9) the character named Lucianus or Luciano carries out, carries out his crime, on the one of the two characters who represents the king, the sham king (le roi de comedie), even though he had in his speech affirmed himself, assured himself as being the king in a certain dimension, as well as the one who represents his wife, his spouse; after the situation had been well established, all the authors who have paused at this scene, have remarked that the rig-out of the character is exactly, not that of the king

whom it is a question of trapping, but of Hamlet himself, and that moreover it is indicated that this character is not the brother of the sham king, is not in a relationship with him which would be homologous to the one of the usurper who is in the tragedy in possession of Queen Gertrude, after having carried out the murder, but in a position homologous to the one Hamlet has to this character, that it is the nephew of the sham king.

What, when all is said and done, does Hamlet cause to be represented there on the stage? It is himself, carrying out the crime in question, this character whose desire, for reasons that I tried to articulate for you, cannot be roused to accomplish the will of the ghost, of the fantome of his father, this character attempts to embody something; and what it is a matter of embodying passes by way of his image which is really specular here, his image not in the situation, the mode of carrying out his vengeance, but of assuming first of all the crime that must be avenged.

Now what do we see? That it is insufficient, that it is all very well for him to be seized, after this sort of magic lantern effect, by what one can really in his remarks, in his style, in the quite ordinary fashion moreover that the actors bring this moment to life, by a genuine little attack of maniacal agitation, when he finds himself a moment later with his enemy within his reach, he can only articulate something which for every listener has always been indeed something that could not be experienced as other than an evasion behind a pretext, it is that undoubtedly, he catches his enemy at a moment that is too holy - the king is praying - for him to decide by striking him at that moment, to make him go directly to heaven.

I am not going to delay by translating all that this means, because here I must go further. I want to advance enough today (10) and point out to you that alongside this failure - I strongly articulated this second phase at that time, I showed you its whole import - it is in the measure that an identification of a quite different nature which I called identification with Ophelia, it is in the measure that the furious soul that we can legitimately infer to be that of the victim, of the person who committed suicide, obviously offered as a sacrifice to the manes of her father - because it is after the murder of her father that she weakens, that she succumbs, but this shows us the age-old beliefs about the consequences of certain kinds of death from the very fact that the funeral ceremonies in her case, cannot be fully carried out - that there is no calming in the vengeance that she for her part is crying out for, that it is at the moment of the revelation of what this neglected, unrecognised object had been for him, that we see there being played out in Shakespeare in a completely open way this identification to the object that Freud designates for us as being the major mainspring of the function of mourning, this implacable definition, I would say, that Freud gave to mourning, this sort of reverse side that he designated to the tears which are consecrated to it, this ground of reproach that there is in the fact that all one wants of the reality of the one whom one has lost, is to want to remember the

sorrow that he has left behind. What astonishing cruelty and one well made to remind us of the legitimacy of more primitive celebrations that collective practices still are able to bring to life. Why not rejoice at the fact that he existed? The peasants whom we think are drowning an injurious insensibility in their banquets, are doing something quite different: it is the advent of the one who has been to the sort of simple glory that he merits, because of having been among us simply a living being. Let us not forget that this identification to the object of mourning that Freud has thus dedicated under its negative modes, has, if it exists, also its positive phase, that the entry into Hamlet of what I called here the fury of the feminine soul, is what gives him the energy to become, from then on, this sleepwalker who accepts everything, up to and including - I sufficiently marked it - being the one who holds the stakes in the fight, who takes the side of his enemy, the king himself, against his specular image who is Laertes. From then on, things will be settled all by themselves and without him doing in short (11) anything except exactly what should not be done, by leading him to what he has to do, namely that he should be himself mortally wounded, before killing the king. We have here, the distance, the difference that exists between two sorts of imaginary identification: 1) that of o:i(o), the specular image as it is given to us at the moment of the stage on the stage: 2) the more mysterious one whose enigma begins to be developed there, namely to something else, the object, the object of desire as such, designated without any ambiguity in Shakespeare's articulation as such because it is precisely as object of desire that it had been neglected up to a certain moment, that it is reintegrated on the stage by way of identification, precisely in the measure that as object it has just disappeared, that as one might say the retroactive dimension, this dimension of the imperfect in the ambiguous form that it is used in French, which is the one which gives its energy to the fashion in which I repeat before you the "il ne savait pas", which means: at the last minute did he not know, a little more and he would have known. This object of desire of which it is not for nothing that desire in French is said to be desiderium, namely this retroactive recognition, this object which was there, it is along this path that there is placed the return of Hamlet, that which is the high point of his destiny, of his function as Hamlet, if I can express myself thus, of his Hamletic completion, it is here that this third moment of reference to my previous discourse shows us where the questioning should be carried to, as you already know for a long time, because it is the same one that I am always renewing from multiple angles: the status of the object qua object of desire. Everything that Claude Lévi-Strauss says about the function of magic, about the function of myth, has its value on condition that we know that it is a matter of the relationship to this object which has the status of object of desire, a status which - I agree - is not yet established, which it is our object this year to make advance by taking the path of approaching it through anxiety and that it would be well all the same not to confuse this object of desire with the object defined by epistemology as the advent of a certain object scientifically defined as the advent of the object which is the object of our

science, very specifically defined, by a certain discovery of the (12) efficacy of the signifying operation as such, which is proper to our science - I am speaking about the science which exists among us for two centuries - leaves open the question of what I called above the cosmism of the object.

It is not sure that there is a cosmos and our science advances in the measure that it renounces preserving any cosmic or cosmising presupposition. We rediscover here this essential reference point, one which is so essential that one cannot fail to be astonished that in restoring under a modern form a type of permanence, of perpetuity, of the eternity of the cosmism of the reality of the object, Claude Lévi-Strauss, in La pensée sauvage does not bring to everybody the kind of security, of serenity, of Epicurean pacification which ought to result from it. The question is posed of whether it is only analysts who are not satisfied or whether it is everybody. Now I claim, even though I do not yet have proof of it, that it should be everybody. It is a matter of explaining why, why people are not content to see totemism suddenly, as one might say, emptied of what I might call in a gross way in order to make myself understood its emotional content, why are people not satisfied that the world should, since the Neolithic era - because one cannot go back any further than that - already be ordered in such a way that everything is only an insignificant little wave on the surface of that order, in other words, why do we want so much to preserve the dimension of anxiety. There must be some reason for that; because the bias, the passage which is here designated for us between this return to an assured cosmism and on the other hand the maintenance of an historical pathos which we do not hold with either all that much - even though it has precisely its function - it is indeed through the study of the function of anxiety that this path we are seeking must pass. And that is why I am led to remind you of the terms in which it can be seen how the specular relationship is precisely linked to the relationship with the big Other. In this article which I asked you to refer to, because I am not going to redo it here in its entirety, what the apparatus, the little image which I fomented to make understood what was involved, what this apparatus is designed for, is the following: it is to remind us of something I stressed at the end of my seminar on desire, it is that the function of specular cathexis is to be conceived of as situated within the dialectic of (13) narcissism as Freud introduced it.

This cathexis of the specular image is a fundamental moment of the imaginary relationship, fundamental in the fact that there is a limit and the fact is that the whole of libidinal cathexis does not pass through the specular image. There is a remainder. I already tried and, I hope, succeeded sufficiently in making you conceive how and why we can characterise this remainder under a central, pivotal mode, in this whole dialectic - and it is here that I will begin again the next time and show you how this function is more privileged than I have been able to make it up to now - under the mode, I am saying, of the phallus.

And that means that henceforth, in any imaginary mapping out,

the phallus appears in the form of a lack, of a (-\$>)• In the whole measure that there is realised at i(o) something that I called the real image, the constitution in the material of the subject of the image of the body functioning as properly imaginary, that is to say libidinised, the phallus appears as a minus, appears as a blank. The phallus no doubt is an operational reserve, but one which is not only not represented at the level of the imaginary but which is circumscribed and, in a word, cut out of the specular image.

Everything that I tried, last year, to articulate for you about the cross-cap is, to add a hinge to this dialectic, something which, in the ambiguous domain of topology, in so far as it slims down in an extreme way the data of the imaginary, in so far as it operates on a sort of trans-space which, when all is said and done, everything makes us think is made up of the worst signifying articulation, while at the same time still leaving within our reach some intuitive elements, precisely those supported by this misshapen and nevertheless very expressive image of the cross-cap which I manipulated before you for more than a month in order to make you conceive how on a surface defined in this way such as this one - I am not going to recall it here - the cut can establish two pieces, two different pieces, one which may have a specular image and the other which literally does not have one. The relation between this reservation, this reservation which is imaginarily ungraspable, even though it is linked, thank God, to a still perfectly graspable organ, namely (14) that of the instrument which ought all the same from time to time be brought into action for the satisfaction of desire, the phallus, the relationship between this (-<p) and the constitution of o which is this remainder, this residue, this object whose status escapes from the status of the object derived from the specular image, escapes from the laws of the transcendental aesthetic, this object whose status is so difficult for us to articulate that it is through it that there have entered all the confusions of analytic theory, this object o whose constituting characteristics we have only begun to outline and which we bring here onto the agenda, this object o, is the one which is at stake everywhere Freud speaks about object when anxiety is involved. The ambiguity comes from the way in which we cannot but imagine this object in the specular register. It is a matter precisely of establishing here - and we will do it, we are able to do it - to establish another mode of imaginisation, if I can express myself in this way, in which this object is defined. This is what we are going to be able to do, if you want to follow me, namely step by step. From what, in this article that I am speaking to you about, do I make the dialectic begin? From an S, the subject as possible, the subject because one must at least speak about him if one speaks, the subject whose model is given to us by the classical conception of the subject on this single condition that we limit him to the fact that he speaks, and, once he speaks, something is produced.

Once he begins to speak, the unary trait comes into play. The primary identification at this starting point constituted by the fact of being able to say one and one, and one again, and one

again and that it is always from a one that one must begin, it is starting from there - the schema of the article in question outlines it - starting from there that there is established the possibility of the recognition as such of the unit called $i(o)$. This $i(o)$ is given in specular experience; but as I told you, this specular experience is authenticated by the Other and as such, at the level of the sign $i(o)$. Remember my schema, I cannot here give you again the terms of the amusing little physics experiment which I made use of to be able to image it for you: $i'(o)$ which is the virtual image of a real image, at the level of this virtual image, nothing appears here.

(15) I wrote ($-\$>$) because we will have to bring it here the next time. ($-\$>$) is no more visible, is no more tangible, is no more presentifiable here than it is there, ($-\langle p$) has not entered into the imaginary. The initial, inaugural fate, the phase - I insist - of which we are speaking depends here on the following - which will have to wait for the next time for me to articulate it for you - that desire depends on the relationship that I gave you as being that of the phantasy, the diamond, with its meaning that we will learn how to read in a still different way soon, o: o

This means that it would be in the measure that the subject could really be - and not through the mediation of the other - at the place of I that he would have a relationship with what it is a matter of taking in the body of the original specular image $i(o)$, namely the object of his desire, here, these two pillars, are the support of the function of desire, and if desire exists and sustains man in his existence as man, it is in the measure that this relationship is accessible by some detour, that the artifices give us access to the imaginary relationship that the phantasy constitutes. But this is in no way possible in an effective fashion. What man is confronted with, is never anything but the image of what in my schema I represented - as you know or as you do not know - by $i'(o)$ that the illusion of this spherical mirror produces; here in the real state, in the form of the real image, he has its virtual image with nothing in its body [neck?]. The o, support of desire in the phantasy, is not visible in what constitutes, for man, the image of his desire.

This presence elsewhere therefore, on this hither side, and, as you see here, too close to him to be seen, as one might say, of the o, this is the initium of desire; and it is from that that the image $i'(o)$ takes on its prestige. But the more man approaches, circumscribes, caresses what he believes to be the object of his desire, the more in fact he is deviated, turned aside from it, precisely because of the fact that everything that he does on this path in order to get closer to it, always gives more body to what in the object of this desire represents the specular image. The further he goes, the more he wants, in the object of his desire, to preserve, to maintain - listen carefully to what I am telling you - to protect - this is the intact aspect of this primordial vase which the specular image is - the more he (16) engages himself on this path which is often incorrectly called the path of the perfection of object relations, the more

he is deceived.

What constitutes anxiety, is when something, a mechanism, makes there appear here at what I would call to make myself understood simply its natural place, at the place which corresponds to the one occupied by the o the object of desire, something - and when I say something, you should understand anything whatsoever - I would ask you, between now and the next time, to take the trouble, with this introduction that I am giving you to it to reread the article on the Unheimlich. It is an article which I have never heard anyone giving a commentary on, never, never heard a commentary on, and which no-one seems even to glimpse as being the absolutely indispensable hinge for approaching the question of anxiety.

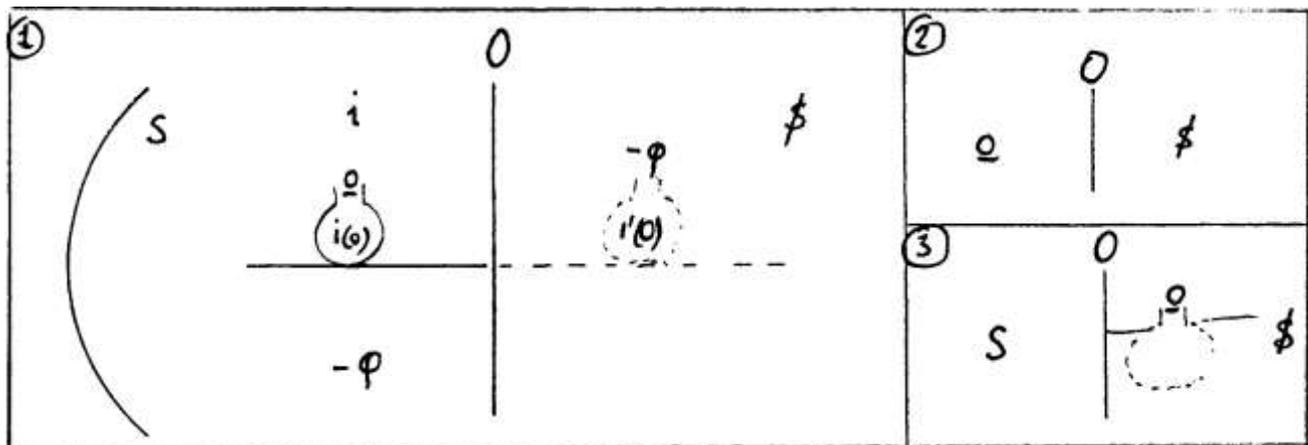
Just as I approached the unconscious by the witticism, I will approach anxiety this year by the Unheimlich, it is what appears at this place. This is why I have written it for you from today: it is the **(-9)**, the something which reminds us that what everything starts from is imaginary castration, that there is no - and for good reason - image of lack. When something appears there, it is because, if I can express myself in this way, that the lack is lacking. Now this may appear to be simply a joke, a concetti (?) which is well placed in my style which everyone knows is Gongoric. Well, I don't give a damn. I would just like to point out to you that many things can appear which are anomalous, this is not what makes us anxious. But if all of a sudden all norms are lacking, namely what constitutes the lack - because the norm is correlative to the idea of lack - if all of a sudden it is not lacking - and believe me try to apply that to a lot of things - it is at that moment that anxiety begins.

So that already I authorise you to take up again the reading of what Freud says in his last great article on anxiety, that of Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety, from which we have already begun for a first outline. Then with this key, you will see the true sense to be given, in his writing, to the term of loss of object. It is here that I will take things up again the next time, and where I hope to give its true sense to our research for this year.

So then, I am again putting on the blackboard for you this figure, this schema by means of which I engaged myself with you the last time in the articulation of what is our object, namely through anxiety - I am saying its phenomenon, but also by the place that I am going to teach you to designate as being its own - to go thoroughly into the function of the object in analytic experience.

Briefly I want to point out to you that there will soon appear

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something that I took the trouble to write up from an intervention, from a communication I made - it is more than two years ago now, it was the 21st of September 1960 - at a Hegelian meeting at Royaumont, at which I had chosen to treat of the following subject: "Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious". I point out to those who have already familiarised themselves with my teaching that in sum I think they will find there complete satisfaction as regards the phases of construction and the utilisation, the functioning, of (2) what together we have called the graph. This is published at a centre at 173 Boulevard, Saint Germain and which is responsible for publishing all the work of Royaumont. I think that this work will soon appear in a volume which will also include the other interventions - which are not all especially analytic - which were made in the course of this meeting centred, I repeat, on Hegelianism.

It is appropriate to mention this today in the measure that subversion of the subject, like dialectic of desire, is what frames for us this function of the object into which we are now going to have to advance more deeply.

In this respect, especially for those who come here as novices, I do not think that I could encounter in any way what I have to call the very antipathetic reaction that I still remember greeted the work of this title, as I told you, at the Royaumont Congress on the part, to my astonishment, of philosophers whom I believe more hardened to welcoming the unusual and who undoubtedly in something which was precisely constructed to put before them very profoundly the function of the object - and specifically the object of desire - ended up on their part with an impression that I cannot qualify otherwise than in the way they described it themselves: that of a sort of nightmare, indeed even of a lucubration emerging from a certain diabolism.

Does it not appear all the same that everything in an experience that I would call modern, an experience at the level of what there is brought in terms of profound modifications in the apprehension of the object, by the era, that I am not the first to describe as the era of technique, should that not bring to you the idea that a discourse on the object must necessarily pass by way of complex relationships which do not permit us to accede to it except by way of profound chicanery? Can one not say that for example this module of object, so characteristic of what is given to us - I am speaking about the most external experience, I am not talking about analytic experience - this module of object which is called the spare part, is it not something which deserves to be dwelt on and something which brings a profoundly (3) new dimension to every noetic interrogation concerning our relationship to the object? For after all what is a spare part? What is its subsistence outside its eventual use with respect to a certain model which is functioning, but which can also moreover become obsolete, no longer be repeated as they say? After that what becomes of, what meaning has a spare part?

Why should this profile of a certain enigmatic relationship to the object not be of use to us today as an introduction, as a reminder of something which is not a vain complication, that there is no need for us to be astonished or to steel ourselves against a schema, against a schema like this one which I recalled for you and already introduced the last time, and that the result is that it is at that place, at the place where in the Other, at the locus of the Other, authenticated by the Other, there is profiled an image of ourselves that is simply reflected, already problematic, even fallacious; that it is at a place that is situated with respect to an image which is characterised by a lack, by the fact that what is called for there cannot appear there, that there is profoundly orientated and polarised the function of this image itself, that desire is there, not simply veiled, but essentially placed in relation to an absence, to a possibility of appearing determined by a presence which is elsewhere and determines it more closely, but, where it is, ungraspable by the subject, namely here, I indicated it, the o of the object, of the object which constitutes our question, of the object in the function that it fulfills in the phantasy at the place that something can appear. The last time I put this sign (-), in parentheses, pointing out to you that here there ought to be profiled a relationship with the libidinal reserve, with

the something which is not projected, with the something which is not cathected at the level of the specular image, for the reason that it remains profoundly cathected, irreducible at the level of one's own body, at the level of primary narcissism, at the level of what is called erotism, at the level of an autistic jouissance, an aliment in short remaining there for what will intervene eventually as instrument in the relationship to the other, to the other constituted starting from this image of my fellow, this other who will profile with its form and its norms the image of the body in its seductive function on the one who is the sexual partner.

(4) Therefore you see there being established a relationship: what, as I told you the last time, can come to be distinguished at this place designated here by the (-jp), is anxiety, castration anxiety in its relationship to the Other. The question of this relationship to the Other is the one into which we are going to advance today. Let us say right away - you see, I am going straight to the nodal point - that everything that we know about this structure of the subject, about this dialectic of desire which is the one that we analysts have to articulate, something absolutely new, original about, we learned through what, along what path? Along the path of the experience of the neurotic. And what has Freud told us? It is that the final term that he arrived at in elaborating this experience, the term which he points out to us as being for him his destination, his end point, the unsurpassable term for him, is castration anxiety.

What does that mean? Is this term unsurpassable? What is meant by this stopping of the analytic dialectic on castration anxiety? Do you not already see, in the simple usage of the schema that I am using, there being outlined the way that I intend to lead you? It begins from a better articulation of this fact of experience, designated by Freud in the neurotic's coming to a halt before castration anxiety. The opening that I am proposing to you consists in the fact that the dialectic that I am showing you here allows to articulate: the fact is that it is not at all castration anxiety in itself which constitutes the final impasse of the neurotic; because the form, the form of castration, of castration in its imaginary structure, is already constructed here in the approach to the libidinated image of my fellow, it is constructed at the level of the breaking that is produced at some time because of a certain imaginary drama; and this - as you know - is what gives importance to the accidents of the scene which for that reason is described as traumatic. There are all sorts of variations, of possible anomalies, in this imaginary break which already indicate something in the material, that can be used for what? For another function which, for its part, gives its full sense to the term castration.

What the neurotic retreats from, is not castration, it is from making of his own castration what is-lacking to the Other, 0, it is from making of his castration something positive which is the (5) guarantee of this function of the Other. This Other which slips away in the indefinite putting off of significations, this Other which the subject no longer sees as anything but destiny,

but a destiny which has no end, a destiny which loses itself in the sea of histories - and what are histories, if not an immense fiction - what can ensure a relationship of the subject to this universe of significations, if not that somewhere there is jouissance? He can only ensure this by means of a signifier, and this signifier is necessarily lacking. It is the topping up that the subject is called on to make at this missing place by a sign which we call on from his own castration.

Dedicating his castration to this guarantee of the Other is what the neurotic comes to a halt before; he comes to a halt before it for a reason that is in a way internal to analysis: the fact is that analysis brings him to this rendezvous. When all is said and done castration is nothing other than the moment of the interpretation of castration.

I have perhaps been quicker than I intended to be in my discourse this morning. In any case you see it indicated there that perhaps there is a possible way through, but of course we can only explore this possibility by going back to this very place at which imaginary castration functions, as I have just pointed out to you, in order to constitute properly speaking with all its rights what is called the castration complex.

It is therefore at the level of the putting in question of this castration complex that our whole concrete exploration of anxiety, this year, is going to allow us to study this possible way though, one all the more possible in that it has already been taken on several occasions. It is the study of the phenomenology of anxiety which is going to allow us to say how and why.

Anxiety, which we take in its minimal definition as a signal, a definition which even though it comes at the end of the progress of Freud's thinking is not what people believe, namely the result of an abandoning of the first positions of Freud which made of it the fruit of an energetic metabolism, neither an abandoning, nor even a new conquest; because at the time when Freud made of anxiety the transformation of the libido, there is already the indication that it could function as a signal. This would be (6) easy to show you in passing by consulting the text. I have too much to do, to bring up this year with you concerning anxiety, to become bogged down too long at the level of this explanation of text.

Anxiety, as I told you, is linked to everything that can appear at that place; and what assures us of this, is a phenomenon which because it has been accorded too little attention has meant that we have not arrived at a satisfying, unitary formulation of all the functions of anxiety in the field of our experience. This phenomenon, is Unheimlichkeit. I asked you to refer to Freud's text the last time, and for the same reasons; it is because I do not have the time to spell out this text with you again. Many of you, as I know, went at it right away, for which I thank them. The first thing which stands out in it even on a superficial reading, is the importance that Freud gives to linguistic analysis. If it were not everywhere obvious, this text would be

enough just by itself to justify the importance that I give to the functions of the signifier in my commentary of Freud. The thing which will stand out secondly, when you read the way in which Freud introduces the notion of the unheimlich, the exploration of dictionaries concerning this word, is that the definition of unheimlich is to be un-heimlich. It is what is at the high-point of Heim, that is Unheim. And then since he has only to explain to us why it is like that, because it is very-obvious by simply reading the dictionaries, he does not delay any longer on it; he is like me today; he has to advance. Well then, for our conventions, for the clarity of our language, for what follows, this place designated here the last time, we are going to call by its name: this is what is called Heim. If you wish, let us say that if this word has a meaning in human experience, this is where the home of man is. Give to this word home (maison) all the resonances you wish, including the astrological ones. Man finds his home in a point situated in the Other beyond the image of which we are made and this place represents the absence where we are. Supposing - which happens - that it reveals itself for what it is: the presence elsewhere which constitutes this place as absence, then it is the queen of the game. It makes off with the image which supports it and the specular image becomes the image of the double with what it (7) brings in terms of a radical strangeness and, to employ terms which take on their signification by being opposed to the Hegelian terms, by making us appear as object by revealing to us the non-autonomy of the subject. Everything that Freud picked out as example in the Hoffmann texts which are at the heart of such an experience: the Sand-Man and his atrocious story in which one sees the subject rebounding from captivation to captivation before this form of image which properly speaking materializes the extremely reduced schema that I give you of it here, but the doll in question, which the hero of the story spies behind the window of the sorcerer who carries out some magical operation or other on her, is properly this image % '» in the operation of

completing it by what is in the very form of the story absolutely distinguished, namely the eye. And the eye involved can only be that of the hero of the story. The theme of this eye which is to be stolen from him, is what gives the explanatory thread of the whole story.

It is significant of some embarrassment or other linked to the fact that it was the first time that the ploughshare entered onto this line of the revelation of subjective structure, that Freud gives us in a way this reference in an unpackaged way. He says: "read The Devil's Elixir". I cannot even tell you how complete it is, the degree to which it contains all the possible forms of the same mechanism in which there are made explicit all the incidences in which this function can be produced, in which there can be produced this unheimlich reaction. Obviously he does not go into it, he is in a way overcome by the luxuriance that is effectively presented by this short little novel which it is still not so easy to get a copy of, even though by the goodness of someone, I still do not know who, among those present I find I have one - and I thank you for it or at least I thank the person

in question - on this lectern. It is very useful to have more than one copy at one's disposal.

On this point, Heim does not manifest itself simply, as you have always known, namely that desire is revealed as the desire of the Other, here desire in the Other, but I would say that my desire enters the den where it has been awaited from all eternity in the shape of the object that I am, in so far as it exiles me from my subjectivity by resolving of itself all the signifiers to which (8) this subjectivity is attached. Naturally that does not happen every day, and perhaps even it only happens in the tales of Hoffmann. In The Devil's Elixir it is quite clear. At every detour of this long and so tortuous truth, we understand from the note that Freud gives, which allows it to be understood that one loses oneself a little in it and even this "losing oneself in it" is part of the function of the labyrinth that must be brought to life. But it is clear that, even though everyone makes this detour, the subject only arrives at, only accedes to, his desire by substituting himself always for one of his own doubles.

It is not for nothing that Freud insists on the essential dimension which the field of fiction gives to our experience of the unheimlich. It is too fleeting in reality and fiction demonstrates it much better, produces it even in a more stable fashion because it is better articulated. It is a sort of ideal point, but one very precious for us, since, from that point on, we are going to be able to see the function of phantasy. This possibility, articulated repeatedly in a work like the Devil's Elixir, but locatable in so many other authors, of the major effect of fiction, this effect in the effective current of existence is what remains we can say at the state of phantasy. And what is phantasy taken from this angle if not - which we have some doubts about - ein Wunsch, a wish and even, like all wishes, rather naive. To express it rather humorously, I would say that S desire of o, the formula of the phantasy, can be translated, in this perspective, that the Other faints, swoons, I would say, before this object that I am, a deduction made from the fact that I see myself.

Here then, because I cannot avoid posing things like that in an apodictic way, and then afterwards you will see how it functions, I will tell you right away to declare my hand that the two phases in which I wrote the relationships of S to o by situating them differently with respect to the reflective function of O. With respect to this mirror O, these two fashions correspond exactly, to the fashion, to the redistribution of the terms of the



(9) might say to express myself very roughly to make myself understood - in their proper place: the o is there where it is,

phantasy in the pervert and in the neurotic. Things are - as I

where the subject cannot see it, as you know, and the \$ is at its place. That is why one can say that the perverse subject, while remaining unconscious of the way in which this functions, offers himself loyally to the jouissance of the Other. Only, we would never have known anything about it, if there were not neurotics for whom phantasy has absolutely not the same function. So that it is at the same time he who reveals it to you in its structure because of what he makes of it, but with what he makes of it, through what he makes of it, he screws you like he screws everybody else. Because, as I am going to explain to you, he makes use of this phantasy for very particular ends. This is what I already expressed before you on other occasions, by saying that what was believed to have been perceived as being a perversion under the neurosis, is simply what I am in the process of explaining to you, namely a phantasy entirely situated at the locus of the Other, the support taken upon something which, if one encounters it, is going to present itself as perversion.

Neurotics have perverse phantasies, and that is why analysts have racked their brains for a long time asking themselves what that means. It can be clearly seen all the same that it is not the same thing, that it does not function in the same way. Hence the question which is engendered and the confusions which multiply about the question of whether, for example a perversion is really a perversion, namely whether it does not function as a question which reduplicates the following: namely of what use the perverse phantasy is to the neurotic? Because there is all the same one thing that, starting from the position of the function that I have just set up before you of the phantasy, one must begin by saying, it is that this phantasy that the neurotic makes use of, that he organises at the moment that he makes use of it - there is indeed in effect something of the order of o which appears at the place of Heim, above the image that I designate for you, the locus of the appearance of anxiety - well then, there is something altogether striking which is that, precisely, this is what serves him best to defend himself against anxiety, to cover up the anxiety.

There is therefore - this can only be conceived naturally starting from presuppositions which I had to pose at first in their extreme form, but like every new discourse, you have to (10) judge it at the moment that it takes shape and see whether it covers (as I think you have no doubt) the functioning of experience - this object o which the neurotic puts into his phantasy, suits him, I would say, the way gaiters suit a rabbit. This indeed is why the neurotic never makes very much of his phantasy. It succeeds in protecting him against anxiety precisely in the measure that it is a false o. It is the function that I illustrated for you a long time ago of the dream of "the butcher's beautiful wife". The butcher's beautiful wife loves caviar; only she does not want it because this might give too much pleasure to her big brute of a husband who is capable of swallowing that with the rest, even that would not stop him. Now what interests the butcher's beautiful wife, is not at all of course to feed her husband with caviar, because, as I told you, he would add a whole menu to it, because he has a huge appetite,

the butcher. The only thing that interests the butcher's beautiful wife is that her husband should want the little nothing that she holds in reserve.

This formula is quite clear when we are dealing with a hysteric; believe me today: it applies to all neurotics. This object of functioning in their phantasy, and which serves as a defense for them against their anxiety, is also, despite all appearances, the bait with which they hold onto the other. And thank God for it: it is to this that we owe psychoanalysis.

There was a lady named Anna O who knew something about the operation of the hysterical game and who presented her whole story, all her phantasies, to Messrs Breuer and Freud who precipitated themselves onto it like little fish into water. Freud on I no longer remember what page, 271, of Studien iiber Hysterie marvelled at the fact that in Anna O all the same there was not the slightest defense. She gave everything she had, just like that. There was no need to work very hard to have the whole package. Obviously he found himself before a generous form of hysterical functioning. And it was for that reason that Breuer, as you know, really felt it going down; because he, along with the formidable bait also swallowed the little nothing, and he spent some time trying to regurgitate it. He stayed well away from it in future.

(11) Luckily Freud was neurotic. And since he was both intelligent and courageous, he knew how to make use of his own anxiety about his desire - which was at the source of his ridiculous attachment to this impossible woman who as a matter of fact buried him called Madame Freud - and he knew how to make use of it to project onto the X-ray screen of his fidelity to this phantastical object, to recognise in it without blinking even for an instant what it was a question of doing, namely to understand what use all of this was and well and truly to admit that Anna O had perfectly in her sights, Freud himself, but that he was obviously a little bit harder to have than the other, Breuer. It is indeed to this that we owe our entry through phantasy into the mechanism of analysis and into a rational use of the transference.

It is perhaps also what is going to allow us to take the next step and to perceive that what constitutes the border between the neurotic and the others - a new leap whose passage I would ask you to note, since like the others we are going to have to justify it subsequently - what effectively functions in the neurotic, is that at this level already displaced for him, of the object is something which is already sufficiently explained by the fact that he was already able to transport the function of it into the other. The reality that exists behind this fallacious use of the object in the phantasy of the neurotic has a very simple name: it is the demand.

The true object the neurotic seeks is a demand: he wants a demand to be made of him, he wants to be begged. The only thing that he does not want is to pay the price. This is a gross experience

which analysts have no doubt not sufficiently taken apart, illuminated by Freud's explanations, for them not to have believed it necessary to return here to the slippery slope of moralism and to deduce from it a phantasy which can be found everywhere in the oldest moralistic-religious preachings, that of oblativity.

They have obviously glimpsed that, since he wants to give nothing, this has a certain relationship also with the fact that his difficulty is in the order of receiving. He wants to be begged, I told you, and does not want to pay the price. While if he really wished to give something, perhaps it would work. Only, do the analysts in question, those who speak so beautifully about (12) genital maturity - as if this were the locus of the gift - not perceive that what the neurotic must be taught to give, is this thing that he does not imagine, it is nothing, it is precisely his anxiety. This is what leads us to our point of departure today designating the coming to a stop on castration anxiety. The neurotic will not give his anxiety. We will learn more about it: we will learn why. It is so true that this is what is involved, that all the same the whole process, the whole chain of analysis consists in the fact that at least he gives its equivalent, that he begins by giving his symptom a little. And this is why an analysis, as Freud says, begins by a putting into shape of symptoms. We are indeed at the required place and we try to catch him, God knows, in his own trap. You can never do anything other with someone. He makes you what is really a fallacious offer, well then one accepts it. By this one enters into the game through which he appeals to the demand. He wants you to demand something of him. Since you demand nothing of him - this is how the first entry into analysis takes place - he begins to modulate his own, his demands, which come there at the place Heim. And I tell you in passing: I find it hard to see, outside what is articulated almost by itself on this schema, how one has been able to justify up to now, except by a sort of false, gross comprehensibility, the dialectic of frustration-aggression-regression. It is in the measure that you leave the demand without an answer that there begins to be articulated here, that there begins to be produced what? The aggression involved. Where have you ever seen, except outside analysis in practices described as group psychotherapy that we have heard tell of, no aggression being produced? But on the contrary the dimension of aggressivity comes into play to put in question again what it aims at by its nature, namely the relationship to the specular image.

It is in the measure that the subject exhausts his rages against this image that there is produced this sequence of demands which goes always towards a more original demand historically speaking, and regression as such is modulated.

The point at which we arrive now and which also has never been explained up to now in a satisfactory fashion, is how it happens that it is along this regressive path that the subject is led to a moment that we are indeed forced to situate historically as progressive. There are those who, placed before this paradox of

how it is that by going back to the oral phase one separates out the phallic relationship, have tried to make us believe that after the regression one should retrace one's steps in the opposite direction, which is absolutely contrary to experience. There has never been an analysis, no matter how successful it is supposed to have been in the process of regression, which repassed through the opposite stages, which would be necessary if it were something like a genetic reconstruction that was involved. On the contrary it is in the measure that there are exhausted to the end, to the bottom of the barrel, all the forms of demand, including the zero demand, that we see appearing at the bottom the relation to castration.

Castration is found inscribed as a relation at the limit of this regressive cycle of demand. It appears there immediately afterwards and in the measure that the register of demand is exhausted. It is this that must be understood topologically.

I do not want to push things any further today. But all the same I will end with a remark which since it converges with the one on which I ended my last discourse will take your reflection in a direction which will facilitate for you the next step as I have just now highlighted it. And here again I am not going to delay on useless detours, I am going to take things right at the centre. In Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety, Freud tells us, or appears to tell us, that anxiety is the reaction, the signal-reaction to the loss of an object; he enumerates that of the all enveloping uterine milieu, which happens at birth, eventually that of the mother considered as object, that of the penis, that of object-love and that of the love of the super-ego.

Now what did I tell you the last time to put you already on a certain path that is essential to grasp, if not that anxiety is not the signal of a lack but of something that you must manage to conceive of at this redoubled level as being the absence of this (14) support of the lack. Well then, take up again Freud's very list that I take here arrested at its term in full flight, as I might say: do you not know that it is not nostalgia for what is called the maternal womb which engenders anxiety, it is its imminence, it is everything that announces to us something which will allow us to glimpse that we are going to re-enter it. What provokes anxiety? It is not, contrary to what is said, either the rhythm nor the alternation of the presence-absence of the mother. And what proves it, is that the infant takes pleasure in repeating this game of presence and absence: this possibility of absence, is what gives presence its security. What is most anxiety-provoking for the child, is that precisely this relation of lack on which he establishes himself, which makes him desire, this relation is all the more disturbed when there is no possibility of lack, when the mother is always on his back, and especially by wiping his bottom, the model of the demand, of the demand which cannot fail. And at a higher level at the following phase, that of the so-called loss of the penis, what is involved? What do we see at the beginning of little Hans' phobia?

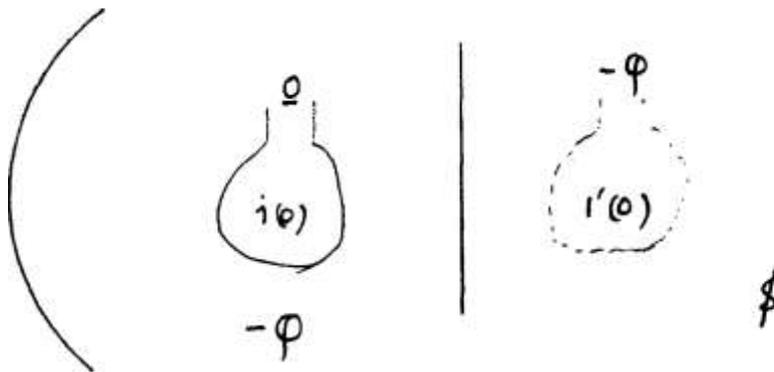
The following, that what the accent is put on, what is not well

centred, namely that anxiety is supposed to be linked to the interdiction by the mother of masturbatory practices, is experienced, perceived by the child as the presence of the desire of the mother being exercised towards him. What is anxiety in general in relation to the object of desire, what does experience teach us here, if not that it is temptation, not the loss of the object, but precisely the presence of the fact that objects are not lacking? And to pass to the following stage, that of the love of the super-ego with everything that it is supposed to pose along what is called the path of failure, what does that mean, if not that what is feared, is success, it is always the "it is not missing, ca ne manque pas"?

I will leave you today on this point designed to make you get around a confusion which precisely reposes entirely on the difficulty of identifying the object of desire. And it is not because it is difficult to identify that it is not there: it is there and its function is decisive for what concerns anxiety.

(15) You should consider that what I told you today is still only a preliminary way in, that the precise mode of situating it that we will go into from the next time is therefore to be situated between three themes that you have seen being outlined in my discourse today: one is the jouissance of the Other, the second the demand of the Other, the third could only be heard by the sharpest ears. It is the following, this sort of desire which manifests itself in interpretation, of which the very incidence of analysis in the treatment is the most exemplary and the most enigmatic form, the one which has made me pose the question for a long time for you: "In this essential economy of desire, what does this sort of privileged desire which I call the desire of the analyst represent?"

Seminar 5: Wednesday 12 December 1962



We have seen, we have read, we will see and read again that a certain way of teaching psychoanalysis, specifically the one that is pursued here, has a supposedly more philosophical character than another type which is supposed to try to connect up with a more concrete, more scientific, more experimental experience. It does not matter what word one uses.

It is not my fault, as they say, if psychoanalysis, on the theoretical plane, puts in question the desire to know, and therefore places itself, already places itself in its discourse on the hither side, in what precedes the moment of knowledge which joined by itself would already justify this sort of putting in question which gives to our discourse, what we might call a certain philosophical hue.

For that matter moreover, I was preceded in this by the inventor of psychoanalysis himself who was indeed, as far as I know, someone who was at the level of a direct experience, that of patients, of mental patients, of those especially that are called with a greater rigour since Freud, neurotics.

But after all, this would not be a reason for remaining any longer than necessary on an epistemological questioning, if the place of desire, the way in which in which it hollows itself out (se creuse), was not at every instant - at every instant in our therapeutic position - presentified for us through a problem, which is the most concrete one of all, that of not allowing ourselves to engage on a false path, of not responding to it in the wrong way, of not responding inexactly to it, at least of considering recognised a certain goal that we pursue and which is not so clear. I remember having provoked indignation in the sort of colleague who knows on occasion how to barricade himself

(2) behind some bombast or other of fine sentiments designed to reassure someone or other, to have provoked indignation by saying that in analysis a cure only came in a way as a bonus.

This was seen as some sort of disdain for the one that we are responsible for, the person who is suffering. I was speaking from a methodological point of view. It is quite certain that our justification as well as our duty is to ameliorate the position of the subject. And I claim that nothing is more uncertain in the field that we are in than the concept of a cure.

Is an analysis which ends with the entry of the male or female patient into the third order a cure, even if the subject finds himself improved as regards his symptoms, and in a certain way, a certain order that he has reconquered enunciates the most express reservations about the ways, now seen by him as perverse, through which we have made him pass in order to make him enter the kingdom of heaven.

This happens. That is why I do not think I am deviating for a single instant from our experience. My discourse, very far from deviating from it, consists precisely in recalling that within our experience every question can be asked, and that it is necessary, precisely, for us to preserve in it the possibility of a certain thread which, at least for us, guarantees us that we are not cheating on what is our very instrument, namely the plane of truth.

This necessitates of course an exploration which must not only be serious, but I would say up to a certain point to be, not simply a....., but - what it can be - but to a certain degree, yes, encyclopedic.

It is not easy in a subject like anxiety to gather together in a discourse like mine this year what, let us say, for psychoanalysts ought to be functional, what they, ought not to forget for a single instant about what is important to us. We have designated on this little schema the place currently occupied by as the place of anxiety, as this place which I already designated as constituting a certain void, anxiety appearing there about everything which manifests itself at this place, to confuse us, as I might say, as regards the structuring function of this void.

The signs, as I might put it, the indices to be more exact, the import of this tautology will only have value if we can find them confirmed by some approach or other which has been given by (3) every serious study of the phenomenon of anxiety, whatever its presuppositions might be. Even if these presuppositions appear too narrow for us, should be situated within this radical experience which is ours, it remains that something has been well grasped at a certain level and even if the phenomenon of anxiety appears to us to be limited, distorted, insufficient in the light of our experience, we should at least try to learn why it is that way. Now it is not always that way. We have to

harvest ctt any level whatsoever where there has been formulated up to the present the questioning about the subject of anxiety.

It is my intention today to indicate, because I am not able, of course, to add together something that would require a whole year of seminars, to add together what has been contributed in a certain number of types of questioning which are called - rightly or wrongly - for example the objective approach to the problem of anxiety, the experimental approach to the problem of anxiety.

And of course, we would only lose ourselves in these responses, if I had not given you at the beginning the lines of sight, the orientation points that we cannot abandon for a single moment in order to guarantee, to restrict our object, so that we can see what conditions it in the most radical, the most fundamental fashion. And it is for this reason that the last time, my discourse ended by circumscribing them, as one might say, with three reference points which I had of course only started on, to introduce three points where undoubtedly, the dimension of the Other remained dominant. Namely the demand of the Other, the jouissance of the Other and, in a quite modal form which remained moreover at the state of a question mark, the desire of the Other in so far as it is this desire which corresponds to our interrogation, I mean that of the analyst, of the analyst in so far as he intervenes as term.

We are not going to do what we reproach all the others with doing, namely elide ourselves from the text of the experience which interrogates us. The anxiety to which we have here to bring a formula, is an anxiety which responds to us, it is an anxiety that we provoke, it is an anxiety to which we have on occasion a determining relationship.

This dimension of the Other where we find our place, our efficacious place in so far precisely as we know how not to restrict it - which is the motive of the question that I am (4) posing, namely the measure in which our desire ought not to narrow it - this dimension of the Other, I would like to make you sense that it is not absent from any of the modes under which up to now an attempt has been made to circumscribe, to get closer to, this phenomenon of anxiety. And I would say that at the point of mental exercise that I have formed, habituated you to, perhaps indeed you may see the vanity in this sort of bombast, of vain success, of false triumph that some people find themselves taking in the fact that, for example, supposedly in opposition to analytic thinking - and again would it even be that, when all is said and done - neuroses are produced in animals in the laboratory, on the experimental bench. These neuroses, those which the Pavlovian laboratory, I mean Pavlov himself and those who followed him,, emphasised on occasion, what do they show us? We are told that in the text and the sequence of these experiments by which one conditions what is called one or other reflex of the animal, namely one or other "natural reaction" of one of these systems which are associated to a stimulus, to an excitation which forms part of a register

presumed to be completely different from the one which is involved in the reaction, by a certain mode of making these conditioned reactions converge, we are going to take into account the effect of contrariety. Once we have already obtained, conditioned, produced one of these responses of the organism, we are going to put it in a position of responding at the same time in two opposed ways, generating as one might say a sort of organic perplexity.

To go further, we would even say that in certain cases we can, we have the idea that what we are obtaining is a sort of exhaustion of the possibilities of response, a sort of more fundamental disorder generated by their confusion, something which involves in a more radical fashion what one can call the ordinary field of the reaction involved, which is the objective expression of what can be interpreted in a more general perspective as defined by certain modes of reaction which are called instinctual. In short, to get to the point where the demand made on the function - it is something which has been theorised more recently and in different cultural areas, by the term stress - may end up, culminate in the sort of deficit which overwhelms the function itself, which involves the system in a way which modifies it, beyond the register of the functional response, which is more or less close, in the lasting traces that it engenders, to a lesional deficit.

(5) It would no doubt be important to highlight in this range of experimental interrogation, where, properly speaking, there is manifested something which reminds us among neurotic reactions of the form described as "anxiety ridden". There is nevertheless something which appears to be eluded in such a way of posing the problem of the experiment. Eluded in a way for which it is no doubt impossible to reproach the reporter of these experiments for eluding, because this elision is constitutive of the experiment itself. But for someone who has to connect this experiment to our experience, namely the one which happens with a speaking subject - this is the importance of this dimension in so far as I remind you of it - it is impossible not to notice the following, that however primitive may be the animal organism thus interrogated compared to that of the speaking subject - and these organisms are far from being primitive, from being distant from our own in the Pavlovian experiments, because they are dogs - the dimension of the Other is present in the experiment.

It is not today or yesterday that intervening for example during one of our scientific meetings on some phenomena which were brought to us - I cannot go over them again today - concerning the creation of experimental neurosis, I pointed out to the one who was communicating his researches, that his own presence in the experiment as a human person, manipulating a certain number of things around the animal, should at one or other moment of the experiment, be put in question, taken into account. When one knows how a dog behaves vis-a-vis the one who is called or who is not called his master, one knows that the dimension of the Other counts, in any case, for a dog. But even if it were

not a dog, if it were a grasshopper or a leech, because of the fact that there is this collection of systems, the dimension of the Other is present. You will tell me: in a grasshopper or a leech, the organism undergoing the experiment, knows nothing about this dimension of the Other. I agree absolutely, and that is why my whole effort for a certain time was to demonstrate the extent of the level that in our case, as subjects, as we learn to manipulate, to determine this subject that we are, there is also a whole field where we know nothing about what constitutes us as field. And that the Selbstbewusstsein that I taught you to name, the subject who is presumed to know (le sujet suppose savoir), is a deceptive illusion. The Selbstbewusstsein considered as constitutive of a knowing subject is an illusion, (6) is a source of error. For the dimension of the subject supposedly transparent in his own act of knowing, only begins with the coming into play of a specified object which is the one that I am try to circumscribe in the mirror stage, namely, of the image of one's own body in so far as the subject in a jubilatory fashion has in effect the feeling of being before an object which makes him, the subject, transparent to himself.

The extension of this illusion, which in itself radically constitutes the illusion of consciousness, to every kind of knowledge is motivated by the fact that the object of knowledge will henceforth be constructed, modelled, on the image of this relationship to the specular image, and it is precisely why this object of knowledge is insufficient.

And if psychoanalysis did not exist, one would know it from the following: the fact is that there exist moments of the appearance of the object which throw us into a completely different dimension, a dimension which merits - since it is given by experience - to be detached as such as primal in experience, which is precisely the dimension of the strange, of something which can in no way allow itself to be grasped, as leaving before it the subject transparent to his knowledge.

Before this new thing, the subject literally vacillates and everything is put in question about the so-called primordial relation of the subject to every effect of knowledge.

This emergence of something in the field of the object, which poses its problem as being that of an irreducible structuring, as the emergence of an unknown as experienced, is not a question which is posed to analysts because since it is a given of experience it is all the same necessary to try to explain why children are afraid of the dark, and one sees at the same time that they are not always afraid of the dark, and then one does some psychology, the so-called experimenters engage precisely in theories about the effect of an inherited, ancestral, primordial reaction from a thinking - since it seems that it is always necessary to preserve the term thinking - from a thinking differently structured to logical, rational thinking. And people make constructions and invent things: this is how people start doing philosophy. Here we await those with whom we have on occasion to carry out the dialogue on the very terrain where

this dialogue has to be judged, namely whether we for our part can account for it in a less hypothetical fashion.

(7) This form that I am giving you, which is conceivable, consists in grasping that if in the constitution of an object which is the object correlative of a first mode of approach, the one which begins from the recognition of our own form, and if this knowledge, limited in itself, allows there to escape something of this primitive cathexis to our being which is given by the fact of existing as body, is it not saying something which is not only reasonable but testable to say that it is this remainder, it is this non-imagined residue of the body which comes by some detour - and here we are able to designate this detour - to manifest itself here at this place provided for the lack, to manifest itself in this fashion and in a fashion since it is not specular becomes henceforth unlocatable: this lack of certain reference points is effectively a dimension of anxiety.

We would not be in disagreement then with the way in which Kurt Goldstein would approach this phenomenon for example. When he speaks to us about anxiety, he speaks about it very pertinently. How is the whole phenomenology of lesional phenomena, where Goldstein minutely pursues this experience which interests us, to be articulated if not from the prior remark that the organism in all its relational effects functions as a totality. There is not a single one of our muscles which is not involved when we nod our head, that every reaction to a situation implies the totality of the organic response; and if we follow it, we see emerging two terms closely woven with one another, the term of catastrophic reaction, and in its phenomenon, within the field of this catastrophic reaction, the mapping out as such of phenomena of anxiety.

I would ask you to consult the very accessible texts - since they have been translated into French - of Goldstein's analyses in order to locate there at once the degree to which these formulations are close to our own and the degree of clarity they would draw by being more expressly based on them. Because at every instant, if you follow the text with this key that I am bringing you, you will see the difference there is between the disorder reaction by which the subject responds to his inoperancy, to the fact of being confronted with a situation which is unsurmountable as such, no doubt because of his deficit on this occasion. It is after all a way which is not foreign to what can happen to even a non-deficient subject before a situation, a situation of unsurmountable danger. In order for the Hilflosigkeit reaction of anxiety to be produced as such, two conditions are always necessary, - you can see it in the concrete cases mentioned -: 1) that the deficient effect should be sufficiently limited for the subject to circumscribe it in the test that he is undergoing, and .that by reason of this limit the lacuna appears as such in the objective field. It is this emergence of lack in a positive form which is the source of anxiety, provided that: condition 2), which must not be omitted here, that it is under the effect of a demand, of a test organised by the fact that the subject has before him Goldstein

or someone from his laboratory who subjects him to an organised test, that there is produced this field of lack and the question posed in this field, in these terms, that there is so little reason for omitting that when you know where and when to seek them, you will unfailingly find them, if there is need of it.

To jump to a completely different order, I would evoke here the most massive, unreconstituted, ancestral experience, rejected onto the obscurity of ancient times from which we are supposed to have escaped, a necessity which unites us with these ages which is still current and which very curiously we speak about only very rarely: it is that of the nightmare. One asks oneself why for some time, analysts interest themselves so little in the nightmare.

I introduce it here because it is going to be necessary all the same for us to remain on it this year for a certain time and I will tell you why. I will tell you why and where to find the material, because if there is already on this question an already established and very remarkable literature, to which you should refer, it is - however forgotten it may be on this point - it is namely Jones' book on the nightmare, a book of incomparable riches. I recall to you the fundamental phenomenology. I am not dreaming for a moment of eluding the principal dimension: the anxiety of the nightmare is experienced properly speaking as that of the jouissance of the Other. The correlative of the nightmare, is the incubus or the succubus, it is this being who weighs with his whole opaque weight of alien jouissance on your chest, who crushes you under his jouissance.

Well then, to introduce ourselves from this important angle into what the thematic of the nightmare will bring us, the first thing in any case which appears, which appears in the myth, but also in the phenomenology of the nightmare, of the nightmare as experienced, is that this being who weighs down by his jouissance is also a questioning being and even properly (9) speaking, one who manifests, deploys himself in this complete, developed dimension of the question as such which is called the riddle.

The sphinx, whose coming into play - do not forget - precedes the whole Oedipus drama, is a nightmare figure and a questioning figure at the same time. We will have to come back to it.

This question, giving the most primordial form of what I called the dimension of demand, the one - as you are going to see - that we usually call demand in the sense of a supposedly instinctual exigency is only then a reduced form of it. Here we are therefore brought back ourselves to a question which is articulated in the sense of interrogating once again, of coming back to the relationship of an experience which, in the usual sense of the term subject, can be called pre-subjective with the term of the question, of the question in its most well-shaped form, in the form of a signifier which proposes itself as opaque, which is the position of the riddle as such.

This brings us back to terms which I believe to be perfectly-articulated, I mean which enable you at every instant to put me back against my own wall, to account for definitions already proposed and to put them to the test of their usage. This signifier, as I told you at one turning point, is a trace, but an effaced trace. The signifier, as I told you at another turning point, is distinguished from the sign by the fact that the sign is what represents something for someone. But the signifier, as I told you, is what represents a subject for another signifier.

We are going to put this to the test again in the sense that concerning this object that is involved, namely our relationship, our anxiety-ridden relationship to some lost object - but which is surely not nevertheless lost for everyone - namely, as you see, as I will show you, where is it to be found again? Because of course, it is not enough to forget something for it not to continue to be there, only it is there where we no longer know how to recognise it. To find it again, it would be necessary to come back to the subject of the trace. For to give you terms designed to animate the interest of this research for you, I am going right away to give you two flashes on the subject of our most common experience.

(1) Does it not seem to you that there is an obvious correlation between what I am trying to outline for you and the phenomenology (10) of the hysterical symptom, the hysterical symptom, in the broadest sense? Let us not forget that there are not only little hysterias, there are also big ones: there are the anaesthetized, there are the paralyzed, there are the scotomized, there are narrowings of the field of vision. Anxiety only appears in hysteria exactly in the measure that these lacks are not seen.

(2) There is something which is not often glimpsed and even - I think I can say this - that you scarcely ever bring into play, it is something which explains a whole section of the behaviour of the obsessional.

I give you this key perhaps insufficiently explained since it is going to be necessary for me to bring you by a long detour - but I give you this term at the end of our path, among others, if only to interest you in this path - the obsessional, in his very particular way of dealing with the signifier, namely of putting it in doubt, of knowing how to polish it, to efface it, to triturate it, to break it into pieces, namely to behave with it like Lady Macbeth with this cursed spot of blood, the obsessional, taking a cul-de-sac no doubt, but one whose aim is not doubtful, operates, precisely in the sense of rediscovering under the signifier, the sign.

Ungeschehen machen: making the inscription of the story nul and void. It happened like that, but it is not sure. It is not sure because it is only signifier (du signifiant), that story is therefore a trick, and in this the obsessional is right; he has grasped something, he wants to go to the origin, to the previous

step, to that of the sign that I am now going to try to make you travel in the opposite sense. It is not for nothing that I started today from our laboratory animals. After all, animals do not exist only in laboratories, one could open the door and see what they for their part do with traces.

It is not only men who have the property of effacing their traces, of operating with traces. One sees animals effacing their traces. One sees even complex behaviours which consist in covering a certain number of traces, with dejection, for example. It is well known among cats.

One part of animal behaviour consists in structuring a certain field of its Umwelt, of its environment, by traces which punctuate it, which define its limits. It is what is called the constitution of the territory. The hippopotami do that with their dejections and also with the produce of certain glands which are, if I remember rightly, peri-anal in their case. The (11) deer rubs his horns against the bark of certain trees, this also has the import of a mapping out of traces. I am not going to develop here the infinite variety of what a developed zoology can teach you about this.

What is important to me, is what I have to tell you concerning what I mean about the effacing of traces. The animal, as I told you, effaces his traces and makes false traces. Does he for all that make signifiers? There is one thing that the animal does not do: he does not make false traces in order to make us believe that they are false. He does not make falsely false traces, which is a behaviour, that I would not say is essentially human, but precisely essentially signifying. This is where the limit is. You understand that I mean traces made so that one believes them to be false and which are nevertheless the traces of my true passing, and this is what I mean by saying that here a subject is presentified. When a trace has been made in order that one should take it to be a false trace, then we know that there is a speaking subject as such, and we know then that there is a subject as cause and the very notion of cause has no other support than that.

We try afterwards to extend it to the universe, but the original cause is the cause as such of a trace which presents itself as empty, which wants to be taken for a false trace. And what does that mean? That means indissolubly that the subject where he is born addresses himself to what? He addresses himself to what I would briefly call the most radical form of the rationality of the Other. For this behaviour has no other possible import than to rank itself at the locus of the Other in the chain of signifiers, of signifiers which have or have not the same origin, but which constitute the only possible term of reference for the trace which has become signifying.

So that you grasp here that at the origin, what nourishes the emergence of the signifier, is an aiming at what the Other, the real Other does not know. The "he did not know" is rooted in an "he must not know". The signifier no doubt reveals the subject,

but by effacing his trace.

First then there is an o, the object of the hunt, and an O in the interval of which the subject S appears, with the birth of the signifier, but as barred, as not-known (non-su) as such. (12) The whole subsequent mapping out of the subject reposes on the necessity of a reconquest of this original not-known.

Understand therefore here this something which already made appear to you the really radical relationship concerning the being to be reconquered of this subject and this grouping of o, of the object of the hunt, with this first appearance of the subject as not-known, which means unconscious, unbewusste justified by the philosophical tradition which confused the Bewusst of consciousness, with absolute knowledge and which cannot suffice for us, in so far as we know that this knowing and consciousness are not confused, but that Freud leaves open the question of where indeed the existence of this field defined as a field of consciousness comes from. And here after all I can claim that the mirror stage articulated as it is, contributes to this the beginnings of a solution. Because I well know how unsatisfied it can leave some spirits formed on Cartesian meditation. I think that this year we can take a further step which will make you grasp where the real origin, the original object of this system described as consciousness, is.

For we will not be satisfied to see the perspectives of consciousness being refuted until we know that it attaches itself to an isolatable object, to an object specified in the structure.

I indicated to you a little earlier the position of the neurotic in this dialectic. I do not intend to leave you in much suspense. To come back to it immediately, if you have been able to grasp the core of what is involved concerning the emergence of the signifier as such, this will enable us to understand immediately the slippery slope presented to us, concerning what happens in neurosis.

I mean that the demand of the neurotic, all the traps that analytic dialectic has gone into, come from the fact that there has been unrecognised in it the fundamental share of falseness that there is in this demand.

The existence of anxiety is linked to the fact that every demand, even the most archaic and the most primitive, always has something deceptive with respect to what preserves the place of desire, and this is what explains also the anxiety-ridden context of what gives a complete response to this false demand. This is what ensures that the mother who as I saw emerging, not so long ago, in the discourse of one of my patients, allowed absolutely no space between herself and her child up to a particular age, only gave to this demand a false response, a (13) really inexact response, since, if the demand is this something which is structured, in the way that I have told you, since the signifier is what it is, this demand is not to be

taken literally: what the infant demands from his mother by this demand, is something which for him is designed to structure this presence-absence relationship which the original fort-da game structures and is a first exercise of mastery over.

But the total filling of a certain void which should be preserved which has nothing to do with either the positive or negative content of the demand, this is where there arises the disturbance in which anxiety is manifested.

But in order to grasp it, to see clearly its consequences, it seems to me that our algebra brings us here a ready-made instrument. If the demand comes here improperly at the place of what is eluded, o the object, this explains to you, on condition that you make use of my algebra - what is an algebra if not something very simple designed to make us achieve a mechanical state in its handling, without you having to understand something very complicated, and it is much better like that: I have always been told: in mathematics, it is enough for the algebra to be correctly constructed - if I taught you to write the drive, \$ cut - we will come back to this cut and you have already begun to form a certain idea of it earlier; what it is a matter of cutting, is the elan of the hunter - \$ cut of D, of the demand, if this is how I taught you to write the drive, this explains to you first of all why it is among neurotics that drives were described. It is in the whole measure that the phantasy \$ 4 o presents itself in a privileged fashion, as in the neurotic, as |«D, in other words that it is a lure of the phantastical structure in the neurotic which allowed this first step called the drive to be made which Freud always and without any kind of wavering designated as Trieb, namely as something which has a history in German philosophical thought, which it is absolutely impossible to confuse with the term instinct.

As a result of this, even in the Standard Edition recently again and, if I remember rightly in the text of Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety, I find translated by "instinctual need", something which in the German text is called Bedürfnis. Why not translate (14) simply, if you wish, "Bedürfnis" by "need", which is a good translation from the German to the English? Why add this "instinctual" which is absolutely not in the text and which is enough to falsify the whole meaning of the sentence?

All of which immediately allows it to be grasped that a drive has nothing to do with an instinct - I have no objection to make to the definition of something that can be called instinct and even as it is called in the usual fashion, why not for example, describe in this way the needs that living beings have to feed themselves, for example.

Well then, yes, since it is the oral drive that is involved, does it not seem to you that the term of erotogeneity applied to what is called the oral drive is something which brings us right away to the problem: why is it only the mouth that is involved? And why not also the gastric secretions, because a little earlier, we were talking about Pavlov's dogs? And even why more

especially if we look closely at it, up to a certain age, only the lips and, when that time has passed, what Homer called the enclosure of the teeth?

Do we not find there immediately, from the first properly speaking analytic approach to instinct, this line of breaking which I speak to you about as essential to this dialectic established by this reference to the other in the mirror the reference to which I thought I had brought you earlier - I did not find it in my papers - that I will give you the next time, in Hegel, in the Phenomenology of the spirit, where it is formally said that language is work, it is in this way that the subject makes his inside pass to the outside. And the sentence even is such that it is quite clear that this inside-out, as they say in English is really the metaphor of the glove turned inside out.

But if I gave to this reference the idea of a loss, it is in as much as something in it does not undergo this inversion, that at every stage a residue remains which is not invertible, nor signifiable in this articulated register. And we will not be astonished that these forms of the object appear to us under the form that is called partial; that has struck us enough for us to annotate it as such under the sectioned form, in which we are led to make intervene an object for example correlative to this oral drive.

This maternal nipple, the first phenomenology of which cannot fail to be admitted as that of a cut, riddled, breast, I mean something which is presented as having an artificial character. This indeed is what allows it to be replaced by any other kind (15) of soother which functions exactly in the same way in the economy of the oral drive.

If one wishes to make biological references - the references to need, of course are essential, it is not a matter of refusing them - but it is to see that the completely primitive structural difference introduces there the fact of ruptures, of cuts, introduces there immediately the signifying dialectic. Is there something here which is impenetrable to a conception that I would call everything that is most natural? The dimension of the signifier, what is it, if not, if you wish, an animal who in the hunt for his object is caught up in something such that the pursuit of this object must lead him onto another field of the trace where this pursuit itself as such no longer takes on anything but an introductory value.

The phantasy, the | with respect to o, here takes on the signifying value of the entry of the subject into this something which is going to lead him to this indefinite chain of signifiers which are called destiny..

One can escape it indefinitely, namely that what it is going to be a matter of rediscovering, is precisely the start: how it got into this business of the signifier.

Now it is all the same clear that it is well worth the trouble to recognise how the first objects, those which were located in the structure of the drive, namely the one which I already named above, this cut breast, and then later, the demand to the mother being inverted into a demand of the mother, for this object, which one cannot otherwise see why it should be privileged, this object which is called the turd, namely something which also has a relationship with a zone which is called erogenous and regarding which it is all the same necessary to see that here also it is in so far as separated by a limit from the whole functional system that it is close to, and which is infinitely more vast among the excretory functions - why the anus, if it is not in its determining function as a sphincter, of something which contributes to the cutting of an object, and the object that is involved is the turd with everything that it can come to represent, not simply, as is said, the gift, but the identity with this object whose nature we are seeking - and this is what gives it its value, its accent.

And what am I saying against this, if not precisely to justify the eventual function which is given to it under the rubric of ((16) object relations in the evolution - I do not mean yesterday, but the day before yesterday - of analytic theory, except that it is altogether to falsify it to see in it a sort of model of the analysand's world in which a process of maturation would allow the progressive restoration of a reaction presumed to be total, authentic, while all that is involved is a scrap designating the only thing that is important, namely the place, the place of a void where there would come - as I will show you - to be situated, other much more interesting objects which you know moreover already, but that you do not know how to place.

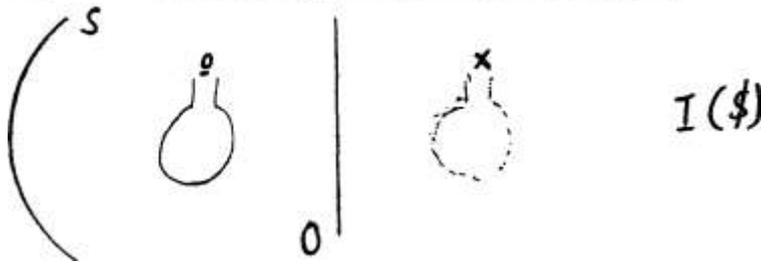
For today only to preserve the place of this void, because moreover something in our project will not fail to evoke the existential and even the existentialist theory of anxiety, you can be sure that it is not by chance that one of those whom one can consider as one of the fathers, at least in the modern era, of the existential perspective, this Pascal whom we do not know too well why he fascinates us because if we believe the theoreticians of science he got everything wrong - infinitesimal calculus that he was, it appears, within an ace of discovering, I think rather that he did not give a damn about it, because there is something which interested him and this is why Pascal still touches us, even those among us who are absolute unbelievers - it is that Pascal, like the good Jansenist that he was, was interested in desire. And that is why, I tell you this in confidence, he carried out the experiments of Puy de Dome on the vacuum. Whether nature does or does not abhor a vacuum, was capital for him, because that signified the abhorrence of all the scholars of his time for desire. This vacuum is of absolutely no theoretical interest any longer. It has almost no meaning for us any longer. We know that in a vacuum, we know there can still be produced knots, fullnesses (des pleins), packets of waves, and anything you could wish. And for Pascal precisely, because, if not nature, the whole of thought up to

then had a horror of the fact that there could be a vacuum anywhere, this is what is proposed to our attention, and to know whether, we also for our part do not yield from time to time to this horror.

What I am evoking for you here then is not metaphysics. I allowed myself to employ a term to which contemporary events have given a certain prominence for some years, I will speak rather of brain-washing.

What I intend to do is to teach you, by means of a method, to recognise, to recognise in the right place what presents itself in your experience; and of course the efficacy of what I am claiming to do can only be tested by experience.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 19 December 1962



And if sometimes people have objected to the presence at my teaching of certain people whom I have in analysis, after all the legitimacy of the co-existence of two relationships to me, the one in which I am heard and the one in which one makes oneself heard by me, can only be judged from within and in the measure that what I am teaching you here can effectively facilitate for each one - I mean in any case for someone who is working with me - an access to the recognition of his own path.

In this connection of course there is something, a limit, where external control stops, but undoubtedly it is not a bad sign, if it can be seen, that those who participate from these two positions will at least learn from them to read better.

Brain-washing, I have said, is indeed for me to submit myself to this control of recognising in the remarks of those that I analyse something different to what there is in the books. Inversely, for them, it is that to know how to recognise in passing in the books what is effectively in the books. And in this connection, I can only congratulate myself for example on a little sign, like this recent one, which came to me from the mouth of someone precisely whom I have in analysis, that in passing there did not escape him the import of a trait like this one that can be caught in passing in a book whose French translation has appeared recently - and how late it is - in a work by Ferenczi, namely this book whose original title is: Versuch einer Genitaltheorie, "Research" - very precisely - "into a theory of genitality", and not simply "About the origins of

(2) sexual life", as they have drowned it here, a book which undoubtedly cannot but be disturbing because of a certain aspect which I already highlighted long ago for those who know how to listen as having at times its share at times, but which, bringing with it all the same this enormous experience, allows there to be posited in its detours several traits which are precious for us, including the following to which I am sure the author himself does not give all the importance it merits precisely in his plan, in his research, by arriving at a too harmonious, a too all-englobing notion of what constitutes its object, namely, the genital perspective, realisation.

In passing, here is how he expresses himself: "The development of genital sexuality, cursorily described above in the male", he says - it is in effect what is involved in the male man, the male - "undergoes in the female", what is translated as, "a rather sudden interruption", an altogether incorrect translation because what is involved in German is "eine zimmlich unvermittelte Unterbrechung", an interruption, that means that it is most often unmediated, that it is not a part of what Ferenczi describes as amphimixis, which is only when all is said and done, one of the natural forms of what we call "thesis, antithesis, synthesis", of what we call dialectical progress, as I might put it. This, no doubt, is not the term which is valorised in Ferenczi's mind, but what animates effectively his whole construction, is indeed what he notes, it is that unvermittelte, namely in a lateral position with respect to this process - and let us not forget what it is a matter of finding - of genital synthesis and harmony, is therefore to be properly translated here by "rather as an impasse", outside the progress of mediation.

This interruption, he says, "is characterized above all else", and here he only accentuates what Freud tells us - "by the displacement of erogeneity from the clitoris (the female penis) to the cavity of the vagina. Psychoanalytic experience compels the assumption, however, that not only the vagina but, in the manner of hysteria, other parts of the body as well are genitalized, in particular the nipple and the surrounding area."

As you know, there are many other zones again in hysteria. Besides moreover the translation here, because it does not effectively follow the precious aspect of what we are brought here as material, a translation that is in a way, there (3) is simply, not at all "en témoigne également", but "nach Art der Hystérie" in German.

What does that mean? What does that mean, for someone who has learned - whether here or elsewhere - to understand, if not that the coming into operation of the vagina as such in the genital relationship, is a mechanism that is strictly equivalent to any other hysterical mechanism? And here why should we be astonished? Why should we be astonished at this from the moment that through our schema of the place of the empty locus in the function of desire you have quite ready to be recognised something about which the least that can be said is that, for

you, it could at least situate this paradox, this paradox which is defined as follows: the fact is that the locus, the home of jouissance is found normally, since it is naturally placed precisely in an organ which you know in the most certain fashion, through experience as well as by an anatomical-physiological investigations, to be insensitive in the sense that it could not even become aware of sensation because it is not innervated, that the locus, that the final locus of jouissance, of genital jouissance is a place - after all, it is not a mystery - onto which one can pour floods of boiling water, and at a temperature that could not be tolerated by any other mucus membrane, without provoking real, immediate sensory reactions.

What does that mean, if not that we have every reason, before entering into the diachronic myth of a supposed maturation, to map out the correlations which would make of the no doubt necessary point of arrival, of completion, of accomplishment of the sexual function in the genital function, something other than a process of maturation, than a locus of convergence, of synthesis, of everything that presented itself up to then in terms of partial tendencies and to recognise, not alone the necessity of this empty place in a functional point of desire, but to see that even if it is there that nature itself, that physiology is going to find its most favourable functional point, we thus find ourselves in a clearer position, at once liberated from this weight of paradox which is going to make us imagine so many mythical constructions around the supposed vaginal jouissance, and not at all of course that something cannot be indicated beyond - and it is, if you remember, those who attended our Amsterdam Congress, what they may remember I indicated at the beginning of the Congress, something which for want of an (4) apparatus, for want of this structural register whose articulations I am trying to give you here, could not even, in the course of a Congress at which many worthy things were said, be effectively articulated and mapped out as such, and nevertheless how precious it is for us to know, since moreover all the paradoxes concerning the place to be given to hysteria in what could be called the scale of neuroses, this ambiguity in particular which brings it about that because of these obvious analogies whose essential element, major element I am highlighting here with the hysterical mechanism, we are called to put it on a diachronic scale as the most advanced neurosis because it is the closest to genital completion, that it is necessary for us in the light of this diachronic conception to put at the end of infantile maturation, and that by the reversal that clinical experience shows us on the contrary, we must, in the neurotic scale, consider on the contrary as the most primary, the one upon which specifically, for example, the constructions of obsessional neurosis are constructed, that the relations in a word between hysteria and psychosis itself, with schizophrenia are obvious.

The only thing that can allow us also not to be eternally, as the need arises - and observers bring us the points of view that we have to tackle on hysteria - putting it either at the end, or at the beginning, of supposedly evolutionary phases, is first and

foremost to refer it to what predominates, namely the structure, the synchronic structure of desire (See schema, page 1). It is to isolate, in the constitutive structure of desire as such, which means that I designate this place, the place of the blank, the place of the void, as still playing an essential function; and the fact that this function should be highlighted in a major way, in the completed, terminal structure of the genital relationship, is at once the confirmation of the well-foundedness of our method and also the beginning of a clearer vision, cleared of , of what we have to map out concerning properly genital phenomena.

There is no doubt an obstacle, an objection to us seeing it directly because in order to reach it we must go by a rather complicated path. This roundabout path is anxiety and that is why we are dealing with it this year.

The point that we are at at this moment at which there comes to completion with the year a first phase of our discourse, consists (5) therefore in you assuring yourselves that there is a structure of anxiety; and the important point, the core of the fashion in which in these first talks I announced, put forward, tackled for you, is sufficiently in this image, I mean, in what it contributes in terms of a framework which is to be taken entirely in its specified character. I would even say up to a certain point that it still does not show adequately, in this tachygraphic form, in which - I have been repeating it for you on the blackboard since the beginning of my discourse - it is necessary to insist on the fact that this stroke is something that you see in cross-section and is a mirror. A mirror does not stretch out to infinity, a mirror has limits, and what reminds you of this is that, if you refer to the article from which this schema is taken, I take into account the limits of the mirror; one can see something in this mirror from a point situated, as one might say, somewhere in the space of the mirror, from which it is not perceptible by the subject.

In other words, I myself do not necessarily see my eye in the mirror, even if the mirror helps me to see something that I would not see otherwise. What I mean by that, is that the first thing to be advanced concerning the structure of anxiety, is something that you always forget in the observations where it reveals itself: fascinated by the content of the mirror, you forget its limits and the fact that anxiety is framed.

Those who heard my intervention at the Journées Provinciales on phantasy, the text of which intervention I am still waiting for after two months and a week, may recall that I used as a metaphor a painting which is placed in a window frame, an absurd technique no doubt, if it is a matter of better seeing what is on the painting, but as I also explained to you, it is not exactly this that is involved, it is, whatever may be the charm of what is painted on the canvas, not to see what can be seen through the window.

What the inaugural dream in the history of analysis shows us in the dream of the Wolfman, whose privilege, as happens

incidentally and in an unambiguous fashion, is that it is the apparition in the dream of a pure schematic form of the phantasy, it is because the repetitive dream of the Wolfman is the pure phantasy unveiled in its structure, that it takes on its importance, and that Freud chooses it to make, in this observation which only has this unexhausted, inexhaustible (6) character for us because it involves essentially, from beginning to end, the relationship of the phantasy to the real. What do we see in this dream? The sudden opening - and the two terms are indicated - of a window. The phantasy is seen beyond a pane and through a window which opens, the phantasy is framed; and you will recognise in what you see beyond - if you know of course how to perceive it - you will recognise in its most diverse forms the same structure that you see here in the mirror of my schema. There are always the two bars of a more or less developed support and of something which is supported, there are the wolves on the branches of the tree; there is on some drawing or other of a schizophrenic - I have only to open any collection to gather them up as I might say by the shovel-full - also on occasion some tree with at the end for example - to take my first example in the paper given by Bobo(?) at the last Antwerp Congress on the phenomenon of expression - with what at the end of its branches? That which for a schizophrenic fills the role that the wolves play in the case of the borderline that the Wolfman is. Here, a signifier, it is beyond the branches of the tree that the schizophrenic in question writes the formula of his secret: "Io sono sempre vista", namely something that she had never been able to say up to then "I am always seen". Here again I must pause in order to make you see that in Italian as in French, vista has an ambiguous meaning, it is not only a past participle, it is also sight with its two meanings subjective and objective, the function of sight and the fact of being seen, as one says the sight of a landscape, the one which is taken there as an object on a postcard. I will of course come back on all of that.

What I simply want to stress here today, is that the horrible, the suspicious, the uncanny, everything by which we translate, as best we can in French, this masterful unheimlich, presents itself through skylights, that it is as framed that there is situated for us the field of anxiety. Thus you rediscover that by which I introduced the discussion for you, namely the relationship between the stage and the world.

"Suddenly", "all of a sudden", you will always find this term, at the moment that the phenomenon of the unheimlich makes its entry! The stage which proposes itself in its own dimension, beyond no doubt we know that what ought to be referred to it is what cannot be said in the world. It is what we always expect when the curtain rises, it is this quickly extinguished brief moment of anxiety, but which is never lacking to the dimension which ensures that we are doing more than coming to settle our backsides into a more or less expensive seat, which is the moment of the three knocks, which is the moment the curtain opens. And without this, this quickly elided introductory moment of anxiety, nothing could even take on the value of what is going to be

determined as tragic or as comic, that which cannot be, here again, not every tongue provides you with the same resources, it is not a konnen that is involved. Of course many things can be said, from a material point of view. It is a matter of a being able, durfen, which badly translates what is permitted or not permitted, since durfen refers to a more original dimension. It is even because Man darf nicht, that it cannot be done, that Man kan, that after all one is going to be able, and that here there comes into play the forcing, the dimension of relaxation, that properly speaking constitutes the dramatic action.

We could not spend too much time on the nuances of this framing of anxiety. Are you going to say that I am appealing to it in the sense of bringing it back to expectation, to preparation, to a state of alert, to a response which is already one of defence to what is going to happen. That yes! It is the Erwartung, it is the constitution of the hostile as such, it is the first recourse beyond Hilflosigkeit♦

But anxiety is different. If, in effect, expectation can serve among other means to frame it, in a word, there is no need for this expectation: the frame is always there! Anxiety is different. Anxiety is when there appears in this frame something which is already there much closer to home: Heim, the guest (l'h5te), you will say, and in a certain sense, of course, this unknown guest who appears in an unexpected fashion has a good deal to do with what is met with in the Unheimlich, but it is not enough to designate him in this way. For, as the term indicates to you very well as it happens in French, this guest, in the ordinary sense of the word, is already someone who has been well worked over in terms of expectation.

This guest is already what had become hostile, had passed into the hostility by which I began this discourse about expectation. This guest, in the ordinary sense, is not the heimlich, it is not the person who lives in the house, it is someone hostile who has been softened, pacified, accepted. That which belongs to Heim, that which belongs to Geheimnis, has never passed through these detours when all is said and done, has never passed through these (8) networks, through these sieves, through these sieves of recognition: it has remained unheimlich, less uninhabitable than inhabitant (moins inhabituable qu'inhabitant), less inhabitual than uninhabited (moins inhabituel qu'inhabite).

It is this emergence of the heimlich in the frame that constitutes the phenomenon of anxiety. And this is why it is wrong to say that anxiety is without an object. Anxiety has a completely different sort of object to any apprehension that has been prepared, structured, structured by what? By the grill of the cut, of the furrow, of the unary trait, of the "that's it" which always in operating as one might say closes the lips - I am saying the lip or the lips - of this' cut which becomes the sealed letter on the subject in order, as I explained to you the last time, to send him off under a sealed cover to different traces.

The signifiers make of the world a network of traces, in which

the passage from one cycle to another is henceforth possible. What does that mean? What I told you the last time: the signifier generates a world, the world of the speaking subject whose essential characteristic is that it is possible to make a mistake about it.

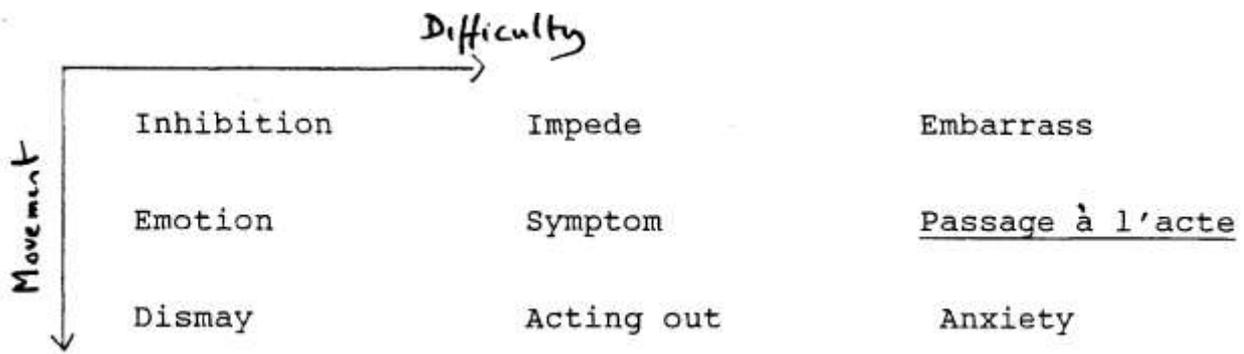
Anxiety is this very cut, without which the presence of the signifier, its functioning, its entry, its furrow in the real is unthinkable. It is this cut which is opened up and which allows there to appear something that you will understand better when I say the unexpected, the visit, the piece of news, what is expressed so well by the term presentiment which is not simply to be understood as the presentiment of something, but also the "pre" of Reeling, that which is before the birth of a feeling.

All the switching points are possible starting from something which is anxiety, which is, when all is said and done what we expected and which is the true substance of anxiety, the "what does not deceive", what is beyond doubting, for do not allow yourself to be taken in by appearances: it is not because, of course, the link between anxiety and doubt and hesitation, and what is called the ambivalent game of the obsessional, may appear clinically obvious to you, that it is the same thing.

Anxiety is not doubt; anxiety is the cause of doubt. I am saying the cause of doubt, it is not the first time, and it will not be the last, that I will have to come back here on the fact that if there is maintained, after so many centuries of critical understanding, the function of causality, it is indeed because it (9) is elsewhere than where it is refuted, and that if there is a dimension in which we should seek the true function, the true weight, the meaning of the maintenance of the function of causality, it is in this direction of the beginning of anxiety. Doubt therefore as I told you, is only there to combat anxiety and precisely all the effort that doubt expends, is against lures. It is in the measure that what it is a matter of avoiding is the dimension of appalling certainty that is in anxiety.

I think that you will stop me here to tell me, or to remind me, of what I put forward more than once in aphoristic forms, that all human activity expands into certainty or again that it generates certainty or in a general fashion that the reference to certainty is essentially action. Well yes, of course, and it is precisely this that allows me to introduce now the essential relation between anxiety and action as such, it is precisely perhaps from anxiety that action borrows its certainty.

To act is to tear its certainty from anxiety. To act, is to operate a transfer of anxiety. And if I allow myself to advance here a little quickly this discourse at the end of the trimester, it is to fill in or to almost fill in the blanks that I left you with in the table of my first seminar. I think that you remember it the one which is organised as follows:



Inhibition, symptom, anxiety, impede, which I completed with embarrass, with emotion and here dismay. I said to you: what is here? Two things: the passage à l'acte and acting-out. I said almost to be complete, because I have not the time to tell you why, the passage à l'acte in this place and acting out at a different one, but I will all the same make you advance along the path by pointing out to you, in the closest relationship with our remarks this morning, the opposition that was already implied and even expressed in my first introduction of these terms, and whose position I am now going to underline, namely between the dimension of too much which is in embarrassment and the dimension of the too little in what I told you, by means of an etymological commentary which you remember I think - at least those who were (10) there - I underlined about the sense of dismay.

Dismay, as I told you, is essentially the evocation of a power which is lacking, esmayer, the experience of what you are lacking in need. It is in the reference to these two terms whose link is essential in our subject; for this link underlines the ambiguity: if there is too much, what we have to deal with then is not lacking to us; if it is lacking to us, why say that elsewhere it embarrasses us, let us be on our guard here not to yield to the most flattering of illusions.

In attacking anxiety here ourselves, what are we trying to do, what do all those who have spoken of it 'scientifically' want? Good Lord, it was that it was pure need, what was required of me to posit at the beginning as necessary for the constitution of a world, it is here that this reveals itself not to be useless, and that you have control of it. This is better seen precisely because it is anxiety that is involved. And what is seen is what? And to want to speak about it in a properly scientific way is to show that it is what? An immense deception. It is not realised that the whole domain which our discourse has conquered always ends up showing that it is an immense deception.

To master the phenomenon by thought, is always to show how one can remake it in a falsified way, it is to be able to reproduce it, namely to be able to make a signifier of it. A signifier of what? In reproducing it the subject can falsify the book of accounts, which should not astonish us if it is true, as I teach you, that the signifier is the trace of the subject in the world's course. Only, if we believe we are able to continue this game with anxiety, well then, we are sure of missing out, because

precisely I stated right at the beginning that anxiety is concerned with what escapes this game. Therefore this is what we must be on guard against at the moment of grasping what is meant by this relationship of embarrassment to too much signifier, of lack to too little signifier. I am going to illustrate this relationship if you have not done so already: if there were no analysis, of course, I could not speak about it; but analysis encountered it at the first corner. The phallus for example, little Hans, just as much of a logician as Aristotle, poses the equation: all animate beings have a phallus. I am presupposing of course that I am addressing myself to people who have followed my commentary on the analysis of little Hans, who will remember here in this connection, I think, what I was careful to (11) accentuate last year concerning what is called the universal affirmative proposition. I told you the meaning of what I wanted to produce for you by this, namely that the affirmation which is described as universal, positive universal, only has meaning from the definition of the real, starting from the impossible. It is impossible for an animate being not to have a phallus, something that, as you see, poses logic in this essentially precarious function of condemning the real, of eternally stumbling into the impossible. And we have no other means of apprehending it, we advance from stumble to stumble. Example: there are living beings, Mummy for example, who do not have a phallus, so there must be no living beings, hence anxiety.

And the following step is to be taken. It is certain that the easiest thing is to say that even those who do not have one, have one. This indeed is why it is the one that we hold onto in general. It is that the living beings which do not have a phallus have one despite and against everything. It is because they have a phallus that we psychologists will call unreal - this will simply be the signifying phallus - that they are living beings.

Thus, from one stumble to another, there progresses I do not dare to say knowledge, but undoubtedly understanding. I cannot resist the pleasure in passing of sharing with you the discovery that chance, a lucky chance, what is called chance but which is scarcely that at all, a lucky discovery that I made for you no later than last week-end, in a dictionary of slang. God knows, I have taken enough time to come to it, but the English tongue is really a lovely tongue. Is there anyone here then who knows that since the fifteenth century, English slang has found this marvel of replacing on occasions "I understand you perfectly", for example, by "I understumble", namely - I am writing it out, since the phonetising has allowed you perhaps to miss the nuance - what I have just explained to you, not what is meant by understand: I understand you, but something untranslatable into French since the whole value of this slang word is the famous stumble which means precisely what I am in the process of explaining to you: the trebuchement. I understand you, that reminds me that one way or another, is always to go further along the path of misunderstanding.

Moreover, if the stuff of experience was composed, as classical

psychology teaches us, of the real and the unreal - and why not - how can one not recall in this connection what this indicates to (12) us in terms of having to take advantage of what is properly the Freudian conquest, and which is specifically the following: it is that if man is tormented by the unreal in the real, it would be altogether vain to hope to rid oneself of it for the reason, which is what in the Freudian conquest is quite precisely disturbing, that in the unreal, it is the real which torments him. His concern, Sorge, the philosopher Martin Heidegger tells us. Of course! This is a great advance for us.

Is this the final term, that before busying oneself, before speaking, before getting down to work, concern is presupposed? What does that mean? And do we not see that here we are already at the level of an art of concern: man is obviously a great producer of something which in so far as it regards him is called concern. But in that case, I prefer to learn it in a holy book, which is at the same time the most profanatory book which exists, called Ecclesiastes. I think I will refer to it in the future. This Ecclesiastes which is as you know the Greek translation in the septuagint of the term goheleth, a unique term, employed on this occasion, which comes from qahal, congregation, goheleth, being at once the abstract and feminine form of it, being properly speaking the congregating virtue, the rallier, the ecclesia, if you wish, rather than Ecclesiastes.

And what does it teach us, this book which I described as a sacred and most profane book. Here the philosopher does not fail to stumble, in reading it, on some Epicurean echo or other, as I have read! To talk of Epicurean in connection with Ecclesiastes! I know that Epicurus has long ceased to calm us, as was, as you know his intention. But to say that Ecclesiastes had for a single moment a chance of producing the same effect on us, can only mean that one has never even opened it!

"God commands me to enjoy (de jouir)" - this is textually in the Bible - it is all the same the word of God. And even if it is not the word of God for you, I think that you have already noticed the total difference there is between the God of the Jews and the God of Plato. Even if Christian history thought itself obliged, in connection with the God of the Jews, to find with the God of Plato its little psychotic evasion, it is, all the same, time to remember the difference there is between the universal mover God of Aristotle, the sovereign good God, a delusional conception of Plato, and the God of the Jews, namely a God with whom one speaks, a God who demands something of you and who in (13) Ecclesiastes gives you the order "enjoy (jouis)". That is really something! Because to enjoy when ordered to do so, is all the same something in which everyone senses that if there is a source, an origin of anxiety, it ought all the same to be found somewhere there. To this order "Jouis!", I can only answer one thing, which is: "J'ouïs (I hear)". 'Of course, but naturally I do not enjoy so easily for all that.

Such is the relief, the originality, the dimension, the order of presence, in which there is activated for us the God who speaks,

the one who tells us expressly that he is what he is. In order to advance while it is there within my reach, into the field of his demands, and because you are going to see that it is very close to our subject, I would introduce - this is the moment - something which you may well imagine I did not notice today or yesterday, namely that, among these demands of God to his elected, privileged people, there are some quite precise ones regarding which it seems that this God did not need the prescience of my seminar to carefully specify the terms. There is one of them called circumcision.

He orders us to enjoy, and what is more he goes into how it should be done. He specifies the demand, he separates out the object. This is why, I think, for you as for me, there could not fail to appear for a long time, the extraordinary entanglements, the confusion of the analogical evocation that there is in the supposed reference of circumcision to castration. Of course this has a relationship with the object of anxiety.

But to say that circumcision is the cause of it, or in any fashion whatsoever, the representative, the analogue of what we call castration and its complex, is a flagrant error. It does not get you out of the symptom precisely, namely of that which in the case of some subject or other who has been circumcised, may establish itself, in terms of confusion concerning its brand with what is involved eventually in neurosis regarding the complex of castration.

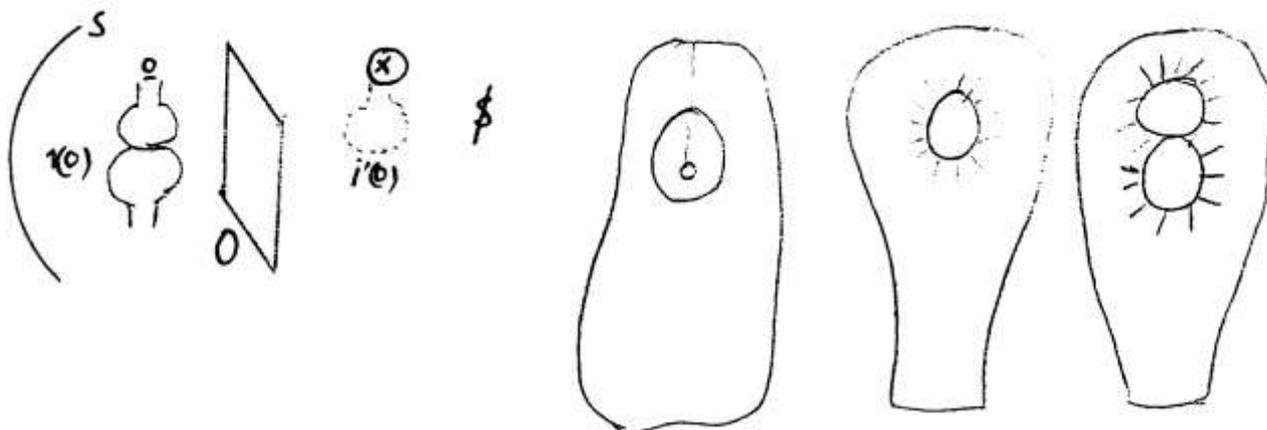
Because after all, there is nothing less castrating than circumcision. When it is clear-cut, when it is well done, undoubtedly we cannot deny that the result is rather elegant. I assure you that alongside all these sexual organs, I mean the male ones, of greater Greece than the antique dealers, on the pretext that I am an analyst, bring me by the cartload and which my secretary puts into the already overcrowded courtyard, alongside all these sexual organs, in which I must say that by an accentuation which I do not dare to qualify as aesthetic the phimosis is always accentuated in a particularly disgusting (14) fashion; there is all the same in the practice of circumcision something healthy from the aesthetic point of view. And moreover those who continue to repeat on this point the confusions which are all over psychoanalytic writings, all the same most of them have long ago grasped that there was something from the functional point of view which is just as essential as reducing, at least in part in a signifying fashion, the ambiguity that is described as the bisexual type. "Je suis la plaie et le couteau", Baudelaire says somewhere. Well then, why consider it to be the normal function to be at once the dart and the sheath? There is obviously in this ritual attention of circumcision a reduction of bisexuality which cannot but obviously generate something healthy as regard the division of roles.

These remarks, as you can well sense, are not by the way, they open up precisely the question which situates beyond, something which already from this explanation can no longer appear as a sort of capricious ritual, but something which conforms to what

in the demand I teach you to consider as the circumscribing of the object, as the function of the cut - it must be said - of this delimited zone here: God demands an offering, and very precisely to separate out the object after having circumscribed it; that whether after that the sources as well as the experience of those who are grouped together, recognise one another by this traditional sign, that if their experience does not for all that lead to a lowering - perhaps far from it - of the relation to anxiety, it is starting from there that the question begins.

One of those who are evoked here - and it is really not designating anybody in my audience - called me one day in a private note the last of the cabalistic Christians. You can be reassured, if some investigation or other involving properly speaking the calculus of signifiers may be something on which I delay from time to time, it will never make me mistake as I may say my illusions for the lantern of knowledge; or indeed rather, if this lantern turns out to be a blind lantern, to recognise my illusion in it, but more directly than Freud because, coming after him, I question his God: "Che vuoi?", "What do you want of me?", in other words: "What is the relationship of desire to the law?" A question always elided by the philosophical tradition, but to which Freud answered - and you live on it, even if like (15) everybody else you have not realised it. The reply: it is the same thing as what I am teaching you, what I am teaching you leads you to, and which is already there in the text, masked under the myth of Oedipus, it is that desire and the law, which appear to be opposed in a relationship of antithesis, are only one and the same barrier to bar our access to the thing. Nolens, volens: desiring, I commit myself to the path of the law. That is why Freud relates the origin of the law to the opaque ungraspable desire of the father. But what this discovery and all analytic enquiry leads you to, is not to lose sight of the truth there is behind this lure.

Whether my objects are normatived or not, as long as I desire, I know nothing of what I desire. And then from time to time an object appears among all the others, which I really do not know why it is there. On the one hand, there is the one which I have learned covers my anxiety, the object of the phobia - and I do not deny that I had to have it explained to me; up to then I did not know what I was thinking about, except to say that you have one, you have or you have not one - on the other hand, there is the one, as regards which I cannot really justify why it should be the one I desire, and I, who do not detest girls, why should I love a little slipper still more. On the one hand there is the wolf, on the other the shepherdess. This is where I will leave you at the end of these first talks about anxiety, there is something else to be understood about the anxiety-provoking order of God, there is Diana's hunt which, at a time that I chose, that of Freud's centenary, was, I told you, the path of Freud's quest, there is something to which I invite 'you for the coming trimester regarding anxiety, there is the death of the wolf.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 9 January 1963

In the thirty-second introductory lecture to psychoanalysis, namely in the series of New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis which has been translated into French, Freud specifies that it is a matter of introducing something which has not, he says, in any way a purely speculative character, but it has been translated for us in the unintelligible French which you can form your own opinion of: "Mais il ne peut vraiment être question que de conceptions. En effet, il s'agit de trouver les idées abstraites, justes qui appliquées a la matière brute de l'observation y apporteront ordre et clarté". There is no full stop in German where I have shown it, and there is no enigma in the sentence: "It is a matter", Freud tells us, "Sondern es handelt sich wirklich", not truly but really, "of conceptions" (comma), namely I mean by that Vorstellungen, correct abstract representations, it is a matter of einzufahren them, of bringing them, of bringing to light, these conceptions whose application to the rohe Stoff, the raw material of observation, Beobachtung, will permit us to make emerge from them, to give birth from them to order and transparency.

It is obviously always distressing to entrust something as precious as the translation of Freud to ladies-in-waiting.

This effort, this programme, the one that we have been trying our best at here for some years, and it is because of this that today we find that we have, in short, specified on our path about anxiety, the status of something which I would designate right away by the letter o which you see here enthroned above the outline, the outline of the vase which symbolizes for us the narcissistic container of the libido, in so far as through the mediation of this mirror of the Other it can be related to its

own image $i'(o)$ and that between the two there can operate this communicating oscillation that Freud designates as the reversibility between the libido of one's own body and that of the object.

From this economic oscillation, this reversible libido from $i(o)$ to $i'(o)$, there is something which we would not say escapes, but which intervenes in the form of an incidence whose style of disturbance is precisely the one that we are studying this year. The most striking manifestation, the signal of the intervention of this object o , is anxiety.

This does not mean that this object o is only the reverse of anxiety, that it only intervenes, that it only functions in correlation with anxiety. Anxiety, Freud taught us, plays the function of a signal with respect to something. I am saying: it is a signal related to what is happening about the relationship of a subject, of a subject who moreover cannot enter into this relationship except in the vacillation of a certain fading, the one which the notation of the subject by an $\$$ designates, the relationship of this subject, at this vacillating moment, with (3) this object in all its generality.

Anxiety is the signal of certain moments of this relationship. This is what we are going to strive to show you more about today. It is clear that this supposes a further step in the situation of specifying what we mean by this object o . I mean, we designate this object precisely by o . I point out that this algebraic notation has its function, it is like a thread designed to allow us to recognise its identity under the different incidences in which it appears to us. Its notation is algebraic, o , precisely to respond to this goal of pure mapping out of identity, it having already been posited by us that the mapping out by a word, by a signifier, is always and can only be a metaphor, namely leaving in a way, outside the signification induced by its introduction, the function of the signifier itself. The term good though it generates the signification of good, is not good by itself and far from it, for it generates evil at the same time.

In the same way to designate the little o by the term object is, as you see, a metaphorical usage, since it is borrowed precisely from this subject-object relationship from which the term object is constituted, which no doubt is suitable for designating the general function of objectivity; and this object, of which we have to speak under the term o , is precisely an object which is outside any possible definition of objectivity. I will not speak of what is happening to objectivity in the field of science, I am speaking about our science in general, you know that since Kant a number of misfortunes have befallen it, a number of misfortunes which all arise, in the heart of this object, from having wanted to give too great a share to certain, "obvious things", and especially those which belong to the field of transcendental aesthetics, like for example holding as obvious the independence, the separation between the dimensions of space and those of time was put to the test in the elaboration of the scientific object

or came into collision with this something that is expressed quite incorrectly as a crisis of scientific reason: in short this whole effort which had to be undertaken in order to see that (4) precisely these two registers of the spatial and temporal dimensions could not, at a certain level of physics, continue to be held as independent variables, a surprising fact, which seems to have posed to some minds indissoluble problems which do not seem nevertheless to be all that worthy of bringing us to a halt, and if we see that it is precisely to the status of the object that we should have recourse to give to the symbolic its exact place in the constitution, in the expression of experience, not to make risky extrapolations from the imaginary into the symbolic.

In truth, the time that is involved, at the level at which there may be posed the problems that come from derealising it in a fourth dimension, has nothing to do with the time which, in intuition, seems indeed to posit itself as a sort of unsurpassable shock of the real, namely something which appears to all of us, and that taking it as an obvious fact, as something which, in the symbolic, could be expressed by an independent variable is simply a categorical error at the beginning.

There is the same difficulty, as you know, at a certain limit of physics, with the body, and here I would say that we are on our own ground, because it is effectively on what has not been done, on what has not been done at the beginning as regards a correct status of the experience that we have here our word to say. We have our word to say since, our experience posits and establishes that no intuition, that no transparency, that no Durchsichtigkeit - since it is Freud's term - which is founded purely and simply on the intuition of consciousness, can be held to be original and therefore valid and therefore cannot constitute the starting point of any transcendental aesthetics, for the simple reason that the subject cannot be in any way situated in an exhaustive fashion in consciousness, since it is firstly and primarily unconscious.

To this must be added, that if it is firstly and primarily unconscious, it is because in the constitution of the subject, we must firstly and primarily hold to be prior to this constitution, a certain incidence which is that of the signifier. The problem is that of the entry of the signifier into the real and to see (5) how from this the subject is born. Does it mean that, if we find ourselves as it were before a sort of descent of the spirit, the apparition of winged signifiers would begin to make their holes in this real all by themselves, in the midst of which there would appear one of these holes which would be the subject. I think that, in the introduction of the real-imaginary-symbolic division, no one imputes such a plan to me. It is a matter today of knowing what is there at first, what it is precisely that allows this signifier to be incarnated. What allows it is of course what we have there to presentify ourselves to one another, our body. Only this body is not to be taken either, for its part, in the pure and simple categories of the transcendental aesthetics. This body is not in a word, constitutable in the way

that Descartes establishes in the field of extension. It is a matter of our seeing that the body in question is not given to us in a pure and simple fashion in our mirror, that even in this experience of the mirror, there can occur a moment where this image, this specular image that we think we have in our grasp, is modified: what we have face to face with us, our stature, our face, our pair of eyes, allows there to emerge the dimension of our own look and the value of the image then begins to change especially if there is a moment at which this look which appears in the mirror begins to look no longer at ourselves, initium, aura, the dawning of a feeling of strangeness which opens the door to anxiety.

The passage from the specular image to this double who escapes me, here is the point at which something happens whose generality, function, presence in the whole phenomenal field we can show, I believe, by the articulation that we are giving to this function of o, and we can show that the function goes well beyond what appears at this strange moment that I wished here simply to pinpoint because its character is well known and also most discreet in its intensity.

How does there occur this transformation of the object, which, from a situatable object, a locatable object, an exchangeable object constructs this sort of private, incommunicable and (6) nevertheless dominant object which is our correlative in the phantasy? Where exactly the moment of this moulting, of this transformation, of this revelation occurs, is, I believe something that, along certain paths, from certain angles which I already prepared for you in the course of the preceding years, can be more than designated, can be explained, and that, in the little schema that I have brought you today on the board something of these conceptions, Auffassungen, in other words of these richtig, correct representations can be given which makes the always more or less opaque, obscure, appeal to intuition, to experience, something durchsichtig, transparent. In other words, to reconstitute for ourselves the transcendental aesthetic which suits us, which suits our experience.

You can hold then as certain, through my discourse, that what is commonly transmitted, I think, about anxiety - not extracted from Freud's discourse but from a part of his discourse, that anxiety has no object - is properly what I am correcting: "it is not without an object, elle n'est pas sans objet", such is exactly the formula on which there ought to be suspended this relationship of anxiety to an object.

It is not properly speaking the object of anxiety, in this "not without (pas sans)", you recognise the formula that I already used in the past about the relationship of the subject to the phallus, "he is not without having it, il n'est pas sans l'avoir".

This relationship of "not being without having" does not mean that one knows what object is involved. When I say "he is not without resources, he is not without guile" that means precisely

that these resources are obscure - at least for me - and that his guile is not of the usual sort.

Moreover even the linguistic introduction of the term sans, sine, which is profoundly correlative to this apposition of haud, non haud sine, not without, is a certain type of conditional liaison, if you wish, which links being to having in a sort of alternation; he is not without having it; but besides, where it is, it is not seen.

Do we not have here precisely, the sociological function of the phallus, provided, of course, that we take it here at the level of the capital letter, at the level of the ^>, in which it incarnates the most alienating function of the subject in (7) exchange itself, in social exchange. The subject as he is involved in it, is reduced to being the bearer of the phallus. This is what makes castration necessary for a socialised society in which there are, as Claud Lévi-Strauss has pointed out to us, prohibitions of course, but also and above all preferences.

This is the true secret, it is the truth of what Claud Lévi-Strauss makes turn around the exchange of women in the structure. Beneath the exchange of women, the phalluses are going to fulfill them. It must not be seen that it is the phallus itself which is at stake. If one sees it, there is anxiety.

I could here branch off onto more than one track. It is clear that with this reference, we have arrived, all of a sudden, at the castration complex. Well then, by God, why not engage ourselves ourselves in it.

Castration, as I have frequently reminded you, the castration of the complex, is not a castration. That is something everyone knows, no-one has the slightest doubt about it, and, a curious thing, people do not dwell on it. It is all the same of interest, this image, this phantasy. Where is it to be situated? Between the imaginary and the symbolic, what is happening? Is it the gelding which is well known from the ferocious practices of war? It is undoubtedly closer to it than to the fabrication of eunuchs.

The mutilation of the penis, of course, is what is evoked by the phantastical threats emanating from the father or from the mother, depending on the epoch of psychoanalysis. "If you do that, it will be cut off you". Moreover it is necessary that this accent of cutting should be given all its importance for there to be sustained the practice of circumcision to which the last time, you heard me make what I might call prophylactic references, namely the remark that the psychic incidence of circumcision is far from being unequivocal, and that I am not the only one to have noted it.

One of the last works, a remarkable one no doubt, on the subject, that of Nunberg, on circumcision conceived in terms of its relations with bisexuality, is there to remind us of something which already a good number of other authors had introduced

before him, that circumcision has just as much the goal, the aim, (8) of reinforcing, by isolating it, the term of masculinity in the man as to provoke the effects, at least in their anxiety-provoking incidence, as to provoke the effects described as those of the castration complex.

Nevertheless, it is precisely this incidence, this relationship, this common denominator of the cut which allows us to bring into the field of castration, the operation of circumcision, of Beschneidung, of arel to say it in Hebrew.

Is there not also here a little something which might allow us to take a further step about the function of castration anxiety. Well then, it is the following, the term which we lack: "I am going to cut it off you", says the Mammy who is described as castrating. Fine, and afterwards, where will the Wiwimacher, as it is called in the observation of little Hans, be? Well then, if we admit that this threat, always presentified by our experience, is carried out, it will be there, in the operational field of the common object, of the exchangeable object, it will be there, in the hands of the mother who has cut it off. And it is indeed this that would be strange in the situation.

It often happens that our subjects have dreams where they have the object in their hands, either because it has been broken off by a gangrene, or because some partner, in the dream, has taken the trouble to carry out the cutting operation, or by some correlative accident or other that is diversely nuanced with uncanniness and anxiety, a particularly disturbing characteristic of the dream, well then, here, to situate for us the importance of this passage of the object, suddenly, to what one could call Zuhandenheit, as Heidegger would say, its handiness, in the field of common objects and the perplexity which results from it, and moreover, this whole passage to the side of the handy, of the utensil, is precisely that which here in the observation of little Hans, is designated for us also by a dream. He introduces the tap fitter, the one who is going to unscrew it, to rescrew it, change the whole discussion of Eingewurzelt, about what is or is not well rooted in the body, into the field, into the register of the interchangeable. And this moment, this phenomenological turning point, here connects up, and allows us to designate the opposition between these two types of object according to their (9) status. When I began to announce the function, the fundamental function in the general establishment of the field of the object, of the mirror stage, what path did I take? Along the plane of the primary identification, the original miscognition of the subject as a whole in his specular image, then the transitivist reference which is established in his relationship with the imaginary other, his fellow, which makes him always badly separated out from this identity with the other and introduces here mediation, a common object which is an object of rivalry, an object, then, whose status is going to begin from the notion of belonging or not: it belongs to you or it belongs to me. In this field, there are two sorts of objects, the ones that can be shared, and those which cannot be. Those which cannot be, when I see them involved all the same in this domain of sharing,

with the other objects, whose status rests entirely on rivalry, this ambiguous rivalry which is at the same time emulation but also agreement, they are priceable objects, they are objects of exchange. But there are some of them, and if I put the phallus in the forefront, it is of course because it is the most illustrious because of the fact of castration; but there are others, as you know, others which you know, the best-known equivalents of this phallus, those which precede it, the turd, the nipple, there are those perhaps which you know less well, even though they are perfectly visible in analytic literature, and we will try to designate these objects when they enter with recognisable freedom into this field where they have only to do, the field of sharing. When they appear, anxiety signals for us the particularity of their status. These objects prior to the constitution of the status of the common object, of the communicable object, of the socialised object, this is what is involved in the o.

We will name these objects, we will draw up a catalogue of them, which is not of course exhaustive, but perhaps also, let us hope so: already just now, I have named three, I would say that as a first approach to this catalogue, there are only two missing and that the totality corresponds to the five forms of loss, of perte, Verlust, that Freud designates in Inhibitions, symptoms (10) and anxiety, as being the major moments of the apparition of the signal.

I want, before going any further, to take up another branch of the switch-line which you saw me a little earlier in the process of choosing, to make a remark, whose asides, I believe, will have for you some illuminating aspects. Is it not strange, significant of something, that in analytic research, there is manifested a quite different lack to the one I already designated in saying that we have not taken a single step in the physiological question of feminine sexuality.

We could accuse ourselves of the same failure as regards male impotence. Because after all, in the process, clearly locatable in its normative phases, of the masculine side of copulation, we are still at the stage of referring ourselves to what can be found in any book of physiology about the process of erection first, then of orgasm.

The reference to the stimulus-response circuit is, when all is said and done, what we satisfy ourselves with, as if the homology between orgasmic discharge and the motor part of this circuit in any kind of action were acceptable. Of course, we are not at that stage, far from it. Even in Freud - and the problem was in fact raised by him - why in sexual pleasure is the circuit not as elsewhere the shortest circuit to return to the level of minimal excitation, why is there a Vorlust, a fore-pleasure, as it is translated, which consists precisely in raising as high as possible this minimal level?

And the intervention of orgasm, namely from what moment is this raising of the level linked as a norm to the preliminary

operation interrupted? Have we in any way given a schema of what intervenes, of the mechanism, if you wish, given a physiological representation of the spoken thing, of what Freud would call the Abfuhrinnervationen, the circuit of innervation which is the support of the bringing into play of the discharge? Have we distinguished it, isolated it, designated it, because it must be (11) considered as distinct from what functioned before, because what was functioning before, was precisely that this process should not go towards its discharge before reaching a certain level of the raising of the stimulus? It is then an exercise of the pleasure function tending to get close to its own limit, namely to the arousal of pain.

So where does this feedback come from? No one dreams of telling us. But I would point out to you, that not I, but the very people who, psychoanalytic doctrine tells us, should tell us normally that the Other must intervene here, because what constitutes a normal genital function is presented to us as linked to oblativity. Let us be told then how the function of giving as such intervenes hic et nunc when one is fucking!

This, in any case, has indeed its interest; for either it is valid, or it is not; and it is certain that in some way there must intervene the function of the Other.

In any case, since an important part of our speculations concern what is called the choice of the love object, and since it is in the disturbances of this love life that there lies an important part of analytic experience, since in this field the reference to the primordial object, to the mother, is held to be capital, a distinction is imposed as to where one should locate this frequent incidence of the fact that for some people the result is that they cannot function as regards orgasm except with prostitutes, and that for others it is only with other subjects chosen in a different register.

As we know from our analyses - the relationship to the prostitute is almost directly meshed into the reference to the mother. In other cases, the deteriorations, degradations of Liebesleben, of the love life, are linked to the opposition between the maternal body which evokes a certain type of relationship to the subject, and the woman of a certain different type in so far as she becomes the support, is equivalent to the phallic object.

How does all of this come about? This picture, this schema (pi), the one that I have once more reproduced here on the upper part of the board allows us to designate what I mean. Is the mechanism, the articulation produced at the level of the (12) attraction of the object, which becomes or not invested for us with this glamour, with this desirable brilliance, with this colour - this is how sexuality is designated in Chinese - which means that the object becomes stimulating precisely at the level of excitation?

This is why this preferential colour will be situated, I would say, at the same level of signal which can also be that of

anxiety, I am saying then at this level here i'(o). So then it will be a matter of knowing why, and I am indicating it immediately so that you can see where I want to get to: by the branching off of the original erogenous cathexis from what is here qua o present and hidden at the same time.

Or that which functions as a sorting element in the choice of love object is produced here at the level of the framing by an Einschränkung, by this narrowing directly referred by Freud to the mechanism of the ego, by this limitation of the field of interest which excludes a certain type of object precisely in function of its relationship with the mother.

The two mechanisms are, as you see, at the two ends of this chain, which begins at inhibition and which finishes with anxiety whose diagonal line I marked out in the table that I gave you at the beginning of this year. We have a right to distinguish two different mechanisms in inhibition and anxiety and precisely to conceive of how both one and the other can intervene from top to bottom of every sexual manifestation.

I add the following that, when I say from top to bottom, I am including in it what in our experience is called transference. Recently I heard an allusion being made to the fact that we in our Society are people who know a good deal about transference. To tell the truth, since a certain work on transference which was done before our Society was founded, I know only one other work which has been evoked, namely that of the year that I devoted to it with you here.

I said a lot of things, certainly in a form which was the most appropriate one, namely in a form that was partly veiled. It is certain that previously in the earlier work on transference to (13) which I have just alluded and which contributed a division as brilliant as that of the opposition between the need for repetition and the repetition of need (the work of Lagache), you see that having recourse to a play on words to designate things - which moreover are not without their interest - is not simply my privilege. But I think that the reference to transference, to limit it uniquely to the effects of repetition, to the effects of reproduction, is something that would altogether deserve to be extended, and that the synchronic dimension risks, through insisting on the historical element, on the element of the repetition of lived experience, risks in any case, risks leaving to one side a whole no less important dimension which is precisely what can appear, what is included, latent in the position of the analyst, through which there lies in the space that he determines, the function of this partial object.

This is what, in speaking to you about transference, if you remember, I designated by the metaphor, which is clear enough it seems to me, of the hand which stretches out towards the log and at the moment of reaching this log, this log bursts into flames, and in the flames another hand appears which stretches out towards the first one.

This is what I also designated, in studying Plato's Symposium, by the function named agalma in the discourse of Alcibiades.

I think that the inadequacy of the synchronic reference to the function of the partial object in the analytic relationship, in the transference relationship, establishes the basis for opening a dossier concerning a domain which I am and am not astonished, not surprised in any case, to see left in the shade, namely that a certain number of failures in the sexual function can be considered as distributed in a certain field of what we can call post-analytic results.

I believe that this analysis of the function of the analyst as the space of the field of the partial object, is precisely *that* before which, from the analytic point of view, Freud brought us to a halt in his article on "Analysis terminable and interminable", and if one starts from the idea that Freud's limit, was - one finds it right through all his observations - (14) the non-perception of what is properly to be analysed in the synchronic relationship between the analysand and the analyst concerning this function of the partial object, one will see there - and if you wish, I will come back to it - the very source of his failure - of the failure of his intervention with Dora, with the woman in the case of feminine homosexuality, one will see in it especially why Freud designates for us in castration anxiety what he calls the limit of analysis, precisely in the measure that he remained for his analysand the seat, the locus of this partial object.

If Freud tells us that analysis leaves man and woman unsatisfied, the one in the field of what is properly called in the case of the male the castration complex and the other about Penisneid, this is not an absolute limit, it is the limit where finite analysis ends with Freud, it is the limit which continues to follow this indefinitely approached parallelism which characterises the asymptote. The analysis which Freud calls indefinite, unlimited (and not infinite) analysis, occurs in the measure that something about which I can at least pose the question as to how it is analysable, had been not, I would say, unanalysed, but revealed only in a partial fashion where this limit is established.

You must not believe that I am saying here, that I am contributing here something again which ought to be considered as completely outside the limits of the blueprint already sketched out by our experience, because after all, to refer to recent and familiar works in the French domain of our work, it is around penis envy, that one analyst made his analysis of obsessionals in particular turn, through the years that made up the time of his writing. How often in the course of previous years have I commented on these observations for you in order to criticise them, to show in them, with what we had at that time to hand, what I considered as their stumbling point. I would formulate here, in a more precise fashion, at the point of explanation that we are getting to, what is involved, what I meant. What was involved - you see it from a detailed reading of these

(15) observations - what was involved if not the filling of this field which I designate as the interpretation to be made of the phallic function at the level of the big Other whose place is held by the analyst and the covering, I would say, of this place with the phantasy of fellatio, and especially concerning the analyst's penis.

A very clear indication. The problem had been seen and let me tell you that it is not by chance, I mean by chance with respect to what I am in the process of developing before you. Only my remark is that here there is only an angle, and an inadequate angle: for, in reality, this phantasy used for an analysis which could not here exhaust what was involved, only rejoins a phantasy symptomatic of the obsessional.

And to designate what I mean, I would go back here to a reference which, in the literature, is really exemplary, namely the well known nocturnal behavior of the Ratman when, having obtained by himself, his own erection in front of a mirror, he goes and opens the door to the landing, to his landing, to the imagined ghost of his dead father, to present, before the eyes of this spectre, the present state of his member.

To analyse what is involved then uniquely then at the level of this phantasy of the fellatio of the analyst so linked by the author in question to what he called the technique of rapprocher (getting closer) to the relationship of distance considered as essential, fundamental to the obsessional structure, specifically in its relationships with psychosis, is, I believe, simply to have allowed the subject, indeed even to have encouraged her to take on this phantastical reaction, which is that of the Ratman, to take on the role of this Other in the mode of presence which is precisely here constituted by death, of this other who looks, by pushing her even, I would say, a little further phantastically simply by the fellatio.

It is obvious that this final point, this final term is only addressed here to those whose practice allows them to put the import of these remarks in their proper place.

(16) I will end on the path on which we will advance further the next time, and to give their meaning to these two images which I have designated for you here in the right corner at the bottom of the board: the first represents a - this is not seen, in fact, at first sight - represents a vase, and its neck. I put the hole of this neck facing you to designate, to clearly stress for you that what is important for me is the edge.

The second is the transformation which can be carried out as regards this neck and this edge. Starting from there, there is going to appear to you the opportuneness of the long insistence that I placed last year on topological considerations concerning the function of identification - I specified it for you - at the level of desire, namely the third type designated by Freud, in his article on identification, the one whose major example



he finds in hysteria.

Here is the incidence and the import of these topological considerations. I told you that I kept you so long on the cross-cap to give you the possibility of intuitively conceiving what must be called the distinction between the object we are speaking about, o , and the object created, constructed starting from the specular relationship, the common object precisely concerning the specular image.

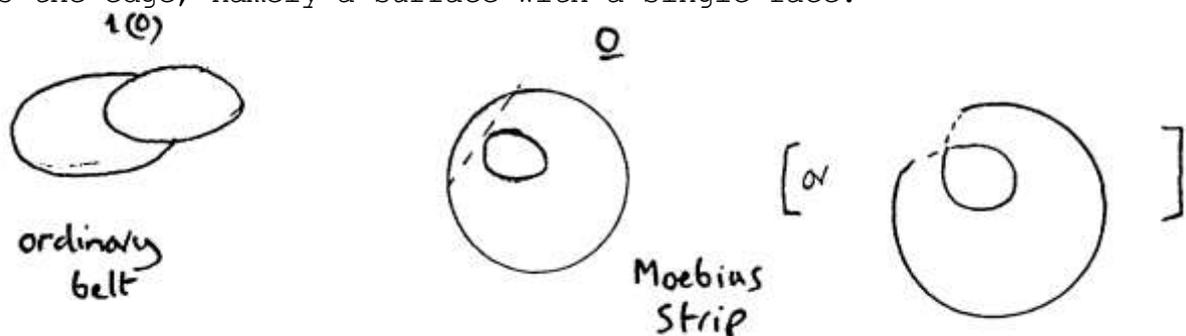
To go quickly, I am going, I think, to remind you of it, in terms which are simple but adequate given the amount of work accomplished previously.

What ensures that a specular image is distinct from that which it represents? It is that the right becomes the left and inversely.

In other words, if we trust this idea - we usually have our reward when we trust even the most aphoristic things in Freud - that the ego is a surface, it is in topological terms of pure surface that the problem ought to be posed: the specular image, with respect to what it duplicates, is exactly the passage from the right-hand glove to the left-hand glove, what one can obtain on a simple surface by turning the glove inside out.

Remember that it was not today or yesterday that I spoke to you about the glove or the hood. The whole dream quoted by Ella (17) Sharpe turns for the most part around this model.

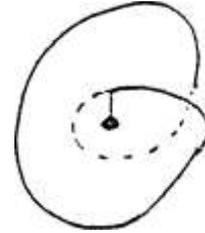
Try the experiment now with what I taught you to know - I hope there are not many who do not know it yet - about the Moebius strip, namely - I recall it for those who have not yet heard tell of it - you obtain very easily in any way whatsoever, by taking this belt, and after having opened it, fasten it again having given it meanwhile a half turn, you obtain a Moebius strip, namely something on which an ant walking along passes from one of these apparent faces to the other face, without needing to pass across the edge, namely a surface with a single face.



A surface with a single face cannot be turned inside out. For effectively you take a Moebius strip; you make it; you see that there are two ways to make it, depending on whether one turns, one makes the half turn that I spoke about above to the right or to the left and that they do not overlap. But if you turn one of them inside out it will always be identical to itself. This is what I call not having a specular image.

You know on the other hand that I told you that in the cross-cap, when, by means of a section, a cut, which has no other condition than that of rejoining itself, after having included in it the hole-point of the cross-cap, when, I am saying, you isolate a part of the cross-cap, it remains a Moebius strip.

Here is the residual part. I constructed it for you, I am passing it around. It has its interest because, let me tell you: this is o . I give it to you like a host, for you will make use of it subsequently. That is how o is made.



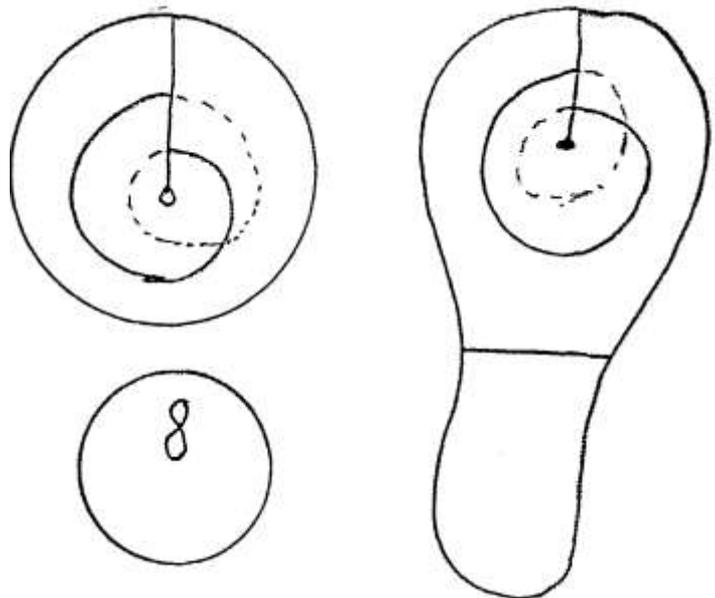
It is made like that when any cut whatsoever has occurred, whether it is that of the cord, that of circumcision, and some (18) others still which we will have to designate.

There remains, after this cut whatever it may be, something comparable to the Moebius strip, something which does not have a specular image. Now then consider carefully what I want to tell you.

The first phase, the vase which is here has its specular image, the ideal ego, constitutive of the world of the common object.

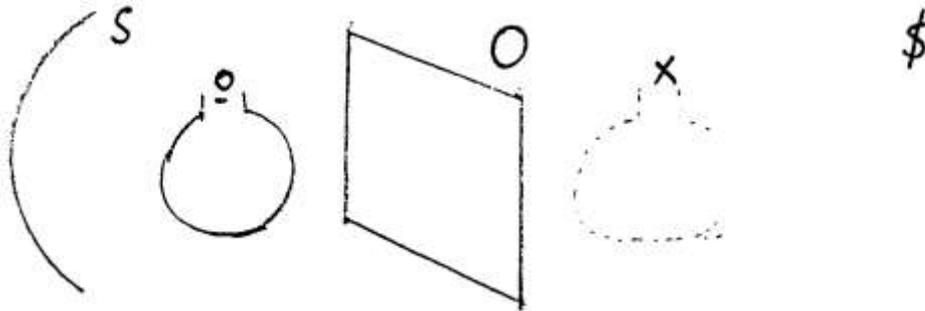
Add to it o in the form of a cross-cap, and separate out in this cross-cap the little object o that I have placed in your hands. There remains, united to $i'(o)$, the remainder, namely a Moebius strip, in other words - I am representing it for you here - it is the same thing as if you make there begin, from the opposite point of the edge of the vase, a surface which connects up with itself, as in the Moebius strip.

Because from that moment, the whole vase becomes a Moebius strip, because an ant walking along the outside enters the inside without any difficulty. The specular image becomes the strange and invasive image of the double, becomes that which happens little by little at the end of the life of Maupassant when he begins by no longer seeing himself in the mirror, or when he perceives in a room something which turns its back on him and regarding which he immediately knows that he is not without some relationship to this ghost, when the ghost turns back, he sees that it is himself.



This is what is involved in the entry of o into the world of the real, which it is only returning to. And notice, to end, what is involved. It may seem strange, bizarre to you as a hypothesis,

that something resembles this. Notice however that if we put it outside the operation of the visual field, behave like a blind man, close your eyes for a moment, and feeling your way, follow the edge of this transformed vase. But it is a vase like the other, there is only one hole because there is only one edge. it appears to have two of them. And this ambiguity between the one and the two, I think that those who have simply read a little know that it is a common ambiguity concerning the apparition of the phallus in the field of dream appearance - and not only dreams - of the sexual organ where there apparently is no real phallus. Its ordinary mode of apparition is to appear in the form of two phalluses. There, that's enough for today!



I would like to manage to tell you today a certain number of things about what I have taught you to designate as the object o, this object o towards which the aphorism that I put forward the last time about anxiety orients us, namely that it is not without an object. This is why the object o comes this year into the centre of our remarks. And if effectively it is inscribed in the frame of this anxiety that I took as a title, it is precisely for the reason that it is essentially from this angle that it is possible to speak about it, which means again that anxiety is its only subjective expression.

If the o which we are dealing with here was all the same introduced a long time ago and along the path which brings it to you, was therefore announced elsewhere, it was announced in the formula of the phantasy \$ « o, desire of o, this is the formula of the phantasy qua support for desire.

My first point will be then to recall, to articulate, to add one more specification certainly for those who have heard me, one not impossible for them to master by themselves, even though it does not seem superfluous to me to underline it today. As a first point - I hope to reach point four - and to specify this function of the object in so far as we define it analytically as object of desire, the mirage coming from a perspective that one could call subjectivist, I mean the one which in the constitution of our experience puts the whole accent on the structure of the subject, this line of elaboration that the modern philosophical tradition brought to its most extreme point, let us say, around Husserl, by separating out the function of intentionality, is one that makes us the captives of a misunderstanding, concerning what can be called the object of desire. The object of desire cannot be conceived of in a fashion which teaches us that there is no noeme, no thinking about something which is not turned towards something, the only point around which idealism can turn in its path towards the Real.

(2) Is this how things are as regards desire? For this level of our listening which exists in everyone and which has need of intuition, I would say: "Is the object of desire out in front? This is the mirage that is involved and which has sterilised everything that in analysis intended to advance in the direction described as object relations. It is in order to rectify it that I have already travelled along many paths. It is a new way of accentuating this rectification that I am going to put forward to you now.

I will not make it as developed as it no doubt should be, reserving, I hope, this formulation for a work which will reach you along a different path.

I think that for most of you listening it will be enough to hear the gross formulae with which I believe I can content myself to emphasise today this point which I have just introduced.

You know how, in the progress of epistemology, the isolation of the notion of cause has produced considerable difficulties. It is not without a series of reductions which end up by leading it to the most tenuous and the most equivocal function that the notion of cause was able to be maintained in the development of what in the largest sense we could call our physics.

It is clear on the other hand that whatever reduction one submits it to, what one might call the mental function of this notion cannot be eliminated, reduced to a sort of metaphysical shadow. We clearly sense that there is something, which it is too little to say that is a recourse to intuition, which makes it subsist, which remains around this function of cause, and I claim that it is starting from the re-examination that we can make of it, starting from analytic experience, that the whole Critique of pure reason, brought up to date with our science, could re-establish a correct status of cause.

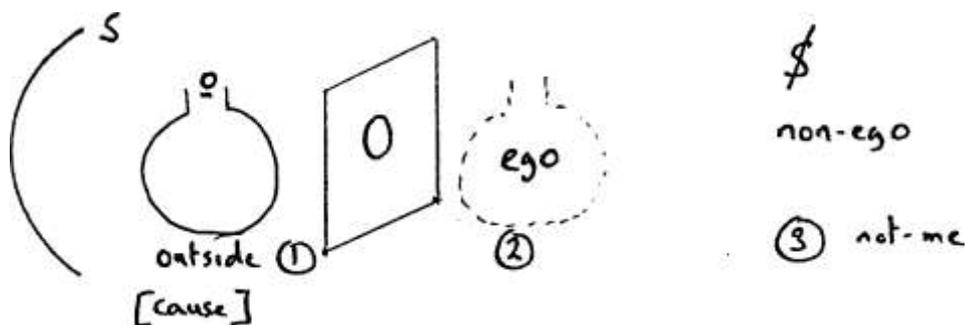
I scarcely dare to say to introduce it - for after all what I am going to formulate is here only a discourse event and scarcely anchored in this dialectic - I would say then, to fix our aims, what I intend to make you understand. The object, the object o, this object which is not to be situated in anything whatsoever which is analogous to the intentionality of an noeme, which is not in the intentionality of desire, this object ought to be conceived by us as the cause of desire, and, to take up my (3) metaphor of a little while ago, the object is behind desire.

It is from this object o that there arises this dimension whose omission, whose elision, whose avoidance in the theory of the subject constituted the inadequacy up to the present of this whole coordination whose centre manifests itself as a theory of knowledge, gnoseology.

Moreover this function of the object, in the novel structural topology that it requires, is quite tangible in Freud's formulations, and specifically in those concerning the drive.

Let it suffice for me to - if you want to check it against a text, I would refer you to the XXXIInd lecture from the Introduction to psychoanalysis, which can be found in what is called the new series of Vorlesungen, the one I quoted the last time - it is clear that the distinction between Ziel, the goal of the drive and the Objekt is something quite different to what you first think, that this goal and this object should be at the same place. And the statements of Freud that you will find in this place, in the lecture that I am designating for you, employ very striking terms, the first of which is the term eingeschoben: the object slides in it, goes somewhere - it is the same word which is used for the Verschiebung which designates displacement - the object in its essential function as the something which slips away is here highlighted as such, at the level of understanding which is properly our own.

On the other hand, there is, at this level the explicit opposition between two terms äusseres, external, outside, and inneres, inside. It is specified that the object is no doubt to be situated äusseres, on the outside, and on the other hand that the satisfaction of the tendency is only found to be accomplished in so far as it connects up with something which is to be considered in the inneres, the inside of the body, it is there that it finds its Befriedigung, its satisfaction. This also tells you that what I introduced for you as a topological function allows us to formulate in a clear fashion that what has to be introduced here to resolve this impasse, this riddle, is the notion of an outside before a certain interiorisation, of the outside which is situated here, o, before the subject at the locus of the Other, grasps himself in x in this specular form which introduces for him the distinction between the me and the (4) not-me.



It is to this outside, to this locus of the object before any interiorisation, that there belongs - if you try to take up again the notion of cause - that this notion of cause, I am saying, belongs.

I am going to illustrate it immediately in the simplest fashion to make you hear what I am saying; because moreover I will abstain today from doing any metaphysics.

In order to image it, it is not by chance that I will make use of the fetish as such, where there is unveiled this dimension of the object as cause of desire. Because it is not the slipper, or the

breast, nor whatever it may be in which you incarnate the fetish that is desired; but the fetish as cause of desire which hooks onto whatever it can, onto someone who is not absolutely necessarily the one who is wearing the slipper; the slipper can be in her surroundings; it is not even necessary that she should have the breast: the breast can be in the head. But what everyone knows, is that, for the fetishist, it is necessary that the fetish should be there, that it is the condition upon which desire sustains itself.

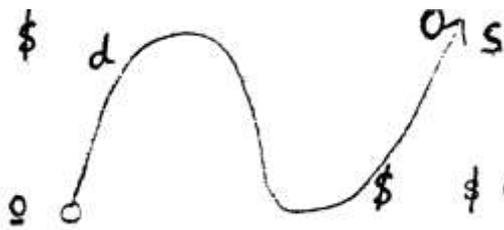
And I would indicate here, in passing, this term, little used I believe in German and that the vague translations that we have in French, allow to escape completely; it is, when anxiety is involved, the relationship that Freud indicates with Libidoaushalt. We are dealing here with a term which is between Aushaltung which would indicate something of the order of interruption, of breaking and Inhalt which is the content. It is neither one thing nor the other: it is the support of the libido. In a word, this relationship to the object that I am speaking about to you today, is here directed, indicated in a fashion which allows a synthesis to be made between the signal function of anxiety and its relationship all the same to something that we can call an interruption in the support of the libido.

We are going to come back to it because this is one of the points that I intend to advance before you today. Assuming that I have made myself adequately understood by this reference to the fetish, about the maximal difference that there is between two possible perspectives concerning the object as object of desire, two specifications of what is involved, when I put o first in an essential precession, I will illustrate it a little further. Everything that follows in our discourse will not stop (5) illustrating it further, but already I want you to understand properly what is involved, where our research will lead us: the fact is that it is at the very locus where your mental habits indicate that you should seek for the subject, this something which despite you is outlined as such as subject at the place where for example Freud indicates the source of the tendency, indeed there where there is something which, in discourse, you articulate as being you, there where you say: "I", it is there properly speaking that at the level of the unconscious there is situated o.

At this level, you are o, the object, and everyone knows that this is what is intolerable and not only to discourse itself, which after all betrays it. I am going to illustrate it right away by a remark destined to introduce some displacement, some disturbance even, as regards the ruts in which you are used to leaving the functions described as sadism and masochism as if all that was involved there was the register of a sort of immanent aggression and its reversibility.

It is precisely in the measure that one has to enter into their subjective structure that traits of difference are going to appear, the essential being the one that I am going to designate

now. If sadism can be imaged, in a form which is only an abbreviated schema of the same distinctions that the graph organises, in a formula with four vertices of the kind that I am designating here, we have here the side of O, of the Other, and here that of let us say, of the subject S, of this still



unconstituted I of this subject precisely to be questioned, to be revised within our experience, of which we only know that it cannot, in any case, coincide with the traditional formula of the subject, namely the degree of exhaustion there can be in every relationship with the object.

[0 = 3εα0]

If there is something there called sadistic desire, with all the enigma it involves, it is only articulatable, it is only formulatable in so far as this schize, this dissociation, that it aims essentially at introducing in the other, by imposing on him, up to a certain limit, that which cannot be tolerated, at the exactly adequate limit where there manifests itself, where there appears in the other this division, this gap there is between his (6) existence as subject and what he undergoes, what he can suffer in his body.

And to such a degree is it this distinction, this division, this gap as essential that is involved and a matter of questioning, that in fact it is not so much the suffering of the other that is sought in the sadistic intention, as his anxiety - precisely here I articulate, I designate, I note this little sign, **f 8**, which in the first formulae that I believe in my second lecture of this year, I introduced concerning anxiety, I taught you to read by the term not 0, 1 told you, but zero - the anxiety of the other, his essential existence as subject with respect to this anxiety, this is what the sadistic desire wants to make vibrate.

And it is for this reason that, in one of my past seminars, I did not hesitate to relate its structure as properly homologous to what Kant articulated as a condition for the exercise of pure practical reason, of a moral will properly speaking, and, in a word, to situate there the only point where there can be manifested a relationship with a pure moral good.

I apologise for the briefness of this reminder. Those who were present at this rapprochement will remember it; those who were not able to attend will see, I think, appearing in the not too distant future what I took up of it again in a preface to Philosophy in the boudoir which was precisely the text around which I had organised this comparison.

What is important today and the only thing I want to add another touch to, is that what characterises the sadistic desire is properly that he does not know that in the accomplishment of his act, of his ritual - because it involves properly speaking this type of human action in which we find all the structures of ritual - what he does not know, is what he is looking for, and what he is looking for, is properly speaking to realise himself,

to make himself appear, to whom - since, in any case, this revelation can only remain obscure to himself - to make himself appear as pure object, black fetish. This is how there can be resumed, in its final term, the manifestation of sadistic desire, in so far as the one who is its agent goes towards such a realisation.

(7) Moreover, if you evoke what is involved in the figure of Sade, you will see then that it is not by chance if, what can be extracted from it, what remains of it, through a sort of transubstantiation through the ages, with the imaginary elaboration of his figure throughout the generations, is a form - Man Ray could do no better when he tried to construct his imaginary portrait - precisely a petrified form. Quite different is, as you know, the position of the masochist for whom this incarnation of himself as object is the declared goal, whether he turns himself into a dog under the table or a piece of merchandise, an item that is treated in a contract by giving it over, by selling it as one among other objects that are on the market, in short, his identification with this other object which I called the common object, the object of exchange, this is the route, this is the path on which he seeks precisely what is impossible, which is to grasp himself for what he is, in so far as like all of us he is an o. .

To know why he is so interested by this recognition, which all the same remains impossible, is of course what many particular conditions of his analysis could reveal. But before even being able to understand these particular conditions, there are certain conjunctions which must be properly established here and which are the most structural ones. This is what we are going to try-to do now.

You should clearly understand that I have not said, without elaboration, that the masochist attains his identification with the object. As for the sadist this identification only appears on the stage. Only, even on this stage, the sadist does not see himself, he only sees the remainder. There is also something that the masochist does not see - we will see what perhaps a little later - but this allows me to introduce right away some formulae the first of which is the following: that to recognise oneself as the object of one's desire, in the sense that I am articulating it today, is always masochistic. This formula has the interest of making the difficulty tangible for you, because it is all too convenient to use our little Punch and to say that if there is masochism, it is because the super-ego is very wicked, for example. We know of course that within masochism we make all the necessary distinctions: erogenous masochism, feminine masochism, moral masochism. But as the simple enunciation of this classification has pretty much the same effect as what I would say if I were to say: "There is this glass, there is the Christian faith, and there is the collapse of (8) Wall Street". This should all the same leave us a little dissatisfied. If the term masochism can have a meaning, it would be well to find a more unitary formula for it and if we were to

say that the super-ego is the cause of masochism, we would not be abandoning too much this satisfying intuition, except for the fact that, since we have said before that the object is the cause of desire, we would see that the super-ego shares, at least that it shares the function of this object qua cause, as I have introduced it today in order to make you sense how true it is. I could include it in the catalogue, in the series of these objects as we will have to deploy them before you, by illustrating this place with all the contents, if you wish, that it can have and which are numerable. If I did not do it at the beginning, it was so that you would not lose your heads, by seeing them as contents, and think that they are the same thing that you always discover about analysis. For it is not true. If you think you know the function of the maternal breast, or that of the turd, you know well how much obscurity remains in your minds about the phallus, and when it is the object which comes immediately after that is concerned. I will give it to you all the same, as a way of giving your curiosity something to feed on, namely the eye as such, about it you know nothing at all. This is why it should only be approached with prudence, and for the best of reasons. This is the object involved since, when all is said and done, it is the object without which there is no anxiety, it is because it is a dangerous object. Let us be prudent therefore since I lack, that is to say in the immediate, the opportunity of making appear in what sense I said it - this caught the ear of one of my listeners - I said, two lectures ago, that if desire and the law were the same thing, it is in so far and in this sense that desire and the law have a common object.

It is not enough then in this case to give oneself the consolation that they are, with respect to one another, like the two sides of the wall, or like the front and the back. This is to cheapen the difficulty and, to go straight to the point which makes you sense it, I would say that it is not for any other reason than to make you sense it, that there is value in the (9) central myth which allowed psychoanalysis to take off, namely the Oedipus myth.

The Oedipus myth means nothing else, if not that, at the origin, desire, the desire of the father and the law are one and the same thing, and that the relationship between the law and desire is so close that nothing but the function of the law traces the path of desire, that desire, qua desire of the mother, for the mother, is identical to the function of the law. It is in so far as the law prohibits her that it imposes desiring her: for after all the mother is not in herself the most desirable object. If everything is organised around this desire for the mother, if it is starting from there that it is posed that the woman one should prefer - for this is what is in question - should be other than the mother, what does that mean, if not that a commandment is imposed, is introduced into the very structure of desire; that in a word one desires according to the commandment. What does the whole myth of Oedipus mean, if not that the desire of the father is what has made the law.

From this perspective masochism takes on the value and function of appearing and clearly appearing - it is its only value for the masochist - when desire and the law are found together; for what the masochist tries to make appear - and I add, on his little stage, for one must never forget this dimension - is something where the desire of the Other lays down the law.

We see immediately one of its effects: it is that the masochist himself appears in this function that I would call lopsided (dejet) with respect to this object of ours, the o of which we speak under the appearance of waste (dejetete), of what is thrown to the dogs, on the rubbish heap, in the dustbin, to the rejection of the common object, for want of being able to put it elsewhere.

It is one of the aspects in which there can appear the o as it shows itself in perversion. And this does not exhaust in any way what we can only circumscribe by going around it, namely the function of o. But since I have taken this perspective of masochism, since I have introduced it, we must give ourselves other points of reference to situate this function of o. You see one of them at the level of masochism. I remind you that one must first take for its function of gross correlation, that the central effect of this identity which conjoins the desire of the (10) father and the law, is the castration complex in so far as when the law is born by this moulting, this mysterious mutation of the desire of the father after he had been killed, the consequence is, just as much in the history of analytic thought as in everything that we can conceive of as the most certain liaison, is in any case the castration complex.

This is why you have already seen appearing in my schemas the notation (-<J>) at the place where o is missing.

Therefore, a first point today: I spoke to you about the object as cause of desire. Second point, I told you: to recognise oneself as the object of one's desire, is always masochistic; I pointed out to you in this connection what was taking shape for us as a presentation - in a certain incidence of the super-ego, I indicated to you a particularity that is in some way depreciated - of what is happening at the place of this object o in the form of (-\$>).

We come to our third point, the one which concerns precisely this possibility of the manifestations of the object o as lack. It is structural to it. And it is in order to make it conceivable that this schema, this image designed to make it familiar to you has been presentified and recalled to you for some time past.

The object o at the level of our analytic subject, of the source of what subsists as body which in part, for us hides from us as I might say its own will, this object o is this rock of which Freud speaks, this final irreducible reserve of libido whose contours it is so pathetic to see him literally punctuating in these texts every time that he encounters it. I will not end my lecture

today without telling you where you should go to renew this conviction. This little o, at the place where it is, at the level where it could be recognised if it were possible - because of course a little earlier I told you that to recognise oneself as object of one's desire is always masochistic - if it were possible, the masochist only does it on the stage. And you are going to see what happens when he can no longer remain there, on the stage. We are not always on the stage, even though the stage stretches very far, and even into the domain of our dreams. And qua not on the stage and remaining on this side of it, and trying (11) to read in the Other what he returns from, we find nothing but the lack here at X (schema).

It is this liaison, coordination between the object and its necessary lack there where the subject is constituted at the locus of the Other, namely as far as possible, beyond even what can appear in the return of the repressed and constituting the Urverdrangung, the irreducible of the incognito, because moreover we cannot say absolutely unknowable because we are talking about it, it is here that there is structured, that there is situated what, in our analysis of the transference, I produced before you by the term agalma.

It is in so far as this empty place is aimed at as such that there is established the always more or less neglected - and for good reasons - dimension of transference. That this place as such can be circumscribed by something which is materialised in this image, a certain edge, a certain opening, a certain gap where the constitution of the specular image shows its limits, this is the elective locus of anxiety.



This phenomenon of edge, in what opens like this window on privileged occasions, marks the illusory limit of this world of recognition, of the one that I call the stage. That it should be linked to this edge, to this framing, to this gap which is illustrated in this schema at least twice, in this edge here of the mirror and moreover in this little sign, ^, that this is the locus of anxiety, is what you ought always to retain as the signal of what is to be sought for in the middle.

The text of Freud to which I would ask you to refer, for it is a text that is always more stupefying to read because of this double aspect of weaknesses, of inadequacies which always present themselves to novices at the beginning as the first things to be picked out in the text of Freud and of the depth with which everything that he comes up against - reveals the degree to which Freud was here around this very field that we are trying to designate, of course, it is necessary first of all for you to be familiar with the text of Dora - can, for those who heard my discourse on the Symposium, recall this dimension always eluded when transference is involved, and of the other dimension in parenthesis, namely that transference is not simply something that reproduces a situation, an action, an attitude, an old (12) trauma, and repeats it; the fact is that there is always another coordinate, the one on which I put the accent in

connection with the analytic intervention of Socrates, namely specifically in the case where I evoke a love present in the real, and that we can understand nothing about transference if we do not know that it is also the consequence of that love, that it is in connection with this present love - and analysts should remember it during analyses - of a love which is present in different ways, but that at least they should remember it, when it is there visible, that it is in function of what we could call this real love that there is established what is the central question of transference, namely the one the subject poses concerning the agalma, namely what he is lacking. For it is with this lack that he loves. It is not for nothing that for years I have been repeating to you that love is to give what one does not have. This is even the principle of the castration complex: in order to have the phallus, in order to be able to make use of it, it is necessary precisely not to be it.

When one returns to the conditions where it appears that one is it - for one is it just as much for a man, there is no doubt about it, and for a woman we will say again through what incidence she is led to become it - well then it is always very dangerous.

Let it suffice for me to ask you before leaving you to reread attentively this text entirely devoted to the relationships between Freud and his patient, this girl - I remind you - of whom he says that analysis makes there appear that it is essentially around an enigmatic disappointment concerning the birth in her family, the apparition in her household of a little child that she has been oriented towards homosexuality.

With an absolutely admirable touch of the science of analogy, Freud perceives what is involved in this demonstrative love of the young girl for a woman who has undoubtedly a suspect reputation, with regard to whom she behaves herself, Freud tells us, in an essentially virile fashion. And if one limits oneself to reading simply what is there, God knows, virility, we are so used to speaking about it without knowing that we do not see that what he intends to emphasise there, is what I tried to presentify before you in all sorts of ways in stressing that it is the function of what is called courtly love: she behaves like the (13) knight who suffers for his lady, is content with the most impoverished, the least substantial favours, who prefers even to only have those and who finally, the more the object of his love goes in the opposite direction to what one could call reward, the more he overestimates and raises this object to an eminent dignity.

When manifestly the whole public clamour cannot fail to impress on her that effectively the behaviour of her well-beloved is extremely doubtful, this dimension of exaltation only sees there being added to it the supplementary and reinforced aim of saving her. All of this is admirably underlined by Freud and you know how the girl in question had been brought to his consultation room: it is in the measure that one day, this liaison carried out

what is more really in defiance of the whole city, in a style whose relationship of provocation with respect to her family Freud perceived right away - and it appears very quickly and very certainly that it is her father - this liaison comes to an end because of an encounter. The young girl in the company of her beloved, we are told, passes, on the way to the office of the father in question, this father who throws an irritated glance at her; the scene then happens very quickly. The person for whom, no doubt, this adventure is only a rather obscure distraction and who is beginning obviously to have enough of it and who, no doubt, does not want to expose herself to great difficulties, tells the young girl that this has lasted long enough and that that is it for the future, that she should stop sending her, as she does everyday, countless flowers, following her everywhere she goes. And at this the girl immediately throws herself over a place as regards which you will remember at one time I explored minutely the maps of Vienna to allow its full meaning to be given to the case of little Hans, I would not go so far today as to tell you the place where something very probably can be found something comparable to what you still see over by Boulevard Pereire, namely a little ditch at the bottom of which there are the rails of a little railway which is not working anymore, this is where the girl throws herself, niederkommt, falls down.

There are many things to say about this niederkommen. If I am introducing it here, it is because it is an act of which it is not sufficient to mention, to recall, the analogy with the meaning of niederkommen in the event of giving to birth, to exhaust its (14) meaning. This neiderkommen is essential for every sudden relating of the subject with what he is as o.

It is not for nothing that the melancholic subject has such a propensity and one always accomplished with a blinding, disconcerting, rapidity for throwing himself through the window.

The window, in so far as it reminds us of this limit between the stage and the world, indicates to us what is meant by this act by which, in a way, the subject returns to this fundamental exclusion he feels himself to be in at the very moment that there is conjoined in the absolute of a subject, which we analysts alone can have an idea of, this conjunction between desire and the law.

This is properly what happens at the moment of the encounter between the couple, the knight of Lesbos and her Kareninian object, if I can express myself in this way, with the father. For it is not enough to say that the father threw an irritated glance to understand how there could have been produced this passage a l'acte. There is something which belongs there to the very basis of the relationship, to the structure; because what is involved? Let us say it briefly in terms that I believe sufficiently prepared for you to understand them: the girl for whom the attachment to the father and the disappointment because of the birth, of a young brother, if I remember rightly, this disappointment was the turning point of her life, is going then

to do what? Make of her castration as a woman what the knight does with respect to his lady, to whom precisely he offers the sacrifice of his virile prerogatives to make of her the support of what is linked in the relationship by an inversion to this sacrifice itself, namely the putting in place of the lack, precisely what is lacking to the field of the other, namely the supreme guarantee, the fact that the law is well and truly the desire of the father, that one is sure of it, that there is a law of the father, an absolute phallus,^ .

No doubt resentment and vengeance are decisive in the relationship between this girl and her father. That is what resentment and vengeance are: this law, this supreme phallus, here is where I put it. She is my lady, and since I cannot be your submissive woman, and I your object, I am the one who sustains, who creates, the idealised relationship to what is inadequate in myself, what was repulsed. Let us not forget that the girl had given up on, had let go the culture of her (15) narcissism, her toilet, her coquetry-/ her beauty, to become the servant knight of the lady.

It is in the measure that all of this is contained in this simple encounter and at the level of the father's look, for whom, nevertheless on this whole scene which had completely gained the assent of the subject, that this scene falls under the look of the father, that there is produced what we could call in referring ourselves to the first table that I gave you about the coordinates of anxiety this supreme embarrassment, that emotion - consult this table, you will see its exact coordinates - emotion is added to it by the sudden impossibility of facing up to the scene her friend had put before her; two essential conditions of what is properly speaking called passage a l'acte, (and here I am addressing myself to someone who asked me to anticipate a little on what I can say about this distinction from acting out, we^will have to come back to it), the two conditions of the passage a l'acte as such are realised. What comes at this moment to the subject, is her absolute identification to this o, to which she is reduced. Confrontation with this desire of the father upon which all her behaviour is constructed, with this law which is presentified in the look of the father, it is through this that she feels herself identified and at the same moment, rejected, ejected off the stage.

Only the "letting fall", the "letting oneself fall" can realise it. I do not have the time today to indicate to you the direction that this takes, namely that the celebrated notation by Freud of the identification to the object in mourning, as being something on which there is brought to bear something which he expresses as the revenge of the one who is experiencing the mourning, is not enough. We carry on mourning and we experience the devaluating effects of mourning in so far as the object that we are mourning for was, without us knowing it, the one which had become, that we had made the support for our castration.

Castration returns to us; and we see ourselves for what we are,

in so far as we would be essentially returned to this position of castration. You see that I am running out of time and that here I can only give an indication; but what well designates the degree to which this is what is involved there are two things: it is the way in which Freud senses that however spectacular the advances made by the patient in her analysis, it runs off her (16) like water off a duck's back, and if he designates specifically this place which is that of o in the mirror of the Other by all possible coordinates, without of course having the elements of my topology, but one could not say it more clearly, for he says there: "Here, what I come to a halt before, what I run into, (says Freud), is something like what happens in hypnosis". Now what is it that happens in hypnosis? It is that the subject is capable of reading in the mirror of the Other everything that is there at the level of this little vase in dots: one goes for everything that is specularisable. It is not for nothing that the mirror, the stopper of the carafe, indeed the look of the hypnotiser, are the instruments of hypnosis. The only thing that one does not see in hypnosis, is precisely the stopper of the carafe itself, nor the look of the hypnotiser which is the cause of hypnosis.

The cause of hypnosis is not seen in the consequences of hypnosis. The other reference: the doubt of the obsessional. And on what is brought to bear the radical doubt which ensures also that the analyses of obsessionals are pursued for a long time and very nicely? The treatment of an obsession is always a real honeymoon between the analyst and the analysand, in so far as this centre where Freud designates very well the sort of discourse spoken by the obsessional, namely: "He is really a very nice man; he tells me the most beautiful things in the world, the trouble is that I do not quite believe them". If it is central, it is because it is there, in x, in the case of the young homosexual, what is involved, is precisely what ought to illuminate us, namely a certain promotion of the phallus as such, to the place of o and it is here - I feel scrupulous about saying it, because moreover it is a marvellously illuminating text that I do not need to give you the other properties of, but I would beseech you not to take as one of these meaningless repetitions that we have become used to, since that on which, the man in question, who was discovering things at that time, ends his text, namely the distinction between constitutional elements and historical elements - it does not matter which ones - in the determination of homosexuality, and the isolation, this being as such the proper field of analysis, of the object, the object choice (Objektwahl) distinguishing it as such, as including the (17) mechanisms which are original, everything turns effectively around this relationship between the subject and o.

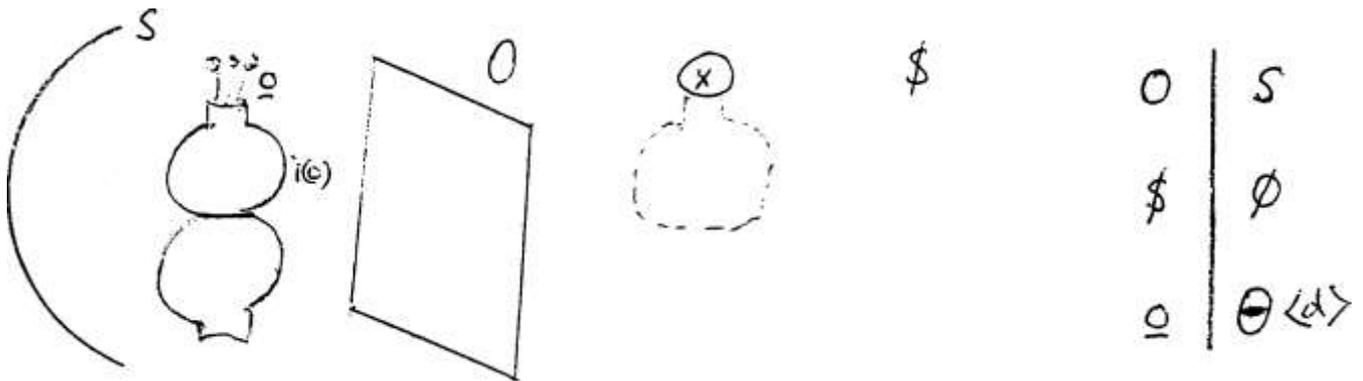
The paradox is the one which is close to what I indicated to you the second time as the point where Freud bequeathed us the question of how to operate at the level of the castration complex, and designated by something which is inscribed in the observation which I am astonished is not a more common object of astonishment among analysts, that this analysis ends with Freud

dropping her.

For with Dora - I will come back to it - we can better articulate now what happened; not everything is awkwardly done, far from it, and one can say that if Dora was not completely analysed, Freud sees clearly to the very end. But here, where the function of small o, of the object, is in a way so prevalent in the observation of the homosexual that it even got to the stage of passing into the real in this passage a l'acte whose symbolic revelation he nevertheless understands so well, Freud gives up: "I will not be able to do anything", he says to himself and he passes her on to a female colleague. It is he who takes the initiative of letting her fall.

I will leave you on this term to give you an opportunity of reflecting on it, because you will clearly see that this concern leads us to aim at an essential reference in the analytic handling of the transference.

Seminar 9 : Wednesday 23 January 1963



Today we are going to continue speaking about what I am designating for you as the small o.

To maintain our axis, in other words, in order not to allow you the opportunity of drifting off because of my very explanations, I will begin by recalling its relationship to the subject. Nevertheless, what we have to say, to emphasis today, is its relationship to the big Other, the other connoted by an O, because, as we shall see, it is essential to understand that it is to thic. Other that it owes its isolation, that it is constituted as a remainder in the relationship of the subject to the Other. That is why I have reproduced this schema, the homologue of the apparatus of division. The subject on the top right in so far as by our dialectic it takes its origin from the function of the signifier, the hypothetical subject S at the origin of this dialectic constitutes itself at the locus of the Other as marked by the signifier, the only subject our experience has access to, inversely suspending the whole existence of the Other on a guarantee which is lacking, the barred Other: \bar{O} .

But from this operation, there is a remainder: it is the o. The last time, I initiated, I put before you as an example, not a unique example - for behind this example, that of the case of female homosexuality, there was profiled that of Dora - I put before you as a structural characteristic of this relationship of the subject to o, the essential possibility, what could be called (2) the universal relationship concerning the o, for at every level you will always find it, and I would say that this is the most characteristic connotation, since precisely it is linked to this function of the remainder. This is what I called, borrowed from the vocabulary and the reading of Freud in connection with the passage a l'acte which brought him his case of female

homosexuality, the letting drop, the niederkommen lassen. And you no doubt remember that I ended with this remark that, strangely, this is what in connection with the case marked the response of Freud himself to a difficulty that is quite exemplary, for in everything that Freud testified to us by his action, by his behaviour, by his experience, this letting drop is unique at the same time as it is almost so manifest, so provokative in his text, that for some people reading it it becomes quasi-invisible.

This letting drop is the essential correlate that I indicated to you the last time of the passage a l'acte. Again from what side is this letting drop seen, in the passage a l'acte? From the side of the subject, precisely. The passage a l'acte is, if you wish, on the side of the subject in the phantasy in so far as she appears effaced by the bar to the maximum extent. It is at the moment of greatest embarrassment that, with the behavioural addition of emotion as disorder of movement, the subject, as one might say, precipitates herself from where she is, from the locus of the stage where it is only as a fundamentally historicised subject that she can maintain herself in her status of subject, that essentially she topples off the stage, this is the very structure as such of the passage a l'acte.

The woman in the observation on female homosexuality jumps over the little barrier which separates her from the culvert where there runs the little semi-underground tramway in Vienna, Dora at the moment of embarrassment into which - I pointed it out to you (3) a long time ago - the trick sentence, the clumsy trap of Mr K puts her: "My wife means nothing to me", goes into action (passee a l'acte).

The slap, the slap which here can only express nothing but the most complete ambiguity: is it Mr K or Mrs K that she loves? It is certainly not the slap which will tell us. But such a slap is one of the signs, of these crucial moments in destiny which we can see reverberating from generation to generation with its value as a switching point in a particular destiny.

This direction of escaping from the stage, is what allows us to recognise and, you will see, to distinguish the passage a. l'acte with its proper value, from this something quite different which is acting-out.

Will I tell you of another very obvious example? Who would dream of contesting this label for what is called a fugue? And what is a fugue in a subject, always put in a more or less infantile position, who throws himself into it, if not this sort of exit from the stage, this vagabond departure into the pure world, where the subject sets off to search for, to encounter something everywhere refused: he froths with rage (il se fait mousse), as they say; of course, he comes back, he returns, this can be the opportunity to become enraged; and this departure, is indeed this passage from the stage to the world for which moreover it was so useful that, in the first phases of this discourse on anxiety, I

posed for you this essential distinction between two registers of the world, the place where the real hurries onto this stage of the Other where man as subject has to constitute himself, to take his place as the one who carries the word, but who can only carry it in a structure which however truly it is established is a structure of fiction.

I will come, in order to tell you at first how this remainder as such asserts itself in the most characteristic way, to speak to (4) you today first of all - I mean before going any further in the function of anxiety - about acting-out.

It may no doubt seem to you, if not astonishing, at least another detour - a further detour, is it not a detour too many? - to hear me in a discourse about anxiety on something which at first sight seems rather to be an avoidance of it. Observe, nevertheless, that you are only rediscovering here what an interrogation which was essential at the beginning, has already punctuated in my discourse, namely whether anxiety is not so absolute a mode of communication between the subject and the Other that to tell the truth one could ask oneself whether anxiety is not properly speaking what is common to the subject and to the Other.

I put here, in order to find it again later, a little mark, a white stone, namely one of the traits which gives us most difficulty and which we must preserve, namely that no discourse about anxiety can fail to recognise that we have to deal with the phenomenon of anxiety in certain animals. And after all, what is there here at first, if not a question, namely how can we be so sure of a feeling in an animal, and perhaps only of this one. For it is the only one that we can have no doubts about when we encounter it in an animal, rediscovering here in an exterior form this character which I already noted anxiety involves, of being this something which does not deceive.

Having posited therefore the outline of what I hope to cover today, I recall first of all as regards this o towards which we advance through its relationship to the Other, to the O , some remarks by way of reminder, and starting from the following, which was already indicated in what I told you up to now, that (5) anxiety - you see it emerging in this schema which here reflects tachygraphically and I apologise if it appears at the same time a little approximate - anxiety, we see, emerging in conformity with the last thinking of Freud, anxiety is a signal in the ego; if it is a signal in the ego, it ought to be there somewhere, at the locus of the ideal ego in the schema; and if it is somewhere, I think I have already sufficiently shown you to begin with that it must be here at x , and it is a phenomenon of the edge in the imaginary field of the ego, this term of edge being legitimated since it is based on the affirmation of Freud himself, that the ego is a surface, and even, he adds, a projection of a surface; I recalled that at one stage. Let us say therefore that it is a colour, as I might say.

I will justify later, when I have the opportunity, the

metaphorical use of this term colour, which appears at the edge of the specular surface itself, itself an inversion, qua specular, of the real surface. Here, let us not forget, it is a real image that we call $i(o)$, the ideal ego.

The ideal ego, this function through which the ego is constituted by the series of identifications to what? To certain objects, those in connection with which Freud proposes to us in Das Ich und das Es, essentially the ambiguity between identification and love.

You know he underlines that the problem of this ambiguity leaves him, Freud, perplexed. We will therefore not be astonished that this ambiguity is something we ourselves can only approach with the help of formulae putting to the test the very status of our own subjectivity in discourse - by that I mean in learned or teaching discourse - an ambiguity designated by the relationship of what for a long time I emphasised before you in the proper place, as the relationship between being and having.

(6) The object of identification, o , to underline by a reference point, in the salient points even of Freud's work, is the identification which is essentially at the source of mourning, for example. This o , object of identification, is also o as love object only in so far as it, this o , is what makes of the lover, to use a medieval and traditional term, what tears away this lover metaphorically, to make of him, in proposing himself as lovable, eromenon, by making of him eron the subject of a lack, therefore that through which he constitutes himself properly in love, what gives him, as I might say, the instrument of love, namely - we find it again - that one loves, that one is a lover with what one does not have.

o is called o in our discourse, not simply as the function of an algebraic identity that we specified the other day, but, if I can put it humorously, because it is what one no longer has (n'a plus) .

This is why one can rediscover along the regressive path, namely in the form of identification to being, this o , what one no longer has. It is exactly what makes Freud put the term regression exactly at the point where he specifies the relationships between identification and love. But in this regression where o remains what it is, the instrument, it is with what one is that one can, as I might say, have or not have.

It is with this real image constituted here, when it emerges, as $i(o)$, that one catches or not what remains in the neck of this image, the multiplicity of the o -objects represented in my schema by the real flowers caught up or not in the constitution, thanks to the concave mirror at the back, of the symbol of something, let us say, which ought to be rediscovered in the structure of the cortex the foundation for a certain relationship between man and the image of his body and different objects which can be
(7) constituted from this body are or not caught, grasped at the

moment when i(o) has the opportunity of constituting itself.

This is why we ought to grasp that before the mirror stage what will be i(o) is there in the disorder of small o's which there is no question yet of having or not. And it is to this that there corresponds the true meaning, the most profound meaning to be given to the term autoerotism is that one lacks self (on manque de soi), as I might say, entirely. It is not the external world that one lacks, as it is incorrectly put, it is oneself.

Here is the possibility of this phantasy of the fragmented body which some of you have recognised, have encountered, in schizophrenics. This does not for all that allow us to decide on the determinants of this phantasy of the fragmented body which those of whom I am speaking have seen being outlined in the schizophrenic. And this is why I also highlighted the merit of a recent research concerning the coordinates of these determinants of schizophrenics, a research which did not claim at all to exhaust these determinants, but which connoted one of their traits by remarking strictly and nothing more in the articulation of the mother of the schizophrenic what her child was when he was in her belly: nothing more than a diversely convenient or embarrassing body, namely the subjectification of o as pure real.

Let us observe once again this moment, this state before the emergence of i(o), before the distinction between all the small o's and this real image with respect to which they are going to be this remainder that one has or does not have.

Yes, let us make this remark: if Freud tells us that anxiety is this phenomenon on the edge, this signal at the limit of the ego, (8) against this other thing, x, which here must not appear in so far as o, the remainder, is abhorred by the Other. How did it happen that this movement of reflection, the guides, the rails of experience led the analysts, Rank first of all and Freud following him on this point, to find the origin of anxiety at this pre-specular, pre-autoerotic level, at this level of birth where who could dream - nobody dreamt of it - in the analytic concert of speaking about the constitution of an ego. There is here something which proves in effect, that if it is possible to define anxiety as a signal, an edge phenomenon in the ego when the ego is constituted, it is surely not exhaustive. This we rediscover quite clearly in one of the phenomena best known to accompany anxiety, those which one designates, in understanding them analytically in an undoubtedly ambiguous fashion to judge from the divergences - for we will have to come back to them - they are the phenomena precisely most contrary to the structure of the ego as such, the phenomena of depersonalisation. This gives rise to the question, that we cannot avoid, of situating depersonalisation authentically.

You know the place that this phenomenon took on in certain reference points proper to one, or several, authors of the French School to whom I already had to refer. I think it will be easy to recognise the relationship between these reference points and

what I am developing here, I mean to assume that these reference points are not foreign to the sketches that I was previously able to give of it. The notion of distance, here almost tangible, in the necessity that I have always marked, precisely of the relation between this distance and the existence of the mirror, which gives to the subject this distancing from himself that the dimension of the Other is designed to offer to him, but this does (9) not enable us to conclude either that any bringing closer can give us the solution to any of the difficulties that are generated by the necessity of this distance.

In other words, it is not because the objects are invasive, as I might put it, in psychosis, which constitutes their danger for the ego. It is the very structure of these objects which makes them unsuitable for ego-ising (a la moisation). This is what I tried to make you grasp with the help of topological references, metaphors if you wish - but I believe that is going too far - which I made use of in so far as they introduce the possibility of a non-specularisable shape into the structure of certain of these objects. Let us say that phenomenologically, depersonalisation begins - let us end our sentence with something which seems to be obvious - with the non-recognition of the specular image. Everyone knows how tangible this is in clinical practice, how frequently it is from not being able to find himself in the mirror or in something else that is analogous, that the subject begins to be seized by depersonalising vacillation. But let us articulate more precisely that this formula given by the event is insufficient, namely that it is because what is seen in the mirror is anxiety-provoking that this cannot be proposed to the recognition of the Other, and to refer to a moment that I marked as characteristic of this mirror experience, as paradigmatic of the constitution of the ideal ego in the space of Other, that a relationship to the specular image is established such that the infant is not able to turn his head, in accordance with this movement which I described to you as familiar, towards this Other, this witness, this adult who is there behind him, to communicate his smile to her, the manifestations of his jubilation about something which makes him (10) communicate with the specular image, that another relationship is established of which he is too captive for this movement to be possible; here the purely dual relationship dispossesses - this feeling of the relationship of dispossession marked by clinicians in psychosis - dispossesses the subject of this relationship to the big Other.

The specularisation is strange, and, as the English say, "odd", unsymmetrical, it is the Horla of Maupassant, the outside of space, in so far as space is the dimension of what can be superimposed. But here at the point that we are at, to stop at what is signified by this separation, this cut linked to the anxiety of birth, in so far as something imprecise exists there from which there are generated all' sorts of confusions. To be honest I do not have the time and I can only indicate it. I will come back to it. You should be aware however that at this place it would be well nevertheless to have great reservations about

the structuring of the phenomenon of anxiety. Therefore it will be enough for you to refer to the text of Freud. Freud - as you will see - sees its convenience in the fact that at the level of the anxiety of birth there is constituted a whole constellation of movements, principally vasomotor, respiratory, which he says is "a real constellation", and it is this that will be carried over into its function of signal in the way, he tells us, an hysterical attack is constructed, being itself the reproduction of inherited movements for the expression of certain emotional moments.

Undoubtedly this is altogether inconceivable because precisely of the fact that it is impossible at the beginning to situate this complexity in a relationship with the ego which would allow it subsequently to serve as a signal of the ego, except through the mediation of what we have to seek in terms of structure in the relationship between $i(o)$ and this o .

(11) But in that case the characteristic separation at the beginning, the one which allows us to approach, to conceive of the relationship, is not the separation from the mother.

The cut involved is not that between the child and the mother. The fashion in which the child originally dwells in the mother, poses the whole problem of the character of the relationships of the egg with the body of the mother in mammals, which you know has a whole aspect which makes it with respect to the body of the mother a foreign body, a parasite, a body encrusted by the hairy roots of its chorion in this organ that is specialised to receive it, the uterus, with the mucus of which it has a certain involvement.

The cut which interests us, the one which makes its mark on a certain number of clinically recognisable phenomena and for which then we cannot avoid it, is a cut which, thank God for our conception, is much more satisfying than the cut of the child who is born, when he drops into the world with what? With his envelopes. I have only to refer you to any book of embryology whatsoever which is less than a hundred years old for you to be able to grasp in it that, in order to have a complete notion of this pre-specular totality which is o , you have to consider these envelopes as elements of the body. It is starting from the egg that these envelopes are differentiated, and you will see there very curiously that they are so in such a fashion that they illustrate - I have confidence enough in you after our work of last year around the cross-cap - that you may find very simply the degree to which on the schemas illustrating these chapters of embryology on the envelope, you can see being manifested all the varieties of this inside to outside, of this outside in which the (12) foetus floats, itself enveloped in its amnion, the amniotic cavity itself being enveloped in an ectodermic lamina and presenting its face towards the outside in continuity with the endoblast.

In short the analogy between what is detached with the cut

between the embryo and its envelopes, and this separation on the cross-cap of a certain enigmatic o on which I insisted, is tangible here. And if we have to rediscover it subsequently, I think that I have today sufficiently indicated it for that. There remains for us to do today then what I announced to you, concerning what is indicated by acting-out about this essential relationship between o and 0.

In opposition to the passage a l'acte, all acting-out presents itself with certain characteristics which are going to allow us to isolate it. The profound, necessary relationship between acting-out and this o is where I want to lead you, in a way by the hand, in order not to let you drop. Observe moreover in your clinical surveys the degree to which being held by the hand in order not to be let drop is altogether essential in a certain type of relationship of the subject to something which when you encounter it you can absolutely designate as being for him an o. This gives rise to unions of a very widespread type which are not for all that any easier to manage, because moreover the o that is involved can be for the subject the most inconvenient super-ego.

The type of mother that we call, not inappropriately, but without knowing absolutely what we mean, a phallic woman - I would advise you to be careful before applying this label. But if you are dealing with someone who tells you that in the very measure itself that an object is most precious to her, inexplicably she (13) will be appallingly tempted not to hold on to this object if it falls, expecting something or other miraculous from this sort of catastrophe and that the most beloved child is precisely the one that one day she inexplicably lets drop; and you know that in Greek tragedy - this has not escaped the perspicacity of Giraudoux - this is the most profound complaint of Electra about Clytemnestra; it is that one day she had left her fall from her arms.

Here then, you can identify what it is appropriate on this occasion to call a phallic mother. There are no doubt other modes; we are saying that this one appears the least deceptive. And now let us go into acting-out in the case of female homosexuality. If the suicide attempt is a passage a l'acte, I would say that the whole adventure with the woman of doubtful reputation, who is raised to the function of ^supreme object, is an acting-out. If Dora's slap is a passage a l'acte, I would say that all the paradoxical behaviour, that Freud discovers immediately with such perspicacity, of Dora in the K's household is an acting-out.

Acting-out, is essentially something in the behaviour of the subject that shows itself. The demonstrative accent, the orientation towards the Other of every acting-out is something that ought to be highlighted.

In the case of female homosexuality - Freud insists on it - it is before the eyes/bf all, it is in the very measure and all the more when this publicity becomes scandalous, that the behaviour of the

young homosexual is accentuated. And what shows itself, when one advances step by step, shows itself essentially as other, other than it is, what it is nobody knows; but nobody doubts that it is other.

(14) What that is in the case of the young homosexual, Freud says all the same; "She wanted a child from her father", he tells us. But if you were satisfied with that, you are not very hard to please, because this child has nothing to do with a maternal need. That indeed is why, a little earlier, I wanted at least to indicate the problematic of the relationship of the child to the mother. Contrary to a whole slippage in the whole of analytic thought, it is necessary to put the elucidation of unconscious desire in what I might call a sort of lateral relationship with respect to the principal current that has been elaborated.

There is in this normal relationship of the mother to the child, in any case in what we can grasp of it through its economic incidence, something full, something rounded out, something closed, something precisely so complete during the gestatory phase that one can say that we need very special care to make it enter, to see how its incidence is applied to this relationship of cutting between i(o) and o. And after all we only need our analytic experience of the transference and to know at what moment of our analyses our analysands become pregnant and the use this is to them, to know clearly that it is always the rampart of a return to the most profound narcissism.

But let us leave that. It is indeed as something else that the young homosexual wants to have this child. And moreover this thing did not escape, thank God, from Freud: she wanted this child as a phallus, namely, as the doctrine announces it in Freud in the most developed form, as a substitute, Ersatz, for something which falls fully then into our dialectic of the cut and of the lack, of the o as dropped, of the o as lacking. This (15) is what allows her, having failed in the realisation of her desire, to realise it at once differently and in the same way, as eron. She makes herself a lover; in other words, she establishes herself on what she does not have, the phallus, and to show clearly that she has it, she gives it. It is in effect a completely demonstrative way. She behaves, Freud tells us, vis-a-vis the Lady with a capital L, like a servant knight, like a man, as one who can sacrifice for her what he has, his phallus.

Let us combine then these two terms, of showing, of demonstrating, and of desire, no doubt a desire whose essence, whose presence, as you see, is to be, to show oneself, as I told you, as other, and while showing herself as other to still designate herself in this way. In the acting-out, we will say then that desire, in a way, to affirm itself as truth, engages itself along a path on which, no doubt, it only manages to do so in a singular fashion. And we know already by our work here that in a certain way one can say that truth of its nature is not in desire. If we recall the formula that essentially it is not articulatable even though it is articulated, we will be less

astonished by the phenomenon before which we find ourselves. And I gave you a further link: it is articulated objectively since this object that I am designating here, is what I called the last time the object as its cause.

Acting-out essentially is the demonstration, the no doubt veiled showing, but which is only veiled for us as subject, in so far as it speaks, in so far as it could be true, not veiled in itself, on the contrary visible to the maximum degree, and because of that, for that very reason invisible in a certain register. Showing its cause, it is this remainder, it is its collapse, it is what falls into the affair that is the essential of what is shown.

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S	Between the subject here, which is I might say
∅	"othered" (<u>autrifié</u>) in its fictional structure, and the
∅	non-authentifiable Other, never completely, what
∅	emerges is this remainder o, it is the pound of flesh,
∅	(\$ in 0), which means, I think - you know who I am
∅	quoting - one can make all the borrowings one wishes to
∅	plug the holes of desire and of melancholy; there is

here the Jew who, for his part, knows something about balancing accounts and who demands at the end: the pound of flesh.

This is the feature that you always find in acting-out. Remember a point of what I wrote about in my report, "The Direction of the Treatment", where I spoke about the observation of Ernest Kris in connection with the case of plagiarism.

Ernest Kris, because he was on a certain path which we will perhaps have to name, wants to reduce it by means of the truth; he shows him in the most irrefutable fashion that he is not a plagiarist; he has read his book; his book is well and truly original, on the contrary it is the others who have copied him.

The subject cannot contest it. Only he does not give a damn about it. And on leaving, what is he going to do? As you know - I think that there are all the same some people, a majority, who read from time to time what I write - he goes and eats fresh brains.

I am not in the process of recalling the mechanism of the case. I am teaching you to recognise an acting-out and what that means, what I am designating as the small o or the pound of flesh.

With the fresh brains, the patient simply indicates to Ernest Kris; "Everything you tell me is true, simply that does not touch the question; there remain the fresh brains. In order to show (17) you, I am going to eat some when I leave in order to tell you about it the next time".

I am insisting. One cannot, in these matters, go too slowly. You will say to me; what is original in that? You will say to me, after all I am making the demands and giving the answers - I would say, I hope not, but since you could all the same say to me

if I have not sufficiently emphasised it; "What is original in this, this acting-out and this demonstration of this unknown desire? The symptom is the same. Acting-out is a symptom which shows itself as other, and so does it. The proof is that it has to be interpreted". All right then let us dot the i's carefully. You know that the symptom cannot be interpreted directly; that transference is necessary, namely the introduction of the Other. You do not grasp it properly yet perhaps. Then you are going to say to me, "Well yes, this is what you are in the process of telling us about acting-out."

No, what is involved here, is to tell you that it is not essentially in the nature of the symptom to have to be interpreted; it does not call for interpretation like acting-out, contrary to what you might think. Moreover it has to be said; acting-out calls for an interpretation and the question that I am in the process of posing, is that of knowing whether it is possible. I will show you that it is. But it is in the balance in analytic theory and practice.

In the other case, it is clear that it is possible, but on certain conditions which are added to the symptom, namely that transference of its nature should be established; the symptom is not, like acting-out, calling for an interpretation. For - it is too often forgotten - what we discover in the symptom, in its (18) essence, is not, I say, a call to the Other, is not that which shows to the Other, that the symptom in its nature is jouissance - do not forget it - a backhanded jouissance, no doubt, unterbliebende Befriedigung; the symptom does not need you as acting-out does, it is sufficient of itself; it is of the order of what I have taught you to distinguish from desire as being jouissance, namely that it goes, for its part, towards the Thing, having passed the barrier of the good (a reference to my seminar on Ethics), namely of the pleasure principle, and this is why this jouissance can express itself by an Unlust.

I am not the only one who is either inventing or articulating all of this, it is said in these very terms in Freud; Unlust, unpleasure, for those who have not yet heard this term, in German.

So then let us return to acting-out, as opposed to the symptom, acting-out for its part is the beginning of transference. It is wild transference. There is no need for analysis - as you no doubt know - for there to be transference. But transference without analysis is acting-out, acting-out in analysis is transference. The result is that one of the questions to be posed, is, concerning the organisation of transference - I mean the organisation, the Handlung of transference - that one of the ways of posing the question is to ask how one can domesticate the wild transference, how one gets the wild elephant into the enclosure or how one can get the horse into the ring, where one makes him turn round, in the circus.

It is one of the ways of posing the problem of transference which

it would be quite useful to pose from this angle, because it is the only way of knowing how to deal with acting-out.

(19) For people who may have to interest themselves in the near future in acting-out, I note the existence, in the Psychoanalytic Quarterly, of the article by Phyllis Greenacre; "General Problems of Acting-Out". It is in Number IV of Volume 19 of 1950, so it is not impossible to find. It is a very interesting article in many ways, and evokes a memory for me: it was at the time about ten years ago when we had already received a visit from some investigators. Phyllis Greenacre, who was one of them, gave me the opportunity to observe a lovely acting-out, namely the frenetic masturbation, which she carried out before my eyes, of a little Japanese mussel fisherman, which I owned and which still carries the traces of it, I mean this object does. I have to say that this furnished the opportunity for a very agreeable conversation, much better than the one punctuated by different passages a l'acte, for example her jumps almost to the ceiling, which I had with the lady.

Therefore this article on "General problems of acting-out", in which there are very pertinent remarks, even though as those of you who read it will see, they gain by being illuminated by the original lines that I am trying to sketch before you.

The question then is to know how to deal with acting-out. There are three of them, she says. There is interpreting it, there is prohibiting it, there is reinforcing the ego.

You should not have any great illusions about interpreting it. Phyllis Greenacre is a very very able woman. Interpreting it, after what I have just told you, promises to have very little effect, as I might say, if only because this is why the acting-out is done. When you look at things closely, most of the time (20) you see that the subject knows very well that what he is doing, is done to offer himself to your interpretation by acting-out. Only you see, it is not the meaning of what you interpret that counts, whatever it may be; it is the remainder. So that this time at least, without something more, it is an impasse. It is very interesting to spend some time scanning the hypotheses.

To prohibit it, naturally that even makes the author herself smile when she says: all the same, one can do many things, but to say to a subject, "No acting-out", is something which is all the same difficult. Besides nobody dreams of doing it. All the same, in this connection, one observes the amount of prejudicial prohibition there is in analysis. Many things obviously are done to avoid acting-out in the session. Then one tells them not to take **decisions** that are essential for their existence during the analysis. Why does one do all of this? Indeed it is a fact that wherever one has a hold, has a certain relationship with what one can call danger either for the subject, or for the analyst.

In fact one prohibits much more than one believes. If I say - which I would be quite willing to illustrate - what I have just said, it is because essentially, and because we are doctors, and because we are good, as someone or other has said, one does not want the patient who has come to entrust himself to us to hurt himself. And the funny thing is that one manages it.

Acting-out is the sign all the same that one is preventing a lot of things. Is this what is involved, when Mrs Greenacre speaks about allowing a more solid transference to be established? What I would like to remark on here, is that a certain aspect of analysis that is not seen is its accident-insurance, sickness-insurance aspect; because it is very funny all the same how much (21) at least from the moment that an analyst has taken on that experience that is called, namely all that he most often ignores in his own attitude, the degree to which short-term illnesses are rare during analyses, the degree to which, in an analysis which lasts for a certain time, colds, flues, all of that is effaced, and even long-term illnesses; indeed, if there were more analyses in society, I think that social insurance, as well as life insurance, would have to take the proportion of analyses in the population into account in order to modify their rates.

Inversely, when an accident happens - an accident, I am not speaking dimply about acting-out - it is very regularly attributed by the patient and by his entourage to the analysis, it is in a way naturally attributed to the analysis. They are right; it is an acting-out, therefore it is addressed to the Other. And if one is an analyst, it is therefore addressed to the analyst. If he has taken up this place, so much the worse for him. He has all the same the responsibility which belongs to this place which he has agreed to occupy.

These questions are designed perhaps to clarify for you what I mean when I speak about the desire of the analyst and when I question it. Without dwelling for a moment on the question which changes the question of the way in which we domesticate the transference - for you see that I am in the process of saying that it is not simple without stopping for a moment to say what it is I am always opposed to, namely that what is involved here is reinforcing the ego - because on the admission even of those who are engaged along this path for more than a decade and more exactly for so many decades that people are beginning to speak less about it nowadays, this can only mean, as we see in the (22) literature, leading the subject to the identification, not at all with this image as a reflection of the ideal ego in the Other, but to the ego of the analyst with the result that Balint describes for us, the really manic terminal crisis that he describes for us as being that of the end of an analysis characterised in this way, and which represents the insurrection of the o which has remained absolutely untouched.

Let us return then to Freud and to the observation of the case of female homosexuality, in connection with which we have all sorts of quite admirable notations, because at the same time as he

tells us that he is quite clear that there is no hint here of something called transference being produced, he says at the same time, and at this time and in this case which designates some blind spot or other in his position, he says all the same that there is no question of stopping for an instant at the hypothesis that there is no transference.

This is to fail to recognise what is involved in the transference relationship. We find it expressly formulated in this discourse of Freud about his case of female homosexuality. It nonetheless remains that Freud, the day he had a patient who - the thing is articulated as such - who lied to him in a dream, for this is how Freud characterises the case, the agalma, what is precious in this discourse on female homosexuality, is that Freud stops for a moment, flabbergasted, before the following - he also makes demands and gives the answers - he says, "What is happening here, the unconscious can lie?", for the dreams, as you know, of this patient, mark every day greater and greater progress towards the sex to which she is destined. Freud does not believe it for a single moment - and with good reason! - for the patient who brings him her dreams tells him at the same time: "But, yes of course, this will allow me to marry, and allow me at the same (14) time to occupy myself all the more with women". Therefore, she herself is telling him that she is lying. And moreover Freud has no doubt about it. It is precisely the absence of any appearance of the transference relationship. But what does he pause at then, this unconscious that we are used to considering as being the most profound, the truly true? It then can deceive us. And it is around this that the whole debate turns, it is around this Zutrauen, of this trust we should have: can we still preserve it, he says.

He affirms it in a sentence which is very characteristic because it is so elliptical and concentrated, that is has this character almost of stumbling over words; what is really involved - I will read the sentence again for you, I did not bring it with me, I will bring it the next time, it is really very lovely - it is still a question of a squabble.

This unconscious still deserves trust. The discourse of the dream, he tells us, is not the same thing as the unconscious; it is constructed by a desire coming from the unconscious, but he admits at the same time that it is this desire that is expressed, to the point of formulating it: it must be then that the desire comes from something, and coming from the unconscious, and it is this desire which is expressed through lies.

She tells him herself that her dreams are lying. What Freud pauses at, is the problem of any symptomatic lie. You see what a lie is for a child is what the subject means by lying. The strange thing, is that Freud lets things drop in the face of this seizing up of the whole machine; he does not interest himself precisely in what makes it seize up, namely the waste scraps, the little remainder, what has brought everything to a halt and what is here that comes into question.

Without seeing what he is embarrassed by, he is undoubtedly moved, as he shows, by this threat to the fidelity of the unconscious, he goes into action (passee a.l 'acte) . It is the point at which Freud refuses to see the structure of fiction at the origin of the truth, which is his passion.

This is where he has not sufficiently meditated on what, speaking about the phantasy, I emphasised before you in a recent discourse on the paradox of Epimenides, on the "I am lying" and its complete acceptability, in so far as what lies is desire in the moment that affirming itself as desire it delivers the subject to this logical cancelling-out on which the philosopher pauses, when he sees the contradiction of "I am lying".

But after all what Freud is missing, as we know, is what he is missing in his discourse. It is what has always remained as a question for him as a question: "What does a woman want?". The stumbling of Freud's thinking upon something that we can call provisionally - do not make me say that woman as such is a liar, but that femininity conceals itself and that there is something of that angle there.

To employ the terms of liquid, it is that flowing sweetness, something before which Freud almost died of suffocation because of a nocturnal stroll taken by his fiancée, the very day that they exchanged the two final vows, with a vague cousin, I no longer remember very well, I did not look up the biography, I call him a vague cousin, it is some indifferent person, it is one of these young gallants who have as they say an assured future, which means that they do not have any - with whom he had discovered a little later that she had taken a little stroll, and this is where the blind spot is: Freud wants her to tell him everything. The woman did indeed do her talking cure, and as regards chimney sweeping she was well swept!

(25) For some time, people have not been stubborn about it; the important thing is to be together in the same chimney. The question, when you emerge - as you know, it was recalled at the end of one of my articles, borrowed from the Talmud - when you emerge together from a chimney, which of the two is going to wash his face? Yes, I advise you to re-read this article, and not alone that one, but also the one that I wrote on "The Freudian thing". The Freudian thing - you can see designated there, with a certain amount of emphasis I might say - is this Diana that I designate as showing the continuation of this hunt which continues. The Freudian thing, is what Freud let drop, but it is still what leads, in the shape of all of us, the whole hunt after his death. We will continue this pursuit the next time.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 30 January 1963

Anxiety, we have always been taught, is a fear without an object. A chant in which, we could say here, another discourse already announces itself, a chant which however scientific it may be is close to that of the child who reassures himself. For the truth that I am enunciating for you, I formulate in the following way: "It is not without an object". Which is not to say that this object is accessible along the same path as all the others. At the time I said it, I underlined that it would be another way of ridding oneself of anxiety to say that a homologous discourse, similar to every other part of scientific discourse, could symbolise this object, put us in that relationship of symbol with it to which, in this connection, we are going to return.

Anxiety sustains this relationship of not being without an object subject to the reservation that this is not to say nor to be able to say, as we could for something different, what object is involved.

In other words, anxiety introduces us with the accent of maximal communicability to the function of lack, in so far as it is radical for our field. This relationship to lack is so fundamental for the constitution of any logic and in such a way that one can say that the history of logic is that of its success in masking it, which means that it appears to be akin to a sort of vast parapraxis, if we give to this term its positive sense.

This indeed is why you see me, along one path, always coming back to these paradoxes of logic which are designed to suggest to you the paths, the ways in, by which there is regulated, there is imposed on us the certain style by which we are able for our part (2) to succeed with this parapraxis: not to miss the lack (ne pas manquer au manque).

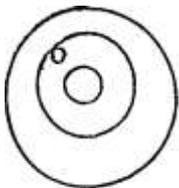
That is why I thought once more of introducing my discourse today by something which of course is only an apologue, and on which you cannot base yourself on any analogy properly speaking in order to find in it what might be the support for situating this lack, but which nevertheless is useful in order to reopen in a way this dimension which in a way every discourse, every discourse of analytic literature itself, gives you, in the intervals, I would say, of the one in which here from week to week, I catch up with you, necessarily to rediscover the hinge of something which might close in our experience, and, by whatever

gap it intends to designate this lack, would find in it something that this discourse could fill.

The little apologue then, the first one that came to me. There could be others, and after all, all I want to do here is to go quickly. I told you in short at one time that there is no lack in the real; the lack is only graspable through the mediation of the symbolic. It is at the level of the library, one might say: here such a volume is not in its place (manque a sa place), this place which is a place designated already by the introduction, into the real, of the symbolic. And here, this lack here that I am speaking about, this lack which the symbol in a way easily fills, designates the place, designates the absence, presentifies what is not there. But notice that the volume in question carries on the first page - a volume which I acquired this week, and this is what inspired this little apologue - carries on the first page the notation: "the four engravings from such and such to such and such are missing". Does this mean, in accordance with the function of the double negation, that because the volume is not in its place, the lack of these four engravings is (3) removed, that the engravings come back to it. Clearly, there is no question of it.

This may appear a bit stupid to you, but I would point out to you that here we have the whole question of logic, of logic transposed into these intuitive terms of the Eulerian schema, of the included lack. What is the position of the family in the genus, of the individual in the species, what constitutes a hole within a plane circle?

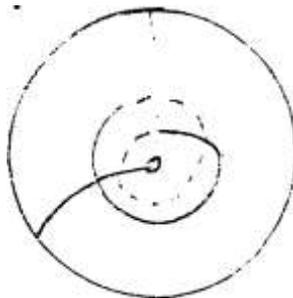
If I made you do so much topology last year, it was indeed to suggest to you that the function of the hole is not univocal. And this indeed is how you must understand that there is always introduced along this path of thinking that we describe in different forms as metaphorical in different forms, but always indeed being referred to something, this planification, this implication of the very simple plane as constituting fundamentally the intuitive support of the surface. Now this relationship to the surface is infinitely more complex; and of course by simply introducing to you the ring, the torus, you are able to see that it is enough to elaborate what is in appearance the most simple surface to imagine, to see there being diversified, on condition that we consider it indeed as it is, as a surface, to see there being diversified strangely there the function of the hole.



I point out to you once again how it is to be understood; because everything that is in effect to be known, how a hole can be filled, can be completed, we will see that no circle whatsoever drawn on this surface of the hole is able - for this is the problem - to constrict itself to the stage of being nothing but this vanishing limit, the point, and of disappearing.

(4) For of course there are holes which can, on which we can

operate in this way, and it is enough for us to draw our circle in the following way - if I draw it, it is in order not to express myself otherwise - or in that way to see that they cannot reduce themselves to zero. There are structures which do not involve the filling of the hole



The essence of the cross-cap, as I showed it to you last year is the following: it is that apparently whatever cut you draw on the surface - I will not spend any more time on it, I would ask you to test it out for yourselves - we will not have apparently this diversity; if we draw this cut in this way, which is homologous at the level of the cross-cap to the cut which on the torus is repeated as follows, namely which partakes of two other types of circle, which reunites them in itself, the two first that I have just drawn, if you draw them here on the cross-cap in this way, if you draw this cut, passing in this way through this privileged point to which I drew your attention last year, you will always have something which in appearance will be always able to be reduced to the minimal surface, but not without - as I pointed out to you - there remaining at the end - I repeat - whatever the sort of cut, there remaining at the end only something which is symbolised not like a concentric reduction, but irreducibly in this shape or in that one which is the same, and that one cannot as such not differentiate from I what I earlier called concentric (5) punctualisation.

It is in this that the cross-cap was for us another contributing path in what concerns the possibility of an irreducible type of lack. The lack is radical. It is radical for the very constitution of subjectivity, as it appears to us on the path of analytical experience. Which, if you wish, I would like to enunciate in this formula: "Once it is known, once something of the Real comes to be known, there is something lost; and the surest way to approach this something lost, is to conceive of it as a fragment of the body".

Here is the truth which in this opaque, gross form is the one that analytic experience gives us, and which it introduces with its irreducible character into any reflection henceforth possible on any conceivable form of our condition. This point, it must be clearly said, involves enough of the intolerable for us to ceaselessly try to distort it, which has no doubt two aspects, namely that in this very effort we are doing more than sketching out its outlines and that we are always tempted, in the very measure that we approach this outline, to forget it in function of the very structure that this lack represents.

Whence it results, another truth, that we could say that every turn of our experience rests on the fact that the relationship to the Other, in so far as it is that in which there is situated every possibility of symbolisation and the locus of discourse, is connected with a structural flaw, and that we are obliged - this is the further step - to conceive that we are touching here on what makes possible this relationship to the Other, namely this point from which it emerges that there is signifier (du signifiant), is the one which in a way cannot be signified. This (6) is what is meant by what I call the "lack of signifier" point.

And recently, I heard someone who does not understand me too badly at all, responding to me, questioning me, whether this does not mean that we refer ourselves to that which in any signifier is in a way the imaginary material, the shape of the word or that of the Chinese character, if you wish, what is irreducible in the fact that it is necessary that every signifier should have an intuitive support like the others, like all the rest.

Well, precisely not. For of course, this is the temptation that arises in this connection. This is not what is involved as regards this lack. And in order to make you sense it, I will refer to definitions which I have already given you and which ought to be enough. I told you: "There is no lack which is not of the symbolic order. But privation, for its part, is something real." What we are speaking about is something real; what my discourse turns around, when I try to represent for you this decisive point, which nevertheless we always forget, not only in our theory, but in our practice of analytic experience, is a privation which manifests itself as much in the theory as in the practice, it is a real privation and which as such can be reduced. Is it enough to designate it in order to remove it? If we manage to circumscribe it scientifically - which is perfectly conceivable - it is enough to work over the analytic literature, an example of which I will give you in a little while, namely a sample, to begin with - there is no other way of doing this - I took the first volume of the International Journal which came to hand and I will show you that almost everywhere we find the problem involved: whether one speaks about anxiety, about acting-out or about - since it is the title of the article to (7) which I will allude later - about R - I am not the only one who makes use of letters - the total response. The total response of the analyst in the analytic situation, by someone whom it happens we rediscover, of whom I spoke in the second year of my seminar, Margaret Little by name, we will find this problem very well centred and we can define it: where is the privation situated, where obviously does she slip up in the measure that she attempts to get closer and closer to the problem that a certain type of patient poses for her? It is not this, the reduction, the privation, the symbolisation, its articulation here which will remove the lack. This is what we have to keep clearly in mind from the start, and if it is only to understand what is signified from one point of view by a mode of appearance of this lack: as I told you, privation is something real. It is

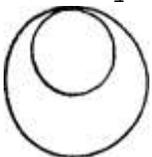
clear that a woman does not have a penis. But if you do not symbolise the penis as the essential element to have or not to have, she will know nothing of this privation. Lack for its part is symbolic.

Castration appears in the course of analysis, in so far as this relationship with the Other, which moreover did not wait for analysis to be constituted, is fundamental. Castration, as I told you, is symbolic, namely it refers to a certain phenomenon of lack, and at the level of this symbolisation, namely, in the relationship to the Other, in so far as the subject has to constitute himself in the analytic discourse. One of the possible forms of the appearance of the lack is here the (-⊙), the original support which is only one of the possible ^ expressions of the original lack, of the structural flaw inscribed in the being in the world of the subject with whom we (8) have to deal. And in these conditions it is conceivable, normal to ask oneself why, by bringing analytic experience to a certain point - and not beyond - this term of castration complex, that Freud gives us as final in the man, he tells us, and of Penisneid in the woman, can be put in question. It is not necessary that it should be final.

This indeed is why it is an essential approach in our experience to conceive of this function of lack in its original structure. And it is necessary to come back to it many times in order not to miss it.

Another fable: the insect who moves along the surface of the Moebius strip - I have now I think spoken enough about it for you to know immediately what I mean - this insect can believe that at every moment, if this insect has the representation of what a surface is, there is a face, the one always on the reverse side of the one on which he is moving, that he has not explored. He can believe in this reverse side. Now as you know there is not one. He, without knowing it, explores what is not the two faces, explores the single face that is there: and nevertheless at every instant, there is indeed a reverse. What he lacks in order to perceive that he has gone to the reverse side, is the little missing piece, the one outlined for you in this way of cutting the cross-cap and that one day I materialised, to put it in your hands, constructed, this missing little piece. It is a way of turning here in a short circuit around the point which brings it back by the shortest path to the reverse side of the point where he was the instant before.

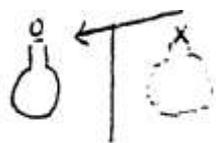
This little missing piece, the o as it happens, does this mean, because we are describing it there in a paradigmatic form, that the affair is resolved for all that? Absolutely not, since it is (9) the fact that this piece is missing, that gives all its reality to the world around which the little insect is moving.

The little interior eight is well and truly irreducible: it is a lack for which the symbol does not supply. It is not then in the first place, an absence which the symbol can make up for.

Nor is it a cancellation or a *dénégation*; for cancellation and *dénégation*, forms constituted from the relationship that the symbol allows to be introduced into the real, namely the definition of absence, cancellation and *dénégation* is an attempt to undo that which in the signifier separates us from the origin and from this structural flaw. It is an attempt to rejoin its sign function; it is what the obsessional, for all that, strives and exhausts himself for. Cancellation and *dénégation* aim then at this point of lack, but do not rejoin it for all that; because as Freud explains, all they do is to duplicate the function of the signifier in applying it to themselves, and the more I say it is not that, the more it is that.

The spot of blood, intellectual or not, whether it is the one that Lady Macbeth exhausts herself with or what Lautréamont designates under the term "intellectual", is impossible to efface because it is the nature of the signifier precisely to strive to efface a trace. And the more one tries to efface it, to rediscover the trace, the more the trace insists as signifier.

Whence it results that we have to deal, as regards the relationship to the fact that the little o manifests itself as cause of desire, with an always ambiguous problematic. In effect

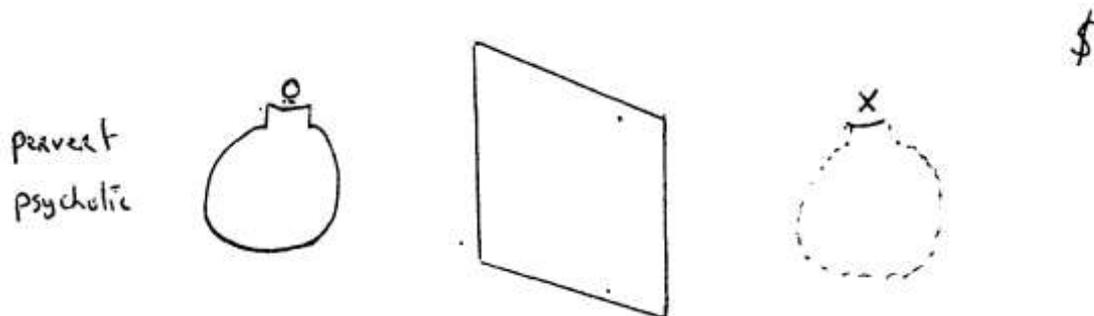


when it is inscribed in our schema, which is always to be renewed, there are two ways in which the relationship of the Other to the small o can appear.

(10) If we can rejoin them, it is precisely by the function

of

anxiety, in so far as anxiety, wherever it is produced, is the signal of it and there is no other way of being able to interpret what is said to us in analytic literature about anxiety.



Because after all notice how strange it is to bring together these two aspects of analytic discourse: on the one hand that anxiety is the greatest, most radical defence and that it is necessary here for the discourse about it to be divided into two references: 1) one to the real in so far as anxiety is the response to the most original danger, to the unsurmountable *Hilflosigkeit*, to the absolute distress of entering into the world and that 2) on the other hand, it is going to be able to be subsequently taken up by the ego as a signal of infinitely slighter dangers, of dangers, as we are told somewhere by Jones,

who on this point shows a tact and a measure which is often greatly lacking in the bombast of analytic discourse, about what he calls the threats of the Id, of the *fa*, of the *Es*, which Jones simply calls a "buried desire", un desir enterre. As he remarks, is this return of a buried desire so dangerous after all, and does this merit the mobilisation of such a major signal as this ultimate, final signal which anxiety is supposed to be, if in order to explain it we are obliged to have recourse to the most absolute vital danger.

(11) And this paradox is found again a little further on. For there is no analytic discourse which, after having made of anxiety the final element of every defence, does not speak to us about defence against anxiety. So that this instrument which is so useful for warning us about danger, is the very one that we have to defend ourselves against; and it is in this way that one explains all sorts of reactions, of constructions, of formations, in the field of psychopathology. Is there not some paradox here which requires things to be formulated differently, namely that the defence is not against anxiety, but against that of which anxiety is the signal and that what is involved is not defence against anxiety, but against a certain lack, except for the fact that we know that there are different structures, definable as such, of this lack, that the lack of the single edge, which is that of the relationship with the narcissistic image, is not the same as that of the double edge which I am speaking to you about, and which is referred to the least extreme cut and to the one which concerns the *o* as such, in so far as it appears, as it manifests itself, that it is with it, that we have, that we can, that we ought to be dealing, at a certain level of the handling of the transference.

Here there will appear, it seems to me, better than elsewhere that the lack of handling is not the handling of the lack and that what needs to be picked out is what you always find every time a discourse is pushed far enough about the relationship that we have as Other to the one that we have in analysis, that the question is posed as to what our relationship with this *o* ought to be.

There is an obvious gap between the permanent, profound putting in question which the analytic experience in itself is supposed to be, always referring the subject on to something different

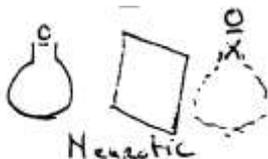
(12) to what he manifests to us whatever its nature may be. Transference is only, as one of my women patients said to me not long ago: "If I was sure that it was only transference". The function of the "only (ne que): "it is only transference" the reverse side of "He has only to do it in this way", this form of the verb which is conjugated, but not, as you believe, the one which makes one say: "II n'a qu'avait", that one sees flowering spontaneously in a spontaneous discourse.

It is the other aspect of what is explained to us as being, it seems, the charge, the burden of the hero analyst of having to interiorise this *o*, to take it into himself, as a good or bad

object, but as an internal object and that it is from there that there is supposed to emerge all the creativity through which he ought to restore the subject's access to the world.

Both things are true, even though they are not connected: it is precisely for this reason that they are confused and that by confusing them, nothing clear is said about what concerns the handling of this transferential relationship, the one which turns around the o. But it is this that is sufficiently explained by the remark that I made to you, that what distinguishes the position of the subject with respect to o, and the very constitution as such of his desire, is, to say things in a summary fashion, that whether we are dealing with a pervert or a psychotic, the relationship of the phantasy \$O o is established in this way (Schema p 6), and it is here that in order to handle the transferential relationship we have in effect to take into ourselves like a foreign body, an incorporation of which we are the patient, the o in question, namely the object which is absolutely foreign to the subject who is speaking to us, in so far as it is the cause of his lack.

In the case of neurosis, the position is different in so far as - as I told you - something appears here which distinguishes the function of the phantasy in the neurotic. Here there appears (13) at X something of his phantasy which is an o, and which only appears so (le parait). And which only appears so because this little o is not specularisable and cannot appear here, as



I might

say, in person, but only as a substitute. And it is only there that there is applied the profound questioning of any authenticity in the classical analysis of transference.

But this is not to say that we have here the cause of transference, and we have to deal with this little o which, for its part, is not on the stage, but which only asks at every instant to be allowed to mount it to introduce its discourse there, even if this were to sow, in the one who continues to *ho!* the stage, to sow confusion, disorder, to say: "Stop the tragedy", just as much as "Stop the comedy", even though this is a little better. There is no drama. Why does Ajax get himself into such a stew, as they say, when after all if all he did was to exterminate the sheep that is so much the better? It is all the same less serious than if he had exterminated all the Greeks since he did not exterminate all the Greeks, he is all the less dishonoured; and if he indulges in this ridiculous manifestation everyone knows it is because Minerva cast a spell on him.

Comedy is less easy to exorcise. As everyone knows, it is more gay, and even if one exorcises it, what happens on the stage can very easily continue; one begins again at the song of the billygoat's foot, at the true history of what is involved from the beginning, at the origin of desire. And this is the reason why moreover tragedy bears in itself, in its term, in its name, its designation, this reference to the billygoat and the satyr, (14) whose place moreover was always reserved at the end of a

trilogy.

The billygoat who jumps onto the stage, is what acting-out is. And the acting-out I am speaking about, namely the inverse movement of what modern theatre aspires to, namely that the actors go down among the audience: it is the spectators who mount the stage and say there what they have to say.

And this is why someone like Margaret Little, chosen from among others - and as I told you - really in the way that one blindfolds oneself and lays out pages to make a divination by spinning a knife.

Margaret Little, in her article on "The analyst's total response to his patient's needs", of May-August 1957, Parts III-IV of Volume 38 of the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, pursues the discourse that I already dwelt on at a point in my seminar when this article had not yet appeared. Those who were there will remember the remarks that I made, about a certain anxiety-ridden discourse on her part and her attempts to master it in connection with counter-transference. They no doubt remember that I did not stop at the first appearance of the problem, namely the effects of an inexact interpretation, namely that one day an analyst says to one of his patients who comes back from having made a broadcast, a broadcast on a subject which interests the analyst himself - we see more or less the milieu in which this could have happened: "You spoke very well yesterday, but I see you are very depressed today; it is surely because of the fear you have of having hurt me by invading an area that I am interested in". Two years have to pass before the subject perceives, in connection with the return of an anniversary, that what had caused him to be so sad was linked to the feeling he (15) had, having made this broadcast, of having revived in himself the feeling of mourning that he had about the recent death of his mother who, he says, could therefore not see success represented for her son at being in this way momentarily promoted to the position of a star.

Margaret Little is struck, because it is a patient that she had taken on from this analyst, by the fact that effectively the analyst in making his interpretation had done no more than interpret what was passing through his own unconscious, namely that effectively he was very sorry at the success of his patient.

What is involved nevertheless is something quite different, namely that it is not enough to talk about mourning and even to see the repetition of the mourning that the subject was suffering at that time, the one that two years later he was having for his analyst, but to see what is involved in the function of mourning itself and here at the same time to take a little further what Freud tells us about mourning as identification with the lost object. It is not an adequate definition of mourning. We are only in mourning about someone of whom we can say "I was his lack (j'etais son manque)". We mourn people that we have either well or badly treated and vis-a-vis whom we do not know whether we

fulfill this function of being at the place of their lack.

What we give in love, is essentially what we do not have and, when what we do not have returns to us, there is undoubtedly a regression and at the same time a revelation of the way in which we have failed the person (manque a la personne) in representing his lack.

But here, because of the irreducible character of the miscognition concerning the lack, this miscognition simply is reversed, namely that this function that we had of being his lack, we now believe we are able to express in the fact that we (16) have been lacking to him, even though it was precisely for this reason that we were precious and indispensable to him.

Here is what I would ask you: if it is possible, pick out this and a certain number of other reference points, if you are willing to work at it, in Margaret Little's article. It is a further phase of reflection which is considerably deeper, if not better. Because it is not better. The very problematic definition of counter-transference is absolutely not advanced and I would say up to a certain point that we can be grateful to her; because if she had advanced into it, it would have been mathematically, into error. All she wants - as you will see - to consider from then on is the total response of the analyst, namely just as much the fact that he is there as analyst as the things which, for him the analyst, as this present example shows, can escape from his own unconscious, as the fact that like every other living being she experiences feelings in the course of analysis, and that after all she does not say it like that, but this is what is involved: being the Other, she is in the position that I told you about the last time, namely from the beginning one of entire responsibility.

It is therefore with this class, this "immense total", as she says, of her position as analyst, that she intends to respond before us and respond honestly about what she conceives to be the response of the analyst. The result is that she goes as far as to take the most contrary positions - that does not mean that they are false - to the classical formulations, namely that far from remaining outside the game, the analyst must suppose in principle that he is involved up to the hilt, consider himself on occasion effectively as responsible and in any case, never (17) refuse to testify, if concerning what happens in the analysis she is for example summoned, by her subject, to answer before a court of law.

I am not saying here that this attitude can be sustained, I am saying that to evoke it, to place within this perspective the function of the analyst is something which undoubtedly will appear to you of an originality which gives rise to problems, that the feelings - I mean all the feelings of the analyst - can be in some cases summoned, as I might say, to justify themselves, not only at the tribunal of the analyst himself - which everyone will admit - but even with respect to the subject, and that the

weight of all the feelings that the analyst may experience with regard to one or other subject who is engaged with him in the analytic enterprise, can be not alone invoked, but be promoted into something which will be not an interpretation, but an avowal, entering in this way on a path whose first introduction into analysis by Ferenczi was the object on the part of classical analysts of the most extreme reservations.

Undoubtedly, our author divides the patients with whom she is dealing into three parts. Since she seems to admit a very large range of cases under her charge, we have on the one hand the psychoses, for whom it is necessary that she should admit that, if only for the hospitalisation that is sometimes necessary, it is necessary for her to discharge a part of her responsibilities onto other supports; the neuroses, of which she tells us that the greatest share of responsibility of which we discharge ourselves also in neuroses, is put on the subject's shoulders - giving proof of remarkable lucidity -; but, between the two, the subjects she defines as the third class, character neuroses or reactional personalities, whatever you like, what Alexander defines again as "neurotic characters", in short this whole area around which there are developed such problematic indications or classifications, while in reality it is not a kind of subject that is involved, but a zone of relationship, the one that I am defining here as acting-out. And it is indeed in effect what is involved, in the case that she is going to develop for us, which is the case of a subject who has come to her because she performs acts which are classed within the frame of kleptomania, who for a year moreover does not make the slightest allusion to these thefts, and who goes through a whole long time of analysis, under the total and vigorous fire on the part of our analyst, of the most repeated here-and-now transference interpretations in the sense taken nowadays, along the path generally adopted, as that which ought to be from a certain moment staunched, sponged up ceaselessly right through the analysis.

None of these interpretations, however subtle and varied she makes them, touch for an instant the defence of her subject. If someone - I am going to end with this - would be willing to do me the service, at a date that we are going to fix, of entering into the detailed exposition of this case, of doing this thing that I cannot do before you because it is too long and because I have other things to tell you, you will see, in all its details, there being manifested the relevance of remarks that I am in the process of making to you now.

The analysis only begins to move, she tells us, at the moment that one day her patient came with her face swollen with weeping, and the tears that she is weeping about the loss, the death, in a country that she had left a long time before with her parents, namely the Germany of that time, Nazi Germany, of a person who was not distinguished among those who had looked after her during her childhood, except that she was a friend of her parents and no (19) doubt a friend with whom she had very different relationships than her relationships with her parents; for it is

a fact that she never showed such mourning for anyone else (247).

Before this passionate, surprising reaction, what is the reaction of our analyst? Undoubtedly one of interpreting as one always does. She varies them again, as a way of seeing which one will work. The classic interpretation, namely that this mourning is a need for retortion against the object, that this mourning is perhaps addressed to her, the analyst, that it is a way, using the person that she is mourning for as a screen, of bringing to her, the analyst all the reproaches that she has against her. Nothing works.

Something begins to be freed up when the analyst - literally - as you will see, it is very visible in the text - admits before the subject that she is completely confused and that to see her like that was painful to the analyst herself. And immediately our analyst deduces that it is the positive, the real, the living element of a feeling which gave its movement to the analysis. The whole text bears sufficient witness to it, the subject chosen, the style as well as the order of its development, for us to be able to say what is involved and what undoubtedly touches the subject, what makes it possible for her, which allows her to transfer properly speaking in her relationship to the analyst the reaction involved in this mourning, namely the appearance of the following, that there was a person for whom she was able to be a lack: the fact is that the intervention of the analyst makes there appear to her - in the analyst - this thing which is called anxiety. It is in function of where we are at the limit of something which designates in the analysis the place of the lack that this insertion, that this graft, as I might say, this (20) layering which allows a subject whose whole relationship with her parents is defined - you will see in the observation that in no relationship was this female subject able to grasp herself as a lack - to find here a way to open up.

It is not qua positive feeling that the interpretation - if one can call it that, because it is well described for us in the observation: the subject drops her arms and gives up - at this place, that this "interpretation", if one can describe it as such, reached, it is as an introduction in an involuntary way of something that is in question and that always ought to come into question at whatever point it may be, even if it is at the end, in the analysis, namely the function of the cut. And what is going to allow you to locate it, to designate it, is that the turning points - the decisive ones of the analysis - are two moments: the moment that the analyst taking courage in the name of the ideology of life, of the real, of anything you wish, makes all the same the most unusual intervention, to be situated as decisive with respect to this perspective that I would call sentimental; one fine day when the subject was going over again all her stories about money quarrels - if I remember correctly, with her mother, she ceaselessly comes back to it - the analyst says to her in the clearest terms: "Listen! Stop that, because literally I can no longer listen to it! You are sending me to sleep". (248)

The second time - I am not giving you this as a model of technique, I am asking you to follow the problems which are posed for an analyst who is obviously as experienced as she is burning with authenticity - the second time, it involved slight modifications which had been carried out in the analyst's house, what she calls the redecoration of her office - if we are to go (21) on the average redecoration carried out by our colleagues, it must have been lovely - already our Margaret Little had been pestered all day by the remarks of her patients: "It's nice, it's not nice, the brown is disgusting, that green is lovely...": and now here is our patient who starts again towards the end of the day, she tells us, and puts that in terms that are, let us say, a little bit more aggressive than the others, and she says to her textually: "I really don't care what you think about it". (248)

The patient, I have to say, like the first time, is profoundly shocked, astounded. After which she emerges from her silence with enthusiastic cries: "Everything you have done there is marvellous". I will spare you the details of the progress of this analysis. What I would simply like to designate here, is that in connection with this case which is favourable and, if you wish, chosen in a part of the field particularly favourable to this problematic, what is decisive in this factor of progress which consists essentially in introducing the function of the cut, is in so far as she tells her in her first interpretation the following: "You're leaving me out of it completely: you are sending me to sleep", and in the other case she literally puts her in her place: "You can think what you want about my decoration, of my office. I don't care about it in the slightest!", that something decisive was mobilised in the transference relationship that is in question here.

This allows us to designate what is involved for the subject. The problem for her, one of her problems is that she had never been able to produce the slightest feeling of mourning for a father whom she admired. But the stories - as you will see - which are reported to us, show us that, if there is something over-emphasised in her relationships with her father, it was well and (22) truly that in any case there was no question in his regard of representing in any way something which could be, from whatever angle it was taken, being lacking to her father.

There was a little stroll with him and a very significant scene about with a little stick quite symbolic of the penis, because the patient herself underlines it and it seems in a rather innocent way - the father throws this little stick into the water without making any comment on it. This story is not the same as the dimanches de Ville d'Avray.

And as regards the mother, the one who is involved in the closest fashion in determining the thefts, this because undoubtedly she has never been able to make of this child anything other than a sort of prolongation of herself, a piece of furniture, an instrument of menace and blackmail on occasion, but in no case something which with respect to her own desire, the desire of the

subject, could have been a causal relationship.

It is to designate the following, namely that her desire - she does not know which one of course - could be taken into consideration, that each time the mother approaches, enters into the field of induction where she can have some effect, the subject very regularly steals something, a theft which like all the thefts of the kleptomaniac has only a signification of particular interest which means simply: "I am showing you an object that I stole by force or by cleverness and which means that there is somewhere another object, my one, the o, the one which deserves to be considered, to be allowed to isolate itself for a moment". This function of isolation, of being alone (etre-seul) has the closest relationship, is in a way the correlative (23) pole of this function of anxiety as you will see in what follows. "Life", we are told somewhere by someone who is not an analyst, Etienne Gilson, "existence is an uninterrupted power of active separations".

I think that you will not confuse, after today's discourse, this remark with the one which is usually made about frustrations. Something else is involved. What is involved is the frontier, the limit where the place of the lack is established.

A continuous, I mean varied reflection about the different, metonymical forms in which there appear in clinical practice the focal points of this lack, will constitute the continuation of our discourse. But we cannot but treat it ceaselessly along with the putting into question of what one can call the goals of analysis. The positions taken up in this respect are so instructive, educative that I would like at the point that we are at, that besides this article to which it would be appropriate to return, to follow it in detail, you should read another article by someone called Szasz on the goals of analytic treatment, "On the theory of psychoanalytic treatment", in which you will see that there is advanced the following: it is that the aims of analysis are given by its rule. And that its rule, and at the same time its aims can only be defined as promoting as a final goal of analysis, of every analysis whether it is didactic or not, the initiation of the patient into a scientific point of view - that is how the author expresses himself - concerning his own movements.

Is that a definition? I am not saying that we can accept it or reject it, it is one of the extreme positions, it is undoubtedly a very singular and specialised position. I am not saying: is it a definition that we could accept? I am saying: what can that definition teach us? You have heard enough here to know that (24) undoubtedly, that if there is something that I have often put in question it is precisely the relationship of the scientific point of view, in so far as its aim is always to consider the lack as being able to be filled in every case, with the problematic of an experience including in itself, of taking the lack as such into account.

It nevertheless remains that such a point of view is useful to pinpoint, especially if one relates it, if one links it to an article by another analyst, an older article by Barbara Low, concerning what she calls the Entschädigung, the compensations of the position of the analyst. You will see produced there a completely opposite reference, which is not to that of the scholar, but to that of the artist, and that moreover what is involved in analysis is something quite comparable, she tells us - it is certainly not any less remarkable as an analysis as regard the firmness of its conceptions - quite comparable, she tells us, to the sublimation which presides over artistic creation. Could we not with these three texts - the third of which is in the International Zeitschrift of year 20, I mean the 20th year of the International Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse in German: despite its rarity I will make it available to whoever is willing to take responsibility for it - could we not decide that on the 20th February, which is the day that my return - since I am going to absent myself now - is possible, but not certain, could we not decide that two or three persons, two persons who are here and whom I questioned earlier, by dividing up the roles among themselves as they see fit, one to present, the other to criticise or comment, or on the contrary alternating like a choir the two parts that these two opposing presentations would constitute, could these two persons, linking up if necessary with a third for the third article - it is not unthinkable - commit themselves to not leaving this rostrum empty for too long and to take my place if I am not there, with me in the audience if I return, this problem, namely to occupy themselves exactly with the three articles that I have just spoken about.

I think I have obtained from two of them - I mean Granoff and Perrier - their consent earlier; I invite you here then to listen to them on the 20th February, namely in exactly three weeks time.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 27 February 1963

Good! Well here I am back from winter sports. The greater part of my reflections there were of course as usual concerned with being of service to you. Not exclusively however. That is why the winter sports this year, apart from the fact that I enjoyed them, which is not always the case, struck me by something or other which appeared to me and which brought me back to a problem of which they seem to be an obvious incarnation, a living materialisation, it is the contemporary one of the function of the concentration camp for the wealthy old, which as everyone knows will become more and more of a problem with the advance of our civilisation given the advance of the average age over time: that reminded me that obviously this problem of the concentration camp and of its function at this epoch of our history has really been completely missed up to now, completely masked by the era of cretinous moralising which immediately followed the end of the war, and the absurd idea that we were going to be able to finish just as quickly with them, I am still talking about concentration camps. Indeed I will not go on any longer about the different commercial travellers who made a specialty of stifling the affair, in the first rank of whom there was, as you know, one who received the Nobel Prize. We saw the degree to which he was up to his heroism of the absurd when he had to make up his mind about a serious contemporary question.

All of that to remind us - because moreover in parallel with these reflections I was rereading, I say it again as I did earlier, in order to be of service to you, my seminar on Ethics of a few years ago and this to renew the well founded nature of what I believe I articulated there as being the most essential according to our master Freud, what I think I emphasised there in a fashion worthy of the truth that was involved, that all morality is to be sought in its origin, in its source, on the side of the Real. Again you have to know of course what is meant by that. I think that for those who understood this seminar more precisely morality is to be sought on the side of the real and more especially in politics. This is not to encourage you to go looking for it in the Common Market!

So now I am going not only to invite to speak but also give the presiding role, as they say, or more exactly the position of chairman to the one who occupied it the last time, Granoff, who is going to come up here, because he is going to have to reply -

(2) since he gave a general introduction - to the three parts, and is going to have say at least a few words in reply to Madame Aulagnier who is going to complete today the loop of what was begun the last time.

Granoff here then, and Aulagnier here. Aulagnier is going to tell us what she extracted from her work on the article by Margaret Little.

Madame Aulagnier on Margaret Little's article, pp 3 - 13.

Lacan: Would you like to say the few concluding words that I suggested, that you were going to give, according to what I read - I will tell you later how I learned what was said the last time - but anyway I know enough about it to know that you announced that you should bring things to a close.

Granoff concludes, pp 13-17.

(17) It was not at all a bad idea of mine to ask Granoff to conclude, not simply because he has freed me from a part of my task of criticism, but because I believe he has completed in a satisfactory fashion and at the same time clarified what I believe I picked up from a rapid reading of the introductory talk that he gave the last time, and which - perhaps not rightly, but after all, I say in a rapid reading - left me a little unsatisfied.

I must say that with respect to the task that had been reserved to him, specifically as regards the article by Barbara Low, I found him a little bit short of the truth, in a word, not to have exhausted everything that can be drawn from this article which is certainly by far the most extraordinary and the most remarkable of the three.

I saw a little bit the sign of an evasion in the fact that he sent us back, referred us to the most modern form of intervention on the subject in the shape of this article by Lucia Tower; on the other hand I am on the whole grateful to him because this article has now been introduced, and I would not have done it for many reasons myself this year, but now we can no longer avoid it.

We will have to find a way of making this article of Lucia Tower, which he was not able to summarise, available; at least bring it to the knowledge of a certain number of people to whom it would be of the greatest interest.

This to orient things in the way I want to tackle them now for the half-hour or the thirty-five minutes that remain to us. I am not going to say much more to you about what I know each one of you contributed, even though I am very grateful to Perrier for having sent me yesterday a little summary of what he for his part contributed, a summary that was made necessary by the fact which I do not need to labour too much, that I was not able to have in time even a typed account of what was said the last time.

Whether it is the effect of chance or of bad organisation, it is certainly not because of me that things have happened in this way; because during the whole of the intervening time I tried to (18) take every possible precaution that such an accident would not happen.

Therefore I am leaving myself time. And perhaps even to be better informed, to make an allusion to the points of detail that I would like to pick up. The authors of these interventions will therefore lose nothing by waiting for a little while. I think that in general you know enough about what I wanted to contribute by referring to these articles which at first appear to be and are effectively all centred on counter-transference, which is precisely a subject which I do not claim to see in any way being even specified for you in the way it deserves, and therefore to have done this from the perspective of what I have to say to you about anxiety, more exactly about the function that this reference to anxiety ought to fulfill in the general sequence of my teaching.

The fact is that effectively these remarks about anxiety can no longer be kept at a distance from a more precise approach to what has been present in an always more insistent fashion for some time in my discourse, namely the problem of the desire of the analyst.

For when all is said and done, this at least cannot fail to escape the hardest-hearing ears: the fact is that in the difficulty of the approach of these authors to counter-transference, it is the problem of the desire of the analyst which creates the obstacle, which creates the obstacle because in short taken generally, namely not elaborated as we have done it here, every intervention of this order, however surprising this may appear after sixty years of analytic development, seems to share a fundamental imprudence.

The people involved, whether we are dealing with Szasz, or with Barbara Low herself, whether we are dealing still more with Margaret Little - and I will say later how things have been advanced in this respect in the extraordinary confidences in which Lucia Tower, the most recent author, has spoken about very profoundly on this subject, more specifically has made a very profound avowal of her experience - none of these authors can avoid putting things on the plane of desire. The term counter-transference, as it is envisaged, namely, in general, broadly speaking the participation of the analyst, but let us not forget that more essential than the engagement of the analyst, in connection with which you see there being produced in the texts the most extreme vacillations from their hundred-percent responsibility to staying completely out of it

(19) I believe that in this respect the final article, the one which you unfortunately know only under an indicative form, the one by Lucia Tower, highlights well, not for the first time, but for the first time in an articulated manner something that is

much more suggestive in this order, namely that which in the analytic relationship can occur on the side of the analyst in terms of what she calls a small change for him, the analyst - this reciprocity of action is here something which I am not saying at all is the essential term, let us say that the simple evocation of it is well designed to reestablish the question at the level at which it should be posed. It is not a matter in effect of definition, even of an exact definition of counter-transference, which could be given very simply, which is simply nothing other than the following which has only one drawback as a definition, which is that it abandons completely the question which is posed about its import, namely that counter-transference is everything that the psychoanalyst represses of what he receives as signifier in the analysis. It is nothing else and this is why this question of counter-transference is really not the question. It is from the state of confusion that it is brought to us in that it takes on its signification. This signification alone is the one from which no author can escape precisely in the measure that he tackles it and in the measure that this is what interests him, it is the desire of the analyst.

If this question is not simply not resolved, but finally has not even begun to be resolved, it is simply because there is not in analytic theory up to the present, I mean up to this seminar precisely, any exact positioning of what desire is.

It is no doubt because to do it is not a small undertaking. Moreover you can see that I never claimed to do it in one step. For example: the fashion in which I introduced it of distinguishing, of teaching you to situate desire as distinct compared to demand. And specifically at the beginning of this year I introduced something new, suggesting it to you first to see your response or your reactions, at they say, which were not lacking, namely the identity, as I put it, of desire and the law.

It is rather curious that something so obvious - because it is an obvious fact inscribed in the first steps of analytic doctrine itself - that something so evident can only be introduced or (20) reintroduced if you wish with such precautions.

This is why I come back today to this plane to show certain aspects, indeed implications of it. Desire then is the law. It is not only the fact that in analytic doctrine, with the Oedipus complex as its central corpus, it is clear that what constitutes the substance of the law is the desire for the mother, that inversely what normatives desire itself, what situates it as desire, is what is called the law of the prohibition of incest.

Let us take things from the angle, through the way in, defined by this word which has a presentified meaning in the very times in which we live, erotism.

We know, that its Sadean if not its sadistic manifestation, is the most exemplary one. Desire presents itself as a will to

jouissance from whatever angle it appears - I spoke about the Sadean angle, I did not say the sadistic one, it is just as true for what is called masochism.

It is quite clear that if something is revealed by analytic experience, it is that even in perversion where desire in sum appears by presenting itself as what lays down the law, namely as a subversion of the law, it is in fact well and truly the support of a law. If there is something that we now know about the pervert, it is that what appears from the outside as satisfaction without restraint is defence, is well and truly the bringing into play, into action of a law in so far as it restrains, it suspends, it stops, precisely on the path of this jouissance.

The will to jouissance in the pervert as in everyone else, is a will which fails, which encounters its own limit, its own restraint, in the very exercise as such of the perverse desire. In a word, the pervert does not know, as was very well emphasised by one of the people who spoke today at my request, he does not know at the service of what jouissance his activity is exercised. It is not in any case at the service of his own.

It is this which allows there to be situated what is involved at the level of the neurotic. The neurotic is characterised by the following - and this is why he was the place of passage, the path to lead us to this discovery, which is a decisive path in morality - that the true nature of desire in so far as this decisive path is not taken except from the moment that here (21) attention has been focussed on what I am expressly in the process of articulating before you just now, the neurotic was this exemplary path in the sense that he shows us, for his part, that it is by way of the search for, the establishment of the law itself that he needs to pass to give its status to his desire, to sustain his desire. The neurotic more than anybody else highlights this exemplary fact that he can only desire in accordance with the law. He cannot for his part sustain, give its status to his desire except as unsatisfied for himself or as impossible. It remains that I am giving myself the easier task in speaking to you only of the hysteric or the obsessional, because this is to leave completely outside the field of the neurosis ;;hat we are still embarrassed by along the whole path we have taken, namely anxiety neurosis about which I hope this year, as regards what we have engaged on here, to make you take the necessary step. Let us not forget that it is from this that Freud began and that, if death, his death, deprived us of something, if is not to have allowed him fully the time to come back to it. We are therefore placed, however paradoxical this may appear to you as regards the subject of anxiety, we are placed, we are brought back to this crucial plane, to this crucial point that I will call the myth of the moral law, namely that any healthy position of the moral law is supposed to be sought in the sense of an autonomy' of the subject.

The very accent of this research, the always greater emphasising in the course of the history of these ethical theories, of this

notion of autonomy sufficiently shows what is involved, namely a defence, that what it is a matter of swallowing, is this first and obvious truth that the moral law is heteronomous; this is why I insist on the fact that it proceeds from what I am calling the real in so far as it intervenes, as it intervenes when it intervenes essentially, as Freud tells us, by eliding the subject, by determining by its very intervention what is called repression and which only takes on its full meaning if we start from this synchronic function, in so far as I articulated it before you by pointing out to you, in a first approximation, what effacing traces means. This is obviously only a first approximation because everyone knows precisely that the traces are not effaced and that this is what constitutes the aporia of this affair, the aporia which is not one for you, since it is very precisely for this reason that there is elaborated before (22) you the notion of signifier, and that what is involved is, not the effacing of traces, but the return of the signifier to the state of trace, the abolition of this passage from the trace to the signifier which is constituted by what I tried to get you to sense, to describe for you by putting in the parenthesis of the trace, an underlining, a dam, a mark of the trace. This is what is demolished with the intervention of the real. The real referring the subject back to the trace, abolishes the subject also at the same time: for there is no subject except through the signifier, through this passage to the signifier: a signifier is that which represents the subject for another signifier.

To grasp the source of what is involved here, not in the always too facile perspective of history and of memory, because forgetting appears to be a too material, too natural thing for it to be believed that it does not happen all by itself, even though it is the most mysterious thing in the world from the moment that memory is posited as existing. That is why I am trying to introduce you into a dimension which is transversal, not yet as synchronic as the other.

Let us take the masochist. The maso, as they say, it appears, somewhere, namely the most enigmatic to be put in suspense from the point of view of perversion. He, you are going to tell me., for his part knows well that it is the Other who enjoys. This would be then the pervert who has brought his truth to light. He would be the exception to everything that I said earlier about the pervert not knowing how to enjoy: of course, it is always the Other, and the maso is supposed to know it. Well then I will no doubt come back to it. As of now I want to emphasise that what escapes the masochist and what puts him in the same position as all the perverts, is that he believes of course that what he is looking for, is the jouissance of the Other; but precisely, since he believes it, that is not what he is looking for. What escapes him, even though it is a tangible truth, really lying about everywhere and within everybody's reach, but for all that never seen at its true level of functioning, is that he seeks the anxiety of the Other.

Which does not mean that he is trying to annoy him. Because for

want of understanding what is meant by seeking the anxiety of the Other - naturally it is at its gross, even stupid level that things are brought to by a sort of common sense - for want of (23) being able to see the truth there is behind that, of course one abandons this shell in which something more profound is contained, which is formulated in the way that I have just told you.

This is why it is necessary for us to return to the theory of anxiety, of anxiety as signal, and for us to see the difference, or more exactly to the new thing that is contributed by the dimension introduced by the teaching of Lacan about anxiety in so far as not opposing Freud, but placed for the moment in two columns. We will say that Freud at the end of his elaboration, speaks about anxiety as signal being produced in the ego about what? An internal danger. It is a sign representing something for someone: the internal danger for the ego. The transition, the essential passage which allows this structure itself to be used by giving it its full meaning and this notion of internal, of internal danger to be suppressed: there is no internal danger because - as paradoxically to the eyes of distracted ears, I say, as paradoxically when I returned to it when I gave you my seminar on Ethics, namely to the topology of the Entwurf - there is no internal danger because this envelope of the neurological apparatus, in so far as it is a theory of this apparatus which is given, this envelope has no interior because it has only a single surface, that the Psi-system as Aufbau, as structure, as that which interposes itself between perception and consciousness, is situated in another dimension as other qua locus of the signifier; that henceforward anxiety is introduced at first, as I did it before the seminar of this year, last year, as a specific manifestation at this level of the desire of the Other as such.

What does the desire of the Other represent qua coming from this angle? It is here that the signal takes on its value, the signal that, if it is produced in a place that one can call the ego topologically, clearly concerns someone else. The ego is the locus of the signal. But it is not for the ego that the signal is given. It is quite obvious that if this lights up at the level of the ego, it is in order that the subject - one cannot call it anything else - should be warned about something.

He is warned about this something which is a desire, namely a demand which does not concern any need, which does not concern anything other than my very being, namely which puts me in question - let us say that it cancels it out: in principle it is (24) not addressed to me as present - which is addressed to me, if you wish, as expected, which is addressed to me much more again as lost and which, in order that the Other should be able to locate himself (s'y retrouve) requests my loss.

That is what anxiety is. The desire of the Other does not recognise me, as Hegel believes, which renders the question quite easy. For if he recognises me, since he will never recognise me

sufficiently, all that is left to me is to use violence. Therefore he neither recognises me nor miscognises me. Because that would be too easy: I can always escape from it by struggle and violence. He puts me in question, interrogates me at the very root of my own desire as o, as cause of this desire and not as object, and it is because he is aiming at this in a relationship of antecedence, in a temporal relationship, that I can do nothing to break this grip except by engaging myself in it. It is this temporal dimension which is anxiety, and it is this temporal dimension which is that of analysis. It is because the desire of the analyst stimulates in me this dimension of expectation that I am caught in this something which is the efficacy of the analysis. I would really like him to see me as such and such, for him to make of me an object. The relationship to the other, the Hegelian one here, is very convenient, because then in effect I have all sorts of resistances against that, and against this other dimension let us say a good part of the resistance slips. Only for that it is necessary to know what desire is and to see its function, not at all simply on the plane of the struggle, but there where Hegel - and for good reason - did not want to go looking for it, on the plane of love.

Now, if you go - and perhaps you will go with me, because after all the more I think about it and the more I speak about it and the more I find indispensable to illustrate the things I am speaking about - if you read the article by Lucia Tower, you will see this story: two gentlemen (bonshommes) - to speak as one spoke after the war, when one spoke about ladies (des bonnes femmes) in a certain milieu - you will see two gentlemen with whom, what she recounts, what she recounts is particularly illustrative and efficacious, they are two love stories.

Why did the thing succeed? In one case when she was touched herself, it is not she who touched the other, it is the other who put her on to the plane of love; and in the other case the other did not get to it and that is not interpretation, because it is written down and she says why.

(23) And this is designed to induce in us some reflections on the fact that, if there are some people who have said something sensible about counter-transference, it is uniquely women.

You will say to me: Michael Balint? Only it is rather striking that he wrote his article with Alice. Ella Sharpe, Margaret Little, Barbara Low, Lucia Tower. Why is it that it is women who, let us already simply say, have dared to speak about the thing in an overwhelming majority and that they should have said interesting things? It is a question that will be completely clarified if we take it from the angle I am talking about, namely the function of desire, the function of desire in love in connection with which, I think, you are mature enough to hear the following - which moreover is a truth which has always been well known, but to which its place has never been given, it is that in so far as desire intervenes in love and has as I might say an essential stake in it, desire does not concern the beloved

object.

As long as this primary truth around which alone can turn a valid dialectic of love is put for you in the ranks of an Erniedrigung an accident of love life, of an Oedipus complex which grows paws, well then, you will understand absolutely nothing about what is involved, about the way the question should be posed as regards what the desire of the analyst may be. It is because it is necessary to start from the experience of love, as I did in the year of my seminar on transference, to situate the topology in which this transference can be inscribed, it is because it is necessary to start from there that today I am bringing you back to it.

But no doubt my discourse will take on, from the fact that I am going to terminate it here, an interrupted appearance. What I produced there at the final term as a formula, can be taken as a pause, a chapter heading or conclusion as you wish. After all it is permissible for you to take it as a stumbling block or if you wish as a banality. But it is here that I intend that we should take up the next time the rest of our discourse to situate in it exactly the indicative function of anxiety and what it will allow us subsequently to gain access to.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 6 March 1963

We are going then to continue our journey of approach to anxiety, which I would like you to understand is indeed of the order of an approach. Of course, you are already sufficiently advised by what I am producing here, that I want to teach you that anxiety is not what shallow people think. Nevertheless you will see, in rereading afterwards the texts on this major point, that what you have learned is far from being absent from them; simply it is masked and veiled at the same time, it is masked by formulae which are styles perhaps that are too cautious under their coating, as one might say, their carapace. The best authors allow there to appear what I already put the accent on for you, that it is not objektlos, that it is not without an object.

The sentence which in Hemmung, Symptom und Angst precedes, in Appendix B "Ergänzung zur Angst", "Supplementary remarks on anxiety", the very sentence which precedes the reference that Freud makes, following in this the tradition of indétermination, to the Objektlosigkeit of anxiety - and after all I would only need to remind you of the bulk of the article itself to say that this characteristic of being without an object cannot be retained - but the sentence just before, Freud says anxiety is "Die Angst ist Angst vor etwas", it is essentially anxiety about something.

Can we be satisfied with this formula? Of course not. I think that we ought to go much further, say more about this structure, this structure which already, as you see, opposes it by contrast, if it is a fact that anxiety, being the relationship with this object that I approached which is the cause of desire, is opposed by contrast with this vor, how has this thing which I placed for you promoting desire behind desire, gone in front of it, this is perhaps one of the sources of the problem.

In any case, let us underline clearly that we find ourselves in the tradition before what is called an almost literary theme, a commonplace, the one between fear and anxiety which all the authors, referring to the semantic position, oppose at least at the beginning, even if subsequently they tend to bring them together or to reduce them to one another - which is not the case among the best of them. At the beginning undoubtedly one tends to emphasise this opposition between fear and anxiety by, let us say, differentiating their position with respect to the object.

And it is really tangible, paradoxical, significant of the error (2) thus committed that one is led to stress that fear, for its part, has one, has an object.

Breaking through a certain characteristic, there is here an objective danger, Gefahr, dangeite, Gef "áhrdung, a danger situation, the entry of the subject into danger, which would after all deserve a pause: what is a danger? We are going to be told that fear is by its nature, adequate to, in correspondence with, entsprechend to the object from which the danger comes.

The article of Goldstein on the problem of anxiety on which we will pause, is in this regard very significant of this sort of slipping, of seduction, of capture, as one might say, of the pen of an author - who in this matter was able to gather together, as you will see, the essential and very precious characteristics of our subject - the seduction of the pen by a thesis, insisting in a fashion which one can say is in no way required by its subject in this respect - because it is anxiety that is involved - insisting, as one might say on the oriented character of fear, as if fear were already made up completely of the locating of the object, of the organisation of the response, of the opposition, of the Entgegendstehen between what is Umwelt and everything which in the subject has to face up to it.

It is not enough to evoke the first reference summoned to my memory by such propositions: I remembered what I believe I had already underlined for you in a little, one cannot call that a short story, notation, impression of Chekov which was translated using the term "frights (frayeurs)". I tried it in vain to inform myself of the title of this short story in Russian; because, inexplicably, none of my Russian-speaking listeners were able to find for me this notation, which is perfectly well located with its year in the French translation, even with the help of this date, in the editions of Chekov which are nevertheless in general produced chronologically. It is peculiar, it is upsetting and I cannot say that I am not disappointed about it - in this notation under the term of "Frights", the frights that Chekov himself experienced - I already pointed out to you once, I believe, what was involved - one day, with a young boy who was driving his sledge - his droschka, I believe it is called, something like that - he is going along a plane, and, in the distance, at sunset, the sun already setting on the horizon, he sees in a church tower which appears, at a range that he could reasonably see its details, he sees flickering through a skylight on a very (3) high storey of the tower to which he knows, because he knows the place, one cannot gain entry in any way, a mysterious inexplicable flame which nothing allows him to attribute to any effect of reflection; there is here obviously the mapping out of something: he makes a short reckoning of what can or cannot account for the existence of this phenomenon and, having really excluded every kind of known cause," he is all of a sudden gripped by something which I believe in reading this text can in no way be called anxiety, he is gripped by what he himself calls moreover, for want obviously of being able to have at present the

Russian term, which was translated by frights - I believe this is what corresponds best to the text - it is of the order not of anxiety, but of fear (peur); and what he is afraid of, is not anything that threatens him, it is something which has precisely this character of referring to the unknown in what is manifesting itself to him. The examples that he gives subsequently under this same heading, namely the fact that one day, he sees passing along the horizon, on the railway, a type of wagon which gives him the impression, to hear his description, of a phantom wagon, because nothing is pulling it, nothing explains its movement: a wagon passes at full speed along the curve of the railway which is there at that moment before him. Where has it come from? Where is it going? This sort of apparition torn away in appearance from any determinism that can be located, here again is something that throws him for a moment into disorder, a veritable panic, which is well and truly of the order of fear: there is no menace there either and the characteristic of anxiety is undoubtedly lacking in this sense that the subject is neither seized, nor involved in this innermost part of himself which is the aspect by which anxiety is characterised, on which I am insisting.

The third example, is the example of a thoroughbred dog which nothing allows him, given the fact that he has completely mapped out everything that surrounds him, whose presence nothing allows him to explain at this time, in this place; he begins to foment the mystery of Faust's dog, thinks he can see the form under which the devil is approaching him; it is well and truly from the side of the unknown that fear develops here, and it is not of an object, it is not of the dog who is there that he is afraid, it is of something else, it is behind the dog.

On the other hand, it is clear that what is insisted on, that the effects of fear have in a way a character of adequation, in (4) principle, namely of unleashing a flight reaction, is sufficiently compromised by what one must indeed put the accent on, that in many cases paralysing fear manifests itself in an inhibiting, even fully disorganising action, indeed can throw the subject into a disarray which is least adapted to the response, least adapted to the finality, which might be supposed to be the adequate subjective form.

It is elsewhere, therefore, that there must be sought the distinction, the reference by which anxiety is to be distinguished from it. And you can well imagine that it is not simply a paradox, a desire to play with an inversion, if I put forward here before you that anxiety is not without object, a formula whose form undoubtedly designates this subjective relationship which is that of a halting-place, a starting-place from which I want to advance further today; because of course the term object has been long prepared here by me with an accent which is distinguished from what the authors have up to now defined as object when they speak about the object of fear.

It is easy to give immediately its support to this vor Etwas of

Freud, of course, because Freud articulates it in the article and in all sorts of ways: it is what he calls the internal danger, Gefahr or Gefährdung, the one which comes from within. As I told you: it is a matter of not contenting yourself with this notion of danger, Gefahr or Gefährdung. Because, if I already signalled earlier its problematic character when an external danger is involved - in other words, what warns the subject that it is a danger if not the fear itself, if not the anxiety - but the sense that the term internal danger can have is too linked to the function of a whole structure that must be preserved, of a whole order of what we call defence, for us not to see that in the very term defence the function of danger is itself implied, but is not for all that clarified.

Let us try therefore to follow the structure in a more step by step way and to designate clearly where we intend to fix, to locate this trait of signal on which indeed Freud dwelt as being the one which is the most proper to indicate to us, to us analysts, the usage that we can make of the function of anxiety. This is what I aim at reaching along the path that I am trying to lead you.

Only the notion of the real, in the opaque function which is the one from which you know I begin in order to oppose to it that of the signifier, allows us to orientate ourselves and to say already that this Etwas before which anxiety operates as a (5) signal, is something which is let us say for man "necessary"- in quotation marks - an irreducible aspect of this real. It is in this sense that I risked giving you the formula that among all the signals, anxiety is the one which does not deceive.

Anxiety then is the signal of the real and - as I told you - of an irreducible mode under which this real presents itself in experience, this is just now, at the point that we are at, the guide, the guiding thread that I would ask you to hold onto to see where it leads us.

This real and its place, is exactly what with the support of the sign, of the bar there can be inscribed the operation which, arithmetically, is called division. I already taught you to situate the process of subjectification in so far as it is at the locus of the Other, under the primary species of the signifier, that the subject has to be constituted; at the locus of the Other and upon the given of this treasury of the signifier already constituted in the Other and just as essential for any advent of human life as everything that we can conceive of in the natural Umwelt. It is with respect to the treasury of the signifier which already awaits him, constitutes the deviation where he has to situate himself, that the subject, the subject at this mythical level which does not yet exist, which only exists starting from the signifier, which is prior to it, which is constitutive with respect to it, that the subject carries out this first interrogative operation: in

0, if
you wish, how many times S?

0	S	X
0	∅	Anxiety
\$	⊕	desire

And the operation being posited here in a certain fashion which is here in the 0 marked by this interrogation appears here, the difference between this response 0 and the given 0, something that is the remainder, the irreducible of the subject, it is o. o is what remains irreducible in this total operation of the advent of the subject to the locus of the Other, and it is from this that it is going to take on its function.

The relationship of this o to the S, the o in so far as it is precisely that which represents the S in a real and irreducible fashion, this o over S, o/S , this is what completes the operation of division, that which in effect since 0, as one might say, is something which has no common denominator, is outside the common denominator between the o and the S. If we wish conventionally to complete the operation all the same, we put as numerator the remainder, o, as denominator the divisor, the S. $\$$ is equivalent to o over S, o/S .

(6) This remainder, therefore, in so far as it is the end (chute), as one might say, of the subjective operation, this remainder, we recognise in it here structurally, in an analogy from calculation, the lost object; this is what we have to deal with, on the one hand in desire, on the other hand in anxiety. We have to deal with it in anxiety, logically, as one might say, before the moment that we have to deal with it in desire.

And if you wish, to connote the three stages of this operation, we will say that here there is an X which we can only name retroactively, and which is properly speaking the approach of the Other, the essential line of sight where the subject has to pose himself and whose name I will give you afterwards. We have here the level of anxiety in so far as it is constitutive of the apparition of the function o and it is at the third term that there appears the ^ as subject of desire.

To illustrate now, to bring alive this no doubt extreme abstraction that I have just articulated, I am going to lead you to the obviousness of the image and this of course all the more legitimately in that it is an image that is involved, that this irreducible of o is of the order of the image.

He who possessed the object of desire and of the law, he who had enjoyed his mother, Oedipus to give him his name, takes this further step, he sees what he has done. You know what happens then. How choose the word, how can one say what is of the order of the unsayable and whose image nevertheless I want to make emerge for you? The fact that he sees what he has done has as a consequence that he sees - this is the word before which I stumble - the moment afterwards his own eyes swollen with their vitreous humours on the ground, a confused pile of filth since - how can we put it? - because since he had torn his eyes from their sockets he had quite obviously lost his sight. And nevertheless it is not that he does not see them, see them as such, as cause-object finally unveiled of the final, the ultimate, no longer guilty, but beyond the limits, concupiscence,

that of having wanted to know.

The tradition even says that it is starting from that moment that he really becomes a seer. At Colonus he sees as far as it is possible to see and so far ahead that he sees the future destiny of Athens.

What is the moment of anxiety? Is it what makes possible this gesture through which Oedipus can tear out his eyes, make this sacrifice of them, this offering, this ransom of blindness in which his destiny is accomplished? Is that what anxiety is, the possibility, let us say, that man has of mutilating himself? No. (7) It is properly that which through this image, I am striving to designate for you: it is that an impossible sight threatens you of your own eyes on the ground.

Here I believe is the surest key that you can always rediscover under whatever style of approach the phenomenon of anxiety presents itself for you.

And then, however expressive, however provocative may be, as one might say, the narrowness of the locality that I designate for you as being that which is circumscribed by anxiety, you should notice that this image is found there as beyond the limits, not because of some preciousness in my choice, it is not an eccentric choice; it is, once I have designated it for you, well and truly frequent to encounter it. Go to the first exhibition currently open to the public, at the Musee des Arts Decoratifs and you will see two Zurbarans, one from Montpellier, the other from somewhere else which represent for you I believe, Lucy and Agatha each one with their eyes on a plate, the match of their breasts. Martyrs, let us say, which means witnesses of what is seen here moreover, that it is not, as I told you, what is possible, namely the fact that these eyes being denucleated, these breasts being torn off, which is anxiety. Because in truth, something which also deserves to be noticed, these Christian images are not especially badly tolerated, despite the fact that some people for reasons which are not always the best are a bit fastidious about them. Stendhal, speaking about San Stefano il Rotondo in Rome finds that these images which are on the walls are disgusting. Undoubtedly in the place he names they are rather lacking in art so that one is introduced, I must say, in a more lively fashion to their signification.

But these charming persons that Zurbaran presents to us, by presenting these objects on a plate, present us with nothing other than something that could be on occasion - and we do not deprive ourselves of it - the object of our desire: in no way do these images introduce us, I think, for the majority of us, to the order of anxiety.

For this, it would be necessary for him to be more personally concerned, for him to be a sadist or a masochist, for example. Once a true masochist, a true sadist is involved, which does not mean someone who can have phantasies that we pinpoint as sadistic

or masochistic, provided they reproduce the fundamental position (8) of the sadist or the masochist, the true sadist, in so far as we can locate, coordinate, construct his essential condition, the true masochist, in so far as we find ourselves, by successive mapping out, elimination, required to push further the plan of his position than what is given to us by others as Erlebnis, an Erlebnis itself more homogeneous, the Erlebnis of the neurotic, but an Erlebnis which is only a reference, a dependence, the image of something beyond, which constitutes the specificity of the perverse position and with regard to which the neurotic takes in a way his reference and his support for ends to which we will return.

Let us try therefore to say what we can presume about what this sadistic or masochistic position is, what the images of Lucy and Agatha may really interest: the key to it is anxiety. But it is necessary to seek out, know why. The masochist - I told you the other day, the last time - what is his position? What masks his phantasy from him? To be the object of a jouissance of the Other which is his own will to jouissance; for after all, the masochist does not necessarily, as a humorous apologue already quoted here reminds you, meet his partner. What does this position of object mask, if it is not to rejoin himself, to posit himself in the function of human rag, of this poor scrap separated from the body which is presented to us here. And this is why I tell you that the aim of the jouissance of the Other is a phantastical aim. What is sought, is in the Other, the response to this essential collapse of the subject into his final misery which is anxiety. Where is this Other that is involved? Here indeed is the reason why there was produced in this circle the third term always present in perverse jouissance: the profound ambiguity in which there is situated an apparently dual relationship is rediscovered here. Because moreover I have to make you sense where I intend to indicate this anxiety to you. We could say - and the thing is sufficiently highlighted by all sorts of features of history - that this anxiety which is the blind aim of the masochist - for his phantasy masks it from him - is nonetheless really what we could call the anxiety of God.

Do I need to appeal to the most fundamental Christian myth to give substance to everything that I am advancing here, namely that if the whole Christian adventure is not engaged in this central, inaugural, attempt, incarnated by a man whose every word is to be reheard again as those of someone who pushed things to their final term of an anxiety which only finds its veritable cycle at the level of him for whom the sacrifice is set up, namely at the level of the father.

God has no soul. That is quite obvious. No theologian has ever dreamt of attributing one to him. Nevertheless the total, radical change of perspective of the relationship to God began with a drama, a passion in which someone made himself the soul of God. Since it is because the place of the soul is also situated at this level of the residue of the fallen object that is involved, that is essentially involved, that there is no living

conception of the soul, with the whole dramatic cortege in which this notion appears and functions in our cultural domain, unless it is accompanied precisely in the most essential fashion by this image of the fall.

Everything that Kierkegaard articulates is only a reference to these great structural reference points. Now then observe that I began with the masochist. It was the more difficult; but as a matter of fact it was the one which avoided confusions. Because one can understand better what a sadist is; and the snare involved here in making of it only the reversal, the other side, the inverted position of the masochist, unless one proceeds - which is what is usually done - in the opposite sense.

In the sadist, anxiety is less hidden. It is even so little so that it comes to the fore in the phantasy, which, if one analyses it makes of the anxiety of the victim an altogether required condition. Only this is the very thing which ought to make us suspicious. What the sadist seeks in the Other - because it is quite clear that for him the Other exists and it is not because he takes him as object that we ought to say that there is some relationship or other that we could call immature or again, as it is put, pregenital, the Other is absolutely essential and this indeed is what I wanted to articulate when I gave you my seminar on Ethics by bringing together Sade and Kant, the essential putting into question of the Other which goes so far as to simulate, and not by chance, the requirements of the moral law, which are indeed there to show us that the reference to the Other as such forms part of his aim - what is he searching for there?

It is here that the texts, the texts that we can hold onto, I (10) mean those which give some hold on an adequate critique, take on their value, of course, a value signaled by the strangeness of some moments, of some detours which in a way detach themselves, explode with respect to the line that is being followed. I will leave you to search in Juliette, even in the One hundred and twenty days, these few passages where the characters, completely occupied in slaking on these chosen victims their greed for torments, enter into this bizarre, singular and curious trance, indicated, I repeat, on several occasions in the text of Sade, which is expressed in these strange words, in effect that it is necessary for me to articulate here: "I had," cries the tormentor, "I had the skin of the cunt".

This is not a feature which is obvious along the track of the imaginable, and the privileged character, the moment of enthusiasm, the character of supreme trophy brandished at the high point of the chapter is something which, I believe, is sufficiently indicative of the following: it is that something is sought which is in a way the reverse (l'envers) of the subject, which takes on here its signification from this feature of the glove turned inside-out which underlines the feminine essence of the victim. It is the passage to the outside of what is most hidden that is involved; but let us observe at the same time that

this moment is in a way indicated in the text itself as being totally impenetrated by the subject, allowing there precisely to be masked here the trait of his own anxiety.

In a word, if there is something for that matter which evokes how little light we can throw on the truly sadistic relationship, that the form of explanatory texts turn aside from the phantasy, if there is something that they suggest to us, it is in a way the instrumental character to which the function of the agent is reduced. That which in a way is hidden, except in a flash, the aim of his action, is the work aspect of his operation. He also has a relationship with God, this is what is exposed everywhere in Sade's text. He cannot take a step forward without this reference to the supremely wicked being and it is just as clear for him as for the one who is speaking that it is God that is involved.

For his part he goes to all sorts of exhausting trouble, even to the extent of missing his goal, to realise - which, thank God, it has to be said, Sade spares us having to reconstruct, for he articulates it as such - to realise the jouissance of God.

I think I have shown you here the game of occultation through which anxiety and object, in the one and in the other, are (11) brought to the forefront, one at the expense of the other term, but how also in the structures there is designated, there is declared the radical link between anxiety and this object in so far as it falls. In that very way its essential function is approached, its decisive function as remainder of the subject, the subject as a real. Undoubtedly this invites us to look again, to place a greater accent on the reality of these objects. And in moving on to this following chapter, I cannot fail to remark the degree to which this real status of objects, already nevertheless located for us, has been left to one side, been badly defined by people who would nevertheless like to consider themselves as the biologising reference points and bearings of psychoanalysis for you.

Is it not the occasion to notice a certain number of outstanding features which I would wish, as best I can and pushing my plough in front of me, to introduce you to. Because the breasts, since we have them there for example on Saint Agatha's plate, is it not an opportunity to reflect, since - it has been said already a long time ago - anxiety appears in separation; but then - we see it clearly - if they are separable objects, they are not separable by chance like the leg of a grasshopper, they are separable because they already have, as I might say, very sufficiently, anatomically a certain stuck on character, they are hung there. This very particular character of certain anatomical parts completely specifies a sector of the animal scale, the one that one calls precisely, not without reason, it is even rather curious that this quite essential, properly speaking signifying character of this trait has been noticed; because after all it seems that there are more structural things than the mammary to designate a certain animal grouping which has many other traits

of homogeneity through which it could be designated.

This trait was no doubt chosen, and it was not a mistake. But it is indeed one of the cases where one sees the fact that the objectifying spirit is itself not uninfluenced by the pregnancy of psychological functions, I would say, to make myself understood by those who have not yet understood, a certain feature of pregnancy which is not simply significant, which induces in us certain significations in which we are very much engaged.

Viviparous-oviparous: a division really made to confuse us. Because all animals are viviparous because they generate eggs in which there is a living being and all animals are oviparous because there is no vivipar which was not vivipared inside an egg.

But why not really give all its importance to this fact which is really completely analogous to this breast which I earlier spoke to you about, that for the eggs which have a certain time of intrauterine life, there is this element, irreducible to the division of the egg in itself, which is called the placenta, that there is here also something stuck on and that in a word it is not so much the child who pumps milk from the mother as the breast, just as it is the existence of the placenta which gives to the position of the child inside the body of the mother its characteristics - sometimes manifested on a pathological plane - of parasitic nesting. You see where I intend to put the emphasis: on the privilege at a certain level of elements that we could qualify as amboceptors.

On what side is this breast? On the side of the one who sucks or on the side of the one who is sucked? And after all I am doing nothing here other than reminding you of something that effectively analytic theory was led to, namely to speak, I would not say indifferently, but with ambiguity in certain sentences, of the breast or of the mother, underlining of course that it is not the same thing. But has everything been said when the breast is qualified as a partial object?

When I say amboceptor, I am underlining that it is as necessary to articulate the relationship of the maternal subject to the breast as that of the suckling to the breast. The cut does not happen in the same place for the two; there are two cuts so distant that they even leave different residues (dechets) for the two. Because the cutting of the cord for the child leaves separated from him droppings (chutes) which are called the envelopes. This is homogeneous with himself and in continuity with his ectoderm and his endoderm.

The placenta is not particularly involved in the affair. For the mother, the cut is placed at the level of the dropping of the placenta, that is even the reason why these are called des caduques and the decay (caducite) of this object o is here what constitutes its function.

Well then, all of this is not meant to make you revise immediately some of the relations deduced, imprudently deduced from a hasty sketching of what I am calling the line of separation where there is produced the dropping, the niederfallen typical of the approach of an o which is nevertheless more essential to the subject than any other part of himself.

(13) But for the moment to make you steer straight towards what is essential, namely for you to perceive where this questioning leads, to the level of castration.

For with castration also we are dealing with an organ, before we get to the castration threat, namely what I have called the possible gesture, could we not, analogously to the image that I produced today before you, see whether we do not have the indication that anxiety is to be placed elsewhere?

Because a phallus, because people are always gargling on about biology, approaching it in an unbelievably frivolous way, a phallus is not limited to the field of mammals. There are a whole lot of insects, all revolting in different ways, from the black beetle to the cockroach, which have what? Stings (des dards). The sting goes a long way in effect in the animal. The sting is an instrument, and in many cases - I do not want to give you a course in comparative anatomy today, I would ask you to refer to the authors, if necessary I will indicate them to you - the sting is an instrument: it is used for hooking on. We know nothing about the amorous enjoyments of the black beetle or the cockroach. Nothing indicates however that they are deprived of it. It is even rather probable that jouissance and sexual union are always in the closest possible relationship.

And what does it matter! Our experience as men and the experience that we can presume to be those of mammals who most resemble us conjoin the locus of the jouissance and the instrument, the sting.

While we take the thing as being self-explanatory, nothing indicates that even where the copulatory instrument is a sting or a claw, an object for hooking on, in any case neither a tumescent nor detumescent object, jouissance is linked to the function of the object.

That jouissance, orgasm in our case, to limit ourselves to ourselves, coincides with as I might say the putting out of action, the putting out of operation of the instrument by detumescence, is something that altogether deserves that we should not hold it to be something, as I might say, which is as Goldstein expresses it, part of the Wesenheit, an essential part of the organism.

(14) This coincidence of approach has nothing rigorous about it once one begins to think about it; and then it is not, as I might say, in the nature of human things. In fact what do we see in Freud's first intuition about a certain source of anxiety?

Coitus interruptus. It is precisely the case in which by the very nature of the operations being carried out the instrument is revealed in its suddenly failed function of being an accompaniment to orgasm, in so far as orgasm is supposed to signify a common satisfaction.

I leave this question in suspense. I am saying simply that anxiety is put forward by Freud in its essential function there precisely where the accompaniment of the orgasmic build-up with what is called the exercise of the instrument is precisely disjointed. The subject can reach ejaculation, but it is an ejaculation outside; and the anxiety is precisely provoked by this fact which is highlighted, what I called earlier the putting out of action of the apparatus, of the instrument of jouissance. Subjectivity, if you wish, is focussed on the collapse of the phallus. This collapse of the phallus, exists in any case in a normally completed orgasm. It is precisely to this that our attention should be directed to highlight one of the dimensions of castration.

How is copulation between man and woman experienced, this is what allows the function of castration, namely the fact that the phallus is more significant in human experience by its collapse, by its possibility of being a fallen object, than by its presence, this is what designates the possibility of the place of castration in the history of desire.

It is essential to highlight this. Because what did I end with the last time, if not by telling you: as long as desire is not structurally situated, is not distinguished from the dimension of jouissance, as long as the question is not that of knowing what is the relationship, and whether there is a relationship for each partner between desire - specifically the desire of the Other - and jouissance, the whole affair is condemned to obscurity.

Thanks to Freud we have the plane of cleavage. That is miraculous in itself. In the ultra-precocious perception that Freud had of its essential character, we have the function of castration as intimately linked to the traits of the decayed (caduc) object, of caducity as characterising it essentially. It (15) is only starting from this decayed object that we can see what is meant by speaking about partial object. In fact I will tell you right away: the partial object, is an invention of the neurotic, it is a phantasy. It is he who makes a partial object of it. As regards the orgasm and its essential relationship with the function that we define as the fall of the most real of the subject, have you not had - those who have here the experience of being analysts - the testimony of it more than once? How often have you been told that a subject had, I am not saying his first, but one of his first orgasms when he had to hand up in a great hurry the copy of a composition or of a drawing that he had to finish quickly and where there was collected what? His work, at the moment when it was absolutely expected that something would be torn from him. The collection of the copies: at that moment he ejaculates. He ejaculates at the high-point of anxiety

of course.

When people speak to us about this famous eroticisation of anxiety, is it not first of all necessary to know what relation anxiety already has with Eros? What the respective aspects of this anxiety are from the side of jouissance and from the side of desire, is what we will try to disengage the next time.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 13 March 1963

СТРАНЫ \j СТРАХА ГЛВЗ*

НЕБ ОСЬ Б ОУСЬ, ГТООН НГГРИЛГГ

Several of you were kind enough to respond to my complaint the last time of not yet having been able to find the Russian term which corresponded to this piece by Chekov which I learned about - I am saying this in passing - through Mr Kaufmann - I will come back to it later. It is Mr Kaufmann himself who, even though he is not a Russian speaker, brought me today the exact text which I asked Smirnoff for example as a Russian speaker to comment on rapidly.

I mean - indeed I scarcely dare to articulate these sounds - I do not know the phonology - to say what is involved in the title, СТсflXW which is the plural of the which **СТPhXB** gives the words that concern dread, fear, anxiety, terror, anguish and poses for us very difficult problems of translation.

It is a little bit - I am thinking about it as an improvisation, I thought of it just now - like what was raised in connection with the problem of colours, whose connotation surely does not overlap from one tongue to another. The difficulty - I already signaled it for you - that we have in grasping the term which in Russian would correspond precisely to anxiety - because this is where our troubles begin - shows it clearly.

In any case, if I correctly understood, from the debates among the Russian speakers here that this word gave rise to, it appears that in one way what I advanced the last time here was correct, namely that Chekov had not intended by this to speak about anxiety.

At this point, I come back to what wanted to render to Kaufmann, it is then very exactly the following: I used this example the last time to clarify, as one might say, in a lateral fashion, the thing whose reversal I was' trying to operate before you, namely to introduce the question, I said that it would be just as legitimate to say in fact that fear has no object; and, as I was going to announce in any case, as I already had done previously, that anxiety, for its part, was not without an object, that had a certain interest for me. But it is obvious

that this absolutely does not exhaust the question of what are these fears or frights or dreads or whatever else, which are (2) designated in the examples of Chekov.

Now, since - I do not think I am misrepresenting him - Mr Kaufmann is trying to articulate something quite precise and focussed precisely on these Chekovian frights, I think it is important to underline that I only made a lateral usage of it and one that was dependent on the one that will be brought forward by him in a work that is to be done later.

And on this point, I think that before beginning today I am going to allow you to profit from a little discovery, due again to Mr Kaufmann, who is not a Russian speaker, which is that in the course of this research he found another term, the most common term for "I am afraid", which it appears is **£iCltO£b**. it is the first word that you see written there in the two sentences; and then, in this connection, he amused himself by recognising that, if I am not mistaken, in Russian as in French, the negation described as expletive, the one on which I put such a stress, because I find in it nothing less than the signifying trace in the sentence of what I call the subject of enunciating, as distinct from the subject of the enunciation, that in Russian also, there is the affirmative sentence, I mean the sentence which designates in the affirmative, the object of my fear, what I fear, it is not that it should not come, it is that it should come, and I say: that it will come (qu'il ne vienne), where I find myself confirmed by Russian, in saying that it is not enough to qualify this expletive ne as discordant, namely to mark the discordance that there is between my fear: since I am afraid that it will come, I hope that it will not come.

Well then, it seems that in Russian we see this with still more specificity - and this goes in the direction of the value that I give this expletive ne - namely that it is indeed the subject of enunciating as such that it represents and not simply his feeling; for if again I understood correctly a little earlier, discordance in Russian is already indicated by a special nuance, namely that the **ZT06** which is there is already in itself a "that not, que ne", but marked by a different nuance. If I correctly understood Smirnoff, the **b** which distinguishes this "**2.TQ&** from the simple "that" of the **Z.T0** in the second sentence, opens, indicates a nuance of the verb, a sort of conditional aspect, in such a way that this discordance is already marked at the level of the letter £> that you see here. Which does not prevent the ne of negation, which is still more expletive therefore, from the simple point of view of the signified, functioning all the same in Russian as in French leaving open then the question of its (3) interpretation and I have just said how I resolve it. There we are!

And now how am I going to get into today's material? I will say that this morning, remarkably enough, thinking about what I was going to produce here, I started all of a sudden to evoke the time when one of my most intelligent analysands - there are still some of those - insistently posed me the question: "What

can be driving you that makes you go to all this trouble to tell them that?" It was in the arid years when linguistics, indeed the calculus of probabilities, had some place here.

In other words, I told myself that after all, it was not a bad angle either for introducing the desire of the analyst to recall that there is also a question of the desire of the teacher (l'enseignant).

I will not give you the word here and for good reasons. But it is striking that when, through a hint of culpability that I experience at the level of what one could call human tenderness, I think of the tranquillities that I am striving for, I am very ready to put forward the excuse - you saw it being highlighted on several occasions - that for example I would not be teaching if the split had not happened.

But it is not true. But, indeed, obviously, I would have liked to devote myself to more limited, more intermittent work; but fundamentally that does not change anything.

In short the fact that one can pose the question of the desire of the teacher to someone is the sign I would say, as Monsieur de La Palisse would say, that the question exists; it is also the sign that there is a teaching. But this introduces us when all is said and done to this curious remark that, where one does not pose the question, it is because there is a professor. The professor exists every time the response to this question is, as I might say, written, written in his appearance or in his behaviour, in this sort of conditioning that one can situate at the level of what, in short, in analysis we call the preconscious, namely of something that one can make emerge, wherever it comes from, from institutions or even from what are called his penchants.

At this level it is not useless to see then that the professor is defined as the one who teaches about teachings, in other words: he carves up teachings. If this truth were better known, that what is involved in fact at the level of the professor is something analogous to a collage, if this truth were better known (4) it would allow them to do it with more consummate art, which precisely the collage which has taken its meaning through a work of art shows us the way to. Namely if they made their collage in a way that is less concerned about fitting together, less restrained, they would have some chance of ending up at the very result that collage aims at, of evoking properly speaking this lack which gives all its value to the figurative work itself, when it succeeds of course. Along this path therefore they would manage to connect up with the proper effect of what is precisely a teaching.

There you are! This then to situate, to pay homage to those who are willing to take the trouble to see by their presence what is taught here, not alone to pay tribute to them, but to thank them for taking this trouble.

On this, for my own part, I am going - because moreover I have sometimes to deal with listeners who only come here in an intermittent fashion - to attempt to make myself for a moment the professor of my own teaching and since the last time I brought you the elements that I believe are sufficiently massive, to recall the major point of what I contributed the last time.

Starting then from the distinction between anxiety and fear, I tried as I reminded you just now, at least as a first step to upset the opposition at which there came to a stop the last development of the distinction between them which is accepted by everyone today.

It is certainly not in the direction of a transition from one to the other that the movement goes. If traces of it remain in Freud, that can only be because of the error of attributing to him the idea of this reduction of one to the other, an error founded on what I reminded you there was in him precisely as a beginning of what in reality is this reversal of positions, in this sense that if he says precisely, despite the fact that at one or other detour of his sentences the term objektlos turns up, he says that anxiety is "Angst vor Etwas", an anxiety about something, it is certainly not to reduce it to being another form of fear, because what he underlines, is the essential distinction between the provenance of what provokes the one and the other.

Therefore it is indeed on the side of the refusal of any emphasis that tends to isolate fear from the entgegenstehen, from what poses itself in front, from fear as response, entgegen precisely, that what I said in passing about fear has to be retained.

(5) On the contrary, it is indeed to recall at first that in anxiety, the subject is, I would say held, concerned, involved in the innermost part of himself, that simply on the phenomenological plane we see already the beginnings of what I tried to articulate further in a more precise fashion. I recalled in this connection the close relationship between anxiety and the whole apparatus of what are called "defences". And on this path I highlighted again, not without having already articulated, prepared it in all sorts of ways, that it is indeed from the side of the real, as a first approximation, that we have to seek anxiety as that which does not deceive.

This is not to say that the real exhausts the notion of what anxiety aims at. What anxiety aims at in the real, that with respect to which it presents itself as a signal, is that whose position I tried to show you in the table called, as I might say, that of the signifying division of the subject in which the X of a primitive

(S)	Jouissance
∅	Anxiety
	desire

namely his becoming as subject, this relationship of 0 over S, according to the figure of a division, of a subject **s** with respect to the 0 of the Other, in so far as it is along this path of the Other that the subject has to realise himself.

It is this subject - I left it undetermined for you as regards

subject moves towards his becoming (avenement),

its denomination in the first terms of these columns of division whose other terms are found posited according to the forms which I already commented on - that I inscribe here as (^).

The end of my discourse, I think, sufficiently allowed you to recognise how at this mythical level, S, prior to any coming into play of the operation, the subject could be denominated, in so far as this term has a sense and precisely for reasons to which we will return, that one cannot in any way isolate it as subject; and mythically we will call it today the subject of jouissance. For, as you know - I wrote it the last time, I believe - the three stages to which they correspond the three moments of this operation are jouissance, anxiety and desire respectively. It is into these stages that I am going to advance today to show not the mediating, but the median, function of anxiety between jouissance and desire.

How could we comment again on this important moment of our presentation, except by saying the following - the different terms of which I would ask you to take in the fullest sense that can be given them - that jouissance would not know the Other, O, except by this remainder o, which henceforth, in so far as I told you that there is no way of operating with this remainder, and (6) therefore that what comes at the lower stage, is the advent, at the end of the operation, of the barred subject, the subject qua implicated in the phantasy, in so far then as it is one of terms which constitute the support of desire. I say only one of the terms; for the phantasy is s in a certain relationship of opposition to o, a relationship whose polyvalence and multiplicity are sufficiently defined by the composite character of this diamond shape, O, which is just as much disjunction, V./, as conjunction, / ^, which is just as much greater, >, and lesser, <, \$ qua term of this operation has the form of division, since o is irreducible, is unable in this fashion of imaging it in mathematical forms, can only represent the remainder, that if division were carried out, further on, it would be the relationship of o to S which would be involved in the

$$\$: \frac{o}{S}$$

o	Ⓢ	<u>Jouissance</u>
<u>o</u>	∅	Anxiety
\$		Desire

What does that mean? That to outline the translation of what I am designating in this way, I could suggest that o has taken on a sort of metaphor-function of the subject of jouissance. It would only be so, it would not be correct except in the very measure that o is assimilable to a signifier: and precisely, it is what resists this assimilation to the function of signifier. It is indeed for that reason that o symbolises what in the sphere of the signifier is always what presents itself as lost, as what is lost to signification. Now it is precisely the residue, this fall, what resists signification, that comes to find itself

constituting the foundation as such of the desiring subject, no longer the subject of jouissance, but the subject in so far as on the path of his search, in so far as he enjoys (il jouit), which is not the search for his jouissance, but it is to want to make this jouissance enter the locus of the Other, as locus of the signifier, it is there on this path that the subject precipitates himself, anticipates himself as desiring.

Now, if there is precipitation, anticipation here, it is not in the sense that this step skips over, goes more quickly than its own stages. It is in the sense that it approaches, on this hither side of its realisation, this gap between desire and jouissance; this is where anxiety is situated. And this is so (7) sure that the moment of anxiety is not absent, as is marked by this way of ordering the terms, in the constitution of desire, even if this moment is elided, not locatable in the concrete, it is essential. I would ask you, for those to whom I need here to suggest an authority for them to have confidence that I am not making any mistake here, to remember in this connection what in the analysis of "Ein Kind wird geschlagen", in the first not only structural but finalist analysis of phantasy given by Freud, Freud for his part also speaks precisely about a second moment, always elided in its constitution, elided to such an extent that even analysis can only reconstruct it. Which is not to say that this moment of anxiety is always so inaccessible at many levels that are phenomenologically locatable. I said anxiety qua intermediary term between jouissance and desire, in so far as it is having gone through anxiety, founded on the moment of anxiety that desire is constituted.

It remains that the rest of my discourse was constructed to illustrate something which had been perceived for a long time, that at the heart of - we do not know how to take full advantage when it is a question for us of understanding to what there corresponds something that in our experience as analysts takes on a different value, the complex of castration - that at the heart, I was saying, of the experience of desire, there is something which remains when desire is "satisfied", that which remains, as one might say, at the end of desire, an end which is always a false end, an end which is always the result of a mistake.

The value taken on by, something you will allow me to telescope in what I sufficiently articulated the last time in connection with detumescence, namely what is manifested, what is represented of this function of the remainder, by the phallus in its exhausted stage. And this synchronic element which is as stupid as a cabbage, or even a cabbage-stalk, as Petrone puts it, is there to remind us that the object drops from the subject essentially in his relation to desire. That the object should be in this drop, is a dimension that must essentially be emphasised to take this further little step to which I want to lead you today, namely what could, with a little attention, already have appeared to you the last time in my discourse, when I tried to show you the shape in which there is incarnated this object o of the phantasy, support of desire.

Did it not strike you that I spoke to you about the breast or the eyes, making these objects o start from Zurbaran, from Lucy and Agatha, where they present themselves under what I might call a (8) positive form? These breasts and these eyes that I showed you there on the plate on which the two worthy saints carry them, or even on the bitter soil where Oedipus' feet carry him, appear here with a sign different from the one I showed you subsequently in the phallus as specified by the fact that at a certain level of the animal order jouissance coincides with detumescence, pointing out to you that there is nothing necessary about this, necessary nor linked to the Wesenheit, the essence of the organism, in the Goldsteinien sense of the word.

At the level of o, it is because the phallus, the phallus in so far as it is, in copulation, not alone the instrument of desire, but an instrument functioning in a certain fashion, at a certain animal level, it is for this reason that it presents itself in the position o with a (-) sign.

This is essential to articulate clearly, to differentiate, something that is important here, from castration anxiety, from what functions in the subject at the end of an analysis when what Freud designates as a castration threat is maintained there. If there is something which allows us to put our finger on the fact that this is a point that can be gone beyond, that it is absolutely not necessary that the subject remains suspended when he is a male at the castration threat, suspended, when she is of the other sex at Penisneid, it is precisely this distinction. To know how we could go beyond this limiting point, what must be known, this is why an analysis guided in a certain direction culminates at this impasse through which the negative which marks the physiological functioning of copulation in the human being finds itself promoted to the level of the subject in the shape of an irreducible lack. This is what will be found again subsequently as a question, as a direction of our path, and I think it is important to have marked it here.

What I subsequently contributed during our last meeting, is the articulation of two very important points concerning sadism and masochism, the essential of which I resume here for you, the essential that it is altogether capital to maintain, to sustain, in so far as by holding onto it, you can give their full meaning to the very elaborated things that are said in the current state of things about what is involved, namely sadism and masochism. What is to be retained in what I enounced there concerns at first masochism, as regards which you can see that, if the authors have really laboured a great deal to the point of taking very far, so (9) far that something I read recently here, was able to surprise me myself, I will mention later an author who took things to my surprise, I must say to my joy also, as close as possible to the point that I will attempt this year, from our own angle here, to lead to you as regards masochism. • The fact remains that this very article, whose title I will give you later, remains, like all the others, strictly incomprehensible for the simple reason that already at the beginning there is in a way elided, because it is there indeed absolutely under his nose, as one might say,

from the evidence, something that I am going to enunciate in a moment. People try, people manage to avoid putting the accent on that which, at first approach, involves, collides most with our finalism, namely the intervention of the function of pain. This, people have managed to understand, is not the essential thing.

Also people have succeeded, thank God, in an experience like that of analysis, in seeing that the Other is aimed at, that in the transference one can perceive that these masochistic manoeuvres are situated at a level which are not without a relationship to the Other.

Naturally many other authors take advantage of it to go no further, to jump on an insight whose superficial character can be seen at a glance, however handy it has shown itself to be in certain cases. For having only arrived at this level, one cannot say that the function of narcissism, which an author who is not without a certain talent for presentation, Ludwig Heidelberg, has emphasised, is something that can suffice for us. This is what, without at all having made you penetrate for all that into the structure - as we will be led to do - of masochistic functioning, what I wanted simply to stress the last time, because what the light which illuminates the details of the table in a completely new way, is to remind you of what is given apparently immediately - this is why it is not seen in the masochist's perspective, in the most banal approach to these perspectives - that the masochist is aiming at the jouissance of the Other; and what I stressed the last time as another term of that for which I intend to put forward everything that will allow there to be undone, as one might say, the manoeuvre which is hidden by this idea, is that what he is aiming at, what he wants, this of course being the eventual term of our research, of which he can only be fully justified by a verification of the moments which prove that it is the final term, the last term is what he is aiming at, the anxiety of the Other.

(10) I said other things that I intend to remind you of today, it is the essential of what is irreducible in it that you must retain, at least until you can make your judgement on what I have organised around it.

On the side of sadism, with an entirely analogous remark, namely that the first term is elided and that it has nevertheless the same obviousness as on the side of masochism, what is aimed at in sadism in all its forms, at all its levels, is something which also promotes the function of the Other, and that precisely there what is open to view is that what is sought is the anxiety of the Other, just as in masochism, what is masked by that, is, not at all, by an inverse process of reversal, the jouissance of the Other - sadism is not the reverse of masochism for the simple reason that they are not a reversible couple, the structure is more complex, I insist on it, even though today, I am only isolating two terms in each; to illustrate if you wish what I mean, I would say that, as you might assume after several of my essential schemas, they are functions with four terms, they are if you wish squared functions, and that the passage from one to

the other is carried out by a rotation of a quarter of a turn and not by any symmetry or inversion.

You do not see this appearing at the level that I am now designating for you. But what I pointed out to you the last time is hidden behind this search for the anxiety of the Other, is in sadism the search for the object o. It is to this that I brought as a reference, an expressive term taken from Sadean phantasies "the skin of the cunt". I will not recall for you now this text from Sade's work.

We find ourselves therefore between sadism and masochism in the presence of that which at the second level, at the level hidden from the perspective of each one of these two tendencies, is presented as the alternation, in reality the reciprocal occultation of anxiety in the first case, of the object o in the other (sadism).

I will end with a brief reminder which returns to what I already said precisely about this o, this object, namely the emphasising of what I could call, essentially, the manifest character that we know well, even though we do not perceive its importance, the manifest character with which is marked what? The mode in which there enters this anatomy which Freud is wrong to say without any further precision, is destiny.

(11) It is the conjunction between a certain anatomy, the one that I tried to characterise for you the last time at the level of the object o by the existence of what I called the caduques, namely precisely what exists at only a certain level, the mammal level, among the organisms, the conjunction between the caduques and something which is effectively destiny, namely the agalma, through which jouissance has to confront itself with a signifier, namely the mainspring of the limitation to which in the case of man the destiny of desire is submitted, namely this encounter with the object in a certain function, in so far as this function localises him, precipitates him onto this level which I called that of the existence of caduques and of everything which can serve as caduques, a term which will help us among others to explore better, I mean to hope to give an exhaustive catalogue and limit of the frontiers, the moments of cutting, where anxiety can be expected, and to confirm that it is indeed there that it emerges.

Then, I ended, I remind you, by one of the best known clinical examples with a reminder of the close connection, to which we will have to return, and which because of this fact is much less accidental than is believed, the conjunction, I am saying, between orgasm and anxiety in so far as both the one and the other together can be defined by an exemplary situation, the one that I defined in the form of a certain expectation of the other - and of an expectation which is not an indifferent one - the one that, in the shape of a blank page or not, the candidate must hand up at a particular moment is an absolutely gripping example of what can be for him for an instant the o.

After all these reminders, we are going to try to advance a little further. I will do it along a path which is not perhaps, as I said, quite the one that I would have determined on of my own accord. You will see later what I mean by that. There is something that I pointed out to you in connection with counter-transference, namely how women seem to be more at ease in the area. Have no doubt about it: if they are more at ease about it in their writings, theoretically, it is because I presume, they do not manage it too badly either in their practice, even if they do not see, do not articulate - for on this after all why not credit them with a little mental restriction - if they do not articulate its mainspring in a very obvious and clear fashion.

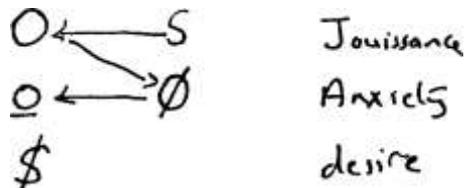
(12) What is at stake here obviously is to attack something which is of the order of the relationship (ressort) of desire to jouissance. Let us note at first the fact that it seems, if we refer to some works, that women understand very very well what the desire of the analyst is. How does that happen? It is certain that we have to take things up here again at the point that I left them with this table, by telling you that anxiety is the middle term between desire and jouissance. I will put forward here some formulae that I will leave each of you to find your way about in from your own experience; they will be aphoristic. It is easy to understand why. On a subject as delicate as the still undecided one of the relationships between man and woman, to articulate everything that could render licit, justify, the permanence of a necessary misunderstanding, could not avoid having the altogether degrading effect of allowing each one of my listeners to drown his personal difficulties, which are very much on this hither side of what I am going to aim at here, in the assurance that this misunderstanding is structural.

Now, as you will see if you know how to listen to me, to speak about misunderstanding here is not at all equivalent to speaking about a necessary failure. I do not see why, if this real is always implicated, the most effj.cacious jouissance could not be reached along the very paths of misunderstanding.

From these aphorisms then, I will choose, I would say strongly - the only thing that distinguishes the aphorism from doctrinal development is that it renounces a preconceived order - I would advance here some forms. For example this one which may speak to you in a fashion, as one might say, less likely to have you rolling about laughing, this formula that only love allows jouissance to condescend to desire. We will put forward some others also which are deduced from our little table where it is shown that o as such, and nothing else, is the access, not to jouissance, but to the Other, that it is all that remains, from the moment that the subject wants to make his entry there, into that Other. The following finally, to dissipate, it seems, to the final term, this term, this poisonous ghost from the year 1927, of oblativity invented by the grammarian Pichon - God knows that I recognise the merit of his grammar - regarding whom one cannot regret too much that what one might call an absent analysis, left him entirely in the presentation of psychoanalytic theory, left him entirely captured in the ideas that he

previously had and which were none other than Maurrasian ideas.

When S reemerges from this access to the Other, it is the unconscious, namely this, the barred Other, O , as I told you earlier, all that remains to him is to make of O something of which it is less the metaphorical function which is important than the dropping relationship in which he is going to find himself with respect to this o .



To desire the Other, O , then, is never anything but to desire o . It remains, since it is from love that I began in my first aphorism, that to treat of love, as to treat of sublimation, it must be remembered what the moralists before Freud - I am speaking of those of the good tradition, and specifically of the French tradition, the one which passes, into what I called its scansion in "The man of pleasure" - what the moralists had already fully articulated, and whose acquisition it would be well for us not to consider as out of date, that love is the sublimation of desire. From this it results that we cannot at all make use of love as first or of final term. However primordial it may present itself to be in our theorisation, love is a cultural fact; and as La Rochefoucauld well articulated it, it is not simply "how many people would never have loved if they had never heard speak of love", it is: there would be no question of love if there were no culture.

This ought to encourage us to pose elsewhere the arches of what we have to say concerning - because this is what is involved, at this point that Freud himself says it, underlining that this detour could have been produced elsewhere, and I will come back to why I am doing it now - therefore we have to pose differently the arches of this subject of the conjunction between man and woman. I continue my aphoristic way.

If we have to refer to desire and to jouissance we will say that, to put myself forward as desiring, eron, is to put myself forward as lack of o , and that what must be sustained in our account is the following, the fact is that it is along this path that I open the door to the jouissance of my being. The aporic character of my position, I think, cannot fail to appear to you, nor to escape you. But there are a few more steps to be taken. The aporic character, do I even need to underline it in passing, I will come back to. For I think that you have already grasped, because I told you it a long time ago, that if it is at the level of eron that I am, that I open the door to the jouissance of my being, it is quite clear that the closest decline which presents itself to this enterprise, is that I should be appreciated as eronemos, namely as lovable, something which without fatuousness does not fail to happen, but in which there can be already read that something has gone wrong in the business. This is not

(14) aphoristic, but already a commentary. I thought I ought to give it for two reasons: first of all because I made a kind of little lapse by using a double negation, which ought to warn me of something, and secondly, I thought I glimpsed the miracle of incomprehension shining on certain faces.

I continue. Every exigency for o along the path of this enterprise, let us say, since I have taken the androcentric perspective, of encountering a woman, cannot but unleash the anxiety *o2* the other, precisely because of the fact that I no longer make her anything but o, that my desire o -'s her, as I might say. And here, my little circuit of aphorisms bites its own tail: this indeed is the reason why sublimation-love allows jouissance, to repeat myself, to condescend to desire.

What noble propositions! You see that I am not afraid of the ridiculous. This may sound a little bit like preaching to you, which is obviously something one cannot fail to run the risk of every time one ventures onto this terrain. But it seemed to me that all the same you are taking your time to have a good laugh. I can only thank you for it and I start off again.

I will only start off again today for a brief moment. But allow me again to take a few small steps: because it is along the same path with an air that has, like that, for you a little appearance of heroism that we can advance in the opposite direction, by noting very curiously once more, confirming the non-reversibility of their journeys, that you are going to see arising something which will appear to you perhaps to have a less conquering tone.

What the Other necessarily wants along this path which condescends to my desire, what he wants even if he does not know at all what he wants, is nevertheless necessarily my anxiety. For it is not enough to say that the woman, to name her, overcomes her's by love. We will return to it, we will have to see.

Let us proceed along the path that I chose today. I still leave to one side - this will be for the next time - how the partners are defined at the beginning. The order of things in which we are involved always implies that it should be so, that we should take things up en route, and even occasionally at the arrival; we cannot take them up at the start.

In any case, it is in so far as she wants my jouissance, namely to enjoy me - this can have no other meaning - that the woman (15) stirs up my anxiety, and this for the very simple reason inscribed for a long time in our theory; the fact is that there is no desire realisable on the path that we are situated on unless it implies castration. It is in the measure that jouissance is involved, namely when she is aiming at my being, that the woman can only reach me by castrating me. Let this not lead you - I am speaking to the masculine part of my audience - to any resignation as regards the always manifest effects of this primary truth in what is called in a classificatory term conjugal life. For the definition of a primary ananke has absolutely

nothing to do with its accidental incidences. It nevertheless remains that one clarifies many things by articulating them properly. Now to articulate as I have done, even though it overlaps experience in the most manifest fashion, is precisely what runs the danger that I have signaled on many occasions, namely that one sees what is called in common language a fatality, which means that it is written down. It is not because I say it - that you must think that it is written down. Moreover if I wrote it I would put more shape on it; and this shape would consist precisely in entering into detail, namely in giving the why.

Let us suppose - something which is obvious - that with reference to what I made the key of this function of the object of desire, the woman - which is quite evident - does not lack anything. Because one would be completely wrong to consider that Penisneid is a final term. I told you already that this would be the originality on this point of what I am trying to advance before you this year.

The fact that she has nothing to desire on this point - and perhaps I will try to articulate very very precisely why anatomically; for this affair of the clitoris-penis analogy is far from being absolutely grounded: a clitoris is not simply a smaller penis, it is a part of the penis, it corresponds to the cavernous bodies and to nothing else; now, a penis, as far as I know, except in the case of hypospadias, is not limited to the cavernous bodies; this is only a parenthesis - the fact of having (16) nothing to desire along the path of jouissance does not absolutely settle for her the question of desire, precisely in the measure that the function of o for her as for us plays its full role. But all the same, this question of desire, simplifies it a lot; I mean for her; not for us; in the presence of their desire. But after all to interest themselves in the object as object of our desire, creates far fewer complications for them.

Time is passing. I am leaving things at the point that I was able to bring them to.- I think that this point is sufficiently tempting for many of my listeners to want to know what comes next.

To give you some foretaste of it, to announce to you the fact that I intend to bring things to the level of the function of the woman, in so far as it may allow us to see further at a certain level in the experience of analysis, I will tell you that, if a title can be given to what I will enunciate the next time, it would be something like "The relationship between the woman as analyst and the position of Don Juan".

Seminar 15: Wednesday 20 March 1963

Today we are going to move forward. We will try to articulate why, in order to situate anxiety for you, I am led, I announced that I will have to deal with this central field, already outlined in the Seminar on Ethics, as being that of jouissance. You already know through a certain number of approaches, and specifically the one that I made that year, that it is necessary to conceive of this jouissance so mythically, that we ought to situate its point as profoundly independent of the articulation of desire, because desire is constituted on this hither side of the zone which separates jouissance and desire from one another and which is the break (la faille) where anxiety is produced.

It is understood of course - and I said enough about it for you to sense it - that I am not saying that desire in its status does not concern the real other, the one who is involved in the jouissance; I would say that it is normative that desire does not concern this other, that the law which constitutes it as desire does not manage to concern it in its centre, that it only concerns it eccentrically and to one side, o substitute for O.

And therefore all the Erniedrigungen, all the degradations of love life punctuated by Freud which come to emerge, are the effects of a fundamental irreducible structure. This is the gap that we have no intention of masking, though on the other hand we think that the castration complex and Penisneid which flourish here, are not themselves the final terms for designating it.

This domain, the domain of jouissance, is the point where as I might say, the point thanks to which woman proves herself to be superior precisely in this, that her link to the knot of desire is much looser. This lack, this "minus" sign, with which the phallic function is marked for man, which means that for him his liaison to the object must pass by this negating of the phallus by the castration complex, this necessity which is the status of the **(-p)** at the centre at man's desire, is something which for the woman is not a necessary knot.

This does not mean that she is for all that without a relationship to the desire of the Other; but precisely, it is indeed with the desire of the Other as such that she is in a way affronted, confronted. It is a great simplification that, as regards this confrontation, this phallic object only comes second

for her and in so far as it plays a role in the desire of the Other.

(2) This simplified relationship with the desire of the Other, is what allows the woman, when she works in our noble profession, to be with respect to this desire in a relationship which, it must be said, is manifested each time she approaches this field designated in a confusing way as that of counter-transference, in a relationship which we sense is much freer, this of course notwithstanding each particularity that she may represent in what I might call an essential relationship.

It is because, in her relationship to the Other, she does not hold to it as essentially as the man, that she has this greater freedom essentially, Wesentlich. What does that mean in a particular case? That means she does not hold to it as essentially as man does as regards the nature of jouissance.

And here I cannot avoid having to remind you, along the same line as that which the other day I incarnated for you at the level of the fall (chute) of Oedipus' eyes, that Tiresias, the seer, who ought to be the patron of psychoanalysts, was blinded, by an act of vengeance of the supreme goddess, Juno, the jealous one; and as Ovid explains very well to us in the third book of the Metamorphoses, from verse 316 to verse 338 - I would ask you to consult this text of which Mr T S Eliot in a note to The Wasteland underlines what he calls the very great anthropological interest - if Tiresias offended Juno, it is because, consulted like that, for a joke - the Gods do not always measure the consequences of their acts - by Jupiter who for once was having a relaxed relationship with his wife and teasing her about the fact that undoubtedly "the pleasure that you experience is greater" - he is the one who is speaking - "than that experienced by the man". But then he says: "But, by the way, what am I thinking of? Tiresias was a woman for seven years". Seven years, every seven years - the baker's wife changed her skin, sang Guillaume Apollinaire - Tiresias changes sex not by simple periodicity, but because of an accident: he met the two coupling snakes, the ones we see in our caduceus, and he was unwise enough to disturb their coupling. We will leave to one side the meaning of these snakes that one cannot unknot without running such great danger. It is by renewing his attempt that he also rediscovers his first position, that of a man.

(3) In any case, for seven years he was a woman. This is why he can testify before Jupiter and Juno, that whatever might be the consequences he must testify to the truth and corroborate what Jupiter says: it is women who enjoy (jouissent).

Their jouissance is greater, whether it is a quarter or a tenth more than that of the man - there are more precise versions. The proportion does not matter much because it only depends, in short, on the limitation his relationship to desire imposes on man, namely what I am designating as situating the object for him in the negative column, the (-\$>) . Contrary to what the prophet of absolute knowledge teaches this man, namely that he makes his

hole in the real, which is called negativity in Hegel, what is involved is something else: the hole begins at the bottom of his belly, at least if we want to remount to the source of what constitutes for him the status of desire. Obviously it is here that a post-Hegelian Sartre, with what I would call his marvellous talent for misleading, has slipped in his own image, the one that you know well, the image of the little child that he makes a born bourgeois for us, as a way naturally of giving flavour to the affair, who sticks his finger into the sand of the beach, mimicing in his eyes and for our intention an act which is supposed to be the fundamental act. Of course starting from there a well-deserved derision can be exercised against the pretention of this new shape that we have given to the little man which is in man, namely that now we incarnate this little man in the child, without noticing that the child deserves all the philosophical objections that were made against the little man.

But after all beneath this figure in which Sartre represents it for us, it works, because what does it make resonate in the unconscious? Well then, by God, nothing other than this engulfment into the womb of mother earth desired by his whole body, whose meaning Freud unveils in a proper sense when he says textually at the end of one of the chapters of Hemmung, Symptom und Angst that the return to the maternal womb is the phantasy of someone who is impotent [cf SE XX 139].

Thus the orphan child that Sartre tries to hatch out in this man and whom through all his work, he urges to share the only glue of existence, will allow itself to be this phallus - the accent here is on the to be - the phallus that you can see by incarnating it in an image which is within the range of your research, the one that is found hidden in the valves of these little animals that are called razor fish and if that is lacking in your experience, (4) I hope that all of you have been able to see them on occasion suddenly .sticking out their tongues at you in the soup tureen where you put those you have collected, a procedure carried out the way you collect asparagus with a long penknife and a simple length of wire that one hooks under the sand.

I do not know whether you have all seen that already, in the opisthotones, these tongues emerging from the ra-zor back; in any case it is a unique spectacle that you should treat yourself to if you have not already seen it, and whose relationship appears to me quite obvious with this phantasy, on which you know Sartre insists in La Nausee, of seeing such tongues dart out suddenly from a wall or from any other surface, this according to the thematic that rejects the image of the world into an unfathomable facticity.

Well then, one might ask: "So what?" I do not believe that in order to exorcise the cosmos - because when all is said and done that is what is involved; it is to undermine, after the fundamental terms of theology, the cosmology which is of the same nature of course - I do not believe that it is this curious usage of tongues which is the right path, but much more rather than to

believe it to be, like earlier, essentially redoubled by Wesentlich - and I would like to have been able to score it for you in many others - I find myself in a Babel-like atmosphere which will end up, if I am roused, by making it one of the key points of what I have to defend.

In any case, this reference indicates to you why my own experience of what one sees on the beach, when one is a small child on the beach, where one cannot make a hole without water rising up in it, well then, to be frank, it is an irritation which also rises - but in me - at this oblique approach of a crab always ready to hide his intention of pinching your fingers.

A crab is very skillful! You could give him a pack of cards to shuffle - it is much less difficult than opening a mussel, which is something he does every day - well then, even if there are only two cards, he will always try to mix them up.

So it is said for example: the real is always full. That has an effect, that sounds a little bit like what is said here which lends credence to it, that of a genuine Lacanism. Who speaks like that about the real. I do.

The problem for me, is that I never said that. The real is full of holes and one can even make a vacuum in it. What I say, is that it does not lack anything, which is quite different.

(5) I added that if you makes pots, even if they are all the same, it is quite certain that they are different pots. It is even quite extraordinary that, under the name of the principle of individuation, this still gives just as much trouble to classical thought.

Look where we are still at in Bertrand Russell: to sustain the distinction between individuals, it is necessary to mobilise the whole of time and space, which, you must admit-, is a real joke.

The next phase for my pots, is that the identity, namely what is substitutable between the pots, is the void around which the pot is made. The third phase is that human action began when this void was barred, to be filled with what is going to constitute the void of the pot next to it, in other words when to be half full is the same- thing for a pot as to be half empty, in other words when it is not leaking all over the place.

And in every culture, you can be sure that a complete civilisation already obtains when there are the first ceramics.

I sometimes contemplate in my house in the country a very beautiful collection that I have of vases. Obviously, for these people, at that time, as many other cultures bear witness, it was their principal wealth; but in these vases, obviously, even if we cannot read what is magnificently, luxuriously, painted on their sides, translate it into an articulated language of rituals and myths, we know that in these vases there is everything, that this is enough, that the

relationship between man and the object and desire is here completely tangible and surviving.

This is what moreover, to take a step backwards, legitimises this famous mustard pot which made one of my colleagues gnash his teeth for more than a year to the point that I, nice as I always am, ended up by putting it back on the shelf with the pots of glue, even though, as I told him from the beginning, this mustard pot served me as an example, by the fact that it is - you know well, it is something striking in experience - that on the table it is always empty, that there is never any mustard except when it gets up your nose.

There we are! Now this having been said, it remains that on the usage of these pots, since recently there was posed for us a problem of this order, I am not looking at all as you might think at Piera Aulagnier, who is a clear-headed person in the way that women know how to be - and that is even what she is blamed for - knows very well that it is allowable to put the label "gooseberry jam" on the pot which contains the rhubarb. It is enough to know (6) what one wants to purge by this means and wait to collect what one wanted from the subject.

All the same, when I bring you here batteries of tarted-up pots - for do not believe that it is ever without having broken a lot of them; I also, in my time, gave whole discourses in which the action, the thought, the word, did the rounds in a way that made symmetry stink, well then, it has been thrown in the waste paper basket.

When I put impediment on top of the column which contains acting-out, embarrassment at the top of the next one which contains the passage a l'acte, if you wish, Piera, to distinguish the cases of acting-out that you have so carefully observed, if you wish to distinguish it as being what you call transference in act (transfert agi) - which is of course a distinct idea of your own, which deserves discussion - it nevertheless remains that it is to my table that you refer since you invoke in the text the embarrassment that your subject found himself in. And since this term is scarcely used outside of this place, it is here that you have noted it down.

Now it is manifest in the observation that the patient had been impeded by the midwife from attending the birth of his offspring, outside the maternal gates, and it is the dismay of being incapable of overcoming a new impediment of this order which threatens him, which precipitates him to throw the police into anxiety by the written claim of the right of the father to what I would call illiophagia, to specify the notion which is there to represent the image of the devouring of Saturn: because after all it is written in this observation that this gentleman presents himself at the police station to say that there is nothing in the law which impedes him from eating his baby who had just died. On the contrary it is obviously the embarrassment into which he is plunged on this occasion by the calmness of the policeman - who did not come down in the last shower - and the shock of the

dismay that he wanted to provoke which makes him act impulsively] (passer a l'acte), with acts of a kind that have him put in prison.

So then, not to recognise, when obviously you are involved, that I could not find a better observation to explain what you know, that you are really involved, that you have put your finger on it, this is a certain betrayal of yourself, which of course could not be reproached to a person when what is involved is handling something like that which has been freshly minted. One could well put a little in it. But this all the same authorises me to recall that my own work is only of interest when it is properly used - this is not addressed to you, Piera, it is (7) not a matter of using it, as people have got into the habit, the bad habit of doing with respect to notions which are in general grouped together in teaching in a sort of collecting together which is only done for decoration. Having recalled this about what gives you the right to watch over what I bring you, what I have chosen for you with so much care, I take up my remarks again.

And to come to the woman, I also am going to try with one of my observations, to make you sense what I mean as regards her relationship to jouissance and to desire.

Here then is a woman who one day - the coordinates of longitude and latitude - remarks to me that her husband, whose insistence, as I might say, is the foundation of their marriage, has abandoned her for a little too long a time for her not to notice it. Given the way that she always receives what she senses from him as being more or less clumsy, this is rather a matter of relief to her.

Nevertheless, I am all the same going to extract a sentence in which - do not rush immediately to smell an irony which it would be quite wrong to attribute to me - she expresses herself as follows: "It does not matter to me whether he desires me or not, provided he does not desire someone else".

I would not go so far as to say that this is the common or the regular position. This can only take on its value from what follows ^{ixi} the constellation as it is going to be unfolded by the associations which make up this monologue. Here then she is going to speak about her own state, she speaks about it - one swallow does not make a summer - with a particular precision. Tumescence not being the privilege of the man, I think, I am not surprised that she, who has a quite normal sexuality - I am speaking about this woman - should testify, should say that, if for example when she is driving something alarms her which moves her say: "Good God! a car!", well then, inexplicably, this is what strikes her that day: she becomes aware of the existence of a vaginal swelling which she notes as responding at certain times to the sudden emergence in her field of any specific object whatsoever which in appearance is quite foreign to sexual images or space. This state, she says, which is not disagreeable, but rather inconvenient in its nature, goes away by itself.

At that point, she says, it bothers me to link up with what I am going to tell you, because of course it is not related. She tells me then that every one of her initiatives is dedicated to me, to myself. "I say it is" - I think you have understood for a some time: I am her analyst - "I cannot say consecrated, that (8) would mean doing it with a certain aim. No, any object whatsoever obliges me to evoke you as a witness, not even to have the approval of what I see. No, simply the look. In saying that, I am even going a little too far. Let us say that this look helps me to get its meaning from everything."

At this point, the ironic evocation of the theme encountered at a younger stage of her life, of the well-known title of the play by Steve Fasseur "Je vivrai un grand amour". Had she experienced at other moments of her life this reference to the other? This made her refer back to the beginning of her married life, then go further and testify in effect to the one who had been in effect, the one who is never forgotten, her first love.

It was a student from whom she was quickly parted, with whom she remained in correspondence in the full sense of the term. And everything that she wrote to him, she says, was really "a tissue of lies".

"I created a character bit by bit, what I wanted to be in his eyes, and what I in no way was. It was, I fear, a purely romantic enterprise which I pursued in the most obstinate way". To envelop myself, she says, in a kind of cocoon. She adds very gently: "You know, it was not easy for him to get over it..... "

At this point, she comes back on what she does with reference to me personally: "What I am striving to be here is the complete opposite: I try always to be true with you. I am not writing a novel when I am with you; I write it when I am not with you" . She returns to the weaving, always thread by thread, of this dedicating of every gesture which is not necessarily a gesture which she thinks would please me, nor even one which is necessarily one that agrees with me. It cannot be said that she forces her talent. What she wants after all, is not so much that I should look at her, it is that my look should come to substitute for her own: "It is the help of yourself that I summon. My own look is not enough to capture everything that is to be absorbed from the outside. It is not a matter of watching me doing something, it is a matter of doing something for me."

In short, I will finish here with something that I still have a large page on from which I only wish to extract the only word of bad taste which occurs on this final page:

"I am," she says, "operated by remote control, which is not in any way a metaphor, believe me. There is no feeling of being influenced. But if I make use of this formula, it is in order to remind you that you may have read in the papers about this left- (9) wing figure who after being conned in a bogus assassination attempt, thought he ought to give this immortal example that in politics the left is in effect always remotely controlled

by the right. This is the way moreover that a strict relation of parity can be established between these two parts."

So then where does all of this lead us? To the vase, to the feminine vase: is it empty, is it full? It does not matter, since even if it is, as my patient says, to be consumed stupidly, it is sufficient in itself. It lacks nothing. The presence of the object there is, as one might say, an addition. Why? Because this presence is not linked to the lack of the object cause of desire, to the ^{to} which it is linked in man. The anxiety of man is linked to the possibility of not being able, hence the myth which makes of the woman - it is a completely masculine myth - the equivalent of one of his ribs: this rib has been taken out of him, it is not known which one, and moreover, he is not missing any of them. But it is clear that in the myth of the rib what is involved precisely is this lost object, that woman for man is an object who is made with that.

Anxiety exists in the woman also. And even Kierkegaard, who must have had more of the nature of Tiresias probably than I have - I am fond of my eyes - Kierkegaard says that the woman is more open to anxiety. Must we believe this? In truth what is important for us, is to grasp its link to what we can call the infinite, indeterminate possibilities of desire around her in her field. She tempts herself in tempting the other, which is a way that the myth can also be of use to us here. After all, anything can be used to tempt him, as the complement of the earlier myth shows, the famous history of the apple; any object whatsoever, even one that is superfluous for her. For after all, what is she doing with that apple? She does not know what to do with it any more than a fish would. But it happens that this apple is already good enough to hook for her the little fish, to hook the fisherman on the line. It is the desire of the other which interests her. To put the accent a little bit better, I would say that it is the price of this desire in the market - for desire is a mercantile thing: there is a share listing of desire which rises and falls culturally - it is on the price that one gives to desire on the market that there depends at every moment the style and the level of love.

In so far as it itself is a value, as the philosophers put it very well, it is from the idealisation of desire that it is made up. I say the idealisation, for it is not at all as a sick (10) person that our patient earlier spoke in this way about the desire of her husband. That it is important to her is love. That it is not all that important for him to manifest it is not necessary, but it is in the order of things.

In this respect, experience teaches us that in the jouissance properly speaking of the woman, which merits - and it is perhaps a good thing - there being concentrated on her all sorts of attentions from her partner, the impotence, properly speaking, the technical mistakes, the impotence of this partner may be very well accepted. And this can also be seen when a fiasco occurs, as Stendhal pointed out to us a long time ago, that in the

relationships where this impotence is long-lasting, and where it seems that if on occasion, after some time, one sees the woman taking to herself some assistant with a reputation for being more efficacious, this is rather through a kind of shame, so that it will not be said that she is being refused it, for whatever reason.

In passing, I remind you of my formulae about masochism that I gave the last time. They are designed, as you will see, to restore to masochism, whether it is the masochism of the pervert, or moral masochism, or feminine masochism that is involved, a unity that is otherwise difficult to grasp. And you will see that feminine masochism takes on a quite different, rather ironic, meaning if this relationship of occultation in the other of the alleged, apparent jouissance of the other, the occultation by this sort of jouissance of the other of an anxiety which it is undoubtedly a question of awakening.

This gives to feminine masochism a quite different import which can only be laid hold of by clearly grasping first what must be posited at the beginning, namely that it is a masculine phantasy.

The second thing, is that in this phantasy in short, it is by procurement and in relation to this structure imagined in the woman, that man makes his jouissance be sustained by something which is his own anxiety, something which overlaps for man the object and the condition of desire. Jouissance depends on this condition. Now desire for its part, only covers anxiety. You see then the distance that remains for it to travel to have jouissance within its range. For the woman, the desire of the other is the means for what? For her jouissance to have what I might call an appropriate object! Her anxiety is only before the desire of the other which she does not know very clearly when all is said and done what it covers. And to go further in my formulae, I would say that because of this fact in the kingdom of the man there is always some imposture present.

(11) In that of the woman, as we already said at one time - remember the article by Joan Riviere - if something corresponds to it, it is the masquerade; but it is something quite different. Woman in general is much more real and much truer in the fact that she knows what the ell she dealing with in desire is worth, that she passes through this in a very tranquil manner, that she has, as I might say, a certain contempt for her misapprehension, a luxury which the man cannot offer himself. He cannot have contempt for the misapprehension about desire, because it is his quality as a man to prize it. To allow his desire to be seen by a woman is obviously anxiety-provoking in some cases. Why? Because it is to allow there to be seen (laisser voir)- and I would ask you in passing to note the distinction between this dimension of allowing there to be seen compared to the voyeurism-exhibitionism couple, it is not simply to show it and to see it: there is the allowing it to be seen for the woman, for whom at most the danger comes from the masquerade - what is to be allowed to be seen, is what is there of course. If there is not much, it is anxiety-provoking: but it is always what is there, instead of

letting her desire for the man be seen, it is essentially letting there be seen what is not there.

So, you see, that you should not believe for all that that this situation, the proof of which may appear rather complex to you, is to be seen as all that hopeless. If undoubtedly it did not represent it to you as easy, could you ignore in it the access for man to jouissance. It remains nonetheless that this is quite manageable if one is only expecting happiness from it.

This remark being conclusive, we will go into the example which I find myself in short in a position to allow you to take advantage of, from the favour that we all owe Granoff for having introduced it here, namely Lucia Tower.

As I told you: in order to understand what Lucia Tower tells us about two males she was dealing with, I do not believe I can find a better preamble than the image of Don Juan.

I have worked over the question again a good deal these days for you. I cannot make you go through the labyrinth again. Read this appalling book which is called: Die Don Juan Gestalt by Rank; a cat could not find her kittens in it; but if you have -che thread that I am going to give you, it will appear much clearer.

Don Juan is a feminine dream. What is necessary in this case, is a man who is perfectly at ease with himself, who in a certain fashion with respect to men, the woman can pride herself on (12) being, a man to whom nothing is lacking. This is perfectly tangible in the term to which I will have to return in connection with the general structure of masochism, which is that Don Juan - this sounds really banal to say it to you - the relationship of Don Juan to this image of the father, qua uncastrated, namely a pure image, a feminine image.

The relationship can be clearly read in what you find in the labyrinth and in the detours of Rank, that what is involved in Don Juan, if we can manage to, link him to a certain state of myths and of rituals: Don Juan represents, Rank tells us - and here he is following his nose - the one who in olden days is capable of damning a soul without losing his own for all that. The famous jus primae noctis is supposed to be based on this, the existence, which you know is mythical, of the priest who deflowers on the first night, is here in this zone.

But Don Juan is a beautiful story which works and has its effect, even for those who do not know all its niceties, which undoubtedly are not absent from Mozart's song and which are to be found in the Marriage of Figaro rather than in Don Giovanni.

The tangible trace of what I am putting forward to you about Don Juan, is that the complex relationship of man to his object is effaced for him, but at the price of accepting his radical imposture. The prestige of Don Juan is linked to an acceptance of this imposture. It is always there, at the place of another:

it is, as I might say, the absolute object.

Note that it is not at all said that he inspires desire. If he slips into women's beds, one does not know how he is there. One could even say that he does not have one either, that he is in a relationship with something vis-a-vis which he fulfills a certain function. This something, call it the odor di femina, and that takes us a good way. But desire plays so little part in the affair, that when the odor di femina passes he is capable of not noticing that it is Dona Elvira, namely someone with whom he has supped to the full, who has just crossed the stage.

It has to be said, he is not what for the woman is an anxiety-provoking character. It can happen that the woman really senses herself to be the object at the centre of a desire. Well then, believe me, it is then that she really flees! We are now going to enter, if we can, into Lucia Towers' story.

(13) She has two men - I mean in analysis. By God, as she tells it, she always had very satisfying relations with them from a human point of view.

Do not imagine I am saying that the affair is simple, nor that they do not hold out for a long while. They are two anxiety neurotics. At least that is the diagnosis that she posits, having examined everything carefully.

These two men who have had, as it should be, some difficulties with their mothers, and with what are called "female siblings", which means sisters, but which situates them as being equivalent to brothers, these two men now find themselves intimately acquainted with women, we are told, that they have well and truly chosen in order to exercise a certain number of aggressive and other tendencies, and to protect themselves in this way from a penchant, that by God is not analytically contestable, for the other sex.

"With both men", she tells us, "I was quite aware of the contributions which they themselves made to the difficulties with their wives, namely that both were too submissive, too hostile, in a sense too devoted, and both wives", she tells us - for she enters boldly into an appreciation of the point of view with a lorgnette - "were frustrated for lack of sufficient uninhibited masculine assertiveness from their husbands", a way of affirming themselves as men in an uninhibited way. (cf 240)

In other words - we immediately enter into the heart of the subject, she has her ideas about things - they do not pretend enough. For her part, of course, without knowing what might trap her in this, she herself feels very "protective", a little too "protective" although differently in the case of the first man: she protects, she tells us, his wife a little bit too much, and in the second case him a little bit too much.

In fact, what reassures her, is that she has a much greater attraction for the second, and this - you have to read the things

all the same in their innocence and their freshness - because the first one has all the same some "psychosexual problems" that are not too attractive.

This one, the first one, shows himself in a way which is not all that much distinguished from that of the other. Both really tire her with their mumbling, their halting speech, their circumstantiality - that means they go on and on - their repetitiveness, and minutiae. But after all she is an analyst: what she notices in the first one, is this tendency to attack her own power as an analyst.

The other has a different tendency: for him it is rather a matter of taking an object from her than properly speaking of destroying it as frustrating. And of course in this connection, she says to herself: "Well now, after all, by God, it is perhaps because the second one is more narcissistic."

*In fact this does not hold up, as those who have a little culture can remark, with the other references that we have about narcissism. For on the other hand it is not so much narcissism which concerns him here as what is called the anaclitic aspect, as she will clearly see from what follows.

Moreover on the other hand, she tells us, however long, however fastidious may be the path which is taken with the one and the other without anything showing the efficacy of the analysis of transference, it nevertheless remains that there remains in all of this something which does not have anything fundamentally disagreeable about it, and that in fact all the counter-transference responses that she perceives in herself do not at all, she says, reasonably go beyond this limit where one could say that any female analyst would risk losing her way in connection with such valuable characters if she were not on her guard. She is very specially so. And very especially, she pays attention at what is happening on the side of this woman over whom she watches perhaps a little more specifically: the wife of her first patient. She learns that she has had a little psychosomatic accident. She says to herself: "By God, that's not too bad. Since what I feared, was that she was drifting towards a psychosis, here we have an anxiety that is well bound."

And then she thinks no more about it. She thinks no more about it and the situation continues, namely that one may well analyse everything that happens in the transference, and therefore even the use made of it in his analysis by the patient - I am speaking about the first one that is involved - of his conflicts with his wife, to obtain from his analyst all the more attention, to obtain from her the compensations that he had never found with his mother, still no progress is made.

What is going to release things, make them progress? A dream, she tells us, which happens to her, to her the analyst. A dream in which what happens? In which she sees that perhaps it is not all that sure that things are going so badly for this woman. First of all because in the dream she welcomes her, the analyst,

extremely well, that she shows her in all sorts of ways that she has no intention - this is in the dream - of torpedoing the analysis of her husband - which was one of the presuppositions of the business - and that this woman is therefore prepared to show (15) a disposition that we would call, to translate the atmosphere of the dream, a cooperative one.

This makes our analyst, Lucia Tower, prick up her ears. She understands that there is something to be completely revised. This chap is really someone who in his home really tries to do everything necessary to make his wife more comfortable, in other words, the desire of this gentleman, is in no way as aimless as all that. Our little pal takes himself seriously all the same; there is a way of dealing with him, in other words, he is capable of taking himself for what is at stake, the dignity of which had been refused him up to then: to take himself for a man, to get involved in the game. When she makes this discovery, when she re-orientes her relationship to the desire of her patient, when she perceives that she has miscognised up to now where things were situated, she can really undertake with him a revision of everything that had been played out with her up to then in a deceptive way. The claims of the transference were themselves an imposture. And, she tells us, from that moment on everything changes. But how does everything change and in what sense?

You have to read her to understand that it is at that moment that the analysis becomes something particularly difficult to tolerate. For, she says, from that moment on everything happens in the midst of this storm of depressive movements and of naked rage, as if he were putting me the analyst to the test in each one of my smallest fragments.

If a moment of inattention, she tells us, meant that each one of these little fragments does not sound right, if one of them was sham, I had the feeling that my patient would shatter into pieces.

She herself qualifies as best she can - she does not see everything but she clearly names what she meets up with - that what is involved is something, she tells us, which really belongs to phallic sadism couched in oral language.

What are we going to retain from this? Two things: firstly the confirmation by the very terms that are used of what I designated for you as being the nature of sadism - for the not entirely attractive anomalies of the patient are certainly of this order - that what is sought for in the sadistic search is this little fragment which is lacking in the object: it is the object, and it is a search for the object that is involved in the way in which, once the truth of his desire has been recognised, the patient behaves.

(16) This to show you also that it is in no way masochistic to put oneself in the line through which the search for the sadistic object passes. Our Lucia Tower does not accuse herself of any such thing and we have no need either to impute it to her.

Simply she draws a storm down on herself, and - she underlines it with a particular courage - with respect to a character with whom she only entered into a relationship from that moment when his desire interested her.

She does not conceal that it is in function of the fact that she herself is in a posture of rivalry with the characters of his history and that obviously that his desire was not entirely involved in her, that she supports therefore the consequences of this desire to the point that she experiences this phenomenon that the analysts circumscribe and have called "carry-over", which means report or designate where most obviously one can denote the effects of the counter-transference when you continue to think about a patient when you are with another one. And nevertheless, she tells us, all of this, when I had almost reached the end of my tether, disappeared by chance "amusingly", really in the most amusing and sudden fashion, which means that going on holidays during one of the annual breaks, well, by God, goodness, she notices that nothing remains of this business, this business is of absolutely no interest to her, namely that she is really incarnating in the freest and most airy mythical position Don Juan as he leaves the room where he has committed his usual idiocies.

After this break, her efficacy, her adaptation in this case and, as I might say, the implacable nakedness of her look is very essentially possible in the measure that a relationship which for once is only a relationship to a desire as such, however complex moreover you may suppose it to be - and she indicates that she also has her problems - is never when all is said and done anything but a relationship with which she can keep her distance. It is on this point that I will continue the next time.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 26 March 1963

....[it is] because of our Lucia Tower that I find myself to have taken here as an example, from a certain angle of what I would call the "facilities of the feminine position" - this term facility (facilite) having an ambiguous import - as regards its relationship to desire; let us say that what I formulated consisted in this sort of lesser implication which, as someone in the analytic position, allowed her to reason it out for us, let us say, in her article on "Countertransference", if not more soundly, at least more freely. It is certain, if you read this text, that it is in the measure and through what I would call her "internal self-criticism" she noticed that through the effect of what she calls - here soundly enough - her counter-transference she had neglected something about what one could call the correct appreciation or orientation of the desire of her patient, that, without her properly speaking telling us what she said to him at that moment, because she does not tell us anything, except that she returned once again to the "transference requirements" of this patient, but by straightening things out for him, therefore she was only able in doing this to give him the impression that she was sensitive to what she herself had just discovered, namely that this patient, in brief, was paying great attention to his wife, was more "the manager" of what was happening in the conjugal circle than she had suspected. It seems indeed that because of this - we can only trust her, for this is the way she expresses herself - that the patient is only able on this occasion to translate this rectification in these terms - which are those of Lucia Tower herself - that in short the patient's own desire is much less deprived of a hold on his analyst than he believed, that effectively it is not ruled out that up to a certain point he can make something of this woman who is his analyst, bend her (la courber) - "to stoop" in English; "She stoops to conquer", is the title of one of Sheridan's [Goldsmith's] comedies - bend her to his desire. This at least is what Lucia Tower tells us in her own words. This does not mean of course - she also underlines this - that there is any question even for a moment of this happening; she is, in this respect, as she tells us, very sufficiently on her guard, she is not a baby - indeed, when is a woman one! - in any case "too aware of" - this is the term she uses - she is well and truly on her guard. But that is not where the question lies. Through this intervention, this rectification which appeared to

the analysand here as a concession, as an opening out, the desire of the patient is truly put back in its place; what is really the whole question, is that he had never been able to find this place. This is what his anxiety neurosis is. What she encounters at that moment, is - we said it the last time - this unleashing in the patient of what she expresses, namely: from this moment on, I was subjected to a pressure, which means that I was scrutee, scrutinsee, as they say in English "to scrutinise", in a way that felt to me that I could not make the slightest false move. If it appeared for a single instant that I was not up to responding to what I was being tested on, cell by cell, well then, it is my patient who would fall apart.

Having therefore, for her part, sought the desire of the man, what she encounters as a response, is not the search for her own desire, it is the search for o, for the object, for the true object, for what is involved in desire which is not the Other, O, which is this remainder, this o, the true object.

It is here there lies the key, there lies the accent of what I would like today, among other things, to demonstrate to you. The fact that she sustains this search, this is what she calls herself having more masochism than she had believed. Here - I told you this because she wrote it - you should clearly understand that she is wrong: she is not at all suited to enter into the masochistic dialogue, as her relationship with the other patient, the other male that she fails so well with - as you are going to see - sufficiently demonstrates. She simply holds out very well, even though it is exhausting, that she is able for no more, as I told you the last time, as her vacation approaches, luckily there are vacations, and, as I told you, in a way that is for her as surprising as it is amusing, "amusingly", in its suddenness, suddenly she perceives that after all all of this, once it has stopped, it does not last very long. She gives herself a shake and thinks about something else, why? It is because after all she knows very well that he can always search, that there has never been any question of him finding. This is precisely what is involved: for him to realise that there is nothing to find. There is nothing to be found there, because that which for the man, for male desire in this case, is the object of the search only concerns, as I might say, himself. This is the object of my lecture today.

What he searches for, is the (-0); it is, as I might say, what he is lacking. It is a male or a mens' affair. She knows very well - let me say it and do not get too worked up about it - she knows very well that she is not missing anything or rather - we will return to it later - the mode in which lack operates in female development is not to be situated at this level, at the place that it is sought by the desire of the man when what is involved properly speaking - and this is why I emphasised it at first - is a sadistic search: to make sprout up what ought to be at the place, in the partner, at the supposed place of the lack. This (3) is what he has to give up as lost. I am saying that because in the text she articulates extremely well that what they did together, is this work of mourning. Once he has given up this

search as lost, namely the hope of finding on this occasion in his partner, in so far as she had posed herself, without knowing too well - it has to be said - what she was doing, as a female partner, when he has given up as lost the hope of finding in this partner his own lack, (-\$>), the primary fundamental castration of the man, as I have designated it for you here - you should note - at the level of its biological root, of the particularities of the instrument of copulation at this level of the animal scale, when he has given it up as lost - it is Lucia Tower who tells us this - everything is going to work out well, namely that we are going, with this gentleman who had never up to then reached this level, to be able to enter into what you will allow me on this occasion **zo** call "the Oedipal comedy", in other words we are going to be able to enjoy ourselves: it is Daddy who did all that! Because when all is said and done this is what is involved, as has been known for a long time, remember Jones and the moralisches Entgegenkommen, the concession to moral intervention: if he is castrated, it is because of the law. We are going to play out the comedy of the law, we are much more comfortable there; it is well known and it has been mapped out. In short, we see the desire of our gentleman taking the paths already traced by what? Precisely by the law, demonstrating once more that the norm of desire and of the law are one and the same thing.

Do I make myself sufficiently understood? Not sufficiently, because I have not told you the difference, what was there before and what is gone beyond at this level as a stage and thanks to this mourning. What was there before, was properly speaking transgression (la faute): he carried all the burden, all the weight of his (-^>). He was - remember the use that I made at one time of the passage of St Paul - he was "a sinner beyond all measure".

I take the next step then: the woman has indeed, as you see, no trouble and, let us say, up to a certain point, runs no risk in seeking what is involved in the desire of the man. But I cannot do less on this occasion than to remind you of the celebrated passage of the text attributed to Solomon which I quoted a long time before this seminar, and which I give you here in Latin where it takes on all its savour: "Tria sunt difficilia mihi," says the wise king, "et quartum penitus ignoro" - there are four things about which I can say nothing, because they leave no trace: "viam aquilae in coelo" - the track of the eagle in the heavens, that of the snake on the earth, that of the ship in the sea - "et viam viri in adolescentula" and the track of man, the accent is put even on the young girl. No trace. What is involved here is desire, and not what happens when it is the object as such that is put forward. This leaves to one side therefore the effects, on the adolescentula, of many things, (4) beginning with the exhibitionist and behind that the primal scene. But it is something different that is involved here.

So then how should we tackle things in order to conceive of how there operates in the case of the woman this thing that we suspect, where she also has a way into lack - it is

sufficiently dinned into our ears - with this business of Penisneid? It is here that I believe it necessary to emphasise the difference: for her too of course there is also the constitution of the object o of desire, since as it happens women also speak. One may regret it, but it is a fact. She also for her part also wants the object, and even an object in so far as she does not have it. This is what Freud explains to us, that for her this claiming of the penis will remain up to the end essentially linked to the relationship to the mother, namely to demand. It is in dependence on the demand that there is constituted this object o for the woman. She knows very well - dare I say: something knows in her - that in the Oedipus complex what is involved is not to be stronger, more desirable than the mother - at bottom she notices quickly enough that time is on her side - it is to have the object. The fundamental dissatisfaction that is involved in the structure of desire is, as I might say, pre-castrational. If it happens that she becomes interested in castration, ^{as} such, it is in so far as she enters into the man's problems, it is secondary, it is deutero-phallic as Jones very correctly articulated it, and it is around this that there turns the whole obscurity of the debate that, when all is said and done, has never been disentangled, about this famous phallicism of the woman, a debate in which I would say, all the authors are equally right, for want of knowing where the articulation really is. I am not claiming that you are going to keep it in mind immediately in a sustained, present, lively and locatable fashion, but I intend all the same to take you right through it along a sufficient number of paths for you to end up by knowing where it passes and where something is skipped over when peopxe theorise. For the woman, it is initially what she does not have as such which is going to become, to constitute at the beginning the object of her desire; while at the beginning for the man it is what he is not, it is where he fails. That is why I made you advance along the path of the Don Juan phantasy. The phantasy of Don Juan - and this is why it is a feminine phantasy - is this wish in the woman for an image which plays its function, its phantastical function, that there is at least one man who has it from the beginning, which is obviously, from the point of view of experience, an obvious miscognition of reality, but much better still: that he always has it, that he cannot lose it. What the position of Don Juan in the phantasy implies precisely, is that no woman can take it from him, this is what is essential and it is obviously - this is why I have said that it is a feminine phantasy - what he has in this case in common with the woman whom, of course, one cannot take it from, because she does not have it. What the woman sees in the homage of masculine (5) desire is that this object, let us say, let us be prudent, becomes something belonging to her. This means nothing more than what I have previously put forward: that it should not be lost. The lost member of Osiris, such is the object of the quest and of the protection of the woman. The fundamental myth of the sexual dialectic between man and woman is here sufficiently accentuated by a whole tradition, and moreover what "psychological" (in inverted commas) experience, in the sense that this word has in the writings of Paul Bourget, about the woman does not tell us is that a woman always thinks that a man loses himself, goes astray

with another woman. Don Juan reassures her that there is a man who never loses himself in any circumstance.

Obviously there are other privileged, typical fashions of resolving the difficult problem of the relationship to o for the woman, another phantasy, if you wish. But in truth, this is not the genuine article, she is not the one who invented it. She finds it ready made. Of course to be interested in it, it is necessary that she should have, as I might say, a certain sort of stomach; I envisage, if I may say here in the order of the normal, this type of rugged fucker which St Teresa of Avila gives us the most noble example of, access to which, a more imaginary one, is given by the type of the woman who falls in love with priests, another notch: the erotomaniac. The nuance, the difference between them is, as I might say, at the level at which the desire of man collaborates in a more or less imaginary fashion as being entirely confused with the o. I alluded to St Teresa of Avila, I could also have spoken about Blessed Marguerite Mary Alacoque, she has the advantage of allowing us to recognise the very form of the o in the Sacred Heart. For the woman who loves priests, it is certain that it is in the measure that something that we cannot simply describe crudely as institutionalised castration is enough to establish, it is all the same in this direction - you are going to see that we are going to advance - that the small o as such is put forward in a perfectly isolated way, proposed as the elective object of her desire. For the erotomaniac, there is no need for the work to be prepared: she does it for herself.

And now we have come back to the earlier problem, namely what we can articulate about the relationships of man - it is he, he alone, who can give us its key - of the relationship of these diverse o's which are proposed or impose themselves or which one more or less disposes of, to what is not discerned, is not defined, and is not distinguished as such, namely giving its final status to the object of desire, in this relationship to castration.

I would ask you to return for a moment to my mirror stage. Once upon a time a film was shown which was made somewhere in England; in a school which made a specialised effort to harmonise what infant observation could give us compared to psychoanalytic development, the value of this document being all the greater (6) because this observation, this shooting, was made without the slightest preconceived idea. It involved, because the whole field of what can be observed had been covered, the confrontation of the little male and female baby with the mirror. The initial and terminal dates that I had given were, by the way, fully confirmed in it. I remember that this film was one of the last things to be presented at the Society Psychanalytique de Paris before we separated from it. The separation was very near and it was perhaps viewed at that time a little distractedly; but I had, I assure you, all my wits about me and I still remember this gripping image in which the little girl confronted with the mirror was represented. If there is something which illustrates this reference to the non-specularisable, which illustrates,

which materialises, concretises this reference to the non-specularisable which I put forward last year, it is indeed the gesture of this little girl, this hand which passes rapidly over the gamma of the junction of the tummy and the two thighs like a kind of moment of vertigo before what she sees.

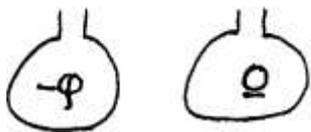
The little boy for his part, the poor clown, looks at his little problematic tap. He vaguely suspects that it is something a little bizarre. For his part, he has to learn - at his own expense as you know - that, as one might say, what is there does not exist, I mean compared to what Daddy has, to what his big brothers etc...., have, you know the whole first dialectic of comparison. He will subsequently learn that, not only does it not exist, but that it wants to know nothing or more exactly that it behaves exactly as it wishes. In a word, it is only step by step in his individual experience, that he has to learn to erase it from the map of his narcissism, precisely so that it can begin to be of some use. I am not saying that it is all that simple, it would be really senseless to attribute that to me. Of course, naturally, as soon as, as I might say, the more it is buried, the more it remounts to the surface and, when all is said and done, that this operation - I am only giving you an indication here, but after all an indication which will link up, I think, sufficiently with what has been indicated to you about the fundamental structure of what is ridiculously called perversion - that this operation here, is the source of homosexual attachment. Homosexual attachment is: I play the game of the loser wins. At every moment in homosexual attachment, it is this castration which is at stake, and this castration which assures the homosexual, that it is really it, the , which is the object of the game. It is in the measure that he loses that he wins.

Now then I come to illustrate something which to my astonishment gave rise to problems the last time in my reminder of the mustard pot. One of my particularly attentive listeners said to me: "That went down well, that mustard pot, at least there were a certain number of us who were not too put off by it. But now you are introducing the question of the contents. You half fill it with what?" So let's go at it. The (-f) is the emptiness of the vase, the same one as defines the homo faber. If woman, we are told, is primarily a weaver, man undoubtedly is the potter and this is even the only angle through which there is realised in the human species a grounding for the jingle which tells us, the thread is for the needle like the girl is for the boy; this kind of reference which claims to be natural, is not as natural as all that.

The woman, of course, presents herself under the appearance of a vase. And obviously this is what deceives the partner, the homo faber in question, the potter. He imagines that this vase may contain the object of his desire. Only look carefully where that leads us, it is inscribed in our experience, it has been spelled out step by step - and this is what removes from what I am telling you any kind of appearance of deduction, of reconstruction - the thing was perceived without in any way starting from the proper place in the premisses, but it was

perceived well before understanding what it meant. The phantastical presence of the phallus, I mean of the phallus of another man, at the bottom of this vase is a daily object of our analytic experience. It is quite clear that I do not need to return once again to Solomon to tell you that this presence is an entirely phantastical presence. Of course, there are things which are found in this vase, things that are very interesting for desire: the egg for example; but after all it comes from the inside and proves to us that if there is a vase, the schema must be complicated a little bit more. Of course, the egg can take advantage of the encounters that the fundamental misunderstanding prepares, I mean that it is not useless for it to encounter here the sperm, but after all parthenogenesis is not excluded in the future and meanwhile insemination can take on quite different forms. Besides, it is, as I might say, in the back room of the shop that there is found in this case the really interesting vase, the uterus. It is objectively interesting, it is also psychically so to the highest degree, I mean that once there is maternity, it is largely sufficient to invest the whole interest of the woman, and when pregnancy arrives all these stories about the desire of the man become, as everyone knows, slightly superfluous.

So then since we have to do it let us come to the pot we mentioned the other day, to the honorable little pot of the first ceramics and let us identify it with (-0). Allow me for the



purposes of demonstration to put here for a moment in a neighbouring little pot what for man can be constituted as o, the object of desire. It is an apologue; this apologue is designed to emphasise that o

only has meaning for man when it has been poured back into the emptiness of primordial castration.

(8) Therefore this cannot be produced in this form, namely constituting the first knot of male desire with castration, unless on3 starts from secondary narcissism, namely at the moment that o is detached, falls from i(o), the narcissistic image. There is there what I would call, indicating it today in order to return to it, and besides - I think that you remember it - not introducing here anything that I have not already emphasised, a phenomenon which is the constitutive phenomenon of what one can call the "edge". As I told you last year in connection with my topological analysis, there is nothing more structuring of the shape of the vase than the shape of its edge, than the cut by which it is isolated as vase.

At a time - now distant - when there was outlined the possibility of a veritable logic remade in accordance with the psychoanalytic field - it is still to be done, even though I have given you more than one beginning for it - a major and a minor logic, I am saying logic not dialectic, at the time when someone like Imre Hermann had begun to devote himself to it in what was certainly a very confusing fashion, for want of any dialectical articulation - but after all this has been outlined - the phenomenon that he qualifies as Randbevorzugung, of choice, of preference by the

phenomenal analytic field for "edge" phenomena had already been - I will come back to it with you - articulated by this author.

This edge of the little pot, of the castration-pot is an edge, for its part, that is completely round, as I might say, completely straight forward. It has none of these complicating refinements to which I introduced you with the Mobius strip and which it is easy moreover, as I showed you - you remember it, I think - once on the blackboard, to realise with a quite material vase: it is enough to join up two opposite points of its edge while in the process turning back the surfaces in such a way that they join up like in the Mobius ribbon and we find ourselves before a vase on which, in a surprising fashion, one can pass with the greatest of ease from the inside face to the outside face without ever having to cross the edge. That happens at the level of other little pots and it is here that anxiety begins.

Of course a metaphor like this is not enough to reproduce what must be explained to you. But that this original little pot has the closest relationship with what is involved as regards sexual potency, with the intermittent springing forth of its force, is what everything that I could call a series of images, that are easy to put before your eyes, of an eroto-propaedeutics, indeed even properly speaking of an erotics, gives a quite easy access to. A crowd of images of this type, Chinese, Japanese and others and, I imagine ones that are not difficult to find either in our culture, will bear witness to it for you. This is not what is anxiety-provoking. That the decanting (transvasement) here allows us to grasp how the o takes on its value because it comes into the pot of ($\sim\langle p \rangle$), takes on its value by being here -o, the (9) vase half-empty at the same time as it is half-full - this is what I told you the last time - it is obvious that to really complete my image it is necessary that I should underline that it is not the phenomenon of decanting that is essential, it is the phenomenon to which I have just alluded of the transfiguration of the vase, namely that this vase here becomes anxiety-provoking, why? Because what comes to half-fill the hollow constituted from the original castration, is the small o in so far as it comes from elsewhere, that it is only supported, constituted through the mediation of the desire of the Other. And it is there that we rediscover anxiety and the ambiguous shape of this edge which, because of the way it is made at the level of the other vase, does not allow us to distinguish either the inside or the outside.

Anxiety therefore comes to constitute itself, to take its place in a relationship beyond this emptiness of what I might call a first phase of castration. And this is why the subject has only one desire as regards this primary castration, which is to return to it.

I will speak to you at length, after the interruption that we are going to have, about masochism and there is of course no question of my tackling it today. If you want to prepare yourselves for it, to understand me about it, I am giving now - it is a lapse on my part if I did not do it earlier when I began to speak to you -

information about an article, which is extremely precious because it is the fruit of very substantial experience. It is an article by a man who is indeed one of those in connection with whom I feel the greatest sorrow that circumstances deprived me of his collaboration, it is the article by Grunberger: "Esquisse d'une théorie psycho-dynamique du masochisme" in the April-June 1954, number 2, of volume XVIII of the Revue Française de Psychanalyse. I do not even know if this article has been given the fate it merits elsewhere; but whether this forgetfulness is due to the fact that it appeared in the shadow of the display surrounding the foundation of the Institut de Psychanalyse, is something I will not try to settle. But you will see there - this is not at all the final word - you will see noted - I am only invoking it here to show you right away the value of the material that one can find in it - you will see noted, at the high point of the day-by-day observation of the analytic session, how having recourse to the very image of castration, to the fact that I would like them to be cut off, can come as a peaceful, salutary outcome to the anxiety of the masochist. What we have here - I underline it - is not a phenomenon which is the final word of this complex structure; but moreover on this point I have sufficiently initiated my formula for you to know that I am on this occasion, I mean as regards the link between anxiety and masochism, aiming at a point which is quite different to this point within what I could call the momentary dismay of the subject. It is only an indication that I find there. But this phase of castration in so far as the subject returns to it, in so far as it becomes a point he aims at, brings us back to what I (10) already emphasised at the end of one of my last seminars about circumcision.

I do not know, Stein, where you have got to in the commentary that you are pursuing of Totem and Taboo and whether this has yet led you to tackle Moses and Monotheism. I think that you cannot but come to it and be struck in it then by the total avoidance of what is nevertheless a structuring problem if one is to find in the Mosaic institution something which reflects the inaugural cultural complex, namely what was on this point the function of the institution of circumcision. You should notice that in any case there is something in this removal of the prepuce which you cannot fail to connect with this funny little twisted object that I one day passed around among you in a material way, so that you could see how it is structured once there has been realised in the shape of a little piece of cardboard, this result of the central cut on what I illustrated, incarnated for you here in the shape of the cross-cap, in order to show you how this isolation of something, which is defined precisely as a shape incarnating as such the non-specularisable, can have to do with the constitution of the autonomy of the o, of the object of desire.

That something like an order can be brought into this hole, this constitutive failure of primordial castration, is what I believe circumcision incarnates in the proper sense of the word. The circumcised person, and circumcision, have by all their coordinates, all the ritual, indeed mythical configuration, the primordial initiatory entrances which are those where it

operates, the most obvious relationship with the normativizing of the object of desire. The circumcised person is consecrated, though less consecrated to a law than to a certain relationship to the Other, to the big O, and that is the reason why the small o is involved. It remains that we are, at the point that I intend to bring the fire of sunlight, namely at the level that we can find in the configuration of history something which is supported by a big O, who is there more or less the God of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, it remains to be seen what circumcision signifies. It is extremely astonishing that in a milieu as Judaeic as the psychoanalytic milieu, that texts gone over a hundred thousand times, from the Fathers of the Church to the Fathers of the Reformation, that is to say up to the eighteenth century - and again, to tell you the fruitful periods of the Reformation - that these texts have not been reinterrogated. No doubt what we are told in Chapter XVII of the Book of Genesis, concerning the fundamental character of the law of circumcision in so far as it forms part of the pact given by Yahweh in the bush, the reference of this law to the time of Abraham - this is what Chapter XVII consists of, it is to date the institution of circumcision from Abraham, no doubt this passage is, it seems, an addition according to critical exegesis, a Priestly addition, namely very noticeably later than the Yahwistic and the Elohist tradition, namely than the two primitive texts from which the books of the law are composed - we have nevertheless in Chapter XXXIV the famous episode which does not lack humour which concerns - as you know - the rape of Dinah, the sister of Simeon and Levi, the daughter of Jacob. To get her - because it is a matter for the man from Shechem who kidnapped her of getting her from her brothers - Simeon and Levi demand that they should be circumcised: "We cannot give our sister to an uncircumcised man, we would be dishonoured". We have obviously here the superimposition of two texts, and we do not know whether it is a single man or all the Shechemites who are done at the same time, in this proposition of an alliance which, of course, could not be made in the name of just two families, but of two races, all the Shechemites have themselves circumcised; the result is that they are out of action for three days which the others take advantage of in order to come and butcher them. It is one of those charming episodes which Monsieur Voltaire could not understand and which made him say so many bad things about this book which is so admirable as regards the revelation of what is called the signifier as such.

This is all the same done to make us think that it is not simply from Moses that the law of circumcision dates. Here I am only highlighting the problems raised in this connection.

Undoubtedly all the same, because Moses is involved and because Moses in our domain is recognised as being an Egyptian, it would not be altogether useless for us to pose the question of what is involved as regards the relationship of Judaeic circumcision with the circumcision of the Egyptians.

This will make me apologise for prolonging again, let us say by five or seven minutes, what I have to say to you today so that

what I have written on the board will not be lost for you.

We have the assurance, through a certain number of authors in antiquity and specifically this old Herodotus who no doubt talks nonsense in some places, but who is often very precious, and in any case who leaves no kind of doubt that at his time, namely at a very low time for the Jews, the Egyptians on the whole practiced circumcision; he even makes such a prevalent state of it that he says that it is to the Egyptians that all the Semites of Syria and of Palestine owe this usage. A lot has been said on this point; after all we are not at all forced to believe him. This he bizarrely puts forward in connection with the Colohidians which he pretends are an Egyptian colony. But let us leave that to one side.

He makes of it, Greek as he is - and after all at his time, he could scarcely have made anything else of it - a measure of cleanliness. He underlines for us that the Egyptians prefer being clean, *katarrinao*, to what is described as a beautiful appearance, hence Herodotus, Greek as he is, does not conceal from us that it seems to him that to circumcise oneself is always (12) to disfigure oneself a little.

We have luckily more direct testimonies and supports about Egyptian circumcision. We have two testimonies that I will describe as iconographic - you will tell me that this is not a lot - : one is from the old empire, it is at Saqqarah in the tomb of Doctor Ank Maror (?). It is said that he is a doctor because the walls of the tomb are covered with figures of operations. One of these walls shows us two representations of circumcision, the other is to the right of this one, I have represented for you the one on the left; I do not know how I succeeded in making readable or whether I succeeded in making readable my drawing which has as an ambition to limit itself and to emphasise perhaps a little in this case the lines as they are presented; here is the boy who is being circumcised and here is the organ. A boy, who is behind him, holds his hands because it is necessary; a personage who is a priest, about whose description I will say no more today, is here; in one hand - it is the left hand - he holds the organ of the other, this oblong object is a stone knife. This stone knife, we rediscover in another text which has remained up to now completely enigmatic, a biblical text which says that after the episode of the Burning Bush, when Moses is advised that nobody in Egypt remembers, more exactly that all of those who remembered the murder that he carried out of an Egyptian, have disappeared, that he can return; he returns and, on the way, the biblical text tells us - on the road where he stops, it used to be translated in a hostelry; but let us leave that - Yahwe attacks him in order to kill him. This is all that is said. Zipporah, his wife, then circumcises her son who is a small child and touching Moses, who is not circumcised, with the prepuce protects him mysteriously by this operation, by this contact, from the attacks of Yahweh who then goes away and leaves him, brings his attack to a halt. It is said that Zipporah circumcised her son with a stone knife.

Some forty years later - because there is also the whole episode of the trials imposed on the Egyptians and the ten plagues - at the time of entering into the land of Canaan, Joshua receives the order: "Take a stone knife and circumcise all those who are here, who are going to enter into the land of Canaan". It is those and only those who are born during the years in the desert; during the years in the desert, they were not circumcised. Yahwe adds: "Now I will have rolled away from on top of you" - which is translated by lifted, suspended - "the contempt of the Egyptians". (Joshua V:VI)

I remind of you of these texts, not because I have the intention of using them all, but to stimulate in you at least the desire, the need, to consult them. For the moment, I will stop at the stone knife.

The stone knife indicates in any case a very ancient origin for this ceremony, which is confirmed by the discovery by Elliot Smith, near Luxor, if I remember rightly, probably at Magadeh (?) which has so many other reasons for attracting our interest as (13) regards this very question of circumcision, of corpses from the pre-historic period - namely not corpses which are mummified according to norms which allows them to be dated in Egyptian history - which carry the traces of circumcision. The stone knife, all by itself, should designate for us a date, an origin for this ceremony which is at least at the epoch that is defined as the Neolithic Age.

Besides so that there should be no doubt, three Egyptian letters, these three, which are respectively an S, a B, and a T, S(e)B(e)T, expressly indicate to us that it is circumcision that is involved. The sign marked here is an hapax, it is found nowhere but there; it seems that it is an effaced, a worn down lorme of the determinant of the phallus. We find it in other inscriptions where you see it inscribed much more clearly.

Another way of designating circumcision is the one which is in this line and which is read "FaHeT", F, the aspirated H which is here this sign which is here the placenta and here the T which is the same as what you see here. Here a determinant which is the determinant of linge (?), it is not pronounced. I would ask you to take note of it today because I will come back to it. Here another F designates "he" and here the PaN which means the prepuce, PaN means "to be separated from one's prepuce". This has also all its importance, for circumcision is not to be taken uniquely as what I might call a totalitarian operation, a sign. The "to be separated from something" is from that moment here, in an Egyptian inscription, articulated properly speaking. As I told you, I am only going so far in order not to have wasted my time writing that here today.

This function of the prepuce, which is in a way the goal, the value which in these inscriptions is given, as one might say to the weight of the least word, the maintenance, as I might say, of the prepuce as the object of the operation, just as much as the one who undergoes it, is something whose emphasis I would ask you

to retain here because we rediscover it in a text of Jeremiah which is just as enigmatic, just as uninterpreted up to the present, as the one to which I have just alluded before you, specifically the one about the circumcision by Zipporah of her son, I will then have an opportunity to come back to it.

I think I have already sufficiently initiated the function of circumcision, I mean not simply in its coordinates of celebration, of initiation, of introduction to a special consecration, but in its very structure as a reference, which is essentially interesting for us, to castration as regards its relationships with the structuring of the object of desire, I think have sufficiently initiated things in this direction to be able effectively to take them further with you on the day that I have given you for our next appointment.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 8 May 1963

I left you on a remark which put in question the function of circumcision in the economy of desire, in the economy of the object, in the sense that analysis grounds it as an object of desire. This lecture ended on a text, on a passage from Jeremiah - verses 24 and 25 of Chapter 9 - which in truth has posed some difficulties for translators throughout the ages, because the Hebrew text - I have too much to say to you today to delay on the letter of the text - for the Hebrew text, I am saying, should be translated: "I will punish every circumcised man in his prepuce", a paradoxical term that the translators have tried to get around, even one of the best of them, Paul Dorn, by the formula: "I will punish every circumcised man as if he were uncircumcised".

I am only recalling this point here to indicate to you that it is indeed some permanent relationship to a lost object as such that is involved and that it is only in the dialectic of this object o as cut and as now sustaining, presentifying a relationship essential to this relation itself, that effectively we can conceive of what is involved at this point in the Bible, which is not unique, but a point which illuminates by its extreme paradox what is involved every time the term of circumcised and uncircumcised is effectively employed in the Bible. It is not at all in effect, far from it, limited to this little bit of flesh which constitutes the object of the ritual. "Uncircumcised lips", "uncircumcised heart", these are terms which right through this text, appear numerous, almost current, almost common, underlining that what is involved is always an essential separation from a certain part of the body, a certain appendix, from something which in a function becomes symbolic of a relationship to the body itself henceforth alienated, and fundamental for the subject.

I will take things up today from a broader, higher, more distant point of view. You know, some of you know, that I have just returned from a journey which brought me some new experiences and which also brought me, in its essence in any case, the approach, the view, the encounter with some of these works without which the most attentive study of texts, of the letter, of the doctrine, specifically that of Buddhism in this case, must remain in some way incomplete and lifeless.

I think that to give you some report of what this approach was, (2) of the way in which, for me and for you also I think, it can

be inserted into what is this year our fundamental question, the point where the dialectic of anxiety takes place, namely the question of desire, which in our approach can from now on be, can represent for us from now on, a contribution.

Desire in effect constitutes the essential basis, the goal, the aim, the practice also of everything here that is denominated and announced about the Freudian message. Something absolutely essential, new, passes through this message. This is the path along which - who among you, there is surely someone among you, some people, I hope, who can pick it up - along which this message passes. We should justify at the point that we are at, namely at every point of a renewal of our remotivated elan, what is involved in this locus this year, this subtle locus, this locus that we are trying to circumscribe, to define, to coordinate, that this locus never located up to now in what we could call its ultra-subjective influence, this central locus of what one could call the pure function of desire. This locus into which we are advancing a little further this year with our discourse about anxiety, is the locus where I am demonstrating for you how o is formed.

o, the object of objects, the object for which our vocabulary has put forward the term objectality in so far as it is opposed to that of objectivity.

To sum up this opposition in some formulae - I apologise that they have to be so rapid - we will say that objectivity is the final term of Western scientific analytic thinking, that objectivity is the correlate of a pure reason which, when all is said and done, is the final term which for us is expressed, is resumed by, is articulated in, a logical formalism.

Objectality, if you have been following my teaching of about the past five or six years, objectality is something else and to highlight it at its most crucial point, I would say, I would formulate, that in contra-distinction to the preceding formula which I have just given, objectality is the correlate of a pathos about the cut, and precisely of the one through which this same formalism, logical formalism, in the Kantian sense of this term, this same formalism rejoins its miscognised effect in the Critique of pure reason, an effect which accounts for this formalism even in Kant, in Kant especially I would say, remains hewn out of causality, remains suspended on the justification that no a priori has up to now managed to reduce, of this function which is nevertheless essential to the whole mechanism of the lived experience of our mental life, the function of the cause. Everywhere the cause and its function prove to be (3) irrefutable even if it is irreducible, almost ungraspable for critical thinking. What is this function? How can we justify its survival against every attempt to reduce it, an attempt which constitutes almost the sustained movement of the whole critical progress of Western philosophy, a movement of course which was never completed. If this, this cause, proves to be so irreducible, it is in so far as it is superimposed, as it is identical in its function to what I am teaching you this year to

circumscribe, to handle, namely precisely this part of ourselves, this part of our flesh which necessarily remains, as I might say, caught up in the formal machine. That without which this logical formalism would be absolutely nothing for us, namely that it does not just provide us with, that it does not just give us the framework, not alone of our thinking, but of our own transcendental aesthetic, that it lays hold of us somewhere and that, this part that we give, not alone the material, not alone the incarnation as thinking being, but the fleshy piece as such torn from ourselves, it is this piece in so far as it is what circulates in logical formalism as it has already been elaborated by our work on the use of the signifier, it is this part of ourselves caught up in the machine, that can never be recuperated, this object as lost at different levels of corporal experience where the cut is produced, is the support, the authentic substratum of every function as such of the cause. This part of ourselves, this corporal part is therefore essentially and by function partial. Of course it is well to recall that it is body, that we are only objectal (objectaux) - which means object of desire - as bodies, an essential point, an essential point to recall because it is one of the creative fields of negation to appeal to something else, to some substitute; this is what nevertheless always remains at the final term, the desire for the body, the desire for the body of the other, and nothing but the desire for his body. One can say, one certainly says, "It is your heart that I want, nothing else", and by this one intends to say something spiritual: the essence of your being or again your love; but here, as always, language betrays the truth. This heart here is only a metaphor if we do not forget that there is nothing in the metaphor which justifies the common usage of books of grammar in opposing the proper sense to the figurative sense. This heart can mean many things, different things are metaphorised according to cultures and tongues. For the Semites, for example, the heart is the organ of (4) intelligence itself. And it is not these nuances, these differences that are at stake, that is not what I want to draw your attention to. This heart, in this formula: "It is your heart that I want", is here, like every other organ- metaphor, to be taken literally. It is as a part of the body that it functions, it is, as I might say, as guts.

After all, why have some metaphors subsisted for so long - and we know the places, I have alluded to them, where they still live, specifically in the cult of the Sacred Heart - why, since the time of the living literature of Hebrew and Akkadian regarding which this little book by Edouard Dorn reminds us of the degree to which the metaphorical use of names of the parts of the body is fundamental to any understanding of these ancient texts, why this remarkable lack in Toutes les parties du corps, which I recommend to you, which can be found, which has just been re-issued by Gallimard: if all the parts of the body are paraded in their properly metaphorical functions, the sexual organ and especially the male sexual organ, even though all the texts which I evoked earlier on circumcision were there to be evoked, the male sexual organ and the prepuce are remarkably, very strangely omitted, they are not even in the table of contents.

How can the still living, metaphorical usage of this part of the body to express that which in desire, beyond appearances, is properly what is required in this haunting memory of what I would call causal guts (la tripe causale), how can it be explained, if not by the fact that the cause is already lodged in the gut, as I might say, figured in the lack; and moreover in all the mythical discussion of the functions of causality, it is always tangible that references go from the most classical positions to those which are the most modernised, for example that of Maine de Biran: when it is by the sense of effort that he tries to make us sense the subtle balance around which there is played out the position of what is determined, of what is free when all is said and done, it is always to this corporal experience that we refer. What I will still put forward to give a sense of what is involved in the order of the cause is what, when all is said and done? My arm, but my arm in so far as I isolate it, that considering it as such, as an intermediary between my will and my act, if I dwell on its function, it is in so far as it is isolated for an instant, and that I must at all costs and from whatever angle I recuperate it, that I must right away modify the fact that, if it (5) is an instrument, it is nevertheless not free, that I must remain on my guard, as I might say against the fact, not immediately of its amputation, but of its non-control, against the fact that someone else may take it over, that I may become the right arm or the left arm of someone else, or simply against the fact that like a vulgar umbrella, - just like the corsets which it appears were found there in abundance a few years ago - I may forget it in the Metro.

We analysts for our part know what that means - the experience of the hysteric is something sufficiently significant for us - which means that this comparison in which it can be glimpsed that the arm can be forgotten, neither more nor less like a mechanical arm, is not a forced metaphor. This is the reason why I reassure myself of its belonging with the function of determinism: it is very important to me that even when I forget its functioning, I know that it functions in an automatic fashion, that an inferior stage assures me that whether tonic or voluntary, all sorts of reflexes, all sorts of conditionings assure me that it will not escape, even when one takes into account an instant of inattention on my part.

The cause therefore, the cause always arises in correlation with the fact that something is omitted in the consideration of knowledge, something which is precisely the desire which animates the function of knowledge. Every time the cause is invoked, in its most traditional register, is in a way the shade, the pendant, of what is the blind spot in the function of this knowledge itself. This of course is something that we did not have to wait for Freud to invoke. Already well before Freud - do I need to evoke Nietzsche and others before him - others had put in question the desire involved in the function of knowledge, others had questioned what Plato had in mind that made him believe in the central, original, creative function of the "Sovereign Good", what Aristotle had in mind which made him believe in this singular prime mover which comes to put itself in

the place of the Anaxagorean nous, which nevertheless can only be for him a deaf and blind mover to what it sustains, namely the whole cosmos. The desire for knowledge with its consequences had been put in question, and always in order to put in question what knowledge believes itself obliged to forge precisely as final cause.

This sort of critique culminates at what? At what I might call a sort of sentimental putting in question of what appears to be most stripped of sentiment, namely elaborated, purified, in its (6) final consequences. It contributes to the creation of a myth which will be the myth of the psychological origin of knowledge: these are aspirations, instincts, needs: by all means add on religious, you will only be taking another step: we will be responsible for all the deviations of reason, the Kantian Schwarmerein with all its implicit openings onto fanaticism.

Is this a critique that we can be satisfied with? Can we not take further what is involved? Articulate it in a more daring fashion beyond the psychological, which is inscribed in its structure. It is hardly necessary to say that this is exactly what we are doing. What is involved is not simply a feeling which requires its satisfaction. What is involved is a structural necessity: the relationship of the subject to the signifier necessitates the structuring of desire in the phantasy. The functioning of the phantasy implies a temporally definable syncope of the function of o which necessarily at some phase of phantastical functioning is effaced and disappears. This aphanisis of the o, this disappearance of the object in so far as it structures a certain level of the phantasy, this is what we have the reflection of in the function of the cause; and every time we find ourselves confronted with the same unthinkable handling of critical thinking which nevertheless is irreducible, even to critical thinking; every time we find ourselves confronted with this final functioning of the cause, we ought to search for its foundation, its root in this hidden object, in this object qua syncope. A hidden object is at the source of this faith in the prime mover of Aristotle which I presented to you earlier as deaf and blind to what causes it. The certainty, this very contestable certainty, always linked to derision, this certainty which is attached to what I would call the essentialist proof, which is not only that of Saint Anselm - because you will also rediscover it in Descartes - the one which tends to found itself on the objective perfection of the idea in order to found in it its existence, if this precarious and derisory certainty maintains itself despite all criticism, if we are always forced from some angle to come back to it, it is only because it is the shadow of something else, of another certainty; and this certainty here, I already named it, you can recognise it, because I already called it by its name: it is that of the anxiety linked to the approach to the object, this anxiety which I told you must be defined as that which does not deceive, the only certainty, which is founded, unambiguous, that of anxiety: anxiety precisely in so far as every object escapes it. And the certainty linked to the recourse to the primary cause and the shadow of this fundamental certainty, its shadowlike character is

what gives it this essentially precarious aspect, this aspect which is only really surmounted by this affirmative articulation which always characterises what I have called the essentialist argument, this something which forever is for it what is in it, what does not convince. This certainty, therefore, by being sought in this way, in its true foundation proves what it is: it is a displacement, a secondary certainty, and the displacement involved is the certainty of anxiety.

What does this imply? Undoubtedly a more radical putting in question than has ever been articulated in our Western philosophy, the putting in question as such of the function of knowledge, not at all that this putting in question - I hope to make you glimpse this - has not been done elsewhere. With us, it can only begin to be done in the most radical fashion if we grasp what is meant by this formula that there is already knowledge in the phantasy.

And what is the nature of this knowledge which is already in the phantasy? It is nothing other than the following which I repeat right away: man, if he speaks, the subject once he speaks is already implicated in his body by this word. The root of knowledge is this engagement of his body. But it is not this sort of engagement that undoubtedly, in a fruitful fashion, in a subjective fashion, contemporary phenomenology has tried to engage with by reminding us that in every perception, the totality of the corporal function - the structure of the organism of Goldstein, the structure of behaviour of Maurice Merleau-Ponty - that the totality of corporal presence is engaged.

Notice that what is happening along this path, is something which undoubtedly has always appeared to us to be very desirable: the solution of the body-spirit dualism. But it is not because a phenomenology, which has moreover reaped a rich harvest of facts, makes for us of this body, taken at the functional level, as I might put it, a sort of double, of opposite to all the functions of the spirit, that we ought to find ourselves satisfied. Because indeed there is here all the same some evasion. And moreover everyone knows that the reactions which are undoubtedly of a philosophical nature or even of a fideist nature that contemporary phenomenology has been able to produce among the servants of what could be called the materialist cause, that these reactions that it has given rise to are undoubtedly not (8) unjustified. The body as it is thus articulated, indeed banished from experience in the sort of exploration inaugurated by contemporary phenomenology, the body becomes something altogether irreducible to material mechanisms. After long centuries succeeded in making a spiritualised body for us in art, the body of contemporary phenomenology is a corporalised soul.

What interests us in the question of what the dialectic involved must be brought back to, in so far as it is the dialectic of the cause, is not that the body participates in it, as one might say, in its totality. It is not the fact of pointing out that eyes are not all that are necessary in order to see, but that undoubtedly our reactions are different according as our skin, as

was pointed out by Goldstein, who was not lacking in perfectly valid experiments, according as our skin is bathed or not in a certain atmosphere of colour. That is not the order of events involved here in this reminder of the function of the body. The engagement of the man who speaks in the chain of the signifier with all its consequences, with this henceforth fundamental springing forth, this elective point that I earlier called that of an ultra-subjective radiation, this foundation of desire in a word, it is in so far as, it is not that the body in its functioning would allow us to reduce everything, to explain everything in a reduction to the dualism of the Umwelt and the Innenwelt, it is because there is always in the body, and by the very fact of this engagement in the signifying dialectic, something separated, something statufied, something inert from then on: that there is a pound of flesh.

One cannot but be astonished once again at this turn, at the unbelievable genius which guided the person we call Shakespeare to fix in the figure of the Merchant of Venice this theme of the pound of flesh which reminds us of this law of debt and of gift, this total social fact, as it is expressed, has been expressed since Marcel Mauss - but it was certainly not a dimension that was allowed to escape at the dawn of the seventeenth century: this law of debt does not take its weight from any element that we could consider purely and simply as a third, in the sense of an outside third, the exchange of women or of goods as Lévi-Strauss recalls in his Elementary Structures. What is at stake in a pact, can only be and only is this pound of flesh, as it is put in the text of The Merchant: "to be cut off by him nearest the heart".

(9) Undoubtedly it is not for nothing that after having animated one of his most fiery plays with this thematic, Shakespeare pushed by a sort of divination which is nothing but the reflection of something always touched on and never attacked at its deepest level, attributes it, situates it with respect to this merchant who is Shylock, who is a Jew. The fact is moreover that I believe that no history, no written history, no sacred book, no Bible, to say the word, is better designed than the Hebrew Bible to make us sense this sacred zone in which the moment of truth is evoked, that we can express in religious terms by this implacable aspect of the relationship to God, this divine wickedness which ensures that it is always with our flesh that we must discharge our debt.

This domain which I told you is scarcely touched on must be called by its name. This designation precisely in so far as *ix* gives for us the value of different biblical texts, is essentially correlative to what so many analysts felt obliged, and sometimes not without success, to question themselves about, namely the sources of what is called anti-Semitic feeling. It is precisely in the sense that this sacred and I would almost say forbidden zone is there more lively, better articulated than any other place, and that it is not only articulated, but after all alive and still carried in the life of this people in so far as it presents itself, in so far as it subsists of itself in the

function that, in connection with o, I already articulated with a name which I described as that of the remainder - it is something which survives the ordeal of the division of the field of the Other by the presence of the subject - of something which is that which in a particular biblical passage is formally metaphorised in the image of the stump, of the cut trunk from which a new trunk re-emerges in this living function in the name of Isaiah's second son Shear-Jashub, a remainder, a remnant, will come back in this Shorit that we also find in a particular passage of Isaiah, the function of the remainder, the irreducible function, the one which survives every ordeal of the encounter with the pure signifier, this is the point where already the end of my last lecture with the remarks of Jeremiah, of the passage of Jeremiah about circumcision, this is the point that I have led you to already.

This is also the one of which I indicated the Christian solution and I must say attenuation, namely the whole mirage which in the Christian solution can be said to be attached at its root to the masochistic outcome, can be attributed to this irreducible relationship to the object of the cut.

(10) In so far as the Christian has learnt through the dialectic of redemption to identify himself ideally to the one who at a particular time identified himself to this very object, to this refuse left by divine vengeance, it is in so far as this solution has been lived, orchestrated, ornamented, poeticised, that I was able, no later than 48 hours ago, to have once again such a comic encounter with the Westerner who returns from the East and who finds that over there they lack heart. They are wily people, hypocrites, dealers, even cheats. Good God, they get involved in all sorts of little schemes. The Westerner who was talking to me, was a very average illustrator, even though in his own eyes he considered himself to be a rather superior sort of star. He thought that over there, in Japan, if he had been well received, my goodness, it was because in the families it was advantageous for them to show that they had relations with someone who had almost won the Prix Goncourt. These are things, he told me, which of course in my - here I censor the name of his province, let us say a province with has no chance of being mentioned - let us say in my native Camargue would never happen. Everyone knows that here we all wear our hearts on our sleeves, we are much more honest, you never have these underhand manoeuvres.

Such is the illusion of the Christian who always believes he has more heart than the others, and God knows why this is? The matter no doubt appears more clearly - this is what I believe I have helped you to see as being essential, it is the basis of masochism - this attempt to provoke the anxiety of the Other, become here the anxiety of God, is effectively second nature for the Christian, namely that this hypocrisy - and everyone knows that in other perverse positions, we are always capable in experience of sensing the playfulness and the ambiguity that are always there - namely that this hypocrisy is more or less the same as what he experiences for his part more as oriental hypocrisy.

He is right to feel that it is not the same, because the Orient is not Christianised. And this is what we are going to try to advance into.

I am not going to do a Kaiserlin here, I am not going to explain to you what oriental psychology is, first of all because there is no oriental psychology. Nowadays, thank God, one goes directly to Japan by the North Pole. This has one advantage: it is to make us sense that it could very easily be considered as a peninsula, as an island off Europe. I assure you that this is in (11) effect what it is. And I predict that one day you will see appearing some Japanese Robert Musil. He will show us where we have got to, and the degree to which this relationship of the Christian to the heart is still alive or whether it is fossilised.

But this is not where I want to lead you today. I want to take an angle, use an experience, stylise an encounter I had and which I indicated to you earlier, to approach something from the field of what is still alive in terms of Buddhist practices and specifically those of Zen. You may well suspect that it is not during such a short raid that I could have brought you back anything. I will tell you perhaps, at the end of what we are now going to go through, a sentence simply gathered from the priest of one of these convents, at Kamakura precisely, with whom a meeting was arranged for me, and who, I assure you, without any urging on my part, brought me a sentence which does not appear to me out of place in what we are trying to define here about the relationship of the subject to the signifier. But this is rather a field to be reserved for the future. The encounters I spoke about earlier were more modest, more accessible encounters, more possible to insert into this sort of lightning journey which are the ones the type of life we lead reduces us to. It is specifically the encounter with works of art.

It may seem astonishing to you that I speak about works of art while what is in question are statues, and statues which have a religious function, which were not constructed in principle with the goal of representing works of art. They undoubtedly are so however in their intention, in their origin. They have always been accepted and felt to be such, independently of this function.

It is therefore absolutely not out of place for us to take this way in, in order to receive from them something which leads us, I would not say, to their message, but to what precisely they can represent, which is the thing which interests us: a certain relationship of the human subject to desire.

I made in haste, with the aim of preserving an integrity which I think is important - I recall it to you as I am passing them out to you - a little montage of three photos of a single statue, of a statue which is among the most beautiful which can I believe be seen in this zone which has no lack of them, what is involved is a statue whose qualifications, denominations I am going to give

you and whose function I am going to make you glimpse, and which is found at the women's monastery, at the nunnery of Todai-Ji at Nara. This will allow me to inform you that Nara was the locus of the exercise of imperial authority for several centuries, which are placed modestly before the 10th century. There are statues there which date from the 10th century. It is one of these statues, one of the most beautiful, the one which is found in the women's monastery of Todai-Ji. I will tell you in a moment what function is involved. So handle them carefully. Because I would like to get the three photographs back later. There are two of them which are copies of one another, they are the same with one enlarged with respect to the other.

We are going into Buddhism. You already know enough, I think, to know that the aims, the principles of the dogmatic source as well as the ascetical practice which can be referred to it, can be resumed, moreover are resumed in this formula which interests us in the keenest possible way in terms of what we have to articulate here, that desire is illusion. What does that mean? The illusion here cannot but be referred to the register of truth. The truth involved cannot be a final truth. The enunciating of "is illusion" in this case is to be taken in the direction which remains to be specified of what the function of the creature (l'etre) may or may not be. To say that desire is illusion is to say that it has no support, that it has no outcome in nor aim towards anything.

You have heard speak, I think, if only in Freud, about the reference to Nirvana. I think that you may have here and there heard speak of it in such a fashion that you could not identify it to a pure reduction to nothingness. The very usage of negation which is current in Zen for example, and the recourse to the sign "mou" which is that of negation here, should not deceive you, the sign "mou" involved being moreover a very particular negation which is a "not to have". This just by itself should be enough to put us on our guard. What is involved, at least in the median stage of the relationship to Nirvana, is well and truly articulated in an absolutely widespread fashion in every formulation of Buddhist truth: it is always articulated in the sense of a non-dualism.

If there is an object of your desire, it is nothing other than yourself. I underline that am not giving you the original feature of Buddhism here; "Tat tuam asi", the "it is yourself" that you recognise in the other is already inscribed in the Vedanta.

Let us say that I am recalling it here, not being able in any way to give you the history, or a criticism, of Buddhism, that I am only recalling it here in order to approach by the shortest paths that to which by this experience, which you are going to see was (13) very particular, that if I localise it there it is because this experience constituted around this statue, an experience I had myself, is characteristic and is usable by us.

The Buddhist experience, in so far as by stages and by advances,

it tends to make for the one who lives it, who becomes engaged in its paths, and also moreover those who engage in it in a properly-ascetic fashion - ascetics are a rarity - presupposes a striking reference to the function of the mirror in our relationship to the object. Effectively this metaphor is habitual. A long time ago I made an allusion in one of my texts, because of what I already knew about it, an allusion to this surfaceless mirror in which nothing is reflected. Such was the term, the stage if you wish, the phase to which I intended to refer for the precise goal that I was aiming at at that time: it was in an article on psychic causality.

You should notice here that this mirror-like relationship to the object is absolutely common to every gnosis. The absolutely common character of this reference is what makes every reference to the notion of projection so easy for us to accede to and also so easy to make an error about. We know how easy it is for outside things to take on the complexion of our soul, and even its form, and even for them to come towards us in the shape of a double.

But if we introduce the object *o* as essential in this relationship to desire, the business of dualism and of non-dualism takes on a completely different relief. If that which is most myself in the outside is there, not so much because I projected it there, but because it was cut off from me, the fact of my rejoining it or not and the paths that I will take to ensure this recuperation take on all sorts of possibilities, of eventual varieties.

It is here, to give a sense which is not of the order of trickery, of conjuring, of magic, to the function of the mirror, I mean in this dialectic about the recognition of what we contribute or not with desire, that it is worthwhile making some remarks, the first of which is that in a fashion which I would ask you to note does not mean taking the path of idealism, therefore the first is this remark that the eye is already a mirror, that the eye, I would go so far as to say, organises the world in space, that it reflects what in the mirror is reflection, but which reflection is visible to the most piercing eye, the reflection that it itself carries of the world in this eye that it sees in the mirror, that in a word there is no need (14) for two opposing mirrors for there to be already created the infinite reflections of the hall of mirrors.

This remark about the infinite deployment of inter-reflected images, which are produced once there is an eye and a mirror, is not here simply for the ingeniousness of the remark, which one cannot see too well moreover where it would end up, but on the contrary to bring us back to the privileged point which is at the origin, which is the same as the one in which there is bound up the original difficulty of arithmetic, the foundation of the one and the zero.

The one image, the one which is made in the eye, I mean the one that you can see in the pupil, requires from the beginning of

this development a correlate which for its part is not an image at all. If the surface of the mirror is not there to support the world, it is not because nothing reflects this world, the consequences of which we have to draw, it is not because the world vanishes with the absence of the subject, it is properly what I said in my first formula: it is that nothing is reflected; that means that before space, there is a one which contains multiplicity as such, which is prior to the deployment of space as such, which is never anything but a chosen space where there can only be sustained juxtaposed things as long as there is room. Whether this room is indefinite or infinite does nothing to change the question. But in order to make you understand what I mean as regards this one which is not mono but poly, all in the plural - I will simply show you what you can see at Kamakura - it is the work of a sculptor whose name is well known; Kamakura is up the end of the 12th century - : it is Buddha represented, materially represented by a statue three metres high, and materially represented by a thousand others. It creates a certain impression, and all the more so because one passes in front of them along a rather narrow corridor and a thousand statues take up some room, especially when they are all of human size, perfectly made and individualised; this work took the sculptor and his school a hundred years. You are going to be able to consider from the front and here from an oblique perspective the effect that has as you advance along the corridor.

This is done to materialise before you that the monotheism-polytheism opposition is perhaps not something as clear as it is usually represented for you. For the thousand and one statues which are there are all properly and identically the same Buddha. Besides, by right, each one of you is a Buddha, I say by right (15) because for particular reasons you may have been thrown into the world with some defect which may constitute a more or less irreducible obstacle to gaining access to it.

It nevertheless remains that this identity of the subjective one in its multiplicity, its infinite variability, to a final one with its completed access to non-dualism, in its access to the beyond of every pathetic variation, to the beyond of every cosmic wordly change, is something in which we have less reason to interest ourselves in as a phenomenon, than the fact that it allows us to approach the relationships that it demonstrates by the consequences that it had historically, structurally in the thoughts of men.

In truth, I said that what is there under a thousand and one supports, in reality these thousand and one supports, thanks to the effects of multiplication inscribed in what you can see, the multiplicity of their arms and of some heads which crown the central head, ought to be multiplied in such a way that there are in reality here 33,333 of the same identical beings. This is only a detail.

I told you what a Buddha was. It is not absolutely speaking a God, it is a bodhisattva, which means to go quickly and create a

void, as I might say, an almost Buddha. It would be completely a Buddha if precisely it was not there; but since it is there, and under this multiplied form, which has demanded, as you see, a lot of trouble, this is only the image of the trouble that he for his part takes to be there. He is there for you. He is a Buddha who has not yet succeeded in disinteresting himself, no doubt because of one of these obstacles to which I alluded earlier, to disinterest himself in the salvation of humanity. That is the reason why, if you are Buddhists, you prostrate yourself before this sumptuous gathering. It is because in effect you owe, I think, recognition to the unity which has troubled itself in such a great number to remain within range of bringing you help. For there is also said - the iconography enumerates it - the cases in which they will bring you help.

The bodhisattva in question is called in Sanscrit - you have already heard tell of him, I hope; his name is widely known, especially in our own day; all of this turns around this sphere vaguely called the element for anyone who does yoga - the bodhisattva in question here is Avalokitesvara.

The first image, the one of the statue that I passed around among you, is a historical avatar of this Avalokitesvara. I thus took (16) the right path before becoming interested in Japanese. Fate decreed that I should have elucidated with my good master Demieville, in the years when psychoanalysis allowed me more leisure, this book, this book which is called The lotus and the true law which was written in Chinese to translate a Sanscrit text by Kumarajiva. This text is more or less the historical turning point at which there appears the avatar, the singular metamorphosis that I am going to ask you to remember, namely that this bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara, the one who hears the tears of the world, is transformed from the time of Kumarajiva, who seems to be a little responsible for it, is transformed into a female divinity. This female divinity with whom I think you are also ever so little in accord with, in harmony with, is called Kuan-yin or again Kuan-shih-yin, this is also the meaning that Avalokitesvara has: it is the one who considers, who goes, who is in agreement. That is Kuan; this is the word I spoke to you about earlier and that is her wailing or her tears. Kuan-shih-yin - the "shih" can sometimes be effaced - the Kuan-yin is a female divinity. In China there is no ambiguity: the Kuan-yin always appears in a female form and it is at this transformation and on this transformation that I would ask you to dwell for a moment. In Japan these same words are written Kannon or Kann-ze-non, according to whether one inserts there or not the character of the world. Not all the forms of Kannon are feminine. I would even say that the majority of them are not. And because you have before your eyes the image of the statues of this temple, the same sanctity, divinity - a term which is to be left in suspense here - which is represented in this multiple form, you can see that the characters are provided with little moustaches and with tiny outlines of beards. Here therefore they are in a masculine form, which corresponds in effect to the canonical structure these statues represent, the number of arms and of heads involved.

But it is exactly the same being that is involved as in the first statue whose representations I circulated among you. It is even this form which is specified, can be seen as "Nio-i-Yin", Kannon or Kann-ze-non. "Nio-i-yin" in this case, which is therefore to be remembered here - there is a character which is going to be a little stifled, but after all not too much so - "Nio-i-yin" means "like the wheel of desires". It is exactly the meaning that its correspondent in Sanscrit has.

Here then is what we find ourselves confronted with: what is (17) involved is rediscovering in the most well-attested fashion the assimilation of pre-Buddhic divinities into the different stages of this hierarchy which thenceforth is articulated as the levels, the stages, the forms of access to the final realisation of beauty, namely to the final understanding of the radically illusory character of all desire.

Nevertheless within what one might call this multiplicity converging towards a centre, which is in essence a centre of nowhere, you see here reappearing, reemerging, I would say almost in the most incarnated fashion, what can be described as most living, most real, most animated, most human, most pathetic in a first relationship to the divine world, for its part essentially nourished and as it were punctuated by all the variations of desire, that [in] which the divinity, as one might say, or the Holiness with a capital H, which is almost the most central for acceding to beauty, is incarnated in the shape of the female divinity which has gone so far as to be identified at the origin with neither more nor less than the re-appearance of the Indian Shakti, namely something which is identical to the female principle of the world, the soul of the world; this is something which ought to make us pause for a moment.

In a word, I do not know whether this statue, the photographs of which I brought you, has succeeded in establishing for you this vibration, this communication in whose presence I assure you one can be sensitive, one can be sensitive not simply because as chance would have it accompanied by my guide, who is one of those Japanese for whom neither Maupassant nor Merimee have any secrets, nor indeed anything else in our literature - I will pass over Valéry because people talk about nothing else but Valéry all over the world, the success of this Mallarmé of the nouveaux riches is one of the most troubling things that one can meet with in our time; therefore let us recover our serenity - I enter the little hall where this statue is and I find there on his knees a man of thirty to thirty-five years old, a sort of very low-grade employee, perhaps a craftsman, already really very worn out by existence. He was on his knees before this statue and obviously he was praying. This after all is not something that we would be tempted to participate in. But after having prayed, he came very close to the statue - because there is nothing to prevent it being touched on the right, on the left and underneath - he looked at it in this way for a time that I could not measure, I did not really see the end of it, it was superimposed itself on the time of my own look. It was obviously an overflowing look (18) whose character was all the more extraordinary because it

was a matter there, not I would say of an ordinary man - because a man who behaves in this way could not be such - but of someone that nothing seemed to predestine, if only because of the evident burden that he was carrying on this shoulders from his work, for this sort of artistic communion.

The other volet of this apprehension I am going to give you in another form. You have seen the statue, its face, this expression which is absolutely astonishing because of the fact that it is impossible to read in it whether it is completely for you or completely inward looking. I did not know then that it was a Nio-i-yin, Kan-ze-non but I had heard tell for a long time of the Kuan-yin. I asked in connection with this statue and in connection with others also, "Is it a man or a woman?" I will skip over the debates, the detours of what happened around this question which is full of meaning, I repeat, in Japan, given that the Kannon are not all in a univocal fashion in a female form. And it is there that I can say that what I collected is a little bit like a survey at the level of the Kinsey Report, the fact is that I acquired the certainty that, for this cultured young man, familiar with Merimee and Maupassant and for a great number of his friends whom I questioned, the question before a statue of this kind, as to whether it is male or female, never arose for them.

I think there is here a highly important fact for tackling what we could call the variety of solutions with respect to the problem of the object, of an object which I think I have sufficiently shown you, by everything that I have just told you about my first approach to this object, the degree to which it is an object for desire. Because if you still need other details, you can notice that there is no opening of the eyes in this statue. Now the Buddhist statues always have an eye which one cannot describe as being either closed or half-closed - it is a position of the eye which can only be acquired by learning: it is a lowered lid which only allows to pass through a line of the white of the eye and an edge of the pupil - all the statues of Buddha are realised in this way. You have been able to see that this statue has nothing of this kind: it has simply, at the level of the eye, a kind of sharp ridge which means moreover that with the reflection of the wood, it always seems that there is an eye operating above, but nothing in the wood corresponds to it. I assure you that I carefully examined the wood, I informed myself, and the solution that I was given, without being able myself to settle how much faith should be accorded it, it was given to me by someone who is very specialised, very serious, Professor Hando to give him his name, the fact is that this split of the eye on this statue disappeared in the course of the centuries because of the rubbing it undergoes I think more or less daily at the hands of the nuns of the convent, of which it is the most precious treasure, when they want to wipe away the tears from this figure par excellence of divine recourse. Besides, the whole statue is treated in the same fashion as this edge of the eye by the hands of the religious, and represents in its polish this unbelievable something of which the photo here can only give you a vague reflection of what is the inverted radiation onto it of what one

cannot fail to recognise as something like a long desire borne throughout the centuries by these recluses towards this divinity of psychologically indeterminable sex.

I think that this - the time today has advanced far enough for me not to take my discourse here any further - will allow us to illuminate this passage to which we have now come.

There is at the oral stage a certain relationship between demand and the veiled desire of the mother; there is at the anal stage, the coming into play for desire of the demand of the mother; there is at the stage of phallic castration, the "minus-phallus" the entry of negativity with respect to the instrument of desire at the moment of the arousal of sexual desire as such in the field of the other. But the limit at which we ought to rediscover the structure of *o* as separated does not stop for us here at these three stages. It is not for nothing that today I spoke to you about a mirror, not about the mirror of the mirror stage, of narcissistic experience, of the image of the body as a whole, but of the mirror in so far as it is this field of the Other where there must appear for the first time, if not the *o*, at least its place, in short the radical mainspring which causes the passage from the level of castration to the mirage of the object of desire.

What is the function of castration in this strange fact that the most moving type of object, because it is at once our image and something else, can appear at this level in a certain context, in a certain culture as being unrelated to sex, here is the fact, which I believe to be characteristic, to which I intended leading you today.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 15 May 1963

If we begin from the function of the object in Freudian theory, the oral object, the anal object, the phallic object - you know that I question whether the genital object is homogeneous with the series - everything that I already initiated, as much in my past teaching as more especially in that of last year, indicates to you that this object defined in its function by its place as o, the remainder of the dialectic between the subject and the Other, that the list of these objects ought to be completed. It is quite sure that we have to define the object o, functioning as a remainder of this dialectic, in the field of desire at other levels about which I have already indicated enough for you to sense, if you wish, that in general it is some cut happening in the field of the eye, of which the desire attached to the image is a function. Another thing, beyond what we know already and where we rediscover this character of fundamental certainty already located by traditional philosophy and articulated by Kant in the shape of consciousness, the fact is that this method of approach in the shape of o will allow us to situate in its place what up to now has appeared as enigmatic in the shape of a certain imperative described as categorical.

The path along which we are proceeding, which revivifies this whole dialectic by our very approach, namely desire, this path along which we are proceeding this year, which is anxiety, I chose because it is the only one which allows us to produce, to introduce a new clarity as regards the function of the object with respect to desire.

How - this is what my last lecture was intended to presentify before you - how was a whole field of human experience, an experience which puts itself forward as that of a form, of a sort of salvation, the Buddhist experience, able to posit at its origin that desire is illusion? What does that mean? It is easy to smile at the rapidity of the assertion that everything is nothing. Moreover, as I told you, this is not what is involved in Buddhism.

But if for our experience also this assertion that desire is only illusion can have a sense, it is a matter of knowing where the sense can be introduced and in a word where the lure is.

I teach you to locate desire, to link it to the function of the cut, to put it in a certain relation with the function of the

remainder. This remainder is what sustains it, what animates it (2) and it is what we learn to locate in the analytic function of the partial object.

Nevertheless the lack to which satisfaction is linked is a different thing. This distance between the locus of the lack in its relationship to desire as structured by the phantasy, by the vacillation of the subject in his relationship to the partial object, this non-coincidence between the lack that is involved and the function of desire, as I might say, in act, is what creates anxiety, and anxiety alone finds itself aiming at the truth of this lack. This is why at every level, at every stage of the structuring of desire, if we wish to understand what is involved in this function of desire, we ought to locate what I will call the anxiety point (le point d'angoisse).

This is going to make us retrace our steps a little, and in a movement determined by all our experience, because everything happens as if, having come with Freud's experience face to face with an impasse, an impasse which I put forward as being only apparent and up to now never broken through, that of the castration complex, everything happens as if this obstacle which has to be explained - which perhaps will allow us today to conclude on some affirmation regarding what is meant by Freud's being brought to a halt on the castration complex - and for the moment let us remember its consequences in analytic theory: something like a reflux, like a return which leads the theory to search in the final resort for the most radical functioning of the drive at the oral level.

It is a singular fact that in analysis, a glimpse which initially was that of the nodal function of what is properly sexual in the whole formation of desire, has been led more and more in the course of its historical evolution to search for the origin of all the accidents, of all the anomalies, of all the gaps which can be produced at the level of the structuring of desire in something which is not fully explained by saying that it is chronologically original, the oral drive, but which must still be justified as structurally original, it is to it that when all is said and done, we ought to bring back the origin and the aetiology of all the difficulties that we have to deal with.

Moreover I have already tackled what, I believe, ought to reopen for us the question of this reduction to the oral drive, in showing the way it currently functions, namely as a metaphorical mode of tackling what is happening at the level of the phallic object, a metaphor which allows there to be eluded the impasse created by the fact, which was never resolved by Freud in the (3) final term, of what the functioning of the castration complex is, which veils it in a way, which allows it to be spoken of without encountering the impasse.

But if the metaphor is correct, we ought, at its very level, to see the beginnings of what is involved, of what explains why it is here only a metaphor. And that is why it is at the level of this oral drive that once already I tried to take up the relative

function of the cut of the object, of the locus of satisfaction and of anxiety, to take the step which is now proposed to us, the one that I led you to the last time, namely the point of junction between the o functioning as $(-<P)$, namely the castration complex and this level that we will call visual or spatial, according to the aspect we are going to envisage it under, which is properly speaking the one where we can best see what the lure of desire means. In order to make this passage, which is our goal today, work, we ought for a moment make a backwards reference, return to the analysis of the oral drive, to ask ourselves, to specify clearly where at this level the function of the cut is. The nursing and the breast, it is around these that there have come to be confronted for us all the clouds of analytic theatre, the origin of the first aggressive drives, their reflection, indeed their retortion, the source of the most fundamental handicaps in the libidinal development of the subject. Let us therefore take up this thematic which - it ought not to be forgotten - is founded on an original act, essential for the biological subsistence of the subject in the order of mammals, that of sucking.

What is it about, what is it that functions in sucking? Apparently the lips, the lips in which we rediscover the functioning of what has appeared to us as essential in the structure of erotogeneity, the function of an edge.

That the lip presents the appearance of something which is, in a way the very image of the edge, of the cut, this is in effect something that ought to indicate to us, after I tried to picture, to define o for you last year in the topology, here is something which ought to make us sense that we are on solid ground.

Moreover it is clear that the lip, itself the incarnation, as one might say of a cut, that the lip in a singular way evokes what (4) exists at a quite different level, at the level of signifying articulation, at the level of the most fundamental phonemes, those most linked to the cut, the consonantal elements of the phoneme, the suspension of a cut, being for their most basic stock essentially modulated at the level of the lips.

I will return perhaps, if we have the time, to what I already indicated on several occasions about the question of fundamental words and their apparent specificity, "mama" and "papa". These are in any case labial articulations, even if something may put in doubt their apparently specific, apparently general, if not universal distribution.

That the lip, on the other hand, should be the place where symbolically, there can be grasped in the form of a ritual, the function of the cut, that the lip should be something which can be at the level of initiation rites, pierced, spread out, triturated in a thousand different ways, is also something which provides us with a reference that we are indeed in a living field and one recognised for a long time in human practices.

Is that all? There is behind the lip what Homer called the

enclosure of the teeth and of the bite. It is around this that what we bring into play, in the way that with the dialectic of the oral drive we brandish its aggressive thematic, the phantastical isolation of the extremity of the breast, of the nipple, this virtual bite implied by the existence of what is called a lacteal dentition, here is the thing around which we have to make revolve the possibility of the phantasy of the extremity of the breast as isolated, something which already presents itself as an object that is not simply partial but sectioned. It is through this that there are introduced into the first phantasies which allow me to conceive of the function of fragmentation as inaugural, this is in truth what we have been content with up to this.

Does that mean that we can maintain this position? As you know, since I already emphasised in a seminar which was, if I remember rightly, the one that I gave on 6 March, how the whole dialectic of what is called weaning, of separation ought to be taken up again in function even of what our experience has allowed us to enlarge, has appeared to us as its resonances, as its natural reverberations, namely weaning and the primordial separation, namely that of birth. And that of birth, if we look at it closely, if we put a bit more physiology into it, is something (5) well designed to illuminate things for us.

The cut, as I told you, is somewhere other than where we put it. It is not conditioned by aggression towards the maternal body. The cut, as analysis teaches us, if we hold - and quite correctly so - if we have recognised in our experience that there is an analogy between oral weaning and the weaning of birth, the cut is inside the individual, primordial unity as it is presented at the level of birth, where the cut is made between what is going to become the individual thrown into the outside world and these envelopes which form part of himself, which are qua elements of the egg homogeneous with what has been produced in ovular development, which are the direct prolongation of his ectoderm, as of his endoderm, which form part of himself, the separation is made inside the unit of the egg.

Now the emphasis that I intend to put here, depends on the specificity in the organismic structure of what is called the mammal organisation. That which, for almost the totality of mammals, specifies the development of the egg, is the existence of the placenta and even of a very special type of placenta, the one that is called chorio-allantoidian, the one by means of which for a whole phase of its development the egg in its intra-uterine position presents itself in a semi-parasitic relationship to the organism of the mother.

There is something suggestive, indicative for us in the study of the totality of this mammal organisation. At a certain level of the appearance of this organismic structure, specifically that of two orders, as one might say, that are called the most primitive of the class of mammals, the one specifically of the monotremes and the marsupials. We have the notion in the case of the marsupials of the existence of a different type of placenta,

which is not chorio-allantoid, but chorio-vitellin. We will not dwell on this nuance; but in the monotremes - I think that since childhood you have at least an image of them in the shape of these animals which in the Petit Larousse swarm in troops, as if they were pressing at the door of a new Noah's Ark, namely that there are two, and sometimes only one of them per species; you have the ornithorhynchus and also the image of what is called the echinoidea type. They are mammals. They are mammals in whom (6) the egg, even though placed in the uterus, has no placental relationship with the maternal organism. The mammary nevertheless already exists, the mammary in its essential relationship as defining the relationship of the offspring to the mother, the mammary already exists at the level of the monotremes, of the ornithorhynchus and allows there to be seen better at this level what its original function is. To clarify immediately what I intend to say here, I would say that the mammary presents itself as something intermediary, and that it is necessary for us to conceive that the cut lies between the mammary and the maternal organism. Even before the placenta shows us that the nourishing relationship at a certain level of the living organism is prolonged beyond the function of the egg which, charged with all the baggage which allows its development, will make the infant rejoin his begetters in a common experience of seeking for food, we have this function of the relationship that I have called parasitic, this ambiguous function where there intervenes this amboceptor organ; the relationship of the child in other words to the mammary, is homologous - and what allows us to say it, is that it is more primitive than the appearance of the placenta - is homologous with something which means that there is on one side the child and the mammary and that the mammary is in a certain way stuck onto, implanted on the mother; it is this which allows the mammary to function structurally at the level of o.

It is because the o is something from which the child is separated in a fashion that is in a way internal to the sphere of his own existence, that it is well and truly the small o.

You are going to see what results as a consequence of this: the link of the oral drive is made to this amboceptor object. What constitutes the object of the oral drive is what we usually call the partial object, the mother's breast. Where at this level is what I earlier called the anxiety point? It is precisely beyond this sphere. For the anxiety point is at the level of the mother. The anxiety of the lack of the mother in the child, is the anxiety about the drying up of the breast. The anxiety point is not confused with the locus of the relation to the object of desire.

The thing is imaged in a singular way by these animals that in a quite unexpected way I brought out here effectively in the shape of these representatives of the order of monotremes. Everything happens as if this image of biological organisation had been fabricated by some farseeing creator in order to manifest for us the true relationship which exists at the level of the oral drive (7) with this privileged object which the mammary is. For,

whether you know it or not, the small ornithorhynchus, after its birth, spends a some time outside the cloaca in a place situated on the stomach of the mother called the incubatorium. It is still at that time in its envelopes, which are the envelopes of a sort of hard egg from which it emerges, from which it emerges with the help of a tooth called a hatching tooth reduplicated, because one must be precise, with something which is situated at the level of the upper lip and which is called the caronculus.

These organs are not special to it. They exist already before the appearance of mammals; these organs which allow a foetus to emerge from the egg exist already at the level of the snake where they are specialised, snakes only having, if I remember rightly, the hatching tooth while the other varieties of reptiles more exactly - they are not snakes - namely tortoises and crocodiles have only the caronculus.

The important thing is the following: it seems that the mammary, the mammary of the mother of the ornithorhynchus, needs the stimulation of this little armoured point that the muzzle of the little ornithorhynchus presents, to unleash, as one might say, its organisation and its function and that it seems that for a week or so it is necessary for this little ornithorhynchus to work at the unleashing of that which appears indeed much more dependent on his presence, on his activity than on something which belongs as a matter of fact to the organism of the mother, for that matter besides, it gives us curiously the image of a relationship in a way the inverse of the one of the mammary protuberance, because these mammaries of the ornithorhynchus are mammaries of a hollow kind into which the beak of the baby is inserted. Here more or less is the place where the glandular elements, the milk-producing lobules exist. It is here that this snout which is already armoured, which has not yet hardened in the form of a beak as it will later become, that this snout comes to lodge itself.

The existence, therefore, of the distinction between two original points in the mammal organisation, the relationship to the mammary as such will remain structuring for the subsistence, the support of the relationship to desire, for the maintenance of the mammary specifically as an object which will subsequently become the phantastical object, and on the other hand the situation moreover in the Other, at the level of the mother and in a way not coinciding, displaced, of the anxiety point as being that by which the subject has a relationship with what is involved, with his lack, with what he is suspended on, the existence of the (8) mother's organism, is what we may be allowed to structure in a more articulated fashion by this simple consideration of a physiology which shows us that the o is an object separated from the child's organism, that the relationship to the mother is at this level no doubt an essential relationship which is isolated with respect to this organismic totality where the o is separated, and is moreover miscognised as such as having isolated itself from this organism, this relationship to the mother, the relationship of lack is situated beyond the locus where there has been played out the distinction of the partial object as

functioning in the relationship of desire.

Of course the relationship is still more complex and the existence in the function of sucking on the side of the lips, the existence of this enigmatic organ which has long been noted as such - remember Aesop's fable - which is the tongue, also allows us to bring into play at this level the something which in the underpinnings of our analysis is there to nourish the homology with the phallic function and its singular asymmetry, one to which we will return in a moment, namely that the tongue plays in sucking this essential role of functioning through what one can call aspiration, supports a void, whose power of appeal is essentially what allows the function to be effective, and on the other hand to be this something which can give us the image of the most intimate emergence, of this secret of sucking, to give us in a first form this something which will remain - I have marked it out for you - in the state of phantasy, at bottom everything that we can articulate around the phallic function, namely the turning inside-out of a glove, the possibility of an eversion of what is at the most profound point of the secret of the interior.

That the anxiety point is beyond the locus where there operates the function, the locus where the phantasy is fixed in its essential relationship to the partial object, this is what appears in this prolongation of the phantasy which is an image that always remains more or less as an underlay to the credence we put in a certain mode of oral relationship, the one which is expressed in the image of a function described as vampirism.

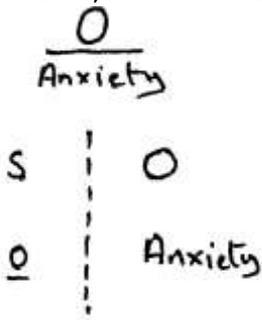
It is true that if in one or other mode of his relationship to the mother the child is a little vampire, if he poses himself as an organism suspended for a time in the parasitic position, it nevertheless remains that he is not this vampire either, namely that at no moment is it with his teeth, or at source that he is going to search in the mother for the hot and living source of his food.

(9) Nevertheless the image of the vampire, however mythical it may be, is there to reveal to us, by the aura of anxiety that surrounds it, the truth of this relationship beyond, which is profiled in the relationship of the message, the one which gives it its most profound accent, the one which adds the dimension of the possibility of the realised lack beyond what anxiety conceals in terms of virtual fears - the drying up of the breast. What puts in question the function of the mother as such, is a relationship which is distinguished, in so far as it is profiled in the image of vampirism, is distinguished as an anxiety-provoking relationship. A distinction therefore, I underline it well, between the reality of organismic functioning and what is outlined of it beyond, this is what is going to allow us to distinguish the anxiety point from the point of desire. Which shows us that at the level of the oral drive the anxiety point is at the level of the Other, that it is there that we experience it.

Freud tells us: "Anatomy is destiny". As you know, I have rebelled at certain moments against this formula because of its incompleteness. It becomes true, as you see, if we give to the term "anatomy" its strict and, I might say, etymological sense, the one which highlights - ana-tomy - the function of the cut, which means that everything that we know about anatomy is linked to vivisection. And in so far as there is conceivable this fragmentation, this cutting of one's own body, which there is the locus of elective moments of functioning, it is in so far as destiny, namely the relationship of man to this function which is called desire, takes on all its animation.

The fundamental "separation", not separation, but partition within, this is what is found at the origin and from the level from the oral drive on, inscribed in what will be the structuring of desire. Hence the astonishment at the fact that we have gone to this level to find some more accessible image for what has always remained for us - and why? - a paradox up to now, namely that in phallic functioning, in the one linked to copulation, it is also the image of a cut, of a separation, of what we improperly call castration, because it is an image of gelding that functions. It is no doubt not by chance, nor no doubt in a misguided way, that we went searching in older phantasies for the justification of what we did not know very well how to justify at the level of the phallic phase, it must nevertheless be noted that at this level something has been produced which is going to (10) allow us to find our bearings in the whole subsequent dialectic.

How in effect, as I have just announced it to you, how in effect has there occurred the division, that I have taught you to distinguish at the topological level, between desire, between its function, and anxiety? The anxiety point is at the level of the Other, at the level of the body of the mother. The functioning of desire, namely of phantasy, of the vacillation which closely unites the subject to o, that through which the subject finds himself essentially suspended, identified with this always elided, always hidden o, that we have to detect underpinning every relationship of the subject to any object whatsoever. You see it here, and to call arbitrarily here S the



level of the subject, that which in my schema, if you wish, my schema of the vase reflected in the mirror of the Other, is found on the hither side of the mirror, here is where at the level of the oral drive the relationships are found.

The cut, as I told you, is inside the field of the subject; desire functions - we rediscover here the Freudian notion of autoerotism - inside a world which, even though fragmented, bears the trace of its first enclosure within what remains imaginary, virtual, the envelope of the egg.

What is going to happen to it at the level that the castration complex is produced? At this level we witness a veritable

reversal of the point of desire and the locus of anxiety. If something is promoted by the no doubt still imperfect style, but one charged with all the relief of a painful conquest, made step by step, and this since the origin of the Freudian discovery, which revealed it in the structure, it is the close relationship between castration, between the relation to the object in the phallic relationship, as an implicit container of the privation of the organ.

If there were no Other - and it does not matter whether we should call this Other here the castrating mother or the father of the original prohibition - there would be no castration.

The essential relationship henceforth between castration and all copulatory functioning has already urged us to try - after all, following the indication of Freud himself who indeed told us, without justifying it in any way, that at this level it is some biological rock that we are touching - has thus stimulated us to (11) articulate as lying in a particularity of the function of the copulatory organ at a certain biological level - I pointed out to you at other levels, in other orders, in other animal branches, the copulatory organ is a hook, it is an organ of fixation, and can be called the male organ in the most summarily analogical fashion - it sufficiently indicates to us that it is important to distinguish the particular functioning, at the level of the organisations of what are called superior animals, of this copulatory organ; it is essential not to confuse its avatars, specifically the mechanism of tumescence and of detumescence, with something that is, in itself, essential for orgasm.

Without any doubt we find ourselves here, as I might say, in what could be called an imitation of experience. We are not going, as I have already told you, to try to conceive of what orgasm may be in a copulatory relationship that is differently structured. Besides there are enough impressive natural spectacles; it is enough for you to take a stroll some evening on the edge of a pond to see two dragonflies flying closely intertwined and this spectacle alone says enough about what we can conceive of as being a "long-orgasm" if you will allow me to construct a word, by inserting a hyphen. And moreover it is not for nothing that I evoked here the phantastical image of the vampire which is not at all dreamt of or conceived of by human imagination otherwise than as this mode of fusion or of primary subtraction at the very source of life, where the aggressor subject can find the source of his jouissance. Undoubtedly the very existence of the mechanism of detumescence in the copulation of organisms most analogous to the human organism, is already sufficient by itself to mark the link between orgasm and something which well and truly presents itself as the first image, outline, of what can be called the cut, separation, weakening, aphanisis, disappearance at a certain moment of the function of the organ.

But then, if we take things from this angle, we will recognise that the homologue of the anxiety point in this case is found in a strictly inverted position to the one where it was found at the level of the oral drive; the homologue of the anxiety point is

the orgasm itself as a subjective experience. And this is what allows us to justify what clinical experience shows us very frequently, the sort of fundamental equivalence there is between orgasm and at least certain forms of anxiety. The possibility of (12) the production of an orgasm at the high point of an anxiety-provoking situation, the eroticisation, we are told from every side, the eventual eroticisation of an anxiety-provoking situation sought for as such, and inversely a mode of clarifying, which means that if we believe the universally renewed human testimony - it is worth the trouble after all to note that someone and someone of Freud's level dares to write it - the attestation of this fact that there is nothing which when all is said and done, which represents, when all is said and done, for the human being a greater satisfaction than orgasm itself, a satisfaction which undoubtedly goes beyond, because it can be articulated in this way, as being not simply put in the balance, but to be given the function of primacy and precedence with respect to anything that man is given to experience. If the function of the orgasm can reach this eminence, is it not because at the basis of the realised orgasm there is something that I called the certainty linked to anxiety, is it not in the measure that the orgasm is the very realisation of what anxiety indicates as a point of reference, as a direction of the locus of certainty, that the orgasm, among all anxieties, is the only one which is really completed. Moreover, it is indeed for this reason that orgasm is not such a common attainment and that, if we may be permitted to indicate its eventual function in the sex in which there is precisely no phallic reality except in the form of a shadow, it is also in this very sex that orgasm remains for us most enigmatic, most shut off, and perhaps up to now never authentically situated in its final essence.

What is indicated to us by this parallel, this symmetry, this reversion established in the relationship between the anxiety point and the point of desire, if not that in neither of the two cases do they coincide. And it is here, no doubt, that we ought to see the source of the enigma that is bequeathed to us by Freudian experience.

In the whole measure that the situation of desire virtually implied in our experience, whose entire texture as I might say is not nevertheless truly articulated in Freud, the end of analysis comes up against something which makes the sign implied in the phallic relationship take on its form: the ($\langle p \rangle$) in so far as it functions structurally as ($-\langle \epsilon \rangle$) which makes it take on this form while being the essential correlate of satisfaction.

If at the end of Freudian analysis the patient whoever he may be, (13) male or female, lays claim to the phallus that we owe him, it is in function of this insufficiency through which the relationship of desire to the object which is fundamental, is not distinguished at every level from what is involved as a lack constitutive of satisfaction.

Desire is illusory. Why? Because it is always addressed elsewhere, to a remainder, to a remainder constituted by the

relationship of the subject to the Other who comes to substitute himself there.

But this leaves open the locus where there can be found what we designate under the name of certainty. No fixed phallus, no omnipotent phallus is capable of closing the dialectic of the relationship of the subject to the Other and to the real by anything whatsoever that is of a pacifying order. Does that mean that if we touch here the structuring function of the lure, we ought to remain there, to admit that our impotence, our limit is the point where the distinction between finite and indefinite analysis is broken? I do not believe it is anything of the kind. And it is here that there intervenes what is concealed in the most secret core of what I put forward a long time ago before you in the form of the mirror stage, and which obliges us to try to order in the same relationship, desire, object and anxiety point, what is involved when there intervenes this new object o for which the last lecture was the introduction, the bringing into play, namely the eye.

Of course, this partial object is not new in analysis, and I will here only have to evoke the article of the most classic author, the one most universally accepted in analysis, namely Mr Fenichel, on the subject of the relationships of the scopophilic function to identification, and even the homologies that he is going to discover between the relationships of this function and the oral relationship.

Nevertheless everything that has been said on this subject can justly appear insufficient. The eye is not an affair which only refers us to the origin just of mammals or even of vertebrates or even of chordata; the eye appears in the animal scale in an extraordinarily differentiated fashion - and in its whole anatomical appearance essentially similar to the one that we have - at the level of organisms which have nothing in common with us.

There is no need - I already repeated it on several occasions, and the images that I tried to make functional - to recall that the eye exists at the level of the praying mantis, but also at the level, what is more at the level of the octopus. I mean the eye with this particularity about which we ought to introduce (14) from the beginning this remark: it is always a double organ, and an organ which in general functions in a dependency on a chiasma, namely that it is linked to the intersecting knot which links two parts of the body that we call "symmetrical".

The relationship of the eye to a more or less apparent symmetry - for no organism is entirely symmetrical - is something that ought to be taken into account by us in the highest degree. If there is something that my reflections of the last time, if you remember them, namely the radical function of the mirage which is included from the first functioning of the eye, this fact that the eye is already mirror and already implies in a way in its structure, the transcendental aesthetic foundation as one might say of a constituted space is something that must yield its place

to this: the fact is that, when we speak about this transcendental structure of space as an irreducible given of aesthetic apprehension of a certain field of the world, this structure only excludes one thing: that of the function of the eye itself, of what it is.

It is a matter of finding the traces of this excluded function which is already sufficiently indicated for us as a homologue of the function of *o* in the phenomenology of vision itself. Here we can only proceed by punctuation, indication, remark.

Undoubtedly for a long time all of those, specifically the mystics, who have attached themselves to what I could call the realism of desire, for whom every attempt to reach the essential is indicated as overcoming this glue-like stickiness that there is in an appearance which is always conceived of as visual appearance, these already put us on the path of something which moreover all sorts of natural phenomena bear witness to, namely the fact that, outside such a register, there remains enigmatic, namely, I am saying, what are called mimetic appearances which manifest themselves in the animal scale exactly at the same level, at the same point that the eye appears. At the level of insects where we might be astonished - why not - that a pair of eyes should be a pair constructed like our own, at the same level there appears this existence of a double stain which the physiologists, whether they are evolutionists or not, torment themselves about by asking what is it that can condition something whose functioning in any case is that of exercising a fascination on the other whether it is a predator or not.

The linking of the pair of eyes and, if you wish, the look, to an (15) element of fascination that is enigmatic in itself, to this intermediary point at which every subjective subsistence seems to be lost and to be absorbed, to go out of the world, this indeed is what is called fascination in the function of the look. Here is, if I may say, the point of radiation which allows us to put in question what the field of vision reveals to us in the function of desire. Moreover it is striking that in the attempt to apprehend, to reason, to logicize the mystery of the eye, and this at the level of all those who have attached themselves to this form of major capture of human desire, the phantasy of the third eye is everywhere manifest. I do not need to tell you, that on the images of the Buddha which I gave an account of the last time, the third eye in some manner is always indicated. Do I need to remind you that this third eye which is promulgated, promoted, articulated in the most ancient magico-religious tradition, that this third eye rebounds up to the level of Descartes who, a curious thing, only finds its substratum in a regressive, rudimentary organ that of the epiphysis, of which one can say perhaps that at a point of the animal scale something appears, is realised, which will carry the trace of an ancient emergence. But this after all is only a reverie. We have no testimony, fossil or otherwise, of the existence of the emergence of this apparatus described as a third eye.

In this method of approaching the function of the partial object

which is the eye, in this new field of its relationship to desire, what appears as correlative of the small o function of the object of the phantasy, is something that we can call a zero point whose influence over the whole field of vision is what gives to this field, a source for us of a sort of pacification expressed for a long time, from earliest times, in the term contemplation, of suspension from the tearing apart of desire, a fragile suspension certainly, as fragile as a curtain always ready to be pulled back to unmask the mystery that it hides. This zero point towards which the image of the Buddha seems to carry us in the very measure that his lowered eyelids protect us from the fascination of the look while at the same time indicating to us this figure which in the visible is always turned towards the invisible, but who spares us it, this figure in a word takes entire charge of the point of anxiety here, it is not for nothing that it suspends, that it apparently cancels out the mystery of castration.

(16) This is what I wanted to indicate to you the last time by my remarks and the little survey that I had made about the apparent psychological ambiguity of these figures. Does that mean that there is in any way the possibility of entrusting oneself, of assuring oneself, in a sort of field which has been called Apollinian, you can see it also as noetic, contemplative, where desire could be supported by a sort of punctual cancellation from its central point, by an identification of o with this zero point between the two eyes which is the only locus of unease which remains, in our relationship to the world, when this world is a spatial world? Undoubtedly not, because precisely there remains this zero point which prevents us from finding in the formula of desire-illusion the final term of experience.

Here the point of desire and the anxiety point coincide, but they are not confused, they even leave open to us this "nevertheless" on which there eternally rebounds the dialectic of our apprehension of the world. And we always see it reemerging in our patients, and nevertheless - I looked to see how one says "nevertheless" in Hebrew, that will amuse you - and nevertheless this desire which here is resumed in the nullification of its central object, is not without this other object that summons anxiety: it is not without object. It is not for nothing that in this "not without, pas sans" I gave you the formula, the essential articulation of the identification to desire. It is beyond "it is not without an object" that there is posed for us the question of knowing where the impasse of the castration complex can be gone beyond. This is what we will tackle the next time.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 22 May 1963

Roughly speaking, to provide a summary orientation for someone who might arrive by chance in the middle of this discourse, I would say, that to complete, as I announced to you, what could be called the range (gamme) of object relations seen in the schema which is being developed this year around the experience of anxiety, he might think that we were required to add to the oral object, the anal object, the phallic object, precisely in so far as each one is generator of and correlative to a type of anxiety, two other stages of the object, bringing to five then these objectal stages in the measure that they will allow us to find our bearings this year.

You have, I think, sufficiently understood that for our last two meetings I have been dealing with the eye stage, I will not for all that leave it today but rather find my bearings from there by making you pass on to the stage that must be tackled today, that of the ear.

Naturally, as I told you, my first word was "roughly" and I repeated "summarily" in the following sentence, it would be completely absurd to believe that this is what is involved except in a grossly esoteric and obscurantist fashion.

It is a matter at all of these levels of mapping out what the function of desire is and none of them can be separated from the repercussions that it has on all the others and from a more intimate solidarity, the one expressed in the foundation of the subject in the Other along the path of the signifier, with the completion of this function of mapping out in the advent of a remainder around which there turns the drama of desire, a drama which would remain opaque to us if anxiety were not there in order to allow us to reveal its meaning.

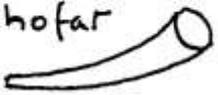
This often leads us, apparently, to what I might call erudite kinds of digressions, in which certain people may see some charm or other to be experienced or reproved in my teaching. Believe me that it is not without reticence that I advance into them, and that moreover the method according to which I proceed in the teaching that I give here will be studied - it is surely not for me to spell out here its rigour - the day when people will search, in the texts that may exist, be transmissible, be still understood of what I am giving you here, it will be seen that this method is not essentially distinguished from the object which is being tackled.

(2) Only I remind you that it arises from a necessity. The truth of psychoanalysis is only, at least in part, accessible to the experience of the psychoanalyst. The very principle of a public teaching starts from the idea that it is nevertheless communicable elsewhere. This having been posited, nothing is resolved, since the psychoanalytic experience itself must be oriented, otherwise it goes astray. It goes astray if it becomes partial, as we have not ceased from the beginning of this teaching to point out in different parts of the analytic movement, specifically in that which, far from being a deepening, a complement given to the indications of Freud's last doctrine in the exploration of the mainsprings and of the status of the ego, far from being a continuation of his indications and of this work, we have seen there being produced what is properly speaking a deviation, a reduction, a veritable aberration of the field of experience, no doubt determined also by something that we can call a certain opacity which occurred in the first field of analytic exploration, the one which for us characterises, which is characterised by the style of illumination, the sort of brilliance which remains attached to the first decades of the diffusion of Freudian teaching, to the form of the researches of this first generation one of whom I will make intervene today more quickly still, Theodore Reik I believe, and specifically among the numerous and immense technical and clinical works, one of these works quite incorrectly described as applied psychoanalysis, the ones that he produced on ritual.

We will see in it - what is involved here specifically is the article which appeared in Imago somewhere, I think I remember around the eighth year, I think more or less, I forgot to bring the text here today, which appeared in Imago around the eighth year - I believe, on something whose name you see here written in Hebrew letters - a study on the shofar of such verve, of such brilliance, of such fecundity, of which one can say that the style, the promises, the characteristics of the epoch in which it is inscribed, saw themselves suddenly extinguished, that nothing equivalent to what was produced at that period went on afterwards. And therefore it has to be asked, why this interruption itself.

שֹׁפָר

shofar



The fact is though that, if you wish, in this article you will see there being manifested, I would say, despite all the praise that I might give to its penetration, to its high signification, you will see there being manifested to the highest degree this source of confusion, this profound lack of grounding whose most (3) tangible and most manifest form is in what I would call the purely analogical use of the symbol. I believe that I must first of all clarify what this shofar is, unsure as I am that everybody here knows what it designates. If I bring forward this object today, for it is an object which is going to serve me as a pivot, as an example, to materialise, to substantiate before you what I mean about the function of o, the object precisely at this stage, the final one, which in its functioning will allow us to reveal the function of sustentation which links desire to anxiety in what is its final knot.

You will understand why, rather than immediately naming what this object in function is, at a level which goes beyond that of the occultation of anxiety in desire, since it is linked to a ritual object, rather than naming it immediately you will understand why I approach it by handling an object, a ritual object, this shofar, which is what? A horn, a horn into which one blows and which allows a sound to be heard, which, undoubtedly, I can only say to those here who have not heard it, to treat themselves at the ritual detour of Jewish feasts, the ones which follow the New Year, which is called Rosh ha-Shanah, which end on the day of the Great Pardon, the Yom Kippur, to treat themselves to an audition, in the synagogue, of the thrice repeated sound of the shofar. This horn, which in German is called the Widderhorn, is also called the ram's horn, Quren ha yobel, in his commentary, his explanation in the Hebrew text. It is not always a ram's horn; besides these examples of it which are reproduced in Reik's text, which are three particularly precious and celebrated Shofars belonging- if I remember rightly, to the synagogues of London and of Amsterdam respectively, present themselves as objects whose general outline, which is more or less like this, makes one think rather of what it is, for this is how it is classically. The Jewish authors, who have been interested in this object, and have made a catalogue of the diverse shapes, note that there is a form of the shofar which is a sort of horn, which is made of the horn of a wild goat.

Naturally this object which undoubtedly has this appearance must much more probably- be the result of manufacture, of alteration, of reduction - who knows? It is an object of considerable length, bigger than the one that I am presenting for you there on the blackboard - the result therefore perhaps of the instrumentalisation of a goat's horn.

(4) Those then who have treated themselves, or who will treat themselves, to this experience will bear witness, I think, as is generally the case, to the character, to remain within limits which are not at all lyrical, to the profoundly moving, stirring character, to the arousal of an emotion whose resonances present themselves independently of the atmosphere of recollection, of faith, indeed of repentance in which it manifests itself, which resonates along the mysterious paths of properly auricular affect which cannot fail to touch to a really unusual, inhabitual degree all of those who come within range of hearing its sound.

Around the questioning which Reik carries on around the function of this shofar, one cannot fail to perceive - and this is what seems to me characteristic of the epoch to which this work belongs - to be struck at once by the relevance, by the subtlety, by the depth of the reflections with which this study teems. It is not simply strewn with them, really it produces them round about some centre or other of intuition, of flair. There is even the date that this appeared. No doubt we have since learnt perhaps by some resifting or other, also by the erosion of the method, the resonance of what is happening, of what emerges from these first blase works at the time - and I can bear witness to you of it - compared to everything that was produced in terms

of erudite works, and believe me: you know that everything I bring here is nourished on my part by what are often in appearance enquiries carried to the very limits of the superfluous. Believe me: because of the difference in effect of this mode of interrogating the biblical texts, those in which the shofar is named as correlative to the major circumstances of the revelation given to Israel, one cannot fail to be struck that Reik, from a position which in principle, at the very least repudiates all traditional attachments, indeed places itself even in an almost radical and critical position, not to say one of scepticism, how much much more profoundly than all the apparently more respectful commentators, the ones more careful to preserve the essential of a message goes for his part, goes more directly to what appears essentially to be the truth of the historical advent in these biblical passages which I ceaselessly evoked, and reported by them.

I will return to this. But it is nonetheless also striking, if you consult these articles, to see the degree to which at the end, he gets himself - and undoubtedly for want of any of these (5) theoretical supports which allow a style of study to give itself its proper limits - into inextricable confusion. It is not enough for the shofar and the voice that it supports to be presented as an analogy of the phallic function - and in effect why not - but how and at what level is where the question begins, it is also there that he comes to a halt. It is not enough that such an intuitive, analogical handling of the symbol, leaves the interpreter, at a certain limit, stripped of all criteria for there not to appear at the same time the degree to which there is telescoped together, the degree to which there turns into a sort of mixture and confusion that is properly speaking unnameable, everything that Theodore Reik ends up with at the final term in his last chapter. To give you an idea of it, I will only indicate to you that these points, step by step and through the intermediary precisely of the ram's horn, of the indication which is given to us by this of what is quite obvious, of the underpinning, more exactly of the correlation, why not say for that matter of the conflict with a whole reality, with a whole social totemic structure in the midst of which the whole historical adventure of Israel is plunged. How, along what path, how does it happen that no barrier stops Reik in his analysis to prevent him at the end from identifying Yahwe with the golden calf? Moses coming down from Sinai, radiating with the sublimity of the love of the father, had already killed him, and the proof, he tells us, is what he becomes: this veritable enraged being who is going to destroy the golden calf and make the Hebrews eat it in a powdered form. In this, of course, you will recognise the dimension of the totemic meal. The strangest thing, is that since the requirements of the proof have to pass through the identification of Yahwe not with a calf, but with a bull,, the calf in question will therefore necessarily represent a son-divinity alongside a father-divinity. We were told about the calf only to confuse the issue, to leave us in ignorance of the fact that there was also a bull. So therefore, since Moses here is the son, murderer of the father, what Moses has destroyed in the calf through the sequence of all the displacements followed

in a way that quite obviously makes us sense that we lack any reference points, any compass capable of orientating us, this is supposed to be therefore Moses' own ensign: everything is consumed in a sort of self-destruction. This is only indicated to you, I am only giving you here a certain number of points which show you the extremes at which a certain form of analysis can arrive by its excesses. We will have other examples in the (6) lectures which follow.

For our part, we are going to see what seems to us to deserve to be retained here, and for this reason to know, to know what we are searching for, this is what emerges from what I was introducing earlier as constituting the necessity of our research, namely not to abandon what in a certain text, which is none other, after all, than the foundational text of a society, my own, the one which is the reason why I am here in the position of giving you this teaching: the fact is that in the principle which determines the very necessity of a teaching, if there is in the first place the necessity of correctly situating psychoanalysis among the sciences, this can only happen by submitting its technique to the examination of what it really presupposes and accomplishes.

As regards this text, I indeed have the right to remember that I had to defend it and to impose it, even if those after all who allowed themselves to be drawn along by it saw in it perhaps nothing but empty words. This text appears to me to be fundamental; for what this technique presupposes and accomplishes in fact is our supporting point, the one around which we ought to make revolve the whole arrangement, even the structural one, of what we have to deploy.

If we overlook the fact that what is involved in our technique, is a handling, an interference, indeed at the limit a rectification of desire, but which leaves entirely open and in suspense the notion of desire itself and which necessitates its perpetual putting in question, we will undoubtedly, on the one hand wander about in the infinite network of the signifier or, going back to the beginning, relapse into the most ordinary paths of traditional psychology. What Reik discovers in the course of this study, which is also what he cannot draw any advantage from in his day, for want of knowing where to put the result of his discovery, is the following: he discovers through the analysis of biblical texts - I will not enumerate all of them for you - but those which are historical - I mean those which claim to refer to a revelatory event and are in The Book of Exodus in Chapter 19 and 20, respectively, verses 16 to 19 for Chapter 19, verse 18 for Chapter 20. It is said in this first reference that in this thundering dialogue carried on very enigmatically in a sort of tumult, a veritable storm of sounds between Moses and the Lord, there is mentioned the sound of the-shofar, an enigmatic fragment (7) of this verse also indicates that at that time it was severely prohibited, and not only for any man, but for any living being, to approach the circle surrounded by lightning and flashes, in which this dialogue is taking place. The people can go up when they hear the voice of the shofar.

A point that is so contradictory and enigmatic that in the translation the sense is weakened, and it is said that some can come up. As regards who, the affair remains obscure. The shofar is also expressly mentioned again after the description of the dialogue. It is the presence in everything that is perceived by the people who are supposed to be assembled around this major event, the sound of the shofar is mentioned again.

Reik's analysis which he cannot find anything to say to characterise, to justify, other than the following, which is that an analytic exploration consists in seeking the truth in details, undoubtedly this characteristic is neither false nor inexact, but we cannot fail to see that, if it is a sort of external criterion, that, if this is the assurance of a style, it is not for all that either something which carries in itself this critical element, that of discerning what detail ought to be retained.

Undoubtedly we have always known that this detail which guides us, is the very one which appears to escape even the intention of the author, appears to remain in a way opaque, shut off with respect to the intention of his preaching, but again it is not necessary to find among them a criterion, if not of hierarchy, at least of order, of precedence.

In any case, we cannot fail to sense - I am forced to go through the steps of his proof - that something correct is touched, as regards ordering, articulating, the fundamental original texts mentioning the function of the shofar, those which complete those of Exodus which I have just named for you which those of Samuel, the second book in Chapter VI, with those of the first book of Chronicles, Chapter XIII, the function of the shofar being mentioned every time it is a matter of refounding, of renewing in some new departure, whether it is periodic or whether it is historical, the alliance with God. The comparison of these texts with, in addition, other occasional uses of the instrument, at first those which are perpetuated in these feasts, annual feasts in so far as they themselves refer to the repetition, and the remembering properly speaking of the alliance, an exceptional occasion also, the function of the shofar in what is called the (8) ceremony of excommunication, the one under which, as you know, on 27 July 1656 Spinoza fell, was excluded from the Hebrew community according to the most complete forms, those which specifically involved, in addition to the formula of malediction pronounced by the high priest, the sounding of the shofar.

This shofar, through the illumination which is completed by bringing together different occasions when it is both signalled for us and effectively enters into operation, is well and truly - and nothing other, Reik tells us - than the voice of God, of Yahwe, I mean the voice of God himself.

This point, which does not appear from a quick reading to be something open to exploitation by us, takes on in a perspective which is the one precisely to which I am forming you here - for it is not the same thing to introduce some more or less

well-marked criterion or for these criteria moreover in their novelty, with the efficacy they involve, to constitute what is called a formation, that is to say a reformation of the mind in its capacity for tackling things.

Undoubtedly for us, such a formula can delay us only in so far as it makes us perceive something which completes the relationship of the subject to the signifier in what from a certain first grasp one could call his [its?] passage a l'acte.

Of course, I have here at the extreme left of the audience someone who cannot fail to be interested by this reference, it is our friend Stein, and I can tell you on this occasion the satisfaction I experienced in seeing that his analysis of Totem and Taboo, and of what can be retained for us in it, led him to this sort of necessity which makes him speak about something that he calls both primordial signifiers, and that he cannot detach at the same time from what he also calls act, namely what happens when the signifier is not simply articulated, which only supposes its liaison, its coherence with the others in a chain, but when it is properly speaking uttered and vocalised.

I, for my part, here, would have some, even many reservations about the introduction of the term act with no further commentary. I only want for the moment to retain the following which puts us in the presence of a certain form, not of the act, but of the object o in so far as we have learned to locate it, in so far as it is supported by this something which must be detached from the phonematisation as such, which is - linguistics has taught us to notice it - which is nothing other than a system of opposition with which it introduces (9) possibilities of substitution, of displacement, of metaphor and of metonymies, and which moreover is supported by any material whatsoever capable of being organised in these distinctive oppositions between one and all. The existence of the properly vocal dimension, of the passage to something of this system, into an utterance which is presented every time as isolated, and as a dimension in itself from the moment that we perceive into what there is plunged corporally the possibility of this dimension of utterance. And it is here that you will understand, if you have not already guessed it, that there takes on its value as an exemplary introduction - you can well imagine that it is not the only one that I could have made use of - this exemplary object which I took this time in the shofar, because it is within our reach, because it is, if it is truly what it is said to be, that it is at a source-point from which there sprang forth a tradition which is our own, because already one of our ancestors has busied himself with it and has highlighted it in analytic enunciating - but for that matter the tuba, the trumpet, and other instruments - for it is not necessary, even though it cannot be just any instrument whatsoever, that it should be a wind instrument: in the Abyssinian tradition it is the drum. If I had continued to give you an account of my trip since I returned from Japan, I could have given an account of the very particular function which in Japanese theatre, in its most characteristic form, that of the No, is played precisely by the

style, the form, of certain types of pulsations in so far as they have, with respect to what we could call the precipitation and the kernel of interest, a really precipitating and binding function. I could also, in referring to the ethnographical field, find myself, as moreover Reik himself does, reminding you of the function of what is called the "bull roarer", namely this instrument which is very close to a kind of top, even though it is constructed very differently, that in the ceremonies of certain Australian tribes, gives rise to a certain type of droning that the name of the instrument compares to nothing other than the bellowing of an ox, the name designates it, and which deserves in effect to be linked in Reik's study to this function of the shofar in so far as it too is made equivalent to what other passages of biblical texts call the roaring, the bellowing of God. The interest of this object is to show us the locus of the voice - and of what voice, we will see its meaning by taking our bearings in its connection in the topography of the relationship of the big Other; let us not go too quickly - but by thus presenting this voice to us in the exemplary form where (10) it is in a certain fashion in potency, in a separated form; because it is what is going to allow us at least to give rise to a certain number of questions which are hardly ever raised.

The function of the shofar enters into action at certain periodic moments which are presented at first sight as the renewals of what? Of the pact, of the Alliance. The shofars do not articulate the basic principles, the commandments of this pact. It is nevertheless quite obviously presented, even down to the dogmatic articulation inscribed, in its connection, in the very name that is current of the moment that it intervenes, as having the function of remembering, Zikor, to remember.

Zikor, to remember, a function supported by three signs. 7103
 which support the function or memory in so far as it appears appropriate here. What I might call the median moment in these three solemn blasts of the shofar, at the end of the days of fasting of Rosh Hashanah, is called Zikron and what is involved, Zikron Terway, designates properly the sort of tremolo which is proper to a certain way of sounding the shofar; let us say that it is the sound of the shofar, the Zikronot, which is the remembrance that is linked to this sound. The remembrance, is no doubt the remembrance of something, of something on which one meditates in the preceding moments, the remembrance of the Hakada.

The Hakada, is the moment of Abraham's sacrifice, the precise one at which God stops his already consenting hand to substitute for the victim, Isaac, the ram that you know about or think you know about. Does that mean nevertheless that this very moment of the pact is entirely included in the sound of the shofar, the memory of the sound of the shofar, the sound of the shofar as sustaining the memory? Is the question not posed of who has to remember? Why think that it is the faithful, since they have just spent a certain time of recollection about this memory?

The question has a very great importance, because it leads us

properly speaking onto the terrain where there was outlined, in the mind of Freud, in the most striking way, the function of repetition. Is the function of repetition only automatic and linked in a way to the return, to the necessary transporting into the battery of the signifier, or has it indeed another dimension which it does not appear inevitable to meet with in our experience, if it has a meaning and the one which gives meaning to this interrogation carried by the definition of the locus of the Other which is characteristic of what I am trying to sustain before you, that to which, in a word, I am trying to accommodate your mental style. Is the one whose memory must be awakened, I mean to ensure that he for his part remembers, not God himself?

Such is the point to which we are brought, I would not say by this very simple instrument, because in truth each one can only experience, before the existence and the function of such an (11) apparatus, at the very least a profound feeling of embarrassment.

But what is involved for us now is to know where it is to be inserted as a separate object, in what domain, not at all in the opposition of inside to outside, whose whole inadequacy you sense clearly in this case, but with reference to the Other, in the stages of the emergence, of the progressive establishment of the subject, with reference to this enigmatic field which is the Other, at what moment can there intervene such a type of object with its face finally unveiled in its separable form and which is now called something that we know well, the voice, which we know well, which we believe we know well in its waste scraps, the dead leaves, in the form of voices, the stray voices of psychosis, and its parasitic character in the form of the interrupted imperatives of the super-ego. It is here that we must in order to orientate ourselves, to map out the true place, the difference of this new object which rightly or wrongly for reasons of presentation I thought I should tackle for you today, present under a form that is somehow manageable, if not exemplary, it is here now that we have to map out, to see the difference, the newness it introduces compared to the previously articulated stage, the one which concerned the structure of desire in another exemplary form - but as you cannot but sense, a very different one - and regarding which it seems that everything which is revealed in this new dimension can only be, and cannot but be, at first masked in this other previous stage, that we must for a moment return to it to make better emerge, stand out from the new thing that is contributed by the level at which there appears the form of o which is called the voice.

Let us return to the level of the eye which is also that of space, not the space that we question in the shape of a fixed transcendental aesthetic, even though undoubtedly the reference to what Kant contributed in this terrain is very useful to us, or as least very handy, but in what space presents for us as characteristic in its relationship to desire.

The origin, the basis, the structure of the function of desire as such is, in a style, in a form each time to be specified, this

central object o in so far as it is not alone separated, but elided, always elsewhere than where desire supports it and nevertheless in a profound relationship with it. This character of elision is nowhere more manifest than at the level of the function of the eye. And this is why the most satisfying support of the function of desire, the phantasy, is always marked by a relationship with the visual models in which it functions commonly, as one might say, in which it gives the tone of our desiring life.

In space nevertheless - and it is in this "nevertheless" that (12) there belongs the whole import of the remark - apparently nothing is separated. Space is always homogeneous, when we think in terms of the space of this body, our own, from which its function emerges. It is not idealism, it is not at all because space is a function of the mind that it cannot justify any kind of Berkeleyanism; space is not an idea, space is something which has a certain relationship not with the mind but with the eye.

Even this body has a function. What one? This body is appended. Once we think about space, we must in a way neutralise it by localising it there. Think simply of the way in which the physicist mentions on the blackboard the function of a body in space. A body is anything whatsoever and it is nothing; it is a point, it is something which all the same must be localised there by something foreign to the dimensions of space, except by producing there insoluble questions about the problem of individuation, in connection with which you have already heard on more than one occasion, I think, the manifestation, the expression of my derision.

A body in space, is simply something which at the very least is presented as impenetrable; there is a certain realism about space that is completely untenable and - as you know because I am not going to spell out its antinomies for you here - necessary. The very usage of the function of space, however punctual you may suppose it to be, supposes an indivisible unity, at once necessary and unsustainable, which is called the atom, completely impossible of course to identify with what is described in physics by this term which, as you know, has nothing atomic about it, I mean that it is in no way indivisible.

Space is of no interest unless there is supposed this final resistance to division, because it has no real usage unless it is discontinuous, namely if the unit which operates there cannot be in two points at the same time.

What does that mean for us? It is that this spatial unit, the point, can only be recognised as inalienable, which means for us that it cannot in any case be o.

What does what I am in the process of telling you mean? I press forward to make you fall again into the nets of what you have already heard. This means that through the form $i(o)$, my image, my presence in the Other is without a remainder. I cannot see what I am losing there. This is the meaning of the mirror stage

and the meaning of this schema that was forged for you, whose place you now see exactly, since it is the schema destined to ground the function of the ideal ego/ego-ideal in the fashion in which the relationship of the subject to the Other functions, when the specular relationship, called in this case the mirror of the big Other, dominates it.

(13) This image $i(o)$, the specular image, the characteristic object of the mirror stage, has more than one seduction which is not simply linked to the structure of each subject, but also to the function of knowledge. It is complete, I mean closed, it is Gestalt-like, namely marked by the predominance of the good shape, and is also intended to put us on our guard against this function of the Gestalt, in so far as it is founded on the experience of the good shape, an experience precisely that is characteristic of this field. For to reveal the degree of "appearance" in this satisfying character of the form as such, indeed of the idea of its rootedness in the visual eidos, to see and tear apart what is illusory in it, it is enough to make a stain on it: to see where this point of desire is really attached, to perform "the function", if you will allow me the equivocal usage of a current term to support what I want to get you to hear, a stain is enough to perform the "function" of beauty spot (grain de beauté).

The spots and outcomes - you will allow me here to continue the equivocation - of beauty show the place of o , here reduced to this zero point whose function I evoked the last time. The beauty spot, more than the shape that it stains, is what looks at me. And it is because it looks at me that it draws me so paradoxically, sometimes more - and with more right - than the look of my partner; for this look reflects me after all and in so far as it reflects me, it is only my reflection, an imaginary buoy. There is no need for the crystalline lens to be thickened by a cataract to blind vision, to blind it in any case to the following: the elision of castration at the level of desire in so far as it is projected into the image.

The blankness of the eye of the blind man, or to take another image in this moment, which I hope you remember, even though it is an echo of another year, the jet-setters of La dolce vita, at the final phantastical moments of the film when they advance as it were jumping from one shadow to another of the pine wood through which they make their way to get to the beach, they see the inert eye of the marine creature that the fishermen are in the process of dragging ashore, it is by this that we are most looked at, and it shows how anxiety emerges in the vision of the locus of desire that it determines.

This is the virtue of tattooing, and I do not need to recall for you this admirable passage of Levi-Strauss, when he evokes the outbreak of desire of the parched colonisers when they get to this zone of Parana where there await them these women entirely covered with shimmering overlapping drawings in the greatest variety of shapes and of colours.

At the other end, what I would evoke, is that, as I might say, in referring to the emergence which, as you know, is more marked (14) for me by creationist rather than evolutionist style of forms, the appearance of the visual apparatus itself, at the level of the fringes of the lamellibranchiata, begins with a pigmentary stain, the first appearance of a differentiated organ in the sense of a sensibility which is already properly speaking visual. And of course there is nothing more blind than a stain! To the spot (mouche) mentioned earlier, I would add the spots before the eyes (mouche volante) which give the first warning of organic danger to people in their fifties.

Zero of o, it is through this that visual desire masks the anxiety of what is essentially lacking to desire, of what determines us when all is said and done, if we remain with this field of vision, to grasp only, to be ever only able to grasp any living being as what he is in the field of the pure visual signal, what ethology calls a dummy, a puppet, an appearance.

o, what is lacking, is non-specular, it is not graspable in the image. I highlighted for you the blank eye of the blind man as being at once the revealed and the irremediably hidden image of scopophilic desire. The eye of the voyeur itself appears to the other as what it is: as impotent. This indeed is what allows our civilisation to put in a box what supports it in different forms that are perfectly homogeneous with the dividends and the bank reserves that it determines.

This relationship of desire to anxiety in this radically masked form, linked by that very fact to the structure, of desire in its most deceptive functions, dimensions, is the specifically defined stage to which we have now to oppose how much openness is brought to it by the other function, that which I introduced today with this accessory, which is not nevertheless accidental, of the shofar.

Do I need, in closing my discourse, to anticipate on what I will articulate step by step the next time, namely how our most elementary tradition, that of Freud's first steps, commands us to distinguish this other dimension. What does it tell us? Here again I would pay homage to my friend Stein for having articulated it very well in his discourse: if desire, he says - and I subscribe to his formula, because I find it more than brilliant - if desire were primordial, if it were the desire of the mother which determined the bringing into the play of the original crime, we would be in the field of vaudeville. The origin, Freud tells us in the most formal fashion - and by forgetting it the whole chain is undone and it is because of not having secured this beginning of the chain that analysis, I am speaking about analysis in theory as in practice, seems to undergo this form of dispersion where one can ask oneself on certain occasions whether there is anything that can still preserve its coherence - it is because the murder of the father and everything that it determines is what reverberates - if one is to understand what one hopes is only a metaphor in Reik's mouth - as the bellowing of a felled bull which still makes

itself heard in the sound of the shofar, let us say more simply that it is from the original fact inscribed in the myth of murder as the starting point of something whose function we have henceforth to grasp in the economy of desire, it is starting from that as a prohibition impossible to transgress that there is constituted in the most fundamental form the original desire.

It is secondary with respect to a dimension that we have to tackle here with respect to the essential object which functions as o, this function of the voice and what it contributes in terms of new dimensions in the relationship of desire to anxiety. This is the detour through which the functions of desire, object, anxiety are going to regain their value at every stage, right up to the stage of the origin. And in order not to fail to anticipate your questions and to tell you also perhaps, to tell those who have posed them, that I am not forgetting this field and the furrows that I have to trace in it in order to be complete, you may have noticed that I have not given an account either of the anal object or of the anal stage, at least since we have taken up our talks again: it is as a matter because it is properly speaking impossible if it is not within the context of a total reworking of the function of desire, starting from this point which because it was enounced here the last time is the most original, the one that I will take up the next time around the object of the voice.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 29 May 1963

On reading, these days, some works which have recently appeared about the relationships of language to thought, I was led to re-present for myself what after all I can indeed at every moment put in question for myself, namely the place and the nature of the angle from which I am trying to attack something, which in any case can only be, - without that what would I have to tell you - an inevitable, necessary limit to your understanding. This does not present any particular difficulty, in its objective principle, all progress of a science depending as much and more on the phasic handling of its concepts as on the extension of its grasp, which may give rise here - I mean in the psychoanalytic field - to an obstacle which deserves particular reflection; it is not as easily soluble as the passage from one conceptual system to another, for example from the Copernican system to the Einsteinian system. For after all one may suppose that for sufficiently well developed minds, that does not create a difficulty for very long. For minds sufficiently open to mathematics, it does not take too long for it to become clear that the Einsteinian equations hold up, are included in the ones which preceded them, that it situates them as particular cases, therefore completely resolves them.

That does not mean that there may not be, as the experience of history proves, a moment of resistance, but it is short. In the whole measure that, as analysts - I mean in the whole measure of our implication, whether it is more or less: to interest oneself a little in psychoanalysis is already to be a little implicated in it - in the whole measure of our implication in psychoanalytic technique, we have to encounter in the development of concepts the same obstacle designated, recognised, as constituting the limits of analytic experience, namely castration anxiety.

It **is** as if what reaches me from different distances from where I am speaking - and not necessarily always to respond to what I am saying, but certainly in a certain zone of response - it is as **if** at certain moments a hardening takes place in certain technical (2) positions, strictly correlative in this matter to what I can call the limits of understanding; it is also as if to overcome these limits I had chosen a path that is perfectly defined, at the level of school-going age, by a pedagogical school that poses in a certain fashion the problems of the relationship between teaching in school and the maturation of the thinking of the child, it is as if I were adhering - and I adhere in effect, if

one looks closely at this pedagogical debate - to this style of pedagogical procedure which is far, believe me, you can check it out, there are some of you who are closer to it than others, more required to be interested in these pedagogical procedures, you will see that the schools are far from being in agreement on the procedure that I am now going to articulate and define. For one school, if you wish, put it wherever you like, for the moment on my left, that means nothing more, everything is determined by an autonomous maturation of intelligence, all one does is follow it, I mean at school-going age; for the others there is a fault, a gap. The first, let us designate it for example by the theories of Stern - I did not say it immediately because I think that a good number of you have never opened the works of this psychologist who is nevertheless universally recognised - for the others, let us say, take Piaget, there is a gap, a fault between what childish thinking is capable of forming and what can be brought to it along these scientific paths. It is clear, if you look carefully at it, it means in both cases reducing the efficaciousness of teaching as such to zero.

Teaching exists: what makes numerous spirits in the scientific arena able to overlook it, is that effectively, in the scientific field, once one has reached it, what is properly of the order of teaching, in the sense that I am going to specify it, can be, in effect, considered elidible, namely that, when one has broken through a certain stage of mathematical understanding, once it is done, it is done; one no longer needs to search out its paths. One can, as I might say, reach it without any difficulty provided one belongs to the generation to whom these things were taught in this form, in this formalisation, as a primary intention.

Extremely complicated concepts, or more exactly ones which (3) appeared at an earlier stage of mathematics to be extremely complicated, are immediately accessible to very young minds. It is certain that one needs no intermediary when one is of school-going age and that the whole interest of school pedagogy depends on grasping, on ascertaining this central point or to anticipate, by problems which go slightly beyond them, what are called the mental capacities of the child. And by helping him - I am saying: simply by helping him - to tackle these problems, one does something which has an effect, not simply pre-maturing the effect of haste on maturation, but an effect which in certain periods that one can call - they have been called that - "sensitive" - those who know a little about this subject can see where; I continue, because the important thing is my discourse, and not my references - one can obtain veritable effects of unleashing, of opening out of certain apprehensive activities in certain domains, effects of a quite special fecundity.

It is exactly what seems to me can be obtained in the domain that we are advancing into together here in so far as, because of the specificity of its field, there is always involved in it something which it would be well for pedagogues to map out one day. There have already been beginnings in the works of authors whose testimony is all the more interesting to retain in that they have no notion of what their experience may contribute to

us: the fact that one pedagogue was able to formulate that there is real access to the concept only from the age of puberty on - I mean experimenters who know nothing about, who do not want to recognise anything about analysis - is something which would merit our taking our own look at it, sticking our nose into it, grasping - in the place where I am speaking to you, there are a thousand tangible traces - that it is properly speaking in function of a link which can be made about the maturation of the object o as such, namely as I define it, at this age of puberty that one can conceive of a quite different mapping out than the one which is made by these authors of what they call "the limit moment" when there is truly the functioning of the concept, and not this sort of use of language that they call in this case, not conceptual, but "complexual", by a sort of homonymy which is a pure encounter with the term "complex" that we use.

(4) This position of o at the moment of its passage, through what I symbolise with the formula of $(-\langle p)$ is one of the goals of our explanations this year. It cannot be valorised, taken up by your ears, it cannot be validly transmitted, except by some approach, which can here only be a detour, to what constitutes this moment characterised by the notation $(-\langle P)$, and which is and can only be castration anxiety.

It is because this anxiety here cannot in any way be made present as such, but only mapped out by this sort of concentric path which makes me, as you see, oscillate between the oral stage and something which I said the last time was supported by the evocation, in a separated form, materialised in an object which is the voice, of this shofar - you will allow me today to take it up and to put it aside in a moment - that we can now return to the central point that I evoke in speaking about castration. What really is this relationship between anxiety and castration? It is not enough for us to know that it is experienced as such, at one or other phase of analysis which is described as terminal or non-terminal, for us to really know what it is.

To say things immediately as they are going to be articulated at the next step, I would say that the function of the phallus as imaginary, functions everywhere at every level, high up and low down, that I defined, characterised by a certain relationship of the subject to o , the phallus functions everywhere, except where one expects it, as a mediating function, specifically at the phallic stage, and it is this lack as such of the phallus which is present, detectable, often to our great surprise everywhere else, it is this vanishing of the phallic function as such, at this level where it is expected to function, which is the principle of this castration anxiety.

Hence the notation $(-\langle p)$ denoting what I might call this positive absence, and since this was never formulated in such a manner in this form, no place was allowed either for its consequences to be drawn.

To make tangible the truth of this formula, I will take different paths in accordance with the mode which I described earlier as

(5) that of turning around. And since the last time I recalled to you the proper structure of the visual field concerning what I called both the sustentation and the occultation in this field of the object *o*, I cannot do less than return to it when, in a fashion that we know to be traumatic, it is in this field that there is presented the first approach to the phallic presence, namely what is called the primal scene.

Everyone knows that despite the fact that it is present, visible in the shape of a functioning of the penis, that what is striking in the evocation of the reality of the phantasised form of the primal scene, is always some ambiguity concerning precisely this presence.

How often can one say precisely that it is not seen at its place, and even sometimes that the essential of the traumatic effect of the scene is precisely the forms under which it disappears, is conjured away.

Moreover I would only have to evoke, in its exemplary form, the mode of apparition - where in any case, for our purposes, we should not deceive ourselves, the anxiety which accompanies it sufficiently signals that we are indeed on the path that we are seeking - the mode of apparition of this primal scene in the story of the Wolfman. We have heard it said somewhere that there was something obsessional, it appears, in the fact that we return here I do not think every time that I am in your presence, but in the fact that we return to these original examples of the Freudian discovery; these examples are more than the supports, more even than the metaphors, they make us put our finger on the very substance of what we have to deal with.

The essential in the revelation of what appears to the Wolfman through the gap which prefigures in a way what I made into a function, that of the open window, that which appears in its frame identifiable in its form to the very function of phantasy in its most anxiety-provoking mode, it is manifest that the essential in it is not to know where the phallus is; it is there, as I might say, identical everywhere to what I could call the "catatonia of the image": the tree, the wolves perched on it who - you can find in this the echo of what I articulated for you the last time - look fixedly at the subject, there is no need to search in this fur, repeated five times, in the tail of the five animals, for what is involved and which is there - as I told you - in the very reflection that the image supports of a catatonia which is nothing other than that of the subject himself, of the child petrified, fascinated by what he sees, paralysed by this fascination to the point that what is looking at him in the scene and which is in a way everywhere invisible, we can indeed conceive of as an image which here is nothing other than the transposition of his arrested state, of his own body transformed here into this tree, that we might describe as, to echo a celebrated title, "the tree covered with wolves, l'arbre couvert de loups".

That what is involved is something that echoes this experiential

pole that we have defined as that of jouissance, appears to me to be unquestionable. This sort of jouissance, akin to what moreover Freud calls the horror of the jouissance the Ratman is unaware of, a jouissance going beyond any possible mapping out by the subject, is here presentified in this erect form, the subject is no longer anything but erection in this grip which makes of him a phallus, makes a tree of him, horrifies him (l'arborifie, l'arb-horrifie), which completely immobilises him.

Something happens which Freud testifies to us as only having been reconstructed on this occasion: essential though it may be, the symptomatic development of the effects of this scene is so essential that the analysis Freud gives of it could not even be put forward for a moment, if we do not admit this element which remains the only one not integrated up to the end by the subject and presentifying on this occasion what Freud articulated later about reconstruction as such: it is the response of the subject to the traumatic scene by a defecation. The first time, or the quasi-first time, the first time in any case that Freud has to note in a particular fashion this function of the appearance of the excremental object at a critical moment, note - consult the text - that in a thousand forms he articulates it as a function to which we can give no other name than the one that it was thought necessary to articulate later as characteristic of the genital stage, namely as a function of oblativity. It is a gift, he tells us. Moreover everyone knows that Freud underlined from the first the character of gift on all the occasions that you will allow me to call in passing and with no further commentary, (7) if you remember my reference points, the cases of passage a. l'acte in which the little child inopportunately releases some of his intestinal contents.

And in the text of the Wolfman things go even further, giving its true sense, the one that we have drowned under a wave of moralising assumptions about oblativity, Freud speaks in this connection about sacrifice, something which - you will admit - given Freud's reading - for example, we know that he had read for example, Robertson Smith - that, when he spoke about sacrifice, he was not speaking about something up in the air, a kind of vague moral analogy, Freud speaks about sacrifice in connection with the apparition of this excremental object in the field. After all that must mean something.

It is here that we will take up the thing at the level, if you wish, of the normal act, of the act rightly or wrongly qualified as mature, that at the level of which I thought I could in my seminar before last, if I remember rightly, articulate orgasm as being the equivalent of anxiety and situating itself in the inner field of the subject, while I provisionally left castration with this single mark. It is quite obvious that one could not detach from it the sign of the intervention of the other as such; this characteristic in reality having always been, from the beginning, attributed to it, it is therefore the other who threatens castration.

I pointed out in this connection that by assimilating, by making

equivalent orgasm as such and anxiety, I was taking up the position which rejoined what I had previously said about anxiety as a reference, a signal of the only relationship which does not deceive, that we could find in it the reason for what could be satisfying in orgasm. It is from something that happens in the perspective in which it is confirmed that anxiety is not without an object, that we can understand the function of orgasm and more especially what I called "the satisfaction that it carries with it".

I believed at that time that I could not say any more if I was to be understood. It nevertheless remains that an echo has come to me, let us say to put it mildly, of some perplexity in the terms that were interchanged, if this echo is correct, precisely in the case of two people that I believed I had formed particularly well. It is all the more surprising that they could interrogate themselves in this case about what I meant by this satisfaction.

(8) Is what is involved then, they asked one another, jouissance? Is it a way of returning in a certain fashion to this derisory absolute that certain people want to put into genital fusion, so called? And then, since it was a matter of seeing the relationship between this anxiety point - put into this point all the ambiguity that you wish - a point where there is no longer anxiety if the orgasm covers it over, and this point of desire in so far as it is marked by the absence of the object o in the form of $(-P)$, what happens, they asked themselves to this relationship in the case of the woman? Answer: I did not say that the satisfaction of orgasm was identified with what I defined in the seminar on Ethics about the locus of jouissance. Answer - it even appears ironic to underline it-: the little satisfaction, even if it is sufficient, brought by orgasm, why should it be the same and at the same point as this other little which is offered to a woman even in a successful copulation? This is what should be articulated in the most precise fashion. It is not enough to say vaguely that the satisfaction of orgasm is comparable to what I call elsewhere, on the oral plane, the crushing of demand under the satisfaction of need. At this oral level, the distinction between need and demand is easy to sustain, and besides does not fail to pose us the problem of where the drive is situated. If by some artifice one can equivocate at the oral level about what is original in the grounding of demand in what we analysts call drive, this is what we do not in any case have any right to do at the genital level. And precisely there where it would seem that we are dealing with the most primitive instinct, the sexual instinct, it is there less than anywhere else that we cannot fail to refer to the structure of the drive as being supported by the formula $\$ \llcorner D: \$$ relationship of desire to demand.

What is demanded at the genital level and from whom? That effectively the experience which is so common, fundamental that it ends up in its obviousness by no longer noticing its relief, effectively interhuman copulation with the transcendence it has compared to individual existence - we needed the detour of a rather advanced biology to be able to notice the strict

(9) correlation between the appearance of bisexuality and the

emergence of the function of individual death, but after all people always had a presentiment that in this act where there is bound closely, then, what we ought to call the survival of the species conjoined with something which cannot fail, if the words have a meaning, to involve what we have located at the final term as the death drive, after all why should we refuse to see what is immediately tangible in facts that we know quite well, which are signified in the most common usages of the tongue - we demand - I have not yet said from whom, but after all since it is necessary always to demand something from someone, it happens that it is from our partner, is it quite sure that it is from her, we will have to see in a second phase - but what we demand is what? It is to satisfy a demand which has a certain relationship with death. What we demand does not go very far: it is the little death (la petit mort); but after all it is clear that we demanded it. That the drive is intimately mingled with this drive of the demand, that we demand to make love (l'amour), if you wish to make "l'amourir", it is to die (mourir), it is even to die laughing (de rire)² It is not for nothing that I underline that which in love participates in what I call the comic feeling. In any case it is indeed here that there ought to reside post-orgasmic relaxation. If what is satisfied is this demand, well then God knows, it is to be really satisfied, one gets out of it!

The advantage of this conception is to make appear, to give the reason, why anxiety appears in a certain number of ways of obtaining orgasm. In the whole measure that orgasm is detached from this field of the demand of the other - it is the first apprehension that Freud had of it in coitus interruptus - anxiety appears, as one might say, in this margin of the loss of signification. But as such, it continues to designate what is aimed at in terms of a certain relationship to the other. I am precisely not in the process of saying that castration anxiety is an anxiety about death; it is an anxiety which refers to the field where death is closely bound up with the renewal of life, it is an anxiety which, if we localise it at this point, allows us to understand very well why it is equivalently interpretable as the reason why it is given to us, in Freud's final conception, as the signal of a threat to the status of the defended "I". It refers to a beyond of this defended "I", at this point of appeal (10) for a jouissance which goes beyond our limits, in so far as here the other is properly speaking evoked in this register of the real which is how a certain type, a certain form of life is transmitted and is sustained. Call that whatever you wish, God or the genius of the species. I think that I have already sufficiently implied in my discourse that this does not carry us towards any metaphysical heights. What is involved here is a real, this something which maintains what Freud articulated at the level of his Nirvana principle as being this property of life, of having, in order to reach death, to repass by forms which reproduce the ones which had given to the individual form the occasion of appearing through the conjunction of two sexual cells.

What does that mean? What does that mean as regards what happens

at the level of the object? What does it mean, if not that in short this result, that I called such a successful result, is only realised in such a satisfactory fashion in the course of a certain automatic cycle that remains to be defined and because precisely of the fact that the organ is never able to hold up very long on the path of the appeal for jouissance. With regard to this end of jouissance and to reaching this appeal of the other in a term which would be tragic, the amboceptor organ can always be said to give way prematurely.

At the moment, I might say, that it could be the sacrificial object, well then, let us say in the ordinary case it has long disappeared from the scene. It is no longer anything but a little rag, it is no longer there except as a testimony, as a memory for the partner in tenderness. In the castration complex, this is what is involved, in other words this only becomes a drama in so far as there is raised, pushed in a certain direction - one which places all its trust in genital consummation - the putting in question of desire.

If we let go of this ideal of genital achievement, by seeing what is structurally, happily alluring in it, there is no reason why the anxiety linked to castration should not appear to us in a much more supple correlation with its symbolic object, and with an opening out that is quite different to the objects of other levels, as this moreover has always been implied by the premises (11) of Freudian theory, which put desire in a completely different relationship to a purely and simply natural one to the natural partner as regards its structuring.

I would like, to make you better sense what is at stake, to recall all the same what is involved in what one might say are, at first, savage relationships between man and woman. After all, a woman who does not know whom she is dealing with, it is indeed, in accordance with what I put forward to you about the relationship between anxiety and the desire of the Other, because she is not before the man without a certain unease about where exactly this path of desire is going to lead her. When the man, by God, makes love like everyone else and is disarmed, if the woman - something which as you know is very conceivable - does not draw, I would say, any obvious profit from it, there is in every case something that she has gained, it is that she is henceforth altogether at ease about the intentions of her partner.

In the same chapter of The Wasteland, by T S Elliot, to which I referred on a particular day when I thought it well to confront with our experience the old theory about the superiority of woman on the plane of jouissance, the one in which T S Elliot allows Tiresias to speak, we find these verses - whose irony made it always seem to me that they ought one day to have their place here in our discourse - when the carbuncular young dandy, the little clerk from the building society, has finished with the typist whose surroundings are all along depicted for us, has finished his little affair, T S Elliot expresses himself as follows:

"When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone."

What is meant by: "When lovely woman stoops to folly", is not to be translated, it is a song from the Vicar of Wakefield, when a beautiful woman abandons herself to folly - "stoops" is not the same thing as "s'abandonne" - lowers herself to folly, and then finally finds herself alone, she strides across the room stroking her hair automatically with her hand, and changes the record.

This by way of response to the question my pupils were posing amongst themselves about what is involved in the question of the desire of the woman. The desire of the woman is determined by (12) the question, for her also, of her jouissance. The fact that she is not simply much closer than man to jouissance, but doubly determined by it, is something that analytic theory has always taught us. That the locus of this jouissance is linked for us to the enigmatic, unsituatable character of her orgasm, is something that our analyses have been able to take far enough for us to be able to say that this locus is a rather archaic point since it is older than the present separation of the cloaca, something that was perfectly well located from a certain analytic perspective by a particular analyst of the female sex.

That desire, which is not at all jouissance, is in her case naturally where it ought to be according to nature, tubular (tubaire) ■ is something that the desire of those we call hysterics designates perfectly. The fact that we should have classified these subjects as hysterics changes nothing in the fact that desire thus situated is true, is organically true.

It is because man will never carry the point of his desire to that extreme, that one can say that the jouissance of the man and of the woman are not organically conjoined. It is indeed in the measure of the failure of the desire of man that the woman is led, as I might say, normally to the idea of having the man's organ, in so far as it is supposed to be a veritable amboceptor: this is what is called the phallus. It is because the phallus does not realise, except in its evanescence, the meeting of desires, that it becomes the common locus of anxiety.

What the woman demands from us analysts, at the end of an analysis conducted in accordance with Freud, is no doubt the penis, Penisneid, but in order to do better than the man. There is something, there are many things, there are a thousand things which confirm all of that. Without analysis what is there for the woman as a way of overcoming this Penisneid, if we suppose it to be always implicit; we know it very well, it is the most ordinary mode of seduction between the sexes, it is to offer to the desire of man the object involved in phallic claims, the non-detumescent object to sustain his desire, it is to make of her feminine attributes the signs of the omnipotence of man. And (13) it is this that - I would ask you to refer to my old seminars - this is what I thought it worth while valorising by

underlining, after Joan Riviere, the correct function of what she calls "Womanliness as masquerade". She has simply to forget about her jouissance.

In the measure that we leave her in a way on this path, we find ourselves signing the decree of the renewal of the phallic claim, which becomes, I would not say the compensation, but as it were the hostage of what one demands from her in fact for taking charge of the failure of the other.

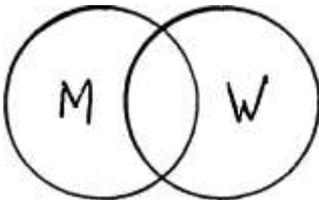
Such are the paths on which there are presented, in considering the genital plane, genital realisation as a term, what we could call the impasses of desire, if there were not the opening up of anxiety. We will see, restarting from the point that today I have led you to, how the whole analytic experience shows us that it is in the measure that it is summoned as object of propitiation in a failed conjunction, that the phallus which proves to be missing, constitutes castration itself as a point that it is impossible to get round in the relationships of the subject to the Other, and as a point that has been resolved as regards its anxiety function.

Seminar 21: Wednesday 5 June 1963

What I told you the last time ended, I believe, significantly with the silence which greeted my remarks, no one it seems having preserved enough sangfroid to reward them with a little applause. Either I am wrong or perhaps after all it is not too much to see in this the result of what I had expressly announced in beginning these remarks, namely that it was not possible to tackle castration anxiety head on without provoking, let us say, some echo of it. And after all this is not an excessive pretension, since what I told you is, if fact, something that could be qualified as not very encouraging, because it concerned the union between man and woman, an ever-present problem all the same, and one that quite correctly always has, and I hope that it still finds, a place in the preoccupations of psychoanalysts.

Jones circled for a long time around this problem materialised, incarnated by what is supposed to be implied in the phallo-centric perspective of primal ignorance, not only of man, but of woman herself, about the locus of conjunction, the vagina. And all the partly fruitful, even though incomplete detours that Jones went into on this path, show very well their aim in what he invokes - as I recalled for you at one stage - the famous "Man and woman he created them" which moreover is so ambiguous. For after all - one is entitled to say - Jones did not meditate on the Hebrew text of this verse 27 of Book 1 of Genesis.

In any case, to try to support what I said the last time on my little schema constructed by using these Euler circles, this could be supported as follows: the field opened up by man and woman in what one could call, in the biblical sense, their knowledge of one another, only intersects because the zone in which they could effectively overlap, where their desires carry them to reach one another, is qualified by the lack of that which would be their middle term, the phallus. For each of them, it is that which, when it is attained, alienates it precisely from the other.



The woman can undoubtedly be the symbol of the man, in his desire for phallic omnipotence, and precisely in so far as she is no longer the woman. As regards the woman, it is quite clear through all that we have discovered, what we have called Penisneid, that she can only take the phallus for what it is not,

(2) namely either o the object, or her own too small (jp) , which only gives her a jouissance approximating to what she imagines is the jouissance of the other, which she can no doubt share through a sort of mental phantasy, but only by straying from her own jouissance.

In other words, she can only enjoy (&) because it is not at its place, at the place of her jouissance, where her jouissance can be realised. I am going to give you a little illustration of it that is a little controversial, somewhat marginal, but contemporary. In an audience like this, how often, do we analysts, how often, to the point that it becomes something constant in our practice, do women want to be analysed like their husbands, and often by the same psychoanalyst? What does that mean, if not that the supposedly rewarded desire of their husband which they have the ambition to share, the - **(-P)** the re-positiving of (<p) that they suppose operates in the analytic field, this is what they have the ambition to attain.

That the phallus is not found where it is expected, where it is required, namely on the plane of genital mediation, is what explains that anxiety is the truth of sexuality, namely what appears every time its flow retreats, runs into the sand. Castration is the price of this structure, it substitutes itself for this cruth. But in truth, this is an illusory game; there is no castration because, at the place where it has to happen, there is no object to castrate. For that, it would be necessary for the phallus to be there. But it is only there so that there will be no anxiety.

The phallus, where it is expected as sexual, never appears except as lack, and this is its link with anxiety. And all of this means that the phallus is called on to function as an instrument of potency. Now potency, I mean what we are speaking about when we speak about potency, when we speak about it in a fashion which vacillates about what is involved - for it is always to omnipotence that we refer ourselves; now that is not what is involved, omnipotence is already the slippage, the evasion with respect to this point at which all potency fails - one does not demand potency to be everywhere, one demands it to be where it is present. It is precisely, because it fails where it is expected, (3) that we begin to foment omnipotence. In other words: the phallus is present, it is present everywhere it is not up to it.

For it is the aspect which allows us to pierce this illusion of the claim engendered by castration, in so far as it covers the anxiety presentified by every actualisation of jouissance; it is this confusion between jouissance and the instruments of potency. Human impotence, with the progress of institutions, becomes better than this state of fundamental misery where it constitutes itself into a profession, I mean a profession in every sense of the word, from the sense of the profession of faith, up to the term, to the aim that we find in the professional ideal.

Everything that shelters behind the dignity of any profession, is

always this central lack which is impotence. Impotence, as one might say, in its most general formula, is what destined man to be only able to orgasm (jouir) from his relationship to the support of (+<p), namely from a deceptive potency. If I remind you that this structure holds up after what I articulated the last time, it is to lead you towards some remarkable facts which control the structure articulated in this way; the famous term homosexuality, which in our doctrine, our theory, the Freudian one, is seen as the principle of social bonding, let us note that Freud always remarked, never raised a doubt on the point, that it is the privilege of the male. This libidinal cement of the social bond, in so far as it is only produced in the community of males, is linked to the aspect of sexual failure which is imparted to it very specially because of the fact of castration.

On the contrary female homosexuality has perhaps a great cultural importance, but no value as a social function, because it is brought to bear, for its part, on the proper field of sexual rivalry, namely there where in appearance it would have the least chance of succeeding, were it not for the fact that precisely in this field those who are at an advantage, are precisely those who do not have the phallus, namely that omnipotence, the greatest liveliness of desire is produced at the level of this love which is called Uranian, which I believe has marked by its bonding the most radical affinity to what one can call female homosexuality.

An idealistic love, the presentification of the essential mediation of the phallus as (-£>). This (jP) therefore, for both sexes, is what I desire and what I can only have qua (-jp). It is (4) this minus which is found, in the field of sexual conjunction, to be the universal third term, to be this ego, my dear Reboul, which is not at all the reciprocal Hegelian one, but in so far as it constitutes the field of the Other as lack, I only accede to in so far as I take this very path, that I attach myself to the fact that this "I" makes me disappear, that I only rediscover myself in what Hegel perceived of course, but which he justifies without this interval, only in a generalised o, only in this idea of the ego in so far as it is everywhere, namely in so far as it is nowhere. The support of desire is not designed for sexual union; for generalised, it does not specify me more as a man or a woman, but as one or the other. The function of this field described here as that of sexual union, poses for each of the two sexes the alternative: the other is either the other or the phallus in the sense of exclusion. This field here is empty, but this field here, if I make it positive, the "or" takes on this other meaning which means that one is substitutable for the other at every moment.

This is the reason why it was not by chance that I introduced the field of the eye hidden behind every spatial universe, with a reference to these beings-images on the encounter with whom there is played out a certain path of salvation, specifically the Buddhist path, by introducing the one that I designated for you as Kuan Yin or in other words Avalokitesvara with its complete sexual ambiguity. The more the Avalokitecvara is presentified as male, the more it takes on female aspects. I will show you, if

that amuses you, some other day the images of Tibetan paintings or statues, there is a superabundance of them and the trait that I designated for you is absolutely obvious here. What is at stake today is to grasp how this alternative between desire and jouissance can find its way. The difference between dialectical thinking and our experience, is that we do not believe in the synthesis. If there is a way through where the antinomy is closed off, it is because it was already there before the constitution of the antinomy.

For the object *o*, in which the impasse of the access from desire to the thing is incarnated, to give him passage, it is necessary to return to the beginning; there is nothing which prepares this passage before the capture of desire in specular space, there is no way out. For let us not omit to say that the possibility of this very impasse is linked to a moment which anticipates and conditions what has come to be marked in the sexual failure of man. It is the bringing into play of the specular tension which eroticises so precociously and so profoundly the field of insight.

(5) What is outlined in the anthropoid about the conductive character of this field has been known since Kohler; that he is not without intelligence, because he can do a lot of things provided he can see what he has to reach.

I alluded last night to the fact that this is the whole point, it is not that the primate is any more incapable of speaking than ourselves, but he cannot make his word enter into this operational field. But that is not the only difference. The difference, marked by the fact that for the animal there is no mirror stage, is what has gone under the name of narcissism, from a certain ubiquitous subtraction of libido, from an injection of the libido into the field of insight, of which specularised vision gives the form. But this form hides from us the phenomenon of the occultation of the eye, which henceforth ought to look from everywhere at the one that we are, with the universality of sight.

We know that this can happen and it is what is called the Unheimlich, but very particular circumstances are necessary. Usually, what is satisfying precisely in the specular form is the masking of the possibility of this apparition. In other words, the eye establishes the fundamental relationship of the desirable in the fact that it always tends to make it miscognised, in the relationship to the other, that under this desirable there is a desirer.

Let us reflect a little on the import of this formula which I believe I can give as being the most general one of what constitutes the arousal of the Unheimlich. Imagine that you are dealing with the most relaxing of desirable things, in its most pacifying form, the divine statue which is only divine. What would be more Unheimlich than to see it coming to life, namely to see it showing itself as desiring!

Now, not alone is it the structuring hypothesis that we pose for the genesis of o that it is born elsewhere and before this, before this capture which hides it, it is not simply this hypothesis, itself founded on our praxis, it is of course from this that I introduce it: (1) either our praxis is faulty, I mean faulty with respect to itself; or (2) it supposes that our field, which is that of desire, is engendered from this relationship of S to O which is the one in which we cannot rediscover what is our goal except in the measure that we reproduce its terms. Either our praxis is faulty with respect to itself or it presupposes (6) this. What our praxis engenders, if you wish, is this universe here, symbolised here in the final term in the famous division which has been guiding us for some time through the three phases in which the subject S that is still unknown has to constitute himself in the Other, and in which the o appears as the remainder of this operation.

I would point out to you in passing that the alternative: either our praxis is faulty or it presupposes this, is not an exclusive alternative. Our praxis can allow itself to be faulty in part with respect to itself, and that there should be a residue since precisely this is what is predicted.

A big presumption that we risk very little by engaging ourselves in a formalisation which is imposed as also being necessary* But this relationship of S to O , must indeed be situated as going far beyond in its complexity, which is nevertheless so simple, inaugural, what those who bequeathed to us the definition of the signifier believed it to be their duty to pose at the beginning of the operation they organise, namely the notion of communication. Communication as such is not what is primal since, at the origin S has nothing to communicate for the reason that all the instruments of communication are on the other side, in the field of the Other, and because he has to receive them from him. As I have always said, this has as a result and consequence that it is always principally from the Other that he receives his own message, the first emergence, the one which is inscribed on the board is only an unconscious, because unformulatable, "Who am I?", to which there responds before it is formulated, a "You are", namely that he receives first of all his own message in an inverted form, as I have said for a long time. I am adding today if you understand it, that he receives it in a form that is at first interrupted, that he hears first of all a "You are..." without attribution. And, nevertheless, however interrupted this message may be and therefore however insufficient, it is never unformed, starting from this fact that language exists in the real, that it is on a journey, in circulation, and that for its part the S , in its supposedly primal interrogation, that with regard to it, many things in this language are already regulated.

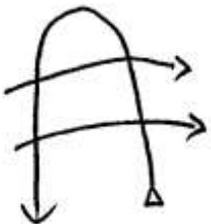
Now to take up a phrase I used earlier, it is not simply by hypothesis, a hypothesis that I founded in our very own practice, identifying it with this praxis and up to its limits, to take this phrase up again, I would say that observable facts - and why so badly observed, this is the major question that experience

presents to us - observable facts show us the autonomous operation of the word as it is presupposed in this schema. I think that there are here enough mothers not afflicted with deafness to know that a very small child, at the age when the mirror phase is far from having finished its work, that a very small child, once he has a few words, monologues before he goes to sleep.

Time prevents me today from reading for you a big page. I promise you something satisfying from it the next time or the one after that; for undoubtedly I will not fail to do it. As luck would have it, after my friend Roman Jakobson had for ten years begged all his pupils to put a tape recorder in the nursery, it only happened two or three years ago. Thanks to this, we finally have a publication of one of those primordial monologues, and I repeat that you will get some satisfaction from it. If I make you wait a little, it is because, in truth, it is useful for showing you a lot of other things that I want to outline today.

It is necessary all the same for what I have to outline today, to evoke the references of existence, as regards which the fact that I can only do so without knowing too much about what may (7) correspond to it in your own knowledge, shows the degree to which we are fated to move around in a field in which, whatever one thinks about it and whatever expense in terms of courses and conferences about it are made, your education is nothing less than adequate.

In any case, if some people here remember what Piaget calls egocentric language, to which I do not know whether we will be able to return this year - I think that you know what it is and that under a name that is perhaps defensible, but is undoubtedly open to all sorts of misunderstandings - there is for example, this characteristic that egocentric language, namely these sorts of monologues a child carries on aloud, when he is set to a common task with some comrades, which is very obviously a monologue directed at himself, can only be produced precisely in a certain community. This is not to object to the qualification of egocentric, if one specifies the meaning of this "egocentric" - in any case, as regards egocentrism, it may appear striking that the subject as enunciated is so often elided in it. I recall this reference, it is perhaps to encourage you to make contact again and get to know the phenomenon in the text of Piaget for any useful end it may have in the future, but also to note that at least a problem is posed: that of situating, of knowing what is this hypnopompic monologue, which is quite primal compared to this manifestation, as you know, of a much later stage.



Here and now, I indicate to you that as regards these problems, as you see, of genesis and of development, this famous schema which has bored you so much throughout these years, will regain its value. In any case, this monologue of the small child that I am speaking to you about, never happens when someone else is there: a younger brother, another

baby in the room, is enough for it not to happen. Many other characteristics indicate that what is happening at this level, which, as you -will see, is so astonishingly revelatory of the precociousness of what are described as the primordial tensions in the unconscious, we cannot doubt that we have here something that is at every point analogous to the function of the dream.

Everything happens on "another stage" with the accent that I have given to this term. And ought we not to be guided here by the little door itself - it is never anything but a bad way through which I introduce you here to the problem - namely concerning what is involved, which is the constitution of o as remainder, that in any case, if its conditions are indeed the ones I have (8) told you about, we for our part only have this phenomenon in the state of a remainder, namely on the tape of the recorder. In other words, we have at the very most the distant murmur that is always ready to be interrupted when we appear.

Does this not prompt us to consider that a way is presented to us to grasp that for the subject who is in the process of constituting himself, it is also in a voice detached from its support that we ought to search for this remainder.

Pay very careful attention: we must not go too quickly here. Ordinary experience is that everything the subject receives from the Other through language is received in a vocal form. But we know very well, in an experience which is not all that rare, even though one evokes always the most spectacular cases, Helen Keller, that there are ways other than the vocal one to receive language, there are other ways for receiving language, language is not vocalisation (cf the deaf).

Nevertheless, I believe that we can advance in the direction that a relationship that is more than accidental links language to sonority. And we will believe perhaps that we even are advancing along the right path in trying to articulate things closely in qualifying this sonority, for example, as instrumental. It is a fact that physiology opens the path here. We do not know everything about the functioning of the ear, but we know all the same that the cochlea is a resonator, a complex or composite resonator, if you wish, but after all a composite resonator is decomposed into a composition of elementary resonators. This leads us along a path which is the following, that what is proper to resonance is that it is the apparatus which dominates in it. It is the apparatus which resonates. It does not resonate to just anything, it only resonates, if you wish, in order not to complicate things too much, to its own note, to its own frequency.

This leads us to a certain remark about the sort of resonator that we are dealing with, I mean concretely, in the sensory apparatus in question, our ear: to a resonator which is not an indifferent one, to a resonator which is a kind of tube. The distance of the journey involved in a certain return that the vibration makes, always carried from the oval window, passing from the scala tympani to the scala vestibuli, appears to be

closely linked to the length of the space travelled in a closed conduit. It operates therefore in the same way, if you wish, as some tube, whatever it may be, a flute or an organ.

(9) Obviously the matter is complicated, this apparatus does not resemble any other musical instrument. It is a tube which could be, as I might say, a tube with keys, in this sense that it seems that it is the cell put in the position of a cord, but which does not function like a cord, which is involved at the point of the return of the wave, which takes charge of connoting the resonance involved.

I apologise all the more for this detour because it is quite certain that it is not in this direction that we will find the last word on the matter. This reminder is all the same designed to actualise the fact that in the form, the organic form, there is something which appears to us akin to these primary, topological, transpatial data which made us interest ourselves very especially in the most elementary form of the created or creative constitution of a void, the one that we have incarnated in the form of an apologetic for you in the story of the pot.

A pot also is a tube, and one that can resonate. And the question of what we have said, that ten absolutely similar pots absolutely do not fail to impose themselves as individually different, but the question can be posed as to whether if, when one puts one in the place of the other, the void which was successively at the heart of each one of them is always the same.

Now, it is indeed from the commandment which imposes the void at the heart of the acoustic tube for anything of this reality which may resonate there which opens out onto a further step of our progress, which is not so simple to define, namely what is called a breath, namely that for all possible breaths, a flute at the level of one of its openings imposes the same vibration. If it is not the law, indicating for us this something where the o involved, functions with a real function of mediation.

Well now let us not yield to this illusion. All of this is only of interest as a metaphor. If the voice, in the sense that we understand it, has an importance, it is not that of resonating in any spatial void, it is in so far as the formula, the most simple elision in what is called linguistically its phatic function, which is believed to be a simplemaking contact, which is indeed something else, resonates in a void which is the void of the Other as such, the ex nihilo properly speaking. The voice responds to what is said, but it cannot answer for it. In other words: in order for it to respond, we have to incorporate the voice as otherness of what is said.

(10) It is indeed for this reason, and not for any other, that detached from ourselves, our voice appears to us to have a strange sound. The structure of the Other, in itself, constitutes a certain void, the void of its lack of guarantee. The truth enters the world with the signifier and before any control. It is experienced, it refers itself on only by its

echoes into the real. Now, it is in this void that the voice qua distinct from sonorities, the not modulated but articulated voice resonates. The voice involved, is the voice qua imperative, in so far as it calls for obedience or conviction, that it situates itself, not with respect to music, but with respect to the word.

It would be interesting to see the distance that exists, in connection with this well-known miscognition of the recorded voice, between the experience of the singer and that of the orator. I propose to those who are willing to do some research for free on this, to do it: I do not have the time to do it myself.

But I believe that it is here that we put our finger on this distinct form of identification that I was not able to approach last year, which ensures that the identification of the voice gives us at least the first model which ensures that in certain cases we are not speaking about the same identification as in the others, we speak about Einverleibung, of incorporation.

The psychoanalysts of the right generation were aware of this. There was a certain Mr Isakover who wrote in the 20th year of the International Journal a very remarkable article which moreover to my mind is only of interest because of the need he felt to give a really striking image of what was distinct in this type of identification. Because, as you will see, he is going to look for it in something whose relationships - as you will see - are singularly more distant from the phenomenon than For that purpose, if he interests himself in the little animal which is called the [Palaemon], if I remember rightly, because I have not had time to check this memory - which is called, I believe, Daphnia and which without being at all a shrimp you can present it to yourself as greatly resembling it. In any case, this animal which lives in salt water has the curious habit, as we would say in our language, of plugging the shell during its metamorphoses with tiny grains of sand, of introducing them into what it has in terms of a reduced apparatus described as (11) stato-acoustic, in other words into the utricles - for it does not have our extraordinary cochlea - into the utricles, having introduced these lumps of sand - because it has to put them in from outside, because it does not produce them of itself in any way - the utricle closes again and here it is inside these little bells that are necessary for its equilibrium. It brings them in from outside. You must admit that the relationship with the constitution of the superego is rather distant; nevertheless what interests me, is that Mr Isakover did not think he could find any better comparison than to refer himself to this operation. You have all the same, I hope, heard being awakened in yourselves the echoes of physiology, and you know that malicious experimenters substituted grains of steel for grains of sand, as a way of amusing themselves subsequently with the Daphnia and a magnet.

A voice therefore is not assimilated but it is incorporated, this is what can give it a function in modelling our void. And we rediscover here my instrument of the other day, the shofar of the

synagogue. What gives its meaning to this possibility that for an instant it can be entirely musical - is this elementary fifth even music, this deviation of a fifth in it? - that it can be a substitute for the word, by powerfully wrenching our ear away from all its customary harmonies. It models the locus of our anxiety, but, let us note, only after the desire of the Other has taken the form of a commandment. That is why it can play its eminent function of giving to anxiety its resolution, whether it is called guilt or pardon, and which is precisely the introduction of a different order. The fact that desire is a lack is fundamental here, we will say that it is its "primordial fault", fault in the sense that something is lacking (fait default). Change the meaning of this fault by giving it a content in the articulation of what? Let us leave it in suspense. And this is what explains the birth of guilt and its relationship to anxiety.

In order to know what can be made of it, it is necessary for me to lead you into a field which is not that of this year, but which we must engage a little with here. I said that I did not know what, in the shofar, let us say the clamour of guilt, is articulated from the Other who covers anxiety. If our formula is correct, something like the desire of the Other must be involved in it.

I will give myself three more minutes to introduce something which prepares the way and next time we will be able to take our next step, namely to tell you that what is here most favourably prepared to be illuminated reciprocally, is the notion of (12) sacrifice.

Many other people besides me have tried to tackle what is involved in sacrifice. I will tell you - we are short of time - briefly, that sacrifice is destined, not at all to be an offering or a gift which spreads itself into a quite different dimension, but to be the capture of the Other as such in the network of desire.

The matter should already be perceptible, namely what it is reduced to for us on the ethical plane. It is a common experience that we do not live our lives, whoever we are, without ceaselessly offering to some unknown divinity or other the sacrifice of some little mutilation that we impose on ourselves, validly or not, in the field of our desires

Not all the underpinnings of the operation are visible. That it is a matter of something which refers to o as pole of our desire is not in doubt. But it will be necessary, the next time, for me to show you that something more is necessary, and specifically - I hope that at this meeting I will have a large convent of obsessionals - and specifically that this o is something already consecrated, which is something that cannot be conceived of except by taking up again in its original form what is involved in sacrifice.

We no doubt have for our part, lost our gods in the great fair of

civilisation, but a rather prolonged time at the origin of all peoples shows that there is linked into them from the beginning like real persons, not omnipotent gods, but gods powerful where they were. The whole question was to know whether these gods desired something. Sacrifice consisted in behaving as if they desired like us: therefore o has the same structure. That does not mean that they are going to eat what is sacrificed to them, nor even that it can be of any use to them; but the important thing is that they desire it and, I would say further, that this does not provoke anxiety in them.

For there is something else that up to the present no one, I believe, has resolved in a satisfactory fashion: the victims always had to be without stain. Now remember what I told you about the stain at the level of the specular field: with the stain there appears, there is prepared the possibility of the resurgence, in the field of desire, of what is hidden behind, namely in this case this eye whose relationship with this field must necessarily be elided in order that desire can remain there with this ubiquitous, even vaqabond possibility, which in any case allows it to escape from anxiety. To tame the god in the snare of desire is essential, and not to awaken anxiety.

Time forces me to end. You will see that, however lyrical this last diversion may appear to you, it will serve us as a guide in the much more day-to-day realities of our experience.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 12 June 1963

Anxiety lies in this fundamental relationship that the subject is in with what I have called up to now the desire of the Other.

Analysis has, has always had and keeps as its object the discovery of a desire. It is - you will admit - for some structural reasons that I am led, this year, to disengage, to bring into function as such in a circumscribed, articulated way, and this just as much by what we could call an algebraic definition, as by an articulation in which the function appears in a sort of gap, of residue of the signifying function as such; but I also did it piece by piece, this is the path that I will take today.

In every advance, in every becoming of this o as such, anxiety appears precisely in function of its relationship to the desire of the Other. But what is its relationship to the desire of the subject? It is absolutely situatable in the form that I already advanced at the appropriate time: o is not the object of desire, the one that we search to reveal in analysis, it is its cause.

This feature is essential; for if anxiety marks the dependency of every constitution of the subject - his dependency on the Other - the desire of the subject is thus found appended to this relationship through the mediation of the first, antecedent constitution of o.

This is the interest that pushes me to remind you how this presence of o as cause of desire announces itself. From the first data of analytic research, it announces itself in a more or less veiled fashion precisely in the function of the cause.

This function can be mapped out in the data of our field, the one in which research engages, namely the field of the symptom. In every symptom, in so far as a term of this name is what interests us, this dimension that I am going to try to bring into play today before you manifests itself. To make you sense it, I will start from a symptom which it is not for nothing has - as you will see after the event - this exemplary function, namely the symptom of the obsessional. But - I am indicating it right away - if I put it forward, it is because it allows us once again to go into this mapping out of the function of o, in so far as it unveils itself functioning in the first givens of the symptom in

the dimension of the cause.

(2) What does the obsessional present to us in the pathognomic form of his position? The obsession or the compulsion, articulated or not as a motivation in his inner language: "Do this or that; check whether the door is closed or not, whether the tap is on". As we will see later perhaps, it is the symptom which takes in its most exemplary form, implies as I might say, that not following the line awakens anxiety. It is this which brings it about that the symptom, I would say, indicates in its very phenomenon that we are at the most favourable level to link the position of o as much to the relationships of anxiety as to the relationships of desire.

Anxiety, in fact, appears - because desire, at the beginning, historically before Freudian research, before the analysis of our praxis, is hidden, and we know the trouble we have to unmask it, if we ever do unmask it!

But here there deserves to be highlighted this datum of our experience which appears from the very first observations of Freud and which, I would say, constitutes, even if it has not been situated as such, perhaps the most essential step in the advance into obsessional neurosis, it is that Freud, and we ourselves every day have recognised, can recognise this fact that the analytic procedure does not begin from the enunciation of the symptom as I have just described it to you, namely according to its classical form, the one which had already been defined much earlier, the compulsion with the anxious struggle which accompanies it, but in the recognition of the following: the fact is that it functions like that. This recognition is not an effect detached from the functioning of this symptom, it is not epiphenomenally that the subject has to perceive that it functions like that.

The symptom is only constituted when the subject becomes aware of it; because we know from experience that there are forms of obsessional behaviour in which the subject, not only has not noticed his obsessions, but has not even constituted them as such. And the first step, in this case, of the analysis - the passages of Freud on this point are celebrated - is that the symptom is constituted in its classical form. Without this, there is no means of getting out of it and not simply because there is no way of speaking about it, but because there is no way of catching it by the ear. What is this ear in question? It is this something of the symptom that we can say is unassimilated by the subject.

(3) In order for the symptom to emerge from the state of an as yet unformulated enigma, the step is not that it should be formulated, it is that in the subject something should be outlined whose character is that it is suggested to him that there is a cause for that. This is the original dimension taken on here in the form of the phenomenon, and I will show you besides where one can rediscover it.

This dimension - that there is a cause for that - in which simply the implication of the subject in his behaviour is broken, this rupture is the necessary complement for the symptom to be approachable by us. What I intend to say to you and to show you, is that this sign does not constitute a step in what I could call the understanding of the situation, that it is something more, that there is a reason why this step is essential in the treatment of the obsessional.

This is impossible to articulate if we do not display in an altogether radical fashion the relationship between the function of o, the cause of desire, and the mental dimension of cause as such. This, I already indicated in what I might call some asides in my discourse, and I wrote it somewhere at a point that I could find again in the article "Kant with Sade" which appeared in the April edition of the journal Critique. It is on this point that I intend today to bring to bear the main part of my discourse.

From now on you see the interest in marking, in making it likely, that this dimension of the cause indicates - and only indicates - the emergence, the presentification, in the starting data of the analysis of the obsessional, of this o around which - this is in the future of what I am trying for the moment to explain to you - around which there has to turn the whole analysis of the transference in order not to be obliged, required to turn in a circle. A circle certainly is not nothing, the circuit is gone through; but it is clear that there is - and I am not the one who enounced it - a problem about the end of the analysis, one which is enounced as follows: the irreducibility of a transference neurosis. This transference neurosis is or is not the same as the one which was detectable at the beginning. Undoubtedly it is different in being entirely present, it appears to us sometimes in an impasse, that is to say sometimes culminates in a complete stagnation of the relationships between the analysand and the analyst. Its only difference to everything that is produced in an analogous way, at the beginning of the analysis, is that it is completely collected together.

(4) One enters analysis through an enigmatic door: for the transference neurosis is there in each and every one, even in Alcibiades: it is Agathon that he loves. But in a being as free as Alcibiades, the transference is obvious. Even though this love is what is called a real love, what we too often call a lateral transference, this is where the transference is. The astonishing thing is that one goes into analysis despite all the things that hold us back in the transference functioning as real.

The real subject of astonishment as regards the circuit of the analysis, is how, going into it despite the transference neurosis, one can obtain the transference neurosis itself on the way out. No doubt it is because there is some misunderstanding about the analysis of transference. Without this one would not see there being manifested sometimes, this satisfaction which I have heard expressed, that to have given energy to this transference neurosis is not perhaps perfection, but it is all the same a result; it is true - but it is all the same a result

that is itself rather perplexing.

If I enounce that the path passes through o, the only object to be proposed for analysis, for the analysis of transference, this does not mean that this does not leave open, as you will see, another problem. It is precisely in this subtraction that there can appear this essential dimension, that of a question always posed, in short, but certainly not resolved - for every time it is posed the inadequacy of the answers is really tangible, evident, striking to every eye - that of the desire of the analyst.

This short reminder to show you the interest of what is presently at stake, this short reminder having been given, let us return to o. o is the cause, the cause of desire. I pointed out to you that to return to the enigma which the functioning of the category of the cause proposes to us is not a bad way of understanding it. For after all it is quite clear that whatever critique, whatever effort of reduction, phenomenological or not, that we apply to it, this category functions, and not simply as an archaic stage of our development.

What is indicated by the way in which I intend to refer it here to the original function of the object o as cause of desire, signifies the transference of the question of the category of causality, from what I would call with Kant the transcendental aesthetic, to that which - if you are willing to agree to it - I would call my "transcendental ethics".

(5) And here I am forced to advance onto a terrain that I am forced to propose simply, in order to sweep the sides of it with a searchlight. Without being able even to insist, it would be well, I would say, for the philosophers to do their work and notice for example, and dare to formulate something which would allow us truly to situate in its place this operation which I am indicating in saying that I extract the function of cause from the field of "the transcendental aesthetic", from that of Kant, it would be fitting for others to indicate to you that this is only a sort of completely pedagogical extraction, because there are many things, other things, that it would be fitting to extract from this "transcendental aesthetic".

Here I have to do, at least by way of indication, what I succeeded in eluding the last time by a conjuring trick, when I spoke to you about the scopic field of desire. I cannot avoid it. It is necessary all the same that I say, that I indicate here, at the very moment that I am advancing further, what was implied in what I was telling you, namely that space is not at all an a priori category of sensible intuition, that it is very astonishing that at the point of advancement that we are at in science no one has yet attacked directly something that everything encourages us to do: to formulate that space is not a feature of our subjective constitution beyond which the thing in itself would find, as one might say, a free field, namely that space forms part of the real, and that, after all, in what I enounced, articulated, drew here before your eyes last year with

all this topology, there is something whose note some of you certainly felt: this topological dimension, in the sense that its symbolic handling transcends space, evoked for many, not only for some, so many shapes which are presentified for us by the schemas of the development of the embryo, shapes that are singular through this common singular Gestalt which is theirs and which carries us very very far from the direction in which the Gestalt has advanced, namely in the direction of the good shape, shows us, on the contrary something which is everywhere reproduced, and regarding which, in an impressionistic notation, I would say that it is tangible in a sort of torsion to which the organisation of life seems to be obligated in order to lodge itself in real space.

The thing is everywhere present in what I explained to you last year, and also moreover this year, for it is precisely at these points of torsion that there are also produced the points of (6) rupture whose importance I tried to show you in more than one case in a fashion linked to our own topology, that of the S, of the 0 and the of the o, in a fashion which is more efficacious, more true, more conform to the operation of functions than anything that is mapped out in the doctrine of Freud, in the way that the differences, the vacillations are themselves already indicative of the necessity of what I am doing there, which is linked to the ambiguity on his part for example about the relationships between ego/non-ego, container/contained, ego/outside world. It leaps to the eyes that all of these divisions do not overlap. Why?

It is necessary to grasp what is involved and to have found other reference points of this subjective topology that we are exploring here. I will finish with it with this indication, whose import I know that at least some of you know very well from having heard me now, that the reality of space qua three dimensional space is something essential to grasp in order to define the form taken at the level of the stage that I tried to illuminate in my first lecture, as the function of the scopic stage, the form taken on there by the presence of desire, specifically as phantasy, namely that what I tried to define in the structure of the phantasy, namely the function of the frame - understand by that the window - is not a metaphor. If the frame exists, it is because space is real.

As regards the cause, let us try to grasp in the very thing which is the common undergrowth of the understandings you have which are bequeathed to you from a certain hubbub of philosophical discussions because of having passed through a class designated by this name, La Philosophie, because it is quite clear that an index of this origin of the function of the cause is very clearly given us in history by the following: the fact is that it is in the measure of the critique of this function of cause, of the attempt to remark that it is ungraspable, that what it is necessarily, is always at least a cause behind a cause, and what is necessary for it to be other in order to be equivalent to this incomprehensible, without which moreover we cannot even begin to articulate anything whatsoever. But of course, this critique has

its fecundity and one sees it in history: the more the cause is criticised, the more the exigencies that one can describe as those of determinism impose themselves on thought. The less the cause is graspable, the more everything appears caused, and up to (7) the final term, the one that has been called the meaning of history.

One can say nothing other than that "everything is caused", except for the fact that everything that happens there presides and always begins from a "sufficiently caused", in the name of which there is reproduced in history a beginning, an un-caused which I would not dare to call absolute, but which was certainly unexpected and which classically leaves lots of work to be done nachträglich by the prophets, which is the daily bread of the aforesaid prophets, who are the professional interpreters of the meaning of history.

Now let us say very simply how we envisage this function of the cause. We envisage it, this function everywhere present in our thinking about the cause, I would say first of all to make myself understood, as the shadow cast, but very precisely and better the metaphor of this primordial cause, substance of this function of the cause which is precisely the o qua anterior to all this phenomenology. We have defined o as the remainder of the constitution of the subject at the locus of the Other in so far as it has to constitute itself as a speaking subject, a barred subject, \$.

If the symptom is what we are saying, namely entirely implicatable in this process of the constitution of the subject, in so far as he has to construct himself in the locus of the Other, the implication of the cause in the becoming of the symptom as I defined it for you earlier, is a legitimate part of this becoming. This means that the cause implicated in the question of the symptom is literally, if you wish, a question, but one of which the symptom is not the effect. It is the result of it. The effect is the desire. But it is a unique effect and quite strange in that it is what is going to explain to us, or at the very least make us understand, all the difficulties that arose from linking the common relationship which is imposed on the mind between the cause and the effect. The fact is that the primordial effect of this cause, o, at the level of desire, this effect which is called desire and this effect which I have just qualified as strange since, you should note, since it is precisely desire, it is an effect which has nothing effected about it.

Desire taken in this perspective is situated in effect essentially as a lack of effect. The cause is thus constituted as supposing the effects of the fact that primordially the effect is lacking there. And this is rediscovered, you will rediscover it, in every phenomenology. The gap between cause and effect, in the measure that it is filled - this indeed is what is called in a certain perspective the progress of science - makes the (8) function of the cause vanish, I mean there where it is filled.

Moreover the explanation of anything whatsoever culminates in the measure that it is completed, in leaving only signifying connections, in volatilising what animated it at its origin, what was pushing to be explained, namely what one does not understand, namely the effective gap. And there is no cause which is constituted in the mind as such, which does not imply this gap. All of this may seem to you quite superfluous. Nevertheless this is what allows there to be grasped what I would call the naivety of some of the research done by psychologists and specifically that of Piaget.

The paths along which I am leading you this year - you have already seen it announcing itself - pass by way of a certain evocation of what Piaget calls "egocentric language". As Piaget himself recognises - he has written it, I am not interpreting him here - **hi3** idea of the egocentricity of a certain childish discourse starts from this supposition: he believes he has demonstrated that children do not understand one another, that they speak for themselves.

The world of suppositions that lies beneath this is, I would not say unfathomable; one can specify them for the greater part: it is an excessively wide-spread supposition, namely that the word is made to communicate. That is not true. If Piaget cannot grasp this sort of gap there again which he himself nevertheless designates - and this is really what is important in reading his works, I beg you between now and the time that I return or I do not return, to get hold of The language and thought of the child which is an altogether admirable book; it illustrates at every moment the degree to which what Piaget collects in terms of facts in this approach, which is aberrant in principle, demonstrates something quite different to what he thinks; naturally since he is far from being a fool, it happens that Piaget's own remarks go along that very path, in any case for example the problem as to why this language of the subject is essentially made for him, never happens in a group.

What he lacks, I would ask you to read these pages because I cannot go through them with you, but at every moment you will see how his thinking slips, clings to a position of the question which is precisely the one which veils the phenomenon which, as a matter of fact, is very clearly displayed, and the essential of it is essentially the fact that it is a different thing to say that the word has essentially for effect to communicate, while (9) the effect of the word, the effect of the signifier is to give rise in the subject to the dimension of the signified essentially. I will return to it again if necessary.

That this relationship to the other that is depicted for us here as being the key, under the name of the socialisation of language, the key to the turning point between egocentric language and completed language, this turning point is not, in its function, a point of effect, of effective impact, it is nameable as a desire to communicate. It is indeed moreover because this desire is disappointed in Piaget - it is quite tangible - that his whole pedagogy here gives rise to systems

and ghosts that are, in fact, rather affected. That the child appears to him to only half-understand him, he adds: "They do not even understand one another". But is that where the question lies?

One sees very well in his text how the question is not there. One sees it in the way that he articulates what he calls understanding between children. As you know this is how he proceeds; -he begins by taking for example the following schema which is going to be depicted on an image which is going to be the support of the explanations, the schema of a tap. That gives us something more or less like that, this being the cross-section of the tap; you say to the child, as often as necessary: "You see the little tube here - it will also be called the door - it is blocked; which means that the water there cannot get through in order to flow here into what will also be called in a certain fashion the outlet, etc".



He explains. Here is this schema, if you want to test it. He thought moreover - I point this out to you in passing - he should complete it himself with the presence of the basin which will absolutely not intervene in the six or nine, seven points of explanation that he gives us.

He will be very struck by the following: the fact is that the child repeats very well all the terms of the explanation that he, Piaget, has given him. He is going to make use of this child as an explainer for another child, whom he will bizarrely call the reproducer.

First phase: he notices, not without some astonishment, that what the child has repeated so well, which means for him that he obviously has understood - I am not saying that he is wrong, I am saying that Piaget does not even ask himself the question - that what the child has repeated to him, Piaget, in the test that he carried out with a view to seeing what the child had understood, (10) is not going to be in any way identical to what he is then going to explain. At which Piaget makes this very correct remark, that what he elides in his explanations, is precisely what the child has understood, without seeing that in giving this explanation this would imply that the child for his part would explain nothing if he had really understood everything, as Piaget says. It is of course not true that he has understood everything - as you are going to see - any more than anybody else.

With these very insufficient explanations that the explainer gives to the reproducer, what astonishes Piaget, is that in a field like that of these examples, namely the field that he calls that of explanations - because I am leaving to one side, for lack of time, the field that he describes as that of "stories".

For stories things function differently. But what does Piaget call stories? I assure you that he has a way of transcribing the

story of Niobe which is a pure scandal. Because it does not seem even to occur to him that in speaking about Niobe, one is speaking about a myth and that there is perhaps a dimension of myth which imposes itself, which absolutely clings to the simple term which is put forward under this proper name Niobe, and that to transform it into a sort of emollient hogwash - I would ask you to consult this text which is simply incredible - one is proposing perhaps to the child something within his range, which is simply something which signals a profound deficit in the experimenter, Piaget himself, with regard to what are the functions of language. If one is proposing a myth, let it be one, and not this vague little story: "Once upon a time there was a lady called Niobe who had twelve sons and twelve daughters. She met a fairy who had only one son and no daughter; now the lady mocked the fairy because she had only one boy; the fairy then became angry and tied the lady to a rock. The lady cried for ten years, and then she was changed into a stream, her tears had made a stream which still flows".

This has really no equivalent except the two other stories that Piaget proposes, that of the little black boy who breaks his cake on the way out and melts the pat of butter on the return journey, and the still worse one of children transformed into swans, who remain all their lives separated from their parents because of this curse, but who, when they return, not alone find their (11) parents dead, but regaining their first shape - this is not indicated in the mythical dimension - in regaining their first shape, they have nevertheless aged. I do not know if there is a single myth which allows the aging process to continue during a transformation. In a word, the invention of these stories of Piaget have one thing in common with those of Binet in that they reflect the profound wickedness of every pedagogical position.

I apologise to you for wandering off into this parenthesis. Let us come back to my explanations. At least you will have grasped in it this dimension noted by Piaget himself of this sort of wastage, of entropy, as I might put, of comprehension which is going to be necessarily degraded by the very fact of the explanation being necessarily verbal. He himself notes to his great surprise that there is an enormous contrast between the explanations, when what is involved is an explanatory one like that, and what happens in his "stories", "stories", that I repeat I put in inverted commas. Because it is very probable that if the "stories" confirm his theory regarding the entropy, if I may express myself thus, of comprehension, it is precisely because they are not "stories", and that, if they were "stories", the true myth, there v/ould probably be no wastage.

In any case, I for my part propose a little sign to you, it is that, when one of these children, when he has to repeat the story of Niobe, makes emerge, at the point that Piaget tells us that the lady had been tied to a rock - never, in any form, has the myth of Niobe articulated such a moment - of course, it is easy, playing, you will be told, on something misheard and on a pun, but why precisely this one makes emerge the dimension of a rock which has a stain, restoring the dimension that in my previous

seminar I made emerge for you as being essential for the victim of sacrifice, that of not having any. But let us leave it. It is of course not a proof, but simply a suggestion.

I return to my explanation and to the remark of Piaget that, despite the defects of the explanation, I mean the fact that the explainer explains badly, the one to whom he is explaining understands much better than the explainer, by his inadequate explanations, bears witness to having understood. Of course here the explanation always arises: he himself does the work again. Because how does he define the rate of understanding between children? What the reproducer has understood
What the explainer has understood

(12) I do not know if you notice that there is one thing here that is never spoken about, it is what Piaget himself has understood! It is nevertheless essential, because we do not leave the children to spontaneous language, namely to see what they understand.

Now it is clear that what Piaget seems not to have seen, is that his own explanation, from the point of view of anyone at all, of some other third person, cannot be understood at all. For as I told you earlier, if this little blocked tube here is switched on, thanks to something that Piaget gives all its importance to, the operation of the fingers which make the tap turn in such a way that the water can flow, does that mean that it flows? There are absolutely no details about this in Piaget who of course knows well that if there is no pressure, nothing will come out of the tap even if you turn it on, but who believes he is able to omit this because he is placing himself at the level of the so-called mind of the child. Let me continue. This seems to be completely stupid, all of this, but you are going to see. The coming into view, the springing forth; the meaning of the whole adventure does not emerge from my speculations, but from experience. You will see.

It emerges all the same from this remark that I have made to you - I who do not claim to have understood exhaustively - that there is one thing that is very certain: it is that the explanation of the tap is not well done, if what is involved is the tap as cause, by saying that it operates sometimes on and sometimes off. A tap is made to be turned off. It is enough that once, because of a strike, you no longer know when the pressure is going to come back to know that, if you have left it on, there are lots of inconveniences, that it ought therefore to be turned off even when there is no pressure.

Now what is marked in what happens in the transmission from the explainer to the reproducer? It is something that Piaget deplores, which is that the so called reproducer child no longer has the slightest interest in anything that is involved concerning two branches, the operation of the fingers and everything that follows from it. Nevertheless, he points out, the other has transmitted a certain part of it to him. The wastage in comprehension seems to be enormous to him; but I

assure you, if you read the explanations of the little third party, of the little reproducer, of little Riv in the text in question, you will notice that what he precisely puts the stress on, are two things: namely the effect of the tap as something (13) which can be turned off and the result, namely that thanks to a tap one can fill a basin without it overflowing, the emergence as such of the dimension of the tap as cause. Why does Piaget so completely miss the phenomenon which is produced, if not because he totally fails to recognise that what there is for a child in a tap as cause, are the desires that the tap provokes in him, namely that for example it makes him want to have a pee or, like every time one is in the presence of water, that one is with respect to that water a communicating vessel and that it is not for nothing that in order to speak to you about libido I took this metaphor of what happens between the subject and his specular image.

If man had a tendency to forget that in the presence of water he is a communicating vessel, there is in the childhood of most the washtub to remind him that effectively, what happens in a child of the age of those that Piaget designates for us, in the presence of a tap, is this irresistible type of acting-out which consists in doing something which runs the greatest risk of upsetting it, and thus the tap finds itself once again in the place of the cause, namely at the level also of the phallic dimension, as that which necessarily introduces the fact that the little tap is something which can have a relationship with the plumber, that one can unscrew, dismantle, replace... etc: it is (-^). It is not the fact of omitting these elements of experience - that moreover Piaget, who is very well informed about analytical matters, is not ignorant of - that I intend to underline, it is that he does not see the link between these relationships that we call, for our part, "complexual" and the whole original constitution of what he claims to question, the function of the cause.

We will return to this language of the child. I pointed out to you that the new evidence of original works, which one can only be astonished were not performed up to now, allows us now to grasp in statu nascendi the first operation of the signifier in these hypnopompic monologues of the very small child, almost two years old, and to grasp in them - I will read you these texts at the proper time - in the fascinating form of the Oedipus complex itself here and now; already articulated, giving here the experimental proof of the idea that I always put forward to you that the unconscious is essentially the effect of the signifier.

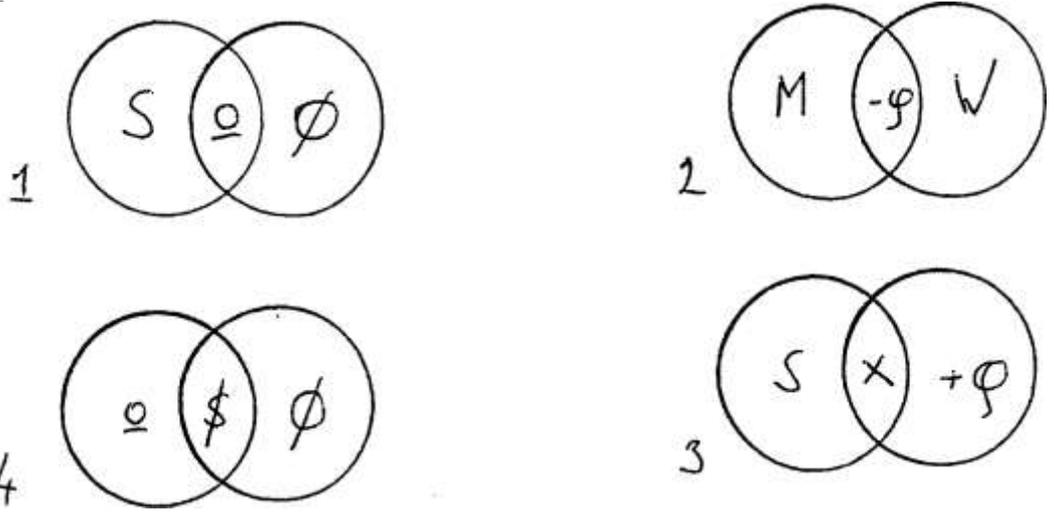
(14) I will finish in this connection with the position of the psychologists, for the work that I am speaking to you about is prefaced by a psychologist who is very attractive at first sight in the sense that he admits that it has never **happened** that a psychologist has interested himself-in these functions starting from, he tells us - a psychologist's own admission - from the supposition that nothing interesting is notable about the coming into play of language in the subject, except at the level of education: in effect it is something that is learned.

But what makes language, outside the field of learning? It required the suggestion of a linguist for an interest to begin to be taken in it, and we believe that here the psychologist lays down his arms. For it is certainly with some humour that he highlights this deficit in psychological research up to now.

Well that is not at all the case. At the end of his preface, he makes two remarks which show the point to which the habit of the psychologist is really inveterate. The first is that, since this constitutes a volume of about three hundred pages and is a considerable weight since these monologues were collected for a month and a complete chronological list of them was made, at this rate of going think of all the research that we are going to have to do! This is the first remark.

And the second one is even better. It is extremely interesting to note all that; but it seems to me for my part, says this psychologist who is called George Miller, that the only thing that would be interesting, is to know: "How much of that does he know?" What does the child know about what is telling you? Now it is precisely there that the question lies. It is precisely, if he does not know what he is saying, that it is very important to note that he says all the same, what he will know or will not know later on, namely the elements of the Oedipus complex.

It is ten minutes past two. I would like all the same to give you the little schema of what I am going to advance towards today concerning the obsessional. In five minutes, the question as it presents itself.



If the five stages, if I can express myself thus, of the constitution of o in this relationship of S to 0, whose first operation you see here, the second phase here not being outside the range of your understanding after the division I already added on as being the following - it is far from the transformation of S into £ when it passes from this part to that (15) one, the Euler circle having obviously to be specified - if the five stages therefore of this definition of o are definable as I am going to tell you now, if, I think, it is sufficiently posited from this resume of what I advanced step by step in the

preceding lectures at the level of the relationship to the oral object, that it is, let us say to be clear today, not need of the Other - this ambiguity is rich and we will certainly not refuse ourselves the use of it - but need in the Other, at the level of the Other, it is in function of the dependence on the maternal being that there is produced the function of the disjunction between this subject and o , the nipple, whose veritable import you will only be able to perceive if, as I very sufficiently indicated to you, you see that the nipple forms part of the inner world of the subject and not of the body of the mother. I pass on

At the second stage of the anal object, you have the demand in the Other, the educative demand par excellence in so far as it refers to the anal object. There is no way of grasping, of seizing what the veritable function of this anal object is, if you do not sense it as being the remainder in the demand of the Other, which I am calling here to make myself clearly understood "demand in the Other". The whole dialectic of what I have taught you to recognise in the function of $(-o)$ f a function unique compared to all the other functions of o in so far as it is defined by a lack, by the lack of an object, this lack manifests itself as such in this effectively central relationship - and this is what justifies the whole axing of analysis on sexuality - that we will call here jouissance in the Other.

The relationship between this jouissance in the Other as such, and any introduction of the missing instrument that $(-p)$ designates, is an inverse relationship. This is what-T articulated in my two last lectures and which is the sufficiently solid base of every sufficiently effective situation of what we are calling castration anxiety.

At the scopic stage which is properly that of phantasy, the one with which we have to deal with at the level of o , it is the power in the Other, this power in the Other which is the mirage of human desire that we condemn in what is for it the major dominant form of every possession, contemplative possession, because it fails to recognise what is involved, namely a mirage of power.

As you see I am going very quickly. At the fifth and final stage, what is there at the level of o ? Provisionally we will say that it is there that there ought to emerge in a pure form - I am saying that this is only a provisional formulation - something which is of course present at all the stages, namely the desire in the Other. What confirms it for us, in any case (16) what signals it for us in the example that we started from, namely the obsessional, is the apparent dominance of anxiety in its phenomenology. It is the structural fact that we are the only ones to perceive up to a certain moment of analysis, that whatever he does, that at whatever refinement there culminate, as there are being constructed, his phantasies and his practices, what the obsessional grasps in them - check out the bearing of this formula - is always the desire in the Other. It is in the measure of the return of this desire in the Other, in so far as

in his case it is essentially repressed, that everything is determined in the symptomatology of the obsessional, and specifically in the symptoms where the dimension of the cause is glimpsed as anxiety-provoking. The solution is known: to cover the desire of the Other, the obsessional has one way: it is to have recourse to his demand. Observe an obsessional in his biographical behaviour, what I called earlier his attempts at getting by with respect to desire. His attempts, however audacious they may be, are always marked by an original condemnation against rejoining their goal. However refined, however complicated, however luxuriant and perverse his attempts at getting by, he always has to have them authorised: it is necessary for the Other to demand it of him. This is the mainspring of what is produced at a certain turning point in every analysis of an obsessional.

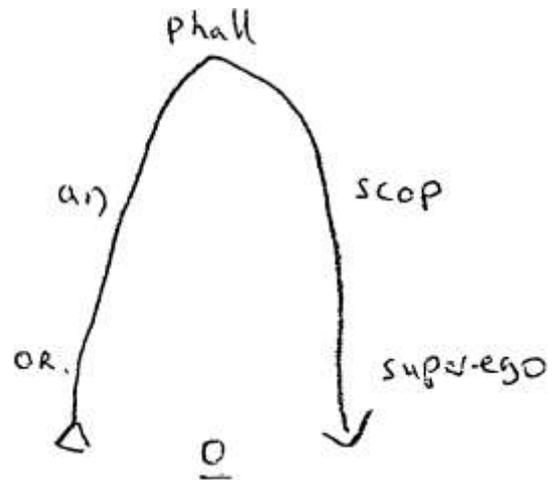
In the whole measure that the analysis sustains an analogical dimension, that of demand, something subsists up to a very-advanced point - can it even be gone beyond? - of this mode of escape of the obsessional. But see what the consequences of it are. It is in the measure that the avoidance of the obsessional is the covering up of the desire in the Other by the demand in the Other, it is in this measure that *o*, the object as cause, comes to be situated where demand dominates, namely at the anal stage where *o* is, not purely and simply excrement, but like that: it is excrement qua demanded.

Now nothing had ever been analysed about this relationship to the anal object in these coordinates which are its veritable coordinates. To understand the source of what one can call anal anxiety, in so far as it emerges from an analysis of an obsessional pursued to that point - something that never happens - the veritable dominance, the character of irreducible and almost in certain cases unmasterable kernel of the apparition of anxiety at this point which ought to appear a final point, this is something that we will be able to locate the next time only on condition that we articulate everything that results from the relationship between the anal object as cause of desire and the demand which requires it, which has nothing to do with this mode of desire which is, through this cause, determining.

As someone pointed out to me after my last talk, this definition that I am pursuing this year before you of the function of the object *o*, tends to oppose to the linking of this object to stages, to what one might call the "Abrahamic" - I mean the psychoanalyst - conception of its mutations, what one might call its circular constitution, the fact that at all these levels it holds up qua object *o*, that under the different forms in which it manifests itself, it is always the same function that is involved, namely how *o* is linked to the constitution of the subject at the locus of the Other and represents it.

It is true that its central function, at the level of the phallic stage where the function of *o* is essentially represented by a lack, by the absence of the phallus as constituting the disjunction which joins desire to jouissance - this is what is expressed by what I remind you we are calling here by convention level 3 of the different stages of the object that we have described - it is true, I am saying, that this stage has what we could call an extreme position, that stage 4 and stage 5, if you wish, are in a return position which brings them into correlation with stage 1 and stage 2. Everyone knows - and this is all that this little schema is designed to recall - the links between the oral stage and its object and the primary manipulations of the super-ego, regarding which I have already indicated to you - by recalling to you the obvious connection with this form of the object *o* which is the voice - already recalled, that there cannot be a valid analytic conception of the super-ego which forgets that at its deepest phase the voice is one of the forms of the object *o*.

These two signs "an" for anal and "scop" for scopophilic recall to you the long-remarked connection between the anal stage and scopophilia. It nevertheless remains that, however conjoined, two by two, the stage-forms 1,2,3, 4,5 may be, they are all oriented in accordance with this mounting and then descending arrow. This is what ensures that in every analytic phase of the reconstitution



of the data of repressed desire in a regression, there is a progressive aspect, that in every progressive access to the stage here posed by the very inscription as being superior, there is a regressive aspect.

(2) Such is, such are the indications that I want to recall to you so that they may remain present in your mind throughout the whole of my discourse today, with which I am now going to continue.

As I told you the last time, it is a matter of illustrating, explaining the function of a certain object which is, if you wish, shit, to call it by its name, in the constitution of anal desire. You know after all, that it is the privilege of analysis to have made emerge in the history of thought the determining function of this unpleasant object in the economy of desire.

I pointed out to you the last time that with respect to desire, the object o always presents itself as a cause function, to the point of possibly being for us⁻, if you understand me, if you are following me, the root point at which there is elaborated in the subject the function of the cause itself. If this primordial form is the cause of a desire, about which I underlined for you that here there is marked the necessity through which the cause can subsist in its mental function, always requires the existence of a gap between it and its effect, a gap that is so necessary that we are only able to still think cause where there is a risk of it being filled in, we have to make a veil subsist over the tight determinism, over the connections through which the cause acts, something that I illustrated the last time by the example of the tap, namely that only the child who neglected in that case, as was said, because he did not understand, the narrow mechanism that was represented to him in the shape of a section, of a schema of the tap, only to him who dispensed with or failed at this level of what Piaget calls understanding, to him alone is there revealed the essence of the function of the tap as cause, namely as concept of tap.

The origin of this necessity for the subsistence of the cause lies in the fact that in its primary form, it is cause of desire, namely of something essentially not effected. It is indeed for this reason that consistently with this conception, we can absolutely not confuse anal desire with what mothers, as much as the partisans of catharsis, might call in this case, the effect: has it had an effect? Excrement does not play the role of effect of what we are situating as anal desire, it is the cause of it.

In truth, if we are going to dwell on this singular object, it is as much because of the importance of its function, always reiterated for our attention, and especially - as you know - in the analysis of the obsessional, as for the fact that it (3) illustrates for us, once more, how appropriate it is to conceive that there subsist, for us, different modes of the object o .

It is in effect, at first sight, a little apart compared to the

rest of these modes: the mammary constitution, the phallic functioning of the copulatory organ, the plasticity of the human larynx to the phonematic imprint, the anticipatory value of the specular image to the neo-natal prematuration of the nervous system, all these anatomical facts which I have recalled to you recently, one after the other, to show you the way in which they conjoin with the function of o, all these anatomical facts regarding which you can see, by simply enumerating them, the degree to which their place is dispersed under the tree of organic determinations, only take on in man their value as destiny, as Freud says, because they come, this I showed you for each one, to block out a key place on the chess board whose squares are structured from the subjectifying constitution as it results from the dominance of the subject who speaks over the subject who understands, over the subject of insight whose limits we know in the shape of the chimpanzee.

Whatever may be the supposed superiority of the capacities of man over the chimpanzee, it is clear that the fact that he goes further is linked to this dominance I have just spoken about, the dominance of the subject who speaks, which has for result in practice that the human being undoubtedly goes further. In doing this, he believes he reaches the concept, namely he believes that he is able to grasp the real by a signifier which determines this real according to its innermost causality.

The difficulties that we analysts have encountered in the field of intersubjective relationships - which the psychologists do not seem to make so much of a problem of, they constitute a rather greater one for us - these difficulties, provided we claim to account for the way in which the function of the signifier is originally mixed into these intersubjective relationships, these difficulties are the ones which lead us to a new critique of reason which it would be a kind of scholastic nonsense to see as some sort of recession in the all-conquering movement of the aforesaid reason.

This critique in effect is directed towards mapping out how this reason is already woven in at the level of the most opaque dynamism of the subject, where there is modified what he experiences in this dynamism as need into always more or less paradoxical - I say paradoxical as regards their supposed (4) naturalness - forms of what is called desire.

This critique thus proves, in what I have shown you to be the cause of desire - is it too high a price to pay? - that it has to be conjoined to this revelation that the notion of cause is found because of this to reveal its origin there. Obviously, it would be too psychologistic, with all the absurd consequences that this has concerning the legality of reason, to reduce it to a recourse, to a development of some events or other. But precisely this is not what we are doing, because the subjectification that is involved is not psychological or developmental. It shows what joins to the accidents of development - those which I first of all enumerated just now by reminding you of the list of them, the anatomical particularities

that are involved in the case of man - joining therefore to these accidents of development the effect of a signifier whose transcendence is henceforth evident with respect to the aforesaid development.

Transcendence, and then what? There is no need to be startled! This transcendence is neither more nor less marked, at this level, than any other incidence of the real, this real that in biology is called on this occasion the Umwelt as a way of taming it. And precisely the existence of anxiety in the animal completely dismisses the spiritualist imputations which, from whatever quarter, may appear in my regard in connection with this situation of the signifier that I posit as transcendent on this occasion.

On every occasion of animal anxiety what is involved is indeed a perception of a beyond of the aforesaid Umwelt. It is because something has shaken this Umwelt to its foundations that the animal shows itself to be aware when he is stampeded by an earthquake for example or any other type of meteoric accident. And once more there is revealed the truth of the formula that anxiety is what does not deceive. The proof is, that when you see animals becoming excited in this way in the regions where these incidents can occur, you would do well to take account, before you are aware of it yourself, of what they are signalling to you about what is happening, what is imminent. For them as for us, it is the manifestation of a locus of the Other, of something else which manifests itself here as such, which does not mean that I am saying - and with good reason - that there is anywhere, on the other hand, that this locus of the Other can lodge itself outside real space, as I recalled the last time.

(5) We are now going to go into the following: into the particularity of the case which ensures that excrement can come to function at this point which is determined by the necessity in which the subject finds himself of constituting himself first of all in the signifier. The point is important because after all here - perhaps more than elsewhere - a sort of shadow of confusion reigns in a singular way. One is supposed to get closer to the matter - as it is appropriately called - or the concrete, in so far as we for our part know how to take into account the most disagreeable aspects of life; that it is there, and not in the Emyrean that we have to seek precisely the domain of causes. It is very amusing to grasp in the first introductory remarks of Jones, in an article whose reading cannot be too highly recommended to you because it is one in a thousand: it is the article which in the collection of his Selected Papers is called "The Madonna's conception through the year", the conception of the Madonna, the virginal conception, the conception of the Virgin through the ear. This is the subject that this Welshman, whose Protestant malice, I have to say, can absolutely not be eliminated from the background of complacency that he puts into it, to which this Welshman attaches himself in a 1914 article, as he emerged himself precisely from his first apprehensions, which had really been illuminating for him, about the prevalence of the anal function in the first few serious

obsessionals that he had in hand, a few years after Freud's obsessionals; they are observations - I sought them out in their original text, the two editions precisely which precede the publication of this article in the Jahrbuch - they are obviously sensational dates, even though we have seen others since.

Here right away Jones tackles the subject by telling us that the fertilising breath is a lovely idea, and that everywhere in myth, in legend, in poetry, we have traces of it. What could be more beautiful than this awakening of being at the passage of the breath of the eternal! Jones for his part who knows a little bit more about it - it is true that his science is still of recent date, but in any case he is full of enthusiasm - is going to show us what sort of wind is involved: what is involved is anal wind.

And, as he tells us, it is clear that experience proves to us that the interest, and this is a presupposition, that the interest - it is the living interest, it is the biological interest, it is the interest that the subject, as he is discovered in analysis, shows in his excrements, in the shit that he produces - is infinitely more present more advanced, more (6) evident, more dominant than this something which no doubt he would have a lot of reasons to be preoccupied with, namely respiration, which scarcely seems, according to Jones, to attract his attention, and this for the simple reason, of course, that respiration is habitual.

The argument is weak. The argument is weak in a field, a discipline, which all the same cannot fail to highlight, and which subsequently highlighted, the importance of suffocation, of respiratory difficulty, in the altogether original establishment of the function of anxiety. That the living subject, even the human subject, that the living subject has not in this respect any warning about the importance of this function is surprising; I mean surprising as an initial introductory argument by Jones, especially since it is at the time where all the same there was already something well designed to highlight the eventual relationship between the respiratory function and what is involved: the fruitful moment of the sexual relationship; it is that this breathing, in the form of paternal or maternal panting, formed part indeed of the first phenomenology of the traumatic scene, to the point of entering quite legitimately into this sphere of what could emerge from it for the child in terms of sexual theory.

So that whatever may be the value of what Jones subsequently deploys, one can say that without it having to be refuted - for it is a fact that the path on which he engages here finds so many correlates in a mass of anthropological domains that one cannot say that his research indicated nothing, I am not speaking about the fact that one can easily find all sorts of references in mythological literature to the function of this lower breath, and even in the Upanishads where under the term Apana it is supposed to be specified that it is from the breathing of his behind that Brahma generated the human species in particular; there are a thousand other correlates designed to remind us on this occasion

of the timeliness in such a text of these reminders - in truth on the particular subject, if you consult this article, you will see that its very extension, which borders on diffidence, sufficiently shows that in the end it is not - far from it - absolutely convincing.

But this is for us only a further stimulation, when it is a matter of questioning the subject about how it is that the function of excrement can play this privileged role in this mode (7) of subjective constitution which we define, to which we give the term, as being that of anal desire.

We will see that by taking it up again, we will see that this can only be settled by making intervene in a more ordered, more structural fashion, which is in accord with the spirit of our research, why it can come to occupy this place.

It is obvious that, apriori, this function of excrement which as compared to the different accidents that I evoked earlier, from the anatomical place of the mammary to the plasticity of the human larynx, and in between the specular image of castration linked after all, in short, to the particular conformity of the copulatory organ at a rather elevated level of the animal scale, excrement has been there from the beginning and even before the differentiation between the mouth and the anus: at the level of the blastopore, we already see it functioning. But it seems that if we construct for ourselves - it is always inadequate - a certain biological idea about the relationships of the living being and his milieu, excrement is characterised, all the same, as something rejected and as a consequence it is rather in the sense, in the current, in the flow of that which the living being as such tends to disinterest himself in. What interests him is what enters; what goes out, seems to imply in the structure that he has no tendency to retain it.

So that starting precisely from biological considerations, it may be indicated, it seems interesting to ask ourselves exactly how at the level of the living being it takes on this importance, this subjectified importance, because of course it is possible and it is even probable, and it is even observable that at the level of what one could call the living economy, excrement continues to have its importance in the milieu that it can manage also in certain conditions to saturate, to saturate sometimes to the point of rendering it incompatible with life; other times, when it saturates it in a fashion which at least for other organisms only takes on a function of support in the external milieu. There is a whole economy, of course, of the function of excrement, an intra-living and an inter-living economy.

Nor is this absent from human happenings, and I searched in vain in my library to show, to get you started on this track - I will find it again, it is lost, like excrement, an admirable little book, like many others by my friend Aldous Huxley, called Adonis and the Alphabet. Within this promising container you will find (8) a superb article about a factory-type organisation, in a town in the American West, for the recuperation of excrement at the

urban level.

This has value only as an example, this happens in many other places besides industrial America. You certainly have not the slightest suspicion of the riches that can be reconstituted simply with the help of the excrements of a mass of humans. Besides it is not untimely to recall in this connection what a certain progress of interhuman relationships, of human relations, which is so much in vogue since the last war, was able to do during the aforesaid last war in terms of the reduction of entire human masses to the function of excrement. The transformation of numerous individuals of a people, chosen precisely because they were a people chosen among others, by means of the crematory furnace, to the state of something which finally, it appears, was distributed in Mittel europa as soap, is also something which shows us that in the economic circuit the perspective of man as being reducible to excrement is not absent.

But we analysts for our part we limit ourselves to the question of subjectification. Along what path does excrement enter into subjectification? Well, this is quite clear in the analytic references, where at least at first sight it appears quite clear, through the mediation of the demand of the Other represented in this case by the mother. When we have found that, we are quite content; here we have connected up with observational data: it involves education in what is called cleanliness, which commands the child to retain - this is something that is not all that obvious; the choice: the necessity to retain for too long a time - to retain the excrement and because of this already to outline its introduction into the domain of belonging, of a part of the body, which for at least a certain time must be considered as not to be alienated, then after that to release it, always on demand. We know the familiar scenes. They are fundamental, in common use: there is no need to criticise, nor to refrain, nor above all, good God, to accompany it with a lot of recommendations; the education of parents, always on the agenda, causes all too much damage in all these domains. After all, in short, thanks to the fact that the demand also becomes here a determining part in the releasing in question, to do something different here, which (9) quite obviously is destined to valorise this thing recognised for a moment and henceforth elevated to the function, all the same, of a part which the subject has some apprehension he is taking on, this part becoming at least valorised by the fact that it gives its satisfaction to the demand of the Other, besides being accompanied by all the caring we know about, in the measure that the other, not only pays attention to it, but adds to it all these supplementary dimensions that I do not need to evoke - it is like physics-for-fun in other domains - the sniffing, the approval, even the wiping, whose erotogenic effects are incontestable as everyone knows. They become all the more obvious when it happens - and as you know its not rare - that a mother continues to wipe her son's bottom until he is twelve years old. That is seen every day, so that of course, it would seem - my question is not all that important - that we see very well how the caca very easily takes on this function that I have called, God knows, that of agalma, an agalma whose passage after

all to the register of the nauseating only occurs as an effect of the discipline itself of which it is an integral part.

Well then, it is precisely - that leaps to the eyes - something that would not allow you to state in any way, nevertheless, in a way that could satisfy us, the fullness of the effects which are attached to this special agalmatic relationship of the mother to the excrement of her child, if it were not necessary, to understand it, to put it, which is the factual data of analytic understanding, to put it into connection with the other forms of o, with the fact that the agalma in itself is not conceivable without its relationship to the phallus, to its absence and to phallic anxiety as such. In other words, it is qua symbolising castration - we know it right away - that the excremental o has come within the range of our attention.

I propose, I add, that we can understand nothing about the phenomenology - which is so fundamental for all our speculation - of obsession, if we do not grasp at the same time in a much more intimate, motivated, regular way than we habitually do, this link between excrement and, not just the (-<p) of the phallus, but with the other forms evoked here in what we could call the classification of stages, the other forms of o.

(10) Let us take things up regressively, with the reservation that I made at first, that this regressive has necessarily a progressive aspect. What is involved is grounded at the level of the oral stage: the fact is that the object o at the oral stage, the breast, the nipple, as you wish, the subject constituting himself originally, as much as completing himself, in the commandment of the voice, the subject does not know, cannot know the degree to which he is himself this being stuck on the breast of his mother in the form of the nipple. After also having been this parasite plunging his villosities into the uterine mucus in the form of placenta, he does not know, he cannot know that o, the breast, the placenta, is the reality of himself, of o with respect to the Other, 0. He believes that o is the Other; that in dealing with o, he is dealing with the Other, with the big Other, the mother.

Therefore compared to this stage, the anal level is the first time that he has occasion to recognise himself in something - but let us not go too quickly - in something, in an object around which there turns - for it turns - this demand of the mother, that is involved: "Hold onto it; give it up". And if I give it up, where does it go? There is no need all the same for those who have the slightest analytical experience, for the others, good God, who only read about it provided they open what I called the psychoanalytic dunghill, analytical literature, I do not need - dunghill means a little pile of shit - I do not need to remind you of the importance of these two phases, their determining importance for what? This little pile in question this time, is the one I spoke about just now; this little pile of shit, is obtained on demand, it is admired: "What lovely caca!". But this demand also implies at the same time that it should be as I might say disavowed, because he is taught all the same that he must not

have too many relationships with this lovely caca, except along the well known path that analysis has also picked out, of sublimated satisfactions: if one smears, obviously everyone knows that it is with that that one does it: but one prefers all the same to indicate to the child that it is better to do it with something else, with the little plastics of the child analysts, or with nice colours that do not smell so badly.

We find ourselves there then at the level of a recognition. What is there in this first relationship to the demand of the Other, (11) is at once him and something that must not be him; or at the very least and even more, it is not from him.

Well now we are making progress, these satisfactions are being delineated, which means that we could easily see here the whole origin of obsessional ambivalence in a certain fashion; this is, in effect, something that we can see being inscribed in a formula whose structure we recognise: o is here the cause of this ambivalence, of this yes and no: it is from me - symptom - but nevertheless it is not from me. The bad thoughts that I have vis-a-vis you the analyst, obviously I indicate them, but after all it is not at all true that I consider you to be a shit, for example. So that in short we see here, in any case, an order of causality which is being sketched out, that we cannot, all the same, immediately ratify as being that of desire.

But in any case it is a result, as I was saying the last time, in speaking precisely in a general fashion about the symptom, at this level, if you wish, a structure is outlined which is of something which would give us immediately that of the symptom, of the symptom precisely as result. I point out that it still leaves outside its circuit the thing that interests us, what interests us if the theory that I expose to you is correct, namely the liaison to what is properly speaking desire. We have there a certain relationship of the constitution of the subject as divided, as ambivalent, in relation to a demand of the Other. We do not see why all of this, for example, should not pass completely into the background, should not be swept away with the introduction of the dimension of something which is supposed to be henceforth completely external, foreign, the relationship of desire and specifically that of sexual desire.

In fact we already know why sexual desire does not sweep it away, far from it. The fact is that this object manages, by its very duplicity, to symbolise marvellously, at least through one of its phases, what is involved with the advent of the phallic stage, namely this something which it is precisely a matter of symbolising, namely the phallus, in so far as its disappearance, its aphanisis - to employ Jones term, the one Jones applies to desire and which does not apply to the phallus - that his aphanisis is the go-between in man of the relationships between the sexes.

(12) Is there any need, in order to justify what begins to function here, namely that the evacuation of the result of the anal function qua commanded, is going to take on all its import

at the phallic level as imaging the loss of the phallus. It is clearly understood that all of this is only valid within the reminder that I have to give once more to the thinking of some people who may have been absent from what I previously said, about the essential nature of this central (-<P) phase, central with respect to all these schémas through which - I would ask you to retain these formulae - the moment of the advance of jouissance, of the jouissance of the Other and towards the jouissance of the Other, involves the constitution of castration as a pledge of this encounter.

5)		<u>o</u>	desire of 0
4)	image	power of 0	
3)	desire	anxiety -φ	<u>jouissance</u> of 0
2)	trace	demand of 0	
1)	anxiety	<u>o</u>	desire x of 0

The fact that male desire encounters its own collapse before the entry into the jouissance of the feminine partner, just as, as one might say the jouissance of the woman is crushed (s'ecra.se) - to take up a term borrowed from the phenomenology of the breast and of the nursing - is crushed in phallic nostalgia and henceforth is required, I would say almost condemned to only love the male other at a point situated beyond the one at which, she also, stops him as desire: this beyond is aimed at in love; it is a beyond - let us say it clearly - either transverberated by castration, or transfigured in terms of potency. It is not the other as if it were a matter of being united to the other. The jouissance of the woman is in herself and is not connected to the Other. If I recall in this way the central function - let us say as obstacle, it is not at all an obstacle, it is the locus of anxiety - of what one might call the caducity of the organ, in so far as it encounters in a different fashion from each side what one can call the insatiability of desire, it is because it is only through this reminder that we see the necessity of symbolisations which in this connection display themselves with a hysterical aspect or an obsessional aspect.

Today we are on the second of these aspects. And what the second of these aspects reminds us of, is that simply by reason of the structure evoked, man is only in woman through the delegation of his presence under the form of this .decayed organ, of this organ of which he is fundamentally, in the sexual relationship and through the sexual relationship, castrated.

This means that the metaphors of gift here are only metaphors. And as is only too obvious, he gives nothing. The woman neither.

(13) And nevertheless the symbol of the gift is essential for the relationship to the Other; it is the supreme act, we are told, and even the total social act. It is here indeed that our experience has made us always put our finger on the fact that the metaphor of gift is borrowed from the anal sphere. For a long time it has been noted in the child that the turd, to begin to speak more politely, is the gift in essence, the gift of love. In this connection many other things have been picked out, up to and including, in a particular form of delinquency, in what is called, after the burglar has gone, the signature that every policeman and the books of legal medicine know well, this bizarre fact, but one which ended up all the same by being noticed, that the guy who has been using the jemmy in your house, and opening the drawers, always has at that moment an attack of colic. This obviously would allow us to find our bearings quickly at the level of what I called earlier manifest conditionings. It is at the level of mammals that we locate, at least in what we know about animal ecology, the function of the fecal trace, more exactly of faeces as trace, and a trace here also certainly profoundly linked to the essential nature of the place of what the organismic subject assures himself of at the same time in terms of possession, in the world, of territory and of security for sexual union.

You have seen described, in places which now all the same are sufficiently defused, this fact that these subjects, the hypopothamus certainly and even - this goes further than the mammals - the robin, feel themselves to be invincible within the limits of the territory and that all of a sudden there is a turning point: the limit precisely where curiously he becomes very timid.

The relationship, in mammals, between this limit and the fecal trace has been noticed for a long time. A reason once more to see there what prefigures, what prepares for this function of representing the subject, and finding there the roots in the biological background of the object *o* in so far as it is the anal fruit.

Are we still going to be satisfied with this? Is this all that we can draw from questioning the function of *o* in this relationship to a certain type of desire, that of the obsessional? This is where we take the next step which is also the essential step. We have justified nothing up to the present (14) other than the subject installed or not in his limits, and within these limits, more or less divided. But the access to the symbolic function that he takes on from the fact that these limits, are seen, at the level of sexual union in man, to be so singularly repressed, even this does not yet tell us anything about what is involved and what we are in the process of requiring, namely how all this whole process manages to justify the function of desire.

And it is experience which gives us the trace of this, namely that up to the present nothing explains to us the very particular relationships of the obsessional to his desire. It is precisely

because up to this level everything is symbolised, the divided subject and the impossible union, and it appears altogether striking to us that one thing is not, namely desire itself.

It is precisely in this effort, in this necessity that the subject finds himself of having to complete his position as desire, that he is going to complete himself in the category of potency, namely at the level of the fourth stage. The relationship between the specular reflection of the narcissistic support of the mastery of self and the field, the locus, of the Other, is the link here. You know it already and this would only be to make you retravel a well trodden path. This is why I want here to mark the originality - otherwise it would never have come to our knowledge - of our interrogation, the originality of what the facts reveal to us.

And to start from the heart of things, and from a fact that you know well, I would say without delaying any longer on the fact that I recalled a thousand times about what I called just now the relationships of the obsessional subject to his desire, namely that, as I told you the last time, the degree of luxuriance reached by his phantasies, which are ordinarily never carried out, but after all it can happen that through all sorts of conditions which postpone more or less indefinitely the putting into action, he gets there, he gets there better, it even happens that others overcome for him the space of the obstacle, a subject who develops very early as a magnificent obsessional may happen to be in a family of dissolute people. Case II in Volume 5 of the Jahrbuch, to which I alluded earlier, on which Jones based himself for his phenomenology of the anal function in the obsessional, Case II - and I could quote a thousand others in the literature - is one of those.

All the sisters - and they are numerous - without counting the mother, the aunt, the mother's different lovers, and even I believe - God forgive me - the grandmother - all had taken turns (15) on the belly of this little kid when he was about five years old. He is nevertheless an obsessional, an established obsessional, with desires of the only kind that he can manage to constitute in the register of potency: impossible desires, in this sense that whatever he does to realise them, he is not in them. The obsessional is never, at the end of his search for satisfaction, in these registers. So then the question that I am posing you, is just as living and brilliant in this observation as in many others, it is in a form that I called just now living and brilliant - it is the image of a little fish that is evoked here, and I can say, under my hand, and with good reason - this ictus, as you see it everywhere in the field of the obsessional, provided he is from our cultural space - and we do not know any different one - this ictus, is Jesus Christ himself. One might speculate a good deal about what kind of blasphematory necessity - I must say that up to the present it has never been properly justified as such - why is it that such a subject, like many other obsessionals cannot carry out one or other of these more or less atypical acts in which his sexual research spends itself, without immediately phantasising Christ as associated in

it. Even though the fact may have been present to our eyes for a long time, I do not think the last word has been said about it. It is quite clear first of all that Christ on this occasion - and this is why it is a blasphemy - Christ is a God. He is a God for many people, and even for so many people that in truth it is very-difficult even with all the manipulations of historical and psychological criticism, to dislodge him from this place.

But after all he is not just any God.

You will allow me to doubt that obsessionals at the time of Theophrastes, the one who wrote the Characters, amused themselves by mentally making Apollo participate in their base deeds.

Here we can see the importance of the little mark in passing, the beginning of an explanation that I thought it worthwhile giving in passing that the God, whether we like it or not, and even if we no longer have with the God or the Gods - for they are rather plural than singular - any relationship, this God is an element of the real. So that they are always there, it is quite clear that they walk around incognito. But there is one thing that is very certain: it is that the relationship of the God is very different from ours to the object of his desire.

(16) I spoke a little earlier about Apollo. Apollo is not castrated either before or afterwards. Afterwards something else happens him. We are told that it is Daphne who was transformed into a tree. It is here that something is hidden from you. And it is hidden from you, it is very astonishing because it is not hidden from you. The laurel tree, after the transformation, is not Daphne, it is Apollo. The proper of the God is that he is transformed, once he is satisfied, into the object of his desire, even if by that he becomes petrified in it.

In other words, a God, if he is real, gives here the image of his power. His power is there where it is. It is true of all the Gods, even of Elohim, even of Yahwea, who is one of them, even though his place is quite particular. Only something intervened there which has a different origin. Let us call it, on this occasion and because it is historically true - but no doubt this historical truth has to go a step beyond - let us call him Plato.

He told us things which, as you have seen, remain very manageable within the ethics of jouissance, because they have allowed us to trace the border of entry, the barrier that the Beautiful constitutes with respect to this supreme Good. Only, mixed in with a Christianity that was coming to birth, that gave something, something people believe was always there, and always in the Bible, but we will have to return to it no doubt later, if we are all still here next year. The matter is debatable, the matter that I am going to tell you about, namely the phantasy of an omnipotent God, which means of a God who is powerful everywhere at the same time, and of a God who is powerful for everyone; for it is indeed to that that one is forced to come, if the world is as it is, it is clear that the power of God is exercised at the same time in every direction.

Now the correlation between this omnipotence and something which is, as I might say all seeingness, sufficiently signals here to us what is involved. It involves something which is outlined in the field beyond the mirage of power, of this projection of the subject into the field of the ideal, reduplicated between the specular alter-ego, the ideal ego, and this something beyond which is the ego-ideal.

The ego-ideal, when at this level what it is a matter of covering over, is anxiety, takes the omnipotent form. The phantasy of ubiquity in the obsessional, the phantasy which is also the support on which there come and go the multiplicity of his desires, which are always to be rejected further away, it is (17) there that he seeks and finds the complement of what is necessary for him to constitute himself in desire.

From this it results - I will only quote here for you the little corollaries that can be drawn from this - that a question which was raised in what I could call the heated circles of analysis, the ones in which there still lives the movement of a primary inspiration, namely whether the analyst ought or ought not to be an atheist and if the subject, at the end of analysis, can consider his analyst terminated if he still believes in God.

It is the question that I am not going to treat today, I mean to settle. But on the road of such a question, I point out to you that whatever an obsessional testifies to you in his remarks, if he has not been routed out of his obsessional structure, you can be quite persuaded that qua obsessional he still believes in God, I mean that he believes in the God that everybody or almost everybody in our cultural arena, I mean in the God that everybody believes in without believing in him, namely this universal eye that is brought to bear on all our actions.

Here this dimension is as solid in its frame as the window of the phantasy that I spoke about the other day. Simply it is also required by it, I mean, even for the greatest believers that they do not believe in it. First of all because if they believed in it, it would be seen. And because if they are as believing as all that, one would notice the consequences of this belief, which in fact remains strictly invisible in events.

Such is the veritable dimension of atheism: the one which is supposed to have succeeded in eliminating the phantasy of the Omnipotent. Well then, a gentleman called Voltaire and who all the same knew something about anti-religious criticism, held very strongly to his deism, which means to the existence of the Almighty, and thought that Diderot was mad because he found that inconsistent. It is not sure that Diderot was really an atheist; to me his work seems rather to bear witness to it, given the way in which he brought into operation the intersubjective at the level of the Other in his major dialogues, Le neveu de Rameau and Jacques le Fataliste. He is only able to do it nevertheless in the style of derision.

The existence therefore of the atheist in the true sense can only

be conceived of in effect at the limit of an ascesis, which indeed appears to us can only be a psychoanalytic ascesis, I mean (18) of an atheism conceived of as a negation of this dimension of presence, at the basis of the world of omnipotence. This does not mean that the term atheism and the existence of the atheist does not have its historical correspondent. But it is of a quite different nature. Its affirmation is directed precisely towards the side of the existence of gods qua real. It neither denies it nor affirms it, it is directed at that. The atheist of the tragedy L'athee - I am alluding to Elizabethan tragedy - the atheist gjxa combatant, qua revolutionary, is not the one who denies God in his omnipotent function, it is the one who affirms himself as not serving any God.

And this is the dramatic, essential value, the one which always gives its passion to the question of atheism. I apologise for this little digression, which, as you may well imagine, is only preparatory.

You see where our little circuit today has led us: to the fundamental liaison between these two stages framing the fundamental impossibility, the one which divides at the sexual level, desire and jouissance. The style of detour, the style of encompassing, the impossible foundation that the obsessional gives to his desire, has allowed us, in the course of our analysis today, to see there being outlined something, namely that this link to a lost object of the most disgusting type, shows its necessary liaison, there in effect with the highest idealistic production. This circuit is nevertheless not yet completed. We see clearly how desire is appended to this structure of the object. It still remains for us - this is what we will articulate the next time - to highlight what this median table which, I hope, you have all copied, indicates to you as being our next field, to highlight the relationship between the obsessional phantasy, posed as a structure of his desire, and the anxiety which determines it.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 26 June 1963

In order to advance today in our account, I am going to take up the things that concern the constitution of desire in the obsessional and its relation to anxiety. And to do it, I am going to return to a sort of table, of matrix, of double entry table that I gave you during the very first lectures of this year's Seminar in the form reproduced here, bracketed by the white line and written in pink.

<u>Inhibition</u>	Impediment	Embarrassment
Emotion	<u>Symptom</u>	Passage à l'acte
Dismay	Acting-out	<u>Anxiety</u>

The intention of this table then was to mark the sort of derangement, of staggering represented by the three terms which Freud came to and which he inscribed in the title of his article Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety. Around these three terms, I punctuated something that we can designate as moments, as a certain number of definable moments in the terms which are here inscribed in this table, and which have as a characteristic, for each term, of referring to the start of its column above, to the start of the row on the left. You find there a correlation which can, when put to the test, be proposed for interrogation as suitable for being confirmed or disproved in its structural function.

Again these terms were presented to you at that time in a certain incompleteness, involving therefore some suspensions, riddles; specifically, the distinction for example between "emotion" and "dismay" may have been, despite the etymological references that I made at the time, may have been all the same for you a matter of interrogation which it was not entirely possible for you to resolve with your own resources.

Assuredly, what I will contribute today seems to me to be of a nature to bring you specifications -which, I have no doubt, for most of you, if not for all, can only be new or even unexpected. And in particular, to begin with this dismay, whose origin, quite distinct from that of the term emotion, is not "motion outwards, motion hors", movement outside the organised, adapted field for

example of motor action, as undoubtedly emotion etymologically, - I am not saying that this is something that we can entirely trust - as emotion etymologically indicates and refers to, dismay is to be sought quite elsewhere if it is to be understood; and etymologically - it was the indication that I gave you for it - the etymology in esmayer referring to a German root, to mogen, a quite primitive Germanic root, gives the indication of something (2) which posits the principle of power as outside - outside of what?

A riddle therefore, around something which is not unrelated to power, and I would say that perhaps even, to take the form that it has taken in French, that it is something of the order of "outside me, hors de moi", "outside oneself, hors de soi" that, in an approach which - here it is almost necessary to refer to the pun - is no less important, we have to direct our minds, to see clearly, to glimpse at least, the direction in which we are going to go today.

To go immediately to the heart of things - it is because the obsessional illustrates it by his phenomenology immediately and in a very tangible way - I would say that at the point that we are at I can tell you very crudely, straight out, that dismay, the that is involved, is nothing other, at least in the correlations that we are trying to explore, to specify, to disentangle, to create today, namely the relations between desire and anxiety, dismay in this correlation is nothing other than the o itself.

In the conjuncture between anxiety and its strange ambiguity, I taught you to circumscribe in the closest possible way throughout the discourse of this year, the ambiguity which allows us for our part, after this elaboration, to formulate what is striking in its phenomenology, what we can preserve of it, and what authors from elsewhere make slips and errors about, and what we introduce a distinction into, this characteristic of being without cause, but not without object; this is a distinction on which I base my efforts. To situate it, I have directed you: not alone is it without object, but it designates very probably what I might call the most profound object, the final object, the Thing. It is in this sense that I taught you to say that it is what does not deceive.

This "without cause", so obvious on the contrary in its phenomenon, is something which is better illuminated to our view by the way in which I tried to situate for you where the notion of cause begins.

This reference to dismay is henceforth that through which anxiety, while being linked to it, does not depend on it, but on the contrary determines this dismay. Anxiety finds itself suspended between what one might call the prior form of the relationship to the cause, the "what is it?" which is going to be formulated as cause, embarrassment, and something which cannot (3) hold onto this cause, since primarily it is anxiety which literally produces this cause.

Something happens which illustrates in an abject and thus all the more striking fashion what I put at the origin of my explanation of the obsessional in the confrontation of the Wolfman and his major repetitive dream, in the anxiety-provoking confrontation with something which appears as a showing forth of his final reality, this thing which is produced, which never reaches his consciousness, but can only be in a way reconstructed as a link for the whole subsequent determination, anal dismay to call it by its name and its product, here at the level of the obsessional is the primary form in which there intervenes the emergence of the object o which is at the origin of everything that is going to flow from it in the mode of effect.

It is because here the object o is found to be given in an original moment in which it plays a certain function on which we are now going to try to dwell in order to specify carefully its value, its incidence, its import, its primary coordinates, the ones before the others are added on, it is because the o is that in its original production that it can subsequently function in the dialectic of desire which is that of the obsessional.

A coordinate therefore, at the moment of its apparition, of this at the traumatic unveiling, where anxiety reveals that it is indeed what does not deceive at the moment that the field of the Other, as one might say, is rent and opens out onto its foundations, what is it, this o, what is its function with respect to the subject?

If we can grasp it here in a way in a pure fashion with respect to this question, it is precisely in the measure that in this radical, traumatic, confrontation the subject cedes (cede) to the situation. But at this level, at this moment, what does this "yields" mean, how is it to be understood? It is not that he either vacillates or weakens, as you know well. Remember the attitude schematised by the fascination of this subject of the dream of the Wolfman before the window opening onto the tree covered with wolves. In a situation whose immobilisation suspends before our eyes its primitively inarticulatable character and by which nevertheless he will remain marked forever, what was produced is literally something which gives its true sense to this "yields" of the subject, it is literally a ceding (cession).

(4) This characteristic of cedable object (objet cessible) is one of the characteristics of o which is so important that I would ask you please to follow me in a brief review to see whether it is a characteristic which marks all the forms of o that we have enumerated. It here appears to us that the fixation points of the libido are always around one of these moments which nature presents for this eventual structure of subjective ceding.

The first moment of anxiety, the one that analytic experience got closer to bit by bit, let us say at the level, around the trauma of birth, henceforth, with this remark, allows us to accentuate it as something more precise, more precisely articulatable than what was first of all roughly approached in the form of

frustration and to ask ourselves, and to notice, after we have asked ourselves, that the most decisive moment in the anxiety-involved, the weaning anxiety, is not so much that on a particular occasion the breast is missing when he needs it, it is rather that this little child cedes this breast which, when he is appended to it, is indeed like a part of himself.

Let us never forget, what I put to you - and I am not the only one to have noticed it, I refer specifically here to Bergler - that the breast forms part of the individual at the nursing stage, that he does not find himself, as I told you in a vivid expression, except as stuck onto his mother. That he is able in a way to hold onto this breast or let it go, is where there is produced the most primal moment of surprise, sometimes really graspable in the expression of the newborn, on which for the first time there passes the reflection of something related to this abandonment of this organ which is much more the subject himself, than something which is already an object, something which gives its support, its root, to what in another register was perceived, called, as regards the subject, dereliction.

But for that matter for us, as for all the other objects o, do we have any other manifest control than this emphasis I give to the possibility of replacing the natural object by a mechanical object, if I can express myself in that way? What I am designating here, is first of all the possible replacement of this object by any other object which may be encountered, another partner, the nurse who gave rise to so many questions for the first proponents of natural education, for the Rousseau-style theme of feeding by the mother, but beyond it to this something (5) which, God knows, did not always exist - at least so we imagine - and which cultural progress has manufactured, has constituted, the soother, namely the possibility of putting o in reserve, in stock, in circulation in the shops and moreover to isolate it in sterile tubes.

This characteristic therefore of ceding the object is expressed by the appearance in the chain, the function of human manufacture, the appearance of cedable objects (objets cessibles) which are, which can be, their equivalents. And if this reminder is not out of season here, it is because from this angle I intend to attach to it here the function on which I have laid stress for a long time, that of the transitional object, to take the term, whether it is correct or not, but henceforth consecrated, with which it was pinpointed by its creator, the person who spotted it, namely Winnicott.

Here, in effect, at this level, one sees clearly what constitutes this object that he calls transitional, in this function of the object that I call a cedable object: it is a little piece, torn from something, most often a piece of cloth, and one clearly sees what is involved as regards the relationship of the subject to the support that he finds in this object. He is not dissolved in it, he is comforted by it, he is comforted by it in his quite original function as subject, from this position of collapse, as I might say, with respect to the signifying confrontation. Here

we have, not an investment of o, but what I might call an investiture. Here, it is the substitute (suppleant) for the subject, and substitute in position, in a way, preceded, it is this relationship o with respect to something which secondarily reappears after this disappearance. This primitive mythical subject who is posed at the beginning as having to constitute himself in the confrontation, but that we never grasp - and for good reason - that it is because the o has preceded him, and because it is in a way itself marked by this primitive substitution, that it has to re-emerge beyond.

This function of the cedable object as a separable fragment, carrying in a way primitively something of the identity of the body which antecedes the body itself as regards the constitution of the subject, since I spoke about a manifestation in the history o^ human production which can in a way for us have the value of confirmation, of revelation, in this sense I cannot possibly not evoke now, at the extreme term of this historical evolution, or more exactly of this manifestation in history of problems which are going to pose us, I am saying, at what one could call the most radical essentiality of the subject, the (6) probably immense extension already engaged in more than, I would say, common consciousness - and even that of practitioners like ourselves - may be aware of, the questions going to be posed by the fact of organ transplants, which take on an appearance which in undoubtedly surprising and well designed to suspend the mind around some question or other: how far should we, or how far are we going to, consent to it? Just how far will go the fact which is opened out here, with what I would call the mine, the mainspring, the principle of these astonishing possibilities, is perhaps going to be found soon in the artificial maintenance of certain subjects in a state, which we cannot, which we will no longer be able to say is one of life or of death, since as you know Angstrom's methods allow us to make subsist in a living state the tissues of subjects in whom everything indicates that the functioning of their central nervous system cannot be restored, no brain waves, mydriasis, .unrecoverable absence of reflexes? What is involved, what do we do when it is from a subject in this state that we borrow an organ? Do you not sense that there is here an emergence into the real, of something of a kind to reawaken, in altogether new terms, the question of the essentiality of the person, and of what it is attached to, to beg these doctrinal authorities who can on occasion provide material for juridicism, to earnestly request them to see how far, in practice this time, the question of whether the subject is a soul or indeed a body can be taken?

I will not go any further along this path today because as a matter of fact these doctrinal authorities seem already to have evoked quite singular responses that it would be well to study very closely in order to see their, consistency with respect to certain positions which have been taken for a long time, and where for example there is radically distinguished, on the very plane of the relationship, of the identification of the person with something immortal which is supposed to be called the soul, a doctrine which articulates in its principles something that is

the contrary of the Platonic tradition, namely that there can be no resurrection other than that of the body.

Moreover the domain evoked here is not so linked to this industrial advance in singular possibilities, for it not to have been evoked for a long time in visionary fabulations, and here I have only to refer you once more to the Unheimlich function of (7) the eyes in so far as to manipulate, to make a living being change into his automaton, the character incarnated by Hoffmann is put at the centre, by Freud, of his article on the Unheimlich, this Coppélius, the one who hollows out eye sockets, who is going to seek down to their root what is somewhere the capital, essential object to present itself as the beyond - and the most anxiety-provoking - of the desire which constitutes it, the eye itself.

I said enough in passing about the same function of the voice and the way in which it appears to us, will appear to us no doubt with so many technical improvements, to be all the more able to be here of the order of these cedable objects, of these objects which can be placed on the shelves of a library, in the form of disks or of tapes, and regarding which in this case we only need to evoke one or other old or new episode, to know the singular relationship it can have with the arousal of a particular conjuncture of anxiety. Simply, let us add to it properly speaking the following, at the moment that there emerges in a cultural area in which it arises for the first time, the possibility also of the image, I mean of the specular image, of the image of the body, in a detached state, in a cedable state, in the form of photographs or even of drawings, and of the lure, of the repugnance that this provokes in the sensibility of those who see it emerging suddenly in this form, at once indefinitely multipliar>le and able to be distributed everywhere, the repugnance, indeed the horror that these cultural things in areas that there is no reason for us to call primitive, the apparition of this possibility gives rise to, with the refusal to allow these images to be taken since God alone knows, it must be said, where they may go afterwards.

It is in this function, in this function of cedable object and in short the most natural one, whose naturalness can only be explained from having taken on this function, that the anal object intervenes in the function of desire, that here, it is here that we have to grasp the way in which it intervenes, and to put to the test, not forget the guidance that our formula gives us, that this object is then, not the end, the goal of desire but its cause, the cause of desire in so far as it is itself something non-effective, that it is this sort of effect founded, constituted on the function of lack, which only appears as effect where in effect there is situated alone the notion of cause, namely at the level of the signifying chain where this desire is what gives it this sort of consistency in which the subject is constituted essentially as metonymy. But how are we going to (8) qualify this desire here, at the level of the constitution of the subject, where we grasp it in its incidence, in the constitution of the subject? It is not the contingent fact, the

facticity of education in cleanliness which gives it this function of retaining, which gives its fundamental structure to anal desire. It is a more general form that is involved here and that we must grasp in this desire to retain.

In its polar relationship to anxiety, desire is to be situated there where I put it for you, corresponding with this old matrix, at the level of inhibition. This is why desire - as we know - can take on the function of what is called a defence. But let us go step by step to see how this happens eventually. What is inhibition? For us, in our experience, it is not enough for us to have this experience and for us to manipulate it as such for us yet to have correctly articulated its function, and this is what we are going to try to do. What is inhibition if not the introduction into a function - perhaps not an indifferent one; in his article, Freud takes as support, for example, the motor function - the introduction of what? Of a different desire to the one that the function satisfies naturally.

This after all we know, and I am not claiming here to discover anything new; but I believe that in articulating it in this way, I am introducing a new formulation, the deductions flowing from which escape us without this very formulation.

For this locus of inhibition where we learn to recognise, while I am underlining it, the correlations this matrix indicates, the locus properly speaking where desire is exercised, and where we grasp one of the roots of what analysis designates as Urverdrangung, what I might call this structural occultation of desire behind inhibition - it is something which makes us say habitually that if Mr So-and-so has writer's cramp, it is because he eroticises the function of his hand, I think this is familiar to everybody - it is this which urges us to bring into play, to appreciate in this situation at the same place these three terms, the first two of which I have already named: "inhibition", "desire", the third being the act. For when it is a question for us of defining what the act is, the only possible, polar correlative in the place of anxiety, we can only do it by situating it there where it is: at the place of inhibition in (9) this matrix.

The act cannot be defined for us, or for anybody else, as something which only happens as I might say, in the real field, in the sense that movement, the motor effect, it will be said, defines it, but as something which in this field - and no doubt in the form of movement on occasion, but not only that - whatever share there may still remain there of a motor effect which is expressed in this field, the field of the real in which the movement response is exercised, which is expressed in such a way that there is expressed in it another field, which is not simply the one of sensory stimulation for example, as it is articulated by considering only the reflex arc, which is not to be articulated either as a realisation of the subject.

This is the conception of the personalist myth in so far precisely as it eludes, in this field of the realisation of the

subject, the priority of o which inaugurates and henceforth preserves this privilege in the field of the realisation of the subject, of the subject as such who is only realised in the objects which belong to the same series, which are from the same place, let us say, in this matrix, as the function o, which are always cedable objects: and these are what for a long time have been called "works" with all the meaning that this term has even in the field of moral theology.

So then what happens in the act of this other field which I am speaking about, and whose incidence, agency, insistence in the real is what connotes an action as act? How are we going to define it? Is it simply this polar relationship and in a way what happens in it in terms of overcoming anxiety, if I can express myself in this way?

Let us say, in formulae which can only approach after all what an act is, that we speak about act when an action has the character, let us say, of a signifying manifestation in which there is inscribed what can be called the the gap (l'ecart) of desire. An act is an action, let us say, in so far as there is manifested in it the very desire which is supposed to have been designed to inhibit it. It is in this foundation of the notion, of the function of the act in its relationship to inhibition, and there alone, that one can be justified in calling "act" things which in principle appear to be so little related to what one could call, in the full, ethical, sense of the word an act: a sexual act on one hand and on the other a testamentary act.

Well then, it is here in this relationship of o to the constitution of a desire - and what it reveals to us about the relationship of desire to the natural function - that our (10) obsessional has for us his most exemplary value. In his case we put our finger all the time on this characteristic, whose enigmatic aspect can be effaced for us only out of habit, that in his case desires manifest themselves always in this dimension that I went so far as to call earlier, anticipating a little no doubt, the function of defence.

How can this be conceived of simply, on what basis does this incidence of desire in inhibition deserve to be called defence? It is because, as I told you, that - it was in an anticipatory fashion that I was able to speak about defence as an essential function of the incidence of desire - it is uniquely in so far as this effect of desire, signalled in this way by inhibition, can be introduced into an action already caught up in the induction of another desire - this is also for us a common fact of experience - and after all, without mentioning the fact that we are always dealing with something of this order, let us observe that, not to leave our obsessional, this is already the position of anal desire, defined in this way, by the desire to retain centred on a primordial object, to which it is going to give its value, it is already here that there is situated the desire that is situated as anal. It has no meaning for us except in the economy of the libido, namely in its liaisons with sexual desire.

It is fitting to recall here that in the inter urinas et faeces nascimur of St. Augustine, the important thing is not so much that we are born between urine and faeces, at least for us analysts, it is that we make love between urine and faeces. We piss before and we shit afterwards or inversely.

And this is one of the further correlations and one to which we give too little attention as regards a phenomenology that after all we allow to come into analysis. That is why it is necessary to have one's ear pricked, and to pick out in the cases in which this emerges, the relationship which links to the sexual act the fomenting, as I might say, of that which will appear of course as unnoticed, as perhaps unevoked, in the history of the Wolfman, his primal little present, the habitual fomenting, in the sexual act, of something which of course does not seem to be very important, but which takes importance from being indicative of the relationship I am speaking about, the fomenting of the little shit, whose subsequent evacuation has no doubt not the same signification for every subject, depending on whether for example (11) they are on the obsessional slope or on another one.

So then let us take up our path at the point that I left you on it, namely: what about the point that I am now directing you towards, as regards this underlay of desire in desire, and how to conceive here what in this path leads us towards the elucidation of its meaning, leads us to it I mean not simply in fact, but of necessity? Are we going to be able to conceive in this interpretation of desire/defense and what it is defending against, namely another desire, that we are simply led, as I might say, quite naturally by what leads the obsessional in a movement of recurrence of the process of desire generated by this implicit effort of subjectivication which is already in his symptoms in which he tends to lay hold of its stages again, in so far as he has symptoms, and what is meant by the correlation inscribed here in the matrix, with impediment, with emotion? This is what the titles that I put in its reduplication explained here underneath, designate for you.

Desire	Not to be able	Cause
Not to know		
<u>o</u>		Anxiety

What is the impediment that is involved? It is that something intervenes, the impediment: "impedicare", caught in the trap, which is not the reduplication of inhibition. A term had to be chosen. The fact is that the subject is quite impeded in retaining his desire to retain, and that, in the case of the obsessional this is what manifests itself as compulsion.

The dimension of emotion here, borrowed from a psychology which is not our own, a psychology of adaptation, of the catastrophic reaction, also intervenes here in a quite different sense to this

classic and habitual definition. The emotion involved is the one which is supposed to highlight the experiences based on being confronted with a task, namely that the fact that the subject does not know how to respond, is where he connects up with our "not to know, ne pas savoir", : he did not know that it was that and that is why at the level of the point where he cannot stop himself (s 'empe~cher) that he allows things to happen, which are these comings and goings of the signifier, that alternately posit and efface, which all go along this equally unknown path of rediscovering the primal trace; what the obsessional subject seeks in what I called earlier - and you will see why the choice of this word - its recurrence in the process of desire, is well and truly to rediscover the authentic cause of this whole process. And it is because this cause is nothing other than this final, abject and derisory object, that he remains in suspense in this search, that there is always manifested there, at the level of acting-out, something that is going to give to this search for the object its moments of suspension, its wrong directions, its mistaken paths, its lateral divergences which will make the search turn indefinitely, and which are manifested in this fundamental symptom of doubt which for him is going to affect the value of all his objects of substitution.

Here not to be able - is not to be able to what? - to stop oneself (s'empecher). The compulsion here, the doubt, concerns precisely these doubtful objects thanks to which there is pushed back the moment of access to the final object which would be the end, in the full sense of the term, namely the loss of the subject on the path where he is always exposed to entering along the path of embarrassment, of embarrassment where there is introduced as such the question of the cause, which is that through which he enters into transference.

What should retain us here? Have we seen, circumscribed, even approached, the question I posed about the incidence of another desire which with respect to this one whose path I have travelled along, might play the role of defence? Manifestly not. I traced the path of the return to the final object with its correlation of anxiety; for it is here there lies the motive for the growing arousal of anxiety. And in the measure that the analysis of an obsessional is pushed further towards its term, provided only it is guided along this path, the question then remains open, if not of what I meant - for I think that you have already glimpsed that - but about what the incidence as defence is, a defence no doubt working and working very hard to put off the expiry date (echeance) that I have just outlined, as defence of another desire.

How is this possible? We cannot conceive of it except by giving its central position, which is something I already did earlier, to sexual desire, I mean to the desire that is called genital, to natural desire in so far as in the case of man, and precisely in function of this structuring proper to desire around the mediation of an object, it posits itself as having anxiety at its heart and separating desire from jouissance.

This function of o which at this level of genital desire is symbolised analogically by the dominance, by the pregnancy of o in the economy of desire, is symbolised at the level of genital desire by the (-tí>) which appears here as the subjective residue at the level of copulation, in other words, which shows us that the copula is everywhere, and that it only unites by being lacking there where precisely it would be properly copulatory.

(13) It is to this central hole which gives its privileged value to castration anxiety, namely to the only level at which anxiety is produced at the very locus of the lack of the object, it is to this that, specifically in the obsessional, the coming into play of another desire is due. This other desire, as I might say, gives its foundation to what can be called the eccentric position, the one that I have been trying to describe for you, of the desire of the obsessional with respect to genital desire.

For the desire of the obsessional is not conceivable either in its agency or in its mechanism, except in so far as it is situated as a substitute for what it is impossible to supply elsewhere, namely at its place. In a word, the obsessional, like every neurotic, has already acceded to the phallic stage, but it is with respect to the impossibility of being satisfied at the level of this stage, that his own object, the excremental o, the o cause of desire to retain, and which, if I really wished to conjoin here its function with everything that I said about the relations to inhibition, I would rather call the cork, it is with respect to it that this object is going to take on what I could call developed values. And it is here that we cut through to the origin of what I could call the analytic phantasy about oblativity. I already said and repeated, that it is an obsessional phantasy. For of course everyone would love to think that genital union is a gift: I give myself, you give yourself, we give ourselves. Unfortunately there is no trace of gift in a genital copulatory act, however successful you may imagine it to be. There is only a gift precisely where it has always been well and truly and perfectly located: at the anal level, in the measure that here something is outlined, emerges, of what is here precisely at this level designed to satisfy, to bring the subject to a halt with the realisation of the gap, of the central hole, which at the genital level prevents anything whatsoever which might function as object of gift from being grasped.

Since I spoke about a cork, by which you can recognise that it is the most primitive form of what I called, of what I introduced the other day to you as the exemplary object that I called the tap through the discussion of the function of the cause, well then how could we illustrate, with respect to what determines the function of the object stopper or tap with its consequence, the desire to close, how could there be situated the different elements of our matrix?

(14) The relationship to the cause - what is that? What can one do with a tap? It is the initial point at which there comes into play from observation, in the experience of the child, this attraction that we see, contrary to any other little animal

whatsoever, manifesting itself for something which announces itself as representing this fundamental type of object.

The "not to be able" to make something of it, as well as the "not to know", and in their distinction there is indicated here sufficiently what the symptom is: it is a leak (fuite) in the tap. The passage a l'acte is to open it, but opening it without knowing what one is doing. This is what is characteristic of the passage a l'acte. Something happens by which a cause is liberated, by means which have nothing to do with this cause. For, as I pointed out to you, the tap only plays its function of cause in so far as everything that can come out of it comes from elsewhere. It is because there is the appeal of the genital, with its phallic hole at the centre, that everything that can happen at the level of the anal comes into play because it takes on its meaning.

As regards acting-out, if we wish to situate it with respect to the metaphor of the tap, it is not the fact of opening the tap as the child does, without knowing what he is doing, it is simply the presence or not of the jet of water. Acting-out, is the jet, namely what is always produced from an event which comes from somewhere other than the cause that one has just acted on. And this is something that our experience indicates to us. It is not the fact that our intervention, let us say, for example on the plane of an anal interpretation is false which provokes the acting-out, it is that where it is brought to bear, it leaves room for something which comes from elsewhere. In other words: one must not inconsiderately pester the cause of desire.

Here therefore there is introduced the possibility of the function which on this terrain where there is played out the destiny of the desire of the obsessional, of his symptoms and of his sublimations, of something that will take on its meaning from being that which skirts around, as I might say, the central gap of phallic desire, what is happening at the scopical level, in so far as the specular image enters into an "analogous" function because it is in a correlative position with respect to the phallic stage.

Everything that we have just said about the function of o as "analogous" object of gift, designed to hold back the subject on the edge of the castrating hole, everything that we have just said about it, we can transpose onto the image. And here there (15) intervenes this ambiguity in the obsessional subject about the function of love which is underlined in all the observations. What is this idealised love that we find as much in the Ratman and the Wolfman as in every observation of an obsessional that has been taken a certain distance, what is the enigma of this function, given to the other - to the woman in this case - of this exalted object as regards which people have certainly not had to wait for either you or me or the teaching given here, to know that it represents surreptitiously the negation of his desire? In any case women for their part are not deceived by it.

What would distinguish this type of love from an eroto-maniacal

love, if we did not seek out what the obsessional engages of himself in love?

Do you believe that for the obsessional, if this is indeed the way things are as regards the final object that may be revealed in his analysis, along a certain recurrent path - I told you which one - excrement is the divinatory source for finding oneself to be a loveable object!

I would beg you to try to illuminate with your pocket torch what the position of the obsessional is in this regard. It is not doubt which prevails here, it is that he prefers not even to look at it. This prudence is something you will always find. And nevertheless if love takes on for him these forms of an exalted bond, it is because what he intends should be loved, is a certain image of himself, that this image he gives to the other, and to such an extent that he imagines that if this image were faulty in any way, the other would no longer know what to hold onto. It is the foundation of what I called elsewhere the altruistic dimension of this mythical love founded on a mythical oblativity.

But the maintenance of this image is what attaches him to a whole distance from himself which is precisely what it is most difficult to reduce, and which gave the illusion to a particular person, (Bouvet), who had, of course, a good deal of experience of these subjects, but not the apparatus - and for reasons which remain to be explored - to formulate it, to put such an accent on this notion of distance: the distance involved is this distance of the subject from himself with respect to which everything that he does is never anything for him in the final term - and, without analysis, is left to its solitude - but something that he sees as a game, when all is said and done, which only profited this other of whom I am speaking, this image.

(16) This dimension is the one that is usually highlighted, as regards the narcissistic dimension in which there develops everything that in the case of the obsessional is not so much central, namely symptomatic, but if you wish behavioural or experienced and which gives its veritable foundation, that through which what is involved for him, namely to realise at least the first phase of what is never permitted for him, what is never permitted to manifest itself in act, namely his desire, how this desire is sustained, as I might say, by doing the round of all the possibilities, at the phallic and genital level, which determine the impossible.

When I say that the obsessional sustains his desire as impossible, I mean that he sustains his desire at the level of the impossibilities of desire. The image of the hole, of the hole that is involved, I would ask you to find the reference to it - I told you about it once and that is why I insisted on it at such length - the reference to the topology of the torus, the circle of the obsessional is precisely one of these circles which because of its topological place can never be reduced to a point. It is because from the oral to the anal, from the anal to the phallic, from the phallic to the scopic and from the scopic to

the vociferous, it never turns back onto itself except by-passing again through its point of departure.

It is around these structures that the next time I will give its conclusive formulation to what this example, which is sufficiently demonstrative to be elaborated as an example, and is transposable moreover from these data into other structures, the hysteric specifically, that starting from this example, we are able in the final term to situate about the position and the function of anxiety.

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I will conclude today what I had set myself to say to you this year about anxiety. I will mark out its limit and its function, thus indicating where I intend there to continue the positions which alone allow us, will allow us settle, if it is possible, what is involved in our role as analysts.

Freud designated anxiety at the end of his work as a signal. He designated it as a signal distinct from the effect of the traumatic situation, an articulated signal of what he called danger; the word "danger" for him is linked to the function, to the notion, not elucidated it must be said, of "vital danger".

The original thing that I have articulated for you this year, is the specification of what this danger is. This danger is, in conformity with the Freudian indication, but more precisely articulated, what is linked to the ceding characteristic of the constitutive moment of the object o.

What, henceforth, for us, should anxiety be considered the signal of, at this point of our development? Here again we will articulate it differently to Freud: this moment, this moment of the function of anxiety is prior to this ceding of the object. For experience prohibits us from not, as the very necessity of his articulation obliges Freud, situating something more primal than the articulation of the situation of danger, once we define it as we have just done: at a level, at a moment prior to this ceding of the object.

Anxiety, I announced to you first in the Seminar of two years ago, anxiety manifests itself tangibly in a first approach as referring - and in a complex fashion - to the desire of the Other. From this first approach, I indicated that the anxiety-provoking function of the desire of the Other was linked to the fact that I do not know what object o I am for this desire.

I will emphasis today that this is only fully articulated, only takes on an exemplary form at what I called, designated here, in a sign on the blackboard, the fourth level definable as characteristic of the function of the constitution of the subject in his relation to the Other, in so far as we can articulate it as centered around the function of anxiety.

(2) There alone the specific plenitude by which human desire is function of the desire of the Other, there alone at this level is this form fulfilled. Anxiety, as I told you, is linked to the fact that I do not know what object o I am for the desire of the Other. But this when all is said and done is only linked to the level at which I can give this exemplary fable of it, in which the Other would be a radically Other, would be this praying mantis with a voracious desire, to which no common factor links me. On the contrary, something links me to the human Other which is my quality of being his fellow. What remains of the anxiety-provoking "I do not know" is fundamentally miscognition, miscognition at this special level of what is, in the economy of my desire as man, the o.

This is why, paradoxically, it is at what is described as the fourth level, at the level of scopic desire, that the structure of desire is for us most fully developed in its fundamental alienation, it is there also that the object o is most masked, and with it the subject is, as regards anxiety, most secured.

This is what makes it necessary for us to seek elsewhere than at this level the trace of o as regards the moment of its constitution. Since the Other, in effect, is in essence always there in its full reality, and therefore this reality, in so far as it takes on a subjective presence, can always manifest itself by one of its sharp edges, it is clear that development does not give an equal access to this reality of the Other.

At the first level, this reality of the Other is presentified, as is quite clear in the original impotence of the nurseling, through need. It is only in the second phase that with the demand of the Other something properly speaking detaches itself and allows us to articulate in a complete way the constitution of little o with respect to the function of the locus of the signifying chain, a function which I hear from the Other.

But I cannot today leave this first level without clearly highlighting that anxiety appears before any articulation as such of the demand of the Other. But, singularly, I would ask you for a moment to dwell on the paradox which connects the starting point of this first effect of ceding, which is anxiety, with what will be at the end something like its point of arrival: this manifestation of anxiety coinciding with the very emergence into the world of the one who will be the subject, is the scream, the scream whose function I have situated for a long time as not at (3) all an original but a terminal relationship to what we ought to consider as being the very heart of this other, in so far as he reaches completion for us at a moment as the neighbour.

This scream which escapes from the nurseling, he can do nothing about it. If he has ceded something here, nothing connects him to it. But this anxiety, this original anxiety, am I the first, have not all the authors emphasised its character in a certain traumatic relationship to the emergence of the organism - human on this occasion - into a certain world where it is going to live.

Can we not see certain contradictory features in these multiple and confusing indications? Can we retain as valid Ferenczi's indication that for ontogenesis itself, there is the emergence from some primitive aqueous milieu or other which is the homologue of the marine milieu, namely the relationship between the amniotic liquid and this water in which there can take place this exchange between the inside and the outside, which takes place in the animal living in such a milieu at the level of the brachiopoda, which is something that never functions at any moment of the human embryo. I would ask you rather to retain - for everything that is indicated to us in this often confused speculation which is psychoanalytic speculation ought to be considered by us as not without meaning, to be on the path of something indicative, that it skips over, delays on and sometimes illuminates, because phylogenesis is mentioned on occasion - I would ask you - from the point of view of a schematised exchange in the form of an organism with, at its border and on this border, a certain number of chosen points of exchange, to notice the degree to which in effect it is something unbelievable, if it is the case that the most basic schema of vital exchange is effectively created by the function of this wall, of this border, of this osmosis between an outside milieu and an inside milieu, between which there can be a common factor - to consider the strangeness of the leap by which living beings have emerged from their primitive milieu, have passed into the air therefore with an organ whose arbitrary character I would ask you to consult in the books on embryology, one cannot fail to be struck by what one might call the arbitrary character of the development of the neo-formation. There is just as much strangeness in this intrusion, inside the organism, of this system, in the whole adaptation of the nervous system to be accommodated for a long time before it really functions as a good pump, there is just as much strangeness in the leap constituted by the apparition of (4) this organ, as one might say there is in the fact that at a moment of human history, one saw human beings breathing in an iron lung, or again taking off into what is called inaccurately the cosmos, with something around them which for its vital function is not essentially different from what I am evoking here as a reserve of air.

Should we not recognise the essential feature of the fact that anxiety was in a way - it is Freud who indicates it to us here - chosen as a signal of something, this radical intrusion of something so other to the living human being which passing into the atmosphere already is; here we have the essential feature which means that the living human being who emerges into this world where he has to breathe, is first of all literally stifled, suffocated by what has been called the trauma - there is no other one - the trauma of birth, which is not the separation from the mother, but the aspiration into oneself of this fundamentally different milieu. Of course, the link between this moment and what can be called separation and weaning is not clear; but I question you, I ask you to gather the elements of your own experience, your experience as analysts, as observers of children, the experience also of everything that must be reconstructed, of everything that proves itself to be for us

necessary if we wish to give a sense to the term of weaning, to see that the relationship of weaning to this first moment is not a simple relationship, a relationship of phenomena which overlap, but much more rather some relationship of contemporaneity.

It is not essentially true that the child is weaned: he weans himself, he detaches himself from the breast, he plays, in accordance with this first experience, whose already subjectivised character is manifested just as tangibly by the passage on his face, simply outlining the first signs of mimicry, of surprise, he plays at detaching himself from this breast and taking it up again; and if there were not already something active enough for us to articulate it in the direction of a desire for weaning, how could we even conceive of the very primitive, the very primordial facts in their appearance, in their dating, the refusal of the breast, the first forms of anorexia, the correlations of which our experience teaches us to seek immediately at the level of the big Other.

What is lacking to this first object that we call the breast for it to function authentically as what it is supposed to be in the (5) classical theory, namely the rupture of the link with the Other, what is lacking is its full link to the Other, and this is why I strongly emphasised that its link is closer to the first little neo-natal subject, it is not of the Other, it is not the link to the Other that has to be broken, it is at the very most the first sign of this link. This is why it has a relationship with anxiety, but also why, from the first, it is in fact the first form of, and the form which makes possible, the function of the transitional object.

Moreover, it is not at this level the only object which offers itself to fulfill this function. And if later another object, the one on which the last time - one more again - I insisted at length, the anal object, comes to fulfill this function in a clearer fashion at the very moment that the Other elaborates her own in the shape of the demand - one can see the wisdom of the ages which ensures that these watchers over the coming into the world of the human animal, the midwives, have always dwelt on, have always been brought to a halt before this singular and so tiny object, the meconium, which comes with the appearance of the child - I will not return today, since I have already done it, to the much more characteristic articulation that this object, the anal object, allows us to give of the function of the object o, the object o in so far as it is found to be the first support of subjectivation in the relationship to the Other, I mean the way in which, or that through which, the subject is first required by the Other to manifest himself as subject, as a subject in the full sense of the term, as a subject who already here has to give what he is, in so far as this passage, this entrance into the world of what he is can only be as a remainder, as irreducible with respect to what is imposed on him in terms of a symbolic imprint.

What he is there, is what he has first of all to give; and it is to this object that there is appended, as to a causal object,

what is going to identify him primordially to the desire to retain. The first developmental form of desire is thus and as such akin to the order of inhibition. When desire appears for the first time, it opposes itself to the very act through which its originality as desire is introduced.

If it was already clear at the preceding stage that it is indeed to the object that there is appended the first form of desire, in so far as we elaborate it as desire for separation, for the second form, it is clear that the function of cause that I give (6) to the object is manifested in the fact that the form of desire is turned against the function which introduces the object o as such. For of course it must be seen that this object, as I recalled earlier, is here already given, already produced, and primitively produced, put at the disposition of this function that is determined by the introduction of the demand through something which is prior, that it was there already as a product of anxiety.

Here then it is neither the object in itself, nor the subject who autonomises himself, as it is imagined, in a vague and confused priority of totality which is involved here, but from the first initially an object chosen for its quality of being specially negotiable, of being originally an object of purchase (objet d'achat).

You see what is in question here: it is to realise that in this primal point of insertion of desire, which is linked to the conjunction within the same brackets of the o and of the D of demand, there is this on one side and on the other side anxiety, and it is in the interchanging of these positions of anxiety and of what has for the subject to be constituted in its function which will remain, up to the end, essentially represented by o, it is here that there is found the level at which we can, at which we must maintain ourselves, to sustain ourselves, if we wish to consider what is involved in our technical function.

This anxiety here, here it is then - we have known it for a long time - as it were set aside, dissimulated in this relationship of the obsessional that we call "ambivalent", this relationship that we simplify, that we abbreviate, that we even elude when we limit it to being one of aggressivity.

This object that he cannot prevent himself from retaining as the good which makes him worthwhile, and which is also only what is expelled, what is evacuated from himself, are the two aspects by which it determines the subject even as compulsion and as doubt. It is on this very oscillation between these two extreme points that there depends the passage, the momentary, possible passage of the subject through this zero point where it is, when all is said and done, entirely at the mercy of the other - here in the dual sense of the small other - that the subject finds himself.

And that is why, from my second lecture on, I pointed out to you, in opposing the structure of the relationship of desire to the desire of the Other, in the sense that I teach you it, to the

structure in which it is articulated, defined, algebrised in the Hegelian dialectic, and that I told you that the point at which they overlap, a partial point, the very one which allows us to (7) define this relationship as a relationship of aggressivity, is the one which the formula defined at the point that we make equal to zero the moment - I mean here in the physical sense - of this desire, namely of what I wrote here as $d(o) : 0 > d(0)$, in other words desire qua determined by the first characteristically negotiable object. Here effectively one can say that the subject finds himself confronted with what is expressed in Hegelian phenomenology, by the impossibility of the co-existence of self-consciousnesses, and which is nothing but the impossibility for the subject, at the level of desire, of finding in himself, as subject, his cause.

Here you ought to see already the beginning of the consistency between this function of cause and this phantasy, this phantasy characteristic of a thinking that is in a way forced, for human speculation, about this notion of causa sui in which this thinking takes comfort from the existence somewhere of a being to whom his cause would not be foreign.

Compensation, phantasy, the arbitrary surmounting of this aspect of our condition, that the human being is first of all subjected to having produced the cause of his desire in a danger that he does not know. To this is linked this supreme and magisterial tone with which there reverberates, and ceaselessly reverberates, at the heart of Sacred Scripture, despite its blasphematory aspect, the text which has remained from Ecclesiastes, and what gives it its tone, its accent, if not the fact that "All is vanity", vanity, what we translate in that way, is in Hebrew the following,, pronounced ruach, whose three radical letters I am writing for you and which means wind, or again breath, a mist, if you wish, something which is effaced, which leads us back to an ambiguity, I believe, more legitimate to evoke here, as regards the most abject aspect of this breath, than anything that Jones elaborated in connection with the conception of the Madonna through the ear.

This theme, this thematic of vanity, is indeed what gives its accent, its resonance, its ever present import to the Hegelian definition of this, of the original and fruitful struggle from which there begins the Phenomenology of the spirit, he tells us, of the fight to the death for pure prestige, he tells us, which has indeed the accent of meaning the fight for nothing.

To make the treatment of obsession turn around aggressivity, is, in an obvious and I might say avowed fashion - even if it is not deliberate - to introduce at its principle the subduction of the desire of the subject to the desire of the analyst, in so far as, (8) like every desire, it is articulated elsewhere than in its internal reference to o , this desire is identified to an ideal to which, in a necessary way, the desire of the patient will be bent, in so far as this ideal is the position that the analyst has obtained or believes he has obtained with respect to reality.

Now the o that is involved, marked thus as cause of desire, is not this vanity, nor this tearing apart. If it is indeed in its function what I am articulating, namely this object defined as a remainder, as that which is irreducible to symbolisation at the locus of the Other - which depends on it certainly, for otherwise how would this remainder be constituted - if o is the unique of existence in so far as it puts itself forward, not at all, as has been said, in its facticity - for this facticity is only situated in its reference to a so-called mythical noetic necessity, which itself is supposed to be posited as the primary reference - there is no facticity in this remainder in which there is rooted the desire which will manage, more or less, to culminate in existence.

The more or less extreme severity of its reduction, namely what makes it irreducible, and in which everyone can recognise the exact level to which it has raised itself at the locus of the Other, here is what is defined in this dialogue which is played out on a stage, from which the principle of this desire, after having mounted it, has to fall off it through the test of what it will have left there in a relationship of tragedy, or more often of comedy.

It is played out there, of course, as a role; but it is not the role that counts - and this we all know from experience and from previous certainty - but what remains beyond this role. A remainder that is precarious and delivered up no doubt, for I am always a cedable object, as everyone knows in our day: an object of exchange. And this object is the principle which makes me desire, which makes me the desirer of a lack which is not a lack of the subject, but a failure brought about in the jouissance which is situated at the level of the Other.

This is why every function of the o refers only to this central gap which separates desire from the locus of jouissance at the sexual level, which condemns us from this necessity which means that jouissance is not naturally promised to desire for us, that desire can only go out to meet it, that in order to meet it desire must not only understand, but break through the very phantasy which sustains it and constructs it, the one that we have discovered as this stopping point which is called castration anxiety. But why not castration desire, since at the central lack which disjoins desire and jouissance, there is also (9) suspended a desire whose threat to everyone is only constructed from its recognition in the desire of the Other. At the limit, the other, whoever he may be, appears in the phantasy to be the castrator, the agent of castration.

Undoubtedly here the positions are different and one can say that for the woman the position is more comfortable, the business is already done; and this indeed is what gives her a much more special link with the desire of the Other.

This indeed is also why Kierkegaard can say this singular and, I believe, profoundly correct thing that the woman is more anxiety-ridden than the man. How would this be possible, if precisely at

this central level anxiety was not constructed precisely, and as such, from the relationship to the desire of the Other.

Desire, in so far as it is desire of desire, namely temptation, is what at its heart brings us back to this anxiety in its most original function.

Anxiety, at the level of castration, represents the Other, since encountering a weakening of the apparatus gives us the object here in the form of a lack (carence).

Do I need to recall what in the analytic tradition, confirms here what I am in the process of articulating? Who is the one who gives us the first example of a castration, attracted, assumed, desired as such, if not Oedipus?

Oedipus is not first of all the father. This is what I have meant for a long time in pointing out ironically that Oedipus could not have had an Oedipus complex.

Oedipus is the one who wishes to pass authentically - and mythically also - to the fourth level, which I must indeed tackle along his exemplary path, the one who wishes to violate the prohibition concerning the conjunction of o - here (-J>) - with anxiety, the one who wishes to see what is beyond the most complete satisfaction of his desire. The sin of Oedipus, is the cupido sciendi, he wants to know. And this is paid for by the horror that I described, that what he finally sees are his own eyes, o, thrown on the ground.

Does this mean that this is the structure of the fourth level, and that there is always present somewhere this bloody ritual of blinding? No. It is not necessary - and this is why the human drama is not tragedy, but comedy: they have eyes in order not to see - it is not necessary for them to tear them out. (10) Anxiety is sufficiently rejected, miscognised by the simple capture of the specular image, i(o), for which the best that can be wished is that it is reflected in the eyes of the Other. But there is no need even, because there is the mirror.

And here the articulation according to the table of reference that I described the last time for you: the inhibition, symptom, anxiety of the fourth level, here is more or less how I would describe it:

- At the level of inhibition, it is the desire not to see which, given the arrangement of phenomena, scarcely needs to be sustained. Everything is satisfactory there. Miscognition as structural at the level of the "not to see" is there.

- On the second line and on the third, as dismay, as ego-ideal, namely that which of the Other is, as they say, is the easiest to introject. Of course, it is not at all without reason that this term introjection is introduced here; nevertheless I would ask you not to accept it without reservation. For in truth the ambiguity which remains between this introjection and projection,

sufficiently indicates to us that it is necessary, in order to give its full meaning to the term introjection, to introduce another level at the heart of the central "symptom" of this level as it is specially incarnated at the level of the obsessional that I already designated: it is the phantasy of omnipotence correlative to the fundamental impotence to sustain this desire not to see.

Here what we will put at the level of acting-out, is the function of mourning, in so far as I am going to ask you to recognise in a moment what in the course of last year I taught you to see in it, a fundamental structure in the constitution of desire.

Here at the level of the passage a l'acte, a phantasy of suicide whose character and authenticity are to be put in question essentially within this dialectic.

Here anxiety always in so far as it is masked.

Here at the level of embarrassment what we will legitimately call - for I do not know if enough account is taken of the audacity of what Kierkegaard contributes in speaking about the concept of anxiety; what can that mean, if not the affirmation that: either there is the function of the concept according to Hegel, namely somewhere symbolically a veritable (11) hold on the real, or the only hold that we have - and this is where it is necessary to choose - is the one that anxiety gives us, the only final apprehension as such of all reality. The concept of anxiety as such only arises therefore at the limit of a meditation which nothing indicates to us is not going to encounter its stopping-point very soon.

I	Desire not to see	Impotence	Concept of anxiety
S	Miscognition (desire not to know)	Omnipotence	Suicide
A	Ideal	Mourning	Anxiety

But what matters for us, is to rediscover here the confirmation of truths that we have already tackled from other angles. What does Freud articulate at the end of his speculation about anxiety, if not this: "After all", he says, "I have just told you, put forward, about the relationships between anxiety and the loss of the object, what is it that can distinguish it from mourning?" And this whole codicil, this appendix to his article - you can consult it - only marks the most extreme embarrassment in defining the fashion in which one can understand that these two functions, to which he gives the same reference, have such diverse manifestations.

I would ask you here to dwell with me for a moment on what I think I ought to remind you of, that what our interrogation here

led us to when we were speaking about Hamlet as an eminent dramatic personage, as emergence at the dawn of modern ethics of the relationship of the subject to his desire, what I highlighted that it is at once the absence of mourning - and simply and properly speaking of mourning by his mother - which made there vanish, dissipate, collapse in the most radical way in him the possible elan of a desire in this being who is presented to us moreover well enough, I believe, for one or other person to have recognised him, even identified to the very style of the hero of the Renaissance, Baldassare Castiglione, for example. Do I need to remind you of him: he is the personage about whom the least that can be said is that he does not retreat before very much, and that he does not lack daring! The only thing that he cannot do, is precisely the act that he is made to do, because the desire is lacking, the desire is lacking because the ideal has collapsed. What can be more doubtful in the words of Hamlet than this sort of idolatrous relationship that he outlines of the reverence of his father, of his father for this creature whom we are astonished that this supreme king, the old Hamlet, the dead Hamlet, literally bows down before to pay her homage, ensconced in his loving allegiance? Do we not have here the signs even of (12) something too forced, something too exalted, not to be of the order of an unique love, of a mythical love, of a love akin to this style of what I called courtly love, which, outside its properly cultural and ritual references, through which it is obvious that it is addressed to something other than the woman, is the sign on the contrary of some lack or other, of some alibi or other, before the difficult paths that the access to a true love represents.

The correspondence between the animal evasion of the maternal Gertrude from this whole dialectic, and the overvaluation which is presented to us in Hamlet's memories about the attitude of his father is obvious here; and the result, is that, when this ideal is contradicted, when it collapses - let us notice it - what disappears in Hamlet is the power of desire which will not, as I showed you, be restored until the vision outside of a mourning, a true one, with which he enters into competition, that of Laertes for his sister, for the object loved by Hamlet, and from whom he had found himself suddenly, through lack of desire, separated.

Does this not open the door for us, does it not give us the key which allows us to articulate better than Freud does and along the line of his own interrogation what is meant by mourning. Freud points out to us that the subject of mourning has to perform a task which is, in a way, to consummate a second time the loss provoked by the accident of the destiny of the beloved object.

What does that mean? Does the work of mourning not appear to us, in a light that is at once identical and contrary, as the work which is done to maintain, to sustain all these links in detail. And God knows how much Freud insists, and quite rightly, on the scrupulous and detailed aspect of the remembering of mourning concerning everything that was experienced in terms of a link with the beloved object.

It is this link that must be restored with the fundamental object, the masked object, the object o, the veritable object of the relationship, for which subsequently a substitute may be provided which will not have, when all is said and done, any more importance than the one who first occupied the place.

As one of you, a humorist, said to me during one of our Journees Provinciales, there is a story well designed to show us in the cinema that any "irreplaceable German" whatsoever - he was alluding to the adventure that is described for us in the film Hiroshima mon amour - this irreplaceable German can find an (13) immediate and perfectly valid substitute in the first Japanese encountered at the street corner.

The problem of mourning is that of the persistence of what? The bonds through which desire is suspended, not at all on the object o at the fourth level, but on i(o) through which every love, in so far as this term implies the idealised dimension that I have spoken of, is structured narcissistically.

And this is what makes the difference between what happens in melancholy and mania. If we do not distinguish the object o from i(o), we cannot conceive of what Freud, in the same note, recalls and powerfully articulates, just as in the well-known article on "Mourning and melancholia", about the radical difference there is between melancholia and mourning.

Do I need to refer to my notes and to remind you of this pass.-: where, after having become engaged in the notion of the return, of the reversion of the supposedly "objectal" libido onto the subject's own ego, he admits: in melancholia, it is obvious that this process - he is the one who says it - does not reach a conclusion, the object overcomes its direction, it is the object that triumphs. And since what is involved as a return of the libido in mourning is something different, it is also for that reason that the whole process, that the whole dialectic is constructed differently, namely that this object o, Freud tells us that it is necessary then, - and why in this case? I am leaving it to one side here - it is necessary then that the subject explain himself, but that, since this object o is usually masked behind the i(o) of narcissism, that the i(o) of narcissism is there so that, at the fourth level, the o should be masked, miscognised in its essence, this is what makes it necessary for the melancholic to pass, as I might say, through his own image, and to attack it first in order to reach in this object o, which transcends it, the thing whose control escapes him, the thing whose collapse will lead him into precipitation, suicide, with this automatism, this mechanism, this necessary and fundamentally alienated character with which as you know the suicides of melancholies are carried out, and not in an indifferent context: and if this happens so often by a window, if not through a window, this is not by chance, it is the recourse to a structure which is none other than the one that I emphasise as being that of the phantasy.

We can only grasp this relationship to o, through which there is

distinguished everything that belongs to the "mania-melancholy" cycle, everything that belongs to the "ideal", the reference "mourning or desire", in the accentuation of the difference of (14) the function of o as compared to i(o), as compared to something which makes this reference to o fundamental, radical, more rooting for the subject than any other relationship whatsoever, but also as fundamentally miscognised, alienated, in the narcissistic relationship.

Let us say right away, in passing, that in mania, it is the non-function of o, and not simply its miscognition that is at stake. It is the something through which the subject is no longer ballasted by any o, which delivers him, sometimes without any possibility of freedom, to the infinite and purely playful metonymy of the signifying chain.

This - no doubt I have here avoided many things - this is going to allow us to conclude, at the level where this year I intend to leave you. If desire, as such, and in its most alienated, most fundamentally phantastical character, is what characterises the fourth level, you can remark that if I initiated the structure of the fifth, that if I indicated that at this level the o is resharpened, this time openly alienated, as support of the desire of the Other, who this time is named, it is also to tell you why I will stop this year at this term.

The whole dialectic in effect of what is happening at the level of this fifth level implies a more detailed articulation than has ever been carried out with what I designated earlier as introjection, which implies as such - I was content to only indicate it - the auditory dimension, which implies also the paternal function.

If, next year, things turn out in a way that allows me to continue my Seminar along the path I anticipate, it is around, not simply the name, but the names of the father that I will make a rendezvous with you.

It is not for nothing that in the Freudian myth the father intervenes in the most obviously mythical way as being the one whose desire submerges, crushes, is imposed on, all the others. Is there not here an obvious contradiction with this fact obviously given by experience that through his voice it is precisely something quite different that takes place, namely the normalisation of desire along the paths of the law?

But is that everything? Necessity itself, alongside what is here traced, represented, rendered tangible by experience, and even down to the facts frequently weighed by us about the absence (carance) of the function of the father, does the necessity of maintaining the myth not draw our attention to something else, to the necessity for the articulation, for the support, for the maintaining of a function which is the following, which is that the father, in the manifestation of his desire, knows for his part to what o this desire is referred. The father is not causa sui, in accordance with the religious myth, but a subject who has

gone far enough in the realisation of his desire to integrate it to its cause whatever it may be, to what is irreducible in this function of o qua - I ask you to grasp - what allows us to articulate, at the origin of our research itself and without avoiding it in any way, that there is no human subject who does not have to posit himself as a finite object to which are appended finite desires, which only take on the appearance of becoming infinite in so far as by escaping from one another always further from their centre, they carry the subject always away further from any authentic realisation.

Now this relationship, this miscognition of o, is something which leaves a door open. We have always known it, there was no need even for analysis to show it to us, since I believe I was able to show it to you in a dialogue of Plato, The Symposium. The object o, in so far as at the term - a term no doubt never achieved - it is our most radical existence, is the only path along which desire can deliver us that in which we will have to recognise ourselves, this object o is to be situated as such in the field of the Other, and not only is it to be situated there, but it is situated there by each and every one. And this is what is called the possibility of transference.

The interpretation that we give is always brought to bear on the greater or lesser dependence of desires with respect to one another. But it is not a confrontation of anxiety. There is only an overcoming of anxiety when the Other has named himself. There is no love except that for a name, as everyone knows from experience. And the moment that the name is pronounced of him or of her to whom our love is addressed, we know very well that it is a threshold which is of the greatest importance.

This is only a trace, a trace of this something which goes from the existence of o to its passage into history. What makes of a psychoanalysis a unique adventure is this search for the agalma in the field of the Other. I have often questioned you about what the desire of the analyst should be in order that, there where we are trying to push things beyond the limit of anxiety, work is possible.

Undoubtedly it is fitting that the analyst should be one who has been able, however little it may be, from some angle, from some tack, to make his desire sufficiently enter into this irreducible o to offer to the question of the concept of anxiety a real guarantee.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 23 June 1965

Our last meeting for this year. I wanted it to be one of the seminars described as closed, namely, this moment or this place where I manifested, this year, the desire to hear, in short, a certain number of eventual responses to what I was led to put forward to you in my lectures.

It is an enterprise which has not revealed itself, this year, to be too risky. Nevertheless, we have almost, for this last meeting, not perhaps all that I was expecting from certain people who had expressly manifested the desire to be present by speaking at one of my seminars of this year, but found themselves, as happens to psychoanalysts, always very busy, and caught for time.

Good. With that, point I had a pleasant surprise. There was brought to me, at the last minute, a text on a book which, as you are going to see, seems to me to be very very important. You will see why it seems to me to be very important. It is not only because I could talk to you about it very relevantly as relating to certain reference (2) points that I think I very clearly elucidated before you, this year, concerning what is called desire.

And then, subsequently, you will have an intervention from someone you have already heard who forms part of this new stratum always ready to go into battle when perhaps older people take things more slowly.

So then, I am going to give the floor, without delaying any longer, to the person who is going to give you her commentary on this work whose name I will not take the freshness off before she speaks about it. It is Madame Montrelay who was kind enough to give me this pleasant surprise.

Madame Montrelay: On this eve of vacation, perhaps it is not too frivolous to suggest to those of you who have not already done so, to read Marguerite Duras' last novel, *The ravishing of Lol V Stein*. This book appeared last year, and was not always favourably welcomed by the critics. They reproached her for an excessively enigmatic subtlety. One finds there, in fact, the usual style of Marguerite Duras: a slow rhythm, an ambiguity of texture, a passionate understanding of words and also of the heart. *The ravishing of Lol V Stein* goes in the same direction as the preceding narratives by (3) Marguerite Duras, in its search for a lost moment. This instant, which occurs completely by chance, fascinates the principal character of the narrative -

remember the scenario of *Hiroshima mon amour* - it fascinates him because it is there that his certainty is inscribed.

This certainty is extremely tangible, moreover, in the style of Marguerite Duras which irritates a lot of people, which is quite comprehensible because it insists the more it slips away. It seems to coincide with memory or rather what Jacques Lacan calls a memory (*une mémoire*).

If I evoke this last term it is not in order to note, purely and simply, that it constitutes the mainspring of the novel. This affirmation is just as true of the works of Proust, Butor, Simon and so many others. It is perhaps truer than about the works of Marguerite Duras where memory does not constitute so much the mainspring as the object of the narrative, which is curiously spoken by another. I mean that it appears here with a particular clarity that it is the desiring discourse of the other that we are living, with the subject Lol V Stein, the event which holds her prisoner.

It goes without saying that this novel is the nth narrative which has been made in the third person. What is surprising is that the unaccustomed relief of the first person who speaks about the third, this relief is in a third dimension in which the subject Lol emerges infinitely more present, more disturbing, than one can account for, by the unique use of the first person. These dimensions which Jacques Lacan has designated for us this year, to which I just alluded, particularly what was named by him last week, the dialectic of the relationship with the other *qua* relationship of alienation, these dimensions even structure Marguerite Duras' novel which it is time for me to summarise for you.

Lola Valerie Stein, nineteen years old, American, on the point of marrying, is suddenly separated at the end of a ball, not from her fiancé, Michael Richardson, but from the couple formed by her fiancé and Anne Marie Stretter, these two having, in the course of the ball, having recognised one another in a passion that is as sudden as it is definitive.

This, I think, is how things ought to be said. Lol, who has seen the couple beginning to fall in love by the simple - I borrow this term from Serge Leclair - circuit of the look, looks on, for her part also she does not intend to stop looking.

We must underline right away the strangeness of Lol's character, indifferent, absent, here is the first presentation that is given of her by her friend. At college, she says, I was not the only one to think it, there was already something missing in Lol for her to (5) be "there", she says. "She gave the impression of of being in a state of passive boredom, putting up with a person she knew she was supposed to be but whom she forgot at the slightest occasion. A miracle of sweetness but also of indifference." (3)

If Lol V Stein is so indifferent it is naturally because she does not clearly distinguish between herself and her surroundings. Anne-Marie Stretter, who appears on the contrary to be perfectly well defined, sure of herself, allows Lol, I

imagine, to make the distinction, thanks to her, the distinction between a woman, this woman who is Lol V Stein and the desire of Michael Richardson.

This desire takes on for Lol, a significant value that was unsuspected up to then, even though she no longer loves her fiancé. Lol V Stein suffers the mark of this signifier in the shape of her forgetting. Lol's forgetting, its negation, are going to constitute her delight at being finally in the presence of the couple and her own presence or the present of presence, if I can invert in that way a formula that Heidegger gives for anxiety, in order to illustrate the opposite, namely, satisfaction, where the present of presence takes an absolute value which represents the dead time of the ball, walled in, it is written, in its nocturnal light.

But more again than what we are told about the multiple aspects of the ball, what holds Lol is its ending, more precisely again the moment when she has just perceived the dawn while they do not know it yet.

(6) At that moment, Lol senses in terror that something is going to happen, that “it is going to happen”. And if I take up the terms recently quoted by Jacques Lacan, it is because they seem perfectly to express in their ambiguity the event that is sensed by Lol of her body as a waste scrap, or rather the becoming of her body as a waste scrap, a remainder, rejected more by the dawn than by the couple.

I take up this passage with more detail: “she knows,” writes Marguerite Duras, and she adds a little bit further on “they do not yet”, “at this precise moment, something ought to have been attempted which was not” (37). This was Lol's temptation: strengthened by the knowledge of which she possesses the privilege for a brief moment, she senses herself on the point of using it, first to circumscribe, to perpetuate, this common fascination, which would be still possible if we were to suppose that Lol discovers for herself a sudden incantatory power.

But this is not the essential. What Lol desires, in the possession of her brief and fragile knowledge, is to be able to say why, really, the couple flees. And this is absolutely impossible.

If the words existed, to circumscribe what is being manifested, played out, before her about the reality of sex, the couple would remain. Lol is sure of it and we also participate in this certainty. We are totally suspended on it for a brief instant. We are (7) nostalgic for it.

I cannot read here the two splendid pages which lead us to this moment. I will content myself with quoting this expression of regret, this mourning of Lol:

“I like to believe - since I love her - that if Lol is silent in her daily life, it is because she believed for a fleeting moment, that this word might exist. It would have been an absence-word, a hole-word whose centre would have been hollowed out into a hole, the kind of hole in which all the other words would have been buried.” (38) Lol is very well aware that she is not able to articulate this word.

So Marguerite Duras continues in the same vein:

“It would have been impossible to utter it, but it would have been made to reverberate. Enormous, endless, an empty gong, it would have held back anyone who wanted to leave, it would have convinced them of the impossible, it would have made them deaf to any other word save that one, in one fell swoop it would have defined the future and the moment themselves.” “What can convince us of the impossible, who can say the truth about reality, beginning with that of sex”, Jacques Lacan asked a little while ago, “if not God. But God is absent.”

“Lol”, continues Marguerite Duras, “is not yet God, nor anyone” (39) Issuing from the absence of a word, from the absence of God, there remains nothing more than the body of Lol, horrible, terrible to sustain, the **o**-object which it is going to be henceforth (8) necessary to abolish. How can one tackle that? By ensuring that the throw of the dice which was Lol’s first forgetting is renewed but makes, as one might say, two blows from one stone. The forgetting of Lol by a real couple, must coincide with the abolition of her body experienced as **o**-object.

Then alone will this event be the arrival of the ravishing of Lol V Stein. And this in both senses of the term. The way in which Lol V Stein imposes on the reality of the beings who surround her the grid of her phantasy which is none other than the reconstitution on the rebound of the first chance, I will tell you later.

We will now make a few remarks, first of all in connection with this **o**-object as it appears in the course of the narrative. The first is that it constitutes in Marguerite Duras, as in Flaubert, Maupassant and also in the new novel, this tangible, palpable, material of the narrative which only properly speaking becomes an event through the intervention of the desire of the other.

In *The ravishing of Lol V Stein*, the object is the body, the look, but it is above all the missing word which, because it is lacking, does not exist any the less and in the most horrible fashion from the moment that its existence is raised, put in question. This word as hole, this hole of flesh, this “bloody incompleteness”, I quote, “this dead dog on the beach”(38), how many times already has it resonated in your ears, this word is, Lol.

(9) Lola, such a feminine first name with its final little “a”, and its sexed character. It harmonises in a curious fashion with the little bit of Valerie that remains, a “V”, and the brief density of the surname.

Dr Lacan: Madame Montrelay, do you think you would have the courage to take the plunge. What you have so well picked out in this work and in this text, try to get it across with your notes of course to sustain you, which are not notes, but a text, but without reading this text, because I think all the same that, not that it is not getting across, but that it has less impact than if you were to say, improvise, tell us the same thing as you are absolutely capable of doing, because I believe that it is important

Madame Montrelay: I have not prepared an improvisation.

Dr Lacan: Do not improvise but say what you have to say. In short, it is a question of something which might be a hisstory, a psychological history, namely, that one could in effect go back to the childhood of Lol V Stein. The originality of this is diminished by the fact that you know the American usage of giving in the form of an initial, to represent the presence of a second fore name in the form of an initial.

(10) The first name is a shortened name, its Lola. This Lol V Stein is absolutely not psychology, I mean people speak about her in terms of what was already strange about her, but the important thing is what happens to her at a moment given as unique, upon which she remains, one could say from outside if we were doing psychology, she remains hooked. She remains hooked up to the fact that one fine evening, with her then fiancé, it happens that a third person, a charming woman enters, the fiancé looks at her, and the affair is settled, they will leave together at the end of the evening, and everything happens really in full sight not just of Lol, but of everyone.

Everything that happens in the rest of Lol V Stein's life and specifically what is reported to us, what is reported to us by a narrator whom we do not know. There is a moment when in the middle of the book, the distance is covered and the narrator unveils himself, the distance is covered, it is I. He is the one who is speaking and who rejoins his own entry into the life of Lol V Stein.

What is going to happen with this character, how this character is encountered, is something which manifests the state in which Lol V Stein has remained in connection with this traumatic scene. What she is, essentially, after that, is what Madame Montrelay is going to try to explain to you. What I was able to say this year about the (11) subject and his supports is here truly illustrated, illustrated in a fashion which does not for a single instant have structuralist or analytic pretensions, simply by stating things with the words that best illuminate it. It emerges that the very structure is written there. Earlier, Madame Montrelay read a text to you where there is this word hole for example. That is in the text. There are many other things in the text which is a text which seems, without our having done anything, Marguerite Duras and I, to meet, they are texts that are congruent with the very theme of what I put forward to you this year.

Take it up again, as you are able, and speak a little bit louder, with a little bit more rhythm. And if you can, leave your text. I would be very happy with that. Because you have certainly more than one thing to say. Or indeed read the pieces from Marguerite Duras when necessary: it is absolutely necessary that this should get across.

Madame Montrelay: The best way is perhaps is if I read first what I have here and afterwards we will see....

I was saying then that this object was a word, it was Lol. I was also saying that Lola had lost the a of Lola, that it had lost its sexed character and made her

anonymous. But that, on the contrary, I believe that I have not yet said that with Lol V Stein, you have a mouthful.

(12) In fact we find in this verbal sequence, the characteristics, it seem to me, which were underlined by Serge Leclair in connection with this secret formula of poord'jeli. These characteristics seem to me to be the following:

- 1) The brevity with which there arises the formula which renders well the apparition of a nothing-at-all-something that we have previously encountered,
- 2) The acme, figured in an inverted form in the V in the centre, a fork, an incomplete triangle,
- 3) The natural reversion as regards the word Lol where the front is the same as the back but precisely, then, can we speak about reversion? It is something different.
- 4) The magical character of this formula, magical at least in the way it appears in the novel because it represents the master word that Lol should have said in order to close for ever the circuit of sense.

These are only suppositions. Nevertheless if, as Marguerite Duras underlines, Lol, when she pronounces a proper name, is incapable of naming - I can find the quotation later - it is quite possible that this present-absent word, far from sustaining here the symbolic order, only serves to want to justify the inexplicable, namely, the mystery of birth.

We will note, secondly, and very briefly, the ambiguity, the incoherence, with which (13) there is manifested in the narrative the femininity of Lol. It is tempting to think that Lol, counting for nothing, forgotten by the couple, apparently not desired by her parents, ceaselessly repeats this experience because this would allow her to articulate for someone else, but especially for herself, her enigmatic femininity.

One is struck in this novel by the absence of reference points, the rarity of phallic signifiers, it seems that Lol's sexuality is situated well on this hither side of an oedipal structure, in this relationship to the void that was evoked by Perrier and one of his collaborators in volume VII of *La psychanalyse*.

But before ending this presentation, it is perhaps necessary for us to give a glimpse of the rest of the novel. Lol V Stein, after the ball, after the crisis, the time of madness which follows it, gets married, has three children and lives in conformity to norms, in a small American town.

After ten years of marriage she returns to her native town and in the course of these afternoons where tirelessly she walks her body as one would walk a child, she encounters a couple, another one, made up of her old friend and a man whom she lays claim to, whom she decides to love in the most bizarre fashion.

(14) In fact, this man was to forget her as often, as absolutely as possible with a woman who is and who must above all be considered by him as possessing the

fullness of femininity. That this woman had also attended the ball which is also her ball, is of course, for her, an essential condition for the charm of things.

The lover of Tatiana now tries to decipher, bit by bit, this immense phantasy conceived by Lol V Stein, for reasons that are now easy to locate. "I desperately want", he declares, "to be part of the word which emerges from the lips of Lol V Stein, I want to be part of this lie that she has forged. Let her bear me with her, let our affair take from this point forth, a different course, let her consume and crush me with the rest, I shall bend to her will, let my hope be crushed with the rest, to be bent to her will" (97).

This is what Jack Hold, the narrator, accepts to do. To meet Tatiana in a hotel near the town while Lol V Stein lying in a field of rye looks, looks. Looks at what? The lovers who at first pass sometimes near the window, and afterwards, naturally, nothing. At the window the forgetting of Lol V Stein that Jack Hold tries to bring about for the greater satisfaction of the trio. What secret plan has taken hold of Marguerite Duras which led her to construct a story that is so frightening, so mad, so logically illogical in its smallest details?

(15) It is here that we must make a third series of remarks in connection with the use of persons in the narrative, particularly the unaccustomed, unusual breadth which was given to the first person, that of Jack Hold.

There follows first of all:

First remark: In the measure that our unique knowledge is established in a desire, a desire itself caught up in the net of a phantasy, that this knowledge is never fixed, always relative, possibility, one story among others. This is the way I believe certain contemporary musical works present themselves, those of Stockhausen for example.

Second remark: The desire of the other conditions the space of the novel, in other words its structure, a space open to all the winds where the desire of the one, let us say outside, can intersect at every point that of the other, supposed to be inside. How can the desire of the one be sutured to the desire of the other. It is in function of the *o*-object but we are going to find that later.

Third remark: It would have been absolutely impossible to account for the subject Lol, to make her emerge in this quality of being, of truth, which sometimes leave you breathless, in other words it would have been impossible to grasp Lol at the zero point of her desire if it were not in the discourse of the desire of the other.

Fourth remark: This subject we grasp, well on the hither side of the *cogito*. Nothing (16) of it is ever formulated in the form of the one, of the unique. Here is what her lover says about it: "That was my initial discovery about her: to know nothing about Lol V Stein was already to know her. One could, it seemed to me, know even less about her, less and less about Lol V Stein" (72).

Let it be said in passing that this definition of love is not so bad, it seems to me. But what interests us here is that this cloudy, insipid subject, who has no ideas,

who has not a single one, is the only subject of the novel who thinks she can manoeuvre her world, tracking, manipulating the couple of lovers into what kind of situations I will later say.

The fact is that the subject is to be grasped in a perpetual division between the desire of the other and the **o**-object. Here she is anew this object, more present than ever in the second part of the novel. These eyes fixed wide open, which devour, absorb, decide about everything, this immense look lost in the bristling of the straw in a field of rye, is this **o**-object which fascinates Jack Hold, which draws him into the phantasy, into her phantasy, or into the phantasy of the novel.

What Lacan told us, I believe, last week. I quote him textually: "It is in so far as I am the **o**-object that my desire is the desire of the other".

So then, in this narrative, the third person is made the first, the first is to be taken as (17) the third. An operation of syntax, of desire, that certain novels of the eighteenth century depicted, I am thinking in particular of *Aux égarements du coeur et de l'esprit* by Crébillon the younger "For a while, the marquise was ejected, leaving at five o'clock".

The new novel, to be located since Flaubert operates between the one who speaks and the luxuriance, the proliferation of the object, an interval, a lack, a pause, a silence which is the subject. Let us make no mistake about it, Marguerite Duras, who knows how to make silence heard, also speaks in the third person.

Dr Lacan: You have just heard a very important and very interesting text. We will try to arrange for you to have it. Is there here, I know that already, among people close to me, there are several people who have not allowed this text of Marguerite Duras to escape them. If they want to give an opinion now on what they have heard, I would be satisfied.

Does someone have something to say about it now? To give you the tone of the novel, I am going to read for you a little piece of the central chapter that I have chosen. I think it will be clear enough, in so far as the voice of the person who has spoken here has reached you, to be clear enough as regards the texture, the texture of (18) the novel for this chapter to take on its value.

The young girl, the young woman in question married rather quickly a very altruistic type of chap, who had, in a way, taken her under his protection as a sort of waif.

After ten years this waif has survived rather well and has come back to her native place, to her hometown which is called South Tahla, of which one could have warned her as regards the dangers that it presented for her, specifically as regards what are called memories that it is necessary to avoid for people for who are suffering from a bereavement, lives again in this town and it is there that, wandering around one day, she is going to meet someone who had already announced himself at the horizon of her vision, one could not say in a meeting, he entered into the field of her window, it is the narrator, at the same time he is the entity, the typical lover, but he is also someone she follows, who is there, the one

who is going to take the place of the hole, of this gap, around which, in short, her whole being as subject is organised.

Following him, having met him on the street, she waits for what he is waiting, namely, the woman with whom she has a presentiment, she presumes he has an appointment.

“She did in fact arrive, she descended from a bus crowded with people on their way home from work.

The moment she heads towards him, with that very slow, very gentle, circular movement of her hips which makes her at every step, the object of some secret, ceaseless, caressing self-flattery, as soon as Lol sees the black mass of dry, mist-like (19) with the tiny, white, triangular face beneath, that face dominated completely by those very large, very bright eyes, gravely disturbed by their ineffable remorse at belonging to this adulterous body. Lol admits that she recognised Tatiana Karl”, namely the woman who was the witness of the initial scene. Then and then only she believes the name that had been hovering on the edge of her consciousness for weeks was there: Tatiana Karl.

She was discreetly dressed in a casual black suit. But her hair was done with great care, there was a gray flower in it, she had pinned it up with gold combs. She had taken great care to fix the fragile hair-do with a long, wide, black hair band which, where it passed close to her face, framed her bright eyes, made them look even larger, even more sorrowful, and this hair-do, which would have been destroyed by the lightest exposure to the wind, which in fact a mere look would undo, she must have - Lol is speculating now - she must have had to imprison in a dark hair net so that, at the proper moment, he would be the only one who could breach and destroy its admirable artificiality, one single movement of his hand would bathe her in its fallen tresses, that marvellous head of hair which, suddenly, Lol remembers and sees again, luminously juxtaposed to this one.”

Then she sees them meeting one another : “They were walking a step apart and (20) scarcely spoke.

I think I can see what Lol V Stein must have seen:

There is between them an incredible contact which does not stem from any intimate knowledge but on the contrary from a disdain for such knowledge. They have the same expression of silent consternation, of fright, of profound indifference. They go more quickly as they approach their destination. Lol V Stein spies, watches, invents these lovers. Their way they look does not deceive her. They do not love one another. What is there for her to say? Others will say it, she would say it differently. But she does not speak. Other bonds hold them in a grip which is not that of feeling nor of happiness, it is something else which gives neither pain nor joy. They are neither sad nor happy. Their union is constructed upon indifference, in a way which is general and which they apprehend moment by moment. All preference is banished from it. They are together, two trains which meet and pass. Around them the landscape, sensuous and lushly green is

the same. They see it. They are not alone. One could deal with them. By opposite paths, they have arrived at the same result as Lol V Stein. They by doing, saying, trying, deceiving themselves, going away and coming back, lying, losing, winning, advancing, by coming back again, and Lol for her part by doing nothing” (49-52).

(21) This is where she follows them to this place which is the hotel, the hotel in the town where everyone is secure to conceal their clandestine loves. Lol knows this hotel because she went there in her youth with her lover who has abandoned her, Michael Richardson. She has no doubt come there sometimes during her walks. It is there that Michael Richardson had sworn his oath of love to her.

“The memory of the winter afternoon has become bogged down also in forgetfulness, in the slow daily glaciation of South Tahla” - this is the name of the town - “beneath her feet.” It is she then, it is she who from there has gone on to the famous scene at the casino which tore from her the one who remained subsequently for her entire life this hole, this hole in the place of which there is no longer anything more than the trace of a lie. This is where they come to.

“I see how she gets there: Very quickly she reaches the field of rye, lets herself slip into it, finds herself sitting, stretches out on it. Before her there is this lighted window but Lol is far from the light.

The idea of what she is doing does not cross her mind. I believe again that it is the first time, that she is there without the faintest idea of being there, if she were questioned, she would say that she was resting there from the fatigue of getting there. From the fatigue that will follow, returning from there. Living, dying she breaths deeply; that evening the air is like honey, cloyingly sweet. She does not ask herself the source of this marvellous weakness which made her lie down in this field; she lets it act on her, fill her up to suffocation, lull her gently until Lol V Stein is fast asleep.

The rye rustles beneath her loins. The young rye of early summer. With her eyes riveted to the lighted window a woman sees the void, knotting, devouring this existing, invisible spectacle, the light of a room where others are.

In the distance with fairy-like fingers the memory of a certain recollection flits past. It grazes Lol a little while after she has lain down in the field, and it shows her at this late hour of the evening a field of rye, this woman who looks at a little rectangular window, a narrow stage, circumscribed as a stone where no actor has yet appeared. And perhaps Lol is afraid - but ever so little - of the eventuality of a still greater separation from the others. She knows all the same that some would fight, they would go running home once a residue of reason made them surprise themselves in this field. But it is the last fear that Lol has learned, the one that others will have in her place that evening. They would bravely destroy it in their breasts, but she quite the contrary, cherishes it, tames it, caresses it, with her hands on the rye.

The horizon on the other side of the hotel had lost all its colour. Night is falling. The shadow of a man crosses the rectangle of light, once and then a second time, in the opposite direction.” (53-55)

(23) And it is there that she follows in the form of this shadow theatre all the goings on of the lovers.

The end, her return to her own house, her husband is in the street. He is waiting for her, alarmed.

“She lies, she is believed. The love that Lol had experienced for Michael Richardson was for her husband the surest guarantee of his wife’s fidelity. She could not find a second time a man who had the measure of the one from Town Beach. Or she would have had to invent him. But she invented nothing, her husband believed.” (57)

You see that the dimensions and the register around which Marguerite Duras operates do not lack some side-long humour.

As regards what here is demonstrated and what can be shown, it is precisely in so far as this being, Lol V Stein, around whom one could recall many of the themes of this year up to and including, as was done earlier, the function of the usage of the proper name which is articulated on several occasions and at several special points of this book with, apparently, God knows, a pertinence which might after all be the object of interrogation if we did not know, through our work this year, the profound consistency of this function of the proper name with everything that is involved in the (24) seat, in this central seat of the subject in so far as she is represented here in the most articulated way by the word hole, by the missing word, the hole-word: either the hole-word - and that it is in the measure that this being, this being designated by this proper name which is the title of the novel by Marguerite Duras, this being is only really specified, incarnated, personified in her novel in the measure that she exists in the form of this core object, this o-object of this something which exists as a look but which is a look, a look that has been set aside, an object-look, a look that we see on several occasions, of course, being renewed on this stage, punctuated, repeated on several occasions up to the end of the novel. Even when she has got to know this man, that she has approached, that she has literally hooked herself onto, as if she were rejoining here this subject divided from herself, the one who alone can support her, who is also in the novel the one who supports her, it is the narrative of this subject that makes her present, the only subject here is this object, this isolated object, this object by itself, in a way, exiled, proscribed, fallen at the horizon of the fundamental scene, which is this pure look that Lola Valerie Stein is, and it is nevertheless, in the novel, the only subject, the one around which there is sustained and turns and exists all the others and that is why the remark that was addressed to you earlier about this sort of sharp turn of the novel, from the old traditional novel, the one that was very prettily (25) illustrated for you by the theme extracted from Crébillon the younger, and also of the novel for the concierge, “the marquise went out at five o’clock,” that from which a certain novel, at a certain moment excluded the rule and style in showing us that things should never be introduced, vivified except in the form of

some monologue with which the ferret was passed from one to the other of the protagonists of the novel, it is here that one finds, in the form no doubt of a character who speaks in the third person, but who is the omnipresent character, the one who slips, who passes, who sees things in a way from the outside, contrary to the principle of Politzer, speaks and recounts the narrative in the third person. It is precisely in the measure that this is done that it allows there to be presentified somewhere the object in the form of an object, of a fallen object, of a detached object, of a waste scrap, to be that which is the essential being that we see that we see being incarnated with a degree of presence in a novel that to my eyes, to the eyes I think of those who have already read it, and to the eyes of those who have yet to read it, in the most intense form, what deserves to be called a subjectivity.

This is what, in short, you have been introduced to by what Madame Montrelay was good enough to prepare for you. If someone has a word to say on it, let him say it right away.

(26) **Dr Green:** Can you remind me of the name Jack Hold? How is it written?

Dr Lacan: H.O.L.D.

Dr Green: Good then, we have Lol V (alerie) Stein.

and then we have Michael Richardson and
then we have Tatiana Karl
Jack Hold.

It is simply some remarks which came to me precisely on the function of the proper name and of the incidence here, all the same, of certain signifiers which are repeated here. The missing “a” here cannot all the same escape the exceptional reduplication of this “a” three times in the first name of Tatiana and precisely also in her family name, constituting the central vowel of that name.

This then is already a first element which it is worth while pinpointing. On the other hand, between Richardson and the Karl we have also something which creates a correspondence; these two fragments of two phonemes in the bonds that unite the two protagonists.

What is lacking here already can be located at the level of the first name, at the level of the “a” which is precisely the syllable amputated from the first name Lola. The “a” I is found again here, on the one hand at the level of this “a” we see that it corresponds in Karl with the name of Richardson, and one could obviously ask oneself the measure in (27) which this ending on a sound which obviously implies the birth of a link of filiation.

Finally, obviously, this central vowel of the name Hold being precisely what remains preserved of what is amputated at the level of Lola ought also to attract our attention.

These are some remarks which perhaps it seemed to me could be an object of an investigation for what was presented to us in the course precisely about subjectivity, in the course

Madame Montrelay: There is one thing that I did not say also in connection with Lol, which is that written in lower case letters that gives 1 0 1.

Dr Lacan: Good, so then Jacques-Alain, over to you old chap. You are entering the arena with a little delay. So off you go. In fact I think you are all going to read this little novel during the vacation. You can read it in two and a half hours but then you have to re-read it twenty times. Announce your subject because I did not announce it earlier.

Mr Miller: My only task is to present to you a text which appeared in *Diogenes*, under the title of *Psychoanalysis in America*, by Norman Zinberg, a text that Jacques Lacan wanted to be drawn to your attention. I was only made aware of it a few days ago. No one, it appears, among those whom he asked, wanted to do this work which is a little unrewarding.

(28) It is then a not very greatly esteemed text that I am going to simply summarise for you.

But it must not be thought that in these words, I am saying that I lack interest for what I am going to try to make you understand. By informing you about what is involved in psychoanalysis in America according to Mr Norman Zinberg I see this interest at least of giving the opportunity to me who is speaking to you and also to certain of you who are listening to remind you that on all sorts of fronts battles are to be waged, battles which are just as much political as theoretical, it is in the United States of America first of all that we are confronted.

In denouncing the plague that the United States of America has brought to psychoanalysis I am only following the vigilance of which Jacques Lacan as far as I know has never ceased to affirm the imperative as regards what is elaborated starting from Freud in the United States, before whose ideological imperialism the university itself in this country all too often bends the knee.

Norman Zinberg's text takes its value from the fact that its author participates, obviously, in what he is denouncing about psychoanalysis in America. It is not some Lacanian excited by the words of the master who might come to sustain these (29) pretensions by a complicitous description geared to his own ends. This text in question testifies from two angles of the state of psychoanalysis in America:

- 1) By what it announces without prevarication about the plague that reigns there,
- 2) by the fact that it shows that the author himself, who knows that the plague is raging, is nevertheless affected by it.

By way of proof I only need this definition that he gives of the Freudian discipline as being the most comprehensive theory of general psychology because it considers the relationships of the individual with himself and with his milieu in terms of adaptation.

What is more that Mr Zinberg is not a brilliant intellectual, that in a word he is a little bit inadequate on the plane of the intellect, none of you will doubt when I read you this farcical epistemology of psychoanalysis:

“The two most important systems of thought in the first part of the twentieth century were the social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer and the economic determinism of Karl Marx. In broad lines and simplified to the extreme, Spencer’s philosophy sees human essence in terms of battle and of competition, every man for himself, natural selection excluding mutual assistance.

(30) The Marxist theory of society where each person ought to help the others and renounce his individual aspirations for the benefit of more important goals of society is incorporated in the idea that the identity of each one is diffused in the state or even in the factory.

Psychoanalysis as a philosophy finds itself half ways between these two concepts. The first of these social theories appears to be rather close to the unbridled aggressivity of primitive humanity while the second one, the Marxist, even though shining with optimism with regard to man, seems to fear a little bit too much personal aspirations.

Psychoanalysis which takes into account the conflict between the fundamental nature of man in his milieu and which, despite its pessimism with regard to the basis of nature, does not abandon hope of a solution, offers a compromise between the two.”

This is sufficient to paint Mr Zinberg. But this gives all the more value to what he himself thinks of psychoanalysis in America. To say it in a few words, it is a catastrophe. Psychoanalysis is going to die, psychoanalysis is almost dead and the analysts also.

How can it be cured? There is little, very little chance of a second chance.

(30) What Mr Zinberg himself says ending his article by the announcement of a treatment which everything that precedes it makes evident will not succeed of course, except by a radical subversion of American society.

This sentence of Mr Zinberg is: “we ought to resist the promotion of our discipline. We have perhaps a second chance.”

Of what then is psychoanalysis dying in America? Why was the first chance of psychoanalysis in America lost?

Mr Zinberg replies, borrowing from Erik Erikson one of his expressions: “It is dying from an ethical illness” What is an ethical illness? What is this illness, this ethical illness, of which psychoanalysis in America is dying.

One could simply say that it is dying of its success. But this we all know, that no sector of American life, that there is no sector of American life which is not touched by psychoanalysis.

But I will take up simply a passage of this article which bears witness to it: "The newspapers furnish a proof of the way in which the mass media have absorbed and spread psychoanalytic ideas. The great news agencies go so far as to give in the news (32) simple slips of the tongue, it being understood thus that the person that has spoken revealed a feeling the opposite of what he wished to express and, generally speaking, opposed to this. The best examples come from the political campaign of 1960, from the fact that Mr Nixon was subject to slips of the tongue. Speaking about his running mate Henry Cabot Lodge he calls him my distinguished adversary. The news analysts would no doubt be incapable of speaking about the world if they were deprived of this use constant use of ideas of ideas which come originally from psychoanalysis and which it is no longer necessary to signal as of being properly psychoanalytic, there having been completely accepted and forming part of the language."

Dr Lacan: I would like to pinpoint just now, as you have spoken about it, the fact that Erik Erikson in *Young man Luther* did not speak about an ethical illness affecting psychoanalysis but said the following. : "At the very moment when we were trying" - it is an imperfect - "to invent with a completely scientific determinism, a therapy for a small number, we were led to propagate an ethical illness among the masses." Namely, that Erik Erikson, let us leave to one side where we have to situate Erik Erikson, is all the same much closer to the essential Freudian milieu than Sullivan who is rather a culturist, is that not so?

(33) Erik Erikson writes then that he considers the conclusion of analysis in American society as representing an ethical illness. This means of the body social.

Mr. Miller: As it happens, you are taking me up then on a very precise point which is that this quotation therefore is simply displaced by understanding that psychoanalysis itself was not an ethical illness. But it seems to me that it is precisely about that that I was talking, this ethical illness, one cannot say that it strikes the social body, if it strikes the social body it also strikes the psychoanalyst who effectively forms part of it and this ethical illness has struck him also. Thus effectively what Erik Erikson in this quotation means is: "psychoanalysis has spread an ethical illness". Now he finds that in expanding, it cannot expand it, because it is itself affected and that, in return, this extension of the plague affects it.

Psychoanalysis does not simply serve as a daily language, it also serves as a unifying language for practices which remained in a way fragmentary. For example for the social sciences. With the appearance of the book by Laswell around 1930 the sociologists, like the psychologists, the psycho-sociologists and the anthropologists begin to interest themselves in the individual and his personality in his relationships with the milieu. They utilise psychoanalysis more and more. When the social anthropologists join up with the foregoing there begins the straddling of functions and (34) of interests on a massive scale. What is more an attempt was made to separate out the polarities of thinking, a dichotomy between theory and empiricism, to go towards what Merton called a

theory of the golden mean. In other words psychoanalysis here, or the social sciences, served as a necessary agent of liaison; this is what Zinberg says.

And now for a quite different domain, for cinema for example, Mr Zinberg recognises in it the same function: “the writers and the psychoanalysts found in a simplified asceptised psychoanalysis the large human themes that they were searching for.”

Therefore just as much for social sciences as for the cinema, one sees psychoanalysis deformed in this way, serving as a unitary language to gather together fragmentary practices. But the success, the diffusion of psychoanalysis is still not the ethical illness.

What ethical illness of psychoanalysis was spread? What illness did it become? Psychoanalysis, but this we also know, has come to sustain the function of overlooking the class struggle in America. This failure to recognise the class struggle is today implied by American capitalist society. We know it, we have read the articles in *Les Temps Modernes*, the numerous ones who have denounced it. Here I am (35) simply going to quote the passage because it takes its whole value of still being by Mr Norman Zinberg who has the appearance, who is infested by this plague.

“People appeal to psychoanalysts and to psychoanalytic psychiatrists on the occasion of any organised effort to remedy,” what Mr Zinberg calls, “social insufficiencies”. He is asked to work in collaboration with childrens’ courts, criminal courts, prisons, houses of correction. He is called in for consultation by the agents of and educational institutions from the kindergarten up to the university. His assistance is more and more demanded by industry for the settling of questions of personnel, for the orientation of workers according to their strengths and their capacity. Sometimes people look for his help in connection with larger problems of national or international importance and he forms part today of numerous federal organisations.”

But this is still not the ethical illness of psychoanalysis. Perhaps to know what it is one has to be able to highlight this sentence: “Once it is admitted that it is appropriate to have oneself analysed, the fact of being able to offer oneself such a treatment was in itself a triumph.” What does this mean if not what Mr Zinberg himself calls what (36) regulates the relationships of money in the United States. The attachment to money and to material goods and the desire to display them and to use them with ostentation was noted by all the indigenous and foreign observers ever since Tocqueville. Only if the analysand by going to have himself analysed wants to show ostentatiously that he has the money for it, the analyst himself, Mr Zinberg tells us, what he is trying to do is to sustain his scientific standing. In other words in this relationship in this analytic relationship is it not necessary to mark that it is psychoanalysis itself which has the status of an o-object.

And this might be collected perhaps in this sentence: “Analysis in the United States is analysis for display”. Now one understands that the evil of psychoanalysis is in fact effectively its promotion, as Mr Zinberg says at the end

of his article. “Stop promoting psychoanalysis, stop being ostentatious, forget about standing.”

And what, for American society as a whole, is the function of this *o*-object which psychoanalysis has become? Here again we have to look for an apparently banal sentence, that of Mr Zinberg or one that is banal for him: “for the dynamic *nouveau riche* of the United States everything can be fixed”. In effect to overlook the class struggle is only in fact the specification of this general suture which American society (37) gave itself as a goal to realise and which carries this name inscribed in the constitution, the pursuit of happiness. To pursue happiness, to pursue the adequation of man to his milieu, to pursue adaptation, this is perhaps utopia, it is in any case what is essentially demanded by the lure, this lure which is the function of the *o*-object, this lure which permits the fixing which permits fullness. It seems that it is psychoanalysis which has come to support it in America and this is what is admitted in this article.

So then you understand that the death of psychoanalysis only comes from its inversion. There is in America an inversion of psychoanalysis. If it is true that psychoanalysis is only possible when it is subject to the irreparable, if psychoanalysis is possible only if its term, if this word has a sense, that its term is the assumption of the irreparable which bears the name in Lacanian algebra of the lack of being.

How can one be surprised then at the disarray of the psychoanalyst as regards what? As regards his desire. This again is what can be read in Mr Norman Zinberg : “psychoanalysts have a sort of identity problem with respect to their work. Their principle goal is to try to ameliorate the state of health of humanity, however its conceptual signification may be worked out, should they on the contrary use a technique, a tool of research which allows there to be studied the mechanism of the (38) spirit, or should they construct, on the basis of their daily experience a broad psychological theory destined to explain at once health and illness? The question is: what does the psychoanalyst want, with this singular will which is that of desire? What is the desire of the analyst and we know for a long while that it is one and the same question as the following: what kind of science is psychoanalysis?”

After a picture of psychoanalysis in America, another one is lacking, but it would not be very well furnished, the one of psychoanalysis in the socialist world. So then I will not draw this picture for you because I know nothing about it. I will limit myself to quoting a sentence of Jacques Lacan extracted from a seminar of the year 1955/56 - I do not have a more precise reference - where Jacques Lacan said: “I find the prejudice that psychoanalysis encounters in the East, justified.”

Yes, no doubt, Lacan was right, better no psychoanalysis than that psychoanalysis, this plague-ridden psychoanalysis. But you, the Lacanians, the Lacanian analysts you ought to know and no doubt you know that you are the guardians of the restored truth of Freud, guardians all the more precious because you are not numerous.

Mr Norman Zinberg promises all of you that the best years of psychoanalysis are still to come. He says at the beginning of his article: “certain signs indicate that the (39) influence of psychoanalysis in America has reached its apogee and perhaps even begun to decline while in Europe and in Japan its popularity is no doubt only beginning.” He explains himself in saying : “a prosperous middle class in western Europe and in Japan, a prosperous middle class that will be inevitably materialistic, breaking with traditional society begins to interest itself in psychoanalysis.”

Himself at the end of his article puts you on guard. “It is difficult to be patient” - he is addressing himself to Americans - “but perhaps by our example we will perhaps be able one day to help the growing psychoanalytic institutes of Europe and of Japan to avoid our errors and to spare their countries so many bad jokes.”

This task, you know that it is yours, and that Jacques Lacan has destined you for this task. You see, with the announcement by Norman Zinberg that what could be called a civilisation of officials is being prepared in imperialist countries. In other words you ought to preserve the consciousness that you are a bastion, namely, that you are under siege. But if this can reassure you, do we not all know that the theories of Americans, like their bombs, are only after all paper tigers.

Dr Lacan: The things one hears! Good, that’s fine. I cannot of course put myself forward even for an instant to temper these appeals, God knows, to those precisely whom I cannot foresee what they will make of what I brought them in the course of the years which are now already long and which begin seriously to stretch back into the past.

I would like you to get to know this article, as well as the little novel I was talking about earlier, this article in *Diogenes*. It really has a great documentary value simply because, whatever may be the limits, in effect, that one can discern in certain of the author’s remarks, it is very well informed, and manifestly he is someone who is very very very close to the most consistent analytic milieu and specifically for example very close to the executive whose last representative, Mr Maxwell Kitleson, who is now dead, is quoted in this article and precisely for the fashion in which he held the rudder of this singularly committed ship in a certain adventure.

I believe that the interest it has for you who have been willing, for different times, long or short, to follow my teaching and to trust my word, the interest is in an account (41) which is really very objective, enabling you to see how there is posed, for someone who sincerely tries to situate it, to draw up an account of it, how there is posed the question of what analysis really is. And I think that this has its interest even quite independently of one or other excesses which are denounced and which are always so much more tangible when one knows the area, a certain style.

I remember the way in which I came, more or less truly exasperated, not horrified, from people who had nothing else than the information that I had given them for their first visit over there, of what was being made of it, naturally in a current

fashion, in an average, common fashion, as they say, to see all the same the following, I think that for my average listener I will limit myself to expecting from the reading of this article the fact that I am not asking that this should be granted to me as a point, a homage but to know that a certain way of posing the problems must for everyone, and specifically and specially for those here who are analysts, make the handling of their function or the fashion in which they think about it, literally, more breathable

Already if I only had this role and this function which I believe would not be negligible and that the fact of rendering possible a certain mental life which does not engage itself in a certain number of impasses or of false antinomies for example this biologism (42) opposed to a so-called culturalism, which you know precisely is one of the most debatable things in these developments - I am speaking about culturalism - in the developments of psychoanalysis in the United States, is something which is rendered completely tangible, very tangible by this article.

In what I have taught you, or that I continue to teach you, let us say that it is very necessary that I always push it a little bit further on, I mean that if, for example, I had given you something which might correspond to the work that I will end up giving you one day, if I had given it to you at the time of the Rome report, and I did not do so, very intentionally, you will see in it now many things, God knows, which, of which I cannot even say that I have to attribute them to what I have been able to propagate, even admitting that from the little circle to which I have always very specially devoted myself, waves came from elsewhere, that it is too easy to see in echoes, an echo is not always the echo of a noise that one makes, echoes come from elsewhere and in a word, if now even the offices of cultural painting with which the complexes of the bourgeoisie are seasoned since the end of the last war, these offices reverberate for some years in using in a more or less relevant fashion the term of signifier, I would not (44) go so far as to make it a merit of mine, simply that I allowed people, a milieu, which is the medical milieu which in scientific matters one cannot always say to be distinguished by the fact of being especially to the forefront, let us say that I warned it in time that there existed things elsewhere, around linguistics that they should at least take into account if they wanted to be up to date. All of this is the out of date side, as one might say, of what gives me, nevertheless, of course, no less trouble for all that.

If I maintained a milieu, let us say, in an adequate atmosphere from the point of view of what I called earlier and very intentionally the dimension of the breathable, it is of course because this is the most contingent aspect, the one which, God knows, with time will only interest people who are writing the minor history of the époque. It is sure that what is important is the skeleton, the nerve of a certain construction which for its part has slowly come to light in the measure that I believed I was able to sustain it, with qualified examples, from a determined orientation of experience, from something which is not easy to make pass into the forefront of your preoccupations, the forefront of certain forums where things are discussed quite consciously and that what I was able to detach from this usage has obviously more difficult aspects and that (45) it is not easy either to diffuse precisely one or other thing that I can only designate by the letters of an algebra.

This is the point, this is the efficacy of the work to which I convoke those who have ears to hear what I am saying, not as a pleasant music, designed to receive from near or far or elsewhere some echoes, which is something that demands a practical effort and the exercise of this practice of theory which is involved in my discourse.

Let no one be alarmed moreover about what may have been said here about elsewhere, uniquely supporting me from an American text itself, about what may have been said here about the chances, which are always so difficult to measure, the detours also that we may expect, as regards the future of what is happening in America.

For myself, who have not had up to now, God knows, the time or the leisure to go there and see on the spot how the operation is carried out even though one or other person I would say represents me there in a certain fashion and that I have had, God knows, also the surprise that one or other person that I did not expect is interested in what I write, I think for my part, that in truth everything can make itself heard in America and that from the moment that they give themselves the trouble, even the doctrine that you have the goodness, the kindness to call Lacanian may also one day (46) have some tiny effects there and that it is not condemned for all that to be subject there to the effects of a mysterious plague to which one not must not either fall into the mistake of according a too essential consistency.

It is the years to come that will give us an account of all this. You have, this year, been willing to sustain me with your zeal, with your presence and with your friendship; allow me, before wishing you a good vacation, to thank you for that.

Seminar 1: Wednesday 2 December 1964

*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously
furiously sleep ideas green colourless*

*Songe, songe, Céphise, à cette nuit cruelle
Qui fut pour tout un peuple une nuit éternelle
[Dream, dream, Cephise, of that cruel night,
Which was for a whole people an eternal night]*

Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.

If I were not in front of a French-speaking audience, I could say right away: “that’s what talking is about”. But since it happens that I must presume that despite the obvious necessity for bilingualism in our culture, there are some people here who are in no way burdened by English, I will give a word-for-word translation of it. The first word means without colour, the second word green, the third word ideas (in the plural), the fourth word means sleep (*sommeil*), can also mean to go to sleep (*dormir*), provided you put *to* before it, and can mean sleep (*dorment*) in the third person plural of the present indicative. You will see why this is the sense (*sens*) that we will pause at.

The nature of the indefinite article in English, which is not expressed, allows us therefore to translate up to this word-for-word: “D’incolores vertes idées dorment” - to which there is added what is very obviously an adverb because of its ending - “furieusement.”

I said: “that’s what talking is about”. Is that really talking? How can we know? It (2) is precisely in order to know that this signifying chain - I scarcely dare to say sentence - was forged.

It was forged by a linguist called Noam Chomsky. This example is quoted, introduced in a little book called *Syntactic structures* published by Mouton in the Hague. What is it about? About structuralism, you can take my word for it, about syntactic structure, syntax.

This would immediately deserve a more precise commentary. I am only going to indicate it.

Syntax, in a structuralist perspective, is to be situated at a precise level that we will call formalisation on the one hand, and on the other hand, as regards the syntagm - the syntagm is the signifying chain considered from the point of view of what concerns the linking of its elements - *Syntactic Structures* consists in formalising these linkages.

Are all the linkages between these elements equivalent? In other words, can any signifier whatsoever be immediately contiguous to any other signifier. It is obvious that the reply will tend towards the negative, at least as regards what concerns a certain usage of this signifying chain, its usage, let us say, in discourse.

This example is found at the beginning of the work in question. It introduces something which is to be distinguished from the end of this work, namely, the (3) constitution or the initiation, the outline of a reasoning about syntactic structure, it introduces a notion which must be distinguished from it, that of grammar.

He introduced his subject matter, *Syntactic structures*, by specifying it as having a goal: how can we establish the formalisation, the algebraic signs, let us say, in order to illustrate immediately for you what is involved, which will allow there to be produced in the English language something grammatical, and to prevent there being produced a chain which is not so.

I cannot go on here to judge what the author of this enterprise achieves. What I can indicate, is that, in the particular conditions that are offered to him by this positive tongue that the English tongue is, I mean the tongue as it is spoken, it is not a matter of extracting the logic of the English tongue, it is a matter in a way of something which could be set up, in our day at least, in an electronic machine, so that from it there could emerge only grammatically correct sentences, and, a greater ambition, all the possible forms that his tongue offers to the Englishman, I mean to the speaking subject.

This book is a very seductive one to read because it gives the idea that by pursuing this kind of work a certain rigour emerges, the imposition of a certain real in the (4) usage of the tongue, and a very ingenious, very seductive, very captivating possibility which is demonstrated to us, of managing to mould oneself according to formulae like those, for example, of the most complex connections of auxiliaries, with certain forms which are proper to English, how to generate without error the transformation from the active to the passive, connected to a certain form which is that of the present in its actuality, which in order to say *lire* distinguishes "I read", from "I am reading" and which generates, in a quite mechanical fashion "I have been reading", for example, by a series of transformations, not of the conjunction of these words but of their composition. There is here something very seductive, but this is not at all what I shall engage myself with.

For what interests me is the reason why this example was forged. It was forged to distinguish the grammatical from another term that the author introduces here of the order of *signification*. In English that is called meaning.

The author thinks that in constructing this sentence he has produced a sentence which is without meaning, on the pretext that colourless contradicts green, that ideas cannot sleep and that it appears rather problematic for one to sleep furiously.

What strikes him is that he can, on the contrary, obtain from a subject, a subject that he questions, or that he pretends to question but undoubtedly who is his (5) recourse, that this meaningless sentence is a grammatical sentence.

I take this historical example because it is in the history, in the work, on the present-day path of linguistics. I am a little embarrassed because it is not in French, but in fact this ambiguity forms part of our position, as you are going to see. For those who do not know English, I would ask you to make the effort of picturing to yourselves that the reverse order of the words *furiously sleep ideas green colourless* is not grammatical.

“*Y restez cieux aux êtes qui Père Notre*” {there remain heavens art in who Father Our} this is what this corresponds to, the reversed sentence of the rather well known sentence of Jacques Prévert: “*Notre Père qui êtes aux cieux restez-y*” {Our Father who art in heaven, remain there}.

It is clear that being grammatical here does not depend, at least entirely, on what may appear in these few inflected words, namely, the *s* of *ideas* which acts as a comfort for the absence of *s* at the end of *sleep*, namely a certain formal harmony recognisable by the English speaker and also the *ly* ending which indicates to us that it is an adverb. Because these characteristics remain in the second sentence; it is nevertheless, for an English person, of a completely different degree as regards the experience of the word, from the first. It is ungrammatical. It will not offer, we might say, any more sense than the ironic, even blasphemous prayer of Prévert (6) - but believe me, in time, it will be baptised: “What respect in this, remain there” - than this sentence once it has been reversed.

This indicates that you should underline in passing, in what I have just articulated, the word sense. We will see the use we can put it to today. We will see what I am introducing here by this means.

In fact Chomsky's undertaking is subjected, understandably, to the discussion of other linguists. It is noted, and quite rightly, that there is some abuse, or in any case that the discussion can begin around this connotation of *meaningless*, of *sans signification*.

Undoubtedly meaning is completely extinguished where there is no grammar, but where there is grammar, I mean a grammatical construction, sensed, presumed by the subject, the subject who is being questioned, who here is called on as judge, at the place, at the locus of the Other, to reintroduce the term inscribed in my presentation last year as a reference, where there is a grammatical construction, can one say, that there is no meaning? And it is easy, basing myself always on documents, to refer you to a particular article by Jakobson in the translation Nicolas Ruwet has made of it, for you to find in a particular article in the grammar part, in these articles entitled *Essai de linguistique générale*, on page 205, the discussion of this example.

(7) It would be easy for me to put forward all sorts of attestations in English usage, in Marvell, for example, “*Green thoughts in a green shade*”, which he immediately translates in parenthesis or rather that the translator translates “*une verte pensée dans une ombre verte*”, or indeed particular Russian expressions completely analogous to the supposed contradiction inscribed here in the sentence. There is no need to go any further. It is enough to remark that to say a *round square*, in English, another example taken by the same author, is not at all a contradiction in reality, given that a *square* is very often used to designate a *place* and that a *place ronde* can then very easily be called a *round square*.

What nevertheless are we going to engage with? You see in the equivalents, and to say the word, if I try to show that this sentence can have a meaning, I will certainly be entering on more subtle paths. It is from grammar itself that I will begin. I will observe that whether this phrase is grammatical or not is, for example, because what apparently emerges in this sentence as an adjective, namely *colourless green*, comes before the substantive, and that here we find ourselves, in English as in French, confronted with a certain number of effects which remain to be described. Provisionally, I continue to call them effects of

sense, namely that in (8) relationship of the adjective to the substantive, the adjective, in Greek we call it *epithete*, usage in English, in French and in every tongue, shows us that even though this usage varies with tongues, this question of the place is important to qualify the effect of sense created by the joining of the adjective to the substantive. In French, for example, an adjective which, as I might say, is identified to the substance is placed before the substantive, *une belle femme* is different to *une femme belle*. Epicatathetic usage, one could say, that of the adjective which comes before, is to be distinguished from the epanathetic, from the one which comes after, and that the reference of the woman to beauty in the case of the epanathetic, that is from the adjective which comes after, is something distinguished, while a *belle femme* is already, that it is within her substance that she is found to be beautiful, and that there is still a third phase to be distinguished, the epamphitetic usage, or that of ambiance, which will indicate that this woman appeared beautiful in particular circumstances, that in other words it is not the same thing to say: “*furious Hermione - Hermione furious - furious, Hermione*” etc, and so on.

In English, the real epamphitetic is where it is permitted to put the adjective after the noun. Epanathetic, like epicatathetic, is always placed in front, but the epicatathetic is always closer to the substantive.

(9) One says: *Un / de belle apparence / et pourvu d'une belle barbe, vieil homme*” (An old man of handsome appearance with a beautiful beard). It is because the *vieil* is closer to *homme* rather than the fact that he has a beautiful beard and a radiant appearance.

Henceforth we are, simply along grammatical paths, in a position to distinguish two planes and as a consequence not to have them meeting in the contradiction, *green colourless*. In addition some memories of Sheridan that I had noted for you, of a dialogue between Lady Teazle and her husband Sir Peter - naturally it is the notes that one takes that one never finds at the right time - sufficiently teaches us that for example, if Lady Teazle protests at the fact of being tortured about these *elegant expenses*, about these *dépenses élégantes*, this is in order to point out to us that the relationship of the adjective to the substantive in spoken usage, when it is a matter precisely of the epicatathete is perhaps not to be taken in English the way it is in French and that you cannot translate *elegant expenses* by *dépenses élégantes* by strictly inverting the relationship and by saying *des élégances coûteuses*. Even in Tennyson I also found for you a certain *glimmering strangeness* which comes from the speaker, emerging from his dream, obviously must be translated by *lueurs étranges* and not by *étrangetés lumineuses*. So that here, it is perhaps indeed this (10) idea of greenness, of ideal greenness that is involved, as compared to what, *colourless* and more decayed, it is something like the shades of ideas which slip away there, losing their colour and in a word, bloodless. They are moving about there, not because they are sleeping, and I would have no trouble, spare me the end of this stylistic exercise, in proving to you that it is perfectly conceivable, that if we grant to sleep, *dorment*, something of the metaphorical, there is a sleep accompanied by some fury. Besides is it not what we experience every day and in a word, if indeed you excuse me from this vain tail-end of discourse, I leave you with the task of fabricating it. I cannot find,

in questioning things in the sense of the link of grammar to meaning, I cannot find in this sentence the evocation properly speaking of the unconscious where it is.

What is the unconscious, if not precisely ideas, thoughts, *Gedanken*, thoughts whose faded greenness, does not Freud tell us somewhere, that like the shades summoned from hell and returning to the sunlight, want to drink blood, to recover their colours. Is it the thoughts of the unconscious that are involved, that here sleep furiously?

Well, all of that would have been a very pretty exercise but I did not pursue it, I (11) would not say to the end, because I am cutting it short only to suggest that it is quite simply completely idiotic.

The unconscious has nothing to do with these metaphorical meanings, however far we may push them. And to search for meaning in a signifying, grammatical chain is an undertaking of extraordinary futility.

For if, because of the fact that I am before this audience, I was able to give it that meaning, I could just as well have given it a completely different one, and for a simple reason, which is that any signifying chain whatsoever, provided it is grammatical, always generates a meaning, and I would go further, any one whatsoever.

Because I commit myself, in varying, and one can vary to infinity, the surrounding conditions, the situation, but what is more, the situations of dialogue, I can make this sentence mean whatever I want, including for example in a particular case that I am mocking you.

Pay attention! Does there not intervene here at this extreme point something other than a meaning? That I am able, in a particular context, to make any meaning emerge from it, is one thing, but is it really meaning that is involved. Because why did I say that nothing guaranteed the meaning I gave earlier? It is in the very measure that I had given it one with respect to what? With respect to an object, a (12) referent, something that I have brought out there for the needs of the case, namely the unconscious.

In speaking about context, in speaking about dialogue, I allow to disappear, to vanish, to vacillate what is involved, namely, the function of sense. What it is a question here of circumscribing more closely is the distinction between the two. In the final analysis, how does it come about that its very author who chose this sentence, drew comfort so easily from something that is so doubtful, namely that it does not make sense.

How could a linguist, who does not need to take the extreme examples, the round square, which I spoke to you about earlier, to grasp that the things that are most easily accepted, allow there to be completely avoided, the remark of a certain contradiction. Does one not say with common assent, *une jeune morte*, (a dead young person). Which could be a correct way of saying that she died young (*elle est morte jeune*) but to describe her as a *jeune morte* with what the adjective

placed before means, the adjective in French, must leave us curiously perplexed! Is it as dead that she is young?

I asked myself what gave this sentence its distinctive character. We cannot believe in such naivety on the part of the person who produced it as a paradigm. And why did he take such an obviously forged paradigm? And nevertheless while I was (13) asking myself what effectively gave this sentence its paradigmatic value I had myself taught how to pronounce it properly. My English phonetics are not especially exemplary, and this exercise had a use for me which was not to torture the ears of those for whom these phonetics are familiar. And in this exercise I noticed something, that between each word, I had to take a little breath.

Colourless, green, ideas, sleep, furiously. Why did I have to take a breath? Have you noticed that this becomes grgr, ideas, sleep, one s linking up with another s and after that **fffuriously**.

So then I began to interest myself in the consonants. There is one thing that can be said in any case, it is that this text is struck by “amusie”, however you understand it, music or the muses, as Queneau says “*avec les arts on s’amuse: on muse avec les lézards*” (with the arts one amuses oneself: one muses with the lizards). In noticing, in counting these consonants, the two l’s and the c of colourless, the g of green, the n, a third l, a fourth l, there came to my mind those verses which I hope you adore as much as I do, the ones written at the bottom of the blackboard and which make use very precisely of the consonantal battery of the made-up sentence :

*Songe, songe, Céphise, à cette nuit cruelle
Qui fut pour tout un peuple une nuit éternelle
(Dream, dream, Céphise, of that cruel night
Which was for a whole people an eternal night.)*

(14) I can easily do the opposite of the work I did earlier to show you that it is no less strange to speak about a cruel night, than of a round square. That an eternal night is undoubtedly a contradiction in terms, but on the contrary that the moving value of these two lines, is essentially in the repercussion first of all of these four sibilant s’s which are underlined on the blackboard, of the repercussion of *Céphise* in *fut* on the second line, in the repercussion of the *t* four times, of the *n* of *nuit* twice, of the primitive labile *f* promised by its attenuated form *fut* and of *Céphise*, in this *pour tout un peuple* which harmonises, which makes vibrate in a certain fashion something which undoubtedly in these two lines, is the whole sense, the poetic sense, and this is of a nature to force us, to draw us intimately closer to the function of the signifier.

If undoubtedly the two verses in question do not claim in any degree to give the meaning of the formula of the linguist, they force us to question ourselves, whether we are not in this way much closer to what constitutes its sense, to what was for its author above all the true point at which he felt assured of its non-sense. For at a certain level, the requirements of sense are perhaps different to what

appears to us at first, namely that at this level of sense, music is a radical objection.

(15) Here is how I decided to introduce, this year, as a way of giving you the tone of it, what I am calling *Crucial problems for psychoanalysis*.

I spoke last year about the foundations *of* psychoanalysis. I spoke about the concepts which seemed to me to be essential to structure its experience, and you could see, that at none of these levels, were they true concepts, that I could not make them hold up, except in the measure that I made them rigorous with respect to no referent. That always in some way the subject who carries these concepts is implicated in his very discourse, that I cannot speak about the opening and the closing of the unconscious, without being implicated in my very discourse by this opening and this closing, that I cannot speak about the encounter, as constituting by its very lack the principal of repetition, without rendering ungraspable the very point where this repetition is qualified.

Dante, after some people but before still more, introduced in *De vulgari eloquentia*, which we will have to speak about this year, the most profound question of linguistics. He says that every science, and for him it is science that is involved, must be able to declare what must be translated as its object, and we all agree except that object, to have its value, in the Latin Dante uses is called here *subjectum*.

(16) In analysis it is in effect the subject that is involved. Here no displacement is possible to permit him to make an object of it.

That it is the same in linguistics no more escapes any linguist than it escaped Dante and his reader, but the linguist can try to resolve the problem differently from us analysts.

It is precisely for that reason that linguistics is engaged ever further along the path highlighted earlier by the work of our author, along the path of formalisation. It is because, along the path of formalisation, what we are trying to exclude is the subject. Only we analysts should have an exactly contrary aim because this is the pivot of our praxis.

Only you know that on this point I do not retreat before the difficulty, since in short, I posit, I did it last year and in a sufficiently articulated way, that the subject can only be in the final analysis nothing other than that which thinks: *Therefore I am*. Which means that the supporting point, the navel, as Freud would say of this term subject is properly only the moment at which it vanishes beneath sense, where sense is what makes it disappear as being, for this *Therefore I am* is only a sense. Is it not there that the discussion on being can find its support?

(17) The relationship of sense to the signifier is what I have always believed to be essential to maintain at the heart of our experience so that our whole discourse does not become debased.

At the centre of this effort of mine, oriented towards a praxis, I placed the notion of signifier. How does it happen, that again quite recently, at one of the meetings of my pupils, I was able to hear one of them, I do not remember who, saying, and after all I know he was not the only one to say it, that the notion of signifier, for Lacan, still left him with some uncertainty in his mind.

If that is how things are, while after all an article like *The agency of the letter in the unconscious*, which I ask you to re-read, it is a fact that my texts become clearer as the years pass.

There are murmurs, people are asking themselves why? I am saying that it is a fact to which more than one if not all testify, this text is admirably clear and the man-woman example that I evoke, as evoking by its signifying coupling the meaning of a urinal, not by the opposition between the sexes, but as inserting itself, because of the masking of this sense, for two small children who come into a station in a train, a henceforth irremedial division about the spot that they have just passed, one (18) holding that he has passed by man, and the other holding that she has passed by woman. This seems to me all the same a story that is designed to open peoples' ears.

Moreover formulations that are less like apologues, which are that the sign, however it is composed and includes in itself the signifier/signified division, the sign is what represents something for someone, namely at the level of the sign we are at the level of anything at all, of the psychological, of knowledge, that you can refine. There is the authentic sign, the smoke which indicates the fire, that there is the index, and that to see the trace left by the hoof of the gazelle on the sand or on the rock, and that the signifier is something different, and that the fact that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, a sufficiently firm formulation, that is simply forcing you to locate yourself in it, has certain consequences.

Why then does this discourse on the signifier retain some obscurity? Is it because for a certain time I, for example, wanted it? Yes. And who then is this I?

It is perhaps internal to this knot of language which is produced when language has to give an account of its own essence. Perhaps it is necessary that at this conjunction there is necessarily produced some loss. It is exactly connected to (19) this question of the loss, the loss that is produced every time that language tries to give an account of itself in a discourse, that there is situated the point from which I wish to begin to mark the sense of what I call the relationship of the signifier to the subject.

I describe as philosophical everything that tends to mask the radical character and the originating function of this loss. Every dialectic, and specifically the Hegelian one, which tends to mask, which in any case points towards a recuperation of the effects of this loss is a philosophy.

There are other ways than the pretention of dealing with this loss. There is for example looking elsewhere and specifically turning one's gaze towards meaning,

and to make of the subject, this entity that is called the human spirit, to put it before discourse.

It is an old error whose final incarnation is called developmental psychology, or if you wish to illustrate it, Piagetism. It is a matter of knowing whether we can approach a critique of it on its own terrain. An example of the contribution that I hope to make this year to something for psychoanalysis, which shows that the discourse that we are pursuing for it necessitates choices, and specifically the (20) exclusion of a certain number of positions, positions concerning the real. That these positions are false, and that it is not without reason that they are false, that the position we take up is perhaps the only one which allows there to be grounded, at its most radical foundation, the notion of ideology.

I will not allow you to leave today - even though it may be a superfluous talisman - without a formula that can be written on the blackboard because after all I put myself into it, which is the following, that it is true that the relation of the signifier is essentially to the signifier, that the signifier as such, in so far as it is distinguished from the sign, only signifies for another signifier and never signifies anything other than the subject. There must be superabundant proofs of this.

On the very plane of the criticism of Piaget, that I think I will approach the next time, and specifically the function of ego-centric language, I think I will be able to give you at that time proofs as a kind of graph, of simplified graph, indicating the path that we are going to travel and the formula of S/s, signifier over signified, is and always has been in an unambiguous fashion to be interpreted as follows, that there is an order of reference of the signifier which is to, what I called last year, another signifier. This is what defines it essentially.

What then is the signified? The signified is not at all to be conceived of only in relation to the subject.

(21) The relation of the signifier to the subject, in so far as it involves the function of meaning, passes through a referent. The referent, that means the real, and the real is not simply a raw and opaque mass. The real is apparently structured. We have moreover absolutely no knowledge of how as long as we do not have the signifier. I do not mean for all that, that if we do not know it, we have no relations to this structure. At different levels of animality these structures are called tendency, need and even necessarily what is called rightly or wrongly, but in fact in animal psychology, intelligence, one has to pass through this structure.

Intelligence, I do not know why a mistake has been made about this, intelligence is indeed for me, as for everybody else, non-verbal. What I will try to show you the next time, to criticise Piaget, is that it is absolutely indispensable in order not to make the error of thinking that the evolution of the child consists, in accordance with a pre-determined will of the Eternal, from all time, of rendering him more and more able to dialogue with Mr Piaget. This poses the question, even if it does not resolve it, of how intelligence as pre-verbal comes to link itself with language as pre-intellectual. For the moment, I note that in order to conceive anything (22) whatsoever about meaning, you must first take, which does not exhaust

anything, and does not force a scaffolding on us, and to preserve the same thing indefinitely, notice that there are two usages of the signifier with respect to the referent, the usage of denotation, comparable to a correspondence which claims to be bi-univocal, let us say a brand, an iron brand on the referent, and a connotation, namely, how it is on this - you will see it the next time - there is going to turn our example of the criticism of Piaget, how a signifier can serve to introduce into the relationship to the referent, something which has a name, which is called the concept. And that is a relationship of connotation.

It is then through the mediation of the relationship of the signifier to the referent that we see the signifier emerge. There are no valid instances of meaning which do not make a circuit, a detour, by way of some referent.

The bar, therefore, is not as has been said, in commenting on me, the simple existence, fallen from heaven in a way, of the obstacle, here entified. It is first of all a question mark about the return circuit. But it is not simply that. It is this other effect of the signifier by means of which the signifier only represents the subject, and a little earlier I wanted to incarnate the subject in what I called sense, where he vanishes as subject.

(23) Well that's it. At the level of the bar an effect of sense is produced, and what I started from today in my example, is there to show you how much the effect of the signified can be bent to every sense, if we do not have the referent at the beginning, but that the effect of sense is something different.

It is so different that the face it presents on the side of the signified, is properly what is not "unmeaning", *non-signifiant*, but "meaningless", that it is properly speaking, what is translated, because we are in English, by the expression "non-sense", and that it is not possible to properly punctuate what is involved in our analytic experience, except by seeing that what is explored is not the ocean, the infinite sea of meanings, it is what happens in the very measure that it reveals to us this barrier of "non-sense". Which does not mean without meaning, which is the face of refusal that sense presents on the side of the signifier. That is why, when we have passed through this survey of psychological experimentation, we will try to show the degree to which it lacks the facts, by overlooking the true relationship of language to intelligence, we will throw light on it from a different angle, which is that while starting from an experience which no doubt is also, just as much as psychology, different to that of psychoanalysis, a literary experience specifically, by (24) trying to give its proper status, for it is not we who have invented it, it exists, to what is called non-sense, by questioning *Alice In Wonderland* or some good author of this register, we will see how this enables us to illuminate the status of the signifier.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 9 December 1964

I want to thank my listeners for showing themselves to be so attentive as I take up these lectures again. I saw the last time how numerous they were .

I begin there because, in truth, for me this is a part of a problem that I am going to try, I will not simply say to pose today, with regard to which I would like to define something which could be described as: how are we going to work this year?

I say "are we going to", since I do not imagine that my discourse is deployed in a professorial abstraction, where after all it does not matter who profits from it, for better or for worse, or in what way.

I learned from echoes, which precisely because of the specificity of my position always reach me without delay, that the last time I was didactic: indeed that on this point I was considered to have made progress.

It is certainly not the case, however, it seems to me, that I spared you, as I might say, because to introduce the problem which is going to occupy us from the beginning this year, that of the relationship of the subject to language, as I did it by (2) this non-sense, and to remain with it, to sustain a commentary, a question about it long enough to make you travel along paths, through defiles that I was subsequently able to cancel with a turn of the hand, let us be clear, as regards the results and not as regards the value of the test, in order, at the end, to make you admit and, I would almost say, from my point of view, to get across the "Hey presto!" of a distinct relationship, the one to sense supported, as I showed, by the two sentences which were still there on the blackboard a little earlier, I can only congratulate myself that something of such a discourse reached its goal.

If it is true that there is the gap, whose formulation I began the last time, between something we do not grasp at the very level where the signifier functions as such and as I define it - the signifier is that which represents the subject for another signifier - if it is true that this representation of the subject, that the way in which the signifier is his representative is what is made present in the effect of sense, that there is between that and everything that is constructed as meaning, this sort of neutral field, of gap, of danger point, what has been encountered is not at all articulated in a necessary fashion, namely, what returns as meaning from a certain (3) relationship, I articulated it the last time, which remains to be defined, of the signifier to the referent, to this something articulated or not in the real, on which it is by managing, let us say, to rebound off, to say no more at this time, that the signifier generated the system of meanings.

There is here no doubt, for those you have followed my past discourse, a new emphasis on something whose place you can no doubt find in my preceding schemata, and even see in it that what was involved in the effect of the signified,

where I had to lead you to indicate its place, at the moment when last year I was giving the schema of alienation, that this referent existed but at a different place, that this referent was desire in so far as it may have to be situated in the formation, in the establishment of the subject somewhere, hollowing out there, in the interval between the two signifiers essentially evoked in the definition of the signifier itself, that here, not the subject, collapsing into this formulation of what one can call the primordial cell of its constitution, but already in a first metaphor this signified, because of the very position of the subject on the way to collapse, had to be relayed by the function of desire.

An illuminating formula, no doubt, to designate all sorts of developmental effects in our analytic experience, but a relatively obscure formula if we have to map out (4) what is involved, when all is said and done, essentially, in the validity of this formula, and, in a word, about the relationship of development taken in its widest sense, of the relationship of the position of the subject taken in its most radical sense, to the function of language.

If these formulae, produced in a fashion that is more aphoristic than dogmatic, given as a supporting point, starting from which there can be judged, or at least sequenced, the range of different formulations which are given of it at every level at which this questioning tries, attempts, to pursue in a contemporary fashion whether it is the linguist, the psycholinguist, the psychologist, the strategist, the games' theorist, etc.

The terms that I am putting forward, and in the first place that of the signifier representing the subject for another signifier, has in itself something exclusive about it, which recalls what another path attempted to trace out, as regards the status to be given at one or other conceived level of the signifier, something which more or less cancels, crosses a certain gap, is undoubtedly risky, and before letting oneself be taken in by it, one should perhaps look at it more than once. Again there is here, I would say, a quasi-imperative position which, of course, can only be sustained by attempting a reference, which not only finds its recourse in an (5) adequate development of theories and of facts, but which also finds its foundation in some more radical structure and, moreover, all of those who for some years have been able to follow what I have developed before them, know that three years ago in a seminar on identification, it is not unrelated to what I am bringing you now, I was led to the necessity of a certain topology which appeared to me to impose itself, to arise from that very experience which is the most particular, sometimes, often, always perhaps, the most confused, the one that we have to deal with in analysis, namely identification.

Undoubtedly this topology is essential to the structure of language. In speaking about structure one cannot but evoke it. The first remark, I would even say the primary one, that however much we ought to conceive of discourse as unfolding over time, if there is something that structural analysis, as it has been operated in linguistics, is designed to reveal to us, it is that this linear structure is not at all sufficient to account for the chain of concrete discourse, of the signifying chain, that we can only order it, harmonise it in the shape of what is called in musical notation a stave, that this is the least that we have to say and that henceforth, the

(6) question of how we are to conceive the function of this second dimension, and whether this is something which obliges us to take surface into consideration and in what form? The one formulated up to this in the intuition of space as, for example, it can be inscribed in an exemplary fashion in transcendental aesthetics, or whether it is something different, whether it is this surface as it is theorised precisely at the level of what are called in mathematical theory, surfaces, taken strictly from the angle of topology, whether this is sufficient for us, in short if this stave, this stave upon which every unit, every significance or sentence should be inscribed - undoubtedly at its cuts - how, at the two extremities of the sequence of these measures, how does this cut come to circumscribe, striate, section the stave. Let us say that there is here, in this regard, more than one way of questioning oneself, that there are horses for courses.

It is undoubtedly not too soon, faced with this structure, to pose again the question whether indeed effectively, as has seemed self-evident up to the present in a certain natural schema, time is to be reduced to a single dimension.

But let us leave that for the moment. And to stay with this curious uncertainty at about what this surface might be, you see that I require as always indispensable for all our ordinates, the two dimensions of the blackboard. Again it is visible that (7) each line does not at all have a function that is homogenous to the others. And simply to approach it, to shake the intuitive character of this function of space in so far as it interests us, I would go as far here as to point out to you that in this first approach that I evoked from previous years, a certain topology that is very structuring as regards what happens to the subject in our experience, I recall that what I was led to make use of is something which does not at all form part of a space which seems to be so integrated into all our experience, and of which one could well say, that alongside this other it deserves in fact the name of familiar, but also particular space: that there is a space, let us say, less or even unimaginable, in any case with which it is important to familiarise oneself, for the paradox that one easily encounters in it, for the lack of predictability involved when you are introduced to it for the first time.

Forgive me for bringing here, in the form of a kind of toy, something whose shape we will perhaps rediscover subsequently - believe me, I have thought about it. These topological elements, to speak of those that I emphasised, the hole, the torus, the cross-cap, respectively, are really separated by a sort of distinctive world from what we could call the shapes that are called Gestaltist, which, it must be (8) said, have dominated the development of part of a whole geometry, but also of a whole significance - I do not need to refer you to well-known and very meritorious researches, let us cite here simply in passing the *Metamorphoses du cercle* by Georges Poulet, but there are many others to remind us that throughout the centuries, the significance of the sphere, with all the exclusiveness that it involves, is what dominated a whole way of thinking, perhaps a whole art of thinking, and it is not at all simply by seeing it culminate in one or other great poem, Dante's poem for example, that we can plumb or measure the importance of the sphere, and even what we can link to it as being, as I might say, "belonging to its world", the cone implying everything that had been ratified in geometry as a

conic section, this is a world from which there differs the one introduced by the references to which I alluded earlier.

I am going to show you an example of it, questioning you naturally, I will not take any of the topological structures that I enumerated earlier, because they are, in a way, too complicated for our object for the moment, the little shock that I am trying to obtain, and on the other hand, the most familiar shape, the one that everyone ends up hearing pass on his auditory horizon, that of the Moebius strip, (9) do I need to remind you what it is. You see apparently, you will see later what that means, do not bother about the multiplicity of thicknesses, but simply about the shape which ensures that something which might be, if you wish, at the beginning, like a segment of a cylinder, because of the fact that, at the same time, one can go round it on the inner wall, I am expressing myself in terms expressly referred to the material, the object, the inversion that is produced, culminates in the existence of a surface whose most remarkable point is that it has only one face, namely, that wherever one begins from, one can end up along the remaining path, on the face from which one set out, at whatever point it may be of what might make you believe to be one face and the other. There is only one of them. It is also true that there is only one edge.

This of course presumes the putting forward of all sorts of definitions, the definition of an edge, for example, which is essential and which can, for us, be of the greatest use.

What I want to point out to you, and this at first will only be, I would say, for extreme novices to consider, this same object, are you able, I would say, to foresee, if you do not know already, what happens, when this surface is constituted, what happens, if one cuts it, remaining always very exactly at an equal distance from its edges, that is to say that if one cuts it in two, longitudinally?

(10) All of those, of course, who have already opened a few books on the subject know what is involved. This gives the following result: namely, not a divided surface, but a continuous strip, which has moreover the property of being able to reproduce exactly the shape of the first surface, in overlapping itself. It is, in short, a surface that one cannot divide, at least with the first cut of the scissors. Another thing, which is more interesting and which you will not, I believe, because I have never found it there, find in the books. It is the following problem: when the surface has been constituted, can it be duplicated, overlapped by another which is applied exactly onto its shape?

It is very easy to see, to carry out the experiment, that in duplicating, with a surface exactly equal to the first, the one that we are going to apply onto it, we will reach the result that the ending of the second strip that we have introduced into the operation, this ending will stop because it has, at the other ending of the same strip, since we have said by definition that these surfaces are equal, but that these two endings will be separated by the first strip, in other words, that they cannot connect up, except by crossing the first surface.

This is not obvious and is discovered by experimentation. It is closely linked, (11) moreover, with the better known first result that I evoked for you. You must admit that this necessary crossing of the surface by the surface which duplicates it, is something which can appear very useful to us for signifying the relationship of the signifier to the subject. I mean: the first fact, always to be recalled, that in no case can the signifier signify itself, except by reduplicating itself, a point that is very frequently if not always forgotten, and of course forgotten with a lot of disadvantages. It will be all the more necessary to remember it here.

On the other hand, it is perhaps linked to this topological property that we must seek, the something unexpected, fruitful, as I might say, in experience that we can recognise as being at every point comparable to an effect of sense.

I am pushing this business still further, and perhaps you will later see its much more tangible implications; undoubtedly, if we continued the covering of our first surface, the Moebius strip, by a surface which is this time, not equivalent to its length but doubles it, we will manage in effect, in so far as these words have a sense, to envelop it inside and outside. This is what is effectively realised here. You should understand that in the middle there is a Moebius surface, and all around a surface of the type of the reduplicated surface, when a little earlier I cut it with (12) a scissors in the middle, which overlaps it, I repeat, if these words have a sense: inside and outside. In that case you see that these two surfaces are knotted.

In other words, and this in a fashion which is just as necessary, as unexpected for simple intuition, which is there to give us the idea that the signifying chain, since quite often metaphors reach a goal only as a preliminary, they only try to target things in an approximate fashion, that the signifying chain has perhaps a much fuller meaning, in the sense that it implies a link, and another link, which interlock, that we presuppose this at first.

I feel perhaps something like a hesitation before the rather distant character of what I have brought here with respect to our problems.

Nevertheless, the division of the field that this structure can contribute: if we compare the Moebius surface to the surface which completes it in the cross-cap, and which is a plane provided with special properties, it is not simply skewed, it is something, of which one can moreover only say the following, which is that it involves, it involves its eventual connection by a Moebius surface.

Imagine the internal eight, as I called it, where again it is a matter of filling it with an imaginary surface, imagine this simply as a circle, to imagine it for yourselves, (13) simply imagine first of all this heart-shape, and that this part here on the right, has little by little encroached, as you finally see it doing, on the left. It is clear that the edges are continuous, that the homology, the parallelism, if you wish, into which these edges enter with respect to their opposite, this is what will allow you to lodge more easily in it, a surface like the Moebius strip, following the surface that you generate, following thus the space between the opposite

edges, you will effectively have this sort of turning back of this surface, which was what I pointed out to you earlier, towards the very definition of the strip.

But here, what happens if we complete this surface by the other one? The fact is that the Moebius strip necessarily cuts the aforesaid portion at another point, therefore in a line whose localisation does not matter but which, for intuition, reveals itself here as the most obvious one.

What does that mean? It means that if we set ourselves, eventually, to make such a cut function in that way, but instead of what the logic of classes taken in extension uses, of what are called the Euler circles, we can highlight certain essential relationships. My discourse does not allow me to push them to the end here, but you should know as regards a syllogism, for example, as problematic as the following:

(14)

All men are mortal
Socrates is a man
Therefore Socrates is mortal

A syllogism as regards which I hope there are here a certain number of ears, if they are willing to admit to the debate something other than meaning, what I called the other day sense, that this syllogism has something which retains us, and that moreover philosophy did not put it forward immediately, or in a pure context; it is nowhere to be found in the *Analytics* of Aristotle who, I imagine, was careful to avoid it. Not at all certainly, that it would be simply the feeling of reverence or of respect that would have prevented him from putting into play with the rest of men the one from whom there emerged a whole body of thought; but that he did not know that the term Socrates, in this context, can be introduced without care.

And thus we are carried - here I am anticipating - into the very heart of a question of the same order precisely as the one that interests us. It is strange that at a time when linguistics is flourishing, the discussion about what is the proper name, is entirely suspended. I mean that if it appears correct, and you know I think that a certain number, all sorts of remarkable works, all sorts of outstanding viewpoints on the function of the proper name with respect to what seems to be self-evident, (15) the first function of the signifier, denomination, undoubtedly, in order simply to introduce what I mean, the thing that is striking, is that on introducing oneself into one of the different, very categorised developments which have emerged on this theme, what I might call a genuinely fascinating value on all who notice it, it appears with a very great regularity in reading each author that everything that the others say is complete absurdity.

Here is something that is well designed to retain us and, I would say, to introduce this little corner, this little angle into the question of the proper name, something which would begin by this quite simple thing: Socrates - and I really believe that in the end there is no way of avoiding this first apprehension, this first principle - Socrates is the name of the one who is called Socrates. Which does not all mean the same thing, because there is the chap himself, Socrates with his pals, there is Socrates as a designator, I am speaking here about the function of the proper

name, it is impossible to integrate it, without asking the question of what is announced at the level of the proper name.

That the proper name has a designatory function, yourself as had been said, which is not true of the individual as such, for by taking this path you will see that we arrive at absurdities, the fact that it has this use does absolutely not exhaust the (15) question of what is announced in the proper name. You will tell me, well say it, but precisely in fact this requires some detour.

But undoubtedly the objection that we have to make to the “Socrates is mortal” of the conclusion is indeed here. Because what is announced in Socrates is undoubtedly in an altogether privileged relationship to death, because if there is something of which we are sure about this man of whom we know nothing, it is that he asked for death, and in these terms: “Take me Socrates as I am, atopic, or else kill me”. This, assured, univocal, and without ambiguity.

And I think that only the use of our little Euler circle - not Eulerian but corrected - allows us by writing right around the circumference in a devouring parallelism

All men,
are mortal

Socrates
is mortal

consider that the junction of these formulae, major and conclusion is what is going to allow us to divide up two fields of sense: undoubtedly a field of meaning where it appears quite natural that Socrates is there in parallel to “all men” and is inserted there; a field of sense also which intersects the first and through which the question is posed for us whether we ought to give to “is a man”, which does not (17) come within it, and much more for us than for anyone else in a problematic fashion, the sense of being in the prolongation of this intersection of sense and meaning, namely, whether to be a man requires death, yes or no, namely to see entering, by that means, this simple problem of logic, and by not bringing into play anything but considerations of signifiers, the bringing into play of what Freud introduced as death drive.

I will come back to this example. I spoke earlier about Dante and his topology that is finally illustrated in his great poem. I asked myself the question. I think that if Dante came back, he would have found himself, at least in past years, at ease in my seminar.

I mean, that it is not because for him everything about substance and being pivots around what is called the point, what is at the same time the point of expansion and of vanishing of this sphere, that he would not have found the greatest interest in the way in which we questioned language, because, before his *Divine Comedy*, he had written *De vulgari eloquentia*, he had also written *Vita Nuova*, he had written *Vita Nuova* about the problem of desire, and in truth the *Divine Comedy* cannot be understood without this preamble. But undoubtedly in *De vulgari eloquentia*, he (18) manifests no doubt, with impasses no doubt, with exemplary points of arrival where we know that it is not at all the way to go, it is for that reason that we are trying to reform the topology of questions, he showed the most

lively sense of the primary and primitive character of language, of maternal language, he says, in opposing it to everything that in his time was the attachment, the obstinate recourse to a learned language, and in a word the preemption of language by logic.

All the problems of the junction between language and what is called thought, and God knows with what an "accent", when it involves one or other of these in the child, following Mr Piaget for example, everything depends on the false path, in the going astray of research that is otherwise illuminating as regards the meritorious facts, as regards thoughtful groupings, in the accumulation, all of this going astray depends on the miscognition of the order which exists between language and logic.

Everyone knows, everyone reproaches the first logics which emerged, and specifically Aristotle's, with being too grammatical, with suffering too much from the stamp of grammar. Oh how true it is! Is it not precisely this that indicates it to us: that it is from this that they begin. I am speaking even of the most refined forms, the most purified ones that we have managed to give to logic, I am speaking about logics that are called symbolic, mathematical logic, and everything that is (19) most refined in what we have contributed in the order of axiomatising, of logistics, the question for us is not at all to set up this order of thinking, this pure and more and more circumscribed game that, not without the intervention of our progress in the sciences, we are succeeding in perfecting, it is not to substitute it for language, I mean to believe that language is, in a way, the instrument that is involved, because everything proves and in the forefront, precisely, our analytic experience, that the order of language and of grammatical language, for recourse to the maternal tongue, to the first tongue, the one that the suckling and the common man speaks spontaneously, is not an objection for Dante, contrary to the grammarians of his time, to see the exactly correlative importance of the *lingua grammatica*, it is that grammar which matters to him and it is here that he is sure of finding the pure tongue.

It is the whole space, the whole difference there is between Piaget's mode of approach and that for example of someone like Vygotsky - I hope that this name does not sound strange to all my listeners - he was a psychologist, an experimentalist, who lived immediately after the revolution of 1917 in Russia, and who pursued his work up to the time he died, prematurely, alas, in 1934.

(20) This book should be read, or indeed - since I pose the question: "How are we going to work?" - someone, and I will say later under what conditions, must take responsibility for this work or some other one, in order, as I might say, to illuminate it in the light of the major lines of reference whose status we are trying to establish here, in order to see in it, on the one hand what it contributes, as I might say, to this water, to this mill, and also the way in which it only responds in a more or less naive fashion to it, it is obviously in a case like this the only way to proceed, for if this book, and the method that Vygotsky introduces, are distinguished by a very severe separation, besides so obvious in the facts that one is astonished that in the last article which has appeared by Mr Piaget, one that has appeared in a collection on psycho-linguistics, he maintains unyieldingly, and he could have replied in a little pamphlet that was added to the book quite explicitly

in the evolution of his thinking, having regard to the function of language, that he more than ever holds that language no doubt helps the development in the child of concepts which, he thinks that, I am not saying subsequent concepts but the concepts in the child as he encounters a limit in grasping them, (21) that these concepts which are always closely linked to a reference to action, that language is only there as a help, as an instrument, but secondary, and all he wants to highlight in questioning the child is inappropriate usage.

Now, all experience shows, on the contrary, that if anything is striking in the language of the child who is beginning to speak, it is not its inappropriateness, it is the anticipation, it is the paradoxical precession of certain elements of the language, which ought to appear later, as I might say, the concrete elements of insertion, as they say, are sufficiently, it is the precession of particles, of little formulae, of "perhaps not", of "but still", which arise very precociously in the child's language, showing even that provided one looks at it with a bit of freshness, of naivety from a certain point of view, which would allow it to be said, and after all, if necessary I will bring in documents, that grammatical structure is absolutely correlative to all the first appearances of language.

What does that mean, if not that what is important, is not at all to see that what is happening in the mind is undoubtedly something which, with time, is realised because he becomes the adult that we believe we are, it is that if at a certain stage, (22) at certain levels, there are to be highlighted in his adequation to the concept, and there we will be struck that someone like Vygotsky, I am saying it simply in passing, without making any more of it, has precisely posed his interrogation in terms that I am going to tell you, namely, completely different ones to those of Piaget, perceives that even a rigorous handling of concepts, he denotes it by certain signs, can be in a way fallacious, and that the real handling of a concept is acquired, he says, singularly and unfortunately without drawing the consequences of this, only at puberty.

But let us leave that. The important thing would be to study as Vygotsky did, and which is moreover for him the source of an extremely rich apperception, even though it has not been exploited since then in the same circle, what the child does spontaneously with what, with words, without which undoubtedly every one agrees there is no concept. What then does he do with these words, with these words that, as they say, he uses badly, badly compared to what, compared to the concept of the adult who questions him, but which serve him all the same for a very precise usage, a usage of the signifier. What does he make of them, what corresponds in him to the dependency on the word, on the signifier, at the same level where there is going to be introduced, retroactively, through his participation (23) in the culture that we call adult, let us say by the retroactivity of concepts that we will call scientific, if it is a fact that it is these in the end which win out, what does he do with the words which resemble a concept?

I am not here today to give you a summary of Vygotsky, since I hope someone else is going to look after it. What I want to say to you, is the following: it is that we see reappearing the door, in all its freshness, of what Darwin with his genius discovered one day, and which is well known: the case of the child who begins,

right at the beginning of his language, to call something, let us say, in French that would be *coin coin* (quack, quack): in phonetic form, we are talking about an American child, in phonetic form it is quack, that this quack which is the signifier which isolates it, I would say, taken at its original source, because it is the cry of the duck, the duck that he begins by calling quack, he is going to transfer from the duck to the water in which it splashes about, from the water to everything which splashes about in it, this without prejudice to the preservation of the flying form, because this quack also designates all birds, and it ends up by designating what? I will give you a thousand guesses: a monetary unit which is marked with the sign of the eagle, with which it was at that time stamped, I do not know whether it still is, in the United States.

(24) One can say that in many matters, the first observation, the one that strikes, the one that makes its way in the literature, and is sometimes charged with a kind of blessing, it is two extremes of the signifier, which are the cry by which this living being, the duck, makes himself heard and which begins to function as what? Who knows? Is it a concept? Is it his name? Most probably his name because there is a way of questioning the function of denomination which is to take the signifier as something which either sticks onto, or is detached from the individual that it is made to designate, and which culminates at this other thing, which believe me I do not believe is chance or the lucky find of an individual, that it is not for nothing that it involves some participation, very probably no one who the conscience of the child, that it should be to a coin that this finally attaches itself, I see no psychological confirmation in this, let us say that I see in it, as I might say, the augury of what always guides discovery when it does not allow itself to be hindered on its path by prejudice. Here, Darwin, by simply collecting this example from the mouth of a little child, shows us the two terms, the two extreme terms around which there are situated, there are knotted and are inserted, one as problematic as the other, the cry on the one hand and on the other something (25) which perhaps you would be astonished to hear me telling you, that we will have to question in connection with language: the function of money.

A forgotten term in the works of linguists, but as regards which it is clear that before them and among those who have studied money in their text, one sees emerging as they write, in a way necessarily, the reference to language. Language, the signifier as guarantee of something which goes infinitely far beyond the problem of the objective, and which is not either this ideal point where we can place ourselves, of reference to the truth.

It is from this last point, the discrimination, the sieve, the screen to isolate the true proposition, it is from there as you know, it is the principle of the whole axiomatic of Mr Bertrand Russell, and this has produced three enormous volumes which are called *Principia Mathematica*, which are absolutely fascinating to read, if you are able to maintain yourself through so many pages at the level of pure algebra, and in that regard it seems that, with respect to the progress of mathematics itself, the advantage is not absolutely decisive. This is not our business.

Our business is the following: it is the analysis that Mr Bertrand Russell gives of language. There is more than one of his works to which one could refer, I indicate

one that you can find everywhere today, you can buy it, it is the book called *Signification et vérité* published by Flammarion.

(26) You will see there that by questioning things from the angle of this pure logic, Bertrand Russell conceives of language as a superimposition, a scaffolding, an indeterminate number of a succession of metalanguages.

Each propositional level, being subordinated to the control, to the correction of the proposition on a higher scale, where it is put in question as a first proposition. I am, of course, schematising to an extreme degree what you can see the illustration of in this work. I think that this work, like any other work by Bertrand Russell, is exemplary, in the fact that taking to its final term what I would call the very possibility of a metalanguage, he shows its absurdity precisely in the following: that the fundamental affirmation from which we begin here, and without which there would not be, in effect, any problem about the relationships between language and thought, between language and the subject, is the fact there is no metalanguage.

Every kind of approach, up to and including the structural approach in linguistics, is itself included, is itself dependent, is itself secondary, is itself at a loss compared to the first and pure use of language. Every logical development, whatever it may be, presumes at the origin the language from which it is detached. If we do not hold firmly to this point of view, every question that we pose, here, the whole (27) topology that we are trying to develop is completely vain and futile, and Mr Piaget and Mr Russell - or whoever - are right: the only problem is that not a single one of them manages to agree with any of the others.

What am I doing here, and why am I pursuing this discourse? I am doing so because I am engaged in an experience which absolutely requires it. But how can I pursue it? Since, by the very premisses that I have just reaffirmed here, I cannot sustain this discourse except from an exceptionally precarious place, namely, that I assume this enormous audacity where each time, you may well believe me, I have the feeling of risking everything, this properly speaking untenable place, which is that of the subject.

There is nothing here that is comparable to any position that might be described as that of a professor. I mean that the position of the professor, in so far as it puts between the audience and oneself a certain framed, guaranteed, grounded *summa*, forming in the communication a sort of intermediary, barrier and rampart, and precisely something that habituates, favours the thing that launches the mind on paths which are the ones that, too briefly, I was earlier able to denounce as being those of Mr Piaget.

There is a problem about psychoanalysts, as you know. Things happen among (28) psychoanalysts, and even things, as I recalled at the beginning of my seminar last year, that are rather comical, I would even say farcical, as there happened to me for three years, to have in the front row of the seminar that I was giving at St Anne, a *brochette* of people who never missed one, nor a single one of the articulations that I was putting forward, while at the same time actively working

to ensure that I was excluded from their community. This is an extreme position, which, in truth, I can only explain by having recourse to a very precise dimension which I described as farce and I will situate it at another time. Another context would have been needed for me to say with Abelard: "*Odium mundi me fecit logica.*" [The hatred of the world made me a logician(?)]

That may perhaps start here. But then that was not what was in question. It was a question of the following: of a rather crude incident, among others, of things that happen all the time in what are called analytic societies. Why did this happen? In the final analysis, because if the formula that I am giving is true, the relationships of the subject to sense, if the psychoanalyst is there in analysis, as everyone knows he is, except that one forgets what that means, to represent sense up to and in the measure that he will represent it effectively, and it happens that, well or badly formed, with time the psychoanalyst more and more fits in with this position.

(29) In that very measure, I mean then, at the level of the best. You can form a judgement about what is involved for the others. Psychoanalysts, in normal conditions, do not communicate with one another. I mean that if sense - this is my radical reference - is what I already approached in fact in connection with the *Witz* of Freud, which is to be characterised in an order which is certainly communicable, but not codifiable in the currently accepted modes of identical communication and which I called, which I evoked, which I highlighted the last time under the term of *non-sense*, as being the icy face, the sheer one, where there is marked this limit between the effect of the signifier and what returns to it by reflection of signified facts, if in other words, there is somewhere a *pas de sens* - it is the term I used in connection with the *Witz*, playing on the ambiguity of the word *pas*, negation, and the word *pas*, crossing - nothing prepares the psychoanalyst effectively to discuss his experience with his neighbour. This is the difficulty - I am not saying it is insurmountable because I am here trying to trace the paths - here is the difficulty moreover that leaps to the eyes, simply you have to know how to formulate it, the difficulty of establishing a psychoanalytic science.

This impasse, which obviously must be resolved by indirect means, this impasse is (30) compensated for by all sorts of artifices, and this indeed is the drama of the communication between analysts.

Of course there is the solution of master-words (*maître-mots*). And from time to time some of them appear. Not often. From time to time some appear. And our friend Klein introduced a certain number of them. And then, in a certain way, one could say that for myself the signifier is perhaps the master word. No, precisely not. But let us leave this.

The solution of master words is not a solution, even though it is the one with which, in large measure, people are satisfied. If I put forward, if I put forward, the solution of master-words, it is because on the track that we are on today, it is not only analysts who have the need to find it. Mr Bertrand Russell, to compose his language, made up of the scaffolding, of the Babel-like edifice of metalanguages,

one on top the other, there must be a foundation, therefore he invented object-language. There must be a level, unfortunately nobody is able to grasp it, where language is in itself pure object. I defy you to put forward a single conjunction of signifiers which could have that function.

Others of course will search for master words at another end of the chain. And when I speak of master words in analytic theory, it is words like those. It is quite (31) clear that whatever meaning is given to this term, it is not sustainable in any sense. The maintaining of nonsense as signifier of the presence of the subject, the Socratic atopia, is essential for this very search.

Nevertheless, by pursuing it, in so far as its path has not been traced, the role of the one who assumes, not at all that of the subject who is presumed to know but of risking himself at the place where he is lacking, is a privileged place and one which has the right to certain rules of the game, specifically, that for all of those who come to hear him, something should not be made of the use of the words that he puts forward, what might be called counterfeit money. I mean that an imperceptible weakening of the use of one or other of the terms that I put forward in the course of the years, signalled long ago and in advance, who would be the people who would follow me in my work, and who would fall by the wayside.

And it is for this reason that I do not want to leave you today without telling you what is the object of my concern about the audience that I am so happy to have gathered together here.

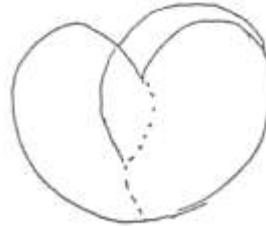
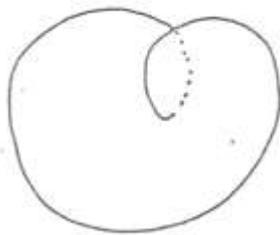
Undoubtedly, one can pursue this research for psychoanalysis, which I spoke about this year, by maintaining oneself in this region which is not at all a frontier one, because analogously to this surface about which I spoke earlier, its inside is the same as its outside.

(32) One can pursue this research concerning the point X, the hole of language. One can pursue it publicly, but it is important that there is a place where I have the response that what has been theoretically preserved in my teaching about the notion of sign, which finally only remained perhaps in the word, the word meant something, but that this takes on a locus and a place, precisely in the measure that my audience has been enlarged.

I have made the following arrangement: the fourth, and when they occur the fifth, Wednesdays, the days that I have the honour of speaking with you here, the fourth and the fifth will be closed sessions. Closed does not mean that anybody in particular is excluded. But that one is admitted on demand. In other words, given that this will not begin this month because there is no fourth Wednesday, I will only speak to you the next time and not the 23rd, the fourth Wednesday of January, anyone who comes here, and who knows, there is no reason why you should not be just as numerous, but it is not sure that all the people who are here will ask me. The relationship S D which is situated somewhere on the right of the graph, which at least some of you know the existence of, has in a discourse such as (33) the one that I am pursuing here, and whose function I have I think sufficiently outlined as analogous, even though inverted, to the analytic

relationship, posits as a healthy and normal structure, that the people who have formulated a request to me should participate in a certain order of work. I will be, I give you notice, very open to these demands, provided I am free, on my side, to summon the person to get a sense of their quality and their measure, but it is armed with a card sanctioning the fact that I agreed to their request, that the fourth Wednesdays and the fifth, up to the end of this year, which makes - I worked it out - eight of these sessions, people will come here to work according to a mode in which, I indicate already, I will have for some people, and I would like to meet those who are willing to help me on this point, I would like to allow some people to take the floor instead of me.

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Seminar 3 : Wednesday 16 December 1964

If psychology, whatever its object may be, but this object itself, as it is vainly sustained, being able to be defined as unique, in some way being able to lead us, along whatever path, to knowledge, in other words, if the soul existed, if knowledge was connected to the soul, professors of psychology, teachers of psychology ought to be recruited by the same methods by which they apprehend their object and, to illustrate what I mean, they should realise what happens in some sections of the museum - let us name one at random, the most representative one, conchology, the science of shells - and ought in short to realise at one stroke, the totality of teaching personnel and the collection itself. The summary of their

university titles serving well enough in this metaphor as an image for the label of provenance stuck onto the aforesaid samples.

Experience proves, even though nothing can be ruled out in the future, that up to the present nothing of the kind has happened. The attempt of a Piaget, which is properly speaking that of limiting in such a narrow way the process, the progress (2) of effective knowledge to the development of something that is supposed to be immanent to a human or other species is something which, undoubtedly, in a fashion that is certainly analogical, since no phenomenology of the spirit, however elementary it may be, can be implicated in it, has to culminate at this sort of selection, of sampling, that I am speaking of, making of the intelligence quotient, in a way, the only possible standard of someone who has to respond to a certain functioning, to a certain integration of the functioning of intelligence.

The object of psychology is so little a unitary one, moreover, that this translation of the word soul to the level at which it serves as a theory of intellectual development is completely insufficient to fulfil its use, and everyone knows that in other registers, we would arrive at the same paradox: that those who have in some way or other to recognise, indeed to administer the field of the soul, ought also to realise in themselves some types, some prototypes or some elective moments of that which, when all is said and done, must be called the beautiful soul.

Luckily, no one dreams of it any longer, the most profound distrust having been cast on this category of the beautiful soul, as you know, by Hegel; the relationship of the beautiful soul to the disorders of the world was once and for all and definitively stigmatised by the undoubtedly penetrating remark which introduces us (3) from every angle to the dialectic applied here, that the beautiful soul has no other support than that disorder itself.

It is clear however that, in the recruitment procedures that psychoanalysts impose on themselves, there is in this whole field, which I was not able to sweep completely with the beam of the searchlight, there is a place which is distinguished by something which comes close in a very remarkable fashion to this paradoxical hypothesis, and that the idea that someone who has to teach, to account for what analytic praxis effectively is, for what it claims to conquer in the real, this someone, in a certain fashion, is himself the one who chooses himself as being a particularly well sorted-out sample of this progress. You will sense, moreover, that what is involved here is something other than something typical, than something static, it is a matter of a certain test, but then it is all the more important to specify the import of this test, and without any doubt the term identification, which is introduced here, for example, by presenting it as the end of the analytic experience, cannot fail at the same time to introduce a quite acute point of this problematic: at what level does this identification occur? At the level of an experience that is itself particular. Is the analysand someone who transmits a certain mode of the experiences of the one who analysed him, as he himself has received it, how can these experiences be (4) oriented with respect to one another, does the preceding one always have something which, in a way, goes beyond and includes the one which emerges from it; on the contrary does it leave the way

open for going beyond it ? This, undoubtedly, is the most difficult level at which to pose the problem, it is certainly also the one at which it must be resolved. How can it even be envisaged if we do not grasp the structure of this experience?

For in no way, in analytic theory, can anything that is found at the level of this identification as substantial, in no way can this serve as a module and a measure, and psychoanalysts themselves, even those most entrenched in one or other traditional process, which God knows must not be studied too closely, would laugh if they were told that what it is a matter of transmitting is a function of the ego-ideal type. The identification involved can only be defined, grasped elsewhere.

We cannot of course be content with something which might evoke having been exercised at one time according to a certain dynamic. How could one find there anything whatsoever that would not resolve itself into a sort of endogeny, the awareness of a certain number of displacements grasped from within, but what graspable, what transmissible, what organisable, what in a word scientific thing, (5) can be based on something which would only amount, in that case, to being at the level of a certain type of massage, if you wish, of a type of breathing exercise, even of some kind of relaxation, something as primitively close to the innermost sphere of a test that, in the final analysis, is corporal.

That is why it is so important to attempt to grasp what is involved in an experience which puts itself forward as being, in the fullest sense, which no doubt does not fail to identify itself entirely to something as absolute, as radical, as speaking about the truth, [and] can nevertheless not refuse, I mean at the level of its experience, at the level of its results, this dimension of veracity, of something which, having been conquered, is revealed not simply as liberating but more authentic than that which was included in the knot from which one had to liberate oneself.

Moreover, it is not for nothing that there occur in my discourse elements of metaphor which are so singular, so unnoticed perhaps but also so striking, if we retain them, as those of knot, which bring us back to what already the last time I brought in here, in this little model that I brought to you in the shape of the Moebius strip, by reminding you of the importance of something which is of the order of topology.

(6) And its use is, in a way, immediately suggested by the simple remark that we ought to make, even though it is beginning from a test, from a test which is in a way naive as regards this realism, like that of Piaget, which is undoubtedly that it is not difficult at one or other turning point of the text to highlight the flaw by which he claims that by simply taking language as an instrument of intelligence and by failing to recognise in the most profound fashion that far from it being the instrument of intelligence, he demonstrates at the same time, and along the same path of the same discourse, how is it then that he underlines in the same discourse that this instrument is so inappropriate, that language is precisely what creates difficulties for intelligence. What perhaps should also be brought up for intelligence are the problems posed by language. It is difficult for it to guide an

appropriate behaviour at the level of the pure and simple obstacle, of the pure and simple and immediate reality, the one that you come up against by knocking your head against it.

To refer this inappropriateness of language to some primitive state or other of what is called, on this occasion, thinking, is really here only to reject the problem without resolving it in any way, for if, effectively, language was at first some crystallisation which was imposed on the exercise of intelligence as an apparatus, (7) why is it not obvious that intelligence would have made language as appropriate as it made, after all, its primitive instruments which we know to be among all instruments often the most marvellously clever, the most striking for us, to the point that we are scarcely able to restore the perfection of their equilibrium, made with the minimum of material and at the same time the best chosen material, hence the instruments that we may have, these primitive ones, are in a way the most precious from the point of view of the quality of the object, why would language not have been something analogous in its own way, if effectively it was the creation, the secretion, the prolongation of an intelligent act ?

Quite the contrary, if there is something that, in a first approach, we could try to define as being the field of thinking, well then, why not provisionally, if it is absolutely necessary to start from intelligence, would I not say that thinking, and God knows it is a formula which would apply well at different levels, at least in a descriptive fashion, since it appears, at least at first sight, from an approach that thinking is intelligence trying to find its feet in the difficulties that the function of language imposes on it.

(8) Far from us being able in any way, of course - this is the first door that linguistics opens - to content ourselves with this first crude schema, which would make of language the apparatus, the instrument of some bi-univocal correspondence, whatever it may be, is it not clear that this very pursuit which is carried out of reducing it under the critical form of meaning, of logical-positivism and its myth of arriving at an exhaustion of the meaning of meaning, to carry out completely in every use of the signifier the exhaustion of different meanings which once supposedly, we are told, connoted will allow us to have a conversation, a dialogue which will be unambiguous, because we will always know in what sense, in what usage, in what acceptance such a word is brought in, who does not know, who does not see that everything that language contributes in terms of fruitfulness, indeed even in pure and simple functioning, always consists, not at all in operating upon this sort of preformed conjunction, apparatus, which, after which, we would no longer have anything to do except to collect, except to read there the solution of a problem, who does not see that it is precisely this operation which itself constitutes the solution of the problem, that this operation of the function and what I may make bold to call for the moment ideally bi-univocal is precisely what it is a matter of obtaining at the end of every research.

(9) This being posited as being of the order of the simplest introduction of any preface for tackling the difficulty of the problem, we see that if the linguistic approach, which is far from dating properly speaking from our epoch - I was recently questioned about this use of the signifier and the signified, which as I was

replying seemed to me now to be really the words that are in vogue, that one begins to hear at every street corner, and which are used, put forward, in the most common replies at meetings - these terms were not invented today or yesterday and the Stoics alone can claim to have introduced them technically in the shape of the *signans* and the *signatum*. What is more one can show their roots much further back, and that it is enough to approach the function of language for there to be introduced a certain type of division which is not unambiguous, which is something that is completely radical, and by the situation of the fact that in this radical we are so implicated that we are only subjects, I am saying, by being implicated at this radical level and in a fashion nevertheless which allows us to see what we are implicated in, and that it is nothing other than what is called structure.

The ambiguity that we grasp, and whose trace I am going to make you follow in one or other field more favourable to show it, between sense and meaning, for (10) example, which alone are capable - it is not always pure pleasure to play with the shimmering of what appears final to us because it cannot even be referred to the higher category of being a shimmering of sense, since it is already a division within sense that is involved - it is because it is uniquely at this level that there is resolved, as you will see when it is a question of a certain type of usage of the word, that there are resolved patent contradictions, patent simply by revealing themselves when in connection with the same words, for example with what is called the proper name, you will see some people seeing there what is most indicative, and others what is most arbitrary, therefore what seems to be the least indicative: the one sees in it what is most concrete, the other what seems to go in the opposite direction, what is most empty; the one what is most charged with sense, the other what is most stripped of it, so that taking things, as you will see, in a certain debate, in a certain register, from a certain angle, this function of the proper name, it is clear in the most transparent fashion, is properly speaking for what it is and for what his name indicates, and what is not at all simply the proper name, it is, as Mr Russell says, *a word for the particular, un mot pour le particulier*, certainly not, certainly not as you will see.

But let us continue .

(11) I would like right away to illustrate the function of tautology for you with something: I spoke earlier about realism, about naive realism, I will oppose to it, I will oppose to it a mode under which the materialism which commonly enters our discourse as, God knows, a very little explored reference, materialism consists of only as admitting as existent material signs. Is that a circle? Certainly not. This suggests a sense. Materiality is certainly not explained but who in our day would feel himself comfortable in explaining it as an essence, as a final substance, but that this term is here expressly referred to signs, to signs at the moment that, on the other hand, where, as a radical reference, I said that signs are what represent something for someone, here is something that at the same time give us the model of what a certain type of apparently tautological reference, for I only said one thing, which is that materialism is what posits as existent only what we have the material signs of, has certainly not touched the sense of the word material, and nevertheless however tautological it is, it bring us a sense and shows us in a way

in an exemplary, paradigmatic figure the usefulness of this little knot whose outline I drew for you the other day, this original double point which, by drawing it as being (12) the introductory circle to any possible approach to the function, whether of signifier or of sign, and here already in order to show you that we cannot make use of it as something which can in any way be reduced to the term of a punctual reference, if the circle is favourable to the mythical apprehension of its contraction to some zero point, there always remains something irreducible in a structure which cannot abolish itself by tightening in on itself; and here, after all, encouraged by the fact that there did not at all fall into a void - I was able to take note of that- what I contributed the last time about the Moebius strip, whose implication I will now point out to you in order to illustrate, provide the illumination which pushes, which begins to push to its highest point its exemplary value.

It is Saussure who, speaking about the signified, and everyone knows that he did not at all speak about it in a definitive fashion, if only because of the ambiguities which were swallowed up through the door of his theory, precisely on this point - the most efficacious thing he says about it, is undoubtedly the fact that with regard to the signifier, the signified presents itself in a back-to-front relationship, or if you wish in a front-to-back one. And of course there is something of this order which is suggested to us by the existence of the semantic sign, of the sign in language, (13) what is undoubtedly involved is that if one sticks in the closest possible fashion to phonematic analysis, it is impossible to speak about a sound element in the modern analysis of linguistics without considering it as being closely linked to what ? To what is called *meaning* and we rediscover here the ambiguity between meaning and sense.

If I began my discourse this year with this example taken from a book on grammar which is an example in which I showed you that whatever about its striving towards asemantics, from the very fact of being grammatical it did not fail to carry a sense, and undoubtedly in this connection I was able to make you feel the two paths upon which we could search for what is called here sense, and that the one was not the other, and that along the path of meaning where we saw there could be constructed in abundance and almost so super-abundantly that our only difficulty was choosing, it was in the measure that we were operating through something, along some path, and that it is not a matter of indifference to point out - this is why I chose an example in a foreign tongue - that it was easier for me, more natural to lead you along the path of translation. It was by translating it into French, that I managed to make emerge from it pretty well everything that I wished by a very simple operational procedure, and one quite like that of conjuring.

(14) But that something different was involved in the other direction which by making us end up no doubt at the impasse and the closed nature of what constitutes the point of surprise, the charm of a poetic text clearly indicated to us that it was another dimension that was involved.

No doubt what it left in vagueness, mist and cloud as regard this poetic direction is something that can in no way appear sufficient to us. But it is here that I bring

you back to the property of this singular surface which, of course, has a front and a back at every point. The important thing is that one should be able, by a certain journey along its circumference to get from any point whatsoever - whether it is from this place, or a corresponding one on the other side is fine - when I tell you that the signifier is essentially structured on the model of the aforesaid Moebius surface, that is what that means, namely, that it is on the same face, constituting the back and the front that we can encounter the material, the material which here is found to be structured on a phonematic opposition and this something which is not translated but which passes, which passes from one signifier to another in its functioning, in the functioning that belongs to language, even the most random one, this is what this poetic experiment demonstrates, in a way, that something which gets across and that this is where the sense is according as the mode that it (15) gets across is differently locatable and differently highlighted. This is what we are going to try to do, this alone is what allows us an exact mapping out of an experience which, from the very fact of being entirely an experience not alone of words but of artificial words, of words structured by a certain number of conditions which inflect the import of the discourse, ought to be mapped out with respect to what I called earlier the usage of the language by something or someone, the subject, the agent, the patient who is caught up in it.

So then I am going to introduce today, introduce one of these shapes, one of these topological shapes, one of these shapes founded on the surface, whose example I gave you the last time, to introduce you, to introduce you into this function because I think that all the same you have heard tell of the Klein bottle.

Let us take up this bottle again. Let us appropriate it to ourselves. And in the Klein bottle, and off we go.

It is extremely interesting. It is going to be of great use to us and you are going to see why. I remind you that I introduced the last time this remark that space, three-dimensional space, is something that is not at all clear, and that before speaking (16) about it like bird-brains, we will have to see the different shapes under which we can apprehend it, precisely along the path of mathematics which is essentially combinatory; and that it is a completely different thing to consider matters resolved with the shapes that one can call the shapes of the revolution of a surface that gives us what? After all nothing other than a volume, and it is not for nothing that it is called that. It is called that because it is constructed on the model, and it is not at all by chance, of something which is a rolled-up surface, a surface where one makes a roll, obviously. That takes up a particular little space. After that, you can take it in your hands and amuse yourself with it.

Turning a circle around an axis, is called a sphere. As I have said, turn this thing which I will call a triangle or simply an angle, according to whether I will limit it or not by a line which cuts the two sides, and you will have a cone, a conic section or an infinite cone according to the case.

But there are things that do not behave at all like that, which do not for the moment need to see the space as constructed and which do extremely well.

As I told you, there are three fundamental shapes, the hole - we will come back to it - the torus, as I told you, the cross-cap.

(17) The torus does not seem to be very complicated. Take what ever you like, a ring of black pudding, a bicycle tube, simply, begin in your head to pose little problems. For example the following: make a cut like that in it, exactly like that; and if you have not already done so and if you have not already reflected on the torus, tell me how many pieces that will give, for example. Which proves to you that one can pose questions in this way with what are not, as I pointed out the last time, immediately intuited objects.

But we are not going to delay on these little toys, I simply want to point out to you how these figures are constructed in a simple and combinatory fashion. They are constructed in the following fashion: the most elementary shape of them that can be given is that of a four-sided figure whose sides are vectorialised.

What does this vectorialisation signify here? That signifies that we construct these figures by a suture, that we stitch what is called here an edge, I will spare you the intermediate definition of what edge means here, that it is in the sense of the vectorialisation, namely, that a point being here on the vector, the point (a) culminates at a point (a') which does not correspond to it in a metrical fashion but (18) which is its correspondent in an ordered way, in the sense that a point (b) which is more in the direction of the vector, will then be sewn, whatever it may be and whatever may be the metrically defined distance between (a') and (b'), sewn on to the point (b'). The same thing for the couple on the other side of the aforesaid construction.

It is obviously only strictly square here for the visual, Gestaltic intelligibility of the eye. I could just as well construct it as follows: I will put the same vectors and that would have exactly the same meaning. Why? Because it constructs a torus. How is a torus constructed? A torus is constructed, it is very easy to understand, and that is why I began with it, a torus is constructed by first of all suturing this side with the other, namely by making what for common intuition is a first cylinder, or if you wish, one can suppose that the space in the interval has some function or other - there are people like that, there is St. Thomas, there are people who always want to stuff their fingers into something. It is a human type.

They make black pudding all their lives. In any case if you want to fill it, you will then have a full roll and, starting from there, you can close this roll and you will obtain what is drawn here.

(19) What does that mean? It means that in a structure which is essentially of a spatial order, which has no history, you nevertheless introduce a temporal element.

In order for this to be fully determined you must connote one and one by the same number but by some number or some connotation which implies, only coming after the two operations. You cannot perform them at the same time. It does not matter which comes before the other; it will always have the same result, a torus,

but it will not give the same torus, because in some instances that will give two tori, one crossing the other. It is even one of their more interesting functions.

So with that, it is a simple introductory exercise, what is a Klein bottle? A Klein bottle is a construction of exactly the same type, with the simple difference that, if the two vectorialised edges are vectorialised in the same direction, it is let us say in accordance with the torus mode, therefore that like the torus it is suitable for making a black pudding. The other opposite edges - as regards which it does not matter whether the operation of suturing is done before or after the other one, it will give the same result, but which ought to be done in a successive fashion - the two other edges are vectorialised in the opposite direction.

(20) I am going to show you right away on the blackboard what this involves, for those who have not yet heard tell of the Klein bottle. That involves something which, if you wish, in section, in section of course, not wanting to say anything in this register, since we are not introducing the third dimension of space; and in a way for common intuition, for the mapping out which is yours habitually in experience, and after all perhaps one can say customarily, because there is no objection to the dimensions of the topology of surfaces being more immediately accessible and familiar to you; it is enough for you to practice it a bit, this is even what is desirable; here is what this gives in section.

Good. What does that mean? That means that this, as I told you, is a section, namely, that there is here, let us say, a volume which is common, which has a conduit which passes through the centre; in other words this deserves to be called a bottle because, see here the body of the bottle and here is its neck, it is a neck which is supposed to be extended in such a way that, entering the body of the bottle, if you wish, to emphasise it better, I am going to show you the entrance here, it is going to be inserted, to be sutured, to the bottom of this bottle.

(21) So then, without even having recourse to my drawing, in words, in terms, you have a bottle, a Vittel bottle. You twist its neck, you make it go through the side wall of this bottle and you insert it onto the bottom of the bottle. At the same time this insertion opens and you can see that you have here something which is realised, with the characteristics of a completely closed surface, this surface is everywhere closed and nevertheless, one can get into its interior, as I might say, as into a mill.

Its inside communicates completely, integrally with its outside. Nevertheless this surface is completely closed.

This would only be a bit of physics-for-fun except of course for the fact that this bottle is capable of containing a liquid and even under ordinary conditions, as I am going to represent it for you, of not allowing it to be poured out, namely of containing it without one even needing to worry about a cork, this is something that the simplest reflection will allow you to conceive of. If you effectively stand this up, as I have drawn it, and you make it effectively function as a bottle, which is filled once it has its bottom in the air, but if you turn it upside down, put its bottom below, it is quite certain that the liquid will not pour out.

(22) This, I repeat, is of strictly no interest. What is interesting is that the properties of this bottle are such that the surface in question, the surface which encloses it, the surface which composes it, has exactly the same properties as a Moebius strip, namely that there is only one face, as it is easy to verify and affirm.

So that, since this may also appear to be a bit of sleight-of-hand, and is not that at all despite the fact that it could pass for something analogous, an effect of sense, and that it is not at all in an analogical fashion that I intend to talk to you about it.

I am going to try to materialise it for you in a fashion that is completely clear: if we begin from the sphere, we could make of the sphere, a bottle; it is something that is not at all impossible. Supposing that this sphere is a rubber ball, you fold it back a bit like this, onto itself, it is not even necessary that here you have this little twist, it is clearer you can always make a cup out of it by pushing it into itself. I would even say that this is the way that the process of the formation of an animal body begins it is the blastula stage, after the morula stage.

(23) Here what do you have? You have an outside, an inside, an inside; the surface, an original series and an outside. You have, in realising something which can be a container, you have modified nothing of the function of the two faces of the surface with respect to the original sphere.

Something completely different happens, if first taking the sphere and making of it this strangled thing, you take one of the halves of the sphere and insert it into the other. In other words, I am schematising. (Drawing). Have you got it?

From the dumbbell of the double ball which I constructed here by strangulation, from this spherical surface I make, imagine that here is ball 1 what I am going here ... the second ball has entered the interior; here you have the original outside, the inside, and what is brought face to face here is a surface of the first outside with the inside, no longer like in my blastula of above; the inside remaining always face to face. And the inside is here, from the second part of the surface. It that a Klein bottle?

No! To get to the Klein bottle something else is needed. But it is here that I am going to be able to explain something to you which is going to show you the interest of highlighting the aforesaid Klein bottle.

(24) The fact is that, suppose that there is some relationship, some structural relationship, as is all the same well indicated for a long time by the constancy, the permanence of the metaphor of the circle and of the sphere in all cosmological thinking, suppose that it is like this that one has to construct, to represent for oneself in a healthy fashion, that one has to construct what concerns precisely cosmological thinking. Cosmological thinking is founded essentially not on a bi-univocal correspondence but a structural one, the enveloping of the microcosm by the macrocosm; that this microcosm, call it whatever you wish subject, soul, *nous*, that this cosmos you can call whatever you wish reality, the universe, but suppose that one envelops the other and contains it, and that the one which is contained

manifests itself as being, as it were, the result of this cosmos, that which corresponds to it member for member.

It is impossible to extirpate this fundamental hypothesis, and it is from this that there dates a certain stage in thinking, which, if you follow what I said earlier, is about a certain use of language.

And this corresponds to it precisely in the measure, and uniquely in the measure, that in this register of thinking the microcosm, as is fitting, is not made up of a part of the world that is, in a way, turned inside-out in the way one turns a rabbit's skin inside-out.

(25) It is not earlier, like earlier, in my blastula as I drew it, the inside which is outside for the microcosm, it is well and truly also an outside that it has, and which is confronted with the inside of the cosmos. Such is the symbolic function of this stage where I am leading you to in the reconstruction of the Klein bottle.

We are going to see that this schema is, of course, essential for a certain mode of thinking and style, but to represent it for you, I will show you in detail and in the facts, a certain limitation, a certain unawakened implication in the use of language.

The moment of awakening, in so far, as I told you, I highlighted, as I located it historically in the *cogito* of Descartes, is something that is not at all immediately apparent, precisely in the measure that of this *cogito* one makes something that has a psychological value. But if one pinpoints exactly what is in question, if it is what I said, namely the making obvious of the function of the signifier, and is nothing other than the fact that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, it is starting from this discovery that the supposedly pre-established pact of the signifier with some thing being broken, it is established, it is established in history, and since it is from there that science started, it is established that it is from this rupture, even (10) if immediately, and because simply it is taught only incompletely, and it is taught only incompletely because its final principle is not seen, that it is starting from there that a science can be inscribed, starting from the moment where there is broken this parallelism between the subject and the cosmos which envelopes it, and which makes of the subject, *psyche*, psychology, microcosm, it is starting from the moment that we introduce here a different suture, and one which I called elsewhere an essential buttoning point, which is the one that here opens up a hole, and thanks to which the structure of the Klein bottle is then, and only then, established, namely, that in the sewing which is done at the level of this hole, what is knotted is the surface to itself, in such a way that what we have up to the present taken as outside, is found connected to what we have located up to the present as inside, to what was located as inside, is sutured, knotted to the face that was located up to then as outside.

[Noises off] Is it visible, is it clear enough? Do you see from down there in the bad light? Here we have opened up an orifice crossing both what in my drawing symbolised the enveloping cosmos and what in my drawing symbolised the

enveloped microcosm, and it is in this way that we rejoin the structure of the Klein bottle.

(27) Have you seen it enough? No? Well then I'll make it bigger. Otherwise we'll never understand anything. There it is now, completed.

Are you beginning to see that? Are you beginning to see it? Have you grasped the essential of what I explained to you earlier, the structure of the Klein bottle? This blackboard must be really badly lit. Is there no light, since I see down there people craning their necks? It would all the same be important for you to see what I drew. I am leading you here along a difficult path, which given the time and the necessity for explanations will not lead you today directly to its relationship to language. So that, because we have no more than ten minutes, I will try to give you a little amusing explanation of it, whose general relationship with the field of analytical experience you will see.

There is more than one way of expressing this construction. I could give you for it the figure of Gagarin, the cosmonaut. Gagarin, the cosmonaut, apparently is well and truly enclosed - let us say, to simplify and to go quickly, we do not have much more time - like ancient man, in his wandering cosmos. From the biological point of view it is, moreover, between ourselves, allow me to point it out to you in (28) passing, something very curious and which could be punctuated with respect to the evolution of animal descendance. I remind you that it is very difficult to grasp, to grasp in any imaginable way, how an animal who regularly exchanged what he had need of, from the respiratory point of view, with the milieu in which he was plunged at the level of the bronchioles, to realise this absolutely fabulous thing, of being able to emerge out of the water, in the present case, by sending into his own interior, an important fraction of the atmosphere. From this evolutionary point of view, you can notice that Gagarin, in so far as he has the slightest responsibility in all of this, reduplicates the operation, he envelops himself in his own lung. Which requires him in the final analysis to piss inside his own lung, because after all it has to go somewhere. Hence the exemplary syllogism that I will have to develop for you in the future, following the famous syllogism: all men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal. I found useful for purposes that you will see better later on, but whose introduction is a caricature, a caricature of this famous syllogism on Socrates, that all cosmonauts are pissers, that Gagarin is a cosmonaut, therefore that Gagarin is a pisser.

(29) Which has about as much importance as the formula about Socrates! But let us leave that for the moment.

Far from Gagarin contenting himself with being a pisser, he is not a cosmonaut either. He is not a cosmonaut, because he is not wandering through the cosmos, whatever may be said about it; because the trajectory which carries him was, from the point of view of the cosmos, completely unexpected, and that one can say, in a certain sense, that any god who ever presided over the existence of a cosmos, never expected, never knew anything about the precise trajectory, the necessary trajectory in function of the laws of gravity, and which literally were not able to

be discovered except by beginning from an absolute rejection of all cosmic facts. All the contemporaries of Newton rejected, indignantly, the possibility of the existence of an action a distance, of an action which is not propagated from neighbour to neighbour, because this was up to then, the law of the cosmos, the law of reciprocal interaction between its parts.

There is in Newton's law, in so far as it allows our little projectile which is called a Sputnik, to be something which is held in a perfectly stable way, at the level of a preconceived law; there is here something of an absolutely acosmic nature, as besides from this fact, from the very fact of this point of insertion, the whole development of modern science.

(30) And this is why that the opening that is involved here, namely, that the cosmos itself, that the little cosmos which allows Gagarin to subsist through the spaces, is something which depends on a construction of a profoundly acosmic nature.

It is with this, with the internal sphere, that we are dealing in analysis under the name of reality, an apparent reality which is that of the correspondence, in appearance, the modeling, one on the other, of something called the soul and something called reality. But compared to this apprehension, which remains the psychological apprehension of the world, psychoanalysis gives us two openings : The first, the one which from this forum, from this meeting place, where man believes himself to be the centre of the world, but it is not this notion of centre which is here the important thing in what is called, parrot-like, the Copernican revolution, under the pretext that the centre jumped from the earth to the sun, which is a clear disadvantage, namely, that from the moment that we believe that the centre is the sun, we also believe at the same time that there is an absolute centre, something that the ancients who saw the sun moving according to the seasons did not believe, they were much more relativist than we are. This is not what is important, it that is the psyche, the soul, the subject, in the sense that it is (31) employed in the theory of knowledge, is represented not as centre, but as the lining (*doublure*) of a reality which at the same time becomes cosmic reality.

What psychoanalysis uncovers for us is: this passage, this passage by which one comes to the between-the-two, on the other side of the lining, where this interval, this interval which appears to be what grounds the correspondence between the inside and the outside, where this interval - and this is the world of the dream, it is the other scene of action - is perceived.

Freud's *Heimlich*, and it is why it is at the same time *Unheimlich*, is that, it is that thing, this locus, this secret place where you walk the streets in this singular reality, streets that are so singular that it is on this that I will dwell the next time in order to begin again. Why is it necessary to give streets proper names?

You walk the streets then, and you go from street to street, from place to place, but one day it happens that without knowing why, you cross some limit or other that is invisible to yourself, and you come upon a place where you have never been, and which nevertheless you recognise as being that place where it reminds

you of having always been there, and having returned a hundred times, you remember it now, it was there in your memory, like a sort of island apart, something not noticed which suddenly comes together for you.

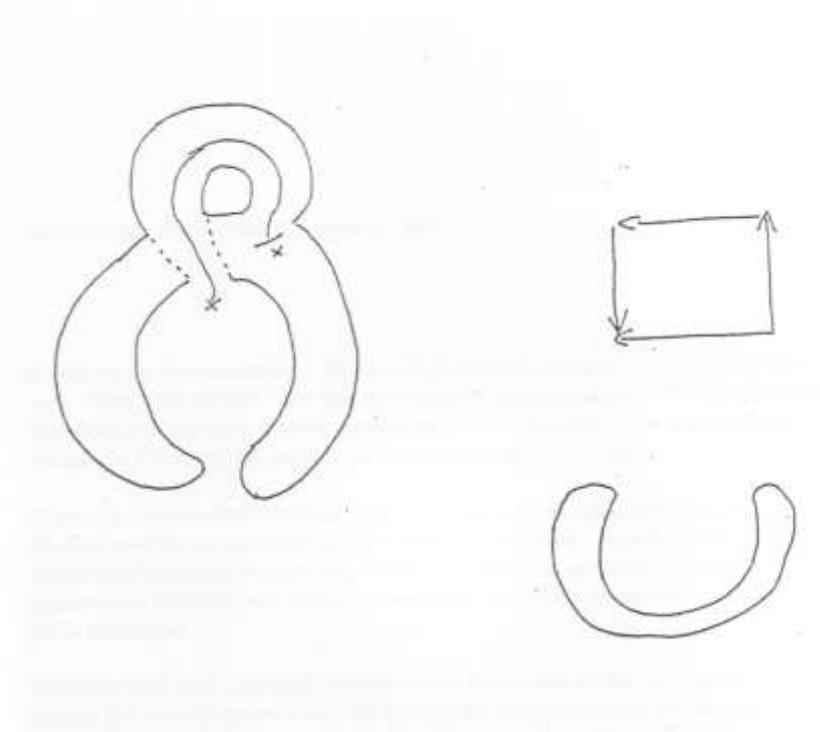
(32) This place, which has no name, but which is distinguished by the strangeness of its setting, by what Freud highlights precisely so well, precisely the ambiguity which ensures that *Heimlich* or *Unheimlich* is one of those words where, in its own negation, we put our finger on the continuity, the identity between its front and its back. This place, which is properly speaking the other scene of action, because it is the one where you see reality, no doubt you know that it comes to birth as a set (*décor*), and you know that it is not what is at the other side of the set that is the truth, and that if you were there, in front of the stage, it is you who are at the other side of the set, and who are touching something that goes further in the relationship of reality to everything that envelops it.

At one time last year I appeared, or perhaps even something which might deserve it to be said that I spoke ill of love, when I said that its field, the field of *Verliebtheit*, is a field at once profoundly anchored in the real, in the regulation of pleasure, and at the same time fundamentally narcissistic.

Undoubtedly another dimension is given to us in this special conjunction; the way in which it happens along the most real paths, it is our companion when we come (33) to this special locus of experience, this is an indication that something, of a dimension that no one more than the romantic poet knew how to accentuate in a thrilling way. There are still other ways for us to make it heard, it is the path of non-sense, that of Alice, not in Wonderland, but precisely having carried out this crossing, this impossible crossing into the specular reflection, which is the passage to the other side of the mirror, it is that, *through the looking glass*, is presented as that which can have this singular encounter, it is this which in another dimension, I said, was explored by romantic experience, this is what is called, with a different accent, love.

But to come back from this place and to understand it, and for it to have been grasped, for it even to have been discovered, for it to exist in this structure which means that here, I encountered the structure of two opposed faces which allow this other scene of action to be constituted, it is necessary that elsewhere there has been realised the structure on which there depends the a-cosmicity of everything, namely that somewhere, what is called structure, the structure of language, is capable of responding to us, not at all of course, it is not a matter here in any way of something which prejudges the absolute adequation of language to the real, but of that which as language introduces into the real everything that is accessible to us in it in an operational fashion. Language enters the real and creates structure in it. We participate in this operation and by participating in it we are included, (34) implicated in a rigorous and coherent topology, so that every discovery, every decisive door pushed at a point of this structure, must be accompanied by the mapping out in a strict exploration, by the definite indication of the point where the other opening is. Here it would be easy for me to evoke the misunderstood passage of Virgil at the end of Chapter VI; the two gates of the dream, are exactly inscribed there; the gate of ivory, he tells us, and the gate of

horn. The gate of horn which opens to us the field of what is true in the dream, and it is the field of the dream; and the ivory gate which is the one through which Anchises and Aeneas are sent back with the Sibyl towards the light, it is the one through which erroneous dreams pass, the ivory gate, the most captivating in the locus of the dream, the one most charged with error, is the locus where we believe ourselves to be a subsistent soul at the heart of reality.



Seminar 4: Wednesday 6 January 1965

Problems for psychoanalysis. This is how I agreed to situate my remarks for this year. Why, after all, did I not say: problems for psychoanalysts? The fact is that it is proved by experience that for psychoanalysts, as they say, there is no problem except the following: do people come to psychoanalysis or not?

If people come to their practice, they know that something is going to happen; this the firm position on which the psychoanalyst is anchored. They know that something is going to happen that might be qualified as miraculous, if one understands this term with reference to *mirare*, which at the extreme could mean to be astonished.

In truth, thank God, there still remains in the experience of the psychoanalyst, this margin that what happens is surprising for him. A psychoanalyst of the heroic epoch, Theodore Reik - it is a good sign, I have just remembered his first name, I had forgotten it this morning, while I was making my notes, and you will see that this has the closest relationship with my remarks today - Theodore Reik, then,

entitled one of his books: *Der überraschte Psychologe*, the surprised (2) psychologist. The fact is, in truth, that in the heroic period of psychoanalytic technique he belonged to, one had even more reasons than now to be astonished, for if I spoke earlier about a margin, it is because the psychoanalyst, step by step throughout the decades, has repressed this astonishment to his frontiers. It is perhaps that now also, this astonishment serves as a frontier for him; namely, to separate him from this world from which people come or do not come to psychoanalysis.

Within these frontiers, he know what is happening, or believes he knows. He believes he knows because he has traced out its paths. But if there is something that ought to remind him of his experience, it is precisely this share of illusion which threatens every knowledge which is too sure of itself. In Theodore Reik's time this author could give astonishment, *Überraschung*, as the signal, the illumination, the brilliance, which to the analyst designates that he apprehends the unconscious, that something has revealed itself which is of this order of subjective experience which happens all of a sudden, and moreover, not knowing how he did it, from the other side of the set (*décor*), that is the *Überraschung*, and it is on this path, along this way, on this trace that he know at least that he is on his own road. (3) No doubt at the time Theodore Reik's experience began from, these paths were marked by darkness, and the surprise represented their sudden illumination. Lightning flashes, however brilliant they may be, are not enough to construct a world. And we are going to see that, where Freud saw there being opened the gates to this world, he did not yet know how to properly denominate either the frame or the hinges of these doors.

Is this enough to ensure that the analyst, in so far as he has been able since to map out the regular unfolding of a process, necessarily knows where he is, or even where he is going? Something can be mapped out without being thought and we have enough testimonies that many things about this process, and one could perhaps say almost all, in any case the ends, remain problematic for him.

The question of the ending of the analysis and of the sense of this ending is not at all resolved at the present time. I only evoke it here as a testimony of what I am putting forward concerning what I am calling the mapping out, which is not necessarily a reflected mapping out.

Undoubtedly there is something which remains assured in that experience, which is that it is associated with we will call effects of unknotting. The unknotting of things charged with sense which cannot be unknotted by other means, this is the (4) solid ground on which the analytic camp is established. If I use this term, it is precisely in order to designate what results from this closure from which I began my discourse today, breaking through or not the frontiers of the camp. The psychoanalyst has the right to affirm that certain things, symptoms, in the analytic sense of the term, which is not that of a sign but of a certain knot whose shape, tightening or thread have never been properly named, that a certain knot of signs to signs, and which is properly at the foundation of what one calls the analytic symptom, namely, something installed in the subjective, which cannot in any way be resolved by reasonable and logical dialogue.

Here the psychoanalyst affirms to the one who suffers from it, to the patient: “you will not be delivered from it, from this knot, except within the camp”. But does that mean that there is here, for him, the analyst, more than an empirical truth in the measure that he only operates it, handles it, by reason of the experience that he has of the paths that are traced out in the artificial conditions of analytic experience? Does it mean that everything has been said at the level of what he can bear witness to from his practice, in terms of demands, transference, identification?

It is enough to note the stumbling, the inappropriateness, the insufficiency of the (5) references that are given to these terms of the experience, and to take only the first one, the major one, the turning-plate, transference, to note in the very text of analytic discourse, that properly speaking, at a certain level of this discourse, one can say that the person who carries it out has no idea of what he is doing. For the kind of irreducible residue which remains in all these discourses about transference, in so far as they have still not succeeded, any more than common, everyday language, any more than what has passed of it into the common representation of an affective relationship, as long as this has not been eliminated, since affective has precisely no other sense than that of irrational, one will see as regards one of these terms, transference, and I do not need to return to the others, darkness progressively deepening in the measure that one advances towards the other term of the series, identification, that nothing is grasped, that nothing is theorised about an experience, however sure may be the rules and the precepts accumulated up to now.

It is not enough to know how to do something - turn a vase or sculpt an object - to know what one is working on. Hence the ontological mythology about which the psychoanalyst has been attacked, quite correctly, when he is told: “these terms to which you refer, and which, in the final analysis point towards this confused (6) locus of the tendency, and since it is to this that, in the common philosophy of psychoanalysis, the drive will finally and in an erroneous fashion be brought back; this then is what you are working on, you entify, you ontify, an immanent property into something substantial. Your man, the anthropology of the analyst, we already know for a long time, this old *ousia*, this soul, still as lively, intact, untouched as ever”. But the analyst, though he does not name it exactly by its name, except with a little shame, it is all the same to it that he refers in his thinking, as a result of which he is quite rightly and quite justifiably completely exposed to the attacks, which as you know come at him from all sides where thinking is able, has a right, to claim that it is inadequate to speak about man as a given, of man in the numerous determinations which appear to him, internal as well as external, in other words, which present themselves to him as things, as fatalities, that man does not know that he is at the heart of these supposed things, of these supposed fatalities, that it is from a certain initial relationship, a relationship of production, of which he is the mainspring, that these things are determined, no doubt without his knowing it, nevertheless issuing from him.

It remains to be seen whether in rejoining by what I am teaching, those who correctly put in doubt the given, natural, status of the human being, it remains to

be (7) seen whether by doing things in this way, I favour, as I was recently reproached for doing, and by someone very close to me, the resistance of those who have not yet crossed the frontier, who have not come to analysis, or whether the truth of what analysis contributes, can be, yes or no, a way into it. If in a certain fashion, to reject that a discourse may encompass analytic experience, and all the more legitimately because this experience is only possible because of a primordial determination of man by discourse, if by behaving in this way, by opening up the possibility of speaking about analysis outside the analytic field, I am or not favouring the resistance to analysis, and whether the resistance involved is not from within the resistance of the analyst to open his experience to something which might comprehend it.

Our starting point, our given, which is not at all a closed given, is the subject who speaks; what analysis contributes, is that the subject does not speak in order to tell his thoughts. There is no world, the intentional, significant reflection at whatever level it may be - this grotesque infatuated personage who is supposed to be at the centre of the world, predestined from all eternity to give it its sense and its reflection, do you see that this pure spirit, this consciousness announced from all time is supposed to be there as a mirror and to vaticinate - how can it happen then, let us always come back to it, that he may vaticinate in a language which of itself (8) creates an obstacle for him at every instant to manifesting what he experiences as surest in his experience, as is clearly manifested by the contradiction, always embraced by philosophers, between logic and grammar. Since they complain that it is grammar which contaminates their logic, how does it happen that people have always been so attached to speaking in a grammatical language with parts of discourse which ground like themselves, which reflect the pure mirrors, with parts of discourse which they affirm to be the parts that contaminate their logic, and that if they trust it, it is precisely at that moment that they will poke their fingers in their eyes.

We have an experience, an experience which is carried on every day in the office of every analyst - whether he knows it or whether he does not know it is of absolutely no importance - an experience which avoids us having to have recourse to this aspect of the philosophical critique, in so far as it bears witness to its own impasse, an experience in which we put our finger on the fact that because he is speaking, because the subject, the patient, speaks, namely, that he emits these raucous or sweet sounds that are called the material of language, which first determined the path of his thoughts, which determined him at first, to such a degree and in such an original fashion, that he carries the trace of it on his skin like a branded animal, that (9) he is identified at first by this something that may be widespread or restricted, but it is now perceived that it is much more restricted than believed, that a tongue can be contained on a sheet of paper of that size, with the list of its phonemes, and one may well try to continue to preserve the old splits and say that there are two levels in the tongue, the level which does not signify - these are the phonemes- and the others which signify, which are words. Well, I am here today to remind you, that the first apprehensions of the effects of the unconscious were realised by Freud in the years between 1890 and 1900. What gave him the model of it? The article of 1898 on the forgetting of a proper name, the forgetting of the name of Signorelli, as the painter of the celebrated frescoes at

Orvieto. I would point out to you that the first manifest, structuring effect for him, for his thinking, and which opened the path was not produced, and he clearly highlighted it, he articulated it in such a well supported fashion in this article, which as you know was reproduced at the beginning of the book on the *Psychopathology of everyday life*, which would appear six years later. It was from there that he began again, because it was from there that his experience originated. What disappears in this forgetting - what is called forgetting - and from the first steps, you clearly see that what one must always pay attention to is the meaning, because of course, it is not a forgetting, Freudian (10) forgetting is a form of memory, it is even its most precise form; so that it would be better to distrust words like forgetting, *Vergessen*. Let us say a hole. What disappeared through the hole? Phonemes. What he is missing, is not Signorelli, in so far as Signorelli would remind him of things that would turn his stomach. There is nothing to be repressed precisely, as you are going to see, it is articulated in Freud; he does not repress anything, he knows very well what is involved, and why Signorelli and the frescoes at Orvieto touched him profoundly, are linked to these things which most preoccupy him, the link between death and sexuality, nothing is repressed, but what disappears, are the first two syllables of the word Signorelli. And immediately, he says, he highlights: "this has the closest relationship with what we see with symptoms" - and at that time he still only knows the symptoms of the hysteric. It is at the level of signifying material that there are produced the substitutions, the slippages, the disappearing acts, the avoidances that one has to deal with when one is on the path, on the track of the determination of the symptom and of its unknotting.

Only, at that moment - even though his whole discourse is there to testify to us that he is so much at the quick of what is involved in the phenomenon and he (11) ceaselessly at every turn accentuates, as well as he can, what is involved - he says : "in this case it is an *ausserliche Bedingung*, an external condition". Secondly, when he comes back to it again, he will say : "one might object to me that there are" - which proves the point to which he senses clearly the difference between two types of phenomena which can be differentiated here - "there may be internally, in effect, some relations between the fact that what is in question is a stumbling on the name Signorelli, and the fact that Signorelli carries with it, given the frescoes at Orvieto, since that is what is involved, it carries with it many things which may interest me a bit more than I myself am aware of."

Nevertheless, he says : "one might object", because it is all he can say, because he knows well that this is not how things are, and we are going to try to see, to enter more deeply into the mechanism, and to demonstrate what in this original case, this model, the first to appear in Freud's thinking of something initial, crucial for us, we are going to see more in detail how it should be conceived, what systems are imposed on us in order to account exactly for what is involved, that we will find some help in this, from the fact that since that time there is something that we have learned to handle like an object, and which is of course called the system of the tongue, it is a help for us but all the more striking is the fact that the first testimony (12) of Freud, of his discourse when he approaches this field, leaves completely in reserve, absolutely outlined that there is absolutely nothing to add to his discourse, it is only necessary to add to it *signans* and *signatum*.

What we have here undoubtedly is the function of the proper name, as I announced to you I would be led to make use of it, take a certain interest in it. This notion of the proper name takes on an interest because of the privilege it has won in the discourse of linguists.

Rest easy! Those to whom I am speaking up to the present to a major extent, in the most *ad hominem* way, the analysts: rest easy! It is not only you who have problems with discourse. You are even precisely the ones who are best protected from it. I would like to tell you that the linguists do not manage too easily with the proper name. A considerable quantity of books have been published on this subject, which are for us, which ought to be for us very interesting to scrutinise in the proper sense of the term, to take bit by bit with notes. As I cannot do everything, I would really like, for example, someone to take responsibility for it in what are called the closed sessions that I am reserving this year in this course in trying to reintroduce into it the function of the seminar. A book, for example by Mr Bigo Brundal on : *Les parties du discours*, an excellent book published in Copenhagen by Munsgard. Another very attractive one by a Miss Sorensen which (13) is called : *The meaning of proper names*, also published in Copenhagen. There are places in the world where one can be occupied with interesting things, and not devote oneself entirely to creating atom bombs. And then there is *The story of proper names* by Sir Allen H Gardiner, a well known Egyptologist, published by Oxford University Press, this one is particularly interesting and I would say "extraordinary". It is really a *summa*, a sort of concentrated point on the subject of proper names, of everything that one could describe as consummate, obvious, apparent, displayed error.

This error like many others, has its origin on the paths of truth, namely, that it begins from a little remark which had some sense on the paths of the *Aufklärung*. He remarks that John Stuart Mill, setting up a fundamental difference between the function of the noun in general - nobody up to the present has said what a noun is, but they talk about it - of the noun in general, it has two functions, to denote or to connote. There are nouns which carry in themselves possibilities of development, this sort of riches which is called definition, and which in the dictionary refer you on indefinitely from noun to noun. That, that connotes. And then there are others which are made in order to denote. I call by his name someone who was present here in the first row or in the last one, apparently that only concerns them. I am (14) only denominating him. And starting from there, we will define the proper name as something which only intervenes in the nomination of an object, by reason of the proper virtues of its sonority, it does not have, outside this denotation effect, any kind of significant import. This is what Mr Gardiner teaches us.

Of course this has only some very small disadvantages: for example to force him, at least in a first phase, to eliminate all the proper names - they are numerous - which carry a sense in themselves. Oxford, you can cut it in two and that gives something. That refers to something which has a relationship to an ox and so on I am taking his own examples. Villeneuve, Villefranche, these are proper names, but at the same time they have a meaning. That of itself should make us

prick up our ears. But, of course, it is said, it is independently of this meaning that it has, that this serves as a proper name. Unfortunately, it is obvious that if a proper name had no meaning whatsoever, when I introduce someone to someone else, absolutely nothing would happen. While it is clear that if I present myself to you as Jacques Lacan, I am saying something which, right away, involves a certain number of signifying effects for you. First of all because I introduce myself to you (15) in a certain context, if I am in a society, it is because I am not an unknown in this society, on the other hand from the moment that I introduce myself to you as Jacques Lacan, that already rules out that I am a Rockefeller, for example, or the Comte de Paris. There are already a certain number of references which come immediately with a proper name. It may also happen that you have already heard my name somewhere. Then of course it is enriched. To say that a proper name, in a word, is without meaning, is something grossly erroneous. On the contrary it carries with itself much more than meanings, a whole sum of notices.

One cannot in any case designate as its distinctive feature, this arbitrary or conventional character, because that is by definition the property of any kind of signifier, as people have sufficiently insisted, rather awkwardly moreover, on this aspect of language, by emphasising that it is arbitrary and conventional. In reality, it is something different that is aimed at, it is something else that is involved.

It is here that we see the value of this little model that in different shapes, but in reality always the same ones, I am discussing before you, I am speaking about those who have been my listeners in this place since my course of this year and that the others know well for a long time, my Moebius strip, my Klein bottle from the (16) last time, this is what is involved. This is what it returns from, from a model, from a support which it is absolutely not proper to consider as being addressed only to the imagination, because first of all I wanted to make you, as it were, touch with your little comprehender something here, there, behind the forehead, which is characterised precisely by the fact that it does not comprehend, and it is there that Freud in his first attempts placed his hands on the head of the patient whose resistance he wished precisely to lift. It was one of the primitive forms of this operation.

It is not so easy to operate, here, with these topological models. It is no easier for me than for you. It sometimes happens that when I am completely alone I get mixed up. Naturally, when I come before you, I have done my exercises.

So then, to take up my schema from the last time, this kind of little jelly fish, this little floating nautilus; under which I have been left all sorts of figures which ought to clarify the situation for you a good deal. Are you able to see?

If I schematised this Klein bottle for you in this way the last time, namely, in the way that the mathematicians, who are not a bad crowd, tried to blow up, as I might say, this Klein bottle, to amuse the public, if I represent it for you in this way, (17) exactly as the mathematicians have done, for there is a whole aspect of mathematics which happily is introduced from the angle of recreation. A Klein

bottle is not complicated. You can have one made. Someone even proposed that we should have a little shop on the way in here where everyone could get his little Klein bottle. It would be a sign of recognition. A Klein bottle does not cost very much, especially if you order a run of them.

As I explained to you, it is a bottle, it is this one here, a bottle whose neck has entered the interior and has, as I have explained to you, inserted itself onto the bottom of the bottle. And if, in addition, you blow up a little this neck that has gone in, then you have this very pretty schema of a double sphere with one comprehending the other, and, as I think you understood the last time, this is a particular happy way to make you put your finger, in the most original way, on the advantage of this model which man discovered very early, in this double and conjugated image of the microcosm and the macrocosm, namely that it would be for me a game that unfortunately I have not the time to devote myself to, I am sketching it out for you, to show you, for example, the first Chinese astronomy, which is a work of genius, I assure you, the first Chinese astronomy, which is (18) called *ka inh tien*, was composed of an earth formulated in this way, of a heavens which overlapped it like a bowl on top of a bowl and the roots of the heavens being supposed to plunge into something which one tended rather to consider as aqueous and which was borne up as an upturned bowl would be borne up on the water.

This allowed, much more than the very exact mapping out of a certain number of geographical and astronomical coordinates, a whole conception of the world. Order, the order of thoughts as of things and the order of society, being entirely inscribed in a more or less analogical, homological fashion with respect to what such a schema allowed to be marked out about the relationships of what one could call the vertical coordinates, the coordinates to the azimuth, to the equatorial coordinates. When you are in China, of course, the North Pole was placed more or less like that, like a bonnet inclined at an angle, and then the ecliptic pole - people knew perfectly well that it was different - was marked out to one side, that could lend itself to all sorts of differentiations, analogies, as I told you, of classificatory inter-knottings, of correspondences in which everyone could find his place more easily than elsewhere.

This fundamental schema - I am bringing in Chinese astronomy for you, it is an example - you will always find this fundamental schema at every level of metamorphosis in a culture, more or less enriched but obviously the same, more or (19) less dented but with the same outcomes, I mean the necessary outcomes that are more or less camouflaged, because, obviously, here one does not know what is happening, but just as at the basis of analytical experience, one can also dispense with knowing what is happening, namely where the point of suture is, the point of the suture between what I could call the outer skin of the interior, and what I could call the inner skin of the exterior.

No doubt analysis, as I told you, has taught us a certain way into the between-the-two, a certain fashion that the subject may have, in a way, of exiling himself with respect to his situation within the two spheres, the internal sphere and the external

sphere, he may manage to put himself in the between-the-two, a strange place, the place of the dream and of *Unheimlichkeit*.

In short, if you will allow me to cut to the quick, I would say that the question is the following: "When you have once held between your hands, and this would be perhaps a reason to expand in effect the model of this bottle, this Klein bottle, you can pour water into it through the only orifice that it presents to you who are holding it like an object. It will pass here then, along this little swan's neck, and will come to lodge itself here in this between-the-two, thus realising a certain level. By the inverse operation, you can get a few mouthfuls to come out of it, you can (20) even drink from this bottle, but you will see that it is malicious, because once the water has been introduced into the inside it is not all that easy to get it all out."

Here we pass onto the plane of metaphor. What does it mean, in short, to explore the field of the dream or of the uncanny in analysis? It is to try to see what is stuck, as one might say, between the two spheres of a meaning, of a signified, which at first, of which at first the mixture there was made up. One puts some signified into circulation. It is a matter of knowing to what purpose. If we trust the that I am expecting from this little image, it ought to be to evacuate it purely and simply, it is not to put it back again in the inside. It is not in order for us to reconstruct a soul with this soul, which already encumbered us sufficiently, of this slack (*ballant*) which resisted like, we do not know exactly either the mode or the equilibrium or the constrictions of this emptiness, played on like an absolutely unmasterable ballast, because it is enough to complicate this figure a little bit - I leave this to your fantasy and to your imagination - for you to see that with this single condition, of inscribing some little chambers in it, one can make an instrument of particular stability, an instrument for example that it is enough to incline a tiny little bit for it to precipitate itself immediately and tip over onto the ground, the (21) objective goal of the evacuation of meaning is all the same the first aspect suggested by the aims of our experiment. Up to certain degree, how does it happen that it does not occur more easily. It is because of the deceptive properties of the figure. I will try to explain myself and make you understand what I mean on this occasion.

The figure, the Klein bottle, is drawn here precisely in a deceptive way because it is the way in which effectively the structure deceives us, it is the way in which it seems that our consciousness, that our thinking, that our power to signify, reduplicates like an internal lining what seems to envelope it, which means that all you have to do is to turn the object inside out and you will create this idea of the subject of knowledge, who for his part inversely envelops the object of the world that he proposes.

Only when I said earlier that this does not mean advancing something which is of an intuitive order, that what we have here is not at all even an outline of a new transcendental aesthetics, that I invited you to distrust the imaginative properties of what I wrongly called the model, it is because a true Klein bottle - if I may express myself in this way introducing for the first time here the word truth and at the appropriate level - a true Klein bottle does not have this shape, this shape in

which (22) I draw it for you roughly, namely for clarity, in the form of a transversal section, and that, you naturally imagine, as I might say in its volume, I mean, in its roundness. You make each one of its parts revolve around itself, cylindrify itself, which allows you to see [it].

But note that a topological surface is something which requires the distinction between two kinds of these properties, the properties inherent to the surface, and the properties that it takes on from the fact that you put this surface into what is, for its part, real three-dimensional space.

In the same way, everything that can be imaged here about the fundamental meaning of the microcosm/macrocosm relationship, has sense only to the degree that the inherent subjective properties of this topology are immersed in the space of common representation, of what is usually called intersubjectivity, a word that for years I heard a certain number of people, supposedly working with me, gargling at the back of their throats, believing that they held in this word intersubjectivity the equivalent of my teaching. That it is the fact that a subject understands another subject, that a viscount encounters another viscount, that a policeman encounters another policeman, which constitutes the foundations of the mystery and the essence of psychoanalytic experience.

(23) The dimension of intersubjectivity has absolutely nothing to do with the question that we are in the process of elucidating. We can try to approach the true shape, always for your convenience, by putting it into our three-dimensional space. But you are going to see what it is going to suggest to you, about the impasses that are involved in our experience along any other path.

In its essence, what is this Klein bottle? It is quite simply something that is very close to a torus. I mean of a cylinder that you bend back so that it rejoins itself by the suture of two circular cuts which terminate, since this is a truncated cylinder, by which means you will make what is called a ring.

Instead of that, suppose that in this truncated cylinder that you are in the process of transforming into a torus, you leave the circular cut open here, but that this, the other circular cut that it is a question of suturing, you bring, as this little drawing images it for you, in such a way as to leave it open or in such a way that the suture or the stitching - you may evoke your household tasks - where the stitching is done, as one might say, from the inside, in such a way, if you wish, take the example of a sock, here the outside of the sock is going to be joined, be continuous with the inside of the other part of the sock, and the same here on the other side. You will then be able to do what? If you do not plunge it back into the three-
(24) dimensional space of common intersubjectivity, you will have something which is open and closed at the same time, because these surfaces only cross one another in the measure that you are in three-dimensional space. As regards their internal property as surfaces, there is no need to suppose that they cross one another to culminate at this stage of suture.

It is exactly the same schema as the one that I reminded you of when, representing for you the fundamental shape of a Moebius surface, which is this sort of lamina

as you may picture it by taking a simple strip and tying it to itself after a simple half-turn, you could only close it by a surface which cuts itself, and if this surface does not cut itself, the Moebius surface will cross it. This is a necessity implied by the plunge into three-dimensional space, but in no way defines in itself the properties of the surface. You will tell me, we are in this three-dimensional space. Well then, in effect, let's go.

Even in three-dimensional space, it remains that this structure has a privileged quality which distinguishes it from any other and which is the following. That which comes to occupy in my schema, the circumference of this entrance, of this hole, of this orifice which specifies it and which makes of it this surface where things are not orientable because they can always go from the front to the back, the (25) place of this opening is essential, structuring, for the properties of the surface. It can be occupied by any point whatsoever of the surface, as a little bit of imagination will be enough to show you, that contrary to a ring, to a torus, which can only in a way turn upon itself, you can make it remain at the same place, but it turns in its whole fabric in a completely contrary way here, since at every place in the fabric there can be produced by a subtle slippage this ring of lack which gives it its structure.

This is not properly speaking what we are trying to consider today concerning the phenomena which, from forgetting to the proper name, the thesis is the following: everything that the theoreticians, and specifically the linguists, have tried to say about the proper name, always stumbles against the fact that, undoubtedly, it is more specially indicative, denotative, than an other, but that people are incapable of saying why. That on the other hand, it has precisely, compared to the others, this property that while being in appearance the most proper name for something particular, it is precisely what is displaced, what travels, what one bequeaths, and in a word, if I were an entomologist, what would I most desire in the world, if not one day to see a tarantula called by my name? What does that mean? Why is it that the proper name, while being supposedly this part of discourse which has the (26) characteristics which absolutely specify it, why precisely is it what one can employ, contrary to what is said on occasion - for one cannot imagine the kind of slippages of the pen such a subject has given rise to among linguists - it can be used perfectly well in the plural as everyone knows, one says the Durands, the Pommodores, anything and everything, the Brosse-à-rebours, in Courteline, you remember the Brosses-à-rebours man: the honour of the Brosse-à-rebours. One can use a name verbally, in function of verbs, in function of adjectives, indeed of adverbs as perhaps I will one day let you put your finger on.

What is this proper name in the ambiguity of this indicative function, which seems to find the compensation of the fact that its referential properties are still not specifically that they belong to the field of signification, become the properties of displacement, of a jump.

Must we say at this level, which is I believe what Claude Lévi-Strauss ends up with in his thinking, and in what he articulates at the level of the chapter on universalisation and particularisation, of the chapter on the individual as a species, in *La pensée sauvage*, he tries to integrate, to show, that the proper name attaches

nothing more specific than the consciously classificatory usage that he gives to the categories in their opposition, so that, in thinking, in its relationship with language, (27) it determines a certain number of fundamental oppositions, of successive cross-checkings, of splits which, in a way, allow savage thinking to rediscover exactly the same method as the one that Plato gives as being the fundamental one for the creation of the concept.

And our proper name would only be, when all is said and done, inserted as the final term of this classificatory process, the one which circumscribes things closely enough to finally reach the individual as a precisely particular point of the species.

It is clear - I would ask you to refer to these chapters - that in the very movement of elucidation for which he strives, Lévi-Strauss encounters the obstacle, and that he designates it, he designates it, he designates it properly speaking in the fact that he encounters, that he encounters the function of the giver of the name. The proper name is the name that is given. By the godfather, you will say, and this in fact may be enough for you if you are resolved to make of the godfather, the someone other. Only it is not only the godfather, there are also all sorts of rules, there are phases, there is a whole configuration which is a configuration of exchange and of social structure, and it is here that Claude Lévi-Strauss will stop to say, quite correctly, that the problem of the proper name cannot be treated without introducing a reference that is foreign to the properly linguistic field, that it (28) cannot be isolated as a part of discourse outside of the function, of the usage which undoes it.

It is very precisely against this, that here I would raise an objection from another register. It is just as false to say that the proper name is here, the circumscribing, the reduction to the level of a unique example, the same mechanism by which one has preceded from the genus to the species, and through which one has advanced the classification, is just as false to do it, and just as dangerous, and just as heavy with consequences as to confuse, in the mathematical theory of sets, what is called a subset, which comprehends only a single object, with this object itself.

And it is here that those who are mistaken, who are committing errors, that those who plunge very deeply and persevere in their error, end up by becoming for us an object of proof. Bertrand Russell has identified the proper name to such an extent with the denotative and the indicative, that he finished up by saying that the demonstrative, the demonstrative "that", as he says in his tongue, is the proper name *par excellence*. One has to ask why he does not call this point x on the blackboard which is familiar to me, why he does not call it Anthony, for example, and this piece of chalk Honorine.

Why does this sort of result appear to us immediately to be absurd? There are many ways of leading you along the path where I want to lead you and first of all, (29) for example, the following which may immediately strike you as obvious, nobody in his right mind would think of this, because by definition, if I put this point on the board here in a mathematical demonstration, it is precisely in the

measure that this point is essentially replaceable, and that is also why I would never call this piece of chalk Honorine.

On the contrary I could call by this name what Diderot called “my old dressing gown” . This is only a *hint* which introduces the function of the replaceable and at the same time, instead of, and for today, given the time, to make right away the leap which will allow us to articulate better, to link up the next time, I would say that it is not as an example, circumscribed as unique through a certain number of particularities, however exemplary they may seem to be, that the particular is denominated with a proper name, it is in the fact that it is irreplaceable, namely that it can be lacking, that it suggests at the level of lack, the level of the hole, and that it is it not *qua* individual that I am called Jacques Lacan, but *qua* something which may be lacking, which means that this name will be for what? To cover over another lack. The proper name, as one might say, is a movable function, and one can say that there is a share of the personnel, of the personnel of the tongue, on the occasions when it is movable (*volante*).

(30) It is designed to fill the holes, to be a shutter, to close it down, to give it a false appearance of suture. That is the reason, I apologise, it is too late for me to speak for very long more today, but perhaps this is only an opportunity for you, and God knows, one that is easy to take, to consult the texts, to consult the texts which concern this forgetting of the proper name.

What will you see there? You will see there something which can be much better imagined if you begin from the notion that the subject is inherent in a certain number of privileged points of the signifying structure which are in effect - this is the part of Gardiner's discourse that is true - to be put at the level of the phoneme. This means that one should highlight the following, that if Freud did not evoke the name Signorelli, he says, it is because of circumstances which are apparently quite external, quite contingent, he was with a gentleman in a carriage which was taking him to Ragusa, towards a place where he was to take the train again. What are they talking about? They are talking about a certain number of things. And then there are the things that are not said. And why are they not said? This is what we are going to see. They are certainly not said because they are repressed, far from it.

(31) He is speaking then with this man, whose name has been preserved for us by the curiosity of the biographers, it is a Mr Freyhau, a legist, a man of law from Vienna, and they are talking about one thing and another; and in particular Freud evoking, evoking what a friend has told him recently, Freud evoking it, speaks about the people of this country, which they are not properly speaking in the process of crossing, because they are in Dalmatia, but which is not far, it is Bosnia, it is Bosnia still preserving all the traces of a Muslim population - it was not long since Bosnia had been wrenched from the Ottoman empire - Freud remarks the degree to which these peasants are what? Respectful, deferential, excellent as regards the one who takes care of their health, in short the person who is working among them as a doctor, and evoking what his friend had told him, and we also have his name, thanks to Freud this time, in the notes of the article of 1898 which I spoke to you about a little earlier, that these people, when one is led

to tell them that undoubtedly their relation who is there on his stretcher is going to die - "Herr!", says the peasant, the Bosnian peasant, "Sir", but with a note of reverence that, in a country with an archaic social structure, the note of reverence that this name involves, an accent which could easily mean Lord, *Herr*, "we know well that if you could have done something, undoubtedly it would have been done, he would have been cured. But since you cannot, since things are happening as God wishes (32) them to happen, it is in short, it is the will of Allah."

This is what Freud recounts. And what does he not recount? He does not tell things, God knows, that one does not tell just like that to just anyone, and very especially not to someone before whom, precisely, one has just elevated medical dignity, however little, one does not tell him that your same friend, a doctor in the Bosnian region, told you that for these people the value of life is so linked, is linked essentially to sexuality that, from the moment that as regards that there is nothing more, well, one may as well lose one's life also.

Now, no doubt, this is a term which is not at all indifferent to Freud from whatever angle it is taken, at this stage of his life, one can certainly not say in any case that it is a knot, a link which is in any way rejected by him, since it is precisely in the measure that this interests him from two points of view, first of all his practice, remember the text, for those at least who still have it fresh in their memories, remember the function that brings into play another proper name, the name of a little village, of a little village which is at the bottom of the col of Stalvio, which is called Trafoi, where he had received the news, precisely, of the death of one of his patients who had not been able to tolerate a decline in his potency and who had killed himself; he had received the news when he was at Trafoi.

(33) On the other hand everyone knows well that at this precise moment, it was on the fundamental, psychical, structuring, importance of the functions of sex, and of the attachment of the subject to everything that arises from it, that his thinking is directed. It is precisely in this measure that he will not put forward, that he will not put forward, what he could report about what he has heard, in a way, as another characteristic of his particular clientele as a doctor.

What does that mean? What does it mean that something which is not repressed, which is re-evoked, a discourse, a discourse perfectly formulated for him, and that he does not even need to make an effort to re-evoke, he re-evokes it immediately when he notices what is happening, what does that mean that the effect, not at all of a repression but of a discourse that has been withdrawn, *unterdrückt*, to use the same word that we have within our reach in Freud's vocabulary, to interest oneself about the subject of the articulation, of the distinction, of the definition between *unterdrückt* and *verdrängt*, has never been properly articulated. Here is a *Rede*, a discourse, a discourse that knitted on the silk stocking this bizarre way, a discourse which goes outside, it is *ausdrückt*, if you give to *aus* not the sense that it has in to express, but to go outside, *hinaus*.

(34) So what then? How does that happen? Why does it happen? And what is happening so that something is disturbed at that particular moment, and it is here,

it is on this that Freud puts the accent, something is disturbed which has as a result that from Signorelli, what emerges? The fact is, that in this singular phenomenon, which we are calling forgetting here, and which I told you earlier was just as much a mechanism of memory, before the hole that it produces and that everyone knows by his experience, everyone knows what happens when we are searching precisely the proper name that we cannot manage to find. Well then, things happen. A metaphor occurs, substitutions are produced, but it is a very singular metaphor, for this metaphor is completely the inverse of the one whose function, whose creative function of sense, of meaning, of sounds, of pure sounds, I articulated for you, which come, and why bizarrely this *Bo* of Botticelli, a term so close to Signorelli, so close that there is even more to it than Freud said, that it is not only the *elli* that remains afloat it is even the *o* of Signor. Boltraffio, no doubt here the other part is furnished by Trafoi, but again this *bo* and this *bo* is found by Freud immediately, he know very well where it comes from, it comes from another couple of proper names, which are properly speaking Bosnia and Herzegovina. And the *Her* of Herzegovina, is what?

(35) This *Herr* of the story, this *Herr* around which there turns then something. Is it not here -I leave the text, Freud's text - for what I want to show you is that if everything happens as if from the fact of the accommodation of the subject to the *Herr*, powerfully illuminated by the conversation, put at the high point of the emphasis in what one of the subjects had confided to the other which make of both one and the other of the subjects the confidants, it is as if the *bo* came here to place itself, somewhere, at a marginal point.

And what does it designate if not the place where the *Herr*, says Freud, what Freud does not say in this first feeling his way, because he cannot yet see it, articulate it, because the notion has not even come to the light of day, has not even fully emerged in analytic theory, what he does not see is that the disturbance that is involved here is essentially linked to identification. This *Herr* that is involved, and this *Herr* which on this occasion has kept all its weight and all its vigour, which does not want to let itself go with this simple legal chap, to go a bit far in medical confidences, the fact is that it is the doctor, the *Herr*, becomes Freud for once identified with his medical personage which takes every precaution with the other.

But what does he lose there? He loses his shadow, his doubt, which is not perhaps so much, as the text says, the Signor, this is perhaps to go too far as one always (36) goes in translating, in the sense of making sense.

I would be more inclined, for my part, to see that the *o* of Signor is not lost at all, and is even reduplicated in this Boltraffio, that Botticelli has proved that it is the sign, the sign which is just as much the *signans* as the Sigmund Freud. It is the place of his desire properly speaking, in so far as it is the true place of his identification which here finds itself placed at the point of scotoma, at what is in a way the blind point of the eye, and because all of this is so closely related to what last year I evoked with you concerning the function of the look in identification that - do not omit the following which is in the text and just as powerfully articulated and left without a solution - which is that Freud notes that in several of

the cases that he has thus highlighted, there is produced something quite singular at the very moment that he fails to find the name of this Signorelli whom he admires so much, what is it that ceaselessly - allow me to anticipate my own discourse - what is it that ceaselessly looks at him?

I say I am anticipating because it is not what Freud tells us. He tells us that at this moment, during the whole time that he was looking for the name Signorelli - and he finished by finding it, someone gave him this name, he did not rediscover it himself - during all this time, the figure of Signorelli, which is in the fresco at (37) Orvieto, somewhere on the bottom left, with his hands joined, the figure of Signorelli never ceased to be present to him, endowed with a particular brilliance.

Here I return the ball to someone who, attentive to my remarks, recently posed me the question: "What do you mean exactly, what is it that remains written in the text of your seminar when you said: where the subject sees himself from, is not the place from which he looks at himself?"

And remember also what I told you a picture was, a true picture. It is look. That it is the picture which looks at the person who falls within its field and in its capture, that the painter is the one who makes the look of the other fall before him.

Signorelli here, and in the very measure that there gleams in this false identification, in this fallacious overlapping of the surface to which Freud limits himself, to which he holds and refuses to give his whole discourse, what he loses there of this circumscribed identity, of this hole of the lost name and of this sign, of this sign incarnated to the very end by a sort of extraordinary chance of destiny which is here truly written, written in a signifier, of what emerges there; but the figure, the figure projected before him, of the one who no longer knows from where he sees himself, the point from which he looks on himself, because this S of the schema in which I showed you that there is constituted the primordial identification, the identification of the unary trait, the identification of the I, from (38) which somewhere, for the subject everything takes its bearings, this S of course, for its part, has no point, it is the reason why it is outside, that the point of birth, the point of emergence of some creation which can be of the order of reflection, of the order of what is organised, as a secret, of what is located, of what is established as intersubjectivity, this sudden illumination which is given to the very image of the one whose name is lost, of the one who make himself present here as lack, it is truly, and Freud leaves the matter suspended for us, leaves us in a way in suspense, leaves us unable to answer the riddle, as one says on this subject, it is the apparition of the point of emergence in the world, of the point of sudden appearance, through which that which in language can only be expressed by the lack, comes to be.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 13 January 1965

You should know that I ask myself whether I satisfy, as well as I am able, the duties of my discourse. It is not enough for me to receive compliments, that for example the last time the *faena* was very successful. What it may involve in terms of eloquence is a kindness towards my listeners, and not, as people in more than one place pretend to assure themselves, a source of satisfaction for me. And these sort of compliments, especially when they come to me from the place to which I am addressing a precise message, leave me still more disappointed.

But moreover, if there are points in this gathering where I know very well who I am addressing, there is a whole section, a whole section of these faces that I see and see again to the point that in the end I can finally pick them out, recognise them, regarding whom I have questioned myself as to what motivated their presence here. And this is one of the reasons for which I wished to establish the closed Wednesday of my seminar. Properly speaking, it is what will give again a sense to this word seminar, in so far as I hope that certain people will contribute to it.

(2) It is on this occasion, that having requested people to ask me for the right to admission, which is not designed to refuse anyone but quite the contrary, I also had the opportunity, which was precious for me, not just simply to see, I am capable from all kinds of echoes of imagining what may be gathered by so many ears straining to follow my discourse, but to gather from their lips the testimony of what each one of that part of my audience seems effectively to be seeking in what they come to listen to here.

There are those who tell me quite bluntly that they do not comprehend everything, but who afterwards, quite inconsiderately, sometimes come to bear witness to me that they reproach themselves for having done so, and that at times they found themselves to be stupid. Let them reassure themselves; they are not the only ones and they have the advantage over the others that they are aware of it.

What is meant by the fact that they do not comprehend everything? That they do not comprehend, and with good reason, because I cannot here provide them with a whole context, which is that of the supporting points on which I am trying to establish for you what seems to me can be concluded from an experience, the analytic experience, which I have necessarily taken further than they have - I am speaking about the part of my audience to whom I just now alluded. This context I cannot, I mean what allows me here to highlight for one or other more experienced section of my audience, what precise correspondences can be found to (3) the formulae which, issuing from my experience, are not entirely legible for all, in a certain style of research: precisely for example, the last time, those researches into the proper name where the vacillation, indeed the weakness, the

striking paradox of the formula of one particular thinker, gave us the means of verifying, which assures us of being - when we tackle a point of consistency, of internal consistency, of a coherence that I could say is global for all our experience, like the one I put forward the last time under the rubric of identification - which bears witness to us that in connection with the proper name, not alone the linguists but the logicians even, let us say the word, it is not unworthy to be pronounced when Bertrand Russell is involved, thinkers, hesitate, go into a skid, indeed make a mistake, when they approach this point of identification, in connection with the privileged usage the proper name is supposed to have as designating the chosen means of indicating the location of the particular, taken as such.

Undoubtedly here, we analysts are responsible, I mean that we cannot be dispensed from making our contribution, if our experience allows us to bear witness to a function of oscillation, of vacillation, of particularly indicative dynamic through which the function of the proper name finds itself taken up into something which is (4) indeed our field, the field of psychoanalytic experience, it deserves to be designated as I do it, in a certain more integrating, more specific fashion than any other, since it involves the subject. That is why it is not at all necessary that all those who are here should yet have present, at the level of their knowledge, of their culture, let us say, these terms of reference, that there can remain in this regard many points to hold on to, suspended hooks, points where they will be able later, further on, to find their feet again in the furrow of the lines to which they will undoubtedly have to refer. They will have nothing to lose in their progress by remembering here the guiding thread they may have found in it and in many this feeling of the guiding thread, of the *Leitfaden*, is given to me in a way which is not ambiguous and which assures me that language does not need to be charged with explicit erudition, with references, which the field I have to cover prevents me from being able to give you a list of every time, that they do not need all of that in order to sense that in one or other of their particular works, my discourse serves them as this guiding thread. That is why the door of this seminar is open as of right to all of those who contribute in a fashion that I believe I understand, and whose testimony I think I can be sure of, even if they do not intend, for reasons which in (5) certain cases are quite legitimate, to be in too much of a hurry to contribute to it. Each and every one, to whom I sense that this radical discourse which our experience, the analytic experience is, contributes in a close or a distant way such help, it is the presence of all of these that I wish to have and they can be sure that I will not refuse it to them.

The demand that I have made is not therefore an exigency designed, as I might say to perform an act of allegiance, to bow one's head under some archway or other at the entrance. It is a desire to know to whom I am speaking and to what degree I may have to respond more precisely to their question. It should be noted moreover, that apart from certain eminent and remarkable exceptions, I was surprised, I am pointing it out to you, it is not a lack for me, I am waiting, I was surprised perhaps by the lack of eagerness, of those who, having a greater right to come here or precisely to make a contribution, did not think, for one reason or another, perhaps because they felt that they had already acquired in advance their right of entry, did not expressly specify what I was expecting from them in terms

of something more articulated, namely, in what measure they will be disposed to bring, here then, to this circle, this more restricted circle, the contribution of their work.

I think then that I have sufficiently specified, repeated, repeated in time since we (6) are only a fortnight away from what will be the first Wednesday that I have described - you have heard in what sense - a closed Wednesday. I am forced to return to the formula even though you sensed that it is not at all to be taken in any way, in an exclusive sense; this closed Wednesday means that there will only enter those who will at that date, be provided with the card that expressly invites them.

Let us come back to our remarks; the one on which I left you the last time. What is meant, what was indicated by the moment at which we had arrived? Where will I take up today, what is the meaning of this tiny apparatus regarding which some people have remarked on what I would call, or what they have called, the tenderness with which I modulated for you the shape of this Klein bottle? What is this fantasy? Must one understand here any thing more than a parable? And as very often, for some people the question seems to be new, what am I getting at with these models?

I think that I have sufficiently designated the point for which I introduced this special model, among others, because it forms part of a family - it is not at all alone - it is associated with what I called on occasion, evoking them more or less for your usage, the torus and the cross-cap, with this fundamental introduction of what can distinguish one and the other in so far as there intervenes or not this particular surface that is knotted in a specific fashion to itself, which gives it, if it is drawn, or (7) if it is isolated in a strip, the singular property of only having one face, only one edge, the Moebius surface as I called it.

My discourse focused on the fact that in the Klein bottle, where there is imaged in a striking fashion, which gives a manageable support to the imagination in its schema, that the Klein bottle illustrates something which is called, in a surface which is proper to retain us because it allows there in a way to be grasped, since like the torus, it presents itself from one point of view like a handle, by offering us the image of what results from this retrogressive point (*point de rebroussement*) which occurs in it along its own detour, by means of which that which comes from one side, finds itself in inner continuity with the outside of the other side, and that from the other side, in the same way the inside with the outside.

It is not at all, in short, so easy to imagine, but after all it is not so simple to give a schema of it that is so favourable to retain us, if on the other hand in discourse, in the Hegelian discourse for example, and this admirable prologue to *The phenomenology*, that Heidegger isolates in the *Holzwege* to give a long commentary of it, but which just by itself in two, three really admirable, unbelievable, sensational pages which just by themselves would be enough to give us the essence of the sense of *The phenomenology*, we see there being designated (8) somewhere this point of return of consciousness as the only necessary point where the loop can be completed and nowhere better than in this text is there

demonstrated the character of loop that the notion of absolute knowledge constitutes, permitting, by pushing with the little finger, by pushing by one notch the sense of this “subject supposed to know”, of which I often speak to you here and which you understand correctly as the “subject supposed to know” for the patient - he who expects, he who puts into the other, into the other whose nature he does not yet know, because he does not know that there are two acceptations of the other, who puts this “subject supposed to know”, who as I told you is already the whole of the transference - at the level of Hegel's discourse, by taking this term of subject identified to the loop of knowledge; and better than this metaphor, which after all is approximate and whose absolutely radical nature nothing evokes particularly to the imagination, this metaphor of the moment of the turning back of consciousness. It is not I believe vainly, or without a fundamental reason, or without us touching there what I would call, a simple formula, without our touching there what I would call, “things as they are”.

After all it is quite praiseworthy for us to make a philosophical usage - I mean to lead you along a certain path - and if the most common and in appearance the least attractive formulae, indicate by their import that we intend also to keep at a (9) distance from a premature discourse on being *qua* being, still more distant from a discourse that has no doubt been besmirched, not without reason, by all the ambiguities that have been allowed to get mixed up in the usage of the term existence.

“As they are”, what does that mean? That means that, to approach things more gently, we should not be too astonished to have to speak about the subject as a surface. And no doubt this is not at all the reason, but if I had to introduce to someone who is completely unused to our discourse the justification for this procedure, I would say: it is no surprise that if what is to be tackled - it might be, I suppose, someone who might come to us from science, who might claim to monopolise the title of objective because of being a laboratory science - I would say, it is not surprising that we should be accustomed here to speak about what is involved here as a surface, in short about what? About the functioning of the system that you know well as the nervous system and the nervous system, without needing to go any further into it but it is also the door through which Freud entered at the very moment of the certain discovery of internal neural connections, of the fundamental function of the network represented by the central nervous system - everything that presents itself as a network is reducible to a surface, anything that is a network can be inscribed on a sheet of paper.

(10) [Various noises] You see that we are in a police state!

I hope then that this ridiculous interlude has not made you lose the thread to the extent that you have not heard that it is proper to a network structure to manifest itself in its totality as something essentially reducible to a surface, namely, which does not, of its nature, in any way appeal to this ambiguous unresolved function, which appears to be obvious to us from our experience of real space, which is called volume.

In truth, I do not have to enter here into a preliminary critique of the third dimension, but you can take it as assured that this preliminary critique, at the point that we are at in philosophical experience, seems to me not to have been gone into at all as thoroughly as it deserves, I would say, *nachträglich*, from what appears in it in terms of asymmetries, of gaps, of the non-homology of what is found as compared to the system of two dimensions, when one passes to that of three dimensions. And in fact, there is here something of which one could say that, like an exercise in scales, these scales are so badly constructed that if it were only for that, to begin with these scales, I would say that to approach what is involved in the subjective structure, it would already be a sufficient justification and a (11) methodological prudence for us to remain with the surface, namely something which is so satisfactory at the level of subjective experience, which sticks so well, in the closest possible way, to what is required of us to apprehend at this level.

It is not at all by chance that the board - I mean the blackboard on the stand on which I drew so much last year to show you what was involved in the structure of the scopic drive - it is not at all by chance that it is content to be on a plane, and to anyone who would object that architecture is something else, I would respond with an architect especially, and with others with whom I have since been able to speak, that architecture is defined rather as a void that planes and surfaces surround and that this is, at least on the plane of what it poses for us as problems in terms of subjective realisation, its essence and its essential structure.

The instant of seeing is always a board, and if I affirm that I am satisfied as a constructive stage, as a step in our progress with this handling of what is properly spatial in our experience of the subject, and if you wish of the *res extensa* as it can be reduced for us, I mean in so far as we are forced to carry out its purification, its extraction along different paths to those Descartes, not at all by taking this piece of wax, already so much taken as what is malleable, unformed and the most accessible (12) to the reduction of all qualities, but as regards which we may come to doubt, if we are less sure than he was about the absence of a common fabric between the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa*, if we think that the *res cogitans* for us only gives us a divided subject because it is formed under the effects of language, whether already in this *schize*, in this division, we are not called on to bring into play a schema which is not at all extended but which is akin to it properly speaking, the topological schema.

On the other hand, if there is something our experience requires us to introduce, and precisely in the measure also that for us it closely binds to the foundations of the subject the locus which is proper to it, if in effect it is in the relationship to language that it determines its structure, if it is the locus of the Other, the field of the Other, which is going to determine the structure, the field of the Other, for its part, I am announcing it here to initiate what I am going to have to open up this year, this field of the Other is inscribed in what I will call Cartesian coordinates, a sort of space that for its part is three dimensional, except that it is not space, it is time.

For in the experience which is the creative experience of the subject at the locus of the Other, we well and truly, whatever has been said in previous formulations, have (13) to take into account a time that cannot in any way be reduced to the linear property - past, present, future - in which it is inscribed in discourse, in the indicative, to what again one can call the transcendental aesthetic commonly accepted in every attempt to inscribe, let us say, in the most general terms, the totality of the world, of the universe, in terms of events.

These three dimensions of what I called in its place, in an article which I agree is difficult to find - but which I hope will be once again be put within the reach of those who wish to read what I described as its character of fundamental sophistry - logical time, where the assertion of anticipated certainty comes here to bind closely its agency to what is involved, namely, this privileged point of identification.

In any identification, there is what I called the instant of seeing, the time to comprehend and the moment to conclude. We find there the three dimensions of time which are, even for the first, far from being identical to what offers itself to receive them. The instant of seeing, is only perhaps an instant, nevertheless it is not at all entirely identifiable with what I earlier called the structural foundation of the surface, of the board. It is something else in that it is inaugural, it inserts itself into this dimension that language establishes, that the analysis of language establishes as synchrony, which is not at all to be confused with simultaneity.

Diachrony is the second moment, in which there is inscribed what I called the time (14) to comprehend which is not at all a psychological function but which, if the structure of the subject represents this curve, this apparent solidity, this irreducible character which is possessed by a shape like the one that I am putting forward before you under the rubric of the Klein bottle, the term to comprehend is to be apprehended by us in the very gesture which is called apprehension, and in so far as there remains irreducible to this substantial shape of the surface under this aspect of envelope in which it presents itself, the fact that it can be grasped in one's hand, and that this is the most adequate form of apprehension, that it is not enough to believe that it is there crudely imaginary, or in any way reducible to the tangible, certainly not, for if it is there that the notion of *Begriff*, even of concept, can be posed in the most adequate fashion - as I hope on occasion, by one of these side-long illuminations made in passing, as it happens, that I must be satisfied with here for one or other aspect of experience - you will see that here we have undoubtedly an infinitely more subtle mode of approach than the one which poses an opposition between the terms of extension and comprehension.

The third moment, or the third dimension, of time where it would be well for us to see where we have to locate, to give, the co-ordinates of our experience, is the one that I call the moment to conclude, which is logical time as haste, and which (15) expressly designates something which is incarnated in the way of entering into his existence, the one proposed to every man around this ambiguous term since he has in no way exhausted the sense of it, and that more than ever at this historical turning point sees its sense vacillating: "I am a man". Who is not able, and more at the level of our analytic experience than any other, to see in this

identification, where no doubt its initial growth from the counterpart, the experiment which is carried out along paths turned back upon themselves, cycles that are accomplished by being pursued completely around this toric shape of which the Klein bottle is a privileged shape, this phase of circumscribing the turns and the returns and the ambiguity and the alienation and the unknown of the demand, after this time for comprehending, there is all the same a moment, moreover the only decisive one, the moment that there is pronounced the following: "I am a man ", and I say it right away for fear that the others, having said it before me, might leave me alone behind them.

Such is this function of identification through which the Klein bottle appears to us most suitable for designating the following, if once more I draw for you what it is, of course, quite incorrect to call its contours, because, in truth, these contours contain nothing of what I have already presented to you in two ways whose aspect of one to the other being frankly foreign even in the utilisation that one can make of one or other of its recesses.

(16) Following the formula, the simplest shape is not an contour, but that which has this craft, this very particular shape where you find here, coming to insert itself upon the circular orifice, through which also there is marked the possible entry into each of these two enclosed spaces that this surface defines in so far as we are situated precisely in space, and that one should distinguish this relationship to space from its internal properties.

Now on this surface we are going, not because it is a game, but because it is a support, which will be essential for us to map out the major moments of the experience, we are going to mark and define that if this shape is one of those in which we can give the most adequate support to what is at the point where I have always articulated things in order to make it understood without lending to misunderstanding, about what is beneath the structure of language, not substance, not *upokeimenon*, but the "beneath" in so far as I say that the subject is what the signifier as such represents for another signifier, what is beneath the fabric of the signifier and in so far as we ought to consider any signifier system as constituting a coherent battery and implicitly which ought to be enough (and, as I have told you, there is no need for much more, which ought to be enough to make use of everything that there may be to say) the subject so defined, as that which, from the signifier is represented within the system of the signifier; this is what we (17) understand by subject - the subject has a shape such that this one or two, or at the most three others, through the system of links with itself, of the stitching to itself of the surface, is extremely limited.

This being taken as the example which allows us the most accessible approach at least for the present time of my presentation, and it is here that there will be represented the effective exercise of this signifier, namely, of what is called statements or words, it will be the outline of something that we can conceive of, according to our needs, as line or as cut, it will be the outline of something which is inscribed on this surface.

Let us take for example the following, which the very shape of this toric part of the bottle seems to suggest, the curve and the returns and the succession and the circuit of something which only submits itself on the single condition of not intersecting itself. This leads us to a progression that is at once circular and necessarily progressive until it turns backwards, it cannot intersect itself, it is excluded by the definition that we have given here of a certain type of cut, we arrive at the fact that the demand as such, if what I am calling demand is this circular movement which tends to be parallel to itself and always repeated, that the demand in so far as it is in no way essentially to be reduced to the demand for the (18) satisfaction of a need, from which an empirical psychology tends to make it begin, but where it is essentially the way in which discourse is inscribed in the locus of the Other, everything that is said in so far as it is said at the locus of the Other is a demand, even if for the consciousness of the subject it is hidden from itself. And this aspect of demand and what depends on it, namely, essentially, here and now, the *schize* caused by the demand in the subject, depends the function of what I wrote in the right-hand corner of my graph in the formula S D, to which we will perhaps, between now and the end of my discourse today, have the opportunity to return.

But for the moment, let us agree that the demand is defined as the discourse which expressly comes to be inscribed at the locus of the Other; I would say the demand from where it begins, necessarily progresses - you can make it start from the other side, you get exactly the same result - the demand progresses towards a point which is the one I designated the last time as the identification point.

This indeed in effect is what analytic experience testifies to us, and what unknown - or not to the speakers, the theoreticians - I mean whether they know or not its import has been located by them and affirmed by them. The whole doctrine of analytic experience which places its whole register on these three conjugated terms of demand, transference and identification, effectively can only be conceived, can (19) only be apprehended, can only be justified, up to a certain point, even if here I am adding on, even if here I am coming to introduce the fact that another dimension is necessary without which this one, as it is defined and described for us, is and will remain obligatorily locked into this shape which, indefinitely turning on itself, can nowhere locate the certitude of a point of arrest.

I indicated last year the sense in which, with respect to what we can call the totality of the figure, there was essentially inscribed the function of the transference and of the "subject supposed to know." We are going to have to evoke it again now but what I want simply to make present to your gaze, is this precise point where what I drew as the loop of the demand engages itself at the level of the point of returning, of retrogression of the surface, and in order to make you sense in a more simple fashion what could be enunciated much more rigorously, much more correctly from the point of view of topological theory, by the use of vectors to schematise the Klein bottle in the same way you can schematise a torus, namely, a square skin whose first cylindrical rolling up is followed by a fitting together which makes of it a circular ring, the difference to the Klein bottle is that if the first cylindrical rolling up is carried out in this way,

what will be produced will be a knotting together of the two circular extremities of the cylinder, but in such a way that one is inverted with respect to the other.

(20) By the very fact of this inversion, when the demand has become engaged here, as one might say, if I can allow myself to speak in such rough terms, from the topological point of view, has become engaged - here we have the language of a mid-wife in this connection - in the forcing of the point of returning of the surface, we have a different aspect, a completely different one which is presented by the loop through which each one of the turns, which up to the present bound themselves to one another, here, if we go in this direction, what are we going to find?

Let us say that here things get to there. What happens? The fact is that the loop turns back and is reflected on the edge that we will call the circle of retrogression. Here it passes what we can call the second segment of the false torus, which the Klein bottle is, then once again, approaching the edge of this circle, it passes into that sort of half-tube which is constituted at this level by each of the parts of this torus when they are integrated in this so special fashion, in which case it is easy to demonstrate that the number of these return points can only be even, the way that it will get out of it, is that the demand from the other side will turn in an inverse direction, namely, that if here it is in a direction like this, that is, if you wish, for you in the direction, looking at things from above, anti-clockwise, to turn the (21) demand onto the other side, it would be in the proper clockwise direction or inversely.

Because it is important to grasp that even at this radical level, the simplest possible one of the function of language, we are dealing with an orientable reality. Because if, undoubtedly, the aspects that this figure presents have only an external or contingent character with respect to the surface, because they can only be mapped out when they are plunged in space, nowhere, inside the surface, does this point of retrogression manifest itself for the surface itself in a tangible fashion.

Inversely, the surface, I would say, or whatever dwells on it, can be perceived, if enough attention is paid to what kind of surface it is, precisely because of this phenomenon, that the circuits that are carried out in it can be located as non-orientable, in other words can be located as being able, at any point whatsoever, to find themselves inverted. I repeat, if one only considers the internal properties of the surface, there is a movement to the right and a movement to the left, there is a right and a left of an outline of a pure outline of discourse; and it can be spotted that something is dextrorotatory or laevorotatory independently of spatial images, independently of the phenomena of the mirror. The surface in itself, as I said, is not reflected. And without being reflected it has this possibility that either it is (22) possible that things that turn in one direction always turn in the same direction, or if it is a different kind of surface, it can happen that something that at one moment turns in one direction, comes after taking a certain path, to turn in the exactly contrary direction.

This is something absolutely essential to define because it is this that is going to allow us to tackle this something around which there revolves the whole difficulty

and the present obstacles, I mean the obstacles in psychoanalytic theory which have come with its progress, which consist essentially in the following: if things are the way I am describing them, namely, if we cannot see any development, any progress of the unconscious in so far as it is graspable in the final analysis in something which is in the nature of the trace of discourse, of the cut, in this singularly topologised veil that we are trying to give of the subject as being the subject of the word, the subject in so far as he is determined by language.

Well then, we have there the only valid support and one which does not find itself at the mercy of the crudest images which are the ones which were given in Freud's second topology - I am talking especially about the images of the ego-ideal, even of the superego. It is in so far as we can manage to grasp, to circumscribe, the problems, to circumscribe the nodal points in particular, and the one I am aiming at today, namely that of identification, it is in so far as such a schema allows us to do (23) it, that we can try to tackle in all its generality, and in a different fashion to the fashion in which it is formulated for the moment in analytic theory, namely in an extremely unsatisfying fashion for any reader who has a bit of an ear and a sense of tone, in an extremely different fashion, I am saying, which relates to what I would call the structural unconscious. For it is undoubtedly everything that justifies so many lucubrations around formulae like that of the distortion of the ego, indeed of the atypical, abnormal, overwhelming forms of the superego, for it is in effect the research, necessitated, encountered in our experience, our experience which is made up of what? Of what have been called obstacles, the analysable points of what is incorrectly called the analysis of the material. What did I do the last time? I tried to suggest to you the following: the fact is, for one part, for example, of this analysis of material, namely what Freud called *The psychopathology of everyday life*, but in which all the same it is rather striking that this talks about nothing, when all is said and done, from the first page to the last, but the business of words. For there is not a single page, whatever the diversity of titles given to the chapters in this volume, there is not a single page where we are not confronted in the most direct and in the most radical fashion, with the fact that it is a matter of something (24) where there comes into play what, in the sense that I understand it, are called, properly speaking, signifiers; namely words and written signs, things which have the value of signifier, and with respect to which all of this is situated, without which no exchange, no substitution, no metaphor, metabolism of tendency, is ever grasped, at least in this volume, is ever grasped, made accessible, graspable, comprehensible in the sense that I understand it.

Because, of course, here we grasp the divergence, the ambiguity, the two parts which are put forward because of this and which are underlined, as much by Freud as by the authors that he integrated into his text over the years. Namely, that in certain cases there dominates what can be called the effects of meaning, but that in other cases, I must say to their surprise because that is what surprises them most, especially at a time when they had no other recourse but to see in this the contingency of mnemonic traces, there are cases that operate essentially not on the *meaning*, not on *signification*, but on something I am provisionally calling other, and which I can be content with telling you that it is other, and about which I have said enough before you, so that in calling it non-sense, this does not mean absurd

or senseless, I think that I have already made you glimpse it sufficiently, non-sense in what is most precisely, what is most positive, most unitary, most nodal, in the (25) effect of sense, namely in something which is incarnated to the highest degree in the effects of forgetting proper names, which are so rich, so illuminating at the level of Freud's text and the text of those who were the first people to have heard him. It is there then that we find the field, from the first analytic discovery. What does it mean that something other was necessary, if not precisely that in a no doubt obscure, awkward and misleading way what is discovered there, behind, is the structure of the support; it is all of this that is helped, compensated for by this singular topography, which so often and so crudely falls into the paths of the most erroneous psychology.

It is here too that we have to constitute something, I would not say more manageable, but something purely and simply more true if we give to this term true here the orientation which means simply, which is not the same thing as the usage that I make of it in other registers when I say: "the word is what introduces the truth into the world", the word true here, as I am employing it, just as earlier, I am trying here to say "things as they are", the word true means real.

For either this is something in its style which is to be understood, properly speaking, as the real - even if only of this real that we are already to admit as being a dimension, the proper and essential dimension perhaps of the real, namely the impossible - this is the real where everything that I am telling you, has no place to (26) be. Now, if we start from there, from where I will illustrate the next time, by showing you not simply how much this allows us to advance into what is at stake, namely the coherence of the tangible points of analytic experience, but which also permits us to advance in the setting up of a logic and allows us to surmount what I must call the extravagant impasses where we see proliferating in modern times these systems which are so self-satisfied, so infatuated with logistics or with symbolic logic, which do not seem to see that in criticising Aristotle, they plunge further and further into paths that have no way out, no way out in this sense, that they cannot in any way be proposed as this something that is called meta-language, as this something which would claim to surmount, to cap, to master, to determine the essence of language, while on the contrary, they are only extracted from it.

It is truly derisory, and this is a point upon which precisely I would like those who will collaborate with our work on the fourth Wednesday, I would like - since I cannot all the same in the position that I am in, I mean with all that I have to cover on my path this year, engage myself in what I would call, for example, the critique of the book by Bertrand Russell called *Meaning and truth* - I would like someone (27) to stick his nose into it. It is a fascinating book and, moreover, it is one of you who brought me the text which is difficult to find nowadays, at least the French text, this fascinating text where you will see the whole edifice of language, the entirely arbitrary even though extraordinarily seductive construction, because of all that it allows us to perceive in the impasses that it pushes us into, that this construction of language as composed, in a way, from a superimposition, from an edifice in an indeterminate number of successive meta-languages including and capping one another, which requires at the base a language which is supposed to

be in some way primary and that he comes to call object-language, which I would defy anyone to give a single example of, all of this being supported by a note, which in texts like these is no less important than the text and is perhaps more so, which says that this conception of language as being necessarily determined by the theory which is called the theory of types, namely of the level of the affirmation of the truth, first language, object-language, second level, that which speaks about what has been said at the level of the object-language, namely, for example, "I said that this is green", meta-language which begins at that moment, "but I should not have said it", it was first necessary for the second proposition to have started, negation therefore supposes a third level of language. This construction of which one can say that apart from the pleasure of a logician, it would in absolutely no (28) way be able to grasp what is involved in the constitution of the subject, namely, what puts man in the position of having a relationship to everything that can be said or exist, that this which is, literally, a struggle in a desperate flight from what is properly speaking the problems of language, all of this reposes, Mr Bertrand Russell tells us, on the simple necessity of avoiding paradoxes, namely this crude paradox which I think I have said enough to you about how it should be resolved, this paradox described as that of the liar, of the supposed logistical impasse of the "I am lying", regarding which, truly, in every case, for us analysts, it is absolutely easy to see that the objection, the logical antinomy does not hold up for a single instant, and has no need to be referred to the hermeneutics of Mr Bertrand Russell in order to be overcome, any more of course, than the supposed paradox of the catalogue of catalogues which do not contain themselves, with the sequel that you know.

For today, simply, I am telling you the path along which I am leading you and the path on which my next lecture hopes to lead you to a term so that at the next one again, our next meeting, namely the closed seminar, we will be able to discuss points of detail, so that I can receive there whatever contribution, or whatever objection that may appear worthwhile to one or other persons.

(29) What is involved is something that is outlined in the clearest fashion through I would ask you to refer to it, after all why should I give here, after having done it for years, a pure and simple commented reading on the text of Freud? The point is the following: the first apprehension which results from a reading of the *Psychopathology of everyday life*, consists in the following: the effect of meaning. If something does not work, it is because that is what you desire. Something which signifies something, to kill your father for example.

Now, this is in no way sufficient because it is not one or other desire which can be more or less easily discerned in a stumbling of behaviour which is not, as I told you, an indifferent one, but a stumbling which always concerns, at least in this volume, my relationship to language, what is important is precisely that language, and at a point that does not concern this desire, is involved in it, involved, not at all in its organ, nor simply as the *Imitation* says, which moreover in saying that does not simply say what I desire to put to one side, and what Freud puts to one side from the very beginning, because it is the very condition of his debate, a tripping over of a word in the sense that it might be a paraphasis in the purely motor sense of this term, where it is a tripping over words, where it is a tripping up on language, it is in function of a phonematic substitution which is itself a

trace, an (30) essential trace, and the only one that is able to lead us to the true source of what is involved, it is in this sense that desire intervenes, and from the desire to kill my father I am referred on to the name of the father, for it is around the name and not at all in a diffused fashion, in the case of any stumbling on words whatsoever, it is always at the level of the name, of the properly nominal evocation, that there takes place, at least in the whole field of our experience, the Freudian mapping out.

Now, this name of the father, if we consider the structure of the Freudian experience, if we consider the theory and the thought of Freud, this name of the father is where the mystery is, since it is by reason of this name of the father that my desire is led not only to this painful, crucial, repressed point, which is the desire to kill my father on this occasion, but many others also since even this desire to sleep with my mother which is the path along which my heterosexual normalisation is accomplished, is also dependent on an effect of the signifier, the one which I designated to abbreviate it here, under the term of the Name-of- the-Father.

Now it is the trace of this that must be followed very carefully in every statement of Freud's, and even to see there the solution of what remains open, namely of that which in an awkward fashion he calls the contagious character of the forgetting of names, and in a case, which is the one found at the end of the first chapter, he will (31) show us something which is a first approach; it is no doubt because all of those present at a certain dialogue between several people, at a certain conversation, find themselves caught up together in something common, which no doubt has to do with a desire - as you are going to see, not just any desire - that the same proper name that they all know very well because it is the title of a book, which I imagine is not very brilliant either as regards its content nor as regards theory, which is called *Ben Hur*, but what matter, we have a charming young woman who in this connection, wants to say, in order to impress the company, that she had found in it some essential ideas, something or other about the Essenes. This *Ben Hur* that the girl cannot remember, what does the author who brings us this example, who is I think Ferenczi, if I am not mistaken, anyway it does not matter, you can take any example whatsoever, you will always find the same structure. What is involved is what? It is perhaps something which has perhaps a certain relationship with a desire but which was, as I might say, or which passed, by this vocalisation, this emission of the voice, which might be formulated as *bin Hure*, I am a whore, and it is here in so far as it is a matter of what, you are going to say, what is most important, what is most decisive? Is it the fact that this declaration hides the ferret that runs through the gathering between this young girl and the young people around her, namely this something that would tend to make (32) the desires of each one emerge, where we might see the guarantee that these desires even have a common factor? But that in all of them something that involves the declaration of the proper name, in the measure that in this whole declaration the identification of the subject, and whatever may be the distance at which the relationship to the proper name is produced, the identification of the subject is involved, and it is here, it is at this level that we find the mainspring.

Now, the way that we have to define, topologically, what is involved in analysis which is quite obviously the picking out of desire, but not of one or other desire which is only the concealment, the metonymy, the metabolism indeed the defence, of which it is the most common figure, when what is involved is to pick out this desire where the analysis ought to find its term and especially its axis if, as we put forward at the end of last year, it is the desire of the analyst as such which is the axis of the analysis, we ought to know how to define this desire topologically in relationship with this pass, this phenomenon which for its part is undoubtedly linked in a certain way, which here we are only beginning to apprehend, to decipher, to approach, namely identification. This will be the sense of my discourse when I take it up again the next time.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 20 January 1965

I must advance into the problem for psychoanalysis that is constituted by identification. Identification which represents in the experience, in the progress, in the step forward I am trying here to make you take in the theory, the screen which separates us from our aim because it is unresolved and which we highlighted last year as being the necessary moment without which there remains in suspense the qualification of psychoanalysis as a science; I said: "the desire of the psychoanalyst".

I tried to capture identification in a topology, in a sort of bundle, a collection of threads more simple than all of those whose twists and turns the labyrinth of modern logic bears witness to, in so far as between class, relations and numbers, it sees slipping away, like the lady in the three card trick, what has to be grasped as regards the enunciating of the identical.

So that, to facilitate your entry onto our path, I am going to begin today from the shape that has been most popularised for two centuries, to circumscribe, make no (2) mistake, this problem of identification, the image of Euler's circle, so striking that there is no student who has even opened, who has approached a book on logic who is able, as I might say, to extricate himself from its simplicity. It is founded, in effect, on what is most structural, and if it is deceptive, it is precisely by fixing on what is called a particular point, a privileged point of topology, its false simplicity.

The circle which defined the class, the circle itself including, excluding, intersecting another circle or several, themselves considered to represent the attributes of the class to be identified. Do I need to reproduce on the blackboard what, I think, was already drawn when I tackled for the first time the syllogism whose conclusion is: "Socrates is mortal". Socrates, men, mortals.
(Demonstration on the board)

This extraordinary booby-trap forged by Euler in the style of the epoch, it was a great and good century, it was the opposite of what is called moreover a century of genius, because it was fascinated, as innumerable works which were published on the subject in this century bear witness, because it was fascinated by the for them apparently unthinkable task involved in the education of women. It was for a woman, and what is more for a princess, that there were forged these Euler circles which now furnish your manuals.

(3) Such a tenacious preoccupation always conceals an underestimation of the subject that is aimed at and there are sufficient indications of this in all the works that are entitled as having this purpose, and moreover, I think, it is in the measure that Euler, who was no mediocre mind, thought that he was addressing himself to a cretin, in both senses of the word, that he put into circulation these captivating circles which, as I hope to show you, allow there to escape the whole essential of what they intend to circumscribe.

So that it is not surprising that it was at a time when the figure was in a way integrated with the common mental image of this sphere, that one is able to deal with a circle - as people did in Roman times with the circle of Popilius - without worrying that it appears, on reflection, that this circle, depending on the surface on which it is traced, delimits fields of value which can be quite different, and as regards what is involved in the sphere, it delimits exactly the same thing, on the outside and on the inside: however tightly you draw the circle around me, I can say that what you are enclosing is all the rest of the earth (*la machine ronde*).

Let us pay a little attention then, before handling the circle and, above all, let us not forget that its principle merit on this occasion is to give us, by its shape, a sort of substitute for what I called in the sense that I introduced to it, comprehension, in the double sense of the true, conceptual comprehension of *Begriff*, what the (4) *Begriff* closes in on, it is of this grasp that the circle gives the image in so far as - I introduced it the last time - it is here, a cross-section of this toric part of our surface with which our discourse today is, in part, going to deal and, on the other hand, only giving to this comprehension an image which is moreover the support of every lure, and in particular that extension and comprehension can be confused, that in the circle one imagines the numerical group of objects, without putting the emphasis on the conditions that are implied by the coming into play of number and which are radically different from classificatory characteristics, at least in what allows us to grasp it in function of meaning.

The numerical reference point is of a different order - this is a field upon which I will not engage myself today because it is properly the type of question that I wanted to reserve for the closed part of this course, which will take the name of

seminar - I mean that the homology of the function which takes the name of number, the name of number in so far that it cannot be distinguished from the function of the whole number, the homology in the sense that it is still more striking, more necessary, than in the indications that I was already able to begin to give you of the function of name in so far as it covers something, that it covers (5) precisely a circle, but one of a very special nature, this privileged circle which is marked by the level of reversion of the surface of the Klein bottle in so far as it is a Moebius surface, the number, given its body, occupies here in an obvious fashion, obvious from the analysis of its structure, because of the problems it poses to the mathematician, you know that the mathematician with his modern impetus, cannot tolerate that any point of his language should be, should be constructed in such a way that it does not grasp several sorts of heterogeneous objects at the same time. The privileges, the resistances of the function of the "whole number", to this mathematical generalisation - I am putting the terms in inverted commas here so as not to introduce more technical references - this is what creates problems for the mathematician which have pushed him to make considerable efforts. The question is whether they have been successful, since they homogenise the function of number and that of class. This is what I hope will be treated here at our next meeting, a closed meeting, here at the level of the seminar.

Let it suffice here for me to indicate in connection with the figure of the circle, that one ends up, and precisely by following mathematical research, that one ends up with a schema that is strictly homologous to the one that I am advancing here by proposing the signifier to you as representing the subject for another signifier, the mathematical theory which represents at once the solution - this is what I am putting in question - and the stumbling block, perhaps it is truer to say, this attempt (6) to reduce, to resolve the function of the whole number in logical language ends up at the following schematised formula exactly in the same way that I show you how, in a way, the subject is transported from signifier to signifier, each signifier representing him for the one that follows: beneath the one, it is the zero that is involved for the series of ones that are going to follow.

In other words, the discovery conditioned by the most recent research in mathematical logic, the discovery of the necessity that the zero, the lack, is the final reason for the function of the whole number, that the one originally represents it, and that the genesis of the dyad is for us very distinct from the Platonic genesis, in that the dyad is already in the one, in so far as the one is what is going to represent the zero for another one.

A remarkable thing, the fact which ensures and which involves of itself, for each number n , the necessity of $n + 1$, precisely from this zero which is added to it, an extraordinary thing, it required long detours of mathematical analysis for something which is presented at the level of the experience of the child. It required the infatuation of pedagogues, to have placed, in terms of tests, as having the lesser mental value of insufficient development, the child who says: "I have three brothers, Paul, Ernest and me", as if this were not precisely what was involved, (7) namely, that here, me must be in two places, in the place of the series of brothers and also in the place of the one who is enunciating. On this

point the child knows more than we do, and trying recently to reproduce with my grandson, and in a way to put him to the test, honestly with a little girl of four and a half, the first stammerings, not at all in the enunciating of number but of its being put to use, I was surprised that nowhere does Piaget take into account - he who undoubtedly is far from lacking an adequate culture in the domain of logic - that nowhere does Piaget take into account something that one sees springing forth, and precisely at the level at which he claims to reduce the approach of the little child concerning the numbering of objects to a sensori-motor groping, precisely with a little girl of four and a half who probably, I say probably because one is never sure, who is able to count above ten, playing with her in accordance with the very formula of Piaget, namely with these famous implements, knives and plates that must be paired off precisely in accordance with the ways theoretically defined by the first formation of number, all the same, putting her to the test of counting in front of three glasses: the little girl says to me "four". "Let's see: really?". "Yes", she says: "one, two, three, four" without the slightest hesitation. The four is her zero, in so far as it is starting from this zero that she counts, because even though she is four and a half years old, she is already the little circle, the hole of the subject.

(8) This circle, regarding which I searched this morning, or rather asked someone to search for me, the famous text of Pascal, which I did not wish to evoke here without asking you to refer to it, without having re-read it myself thanks to the work of innumerable university people who have each charged themselves to give their personal reclassification of these *Pensées* which were given to us in a type of dossier which was disordered enough just by itself, in general you have to spend three-quarters of an hour to find the simplest quotation in any one of these editions. Someone spent the three-quarters of an hour in my stead which allows me to indicate to you that in the big Havet edition, it is on page 72 of the *Pensées* that you will see the reference to this famous "infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere".

This is important because God knows Pascal is our friend. And our friend, as I might say, in the manner of someone who guides our every step, neurotic that he was, that is not to diminish him, you know well that here we do not involve ourselves on the path of psychopathologising genius. It is enough to open the memoirs of his sister to see the point to which his anxiety and his abysses and all this horror that he was surrounded by, was able to take root in the aversion, to which he bears witness so precociously, and which it is so striking to see his sister bearing witness to, that she undoubtedly while bearing this witness - it is obviously the best condition for giving credit to the testimony - she has not the slightest (9) comprehension of what she is saying. The horror pushed to the extremes of panic, to a fit, a black fit, to the convulsions of Pascal every time he saw the loving parental couple approaching his bed, is all the same something which must be taken into account, on condition of course, of being in a position to pose oneself the question of what limits a neurosis imposes on the subject. It is not necessarily the limits of adaptation, as is said, but perhaps metaphysical detours, and that is why this same man, to whom we owe this example of prodigious daring, which is this famous wager about which people have said so many stupid things because they were speaking from the point of view of the

theory of probability, but which it is enough to approach to see that it is precisely the despairing attempt to resolve the question that we are trying to raise here; that of desire as desire of the big Other.

This neither prevents this solution from being a failure, nor that Pascal, when he formulates for us his infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere does not demonstrate precisely that he has tripped up on the metaphysical plane. Anyone who is a metaphysician knows that it is the contrary and that if there is an infinite sphere, something that is not proved, undoubtedly in the surface that is involved, what is circumferential is everywhere and the centre is nowhere.

(10) This is what I am hoping to convince you of, in the apprehension of this topology. In effect, to take up again what I indicated to you the last time, if it is the operation of this surface which determines what is happening at the level of the subject, if the subject is to be conceived of as guided by the envelopments but also the reversions, the reversion points of this surface, he does not know the reversion points of this surface any more than the surface itself, as I might say.

The fact is, that since he is implicated in this surface, he can know nothing about this circle of retrogression being himself in it; that the question is posed of from where we can grasp the function of this privileged circle, which as I told you is not at all to be conceived of in an intuitive fashion, it is not necessary that it should be a circle, it is possible to reach everything like a circle, by a cut, but notice if you carry out this cut, the surface no longer has anything of its specificity, everything is lost, the surface is presented as equal, similar in every way to a torus on which you might have performed the same cut.

The question of what happens at the level of the circle of reversion, is what today I would like to try to make you approach, in so far as we can grasp in it - I pass over the term, I am putting it in inverted commas to make myself understood - the "model" of what is put in question for us by the function of identification.

(11) The last time I recalled that the whorls of a line drawn on the outside surface of a Klein bottle, which you see here represented as a whole on the left, represented only partially on the right, namely on the point which interests us in the approach to what I have just called a circle of reversion, or of retrogression as you like.

The whorls of the demand with their repetition on an ordinary torus, as I developed it at length at another time and precisely in relation to the structure of the neurotic, will end up by coming back onto themselves, intersecting or not intersecting, but even without needing to intersect, simply by continuing as it is easy to imagine, once the circumference of the torus has been completed, inserting themselves inside these preceding whorls, can be indefinitely continued without there ever appearing, in the counting of the turns, this succession of supplementary turns accomplished by going completely around the torus, and by making the circuit if you wish of its central hole.

Here in the Klein bottle what do we see happening? I already told you the last time and the schema that I have drawn for you today already shows it to you. Through a necessity that is internal to the curve, it is necessary that the circuits of the demand upon this circle of retrogression should be reflected from one edge to the other of this circle, in order to remain on the surface, of the point in the field of the (12) surface where it is woven. It will necessarily arrive, having crossed according to - here, as you see it, I showed you the minimal incidence of it - in accordance with, for your eyes, a half-circle having crossed this pass, always having to cross it in accordance with an uneven number of these semi-circles; it will re-appear from the other toric side of the Klein bottle, with a gyration in a opposite direction, what was on the right, since it was from there that we make begin, as the tips of the arrow which vectorialise this journey indicate to you; on the right, let us say that we are turning in the clock-wise direction; if we position ourselves properly, staying in the same place, it is in the anti-clockwise direction that the movement of the spiral comes into operation.

Now this, this is for us, in a way, due to the favour touched here that this topological figure presents to us. It gives us what I might call the intuitive knot, since I am representing it for you by a figure, but which has no need of this figure, I could simply, in a fashion that would be more obscure, more opaque, have it supported for you by an arrangement reduced to a few algebraic symbols by adding in vectors which it would be much more opaque for you to represent.

This figure, then, with its intuitive appeal, I intend it to allow you to grasp the coherence that there is at this point if we define it, determine it as circumscribing (13) the conditions, the favours, but also the ambiguities and thus the lures of identification, to make you grasp also the connection at this point, which is what gives it its true sense, with what we notice in our experience, which for us is the clinic, the analytic clinic, which for us is so forced that we had to model our language on it, namely, the essential reversibility of the demand and what ensures that in the dynamic, complexual operation there is never, for example, a phantasy of devouring that we do not hold as implying, necessitating at some moment, which outside of this theory remains obscure, its own inversion, I mean resulting in this inversion, and determining the passage to the phantasy of being devoured. This expresses the consistency with the focal point, with all the determinations that are going to allow us to tie down the localisation of this focal point, to grasp the consistency of this fact of experience with what we so confusedly call identification, at the same time, specifies what is involved in such and such an identification of this one and not of another, this is what we are advancing into and what determines our steps.

One thing is assured. I spoke to you about the spirals of the demand. You will allow me to give no further justification, because as a matter of fact it is something accessible; I mean not too difficult to grant me, simply by experiencing its (14) consequences; I cannot here pursue a discourse which is too astringent except by completely transforming the nature of what I am teaching you, about not making a logical leap; what we will call an enunciation in the sense that interests us, in the sense that there are incidences of identification, I mean here not analytic identification, but analytic and conceptual identification, this is

something that in effect we would like to symbolise by a circle, except that our topology allows us to distinguish it strictly from the Euler circle, namely, that there is not to be raised against it the objection that we were able to raise earlier, namely that this circle, by failing to specify the surface on which it is drawn, may define two strictly equivalent fields on the inside and on the outside.

What is more, the Euler circle, since it is apparently drawn on a plane, I mean that in this respect nothing is specified, has all the same manifestly this import of having to be reduced to a point. A circle which, as in the whorls of our demand, turn around the toric part of the torus or of the bottle, is a circle which does not have this property in either one or other case; first of all it does not define two equivalent fields for the good reason that it only defines a single one, to open the bottle or to open the torus with the help of one of the circular cuts, simply makes a cylinder of it in both cases. Besides this circle is not at all reducible to a point. What interests us is how the circle thus defined can serve us. It is precisely this circle which is going to permit us to discern what interests us as regards the function of identification.

Let us say that, according to this circle, which as you see is a cut, it is no longer an edge, we are going to try to see what becomes of our propositions, the ones that interest us, the propositions about identification. As I already showed you once by putting it into practice, we are able to inscribe the predicative proposition - as one says to characterise it grammatically - since it is the simplest proposition, the one which in tradition is presented first, as regards identification, we can inscribe it on the circumference of this circle.

We can from this circle, written in this way, as it is here for example - do not bother yet about these letters nor about the function of the diametrical line - we can write, "all men are mortal", the "are mortal" should have been written afterwards I ought also to have written it upside down but that would not have added anything. We can also write: "Socrates is mortal"; it is a matter of knowing what we are doing by articulating these enunciations that, according to the case, we will call predication, judgement or concept. It is here that there can be of use (16) to us the particular case in which this circle operates by having to be reflected on what I called earlier the circle of retrogression in the Klein bottle.

You see then, that by marking in blue this circle of retrogression, the other circle is made up of a line which comes to be reflected on its edge, to take up its outline again on the other part of the surface, on the one which separates the circle of retrogression from the first.

But if this is how things are, the first half of the circle, the one which was outside the first half of the surface as I have just defined it, continues on the contrary inside the same surface if we consider the inside, is that the inside of the Klein bottle, in short that the two halves of the circle at this level are in no way homogenous, that they are not in the same field - unless one wishes at all costs to blind oneself as is the function of the formal logician - that it is not in the same field from the point of view of identification, in the sense that it interests us, that there is posed the "all men", and the "are mortal", that there is posed the

“Socrates”, and the “is mortal”, that it is not at all said in advance that the “Socrates” should not be distinguished, even in its logical function, from what is supposed to be the subject of a class (17) simply defined as predicative. And who does not sense that it is a matter of something completely different to say that a man, or all men, are mortal, that it is completely different than for example to define the class of white geese. There is a radical distinction that imposes itself here, that we support with philosophical vocabulary as best we can, from the distinction between qualities, for example, and from attributes that undoubtedly are not homogeneous; which moreover is not to say that the class of white geese does not pose us problems in so far as the usage of the metaphor will leave us with some work to do in calculating what is involved between the priority of gooseness or of whiteness.

And undoubtedly, the class of white geese can be reduced in a different way to the definition which makes us articulate that all men are mortal. In speaking of all men as mortal we are not speaking about a class which specifies, among the others, the mortal humans. There is a different relationship between man and being mortal, and it is precisely this which is in suspense in connection with the question of Socrates.

For we may become weary at evoking problems which may appear trite to us and to smell of the classroom about what is involved in the universal affirmative, namely: is there a universal of man, or does man on this occasion simply mean, as the logic of quantification strives to put it, any man whatsoever? The fact is that it (18) is not at all the same thing. But moreover, since people are still involved in scholastic debates about this theme, perhaps we, who are in a bit more of a hurry and who may perhaps suspect that there is a deviation somewhere, can re-pose the question at the level of the proper name, and ask whether it is all that obvious, even if it is admitted that all men are mortal is a truth which carries itself sufficiently for us not to have to debate about the sense of the formula, whether starting from that it is legitimate to say, to conclude, to deduce, that Socrates is mortal. For we have not said: “any man whatsoever who perhaps may be called Socrates, is mortal”. We have said: “Socrates is mortal”. The logician, no doubt, is going too quickly. Aristotle did not skip this step, because he knew what he was saying better perhaps than those who followed him, but very soon in the Sceptic, Stoic schools, the example became common and why was the jump so easily made of saying that Socrates is mortal.

I was not able here, because after all as in many other things I spare you, to mark for you that precisely a step was taken at the level of the Stoic school, around which there turned the sense granted as such to the term, proper name. The *onoma* as opposed to the *rhexis* namely as one of the two essential functions of language. The *onoma*, at the time of Plato and Aristotle, as well as that of Protagoras, and moreover in *Cratylus*, the *onoma* is called, when it is a question of the proper name, the *onoma kyrum*, which means the name par excellence. It is only with the Stoics that the *idion* takes on the aspect of the name which belongs to you, in particular takes the step, and it is indeed this which permits this fault in logic. Because in truth, if we preserve the originality of the function of nomination, understand by this where to the highest degree there is maximised

this formation proper to the signifier, which is of not being able to be identified with itself, which undoubtedly culminates in the function of nomination, this Socrates who is at once a *soi-disant* and an *autre disant*, the one who declares himself to be Socrates and the one others do, the others who are the elements of his descendance, whether they are incarnated or not, that others are covered by the name of Socrates, this is not something that can be treated in a homogeneous fashion with anything whatsoever that may be included under the rubric of all men.

Let us try to look at this more closely. It is clear that the venom, I would say the aggression of this particular syllogism is completely in its conclusion, and moreover, it would not have been promoted to this value of classical example if it did not involve in itself this something which is satisfied with the pleasure of reduction that we always experience in connection with any avoidance (*escamotage*) whatsoever, because after all it is always the same thing that is involved and that it is a matter of avoiding, namely, the function of the subject who (20) speaks, and makes it necessary to say quite simply that Socrates is mortal because all men are so, is also to avoid the fact that there is more than one way for a subject to fall under the stroke of being mortal.

We know very few things about Socrates, however surprising this may appear, this man from whom has emerged the whole philosophical tradition since his time, the whole philosophical tradition that is called Western, our own in fact. Open, if you wish, the five hundred philosophical/psychological volumes where you see him tackled as a subject, the more or less five hundred others where you will see being appreciated the epoch he constitutes, the philosophical step forward that he contributed, and you will see not only not a single one of these appreciations, of these references, of these accounts coinciding, but you will even see them opposed point by point, term by term. It will be impossible for you to guarantee any certainty about this, there is no subject about which the experts, the scholiasts so radically diverge. And it is not because Plato gives of him a plentiful, multiplied and sometimes seductive image as a sketch of his time, indeed even a photograph, the multiplicity of these testimonies do not add a single shadow of consistency more to this figure, if we want in our turn to interrogate this great questioner.

(21) What a mystery! There is nevertheless in this *soi-disant* par excellence, something - which thanks to those who followed him, and no doubt it is not by chance, this *soi-disant*, always *soi-disant* Socrates, which here means exactly the contrary, namely, that he does not speak about himself - there are all the same something, two things, which are irrefragable in a way, that do not lend themselves to interpretation as regards the sayings of Socrates.

The first, the first of these things is the voice, the voice which Socrates undoubtedly testifies to us was not at all a metaphor. The voice for which he stops speaking in order to hear what it is saying to him just like one of our hallucinating patients. And a curious thing, even in this great century of psychopathology, the nineteenth century, people remained very moderate in fact on this point of diagnosis. As long as one does not have a really adequate idea

about what a voice is, what functions it enters into beyond its phenomenon, what it means in the subjective field, so long as one does not have what will allow us, in my discourse, to formulate it as this little object fallen from the Other - like other little objects of this kind, the *o*-object to call it by its name - then we do not have a sufficient apparatus to situate, without imprudence, the function of the voice in a case like that of Socrates, which is in effect a privileged one. And what we also know is that there is a relationship, a fundamental one, between this *o*-object, whatever it (22) may be, and desire. And then on the other hand, concerning what interests us here, very closely, namely that Socrates, it is legitimate to say, whether he is or is not mortal, we have the following, which could be said rapidly: that Socrates demanded death.

It is a way of expressing oneself briefly. There is also the demand to be fed at the Prytaneum in the same discourse, which is called the *Apology* of Socrates, and of course you will spare me, just as I asked you earlier to spare me other detours, from carrying out with you here a reading of the *Apology* of Socrates and of the *Phaedrus*, and perhaps also of this stupefying encounter with this priest which is called *Euthyphro* which he had precisely the night before, and naturally no one ever really emphasised what was meant by the fact that Plato makes him go through this encounter the night before, nor how it happens that Plato, who was all the same at that time one of his disciples, was not there either at the trial or at the moment of the last conversation, of the conversation before the death.

Perhaps the whole work of Plato is only constructed to cover this lack. The demand to be fed at the Prytaneum, will be considered an insolence. People quickly begin to construct a psychology, and I do not wish here to designate in any other way a discourse which greatly struck me at the time, an admirable discourse no doubt, in which I was able to hear in a very distinguished place, someone speaking in the last way which moved me about the trial of Socrates, something all (23) the same came to be said that, no doubt, Socrates could have, let us say the word, the nuance is perhaps a little bit too emphasised, defended himself better; one can always fight, struggle, by taking into account the thinking of the judges. There is here the animating idea of the secret of existential commitment, that something demands of us always to follow the interlocutor onto his terrain of situation, and you also see where this slope leads us, the slope of the analysis that I would call popular, the one on which my earlier declaration that Socrates demanded death constituted an ambiguity: we will soon be saying that Socrates fled it in a fearful aggression, or again, for the more adventurous, that Socrates desired death. Socrates desired death! Precisely not.

The third thing, the one that we do not know and the one that we are called on to accept or not, something that he himself told us, he told us that he knew nothing. He knew nothing about anything except about desire and that as regards desire, he knew something about it. Only look, this desire of Socrates, of which it is not too much to say that it is at the root of three-quarters of what in reality, or what we have called such, configures all of us who are here - this desire of Socrates, the one which affirms itself in *atopia*, the one which makes of Socrates, in his time, the one who interrogates the master - and it is one of the great illusions that were able to develop around the fact that the question of the desire of Socrates is never

raised (24) and with good reason, it is one of the great philosophical derisions to identify the master to pure and simple desire. This vision of the master is the vision of the slave, which means that the slave for his part has a desire. The master too, of course but the master, stupid as he is, knows nothing about it.

The master is sustained, and this is precisely the sin in the Hegelian analysis the question has often being raised: if the master in Hegel is what Hegel tells us, then how can we have a society of masters? Of course it is insoluble.

It is very soluble in fact, because the great support of the master is not at all his desire, but his identifications, the principal one being that to the name of the master, namely to the name that, he for his part, carries in well-specified, isolated, primordial way, in the function of the name, from the fact that he is an aristocrat.

Socrates interrogates the master about what he calls his soul. I suspect that the point at which he expects it, where he always finds it and even in the furious revolt of Thrasymachus, is at the point of his desire and precisely by making testify who? The Other par excellence, the Other that can easily be, in his society, represented by the radical Other, the one who does not form part of it, namely the slave, and it is here, from here that he makes emerge the valid word.

(25) Such are the manoeuvres which undoubtedly were bound to end, whatever may have been the admiration, the love that a personage like Socrates was able to draw to himself, to end up by provoking some impatience. One can have enough, all the same, of always listening to that fellow! Now, Socrates says the following: "there is no choice, either you leave me as I am, even if it is to put me on the mantelpiece like a clock, at the Prytaneum, or it is death, something which at my age", he adds - it is one of the rare touches of humour in the discourse of Socrates, because it is a very curious thing, Plato is a humorist, but nothing bears witness to us that Socrates was one, it is a very peculiar case, Socrates does not try in any way to be funny; he is not tragic, and again what is this unusual tragedy of the last moments of Socrates, let us leave this point in suspension, he is only tragic at the end; in any case something that he never said, is that he was a man. "*Homo sum, humanum nihil a me alienum puto*", is a phrase from a comic poet because we no longer know very well what is involved in being a man; there is one thing certain that man is the comic.

So then, the articulation of two circles, all men are mortal, and Socrates is mortal. I cannot, because of the time push any further here what results from their interference, it is not my fault that the road is long and that I have to make you sense all its detours.

(26) For you see being highlighted indeed at the two terms between this enigmatic desire and the following, that if this is the way things are, what we have come to, we do not know very well how, is to speak about the death drive, and to either speak about it without knowing what we mean or on the contrary to reject it because it is too difficult, we see clearly that it is towards this, towards this meeting point that we are going, and what relationship and how spell out what there is between the demand for death of a great living being and this famous

death drive that we are going to see implicated to such a degree in an “all men”, of a different nature than the two logical terms which I already advanced, namely the “anyone whatsoever” or the universal “man”, in any case man without a name, and all the more without a name that what we find behind is the unconscious of man, which is undoubtedly un-nominated, because it is undetermined.

How are we going to be able to cross this space hollowed out here between the conclusion of “Socrates is mortal” and “all men are mortal”. I will only highlight my punctuation of today around a topological trait - in any case, and however these two circles are articulated, which undoubtedly do not overlap, disjointed as they are by the whole force of the topological reversion around which I make turn to-day the operation of my discourse - a punctuation I would mark by this virtual line which does not exist, which is not in the surface, which is essentially deceptive, (27) is the one which constitutes the articulation of the syllogism in the minor, namely, not “Socrates is a man” whose total fragility we have seen, but simply the introduction of the “is a man” here, diametrically in the proposition, whatever it may be. Either “all men are mortal” at the circumference, or intersecting with it if you wish, is obviously what is suggested, “Socrates is mortal”, with as a common trait of intersection this diameter which, moreover from elsewhere, because what is involved is a topology and not a metric space, can be any cord whatsoever, this diameter on which we inscribe “is a man”.

What is meant by this which, in the measure of the radical heterogeneity between the premise and the conclusion, is affirmed and is proposed to us as a lure? What is meant by this intersection of the plane between the planes which, precisely, are not so, because they are both holes, by nature holes, if you will allow me to express myself in this way? What is meant by this identification which allows this false step of the syllogism? What does it mean? What it means you see beginning in the letters with which I marked the three stages of the diametred circle which is on the bottom right. The relationship between the two halves of the circle which are, as I told you, heterogeneous - if one is identification, the other is demand and inversely (28) - the relationship between the two, in so far as it is a deceptive one, is precisely this diameter which sustains them and which nowhere exists. I put there the letter T because we rediscover here the function of transference, the function of transference in so far as it is essentially linked to the deceived Other or to the Other as deceiving, the function of transference in so far as it is the function of deception, it is around this that there will turn the dialectic of my lecture in February: the relationships between identification, transference and demand in so far as they are solidary with three terms, three terms that I think I have made familiar to you by my discourse of last year, the term of indetermination, subject of the unconscious, the term of certainty, as constituting the subject in the experience and the aims of psychoanalysis, the term of deception as being the path on which his very appeal to identification summons him.

If things are knotted together in this way between these terms where it seems we could not find an issue which is not a lure, it is because of the structure of these big loops of this big knot, which constructing themselves and conjoining themselves in the field where the game is played out puts us, concerning the

desire whose support, whose conception can only be of this very loop represented by the toric handle, whose inside we will try to make speak the next time

(29) Do you not recognise in it, after my schemas of last year, this issue, this exit as spasmodic outside the palpitating gap of the unconscious which, at the major hole around which we have turned today, opens and closes, the very outwards and return trajectory of the drive, in so far as it surrounds something which we have left in suspense, we should say, in the void; this desire is what determines it, and it is not at all without a face even if at the level of Socrates today - and I deliberately chose my example - there is presented an enigma. Desire introduces the fourth category after the others of indetermination, deception, certainty, introduces us to the fourth which determines everything and which is our very position - the one clearly articulated, seen and announced by Freud - which is the very one of desire in so far as it determines in reality the category of the impossible. This impossible that we sometimes find the means of overcoming, by resolving what I called the game, the game constructed, constructed in such a way that it is assuredly lost in every case. How this game can be won is, it seems to me, the major problem, the crucial problem for psychoanalysis.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 27 January 1965

In the relationship of the subject to the Other, in the relationship of one with others, we have learned to distinguish in its subtlety, in its mobility, an essential function of mirage; we have learned it doubly through the teaching of psychoanalysis, through the way in which, for twelve or thirteen years, I have been trying to articulate it.

We know that the failure, up to now, of all ethics, and secondarily of all subjective philosophy, to master this mirage, is due to a failure to recognise what it invisibly regulates itself around.

The function of the **o**-object in so far as it is, in its ambiguity between good and evil, is what really centres all these "I's". It is not enough to say that the **o**-object, in effect, runs and goes and comes and passes in this "I", like the lady in the three-card trick, of its nature it is lost and never found again.

Nevertheless, from time to time, it appears in the field with such dazzling clarity, that it is that very fact which ensures that it is not recognised. This **o**-object I have described, in what regards us, namely the rule of an action, as the cause of desire.

(2) It is a matter of knowing for what sort of action this recognition of a new factor in ethics or in subjective philosophy, for what sort of action it can serve. Undoubtedly, when I have desired from my public to know a little bit more about it and specifically, given the time I have at my disposal, from those who have asked me to come to this closed seminar, I was able to see something that I had already been able to get a few echoes of, which is that for some, for many and perhaps in a much greater measure, a much more varied and much more nuanced one than I supposed, this teaching takes on its value, which is that of any teaching, by sustaining, and this is not nothing for more than one person, this state of indetermination which we know has more than one trick up its sleeve, which is the one by which we are able to live, things being the way they are.

I intend that here, there will only remain those for whom this teaching has in some way a value as action. What does that mean? People here know, or do not know, here that elsewhere I have a school, a school of psychoanalysis which bears the name of Freud and the name of the city in which I have taken on the responsibility of directing it. A school is something different if it deserves its name, in the sense that this term has been employed since antiquity, it is something in which there ought to be formed a style of life. Here I demand that there should come those, who in some way or other take my teaching as the principle of an action which is (3) their own and of which they are able to render an account. The fourteen rows which are still almost full today prove that I do not want, through an arbitrary barrier, through a barrier of appraisal of whatever order it may be of experience, of quality or of presence, that I do not want to put up a barrier to anyone here.

Nevertheless if I wanted people to ask me to come here, it is to put me also in the position of asking you here to prove yourselves as regards what is required from a certain more restricted circle for whom this teaching takes on a value. I want in some way or other, and rather promptly, to obtain from those who are here some testimony and, of course, it would be completely vain and moreover inefficient necessarily to expect this testimony in the form of a spoken intervention here. I would like it. I know from experience and also from the amount of time available that it is not possible and that it is not the best way.

This testimony involved then, which is the testimony of an action interested in this teaching, I thought that to obtain it, I should proceed in the following way. There will be proposed to you here work, remarks, papers, statements having a sort of character of kernel, of key point which is manifested as particularly illuminated, renewed, highlighted, or on the contrary singularly connected up, in the thread of my discourse. Nothing will be done to make these kernels, in a way, more (4) accessible, it is not the small change of my teaching which will be given to you here, unless you understand specifically by the term small change, precisely these solid, indeed closed, opaque and resistant moments which I moreover only produce, quite often, in order to do more than to communicate the presence to you, beneath what I am articulating for you.

It will be then, in the final analysis, if I get my way, the hardest, most opaque, most localised elements which will be proposed to you, to those for whom my teaching may have this more precise value, this is meant to provoke a response, a

response which will be given to me, if it is not given to me here in a consistent and articulated way, which will be given to me in the interval between our meetings, in the shape, not I would say of a letter but of a small memoir, of requests, of suggestions, of questions which I should take into account for the choice of those who, subsequently, will be here the objects of which I am speaking, the object of provocation of the presenters.

Only in this dialogue, in this dialogue which, if you do not mind, you see clearly can only be carried on with those who in the final analysis will bring here a contribution, a contribution which there will be all the necessary time to elaborate in the interval between our meetings, it is in the nature of things that this only occurs with a small number.

(5) Many of those who are here, whom I allowed in today because, after all, there is no mystery about it, will come to realise, will come to realise, for a good number of you, that if they profit, and that is what I wish in every case, from what I teach on the other Wednesdays, in long continuous discourses, where things are taken up again, which is what I have been pursuing for twelve or thirteen years, it is conceivable, it is even essential that somewhere, in a circle, things should be put to the test of an action in which each one participates, that it should be from there that there should begin, that there should radiate out, what I will continue to pursue of my discourse in front of everyone,

It is normal that three-quarters of the people who are here today will come at a moment to recognise, that after all it is not the moment for them to come here to work, or simply that they will never have anything to do here, without for all that their forfeiting any merit. It is simply that what is happening here is not their business. I want here people who are interested in their action, in what is involved in this essential change of ethical and subjective motivation, which is what analysis introduces into our world.

I am not prejudging in any way who the people are who may take on the role which is the appropriate one for here. Let us say, that to find my bearings in it, I (6) will proceed as Josuah did at a certain detour which we are told about in his story, you will see the way they behave with their hands, when it is a matter for them of taking water to drink.

I give the floor to Leclaire.

[Leclaire's paper is missing. But cf the Laplanche/Leclaire article of 1960 translated in *Yale French Studies* 48: 118-76 for an earlier treatment of the same material.]

Dr Lacan: I want to preserve for this first meeting all its austerity. I am going to ask someone whom I expressly asked to be present at this first meeting, Conrad Stein, who at the time when Leclaire for the first time went into the example that he took up today in a completed and perfectly articulated fashion, I am going to ask Conrad Stein who had raised a certain number of objections, of questions, who had put in doubt the exact relevance of the articulation at this moment of the

first chain which goes from *lit-la-corne*, gathers together in the *la licorne* [the unicorn] its character, properly speaking, of ideational representative of the unconscious, whether there remains in suspense for him, some question about the relevance of what he had put forward, what he has been able since then, because of these very questions, as he has said himself, to specify.

If Conrad Stein finds his question and his demand for precision renewed in any shape whatsoever - if he is in a position to formulate it immediately let him do so. We will put this question, as I might say, on the agenda, on the blackboard. Nothing more because I would like that today there should intervene those who have prepared different material, just as difficult, as you will see to understand like that, in passing, as Leclaire's paper.

(2) Here in effect, in practice, is what I propose: Leclaire's paper and those which will follow, I have no doubt deserve in every respect, it is perfectly ready, it has been more than gone over, to be printed.

This printing will be carried out and will be put at your disposal within ten days, put at your disposal for a moderately onerous sum, and I think that the most convenient way is to go and get it at the Secretariat of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Madame Durand's office on the second floor of 54 rue de Varenne, where all of those who want to have it will be able to get it.

Nevertheless, as much to see the size of this printing, which will be roneotyped, as for the security of what follows, I would ask to raise their hands those who do not simply want to have this paper as a pretty little article, but who in this connection commit themselves, and moreover their names will be taken when they get the text, commit themselves to respond to it by a text of a minimum of two pages concerning what it gives rise to for them in terms of a necessary questioning indeed of a response. They commit themselves to have it reach me before the next meeting of this closed seminar. Those who having procured this text do not bring along this contribution, place themselves at the same time, outside the commitment which I said at the beginning is the one that I intend to bind together here. Raise your hands, then, those who want to have this text in order to base something on it and send it to me. Raise your hands.

We will print then a run of this text that is more or less double the number that I see, namely, 35 or 40 copies.

To expedite matters, Stein, are you able to reply now or would you prefer to wait until another paper has been read to allow there to mature, for example, what I am asking from you in terms of a response?

Doctor Stein: I would prefer to say a few words right away for the good reason that a half an hour of maturing would not be enough. It is obviously not possible to take up the discussion with Leclaire at the point at which it remained 4 years ago. I would effectively need to read his text to give a detailed commentary of it. Here I would simply like to make a few remarks, and I will take things up, beginning with the end, with what is closest therefore. Poord'jeli, this phantasy,

effectively, this expression, this quite fundamental reference to unconscious phantasy because the unconscious phantasy is by its very nature unsayable, Poord'jeli is obviously constructed like a dream. Leclaire has given us the different words, the different phrases, the different thoughts formulated in language of which Poord'jeli constitutes the expression and the means of condensation and of displacement.

(4) Now you know and in this connection I would like to ask those who want to intervene on the text of Leclaire to re-read the *Traumdeutung*, the interpretation of dreams, in the measure that they don't have it entirely present in their minds. Because I believe it is indispensable in this matter, I did not do it sufficiently four years ago in this discussion with Leclaire, to see the measure in which his analysis, his interpretation, is the faithful reflection of the method, of the Freudian technique as Freud presents it to us in this fundamental work, and what the original contribution of Leclaire is, namely, what is the part in his work, the part that constitutes a development, an elucidation of what creates a problem in the text of Freud. We must absolutely distinguish these two parts I believe.

Poord'jeli is constructed like a dream in the measure that thoughts formulated in language are the object of a displacement and are contracted in accordance with the procedure of condensation, namely, condensation-displacement, the primary process, namely, that we notice here something that is completely fundamental in the original exposition by Freud namely that the dream and the phantasy treat words as if the words were images. Later he will say treat the representatives of words like the representatives of things. Words are from this point of view (5) acoustic images and they undergo the same fate as visual images.

If I recall this, it is because the term "translation into a language", obviously creates a problem. I cannot say very much to you about it now. I believe moreover that I have myself recourse to this notion of translation into language, I am less certain now that images can be translated into language. The relationship that exists between images and language, I believe that if one looks a bit more closely, they will appear to us as being at a different level than that of translation.

This is a first remark. Second remark concerning the chain which begins from Lili and which culminates at corne: lili, plage, sable etc. Well then, Leclaire said something earlier which appears to me to be quite correct and very important to consider which is that this chain plays a privileged role *qua* key to the singularity of the personality, as I might put it, of Philip. Why? Or how? Well then Leclaire's whole argument starts from a dream, from the dream of the unicorn which he recalled for us at the beginning. Well then, this dream, as Freud says in the *Traumdeutung*, this dream is a rebus. The method for deciphering the rebus, the one which is important for Freud, namely the method which permits us, starting from this rebus which the dream constitutes, to culminate from what Freud called the *Traumgedanken*, the dream thoughts, the dream thoughts which are expressed (6) in the form of a wish, this method is free association. You know that free association, we could come back to the question, is precisely not possible. Nevertheless the fact is that this method is free association. Freud speaks in this text, where he says that the dream is a rebus, speaks about the

signifying relationship, *Zeichenbeziehung* between the manifest content of the dream, of the narrative, of the dream that Leclair gives us at the beginning, and the dream thoughts, the wishes that this dream realises, of which he did not give us an exhaustive representation but it would be very easy to do. We have what is necessary to do that.

This signifying relationship poses all sorts of problems that it is not possible to approach now but which will appear with clarity, the fact is that in the singularity which is that of the person of Philip, as Leclair said, the chain which goes from Lili to corne, represents a privileged chain which gives us a sort of key to the rebus. You know moreover that a rebus does not have a key - if in fact, the only key that one could find for a rebus or for a series of rebuses, for a collection of rebuses, the only key would be linked to the singularity of the person who had composed this collection of rebuses. The rebus as such has no key, the dream as such has no key, there is a method - that is something else.

(7) Now, if the dream has a key a very general key, it is a key which depends on a sort of configuration which is that of the Oedipus complex but that is a complex that I do not want to develop now.

The fact remains that this chain has indeed here a privileged value and if you re-read the interpretation of dreams, what is called the *Science des rêves* in the French translation, by Freud, you will find in what concerns the dreams of Freud, all sorts of chains which he does not put forward explicitly as such but that you can reconstruct easily, its not difficult to do, completely analogously to this chain which begins with Lili and which culminates at la corne. And it is this chain that is privileged by Freud, which is easy to reconstruct, which allows him to give us the key of his dreams whose interpretation he gives in his work.

Therefore let us not confuse this chain with the dream thoughts, namely, with what belongs properly speaking according to Freud to the preconscious.

Now a final point. A final point, which is important in connection with this dream that Leclair has analysed for us, is that the patient was thirsty. He needed a drink. If we refer again to the original text of Freud we see there a whole problematic (8) which is quite central in the *Traumdeutung*, the problematic of need. There is a whole chapter consecrated to the satisfaction or rather let us say to the satiation of the needs of the sleeper, and in chapter seven of the *Traumdeutung*, you will see that there is a passage which explicitly shows us, which explicitly refers to a change of register, namely that the dream cannot allow the dreamer to continue to sleep by satiating his need, there is this change of register which is the passage to that of desire and what allows him to continue to sleep is precisely giving himself over to these phenomena of condensation and of development that the dream produces in accordance with condensation and displacement, namely along the paths of desire.

I simply wanted to indicate this as a particular point of this dream, allowing us to end up with a question of desire. I do not want to speak any longer and as I told you, anyway, the new thing that Leclair contributed today to his interpretation of

Phillips dream is much too important for me to comment on, without having reflected for a long time with the text in my hand.

Doctor Lacan: So then we conclude. Am I to understand that the method of approach which allows the strict application of the method, namely, the prevalence of the signifier over any metabolism of images, namely, that what you have called (9) the singularity of the subject is here at best highlighted precisely to allow us to map out three sorts of question that you have punctuated here, do you think that it is the best method of approach to put in place the questions you have posed concerning in a way the sanction to be given to the long *Umschreibung*, the long circumlocution that - I am using the same term as Freud, am I not - that the *Traumdeutung* represents. Is that what I am to understand in your intervention, namely, that you sanction the method as being precisely the one which can allow you to pose the question that you have posed.

Doctor Stein: I would answer yes to you and I would above all answer that we have no choice.

Doctor Lacan: Good then, I think that it is appropriate that on this subject you should give as a reply, more precision in fact to what Leclaire has done, namely that you reply to it by a work that is in accord with it.

I regret that your questions were not - that was why I was in a way leaving you some time - tighter.

We are not going to be able to-day to cover our whole program. I immediately invite Yves Duroux to speak.

Mr Y Duroux: I think that in the little time that remains it is very difficult for me to give my paper and for Jacques-Alain Miller to give his.

(10) Doctor Lacan: Well then, give yours.

Mr Duroux: It is not possible in the measure that Jacques-Alain Miller has based himself on many of the points that I am giving, and I think that the benefit of the paper will be zero if we are not based upon one another in a single continuity.

Dr Lacan: No, not at all, that is not necessarily so. We will take things up the next time, it doesn't matter. You will give your work; people will remain in suspense, and that's it.

Mr Duroux: It will almost be necessary for me to begin again the next time.

Dr Lacan: Ah sure, why not! I had also brought along some things that were quite exemplary and I will delay them also.

Off you go!

PRESENTATION BY Mr YVES DUROUX

The subject of the presentation of which I am only responsible for the first part is entitled Number and Lack. It is based on the careful reading of a book by Frege which is called *Der Grundlagen der Arithmetik*.

The proper object of the investigation is what is called the natural sequence of whole numbers. One can study either the properties of number or study their nature. I understand by property what the mathematicians do in a domain which is delimited by the axioms of Peano. I am not going to state them. Miller perhaps may state them.

Starting from these axioms, kinds of properties are given to whole numbers but in order for these axioms to function it is necessary that there should be excluded from the field of these axioms a certain number of questions which are given as self-evident. These questions are three in number.

- 1 What is a number? Peano's axiom takes as a given that one knows what a number is.
- 2 What is zero?
- 3 What is the successor?

I think that it is around these three questions that the different answers can be given about what is the nature of a whole number.

(2) For my part I will interest myself in the way in which Frege, criticising a tradition, gives a reply. And the totality of this critique and of this response will constitute the stumbling block starting from which Jacques-Alain Miller will develop his presentation.

If the zero, posed as problematic, is not reflected outside, in a function different to that of other numbers, if it is not like a particular point starting from which a sequence is possible, namely that if one does not give to zero a prevalent function one reduces the questions that I enumerated to two others that can be announced as follows:

- 1 How pass from a collection of things to a number which is supposed to be the number of these things? And that precisely is the problem.
- 2 How pass from one number to another?

These two operations one of collecting, the other of adding, are treated by a whole empirical tradition as referable to the activity of a psychological subject.

Both of these operations use both, either to collect objects and name the collection thus formed or to add an object to another object. This whole tradition plays on the word - the word is untranslatable into French - *Einheit*, which in German means unit and it is starting from a play of words on this word that there becomes possible a series of ambiguities in connection with these functions of successor and (3) of number.

An *Einheit* is first of all an undifferentiated and indeterminate element in a collection whatever it may be. But an *Einheit* can also be, one can also take it as the noun one, number one.

When one says that a (*un*) horse is a horse or one horse; the *un* can indicate either a unit, namely an element in the collection in which there is posed one beside the other three horses. Then as long as one takes these units as an element and one collects them in a collection one can absolutely not infer that there is a result to which one attributes the number three, except by a *coup de force* which is arbitrary and which causes this collection to be numbered three.

For one to be able to say that one horse and one horse and one horse make three horses it is necessary to make two modifications. It is necessary

- 1 That the one is conceived as a number and
- 2 That the and is transformed into the plus sign.

But of course, once one has given oneself the second operation one will have explained nothing. Simply one will have posed the real problem which is namely how one plus one plus one make three because one no longer confuses it with the simple collection of three units.

That is why the return of the number as contributing a radically new signification, namely not a simple repetition of a unit. How can this return of the number as the (4) emergence of a new signification be thought of when one cannot resolve the problem of the differences, the equality of elements, simply posed one beside the others, and their difference which ensures that each number, added one after the other, has a different signification.

And a whole empirical tradition is satisfied to refer this function of the emergence of a new signification to a specific activity and a function of inertia of the psychological subject which is supposed to consist in adding along a temporal line of successions, adding and naming.

Frege quotes a large number of texts. All of them come back to this fundamental operation of collecting, adding, naming. In order to support these three functions which are the functions which mask the real problem, by supporting a psychological subject who announces and carries out these activities. If the problem is to discover what is specific in the plus sign and in the successor

operation, for that it is necessary to separate out the concept of number from this psychological determination.

It is here that there begins the proper and original enterprise of Frege. This reduction of the psychological can take place in two phases:

- (5) 1) By a separation that Frege carries out in the domain of what he calls like all of those who had been caught up in psychological concepts known for a very long time, the domain of the *Vorstellungen*. The domain of the *Vorstellungen* where he puts to one side what he called the subjective psychological *Vorstellungen* and on the other side what he called the objective *Vorstellungen*.

This separation has as object literally to efface any reference to a subject and to treat these objective representations uniquely starting from laws that Frege calls logical.

What characterises these objective representations? These objective representations are themselves reduplicated in what Frege calls a concept, in what Frege calls an object. One has to pay careful attention that both the concept and the object cannot be separated and that the function that Frege assigns them is no different to the function assigned to a predicate with respect to a subject or, in the language of modern logic, is nothing other than a monadic relationship, namely what is called a relationship of an element which is the support of this relationship.

And it is starting from this distinction, that Frege carries out a second distinction which makes him refer a number, no longer to a subjective representation, like in (6) the empirical tradition, but refers the number to one or two objective representations and which is the concept.

The diversity of possible numerations never refers to, and in any case cannot be supported, by a diversity of objects. It is simply the index of a substitution of concepts in the sense that I began to speak about earlier on which number is brought to bear the number of which the number is the predicate.

Frege gives a rather paradoxical example. He takes a sentence which is : “Venus does not possess any moon”. Starting from this sentence what should "any" be attributed to? Frege says one does not attribute the “any” to the object moon and for good reason, because there is not one, and that nevertheless the numeration zero is a numeration; therefore what one attributes it to is not the object moon but to the concept moon of Venus. The concept moon of Venus is referred to an object which is the object moon and precisely in this relationship of the concept moon of Venus to the object moon, this relationship is such that there is no moon. Hence one attributes to the concept moon of Venus, the number zero.

It is starting from this double reduction that Frege obtains his first definition of number since the different definitions of number only have as object to ground this successor operation of which I spoke earlier. The first definition of number and the number belongs to a concept.

(7) But this definition “the number belongs to a concept” is still incapable of giving us what Frege calls an individual number namely a number possessed by a definite article: the one, the two, the three, which are unique as individual numbers; there are not several ones there is one one, and one two.

But how can one know, uniquely with what one has just up to now, whether it is the one or the two or the three which will be attributed to a concept and not, for example, Julius Caesar. We have nothing yet which allows us to determine whether what is attributed to a concept is this number which is the unique number preceded by the definite article.

To make understood the necessity of a different approach to arrive at this individual number which is strictly to be circumscribed, Frege takes the example, of planets and of their moon and this time it is: “Jupiter has four moons”.

“Jupiter has four moons” can be converted into this other sentence: “the number of the moons of Jupiter is four”. The "is" which links the number of the moons of Jupiter and four is absolutely not analogous to an "is" in the phrase: “the sky is blue”. It is not a copula. It is a much more precise function which is a function of equality namely that the number four is the number that must be circumscribed and posed as equal to the moons of Jupiter namely to the concept moons of Jupiter there is attributed a number.

(8) And this number is posed as equal in the “is four” which is the number whose property, whose nature one is trying to determine in its relationship to the other whole numbers.

This detour obliges Frege to carry out a primordial operation which allows him to refer the numbers to a pure logical relationship. This operation - I will not give all its details here - is an operation of equivalence, which is a logical relation which allows there to be ordered bi-univocally objects and concepts. The "or" of concepts ought not to disturb you in the measure that, for Frege each relationship of equality between concepts, orders equally the objects falling under the concepts according to the same relationship of equality.

Once there has been posed this relation of equivalence one can come to a second, the true definition of number obviously in the vocabulary of Frege which is a little peculiar but which is absolutely analogous, and a definition which is taken up in the whole formal logic tradition. The definition is the number which belongs to the concept "f" for example of which I spoke earlier, is the extension of the “concept” equivalent to the concept "f".

That is to say that one has posed a particular concept “f”; one has determined by the relationship of equivalence all the equivalents of this concept “f” and one defines the number as the extension of this concept equivalent to the concept “f” (9) namely all the equivalents of the concept “f”. The extension of this concept is to be taken in the simplest sense, namely the number object that there is in a place.

If the definitions of number are obtained starting from this relationship of equivalence Frege thinks, having excluded the individual number, more exactly having delayed it in his investigation, and having in a way put at the end, as the crown of his whole system of equivalence, Frege is going to try, starting from this machine which can be organised in terms of two axes, a horizontal axis along which there operates the relationship of equivalence and a vertical axis which is the specific axis of the relation between the concept and the object namely between the concept and the object is continually that is to say one can always, once one has a concept, transform it into the object of a new concept since the relationship of a concept to an object is a purely logical relationship of relation.

It is starting from these two axes which constitute his relational machine that Frege now claims to circumscribe the different numbers and we see that to circumscribe the different numbers comes back to simply replying to two of the three questions announced at the beginning: “what is zero?” and “what is a successor?”. Given (10) that if one has a zero and that if one has the successor of zero the rest happens automatically.

It is starting from this definition of zero that one can highlight a little what is involved in Frege’s definition. The first necessary definition is the definition of zero. The problem is to know whether one is going to be able to define the zero otherwise than by the tautological reference to the non-existent object falling under the concept. Earlier I was able to attribute the number zero to the moons of Venus because,

- 1) I posited that moon of Venus was a concept, namely objectively existing
- 2) I know that there is nothing which falls under it.

To give himself this number zero Frege forged the concept of non-identical to itself, which is defined by him as a contradictory concept and Frege declared that any contradictory concept, and he allowed there to appear the contradictory concepts accepted in traditional logic, the square circle or the mountain of gold; any concept under which no object falls; to this concept is attributed the name zero. In other words the zero is defined by logical contradiction which is the guarantee of non-existence of the object namely that there is - between the non-existence of the object which is noted, decreed because one says that there is no centaur and then the logical contradiction of the concept of centaur is contradictory.

(11) **Dr. Lacan:** Or unicorn

Mr. Doroux: Or unicorn.

You can understand very clearly if it is the concept contradictory with itself, the concept starting from which there can unfold the definition of number; there is a problem which is posed and which is not resolved by Frege - I am only going to indicate it because it is posed in mathematical logic - it is whether there are several classes.

Frege does not pose himself this problem. He thinks that in the measure in which he has defined in a general fashion the relationship of number and concept by the equivalence of all the concepts, that for the class zero there are also several. In any case he doesn't pose himself the problem. For example other mathematicians are obliged to posit a class zero and a set.

The second operation which will allow there to be generated a whole sequence of numbers is the successor operation. Frege gives simultaneously the definition of the one and the definition of the successor operation.

I say simultaneously because I believe one can say and show that they imply one another and that the definition he gives of the successor is not thinkable until he has defined the one starting from this successor operation.

(12) In other words for the successor operation I will only give the definition of Frege that he posits before the one, and then afterwards I will show that he can only give himself this successor operation because he gives himself this relationship between the one and the zero.

The successor operation is simply defined as follows. One says that a number naturally follows after another number if this number is attributed to a concept under which there falls an object (x), such that, there is another number, it is the number that the first number follows, such that, it is attributed to a concept under which there falls the preceding concept and which is not (x), namely the object fallen under the preceding concept.

That is a purely formal definition which simply shows that the number of the concept that follows as compared to the number which precedes it, the number which precedes has for object the preceding concept on condition that it is not the object which falls under the preceding concept.

This definition is purely formal and I say that Frege grounds it, gives it immediately after, after he passes to the definition of the one. He is going to say, how do I give a definition of one? The definition of one is fairly simple, it consists of giving one a concept equal to zero. What object falls under this concept? Under this concept there falls the concept zero.

(13) Afterwards Frege asks himself what is the concept under which there falls the object equal to zero and not equal to zero.

Equal to zero and not equal to zero; you remember that it is a contradictory definition that defines the number zero. In other words giving itself a first definition: the concept equal to zero. Under this concept there falls the object zero. Then giving oneself a second definition: the concept equal to zero and not equal to zero is the number zero. One knows that because one has already defined it earlier.

Starting from these two propositions Frege can say: “one follows zero in the measure that one is attributed to the concept equal to zero”. Why does it follow zero? Because zero is the object which falls under the concept zero and which at the same time is not equal to zero. In other words contradictory.

Therefore the successor operation is generated by a double operation of contradiction in the passage from zero to one. One can say without going too far beyond the field of Frege, that the reduction of the successor operation is carried out by an operation of double contradiction. Zero being given as contradictory, the passage from zero to one is given by the contradictory contradiction. I mean to say that the motor which generates succession in Frege is purely a negation of negation. The whole apparatus which consisted in reducing the number, is an apparatus common to a whole part of mathematics. It is absolutely recognised that (14) it cannot create any difficulty. One can very easily admit it as included in the field of mathematical logic and not posing us questions. It functions very well all by itself. Is this apparatus capable of responding to the question: “how after zero is there a one?” How is this one a successor and how is it such a successor that the one which comes after it will be two.

Frege thinks he resolved it in the fashion that I have told you. This operation of double contradiction. I will not question myself about the legitimacy of this operation. I will leave it to Jacques-Alain Miller to do that.

I would simply like to say that among the empiricists, as in the case of Frege, the name of the number that Frege calls individual name is only obtained in the final recourse, as a sort of *coup de force*, as if you wish, like, as the , abstains. And secondly in one case and the other, in Frege the number is always captured by an operation which has as a function to create a fullness either by a collection or by this operation that Frege calls bi-univocal correspondence which has exactly the function of exhaustively collecting a whole field of object.

On the one hand it is the activity of a subject, on the other hand it is the operation which is called the logic of equivalence and which have the same function.

(15) I believe if you wish to answer the question which is posed at the beginning one can ask oneself how the return of the number as a different signification is possible, namely, if there are other principles which are capable of accounting for these different significations.

If you wish I gave in connection with these questions a Moebius strip, it must now be twisted. This is what Jacques-Alain Miller will do.

Dr Lacan: The requirements of a cut in time, then, leaves the discourse of Yves Duroux in suspense until Jacques-Alain Miller, at our next closed meeting, will show you its relationship, its direct incidence with what preoccupies us to the greatest degree, namely the relationship of the subject to the signifier, in so far as here you see it being simply outlined - I am speaking for those for whom

questions may arise in their most confused form - being outlined in the relationship between the zero and the one.

Do not content yourselves, of course, with this summary analogy. If today, we have made the effort to make you take into account, with the greatest fidelity of a text which is fundamental in the history of mathematics, to which I believe a good share of you have not been introduced and still fewer are familiar with, if we have made this effort it is because it is necessary for you to know that these are questions that are so pregnant that even for the people - the mathematicians - who do not after all need this elaboration in order to make their system function, they are nevertheless posed and they nevertheless have their fecundity.

In effect, everything that has recently been produced in terms of mathematical (2) research, and rather fruitful mathematical research because it has absolutely transformed its every aspect, is founded on the avowal of the very people who made it happen, specifically for example Bertrand Russell, referred back to this work which is inaugural and was unknown until Russell himself partially discovered its mainspring, because the work remained for more than twenty- five years in the most profound obscurity.

I think that however disparate at first approach may appear the two presentations that you have heard today, and I underline it, those to whom this discord will oblige to make an effort of mental gymnastics which may appear too difficult for them, these people precisely, are those to whom I said that after all they are not obliged to submit to it. If such a relationship must be established for you, it is very certainly along thousands of threads of communication, of which I will only quote one to you for, after all, it has been agreed for a long time that when the philosopher tries to accord his thinking with the object of his grasp, he will tell you right away that the unicorn is something, as they say, which does not exist.

Nevertheless, does a unicorn exist and in what measure? Does a centaur exist and does it exist a little more once it is the centaur of someone like Nessus or Chiron?

(3) It is a question which has for us the greatest importance. Because it is indeed this that is involved in our practice, namely the incidence of nomination, at its conceptual state or at its pure state, on the proper name with which we have to deal, to the very *initium* of what determines the subject both in his history and in his structure and in his presence in the analytic operation.

This text of Duroux will likewise [be made available], because I consider he has rendered you a very great service, by giving you of Frege's work, *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, a remarkably short summary, which is quite substantial and which is the rock, the point, the core, of the reference thanks to which this conjunction which will be carried out at our next meeting between [the way in which] the apparently purely technical questions that he raised harmonise with our practice.

All of those therefore who desire, under conditions which are broader than those which I mentioned earlier - Leclaire's text should only be taken at the risk and peril of the one who takes it not giving any response, the text of Leclaire, it is to

those and to those alone who want to add something to it that it will be given. - For the others who are there in a way as auditors and who are still in a way in suspense, all of those who wish for the next time to have confronted, prepared what Jacques-Alain Miller will bring us are asked to raise a finger. Good, I estimate that we need to run off about eighty copies and it is in the same place and the same office, that in a fortnight Duroux, if this is agreeable to him, will have the time to look over the text which he has typed here, that you can find it at the same address, so that those, a great number, I think, who may have allowed there to escape some of the perfectly circumscribed and well modulated articulations, which were strictly equivalent to Frege's text, let them come then to our next meeting to hear what will follow.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 3 February 1965

Before beginning my lecture, I would like to make an announcement, and I would be grateful if Melle Hocquet would recall it at the end of the lecture by writing it on the board, namely that there will be no lecture next week, nor will there be one in two weeks time. I am in effect going to absent myself for a period of a fortnight, or a little bit more.

I will take up our conversations here then on the 24th of February, which will fall on a fourth Wednesday of the month, a fourth Wednesday which, as you now know is reserved for this form of meeting that I call the closed seminar and which, as you know, is open to all of those who ask me, which charges them subsequently with comprehending, as I tried during the last of these closed seminars, with comprehending what they have to do in this seminar, namely to draw for themselves the consequences of choosing whether they ought to remain there or leave it.

For the many among you - which renders legitimate my public communication here - who were at the last closed seminar, I specify that they will be able to find very (2) shortly I hope, namely, I think between now and the end of the week which has now begun, one of the texts and, a little later, the other one of those that it was decided to make available in a roneotyped form for the people who wished to consult them for the subsequent seminars.

It will be available for them at 54 rue de Varenne, on the second floor at the back of the courtyard, they should address themselves to Madam Durand's porters. At the same time I point out to members of the *Ecole freudienne*, who obviously have complete access to the closed seminar - I think that the majority of them will

go to 54 Rue de Verenne to obtain these texts, they can at the same time get their card from the approximate pile that I made of the entry cards that they can use at the closed seminar; I apologise to those who do not find themselves there. That simply means that they did not write their name on a blue card on the way in to this closed seminar.

This having been said, I would like today for us to continue to advance into what is the crucial problem. We are trying to propose a shape and, make no mistake, a topology essential for psychoanalytic praxis. It is with this in mind that I reproduced here in the shape of the Klein bottle, a shape, if you wish, that is not unique as you know well, since it is itself is a shape which may appear to you, (3) having regard to the most widespread, the most current, the most imaged shape in the most elementary books, may appear simplified to you; it is not at all simplified, it is exactly the same but it can be represented in many other ways for the simple reason that every representation is an incorrect, forced, representation of it because any representation that I can give you of it on a plane board, is obviously a representation which is a projection into three-dimensional space to which the surface of the Klein bottle does not belong. A certain immersion in space is therefore always involved.

Nevertheless, there is a relationship which is all the same analogous between the structure, the essence of the surface, and this immersion. There is an analogous relationship, I am saying, between what the surface is designed to represent for us and the space in which it functions, the space in which it functions being precisely the space of the Other *qua* locus of the word.

I am not today going to try to pursue this analogy between a three-dimensional field and what I called “the space of the Other” and “the locus of the Other”, which is not at all the same, let us say that a certain analogy with the three Cartesian dimensions of space could be introduced here but I will not do it today.

There are four schemas on the board; the one on the top left is limited, framed by a (4) right-angled bar to isolate it from the others. It has no relation to the others. For all of those who have had the leisure to open certain *Remarks* that I made, on the discourse of one of my former colleagues, remarks implying a correction, indeed a rectification of certain analogies introduced by him between the terms which serve to define the agencies in the second topography, more especially the terms ideal ego and ego-ideal, regarding which it remains moreover in suspense, whether Freud authentically distinguished them, and it is a long time ago that I articulated that he did, but the matter can remain in effect as a question.

In any case, the passage was crossed by the author to whom I am referring, if I remember correctly, in number four or five of the review *La Psychanalyse*; the step was taken since, in fact, ideal ego and ego-ideal have a sense in psychology, and because it is this sense that the author tried to harmonise with analytic experience.

He did it in terms which can be described as terms of the person, indeed of Personalism, and I tried in these *Remarks*, without properly speaking putting in

question a phenomenology which retains its value, I tried to show what analysis allows us to articulate on this point. The few strokes of the drawing that I made on the left, refer then, are a simple allusion to the schema that I gave at that time, the details of which you can see in this article.

(5) It is perhaps not useless for me to recall what is involved. The value, the spice of this construction entirely reposes on an experiment in physics-for-fun that is called that of the inverted bouquet. Thanks to which, by the use of a spherical mirror - for the moment, leave this part of the schema to one side - thanks to the usage of a spherical mirror, one can make appear inside a vase, which is supposed to be real, which would be placed here, a false bouquet. Provided the bouquet is hidden from the view of the spectator by some suitable screen, the bouquet gives, by the effect of reversal that the spherical mirror produces, an image here which - as opposed to the image in the plane mirror, beyond the plane mirror - is an image described as real.

Namely, that it is effectively something which is sustained in space like an illusion; illusionists, in certain cases, and naturally in conditions of favourable lighting, in an environment protected by black screens, manage to make emerge these sorts of phantoms in a fashion that is quite sufficient at least to interest the eye.

It was starting from there that, in a purely fictitious fashion, I took the liberty of imagining the following model, one which would give rise to an illusionary vase, around to a bouquet.

(6) It is quite clear that this illusion is only produced for an eye which is placed somewhere in the field in such a way that this can give rise to an image for it, namely, from a certain reflection of the rays from the spherical mirror, that having crossed again to constitute a real image, is going to expand into a cone at the bottom of the space in question. It is necessary of course that the eye which is able to receive, is supposed to receive the real image, should be in this cone. In other words, which is quite easy to comprehend, it is necessary that the spectator of this illusory spectacle should be within a certain rather limited field, for him not to escape purely and simply from the effects of the spherical mirror.

It is here that there lies the principle of the little supplementary complication that I add to it, namely, that this illusion of the real image, is a subject, this subject is quite mythical, it is for that reason that here the S is not barred, it is a subject who, on the contrary, is placed, as one can easily comprehend is required, on the side of the spherical mirror. This spherical mirror represents some mechanism internal to the body, which sees in a mirror the illusion that is produced here for the one who is supposed to be there.

This is not very difficult to comprehend. In effect the position of the S and of the I with respect to the plane of the mirror, even if it does not appear so in this figure, is strictly symmetrical.

(7) It is enough then that S finds his own eventual image beyond the mirror, somewhere in this cone constituted by the illusion of the spherical mirror within his range, for him to see in the mirror exactly what he would see if he were there, namely at the place marked I. It is exactly the relationship between S and the identification which is called ideal ego, namely this point of accommodation that the subject, I would say, from all time - this "from all time" is not what is covered by a history, namely the history of the child in his identification-relationship with the adult - it is then from a certain point of accommodation in the field of the Other, in so far as it is woven, not simply from the symbolic relationship, but from a certain imaginary plane, his relationships with the adults who oversee his formation.

It is in a way to fix there, to locate there, to accommodate to this point that he is going to have, right throughout that same development, in order to bring in here what he refers himself to in the genesis, that he is going to have, in the course of this development, to accommodate this illusion, which is the illusion of the inverted vase, namely, to bring into operation around something which is the bouquet - which we have here, for reasons of clarity, reduced to a single flower, indeed to this sign, this little circle or little stem - to accommodate around this something which has still not said its name, even though it is already written on the board, to accommodate around this something, here, the virtual image of the flower, to (8) accommodate, in short, this real image of the inverted vase. This real image of the inverted vase is the ideal ego, it is the succession of forms from which there will crystallise what is called, in a much too monolithic fashion, by a sort of extrapolation which produces a disturbance in the whole theory, the ego. The ego is formed from the successive histories of these ideal ego's; these include the whole experience of what one could call the taking in hand of the body image. It is there that there always lies what I emphasised under the title of the mirror stage, in other words, the core character with respect to the agency of the ego of the specular image.

You see the greater elaboration that is contributed by this schema. It is clear that if the mirror here has its *raison d'être* because it defines a certain relationship between the body, here taken *qua* hidden, and what is produced in terms of the mastery of its image by the subject, it introduces there in a visible fashion something that is quite clear in the experience of the mirror, namely, that prior to this experience there is the locus of the Other, the field of the Other, the support of the Other, the other, in a word, who holds the child in her arms in front of the mirror. It can happen, this is an essential dimension, that the first gesture of the child in this jubilant assumption, as I said, of his image in the mirror, which is very often co-ordinated with this turning of the head towards the other, the real other, (9) seen at the same time as him in the mirror and whose tertiary reference, seems to be inscribed in the experiment.

So what? What is involved in the reminder that I have given here of this little schema, is to show that the function and the relationship there is between this flower, as I called it earlier, here designated by **o**, and which is effectively what we call the **o**-object, this flower does not have in this experiment, and with respect to the mirror, does not have the same function, is not homogeneous with what

comes to operate around it as a reference, namely the body image and the ego. I can even add for those who have already followed my developments on this during the seminar on *Identification*, that on the single condition of making intervene another register, that of topology, one could say, but obviously it is a metaphor, being there only a metaphore, more especially the metaphor of this little physics experiment, do not try then to bring into it in any way, despite the fact that Freud himself used schemas that were in fact quite similar, you cannot in any case bring into it more reality than we are doing here ourselves.

Nevertheless, do not forget, that besides, and with the help of a reference much (10) closer to the real, which is precisely the topological reference, I clearly underlined that if the body-image, the $i(o)$, originates in the subject in the specular experience, the small o - you know the agency I give it in the economy of the subject and his identification - the small o has no specular image. It is not specularisable. And this indeed is the whole mystery. How, not being specularisable, can one sustain, maintain, because this is the fact of our experience, that it centres the whole effort of specularisation?

It is from there, I remind you, that there ought to begin every question, more exactly the putting in question, of what is involved in identification, and more especially in identification as it is pursued, as it is accomplished in the analytic experience.

You see there that the operation of identification, like the end of analysis, depends on an alternative between two terms which govern, which determine, the identifications of the ego, which are distinct without our being able to say that they are opposed, because they are not of the same order.

The ego ideal, locus of the function of the unary trait, point of departure of the attachment of the subject in the field of the Other, around which no doubt there is played out the fate of the identifications of the ego in their imaginary root, but also elsewhere, the "invisible" point of regulation, if you wish, but I put this "invisible" in inverted commas because, if it is not seen in the mirror, its relationship to the visible must be completely revised, and you know that last year, for those who (11) were here, I laid down the foundations, but here I leave the point in parenthesis

Around, let us say, the o hidden in the reference to the Other, around the o , just as much, and more, as around the ideal ego, there will be played out the identifications of the subject. And the question is whether we ought to consider that the end of analysis can be satisfied with a just one of the two dimensions which determine these two poles, namely, culminate in the rectification of the ego ideal, namely, end up at another identification of the same order, and specifically what has been called, and what can be designated, as the identification to the analyst.

If all the aporias, the difficulties, the impasses of which, effectively, the experience of analysts and the sayings of analysts bring us testimony if it is not

around this something, insufficiently orientated and not referred to the level of the \mathbf{o} , that there operate the impasses of that \mathbf{o} and their solution.

It is a reminder on the path onto which we now have to advance, and propose for ourselves a formula which re-introduces here our apprehension of the Klein bottle and what is involved in this figure, I would say the key that we are trying to give with this topology, is what is involved when desire arms itself; desire is something that we have to deal with in the Freudian unconscious.

It is in the measure that it is something completely different to what was precisely (12) called, up to then, an unknown, mysterious animal tendency. If the unconscious is what it is, this opening which speaks, through which desire is to be formulated for us, somewhere in the cut characteristic of the scansion of this language, and this is what our topological reference tries to express.

I advance the following formula. Before commenting on it, we could say that desire is the cut through which a surface is revealed as a-cosmic.

This is the order in which you must have clearly sensed it for a good while, because already as regards this term a-cosmic, I already put forward, and under more than one horizon, the profoundly intuitive character which is not seen, and as I was told again quite recently when trying, with a mathematician, to bring into play on this famous little bottle some higher exercise, "these surfaces that are horrible to look at". I mean that my mathematician, to resolve its problems which by common accord are at stake, rejects energetically and quite correctly, and even remarked effectively on the aspect of the horrible, here, of the bottle, this kind of curious double mouth, at the same time embraced, stuck to itself, but from the inside which means that one arrives at this edge from two sides at once.

There are things that can be represented at the level of reflection on this edge and I who am not afraid to draw you into the horrible, I spoke to you about it as of a (13) certain retrogression, but in fact this circle of retrogression is nowhere. If we take the surface completely rigorously, this circle is nowhere because, simply to limit ourselves to the way it is represented here, it can slide everywhere.

I already one made the comparison with you of the peculiar stocking, of a kind of immaterial nylon retrogressing somewhere onto itself. Let us suppose that this nylon is able to traverse itself without damage, in a way that is easier than on the board, well then, you will see that this circle of retrogression can be placed at every point of its trajectory. The essence of the bottle is precisely constituted by its ubiquity.

That is why, of course, the questions that I pose to the mathematician horrify him. There are other methods to formulate the consequences of this ungraspable circle of retrogression, and what I represent for you here, because I think that it is all the same, however horrible to look at its construction may be, more graspable, not to your mental habits, for once you begin to try to manipulate this bottle a little, you will see what difficulties you are going to have. But all the same, that these mirages are much more striking than if I were to content myself with some

symbol and with some calculation; you would not at all have the feeling that this makes sense, but it is clear that if I ask you by means of this to locate certain things that I (14) am not going to make you sense now. You can practice it by yourselves to verify its importance: the fact is that to go from a point (a) to a point (b), which are here represented on the circle of retrogression, if we take a certain type of path there and back, we cut the bottle in a certain fashion which leaves its characteristics intact, namely, that we cut it - if that amuses you - into two Moebius strips, that is to say two non-orientable surfaces like that.

If on the contrary, we procede in a fashion which seems to be only slightly different, if you wish, the first trait is the same, but the other trait happens in a different way, well then, we also cut the bottle, but we transform it into a sort of pure and simple cylinder, in other words something perfectly orientable, into something which has a front and a back, which is absurd, the front not being in a condition to pass, except by crossing an edge on the back side.

This only imaged, even though it is left in suspense here, we could enter into greater detail, see to what the divergence of these possibilities refers to and if we have enough time I will have the opportunity of showing what it serves to figure.

You will even see that there is here a good cut, one which reveals the surface in its true nature, which is that of a non-orientable surface, and a bad one which dodges it, and which reduces it to a different surface, and in any case one that is more banal, more common, more accessible to intuition, because moreover, you know (15) that historically, it is a curious thing, in a field like mathematics, where from all time recreation has served in many cases as a way into the true problems, it is in higher mathematics, in pure mathematical speculation that there appeared first of all these strange topological beings, and that if they descend to recreation now, it is secondary.

This is a procedure strictly opposed to all our observations in the other fields of mathematics, if only to repeat that no one should enter here if he is not a topologist, as was formerly said at the door of certain schools of thought: "let no one enter here if he is not a geometer".

Do we have here then the function of this famous desire of the analyst: to be the one who knows how to cut out some figures in this a-cosmic surface for nothing is unannounced in the field of thought and of history; is Carlyle's work, *Sartor resartus*, the tailor re-tailored, only in a way the announcement and the prefiguring of what the subject is going to undergo with Marx and Freud?

Undoubtedly there is something of that, there is something which, in analysis, echoes what Carlyle's title alone carries: the philosophy of dress, and it is not for nothing that we begin to enter into the field of the analysis of desire with the term *Verkleidung*, which is so futile, with the presence in the word of the term dress, *Kleid*, which the term *déguisement* allows to escape in French.

(16) But *Verkleidung* is something else. It has to do with dress.

But then the phrase of a dead queen speaking about her son will serve us: “well cut, but must be sewn up again”. And also in the field of analysis, undoubtedly everything depends on the efficacy of the good cut, but also to be considered is the way that, this cut having been made, it allows us to have the garment, the garment behind which there is only perhaps nothing, it is only the garment that is at stake, turning the garment in a different way; the *Sartor resartus* in question, of which I want to speak to you today - I highlight the fact that it is not the patient, it is not the subject, it is the analyst.

Because what I want to try to bring to life for a moment, and to image for you, is a certain difficulty that the analyst has with his own theories. I will take this up in the text - I chose it because it is the last one that has come into my hands, it was not I think published in the last issue of the *International journal of psychoanalysis*, recording the Stockholm Congress where this paper was read.

It is the work, let us say, of a young woman, or one at the limit of the moment when this term young begins to take on a vaguer sense, she is not a young analyst either, she is all the same in a rather peculiar position in this curious *milieu* which is (17) the analytic community, let us say that in the English Society she represents a sort of baby for all of them. She is, faith, very active and very sharp, very intelligent, as you are going to see and after all, does not lack some daring, a daring of which the title of her paper carries the trace because, in short, she puts in question one of the terms that has passed, been woven, integrated in the most current fashion into psychoanalytic experience. She opens things out in a certain field that is properly educational, in short a really English style of psychoanalysis and of course, to speak about this style is not to decide about doctrinal orientations, for doctrinal orientations must oppose one another, even struggle with one another within this general proposition which all the same has a formative reference. The title is then: “The unconscious exploitation of the bad parent to maintain belief in infantile omnipotence”.

It is a matter here of showing along what path a practitioner comes to put in doubt, something that everything that she has been taught as being the mainspring of analytic experience revolves around, because of the paths this teaching, this direction has led her onto. She becomes aware that everything that is ordinarily said about transference, namely, a mistake about the person, the reproduction, in the relation to the analyst, of experiences one had with parents, has led to putting the accent in a more and more prevalent way on the effects that were produced in (18) the development of the subject, by what can be called for example, as a characteristic sign, an inadequate emotional conditioning. Minds are led more and more towards this developmental aspect that the good parent is the one who takes care not to contribute, at every phase of the development of the child and of the needs which correspond to it, this something which is not going to produce what is called "emotional disturbance", in short to centre the business around an ideal of affective formation, where what is involved is something about a relationship between two living beings, one having needs, the other being there to satisfy them, and that, in a way, the outcome, the good formation depends on questions of harmony, of appropriateness, of the stages of care.

That an analyst raised in this environment moreover there is no reason to be surprised because this aspect, this slope, is all the same only the bottom of a slope. Analysis has in no way come out of that, and what we have to deal with is not what its praxis, in a certain field, in a certain *milieu*, directs itself towards in a fascinated way. It is of course from a completely different experience that we begin, namely that this appears as the possible source of what is effectively involved, namely the ectopia of a response in the child to these so-called educational misdeeds, which is there ectopic, present, in the analytic field with respect to the analyst: this is what is called the transference.

(19) One must all the same know, of course, if one accords importance to my formula, whether they can be applied. Meaning what? Translated, and it is I myself who contributed a translation: transference is deception (*tromperie*) in its essence. Now then, if that is how things are, one ought to be able to give weight, vigour to the equivalence between transference neurosis and deception neurosis and why not? Let us try.

Whom is one deceiving? If transference is indeed this something by which the subject, within the range of his means, establishes his position at the locus of the Other - and there is no need for a lot of references to confirm this for us - it is a matter of knowing whether the transference interpretation which limits itself to noting that what is displayed and represented in the behaviour of the patient towards us comes from elsewhere, from further back, from a long time ago, from his relationships with his parents. If he interpreted it in this way, he perhaps favoured this deception. This at least is the question that of course I am raising, but for today, I put forward to you, as being precisely the question raised by our analytic hope, by this precious person, whose first name as it happens is Pearl.

After some salutations to the authorities of her *milieu*, she correctly poses the question: how can one discriminate, in the return of the "traumatic" experience in transference, in the analytic situation the exploitation, she says, she expresses herself very well, of these traumatic experiences for the maintenance, she says, of the omnipotence, or the all-powerfulness well known in common analytic references, as being those which belong to the child and, moreover, to the unconscious.

In other words, someone, an analyst, poses in the proclivity, the present slope, the aspect followed by analytic experience, poses the question as to whether, no doubt, this interpretation of transference which has from its import as a rectifying experience and as an operation, which is important, whether limiting oneself to this field does not mean for the analyst, in so far as he is the Other, the Other of the Cartesian subject, this God of whom I told you, that it is not so much a question of knowing whether he is not a deceiver, but what Descartes does not bring up, whether he is not deceived. And if Descartes does not bring it up, it is for a reason, it is because this non-deceiving God, to whom he remits so generously the arbitrariness of eternal truths, have people not always sensed that there is here some deception on the part of the great gambler, who here advances masked. For what does it matter to him to leave Him with His truths, if he, the subject of the *cogito*, removes from Him after all the only thing which counts for

him, his certainty, of being the one who thinks, *res cogitans*. God may well be the master (21) of eternal truths, it is not even guaranteed in this remitting that He himself knows it.

Now then, this indeed is what is involved for the analyst, namely, to know up to what point that which is involved, namely the structure of a subject, is something that one can radically and purely refer to this double register of a certain normativity of needs, in the midst of which there intervene, in a more or less opportune fashion, these incidences that formerly were called traumatic, but that people tend more and more with time, to reduce to what is called cumulative traumatic effects, in other words to dissolve into something or other which gives the quite simple reason which is always necessary to account for the fact that your daughter is dumb, namely, that there was indeed something that, at some moment or other, did not go right, in other words, whether one does not follow, at least for a certain number of patients, a dangerous path, by allowing them to install themselves in a history which, when all is said and done, appears to organise itself from a lack of certain ideal requirements.

Of course all sorts of "insights", as they say, of points of view, of revealing apprehensions can be installed in this function and this register. Nor is it false to say that the ego can become supple to it, indeed re-organise itself around it, this indeed is what Figure 1, which I apologise for having stayed too long on at the beginning at this discourse today, illustrates for you: everything that is played out (22) around transference and the identifications, at once provisional and successfully refuted, that take their place there, will come to operate on the image *i'(o)*, and allow the subject to gather together these variants.

But is that everything? If this ends up by neglecting the equally radical function, the function at the other pole of what belongs to the secret of what analysis has taught us to locate in the *o*-object.

I insist that if the *o*-object has the function that everyone knows about, it is clear that it does not impact on us in the same way with different patients. I mean that it is necessary in what is going to follow, that I should tell you what an *o*-object is in psychosis, in perversion, in neurosis, and there is every chance that it is not the same.

But today I want to tell you how the *o*-object appears to an analyst who is undoubtedly sensitive, as you are going to see, to her experience. So here then it matters little that the case with which she puts forward her reflections is a "borderline" case, as she says, with crises which have even been vaguely labelled *petit mal*, if not a crisis of depersonalisation, a subject who had up to the age of fourteen years, in the atmosphere of a couple between whom very numerous tensions, shocks, "rows" occurred up to the time the couple divorced when the (23) child was fourteen. A brother three years older and a sister older again. It does not matter to us for the moment that he is described as schizoid, that he suffers, like these subjects that we put on the edge of the psychotic field, from this kind of falseness experienced about his *self*, from this putting into suspense,

indeed from this vacillation of all his identifications, all of this for the moment is secondary for us.

What is important is the following: that this patient is psychoanalysed by the analyst in question with a short interruption for ten years; that she had already given a paper on him in 1954 to the British Psychoanalytic Society. In 1954, that seems to be precisely ten years previously, but what is reported to us is from a prior time in which she herself, with regard to this patient, is able to distinguish, with what I would call her little Geiger counter, her little apparatus for radiation from the unconscious, two fields, two periods, two phases of experience possible with such a subject: those during which there is something happening - the subject, I would say, plays the game, in any case he makes astonishing progress and the psychoanalyst is satisfied, I mean that she herself knows well this whole veil effect, behind which there occurs this mysterious exchange, through which the analyst again, indeed in the fields which are closest to her, knows well that there is situated (24) her day-to-day experience of the analytic session. One knows what the discourse of the patient is addressing to you directly, and whether it is going well or not, how it is being played out and what sort of lure is at the same time presented to us, which is at the same time an opening out to the truth, and she knows well when that is happening.

But there are periods, she tells us, when I pick up, I sense something which I know well, she says, for it is far from being simply with patients specified in this way that for her this happens, I find myself in a way, she says, fixed by him.

Since she has to put her little Geiger counter somewhere, she places it there then, this is where it weighs on her, it gives her a slab on the stomach. And from there it does not budge. And what is imprisoned, it is her term, "imprisoned", what is imprisoned inside is herself, the analyst. There you are.

Now then, she has put up with that in a way, she has put up with that for ten years. I am not in the process, however much of an analyst I may be, of being ironic about analyses that last ten years, I am speaking about analysts who put up with such a situation for ten years. It is something different that they put up with the slab that is there.

(25) What does that mean? That means that the results obtained gave the patient space, and that in the end, all sorts of things did not turn out too badly, including the fact that he stopped being a beatnik; he got married, things happened to him which are generally considered to be nice .

It must be said that already, on the occasion of a first return to a period of treatment, it was after one of his little "fits", one of these crises which came on him, when, a curious thing, he was cutting down a tree. That very quickly brought back to him a certain panic. The second time, it was something analogous. The patient, faith, is on the point of having, because he can no longer articulate a word, of having profuse sweats and of being completely embarrassed because of this at his work.

It is rather striking that in these conditions an analyst who, as I told you, is very well accepted in the field of the official *milieu*, should take on the role of doing, in short, what could be called, as she expresses it herself, a sort of case supervision: she sees the patient face to face. And then, at that point, there happen quite curious things. If at the level of her paper, she says that undoubtedly they had perhaps gone astray for ten years, by allowing the whole emphasis to be put on the side of the ravages caused by these bad parents, by the father on this occasion, the (26) matter is perhaps correctable. In the ordinary theory, let us say that the healthy part of the analyst's ego as it is expressed, which up to then had given the measure of things, was obliged to make way to an extra-healthy part.

When all is said and done, it might begin to be put in question whether the father is really at the origin of these ravages. What is striking is that, in the more and more subtle remarks that the analyst is going to make, and which in a way, a rather interesting thing, in her own report, comes to her, comes to her from a kind of a spoken word, a word from herself whose message she receives. She happens one day to cry out that no doubt the patient must all the same have a great need for the myth of the unsatisfactory father. She says it before thinking. It is she herself who notes it.

In short, before the declarations of this patient, declarations that one would not be surprised to see coming from a psychotic subject, that he has the feeling no doubt that when things are going well, everything is going well, no doubt, but that, nevertheless, it is not him, that he is elsewhere.

One can let that pass as a clinical feature. One can also ask oneself to what degree, and in what measure, the analyst had worked precisely in the direction of leaving intact, of reinforcing even, this falsified aspect of the fundamental identification of the patient.

(27) The analyst is aware of all of that. She notices, no doubt with some delay, that all that can be grasped about this deteriorated relationship with the father, when one is able to see its sign and its source, is that the patient has done everything to maintain it.

The role of the analyst, or rather the reversal in her aims that is produced, is to ask herself why the patient, in short, by a sort of turn-about which comes to her from a grip in which she had allowed herself to be stuck, englobed for ten years, why the patient, it is the least we might say, was so complicitous in the maintenance of this bad relationship.

It is here that we must say that even though the analyst perceives this possibility, the dissection that she makes of it along the path of this heart-rending revision is, as one might say, completely insufficient.

To make you aware of it, I must myself formulate, I mean not in a decisive, definitive fashion or in a radical one, but at the level of what is involved, namely of desire, there again, if one gives a sense to the formulae that I put forward, if one can admit that at a particular detour in my discourse I said that the desire of

man was the desire of the Other (with a capital O), and if this is essentially what is at stake in analysis, where is this desire of the Other presented.

(28) The desire of the Other, in this radical field where the desire of the subject is irreducibly, not tied into him, but precisely constituted by this torsion that my bottle here tries to represent for you. This is untenable and requires an intermediary.

The major intermediary, the one with which there is no question, is the law, the law supported by something which is called the Name-of-the-Father. Namely, a quite precise and articulated register of identification whose major reference points I was at one time prevented from highlighting, with the consequence that I will not do so in the near future.

But at the level that we are at, what we have to see is that in the transference, what is involved is always to supply by some identification, for the fundamental problem: the liaison of desire with the desire of the Other.

The Other is not desired since it is the desire of the Other which is determining, it is in so far as the Other is desiring.

At one time I articulated this around the *Symposium*. Alcibiades approaches Socrates and wants to seduce him, to ravish his desire. And he takes the metaphor of the little Silenic box - I mean in the form of a Silenus - in the centre of which there is a precious object. Socrates possesses nothing other than this: his desire.

Desire as Socrates himself articulates it in Plato, cannot be caught just like that, (29) either by the tail, as Picasso says, or otherwise, since desire, as it is underlined, is lack.

One dwells in language - I even said recently, which is amusing, that there is somewhere in Heidegger, something I had not noticed, a suggestion that there is here a solution to the housing problem - but one does not dwell in lack. Lack for its part on the contrary, may dwell somewhere. It dwells somewhere in effect, and the metaphor of the *Symposium* takes on its value here. It dwells within the **o**-object. Not the Other, a space in which there are deployed the aspects of deception, but the desire of the Other is hidden here at the heart of the **o**-object.

The one who knows how to open the object in the right way with a pair of scissors, is the one who is the master of desire. And this is what Socrates does with Alcibiades in jig time, by saying to him: "do not look to what I desire, but to what you desire, and in showing it to you, I desire it with you, it is this imbecile Agathon".

So then, when the patient during a session, which is analysed at length by our analyst, brings along the following symptom : " things have got to such a stage for him that when he is having his breakfast, he cannot hold his fork without being aware that he wants to stick it in the toast and the butter at the same time", which are evidently made to be put together but which, at this moment, are still on

(30) separate plates. Well, what is instructive, is to see what our analyst, put at ease by the face-to-face position, replies to this short communication:

"The part of you that wants to get better," I am translating the English as best I can, "and which has formed an alliance with me, is fed up with the way that you are incapable of taking a step towards what you are missing. This is the *status quo* that you were speaking about, and it seems to me that the reason why you cannot go forward and grasp one of the objects that you desire, is that you have put your own famished baby's mouth in both of them. So, since you believe unconsciously that there is only enough food for one mouth, namely, that you can only do one thing at a time, the other one is going to suffer hunger and probably die of it. This is a reason why you have been put on notice to preserve the *status quo*, that is, not to allow yourself to feel" - this is how the patient has expressed it - "that you might do, or might have done something, because this would mean that a part of you, or one of your selves, would have been abandoned for ever and would have died of hunger."

Here is an interpretation of which one can say,

- 1) That it is very circumlocutious
- 2) That she tries to connect very rapidly what was involved at the

(31) beginning and that nevertheless the analyst even puts in question, namely, at all costs the demand; and not simply the demand but precisely what every analysis of demand necessarily converges towards, since the demand, in analysis, is made by the mouth, there is no need to be surprised that what offers itself in the end is the oral orifice, there is absolutely no other explanation for the supposedly regressive stopping point that is considered necessary, to the point of believing that it is obligatory, that it is inscribed in the nature of things, of every regression in the analytic field.

If you cease to take as your guide the demand, with its horizon of identification through transference, there is no reason for regression to culminate necessarily at the oral demand, given that the circle of drives is a continuous, circular circle and that the only question is to know in what direction one goes around it, but since it is circular one goes around it necessarily, obligatorily, from end to end and in the course of an analysis one even has the time to make several circuits.

What is striking all the same is that by a sort of feeling that she is palpating precisely what is involved, she distinguishes something which is exactly our structure, namely, that precisely because the oral demand is made through the same (32) orifice as the invoking demand, that the demand to eat is the same because it is the mouth which speaks, he has two mouths. All this is very ingenious but it completely misses the essential, namely, that in such a symptom, which is a symptom that has been pinpointed for a long time and which posed a riddle for philosophers, the symptom that I would describe as Buridan's, namely, that of the duplication of the object and not, as it is said, of the liberty of indifference, the allusion, the reference which is made to it by the subject at that moment is essential, the fact is that what is involved is something different to a demand, what is involved is the dimension of desire, and that she does not know how to cut it properly with her scissors.

It is late and I will have to come back to this case, since I must interrupt myself here. For what follows, I hope that the time will not be so long for you to lose the thread of it in your memory.

But what we are going to see as essential is the following, it is that at no time after having had this inspiration that what the subject had maintained throughout the whole of his history is a need to maintain his hold on the adult, his all-powerfulness, the darkness is so thick about the nature of infantile all-powerfulness and its exigencies, that the analyst does not even glimpse what is nevertheless articulated in all sorts of ways in the field of observation, which is that in this case, and with respect to a father, a depressive father let us remember, namely, in whose (33) economy the partial object has a prevalent importance, the fact is that the patient, like every child, but more than others, precisely because of this structure of the father, the patient, I repeat as every child is to different degrees, the patient is himself this *o*-object.

The child's hold over the adult is all there is in children's myths, as the analyst expressed it earlier concerning his all-powerfulness, and it does not have its source where people say it is, in a kind of so-called magic that one also attributes to him, on condition of course that the patient is not capable of speaking about his own magic. Everyone is capable of speaking about this language, but that is not a reason to believe them.

There are, in this observation, very subtle moments where the analyst goes so far as to say : "these sorts of patients have a way of provoking in me a certain *mood*, a sentimental nuance which makes it irresistible for me to believe them". And it is in this fact of believing them that there lies the fatal principle, because she is also very well aware that when she believes them, the patients are aware of it. When they deceive you, they feel themselves recompensed.

There is no other source of infantile all-powerfulness, and I would not say the illusions it generates from its reality, than the fact that the child is the sole, (33) authentic, living, real *o*-object, and that he immediately learns that in this capacity he holds, he contains, the desirer.

Well then, up to the end of this revision of the observation, of this correction which terminates, I will tell you why in what follows, in a kind of general satisfaction, of "happy ending", just as illusory as everything that happened before, the analyst still does not manage to become aware of what is really involved.

She believes that the weapon of the patient becomes the bad child, after having been the bad parent; it was to reduce his father to nothing, to reduce him for his part to being an object. While in fact it is nothing of the kind, that what is involved is not the effect that the child tried to obtain over the father, but the effect that he experienced from knowing that he was placed at this blind spot which is the *o*-object, and if the analyst had been able precisely to locate the function of his desire, she would have become aware that the patient was having

the same effect on her, namely, that she for her part was transformed by him into an object. And the question is why she put up with ten years of a tension which was so intolerable to herself, without asking herself what *jouissance* she herself might have been finding in it. This is the true question and here there is highlighted what is more or less legitimately called counter-transference and which is, as is always the case in a transference neurosis, what is said to be at the source of interminable analyses.

It is true and it is not at all in vain that this word is homonymous and homologous to the term transference neurosis to designate analysable neuroses. And the transference neurosis is a neurosis of the analyst. The analyst escapes into transference strictly in the measure that he is not just right as regards the desire of the analyst.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 24 February 1965

I greet you as someone who is happy to see you after a long absence. I am going to specify certain points because of some little uncertainties that have arisen. It is understood that you do not have to go looking for a card every time to come here, even if it only takes place every month. The people who have got their card under different titles and who have, in short, the last time, because of the way in which things are organised, put it in a box where it bears witness then that the attendance of these people is regular. Things will regularise themselves with time. The only people who can come here are those who have their card, and this card will be in a box that the person who controls the entrance to whom one must always refer to know whether the person who passes and says: "I have my card", really has it. You get your card once and for all. For the others, their demand is being (2) processed, some have a card of various colours, a provisional card which I intend to signal the fact that I have to get to know better the person who has been admitted in this way.

I apologise to you therefore for the misunderstandings that may have occurred. Some people put themselves out for nothing. I mark here that I am very sorry about that. I think moreover that it is not extraordinary that these little uncertainties occur at the beginning of an organisation that it is a delicate matter to get right.

Today, I would like to introduce what you are going to hear, with the desire of leaving the field free as quickly as possible. I want to introduce it with a few remarks that are designed to situate for the people who coming here with different

prejudices, I mean with the idea that they have of what should be done in this closed seminar, may very easily not realise immediately why you are going to hear expressly what is to come; also, for the rare people who have been coming here for only a very short time.

Today you are going to hear about logic. I suppose that this will not surprise those who come, who have followed my teaching for long enough. For these people, it must have become clearer, with time, in a firmer and firmer fashion, that there are intimate, profound, essential relationships between psychoanalysis and logic.

(3) I do not suppose that all of you here, or even very many, are logicians, and that I can at this point assume that I am speaking to ears that are already alerted, but nevertheless, however little occasion you may have to refer yourselves, for example, to the introductory chapter of any treatise whatsoever on logic, you will see that logicians, in order to situate logic itself, to place it, which is really the minimum that a logician should feel himself obliged to do when he begins a treatise on logic, you will see, you will above all be struck - if I get you to prick up your ears in this respect - by the degree to which the order of difficulty that the logician encounters in placing his science in the hierarchy of the classification of sciences, is really analogous, corresponds, to the difficulties that the analysts may also have. This is only an indication.

Psychoanalysis is a logic and, inversely, one can say that logic could be greatly illuminated by certain radical questions which are posed in psychoanalysis. To stick to the most summary phenomenology, what strikes, what strikes someone coming from outside, when he arrives and when he hears the psychoanalyst expressing himself about the value to be given, about the accent, about the translation of one or other manifestation of behaviour, of one or other symptom, is something in general which is manifested to this newcomer by the idea of a certain (4) absence of logic, or at the very least of a certain overturning, of a certain disorder in logic, and it is frequent to see the objection being advanced, that in psychoanalysis people draw the same conclusion from facts that one would improperly describe as contradictory, because facts can scarcely be contradictory, they can be opposed, operate in an opposite sense, one notices immediately the same conclusions.

Does that mean, does that mean that analytic interpretation, the structuring of the theory, holds logic cheap. Precisely not. This psychoanalytic use of logic is a further reason to question ourselves about what its effective rules are, because all the same it does not function without a rule. It is a precious suggestion for us, one that insists that we should devote ourselves more than ever to logic and even become aware that, as I said and as I indicated earlier, that the real question is to see whether there is not some profound relationship with the question which the logicians pose, namely, on what in fact does logic have a hold. For it is not so simple. Logic does not give us the facts or, as they say, the premisses. Logic gives us what? The means to profit from them. On what miracle, on what is this effectiveness of logic brought to bear? Then, after all - the logicians (5) themselves remark on it - one observes logic, one has no need to think about it

all that much to observe it, except for the fact that one becomes aware that, in observing it, one sometimes makes a *faux pas* in logic, and that this is what puts us on our guard. But after all, in principle, one is not thinking all the time, when one is reasoning, about following the rules of logic and in a word, one may very well say that to reason properly one does not need logic, namely, the rules of proper reasoning.

But when, like the analyst, one does more, people have the feeling, in any case one gives the impression, that one is going too far. It is there that there begins, perhaps, all the more, the necessity imposed on us that we cannot do without logic. One has this feeling of going too far, that what it has a hold on normally, becomes then a question that must be put in the foreground.

These are quite general truths. There is a second point, which is the one from which I started earlier, namely, the teaching that I was already able to give, to organise, to separate out for some years. In it I highlighted functions that I did not invent. They are not latent, they are patent. They were articulated within psychoanalysis, even among those, among the authors who do not express them with the same concepts, in accordance with the same functions as I do, they are (6) present, they are manifest, they are there from the beginning. One could describe a part at least, a whole slice, a whole aspect of what I articulated, as the attempt to situate, to establish, a logic of lack. But to say that is not enough. During my last discourse, the one at the beginning of February, for example, you were able to see, there being articulated, being posed, two horizons, in two poles, the functions of the ego-ideal and of the ideal ego, for example, a pivotal, determining function that the *o*-object, in its two opposed terms of identification, you saw, heard me, articulating it in a certain fashion which it seemed to me to be able, at least for those who were already sufficiently engaged in this path, for those at least, to give some satisfaction, which means it manifests itself, it is taken up at the level of the subject, and at the level of this privileged, singular object which is called the *o*-object, at the level of different forms, that are more or less alluring, of identification, at the level of the paths through which we put to the test this function of identification, what I called the paths of deception or of transference. We have here the planes that it is not enough to enumerate, or indeed to caress in passing, to believe that we possess the key to what has to be handled there. It is from the same level that these planes are articulated, and are articulated in a way which ought to be all the more precise in that it is newer, in that it is more unusual; (7) have no doubt about it, this new logic will become, it will find in a sufficient number of minds its articulation and its practice for the subject, its commonplaces, if I can express myself in that way, expanding and becoming the organising foundation of our research and from there, passing to the outside, filtering, osmosing to the outside in such a way that someone who in other domains encounters logical impasses, precisely recognises that there there is being forged an apparatus which is of a use, which as one might expect, of course, infinitely surpasses the order of simple practical rule to be used by the therapists who might be called psychoanalysts.

Among these essential, and truly enormous, pre-eminent, almost crushing problems, and not simply in our domain, the question of whether one is essentially

a subjective construction is a primary question. This question of the one, in so far as I hammered it out at length, as I might say, for almost a whole year, three years ago in my seminar on identification, this question of the one of the unary trait, in so far as it is the key to the second type of identification distinguished by Freud, this question of one is essential, pivotal for this logic whose status it is a matter of establishing, and which will be what I intend to direct the remainder of my (8) discourse towards up to the end of this year.

If this one is constituted subjectively, does this eliminate the fact that this constitution may be real? Here is the problem, here is the problem to which there was destined to contribute a reflection, a meditation, which was extraordinarily ahead, very exactly twenty-five years ahead of anything that minds were able at that moment to receive, the meditation of Frege in the specific domain within which one has to take up its status, namely that of arithmetic.

It is for that reason that we have put forward the reference, the terminal point of our discourse this year and it is also so that this may not be a kind of simple sign made in the middle of some island, of some abandoned Philoctetes who has been crying out in vain for years, and all we would be doing for our part also is repeating this passage, this indifferent cruise; that obviously here something important was happening. I do not want to insist either that its essence passed elsewhere. No. This is never true. The essence of a research does not pass elsewhere. It is to the very locus of the discovery that we must return if we really wish to receive its imprint, its brand and also pick out its repercussions for us.

This is why, the last time, I asked one of those here, who are for me a sign of the (9) truth that what, I believe, we have to say in psychoanalysis, goes way beyond its therapeutic application, that the status of the subject is essentially involved in it; it is in so far as I saw here, receiving this sort of response which effectively testifies to me that this is not a hope that is up in the air, that effectively there are interested, from a certain position, a certain number of minds on condition only, as I might say, that they are open, that they have what should remain at the basis of every layer of learning, namely a certain ignorance, a certain freshness, those for whom the usage of concepts is not something that they have always known, that when one refers to the good practical wisdom of Mammy and Daddy, one can always allow to speak those who speculate, one can also allow there to pass in the distance the cries of indignation, which pass to the right or to the left between this or that disorder in the world.

Everyone knows that reality consists in not letting oneself be touched. What one calls reality is too often only, and it is with this that we have to deal in psychoanalysis, referring the function of reality, for us analysts especially, to a certain co-efficient of mental deafness. That is why the reference by psychoanalysis, which is too often put forward, the reference to reality, ought (11) always encourage us to a greater reserve, to some mistrust. Thank God, there has come to me a new class, a new generation of people who are not deaf, to respond to me. It is one of these that today I am inviting to speak, to respond to another, to one of those who the last time was kind enough to render us the service of introducing here the discourse and the question of Frege, to respond to

him, to open up for you also the different ways in which we wish there should intervene anyone who has been admitted here, and the fact that this room is full, sufficiently proves that I am not putting any artificial barrier to it, that I allow anyone whomsoever to present himself, with the manifested desire of taking part in our dialogues, that I place no barrier to it, but because I make this welcome so broad, I would ask you to bring me, whatever the form of your answer may be, to bring me the testimony that this behaviour of mine is justified.

Leclaire, who the last time gave, before Duroux whose paper I am alluding to, Leclaire is not there today because he had a long-standing engagement. He had to speak in a foreign city, in Brussels specifically, so that what today may be contributed, referred to what Leclaire said here cannot take place today. Thanks to this I do not have to deplore too much something which is regrettable in itself, that after I had asked that all of those who had the advantage of (11) this roneotyped text, which was put at the disposal of one and all, that whoever wanted it should commit himself to contributing a short written remark. I did in fact receive a certain number. They do not go beyond six in number which is small given the fact that thirty-five of Leclaire's texts were taken from the place from where I said they could be found.

I make no further comment on the fact of this lack. I said, I warned clearly, that I would take appropriate action, namely, that it is certain that I cannot, it is not my aim to make of this gathering, described as a closed seminar, something to which there come too many people who, whatever benefit they may draw from it, put themselves in a position of withdrawal that I cannot but see, within this closed seminar, as equivalent to a certain position of refusal.

It is obviously necessary that I should know the measure in which each person is disposed to contribute to what should be here essentially a working session.

This having been said, I had not expressly demanded remarks to be made to Duroux' report. Up to the present I have received none. I would like to receive some after you have heard the response which was planned for, which we were not able to find a place at the end of the last seminar, the response that is going to be given to it now by Jacques-Alain Miller to whom I give the floor.

Presentation by Jacques-Alain Miller

No one has a right to get involved in psychoanalysis who has not acquired from a personal analysis those precise notions which it alone is capable of giving.

“No one has the right”. You are certainly, ladies and gentlemen, I imagine, very respectful of the rigour of this interdiction pronounced by Freud in his *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.

So that a question is posed for me in your regard in particular as a dilemma. If, transgressing the interdictions, I am going to speak about psychoanalysis without having the right to do so, what are you doing here listening to someone who is absolutely incapable of producing the title which would authorise your credit? Or again, if my subject does not belong to psychoanalysis, once again, you who return so faithfully to this hall where you expect to be regularly addressed about problems relative to the Freudian field, what are you doing here?

What are you doing here, you especially ladies and gentlemen who are psychoanalysts, you who have heard this warning, addressed particularly to all of you by Freud, not to put yourself in the hands of those who have not a direct experience of your science.

(2) As Freud says “all these so-called learned men, all these literary people who come to cook their soup on your fire without even showing themselves grateful for your hospitality”.

That if the fantasy of the one who is the head chef in your kitchen, may be amused at seeing a pot-boy making away with this cauldron, which is quite naturally after all very close to your hearts, because it is from it that you draw your subsistence. It is not sure and I admit that I have some doubts that you will be prepared to drink a little of the soup prepared in this way. And nevertheless you are there. Allow me to marvel for a moment at the fact of your attendance and of having for a moment the privilege of manipulating this most precious organ of all those you use, your ear.

It is then your presence here that I am going to try to justify to yourselves by reasons which at least are avowable. This justification depends on the fact which could not have escaped you after the developments which have enchanted you at this seminar from the beginning of the scholastic year, namely that the Freudian field is not representable as a closed surface.

The openness of psychoanalysis does not depend on liberalism, on fantasy, indeed on the blindness of the one who set himself up in the place of its guardian.

(3) This openness depends on the fact that, not being situated on its inside, one is not for all that rejected into its outside, if it is true that at a certain point, which

escapes from a topology restricted to two dimensions, their convergence takes place.

That I may be occupying this point for a moment, is what will allow you to escape from the dilemma that I presented to you and allows you to find the justificatory argument necessary for you to be here as listeners in all good faith.

What is at stake then is for me to manage to occupy this point. You see by this, ladies and gentlemen, the degree to which you are interested in the enterprise that I determine, the degree to which you are implicated in its success or in its failure.

What I am aiming to restore here in gathering together scattered fragments in the discourse of Jacques Lacan, ought to be designated by the name of the logic of the signifier, a general logic in that its functioning is formal with respect to all the fields of knowledge which may specify it, including that of psychoanalysis, an elementary logic in so far as there will be given here only the minimal pieces indispensable to guarantee a progress reduced to its linear movement.

The simplicity of its economy should nevertheless not dissimulate from us that the conjunctions which are accomplished there between certain functions are essential (4) enough not to be neglected without unveiling properly analytical reasoning which I will try, by involving myself on a terrain that I know badly, what I will be trying to administer the proof of in effecting, according to purely formal criteria, a summary mapping-out of conceptual aberrations that constrain a presentation, whose merit besides one must recognise, published in Volume 8 of the review *La psychanalyse*, aberrations which can perhaps be deduced from the obvious neglect of this logic of the signifier.

Its relation with what we will call the logic of logicians proves to be singular, through the fact that it treats exactly of its emergence and that it has to make itself known as the logic about the origin of logic, namely, and the point is capital, that it does not follow its laws, that it falls outside the field of their jurisdiction because it has prescribed it.

Here, in what concerns us, we will reach this dimension of archaeology by a retroactive movement starting, from this field of logic where precisely there is accomplished the most radical miscognition in that it is identified with the possibility itself.

The guiding thread of it will be the discourse of Gottlob Frege in his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* which is privileged because it questions the terms accepted as primary in the axiomatic sufficient to construct the theory of the natural axiomatic (5) numbers of Peano. These terms are accepted as primary in this axiomatic, they were enumerated for you in the last closed seminar, they involve the term of zero, that of number, and that of successor.

None of the deviations afterwards brought to this first vision of Frege will detain us. We will keep ourselves therefore on the hither side of the theorisation about the difference between sense and reference, as well as from the difference of the

concept later introduced starting from predication which then makes it function, the concept in the dimension of non-saturation which is as it were the remainder of the difference between predication and identity. This to respond to someone who might reproach the previous presentation for neglecting the concept of saturation.

It is then quite clear that I am not speaking - it would be quite presumptuous - as a philosopher. Moreover of the philosopher I know only a single definition, that of Heinrich Heine, accepted by Freud, quoted by him, which says : "With his night-cap and bits of his dressing gown he stuffs the holes of the universal edifice". The function of the philosopher, that of suturing, is not special to him. What here characterises the philosopher as such is the scale of his field, the scale which is that of the universal edifice. What it is important is that you should be persuaded that the linguists, like the logicians, suture at their own level.

(6) It will be therefore not philosophy but perhaps epistemology that I will be doing here, and perhaps more precisely what Georges Canguilhem who would be very surprised to be quoted here, calls a work on concepts. Here the concepts are the subject and the signifier.

The question in its most general form can be stated as follows : "What is it that functions in the sequence of whole natural numbers to which their progression must be referred?". The question is therefore about what? The reply I give it, before reaching, it is that in the logical process of the constitution of this sequence, namely in the genesis of progression, the function of the unknown subject operates.

This proposition can scarcely fail to be taken as a paradox for anyone who is not unaware, and no doubt, you are now in the picture, that the logical discourse of Frege tries to exclude what, in a theory which is described as empirical, proves to be essential in making the collection of units pass to a unit of number.

What allows you, in this empirical theory, to go from the collection of units to the unit of number, is the function of the subject named thus in an empirical theory.

The unity thus assured to the collection is only permanent in so far as the number functions in it as a name, the name of the collection, the name which had to come to it in order that its transformation into a unit should be accomplished.

(7) Nomination has then here the function of assuring identification. And in the empirical theories the subject guarantees this function of the name which is that of the gift of the name whose essential liaison to nomination is admitted without difficulty and as such, and one can add that [in] this gift of the name to which the function of the subject can let itself be reduced, there originates its definition as creator of the fiction.

Only this subject, specifically designated here, is a subject defined by his psychological attributes. The subject that Frege excludes at the beginning of his discourse is this subject, this subject defined as possessing a power, and

essentially as possessing a memory, which allows him to circumscribe this collection and not allow there to be lost all these elements which are interchangeable.

The discourse of Frege then, setting itself up from the beginning against the psychological foundation of arithmetic, excludes the subject from the field where the concept of number has to appear.

What it is a question of showing, is that the subject is not reduced in its most essential function, to its psychological power.

You know that the discourse of Frege develops entirely from the fundamental system of three concepts: the concept of concept, the concept of object, the concept of number.

(8) And from two relations, the relation of the concept to the object, the relation which is described as that of subsumption; the second which is the relationship to the concept of number which we call assignation. The schema is therefore very simple. I reproduce it.

It is clear that this opening is the mark of the relation of subsumption as such. The definition of the concept as Frege gives it is not surprising, in that it situates itself in the line of the most classical thinking since its function is that of gathering together. But the unusual thing here, and what is specifically logical, is that the concept is defined only by the relationship that it has to the subsumed. The object which falls under the concept takes on its meaning from the difference to the thing, which is simply a body occupying a certain spatio-temporality in the world. For here the object is simply defined by its property of coming under a concept without having regard to the determinations that an investigation other than logical may discover in it. It is therefore essentially deprived of its empirical determinations.

It appears then that the concept which will be operational in the system, will not be the concept formed starting from determinations but the concept of the identity to a concept.

It is by this reduplication that we enter into the logical dimension as such. It is essential to see that the entry into the logical dimension as such is produced by the appearance of identity.

(9) It is thus that, in the work of Frege, it is only apparently a question of the concept, for example: the moon of the earth. What is involved in fact is the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth. For since it is a question of the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth what comes under the concept is not the thing as such but only the thing in so far as it is one.

The assigning of number, the second relationship, is deduced from this subsumption as extension of the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth.

One seen then that what comes under the concept moon of the earth is the moon but that what comes under the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth is an object, it is the object :”moon of the earth”, namely the unit. Hence Frege’s formula: the number assigned to the concept F is the extension of the concept identical to the concept F.

This tripartition of Frege has then the effect of only leaving to the thing the simple support of its identity to itself; hence it is the object of this concept.

The foundation of Frege's system is then to highlight in the function of identity in so far as it is what accomplishes the transformation of everything into an object to leave to it only the determination of its unity.

(10) For example, if I try to collect what comes under the concept of “a child of Agamemnon” I would have these children whose names are: Chrysothemis, Electra, Iphigenia and Orestes. I cannot assign a number to this collection except by bringing into play the concept of the identity to the concept: child of Agamemnon.

Thanks to the fiction of this concept each child will intervene here in so far as there is applied to itself what will transform it into a unit, what will make it pass to the status of an object that is numberable as such. Logic here originates from the conjunction of the function of subsumption, that is to say of gathering together, with the function of identity through which the point is capital; we will see its incidence later, the subsumed being brought back to the identical. And the name of the subsumed collection is to be a child, to be able to become four.

The important thing here as you already grasp, is the unit that one can describe as unifying of the concept as an assignate of number, is subordinated to the function of the unit as distinctive. The number as name is no longer then the unifying name of a collection but the distinctive name of unit.

The one, this one of the identical of the subsumed, this one is what every number has in common since it is above all constituted as a unit.

(11) At the point of development that we have reached, I think that you will sense the weight of the definition of the identical that I am going to put forward, in the fact that it is the function that assures identity which allows the things of the world to receive their status as signifier.

You understand, that in what concerns this definition of identity in so far as it is going to give its true meaning to the concept of name, it can be deduced that it ought to borrow nothing from it to this end in order to be able to generate the possibility of numeration.

This definition, which is pivotal in his system, Frege borrows from Leibnitz. It is contained in this short sentence: *eadam sunt quorum unum potes substitui alteri*

salva veritate, things are identical when one can be substituted for the other without truth being lost.

What is accomplished in this formula, which might appear anodyne if Frege himself had not emphasised it, you can measure its importance, is the emergence of the dimension of truth as necessary for identity to function.

As a logician occupied by the genesis of number, Frege only uses this definition in so far as it allows the leisure of modifying it in a definition of identity to itself. And there we touch on a still more radical point than the one aimed at in the definition (12) of Leibnitz, since after all the definition of truth is much more threatened when identity to itself is concerned.

If one follows the sentence of Leibnitz, after all the failure of the truth, this loss of the truth in substitution of one thing for another, this loss whose possibility is opened up for a moment by the sentence of Leibnitz, this loss will be immediately followed by the establishment of the truth by a new relationship, for if I substitute for one thing a thing which is not identical to it, the truth is lost, but it is found again in that this new thing is identical to itself.

While if a thing is not identical to itself, it subverts from top to bottom the field of truth, ruins it and abolishes it down to its very roots. You understand the way in which the safeguard of the truth is involved in this identity to itself which guarantees the passage from the thing to the object. It is in the field of truth that the identity to itself emerges. And the identical is to be situated in the field of the truth in so far as it is essential to what can be safeguarded in this field.

Now let us make Frege's schema function a little, this so simple tripartition, namely to make it function; let us go through this regulated circuit that he prescribes for us: let there be a thing, X, in the world. Let there be a concept of this X. The concept which is going to intervene here is not the concept of X but the concept of identical to X. This is the object which comes under the concept identical to X, X (13) itself. In that the number, and this is the third term of the circuit, the number that one is going to assign to this thing which has become object by this translation, will be the number one.

I took X, which means that the function of number is repetitive for all the objects of the world. This repetition which ensures that everything, by passing to the concept of identity to itself, then to the concept of the object produced, makes emerge the number one.

It is starting from his ternary system, in so far that it is supported by the function of identity, that Frege can accomplish the generation that he pursues of these sequence of whole natural numbers, in accordance with an order which is the following, first of all the generation of zero, then the generation of one, finally the generation of successor.

The generation of zero is admirable in its simplicity which is to produce it as follows: zero is the number assigned to a concept which is not identical to itself,

in other words, a concept not identical to itself as the truth exists: the object zero and the number, then, which qualifies the extension of this concept, is the number zero.

In this generation of the zero, I highlighted that it is sustained by this proposition which is necessarily prior to it, that the truth exists and must be saved.

(14) If no object corresponds to the concept not identical to itself, it is because the truth must persist. If there are no things which are not identical to themselves, this is contradictory with the very dimension of truth.

It is in the decisive enunciation that the number assigned to the concept of non-identity to itself is zero that logical discourse is sutured. But here I am going to go decisively beyond Frege's statement. It is clear that to realise this primary suturing, it was necessary to evoke, at the level of the concept, this object which is not identical to itself which found itself subsequently rejected from the dimension of truth and which zero which is inscribed in the place of the number, treats as the mark of exclusion.

There is not, at the place of the subsumed object itself, in that place within the system, there is no writing possible and the zero which is inscribed there, which can be inscribed there is only the figuration of a plane.

One is now generated from the fact that zero as number, is able to become concept and object. If it is necessary to pass by way of zero to generate one, it is because what I said about the X was only a fiction. We are here in the logical domain and one does not have the right to give oneself an object of the world. That is why once you have generated the number zero you finally lay hold of a first object. That means that Frege counts as nothing this object (15) that he had to evoke and reject primordially.

Now then, how is one generated starting from this first object which is the number zero? Well, you give yourself the number identical to the concept of the number zero. At that moment, the object which falls under this concept identical to the concept of the number zero is the object number zero itself. And therefore the object which must be assigned to this concept; and thus one is produced.

You see then that this system operates thanks to a translation of the elements defined at every place in the system. One has the concept of the number zero and the number zero becomes object in order finally to produce the number one.

I would like to put this formula clearly before you who are beginning to believe that this functioning is a little slow in happening. I would like to pose this formula clearly since it is through it that our whole development will give a consequence, whose value perhaps you are beginning to see, that the zero is counted as one.

This fundamental property of zero of being counted as one, while its conceptual assignate only subsumes under itself the absence of the object, a blank, this

fundamental property is the general support of the sequence of numbers as Frege generates it. This is sufficiently characterised, in a less profound research than that (16) of Frege, by being called the successor, namely the successor of n obtained by the addition of one, while some people are satisfied with the simple presentation of the operation of the $n + 1$ gives n' , the successor of n , $3; 3 + 1$ gives four.

This operation then can be satisfied by this $n + 1$, Frege opens it up to discover how the passage from n to its successor is possible, in so far as it is guaranteed by this operation. The paradox of this generation you immediately grasp, you are going to grasp it immediately as soon as I produce the most general formula of the successor to which Frege comes. This formula is the following: the number assigned to the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in n ”, follows in the series of natural numbers immediately after n .

In other words the definition of $n + 1$ is : the number assigned to the concept number of the series of natural numbers ending in n . Let us take a number: you are going to see how funny it is, how absolutely astonishing this conjuring trick is. There is the number three. An honest number that we all know especially here. Well then, this number three is going to serve me to constitute the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in three”. It happens that the number that one assigns to this concept is four. Here the one has arrived and where has this one come from?

A moment is necessary to grasp the subtlety of the matter. Here is the number (17) three. I skip the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in three”, namely, I make three function as a reserve; I no longer take it as a number, I take it this time, if you wish, as a concept. I am going to see what it is made of. So I decompose it. What has three in its belly? There is one, two, three, three objects as you would say. Except that we are in the element of number and in the element of number, you count the zero. In the series of natural numbers the zero counts as one. Namely, what is more, there is the zero and the zero counts as one, this is the fundamental formula for the generation of the sequence of numbers.

From this it arises that it is from the emergence of zero as one an emergence which is produced as the trajectory of the number within the cycle, which determines the appearance of the successor number where the one vanishes. One, $n + 1; n'$; the zero has risen; it has fixed itself as one to the following number which has disappeared.

In such a way that it is enough to re-open this following number once again and to find in it once again this zero which counts as one. This one of $n + 1$ which is substitutable, you saw it earlier for all the members of the sequence of numbers, in so far as each one, because it is identical to itself necessarily evokes, if it is nothing (18) other than the count of zero, allows there to be given here this interpretation of the sign plus, from the fact that its function of addition appears superfluous, to produce the sequence.

Here then, if you wish, is the classical representation of generation and this is what one must come to: namely, that it is necessary to pass from the absolutely horizontal representation, marked here, to a vertical representation where one sees there being effected, by this so-called plus sign, the emergence of the zero which comes to be fixed here as one, and to produce the difference between n and n' which you have already recognised as a metonymical effect.

The one is therefore to be taken as the originating symbol of the emergence of zero in the field of the truth, as the sign of the transgression by which the zero comes to be represented by one, a representation necessary to produce as an effect of sense, the name of a number as successor.

You see then that in a logical representation, the schema is as it were squashed in on itself, and that the operation carried out here consists in unfolding it into a vertical dimension to give rise to the new number.

You see then that if the one constitutes the support of each of the numbers of the sequence it is in so far as it is for each one of them the support of zero. The restored schema presentifies for you the difference between the logic of the signifier and logicians' logic.

(19) It ought then allow you to isolate number as an effect of meaning. The function of metonymy as an effect of zero. You understand then that this proposition sutures the logic, this proposition formulated in the first of Peano's five axioms, a proposition that establishes the zero as a number. This proposition that zero is a number, is the proposition that, decidedly, allows ... to exist as such at the logical level.

This proposition that zero is a number is as such untenable. And its non-validity is sufficiently marked by the hesitation which is perpetuated about its localisation in the sequence of numbers by Bertrand Russell. But its singularity is sufficiently marked for us here, in the fact that this number, counted as an object, is assigned to a concept under which no object is subsumed.

So that in order to count it, it must again be supported by the minimum one in order to attribute to it the decisive one of progression. The repetition which develops in the sequence of numbers is sustained by the fact that zero passes, in accordance with a horizontal approach, crossing the field of truth in the form of its representative as one and in accordance with a vertical act in so far as its representation only takes place because of its absence.

If you have understood this, why is there any obstacle then at least for us here, for (20) no doubt, it would be normal for the logicians to start screaming out loud, why is there an obstacle for us at least here in recognising in the zero, in so far as it is a function of excess, the very locus of the subject which is nothing other than that, the possibility of an additional signifier?

The relationship of the subject to the field of the Other, for now we will put our cards on the table, the relationship of the subject to the field of the Other, is

nothing other than the matrix relationship of zero to the field of truth. This relationship in so far as it is matricial cannot be, I remind you, for this proposition was advanced by Jacques Lacan, it must be three years ago, if I can believe the notes on his seminar on identification, this matricial relationship cannot be integrated into a definition of objectivity.

You have, I hope, perhaps better understood it in any case, it was illustrated for you by the generation of zero starting from non-identity to itself, under the influence of which nothing in the world falls.

And this matricial relationship - and here we hold a conjunction that is essential for this logic of the signifier so often called, that the representation of the subject in the Other, in the form of the one of the unary trait, is correlative to its exclusion outside of this field.

You know well enough this relationship of the subject to the Other, to the big (21) Other, means that this subject must be represented as struck by this bar of the signifier, which makes it function outside the field of the Other, provided that if one is placed on the side of the subject, it is the big Other which is struck by this bar.

You see then in this exchange, a fundamental exchange, this logic of the signifier. The bar of the big O is nothing other than the relationship of exteriority of the subject to the Other, which constitutes this Other as unconscious in so far as the subject does not reach the Other.

Now if the subject is sustained by the sequence of numbers, there is nothing that can define, define him in the dimension of consciousness, at the level of constitution and progression.

The consciousness of the subject is to be situated at the level of the effects of meaning regulated to the degree that it can be said to be its reflections by signifying repetition, a repetition itself produced by the passage of the subject as lack.

I hope that it is clear that these formulae can, that they could in any case be deduced from a simple transgressive advance into the discourse of Frege. But if there is necessary, let us say, a piece of proof which will show you that this function of excess supported by the subject, at bottom, was always obvious, I will quote for you a passage of Dedekind cited by Cavallès in his book *La philosophie (22) mathématique*, where moreover he notes that Dedekind here rediscovers Bolzano. It is a matter of giving to the theory of sets its existence theorem. It is a matter of explaining the existence, or the possibility of existence, of an numerable infinity. And what example does Dedekind give here? He says “once a proposition is true, I can always produce a second, namely that the first is true, and so on to infinity”. It is here then, and quite nakedly, that the function of the subject is shown as the function of the excess which receives, in the language of Cavallès the name of the function of thematisation.

When Dr Lacan substitutes for the definition, puts forward, over against the definition of the sign as that which represents something for someone, the definition of the signifier as that which represents the subject for another signifier, what is being realised here is the exclusion of any reference to consciousness as far as the signifying chain is concerned.

Into this signifying chain, it is in effect necessary to insert the subject, but this insertion inevitable rejects him outside of this chain, which means that the emergence of the subject, its insertion, as we say, or its representation is necessarily correlative to its vanishing. And we have here again a fundamental relationship of the logic of the signifier.

(23) Now we may try to represent such original generatings in time, as it would in fact be natural to do, and time, or at least its linear representation, you should clearly understand that they are here dependent on this chain. And thus that this time which would be necessary to represent this generation cannot be linear, since it is going on the contrary to produce the linearity of the sequence.

So then, if you wish, one could say, and Dr Lacan held these two propositions together: the first emphasis being put, I believe, in the seminar on identification on the point that the subject is at the origin of the signifier. It was put elsewhere, I think in the seminar on anxiety, on the contrary, that the origin of the subject depends on the fact that it is excluded from the signifier that determines it. In other words the subject is at the origin of the signifier; the birth of the subject must be referred to the priority of the signifier. There is no need to be astonished here, to see an effect of retroaction; retroaction is essentially the following: this moment of generation of a time which could indeed be linear and in which, perhaps, one could live.

By preserving simply these propositions, I found, of course here and there in the discourse of Jacques Lacan, the two propositions that must be kept together, firmly held, “the subject is the effect of the signifier, the signifier is the representative of the subject”.

(24) So that it is here that circular time belongs. You see that starting from a simply logical discourse, one can rigorously deduce from it this structure of the subject in its relationship to the signifier, as, with the greatest simplicity, Dr Lacan has hammered it out, a structure in equilibrium.

Of what appears in order to disappear. The opening or closing of a number. One discovers a zero in the number, there is a one to be abolished in the number which closes itself. And there you understand why one always finds one more than what was said, and that this lack also is, that this extra one becomes, of course, when one passes into the real, a lack.

This is the story that the doctor often told you, when he was in the mood for a joke, this story of the shipwrecked people counting themselves on an island, who always find an extra one.

Dr Lacan: It is Shackleton who reported that on an Antarctic exploration. They were living in very, very special conditions, a little isolated group. They always find themselves both with an extra one and at the same time with one missing.

Mr Miller: This plus sign, then, that we have transformed, we understand that it is not addition, that it is more essentially the summing up in this pseudo plus, and the subject who was summoned to appear in the field of the Other, and who never appears there in person. Here then is the fundamental dimension of a summons and a rejection, a summons and a rejection which structures the division of the subject, and it is there, as you know, since the end of last year, that alienation is situated.

I have scarcely the time, and in any case I have scarcely the competence to speak about this article, about this presentation which I wanted to speak about, and in connection with which I wanted to pose some questions in relation to the logic of the signifier. But after all I am going to try to do it very rapidly; in fact time here is on my side because it allows me not to have to advance too far onto a terrain that I know badly.

I am speaking about the article published in Volume VIII of *La Psychanalyse* under the title of “*Remarques sur la structure psychique: I, Ego spéculaire, corps fantasmé et objet partiel*” by Madame Pierra Aulagnier.

I will pick out then, very rapidly, these points, that alienation here appears to me to be constituted in a primordial reference to consciousness and that one touches perhaps there, I hope that Madam Aulagnier will not hold it against me, a certain Lagachian deviation from Lacanism since alienation, instead of being referred to division can only find its final reference in what is called here the reply of recognition, in fact conscious awareness.

(26) It seem to me subsequently that a sentence from this article, because it allows it to be believed that the Other is not essentially conceived there at first as a field. This sentence which says : “discourse, in this beginning that is alienating by definition, this original and initial misunderstanding, is what bears witness to the insertion of the one who is the locus of the word onto a signifying stage, a preliminary condition for any possibility for the subject to be able, in his turn, to insert himself into it”.

This term insertion, then, seems to me too convenient in that it allows there to be neglected precisely the dimension of the vanishing of the subject because of the fact that he is, at a certain point, afflicted by the adjective bad, belongs much more to culturalist interpretations, this is what is called here entering into the defiles of the signifier. Finally, and here I can only indicate it, because, let us say, I have not worked over sufficiently what Madame Pierra Aulagnier tries to articulate about castration in so far as the big Other is supposed to be the agent of it, and the subject the locus, does not seem possible to me to develop in a reference to the unary trait, which is marked perhaps by this sentence, what must be added is that what is reflected in the mirror *qua* specular ego, closes off for ever to the psychotic any possibility and any path to identification.

The conclusion of this essential mechanism, as Madam Pierra Aulagnier, it seems to me, says very well, this foreclosure, how is it conceivable without this relationship to this - (minus phi) essentially correlative to the S, in so far as that what is diminished here is barred there.

Is it not the case that this phantasised body, this body that the psychotic sees in the mirror, definitively lacks this unification which alone would allow him to guarantee the distinction of the trait? Is not what is lacking here, then, the subordination that at the beginning we described as essential to the function of the unifying unit, to the function of the distinctive unit and thus the function of the unary trait as the heart, the root of this castration?

Once again I believe that I have done too little work to say any more about it since, effectively, I do not know any more. What on the contrary seems to me, and seemed to me quite compatible and articulated in accordance with the rules of the logic of the signifier, is the point here recalled by Dr Lacan at the beginning of this presentation, which is the **o**-object and it is well said in this article, that it has as a turning point of its constitution the phallus.

It is clear that the function of number can be referred to this function of the **o**, as an effect of metonymy, which abolishes the subject by blocking off its place, because the subject finds himself identified to it.

(28) Because finally, if I dared to say a few more words in relation to analysis, and again no doubt here from a formal point of view, I would say that what marks the metonymy of this **o**- object as the function of number, is that the infinity of desire is a pseudo-infinity, namely, that it is an infinity that can be numbered in so far as it is only a metonymy as it appears in the form of recurrence in the theory of the whole number.

Desire, and here you see the point to which the categories articulated in this logic can serve in analytic algebra, this infinity is to be conceived as the law of the passage from the zero, in so far as it abandons, as the one who is called the devil does, its trace.

By which you see that he is not so clever because one can follow his trace. Again one must put on the green glasses of the analysts to fall into step with him. The step from zero, is the one in its function of repetition.

I would like to have said a word about what this logic of the signifier can teach us in the discourse of Claude Lévi-Strauss which sometimes is apparently so connected up to Dr Lacan. I would say - it is perhaps a little elliptical and a little cavalier, I apologise for it - that it is wrong to discern in the articulation of the combinatory, and in the movement of its variations, the passage of zero, that there is expressed for him the necessity of a reference outside the combinatory such as (29) Lévi-Strauss finds it, by turning back to the most primitive materialisms of the eighteenth century in the structure of the brain. We are spared this return because of what we know about the implication of the subject in the structure and

not about his position on the outside. From this implication of the subject in the structure, in so far as this implication functions there as intimation by the summation that the signifier makes there of the subject.

I am going to end with what I had at one time thought of beginning with, which was to tell you the relationship that this presentation expressly has exactly with what Dr Lacan explained at the beginning of this year. Somebody was astonished at one point that this year's seminar was not called: the subjective positions, as he had said last year. Now it is indeed in a certain fashion subjective positions that are being dealt with this year, that continue to be dealt with here and that, perhaps, no doubt will continue to be dealt with.

What Dr Lacan explained to us right at the beginning of this year, what he tried to do, was to situate in a unique topology the relationships that obtain in the space of language, the circumscriptions of the logical field, of the linguistic field and of the analytic field.

(30) He tried to give the principle of the divisions brought about, according to their particular relevance, by the three discourses of logic, linguistics and psychoanalysis in the space of language.

The relevance for each one of these three discourses - and one sees here how psychoanalysis can give the principle of a new classification - the relevance for each one of these discourses, the position, is the position in which the subject is sustained in relation to the represented that is produced establishes. Which can, which even ought to be said as follows : “the principle of the variation of relevance is the variation of the positions of the subject”.

The totality of what I have said here only has a value of fiction. It is precisely because this has only the value of fiction that one can imagine that one might export certain of its terms elsewhere, which is what a work essentially dealing with concepts consists of, by reducing this logic to

- 1) The action of the signifier as what the subject cannot reach except by being represented and
- 2) to the possibility nevertheless of the signifier.

This action of the signifier and this possibility of the signifier seem to us, I say in parenthesis, to characterise this inversion that Marx puts at the principle of ideology.

(31) Now it may happen that one does not simply accept that this is a fiction.

To those who do not except it, I would say better then, to satisfy them completely. I would say that what was involved here was a farce of which I was perhaps the marionette, but that those who might think it was a farce, should be well persuaded that they have been the turkeys.

Dr Lacan: After this extremely complete presentation, which I think the attention it was given sufficiently marks, I am going, alas, simply for form's sake, given the late hour, to ask if anyone might not complement it by a question which might have suggested itself as being quite specially urgent.

Does Pierra Aulagnier, Pierra Aulagnier who of course was put on the spot in such a flattering fashion, I might say, think that we are not going to remain there and since we already have other texts by Pierra Aulagnier, which are published or not published, and one recently delivered in public, I will have occasion to refer to it in the whole measure that you will see that this radical presentation, this core presentation concerning the function of the zero and of the one, is the absolutely essential pivot by means of which we will be able to set out, to take up questions which I became aware in the course of this period, let us say the word, of isolation that I took recently, to take up again I say in their order, in which I became aware that they had been stated in an order which, undoubtedly, for all those who refer to the text of (2) my seminars of the past years, will appear quite rigorous, I must say, I must attribute to myself a good mark from the didactic point of view, to take up again in their order, all those things whose consequence I showed at the level respectively of the position of demand and of desire, first of all and from a quite fundamental distinction that I made, and in connection with which they were produced around me, and not alone in the article by Pierra Aulaigner, certain slippages which were almost necessary, but which it is still a question of correcting, concerning the distinction of functions which I described, posed as being respectively privation, frustration, castration, which are so essential to distinguish in order to put back in their place the whole theory that we give of treatment in its most concrete form.

I think that what you heard today, which will be roneotyped and put at your disposal in the same conditions, that is to say without any engagement, as one might say, on your part to intervene immediately about it in the same conditions as the discourse of Duroux the last time, I think that you could not expect a better starting base for the rest of what I am going to develop for you now during the month of March and to which then there will perhaps be contributed, first of all in a way that will allow us the time to do it, we will have two closed sessions at the end (3) of the month of March, and in a fashion that will be diversified by the diverse shoots that I will have the time to take up between now and the end.

I pose my question again then. Is there someone who wants to pose an urgent question?

Seminar 10: Wednesday 3 March 1965

I apologise: the absence of white chalk probably does not facilitate the legibility of what I have written on the board. I would like to know, however, whether it is completely invisible from some parts of the room in order to be able, I do not know how to change the angle. You cannot see anything, as usual! What are we going to do?

I will speak to you, I will try to speak to you, today, in a way that represents a knot between the trajectory that we have pursued up to now and what is going to open up, I will try to speak to you about identification; I mean the way in which, presenting itself to us in analytic experience, it poses its problem as contributing an essential step in what has taken shape, in the course of a long tradition called more or less correctly a philosophical tradition, in what has taken shape around this theme.

Identification: I have tried to introduce the subject for you by a reflection on what establishes it at the centre of our experience, which is the analytic experience; the subject seems to have presented itself to us in the course of the last steps we have (2) taken; the subject, would be, if we are to believe the straight path onto which I tried to direct your gaze with the theory of numbers, the subject would be, in short, recognisable in what proves, for mathematical thinking, to be closely linked to the concept of lack, to this concept whose number is zero.

The analogy is striking between this concept and what I tried to formulate for you about the position of the subject as appearing and disappearing in an ever-repeated pulsation as an effect, an effect of the signifier, an effect that is always vanishing and re-appearing; there is a striking analogy between this metaphor and the concept that the reflection of an arithmetician-philosopher, Frege - someone asked me. since we have been talking about him here, how his name is spelt - Frege is necessarily led to give a place to the support, to the contribution to this concept whose assignation as number is zero, in order to make emerge from it this one, which is also inextinguishable, always disappearing so as, in its repetition, to be added to itself but in a unit of repetition of which one can also say that we touch in it, that never do we find, in the measure that it progresses, what it has lost, if not this proliferation which multiplies it without limit, which manifests itself as presentifying, in a serial fashion, a certain manifestation of infinity.

Thus the subject shows itself one, as originating in a privation, and, in a way, (3) through its mediation chained, riveted to this identity which, as has been said to you in a recent formulation, in an identity which is nothing other than a consequence of this primary requirement without which nothing could be true, but which leaves the subject in suspense, hanging on to what has been called, what Leibnitz - this Leibnitzian reference was admirably highlighted for you in a closed session - that identity is nothing other than that without which the truth could not be saved, no doubt, but for us, for us analysts, is the question of identification not posed in another fashion, that is, in a way, prior to the status of truth? How could we not have the testimony of it in this shifting foundation of our experience, which puts at its root what is at the same time, what presents itself to us in a moment which is profoundly the same, as transference in so far as it is

referred by us to the double pole of what is involved in love for us as the most authentic and also what is manifested to us of it along the path of deception.

Let us posit that in taking this reference to number, we wanted to find the most radical point of reference, the one where we have to locate the subject in the language that is established, in a way, before the subject identifies himself in it, locates himself in it as the one who is already speaking, before the sentence has its "I", where the subject first of all poses himself in the form of a shifter as being the (4) one who is speaking. The impersonal sentence exists, there is a subject of the sentence. This subject is, first of all, at this root point of what happens, when he says, not that the subject is this or that, but that that something is happening: "it is raining". This is the fundamental sentence and, in language, is the root of the fact that things happen; it is in a second phase that the subject identifies himself in it as the one who speaks.

And, no doubt, this or that form of language is there in its difference, to remind us that there are more diverse modes of giving preeminence, precedence to this identification of the enunciating subject, to the one who effectively speaks it. The existence of the verb "to be" in Indo-European tongues is there, no doubt, to put in the forefront this *Ich* as being the support of the subject, but not every tongue is constructed like that; and one or other logical, or pseudo-logical problem which can be posed in the register of our Indo-European tongues, with different forms of linguistic status, this is why I wanted today, simply as an indication, as a fastening point, a reference point, to put on the board some Chinese characters, and you will see later what they mean and what use I will make of them.

If the logical problems of the subject are not formulated in the Chinese tradition with such an exigent, deep, fruitful development of logic it is not, as has been said, (5) because in Chinese there is no verb "to be". The most usual word in spoken Chinese for the verb "to be" is this *iche*, naturally, how could one do without it in spoken usage? But that it is fundamentally, and this is the second character of the three written on the board on the left, in the most legible form, the most recognisable one in print in which these characters are written, on the right, in the cursive form in which this formula that I am bringing you, I found it effectively in a monastic calligraphy, and you will see the meaning that it had.

The character in the centre of this formula which is pronounced *jou che*, like the body, this *che* is also a demonstrative "this", and that the demonstrative in Chinese is what serves to designate the verb "to be", is something which shows that the relationship of the subject to enunciating is different where it is situated(?).

But we are going to see, for us, for us analysts, the level at which we must now take up the problem, to draw, to situate our current progress, the one which was achieved before our separating, before this interruption of two or three weeks, to situate the importance of what I wanted to designate for you in this relationship between the zero and the one as giving to the inaugurating presence of the signifier, its fundamental articulation.

(6) Here I must designate for you, if not commentate for you, for the commentary on it would be rather long, it is all very well for it to be no more than three pages long, in these pages that I designate for you in *Massen-Psychologie und Ich-Analyse*, translated as *Psychologie des masses*, what is involved is, effectively, a crowd, the reference is to be found in the work of Gustave Lebon, *und Ich-analyse* and *Analyse du moi* - chapter VII about identification.

I only point it out to you so that you will be able to see in it, concentrated in a way, all the enigmas before which Freud, with his honesty, which is so profound and so obvious at the same time, pauses, pointing with his finger to the place where there shifts, where there fails for him, what is satisfying in the reference that he is producing here, at the moment when he wants to give us the key, the soul, the heart of his topography.

Far from formulating for us at this level, I said in this chapter, the terms of identification in a form that is in a way happy, shifting, dialectical, re-emerging from itself, like in the approaches that he had read of it up to then in its developmental description, in short, the stages of the libido, as he had been able to sketch them out and specifically at the point where his thinking turns and where, from the register of the conscious-unconscious thematic he passes to the (7) topographical thematic, specifically in what is called *An introduction to narcissism*. Here the identification to the primary seems to open up easily, by a sort of progress in the structuring of the exterior, to these more precise identifications in which the subject, finding his bearings from the first closed field of this so-called autism, of which so many abuses have been made outside of analysis, found, with respect, with respect to the exterior world, by finding himself in it in his own image, a secondary identification and soon, with reference to what he was dealing with, found this perceptual multiplicity, this adaptation which would make of him an object in harmony with a realised knowledge.

There is nothing of the sort when it is a matter, for Freud, of tackling what is, for the thinking of analysts, a radical agency, identification.

There is nothing that it is less proper to keep distinct, as was always the central flaw of their psychology, to keep distinct this register of the mapping-out of knowledge, in what would be represented for us as purely and simply and blindly, in a way, the necessary high-point of the vital surge - I give it to you here as that which, God knows why, it has to be said, culminates in the function of a consciousness - there is nothing which distinguishes less this perspective of the relationship of the living subject with a world, which distinguishes it less, I am (8) saying, as the understanding of something of another register which is here irreducible, like a piece of waste, while this perspective is adopted as been essential for subjective progress, namely that which, from all time, in philosophical tradition, is called the will.

And what is more derisory after this opening, this profound alienation of the subject from himself, in two faculties was, once it was established, an experience that itself was partial; what is more derisory than to see the centuries continue to

pose themselves the question, since these are two irreducible faculties: which then predominates in God?

Is there anything more profoundly derisory than a theology which has not ceased, at least in the Western tradition, than a theology which has not ceased to revolve around this false problem, of this problem established on a defective psychology?

This God who must know everything, from which it results that he does know everything, must then submit to the fact that he knows that he is impotent or must have willed everything, from which it results then that he is evil.

The force of atheism, of the impasses in the notion of the divine, is not in atheistic arguments, which are often much more theist than the others. The lesson is all the (9) same to look for it among the theologians themselves. Let this not lead you astray, there is no digression here, no parenthesis, because moreover this correlative of divine alienation, is the term, and we see it in Descartes indicated at its place, not at all as is said simply transmitted, inherited from the scholastic tradition, but in a way necessitated by this position of the subject in so far as the false infinity of this always reproduced ego, of this repetition which generates this false infinity simply from an infinite recurrence, it is from this that there begins the necessity of the guarantee, of the fact that something here is grounded which is not a lure, and from the deduction of the fact that there is undoubtedly necessary the field in which there is reproduced this infinite multiplication of the unit in which the subject is lost, there should in a way be guaranteed, guaranteed by this Being where simply Descartes has the advantage of designating for us understanding, against will; here we have to choose and only the will in its most radical unthinkableness, the will in so far as it is from it alone that there is sustained the assurance of truth, and that God could have made the truths quite different, but that those that appear to us to be eternal truths, that this God alone is thinkable but we designate in this way the final impasse.

Now, it is around this that there turns an essential moment of Freud's thought for, (10) going much further than any atheistic thinking which preceded it, he does not simply designate for us the point of the divine impasse, he replaces it.

If he tells us that the paternal thematic is the support of a belief in an imaginary God, it is in order to give it undoubtedly a quite different structure, and the idea of the father is not the inheritance, is not the substitute for the father, for the fathers of the church.

But then this father, this original father, this father of whom people no longer speak in analysis, when all is said and done, because they do not know what to do with him, how and what is the status that we must give to this father as regards our own experience?

This is how and this is where there is situated the perspective which now comes into our interrogation about identification in analytic experience.

What are we going, in effect, in this text which I designate for you on page 115 of the *Gesammelte Werke* in German, in volume 18 of the *Standard Edition* for those who read English, on page 500, what is it that strikes us?

It is that having spoken to us about identification there first comes, and with a priority which we must indeed sense is an enigma, that he proposes to us here as primordial that the identification to the personage of the father is posited at first in (11) his deduction, that the very special, very special interest that the little boy shows for his father is here, put forward as a first moment for any possible explanation of what is involved in identification.

And at this moment, since the analyst could initiate, from his experience and the previous explanations, could be deceived about it, and think that in this first interest there is something that was located later as being what is called the passive position of the subject, the feminine attitude that Freud underlines; this first moment is properly speaking what constitutes an identification, he says, that is typically masculine. He goes further: exquisitely, "*typically*" is the English translation, it is "*exquisit mannlich*" in German.

This primordially which will make him say that in a second moment, what is going to come into play, in terms of rivalry, he tells us, with the father concerning the primordial object, this first moment takes on its value by being articulated in its primitive character; from which there arises also in its relief the mythical dimension by being articulated at the same time as being linked to what, in this way, is produced as the first form of identification, namely *Einverleibung*, incorporation.

So that, at the moment when it is a matter of the most mythical primordial reference, and one could say, and one would not be wrong to say, of the most idealising one, since it is the one in which there is structured the function of the ego (12) ideal, the primordial reference is made in terms of the evocation of the body.

The things that we handle, these terms, this concept that we leave in a sort of haze without ever asking ourselves what it involves, deserves nevertheless to be interrogated. We know that, when it is a question of incorporation as referring to the first inaugural stage of the libidinal relationship, the question, it seems, is not so simple, that undoubtedly something is distinguished there from what we may yield to, namely, to make of it an affair of the representation of an image, the other side of what will later be the dissemination onto the world of our different affective projections; that is not at all what is involved, it is not even a question of the term of introjection which could be ambiguous. It is a matter of incorporation, and nothing indicates that anything whatsoever is to be attributed here to a subjectivity; incorporation, if this is the reference that Freud has put forward, it is precisely because of the fact that no one is there to know whether it has happened, that the opacity of this incorporation is essential, and moreover in this whole myth which serves, which serves for the articulation - ethnologically locatable - of the cannibalistic meal, which is here right at the inaugural point of the emergence of the unconscious structure. It is in so far as there is here a completely primordial

mode in which, very far from the reference being, as it is said, idealistic in Freudian (13) theory, it has this form of radical materialism whose support is not, as has been said, the biological, but the body, the body in so far as we no longer know how to speak about it, since precisely the Cartesian reversal of the radical position of the subject has taught us not to think about it any longer, except in terms of extension.

Descartes' passions of the soul are the passions of extension, and this extension, if we see it through some singular alchemy as more or less suspect after a while, and that we follow its magician-like operation around the piece of wax which, purified of all its qualities, and God knows, what are these stinking qualities that must be withdrawn in this way one after another, so that there no longer remains anything but some kind of shadows of shadows, of purified waste? Do we not grasp here something that is derived from having played one's game with the Other too well?

Descartes slides towards the loss of something essential which is recalled for us, recalled by Freud, in that the fundamental nature of the body has something to do with what introduces it, what he restores as libido. And what is the libido?

Since moreover this has a relationship to the existence of sexual reproduction but is not at all identical to it, since the first form of it is this oral drive through which (14) incorporation takes place, and what is this incorporation? And if the mythical, ethnographic reference is given to us in the fact that those who consume the primordial victim, the dismembered father, is something which is designated without being able to be named, or more exactly, which can only be named at the level of veiled terms like that of being, that it is the being of the other, the essence of a primordial power, which is here to be consumed, is assimilated; that the form under which there is presented the being of the body, this being, that which is nourished from what in the body is presented as the most ungraspable part of being, which always refers us to the absent essence of the body, which from this aspect of the existence of an animal species as bi-sexual in so far as this is linked to death, isolates for us as living in the body precisely what does not die, what ensures that the body, before being what dies and what passes through the toils of sexual reproduction, is something which subsists in a fundamental devouring which goes from being to being.

It is not in any way philosophy, or belief, that I am preaching here; it is the articulation, it is the forms of which I say that it must question us that Freud puts it at the origin of everything that is to be said about identification. And this, have no doubt about it, is rigorous, I mean that the very term life-instinct has no other (15) meaning than to establish in the real this sort of different, questing, transmutation, this transmutation of a libido that is immortal in itself. Which mean what? What should such a reference be for us? How conceive that it should be put first by Freud, in the forefront? Do we really have here an originally established necessity of what is involved in unconscious reality, in the function of desire, or is it a term, is it a stumbling block, is it something encountered by the experience that has been set up?

Let us pursue the reading for that; we see that it is in a second moment that there is established, with regard to this primary reference, that there is established the dialectic of demand and of frustration, namely what Freud poses for us as the second form of identification, the fact that, in, from the moment that there is introduced the love-object, the choice of object, he tells us, *Objectwahl*, this is where there is also introduced the possibility, through frustration, of identification to the love object itself.

Now, just as it was striking in the first formula that he gave us of identification, to see in it the enigmatic correlation, this is how I am underlining it for you, of the *Einverleibung*, incorporation, in the same way here also Freud pauses before an enigma; he tells us that we can undoubtedly find, easily, the kind of logical reference of what is involved in this alternation which goes from the object to (16) identification, from the object in so far as it becomes the object of frustration; that we have here nothing other than the alternation, he tells us, - it is in Freud's text and it is not I who brought these two terms into circulation - the alternation between being and having.

That from not having the object of choice the subject comes then, and the terms subject and object are here put in the balance, expressly articulated by Freud, but he also tells us that this is only a mystery for him, that we find ourselves here before something completely opaque; can this opacity in any way be lightened, be settled? Is it not along this path that there is pursued the progress towards which I am trying to lead you? We shall see.

The third term, Freud tells us, is that of a kind of direct identification, from desire to desire, the fundamental identification through which, he tells us, it is the hysteric who gives us the model of it; for him or for her, for this kind of patient not much is needed to locate in some sign, wherever it may be produced, a certain type of desire. The desire of the hysteric grounds all desire as hysterical desire, the shimmering of echoing, the infinite repercussion of desire on desire, the direct communication of the desire of the other is established here as a third term. It is not at all sufficient to say that the grouping of what Freud, nevertheless, in this (17) essential chapter, thinks he is bringing together, remains not alone dissociated, enigmatic, but completely heteroclitic.

Now it is there that I think I have introduced a series of structures, destined not alone to gather together, to allow to be situated as the foundation piles, the essential points of attachment that Freudian thought maintains, when it obliges us at least to cover the field, the square, of which it marks the limits, but also to integrate to it, to situate in it what our experience has since allowed us to experience, the paths and the pathways along which the development of this experience led us, allows us to perceive the well-foundedness of Freud initial apperceptions and, moreover, why not, where they were lacking.

You may well believe, that these lacks are precisely not at the conceptual level but perhaps, and we will see how, at the level of the experience.

I introduced at one time a tripartite division which has the merit of anticipating what someone in the course of a recent talk, recalled to you as being the title which I wanted at one time to give to this year's seminar, which it was said that perhaps I was connecting up with more than I had dared to promise myself: namely, the subjective positions. It is nothing else that is involved, in what I introduced five (18) years ago, or even more, by recalling how essential it is, the degree to which our experience obliges us, to confront, to distinguish the levels of of its structures, the terms of privation, frustration and castration.

All analytic experience since Freud, is inscribed at the level of an exploration, that is more and more advanced, and more and more investigative of frustration, which is properly speaking articulated as constituting the essential of the situation and of the progress of analysis, for example, and that the whole of analysis happens at this level.

In truth, this limitation of the conceptual horizon has as an effect, in the most manifest and clearest fashion, to render properly speaking more and more unthinkable what Freud designated for us in his experience as being the stumbling block and the end point - and here again people find this satisfactory - the end point of his experience, namely, what is picked out in his text as been the rock, which is in no way an explanation, namely castration.

Castration, in the terminal experience of an analysis of a neurotic, or a feminine analysis, is properly speaking unthinkable if the analytic operation is nothing other than this combined experience of demand and of transference, around which the subject has to experience the gap which separates him from the recognition of the (19) fact that he is living elsewhere than in reality and that this gap, this experience of the gap is all he has to integrate into analytic experience.

The articulation of castration to frustration, just by itself, requires us to question in a different way and in a more fundamental fashion the relations of the subject, than the way which can, as it were, be exhausted in the double relationship of transference and demand.

This mapping-out necessitates precisely, as a preamble, that the status of the subject as such should be posed and this is what constitutes the isolation, that I am not moreover the only one to have formulated, of the situation of privation. No doubt, in a confused fashion, but in an articulate fashion, someone like Jones who formed part, all the same, of a generation which had a greater horizon, someone like Jones gave to the function of privation - when it was a question for him precisely of questioning the enigma of the relationship of the feminine function to the phallus, that is, to the function of privation - its indispensable moment as backbone to the logical articulation of these three positions. This is what made it necessary for us to have first of all posited that the subject, the subject in its essential form, is introduced, as it were, into this sort of radical relationship, that it is unestablishable, that it is unthinkable outside of this pulsation, which is imaged (20) so well by this oscillation from the zero to the one, which proves to be necessary in every approach to number, for number to be thinkable. That there is a primary relationship between this position of the subject and the birth of the one,

this is what had to be circumscribed for us around this attention given to the one, which made us see that there are two functions of one: a mirage, which is to confuse one with the individual, or if you wish, to translate this term, the indivisible; and on the other hand, the one of numeration which is something different, the one of numeration does not count individuals, and no doubt the slide into confusion is easy. The idea that this is nothing other than its function has something so easy and so simple about it, that it requires precisely the reflective meditation of someone who is a practitioner of numbers to perceive that the one of numeration is something different.

Difference and otherness are not the same and, no doubt, all of those who from the earliest times have had to meditate on the radical nature of difference, have clearly seen that what is involved in numeration is something other than the distinction of qualities, that the problem of the distinction of indiscernibles, and why, is not simply one; anything that groups around itself even the identity of qualities, anything that falls under the grasp of the same concept, proves the fundamental distinction there is between the fellow (*semblable*) and the same, or, if you wish, to (21) give it here the resonance of a familiar term, of the similar to the same; the register of the similar is something other than that of the same. The other is joined not to the similar but to the same, and the question of the reality of the other is distinct from any conceptual or cosmological discrimination, it should be pushed to the level of this repetition of one which establishes it in its essential heterogeneity.

What is involved is to interrogate what is at stake for us in this function of the other, how it presents itself to us, and it is this that I intend to introduce today, because undoubtedly the step has I think been taken, easily, facilitated by our last explorations, of what I always meant by introducing, precisely at the level of this question of the other, what is essential for us in order to know what identification means, by introducing the question which so horrified all those around me who preferred to find my message futile, indeed gone uselessly astray, the question described as that of the mustard pots.

The question of the mustard pots, posed first of all as the fact that the mustard pot is characterised by this experiential fact that there is never any mustard in it, that the mustard pot is by definition always empty, the question of the mustard pots poses this question, the question precisely of the distinction between what is indiscernible. It is easy to say that the mustard pot here, is distinguished from the (22) one there, as Aristotle tells us, because they are not made of the same matter.

Thus, the question is easily resolved, and if I chose mustard pots, it is precisely to avoid the difficulty. If it involved the body, as it did earlier, you would see that Aristotle would not have had such an easy answer, for the body, being what has the property, not only of assimilating to itself the matter that it absorbs but, as we have seen suggested by Freud, of assimilating something quite different with it, namely, its essence as body. There you would not have found it so easy to distinguish between the indiscernibles and you might, with the monk, I hesitate to say practising Zen, because you are soon going to spread it throughout Paris that I am teaching you Zen, and what might result from it, anyway, it is all the same a

Zen formula and this monk is called Tchi Un. He tells you: "like this body" undoubtedly, at the level of the body, it is impossible to distinguish any body from all the other bodies, and it is not because there are two hundred and sixty of you here that this unit is less real, because moreover in the case of the Buddha, he was something like three hundred and three million, three hundred and thirty thousand, three hundred and three, and it was always the same Buddha. But we have not got that far. We take the mustard pots, the mustard pots are distinct but I think the question is, the hollow, the void that the mustard pot constitutes. Is it the same (23) void or are there different voids? Here the question is a little bit more thorny, and it is precisely rejoined by this genesis of one in zero, to which arithmetical thinking is constrained.

In a word, these voids in effect are so much a single void, that they only begin to be distinguished from the moment that one fills one of them and that the recurrence begins because there is one void the less. Such is the inaugural establishment of the subject.

Someone, before you, in the closed part of my seminar, was able to make coincide, intersect, so rigorously the deduction which coexists between a certain form of my introduction of the subject, that it is not by chance, but the apologue that I give you here about the void and its filling and of the genesis of a distinction of lack as it is introduced at the level of the pint; the "One Tuborg, one" (*Une Tuborg, une*) - I would be the first to have substituted the *garçon de café* for God the creator - "One Tuborg, one" means, introduces the possibility, that afterwards I may ask for another, and nevertheless it is always Tuborg, always similar to itself.

The introduction of "one" is here the essential point at the level of lack. This other subsequently gives the measure or the cause of my thirst, that it also gives me the (24) opportunity to order it for another and, by bi-univocal correspondence, to establish as such this pure other, such is the level of operation where there is generated, where there is first introduced as presence the lack of the subject.

It is starting from there, and uniquely from there, that there can be conceived the perfect bi-polarity, the perfect ambivalence, of everything that will subsequently be produced at the level of demand, it is in so far as the subject is established, is supported, as zero, as this zero which lacks its filling up, that there can operate the symmetry, I would say, of what is established and what, for Freud, remains enigmatic between the object that he can have and the object that he can be.

It is precisely by remaining at this level that there can be pushed perhaps to its term, a quite particular conjuring farce, because it is not true that everything is exhausted for the subject in the dimension of the Other, that with respect to the Other, everything is a demand to have, into which there is transferred, there is established a semblance of being.

The coordinates of the space of the Other do not operate in this simple dyedre[?]; in other words, the zero point, the origin of the coordinates from which we might establish it, is not a true zero point.

What experience shows us, is that demand, demand in analytic experience, is not simply the interest that we might operate on it as the plane and register of (25) frustration, referring the subject back to this establishment, this fallacious setting up of a being, of a being to whom the comparison, the reference, the reduction to the being of the analyst would bring the path to salvation. Analytic experience shows us - after this no analyst can reject it even if he does not draw the consequences from it - that in the operation that is involved there is always a remainder, that no filling of the one, either at the level of the demand to have it, or at the level of the being of transference, totally reduces the division of the subject between the zero and the one; that the effect of the operation is never a pure and simple zero; that the subject, by deploying himself in the space of the Other, deploys a quite different system of coordinates than the Cartesian coordinates; that the zero point of origin does not exist; that the transparent, impalpable, Medusa-like form of the structure of the subject is the one, precisely, which is going to reveal to us from where there arises the quality of the one, which is not at all simply to be a sign, to be the primitive notch of the experience of the hunter, even if, for it is there it was born by chance, that the existence of one and of number, far from being everything to which it is applied, belongs to the locus where, far from been a consequence of it, it generates the individual, has no need of anything individual to establish that the veritable priority, specificity of number depends on the consequences of what is introduced into the shapes that I am trying to (26) presentify for you under the topological aspect, in the effect on these shapes of the cut.

There are shapes which right away are divided effectively in two by a single cut; there are others of which you can make two, without the shape disappearing, they remain part of a single block. This is what is called, in topology, the connectivity number. This is the usage and the privilege of what I am trying to bring into play before you, since it is for the practical purposes of representation in the form of images, and what I drew today on the blackboard which consists of: the Klein bottle to be a part of a cutting point, a cut, a single one - they might seem to be two because they pass twice through the same point - appear, through a certain feeling of vanity that, in this presentation of my drawings on such a badly lit blackboard, I did not make the image which might have been complementary and which is easy to imagine.

At the level of this mythical circle that I call the circle of retrogression, take two opposing points. Let the cut pass through the whole longitude of the Klein bottle, up to the opposing point, since you have the possibility of making the circle of retrogression return to the first point, in this way you will have, joining apparently two opposing points of the circumference, which I call the circle of retrogression, in this way, you will have a single cut.

(27) The property of this cut is not to divide the Klein bottle; simply to allow it to develop into a single Moebius strip. Bring these two points together so that they

are only one, and you will perceive that something was masked from you in the preceding operation, because this conjunction “a”, as the figure that is presented here makes you apprehend it, has as a property, no doubt, to leave the Moebius strip intact. But by making appear in it a network of the residue, - the psychoanalysts know it well - this residue that there is beyond the demand, this residue which, moreover, is beyond transference, this essential residue through which there is incarnated the radically divided of the S of the subject, it is what is called the **o**-object.

In the identification operation of primordial privation, there is an effect not simply the manifestation of a pure hollow, of an initial zero of the reality of the subject being incarnated in pure lack; there is always to this operation something especially manifest, arising especially from the frustrating experience which escapes its dialectic, a residue, something which manifests that at the logical level where the zero appears, subjective experience makes appear this something that we are calling the **o**-object and which through its simple presence, modifies, inclines, (28) inflects the whole possible economy of a libidinal relationship to the object, of any choice whatsoever which is qualified as objectal.

This, which is so manifest, is always present; this which gives to every relationship to the reality of the object of our choice its fundamental ambiguity; this something which means that in the chosen, elected, cherished, beloved object, the doubt which is essential for us is always there about what is involved and that we aim at elsewhere. It is this that analytic experience is designed to highlight, is designed also to make us question ourselves whether the goal of analysis is well and truly to be satisfied with the identification, as is said, of the subject to the analyst or whether, on the contrary, the irreducible otherness makes him reject him as other, and here indeed is the terminal pathos of the analytic experience. Should the question not be for us, on the contrary, the question around which for us there ought to turn, be elaborated everything that constitutes at present difficult problems in analysis, which are not simply the greater or lesser therapeutic result, but the essential legitimacy of what grounds us as analysts, and in the first place, the fact that precisely by not knowing, by not at least having highlighted where there is situated what I call the legitimate operation, it is impossible for the analyst to operate in any way in a manner which merits this title of being a legitimate operation. He is himself a blind plaything, caught up in deception (*fallace*); now this deception is precisely the question that is posed at the end of analysis.

What is there, at the level of castration, but this point, this point that in the tripartite schema, the double entry matrix in which I tried in a first approach to make you locate the way in which there interchange, at each of the three levels of the reciprocal distribution, the terms of symbolic, imaginary and real, to make you map things out in a first approach by speaking, not at that time about subjective positions but, to take simply a Freudian schema about a certain mode of action or state, of exercise, of *habitus*, as one would say in the Aristotelian tradition, and to divide up with respect to these three stages of privation, of frustration and of castration the things to the right and to the left, on the side of the agent and on the side of the object.

I would point out to you, if you consult the summary which was made at that time, that I left completely blank what was involved at the level of the place of the agent of castration. Now what is involved is precisely this final position, the status that should be given to this dimension of the Other at the locus of the word as such in analysis.

Here you sense clearly we are rejoining the whole question of the essence, why not say it in a Heideggerian formula, form of *Weg der Wahrheit*, of the status, if you wish, of the truth.

It is towards this goal that, no doubt, not directly but after some stages in which I will try to articulate better for you the next time the dialectic of demand and of transference in analysis, it is towards this final goal that we are directing ourselves this year.

	A.	S.	O.	
Castration	r	s	i	i
Frustration	A	I	R	
Privation	I	R	S	

Seminar 11: Wednesday 10 March 1965

We remained the last time at the threshold of the demand, of the demand which is important for us, the analytic demand, this demand in which there is inscribed the second stage of what, in the matrix that I recalled the last time on the board, of what in this matrix is inscribed as frustration, of what in modern analytic theory is effectively affirmed as central in a dialectic expressly taken under this term, frustration.

The vagueness in which there is sustained this dialectic, which originates from a doctrinal point of view in a reference to the need of the subject, a need whose inappropriateness (*l'inactualité*) is supposed to be what is to be rectified in the handling of transference - this is what pushes me, what has pushed me ever since I have been developing my teaching, to demonstrate its error-generating inadequacies.

To rectify this conception of the function of demand, which is necessary in effect, in a more accurate reference to what effectively is involved in the function of the transference, this is the reason why we are trying to articulate in a more precise fashion (2) what happens through the effect of demand, and how would this not be required if one perceives that in referring to this dialectic of frustration, everything that happens in therapy loses its moorings, is allowed to drift, is allowed in a way to become detached, at the level of a theoretical horizon, everything that constitutes the starting point, the foundation, the root of the Freudian message, namely the way in which it originates in desire and sexuality.

The way in which, for the “I think” of the subject of the *cogito*, it substitutes an “I desire” which can, in effect, only be conceived of as an unknown beyond, always not known to the subject of the demand, while sexuality, which is the foundation through which the subject, the subject in so far as he thinks, is situated, is supported by the function of desire through which this subject is the one who, at the origin of his status, is posed by Freud as the one who, strangely, the pleasure principle radically allows to hallucinate reality.

This status, this point of departure, of the subject as desiring in so far as he is a sexual subject, which is the way that, in the doctrine of Freud, reality is originally, fundamentally, radically hallucinated, it is this that must be harmonised, recalled, co-ordinated, represented, in the doctrine of what happens in analysis itself.

(3) We cannot do it by taking our bearings from the opacity of the sexual thing, from the *jouissance* which motivates in only the most obscure, the most mystagogical, fashion the thing that is involved and that I called somewhere the Freudian thing.

Here there is only offered to comprehension what precisely gives to this word its derisory sense, namely that one only begins to comprehend properly from the moment that one no longer comprehends anything.

So then, how could a technique which is essentially a technique of the word become infatuated by introducing itself into this mystery if it did not itself contain the source of it. That is why it is indispensable to take as a reference, the reference that is in appearance the most opposed to this obscurity, which is falsely described as affective. That is why the starting point, the radical foundation of the function of the subject in so far as he is the one that language determines, is the only starting point which can give us the guiding thread which allows us at every instant to find our bearings in a field.

It may appear strange to some people that our references, this year, should have touched on what, more or less correctly, I hear from here and there in snatches, in a complaining, tone being described as higher mathematics. High or low, what matter. It is certain that it is not for being situated, as it is, at the level of an element, that it is (4) in effect easy. And you should have no doubt, that this unfortunate little bottle, called the Klein bottle that I am putting before you this year, it seems, it seems that for the mathematicians themselves who busy themselves in this domain, which is rather new, or not all that new, everything depends on the reference point that one takes in history, it seems that this little bottle has not in effect, if I am to believe them, the people that I discuss it with sometimes, that it has not yet delivered up all its mysteries.

What matter! It is not by chance that it is there that we have to search for our reference, since mathematics, mathematics in its eternal development, since its Euclidian origin, as you know, for mathematics is Greek in essence, and its whole history cannot deny that it bears the original trace of it, mathematics, throughout its whole history, and always in a more striking, more submerging way in the

measure that we approach our own epoch, manifests something which interests us to the highest degree, which is that whatever may be the side that one or other family of spirits takes in mathematics, preserving or on the contrary tending to exclude, to reduce, to anathematise even the intuitive, this intuitive kernel which, undoubtedly, is irreducible (5) here and gives to our thinking this indispensable support, the dimensions of space, the inadequate phantasmagoria of linear time, the elements more or less well articulated by Kant in the *Transcendental aesthetics*, it remains that on this support where, as you see, I did not include number, even though this number, intuitive or not, offers us a so much more resistant kernel, with a consistency, an opacity, as you see, the whole effort that is involved in knowing whether it is successful for the mathematicians to perform this logical reduction of this number, that however successful it may appear for some, leaves us suspended nevertheless on something which the mathematicians testify remains irreducible, this something which makes these numbers be described by the predicate of natural numbers.

But it remains, and I underline it, testified in the most striking fashion, everything that has been constructed more recently and of whose dimension you should have an idea from the fabulous expansion that it represents for about a century, that one grasps there what is already graspable at the level of Euclid, which is, that it is along the path of logical requirements which ensure that, for whatever operation of mathematical construction it may be, everything must be said and in a way that resists contradiction.

(6) And this “everything must be said”, namely, that whatever may be the bridle, the extenuated support of intuition which remains in this something which, assuredly, is not the triangle drawn on the board or cut out on a piece of paper, and which nevertheless remains a visualisable support, the imagination of the relationship between two conjoined dimensions which suffice to subjectivate it, that nevertheless, we have to justify in words the slightest operation, that of a translation, of a superimposition, what legitimates this application of one side onto another side, and of such and such of the equalities on which we are going to establish the most elementary truths about this triangle, this “everything must be said” which carries us, now that we have learned, not alone to manipulate but to construct many other things of a much greater complication than the triangle, we know that this “everything must be said”, that it is starting from there that there has been constructed, elaborated, erected, everything that in our day this mathematics allows us to conceive of, in this extraordinary liberty which can only be defined by what is called the body, namely, the totality of signs which are going to constitute this thing around which for a theory, around which we circumscribe this limit, by imposing it on ourselves to make use only of elements individualised by these letters, plus some signs which join them together. This is called the body of a theory; (7) you introduce into it any equality whatsoever from one of these equations borrowed from this body, with something new that is purely conventional, by means of which you give it its extension, and starting from that, it works, it is fruitful. You are, starting from there capable of conceiving of worlds, not alone of four dimensions, but of six, or seven.

I was reminded recently that the last prize awarded, the Nobel prize for mathematics, which is called Field's Medal, was to a gentlemen who showed that starting from the seventh dimension, the sphere which up to then remained completely homologous to the three-dimensional sphere, the sphere completely changed its properties.

Here there is no longer any intuitive support, we no longer have anything but the operation of pure symbol. Now this exhausting "everything is said", because in connection with the smallest theorem, this "everything must be said" leads us to write volumes, this fruitfulness of "everything to be said", about which I was recently speaking to a mathematician, it is from him there emerged the cry: "but after all, is there not something there which has a certain relationship with what you are doing in psychoanalysis?"

What do I answer him? "Precisely". From another angle, this "everything to be said", once it is done, no longer interests the mathematician, the mathematician and moreover those who imitate him on occasion, the best of the phenomenologists.

(8) As Husserl says somewhere, and precisely in this little book on the origin of geometry, there is, once it is done, this truly "everything said"; it is there once and for all, it only has to be ratified, to put its result somewhere, and start from that result.

This vanishing aspect of the "everything said" exhausted upon a point, of which it remains the construction of which it can be the homologue, or more exactly the difference when it is a matter of this "to say everything", if it is here also that we should look for the direction of our operational efficacy.

Undoubtedly, the difference appears here, for otherwise why would there be a need to recommence with each one the exploration of this relationship, which is nevertheless a relationship of saying, that psychoanalysis is.

This is why the radical interrogation about what is involved in language, reduced to its most opaque agency, the introduction of the signifier, brought us to this interval between zero and one, where we see something which goes further than a model, which is the locus in which we are doing more than sense, where we articulate, where there is established, in a vacillating way, the agency of the subject as such, first of all sufficiently designated by the ambiguities in which this zero and this one remain, in the very loci of the most extreme logistical formulation.

(9) I hesitate to make a too rapid reference, which may reach only some ears, to the fact that zero or one, appearing at the final term, are indeed effectively articulated. Why is it one or the other, according to the operations, it is one or the other which will represent what are called, in the formalisation of the aforesaid operations, neutral elements. Or again, that it is in the interval between zero and one that there is situated this something through which, in the set of rational numbers, there is differentiated two intervals between the zero and the one, we

can demonstrate the existence of an un-numberable, which is not the case outside of these limits.

But what matter if, once it has been recalled, situated, and provided I can verify its foundations more radically with some people, we have this statute, which notes that whatever degree of logicity, of purification, of symbolic articulation we might arrive at in mathematics, there is no means of putting its development before you on a blackboard in a kind of dumb show. It would be impossible, if I were here in the process of giving you a lecture in mathematics, to make you follow and understand - this is recognised by every mathematician - in a dumb show, by simply putting on the board a sequence of signs.

There is always a discourse which must accompany this development, at certain of its (10) turning points, and this discourse is the same as the one that I am giving at the moment, namely, a common discourse in everybody's language.

And this signifies, the simple fact that this is the case, this signifies that there is no metalanguage, that the rigorous operation, the construction of symbols, is extracted from a language which is everybody's language, in its status as language.

That there is no other status of language than common language, which is moreover that of uncultivated people and children.

You can grasp what results about the status of the subject on the basis of this reminder, and attempt to deduce the function of the subject from this level of signifying articulation, from this level of language that we will call the excise (*l'excise*) by isolating it, by isolating it properly, and as such, from this very articulation, that here the subject situated somewhere between zero and one manifests what he is and that you will allow me for a moment to call, to give you an image, the shadow of the number. If we do not grasp the subject at this level in what he is, which is incarnated in the term privation, we cannot take the next step which is to apprehend what he becomes in the demand, in the *aphasis*, in so far as he addresses himself to the other, that we only grasp the most insubstantial shadow for the shock of what happens when the subject, does not use language, but arises from it.

(11) In the introduction of a sort of little apologue borrowed, not by chance, from a short story by this extraordinary spirit that Edgar Poe was, specifically *The purloined letter*, which by reason of a certain resistance that it offers to these sort of pseudo-analytic lucubrations, as regards which one can only think that there ought to be renewed in the domain of investigation, something equivalent to what you see on the walls, "dumping prohibited here", *The purloined letter*, unlike the other productions of Poe, seems to defend itself rather well, since in a certain two-volume book on Edgar Poe that many of you know, by a titled person, *The purloined letter* did not appear to be ready for the rubbish dump.

The purloined letter is, in effect, something different. This subtle passage, this sort of fatal destiny, of blindness, that a little piece of paper covered with the signs

of a letter which must not be known, which means that even those who know it, namely, everybody must organise themselves in order not to have read it. In the introduction to this apologue, in effect, which is very suggestive for us, I put forward a sort of first attempt to show the autonomy of the determination of the signifying chain, from the simple fact that there is established the most simple succession by chance, as in a (12) binary alternation, what can be generated from it starting from congruent but not arbitrary groups, from this triple grouping which, entitled, in the articulation that I gave of it, in Greek letters, overlaps a different fashion in which I could have expressed them, which is to give to each of these letters the substitute of three signs, each one of which would have been a zero or a one.

Why three? What is the central sign? I will only concern myself with the two extreme signs. The consistency, the original determination which results from this pure combinatory, depends in the final analysis on the fact that it recalls radically, the minimal sufficiency that we can make for ourselves from the alternation of two signs: the zero and the one. What from these three terms, I told you, leaving the central term empty for the moment, goes from one to one, reminds us of the radical function of repetition in the status of the subject, and how the enunciating of truths is based on a fundamental untransparency.

The passage from one to zero, symbol of the subject, of zero to one, reminds us of the pulsation of this most radical vanishing which is that on which there reposes, when it is rigorously analysed, the fact of repression, and the fact that it includes in itself the possibility of the re-emergence of the sign in the opaque form of the return of the repressed. Here I said the sign.

Finally, this pulsation from zero to zero, which would be the fourth term of this (13) combinatory, reminds us as fundamental, the most radical form of the agency of the *Ich* in language, which is the one that at another point I tried to have supported by this little fleeting knot that one can do without in language, which is the one which is incarnated in the “*je crains qu’il ne vienne*”, in the “*avant qu’il ne vienne*”, in this fleeting immediacy of the subject who speaks himself by not speaking himself.

But this being posited simply to point you in the direction you should look to rediscover a reference point in my past discourse, I want also today to emphasise something different whose importance, perhaps, is not, when all is said and done, even though I always try to make its importance vivid enough, what relationship, what relationship there is between this subject of the cut and this image, and you are going to see this image at the limit of the image - for in fact it is not one - that I am trying here to make present, with certain mathematical references such as those that are called topological, and of which the simplest shape, I will content myself with it today, you know that it is fundamentally the same as that of the Klein bottle, besides I will recall it for you and it was written on the board earlier, is the Moebius strip.

I know that the beginning of this discourse today must have tired you - that is why we are going to try to do a little bit of physics-for-fun.

(14) Something that I already did. I am not going to surprise you. The Moebius strip, you know how it is made. For those of you who have not come here before, the Moebius strip consists of taking a strip and making it perform, before sticking it to itself, not a complete twist but a half-twist, one hundred and eighty degrees. By this means, I repeat for those who have not yet seen it, you have a surface such that it has neither a front nor a back, in other words, that without crossing its edge, a fly, or an infinitely flat being as Poincaré said, who travels along this strip arrives without mishap to the point on the other side of the one from which it began. This has no kind of sense for what happens on the strip since, for whoever is on the strip, there is neither front nor back. There is a front and a back only when the strip is plunged into this common space in which you live or at least believe you live.

There would then be no problem *vis-à-vis* whatever may be situated on this surface, no problem of front or back, and therefore nothing that allows it to be distinguished from a common strip, from the strip for example that might serve as a belt.

I would not have the malice to give this final twist. Nevertheless, there are in this strip properties that are not extrinsic but intrinsic, which allow the being that I (15) supposed to be limited here by his horizon, it has to be said, which allow him all the same to notice that he is on a Moebius strip, and not on the belt around my body.

It is the following, which is defined by the fact that the Moebius strip is not orientable. This means that if the supposed being who moves along this Moebius strip starts from a point, having picked out in a certain order its horizon a, b, c, e, f - put as many letters as you wish - if he makes a word, in a certain sense, it is the most rigorous way on this occasion of defining orientation, if he continues his path without meeting any edge, coming back to the same point for the first time, he will find the opposite orientation, the word will be read in a palindromic fashion in the exactly opposite sense.

This is what constitutes, for the one who subsists on it, the originality of the Moebius strip.

Good. These first truths having been recalled, I begin, as I already did before you, to cut the edge of the strip, and I remind you of what I already told you at one time, namely what comes out of it. There comes out of it these two rings, one of which remains the heart of what was primarily the Moebius strip, namely a Moebius strip, and the other of which, let us take out the Moebius strip, is not a Moebius strip, but a strip rolled twice around itself, an orientable strip on which there will never happen to the (16) being who subsists on it the misadventure of seeing his orientation reversed.

If I make what I take out larger and larger, I will manage to make a cut which passes, as they say, through the middle of the Moebius strip; this as you realise

having strictly speaking no sense. By making the cut pass through the middle of the Moebius strip, what do I obtain?

I obtain what would have happened if I had reduced more and more the extraction of the edges, there is no longer anything in the middle, namely, that in withdrawing from my Moebius strip what I can find in it, as I wish, namely, everything that is orientable, I become aware that what constitutes the essence of the Moebius strip, namely, its non-orientability is strictly speaking nowhere if not in this central cut which brings it about that, by simply cutting this Moebius strip, I can make it into an orientable surface.

It is therefore not in any way the disposition of the parts of the Moebius strip which gives it its non-orientable character. Its property is nowhere other than precisely in the cut, which is the only thing that has the shape of the Moebius strip, namely, what required the turning over of my scissors at a given moment.

(17) Whether you see in the final operation, in a word, the analogy there is between this Moebius surface and everything that supports it, namely shapes that we can call, for your satisfaction and to go quickly, abstract shapes like those of which some are here represented on the board, what gives it its essence depends entirely on the function of the cut.

The subject, like the Moebius strip, is what disappears in the cut. It is the function of the cut in language, it is this shadow of privation which ensures that he is in the cancelling-out that the cut represents, that he is, in this form, this form of the negative trait, which is called the cut.

I hope that I have made myself sufficiently understood, and at the same time justified this introduction of the Klein bottle, in so far as, if you look closely at its structure, it is what I told you, namely the conjunction, the sticking together in a certain arrangement that you must now see as being purely ideal, or better abstract, the arrangement of the two Moebius strips as what I have inscribed on the board here represents it for you and would represent it still better, if, for the orientable character in opposite fashions of the two edges of the Moebius strip which are here, I substituted their duplication in the (18) following fashion; such is the schema of the Klein bottle.

This introduction of this shape of the Klein bottle is designed to support at the state of question for you, what is involved in this conjunction of S to O, within which there is going to be able to be situated for us the dialectic of demand. We suppose that O is the inverted image of what serves us as a support for conceptualising the function of the subject.

It is a question that we pose with the help of this image. Is O, the locus of the Other, the locus where there is inscribed the sequence of signifiers, is O this support which is situated, with respect to the one that we give to the subject, as his inverted image.

For in the Klein bottle, the two Moebius strips are conjoined in the measure that - you see it in a very simple fashion in the square shape that I have myself modified here on the board - are conjoined in the fact that the twist of a half-turn is made in the opposite direction. If one is levogyratory, the other is dextrogyratory.

This is a type of inversion that is completely different and much more radical than that of the specular relationship for which, with the progress of my discourse, it comes effectively, progressively, in time, to substitute itself .

If a Moebius strip can operate in this way with respect to another one, is there another (19) shape which is able to perform this complementary function, this function of closure?

Yes, as has been very obvious for a long time, since I produced it before you in different forms, this shape is the one that is called the interior eight.

In other words, this, which is a perfectly orientable surface, a little ring whose edge is simply twisted in an appropriate fashion. It is an orientable surface which has a front and a back and in which it is enough for you to make the cut favoured by this disposition of one edge to the other, to see that you create there, effectively, that you create with the help of this shape, a Moebius strip.

This shape, whose function I already introduced to you as demand to be substituted for the Euler circle, is supported for us by being an indispensable instrument.

You will see how. Let us say right away that it is what allows us to raise this other function, the one that I call that of the \circ -object and the *rapprochement* of these two complementary ; the other Moebius strip in the Klein bottle and the \circ in this one, allows us to pose a second question: "What are the relationships between the \circ -object and O?" It is worthwhile all the same to pose the question.

If analytic theory leaves in suspense, indeed to the extent of letting it be believed that (20) to leave the door open to the fact that this \circ -object, which we identify to the partial object, is something which can be reduced to a biological relationship, to the relationship of the living subject with the breast, with the faeces or scybal, with one or other more or less incarnated shape of the \circ -object, the function of the phallus being here altogether present.

Whether the \circ -object depends or not on the relationship with O, with the Other, with the status we have to give to the Other, to the O with respect to the subject; this indeed is the question which deserves to be posed. And if it ought to be, in what measure does it depend on this specific relationship to the Other that we symbolise by the letter D, namely, that of demand.

Simply, in passing, let me note for you as regards the usages this shape of the interior eight can have for us, but not alone for us, also for logicians; observe here, observe here the degree to which it can be, for us in any case, of great service.

For suppose that we have to define, and we do not fail to do so, and Freud himself, when he furnishes his text with one or other little schema which illustrates it, the fact, if we have to finish with a limited field, with a field of the type of the Euler circle, the field in which is valid, or there prevails the pleasure principle, we find ourselves from the doctrine as well as from facts, in an impasse.

(21) This impasse which leaves us to speak about a beyond of the pleasure principle, namely, how a doctrine which had made of the pleasure principle its foundation as establishing as such the whole subjective economy, can introduce into it what is obvious, namely, that the whole pulsation of desire goes against this homeostasis, this level of least tension which is the one that the primary process takes care to respect.

Observe how, on the contrary, and this perhaps is a different path to the one that is called purely dialectical to conceive of it, how on the contrary, it is not simply because a limited circle defines two fields which are opposed: good and bad, pleasure and unpleasure, the just and the unjust, that the liaison is established between one and the other, if we oblige ourselves, on the contrary, to consider that everything that is created in the field of language finds itself required to pass through these topological shapes which, for their part, are going to highlight, for example, the following, that if we define the field of the Moebius strip as being under of the reign, as being under the reign of the pleasure principle, this field will be necessarily traversed on its interior by the other residual field which is created by this line, that we will obligatorily, if we impose it on ourselves, have to define the opposing fields, not as is usually done, on a sphere, an infinite sphere if you wish, that of a plane, but on a sphere cutting out an interior field, an exterior field, we oblige ourselves to do it on this, where you recognise - I cannot today began the whole deduction of it - the image of what is called a cross-cap, which is exactly the one where we can create the division from a Moebius strip, examine it, you will see that this field is a Moebius strip, and this, this internal field, the field of the \circ -object of which I make the following logical usage here: field excluded from the subject, field of unpleasure, this field of unpleasure necessarily traverses the inside of the field of pleasure.

And it will remain for us, starting from this way of conceiving things, to think about pleasure as necessarily traversed by unpleasure and to distinguish in it what it is in this traversing line that separates out pure and simple unpleasure, that is desire, from what is called pain, with this power of investment which Freud distinguishes with such subtlety and for which the inside, the very inside of the surface that we have called \circ , that we could just as well call quite differently on this occasion, namely the part in or whatever you wish, it is in the measure that this surface is capable of traversing itself in the prolongation of this necessary intersection, it is here that we will situate this case of narcissistic investment, the function of pain, otherwise, logically, (23) properly speaking unthinkable in the text of Freud, even though admirably elucidated.

Of course, this only overlaps things well known for a long time and I spared myself from giving you the first sentence of chapter two of the Tao-tse Ching because moreover I would have had to comment on each one of the characters, but

these characters are so significant for anyone who gives himself the trouble of learning their reference, that one cannot believe that there is not something of the same logical vein in what is announced at this original point for a culture, just as much as Socratic thinking for us, about what was original as regards everything that is of the heavens and of the earth, that everyone, the term universal is well and truly isolated, posing the function of the universal affirmative so that everyone knows what is involved in the good, so then, it is from this that there is born the opposite; that everyone knows what is involved in the beautiful, so that it is from this that ugliness is born and it is not pure vanity to say that, of course, to define the good is at the same time to define the bad, it is not a question of frontiers, of a bi-coloured opposition, it is an internal knot; it is not a matter of knowing what is distinguished, in a way, as one would distinguish the upper waters and the lower waters in a confused reality, it is not about whether it is (24) true or not, whether things are good or bad. Things are. It is saying what is in the good that gives birth to the bad, makes it, not that this is, not that the order of language covers the diversity of the real, it is the introduction of language as such which makes there be not distinguished, noted, ratified but which above all constitutes the traversing of the bad into the field of the good, the traversing of the ugly into the field of the beautiful.

This is for us essential, capital in our progress. We are going to see it. For it is now a question of passing from this first articulation of the effects of the *lexis* isolated, in a way, in an artificial fashion, into the field of the Other and to know what this Other is.

This Other interests us in so far as we analysts have to occupy its place.

From where will we interrogate this place? Shall we begin, in order to advance, and because time is at our heels, shall we begin from the formula around which we have tried up to the present to centre the attachment, the approach of analytic activity, namely: the subject who is supposed to know, because of course the analyst cannot be conceived of as an empty locus, the locus of inscription, the locus - it is a little different and we will see what that means - of reverberation, of pure and simple resonance of the word of the subject.

(25) The subject comes with a demand; this demand, I told you that it is crude, it is summary, to speak about a demand purely and simply as originating in a need.

The need may happen to present itself, to be incarnated, by a process that we know, and which we call the process of regression, to present himself, to appear in the analytic relationship, it is clear that the subject at the beginning, has installed himself in a demand, but that we have to specify the status of this demand.

It is certain that to specify this status requires us to reject immediately the schema, which is in any case inadequate and summary, promoted by the theory of communication. The theory of communication, reducing language to a function of information, to the link between an emitter and a receptor, may on occasion be of service, a service moreover that is limited because as a matter of fact, in any case, their origin, since they are not detached from language will imply in their

usage - I am speaking about the schemas of the doctrine of information - all sorts of confused elements; it is inadmissible to refer to any ordination or cardination - in function of a reduced horizon, the reciprocal function of the code and of the message - everything that is involved in communication. Language is not a code, precisely because in its least enunciation it carries with it the subject present in the enuntiating.

(26) All language, and still more the one that interests us, that of our patient, is inscribed, it is quite obvious, in a density that goes far beyond the linear, codified, one of information.

The dimension of commanding, the dimension of soliciting, the dimension of *to demand* in English, the *demand* is a stronger formula than in our tongue, demand in English is requirement, and one can only smile at the article of someone who, having specialised in the tact of analysis, made a great discovery, a marvellous discovery of the catastrophic effect that he had by approaching the interpretation of one or other of the detours of the discourse of his analysand, by telling her that she *demande*d, by employing *to demand* instead of *to need*.

Only a profound ignorance of the English tongue, as indeed was the case at that epoch, of this newcomer to America, can explain the brilliance of such a discovery.

Quémander, namely *to beg*, the opposite position, it is between this *to beg* and this *to demand*, this *commander* and this *quémander* which, between ourselves, I point out have absolutely not the same origin; it is not because words come to be assimilated to (27) the same fate and signification of the usage of the tongue that you can in any way refer *quémander* to some conjugation of *que* with *mandare*.

Quemande comes from *caiman*, which in the fourteenth century designated the name of a beggar.

This having being said in passing, it is in this dimension that we ought first of all to interrogate demand in the dimension of knowing whether, for lack of any way, of course, of being able to refer ourselves to any extra-flat theory about the transmission of what happens in language as something that is inscribed in terms of information, where are we going to search for its density? Is it in the direction of the expression of the person who expressing himself as follows, that after all every word is sincere because in any word whatsoever, what I express is indeed my state of mind as Aristotle says somewhere at the beginning of the *Peri psyche*.

These people undoubtedly had noble souls and, moreover, there would be some bad faith in isolating what Aristotle wrote at this level from its context. What Aristotle wrote is never to be rejected so rapidly. In any case, to read him in a certain fashion is the source of many errors.

The thought that language, in any way, always expresses, as opposed to what is communicated, something which is supposed to be the basis of the subject comes

from (28) a radically false thinking, and one to which an analyst especially cannot in any way abandon himself.

Do you imagine that when I am speaking to you I am speaking to you about the state of my soul? I am trying to situate what the consequences are of having precisely to situate oneself as dwelling in articulated language. And this could be pursued to the final limit, namely, to the most elementary, the most reduced form of what an enunciation is, an enunciation reduced to itself, an interjection, as the authors have said since Quintilian, concerning the parts of discourse, the interjection, this ultra-reduced sentence, this compression of sentences, this holophrase, as some would say, using one of the most questionable terms, the interjection is, in the thinking of ancient rhetoric, something which is to be isolated within the sentence, and very precisely something which gives rise to the image and the function of the cut. Is an interjection, in whatever way we may advance it, as one sees it too easily and frequently referred to as something which is supposed to be a pure and simple exclamation, something whose shadow is traced by this punctuation which is called the exclamation mark. Is it not the case, that looking at something as it happens beyond simulatory appearances, you (29) can see that there is not a single exclamation, however reduced you may suppose it to be in vocalised terms, which is - you sense here that there is a word that I still do not want to pronounce, it is the word scream (*cri*) - which is a scream. If I say "ah!" at any moment whatsoever, and even if I am waking up from a knock-out, I call you and I say "oh!" it is a sort of breathing space, it is an "oh!" that I am going to depose somewhere in the field of the Other so that it may be there as a germ, I other you or I ostrich you as you wish, and if I say "eh!", it is, "eh! yes I spy you, yes".

There is always in the interjection this infinitely varied function. I took the crudest and the most summary terms, but there are of course other interjections. All of those who have considered the problem a little, and I have only to ask you to refer to the book by Brondal on the parts of discourse, where you will see that he finds the need to notice that, as regards interjections, there are those which should be qualified as situational, resultative, supputative. There is no interjection which is not situated exactly somewhere in the cut between S and O, between S and the locus of the Other, the locus of the Other where the Other is present.

Will I be able to get as far as the scream today or will I reserve its function for the next (30) time? I think I will adopt second position because, moreover, this is where the cut takes place fairly well. I will begin the next time by speaking to you about the scream because I cannot separate what I have to say to you about the scream from what I have to say to you about what supposedly well-intentioned persons, who are, it is true, in the process of valorising themselves elsewhere, in places where people speak very strangely about analytic relationships, what a well-intentioned person declared to have searched wholeheartedly for, with a magnifying glass, in my writings. Supposedly, there is nowhere a place for silence.

Well then if this person had better searched and located in my graph the formula, the schema, the articulation which conjoins the S with the D, joining them with a

diamond, conjunction, disjunction, inclusion, exclusion, he would perhaps have perceived that if it is precisely in correlation with the demand that there appears there for the first time the S, it is perhaps not altogether unrelated to this function of silence, but in truth people prefer to speak about it in certain places in terms of emotion or of effusion. It is at this moment of silence that an analyst, whose profile after all I have no need to sketch out here, because I will have to come back to him as a typical example of a (31) certain fashion of assuming the analytic position, that it is at the moment that the solution of the transference neurosis, according to him, and a very large public came to hear such sureties, where the solution for the transference neurosis is to be found in the procedure described as that of airing, as he expresses it : “one opens the windows”, a solution indicated for the transference neurosis. It is true that according to a certain fashion of articulating the transference itself, it is hard to see in what order of reference one could find the indication of the solution. I shall speak to you then, to begin my discourse the next time, about silence, after I have spoken to you about the scream.

But to end today on something which, God knows, after such a testing session may distract you so that you may take away something amusing, I am going to tell you a story which you can see reproduced in the year 1873 of Dostoievsky's *Journal*. It is an illustration which I picked out, as I might say, for you, as a way of making present, of imaging what I have just said about interjection, in other words about the ultra- reduced, even monosyllabic sentence, and you are going to see that an interjection, however one may see it as arising from some ultimate radicality or other, is something quite different to what we may thus think of it, that it is on the contrary essentially (32) not simply at the limit of the subject and the Other but in the presentation of the world of the subject to the Other in the very establishment of his most radical foundations.

This having been said, prepare yourselves to see it illustrated in a humorous fashion. Dostoievsky tells that one evening, making his way through the streets of Moscow, he finds himself moving in harmony with some people who are well vodkaed. These people, as one might expect, were involved in a very animated debate which involved nothing less than the most universal, cosmic references and what he depicts for us is the following. All of a sudden one of them concludes this debate in uttering, he tells us, it is in Russian, I cannot start playing vain games here with a tongue which I do not know, we will search for an equivalent, what is involved is a word he tells us that is in any case unpronounceable. This word he pronounces decisively as a kind of jet of universal contempt; all of that, all you are thinking, comes from that. This is said in the most convincing fashion, at which another younger person who is flying just as high, approaches and repeats the same still unpronounceable word in a questioning tone. Following which a third arises who shouts the same word like a roaring, a howling towards the sky almost breaking his voice, a sort of enthusiasm, after which the second person who had spoken comes up to the first and says: "Oh, well done! We were talking about serious things, we were at the level of philosophical debate, and you have just introduced , he said, wearing out your voice." At which point the fourth, for you will have noticed that only three have intervened up to now in the four remarks that I have given up to now, the fourth then intervenes

speaking to the fifth and reproduces the same word, this time in the manner of a revelation, of a eureka! The truth has dawned on him, it is this word which is the key to everything. At which point, another gloomier looking fellow, Dostoevsky tells us, repeats this word several times in a low voice as if to say, we must not lose our heads, which results in something more or less like: "Shit", "Shit?", "Shit" "Shit" "shit, shit, shit, shit."

Seminar 12: Wednesday 17 March 1965

Perhaps I might have had a pretext for asking you for a little rest to-day. But how could I send away so many people, and on the other hand up to a certain point, I am pressed for time; it is almost insufficient for me to hold to the trajectory that I have assigned myself this year.

I would ask for your attention, especially in the measure that I may be led to go rather quickly along the line that I intend today to stretch from one point to another, and which responds to what I already announced, indeed began, the last time concerning what at the point that we are at, in terms of a correction, I would say, of the experience of analytic technique, starting from this affirmation that it is only thinkable, I would not say practicable, that it is only thinkable starting from a quite articulated notion of the subject, of the subject as such, of the subject at least as I have tried to focus it for you around a certain conception of what is involved in the experience of the Cartesian *cogito* and the novelty it introduces from the point of view of being, as regards the thought-out position of the one who is going to offer himself to something which is called psychoanalysis.

(2) It is not at all necessary, for all that, that the subject knows it, if the key formula giving us the place in the experience of the unconscious, is : "He did not know that". This is the status, as I introduced it for you last year, of this pulsation in which there appears this something of which one can say that however little it reveals itself, it betrays itself, and already as the screams (*cris*) lighten for us the formula of Heraclitus speaking about Ohanax: "About the prince, about the one to whom there belongs the place of divination, the one at Delphi, he does not say, he does not hide" - there is no other possible translation, it is not that is used here, there is no other possible translation than this one, "he makes something signifying".

He is the one who collects this signifier, who makes something of it and literally, what he wants.

Everyone knows that with respect to this : “what he wants”, the analyst is not in a simple position, that from this : “what he wants”, he separates himself by all sorts of walls, which come from experience, from principle, from doctrine.

But, when it is a question of approaching what I called the last time the second stage of the usage of the word in analysis, it is important for us, as regards this stage, which one can say was very well explored, very well developed, during the (3) Freudian and the post-Freudian years, it is a matter for us of situating what belongs to this second stage and also what constitutes its frontier and its limit.

As a reference, in this pioneering work which I am carrying out here, and as regards which you may well imagine that it is not by chance, if at the moment of taking up today my discourse, I indicate, designate for you, if it is a different gesture to the one that I evoked earlier, that it is from the position of the analyst that for me, and for you because you are waiting here, it is a matter of starting.

I recalled on the board, in a still simpler, I would almost say crude fashion, what in the first phase of this pioneering work, when, for the analysts, of whom it must be said that up to then, very often in language, for them the three kinds of forms of the dialectic of lack, which are entitled privation, frustration, castration were used in an almost interchangeable fashion, when I recalled that at the level of the reference to the symbolic, to the imaginary and to the real it was appropriate to see that there was something at these three levels which was radically different; that frustration, I would simply say to analyse it in a semantic fashion, is something which carries in itself, at its centre, its essence and as one might say its act, it is in vain, this thing which escapes, this fraud, this frustrating which makes of it, (4) incontestably from its status, from disappointment in its most imaginary aspect, and that this did not exclude that its objectal reference was something real, that on the other hand, what was its support and agent, the Other to call her by her name could only be situated for us in the most general form, from the locus of the symbolic, that there is only frustration, properly speaking, where something can be claimed and that moreover, it is the dimension that one cannot eliminate from its definition, that moreover this is the broadest frame in which, in the experience of psychoanalysts, there appeared to be situated the daily situation, the day-to-day of what an analytic experience can discover, in stages, when it is a matter of conjoining it in the *hic et nunc* of the relationship to the analyst.

Is this something with which we can in any way be content? When it is a matter of articulating this frustration, it cannot but be that everything that is enounced in the discourse of the analyst [analysand?] is inscribed in the double register of the demand which speaks, which is a question which is posed from the beginning, the first step in analysis; the subject comes here to demand analysis.

What does he come to demand in analysis? The whole psychoanalytic literature, when it is brought to bear on this experience, on, as some people say, this living experience of analytic stages, is employed in unveiling, in manifesting what through (5) something which is made up of mapping-out, but also of construction, and here the thinking of what the analyst lives out, has

demonstrated, has conjoined, has justified the succession of what is presented at different stages of the analysis as demand.

Now the conjunction of this demand with some developmental conception or other cannot come into play without there being made of it, without there being presented, a certain margin of arbitrariness.

For in truth what is done, I mean effectively by the authors - it is not that this ought not to give us pause - is referred, dares to refer itself, to a function that is in a way, I would not say biological, for this would already be to make intervene a register of a high level which is certainly not in question, to this simple level that we will call that of a living relationship (*rapport vital*) quite simply, and even, let us go a little further, of a carnal relationship. The dependency, the physical, animal dependency in which the little child finds himself with respect to his mother, is invoked as being this something which defines, gives, gives as the main background of what the demand is going to develop upon, what we will call, with the majority of analytic authors, the anaclitic position.

That there is conjoined there besides to this conception, whose central term is taken from Freud's pen, that there is conjoined to it a notion like that of primordial (6) auto-erotism and again of primary narcissism, from this epoch, where at a quite initial stage of his coming into the world, the subject, in Freudian theory is conceived of constituting - as is very commonly explained in more than one place - only a single being, or a single individual, as you wish, with the being from whom he has just detached himself, with the being from whose belly he has emerged, this is something which is associated with this so-called anaclitic position which is revealed in the exercise by the subject, of the function of demand.

Now, there is incontestably here a leap because, after all, if it is not impossible that this anaclitic position which, all the same, if it is there present in the treatment, has nothing to do with the position of vital dependency of which I spoke to you earlier, of which I spoke to you just now, if this anaclitic position can be conceived, given doctrinal form exactly as being at the same level in the imaginary structure as the narcissistic position, does not mean that the question of the primary relation to the mother is settled, nevertheless, at least something will be required which justifies the connection and which assures us that it is not a matter, in this image often evoked in the course of an analytic treatment, of a support taken as fusional, of an aspiration to return, as it were, to origins conceived, as I was saying earlier, in their most carnal form, that it is not a matter here of a phantasy properly speaking, that (7) we can on this point find support in some continuity where there is expressed the imprint which for its part is supposed to be beyond language.

Now, up to the present, nothing guarantees for us that this domain of the demand having been explored, we can always justify the most paradoxical things that appear there without referring ourselves to their concrete origins, which are those which should be conceived, as fundamentally those of feeding, of feeding, if it is a fact that it appears essential in something which, here or there, can appear as

constant or engraved in the history of the subject, it is not at all so much because it was so in fact and really, that in a function, that in a function that is different, which makes in particular of what serves in analysis as a symbol for this feeding, namely the maternal breast, is absolutely, exclusively given the metamorphoses under which we have to locate it and to see it translated, absolutely exclusive of a pure and simple concrete experience.

What is, at first appearance, this symbolic, metabolisable, metonymical, translatable character, and this very early on this is the interest of the Kleinian experience, its appearance very early on - why not say it? - in the disguised, *entstellt*, displaced form of the phallus, this is something which ought to attract our attention and (8) ensure that we do not content ourselves with some, whatever may be the weight, the convenience, of seeing the often fallacious intersections that we can find in direct observation which ought at least make us put in suspense the status of its origins.

For this experience of demand, this analysis centred on the stage at which the subject incarnates his word, this is no longer the subject whose status we have marked at the most radical level of language, of the unary trait and of the status of privation where the subject installs himself in it.

How can one not sense that there is to be retained from the experience centred in this way, articulated in this way, that what has come in the course of years and by stages and providing material to argue in a way that is undoubtedly nuanced, subtle, because extremely divided, I would say from school to school, if it is a fact that this term allows there to be assured quite clear limits within analysis, that this something, of which this experience brings us the testimony, is the discovery, is the handling, is the perfecting, is the precise interrogation which has been centred from Abraham up to Melanie Klein and since, multiplied in multiple efforts to assure its avenues, the partial object, what in our discourse here, I articulate as being the **o**-object.

I apologise, I am a little tired. You really cannot hear properly? Thank you for letting me know.

(9) I think that the diversity, the variety of this **o**, in so far as the list that I gave you of it here does not surpass, but undoubtedly articulates in a different fashion, their range, without at all, for all that, going in the direction of not retaining the major reductions to which analytic experience subjects these **o**-objects.

The prevalence of the oral object, in so far as it is commonly called the breast, of this faecal object, on the other hand, if we put it on the same table or in the same circuit as the one in which there are situated all the objects articulated no doubt in analytic experience, but in an infinitely less assured way as regards their status than ours, namely the gaze and the voice, we have to question ourselves about how, that we have to question ourselves about the fact of how analytic experience can find in it the fundamental status of what it is dealing with in the demand of the subject.

Because after all, it is not self-evident that first of all this list should be so limited. And no doubt the privilege enjoyed by these objects is illuminated by each one of them being in a certain homology of position at this level of joining, that I evoked the last time, between the subject and the Other.

Nevertheless, it is not to be said, that what the subject demands in the demand to the Other is the breast. In the demand to the Other, the subject demands (10) everything that he may have to demand, in the first place, in analysis, for example, that the Other should speak.

There is something abusive, excessive, to immediately translate what is characteristic of the demand, namely, that it is true that there is demanded something that the analyst is supposed to have, but what is demanded as what he has, is in function of another thing that the analyst himself poses as the true aim of what the subject demands.

This is worth pausing on. This is worth pausing on, when this *o*-object is thus set up, less as the point of what is aimed at than as what arises in a certain gap which is the one created by the demand, and that I insisted upon the last time, throwing my beam of light in the direction of going to look for the demand and the sentence in the most compact form, the one that could pass for being at the level of pure and simple expression and that there, in the interjection, I insisted on showing you that what gives it its value and its price, its specificity that is all the more graspable in that it is here more compact, because it always comes to strike at the joining of the subject and the Other. That what the simplest-looking interjection imposes on the interlocutor is this common reference to a third who is the big Other, and it is something which always has, more or less, is an invitation to step back, to temper, to reconsider, to review, to reoppose, to redirect the gaze towards some previous (11) interlocutor, undoubtedly one can pose the question, glimpse whether it is not some more reduced, simpler, more efficacious incidence also of language.

The whole theory of Pierre Janet is constructed upon the theory of commandment; the order given, in so far as from the one who speaks, to the arm which acts, he establishes a sort of common, inaugural status in the agency of human conduct.

Everyone know that analysis cannot be content with this reconstruction which is only a reconstruction on the blackboard. And that as regards the governor on Egyptian boats, the one who with his baton gives rhythm to the beat of the oars, is not something which belongs to the status of the effective subject, that there is no order which is not a reference to a super-order.

Undoubtedly the question is posed of the cases where the order goes straight to its goal and effectively manifests itself in what is called suggestion. But what does analysis show us if not that, in this case, suggestion functions with respect to this third term which, in this case, is that of the unknown desire.

It is on the level of the repercussion, of the interest obtained from the unconscious desire, that the one who knows how to handle this sort of remote control, what is

called suggestion, takes his point of support and if he does not have it, the suggestion is ineffective.

(12) That it can be caught by extremely primitive means, like that of the crystal ball, is simply there to show us the eminent function, for example, of a bright point at the level of the *o*-object.

There is then always this third reference in the effect of demand and nevertheless, is it not possible to discover somewhere, this something which would have the privilege of making us grasp that something of which we nevertheless have need, namely, what is the status, what are the limits of this field of the big Other, to which we have been led, led at the level of the experience which is that of the field, of the artificial field guaranteed to the word in psychoanalysis, it is here that I hope that the object which I had circulated among you earlier, namely, a reproduction of the celebrated painting by Edward Munch called *The scream* is something, a figure, which seemed to me suitable to articulate for you a major, fundamental point on which many slippages are possible, many abuses are committed, and which is called silence.

It is striking, that to illustrate silence for you, I found nothing better in my opinion than this image which I think you have all seen now, and which is called *The scream*. In this singularly deserted landscape, denuded by means of concentric lines, outlining a sort of bipartition at the back which is that of a form of landscape, in its reflection, a lake also forming a hole there in the middle, and on the right diagonal edge, crossing, barring in a certain way the field of the painting, a road which disappears. At the back two passers-by, thin shadows who distance themselves in a sort of image of indifference, in the forefront this being, this being of whom, in the reproduction of the painting, you were able to see this strange appearance that cannot even be said to be sexed. It is perhaps more emphasised in the sense of a young individual and of a little girl in some of the repeats that Edward Munch made of it, but we have no further special reason to take it into account.

This being, this being here in the painting with a rather old-fashioned appearance, and also a human shape so reduced that for us it cannot fail to evoke that of the most summary, the most crudely treated images of the phallic being, this being covers his ears, opens his mouth wide, and screams.

What is this scream? Who will hear it, this scream that we do not hear? If not, precisely, that it imposes this reign of silence which seems to rise and fall into this space which is at once centred and open. It seems there that this silence is in a way the correlative which by its presence distinguishes this scream from any other imaginable modulation. And nevertheless, what is tangible, is that this silence is not the ground of the scream, there is no Gestalt relationship; here the scream (14) literally seems to provoke the silence and in abolishing itself in it, it is tangible that it causes it. It gives rise to it, it allows it to hold its note, it is the scream which sustains it and not the silence the scream, the scream in a way makes the silence curl up in the very impasse from which it springs, in order that the silence may escape from it. But it has already happened when we see

Munch's image. The scream is traversed by the space of the silence without dwelling in it; they are not linked either by being together or by succeeding one another, the scream creates the abyss into which silence rushes.

This image in which the voice is distinguished from any modulating voice, for in the scream, what makes it different even from any of the most reduced forms of language, is the simplicity, the reduction of the apparatus that is involved. Here the larynx is no longer anything more than a pipe. The implosion, the explosion, the cut are lacking.

The scream here cannot give us the assurance of this something in which the subject no longer appears except as signified but in what way? Precisely in this open gap which here being anonymous, cosmic, all the same marked in a corner by two absent human presences, is manifested as the structure of the Other, and all the more decisively because the painter chose it as divided in the form of a reflection, clearly indicating to us, in this something, a fundamental shape which is the one we rediscover in the confrontation, the sticking together, the suture of everything that affirms itself in the world as organised.

(15) This is why in analysis when what is involved where the word has its place, and an approximate usage is made of silence, "*Silence and verbalisation*" an excellent article written by the son of Wilhelm Fliess, the companion of Freud's self-analysis, Robert Fliess; Robert Fliess, then, undoubtedly names in a correct fashion what is involved in silence, in what he explains to us. This silence is the very locus where there appears the fabric on which there is unfolded the message of the subject and the place where the nothing printed allows there to appear what is involved in this word, and what is involved is precisely, at this level, its equivalence with a certain function of the *o*-object.

It is in function of the object of excretion, of the urinary or faecal object, for example, of the relationship to the oral object, that Fliess teaches us to distinguish the value of a silence by the way in which the subject who enters it makes it last, sustains himself with it in a way, he teaches us the quality of this silence; it is clear that it is indistinguishable from the very function of verbalisation.

It is not at all in function of some defence, of some predominance of the ego apparatus that it is appreciated, it is at the level of the most fundamental quality which manifests the immediate presence in the operation of the word of what is indistinguishable from the drive.

This analyst of the old stock and of great class, no doubt, this work, this reference (16) is undoubtedly of great value showing how the paths of a certain apperception of what is involved in the erotic presence of the subject, is something upon which we have a right to depend and which is very illuminating.

Nevertheless, this silence, if, in a way, denoted in its musical function, however integrated into the text may be silence in all its varieties, and the musician knows how to make of the pause or of silence, a moment that is just as essential as that of

a sustained note. Is this something that we can allow ourselves to apply simply to the fact of the arrest of the word?

Silence is not simply not saying something : *Sileo* is not *taceo*, Plautus said somewhere to his listeners, as is the ambition of anyone who can, or wants to, make himself heard : *Silete et tacete atque advertite animum*. Pay attention: “be silent” and “shut up” are two different things; the presence of silence in no way implies that there is not someone speaking, it is even in that case that silence takes on its quality to an eminent degree, and the fact that it happens that I obtain here something which resembles silence, does absolutely not exclude that perhaps, before this silence itself, one or other person may be busying himself in a corner in order to furnish it with more or less loudly spoken reflections.

(17) The reference of silence to "shutting up" is a complex reference. Silence forms a bond, a closed knot against something which is an understanding and something which, speaking very quietly, is the Other, is this closed knot which can reverberate when the scream traverses it and perhaps even digs into it.

Somewhere in Freud there is the perception of the primordial character of this hole, of this hole of the scream, when Freud himself in a letter to Fliess articulates it, it is at the level of the scream that there appears the *Nebenmensch*, this neighbour whom I showed should effectively be named in this way, this close neighbour because he is precisely this hollow, this uncrossable hollow marked within ourselves and which we ourselves can scarcely approach.

Here we have perhaps the model, sketched out in this way, for silence, and you have sensed, confused by me with this space enclosed by the surface, and of itself, by itself unexplorable, which constitutes the original structure that I have tried to image for you at the level of the Klein bottle.

What must we distinguish then in the operations of the word and of the demand? At first appearance, in the first phase, this cut that the schema of the bottle allows us to image as being that of its division into two fields whose character, a Moebius surface, is there to picture for us the side closed in on itself, not a double-sided but (18) a single-sided surface, the side which in the signifier constitutes the prevalence, the unity of the effect of sense in the measure that it does not, of itself, involve the reverse side of a signified, in the measure that it closes in on itself and that it is above all this cut to which there could be reduced, as I have told you, everything that is essential in the structure of the surface since, carried out in an appropriate fashion, it makes disappear from it this essential function of being sense and pure sense; it makes appear there this duplicity, this front and back which for us picture the correspondence, the division of the signifier and the signified.

Now, what is meant by the fact that in the demand there is separated out, there appears then, something which is a different structure, which appears as one might say beyond the expectation of what is demanded; this is pictured for you by the relationship which I reproduced once more here on the board, between the peripheral Moebius strip and this reduced ring of this independent thing that can

be detached from it, which is something that falls, which is the apparition of a residue, of a remainder in the operation of the demand, and which appears as the cause of something taken up again by the subject which is called phantasy, and which, at the horizon of the demand, makes there appear the structure of desire in its ambiguity, namely that desire, if it can detach itself, arise, appear as absolute condition, and (19) perfectly presentable as being this something which the subject who desires it, who takes it as such at the level of the Other, makes it simply subsist by sustaining it as unsatisfied - a hysterical mechanism whose essential value I have marked.

That this is the only point, the only term where there converges, in explaining it, the junction of demand and transference, that in the deception of transference, what is involved is something which, without the subject knowing it, turns around the capturing in some way which is imaginary, or which is acted out, of this *o*-object, that this is the term and the common measure around which function the whole level of what is called frustration. It is there that it is a matter of posing, in a fashion which allows there to be posed questions, starting from there, and only starting from there: of distinguishing what experience can allow us currently to ratify concerning what is the origin, through what door the function of this *o*-object has come.

It is here that there must be emphasised, always recalled, that all our knowledge as regards what is concerned in a development which is supposed to be psychoanalytically justifiable begins, and always originates, in experience and in the experience of the treatment.

That is why it is not sufficient for us for the moment, here, simply to ground the status of the analyst, in a way, in an arbitrary fashion prefigured by our categories; (20) it is a matter of seeing whether our categories are not those which allow us precisely to construct the map, to understand what is involved in one or other theoretical tendency in the analytic milieu, in the community of analysts, with this position which in each analyst - and quite naturally not simply in an isolated fashion but in the measure of the experience that he has had of it, namely his formative experience - of what in each analyst can be located in terms of a desire that is an essential reference for him.

For here there results from what is affirmed and is picked out in the theories of the technique and in papers, that to put the emphasis, for example, on a technique which makes there appear, for the subject, in phantasy, at the level of the Other, the phallic image in the positive form where it is conceived and represented as the object of fellatio, that there is here something which already is distinguished by the fact that in the cut, it is on the side of the *O* that this object falls, and that this object is charged at least in certain nosological registers, especially for example in the case of obsessional neurosis for the author and practitioner whom I am indicating, and whom many here may be able to spot. It is clear that to centre around the emergence of this phantasy, in so far as it appears at the level of the Other, namely (21) of the analyst, a mapping-out, an approach, a critique of the approach to reality which might seem, in this perspective, to be the key, the hinge, the door through which there may be resolved the harmonising of the subject with

a particular object that is supposed to be real, this is something which is distinguished in any case from another way of thinking, from another theory, which holds there can be no analysis which could in any way be said to be completed, if it is not at the level of the subject himself that, at a phase which is precisely a phase which goes beyond this purely identificatory stage of mapping out, of highlighting, of the feeling of a certain real that a certain technique entrusts itself to, it is in the measure that the subject himself can come, beyond this identification, to live the effect of this cut as being himself this remainder, this waste even, if you wish, this extremely reduced thing from which he has effectively started, at an origin which it is a matter of conceiving, not so much as that of his history, but as that origin which remains inscribed in the synchrony, in the very status of his being, that something should at one time be experienced as if he himself was this object which is either demanded from the Other, or is demanded from him.

Breast, even waste, excrement properly speaking, in other cases in other registers, in other registers which are not those of neurosis, this function of the voice or of the look.

(22) Here the reference that I made at one time about transference is essential. At the point where in the history there appears the emergence, emerging in a primordial fashion that has since been veiled, but in a celebrated text by Plato which preserves this testimony for us, what is in question is the text of the *Symposium*, at the end of this series of discourses in which there is constituted the *symposion* of these discourses which are praise or illumination, in any case praise and celebration of the function of love, there enters the procession of these revelers, who are certainly not inspired, real trouble-makers, the real people to come and upset here all the rules of this extraordinarily civilised celebration.

It is Alcibiades, it is Alcibiades who nevertheless finds himself in this way at the high point of the dialogue and even though the majority of translators in the French tradition, from Louis Leroi to Racine, and up to Monsieur Léon Robin, did not believe, of course, that they could in any way do without this essential complement, we know that certain translators in the past cut it there, retreated, as if this were not the last word, the secret of what is in question.

To understand what is at stake between the subject and the analyst, what better model than this Alcibiades, who all of a sudden comes to recount, to recount the adventure that happened to him with Socrates.

(23) This before Socrates and before the assembly of the other eminent and learned guests. He says then about this Socrates, first of all he praises him and in what terms, in these terms which picture him as related to a box, as something which envelops a precious object and which often on the outside is presented as a grotesque, caricatural, deformed figure.

The ancient figure of Socrates looking like a Silenus, if it is not true, it is not beautiful, comes from that, as you know, and at the origin of his *Grand livre*,

Rabelais takes it up when he addresses himself to those who are made to hear him, the very precious drunkards and the syphilitics. From all time, an assemblage which chooses itself as being from the outside, is taken up with humour from the inside, as specified by some trait of caricature, it happened that those who constituted my audience for ten years, were not from the outside, although in other terms, described in the most favourable fashion.

Here we have Socrates. At first then, in this enigmatic, praised, chanted, exalted form; and what is Alcibiades going to testify to us? It is that in order to obtain what is in that box, what the secret of Socrates is about, as I might say, of what was he not capable? What does he tell us he was capable of, of nothing less than of lying, at least, he is the one who says it: because moreover everything that he depicts for us about his behaviour, about his declaration of love, of seduction with respect to Socrates, is something that he presents to us as being entirely directed towards obtaining, no doubt, for a moment from Socrates, what is at the bottom of him, in terms of this mysterious, enigmatic, profound science, of which nothing more assured is given to him than this extraordinary *atopia* of Socrates, this something which, in his behaviour leaves him on the outside, distinguishes him from everything around him, leaves him, let us say the word, without dependencies.

And if Alcibiades pushes things as far as to have the appearance of having had the occasion of giving a demonstration of the virtue of Socrates, since in the course of these assaults he is going to push him to sleep the night under the same cloak, the cloak of Socrates - and after all, God knows, it was probably something which was worth pointing out, since, if we are to believe the testimonies, Socrates sometimes washed, but not always. And here, if according to the declarations of this individual to whom moreover it is said that Socrates paid particular attention, and which was a loving attention, there is a fact, which is that Socrates sends him away and that the whole fable, I would say, for how are we to know if in telling it Alcibiades is lying or not, undoubtedly he testifies to it, I was devious, I lied, but how describe this lie when its goal was something which he himself could not give an account of, because what does he want? Is the truth so precious to Alcibiades (25) who is the one who is the very image of desire, who always goes straight ahead, breaks down every obstacle, wards off the flotsam of society up to the term where he arrives at the end of his journey and is slain?

What then is this *agalma* that is involved and which is here the centre of the captivation of Alcibiades by the figure of Socrates? And what does it mean, what is meant by what Socrates replies to him? “Everything that you have said, everything that you have just said, is here something that has no reason or purpose for you, except for the fact that you love Agathon”.

Let us leave the figure of Agathon whose name might allow us to dream. Let us only indicate that I made the discovery that the remarks imputed to Agathon in the *Symposium* can only be qualified as caricatural, that the fashion in which he praised love is that of a *précieux* but which, in its effect, only articulated the most derisory lines, even the way in which they are alliterated underlines it, this excessive trait which makes of him what we could clearly pin-point, much more

legitimately than Nietzsche did with Euripides, as being a tragic figure, undoubtedly going in the direction of comedy.

But what does it matter. Is what is involved here not to make appear for us the structure, the structure of deception that there is in the transference which accompanies this certain type of demand, that for the hidden *agalma*.

(26) That this very special transference, that we have the right, which is placed there at the *culmen* of what is involved in love, do we not see there being dismissed, though with contrary accents, two words of love, that of Alcibiades and that of Socrates which, as I said, with accents which are not the same, fall under the key of the same definition: love is to give what one does not have to someone who does not want it.

It is true that Alcibiades, who cannot give what he does not have, namely, the love that Socrates demands of him, the love which would send him back to his own mystery, and which in the dialogue of Alcibiades is unbelievably pictured in a way that seems to me to be so contemporary for our reflection here, because it is to this little image which appears at the back of the pupil, it is to this something which in vision is not vision but is inside the eye, it is at this place that we situate this foundational object which the look is, that, in the text of Plato, Alcibiades is referred to, and that Socrates does not blame him, this too is an essential articulation which demands to be retained. Why does he not blame him? Because, as a matter of fact, everyone knows that Socrates is said not only to be attached to Alcibiades, but to the point of being jealous - it is the text and the tradition that tell us this. And what Socrates returns to Alcibiades is also something that he affirms that he does not have, since he does not have any knowledge which is not, he says, accessible to all.

(27) And the only thing that he knows, is the nature of desire; and that desire is lack.

It is here that things remain suspended in Plato's text and that, after the merry-making of one part of the weary gathering, the passage through sleep of another part, things take up in the morning with a discussion on tragedy and comedy.

What is essential, is this suspension around the point where Alcibiades is sent away, towards what? What we would call the truth of his transference. And what does he try to get from Agathon, if not, properly speaking, what is defined in Freud as hysterical desire. What Alcibiades simulates is what had been previously defined in the *Symposium* as the highest merit of love, the fact that the desired and the desirable make themselves, pose themselves, devote themselves as desirers.

And it is here, and it is through this that he thinks he can fascinate the gaze of the one who, in any case, we have already seen as being a person of the type who is extraordinarily uncertain as regards the foundation of his word.

This is the path through which there is open to us, and since the time, as you see, of an antiquity which gives it all its titles of nobility, the dialectic of the transference as one might say, the entry into history of a properly speaking analytic question.

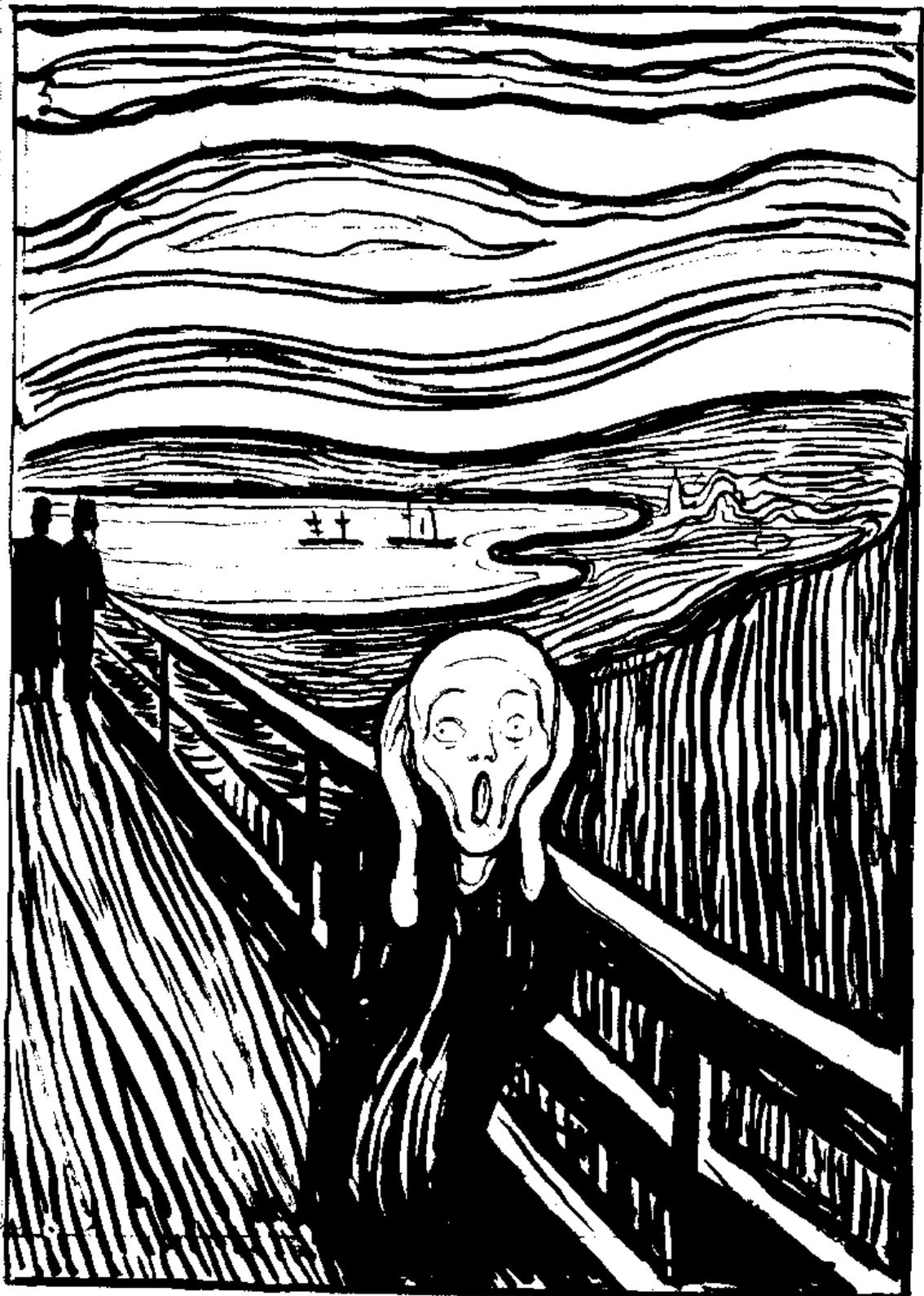
(28) I would propose to test this on a text that I have chosen, and that I already proposed to some people, and that I hope will be chosen and accepted by one or other person, to show you in connection with a text precisely chosen because of the fact that undoubtedly through choices, that were perhaps premature - it is an article in which the author in question entered battle for the first time - but the value of this article is to bring the testimony, to bring the proof of his first analytic experience, and of his first analytic experience with silence.

Whether it is correct or not that he calls this silence, is another question for, after all, it is perhaps not really a silence that is involved. But where he is led, quite consistently, and one cannot say, at first sight, under the influence of some doctrinal guidance, where he is led in his conception of the relation of the subject to the partial object and of the other, to this enigmatic total object whose fate and future it is believed can purely and simply be deposited into the hands of the analyst. Where he has been led, and the fashion in which he has to find his bearings with the different references that he has at his disposal, which are offered to him by more or less current doctrines with all their diversity, is something that undoubtedly I cannot pursue except in a smaller seminar than the one here, but which is, in the final analysis, the essential thing that we are aiming at. If these (29) categories, if their articulation, that of S and of O and of o have some meaning, it is not because they can be joined to some cultural baggage or other destined to be applied where it can be, more or less blindly.

These things are constructed around the analytic experience, and in terms of analytic experience, it is not the least precious thing to know how the analyst thinks about it, whether he wishes or does not wish to do it in terms of thinking.

That he says : "I am not one of those who philosophises", changes nothing about the question. The less one wants to do philosophy, the more of it one does and, moreover, it is absolutely necessary that in an experience like the analytic experience the subject allows there to be seen what we will call the bottom of his sack and that, in an analysis, the analyst is as much in question as the analysand.

And the sense and the perspective of that towards which I am directing you, and it is not for nothing that at the level of this experience of a prolonged silence with a patient, the author puts forward the bringing to light of what he calls, in fact incorrectly, his counter-transference - as I have often said, the term is incorrect - and everything that is involved in the position of the analyst, everything, including the totality and the baggage of its rules, of its indications, of its doctrine and of its theory, ought always to be taken into account in what we call transference; namely, that there is in no case, whatever it may be, that should not be suspected, suspended by the analyst as participating for him in some unwarranted identification.



Seminar 13: Wednesday 24 March 1965

Will we manage, before the end of this year, to find some rule, some style? The time is undoubtedly short. We have already had two closed seminars in the course of which you have heard papers (*communications*). Who does not agree? They were indeed papers; it is the name that what you have heard deserves. You were able to take notes and things were arranged, in principle, for you to be able to procure these texts. Those who were lucky enough, who came at the right moment, were in effect able to get them.

Since I was imprudent enough to say that for those who took Leclaire's text, that I was expecting from them a collaboration which, probably, in the minds of my listeners, implied that those who having taken the text did not bring any contribution would be, as one says at school, and it seems that we are still there, noted. The result is that I learned with astonishment that some people did not take Leclaire's text so that they would not subsequently incur the reproach of not having replied to it. One learns at every age! It must be that there remain corners (2) of naiveté among some people who believe themselves laden with experience. Happily I am not too naive about this.

So then, now, we find ourselves with the necessity of recalling that what we are doing here is something to which I gave this closed character, not that we could hope to give the line and the field for what ought to happen elsewhere, namely the analytic perfecting of the consequences of the research that I am carrying out before you this year and which, as it happens, this year, for example, could be entitled subjective ontology, the term subjective being taken here in the sense of a qualifier or of an objective predicate. This does not mean that it is the ontology which is subjective. The ontology of the subject and what the ontology of the subject is from the moment that there is an unconscious.

This, of course, I am trying to trace the line for you this year, this has consequences at the level of - not so much criticism as is said - but of the responsibility of the psycho-analyst. A term just as difficult to evoke in the context of a psychoanalytic society. What this involves in effect at this level, ought to be constructed, articulated elsewhere, and it is not easy to reunite a college where things can be posed at this level here, in the margin of what I am pursuing this year as teaching before you to give a certain sampling, there will always be (3) then a certain arbitrariness in the choice of what supports the line that we are trying to stick to here at its level of foundation necessary for what supports it, coming from different domains - you were able to see it illustrated by what we extracted from the theory of numbers.

A sampling also of what may interest the analyst in a work of concrete articulation in connection with a case, a work of articulation essentially animated by our line

of research and which today is going to be put to the test of a number of responses whose relevance we are going to have to address.

I will say no more about it today, but advancing then into the experiment, we are going to see what this will produce.

I would not like to leave you all the same without highlighting, at the right time, because, all the same, we cannot let slip this event, the value as image that this week's exploit ought to take on for us, the one which happened at some hundred and seventy five or more kilometres out in space, and which, as I said, in our eyes takes on the value of an image. I will not comment on it today because it would take us too far.

I would simply ask you to dream about the value that our major in space, the man called Leonov, may take with respect to what in this ontology of the subject, represents precisely the way in which man can be properly speaking this thing that is ejected and connected at the same time which is the **o**-object.

(4) In that case, today, I am a little awkward at drawing things but all the same it is not very difficult, here is our major and here is the **o**-object; the capsule would be the S and then where is desire if not at the level of the big Other, the USSR.

I am glad that that makes you laugh, because, this exploit, one of the most sensational all the same that can be attributed to man, this exploit is from a certain point of view a *gag* which depends profoundly on the fact that it is effectively the final structure of phantasy, as realised, one can find it of course in other registers, one can say that it is not unimportant either that we have it here in its most perfectly desexualised form.

You know that it is not in this connection that I introduced some reflections about the cosmonaut, because those who listen carefully to my lectures may remember that in connection with the classical syllogism about "Socrates is mortal", I tried to make another of a caricatural kind about Gagarin.

It was certainly not at the high point of the perspective of what is found here, not to articulate it, I will come back to it, but to outline it.

I do not believe that in saying it today, moreover, I am completely outside of our field, about what is involved in the subjective position, namely, whether it is (5) entirely reducible logically or whether we ought to direct the consideration of this subjective position, in so far as it involves the subject of the unconscious, towards the side of the remainder, namely, precisely, this **o**-object; it is indeed between these two terms that there is going to be suspended, if the matter is pursued rigorously, the question which can be posed in connection with the literal, almost graphic formula, the literal formula decanted by the extremely subtle operation of Leclair.

I am now going to ask who are the people present among those on whom we are counting, I enumerate : Valabrega is there; Irigaray, Lemoine is there; I hope that

Oury is there; Cotsonis Diamantis is there, thank you very much; Jennie Lemoine is there; Francine Markovitz is there; Melle Mondzain is there; and Major.

Dr Leclaire : I am going to propose that we begin the discussion about this text perhaps by considerations that I would arbitrarily describe as theoretical. As it happens, in fact, those of Oury and of Valabrega are directed precisely to the question of phantasy. So perhaps Oury could begin.

Presentation by Monsieur Oury

I am very annoyed to have only twelve minutes because I have a text which if I read it very quickly would take thirty minutes. So I am certainly going to have to skip a lot of things which might be important.

Anyway perhaps in the discussion they can be reintroduced.

Leclaire's presentation the last time certainly inspired me in a rather poetic way, I wrote a little exergue which can be developed afterwards.

Let us admit that Poord'jeli is a phonematic gestalt which is organised from the proper name of the subject, it is demonstrated in the text or more exactly around his first name and the name of the father, an exploded fragmented figure which is readjusted according to the laws of a primary process and utterance at the moment of evanescence of the subject, the crystallised cry of a primitive *jouissance* which is inscribed to indicate the almost inaccessible path. I take up, perhaps in a different formulation, what Leclaire said, a sort of of the most intimate signifier, a sign of prohibition for the phenomenology of meaning, the entry into a domain of nonsense a forerunner of the unconscious, a vectorial dimension of a more or less mythical point of origin, this point of seeing outside the reflecting field, from which one can see arising the essence of the image.

(7) There where the *Wo Es war* concretises the history of the speaking subject.

Before formulating some criticisms about Leclaire's presentation, I would like to indicate by way of hypothesis, the possible function of this genesis of this phonematic gestalt, Poord'jeli.

Here is where I am going to be obliged to reduce things as far as possible because I carried out a very rapid and partial survey of the neurological literature to try to see what its factors were.

I note that I employ this expression of phonematic gestalt in a sense close to that given by Conrad, the neurologist, when he takes up the gestaltic study of aphasia, starting from Goldstein, etc., and I note that Conrad distinguished in the genesis of the gestalt, a *Vorgestalt* or pre-gestalt and a final gestalt.

I pass over all that and I think that this gestalt poord'jeli is close to another aspect of this pre-gestalt, whatever this pre-gestalt poord'jeli may be, it may evoke for us another conception which is the conception of Guillaume in connection with the

period of the undifferentiated word sentence, a secret ejaculation accompanied by a sort of somersault, as Leclair says, this poord'jeli is a sort of word-sentence containing in itself the origin of all subsequent syntactic developments.

(8) But let us pause again for a little moment to indicate that this phonematic pre-gestalt can be situated in a very marginal fashion that Luria and Ludowig describe under the name of syntactic language in the article on *Mutisme et les silences de l'enfant*. The authors commenting on the analysis of Luria's conceptions defining syntactic language as differentiating itself from real language by the fact that there does not emerge from it reality and action. It is confused with immediate activity, it is only a way of underlining the gesture, mimicry or action. They distinguish it from planning language and from informing language. I pass on.

Nevertheless even if we recall the possible articulation of these concepts with notions such as the motor schema or the theoretical developments of Silver, we could also quote what Ombredanne says, which is very interesting, on the subject of the genesis of the language of the child but all of that does not seem to us to circumscribe in a very precise fashion the problem and it seems much more important, much more urgent and much closer to our subject to refer to a study by André Thomas a very precise study. This study of which I will only indicate the reference is called - this study appeared in an article of the *Presse médicale* of February 1960. "The auditory caresses to the nursling, the first name and the pseudo-name".

From the first days of childhood the child is exquisitely sensitive to his name and (8) this specific sensitivity seems to be something very special and simply different to the phenomena described for example by in connection with the first sounds to which the child responds, those which reproduce his own babbling, provoking, he says, the end of his prattling.

Finally let us recall here the fundamental data articulated by Jakobson in an old paper of September 1939 on the phonic laws of infantile language and their place in general phenomenology. He says that one cannot explain the sorting out of sounds during the passage from babbling to language in the proper sense of the word, except by the fact of this passage itself, namely the phonematic value that the sound acquires. Further on the phonetic richness of babbling gives place to a phonological restriction.

Thus, even before what I am calling here the phonological introduction that the organisation of the word inaugurates from the time of prattling, of babbling, before language is determined in a closed system, there is created a potential phonematic polyvalence, a phonetic super-abundance, in which the child individualises himself following a schema which is personal to him.

From this time on, and this is the hypothesis that I am formulating, is there not the putting into place of a sort of personal grid, a system of phonological sieve, in the (10) sense used by whom I do not quote. These phonological sieves are the key, in the sense of a key of musical notation, which allows to be deciphered the

articulation of the subject with the signifier and his fellows. Now is not this key close, precisely, to this phonematic gestalt which we previously spoke about.

This gestalt would function a little like a resonating system, cutting out in the surrounding language, forms of meaning in order to be organised into a message furnished by the personal sieve.

It is the problem analogous to the one that we are quoting about the relationship existing between foreign tongues and the maternal tongue, but also, on the pathological plane, one could relate these phenomena to that of verbal illusions or again to delusions of self-reference.

But it seems that it is also the mode of functioning of the preconscious system through which there are organised the *Fort-vorstellungen*. In this connection I think it would be interesting to recall very rapidly some quotations by Lacan in a seminar of January 1962. He says : “what interests us in the preconscious, is language as it effectively is when one hears it being spoken. It scans, articulates our thinking. In the unconscious structured like a language it is not easy to have it (11) express itself in a common language. The articulated language of common discourse is outside, with respect to the subject of the unconscious; an outside which conjoins in itself what we call our intimate thoughts. This language which carries on outside and not in an immaterial fashion, this discourse is entirely homogenisable as something which happens outside; language fills the street and there is effectively there an inscription; the problem of what happens in consciousness comes to make itself heard and there is the problem of the mimicry between the unconscious and the preconscious.” And again : “if we should consider the unconscious as the locus of the subject where something is profoundly restructured without the subject knowing it by the retroactive effects of the signifier implied in the word, it is in so far as and for the least of these words, that the subject speaks, that he can do no more than always once more name himself without knowing it and without knowing by what name.” And finally “the status of the unconscious is established at a more radical level, the emergence of the act of enunciating.”

It is a simple reminder and we can suppose that this gestalt poord’jeli is very close to the point of emergence or of the birth of the subject, a subject, for example who emerges from a coma always responds to the summons of his name well before he can become aware of the noise of any sentence whatsoever. A supplementary argument to signify that this gestalt indicates the speaking subject.

It is here from this aspect, from this point, that the phantasy can be located and it is (12) here that I come to this criticism of Leclair but this point of reference is not a phantasy. And this is a reproach that I would make to Leclair that he has assimilated his poord’jeli to a phantasy.

Fundamentally, phantasy is much more scopical in its essence. Of course we can quote Freud who in the letter to Fliess of 25 May 1897 puts forward the hypothesis that phantasies are produced by an unconscious combination of things experienced or things heard, following certain tendencies.

But the problem still remains. The phenomenological grasp of phantasy poses the problem of the imagining of the phantasy. But this problem implies the equating of a certain symbolic framework. It seems to me that to be rigorous, this phonematic, sonorous gestalt, indicates the point from which one can see arising the privileged image of a fundamental phantasy which is very conjuratory and with an opening marking the bringing into play of the big Other. Posed in this way, it seems to me we can better articulate what Leclaire says, by avoiding the risk of getting involved in a specular jousting with the patient. And what can result from an obsessional-ascetic search for a fundamental key to the problem which is posed by the analytic relationship, it seem that there is here in effect the search for a guarantee which ought to be a beyond of anxiety towards the mythical locus of the *jouissance* of the Other, the big Other, with an avoidance, with a possible collapse towards a (13) possible alienation of the desire of the analysed subject into the desire of the analyst.

We can formulate that in a different way. What seems to be in question here is the problematic of the phallus in the analytic relationship; the path which leads towards the unity of the subject signified by the name of the father which phenomenologically is the appearance of the phallus in the progress of making meaning.

Here I make a reference to a note by Lacan from the same seminar of January 1962 which, after a mathematical development of a periodic function, comments on the first thing that we encounter and this: it is the essential relationship of this something that we search for being the subject before he is named, to the usage that he can make of his name as being the signifier of what is signified about the question of the addition of himself to his own name, this is to split him, to divide him in two.

On the other hand, the phonematic gestalt by its essence from the order of the big O, from the big Other, is what is the point of ambiguity, namely for oneself and for the others, the coming to light in the analytic relationship on this point of ambiguity deserves in fact to be circumscribed in a particularly precise fashion, it has something to do with the point of reversion, the point of articulation between the imaginary and the symbolic.

(14) I tried to reduce my presentation as far as I could.

Dr Lacan: Thank you for having done so. The longer piece you have done, we will see what we can do with it.

Dr Leclaire: In the choice that I have of responding immediately in detail to every intervention on the one hand, or, on the other hand of underlining a point in it, while leaving it in suspense and leaving somebody else speak, I chose the second formula because I do not think that it is opportune that either I or Lacan should take things up to begin the speaking again. I think that it is appropriate that those who have expressed themselves in writing should do so today before you. The particular point that I would like to underline, and which poses a

problem for me, is the prevalence of the scopic element that Oury advances as being constitutive of phantasy.

No doubt this is what is usually evoked when people speak about phantasy but I wonder whether, analytically speaking, we do not precisely have to distinguish the forms of phantasy according to the nature of the object, the object in the Lacanian sense, namely the *o*-object implied in the phantasy. In other words, if what is involved is an object from the scopic sphere, from the visual sphere, OK, but in the example I chose what is involved is an object of a different nature, which is precisely an object from the domain of the voice, from what we could call the vocal and acoustic sphere. I do not know if it is necessarily appropriate to reduce this object to a scopic dimension. I leave the question open because I think that one should make distinctions there. On the question of phantasy does Valabrega, who had a terminological question to specify, wish to speak?

Presentation by Monsieur Valabrega

What I had to say rejoins one of the points raised immediately by Oury. It was a very short remark to which I give only a terminological importance, which terminological remarks naturally may have, because I would like to tell Serge Leclaire that on the whole, I found his presentation extremely satisfying.

I come back as Oury did to the formula Poord'jeli of which Leclaire has made, as Oury has told us a phantasy, and even a fundamental phantasy, *Urphantasie*. It is also on this point that the remark I want to make will bear. Can a formula of this kind be considered to be a phantasy? I do not think so. I think that the formula contains basic elements or signifying elements of a fundamental phantasy. Only one cannot be reduced to the other.

On the scopic content, on the scopic form that has just been spoken about, I would not be fully in agreement what Oury said but I would rather align myself with the indication that Leclaire has just given.

(16) For my part I would say that what can create an agreement between those who hold with a copy, as I might say, and those who hold with the distinctions that are necessary to make at the level of drives in the constitution of the fundamental phantasy, I would define the phantasy as a story that one tells, or rather more exactly as a story which is told, which happens to be told, which implies nothing as regards who tells it and where it is told and by whom it is told.

The only thing is that a story that is told can refer to a scopic content or to different one; what I would see as essential in the phantasy that is described as fundamental, in the *Urphantasie*, is that for me, at least, it opens out necessarily onto a myth.

This is why, moreover, in psychoanalysis one cannot do otherwise than pass perpetually from the signified to the signifier through signification and in every sense of this passage. This definition of analysis is obviously applied to the discovery of the phantasy and of the fundamental phantasy.

I add a little point: what seemed to me interesting to ask Leclaire as a complement to his presentation is the following: what are, in his case, the clinical conditions for obtaining the aforesaid formula? On what I said about analysis which passes from the signified to the signifier by signification one can only say it, moreover, it is not (17) a critique, there is nothing of the sort in what I said there, it is what Leclaire did in his presentation which once more reduces the importance of my remark to a question of the distinction between terms.

Dr Leclaire: I would have great difficulty in responding in a few words to the question of the clinical conditions for obtaining this formula. It comes, it emerges, it is given. Moreover this formula is a typical example.

But what I would like to pause on for a moment is the question of phantasy as Valabrega argues it.

He says that for him a phantasy is something like the impersonal argument of a story. I agree. The critique is directed perhaps at this formula but it is not directed completely at it. For this formula seems all the same to represent for the subject the outline, however slight it may be, of a history and not just of a history, of a sort of action.

When I evoked the gesture of somersaulting, even its somatic accomplishment which accompanies the formula, or which the formula realises, I think that there is produced something at the level of a summary accomplishment of the model of a story. I will come back perhaps in a more precise fashion on this later if I have the time. I would like now to ask Mme Irigaray to communicate her remarks for it seems to me that they refer to, that they can complete on the one hand the ones made by Oury on the question of the first name, or the question of sensitivity to the first name and perhaps also on the other hand because they take up again the problem of the body in the case of this observation.

Mme Irigaray: In connection with Leclaire's seminar I would like to make three remarks on rather different things. The first remark has to do with the difference that exists in my opinion between the first name and the surname, a difference which in my opinion was not sufficiently noted by Leclaire.

When Leclaire speaks about the proper name, he gives as example George Philip Eliany and when Lacan speaks about it, moreover, he gave as an example Jacques Lacan.

It seems to me that between Eliany and Lacan on the one hand, and Jacques and George Philip on the other, there exist important differences. Lacan and Eliany are not proper names. *Qua* Lacan or Eliany the subject is only the element of a group and one could invoke in this connection what a line of descendance requires of those who carry its name to the detriment of the singularity of each person.

George Philip, Jacques, are in a way, the sound image of the subject. They take into account the singularity of the subject, at least within the group Eliany or

Lacan (19) but they take it into account above all at the imaginary level which does not already exclude, obviously, the presence of the symbolic.

One can note in this connection that the young child is always called by his first name, especially by his mother. Moreover if another person in the line of descendants, and particularly the father is called George Philip or Jacques there is proposed a crucial problem for the subject and the homonymy of the first name especially between father and son or mother and daughter is often, it seems to me, a handicap in the becoming of the subject.

Obviously when the subject emerges from the Eliany or Lacan group he can only signify himself as George Philip Eliany or Jacques Lacan because he encounters at that point other George Philip's or Jacques's. One can note that this is situated generally speaking when he goes to school, a key moment for the positing of the Oedipus complex and the access to the symbolic order. To this primordial and more imaginary George Philip or Jacques there is added at that point the Eliany or the Lacan which are going to situate the subject in the society which he then really enters, the family in the last resort being more another mother than a true society.

The proper name is therefore the conjunction of a sound image, of a symbolic brand. But there always remains, it seems to me, a difference, notably at the level of identification between the George Philip's or the Jacques's or the Elianys and Lacans.

(20) For example the subject does not react in the same way to the death of a George Philip and to the death of an Eliany.

A second remark then: When Leclaire speaks about the empty mask of the unconscious, I would really like him to explain what he means. Because in fact his text does not seem to consider the unconscious as empty. Moreover it seems to me if analysts consider the unconscious as empty, they are much closer to Claude Lévi-Strauss than they say.

If the unconscious is empty, it manifests itself only by chains of behaviour, this word being understood in a very broad sense, and not by imaged or phonematic contents.

The problem of a full or empty unconscious appears to be quite fundamental and if the analysts are able to speak about the unconscious with such difficulty, is it not precisely that it is above all a structure that can be located through its opposition or at least comparison with other unconscious's, a structure that is at once the same and different between one or other subject.

A third remark: If the unconscious is born from the encounter between the organic and the signifier, why does Leclaire invoke experiences of exquisite difference, of movements of somersault, of attitudes of reversal which are situated, it seems to (21) me, at a properly corporal level? Does Leclaire mean by this that the corporal behaviour of the nursling is already organised in a way that is parallel to that of the signifier? But is that not to suppress this problem of the insertion of

the signifier into the organism, a drama from which the unconscious is going to be born.

It seem to me that the originality of the organic is not sufficiently preserved at least unless that what Leclaire is suggesting is that what is involved here is a kind of *fort-da* that the subject tries on himself to master precisely this primordial meeting between the organic and the signifier. But is he touching then the most archaic unconscious level since he has already mastered it?

Dr Leclaire: Several questions are posed. Three at least. To the first I can only allow its whole value to - I was going to say to the clinical arguments which are advanced about the privileged value of the first name. The question that I would pose at that level when Madame Irigaray says that first names take into account the singularity of each person but that they take him into account above all at the imaginary level, I think that a question is posed at a particularly tangible point because, of course, here there remains to be specified with greater rigour what one means precisely by this imaginary level and to what it is opposed. To the symbolic of course but how and in what way precisely in this case at the primary level?

(22) On the question of this expression of the empty mask and of the void in particular, I think that this gives rise to or that this activates the whole series of phantasies which are familiar to us and which, if I may say, refer to the opposition between the full and the empty.

The word that I chose is perhaps not a very fortunate one but it is this image of the mask which struck me for reasons that I will no doubt have to take up again. The term of empty there is employed in a precise sense, namely, where there is no sense close-by, where there is not a ready-made meaning, which is the contrary of a full or too full meaning, if empty has a meaning, in connection with the mask of the unconscious or the empty mask of the unconscious, it is in this direction that I would want it to be understood.

As regards the question of the involvement of the body, the question of the encounter between the organic and the signifier, I consider this to be a crucial question and if I have a little bit of time at the end of this discussion I think that I can take up again in a precise fashion what I have to say there, precisely in connection on what I underlined already earlier in what one could almost call the animating value on the muscular plane of this Poord'jeli formula, for it seems to me, I told you immediately, that would not have a lot of meaning for us, that that (23) formula is already in a certain way something like a mime of the signifier. I will come back on it later, as I was telling you, if we have the time.

Dr Lacan: I would like simply to make a little remark about this question of the first name. The next time I will put on the board an indication in German of a work on the psychology of the first name by somebody called Rose Katz, if I remember correctly.

I think that all the same on this subject, the essential was given by Luce Irigaray, the essential in the distinction between the first name and the family name is that the first name is given by the parents, while the family name is transmitted. It is much more important than the classificatory aspect which opposes the generic nature of the family name to the singularity of the first name. A first name in no way constitutes a singularity. At most, the essential is that it expresses something which accompanies the birth of a child and which clearly comes from parents. The child already has a determined chosen place in the universe of the language of the first name, illustrations that are at the same time very superficial

Dr Leclaire: Lemoine with whom we will end, as I might say, this first part very arbitrarily divided as what we can call theoretical remarks or commentaries of a theoretical nature.

(24) Mr Lemoine: I do not have the impression that what I am going to say is theoretical because what I said was suggested to me by reflections that I had after having heard the brilliant presentation that Leclaire made to us at the last closed seminar.

What I have to say concerns two points :

- on the one hand the fact that Leclaire made no illusion to the last sentence of the dream which seems essential to me because precisely this sentence was an appeal to him, and made of this dream a transference dream.

In effect what does the last sentence say? "We were going, all three of us, towards a clearing that could be seen down below". Well then for me, the clearing (*clairière*) is clear (*claire*). What is involved precisely is Leclaire's name which is invoked in a way by the patient and then this is already an appeal to the name. There is a second appeal to the name and another name which is the name of the father and which is indicated by the unicorn because what is the unicorn? It is a fabulous animal which is only appeased - and Leclaire tells us this in his article of 1960 *Temps Modernes* - when he rests on the lap of a Virgin.

Now this is precisely the problem of the taboo of virginity and it must be remarked moreover that this Virgin is perhaps the mother but he makes no allusion to it (25) anywhere to it in this dream. This Virgin is Philip's mother. Now Philip's mother is the one who responds to the desire of the father. If the father had married a Virgin, a Virgin mother, Philip's name, Philip's identity is from that moment on uncontested. But precisely Philip is an obsessional. And the desire of his mother is precisely what creates a question for him. That is the reason why Philip has the greatest doubts about himself and about his identity. And it is the reason why he entered analysis.

That is why this parallelism between the name of the analyst which is found for its part outside the circuit - and moreover I would ask Leclaire as I wrote to him whether there is not here a counter-transference indeed an excess of counter-transference if precisely he refused to implicate himself by not listening with such an attentive ear as he did to the beginning of the text of the dream to this last

sentence which was addressed to him. In any case this last sentence is directed at the name of the analyst on the one hand on the other hand the name of the father.

And then at this point I would like to touch on what was called here earlier the body, namely the anxiety of the patient. I believe that this is essential if, in effect, the patient speaks about Lili and if everything has deviated in a way towards the Lili of Licorne and if everything that can be described as a horn (*corne*) is hidden and is gathered together in a way in this fabulous animal, it is because on the side (26) of Lili finally something equivalent to the relationship to the mother, but a displaced equivalent, that is to say one that is much less anxiety-provoking.

In the same way, the evocation of the name of the analyst is much less charged with anxiety than would be the evocation of the father. And that is why the father is masked in this dream or condensed if you wish in the image and why the analyst is on the contrary much more apparent because what is involved is a clearing.

This leads me to speak about the formula about Poord'jeli. It was said earlier, and I agree, that it is a reversal, there is a sort of symmetry in a way between the two elements of this formula. There is in effect on the one hand George and on the other hand Lili and in the middle the little d which is the arrow of desire which Lacan has taught us to use. I mean by that that this symmetry is a false symmetry and it is a false symmetry because George is found in the final analysis with Lili, namely that Lili, he finally, with Lili, he understood, he held in his grasp, he had signified in a way, experienced his desire. And it is this kind of traversal of desire which modifies the formula Poord'jeli, a reversal that we also find in the symmetry formula *Lili j'ai soif*; *Philippe j'ai soif* (Lili I am thirsty; Philip I am thirsty).

(27) It seems that this sort of reversal, namely, this turning back on oneself and this way of finding oneself perpetually back on oneself is evidently the fundamental problem, the fundamental attitude of Philip.

So then what use is this formula? It serves to fill a lack in the signifying chain and it serves by its singularity and I believe that there is a difference between the image that one encounters very frequently and very easily in numerous analysis; whether it is for example a tower that looks at you with two eyes, or whether it is a siphon which suddenly turns towards the mouth of the patient, or whether it is a Punch also which suddenly becomes an erect penis, well one finds all of these images at an essential turning point of an analysis and each time there is an anxiety to be covered over. This formula Poord'jeli is a much older formula, this moreover has been said, and it is a formula which allowed perhaps to go further in the analysis of the subject and which allows the subject finally to do what? To recuperate himself when he finds himself, through anxiety, brought to a halt in the course of his associations and in the course of his life.

For what must be clearly said is that anxiety is experienced in the body and that this is the problem and that what constitutes analysis is nothing other precisely than to (28) put the signifying chain in motion and thus to modify what is

incarnated in a certain way by the subject. And besides, is not analysis precisely and in the final analysis a reincarnation of the signifier. Does it not in the final analysis heal the subject by allowing him to reincarnate himself in his language?

Dr Leclaire: Lemoine was right and I apologise for having classified him in the first category. I must say, because we are already in the second series of arguments, namely, clinical arguments that on that point I will allow to each testimony its value as an association because I do not think, even though we are in what is called a closed seminar, that we can enter into the dimension of a discussion of a case or indeed of the analysis of a counter-transference.

Not that this is something to be excluded, but I believe that we will not have the leisure or the possibility to do so here. What comes as an echo to an analytic text is in itself sufficiently eloquent. I would like now to invite Mme Cotsanis-Diamantis to speak who I think, precisely, is going to present us a very short observation of something different.

Mme Cotsanis-Diamantis: In an article like the one Leclaire has proposed to us it seems to me that in connection with these groups of words he proposed to show us (29) how through a chain of signifiers the unconscious appeared to us.

I said, it seems to me, for if our own experience did not make us encounter such notions, we would be condemned to believe it on his word.

It seems to me, in effect, that at the level of a theorisation, of an explanation, of a reference to a third, the one who is neither the analyst nor the analysed, to someone like that these notions may appear as arbitrary. This means that if temporally we accept to believe it on his word it is only through the detour of our own experience that we will be led to convince ourselves more surely.

The analyst-analysand relationship being a relationship of two, the third, the one who listens, the hearer, has no access to it. I will record here an example of an exchange between the analyst and his patient where the dialogue is engaged between two unconscious's and where the reference to a third become difficult.

In the course of a child therapy I am suddenly asked : “where is the orange, where is the orange?” And since I was asking myself inwardly what might this orange mean I made a lapse which informed me, if not about this meaning, at least about (30) my own phantasies: I wrote: “where is the organ?”.

I would like now to report a history I heard being reported to me by people who know who is involved, a little while after Leclaire’s paper. This story I heard completely outside the analytic field. And if there was an analytic intention it was because of my listening for it. It is by that special opening that was brought by Leclaire’s paper and in particular by the teaching of Lacan in general to which the story that I heard brought me back and which I will call the story of Norbert.

The story is about a couple. The husband is twenty-five, he is a doctor with the promise of a brilliant future, and who is supposed to become gynaecologist. He

has a two-year-old daughter. The mother, who has fixated herself on her own mother, is rather indifferent to the child. On the contrary the father experienced a real passion for his daughter. The father was doing an exam that he failed, because that day his daughter had swallowed a brooch and he was extremely upset. He gives up his studies and goes into the navy to do his military service. There, even though he is an excellent diver he kills himself by breaking his skull on a block of cement. The child is two years old at the time.

We rediscover the widow twenty years later with her daughter aged twenty-two at (31) the time. This widow has got married afterwards to a man that she does not love. Her daughter gets married immediately to a man she does not love either. This man has the same family name as her and what is more his first name is Bernard while his own father was called Norbert. The marriage goes badly. The young woman cannot tolerate her in-laws and persuades Bernard her husband to go to live on an island. There while Bernard is driving an accident takes place which disfigures the young woman. She does get back a more or less normal face but a different one after several surgical operations.

A little while afterwards they have a son whom they call Norbert. This child is the object of a great passion on the part of his mother. As regards the father he finds himself rejected by the mother-son couple. The mother is constantly afraid that Norbert is going to swallow the noxious products that the father, who is a farmer, makes use of, and in particular insecticides. One day the father brings his son out into a field where he had work to do. He pours the insecticide into a recipient and goes to work a little bit further on. And leaves the child to play. When he comes back he notices the level of the bowl has dropped; at least he suspects it, thinks about his son but does not dwell on. An hour later the child got sick and by the time father had brought him to hospital had died.

(32) From the angle of this story I found myself coming back on what Leclair spoke to us about, and it showed me here a little of what he showed in what concerns the appearance of relationships, in the phantasy, between the name of the subject and, a fortiori, in the story of Norbert, with the name of the father.

From what angle do we find it here? We have seen a young woman who loses her father when she is two years old, who grows up alone with her mother and who takes a husband and surely a phallus at the same time as she.

Her choice is the following : Mr X who has the same surname as the father of the young woman, therefore the same surname as the young woman. She marries Bernard and she lost Norbert. In fact Bernard, as a rather miserable farmer, is exactly the opposite of Norbert, a doctor with a promising or a brilliant future. The inversion of syllables between the two first names seems here to reveal to us the most unconscious and the most secret phantasy of this young woman. Perhaps Bernard is only the virtual inverted image of Norbert who is so much desired but is absent, or rather is so present.

How is this woman going to be able to accommodate this virtual image with respect to the real image of Norbert, her father? In fact everything happens as if Bernard had a mission to cancel out Norbert.

(33) Who gave him this mission? It is a reply to his wife, perhaps, but much more surely to Norbert himself insofar as he is manifested through the desire of the other.

What is Bernard for this woman? Is he not the antidote, the anti-poison, the one who will cancel out Norbert? The first patricide that the young woman is going to commit is getting married to Bernard. From then on it seems that it is Bernard himself who will take charge of it. First of all by destroying the brand, the imprint of Norbert on the face of his wife. Then by killing his son, the resurrected Norbert for two years, and with, one could hardly choose better, an insecticide.

There are other elements that would be worth while exploring here. For example the references to the *mère/mer* that we find constantly. Norbert who wanted to be a gynaecologist doing his military service in the navy, and killing himself at sea, the couple going to live on an island.

But neither the example, which is a story that was told, for which we have no analysis at our disposal, nor my present experience allows me to go any further than these few elements that I have just given.

Dr Leclaire: There is very little to be added to this extraordinary story. Have you started to write it up, this story of Norbert?

(34) Dr Lacan: I wanted people to remember this. It is worth the trouble. It is a story which was not analysed and which cannot be analysed. But the name Norbert was not heard. I wanted it to be written out.

Dr Leclaire: I still have a lot of papers. Mme Lemoine. It is in connection of the dream of the unicorn.

Mme Lemoine: I am neither an analyst nor a doctor. Besides I think you will see this very soon. But I was invited to communicate to you my intuitive reflections, so here they are.

“One could go much further”, Serge Leclaire said at the end of his presentation. In fact no, one cannot. It is all very well for him to propose a new variation on the theme of inverted gold and which would give rose like the scar, or like the inverted sex or the inverted rose of the woman, but neither the signifying chain nor the cypher of Poord’jeli nor above all the dream itself are themes but texts which are open to infinite variations. Therefore, in order to go further, we would have to be the analyst himself and to have before us the analysand, namely to continue the analysis. Finally, we would have to know the real name of the patient this name Eliany, son of the Lord in Hebrew, I believe, but I do not know Hebrew, was probably put forward for the needs of the case.

We would then see, if we knew this surname, operating in function of Leclair, the (35) clearing of the dream. But we do not have the man or his name, so we can only dream in effect, or worse conclude. For example, to the castration complex.

But the analysis is, it seems, the opposite to a diagnosis, even if it was concurrently made by the patient himself. Simple conscious awareness is not very effective.

But Serge Leclair also says and from the beginning that the proper name is linked to the most secret aspect of the unconscious phantasy and it is from this sentence that I would like to begin.

Let us take up a little of the history of the dream. Philip is thirsty. He succeeds in deceiving but obviously not in satisfying his thirst by appeasing other thirsts in a dream, a preconscious echo of a fundamental unconscious lack. The dream then is like an echo chamber.

In a day-to-day context on the contrary when Philip happens to say “Lily I am thirsty”, he expresses at least two desires: he needs to drink and he loves Lily. The most important one is not the one that is formulated, because any word is first of all the sign of a need of love, of an appeal. But he wants all the same something, to drink, at least in the first phase. Therefore things happen very differently in the dream and in reality at the level of language. In reality the thirst is expressed to (35a) obtain satisfaction, in the dream it is not expressed and far from being satisfied it awakens other thirsts which for their part are asleep during the day.

In Philip's case one can say then that the language of the night before shows certain splits. No doubt it is lacunary, like his night-time language, since it allows there to appear rather frequently a formula stripped of meaning like *poordj'eli*.

Why then in Philip's case does the original pressure, instead of being normally represented and occupying therefore from substitute to substitute the psychic life up to language, why has the displacement being cut short and culminated at this blind alley of *poordj'eli*.

No doubt because there is no anchoring point at the desired moment. No doubt because a brutal weaning dispensed the father from playing his separating role. This is what the remainder of the analysis would no doubt teach us. Perhaps also the father was completely missing in person, how can we know? There is a Jacques who is a brother of the father who seems to have operated sometimes in his place. Therefore the original metaphor did not operate. It did not come to separate what should have been separated establishing thus the subsequent oppositions, conditions of the discourse. The psychic life of Philip has remained like a marsh where one *nenuphar* displaces another *nenuphar* indefinitely.

(36) Underneath the original drive the death drive has remained gaping. In order to fix the circle of fallacious substitutions, Philip posed on his need a seal, a scar

that he masks but which at the same time castrates him. The scar is on him but the rose is elsewhere, in the clearing perhaps.

It is not just anyone at all who can show him the path, the patient therefore appeals to the analyst so that he will help him to reconvert the scar into a dart.

This appeal of the analysand to the analyst, takes on from the beginning and at the end the form of two proper names. George-Philip, the son of the Lord with a question-mark, appeals to Serge Leclair so that he will take up with him his history at the moment that his father was lacking, and so that he will allow in this way to be reknotted the signifying chain as closely as possible to the first symbolic link.

Philip will end up perhaps later in the clearing where he can perhaps become a man and pick the rose. Having become a man he will also be able to have himself called by his own name, which we do not know, and not the son of the lord. Until then he remains a child who is suckling his nurse to the great satisfaction of the nurse herself, but the patient has to liquidate his transference in order not to become the child of the analyst after having been the child of his nurse.

(37) It is only then that he will be authorised to bear his own name which will no longer be that of his father who is symbolically dead. He will also be able to speak in the first person and to allow to speak in him the second and third persons. That is the end of the dream of the unicorn carrying his sleeping dart.

Philip, finally, twice baptised, will have conquered his own identity. The transmission of the proper name is no doubt a sociological fact, but the proper name sticks to the person like the common name to the thing which we would not be able to distinguish if it were not named.

In that way, to bear a name has a meaning and an action on the person and one could perhaps speak about the conquest of the name.

It is a matter then for the analyst to authorise, however little, the unconscious after separation of the persons to found, to ground, the first. Literature in this perspective is a magnified analysis in and through the person of the author, while according to the expression of Jean Paulhan, it is an enlarged language where metaphor and metonymy appear as seen in a microscope.

But the dream is not a text with an author's name. It is only the reverse of a poem.

Dr Leclair: We still have at least three texts: Melle Markovitz.

Presentation by Melle Markovitz (not in French typescript)

(48) **Dr Lacan:** Without prejudice to the others, we will see the decisions that we will have to take, we are going to have this really remarkable paper reneotyped.

Since you will only have the text of Jacques-Alain Miller next week you will be able to get this one probably a little later.

Dr Leclaire : I would wish for my part first of all of course that we should take up this text of Melle Markovitz, that people should also have before their eyes the sequence of tapestries of the lady with the unicorn, which is not so difficult, but I would wish perhaps, rather than replying, to add myself a commentary to this discussion to give the opportunity which will not be very long to two people who again wrote something, namely Melle Mondzain and Mr Major, the opportunity to communicate their reflections to you.

Melle Mondzain: After the papers that have been given I have the impression that the clinical reflections that Leclaire's text suggested to me are going to overlap things which have already been said and may appear a little bit like repetition.

Nevertheless I will give them as such since I have been asked to do so and by beginning perhaps with the end of what I wrote to Leclaire because the preceding (49) interventions put the emphasis on the term *poordj'eli*.

Leclaire told us in his text that it was extremely difficult in general for analysts to obtain the communication of such formulae whose unveiling, he told us, which is apparently so anodyne has something which resembles something extremely shameful or even at the limits sacriligious.

He put the accent especially on the question of sacrilege in showing us how the term of *poordj'eli* was linked to the name of the father, to the name of the patient, to the surname.

Madame Lemoine alluded earlier to the possible signification of this name Eliany, the son of the Lord. It is a question that I also posed myself, but I do not know Hebrew any more than she does. Besides I asked myself whether the name Eliany was the real name or whether it was a forged name. In any case the convergence is all the same rather striking.

It is a name which has a Semitic resonance and there is in the tables of the law a commandment which says : "you shall not pronounce the name of Jaweh, your God in vain." I have thought that someone who is called George-Philip Eliany, whether he is a Jew or even perhaps a Christian, could scarcely be ignorant of such a commandment and that the term of *Poord'jeli* might appear, in a certain measure, like a sort of swear (50) word and a sacrilege in the religious sense, a way of saying : "nom de Dieu", very cleverly and this form of disguise, which is proper sometimes to certain neurotic symptoms, to clinical features that we know well as analysts where the transgression unveils itself in a fashion that is all the more clear because it wants to appear camouflaged.

I was struck by another aspect of this phoneme *poordj'eli* as Oury and others have spoken about it on the phonematic plane. I have not sources that are as precise or as plentiful as those of Oury. I consulted books on child psychology, rather banal

sources, because I had the feeling that that reminded me of something, that reminded me more of words or of terms that children easily invent and of the verbal games of children.

What I found disappointed me a little and satisfied me a little in the sense that all the observations are practically unanimous in noting that certain sounds appear before others and that for example a sound like "r" is one of the earliest and is particularly associated to agreeable physical experiences: so that it would be rather characteristic.

The letter "p" is supposed to be one of the first consonants to be pronounced and people frequently speak about babbling. This link between verbal games and agreeable physical experiences led me to pose the question of a possible link (51) between a phonetic expression of this order and the agreeable physical side, this physical pleasure which can be associated to it or has been associated to it and I asked myself, I posed the question to Leclaire as regards whether the difficulty that there was in finding such formulae, of collecting them as a general rule, could not be caused by an extremely early forgetting which is contemporaneous or of the same order, which might go in the same direction as the perhaps forgotten, the first agreeable physical experience, indeed the first masturbations which even children at the breast apparently carry out. This would rejoin a problem which Leclaire said he would speak to us about which is that of the unconscious and of the signifying chain with respect to the body and other bodily problems.

This question of the body and of Philip's body, I also posed at the level of the dream. It has already been remarked here how one could situate the place of Leclaire in the dream with respect to this clearing.

Leclaire spoke to us about this dream telling us that it was a thirst dream if one takes the term in the sense of a dream whose origin is thirst, which has a somatic (52) source. It does not correspond quite to what is classically known about such dreams in which one would expect for example that Philip would at least dream of a spring, that he would dream about water, that he would dream about some liquid or other to be consumed. There seems to have been a certain delay between the dream which ends up in a clearing which is not reached and the manifestation of the thirst. I would like to pose the question to Leclaire of whether the term of a thirst dream is not to be taken in the sense that it is a dream which made Philip thirsty because there is here fundamentally in the movement of the narrative that Philip makes to Leclaire, two phases, there is a moment of the dream in which Philip sleeps, Philip who is lying down, Philip who is dreaming about Leclaire, to Leclaire, as there is on the analyst's couch a Philip who speaks to Leclaire, and he posed in the discourse a Philip who emerges from the dream, who wakes up to have a drink and who at that moment is no longer the Philip linked to the desire of Leclaire but the Philip linked to the Philip-I'm-thirsty, to the very body of his childhood and who orients himself in the direction, at bottom, of another desire, Philip-I'm-thirsty, it is a Philip who is unique in the world, unique and distinguished from all other Philips of the world perhaps by his mother who perhaps fed him when he was a child or in his narrative at least, what appears is a

different figure of (53) a woman, it is that of Lili who had nicknamed him Philip-I'm-thirsty and who had thus greeted him as such.

Dr Lacan: What Melle Mondzain has said is really very important. Does Israel, whom I asked to intervene, have something ready.

Dr Israel: It will keep.

Dr Lacan: So we will ask Major.

Dr Leclaire: I will leave to Major the responsibility of concluding by asking him to come right away, through a sort of analytic commentary that is extremely close it seems to the material that was brought up here and I would like to have the opportunity the next time to tell you what I would like to underline at the end of this discussion and what I would like to emphasise in this connection, namely, the quite particular nature of what is involved here, of the object of which there can be a question, in so far as it is a matter of a formula, of an ejaculation, of something which is said aloud or quietly and I wanted above all in this connection to remind you of another element of the analysis of Philip which is that of the dream of the sickle (*serpe*) to which moreover Major refers, in which we find in a still more precise fashion something that is of the order of an appeal.

(54) **Mr Major:** I would say that this could turn around the encounter of the desire of the analyst, and the becoming of the subject, on the track of the proper name.

I will go to the most central point.

It is indeed on the privileged terrain of the unconscious from which sense emerges from non-sense where in connection with the proper name and its relationship with the fundamental phantasy Serge Leclaire has led us to the edge of a transgression with the rigour of a non-logic of a primary type.

He has illustrated for us the fundamental mechanisms of the unconscious - metaphorical substitution and metonymical displacement.

To the unconscious text of the dream with the unicorn with Philip, Lili, beach, thirst, sand, skin, foot, horn elaborated in 1960 he added last January the phonematic transcription of the fundamental phantasy of George-Philip Eliany, Poord'jeli.

He has given us the criteria which led him to distinguish, retain, underline, one phonematic couple rather than another in his analytic progress. The criteria that he has retained take essentially as an axis three fundamental concepts in psychoanalysis, the repetition of significant elements, the irreducible drive whose (55) representatives undergo the effect of repression, of displacement, and of condensation and finally the constitutive absence of logical relationships and of contradiction at the primary level of the processes of the unconscious.

Unconscious, drive, repetition in their insoluble link summon nevertheless a fourth concept just as Jacques Lacan has insisted in his seminar on the fundamentals of psychoanalysis, transference, and it is indeed on transference that a number of the people who have spoken before me have come back to.

The temptation came to me given account of it by applying the very method that Serge Leclaire has used and in particular in his articulation with a proper name. But it is necessary for me in my turn, to raise myself, to the limits of a new transgression, that of lifting the veil on the analytic situation where as a real third person I am excluded, to interrogate the desire of the analyst. A difficult position if there ever was one where one risks surprising one's own gaze on the invisible.

It is starting from the two dreams of Philip that I will first try to uncover the traces of transference in the proper names in the dreams. Then I will take the risk of opening up a path into the locus, into the singular dialogue of analytic experience, of the becoming of the subject in place of the desire of the analyst through the (56) phonematic transcription of the fundamental phantasy of Philip.

Is it not from this conjunction that there is born in analysis what in another place Leclaire has called the incestuous encounter? This incestuous encounter that I try here to highlight in the articulation of the collusion of the proper names of the analyst and of the analysand. Of this encounter it would be necessary to speak more at length. Let it be enough for me on this occasion to say two more words.

In virtue of the assimilation of the barrier of repression that is constitutive of the unconscious to the barrier of incest, the aim of the analyst which appears as an unveiling of sense, indeed of the sense of origins, in attempting to modify the systemic equilibrium, makes conscious what is unconscious, becomes an incestuous adventure in potency, the only veritable transgression of incest, such as the one committed by Freud in an exemplary manner when producing his major work, the *Traumdeutung* he resolves the enigma posed to him, even down to his trip to *Roma* whose anagram is *amor* and accedes to a that is hence forth symbolic.

Do we not have here in the renunciation of the fascination of desire in its incidences linked to the mother and to the origins, e.g. Oedipus, where its assumption in its indissoluble link to castration that there occurs the accession to (57) meaning, to self-consciousness, in opposition to universal consciousness which is an overlooking of desire and of castration.

Let us come back to Philip's two dreams of which I recall only the two final sentences of the dream of the unicorn: "we were all three walking towards a clearing which could be spotted down below." (This element has already been underlined.)

And the dream of the sickle the final sentence of which also seems to me to be linked to a transference: "he would thus have wounded himself against an object hidden (*caché*) in the hole. I look for him thinking about a rusty nail. It was more like a sickle (*serpe*)" (I underline sickle, a picturing of the analyst in his place).

Philip tries to satisfy his desire to drink in the unicorn's fountain, a patch of water in his memory to which there is associated the *li* of Lili and to which there becomes associated the day's residues, an evocation of his walk in the forest with his niece Anne. Already we recognise the phonemes that constitute his name : Eli an y.

Seeing the game, they had noticed towards the bottom of a valley where there flowed a stream, the clear water, the clearing of the dream, numerous traces of stags, of hinds indicating one of the points where the animals come to drink. The unicorn as we know is represented with the body of a horse and the head of a stag (*cerf*).

(58) Let us try to reconstitute the discourse by filling the lacuna like a rebus, by giving again to the phonemes of the unconscious chain the support of a preconscious discourse. "On the track, and at the head of a stag, I come to drink the clear water of the good word" Philip might have said, in a formula not without ambiguity which is an obsessional one. "Or being reflected in the fountain and only offering itself as an unattackable fortress the better to resist, this pretty body serves only me and is only for me" where there is rediscovered the unicorn and in the radical contraction of the second piece of the sentence, the first name of the analyst trimmed down to the ego, *je*, which served to name Philip.

Or again constituting himself as the phallus of the analyst and seeking his complicity in masking his lack of subject, according to the formula of Leclaire, "of the stag, I am the horn." But in fact who am I? Where can I situate myself and to what locus and place can I come?"

Taking his support on the "I" of the analyst in his name Serge and making of him in this way, for a time, his serf, he constitutes himself as a desiring subject: George, who desiring the phallus, the one that Lili desires, will carry in his head like in the onomatopoeia given by the analyst, a translation of the fundamental phantasy, Poord'je. Here there is found in its ineluctable inversion the apodictic operation of the Cartesian "I think".

(59) But let us continue in attributing to Philip, in connection with the second dream, the following discourse: "It is a sickle which inflicts on me this injury to my foot." And behold, the exquisite difference, mark of the unconscious element, comes to lodge itself in two phonemes, *pe* and *je*, the opposition of penis-phallus, and of the throat as the representative of the two poles of bi-sexuality of the *sapens* and of the "*je suis*", a commentary on the *Wo Es war* but above all of two phonemes starting from which the analyst had forged the name George Philip Eliany, while leaving in it the imprint of his own, from the *pe* of *serpe* there came Philip in 1960, a name completed in 1965 with the help of the *je* of Serge to give George and finally Eliany, where his becoming as a subject is situated between the fascination for the *lit* of Lili and the free (*libre*) knowledge of his analyst, like Freud doubly fascinated by his young, pretty mother and by the biblical knowledge of his father.

Three phonemes, pe, je, li that we rediscover in the transcription of the fundamental phantasy, poord'je li. If between the pe and the je of poord'jeli, there appears the or which in the reversal gives rise to the rose, in the poor of the unicorn, in an identical movement there arises the rock, that of the death drive, the stumbling block of desire and of castration, a death drive constitutive, in the words of Serge Leclaire, of the desiring subject, but again, the rock of the irreducible singularity of the subject.

(60) This injury, inflicted on the foot by the sickle, the analyst will try to raise, not without allowing it to stay at its proper place, to the head, the head of the stag with a single horn, where the *je* of George Philip will tighten around the proud symbol to constitute his phallic identity, *joli porc*.

Dr Leclaire: I will try to reply and to conclude next Wednesday.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 31 March 1965

Dr Lacan: The intention is that, in a way, a part of what I am trying to develop before you this year will be put on the agenda of the closed seminar; it does not remain in this sort of academic suspense in which in the debates of scientific societies, which are given this title in psychoanalyse, things too often remain.

In a word, I prefer that we should have, at least at the beginning, the feeling of consecrating perhaps a little bit too much time to deepening the same subject, I prefer to fall into that mistake, into that disadvantage, than into the opposite disadvantage, namely, that one should have the feeling that one has got nothing out of it except questions that are still in suspense.

Perhaps on the subject of Leclaire's paper, which will thus be on the agenda again today, you could have the impression, when you part, of things still unspecified or of a dilemma that is unresolved or incomplete, I think that I will be able to take the responsibility subsequently of providing a closure to what will indeed have been posed as a question. I want, in a word, the question to develop and in a direction which is far from this thing that we encounter *en route*, originalities. No one (2) would have known otherwise the testimony that he is capable of giving of what people are able to understand here.

It is a matter of benefits which add up at different levels. The essential is the articulation of the question. Of course the people who expose themselves in this way contribute precious elements. Exactly, there are things that cannot be said

with the required precision except in the measure that certain questions are elaborated here in reply.

I believe that the rest of the course that I am giving you this year can only be nourished by the way in which questions are opened up here at the level of the difficulties that they pose, let us say, not necessarily to everyone but to more than one. This can give rise to precisions at a much greater level than what I am able to do by my first intention.

I point out, that since everything is not running smoothly, or as perfectly as it should do, there are people who last Tuesday, namely, on going on the eve of the closed seminar found at rue de Varenne neither Leclaire's report nor that of Jacques Alain Miller. They are there since last Wednesday morning. You can still find them and acquire them.

Now, Leclaire, I think that you have something to say right away?

(3) Dr Leclaire: I think that the best thing to the continue discussion is still to give the floor to a certain number of people who manifested a desire to speak.

I myself also want to speak, not precisely to reply but to participate in the discussion. We will see then, at the point that we have got to, whether other unprepared interventions arise.

So then, Safouan asked to make a few remarks. I give him the floor right away.

Dr Safouan: I asked Mr Lacan if I could speak because the last time we heard a lot of things that were correct but we also heard some propositions which were frankly false.

So that it would be useless to pursue this discussion if we do not bring the mistakes to light.

For example, we were told that the barrier which separates the conscious from the unconscious is the incest-barrier. I ask myself where that came from. There was a temptation perhaps to make a sort of generalised theory. Here we have psycho-analysis and anthropology which are That is all very well provided one knows what one is doing.

But to begin, what does that mean? That means that the barrier which separates (4) the conscious system and the psychic system of the unconscious is the very one which is erected between the child and his mother to stop him sleeping with her.

I am forcing things perhaps. But I would like to hear another definition of incest.

I will be told that there is no need to really sleep with her and that it is enough to imagine it for incest to be involved.

That is all very well, but the categories of Mr Lacan are there to come to our help again and it must be asked if there is not here an abuse. Because, what happens in that case is that one is obliged to use it more than is said, it is imagined but invisibly.

This is correct on the whole. I say on the whole, because it also happens sometimes that the subject sees himself for example at the end of a corridor, in a blind alley, you know what is going to happen to him, what never fails to happen to him.

But if he sees himself invisibly and without knowing it, the question is only posed with still more insistence, namely, what is it that pushes the subject then to emerge from this retreat?

Still more. How can he come to suspect that he is there without knowing it?

(5) Even when he for his part has completely forgotten it. Here the psychoanalytic experience leaves no doubt about the conclusion, it is exactly in the measure that something of the incest barrier remains in place, namely, in the measure that the name of the father still has some meaning for the subject - and I said the name of the father because we know that in what concerns the father, the real one, namely of the father in his irreducible reference to the position of the child, this father has already been dead for a long time in accordance with the wish of the subject.

It is therefore in the measure that the name of the father still has some meaning for the subject that something precisely from the unconscious and makes its way towards consciousness.

If it was possible to sustain the contrary idea, the exactly opposite one as you see, it was because there was, perhaps, a play on a sentence like the following one: the law does not strike simply desire but also its truth. It is a sentence that was perhaps said, written somewhere, but I never heard Mr Lacan saying it like that. Even if he had said it, it would not be difficult to see what he means by the law here does surely not designate the condition of incest. Law here designates the censorship or more precisely the law of the Other, the law of the authority of the Other, this authority is, as Mr Lacan says, this obscure authority which confers on (6) the Other this first word and which gives to his words their value as oracle.

In short, far from being what strikes the truth of desire, the law, the morality of the father is precisely the only thing that determines the truth.

Another proposition which was not spoken here and on which it is just as important to take up a position, because it is necessary to clarify what is involved in the material that Leclaire brought us, and this all the more so in that it is Leclaire himself who is the author of this proposition, which is namely that psychoanalysis and the analytic experience ought to lead the subject towards the following: towards something which is supposed to be a transgression or is

experienced as a transgression - I tell you in passing it is exactly the same thing, everything is there - towards an incestuous encounter.

On this point also, I think, there is no possible doubt about the conclusion that psycho-analytic experience imposes on us, namely: if the subject in the course of the psycho-analytic experience ought to be led to accomplish some transgression or other it is well and truly the transgression of the permanent temptation to transgression.

..... a transgressor precisely. We have not led the subject towards an incestuous encounter for the simple reason when he comes to us, he arrives with that encounter already. (7)

It must not be forgotten that wherever there is an analysis, we are dealing precisely with failed, unsuccessful Oedipus complexes.

We do not have to lead the subject towards a breaking of the limits or to imagine that he is breaking the limits because, what else is he doing in his imagination. We lead him precisely to the fact of putting his finger on the fact that there is a limit which may not in any case be crossed.

What at the end of a psychoanalysis is the paternal figure, the paternal figure as he operates in the complex, namely the lack as it manifests itself in a subject of the male sex in the form of the threat of castration, and in a subject of the female sex, in the form of penis envy which has nothing to do with the demand for a penis.

In other words the recognition by the one of the fact that he can only make use of his phallus when he submits it to a precise jurisdiction even when it is not written down, and the extraction from the other, I mean from the female analysand, of every identification to the mother as omnipotence.

Now, these obvious facts having been affirmed or reaffirmed, I can pass to the (8) material that Leclaire brought us, this poord'jeli. First of all this poord'jeli is not a phantasy. Here I agree with Oury, namely, that there is here something that is much closer to that from which the subject phantasies himself, than a phantasy itself. To be more precise, I would say that the phantasy is not in the poord'jeli, it is in the fact that the subject in stammering it, names himself.

Let us take another little step forward, he names himself against a background of a "he does not know". And it is precisely this "he does not know" that I would consider for my part as the fundamental phantasy of the subject, I mean that it is under the shelter of this "he does not know" that all the phantasies are nourished.

Now, in this phantasy, Melle Mondzain did not fail to pick out with a truly admirable perspicacity, the transgression rumbling underneath and what does that mean? That means that one cannot take one idea of Mr Lacan and leave the other one to one side. I mean by that, for example, Mr Lacan's theses about the proper name are verifiable at every turn of psychoanalytic experience. I mean that there

is really no analysis where the subject finds himself lead to that radical point where his desire is seriously put in question without their appearing in the forefront of the (9) analysis, the proper name and more precisely, the relationship of the subject to the proper name, as a point where his desire can be still suspended for a time before this radical vacillation that analysis alone can provoke and effectively provoke.

Now what happens? What happens is that we hear sometimes remarks like the following, and I quote : “Basically, that is what the name is; it is the first name. The name is always the name of someone or of something else. It is the name of the father or of the family or again the name of the husband. But not really, it is my real name, that is where I really am.”

And what is meant by such despairingly naive remarks even though they have the merit of coming straight from the source, namely, of coming to light as it were for the first time. That means that the lack from which the subject draws what one can call his unitariness (*unarité*), this lack is the one from which the subject guarantees, or believes that he can guarantee, himself on the basis of the fact which has always been recognised by serious psychoanalysts as the psychic reality of the unary, and which is called the hatred of the father.

And it is only once this limit has been crossed that we can begin to pose questions which are really interesting.

(10) For example, we call the position, like the position called primordial castration, that we also qualify sometimes as imaginary, even though one forgets sometimes or tends to forget sometimes that, however imaginary, this castration may be it is well and truly operative, namely, that it dispossesses the subject, it takes from him nothing less than his flesh.

But we say that this is a primordial castration, and we recognise that as long as he is riveted to this position, we cannot say that the subject has any desire whatsoever. What is it that grounds desire? We reply that it is the law, but that it grounds it in an indissoluble link to castration. About the question of what does that mean? Does the position necessarily find itself in the relationships between the sexes?

To express myself in more precise terms which I borrow from Mr Lacan, what does it mean to become a creditor in the great book of debt after having been a debtor? More precisely still, what becomes of () in this operation? What becomes of the desire of the analyst in the ruin of the supreme good? And if the desire of the analyst, as Mr Lacan has said, in a sure and certain way, is a desire for maximum difference, a difference between what and what?

(11) These are not just questions that I am posing, not from a speculative or theoretical interest, still less because I just feel interesting myself in it, like that, but for reasons that are well and truly, which takes nothing from their pressing character.

For example it can happen - it is an example among many others - we can happen to have to occupy ourselves, for example, with a patient who is stuck in a position described as that of a claim for masculinity, and it happens sometimes, with respect to such a patient in particular that we perceive that this person, that this patient organises her whole position by betting on the certainty that there is no man who can encounter a woman without feeling some anxiety about it. This is a certainty which undoubtedly has something to ground it, otherwise how would she have come to sustain it? It nevertheless remains that it is a well and truly mistaken certainty and it is important to know how it is mistaken and what it is grounded on, so that we can discover the strategy that is appropriate to adopt vis-à-vis this patient.

For the rest, it is self-evident that I am not launching these questions like so many challenges. These are not questions without a possible response, in truth, this seemed to me to be perfectly soluble and even already resolved. They are certainly (12) not either the most difficult or the most interesting ones.

All I meant to say by this, is that it is time, it is time if we want to get anything more than boredom out of this seminar, it is time for us to question the teaching of Lacan from a more advanced point than we have done up to now. That's all.

Dr Leclaire: I will allow myself to respond immediately to Safouan, on marginal points of course.

And I will take the same tone of liberty and perhaps incisiveness that he himself used. I would say to him that more serious, in my opinion, than the mistaken certainties that he evoked in connection with his patient are guaranteed certainties. It seems to me that in his whole discourse there is something like a passionate reference to a dimension which is that of orthodoxy. Lacanian orthodoxy you should understand. I am altogether in favour, of course, of questioning Lacan's teaching but this questioning does not presuppose at the outset any orthodoxy.

Everything, moreover, in Safouan's discourse is marked by the fundamental problem of the relation to the law. And what seems to me above all to characterise it, is a way of situating oneself with respect to the law by right away putting one's (13) interlocutor in the wrong. Whatever he says, it is wrong, he says something stupid or indeed something asinine. This he situates right away in effect with respect to the law. So that when he questions or interrogates this proposition, we are quite close to Freudian formulations, namely, that the incest barrier is close to, is almost the equivalent of the barrier of repression, it is not sufficient, I think to invoke the law to reject that position as being false.

I know that this is one of the axes of the seminar that Stein has been giving for a long time and I would like, because as it happens Major has been put in question, that he should reply, if he is agreeable, in perhaps a more precise fashion, about this particular question of Safouan.

I was specifically put in question in connection with another subject which is also related to the question of transgression. I do not think that I introduced it into the

paper that I communicated to you here but it is a question of something that was said elsewhere. I am caught red-handed in my mistake. It is not difficult of course, all the more so because Safouan bases himself on something he heard, he does not have my text. I did not say what he reported, namely, that analysis is experienced as a transgression or ought to be experienced as a transgression or that some (14) transgression ought to take place. What I did say is that the question was posed in analysis, and in connection with analysis, of the relationship between the analytic perspective, a certain analytic perspective, namely, the search for a particular point, of an irreducible point, of a point of origin, the forgotten memory, the focal point of the origin, that the question was posed of the relationship between this conception let us say of analysis or this phantasy about analysis, and on the other hand, the signification of incest and I specified clearly of incest, not in its dramatic context, but in its essential reality, namely the concrete putting in question of something which represents the point of origin.

It is the question of the relationship between this process of analysis and the reality of incest that I had posed. Perhaps the fact of posing it may be experienced in effect as transgression.

On the question of phantasy, I will come back to it in a moment, I said the last time that with respect, in effect, to an orthodoxy, it would be appropriate perhaps and it was perhaps usual to consider phantasy as being something different to this formula, but this would lead us I believe to take up the whole question of an orthodox definition of phantasy. After all, it would be better, I believe, at the point that we are at, to try to define and to examine other phantasies at the level of analytic practice.

(15) I know that I have not entirely responded to Safouan. Major have you got something to say?

Mr Major: What is involved is an assimilation of the incest barrier and the barrier of repression in so far as the barrier of repression of the unconscious. What is involved here is an analogy of structure which is to be situated at a completely different level to the one that Safouan alluded to.

Dr Leclaire: I have no intention, for my part, of closing the discussion. Nevertheless I would like it to advance. I would therefore ask Mannoni to take the floor.

Dr Lacan: I would like to specify all the same that what Safouan said is that the incest barrier thanks to which there is produced the return of the repressed.

Mr Mannoni: I regret being introduced in this way because I am afraid I will not take the discussion any further. I think, on the contrary, that Safouan brought it to (16) a very high level and that now we are going to go downhill.

I would like to apologise because I naïvely believed, not having looked at my diary, I thought for a while that it was for the closed seminar of the month of April. So that what I have done is a little bit telescoped.

What I would like to examine is the passage, that I found a little bit rapid for me, in Leclair's presentation where he exposes the non-sense of the fundamental phantasy in the sense of these translations into a tongue.

It is true that he does not exactly say sense. He speaks about a certain analytic comprehension which I believe in his mind is an incomprehension. It seems to me that there is here a knot of problems of the greatest importance which remains posed. Since he held to the strictest Freudian formulations about it, it must be granted to him that the primary processes are always at work behind the secondary processes.

But it seems difficult to deny, still in the Freudian topology, that *poord'jeli* is precisely a secondary production in which there is recognised the effect of primary processes. It is on this point, he tells us, that there were already directed the criticisms which were previously addressed to him and which, moreover, I do not know.

(17) But in my opinion, to reply to these criticisms is not necessarily to accept their demand, as one soon will be demanding of an astrologer to come back with a mineral sample from the moon. One cannot ask him to give us the element of the unconscious, just like that. We will never have of it anything except what we can read of it in secondary structures, in the measure precisely that this secondary is subjected to the effect of the primary.

It is in this secondary it seems to me, that sense and non-sense meet in a certain fashion as long as one holds to Freudian terminology, and I cannot see any other place where one can grasp either one or the other.

Only the passage where Leclair deals with this question is more elusive than allusive. Discussing it would come back to opposing a way of looking at things, a different way to his way of looking at things which is not very interesting.

I will therefore abstain, at least until my conclusion, when I will come back to the question, I will then abstain with the certain hope that this problem is going to be taken up again, it has already happened, moreover, in a less succinct manner and I am going to take a path that is quite different by turning very freely, too freely around the question of the proper name, a little bit at random with the idea of (18) encountering one or other remark which very indirectly may refer to what Leclair presented to us.

I believe we have nothing to expect from sociology or from ethnology, except occasionally some convenient examples. The proper name, as it interests us is just as much Toto as Gaetan de Romorantin, what in our society is called the surname, it is not the name of the father, the father of Jean Dupont is not called Dupont he is called, for example, Paul Dupont, and there are countries like

Madagascar, where at the birth of Lacoute, his father can change his name and call himself in future the father of Lacoute. It is then “father of Lacoute” which is the name of the father in the most simple fashion.

This systematic use of a name and a first name is a limited, recent, historical accident and I do not believe its study would lead us towards anything that is very interesting for us.

On what Leclaire has called the irreducibility of the proper name, I could contribute, perhaps, a sort of indirect illumination by telling of a personal experience which has the advantage of being entirely artificial and almost axiomatic.

(19) It is an experience that many people have had but not perhaps on such clear basis. For the characters of a book that I was writing and which appeared in 1951, I had to invent proper names. A proper name being only a succession of phonemes one could take a succession of syllables in any sense whatsoever. This book was written in 1949 at a time when the Lacanian theory of the signifier was not yet formulated.

The majority of the names in the book were constructed in that way. But not all because some of them came to me as it were spontaneously. For the others, I have completely forgotten today the unimportant sentences from which I drew them. This happened, it seems to me rather quickly, and perhaps there were more complications hidden in it than I was aware of, but about that I can say nothing.

But for one of these proper names, I remember very well the details of its construction. I took it from what I believe to be a line in this song about Marlborough, though in fact it is an inexact quotation. But for the use I wanted to make of it that was of no importance. And I had already used sentences that were probably more fanciful. This incorrect line is : “*ensuite venait son page*”. One could take for example *te venait* and by adding th to it that gives a very pretty proper name. So pretty even that that makes one want to look up telephone (20) directories. Now between the Thévenins and the Thévenots one finds in it for Paris alone, 38 Thévenaits. Having discovered that, I had the impression that I was competing too much with the registry office, or rather that the registry office was competing too much with me and I immediately gave up this construction. I therefore took the following syllables which gave *venaison*. *Venaison* is also a pretty name and if one looks in the telephone directory there is no trace of a *Venaison*. Not even of a name which resembles it in the slightest way. It was therefore perfect. The name of Venaison was thus adopted.

I will not question myself about the reasons which escape me for which I choose Marlborough. I see clearly that Venaison is the only character whose death I spoke about and the only one of whom I could say in all strictness that he had a page. But in fact it is now that I notice it. Moreover I would have completely forgotten all of that by now if a few months later I had not gone through a little crisis which I am going to tell you about now. The manuscript was finished and I was going to take it to the publisher when I became suddenly aware of the

existence of a critic whose intelligence and humour I was very fond of and who signed some of his articles with a *non-de-plume* which was terribly like Venaïsson.

(21) Since this pseudonym is very well known and because I am saying too much to hope to hide it now, I may as well say what the pseudonym is, it is in fact Gabriel Venaïssin. When I made this discovery I was terrified; it seemed to me that if I had called my character Dubois, all the Dubois in the world would have nothing to say about it. But the close encounter of two names that are more than rare, singular, not in the directories, this appeared to me to be impossible to accept. The name Venaïsson had to be changed.

I set about doing it using the same method and I remember nothing, naturally, about the numerous substitute names that I constructed. But, and this is the obscure fact that I can only note, I could not change the name of Venaïsson. It seemed to me that he was called Venaïsson and that I, for my part, could do nothing about it and that I was not involved in it. He defended his name like Sosie before Mercury. I knew well that it was I who had given him the name but he answered me to say, as it were, like Sosie that he always had it. I was obliged to leave it to him.

Since this experience has taken on the form of an anecdote I will add that Gabriel Venaïssin published an extremely laudatory critique of my book but he did not sign it Venaïssin. He signed it with his real name. At the time I was not surprised. (22) Venaïssin was a pseudonym, an alias, which could not hold up before Venaïsson because, in a way, Venaïsson was the real name of my character. It is a funny story. I believe it to be instructive even though I cannot see very clearly what it is trying to instruct us about.

The name Venaïsson has obviously no meaning by itself. Has it a signified? Undoubtedly, but on an identity card there is a photograph, fingerprints, and a description or the signature of the bearer which is just as physiognomical in its fashion, if not, the identity card would be a visiting card.

It also requires, and this is not negligible, a police stamp. Venaïsson had nothing of all of that. I had constructed the simplest elements of a personality, a sequence of phonemes which were not sufficient of themselves and what was said about an imaginary person with this sequence of phonemes, was attributed by me. The fact is that this extremely simple construction was enough to make there appear in subjectivity, in this case, obviously in mine, a not to be neglected form of the powerful adherence of these elements if one wants something which resembles the irreducibility of the name. What is involved, I said, is what attaches the signifier to the signified. Such an attachment has absolutely nothing surprising about it. It (23) exists even for common names, and if it surprises me in the example above it is because I believed I was the master of nomination. In a sense I was not.

Here now is an example of the attachment of the signifier to the signified in the case of the common name. It is the case of an Iranian who arrived in France at the age of eight or nine years and who now as an adult, discovers quite suddenly

retrospectively, the reasons why he refused when he arrived in France, the French *café au lait*. It was not the coffee he was refusing, it was the bowl. At the time he did not know. The word *bol* in Iranian has naturally a different meaning. It is not simply half of the word *bol-bol*, which designates the nightingale, it is also the monosyllabic word by which one designates the sexual organ of little boys.

For him with his arrival in France every word has changed with all the possibility of bilingual puns. But there was one which stuck much more than the others which was as one could say rooted.

It resisted, alone among all the others, in this rather simple situation of a change of tongue. I am sure, even though obviously I cannot prove it, that he would have accepted the bowl of coffee if he had been given a French name for his sexual organ. He found the translation too partial or too biased. In the change of tongue (24) he was losing something.

I do not know anything about what might have been involved in the George, Lili encounter marked in the fundamental phantasy, but the fact that it is a boy's name and a girl's name has perhaps something to do with its irreducibility.

Proper names change under certain conditions. For example, among the nobility, by the death of an ancestor, among women by marriage or indeed by going into religion, etc. These changes are institutionalised. Outside any institution hysterics sometimes give themselves first names which do not belong to them. the spelling of the one they have.

Casanova who gave himself the name Stengal was questioned by the police authorities about the reason why he took on a name which was not his own; he replied with indignation that no name could more legitimately belong to him because he was the one who had invented it. A bad reason but one which makes him a little like Venaïsson. What is interesting is to compare the police authorities and Casanova from the point of view of their spontaneous linguistic attitude. For the police, Stengal is an alias, which has as a signified Casanova. The argumentation is :

- 1) Stengal is Casanova,
- 2) Casanova is not Stengal.

(25) On both sides there is a mistake. For Casanova the formula is less clear but more simple. It is formulated as follows: Stengal is me. The signifier Casanova can disappear.

One cannot imagine, without a sort of vertigo, what would happen precisely to the ego, the "It's me" if one gave the same first name to two identical twins who even their parents could neither call individually or recognise. Nevertheless homonymy of itself is tolerable. There can be, this happens, two Jean Duponts in the same family. It is a homonymy like many others which may cause mistakes and misunderstandings like the others.

After all we are much less troubled by meeting a homonym than by meeting a double. The speaking subject who knows he is such a person by his proper name, recognises himself also in another way. He has at his disposition to speak, the first person singular. His name draws him towards the third person. There are cases of telescoping between these two people. Is the slang signifier *bibilolo* a proper name or a personal pronoun? Try to put it in the vocative to see. This is perhaps of no interest, a purely grammatical problem *bibilolo* being a which designates a subject but imposes a verb on the third person. I am, therefore *bibilolo* is but it (26) would be very remarkable if this was only a grammatical curiosity and that this manner of speaking did not have subjective implications.

I am skipping over a little of it because ...

So - this is a little bit improvised - the proper name is far from being established in a nuclear fashion in a subjectivity as if one was trying to point to a subject in the way in which Descartes situated himself.

It is certainly the name which marks the subject. It acts on him like a provocation. It makes him become but at the same time it denounces him, objectivises him, transforms the speaking subject into an object which is spoken about and the "I am so- and-so" is confronted with the "I am me" and is distinguished from it. This "I am so- and-so" only brings to the "what am I?" a reply that is experienced as insufficient. Hence the obligation, as they say, to make one's name, an obligation for all and not simply for the ambitious. The obligation that everyone fulfils with the help of all, and even of the police, to assure themselves that their name has a signified something that is always more or less badly assured.

Like the young Iranian was not assured of the signified of bowl, which was like a partial proper name, and like Venaisson which became a name in the measure that I was speaking about him. I constituted him in that way, and only his proper name (27) could have the sort of signified for his very particular case as a literary character.

Again with the idea of contributing to the questions raised by Leclair a distant and very indirect illumination, so indirect that we cannot easily be assured that we are speaking about the same thing, I would like to contribute very briefly a fragment of an observation which bears upon the operation of phonematic elements of proper names in an obsessional.

It is a rather serious case, in the style of the Ratman but more severe. A very intelligent and open subject who was obsessed at the beginning by the idea that he had for his wife an attraction of an incestuous character and this tormented him in a very painful way. At present his analysis is continuing. His life has become more easy but not without symptomatic accidents like the one that I am going to speak about.

He has for a long time a colleague, almost a friend, that we will call Lemarchand. Now one day when he was carelessly looking in the direction of this Lemarchand and thinking about something else, what he does not know, he suddenly notices

that the maiden name of his wife was let us say Martineau, the two names have then the same syllable *mar* in common. I changed the name but not the syllable. He is for a number of seconds terrified by this, and there remains with him for a (28) fairly long time an obscure uneasiness.

I do not at present have a sure way of accounting for this symptom. It is obviously useless to question the syllable *mar*; it is, as we might say, on the non-sense of the matter. If his colleague had been called for example Artigues or Ostineau I am sure almost without being able to prove it that it is the syllable *ti* which would have sent him to Martineau.

The totality of his analysis leads me to think that in this symptom there is condensed and displaced his fear of homosexuality, the effects of his identification to a girl and his fear of castration; he might take his colleague as his wife, the syllable *mar* could become detached, etc.

But what is more sure and almost obvious is that this syllable plays the role of a revolving platform, and that it makes him pass from the circuit which contains the signifier which refers to his wife, to the circuit where there appears the signifier which refers to his colleague.

Obviously I do not know anything about these circuits as such. It clearly involved a symptomatic element, namely, something to which, from the point of view of technique, one should not give too direct an interest. But from the point of view of the theory it is another story.

(29) It seems to me that he teaches us at least that the phoneme *mar*, or any other phoneme playing the same role of revolving platform, does not need to be accorded some primary characteristic. What is primary there, is the pure possibility of the phonematic decomposition and recomposition, namely of metonymy and metaphor reduced to phonemes with their amputations, the forbidden contacts, the terrible confusions that they lead to through the intermediary of what one could call the primary circuit, with everything that this implies, in particular the field of unconscious desire.

Thus one could say that the primary mechanisms manifest themselves as non-sense in a symptom for which a meaning, after all, is required. The fact that it is a symptom and not a simple sequence of associations gives to the thing, as I might say, a seriously obscure character. The symptoms are, in analysis, even if in the treatment it is not good to attack them directly, something like what in theology are the witnesses who have themselves massacred, as absurd as they are authentic.

I cannot leave entirely open, without getting involved in it, the possibility of a comparison between the phantastical *poord'jeli* and the symptomatic *mar*. I simply think that a discussion taken far enough on this point would allow us to see (30) more clearly. Either that it is necessary to bring the two formulae together or that it is necessary to oppose them radically.

Dr Leclaire: No doubt I was a little affirmative and a little decisive earlier in my response to Safouan and I did not underline sufficiently, as I might say, how much of the question remained open.

Mannoni said himself earlier that he had the feeling that his text, I ask myself why, was not posing the questions at such a high level. After all, I will let you be the judge of it.

What I am going to say, simply, is that I would wish that the questions thus posed should not fall into oblivion. No doubt we cannot here, however closed this seminar may be, it is all the same rather large, raise the discussions in as free a fashion as one could do effectively in a small group.

I retain, to come back to Safouan's intervention, the question which was posed, namely, that of the relationship between the law and the prohibition of incest, for his affirmation changes nothing about it, the question remains posed.

I believe that this is the one that is really posed, and that one can, from some angle or other tackle, to get to and even no doubt to the formulations that he himself gave.

(31) As regards the questions posed by Mannoni, happily they do not allow themselves, and that is why they are really open, questions, I think, that will remain very insistent, one cannot summarise them better than the way in which he presented them himself.

I will now take the floor to participate in the discussion. Because I am certainly happy that my work, written in fact essentially in 1963, has given rise to so many responses. I know of course the importance that must be given on this occasion to certain vigorous encouragements. But the fact is there: a dialogue seems to be opening up.

I would like to thank all of those who are willing or who will be willing or have already announced that they have something to say, all of those who were willing to manifest their interest here, it is because by coming forward in this way they allowed something to begin.

It is quite clear that my attempt, if it had not been sustained by your remarks, would have very quickly, like so many other exercises, become a dead letter. And in the same way no doubt certain words of truth that we have heard would have remained in the secret of a filing cabinet or in the limbo of the unformulated.

I would also like, and in fact for the same reasons, to thank all of those who have (32) shown their interest for this enterprise without for all that committing themselves, against their feeling, by participating here now immediately in this dialogue, because they know that often in analysis a word has to come in its own time.

You will understand then that I have no intention here of playing at being a lecturer who, by his response, is supposed to put an end to the discussion or as is said, to close it. On the contrary. If I take the floor again before others take it, it is indeed to pursue the dialogue by contributing to it here, directly, another contribution, and no doubt because, I am tempted to say, some people may find in it an allusion, a taking up again or a reply to what they said.

I announced the other day that I would speak about the body and about the signifier. I am going to try to do so. Even the least clinical people among us know that a constant concern about a certain mastery is a common trait in obsessional neurotics. That Philip enters this category is, I think, a fact that has escaped no one. It is this passion for a certain mastery that, to begin with, I would like to question. The gesture of the two hands held together in a cup to drink, realises in an exemplary fashion what I want to underline here.

(33) Surely this bowl made of the palm of the hands, as a way of drinking responds, or summons by its hollowness the fullness of the breast. But to go more quickly, I would say that the gesture appears to me to be a way of mastering the problematic conjunction of two elements.

Problematic, it is tangible in the well known fact that this makeshift cup made by the hands is characterised in general by the leaks that run out of it. Philip's pleasure in this gesture seems to have been, just as much as drinking, that of producing a goblet which staunches a momentary grasp of what in fact flows, a mastery that he consecrates by drinking this water.

In a word, it seems to me that what is involved here is a mime or a ritual gesture which represents or actualises with the body or a part of the body the pure materiality of the signifier. I would even add something that appears to everyone, that this gesture gives rise precisely to the symbol in its primary sense, namely, in the fact that it tries to stick together the elements of what can also be the support of an appeal, indeed of a beggar's bowl.

When I speak about the pure materiality of the signifier I am designating here the opposed couple of two elements: no doubt to constitute a signifier it matters little whether these elements are acoustic, graphic or tactile.

(34) The essential is that the articulation of these two traits which are, at the extreme, pure materiality, totally stripped of signification, the essential I am saying is that this opposition should be a connotation of antinomy.

I believe that it is correct to say that the signifier is pure connotation of antinomy. And to sustain at the moment of grasping what you can try to grasp of this formula, I would add that this antinomy is fundamentally in our experience the one that is constitutive of the subject.

Antinomy or again, as Lacan says "radical heteronymy"; it is the dimension that the Freudian way and our experience as analysts necessarily imposes on us.

Finally I must add here that the object, in the Lacanian sense

a) Is precisely that which escapes from signifying connotation and certainly in its nature what escapes antinomy.

In this perspective, namely, that the signifier is a pure connotation of antinomy, one will understand better perhaps what I mean to indicate in presenting this gesture of the two hands together in a cup as a certain attempt at mastering - a ritual gesture - of the very nature of the signifier.

(35) You should clearly understand that if I do not evoke here immediately the imaginary and death, the elective domain of the obsessional, it is only because constrained by time I am aiming rather at a linear precision of this outline, than the shimmering of the play of shadows.

I add simply that the other gesture, that of the two hands joined in a shell to make the appeal resonate seems to me to be able to be inscribed along the same line of a certain attempt at mastering and I will come back to it by way of conclusion.

The next phase of my interrogation dealt with the term of mastery. How could we not evoke immediately, especially in connection with this gesture, the movement of grasping, to grasp with the hands, but in fact what can the hands grasp?

What kind of grasp is possible here? I will leave it to others the responsibility of speaking about *Begriff*, of the concept, so that I will only delay here for a moment on the problem of the body trying to grasp. But what precisely? Well then, precisely nothing. Or, still more precisely, the object in its nudity. I am going to try to explain myself briefly. Let it suffice for that for me to recall to you the pure difference or again, more modestly, the little difference that we irreducibly find as the pivot of our experience as analysts, of course, but also as living beings, that is of delusional patients.

(36) This pure difference interests us to the highest degree by designating it first of all at the level of the body, the body of evidence or the tangible body as they say, this is what I underlined about the term of exquisite difference.

This exquisite difference can certainly be illustrated secondarily as was the case for Philip by the punctual and annoying irritation of the grain of sand contrasting with the unity, the smoothness of the skin, but I would like here to give a purer example of it that I recently quoted as an irreducible term as one finds it in analyses that have been taken far enough, namely, the acid fringe of sweetness.

In its precision as a reminiscence and its in determination as a memory.

I think that I am using these words properly?

At this point there is posed, without any possibility of escape, the necessity of pure sense, namely, the pure taste of one on this occasion the taste which here underpins, connects and produces this pure difference and the acid, acid-like fringe.

To pass in this way from the field of sweetness to that of the acidulous is the vector of pure sense, the taste which issuing from this very gap of the body makes, as it were, an excursion, the circuit of another body before rejoining the other side of the dehiscence of which it was the issue.

(37) This other body which causes the vector of sense to be reflected, it is sufficient at the beginning that it is nothing or almost, a ball of red acidulous sugar on a little stick, a cherry, and which, moreover, ends up by effacing itself when it melts.

Nothing or almost and nevertheless, as I experienced the other day, it is for example the very full odour of a Williamine, a pear alcohol, that is so dense that before drinking it and experiencing it by taste I felt on my tongue with an hallucinatory precision the rather crude grains of this sort of pear that it is distilled from.

But if it happens, and it is artificially of course that I distinguished these two possibilities, that this other body in the image of the first, is also possibly the locus of a pure difference, then there appears finally, clearly, the dimension of desire.

In other words, if we substitute for the sugared cherry, the nipple of the breast, the pure sense of taste will complete its excursion just as if it were making the complete circuit of the mother, approaching at the same time, or tending to approach with his mouth, namely, from his own gap, a dehiscence of the maternal body, on this occasion the nipple, for his orifice. And simultaneously the maternal body, is easily represented, constructed by the voice, by the sense of touch at least, but also it must be hoped by other means, by other senses above all by the gaze (38) makes the round of the gaping body of the child. It is clear, already, in this figure, at least I think so, starting from an exquisite difference that by attempting to grasp the other body in its inevitable gap, to protect against one's own, the body is affirmed as desire, the body affirms itself as inextinguishable desire.

I will leave you, starting from this little sketch, which could be easily drawn on the blackboard by a double loop, to imagine the possible games in the variety of senses, between one and the other, and I leave you also to highlight, for a correct classification of the neuroses, the possible traps and impasses of all the circuits of the senses, of all the senses. In these games, the pure difference escapes, of course, from any grasp, but what best connotes it, this pure difference, is the signifier such as we have defined it earlier, as pure connotation of antinomy.

Undoubtedly Philip, in his neurosis, did not understand it that way, and if I already said how he strove to mime the signifier by the quasi-ritual gesture of the hands united in a cup, I would like at this point to underline a little better the way in which, in parallel, the jaculatory formula *poord'jeli*, seemed destined to master, while fixating it in death, the circuit of desire. The vocalisation of the secret formula contains in itself this acme where the reversion is accomplished.

(39) And above all, the movement of the body that it connotes, namely the somersault, develops the very figure of the loop around, no doubt, some nothings of the formula itself, or more precisely around another absent body.

This movement, best summarised by the sequence: nothing at all, something, underlines the apparition, like at the end of a conjuring trick, of this something which is supposed to be there, at the outcome of this exercise of miming the signifier and it seems that in this case, it is in fact an excremental remainder of an object.

It appears there as a remainder, as the point around which there is completed the loop, a present and derisory object whose opaqueness replaces the other absent body. Thus sustained by my example and leaving for today deliberately to one side the fascinating operations of the sense of sight, which habitually serve to illustrate the moments of reflection, of reciprocity and of lure, I will limit myself to this particular mode of trying to grasp which is the voice.

The voice seems to me, first of all, to have this privilege in so far as it is no longer a simple scream or that it is to be in principle grasped, mastered, as an echo of the discourse that the voice of the other supports. There is no mother who is not taken up again from the voice of the other and, because of that, the voice constitutes a sort of privileged model of this first relationship to the other. Then, (40) because the voice necessarily brings into play another organ, namely the ear, which pictures in a more singular way, the circuit of sense, from mouth to ear as people say. Finally, and all the same because the voice is all the same the privileged vector of the signifier which, because of this fact, becomes or is above all a verbal signifier. In Philip's story the siren call produced by blowing into the hands that are joined like a shell and offered to the echo of the forest is presented as an imitation, a reduplication, an empty reproduction of the appeal of the voice.

But it is also, in the obsessional style, a game of mastery. We must evoke here the dream of the sickle to say a little bit more about the voice, the scream and the call. In this dream, Philip produces a scene of a young boy whose leg has slipped into a hole. He is wounded by a sickle no doubt but one only sees a slight scratch on his heel. The boy screams out very loudly. It is an unusual howl, at once a scream of terror and an irresistible appeal which makes Philip evoke the scream that is in question in the Zen tradition and which is supposed to be capable of raising the dead. The scream reminds him above all of a memory of noisy panic. Philip is eight or nine. He is travelling with his parents and finds himself alone in the grounds of a hotel. A few older boys who are playing cops and robbers attack him.

(41) Seized with panic he runs away howling. But not just anything. He screams very loudly as in an appeal, the boys' names: Guy, Nicolas, Gilles in order to change things and to make his attackers believe that he too is a part of a larger gang.

He tries not to utter names that are too well known. Pierre, Paul or Jacques. The summons must seem to be precise. And he remembers precisely having invoked Serge in this way. At that time Serge was either Lifar or Stavisky.

Many of you have sensed that the theme of an appeal to Leclair was undoubtedly an important mainspring of the treatment. But I am not going to dwell on this any more today.

This scream, this cry for help, completes and illuminates from another angle the appeal of Lili I'm thirsty, or the invocation of Poord'jeli.

Of the Lili I'm thirsty, I would simply like to underline once more its ambiguous character as a model or echo with respect to the other sentence or phase of the circuit of the path, namely, Philip-I'm-thirsty articulated by the intermediary of Lili. But it is obviously to the level of the ejaculatory formula of Poord'jeli that I want to return to conclude.

I already showed that in itself this formula displayed, even gave rise to this (42) movement of reversal that is necessary to understand anything whatsoever about the reality of the drive and also, of course, that of desire. But what I would like to accentuate again here is that this other formula constitutes in this way a taking up again by Philip of the voice which called him by his name and more literally again, this could be the taking up again of the loving voice of his mother, caressing him at the same time as she articulates something like my dearest treasure (*trésor chéri*).

But if we have in this interpretation of: my dearest treasure one of the necessary poles of the analysis of the formula, I believe that we will fail to recognise its essential, all the same, if we do not come back to this limit of the sacred which is perceptible to us in this incantation.

Philip, as you suspected, is a Jew. And the theme of the incantatory formula as well as the almost sacred character of the treasure that he represented for his mother, leads him to remember some rudimentary elements of his religious formation.

Of the Hebrew that he learned to read he remembers almost nothing. Except for this essential prayer which is called the Shemah. It is, he had been told very early on, a prayer that must never be forgotten because it has to be recited at the hour of death. It is a viaticum but it is also, in his rather confused memory, something like a blessing.

(43) Concretely, in his memory, these blessings, incomprehensible mutterings which were accompanied precisely by the placing of hands on his head, a paternal and above all a grand-paternal gesture, tend nevertheless in this memory, to be confused with maternal fears. But this prayer is also, undoubtedly, on the one hand an invocation to God whose name one must not pronounce, but also, and in its very formulation, an appeal to the one who ought to say it. Here is more or less the text, or at least its beginning, this formula that at the moment of death one

must be able to say : “Listen Israel, the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal is one”. And we see here that this prayer to God is also an appeal to the one who says it. In the strictest sense, and this is how Philip thought, the articulation of the first word Shemah, as the prayer is called would be enough to serve as a viaticum.

At bottom, and this is where I wanted to get to, what does the voice say here? The voice says : “Listen, listen”. And now as before this invitation, the speaker finally shutting up, can like the analyst setting himself up in his armchair, mark the moment of the end or of the beginning in saying : “I am listening to you”.

(44) Which in truth you have already done and I have already done also.

Many of the interventions will necessarily remain in suspense. There are some written and some not written and some announced. I say necessarily in suspense, for today.

Mr: I did not prepare a text to tell you what I thought of the presentation of Leclaire because I wanted to write it to him but he gives me the occasion today to say it to him without having prepared it and I would like to articulate something on the subject of the poord’jeli and in particular on the subject of what is happening at the level of the breathing of the one who falls asleep and who begins to hear his breathing no longer knowing too well whether it is his own breathing or whether it is an echo of something else. And it is at this level that one can find this kind of strangely inverted rhythm at a place even of this breath, which is a moment of inspiration that is perceived, a time of exploration that is also perceived and containing, in a way, this kind of reversal.

This kind of reversal is, in a way, not enough to explain the formula entirely, even if it is perceived in this way but it introduces, in a way, a possibility of phantasing about this basic sound and, when we question our patients about what is emitted from them by this kind of listening system inside themselves, one can find very (45) often sentences which have an enormous importance for them and with which they play. It is certain that subsequently all sorts of other terms may be brought out by this one and I totally rejoin your successive interpretations with which I find myself very much at ease, but I mean by that there is in a way a possibility of entering on a very profound path of listening to the other by sensitising him to his own respiratory rhythm which is moreover a way of bringing to the level of the voice what you have so admirably articulated.

Dr Lacan: Does Israel want to take the floor now. I had not foreseen, even though I had tried to be sure of it by calling him a week ago, I did not believe that Durand de Bousingen would be here today. I asked Leclaire earlier for the text that Durand de Bousingen sent me very early on, one of the first about Leclaire’s intervention.

Dr Leclaire: Yes, I asked Durand de Bousingen precisely before beginning, if he wanted to begin by taking the floor, he told me that he preferred, since he had not reread it, to have the time to prepare a presentable and spoken form of it.

Dr Lacan: You can be there then at the closed seminar next month. That is one (46) point out of the way. Israel is going to tell us what he brought along today and I will conclude by giving an indication of some reading that I think is important.

Mr Israel: I suffer from an unfortunate atavism which means that when one of my god's calls me, I reply : "here I am" and always in accordance with the same atavism I act without reflecting. After having responded : "here I am" I unfortunately had more time than Abraham before acting which means that rather than sacrificing one of my sons - I do not know moreover if a ram will be found in time - I sacrifice a part of my text and interest myself strictly only in the theme of Poord'jeli, and come to this mouthful of a word and which comes in the place, perhaps, not of the desire to drink but of the object of desire, but in fact all that has been said.

.....*Bedeutung* and that is why this word, which is made of bits and pieces, I ought to say this object more than this word so much does it evoke surrealistic objects, and if it were a portmanteau-word, I would be tempted to see in it a bloody trunk, a suitcase containing dismembered corpses.

Corpse, to drink, immortal fragments, the fragments of my and here I am then off on a little game which was perhaps the only thing not spoken about - one (47) cannot know everything - the fragment of this surrealistic object evoked has another form of composition which is exactly the one that is called in Talmudic studies the *no taikon*. The *no taikon*, is the signifying assembling of pieces of names with which one constitutes a new term.

I am going to give you an example of it. In fact I am very encouraged to speak about the proper name and about my own since it has been invoked. I wrote my name. But this name, as everyone knows was given to my country, to Jacob but why? Is it simply to connote or to bring to mind a battle?

It was above all a question of closing a period which was the patriarchal period and this was what was summarised in this name. Namely, that we have the initials of all the patriarchs and their wives - there must be seven of them if I am not mistaken - and also this metonymical association becoming metaphorical by its effects could not correspond to some kind of phantasy, since it is a phantasy that is dear to me.

Naturally, what I have just said there is to infiltrate it too much with my personal imaginary, one could carry out a chronological research on this object; many others have done it, and in this poord'jeli one would see a series of openings in a chain, (48) the opening first of all of the lips, of the teeth, then of the tongue unsticking itself from the palate which would lead us to find at the limit of the object which, as Leclair says, makes appear, appear concretely something where there was nothing, at the limit we would find perhaps no longer a meaning even but a pure namely a rhythm so well manifested by this feeling of Philip of being rolled up and of being unfolded, this movement distinguished, this exquisite difference which is finally perhaps only a perception of variation.

A final remark : I asked myself after having heard Stein speaking immediately after your presentation, whether the rebus that he evoked in which the dream was utilisable in a single tongue or in several tongues, a rebus is written in a single tongue, it is the same for this phantastical object that you have produced, I asked myself if this was not an example of a term valid in every tongue. This phantasy would bring us back also to a period when the whole world had a single tongue and similar words - you recognise the quotation - but let us beware of this apparent simplicity because it is not enough to read the text; one single tongue and similar words, you must still ask yourself what were these words and the commentator, (49) Rachi in this case, explains that these words consisted in saying: God did not have the right to choose for himself the upper world, let us climb up to heaven and wage war on him.

This would be still too simple, there is another explanation: they said to themselves, once every 1,656 years the world undergoes a cataclysm like the flood, let us make a construction then to support the firmament. That is what I have been doing.

Dr Lacan: to conclude many particularly valid points, fruitful points in each one of these interventions. I raised earlier something which deserved to be retained in the very first place as the axis of what Safouan contributed in terms of the very important questioning of everything that he unfolded today.

I would like that Safouan's intervention, perhaps, because of its size, added to another one, should be put at the disposition of listeners so that it can be obtained.

In Mannoni's paper which he told us was at an early stage because he could not do any more, what he said to us, on terminating, about the symptom, seemed to me to be extremely important.

I will pass over what Leclair said because it is with that that I am going to end.

(50) On what Israel contributed today what appears very important to me is this old phantasy: the single tongue renewed and renovated by the way in which he poses it, the question of which is respectively posed by the *Interpretation of dreams* and by analytic experience.

I told you that in leaving you today I would indicate some reading to you: I would like for the remainder of the time you spend listening to me, I would like all, all those who are here today and who are therefore are supposed to be interested in a closer way with what I am unfolding before you, I would like you to consider it extremely urgent to read this book by Michel Foucault which is called *The birth of the clinic*.

Michel Foucault who is for me one of those distant friends with whom I try, from experience, with whom I am in very close and very constant correspondence, despite the fact that I see very little of him because of our reciprocal occupations,

Michel Foucault whom I saw last evening, I asked him a question in connection with this book, the question as to whether he had in some way been informed - it is not rare, there are many people who write in our field - about the thematic that I developed last year around vision and the gaze. He told me that nothing of the kind had happened.

(51) It is all the more remarkable that the work of Michel Foucault happens to have adopted, finds itself from the beginning infiltrated in a way by the first phase of my teaching in 1953, that the work of Michel Foucault, without any other reference since then which might converge towards this theory of the *o*-object which he knows nothing about, in speaking about *The birth of the clinic*, and very exactly what corresponds, at the level of medicine, to this point of interrogation that I brought before you as intimately linked at the beginning of my discourse this year, happens to correspond exactly to this questioning. Just as there is a moment at the beginning of the 17th century at which quite simply science is born, our science, in the same way at the level of medicine, there was produced at the beginning of the 19th century this mutation which radically changed the meaning of the term clinic.

The fashion in which he resolves this problem is so intimately co-extensive with everything that I have developed before you on the function of the look, that I cannot but see in it at once the encouragement, a comfort, and the certainty that it is indeed something that is on the agenda for current thinking that is involved, here being realised at distinct, autonomous levels that are dependent and nevertheless really identical.

This you can see for yourselves in reading this book which is of a really original (52) interest for any doctor and it is also the symptom of the present condition of different professions, that French medicine, to which it is addressed, since it is written in French, has absolutely and totally ignored it.

Michel Foucault told me last evening that 475 copies of this unique book, of which there is no equivalent, that only 475 copies of this book were sold. I hope that there are enough people here to make that figure leap forward.

I repeat, that everything in this book is absolutely virgin, has never been said, and it is the only book that I know which, in short, allows doctors to situate exactly this kind of world and of medical productions which is that of everything that was done, all the same, before the beginning of the 19th century and access to which, outside of this book, is absolutely closed.

The operation which tried to pose the principle of historical exploration in a work, in a style like that which is indicated in the work of Lucien Fèvre, for example, concerning the problem of unbelief in the 16th century, this programme, sometimes we are led to question ourselves about the appropriate way of reading what was expressed at that epoch on the subject of unbelief and which is so distinct from the (53) way in which that problem is posed for us now, that it is only along this path that we can comprehend the degree to which the phenomena of unbelief were at once more radical even than they are for us, at that time, so

much more advanced on certain points and also, on others, so much on this hither side of what is our position, this restoring of co-ordinates which allows its authentic sense to be given to what was produced at that time, here we have an absolutely extraordinary example of it, something which means that the history of medicine is only ever done at the level of little stories, at the level of Lenôtre, for example.

This is absolutely, radically transformed by the work of Michel Foucault, even though this aspect of the little story and the anecdote, the breaking up of texts, the choice of paragraphs which highlight something in someone who is so much of a researcher, so much of a ferret, I would say, as Michel Foucault, is present in the work, that you will find a thousand little snacks in it; this takes on its sense and its importance only because of the profoundly directive line which carries everything to the limit from one end to the other of a work of articulated erudition, the sense of what Michel Foucault has done which, in opposition to Lenôtre, I would say, is not placed at the level of the work of Marx to understand all previous history.

(54) In this regard, I will extract from this very rich text that Serge Leclaire gave us today, I will extract this really remarkable point which is the one by which he made the approach to the term of sensoriality in the genesis of the *o*-object.

You will see, if you know how to read this book attentively, and to highlight its major passages you will see how this will allow you to map out what Leclaire has contributed, at the level of a certain gap, which is very precisely in the book the one which designated what separated the thinking of Cabanis from that of Pinel. Or, if you wish, more precisely, because that of Pinel, who is one of the authors most profoundly explored by Michel Foucault and because the position of Pinel remains ambiguous, of what separated Cabanis from Bichat.

I cannot develop this point today. I would like that when I come back it will on the basis on your part of a thorough knowledge of the text of Michel Foucault, *The birth of the clinic*, published by P.U.F.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 7 April 1965

This Churchillian gesture is made to show those who for three weeks, having been here either at my open lectures or at my closed seminar, did not see that there had been wrapped up in a sort of doll, as it is put, these fingers, which after all I perhaps allowed to get caught in this door that I am trying to open for you.

I had the satisfaction of making it tangible at the closed seminar that some work is being done, and can be done, along what I am trying to outline for you as a path to be travelled.

This path, this year, we are following around the function of the signifier and of its effects, of its effects by which it determines the subject in a singular way by rejecting him, by rejecting him at every instant, from the very effects of the discourse.

Since I learned that a remark was made in a report last year on the aggregation lectures, namely, what was involved was a title, if I understood correctly, which was: "*On the true word and the lying word*". Namely, that the subject had not been invented by Lacan and by Claude Levi-Strauss, that Plato already, or Parmenides perhaps, had been interested in it.

This is a remark that, in truth, is excellent. Which will allow me to reply to those who having heard me in past years, are growing impatient at the fact that this discourse, in their eyes, is not reaching sufficiently rapid conclusions.

Why, people are saying, not without relevance and not without humour, since he is speaking to us about the truth, why does he not tell us the truth about the truth?

Some of these impatient people have changed camp, content after all to rally to those forms of teaching where people are satisfied to take as assured certain opaque reference points, which may give the feeling that in them one has a good hold of the final object. Is it so certain that people are right to be satisfied with this, and that this very opacity is not the sign that what we have there is a true illusion, as I might put it, namely, that people are satisfied too quickly, and that the true honesty is perhaps where one leaves always an opening in the path the incomplete truth.

This is, in truth, what I found in following the indication of this report, I found of course, this was not the occasion on which I discovered it, but what I am referring you to, namely on the same subject as we are dealing with this year, is this book of Plato which is called *Cratylus*, where you will see being pursued between Hermogenes, Cratylus and Socrates, a very useful dialogue which terminates with nothing other than the highlighting of a complete impasse in the debate and with Socrates sending Cratylus off, incontestably, sends him off with the formula: "Then, my friend, at another time you shall give me a lesson when you come back, namely, when you have well reflected on everything that created such a problem for us today". To which the other replies: "Very good. I hope however that you will continue to think about these things yourself".

Such a dialogue, this one among others, in any case, if not all, is there to make us grasp that Plato's dialogues, far from saying the truth about the truth, are expressly constructed to leave it in suspense, really giving the feeling that he knows more (2) about it than he tells us, and this, undoubtedly, in an unequivocal fashion. If he knows more than he tells us about it, and if he does not say it, there is indeed some reason; that in truth, even if he told it to us, we would not be any

more advanced, but that already in the traces of what he gives, there can be read, beyond, what constitutes our path after him and very precisely the place is marked, for example, of what the experience of the unconscious leads me to say to you.

Perhaps during the holidays you will have the opportunity of opening this book. I hope so, in the measure that you would be able to find there clearly marked what has constituted the kernel of the clear, perfectly legible tradition, of the *lekton* considering the status of the signifier, and you will find confirmed there what at the beginning I am going to try to summarise here, in a fashion which has nothing original about it, what is inscribed at the beginning of this tradition and which reposes on the opposition, as regards the function of the signifier, between these two great functions that Aristotle admirably distinguishes, posits, affirms in their simplicity, and from which it is appropriate to start to find one's bearings in everything that has been said since, and which undoubtedly does not date either from de Saussure or from Troubetskoi [?] or from Jakobson, this theory of the signifier which the Stoics, and specifically for example somebody like Chrysippus, for example, had pushed to an extreme point of perfection. *Signans et signatum* are in circulation already for some two thousand years. The opposition is that between a moment and a *rhexis*.

The function of nomination deserves to be reserved as original, as having a status opposed to that of the enunciation or of the sentence, whether it is propositional, definitional, relational, predicative, of the sentence in so far as it introduces us into the effective action of the symptom, culminates at this grasp whose *culmen* is the formation of the concept, is something which leaves in suspense, on the other hand, the function of nomination in so far as it introduces into the real this something which denominates, and which it is not enough to resolve around a fashion of sticking to something which is already given, a label which allows it to be recognised.

We have already sufficiently insisted on the fact that this label is not at all to be considered as something which is simply the duplication, the list, the list that is kept, purely and simply, of something which is supposed to be already in the store, as one might say, properly ordered like a set of accessories. The nomination, the label that is involved starts from the brand, starts from the trace, starts from something which, entering into things and modifying them, is at the beginning of their very status as things, and that is why this function of nomination involves a problematic, a problematic around which Hermogenes, Cratylus and Socrates turn; Hermogenes taking this aspect of the truth, by announcing about nomination what will subsequently develop, in the insistence on the conventionalism of nomination, on the arbitrary character of this choice of phoneme which, taken in its materiality, has something undetermined, fugitive, why call this that rather than something else, nothing obliges us to grasp what one could call a resemblance, a coming together of the word and the thing and nevertheless, and nevertheless Socrates, Socrates the (3) dialectician, Socrates the questioner, shows us his very clear leanings towards the enunciations of Cratylus who in a different radicalism insists on showing that there could not be an

effective function of nomination if the name, in itself, did not involve this perfect fit with the thing that it designates.

It is in the often amusing, always paradoxical operation of an insouciance well designed to liberate us from all sorts of prejudices, from certain traditional habits concerning the genesis of meaning, and specifically everything that is called etymology, shows us by this ease, by this casualness, almost this game with which this questioning of the phonematic signifier is put to use before us, the way in which in the debate the words are cut up, solicited, by the way in which the game is carried out, around a supposed expressivity of the phoneme, undoubtedly shows us something other than what is taken to be naïveté.

For I believe that what Plato shows us in this exercise, in this way of seeking, as if he believed in it, the primary element in words thanks to which we can question them about the fashion in which they respond to what they are led to designate, in the way in which he plays with the word *skleros*, which means hard in Greek, and regarding which he points out that the labial and the *ro* of the *ros*, means flow in Greek, is little adapted to the hardness to be expressed by the word *skleros*, that what he shows us in truth is something, namely, this exercise which consists in showing us in everything that refers to this function of nomination, what is important, what he shows us in this game with words, is the way of cutting them up with a scissors.

It is also what is essential in the function and the existence of the name, it is not the cut, it is, as one might say, the contrary, namely the suture.

The proper name towards which, at the beginning of this discourse, I directed your attention, at the same time as on the other hand the function of number, the proper name, for a moment direct your attention to what is essential in it, the proper name already in its nomination, *onoma idiom*, involved this ambiguity which has allowed all the errors, of meaning on the one hand the name which is proper to someone or to some thing, to this or that object, which is the name specified in the pure function of denotation, to designate, but proper also means properly speaking. And is it not here that there is to be seen the essential of this function of the proper name, namely, that among all the names [nouns?], it is the one which shows us in the most proper fashion, the most proper to the function of name, what the name is.

Now if, with this empty formula, you set about looking - I am giving you this responsibility, the time, as well as the technical incident which delayed the start of my discourse today, the time being lacking for me to illustrate it for you in a great number of examples - you will see that of all names whatever they may be and whatever extension we may be able to give to the function of the word name, that of all the names that we have to interrogate under this aspect of nomination, the proper name is the one which presents in the most manifest fashion this feature which makes of every phonematic establishment of the name, of the founding act of the name in its designatory function, this something which has always in itself (4) this dimension, this property of being a collage. Into the very structure of the proper name there has slipped something more essential than this so-called

particular name which is supposed to be given to the individual. With regard to which, the statement of Claude Lévi-Strauss in *La pensée sauvage*, when he makes of the proper name that which pushes to its final term, to the term of the designation of the individual, the high point, and in a way the completion, of the classificatory function, is too partial and too one-sided.

What I already advanced here, that the proper name is going to place itself always at the point where precisely the classificatory function, in the order of *rhexis*, stumbles, not before a too great particularity, but on the contrary before the tear, the lack, properly speaking, the hole of the subject, and, precisely, to suture it, to mask it, to stick it. Here certain of the things that were said at the closed seminar take on all their value, and specifically when someone came here to bring us his experience as a literary author and spoke to us about his difficulties with the proper name given to a vain character who nevertheless was invented. The proper name did not appear to him to be something that was so arbitrary that he could be given any other one whatsoever.

The fashion in which the sticking, in which the suture, destined to mask this hole, which is all the more evident because what was involved here was the hole represented by an invented character, is here the testimony of this experience which is, as a matter of fact, marked in that of all those novelists, dramatists, of having the function to give rise to characters that are more true than living characters, designate them in a fashion which makes them tangible to us.

Will I on this point, echoing older periods of my teaching, have to remind you of the degree to which this takes on a relief in certain works and, specifically, in those of Claudel: Sygne de Coûfontaine, a strange and resonating designation for this character who shows us something quite singular in the work of Claudel.

Are we at the front or at the back of Christian revelation, when Claudel forges for us, in the character of a woman, this sort of singular Christ accumulating onto herself all the humiliations of the world, and who dies saying “no”.

Sygne de Coûfontaine who bears, masked in her name, this singular signifier, the first moreover ambiguous between the name of the bird with the curved neck, and the proper designation also of this sign, which is given to the world of something with a very singular actuality at the moment that this trilogy of Claudel emerges, and this strange Coûfontaine where we rediscover the echo of this shape of the swan, where there is designated for us that there is coming towards us the reopened, although inverted, spring of an ancient message [lie?]. This word which carries in itself again this care, this trace of the elementary signifier in this u (with a circumflex) which he insisted so much on that - I said it before, I recalled it in my seminar - it was necessary to forge a typographical sign which does not exist in the French tongue for capital letters, so that the circumflex with which the u of Coûfontaine is crowned could be printed.

(5) "Sir Thomas Bollock", what an invention! Since already with this extraordinary designation we do not know so much about the character of the exchange, as about everything that is going to unfold in the drama. This singular

life of the proper name, you will rediscover it if you know how to listen, if you know how to hear, in all proper names, whether they are ancient, accepted, classified, or whether they are those which may be forged by a poet.

In truth, I believe that if we had to add something to this sort of residue, this scar around which the attention of the people at the closed seminar was recently called on to give an opinion, namely this poord'jeli of which Leclaire's analysis, as regards his part in this inaugural report on the unconscious, in which something had been promoted by him and by his co-author to the attention of a larger psychoanalytic audience, concerning the originality of what I had emphasised in the teaching of Freud about the unconscious, this something which I was able to read, not without satisfaction, from a writer who was certainly not friendly, that since Freud's time everyone knew that the fact of the enunciation that the unconscious is structured like a language, is since Freud a commonplace.

Undoubtedly this is indeed what I for my part think. Even for the person who only pretends to say it in order to contradict it, well then, God knows, something comes out of it, all the more so because the personage in question who makes of it an objection to what I announce, feels the need to connote it, to comment on it, with a series of remarks which, just by chance, are very exactly what I teach about the meaning of the formula.

There would be much to say starting from this notion, from this statement that every nomination in its usage ought always to be mentally referred by us to the fact that it is a memorial of the act of nomination. Now this act is not carried out at random. To emphasise its conventionalism, in so far as it tries to give its status to the signifier, is only one aspect of the problem. Conventional is the name of someone who accepts the tongue in its actual facticity, in its result, but the moment at which the name is given is where precisely we have the role, the function of the one who, very brilliantly and in a fashion that has never, when all is said and done, been taken up again, Cratylus designates as a necessary actor in this history, namely, what he called the *demiurges onomatom*, the worker in names. He does not do just anything whatsoever, nor what he wants, in order that the denomination of something may be accepted, and it is not enough to say that it is universal consent, for who will represent this universal consent in the field of language? This denomination operates somewhere. What makes it propagate itself? I spoke to you the other day about the collective exploit that is represented by the appearance in space of this extraordinary swimmer who, for a moment, I showed you could spark off for us in the imagination all sorts of singular ways of imaging, as I told you, the function of the *o*-object.

I did not insist. What matter! I will come back to it. But what a strange thing it is, after all, that no one up to now has thought of calling him by the name which seems undoubtedly the most prepared and the most suitable for him. How does it happen that no one answered the call, when people are so rash, so tranquil about designating as cosmonauts people who are propelled in a field that undoubtedly no cosmos, at the time that there was a cosmology, whose trajectory no one ever (6) forecast. Why should we not call this Leonov, because of the place that it occupies, as I might say, for a very long time, ever since the time that there are

people who mark for us the messengers who arise somewhere in space, with this ridiculous plumage which makes their image really in all the paintings properly speaking unbearable. Why do we not call him an angel?

There you are then. You laugh. Well that is why he will not be called an angel. He will not be called an angel because, in any case, each one of you holds onto your own good angel. You believe in him up to a certain point, just as I do. For my part I believe in them because they cannot be eliminated from the scriptures. I remarked this one day to Père Teilhard de Chardin who almost broke into tears. It is also the difference between my teaching and what is called progressivism. I find that the weakness is on the side of the progressivism.

This little test has all the same a decisive aspect. Because you see clearly that you cannot call a novelty anything you please, even when it appears precisely to fill with a new wine an old wine skin. The wine skin angel is still there.

You see how this experiment concerning nomination also leads us straight towards the functions of dead languages. A dead language is not at all a language that one can do nothing with as experience proves. When Latin was a dead language it served very efficiently as a language of communication. It is even because of this that we were able to have throughout this whole period of the scholastics, extraordinarily good logicians. The *rhetoric* functions admirably well and all the better perhaps precisely because it remains mistress of the terrain, the *rhetoric* functions admirably in a dead language.

But not nomination. I had humorous echos of it. My momentary infirmity having prevented me from turning over as many pages as I have recently been in the habit of doing, I regret that I cannot extract for you, from the acts of the Vatican Council, the way in which people there expressed the designation of bus, for example, of bar, which it appears was functioning there in a corner that worked rather badly.

How can you make new nominations in a dead language? I mean new nominations which inscribe themselves on the language. On the contrary, the whole of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, to which I alluded in my lectures at the beginning of this year, I mean this purely admirable work by Dante in which there is defended the properly literary function, the *lingua grammatica*, that he intended to give to his Tuscan, chosen from among three others; read it, it is less easy to find than *Cratylus*, read it and you will see what Dante tends towards, a reality of which only a poet can speak, which is properly speaking that of this adequation, which only a poet can sense, of the phonematic shape that a word has taken, and this exchange between the signifier and the signified which is the whole history of the human spirit.

How a signifier imperceptibly passes into an aspect of the signified which has not yet appeared; how the signifier itself is profoundly changed by the evolution of meanings, this is something again that I must skip over, but at least I indicate a reference to you.

(7) The weight that the Latin *causa* took on from the day that Cicero translated by *causa* the Greek *leita*, this is the turning point which ensures that in the end, this cause which is still the juridical cause, first of all, the Latin *causa* is finally there to designate the *res*, the thing (*chose*), while the *res*, the thing, has become for us the word *rien*.

This history of language is something which, since it is not properly speaking the field in which the psychoanalyst has properly speaking to pursue his practice, shows him at every instant the paths and the models in which he ought to grasp its reality.

And in the presentation that Leclaire gave of the poord'jeli in connection with a paradigmatic example, people question themselves about what field it was in, preconscious, unconscious, is it a phantasy? I believe that the initial image to which we ought to fix ourselves to understand what is involved, is that what it is closest to, and here we rediscover psychoanalytic experience - who among the analysts has not put his finger on the function for each one of his analysands of some proper name, of his own or that of her husband or his wife, of his parents, indeed of the personage in his delusion, the proper name plays in so far as it can be fragmented, be decomposed, be rediscovered, infiltrated into the proper name of someone else. The poord'jeli of Leclaire is above all something which functions as a proper name.

And if I have to designate the point of the Klein bottle where this poord'jeli has to be inscribed, it is, as I might say, on the edge, the orifice of reversal through which, by taking something that is involved in this double entrance of the Klein bottle, it is always to the front of one that there corresponds the back of the other, and inversely, and if you want an image which will satisfy you still better, the action of the poord'jeli, or anything else that in the history of one of our patients might correspond to it, well then it is the proper function with respect to a pattern, in the sense that this word has for a dressmaker, the pattern which represents the piece of cloth which will serve to split such and such a dotted line of the garment, or such and such a sleeve, with little letters designed to show what should be sewn onto what.

It is starting from there that there can be grasped, be understood this function of artificial suture, which ought to allow us with sufficient attention, with a method which is precisely the one which we are trying to create here, to suggest to you, at the very least will allow us to grasp, to differentiate even, in this image a sort of primitive support in connection with which there could be distinguished the fashion in which these sutures are made in one or other person, I mean by that, that this is not done to the same point nor with the same goal in the neurotic, the psychotic, nor in the pervert, the way in which these sutures are done in the subjective history is properly in the image, the paradigm of Leclaire, for there is something which gives it its value and which is not simply that of a pure and simple phonological curiosity, the fact is that this suture is closely linked to the grasp of what Leclaire designates as the exquisite difference, the sensory difference, and it is here that there is specified the obsessional trait: here is the

new element which can be added to what is called, properly speaking, the clinic, in so far as psychoanalysis has something to add to this ancient word clinic.

In this very suture there is caught this exquisite point of the tangible, this scar-like, I would almost say colloidal aspect to use a metaphor, this elective point which designates in the obsessional something which remains caught in the suture which is properly speaking to be opened up.

Here is what allows us to situate the original point of what can serve on the other hand as a demonstration for the function of the signifier, but which also designates for us the particular function and what occupies it in the example thus isolated.

Undoubtedly all of this demands that we should give ourselves a little trouble to bring into circulation these notions which, in effect, are in no way new, which are already locatable in Freud and that it would be easy, I do not need, I think, for all (8) of those who have read him a little, to designate at what point we find its homologies, from the *aber*, *abwehr*, the *amen*, which is *samen* in the *Ratman* and many others, but moreover, if it is here that we ought to locate something whose secret and whose handling we are trying to rediscover, it is not of course by turning away, by sticking to what we were given, but by trying to pursue, according to Freud's formula, the construction in connection with the subject, that we ought to take advantage of it in an appropriate way.

This separation, this separation which leaves in each name this suture that it represents, if you know how to look for examples of it, you will find it in every one; Oedipus, I take it because after all I am attracted by the fact that he is indeed the first one who may come to mind, Oedipus, swollen foot, is that self-evident? What is there in the hole between the swelling and the foot? Precisely the pierced foot; and the pierced foot is not said. It is the swollen foot with its enigma which remains open in the middle, and perhaps more in relation with the hole than appears at first.

And since someone amused himself by presenting my name in this debate, why not amuse ourselves a little since Jacques, on one side is Israel, of which one of our witnesses spoke in the closed seminar that being Lacan in Hebrew, namely the name which preserves the three consonants which is written more or less like this, well then that means: "and nevertheless".

This fabric, this surface which is the one on which I am trying to draw for you the topology of the signifier, if I give it this year this shape from the history of mathematical thinking, then of logic, it is not by chance that this shape came so late, that Plato did not have it and, nevertheless, it is so simple, this Moebius strip which reduplicated gives the Klein bottle.

What is the enigma that lies there? What do I mean? Do I believe that it exists? It is clear that it evokes analogies, and in the properly speaking biological field. The last time, for those who were at the closed seminar, I indicated, I repeat it here because the slogan can be given again to my complete audience, I spoke about *The birth of the clinic* by Michel Foucault. I said that it was a work to be

read because of its great originality and for the method by which it is inspired. It is very striking, very gripping, to see that the accent that he puts, as regards the change of direction of the anatomical agency in nosological thinking, on this incidence, I mean, of pathological anatomy, the change of look, the change of focus, which brings about a passage from the consideration of the organ to that of the tissue, namely of surfaces taken as such, with the model taken essentially from what distinguishes the epidermis from the dermis, the layers (*feuilletés*) of the pleura from those of the peritoneum, in the total change of meaning that the term sympathy takes on from the moment that it is by following these leaves, these cleavages, rendered so tangible since by the whole evolution of embryology, in short that it is since the treatise on membranes by Bichat that anatomy changes direction and changes, at the same time, the meaning of everything that one can think about sickness.

The way in which these layers, specifically in the embryological field, envelop one another, tie into one another, twist around one another, arrive at this point of stricture like the closing of a sack, the closing of a purse, to isolate themselves in their adult form, is something which will also deserve to be mapped out almost, in a way, as a sort of aesthetic exercise but which would have on the biologist this effect of suggestion, which for the rest, I do not doubt, that very quickly, because it is already happening, and is highlighted in a certain order of reflection, that it is in an original structure of torsion of space, comparable to the style of this curve that the physician knows at a certain level of the phenomena, in a different form of torsion, of involution, as already the words seem quite prepared to welcome them, that there would reside the originality of the living function of the body as such.

(9) This is really only a suggestion in passing in order, at the point where I am leaving you before the holidays, to scan this something by which I would like to illustrate in a more living fashion what is contained by formulae like those to which I came back on several occasions and that I hold to be essential, telling you first of all that it is the key link to avoid slipping into some one of these errors of the right or of the left, too quick or too slow, to illustrate for you this formula that the signifier, as distinct from the sign, is something which represents a subject for another signifier. Perhaps there were here still more things before which, for want of being used to the formula, at which you pause and do not draw the consequences; I did not remain with that because last year, giving you the formula of alienation that is perhaps new in the eyes of some people, it represents, I said, a subject for another signifier but in so far as the signifier determines the subject, in determining it he bars it, and this bar means at once vacillation and division of the subject.

Undoubtedly there is here something which in its paradox, and I affirm to you, nevertheless, that I am not trying to make it any heavier, that the paradox did not have there the means for me to capture the attention, that the paradox forces my hand, as I might say, cannot be materially similar to a sign, a sign representing something for someone. The theory of the sign is pregnant, imposes itself so much on attention at this moment of science that we are living in, that I was able to hear a physicist with whom I had long discussions, hear a physicist say that, when

all is said and done, the basis, the foundation of the whole theory of physics, in so far as it requires the maintenance of a principle of conservation, described as the conservation of energy, will only find this basis, this final certainty, when we have managed to formalise the whole discovery of modern physics in terms of an exchange of signs. The prodigious success of the cybernetic conception, which is now going towards this strange thing that is described as information, puts in the register of information every kind of long-distance transmutation, provided that at some moment it presents itself as cumulative. Here I am going a bit too quickly. Let those who know how to estimate in their way and as they wish what I am saying, the relevance of what I am saying.

In biology, people talk about information, for example, to define what emanates from one of other glandular system, in the measure that this is going to reverberate further on in some part of the organism.

Does that mean that one must understand that there are here two poles, by calling them the emitter and receiver? Whatever one does, one subjectivises, which is properly speaking ridiculous.

Why, after all, along this path not consider as information the rays of the sun in so far as they accumulate somewhere in chlorophyll, or that quite simply in reheating the bud of the plant they determine and are accumulated in the effects of opening out, of development, in the living plant.

(10) The naivete with which, it seems, people adopt, in this formulation of the theme of information, the function of the emitter and of the receiver, without being aware of the point to which here, they are marking time on the grass borders of the old subject of knowledge, namely, that when all is said and done, to take this path where every point of the world would be judged by the fashion it knows more or less well all the other points, has something singular, paradoxical, in which a loss is manifested in the most tangible fashion, and whose model obviously cannot be given other than by the fact that we are now used to seeing the handling of objects that we can distance almost indefinitely from ourselves, which are machines, and with respect to which in the measure that we make them, precisely these machines, subjects, that we think about them like machines that think, that effectively they receive from us information thanks to which "they direct themselves". There is here a sort of evolution, indeed a slippage of thinking to which, after all, I see no objection in a certain domain, provided one defines it, it can render and render extremely important services. The equivalence information-..... seems to have some fruitfulness in physics but is this what we can content ourselves with concerning the status of the subject with respect to the *signum*, the sign. It may appear to you to be tenable in a way, if we understand it precisely in this fashion, for us to continue to say that it functions always for someone.

The reverse of this position, namely, that amongst the signs there are some which are signifiers, in so far as they represent the subject for another signifier; you see the measure in which, after all, it responds to this slope, to this succession of thinking, that this subject allows us to make of it something else, something else

determinable, localisable and whose metabolism can be graspable with its consequences. And why?

I forged an example for you or rather I took one at random, I took it from an article by a linguist who, literally, even though advancing it to define what the linguistic sign is, fails completely at it, I must say.

And I take up the same example to try to make something of it for you: a young girl and her lover. They agree this sign to see one another. When the curtain - I am modifying the example a little bit - when the curtain is drawn across the window, that means I am alone. So many flower pots, so many hours; there is designated in that way, five flower pots "I will be alone at five o'clock" (*Je serai seule à cinq heures*).

In function of this, is it in words, in a language, that this convention was grounded. Is it in so far as there is a nomination, the founding act which makes of this curtain something different to what it is, but how is it that we can identify this purely and simply to a sign, to a combination of signs because there are two of them; in other words to a green light to which there is joined an index?

I say no. And since that cannot be seen immediately I am forced to use what I have to hand or, in other words, to question it with my formulae.

"Alone", we put "alone" in place of the curtain. I defined that the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier. Whether the lover is there or not to receive what is involved changes nothing in the fact that "alone" has a meaning which goes much further than to say: "green light".

"Alone" what does that mean for a subject? Can the subject be alone while his constitution as subject is to be, as I might say, covered by objects. Alone means something else. It means that the subject fails in the measure that we do not have: that we can reduplicate the formula: in the measure that there he is not simply one.

Second element: five o'clock. With the addition of this second element there is established the elementary structure of the seduction. If you wish I will illustrate it for you as quickly as possible, I mean that one or the other can serve as subject or as predicate. Alone: predicate of five o'clock. Five o'clock: predicate of alone. That can mean just as much alone at five o'clock or only at five o'clock. This is quite secondary compared to what I have to show you which is, namely, that in this interval the only, which is in the denominator of the only one, which determines what it is, this alone, in its good function of *o*-object must emerge, namely, that between the two between alone and five o'clock, the lover is expressly summoned as being the only one who can fill this solitude.

In other words, what we see being produced, what ensures that this holds up and subsists as a signifying structure, is in the measure that the *lekton*, or what is legible of what is thus expressed, leaves open a gap where there is structured the function of desire.

The one to whom this *lekton* is addressed, whether he reads it or not, is summoned in this *lekton* to function in the gap, in the interval, which determines two directions: on the one hand, the "alone at five o'clock" is the direction of what the Stoics called, not without reason, *tukanonon*, the rendezvous, the elective meeting. In the opposite sense, what the subject divided in his statement of being alone, hides and dissimulates, and what is his phantasy, which is to be the only one. In the division of the subject, there is, as object, becomes: the only one functions here as desire, entirely in suspense with respect to the desire of the Other.

Only the desire of the Other gives its sanction to the functioning of this appeal. The desire phantasied by the subject who announces herself to be alone, in order to be the only one, this desire is the desire of the Other.

The accent put here on the formula: "the signifier represents the subject for another signifier" consists, as you have remarked, in differentiating the signifier, not from the side of the receiver, as is always done and where it is confused with the sign, but from the side of the emitter. Because if I say that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, it is in the measure that the subject in question is the one who emits it.

Now what do we mean when we speak about the unconscious? If the unconscious is what I teach you, because it is in Freud, there you ought to put the subject behind the signifier which is announced.

And you who receive this message from your unconscious, you are at the place of the other, of the idiot, and - to address myself to you in the same terms as the other day - "The most illustrious drinkers and most precious syphilitics", which in our day is translated, as it was expressed from behind a window, considering my large audience at Ste Anne to be a public of homosexuals and drug addicts, the public of others is always made up of homosexuals and drug addicts; all of you then, psychotics, neurotics and perverts who form part of my audience *qua* Other, what does it mean that you are before this message?

Well then this is an important point to specify because this is a trait of the clinic, I mean of an opening up of what questioning should be directed at.

If you are psychotic, that means that you are interested in the message essentially in the measure that she knows that you are reading it. This is always forgotten in the examination of the psychotic. He for his part does not know what the message means, but the subject generated in the signifier of the message, knows that he is reading it. This is a point on which - I will not say that it is not insisted enough on - it is a point that has never been seen.

If you are neurotic, you are interested in the rendezvous. And naturally in order to miss it, since in any case there is no rendezvous.

If you are perverse, you are interested in the dimension of desire. You are this desire of the Other. You are caught in the desire of the desire of the Other as such. You are the pure victim, the pure holocaust of the desire of the Other as such.

Because of the fact that I was delayed, I cannot show you today on the Klein bottle itself that these are the fields that this first step determines.

You should know that it is here that I will take up my discourse on the first Wednesday in May. I am saying this since the last time again I was asked if my seminar was going to take place, after I had expressly announced that the last Wednesday of this month of April will be a closed seminar.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 5 May 1965

If to be a psychoanalyst is a responsible position, the most responsible of all because he is the one to whom there is entrusted the operation of a radical ethical conversion, the one that introduces the subject to the order of desire, which orders everything that is involved in my teaching as regards historical retrospection, trying to situate the traditional philosophical position, showing you that this order has remained in a way excluded from it. What must be known are the conditions required in order that someone may be able to say of himself: "I am a psychoanalyst".

If what I am demonstrating to you here seems to culminate in the fact that these conditions are so special that this: "I am a psychoanalyst", cannot in any case descend from an investiture, in no case can come to the candidate from some other place, there would appear to be, it seems, some contradiction to found that while listening to me or at least taking seriously what I am saying, which seems to be implied in coming to listen to me, people can in fact continue to find it sufficient to (2) receive this investiture let us say, it is the least that can be said, from places where what I am saying is a dead letter.

This undoubtedly forms part of the constitutive conditions of what I would call: the difficulty about being serious in our material.

I will come back to this prelude, since in fact my discourse today will only be an attempt at gathering together the logical conditions in which there is posed the question of what we can conceive to be involved in being an analyst, what we expect to get to know.

Everything that I have brought before you from the beginning of this year concerns this place that we can give to what we operate on, if it is the case that it is indeed the subject that is involved, that this subject is situated, is essentially characterised as being of the order of lack, this is what I tried to make you sense in showing you at the two levels of the proper name on the one hand, of numeration on the other, that the status of the proper name is only possible to articulate, not as a further additional connotation approaching what, in classificatory inclusion, would manage to be reduced to the individual, but on the contrary as the making good of this something of a different order, which is what, in classical logic, was opposed to the binary relationship of the universal to the particular, as something in a third place (3) that was irreducible to their functioning, namely, as the singular.

Those here who have a sufficient formation to understand this reminder that I am giving of the attempt to homogenise the singular to the universal, who also know the difficulties that this *rapprochement* opposed to classical logic, and the status of this singular can not only be given in a better fashion in the approximations of modern logic, but it seems to me, can only be completed in the formulation of this logic to which analytic truth and practice give us access, which is what I am trying to formulate before you here and which can be called, which could be called, if I succeed, this logic to formalise desire.

That is why I wanted these remarks about proper names to be completed by this modern logic of numeration, where it also appears that it is essentially in the function of lack, in the concept of zero itself that there takes root the possibility of this foundation of the numerical unit as such, and that it is only by this that it escapes from the irreducible difficulties which oppose to this functioning of the numerical unit the idea of giving it some empirical function or other in the function of the final term which is supposed to be individuality.

(4) Moreover, I thought that it is essential, precisely, to get to that point, to make you sense the distinction there is from any conception of the tendency *qua* scientific, in so far as it brings us to the order of the general; that the tendency is specific, and that the error of translating *Trieb* by instinct, consists precisely in the fact that it would make of the tendency some property, some status, which is supposed to be inserted into the living thing in so far as it is typical, that it falls under the order, under the sway, under the effect of the general; while it is along a singular path whose question it remains for us in short to invert as regards how it happens that we are able to lay hold of something of which we can speak scientifically. What is this something? You know it is the \mathfrak{o} -object, you know that it is along the opposite path, that of an incidence that is always singular and from the incidence of a lack, that there is introduced this result upon which, through an effect of remainder, we can operate and about which it remains to be known in what position we must be, we must maintain ourselves in, in order to operate correctly on it.

Thus it is that today, in order to arrive at the end of our discourse for this year, to give the formula of this status of our position, I will take up today this discourse, (5) by gathering it around two fundamental positions of what I am teaching you as

regards our logic, the logic of our analytic practice, the logic implied by the existence of the unconscious.

- 1) The signifier, over against the sign which represents something for someone, the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier.
- 2) What is meant in our field, in the field that psychoanalysis uncovers, what is meant by the formula: the subject who is supposed to know?

To link up with what I proposed to you as a model to clarify a certain tripartition of this field, during my lecture of the 7th April, I remind you of what is here reproduced for you on the right of this board, the signal at the window made by our hypothetical lover, to the one to whom she is offering a welcome: on the left the drawn curtains, “alone”, and the five little flower-pots, “at five o’clock”. Why are we going to say that here we are dealing with signifiers? I said the last time that it was signifiers that were involved, even though it only seems to involve semiological elements, because this has no import unless it can be translated into language, that it is a code no doubt, but that this code can be translated, this is tangible specifically at the level of the first term, of the “alone”(*seule*), it can be (6) translated into something whose not only fundamentally ambiguous but also sliding character I pointed out to you: what does it mean to be alone, if not to articulate this term which gives rise in the hollow which immediately follows it, to the ambiguity of what is going to be articulated under the desire to be the only one (*la seule*), for the rendezvous to whom the only one (*le seul*) is summoned, under the movement that there is created, in the two senses, of the direction that is indicated by the line where there is articulated this signifying couple, on the one hand the rendezvous for the meeting and on the other hand the desire which underlies it, which arises from the formulation itself.

That is not all: the status of what is articulated there is in a way independent of any fact whatsoever: it is offered at first as something signified, as this beyond which I called by the term in which the Stoics designated it: the *lekton*; just as it was from the Stoics that I borrowed the term of *tukanon* to designate what is produced in the direction towards the right in which there is constituted the summons to the only one for five o’clock.

This example, this model, which is rudimentary or summary, in a way, which can perhaps be given, allows you to grasp that the discussion may remain open about the status of what is involved in this framework of the window which is here what overlaps the real in its movement, in its multiplicity, which gives it shape, which makes of it the subject of the sentence.

(8) This sentence is a sentence, in so far as, at least tangibly in the first term, in this alone, something emerges which is of the order of the subject only, which does not have, in a way, any real correspondent; as I told you: what is it to be alone, in the real, what is alone.

This alone could at the limit evoke self-sufficiency, but it is precisely what it is there, not alone not to evoke it but to evoke the opposite, namely the lack.

Taken at this level of logic where there is shown the primordially of desire with respect to any distribution, we see being inverted, in a way, what classical logic presents to us in the register of necessity: it is necessary and sufficient.

It is in the inverse order that there is presented the following, that what is apparently announced as being self-sufficient, essentially it is necessary, there is lacking something that is going to arise between the alone and the hour.

In other words, the level at which we have to grasp everything that is of the order of our field, is distinguished by a fundamental distribution that I am going to try again to underline by other examples.

In a reference that we will call, to simplify things by convention, that of the (9) traditional knowledge of the function of the sign, and what is more, besides, in certain logics, and specifically, I would ask those who are tempted by this, to look at it in what is involved at the level of the Buddhist teaching on logic, the function of the sign is put in the forefront in an admirable way, the sign is essentially: there is no smoke without fire, as you know, as a matter of a fact, moreover, there is nothing better than smoke to hide the fire. The fire a real referent, the smoke, a sign which covers it, and there somewhere the subject, immobile, universal receptacle of what there is to be known behind the signs, the supposed real.

How is the function of the signifier opposed to this and what results from it for the status of the subject?

It is not easy to get you to know about it by a sort of spelling out and, moreover, if it is possible, it will only be along a kind of maieutic process, where at every crossroads there will only be too many opportunities for you to escape from the chain. That is why, while asking you to note that I will not entirely make use of it today, I am giving you the complete function in which there is distinguished the relationship of the subject in the status of the signifier.

“It is necessary for us,” says the formula that I advanced before you, “that the (10) signifier should be what represents a subject for another signifier “. What is suggested to us by this formula?

Well then, why not? The key and the lock. It is not what the lock is going to allow to be discovered when it is a matter of the bolt or the pin falling, it is its relationship to something that makes it function.

But what is the key? Between the key and the lock, there is still the number (*chiffre*): the key is deceptive here, which interests us in the following: a lock which is a signifying composition is the internalness of this composition, with the polyvalence, the choice, the riddle on occasion of the number which is going to allow it to function.

In a certain state of the lock, there is only one number that can operate it: the one which presupposes a subject reduced to this one of a combination. There is no play here. The subject is not the universal receiver. He has the number or he does

not have it. And the role of the key is very suggestive, and very amusing, because it represents for us the following, that it is in effect a remainder, a little operational something, a piece of waste in the affair, but one which is no doubt indispensable, which, in the final analysis, represents the effective and real support where the subject will intervene, in other words, in the formula that you see here in the second place, which is substituted for the first in so far as the first designates for us (11) the S1 which represents for S2, the \$ which is the subject; underneath you see the S, if you wish in the case of the number, representing for the S of the lock what is the one of the subject, in so far as it is reduced to being or not the key to be supplied.

This little presentation, preamble, is essential to pose what should be put in question : “What is, at this first level, in so far as it is the one at which we have to operate in analysis, what is, what ought to be, how is there presented, what we will call the status of knowledge?”

For after all we have said, and even if we had not said it it is clear, that the psychoanalyst is summoned, in the situation, as being the subject who is supposed to know.

What he has to know is not a classificatory knowledge, is not knowledge of the general, is not the knowledge of a zoologist. What he has to know is defined by this primordial level where there is a subject who is led, in our operation, to this moment of emergence, which is articulated: “I did not know”.

I did not know, or indeed that this signifier which is there, which I now recognise, it was there that I was as subject, or indeed that this signifier which is there and which you designate for me, that you articulate for me, it was to represent me to you that I was this or that.

This is what psychoanalysis uncovers, and here I am going to emphasise for you, (12) by taking, almost at random, some examples in the first articulations of Freud, the degree to which that it is in this way there ought to be expressed in an appropriate fashion what is called the structure of the symptom.

The aphonia of Dora is only recognised, is only recognisable as representing the subject Dora, in relation to this signifier which has no other status than that of signifier, if one targets correctly the functioning of the symptom, and which is articulated “alone with her “.

“Alone with her “, namely Mrs K. She can no longer speak in the very function that she is alone with her and the aphonia represents Dora, not at all to Mrs K, with whom she speaks and even too much in ordinary circumstances, but when she is “alone with her”, when Mr K is travelling.

Dora’s cough, Dora’s cough, where does Freud locate it? Read the text. When he designates a symptom there, it is in function of this cough taking on the function of signifier, of warning, I would say, given by Dora of something that arises on this occasion and which would not have arisen otherwise, and you have to read

Freud's text to follow the purely signifying journey of word play around the father who is a man of fortune, which means, Freud says, without fortune, in the sense that the word fortune also means, in German, sexual potency.

(13) Without, *Vermögen*, this is what is most purely signifying, this homonymic play on words, and what is more, the negative reversal of what it means, without which nothing in Dora's cough would have this sense that Freud gives it, which is also the one possessed by this symptom, which is that of the substitution that the couple of her father and Mrs K bring to this impotence, specifically what Freud articulates, moreover, without pushing things absolutely to the end, as an oral-genital relationship.

Take little Hans, the extravagant story about the departure for Gmunden with the governess riding on the horse pulling the sledge, how does Freud interpret it for us? It means: "I am well able to spin you yarns like that if you spin other ones to me. I ask you how children are born and you talk to me about the stork." The signifier has value for the other signifier, the only person who does not know it, until he is told, is the subject, is little Hans.

Moreover, it is not quite the same thing. For the signifying function here is that of a much bigger molecule. It is a great fable which little Hans indulges in.

And to take a third example and complete our hysteric and our phobic with an obsessional, remember in the *Ratman* what happens in the desperate attempts to (14) slim which the Ratman devotes himself to in function of what? In function of the fact that at the same time there is among his beloved's acquaintances someone called Dick: it is in order not to be *dick* that he wants to slim.

His whole effort to slim, he forces himself to slim to the point of dying very precisely in order to signify himself with respect to the signifier Dick and nothing more.

But, but, but, something whose general features have never, to my knowledge, been picked out, it was indeed nevertheless the case, because we are still, there, more at ease in laying hold of it, is what results from a simply naive examination once the category has been set in motion, as I might say, the category of knowledge.

The fact is that it is here there lies what allows us radically to distinguish the function of the symptom if in fact we can give the symptom its status as defining the field of the analysable: the difference between a sign, a dullness for example, which allows us to know that there is hepatitis in a lobe, and a symptom in the sense that we ought to understand it as an analysable symptom, and precisely what defines and isolates as such the psychiatric field and what gives it its ontological status, is that there is always in the symptom the indication that there is a question of knowledge. There has never been sufficiently underlined the degree to which in (15) paranoia, it is not simply the signs of that the paranoiac receives, it is the sign that somewhere it is known what these signs mean, and that he does not know.

This ambiguous dimension of the fact that there is something to be known, and that it is indicated, can be extended to the whole field of psychiatric symptomatology in so far as analysis introduces into it this new dimension, which is precisely that its status is that of the signifier.

Look at the degree to which - of course I am not claiming to exhaust in these few words the infinite multiplicity, the shimmering brilliance, in a way, of the phenomena - the degree to which in neuroses it is implied, given, in the original symptom that the subject has not come to know, and that the status of perversion also is closely linked to something, here, that one knows, but that one is unable to make known.

The livid (*livide*) indication in the symptom itself of this dimension, of this reference to knowledge, is where I would like to start from, in a meeting that I announced at the end of the closed seminar and which will take place, not as I said on the 20th June but on the 27th June, by the invitation of a group that the people qualified will receive and that those who are not qualified have only to make themselves known to receive, that I would like to see there beginning a certain nosological revision properly speaking, that I would like to see it begin at the level (16) of this element of symptom, the highlighting of this dimension, of this agency and its variety. Its variability, its diversity which I manifested the last time as tripartite, I must say, simply by way of introduction, of engagement in this matter by saying that this knowledge that is in question, in so far as it is also lack, indeed failure, is diversified according to the three planes isolated here of the *lekton*, the *tukanon* and of desire, according to the three varieties: as regards psychoses, who knows that there is a signified, I would even say dwells there, it is a *lekton*, but which is not for all that sure of anything.

The neurosis with its *tukanon*. When will it be encountered? When will I have, not the key but the cipher (*chiffre*), and that of the pervert for whom desire situates itself properly speaking in the dimension of a secret that is possessed, experienced as such and which as such develops the dimension of his *jouissance*.

But what is to be said again about this knowledge which first of all was inscribed in this subjectivity of the "I did not know" where it is the pursued I of the vibration of what is not pure and simple negation, but the "it is necessary that I do not know", the "before I know", "with the help of God I did not know", which is the prolongation of the I itself, to which there must be left stuck, where this I has a completely different status to that of the shifter. It is not the same I who says: "I (17) am speaking to you", for the "I am speaking to you" is only a reminder of the actuality of an articulation which itself remains perfectly ambiguous as regards its very value, even if it always proposes itself as establishing a relationship.

This I of the "I did not know", where was it and what was it before knowing? This is indeed a propitious moment to evoke the dimension at which there culminates and tips over the whole classical tradition in so far as there is completed in it a certain status of the subject. All the same, there are many among you here who know where Hegel proposes the completion of history in this incredibly derisory myth of absolute knowledge.

What could be meant by this idea of a totalising discourse, totalising what? The sum of the forces of alienation through which a subject would have passed, moreover, you know well that it is ideal since, moreover, it is not conceivable that it should be realised as such by any individual.

What could be meant by this strange myth, and in truth is it not obvious that it would have been rejected a long time ago as the dream of a pedant, if it were not articulated precisely from a quite different dialectic than that of knowledge, and if we were not told that it is the being of desire who completes himself in it in so far as the paths along which this desire has passed are ruses of reason.

(18) But who is the wily one (*le rusé*)? It is the one who is completed in this Sunday of life, as a humorist has very well articulated it, of absolute knowledge since it is the one who will say "I'm still yapping" or the one who will say "from now on I fuck."

Where is the ruse? In desire or in reason? Analysis is there to teach us that the ruse is in reason because desire is determined by the play of the signifier. That desire is what emerges from the brand, from the brand of the signifier on the living being and that, henceforth, what we have to articulate is what is meant by the path that we trace out of the return of desire to its signifying origin?

What is meant by the fact that there are men who call themselves psychoanalysts and are interested in this operation?

It is quite obvious that in this register the psychoanalyst is first introduced, by introducing himself as a subject who is supposed to know, is himself, himself receives, himself supports the status of the symptom. A subject is a psychoanalyst, not as a scholar barricaded behind categories in the midst of which he tries his hardest to construct the drawers into which he will be able to put the symptoms that he registers in his patient, psychotic, neurotic or other, but in so far that he enters into the signifying operation, and this is why a clinical examination, a (19) case presentation can absolutely not be the same in the days of psychoanalysis as in the times that preceded it.

In preceding times, whatever might have been the genius that the clinician brought to it - God knows, I had recently to refresh my admiration for the dazzling style of Kraepelin when he describes these diverse forms of paranoia - there is a radical distinction between what, at least in theory, potentially, between what is required in terms of the relationship of the clinician to the patient even on the plane of the first presentation.

If the clinician, if the doctor who presents, knows only a half of the symptom, as I have just articulated it for you in reminding you of the examples of Freud, only half of the symptom, it is he who has the responsibility that there is not a case presentation but a dialogue between two people and that, without this second person there would be no complete and filled out symptom as is the case for most.

By allowing clinical psychiatry to stagnate on the path from which Freudian doctrine ought to have removed it, we have to define the symptom as something which signals itself as a knowledge that is already there, to a subject who knows that it concerns him, but who does not know what it is, in what measure can we (20) analysts say that we are equal to this task of being the ones who in every case know what it is. Already simply at that level there is put, there is posed, the question of the status of the psychoanalyst.

The question is facilitated by a long-term evolution. For a long time we were able to believe that the whole status of science depended on an examination that was put to the test of feeling, of perception, but what is meant by this opposition between the lure and the real?

If it is not the real that is involved, even in the most ancient science, it is the real of the scholar and what is not seen, is that this real of the scholar, namely, what a knowledge is, is well and truly a body of signifiers and absolutely nothing else.

If the notion of information has been able to take on this anonymous form which allows it to be quantified in terms of what is called a *bit*: it is in so far as the collecting, the storing, of elements of information is sufficient in itself in our eyes to constitute what is called a knowledge, except for the fact of course that this only begins to have a sense if you circulate somewhere, wherever it may be and you can in no way avoid the shadow of it, a no doubt infinitely mobile subject, if you want to inscribe in terms of information the internal functioning of a biological organism, for example, this means that even though you may have it, you have to put (21) somewhere, like Descartes, not necessarily in the pineal gland, but wherever you may put it, it will always be somewhere, in some other gland with internal secretions, a subject, a subject who slips away, a fleeting subject.

This knowledge is such that we have to give it its status, it is not at all an Aristotelian logic that corresponds to it. For, as you are going to see, it is enough to pose the question at the level of science, of a modern science, of a science which is our own to find ourselves before the very curious impasse of problems which are the very ones that brought Aristotle to a halt.

For him, it was in connection with the contingent. An event which will take place tomorrow, is it true now that it will take place or that it will not take place? If it is true now, it must be because it is now that it has taken place. Aristotle of course had too much common sense not to escape from such a constraint by pointing out to us that it is not always true that a proposition has to be either true or false.

Good or bad, this solution has been discussed. This is not what interests us. It is to become aware that we can pose the question of whether Newtonian doctrine was true before Newton formulated it.

(22) Well then, I would like to know how the audience is divided on this point? But for me, I will happily put my cards on the table by saying that it seems to me to be very unlikely to say that Newtonian knowledge was true before it was

constituted by Newton for the good reason that now and in the first place it no longer is so. It is no longer completely so.

In the very necessity of knowledge, of signifying articulation, there is this contingency of being only a signifying articulation, an assembled lock.

We analysts do not even have to go so far, only this roofing is constructed so that we will not be so disoriented in having to deal with a quite different requirement.

What is this requirement? It is placed at the level at the original signifying incidence, the one where the subject finds himself at once emerging and at the same time being alienated because of this signifying incidence.

This signifier, of which it is required that to represent a subject, it should be addressed, signifying him, it should be the diplomatic representative of the subject to another signifier, is it going to be required of us that we should find it on every occasion?

What would be the paradox of a requirement and of a duty, which is not the one that the scholar like the sophist has always assumed, which is to have an answer to (23) everything. To everything that has been organised as discourse, to everything that has arisen as a signifying combination, to be always equal to the discourse; not of this absolutely original something which is what this unique and supporting signifier would be, this primordial *onoma*, where the subject is specified with respect to the whole world of the signifier.

The absurdity of this position is sufficiently shown, and this is the point of vertigo that the very idea of interpretation involves, is at the same time what allows us to escape from it, this is what relativises it, it is not at all with this that we have to deal, any more than our knowledge of psychoanalysis would culminate in this sort of fatalism of knowledge, that the answer is already in us and not because of the fact that from us, an answer is expected.

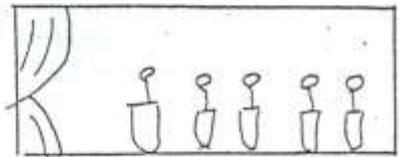
The chances of the encounter, which is what is involved in the appeal of desire, are in themselves more than improbable, and moreover the horizon of signs, of signifieds on which subjective experience is deployed is of its nature enigmatic, and announced as such at the level of the *lekton* as regards what is involved in desire, I will not put forward the term today, except to say it is the real of desire and its status that is involved in the analytic operation.

Let us simply say that in the first place and phenomenologically, it announces itself to us as being the field of the impossible.

There we are, well circumscribed. Might not the position of the analyst be summed up effectively in this something that we might call, not at all the fatalism of knowledge but fetishism, that the analyst would be something like the boundary mark or the joist of a knowledge that is impossible to sustain.

- 3/5/65

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This is the point of impasse at which where I intend to conclude today in order to try to open it up the next time we meet.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 12 May 1965

The signifier	The subject supposed to know
The subject	-----
Knowledge (<i>le Savoir</i>)	The subject supposed to know
	The signifier as singular
	The missing signifier and the Dyad
	Sex and Knowledge

I left you the last time on the question posed about the status of the analyst: can the analyst be, quite simply, the subject who is supposed to know?

I ended on the image raised about what such a supposition would involve, what it would force us to sustain, in terms of a sort of fetish function of the analyst with respect to this position of knowledge.

In order that the analysis may be engaged in and sustained, the analyst assuredly **is** supposed to know. And, nevertheless, everything that the foundations of psycho-analysis involves, precisely in terms of knowledge, affirms to us that there cannot be this subject who is supposed to know for the reason that the discovery of Freud excludes the fundamental knowledge of psychoanalysis.

I will go no further today. Here I am tracing the limit from which my discourse ought to begin or to end. My discourse today will only be the development of this antinomy opening out perhaps, but only to some people, the fault, the gap through which we can conceive - because this fault, this gap is already traced out - that the position of the analyst effectively is sustained.

(2) Nevertheless, we already remained on this question about the analyst the last time, not at all of course about his capacity, it is too easy and mythical to imagine some virtue or other, an innate or acquired gift which would put him in the position of assuming what he has to do, it is his radical position as subject that is involved when we say that, at the foundations of analysis, he ought to be the subject who is supposed to know, and I began to say the last time how this could have a meaning; this can only, given the outlines of what Freud gave us about the analytic experience, represent nothing other than a certain availability that he provides and which defines him as such, so that he would be equivalent to a certain availability to be provided in the order of the signifier, and this of course is

not without a reply, an echo, a preparation in the fashion that I define the signifier for you, and not without reason, as being what represents the subject for another signifier.

This indeed, moreover, is why the analytic conjuncture is the point from which there is dissolved this case of short-sightedness in the linguist, this distinction that he believes he is making or ought to make, as being essential, between two so-called linguistic levels, one involving the inherency of meaning, opposed to the other which excludes it, in other words, to go quickly, the opposition between the word and the phoneme.

(3) From our point of view, from our experience, which is that of lack, there is never given anything but the word of whatever it is and at whatever level it is, the phoneme being here strictly equal in experience as it abundantly proves in this field, one of those from which Freud began, the forgetting of names, the phoneme, its forgetting, is at the principle of the fact that this forgetting is not at all the forgetting of the word as meaning, which quite often subsists, but comes from the lack of a signifying articulation.

I remembered in this connection, in order to tell it to you, that, curiously, the very expression in French, *le mot me manque* (the word escapes me), can be dated, it was not used in French before a certain époque; namely, that we have an attestation of it from someone from the circle of the *précieux*, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, who is able to note then, because he does it from day to day, collecting the well-made expressions that he sees arising in his milieu, that this expression, he collects it, he underlines it, *le mot me manque* was invented somewhere among these people who were dialoguing one opposite the other, seated on what are called *commodités de la conversation*, in other words, armchairs.

He goes as far as to say of this trait, this notation, that it is legitimate to affirm that before this dictum of the *précieux*, the expression *le mot me manque*, since it was (4) not in use in French, left in suspension an unthinkable part about this lack of the signifier, and that it is indeed there, always at the level of the signifying creation, that there is introduced something which opens up the path to what can later be grasped; *le mot me manque* does not imply the whole of Freud, but it is a way for me of introducing, of taking up on this occasion, the form of a question that I had introduced the last time of what is involved in a knowledge before this moment, however we may designate it, when it emerges, without our being able to say in virtue of what maturation, unless it is perhaps, the possibility of its signifying composition.

What was meant by *le mot me manque* before Freud? In any case it is clear that it did not have the same signifying value.

But it is not there that we ought to seek the source of the incidence of this signifying conjuncture which for us is what we are going to structure the notion of knowledge around. By way of proof I need only indicate the sterility, the lack of openness, that the other side involves, the one that is called logical-positivism

which, searching for the *meaning of meaning* by assuring itself, by being on its guard, I would say, against the surprises of a signifying conjunction by dismembering, in a way, - how can it be done if not always in a retrospective fashion - the diversity of these significant refractions only ends up with this curious (5) skeleton which, in a particular work entitled *The meaning of meaning*, by Ogden and Richards, by Richards and Ogden, ends up for example in dealing with the beautiful, by laying out for us for whole columns, with brackets and parentheses, a whole section of the different acceptations in which this word can be taken, thus rendering it strictly impossible to understand why these diverse meanings find themselves united there.

Logical-positivism makes one think, I would say, by the very contrasting and bracketing of the two terms in which it affirms itself, of something like these monsters who peopled the mediaeval bestiaries, and so as not to be always coming back to our eternal unicorn or to some chimera, sufficiently worn out by the risky, doubtful usage made of it by logicians, for it is well to be always prudent as regards the exact status of these monsters, I would compare it here to another one which you hear less spoken about, the mirmicoleon. It has the breast of a lion and the hindquarters of an ant. It is not surprising, as the scholarly authors of the aforesaid bestiaries affirm, that it can only die. The ant, even if it was raised by Prévert to the fabulous dimensions of the famous eighteen metres - and why not says Prévert - the ant, in any case, not being able to evacuate what the lion devours. Such is the positivist or logical-positivist fly-speck after an abundant (6) chewing-over of what it cannot grasp in the dialectical virtue of a term like the beautiful, of which one could say in this connection, when one gives a sigh of relief at seeing the end of the painful elaborations of the authors of *The meaning of meaning*, that the first idiot who might point out to us that *beau* rhymes with *peau* would tell us much more about it.

Le mot me manque, le mot me manque, before Freud, had its value as an unveiling. *Le mot me manque*, involved from its very composition as a precious artefact, the opening of a path of truth which was to find, with Freud, its completion in knowledge.

I understand the word truth here in its properly Heideggerian sense. The ambiguity of what is unveiled but still remains half-hidden.

A certain medical lack of reflection with which I am surrounded, may undoubtedly, when I say, when I said the last time that a question can be posed about the status of a knowledge, whether it is Newtonian or Freudian, before it effectively comes to light, may say to me: what are you saying there, you who are interested in us, who teach us such risky things? So the unconscious is an invention of Freud's, and why not? The subject represented by the signifier is something which only dates from your discourse. Now, what is at stake, is precisely the status of the subject with respect to a knowledge.

(7) This subject, as we first encounter it as affirmed, effectively supposed, in every knowledge which closes in on itself, where was it before? When a knowledge, like Newtonian knowledge is completed, let us observe what happens

as regards the status of the subject,. It is worth our while delaying on the matter for a moment, even though I raised this problem before you a long time ago.

Newtonian knowledge realised, in the history of science, a sort of exemplary acme, that was at once paradoxical and really exemplary, paradigmatic, not to say pleonastic, an example then of what is really involved in the status of the subject. For in this formula which suddenly rooted the enigmatic phenomena in the heavens which had captivated the attention of calculators throughout the centuries, gathered them together, enclosed them in a formula which had nothing else for it than its exactitude, for it is so unthinkable in the name of any experienced property, in anything that man knows in his relationship to the world, that what it teaches him has no action to be transmitted and presupposes a medium which transmits it, which proposes to him this action at a distance which is properly speaking unthinkable, and makes there arise from the mouths of our contemporaries with a single cry, as it were, but how can such a body, as it were, such a mass isolated at some point in space, know the distance it is from another body, so that it is linked to it by this relationship?

(8) And of course, for Newton, there is in effect no doubt the fact that this presupposes in itself a subject who maintains the action of the law. Everything which is of the order of physics or appears here to relate to the action and the reaction of bodies following the properties of movement and of rest, but, the operation of gravity does not appear to him to be able to be supported except by this pure and supreme subject, this sort of acme of the ideal subject that the Newtonian God represents.

This indeed is the reason why our contemporaries have quite correctly made Newton equal to this God, for it is the same thing to create this law and to see it articulated it in all its rigour. But it is no less true that a too perfect subject like the subject of knowledge, which is the first true model of this absolute knowledge which haunted Hegel, that this subject leaves us completely indifferent and that belief in God gained no renewal from it.

That this subject is nothing, that he is the only one not to know it. And this indeed is precisely the sign that he is nothing. In other words, it is in the ambiguity of the relationship of a subject to knowledge, it is in the subject in so far as he still lacks knowledge that there resides for us the nerve, the activity of the existence of a subject. This indeed is why it is not as a supposed support of a harmonious group of signifiers in this system that the subject is grounded, but in so far as somewhere (9) there is a lack, which I articulate for you as being the lack of a signifier because it is this articulation which allows us to rejoin in the simplest fashion the Freudian articulation so that we can extract from it its essential principle.

Undoubtedly, so as not to leave for a moment this horizon of the starry heavens before which Kant still prostrated himself, note that if, from all time, it is there that man has done his scales, his exercises in signifiers, it is uniquely for the reason that he had always been looking for the supreme subject, never finding him there for that matter, but such is the force, the pregnancy of the functioning of the signifier, that it is still there that he keeps his gaze turned when from all time

he knows well that the Gods are among us. They are elsewhere than in the heavens. It is only their eponymous constellations that he is going to situate there.

The final taste, after this decisive expulsion from the heavens by Newton of any divine shadow, remains to us in the form of these signals that we are waiting for and which might come to us from somewhere, and paradoxically, as they say, from some life on another planet.

I ask, whether if there effectively came to us some sign or signal that we could qualify as signifying, in the name of what would this assure us of any life whatsoever, if not for the reason that in the least well grounded fashion we identify (10) the possibility of articulating the signifier with the fact of a life which might be its support. Is there not something other than life that can produce a signifier, and if we are so sure of it, in the name of what?

Undoubtedly the first criterion would be to know where we will define the limit, the definition of a natural pulsation, since the last I heard, it seems that we have received nothing other from some distant galaxy or from what might be properly speaking a signifier. How could we define it except in Lacanian terms?

I mean that we will only ratify as attesting for us somewhere the presence, not of a living being, but of a subject, a signifier that we could very precisely articulate as orientated with respect to another signifier. The first condition is alternation, but one which one would, in a special fashion, bear witness to one of its members, and thus some variation is needed and, in a word, the shape of which Morse gives us an indication, namely, the existence of dactyls or of spondees so that in the first phase we would clearly know that a signifier only has a value in this case for other signifiers, but that is still not sufficient.

It is necessary to have this element of oddity, of exception, of paradox, of appearance and disappearance founded as such, which would show us clearly that something is alternating, which is precisely the relationship of one of these (11) signifiers with a subject. In a word, oddity and alternation: we need to have the testimony that the signifying ordering of something in which the subject would show himself to be capable of assuring pure chance, namely, a succession of heads or tails grouped together under a signifying form.

In other words, the best proof that we could have of the existence of a subject in the starry heavens, would be if some message with a minimum of four terms was found to correspond to the syntax that, in the introductory chapter to Poe's *Purloined letter*, I tried to articulate as alpha, beta, gamma, delta which those who have read this little introduction know are composed from a sort of grouping of pure random selection, and that the fact of grouping them, of naming them in a certain unitary fashion, whatever it may be in fact, culminates at a syntax from which already one cannot escape. If an analogous syntax were discovered in a succession of signs, we would have the assurance that what is involved there is indeed a subject.

If you believe you have the right to justify why, at the same time, you could describe it as living, try to articulate why. This will lead us, perhaps, along the same paths on which I am now going to try to advance.

(12) Freud escapes from the objection that my unreflective interlocutor put to me earlier, as follows: the fact is, that replying to the question, where is the subject of the unconscious before Freud discovered it, the reply is precisely that what Freud defines for us as subject is the new, original relationship, unthinkable before his discovery, but affirmed, of a subject to a not-knowing.

Must I dot my i's? The unconscious means that the subject refuses a certain point of knowing. The fact is that the subject is designated by deliberately trying not to know, it is that the subject is established - this is the step where the Freudian articulation is enriched by what I outline in the margin concerning the relationship to the subject to the signifier - the fact is that the subject is established from a rejected, *verwerfen*, signifier, from a signifier about which one wants to know nothing.

What is this "one"? It is no more strange than the subject which disappears in total disinterest at the basis of an absolute system.

What Freud designates for us, is the subsistence of the subject of a not-knowing. The question for us is to elaborate a status for this subject such that we are not forced to give it a substance, namely, to believe like the Jungians that this subject is God.

This is where there should be of service the reminder that I give you that what (13) represents the outline of the whole dialectic which has culminated in our science, rests on a more and more articulated approach of the subject as designated by a relationship which overlaps this affirmed, concrete, experimental relationship with the missing signifier by Freud.

What the whole dialectic, the one which begins with Plato, has forged for us - and this is the sum of the major texts concerning the elaboration of a thinking about knowledge in our tradition which bears witness to this - I remind you from time to time about its essential articulating points, I will remind you or indicate to you, for my listeners who are here for the first time, of the really fundamental text which is Plato's *Sophist*, which I would ask you to consult; you will see there intervening in filigree the essential articulations that you will see overlapping with the greatest rigour, to the point of emerging in certain places as something which breaks through the canvas, the definition that the linguistic reference today allows us to give of a subject as that which corresponds to the position of the signifier - I mean the elementary signifier of the phoneme - in the system where the signifying battery, where there is established the concrete reality of every existing tongue.

It would be well here to recall two themes which are included in the fundamental aphorism of the signifier representing the subject for another signifier.

(14) Everything is in the status of this other. Everything that I will say about this other in what is going to follow, emerges, is already perfectly articulated at the end of this *Sophist* that I evoked for you just now and precisely under the rubric of the Other.

If the modern status of the subject is not given in Plato, it is in so far as there escapes there, that there is not articulated there, the tension that there is between this Other and the One, and which would allow us to ground this Other as what I call the One-more (*Un-en-plus*), it is One-more that you only see emerging in the theory of numbers at the level of Freud. In other words this conception of the singular as essentially lack.

Two relationships are outlined in this tertiary relationship that I articulate for you of the signifier representing something for another signifier and of the signifier representing the subject in a function of alternation, of *vel*, of either or, either the signifier which represents or the subject and the signifier which vanishes.

Such is the form of the essential singularity which is indeed the one that would be required of the analyst if he had, irreducibly, fundamentally, to reply to this phantastical domination which always appears on the horizon, and which you saw (15) being discussed recently at my closed seminar in connection with a certain example, with this specific, onomastic, formulation by which this lack is supposed to be filled by the formulation of a name.

The composition of the signifying dyad of the couple, whatever it may be, that every usage of the tongue and especially the poetic one knows well, the one which is expressed in the poetic formula that words make love, or again to quote another poet: “to every night its day, to every mountain its valley, to every day its night, to every tree its shade, to every being its no (*non*)” as in Plato who speaks of nothing but this no and of the distinction between this no and non-being, “to every good its evil.”

Which must be understood here, not as contraries in the real but as signifying oppositions. Now, it is around this that there revolves the whole Platonic development. This dyad, since it subsists in Plato’s thinking, requires the introduction of the Other as such. In order that being and non-being should not also be contraries equally existing, and thus giving shelter to all the conjuring tricks of the sophist, it is necessary that the non-being should be established as other in order that the sophist can be rejected there.

The astonishing embrace between Plato and the sophist, which I would like one of you to give a commentary on at our next closed seminar, by showing us in it what (16) appears everywhere, the extraordinary similarity, the shimmering reflection which means that at every turn of the page we read in it the characteristics of the palpitation that is current and present in the history of the psychoanalyst himself.

The psychoanalyst is the presence of the sophist in our time, but with a different status from which the reason has emerged, that there has come to light the reason, why these sophists operated with so much force and also without knowing why.

The moment of force is based on something that analysis teaches us: the fact is that at the root of every dyad there is the sexual dyad. The masculine and the feminine (*le masculin et le féminin*), I say it like that because there is a tiny little oscillation in the expression if I were to say, the male and the female (*le male et le femelle*).

The ambiguities in the tongue about the function of gender, of what someone like Pichon, who believed a little bit too much in thinking not to have singular variations in his way of analysing phenomena and words, had called the *sexuiseblance* - I agree, but I would prefer *sexuilatence* - because the fact that the armchair is called the (*le*) armchair, the chair, the (*la*) chair, does not have any *sexuiseblance* except for very imaginative people, but the presence of gender as simply correlative of the signifying opposition, is for us, by underlining for us precisely the distinction between gender and sex, is designed to remind us that in what grounds the dyadic opposition - and God knows that it gives Plato a lot of embarrassment because he has to invent the Other in order to make the individual (*l'être*) subsist - the dyadic opposition has as a radical foundation only the opposition of sexes, of which we know nothing.

Because Freud himself articulates in many texts that we give to the masculine-feminine opposition equivalents, metaphors, the parallels of active and passive or of seeing and being seen, of penetrating and of being penetrated, so favoured by a celebrated cuntesse; but we do not know what the masculine and the feminine are.

And Freud recognises it and affirms it. What is at stake so that knowledge, I mean the knowledge capable of giving an account of itself, the knowledge that knows how to articulate the subject - there is no other one to give its status to the unconscious, the unconscious means nothing else outside of this perspective - what is there in this knowledge which ensures that at the approach of this knowledge there functions, and in a unilateral fashion, namely, in the sense of the pure eclipsing, of the disappearance of the signifier, not simply the *verwerfen* which grounds the subject, but of the *verdrängt*, repression of everything which may approach it, even from a distance, and which bears witness to us of the presence of the subject in the unconscious, where the subject of the unconscious is the subject who avoids the knowledge of sex.

(18) You must admit that this is a state of affairs that is a little bit surprising which, moreover, in order to give you a rest for a moment, will allow us to throw a look backwards and to make the observation that perhaps some of you have made along this path that I try to elaborate for you in the hours that I reserve for it on my Sabbath day: all of a sudden I struck my head saying: "But there is no word in Greek to designate sex!"

Since I had only Greek-French dictionaries within reach, I was reduced to searching in the authors, in the treatise *On animals* by Aristotle - this made me do things which were not new discoveries, for I am very fond of this treatise *On animals* - I was able to confirm that Aristotle, in short, had said almost everything that is important in zoology, but has all the same on the subject of reproduction - not to mention sex - of reproduction ideas that are necessarily a little vague.

Microscopy was missing and the common nature of the term *sperma*, this sort of liquid which spreads out and from which there begins the equal attribution of the *sperma* to the male and the female, the only difference being that the female spreads it in herself and that the male spreads it outside is a rather valid phenomenological distinction but perhaps one designed to give us the idea of the embarrassment people were in effect in for centuries about what is involved (19) essentially, simply in reproduction.

As regards sex, let us not mention it. And this may explain a lot of things to us.

With some scruples I telephoned someone who is here on my left and who never refuses to perform this service to me, to ask him how, in a French-Greek dictionary, sex in Greek was expressed.

He replied with some little things which meant that it was gender, nature, and that it was on occasion ,namely, the difference between the male and the female.

You see what a periphrasis this is. These things are very interesting and one cannot blame Plato too much for completely failing to recognise this dimension which, perhaps, would have been of service to him in his embarrassment, the aporias of the *Sophist*.

But he was not without some awareness of it because, as a matter of fact, the horror that he manifests for the category of of the contrary, concerning the oppositions which are characterised by the yes and the no, is in fact the testimony that here there is being approached a mystery which is undoubtedly one to which a wide berth should be given.

(20) The Latins obviously have *sexus*. And here I will only allude in passing to the fact that this *sexus*, if we can designate an origin for it, it is on the side of [secus?]. You are approaching a little the Freudian truth. But indeed this still does not go very far.

There is something strange. It is that about sex we know, I mean know because of scientific investigation, we know much more. There is something that is striking simply from the examination of what happens at the level of animals that are called protistae or their near neighbours, something that every naturalist not only knows but can clearly articulate. I am not going to quote the authors for you but almost all of those who have studied the problems of sexuality have said it and have perceived ever since we have known a bit more about it thanks to the microscope. We know, but we do not draw the consequence of it, that sex is not at all something that is related to reproduction, first of all because there are organisms which reproduce in an a-sexual fashion and because among those which are intermediary between a-sexual reproduction and sexual reproduction, in other words depending on the stage of the shoot (*rejet*) of the line of descendance, reproduce themselves sometimes in an a-sexual fashion and sometimes do something which gives us the idea of a relationship with sexed reproduction, what (21) gives us the idea of it among elementary organisms - and I am not going to

be so pedantic as to tell you their categories here because I do not want to overload my presentation - the fact is that what happened when I spoke about sexed reproduction, it is above all something whose essential is rather the reverse of fecundation than fecundation itself; namely, that a meiosis, that is to say a chromosomic reproduction, and after that there can be a conjunction, but it is not necessarily a reproduction; it can also be considered as a rejuvenation and this perhaps is what sexual conjunction essentially is.

In other words the relationship, the bond, between sexual differentiation and death is here manifest and tangible and in an ambiguous fashion. It is the relationship with death which undergoes here, something like the characteristics of a genuine relationship: this fundamental pulsation that sex is, at one and the same time, the sign of death, and that it is at the level of sex that there is waged the battle against death, as such, but not at the level of reproduction. Reproduction here is only a consequence, a usage on this occasion of cells that are more specialised than the others *qua* sexed, in other words at the moment when there appears the autonomy of the *germen* as compared to the

But of its nature nothing indicates that sex is in its origin a reproductional mechanism.

(22) If we delay on this fundamental phenomenon of chromosomic reduction, in other words, what is called meiosis, and what results from it by way of expulsion, of what on the desks of the secondary school we were told were the little polar globules, in connection with the formation of the sexual cells, we see there, in the concrete, in the material, the expression of a different polarity, that of the support of the organism with something which is a remainder, something which is the complement of what is, precisely, lost, reduced, in the meiosis and which, perhaps, may be destined to illuminate us about what is involved in the phantastical function of the lost object, metaphorically incarnated by objects which do not always have, perhaps, only a quite external relationship with this form of residue expelled from the organism.

I am speculating, I am dreaming. *Schwärmerei!* But it is strange that these sorts of *Schwärmerei* were never, never, never, done in the psychoanalytic field. All the discoveries about sexuality and what is more, besides, they are abundant, they swarm, there are things added to it every day: chromosomes are fascinating, they are the object of feverish discussions for all those who are effectively occupied with this thing that is called the reproduction of living beings, whatever they may be.

(23) For psychoanalysts this is strictly a dead letter. I never saw any text whatsoever in an analytic or para-psychoanalytic review which interested itself in the slightest in this field of the discoveries of modern biology on sex nor the questions that it poses. There is here a phenomenon that we cannot but consider, considering what that involves in terms of indications, moreover, that are not necessarily illegitimate about what is really involved in the position of psychoanalysts concerning what? This something which takes on a more and more pregnant shape, namely, the subject who is supposed to know *qua* subject of

the unconscious, namely, the subject who is supposed to know what must in no case be known.

This then is of a nature to show us the mistake, the paradox there would be in thinking of the psychoanalyst as being the one who has to furnish, who has to answer for the singular signifier because it is lacking in its relationship with the other signifier. For if this radical relationship involves the original covering over, the *Verborgenheit*, the fundamental exclusion of what through analytic doctrine itself constitutes its final link, namely, what is involved in the correspondence, whatever it may be, between the male and the female, it is quite clear that everything indicates that the position of the analyst finds itself no less excluded (24) than that of any established subject who preceded him. This indeed is why analysis remains completely in the tradition of the subject of knowledge on the single condition that we should carefully note that for a long time knowledge has been let go far from the subject and that the subject that is involved is only the subject in relation to the missing signifier.

On the contrary, what experience teaches us is, effectively, what arises in this field of experience: it is precisely this metaphor regarding which, all the same, it is not for nothing that a little earlier I evoked for you the correspondence that it has with respect to one of the most fundamental realities of sex, namely, the loss of this little something in which there is established the closest possible relationship of the subject of the unconscious with the world of phantasy.

That it should be here that analytic experience has in fact taken the psychoanalyst, now allows us to open up the question of how he is solicited by this point, this point of lateral deviation, this indicated point of a relationship to sex which in any case would not be able to overlap a mythical image that we might construct of the male and female relationship, this is what emerges from the divine text: "man and woman he made them". As Mr Ernest Jones armed with his Protestant tradition does not hesitate to take up again.

(25) Do we not grasp here that for other traditions of thought - by way of illustration, that of Taoism for example - which begin entirely from a signifying apprehension in which we do not have to look for the meaning it represents for them because, for us, it is quite secondary. Meanings always pullulate. You put two signifiers opposite one another and that gives little meanings. They are not necessarily all that pretty.

But that the beginning should be, as such, the opposition between the Ying and the Yang, the male and female, even if they do not know that this is what that means, this just by itself, involves at once this singular mirage that there is here something more adequate to some radical foundation or other, at the same time, moreover, as this may justify the total failure of any culmination on the side of a veritable knowledge, and that is why it would be a great mistake to believe that there is the slightest thing to be expected from the Freudian exploration of the unconscious that would in a way rejoin, echo, corroborate what has been produced by these traditions that we qualify, that we label - I detest the term - oriental, of something which is not from the tradition which has elaborated the function of the

subject. To fail to recognise it is to risk all sorts of confusions, and if something on our part (26) can ever be won in the sense of an authentic integration of what for psychoanalysts knowledge ought to be, undoubtedly in a quite different direction. I will pursue this discourse about the position of the analyst the next time.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 19 May 1965

Like in the game of love, of *amora*, where scissors, stone, and paper catch up on one another indefinitely in a round, stone breaking scissors, paper enveloping stone, scissors cutting paper, you can state in an analogy, which undoubtedly conceals something more complex, that the three terms of my last discourses, and very especially that of the last time, set out before you, under the rubric of the subject, the one that I devoted the greatest care to honing, for your understanding, of knowledge, which, moreover, was the second term to which I tried to give its whole weight, concerning what is involved under the name of unconscious.

The unconscious is a knowledge, whose subject remains undetermined, in the unconscious. What does it know? Well sex, and it is not by chance, nor from haste, if, having marked only the last time in all its relief, that the meaning of the Freudian doctrine is that sex is one of the stumbling points, around which turns this triple relationship, this economy, where each one of these terms is referred on from one to the other in accordance with a relationship which, at first approach, may seem to be the one through which I introduce you to it, a relationship of circular dominance, the (2) subject being undetermined in knowledge, which is brought to a halt before sex, which confers on the subject this new sort of certainty through which his place as subject being determined and only being able to be so from the experience of the *cogito*, with the discovery of the unconscious, of the radically, fundamentally, sexual nature of all human desire, the subject takes his new certainty, that of finding his lair in the pure default (*défaut*) of sex.

This relationship of rotating dominance is essential to ground what is involved in my discourse from its beginning, regarding what status of the subject is involved in what is regenerated for him by the analytic operation, and, moreover, since this analytic operation alone gives him his status, what will be involved today, after this introduction, is not to affirm as a given in the world this dominance which is rejected by each one of the three terms, but to reformulate it, to make its effects felt, in terms of this form under which it is exercised for us, which is properly speaking the form of a game.

I think that even those who might be coming here today to listen to me for the first time, know enough about Freud to recognise what an essential term the relationship between knowledge and sex constitutes in his teaching.

(3) Whether it is a matter of his approach, of his discovery of the psychoanalytic dynamic, it is in terms of what the subject knows more about it than he believes, says more about it than he wishes, and demonstrates, from his own resources, this form of ambiguous knowledge which, in a way, renounces itself at the very moment that it avows itself, that Freud introduces the dynamic of the unconscious, and when he theorises it, it is around this oscillating point of the question about sex, of the epistemological drive, of the need to know what is involved in sex, that there is introduced genetically into the history of the child everything that will subsequently expand in the shape of his person, of his character, of his symptoms, of all this material which is ours and which interests us.

But it is here that we have the incidence of what I wanted to articulate for you in its dialectical difference, when I spoke to you about truth in connection with knowledge; where that knowledge is, where it has its status, there where we have constituted it, there where not unconsciously but external to us, it is grounded in science. Where was the truth before the establishment of knowledge?

A question which, as I reminded you, does not date from yesterday. It is exactly contemporaneous with the first logical articulations: it is in Aristotle, it is the status of the contingency of truth before it is authenticated in knowledge, but what the Freudian (4) articulation shows us is a divergent relationship between this truth and knowledge.

If we must wait for knowledge, if the truth is in suspense as long as knowledge has not been constituted, it is quite clear that if someone had formulated three hundred years earlier the Newtonian formula itself, it would have meant nothing, because these truths would not have been able to be inserted into his knowledge.

It is the Freudian structure which reveals and lifts the seal of this mystery for us. The orientation of the truth, what is discovered, is not towards a knowledge, even one to come, which is always, with respect to a point X, in a fundamentally lateral position, what we have to bring to light as truth, as *alethia*, as Heideggerian revelation, is something which for us gives a fuller sense if not a purer one to this question about being, which is articulated in Heidegger and which is called for us, for our experience as analysts, sex.

Either our experience is in error or we are doing nothing right: and that is how this is formulated. This is how this ought to be formulated here.

The truth is to be said about sex, and it is because it is impossible - this is in Freud's text - because the position of the analyst is impossible, that is why, it is because it is (5) impossible to say it in its entirety, that there flows from it this sort of suspense, of weakness, of secular incoherence in knowledge, which is properly the one that Descartes denounces and articulates in order to detach from it his certainty about the subject, by which the subject is manifested as being

precisely the signal, the test, the remainder of this lack of knowledge, through which he rejoins what bound him, what refuses itself to knowledge, in the sex on which the subject finds himself suspended in the pure form of this lack, namely, as desexualised entity.

A knowledge therefore, takes refuge somewhere, in this place that we could call and why not, for we are only rediscovering here ancient paths, in a place of original shame (*pudeur*), with respect to which all knowledge is established in an unpersedable horror, with regard to this place where lies the secret of sex.

And this is why it is important to recall what everyone may know, but it is striking that it is forgotten, that we know the many cascading effects of what is involved in sex, even if it is only the multiplicity of existing beings, and that it is to veil the question, it is to dodge it, to make of sex the instrument whose effects would be justified by their teleology. Sex, in its essence as radical difference, remains untouched and sets its face against knowledge.

(6) The introduction of the unconscious totally changes the status of knowledge and that in a double way, the doubling having to be repeated at every level that we have to take up again in the three poles in which our subjective order is constituted.

The knowledge of the unconscious is unconscious in that, on the side of the subject, it is posited as the indetermination of the subject, we do not know at what point of the signifier there is lodged this subject who is supposed to know.

But from another side, this knowledge, even unconscious, is in a reference of fundamental interdiction with regard to this pole which determines it in its function as knowledge.

There is something that this subject, this knowledge must not know. It is the radical, not accidental, constitution - even though all the chains in which there are linked this subjective concatenation are never anything but singular - founded on this grasp, this first inclusion which constitutes its whole logic, a logic that we must ground, in order to grasp how it circulates, and where we are at when we, as analysts, claim to operate on it.

There is a question which has just been posed at a competitive examination, one of these examinations which in a *milieu* like this one is something which provides some illustration: one could indeed say that one question which was posed there is on the agenda. The question was posed to those who had to surmount this barrier, this (7) steeplechase of what is called *l'agregation*: "Can man represent for himself a world without men?"

I will say here, not at all the way in which I would have advised each candidate to treat this question, but the way I would have treated it myself.

That the world in question has never been graspable except as forming part of a knowledge: it is clear that from all time, it is easy for us to see that representation is only a term which serves as surety for the lure of this knowledge.

Man himself was fabricated, right throughout his traditions, in accordance with these lures. It is quite clear then, that he could not be excluded from this representation, if we continue to make of this representation the surety of this world.

But it is the subject that we are dealing with and for us the subject, precisely in the measure that he may be unconscious, is not a representation, he is the representative (*Representanz*) of the *Vorstellung*. He is there in place of the *Vorstellung* which is lacking: this is the meaning of the Freudian term of *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*.

It is not a matter of objecting to us the fact that from all time this man with which we have covered the world, this *macroanthropos* which the macrocosm was, was of course always made sexed, but precisely it is only too clear that for want of being able to say what sex he was, he had the two and that indeed is the whole question.

(8) The fact of saying that one finds a little touch of the one and the other, a mixture of characteristics among the higher vertebrates, adds nothing to this.

The subject from which we have to begin is the piece which is lacking to a knowledge that is conditioned by ignorance and what is involved in its regard, if it is through it that we have to find man, is always in a position of a scrap of waste (*déchet*) with respect to his representation.

And in this measure one can say that until psychoanalysis, the world was always represented without the true man, without taking account of the place where he is as subject, the place in which there would be no representation, very precisely because the representation would not have a representative in the world.

This is how I have marked on the board, with their characteristics, the very ones that I have just stated, these three poles of knowledge *qua* unconscious which knows everything, perhaps, except what motivates it, of the subject who is established in his certainty of being a lack of knowledge, and of this third term which is precisely sex in the measure that in this sphere, it is rejected from the beginning, in the measure that it emerges from the fact that one wants to know nothing about it.

(9) This is where I am going to ask you: "Today, do you want us to play?" I say no more about it. I am not saying to you: "Do you want to play with me?" Because after all, from where I am speaking, namely as analyst, to play with me does not say with whom one is playing. I am not saying to you either that something is being played out.

Even though we are analysts, we are in history, and if physics is founded on the terms of: “Nothing is lost, nothing is created”; I would ask whoever here has reflected on history, whether the foundation of this idea of history is not very properly, “nothing is being played out (*rien ne se joue*).”

For all of those who have had the time to experience something of what, in our day, appeared to be played out in what can be written about history, for those who have had the time to see collapsing some pure game in history, is it not obvious that the march of things shows the truth of what I have just stated in this form: “nothing is being played out”.

If there is a truth of history, the Marxist truth for example, it is precisely what from a certain point of view we may be led to reproach it with: it is that everything is played out in advance if the subject of history is indeed there where we are told he is, in his economic foundations.

But this indeed is what is demonstrated at every turn. It is enough simply for us to put in its place what is involved, where it is believed the game is being directed from. It (10) nevertheless remains that this game has its status and that it is somewhere between the three terms that I have just outlined for you. It is into this that we are now going to enter and that I pursue my discourse for analysts, even if it proves to be only some game that I am playing for their sake, it is always where there is the least risk that they put the biggest amount, and the smallest where there is the greatest risk. But for this it is necessary to know what these terms mean, what the game itself means whatever the level at which we employ this category.

Game is a term with a very large extension, from childrens’ games up to the game that one can describe as one of chance, and even as far as what has been called, in a confusing fashion, games’ theory. I mean the one that appears to date from the book by Mr Von Neuman and his collaborator.

I will try today to tell you how from the point of view of analysis, which has all the characteristics of a game, we can approach what is involved in this register. The game is something which from its simplest forms up to its most elaborate ones, is presented as the substitution for the dialectic of these three terms, a simplification which, at first, establishes it in a closed system.

What is proper to the game is always, even when it is masked, a rule, a rule which (11) excludes as forbidden this point which is precisely the one that, at the level of sex, I designate for you as the impossible access point, in other words, the point where the real is defined as the impossible.

The game reduces this circle to the relationship of the subject to knowledge, this relationship has a sense and can only have a single one, it is that of waiting. The subject waits for his place in knowledge. The game is always about the relationship of a tension, of a distancing, through which the subject establishes himself at a distance from what already exists somewhere as knowledge.

If, at the time when I still believed that something was being played out, I made, for at least a trimester, the little flock whose crook I was then holding, exercise themselves at the game of odds or evens, it was in order to try to get this truth to pass into their veins. The person holding the marbles knows whether their number is odd or even. Besides, it does not matter whether he knows it or not, he has in his hand knowledge, and the passion for the game arises for the fact that, face to face with him, I establish myself as a subject who is going to know. Under whatever form it may be: of a stake or the marbles themselves, the reality which takes its place, loses what in this triangle, in this tripole, is the impossible to know but which, brought down to the level of a game, because excluded in this impossible, becomes the pure and simple reality of the stake (*l'enjeu*).

(12) The stake is in a way what masks the risk. Nothing, when all is said and done, is more contrary to risk than a game. The game caps the risk. And the proof is that the first steps in games' theory were taken not by Neuman but by Pascal, beginning with the theory of distribution, which means that at every moment of a game an equitable distribution of what is being played for is conceivable, a calculation of hopes is possible which means that to stop a game in the middle does not simply mean that each one of the players takes back his stake, which would be unjust, it is that the stake is distributed in function of what it is extraordinary to state, and which nevertheless gives the very structure of what is involved, in function of the calculation of the hopes of the players.

I will not go into detail about what is involved, contenting myself here with referring you to the fundamental works by Pascal on the matter, which moreover, for very good reasons have been the law ever since.

What does that mean, if not that for us, whose paths are cleared by this games' theory where it is demonstrated that what is called strategy is something which shows us that what is perfectly calculable, what in a large enough number of cases for it to provide a start to the whole elaboration concerning the exercise of games in a large enough (13) number of cases, the connotation of possible attempts for a player with the totality of possible attempts for the other being known, there is a point, named the saddle point, as one talks about the saddle of a horse, where there intersects as being strictly (*tristement*) identical, what the two players should play in order to have together and in every case, the minimum loss, showing that the nature of the game is far from being purely and simply the opposition between the players, but from the beginning, in its very comprehensibility, the possibility, on the contrary, of agreement.

What the player is looking for in every game, the player as a person, is always something which involves this conjunction as such of two subjects, and what is really at stake in the affair, is this player, the divided subject, in so far as he intervenes in it himself as a stake under the title of this little object, of this residue that we know well, we analysts in the shape of this object to which I gave the name of a little letter, the first one.

If there is something which supports every game activity, it is this something which is produced from the encounter of the divided subject in so far as he is

subject, with this something through which the player makes of himself the waste scrap of something which is played out elsewhere, the elsewhere which is full of risks, the elsewhere from which he has fallen from the desire of his parents, and there precisely the point from (14) which he turns away by going to seek, on the contrary, this relationship of a subject to a knowledge and to image for you in the most rudimentary form the well founded character of what I am indicating to you as being in the game, radically, the relationship of a subject to a knowledge, I will evoke for you an image that for me is particularly striking, that of a little girl who, around the age of three, had discovered this game, in an exercise in which it was not at all by chance that what was involved was to come and kiss her father, which consisted of going to the other end of the room, and in approaching with slow steps, and then more precipitous ones, punctuating this advance with these three words: “It will happen, it will happen, it will happen (*ça va arriver!*)”.

Such is the fundamental image in which there is included everything that is called, in its diversity, ludic activity up to its most complex and the most organised forms, the isolation of a system by means of a rule in which there is determined the entry into and the emergence from the game, within the game itself, the subject in whatever real he possesses and of an impossible to obtain real, materialised, as I might say, in what is at stake. And this is why the game is propitious, exemplary, isolating an isolatable form of the specification of desire; desire being nothing other than the appearance of this stake, of this *o* which is the being of the player, in the interval of a subject divided between his lack and his knowledge.

(15) Note that in this game, if reality is reduced to its form of waste scrap of sex, to its unsexual form, the other advantage of the game is that the truth relationship is there, because of the very suppression of this pole of reality as impossible, the relationship of truth is suppressed.

One could ask oneself in every sense what is involved in the truth of science before it is affirmed. One could ask oneself what is involved in the unconscious before I interpret it, and what is proper to a game, is that before one plays, no one knows what is going to come out of it.

This is the relationship of the game to phantasy. The game is a phantasy rendered inoffensive and preserved in its structure.

These remarks are essential to introduce what I want to articulate for you today, namely, what is involved in the game of analysis, if it is a fact, since it has all its characteristics, that analysis is a game because it is carried out within a rule, and regarding which it is a matter of knowing how the analyst has to direct this game, in order to know also what are the properties required of his position in order for him to direct it to this operation in a correct fashion.

Let us say first of all what use this schema is for us. To tell us, what we no doubt know but what we are far from articulating in every case, and this schema can even be explained, the fact is that in an analysis, there are apparently two players: these players (16) whose relationship I have tried to articulate for you as a

relationship of misunderstanding, since, from the place that one of these players occupies, the other, who is the subject, is the subject who is supposed to know, while if you trust my schematic articulation, the subject, if we can speak about this pole in its pure constitution, the subject is only isolated by withdrawing himself from any suspicion of knowing.

The relationship of one of these poles to the pole of the subject is a fallacious relationship, and it is also in this that it comes close to being a game; the subject who is supposed to know constitutes the conjunction of this pole of the subject to the pole of knowledge, regarding which the subject has first of all to know that at the level of knowledge a subject should not be supposed since it is the unconscious.

What results from that? To keep ourselves to these two poles, it is that from the point of view of the game, that gives perhaps two players, in the sense that in the games' theory of Mr Von Neuman what is meant by players are simple agents, the which agents are distinguished from one another simply by an order of preference.

But the very fact that these agents, in the case that I evoked earlier, may be in agreement without even knowing one another, on the simple sheet of paper that Mr Von Neuman uses to show that each of the two has only one and the same attempt to (17) make, proves that they are perfectly compatible by indicating the same person.

And from a certain point of view and up to a certain limit, if the analyst in his pure, original position has no other one than that of the subject as I define it from a Cartesian point of view, putting the one who, in any case, affirms himself, even if he knows nothing, he is the one who thinks that he knows nothing and that this perfectly well suffices to assure his position opposite the other player, who no doubt knows but does not know that he knows. It is quite clear that these two poles can very validly constitute, up to a certain point, the same person if we define the person not by this reference but by the common interest and the common interest is what is called the cure. What does the cure mean? Exactly what happens at some possible point where Pascal stops the game and can carry out at that moment the distribution of the bets in a fashion that is satisfactory for the two. The cure has absolutely no other sense than this distribution of the bets at some point or other of the process if we start from the idea that, up to a certain point, the subject and knowledge are perfectly made to agree, is what every analyst from the school of today's psychoanalysis call, in this false language borrowed from psychology, the alliance with the healthy part of the ego.

(18) In other words let us deceive ourselves together.

If there is something that I am trying to reintroduce, which would allow the analyst to end up with something other than an identification of the indeterminate subject with the subject who is supposed to know, namely, with the subject of deception, it is in the measure that I recall what even those who have this theory know in practice, which is that there is a third player. And that the third player is called the reality of sexual difference.

It is because before this reality of sexual difference, the subject who knows, who is not the analyst but the analysand, has been for a long time established within his own game, the one which has lasted, commenced and culminated in analysis, necessary, of two subjects, of the divided subject, on one side subject and on the other side knowledge, but not together, and of this something which means he can only apprehend himself as fallen and dropped from the reality which he neither wants nor can know anything about, in what ensures that man always has to flee the impossible of reality into this something which is the ludic supplement of it and at the same time its defence, this something that we know in the shape of what is revealed in phantasy in so far as its cause is the bringing into play of the subject in the form of this object of object relations, brought into play between the two opposed subjective terms of the (19) subject and of unconscious knowledge, this substitution of the \circ , of the object of waste, of the object of the fall, for what is involved, the reality of the sexual relationship, this is what gives its law to this relationship of the analyst to the analysand in this sense that far from him having to be content with some equitable distribution of the stakes, he has to deal with something where he finds himself indeed in a position of opposition to his partner.

As in all the cases where there is not in the game an agreeable solution, he has to deal with a partner who is on the defensive but whose defensiveness is dangerous and prevalent in the fact that contrary to what many imagine, this defensiveness is not directed against him the analyst, which gives him his strength, the fact is that it is directed against the other pole, that of sexual reality.

It is unbeatable precisely in that having, because of this fact, no solution, the ruse of the leader of the game, if the analyst can deserve his name, can only be the following, to make there end up from, to separate out from this defensiveness, a form that is always more pure.

And this is what the desire of the analyst is in its operation. To lead the patient to his original phantasy, is not to teach him anything, it is to learn from him how to act. In a particular case, it is the patient who knows how to deal with the \circ -object and its relationship to the division of the subject.

(20) And we are at the place of the result in the measure that we favour him. Analysis is the locus where there is verified in a radical fashion, because it shows it, this strict superimposition that desire is the desire of the other, not because the desire of the analyst is dictated to the patient, but because the analyst makes of himself the desire of the patient.

This is what is expressed for you by the little triangle in red, which shows you in what virtual space on the side of the other, a locus occupied by the analyst, there is situated the point of desire, namely, at strictly opposite poles, at the locus where there lies the impossible of the reality of sex.

Now it is here that there is found the high point of the analytic ruse, and it is there only that it can be rejoined. It is only from this perspective and in the measure

that the analyst is absolutely broken to it, that there can happen something of what properly speaking constitutes the only conceivable gain.

It is only at the point where there is taken to the maximum what makes knowledge be constituted as the guard, but understand it in the sense of serving, that this refusal of sexual reality, of this most intimate *aidos*, of this radical shame, it is precisely at this point that this shame may betray itself.

The fact is that this guard is brought to its most perfect point, which can let there (21) happen something of a lack of guard, for this reality of sex, for its part, is not supposed to know.

And it is there that I will leave oscillating the question of the final subjective positions.

Does this supreme shame know or not know? There are those who believe that it knows. But how can it be known what it knows, except at the level of the other, from which there is going to arise the shadow of this omnipotent signifier, of this supreme name, of the omniscient which has always been the trap, the elective locus of capture for those who need to believe, as everyone knows, to believe in it can mean, always means, the very people who believe affirm it and say it, it is the fideist theory, one can only believe what one is not sure about.

Those who are sure, well, precisely, they do not believe in it. They do not believe in the other; they are sure of the thing. These people are the psychotics. And that is why it is perfectly possible, contrary to what someone from this School has written in connection with the history of madness by Michel Foucault, to whom one can reproach only one thing which is not to have given to psychosis this formulation for want of having attended my seminar on President Schreber, there is a perfectly consistent discourse of madness, it is distinguished by the fact that it is sure that the thing

(22) I will leave you at this point - it is two o'clock - to which I led you today.

What ought to be, what can be this desire of the analyst, if it is to hold itself at the same time at this point of supreme complicity, open complicity, open to what? To surprise. The opposite of this waiting in which there is constituted the game in itself, the game as such, is the unexpected. The unexpected is not the risk. One prepares oneself for the unexpected. The unexpected even, if you will allow me for a moment to return to this outline of the para-Eulerian structuring that I tried to give you as necessary at least for certain concepts, namely the inverted eight, a little portion whose external field is this Moebius strip which must necessarily traverse it, you will see that the unexpected finds in the little portion its admirable application. For what is the unexpected if not what reveals itself as being already expected but only when it arrives.

The unexpected, in fact, traverses the field of the expected. Around this game of expectation, and confronting anxiety, as Freud himself in the fundamental texts on

this theme formulated it, around this field of expectation we ought to describe the status of what is involved in the desire of the analyst.

This is where I will take things up again in a fortnight's time, since the next time we will have a closed seminar.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 26 May 1965

Dr Lacan: In the first steps of my closed seminar it is of course to be expected that things will not immediately take on either their shape, or their style, or their method and that certain things remain in suspense.

Our friend Leclaire thought it was a pity that there had not been any response here, I mean a public one, to what Jacques-Alain Miller had written, the text of which had been put at everyone's disposal.

So then, I give the floor to Leclaire who is going to contribute in this connection some remarks which will not have simply the protocol interest of marking the importance of this text of Jacques-Alain Miller but of giving it a properly analytic response.

This intervention by Leclaire will be brief. Jacques-Alain Miller will reply to him if he thinks it is good and opportune to do so. This ought not to cut too much into the totality of our session today which, I remind you, is devoted to the attention that I asked should be given to the text of the *Sophist*, and on which there will intervene in two fleshed-out papers - we have therefore a very heavy program - Audouard first, then Kaufmann.

(2) **Dr Leclaire:** I am going to try to be brief and nevertheless to reply to Miller, namely, to announce my colours right away, to attempt to say how the position of the psychoanalyst is irreducible to any other one and, I will go even further, not only irreducible but perhaps, properly speaking, inconceivable.

I will do it by basing myself on Miller's text of 24th February and more precisely again, on what gives it its fascinating perfection.

In the passionate enterprise of interrogating the foundations of logic, of the logic that he describes as logical, and to gather together in the work of Lacan the elements of a logic of the signifier, Miller manages to present us with a very

marvellous discourse and I will not hide from him the satisfaction that I had in reading it, because circumstances had not given me the opportunity to hear it.

Miller's essay has, I believe, the concern to be, like its object, a logical or even archaeological discourse, as he says, and above all a discourse open to comprehending the other discourse, the discourse which has issued from analytic experience.

Now to come to such a discourse, the one that Miller has tried to maintain, it is necessary, as I might say, to hold firmly to the point which, precisely, makes possible the articulation of a logical discourse, namely, this point which is presented to us by (3) himself as the weak point and at the same time the crucial point of every discourse, namely, the suturing point.

It must be understood, Miller reminds us, that the function of suturing is not particular to the philosopher. It is important that you are convinced, he reminds us, he insists even, that the logician, like the linguist, at his level, sutures.

I am quite convinced of it. It is clear that Miller for his part, as a logician, or archaeologist, also sutures. But here precisely is where the difference is. The analyst, for his part, in any case, and even when he tries to talk about psychoanalysis, the analyst does not suture, or at least he ought to force himself, as I might say, to guard against this passion.

I could stop there. It would obviously be the briefest form. Nevertheless, I would like to take my argument a little bit further. It is easy to say suture. What precisely is involved? In what does there consist this suturing point that is being considered?

One of the propositions underlined in Miller's text which constitutes one of its axes, one of its pivots, is the following: it is in the decisive statement that the number assigned to the concept of non-identity to itself is zero that logical discourse is sutured.

(4) Far be it from me to contest the importance of this remark. On the contrary it is as useful to the analyst as to the logician. But I would like to go further and to question Miller's interest in the concept of non-identity to itself. In his text, the introduction of this concept of non-identity to itself follows on the one, which is no less fundamental, of the concept of identity to itself which is advanced in connection with Frege but in evoking the proposition of Leibnitz, namely: "those things are identical of which one can be substituted for the other without the truth being lost", and that it is starting from this that one arrives at these other proposition underlined in Miller's text, namely: "the truth is: everything is identical to itself".

I took good care, in this text, to take up also the question of the thing. What is this thing which is identical to itself? Miller does not pass over this in silence, on the contrary. He specifies for us, tries to specify for us, on pages 6 and 7, the relationships of the concept of the object and of the thing. The object - I am

summarising perhaps - is the thing in so far as it is one, and the concept is what subsumes - if I understood correctly - the existence of the object.

Everything is identical to itself, which allows the object, the thing *qua* one, to fall under the concept.

(5) This is a proposition that he says is pivotal. Those things are identical of which one can be substituted for the other without the truth being lost. It is necessary for the thing to be identical to itself for the truth to be saved, and there we will discover, I think, what constitutes the emphasis, the most important concern of this text, namely, to save the truth.

There again this is not necessarily a concern which is radically foreign to the analyst. But I think that it is not an essential concern, and above all not his unique concern. I told you: the analyst, for his part, does not suture. He does not have the same concern. He is not necessarily concerned with saving the truth.

In the proposition “the truth is: everything is identical to itself”, the analyst would be happy to say, at least I would, “the truth is also “. But reality is also. And reality, for the analyst, is to envisage the thing in so far as it is not one, to envisage the possibility of the non-identical to itself.

I am not saying that Miller does not do it. But he does it, in blocking right away the non-identical to itself, the concept of the non-identical to itself, by the signifier, by the number zero. I am going to try to make myself understood in a slightly more lively fashion.

(6) If one renounces, for a moment, the saving of the Truth, of the Truth with a capital T, what appears? What appears is the radical difference, in other words, the sexual difference, the difference between the sexes.

We can find an extremely precise reference to it in Freud’s work. At the moment when he is discussing the reality of the primal scene in connection with the observation on the *Wolfman*, he interests himself in the problematic of castration, in its relationships with anal eroticism, there comes to him this curious expression of an unconscious concept. He apologises for it, he does not know very well where that comes from. That comes to him from the unconscious; he proposes an unconscious concept. And what is involved in this unconscious concept?.

It certainly involves, a unit (*unité*), a unit which is the concept but a unit which overlaps things that are non-identical to themselves, which overlap, in his example, the faeces, the child or the penis; why not moreover the finger, the finger that is cut off and the little pimple on the nose, even the nose. We have the introduction of an unconscious concept, the notion of unconscious concept, and in the first example of Freud that comes to him, a little thing that can be separated from the body, but precisely a little thing, let us say, that is indifferent, which is not singular in itself.

(7) Do we have here the concept, or the reality, of a thing that is non-identical to itself, I would not go so far as to claim it, I would simply like, in returning this

time to the experience of analysis, to give another example of one of these cases in which one might be embarrassed by these references of identity to itself, and non-identity to itself, as fundamental.

Thus, still in the experience of the Wolfman, there are many moments where his experience pivots, turns upside down, where something changes radically.

In the supplement to the history of an infantile neurosis, that Ruth Mack Brunswick has given us, she signals textually one of these moments where the world pivots on its axis, where the structure of the world, the order of the world seems to vanish. It is the moment when, uneasy about the presence of this pimple on his nose, the Wolfman having questioned the dermatologist, hears it being said that nothing can be done, the pimple will remain the same, it will not change, there is nothing to do, there is no need to treat it or to take it off.

You will tell me, this pimple is therefore precisely one of these things, like that, which is found to coincide with itself. Does that mean that it is identical, that it can be located as identical. I do not think so at all. The proof is that he goes to see another (8) dermatologist, has the pimple removed, experiences moreover an acute ecstasy at the moment that this pimple is removed. He is relieved about it for a while. The veil which separates him from the world is once again torn, and he is once again present to the world.

But, of course, this does not last. And what replaces the pimple is a hole. And of course his delusional preoccupation - in fact the delusion is not one that would frighten us - is going to be what is going to happen to this hole, this little scar, this little scratch, which cannot be seen, but he, at his mirror where he constantly looks at his nose sees this hole.

The decisive moment, another decisive moment, which this time decides him to begin a new slice of analysis, is when he is told that the scars will never disappear.

There again it is the same thing: whether what is involved is the pimple or the scar of the pimple; different things, they are nevertheless the same things. For him also, here the world pivots on its axis, he can no longer live like that, it is completely intolerable.

In the formulation that Miller proposes to us and which, I must say, made me reflect a good deal, I think that there is lacking, perhaps, a passage on the problematic of what we could call the identity of zero's.

(9) What is it that makes a zero resemble another zero when one takes into account, at least, that the concept of zero is precisely what most resembles and that it is here we find the essence of identity when something of the order of zero appears.

Why? Because, precisely, it presents us with this radical difference. When I say that the analyst does not suture, it is because it is necessary, in his experience, that

even the zero does not serve to hide from him this truth of a radical difference, that is to say in the final analysis, or in the ultimate reality, of sexual reality.

For what does he see, if he does not suture? What can he see? He can see, precisely, this radical difference, the reality of sex underpinned by the fundamental castration.

He can envisage the riddle of generation. Not simply that of the generation of a sequence of numbers, but of the generation of men. And he can perhaps then glimpse the truth from an angle which is, very exactly, that of death.

In other words, I do not think that the analyst can, in any way, fundamentally situate himself with respect to truth.

(10) It is one of these differences, it is one of these dimensions. Just as important for him is the dimension of lure or of deception without for all that, moreover, him privileging what is called the illogical other, one could say that the domain of the analyst is rather a domain that is necessarily a-truthful, at least in its exercise.

I told you that the analyst refuses to suture. In fact he does not construct a discourse, even when he speaks. Fundamentally, and this is the reason why the position of the analyst is irreducible, the analyst listens. And everything that one says to the analyst, including the discourses that one hears, can illuminate him. He is listening for what? He is listening to the discourse of his patient, and what in the discourse of his patient interests him, is precisely how there is tied up for him this point of suture, how there is tied up for the patient, for the discourse of his patient, this particular suturing point where necessarily, in effect, a logical discourse is sutured.

In this sense, everything that Miller brings us is extremely precious. If Miller - and he said it to us in his very amusing introduction - situates himself, for his part, in order to speak to us, at a point of a topology of two dimensions, neither opened nor closed, thus neither outside nor inside, I agree, and what is more, that he occupies it, we grant (11) him that, let it be, but the analyst, for his part, even when he speaks or when he tries to speak, always listening to the discourse of the other, well then, he is rather like the subject of the Lacanian discourse, namely, he has no place and cannot have one. Whether he is on the side of the truth of death or on the side of the subject, namely, necessarily evanescent, without a place, without ever occupying, really, any place.

I can imagine that this position or this non-position of the analyst may give vertigo to the logician, to the one whose passion is for the truth. For he is in effect the witness, in his action, of this difference, which for its part is also radical between, let us say, a suturer, between a sutured desirer and one who refuses to suture, a non-suturer, a desirer-not-to-suture, I know well that in a certain way this position is intolerable. But I believe that, whatever we make of it, we are not finished with it, and you have not either Miller, you have not finished attempting, as they say, to put analysis in its place. In fact it is a good thing. For whether it puts itself there by itself - that happens, through weariness - or whether one tried

to constrain it there, one single thing is sure. The day that the analyst is in his place, there will no longer be analysis.

Dr Lacan: I will not indicate here, I will not recall, that the things that I began in the last two lectures, are obviously of a nature to give certain indications already in advance about the questions that Leclaire poses here, in a very relevant fashion.

I did not have the time to get us all in tune, as I might say, before this being linked to the work of each one of us. Miller has been very busy these last weeks. This means that I was not able to give all the importance it should have had to Leclaire's plan to speak.

Miller is therefore now free, because he had no prior communication, to respond to me now or to postpone his response. So that it will not be too long delayed, I am even on this occasion, ready to give him the floor at the beginning of our next meeting here, of the next lecture, which, quite simply, will take the place of our talk.

In other words, Miller, do you want to reply in a week's time or do you want a reply right away?

Mr J-A Miller: In a week's time would suit me much better.

Dr Lacan: I imagine so. Well then, there is no reason that you should improvise on the propositions which have been advanced and which deserve a very serious examination. So then you shall speak first.

I give the floor right away to Audouard.

(13) Mr Audouard: “Yes
 True
 Certainly
 I agree
 Undoubtedly
 Perfectly true
 Obviously
 You are speaking the truth
 Go on
 What do you say?
 That is exactly my opinion.”

These are the words of Theaetetus, this blessed young man, chosen in your circle, O Socrates, to echo the maieutic discourse of the Stranger. To offer his desire as a reply to the desire of the Stranger. He is a strange blessed young man, whose role I am constrained to adopt today before you caught as I am on the hook of the Master, before being so on that of the questioner. Do you not irresistibly think, in listening in this way to the mouth of Theaetetus opening and closing like a valve, of the sucking of air by the fish which is being asphyxiated at the hand of the fisherman.

A Stranger arrives in the circle with whom Socrates had made an appointment the day before. He comes from Elea, from among the disciples of Parmenides and Zeno. In (14) our day he would surely come to us from the USA. Perhaps he is among us today. Perhaps he is in us today, why not?.

This other might come into our circle to question us about the sophism which had dressed up the truth in beautiful clothes before it made it lose its very foundations by being referred to the truth. The beginning of Plato's dialogue administers the proof to us without telling us. No one can, in effect, know in this dialogue about the angler, who is the fish and who is the fisherman.

Theaetetus mouth opens and closes on the hook dangled by the Stranger, but the Stranger is much rather the fish, because the aim of his discourse is to escape from the net held out by the Sophist. But the Sophist himself, is he not the one who must be grasped and taken in the bow-net, by fishing him along the line of the dichotomies thanks to which one will finally reach his definition. Where has the fisherman gone then? According to the point of view that is adopted, Theaetetus, the fish, will retrospectively fish in the mouth of the Stranger the truth that he wants to grasp. Or the Stranger will fish, in the agreement of Theaetetus, the surrender of the Sophist. Or might it not rather be that the Sophist has caught with his bait the two who are speaking about him, because, when all is said and done, the Stranger and Theaetetus are going to be caught up in the operation of an enormous sophism which will consist (15) in using from the very start, as an essential base of their meeting, the very thing that they are trying to find in their meeting, that the participation, the community, the *koinonia* give, in this game of what is and of what is different, an acceptable status to the *fantasmata*, to the simulacrum, which the Sophist sustains as being purely and simply non-being.

But just as the fish is the real fisherman, as the fisherman becomes rather the fish of his fish, as the fisherman passes into the fish and the fish into the fisherman, in the same way, you are going to recognise the method thanks to which the Stranger is going to pursue the definition of the Sophist, and which is called dichotomy, makes pass what was first of all a predicate into a subject, posing first of all, by this fact, a subject with whom one no longer knows what to do, since he remains at the origin independent of the subjects and the predicates that he has generated.

This subject who is first of all the angler and who subsequently is going to become the Sophist. I illustrate for you by a reference to the text :

“Stranger: What is there which is well known and not great, and is yet as susceptible of definition as any larger thing? Shall I say an angler? He is familiar to all of us, and (16) not a very interesting or important person.

Theaetetus: He is not

Stranger: Yet I suspect that he will furnish us with the sort of definition and line of enquiry which we want.

Theaetetus (the blessed young man): Very good.

Stranger: Let us begin by asking whether he is a man having art or not having art, but some other power.

Theaetetus: He is clearly a man of art.

Stranger: And of arts there are two kinds?

Theaetetus: What are they?

Stranger: There is agriculture and the tending of mortal creatures, and the art of constructing or moulding vessels, and there is the art of imitation - all these may be appropriately called by a single name?

Theaetetus: What do you mean? And what is the name?

Stranger: He who brings into existence something that did not exist before is said to be a producer, and that which is brought into existence is said to be produced.

Theaetetus: True.

Stranger: And all the arts which were just now mentioned are characterised by this (17) power of producing?

Theaetetus: They are.

Stranger: Then let us sum them up under the name of productive or creative art.

Theaetetus: Very good.

Stranger: Next follows the whole class of learning and cognition; then comes trade, fighting, hunting. And since none of these produces anything, but is only engaged by conquering by word or deed, or in preventing others from conquering, things which exist and have already been produced - in each and all of these branches there appears to be an art which may be called acquisitive.

Theaetetus: Yes, that is the proper name.

Stranger: Seeing, then, that all arts are either acquisitive or creative, in which class shall we place the art of the angler?

Theaetetus: Clearly in the acquisitive class. (218d-219d)

(I am not going to go through the whole dichotomic definition of the angler but to indicate to you the very style through which it is obtained and that the commentator summarises as being art of production or of acquisition, an art of acquisition whether it be by exchange or by capture, an art which is by capture or by fighting or by hunting, an art which by hunting is either of the animated or the inanimate type. This is the (18) dichotomy which has left as I told you, at the origin, the true subject. It is starting from him that one began to dichotomise. In the same way one can refer to the other series of dichotomies which is going to be the hunt for living things, the animated kind therefore, and those that remain in the water; and then it is the sort of fishing that is done using a dam or by striking the prey.

Now, when all is said and done, in this first approximation of the definition of the angler and further on of the Sophist in what light is it going to manifest itself?

Oyez(?) rather: the schema will be the art sorting out the similar and the better by purification. The art of sorting the better, which will be done on corporal things, and spiritual things, rather spiritual. Good, or then the art of sorting the spiritual things and which will then belong to correction or teaching. Teaching which will be then the teaching of trades or education. Education which will be either admonishing or refuting.

But what is it, then, that the Stranger wants to reach in this way? He is already there, and as soon as he is there, already lost. Is this Sophist not ungraspable

because he is posited as pure origin of the discourse that is going to be conducted about him? Is not every subject of a discourse hidden immediately that the discourse begins, because he is clothed by the discourse itself? Now, let us remark in passing, the Sophist is (19) precisely the one who hides behind his discourse, not being able to initial it and to make it true by recognition, covering the others with it and letting himself be covered by it.

But it is precisely against that that the Stranger protests by showing the character of unveiling, of purification, of catharsis of the one who believes that he is the true educator.

Again I cannot resist reading to you the passage where the Stranger tries to define this truthful and true educator. He speaks of the Sophist :

Stranger: The Sophist cross-examines a man's words when he thinks that he is saying something and is really saying nothing, and easily convicts him of inconsistencies in his opinion; these they then collect by the dialectic process, and placing them side by side, show that they contradict one another about the same things, in relation to the same things, and in the same respect. He, seeing this, is angry with himself, and grows gentle towards others, and thus is entirely delivered from great prejudice and harsh notions in a way which is most amusing to the hearer and produces the most lasting good effect on the person who is the subject of the operation. For as the physician (20) considers that the body will receive no benefit from taking food until the internal obstacles have been removed, so the purifier of the soul is conscious that his patient will receive no benefit from the application of knowledge until he is refuted, and from refutation learns modesty; he must be purged of his prejudices first and made to think that he knows only what he knows and no more. (230b-d)

“To think that he knows only what he knows and no more” Is this not the most striking expression of a tautology to which we will have to return. Here there is going to begin a logical journey to which I will ask you to give the whole of your attention and of which I do not want to give too heavy an illustration by referring ceaselessly to the text. I summarise it for you therefore :

- 1) To instruct the young about everything one must know everything.
- 2) Now to be omniscient is impossible; in the case of the Sophist therefore it is only make-believe.

“Well, a man who says he knows everything and could teach it to another for a small fee in a short time can hardly be taken in earnest.” (234a)

(21) This game is the imitation which is going to replace the reality by imitations and illusions. Thus I quote:

“Well, we know this about the man who professes to be able, by a single form of skill, to produce all things, that when he creates with his pencil representations bearing the same name as real things he will be able to deceive the innocent minds of children, if he shows them his drawings at a distance, into thinking that he is capable of creating in full reality, anything he chooses to make. Then must we

not expect to find a corresponding form of skill in the region of discourse, while we”, continues the Stranger, “we are capable by experience of seeing through *fantasmata*, illusions.

I quote: “And is it not inevitable that after a long enough time, as these young hearers advance in age, and coming into closer touch with realities, are forced by experience to apprehend things clearly as they are, most of them should abandon these former beliefs, so that what seemed important will now appear trifling and what seemed easy difficult and all the illusions created in discourse will be completely overturned by the realities which encounter them in the actual conduct of life?

Theaetetus: Yes, so far as I can judge at my age, but I suppose I am one of those who are still at a distance.

Stranger: That is why all of us here must try, as we are in fact trying, to bring you as close as possible to the realities and spare you the experience” (234d-e).

(22) The simulacrum created in discourse will be completely overturned by the realities of life.

Do you not hear the psychoanalyst designating to his cured patient, the window through which he finally sees reality? And through which, if the patient has really finally understood, he will not fail to throw himself. In short, it is the Stranger straight from the USA, namely, one that we are used to.

Thus, in the light of our experience and of our wisdom and of our love of reality, we have understood that the Sophist, for his part, is a magician, an illusionist. And what does he fabricate? Simulacrums, *fantasmata*. And what then is a simulacrum? Well they are not copies, because over against these, they are constructions which include the angle of the observer in order that the illusion may be produced from the very point where the observer finds himself. I quote:

Stranger: The first art that I distinguish in imitation is the making of likeness. The perfect example of this consists in creating a copy that conforms to the proportions of the original in all three dimensions and giving moreover the proper colour to every part.

Theaetetus: Why, is not that what all imitators try to do?

(23) Stranger: Not those sculptors or painters whose works are of colossal size. If they were to reproduce the true proportions of a well made figure, as you know, the upper part would look too small and the lower too large because we see the one at a distance and the other close at hand.

Theaetetus: That is true

Stranger: The first kind of image, then, being like the original may fairly be called a likeness (*eikon*).

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And the corresponding subdivision of the art of imitation may be called by the name we used just now - likeness making.

Theaetetus: It may

Stranger: Now, what are we to call the kind which only appears to be a likeness of a well made figure because it is not seen from a satisfactory point of view, but

to a spectator with eyes that could fully take in so large an object, would not be even like the original it professes to resemble? Since it seems to be a likeness, but is not really so, may we not call it a semblance (*fantasma*)? Theaetetus: By all means” (235d-236b).

(24) The Sophist creates an illusion therefore but from the very point of view where his interlocutor is found. He creates the representatives of the representation, the copies of the simulacrum, the *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*. His art is the art of the phantasy.

It is here that there is going to be introduced the question which one might think to be the essential one of the dialogue: what status is to be given to non-being, to what lacks being in the simulacrum. And nevertheless, our manner of introducing it would tend rather to make us think that it is not in reality on the status of non-being that the emphasis is laid, but indeed on the little separation, the little warping of the real image of the copy which depends on the particular point of view observed, occupied for the observer, and which constitutes the possibility of constructing this simulacrum, the work of the Sophist. Non-being poses thus in truth and for us, the question of the subject, because if the *fantasma* is possible, that comes from the particular place the subject occupies with respect to the universal and all-seeing subject. We would be well founded in thinking that the dialogue about the status of non-being is transposable into a dialogue on the status of the subject.

“Mark now, tell me, we do not hesitate to utter the phrase ‘that which has no sort of being’”? (237b)”

(25) And Theaetetus gives the subtle response: “Why not?”

But the Stranger follows his infallible logic, founded on a logic whose real flaw will only appear to us much later: non-being cannot be attributed to any being. Hence it follows that it is impossible to think it in any form whatsoever. But the “it” is too much since it already makes a unit of it and subsumes being under the concept of unity. The Sophist awaits, for his part, full of irony until “his patient” (the word is from Plato) gets bogged down in this rut.

Stranger: Accordingly, if we are going to say he possesses an art of creating simulacra, he will readily take advantage of our handling our arguments in this way to grapple with us and turn them against ourselves. When we call him a maker of images, he will ask what on earth we mean in speaking of an image at all. So we must consider, Theaetetus, how this truculent person’s question is to be answered.

Theaetetus: Clearly we shall say we mean images in water or in mirrors and again images made by the draftsman or the sculptor and any other things of that sort.

Stranger: It is plain, Theaetetus, that you have never seen a Sophist.

Theaetetus: Why?

(26) Stranger: He will make as though his eyes are shut or he has no eyes at all.

Theaetetus: How so?

Stranger: When you offer him your answer in such terms, if you speak of something to be found in mirrors or in sculpture, he will laugh at your words, as

implying that he can see. He will profess to know nothing about mirrors or water or even eyesight, and will confine his question to what can be gathered from discourse.” (239c-240a).

This rut, therefore, is that giving to the Sophist the domain of the simulacrum and deception as his work, we will affirm that his art is an art of illusion, that we will then say that our soul forms false opinions through the effect of his art. Hence it will follow that in our soul there are things which are not and non-beings that are. We transfix ourselves in the contradiction if we say that the Sophist succeeds in his imposture, then we are saying at the same time that non-being can be because he succeeds at it and even manages to define it. If we want to make the non-being disappear, we have to make the Sophist himself and his art disappear. But if we make the Sophist and his art disappear, (well then, believe me, if you wish, this is what Plato introduces us to at this very place) then the essential is lost. Why? Because we return in doing this to the father of our discourse, to Parmenides, whose oracle is always heard: “No, you will never bend non-beings to being by force: distance your thinking from this route of (27) research.”

It is doing this that every path towards parricide will be closed off, that every simulacrum will be forbidden and that, when all is said and done, in order that the father should be, it is necessary that the place of non-being, namely, that of the subject, should be filled by this prohibiting word to which one should not even respond: the father being an unattackable monolith and man a virtual pebble which cannot be detached from it. He is a blessed Sophist who wants to make it possible for us to become rather “gods, tables or pots” thanks to his simulacra. But the Stranger becomes fearful:

“I have another still more pressing request.”

Theaetetus: What is that?

Stranger: That you will not think I am turning into a sort of parricide.” (241d)

But in fact if the Stranger is afraid what is he then but a simulacrum of a parricide.

I want to make the remainder short, and summarise like a good scoliaste, the doctrine that is constituted throughout the dialogue and wants to suppress the Sophist by including him in a sort of *Aufhebung* which did not have to wait for Hegel, an *Aufhebung* which we are going to have to question ourselves about. I quote :

Stranger: On these grounds then it seems that only one course is open to the (28) philosopher who values knowledge and the rest above all else. He must refuse to accept from the champions either of the one or of the many forms the doctrine that all reality is changeless, and he must turn a deaf ear to the other party who represent reality as everywhere changing. Like a child begging for both, he must declare that reality or the sum of things is both at once - all that is unchangeable and all that is in change.

Theaetetus: Perfectly true. (249c-d)

Thus Plato attempts to reconcile Parmenides and Heraclitus, the *on* and the *genesis*, being and becoming, the true being reached by thought, by pure thought, and the becoming reached by sensation. He adopts an intermediary position between being and non-being, the becoming being not nothing. If it is true that being is, it is not strictly true that non-being is not. The genesis, the becoming is not being but it is not nothing. What is present is not being and non-being but being and the other which is not the non-being of this being, except by participating in being that it is not yet. There is thus constituted the category of *koinonia*, of participation, of community.

In effect if there is no *koinonia* between the genera, there is only pure identity prohibiting all thought. If, on the contrary, *koinonia* is universal, everything is in everything and movement is only rest.

(29) But if the *koinonia* is limited, nothing is related to anything. Just as certain groups of letters are unpronounceable, others are pronounceable, in virtue of certain letters that allow consonants. For thus appear multiple othernesses that the limitation of being by non-being grounds the possibility of the All.

Here in short we have the triumph of the Stranger.

“So it seems when a part of the nature of the different and a part of the nature of being are set in contrast to one another, the contrast is, if it is permissible to say so, as much a reality as the being itself. It does not mean what is contrary to being but only what is different to being.

Theaetetus: That is quite clear.

Stranger: What name are we to give it then?

Theaetetus: Obviously this is just that “what is not “ which we were seeking for the sake of the Sophist. (258b)

From this there is going to flow rapidly a new definition of the Sophist and one which is no longer an *aporia* but the possibility at last of catching him at the end of the line and precisely of bringing him to the light of judgement. By refusing non-being in (30) favour of the other the Stranger had wanted to, and believed he had shown that non-being was only a creation of the Sophist because the Sophist refuses to give it an ontological status, conducting his patient by trickery to an inadmissible contradiction. And it is on the very terrain of the Sophist that the battle must now be won in the domain of opinion and of discourse of truth and of falsity. For the Sophist there is no falsity. I quote again:

Theaetetus: I do not understand why we need an agreement about discourse at the present moment.

Stranger: I may be able to suggest a line of thought that will help you to understand.

Theaetetus: What is that ?

Stranger: We say that non-being is a single kind among the rest, dispersed over the whole field of realities.

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: We have next to consider whether it blends with thinking and discourse.

Theaetetus: Why that?

Stranger: If it does not blend with them, everything must be true but if it does, we shall have false thinking, and discourse for thinking or saying what is not comes, I (31) suppose, to the same thing as falsity in thought and speech

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And, if falsity exists, deception is possible.

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And once deception exists, images and likenesses and appearance will everywhere be rampant.

Theaetetus: Of course

Stranger: And the Sophist, we said, had taken refuge somewhere in that region but then he had denied the very existence of falsity; no one could either think or say what is not, because what is not never had any sort of being

Theaetetus: So he said (260b-d).

It is necessary therefore to establish the being of what is false. Are all the notes in accord? No. Those which are in accord, do they express a meaning? Those which are in accord express a sense, the others no. No pure sequence of nouns, no pure sequence of verbs expresses a sense but only the agreement between nouns and verbs.

I will not quote any more in order not to lengthen my text. Beyond this agreement it is also necessary for there to be accord between the sense which is spoken and the subject of which one speaks. Hence it will follow that the discourse will be true or false. The false discourse, then, says things that are but different in this respect from those that are. Thus an assemblage of verbs and of nouns which, with regard to a subject, states in fact to be other what is the same, is like being what does not exist, (32) here it seems in fact is the kind of assemblage which really and truly constitutes a false discourse. You have recognised the style of the Stranger, I hope. Now, discourse, imagination, opinion found this same qualification, producers of illusion, of images, of simulacrum, but the simulacrum, *fantasma*, will be in turn divided in two: the simulacrum is constructed by way of intrusions and the person who makes the simulacrum claims to be like an instrument; this is the imitation which makes the simulacrum of which you know but it is he who imitates. Others may not know and nevertheless imitate. You see this moreover every day. Here then, continues the Stranger, are two imitators that we must say are different. From one another I imagine. The one who does not know and the one who knows.

Let us translate: the one who has a sure reference, the other not having one but only a *doxa* [?], an opinion. Now the Sophist is one of those. He is not one of those who know, nor one of those who limit themselves to imitation. It is, following an neologism introduced here by Plato, a *doxomime*. This person in a private reunion cutting his discourse into two brief arguments, constrains his interlocutor to contradict himself. And nevertheless he is not a wise man for he knows nothing. It is time to (33) conclude as soon as possible, when I have told you why it is opportune to conclude.

The Platonic dialogue is cut here in effect but by intersecting itself. In effect the Stranger bases himself, in order to insert the Sophist into his definition, on the fact that the Sophist, as against the wise man, knows nothing. Knows nothing about what? What justice is, for example, having only a *doxa*, an opinion, but he nevertheless makes a discourse about it. This discourse is not based on any serious reference. What would such a reference be? The maieutic path along which the wise man for his part has succeeded in defining justice from dichotomy to dichotomy, going always towards the right if he is writing in Greek, this path gives him a sure reference about the nature of justice and allows him not to create a simulacrum of it. But what is involved? The idea of justice which grounds the research and is immediately dichotomised, or the idea of justice which contain *nachträglich, a posteriori*, all the dichotomies, all the cross-roads of the road by which one came. Who then knows? The one who begins or the one who arrives? The subject of which one speaks or the subject at which one arrives. What is the subject who is supposed to know if not the wise man himself. To know what? That he always knew precisely what was necessary to know. The Sophist, for his part, pretends that to know and not to know comes back to the same thing because there is no truth in the simulacrum, because the gap which creates the simulacrum, the (34) difference as much from the copy of reality as reality itself. That the simulacrum alone establishes the subject by incorporating him as this gap itself, that the subject is not and cannot be a reference, except by bringing to light at each incident of the dichotomic process that he is the new gap taken with respect to any reference, that never will this subject overfly as a subject of knowledge, the totality of the gaps where he has been established, that the subject to be known is a simulacrum, a phantasy, in fact. He cannot be known except from the particular point of view of the subject to whom he reveals himself. It is in the last analysis only the Sophist who prevents the dialogue about Sophistry from being an enormous Sophistry. Suppress him for a moment from your reading. Make of him a sceptic for example who does not dissolve the truth in discourse but suspends it before any discourse. You will see that he might receive exactly the same objections as the Sophist on the part of the Stranger. For the Sophist, as you know, man is the measure of everything, of everything there is and of everything there is not. The Sophist, for his part, establishes himself like the zero, from which numeration is going to begin, and as the zero who is going to sustain it so that it can finally be held by it. This is what permits for example all the enumerations of the Stranger, provided that the zero of the arrival is here considered by the Stranger as the one (*le un*) of knowledge.

The sceptic, for his part, declares himself to be the zero like a one that can be designated at the beginning. It does not matter whether the Stranger shows him that he is wise because he knows what he is even though he simulates not knowing. For the Stranger, this is his Sophistry, has science instead of those who do not have it or who say they do not have it. He puts himself forward as the subject of all knowledge. What we have, for our part, is that he speaks to us and about us every day on our couches. That he speaks in us when we hear speaking those who are speaking. He is the obsessional soul who haunts every locus of analysis, and the Sophist, please God he exists, is nothing less having lost his references, in the gap that is constitutive of the simulacrum, than the analyst

himself. His voice being nothing more than that of Theaetetus who replaces him here:

“Yes,
That is how it is.
Of course.
Keep talking.”

Dr Lacan: I think that we ought to thank Audouard for his extremely precise and elegant discourse which seems to me to have first of all this advantage, which is to have, for those who have not yet at my summons opened the *Sophist*, constituted the best introduction to it.

I think that it is legitimate to procede as Audouard has done, namely, in the last analysis to credit Plato with what, nevertheless, is not retrospectively enounced, namely, this fundamental function of the gap (*écart*) in what is incorrectly translated as the simulacrum and which is represented by the Greek term of *fantasma*.

Obviously, the important thing in this discourse, is that it allows there to be shown with what precociousness in philosophical reflection there was introduced, as I might say, the status of the phantasy. Nevertheless, I think it is correct to say that Plato did not establish it, any more than he was able to establish the status of imitation, or what he believed to be imitation, in the foundations of art.

This shows how moving is the subject into which we are advancing if we take a dialogue of Plato, because we ought all the same preserve some references to what it was, as one might say, historically, in function of Plato, however englobing this function always remains and even for us.

(36) I would not be unhappy if someone were to contribute an echo, indeed a reply to what Audouard put forward to day. And perhaps after all, who knows, the matter might tempt Jacques-Alain Miller at the same time as he replies to Leclaire the next time. I would not be unhappy to know what the discourse of Audouard inspired in him or may inspire in him between now and then, in a week's time, as he emerges from his personal work. I do not want to delay any longer giving the floor to Kaufmann who undoubtedly in the twenty minutes that remain to us will only be able to introduce things which are extremely fruitful and of a sort, of an aspect that is quite singular and different, of which he was good enough to give me a glimpse.

Do you feel yourself in the mood, Kaufmann, to introduce it in twenty or twenty-five minutes?

Mr Kaufmann: Oh yes, especially as it can be interrupted. It concerns a few trifles principally by way of reference. It is probable that I will not have the time to develop it but since the texts are within everybody's reach, I will limit myself to giving a few references that emerged from an association of ideas which came

to me in connection with the *Sophist*. At the end of the *Sophist*, you know that there is a question of number. As I was reading this passage I found myself thinking about the sheep of Polyphemus. This made me curious to look up Polyphemus and this reference seemed (38) to me to be useful enough for me to tell you in particular what was brought up by Polyphemus, which shows that this story of the angler is a very ancient story and it is moreover very difficult to disentangle all its knots. One see that the problem of the relationships between the question of phantasy on the one hand, and on the other hand the question of the relationship between the elements, namely, between fire, air, etc., all of that certainly circulated in Greek thought and I think that the dialogue of the *Sophist* is to be set in this context.

So then I will limit myself to giving you a few references which I consulted.

On Polyphemus we have a number of texts at our disposal. There is first of all of course the archetypal text in what concerns Sophistry, namely, *Outis*. The serious question - you know the passage: Who is there? No one. This in short proposes to us at the beginning the very problem that will be discussed in the *Sophist* but from a different point of view, namely, what are the consequences of the use of the *bouc*. Plato, precisely, will answer that correctly to interpret the misadventure of Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*, it is important to distinguish between *ouc*, namely the negation of, let us say, the negation grounded on the principle of identity and on the other hand, the *mais*, namely, a differential negation which places us, as you know, on the (39) path of signifying differentiation, namely, that in short the fatal error of Polyphemus was not, properly speaking, to remain at the principle of identity but, things being a little bit more complicated, to confuse simultaneously two planes, on the one hand the phonetic plane, and on the other hand the plane in which there ought to intervene this distinction between the *mais* and the *ouc*.

But this might not seem to have any great relationship with phantasy if, precisely, we did not see throughout the history of mythology, a progressive revelation of the myth. The texts at our disposal are, therefore, first of all the *Odyssey*, on the other hand the *Cyclops* of Euripides, thirdly an *Idylle* by Theocritus, and finally the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. The text of Plato then has to be situated between the interpretation of the myth by Euripides in the *Cyclops* on the one hand, and on the other hand the evolution that the myth underwent after him namely in Theocritus.

Now then, what is very interesting in this adventure, what is amusing, is that progressively there is revealed what was masked at the beginning in the adventure of Polyphemus, namely, that there appeared progressively the phantasy under the species of Galatea. You know that Galatea, in Theocritus, is the nymph whom Polyphemus (40) loves and the lovers who frequent the Luxembourg Gardens know that they can find at the Medici fountain a plastic representation of the discovery made by Polyphemus of the loves of Galatea, his nymph adored like a phantasy, and of Acis.

You know, on the other hand, that this did not bring much luck to Acis. Acis was crushed by a rock. This did not bring him luck if not for the fact that Acis has something to see from it, under the species of a river, namely that Acis was absorbed into a current which makes us think that his fate was not definitively so disastrous as it might first have seemed.

So then in the *Odyssey*, Polyphemus and Ulysses, in the *Cyclops* Polyphemus and Satyr but not yet Galatea. Polyphemus holds the satyrs prisoner. The satyrs long for their Galatea but there is no question of it. It is because we know that subsequently Galatea comes to establish a connection between the different phases of the myth.

On the contrary, in Theocritus and then in Ovid we see Galatea appearing in flesh and blood.

The final text to which we we have to refer is the poem by Gongora which belongs to the same cycle as regards the evolution of the myth and which gives us, as regards what concerns the birth of the Cyclops, an indication that we can, in a way, if not by (41) knowing here how things are constituted, in fact be a segment which gives us an interpretation of the *Cyclops*, namely, that things close in on themselves.

In the poem by Gongora we hear the song of Polyphemus, only it is a little late to read the verses: "Daughter of the sea whose ears to my wailing are like a rock in the wind, thou who in my sleep takes away from my complaints the purple trees of coral by the hundred or who to the dissonant rhythm of marine plants if not the agreeable instrument interlacing hearts with incense, listen today to my voice for its sweetness if not because of mine."

And then, a little bit further on we see the birth of the Cyclops. This is what he says to us : "A maritime kingfisher crowned in his flight above his eggs an eminent rock, the day when as a mirror of sapphire there was shining from my person the blue bank, I looked and I saw shining a sun in front while in the heavens an eye appeared. Neuter asked himself who should be believed, the human heavens or the terrestrial Cyclops."

This obviously ought to be given a long commentary but initially poses us the problem (42) of what relationship there is between the eye of the Cyclops, Sophistry, phonetics and the development of the myth of Galatea.

In what concerns the eye of the Cyclops you know that it is no doubt the orifice of the crater surrounded by fire and, in short, one could say that the question which is posed for us in the *Odyssey* means that knowledge, what relationship is there between the belly rumbling with the sounds of the Cyclops, rumbling let us say with the verbal fury of the Cyclops inside the crater, and the relationship of this sound to the eye of the Cyclops, namely, to the orifice of the crater, the fact that this eye is unique and finally the fact that the unfortunate Polyphemus was deceived, as you know, by Ulysses.

In other words, why is it that this Cyclops was destined precisely not to understand that *Outis* was not a proper name or rather what could be at the same time a proper name and something else according to the point of view that one places oneself. *Outis*, no one, is a proper name in the measure that one interprets it phonetically. I can be called Outis, I can be called no one.

On the other hand one cannot say that Outis is not a proper name. It seems, even though Homer does not say so very certainly, his listeners understood that Outis meant not one among others, in other words, Outis is precisely a proper name in the measure (43) that one cannot order what is designated here by Outis in a series of general terms that can be assimilated to one another. Outis signifies that Ulysses is designated as not being one among others, in the sense that one could say for example that a chair, when one says a certain chair, well then, it is a chair among other chairs, that perhaps we might rejoin the relationship to arithmetic, that is latent in the *Odyssey* here, Outis designates himself as being not one among others. Only he is something other than that, and if he is something other than that, we have to introduce the category of otherness, namely, that we must in place of the *ouc* introduce the *mais* and it is on this precisely that the cleverness of Plato will be brought to bear.

Why, moreover, is the Cyclops destined precisely not to make this distinction. Well then, Plato will teach us, precisely, that someone who has only one eye cannot distinguish between a reflection and a representation, in other words, he is not capable of introducing within the general category of the imaginary the differentiations that we all, in so far as we have two eyes, can make. The commentary here might obviously be late, but we are only busying ourselves with the connection of ideas, the commentary ought to be looked for in the *Timaeus*, by Plato, where as you know, Plato links the (44) problem of inversion, the problem of right and left, to the problem of the mirror and the problem of the simulacrum.

This then being sufficient as regards the *Odyssey*, we can pass to the theme of the Cyclops in Euripides. One of the principle transformations that we see in Euripides, is that the Cyclops of Euripides is no longer simply the boiling of the roaring, Polyphemus, as his name indicates is precisely that. It is no longer simply the boiling, it is no longer simply fire, but we see there being introduced here a differentiation between the solid element and the liquid element, a differentiation which, precisely, will be at the heart of the version that Theocritus will give of the same myth. I will limit myself here to quoting some fragments from the *Cyclops* of Theocritus: “White Galatea, why do you reject the one who loves you?”, and a little further on, which gives us then a reference point as regards the angler, the situation of the angler: “what misfortune that my mother did not bring me into the world with gills! I would dive to rejoin you, I would kiss your hands, if I do not want your lips, I would bring you white lilies, tender poppies, etc.” And a little further on, moreover, the poet takes it up again, saying: “Cyclops, Cyclops where has your reason gone? If you were to weave (45) baskets and gather the young branches that you carry, you would have more sense. Take the ones that present themselves, why are you pursuing what flees from you.”

You see here that in Theocritus the problem of the phantasy, namely, Galatea and the position of Galatea in the liquid element is very precisely linked to the problem of space and, as Plato does, precisely, to the question of the dimensions and the number of space. This gives us the phantasy as situating itself in a one-dimensional space which is divided between approaching and fleeing. And this again precisely would have to be put into relationship with the angler.

That the angler represents effectively a given underlying all these discussions of Sophistry, and of philosophy in its relations to Sophistry, is what indicates to us in a manner which cannot, it seems to me, be by chance, another register involving another one of Ulysses' enemies namely Palamedes.

I will not talk a lot here about Palamedes. It would all the same be rather easy because we possess few texts on Palamedes. You know who Palamedes is. Already to interest you in the story I will say that a text of Pausanias tells us, separating itself moreover from other versions, that Palamedes was massacred when he went fishing.

(46) Here, it is a simple passage where Pausanias reports on his visit to pictures representing precisely the enemies of Ulysses. Well then, this little feature invites us to become interested in Palamedes, and when one becomes interested in Palamedes one sees that Ulysses is found in a very significant way to be flanked on the one hand by Polyphemus, the roarer, on the one hand and by Palamedes who is none other, as you know, it is perhaps no harm to recall it, none other than the man of writing. Palamedes was the Dreyfus of the Greek army. A letter was circulated in the army in which he proposed to betray the Greeks. On the other hand, his pocket was stuffed with pieces of gold. Here, moreover, there is an undisguised reference to the relationships between linguistics and arithmetic. The unfortunate Palamedes was found thus to be convicted of treason and properly speaking stoned by the Greeks as a punishment for this crime.

It is Ulysses who is at the origin of this sad story because the trouble between Palamedes and Ulysses comes from the fact that Ulysses was not all that keen to go to war, and he had simulated madness, in circumstances upon which I will not insist and he had his plough drawn by a donkey, if I remember correctly, or another animal and he amused himself by scattering salt. In short, he said, you see that I am unfit for (47) armed service, as you see, I am completely nuts. Only Palamedes, in order to convict him, did something very simple, something analogous to a judgement of Solomon. He put the little Telemachus in front of the plough. So Ulysses stopped his plough and that was how Ulysses was unmasked, people saw in short that Ulysses was not delusional. Palamedes got the better then of the pretended delusion of Ulysses, precisely because Palamedes is the man of writing. What allows us to say that Palamedes was a man of writing? Not simply what I have just told you about the circumstances in which he was falsely accused, but also extremely diverse and confused traditions. There exists a tragedy *Palamedes*, by Sophocles, which unfortunately is lost but Palamedes is thought to be the inventor according to certain people of certain letters, but, in a much more interesting manner, of the alphabet, namely, the order of letters, which allows, in short, the word to be established in writing.

What allows us here to understand Palamedes, is that a writing confiscates the enunciating subject, in other words what is dissimulated behind all of that is a certain number of tricks which Plato's *Sophist* implicitly notes about the relationship of the enunciating subject to the subject of the enunciation, that is to say, in the *Sophist* the relationship between the noun and the verb and of what happens in this sliding of sense through which the potential noun is actualised in the verb.

Palamedes joins the themes which are dear to us here because, among all the services that he rendered for the good cause, we find one of having reassured the Greeks in the presence of an eclipse. Here, it is not for nothing that the eclipse intervenes.

Besides, he is also the inventor of the game of draughts. I did not have the time to research how exactly the Greeks played draughts nor how pawns were taken as we do today, if the Greeks took the pawns.

In what concerns, then, the relationship with arithmetic, I equally remind you that according to a certain tradition, Ulysses is not at all the son of the person you believe, namely Laertes but of Sisyphus who began over and over. You see that here we are on the path which will lead to the Platonic problem of the dyad and consequently this will allow us anew, within Sophistry, to articulate the problems of arithmetic with the problems of linguistics.

In short, it is a matter of understanding what becomes of the numbering unit within the number, and also, if we link this to the theme of Palamedes and of the order that is established.

[Some pages seem to be missing]

Seminar 21: Wednesday 2 June 1965

In places where I scarcely ever set foot, people are talking about nothing else - it happens periodically - but the word dialogue. You make dialogue together people that one can quite properly say, in the strictest sense of the word, are from different extremes and you expect something or other from it.

As long as there is not a more reliable dialogue between men and women, I mean on the terrain where they are respectively man and woman, on the terrain of their sexual relationships, you will allow me to be sceptical about the virtues of dialogue.

This position is the analytic position. This is why psychoanalysis is not a dialogue. In the field that psychoanalysis is applied, people realised, because there it stuck out, that dialogue produces nothing.

This first truth, this open door that I am pushing, has always been known and it is not at all unrelated to the fact that what are called Plato's dialogues, I do not know if you have noticed it, but they are never dialogues, I mean that it is never the exchange of remarks between two characters one of whom would really be holding one of the (2) theses in question and the other the other. There is always one who represents one of the two theses, who, for some reason or other refuses to give an opinion, slips away, declares himself inadequate, and then you take a third person, who is going to consent to do something which at first sight appears to be to play the role of the idiot but who is no doubt a useful intermediary because it is in that way that an attempt is going to be made to get across something which is not always a dialogue but much more often a presentation.

The *Sophist* begins like that. It unfolds like that. It takes place between the stranger from Elea and the one in question, who began things, namely Socrates. But with great astuteness, it always ends up with another Socrates, a little wandering Socrates, Socrates the younger.

There is perhaps something of that also in the fact that this year I experienced the need at a moment to make the gesture of closing the seminar in order perhaps to be able speak a little bit more with people and also for them to be able speak to me. There is here a tertiary function but the proper of tertiary functions is that, all the same, they ought to come back into the circuit and that is the reason why today, even though it is one of the days reserved for my lectures, I think that it is not inopportune that something should come here that arises from a reply to something that had been produced at my closed seminar at which moreover it is a very large part of this (3) gathering that functions.

So then, at my last closed seminar something was stated which came from the lips of Serge Leclaire addressing himself to the work that Jacques-Alain Miller had done on the theory of number in Frege.

Serge Leclaire had insisted a good deal that this should not remain, in a way, a dead letter or in suspense and he proposed a few observations to him. Jacques-Alain Miller is going to give today the reply to what Serge Leclaire said and, you will see, I think, that it is a reply which will have its place in what I will subsequently link up to it either today or the next time.

On the other hand you can see that our programme for this year led us, in short, aimed essentially at a grasp of the function of the psychoanalyst starting from what grounds his own logic. What are the means by which we are going to try to accede, along this path, to what it is our goal to define, the position of the analyst.

This is not, this cannot be only this sort of misunderstanding by being simply defined, to define what is for the analyst his relationship to two terms, for example, like those of the truth and of knowledge. It is impossible even though here we have, as I might say, what is most tangible in the experience of the psychoanalyst.

(4) He can immediately, on that, specify, question himself, give replies which can be corrected if he gives them incorrectly. It is impossible to situate correctly the relationship of the effective analyst to these two terms, so essential to specify the position of the scholar, without referring him in a more radical fashion to what we can hold on to from a whole experience which is what preceded it: analysis.

The relationships between truth and knowledge, this is where we are carried onto the terrain of logic, and that this logic should be grasped where it is articulated at the final term in this author who is so important, more important perhaps than is generally accepted, namely Frege, but just as much at the origin, at the moment where there begins, there is articulated what it is perhaps too general to call dialectic, in one or other of Plato's articulations and precisely in what is called the Plato of the last period. Well then, from the first steps of this logic, before it is crystallised in the form which has been transported through the centuries wrapped up under the name of formal logic which is only moreover one of the more external characteristics in the *Sophist*. I pointed this out and at my seminar someone was willing to open up the first passages of the *Sophist* where the most burning questions are articulated around the two terms (5) of truth and knowledge.

That is why one of those who on this point best follow what I was able to begin to articulate this year will take the floor immediately after Jacques-Alain Miller to bring you some observations on the *Sophist* which I considered as indispensable to make this relay before giving on the two following Wednesdays the two lectures with which I hope this year to sufficiently round off what I began to tackle this year, if you remember, already at the opening of my first seminar around the question of sense and of nonsense, centring myself properly speaking on these signifying chains which are supposed to be without any kind of sense, but which I indicated to you, all the same, are bearers of sense, however opaque they might have been, for the simple reason that they were grammatical. Let those who were at this first lecture refer to it before I take up the rest of my course, namely, at the end of our meeting today and the next times.

I give the floor to Miller.

PRESENTATION BY JACQUES-ALAIN MILLER

I apologise first of all for giving this elliptical discourse which is scarcely in shape. I apologise for it to you and especially to Serge Leclaire.

Some of you here, perhaps, may remember something like a letter inserted by me in the course of a speech dedicated to the fifth season of a logic of the signifier, specifically addressing an exceptionally praised lady analyst, something certainly like a letter demanding a response.

But this letter, I have to believe, got lost *en route*, and if it was lost it is because letters do not go where we want them to go but where they wish. Perhaps it was purloined; it is still the letter which wishes to be stolen in order to go where it wishes, and if it is into the hands of Serge Leclaire that it has come, it is because this was its final term.

Since the letter wished that it should be so, since also he wished to be it and I thank him for justifying in this way the unjustifiable fact that I speak before you here, then we have an opportunity for dating a correspondence of which I hope Dr Lacan does not mind being the relay, an exchange no doubt but certainly not a dialogue.

(7) Neither Serge Leclaire nor I want a dialogue. We are only speaking in order to reject that we are in reciprocal positions. We only listen in order to hear in the discourse the part that is secret to itself.

For Serge Leclaire's taste, what I am pronouncing as my discourse is necessarily in order that sexual reality should not appear sutured to us, while the analyst, for his part, by being an analyst in his word, for, says Leclaire "the analyst does not construct a discourse in speaking, the analyst does not suture."

The analyst refuses to suture, he told you. In fact he does not construct a discourse even when he speaks, fundamentally, and this is why the position is irreducible and everything that is said to the analyst on this point, including by me, the discourses that one hears can clarify it.

What is he listening for? The discourse of his patient, and in the discourse of his patient what interests him is precisely how there is entwined for him this suturing point "in this sense, everything that Miller brings us is extremely precious".

I hope that you appreciate, as I do, the delicacy with which Serge Leclaire introduces his remarks. My discourse is precious for him? Thank you very much. But precious like the word of an analysand on his couch? No thanks!

(8) And the right to say here this "No thanks!", is what I am going to defend and as I said too briefly and in an incomplete fashion, the misunderstanding produced by Serge Leclaire in the reading that he carried out of my text, a reading which he directed so exactly towards the pivotal concept of what I articulated, namely the concept of suture.

In any case, I hope that my reply will not make vanish whose unpublished character undoubtedly does not leave me indifferent, that he was able to make use of my discourse as an analyst.

I hope that it is open to another use, in my sense, than that of the word of an analysand that he was not careful to distinguish the discourse which I dismantled from the logic of the logician, from Frege, and the discourse that I articulated starting from Jacques Lacan about the logic of the signifier.

He overlooked that it was starting from this logic of the signifier, assumed as my discourse, that the sequence of numbers engendered in the discourse of Frege could be said to be sutured, that this logic was general enough to be described correctly as that of the signifier.

I mean by that to show Serge Leclaire that the discourse that he sustains in the name of the analyst and which he opposes to mine which was already anticipated and even (9) accounted for beforehand, in fact we are not in a situation of reciprocity, but not in the way he thinks.

I am now going to read some quite quick notes and I hope you will excuse me for it.

It is obvious that the interest in my text only takes its origin from the opportunity of highlighting the difference between two positions. I summarise his analysis:

“While the logician sutures, the analyst does not suture because the latter defers the suturing that truth demands, while the logical concept takes into it ambit objects identical to themselves; the unconscious concept gathers things that are not identical to themselves.”

Let us take the first point. What is the suture in Jacques Lacan? It is a non-thematic concept which emerges for him in the field of analysis.

What is supposed by the importation that I make of it? Importing its usage presupposes that the functioning of categories whose value is assured in the field of free speech remain adequate in the field of this constrained speech that we call a discourse. But importing the suture what do we import? I say that we are importing the following: a structure which puts in place a scene, a chain where the subject is produced in the first person which is the chain or the scene of his speech in its relationship to the other scene, to the other chain where there is not, for the subject, any conceivable reflection in that he is only an element in it.

(10) I would say then that a sutured discourse is distributed between an apparent chain and a dissimulated chain which manifests itself at a point, a point whose crucial occultation, which is at once apathetic and thematic, is the condition for the opening of discourse.

But this implies that no suture is a suturing of sexual reality, namely, that the other scene must not be, and in any case this is the usage that I make of it, is not the only one.

In this, which is formal for what is involved in the structure of the suture, what I wanted to articulate about a theory of discourse opens the possibility of a generalisation of the cause that is unconscious or absent outside the field of analysis.

What is involved for the analyst with respect to the suture? Consider the formulation of Leclaire.

“The analyst does not suture or, at least, he ought to try, how can we say, to guard himself from this passion”. Take the field of analysis as field of free speech. The analysed subject sutures his lack of being, the metonymical effect of desire, the metaphorical cause.

The analyst for his part does not suture. It is true because he is the subject who is supposed to know and because he holds himself in this position and because he speaks from this position and if he becomes, and Leclaire is of course here, completely in agreement on this point, let us say a subject who supposes himself to know, namely, if (11) he stamps his position with the point of certainty in order to give a content to his knowledge, he makes himself, in that way, supposedly adequate to the real, the model for the identification of the analysand and by that he sutures, namely, he sutures the lack through which he is a desiring subject.

It is therefore the desire of the analyst which makes his word non-sutured.

And with this desire he covers the dimension of the ethics of the psychoanalyst which is stamped by the duty that Leclaire imposes on him of not suturing, but it seems certain to me that when he attempts to speak about analysis, the analyst is not in the position of the subject who is supposed to know.

For myself, suturing my desire, in order to speak about theory, is my theoretical discourse sutured? Suture here, necessitates then that my discourse, perhaps, related to the law of my desire in a way that it appears to be the rule according to an order which does not overlap the order that I give to it. I would say to Leclaire that this remains to be proved but is it not obvious, on the contrary, that Leclaire in a certain way wants, desires my discourse to be sutured. Perhaps he only desires to have before him the words of his patients?

And that is why he blinds himself to what I am articulating about the logic of the signifier or if necessary, he might recognise that it marks itself as being altogether necessary, namely, the logic of the non-identical to itself.

(12) I come then to the second point, in all of this I apologise for going so rapidly.

I quote Leclaire: “Reality for the analyst is to envisage the thing in so far as it is not one. I am not saying that Miller does not do it but he does so by blocking immediately the non-identical to itself with the number zero.”

I wonder whether, now that I highlight this text before him, Serge Leclaire will not himself realise this striking lapse through which he imputes to me what I myself announced from Frege.

Why is it necessary that at the place where the name of Frege is required it is mine which comes into position itself while my concern precisely was to manifest in Frege, the apparition of the non-identical to itself in which I said there consisted the suturing point of Frege's discourse.

Why this confusion and why does Serge Leclaire want the archeologist to be a logician, that my concern was to save the truth and not, in a certain fashion which is that of the analyst to undo also in a certain fashion, for my part, a suture.

Thus Leclaire explains to us what is involved in the unconscious concept which, very correctly, he opposes to the logical concept.

(13) "In the *Wolfman* Freud proposes to us an unconscious concept. It is certainly a matter of a unit which is the concept but which rejects things that are non-identical to themselves ... why not moreover the cut finger or the little pimple on the nose. We have the introduction of an unconscious concept. In the first example of Freud which comes to him, precisely a little indifferent thing which is not singular in itself."

What I find singular in this text is that I do not believe for a single moment that these little things are qualified as signifiers. Now they are signifiers in good Lacanian orthodoxy, as such they are the representatives of the subject and, as such, these signifiers are the signifier is identical to itself in so far as it is constituted at its root by the non-identical to itself which is the lack.

Thus we see in the rest of Leclaire's text, the Wolfman with this pimple on his nose, first of all preoccupied by this pimple on the nose and afterwards, once this pimple is removed, equally occupied by the hole which he alone sees in its place.

What does that mean if not that the signifier is constituted as a lack is never anything but the representative of the barred phallus as such, the representative of the barred subject.

The signifier is identical to itself.

(14) It is that of the non-identical to itself which is named subject or lack.

Again once the signifier is identical to itself being uncuttable and irreducible; it is not identical to itself in so far as it is undefinable and one only has to refer to the Saussurian definition of the signifier which always defines it by what it is not, to manifest it.

It seems to me that Dr Lacan did it in a seminar on identification. Thus for the moment, I see dimly, or even not at all, what this logic of the signifier had in

terms of a concern for saving the truth. I am still waiting to see on what it sutures in so far as it is not the word of an analysand.

It seem to me that the conclusion - it is not altogether one - would be to accept the reciprocal sovereignty and the paranomias between four fields: the field of the enounced, the logical field, the field of the message and the linguistic field. The field of free speech which is the psychoanalytic field, in fact the field of the word for which a theory of discourse is still to come.

I can even say that perhaps the most radical element still of a logic of the signifier would perhaps be a doctrine of the point.

(15) I am going to end, since this text is incomplete, in order to leave you something well finished, on a quotation which I think makes one think in *Point, line, surface*: “ the geometrical point is an invisible being. The point resembles a zero. In this zero, nevertheless, there are hidden many qualities which are human. As one separates out the point from the narrow circle of its habitual role, it becomes between silence and the word the ultimate and unique union and that is why it found its first material form in writing. It belongs to language and signifies silence.”

Dr Jacques Lacan: I would ask that this text should be put, as it is or revised, as he wishes, but fairly rapidly at the disposition of listeners before I have finished my course this year.

I believe that very important things are said there on the function of the suture, a non- thematic function as Miller quite correctly said, in my teaching, in this sense that if it is always in question, it has not been designated expressly by me as such.

On the other hand, I indicate to Miller who, perhaps, was not there that day that as regards the point, I, as I might say, punctuated the point of passage in one of my seminars, in one of my lectures at the beginning of this year, very precisely under this name which I am not happy with because I am trying to highlight the functions of a different point which is not the reduction of a circle but of this little interior eight.

I do not want to go any further to day. Those who have well understood will put the question marks at the places which they think deserve them. And I hope that I will not leave, in what follows, any of these question marks in suspense.

I give the floor to Milner

PRESENTATION BY MONSIEUR MILNER

[A modified version of Milner's paper was published in *Cahiers pour l'analyse*, no 3]

That there is between being and computation an inherited link, anecdote alone manifests. In his edition where he quotes Isocrates: "for one of the ancient sophists, there is an infinity of beings; for Empedocles four; for Ion, only three; for Parmenides, one; for Gorgias, absolutely none".

Inscribing himself in this register, Plato, moreover wanting to know what is involved in non-being, is led to enumerate, to make it emerge by a computation from which he begins. And for community see 254b:

"Among the genera some lend themselves to mutual community and others pervading everything find nothing which prevents them from entering into community with all"

This opposition between blending and non-blending, and what cannot do it, will serve as a distinctive trait allowing Plato to introduce a hierarchy among the genera. Subsequently Plato tells us that he takes from the number of genera the greatest ones, namely three: being, rest and motion.

(18) Rest and motion cannot blend with each other. Now here Plato's text ought to be rectified. It must be seen that what Plato reveals as a choice is in fact a necessity of the logical order. What is thus constituted is a minimal group that is proper to support the binary opposition between blending and non-blending.

One term is enough to support blending but one term is not enough to represent non-blending. Suppose that we only have movement. Consequently being is blended with movement in its order would be abolished, it is necessary therefore to make non-blending appear to have two terms, rest and movement. The minimal couple obtained is thus there by right and Plato underlines the number in 254d: "Each one is different from the two others and thus we obtain five terms as a minimal chain."

This is what Plato says in 256d: "In order to articulate the binary positions of blending or non-blending there must be constituted a series of five terms corresponding to the binary of origin. The functions in effect reduplicate one another, being which is blended ;it is the very element of its development since all the terms are of being but by this very expansion being makes manifest itself this trait which makes it the term of a binary opposition. In short, through the modality of its expansion, being becomes (19) a singular element of the series."

Now if being is posited by that very fact, it falls into the register of the other occupier by positing itself as an element in the series, it posits itself like the others, all the elements that it is not.

257a: “By the vacillation of being as expansion and of being as term, by the operation of being and of the other, non-being is generated and ought to be inscribed on the table of numbers.”

258c : “We have shown that the nature of the other has being and is parceled out over the whole field of existent things with reference to one another, and of every part of it that is set in contrast to that which is we have dared to say, that precisely that is really that which is not.

It is nevertheless remarked that Plato does not add things up and does not tell us that it is necessary to raise from five to six the minimal number to support the binary opposition. Is not a new register posed here? In effect non-being does not appear in the sequence of genera like the others in the chain that must be paraded past. Non- being arises at the weakening.

It is thus necessary at the same time to say that the genera are the points where being is bound, namely, in fact where the discourse on the being of things is required to make its own computation pass, but they are also at the same time the points of its (20) disappearance. It is in this operation of passage that the other names, circumscribing being as a computable term. Non-being is therefore nothing other than being itself as a radical dimension in so far as without it nothing would be computable.

And the other simply names. This knot of being and non-being, how can we not read being here as a dimension of the signifier, a radical register of all computation, an element of computation, is it not the case therefore that non-being reappears every time that the discourse perpetuates itself, overcomes a downward turn from the arrival of non-being. It is the locus of the zero.

In this numerical generation where, nevertheless, no addition of a sum is operated, the dimension of the signifier thus disappears to the level of logic itself. This does not escape his reading. Through the excessive haste that one can employ in trying to grasp what is most central, it is in this way that the excellent reference which is made in Mr Audouard’s text loses its cutting edge.

No doubt the phantasy takes the place of representation but above all it is a so-called representation. In effect let us read the text where Plato speaks to us about it (236b): (21) It is necessary thus at the point where the copy is a sign, namely, not the thing and not the being of the thing, gives rise to another register where the look reveals itself as essential.

If the *fantasma* is a pretentious discourse, a so-called discourse, a discourse that is so called in the warping, the deforming, it is indeed a signifier, it is the signifier, namely, that for the other, the one who seeing the proportion is capable of correcting them. It is therefore here its distortion, the signifier for the other, this signifier of a subject.

It is therefore permissible, without having recourse to what Mr Audouard to read a same place, the subject, non-being. How does it happen that the locus of

non- being is precisely the point of a weakening of the look if it is precisely the name of a weakening in the computation of being; the relevance of the signifier we can find at different levels.

The figure of the Sophist was perfectly linked to discourse but the reference ought here to be detailed. In effect if the Sophist is the one who is spoken about in the structure of the dialogue and opposite the “I” and the “you” namely the pronouns which reveal from the dialogue whether the tongue establishes the other dimension.

(22) It must be underlined the degree to which the Indo-European languages ought to be, in a way, analysed closely over against the “I” and the “you”; a unique reference, the one of whom one speaks being able to enter as a partner into the dialogue or being unable. Irrelevant at the linguistic level, the insertion into the game of the partners, the “he” of the partner is not another, it is that of the non-partner. Now this distinction Plato says that he has made it in 246e.

When he directs himself towards a refutation of two opposing philosophical schools he tells us, he asks Theaetetus:

This game of hermeneutics and this affirmed position of herald, of the one who lends his mouth to another voice, this is what signals for us

Now the Sophist for his part is excluded from this hermeneutic. No one lends his voice to him,³¹ for him. His only place is on the validated horizon of a chain.

He is nevertheless present at every articulation of the dialogue. The Stranger establishes him as a judge of the definition and at the end of the *Sophist* the (23) Sophist is the one who is the source of discourse.

It appears then that in order to understand a figure of the Sophist our only mooring point is discourse and its forms.

What is in question in the whole dialogue is the *onoma* of the Sophist. Now when the *onoma* proper to the Sophist is inscribed, that the Sophist will be able to stop constructing sophisms, namely, escaping, this is possible for the Sophist is a technician of discourse.

The Sophist ho is, and in so far as he is, subject of and through his *onoma*, outlines the very figure a/ space of discourse and its law in 260b:

It is necessary to define the discourse, namely, here

To be clear, it is a matter of constructing the space of a vacillation in which the Sophist will take his place. This presupposes the establishment of non-being at the level of the statement; play the Sophist.

But more radically it is necessary to introduce non-being into discourse itself. Now here we find ourselves on the inverse itinerary and we have, through that

very fact, a (24) confirmation. A weakening has to be developed. There must be posed in the heart of discourse, in its being, an otherness of being; thus non-being requires that it should be defined and that discourse should be defined as an assemblage in which there is manifested the dimension of the other.

Plato is attached to the minimum. Otherness, because it is necessary, must support a blending.

One sees then that it would be absurd to look here for the teaching of Plato on the parts of discourse but he is very careful to deduct them.

In effect, if it is exemplary for linguistics, it is precisely in so far as it is computation, in so far as in this closed list a computation of the elements of discourse is possible which becomes the term, that is, in this case, a pronoun.

In Plato, we find ourselves at the origin of computation, but the discourse remains moored to a being of which he speaks.

One can say what it is not, but a statement must be made about what it is.

For if non-being arises discourse disappears. It is necessary then to drop non-being into the underground.

263c: The Stranger tells us

(25) Now, there is here revealed perhaps the true dimension of what could be, it seems, Plato's choice. What is curious is that all the discourses of Plato but the name here is the proper name.

Thus there is outlined a situation of the proper name which is the very locus where non-being disappears; the series of the parts of discourse, as soon as they are posed, are revealed then as impossible. The noun is immediately absorbed into the proper name and precedes it as a logical function.

The subject has disappeared. Being reigns as a numerable series, as signifier.

The fact is that, perhaps, a discourse that could be called analytic, an analysis of discourse is possible..... One is sure of one's anchoring point here.

If Plato ignored the structure of the subject and even that of zero, Mr Audouard has perfectly grasped what is at stake in this wager.

It remains impossible nevertheless to welcome the concept of for us in an analytic discourse.

It is first necessary to make it undergo a dissolution where it will show its theoretical (26) cutting edge. I chose as an element of dissolution cannot fail to demonstrate its dissimulated phase in the reference perceptible to those who have an ear.

It is necessary to grasp here a radical difference. In effect it is impossible to unfold Plato's discourse and one can in a way cut across the folds.

Thus there arises a circle of the analysis of discourse whose hermeneutic circle is only an obscure illusion. If we must, in effect, construct the fictitious structure, it becomes then something that holds.

It is no longer a matter of reading a suture but of inventing the suture to establish the discourse as a legitimate discourse.

To situate the point which renders the object living, it is necessary, Plato tells us, to place the candle in the right place.

I found that Plato himself articulated the laws of the locus of discourse make it appear, call for a reading whose order would depend on a unique point whose validity only revealed itself to be foreign to Plato on the hither side of a miscognition.

Dr Lacan: Does anyone here want to pose a question, and at the same time try to bear witness to the fact that something of this got through?

I hope all the same that this challenge will be accepted.

Dr Kaufmann: As regards Platonism where do you situate the good? There is the problem of the Sophist on the one hand and on the other hand the problem of Platonism.

Mr Milner: I foreclosed it from my discourse.

Dr Kaufmann: In connection with the *logos* how do you understand the relationship of the noun to the verb? When I took up this *Sophist* I was pre-occupied by the question of the relationship between the *onoma* and?

On the other hand, what you said as regards the common noun and the proper name, do you not think that that involves the relationship of the noun to the verb?

Mr Milner: It is necessary to note that the problem of the relationship of the noun to the verb does not involve a theory of the parts of discourse. You have to look for it elsewhere. In the *Letters*.

Dr Kaufmann: I have got a little idea in connection with the problem of the noun/ verb and the problem of phantasy. I attach great importance to a term which is found, I do not know where, in the text it is *parafein*. In connection with phantasy, the way to link up to what Audouard said, is a That can be presented in a very simple manner in connection with the phantasy for the Stoics.

(28) You know how this happens among the Stoics? I advance, I stumble, it is Bergson's elevator. There is one in place and then, from the fact that I go too far

there is a hollow that is formed. It is the hollow of the wave. Among the Stoics the phantasy emerges within this. One has only to replace by *Trieb*. One is on a certain line.

At that point one would have the equivalent of the problem that Audouard posed. The difference to Plato is that among the Stoics it happens like that and the phantasy comes here. One goes too far and in the hollow there is the demon of the elevator which arises there in the fact

Instead of it being linear, in Plato, it is *parafein*. It goes to one side namely that there is a sheaf of non-beings around this axis.

Do you agree?

Mr Milner:

Dr Kaufmann: Here I rejoin a remark of Dr Lacan. The *passage à l'acte* within the verb when I lack predication and I obtain here the phantasy. That is why I believe that the Sophist contains more unity.

Dr Lacan: I believe that he said a lot about the *Sophist*. What Milner told us was all the same very marked by his specification as a grammarian. It is in a completely different register that there is posed the difference *onoma*, in Plato. You are

(29) I do not know if it is appropriate that I should, after this, do something which in any case can only mesh with it in a very superficial fashion, because it cannot be pushed far enough.

In order to prepare what follows of my discourse, shall I recall what I am at present centring it around

The three edges, the three terms of subject, knowledge and sex which are, of course, the tripolarity which is essentially extracted from our experience as analysts and as such can be questioned.

Of course, all of this is a stage, and a major stage, in something which, inaugurally, is based on my terminology opposing as primary categories the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

Since the time I introduced them, I would say, a little like the terms of a really hammer-blow philosophy, I mean what it seemed to me we could be satisfied with at least within our position as analysts, in terms of a sort of irreducible residue concerning the horizons of our experience.

One might happily construct, therefore, a correspondence, a superimposition of three terms: knowledge, subject, and sex.

I do not need to point to these three terms, I think, in a bi-univocal fashion unless I am expressly asked to.

(30) It is certain that there is here, nevertheless, a path that has been travelled and even a very long path. And that one cannot in any way take up the posture of being the contents of the other, that the three edges of the second triad cannot in any way be the filling out of the three edges of the first.

In this connection, I would like to mark, because, moreover, it is in the very measure of the progress of the elaboration that this content establishes, which is not identifiable to either one or the other, that the real, for example, of which people said that for a long time I only made almost an excluded term. Why did I apparently make of it an excluded term, if not through this mirage effect which is properly speaking the fact that the psychoanalyst, by his position, and it is here that you see it rejoining what Milner so well outlined for us today in connection with the *Sophist*, the psychoanalyst, in a very singular fashion, is excluded from the real by his position.

He forbids himself by his very technique any means of approaching it. To be excluded is a relation and it is indeed this exclusion which gives him all his difficulty in holding his place, holding it just as much as a theoretician as holding it in practice.

The real, up to a certain point, can even, can even be considered for him as a danger, the fascination offered to his thinking and to which all too easily, in a too easy fashion he succumbs when he goes into this field of the real which is his major reference, (31) namely the real of sex, when he advances towards this place where he has this something which he refuses himself and from which he is excluded: he is going to construct a real which will necessarily be the real of the psychologist or of some others which have their validity in the not only ambiguous but bastard register which is called human science, and which is what, properly, he has to if he wants to remain an psychoanalyst, he has to preserve himself.

What then is this place of the real for the analyst, and what is meant by the fashion in which precisely we attempt, we indicate, the possibilities of the construction of his place along this paradoxical path which is to take the path of logic.

It is very striking to see that in the measure that, historically, logic progresses and to the point where it culminates in the theory which is called what distinguishes the sign from the *Bedeutung*, from meaning, in Frege, we arrive at this sort of extenuation of the reference which means that Frege formulates that if we must find for this something which is called a judgement, some reference or other, this can only be, in the final analysis, the double value of the false or the true, the value is properly speaking the referent, you should understand, that there is no other object of judgement at the highpoint of logical thinking, which is for us exemplary of what a certain path that is pursued generates as a paradox that there is not, in the final (32) analysis, any reference except it is the value where it is true, where it is false.

It is clear that this extenuation, for us, is literally to be taken like a sort of symptom and that what we are in the process of searching for, by following things along this path, on this track, is what indeed was able to condition the evolution of logical thinking, it is what was indeed lacking for the designation of the place of the real.

In this sense, it is tangible for us that what is thus circumscribed in the form of a lack is something which has some relationship with the fashion in which the real presents itself for us analysts.

It is very striking that it culminates for us, and in a tangible fashion, at the same distinction as the one Frege gets to. Along his path, the distinction between sign and sense, it is through this that I tried this year to make you sensitive to its distinction from meaning. Sense exists at the level of non-sense and with a weight that is just as manifest as in any other locus where there can develop what is called meaning, an apparent real.

The relationship between sense and, as one might say, this blind spot of the real, this stumbling point, this end point, this point of impact and of aporia in sexual reality, it is (33) this point which necessitates for us the organisation of a logic where the three distinct edges of knowledge, the subject, and sex allow us to situate in their relationship, at their place, this something which is going to make appear to us a certain paradox and principally the place of the sign of sense as such, in a relationship of knowledge to sex from which the subject is in a certain way extracted, to which, properly speaking, this double alienation of terms between which there is established the dimension of sense, is what itself opens out into this very singular division (*divinité*) which is placed here, in analytic experience, between the subject and sex, the dimension of *Bedeutung*, the dimension also of what is for us the question mark, the sensitive point of truth.

What is situated on the side of knowledge is properly speaking the most opaque, what I introduced at the beginning of my discourse this year, this something which is properly speaking gaping wide which we can incarnate in the notion of *Zwang*. It is on the side of knowledge that the subject is found to receive this mark of division which is inscribed in the symptom and that I symbolise in the term that I announce here, taken from Freud under the term of *Zwang*. We are rather late. I have given you a scaffolding for what will be the end of my discourse this year. I wanted to announce it to you so that you would be less surprised when I will have to articulate them more deeply.

We are pursuing our remarks about the high-point that I am bringing you, to close my discourse this year on “Crucial problems for psychoanalysis”, this high-point which the triad that I introduced three or four lectures ago structures.

I hope that what I indicated the last time, by way of closing the contributions of elements of a certain dialogue where this term, supported by all the reserves with which precisely I introduced the session the last time, that what I contributed by way of conclusion, introducing in a certain fashion the pole of the real in so far as it is constitutive of a certain difficulty which is, properly speaking, that of the psychoanalyst.

I hope that you remember it, this is the introduction of a theme, of a theme which without any doubt I will not exhaust this year, but which, if fate decrees, will be pursued next year.

In this introduction, which was perhaps too rapid and perhaps even up to a certain (2) point catapulted, I signalled the place where we ought to conceive that with respect to these three terms, whose function I am going to re-articulate today, gathering together, in a way, the meaning of the whole of our discourse of this year, I placed the three terms that I inscribed there, in German, for reasons which are linked to the historical lucubrations of these three terms, in so far as two of them refer to the thinking, to the work of authors who wrote in German.

Sinn, is properly speaking a Fregean reference, it is in so far as Frege opposes *Sinn* to *Bedeutung* in his conceptual elaboration of what the being of number is for him; *Zwang*, that it is in so far as it is here that it is appropriate to situate this function which is properly speaking the Freudian discovery, which gives a new sense, a renewed sense to what is presented in phenomenology, to what had been elaborated right through the nineteenth century as clinic of the mind and which gives it a status, a status which I intend today to make you locate as being what justifies, properly speaking, the accent that we have put with our commentary on Descartes on the fundamental relationships of the subject - in the modern sense of the term - and knowledge.

If there is a *Zwang*, if there is something which manifests itself in an opaque fashion in the symptom, which literally constrains, at the same time as it divides the subject, it is there that it is important to use the word *Zwang*, because *Zwang* refers to *zwei* and that as you see on the little figure to one side whose enigma I still have not revealed to you, it is indeed an *Entzweiung*, it is this that Freud pursued, discovered, traced to the extent that his final writing culminates at it, in the idea of *Spaltung* of the subject, which is essentially an *Entzweiung*.

Here then is the justification for what you see written there on the board; the term *Wahrheit*, truth is also written in German quite simply to remain homogeneous with the two other terms.

It is this, this third term, *Wahrheit*, the fashion in which *Wahrheit*, truth, presents itself in psychoanalytic experience or, more exactly, in the fundamental structure which permits this experience, it is from this that I intend to start again with you today.

Not without having drawn, from our common discourse the last time, a thread, a thread that we are going to rediscover later, which is that of the question posed by Kaufmann to Milner.

Milner gave us an extraordinarily well-structured account, an undoubtedly very rich, working text, commentary, in short at the same time summarised from the *Sophist*, to which, from today, I think I will be able, without abusing it, refer myself.

(3) On the whole, as far as I have been able to gather, this discourse did not fall on deaf ears and was recognised, at least for the dimension that it offers, this dimension not being moreover necessarily the one which, for every listener, is either the most familiar or the one which interests them most, a dimension which can cause someone who is used to medical thinking, certain moments of vagueness. I even believe that not enough has been done to allow us today the reference that I am going to speak to you about now.

Kaufmann, questioning Milner, said to him, posed him this question: “ Well then, what do you make in all of that of the good, of the good in Plato, of the pure idea of the good?” I remind you that Milner had put the emphasis on this dialectic with which the *Sophist* culminates which essentially wants to demonstrate - this is the *culmen* of Platonic thought - Plato had right through his discourses through which he addresses himself to us, discourses which are always, when all is said and done, essentially enigmatic, enigmatic to the point of being on occasion upsetting, humorous; it is quite clear, you really have to be deaf not to see that at one or other detour he really goes so far as to mock us; Plato, after having distinguished the world of ideals, in so far as they are unchangeable, that they are not subject to the field of like that which, in the tangible world, in a way, receives them but cannot be affected by them, cannot (5) reflect them except in an approximate way, Plato, in the *Sophist*, is led and leads us to the demonstration that, if the action of ideas, I might say, can only be conceived of in the mode of participation, this participation is not to be conceived of as an effect which is produced in thought, in that through which we raise ourselves by dialectic to the conception of the most original ideas, by our dialectic we make operate this weaving, this through which we recognise what in the world, movement of change, is sustained by a participation in the idea. The fundamental ideas themselves are only sustained in so far as amongst them there takes place this movement of participation and Milner reminded you how we find participating in being both movement and rest, how nevertheless movement and rest differ and can only differ in so far also as they participate one with the other, how then there is necessitated this something which for three terms, chosen by Plato to show us this something that we have to admit, that we must conceive of as being exercised in a movement, in an action, in a passion, at the very level of ideas, how beyond these three terms, two others are necessary which are the same

and the other and the term of a fiveness, a (6) primitive *fünfheit* which is here rather advanced. I do not remember what Milner replied to Kaufmann's question. I hope he replied that as regards the good, the good in Plato's sense, he had spoken about nothing other than that.

For what the good is for Plato, is, properly speaking, the interplay of number. This is not a commentary as I might say invented by me. I put it forward today with all the more ease, in that a certain good fortune in a research inspired, like that, by reflection on the *Sophist*, led me to come upon something that perhaps is far from being unknown, but whose historical confirmation I was happy to find, namely, that there is a lecture of Plato on the good conceived as the idea of the idea. It is Simplicius, a commentator of Aristotle, therefore not simply the third but the fourth generation, it is Simplicius who bears witness to it in what remains of what he has attested, who bears witness to us that Aristotle bequeathed to the generations the fact of having attended this lecture, and that Aristotle attended it, that Aristotle had taken a summary of it, notes, a roneotyped copy, and that what was surprising for those who attended this lecture was very precisely that Plato only spoke about number at it. Everyone was expecting a discussion about what was involved in the good, whether it was riches, or good health, or good mood, or good knowledge. A part of the audience even left in (7) the middle, very disappointed.

That in truth, it is in this way that we must situate what was for Plato this reference to what we can call, to play for him the role of absolute idea, of unshakeable foundation for all his reflection about the world, this is something which is precious for us, because, as you are going to see, this is what is going to allow us to monitor the sense of what, in the history of our thinking, is contributed by Freud and what, having been contributed by Freud, opens to us a view which co-ordinates in a way superior to everything that was able to be apprehended up to then, the reefs, the aporias, the difficulties encountered in fact by what I would call the definition of truth.

This for us psychoanalysts is something which is to be taken at the most crucial level of our experience.

In a work to which I have been devoting myself for several years, and whose title I will not tell you, I begin, in a first draft, that you will not see, in the following terms:

“The title chosen here - the one that I am not telling you - implies another which might be *Voies de la vraie psychanalyse* (Paths of true psychoanalysis). This indeed is what is involved. Along what paths does psychoanalysis proceed? The examination of these procedures will be our method to determine what psychoanalysis truly is. We will (8) grasp here that its being depends on the effects of the truth. To remain there would be to paint it as an island floating on its own. The mean of the golden mean would become the subtitle whose extreme-oriental stamp would parody, not without virtue the very success of such a proposal. But this Cythera is firmly nailed to the world and that is why the map

that we will describe will be rather in the style of marine charts, the commented contour of the banks leaving the interior surface grey.

Along what paths does one accede to psychoanalysis? Here is the anchor around which we intend to make profoundly revolve the interest of the reader, which means also the reader that we here hold to be interested.

The guide of the true psychoanalyst, such is the title of its aim. It is obviously addressed to doctors, and as a partner in dialogue who reduplicates him, as a witness in a public which expects him: the true psychoanalyst.

One will discern here the echo of a *cliché* illustrated by the literature of our cousins: *The compleat angler*, the true angler. This is a celebrated work of English literature which is evoked here for the same reason which made Plato begin his definition of the *Sophist* by the same reference. *The compleat angler* would only have led a small number of its readers to become accomplished fishermen. Only the will to select the (9) reader is declared in it. Besides, if this book were opened by someone who might want to find in it the paths of the perfect psychoanalysand, you can rest assured: he would find himself much less solicited by it than by other works, not only is there nothing here which will lull him with these implicit promises that a familiarly presented observation conveys, but he will be no less refused the opportunity of displacing his anxiety onto the new burden of a psychological norm. He will find neither the *carte du tendre* of psychoanalysis, nor material to track himself down in it. This will not even embarrass his first steps in psychoanalysis and this guide does not aim at guiding him, but his own eventual guides. In reading it he will only feel himself to be interested objectively or, at most, as the one whose interests are being defended, a participant no doubt but not judge, if he only wants to retain of it, nevertheless, that guarantees are necessary and that this book calls for them.

Or much more, rather, that this book calls those for whom it is written, away from existing guarantees to other surer ones. Such is in effect the third theme that we have emphasised in it.

Along what paths does psychoanalysis; here is what the author, in a teaching which has lasted almost a decade (I give here some references which give the date and they are already well past) will try to articulate. Is there any need in order to clarify (10) this distinction to enumerate all the sciences with which modern medicine supports its procedures, or to remark that by basing itself on their results, it credits each one with its own principles, stamping them, as one might say, as ready made products. Now this is what is in no way possible for the psychoanalytic method. And psychoanalysts, on this point, will certainly sing with one voice, and as you will see we will make a great deal of this accord, which goes further than being a certain fashion of making oneself heard, if it is not always a certain mode of harmony. But it is not in vain that we have played first of all on the metaphor of the island, the fact is that we must recognise moreover, that it is the deadly object that this insularity has generated in what one might call its reflected, external form, namely, the situation of scientific segregation in which the analytic community sustains itself.

The fact is that the path of psychoanalysis, for its part, is not maintained there. A fact that we will corroborate with a no less serene chorus of psychoanalysts that admits it, in order to explore its antinomy. The paradox that we highlight here, in effect, uncovers more of its basis than it hides, for if we do indeed intend to say that only a technical formalism still preserves among psychoanalysts the community of the experience, let it not be thought that the straying that we denounce in the discipline (11) takes place in an empyrean ideal. It touches on the very way in which the treatment ought to be sought if it is to be true.

True has first of all here the simple sense of an effective treatment but in so far as its effects correspond to its means, means which in their terms go beyond the most ordinary reference for the doctor, the one which makes him qualify as suggestion the effects which he has at his disposal on a common margin of psychic displacement offered to almost all his interventions, even if they are only a simulacrum.

And true takes on here a reduplicated sense from the fact that the means of psychoanalysis are the means of truth through which we return to our debate. Now the use of such means is always diluted, as history proves, by not being open, open to criticism, open to questioning, open to an ambiguity which takes on here a particular form. For no one who offers himself to the test of a psychoanalysis will hesitate on the point that the truth evoked in this way has the sense of the truth proper to this person.

But how establish the relationship between this truth of the subject and what the construction of science has taught us to recognise under this name? Let us not refer here our confraternal partner to the disappointing *Periplus* that at best his secondary schooling, since it was French, made him go through under the name of philosophy, or (12) even to the already dusty epistemology that he may have retained from it. And this simply because Freud introduced to our experience, under the name of unconscious, the order of facts which opens up an experimental path to the question thus posed.

This is where our case (*audience*) and our remarks take on substance, and we are going to say by whom we want to make it understood: by those very people with respect to whom the bearers of analytic experience were only able, up to now, to state its incommunicable character for those who had not shared it, except, most recently, to spread this mystery, on this mystery, the badly digested cream-tart of the function of communication, by joining to it some simpering about the doctor-patient relationship.

For our purpose is that psychoanalysis should be submitted to a research which is brought to bear on its procedures and even its errors, finds a way to articulate its limits, in other words, disengages from it what could be called its structure.

For the monitoring of such work we call on all those for whom the notion of structure has its use in their respective sciences. We expect, moreover, that with us they will deduce from this work the conditions of formation thanks to which an

analyst will be fit to conduct an analysis. It is in this moment that our exemplary dialogue with the doctor finds its touching side.

(13) “Beware, if you have opened this book because you dream of becoming a psychoanalyst! Because the psychoanalysis will be worth only what you are worth when you become an analyst, it will go no further than what it can lead you to.” It is from this reference of psychoanalysis as science to what, effectively, can be realised from this certain relationship, linked to a certain place of the resurgence of the truth in the modern dialectic of knowledge, it is from this that there depends, contrary to Plato’s idea, that there depends what is involved, effectively, what we can talk about under the name of psychoanalysis.

And it is very precisely in so far as psychoanalysis, as it is lived, is present and is exercised in our historical moment, has a certain resistance to a certain way of directing this enquiry about the basis of its truth, a resistance moreover highlighted, designated in advance by Freud, it is indeed in so far as this is how things stand, that as regards my teaching, properly, not alone do I believe I have the right, but I am obliged, in the very measure of this resistance, to bend, to curve its sequel and not go beyond a certain limit of what is the exploration of a truth, which can only be defined by following the effectiveness of what it brings into play, *hic et nunc*, as it is practised, of what the totality of its procedures brings into play.

(14) That in this regard the truth enters into a sort of drama which is the one sufficiently indicated by the limit, by specifying that the very person who can at a certain point reveal this truth has a right to suspend it, even to refuse it, this is something which not only has nothing original about it, but which in psychoanalysis itself finds its greatest justification.

I am telling you the way in which, the fact, that in the course of the ages this position was effectively adopted by many thinkers, adopted as a bias, an admitted bias - written in black and white - when Descartes tells us that he will not give the solution to a certain problem, he gives as a pretext that no doubt he does not want to give the opportunity to one or other of his rivals who will pretend to have discovered it by themselves, that he wants simply to show that they have not, effectively, been able to reach it, this is only a pretext, just as it is a pretext when Gauss, having glimpsed before Riemann the modern mathematical formulation of space, permitting a trans-euclidian entry, that Gauss refuses, refuses to communicate it, having his reasons to articulate that no truth is able, in a way, to anticipate on what it is tolerable to know.

This dialectic, as I said, is justified, takes its form in so far as psychoanalysis is for the (15) first time what allows us to bring to light, to pose in their radicality, the relationships which exist between truth and knowledge.

One can pose the question in a sort of abstract fashion - it is easy to point out, I did it in passing - in the paradoxical and, of course, not serious, comic form, what would be involved in the truth of the knowledge that the Newtonian formula established if it had been put out by someone two hundred years before?

Would this formula, whose introduction into knowledge represents a structural moment - we are going to come back to it again - in the relationships of the truth and of knowledge, would this formula have anticipated? Has it or not some value as truth?

This is only a mind game, an artificial aporia, but much more radically there is posed this question of the truth and it is around this question that there is played out the Freudian experience.

That is why it is not thinkable, it only takes on its sense starting from a status of the subject which is the status of the Cartesian subject. If I took so much care at the beginning of this year to take up again the dialectic of the *cogito* as being the fundamental one which ought to allow us to situate what is involved in the sense of Freudianism, it is because it is proper to the Cartesian *cogito* to mark the importance (16) of a certain defining moment as such in the relationships between the subject and knowledge.

This is perhaps something that is not totally clarified by all the commentaries which were made of this essential moment represented by the *cogito*. What Descartes was looking for and what he found in this perspective, in terms of an unshakeable foundation, of a *fundamentum in* can we say that he obtains it with the *cogito*?

That this being, impossible to snatch from the apprehension of "I think" should be a being, grounded in being; it is in any case quite clear that the fashion in which, before you, in contempt if necessary of previous commentaries, but certainly not in contempt of Cartesian texts, I articulated it in a fashion which goes beyond that at which, at the moment when in the commentary one is forced to remain at the moment of the "*ergo sum*", the commentary must recognise only there, what Descartes at least when he is his own commentator bases himself on, the obviousness of the clear and simple idea.

But for us, at the point that we are at in the effectiveness of science, what is this obviousness of the clear and simple idea worth? This *simplex intuitus* which Descartes himself notes?

Undoubtedly it is subjected for us to the consequences of the whole development of science, of the one which has been produced since the Cartesian step forward, which is (17) designed to make us revise this prevalence of the simple idea of intuition.

And the fashion I had of articulating before you the "I think: therefore I am" (with two points to work on the inverted commas) from which it results that the complete formula is properly speaking "I am the one who thinks: 'therefore I am'"; and that what I call this division between the "I am" of sense and the "I am" of being is the introduction to this *Entzweiung* where there is going to be put for us, differently, the problem of truth.

And it is here that we see the value of the fact that the *ergo* of Descartes, which clearly indicates something which is of the order of necessity and that, nevertheless, Descartes emphasises, repudiates as not to be interpreted in any way by a necessity which might fall under the incidence of the logical process of necessity, the one which could be expressed: “everything that thinks is, but I think, therefore I am”; it is precisely what Descartes himself takes care to reject in one of his texts. The “therefore” is here an articulation which certainly marks the place of a causal reference, but of a causal reference which is that of the activation of something which is present and culminates at this disjunction, at this *Entzweiung*, of the operation of sense that Descartes, at another point, is going to articulate frankly, not even *cogito* but *dubito*, the sense vacillates, the doubt goes to the most radical point: *ergo sum*; the being that is (18) involved is separated even from the *dubito*.

What then would Descartes be if we remained with what is imposed in this analysis of his fundamental articulation? Nothing other than a consistent scepticism, a scepticism that would protect itself from what he always opposed, that at least the truth of scepticism is true.

Now this precisely is what is involved. The approach of Descartes is not a truth approach and what signals that and what has not either, it seems to me, been fully articulated as such, is what gives it its fecundity, it is precisely that he proposed a goal to himself, an end which is that of certainty but for what regards truth, he discharges it on the other, on the big Other, on God in a word. There is no necessity internal to the truth; even the truth of two and two make four is the truth because it has pleased God that it should be so.

It is the rejection of the truth outside the dialectic of the subject and of knowledge which is properly speaking the core of the fruitfulness of the Cartesian approach. For Descartes, the thinker, was still able to preserve for a time the carcass of the traditional guarantee of the eternal verities. They are that way because God wants it that way; but in that fashion, in fact, he gets rid of them. And along the path that is opened up there enters and progresses the science which establishes a knowledge which no longer (19) has to embarrass itself with its foundations in truth.

I repeat: no essential establishment of being is given in Descartes. A step, an act reaches certainty with a reference to what? That there is already a knowledge. Descartes' approach could not be not sustained for an instant if there were not already this enormous accumulation of the debates that followed knowledge, a knowledge always linked, still caught up until then, like a string on its paw, on the critical fact that the beginning of this knowledge is linked to the possibility of constituting the truth.

I would call this knowledge before Descartes a pre-accumulative state of knowledge. From Descartes on, knowledge, that of science, is constituted on the mode of the production of knowledge. Just as an essential stage of our structure which is called social, but which is in reality metaphysical and which is called capitalism, is the accumulation of capital, the relationship of the Cartesian subject

to that being which is affirmed in it, is founded on the accumulation of knowledge. Knowledge from Descartes on, is what can serve to increase knowledge. And this is a completely different question to that of the truth.

The subject is what is lacking to knowledge. Knowledge in its presence, in its mass, in (20) its own growth regulated by the laws which are different to those of intuition, which are those of the symbolic operation and of a close copulation of number with a real which is above all the real of a knowledge, this is what it is a matter of analysing in order to give the status, the true status of what is meant by a subject at the historical moment of science.

Just as all modern psychology is constructed to explain how a human being can behave in the capitalist structure, in the same way the true core of the research about the identity of the subject is to know how a subject sustains himself before the accumulation of knowledge. It is precisely this state, this extreme state, that the discovery of Freud offers to you, a discovery which means and which says that there is an "I think" which is knowledge without knowing it. That the link is quartered (*écartelé*) but at the same time tips over from this relationship of "I think" to "I am". The one is *entzweiet* from the other, there where I think, I do not know everything that I know, and it is not where I am discoursing, where I am articulating, that there is produced this announcement which is that of my being as being, from which I am being. It is in the stumblings, in the intervals of this discourse that I find my status as subject. The truth is announced to me where I do not protect myself from what comes in my word.

The problem of the truth re-emerges. The truth returns in experience and along a (21) different path to that of my confrontation with knowledge, of the certainty that I may attempt to win in this very confrontation, precisely because I learn that this confrontation is ineffective, and that where I have a presentiment, where I avoid, where I divine one or other rock that I avoid, thanks to the extraordinarily rich and complex construction of a symptom, what I show as a symptom proves that I know what obstacle I am dealing with, alongside that, my thoughts, my phantasies construct, not alone as if I knew nothing about it, but as if I wished to know nothing about it. This is the *Entzweiung*. The value of this image, the one that I put on the right, which is easy for you to reproduce because it is one of these constructions that one can make very simply by manipulating a strip of paper. It is still the Moebius strip but a Moebius strip that is in a way crushed and flattened.

I think that you will rediscover there the profile that I made familiar to you of the interval where in the interior eight there is knotted together the Moebius strip, namely, this strip which is stuck together again to itself after a simple half-turn and which has as a property, as I told you, this surface, of having neither a front nor a back, it is exactly the same. Here you see it in the shape in which it is most habitually reproduced when you make it with a simple strip, with a belt, namely, when it does not take on the flattened aspect it has here which is moreover very useful for us to show (22) certain things, in short, this Moebius strip is realised just as well by a strip of paper folded three times in a certain way.

What does the fashion of presenting it in this way show us? The fact is that, if you wish, on the upper right-hand side of this triangular structure, there is a symmetry. The two foldings of the paper are carried out in a way that is symmetrical with respect to the one which appears at the surface. In the same way here, in the following folding, it is in a symmetrical fashion that you will first of all see there being folded the first strip like this, then in the following loop; but from the way they are knotted, you see that here, on the third side of the upper side it is in a non-symmetrical fashion that the folding is produced.

In other words, if we imagine what is involved in the relationship to sense, in so far as at this level of unconscious knowledge what is established is the communication of a certain structure between signifying articulation and this enigmatic something which represents, which is the sexed individual (*être*); if we symbolise the following phase as being that of meanings through which there come, at the level of the subject this opaque kernel of the sexed individual, we have here two fields here that are, in a way, not alone autonomous but which can be situated, one with respect to the other, as they are effectively in this image, as the front and the back.

(23) But there is a point where what is the front comes to rejoin the back, where the junction cannot be produced, except in the shape in this *Entzweiung* where it is something different that appears from one edge to the other of the third edge, which is the one which links the subject to knowledge. And here, far from it being a relation to certainty, the one which is grounded only on the relationship of the vanishing of the subject with respect to knowledge, it is the reality called symptom, that of the conflict which results from what is announced from the side of the unconscious, in opposition, in a fashion heterogeneous to what is involved in, to what is constituted as the identity of the subject.

The division between the subject and the symptom is the incarnation of this level where truth regains its rights and in the shape of this unknown real, of this real that is impossible to exhaust, which is this real of sex, to which up to now we only accede through disguises, through deputies, through the transposition of the masculine/feminine opposition into the active-passive opposition, for example, or the seen/not seen, etc.

Namely, properly speaking, in this function which caused so much embarrassment to the founder of dialectic, namely, the function of the dyad.

It is very striking that they perfectly well realised this function of the dyad. They perceived it as what constitutes the obstacle and stumbling block to the establishment of being and the one by whatever path this problematic is tackled, whether it is in (24) *Parmenides*, in the *Sophist* itself - I sufficiently indicated it earlier - in the commentary of Aristotle which is given in Simplicius and which carries the reflection of what Aristotle had integrated about this famous Platonic lecture with which I began earlier, we find that the status of number, finally, at this summit of Aristotelian thinking which certainly carries the reflection of Plato's lecture, the number is the number two. It is a number for us; it is a number in so far as the Fregian dialectic allows us to make it emerge from the zero along the path of what we called earlier the subjective suture, but before

there was constituted in any fashion this relationship of the subject to knowledge, there was no other means for such a deduction except to establish the beginning of number at the level of two, of the *zwei*.

Now this *zwei* is precisely the one that we rejoin in the distinction of sex, a distinction which was completely outside the range of the Platonic dialectic. It is along the path of this something which is all the same aimed at by this dialectic and which betrays itself, as one might say, or expresses itself, or is reflected in the forms that this dialectic gives to the deduction of the dyad, for of course, consult the text and you will see they (25) do not take the *zwei*, the sexual dyad as a given, precisely because they do not have the sexual reference, and that to take it as a given is not a solution.

But Aristotle attempts to make this dyad emerge from a dyadic relationship which is that of the one, of the big and the small. It is from a correct measure that the birth of the two will be conceivable, namely, when the exact difference between the big and the small comes to equal one.

It is clear that this deduction is fragile because it presupposes proportion and measure. It is clear that it requires the same, the same proportion, let us vary it, to give rise to all the other numbers; it is clear that it betrays a fundamental asymmetry in the two units of the duality and that it is precisely this asymmetry that is involved in what is always involved in any true apprehension of the individual (*l'être*) *qua* sexed.

This same asymmetry, which is the one where there comes to be tied in the disparity of knowledge and the subject, in the fact that the subject is lacking, that the subject forces us, solicits us to construct a more radical imaginary than the one again which is given to us in analytic experience, as the one where there arises the image of the ego, that this imaginary, this absolute singularity of the subject as lack, is the reflection of the expression of what cannot be matched from the dual opposition of one sex to the other sex.

(26) The 2 relationship that there is in sex is an asymmetrical relationship; and everything that our experience gives rise to at the place where it is a matter of grasping this sexual difference, this something with a different structure which is the one by which I tackle and around which there is going to turn our whole critique of analytic experience at the point that it is at, *hic et nunc*, in real psychoanalysis, namely the **o**- object.

Everywhere the subject finds his truth - this is what our experience has come to. What he finds, he changes into the **o**-object like King Midas, who turned everything he touched into gold. What we encounter at the place from where there begins this incidence of being and of the sexed being, refused by knowledge and with respect to which the subject is this singular who only signals this asymmetry of difference. Every time the subject finds his truth, he changes what he finds into the **o**-object. This indeed is the drama which is absolutely without precedent into which the analytic experience pushes us. For there we perceive that it was not a slight or accessory question when Plato asked himself whether

there also was an idea of mud, an idea of dirt. What analytic experience reveals is that it is into things quite different to gold that man, in analytic experience, finds changed what he reaches at his point of truth. The introduction of the scrap of waste as an essential term of one of the possibilities of support of the **o**-object is something which is what I call an unprecedented indication.

(27) This status of the **o**-object which is there at the place, at the place of the third term which is veiled and in part cannot be unveiled, is the fact of experience which brings us to the radical question of what there is beyond knowledge, what is involved with respect to the subject, in terms of a truth.

I will pursue and close what I have to say about it the next time which will also be my last lecture.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 16 June 1965

Today, in principle, I am giving the last lecture of this year.

Nevertheless, it will not be quite our last meeting. On the contrary, the closed seminar which will take place in a week's time will give an opportunity to each and every one of you to put some questions to me about what may have remained in obscurity for him either in his text, or in his drawings, about what I presented to you this year.

I stopped the last time the reading of a text, preliminary to a writing in progress, at the following terms: "For psychoanalysis will only be worth," I said, "to the one who demands to be an analyst, what you are worth when you become a psychoanalyst, it will go no further than it is able to lead you. This is not to delude ourselves together with a high-flown summons about your responsibility in practice," I continued, addressing myself to the same. You know well that every exercise of power is not simply subject to error but to this high-point of misunderstanding of being well-meaning in its error.

How could we accept to be doctors if we did not accept this unbelievable effect of the human labyrinth. What I must tell you, is the risk for you of this marriage to the fate (2) of psychoanalysis. For what you bring into play here has nothing in common with what is involved in the outcome of an ordinary psychoanalysis. And the term of 'perfectly analysed' that people ask you to admire at the outcome of your analysis when it is described as a training one, is as deceitful as it is inadequate to define the ends of this analysis.

For it is not enough that you should be, according to the classical formula, perfectly clear about your relationships with your patients, it is also necessary for you to be able to tolerate your relations with psychoanalysis itself. For, if psychoanalysis teaches it, truth responds to a venial lack in its regard, in other words to a repression, by taking its ransom on the very body where your being dwells.

Do not believe that it is more merciful to the mortal sins that are always imminent in the action which claims to follow its trace without knowing its tracks. An action whose means is that the word stumbles in the lie and the truth picks up the bill, always with usury. Your position is indeed linked then to the fate of all of those who are called psychoanalysts for psychoanalysis is nowhere else. If you can expect nothing more of psychoanalysis than what you put into it, what I require is, namely, to penetrate what there is behind a certain resistance established in the very body of (3) psychoanalysts. This indeed is the essential question, ever since the time that my teaching posed itself, purely and simply as being opposed to a certain sordidness in the theorisation of the practice whose common denominator is given by psychologising, this psychologising which is strikingly denounced there, since it is admitted to be the goal of some of its promoters.

To look for the real that psychoanalysis deals with in the psychological, is the principle of a radical deviation. Every reduction, every attempt to return, as they say, or of the exhaustion of psychoanalysis in some psychologism in whatever constituted fashion it may be forged, is the negation of psychoanalysis.

Ever since the time when I showed that psychologism is woven from false beliefs, let us call things by their name, of which the first is that of these intuitive identities that is called the ego, it seems to me that I have gone over the path sufficiently to show you where the path can be traced quite differently.

No one has ever, except in a certain form of ignorance that, as a humorous theme, I attribute quite gratuitously, even though no doubt not without reason, to dentists, no one has ever yet dared to impute to Descartes the origin of this intuitive error.

(4) What I reminded you about the last time concerning the established status of the *sum* in the *cogito*, I will not recall today. It is from there that I begin again. Let those who were not here the last time, I want all the same to mark what I put the accent on, it is that this foundation of the *sum* in the *cogito* is not a primary foundation. It must be remembered that this emergence of the *cogito* in this division where my analysis marks it between the “I am” of being to the “I am” of sense, of the “I am of the one who thinks: ‘therefore I am’”, that this approach cannot be conceived of without the mapping out of that with respect to which it is situated, it is situated no doubt as a methodical doubt and what is more a radical one, this something which is an already constituted knowledge and that this relationship of the subject to knowledge is so essential that, starting from there, at the beginning, we rediscover in the result this something that I repeat here in order to see in it the initiation of a reflection which can be taken up again and pursued,

the fact is that the result of Descartes' approach is to render possible this something that I characterised after him as the accumulation of a knowledge. The foundation, the end, the brand, the style of knowledge of science, is above all to be a knowledge which can be accumulated, and everything that philosophy since then, I am speaking about the one that we can retain as the best, was nothing other than to define the conditions of the possibility of a subject in the face of this (5) knowledge in so far as it can be accumulated.

Now it is this which is the false position of philosophy which puts the philosopher in the same position of a valet, which means that the psychologist is there to give us the conditions of possibility of a subject in a society dominated by the accumulation of capital.

The subject, in so far as he must constitute himself in order to render possible this accumulation of knowledge, this is something in which we can highlight what the Kantian approach itself is, the healthiest one in this matter, but the origin of this something with respect to which we have to pose ourselves as seeing it as wrong. It is not the condition of the possibility of knowledge that interests us. It is precisely of that which Descartes, of that which with Descartes, the consummation is accomplished of what I would call the alienation of knowledge in the fact that he abandons the eternal truths to divine arbitrariness. Here is the mainspring which allowed this new departure, this new approach but where something is fundamentally unrecognised, whose return constitutes the essence of the Freudian discovery.

If Descartes liberates the chariot of these eternal truths, which he off-loads onto divine (6) arbitrariness, they might be different.

I am, undoubtedly, highlighting the importance of the decisive character of this moment but it is appropriate to give it its consequence, that therefore nothing, even two and two make four is not necessary of itself, everything is possible. If everything is possible, nothing is. And from then on, this is the important thing in what is omitted in our perception, the philosophical perception of Descartes' starting point, henceforth, the real is the impossible. Everything is possible except that which, henceforth, is only founded on its impossibility.

It is impossible that two and two make four, simply because God wills it. And nevertheless that is the only reason. Take it or leave it; one must pass by way of the impossible. Newton has the path opened up with his impossible action at a distance, with the knot that has never yet been untied of the field of gravity, and Descartes can allow himself to be a backslider, a backslider on the side of the possible, with his theory of vortices.

Henceforth it is clear that for the philosophers, and those I would say those of the best Kantian descendance, the analysis of the conditions of the possibility of knowledge is a deviation. As if we had to wait for them for that. For it is precisely during everything which had gone before, when people were looking for the path along which knowledge (7) would be rendered possible, it had proved impossible to find that path.

All of a sudden, knowledge came, which was impossible to discover when people were searching at first in it what was true, I am speaking about science.

And now, behold, when people were no longer looking for it because it had been off-loaded onto God, well then, what people were looking so much to discover, imposed itself all by itself, but in a quite different fashion, which did not settle anything about truth.

This is why now philosophers are reduced to fishing out some trifles for hermeneutical commentaries, along a path which goes completely elsewhere. For what I am trying to constitute for you, is not the conditions of possibility of psychoanalysis, but the way in which its path is traced, from the foundation of what Freud himself from all time articulated as being its impossibility.

I articulate this term of impossible today, no doubt, in a fashion which may appear hasty to you, even biased, it would no doubt deserve our saying more about it, may I provisionally indicate to you, that in order for us to grasp the two angles as regards the real, which will allow us to apprehend this relationship to the possible which is so essential to mark clearly for our whole analytic approach, to recall to you that the contingent is part of the real, which can only be the necessary if we make the mistake (8) of grounding it in the real and not where it is grounded, namely in a symbolic relationship, the real is that which cannot not be, I beg your pardon, the necessary is that which cannot not be, if we see in it the foundation of the real, you have only, as I might say, to operate on these two formulae what cannot be and what can and carry out the subtraction, it is in the transformation of can into cannot, in the establishment of the impossible that there effectively arises the dimension of the real.

I had, I had announced to you last year that I would speak to you this year about the subjective positions of being and then, in a moment of prudence, besides I allowed myself to be advised, I contented myself with speaking in my title about crucial problems for psychoanalysis.

I was right, not at all of course that my first plan was abandoned for all that. The subjective positions of being are there on the blackboard for the past four of my lectures, five perhaps, under the three terms of subject, of knowledge and of sex. It is indeed the subjective positions of the being of the subject of the "I am" of Descartes, of the being of knowledge and of the sexed being that are involved in the psychoanalytic dialectic and nothing is conceivable without the conjugation of these three terms.

The relationship of these three terms is marked by a relationship which is the one that, (9) under the term written here in red, and which is in a way the title, on the board of *Entzweiung*, that I am trying to make you comprehend as establishing itself, rooting itself in the mode of relationship of what constitutes the status of the subject, the status of the subject in so far as we have for the whole year turned around the kind of particular trait which is the one that constitutes it, this "one" whose formula we went looking for in Frege, in so far as it is this "one" which

established the mapping out of the lack, we must seek somewhere this something which puts this singular one in this relationship of *Zwang* or *Entzweiung* with respect to the body of knowledge and it is from the *Zwei* of the sexed being, in so far as it is forever insoluble for this “one” of the imaginary subject, it is this relationship of the “one” to the *Zwei* of sex whose agency we find at every level of the relationships between the three poles of this triad. For this *Zwang*, this *Entzweiung*, this something that the last time, I will not go back to it, or I will go back to it if necessary, I thought I ought to inscribe in the topological schema whose importance or timeliness I will have to come back to later, as being marked by the fact that the structure of this topology being that of a surface such that its front comes in a way, as one might say, to conjoin itself to what is after all its opposite, namely its back.

Of course, in our experience as analysts, it is in this very particular relationship of a (10) subject to his knowledge about himself that is called symptom, the subject apprehends himself in a certain experience which is not an experience where he is alone, but an experience, up to a certain point, educated and directed by a knowledge.

The symptom, even if it is apparently the one that is most characterised for our habits as clinicians, that of the obsessional for example, we have only too much experience that it is only completed, that it only takes on its full constitution in a certain relationship to the other which Freud clearly underlined can be qualified as a first phase of psychoanalysis.

This division, this *Zwang*, this opposition between the subject and what comes to him from the side of a knowledge, is the relationship of the subject to his symptom, it is the first step of psychoanalysis.

I am only recalling this to justify the fact that it is there that I marked the division, the *Zwang*. But if it is there, and if this drawing is justified by the fact that the symbolic sheet of the topological relationship involved which is a relationship of a triad has its sense, its importance, and I will return to it later, it is clear that this Moebius strip which is thus, you have not perhaps sufficiently reflected on the reason why, is it by chance or is it not what is imaged in this way in this strip that is folded three times onto itself, this Moebius ribbon I mean its fundamental half-twist, constitutes its topological (11) property, what it conceals in terms of *Entzweiung*, precisely in the fact that there are not two surfaces, that the same surface coming to encounter itself as being its back, this is the principle of the *Entzweiung*, of course it is at all the points of the Moebius strip that it can manifest itself.

And this indeed is what we touch in experience when we see that the sign, namely what gives its power to the analytic experience, what it introduced into the world in terms of this essentially ambiguous something, in which we recognise that at the most opaque level of signifying chain, something, this something which makes sense, it is always more or less caught up in this still unresolved bipolarity that emanates from sex and what, in any case, makes sense there, but did I not also begin the year by showing you that this kind of sense is exactly that of the

pas-de-sens, that further, what we can try to articulate, to form, to conjoin in terms of signifiers on the sole condition of respecting in it a minimum of grammatical structure, will give this *pas-de-sens* and will manifest all the more its relief and originality.

Sinn is fundamentally marked by the fissure of *Unsinn* and this is where it arises in its greatest purity. So then, where would we find what corresponds there to this magical, fleeting and ideal line which is everywhere and nowhere, this line of the *Entzweiung* in (12) the locus of the liaison of the subject to sex that we have called *Wahrheit*.

For this is what is involved in psychoanalysis. If *Sinn*, if what is sense is interpretable, belongs to the subject from the side of knowledge, in the difficulties of discourse, in the stumbling of the signifier, the signified which thus comes, comes from elsewhere; it comes here from underneath, not at all through a detour of knowledge, but through this direct relationship of the subject with the sexed being. Where then is the division here? Do I need speaking to psychoanalysts to call it by its name? What is the experience to which psychoanalysis leads us and which defines the relationship of the subject with sex, if not that whatever the sex of this subject may be, this relationship is expressed in this singular fashion which is the one that we call castration.

It is in the measure that there is negated, precisely, the copula, the instrument of conjunction, that the subject, whatever he may be, is integrated into the truth of sex and is necessitated from the foundation of castration, this is what shows us here again the principle of this singular *Entzweiung*, playing on the impossible to resolve ambiguity of this “one” that is always vanished, always constrained to confront itself with two.

Now, as I told you, the idea of the idea, the root of every institution, the establishment of the symbolic in the real, Plato’s good, to call it by its name, is nothing other than (13) number. And I indicated to you the last time my references in Simplicius and his testimony about a certain lecture by Plato. I would like if one of my listeners would take it as a matter, an opportunity and a pretext for a more developed research.

Observe that it is not because I felt like drawing this strip that I described as folded three times in a certain fashion which harmonises with my drawings, the ones that I underlined the last time, in returning, that here there was a symmetry in the fashion in which, for example, this roll inserted into the strip is opposed to this other one, placed at this level of the figure. There is a symmetry, I mean that they are both, for us who are here hidden by the strip, and can easily rejoin one another.

The same here at the level of the other side of the junction but not in the third. A funny thing, a curiosity but as regards which I would ask you to observe, to notice, as you habituate yourself to it, to this sort of experiment, *experimentum mentis*, that it could not be otherwise, that there is no other means of arranging this strip in this triangular flattening out, without there appearing

somewhere the structure that I have just underlined, which means, which is not distinguished from the fact, that it is necessarily a Moebius strip.

(14) There is only one other possibility, which is that the thing is produced in the same fashion at the level of the three sides, which is what happens in the case that one makes use of what is called the shape of a knot. Namely, that it is in the same way, inverting the three points, that the strip would be folded but that it will, nonetheless be a Moebius strip.

There is then no escape from this topology; the triad, and it is curious that people did not see this until a certain epoch, the triad implies this topology of the Moebius strip.

It may seem to you to be a distant detour, capriciousness, a taste for the singular, that I delay, that I should wish to delay so long on a structure as regards which, at the very least, you can sense that as a structure that is not familiar, since I am sure that for some, if not for the majority of those who are here, the remark that I have made that the fact of using a surface as being the most propitious support to represent a certain triad is posed here for us as properly speaking establishing the subjective position - I specify and I insist, I do indeed mean that I know what I am saying when I say the subjective positions of being as such - that this support carries in itself the necessity of a certain relationship imaged by the Moebius strip but of which I already pointed out to you the strip is only the image.

(15) May I recall that it is not because this surface is a surface, that it exists, in a word, which makes it a Moebius surface. You can take as many pieces out of it as you like, if the continuity remains it is still a Moebius surface, and, at the limit, it is nothing more than this median cut which, changing the surface into a surface that is well and truly unique, remember, a median cut does not cut the Moebius strip in two but transforms it into a strip which only gives what is called a loop.

But what is proper to this strip is that it can, I showed it to you once but I regret not being able to do it again today, I forgot my scissors and my glue and I was not able to find here something to supply for it at the secretariat, but remember that this strip can overlap itself in such a fashion that it takes on again the exact shape of a Moebius strip and that then, what will be the the double edge of this strip folded once again in a Moebius strip, would be an interval that you have here drawn on the board, which you can show also involves this half-twist which is a Moebius strip.

What does that mean? The fact is that if in accordance with topology we consider the surface as having always to be defined by an edge, there is no other topological definition of the surface, an edge vectorialised like this, here is the symbol of the (16) surface that we call spherical, a sphere, it is there that one can make a hole which is cancelled out, as they say edge to edge, namely the two edges of the hole stitching themselves together, let us say, in the same sense.

If you wish, in order not to confuse, in order not to lose you in these imaginings about volume which is in no way involved in the matter, call what I called for you

this first surface a globe, and the topology of the globe is not defined otherwise than by the duplicity of this edge.

What is inside it and at the two edges of the edge, even if it is an infinite globe, even if because of that it is a globe, strictly equivalent.

I already told you, that what is outside the circle of Popilius is a circle, just like what is inside it. And the proper of a surface which is called globe is that it is from a closed cut that one separates a fragment.

This is not true of every surface as is easy to see on a torus or a ring if certain closed cuts can have the same effect, there are those which only simply open the bicycle tube of the torus and leave it well and truly in a single fragment.

It is also true that a double cut, provided they cross over one another, do not fragment a torus into two pieces, I said provided they cross one another. A little imagination (17) with the bicycle tube that I evoked is enough for you to grasp this.

I introduced this year the Klein bottle whose property is that there can be two cuts on it which do not cross one another and which are not for all that divided.

I indicate it here by a little schema: one cut here, the other opposite, also a closed cut. I give you the responsibility of seeing for yourselves what the result is. The result is a single strip which forms a double loop on itself, namely, something which resembles without being confused with it what happens when one cuts a Moebius strip in the middle.

This is not at all astonishing since the Klein bottle is made of two Moebius strips and that there is therefore a trait, a trait with a particular shape, the one which, as I might say, goes around twice in this way, a very bad way of expressing it, the central void, the one of which we do not even have to speak when we speculate on surfaces, I am saying this to go quickly, it appears immediately and easily to you that this surface is thus divided into two Moebius strips.

You are going to see why I am re-evoking here the Klein bottle.

(18) There is a fourth shape of surface that can be defined by its edge. The one that I called, also in order to go quickly, before you, the cross-cap because it is in this shape that there is marked and that one calls in strict rigour, theoretically, the projective plane.

I think that I do not have to re-evoke, at least for the majority of you For the others, let them for a moment imagine that here, this line shows the crossing which is produced here of a globe whose edges we would previously have opened in the way that we did it earlier, and if, once the edges are open, we make them rejoin themselves by intersecting themselves, namely, in such a fashion that not every point is going to be sutured with the symmetrical point, let us say, with respect to a line which faces it, but symmetrical with respect to a point.

We then obtain, I repeat, figured in a fashion which gives an image, what constitutes what I called provisionally the cross-cap or the projective plane.

What is here the property of the closed cut, of a certain type of closed cut? There exists a closed cut which has the same effect as on the sphere, with this difference, there is a difference of kind between the one and the other piece. One, and this is (18) pictured, is represented in the form that is described as that of the interior eight, and again the little portion that I will call differently today, and which is of great importance.

The other is a Moebius strip, I apologise for this long development, this long development is made to pose and introduce the following: the fact is that this central element, let us take it as such with respect to what you see here pictured in the shape of a Moebius strip, this central element which completes it and which closes it, and which is, what I called just now the little portion, this completes topologically what we have to say about the subjective positions of being.

What of the Moebius strip in the Klein bottle is completed with a symmetrical Moebius strip which closes it in the form of this something which resembles a torus, has as equivalent here something else of a nature that is different to the Moebius strip. This other thing, is what corresponds topologically to the **o**-object.

This **o**-object is essential for the analytic dialectic. I have heard it said, it has come back to me, that someone among my listeners had expressed himself on the **o**-object in Thomistic terms. The **o**-object is supposed to be the *esse* by essence, the something in which being would find its completion. Of course, such a misunderstanding is possible.

Up to the time that this topological image is there to make you sense that what is involved is the closing of *Entzweiung*, the occultation of the impossibility, the consummation of indetermination, this indetermination of which I spoke to you earlier which is that of the place of the *Entzweiung* and of this false assurance of certainty which is established in the masking of division.

Such is the function of this object, I would say, which conforms so little to a good shape, for you can only imagine it as this little disc, whose badly connected, hanging and circular shape comes to overlap itself, as the figure on the bottom right shows. It is nevertheless not something different to an ordinary surface but this side, I repeat, that is antipathetic to the good shape, this side that I would call the rag, this rag is the shape, the shape in which there is presented in the four registers where there is mapped out in the agency the subjective positions of being, namely, what is called in analysis, the object, the breast, the faecal object or excrement, the look and the voice, it is in this shape, in this topological shape that the function of the **o**-object is conceived. And this is why the equivalence, the possible substitution of the **o**-object for the conjunction to the other characteristic to a certain world, a micromacrocosmic world which (21) prevailed up to a certain date of the world where man bends himself and joins

himself to the reality of a preformed other, of the one that he made in his image, in the image that is similar and at the same time inverted.

The cut, the cut in the history and also in the status of the subject as such, is, at the moment when for this partner there is substituted the function of the **o**-object, it is in so far as I am **o** that my desire is the desire of the Other and it is for that reason that it is through this that there passes the whole dialectic of my relationship to the Other, the big O, the one which last year I defined for you by the relationship of alienation.

The **o** by substituting itself for it, allows us the other mode of the relationship, that of separation, something in which I establish myself as fallen, where I establish myself as reduced to the role of rag in what was this structure of the desire of the Other by which mine was determined.

It is through the fact that the suturing, that the soldering of my subjective relationship, of my subjective position as being can be found in the **o**-object that there passes the true nature of the dependence on the Other and especially on his desire. For phantasy is nothing other than this conjunction of the *Entzweiung* of the subject with the **o** thanks to which a fallacious completeness comes to overlap the impossible aspect of the real. The character of covering that the phantasy has with respect to the real cannot be, ought not to be articulated otherwise.

The analyst passes through the desire for this repositioning of the ego as subject in this **o** that I was for the desire of the Other and no disentangling is possible of the enigma of my desire without this re-passing through the **o**-object.

I heard, not too long ago, in one of my analyses, there being employed the term in connection with someone for whom analysis did not seem to have been a great success from the point of view of personal qualities. "There are then" said my analysand, making himself an objector for the occasion, "analytic miscarriages."

I rather like that formula. I would never have invented it In effect there is a turning point of analysis where the subject remains dangerously suspended on this fact of encountering his truth in the **o**-object. He may remain there, and one sees that.

My course for next year I will give then on what is lacking to the **x** subjective positions of being, I will give it on the nature of the **o**-object. If I were speaking to you in English I would have said *the significance of the object small a*, and if I had done so in German I would have said *die Bedeutung des Objektes kleines a*. But since I speak to (23) you in a tongue closer to that tongue fresher than all the tongues, which is called Latin, I will inspire myself from the *De natura* something, *rerum* and I would say to you *De natura objecti a* and I would add perhaps *et de consequenti*.

I can only deplore on this occasion that mother church is abandoning this tongue which has the great privilege of rendering precisely absolutely hermetic the explanations about the ceremonies that must be given while they are happening.

When they are given in Latin there is a chance that one will comprehend that it is the incomprehensible that is important.

Reassure yourself, I will not give next year's course in Latin. Although you never know. I will perhaps give one just to teach you.

I would not like to leave you without all the same having illustrated a little bit what all of this means because there are perhaps some who believe that I am far from the clinic in telling you this story.

There are a certain number of subjective positions which are well and truly concrete with which we have to deal even if we do not see that in the symptom, it is always necessary to search out where the knowledge is, where the subject is but not to go too quickly as regards knowing what sex we are dealing with. But in analysis there is the Other and we perceive the fashion in which, with respect to the Other, to the big O there are posed the problems of desire.

(24) Today I will not return to the major repartition of the demand, of the *jouissance* of the Other and of the anxiety of the Other as corresponding to the three perspectives determining the respective aspects of neurosis, perversion and psychosis.

In neurosis, from which our experience began and which is just as fundamentally our daily experience, it is with respect to the demand of the Other that there is constituted the desire of the subject.

To say that it is with respect to the demand to the Other is not going against what I am saying: the desire of the subject, is the desire of the Other but his aim, because it is also the principle of his maintenance in the neurotic position, is the demand of the Other, what the Other demands, of course, is not what he desires. I insisted enough, I think, on this radical *Entzweiung* for me not to have to illustrate it in you here, besides, take up everything that I may have left as a commentary on one or other point of the *Traumdeutung* in order to pursue it even into the structure of feminine homosexuality, you will put your finger on this *Entzweiung* and the hysteric charges a third person to respond to the demand of the Other. For her part, she sustains herself in her desire as unsatisfied. And that is why it is to the symptomatology, to the evolution of the hysteric that we have the most rapid access but, at the same time, which veils it in part to the fact of castration.

(25) Castration is too instrumental, too much of a consideration in the hysteric and also too easy to reach because most of the time the hysteric is already the castrated object, for it not to hide it from us.

The obsessional like the neurotic is in the same situation. He operates differently with the demand of the Other. He put himself in his place and he offers him the spectacle, the spectacle of a challenge by showing him that the desire that this demand provokes in him is impossible.

In fruitful cases, because they exist, of obsessional neurosis he demonstrates to him that in its place that everything its possible. He multiples his exploits,. All of this has also a considerable relationship with castration and if he snubs, if he degrades, if he mocks in this way the desire of the Other, well then, it is, as we know, to protect his penis.

From the place of the Other, through all the calculated risks that he runs, he experiences himself as a safeguarded phallus. This is where oblativity is at work. He offers everything instead. There are no greater oblates than the true, than the major obsessionals. He offers all the more willingly in that everything that he offers is, as you know, shit.

So then, forcing his hand by interpreting the phantasy of fellatio, which may come up, (26) in effect, and which ordinarily comes up in the analysis of the obsessional, imagining that it is the avidity for the penis that directs him, by making it the object of communion, well then, it is in reality a miscognition in the analyst, the effect in him of the confusion between the lost phallus and the faecal object and which, by involving the subject in analysis in a dialectic of touching, of not touching, of contact or of no contact, testifies properly speaking to the truth of what I am saying because this dialectic for the treatment of the obsessional is properly, as I might say, not that of property but that of cleanliness.

The subject, in analysis, along such a path, with such a method, is invited to what I defined as being the function of the **o**-object, to find his truth in the **o**-object, under its faecal species, which is properly, of course, what in fact delights the obsessional, who asks for nothing but that.

You see that this theory has practical consequences, that it allows there to be articulated objections, structures objections against something which is presented as not being without clinical effect and even up to a certain point beneficial. Since the whole danger comes precisely from satisfying the demand that we see being manifested in the neurotic.

When I take up again this dialectic of the possible and the impossible I will show you (27) that after all it is nothing other than what Freud uncovers for us as being the opposition of the pleasure principle and the reality principle.

But I do not ask how it is possible for neurotic suffering to be a pleasure, even though it is very obviously demonstrated.

I cannot demonstrate how it is possible except by doing him a bad turn but I can manifest it by putting myself at the place where I render impossible the satisfaction of the demand which is hidden under this suffering.

I will not go any further today about the clinical details because I must conclude.

I will not tell you how the phobic patient comes under the same rubric which is always the relationship to the demand of the Other. I spoke to you enough about the signifier that is lacking to close and terminate what I have to say to you today

on this point where there really culminates the whole discernment that Freud has of the unconscious phenomenon when he speaks about the final desire that dwells in the dream, which is the true desire of the Other; the desire that we should sleep. That it is at the moment when a dream comes to this high point of fixing itself in this immobile figure where really for us there is incarnated in the deepest way the nature of phantasy and of its function as a covering of reality. Think of the dream of the Wolf man. If the phantasy wakens us, and in anxiety, it is so that reality will not appear.

(28) May you simply be sufficiently awake for the sense of the word future in my drawing to touch you from now on.

I will not strip the Other either of his knowledge nor of his truth. The end of analysis if it is what I inscribed in the symbol S, signifier of \emptyset , are these terms: the Other knows that he is nothing.

THE OBJECT OF PSYCHOANALYSIS 1965 - 1966

- 1 December 1965 (I) Science and truth
- 8 December 1965 (II) The subject and lack
- 15 December 1965 (III) Topology and the subject
- 22 December 1965 (IV) A Green on the \circ -object
- 5 January 1966 (V) The \circ -object
- 12 January 1966 (VI) Subject of science and of psychoanalysis
- 19 January 1966 (VII) Mirror stage and the Divine Comedy
- 26 January 1966 (VIII) Discussion on Conrad Stein's work
- 2 February 1966 (IX) Pascal's Wager I
- 9 February 1966 (X) Pascal's Wager II
- 25 February 1966 (XI) LACAN ABSENT
- 23 March 1966 (XII) Lacan on America
- 30 March 1966 (XIII) Topological discussions
- 20 April 1966 (XIV) Summary of Crucial Problems; Jouissance
- 27 April 1966 (XV) Jones' Female sexuality
- 4 May 1966 (XVI) Visual structure of the subject
- 11 May 1966 (XVII) Perspective: Las Meninas I
- 18 May 1966 (XVIII) Michel Foucault: Las Meninas II
- 25 May 1966 (XIX) Summary of Object of psychoanalysis; Las Meninas III
- 1 June 1966 (XX) Re-thinking Freud; Las Meninas IV
- 8 June 1966 (XXI) Jouissance and castration
- 15 June 1966 (XXII) \circ -objects; Safouan's case

Seminar 22: Wednesday 15 June 1966

We have heard, I am saying this for those who take part in the closed seminar and who also attend the debates described as *Communications scientifiques* in the Ecole Freudienne, there is here, for example, a large part of the gathering who make up this meeting of a character.

Obviously, we heard a very, very good paper. Moreover, I noted it; but after all it is very, very much to be placed, if you will allow me this thing which is to be taken with a pinch of salt, in what constitutes, for me, the problematic of what is called a paper (*communication*) - you saw earlier that I did not finish - a scientific paper, in psychoanalysis.

This must not be particularly special to psychoanalysis. There must be other configurations in which the same effect is produced. In any case, for psychoanalysis, let us call that that this always turns a little into a conspiracy against the patient!

(2) And this is what falsifies things, and means, after all, that one comes to say things that go a little bit beyond, as I might say, strict scientific thinking, which is the one that one would restrict oneself to if what were in question were real scientific meetings.

Since we are at the end of the year, you will perhaps allow me to open my heart about the reasons that I have to be reticent about this style, in so far as it is the current motor of analytic work, and which is described as meetings where there are papers which are called scientific, and which are really not all that much so.

In consideration of which, on the plane of a clinical description of something centred around the perverse couple, Clavreul, whose absence here today I regret, for I would have reiterated my compliments, gave us something excellent. There we are. The only thing that was missing in it was something that was finally said in the discussion, but that nobody heard because it was not said clearly, which is that, in short, to speak altogether scientifically about perversion it is necessary to start from what is quite simply its basis in Freud.

Someone said, someone brought forward, timidly, these *Three essays on sexuality*, the fact is that perversion is normal.

(3) You have to start from there once and for all, and in that case the problem, the problem of clinical construction, would be to know why there are abnormal perverts.

Why are there abnormal perverts? This would allow us to enter into a whole configuration that on the one hand would be historical, because historical things are not historical simply because an accident happened, they are historical because it was necessary for a certain shape, a certain configuration, to come to light.

It is quite clear that it is the same problem as that of our friend Michel Foucault, who is not here either, he did not think that he was invited to the closed seminar, it is great pity, our friend Michel Foucault, in short, tackles with his excellent books, to which we have referred - you can hear me at the back? Yes? Good - *The History of Madness* or *The Birth of the Clinic*. You will understand why

1. there are normal perverts,
2. there are perverts who are considered abnormal, the least that can be said is that once there are abnormal perverts, there are also people who consider them to be such, unless things happen in the reverse order. But we should not force anything in this direction.

(4) In any case, I regret the absence of Clavreul, because I would have recommended him some reading for this next lecture that he will certainly give us, and one that is even still more excellent, by beginning, as I advised him, from what I highlighted, namely, that his best reference in everything that he told us - let us not forget that his lecture was entitled *The perverse couple*, as if there were pure and simple perverse couples. Precisely, that is the whole drama. Anyway let us leave it.

The remark is the one pinpointed by Jean Genêt, that there is always in the exercise of the perverse act, a place in which the pervert really wants to have put the brand of falsity (*la marque de faux*). I advised him to begin again from there.

Today, I would recommend some reading to him, reading, moreover which should be read by all, that I recommend to all of you, and which will allow you to give a very simple and very convincing illustration of what I am in the process of telling you, that one must begin from the fact that perversion is normal. In other words, that under certain conditions, it may not stand out as a blemish at all. In consideration of which, this book, that I took the trouble to go to the bookshop for, so that you could see that (5) it exists, and I no longer remembered that it had been printed by the Mercure de France, quite recently, moreover, so that as a result you will be able to get it, which is called *Mémoires de l'Abbé de Choisy en femme*, read it, read it and by means of it you will see where to find a sound starting point as regards the register of perversion.

You will see someone who is, not simply completely at ease in his perversion, and this from one end to the other, which did not prevent him from being someone who led a career carried out with general respect, receiving all the marks of public and even royal confidence, and writing with perfect elegance an account of things which, in our day, would literally turn our heads upside-down, and would even push us to do such

extraordinary things as getting a medico-legal opinion, without even counting the discredit that would result for the higher clergy who are, nevertheless, well known for being particularly expert in these practices, while, in our day, they are forced to dissimulate these things which are only the sign of a healthy and normal relationship to fundamental things.

(6) Here then is some reading that I would recommend to you. Naturally, some of the people who are here, or who are not here, will see in this a confirmation of the fact that, as it is put, I am a *bourgeois* from between the two wars. Good God, how small-minded people are! I am a *bourgeois* from before the French revolution, so you can see how far ahead they are putting me.

Anyway, you will be convinced of it after this approbation, this stamp of “book to be read”, that I have put on this book for you.

At this point, today, I would like, since it is not simply a closed seminar but it is the second last one, and that, God knows, in the last one I must put on the appearance of giving a closure to some things, I hesitated about what I would close on.

Perhaps, after all, I could, all the same, restate something which constituted the beginning of the closed seminar this year, namely, the discussion about the articles in which our excellent friend Stein, put forward his positions on the subject of what he called the analytic situation, which he wanted to limit to the conditions at the beginning, namely, what one is engaged on in carrying out analytic sessions; then, after that, he dealt very gently with transference and counter-transference; it is a matter of (7) understanding what he puts under these two rubrics. And, after that, he spoke about the judgement of the psychoanalyst. There was a debate, a debate which I did not attend in its entirety because, for one part, Doctor Irène Perrier-Roublef was kind enough to direct it in my absence. All of this would undoubtedly deserve a complement, a complement and, perhaps, illumination, an illumination, and, perhaps, something more, after all, something more firm, I mean, I mean that perhaps later, we will begin to speak about it, if it works, well, this might also encourage us to ask Stein to come the next time because, moreover, it would not be altogether suitable either that this closure should take place without his presence. Anyway, that will perhaps come up later on. I mean the beginnings of that.

What I would like, and happily what I took care to guarantee, so that I would at least have something to reply to, what I would like is that, after all, after a year in which I told you things of which a large residue must all the same remain in your heads, I said things, some of which were altogether new, at least for some of you, others which (8) were really structured for the first time in a fashion that was not simply absolutely exemplary but rigorous, I also dared to add, taking in this way a sort of definitive commitment, considering, for example, the schema that I gave you about the function

of the look. Well, I would not be unhappy, I would have no regrets, if some people were to pose me questions.

Naturally, the rumour has been confirmed that this is not something to be done, on the pretext that the other day, for example, I seemed to say to Monsieur Audouard who, in short, is the only person who at this level gave me complete satisfaction this year, namely, that he quite simply risked doing what I asked, namely, that someone should respond to me.

Monsieur Audouard, it is true, made a big mistake, a big mistake, in sticking into the schema of perspective the eye of the artist on what one can, in short, call the picture plane, this at the time of the foundation of perspective. Good. It is all the same necessary that you could conceive of the fact, that given that everyone is here with his (9) own little narcissism in his pocket, namely, the idea of not making himself ridiculous, it is all the same necessary to tell you that what Monsieur Audouard did, is very exactly what, with respect to Alberti, I told you that he was in this famous schema of perspective, I drew it on the board, after all, I went to a lot of trouble, in what Alberti founded and that someone named Viator, it was because he was called quite simply Pellerin in French, took up again, well then, the error that Monsieur Audouard made is exactly the error made by Albert Dürer, namely, when one consults the writings of Albert Dürer, one sees very exactly that certain mistakes, a certain displacement of the schema which does not fail to have repercussions elsewhere on the rather upside-down things that you see in the perspectives of Albert Dürer, when you look at them closely, are due, very exactly to an initial error of this kind. You see then that Monsieur Audouard is not in bad company.

I cannot, of course, demonstrate this for you because, because it would be necessary, anyway it is very easy, I can give those of you who are interested the bibliography, there is someone who highlighted this very nicely, an American who wrote some clever little books on art and geometry, and one in particular concerning the status of (10) perspective, in so far as it originates with Alberti, Viator and Albert Dürer. And all this is explained, is explained very well. All this is explained in function of the fact, precisely, that Albert Dürer began to pose the problem of perspective starting from what I would call a radically opposite approach, one which comes from the consideration of the luminous point, and the formation of the shadow, namely, the previous position, the one that I showed you was completely antinomical to that of the construction of perspective, which for completely opposite goals, which are not the goals of the constitution of the illuminated world but the constitution of the subjective world, if you will allow me to make this clear-cut opposition, clear-cut and justified from the whole previous discourse.

It is in the measure that what interests Dürer is the shadow of a cube, that he does not succeed in constructing the correct perspective of the cube.

Good, this having been said, and Monsieur Audouard having been restored to his position, namely, having only undergone the prestige to which people other than us, and, one might say, greater, succumbed, I would all the same like to encourage those who may have some questions to pose about what I have said and, for example, what I (11) said the last time about this schema, which ends up really posing very, very big questions about this schema, which is there at the back, and where we find ourselves, with the subject, in this position in respect to the field of the Other, that everything that concerns his relationship to *jouissance*, has to come to him through the mediation of what is linked to the Other, and which is presented in this way as linked to a certain function which is not without being the since, moreover, what the apparatus illustrated, for example, by *Las Meninas*, from the structure which was produced by Velasquez, demonstrates to us. Let us say that in the apparatus of perspective and of the look, we can conceive, make coexist, not just the reason why this narcissistic register coexists.

My whole first effort of teaching was to detach it from the articulation it has, that not only how they can coexist but how at the level of a certain object, the look, one can provide the key for the other and the look as the effect of to be the true principle, the true secret of narcissistic capture.

Therefore, in this relationship of S to O, we have been able to establish the function of this (o) of which I spoke, if you wish, with a privilege for one of them, the least (12) studied and, nevertheless, the most fundamental for the whole articulation of the thing itself. And then the correspondence in advance or, if you wish, the equivalence that the (-phi), namely, the phallus *qua* the object at stake in the relationship to *jouissance*, in so far as it requires the union of the other in the sexual relation

Ah, good, there you are Stein. Come over here. I was lamenting your absence.

Well then, this obviously poses, seems to me to offer an opportunity for all sorts of questions.

When I say that I re-make the circuit a second time, when I go twice around the Freudian Moebius strip, you should see in it not at all an illustration but the very fact of what I mean in the fact that the drama of the Oedipus Complex, which I think I have sufficiently articulated for you, has another aspect by means of which one could articulate it from one end to the other and make a complete circuit of it.

The drama of the Oedipus Complex, is the murder of the father and the fact that Oedipus enjoyed (*a joui de*) his mother. One also sees that the matter remains in suspense because of an eternal questioning about the law and everything that is (13) generated from it because of the fact that Oedipus, as I often say, did not have an Oedipus Complex, namely, that he did it in all tranquillity. Of course, he did it without knowing it. But one can illuminate the drama in another way and say that the

drama of Oedipus, in any case the drama of the tragedy, is in the clearest fashion the drama engendered by the fact that Oedipus is the hero of the desire to know. But as I already have been saying for a long time now, but I am repeating it in this context, I already said a long time ago what the term of the Oedipus Complex is.

Oedipus, before the revelation, on the torn screen of what there is behind, and with - this was how I described it - his eyes lying on the ground, Oedipus tearing out his eyes, which has nothing to do with vision, which is properly speaking what gives the symbol of this fall into this between-the-two, into this space that Desargues designates by the name of heavens, and that I identify, it is the only identification possible, to what we call the *Dasein*, this is where the look of Oedipus fell. This is the end, the conclusion and the sense of the tragedy, at the very least it is just as permissible to translate this tragedy onto this reverse side as to pose it in front where it reveals to us the generating drama of the foundation of the law. The two things are equivalent for the very reason which ensures that the Moebius strip only really connects up with itself when two (14) circuits have been made.

Good. Well then, this having been brought forward, it will be accompanied by no more than one remark, which is that the consideration of the \mathbf{o} -object and of its function, in so far as this consideration alone leads us to pose the crucial questions which concern the castration complex, namely, how there arises the group - it is necessary to use a mathematical term - which permits the functioning of a certain (-phi), which we have used for a long time but in a more or less specified way, in a logical structure; well then, this is the decisive thing introduced by the \mathbf{o} -object, namely, that through which it will allow us to tackle this properly speaking virgin terrain, virgin for a psychoanalyst, like that, produced (*émis*) in our day, as I might say, namely, the castration complex.

It is quite clear that people never speak about it except in a marginal way, behaving as if we knew what that meant. Obviously, we have a little inkling, because I spoke about it a little here and there. But all the same, after all, not enough for Monsieur Ricoeur, for example, to have brought the slightest fragment of it into his book which provoked so much interest. It is even remarkable that there is not even a trace of it.

(15) It must be then, that people do not speak about it elsewhere either. It would indeed be necessary for one to be able to say something about the castration complex. Now, it seems to me that the last time, I began to say something very firmly articulated on this point. Obviously in the measure that we can at least outline the program, to say that next year, we will speak about this sort of logic which may allow us to situate what, very specifically, re-emerges for the function (- phi) with respect to this first plane that we have assured this year about the \mathbf{o} -object.

There is one thing, in any case, that is certain, since we have spoken about the Oedipus myth. Of course Oedipus is the corner stone, and that if we do not see that

everything that Freud has constructed was around the Oedipus complex, we will never see absolutely anything. Only, it is still not enough to explain the Oedipus complex for you to know what Freud was talking about, unless you know, having been broken to the vocabulary that I unfold before you, that what it is a matter of articulating, is the foundation of desire, and that as long as one does not get that far, one has not even guaranteed the field of sexuality. The Oedipus myth tells us nothing at all about what it is to be a man or a woman.

(16) It is absolutely displayed in Freud. As I said the last time, the fact that he never puts forward the masculine-feminine couple, except to say that one cannot speak about it, precisely, sufficiently proves this kind of limit.

One only begins to pose questions that concern sexuality, masculine as well as feminine, starting from the moment where there comes into play the phallic organ and function. For want of making these distinctions, people are in the most absolute confusion.

It must be said that here there is something which operates, perhaps, at the basis of the fact that Freud did not complete, why would he not himself have completed his second circuit? Why did he leave it to be done by someone else? One could also ask oneself that question.

This is where I am very embarrassed. Experience teaches me, it teaches me at my expense, counsels me never to proceed without very great precautions. In truth, it is not quite in my nature, but others take them for me. In short, since this tightly-knit series of events which culminated one day in making me interrupt at my first lecture a seminar I had announced under the title of *Les noms du père*, will tell you that, for (17) psychoanalysts, it is all the same quite natural to give a sense to events and that, whatever may be the contingent detours, the policies, the little bloomers, which, precisely, brought about that day, the fact that, after all, people, perhaps, more alive to the importance of what I have to say, took very good care that I would keep my word not to say it in certain cases, it is because there was there, all the same, some reason and one which touches, which touches precisely at this delicate point of the limit at which Freud stopped.

If so many things of the order which culminate at these singular rendezvous, of which one cannot say that, of themselves, they are progressive, it is indeed because there is something in Freud that people cannot tolerate. If I take it away from them, what are they going to support themselves with? Those who support themselves, precisely, in short, with what is intolerable (*insupportable*) in this something regarding which we must believe that this was already sufficiently put forward, in a certain sense, because one cannot go any further. So that, in short, it is only in a fashion, a very light touch, and in a way something like a shadow, a negative factor, that I will point out that we (18) owe to Freud, all the same, that up to the end of his life, it appears, a mystery

seems for him to reside in the following question that he expressed thus: “What does a woman want?”. We owe this to an cuntess who reported it to us, and before whom he had, like that, allowed his ventral mug to open. There are moments when even idols exposed themselves. It must be said that, for this to happen, particularly horrible sights are necessary.

What does a woman want? Freud, as Jones put it, had a trait which cannot, all the same, fail to strike, this trait which is only well expressed, which is only really pinpointed in the English tongue, which is called *uxorious*. In French, it is not used very much. We are perhaps not sufficiently uxorious for that. But any way, in one case as in the other, whether one is or whether one is not, it is never anything but the specification of a position that one can boast about on this point. It is no luckier to be it or not to be it. He was uxorious and not with regard to someone indifferent.

“Caesar’s wife must be above suspicion”, we are told. That is used a lot. It is like when one says “the style is the man”, for example. It is an incorrect quotation, but that does not matter.

(19) These are things that always work. Put in the right place, it is not open to discussion. What does it mean? Suspected of what? Of being a real woman perhaps? Freud’s wife who, one can wager everything, was his only woman, cannot be the object of such suspicion. We have in Freud’s writings, after all, all the most extraordinary traces. The use of the term *sich strauben*, to bristle up, in the analysis of the dream of Irma’s injection is, in a way, in this style, this *Umschreibung*, this twisted style, almost the only case where I can reconcile mine with his. He brings us where he wants to go, of course, without telling us; the fact is that, when all is said and done, all of that, a woman *sich straubt*, it is like Mrs Freud and it is, all the same, a little annoying.

Yes, here obviously is a reference point of a kind to give us the feeling of knowing where the problem is posed, where the question is, and where we have got in it, where are, in a way, the structural barriers, inherent to the very structure of the concept brought into play, which explains a lot of things, for example, about about the history of psychoanalysis ever since, and the way in which there have been highlighted in it not alone femininity and its problems, but women themselves.

(20) What one can call the mothers of our psychoanalytic community. They are funny old mothers!

Mme Roublef: We can’t hear.

Dr Lacan: Perhaps its just as well!

So then, on this point I would like some questions to be posed to me. Since, in short, for example, the last time, in posing the subject before, as I might put it, this surface of reflection, that is constituted by the dialectic of the Other, in order to locate in it, in a fashion which requires, here also, a certain order of mirage. The place of *jouissance*, I indicated many things to you, specifically, and settled this question in passing of what I called Hegel's error, that *jouissance* is in the master. One is astonished. If the master has anything to do with the absolute master, namely death, what an extraordinary idea to place *jouissance* on the side of the master. It is not easy to make the agency of death function. No one has ever yet imagined that it is in this mythical being that *jouissance* resides. The Hegelian error is, then, well and truly an analysable error. And here, we put our finger, in the structure here written on the board, written in these little letters in which there lies the essence, the dramatic knot which is properly the one that we have to deal with; how does it happen that it is at this place of O, at the place (21) of the Other, in so far as it is there that signifying articulation is constructed, that there is posed for us the aim of a mapping-out which tends towards *jouissance* and, properly speaking, sexual *jouissance*.

That the (- phi), namely, the organ, the particular organ whose contingency I explained to you, I mean that it is in no way necessary, in itself, for the achievement of sexual copulation, that it took on this particular form for reasons which, until we know how to articulate a little beginning of something in the matter of the evolution of forms, well then, we will content ourselves with taking the thing as it is. As long as we have not substituted for some imbecilic principles this first apperception, that it is enough to look a little bit at the zoological functioning of animals, in order to know that instinct (*instinct*) does not concern only them. What is the living being going to do with an organ? Not only does the function not create the organ, this leaps to the eye, and how can this even be done, but enormous cleverness is required to give a use to an organ. This is exactly what the functioning of things really shows us, when one looks closely at it.

(22) The living organism does what it can with the organs that are given it, and with the penile organ, well then, one can no doubt, but one can do little. In any case it is quite clear that it enters into a certain function, into a role which is a little bit more complicated than that of fucking, which is what I called the other day, to serve as a sample, to create an accord between male *jouissance* and female *jouissance*.

This being placed completely at the expense of male *jouissance*, not simply because the male cannot accede to it, except by allowing the penile organ to fall to the rank of an o-object function, but with this quite special sign which is the negative sign, to which it will be a matter for us, next year, in learned logical researches, to see, to specify what exactly is the function of this (-) sign, with respect to those in use, and which are moreover used, I mean currently, among the majority of people who are here, for example, without at all knowing what one is doing, even though it would be quite simple to refer to excellent little books on mathematics, which now can be found

at every street corner, for all this is now being popularised, thank God, with a 150 year delay, but, after all, it is never too late to do the right thing, but everyone can perceive (23) that the minus sign can have, according to groups, and can bring into play, extremely different senses. It is a matter of knowing, therefore, what it is for us. But let us leave that. Let us take this (-phi) in block, and let us say that the relationship that it is a matter of establishing in sexual union to a *jouissance*, precisely gives precedence to feminine *jouissance*, which would not have this importance at all, if it did not come to be situated, precisely, at the place that I have marked here with an O, the locus of the Other. This does not at all mean, of course, that the woman goes more directly there than we men, for she is exactly at the same place of the S, and both, the poor dear little darlings, as in the celebrated tale of the immortal Longus, are there with this lovely dessert of the (-phi) in their hands, looking at one another, and asking one another what they are to do with it, in order to come to an agreement about *jouissance*.

So then, after that, people would be better off not talking to us about genital maturation, as a given, about the existence of perfect domestic arrangements. Because, of course, oblativity, this sacred oblativity that I end up by no longer talking so much about, and which one must not go on speaking eternally about, one day we (24) must close this parenthesis for good, it must not be believed either that it is a windmill, I have pupils who take it for that, they hurl themselves against it in all sorts of circumstances, in places, what is more, where it does not exist.

It is certain, all the same, that it must be said that there are things that must be said, all the same. The oblativ husband exists, for example. There are some who are so oblativ that you can scarcely imagine it. You meet people like that! This has different origins. One must not discredit it in advance. It may have noble origins: masochism, for example. It is an excellent position.

From the point of view of sexual realisation, afterwards, I am beginning to have some experience, indeed. Yes I do. Thirty-five years, all the same. It is beginning to add up. Naturally, I have not seen a great number of people, anymore than anyone else. One has so little time. But, all the same, I have only seen it in a woman, that unleashes, properly speaking, you know that, that unleashes very, very curious reactions and abuses which, from the outside, like that, from the moralistic point of view, are altogether manifest.

In any case, a great insistence on the part of the woman, on the *chanterelle* of the castration of the husband.

(25) Which is not something which happens all by itself, which is not implied in the schema, you understand, when I speak about the minus phallus here, as the vibrant sample which ought to permit agreement, that does not mean that castration is reserved to men since, precisely, and this is the whole interest of analytic theory, the

fact is that one perceives that the concept of castration operates in so far as it is brought to bear also on someone who is not by nature castrated, he may even not be so, if it is the penis that is at stake.

It is in this perspective that it would be appropriate, for example, to ask oneself about the extraordinary efficacy as regards sexual revelation, because this exists, this extraordinary efficacy on many woman, or even on the woman, the woman exists, it exists down there, at the level of the *o*-object. The extraordinary value then, for this operation, of what are called feminine men. There is absolutely no doubt about their success. This has always been known and has always been seen. Let a woman who has had this kind of husband, the golden type, carved out with a chisel, take the butcher of *la belle bouchère*, just meet up with a *chanteur à voix*, and strange things are going to happen. It is from these facts, in effect, which are massive, commonly (26) observed, renewed every day, that fill us analysts up, we can see the pleasure that women have with a *chanteur à voix*. It is fantastic, the way they have rediscovered themselves there. I am not telling you that they stay there. They do not stay there because it is too good. The whole problem is posed again about the relationship of desire and *jouissance*, but it is all the same necessary to know from what side *jouissance* is accessible.

I sense that I am entering, very gently, like that, onto the slope of, I do not know, memories of thirty years of psychoanalysis. And then, it is the end of the year, we are already a little among friends. You will forgive me for saying things that are between banality and scandal but, if one forgets them, end up really by being precisely what open the door finally to the most permanent idiocies. Which is all the same, despite everything, despite all my efforts, the one which remains absolutely in use and dominant in this country as in our neighbours, it has to be said.

Well then since I am on this slope, I must all the same ... Ah yes, I spoke about finishing up with ... settling, not to speak any more about this business of oblativity. One must all the same remember, since I spoke about context, the *milieu* in which, in (27) what narrow little circus, this idea made its rounds, namely, put in a few names, it is not for me, all the same to bring them out for you. This did not emerge from anywhere bad. There was someone called Edouard Pichon who had only a single fault, which was to be a Maurassian, and that is irremediable. He is not the only one. Between the two wars, there were a lot of them. He fomented that with a few clinicians, anyway, since it was between the two wars, those who had escaped the first, as you know, were not all that brilliant.

And then, this was taken up again. It was taken up again, I do not know why, yes, but after all, it is not for me to say it to you, in a certain context which is much more recent, and fed on a history which had, in short, nothing to do with oblativity, and which was this very special mode of relationship that arose from a certain analytic technique described as being centred on object relations, in so far as it brought into

play in a certain fashion the phallic phantasy, and the phallic phantasy especially in obsessional neurosis.

There you are. And then, as regards everything that was played out around the phallic phantasy, God knows I spoke enough about it on several occasions in my seminar, (28) came back on it often enough, all the same, in its details, in its technical usage, you have, all the same, clearly seen the mainsprings, the forced points, the unwarranted points, and here, I can really only say, I cannot even say, say something that summarises everything that I showed about it in detail, but which shows what I really think about what is in it.

There is something which found special favour, from the fact that the general sliding, which ensured that the whole theory of analysis no longer took as reference anything but frustration, I mean made everything turn, not around this initial double point of transference and demand, but quite simply of demand.

Since transference effects, of course, were not neglected but simply put in brackets, because people were expecting them, when all is said and done, to go away, and that, on the contrary, demand, especially with this fact that things happen on this point, and in effect, things happen, but they do not happen at all in the way that you say, Stein. But, after all, if you come back the next time, we will talk about it again.

The position of the analyst in the session with respect to his patient is certainly not to be this disturbing pole linked to what you call the reality principle. I believe that it is (29) necessary all the same to come back to this thing which is really constitutive, which is that his position is to be the one who demands nothing. This indeed is what is dangerous, since he demands nothing, and because one knows where the subject is coming from, especially when he is neurotic, one gives him what he does not demand. Now, what is to be given is one single thing and one single *o*-object. There is a single *o*-object which is in relationship with this demand which is specified as being the demand of the other, this object that for its part one also finds in the heavens, in the between-the-two where the look has also fallen, the eyes of Oedipus and ours before the picture by Velasquez when we see nothing in it, in this same space, it rains shit (*il pleut de la merde*). The object of the demand of the Other, we know it by the structure and the history, after the demand to the Other, the demand for the breast, the demand which comes from the Other, and which establishes discipline and which is a stage in the formation of the subject, it is to do that, to do that in time and in the proper form. It rains shit, the expression is not all the same going to surprise psychoanalysts who know something about it. People speak about nothing but that, after all. But, after all, it is not because people speak only about that, that one everywhere perceives where it is. Anyway, the rain of shit, is obviously less elegant than the rain of fire in Dante, but they are not so (30) far from one another. And then again, there is also shit in Hell. There is only one thing that Dante did not dare to put

in Hell, or in Paradise either, I will tell you another time. It is all the same rather striking.

And what is more, huh, the fact that we analysts have to pile it on about the soil-tub, is not, all the same, one of the things that is going to win us any stars! For a whole century, the bourgeoisie considered that this sort of piling on, that I call piling on the soil-tub was exactly what was educative in military service. And that is why they sent their children into it.

You must not think that things have changed enormously. Except that now, it is accompanied by kicks in the shin and some other exercises of down-on-your-stomach, applied to the recruit or to the one who subsequently is confided to him, for example, when it is a matter of colonial enterprises. This is a slight complication which people naturally have been legitimately alarmed about, but the basis is that: piling on the soil-tub. I do not see the special merit that analysts introduce into this business. Everyone knew that shit had the closest relationship with every kind of education, even, as you (31) see, that in virility, because after having done that, you come out of the army, a man. What I am in the process of saying, is a matter of theory and some people know very well the one I am aiming at, the fact is that if you read attentively everything that has been said about this phallic dialectic, especially in the obsessional, and about the touching and the not touching, and of the precautions and of the approaches, all of that smells of shit. I mean, that what is involved is an anal castration, namely, a certain function which, in effect, intervenes at the level of the relationship of the demand of the other, or of the anal phase, namely, the first functioning of the passage from one side to the other of the bar which ensures that what is on one side with a positive sign is on the other side with a negative sign. One gives or one does not give one's shit. And thus one arrives or does not arrive at oblativity. It is all made up of gift and of present, as we have always known, since Freud never said anything else; it is never a question of anything, when one gives what one has, than to give shit. This is also the reason that when I tried to define love for you, in a kind of flash, like that, I said that love was to give what one does not have. Naturally, it is not enough to repeat it to know what that means.

(32) I realise that I have left myself go a little down the slope of confidences. And that I am going to close with something which is not inappropriate, is that not so Safouan, after what I have been saying, so that you can give them the little paper that you had the kindness, like that, to put together on the off-chance, right along the line of what you contribute. Will a quarter of an hour be enough for you? If not we can put it off until the next time.

Duquenne: We have time.

Safouan: That depends.

Lacan : How long to you think you have in order to say what you have to say?

Safouan: Twenty minutes.

Lacan : Well then, start right away, it will be five past two, that is the time we normally finish. I am incorrigible.

Monsieur Safouan

(33) The subject of this paper, is the duplication of the feminine object in the love life of the obsessional. It is a subject that I chose precisely because, it leads me to the same questions that Monsieur Lacan announced as being those that he is going to deal with next year, and led me to appreciate the interest and the importance which, for an analyst, is attached to the fact that this question should be treated.

Before subjecting it to an examination, I am going to present you first of all with some material, which is, in effect, rather exemplary to permit an easy mapping-out of the structure underlying this duplication, but whose quite typical character you will certainly not fail to see.

At a given moment of his analysis, a patient falls in love, and this is accompanied with impotence on the sexual plane. “It is as if every part of her body were put in a jewel case”, he says, speaking about the person that he loves. From which I conclude to the presence of a protective intention with respect to the body of the beloved object, but also with respect to his phallus which he does not manage to put to use, and starting (34) from an identification of these two terms.

This, obviously, calls for a lot of details which, precisely, are going to emerge subsequently. Moreover it is perhaps not without interest to underline the fact that the same object which fascinated him, did not fail to inspire in him at times a certain disgust. For example, in noticing a missing fastening at the wrist, which means also that he did not fail to detail this indicative object that his relationship was not at all foreign to the narcissistic dimension. I say, in effect, because this is how he described it himself.

But the important thing is that, parallel to this love that he described himself as narcissistic, he was also linked in a way that he qualified, for his part, as anaclitic to another young woman who, not only put him, but asked him expressly to let himself be put, into an entirely passive position, in order to pour out on him all the perverse excitations he wanted.

So that the totality of the situation was expressed for him in this phantasy, namely, he says, “that he flies towards his beloved, his phallus erect and pointed downwards, but the other interposes herself, catches him in flight, pumps him, and when he arrives, it is flaccid.”

(35) And it is in this context that the patient brought a dream in which he saw his friend whom I will call, let us say, Barot, wearing a nylon stocking, and the sight of his leg and of a part of his thigh clothed in this way put him in exactly the same state of excitation as if he were a woman. And he asks himself: “What is this stocking?” At which point I replied: “It is a jewel-case”.

I leave to one side, for the moment, I leave to one side the subsequent effects of this interpretation, which made him rediscover, for a while, his sexual potency, but the important thing is that, right away, he replied by saying that he was going to launch himself into homosexual affairs, but he perceived that his friend Barot was only involved in the business because of his own name, for example: *Bas barot*, that the knot of the question is in this jewel-case and that there, he really gets very close to perversion. What is this jewel-case and what does he put in it? And if he cannot prevent himself from saying yes, after all why not, because one also puts jewels in a jewel-case and jewels are shit. This is what he connects up with with his stories about masturbation, which he describes as anal.

This is the material. The jewel-case is the curtain, the curtain in the thematic of the (36) beyond of the curtain, which Monsieur Lacan treated in his seminar on object relations, namely, not even $i(o)$, the real image of the body, but $i(o')$, a virtual image.

If I refer, obviously, to the optical schema which appeared in Monsieur Lacan's article in number 6 of *La Psychanalyse*, one thing that deserves to be underlined according to this article, is the fact that it is not the unique, that the most immediate grasp is not of the immediate but of the mediated, and that $i(o)$ is never apprehended outside the artifices of analysis.

I mean by that, that there would not even be assumption, that there would not even be a simple relationship to what, otherwise, would be not only an indigestible contingency, since the notion of contingency already supposes the notion of a network, but what would be rather due to being rejected, namely, the specular image emerges from this mediation of the other, to whom the child turns.

In other words, it is right away as $i(o')$, that the sexual act functioning in the field of the other, that the body image functions, and that a whole procedure, which is really the analytic procedure, puts the subject in a position from which he can see $i(o)$, really.

(37) **Doctor Lacan:** He can never see it, it is constructed in the schema, and then it remains there, it is a construction, $i(o)$.

Monsieur Safouan: Yes. Yes, of course. Precisely, yes. But the content of the jewel-case no longer poses a problem. The content of the jewel-case is found to be sometimes, proves to be sometimes shit, and sometimes the phallus. This phallus

finds itself identified to the beloved object, so that the question is posed: either there is an error of translation somewhere, or a correct translation poses the paradox of this kind, which is probably the case given that, given the experience.

So then, to take up this translation again, this equivalence of phallus = beloved object, phallus = girl, you see that I based it on the presence of a protective intention. Hence the question is posed: from whom is he protecting it? Surely not from the honest girl, but from the other one, the one that he calls perverse. This illuminates a fact that up to now I have not underlined, namely, that all his anxiety was effectively engaged in his relations with his beloved, namely, the one who was a pole of desire, a term which one can see is more adequate than to speak simply about narcissism, as he does for his part, because he does not see that $i(o)$, because nothing is visible, in principle, except the $i(o')$; it is here that all his anxiety was engaged, will he be able, will he not be able, (38) while this anxiety was completely absent in his relationship with the perverse girl, whom one can thus call, designate, as a pole of demand, which one can see is much more adequate than to speak about an anaclitic relationship as he called it himself .

It is therefore necessary to examine more closely the description that he gives of his behaviour and of the latter. What emerges is that she made use of him as a phallus, but that in the sense of an object subject to the exercise of her caprice, and not in the sense of the organ of which he is the bearer, because it is precisely this sense which is excluded from this relationship. She put his real phallus outside the circuit and, no doubt, she uses this castration to guarantee her desire and, no doubt, the exasperation of these perverse exercises come back to the impossibility in which she was of being able to integrate, as I might say, her condition of being really an o -object, namely, an exchangeable object.

For it would also be very difficult, obviously, to quote several observations which would throw light on this state of things, namely, that it is in the very measure that a subject finds it impossible, as I might say, to "*s'avoir*" (to have oneself, to know) as (39) object of *jouissance*, that he thinks he is it, hence, moreover, the paradox of a being whose whole thinking would be necessarily false; naturally, people do not know that this itself is God, it is because one does not know that religion always preserves, and the forms of religious life always preserve, their structural connection with guilt.

Moreover, one can also ask oneself in what measure one might not say that the unconscious is that, namely, this false knowledge whose statement, nevertheless, constitutes the true, and which is situated nowhere except in the gap of this "*s'avoir*" in sufferance, but with all of these considerations, which appear to be philosophical, I am only anticipating the clinical conclusion of this work or of this observation.

To return then to the patient, there is a misunderstanding, or perhaps an understanding, this is where it is difficult for me to decide, just as much a misunderstanding that I would qualify as comic, if the consequences were not so

grave, is going to be set up and mark his relationship to the perverse girl. This is a misunderstanding that can be brought to light. The fact is, that in the measure that there intensified the temptations which would put him entirely at her mercy, at the moment then at which there intensified the temptations, in short, linked to the fact that $i(o')$ attempts, in its mode of (40) exchange, to coincide with ϕ , or more simply with what he perceives as an object which does not calm him, but which calms something in her, he will have no other recourse than to guarantee her castration with his own, without noticing that it has already happened, namely, that he does not notice that not only is this castration the same on one side and the other, but in the sense that it is one and the same object which is lacking to both one and the other, which is obviously not the real phallus, because this is not lacking to him, and, as far as she is concerned, one can say that she does not lack it either, because it is, precisely, what she does not want. But which is the image linked to this organ, namely, the imaginary phallus, which is henceforth to function as $(-\phi)$, and it is from this angle the one can say that the phallic position ensures that the subject is, not neither man nor woman, but one or the other.

In other words, what is involved in the final analysis is the following, it is that the neutralisation and the putting outside the circuit, not of any organ whatsoever, but of his phallus, is going to promote the function of the image which is attached to it as $(-\phi)$. In other words, in other terms, the more $i(o')$ tends to identify itself to ϕ , the (41) more the subject, for his part, tends not to be identified but to sublimise, as I might say, into $(-\phi)$, namely, into a phallus that is always present elsewhere. Starting from which, one sees, not how he identifies the beloved girl with the phallus, for this is not an operation that he accomplishes. It is a matter rather of an operation in which he is caught up, but one sees how by engaging along this path, he only sees narcissism, the remainder, namely the identification of the girl to the phallus being the effect of what the demand of the other already evoked starting from a desire.

It is a curious thing, but this seems to me to merit further examination, or again, I would go more gently, one could say at a push that this $(-\phi)$, which is signified in this statement: "it is as if each part of her body was placed in a jewel-case", where this misunderstanding is going to reverberate necessarily in a mistake, as I might say, which is going to mark his relationship to the beloved girl as a brand of origin.

The mistake, here, does not consist in the fact that the beloved girl is the phallus but, on the contrary, in the fact that she is not it, or, more precisely, in the fact that she is minus ϕ , the guarantee of the castration of the other. The fact is that, in the whole measure that the erotic life of the subject is thus placed under the sign of his dependence on the all-powerfulness of the other, and here I am treating the question, (42) the other question, the other problem which is posed, namely, that if my body were identified to shit, then this becomes clear, I am saying that, starting from this, that in the whole measure that the erotic life of the subject is placed under the sign of

dependency on the all powerfulness of the other, one is not surprised that the same beloved object is also found to be identified to faeces.

The formula which clarifies this state of things, and on which I am going to conclude, is the following: the more the desire of the mother is lured into what is going to function right away in the sight of the subject as $i(o')$, the more the subject not only regresses, but is alienated in a pre-genital object, here the scybalum, which object will only function, nevertheless, in reference to the gap, which in the desire of the other is always signified as castration.

I think that it is starting from there that one can correctly pose the problem of normativising Oedipal castration - I mean castration in so far as it regularises precisely the phallic position, the which phallic position is strictly identical, as has been seen, to imaginary castration. It is starting from there that one can pose the problem of Oedipal castration, and one sees that really, the question of knowing along what pathways there is effected this symbolic castration, can only be resolved by setting up distinctions up to now unpublished, unformulated, concerning negation.

Doctor Lacan

Good. Thank you very much, my dear Safouan. That was excellent. Naturally, as they say, like every text that is read, it is better that it should be re-read. We will see, for example, with Milner whether it could not find a place in *Les Cahiers*, in that way everyone will be able to get to know it.

I am going, all the same, to conclude Safouan's contribution, to tell you something which has come to my mind, as they say, nevertheless.

You will have understood that immediately after his double commitment with these two objects which are so differentiated, he had this dream about the leg of his friend in a stocking, and it is around that that everything turns, the whole phenomenology of castration, that you presented so subtly, Safouan. That reminded me of what Napoleon said about Talleyrand: a stocking full of shit.

Green: A silk stocking.

Lacan: Yes. But this poses some problems. Napoleon knew something about the leg, as regards what concerns things associated with love. He said that the best thing was to take to one's heels (*prendre les jambes à son cou*). The only victory in love is flight. He knew how to make love. We have proof of it.

On the other hand, it is obvious that shit had a very large place in Talleyrand's politics. In any case, he also had some relationships with the all-powerful. And that his desire found its way rather well there, is something that is not in doubt.

It is necessary also, therefore, to distrust the following, the object of the desire of the Other: what is it that leads us to think that it is shit? In the case of Napoleon, there may be a little problem about Talleyrand who, in the last resort, defeated him.

There you are. This was simply an order of reflection that I wanted to propose to you, and which comes as a codicil to what I told you about the **o**-object today.

THE OBJECT OF PSYCHOANALYSIS 1965 - 1966

- 1 December 1965 (I) Science and truth
- 8 December 1965 (II) The subject and lack
- 15 December 1965 (III) Topology and the subject
- 22 December 1965 (IV) A Green on the **o**-object
- 5 January 1966 (V) The **o**-object
- 12 January 1966 (VI) Subject of science and of psychoanalysis
- 19 January 1966 (VII) Mirror stage and the Divine Comedy
- 26 January 1966 (VIII) Discussion on Conrad Stein's work
- 2 February 1966 (IX) Pascal's Wager I
- 9 February 1966 (X) Pascal's Wager II
- 25 February 1966 (XI) LACAN ABSENT
- 23 March 1966 (XII) Lacan on America
- 30 March 1966 (XIII) Topological discussions
- 20 April 1966 (XIV) Summary of Crucial Problems; Jouissance
- 27 April 1966 (XV) Jones' Female sexuality
- 4 May 1966 (XVI) Visual structure of the subject
- 11 May 1966 (XVII) Perspective: Las Meninas I

- 18 May 1966 (XVIII) Michel Foucault: Las Meninas II
- 25 May 1966 (XIX) Summary of Object of psychoanalysis; Las Meninas III
- 1 June 1966 (XX) Re-thinking Freud; Las Meninas IV
- 8 June 1966 (XXI) Jouissance and castration
- 15 June 1966 (XXII) o-objects; Safouan's case

Seminar 2: Wednesday 8 December 1965

The last time you heard from me a sort of lecture which was not like the others because, as it happens, it was entirely written out. It was entirely written out so that it could be printed in roneotyped form as quickly as possible so that you could have it as a guide as regards my teaching.

Some people have expressed a certain regret, let us say, a disappointment. It is worth while pausing on this. In order to put a little humour into things, I would say that the way in which this disappointment was expressed was something like the following - I am forcing things a little - people preferred this sort of struggle, it appears, that is represented by being present - I scarcely dare to say it - at the birth of my thinking.

Do you really think that my thinking is coming to birth when I am here - in the process of wrestling with something which is far from being exactly that.

(2) Like everyone else it is with my speech (*parole*) of course that I explain things. Moreover you have perhaps heard that my *cogito*, which does not mean, moreover, that it is in any way in contradiction with the *cogito* of Descartes, might be perhaps rather: "I think, therefore I cease to be". So then, since I do not cease to be, as you can clearly see, that proves that I have less reason than others to believe in my thinking.

Nevertheless, it is quite certain that this is what we have to deal with. This is what does not make any easier relations with those to whom it is very particularly addressed, namely, the psychoanalysts.

And the fact that the earlier remarks came to me, I repeat, with a hint of humour, very specially from them, proves well, confirms, that it is also they who prefer what I would call the show-biz aspect of this display. This does not make relations any easier.

It is also indeed from this point of view that there should be understood the fact that I believed I should, on several occasions in my last presentation, allude to what constituted a certain moment in my relations with the psychoanalysts and for example that I spoke (3) about what I call the Freudian thing, or one or other analogous point.

It is not a question here of what I have heard qualified as useless recollections about the past, which is quite curious for analysts because, moreover, this past forms part properly speaking of a history in the sense that I tried the last time to specify what is involved for us in history, what we bring to it in terms of an essential contribution by showing what is involved in the fracture, the trauma, in something that is specified by the moments of the signifier, and it would really be to overlook completely the function that I give to the word, and what I very specially affirmed the last time, if I did not attempt, in some way or other, to include in what I am teaching about it, what I note and record about the effects of my word and very specially what happens to those to whom it is addressed.

That is why, in the measure that we are advancing this year around a more radical point, this cannot fail to end up by highlighting something which must give the key to the passage or not of my teaching to where it ought to have its impact. There must be some very close relationship between what we could call these phases or these very difficulties, to call things by their name, and what precisely I was able to say and put forward (4) about the subject in so far as it is divided between truth and knowledge.

The last time, I did not, for all that, entitle this discourse: *A courteous debate between truth and knowledge*. I spoke about the subject of science and not that of knowledge. It is indeed here that there lies something of which I also said that there is something not quite right, in other words something that does not fit together in a way that is altogether adequate or comfortable.

This indeed is why, moreover, that the real title of this lecture, this presentation, is the subject of science but as he ought to be put on sale, the law of an object that can be sold is what the label covers, what I would call the merchandise and since it obviously involves, on the inside, science on the one hand and truth, on condition that you put the and in the brackets that it deserves, namely that it is a term which does not at all have a univocal sense, that it may well, moreover, include the asymmetry, the oddity that I spoke about earlier, *Science and truth* will be the title of this presentation. Or indeed if you wish, *Science, truth*.

What there is in this presentation is just as important for what it leaves blank as for what it contains. In the enumeration of the different phases, of the different moments of the truth as cause, you will see that there are put forward in it the aspects described as efficient causes and final causes, I left in the discreet suspense of what is going to be called (5) henceforth the debate between psychoanalysis and science, the interplay of the relationships between material causes and formal causes. This is what we are going to approach today.

In what is obtained as an effect of what I teach, in the practice of those who receive it, I can note a certain tendency, a certain aspect which is the one, a curious consequence of the particularly strict form that I try to give to the term of subject, and which culminates in a singular laxity, properly speaking the one that could be qualified from the outside and according to the ordinary usage of these terms, as subjectivism. Namely, that each one in turn and, what is more, following some *up to date* style or other, which may be fashionable, for example, by being a little bit behind the fashion, people have successively used as a reference point for the position they take in psychoanalytic activity, being and having, desire and demand - I am not saying them in the order that I produced them - indeed even the final term, of knowledge and truth.

This is one of the ways of escaping, as I might say, - I hope that it is only mythical, approximate, that I am only designating and highlighting here a tendency - this is indeed one of the most radical ways of escaping from what I am trying to obtain, since what sense (6) would there be to the formulation that I give of the function of the subject as cut, leaving perhaps a certain indetermination in its choice at the origin, but is afterwards an absolutely determining fact, if it were not a question, precisely of obtaining a certain accommodation of the position of the analyst to this fundamental cut which is called the subject. Here, here alone, as identical to this cut, the position of the analyst is rigorous. Of course it is not tenable. I am not the one who first said this, it is Freud who had no doubt about it. This indeed is the reason why in holding their place, the analysts indeed do not hold it.

There is, properly speaking, no way of remedying this but there is knowledge which may be a way of getting round it. Here there is uncovered the difference between *Wirklichkeit*, namely, the possible realisation of my relationships with the psychoanalyst in so far as he leaves me at the place where I am and where I try to circumscribe a certain type of formula, and *Realität* which is beyond in so far as being impossible, it is what determines our common failure (*échec*).

This is why every failure is not as has been taught and as people continue to believe, namely, at the most rampant level of psychoanalytic thinking, every failure is not necessarily a negative sign. Failure can precisely be the sign of a break which marks the closest relationship with reality.

(7) This is what motivates and justifies, I am going to say it rapidly in two words, this is why, I have to close half of these Wednesdays. What does that mean? And why have I taken the responsibility this year to choose myself the persons who will be invited to participate in them, it is for this very simple reason that in the study of this *Wirklichkeit* there is an aspect traced out, an aspect of direct exchange, an aspect that involves the passing of the ball of the word which can only be realised in certain conditions of choice, of blending between the different types of participants, those who have to make an analytic usage of my word, and those who show me that one can very easily follow it in all its consistency and rigour wherever it goes, which of course is to be expected, if analytic praxis merits this name of praxis it is inserted into a structure which is valid even outside its current practice.

It is necessary therefore for there to be established a possibility of exchange at the level of which, for example, there can be studied these terms which clear the way, which facilitate at this level of common knowledge, the usage of certain terms essential for this part of our praxis which is called theory, and, for example, that something - I am not saying, I have no preconceived idea about what could be put on the agenda here - which for example, shows (8) us the way in which the Stoics may have already approached our truth since they happen, on the one hand, to have contributed to us at the level of logic, essential references, which have the interest for us of being a common branch for the most modern usage that is made of logic on the one hand, and on the other hand, as will appear in my lectures this year, and which is not a novelty for the analyst, except for the fact that this is not at all the way that he formulates it, what is implicated in terms of the corporeal in this logic.

For it is not enough to remember that we speak in analysis about the body image. What sort of image? An uncertain, bladder-like image, a ball that one catches or does not catch. Precisely, the body image only functions analytically in a partial fashion, namely, implicated, cut up, in the logical cut. So then it might be interesting to know that for the Stoics, God, the soul even, and what is more everything in the world, including the determinations of quality, everything was corporeal. Here we have logicians for whom everything is body. I am not telling you that this is a study to which one might not prefer another better one. One might also study why Aristotle completely bungled the question of the material cause. Why matter, when all is said and done, for him, is not a cause at all because it is a purely passive element.

(9) You can take things up where you wish. If one has a praxis like ours, one must always come up against the vital points. Only this choice, then, can only be done in common because it is a very special choice and because I do not want it to get around - which would not fail to happen given the taste for labels - that I am preaching a Stoical psychoanalysis to you.

We will try then to organise these things by a common choice in order to work effectively. I think that the best system is that a work should emerge from it which

can be communicated to all, to all of those who here will do me the honour, I hope, of continuing their regular attendance on the first two Wednesdays.

Having finished these remarks, which moreover are not without interest for the points which may emerge in my discourse, this reminder of a certain question about the cause or about what must be understood by matter, I take up again the following, which is that if my teaching has a sense and if it is consistent with the structuralism that it highlights, if it was able to be pursued and be built up from year to year, it seems to me that it is rather normal to consider that it found favour in the fact that in order to ground the structuralism formulation - let those who can remember my first graph constructed during a whole year, (10) patiently, remember this first graph, this network relationship of the determining functions of the structure of language and of the field of the word - if this network structure for example has one advantage it is precisely that of belonging - almost to the first word, world but I use it quickly to make myself understood - to a topological world, which means that the connections are not lost because the shape is distortable, flexible, elastic. That is not new. Even the most rebellious people understood very well what was involved.

In such a way that this is what ensures that the edifice does not collapse, does not crumble, is not torn apart because of the modifications of proportion in the measuring of the whole when I contribute new terms, and that as I evoked it earlier, after being and having, I speak about desire and demand, it is a matter of seeing where the structure connects these four terms with one another. And it does not seem to me that it is, properly speaking, impossible.

There is here on the right the reminder of four of these structural networks, first of all under the name of the hole, which designates what I am going to speak about today.

You have the graph, the two storied graph and the function of the word in so far as there is differentiated in it the enunciating and the enunciated.

(11) To the right of this, something like a square piece of cloth, a field where those, who are not so rare, who read me, even though I never learn anything about it, were able to pick it out at the beginning of an article that is called: *A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis.*

It is really very striking that ever since the time, it is already four years ago, that I wrote on the blackboard, for my audience, a psychoanalytic one precisely, the year of my seminar on *Identification*, that I wrote on the board, vectorialised, the topological schema of what is called the projective plane of what I introduced under the term of cross-cap at that moment of my teaching, that it never came into anybody's head to see that the Moebius strip, in so far, - we will come back to it later - as it is cuttable in this projective plane with a remainder - we will say what one - that the Moebius strip is inscribed there that it was waiting for you for a long time, it has to be said, but after

all, one cannot reproach anyone for not having guessed it, nevertheless the letters that I had written: (I), (M), (i), (m); it is not simply for the pleasure of making *mimi* that I put them there. They might perhaps make you suspect something, namely this application function that I give to the Moebius strip in order to make you grasp what is involved in the constituting cut of (12) the function of the subject.

There is, right at the bottom, I pointed out in passing for those who might like to copy it today, a new little graph which I am giving you as an object of reflection which is properly speaking useful in order to grasp the relationships of what I called and continue to make function as the signifier with what will be very especially useful for us to consider this year, its functioning in what is not simply language regarding which I told you the last time that there is no meta-language which implies that henceforth, whatever of course presents itself as such, logic - what is logic if not precisely an attempt at meta-language - that logic is only a shoot (*chute*), and that it can only be conceived, Bertrand Russell (*prend et recèle*), by being considered as such. That is why in the schema at the bottom, you have at the right-hand point, something that I have written as phon or phoneme, the properly phonematic element of the signifier. It is formed by something which appears at the two upper and lower poles as an indicative symbol that I can put forward now since last year I was able to show you what is involved, in its central function, for this indicative term. The typical example is the shifter. What is essentially indicated is always more or less the hole of the subject, of the enunciating subject.

(13) At the lower edge, the symbol - but perhaps the term is going to surprise you, and it is precisely because I can only introduce it in all its crudity at this point of elaboration, because then it does not dominate everything, it does not carry everything before it - the imitative symbol.

This is something which is in agreement with the phoneme, and the phoneme refers you on to the pole of logical combination which is to be grasped at the end of the horizontal line, on the right.

The relationship of this logical resultant to the index and the lexical terms regarding which I can henceforth very easily admit that they contain elements of imitation, their relationship is the whole business of logic in so far as a logic is constitutive of science. This changes nothing about the fact that there is no meta-language.

The little schema on top is to remind you that at the beginning of an article which is called *The purloined letter* you have a certain number of concatenations concerning the signifying chain which perhaps will become a little clearer, but which I cannot say for the moment are very illuminating, which will become a little bit clearer because of what we are going to advance into later.

So what? It is a matter of starting from the subject, from the subject of science as we (14) were able to highlight it in this experiment of Descartes, the sign of a fainting point, but also indeed in the logical effort of Frege by which he designates for us where the one must emerge if we want to give it a purely logical foundation, namely, properly at the level of the zero object.

Are not these two reminders from last year enough to make astonishing and significant the reaction I encountered that someone, one of the best, found himself surprised at the accent that I put, during my last presentation, on the subject of science.

These are not vain remarks to study what is involved in certain deafnesses, which are only momentary precisely because they are Freudian, we are absolutely not satisfied with the term of scotomisation, namely, that for us, the hole, and for the best of reasons, cannot be in the perception, this is properly speaking a stupidity on which, moreover, much has been constructed.

The whole of English psychiatry, for many years, has spoken about nothing but negative hallucinations. The fact that it is structured differently and that to realise this it is enough to read the article that Freud wrote quite intentionally to show it, which is called *Fetishism*, what is involved in the *Spaltung*, the division of reality itself in the subject who is described as perverse on this occasion. This indeed is the reason why it is interesting to (15) highlight such remarks, such accidents, in so far as I have the good luck, after all - this did not appear to be luck to my dear dead friend Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who rather indeed, at the thinking that I received on the very afternoon of the day that I expressed myself at that time in Sainte-Anne, I received the different forms of disarray from my own listeners

I see in this, for my part, on the contrary, for them and for me, many advantages.

So then, let us now begin again from the hole. It is a long time, a very long time since I have given to the hole the essential function as regards the functioning of the symbolic order. Do I need to recall a certain meeting, congress, gathering, whatever you want to call it, which happened at Royaumont and where, having given a report on the direction of the treatment and everything that follows from it, the principles of its power, I spoke to them about nothing, because I had to change the record because the discourse was already in print, I spoke to them about nothing, to the stupefaction of a journalist who had entered there by I do not know what door, I spoke to them about nothing but the mustard pot, starting from this fact of experience, which had once again been confirmed at lunch, that the mustard pot is always empty. There is never a case that one opens a mustard pot and finds mustard in it.

(16) This mustard pot is the symbolic creation *par excellence* and everyone has known this for a long time. If there were not a being who speaks, there would be perhaps

hollows in the world, pools, depressions, things which retain, there would not be a vase.

One would be wrong to believe that it is of no consequence that this forms part, for us, of the first essential reliefs to be found of civilisation. Ceramics, then bronze vases, the prodigious quantity of these things that we find when nothing else remains, ought all the same make us prick up our ears a little, and many other things also. After all it is not enough to prick up your ears to make it understood, you have to believe.

Obviously there were other things before. The first historical stratum, has a pretty Danish name but I am incapable of pronouncing it, it is the piles of rubbish, so then in that case we have the **o**-object.

And the vase is not an **o**-object. It has served for a very long time to express something. What? Is it a lecture on theology? You know: God, the great worker, “just as,” we are told in the catechism, “one needs a potter to make a pot, in the same way

Have we not better profited from it! For this does not at all say what it is trying to (17) convince us of. What does this say to us? “..... and what follows *ex nihilo*”. What does that mean? That means that he makes the vase around the hole. That what is essential is the hole. And since it is essential that there should be a hole, the Jewish enunciation that God made the world from nothing is properly speaking, as Koyré thinking, taught and wrote, what opened up the path to the object of science. People have become bogged down, or remained stuck on all sorts of qualities, whatever they may be, from force, impulsion, colour, anything you wish, in short to perception, to the piece of chalk to which Socratic progeny remains stuck like flies on fly paper for two thousand years, namely Lagneaux and also Alain, have speculated on appearance. So then this appearance? Well then we must manage to see how it is also reality.

It is with this that philosophy and science have taken off at a tangent with respect to one another. So what? I think that I am in a position to tell you right away. The piece of chalk becomes an object of science at the moment and from the moment that you begin from this point which consists in considering it as lacking.

This is what I am going to try to make you sense right away.

(18) But for the moment, I do not want to lose the opportunity of adding in passing what is meant by the material cause, because if you are a philosopher, Aristotle, I will tell you that matter is the mustard, namely, what fills the void. Aristotle who was nevertheless so well orientated in his conception of space, is very far from this terribly slippery extension which is a veritable problem, always to be reposed, in the mathematical-physical sciences. He had very well seen that the locus (*le lieu*) was what allowed there to be given a conception of space which would not expand

indefinitely, which would not put to us the question of this false infinity. Only then, after having begun so well by defining the locus as the final container, the last one being that which is *non ens*, well then, because he was a Greek and because he had not read the Bible, he was not able to admit that there was a void separating objects. So then, he filled the mustard pot and it is because of this that we remained there for a certain number of centuries.

Does that mean that the material cause is the pot, an incontestably divine creation like every creation of the word and to which there can be strictly reduced what is said in the text of Genesis.

Not at all. And this is the remark that I wanted to highlight in passing. We find piles of (19) pots, I told you earlier and in tombs, everywhere where there reign what are called primitive cultures. Well then, with a very particular intention, namely, so that future collectors would not be able to give them as flower pots to their girl friends, which would have meant that all the pots would have been destroyed long ago, with the simple intention of preserving these pots, the people who put them in the tombs made a hole in the centre. Which proves to you that it is indeed from the angle of the hole that you have to seek the material cause. Here is something which causes something, a hole in the vase. This is the model.

If you take the high point of scientific development, what in it is at once the keystone and the essential hinge, you obtain what? Energetics is not what it is believed to be by an author who opposes it, as a complement, to my structural theory of psychoanalysis. He imagines no doubt that energetics is what pushes. You see the level of culture among philosophers!

Energetics, if you refer for example to someone as authorised, all the same as Feynman whom I did not wait to open, you may well believe, until he won the Nobel prize, in a two volume treatise which is called *Lectures in physics* and which, for those who have the time, I could not recommend anything better to read because it is a two year course that is (20) absolutely exhaustive. It is altogether possible to cover the whole field of physics at its highest level in a certain number of lectures which, after all, do not weigh more than one and a half kilos.

In the third chapter, or the fourth, I do not know which, he gives the reader or the listener, I do not know which, a whiff of what is involved in energetics. I am not the one then who invented that to support my theses. I remember that I had read that when I had the book, that is to say a year and a half ago. I would ask you to consult the first paragraph of chapter four: *The conservation of energy*.

What is the best thing he finds to give an idea of it to listeners who are supposed to be relatively uninformed about what is involved in physics, since up to then they will only have been taught by incompetents.

He imagines a highly strung little individual whom he calls *Denis the menace*, Denis, a danger to the public. He is given twenty eight little blocks, but since he is a savage, they are in platinum, indestructible, uncuttable, incapable of losing their shape. The question is to know what Mammy is going to do every time that, in a properly discreet way, namely, not an American Mammy, comes into her child's room and sometimes finds only twenty three blocks, sometimes twenty two.

(21) It is clear that these blocks will always be found, either in the garden, because they have been thrown out the window, or in the difference of weight that one may notice in a box which, of course, is not opened; or because the water in the bath has risen slightly, but since the water in the bath is too dirty for the bottom to be seen it is by means of this slight raising of the level that one comes to know where the blocks have gone. I am not going to read the passage for you. I do not have the time. It is sublime.

The author points out that one will always find the same constant number of blocks with the help of a series of operations which consists in adding together a certain number of elements, for example the height of the water divided by size of the bath, by adding this curious division to something else which might be, for example, the total number of blocks that remain. I hope you are following. Nobody is making faces. Namely, to do this thing, I tell you in passing, which is included in the least scientific formula which is that, not alone does one add but one subtracts, that one divides, that one operates in all sorts of ways with what? With numbers thanks to which one adds, and without which there would be no possible science, one adds all together the towels and the serviettes, the pears and the leeks, is that not so?

(22) And what does one teach children when they begin to enter - I hope this is no longer the way now but I am not so reassured - precisely in order to explain things to them, one tells them the opposite, namely, that one does not add together the towels and the serviettes, or the pears and the leeks which means, naturally, that they are definitively barred from mathematics.

Let us come back to our Feynman. This parenthesis will only lead you astray. Feynman concludes: "Here is the example. One number is always going to emerge as a constant: twenty eight blocks. Well now, he says, energetics is like that. Only there are no blocks."

This means that this constant number which guarantees the fundamental principle of the conservation of energy - I mean not simply fundamental but of which a simple shakiness at the base is enough to throw any physicist into an absolute panic, this principle must be preserved at any price, therefore it will necessarily be so since it will be at any price, it is the very condition of scientific thinking. But what does the constancy mean here, that one always finds the same number? Because that is the whole point. It is not simply a question of a number. That means that something

which is lack as such - there is no block - is to be found elsewhere, in another kind of lack. The scientific object is passage, (23) response, metabolism (metonymy if you wish, but be careful) of the object as lack. And starting from there many things are clarified. We will refer to what last year we were able to highlight about the function of the one. Does it not seem to you that the first emergence of the one concerning the object, is that of the cave man, to please you, if these sorts of images still please you, who comes home where there is a little bit of food or a lot, why not, and who says: "there is one missing". This is the origin of the unary trait: a hole.

Of course one could take things much further and we will not fail to do so. Note that this proves that our cave man is already at the high point of mathematics. He knows set theory. He connotes: there is one missing. And his collection is already made. The truly interesting point is obviously the "one" which denotes. Here the referent is necessary. And the Stoics will be of service to us.

It is obvious that the denotation, here, is what? His word, namely the truth which for its part opens up for us the hole, namely, why "one"? For what this "one" designates is always the object as lacking. And what would then be the fecundity of what we are told is the characteristic of the object of science which is that it can always be quantified.

(24) Is it simply the fact, that from a prejudice which is really unbelievable, we choose among all the qualities of the object simply the following: its size, to which we subsequently apply measurement and people then ask where this comes from. From Heaven, of course. "Everyone knows that number," this at least was the way Krodcker [?] expressed it, if I remember correctly "except for the whole number which is a gift of God."

Mathematicians can allow themselves humorous opinions like that. But the question is not there. It is precisely by remaining stuck at this notion that quantity is a property of the object and that one measures it, that one loses the thread, that one loses the secret of what constitutes the scientific object. What is measured by the ell of something which is always something else, in the dimensions, and they can be multiple, of the object as lack.

And the thing is so little a simple one that what we have to see is that the true experience that one has, on this occasion, is the following: namely, that number in itself, is not at all a measuring apparatus and that the proof of this was given immediately after the Pythagorean inspirations; it was seen that number could not measure what it itself allowed (25) to be constructed, namely that it is not in a position to give a number, a number which is expressed in any kind of commensurable way, for the diagonal of a square which would not exist without number.

I am only evoking this here because what is interesting is that if number, for us, is to be conceived as a function of lack, this, this simple remark that I made about the incommensurable diagonal indicates to us what richness is offered to us starting from there.

For number furnishes us, as I might say, with several registers of lack. I specify, for those who are not particularly interested in this question: a number described as irrational, which is nevertheless, at least since Dedekind, to be considered as a real number is not a number which consists in something which can be indefinitely approached. It can only be plunged into the series of real numbers, precisely, by making intervene a function which, not by chance, is called the cut.

This has nothing to do with a goal which keeps retreating as when you write 0.3333....., which is for its part a perfectly commensurable number. It is a third of one. As regards the diagonal, it is known since the Greeks why it is strictly incommensurable, namely, that (26) not one of its numbers is predictable up to the very end.

The only interest of this is to allow you to envisage that, perhaps, numbers will furnish us with something very useful in order to try to structure what is involved for us, namely, the function of lack.

Here we are then before the following position: the subject can only function by being defined as a cut, the object as a lack. I am speaking about the object of science, in other words, a hole, things going so far that I think I have made you sense that only the hole, in the final analysis, can act as what, effectively is important for us, namely, the function of material cause. Here are the terms between which we are going to have to tie a certain knot.

Since I was not able, today, to advance my remarks as far as I had hoped because of the fact that things were not written out and since also, I cannot hope in a week, to make at my discretion the necessary choice, I will conduct on the third Wednesday of this month, exceptionally, the same open seminar to which you are all invited.

In order to punctuate, to highlight what is going to be involved I will make an opposition. What relationship can be conceived between this **o**-object in psychoanalysis and this object of science as I have been trying to present it to you?

(27) It is not enough to speak about the hole, even though all the same, of course, it seems to me, at least for the sharpest among you, that the solution ought already to be appearing to you, it has to be said, on our horizon. The function of lack - I did not say the idea, be careful, we know how this idea caught Plato by the ankle and that he never freed himself from it - we see the function of lack emerging, undergoing the necessary escape (*fuite*) through the fall of the **o**-object and this is what these drawings

that I brought today, and that I will bring back again the next time, are designed to let you put your finger on. Such a structure is necessary for a cut to determine the field, on the one hand of the subject as it is necessitated as subject of science and on the other hand, the hole where there originates a certain style of the object, the only one to be retained, the one which is called the object of science and as such can be a sort of cause over which I left a question mark the last time, is such, as it appears only the form of laws. Or again, where can there be connected up this manifestly materialist aspect, through which science precisely can be designated. It is indeed in this knot of the function of lack that there lies and there is concealed here the turning point of what is in question. And what are we going to have at this point which is a point of gap?

(28) We saw it last year in connection with the Fregian genesis of the number one. It is in order to save the truth that it must function. Saving the truth, which means not wanting to know anything about it.

There is another position which is to enjoy (*jouir de*) the truth. Well then, that is the epistemological drive. Knowledge as *jouissance* with the opacity that it brings with it in the scientific approach to the object, this is the other term of the antinomy. It is between these two terms that we have to grasp what is involved in the subject of science. It is here that I intend to take it up again in order to take you further. By this you should understand, to speak about this radical function. I have made nothing emerge yet about what is involved in the \mathfrak{o} -object, but you ought to sense that the same schema, precisely, that I have not reproduced here, the schema with two circles at the time when I depicted for you the function of alienation as such, remember the example: “Your money or your life, liberty or death?” As I explained to you, the schema for alienation is a choice which is not really one in this sense that one always loses something in it. Either the whole, you enjoy the truth but who enjoys because you know nothing about it? Or you have, not knowledge but science and this intersection-object which is the \mathfrak{o} -object escapes you. That is where the hole is. You have this amputated knowledge. This is the point on which I will stop today.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 15 December 1965

Today you are not being spared drawings and cuts. To be strict even, I was careful to put on the board on the top left-hand side the one which corresponds to the reminder

that I gave the last time of what I had given at the end of my first year here as the schema for alienation.

Let us say that alienation consists in this choice which is not really one and which of two terms forces us to accept either the disappearance of the two or a single one mutilated.

To enjoy the truth, I said, is the true aim of the epistemophilic drive in which there escapes and vanishes all knowledge as well as the truth itself. To save the truth, and in order to do this not to want to know anything about it, is the fundamental position of science and that is why it is science, namely, a knowledge in the middle of which there is displayed the (2) following hole that the o-object, here marked by taking support from an Eulerian convention as representing the field of intersection of truth and of knowledge. It is clear that I raised more than one objection to these Euler circles on the plane of their strictly logical utilisation and that in fact, here, their usage is in a way metaphorical.

These are precautions that should be taken. You must not think that I think that there is a field of truth and a field of knowledge. The term field has a precise sense that we will perhaps have an opportunity of retouching today.

This use of the Euler circles is therefore to be taken with reserve. I note this because over against this reserve that I have just made, you are going to see me today taking support from, to say certain shapes does not really express what is involved, cut is closer; signifier, this is what is involved, writing, why not?

In advance then I ask you to note that their decisive importance is to be taken in a quite different sense to a sense of meaning, as what represents the circle in the Euler sense here which, in short, is designed to show us how there is included a certain extensive and comprehensive conceptualisation in what I am showing you in the centre of these figures that I brought along for you today, something which has been traced out by a Buddhist (3) monk who is called by the name that I put there on the board in its Japanese phonetics, since Jiu Oun was Japanese.

Jiu Oun, as one of my faithful friends here today was kind enough to tell me, Jiu Oun lived between 1714 and 1815. He entered a Buddhist "order" - as I might put it - at the age of fifteen years and you see that he remained there until an advanced age. His work is considerable, and I will not tell you about the original foundations which still carry his mark; in order to give you an idea, for example, of his activity, it would be enough to evoke, for example, that a Sanskrit study manual, considered today to be fundamental, comes from him, even if not entirely from his hand and that it contains no less than a thousand volumes. Which means that he was not a lazy man.

But what you see here is typically the trace of this something which, I would say, is the high point of a meditation and is not unrelated at least in appearance to what is obtained from some of these exercises, or rather of these encounters, which are staged out on the path of what is called Zen.

I would have some scruples in advancing this name here, namely, before an audience a part of which I cannot be sure of as regards the way in which I may be understood, to (4) advance without any precaution a reference to something which is certainly not a secret, which is everywhere to be found and which one hears being spoken about everywhere. Zen does not represent something which can go so far as a betrayal of confidence in the true sense, I cannot advise you too much to distrust all the stupidities which are piled up under this heading. But after all no more than about cybernetics itself.

I am forced all the same to say that this, which is traced in a brush stroke of which no doubt it is not sure that we can appreciate the particular vigour which is, nevertheless, for an experienced eye rather striking, this brush stroke is what is going to be important for me, it is on it that I am going to fix your attention to support what I have to advance today along the path that we have opened up. There is no doubt that it is here in the proper position that I define as being that of the signifier. That it represents the subject, and for another signifier, is sufficiently assured by the content of the writing which is here aligned and read like the Chinese writing that it is, this is written in Chinese characters: I will pronounce it for you, not in Japanese but in Chinese: Chi yen che [?], which means: “In three thousand years how many men will know? “

(5) Will know what? Will know who has made this circle. Who was this man whose range I thought I ought first of all indicate to you between the most extreme, the most pyramidal of science and a mode of exercise which we cannot fail to take into account here as a background to what it allows us to describe here.

“In three thousand years, how many men will know” What is involved at the level of this traced-out circle. I allowed myself in my own calligraphy to respond: “In three thousand years, well before, men will know”..... Well before three thousand years, and after all it can begin today, men will know, they will remember, perhaps, that the sense of this drawing deserves to be inscribed in this way.

Despite the apparent difference, it is topologically the same thing. Imagine that this is round, that what I called a circle is a disc. What I traced out here by hand is also a disc even though it is in the shape of two lobes, one of which covers the other, the surface is all of a block, it is limited by an edge which, by continual distortion can be developed so that one of these edges overlaps the other, the topological homeomorphism is obvious. What is meant by the fact, then, that I traced it out in a different way and that it is to this that I now have to draw your attention?

(6) A drawing which I called a circle and not a disc leaves in suspense the question of what it limits. In order to see things where they are traced out on a plane, what it limits is perhaps what is inside, it is also perhaps what is outside.

In truth, it is here that we have to consider what may be original in the function of writing. Let us leave for a moment what we have here before our eyes and which undoubtedly I propose rather as an *experimentum mentis*, as an exercise of the mind which has an intuitive adhesion. For if I lead you into the field of topology, it is in order to introduce you to a sort of flexibility (*mentis*), of mental exercise concerning figures which are not, no doubt, incapable of being grasped in some intuitive way but regarding which it will be sufficient, at least for someone who is less prepared to follow me, for, let us say the effects that I will try to demonstrate to you in it by tracing certain cuts. You will see immediately that you will have enough trouble with these extremely simple things here, this agent prepared for your use in what I have to tell you today, so that you will be able to grasp that it is, no doubt, not for nothing that these constructions which are called - I already introduced all of them and I have already even used and abused them sufficiently, but not without my needing today to gather together what concerns them - these figures called the (7) Klein bottle, the projective plane, the torus find themselves, as compared to what is the structure of our habitual co-ordinates of intuition, in such an upsetting position that it is really necessary to practice them, to apply oneself to them in order to find one's way around them easily.

This is why - I apologise to those mathematicians who may be in my audience for having to explain things by oppositions that are, in a way, gross and which allows there to escape a part of the rigour of what would be a present-day presentation of what is involved, for example, in the chapter where these figures appear in a modern book of topology, but after all, I do not have to apologise either, for if these difficulties that are described as intuitive difficulties concerning the field of topology have been, in a way, radically eliminated from the properly speaking mathematical presentation of these things, if they do not enter in even for a minute, given the very assured combinatorial formula in their premises, in their original axioms, in the laws which are advanced, it remains, nevertheless, that something retains its value in the very difficulty that these things present by being decanted, ending up by finding their mathematical-logical status, and that it is too easy to rid oneself of them by saying that they contain remainders of intuitionist impurities, that it (8) is all in the fact, for example, that people allowed themselves for too long a time be encumbered by a point of view which is, in a way, linked to the experience of a three-dimensional space, that it was necessary to come to be able to think it, to construct it, starting from this data of experience, by varying, by constructing, by building up a generalised combinatorial.

People are satisfied with this criticism and this reference. But I think that there is something missing in it. If the negative number, to keep to one of the historic aporias

that are really now for us, which appear to us to be completely elementary - who torments himself today about the existence of the negative number? And this tranquillity that we have as regards the negative number, besides the fact that it does not cover over anything good, is all the same quite useful, as regards what is involved in not posing oneself useless questions, this tranquillity with respect to the negative number only dates from scarcely a century ago. I was speaking again recently to a very erudite mathematician who knows his history of mathematics extremely well. Even in Descartes' time the negative number, this magnitude below zero tormented them. They were not at ease about it. Numbers increase and also decrease. And when they go beyond the limit below the bottom of the bottom where do they go?

(9) After all, it is legitimate enough for him to be tormented if he puts things forward in these terms.

I am only evoking this simple example: you can well imagine that it would be easy for me to evoke others; the irrational number, the number that is called imaginary, the famous root of minus one. Here again mathematicians forget a little easily what the imaginary number was for centuries, about five or six centuries, you know that it made its appearance in connection with a root outside the field of the conceivable, in terms of a very simple second degree equation, from that time up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the imaginary number caused lots of problems, people did not know what to make of it, what to make of it conceptually, and if now things are assured starting from the foundation of the complex number, the extension of numerical groups to which one has ended up by giving its status, it nevertheless remains that it is easy enough for mathematicians and too easy not to remark that, of course, the term imaginary remains attached to it but that it is just as good a number as any other, that this notion that I have just brought into play of numerical group is sufficient to cover it and that it is no more imaginary than any other one.

Well then, it is at this point that I will put forward an objection. For it seems to me that everything which has thus constituted a stopping point, a point of scansion, the (10) progressive mastery of the conquest of certain structures that I have evoked just now under the term of numerical sets, the obstacle, the obstacle is not to be put under the heading of intuition, of this veil, of this closing down which would result from the fact that it is not possible to visualise some support for what is involved in the combinatorial. I hold on the contrary that we are led to something more primitive which is nothing other than what we are trying to grasp as the structure, as the constitution of the subject by the signifier.

It is in so far as these diverse forms of numerical expression are reproduced at different moments of scansion, I am saying that in reproducing temporally we are not even sure that it is the same circuit that is involved in this reproduction: we will have to see. In other words, there are perhaps structural forms of this constitutive lack of the subject which differ from one another, and that perhaps it is not the same lack

which is expressed in this negative number in connection with which one can indeed say that the introduction by Kant of this number into the field of philosophy is really, and when one returns to it, of a really heart-breaking character. Perhaps it is a great merit that Kant tried such an introduction. The result is an unbelievable mess.

(11) Thus it is perhaps not the same moment of the structural lack of the subject which is supported, I am not saying here is symbolised, here the symbol is identical to what it causes, namely the lack of the subject. I will come back to it. At the level of lack there has to be introduced the subjective dimension of lack and I am astonished that no one has remarked in the article by Freud on fetishism the use of the verb *vermessen* and one can see that in its three uses in this article he designates the lack in the subjective sense, in the sense that the subject misses out.

We are brought then to this function of lack in the sense that it is linked to this original thing which, being called the cut, is situated at a point where it is writing that determines the field of language.

If I was careful, I mean, to write *Function and field of speech and language* it is because function refers to the word and field to language. A field has an altogether precise mathematical definition. The question was posed in the first part of an article which appeared this week, I believe, in any case it was this week that I received its delivery by someone who is very close to some of my listeners and who introduces with a vivacity, a crispness, a vitality which really gives it an inaugural importance this question of the (12) function of writing in language. He highlights in a fashion which I must say is definitive, irrefutable, that to make of writing an instrument of what is, of what lives in the word is absolutely to fail to recognise its true function.

That it must be recognised elsewhere is structural to language because of something that I indicated sufficiently myself, if only in the predominance given to the function of the unary trait in identification so that I do not have to underline my agreement on this point.

Those who attended my former seminars, if they still remember something about what I said, may remember the value given to something, something in appearance so out of date and uninterpretable as the discovery made by Sir Flinders Petrie about predynastic potsherds, namely, long before the foundation of the Phoenician alphabet, precisely of the signs of this alphabet which is supposed to be phonetic which were there obviously as a trade mark. And on this point I stressed the fact that we must at least admit, even when it is a question of writing that is supposed to be phonetic, that the signs came from somewhere, and certainly not from the need to signal, to code phonemes. Indeed everyone knows that even in a phonetic writing they code nothing at all.

(13) On the contrary, they express remarkably well the fundamental relationship that we put at the centre of phonematic opposition in so far as it is distinguished from

phonetic opposition. These are crude things, which are really way behind when compared to the precision with which the question is posed in the article that I told you about.

It is always very dangerous moreover to give references. You have to know to whom. Naturally those who will read this will see put in question certain oppositions such as that between the signified and the signifier. It goes as far as that and they will see there perhaps some discordance where in fact there is none. On the other hand, who knows, it may encourage them to read one or other earlier or later article. There is always something very delicate in this always fundamental reference that a signifier refers on to another signifier.

To write and to publish is not the same thing. That I write even when I speak is not in doubt. So then why do you not publish more? Precisely because of what I have just said. One publishes somewhere. The fortuitous, unexpected conjunction of this something which is a writing and which has thus close relationships with the *o*-object gives to every disunited conjunction of writing, the appearance of a dust-bin. Believe me, at the early morning hour that I come home, I have a considerable experience of dust-bins and of those who busy themselves with them. There is nothing more fascinating than these nocturnal individuals who snatch something or other whose usefulness it is impossible to (14) understand. I have been asking myself for a long while why such an essential utensil had so easily kept the name of a prefect, to whom the name of a street had already been given and which would have been quite enough to commemorate him. I believe that if the word dust-bin (*poubelle*) has come to fit in so well with this utensil, it is precisely because of its relationship with publication (*publication*)

To come back to our Chinese, you know, I do not know whether it is true but it is edifying, one never puts in the dust-bin a piece of paper on which a character has been written. Pious people, who are supposed to be cheerful because they have nothing else to do, collect them and burn them on a little *ad hoc* altar. It is true. *Si non e vero e bello*.

But altogether essential to delimit this sort of trap-door of exteriority that I am trying to define with regard to the function of the dust-bin in its relationships with writing.

This does not imply the exclusion of all hierarchy. Let us say that among the reviews that we are surrounded by, there are more or less distinguished dust-bins. But in looking carefully at things I have not seen any tangible advantages in the dust bins of the rue de Lille as compared to those of the surrounding area.

So then let us take up our hole again. Everyone known that a Zen exercise has something to do, even though people do not know very well what that means, with the subjective realisation of a void.

(15) And we are not forcing things in admitting that anyone, the average contemplative, will see this figure, will say to himself that there is something like a sort of high point which ought to have some relationship with the mental void that it is a matter of obtaining and that this singular high point will be obtained in an abruptness, succeeding a wait which is sometimes realised by a word, a sentence, an ejaculation, even a rudeness, a cocking of the snoot, a kick in the backside. It is quite certain that these kind of pantalooneries or clowning have no sense except with respect to a long subjective preparation.

But again. At the point that we have got to, if the circle, however empty it may be, is to be considered by us as defining its holding value, if finding favour in it to depict what we have approached by all sorts of convergences, about what is involved in the *o*-object; that the *o*-object is linked *qua* fall (*chute*) to the emergence, to the structuring of the subject as division is what represents, I must say, the whole point of the questioning. What is involved in the subject in our field is this hole, this fall, this *ptose*, to employ here a Stoic term the quite insoluble difficulty of which for the commentator when it is confronted with the simple *catagoren* seems to me is this with respect to a *lecton*, another mysterious term, let us translate it (*produisons-le*) with all sorts of reservations and in the crudest fashion (16) which is certainly inexact by meaning, incomplete meaning, in other words a fragment of thought.

One of these possibilities, fragment of thought is Commentators, of course, caught by the incoherence of the system do not so much miss the relationship by translating it as subject, logical subject, since it is a matter of logic at this level of Stoic doctrine, they are not wrong. But we can recognise in it the trace of this articulation of something which falls with the constitution of the subject. Here is something that I believe we would be wrong not to be comforted by.

So then are we going to be content with this hole? A hole in the real, that's the subject. A little facile. We are still here at the level of metaphor. We might find here however, by pausing for a moment, a precious indication, notably something that is altogether indicated by our experience which could be called the inversion of the function of the Euler circle, we would still be in the field of the operation of attribution. We would rejoin here the necessary path to what Freud defined as the *Bejahung* first of all which alone makes the *Verneinung* conceivable, there is the *Bejahung*, and the *Bejahung* is a judgement of attribution. It does not prejudge anything about existence, it does not tell the truth about the truth. It gives a start to the truth, namely something that will develop as for (17) example, the qualification, the quiddity which, moreover, is not quite the same thing.

We have an example of it in psychoanalytic experience. It is primary for our object today. It is the phallus. The phallus, at a certain level of experience, which is properly speaking the one analysed in the case of Little Hans, the phallus is the

attribute of what Freud calls living beings. Let us leave this to one side, if we do not have a better designation. But note that if this is true, which means that everything that develops in the register of animism would have had as a beginning an attribute which only functions by being placed in the centre, by structuring the field at the outside and by beginning to be fruitful from the moment that it ,namely, when it can no longer be true that the phallus is the attribute of all living beings.

I repeat, if I put forward this schema, I only did so in parenthesis. Let it be said in passing that if my discourse unfolds from the parenthesis, from suspense and from its closure, then from its often very embarrassed resumption, you should recognise there, once again, the structure of writing.

Is this then, do we have here then, one of these summary reminders to which there would (18) be limited the exhaustion of what we are trying to do. Certainly not. For it is not a matter for us of knowing at the point to which we take the question, how the signifier colours the real. That one can colour any map whatsoever on a plane with four colours and that this is enough, even though this theorem is up to the present still verified, even though it has not been proven.

This is not what interests us today. It is not a matter of the signifier as a hole in the real. It is a matter of the signifier as determining the division of the subject. What can give us the structure of it?

No void, no fall of the \circ -object that a primordial anxiety is able to account for, and I am going to try to make you sense it by topological considerations. If I proceed in this way, it is because there is a quite striking fact which is that, as long as scribblers have been around, and God knows that it is quite a while ago, even if one believes that writing is a recent invention, there is no example that everything that is of the order of the subject and of knowledge, at the same time, cannot always be written on a sheet of paper. I consider that this is a fact of experience that is more fundamental than the one that we have, that we might have, that we believe we have, of three dimensions. Because we have learned to make these three dimensions vacillate a little, it is enough for them to vacillate a little bit for them to vacillate a lot.

(19) In the place where, perhaps, people still write on a sheet of paper and where there is no need to replace it by cubes, it has still not vacillated. There must then be something here as regards which I am not in the process of saying that it must be concluded that the real has only two dimensions. I undoubtedly think that the foundations of the transcendental aesthetic are to be taken up again, that the bringing into play, even if only for probative purposes, of a two dimensional topology for what concerns the subject, would in any case already have this reassuring advantage, if we continued to believe *mordicus* in our three dimensions which, in effect, we have many reasons for marking our attachment to, because this is where we breath. This would at least have the reassuring advantage of explaining to us the way in which what

concerns the subject belongs to the category of the impossible. And that everything that comes to us through it, through the real, is inscribed first of all in the register of the impossible, of the realised impossible. The real, in which there is carved out the pattern of the subjective cut, is this real that we know well because we find it reversed in a way in our language every time that we really want to circumscribe what is involved in the real, the real is always the impossible. Let us take up again then our sheet of paper.

(20) We do not know what our sheet of paper is. We know what the cut is and that the one who has traced out this cut is suspended on its effect. "In three thousand years, how many men will know?"

It would be necessary to know what condition a sheet of paper must fulfil, what is called in topology a surface, there where we have made holes, in order that this hole should be a cause, namely, has changed something.

Note that for what we are trying to grasp in what is involved about the hole, we are not going to suppose another one. This one is enough for us. If this hole has had as an effect to make fall a shoot, a fragment, well then it is necessary that what remains is not the same thing, because if it is the same thing, it is exactly what is called a hole or a sword-thrust in the water.

Well then if we trust the most accessible, the most familiar, the most fundamental intuitive support, which it is not a matter moreover of deprecating either in terms of its historical interest or its real importance, namely a sphere - I apologise here to the mathematicians - it is to intuition that I am appealing here because we only have a surface into which one cuts and that I do not have to appeal to something which is plunged, precisely into three dimensional space, namely,

(21) What I simply mean in asking you to evoke a sphere, is to think that what remains around the circle has no other edge. You can intuit this in the present state of things only in the shape of a sphere, a sphere with a hole. If you reflect on what a sphere with a hole is, it is exactly the same thing as the lid that you have just dropped. The sphere has the same structure.

The fall that is in question in this fundamental drawing has no other effect than to make re-emerge in the same place what has just been ablated. This does not allow us in any circumstance to imagine something which is structural with respect to the subject which interests us, is structural.

Since I must advance, I will only make a rapid allusion to the fact that Mr Brouwer, a considerable personality in the modern development of mathematics, demonstrated this theorem topologically, which, topologically, is the only one to give us the true foundation of the notion of centre, a topological homology. There are two figures,

whatever they may be, provided they have an edge, can, by a distortion of this edge be proved to be homeomorphic. In other words if you take a square, it is topologically the same thing as this circle because you have only to blow, if I can express myself in this way, inside the (22) square and it will swell up to be a circle. And, inversely, you give some hammer blows to this circle, to this two-dimensional circle, you give a two-dimensional blow of a hammer also and it will become a square. It has been proved that this transformation, however it may be carried out, leaves at least one fixed point. Where? A more astute thing that is less easy to see immediately - even though already the first thing is not so easy - or an odd number of fixed points. I shall not go any further into this.

I want simply to tell you that at this level of the structure of the surface, the surface is, as one might say concentric. Even if we go by the outside, I mean intuitively, to see what is connected up at the level of this edge, what is involved is a concentric structure.

I said a long time ago, I am still more inclined to say it, but nevertheless I will not say why, that Pascal was a very bad metaphysician. This "*world of two infinities*", this literary fragment which has been giving us a headache almost since we were born, appears to me to be the most out of date thing that one could imagine. This other anti-Aristotelian *topos*, where the centre is everywhere and the circumference is nowhere, appears to me to be the most inexact thing possible, except for the fact that I will easily extract from it Pascal's whole theory of anxiety.

(23) I will do it all the more easily because, in truth, I believe if I can believe the stylistic remarks which were brought to me by this great reader of mathematical material who asked me to consult the text of Desargues, who was a much greater stylist than Pascal, in order to see what we know very definitely from other sources, the importance that the references to Desargues may have had for Pascal, which would change the whole sense of his work.

In any case, it is clear that on this concentric, spherical structure, if the circle can be everywhere, undoubtedly the centre is nowhere. In other words, it is obvious to anyone that there is no centre for the surface of a sphere. This is the inconsistency of Pascal's intuition.

And now the problem is posed for us of whether there cannot be, in order to explain ourselves in terms not of images but perhaps of ideas, and which give you an idea of where I am guiding you from, if at the outside of what I very intentionally called the circle, and not the circumference, the circle means what you would ordinarily call in geometry circumference, what one usually calls circle I will call disc or flap (*lambeau*), like earlier. What must there be on the outside in order to structure the subject, in other words, in (24) order that the cut from which there results the fall of the \bullet -object should make appear, on something which was completely closed up to

then and where then, nothing could appear in order to make appear in what we require for the constitution of the subject, the subject as fundamentally divided. It is easy to make this appear, for it is enough for you to look at the way in which this circle is arranged, the way that I have retraced it, in order to see that if you conceive of this outline as empty, as I taught you to read this one as empty, it becomes very simply, and this is obvious, I think all the same that I have spoken to you sufficiently up to now about the Moebius strip for you to recognise it, it is the mounting, the framework, what allows you to see sustained and immediately intuitable, a Moebius strip.

You see it here. Join, as I might say, with a thread, each of its edges. You will see it being reversed and see being stitched at the level of the back what was at first its front. The Moebius strip has numerous properties. There is one major, capital one that I have, I think, sufficiently represented in the preceding years, even to the extent of having a pair of scissors here myself, I demonstrated to you, namely, that a Moebius strip has no surface, (25) that it is a pure edge. Not only is there only a single edge to this surface of the Moebius strip, but if I split it in the middle there is no longer a Moebius strip, for it is the stroke of my cut, it is the property of division which establishes the Moebius strip. You can extract from the Moebius strip as many little fragments as you wish, there will always be a Moebius strip as long as some of the strip remains, but it will still not be the strip that you hold. The Moebius strip is a surface such that the cut which is traced in its centre is itself the Moebius strip.

The Moebius strip in its essence is the cut itself. This is how the Moebius strip can be for us the structural support of the constitution of the subject as divisible. I am going to put forward here something that is strictly speaking incorrect from the point of view of topology. Nevertheless, this is not going to worry us for I am caught between explaining something to you in an incorrect fashion or not explaining it to you at all; here we have a tangible example of one of these subjective impasses which are precisely what we base ourselves on.

Therefore I advance, having sufficiently warned you that in strict topological doctrine this is incorrect. You can remark that my Moebius strip - I am speaking about the one which is drawn on the mounting of this \circ -object, this mounting, as I told you, is exactly a (26) spherical flap which is in no way distinguished from what I demonstrated earlier in connection with the hole of Jiu Oun. For it to serve as a mounting for a Moebius strip, the fact is that a Moebius strip radically changes its nature as a flap or little portion by soldering itself to it.

What is involved is a text, tissue, coherence of a fabric, of something which is of such a kind that having made in it the trace of a certain cut, two distinct heterogeneous elements appear, one of which is a Moebius strip and the other is this flap equivalent to any other sphere. Let us foment this Moebius strip in our imagination, it will come in this line necessarily (if the thing is plunged into three dimensions, this is my

incorrectness), but it is an incorrectness which is not enough to set aside the problem of this fact that something which is indicated in the three dimensions by a re-crossing, an intersection which finally gives to the total figure of what is commonly called a sphere topped by a crossed bonnet or a cross-cap which gives what is drawn in red here, namely, what you can always imagine, of course in an incorrect fashion, plunged into the third dimension, as having at the bottom, and at the level of this base, of this chiasma, of this intersection, having the same cut.

(27) Every cut which goes to the level of what, schematically, is represented as this line of crossing over, every closed cut which passes by this crossing-over, is something which dissipates, as I might put it, instantly the whole structure of the cross-cap, the *chapeau croisé* or again, the projective plane - as against the sphere which does not lose its fundamental concentric structure as regards with any cut or closed edge that you may describe on its surface. Here the cut introduces an essential change, namely, the apparition of a Moebius strip and, on the other hand, this flap or little portion.

And, nevertheless, what I have just said to you is that the stroke drawn here in black, which is a simple stroke, a closed edge, of the same type as the one the drawing of Jiu Oun reduced, as I told you, entirely to this little portion. So then, what is the riddle? I think that you must remember still what I told you earlier, namely, that the cut itself is the Moebius strip. As you can see in this second outline that I made on the same figure, next to it, a figure which is schematised in something, a bladder in which I am trying to help you to intuit what is involved in the projective plane, if you separate the edges, as I might say, which result from the cut here traced in black, you obtain a gap which is constructed here like a Moebius strip.

(28) The cut itself has the structure of the surface called Moebius strip. Here you see it pictured by a double stroke of the scissors that you can also do, in which you would effectively cut the total figure of the projective plane, or of the cross-cap as I called it, in two parts: one Moebius strip on the one hand, here it is supposed to be cut, all on its own, and on the other hand a remainder which is what plays the same function of hole in its primitive shape, namely, of the hole that is obtained on a spherical surface.

This is fundamental to consider and you have to see in it another figure in the schematised shape, and one more properly topological which is the following one whose complement I have written on the blackboard where I think you can see it.

Now, the way in which the first hole, the spherical hole, the one that I called concentric, is sutured, topology reveals to us that nothing is less concentric than this form of centre contiguous with the function of the first flap. Because in order to close the hole on the sphere, it is enough to have a simple cut which connects the two pieces in the way, simply, in which a dressmaker would darn something for you. Having established the cut, if you take things in the inverse sense for the Moebius strip

implies an order, and it is really here that we have our third dimension which is what justifies us having introduced earlier a (29) false third in order to make you sense the weight of these figures.

This dimension of order, in other words, representing a certain temporal base, implies that to realise this hole, this second hole whose topological properties I am explaining to you, there is an order necessary which is a diametrical order, diametrical, that is apparently spatial, founded in accordance with the median stroke, gives you the figured support in which properly speaking it can be read that this sort of cut is precisely the one that we were waiting for, namely, it can only be realised by having at the same time to be divided, in other words, if it is not in an intuitive and visual fashion but in a mental fashion that you try to realise what is involved starting from the moment that you think that the A, the point A on the circle is identical to the point A that is diametrically opposite it, which is the very definition which was introduced in a quite different context, in metrical geometry by Desargues, in other words, the projective plane, and God knows that Desargues, in writing it, himself underlined how paradoxical, bewildering, even crazy such a conception was which proves very well that the mathematicians are themselves well able to imagine the points of transgression, of going beyond the limit, in connection with the setting up of one or other structural category. If they did forget it, moreover, there would always be their colleagues to remind them by telling them that they understand nothing about what (30) they were saying, something which happens at every turn, and especially what happened to Desargues when the walls of Lyon were covered with posters in connection with things that as you see were very exciting. What a lovely time! What a marvellous epoch!

The A and the A are the same what does that mean if not that, even if we consider this as the hole, the conjunction of the edges cannot be carried out except by dividing this hole, by managing to pass it in the movement, as one might say, of its conjunction.

We find here the model of what is involved in the subject in so far as it is determined by a cut. It ought necessarily to be presented as divided in the very structure.

I was not able, of course, to take any further today the point that I wanted you to arrive at. You should simply know that in referring ourselves to two other topological structures. which are respectively the Klein bottle, in so far as I already showed you that it is made up, composed, by the sewing together of two Moebius strips. As you will see, this is not at all enough to allow us to deduce its properties by simple addition.

On the other hand, the torus, which is still another structure. We can, starting from these primary definitions about the \$ conceive of what use there could be to us these two other (31) structures of the Klein bottle and the torus in establishing fundamental

relationships which will allow us to situate with a rigour which has never been obtained up to now in ordinary language, in so far as ordinary language ends up with an entification of the subject which is the veritable knot and key to the problem.

Every time that we speak about something which is called the subject we make a “one” of it. Now what it is a matter of conceiving, is precisely the following, it is that the name of the subject is the following. The one to designate it is missing. What replaces it? What comes to fulfil the function of this “one”? Several things, undoubtedly, but if you only see several very different things, the \circ -object on the one hand, for example, the proper name on the other fulfilling the same function, it is quite clear that you can understand nothing either about their distinction - for when you see that they fulfil the same function one believes that it is the same thing - or about the very fact that they fulfil the same function.

It is a matter of knowing where there is situated, where there is articulated this $\$,$ the divided subject as such. The torus on the one hand, a figure so exemplary that already in the year of my seminar on identification that, except for the fresh ears who came that year, nobody listened to what I was in the process of saying, because people had other worries.

(32) In my seminar on identification, I showed the exemplary value that the torus has in linking, in a structurally dogmatisable way, the function of demand and that of desire properly speaking at the level of the Freudian discovery, namely, of the neurotic and of the unconscious. You will see its exemplary functioning.

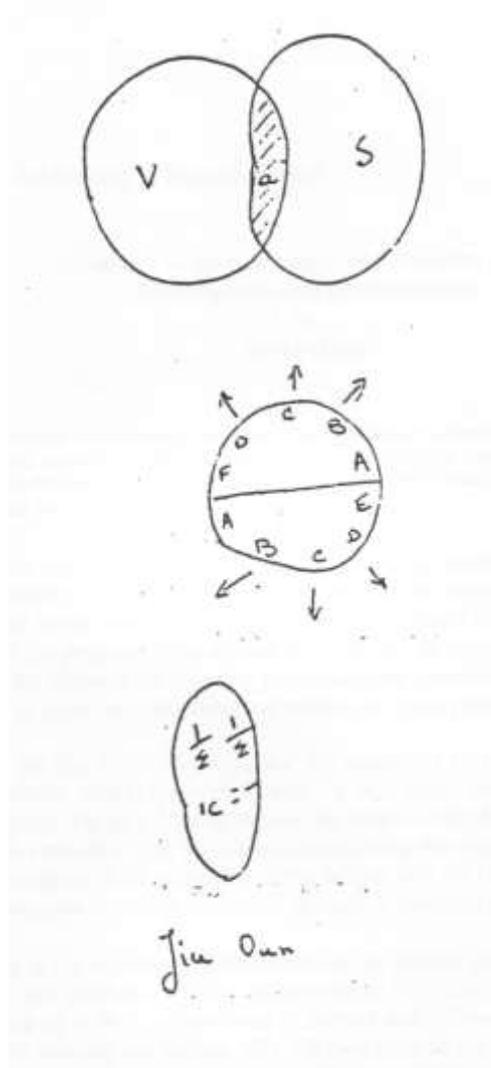
..... what can be structured of the subject is entirely linked, structurally, to the possibility of the transformation, of the passage of the structure of the torus into that of the Moebius strip, not the true of the subject, but the Moebius strip in so far as it is divided, in so far as once it is cut through the middle it is no longer a Moebius strip. It is something which has two faces, a front and a back, which roll up upon themselves in a funny way, but which, as in the model that I brought you today to enable you to see it in a tangible fashion, becomes applicable onto this thing which is usually called a ring and which is a torus.

This structural connection allows there to be articulated in a particularly clear and obvious fashion certain relationships which ought to be fundamental for the definition of the relationship of the subject of demand and of desire. In the same way it is only at the level of the Klein bottle that there can be defined the original relationship that is established starting from the moment there enters into function in language the word and the (33) dimension of truth. The non-symmetrical conjunction of the subject and of the locus of the Other is what we can illustrate, thanks to the Klein bottle. With these simple indications, I will leave you and give you an appointment for the first Wednesday in January.

For the fourth Wednesday of this month, I would urgently ask anyone in this assembly who in whatever manner is interested in the progress of what I am trying to make advance here, to kindly, whatever may be the fate that I may reserve for the information sheet that he will have to fill up, namely, that whether I invite or do not invite him to the fourth Wednesday to consider that it is not because of his merits or his lack of merit that he is invited or not.

People are or are not invited for reasons which are the same as those that Plato defined for the functioning of politics, namely, which have nothing to do with politics but which are rather to be considered as those of the tapestry worker. If I have to have the threads of one colour and different threads of another colour to produce a certain weave on that day, let me choose the threads. That I should do that this year as an experiment on each of the fourth Wednesdays is something that the totality of my listeners and all the more so in that they are the most faithful and all the more so that they may be really interested in what I am saying, ought in a way to leave to my discretion.

(34) You will allow me then for the next fourth Wednesday to invite whomever I please in order that the subject, the given subject of discussion, of dialogue which will function on that day should be carried out in the best conditions, namely, among interlocutors expressly chosen by me. Those who are not part of these on that Wednesday should in no way take offence.



Seminar 4: Wednesday 22 December 1965

*J Lacan's o-object, its logic, and Freudian theory
(convergences and interrogations)*

by
André Green

[When this translation was made I was unaware of the existence of another translation made for *Interpreting Lacan* edited by J Smith and W Kerrigan and published by Yale University Press. This translation is

attached but my - unrevised - translation may still be of some interest. The remarks of Lacan, Conté and Melman are not contained in the Yale translation.]

To speak about the object of psychoanalysis immediately gives rise to a question. It leads us to question ourselves as to whether one is going to treat the object of psychoanalysis in the sense that one speaks about the object of a science - what the approach and the progress of the science is aiming at - or whether one is going to speak about the status of the object as psychoanalysis conceives of it. The surprising thing will be to show here that these two senses are closely linked and interdependent.

Littre points out that at the word "subject" the *Académie* says: natural bodies are the subject of physics. And at the word "object", it says again: natural bodies are the object of physics. Far be it from us to pick out here a contradictory reduplication or one too easily reducible. Nor will we join brandishing this example, to the chorus of those who denounce in the separation of the subject and the object the cause of all the theoretical impasses for which traditional thought is rendered responsible.

Encountering at the beginning the linked fate of the subject and the object is not to affirm either their confusion or their independence. It is to calculate that we are going to have to face up to the confrontations of identity and difference, of conjunction and disjunction, of suturing and cutting. We will then have to ask ourselves if the object of psychoanalysis - I am speaking now about what it is aiming at - can be content with this coupled limitation to which many contemporary disciplines, and indeed the most advanced, limit themselves.

I - JACQUES LACAN'S OBJECT: A RAPID REMINDER

To examine the role of the **o**-object in the theory of Jacques Lacan will help us kill two birds with the one stone. It will lead us - this at least is our project - to specify its content in the conceptual framework which is proper to him on the one hand, and on the other hand to mark the limits of agreement of this thinking - and no doubt of all psychoanalytic thinking - with modern structuralism.

A - The (o), mediation between the subject to the Other

The (o) - I am not saying yet the **o**-object - is present in Lacan's oldest graph when he starts from the theorisation proposed in *The mirror stage* (1936-1949). (o) can be understood then in its relationship to o' (which will have the closest relationships with the future i(o) namely the specular image) as an element of the indispensable mediation which unites the subject to the Other. It is clear that this situation of the mirror stage - which is less important to date as a stage than to designate as a structuring situation - can only be understood if one specifies that it is not psychology

that is in question here (whether we are talking about Preyer or Wallon) but psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis which gives to the child which has emerged from his mother a meaning which weighs on all his development: namely that he is the substitute for the penis of which the mother is deprived and only accedes to his status of subject by taking his place there where he is lacking to the mother on whom he depends. This substitute is the locus and the bond of exchange between the mother and the father who even though he has a penis cannot for all that create it (because he has it).

The relationship (o) to i(o) is going to reduplicate the relationship that we have just described.

B - The (o), mediation between the subject to the ego ideal

There then comes the quadrangle called the schema R. Here again there are opposed the couple of tensions between the systems of desires (iM) and the system of identifications (eI). The (o) is inscribed on the line (iM) which starting from the subject S and going towards the primordial object M (the mother) is constituted through the figures of the imaginary other. On the contrary the o' is inscribed on the line which goes from the subject S towards the primordial object M (the mother) by way of the figures of the imaginary other. On the other hand o' is inscribed on the line which goes from the subject to the ego ideal through the specular forms of the ego. It can be seen how the quadrangle derives from the Z by joining the points which in the first graph are only reached by a round-about journey. One might point out here that in the field of the imaginary the two directions of the subject go either towards the object, or towards the ideal. One also knows that in Freudian thought this orientation is closely dependent on narcissism. One notes then that the Other which has come to the locus of the Name of the Father, situated only in the field of the symbolic, at the opposite pole to the subject here identified to the phallus, can only be reached by the two paths that we have just described above, the object or the narcissistic, but never in a direct fashion.

The field of the real is comprised in the tension of two couples eIxiM whose meaning we have specified. But it is only in the symbolic field that there appears the third term which is indispensable for the structuring of the process.

[Foot note

1. It is not out of season to make two remarks here:
 - a - In French psychoanalytic work the notion of object relations has developed a good deal (Bouvét) imported from Anglo-Saxon authors (M Klein especially, after Abraham). Lacan is opposed to it underlining the absence of any references to elements of mediation in these conceptions. Especially - which amounts to the same thing perhaps - he will condemn this view-point in so far as it ends up at a Real-Imaginary opposition which crushes the Symbolic.

c - The opposition between the ideal ego and the ego ideal (Nunberg-Lagache) serves as a platform for the theoretical developments of Lacan which are inserted in the perspective of the relationship to the Other.]

C - The o, object of desire

In effect, Lacan postulates the existence of an ideal ego as a precocious form of identification of the ego to certain objects which operate both as love objects and objects of identification, but in so far as they are extracted, cut out, taken from a series which makes the lack appear. I who am speaking identify you to the object which you yourself are lacking, says Lacan. The relationship between (o) and O is therefore clearly shown. If O only reaches its full meaning by being sustained by the Name of the Father which is not, is it necessary to specify, either a name or a God, it passes as we have seen through the maternal defile and is only reached when the cut between the subject and maternal object irremediably separates him from the aforesaid object. Or again when there is revealed the lack which affects the primordial object, in the experience of castration. The series of castrations postulated by Freud: weaning, sphincter training, castration properly speaking, renders this experience in its repetition, in its recurrence, signifying and structuring.

The **o**-object will then be that which through these experiences, is going to fall, as Lacan says, from its position of being “exposed to the field of the Other” but in order to attain the status of object of desire. The tribute paid to this accession is to exclude the desiring subject from saying, from naming the object of desire.

Having being situated in the field of the Other now allows there to be conceived the function of mediation such an object plays less between the subject and the Other but in their relationship: my desire enters the Other where it is expected from all eternity in the form of the object that I am in so far as it exiles me from my subjectivity by resuming all the signifiers to which this subjectivity is attached.

We know that phantasy allows the establishment of this formula of relationship, in so far as it reveals here the subject in effacing his trace. The phantasy as a structure constitutive of the subject, where the latter is imprinted in the hollow, through which fascination operates, opens the relationship of the **o**-object to the ideal ego.

D - The (o) as fetish

This formulation indicates everything that separates the theorisation of Lacan from that of other authors. Let us say schematically that while the latter are above all going to mark the positive aspect of the qualities of the object Lacan valorises the negative approach. A clear example shows us this. Before the image of the phallic mother the post-Freudian authors will say that she is terrifying because she is phallic. Because the phallus can be a maleficent instrument, a destructive weapon, etc... . Freud said

that the bewilderment produced by Medusa's head took place because the reptiles which took the place of hair for her denied, as many times as there were serpents, castration and by this reversal it was recalled in a multiplied way to the one who wanted to cancel it out. Lacan is happier to follow this path. The case of fetishism to which he gives a lot of attention is the apologue of this reflective mode. The object of the fetish will be the witness, the veil of the castrated sexual organ - of the lack in the field of the Other.

E - The (o) object of lack, cause of desire

In connection with his seminar on the *Symposium* there appears with a particular force the metonymical and metaphorical structure of the **o**-object in the mapping out that Lacan gives in Plato's text about the particular position of the *agalмата*, in the discourse of Alcibiades where the latter depicts Socrates: "He is just like the silenuses that one sees in sculptors' lofts which the artist represent as holding a pipe or a flute; if you open the middle of them you see that within they contain little figurines of gods". We are dealing both with fragments of the body, with a part of the body and its symbolisation and this is to be taken literally, in the form of a divine figurine.

It is precisely in so far as this **o**-object is going to emerge as objective lack that it is going to be deployed in a double register which will be at once the revelation of the lack of the Other and also of the lack as it appears in the process of meaning. What is lacking to the Other is what cannot be conceived of. The (-phi) which is introduced here in the shape of what does not appear - it is the Nothing which cannot be pictured - in which there is ordered the encounter with castration as unthinkable, whose hiatus is filled with the processes of meaning, by the mirage of knowledge. I quote again: "(o) symbolises that which in the sphere of the signifier as lost is lost to meaning. What resists this loss is the subject designated once the processes of knowledge come into play, once that is known, there is something lost." It is this apparition in the shape of the object of lack which specifies what our presentation is going to revolve around, namely the non-specularisable nature of the (o). Everything happens as if the barred subject takes on the function of i(o) as Lacan puts it or again as if, short-circuiting the impossible specularisation of lack, the subject thus identifies himself to knowledge, coming to the locus and the place of the loss which stimulates its promotion, covering over this loss to the extent of forgetting its existence.

Starting from this appearance of lack, there is going to come into play the function of the remainder issuing from the desire of the other, the function of the remainder which is manifested as a residue left by the bar, which affects the big Other and whose homologue in the subject interests him in knowledge. Here again Lacan makes a distinction of a logical order where nullifying does not suppress having, which precisely makes the remainder appear.

The function of the remainder is what is saved from the menace which weighs on the subject; “desire is constructed on the path of a question: not to be”. The **o**-object is the cause of desire.

F - The (o), product of work

One might think, even though Lacan does not say it expressly, that the progression-regression dimension might constitute a plane that is correlative to those of conjunction- disjunction and of suture-cut. The developments generated on the plane of knowledge are to be taken in their negative perspective, referring back to the plane of miscognition where they are organised in the approach of the processes of meaning - which ceaselessly tend to cancel out or to nullify the loss of the object - to what was signified around this loss, by the traces left of this work, of which the **o**-object is the surest reference point, the index of truth pointed towards the subject. Freud insists, in his final works on the historical truth at which the construction of the analyst aims. The channel of demand constitutes the guiding thread of this access to the truth. Its function is not alone to serve as a guide, but to form the very outline of this itinerary of the paths of truth.

This reminder in which we have only wanted to keep the indispensable minimum for the development which is going to follow is going to allow us to pose some problems.

a - Given the relationship of the **o**-object to representation it would be well to ask oneself what are the relationships between it and the signifying chain. Does the lack represent some relationship with the word as concatenation.

b - Must one accord - in turning towards Freud - the status of the signifier to the *Vorstellungrepräsentanz* alone? What about affect?

c - is there not in the work of Freud a point about representation which has not found an echo in Lacan: the distinction between different types of representation (of words and of things for example) which might lead us to differentiate still more, in order to underline the original character of the Freudian concatenation.

d - If knowledge is what comes in the place of truth, after the loss of the object, would it not be appropriate to link one to the other by the traces of this loss and the attempt to efface them.

These are questions which will allow the **o**-object to be considered less as a support of the partial object than as the pathway of a hand tracing, the inscription, the letter, o.

II -THE SUTURING OF THE SIGNIFIER, ITS REPRESENTATION AND THE o-OBJECT

I come now to what is going to constitute another axis of my presentation, namely the relationship between (o) and the cut and the suture, and I will refer to the presentation by J A Miller concerning the theorisation, starting from the work of Frege, of the logic of the signifier. This in order to situate correctly the position of the number zero in the measure in which it is going to have an impact on the destiny of (o).

In virtue of the principle according to which, in order that the truth may be saved, everything is identical to itself and zero is the number assigned to the concept “not identical to itself”, there is no object which falls under this concept.

But, says Miller, speaking about Frege, “it was necessary, in order to exclude any reference to the real, to evoke at the level of the concept an object that is non-identical to itself - subsequently rejected from the dimension of the truth”. The zero (O) which is inscribed at the place of the number consummates the exclusion of this object. As for this place designated by subsumption where the object is missing, nothing can be written and if it is necessary to trace a O, it is only to picture a blank in it, to make the lack visible”. There is here therefore on the one hand the evocation and the exclusion of the object which is not identical to itself and on the other hand this blank, this hole in place of this subsumed object.

The notion of unity is given by the concept of identity, the concept of the subsumed object. But the place of one, no longer *qua* unity but *qua* number one, remains problematic as regards its place as the first, as regards its primordality, as I might say.

It is not legitimate, Miller remarks, to count the number zero as nothing, and logic demands then that one should confer on this number zero the role of first object.

The consequence of this is the identity to the concept of the number zero which subsumes the object number zero in so far as it is one object. The primordality, in short, cannot be established under the sign of unity, but of number starting from which the one is possible, the number zero. Thus a double register overlaps a functioning which must be unfolded in order to understand the ambiguity of the number zero in so far as it includes :

- the register of the concept of not identical to itself
- the register of the object, matrix of the one, the object permitting the assignation of the number one.

Thus there is uncovered the double operation:

- The evocation and the elision of the non-identical to itself, with a blank at the level of the object subsumed permitting the number zero
- The introduction of zero as a number, that is as a signifying name and as an object.

This situation has an interest for us above all in so far as it specifies the structure of the concatenation. Not only does the subject exclude himself from the scene and from the signifying chain by the very fact that he constitutes it as subject in its structure of concatenation, but the first of these objects operates at once as a concept and as an object, not represented but named unary object and concept on the non-identical to itself, a concept that is a threat to the truth and this all the more so because it is out of play, or *hors-je* (out of I).

This concept of the threat to the truth is for us a concept which emerged from the encounter with the truth, in so far as it dissociates not alone the truth from its manifestation (identity to itself) but designates here its place, through the blank or the trace which negates it. It is insufficient to see in this, (it has to be said) only a simple relationship of absence. It is also necessary that there should be circumscribed here its relationship of lack of truth.

The interest taken by us in this confrontation with Frege read by Miller is to link the subject to the signifier. The subject is identified to the repetition which presides over each of the operations through which concatenation is knotted together, in the hold on each fragment by the one which precedes it and by the one which succeeds it: at the same time and in the same movement the subject sees itself so many times rejected outside the scene - and from my chain - which thus constitutes itself. Now if the operation excludes at every stage, the nullifying does not suppress the having which subsists for us, on condition of being able to recognise it under the form of (o).

The effect of concatenation rejoins the definition by Lacan of the signifier: "the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier". There is thus clarified what is involved in the relationships of the subject and of the **o**-object in their relationships of suture and of cut. "If the succession of numbers, metonymy of zero begins by its metaphor," says Miller, "if the number O of the sequence as number is only the suturing substitute for the absence (of absolute zero) which is carried underneath the chain following the alternative movement of a representation and of an exclusion - what creates an obstacle to recognising in the restored relationship of the zero to the sequence of numbers the most elementary articulation of the relationship that the subject has with the signifying chain?".

I leave here the question of the relationship of the subject to the big Other by the effect of the zero but I am going to raise two problems, that of the suture and that of representation.

A - The problem of the suture

Leclaire protested against this suturing inferred by Miller. The question remains: is there or is there not a suture? Is not what designates the position of the psychoanalyst

with respect to the truth precisely the privilege that he does not have to suture? How can one deny that there is a suture if there is a concatenation?

I would take as proof this argument of Freud that is too often forgotten on the consequences of castration. If it is possible, if the threat has been executed, it does not simply deprive the subject of masturbatory pleasure, but it has, the henceforth definitive impossibility for the castrated subject of a union with the mother. That castration is seen here as the collapse of the whole system of the signifier by the rupture of any possibility of concatenation, explains why Freud compares it to a disaster whose costs are immeasurable. In any case the penis plays here the role of mediator of the cut and of the suture.

How can this be sutured? Jacques-Alain Miller, as I have just said, has shown the assension of the number zero its transgression of the bar under the form of one, its vanishing in the passage from n to n' which is $n + 1$. But one would not be wrong either to highlight the fact that the logic of an unconscious concept has requirements that are internal to its formation. Here let us quote Freud (with Leclaire): “faeces”, “child”, “penis” thus form a unity, an unconscious concept (*sit venia verbo*). The concept specifically of a little thing which can be separated from one’s own body.

To an opposition of a binary type, the one that linguistics offers us, that of phonology where relationships are always posed in terms of an antagonistic couple and the one that is put at the basis of all information, there is substituted here an operational process with three terms ($n, +, n'$) with the vanishing of a term as soon as it is manifested. We find here a sort of paradigm which can give us the path of what may be involved in the cutting up of the signifier.

In effect the linguists show themselves to be extremely embarrassed when it is a matter of the cutting up of the signified while the cutting up of the signifier does not present us with any kind of difficulty it seems. If for example I can believe Martinet, I read: “As regards semantics, if it has acquired the sense which interests us, it is nonetheless derived from a root which evokes not at all a psychic reality but rather the processes of meaning which are implied by the combination of the signifier and of the signified”. “A seme in any case can be nothing other than a two faced unit.”

The embarrassment comes here from the fact that any direct reference to the signified would ruin the structuralist approach, since its accession by way of the signifier creates the necessary detour for an indirect, relative and correlative apprehension. Moreover, and above all, the tracing out of relevant traits leaves us here in perplexity.

Definitively, what lacks a consistent support here is the structure of the body. Does not the assurance of holding as firm the relevant traits in phonology repose definitively on the functioning of the vocal apparatus? No doubt it is under the command of the nervous system, which explains the fascination of linguists for

cybernetics. The psychoanalyst is here the only one who tries to listen to the sense, at its level, namely to consider, while respecting the same requirement of indirect reference, that the cutting up passes to the level of the signified and that it is this cutting up itself which will imply a cutting up of the signifier which renders the signified intelligible. Here there is located the ambiguity that must be raised between the linguistic concept of the signifier and its psychoanalytic formulation as Lacan conceives of it. But is it the same thing?

You have no doubt recognised in this two-faced unity the theorisation of the Moebius strip by Lacan. But can one not consider that the cutting up of the signified in this metonymical series of different partial objects is represented by the phallus precisely in so far as it has appeared in the form of (-phi) in its different partial objects whose diachronic succession you know well: oral object, anal object, phallic object, etc. these terms only representing their mapping-out with respect to the erogenous zones, leaving a place for more complex forms.

This could reconcile a choice between a strict binary system which refers to options which do not allow us ternary mediation, and another system where causality is developed in a network, a type of reticular system which makes disappear any functioning of an oppositional type.

Finally it clearly appears that the minimal form of this reticular structure is the triangular structure where the third is vanishing. It is, I believe, the operation illuminated by Miller's commentary.

This may evoke for us diverse forms of relationships with which we have to deal in the Oedipus complex where an opposition, that of the difference between the sexes, in so far as it is supported by the phallus is in fact inserted into a triangular system which is never apprehended except in two by two relationships; where the phallus constitutes the standard of exchange, its cause.

Saussure had the merit of placing at the beginning of the tongue as system, value, outlining in this respect the comparison with political economy. But even though he separated it out here, he scarcely went any further and did not pose himself the question of what has value for the speaking subject. Thus the suture is accomplished by allowing value to be seen as a cause without telling us anything about it.

This is where we encounter the function of cause developed by Jacques Lacan. If, with Frege, the identity to oneself has allowed the passage from the thing to the object, may we not think that what we have just shown may function as a relationship of the object to the cause? One might conclude that the object is the signifying relationship which can link the two terms of the thing and of the cause. We would here perhaps have one of the examples spoken about in this still contested article by Freud on the antithetical sense of primitive words since we know that *chose* (thing)

and *cause* (cause) have a common root, the mediation here being found to pass through the object.

In short, we would be present at the passage from “the indeterminate” to “the state of what is or works”, from “what is in fact” to “what is of the order of reason, of the subject, or of the motive” through the intermediary of the object in so far as its definition is: “what presents itself to sight or affects the senses” (Littré).

B - The problem of representation

Here there is posed then our second problem, namely that of representation. It seems to me that Miller paid little attention to all the references to representation used by Frege. Nevertheless he preserved in the passage quoted above the notion of an alternative movement of a representation and of an exclusion. The function of gathering together, of subsumption is solidary with the notion of a power which puts things together and which at the cost of a cut (that of the power of gathering together presented to the thing, represented). It is the cut which allows the representation. Now here the number zero figures as object under which there falls no representation. It is by the very operation of the cut that there comes, that there is accomplished the subject I would say on the back of, at the expense of the object. As if one could say: what does the cut (of the subject) matter since there remains the suture (of the \mathbf{o} -object). This is what the sacrifice of the object by desire in a way realises. What matter the loss of the object if the desire survives and outlasts it. Something also which would be of the order of: the object is dead, long live the desire (of the Other). The demand becomes what assures the renewed resurrection of desire in the case where it might happen to be lacking; it is formulated through the \mathbf{o} - object.

The demand which is sustained by no cause, a cause whose effect is the hole, through which the remainder is confused with the demand, is this not the way that the fool - the buffoon, Polonius - sees the fool - Hamlet in love with his daughter and an uncertain avenger of the dead Father - which will make another father perish, that of the object of his desire (Polonius) after a tragic mistake.

“That I have found
the very cause of Hamlet’s lunacy
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad
mad call I it; for to define true madness
what is it but to be nothing else but mad.”

And further on:

“That we find out the cause of this effect,
or rather say the cause of this defect,

for this effect defective comes by cause
 thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
 Perpend”.

Hamlet Act 2, Scene 2.

III - THE RELATION o TO i(o) AND THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTATION AND SPECULARISATION.

Lacan insists forcibly on the fact that the o-object is not specularisable, the reference to the specular image is neither the image of the object nor that of representation, it is, says Lacan in his seminar on *Identification* (1962) another object which is not the same. It is caught up in the framework of a relationship where there comes into play the narcissistic dialectic whose limit is the phallus which operates there under the form of a lack.

Now we have just seen the non-depictable object represented by the number zero.

What does Freud have to say about it? By considering the problem uniquely from the angle of the narcissistic dialectic one short-circuits in my opinion the problem of representation which refers to the object of the drive. Freud designates it as eminently substitutable and interchangeable, which might perhaps appear to be a compensation for the impossibility of flight before internal stimuli, an intermediary procedure, I would say between a limited exchange and a generalised exchange.

It is necessary that there should participate in this exchange as an exchanged term an object of the drive, therefore it is not any object whatsoever that is involved in the substitution.

Two problems here present themselves before us. The first is that of the distinction between the representative of the drive and affect, the second is that of the differential distribution of the mode of representation.

A -The problem of the distinction between the representative of the drive and affect

The distinction between the representative and the affect is conjectural in Freud's work as we know. Often the drive is confused with the representative and visa versa. But at the end of his work, we know that a further distinction that is more and more marked is established where - this is what I propose should be taken into consideration - the affect takes on the status of signifier. The proof of this is that from 1924 on, the use of *Verleugnung* which it has been proposed to translate by *déni* (denial) is more and more specific; it finds its most precise formulation in the article on fetishism (1927) to which Lacan refers so frequently, the article on the splitting of the ego (1938) and finally in chapter VIII of the *Outline of psychoanalysis* (1939). Freud's

thesis then becomes that perception falls under the influence of *Verleugnung*, whilst affect falls under the influence of the *Verdrangung*.

The possibility in the alternative of acceptance-refusal of a global functioning or one impacting simply on one of the terms (perception and affect) is the condition for the differentiated suturing of certain conflictual organisations.

It is here, it is starting from this distinction that Freud sees this splitting of the ego: the *Entzweiung* that Lacan highlights. Now if Freud creates a term equivalent to repression, denial, which has the same semantic value, it must probably be concluded that if only a signifier can undergo this destiny, the fact is that affect enters into this same category.

I even think that the definition of the signifier would gain perhaps by being completed in the light of what is being said: the signifier would then be that which, under pain of disappearing, must in order to subsist enter into a system of transformations where it represents a subject for another signifier falling under the effect of the bar of repression or denial which constrains it to a fall in its status as being in its relationship with the truth, a fall through which it exceeds or it comes to the rank of signifier in its resurrection.

There would be a certain interest in underlining the correlation of these two modes of signification, each one englobing the two mechanisms. The affect is only seen as a discharge, even though it is - Freud says it for anxiety - a signal (a signifier for us), the representative is only seen as a signifier while it is (in the Freudian theory) the generation of a certain mode of production, therefore of discharge (engendered by the impossibility of this).

In the *Ego and the Id* Freud takes up the question already evoked, not without difficulty in his article on the unconscious, about the difference between the representative and the affect. What qualifies the affect is that it cannot enter into any combinatorial. It is repressed but its specificity *qua* signifier is to be expressed directly, and not pass through the connecting links of the preconscious.

In his seminar on anxiety, Lacan elucidated and demonstrated what unleashes anxiety, the fashion it operates when there is anxiety. But I would ask myself if he has really taken into account what anxiety is in the sense of the status that it has in the theory. I believe that there is an interest in considering affect as an original semantic form alongside the primary semantides - terms borrowed from the vocabulary of molecular biology - which are the representatives; it would function then in a secondary position which would allow it to acquire the status of a secondary semantide of a different nature to that of the representative and reduplicating the *Entzweiung* in this difference. There would be a reduplication of non-identity to itself through this disparity of the two registers of the signifier.

Contrary to received opinion, it is very curious to see that Freud makes of language what transforms internal processes into perception and not as might be imagined what detaches itself from the perceptive plane, and which would belong to the order of thought. With affect we are in the presence of an effect of the effacing of the perceived trace restored under the form of discharge.

What about the representative? Considerations of terminology are not useless here. It is not for nothing that it has long been discussed whether the *Vorstellungrepräsentanz*, the representative representating, the representative of representation, what takes the place of representation. We know that it enters into the combinatorial. This is where the ambiguity begins. It does not enter into it as a homogeneous unit identical to itself. The clairvoyance of Freud in his domain was to make from the start this exclusive distinction present to all your memories between perception and memory. Let us recall the role that he makes reminiscence play in so far as it is supposed to be, as one might say, memory in the locus of the Other but which preserves the trace before it not without losing its quality of memory if it comes to be lived out in actuality.

B - The problem of the differential distribution of the mode of representation

Another type of differentiation interests us here, that of representations of words and representations of things, a distinction which is not contingent. I am only recalling this, which is already known, in order to put forward that: if there is a theory of the signifier in Freud it cannot avoid passing through the perceived. This is tangible in the organisation of discourse. In the narrative of the analysand, the secondary elaboration of the dream, the present or revived phantasy, the image are renewed testimonies to it in the text of our sessions. The question is whether all of this is really of the order of the perceived.

This representative of representation shows that one cannot reduce its status to that of perception. Let us note once again that it is never a question of a presentation but of a representation. The perceived only represents the point of fascination, the centring effort of specularisation as Lacan would say. What allows a functioning at the level of zero, is of the order of the subject, but what is going to emerge and take the place of the one is here the **o**-object, on condition that one considers it in this differential distribution, where the non-identity to itself is manifested in this disparity.

The economic point of view is illustrated here not simply by being put in question when it is a matter of the quantitative evaluation of the processes, but because it can be identified in this differential distribution. It is the damming effect which weighs on discourse which compels not alone the combinatorial, but again the changes of register, of materials and of the modes of representation of the signifier. These mutations have as object the accentuation of non-identity to itself not alone in the

resurgence of the signifier but in its metonymical metamorphoses. The metaphor is infiltrated even into the metonymical enchaining.

It is not for nothing that Freud opposes two systems: what functions at the level of the one is the identity of perceptions and in the other the identity of thoughts. It is in so far as both have a relationship with truth that they form part of our concepts. But the disturbing and fascinating point comes from the fact that perception can be seen as a field of identity while identity operates there in accordance with a register which is not that of the perceived.

It is this identity which abolishes difference as sustained by lack and which finds itself being materialised in the perceived, in the same way as the identity of thoughts in the order of thinking only become operational after the loss of the object.

Lacan did not seem to me to be quite right to have so severely criticised the works dealing with negative hallucinations. At the very most one can only deplore their imprecise reference points. If negative hallucination is this emergence of the zero in so far as it has absolutely nothing to do with representation, is of the order of the representative of representation. Its value is to give support to the notion of *aphanisis* which has played such an important role for Lacan after Jones.

One must also remember the alternative picked out by Lacan in Jones' work on feminine sexuality, whose importance is probably greater: either the object, or the desire. Negative hallucination would thus give the model of a subjective structure in so far as it implies the mourning of the object and the advent of a negated subject thus rendered apt for desire. Might one not recall here that the first modes of representation of the subject - the first *i(o)* - is precisely the product of a representation that is homologous with negative hallucination: the negative hand of the artist appearing in the contour of the painting which delimits its shape. One sees then how the phantasy is placed, since it is the function that Lacan assigns to it of rendering pleasure apt for desire. Here then there appears a form of emergence of a subject which escapes the annihilation of the signifying power in *aphanisis*, since the negative hallucination manages to be produced but as a specular lack. It seems to me to be the inaugural relationship of narcissistic identification in the sense conceived by Freud as a relationship to the mourning of the primordial object. It is the meeting point of the cut and of the suture.

It becomes clear that this process is the same as the one which grounds desire as the desire of the Other, since mourning is interposed in the relationship of the subject to the Other and of the subject to the object.

If the (o) operates between all these forms (one could say that it plays with the fascination of the perceived in running through these registers), it is indeed because it is, not as perceived, but as the trajectory of the subject, the circuit of discourse. I will

give an example of it taken from *Othello*. In *Othello* it is the handkerchief which might appear as (o). In fact it is here that we are witnesses to the fascination effort of the perceived, the truth is that it is not so much the handkerchief which is important as the circuit that it goes through from the magician who gave it to Othello's mother or her father (both versions are in *Othello*) until it ends up on the bed of Bianca, the whore, in order finally to reveal Othello to his desire, "my mother is a whore". This must be demonstrated with the help of knowledge, for Othello like every jealous person wants an avowal more than the truth.

Is this not the way then that one must listen to his soliloquy, when he enters the nuptial chamber where he is going to kill Desdemona to make of her wedding night a night of mourning.

"It is the cause, it is the cause my soul
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars.
It is the cause."

(Act 5, Scene 2.)

The function of the cause is here what orders the indubitable perception of his mother's handkerchief in the hands of a whore.

Freud underlines in *An outline of psychoanalysis* that we live in the hope that with a refining of our instruments of perception we may finally accede to certainty about the sensible world. In fact he accentuates once more the affirmation that reality is unknowable and that we can only allow ourselves a deduction of the truth from the connections and the interdependencies existing between different orders of the perceived. This is obviously to affirm the pre-eminence of the symbolic, if it were needed.

But his originality was to introduce at the level of the perceived an order, an organisation, which allows him to get out of the dilemma of appearance and reality, in order to substitute for it that of the ideal (*Idealfunktion*) and the truth, this couple functioning moreover in the order of the perceived and of the thought. The confusion repeated more than once between the symbol and the symbolic ought to make us more attentive not to take one for the other.

What then becomes then of the *o*-object? It exists as a structure of transformation where the object of desire takes on a new mutation in which it is the desire that becomes the object. Through what operation is the cross-checking (*recouplement*) through the non-identity to themselves of these enumerated forms accomplished? I think that one can grasp them in accordance with the two major axes of synchrony and diachrony taking Freud's theorisation as a reference.

1 - In the axis of synchrony we have a series formed by thoughts in so far as they are thoughts of the unconscious (and where it is necessary to distinguish between representations of words and representations of things), affects (as secondary signifiers) and two other categories which it seems to me must come into consideration in so far as we observe them in the analytic situation and not outside it; I am thinking about states of one's own body - depersonalisation or hypochondria, etc...- and all the manifestations which relate to what the English authors call paraparaxes as expressions of the register of the act (acting-in and not acting-out).

2 - But we can also map out another series on the axis of diachrony which is the axis of the succession of oral anal phallic objects etc... I wonder whether the scopic object and the auditory object that Lacan brings into this register gain from being included in this series and whether they do not rather form part of the register of transmission between synchrony and diachrony that one can pick out in discourse in the diverse forms of the dream and its secondary elaboration, of phantasy, of memory, of reminiscence, in short of all the ways which make synchrony and diachrony function. It is upon this sampling that there operates the creation of the **o**-object in which desire becomes the object and accounts for subjective positions. This non-identity to oneself which the blank images is linked for me to the processes of the effacing of the trace. This is what compels this system to be transformed.

IV - IDENTITY AND NON-IDENTITY TO ONESELF: THE DEATH DRIVE

The signifier reveals the subject while effacing its trace, says Lacan. It is here, I believe, that there is situated the divorce with all non-psychoanalytic structuralist thinking: in the visible/invisible opposition, in the perceived/ known opposition, we bring into play the order of truth, but in so far as this truth always passes by way of the problem of the effacing of the trace.

Freud says in *Moses and monotheism* (1938): “In its consequences, the distortion of a text is like a murder, the difficulty is not to commit the act but to get rid of its traces”. Now, it is this process which, starting from traces, makes it possible to go back to their cause in which we find the very process of paternity. In *Moses and monotheism*, again, taking up a remark already made at the time of the *Ratman*, he recalls that maternity is revealed by the senses while paternity is a conjecture based on deductions and hypotheses. The fact of having thus given priority to cogitative processes over sensorial perception “was heavy with consequences for humanity”.

I point out here that if Freud established a very close link between the phallus and castration, between sexual curiosity and procreation, it seems curious to me that he never in an explicit fashion related the role of the phallus in procreation, in the child's desire for a child or in sexual curiosity.

What functions as cause in the subject (in the search for truth in so far as it is a question of origins, a relationship to the begetter) functions as Law at the socio-anthropological level. Here also the combinatorial only comes into action through the compulsion of a rule.

To the prohibition of incest, the interdiction to the sight and to the knowledge of all which removes the mother and the sister from choice in order to designate other objects in their place, there is added the funeral ritual which establishes the presence of the absent one, of the dead Father. A double process, let us note, of cutting and of suturing. Among the living, a cutting off of the mother and a suturing by her substitutes, among the dead a suturing of the disappearance of the father by the ritual or the totem which is consecrated to him, a cutting off from him through the inaccessible beyond where he henceforth holds himself.

We have here a striking example of the cut between Lévi-Strauss and Freud which is illustrated in an unexpected encounter.

In connection with the mask Lévi-Strauss insists on its function as being at once negative (of dissimulation) and positive (the accession to another world). But what seems to be involved for him is a homology, a correspondence such that in this two-faced reality nothing is in any way lost on the way. One might pose the question : “What is it that necessitates dissimulation, what is it that requires this two-planed structure?”

Lévi-Strauss speaks about a mask (Hamshamtses) among the Kwakiutl Indians made up of several articulated shutters which allows there to be unveiled, to be “unmasked” (*sic*) the human face of a God hidden under the outer form of a crow. We are in agreement with him in concluding “that one masks not in order to suggest, but finally in order to unveil”, now when this mask is deployed it makes appear the human face in what could be taken to be the back of crow’s throat. We do not have to force the facts very much to say that the figure presented here makes there appear the four semi-halves of the beak (two upper ones and two lower ones) as the four members of a character whose trunk is represented by the face of a God. The analogy between this representation and the one Freud notes in an extremely short text - *A mythological parallel to a visual obsession* - is striking. He describes in it an obsessional representation which haunts the patient under the name *Vater Arsch* in which there is imagined a character constituted by a trunk and the lower part of this, its four members, with the genital organs missing and the head, the face drawn on the stomach.

And Freud concludes to the link between the *Vater Arsch*, the father’s arse, and the patriarch, this subject possessing of course a quite filial veneration for the author of his days, like any obsessional.

It seems to me that what Lévi-Strauss misses is this sacrifice of the head and of the genital organs represented by the Kwakiutal mask which goes beyond the relationship of what is shown to what is hidden but reveals a relationship of the unveiled to the effaced, to the barred, to the lack. The cause of desire is here.

The metonymy is highlighted by Freud in the representation of the substitutive body for the lack of one of its parts, the genitals. All of this takes on its value because it exposes to us the interest taken by Freud at the end of his life in Moses, not simply because of his quality as a Jew, but also because monotheism appears there to be closely linked to the interdiction of idolatry and to the total effacing of every sign of the presence of God otherwise than under the form of names of the father (Yahve, Elohim, Adonai). Let us note here again the duplication of the non-identity to oneself.

The work of the death drive which always operates in silence can be noted in this reduction - the word is to be taken in all its dimensions - which forces itself always to reach this point of absence where the subject rejoins its dependency on the Other, to identify itself to its own effacing. The mutation of the signifier, its epiphany in its polymorphous and distributed shapes, indicates the startled response that it intends to oppose - as in the dream - to this annihilation and the effort to which it perdures profoundly disguised and modified, as a witness.

Must one see again here a striking feature of Judaism in the silence that it maintains about the after-life? The two facts are perhaps linked. But in order to understand the logic of the effacing of the trace, perhaps it will be necessary to have recourse to other spatio-temporal categories than the ones that we know. Perhaps it will be necessary to find here the structures of a time and a space only the pre-Socratics were able to reveal to us, directly or through the analyses of Vernant and Beaufret, the two in a very different way, but where we are surprised to note that the analytic treatment furnishes us with a privileged access to this time and space, these places and this memory in the sense of the Greeks.

The (o) is revealed under the structures of nosography as an episemantic organisation and under the modes of the analysand's discourse in its semantophoric aspect. The analysts here have to pass through a narrow gate. The approach to a structural psychoanalytic technique appears to me to have to be based on the differentiation between representatives and affect and on the differential distribution of representatives.

One is extremely stuck in reading works on psychoanalytic technique to note the total absence about anything which concerns the modes of discourse of the analysand. Nevertheless we all know the considerable difficulty of treatments which do not conform to the model established by Freud of free association. What is most often lacking is this differential distribution of modes of representation which bear witness to the non-identity to itself of the signifier as a necessary condition of analysis. I am

only noting this point as a possible field of research without being able to dwell on it any longer.

The essential difficulty of psychoanalytic investigation comes from the fact that it is a constrained discourse : it is not simply a question of communicating but for the analysand to say everything. On the side of the analyst, it is a fleeting word - *verba volant* - that he is not able like the linguist or the ethnologist to lock up in a box. The analyst runs after the word of the analysand. If the death drive infiltrates the word of the analysand, in the silence towards which it always pushes him, the analyst has to deal with a living word; living in its refusal to be reduced to silence, living in its character which is refractory to all embalming where the text finally conditioned lends itself to all the treatments to which men of knowledge submit it.

We will know precisely what the (o) is when we have gone completely round the field of subjective positions. We will then have a vision which corresponds to that of the philosopher who thinks about history and culture through the modes of discovery of the movement of ideas, of art, of the science of his time but as a polymorphous, heterogeneous *milieu* where there are illustrated different forms of alienation. One should however not be deceived. The psychoanalyst here is not disposed to abandon his priority to anyone in the examination of these facts. Even though he may be taxed with imperialism, he will always remain arrested before this affirmation by Freud that the religions of humanity represent obsessional systems, just as the different philosophies represent paranoiac systems. The one and the other are valorised in so far as they allow the subject to feel better, says Freud, by having thus escaped desire and succeeding in installing something else in its place. And we would have here, in the order of the projections of the functioning of the psyche, the first elements of a conception or of a mimetic theory of the functioning of the subject. Psychoanalysis has not yet exhausted the resources of mimesis.

It is insufficient to attribute to the psychoanalyst the function of demystification which would allow there to be preserved a purged and purified *cogito*. It is in fact because Freud begins from what is slag, waste, mistake, that he discovers the structure of the subject as a relationship to the truth. This is perhaps less close to the image of Prometheus hunted for having stolen fire and than to that of Philoctetes abandoned by his own on a desert island because of his stinking wound.

Dr Lacan: I want to thank Green very warmly for the admirable presentation that he has just made to us on his position with respect to what I, as he recalled, patiently put forward, constructed, produced and what I have not finished producing concerning the **o-object**. He really showed very remarkably all the connections that this notion involves. I would even say that he even left in the margin something he could have taken further, I know, and specifically as regards the organisation of different types of treatment and what constitutes properly speaking the function of the **o-object** as regards the treatment.

I thank him for having given this clarification which is much more than a summary, which is a genuine animating, an excellent reminder of different stages, I repeat, in which one could specify my research or my discoveries. I will not answer him now because we have a programme. I think that he will be prepared to collaborate in the closest possible fashion with what has been put together in order that the text of what he gave to day and which marks a date and which can serve as a reference for what will be developed and I hope completed or increased this year, I think that it is an excellent work-base especially for those who will form part of this closed seminar.

(28) Thank you very much, Green. You have filled your hour with an exactness that I cannot compliment you on too much. So then. I give the floor to Conté who is going to propose a certain presentation about what is involved in the articles by Stein that are going to be questioned today. Nevertheless, I take advantage of the interval to let you know the following, which is that a study and work circle which is called the epistemology circle and which belongs to this school whose guests we are here, this epistemology circle has been constituted in the course of the *cartel*: theory of the discourse of the Ecole Freudienne and is going to publish *Cahiers pour l'analyse*. The very title of these *cahiers* requires no further commentary. But I will give you all the same its direction and what it is open to, what it may possibly welcome. These *cahiers* will be put at your disposal of course here at the entrance to the seminar but at the Ecole Normale in a permanent fashion and also at the Sorbonne in a place that I will designate for you later. I gave to these *cahiers*, which appear to me to be animated by the most fruitful spirit and this for a long time, I mean that the circle which is going to edit them appears to me to merit the attention of all of us, I gave my first lecture this year which as you saw was written out, so that it could be published in the first number. There will be other things. So you will see.

(29) **Monsieur Conté:** I am going to speak about two articles by Stein leaving to one side the third more recent one, his lecture on the judgement of psychoanalysts which seems to me to pose problems at a different level. So then here are two articles which follow one another and which are simultaneously consecrated to furnishing a certain mapping-out of the analytic situation and to elaborating a theory of the weight of the word of the analyst in the session.

The first article accentuates above all the reference to primary narcissism; the second introducing the opposition between narcissism and masochism is essential for the conception of transference.

I am first of all going to give a rapid account, too rapid surely, of what appeared to me to constitute the essential theoretical contribution of this work. I will be forgiven I hope for passing perhaps a little quickly over certain articulations and above all for depriving these writings of their references to precise clinical cases which give them their whole value as a reflection on psychoanalytic experience.

Stein will, I hope, at least correct me in case I have betrayed or badly expressed his thinking.

I will then make a certain number of critical remarks which have no other goal than to (30) grasp in his original development the points of divergence with the teaching of Lacan and in that way to open the debate.

The first article is then: "*La situation analytique: remarques sur la regression vers le narcissisme primaire dans la séance et le poids de la parole dans l'analyse.*" It appeared in the *Revue Francaise de psychanalyse*, 1964, No.2. Stein's remarks aim at elucidating the mode of action of interpretation but, I am quoting him here, in order to approach the question in a useful way, one must first ask oneself where the power of the word resides in the course of a session whatever may be the choice of the content of the interpretation, which opens out onto the problem of the power of the word in general.

Stein is going to tackle this problem starting from certain privileged moments of analysis. Such is in effect the consequence of the fundamental rule: asked to adopt the state of free- floating attention, the patient listens and speaks in one and the same movement. The perception and the emitting of the word are confused. He does not speak. It speaks. The analyst for his part also in the state of floating attention listens to the it that is speaking. He does not listen in person. It listens but the word and the listening are not two distinct things. The patient and the analyst both tend to be in a one in which everything is contained.

(31) The analytic situation, when ideally realised, is supposed to be quite like sleeping and the discourse which makes itself heard there is a dream. What is at stake in the analytic situation is therefore a topical regression involving the abolition of limits between the outside world and the inside world both from the side of the patient and that of the analyst. This topical regression is a regression towards primary narcissism expressing itself in a certain manner of well-being which would deserve, Stein tells us, to be called the feeling of narcissistic expansion or again in the illusion of having the object of desire, this is what he tells us in connection with a clinical example or in the syndrome of bliss accompanying the beginning of certain analyses.

Now such moments of analysis rarely fail to stimulate in the session the evocation of the past. Topical regression in the analytic situation is properly speaking the condition of temporal regression and it is in topical regression that there is actualised a conflict which appears to repeat the past. I quote him again: “what happens on the occasion of this actualisation is analogous to what is produced when at the moment of wakening the dreamer formulates the text of his dream.” Here the patient emerges from his state of free association in order to address his word to the analyst. It no longer speaks. He speaks. He reflects on himself and correlatively addresses himself to the analyst as if to (32) the object of his discourse. It is at this precise point Stein tells us again that aggressivity emerges for aggressivity, as Freud tells us, is born with the object.

The rest of the article enriches this articulation with a certain number of specifications. There can be, in particular, in the course of a treatment a defence against narcissistic regression in so far as it may favour the reappearance of unconscious conflicts and of anxiety. To the easy speech characteristic of this state of free-floating attention or to silence of a fusional type there is thus opposed speaking without discontinuity or the wary silence which always expresses the defence against narcissistic regression, the word of the analyst being in such cases wished for as a protection against regression but at the same time dreaded in so far as it deprives the patient of a substitutive satisfaction for narcissistic expansion namely the exercise of omnipotence.

The double incidence of the word of the analyst thus finds itself pin-pointed. Pronounced in person, it breaks the narcissistic expansion, while making itself heard as participating in the it speaks, it favours this regression. The intonation or the choice of the moment to speak may account for one or the other of these effects which are in fact habitually present simultaneously but in a variable proportion.

(33) I signalled that the first article introduced then a position of the analysand which, has the value of a compromise situation with respect to narcissism. Fearing regression the patient tries to reduce the analyst to silence, to escape from fluctuation by becoming the one who organises it, and to preserve a mastery over it and through that a substitutive *jouissance* of narcissistic regression.

The second article elaborates this position in opposing to narcissism this time the masochism of the patient in the treatment. It is a lecture entitled : “*Transfert et contretransfert ou le masochisme dans l'économie de la situation analytique*” given in October 1964 and I thank Stein for having been willing to put it at our disposal.

Narcissistic expansion in the course of a session is always threatened by the eventuality of the intervention of the analyst in so far as this implies two persons separated then by a cut between the patient and what is not him, a gap through which

there is introduced a heterogeneous power namely something which is to be put in relation with the principle of reality. Now, at this level there is realised a false link that is constitutive of transference. In the analytic situation there is produced a phenomenon of confusion, of coalescence between the representation of the intervention of the analyst and the recognition of the reality of the fact that he can speak.

(34) The analyst appears as the origin of the reality of existence, as the origin of a failing power. The analyst appears as frustrating the patient of his pleasure by his own will while he is not at all the master of the frustration that the patient experiences in the cut with what is not him. This phenomenon, Stein tells us, is known to us under the name of transference.

The intervention of the analyst is seen then as an abuse of power. Transference has masochism as a correlate. But in conferring on his analyst such absolute power, the subject aims in fact at making himself the master of this power which is lacking for his narcissistic completion. Presenting himself as a fool, he makes of the psychoanalyst his king. He is going to suffer for pleasure namely try to deny the reality of existence while at the same time recognising it since narcissistic completion is deferred. More fundamentally he aims at lying to the analyst, at indefinitely maintaining his desire by not satisfying him. It is not a matter for him of being the missing object, the object whose completing images in short the completion of the narcissism which cannot be. Through this substitutive realisation he simulates the possibility that frustration may no longer exist.

This allows us then to accede to the following step which is the recognition of the sadistic goals implied in the masochism of the subject namely the appeal to counter-(35) transference for the psychoanalyst who undergoes the common lot of not being able to escape from frustration, may at the limit allow himself to be deceived and believe himself in fact to be the master of frustration. Remaining frustrated in the reality of his existence, he would then be tempted to attribute the non-completing of his own narcissism to the lack of his patient who thus becomes the object who is lacking to him.

Thus it is that transference is established with the illusionary aim of restoring a narcissistic completion supposedly lost under the sign of uncertainty. The end of analysis, implies an access to a certain order of certainty in existence or of knowledge in frustration.

Starting from this very brief summary of Stein's two works, I am going to propose a certain number of critical remarks which are going to be ordered in three groups. The first group principally concerns the first article and the opposition or the alternation Stein introduces which is destined to account at this level for the dynamism of the treatment. I remind you that he situates on the one side the rule of free association

which tends to induce in the patient a movement of regression towards primary narcissism characterised as fusion with the analyst and on the other hand the topical (36) regression towards narcissism conditions a temporal regression namely the re-emergence of old conflicts or the repetition of conflicts in which there consists properly speaking the transference.

The repetition compulsion appears as the negation of the compulsion to topical regression where, I quote again another formula “the whole of analysis is in this regression”.

Here in this connection are all the questions that I would like to pose concerning the fusional situation, I recall two formulae. There is one unique it speaking and listening or again the patient and the analyst tend to be in a hand in which everything is contained.

Well then, the moments where there seem to be confused perception and the emitting of the word in an immediacy where there is supposed to be abolished every screen and every intermediary, may effectively evoke certain clinical situations but they also seem to be rather exceptional on the whole and pose therefore right away the problem of their meaning in the treatment and very especially with respect to transference.

Certainly this indeed is what Stein elaborates in his work but at the level, as one might say, of a global clinical experience, we would be tempted to ask him what led him to choose to privilege relatively rare situations in order to make of them one of the fundamental reference points of the treatment.

(37) Or again, to remain at this clinical level, we would like perhaps to know if he would tend to refer such facts to a particular neurotic structure for example or indeed how he would situate them with respect to the totality of the treatment and with respect to its different phases.

In a more theoretical register now the problem might be posed as to how Stein conceives of topical regression in the treatment and in what measure it seems to him to imply a situation of a fusional type when it might appear to have at first sight a relationship with something which would be on the contrary of the order of an unveiling of the big Other to refer here to the teaching of Lacan.

Or again, is there an argument for making converge the state of free association and the activity of the dream on the one hand, the re-emergence of the conflict and the narration of the dream conceived of as a reflection on the dream on the other hand. We know for example that a doubt about one of the elements of the dream when it is being narrated announced in the narrative ought to be considered to be a part of the text of the dream and that the subject remains implicated precisely in the text of the dream.

In a parallel way, in connection with this unique it speaking and listening, we would ask him what is involved for the analyst in the narcissistic moments of the treatment. Is (38) his mode of being to be closely linked to the activity of the dream? In other words is he also subjected to topical regression or is it rather a matter of a phantasy of fusion with the analysand?

In connection now with primary narcissism, it is presented essentially as a limiting situation referred to a primary fusional identification or to a state of hallucinatory satisfaction of desire which supposes a situation regulated by the pleasure principle. A note which refers to puts the fusion in relationship to the putting in suspense of this separating word and this appears to imply a reference to an ante-verbal or pre-verbal state. Certainly it is underlined that the regression in the session never quite reaches primary narcissism, there is only a movement towards it. Nevertheless a certain number of passages of the text appear to propose narcissism as something which is supposed to be one of the primordial steps or a first phase of the development.

The second article on the contrary, introduces a different aspect. The patient, in order to picture the completion of the impossible narcissism is led to try to pose himself as the missing object, in the extreme case the object that would satisfy his analyst. He seems thus to be aiming at the restoration of the narcissism of the other and this narcissism is presented thus as the myth or the phantasy of the completing of the desire of the Other.

(39) We have been asking ourselves which of these two aspects seemed to Stein to be the most decisive, the most essential or again how he articulated the two of them. Since then, Stein, in his lecture on the judgement of the psychoanalyst has contributed to this subject a certain number of precise articulations and I think that it is along this direction that he will be led to respond to us. I maintain however this interrogation in the measure that the problem remained posed at the level of these two first articles.

In connection now more especially with the second article, I would like to interrogate Stein's text about the relationships of these theoretical reference points to certain Lacanian categories, in particular the big Other, the small other and the *o*-object. I must say in this connection that it is the category of the imaginary other which seemed to me to appear most often highlighted to the point that his work seemed to me to tend at different moments to present the analytic situation as a dual situation for example when he put the accent on the dialectic of the frustration in analysis.

In the same way, in the first article, he tells us that at the moment of the re-actualisation of the conflict, aggressivity arising with the object, the patient emerges from fusion to address himself in person to the analyst who is also re-personalised as (40) object of his discourse. Is this not to situate the analyst essentially as an

imaginary other of aggressive rivalry? Undoubtedly Stein also introduces the big Other which is also found certainly implied by what I have just said or also when the analyst finds himself designated as the master of frustration or source of the heterogeneous power but it seemed to me nevertheless difficult to differentiate in his text between the big Other and the other of the imaginary relationship.

Finally, Stein introduces something which might seem close to the category of the *o*-object in particular in the second article: the analysand trying to situate himself as the missing object of his analyst.

Without wanting to take up here again the contribution of Lacan concerning the *o*-object and the articulation of sadistic desire and of masochistic desire, I point out that Stein appears at this moment to be engaged in a description of the analytic situation in terms of desire. We rediscover then the question: how is this level articulated with that of narcissism? In particular do we have to situate the *o*-object as that whose possession, at the limit, would be the restoration of the lost completeness?

Or again, if narcissism is synonymous with the disappearance of limits between the ego and the non-ego, should it really be closely linked to what can emerge in the course of a treatment that is of the order of a phantastical evocation of the object which seems to (41) me to imply an articulated structure rather than a fusional lack of distinction.

Finally, the third group of remarks: I would like in finishing, to take up what constitutes the axis of Stein's work and gives it all its value for us namely the putting in place of the mapping-out of the choice of the word of the analyst as such or again of the power of the word.

What it seems should first be remarked is that Stein appears to have been led to having to orientate his research with respect to a series of positions with two terms. For example the alternation of narcissistic regression and the re-emergence of conflicts or the opposition of narcissism and masochism, this overlapping the Freudian dualities of the pleasure principle and the reality principle; primary process, secondary process. Do we have here a conceptual model which we ought to consider as necessarily implied as a frame for the analytic situation?

Stein sees of course the end of these remarks: it is in short an interrogation about the impression that his text gives which is finally essentially axed on the real-imaginary opposition and putting in the background the proper dimension of the symbolic. Undoubtedly my impression comes probably from the fact that Stein, in this text only exposes one of the levels of his articulation but at this level itself the question perhaps deserves nevertheless to be posed.

(42) For example in the first article, the word of the analyst takes its weight from the fact that it goes in the sense of regression or introduces on the contrary a rupture restoring then the duality of persons. The word is there in order to reinforce unity or underline duality.

This final eventuality appears more essential because Stein sustains his point of view by situating the word as that which intervenes in order to break down narcissism by separating the ego from these objects. The word is a cut. It is this cut which introduces the double polarity subject-object.

I must admit that I do not know here whether it would be wise to introduce essentially the word as cut generating a duality and not to grasp either exactly how this presentation accords with what is said about narcissistic moments of the treatment where the subject listens within and speaks in one and the same movement, where it speaks, the word seeming to espouse the psychic flux without a break or a cut.

In the second article, the word is opposed to narcissism as the reality principle to the pleasure principle; it is what obliges the patient to notice that there is a reality because of the impossibility of his narcissistic completion. There is here also a duality under the word supports and imposes the subject. The word is situated on the side of the real represented by the analyst as master of frustration.

(43) Is this to be attributed to the transference error? It seems to me nevertheless that the articulation of the word and of the real as such would benefit from being made more specific. It is the same question which might be posed finally in connection with the end of the treatment as a knowledge about frustration. "It is not the analyst", Stein tells us, "who frustrates the subject of his omnipotence. But frustration is the very reality of existence. Must the psychoanalyst then operate as the representatives of reality in order to lead his patient to it?" I am forcing the text and it is only in order to interrogate Stein on the decisive role that he accords to frustration. It seems to me that the more radical category of lack may reveal itself to be more manageable at the different levels of structure by permitting for example castration to be situated with respect to frustration and allowing there to be articulated more precisely the symbolic with respect to the real and the imaginary.

I am closing here these remarks which were intended simply to introduce a discussion.

Dr Jacques Lacan: Without delaying on everything that I was responsible for Conté saying I think that, addressing myself to Stein, that he cannot but recognise that what we have here is the most strict, the most exact, the most articulated, the most honest and I would add the most sympathetic account that could be given of what we know at present about his thinking, in an effort which did not fail to hit out at it, in so far as undoubtedly there are avenues, as I might say, which have already served us at least in

grand part and which were and that it was your goal to integrate to put the accent on what, God knows, they serve you for an authentic experience.

This is not the time that I am going to highlight everything that appears to me in your position to preserve the mark of a sort of holding back, of tension, of a braking linked to other categories which are, I must say, more current in the common theory which is given today of analytic experience and whose two terms are very very well marked at the two poles in what you have presented, on the one hand, the notion, which is so questionable and which it is not for nothing that I have not discussed up to the present, namely, that of primary narcissism. I considered that at the point of my elaboration, it (45) was not up to the present, for any of those who follow me at least, ready to be tackled. You will see that with the last topological notations that I have given you, it is going to appear quite clear that the difference between what I have contributed as an articulation and what is precisely received in this order and showed at the same time, which is always necessary, how the confusion came to be produced, that there is here a knot, that before tackling it, one approaches it, this is not the time that I am going to mark it. Perhaps not even today, although I may, perhaps, at the end of the session give an indication of it.

On the other hand the very articulated and precise centring that you give to the schema of psychoanalysis as remaining on frustration, since, as you say, it is around frustration that there is situated and even, as you say, that here is what one calls, properly speaking transference, namely, that the analyst is at the beginning the representative for the subject of the power, of the omnipotence which is exercised on him in the form of frustration and that finally, the ending would end up at this knowledge of the fact that frustration is the divine essence of existence.

I think that here also what I have done and brought forward consists properly in saying that there is not only this axis and not in any case the definition that you give on page 3 and 4 of the article on transference and counter-transference, that what is involved (46) when you say that this is properly speaking the transference, is very precisely saying the contrary of how I introduced the transference by this key formula, to obtain this point of mental fixation for the direction that I indicate, namely, that the transference is essentially founded on the fact that for the one who enters into analysis, the analyst is the subject who is supposed to know. Which is strictly of a different order, as you see, to what I am developing at present.

This distinction between demand and transference which remains, at the beginning, in analysis around this *Entzweiung* of the analytic situation itself is why everything can be ordered in a correct fashion, namely, in a fashion which will make, in a way, the analysis come to a term, a finish properly speaking which is of a nature that is essentially different to this knowledge about frustration. That is not the end of the analysis.

I am saying this to give an axis in a way, I am not saying that with this I have closed the debate, on the contrary I am opening it. I am showing that the lines of perspective are completely different to what I will call, in an abbreviated way, your system which after all I have no reason to consider as closed. Perhaps you will open it up again. It is your system conceived, closed, with what we have up to now which represents already a certain body.

(47) I undoubtedly regret that Conté, with the purpose as one might say of being rigorous, seeing that he did not quite manage to see the sharp turn, the transformation which is produced in your third article, which also contains things that to my eyes, are extremely questionable, specifically the accent that you put on communication. It is still obviously about the sense that the word that the analyst has.

I underline moreover, at the point that we have got in the progress of things, I do not consider that we are going to liquidate the whole of this debate today. The fourth Wednesday in January will perhaps allow us to give.....

At the point we are at with time do you for your part see things that you think would be good to say, or would you prefer, for example, to leave Melman who also has something to say, leave Melman to put forward what he has brought along?

Dr Stein: I think it would be better if I let the others speak first.

Dr Lacan: Yes of course because after all even if today you do not have all the time you would like to reply we are reduced to a limited number precisely for that, so that we can consider in order that the recording of what has been received here may have time to mature. Others perhaps will want to intervene. I give the floor to Melman.

Dr Stein: I would like all the same before Melman speaks to say how much I appreciated Conté's presentation.

(48) **Dr Melman:** I will take things up at the very point where Conté began. Because of this work of Stein, one may well consider that they merit an attention that is all the more sympathetic and careful because they seem to constitute a sort of reflection on a general theory of psychoanalytic treatment, and that Stein begins in no uncertain terms, makes his reflections begin from the power of the word of the analyst, which, says Stein, opens out onto the problem of the power of the word in general and which culminates at the end of this first article which appeared in the *Revue Française de psychanalyse*, March - April 1964 in this formula: "to consider the content of the words pronounced, is never enough to account for the change produced by the word in the one who hears it. To envisage as I did here, contrary to custom, the analytic discourse otherwise than from the strict point of view of the content of the words pronounced appears to me to be a step following which the

understanding of the content will find itself grounded on that of the word. For it is indeed in appearance on the understanding of the content that there is founded in its essentials the conscious action of the psychoanalyst in the progress of the clinic.”

The little point that might be remarked is that to pass from the power of the word of (49) the analyst to the power of the word in general is an advance, is a step that in my eyes is altogether to be wished for, but which implies indeed nevertheless that we are dealing in analysis with language. And this second proposition, that it is a matter of considering the content of the words pronounced, appears to be a striking illustration of what it means, that one could go and seek its value, its weight, not alone at the level of its content but also of its container, in order to notice there for example that at the level of its container, certain terms are missing which are the very simple ones that I will allow myself to reintroduce here for the clarity of what I mean, which are the terms of course of signifier and signified and I think that their introduction puts better on the rails what Stein means.

In effect, what does the author say? I take up here a little point developed by Conté. It is that the word in the treatment has two faces; the one is that of the patient which is ordered by free association and which irresistibly orients the patient into a regression towards narcissistic expansion, primary narcissism whose extreme, ultimate, hypothetical well-being is linked to a feeling of fusion with the analyst, this so-called fusion being able to depict the rediscovery of the lost mythical first object of desire. The other face of the word is that of the analyst which he can make use of and which (50) he disposes of either to favour this regression towards this narcissistic expansion of the primary type or to introduce an inevitable cut, that of reality of which the patient wrongly will make him the agent. One can only mark here already the rather peculiar position accorded by Stein to the word of the analyst which it seems is still better illuminated in the last work done quite recently on Mondays by Pierra Aulagnier at St Anne, recent work which has as the title “The judgement of the psychoanalyst” and in which the author says the following : “The exceptional word of the analyst which comes to fulfil the expectation of the patient is effectively received with pleasure. It neutralises a tension in a feeling of adequation and of relief even if immediately afterwards it may give rise to anger, to opposition or to denial. Hence its frequent comparison with a substance, food, sperm or child which is supposed to fill up the belly of the patient to the degree that sometimes he is sick of it. Having received an interpretation towards the end of the session, a female patient replies: ‘that makes me happy I would like to end with that’, that at the next session she evokes the pleasure that she has when you speak to me, the unexpected aspect of your words and nevertheless it is like a miracle but this comparison does not please me for in the miracle, the patient adds, there is something passive and that the patient has great trouble explaining her: and nevertheless which is referred to the fear that the (51) pleasure will not last and to her impression of not being able to grasp everything that her psychoanalyst says to her. And this ends as follows: “and one will

not be surprised to see in what follows that she received the interpretation like a child that her analyst had given her, a guilty satisfaction.”

And it seems to me that it is at the level of a formulation that has here become quite clear that there is better specified no doubt what Stein meant when he said that the content did not exhaust the word of the analyst. And, in effect, this content as it is called here seems to evoke “no signified which summons by itself some signifying articulation” but seems essentially to evoke the place from which the word of the analyst might take on this so singular brilliance.

I do not believe that I am here forcing Stein’s thinking in quoting for example this sentence, still in his last work when he says: “the word of the analyst is always awaited like the repetition of a word already pronounced”; I would tend of course to say : “as the evocation of a place which has always been there”. I continue with Stein: “a mythical word, a foundational word which establishes him both as (which establishes the patient as both) for these two effects are inseparable, *qua* objects of the desire of the Other and *qua* subject of an original fault.”

(52) And it seems to me that, while always according to these elements their place which to my eyes appears very important in Stein’s work and in the effects that he furnishes, I would say that to suppose that the word of the analyst is exercised at this place whose particular brilliance I tried to evoke earlier, supposes of course that the analyst accepts or ratifies, poses, quite simply that his word comes from this place and it seems to me that a certain number of articulations in the text could eventually be ordered around this supposed position of the word of the analyst in the treatment. For example, when it is said that through these free associations the analysand “in the perfect accomplishment of his gift” (it is a quotation) tries to realise his word towards that same place which is that aimed at by the analyst, one might think then that if through this gift the analysand tries to rejoin here what may seem to him to be the place or the word of the analyst; he is likely eventually to inscribe let us say a lived experience to simplify in terms of mythical fusion indeed even in something which may, at that moment, take on the term of this narcissistic extension which is so particular, he is likely to end up at these extreme effects, namely at that of a fusion with the analyst.

On this I have been a little, I have the impression that I have not said this altogether clearly but what I mean to say is that starting from the mapping-out of this place one (53) can ask oneself whether effectively starting from that moment the movement of the analysand in the treatment is not an attempt to rejoin a locus starting from which effectively a mythical fusion can, from all time, can be perhaps supposed and perhaps obviously in this movement to situate something which is this ineffable well-being inscribed under the term of primary narcissistic expansion.

One could also ask oneself whether situating the thing in this way, I mean the word of the analyst does not come to this place, this word which can either fulfil this narcissistic regression or introduce the cut, whether to see things in this way does not amount to recalling this frequent and current bi-valence which recalls a frequent speculation which has no doubt its value on the good and the bad object.

One could ask oneself also whether situating things in this way is not something which allows there to be understood, for to my eyes it appeared rather surprising, the fact that if the subject fails to observe the fundamental rule in the treatment he immediately senses himself to be guilty of masturbation. One could say there also, situating things in this way, or guilty of some original auto-erotic satisfaction.

(54) One could then ask oneself whether the refusal of the patient when he fails to observe the fundamental rule, to lose something, in obeying this rule imposed by the analyst whether this refusal of the patient is not something which eventually takes on this auto-erotic or masturbatory character because it can signify the fear or the refusal of the patient to lose himself in some object to be specified which is supposed to be for its part held precisely in the power and the hands of the analyst.

That, for example, in the dialogue of the treatment there may intervene elements which bring into play the body, the somatic, at the level of a malaise that the word of the analyst is able to remove. I must quote again here these few sentences which seem to me altogether clear and altogether interesting in the remarks, in the text of Stein. He says for example the following: “in lifting the uncertainty, this word of the analyst suppresses the malaise at the same time. But the patient had already partially removed this uncertainty by translating his malaise into a more or less determined affection of his body, a phenomenon that is very close to the one of somatic compliance that Freud studied in connection with Dora’s hysteria. For a certain malaise that is waiting for the word of the analyst the patient had substituted a suffering which invited a rather precise representation of the substance or the physical agent necessary for its suppression. This at least allowed him to know what he was lacking. It was sufficient for him to model it on a suffering previously experienced because of the action, a natural factor and thus there is explained the fact that the word of the analyst can act as if it were a physical substance or agent .”

I would tend, moreover Stein says elsewhere, is it not perfectly clear that this word of the analyst is also the same that, indeed it is much better imaged when for example Stein compares it to food: this word which has as effect the bringing about of a corporal modification just as food calms hunger, or as the rays of the sun suppress the sensation of the cold. I already underlined, says Stein, that the word could on occasion make a toothache or a pain in the head disappear. It is not rare either for it to calm a sensation of hunger or for it to warm somebody up. Such an identity of facts might lead one to think that it is the substitute for a substance or the agent of a physical action or that it is of the same nature.

Indeed I would have a tendency also to see in this position, in this particular place accorded to the word of the analyst, something which would bring it about perhaps that the logical approach of the author finds itself engaged in a completely binary (56) system, as Conté said a little earlier, a binary system sustained by a fundamental model and that I would tend to see as follows, not something that would be like that, for example, of being or not being, but something which is rather perhaps being this or being that.

Finally, I asked myself also if it were not starting from this place, from this locus accorded to the word of the analyst that there is necessarily posed the problem of the end of the treatment in this closed situation or effectively as Stein does, they can only be inscribed, they can only be expressed in terms of technical artifices.

I ought to say that, of course, Stein has not, in his remarks in the text that we have studied does not go beyond this introduction but in any case it is nevertheless how it is, I mean in terms of technical artifices that this end of the treatment is evoked and effectively, of course, one could ask oneself how in this dual, relatively immobile situation and situating in this place the word of the analyst things could be that much different.

Finally, to end, the author poses, of course, the problem of the truth. “How,” Stein says, “can the analyst make of his word the guarantee of truth when the patient in transference attributes to him a power that he does not have”. Which ends up, of (57) course, with formulae which make of the analyst a deceiver, quite simply deceived himself. And I would say that for my part this is eventually what I will be led to situate, I mean in such an articulation even though after all I cannot see effectively how it could here be otherwise if the analyst were not led perhaps was not led to contribute something else in place of the lure.

Stein also adds : “there would be no psychoanalysis if the psychoanalyst pretended to situate himself at every instant as a faithful servant of truth”. I will read this sentence again: “there would be no psychoanalysis if the psychoanalyst pretended at every instant to situate himself as a faithful servant of the truth.” I must say, for my part, that I do not at all agree, of course, with this conclusion, that I think, on the contrary, I am ending in an abrupt and rather rapid fashion - that analysis on the contrary has this fundamental relationship to the truth and that if the psychoanalyst was not able effectively to be constantly the guarantor one would risk finding oneself in these positions of lure, in these positions of deceived deceiver with the consequences that this would have on the carrying out of the treatment that I tried perhaps in a rather difficult way and one that was not always too clear to retrace in my remarks.

Dr Jacques Lacan: It is two minutes past two. I would ask you for another two minutes. I do not think that Stein will respond today. There is clearly not enough time and I think that things should be taken up again.

One part, one part only of the difficulty of Melman's text comes certainly from the fact that this article by Stein on psychoanalytic judgement was not adequately presented. I think that there will not escape Stein himself, something that I am going to clarify immediately that in short Melman committed himself to a reading of an article essentially founded on the preaching function (*fonction de prédication*) of the analyst.

It is in a way in so far as this preaching, you can be sure, is expected that you note at the level of four principles what are its effects. In order to explain these same effects Melman supposes a more central apprehension on your part of this function of the word of the analyst. In short he read it, he dares to read it beyond what you yourself see in it. Everyone was all the same able to follow this place that he designates and it is a question. This is not to take up a position. This indeed is why he did not specifically designate it, precisely in the final analysis as the place of the **o**-object. You (59) sensed right throughout Melman's presentation and this again poses problems since, moreover, it would be of a nature to reform the whole chain of your conception, if not mine, indeed mine for the past ten years, of the relationship of the patient to the word of the analyst which might go so far almost to being a position constituted not at all here, it is not a matter of masochism, we have left completely to one side today our conception of masochism because it poses to many problems. But a conception that is in a way hypochondriacal of the function of the word of the analyst.

Naturally, everything culminates, he made it culminate admirably at this difficulty that you raised: should the analyst be the faithful servant of the truth. This is what I brought up recently in saying that there is no truth about the truth. Would this not allow you to correct what is in a way this simple approximation, this notion, of course, that the psychoanalyst cannot be the faithful servant of the truth for the very good reason that it is not a matter of serving it.

In other words one cannot serve it. It serves itself all on its own. If the analyst has a position to define, it is quite elsewhere than in that of a *Bejahung* which is in effect never anything other than the repetition of a primitive *Bejahung*. It is much more (60) precisely than what was recently introduced during an internal debate in our Ecole to which Green, who had some echos of it, alluded earlier. If precisely the analyst is in a certain position, it is indeed rather in the one which is not at all, I would say that it has been spoken about but not yet elucidated, it is that precisely of the *Verneinung*. .

I am giving you that as a final suggestion. If you wish it is starting from there that we can take up on the fourth Wednesday of January this debate then which has simply begun.

I think that all the same, as regards Stein, you had enough to satisfy you today. There is no need to add that what has been begun and that I pose a final question: is there not a profound confusion in this kind of prevalent value, this value as an aspiring point that the oral drive has in all our theorising about analysis, does that not come precisely from a fundamental failure to recognise of how orienting, directive there can be in such a vanishing point, the fact that it is forgotten that the demand, whatever it may be is pronounced with the mouth.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 5 January 1966

I wish you a happy New Year, and my very best wishes, wishes which, after all, in my mouth take on their importance from my being able at least on one point, however limited it may be in terms of your interest, to bring something of myself to it.

We are going to pursue what we have to say this year about the **o**-object. If you will allow me, taking advantage of this cut and these good wishes, to put the accent here on a certain solemnity, it must be said, we will say that this **o**-object, a waste object, you have already had enough approaches to it to sense the relevance of this term object, is from a certain perspective and in a certain sense rejected. Yes! Will we not say of it that, as it has been foretold, that the rejected stone must become the corner stone.

It is present everywhere in the practice of analysis. Again, when all is said and done, it can be said that nobody, let us say, knows how to see it. This is not surprising if it has the situation of properties that we give it, the articulation that we are going to try once more to take forward today.

(2) That nobody is able to see it, is linked, as we have already indicated, to the very structure of this world in so far as it appears to be coextensive to the world of vision.

A fundamental illusion that from the beginning of our discourse we have tried to shake, to refute when all is said and done.

But that nobody has been able to see it, in the sense that to be able means cannot see it, is no excuse for the fact that no one up to this has been able to conceive of it.

When, as I told you, its apperception is constant in the practice of analysis, so much so and to such a degree and in such a way that, after all, people speak about this so-called re-genital object which people gargle in the backs of their throats, in order to try to typify in terms of it this unjust, imperfect apprehension of a reality, the grasp and the form of which is supposed to be linked to the simple effect of maturation whose pillars are undoubtedly firm in analysis, namely, the link that exists between this maturation and something which must be called by its name, a truth.

This truth is that this maturation is linked to sex even though all of this must appear to be swamped in a confusion between sex and a certain sexual morality which no doubt is not without a certain intimate link to sex since the morality emerges from it which, for want of being sufficiently well delineated, makes of this pre-genital object the function of a myth in which everything is lost, in which the essential of what it can and ought to bring us as regards the most radical function of the structure of the subject, as (3) it emerges from analysis and abolishes for ever a certain conception of knowledge.

People speak a lot about it then and not simply in the sense that, as I said, is quite excusable, namely, to see it, for we will see what the conditions are for a thing to be seen and without knowing even the sense of what is said about it, since this position, not to know what one is saying is properly speaking what must be turned around in analysis, what must be forced in analysis, what ensures that analysis opens up a new path to the progress of knowledge, one can say that the analyst fails in his mission by not progressing precisely to where the key point is on which his efforts should be brought to bear.

I have come a long way to come to grips with this central point and one of the useful things about the use of this algebra which means that I pinpoint this object by the letter (o), one of the functions of this use of algebraic notation is that it allows us to follow its thread, like a golden thread from the first steps of this approach that constitutes my discourse and that, striving from the first to come to grips with this key point, this dividing point of what is analysis and of what is not, having begun with the mirror stage and the function of narcissism, if from the beginning I called this alienating image around which there is grounded this fundamental miscognition which is called the ego. (4) I did not call it for example $i(S)$, the image of the “self”, which would have been quite enough, it would only have been an image of it. What had to be demonstrated there, that it was only imaginary, had already been sufficiently indicated. From the beginning, I called it $i(o)$ which is in short superfluous, a

reduplication, the indication that there is in identification a fundamental alienation. We miscognise (*meconnaissions*) ourselves to be ego. (o) is in brackets, at the heart of this notation. To such an extent that already, it is here that it is indicated that there is something other, the (o), precisely at the heart of this capture and which is its true reason.

There is then a double error, the error of the mirage of identification and the miscognition of what is at the heart of this mirage and which really sustains it.

I am indicating it today for the first time I believe, you will see it returning today in what follows of my discourse, (o), a reference point, a simple indication, I am saying it, I am not here giving the reason for it, and you will see it emerging, (o) is of the order of the real.

I had the satisfaction, during my closed seminar, of seeing gathered together by someone, up to this very day and date, covering, I would say, almost the whole field of what I have articulated about the (o) and posing, covering the questions that this gathering together left open.

(5) I am indicating in passing, for all of those whom I cannot, for reasons of the relationship of mass, of the relationship between quantity and quality as it is put elsewhere, from the fact that the quality of an audience changes when it is too big and too dense. I apologise to those that I am not convening to these tasks which I hope will take on the tone of an exchange, of a team work. The one of which I am speaking, which is due to Mr. André Green, has undoubtedly not yet begun the dialogue, except with me, since it was a matter of saying what I had said up to now about the **o**-object in order to question me, and its relevance is sufficient here to impose on me the adequacy, otherwise why would he question me, the relevance of the questions and of the ones to which I hope to be able this year to give a satisfying response. Moreover let all of those who do not attend these seminars know that here the solution to the problem of communication is simple. It is sufficient for this sort of little report to be diffused in order for it in fact to serve everyone as a reference for what I may be able to insert into it in terms of replies in what follows. In other cases where the dialogue is a debate, articulations allowing there to be resumed in a protocol in the same way it will be simply a question of a lapse of time which will remain between what can be articulated as an outline, a grid obtained of this discussion which will be communicated in the same way. It is in no way a question therefore of (6) esoterics in what is called the closed seminar, of something which is not available to everybody.

I began, therefore, today from these two terms recalled in the discourse to which I am alluding, namely, that it is from the beginning of my critical furrow in the articulation of analysis that we see there being highlighted, there appearing, what now culminates at the articulation of the **o**-object.

The ego, a function of miscognition. It is important to see the degree to which, yielding, with respect to what is called, before Freud, let us never take as a reference point the function of the real, the important thing is to underline constitutive of the world. Contrary to what is affirmed, the ego in Freud is not the function of the real even if it plays a role in the affirmation of the reality principle which is not at all the same thing.

The ego is the apparatus of perception-consciousness: *Warnehmungsbewusstsein*. Now, if from all time the problem of knowledge turns and twists around the critique of perception, can we not from our place as analysts precisely, glimpse something which is betrayed in philosophical discourse itself, for always, when all is said and done, there lie about in the discourse the keys of what it refutes, and the senseless discourse of analysts about the pre-genital object allows us also to bring out, from here and there, (7) the articulations which will allow us to situate it correctly.

It is this indeed which ought to allow us to predict this striking thing which ought to have been for a long time a part of our patrimony because it is at the disposition of all.

Who does not know how limited the intelligence of man is, and in the first place those who, guided precisely by the progress of the scientific context, set about studying intelligence where it ought to be grasped: at the level of animals.

That we are already rewarded when we know how to determine the level of intelligence by deviation behaviour (*conduite de détour*). I ask you, as regards intelligence, what further degree man attains. There is a further degree. There is what is found at the level of the first Thalesian articulation, from Thales, namely, that something, some measure, is determined with respect to something else as being, with respect to this other thing, in the same proportion as a third to a fourth. And this is strictly the limit of human intelligence. For it is the only one, the one that it grasps in its hands, all the rest of what we place in this domain of intelligence, and specifically what culminates in our science, is the effect of this relationship, of this grasp on something that I call the signifier whose import, whose function, whose combination surpasses in its results what the subject who handles it can predict because, contrary to (8) what is said, it is not experience that makes knowledge progress. It is the impasses in which the subject is put because of being determined I would say by the jaws of the signifier. If we grasp proportion, measure, to the point of thinking - and no doubt quite correctly - that this notion of measure and that it is man himself, man has made himself, says the pre-Socratic, the world is made in the measure of man. Of course, since man is already measure and is nothing but that.

The signifier - I tried to articulate it for you during these last lectures - is not measure, it is precisely this something which by entering into the real introduces into it the ell (*l'or[l'aune?]*) of measure which some people have called and still call actual infinity.

But let us take things up again. What is signified by what I mean when I repeat, after having said it so often, that what falsifies perception as I might say is consciousness. What does this strange falsification depend on? If from all time I attached so much importance to grasping it in the psychological register, at the level of the mirror stage, it is because this is to look for it in its place, but this place goes a long way. The mirror is only defined, only exists because of this surface which divides, in order to renew it, a three dimensional space, a space that we hold to be real and which undoubtedly is so.

(9) I do not have to contest it here. I make my way like you, and I have not got the tiniest foot in the stirrup of the Taoist journey, straddling some dragon or other across the worlds. But precisely. What does that mean? Not that this specular image does not have this value of error and of miscognition when already, a symmetry which is described as bilateral, along a saggital plane, did not characterise in any case the being who is interested in it. One has a right and a left, which are obviously not the same but which behave as if they were the same, generally speaking, two ears, two eyes, a lock of hair no doubt a little crossways but in any case one can put the crease in the middle. One has two legs, one has organs for the most part in pairs, but not in every case, and when one looks at it a little more closely, namely, when one opens things up, inside, it is a little bit more twisted, but this is not seen from the outside.

Man, just like a dragon-fly, has a symmetrical appearance. It is an accident of this species, an accident of appearance, as the philosophers say, that something is due first of all to this capture which is described as that of the mirror stage.

Is there not, it is the question that we can pose ourselves here, a more profound reason for what appears to be this accident because of this capture? It is here, of course that a (10) more penetrating, more attentive look at forms might put us on the track for, first of all, not all living beings are marked by this bilateral symmetry. And what is more neither are we, for it is enough to open our bellies to be convinced of it.

What is more, we have interested ourselves in the forms that are taking shape, in embryology, and here the more we advance, the more do we remark what I called earlier, what I designated by the term of torsion, or again of disparity, or again - I wanted to use the excellent English word - *oddity*, always dominates in what constitutes the transformation, the passage from one stage to the other.

In the year when I traced out on the blackboard the first uses of these shapes (*formes*) to which I am now going to come in topology and in which I tried to inscribe for the edification of my listeners and to indicate to them what was to be extracted from them in terms of resonance, as an analogy, to introduce them to what I must now show them as being properly the structure of reality, and not some simply the figure. How often have they not being struck, when I showed them the bladder of some eviscerated torus

or cross-cap, to see in a way emerging on the blackboard a figure which might pass at first sight for a cross-section of the brain, for example, with such striking involuted shapes, even in macroscopy, or, on the contrary, a stage of the embryo, after all, open (11) a book on embryology, the first one you come across, look at things at the level where an egg is already at a rather advanced stage of division and presents us with what could be called the primitive line, and then a little point which is called the Hensen knot, after all, it is all the same rather striking that this resembles very exactly what I have several times drawn for you under the abbreviated name of a *chapeau croisé*, of a cross-cap.

I am not going, even for an instant, to slip into this philosophy of nature. This is not what is involved. In any case, we can only find there an indication of something which indicates that in the shapes of life there is something like a kind of obligation to simulate a more fundamental structure.

But what this simply indicates to us and what ought to be retained, is that it is not legitimate to reduce the body, in the proper sense of this term, namely, what we are, and nothing else - we are bodies - to reduce the dimensions of the body to what in the final analysis of philosophical reflection Descartes called extension.

In the theory of knowledge, this extension is there from all time. It is there from Aristotle. It is there at the beginning of the thought that is called by the name - I hate these idiocies - of Western.

(12) It is that of a homogeneous, metrical, three-dimensional space and, at the beginning, what this implies is an unlimited sphere. No doubt, but constituted all the same by a sphere. Later, I hope, I am going to be able to specify what is meant by this correct apprehension of a homogeneous three-dimensional space and how it is identified to the sphere which is always limited even if it can be extended.

It is around this apprehension of extension that thinking about the real, that of being (*l'étant*) as Mr Heidegger says, was organised. This sphere was the supreme and the final being: the unmoved mover.

Nothing changed with Cartesian space. This extension was simply pushed by him to its final consequences, namely, that there belongs to it by right everything that is body and knowledge of the body. That is why the physics of the *Passions of the soul* fails in Descartes, because no passion can be an affection of extension, the affect of extension.

No doubt, there is here something which has always been very seductive. We are going to see that the structure of this spherical space is at the origin of this function of the mirror put at the source of the knowledge relationship. The one who is at the

centre of the sphere, namely monstrously reflected in its inner lining, a microcosm responding to a macrocosm.

(13) Thus the conception of knowledge as *adequatio* of this mysterious central point which is the subject to this periphery of the object, is once and for all established as an immense deception about the sense of the problem. Descartes was not suspicious enough about the evil God. He thinks he can tame him at the level of the “I think”. It is at the level of extension that he succumbs to him.

But, in fact, this deception is not necessarily a deception. It is just as much a limit, a limit imposed by God, precisely. In any case in *Genesis*, more or less in the fifth verse - I did not have the time to verify it before coming here - that of the *berechit bara heloim*, there is here from all time an explosive term which, naturally, did not escape rabbinical commentaries.

It is the one that St Jerome translated by *firmamentum*, which is not that bad. The firmament of the world. It is beyond this that God said: “You shall not pass”. For do not forget that up to a recent epoch the celestial vault was the firmest thing that existed. That has not changed. It is not at all because people imagine that one can sail further and further into it that it is any less firm. It is a matter of a different kind of limit in thinking from the one which articulates this in Hebrew characters: *rakia*. *Rakia* separates the upper waters from the lower waters. It was understood that for the (14) upper waters access was forbidden. It is not just because we stroll around in space with - a point which, incidentally, I appreciate, I do not reduce it to nothing - that we stroll around space with charming satellites which is important, it is that with the help of this something which is the signifier and its combinatorial, we are in procession of possibilities which go beyond those of metric space. It is from the moment that we are capable of conceiving as possible, I am not saying as real, worlds of six, seven, eight, as many as you wish, dimensions, that we have broken through the *rakia*, the firmament. And do not think that these are jokes, namely, things into which one can put whatever one wishes on the pretext that it is unreal. People believe, like that, that they can extrapolate. People have studied the sphere in four, then in five, then in six dimensions. So you say to yourself that it is good. You discover a little law like that which appears to be consistent. So then you think that complexity is always going to be added, in a way, to itself and that you can treat this as you might treat a series. Not at all. When you get to the seventh dimension, God knows why it must be said, He is still the only one, no doubt, at the moment for the mathematicians do not know, there is a problem. The seven-dimensional sphere creates unbelievable difficulties.

These are not things that we will have the space to pause on here. But it is in order to (15) signal to you, in return, in retreat, the sense of what I am saying when I say: the real is the impossible. That means precisely what remains affirmed in the *firmamentum*, which means that speculating in the most valid, in the most real

fashion, for your sphere in seven dimensions is real, it resists you, it does not do what you mathematicians wish. Just as in the first steps of Pythagorus the number which he did not have the *naïveté* to believe to be a product of the human spirit created a difficulty for him simply by doing the minimal thing, by beginning to make use of it to measure something, by making a square. Immediately number emerges from our first effect as irrational. In this way this is what the real denounces. It is the impossible. It is that one cannot make of it what one wishes. I drew as much teaching from this first experience as from that of the seven-dimensional sphere which is only there to amuse you and not to be a planet (*faire "planète"*).

So then, the question is how we can give an account of the fact, which has always been within hand's reach, of something which is, all the same, also in the real but is not at all as the theory of knowledge depicts it, namely, this central point, this point of convergence, this point of reunion, of fusion, of harmony regarding which one might then ask oneself why there are so many peripetias, avatars, vicissitudes from the time (16) that it has been there, in receiving the macrocosm. This subject, regarding which the first thing that one sees, and we did not have to wait for Freud for that, is that it is, wherever it goes, or wherever it acts like a subject divided from itself, how can it be inscribed in a world of spherical topology.

Our only grace is to be at the moment when, perhaps, having broken through the *rakia*, the *firmamentum*, above all in the speculation of mathematicians, we are able to give to space, to the extension of the real a different structure than that of the three-dimensional sphere.

Of course, there was a time when I made you take, in a certain report, that of Rome, the first steps which consist in clearly marking the difference between this ego which believes itself to be me and what it requires from us, fascinated by this secret fainting point which is the true point of perspective beyond the specular image which fascinates the one who here recognises himself, looks at himself, the difference there is between this and the "I" of the word and of discourse, of the full word as I put it, the one which engages itself in this wish that I can scarcely repeat with a straight face, "I am your wife" or again "your husband" or indeed "your pupil". For my part, I never alluded to this dimension except in the form of the *tu* that, of course, any person who is not absolutely senseless, that one only receives this sort of message from the other and in (17) an inverted form, this is what I first of all insisted on. In my seminar on President Schreber I oscillated for a long time in connection with what I called the perforating power of the consecrating affirmation, I oscillated for a long time around the:

"tu es celui qui me suivra (s)" which, a benefit of the Gods' in French, benefits from the amphibology of the second and third person of the future, you do not know whether you should write *vras* or *vra*.

One can say that, but as regards the person who says: "*je suis celui qui te suivrait*". You poor idiot. How far will you follow me? Up to the point that you lose track of me or to the point that you will feel the urge to give me a belt of a *tabuse* on the head.

The fragility of this foundational word is one of those that humans make use of in order to try to exist. It is something about which we can only begin to speak with some seriousness because we know that this announcing "I" is the one which is really divided, namely, that in any discourse, the "I" which announces, the "I" which speaks, goes beyond what is said. The so-called full word, the first element in my initiation, is here only a derisory figure of the following: it is that beyond everything that is articulated something speaks that we have restored in all its truth.

(18) I, the truth, speak in your stumbling discourse, in your shaky commitments which see no further than the end of your nose, to the subject, the "I", does not know at all that he is. The subject of the "I" speaks, speaks somewhere that I called the locus of the Other and here is what always obliges us to take into account a figure, a structure, which is other than punctual and which organises the articulation of the subject. This is what leads us to consider as closely as possible what ought to be taken up again in terms of this trace, of this cut, of this something which our presence in the world introduces as a furrow, as a graph, as a writing, in the sense that it is more original than anything that is going to emerge, in the sense that a writing exists already before serving the writing of the word.

It is here that, in order to make our leap, we take a step backwards. We do not hope to break through the *rakia* in three dimensions. Perhaps by being satisfied with two, these two which always serve us, after all, and since, ever since the time that we have been struggling with this problem of what is meant by the fact that there should be a world of beings which believe that they are thinking, that it is on a parchment paper, of material or of toilet paper that we write it. What is it, what does it mean that there should be in the world beings who believe that they are thinking.

(19) So then, we are going to take a function already illustrated by a title given to one of his collections by one of the curious spirits of our time. Raymond Queneau, to give him his name, called one of his volumes: *Bord* [Edge].

Since it is a matter of frontiers, since it is a matter of limits, and it means nothing else, *bord*, means limit or border, let us try to grasp the frontier as being what is really the essence of our business.

In two dimensions, a sheet of paper is the simplest form of the edge. It is the one people have always made use of but to which no one really paid attention before a certain Henri Poincaré. Already someone named Popilius and many others also...

And if you do that? Is it an edge? Precisely not, but that does not mean that it is not something about the edge (*de bord*). This, this stroke has two edges or more exactly, by convention, we will call the two points which link it its edge. It is precisely in the measure that what you see here, which is also called a closed cut does not have an edge, precisely, that it is an edge, an edge between what is here and what is there.

What is there, because we have limited ourselves to two dimensions, we are going to (20) call it what it is. We are going to call it a hole. A hole in what? In a two-dimensional surface. We are going to see what happens to a two-dimensional surface which starting from what we said earlier and which is there from all time, is a sphere - I did not say a globe, a sphere - what results in the surface from the establishment of this hole.

In order to see it, this hole for its part being stable from the beginning of the experiment, let us make other ones. It is easy to see that these other holes on which we give ourselves the liberty of movement, the liberty to experiment, what will happen to the other holes from the fact that there is a hole. All these other holes can be reduced to being this subject-point of which I spoke earlier.

All of them. Because suppose I do the following. It is the same thing. However large the sphere may be I can enlarge this hole infinitely so that it is going to be reduced to a simple point at the opposite pole. This means that on a surface determined by this edge that we call the edge of a disc, that this surface is in reality a sphere, all these holes that we may make are infinitely reducible to a point and, what is more, they are all concentric, I mean that, even this one that I am making outside the first cut, in appearance, can, by a regular translation, be brought to the position of this one here.

(21) For this it is enough to pass through what I earlier called the opposite pole of the sphere.

And nevertheless, something has changed since we made the two holes. The fact is that from now on, if we continue to make holes, suppose that we make one like that, here, it is a reducible hole, one reducible to a point. But if we make one that is concentric to the first hole and concentric also to the second here, this hole here, has no chance of escaping which would allow it to be reduced to a point. It is irreducible. Whether one restricts it or one enlarges it, it meets up with the limit of the edge constituted by two holes. I repeat, I am saying edge in the singular in order to say that, at a subsequent stage of the experiment in the sphere, I defined two holes and this is what I call the edge. Which means what? The fact is that a surface which is drawn here, which is easy for you to recognise even if it appears to you - because you can call it a disc - holed, indeed something like a Chinese jade, you can see that it is exactly equivalent here to what is called a cylinder.

With the cylinder, we are already entering into a completely different type of surface, for I am presenting you here my sphere with two holes. I told you earlier that it was altogether equivalent whether these holes seemed or did not seem to be concentric, (22) as I might say, one on the other, it is exactly the same thing (*le même tabac*), moreover, as you see, this kind of stomach that I drew here is a cylinder, it is enough for me to fit the ends together, namely, a cylinder, with two holes to the two preceding holes which makes four of them, and it is enough for me to stitch them together to make emerge the figure of what is called quite simply in the language of young ladies, a ring. It is necessary of course to preserve the image of it as hollow to see what sort of surface we are dealing with.

For a long time I have made use of this torus to articulate many things, and you will rediscover the trace of it in the last section of the Rome report. This torus, all by itself, and I would almost say, intuitively, introduces something that is essential to allow us to emerge from the spherical image of space and of extension.

Because, of course, we do not imagine that we have drawn here the true three-dimensional torus. This two-dimensional torus for its part is, undoubtedly, an edge, namely, that in the measure that we have abolished the edges of the cylinder it is one without an edge and, as surface, it becomes the edge of something which is its interior and its exterior.

But it is a simple figure which ought not to give us the idea that, analogously to what can happen to space, to spherical space, if we suppose it in its breadth, in its spatial thickness, as I might say, to make myself understood to an audience that is not (23) necessarily accustomed to using mathematical formulae, that it is twisted onto itself in a toric fashion.

In any case, by taking it, which is enough for us, as a model in two dimensions we see that here, that there is concerning what we can draw in terms of an edge of one dimension, a cut, a difference of species of the clearest kind between the circles that can be reduced to being only a point and those that are going to find themselves in a way shackled, hampered by the fact of being a circle, for example, traced out like this right along the torus or even here, to buckle it in what we will call, if you wish, its thickness as a ring. These are irreducible.

I will show it to you, I will reproduce something that I already articulated the year of my seminar on *Identification*, that the torus gives us a particularly exemplary model to image the knot, the link, which exists between demand and desire. For this it is enough to declare, as a convention, but a convention whose profound motivation you will see when I have come back to the following figures, that the demand must, at the same time, loop its loop around the inside, the inside of the ring, of this ring which the torus is, and come to buckle onto itself without having crossed itself. Here is more or less the figure that you obtain. However you strip it down, it is a figure like the following: (24) the central void of the ring being here.

You can then easily remark that in drawing such a loop, you are obliged to make at least two loops, I would say, around the inner void of the ring, and in order that these two loops should join together to make a circuit around the other void, namely, at least two D's plus one d or inversely two d's plus a big D.

In other words, a desire always presupposes at least two demands and a demand always presupposes at least two desires. This is what I articulated at one time and what I will take up again, I am only recalling it here to highlight the element to which we are going to be able to return in a way that removes its opacity from this figure.

It is important to go further before I leave you. Namely, to show you what constitutes, properly speaking, the discovery of this topology which is absolutely essential to allow us to conceive of the link which exists between this furrow of the subject and everything operational that we can attach to it, and specifically the mirage that is constituted by this something which has remained on the seat of the trousers of psychoanalysis as a remainder of the old theory of knowledge and nothing else, the idea of autoerotic fusion, of the supposed primordial unity of the thinking being, since (25) to think, it is a matter in the unconscious, with the one who carries it as if it were not sufficient that embryology should show us that it is from the egg itself that there emerge these envelopes which are only one, which are contiguous with the tissues of the embryo which are made of the same original matter, as if, from the first outlines of Freud, the very ones which it seems we have never being able to go beyond, it was not obvious in the *Wolfman* remember, the Wolfman was born with a caul. Is this not of capital importance in the very special structure of the subject, this fact that he carries with him even after the steps have been taken, the final steps of Freud's analysis, this sort of debris which is the envelope, this clouding over, this veil, this something because of which he senses himself as separated from reality. Does not everything carry the trace that in the primitive situation of the individual that what is involved is indeed his enclosure, his envelopment, his being closed off within himself, even if he is found, with respect to another organism, in a position which the physiologists have absolutely not failed to recognise, which is not symbiosis but parasitism, that what is involved in the so-called primal fusion is, on the contrary, this something which is for the subject an ideal that is always sought of the recuperation of what constituted his (26) closedness and not his primitive openness. This is a first stage of the confusion but this does not mean, of course, that we ought to stop here and believe like Leibniz in the monad, for in effect, if this complement always remains to be sought by us as a reparation that is never reached, something we have effectively the traces of in the clinic, it nevertheless remains that the subject is open, and that what it is a matter of finding is precisely a limit, an edge, an edge of such a kind that it is not one, namely, an edge, which allows us to trace out on its surface something which is constituted as an edge but which itself is not an edge.

You can, you have already seen being traced out on the torus the inverted figure eight. It cuts the torus and opens it in a certain twisted fashion but which leaves it in a single piece. And this reconstituted torus is an edge. There is an inside and an outside. We can, then, draw a model and a teaching from a certain function of the edge which is inscribed on something which is an edge. We need an edge-function determining effects analogous to those that I have described on the surface in terms of a difference, of a differentiation between the edges which can subsequently be traced out. We need this on something which is not the true edge ,namely, which does not determine the inside or the outside. It is precisely what is given to us by the figure that I earlier called on a sheet, this sort of *bonnet croisé* or cross-cap.

This figure, I would say, is too advanced with respect to what we have to say. What I want to underline today, before leaving you, is the following, which is that one of the two surfaces which are produced when, on this surface which is falsely closed, falsely open, is what I have called the cross-cap, we trace out the same inverted eight edge that I earlier described.

We obtain two surfaces, but two surfaces which are distinct from one another: namely one is a disc and the other is a Moebius strip. Now, what this is going to allow us to obtain, subsequently, are the edges of a different structure.

Every edge which is traced on the Moebius strip will give qualities which are absolutely distinct from those which are traced on the disc. And, nevertheless, I will tell you which the next time. And, nevertheless, this disc is found to be the irreducible correlative, once we are dealing with the world of the real in three dimensions, of the world marked with the sign of the impossible with respect to our topological structures. This disc occupies a determining function with respect to what is the most (28) original, the Moebius strip.

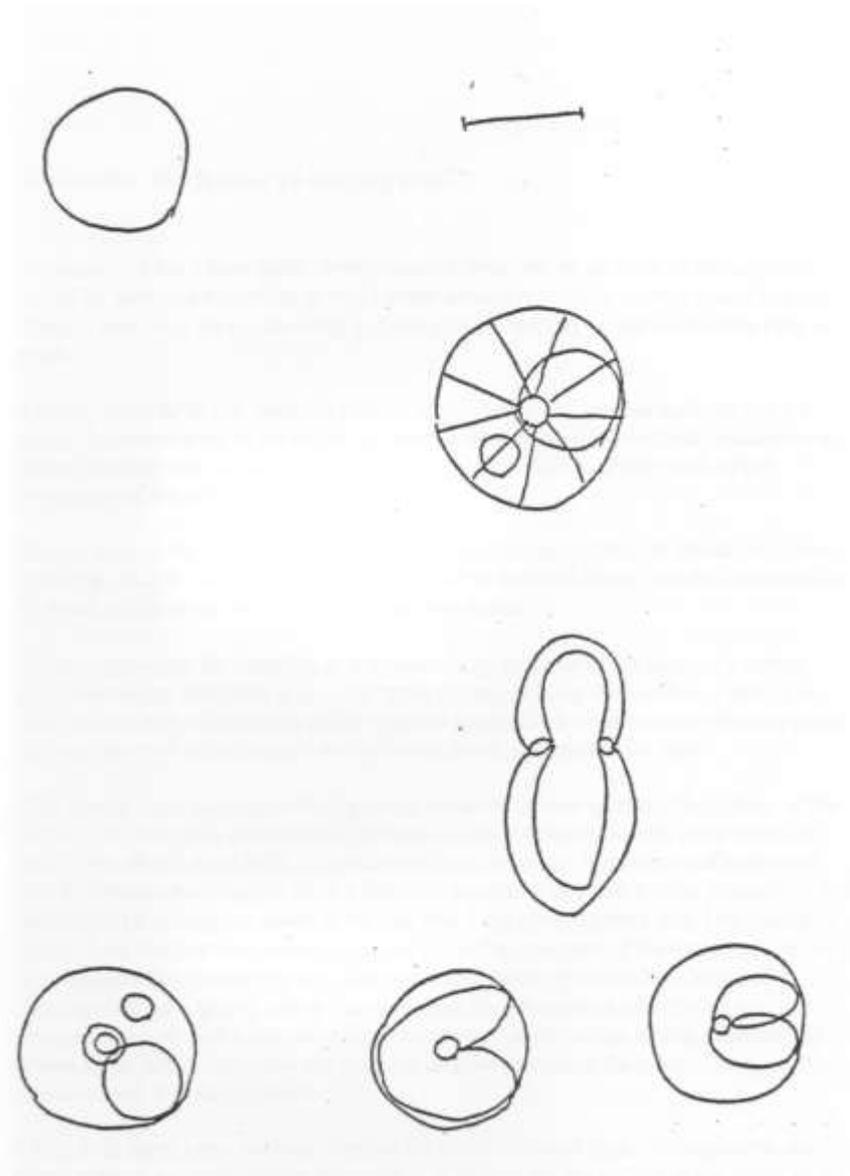
In this figuration, what does the Moebius strip represent? This is what we are going to be able to illustrate the next time in showing what it is, namely, a pure and simple cut, namely, a necessary support for us to have an exact structuring of the function of the subject, of the subject in so far as this auscultatory power, this taking of the signifier into itself, which means that the subject is necessarily divided and which necessitates that any cross-checking within itself does nothing else, even when pushed to its most extreme, than reproduce its own structure, more and more hidden.

But existence is determined by its function in the third dimension or, more exactly, in the real in which it exists. The disc, I will show it to you, is found in a position of necessarily crossing, it as real, this figure which is that of the Moebius strip in so far as it makes the subject possible for us.

This crossing of the strip without a front or a back, allows us to give a sufficient figuration to the subject as divided, this crossing, is precisely the division of the subject

from itself, at the centre, at the heart of the subject. There is this point which is not a point, which is not without leaving to the central object; underline this not without (*pas sans*) which is the same as the one that I made use of for the genesis of anxiety.

(29) This function of this object with respect to the world of objects, we will designate the next time. It has a name. It is called value (*la valeur*). Nothing in the world of objects could be retained as value if there were not this more original thing, which is that there is a certain object which is called the **o**-object whose value has a name: truth- value.

**Seminar 6: Wednesday 12 January 1966**

Contrary to what I have heard, even though it was only as an echo, as having been stated by someone very close to me, I mean among my pupils, theory, theory as I am doing it here, as I am constructing it, theory can in no way be put in the same rank as myth.

Theory, in so far as it is scientific theory, claims to be and proves itself not to be a myth. It claims to be, in the mouth of the one who is speaking and who enunciates it, whose register one cannot but reintegrate into every theory of the word, of the dimension of enunciating beyond enunciation.

That is why, at the origin of theory, it is not superfluous to know in whose name one is speaking. It is not an accident that I speak in the name of Freud, and that others have to speak in the name of the one who bears my name.

When I denounce, for example, as a non-truth, to enounce in the name of a certain phenomenology that there is no other truth about suffering than suffering itself, I say that this is a non-truth as long as one has not proved that what is said in Freud's name, (2) that the truth of suffering is not suffering itself, is shown to be false.

This having been said, the birth of science does not remain eternally dependent on the name of the one who established it, because science does not simply claim not to be part of the structure of myth, it proves itself not to be so. It proves itself in the fact that it demonstrates itself to be of a different structure, and this is what is meant by the topological investigation which is the one that I am pursuing here, that I am taking up today, from the last time where I stopped it, on the structure of the torus, in so far as it is constructed by joining together where the two holes of the surface described topologically as a sphere, which I am sure you do not confuse with the bladder of children, even though it has, of course, the closest relationships with it, whether it is blown up or not. Even when it is reduced in your pocket to the state of being a little handkerchief, it is still a sphere.

I ended, in some haste no doubt, limited by the cut, that of time, which governs for every subject our relationships, I remained at the cut on the surface of the torus, of an edge, a closed edge, the one which establishes minimal repetition there. One circuit does not suffice to deliver up to us the essence of the structure of the torus, one circuit (3) makes there appear the gap between the two holes on which it is constructed, restores, with these two holes, the opening of what we have defined at the beginning as the cylindrical strip, namely, that which, I do not think I have to go back on it today, and that all of those who were here the last time, for the others, good God, too bad, let them inform themselves, I said that two holes, whatever they may be, on the sphere, are always concentric even if they appear, at first sight, to be what is described as exterior. They are always concentric and create what I am drawing here which is called the strip, that we will call by convention here in order to make use of it, the cylindrical strip. Topologically, that it is, I told you the last time, a flat and perforated jade, all this because it is a figure in which this strip may appear and effectively appears and not without reason in art, or in what is called art, because it is then at the same time this flat shape, perforated in the centre, or a cylinder. Topologically it is equivalent.

One circuit then on the torus, a cut made in this way, for example, or made like that, has simply as effect to refer it back to the structure of this cylindrical strip, and in no way reveals, let us say, its property.

Two are necessary. Very convenient, in order to support for us the necessity of (4) repetition, for what the torus is going to represent for us, but then, for this cut to close, it is necessary that there should be added to it, let us say, the circuit made around the second circuit, since, what defines the structure of the torus, I mean intuitively, I am uncomfortable myself at having to pursue this discourse in terms which appeal to your eye, to your intuition, about what this hollow ring, this torus is. But let us profit from this support of intuition and, after all, it corresponds to the foundation of the structure for the cut to close having made two circuits around the hole, that we will, if you like, call circular, it is necessary that this cut should also make a circuit around the hole, that we will call - the name is not perhaps the best, but it creates an image, a figure for you here - the central hole.

Conventionally, we are going to represent - I am saying "to represent" in the name of the term representative, whether this representative deserves to be called a representation we will see afterwards - representative has the advantage of saying here what takes the place of (*tenant lieu*) which means that nothing has been decided on the subject of the function of representation and that moreover, perhaps, what here is defined is cut out, is affirmed as cut, may well, until we think better, be taken literally as being really what is involved. That is why the term representative is enough for us for the moment.

Here then is what is going to be produced each time that the repetition, that this circuit (5) which by convention we are going to assimilate to the circuit of demand, 2D, cannot work unless, for the curve to close, the circuit of the central hole is also made, 2D cannot occur without d or, if you make the cut differently, which is also conceivable, I think - I have to do things a little bit more rigorously in order not to be completely - which is also conceivable, 1D (one demand), for the cut to close, implies two circuits around the central circuit that we will call the equivalent of two d's.

Demand and desire are what, in the course of our long-prepared construction, and when we introduced as being at the heart of analytic experience the terms function and field of speech and of language, what we are going to give the essential share of analytic experience to, not simply its medium, its instrument, its means, but undoubtedly, it must be taken into account that, in the final analysis, there is no other support for analytic experience than this word and this language.

To say, as I might say, that its substance is word and language, is the given upon which we have constructed this first restoration of the sense of Freud. But, of course,

this does not say everything as far as we are concerned. What the topology of the torus, (6) finally, comes to support, is imaging for us, is allowing us to intuit this divergence produced between the enunciation of the demand and the structure which divides it and which is called desire, it is a way for us to support what is we are given by an experience whose subjective presuppositions need to be deepened.

Psychoanalytic experience, at the stage of structure that we are supporting here by the torus and which is, as I said, the first phase that I gave to my reconstruction of Freudian experience, in a sense, function and sense of the word and of language, is to ground it on the foundation of the pure symbolic.

And if the torus is not enough to account for the dialectic of psychoanalysis itself, if, after all, we may believe ourselves to be obliged to turn on the torus eternally in this cycle of two terms, one duplicated, the other masked, of demand and of desire, if it is necessary that we should make something, as I might put it, of this cut, and if we must see where it leads us, namely, how from this circle, from this edge which, according to the formula proper to every edge, is edgeless (*un sans bord*), namely, will turn always and endlessly around itself, what can one reconstruct by using the cut of the edge?

One moment, let us pause then before leaving it with this structure - you saw me (7) hesitating because I was going to say this shape (*forme*) and, in effect, in so far as we are going to leave it in order to go on to another structure, it is detached as a shape at the moment that it falls - let us pause there for a moment to envisage how it was even possible that we should have been retained, that we are necessarily retained, for it is not a useless detour but an obligatory passage in our construction of the theory if we had to begin again from the function and field of the word and of language as an initial point, this pure symbolic is inscribed in the conditions which bring it about that it is the neurotic, and I would say the modern neurotic, a mode of manifestation of the subject not mythically but historically dated, entered into the reality of history, surely at a certain date, even if it is not dateable, we are not going to go wandering about asking what obsessionnels were in the time of the Stoics. For want of documents, we would be prudent to make, eventually, some structurally modified reconstruction of it.

This is not what is important to us. For this modern neurotic is not without a correlation to the emergence of something, of a displacement of the mode of reason in the apprehension of certainty, which is what we have tried to circumscribe around the historical moment of the Cartesian *cogito*. This moment is also inseparable from this other emergence which is called the foundation of science and, at the same time, the intrusion of science into this domain that it completely upsets, that it takes by (8) force, I would say, which is a domain which has a perfectly articulated name which is called that of the relationship to truth. The limits, the links to the difficulties, as I might put it, of the function of the subject, in so far as it is introduced in this way, in this relationship to truth, have a status that I tried simply to sketch out for you in so far as it is useful for our purposes, for without it, it is

impossible to conceive either of the existence as such and as structure of the modern neurotic which, even though he does not know it, is coextensive with this presence of the subject of science, not to mention the fact that in as much as its clinical and therapeutic status is given to it by psycho-analysis, however paradoxical that may appear to you, I affirm that it does not exist, however singular this may appear to you, that it only exists, I would say, in a completed form from the agency of the psychoanalytic clinic and therapeutics.

To which you are going to reply legitimately, because I said “completed”, that psychoanalytic praxis is literally the complement of the symptom. And why not? Since, moreover, it is because of the attention of a certain perspective and a certain fashion of questioning neurotic suffering that, effectively, symptomatology is completed in the treatment, as Freud quite correctly underlined. The fact that it can also be completed elsewhere, namely, even before Freud completed his experiment (*expérience*) there was a certain way for the neurotic to complete his symptoms with (9) Monsieur Janet, does not go against this. It is a matter precisely of what we can retain of the Janetian structure for the constitution of the neurotic as such.

But after all, I am telling you right away that, for all that, you must not vacillate. This kind, I would not say of idealism but of relativism of the patient with respect to his doctor, is something you would do well not to precipitate yourselves into, because this is not at all what I am saying, despite the fact that this is how I was heard because I introduced this function of the psychoanalytic clinic a little prematurely to the meetings of my School, where, of course, I instantly received this interpretation of the complementing of the neurotic by the clinician, and in truth I was hoping for better from those who were listening to me.

It is perhaps also for me a little excessive to expect so much because, moreover, I was forced, for the purposes of my presentation, to go by way of this term completing which, you will see, can be corrected when precisely I will have been able to progress to another structure. It is perhaps a complementing but it is not of a homogeneous order.

This is what the following structure is going to give us, I mean that I am here going to re-introduce the Moebius strip. In any case, let us note clearly already the fundamental disparity that exists. It is already what is tangible, inscribed, living, and which gave rise (10) to the enormous impact of psychoanalysis even in the imbecilic forms in which it was first presented.

When I said that the entry of the mode of the subject established by science overturns and forces the domain of the relationship to truth, you should note that, in giving the floor to the neurotic as such in psychoanalysis, what he represents, to employ my earlier term, is no doubt something which is called, which is manifested in the first place as a demand to know and in so far as this demand is addressed to science.

But what is decisively introduced with psychoanalysis on the side of the one who authorises and supports himself here as being the subject of science, whether he knows or not why, in so far as he engages himself as responsibility, it has to be said, he does not always seem to know it, even though he prides himself on it, but what is original is that the floor is given to the one that I called the neurotic as representative of the truth. The neurotic, in order that psychoanalysis should be established, should have what we will call in the broad sense that I use this term, a sense, that he is, and is nothing other, than the truth which speaks, what I called the truth when I made it say, speaking in its name: "I the truth speak". This is what we are asked to dwell on and in the closest possible manner, for the person that we are listening to represents it. Such is the new (11) dimension, its originality depends on the disparity that this absolutely senseless credit which is given to a manifestation of the word and of language, is given to science in so far precisely as science, in this fundamental displacement which establishes it, as such, excludes it for the subject of science for whom it is only a question of suturing the gaps, the openings, the holes through which, as such, there is going to be brought into play this ambiguous, ungraspable, domain clearly located from all time as being the domain of deception (*tromperie*) which is the one where, as such, the truth speaks.

It is to this junction, to this strange connecting up, that it is a question of giving its status. I repeat. Doubtless, I have too many opportunities to see how necessary it is to insist in order to make oneself understood.

The truth as such is prompted, is convoked, no longer has to be grasped as it were in the emergence of the status of science as problematic, but to come, to plead its cause itself at the bar, to pose the problem of its enigma itself in the domain of science, this relationship to truth cannot be eluded. It is not for nothing that we have a logic that is described as modern, a logic called propositional, outlined, one might even say and believe to such a degree that one must also credit, so few are the documents that we have, outlined, I am saying, by the Stoics. It reposes, this logic the manifestation of (12) whose importance you would be wrong to minimise, for even if it comes late in the construction of science, it has occupied in our present pre-occupations this extraordinary place which does nothing less than reveal a problematic which no doubt being resolved *ambulando* rejoins us, not by chance, at the rendezvous where we now find it.

Without even being able to say here anything whatsoever about it to remind those who know the complexity, the richness and the heart rendings, the antinomies that it sets up, I will simply recall as a reference point to what, as I might say, it reduces the function of truth. It is *alethia*, this ambiguous figure of what cannot be revealed without hiding itself, it is the *alethia* whose inaugural function a Heidegger recalls for us in our thinking and reminds us to return to, not, I must say, without a strange awkwardness on the part of the philosopher, for at the point that we have got to, I

would dare to say that we psychoanalysts have more to say about it, yes, more to say about it than Heidegger says about *Sein* even barred in its relationship to *Wesen*.

Let us leave this to one side for a moment and let us say that *alethia*, that is why I reintroduced it, since the Stoics, is opposed to *alethes*, the true in the neutral, the attribute. What could be meant by the *alethes* of machines, of *alethia*.

(13) Naturally, I am all the same not the one who introduced this question for the first time. Let us say that the whole of logic, propositional, modern logic that you can, by opening any manual, whether it is called symbolic or not, you will see there being constituted the operation of what is called the logical operation, conjunction, for example, disjunction, implication, reciprocal implication, exclusion. Nowhere will you find there, I tell you this in passing, the logical function that I introduced last year, the year before last under the name of alienation.

I will come back to this.

These operations are grounded, are defined, in a fashion that is called purely formal starting from the possibility of qualifying a statement as *alethes*, true or false, in other words giving it a truth value. The most common logic, the one with a truth which has always lasted and which, perhaps, has a certain title for lasting, is a bi-valent logic.

A statement is true or false. There are strong reasons for presuming that this way of tackling things is altogether inadequate as, moreover, it must be recognised, the modern logicians have perceived, hence their attempt to construct a multi-valent logic.

(14) Well, it is not easy, as you know. And, moreover, I would say provisionally that it does not interest us. The interesting thing is to know simply that one constructs a logic on the bi-valent foundation, *alethes*, true or not, and that one can construct something which is not at all limited to topology, the true is true, the false is false which can go on for pages and pages and which, of course, while being closely related to topology, nevertheless constructs something where some ground is gained. It is exactly the same problem as that which is, one might say, mathematics is a topology from a certain logician point of view but it remains nonetheless that it is a conquest, an edifice which precisely is fruitful and whose exploits, whose apogees, whose developments, call them what you wish, are altogether substantial, existent. With regard to the premises, one has effectively constructed something: one has won some knowledge.

The reference to truth is, in other words, sutured here by the pure and simple reference to value. That people demand more of it when people ask what it is to be true, of course, the thinking described as positivist or neo-positivist will go so far as to have recourse to a referent (*référence*), but this recourse to a referent, in so far as it is supposed to be experience or anything whatsoever which is supposed to be of the

order of an experiential objectality, will always be insufficient, as it is easy to demonstrate every time this path is taken.

(15) For one cannot, with this simple reference, explain either the source or the parts or the development or the crises of the whole scientific construction.

We have to remind ourselves that by simply having a sound logic we cannot completely eliminate the simple relationship to being in the Aristotelian sense which says that the truth is to say of what is, that it is, and that what is not, does not exist; that the false is to say that what is, is not, and that what is not, is.

People have tried for a way out of this reference to being, and so we have Russell's way out, that to the event which is something quite different to an object. Russell's wager, whose sole reference is that of the event, namely, the spatio-temporal intersection, this something that we can call an encounter and, henceforth, one defines the true as the probability of a certain event, the false as the probability of an impossible event.

There is only one to this theory, to this register, which is that there is, and it is here that we bring into play again, we analysts, a sort of encounter which is the one of which I spoke to you the first year that I spoke here immediately after repetition, it is precisely the encounter with the truth.

It is impossible then to eliminate this dimension which I describe as the locus of the (16) Other where everything that is articulated as word, is posed as true, even and including the lie, the dimension of the lie, contrary to that of the feint, being precisely to have the power of affirming itself as truth. In the dimension of the truth, namely the totality of what enters into our field as a symbolic event, the truth before being either true or false, according to criteria which as I indicated to you are not simple to define since they always bring in from one side, the question of being, and from the other, that of the encounter precisely with what is in question, with the truth.

And the truth comes into play, restores and articulates itself as a primal fiction around which there is going to have to emerge a certain order of coordinates which are there in order not to forget the structure before anything whatsoever can be pursued validly in terms of its dialectic, it is this that is in question.

It is here that what is pursued as a work, as an embrace, as a weaving together, on this point that I called the connecting point between truth and knowledge, becomes fascinating. If last year we spent so long and made so much of the themes of Frege, it is because he attempts a solution - one among others, but this one is especially revelatory for us because it goes in a radical direction - when we saw or glimpsed, (17) thanks to some of those who were willing to respond to me here, what we saw is that at the level of the conception of the concept, everything is drawn to the side

where what is going to have to take on the value or not of truth, is marked by a certain solicitation, reduction, limitation which is properly that of the fact that he was able to extract his theory of number from it, and that if one looks closely at it, the Fregian concept entirely centred on that to which one can give a proper name. Which means for us, with the critique that we made of it last year, here I apologise to those who were not participants at it, by which there is revealed the specifically subjective character in the sense of the structure that we ourselves give to the term subject, of what, for a Frege, *qua* logician of science, is what characterises as such the object of science.

I know that here I am only approaching a point which would require a development. If there is to be a development it can only be around a question, if there can be a question about it, and this can be done at my closed seminar.

But I have indicated enough about it to connect up with what I ended on the last time, namely, that there is a problem about this Fregian function precisely of the *Bedeutungswert* which is *Warheitswert*, and that if there is a problem about this truth value it is here perhaps that you will see in fact that we can contribute something which gives to it, which designates in it, in a fashion renewed by our experience, the true (18) secret, it is of the order of the **o**-object.

It is at the level of the **o**-object *qua* object that there falls the apprehension of knowledge, that we are, as men of science, rejoined by the question of the truth.

This is hidden because the **o**-object is not even seen in the suture of the subject as it is constructed in modern logic, and that it is precisely this that our experience forces us to restore in it where theory, precisely, not alone claims but proves itself to be superior to myth and that it is only starting from there that there can be given its status, a status that can be accounted for and not simply noted, as the fact of being divided, its status precisely to the subject whose sense cannot escape from this division.

It is here that there is introduced the structure of the projective plane in so far as this surface is different one and allows us to respond differently to what is cut out as object and as subject. I already showed you this Moebius strip in the course of the past years and already I gave you the indications which put you on the path of its use for us in the structure. I already, once upon a time, constructed the Moebius strip before you, you know how its made. You take a strip of the type of those that I call a cylindrical strip (19) and giving it a half-twist, stick it to itself, in this way one makes this Moebius strip which has only a single surface and which does not have a front or a back. And already, the first time that I introduced it, I alluded to the way in which this surface can be as it were the lining of a garment, how can it be or not be reduplicated? Well then, notice here something essential in the structure of the sphere. This structure of the sphere on which all thinking lives, at least that which emerged up to the coming into play of science, in other words cosmological thinking which, of

course, continues to claim its rights even in science among those who do not know what they are talking about.

It is not enough to have revolutionary pretensions in social matters to escape certain impasses concerning precisely what is, nevertheless, at the root of the bringing into play of any revolution whatsoever, namely, the subject. But I will not evoke here a dialogue that, perhaps, I already evoked with one of my Soviet confreres. I was able to see and to confirm since, by information that I would ask you to believe is plentiful, that in the Union of Socialist Republics people are still Aristotelian, namely, that the cosmology there is no different, namely, that the world is a sphere, that the sphere can be reduplicated within by another sphere and so on, like onion skins.

(20) Every relationship of the subject to the object is the relationship of one of these little spheres to a sphere which surrounds it, and the necessity for a final sphere, even though it is not formulated, is all the same implicit in the whole style of thinking about reality.

Now, whatever one thinks of it, this is something which can indeed be painted in colours that are ridiculously called, I again heard there being used not long ago the term realist, to designate the myth, as it was said, of reality. In effect, it is indeed a mythical reality that is involved but to call that realist has something hallucinatory about it, since the history of philosophy demands that we describe as realist something quite different. It is an affair of the quarrel of universals.

As to whether or not Freud fell into the trap of taking reality as the last or the second last or any one of these skins, namely, that by believing there is a world whose final sphere, as I might say, is immobile, whether it is a mover (*motrice*) or not, I think that this is to put forward something that is completely unwarranted for, if this is how things were, Freud would not have opposed the pleasure principle and the reality principle. But it is still a fact whose consequences nobody has up to the present taken (21) cognisance of, namely, what this supposes as regards structure. I repeat that one sees the degree to which there is solidarity at once with idealism and a certain false realism which is the realism, I will not say of common sense, for common sense is unplumbable, of the sense precisely of people who believe themselves to be an ego, an ego which knows, and who construct a theory of knowledge. The fact is that as long as the structure is made up of these spheres which envelope one another, whatever may be the order in which they are staggered, we find ourselves precisely before this figure between us, a subjective sphere, and every other sphere - there will always be a certain number of intermediary spheres, idea, the idea of an idea, representation, representation of representation, idea of representation, and that even beyond the final sphere, let us say it is the sphere of the phenomenon, we can perhaps admit the existence of a thing in itself, namely, of a beyond of the final sphere. It is around this that people have revolved from all time. And this is the impasse of the theory of knowledge.

The difference between this structure and the structure of the sphere and that of the Moebius strip that I am presenting to you, that if we set about making the lining (*doublure*) of this Moebius strip, which is the one that I am holding here in my right hand, when we have made a circuit, this is what I told you when I presented it to you, (22) we will be on the other side of the strip, it would seem then that it is necessary to cross it as I told you the first time in order to give it a lining like the lining of this coat or the lining of the sphere earlier, a lining which is closed in one circuit, but if you make two of them, you completely envelope it, namely, that you no longer need to make another one. The Moebius strip is completely duplicated by this element which, moreover, is linked onto it. Concatenation, an essential term to give not its metaphorical but concrete value to the signifying chain, only what duplicates this Moebius strip is a surface which does not at all have the same properties. It is a surface which, if I undo it, I believe for the moment we have nothing more to do with it, if I undo this Moebius strip which was buckled on to it, have as a property being able, as I might say, doubling itself, sticking one of its faces, let us call it the blue face in order not to be talking about the front and the back, it has no front and back, it has a front and a back once I have chosen it, the blue face is stuck to itself and the red face since I repeat, has a front and back, is entirely in what is seen on the outside.

(23) Here then is something, a surface which has as a property the primitive Moebius strip in which these two others were made, it is a Moebius strip that you take, construct, in the ordinary fashion, by turning it in this way, if you cut it in a way that is equidistant from its edge, if you make a cut in it, you will have two loops, you cut them in the centre, of another Moebius surface, the one that I showed you earlier and at the periphery a strip, a strip which it, for its part, is not a Moebius strip, it is a strip with two faces, it is not a cylindrical strip for, as you see, it has all the same a shape and a rather bizarre shape, I am showing you this shape, it is very easy to find, here it makes two circuits and in this case here it one. Good. Verify it. This strip is a strip that is applicable to the surface of the torus. There you are, I am passing it around so that you can look at it.

So then, what have we got? We have a Moebius strip of such a kind that, being subjected to a cut, a typical cut in a regular fashion equidistant from its edge, one ends up with something which is the Moebius strip which still remains, something which envelopes it completely by making a double circuit. This something is not a Moebius strip, it is something which envelopes the Moebius strip, from which this something has (25) emerged in the measure that this strip results from a division of the Moebius strip. This strip, in so far as it is both linked onto the Moebius strip but, when being isolated from it, is applicable to the torus, this strip, is what for us, structurally, can be best applied to what I define for you as being the subject in so far as the subject is barred.

The subject in so far as it is, on the one hand something which envelopes itself or again this something which can suffice to manifest itself in this simple reduplication,

for there is no need even for the Moebius strip to remain isolated in the centre and to be linked onto this strip which is, as you have seen, from this strip simply by making it reduplicate itself, I can reconstruct the structure of a Moebius strip.

This is going to serve us as a support to define the function of the subject. Something which will have this essential property to define the conjunction of identity and difference. Here is what appears to us to be most appropriate to support for us structurally the function of the subject. You will only see details, refinements in it in the measure that I continue, namely, what you will be able to see in it in a more intimate fashion about this relationship of the function of the subject to that of the signifier. And the distance which separates in one case and the other this relationship to the conjunction of identity and of difference. And now I point out to you that if the Moebius strip is itself the effect of a cut in another kind of surface, which to facilitate things for you I did not introduce otherwise, and that I earlier called the projective plane, it is at the cost of leaving here the residue of a fall, a discal one, which I take as a support for the \mathbf{o} -object in so far as it is on its fall that there depends the advent of the Moebius strip and that its reintegration modifies it in its nature as discal fall, namely, ensures that it has neither front nor back and it is here that we rediscover the definition of the \mathbf{o} -object as non-specular.

It is in so far as, as you see, it is re-sutured, it is re-situated in its place with respect to the subject in the Moebius strip that it has the property of becoming the something different whose laws are radically different from those of any hole made in the sphere which moreover defines subject or object. It is a quite special object. And last night, I regret that the person who introduced this term has now left, given the time, we were told about *retournement* [turning inside-out, back-to-front, reversal]. No use of a term such as that can be held to be legitimate, except by being properly speaking spoilt, if it does not emerge from this structural reference, namely, that what can be qualified as reversal has a completely different import according to the structures. What good was it for me to have hammered out for years the difference between the real, the imaginary (27) and the symbolic which you have now seen incarnated, I think that you sense this, that earlier in my successive spheres, you have seen the way the imaginary finds its place there. The imaginary is always the intermediary sphere between one sphere and the other. Does the imaginary only have this sense or can it have a different one? How can one speak in a univocal fashion about reversal, how can one give a sense of it?

A glove, let us take the oldest way of presenting things, one which is already in Kant. A glove that is turned inside-out and a glove in the mirror are not the same thing. A glove that is turned inside-out is in the real, a glove in the mirror is in the imaginary in so far as you take the image of the glove in the mirror as the image of the glove which is inside. Starting from there you can clearly see, for our shapes, the ones that I can draw for you on the blackboard, it is the same thing because they have a front and a back and because they have an axis of symmetry.

But for the projective plane and for the Moebius strip, which do not have a front or a back or a plane of symmetry even though they are divided in two, what you have in the mirror is to be seriously questioned. As regards what you have in the real, try again to reverse a Moebius strip, you can reverse it as much as you wish, it will still have the (28) same twist for in effect this Moebius strip has a twist which is proper to it and it is in this way that one might believe that it is specular for it turns either to the right or to the left.

This is precisely why I do not say that the Moebius strip is not specular, we will define the status of its proper specularity, we will see that this will lead us to certain consequences.

What is important is this false complementarity which means that we have on the one hand a Moebius strip which, for us, is the support and structure of the subject in as far as we divide it, if we divide it in the middle we will no longer have this residue of the Moebius strip linked up as I showed you earlier, but we will still have it in the form precisely of this cut and what does it matter the essential will be obtained, namely, the strip that we will call toric applicable onto the torus and which it is capable of restoring, by applying onto itself the Moebius strip.

This, for us, structures $\$$. Something which is conjoined to this $\$$ that we call (o), which is the non-specular (o), in so far as it is knitted together, in so far as it is considered as the support of this $\$$ of the subject, on the other hand, having fallen from it, it loses all privileges and literally leaves the subject alone, without the recourse of this support, this support is forgotten and has disappeared.

(29) This is where I wanted to lead you to today. I apologise for not having taken this presentation further but I have thought for a long time that by not literally chewing over every step, I was taking the risk of leaving the way open to a relapse into the psycho-cosmological thinking which is precisely what our experience is going to put an end to.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 19 January 1966

Today is going to be spent on a sort of test whose plan I would first of all like to tell you about.

It is first of all a kind of sampling of a method. Someone is going to speak to you - not me, the person to whom I gave the responsibility - someone is going to speak to you about a clarification contributed to a particular point of Dante's *Divine Comedy* by someone who, obviously, was guided by the suggestions that he received from knowing about my mirror stage.

Of course this is not what gave him his knowledge of Dante. Monsieur Dragonetti, the author of the article which you are going to be given an account of, is an eminent Romance scholar whose very broad knowledge of Dante is, precisely, what gives its value to the mapping out that he conducts of the function of the mirror in such a style that it allows him to contribute on consciousness its fundamental function, notations, as one might say, that are completely unrelated to what was circulating in his time. This is what is going to be presented to you.

(2) What is the interest of it? It is to indicate the sense in which there could be carried out this sampling of structure, which would allow there to be given an order, a different order than one reposing on the pre-conceptions of linear evolution, of historical evolution, or more exactly of this introduction into history of this notion of evolution which completely falsifies it.

In short, this is a kind of first model, a model borrowed from what is effectively produced in reality, but which is, in a way, confined to the works of specialists, a model, as one might say, if you wish, of historical method as it can be guided by structuralist considerations which guide us here in so far as they are employed with psychoanalytic references. This will be an opportunity to recall them.

This will at the same time put me in a position of reminding you of certain acquisitions of my previous teaching in so far as I am going to have to put them very soon into communication with what I continue to develop for you in terms of fundamental topological structures in so far as they are for us guiding structures.

I will speak to you about something else which I will leave as a surprise but about which I indicate to you now that while being a structuralist analysis, from another point of view of the data of what has been culturally acquired - you will see later what I (3) chose - at some centuries distance from Dante, I will find myself lead here to one of these turning points of the introduction, of the highlighting, of the bringing out of a structural given which will be, especially for us analysts, of the greatest utility as a foundation, in order to try to order things that are completely confused because collapsed together, crushed, as I might say, by the different planes that it invokes on the subject of masochism.

So then, I give the floor to Madame le Docteur Parisot, who is going to give you an account of this article on a particular point of the *Divine Comedy*, namely, this presence of specularity, of what Dante thinks about it.

Madame le Docteur Parisot

Dragonetti's work is a work that he published in the *Revue des Etudes Italiennes* number 102, September 1965. The title that he gave to his work was; *Dante et Narcisse ou les faux monnayeurs de l'image*.

In the *Divine Comedy* there are two allusions and only two to the myth of Narcissus. The first in Hell where the name of Narcissus is mentioned; the second in Paradise which is only treated in the form of a periphrasis.

The intention of Roger Dragonetti is, by means of a commentary on these two passages, to put forward that the substance of this myth is ceaselessly present in the *Divine Comedy* and that it was Dante's inner monster.

The first allusion, that in Hell, is found in Canto XXX; this allusion itself is around verse 128. It figures in the course of the episode about the counterfeiters (*faux monnayeurs*). Here is the episode: Dante sees someone with dropsy, with a protruding stomach and limbs out of proportion: it is Master Adam. The obsessive image of the streams of Casentino only increase the thirst that consumes him. Stuck to him there are two shades, one is the wife of Potiphar, and the other is Sinon the Greek of Troy.

(5) Master Adam and Sinon are exchanging blows in a quarrel that has been provoked by the former who had called the Greek a cheat. Here is the text, translated, naturally:

“The Greek said: ‘May the thirst that cracks your tongue
Be torture to you, likewise the festering water
That makes your belly such a hedge around you’.

To which the counterfeiter responds:

“So it is open wide,
Your mouth to speak ill as it used to do;
If I am thirsty and am bursting with fluid,
You have that burning and that pain in the head,
For you to lick the mirror of Narcissus,
You would not need much of an invitation”

The first point is the mirror of Narcissus. This mirror of Narcissus cannot be taken as a simple metaphor to designate fresh water. It is not fresh water designated in more beautiful language. Moreover, it would be altogether contrary to Dante’s idea of poetry. Here then it is a metaphor but it is the metamorphosis of this water, the metamorphosis of this water into the mirror of Narcissus. Dante does not speak then only of water, but of a hardened reflecting surface which sends back the image of a Narcissus fascinated by his shadow. Thus the fresh water is effectively this water but a water transmuted into a mirror, a water changed into an image of water. Starting from there the reply of Master Adam takes on its sense. One could translate it as follows: “your fever makes you so thirsty that you would not need to be asked very often to (6) start licking an image of water.”

The second point is the allegorical sense which agrees with the literal reading of this verse. It is necessary therefore to look for the symbolic sense of the sin of Master Adam and the symbolic sense of this deformity of dropsy.

Master Adam is then a counterfeiter whose sin appears of particular gravity given the place that he is in Hell.

What had he done? On the instigation of the Counts of Romena he fabricated florins. These florins had the right weight, but their alloy - they contained an alloy - the florin was in principle a coin of pure gold. These are not of pure gold. They include three carats of metal.

Before investigating the sense of this sin, it would be well to situate it in what one can call the moral order of Hell which is presented in Canto XI, presented through the mouth of Virgil. It is said that fraud on the one hand presupposes malice, and on the other hand it is said that fraud is an evil proper to man.

The first point: fraud, falsifying, presupposes malice. Malice is manifested in the deliberate choice of an evil that one pursues. It falsifies the very principle which grounds every virtue on the good, by dissimulating itself under the appearance of a (7) good. It strikes God in what is closest to his essence, namely reason. If reason renders man similar to God it is also through it that this similarity, in the analysis, is adulterated in its reflection, that of an absolute Other, a semblance of the absolute.

Reason, captive of its own image of the good, seduced by its reflection, makes itself like its reflection by choosing itself as such, the absolute sense of metamorphosis. In this sense, what draws into its hollow the being of everything, draws in a double that resembles it where nothing ever is presented or slips away, under the appearance of an absolute.

It is therefore by its latency that malice is formidable, and the proper of malice is that it never appears. This is no interpretation. It is in the text. In fact it is in Canto XI.

The second thing that is said in this Canto is that fraud is the evil proper to man. It is Virgil who expresses this in a quite striking short-cut and in a single verse, verse 52 of this Canto XI: "Fraud, by which every conscience is bitten."

In other words every conscience as such is bitten by fraud. There is in every man something fundamentally false of which conscience bears the marks. What is involved is the primal fault, the primal fault is separation, it is the bite. And in the fault of every conscience in remorse, there is this "*mor*" of the bite (*morsure*). It is Adam's bite which provoked this separation, this break-up, this break-up of reason.

Therefore every conscience is already ruptured, contaminated as it is by the original falsification. The counterfeiter is called Adam. Naturally, the name of this personage recalls that of the first man and preceding the text that I read at the beginning, the text about the allusion to Narcissus, all the themes of the original sin (*faute*) are present.

Now, by taking into account this symbolic *rapprochement*, and in the same register of interpretations, we are going to see in what sense counterfeit money is an image of the original sin. This florin as I told you was a florin of pure gold, nature still remaining at that time the referent. This florin of pure gold is recognised as pure money by name and by effigy, name and effigy which are the signs of truth. But this power of signifying naturally belongs to the one who has authority to authenticate the sign, namely the prince. The prince is guilty if he corrupts the sign. The golden florin is marked by the effigy of John the Baptist. This effigy as sign is then the reminder of a divine order that has to be safeguarded. When the coin is counterfeit, the authentic relationship of the sign and to the material is destroyed. The symbol, perverted into a (9) fiction, fears an image of integrity in which there can be imbedded all the abuses of fraud. Fraud falsifies therefore the truth of the coin and at the same time falsifies the coin of truth. The coin of truth is a holy thing. It adulterates, therefore, the divine

order; it adulterates the relationship to God, the relationship to the source which founds the natural order of values.

As regards the symbolic sense, now from the deformity of Master Adam one can always prove it in the same register. The *res publica* has from all time been compared to a body, the body social that one employs even now, and the effects provoked on this body by the disproportionate swelling of the unwarranted riches of the prince leads to images of deformity. The prince is a member of this body. He becomes a sort of monster disproportionately swollen, swollen to the detriment of the rest of the body, namely of the community. There results a monstrous disproportion of this community. And the deformity of Master Adam, this dropsy, a dropsy which means that he has an enormous body, an enormous wound. This wound rises before his eyes and it creates a screen before his eyes, it blinds him, this wound is full of a water that is stagnant because of the riches of the prince. Because it is stagnant, it is corrupt. Because it is stagnant it can no longer circulate in the rest of the body of Master Adam and it leads then to this dryness in which the mouth and the lips are fixed. It involves this constant (10) thirst and also this thinness of the lower members which can no longer support Master Adam, this enormous blind wound.

Taking account of these remarks one might ask oneself what Master Adam represents, what Sinon represents and what is meant by this quarrel, namely, what is the relationship between Master Adam and Sinon which ends in this marvellous allusion.

First of all Master Adam. The scene unfolds then in the perspective of the latent malice from which there has emerged the fraudulent art of the first man. This evil proper to man is symbolised then by dropsy. It is a water illness, a perversion of man at the source, and it is a weighty illness which immobilises Adam in a grotesque position. Here is the brand of his radical impotence. The image of the streams of Casentino, Casentino is a place close to Romena, and Romena is the locus of the sin. It is there that Adam counterfeited his coin. This image and this source that has been destroyed torments Adam by its reflection, and the fact that, nevertheless, he is ready to sacrifice this image to see its instigators. He is ready to sacrifice this reflection to see the prince, namely, the one who is the cause of his spiritual destruction, namely, malice itself. And the desire to see the malice is equalled only by the radical impotence (11) Adam to see this shade, because he does not want to be moved.

If one remembers that what is proper to malice is its latency one can clearly understand that what Adam pursues, the principle of evil, which is preferable to the spring which quenches his thirst, slips away and that it is nothing other than the refusal to be, hence the radical slipping away.

And Master Adam bears it in himself. He bears it in himself as a void swollen into a dream of the absolute. And what his desire pursues is nothing other, when all is said

and done, than Master Adam himself with respect to whom there forever escapes the principle of evil as the Other of the absolute.

In sacrificing the coin, a holy thing, sin has thus provoked the perversion of the sign, metamorphosed the symbol into a fiction, soiled the source of justice, falsified the link of love between men as God wishes it. There was therefore a choice. But this choice, nevertheless, is still love but a different love, it is the one that man brings back entirely onto himself through the detour of an image, an image which feigns love for the other. It is a doubling of the absolute which is missing by a fictitious absolute.

So much for Master Adam. Now what about Sinon? By falsifying the indication of the divine principle Master Adam engages the whole community in a sort of adventure between being and appearance. This is what emerges from the words of Sinon. Sinon (12) says the following: “and if I spoke falsely, well then you, you falsified the coin and I am here for a single crime, and you for more crimes than anyone else even if he were the demon”.

Sinon comes on the scene when the coin, the word of truth is already falsified. He makes use of the product of Master Adam. For the falsification of the word of truth, Sinon, for his part, is not responsible. He comes into play at the level of the effects of the act of Master Adam. The perverted word has brought about an unlimited falsification of language and it is language that Sinon abuses.

Sinon’s crime is to have pretended to be a deserter from the Greek camp and to have made the Trojans decide to bring the wooden horse into their city. In principle that is it. Which presents him, therefore, as a cheat and a cheat by tactics. But his crime is a double one. It is then cheating as a tactic, but he is also implicated, like in the crime of Judas, as a perjurer in a crime of universal notoriety. He is a pretender who feigns to be what he is not and a perjurer because the language that he abuses is an offence against the gods.

The relationship now between Master Adam and Sinon. Sinon occupies a very particular position in this scene. He is stuck in a very close way to the person with dropsy and he seems to be of one body with him. Master Adam cannot see him and (13) Master Adam does not know the origin of their close relationship. Everything happens as if, once it has been put into circulation, the false word, like false money, so much resembles the authentic that the true becomes unrecognisable and invisible. The sign which carries the guarantee, effaces, in its apparent legality, the traces of its suspect origin to such a degree and so well that the counterfeiter himself is not capable of identifying the product of his own artifice.

And the quarrel breaks out at the moment that Sinon hears himself being presented by Master Adam with qualification of a cheat. Master Adam says: “the cheat, Sinon the Greek of Troy.”

He hears himself, then, on the one hand being denounced in the eyes of the world and, on the other hand, he hears himself being denounced in the attitude of his latency. And in the extraordinarily rapid rhythm of the altercation, one after another the two simulators are placed in the position of accused and accuser and in no way recognise in the malice of the other their own simulation and even play the game of truth. The word truth returns three times in Adam's mouth.

All of this seems to symbolises two phases of the movement of self-fascination of the fraudulent conscience. On the one hand Master Adam, even though riveted to an image of water, an image which does not have for him an autonomous power because he prefers to this reflection the vision of the principle of evil and, on the other hand, (14) Sinon, who is not interested in the principle of evil since he does not feel himself responsible for this perversion. Sinon, for his part, has then nothing to prefer to an image of water. The spring, annihilated in the language that he has feigned, works so well on this fiction that it has acquired an autonomous power for Sinon. For Sinon the true spring has become this image of water with which dreaming consciousness is capable of slaking its thirst. Hence the reflection of Master Adam to Sinon that to get you to lick the mirror of Narcissus not many words would be needed.

Sinon represents in the movement of fraud, the culminating point, the radical perversion where malice encloses the falsifier in his image which has become for him the truth itself. The image of nothing. One could probably say that it is to the absoluteness of this image that the pervert is fixed.

As for the way Dante is involved in this story, Dante himself tells us. He is fascinated by the spectacle of the altercation; he is fascinated by the images of hell. And to break the attachment of his look to error, the intervention of the voice of Virgil is necessary. Virgil says: "now then, be on your guard". From these images Dante has to turn aside, not take these images for reality, and turn away from them, such is the sense that Virgil gives to the path that Dante travels with him. To be on your guard against this danger of capture, is to look to the truth.

(15) Dante in fact wakes up but he will need more than one warning to really awaken.

Here is the text in the translation of Madame Tenaasse-Mongen  [here: C H Sisson, World's Classics, Oxford University Press] It is Dante who speaks :

"I turned towards him and was so ashamed
That I am so still when I think about it.
And as one who dreams of something harmful,
Wishes in his dream that he was dreaming,
And so desires what is, as if it were not,
So did I, for I was not able to speak;

I wanted to excuse myself, and was doing so
All the time, and did not think that I was”

The voice of Virgil brings Dante to the truth, and this in shame. But the awakening is brief. Born to the truth in shame, Dante pauses. He pauses to reflect the shame by wishing to express it. Wishing to express it in order to excuse himself, Dante ceases to see the reality which speaks by itself in the silence of the shame. And his desire for expression means that he fails to recognise this truth even at the moment that it is accomplished. He falls once again into this broken reflection that he assimilates to sleep. This comparison fixes in a way the radical impotence of reason ever to recover the truth by itself. Dante the sleeper desires what is as if it were not. The real fact, namely, the truth speaking by itself through shame, is transmuted into the unreal, the impossibility of speaking. The reality is taken as unreal.

(16) Virgil intervenes at all speed at that moment and he says:

“ A lesser shame would erase a greater fault
..... than you have been guilty of;
Therefore let fall any unhappiness”.

It is sadness that is involved. And here Virgil puts the accent on what, beyond the shame, weighs on Dante a residue of heaviness, a residue of evil desire.

This second intervention seems to have more of the value of a warning than the first one. One could perhaps say that it is, could be assimilated to an intervention. In any case it appears from it that the conscience that is originally bitten is incapable, left to itself, to react against evil desire, base envy.

Dante closes this Canto XXX with these words of Virgil. He posits Virgil in a way as a memory of presence. Virgil says:

“And take account of the fact that I am here,
If it so happen that fortune should bring you
Where there are people in the like disputes:
To want to hear them is an inferior wish”

Perhaps one could link the place that Virgil occupies to that of the analyst.

The second allusion to the myth of Narcissus is that in *Paradise* in Canto III. The scene takes place in the moonlit heavens. Beatrice has just destroyed the erroneous opinion of Dante about lunar spots. Dante is disposed, at that moment to confess his (17) correction and his new conviction. Here is what Dante says:

“And I, to admit that I was put right
And convinced, as the case indeed required,

Raised my head to address some words to her;
 But an apparition appeared, which held me
 So closely to itself, to look at it,
 That I did not remember my confession.
 As through a glass which is transparent and polished,
 Or through tranquil and translucent water
 Which is not so deep that it is dark at the bottom
 The outlines of our faces are reflected
 So faintly, that a pearl on a white forehead
 Does not come less readily to our pupils;
 So I saw many faces set to speak:
 Which made me run into the opposite error
 To that which made the man in love with the pool.
 The moment I caught sight of them,
 Thinking that they were reflected images
 I turned my eyes to see whose they were;
 And saw nothing and looked back again
 Straight at the light which came from my sweet guide
 Which, as she smiled, blazed from her holy eyes.”

Dante was disposed to confess his being put right but nevertheless he did not speak. The gesture of bringing his face to the front changes intention before a vision which imposed itself with such force that Dante forgot his confession. Dante perceives several faces which like him are ready to speak.

(18) Thinking that he is seeing images in a mirror, he turns his head back in order to see where they are coming from and, seeing nothing, he turns his eyes to the front, straight into the gaze of Beatrice.

In Canto II which comes before, Beatrice had, then, explained to Dante what the lunar spots were and she had told Dante that what appeared to him on the moon as a shadow reveals itself in truth to be also light, but light which is differentiated from the properly luminous part of the moon by a degree of receptivity, or rather of transparency, I believe that the term transparency is more appropriate, a lesser degree of transparency. So then, shadow understood as light and always presented as light appearing against a luminous background, this background being the measure which makes tangible their difference and the possibility of their apparition.

The shades, the souls of Paradise are of course also understood as light, and it is in the divine light that they are lit up and allow the rays to pass through without stopping them.

Dante symbolises God by a mirror in which there are reflected the souls of Paradise. In any case this is Dragonetti's conviction. Not by a silvered mirror but a mirror

whose depths remain entirely light. The shades, the transparent images, appear in the realm of light and here reflection is considered in a manner different to terrestrial (19) reflection. Reflection is considered as the action of the direct radiation of divine light through the transparency of celestial bodies and not as the reflection of rays produced by bodies whose opacity forms a screen to this light. Dante clearly specifies that the more or less specular surface on which his vision appears is like that of a crystal or that of waters whose bottom is not obscure, whose bottom is not hidden. The obscure bottom and the hidden bottom is the tain of the mirror of Narcissus. Here the bottom is light. It is not even that there is no bottom. The bottom is something and it is light. It is not a matter then of a mirror on the terrestrial model; it is a matter of pure transparency, of a mirror in the celestial style.

What is more, there are two sorts of images that have appeared: there are the figures that are prepared to speak; these are the admired figures. And these images play into one another in such a way as to give the impression that the admired figures, the faces of the spectators blend in with the faces that are prepared to speak.

Dante turns away to break the spell of the mirror and he reveals at the same moment, says Dragonetti, the degree to which he is conscious of the error which perverts such a relationship to images. Dante brought to bear on the vision a gaze captivated by its reflection so that he had changed the transparency into a spectacle. What Dante denounces as “the opposite error to that which made the man in love with the (20) pool” is in the rejection of reason onto itself for having made reality disappear in an image.

To the appeal of the vision, Dante replies by the spontaneous correction of his look in the direction of the eyes of Beatrice. For Dragonetti, Beatrice is the revealed truth who turns Dante away from his fascination with a reason too sure of its rightness. And at Dante’s gaze on transparency, to make it become transparent by this gaze itself.

Dragonetti says that to see is to interiorise reason in faith. The danger that threatens Dante is that his reason confronted with transparency, is tempted to represent it instead of presenting itself to it. The reason which wishes to reduce faith to an image of terrestrial reflection would no longer deserve that name, because not only does it transform its object which is essentially light into shade, but that cut off from the true light this reason which ought to be transparent, then becomes itself a shadow projected onto things. Without this I think that Dragonetti sees a Dante whose monster submits to the myth of Narcissus.

But to this interpretation of Dragonetti there can perhaps be added the following, that at the heart of the transparency of Paradise there is no possibility of being a part of it. To remit to God the cause of one’s desire is the only possible path. Perhaps this is Dante's phantasy, the transparency of his gaze before the light of God.

(21) After all in Paradise, there is God. All is light and the light comes from God. Light is God's look. And between God and Dante there is Beatrice, Beatrice who is not God, who is not either, I think, the revealed truth of Dragonetti but Beatrice who bears the mark of God. Then there is, still between God and Dante, the vision of Dante onto which he stuck the admired figures. It is from these admired figures whose spell he broke by turning away, it is not from the vision itself, the vision itself pre-existed these admired figures. This vision is not the vision of something indifferent, it is the vision of souls who by compulsion failed in their vows of chastity. It is the vision of God's creatures. Then there is Dante. Now, in Paradise reflection is conceived of as the action of the direct radiation of the divine light through the transparency of celestial bodies. Before God, in the field of God's look, the only presence which is not transparent is Dante, perhaps the earth, an obscure bottom. So then, rather than Dante's narcissism, is it not also a question of the narcissism of God?

Dr Lacan

You have heard a very faithful account of this article by Dragonetti. For those who perhaps got lost because of the very fidelity of these detours that are pursued on this occasion by Dragonetti, I am going to try to take things up again once again, and summarise what is involved. At the same time, as I announced, I will show the interest that such a reference has for us.

Our starting point this year was to render coherent what we have to affirm about the function of the \circ -object in the position of psychoanalysis, in so far as it originates from science and from science in its very particular relationship to truth, science being understood as the modern science born in the seventeenth century, in the century that has been called, because of this mutation in the position of knowledge, the century of genius.

You will see that we are going to come later to another aspect of this apparition of the scientific position in so far as it was eminently incarnated by someone other than Descartes. You will see later who, if you do not guess it already.

There is here then a profound transformation of something which is not eternal, which corresponds to another field, to another interval of history, namely, the relationship prior to the origin of science to what is inscribed in the form that I would (23) not qualify as more general and which I qualified as prior, of the relationships of knowledge and of truth. These relationships of knowledge and of truth are the whole tradition that we are going to call, for greater convenience, the philosophical one.

It is in this topological framework that there is situated the position of a Dante. Let us not go too quickly. I am not saying that Dante is a philosopher even though his relationship to philosophy is such that it was able to be followed, isolated, in a whole work for example by Monsieur Etienne Gilson which is entitled precisely, *Dante et la philosophie*, and which keeps its promise by showing us its insistence, punctuating the life and the work of Dante.

Our topology here, in the sense that I understand it, that I manipulate it, that I introduce you to it has no other function than to allow there to be mapped out these transformations of the relationships of knowledge and of truth. If Dante is chosen by us today to be presented to you, within his most outstanding poetic creation, that of *The divine comedy* it is for a reason which for us determines it, as I might say, in two phases:

1) He introduces here the presence of the Christian religious construction and the thesis that is latent, as one might say, in this choice, is the following: that at the origin of the Christian religious tradition there is this introduction into the (24) field of the relationships of knowledge and of truth of a certain God to whom we will come later in order to define him in his origin, in his Jewish origin, in so far as his presence is the crystallising point of this fundamental, inaugural axis for us which is the very one of the introduction of science, I am saying, I already sufficiently indicated, I am repeating it here with more force and I am going to justify it later, the introduction of this God of the Jews is the pivotal point which, even though He remained throughout the centuries enrobed in a certain philosophical framework of the relationship of truth and of knowledge, ends up by emerging, by coming to light, by the surprising consequence that the position of science is established from the very work that this function of the God of the Jews established within these relationships of truth and of knowledge.

This would not have been enough to make us choose Dante because, in fact, any theologian of the medieval epoch would have been able to serve us in the same way as an example to situate what the philosophical tradition involves in terms of the relationships of knowledge and of truth. Dante is also a poet, and I am going to try to tell you how it is *qua* poet that he manifests in a fashion that is not only outstanding but choice, the emergence, the analytical point where, in what he articulates, there is manifested more than he realises, and where he testifies in a certain fashion that I am now going to situate, I mean give the reasons, why he is able to testify, where he (25) testifies in a fashion that is in a way anticipatory for us, to the presence in the relationships of knowledge and of truth of what, properly this year, is promoted by me as the function of the \mathbf{o} -object. This is the interest, in effect, of these two passages in so far as they are chosen, signaled criticised in Dragonetti, that they are signaled by the presence of the mirror which allows us, for our part, to pick out there the manifest designation as such of the \mathbf{o} -object, whose name here is the look.

Let us take things up again. Dante of course, far from escaping, falls completely, as you know, even if you have hardly ever opened it, you know enough about *The divine comedy* to know that this work is inscribed in what I call the cosmological module, a cosmology of the beyond, it is, nonetheless, a cosmology and one which borrows its framework from the cosmology established, let us say, starting from the first Greek philosophers raised to its first model by Aristotle, and transmitted as a form, as a framework for the thinking of the physicists of the time, the Ptolemaic system for example, however limited it may be to the observation of the functioning of the real world as it is presented, namely, to account for the relationships of the movement of the stars and to establish it as consistent with the existence of this world which is that of the terrestrial world which is ordered as you know in function of this topology of (26) the sphere, of a series of spheres including one another which are the planetary spheres before arriving at the upper sphere, the fixed stars. It is a matter of accounting for their functioning, such is the start of ancient physics, and it is in this that we can, in short, qualify as an introduction to a science as such in human knowledge, it is in this that we can qualify the Ancients as having taken the first historically acceptable, transmissible, steps which served as primary matter for the revolution which was called the Copernican revolution, itself an introduction to the quite different Newtonian revolution.

This cosmological world which also includes coordinations of divers parts of the teaching, let us say, of the university (*universitas*) is the fundamental reference point, the framework in which there developed what was teaching up to a certain date, cosmology therefore with its psychological, ideological, even ontological coordinates, it is in this framework that Dante's thinking is situated.

What is it, if not a presentation to us of the first split between truth and knowledge. And it is thus indeed that all mediaeval thinking which, far from being a negligible thinking, rejected, in a way, however radical I present to you the cut established by the (27) birth of modern science is illuminating for us as regards this topology which we have to take into account in the situation which is re-established because of the question posed by analytic experience, this thematic of the opposition between truth and knowledge is inscribed throughout the whole development of medieval thinking in what is called the doctrine of the double truth. No thinker, no teacher of this epoch escaped the question of this double truth. It is the real foundation of this split which had necessarily to be made by the teachers of this epoch between the field of reason and that of revelation.

It is nothing other than the fact that there is a supposed field of constructive knowledge in the ideal, deductively, concerning the structure of the world and then something else which we only know from a supernatural source and from the word of this other who is God.

This distinction is so fundamental in the structure of everything that is articulated at this epoch that we ought to pay tribute to it, to the eminent rationality of the thinking of those that I call these noble teachers (*enseigneurs*) in order not to call them by this disparaging name of scholastics.

Let us admire the firmness of the reason of these people who, supposedly caught up in suggestions which are no longer anything but obscurantist for us, which come to us (28) from religion, did not prevent them from maintaining the rights of strict reason.

Do I need to recall that St Thomas, if I remember correctly, even after - I am not sure but it does not matter - with reference, this is the point of reference for us, the condemnation in 1277 emanating from the Sorbonne of Bishop Tempier which condemns him precisely for having supported, according to the ecclesiastical authorities, more than was proper for the Christian conscience, the distinction between these two domains, finds himself compared in the same condemnation to the followers of Averroes and to the teaching for example of a Siger de Brabant from whom, nevertheless, he is distinguished by all sort of modalities. Still, this did not prevent St Thomas from writing something whose title at least you know: *De aeternitate mundi contra murmerantes*, namely, against what had already provoked his condemnation, namely, to maintain that from the point of view of strict reason the world ought to be eternal and that only revelation indicates to us that it is nothing of the kind.

Is not this distinction between truth and knowledge there to remind us that already the whole organisation of knowledge, of knowledge in so far as it is supported by this body which up to the inauguration of the position of modern science imposes itself as what can be said about knowledge, namely the cosmological, theological, psychological, ontological body, that this body is posited as this ambiguous style of approach which is at the same time a fundamental distancing from what is involved in (29) the truth. I would almost say that for centuries knowledge is pursued as a defence against the truth.

The truth, if you wish, in order to make you sense it, being here to be mapped out, registered, as the question about the most essential relationship to the subject, namely, his relationship to birth and death in so far as everything that concerns him is in the interval between them.

This is the question of the truth in the sense that I define its truth as the one who says: "I the truth speak." It is about this, it is about our last ends that the truth has something to say to us.

Observe here that the articulation of the very term of interval is even a poetic metaphor from a sombre quarter (*bord*), and is here to remind us of the very topological term, properly speaking the one that I designate as being the function of the edge (*bord*). Everything happens as if, to take our reference point, which is not a

metaphor, from the opposition in modern logic between the open set and the closed set, namely, for centuries did not protect and protect so well the line of choosing uniquely the side of the open set. You know that a closed set is what is conceived as uniting the open set with its limit in so far as topologically it is distinguished from it.

(30) Limit, frontier, edge, these are the terms that are involved. The part of truth, is that of our limit between birth and death, a limit in so far as the subject, and everything that is involved in knowledge, is the open set which is comprised in the interval.

This is why the poet in any case, and even if he does not know it, henceforth reintroduces that what he knows and what he manipulates is the structure of language and not simply the word, reintroduces in any case this topology of the edge and the articulation of the structure.

It is through this that Dante, here, goes beyond what he borrows from the structure of knowledge of his time, and precisely in the measure of this ambiguity introduced because of the fact that he projects the cosmological forms of knowledge of his time into the field of what I call the final ends. It is having made of the cosmology of his time what he intends to sing about a beyond of knowledge, the proper field of truth, that he manages to bring out in two points chosen by a commentator, a commentator who is no doubt guided, enlightened, because he is situated in the modern epoch, allows us to pick out in two points, one of Hell, the other of Paradise, constellations that I would qualify as typical, which are properly speaking those of the relationship which links the word *qua* situated in the field of the Other as support of the truth and (31) the necessary, co-ordinated emergence of the \circ -object, that at the same point, a point whose depth I did not point out to you precisely enough earlier, even in deepest Hell, there are found joined together the one who made of the word the support of deception and the one who made counterfeit money.

What a strange conjunction, what a singular necessity, for which we have to invoke the poetic double view, the fact is that Dante as regards whom, undoubtedly, the simple reading of this poem, marked by so many strange things, imposes on us the idea that he knows what he is saying, however strange there appear to us at every moment these excesses with regard to our common sense.

It is not for nothing, it is not by chance that there are joined together to dialogue, in this sort of singular embrace the one who fundamentally has lied, and not in just any fashion whatsoever, has not simply lied, simply cheated, as you were told earlier but cheated in deceiving the trust of the other. This conjunction of the lie as an attack on faith with the fact of the reference of this something which is not truth but truth value, this thing whose reference it is so necessary to introduce when it is a matter of the truth, that when Heidegger proposes to us the *von Wesen der Wahrheit*, he also speaks about a coin.

What is meant by a counterfeit coin? Is not this counterfeit coin also something which (32) is. It is what it is. It is not false. It is false only with respect to this function that conjoins truth to value. This indeed is why what is involved around this **o**-object is this function of the value of truth.

It is here that it is striking, singular, to see that Dante in this vulgar dispute set up between two of the damned, makes there emerge from the mouth of one, precisely of the counterfeiter who addresses himself to the traitor, that he would still be quite content to succumb to this sort of miscognition which would be to lick the mirror of Narcissus, namely, to believe himself to be at least himself, while what is involved is precisely, as was very well articulated for you earlier, that at the very essence of himself which is to be a liar, he has lost it and that he can no longer rediscover any form of his being except by desiring passionately to rediscover before him the one who led him into his fundamental lie.

In the same way, arriving in Paradise what Dante calls the error contrary to that of Narcissus is, apprehending oneself as something which is presented to him as an appearance, not to be able to do otherwise than turn around to see what he sees is the image of.

(33) So that, Dante himself reveals to us that this something which is produced at the limit at which he enters into the field of God, proposes to us objects which are properly speaking what I designate as **o**-objects. In the field of God, in so far as it is from him that there emanate the substances, nothing that is an object is presented except as a darkening relative, in a way, to a pure look, a transparency against a background of transparency, and that this apparition can only be recognised, for the thinking of reflection, as they say, by seeking, by turning back to behind oneself where the original being may well be.

I happened at one time to write these sentences: “When man, searching the void of thought, advances into the shadowless gleam of imaginary space, abstaining even from expecting what is going to emerge from it, a mirror without lustre shows him a surface in which nothing is reflected.”

The snare in this sentence which concludes one of the chapters of the discourse on psychic causality, is that it seems to appear to say that there is no image, while what it means is that the image reflects nothing, designating here already something that Dante’s text accentuates, and which is properly what I am telling you, that the (**o**) is not specular. In effect, when it appears against the transparent background of being, it is precisely at the same time to appear as an image and an image of nothing. This is what Dante accentuates in the second appearance of the reference to the mirror, (34) namely, that here where he believes there is a mirror-function, he comes to realise that when the (**o**) appears, if there is a mirror, there is nothing reflected in it.

Such are the structures that Dante's poetic construction brings to light and if he is able to do it, it is because he is a poet and that, being a poet, what he rejoins is not so much our science as what we are in the process of constructing for the moment and what I call theory.

The privilege of this poetic construction with respect to theory, psychoanalytic theory, if you wish, for us simply theory, depends on a privileged relationship which is constructed by means of a certain form of asceticism of the subject with respect to the other. This privileged structure, I defined the year that I gave my seminar on *Ethics*. It is that of courtly love in so far as we can locate in it in an outstanding fashion the terms (I) the ego ideal, (o) the \circ -object, i(o) the image of o, foundation of the ego, and \$.

This privileged structure - I can only here refer to my seminar on ethics those who attended it - is linked to something which is courtly love and which is so important for us to reveal the structures of sublimation.

The centre of Dante's life and of his work is, as someone as well balanced as Monsieur (35) Etienne Gilson underlines strongly, his choice of Beatrice and the existence, the real existence of the person designated in his work by this name. It is in the measure that Dante, as the simple continuation of his work shows, and its origin in the *Vita nuova*, is a poet bound to the technique of courtly love that he finds, that he structures this elective place where there is designated a certain relationship to the other suspended as such on this limit of the field of *jouissance* which I have called the limit of brilliance or of beauty.

It is in so far as *jouissance* - I am not saying pleasure - is withdrawn from the field of courtly love that a certain configuration is established there which allows a certain equilibrium between truth and knowledge. It is properly what has been called, knowing what he was doing, *le gai savoir*. And in a thousand terms of the field thus defined in which the erudite lose themselves for want of being able to bring to it the slightest philosophical orientation, and here we find a thousand terms which designate for us topological references. A very outstanding term, for example, is the one which is employed to refer to the function of the other and of the beloved other, that the chosen woman is the one - which appears paradoxical to us and it is in Guillaume IX d'Aquitain - the good neighbour. The good neighbour, for me, if I had the time I could insist on it, is here as close as possible to what in the most modern mathematical (36) theory is called the function of neighbourhood. This point is absolutely fundamental to establish this dimension that I introduced earlier of the open set and the closed set.

In the development that I shall have to pursue on the subject of structure, the one that I shall bring in again, after having introduced it last year in the shape that it has for the

moment, it is a fact, that is what it is called, it is the Klein bottle, will allow there to be structured in a decisive fashion what I mean here about the relationship of the subject to the other.

It is in so far as Dante, the courtly poet rejoins it, that he can achieve the encounters that I have now, I think, it is too late in any case to know whether I reached them that year, for what follows will prove to me whether I sufficiently mapped out what is in question.

We are coming up to two o'clock and, consequently, what I was not able to do otherwise than announce to you earlier, and which I am now happy at not having said any more about, that way you will not have the feeling of being frustrated, what I wanted to talk to you about in a second moment today, I did not have the time to do it, I will do it therefore at my next seminar and because of this, the people who are invited to the third seminar are also then invited, this time, to the fourth seminar.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 26 January 1966

Dr Lacan: My dear friends, the question is about the existence and the functioning of this closed seminar. What decided me to start it is that I intend that there should be produced at it what is called more or less correctly a dialogue.

This term is vague and is much abused. The dialogue as it may be produced in the framework that I am trying to establish in this closed seminar has nothing privileged about it as compared to any other dialogue.

Quite recently for example someone came to ask me for something, this something was in itself something so exorbitant and impossible to grant that I did not believe for a moment that this was what was being asked of me. The result is that, conceding something that I could quite easily grant, the person before me was convinced that I was granting him something that was in accordance with his desire and which, I repeat, was so much outside the limits of any possibility that I could not even think that this was what he was asking of me.

This is an example that it is easy to relate to many [page 2 missing?].

(3) On the other hand, you have had a presentation by my pupil Conté, a certain number of questions posed by my pupil Melman. These three works, which were very carefully prepared, were sufficient to fill the fourth Wednesday to which I have alluded that of the month of December. It is along the line of things and of what has been promised, that you will hear today a response from Stein. I heard from him yesterday evening, with pleasure, that he was asking me to speak for more than a half an hour; let him speak as long as he wishes provided he leaves half the session for the responses that I hope will manifest themselves.

I apologise then to him if I commit myself, as I do, not to speak today myself. Since it appears that for some people it is the very presence of this word which puts them in a position of not wanting, I am summarising, it is much more complex, to expose themselves to some comparison or other whose reference on such an occasion seems to me to be absolutely at the limit of the analysable. I will succeed or I will not succeed, but it is not at all a question for me of the value of the work that I have done for you here, I will succeed or I will not succeed in getting people to intervene.

So I would ask you now to give your attention to what Stein is going to say to you and I give the floor to him immediately.

Dr Stein: I will take as a starting point for my replies the very precise and very relevant remarks that Conté made the last time and, at the same time, I will be led to respond to a certain number of questions by Melman in order subsequently to take up a problem which concerns very particularly Melman's presentation.

I believe that the centre of Conté's preoccupations in connection with two articles by me which he analysed is found in this notion of a fusional situation. This is what Conté picks out first and what he insists on from the beginning and he quotes two sentences of mine, two sentences which figure in the first article. One: "there is a unique it (*ça*) speaking and listening ..." and the second: "the patient and the analyst

both tend to be in one (*en un*), in which is everything.” Starting from there Conté notes that such states are rare. He is thus led to ask me:

- 1) Whether I refer these states to a particular neurotic structure,
- 2) How I situate these states with respect to the totality of the treatment.

Let us pause then at this first question by Conté.

(5) The response that I hope to provide you with will serve in great measure as a key to all these other questions and to all the other objections which have been made to me. My response could be the following: it is true that I refer these states to a particular structure, to a particular neurotic structure but this particular structure concerns all patients, the totality of all the patients who are capable of transference. I would say again: yes, I refer all of these states to a common structure which is defined by this category that I am going to try to elucidate a little later on. I will reply no, if you have to take the structure as neurotic structure in the strict sense of the term, namely, what distinguishes one form of neurosis from another.

I do not think that these states are only encountered in one of the forms of neurosis that one can distinguish.

As regards the totality of the treatment I must say that the question is a little bit more difficult given that in these works, in the works that I have provided up to now, the totality of the treatment is not yet taken into consideration in terms of what differentiates it in its successive phases. This is not what I have dealt with up to the present. On the contrary what is indeed in question are things, phenomena, which are met from one end to the other of the treatment, namely, that in this first stage I took into consideration something which is common, which concerns not the treatment but (6) which concerns the analytic session whatever it may be, namely, that I try for my personal use in the first place moreover, to find reference points which are valid for the first session of a treatment just as much as for a final one.

The replies that I have thus just given to Conté are in contradiction with the notion that I privilege according to Conté, rare states. I could object to this:

- either it does not matter whether these states are rare if they are exemplary
- I could also object to this, that I for my part encounter them very frequently.

You will not fail to find that both one and the other response are too subjective to serve as a basis for a discussion and this subjective character of my reply would be still further increased if you recalled that it is a matter here of limit states which cannot be realised, what one can perceive are only the states that can be, this is what I have done, be described as tending more or less towards this limit.

To abandon this too subjective register we must realise that these limit cases in question, which cannot be realised, are by very definition imaginary.

We are thus led to define this imaginary state, which comes back more precisely to (7) defining the sense of the proposition: it speaks. It is in connection with the definition of the sense of this proposition that I am going to be led to present to you an argument which is perhaps a little new and which ought to serve us as a key for the principle question which have been raised. I am thus obliged to ask you for a particularly sustained attention for a few moments because I am obliged to state to you a certain number of propositions in a rather arid form.

It is a matter then of elucidating the sense of the proposition: "it speaks". Let us call predication any proposition which designates a subject by means of its predicate. This subject, let us call it the subject of the predicate. As regards the one who is at the origin or the one who is the agent of the predication, the one who really, pronounces the words and who is not habitually represented by one of the terms of the proposition, the one who could precede the proposition by an "I say", let us call him the predicating subject. It is not grammatical, it is a supposed subject. You will note that it is necessary always in the first person.

Now let us agree that in every proposition, the subject of the predicate is the term which designates a particular patient once and for all. In the analytic situation, it is a matter of someone that one habitually calls the patient and if one wished to examine (8) with this method the content of any dialogue whatsoever, the one of which Lacan spoke to you earlier, well then, the patient may be chosen arbitrarily but he ought always to remain the same. The patient must always remain the same whether he is being spoken about, whether he is being spoken to, or whether he speaks himself.

I give you an example to specify things clearly. The patient, let us say in the analytic situation, since in fact this is the only one we will be dealing with today, and I would not go so far as to extrapolate it into every dialogue, the patient says to his psychoanalyst: "you do not respond to my expectations".

The subject of the predicate, contrary to appearances, is contained in the "my". Which means that this sentence, to clarify things, could be transposed: "I am waiting in vain for your response". Here the subject of the predicate is indeed "I". I (predicate) await your response in vain.

To this you may object that the two sentences do not have the same sense. I would respond to you that this shows us that it is not indifferent that the subject of the predicate should figure in one manner or in another.

Our own proposition: "it speaks in the session", is a second degree predication. Let us not forget it. We do not have to study these second degree predications especially but

(9) we do have to know clearly that when we speak, we are speaking about words which are spoken in the session. We must distinguish what we say about words which are spoken. That means nothing else. “It speaks in the session” is our discourse about the word which in the session was pronounced. We do not have to ask ourselves: “Who was speaking? Who is speaking?”.

Quite obviously in the case under consideration, “it speaks in the session”, it was the patient who spoke. Nevertheless we say clearly: “it speaks” and not “he speaks”. Why? Because he does not speak, he does not speak to his psychoanalyst in the imaginary sense that we have to consider.

To clarify things let us envisage first of all the case in which he might speak to his analyst, the case at the limit which is by far the most usual. In the case that he speaks to his analyst his word could be preceded by an “I say” which implies that there ought to be two people in the listening :

- I speaking and listening which designates the patient of the same order, in so far as he is I, other than the I of the other, the psychoanalyst who is listening.

Can we consider another case where it is the patient who speaks, of whom we should say: “he speaks”. The patient can pronounce words that he can suppose to be addressed to himself by his double or by a third party, for example, by his psychoanalyst.

(10) This supposition of his is that his word can still be preceded by a “I say”, an I similar to the I of the one whose word is supposed. This is still not the imaginary case that we are considering.

Let us first of all make some remarks relating to this formal order which is the one of the: “he is speaking”, that we are envisaging for the moment.

First remark

I, predicating subject, is always of the same order as another I, predicating subject.

Second remark

When it is the patient who speaks, the predicating subject is by definition the same as the subject of the predicate. I say I.

Third remark

When the predicating subject is the same as the subject of the predicate, the latter is always in the first person. Speaking about myself, I cannot designate myself otherwise than by “I”. In order to speak about oneself, one says “I”. But in the second case that we have considered to make another speak about oneself, one says to one’s psychoanalyst: “you are telling me even though ...” to make another speak about

oneself, one does not say I, one says me. You are telling me. In connection with this reflective form of the first person, me, we ought to note, it is very important, that it (11) implies a reference to the predication of the second person. You tell me. Me contains the subject of the predicate. It nevertheless remains that the implied reference to the second person is that of you: “you say you to me”.

There is therefore in the reflective form of the first person, me, a certain degree of contamination of the I, the first person properly speaking, by a reference to the second person, you.

If I point out to you this degree of contamination that exists in this reflected form, it is because it leads us easily, by a transition, to the imaginary case that we have to consider where there is no longer contamination of I by the reference to a you, I and you always designating the same subject, the subject of the predicate, but where there is a confusion between the two.

What are we to say then about the imaginary case that we have now to consider, that in connection with our commentary is: “it speaks”. Well, we have seen that in the formal order in which one can say: “he speaks”, he designates the predicating subject which always supposes another I, a predicating subject. The imaginary order is that of the “it speaks”. It designates as emitter of the word, a unique person, there are always two I’s, there is only one it; a unique person and an unnamed person in the sense that he does not name himself.

(12) Moreover, when we say: “he speaks” we refer to the one who says I, and when we say: “it speaks” we have no name to designate what is at the origin of the word pronounced, we do not have a name to designate the predicating subject for the good reason that this predicating subject loses here the status of subject.

The imaginary case is precisely the one where, contrary to the law that I presented to you under the form of a remark earlier, where contrary to the law, the subject of the predicate is in the second person while the predicating subject is the same as the subject of the predicate. In other words, where the first and the second person are only one.

Example

How can one give an example of an imaginary case. One can only give it in a very approximate manner obviously, for example, the patient speaking through the mouth of his psychoanalyst. I mean, not in the figurative sense of the formula speaking through someone else mouth but the patient speaking through the mouth of his psychoanalyst, saying really, because there is nothing as real, in the sense that what we are dealing with in psychic reality, as the imaginary. The patient speaking through the mouth of his psychoanalyst is something, if one takes the term in its proper and not

figurative sense, evidently impossible in any other domain than the one of psychic reality (13) that Freud assigns to psychic reality. So then, what happens in this imaginary case? In his predicating, he will designate himself as the subject in the second person, saying you to himself. If such a word were preceded by an “I say”, this would give I and you being the same: “I am saying you are I”.

Now he cannot say you or I, this is why we say: “it says you are I.” The imaginary person which is at once the first and the second, we designate in our discourse about his discourse as being it. It is an imaginary person. It speaks and the discourse which makes itself heard, just like a predication, does not have its status by reason of the ubiquitous character of the subject which is designated there. (I told you earlier that it (*ça*) did not have the status of a subject).

Now it is perhaps a good thing to note that we have distinguished two registers of the word: the formal register from which he speaks and the imaginary register from which it speaks. We must add that these registers admit subdivisions, very numerous subdivisions but it is not our purpose today to examine all the possible subdivisions of these registers, it would moreover be a very interesting project to carry out. I would like simply to mention three registers which constitute subdivisions of the formal register: he speaks; three registers because they will be of immediate use to us.

(14) These registers are moreover the most simple.

1) That of the designation of the subject of the predicate in the second person. The word in this case is obviously the creation of the other, the one who says you. This register, in very rough approximation, in a first approximation, the one which is privileged in the interpretation of the psychoanalyst who says to his patient, you.

2) The designation of the predicate in the reflected first person, a register that we have already encountered as example. Here it is indeed the patient who speaks about himself designating himself by means of the supposed statement of his psychoanalyst which constitutes the predicate. This register of the designation of the subject in the reflected first person, of the subject of the predicate, is that of the supposed interpretation of the psychoanalyst, it is the register, which in a still very approximate manner, and in a privileged manner, of transference.

Now you will say to me, there exists all the same an extremely simple register which we have already spoken about earlier and which must be taken into account, it is that of the designation of the subject of the predicate in the first person, in the case of psychoanalysis, the one in which the patient speaks saying I. What is involved in this register? Well then, I would ask you for a moment. We will come back to it later. For I would propose to specify all of this for you by replying to a certain number of (15) questions by Conté. Conté said that I presented the word as introducing a cut. He also said that I presented the word as exhausting the psychic flux without a gap or

a cut. The expression is Conté's. There is here an apparent paradox which leads Conté to pose the question: "in my opinion what is primordial?"

Here is my reply: the primordial function of predication seems to me to reside in the register that I designated earlier as being that of the designation of the subject of the predicate in the second person, a register which in a privileged manner is that of the interpretation of the psychoanalyst. I would point out to you that all of this demands to be, of course, demands to be much more developed and that I did not do it in this first project. Here then is what is primordial.

I would add that the function of this predication has some relationship, I would not even say a very intimate relationship, with what we can designate as being the paternal function, that it is constitutive of the apparatus of the soul, as Freud calls it, or the psychic apparatus in its topical dimension just as much as in its structure, namely, in its reference to these three neo-grammatical persons who constitute what can be called in an improper term the second Freudian topography, consequently constitutive of the imaginary register of which we say: "it speaks".

(16) Constitutive in a very different way of what in habitual language one calls the "it", it is just as constitutive of the ego and of the super-ego.

Let us add now that in this imaginary register, "it speaks", the function of predication of the word is in a certain way alienated. Let us now note that there is an incompatibility between "it speaks" and predication, that *vis à vis* the narcissistic register "it speaks", predication has, either a cutting effect restoring the patient to one of the modes of the register in which he speaks or, again, has no effect whatsoever. In this case this function of predication, this predication, is in a way foreclosed, to take up Lacan's term in the exercise of its function and I think that this way of seeing things overlaps rather exactly what Lacan calls the foreclosure of the name of the father.

In other words, when it speaks and when in a way things are fixed in this register, that predication remains without effect, we ought to consider that there is no transference, that there is no transference simply in the sense that the intervention of predication, of the predication which designates the subject of the predicate in the second person in no way breaks up the it speaks and does not make the patient accede, in particular, to the register of the designation of the subject in the reflected first person.

(17) Namely, that in the case of foreclosure we are dealing in practice with patients for whom interpretation represents nothing as such and who do not accede to the register in which they designate themselves by means of the supposed interpretation of the psychoanalyst, this is what foreclosure is, this is what foreclosure of the name of the father is, as Lacan says, and here is very precisely the definition of narcissistic neurosis as Freud distinguished it.

You know that I am making an incident here that is designed to show you that all of this has also an interest for psychoanalysis. You know that ever since psychoanalysts have begun to deal with people who are mad, to deal with psychiatric patients, they have noticed that these people experience with respect to them very lively feelings which made them believe that madness did not exclude the possibility of transference. Well, this is an error. If one wishes to maintain the framework of narcissistic neurosis, which seems necessary to me, it is necessary to take transference in a more restrictive sense than that of a feeling relating to someone, in a strict sense which is the one that I propose to you, for example, for there are many other formulations possible, as being for example this capacity to designate oneself by means of the supposed interpretation of the psychoanalyst. Well now madness, in the measure that the patient is mad, for one is never entirely mad, and this is why one can all the same treat the mad, and in the (18) measure that the patient is mad, this possibility does not exist because of the foreclosure that we have just been dealing with.

Now, still in this incident since here I am no longer answering Conté's questions, it must be noted, we must come back to this register which I said nothing about to you earlier, the register of the designation of the subject in the first person, the patient speaking about himself and saying I.

Well then, at this other extreme, one could say, the function of predication of the word is not alienated, as in the imaginary register of "it speaks", but is supposedly entirely assumed.

This register could be defined as being that of secondary narcissism. With respect to this register, predication is either put in question in its effect or again it remains without effect. Here again there can be a foreclosure of this function, that Lacan designates as essential, of the name of the father. Here again there is no transference possible in the measure that things are really so. We are dealing here, not in practice with the mad, but on the contrary with people who are perfectly sane or apparently sane, these sane patients who do not do analysis, who appear in a way, irreducible and of whom one says in a language which appears to me to be rather inappropriate, rather (19) vague, all the more so because the terminology is multiple, that they present rigid narcissistic defences or irreducible character defences or whatever you wish. This then was an incident, a very summary indication to show you that my rather arid formulations, I do not think that it is necessary to see things as I see them and I do not think that it is necessary to be interested in this type of formulation, but to tell you that in the measure that one is interested in them this does not mean that one is not doing psychoanalysis.

Another question of Conté's: in the unique speaking and listening it, the psychoanalyst is for his part also subject to regression, to a topical regression. Or again is it rather a question of a fusion phantasy of the analysand?

Well now, I believe that what has gone before allows there to be formulated a very simple response, already implies the response. In the whole measure that we have precisely posed this convention that the patient remained always the same by convention, a particular person then, that when we speak the words which make themselves heard in the course of the analytic session we cannot all of a sudden take the psychoanalyst as the patient but one could reason as follows, the unique speaking and listening it, designates quite obviously the phantasy of the patient, a phantasy which betrays, from the phenomenological point of view, a certain effect, a certain (20) temporary random manner of being that I designated as being narcissistic expansion. I do not at all require that one should keep this terminology which does not have a fundamental importance.

What is important is to underline the irreducible unconscious character of the phantasy of the patient in articulating, rather than speaking about narcissistic expansion here we are constructing the theory in articulating this phantasy, in the following fashion: "it says you are I". You will notice that this formula, "you are I" is not specularisable and that there is always only one it, which responds I believe sufficiently to Conté's question.

Another question.

Conté says that for me primary narcissism appears, he does not assume it, appears as a primordial step, as an ante-verbal or pre-verbal step in development. Moreover the patient positing himself as the object lacking to his psychoanalyst, appears in my work to be aiming at the restoring of the narcissism of the other. And this restoring of the narcissism of the other is supposed to be presented as the myth or the phantasy of the completion of the desire of the other. So then Conté asks me: what is the decisive aspect and how are these two aspects articulated with one another? Well then my reply to the first point: I believe that I have sufficiently replied in order not to need to give specifications on the fact that it is quite obvious that I cannot consider primary (21) narcissism as something ante-verbal or pre-verbal, this results from what I tried to show you earlier. On the second point: I would say to Conté that I believe that it is necessary to distinguish the narcissistic phantasy and the narcissistic myth, that at least one can distinguish them.

The narcissistic phantasy is the phantasy of the patient, it is unconscious. The narcissistic myth, is a notion that is perhaps rather newer than the one that Conté introduces here, the narcissistic myth, for its part, is not unconscious but conscious or pre-conscious, liable to become conscious, this narcissistic myth is the one according to which the other can accomplish or fulfil his desire. The narcissistic myth might be for example the myth of the psychoanalyst as ordering destiny, the myth of the psychoanalyst erected into a function which is properly speaking that of an idol.

Conté and Melman also wanted to question themselves on the relationship between the reference point furnished by my two first texts and a certain number of the principle Lacanian categories. They found themselves troubled by the fact that primary narcissism, described in a first approximation as a limit state of fusion, may appear to have an aspect that is in a way amorphous. Perhaps the specifications that their remarks led me to formulate as regards the signification of the proposition, it speaks, (22) perhaps these remarks, this key that I tried to furnish in a first approximation, will contribute to better posing the elements of such a confrontation.

Nevertheless, it remains, let us not forget, my first article preserves and will preserve a character that is more descriptive than theoretical properly speaking and that the second article that Conté summarises is aimed at situating the word of the patient in a plane defined by two co-ordinates axes, that of the imaginary where it speaks and the formal one where he speaks, designating the first person by means of the attribution of his object. The asymptotic progression towards the first of these axes I described as the movement of topographical regression, and the asymptotic progression towards the second of these axes I described as the movement of repression. This fully justifies the impression of Conté and of Melman that what is at stake here, as they say, is a framing of the analytic situation in reference to the opposition I would no longer say so much of two terms, as they say, but rather of two axes.

Conté sensed very well, moreover, that in the whole measure that such a mapping-out led to an evocation of the sado-masochistic relationship in the transference as I did it in the second article, a third term is found to be necessarily implicated, a third term which will be introduced in the third of these articles that Melman commented on, that of the (23) function of predication of the word of the analyst. But it remains that in this third article the work is far from being completed. It is indeed this incompleteness which makes the confrontation a little uncertain.

The question of the situation of castration with respect to frustration on which Conté's commentary ends will be tackled correlatively to that of the constitution of the ego ideal ego *qua* inheritor of primary narcissism. This is something that I have not yet done but it is only then that I will be able to speak about the evolution and the termination of the treatment. (In connection with the ending of the treatment, it is perhaps now useless for me to say as Conté and Melman think perhaps, for me to say whether I can subordinate it to some artifice that is described as technique).

I think that I have re-evoked, if I have not responded to all the questions and remarks of Conté and to a great number of those of Melman. For Conté there remains only the question of the dream for which the response would, moreover, be a very instructive exercise but I do not have the time.

But as regards Melman there is a sort of remainder, and I ought to respond separately to him about what seems to constitute between him and me, what appeared to

constitute, at least the other day, between him and me the principle misunderstanding. Here is what is at stake.

(24) How, says Melman, can the analyst make of his word the guarantee of truth when the patient in the transference attributes to him a power that he does not have. This is what Melman says making me speak, what he attributes to me. Now I said nothing which could lend itself to such a paraphrase. I wrote, and here Melman quotes me correctly and even on two occasions, in an article which moreover does not deal with the word pronounced by the psychoanalyst, it is perhaps an artifice to write an article leaving for later the question of the word that is effectively pronounced by the psychoanalyst but this artifice was the one I practised. I wrote in this article: "there would be no psychoanalysis if the psychoanalyst claimed at every instant to pose himself as a faithful servant of the truth." This is what I wrote, and in a context which does not allow, I believe, any doubt as regards the sense of this sentence. In order to be still more explicit, let us replace the term servant, if you wish, by the term champion. Champion of the truth. That he does not claim to be its champion at every instant does not at all mean that he does not serve it and that sooner or later this truth may not explode. In a general manner, this signifies even that he keeps quiet and that he does not prevent the patient from speaking, that he does not set himself against the development of the transference in which the patient makes of him a deceived deceiver, this does not at all imply, on the contrary that he accepts or that he ratifies this position (25) when he in his turn comes to speak, namely, to interpret. The place from which the psychoanalyst speaks is not the same as the one from which, in the transference, he is supposed to speak. This is essential.

A remark that is a little incidental all the same. In this connection Melman speaks about the place from which the word of the analyst would take on this singular brilliance. It is a very beautiful expression. But when one speaks about this problem of the place of the analyst, of the place that the analyst occupies, I believe that there is often in the dialogue a certain confusion between a problem of right and a problem of fact. I do not think that we are there in the first place to say from what place the psychoanalyst ought to speak in order that his word should take on this singular brilliance, but I think that we are there to examine in the first place from what place the analyst is proved to speak from. I would sustain this consideration of a remark which might perhaps appear to be a little wicked but Melman will easily grant me that the word of one or other of his colleagues, for the intelligence of whom he has not the greatest esteem, I am mentioning nobody, it is an example, that he considers that this analyst does not understand very much about analysis and what he is doing, you will grant me all the same that even in this case, that provided he is in the situation of an analyst with his patient, it happens from time to time that his word takes on this brilliance.

(26) In fact, perhaps not for us who may have an account of the analysis, but for the patient. It is a matter then not so much of the question of right but of the question of fact.

Melman notes that the word considered independently of its content, he will grant me this, seems to evoke essentially the place from which the word of the analyst would take on, he says, this so singular brilliance. It is a matter, I say, indeed of the question of the place of the one who pronounces the word, in other words of the status of the predicating subject. The one who pronounces the interpretation designates the subject of the predicate in the second person. He does not have the same status as the one who, while he is in fact designated by himself in the first, in the reflective form, me.

The analyst who is thus supposed to speak occupies the place of the subject of the myth of narcissistic accomplishment. He is supposed to be at the origin of all things. The psychoanalyst giving the interpretation occupies the place of a subject himself designated in his turn in the second person by another. Contrary to the one who is supposed to be at the origin of all things, he is marked by his place in the succession of a genealogy. I will be very brief in ending but it remains for me to reply to the suggestion that Lacan made to us at the end of the last meeting, of the meeting in which this text was in question.

(27) He suggested to us to take up our debate today starting from the following idea: that if the analyst is in a certain position, it can only be that of the *Verneinung* and not that of the *Bejahung*. *Bejahung*, in French, is simply *affirmation*. Now everyone knows that predication can take an affirmative or a negative form. The category of predication cannot then be either that of affirmation or of negation. This refutes, I believe the argument of Monsieur Lacan according to which I am supposed to situate the psychoanalyst in a position of affirmation, of *Bejahung*.

And to attempt to situate what I tried to formulate today from the view-point of Lacan's suggestion I would say very quickly the following. The word of the psychoanalyst designating the subject in the second person is incompatible with the imaginary "you are I" of narcissism, I remind you. When the word of the psychoanalyst is heard, it can only be received as a cut, as the cut constitutive of desire, as a denial of narcissism, a repetition of the first mythical denial in which the phantasy "you are I" was constituted in the alienation of the function of predication or function of denial - for it is one and the same thing here - of the word. Where according to the terms of Freud this word cannot be received except as a denial of (28) infantile omnipotence, Freud's first formulation, or let us say as a denial of narcissistic omnipotence to refer to the later formulation of Freud. A denial which is consequently correlative to repression. This denial of omnipotence is best illustrated by the following word, by the word: "because of your wish", a word which the psychoanalyst adds to the text of the patients dream. He did not know that he had died

thus giving rise to the denegation of the patient, this is not my wish. This is what I wanted to say to you.

(29) Doctor Lacan: Stein, thank you very much for what you have been willing to contribute in terms of a gathering together of the specifications of what you have presented to us elsewhere as being only the first three moments of something which is your project and which undoubtedly must involve at least one more, is that not so.

I must then thank you for two things, first of all for having succeeded in bringing out this first part, secondly for having been willing to situate them for us in the totality of your plan. I am not going to, as I announced earlier, in conformity with what I announced, I will not intervene today either on the foundations or the details of the articulation that you have brought to us, counting on the people in the audience who have heard you to contribute the first remarks.

I can only say one thing which is that I am delighted beyond what was the immediate motivation for which I wanted a discussion to be brought to bear here in the framework of our seminar on certain of these articles as a group and more precisely in connection with the first one,. Undoubtedly in what you have put forward a certain misunderstanding was dispelled concerning the essence of what you meant.

(30) It remains nevertheless that this does not mean that I can be in agreement about the totality of your way of situating the problem because this is what is at stake. But it is undoubtedly something that is profoundly enough structured for it to designate for us very well the level at which there are placed certain essential problems. I think that, for the limits which you imply about the development of this analytic situation can be gone beyond, and there is precisely here a basis, a supporting point which can be extremely precious for me to map out the way in which what I am articulating this year allows me to criticise this position. I will undoubtedly do it all the more, and all the more easily, and in a way that is all the more relevant for all, to the degree that I see where one or other of my listeners are, with respect to the hearing that your presentation today imposes.

Nevertheless, I cannot avoid, right away making a correction. It is important. I am really very sorry that the text that I communicated to you and where in particular Melman had made his corrections had allowed there to get past in the last page something that was not on my part, even a staking-out, a cord launched from your side, I spoke for two and a half pages. There is in effect written in this text the word, whose incorrectness should perhaps have startled you, the word *Verneunung* which does not exist. You had translated it as *Verneinung* and I had said *Verleugnung*. This puts me a little bit in a false position without at all for all that diminishing the interest of what you have directly responded to me in finishing

Doctor Stein: I am much happier with *Verleugnung*.

Doctor Lacan: So then I ask first, as is natural, those who have been answered, namely specifically Conté and Melman, if they now wish to take the floor. Conté, you have taken notes. Would you prefer to have a moment of reflection or are you prepared right away to tackle what you have to say? Do not speak from where you are. Come up here.

So then since it is possible that things will happen rather well to suit me, in order that later people will start leaving in stages as it happens, namely, that some people are limited by time and have to go, I would like to announce to you, it is one of the reasons (32) why earlier I rejoiced that there should have taken place in the framework of my seminar this year, that this place was taken by a discourse like the one that we have just heard.

In effect, perhaps you will not grasp right away the relationship, but I believe that there is no better text to allow me to re-launch certain affirmations that I intend to discuss about what Stein has announced to us than this one, this text, the one that I had announced to you the last time before Madame Parisot spoke to you about Dragonetti's article on Dante.

I cannot, of course, comment in any way today on the function that I intend to reserve for it. But after all in order not to tackle it as a complete surprise and so that nobody will be too shocked at its appearance, I announce to you in order that you may make whatever use you wish of it, namely, in order that you may be able to renew your knowledge of it, even that you might refer to the numerous and essential commentaries that this text provoked, the one from which I will begin the next time, that I will take up as a relay to what will follow topologically which, this year teaches you to situate the function of the *o*-object, is none other than Pascal's *The wager*. Those who wish to listen in an appropriate way to what is being said this year have therefore a week at least to refer to the different editions of it which have been produced. I insist, most of you I hope know it, on the fact that since the first edition of the *Messieurs de Port-Royal*, there have been a series of texts which are different, I mean that they get closer more or less, which tend to get closer and closer to the two little sheets of paper written in a really scribbling fashion, the two little sheets of paper back and front, on which what has been published in this register about the wager of Pascal happened to have been left to us. Therefore, I am not giving you a whole bibliography unless someone demands it of me at the end, you know also that numerous philosophers have attached themselves to demonstrating its value and its incidence. Here also those who may have something to ask me as regards some of the more substantial articles to which it would be well for them to refer, can come when appropriate to ask me myself for them unless there is some time left for me which will allow me to indicate them.

(34) Monsieur Conté: I intend to limit myself to a very few things and essentially to thank Stein for what he brought us today which in effect is a contribution which for a major part is new with respect to what I had read and which allows us to situate things in a different perspective.

Already certainly the third article on the judgement of the psychoanalyst with the introduction of the function of predication certainly allowed us to understand better his first article and in any case what he said this morning, which is more precise, more developed, leaves the majority of my remarks without an object. I mean that the difficulties which were raised are resolved at that level, the problem being referred now to another level of discussion.

I remain all the same a little bit unsatisfied about a certain number of points particularly on the relationships between the register of narcissism and the register of desire *qua* implicating the dimension of the *o*-object. I do not see very clearly yet how Stein articulates these two registers.

A second point: the second article, that on masochism in the treatment, insisted on the reference to the word pronounced by the psychoanalyst as real, this being opposed to the dimension of the imaginary and I wanted to ask Stein in this connection whether he (35) does not tend, in this text, to situate transference, to make transference tip over a little bit to the side of demand and whether there might not be a bias on his part at the level of this presentation.

In fact, I believe that the debate should now be brought to bear in effect on what is the function of predication and this is a reference that I am little prepared to intervene on. I would prefer to give some more mature reflection to this subject. And I ask simply at first hearing, at first listening, whether one has to situate the predication, this first foundational or original word as a predication founding the subject namely attributing a predicate to the subject, the subject becomes such, he is this or that, or whether predication is not to be referred rather to a judgement brought to bear on objects. I could eventually develop this point.

And with regard to the third article on the judgement of the psychoanalyst, there is something here also that for the moment I grasp badly in Stein's thinking, it is precisely the articulation of the level of desire and of that of the law or again of prohibition, namely, the moment that Stein passes from the lack, for example, of the analysand trying to posit himself as the object lacking to the analyst, where he passes then from this level to that of lack where it is a matter here of lacking (*manquement*) with respect to a law and where it would thus be a question of interdiction, namely, the very precise articulation that Stein makes between the first foundational judgement in so far as it establishes the subject on the one hand as object of desire and on the other hand as (36) subject of a past sin (*faute*). There is here an articulation that I

have not grasped very well but no doubt it is because I have not reflected enough on it. That is all I wanted to say for today.

Doctor Melman: It seems to me that one of the great merits of your presentation is in any case to have made much more clear to the listeners than we were able to do with Conté, your positions and your opinion on the treatment which will of course allow us to engage more easily in a discussion.

What I would like to say to you all the same is that I read your text with great interest and certainly one all the greater that as I tried to say the last time everything that presents itself as an effort of general theorisation of the treatment or of what happens in analysis cannot fail of course to awaken our attention our interest and our sympathy, of course.

This having being said, I had the impression and the feeling, in reading precisely these three texts, the last three recent texts that it was possible to articulate the different terms that you put forward and which are those of primary narcissistic expansion, you told us today that after all that you did not hold too much to this text [term?]and that you would be willing to abandon it - that's fine.

Doctor Stein: I would like to specify that it is not a matter here, that this term does not refer to a theoretical concept. That is why I said that I considered it as descriptive, therefore as having effectively a secondary importance.

(38) **Doctor Lacan:** This is a very important specification given the essentially theoretical character given generally to the term primary narcissism.

Doctor Melman: Essentially theoretical and very difficult to situate, I mean fundamentally in your text. I mean that one sometimes has the impression, I mean that, for example, when you situate primary narcissism or at least the goal of primary narcissism as the rediscovery of this mythical lost object, it is quite certain that you are engaging there along a certain path, a certain way of approaching this term.

But what I wanted to tell you is that I regrouped, in a way, your different propositions and your different terms around something which seemed to me to be a position. This position is the one which would make of the word of the analyst an *o*-object. It is around this that I tried to speak to you and it is also, I am saying, around this that it seemed to me that the different moments of this text could very well be articulated. When you say that the word of the analyst is liable to take on what I called, moreover, in a rather forced way, to take on this so singular brilliance I have no doubt,of course, absolutely not, the essential question appeared to me to be rather that of the position of the analyst with respect to his own word and in so far as it is liable to picture for the patient this particular object, this singular object.

(39) To take things perhaps a little bit from the beginning what seemed to me, I must say, to stymie in a way the development of these texts, in a certain way to reduce them constantly to this dual game between the patient and the analyst, with things oscillating like that from one to the other in a movement in which, as you say very clearly, one asks oneself how it can end up because, in fact, you say it all the same very clearly: you pose in any case the question in the clearest fashion and you are very frank, it seems to me that the reference to the other, I mean here of course the big Other, the lack of the references that you make here to the big Other is the point where precisely things start to agglutinate in the text, it gets clogged up and one finishes by asking oneself how they can be disentangled.

For example, I would have a tendency to interpret what you define by the term of fusional situation by which you began your presentation, I mean the realisation of this unique speaking and listening it, which Conté picked out, moreover, as a phenomenon that is of course possible but rare, I would have of course a tendency to try to evoke it in this dimension which might be perhaps eventually that in which the patient may have the feeling that his word risks rejoining the discourse, the discourse of the Other, and (40) where any separation, starting from this moment, any rupture, any hiatus or any distance would find itself abolished.

I ask myself also whether introducing this reference would not allow there to be situated in the measure in any case, I apologise if they were not here always sufficiently attentive in listening to you, but what you introduce on the subject of this distinction of different persons with regard to the subject of the you and of the he which are grammatical categories which, of course, are essential but of which I must say, I ask myself every time listening to you how you use them, I mean do you take them, do you pick them out as such in the subject of your patient, I mean, when the patient says I, for example, starting from there do you put that in one of the three categories that you have isolated, the designation of the subject of the predicate in the second person or to the first reflected person or again a designation of the subject of the predicate in the second person, is that not so.

In other words, everything that you introduce in an effort to make distinctions and to analyse the I and the you and the he, I ask myself whether it could be, I would say, situated outside this reference to a third locus from which the subject receives his own word *qua* subject.

As regards this little point that you put forward about the truth, the question of the (41) truth, allow me to quote you. When you say the following, in the text on masochism: “the psychoanalyst is called on to intervene, he is affected from two sides at once. In the transference the patient appeals to him at a place where he is not. He situates him at the supposed locus of power from the existence of which he experiences frustration, namely, this power of reality that the analyst is supposed to hold and which he can make use of as he wishes to interrupt the narcissistic expansion

of the patient. In the name of truth, he is supposed to be called to pronounce on the transference, to denounce the illusion of the patient. Replying to the first appeal from a locus where he is not, he would deceive the patient by accepting to serve as a lure for him and arrogating to himself a power which is not his own. In the name of the truth he ought to abstain from responding to the appeal of the patient and intervene in order to declare himself incompetent to judge. But, as the analyst listens, the patient's appeal is constant. To tolerate the transference is already to deceive because it is the listening which gives rise to it. The analyst ought then constantly to intervene to denounce the false in the name of truth and not listen to the appeal of deception. His efficacy would then be that of the preacher and no longer that of the analyst."

And this is where you add: "there would be no psychoanalysis if the psychoanalyst pretended to posit himself at every instant as a faithful servant of the truth." I believe that it is certain. I believe that you are completely right. But I do not see how in the articulation that you advance there, you manage what seems to be nevertheless essential for any possible development of the treatment unless it were to become, I cannot situate exactly how you manage to find a place in order nevertheless in this movement of existence of the dimension which is that of the truth.

Stein: There I reply immediately to you. It is that there is no truth at that point. As regards the term preacher, in this text it is quite evident that subsequent developments are going to lead me to suppress it. Up to then I had simply taken it in the sense of someone who gives sermons. Therefore, so that there will be no confusion, that will be left out. That is obvious.

Melman: Good, that is agreed then. I will also take up then, perhaps, perhaps on my own account, perhaps in the very final place, what you say with regard to the predicating subject which takes on an important place in your last developments which I believe deserve much reflection, what is the eventual predicating function that you assign to the analyst here.

Doctor Lacan: Good. Stein has obviously, I only noticed it afterwards I was so charmed by his speech, Stein went well beyond his time, which does not allow us sufficient time to give to the discussion, the time that I would have expected today.

(43) Now there is still space for one person. Green, would you like to intervene?

Green: I am quite willing but I do not want to deprive others of the opportunity.

Lacan: Would Major like to intervene? Have you something to say Major? You have to leave. Good. So Audouard.

(44) **Monsieur Audouard:** It seems to me that this sort of grammatical universe in which Stein situated us earlier allows itself to be constituted at every moment as a

remainder, and it is tangible from different aspects of his remarks for example when he says that even if the psychoanalyst's activity is contestable, or if he occupies a contestable position in our view, it nevertheless remains that there is a certain brilliance in his remarks. That even if the psychoanalyst is not the possessor of the truth it remains nevertheless that he is its faithful servant. That if it is true that predication is always either positive or negative, it nevertheless remains that the proper field of predication falls outside the positive as it does of the negative. And it is not perhaps for nothing that precisely *Verneinung* here was understood instead of *Verleugnung*. For *Verleugnung* precisely introduces this dimension of the lie which is nothing other than denegation. In this grammatical universe in which Stein seemed to me to situate the relationships of the analyst to the analysand, there is a sort of fidelity which appears at every moment where the effort of specularisation which takes place for example between the I and the you, between the first person reflecting himself where the you comes here to reflect the first person, there is in this effect of specularisation in which (45) Stein tries to introduce the relationship of the analysand to the analyst, there is something non-specularisable which appears at every incident. In short, one could say that this logical universe of a reflection of the you onto the I or of the I onto itself is perhaps already given the orientation of a dialectic and that, even if one introduced a more dialectical orientation, it would still remain that in this dialectic one would scarcely find a basis or a truth to ground it. It is linked, for example, with what Madam Parisot told us the other day, that one could put all of that, namely, that after all the specularised is not the specularisable. Far from being the specularisable, it is perhaps simply what makes us believe that there is a specularisable and that the specular as such is always traversed by a remainder which falls out of the field of reflection. In short that there is a sort of abyss between the predicating subject and the subject of the predicate indicates to us that there is here between the two something like a world, like a void, something which distances them, certainly not without being able to dialecticise them but without permitting at any moment that this should aim at "you are I" without there being constituted as something different, as something forced which belongs neither to logic nor to grammar but to this particular forcing of desire. Predication does not appear to me to be at the beginning a logical act, as when the (46) child says that the dog goes miaow and the cat goes bow-bow, as Lacan said, it is not a matter of a predication which belongs to the order of logic but to an order of particular forcing which is desire.

In any case this is simply to indicate along what path there could to my sense be introduced a critique of an interpretation that in my sense is too satisfying because it is too grammatical.

Doctor Lacan: Green, say a word.

Doctor Green: I apologise. I would need a blackboard. I will try to be as brief as possible. I think that I would like just to say a few words about Lacan's formula : "I the truth speak" (*Moi la vérité je parle*), with what Stein has just said.

a quite identical problematic to the one that I tried to analyse in what concerns the oracle among the Greeks.

Doctor Lacan: I will try to give still more precise formulae but this one seems to me to be really massive and to be quite fundamental. Would you like, Stein, to reply right away or indeed, which is quite conceivable, for I am telling you already now that I will give three seminars in February: two open seminars and then I will give a closed seminar, on the fourth, I will in principle be gone to the USA. It is quite conceivable that the fourth seminar of February could be spent in pursuing a discussion that has begun so well which will allow you leisure enough to delay giving your response to today's interventions the next time, unless you wish to say a few words right away.

Doctor Stein: I do not think that it would be easy for me to give a substantial introduction the next time on the basis of the remarks that have been made today because it would lead nowhere.

Doctor Lacan: No, but the next time a number of people can give you their names, it would be more simple if a certain number of people who having allowed to mature what they have heard today would offer to come to discuss it with you on the fourth Wednesday.

Doctor Stein: Yes, but I cannot advance much further on ...

Doctor Lacan: No, that is not what is in question. It is a matter of whether you say a word which you think is very important...

Doctor Stein: Yes there is a word that I would like to say. It is the following. In this whole discussion and this should not astonish us, one always arrives at the temptation to reduce this remainder that Audouard spoke about and that Green took up again.

In the argument of Green which I do not wish to reply to in its totality because it is very important, very interesting, I would like all the same simply to point out to him that by attributing to me the intention of establishing an equivalence between different pronouns, he reduces precisely what I had left in a way as a remainder for I did not designate an equivalence between the different pronouns but precisely a confusion between the different pronouns in the imaginary register, which is quite different.

And this leads me, to be very brief, to Audouard who, in my opinion admirably defined something which refers, which is in what I told you today, that one is making use of a (53) really excellent instrument. I would like all the same, like that, for the pleasure of the story to recall that a certain congress in Amsterdam which if I remember correctly was held in 1950, no, the first Amsterdam Congress was in?

Doctor Lacan: In 1948. In 1948 I gave the speech that I had prepared, at that time we were not yet at the beginning of any teaching whatsoever on my part, which was, which turned around, not at all simply some grammaticalisation or other but precisely that of the personal pronouns I and me, a speech in which I must have exhausted the interpreters because I was forced to say in ten minutes what I had prepared for twenty, since Madame Anna Freud thought she was entitled to go a long way over her time.

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I am concerned to know whether those psychoanalysts to whom I have taught something will correctly transmit what I have said. This is the sort of test that is set by the sessions devoted to a seminar to which I cannot admit so many people for the reason that this attendance itself would be an obstacle to this verification.

If it is true that the primary aspiration of the psychological subject is to present to the desire of the other this fallacious object which is his self-image, we cannot take too rigorous precautions in order never, in any form whatsoever, to see, in what is called analytic treatment, which is an experience that is properly speaking transcendent with regard to what was expressed up to then in the order of ethics, we will never be able to take too many precautions to define the paths through which this formula of the relationship of the subject to the desire of the other which I have just given first and

which was never gone beyond in any philosophical doctrine, should effectively be gone beyond, broken through in a radical fashion.

This is why, since I am not able to be at the fourth Wednesday at which there will be (2) pursued the debates which were inaugurated on the last two Wednesdays on the subject of the formulations of Monsieur Stein who is present here in the front row of this gathering, I will question him so that the ball may be put into play again about what he understands by this so-called masochism imputed to the patient in the measure that he submits himself to a severe rule, why so quickly define as masochism something after all of which we have nothing to say at the beginning, except who wants it. It is all that we are able to say about it. He wants it (*il en veut*). Not a vague but a minimal formula for desire. Is all desire then to be desire and in itself masochistic? Undoubtedly, if the question is worth posing, it is also worth not settling too soon, especially if we remember the formula that I gave in speaking about desire and its interpretation that, in a certain sense, given the conditions of the analytic experience, desire is its interpretation.

To expose oneself to this situation which is really fundamental that any demand can only be disappointed, this is no doubt what the patient has to affront and what he cannot at the beginning foresee, and, besides, what masochism in this case to offer oneself to disappointment, as another one of my interlocutors has very well formulated it. The analyst is in effect the subject who is supposed to know, supposed to know everything except what is involved in the truth of the patient.

(3) And much more than a situation being established on a given whose high point I am indicating to you here, does the patient who offers himself to analytic experience not say to us: “it is you who, if you demand the truth from me, will fall under this law that every demand can only be disappointed. You will not rejoice in my truth and that is why I suppose you to know. It is because this is what obliges you to be deceived. The epistemological drive is the truth which offers itself as *jouissance* and which knows that it is prohibited by that very fact, for who can enjoy the truth (*jouir de la vérité*)?”

A drive then that is rather mythical (*plutôt mythique*), let me stick together these two terms in a single word and receive, psychoanalysts the investiture of what is imposed on you here: the adjective in a single word, the *plutôtmythique*.

What the patient does to us is that he makes us abandon our Pyrrhonian position. “You would like to know more about it. I am arousing your most reflective desire, that is the most unrecognisable one. The predicate with which you affect me, is your own downfall, if you qualify, you qualify yourself, I triumph.”

No doubt there is here, as Stein perceived, the point and the birth of a guilt in the patient. But you, if you accept yourself as judge, are thereby rejected as subject henceforth in the ambiguity of having to judge yourself.

(4) Recognise in the harmonic slippage of the tongue, this subject which has to judge itself (*le sujet qui a à se juger*), one of the forms of which every tongue, in its fashion, offers us the indication. No doubt, here, at the same time, there is the warning not to go, of there being no need to go too far for, says the patient, of course you will make me into a masochist, namely, a lover of your anxiety that you take to be a *jouissance*. I have become the other for you, and if you are not on your guard, you cannot avoid getting everything wrong.

Because it is enough for me to identify myself to you for you to see clearly that it is not me that you will enjoy. The hey presto! has happened and that by taking your reality, *Wirklichkeit*, what I efface down to its very trace in the real, *Realität*, is precisely what I chose in you to sanction this effacement.

So then, the idea of a subsistent and graspable being, grounding subject to subject relations, is precisely the terrain of slippery traps to which, from the start, an inadequate theory is irremediably committed, but that is the reason why it is so important for us to elaborate the structure which allows us to conceive in a radical fashion, how progress is possible for the one who offers himself in the position of knowing subject and who must, nevertheless, initially, and in a Pyrrhonian fashion, renounce any access to the truth.

(5)“No more this than that” [Greek quotation], this nodal formula in which there is expressed the position of the Pyrrhonian or the Sceptic, Pyrrhon being the leader of one of these philosophical sects that I have also, on occasion, described as schools, in order clearly to recall that the practice of philosophy in a certain context was something different to the one in which there came to completion a certain socially defined order of the ancient world. Just imagine the discipline of those who precisely imposed it on themselves in the introduction of any predicate into any question whatsoever about the truth, not simply to reject by a “neither... nor” the members of an alternative, but always to forbid themselves the very introduction of the disjunction, the one most apparently imposing itself, the refusal precisely to break through the bar of its establishment and to reject entirely the demands of the disjunction.

The fundamental position, then, of a subject imposing on himself an arrest at the threshold of truth, is here something that would no doubt deserve a longer explanation, a return to the texts, which are no doubt sparse, insufficient, full of problems, but whose whole breadth is given us by a reading of Sextus Empiricus, a reading which is not limited simply to reading a summary of it in some some manual or other, but to following the detours of a text that must be taken page by page in order to grasp the weight, the reality, of the operation that is engaged in it.

(6) It is not for nothing that I am putting forward this reference that I am giving, and which is directed to the more studious, were it only to indicate to them that they will

find in the excellent work by Victor Brochard, *Les sceptiques grecs*, the complement, the situation, the fruit of a real meditation in a modern spirit. It is not by chance that I am putting it here on the threshold of what I announced today as being my subject which, no doubt, is not a matter of indifference to the enormous attendance that I attract, namely, Pascal's *Wager*.

Pascal's *Wager*, I hope that there are none of you who have not heard something about it before today. I do not doubt that Pascal's *Wager* is something, I mean as a cultural object, infinitely more diffused than one might suppose, and if one marvels at the fact that there have been some texts of philosophers, after all, if I had here to give you the bibliography, I would manage, God knows, to exhaust it rather quickly, when I had reached fifty references on the side of those who write and who think it worth while to communicate their thinking to us, I would have seen the end of it and everything that has been said about it - I apologise for having to announce such a depressing formula, I regret it all the more since this concerns, as I might say, the reputation of a corporation described as philosophical - all this does not go very far.

I cannot but recommend to you one article which is to be commended for the excellent (7) procedure of starting at the level, I cannot say, of the text, of what is written on this little sheet or rather on these two little sheets of paper covered front and back which is what Pascal left us in what one could call his scribbling, and which from there, starting from there, for it is very necessary not to see there something which was done to be addressed to us but which, nevertheless, and perhaps all the more, deserves to be retained as giving us, in a way, a sort of substitute or real substance concerning this singular incorporeal reality which is properly the one which I am trying, with the resources of an elementary topology, to valorise for you as regards what we can take from it at the level of our articulations.

In this respect, the article by Monsieur Henri Gouhier which appeared in an Italian journal and whose reference, after all, I would like to leave you here, an Italian journal which is published as *Archivio di filosofia*, number 3, 1962, the organ of the institute of philosophical studies, *Di studii filosofici* in Rome, the article by Monsieur Henri Gouhier on Pascal's wager deserves your attention, if you can obtain the volume of this journal.

It is, as you see, one of the last to appear. In the past there were many others ranging from the astonishment of Voltaire, the specifications of Condorcet, the wanderings (8) of Laplace, the scandal of Victor Cousin which I will not develop here, not having the time to tell you what was the true function of what is called eclecticism, more recently the valuable remarks made by Lachelier which, undoubtedly, are worth reading. I would not say as much about something of which I will give you a sample later on, the article by Dugas and Riquier in the *Revue philosophique* of 1900.

Since then things have been taken up at the level of what we will call the wager considered at ground level. Should one wager? To wager, as Pascal indicates to us, if

this indeed is what we are dealing with, what would certainly be the good of our life conceived at its most ordinary level, for the uncertainty of a promise, whose incommensurability with regard to what we might be abandoning the articulation of Pascal seems to be entirely directed to demonstrate to us, an introduction it is said, to invite us to the wager of belief, undoubtedly, discern now what is proposed in the putting forward of something, after all, which is not so far from the most common consciousness, this vague anxiety about the beyond, which is not necessarily a beyond of death, is it not necessary for it to exist in order for it to be supported in all sorts of references which, for the most exigent, take shape in these hopes to which people consecrate themselves and which are only in this perspective, with regard to religion, (9) something that we would at the very least qualify as analogical. In a short and substantial chapter, the author of *Dieu caché*, Monsieur Goldman does not seem, for his part, to be at all reluctant to make of Pascal's *Wager* the prelude to the faith that the Marxist commits himself to in the advent of the proletariat.

I would be far from reducing to this limit, of which the least one can say is that it is a little bit too apologetic, the import of a chapter whose value as a discussion is undoubtedly enriching enough, no doubt, for us to rate this part of the enterprise as more than *bricolage*.

But it seems to me that nowhere has anyone gone into the text of the *Wager* from this point of view, that it is not a "one" that it is a matter of convincing, that this wager is the wager of Pascal himself, of an "I", of a subject who reveals to us his structure, a structure that is perfectly verifiable and to be verified not at all from such and such an incident which confirms it in the biographical context, Pascal's deeds in a life in which it is only right to manifest the extremely complex steps, the gestures that are brought to completion with the approach of death in one or other wish which may appear exorbitant to us, the one to be brought to the incurables to end his existence there, this would mean pinpointing them very quickly and picking out in them the theme of (10) masochism. Whether a subject, whether a thinking which is able so admirably to distinguish, as you are going to see, in the strict formulation of essential positions, yields to us in a way its structure, is something which for us is only to be linked up to other points in which, also, the structure of the subject as such is manifested by him in a certain radical position, and if we have the honour of seeing there being affirmed, without for all that there being anything to say that there was here any message whatsoever, for after all we have these pieces of paper, almost after his death, death is perhaps not the limit of any beyond, it is undoubtedly one of the easiest limits to use when it is a question of pickpocketing. Pascal's pockets were picked. It has been done, let us take advantage of it.

Let us take advantage of it, if there is something that can allow us to articulate one of the most singular projects, one of the most exceptional sorts of enterprise that has ever been given to us, and which might appear to be one of the most banal as you are going to see.

“Infinity -Nothing”, he begins. Uninterpretable. “Our soul is cast into the body where it finds number, time, dimensions; it reasons about these things and calls them natural or necessary and can believe nothing else”. A reminder of the powers of the imagination.

“Unity added to infinity does not increase it at all, any more than a foot added to an infinite measurement. The finite is annihilated in the presence of the infinite and becomes pure nothingness.”

“So it is with our mind before God, with our justice before divine justice. There is not so great a disproportion between our justice and God’s as between unity and infinity.” - I cannot resist the pleasure of not cutting what follows - “God’s justice must be as vast as his mercy. Now his justice towards the damned is less vast and ought to be less startling to us than his mercy towards the elect.”

“We know that the infinite exists without knowing its nature, just as we know that it is untrue that numbers are finite. Thus it is true that there is an infinite number, but we do not know what it is. It is untrue that it is even, untrue that it is odd, for by adding a unit it does not change its nature. Yet it is a number, and every number is even or odd. (it is true that this applies to every finite number). Therefore, we may well know that God exists without knowing what he is.”

Such is the introduction that is subsequently developed. I would ask you, starting from there, to refer to the text whose starting point is properly that Pascal, the thinker, and if you wish a religious, integrated thinker, at the thought that the damned like the (12) elect are entirely at the mercy of divine grace, posits nevertheless as an inaugural step that God can in no way be known in his being.

He even highlights properly speaking that one is not able through the power of reason to know that he exists. The important thing I am going, I hope, to show you and after all I do not think that I am contributing here for any of you something all that surprising, you have heard enough spoken about the problems of existence, even though they are suspended in thin air, for you not to be surprised if I point out, if I point out in passing for want today of being able to dwell any longer on it, that the important thing is not at all this suspense in so far as it is radical, but the division that it introduces between being and existence.

The “he [it?]exists” which gave so many difficulties to Aristotelian thinking in so far as, after all, the being that is posited is self-sufficient, he exists because he is being and, nevertheless, the intrusion of religious revelation, that of Judaism, poses, I mean among philosophers starting from Avicenna, the question of how to pigeon-hole this suspending of existence in so far as it is necessary for religious thinking to remit its decision to God.

(13) This impossibility of pigeon-holing in a categorisable fashion the function of existence with respect to being, even if it is the same as what is going to come back into question about God himself by keeping us on this question of whether it is enough to say about God that he is the supreme being. Have no doubt about it. For Pascal the question is settled. Another little piece of paper sewn more deeply than in a pocket, under a lining, “not the God of the philosophers but the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob” shows us the step that has been taken, and that what is at stake is not at all the supreme being.

So then, clear away, scour clean these preliminary questions which would undoubtedly render precarious any reference to a given as sufficiently constituting by itself a certainty. When Monsieur Dugas and Riquier at the end of their article - read it, I am not claiming that it should be judged entirely from the sample that I am going to give you of it - question themselves: “And now what should be thought of an experience which presents itself as follows: in order to enter into the state of mind of the believer, you strip bare your nature, you make a *tabula rasa* of your instincts, of your feelings, of your conceptions of happiness. By considering the wager only from the point of view of logic, the refusal to wager for,” - this is called in the argument, I have not read enough of it for you to be up to speed with the vocabulary, to take the cross, that means odd or even, heads or tails, it is not a matter of the Christian cross - “but if we put ourselves before the real conditions of the wager, we have to say that on the contrary it would be madness to take heads (*la croix*), for faith is not as Pascal sometimes presents it. It is not simply superimposed on reason; it does not have as an effect to push back the limits of our mind without hampering its natural development and give it access, therefore, to a world which would naturally be closed to it. In reality it requires the abdication of our reason, the immolation of our feelings. Is not this annihilating of our personality the greatest danger that we can run as human beings. Pascal nevertheless looks on this danger with an indifferent eye. What do you have to lose, he asks us. Full of his theological ideas” - we are here in psychology - “he does not enter into the mind of man as purely man and ‘his discourse’ is exclusively addressed to the one who already admits if not original sin and the fall of man and the whole of this more pessimistic philosophy that he himself has drawn from Christian dogma. But any mind which has only reason as a guide and which believes in the natural dignity of man and the possibility of happiness cannot fail to consider the argumentation of the wager at once as a logical monstrosity and a moral outrage. The harshness of such a judgement would, if needs be, find its justification or its excuse in (15) Pascal’s celebrated remark about the difference between men or the originality of spirits.”

I will skip a few lines in order to arrive at this indulgent absolution: “his sincerity is obvious, his frankness is absolute and whatever may be the immorality of his theses and the weakness of his reasoning, one continues to respect his character and to admire his genius.”

So that is settled. Poupoule give me my slippers. I have finished with him. Nevertheless, I would like if, appealing to all of this which, after all, gives a tone which is properly speaking never quite absent at least as a state from those who have pushed furthest the analysis of Pascal's wager, to whom I would not like, for fear of forgetting him afterwards, fail to join to those whom I already quoted earlier the chapter devoted by Monsieur Souriau to Pascal's wager in his book, *L'ombre de Dieu*. Here also you will see glimpses that are altogether suggestive and valid from our perspective with respect to the fashion in which we should handle this testimony.

A wager. Many things have been said about this wager and, in particular, that it is not one. We are going to see later what a wager is. What makes people afraid at the beginning is the stake (*l'enjeu*) and the way Pascal speaks about it. "Let us then examine this point, and let us say: 'either God is or he is not'. But to which view shall (16) we be inclined? Reason cannot decide this question. Infinite chaos separates us. At the far end of this infinite distance a coin is being spun" - pay attention to this phrase - "which will come down heads or tails." Never has this infinite distance, namely, what it means, been really taken into consideration.

"How will you wager? Reason cannot make you choose either, reason cannot prove either wrong." It is Pascal who speaks. "Do not then condemn as wrong those who have made a choice, for you know nothing about it." "No", replies the interlocutor, who is also Pascal himself, "but I will condemn them not for having made this particular choice, but any choice, for although the one who calls heads and the other one are equally at fault, the fact is that they are both at fault: the right thing is not to wager at all".

"Yes, but you must wager. There is no choice, you are already committed. Which will you choose then? Let us see: since a choice must be made let us see which offers you the least interest. You have two things to lose". (No one seems to have noticed that it is a matter purely and simply of losing them) "the true and the good; and two things to stake: your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness."

When one commits something in a game, in a game played by two, there are two throws: your reason and your will is the first. Your knowledge and your happiness is (17) the second which is not at all wagered by the same partner. Later on we will discuss what is at stake, namely, that to wager that he is, without hesitating, since there is an equal chance of gain and loss, if you stood to win only two lives for one, you could still wager.

After which we are promised, in a formula whose text should not be misunderstood, an infinity of lives at first, which displaces, of course, the conditions of what is at stake. It is not at all two lives instead of one, one life on each side which are at stake, but a life on one hand and, on the other hand, what Pascal calls first of all an infinity

of lives, then afterwards an infinity of infinitely happy lives. This is what we will have to take up in a moment when we study what such a wager signifies.

But first of all I would like to question the following which has never been retained, namely, what is meant by committing one's life and how is it brought into the reckoning? We see Pascal alluding to it at several stages of his reasoning.

- 1) that it cannot not be committed,
- 2) the way in which it must be judged if, at the end, the wager is lost.

"I reply," says Pascal "that you have lost your life" and here he articulates, "but in losing it you lose nothing". The singularity of this nothing. At first it is a matter of a (18) life at least for a time, in the average case, this choice is not made on one's death bed, even though again this is not unthinkable, a life that you could have lived.

This life is evoked at other moments as involving more than one pleasure, pleasures that he describes as foul, no doubt, but which are nevertheless there, providing a certain weight because they may create an obstacle to the one to whom this reasoning is addressed sensing its conviction. The ambiguity, then, of this life, between the fact that it is the heart of the resistance of the subject to become committed to the wager and that, on the other hand, compared to what is involved in the wager, it is a nothing, this is properly what ought to be remembered by us in order to make us question ourselves about what distinguishes this nothing.

This nothing has all the same this property of being the stake, and we are going to see right away what it involves as regards a wager, this remark is precisely the something which is going to allow us to give its true place in the structure to this supposed nothing of the stake.

And if, when breaking through the term of "discourse" to put them as Messieurs Dugas and Riquier, about Pascal, Pascal, to the one who has consented to submit himself to the rules of the wager nevertheless says, you must not believe that the effects of my wager can be identified to my belief. Pascal's reply: "Become more (19) docile (*abêtissez-vous*)", which horrified Monsieur Victor Cousin, the first one to have extracted it with the writing of the scandal of the direct papers of Pascal to which he had direct access, this "become more docile" is nevertheless clear enough. This "become more docile" is exactly what we can designate by the renunciation of the traps and the envelopes, the clothing of narcissism, namely the stripping of this image, the only one that the beasts do not have, namely, self-image.

What falls, what collapses at the proposed goal of a certain asceticism, of a certain stripping away, is properly speaking what links up in its situation in the individual (*l'être*), at the level of what is affirmed of it as I am in the field of the other, of what, in the subject, comes from self-miscognition. Does that mean that we should take as

being equal to nothingness (*néant*), the nothing (*rien*) which remains? How then could it play its role as a stake?

Could we not identify this nothing, I am introducing the question here, to this always fleeting, always hidden object, to what is after all hope or despair the essence of our desire, to this unnameable, ungraspable, unarticulatable object and, nevertheless, that Pascal's wager is going to allow us to affirm, according to the formula that Plato employs in *Phaedo*, concerning what is involved for being as something to which there corresponds an invincible discourse.

(20) The (o) as cause of desire and value which determines it, is what is involved in the Pascalian stake. What allows us to confirm this? Undoubtedly, I have just said it, the fact that it is engaged as a stake in the wager. For this it would be well to clarify the obscurities about what a wager is. A wager is an act that many people engage in. I say that it is an act; there is in effect no wager without something which does away with decision. This decision is remitted to a cause that I would call the ideal cause, and which is called chance.

Moreover, let us pay careful attention to avoid here the ambiguity which would consist in putting Pascal's wager in terms of the modern theory of probability which was not yet born at that epoch.

Probability is something that the development of our science encounters at the final term of a certain vein of investigation of the real. And to manifest the permanence of the presence of this ambiguity whose profile I only evoked earlier concerning the relationship to being, I can only recall here how, as Pascal would say, the difference of minds is marked which is not at all a psychological remark but a reference to the structure of the subject. The repugnance marked, for example, in a letter from Einstein to Max Born, for this final reality who would only be a thrower of dice, the (21) fundamental and proclaimed attachment on the part of a spirit who committed the highest scientific authority of his time to the supposition of a being who is no doubt clever but who does not deceive, namely, a certain form, still perfectly subsistent at the centre of a scientific thinking, of a divine being, is something that deserves to be recalled at the threshold of what we are going to commit ourselves to and which is, properly, this can only be defined at the moment of this threshold, of this step, of this radical break-through by Pascal, namely, the term strictly opposed to a defined chance (*hasard*).

What is chance? Chance is attached essentially to the conception of the real *qua* impossible, I have said, an impossible which I would complete today as impossible to question, impossible to question because it answers at random (*au hasard*).

What does this say about this form of the real? We may consider, if only for an instant, and to situate the sense of what we articulate as the wall, the limit, the point

that we are trying, in the final analysis by scientific exploration, to end up by getting to, the point where there is nothing more to be extracted from it but a random response. Science is not complete. But the progressive rise of a thinking that is quite improperly called indeterminist, in as much as the level of the real that we are questioning forces it (22) on us, may allow us at least to suggest this perspective in which there would be inscribed scientific knowledge if it is precisely what I am telling you, namely, the renunciation of knowing, and at the same time of being, is it not in the measure that what is involved is to construct, in the form of scientific instruments, what in the course of this goal of rejoining the real, the point of chance (*le point de hasard*), was recommended to us as an instrument which is capable of rejoining it.

What is a dice if not an instrument designed to give rise to pure chance. In the investigation of the real all our instruments might be conceived as only a scaffolding thanks to which, by ploughing on, we arrive at the term of absolute chance.

I am not at all saying that I am settling this matter. No doubt, they could not be sufficiently articulated except by entering in a more precise fashion into the elaborations that our link with physics obliges us to give to the principle of probability. But here we are at a much more elementary level. Before this theory of probability is born, does it not guarantee to this register, as I might say, its scientific seriousness? We ought not to question ourselves about what is meant by this first speculation about chance, that is always indispensable to put as an exergue to all speculation on probability.

(23) Open any book whatsoever: there are good ones and there are bad ones, there is a good one that I mention to you in passing: *Le hasard* by Monsieur Emile Borel simply because of the fact that he collects in passing for you a series of objections, of absurd questions, there is nothing more interesting for us than *stultae questiones*.

You will see there that, for those who begin to give shape, to give body to this question about chance, when I said earlier to give body, and evoking this edification of our science, there comes as an echo to me the formula which had in a way, when I was taking my notes, sprung from my pen, that in the mapping out on the wall of chance, our science, in its instruments, would give body to the truth.

But what is it that haunts anyone limited to the most accessible and the most elementary level of this operation of chance. How long will it take monkeys working on a typewriter to produce with their machines a verse of Homer? What are the chances that a child who does not know the alphabet will right away put the letters in the correct order? What chance is there that a poem will emerge from a succession of throws of the dice? These questions are absurd. In all of these eventualities, there is no objection to them being realised on the first occasion. Simply the fact that we think of them when we introduce this function of chance, proves what the aim of this cause (24) signifies for us. It is aiming at the same time this real from which it has

nothing to expect, what a poet in 1929 wrote in a little journal that can no longer be found: “the blind and deaf evil, the God deprived of sense”, and at the same time it is waiting for it to manifest itself as subject. But after all, where do we get to? Even if the stakes are equal, which is where one always starts to begin to appreciate what is at stake in a game of chance, that the chances, as they say, or again the mathematical expectancy, a very incorrect term, are equal to a half, it is beginning from here that it is worth the trouble to play. And, nevertheless, it is quite clear that if the chance is only a half, all you will do in an equal bet is recuperate your own, which means nothing.

The fact is, therefore, that in the risk something else is involved. What is involved, what is at the subjective horizon of the passion of the gambler is the fact that, at the end of the act, for it is necessary that there should be an act and an act of decision, at the end of this, whose conditions a certain signifying framework must first of all have defined, I have not yet tackled it up to now because this is what we are going to go into subsequently, a pure response gives the equivalent of what, in effect, is always committed as nothing since the bet is placed there to be lost, that it incarnates, in a word, what I called the object lost for the subject in every commitment to the signifier, (25) and that beyond another chain that is supposed to be signifying and of another order of subject, something which does not involve the lost object, which because of this fact restores it to us in a successful sequence.

Such is the pure principle of the passion of the gambler. The gambler refers himself, in a certain beyond which is the one which the framework of the game defines, refers himself to a different mode of relationship of the subject to the signifier which does not involve the loss of (o). This is why he is capable if he is a gambler, and why should you belittle him if you are not one, you have no doubt, going on the most important testimonies of the literature that there is here an existential mode and that if you are not one it is perhaps simply because you have not perceived the degree to which you also are, this is what I hope to show you soon, as Pascal does, who tells you that you are committed whether you wish it or not.

Here, we have to dwell for a moment on the way in which, before the wager, Pascal properly speaking tried to give substance, as I might say, to this reference which may appear bold to you, that I give you about the presence of the object which is found in a random sequence. I will explain to you - no doubt not today but the next time given the fact that I will be limited by the clock - why Pascal, in the wager, evokes only one (26) game and especially that one, and especially that one for, let us say quickly, it is late, a Jansenist, is played in several stages.

But one thing, at the very time when he began to write the *Pensées* and when no one knows whether he had already written the little bits of paper on *The wager*, one thing had been well worked over by him of which he was very proud. It is essential to recall that in the triad which comes from his own pen and which summarises the three

moments of the wager, of which I have only gone through two today, reserving for the next time the third, the Pyrrhonian one, no access to the truth, the geometer, geometry of chance. It is in these terms that Pascal addresses himself to the Parisian mathematical society before whom he is presenting some results of his arithmetical triangle. He himself describes as stupefying this capture, this halter of geometry that he has put on chance. He dialogues at length with Fermat, a great mind no doubt but whose position in the magistrature of Toulouse distracted him, no doubt, from the strict firmness necessary for mathematical speculation. For they are not at all in agreement on what will be called, you will see what it is subsequently, the value of parts, the fact is precisely that Fermat, too prematurely, intends to treat them in the name of probability, namely, of the series of events arranged according to the (27) succession of combinatorial results, between what they give let us say with Pascal, heads or tails. Pascal has a completely different procedure. This is what is called in Pascal the rule of parts. I am going to try to put it, all the same, within hand's reach. Naturally you will think that you understand. I would advise you nevertheless to read very seriously in the Boutroux, Gazier, Brunschvicg edition in book three of volume three, to read what is involved not simply about the rule of parts but of the mathematical triangle. Because you will see, then, that this does not deliver itself up immediately even though it is, as I am going to tell you, the first time that Descartes presents it to Fermat or to Monsieur de Carcavie, I do not remember.

A game is played out in two throws (*coups*). This presupposes that the bets are already on. We say provisionally that they are equal. One plays one throw. I win. My partner wants to stop the game here. I underline this scansion which is abbreviated in Pascal. He speaks immediately of a common agreement. Now, as we will see, this common agreement deserves to be questioned. I agree. Are we going, since nobody has won, if the chance in question is for example that the coin gives heads twice in succession, which I would have bet on, let us suppose. I have not won and, nevertheless, Pascal says and affirms, in a development which gives its whole weight to (28) the articulation that is at stake, for there results from it a mathematical theory whose developments are very wide-ranging, and it is this extensiveness that I would ask you to refer to later while you are waiting to hear me again next week. Pascal says: "Thus ought to reason the winner in order to give his agreement. He ought to say: I won one game."

This is nothing compared to the wager because the wager is that I have won two and nevertheless this is worth something, for if we now play the second either I win the lot, the stake, or indeed if you win, we are at the same point as at the beginning, namely, that if we separate, I repeat, by common agreement, each one takes back his bet.

Thus for me, who am now winning, to agree to the interruption of the game, there are those who leave and what must be divided up: *partituri* *partitura*, until I have either to take back my bet or I win everything, I ask you, as is legitimate, to take

half of your bet. It is from there that Pascal begins to give his sense to what is meant by a game of chance. What is not highlighted, is that if it were I the winner who interrupted things, my adversary would be quite right to say: "Excuse me, but you have not won."

(29) And then, you have nothing to say about my bet. The substance, the incarnation that Pascal gives of the value of the very act of gaming, separated from the sequence of the game, is where there is designated that what Pascal sees in the game, are precisely one of these objects which are nothing and which can, all the same, be evaluated in function of the value of the bet, for, as he articulates very well, this object, definable in all correctness and in all justice in the rule of the game, he says, is to get the other person's money.

It is two o'clock, and the things that I am going into, as regards which you will see that at the final term, the wager is nowhere in what I told you today, because the wager is Pascal's wager on the existence of the other. That this wager holds to be sure, the two lines separated by a bar: God exists, God does not exist, namely, that not, as has been said, Pascal's wager remains suspended, because if God does not exist, there is no wager, because there is no other, nor any bet, far from it, the structure that Pascal's wager puts forward is the possibility that is not simply fundamental but I would say essential, structural, ubiquitous in every structure of the subject, that the field with respect to which there is established the claim of (o), the object of desire, is the field of the Other *qua* divided with respect to being itself, it is what is in my graph as S, signifier of \emptyset .

Seminar 10: Wednesday 9 February 1966

Since it sometimes happens that at the beginning of one of my lectures I give some references to what is happening elsewhere in the sphere of my teaching, I will evoke today, at the beginning, something whose entire (*en pierre*) relevance, of course, will only be obvious to those who attended a session of our Freudian School last evening, but which, nevertheless, for all the others will represent an introduction to the focusing, in the photographic sense of the term, that my discourse today will

constitute, with which I will complete, I hope, what I have to say about Pascal's *Wager*, as regards the essential it conditions.

Relationships engaged in in psychoanalysis, this then is what I will begin from as a preamble which is at the same time a parenthesis, it is a remark that is very brief, necessarily, concerning the phantasy that is called, and which is in question under the name of feminine masochism.

Let me be understood if I state that feminine masochism is, in the last resort, the profile of the *jouissance* reserved for the one who enters into the world of the Other, in so far as this Other is the feminine Other, namely: the Truth.

Now the woman, if one can speak about the woman, the woman that someone tried last evening to make depend on a typical essence which is supposed to be that of femininity, a fragile enterprise, the woman, let us say that in so far as Freud develops and articulates as having a start that is distinct from that of man in this game which is (2) engaged where what is in question is her desire, the woman is no more in this world than the man. No doubt it can happen that she represents it for him in the form of the *o*-object; but it has to be said, that this is what she energetically refuses to be, since her goal is to be *i(o)* like every human being, that the woman is narcissistic like every other human being; and that it is in this distance, this tearing apart that there is installed, between what she wishes to be, and what one puts into her, that there is established this dimension which is presented in the relationship of love as deception.

Let us add that this narcissism, is the impasse, the great impasse of the love described as courtly, that by putting her in the position of the I of the ego ideal in the field of the other as a point of reference, by organising this status of love, one only exalts this narcissism, namely accentuates the difference.

In these few terms there is located the impasse of trying to define femininity as a function that can be isolated.

Nothing, here, then can be located to say that in this term there is a feminine pole of the relationship, of the relationship to the thing and that the feminine is this term of truth. The feminine is radically deceiving under all the forms in which it is presented.

This will serve us as a start to map out the three distances in which there can be accommodated this field of research that the ambition of philosophers has always signalled as a search for truth.

Is the danger that the analyst assumes in taking the place of guide on this path, the one that the myth of Acteon signals as the impossibility of surprising the domain where (3) our destiny is sketched out as the one which is commanded by the three Parcae, Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos, a Trinitarian form of the fundamental, archaic, ancestral

God, the one from which the other revelation separates us, the one whose reference we will later have to take up, through Pascal's *Wager* which adapts onto the function of the father what holds us in a particular interdiction with respect to the final *jouissance*.

It is already the inaugural statement of Freud's thinking that signals for us the importance of its suspension, of the suspension of all his thinking around this interdiction of the father whose formula we will see appearing later in a different form.

If, in the preceding years, I taught you to dwell on the Cartesian *cogito* in order to represent to yourselves how there is sketched out the *squeeze*, the *Entzweiung*, the radical division in which the subject is constituted, to recognise in the formula of the "I think" itself, the point at which it emerges that the rupture between the being of the "I think" can only be affirmed from a point of doubt, it is to approach, in a surer fashion, this purer formulation, that the same function of the subject, this time radically in function of desire that is given to us by Pascal's *Wager*. For undoubtedly what is already in the Cartesian *cogito* is sufficient to ground the being of the subject in so far as the signifier determines it as being only able to grasp itself at the point that around the affirmation of "I think" it has been reduced to this point of doubt of being, it has no longer any sense except that by opening the inverted commas of the conclusion which (4) gives it all its substance, the "therefore I am" as content of the thinking in so far as it rejects into a retro-position the "je suis d'être" of the "I think", I am the one who thinks "therefore I am". Now, if we rediscover Freud's path by considering that in this doubt there is the whole substance of the central object which thus divides the being of the "I think" itself in so far as in this doubt, Freud in his praxis, makes us recognise the point of emergence of this fault (*faille*) of the subject which divides it and which is called consciousness.

The suturing point, the unnoticed closing point in the "I think therefore I am", is where we have to reconstruct the whole elided part of what is opened up, that we open again this gap (*béance*), which can only in any form of discourse which is a human discourse, appear in the form of a stumbling, of an interference, the breakdown of this discourse which wants to be coherent.

Nevertheless, what grounds this discourse is not at all grasped in this manner, a discourse of desire, we are told, but what is it that ensures that we can say that that by which we supply for it, is what takes the place of representation. You will clearly understand that this is to indicate here the place where there functions what sustains as divided everything of the subject that is realised in discourse, that this is the place where we have to search for the function of the *o*-object.

Pascal's doubt is still in this passage of a balancing operation, *tute dubo dubito*, it is habit, I busy myself in making the scales of this balance oscillate. It is around a

testing of knowledge with respect to the truth, of what is involved or what is not involved in (5) true knowledge.

Naturally, Heidegger has the easier role in representing that there is abandoned the irremediably repressed basis of the *Alethia*, the *Urverdrängung*, if this is not how he names it, this is how we can identify it.

But this reminder is a fragile one since it only represents a return to a domain with no way out, in conformity with the term employed at the origin of Greek thought it is *Lethos* that is involved, it is the *echt*, the authentic.

Descartes installs at the same time as he reveals, unknownst to himself, the division of the subject around the operation of putting to the test, a negative operation, it is impossible to recognise how the scales tilt around true knowledge. He gets nothing from it except the certainty of the test that he has tried and it is in this doubt of the subject that certainty is inserted. To take things up again and take a further step, he has to bring forward again the ancient argument, through which what impresses the idea of perfection onto the order of our thinking, ought to guarantee the path of our research. Undoubtedly, one can highlight and outline already here the distance taken with respect to the ontological argument whose form, nevertheless, you recognise here; and even though it has had its value in the exploration of the field of being, it no longer deserves, for us, to be recaptured in this form which appears certain here, to which his reflection will have sufficiently shown that the idea of perfection is only delineated and formed on the model of a competition between prize animals (*bête de concours*) and that its substance is nothing other than that of which the pig may dream (6) as regards the obesity of his castrator. I do not like vain blasphemy and you should know what I am aiming at in this way, is certainly not the aim of some people, of a certain deviation concerning a questioning about the divine being, but the one in which a certain philosophical detail seems determined to remain stuck.

So that it must be remarked that Descartes' approach allows the subject to get away scot-free with regard to a supposedly deceiving God and that by turning towards the other God in order to remit to him, to his arbitrariness, the entire charge of grounding the eternal truths, the question which is important for us is to know whether in this operation, since already he has got off scot-free, it is indeed the subject who doubts and that even the deceiving God would not for his part be able to withdraw this privilege from him. The one towards whom he turns is not in that case - even if he is perfect - and I am saying it strengthened by what Pascal thought before me, is not in that case a deceived God. This sensitive point is important for us and in our research, in so far as it is by the trap of the ideal form, as in a way preformed, placed beforehand in the path where we have to guide the research of the subject is properly such that the ideal of perfection has to be deceived. "(Greek quotation) what is to be done concerning the act of the doctor," Plato well says, "is this image (Greek quotation) that he the doctor has in his soul." Is this not to express the exact

importance that there is, the representation that we have to make, that we have to make for ourselves, about the nature of what is at stake when we are dealing with the order of the relationship to the truth, which is only accessible and defined by the conditions (7) under which we put into practice the experience to which there is limited the thesis where the subject is formed in dependence on the signifier as such.

This opens up the structure of Pascal's *Wager*. Somewhere, in one of these numerous points where there is prefigured, in these dialogues of Plato which are very far of course from giving us a doctrine that is, in a way, unilateral, the relationship of everything that is, everything that is idea to this *aethéos* of which I spoke earlier, which is supposed to bring to birth everything that subsists in being, very far from that at every moment we will find references designed to orientate us and specifically the following: between the eternal being which does not exist, and what is born and dies but which is not.

The sign, the touchstone ought to be given to us in the fact that if the first subsists he must be supported by an invincible discourse, this indeed is what we are still searching for, except for the fact that this discourse is the one which ought to allow us to recognise in the field which is ours of an existence circumscribed between birth and death, what this discourse may contain that is of this invincible order.

And this is what Pascal's discourse introduces us to. It is no surprise that he does not begin from this reference to the beyond, of life and of death but it is not, I would not say, as it appears but well and truly as each and every one sees and is scandalised by, all these gentlemen with a spiritualist ideology rear up here and pout, how can one speak about something that is of such high dignity in terms of these gamblers who are the dregs of our society. In Victor Cousin's time only the bourgeois have the right to (8) devote themselves to the *agio*; and those to whom there is given in society the responsibility of thinking about what is happening, can warn the people of what is effectively at stake in what is called the mark of progress, are requested to enter into this order of decency to which I wanted to give earlier, in a scandalous form, its outrageous enseign, that of the castrated pig, in other words, to remain within the limits of decency of the thinking that is called eclecticism.

Have you not noticed that in this wager about the beyond, Pascal does not speak to us, no one has ever seen that, about eternal life. He speaks about an infinity of lives that are infinitely happy. That is an awful lot of lives! And in the final analysis by calling them that, he preserves for them their horizon of life and the proof is that he begins by saying: would you not wager simply in order that there should be another one? The person that I called earlier, I mean the last time, the good Lachelier, well he is very nice, he stops there; he says all the same, who would wager in order simply to have a second life? Find the passage, I was searching frantically for it earlier, you will easily find it - the fact is that I do not reproach him for this lack of imagination, but is it not true, simply, that by covering his little everyday man with the sifter of chance

involved in the *Wager* he invites us, for our part, to really pose the question to ourselves.

What happens, effectively, and would it not be worth the trouble to commit oneself to a wager, only with some chances as regards this life between birth and death, this life (9) of ours, in order perhaps to have a second one?

Let us allow ourselves, let us allow ourselves to dwell for a moment on this game, perhaps a little bit better equipped than others, in order to grasp the irreducible difference, the breakthrough that is involved in being able to think in this way. For it is necessary that these two lives should each be between birth and death, but it is also necessary that it should be the same subject. Everything that will have been played out precisely in the first, we can as we know play differently in the second. But we will not know for all that what the stake is. This unknown object which divides us between knowledge and truth, how can we not hope that the second will give us a view of the first, that for a subject the signifier would not be what represents the subject to infinity for another signifier, but for the other subject that we would also be? How can we not hope for the privilege that this other subject will be the truth of the first one? In other words, do we not see here in this imagining, a phantasy of a phantasy, there being clarified what under the name of phantasy plays in secret with this life which indeed is such that we only have one and that up to the end the stake may be hidden from us.

This supposition implicit to the *Parcae*, as we read it, if we read it in the candlelight of the lack of reflection on which our whole fate is suspended, this supposition, that after death we will have the final word on it, namely, that the truth will be obvious whether yes or no the God of the promise will be there to keep it, who cannot see that this supposition implicit in the whole business, is what really keeps it in suspense. Why, (10) after death, if something perdures, should we not still wander about in the same perplexity?

The Pascalian game about this infinity of lives, multiplied by the infinity of happiness which must certainly have some relation to what is hidden in ours, cannot but have another sense which has nothing to do with the retribution of our blind efforts and this indeed is the reason why it is consistent that the man whose faith was completely suspended on this something about which we no longer even know how to speak, which is called grace, is in a consistent position when he unfolds his thinking about the stake, the stake which is that of happiness, namely, everything which causes what is perishable and failed in our desire, that this stake of happiness is of a nature to make us look for what is the basis of the wager.

This *o*-object that we have seen emerge in this imaginable beyond, already in a very proximate way by simply imagining a second life, is not something that religious thinking has not already plumbed.

It is called the communion of saints. None of those who live within a community of faith, which has some relationships with this foundation of happiness, is uninterested in the fact that somewhere this happiness has been conquered by others of whom we know nothing. This conception is consistent with the fact that each one of our lives, those of us common people, is nothing other than a test of endurance suspended on the merit of some unknown people and that what is traditionally expressed in this theme exploited by a whole theatre which goes further in dignity than you may first be able to measure, if you think that the theatre of Shakespeare himself takes up the one whose (11) theme is that life is a dream.

As compared to this perspective Pascal's *Wager* signifies an awakening. The very closeness of the relationship to the other concerns this doctrine of predestination and grace to which, from my Rome report on, I indicated that instead of a thousand other futile occupations, psychoanalysts should turn their gaze. Here there is already outlined the point of impact where we can, just as at the end of an article entitled "Remarks on a certain discourse" - which I would ask you to consult - marked the point to which I already wanted to direct you with respect to the function of this wager.

Because now we can see what is meant by this *Wager*, which is unique in that the stake is the existence of the partner. If Pascal can put in the balance this something which is not the all, but the infinite which opens out, by simply being able to recognise it at this point where we learned last year to designate substantially the function of lack, namely, number where the indefinite is only the mask of the real infinity which is dissimulated in it and which is precisely the one opened up by the dimension of lack, to put it in the balance with what is designated in the field of the subject as object cause of desire, which signals itself by being apparently nothing, and from this very confrontation of the balancing carried beyond, into the field of the other, of this field where for us there is outlined the whole signifying putting into shape at which Pascal tells us: you cannot escape, you are already on board; this is what the signifier supports, everything that we (12) grasp as subject, we are in the wager and it is for the one to whom there belongs, as was given to Pascal, the power of recognising the purest forms of it, those closest to this function of lack, it is here, around this oscillation that affects the other and putting him between this question that I already formulated and that I allow myself to recall because some people here may remember it, this question of "nothing perhaps" and this message of "perhaps nothing". That the answers come, to the first; not surely nothing; to the second, in so far as the stake for a Pascal is precisely that of this nothing grounded in the effect on us of desire: surely not nothing.

I want to clearly illuminate the topology of what I am designating here. I found, there were many other ways to bring it out, but I would like to take the neutral path, a logician of grammar, what matter. There are excellent things, among others that are more mediocre, in a book by Willard Van Orman Quine which is called : *Word and*

Object. You will find in it, in the chapter referential untranslatable, vagueness some remarks. They begin from the fact that the Fregian position, to which our exercises of last year have accustomed us, about the difference between what is *Sinn* and what is *Bedeutung*; of what makes sense, of which I gave you an intimation in the example: “green colourless ideas”, and of what concerns the referent.

At the moment of this parenthesis that Pascal’s *Wager* constitutes in the progress of my topology, at the moment that having presented to you, in the cross-cap, the surface (13) in which we can discern there being joined together the two elements of the phantasy, those which only function from the moment that the cut ensures that one of the elements, the *o*-object finds itself in the position of being the cause of an invisible, ungraspable, indiscernible division of the other, the subject. A question, and one supported by us in this model of the wager, of conceiving not what this phantasy is but how we can represent it for ourselves. It is quite clear that it is unapproachable in its immanence and that it is a matter of explaining why analysis allows the little (*o*) in question to fall into our hands; it is in so far as another shape, the one that I have not brought forward this year, the one which, topologically, contingently - as I might say - delivers it to us from the Klein bottle. The function of the other in this possible *Erscheinung* which cannot be the representation of the *o*-object, this is what the final explanations, on which no doubt my discourse today will dwell, are going to try to illuminate.

Let us go right away to what is in question: namely, belief. When I spoke to you earlier about this second life, there might have appeared this reflection, display, disjunction of the phantasy; did you not at all reflect incidentally that this would give our existence a little elbow room that would allow it to relax its seriousness a bit? There is only one problem, which is that this second life, which does not exist, and that I tried for a moment, within the seriousness of Pascal’s *Wager*, to bring alive for you, (14) well then, we believe in it. We do not wager, but precisely, if you look closely at it, you will see that you live as if you believed in it; this is called the lining which psychologists delight in so much and which is called on this occasion the level of aspiration, nobody understands as well as the psychologists how to give a status to all the dirt with which our fate is perverted; this is called our ideal life - the one precisely that we spend our time indolently dreaming about. Mr Willard Van Orman Quine quotes with some astuteness, in connection with a little example that I do not see at all why I should change, what happens in what are called propositional functions which have as a model the following: - I am leaving the names - Tom believes that Cicero denounced Catiline. The matter takes its interest, it is because of his limited information that Tom believes that the one who, in the tragedies of the sixteenth century, one would in fact have designated by a Frenchified name, not Tullius but Tulle, namely, that for us who of course are erudite people it is the same Cicero. Tom believes that Tulle is really incapable of having done such a thing. So then what about the reference to the signifier Cicero as regards the statement: “Tom believes that Cicero denounced Catiline”, if he maintains that Tulle - he does not

know that it is the same person - had nothing to do with it? It is around this suspension that a grammarian contributes very interesting specifications about the way it is appropriate to measure by the ell of logic one or other form of grammar. For it becomes interesting to remark that if in the same form you substitute for nomination an (15) indefinite form - which might appear then to see the reference being made more opaque, on the contrary, the “referential”, namely, the opacity that the propositional function: “Tom believes” introduces; here it cannot be a matter of saying that the reference becomes vague from the moment you say that: “Tom believes that someone denounced Catiline” Undoubtedly one can go further and note that it is not at all the same thing to believe that someone denounced Catiline, or to say that someone existed whom Tom believed denounced Catiline. But you see that we are beginning to enter here into a system of double doors which, perhaps, would take us a bit too far.

But to bring you back to the question of the existence of God, this will make you grasp the difference there is between saying: “he believes that God exists”, especially if we were to find it in the text of someone who tells us that one can think out the nature of God. Now precisely Pascal tells us that he is properly speaking not alone unknowable but unthinkable and thus that there is a world between believing that God exists in the sense that contrary to what the representatives of the ontological argument think there is no referent of God, and that on the contrary to say, about the indeterminate that God becomes in “I wager that God exists”, is to say something completely different for this implies beneath the bar that God does not exist.

In other words, to say: “I wager that God exists or” (the or must be added) is to introduce this referent in which there is constituted the Other, the big Other, as marked (16) by the bar, which reduces him to the alternative of existence or not, and to nothing else.

Now this indeed is what is recognisable in the original message through which there appears in History the one who changes both the relationships of man to the truth and of man to his destiny, if it is true - one could say that I have been dinning it into you for some time - that the advent of Science, of science with a capital S - and since I am not the only one to think what Koyré has so powerfully articulated - this advent of Science would be inconceivable without the message of the God of the Jews. A message that is perfectly legible in the following: given that when he who was still not properly disentangled from his functions as a magus in communication with the Truth; because they were in communication with the truth - there is no need to treat yourself to the ten plagues of Egypt to know it; if you had your eyes open you would see that the least of these pieces of pottery which are inexplicably for us the legacy of ancient times, breath magic, this is indeed why ours do not resemble them.

If I put so much in the foreground some tiny apologues like those of the mustard pot, it is not for the simple pleasure of parodying the stories about the potter.

But when Moses asks the messenger in the burning bush to reveal to him this sacred name which must act in the field of truth, He only answers him the following: *Eyè asher eyè*, which as you know - at least those who have been listening to me for some time - is not without posing certain difficulties of translation, of which undoubtedly the worst of all because it is formally accentuated in the sense of ontology would be: "I am (17) who am"; *asher* has never meant anything of the sort; *asher* is "that which"; and if you want to translate it into Greek it is

"I am that which I am"; which means you will know nothing about my truth between this: I am appointed and the one who is to come, opacity, the stroke of *that which* subsists which remains as such irremediably closed.

I mark on the big O this bar; which means that it is here, at the beginning that we have struck in order that there may fall from it what, henceforth, in Pascal's *Wager* cannot be conceived of as anything representable, but as the real transparently seen as compared to this subjective fog of what is outlined in a misty and incoherent fashion of a dream about the field of the other in what solicits us on awakening, namely, this small (o), it is true that it is real and not represented, that it is graspable in a way by transparency, according as we ourselves have been able to organise the field of the other with more or less signifying rigour.

This small (o) that we know well through what I shall have to explain to you, and only now, about its relationship to the super-ego. It is when it is beyond the wall of shadow represented by this other suspended around the pure interrogation about his existence, that awakening is here what permits to make it fall, what is more, subsequently but antecedently with respect to this opaque field of the dream and of belief, and that the relationship of the analyst to this other whose definition, at the end of last year, I already gave you, it is here that the position of the analyst is to be defined; the partner, the respondent, the one starting from whom there is inaugurated the possibility of there (18) entering into the world a golden order which is not submitted to the eternal lure of the false captures of being, and depends on the realisation of the fact that this other, that this partner, the one who is not the one whose place we are occupying but with whom we have to engage ourselves in a three-sided game with the analysand and even with a fourth, the Other knows that he is nothing.

SEMINAR 11: Wednesday 23 February 1966

Lacan was not present at this seminar.

French manuscripts are available for those who are curious about what was discussed.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 23 March 1966

I would like if we could open the window, because it is true, I am noticing for the first time that you cannot breath in here.

I will see you afterwards, Jean-Paul.

Good, well I do not know how broadly the news has spread of something that I let those who are in a position to transmit it know about, namely, that this seminar today is an open seminar. Perhaps the fact that you do not, for all that, fill the room is due as much to the strike as to the fact that the news was not spread.

I had in effect, God knows, a rather strong desire to make contact again with my whole audience after this interruption for which I apologise. It is a lack on my part, no doubt. But, after all, I had to choose and to do, for once, what I ought to have done a long time ago, namely, visit the USA. It seemed to me, and again just a moment ago, that you expected, at least that some of my listeners expected me to say something to you about it.

I will try then to satisfy this desire, at least in part, and in a fashion that is improvised.

(2) Before doing so, nevertheless, I want first to state the pleasant surprise, which is not a complete surprise, the final satisfaction that I had, let us say, of the pleasant surprise that I already had before my departure. To say what is involved, I will show you immediately the last number of *Temps Modernes*, the article by Mr Michel Tort, who is present here, which appeared in two parts, and is called *De l'interprétation ou la machine herméneutique*.

I did not speak to you about it before leaving you since I was waiting for the end of this article, which I may say brings me great satisfaction. It seems to me to be appropriate that someone who bears the name of Tort is the one who takes up the gauntlet so well on my behalf.

In effect, I would say that, to describe this article, which is really a work, I think that it is a great encouragement for me to see on the part of someone whose quality I will not specify yet, as such, on the part of someone, a correction, [of] something that I will call right away, that I will highlight in a fashion which might perhaps be better qualified, but after all I cannot find a better term than that of philosophical misappropriation, or again misappropriation of thought.

Someone in my immediate circle thought he ought to highlight - this required a certain courage - the elements that were borrowed, not necessarily recognised as such for a (3) long time by the author, the elements borrowed from my teaching. At which he drew on himself a singular response, whose incorrectness a certain number of you at least will be able to measure by reading a certain number of *Critique*.

The term of plagiarism, which my pupil had not written, was put forward in this response and its juridical background was even discussed, undoubtedly, this is not the question. I have spoken about this question of plagiarism for a long time, and underlined that in my eyes there is no such thing as intellectual property.

Nevertheless, after having been for a very long time not simply an assiduous attender but even a confidant of the particular plan of my teaching with regard to psychoanalysis, after having made use of it, and this for a very long time, after having made use of it in lectures given in America which moreover had a great success, then in a work whose goals are properly speaking goals that are contrary to those which constitute the foundation of psychoanalysis, my teaching being a teaching which properly speaking, claims to re-establish this teaching of psychoanalysis on its true foundations, this is what I qualified just now as a misappropriation of thought. I can do so all the more in that the article by Mr Michel Tort is precisely the exact demonstration of this scandalous operation which reflects, moreover, the general tone which, in our times, is the one of what is called, more or less vaguely, philosophy. (4) That is the reason why I hesitated to describe Mr Michel Tort as a philosopher, since the operation that he devotes himself to has nothing in common with what is usual in this field.

The firm, the rigorous, implacable distinction that he makes between what is involved in psychoanalytic interpretation and this vague and flabby field that I already designated as being properly that of all the swindles of our epoch, which is called hermeneutics, once this distinction has been fixed, it is really the type of operation that I most wish for from those who come to listen to me and who listen to me in an appropriate fashion, I mean understanding the import of what I am saying. The work of Mr Michel Tort in this regard represents a milestone, an essential milestone upon which really one could ground oneself to qualify what I meant to say about what is involved in psychoanalytic interpretation.

In effect if you refer to what I put forward at the end of my seminar last year, about the situation created by the advent of science, and that this advent was possible in the measure in which a position was taken up which used the signifier, as I might say, while refusing to it any compromise in the problems of the truth.

(5) If one thinks that because of this, a situation is created by which the question is posed to science about the field of truth, by each of those who find themselves affected by this fundamental modification.

What about the truth? That it is properly in this field of truth, effectively, that religion responds. But what today cannot be eliminated from any philosophical position of beginning from this fact, of the distinction, of the radical opposition between religion and science, that it is impossible, that it is untenable to try, as Whitehead did, to apportion the domains of science and of religion as two distinct domains with an objectivity that could have anything whatsoever in common, that their difference lies very precisely in the two essentially, radically, different approaches to the position of the subject.

Henceforth, it proves, that if I say that psychoanalysis is properly speaking the interpretation of the signifying roots of what constitutes the truth of the destiny of man, it is clear that analysis places itself on the same terrain as religion and is absolutely incompatible with the responses given in this field by religion for the very appropriate reason that it brings a different interpretation to them. Psychoanalysis is in an essentially demystifying position with respect to religion.

(6) And the essence of analytic interpretation cannot in any way be mixed up at any level whatsoever with the religious interpretation of this same field of truth. It is in this sense that I would say that Mr Michel Tort, in articulating this up to the point where this rejects into the same field by demystifying almost the totality of the philosophical tradition, including the Hegelian dialectic, has proved on this occasion that he is what I can only qualify in the final analysis by one word, because there is no other one within reach for the moment, a Freudian.

And those who deserve to be qualified by this term can, to my knowledge, properly speaking to be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Well then, after having done justice to Mr Tort, after having thanked him, after having offered him on this occasion everything that might be appropriate for him to adopt his work in any way possible that may come within my orbit, as a way of republishing it, after also having drawn it to the attention of all, and having asked everyone to consult it, and I would say line by line, well then, good God, I will try to say a little about what I have been told you are expecting, namely my impressions of this short visit to America, since I spent twenty-eight days there.

(7) To tackle this experience, especially like this, in a way that is a little impromptu, is not all that easy. First of all because there are practical consequences to this, and projects that I cannot give you an account of without having conferred with my closest collaborators, and which after all, I ought to confide only in them, it is, nevertheless, all the same in the field of what I encountered over there in terms of psychiatric, indeed university reality in its totality, that you expect from me, perhaps even, why not, you expect from me about the memories of my travels.

To make contact with what is after all no longer a new world' except for me, since I waited until I was at an advanced age to set foot in it, may suggest to some people a certain curiosity. I am certainly not going to set about playing the Keyserling before you in connection with this encounter.

And, right away, I would say that prudence and, indeed, respect for the real require of me, after such a short journey, to abstain above from making judgements. I think, moreover, fundamentally, and not from today, that the benefit to be drawn from a journey is that, on returning, you see what is well known, familiar to you with a different eye. This is the real discovery of a journey. And it is in this sense that this journey is a great discovery because I do not yet know how far will go the fact that I

(8) see things here with a different eye, but I am certain that, in that respect, this voyage will not be without consequences.

How can one try to say it? My first feeling about it? It is a matter of what I am going to tell you about my experience. You see clearly how I am situating it. It is not a matter of a judgement on the United States of America. It is simply a matter of what I, for my part, saw there, and which all of a sudden, allows me to foresee everything that I am going, for example, to drop from my discourse from now on.

A tendency, an indication it is not sure that I will go so far as I am going to say. The beginning of such an effect, I am going to try to summarise in a short sentence. It seemed to me that I encountered a past, an absolute, compact past, a past that could be cut with a knife, a pure past, a past that is all the more essential in that it never existed, either in the place that it is established for the moment nor where it is supposed to come from, namely, from us.

Obviously, this may come perhaps from too much tourism. The fact that in New York I encountered Gothic churches and even cathedrals at every street corner, I am saying at every street corner, there are people who have been there who can tell you that it is true, it has not been sufficiently underlined and that is how, nevertheless, the fact that the University of Chicago at which I thought I ought to end up, finishing there in fact the six lectures that I gave over there, I really wanted to do that because Chicago is an (9) elective place in my history. There were woven there very interesting things, things which were supposed in principle to be designed to withdraw from me, henceforth, any possibility of speaking. I was therefore not at all unhappy to carry the word there myself. In Chicago I saw an entire university, but a university over there, as you know, is very big, entirely constructed in Gothic. A hundred buildings of, I must say, perfect Gothic. I never saw a more beautiful Gothic, a purer Gothic, it is very well done. The false Gothic is well equal to the real I assure you.

We know that university methods in every country in the world remain dated from the Gothic epoch. The Sorbonne, for example, is still structured as it was at the time of its birth which was a Gothic epoch. It distinguished itself already by a violent, manifest opposition to anything new that might be created, as we know in connection with this condemnation, that I recalled for you recently, that it thought it should bring against St Thomas Aquinas who was an audacious little innovator.

When I speak about the Gothic quality of the university, I am not for all that saying that it always kept to the same principles: it has rather fallen away from them. At the Gothic epoch, precisely, people maintained very severely this principle of two truths that I spoke to you about earlier. When people did philosophy, it was not in order to defend religion; it was in order to separate itself from it. In our day we have gone into this mixing whose results of course are spreading. This is only a reminder of what I was saying earlier.

In any case, there is one thing certain, it is that the Sorbonne at the time that it was properly Gothic, was not constructed in Gothic, at least not in this perfect Gothic of the University of Chicago.

It is not so impressive. You have all the same the same feeling when you see piled up in a mass in these museums, these formidable and unimaginable collections of Impressionists which seem to be exiled, as it were, to be prisoners, torn from the atmosphere of this Parisian light of the end of the last century in which they blossomed, which are visited in a sort of ceremonial way by hordes of women and children who file past, I must say, at any hour of the day, at any day of the week that one comes, before this sort of incomparable and heart-rending brilliance that they take on from their very accumulation, as if here, in effect, were the place where there ought to end up the brilliant product, after all, of an art that we have, it has to be said, here, particularly disdained, I mean at the moment that it emerged and it is once again our past in a massive way which is found over there, I would say in a certain fashion which weighed, weighed very heavily on anything else which might seem, after all, to be called to be born in a society which has existed for a long enough time to have its own cultural masters.

Obviously, there are little shoots from time to time. I cannot hide from you the satisfaction I had to see an apartment entirely furnished with tiny samples of these little outpourings, like that, of creative fever which has described itself with the rubric of Pop Art. It was a chap who had made a fortune in the taxi business and who found himself effectively to be one of the first to finance, namely, to give here and there two hundred dollars to this group, up to then dispersed, of people who had launched themselves into a certain register, I do not want to describe to you either the principles, or the appearance, or the style or indeed what radiates from this Pop Art, what I mean is that this character who remained there, entirely furnished, adorned his apartment, his walls covered with the works, with the fruits of Pop Art gave me a long speech full of clap-trap to explain to me how he had spotted, helped, sustained this Pop Art. I find this extraordinarily appealing. Indeed something appeared to me in this Art in relation to the society that it sustains. Unfortunately, when I, without any particular sense of paradox, God knows, for I had taken a rather lively pleasure in this experience, I shared it with some very distinguished people that I met in New York, I sensed a (12) certain reserve. People looked at me a little strangely. I mean that people were asking themselves whether I was not pushing the joke a little bit too far, because Pop Art for the moment seems to have already gone underground, and even what has succeeded it, namely, Op Art.

In short, I have just illustrated for you what I called earlier the dominance of the past, I am improvising, I apologise for being so long, I have illustrated it for you in these fields which are not properly speaking those which interest us, but that is perhaps because I did not want to say too much about it, that I wanted to spare you what, after

all, I only know imperfectly and necessarily from people who, for their part, aspired rather for some change in what we will call the method of teaching psychology, indeed of psychology in medicine, of what was the status, the style of life, the way of being of the psychiatrist.

After all it is extraordinary, I take the very terms of someone who spoke to me, the ease of life of a psychiatrist over there is extraordinary, one really has no need, I was told, to put oneself out in order to have a clientèle.

And, starting from there, I was quoted names which are not the least important, which are quite capable of being ones to whom I could pin remarks like the following: “Good God, why ask oneself questions, and especially if they are any bit metaphysical when (13) God knows, after all, everything is going so well, that you finish work at half-past five, you have a whiskey, you read a novel, usually a spy one and you settle down in front of television”. I do not see why one should reproach what constitutes a social class for having its comforts, simply that it is for us to see what this involves, of course, in terms of inertia, and of being too settled.

Well then, whatever about appearances, it must nevertheless not be believed that on this basis, that on this very particular basis which is perhaps, as I might say, the opposite of the sky-scrapers, of this monumental verticality, which is moreover, a singular thing, the exclusive privileges of banks. Alongside this, there is a whole horizontal world which is precisely the one inhabited by people of the class that I have just evoked, namely an infinite world, a sea of little two-storied houses, perfectly imitated from the English style, in which there live, with, God knows, what one might call all the amenities of existence, a considerable group of people which is precisely the one which interests us on this occasion, because it is the one in the midst of which I was called to move about as a pilgrim or as a pioneer, as you wish. Detroit where I spent some time, is a city of twenty-five kilometres wide and eighteen kilometres long, which means that when you are looking for a good restaurant it involves a considerable time, after all, in order to cross it in a motor car.

(14) Even though, again, the heart of this city is made up of a knot of motorways. Within this network of motorways, you have the streets that I am speaking to you about with innumerable little houses and all of those I entered, of course, given the class of people that I was seeing, were very well furnished and rather encumbered with *objets d'art* brought back from the peregrinations across the world of the people involved which are, as you know, numerous.

So much for the style and the complement of what I called earlier this sort of inertia of the past and of a singular past, I am coming back to it, for this suggested to me this form of questioning: that there is a dimension of the past which is to be defined as essentially, radically, different from the one which interests us under the rubric of repetition. The past into which there does not intervene to any extent, and it is a

feeling of this sort that I had on encountering this extraordinary past, the fact is that it is a past without any underlay of repetition.

It is perhaps this singular, striking, impressive aspect, I assure you, which gave me, at least, which gave me the feeling of a dough that is absolutely impossible to stir. For this is not to say, for all that, that I did not encounter over there numerous occasions for dialogue. And I would say that of the six audiences that I had, specifically, at the (15) University of Columbia, on my arrival, at MIT (The Massachusetts Institute for Technology), at Harvard University, (Centre for Cognitive Studies), The University of Detroit where I spoke before the college of professors, after one of these ceremonies which consists in a lunch taken in a comfortable room which is distinguished by the absence of any wine, which is not the privilege of the United States, at the University of Ann Arbor some fifty-five kilometres from there, which is a city - when I spoke about the University of Chicago the word city was a metaphor, while for the University of Ann Arbor it is not one - the population of some thirty thousand students who live there in a city that is, as it were, specialised to receive them and finally at the University of Chicago, the audience was mixed differently in different places, more linguists and philosophers, very few doctors at Columbia but, on the contrary, an almost entirely medical audience at Chicago, this because of the fact that the parts of the University to which my friend Roman Jakobson, to whom I want now to render homage here for the whole enterprise of which he was at once the initiator and the organiser, well then, I must say that of the six audiences, I had, in reply to what I articulated before them which I will not perhaps have the time to give you an idea of, (16) in reply, God knows, the most relevant, the most interesting questions from professors of different specialities, with whom, thanks to their welcome and their charming hospitality, I subsequently had throughout the whole day, or on the occasion of meetings, dinners or other festivities, the opportunity of explaining myself, I had the feeling of a very great openness to the things that I was bringing them and which, to their ears, were nevertheless, undoubtedly, unheard of. I am speaking here about the university milieu. I except, here as elsewhere, what we will call the high-brow milieu, the intelligentsia, localised, for me at least, to those whom I met in New York. For at New York my teaching is unpublished, perhaps, but it probably will not always be so. It is far from being unknown. But as you have often been told no doubt, New York is not America. At New York they know perfectly well what is happening here and the small place that I hold in it is not unknown. But to return to my contacts with the American University, my feeling was confirmed moreover by my interlocutors, who told me what I ought to expect and what I should not expect, my feeling is that there is a very large field of places and of points where you could gain attention, establish links, elaborate contacts which would be followed up, recorded, published. I brought back some samples of journals that are properly speaking internal to the universities and which I even read *en route* with very great interest because there are excellent (17) articles of all sorts and of all kinds, and one could say that everything remains to be done. One could also say that nothing is to be done because undoubtedly with so much openness, welcome, even success, the feeling, at least the

present general feeling, I mean among my interlocutors, I would not allow myself to have a feeling, is that in any case nothing will be changed in the equilibrium currently attained, which leaves plenty of liberty for everyone, that someone who can bring along a sufficient number of collaborators is certainly not prevented from working, and everything is thus installed in a juxtaposition of living co-existence which seems indeed for the moment to exclude, even if one aspired to it, a renewal of style and especially in what interests us, in what interests me, namely the status of the teaching of psychoanalysis, that one will not arrive at anything like a reversal of the current, at a reflux, a change of tide, at anything at all that may resemble a fundamental change. Nevertheless, between this everything to be done and nothing to be done, I believe that my tendency for the moment is undoubtedly, God knows, even if it were only as a way of taking up a challenge, and then there are other things in the world besides the North American United States, to do there all the same at least something in the form of a publication, and this is what I will reserve for my closest pupils as regards my project.

(18) Might I add, in two words, the complement, the following secret that, in the course of this little “*travel*” which is almost nothing but a little “*trip*”, I reserved a week for myself at the end for my personal pleasure and that having planned first of all to spend it in the American West, I changed my project, suddenly not being able to resist the proximity of a country full of magic, I think, for some of you, which is called Mexico and I spent eight days there.

I will not speak to you about it at length now. I did not at all have there the life of a missionary. I had that of a tourist, it must be said, nothing more. In any case, the things that I saw touched me at two points.

The fact is that one cannot but be very impressed to see something, me in any case, something which is indeed, the ancient religion, since earlier we were talking about religion, of these peoples who are still there, absolutely unchanged, the face and I would dare to say the look of these Indians, still the same, whether it is those who serve you discreetly in the corridors of hotels or who inhabit cabins which are still thatched at the side of the road, these Indians who have the same figure, exactly, that we see fixed in basalt or in granite, these vague fragments that we collect of their ancient art, these Indians have there something or other, in terms of a relationship which persists, with the simple presence on the monuments of what are incorrectly (19) called pictogrammes, ideogrammes or other incorrect designations of what we can call hieroglyphs, and moreover not always deciphered but whose taking up again by contemporary painters or architects, because at Chicago there are on the walls of an ultra-modern library, for example, four entire facades decorated in what we could call the usage of the flotsam of these signifying forms. What is conveyed by this seems to me to be something that is at once enigmatic and, at the same time, so impressive because of this sort of invisible link across an irremediable break which subsists between the generations which are growing up and those of the students who populate

the University of Mexico, which I would say is the most enormous of all of those that I have seen, with these signs, these signs with which something has forever been broken and which nevertheless are there, translating in a visible fashion what I could only call, because I am before this audience, a relationship preserved to what is so tangible in everything that we know about these ancient cults, this thing which was not at all understood, except as something horrible, by the first conquerors, and which is nothing but visible everywhere, everywhere present, everywhere attached in the form of charms, as it were, all the forms of the divinity which is nothing other than the o-object.

We will no doubt, perhaps, have to allude to it later and perhaps I will have the opportunity of giving it to you as indeed a simple marginal illustration, but one that (20) undoubtedly is not without its importance for what I will continue to say to you about it.

Well then, there is no point, in the middle of all of that, marking for you what I thought I saw being sketched out of it there as a consequence.

I have given myself an awful lot of trouble, through the numerous years of my teaching, to bring to a *milieu* which was not specially prepared to receive it, a certain amount of information, more especially about the field of linguistics. You have already sensed for a long time the slight nostalgias that I may have about this, the result is that after fifteen years of this teaching, I put, perhaps a little bit before the others, this little *milieu* which was the one that I was operating on, alerted them to something which now you can find everywhere at every cross-roads, at every street corner, indeed under the more or less appropriate name which will soon be absolutely, even impossible to clean up such is the degree to which it is going to be covered with these different encrustations of shells that cover a wreck, the word structuralism. It is here, rather, that it is going to be a matter of carrying out a very serious cleansing operation in order to be able to say all the same what structuralism is for us.

This effort that I also made to recall the conditions of the birth and the evolution of (21) science in terms of how decisive it may be for us, for us to conceive ourselves as determined by it. It must be said, I was surprised in the United States to find a large part of my programme, of what is in my seminar, spread out on walls about ten metres long in the form of little diagrams, which moreover no one even looked at, but which contained in an absolutely decisive fashion, the dates, the turning points, and perfectly well explained in every line of descendency of the classification of sciences and which, if I ought to say it, I ought also to say if I had been teaching over there, would have saved me a lot of trouble. For when all is said and done, all of these things can be bought over there in a paperback.

This is the interest, the importance of what I might call from a certain angle, the evacuation of the past which is, at the same time, possible if we clearly see its proper dimension, this aspect of inertia, one can leave its manipulation to men with shovels.

It must be said that this is not at all a perspective of “*despise*”, of *mépris*. What on the contrary appears there to be most certain, is what it separates out as regards our own essence. Because from the very moment that the past, at the state of pure past, exists there block-like, in its perfect form, for as I demonstrated to you earlier, the portrayal of the University of Chicago exists more perfectly than it ever did exist. The (22) impressionist creation is there like a fly in amber, in a state of perfection that it never had here.

With respect to this past which is, in a way, what we are delivered from, there is all the same an aspect of ourselves which remains part of it, which is indeed ourselves as we are today and which is only a miscarriage of it. In order to see it raised to the level of caricature you have again, in Mexico, to go to the Hotel Del Prado and install yourself before a fresco, which is the height of the wall of our room here, by Diego Rivera and which is called *Un rêve de dimanche après-midi sur l'Alameda*. The Alameda is a sort of Tuileries of Chicago, and the figure that we cut in this panel, I am not going to describe it for you, you can get photographs of it, is very instructive.

Here then is what I believe we can learn by going to the United States and, moreover, on the entire soil of this noble America, there is the figure of everything that failed in the past, it is a kind of retroactive figure of an adherence to something which was never lived, and which, as such, cannot be, in any shape or form, if one lets oneself go a little to any movement whatsoever of hope, of vivacity, of creation, undoubtedly the only thing that remains for you from such a contact is a really crushing impression of (23) what is difficult to raise up in our world.

What did I speak to them about? It is quite certain that I did not properly speaking do a seminar with them. Even though my roots in a certain style are not so easy to break all of a sudden, it is to this *penchant*, this habit, even this need that I have acquired of a certain way of hooking my audience that I owe, to my astonishment I must say, the fact of not being able in any case to make up my mind to speak to them in French, and it is a curious thing, to really manage to speak to them in English.

The habit that I have of following on your faces the rather peculiar effect of this word, did not seem to me to be extremely different to what I experienced before these audiences, namely, that their captive, if not illuminated faces gave me the feeling that something in this English was of such a kind that they did not reject the impression of it being an articulated language.

There you are. So I spoke to them - I am going to tell you about what in two words because in a few moments we are going to have to separate - I centred things a little, because I had to make myself understood, on something which seemed to me to be striking. And then I, as you understand, for my part I am taken up with my *o*-object for the moment, I am trying to bring it to you like that, to slip it into a certain number (24) of stockings from which it will emerge in one way or another. We will see that,

we will take it up the next time. I had to return to fundamentals. And after all, this allowed me to gather these fundamentals together. Not at all, of course, that I allow them like that to go with the stream. But after all why not? This allowed me perhaps to take up the module of a discourse that was more condensed, more simple also, more striking even though the hammer-blow is never absent from what I have to tell you.

Perhaps, after all, I will make a little collection of them which will perhaps not be all that badly adapted to American ears since I adjusted it to American ears.

Well then, I thought I should begin from something which is all the same a tangible feature, a feature that it is easy to make understood and which is not new, of course, for you, it is that of the distinction between demand and desire.

Obviously in English, I prided myself on making myself understood, it is obviously with a vocabulary and syntactic refinements that are more reduced that I was led to speak. It is quite easy to make understood to people who are listening to you, that when something is demanded of them they have to be careful, that it is not always what is demanded of you that is precisely what people desire you to give. It is enough to (25) have the slightest experience of it. It is enough to have a girl friend for this truth to be immediately perceptible, and after that you can go into structural considerations.

Yes. Because starting from that moment, of course, you can show that desire ought to be extracted from the demand and that there is this second phase, that the demand is articulated in the unconscious. It is enough here to refer to the truths that I have always reminded you of and which consist simply in opening the first books of Freud. When all is said and done, it is not impossible, even before an American audience, to introduce the inscription of the formula in the top right-hand corner of my graph, namely $\$ \bar{D}$ (\bar{D} barred in its relationship to demand), namely, that it is precisely to this that the division of the subject is attached.

Which is obviously to reintegrate this division of the subject onto the same plane, at the same level that Freud introduced the division between the unconscious and the pre-conscious, to eliminate the distance which separates this beginning of his work from the point that he ends up with, the *splitting* of what he calls the ego, namely, the *splitting* of the subject, and to show for example on this occasion that this remark that Freud makes that the principle of contradiction does not function in the (26) unconscious, is a remark which is only a first approach and is inadequate in a sense if it goes as far as to imply that there is no sign of negation in the unconscious because we all know, and from reading the texts of Freud himself, that negation has, I am not saying in the unconscious, that would mean nothing, but in the formations of the unconscious, representatives that are clear and well mapped out.

The so-called suspension of the principle of non-contradiction at the level of the unconscious, is simply this fundamental *splitting* of the subject. There is something else that I put in the foreground of my discourse and which follows, as one rosary bead follows the other, this approach through the difference between demand and desire, it is the designation of the point which is the same meeting point from which I began earlier, moreover, concerning the relationships of knowledge and truth, the fact is that what Freud contributed to us is the designation of the locus of incidence of a particular desire which is the point through which sexuality comes into play as fundamental in the domain that it is a matter of defining and that this point is called: the desire to know.

It is because sexuality first comes into play from the angle of the desire to know that the desire involved in the Freudian dynamic is sexual desire. It is because it comes into play under the species that had already been located, not without reason, by religious minds, it is because the *cupido sciendi* was situated where it should be by Freud that everything has changed in the dynamics of ethics.

(27) That the other desires, the desire for *jouissance* and the desire for domination, prove not to be on the same level. That one is found to be in a dependent position by being at the level of narcissism, that the other, the desire for *jouissance* is precisely there to manifest for us what I would call the duplicity of desire.

For, far from desire being desire for *jouissance*, it is precisely the barrier that keeps you at the distance that is more or less correctly calculated from this burning hearth, from what is precisely to be avoided by the thinking subject and which is called *jouissance*.

Will I go so far as to tell you that I began for them something that will be the next step of what I am going to have to present to you. Namely, taking into account the following of which, of course, I was only able to speak from the angle, namely, from the locus of the Other, the positioning point of the truth, as a locus where there is put in question the truth of the demand, as a locus also where there appears and emerges at the same time the dimension of desire, I was able to begin what, as I have just told you, is going to be the continuation of my discourse and which, consisting of specifying the fact that desire, this desire whose locus I articulated for you at first by saying that desire is first of all the desire of the other, topology is going to teach us to make function this sort of turning [inside-out, back-to-front] (*retournement*) which is (28) properly the one that I will try to display, at the level that I will show you, such as they are, as it can be done, as one turns a glove inside out, at the level of the structure of the torus, that if desire is to be located, to be measured in function of a demand of the other, the structure is going to allow us to see, the structure which is the structure of the torus, the fact is that there is a structural foundation that is perfectly - I am minimising in saying that it is illustrated by the structure of the torus, it is sustained by the structure of the torus, the torus is the substance, the *upokeimenon* of the structure

in question concerning desire, the torus may appear, obviously, this is what I will show you with a piece of chalk the next time, that there is inscribed in it in the clearest fashion the relationship that there is of the sustaining of a desire, not at all by a demand but by a repeated demand or by a double demand.

And the fact that this figure which is properly the one that I am drawing for you here, the turning inside-out (*retournement*) of the structure of the torus can display, materialise before your eyes what can be obtained from it and we will see what



turning inside-out signifies in function of what happens to turning inside-out when we are dealing with other topological structures, namely, the cross-cap and the Klein bottle.

(29) This turning inside-out having been performed, we have two desires in relation to one demand. This duplicity of desire with respect to demand is at the root of everything that in the analytic field extends as far as to what is called confusedly ambivalence, which can find its reason only there. This is what I will have the opportunity of developing for you in a fuller fashion the next time. And you see already that what is involved is the function of a cut, that in the three shapes that I will have to take up from this angle, it is the same shape of cut, namely, what I called the S or the inverted eight, which gives us its key and its shape and that there are different functions. In short, to conclude and to say what I was trying above all to get across to the ears of my audience in America, that there is a domain that can be isolated in the field called psychological up to now which is the domain of what is determinable as the field of language and excels in this field which is the word, that this is definable. It is the function of the subject, the function of the subject which is not, as I saw written recently, a function of absence but on the contrary a function of the intense presence of something hidden, which is what brings us back to the Freudian foundation of the unconscious and it is on this that I will leave you today and give you a *rendezvous* for the open seminar next week.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 20 April 1966

I am going, after this vacation which has separated us, I had to meet you again on a pre-arranged Wednesday to hold a closed seminar which, because of this fact, reduces you to a number of chosen pupils, which I do not find to be a bad way of our getting together again today, for the things that I am going to have to say to you.

In effect, contrary to what is the principle of these closed seminars, namely, that it ought to be, it can be in any case, someone else other than myself who, at first at least, poses the question; well then, I shall be the one who speaks to you today, even if only in order to compensate, to tie together again what was interrupted by my month's absence in the last trimester, and also, I hope, in order to begin for the next time, a collaboration which will give to this closed seminar the next time, its proper character as a seminar.

I will begin, because moreover this time of vacation brought me back to the problems, already present in my first remarks, of my relations with my audience, well then, I said to myself, because it was yesterday evening that I got it to be corrected, that I was going to see in that a sign, and that I was first of all going to read you something (2) which you see here is still a galley-proof which is meant for the year book of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. Every year there appears, from each of those who collaborate in the teaching of the Hautes Etudes, a little summary of their course. This summary is not of course that of this year, it is that of last year; it is not ahead of time, as you can see. But after all, there is still enough time since, moreover, it is going to give me the opportunity of sharing it with you.

I am going to share it with you because, as you are going to see, in drafting it, I thought of you. Not of reading it to you, I had no way of knowing that this would happen. But as you are going to see, I thought of you.

With no further preamble then, I begin this reading. What is in question is what, last year was called: *Crucial problems for psychoanalysis*. "The problem placed at the centre," I say, in this little summary which you may well imagine is ultra-condensed, "the problem placed at the centre, can be described in these terms: the being of the subject." (I pre-suppose that I am addressing people who attended this seminar last year.) "Terms to which the high-point of our previous references brought us. That the being of the subject" - it is still relevant this year - "that the being of the subject is split, was something that Freud repeated, in all its forms, after having discovered that the unconscious can only be expressed in a knot of language, [and] has therefore the

being of a subject. It is from the combinatorial of these knots that there is broken through the censorship, which is not a metaphor, brought to bear on the material of these knots of language.” (As regards these two little paragraphs, even though a summary is not a didactic object, all the same I recall the very solid foundations that we start from, (3) which is precisely the fact that the unconscious has the structure of language. That censorship is not a metaphor, means that it cuts into something material and this is where we start from with Freud. I think I have summarised it here in five lines.)

“Right away, Freud” - this is for the use of people who might find my summary too obscure if it elided these primary truths - “right away Freud affirms”, this is a complement, “that any conception of a of consciousness towards the obscure, the potential, indeed automatism, is inadequate to account for its effects.” (A reminder, then, that everything which tries to make of the unconscious a lesser, a virtual, an ante-, a pre-consciousness is not the unconscious.) Three lines again then. Which I specify: “This is only recalled to separate off any ‘philosophy’ from the use that we made this year” (this year that I am giving an account of) “of the *cogito* which is legitimate, we believe, since the *cogito* does not ground consciousness, but precisely this splitting of the subject.”

“It is enough to write: ‘I am thinking “therefore I am”’ - I repeat: ‘I am thinking “therefore I am”’, this is what I think: “*I am thinking, therefore I am*”, and to note that this enunciating obtained from an asceticism,” (naturally it does not fall from the Heavens), “consists first of all in an arranging, in a great clearing-out of all the knowledge that was actualised in the time of Descartes who undertakes this asceticism, that this enunciating splits the individual (*l'être*), these two ends” (I am thinking therefore I am at the end) “only connect up by manifesting some torsion that it underwent in its knot”, (its knot to enunciating.)

“Causation? Reversal? Negativity?” (with question marks) “it is the topology of this torsion that must be carried out.”

(4) (I recall here, in the following paragraph, the angle from which I touched on Piaget and Vigotsky who, I say, illustrate between the first to the second, the advantage that is to be gained by rejecting any psychological hypothesis about the relationships of the subject to language, even when we are dealing with the child. For this hypothesis is only the mortgage (*hypothèque*) that a being of knowledge takes on the being of truth that the child has to incarnate, starting from the signifying battery that we present him with, which Vigotsky faithfully presents to him, as such, and which constitutes the law of the experiment.)

“But this is to anticipate on a structure which must be grasped in its synchrony, and an encounter which is not simply a chance one. This is what is provided for us by this meshing of the one with the zero which came to us from the point at which Frege set

about founding arithmetic.” (A summary therefore in three lines, of the function which our study of the foundations of arithmetic played in this last year. The one numbers the null class. The reference is to the lectures of Messrs Miller and Milner)

“From this, it is perceived that the being of the subject is the suturing of a lack, specifically of the lack which, hiding itself in number, sustains it by its recurrence - this is the idea on which there is founded the theory of number - of the successor, but in this only supports it by being, when all is said and done, what is lacking to the signifier to be the One of the subject, or in terms that we have called in another context, the unary trait, the mark of a primary identification which will function as ideal.”

“The subject experiences himself as being, at the same time, an effect of the mark and a support of its lack. Some reminders of the formalisation where this result is found would”, I write, “be appropriate here. However short may be the space reserved for me, I have all the same room to recall, first of all, our axiom grounding the signifier as (5) ‘what represents a subject not for another subject but for another signifier’. This axiom situates the lemma which has just been re-acquired along another path” - what we have just said before - “the subject is what responds to the mark by what it lacks, in which there is seen only the reversal of the formula” - that of the signifier that I have just given earlier as an axiom - “that the reversal of the formula only operates by introducing at one of its poles, the signifier, a negativity.”

“The loop is closed without being reduced to a circle, the supposed, third term,” call it what you wish,” after the axiom and the lemma, that the signifier originates from the effacing of the trace.”

“The power of mathematics, the frenetic pace of our science reposes on nothing other than the suture of the subject, from the thinness of this scar, and after all, in speaking about a scar of this suture, you must not believe that I am using a term that a mathematician would reject, it is Poincaré’s term in his *analysis situs*, or better again of its gap. The aporias of mathematical logic bear witness to this thinness - Godel’s theorem” - you remember the beginning of the sentence). “And always, of course, a great scandal for consciousness.”

“People have no illusions about the fact” - I for my part have no illusions, nor I hope have you - “that a critique at this level will not be able to scour clean the wound of the lack of the subject everywhere except at the level where science maintains it sutured, by the sheer strength of arithmetic. One cannot scour clean the plague of excrement which the order of social exploitation, which takes its stand on this opening in the (6) subject, and therefore does not create, whatever may be thought about it, even in Marxism, alienation, in the order therefore of social exploitation,” I say, “an attempt is made to cover the aforesaid wound, more or less consciously. There are many things which serve that purpose.” A discipline of truth, we would say in

general, but there has to be mentioned, (should I add, should I not add) the servile task, (I did not put it in the text, I put it in as an author's correction for the typist, but I do not know yet whether I will leave it) which is fulfilled there by philosophy, ever since the open crisis of the subject.

I said: since the open crisis of the subject. I am designating a date in the history of philosophy, philosophy, as they say, ever since it has been related to science. And that here it plays its role very badly "It is on the other hand out of the question that any critique directed at society should supply for it" - for this critique, about which I said I have no illusions, as regards the power that we have to scour the wound of excrements, etc. - that no critique then, directed at society can supply for it - it is very important - "because this critique itself can only be a critique coming from society, namely, whatever it may be, implicated in the business of this sort of bandaging up, that we have just spoken about. That is why only the analysis of this object - the bandaging - can confront it in its reality which is to be the object of psychoanalysis. Our project for the current year."

"We will not be content however to suspend, which would be an admission of defeat, [in] our approach to the being of the subject, on the excuse of rediscovering, of course, its foundation of lack."

It is precisely for this reason that I am reading this to you. I would like to throw something like a seed into what I might call your fundamental attitude as a listener.

(7) "This is precisely the upsetting dimension," I did not hesitate to write, "of our teaching, that it puts to the test this foundation, demand, in so far as it is in our audience. For how could we back away from seeing that what we require from structure as regards the being of the subject, cannot be left out of account in the one who represents it in an outstanding way in our discourse, even in order to represent it as belonging or not to thought, just like the *cogito*," (just like the *cogito*, people have sneered (*gauté*) at it, you see that you never waste your time), "namely, the psychoanalyst. It is indeed what we find in the phenomenon notable in that year, of the advance made by another part of our audience, by giving us this success," I say, "of confirming the theory that we believe to be correct, of communication *in* language, which is not the whole of communication." But you know this formula for a long time. It must be the case that mine do not lose all that much by being endlessly repeated, because it is effectively necessary for me to repeat them and to announce them. We express it by saying that the message is only emitted here at the level of the one who receives it. "No doubt a place should be given here, since I make an allusion to another part of my audience, to the privilege that we receive from the place whose guests we are." This is in homage to the Ecole Normale Supérieure. "But it must not be forgotten, that in the reserve that is inspired in some people by what appears to be too easily in this effect of seminar, the resistance that it allows, this reserve" (and I add) "which is justified. It is justified because commitments are part of being and not

of thought, and the two aspects of the being of the subject are diversified here because of the divergence between truth and knowledge. The difficulty of the being of the analyst comes from the fact that he encounters, as being of the subject, namely the (8) symptom, that the symptom is a being of truth, everyone agrees with this in so far as they know what psychoanalysis means, even though it is constructed to confuse the matter.” (I am sure I would obtain the agreement even of those who confuse it most, if I were to throw in their face right away, the fact that the essence of the symptom, our position in the symptom, is that it is a being of truth.)

Henceforth, one sees what it costs the being of knowledge, by recognising the fortunate forms of what he, for his part, only engages with under the sign of unhappiness, the unhappiness of his patient, that this being of knowledge - that of the psychoanalyst - must reduce himself to being only the complement of the symptom, this is horror-provoking, and that by eliding it, the being of knowledge in question is operating towards an indefinite adjournment of the status of psychoanalysis, I mean as scientific.

“That is why even the shock that I produced, by closing the year on this principle, was not able to avoid the short-circuit being repeated in its place.” (And I make an allusion to the form in which this came back to me and which is very important.) “It came back to me with obvious good will, of course, and even adorned with a paradox, as it stated that it is the way in which the practitioner treats it that creates the symptom.

“This appears to be the continuation of what I had put forward before. Nevertheless, there was good reason for me to be startled by it, for, of course, it is true from the experiments of psychologists through which we had introduced our few words (*le grelot*)” - a reference to the paragraph on Vigotsky and Piaget - “but it is also to remain a psychotherapist, and this exactly at the level of saying that,” (to say that which in a certain sense is true, but it is not the truth that we, for our part, have to (9) speak, which is not the one that we have to confront, when I contribute on the subject of the clinic the following, namely, that we, as analysts, have to take part in the symptom.) “It is then to remain, as a psychotherapist, exactly at the level of what ensured that Pierre Janet never could understand why he was not Freud.”

“The divine bottle,” I concluded, “is the Klein bottle. Not everyone can make emerge from its neck what is in its lining. For this is how there is constructed the support of the being of the subject.”

There you are. I only read this little piece for you to give you the opportunity of getting to know it because, in any case, you would never have gone looking for it in this year- book. Who reads year-books? But for

Madame X: Can we get that text?

Dr Lacan: My dear, you can make some off-prints of it. Good. I for my part am going to give it to the year book. I am not going to make off-prints of it. Nobody does that. But after all, in effect, it may be of use to you because it is a tiny little text to which I gave enough care for it to be considered as having a little function as a hinge.

If I begin again, if I take things up again, if I link up, if I recall, starting from this text, to continue, in fact what I will most easily begin from is, of course, naturally, from the end, this will only make it easier to highlight for you something people do not often think about: it is the pride which is hidden behind the promotion, as it is ordinarily carried out, of every step towards relativism. I am proposing, I am indicating that the problem of the analyst is precisely his implication in the symptom which is put before him and questions him, for his part, as a being of knowledge, as a being of truth, I am (10) saying in short that the drama of the analyst, is that necessarily, his being of knowledge is inflected, is implicated in this confrontation, that Oedipus, whatever he does gives his hand, at least for a while, to the Sphinx, since this is what is in question. By having manifested himself, in the final analysis, as superior, as a being of knowledge, it is precisely this which makes a hero of him. Which we are not at every moment. Immediately, this thinking jumps very easily to this function of this presence of the observer in the observation which is also what the progress of our physics indicates to us, and which gives us the idea, as they say, that we are not uninvolved.

But it is the opposite. Even in the theory of relativity in physics, whether it is special or general, it does not at all mean that it is the observer who settles the affair. It means on the contrary that the affair has an eye on the observer.

In other words, no relativist theory gives any kind, as it is habitually experienced, any kind of renewed energy whatsoever to the idea of the subject as subject of knowledge, to the idea of a bipolarity which might be complementary, whether you oppose them or not to the being of the sign, which would in a way be reciprocal and of equal dignity. There is absolutely nothing of the sort.

Everything that is accentuated in this perspective, whether it is that of the progress of science or that of our own experience as analysts, is that it is impossible for us to get out of this illusion, except precisely [by] what we would call a little bit more than very (11) great precautions except for the radical, structural, absolutely total recasting of the topology of the question. And to introduce, into something which cannot in any way be called another kind of knowledge which would get around the difficulty, something which is not at all of the order of knowledge, something which is of the order of calculation, of the combinatorial, something which we no doubt make function but which for all that does not surrender itself to us, to the impulse in such a

way that it would allow us to start again quite simply with a lighter step on the same path considered as enlarged and more perfect.

There are many things to be said, and in particular something to which I would like all the same to give a little bit of care to today, because it is at once to face up to objections that, faith, are not very efficacious, one can always allow it to be said, to get around, when all is said and done, that a fashion like mine of tackling psychoanalysis has something, as people say, that is too intellectual, or even verbal, and then, moreover, about the use that is made in analysis of the famous power of words. As usual, malevolent powers, and this one in particular, the power of the word which is still magical, as they say, with a magical all-powerfulness, whether it is a matter of thinking or of words it comes back to the same thing, it is always the other, of course, who falls into it.

Of course, that we have to deal, always, with this operation of demythification which consists in taking up terms which, traditionally, were grasped in certain words and put them in question.

(12) When Nietzsche, after all, to bring him in here, not that he did really excellent work but, in any case, it was a beginning and it struck a lot of people, when Nietzsche busies himself in rediscovering the trace of what, in the philosophical tradition, gave a consistency to one or other term, whichever you like, the soul for example, what do we have to do with it? Is this really the way? When we go as far as to say, even with our means, which only allow us an extrapolation of an elegance which goes beyond what he had access to, by designating some support for this soul, in the shadow of the body, the one which the character of Charmides left on the way, what more will we do? That to be still on exactly the same path from which the whole affair began, an affair which goes far beyond the particular prostration of the psychology that we have to deal with, namely the apologue, the fable, of the cave in Plato, in the VIth book if I remember correctly, of *la politea*, this shadow is none other than the one which plays on the wall which the captives in cave are facing, necessarily maintained in a whole sort of apparatus, without being able to turn, to see what is behind, and what these shadows on the wall are the projection of. But what does this fundamental fable imply? What it is a matter of knowing is whether one gets out of it or whether one does not get out of it. It implies something which, referring to the text, is designated as a fire, the fire which precisely, from its projected illumination, produces the phantasmagoria, in other words, the fire of fire, the central idea, the source that is well and truly figured elsewhere, in other texts of Plato by the sun itself, the inaugural point (13) where there is indicated the identity of the being of the real and of the being of knowledge. By means of which everything is structured according to this form of envelopes enveloping one another, the topology of the sphere, capable of reduplicating itself as identical from simply what is called in topology, mapping, namely, to overlap like a lining, which goes as far as the terminal point of the envelope of all the

envelopes, on which there is presented, as opposed to the identity of two beings, the content of knowledge.

Only there is a remark which, just by itself, may put the conditions of simply accepting to let fall again into darkness, all of these things that are in suspense, by pointing out to you that if, undoubtedly, the shadow disappears, if there is no longer any sun, the body, for its part, is still there.

One can feel around it in the darkness and recommence the experiment on a new footing. Now this is what is at stake. It is not a matter of knowing what imaginary lure words give a consistency to, by giving them their *cachet*. It is not the lures that deceive. It is the words. But this precisely is their force. And this is what it is a matter of explaining. If the soul, in order to take things up at the key point where we think the affair has been cleaned up, is an entity which has some consistency, it is not, we are saying this year, in so far as we are studying the object of psychoanalysis, it is not because the soul is something which is either the shadow of the body, or its idea, or its form, which is properly speaking what falls away from it, forms a waste scrap, a fall, it is what, from the body, falls under the blade of this something which is produced as an effect of the signifier.

(14) And it is in the measure that the signifier makes its mark on this incarnated subject, that something corporeal, effective, material is produced, which is what is in question. It is not therefore a sanction through the language of some imaginary mirage, which is produced, but an effect of language, which by being hidden under these mirages, gives them their weight.

This is what constitutes the novelty of the psychoanalytic approach, founded on this fact that the effect of language goes beyond, because it precedes it, any subjective apprehension which may authorise itself as being a conscious apprehension.

And every critique of the power of words, as it is put, which attacks it as such, what perdures under the academic label of psychology is never anything other than this voice, it is by beginning from the verbal status, incontestably because it is traditional, of a certain function of the soul, and by putting it in question as word, and by questioning, starting from there, what is real in it, which leaves standing perfectly well the framework of the power of words, while what it is a matter of questioning, is what has language produced as an inaugural effect on which there reposes the whole *montage*, which gives the setting of the state of the subject.

This is not tackled simply by looking at it head-on. That is why the relationship of the being of knowledge to the being of truth is founded on what, to speak here of the very one who is speaking to you, means precisely that my discourse is not sustained by any re-organisation of vocabulary. If I say that there is no metalanguage, I emphasise it by

the fact that I am not attempting to introduce one, a new one, which would always be (15) subject to the fact of being, like every metalanguage, made up of language.

The first condition to grasp that it is indeed a matter of the relationship to a being of truth, is that, in discourse, it is articulated as an enigma, and I greatly regret if this, at all times and to Freud himself who admitted it and recognised it as such when he wrote the *Interpretation of dreams*, *Umschreibung*, he said, enraged at not being able to reproduce the style of his previous little scientific reports, *Umschreibung*, which means: mannerism.

Throughout the historical cases of the crisis of the subject, the literary and aesthetic explosions in general of what is called mannerism always corresponds to a reorganisation of the question about the being of truth. Yes. It is a matter of finding a short circuit to rediscover our **o**-object, since, moreover, an idea of it comes to me: it was furnished me, refurbished, refreshed not too long ago by Guilbaud with whom I have been having weekly conversations for some time now, he reminded me that it was Franckel, I believe, who played this trick on his listeners: 1,2,3,4,5, what is the smallest whole number that is not written on the board? Good, listen, on you go. The smallest whole number written on the board. You naturally believe that someone wants to trick you. But it is not complicated, it is 6. Are you sure that zero is a whole number, that (16) could be debated... (written on the board: the smallest whole number that is not written on the board). So then what is it now? The smallest whole number which is not written on the board? None obviously. What? What are you going to say? Whatever you say I will tell you: it is written on the board. That astounds you? Well then, that it is precisely what is in question, that this should surprise you. This reinstates, this shows you, that reintroduces you since this is what is at stake, it is in the question of language, founded, as you see on writing, the **o**-object. That knocks you? You have absolutely no voice to raise on this occasion? What?

: ... : ... on the board.....

Lacan: Yes, it is very relevant that it is by writing [or not written] of course. One could start from there and make a lot of it. Good.

Does that mean, with that, it knocks you out, if we have here everything that is involved, about castration. I say no. It is only a matter of things at the level of the **o**-object. In order that something written should in fact hold up, you have to pay your dues, namely, that if I only put down written things, for example, my scientific discourse from the start of set theory until nothing stops me up to the end, I will exhaust the whole trajectory of modern physics, this will in no way hold up unless I accompany it with a discourse which presents it to you. There is no means of presenting a discourse, even the most formalised one that you may imagine, there is

no means of presenting if you like, Bourbaki without preface or text. This is what is in question.

(17) And therefore the relationships of language which, incontestably, in effect, are cut and writing, with what presents itself as discourse, ordinary language and which requires this support of the voice, except, of course, that you should not take the voice as simply sonority, which would make it dependent on the fact that we are on a planet where there is air which carries sound. It has absolutely nothing to do with that.

When I think that in the phenomenology of psychosis, we are still at the stage of questioning ourselves about the sensorial texture of the voice, when simply with the six or eight pages of a prelude that I gave in my article on "*A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis*", I designated the quite precise approach from which there can be in our day, at the point that we are at, there can be questioned the phenomenon of the voice. You only have to take Schreber's text and see distinguished in it, as I did, what I called the message of the code and the code of the message, to see that there is here a means of grasping, in a fashion that is not abstract but already perfectly phenomenologised, the function of the voice as such. By means of which one can begin to detach oneself from this really unbelievable position which consists in putting in question the objectivity of the voices of the hallucinator. You objectify the hallucinator. Why should his voices be less objective; why should his voices, on the pretext that they are not sensorial, belong to the unreal, to the unreal. In the name of what? It is a prejudice which dates from some extremely archaic stage of the critique (18) of so-called knowledge. Is the voice unreal, are we going to affirm, are we going to say from the fact that we submit it to the conditions of scientific communication, namely, that he cannot make this voice that he hears recognised. So what about pain, then? Can he make that recognised? And nevertheless. Are people going to start discussing whether pain is real? The status of the voice is properly speaking still to be established, but not alone is it to be established, it has to be brought into the mental categories of the clinician of whom we were speaking, precisely, earlier, who very certainly even when he succeeds, I noted it in the same text, in doing something as fortunate as to perceive things which probably had been seen a long time ago with the naked eye, but that no one ever picked out, namely, that there are these voice phenomena which are accompanied by laryngeal and muscular movements around the phonetic apparatus and that this, of course, has its importance, this certainly does not exhaust the question but, in any case, gives a method of approach to it. This did not advance the status of the voice by a single step, for all that.

Here, I would like all the same to remark that it is a great ingratitude for anyone who has, a little bit, the clear sense of what Nietzsche called, precisely, the genealogy of morality or of something else, it would be complete madness to overlook what the status of science, precisely, I am speaking about ours, owes to Socrates who, precisely, consulted his voice. It is not enough to claim to be rid of it to satisfy oneself or

to believe that one has satisfied a phenomenon like that by the fact that Socrates said expressly that he consulted his voice, in order to say, either yes or no, (19) that there was therefore a little corner, something or other which was out of synch. When it is Socrates who is in question, it seems to me difficult not to grasp the consistency of the totality of his system, given especially that this system functioned all the time in the open. We may have the idea, precisely, that in fact, the question of the subject as I am posing it, is perfectly and totally open at the level of Socrates whatever we may think about the fashion in which there were transmitted to us these conversations which were the basis of his teaching, however they have been arranged, modified, enriched as we may suppose by one or other person and by Plato especially, it nevertheless remains that their schema is clear, that there is a perfect decantation between the being of knowledge and the being of truth.

You have to re-read the whole of Plato with this guiding thread which can be held, something that, of course, I previously taught you to decipher much more fully, by calling things by their name and by saying what was involved in the desire to know, namely, the *agalma*. But let us leave to one side for a moment that what Socrates responds to is the following: what is the being of truth of this desire to know. What does he mean when this supposedly culminates in the Platonic transcription: “take care of your soul”? We will leave it for later. But it is not for nothing that I am evoking Socrates here, that I recall moreover only this key: the being of knowledge and the being of truth.

I will also leave to one side today a remark that I could make about this use of the term key even though I said earlier that my teaching did not contain key words.

(20) It is perhaps precisely because the property of the keys in question is to have no lock. And, in effect, the whole question is there. I want simply to make a remark which is one that, of course, anyone here could bring up. So then, why did Socrates not discover, articulate, the unconscious? The response, of course, is already implied in an earlier part of my discourse: because our established science did not exist. If I underlined the degree to which psychoanalysis depends on an assured, sutured, status of the being of knowledge, I think that this might already be seen as a sufficient response if, precisely, the question did not refer back simply to why there was not in Socrates' time, as a starting point, a science having the status of our science, of the one that I defined in a certain fashion? Precisely the suture on the side of the truth. I will not go very far, given the time today, in this direction, but since it is on the path of something which is very important for us to bring us back to what is involved, namely, the position of the psychoanalyst, namely, what I would want someone here to make some contribution to the next time, let us take one of the best, one of the greatest, and on the point to which he contributed to things their greatest relief, I would ask someone to take up again here my article on the theory of symbolism which was written as a commentary on Jones' article and then connect up with it what is also implied, simply indicated in my article, namely, the way in which Jones had to sort

himself out on the problem of female sexuality in so far as it involves the status of the (21) phallic function. Start from the manifest inconsistencies into which his discourse ceaselessly slips, or from the way the very symptom he is dealing with corrects him and in a way reintegrates, and does more than suggest, imposes, in a way, clearly written and contrary to his intention the same topological formula as ours, I would like if someone were to devote himself to this little manoeuvre and not force me once again to get involved in it myself.

What an extraordinary text is the one that I attacked in this article of which I speak, this article on symbolism. It consists in short of telling us - you will see it in the text - of saying, in conformity, when all is said and done, with things that I managed to say after him, that it is not a metaphor to say that symbolism is constructed like a metaphor, that it is a true metaphor, that here, the metaphor, instead of distancing itself, as he expresses it, from the concrete, approaches it under full sail. What, when all is said and done, is truer than this direction? Except that in the end it is false all the same because it is not a metaphor, it is a metonymy.

For the phallus, with the woman and with what effectively introduces it in an extraordinary relief as regards the determination, the function, even the sense of female homosexuality, one can say that everything is in this text except the author comprehending what he is saying.

(22) Is there not here something in which there is precisely inscribed this relationship to the symptom of which I speak, which is necessitated, that one can from the other aspect consider that he was only able to accede so profoundly to the sense of the symptom because he was missing a theory of it. So we can ask ourselves why it is that science, Greek science, which already knew how to construct such admirable automata, did not take on its status as science. The fact is that there is another voice which plays its role in the Socratic questioning. I think that you can evoke it with what I am designating here. It is the one that he calls on to give evidence from time to time, in a rather exemplary, rather scandalous fashion perhaps, we will never know anything about it, for contemporary ears, it is the voice of the slave. How does it happen that the slave then always responds so correctly, responds always so well and goes straight to the truth, to the quality of the irrational number which corresponds to the diagonal of the square. Do we not grasp here what is at stake and that it is precisely nothing other than the status of desire.

If neither Freud nor Socrates did not, however dissolving their product might have been, did not go so far as a social critique, for, after all, as far as I know, Socrates did not introduce historical materialism, even though he made the statues of the Gods tremble a little on their pedestals. It is quite clear that it was not for nothing that Alcibiades cut his dog's tail, that it was not simply to make people talk because it resembled a little bit too much a certain affair involving the mutilation of Hermes,

which for its part had caused some stir, but so that people might comprehend that this was not quite without some relationship with the dialectic about the being of truth.

(23) And this is not social criticism. Let us call that direct action. It is anarchy, something which, as you know, is no longer our style. Socrates did not engage in social criticism nor did Freud. It is no doubt because both one and the other had the idea from where there was situated an extraordinarily important economic problem, that of the relationships of desire and of *jouissance*. If there was no ancient science, it is because it was necessary, in order that there should be science, that there should be modern industry. And for there to be modern industry, it was necessary that slaves should not be private property. One looks after private properties, one does not make them work so bloody hard as in regimes of liberty. Which means, that the problem of *jouissance* in the ancient world was resolved and in a way that I think you see clearly, the beings devoted to *jouissance*, to pure and simple *jouissance*, were the slaves as, moreover, everything indicates. To the respect, contrary to what is said, that they received, one did not mistreat a slave like that, especially since he was capital, to the fact that it is enough to open Terence, not to mention others, Euripides, to notice that everything that was involved in terms of refined relationships, of courtly relationships, of love relationships, indeed, I do not know if you to beings who are in a servile condition. And that the *nihil humanum me alienum* of Terence, designates that, has no other sense. Why would one utter such an idiocy, if it were not a question of saying: I am going to where there is humanity, to the slaves.

(24) The *jouissance* of the ancient world is the slave. And this reserved park of *jouissance*, as I might say, was the factor of inertia which ensured that neither science nor at the same time the being of the subject were able to emerge. No doubt the problem of *jouissance* is posed for us in different terms. And certainly, because of capitalism, in terms that are a little more complicated, it nevertheless remains that in a certain place, Freud pointed his finger at it, and in connection with *Civilisation and its discontents*, we will have to take that path again, in order to take up our thread.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 27 April 1966

Good. *Inter*, as they say, *inter* in Latin. It is Saint Augustine who begins like that, a sort of statement which has finished by becoming eroded, by doing the rounds so much, *inter urinas et faeces nascimur*.

He was a delicate person. This remark which, of itself might not seem to involve infinite consequences, since moreover, since you are born from this perineum, it must all the same be said that you chase after it.

It is certain that if Saint Augustine had reason to remember it, it was for other reasons, for reasons other than the ones that interest all of us, in this sense, that it is not *qua* living being, body, that we are born *inter urinas et faeces*, but *qua* subject.

This is why it is not limited to being a bad memory, but is something which solicits us, at least those of us who are here, at present this year, to interest ourselves vitally in the *o*-object, since it happens that at least one of them is found to be connected to its surroundings.

At least one of them, and even two, the second, namely the penis, having being found to occupy in this determining of the subject, an altogether fundamental place.

(2) The way in which Freud articulates this knot introduces a great novelty as regards the nature of the subject. It is particularly opportune to remind oneself of it when the necessity of the becoming of this subject made us have it come from a completely different direction, namely, from the “I think”. And you ought really to sense that if I take so much trouble to articulate it for you starting from the “I think”, it is, of course, to bring you back to the Freudian terrain which will allow you to conceive of why it is the subject that we grasp in its purity at the level of the “I think”, has this close connection with two *o*-objects which are so incongruously situated.

It must be said moreover that we, who do not have a set purpose, we do not have the special aim of humiliating man, we will notice that there are two other *o*-objects, a curious thing, which remained, even in Freudian theory, half in the shadow, even though they play their role in it, with an active agency, namely, the look and the voice.

I think that the next time I will come back to the look. I gave two or even three celebrated seminars, as they say, in the first year of my lectures here, in which I tried to make you sense the dimension in which there is inscribed this object that is called the look.

Some of you surely remember this. Those who have been coming for a long time to my seminar could not have failed to notice their importance. And since I will have the opportunity, I think, the next time, to put the whole emphasis on it, I would like, from today, for those who represent the sacred battalion of my audience, namely yourselves, (3) to recommend between now and then, because this will render much more intelligible the references that I will make to it, what has appeared in the very brilliant book that our friend Michel Foucault has just published, what appeared in the first chapter of this book under the title: *Las Meninas (les suivantes)*, Chapter I of Michel Foucault's book entitled for those who are hard of hearing today, en-ti-tl-ed *Les mots*

et les choses [The order of things]. It is a beautiful title. In any case, this book will not disappoint you and in recommending you to read the first chapter, I am, in any case quite sure of not doing him a disservice, for it will be enough for you to read this first chapter, for you to throw yourselves voraciously into all the others.

Nevertheless, I would like a certain number of you at least to have read this first chapter between now and the next time, because it is difficult not to see inscribed there, in an extraordinarily elegant description, something which is precisely this double dimension which, if you remember, I had represented formerly by two opposing triangles, that of vision, with here this ideal object that is called the eye and which is supposed to constitute the vertex of the plane of vision, and what is inscribed in the opposite sense in the form of the look. When you have read this chapter, you will be able, you will be much more at ease in understanding what I will contribute as a continuation to it the next time.

Another little read, to distract you, to read in the shower, as they say, there is an (4) excellent little book which has just appeared with the title of: *Paradoxes de la conscience*, written by someone whom we all esteem, I imagine, because we have all, at some moment or other, opened one of his books, which are nourished by great scientific erudition, who is called Monsieur Ruyer. It is pronounced Ruyer, it appears. Raymond Ruyer, a professor at the faculty of letters in Nancy, Monsieur Ruyer who, in this provincial retreat, has pursued for long years a work of development that is extraordinarily important from the epistemological point of view, gives you here a sort of collection of anecdotes, which, I would say, in my eyes, have a quite extraordinary cathartic value, that of reducing, in effect, what one could call the paradoxes of consciousness, to the form of a sort of *almanach Vermot*, which is all the same rather interesting, I mean, puts them in their place, in their place, in short, as good stories. It seems that for a good while the paradoxes which attract us must be something other than paradoxes of consciousness.

In short, under this rubric, you will see there being summarised all sorts of paradoxes, some of which are extremely important, precisely because they are not paradoxes of consciousness, but when one reduces them to the level of consciousness, they become nothing more than trifles. This is an extremely invigorating read, and it seems that a good part of the philosophy programme ought to be put definitively outside the field of teaching after this book which shows the exact import of a certain number of problems which are not such.

(5) What else can I recommend to you? There is in the last two numbers of *Esprit* a commentary by someone whom I am told is a reverend Dominican father and which is signed by Jacques M Pohier, and which is devoted to the examination of a book which has been much spoken of here and to which Monsieur Tort has given his definitive sanction.

It nevertheless remains, that there is the other point of view to tackle it from, and that the religious point of view is not at all to be neglected, and I would ask you to read this article. You will see in it the way in which my teaching can be used on occasion in a religious perspective, when it is done honestly.

It is in happy contrast with the use that was made of it, precisely, in the other book that I am only designating for you here in an indirect fashion.

What else to advise you? Well, good God, I believe I have exhausted my few resources. All the same, you are going to see that today we are going to put on the agenda the examination of an article by Jones, for the interest of these closed seminars is that we should devote ourselves to the work of study and of commentary in so far as they may furnish materials, references, and also sometimes an initiation into the method of our research, and this article by Jones that we are going to see today which is called "The early development of female sexuality" and which appeared in 1927. I point this out to you, I point it out to you, because Jones wrote two other articles just as important as this one, and because the second like the first, not the third but, after all, (6) one can dispense with it, were translated, I was reminded in a happy enough way, because I had completely forgotten it, were translated in number seven of *La psychanalyse*, consecrated to female sexuality, numbers which are not perhaps out of print, so that, God knows, for those of you who are not too familiar with the English tongue, this will make it easier for you, retrospectively, I think, for those who have not yet read this first article, to grasp clearly what we will manage to say today about this article, and in reading the other one, to find in it the beginning of future works that I hope, since I hope that I will obtain just as much good will for the next closed seminars as I obtained for this one, while going at it in a rather short term fashion which deserves to be underlined here, to introduce the people who were willing to devote themselves to it, at my request.

You will find also in this number on female sexuality under the title of *Womanliness as masquerade*, which is exactly the translation of the English title, an excellent article, from an excellent psychoanalyst, called Madame Joan Riviere, who always took up the most relevant positions on all the subjects of psychoanalysis and, very especially, I mention it to you in passing, on the subject of child psychoanalysis.

You see that you will not be short of things to work on, the most urgent being to read Michel Foucault for the next time.

(7) So then, since I am very keen on this collaboration *from the floor* as they say, in the closed seminar, I am going to give the floor right away to Mademoiselle Muriel Grazien who was kind enough to make this sort of presentation, introduction, for your use, of this article by Jones which is called precocious development or early development, as you wish, of female sexuality.

You are going to see first of all what it comes down to, and I hope that I will manage to show you the use that I intend to make of it.

Mademoiselle Grazien

(On the board: *unseen man, unseeing man*)

“Unseen man” is a term that is present in the original text of Jones, and which is translated very correctly in French, but which, necessarily, lacks a little bit of ... spice.

What is there in women which corresponds to the fear of castration in men? What differentiates the development of the homosexual woman from that of the heterosexual woman? These are two questions that Ernest Jones asks himself, and that his article “The early development of female sexuality”, which appeared in the *International journal of psychoanalysis* in 1927, aims at elucidating.

Very quickly, by circumscribing the first question, Jones centres the problem around the concept of castration, and it is at this point that he pauses in order to try to elaborate a more concrete and more satisfying concept for the unfolding of a certain guiding thread of this article which is announced from the first paragraph. It is here that Jones evokes the notions of mystification and prejudice among the authors writing on the subject of female sexuality, that analysts diminished the importance of the female genital organ and had therefore adopted a phallo-centric position, as he says, in (9) connection with these questions. That these guiding threads are for Jones the opportunity to put in question again the whole concept of castration, by bringing out the points at which he is himself dissatisfied about the formulation given at that time to the concept, will not prevent Jones himself taking up this thread, at the different moments when he speaks about biological reality as fundamental.

When he underlines the primordial role of the male sexual organ, “the all important part normally played in male sexuality by the genital organs”, when he speaks about the partial threat represented by castration, “castration is only a *partial* threat, however important a one, against sexual capacity and enjoyment as a whole”, when he points out that the woman is closely dependent on the man for what concerns her gratification: “for obvious physiological reasons the female is much more dependent on her partner for her gratification than is the male on his. Venus had much more trouble with Adonis, for example, than Pluto with Persephone.” Finally, when he specifies what is for him the very condition of normal sexuality: “In both cases,” (in speaking about inversion), “the situation of prime difficulty is the simple but fundamental one of union between penis and vagina.”

This unconscious bias, as Karen Horney called it, has contributed, Jones tells us, to considering questions touching on sexuality far too much from the masculine point of view, and has thus thrown into an unknown position what he calls the fundamental conflicts.

“In attempting to answer this question - *ie*, to account for the fact that women suffer from dread at least as much as men - I came to the conclusion that the concept ‘castration’, has in some respects hindered our appreciation of the fundamental conflicts.” (557) The undoubtedly more general and abstract concept, at which Jones ends up, is that of *aphanisis*. This *aphanisis* is the total, irrevocable, disappearance of all capacity for the sexual act or for the pleasure of this act. It would thus be the fear (*dread*, which in English is even more...), the fear of this situation, which is common to both sexes.

In connection with *aphanisis*, I have been thinking that this term could correspond, at the clinical level, to nothing other than the disappearance of desire, as we understand it. In that case, the fear of *aphanisis* would be expressed by a fear of the total disappearance of desire, which appears to us to be the other side of one of these coins, either the desire not to lose desire, or else the desire not to desire.

In any case, Jones will not go much further in the development of this concept that he applies to this useful end and we can suppose that it did not seem to be sufficient, either for himself, or for a more rigorous formulation of what is represented by female castration.

We will now follow Jones in the second question which he approaches through a glimpse of the normal development of the girl, the oral stage, the anal stage, the identification to the mother at the mouth-anus-vagina stage; soon followed, as he says by penis envy.

(11) In specifying the distinction between the pre- and post-oedipal, or auto- and allo-erotic penis envy, Jones recalls the function in regression of defence against a privation at this final stage, a privation of never being able to share the penis in coitus with her father, which will send the little girl back to her first penis envy, namely, to have her own penis for herself.

This is the moment at which the little girl has to choose, it is a point of bifurcation between her incestuous attachment to the father and her own femininity. She must renounce either her object or her sex, Jones underlines. It is impossible for her to keep both. I believe that it is worthwhile at this point to read for you the paragraph where he specifies it.

“There are only two possible ways in which the libido can flow in this situation, though both may, of course, be attempted. The girl must choose, broadly speaking, between sacrificing her erotic attachment to her father and sacrificing her femininity -

ie, her anal identification with the mother. Either the object must be exchanged for another one or the wish must be; it is impossible to retain both. Either the father or the vagina (including pregenital vaginas) must be renounced. In the first case feminine wishes are developed on the adult plane *ie*, diffuse erotic charm (narcissism), positive vaginal attitude towards coitus, culminating in pregnancy and child-birth - and are transferred to more accessible objects. In the second case the bond with the father is retained, but (12) the object-relation is converted into an identification, *ie*, a penis complex is developed.”

Girls who renounce the object pursue a normal development, while in the second case in which the subject abandons her sex, the non-abandonment of objects is transformed into identification and this is the case of the homosexual.

“The divergence there mentioned - which, it need hardly be said is always a matter of degree - between those who surrender the position of their object-libido (father) and those who surrender the position of their subject-libido (sex), can be followed into the field of homosexuality itself.”

Jones then makes a division within the homosexual group. “One can distinguish two broad groups here: (1) The women who retain their interest in men, but who set their hearts on being accepted by men as one of themselves. To this group belongs the familiar type of woman who ceaselessly complain of the unfairness of women’s lot and their unjust ill-treatment by men. (2) Those who have very little or no interest in men, but whose libido centres on women. Analysis shews that this interest in woman is a vicarious way of enjoying femininity; they merely employ other women to exhibit it for them.”

It is we who are now underlining that by this first division that Jones makes, there are (13) in the two homosexual sub-groups, all the woman who have chosen to keep their object, the father and to renounce their sex. It is here that it is necessary to follow attentively Jones’ presentation to see what is happening.

It is easy to see that the first group so described, covers the specific mode of subjects who had preferred to abandon their sex; while the second group corresponds to the subjects who have abandoned the father object and substitute themselves for him by identification.

So then, I repeat: while the second group corresponds to the subject who has abandoned the object, the father.

The women belonging to the second group also identify with their love object, but this object then loses all interest for them. Their external object-relations to other women is very imperfect for they represent, henceforth, only their own femininity through identification, and their goal is to obtain from it, by substitution, gratification at the

hands of a man who remains invisible to them, the father incorporated in themselves. And this is the man who remains invisible to them: *unseen man*.

After these descriptions one can only remark that this interest in women, which is fleeting in a way, seems to be brought to bear on an attribute, without there being any real object relationship. What can be understood about it if we have here a double identification, on the one hand to the father, on the other hand to the lover (*l'amante*)? (14) I am proposing that what is at stake in this example here is a symbolic operation.

- 1) That the lover is the symbol of lost femininity rather than the femininity which the subject has renounced,
- 2) This man who is invisible to her, the *unseen man* which does not mean the *unseeing man*, the father, or rather what it is, in him, that sees, that which in him is *seeing*, the eye, a symbol already evoked by Jones in his theory of symbolism and specified by him there as phallic, is the true object, for its presence is necessary, indeed indispensable, for the accomplishment of the ritual designed to render to the father what he did not give.

In order to leave you with a very gripping image of this type of relationship, I would like to read for you an episode which is seen by the narrator, Marcel, in *Swann's way*, at a moment when he, by chance, if you wish is also moreover *unseen*, namely, he has hidden himself, he is hidden by the circumstances and the scene unfolds before him without it being known that he is there. Obviously the whole scene is important. I am giving you simply a few lines:

“In the v-shaped opening of her crepe bodice Mademoiselle Vinteuil felt the sting of her friends sudden kiss; she gave a little scream and broke away; and then they began to chase one another around the room scrambling over the furniture their wide sleeves fluttering like wings, clucking and squealing like a pair of amorous fowl. At last Mademoiselle Vinteuil collapsed onto the sofa with her friend lying on top of her, the (15) latter now had her back turned to the little table on which the old music master's portrait had been arranged.”

Dr Lacan: It is her father.

Mademoiselle Grazien: “Mademoiselle Vinteuil realised that her friend would not see it unless her attention were drawn to it and so exclaimed as if she had just noticed it for the first time: ‘Oh! There is my father's picture looking at us; I can't think who can have put it there; I'm sure I've told them a dozen times that it isn't the proper place for it.’

I remembered the words that M Vinteuil had used to my parents in apologising for an obtrusive sheet of music. This photograph was evidently in regular use for ritual profanations, for the friend replied in words which were clearly a liturgical response:

‘Let him stay there. He can’t bother us any longer. Do you think he would start whining and wanting to put your overcoat on for you if he saw you now with the window open, the ugly old monkey?’ To which Mademoiselle Vinteuil replied in words of gentle reproach - ‘Come, come!’”

And further on: “She could not resist the attraction of being treated with tenderness by a woman who had shown herself so implacable towards the defenceless dead, and, springing onto her friend’s lap she held out a chaste brow to be kissed precisely as a daughter would have done with the exquisite sensation that they would thus between them inflict the last turn of the screw of cruelty by robbing M. Vinteuil, as though they (16) were actually rifling his tomb, of the sacred rights of fatherhood.”

And further on, it is the narrator who is speaking: “I knew now what was the reward that M. Vinteuil, in return for all the suffering that he had endured in his lifetime on account of his daughter, had received from her after his death.”

Dr Lacan

Merçi, Mademoiselle.

Good. Mademoiselle Grazien, in short, has given you an introduction, indeed a very rapid introduction. It is not, and, after all, we have no reproach to make to her because it is an introduction. She highlighted two very important things about this article which, even though it is short, includes, for example, certain detours that she thought she should elide, on, for example, the idea of privation and that of frustration which follows, the relationships between privation and castration, all terms which are for us, those at least who remember what I teach, of some considerable importance.

But, nevertheless, she has not done badly, since for you, who are always in the difficult position of listeners, what has been highlighted are these two terms; on the one hand the notion of *aphanisis* and on the other hand, the way that Freud, no, that Jones with his concern with looking for what is involved in castration in women, sees himself referring back to certain positions which involve references that can be qualified, properly speaking, as structural references.

It is clear - consult the article - that he does not know how to organise these structural (18) references.

He does not know how to organise them because of the same concern as the one that guides his article on symbolism, namely, to highlight in a fashion that is rigorous and valid, what constitutes the moorings of the Freudian theory of the unconscious.

Symbolism took a whole series of threads which had become detached from the principal Freudian trunk, the value of something which allows a symbolic utilisation, in the usual sense of the term, of elements highlighted by the handling of the unconscious.

This symbolic utilisation, the one which means that Jung sees in the snake the symbol of the libido, for example, is something that Freud opposed in the strongest fashion, saying that the snake, if it is the symbol of something, is the representation of the phallus.

Because of this Freud, Jones - twice I have made this slip - Jones makes great efforts to show us metaphor - since when all is said and done he is forced to adopt this linguistic reference - to show us metaphor developing in two directions.

In one direction, of an always greater lightness of content, one cannot refer to another register, even though it is not the term that he employs, but he is forced to employ so (19) many others which are all, which are all of the same order, namely, a sort of rarefaction, of emptying, or abstraction, or generalisation, in short, of respect for this sort of ordering, of hierarchy concerning the consistency of the object of the classical theory of knowledge, that, one can see clearly that what is involved is to show us that in no case does the symbol have this function, that the symbol, on the contrary, is this something which brings us back to what he calls in his language, and as he is able, primary ideas, namely, something which is distinguished by a character that is at once concrete, particular, unique, involving the totality, as one might say, and the specificity of the individual in his very life, we will say, in order not to use the term which, of course, he avoids, and which is none other than the term of being.

It is quite clear, nevertheless, that when he refers to these primary ideas, and when he inscribes precisely in them, terms concerning what being is, namely, birth, death, relationships with near relatives, for example, he designates himself something which is not a biological given, but quite the contrary, an articulation which transcends, which transposes, which transcribes this biological given within conditions of existence which can only be situated in relationships of being.

(20) The whole ambiguity of Jones' article on symbolism comes from that. Nevertheless, what he aims at, and principally his effort to show that what is involved in symbolism, circumscribes something that he does not know how to designate, but that he circumscribes all the same, in a way, by the movement proper to his *élan*, to his own concrete experience, to what is involved in analysis, he arrives at the result of putting forward in such a unique way, symbols which are all in different degrees, symbols of the phallus, that he forces us indeed to ask ourselves the question, when all is said and done, about what the phallus is in the symbolic order.

He does not convince us, far from it, that the phallus is purely and simply the penis. But he leaves open the question of the central value possessed by a certain number of entities among which the phallus is the one which is presented with the greatest incarnation, even though it is only presented behind a veil, a veil that he has not lifted.

That is why I will have this article taken up again by someone who prepared it for today but who prefers, in short, of his own accord, to put it off to a later stage, namely, let us say to our next closed seminar, I will take up, on that occasion, by way of commentary, the details of this article on the theory of symbolism, but I am already advising you that there is an article by me which appeared, if I remember correctly, in *La psychanalyse*, number six. It was in number six that it appeared?

(21) **Mr Safouan:** Five.

Doctor Lacan: Five, on Jones' theory of symbolism.

What we are doing today has, with respect to what I will have to develop then in the next seminars on the function of the **o**-object, a certain value - I would not say of anticipation - but of horizon. For, when all is said and done, there is a relationship between the place of the **o**-object in so far as it is fundamental, that it allows us, in a certain type of structure which has no other name than that of phantasy, to comprehend the determining function, determining in the manner of a support or of a mounting, I have said, which the **o**-object has in determining the splitting of the subject.

This **o**-object, as I indicated to you in my discourse earlier, and of course it is not a novelty, is presented under, not four forms, but let us say four aspects (*versants*), because of the way in which it is inserted on two aspects first of all, demand and desire, on the demand aspect, the objects that we know under the species of breast, in the sense and in the function that we give it in psychoanalysis, and of excrement or again as we express it, faeces.

The other aspect is the one that the relationship to desire has; it is therefore a function of a higher degree. For I point it out to you in passing. The earlier reading of the French text that Mademoiselle Grazien gave, reveals an incorrectness in it, what was translated by *désir* at a certain place, namely, that the homosexual was led to surrender her desire for the object in order not to surrender her sex is incorrect, in English it is (22) "*the wish*", and from the moment it is "*the wish*", it is not desire, it is the *voeu* or the demand.

We have situated the topological place of desire sufficiently with respect to demand for you to conceive of what I mean when I say, I am speaking about another aspect, in connection with the function of two other **o**-objects, namely, the look and the voice.

In these two couples an opposition is made which, from the subject to the Other can be situated as follows: the demand *of* the Other, is the **o**-object faeces, the demand *to* the Other, is the **o**-object breast.

Now then, the same opposition exists, even though it cannot fail to appear still more obscure to you, since I have not explained it to you, there are also some forms, such that the obscurity is not about the desire *of* the Other, which you will already immediately sense is supported by the voice, as this desire *to* the Other which represents a dimension that I hope to be able to open out to you, in connection with the look.

But, at the heart of the function of this **o**-object, it is clear that we should find what is altogether central to the establishment, to the institution of the function of the subject, it is very properly speaking, the function that the phallus comes to occupy at the same place which, precisely, has absolutely not the same character as regards what one can (23) something like a common question englobing in its parentheses the totality of the objects in question; it has not, it does not enter as organ, since, when all is said and done, in all these cases, and however material two of them may appear to you, it is well and truly, in all these cases, a matter of an organic representative.

Undoubtedly, it already seems less substantial, less graspable, at the level of the look and of the voice, but this is not, nevertheless, by reason simply of a sort of difference of scale, of scalar difference, as one might say, in the ungraspable character that we find the phallus here. The phallus enters, as such, in a certain function that it is now a matter of defining and which, properly speaking, can only be defined with reference to the signifier.

The double dimension which is revealed here is, as you will see, something which differentiates the slipping away, ungraspable character of the substantiality of the **o**-object when it is a matter of the look and of the voice, this slipping away, ungraspable character is absolutely not of the same nature with respect to these two objects and with respect to the phallus.

What happens when someone like Mr Jones, I am saying, nourished, inspired by the very purest style of the first analytic research into the value as discovery that the realities of experience had, still could not in any way be reduced to not being able, little (24) by little, to be drawn into a series of paths, of traces, which represent, properly speaking, with respect to this experience, a rationalisation and which is the whole one which made psychoanalysis develop along a path which, in some way, deserves to be situated in some parallelism with respect to the educative reduction, as one might say, that Anna Freud made of psychoanalysis at the level of children.

However masked such a deviation of psychoanalysis may be with respect to the adult, we can say that everything that brings into play in the present state of things and in the

way that this has been expressed, some reference, whatever it may be, to reality or again to the establishment of a better, less distorted, stronger ego, as it is put, all of this only consists in making the paths that analysis has allowed us to imagine, enter into the register of development, in the sense of a fundamental orthopaedics which dissipates, properly speaking, the sense of psychoanalytic experience. Jones is certainly not at that point, and the reality (*fait*) of what he produces before us well represents something which tends to rediscover the supporting points in a certain number of accepted references, this is what Mademoiselle Grazien alluded to in speaking about a certain number of appeals to what one could call a certain number of scientific prejudices, the primacy, for example, of the biological reference, why primacy? There is absolutely no question, of course, of neglecting it, nor even of not saying, when all is said and done, that it is first, but undoubtedly to pose it firstly as first, is where the whole error lies, for what is involved, on this occasion, is to prove it. Now, it is not proved. It is not proved, at least at the beginning, when we find ourselves before a phenomenon as paradoxical as the generality of the castration complex, in so far as generality means also its incidence in both sexes, the two sexes not finding themselves with respect to this something which is first of all presented, and in a fundamental fashion, as outlining the structure of this castration complex, involves something which refers to a part and to a part only of the genital apparatus, in the part which comes to offer itself in a manifest and visible and in a way pregnant fashion from the point of view of *Gestalt*, which in man is the penis. Not a privilege, but a privilege which takes on a value as one might say of *phanie*, of manifestation, and where it is as such, it appears, at least at first appearance, that it is introduced with a prevalent value.

Such, in other words, is the function that the castration complex is going to take on if we examine it from a certain angle. Well then, it is extremely remarkable that Jones' first step should go in the direction of a subjectivication. I am giving to this word the weight it may take on here, given what I announce about the definition of the subject for almost two years already, and for much longer, of course, for those who have more or less always been coming here.

(26) We cannot fail to see, if we are already a little practised in this perspective, the relationship between the introduction by Jones of the term *aphanisis*, in connection with the castration complex, and what I represented for you as the essence of the subject, namely, this *fading*, this perpetual movement of occultation behind the signifier or intermittent emergence, which defines as such the subject in its foundation, in its status, in what constitutes the being of the subject.

There is something twisted which allows there to be approached, in a quite different fashion the relationship of being, non-being, not in a fashion which, in a way, is extracted from it as if a judgement could grasp somewhere the relationship of being and non-being, but in a fashion which is here in some way profoundly implicated, makes us grasp that we will never in any way be able to speculate, reason, structure everything that is involved in the subject, without beginning from the fact that we

ourselves as subject, are implicated in this profound duplicity which is the same as the one the Cartesian *cogito* separates out by fixing itself on a point that is more and more reduced to the ideal, to the point of being itself the nothingness which the “I think” is, “I think” meaning nothing just by itself, which allows there to be set aside, to be divided, to be shown the degree of torsion we must suppose there is, in a way, submitted this subsistence of the subject for it to be able to appear in such a perspective, that being is dissociated between the being prior to thinking and the being that thinking gives rise to.

(27) The being of the “I am” of the one who thinks, the being which is led to emerge, from the fact that the one who thinks says “therefore I am”.

Jones’ *aphanisis* is absolutely not conceivable except in the dimension of such a being. For, how does he himself articulate it for us? What could be the recoiling of anything whatsoever which is not of the order of the subject as regards a fear of losing the capacity of what is called in English:

- 1) *capacity*
- 2) the term *sexual enjoyment*.

I know that it is very difficult to give a support which is equivalent to our French word *jouissance* to what it designates in English. “Enjoyment” does not have the same resonance as *jouissance*, and it would have, in a way, to be combined with the term “lust”, which would perhaps be a bit better.

In any case this dimension of *jouissance* which I told you the last time we were going to introduce, that it is in a way a term which of itself poses essential problems that we can really only introduce after having given its status to the “I am” of the “I think”.

Jouissance, for us, cannot but be identical to every presence of Kant. *Jouissance* can only be apprehended, can only be conceived of with regard to what is body. And from which there could never arise from a body something which is supposed to be the fear (28) of no longer having orgasm (*de ne plus jouir*). If there is something that the pleasure principle indicates to us, it is that if there is a fear, it is a fear of orgasm (*de jouir*). *Jouissance* being properly speaking an opening out whose limit cannot be seen, and whose definition cannot be seen either.

However well or badly it may orgasm, it is only a body that can orgasm or not orgasm, this at least is the definition that we are going to give to *jouissance*. For as regards what constitutes divine *jouissance*, we will put this question off, if you do not mind, until later.

Not that it is not posed. It seems to us that there is a defile that is important to grasp; it is the following, how can the relationships between *jouissance* and the subject be established?

For the subject says "I am". The centre, that I would not describe as implicit, because in fact it is formulated, it is clearly stated in Freud, the centre of analytic thinking, is that there is nothing which has more value for the subject than orgasm (*l'orgasme*).

Orgasm is the moment in which there is realised a privileged, unique, summit of happiness. This merits reflection. Because, what is more, it is no less striking that such an affirmation involves, in a way, of itself a dimension of agreement. Even those who have some reservations about the more or less satisfying character of orgasm in the conditions that we may manage to reach it, are not going, for all that, not to think (29) that if this orgasm is insufficient, there is not a truer, more substantial one that they call by some name, whether what is involved is union, the unitive way, fusion, totality, loss of self, anything you wish, it will still be orgasm that is in question.

Is it not possible for us, even if we keep a question mark attached to what is here taken as a starting point, is it not possible for us, from now on, to grasp the fact that we can consider orgasm in this, let us say, provisional function, as representing a crossing



point, or again a point of emergence, a point where precisely *jouissance*, I would say, surfaces. This takes on a privileged sense for us from the fact that where it surfaces, at the surface *par excellence*, the one that we have defined, that we are trying to grasp, as structural, as that of the subject.

I indicate also for you the references that this may take on in - why not - what we will call our system. I do not reject the word system on condition that you describe as system the fashion in which I systematise things and which is precisely made up of topological references.

We can indeed consider *jouissance*, the one that is in orgasm, as something which will be inscribed, for example, in a particular shape that our torus will take on, if our torus (30) is this cycle of desire, which is accomplished through the succession of the repeated loops of a demand, it is clear that in function of certain definitions of orgasm as a terminal point, as a point of retrogression, as you like, what would be involved is a torus constructed more or less as follows,

but here it has a punctual value, in other words, every demand is reduced to zero in it, but it is no less clear that it deceives (*il blouse*) desire.

It is what one might call the ideal and naive function of orgasm. For anyone trying to define it from introspective data, it is this short moment of annihilation, a moment moreover that is punctual, fleeting, that is represented in the dimension of everything that the subject can be in its tearing apart, in its division, that this moment of orgasm, I said of orgasm, is situated.

It is clear that it is as *jouissance*, which it is not sufficient for us to notice only in the ideal moment, I insist on the ideal, it is realised in sexual union, for us to say that it is (31) immanent in sexual union, and the proof is that this moment of orgasm is exactly equivalent in masturbation.

I am saying in so far as it represents this end point of the subject. We will retain then, in this function, only the character of *jouissance* and *jouissance* which is not yet defined or justified. But this will allow us to comprehend, provided we notice the analogy between the shape of the Klein bottle, as I might say, if in fact one can speak about the shape, but after all, since I draw it, it has a shape, if I represent it in a shape that is inverted with respect to what you normally see, in the drawing that I called its opening, its circle of reversion, the Klein bottle appears above as the point made earlier. This circle of reversion, where I already taught you to find the nodal point of these two aspects of the subject as they can be joined together from the affronting of the stitching of the being of knowledge to the being of truth, I also told you that this was the place where we ought to inscribe, precisely, as a conjunction between one and the other, what we call the symptom, and it is one of the most essential foundations not to be forgotten about what Freud always said about the function of the symptom, the fact is that, in itself, the symptom is *jouissance*.

There are, then, modes of emergence, other than orgasm, structurally analogous to *jouissance* at the level of the subject. I do not need, it would be easy but time prevents (32) me, to refer you to the number of times that Freud highlighted the equivalence of the function of the orgasm to that of the symptom. Whether he is right or wrong is a different question to knowing what he means on this occasion, and what we for our part, can construct on it.

So then, it would be well, perhaps, to look twice at it before making orgasm equivalent to sexual *jouissance*. That orgasm is the manifestation of sexual *jouissance* in man, and one singularly complicated by the function that it comes to occupy in the subject, is indeed what we have to deal with and we would be quite wrong to collapse, in a way, into one and the same reality, these three dimensions.

For this is properly speaking to reintroduce, in a dangerously masked and also ridiculous shape, the old implications of mysticism to which I alluded earlier, into the domain of an experience which in no way requires them.

Once upon a time, a poet who said “*post coitum omne animal triste*” added “*praeter* (because this bit is always forgotten) *mulierum gallumque*”, except women and cocks.

It is a curious thing, ever since what I call psychoanalytic mysticism exists, people are no longer sad after coitus. I do not know whether you have ever noticed that, but it is a fact.

(33) Women, of course, were already not sad but since the men used to be, it is curious that they no longer are so. On the contrary, when women do not orgasm (*ne jouissent pas*) they become extraordinarily depressed even though up to then they accommodated themselves extremely well to it. This is what I call the introduction of psychoanalytic mysticism.

No one has yet definitively proved that it is necessary that a woman must at all costs have an orgasm in order to fulfil her role as woman. And the proof is that people are still quibbling about what this famous orgasm is in the case of women. Nevertheless, this metaphysics has taken on such value, I know a very great number of women who are ill because they are not sure that they really orgasm (*jouissent*), while after all they are not so discontented as all that with what they have and if they had not been told that it was not that, they would not have worried about it.

This makes it necessary to dot the i's a little, about what is involved in sexual *jouissance*. If one posits first that what primarily interests us is to know what is involved at the level of the subject, this is a first way to make the question a healthier one. But one could also ask oneself the question of what is involved in it at the level of sexual union, because here, it is very remarkable that it is a strange phenomenon that we always speak as if, from the simple fact that sexual difference exists among living beings with what it requires in terms of union, the accomplishment of the union (34) is accompanied by a sort of univocal *jouissance*, and univocal in this sense that we ought quite simply to extrapolate from what we, the humans or, if you wish, the most particularly evolved primates, know about this *jouissance*.

Well then, I am not going to go into this chapter today because it is very curious that it is never treated. Indeed it is a fact that it is not. But, indeed, it is quite clear that first of all, it is impossible to define, to grasp, any signs of what one could call orgasm in most females in the animal domain. For the one or two species where one can, which only show, precisely, that one could find signs if they existed, since sometimes one does find them, it is quite clear that everywhere else one does not find them, in any case objective signs of orgasm in the female.

So then, since one could find them and one does not find them, this is already something made to throw a little doubt on the modalities of *jouissance* in sexual union. I am not saying, I do not see why I should except sexual union from the dimension of *jouissance*, which appears to me a dimension that is absolutely coextensive with that of the body.

But that it should be that of orgasm, seems to be in no way required. It is perhaps of a quite different nature and the proof, moreover, is precisely where sexual union is most (35) impressive, where it lasts for ten days, between frogs for example, that one clearly sees that what is involved is something other than orgasm. It is very important all the same.

Here we are full of metaphors. Tumescence, detumescence, is one of those which appear to me to be most extravagant. It is a matter of manifesting in the sequence of behaviours of what one could call, with regard to union, an ascending behaviour or a behaviour of approach, followed by a behaviour of the resolution of charges, after which there is produced the separation .

With the existence of an erect organ, which is very far from being universal, there are animals - I am not going to amuse myself by teaching you biology here but I would ask you to open the big treatises of zoology - there are animals who realise sexual union with the help of an organ of fixation which is completely non-tumescient since it is purely and simply a hook.

It clearly appears that orgasm in these cases, if it exists, must take on, even in the case of the male, a quite different appearance and there is nothing to say, for example, that it is liable to any subjectification. These distinctions appear to me to be important to introduce because if Jones, at the beginning, in a way, sets aside and is astonished at and this is how he introduces his notion of *aphanisis*, the distinct character, in short, (36) there is between the idea of castration as it is substantiated in experience, namely the disappearance of the penis, and something which appears to him to be more important, namely a disappearance which is not that of the penis, which for us can only be that of the subject, and that he imagines to be the fear of the disappearance of desire, even though this is in a way a contradiction in terms, for desire precisely is sustained by the fear of losing itself, that there could not be an *aphanisis* of desire, that there could not be in a subject a representation of this *aphanisis* for the good reason that desire is sustained by it.

To persevere with it in the Spinozian being is the same text and the same theme which says: "desire is the essence of man". Man perseveres in being as desire. And he cannot escape in any way from this support of desire. There is precisely the ambiguity of being able to carry on with one's own restraint and one's own fear as being an aspect of defence at the same time as an aspect of suspension, towards *jouissance*.

So then, do we not see here the whole value of the other end of the arch, of the trajectory that Jones accomplishes for us, when very firmly and how correctly, because it is a matter of introducing things at the level of the subject, he puts us, as regards the (37) woman, since she is the one in question, at the heart of the way in which the subjective *impasse* can present itself for her.

Over against the son-mother couple, from which there began, not without reason, the whole analytic exploration, he speaks to us about the father-daughter couple. And what does he tell us? Everything begins here from a privation. Father-daughter incest, as we know, for our part, from all our experience, is in its consequences - analytic ones, I cannot define them otherwise - let us say, neurotogenic, but the term is not enough because it can go so far as to have psychotic consequences; it is infinitely less dangerous, it is even dangerous to a zero degree as compared to mother-son incest, which always has devastating consequences, to which I have alluded.

At the level of the father-daughter couple, the function of interdiction, as it is exercised in its dialectical consequences, in what is called the fundamental interdiction of incest which is the interdiction of the mother, takes on a simplified form which clearly highlights the privileged function of the woman with regard to sexual union. For if the specificity of a certain sort of living being is that an organ which is at once erectile and as such privileged as a support for *jouissance*, is its ambocepteur, well then, what does that mean? It is that for her, there is no problem. To make love, if things had an absolute value, of course, is necessarily alloplastic, as I might say, implies that she should go to the one who has it. If she did not have some of the properties of the little (38) boy there would be no problem. The little boy has other ones precisely because of the fact that he can enjoy himself (*jouir de lui-même*) exactly like a little monkey.

The question would, therefore, be quite simple but this is not what is involved, precisely because there is language and the law, the father is forbidden, and the problem comes into play along this path. Now, what does Jones tell us? What does he cry out to us at the top of his voice in giving an account of his experience? What does he tell us if not that here again the woman is going to keep her advantage, is going to win, but it is necessary to see how, and in order to see how, one must not keep all these prejudices in one's head.

Let us see what he tell us. It is necessary for the woman to choose between her sex and her object. She surrenders the paternal object and she preserves her sex. There exist only two possibilities for expressing libido in this situation and both one and the other of these paths can be taken. *Grosso modo*, between abandoning her erotic attachment to the father and the abandonment of her femininity. She must change either the object or the desire. And what is he going to tell us about what is involved

at this level, let us see, describe it for us exactly, Mademoiselle Grazien, tell me exactly the place of the paragraph where he describes

Here it is. “In the first case feminine wishes are developed on the adult plane - ie, (39) diffuse erotic charm”, (he underlines), “(narcissism).”

What does that mean? The fact is that Freud, here, from his experience, the first thing that he puts forward, as regards what results from the choice that I would not describe as normal but as legal. The one who renounces the paternal object in order to preserve her sex, in short, this is what is at stake, well then, this means it is no use renouncing the object in order to preserve something, because this something that one wishes to preserve at the cost of a renunciation is precisely what one loses.

For, what has diffuse erotic charm, which consists in the manipulation in the narcissistic apparatus, have to do with the essence of femininity, if not very precisely what Madame Joan Riviere pinpointed as womanliness as a masquerade and this must indeed reflect something, which is that, precisely starting from such a choice, the woman has to take the place, for reasons which it is a matter for us of specifying, of the **o**-object.

In the paternal and patriarchalising perspective, the woman, born from the man's rib, is an **o**-object. Submitting to the law in order to preserve her sex not only does not avoid her losing it, but necessitates it.

On the contrary, it is not I who say this, it is Jones, in the other case, retaining the (40) object, namely the father, what will be the result. The result is a homosexual choice. I repeat. I can do no more today than to say: it is Jones who says it. And after all, all our previous experience behind, including the pinpointing that is a little bit incomplete because elided of the whole presence of Proust, which links this case with the whole divinatory character of his intuition and his art, but what matter!

In the other case, namely, in as far as the father-object is retained, the woman finds what? What Jones says then: namely her femininity. For in every homosexual attitude or function, what the woman finds, in place of the object and people say it is in place of the primordial object, is her femininity.

And then, a second moment of what happens within this second choice. Here, Jones' terms are not equivocal, despite himself. It is from stressing the function of what is at stake, namely, a certain object, and this object as lost, that the choice is going to be made, whether this object is going to become an object that is claimed and that the so-called homosexual becomes a woman in rivalry with men and claiming to have the phallus like them, or that in the case of homosexual love, it is *qua* not having it that she loves, namely, to realise what is in fact the high point of love, to give what she does not have.

(41) So that, when all is said and done, we would only have, and, after all, why not admit it, *jouissance* of femininity as such from this homosexual beginning, which only simply illustrates the mediating function that this phallus takes on which then allows us to designate its place.

For if what is involved as regards the status of the subject is to know what the individual (*l'être*) loses of its being by being the one who speaks or who thinks, it is also a matter of knowing what comes to take the place of this loss when it is a matter of enjoying (*de jouir*).

And what is more natural than that the privileged organ of *jouissance* should be employed here, since the fact is, as I might say, that man has it within hand's reach. But in that case, things happen at two degrees. This organ, like every organ, is used for a function. Far from the function creating the organ, there are a whole lot of animals that have organs which they have certainly for a long time never known what to make of, until they have found a way of using them. I could give you a number of them. Naturally, they are not organs absolutely like the liver or the heart. There is one that has a little saw in the oesophagus; you have to go to so much trouble to understand what he can do with it, that you are lost in admiration that he has succeeded in doing something with it. Well, it is the same thing. It is with this penis that there is going to be made something much more interesting, namely, a signifier, a (42) signifier of the loss that occurs at the level of *jouissance* through the function of the law. And what is important, is not its function as signifier. When you look a little bit more closely than most of you have done at what is called in language morphemes, you will see the function of what is called the case or the unmarked form. There can be here a termination or a flexion which indicates that it is the future, the past, the substantive, the partitive or the *torsif*. And that there is sense in the fact that there is precisely no mark in this place. This is the essence of the function of significance (*signifiance*) and if the woman keeps, retains, raised to a higher power what is given to her by not having the phallus, it is precisely by being able to make of this function of the phallus the perfect completion of what is at the heart of castration, the word phallus, namely, castration itself, it is to be able to raise the function of significance to this point by not being marked.

It is on this that I will end today, certainly forced to abbreviate things given the time. I think, at least for those who are here and who I very particularly desire should grasp where we are going to be led by this re-emergence of this castration complex, of which nobody ever speaks any more, for it is rather striking that in the last article that I told you to consult, it is a Dominican priest who is neither analysed nor an analyst who points out that in a certain book there is absolutely nothing said about the castration complex. It is not astonishing. I never taught him what it was. He could not know. But I hope that with, I think, sufficient time, namely, not later than the end of the year, (43) we will have gone a little bit further into it.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 4 May 1966

It is a matter, for us, of situating our topology; to situate ourselves, we analysts, as acting in it. In a closed meeting, a small little group, someone asked me, recently, in connection with what I said about this topology - that it is not a metaphor - what is it then? What does it mean for us to situate ourselves as subjects in a reference which is not metaphorical. I did not answer; the person who was questioning me had not been at the last closed seminar and the elliptical response that I would have been able to give, would have confronted us with *jouissance*, would have been a reply that was not sufficiently commented on.

To be situated in what is no longer the metaphor of the subject, is to go searching for the foundation of its position, not at all in any effect of meaning, but in what results from the combinatorial itself.

What exactly is involved in the subject, in its classical position, from this locus (2) necessitated by the constitution of the objective world? Note that in this pure subject, the subject whose unitary reference the theoreticians and the philosophers have taken to extremes, this subject, I am saying, is not altogether believed in and with good reason. People cannot believe that the whole world is suspended on it. And it is indeed in this that there consists the accusation of idealism.

It is here that the visual structure of this subject ought to be explored. I already approached the material contributed by our analytic experience, and in the first place the screen, the screen that our analytic experience teaches us to be the principle of our doubt, what is seen does not reveal but hides something.

This screen, nevertheless, supports, for us, everything that presents itself. The foundation of the surface is at the source of everything that we describe as an organisation of form, a constellation. Henceforth, everything is organised in a superimposition of parallel planes and labyrinths are established with no exit to representation as such.

In a book that I recommended to the greater part of those who are here since, as a matter of fact, this audience is not much bigger than the one that I had the last time, a

book called *Les paradoxes de la conscience* by Monsieur Ruyer, you will see the consequences of this structural reference. Everything that we conceive of as point by (3) point correspondence of what is on one surface onto another, is imaged by the representation of a point from which the rays start, traversing the two parallel planes manifesting there a trace on a different one to that on a plane to the corresponding plane, a fundamental homothety, homology, so that, however we may manipulate the relationship of the image to the object, the result is that there must indeed be somewhere this famous subject, who unifies the configuration, the constellation, by limiting it to a few brilliant points, who unifies it somewhere, this something in which it consists. Hence the importance of the subject.

But this flight into a mythical unity, in which it is easy to see the requirement of the pure unifying spirit, the path, the path along which I am leading you, which is properly speaking what is called method, culminates at this topology which consists in this remark that it is not at all by seeking something that is going to correspond to this surface at the back of the eye which is called the retina or moreover to any other, at whatever point the image is formed, that it is a matter of referring to as constituting the unifying element. Of course, this begins from the Cartesian distinction between extension and thought. This distinction supposes that extension is space as homogenous, in this unthinkable sense that it is, as Descartes says, entirely to be (4) conceived of as *partes extra partes*, except for something which is hidden in this remark, which is that it is homogenous, that each point is identical to all the others while at the same time being different, which is really what the hypothesis means, namely, that all its parts are of equal value.

Now, the experience of what is involved in this structure of space, not at all when we distinguish it from thought, from thought in so far as the signifying combinatorial supports it uniquely and fundamentally, that this space cannot effectively be at all separated from it, that it is on the contrary intimately consistent with it, that there is no need for an over-arching thought to grasp it again in this necessary coherence, that thought is only introduced into it by introducing measure into it, a measure in a way that is applicable, as in land-surveying, which far from exploring it, constructs it. I have designated here the essence of what is involved in the first steps of geometry, the trace of which is still conveyed by its name, geometry, of Greek, Euclidean geometry, entirely founded precisely on this theme of a measure being introduced, which hides that it is not at all thought which carries it but properly speaking what the Greeks themselves called measure. “Man is the measure of all things”, namely, his body, the foot, the thumb and the cubit (*la coudée*).

(5) Now, the progress of the thinking that has continued to be called geometric and, no doubt, it is not for nothing that *more geometrico* has always appeared to be the ideal for every deduction of thought, the progress, I am saying, of this geometry shows us the emergence of another mode of approach in which extension and combinatorial are closely tied together and which is, properly speaking, projective geometry.

Not at all equality, measure, an overlapping effect, but as you still remember, the often painful effort to ground the first deductions of geometry. Remember the time when you were put through the Hey presto! of a reversal onto the plane. God knows, this is an operation which did not seem to be implied in the premises to ground the status of the isosceles triangle. Displacement, translation, manipulation, even homothety; this whole operation starting from which Euclidean deduction fans out, is transformed, properly speaking in projective geometry, precisely by introducing from figure to figure the function of equivalence by transformation.

Curiously, this progress is marked, historically, by the contribution properly speaking of artists, namely, those who were interested in perspective. Perspective is not optics. (6) It is not at all a matter in perspective of visual properties but, precisely, of this correspondence of what is established concerning the figures which are inscribed on one surface with those which, on another surface, are produced from the simple consistency established of the function of a point starting from which straight lines join this point to the articulations of the first figure, to find themselves, by crossing another surface, making another figure appear.

We rediscover here the function of the screen. And it is not at all implied that between one figure and the other there should appear a relationship of resemblance or of similarity, but simply of the consistencies that we can define between the two. The screen, here, functions as what is interposed between the subject and the world. It is not an object like any other. Something is painted on it. Before defining what is involved in representation, the screen already announces to us, at the horizon, the dimension of the representative of the representation. Before the world becomes representation, its representative - I mean the representative of the representation - emerges. I will not deprive myself of the opportunity of evoking here for the first time, even if only to come back to it, a notion which, although prehistoric, cannot in any way be taken as archaeology in the matter.

(7) Cave picture (*l'art pariétal*) the one that we find precisely at the bottom of these closed spaces that are called caves, is it not a fact that in its mystery, whose principal one is undoubtedly that we still remain embarrassed as regards knowing the degree to which these places were illuminated; they were so only at the opening, to what degree these places were visited, they seem to have been rarely so if we are to believe the traces that we can pick out in the shape of traces of footprints in places which, nevertheless, are capable of carrying such marks.

Cave picture seems to refer us to nothing less than to what, later, is announced in the Platonic myth of the cave, which would then take on a different import, in effect, than a metaphorical one. If it is into the womb of a cave that Plato tries to take us in order to give rise for us to the dimension of the real, is it by chance that no doubt what is found on these walls, where recent explorations by methods which are scientific, and which are no longer breathless before these figures, imagining the man of earliest

times in some anxiety or other about bringing back enough for the midday meal to his bourgeois wife, this exploration which, for its part, being brought to bear not on the imaginative interpretation of what can be involved in the relationship of an arrow and (8) an animal, especially when it appears that the wound carries the most obvious traces of being a vulvar representation, this method which brought into play, with M Leroy-Gourant, a carefully maintained card index, indeed even the use of an electronic machine, shows us that these figures are not scattered around at random, and that the constant, univocal frequency of deer at the entrance, of bison in the middle, introduces us directly, in a way, even though M Leroy-Gourant, and with good reason, does not make use of this reference point which, nevertheless, is very simple, which is immediately given to him by the import of my teaching, namely, that there is no need for those who participated, very obviously, around these pictures which are still enigmatic for us, in a form of worship, that these people had no need to go to the back of the cave for the signifiers at the entrance to represent them for the signifiers at the back, which had no need, on the contrary, to be so frequently visited, as such, outside of the precise time for initiation.

Everything that accompanies these singular processions, lines of points, arrows which appear here to be much more directing of the subject than conveying an alimentary intention, everything indicates to us that a structural chain, that a distribution whose essence is properly speaking to be signifying, and this something which, of itself, can (9) give us the guide of a thinking, that is at once firm and prudent, with respect to what is in question.

The function of the screen as a support, as such, of significance is what we find immediately with the awakening of this something which, as regards man, assures us that, whatever tone of voice he emitted there, he was a speaking being.

It is here indeed that it is a matter of grasping in a closer way the relationship of significance to visual structure which is found, by the force of things, namely, by the fact that it seems, as far as anyone knows, that we will never have any trace of the voice of these first men, it is undoubtedly from the style of writing that we find the first manifestations in him of the word.

I do not need to insist on a very curious fact that these representations also highlight, that people go into ecstasy about the fact that they are naturalist, as if we had not learned from our analysis of realism the point to which, in every art, it is fundamentally metonymical, namely, designating something other than what it presents to us, these realistic shapes represent with a remarkable constancy this oscillating line which is (10) expressed in fact by the shape of this elongated S in which I, for my part, would see no inconvenience to see intersecting that of the S with which I designate the subject for you. Yes. Exactly for the same reason that when Monsieur Hogarth tries to designate what is involved in the structure of the beautiful, it is also exactly and specifically to this S that he refers.

To give body, of course, to these extrapolations, which may, I agree, appear to you to be bold, we must now come to what I earlier called the visual structure of this topological world, the one on which there is founded any establishment of the subject. I said that this structure is logically prior to the physiology of the eye and even to optics, that it is the structure which the progress of geometry allows us to formulate as giving, in an exact form, what is involved - I underline exact - what is involved in the relationship of the subject to extension.

And, undoubtedly, I am of course prevented by simple considerations of propriety from giving you here a lecture on projective geometry. It is necessary then that by a few indications, I stimulate the desire in you to refer to it, by means of some apologies, to make you sense its proper dimension.

Projective geometry is properly speaking combinatorial, combinatorial of points, of (11) lines, of surfaces that can be traced out rigorously, but whose intuitive foundation - what points, lines, planes, evoke for you - is dissipated, is reabsorbed, and finally vanishes behind a certain number of purely combinatorial necessities, such as, for example, that the point will be defined as the intersection of two lines, that two lines will be defined as always cutting one another, for a combinatorial definition is not valid if it involves exceptions of the intuitive order. If we believe that parallels are precisely lines which do not cut, two lines will always cut one another at a point, and one may make out as best one can, but it is necessary for this point to exist.

Now, it appears that precisely this point exists, and that it is even by making it exist that projective geometry is founded and it is indeed in this that there consists the contribution of perspective, the fact is that it is precisely by projecting it onto another plane that one will see appearing, on this other plane, in a way whose interest is not that it is intuitive there, namely, perfectly visible in the joining of two lines on the horizon line, but that it has to correspond, according to strict laws, to an expected equivalence, starting from hypotheses that are purely combinatorial, I repeat, which are the ones which will be pursued in the terms that two points, for example, will only (12) determine a single straight line, and that two straight lines cannot cut one another at two points.

To make you sense what is involved in such definitions, I remind you, that the result is that in encountering the manipulations of Euclidean proofs, the admission of these principles, which are summarised in a form called the principle of duality, a purely projective, non-metrical, geometry can with confidence translate a theorem established in terms of points and of lines, by substituting point for line in its statement and line for point, and by obtaining a statement that is certainly as valid as the preceding one.

This is what emerges in the 17th century with the genius of Pascal, already prepared, without any doubt, by the multiple advent of a mental dimension as it is always

presented in the history of the subject, which means, for example, that the theorem described as Brianchon's which states: "That a hexagon formed by six straight lines which are tangents of a conic" - therefore the hexagon circumscribes, I imagine that you know what a conic is, but I remind you, a conic is a cone, it may be a hyperbola or a parabola, which means, on this occasion, that it is a matter of some of their shapes as they are generated in space and not simply in the form of revolutions; a cone being (13) defined then by the shape that it presents in space, through the enveloping of a line joining a point to a circle, for example, and not necessarily joining it from a point situated perpendicular to its centre - "all of these lines then present the property that the three lines that join the opposite vertices, which is easy to determine whatever the shape of the hexagon may be, by simply counting, these three lines converge in one point."

From the simple fact of admitting the principles of projective geometry, this is immediately expressed by the fact that a hexagon formed by six points which repose on a conic, which is thus an inscribed hexagon, that in this case, the three points of intersection of the opposite sides, are on the same line.

If you have listened to these two statements, you see that they can be translated from one to the other by simple substitution, unequivocally, from point to line and from line to point. There is here in the process of the proof, as you clearly sense, something completely different to what brings into play measuring, ruler or compass, and that, as regards the combinatorial, it is indeed with points, with lines, indeed with planes, in terms of pure signifier and, moreover, with theorems that can be written out simply with letters that we are dealing.

(14) Now this, just by itself, is going to allow us to give a completely different import to what is involved in the correspondence of an object with what we will call its figure.

Here, we will introduce the apparatus which served us already as being essential to confront this mythical image of the eye which, whatever it may be, eludes, elides what is involved in the relationship of the representation to the object, since, in some way or other, the representation in it will always be a double of this object.

Confronted with what I first of all presented to you as the structure of vision opposing to it that of the look, and in a first approach, I put this look where it is grasped, where it is supported, namely, where it is scattered in this work that is called a picture.

The sort of originating relationship of the look with the stain, in so far even as the biological phylum (*phylome*) may make it effectively appear to us in extremely primitive organisms, in the form of a stain, starting from which the localised sensitivity that the stain represents in its relationship to light, can serve us as an image, as an example, for this something where the visual world originates.

But undoubtedly this is only an evolutionary equivocation whose value can only take (15) on, can only be affirmed as a reference by being referred to a perfectly graspable synchronic structure. What is involved in what are opposed as field of vision and as look precisely at the level of this topology?

Undoubtedly, the picture is going to continue to play a role in it, and this should not astonish us, if we have already admitted that something like a *montage*, like a mounting, like an apparatus, is essential for what we are aiming at having the experience of, namely, the structure of the phantasy. And the picture about which we are going to speak, because it is in this sense that we expect it to be of service, and of use, it is indeed as it is mounted on the easel that we are going to take this picture, as something which holds up as a material object, this is what is going to serve us as a reference for a certain number of reflections.

In projective geometry, this picture is going to be the plane that I spoke about earlier onto which, as everyone thinks, the lines that we will call, if you wish, ocular lines, so that there will be no equivocation with visual rays, the lines which join the essential point at the beginning of our demonstration, that we are going to call eye, and which is this ideal subject of identification of the classical subject of knowledge, do not forget for example, in all the schemas that I gave on identification, that it is from an S-point (16) of the eye that there start these lines that I trace out from this point in a straight line, an ocular line which is joined to what, to what we will distinguish as a support, point, line, even plane, in the ground plane (*plan-support*), these lines cross this other plane and the points, the lines where they cross it, indeed the crossing of the plane which will be determined with respect to one of these lines, to contain it for example, these crossings of the figure plane - I am distinguishing therefore ground-plane and figure plane - this crossing of the ocular line, leaving its trace on the figure plane, and this is what we have to deal with in what is involved in the construction of perspective. And this is what ought to reveal, materialise for us, the topology from which it results that something is produced in the construction of vision which is nothing other than what gives us the basis and the support of the phantasy, namely, a loss which is none other than the one that I call the loss of the **o**-object, and which is none other than the look and, on the other hand, a division of the subject.

What, in effect, does perspective teach us? Perspective teaches us that all the ocular lines which are parallel to the ground plane are going to determine on the figure plane a line which is none other than the horizon line. This horizon line is, as you know, the major reference point for any construction of perspective.

(17) What does it correspond to in the ground plane? It corresponds also, if we maintain firmly the principles of the consistency of this combinatorial geometry, to a line. This line is, properly speaking, the one that the Greeks, in fact, only missed for reasons that today we will leave to one side, even if we ought one day to put them in

question, that the Greeks could not but miss and what is, properly speaking, this line, a line that is also, and from our principles, also a straight line which is found at infinity on the ground plane and that, intuitively, we can only conceive of as representing, as I might say, the whole of it.

It is on this line that there are found the points where in the ground plane the parallel lines converge, which is shown in the figure plane, as you know, by the convergence of almost all the parallel lines at the horizon.

This is imaged, in general, and one sees it written by the best authors, this is something you know well, when you see a road going off towards the horizon, it becomes smaller and smaller, narrower and narrower. People forget only one thing, the danger of such references, for everything that we know as horizon is a horizon of our terrestrial ball, (18) namely, a completely different horizon, determined by the spherical shape, as is noted elsewhere, moreover, without seeing in this, it seems, the slightest contradiction, as is noted when we are told that the horizon is the proof of the roundness of the earth.

Now, I would ask you to notice that even if we were on an infinite plane, there would always be a horizon line, for anyone who stood upright on it. What troubles and disturbs us in this consideration of the horizon line, is first of all what I will come back to later, namely, that we never see it except in a picture.

We will see later what is involved in the structure of a picture. Since a picture is limited, it does not even cross our minds that if the picture were infinitely extended, the horizon line would be straight to infinity, to such a degree on this occasion, do we satisfy ourselves with having simply to think in a crudely analogical way, namely, that the horizon there on the picture, is a horizon like our horizon, which one can go around.

Another remark is the following: it is that a picture is a picture and perspective is something different. We are going to see later how we get out of it in the picture.

But if you begin from the conditions that I gave you for what must come to be traced (19) on the figure plane, you will notice the following, which is that a picture made under these conditions, those of strict perspective, would have as an effect, if you suppose, for example, because you have to hang onto something, that you are standing on a plane covered by a pattern of squares going to infinity, that this pattern of squares has, of course, stopped - we will see later how - at the horizon.

And above the horizon? Naturally, you are going to say the sky. But not at all, not at all, not at all, not at all. Above, what is there, on the horizon, behind you, as I think that if you reflect on it, you can immediately grasp it, by drawing the line which joins

the point that we have called S to what is behind on the ground plane which you will immediately see is going to be projected above the horizon.

Let us suppose that at this horizon of the projective plane there comes, from the ground plane, to be stitched at the same point of horizon, the two opposite points of the ground plane, one, for example, which is on your extreme left on the horizon line of the ground plane, will come to be stitched to another one which is on your extreme right, also on the horizon line of the ground plane.

(20) Have you understood? I mean No? Let us begin again.

You have a surface in front of you. You have in front of you a plane made out in squares. Let us suppose, for the greatest simplicity that it is horizontal and that you, for your part, are vertical. It is a line joining your eye - I am going to say things that are as simple as possible - to some point or other of this chequered ground plane and at infinity which determines on the vertical plane, let us say, to satisfy you, which is that of projection which is going to determine the correspondence point by point.

To every point on the horizon, namely, at the infinity of the ground plane there corresponds a point on the horizon of your vertical plane. Reflect on what is happening. Of course, it is a matter of a line which, precisely, as I began to say, has nothing to do with a visual ray. It is a line which starts behind you from the ground plane and which goes to your eye. It is going to end up on the figure plane at a point above the horizon. To a point which corresponds to the horizon of the ground plane there is going to correspond another point coming to touch it from above, as I might say, on the horizon line, and what is behind you, on the right, since this passes and is crossed at the level of the eye point, is going to come exactly in the opposite sense to (21) which it would present itself if you were to turn around, namely, that what you would see on the left, if you were to turn towards this horizon, you would see being picked out on the right, above the horizon line on the projective plane, of the projection.

In other words, that a line that we cannot define as round, since it is only round because of our daily apprehension of terrestrial roundness, that it is from this line, which is at infinity on the ground plane, that we will see the points knotting together, coming respectively from above, and from below, and in a way that, for the horizon behind, is attached in a strictly reverse order to what is involved for the horizon in front.

I can, of course, on this occasion, suppose, as Plato does in his cave, my head fixed and, consequently, determining two halves of which I can speak, as regards the ground plane. What you see there is nothing other, moreover, than the pure and simple illustration of what is involved when I represent the projective plane for you on the board in the form of a cross-cap, namely, that what you see, instead of a spherical

world, is a certain ball knotted in a certain way, crossing itself and which means that (22) what presented itself at first as a plane to infinity, comes in another plane, having been divided, to be knotted onto itself at the level of this horizon line; and to be knotted in such a way that to each one of the horizon points of the ground plane, is knotted what? Precisely, what the shape that I already put on the board of the projective plane, namely, its diametrically opposite point. It is indeed for this reason that it comes about that in such a projection, it is the point behind on the right which is knotted to the point in front on the left.

This is what is involved in the horizon line, indicating to us, already, that what gives its consistency to a signifying world with a visual structure, is an envelope structure and not at all one of indefinite extension. It nevertheless remains, that it is not at all enough to say these things as I have just imaged them for you, for I forgot in the question the squares that I had put there uniquely to be of use to you, but which is not indifferent, for a pattern of squares being made up of parallel lines, it must be said that having also admitted the fact that I fixed my head, all the parallel lines of space, as you have, I think, no difficulty in imagining, are going to rejoin at a certain vanishing point at the horizon, one single point, namely, that it is the direction of all the parallel lines in (23) a certain given position which determines the unique horizon point at which they are going to cross in the figure plane.

If you have this infinite pattern of squares that we are speaking about, what you will see joining together at the horizon, will be all the parallel lines of all the squares at a single point. Which does not prevent it being the same point where all the parallel lines of all the pattern of squares behind, will also join together from above.

These remarks which are fundamental for any science of perspective and which are those that any artist who has trouble ordering anything whatsoever, a series of figures on a picture, or moreover the lines of what is called a monument, which is the arrangement of a certain number of objects around a void, will take into account; and that this point on the horizon line that I spoke about earlier in connection with the pattern of squares is exactly what is usually called, I do not see that I am contributing here anything that is really all that transcendent, the vanishing point of the perspective. This vanishing point of the perspective is properly speaking what represents in the figure the eye that looks. The eye is not to be grasped outside the figure, it is in the figure and everyone, ever since there has been a science of perspective, has always (24) recognised it as such and called it that. It is called the eye in Alberti; it is called the eye in Vignola; it is called the eye in Albrecht Dürer. But that is not all. For I regret that I have been made waste time in explaining this point that is really very accessible, that is not all. That is not at all the whole story for there are also things which are between the picture and me.

The things that are between the picture and me, can also, by the same procedure, be represented on the plane of the picture. Or they will go towards depths that we can

hold to be infinite, none of this hinders us, but they will stop at a point which corresponds to what? To the plane parallel to the picture which passes - I am going to say, to facilitate things for you - which passes through my eye or through the point S.

We have here two traces. We have the trace of that through which the picture has cut the ground (*support*). It is the inverse of the horizon line. In other words, it is what, if we were to reverse the relationships, and we have the right to, constitutes as horizon line in the ground, the infinite line in the figure. And then, there is the line which represents the section of the ground by the plane of the picture. They are two lines.

(25) It is late and I will tell you something much less rigorous because of the little time that remains to me. Things take much longer to explain than might appear at first.

Rigorously, this means that there is another eye point (*point d'oeil*) which is the one constituted by the line to infinity on the figure plane, and its intersection by something which is well there, namely, the line through which the figure plane cuts the ground plane.

These two lines cut one another since they are both on the figure plane. And what is more, they cut one another at a single point for this point is well and truly the same on the line to infinity.

In order to remain in the domain of images, I would say that this distance of two parallel lines which are on the ground plane, the ones that are determined by my fixed position as a looker, and the one which is determined by the insertion, the meeting of the picture with the ground plane, this gap, this gap which, in the figure plane, is only translated by one point, by a point which, for its part, is totally hidden for we cannot designate it as we designate the vanishing point at the horizon.

(26) This point essential for the whole configuration and very specially characteristic, this lost point, if you are willing to be satisfied with this image, which falls in the gap between two parallel lines as regards what is involved as regards the ground, this is the point that I am calling the point of the looking subject.

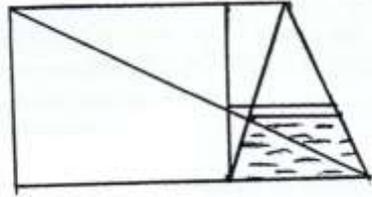
We have therefore the vanishing point which is the point of the subject *qua* seeing (*voyant*), and the point which falls in the gap between the subject and the figure plane which is the one that I am calling the point of the looking (*regardant*) subject.

This is not a novelty. It is a novelty to introduce it in this way, to find in it the topology of \$, with respect to which it must now be known where we situate the (o) which determines the division between these two points. I am saying, of these two points in so far as they represent the subject in the figure.

Going further will allow us to establish an altogether rigorous apparatus, *montage*, which shows us at the level of the visual combinatorial, what the phantasy is.

Where we will have to situate it in this totality, is what will be said later.

But from now, so that you do not think that I am leading you here into abyssal regions (27) - I am not doing depth psychology, I am trying to do geometry, and God knows I have taken precautions, after having read everything that may be referred to this history of perspective, from Euclid, who missed it so completely in his *Aphorisms*, down to the people of whom I spoke earlier, and even to Michel Foucault's last book which directly alludes to these matters in his analysis of *Las Meninas* (*Les suivantes*) in the first chapter of *Les mots et les choses*, I tried to give you something that would



be altogether a support for it, it must be said.

But as regards this perfectly defined point that I have just given as the second point representing the seeing subject in the projective combinatorial, do not believe that I am the one who invented it. But it is represented otherwise, and this otherwise has already been called by people other than myself, the other eye, for example.

It is exactly well known by all painters, this point. For since I told you that this point, in its rigour, falls into the gap as I defined it on the ground plane, in order to situate itself at a point that you naturally cannot highlight, but which is required by the fundamental equivalence of projective geometry and which is found in the figure point, (28) it is all very well for it to be at infinity, it finds itself there. How is this point used?

It is used by all of those who have made pictures by making use of perspective, that is very exactly between Masaccio and Van Eyck in the form of what is called the other eye, as I told you earlier. It is the point which allows there to be constructed any plane perspective in so far as it vanishes, in so far as it is precisely in the ground plane. It is constructed very exactly in this way in Alberti. It is constructed a little differently in what is the *pélerin*. Here it is:

(29) This is what is involved in discovering perspective, namely, a pattern of squares, for example, whose base is supported here. We have a reference.

If I lend myself to this, I mean if I want simply to do things that are simple for your comprehension, I put myself in the middle of this reference of the pattern of squares and a perpendicular line raised on the base of this pattern of squares gives me the vanishing point at the horizon. I will know then, already, that my pattern of squares is going to be arranged like that, with the help of my vanishing point.

But what is going to give me the height from which there is going to come the pattern of squares in perspective? Something which requires me to use my other eye. And what people discovered, rather late because, when all is said and done, the first theory is given of it in Alberti, a contemporary of those whom I have just named, Massachio and Van Eyck, well then, I will take here a certain distance, which is exactly what corresponds to what I gave you earlier, as this gap of my block on the board. On this distance, taking a point situated at the same height as the vanishing point, I make a construction, a construction which, in Alberti, passes through a vertical line situated here. I trace out the diagonal here; here a horizontal line and here, I have the limit at (30) which my pattern of squaring will end, the one that I wanted to see in perspective.

I have therefore complete freedom as regards the height that I will give to this pattern of squares taken in perspective, namely, that inside my picture I choose as I wish the distance at which I am going to place myself from my pattern of squares so that it will appear to me in perspective, and this is so true, that in many classical pictures, you have in a masked form a little stain or indeed sometimes quite simply an eye.

An indication, here, of the point from which you yourself ought to take, the distance that you ought to put yourself from the picture, in order that the whole effort of perspective may be realised for you. As you see, this opens up another dimension which is the following, this one which is exactly the same as the one that astonished you earlier, when I told you that above the horizon there is no sky. There is sky because you put at the back, on the horizon, a strut (*portant*) which is the sky. The sky is never anything but a strut in reality as in the theatre, and in the same way, between you and the sky there is a whole series of struts.

(31) The fact that you can choose your distance in the picture, and in any picture whatsoever in the picture, and already the picture itself is a taking of distance, for we do not make a picture of you in the opening of the window in which you are framed.

Already you make the picture within this frame. Your relationship with this picture and what it has to do with phantasy, will allow us to have reference points, an assured figure for everything which, subsequently, will allow us to show the relationships of the o-object with the \$, this is what I hope, and I hope a little bit more quickly than today, I will be able to present for you the next time.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 11 May 1966

As regards knowledge (*savoir*), it is difficult not to take into account the existence of the knower (*savant*), knower taken here only as the support, the hypothesis of knowledge in general, without necessarily giving it the connotation of scientific.

The knower either knows something or he knows nothing. In both cases, he knows that he is a knower.

This remark is simply made to highlight for you this problem which has been prepared for a long time and, I would even say, presentified not simply since I have been teaching, but since I made my first remarks about the fundamentals that analysis reminds us of, and which is centred around the function of narcissism or the mirror stage.

Let us say, to go quickly, since we began late, that the status of the subject, in the broadest sense, in the sense not yet clarified, not at all in the sense whose structure I am in the process of trying to circumscribe for you, what is called the subject in general, which means simply, in the case that I have just spoken about, there is knowledge therefore there is a knower.

(2) The fact of knowing that one is a knower cannot but be profoundly enmeshed in the structure of this knowledge. To go straight at things let us say that the teacher (*professeur*), since the teacher has a lot to do with knowledge since he transmits knowledge, he has to cart around a certain quantity of knowledge, which he went looking for either in his experience, or in an accumulation of knowledge that has been done elsewhere and which is called, for example, in one or other domain, philosophy for example, tradition.

It is clear that we cannot overlook that the preservation of the particular status of this knower, I evoked the teacher but there are many other statuses, that of the doctor, for example, that the preservation of his status is of a nature to divert, to give a certain direction to what, for him, for his part, will appear to be the general status of his knowledge. The content of this knowledge, the progress of this knowledge, the high point of its expansion cannot but be influenced by the protection necessary for his status as a knowing subject.

This seems to me to be rather obvious if one thinks that we have before us the materialisation made tangible by social consecration of this status which mean that a gentleman is not considered to be a scholar (*savant*) uniquely in the measure that he knows or that he continues to function as a scholar, considerations of productivity (3) come here very far behind those of maintaining a permanent status for the one who has acceded to a scholarly function.

This is not unjustified, and on the whole it suits everyone; everyone adjusts to it very well. Everyone has his place; the scholarly knower in designated places, and one does not look too closely to see if his knowerliness, from a certain moment on, is repeating itself, is getting rusty, or has even become a pure semblance of knowerity.

But as in the case of many social crystallisations, we should not stop simply at what pure social exigencies, what are habitually called group functions and how a certain group takes on a more or less privileged status for reasons which are, when all is said and done, to be traced back to a certain historic origin.

There is indeed here something structural which, as the structural often forces us to notice it, goes way beyond a simple inter-relationship of utility. One may consider that from the point of view of output, there would be an advantage in making the status of the knower less stable. But we have to believe, precisely, that there are in the mirages of the subject, and not in the structure of the subject itself, something which ends up with these stable structures, which necessitates them.

(4) If psychoanalysis forces us to put in question again the status of the subject, it is no doubt because it tackles this problem, the problem of what a subject is, from a different starting place. If, for long years, I was able to show that the introduction of this experience of analysis into a field which can only be mapped out by joining to it a certain putting in question of knowledge in the name of truth, if the scansion of this field is to be sought at a more radical point, at a point prior to this encounter, to this encounter of a truth which poses itself and proposes itself as foreign to knowledge, as we have said, this is introduced first from the angle of demand, which first of all, in a perspective which is subsequently reduced, proposes itself as more primitive, as more archaic, and which makes it necessary to question how there are ordered, in their structure, this demand and something with which it is discordant and which is called desire.

This is how that from this angle, in a certain way in this structural splitting, we have come to put in question the status of the subject, to consider that, far from the subject appearing to us as a pivotal point, a sort of axis around which there would turn whatever may be the rhythms, the pulsation that we might attribute to what turns, around which there might turn, the expansions and the retreats of knowledge.

(5) We cannot consider the drama that is played out, that grounds the essence of the subject as it is given to us in analytic experience, by introducing the angle of desire at the very heart of the function of knowledge, we cannot do it on the foundations of the status of the person which, when all is said and done, is what has dominated up to now the philosophical view which was taken about the relationship of man to what is called the world in the form of a certain knowledge.

The subject appears to us to be fundamentally divided in the sense that to question this subject, at the most radical point, namely, whether or not it knows anything, is Cartesian doubt; we see what is the essential thing in this experience of the *cogito*, the being of the subject when it is questioned, fleeing, in a way, diverging, in the form of these two ranks of beings which only coincide in an illusory form, the being which finds its certainty by manifesting itself as being at the heart of this questioning, “I think”: thinking that I am, but I am what thinks and to think: I am, is not the same thing as being what thinks.

A point that is not noticed but which takes on its whole weight, its whole value by being crosschecked, in analytic experience, with the fact that the one who is that which thinks, thinks in a way that the one who thinks: “I am”, is not aware of.

(6) This is the subject whom there is charged to represent the one who, directing the analytic experience, and being called the psychoanalyst, sees there being posed again for him what is involved in the question of the knower.

The relationship of the psychoanalyst to the question of his status takes up again here, in the form of a sharpness that has been increased tenfold, the one which has always been posed concerning the status of the one who possesses knowledge, and the problem of the formation of the psychoanalyst is really nothing other than, through a privileged experience, to allow there to come to birth, as I might say, subjects for whom this division of the subject is not simply something that they know but something in which they think.

It is a matter of there coming to birth some people who will know how to discover what they experience in psychoanalytic experience, starting from this position that is maintained that they will never be in the position of failing to recognise that at the moment of knowing, as analysts, they are in a divided position.

Nothing is more difficult than to maintain in a position of being what, undoubtedly, for each one if he deserves the title of analyst, had been, at some moment experienced in the experience.

So there you are.

(7) From the moment that the status of the one who is supposed to know is established in the analytic perspective, there is reborn all the prestige of specular miscognition

which cannot but reunify this status of the subject, namely, let drop, elide the other part which is the one that, all the same, ought to be the effect of this unique experience, ought to be the separating effect with respect to the rest of the flock, that some people should not simply know it but should, should at the moment of approaching any experience of the order of their own, should conform to those who at least have a presentiment about what is involved in this divided structure.

It is nothing other than the sense of my teaching to recall this exigency when, undoubtedly, the means of being introduced into it are elsewhere, but that through a structure, I repeat, which goes way beyond its social conditioning, something, whatever the experience may be, from the simple fact of the functioning in which each one is identified to a certain nameable status, in this case that of being a knower, tends to put into the shadows the essential of the *schize* through which alone, nevertheless, there can be opened up an access to the experience which is at the proper level of this experience. It is as divided subject that the analyst is called on to respond to the demand of the one who enters with him into an experience of subject (*expérience de sujet*).

(8) That is why it is not pure refinement, an ornamental detail, the depiction of a particular sector of our experience which might illustrate, in a way, what must be added in terms of information to what we may be able to know, for example, about the scopoc drive, that the last time I was led to develop before you the functions of the notion of perspective.

It is in the measure, on the contrary, that it is a matter for you of illustrating what can sustain by its apparatus, around what the subjectivity of the analyst must take its bearings, and in taking his bearings never forget even when the second vanishing point, as I might say, of his thinking, tends to be forgotten, elided, left to one side, at least because of the strength of some schema, sees himself being reminded that he ought to seek out the place where there functions this other vanishing point at the very moment, in the very place at which he tends to formulate some truth which from its very expression, if he is not careful, will see itself falling into the old unitary schemas of the subject of knowledge and will encourage him, for example, to put in the foreground one or other idea of totality which is, properly speaking, what he ought to most distrust in the synthesis of his experience.

(9) The last time, trying by abbreviated paths to presentify for you what the experience of perspective can contribute to us and teach us, even though I chose these paths to be as practical as I could, no doubt, I had the feeling of not always having succeeded in concentrating, if not all your attention, at least to have always succeeded in compensating it.

For want perhaps of some schema, and, nevertheless, this indeed is what I intended to reject, to pull back from in order to avoid some misunderstanding, nevertheless, I am

going to do it today, to summarise it, and to say what, in this experience of perspective, can properly speaking illustrate for us what is involved, namely, the relationship between the division of the subject and what specifies, in analytic experience, the properly visual relationship to the world, namely, a certain *o*-object.

This *o*-object that up to now, and in an approximate fashion, one which moreover was not taken up, I distinguished from the field of vision as being the function of the look, how can this be organised in experience, structural experience, in so far as it establishes a certain type of thinking in geometry, in so far as it is made tangible in all functioning (10) of art and especially in painting.

The last time I made, verbally, a construction which is easy to find as such in a work on perspective. This is not the one in question: it was brought me just a few moments ago. It is the work, for example, or rather the collection of articles by Erwin Panofsky on perspective. There is a German edition which comes from somewhere else in which the articles, I see, are grouped differently to this Italian edition.

I recalled that, in the relationship which is described as projective which is established between the plane of what one could call the picture and the plane of what, in order to be simple today we will call the ground plane (*le sol perspective*), there are fundamental linear correspondences which are established and which imply elements that are properly speaking non-intuitable and which are, nevertheless, fundamental elements of what one can call projective space or extension.

A coherent geometry, establishing a perfect demonstrative rigour, which has nothing in common with metric geometry, namely, on condition of admitting what is happening in what I call today the perspective ground, to replace a term, I realised, that is more (11) difficult to keep in mind, the one that I used the last time, the correspondence of the lines traced, therefore, on the ground plane to lines traceable on the picture, imply that a line to infinity on the perspective ground, is translated by the line on the horizon of the picture.

This is the first step in any perspective construction. I am going to schematise it in the following fashion: suppose that this is the perspective ground here, I will leave the picture in profile for you, I am putting here what I have not yet spoken about: the eye point of the subject. I sufficiently indicated the last time what was involved for you to understand now the sense of the outline that I am going to make. I told you that independently of anything whatsoever that you have to refer yourself to in experience and specifically not the horizon as it is effectively experienced on our globe in so far as it is round, an infinite plane supposes that, from this eye-point, it is at (i), posing a plane parallel to the perspective ground, that you should determine the horizon line on the picture in accordance with the line where this parallel plane cuts the plane of the picture.

The experience of the picture and of painting tells us that any point whatsoever of this horizon line is such that the lines which come together on it correspond to parallel lines whatever they may be, on the ground plane.

(12) We can therefore choose any point whatsoever of this horizon line as centre of perspective. This is what is, in effect, done in every picture that is subject to the laws of perspective. This point is properly what, in the picture, does not correspond only, as you see, to the ground to be put in perspective, but to the position of the point S and as such, in the figure, represents the eye.

It is in function of the eye of the one who is looking that the horizon is established on a picture plane.

To this, as I told you the last time, all those who have studied perspective, add what they call the other eye, namely, the impact on perspective of the distance of this point S to the picture plane.

Now, moreover, one ensures that in the usage that one makes of it in any picture whatsoever this distance is arbitrary, it is up to the choice of the one who makes the picture. I mean that it is open to choice within the picture itself.

Does this mean that from the point of view of the structure of the subject, in so far as the subject is the subject of the look, that he is the subject of a seen world, this is what interests us, does that mean that we can neglect this part of the subject, that it only appears to us in function of an artifice, while the horizon line is structural, the fact that (13) the choice of distance is freely left to my choice, to me who is looking, I can say that what we have here is only an artifice of the artist, that it is from the distance at which I put myself mentally from one or other plane that I choose in the depths of the picture that this is therefore in a way out of date and secondary and not structural.

I am saying it is structural and no one has ever sufficiently noted it up to now. This second point, in perspective, is defined from the remark that whatever may be the distance of the provisional subject, of the subject S, which is precisely what we have to put in suspense and to see how it enters the picture, that whatever may be the distance of this subject from the picture, there is something which is simply the between him and the picture, which separates him from the picture, and this is not simply something which will be noted from the metrical value of this distance, that this distance, in itself, is inscribed somewhere in the structure and that it is here that we ought to find, not the other eye, as the authors on perspective (in inverted commas) say, but the other subject. And this is demonstrated in the way I did it the last time and which, for certain people, was not understood, and which is grounded on the remark that:

1) If we make pass through the point S a plane parallel, not this time to the ground (14) plane (*plan perspectif*) but to the picture, two things result. First of all, that this urges us to note that there exists a line of intersection of the picture with the plane, a perspective sum (*somme*) whose name is known, which is called, if we are to believe the book by Pankofsky, which is called the fundamental line.

I did not call it that the last time and it is this line here. The plane parallel to the picture which passes through the point S, cuts the plane of the perspective ground in a line that is parallel to the first.

From the representation of these two lines on the picture, what I called the last time the figure plane, there is going to be deduced what we will call the second subject point.

In effect, in the triple relationship S, subject point, picture plane, ground plane, we have seen that to the infinite line on the ground plane - I think I sufficiently indicated the last time what this infinite line means - to the infinite line of the ground plane there corresponds the horizon line on the picture plane.

In the same group of three, you can, if you look closely at it, perceive that the line defined here - let us call it line b, the one parallel to the fundamental line - has the same (15) function with respect to the infinite line of the picture plane as the horizon in the picture plane has with respect to the infinite line in the ground plane.

It is therefore represented in the figure by this infinite line, of course, in the picture, and on the other hand, as the fundamental line is already in the picture, the other subject point, while the first was defined thus, any point whatsoever on the horizon line, the subject point can be written as follows: the point of intersection of the infinite line of the picture plane with the fundamental line.

You see here that I represented in a way that is only imaged, that is insufficient, the infinite line by a circle since in short, for intuition, it is this line which is always, from all sides at infinity on any plane whatsoever.

Intuitively, we represent it as a circle but it is not a circle. This is proved by the whole way it is handled and the line by line, point by point correspondences that constitute the essential of this projective geometry. The apparent double point of encounter that it has with the fundamental line is only pure appearance since it is a line, a line to be considered as a straight line like all the other lines, and that two straight lines could (16) only have a single point of intersection.

These are not things that I am asking you to admit in the name of a construction which is my own. I cannot push open the door of projective geometry for you, and

specifically not for those who still have no practice in it. But it is very simple for any one to refer to it and to see that there is nothing to be corrected in what I am putting forward here, namely, that what results from it is that we have two subject points in every structure of a projective world or of a perspective world, two subject points, one which is any point whatsoever on the horizon line, on the plane of the figure, the other which is at the intersection of another line parallel to the first, which is called the fundamental line which expresses a relationship of the figure plane to the ground plane with the line to infinity, in the figure plane.

This deserves to be highlighted by the path along which it came, where we have been able to establish it. But once established along this path, which you will see subsequently does not fail to constitute for us an important trace every time we will have to locate this other subject point, in order to tell you now that if, in the figure plane, we trace out the horizon line which is parallel to this fundamental line, we should deduce from it that the horizon line cuts this infinite line exactly at the same (17) point where the fundamental line cuts it since it is a line which is parallel to the first one.

Whence you will see there being greatly simplified the relationship between these two points, one is any point whatsoever on the horizon line, the other is the point at infinity, in the fact that the point at infinity is not just any point whatsoever, that it is a unique point despite the fact that here, it seems to be two.

This will be for us, when it is going to be a question of highlighting the relationship of the subject in phantasy, and specifically the relationship of the subject to the **o**-object, this will have for us the value of a support, and which will merit your having spent the necessary time, no more, no more than in Descartes' demonstrations, a demonstration once it is grasped is demonstrated, but its rigour and its process must still be maintained. This is what ought to serve us, serve us as a reference every time that we have to operate in terms of the scopic phantasy.

This divided subject is sustained by a common setting (*monture*), the **o**-object which, in this schema, is to be sought for where? It is to be sought for at a point where of course it falls and vanishes, without that, it would not be the **o**-object. The **o**-object is represented here by this something which, precisely, in the figure that I hope to have shown you of it here, with this success of making something tangible out of it for you, (18) the **o**-object is what supports this joint (?), S, which I imaged here by the world of this parallel plane. What is elided in it and what, nevertheless, still exists, is what, under more than one form, I already introduced into the structural relationship of the subject to the world; it is the window in the scopic relationship of this subject at the point S from which there begins the whole construction, there appears specified, individualised in this wall, if I can express myself in that way, that is represented by this parallel plane in so far as it is going to determine the second point of the subject

in this wall, it is necessary that there should be an opening, a split, a view, a look. It is this, precisely, that cannot be seen from the initial position of the construction.

We have already seen this function of the window being of service to us last year as a surface of what can be written from the very first as function of signifier. Let us call it by the name that it deserves, it is, precisely, in this closed structure which is the one that would allow us to knot together with one another all the different planes that we have just traced out and reproduced, the structure of the projective plane in its purely topological shape, namely, under the envelope of the cross-cap. It is this something holed in this structure which, precisely, allows there to be introduced the irruption on which there is going to depend, on which there is going to depend the production of the division of the subject.

(19) Namely, properly speaking, what we call the **o**-object. It is in so far as the window, in the relationship of the look to the seen world is always what is elided, that we can represent for ourselves the function of the **o**-object, the window, namely, just as much the slit between the eye lids, namely, just as much the entrance of the pupil, namely, just as much what constitutes this most primitive of all objects in anything concerned with vision, the camera obscura (*la chambre noire*)

Now this is what I intend to illustrate for you today, to illustrate for you by a work which I told you had been put in the foreground of a recent production by an investigator, whose type of research is certainly not very distant to that of which I have charge here, in the name of analytic experience, even though he does not have the same base, nor the same inspiration, I am speaking about Michel Foucault and this picture by Velazquez which is called *Las Meninas*.

I am now going to have this picture projected before you - close the window - so that we can see in it in a tangible fashion what is allowed by a reading of something which is not at all, in a way, designed to respond to the structure of this picture itself but which, you are going to see, what it is going to allow us - what's happening? This is (20) a slide which has been loaned to me by the Louvre that I was not able to experiment with earlier and which, really, will give here only the weakest support, but which for those who have seen it, or some photograph of this picture called *Las Meninas*, or simply remember a little bit about it, will serve us as a reference point - you don't have a little pointer, something that would allow me to show things? It's not much but I suppose it's better than nothing.

There you are. So then, perhaps you can, you can see something, a little, the minimum? There at the back, can you see anything?

X: As well as earlier. Monsieur Milner tried.

Lacan: You know, its not too bad, is it. Here, you have the figure of the painter. Substitute it right away, so that all the same, you can see clearly that he is there. So, can you focus it?

X: That's it, I can't do any better

Lacan: All right. Go back to where you were. The painter is in the middle of what he is painting. And what he is painting, you see spread out on this canvas, in a way that we are going to return to. Here, this stroke that you see is the limit, the external edge, touched by light, that is why it emerges, from something which goes from here, very (21) exactly to a point which is found there. You see almost the whole height of the picture which represents to us, you see here one leg of the easel, a picture seen back-to-front (*à l'envers*).

It is on this canvas. He is working on this picture and the picture is turned round (*retourné*). What do you have to say?

This is the essential plane from which we must start. And what in my opinion Michel Foucault, whom I asked you all to read, in his very remarkable text, has eluded. It is in effect the point around which one has to make turn the whole value, the whole function of this picture.

I would say that this picture is a sort of face down card and we cannot fail to take into account that it is like a face down card, that it takes on its value by belonging to the module and the model of other cards.

This face down card is really constructed there to make you lay down your own. For in effect there was, I cannot fail to mention it, discussion, debate about what is involved in the fact that the painter, Velasquez in this case, is here at a certain distance from the picture, from this picture that is being painted.

The way in which you respond to this question, in which you will lay down your cards, is in effect absolutely essential for the effect of this picture.

This implies this dimension that this picture subjugates.

(22) Ever since it has existed, it has been the basis, the foundation of all sorts of debates. This subjugation has the closest relationship with what I call this subversion, precisely, of the subject on which I insisted in the whole first part of my discourse today, and it is precisely by being based on it that it takes on its value.

In fact, the relation to the work of art is always marked by this subversion. We seem to have admitted, with the term sublimation, something which, in short, is nothing else. For if we have sufficiently explored the mechanism of the drive to see that what

is happening in it is a return journey from the subject to the subject, provided one grasps that the return is not identical to the outward journey and that, precisely, the subject, in conformity with the structure of the Moebius strip, fastens on to itself there after having completed this half-turn which means that, starting from its front, it comes back and is stitched onto its back, in other words, that it is necessary to make two drive circuits for something to be accomplished, which allows us to grasp what is authentically involved in the division of the subject. This indeed will be shown to us by this picture, whose capturing-value depends on the fact that it is not simply what we always limit ourselves to, precisely because we only do one circuit and that, perhaps, in (23) effect, for the sort of artist we deal with, namely, the ones who consult us, the work of art is for internal use. It helps them to make their own loop (*boucle*).

But when we are dealing with a master like the present one, it is clear that at least what remains from any apprehension with this work is that the one who looks at it is fastened onto it (*y est bouclé*). There is no spectator who simply does anything more than pass in front at all speed and pay his dues to the ritual of the museum, who is not seized by the particularity of this composition, as regards which, all agree in saying that something is happening in front of the picture which makes of it something quite specific, namely, - we express ourselves as we can - that we are caught up into its space. And people give themselves a headache trying to work out the trick of construction and of the construction of perspective, through which this can be produced. Starting from there, people go further, people speculate about what is involved in the function of each of the personages and of the groups, and they do not see that all of this is only one and the same question.

People proceed generally along this path which is in effect the question which is going to remain at the heart of the problem and which is the one to which at the end I hope to be able to give the response. What is the painter doing? What is he painting?

(24) Which implies, and it is most often because it is the art critic who is involved, the form in which the question is posed: What was he trying to do? Because in short, of course, no one, properly speaking, takes seriously the question: What is he doing? The picture is there: it is finished and we do not ask ourselves what he is now painting. We ask ourselves: What was he trying to do? Or, more exactly, what idea does he want to give us of what he is in the process of painting? A point where already we obviously see marked out a relationship which, for us, is quite recognisable: what we desire and desire to know is very properly something which is something of the order of what one can call the desire of the other, since we say: What was he trying to do?

It is certainly the wrong position to take up, because we are not in a position to analyse, I would not say the painter, but a picture. It is certain that the painter did what he wanted to do, because it is there before our eyes. And that consequently, this

question, in a way, cancels itself out because it is on this hither side of the point at which it is posed, since we pose it, in the name of what he has already done. In other words in the loop-like return of which I spoke earlier, and it is already because of this (25) that the picture introduces us to the dialectic of the subject: there is a circuit already made and we have only to make the other one. Only to do that we must not miss out the first one.

The presence of the picture which occupies all this height and which, from the very fact of this height, encourages us to recognise in it the picture itself, which is presented to us by, this is something I note, in a way, in the margin of our progress which goes along a different path, that this discussion for those who have advanced this thesis that I permit myself to consider to be futile, that it is a different picture that is involved, you will see it later, we will discuss it in more detail, namely, the portrait of the king and of the queen whom you cannot, of course, see on this figure, which is of course quite inadequate, that I brought you, they are here in the background and as you know, I hope, on the whole, is present in a frame which we will have to discuss later as regards its significance, but whose testimony some people take as indicating that the king and the queen are here in front of the picture and it is them that the painter is painting.

This, in my opinion, can be refuted. For the moment, I only want to remark that it is against this background that I tell you that the size of the canvas is already an argument that can be brought that this is not the way things are and that this (26) represented canvas is exactly, represents, the picture that we have here, in so far as it is a canvas supported on a wooden easel whose framework we see here, and that, in other words, we have in this picture the representation of this picture as reality.

Here I can indeed push this little door which means that once again we find in it the crosschecking with my formula which means that the pictorial object is a *Vorstellungs- representanz*.

I am not at all saying that the painting is a representation of which the easel, the support, is the representative. If it functions here to make us perceive the truth that is there, it is in the fact that by putting ourselves into the picture which, a curious thing, is done there for the first time, for there were already things like mirrors in the picture. even numerous ones at this epoch, but the picture in the picture, which is not the play within the play, not at all, is something that was done here it seems for the first time and has scarcely ever been done since except at the level of the point where I picked it out for you, namely in Magritte.

Representation is indeed, in effect, what this figure of the reality of the picture is, but it is there to show us clearly that, at the level of reality and of representation, what is (27) traced out here in the picture and the picture mutually saturate one another. And that this is why it is highlighted for us that, precisely, what constitutes the picture in

its essence is not representation, for what is the effect of this picture in the picture: *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*. It is precisely all these personages that you see precisely in so far as they are not at all representations but that they are showing off (*en représentation*), that all these personages, whoever they may be, in their status, as they are here effectively in reality, although long dead but they are still there, are personages who are sustained as showing off and with complete conviction, which means, precisely, that none of them represents anything of what they represent. And this is the effect of this something which introduces into the space of the picture, binds them together, crystallises them in this position of being personages on show, personages of the court.

Starting from there, that Velasquez, the painter, should put himself in the middle of them takes on all its sense. But, of course, this goes much further than this simple touch of what one could call social relativism.

The structure of the picture allows us to go well beyond to the truth, to go beyond, it (28) would have been necessary to start from a question, not from a question but from a completely different movement than this movement of the question, which I told you cancelled itself out from the simple fact of the presence of the work itself, but starting from what the work imposes as we see it here, namely, that the same childhood mouth (*bouche d'enfance*) which is suggested to us by the central character, by this little Infanta who is the second daughter of the royal couple: Philip IV and Dona Marianne of Austria, the little Dona Margherita who was painted fifty times, I would say, by Velasquez, that we should allow ourselves to be guided by this personage who comes, in a way, before us in this space which is for us the question mark as for all of those who have seen this picture, who have spoken about this picture, who have written about this picture, the question mark that it poses us, it is the cries emitted from her mouth, I would say, that it would be well to start from in order to make what I would call the second circuit of the picture and it is the one, it seems to me that is missing in the analysis of the work of which I spoke earlier: "let me see" (*fais voir*) what is behind the canvas as we see it from the back, it is a "let me see" which summons him and that we are more or less ready to pronounce.

Now, from this simple "let me see" may arise what, in effect, starting from there is (29) imposed, that is, what we see, namely, these personages as I qualify them as being essentially personages on show.

But we do not see only that. We see the structure of the painting, its perspective *montage*. It is here that undoubtedly I regret that we do not have here a support that is sufficient to demonstrate for you these features in all their rigour. Here, the personage that you see framed in a door of light at the back is the very precise point where the lines of perspective come together. It is at a point more or less situated according to the lines that are traced out between the figure of this personage - for there are slight fluctuations of intersection which are produced - and his elbow that there is situated

the vanishing point, and it is not by chance if through this vanishing point, it is precisely this personage and a personage who is leaving.

This personage is not someone indifferent. He is also called Velasquez. Nieto instead of being called Diego-Rodrigues. This Nieto is the person who had some say in the vote which allowed Velasquez to accede to the position of *Aposentador* of the king, namely, something like a chamberlain or grand marshal. He is, in brief, a sort of personage who reduplicates him and this personage, here, is designated to us because of this since we do not see and of whom we say "let me see", not alone does he see it from where he is, but that he has, as I might say, seen too much, he is leaving. Is there (30) a better means of designating this high-point as regards what opens out as regards the subject in terms of the function of the eye than something which is expressed by a "seen that" (*vu*) that is, in a way, definitive.

Henceforth, the presence of Velasquez himself in this position where you have seen him earlier and the second photo being no better than the first, you have not been able to see what you could see on better reproductions and what a thousand authors who have spoken about it have born witness to, namely, that this personage who is looking, people underline, towards us spectators - God knows the amount of speculation that has gone on about the orientation of the look - this person has precisely the look that is least turned towards the outside.

This is not an analysis that is personal to me. Several authors, the great majority, have pointed it out. The sort of absent, dreamy, aspect turned towards some *disegno interno*, as the Gongorists express it, I mean the whole theory of baroque, mannerist, conceptist theory, anything you like, and of which Gongora is the example, is the flower, *disegno interno*, this something to which there is referred the mannerist discourse and which is, properly, what I call that in this discourse there is no metaphor, that the metaphor enters into it as a real component, this presence of Velasquez in his (31) canvas, his figure bearing in a way the sign and the support that he is here, at once, as a component and as an element of it, this is the structural, represented point through which there is designated to us what may be involved in it, along what path it can happen that there appears in the canvas itself the one who supports it *qua* looking subject (*sujet regardant*).

Well then, it is something quite striking whose value cannot, in my opinion, be mapped out except from what I introduced to you in this topological structure.

Two features are to be highlighted: that this look is looking and with respect to it everyone says, it is us, we the spectator. Why believe so much in ourselves? No doubt it summons us to something since we respond in the way that I told you. But what this look implies, just like the presence of the turned picture in the picture, just like this space which strikes all those who look at the picture as being in a way unique

and singular, is that this picture extends into the dimensions of what I called the window and designates it as such.

This ensures that, in a corner of the picture, through the picture itself, that is in a way turned onto itself in order to be represented in it, there is created this space in front of the picture which we are properly designated as inhabiting as such, this presentifying (32) of the window in the look of the one who has put himself, not by chance, or in any random fashion in the place that he occupies, Velasquez, this is the point of capture and the specific action this picture exercises on us.

There is a crosscheck for this in the picture. I can only regret once more to have to refer you to images, in general, moreover, I must say, in numerous volumes, all rather bad and either too dark or too clear. This picture is not easy to reproduce but it is clear that the distance between the painter and the picture, in the picture where he is represented, is very sufficiently emphasised to show us that he is precisely not within range to reach it and in this there is an intention, namely, that this part of the group, what is here called *Las Meninas*, *Les Ménines*, namely, Dona Margarita with Dona Maria Agostio Sariato who is on her knees before her, are in front of the painter, while the others, even though they seem to be on an analogous plane, in front, are rather behind, and that this question about this space between the painter and the painting is here not alone what is presented but what is presentified to us by this trace that it is enough to designate to recognise that here a transversal line marks something (33) which is not simply a luminous division, a grouping of the canvas, but a veritable furrow of the passage of this phantastical presence of the painter in so far as he is looking.

If I tell you that it is somewhere at the level of the intersection of the fundamental line and the ground plane and at a point in infinity that the look of the subject is going towards, it is indeed also from this point that Velasquez made, in this ghost-like form which specifies this self-portrait among all the others, one of the traits which is distinguished undoubtedly by the style of the painter. He will tell you himself: “Do you believe that I would paint a self-portrait from this drop, from this oil, with this paintbrush.”

You have only to consult the portrait of Innocent X which is in the Palazzo Doria Pamphili to see that the style is not at all the same.

This ghost of the looking subject entered by this trace which is still tangible there and of which I might say that all the personages bear the vibration, for, in this picture, in which it has become a cliché, a common-place and I have heard it articulated in the mouths, I must say, of not only the most authorised but the most high ranking in the hierarchy of creators.

(34) This picture which we are told is the picture of looks which cross one another and of a sort of inter-vision, as if all the personages were characterised by some relation with one another. If you look at things closely you will see that except for the look of the maid of honour Maria Agostina Sariate who is looking at Dona Magarita, no other look fixes on anything.

All these looks are lost on some invisible point, as one might say, "an angel has passed", precisely the painter. The other maid of honour who is called Isabelle de Velasque, is there, in a way, as forbidden, her arms, in a way, spread apart from the trace of this passage.

The idiot, here, the monster Maria Barbola, the dwarf, is looking elsewhere and not at all, as it is said, towards us. As regards the little dwarf, he is occupied here with very precisely doing, with very precisely playing the role that he is made to play *qua* imitation little boy, he is playing the little brat: he is giving the dog a kick in the behind as if to say to him, in a way: "Are you asleep! You didn't smell the mouse that has just passed."

A look, we will be told, if someone still wished to sustain it, but observe that in a picture which is supposed to be a picture about the interplay of looks, there are not in (35) any case, even if we must retain the look of one of the maids of honour, two looks which meet, complicitous looks, intelligent looks, searching looks.

Dona Margarita, the little girl, does not look at the maid servant who is looking at her. All the looks are elsewhere. And, of course, the look at the back of the one who is leaving is nothing more than a look which means: "I am leaving you", and is far from being pointed at anyone.

Henceforth, what can be meant by the fact that is brought to the centre of the theory of this picture, when it is claimed that what is here in the forefront, at our place, and God knows whether the spectator can take delight in such a support, in such a hypothesis, is the king and the queen who are reflected in the mirror which ought to appear here for you and which is at the back?

To this I would object that the painter, from where he shows himself in this picture, where does he intend that we should put it? One of the hypotheses and one of the ones which seduced most among those put forward, is that, since the painter is there, and this is what he has painted, he must have seen all of this in a mirror, a mirror which is where we are and there we are, transformed into a mirror. This does not lack seduction nor does it fail to involve a certain appeal with respect to all I evoke for you (36) as regards the relativity of the subject to the other, except that when you want, it is around such an experience that I would highlight for you the strict difference there is between a mirror and the window; two terms precisely which structurally have no relationship.

But let us stick to the picture. The painter is supposed to have painted himself having seen the whole scene of people around him in a mirror. I only see one objection to it: it is that nothing indicates to us from the testimony of history - and God knows this is the sort of news that history charges itself with transmitting - nothing indicates to us that Velasquez was left-handed. Now, this indeed is how we ought to see him appearing if we are to take seriously the fact that, in a painting supposedly made with the help of a mirror, he represents himself as he indeed was in effect, namely, holding his paintbrush in his right hand.

This may appear to you to be a very slight reason. It nevertheless remains that, if this is how things are, this theory would be completely incompatible with the presence here of the king and the queen. Either it is a mirror that is here, or it is the king and the queen. If it is the king and the queen, this cannot be the painter, if the painter is elsewhere, if the king and the queen are there, it cannot be the painter who is there, as I suppose he effectively was.

You do not understand, Monsieur Castoriadis?

Castoriadis: No

Lacan: In the hypothesis that the king and the queen, reflected back there in the mirror, were here to have themselves painted by the painter, since I have eliminated the hypothesis that the painter was there otherwise than through the art of his brush, it is necessary that the painter be either here or elsewhere. The requirement that the painter should be there and not on the other side of a mirror, which would be ourselves, lies in the fact of supposing that the king and queen are in the mirror.

In other words, we cannot put at the same place any two personages whatsoever of this trio which are: a supposed mirror, the king and the queen, or the painter. We are always forced, in order that this should hold up, to put two of them at the same time, and there cannot be two at the same time.

If the king and the queen are there so as to be reflected at the back in the mirror now it is impossible that they should be represented as being there in the mirror, if only because by reason of scale, of the dimensions in which they are seen in the mirror where they are more or less the same scale as the person who is on the point of leaving next to them. Even though given the distance that we are at, they ought to be exactly (38) twice as small. But this is only another additional argument.

If the king and the queen are there in this hypothesis, then, the painter is here and we find ourselves before the position put forward by tellers of anecdotes, by Madam de Motteville, for example, namely, that the king and the queen were here - and what is more they are supposed to be standing - in the process of being, of posing and are

supposed to have before them the array of all these people whose natural function, you can see, would be if really at this time Velasquez was in the process of painting something quite different to them and, what is more, something that they do not see because they see all of these personages in a position that surround him.

I put forward, in opposition to this obvious impossibility, that what is the essential in what is indicated by this picture is this function of the window. That the fact that the trace is, in a way, marked by that through which the painter can return to it, is really here what shows us how it is there the empty place. That it is in symmetry to this empty place that there appear those, as I might say, not whose look, but the supposition that they see everything, that they are in this mirror exactly as they might (39) be behind a grill or an un-silvered window pane and after all, at the limit, nothing prevents us from supposing that it is something of the kind, namely, what is called a connector, connecting with a large room, one of these places of the type of a place for spying, that they are here in effect, that the fact that they see everything is what sustains this world as being on show, that there is here something which in a way gives us the parallel for the “I think, therefore I am” of Descartes; that Velasquez says “I paint, therefore I am”, and I am the one who is leaving you here with what I have done for your eternal interrogation. And I am also in this place from which I can return to the place that I leave you which is really the one where there is realised this effect from the fact that there is a fall (*chute*) and disarray of something which is at the heart of the subject.

The very multiplicity of interpretations, one might even say their embarrassment, their awkwardness is there sufficiently designed to underline it. But at the other point what do we have? This presence of the royal couple, playing exactly the same role as the God of Descartes, namely, that in everything that we see, nothing deceives on the single condition that the omnipresent God, for his part, is deceived by it. And it is there, the presence of these beings that you see in the so confused and singular (40) atmosphere of the mirror. And this mirror is there, in a way, the equivalent of something which is going to vanish at the level of the subject O who is there, as a pendant of this small (o) of the window in the foreground, would this not deserve our dwelling a little more on it?

A painter, about thirty years later, called Luca Giordano, a mannerist precisely in painting and who preserved in history the label of “*fa presto*” because he went a little quickly, also extraordinarily brilliant, having contemplated at length this image whose history I have not given you as regards its denomination, uttered a word, one of these words, God knows, that one might expect from someone who was at once a mannerist and very intelligent, he said: “It is the theology of painting”.

And of course, it is indeed at this theological level, where the God of Descartes is the support of a whole world that is in the process of being transformed through the intermediary of the subjectival ghost, it is indeed through the intermediary of the royal

couple, who appear to us scintillating in this frame at the back, that this term takes on its sense.

But I will not leave you without telling you, for my part, what suggests to me the fact that a painter like Velasquez, how much of the visionary there was in him. For who (41) will speak in connection with him about realism, who for example in connection with Philanderus (?) would dare to say that this is painting of a popular crudeness. It no doubt is, which simply means eternalising the *flash* that he might have had one day leaving the royal tapestries factory and seeing there the workers in the foreground providing a frame for what was being produced at the back.

I would ask you simply to consult this painting, which is worth more than what I have shown you there, in order to see the degree to which there can be distant from any realism, and, moreover, there is no realistic painter, undoubtedly, who is not a visionary. And by looking more carefully at what is happening at the back of this scene, in this mirror where these personages appear to us to be twinkling, and for their part undoubtedly distinct from what I called earlier ghostly but really brilliant.

There came to me the following, that in polar opposition to this window in which the painter frames us as in a mirror, he makes there emerge what for us, no doubt, does not come in an indifferent place as regards what happens for us in terms of the relationship of the subject to the o-object - the television screen.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 18 May 1966

I would like to salute the presence among us of Michel Foucault who does me the great honour of coming to this seminar. As for myself I rejoice, for it is less a matter for me of giving myself over, before him, to my usual exercises than to try to show him what constitutes the principal goal of our meetings, namely, a goal of formation which implies several things, among ourselves, first of all that things should not be these things of two sides, yours and mine, and immediately located at the same level, otherwise what use would it be? It would be a fiction of teaching.

It is indeed for this reason that, for the last three of our meetings, I was led to return to the same plane, on several occasions, through a sort of effort of reciprocal

accommodation. I think that already, between the second last time and the last time, a step was taken and I hope that another one will be taken today. In a word, I will return today again to this quite admirable support that is given to us by *Las Meninas*, (2) not that they were brought into the forefront as the principle object, of course, - we are not here at the Ecole du Louvre - but because it seemed to us that there was illustrated there in a particularly remarkable fashion, certain facts that I had tried to highlight and to which I will return again for anyone who has not sufficiently followed me. We are dealing here obviously with things that are not all that usual.

The usual use of teaching, whether it is university or secondary, by which you have been formed, being of course to have put between you and what constitutes, for example, the really essential form of modern geometry, remains not simply unknown by you but particularly opaque, and, of course, I was able to see the effect of this when I tried to bring you some of it by these figures, very simple and exemplary figures when I tried to bring you something that showed its dimension to you.

At this point *Las Meninas* presented themselves, as often happens. One really has to marvel, one is wrong to marvel, things come to you like a ring on the finger, we are not alone in working in the same field. What Monsieur Foucault had written in his first chapter was immediately noted by some of my listeners, I must say before me, as (3) constituting a particularly relevant point of intersection between two fields of research. And it is indeed in this way that it must be seen, and I would say all the more so when one applies oneself to re-reading this astonishing first chapter, which I hope that those who are here noticed was taken up a little further on in the book, at the key point, at the turning point, at the one where there is made the junction between this mode, this constitutive mode, as one might say, of relationships between words and things as it is established in a field which begins with the maturation of the sixteenth century to culminate at this particularly exemplary and particularly well articulated point in his book which is that of the thinking of the eighteenth.

At the moment of arriving at what constitutes its goal, in his perspective, at the point that he has led us to, the birth of another articulation, the one which is born in the nineteenth century, the one which already allows him to introduce us both to the function and the profoundly ambiguous and problematic character of what are called the human sciences, here Monsieur Michel Foucault stops and takes up his picture, *Las Meninas*, again around the personage in connection with whom we ourselves left our discourse suspended the last time, namely, the function of the king in the picture.

(4) You will see that this is what is going to allow us today, if we have the time, if things are set up as I hope, to establish for me the junction between what has been brought forward by contributing this precision that projective geometry may allow us to put into what one can call the subjectivity of vision, to make the junction between

this and what I already contributed a long time ago under the theme of the narcissism of the mirror.

The mirror is present in this picture in an enigmatic form, so enigmatic that the last time I was able to end humorously by saying that, after all, for want of knowing what to make of it, we might see there what appears to be, in a surprising fashion, in effect, something which singularly resembles our television screen. But this is obviously a witticism. But you are going to see today, if we have the time, I repeat, that this relationship between the picture and the mirror, what one and the other not alone illustrate for us or represent for us, but truly represent as a structure of representation, this is what I hope to be able to introduce today.

But I do not want to do it without having had here some testimony of the questions which may have been posed after my earlier discourses. I asked Green who, moreover, (5) since we are in a closed seminar, offered himself spontaneously, in a way, to bring me this reply by bringing it to me from outside this circle. I am therefore going to give him the floor. I believe that Audouard, I do not know if he is here, is also willing to bring us some elements of interrogation, and immediately afterwards I will try in replying to them, perhaps, I hope, lead Monsieur Foucault to make a few remarks. In any case, I will certainly not fail to call on him.

Good. I give you the floor, Green.

My voice is a little tired today. I am not sure that in this room, whose acoustics are as bad as its cleanliness, today at least, I am not sure whether I can be clearly heard at the back. Yes? Anyway it would not be a bad thing if you were to move in a body and come a little closer. I would feel surer.

Dr Green: In fact, what Lacan asked me, was essentially to give him the opportunity to start again on the development that he had begun the last time. And it was starting from certain remarks that I myself made at the time of his commentary, that I had taken the liberty of writing to him.

These remarks related essentially to the conditions of projection which were very directly linked to Lacan's commentary and to his own place, preoccupied as he was by the commentary, and to what he could not perceive from the point at which he was.

The conditions of this projection having been, as you know, very poor, and the lack of sufficient darkness considerably misrepresented the picture and, in particular, certain details of this picture became totally invisible. It was in particular the case for what concerned

Lacan: Green, this is not a criticism, we are going to project it again today. Today it will work. I do not think that it was the lack of the darkness, even though darkness is very precious to us, this is not what was in question.

(7) This is not what was at stake. I think that it was the fact that the bulb was, I do not know why, badly regulated or prepared for some other use.

In short, my negative the last time, I cursed the Ecole du Louvre. I was wrong and I went to apologise. My negative was not only very adequate but, as you are going to see, excellent. It was therefore a matter of the bulb. Naturally, you have to lower these curtains if we want to have the projection. So do it quickly. You are very kind. There you are. Thank you.

So then, on you go, Gloria. Put on *Las Meninas*.

Green: In fact what was effaced on that occasion was the person of Velasquez himself, the painter, and the couple... Today, one can see it better, but the last time, precisely, what was effaced was the personage of the painter and this couple, this couple which appeared to be totally effaced.

I questioned myself about this effacing and I asked myself whether, instead of considering it as a simple inadequacy, we might not consider that this effacement itself signified something, like one of these productions of the unconscious, like a bungled (8) action, like forgetting, and whether there was not here a key, a key which strangely unites the painter and this couple who found themselves in the penumbra, who seemed, moreover, to be uninterested in the scene and to be whispering together.

And it was starting from this reflection that I asked myself whether there was not here something to be explored in connection with this effacing, and the effacing of the trace in the picture, where the planes of light are distinguished in a very precise fashion, by Lacan as well as by Foucault with, notably, the plane of light at the back, of the other Velasquez, the Velasquez at the back, and the plane of light which comes to him from the window.

It is therefore in this between-the-two, in this between the two lights that, perhaps, there would be something to be explored as regards the meaning of this picture.

Now we can perhaps put on the lights again if you do not mind.

These, then, are two remarks that I had made to Lacan in writing without thinking at all that they had any other goal than that of re-launching his reflections.

And then, I took up Foucault's text, this very remarkable chapter, and noted there a certain number of points of convergence with what I have just told you, and particularly what he himself says about the painter, he says: (9)

“His dark torso and bright face are half-way between the visible and the invisible”.

On the other hand, Foucault seems to me to have been very silent about the couple that I have been speaking about. He alludes, moreover, he speaks about the courtesan who is there and he does not speak at all about the feminine character who, from appearances, seems to be a religious, from what one can see.

Here I must say that the reproduction in Foucault's book does not allow her to be seen at all, while the reproduction that Lacan has pin-pointed here, allows one to think that there are strong reasons that she is a religious.

And I re-discovered, obviously in Foucault's text, a certain number of systematic oppositions which illuminate the structure of the picture. Some of these oppositions have already been highlighted and particularly, for example, there is the opposition of the mirror, the mirror as support for an opposition between the model and the spectator, the mirror as an opposition to the picture and to the canvas, and, in particular, as regard this canvas, a formulation by Foucault which reminds us, I believe, a good deal, about the barrier of repression. “It prevents there ever been located or (10) definitively established the relationship between the looks.”

This kind of impossibility conferred on the situation of the canvas, being back-to-front, namely, what is inscribed on it, makes us think, for our part, that there is here an altogether essential relationship.

But above all, as regards Lacan's reflections on perspective, what appeared to me to be interesting, is not to rediscover other oppositions, there are such and I forget some of them, of course, but above all to try to comprehend the succession of different planes from the back towards the surface, precisely in Lacan's perspective on perspective.

Well then, it is certainly not indifferent, I believe, that one can rediscover there at least four planes. Four planes which are, successively, the plane of the other Velasquez, the one at the back, the plane of the couple, the plane of the painter, and the plane constituted by the Infanta and her handmaidens, the idiot, the fool and the dog who are in front of Velasquez. They are in front of Velasquez and I think that one can divide this group itself into two sub-groups: the group constituted by the Infanta where Foucault sees one of the two centres of the picture, the other being the mirror - and I believe that this is obviously very important - and the other sub-group constituted by the animal and the monsters, namely, the idiot and the fool Nicolas Percusato with the (11) dog.

I believe that this division on the style of from the back to the front, with these two groups may make us think, and there, perhaps, I am advancing a little - but it is uniquely to provide matter for your commentaries and your criticisms - as something which makes of this picture, of course, a picture about representation, the representation of classical representation, as you were saying, but also, perhaps, of representation as creation and, finally, as this antinomy of creation with, on the left-hand side, with this individual, absolutely, who in the relationship of the Infanta to her two parents who are behind, represents creation in the most successful, the happiest, human form and, on the contrary, deported to the other side on the side of the window, as opposed to that of the canvas, these failures of creation, these marks of castration that are represented by the idiot and the fool.

So that that then, this couple in the penumbra, would have a singular value with respect to the other couple reflected in the mirror, which is that of the king and the queen.

This duality probably being too directed, at that moment onto the problem of creation, in so far as, precisely, it is what Velasquez is in the process of painting, and (12) where we find this duality, probably, between what he is painting and the picture that we are looking at.

I believe that it is in opposition to these planes and these perspectives and, probably, the fact that it is not by chance, something I did not know, that the personage at the back, and Foucault writes in connection with this personage at the back, whom I did not know was called Velasquez, and of whom one can say that he is the other Velasquez, he says of him, in a phrase that really struck me: "Perhaps he is going to enter the room? Perhaps he is confining himself to spying on what is happening inside, content to surprise without being observed."

Well then, I believe, precisely, that this person because of his situation, is precisely in a position to observe, and he observes what? Obviously everything that is taking place in front of him while Velasquez, for his part, is absolutely not in a position to observe this couple in the penumbra and can only look at what is in front of him, namely, the two sub-groups that I have just spoken about.

I do not want to be much longer in order to give the floor to Lacan but I believe that we cannot but see the degree to which in all of this and in the relationship of the (13) window to the picture that Lacan speaks about, well then, I believe that the fascination-effect produced by this picture, and I think that this is what is most important for us, that this picture produces a fascination-effect, is directly related to the phantasy in which we are caught up and, perhaps, that precisely there is here some relationship with these few remarks that I was making about creation, in other words the primal scene.

(14) **Dr Lacan:** Good. We can thank Green for his intervention and also, God knows, this does not seem very nice, his brevity. But we lost a lot of time at the beginning of this session, I would ask Audouard if he wishes, to make an intervention which I have no doubt will have the same qualities.

(15) **Monsieur Audouard:** Precisely, it seemed to me that in a seminar like this one, speakers ought not to be limited to those who have understood, the most brilliant pupils, but that those who have not understood, and that those who have not understood, should be able to say so.

So I would like to say to Monsieur Lacan and to yourselves, apologising in advance for the rather graceless nature of this intervention, that what I would like to express is above all what I have not understood in the presentation that Monsieur Lacan gave us, about the topology that Monsieur Lacan has made for us, in part in the encounter of the ground plane and the figure plane.

First of all, there are many ways of not understanding. There is one way which is to go out of the seminar saying: "I understood nothing at all. Did you understand anything?" "Me neither" says the other. And one remains with that. And then, there is another way which for once I have adopted which is to put myself in front of a sheet of paper and try to make my own little graph, my own little schema.

(16) Not without some trouble. It was especially this morning because this morning Monsieur Lacan telephoned me to tell me that I might perhaps have something to say. So then I rushed to construct something so that it is really like that, impromptu.

Only I am a little uncomfortable because I would like to have put my little graph somewhere and I see that this would mean destroying the organisation of the session and

Lacan: The paper is there for that. Use that.

Audouard: Thank you very much. So then, what I am going to do, I am simply going to tell you the way in which I saw myself obliged to express things to myself, and I would ask Monsieur Lacan to tell me where I went wrong

Lacan: On you go, my friend, on you go.

Audouard: This will allow us to see better. Good. I am going to image with a circular plane this plane of the look in which my eye is caught, the plane of the look in which my eye is caught, therefore, that my eye cannot see.

Here, there is going to be an infinite line which is going to lead to the horizon. Here, there is going to be the projective repetition of this line which will not only be the (17) projective repetition of this line as if it were a matter of metrical geometry, but which is going to be the possibility, for a metrical geometry, that each one of its points, of course, parallel to this line is going to be projected onto it and constitute a parallel line, but in reality, for my eye situated here in the field of the look, each one of these lines is therefore no longer parallel, and will come to constitute a point, like this, in the perspective offered to my eye.

Good. It is also certain that the infinite line which is traced from the field of the look to the horizon, will itself be, in one way or another, and it is here that, perhaps, my position is a little bit uncertain, in one way or another projected onto this line and therefore, when all is said and done, onto this point.

Every point of this line and every point of this line will in the final analysis be projected onto this point. Here I have the figure plane, namely, what offers itself to me, which offers itself to my look when I look: my field, my field in which the plane that I, for my part, cannot see, namely the ground plane, the plane of the look in which my eye is caught up, in one way or another, is going to be projected. To such a degree and so well that, as Monsieur Lacan has often pointed out to us, I am seen just as much as I (18) see. Namely, that the lines which come here to rejoin the plane of the look or this fundamental line that Monsieur Lacan spoke to us about, at this figure plane, will moreover be invertible, as I might say, like this, by an exactly inverted projection. So that, if I consider that the look-plane is projected onto the figure plane, the look-plane sends me back something which came from the figure plane, there will be at each intermediary point between the plane of the look and the infinite line, the vanishing point, the point at the horizon, there would be at every point of this space, a difference between perspective, if I consider it as vectorialised as it were like this or vectorialised like that, namely, that for example a tree that would have this dimension in this vector, will have that dimension in that vector.

Therefore, there would be here a separation (*écart*), something not seen which is there only to express that at each point of this plane there is also a separation of each point with respect to itself, namely, that this space is not homogeneous and that each point is displaced with regard to itself in a separation that is not seen, not visible, which nevertheless comes strangely to constitute each one of these points that my eye perceives in the perspective plane. Each one of these things, seen in the perspective-plane being sent back by the figure plane, in so far as in this figure plane, the plane of (19) the look is projected; each one of these separations can be called (o) and this (o) is constitutive of the separation that each point of the look-plane takes on with regard to itself.

An absolute non-homogeneity of this plane is thus uncovered, and each object is uncovered as being able to have a certain distance with respect to itself, a certain difference with respect to itself.

And I am struck that in what Green told us, if one considers in effect this sort of intersection of the illuminations of the plane, the figures that he speaks to us about are situated, as it were, at an intersection, to rejoin, in a way, to rejoin what is crossed over here like that. And that, in effect, there is perhaps, one can also say, in the illumination of the faces as compared to the bodies, something which goes further and which could, by way of simple illustration, I am not claiming to do any more, which could indicate to us this little difference, precisely, that the object takes with respect to itself when one opposes (*mets en regard*), it is the moment to say it, the plane of the look and the plane of the figure. This is the way in which I expressed things to myself, and I will leave it to Monsieur Lacan to tell me whether I am completely mistaken or whether I misunderstood a part of what he told us the other day.

(20) **Dr Lacan:** Thank you very much, Audouard.

There we are. It is really an interesting construction because it is exemplary. I find it difficult to believe that there was not mixed up in it for you the desire to reconcile a first schema that I had given when I was speaking about the scopical drive, two years ago, with what I brought you the last and the second last time.

This schema, as you have produced it, and which corresponds to neither one nor the other of these two statements of mine, has all sorts of characteristics, the principal one of which is to want to image, at least this is what I think, if I am not mistaken myself about what you meant, in short, a certain reciprocity between the representation that you have called the figure, and what is produced in the plane of the look from which you began.

I think, indeed, in effect, that it is a kind of strictly reciprocal representation that is involved in which there is marked, as one might say, the permanent vertigo of intersubjectivity. And with this you introduce, in a way that would deserve to be criticised in detail, something or other that I do not want, with which I do not want to burden myself with. From which something would result through which the object, it is (21) indeed an object that is in question since you have supposed a little tree, which would draw in a way, I am going a little quickly but, which would draw all its relief, from the non-coincidence of two perspectives that they grasp, which, in effect, ought to be more or less sustainable in the way in which you have posed things.

And, moreover, I believe that at the end it is not for nothing that you present us, in the plane of the look, with two points separated from one another and which come here,

curiously, without my knowing if it is your intention, but in a striking fashion, evoke binocular vision. In short, you appear, with this schema, to be completely prisoner of something undoubtedly confused, and which takes on its prestige from overlapping rather well what properly optical physiology tries to explore.

Now, - naturally I am going very quickly, it would be worth discussing this in detail with you, but then I think that the seminar today cannot be considered as remaining in the axis of what we have to say - in short, it is easy to locate here the defects of your construction with respect to what I have contributed, the fact that you have started from something which, let us say, you call the plane of the seeing subject or the plane (22) of the look, that you should have started from there is an error that is altogether tangible and extremely determining for the embarrassment that the rest of your attempt to cover what I said left you in. This will only give me an opportunity to express it once more.

To start from there by saying that this, whose horizontal line you drew without specifying immediately what it was, and, moreover, this is something that we remain embarrassed by, because what this line is determined by, what it is determined by is this plane that I called the first time the support plane, and that I subsequently called more simply and to give an image, the ground, the ground plane. You do not specify it but, on the contrary, suppose that anything whatsoever on this plane, on this plane of the look, can go and project itself onto this something that you introduced first and which is the horizon line. This is really to miss, really the essential of what was contributed by the construction that I showed you the last day in a second phase, after having first of all expressed it in a fashion, after all, which could be simply translated by letters or by numbers on the board.

Nothing on the plane of the look, if we have defined it as I defined it, namely, as (23) parallel to the figure plane or again to the picture, is that not so, nothing, very precisely, can be projected there onto the picture in a way that is representable by you, since this is going, in effect, to be projected there, since everything is projected there, but this is going to be projected there in accordance, not with the horizon line but the line at infinity of the picture.

This point here, therefore - I am going to do it in red to distinguish it from your marks - this point there, then, is the point at the infinity of the picture plane. Are you with me?

This is easy to conceive of because, if we re-establish things as they ought to be, namely, I am drawing here - would you please get me some other sheets of paper, Gloria, because it will really be too confusing.

In the meantime, I am, all the same, going to try to say why all of this is of interest to us because, after all, for someone like Foucault who has not been present at our

previous conversations, this may appear to be a little bit outside the limits of the blueprint, it must be said.

But after all, this may be an opportunity for me, this may be the opportunity, to specify what is in question. We are psychoanalysts. What do we deal with? A drive which is called the scopic drive. This drive, if the drive is something constructed as Freud has (24) inscribed it for us, and if we try, following what Freud inscribed about the drive, that it is not an instinct, but a *montage*, a *montage* between realities of an essentially heterogeneous level, like those which are called the pressure, the *Drang*, something that we can inscribe as being the orifice of the body where this *Drang*, as I might say, finds its support and from which it draws, in a way that is only conceivable in a strictly topological fashion, its constancy: this constancy of the *Drang* can only be developed by supposing that it emanates from a surface and the fact that it is supported on a constant edge, finally assures, as one might say, the vectorial constancy of the *Drang*.

From something subsequently which is a return movement, every drive includes in a way in itself, something which is, not its reciprocal, but its return to its base. It is starting from something that we can conceive, at the limit, and in a way, I would say, that is not metaphorical, but fundamentally inscribed in existence, namely a circuit (*tour*), it describes a circuit, it goes around something, and it is this something that I call the *o*-object.

(25) This is perfectly illustrated, in a constant fashion, in analytic practice, by the fact that the *o*-object, in the measure that it is for us the most accessible, that it is literally circumscribed by analytic experience, is on the one hand what we call the breast, and we call it that in sufficiently numerous contexts for its ambiguity, its problematic character, to leap to the eye of everyone.

That the breast is a little object, all sorts of things are designed to show that it is not a matter here of this something carnal which is what is at stake when we speak about the breast, it is not simply this something that the nursing squashes his nose against, it is something which in order to be defined, if it must fulfil the functions and, moreover, represent the possibilities of equivalence that it manifests in analytic practice, it is something which must be defined in a completely different way.

I am not going to put the emphasis here on the function, which also presents the same problems, that is constituted by, however you may call it, by this scybalum, waste, excrement, here we have something which is, in a way, quite clear and well circumscribed.

Now, once we pass into the register of the scopic drive, which is precisely the one that (26) in this article, this article on which I am basing myself - not simply because it is Freud's sacred article - because it is a supreme article in which, for him, there is

expressed precisely some necessity which is along the path of this topological specification that I am striving to give.

If in this article, he particularly highlights this outward and return function in the scopic drive, this implies that we ought to try to circumscribe this *o*-object which is called the look. So then, it is the structure of the scopic subject that is involved and not of the field of vision. Immediately, we see there that there is a field in which the subject is implicated in an outstanding fashion. Because for us - when I say us, I am saying you and I, Michel Foucault - who interest ourselves in the relationship between words and things because, when all is said and done, there is nothing in analysis but that, we also immediately clearly see that this scopic subject is involved in an outstanding way in the function of the sign.

It is a matter, therefore, of something which already introduces a completely different dimension to the dimension that we could qualify as physics, in the elementary sense of the word, which represents the visual field in itself.

At this point, if we do something which, I do not know whether you would accept the (27) title, it is for you to tell me, if we try to construct, on some precise point or from some angle something called the history of subjectivity, it is a title that you would accept, not as a sub-title, because I believe there already is one, but as a sub-sub-title, and that we might define as a field, as you have done in the *Birth of the clinic*, or for the history of madness, or a historical field as in your, it is quite clear that the function of the sign appears there as this essential thing, this essential function that you give yourself in such an analysis.

I have not the time, thanks to these delays that we have had, perhaps to raise point by point all the terms in your first chapter, not at all that I would have anything to object to but, quite the contrary, which seemed to me literally to converge towards the sort of analysis that I am doing.

You end up with the conclusion that this picture is, in a way, the representation of the world of representations, as you consider that it is what the infinite system, I would say, of reciprocal application which constitutes the characteristic of a certain moment of thought. You are not completely against what I am saying here?

(28) You agree. Thank you. Because that proves that I have understood properly.

It is certain that nothing is more instructive for us about the satisfaction that its *éclat* gives us, than such a controversy. I do not in any way believe that I am bringing forward an objection in saying that, in the final analysis, it is only with a didactic end in view, namely, to pose for ourselves the problems that are imposed by a certain limitation in the reference system which is, in effect, important that such a grasp of

what, let us say, thinking was during the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, is proposed to us.

How can we proceed differently if we even wish to begin to suspect from what angle problems are proposed to us. Nothing is more illuminating than to see, to be able to grasp in what, I can say the word, a different perspective there can be proposed in a different context, even if only to avoid errors in reading, I would even say more, simply to allow the reading when we are not naturally disposed to it, of authors like those whose way of working you put forward in such a dazzling fashion, like Cuvier for example. I am not speaking, of course, of everything that you also contributed in the register of the economy of the epoch and also of its linguistics.

(29) I put this question to you: do you believe or do you not believe that, when all is said and done, whatever may be the outline, the testimony, that we may have about the lines on which the thinking of an epoch took its assurance, there was always posed to the speaking being, when I say posed, I mean that he was in and that, because of this fact, we cannot avoid speaking about thinking, that exactly the same structural problems were posed in the same way for them as for us.

I mean that this is not simply a kind of metaphysical presupposition and even, to say it more precisely, a Heideggerian one, namely, that the question of the essence of the truth was always posed in the same way. And that people refused it in a certain number of different ways. This is the whole difference, but all the same, we can put our finger on its presence. I mean not simply like Heidegger by going back to extra-ancient Greek antiquity, but in a direct fashion.

In the sequence of chapters that you give: speaking, exchanging, representing. I must say, moreover, that in this respect to see them summarised in the table of contents is something gripping. It seems to me that the fact that you did not make figure there the word counting is a rather remarkable thing.

(30) And when I say counting of course I am not speaking just about arithmetic nor about "*bowling*". I mean that you have seen that, at the very heart of the thinking of the seventeenth century, something which certainly has remained unrecognised, and which has even been booed, you know as well as I who I am going to speak about, namely, the one who received the cooked apples, who had pulled back from things, and who, nevertheless, remains indicated, for the best people, as having shone with the most brilliant *éclat*, in other words Georges Desargues, is to mark something which escapes, it seems to me, from what I would call the trait of inconsistency of the reciprocal mode of representations in the different fields that you describe to us in order to give an account of the seventeenth and of the eighteenth centuries.

In other words, Velasquez' picture is not the representation of, I would say, all the modes of representation, it is, in accordance with a term which of course is only going

to be there as a dessert, which is the term on which I insist when I borrow it from Freud, namely, the representative of representation.

What does that mean? We have just made, I mean had, a striking testimony - I apologise, Audouard - of the difficulty in getting across the specificity of what I tried (31) to introduce, for example, at one time not too long ago, namely, for two of our meetings.

When what is at stake is the scopic field, the scopic field, it has served for a long time in this relationship to the essence of truth. Heidegger is there to recall it for us, in this work that I can hardly conceive why it was not the first to be translated, as *Wesen* not as *Wesen der Wahrheit*, but of Plato's *Lehre* [?] on the truth, a work which is not only not translated but, what is more, is unfindable, is there to remind us the degree to which in the first information, it is absolutely clear, manifest, as regards this subject of the truth, that Plato made use of what I would call this scopic world.

He made a use of it, as usual, that was much more astute and wily than one might imagine for, when all is said and done, all the material is there, as I recently recalled, the hole, the darkness, the cave, this thing which is so capital, namely, the entrance, what I am going to call later the window and then, behind, the world that I would call the solar world.

It is indeed the entire presence of all the paraphernalia which allows Heidegger to make such a dazzling use of it which, at least you, Michel Foucault, here, you know, because I think that you have read it, and since this work is unfindable there must be (32) few people here who have read it up to now, but I already spoke about it a little all the same, namely, to make Plato say much more than he ordinarily says, and to show, in any case, the fundamental value of a certain number of movements of the subject which are very exactly something which, as he underlines, links the truth to a certain formation, a certain *paideia*, namely, to these movements that we know well, in any case those who follow my teaching know well, the value of the signifier, a movement of turning and of returning, the movement of the one who turns round and who must maintain himself in this turning around (*renversement*).

It nevertheless remains that subsequent times show us the confusion that such a debate can lend itself to, if we are not able to isolate severely in this field of the scopic world, the difference between structures.

And, of course, it is to go about it in a summary way, for example, to make in it one of these oppositions, an opposition from which I am going to begin.

The apologue, the fable of Plato, as it is usually received, only implies something which is a point of radiation of light, an object that he calls the true object, something that is (32) in the shadow.

That the prisoners in the cave see only shadows, this is usually all that is taken from this teaching. I earlier marked the degree to which Heidegger managed to get more out of it by showing what, in effect, is involved.

Nevertheless, this way of starting from this centrality of light towards something which is going to become not simply this structure that it is, namely, the object and its shadow, but a sort of degradation of reality which is going to introduce in a way at the very heart of everything that appears, of everything that is *scheinen*, to take up again what is in Heidegger's text, a sort of mythology which is precisely the one on which there reposes the very idea of the idea which is the idea of good, the one where there is, where there is found the very intensity of reality, of consistency, and from which, in a way, there emanate all the envelopes which will be no more, when all is said and done, than expanding envelopes of illusions, of representations always of representation, it is here moreover precisely, if you will allow me to remind you, I do not know after all if you remember clearly that on January 19th, I illustrated here by making Madame Parisot, here present, give a commentary on two texts by Dante: the (34) only two in which he spoke about the mirror of Narcissus.

Now, what our experience, the analytic experience, brings us is centred on the phenomenon of the screen. Far from the inaugural foundation of the dimension of analysis being something where at some point the primitiveness of light, by itself, makes there emerge everything that is darkness in the form of what exists, we have first of all to deal with this problematic relationship which is represented by the screen.

This screen is not simply what hides the real, it surely is that, but, at the same time, it indicates it. What structures carry this frame of the screen in a way that strictly integrates it into the existence of the subject, this is the turning point starting from which we have, if we want to account for the least terms that intervene in our experience as connoted by the term *scopic*, and here, of course, we are not only dealing with screen memories, we are dealing with something which is called *phantasy*: we have to deal with this term that Freud calls not a representation but a representative of representation. We have to deal with several series of terms, and we have to know whether or not they are synonyms. This is the reason that we perceive that this *scopic* world that is in question is not simply to be thought in terms of the magic lantern, (35) that it is to be thought out in a structure which, happily, is given to us. It is given to us, I must say, that it is present all the same throughout the centuries; it is present in the whole measure that one or other person has missed it.

There is a certain Pappus' theorem which is found in a surprising fashion to be exactly inscribed in the theorems of Pascal and of Brianchon, those on the rectilinearity of the colinearity of the meeting points of a certain hexagon in so far as this hexagon is inscribed in a conic. Pappus had found a particular case of it which is very exactly the one where this hexagon is not inscribed in what we usually call a conic but simply in

two straight lines crossing one another, which was, I must say, up to an epoch which was that of Kepler, people had not noticed that two lines which crossed one another constitute a conic. This indeed is the reason why Pappus did not generalise his invention.

But that one is able to make a series of punctuations which prove that at every epoch, this thing which is called projective geometry was not unrecognised, is already sufficient to assure us that there was present a certain mode of relationship to the scopic world, and I am going to try to say now, and in the haste that we are always in (36) for working, what its structuring effects are.

What are we looking for? If we want to account for the possibility of a relationship, let us say, to the real - I am not saying to the world - which is such that when it is established, there is manifested in it the structure of phantasy, we ought in this case to have something which connotes for us the presence of the **o**-object, of the **o**-object in so far as it is the setting (*monture*) of an effect, not alone, I do not have to say that we know well, precisely, we do not know it. We have to give an account of this first, given, effect, from which we start in analysis, which is the division of the subject, namely, that in the whole measure, I know that you are fully aware of it, that you maintain the distinction between the *cogito* and the unthought (*impensé*), for us there is no unthought. The novelty for psychoanalysis, is where you designate, I am speaking at a certain point of your development, the unthought in its relationship to the *cogito*; where there is this unthought, it thinks (*ça pense*), and this is the fundamental relationship which, moreover, you know very well is problematic since you subsequently indicate, when you speak about psychoanalysis, that it is in this that psychoanalysis radically puts in question everything that belongs to the human sciences.

(37) I am not deforming what you say? What?

Michel Foucault: You are reforming.

Lacan: Of course. And what is more, naturally, in more than one way, which would require more breakthroughs and stages. Now, what is involved is a geometry which allows us, not simply to be a representation, in a figure plane of what is on a ground, but that there is inscribed in it this third term, which is called the subject, and which is necessary for its construction. It is very precisely why I made the construction that I am forced to make which, moreover, has nothing original about it, which is simply borrowed from the most common books on perspective, provided they are illuminated by Desargues' geometry and by all the developments that it made, moreover, in the nineteenth century, but precisely Desargues is here to highlight that in the heart of this seventeenth century, already, this whole geometry that he perfectly well grasped, this fundamental existence, for example, of a principle like the principle of duality which does not mean essentially by itself that geometrical objects are referred to an operation

of symbolic equivalence, well then, with the help simply of the most simple usage of the goal-posts (*montants*) of perspective we find that, in so far as it is necessary to (38) distinguish this subject point, this figure plane, this ground plane - naturally I am forced to represent them by something, you must understand that all of these extend to infinity of course - well then, something is locatable in a double fashion which inscribes the subject in this figure plane which, because of this fact, is not simply an envelope, a detached illusion, as one might say, of what it is a matter of representing, but in itself constitutes a structure which is the representative of the representation.

I mean that the horizon line, in so far as it is directly determined by this point that must not be called the eye point, but the subject point, the subject point, in parenthesis, as one might say, I mean the subject necessary for the construction, and which is not the subject, since the subject is engaged in the adventure of the figure and it is necessary that there should be produced there something which, at the same time indicates that he is somewhere at a point, necessarily, but that his other point, even though it is necessary that it should be present, should, in a way, be elided. This is what we obtain in remarking, I recall - I lack the time to re-do the proof in such an articulated fashion - that if this horizon line is determined simply by a parallel, a parallel plane which passes (39) through the subject point, a plane parallel to the ground plane, everyone knows this, but that this type of horizon, moreover, in the establishment of some perspective or other, implies the choice of a point on this horizon line, and that if everyone knows that, it is what is called the vanishing point and that, therefore, the first presence of the subject point in the figure plane is any point whatsoever on the horizon line, let us say, any point whatsoever, I again underline, in principle there should be one.

When there are several of them, it is when it happens that painters give themselves some licence, when there are several, it is for particular ends. Just as we have several ego ideals or egos ideals - you can say both - it is for certain ends. But that there is, but that is of course one of the necessities of perspective, all of those who are the founders of it, namely, Alberti and Pellerin, otherwise known as Pellegrini, but also Albert Dürer, what he calls the other eye, I repeat, this lends itself to confusion for in no case is it a question of binocular vision, perspective has nothing to do with what one sees and relief, contrary to what is imagined, perspective is the mode, at a certain time, at a certain epoch, as you might say, by which the painter as subject puts himself (40) into the picture, exactly as the painters of the epoch that is wrongly called primitive put themselves in the picture as donors. In the world of which the picture was supposed to be the representative, at the time of these so-called primitives, the painter was in his place in the picture.

At the time of Velasquez, he gives the impression of putting himself into it, but you only have to look at him to see - you have underlined it very clearly - the point to which he is in it in a state of absence. He is in it at a certain point that I precisely describe in the fact that one touches the trace of the point from which it comes, from

this point for you, for you alone, for I have already said enough for the others, this point that I have not up to the present qualified, which is the other point of presence, the other subject point in the field of the picture, which is this point which is determined, not in the way you were told earlier, but in taking into account precisely the fact that there is a point and a single parallel to the plane of the picture which can in no way be inscribed in the picture. And this indeed is what makes leap to our eyes the degree to which the first presence of the point S on the line at the horizon in the form of any point whatsoever is problematic.

This, any point whatsoever, in its form as a point of indifference, is indeed precisely (41) something of a nature to suspend us around what one could call its primacy.

On the contrary, in taking into account the fact that this line that we determine as the line of intersection of the plane which passes through the point S supposed at the beginning, the intersection with the ground plane, that this line on the figure plane has a translation that is easy to grasp, because it is enough simply to invert (*renverser*), which appeared to us to be quite natural to admit as regards the relationship of the horizon with the infinite line on the ground plane here in the other arrangement, it appears immediately that this, if you wish, constitutes a horizon line with respect to which the line to infinity of the figure plane will play the inverse function and that, henceforth, it is at the intersection of the fundamental line, namely, of the point where the picture cuts the figure plane, at the intersection of this fundamental line with this line to infinity, namely, at a point at infinity, that there is placed the second pole of the subject.

It is from this pole that Velasquez returns after having split his little group and the line of cleavage which marks there by its passage, you agree, in a way by what forms his model group, sufficiently indicates to us that it is from somewhere, outside the picture, that it has arisen here.

(42) This, I regret, makes me take things from the most abstract and theoretical point. And time is passing. I can therefore not take things today to the point that I would have wished to take them. Nevertheless, the very form of what was brought to me earlier as an interrogation required me to put it in the forefront.

Nevertheless, if some of you can still make the sacrifice of a few minutes after this 2 o'clock time, I am going all the same to pass, namely, taking things at the level of what I must say is the fascinating description that you have given of *Las Meninas*, to show you the concrete interest that these considerations take on, on the very plane of description.

It is clear that, from all time, the critics as well as the spectators have been absolutely fascinated, disturbed by this picture. The day that someone - I do not want to tell you his name even though I have all the literature here - made the discovery that this little

king and queen that are seen at the back were extraordinary, that this surely was the key to the affair, everyone acclaimed him as if it were really extraordinary, intelligent, to have seen this which is obviously, which is displayed where it can fascinate, not in (43) the foreground, because it is at the back, but after all it is impossible not to see it.

In any case people progressed from heroic discoveries to other discoveries that were sensational in different ways, but there is only one thing that people have not quite explained, it is the degree to which this thing, if it were only that - cuckoo, the king and queen are in the picture - would be enough to give the thing its interest.

In the light, as one might say, because we are not working here on the *photopique* plane, we are not dealing with colour, I reserve it for next year, if next year in fact exists, we are working in the scotopic field in effect, in the penumbra, like here.

What is important, interesting, is what happens between this ritual S point for it only serves for the construction, all that is important for us here is what is in the figure, but all the same it plays its role, it is what happens between this point here in the interval between him and the screen. Now, if there is something that this picture imposes on us, it is thanks to an artifice which is the one, moreover, from which - I compliment you on this - you began, namely, that the first thing you said is that in the picture there is a picture, and I think you do not doubt any more than I do that this (44) picture in the picture is the picture itself, the one that we see. Even though, perhaps, on this point you may lend yourself to perpetuating the interpretation that the picture is the picture on which he is making the portrait of the king and the queen. Can you imagine, he would have taken the same picture of three metres and eighteen centimetres with the same frame to make just the king and the queen, these two little idiots there at the back.

Now, it is precisely from the presence of this picture, which is the only representation in the picture, this representation saturates in a way the picture *qua* reality. But the picture is something else since, I will not prove it to you today, I hope that you will come back next week because, I think that one can say something about this picture which goes beyond this remark which is truly inaugural, namely, what this picture really is.

I sufficiently underlined the last time the space (?) that all the interpretations that have been made of it represent, but obviously one must start from the idea that what is hidden from us and whose function you highlight so well of something hidden, of a face-down card that forces you to lay down your own, and God knows that, in effect, (45) the critics have not failed to lay down their cards and say a series of extravagant things, not that much though. It was enough to bring them together to end up, all the same, by knowing why their extravagances, one of which one is, for example, that the painter is painting in front of a mirror which is supposed to be where we are. It is an elegant solution, unfortunately, it goes completely against this story of the king and

the queen who are at the back because in that case, it would also be necessary for them to be at the place of the mirror. You have to choose.

In short, all sorts of difficulties present themselves, if simply we can maintain that the picture is in the picture as a representation of the love object. Now, this problematic of the distance between the point S and the plane of the picture is properly at the base of the captivating effect of the work.

It is in the measure that it is not a work with a usual perspective, it is a kind of mad attempt which, moreover, is not limited to Velasquez, thanks be to God I know enough painters and, in particular, the one whom I am going to show you something of, like that, to give you a little treat, at the end of this presentation in which I regret (46) that I am always forced to return to the same planes which are too arid, a painter, one of whose works I am going to show you here, as I leave you, one that you can all go to see, moreover, where it is on display, that it is indeed the problem of the painter, and this, consult my first dialectics on this when I introduced the scopic drive, namely, that the picture is a trap for the look, that it is a matter of trapping the one who is there in front and what better way of trapping him than to extend the field of limits of the picture, of the perspective, to the level of what is there at the level of this point S, and what I am calling, properly speaking, what always vanishes, which is the element of fall (*chute*), the only fall in this representation, where this representative of the representation which is the picture in itself, is this *o*-object, and the *o*-object is what we can never grasp and especially not in the mirror, for the reason that it is the window that we ourselves constitute by simply opening our eyes. This effort of the picture to catch this vanishing plane which is properly what we have contributed, all of us, loafers that we are, there at the exhibition, believing that nothing is happening to us when we are in front of a picture, we are caught like a fly in glue; we lower our look as one lowers one's pants, and for the painter it is a matter, as I might say, of making us enter into the picture.

(47) It is precisely because there is this interval between this high canvas represented from behind, and something which puts forward the frame of the picture, that we are ill at ease. It is a properly structural and strictly scopic interpretation. If you come back to hear me the next time, I will tell you why this is the way it is, for in truth I remain here today strictly within the limits of the analysis of the structure, of the structure as you have done, of the structure of what one sees on the picture.

You have introduced nothing into it of the dialogue, as I might say, of the dialogue that it suggests between what and what? Do not believe that I am going to engage in reciprocity, like Audouard, namely, that we are asked for our part to dialogue with Velasquez. I sufficiently said for a long time that the relationships of the subject to the Other are not reciprocal, for me not to fall into this trap today.

Who speaks in front (*en avant*)? Who interrogates? Who is it, rather, who cries and begs and asks Velasquez: “Let me see” (*fais voir*): this is the point from which one must begin, I indicated it to you the last time, in order to know in fact who is, what is there, in the picture?

And that this interval, this interval between the two planes, the picture plane and (48) the plane of the point S, that this interval which cuts the ground plane into two parallels and by that which in Dessargues’ vocabulary is called the axle (*essieu*).

For, what is more, as a way of making himself more unpopular, a vocabulary which was not the same as that of everyone else.

In the axle of the earth what is happening? Certainly not what we will say today and that the picture is made to make us sense this interval, is what is doubly indicated in our relationship to being nabbed by this picture on the one hand, and in the fact that in the picture Velasquez is manifestly so much there in order to mark for us the importance of this distance, that he is not, notice, you must have noticed it but you did not say it - he is not within range, even with his elongated brush, of being able to touch the picture.

Naturally, people say he stood back to see better. Yes. Of course. But after all, the fact that obviously he is not within reach of the picture is here the capital point, in short, that the two key points of this picture are not simply the one who for his part is also escaping towards a window, towards a gap, towards the outside, posed there as if in parallel to the gap in front, and on the other hand Velasquez whose (49) knowledge, what he tells us there is the essential point. I will make him speak in order to end, not to end because I still want you to see Balthus’ picture all the same, to say things in a Lacanian language since I speak in his place, why not?

In reply to “Let me see”: “You do not see me from where I am looking at you” (*tu ne me vois pas d’ou je te regarde*). It is a fundamental formula to explicitate what interests us in every relationship of looking, it is a matter of the scopic drive and very precisely in exhibitionism as well in voyeurism, but we are not here to see whether, in the picture, people are tickled nor whether something is happening.

We are here to see how this picture inscribes for us the perspective of the relationships of the look in what is called phantasy is so far as it is constitutive. There is great ambiguity about this word phantasy. Unconscious phantasy, all right, that is an object. First of all it is an object in which we always lose one of the three pieces that are in it, namely, two subjects and one (o). Because do not believe that I have the illusion that I am going to bring you the unconscious phantasy as an object. Without that, the drive of the phantasy would spring up elsewhere. But what is disturbing, is that every time (50) people speak about unconscious phantasy, they also speak implicitly about the phantasy of seeing it. Namely, that the hope, from the fact that people are chasing it,

and this introduces a lot of confusion into the matter. I, for the moment, I am trying to give you, properly speaking, what is called a frame (*bati*), and a frame which is not a metaphor, because unconscious phantasy depends on a frame, and it is this frame that I do not despair, not only of making familiar to those who listen to me but of making it get under their skin. This is my goal and this is an absolutely risky exercise which, for some people, appears to be derisory, that I am pursuing here, and that you only hear distant echos of.

I am now going to pass around among you, thanks to Gloria, Monsieur Balthus' image. There is a Balthus exhibition on at the moment. It is at the Pavillon de Marsan, I am giving you the information free. For a modest sum, you can all go and admire this painting.

Well then, it is a little homework that I am giving to some people. I am giving them the whole vacation for it. Let us see. Look at this picture. I hope to get some reproductions of it but it is not very easy. I owe this one to Madam Henriette Gomez who happened, it was moreover for her astonishing, who found that she had it in her (51) filing index. There you are, there is a slight difference in the picture that you will see, you see, contrary to what happens in Velasquez because obviously there are questions of epoch.

Here, in this picture, people are being tickled a little and to ensure the tranquillity of the present owner this hand has been slightly raised by the author.

I showed it to him again last evening, I must say that he told me that, all the same, it was very much better composed like that. He was sorry for having made a concession that he thought he ought to, it was a sort of counter-concession. He said : "After all, perhaps I am doing that to annoy people, so why not drop it", but it is not true. He had put it there because it ought to be there. In any case, all the other things which are there ought also to be there and, when all is said and done, when I saw this picture, I had seen it once previously and I no longer remembered it, but when I saw it this time, in this context, you will attribute this to what I do not know, to my lucidity or to my delusion, you have to decide, I said: "That is *Las Meninas*". Why is this picture *Las Meninas*? This is the little piece of holiday homework then that I am leaving to the best of you.

I am going to begin, *sotto voce*, by reading to you, rapidly, something which represents a short account of my seminar, that I have been asked for, as is done at this time of the year. It will be less long than the one that I gave you, already developed for you, about last year's seminar, but as I know that this first reading was of some service as regards last year's seminar, I am going to begin things today by giving you, by recalling to you what the situation of this year's seminar is.

"This seminar which is, for us, still in progress," I write, "was concerned, following its path, with the function long mapped out in analytic experience under the title of object relations. It is held in it, for the analysable subject, it dominates his relation to the real, and the oral or anal object are promoted in it at the expense of others whose status, even though manifest, remains uncertain in it.

(2) "The fact is that, if the first - of these objects - depend directly on the relationship of demand, very suitable for a corrective intervention, the others require a more complex theory, because there cannot fail to be recognised in them a division of the subject impossible to reduce by the simple efforts of good intentions, being the very division by which desire is supported."

"These other objects, specifically the look and the voice, if we leave for what is to come the object at stake in castration, are an integral part of this division of the subject and presentify in the very field of the perceived the elided part of it as libidinal.

"As such, they push back the appreciation of the practice that threatens the overlapping of these objects by the specular relationship with the ego identifications which people want to respect in it."

"This relationship is enough to justify our having insisted this year, by preference, on the scopic drive and on its immanent object, the look. We have given the topology which allows there to be conceived the presence of the *percipiens* himself in the field where as unperceived, he is nevertheless perceptible when he is even too much so in the effects of the drive which manifest themselves as exhibitionism or voyeurism."

(3) "This topology which is inscribed in projective geometry and the surfaces of the *analysis situs*, is not to be taken, as in the case of the optical models in Freud, under the heading of metaphor but indeed as representing the structure itself. This topology accounts, finally, for the impurity of the scopic *perceptum*, by rediscovering what I believed I was able to indicate in one of my articles, very precisely the one on the *Question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis*, what I believed I was able to indicate in terms of the presence of the irreducible *percipiens* from the mark

that it carries there of the signifier, when it shows itself to be minted in the never conceived phenomenon of the psychotic voice.”

“The absolute requirement in these two scopical and invocatory points of a theory of desire, brings us to a rectification of deviations in practice, to the necessary self-criticism of the position of the analyst, a self-criticism which is directed at the risk attached to his own subjectification, if he wants to respond honestly, even simply to the demand.”

I am going, today, to pursue this exemplary object that I chose three seminars ago, to take, in order to fix before you the terms in which there is situated this problematic, the problematic of the *o*-object and of the division of the subject, in so far as I have just (4) said, that since the obstacle in question is the one procured by specular identification, it is not without reason, it is by reason of the particular role, at once through its latency and the intensity of its presence, that the *o*-object constitutes at the level of this drive.

Would you mind letting us see again the picture of *Las Meninas*? Here is this picture. You already saw it enough the last time, I think to have since had the curiosity to come back to it, this picture, you now know, by the thematic that it furnished, in the dialectic of the relationships of the sign with things, specifically in the work of Michel Foucault around whom my whole statement the last time was produced, through the numerous discussions that it has provided within what one could call art criticism, this picture, let us say, presents us, reminds us of what was advanced in its connection, in terms of a fundamental relationship that it suggests with the mirror, this mirror which is at the back and where people wanted to see, in a way, and, as it were, in treating lightly the trick which consists in representing in it those who are supposed to be there in front as models, namely, the royal couple, this mirror, on the other hand, is put in question when it is a matter of explaining how the painter could situate himself here, and (5) painting for us what we have there in front of us, can, for his part, see it. The mirror, therefore, which is at the back and the mirror at our level.

Lights please.

This, the mirror and the picture, introduces us to the reminder by which today I want to enter into the explanation that I hope to be able to make complete today, complete and definitive, as regards what is in question.

The relationship of the picture to the subject is fundamentally different to that of the mirror. When I put forward that in the picture, as a perceived field, there can be inscribed both the place of the *o*-object and its relationship to the division of the subject, that this, I showed it to you in introducing my problem, by the putting in the foreground the function, in the picture, of perspective, in so far as it is the way in which, starting from a certain historically situatable date, the subject, specifically the

painter, makes himself present in the picture, and not simply in so far as his position determines the vanishing point of the aforesaid perspective. I designated the point where there is, not at all as people say, the artists speaking as artisans, the other eye, this point which regulates the distance at which it is proper to place oneself in order to appreciate, to receive the maximum effect of perspective, but this other point that I (6) characterised for you as being the point at infinity in the picture plane.

This, just by itself, is sufficient to distinguish in the scopic field the function of the picture from that of the mirror. They both have, of course, something in common, it is the frame, but in the mirror, what we see is this something in which there is no more perspective than in the real world; organised perspective means the entry into the scopic field of the subject himself. In the mirror, you have the world unadorned, namely, this space in which you locate yourself, with the experiences of ordinary life, in so far as it is dominated by a certain number of intuitions in which there is joined, not simply the field of optics, but where it is joined to the practice and the feel of your own movements.

It is in this respect, and in this respect first of all, that one can say that the picture, so differently structured and in its frame, in its frame which cannot be isolated from another reference point, the one occupied by the S point dominating its projective, that the picture is only the representative of the representation. It is the representative of the representation in the mirror. It is not, in its essence as being, the representation. And modern art illustrates this for you: a picture, a canvas, with a simple piece of shit (7) on it, a real piece of shit, for after all what else is a big splash of colour? And this is manifested in a provocative fashion, in a way, by certain extremes of artistic creation. Duchamp's *ready made* is as much a picture as it is a work of art, namely, moreover, the presentation before you of a portmanteau hanging on a rod.

Its structure is different to any representation. It is in this connection that I insist on the essential difference constituted by this term of representative of the representation, *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*, borrowed from Freud.

The fact is that the picture, through its relationship to the point S of the projective system, manifests this, which, parallel to it, exists, framing this point S itself in a plane, therefore, parallel to the plane of the picture and what I call the window, namely, this something that you can materialise as a frame parallel to that of the picture, in so far as it gives its place to this point S, that it frames it.

It is in this frame, where the point S is, that there is, as I might say, the prototype of the picture, the one where, effectively, the S is sustained, not at all reduced to this point which allows us to construct perspective in the picture, but as the point where (8) the subject itself is sustained in its own division around this present o-object which is its setting. This indeed is why the ideal of the realisation of the subject would be to make present this picture in its window, and this is the provocative image that a

painter like Magritte produces before us when, in a picture, he in fact inscribes a picture in a window. It is also the image to which I had recourse to explain what is involved in the function of phantasy. The image which implies this contradiction, that if ever it were realised in some room, like this one, lit by a single window, the perfect realisation of this ideal would plunge the room into darkness.

This indeed is why the picture must be produced somewhere in front of this plane where it is established as a place of the subject in its division, and that the question is to know what happens to this something which falls in the interval, because the subject separates (*écarte*) the picture from himself. What happens, what the exemplary object around which I am working here before you manifests, is that the subject, in its divided form, can be inscribed in the figure plane, in the plane separated from the plane of the phantasy where the work of art is realised.

The artist, like every one of us, moreover, renounces the window in order to have the picture, and this is the ambiguity that I gave the other day, that I indicated about the (9) function of phantasy, phantasy is the status of the being of the subject and the word phantasy implies this desire to see the phantasy being projected, this space of withdrawal (*espace de recul*) between two parallel lines, thanks to which, always insufficient but always desired, at once do-able and impossible, the phantasy can be summoned to appear in some way in the picture.

The picture, nevertheless, is not a representation. A representation “can be seen”. And how can we express this “can be seen” (*ça se voit*)? “Can be seen”, it is anyone at all who sees it, but it is also the reflexive form; because of this, there is immanent in every representation, this “to see oneself” (*se voir*). Representation as such, the world as representation and the subject as support of this world which is represented, this is the subject transparent to itself in the classical conception, and it is there precisely what we are asked by the experience of the scopical drive, what we are asked to come back on.

That is why, when I introduced the question of this picture with the “show me” (*fais voir*), put in the mouth of the personage to whom we are going to return today, the central personage of the Infanta, Dona Margarita Maria of Austria, “show me”, my reply was first, the one that, in my terms, I gave to the figure of Velasquez, present in (10) the picture: “You do not see me from where I am looking at you”.

What does that mean? As I already put forward, the presence in the picture of what, simply in the picture, is representation, that of the picture itself which, for its part, is there as representative of the representation, has the same function in the picture as a crystal in a super-saturated solution, the fact is, everything in the picture is manifested as no longer being representation but representative of representation.

As it appears, in seeing - do I have to produce this image again - that all the personages who are there, properly speaking, represent nothing to themselves, and precisely not the fact that they represent. Here, the figure of the dog that you see on the right, takes on all its value. None of the other figures, any more than him, does anything other than show off (*être en représentation*), be court figures who mimic an ideal scene where everyone is in his function of showing off, while hardly being aware of it. Again, that here lies the ambiguity which allows us to remark that, as you see on the stage when an animal is brought onto it, the dog, also, is for his part also a very good actor.

“You do not see me from where I am looking at you”: since it is a formula minted in my style that is in question, I will allow myself to point out to you that in my style I did (11) not say: “you do not see me, there, from where I am looking at you” (*tu ne me vois pas, là, d’où je te regarde*), that the “there” is elided, this “there” on which modern thinking has put so much accent in the form of the *dasein*, as if everything were resolved about the function of being open to the fact that there is a being there. There is no “there” that Velasquez, if I make him speak, invokes, in this “you do not see me from where I am looking at you”. In this gaping place, in this unmarked interval, there is precisely this “there”, where there is produced the fall of what is in suspense under the name of *o-object*. There is no other “there” involved in the picture, than this interval that I showed you in it, expressly drawn, between what I could trace out but that you can, I think, imagine as well as I can of two grooves which would outline the trajectory in this picture, like on a stage in the theatre, of the way in which there arrive these stays or practicables, of which the first is the picture in the foreground, in this slightly oblique line that you see being easily prolonged by seeing simply from the figure of this large object on the left, and the other, traced across the group - I taught you to recognise its furrow - which is the one through which the painter introduced himself as one of the phantasmagoria personages which are made in (12) the great theatrical machinery by having himself placed at the right distance from this picture, namely, a little bit too far for us to be in any ignorance about his intention.

These two parallel grooves, this interval, this axle that this interval constitutes, to take up again the term from the baroque terminology of George Desargues, there and there alone, is the *dasein*.

That is why one can say that Velasquez the painter, because he is a real painter, is therefore not there to traffic with his *dasein*, as I might say. The difference between good and bad painting, between the good and the bad conception of the world, is that, just as bad painters never do anything but their own portrait, whatever portrait they do, and that the bad conception of the world sees in the world the macrocosm of the microcosm that we are supposed to be, Velasquez, even when he introduces himself into the picture in a self-portrait, does not paint himself in a mirror, any more than this is done in any good self-portrait.

The painting, whatever it may be, and even the self-portrait, is not a mirage of the painter but a trap for the look. It is therefore the presence of the picture in the picture (13) which allows the remainder of what is in the picture to be freed from this function of representation. And this is why this painting seizes us and strikes us. If this world that Velasquez gave rise to in this painting - and we will see what his project was - if this world is indeed what I am telling you, there is nothing excessive in recognising in it what it manifests, and what it is enough to say for it to be recognised.

What is this strange scene which has had for centuries this problematic function, if not something equivalent to what we know well in the practice of what are called parlour games and what is other than a parlour game, namely a *tableau vivant*.

These individuals who are here, no doubt, because of the very necessities of the painting projected before us, what are they doing, if not representing to us exactly this sort of group which is produced in this game of the *tableau vivant*. What is this almost gourmet attitude of the little princess, of the maid on her knees who is presenting to her this strange useless little pot on which she is beginning to put her hand, these others who do not know where to place these looks, which people persist in telling us are there to intersect when it is manifest that none of them meet, these two (14) personages of whom Mr Green made something the other day and among whom, let this be said in passing, he would be wrong to think that the female personage is a religious, she is what is called a *guarda damas*, as everyone knows, and even that her name is Dona Marcella de Ulora.

And there, what does Velasquez do if not show himself to us, as a painter, and in the middle of what? Of this whole gynaeceum. We will come back to what it means, to the really strange questions that one can pose oneself about the first title that was given to this picture, I saw it still written in a dictionary which dates from 1872: *The family of the king*. Why the family? But let us leave this for a moment, when there is obviously nobody except the little Infanta representing it here?

This *tableau vivant*, I would say, and it is indeed in this fixated gesture which makes life into a still-life, that no doubt these personages, as has been said, are effectively presented. And this is the reason why, however dead they may be, as we thus see them, they survive themselves, precisely because they are in a position which, even during their lives, never changed.

So then, we are going to see, in effect, what first of all suggests to you this function of the mirror. Is this individual, in this position of fixed life, in this death which, for us, makes it across the centuries, rise up as almost alive, like a geological fly in amber, do we not, by having made her pass over to our side to say her "let me see", evoke in her connection, this same image, this same fable of Alice's leap which would join our

own by plunging, in accordance with an artifice which the literature of Lewis Carroll and up to Jean Cocteau was able to use and abuse, the passage through the mirror.

No doubt, in this sense, there is something to traverse which, in the picture, is, in a way, preserved in a congealed way for us. But in the other? Namely, from the path which, after all, seems to be open to us and summons us to enter, ourselves, into this picture; there is none, for this indeed is the question which is posed to you by this picture, to you who, as I might say, believe that you are alive, simply because, which is a false belief, it is enough to be there to be numbered among the living. And this indeed is what torments you, what grabs everyone in the gut, at the sight of this picture, as in every picture in so far as it summons you to enter into what it truly is and what it presents to you as such; the fact that the individuals are not at all represented there, but showing off (*en representation*). And this, indeed, is the basis of what makes it so necessary for everyone to make emerge this invisible surface of the mirror (16) which one knows one cannot go through. And this is the real reason why in the Prado, you have, slightly to the right and at three quarters, so that you can hang onto it if you become anxious, namely, a mirror for it is necessary for those whom this may make dizzy to know that the picture is only a lure, a representation.

For after all, in this perspective, it must be said, at what moment do you pose yourself the question or do you distinguish the figures in the picture in so far as they are there, naturally, showing off without knowing it? Thus, in speaking about the mirror in connection with this picture one is no doubt getting warm. For it is not there simply because you add it on. We are going to say, in effect, the degree to which the picture is that very thing, but not from the angle that I believed, just now, I had to set to one side. Of these little *Meninas* with their *dasein* time still sharpened - but I do not want here to be telling you anecdotes, to be telling each one of you what, at this point where they are caught here, they still have to live, that would only be a detail that would lead you astray and it is not appropriate, remember, to confuse the reminder of the little pickings of observation and of anamnesis with what is called the clinic, if one forgets the structure in it.

(17) We are here today to sketch out this structure. What is involved then in this strange scene where what holds you yourself back from jumping, is not simply the fact that in the picture there is not enough space? If the mirror holds you back, it is not by its resistance or by its hardness. It is by the capture that it exercises, which means that you show yourself to be very inferior to what the dog in question is doing, since it is he who is there, let us take him, and, that moreover, what he shows us, is that he very quickly goes around the mirage of the mirror once or twice, he has clearly seen that there is nothing behind it.

And if the picture is in a gallery, namely, in a place where if you make the same circuit, you will also be very reassured, namely, you will see that there is nothing, it is nonetheless true that, in a way completely opposite to the dog, if you do not recognise

what the picture is the representative of, it is precisely by missing this function that it has, of reminding you that with respect to reality, you yourself are included in a function analogous to the one the picture represents, namely, caught up in phantasy. So then, let us question ourselves about the sense of this picture: the king and the queen at the back, and, it seems, in a mirror, such is here the indication that we can draw from it.

(18) I already indicated the aim of the point where we ought to seek this sense. The royal couple, no doubt, has something to do with the mirror. And we are going to see what.

If all of these personages are showing off, it is within a certain order, the monarchical order whose major figures they represent.

Here, our little Alice, in her sphere, a representative, is indeed in effect like Carroll's Alice, but with at least one element which - I already employed the metaphor - presents itself like figures on a playing card. This king and this queen whose unbridled exclamations are limited to the decision: "Off with her head".

And moreover, to give here a reminder of what I had to pass over earlier, observe the degree to which this room is not simply furnished with these personages whom I hope I have illuminated for you, but also with innumerable other pictures; it is a room of paintings and people have played the game of trying to read on each one of these cards what value the painter may well have inscribed on them. There again, there is an anecdote which I am not going to wander off on, on the subject of Apollo and Marsyas at the back, or again of the dispute between Arachne and Pallas in front of the tapestry of this carrying off of Europa that we find at the bottom of the neighbouring painting (19) by Hilanderas which is displayed here.

Where are they, this king and this queen around whom, in principle, the whole scene is properly speaking suspended? For there is not only the primal scene, the inaugural scene, there is also this transmission of the scene function which does not stop at any primordial moment.

Let us observe why and for whom the representation is made? For them to see; but from where they are, they see nothing, for here it is well to remember what the picture is, not at all a representation around which one turns and for which one changes one's angle. These personages have no back, and if the picture is turned round there, it is in order precisely for that which is in front of it, namely, what we see, to be hidden from us. This is not to say that, for all that, it presents itself to the prince. This royal vision is exactly what corresponds to the function, when I tried to articulate it explicitly, of the big Other in the narcissistic relationship. Consult my article entitled *Remarks* on a certain discourse which was given at the Royaumont Congress. I recall for those who no longer remember it, or for others who do not know it, that what was at stake then

was to give its value, to restore in our perspective two themes which had been put (20) forward by a psychologist, and which put the accent on the ideal ego and the ego ideal, functions that are so important in the economy of our practice; but where seeing the incorrigible psychology of these consciousness references enter into the field of analysis, we saw there being produced again, the first as the ego that one believes one is and the other as the one that one wants to be.

With all the kindness of which I am capable when I am working with someone, I only collected what, in this beginning, seemed to me right to recall, what was in question, namely, an articulation which makes it absolutely necessary to maintain in these functions their structure, with what this structure imposes from the register of the unconscious, that I imaged it through this image of the point S, with respect to a mirror, effectively, whose ambiguous function it is now a matter of getting to know.

By putting oneself, therefore, with the help of this mirror through which I define in this schema the field of the Other, in a position to see, thanks to the mirror, from a point which is not the one that he occupies, which he cannot see otherwise because of the fact that he keeps to a certain field, namely, what it is a matter of producing in this field, what I represented for you by an upside-down vase under a little board, and taking advantage of an old experiment in physics-for-fun that was taken as a model.

(21) Here it is not at all a matter of structure but, as in each case that we refer to optical models, of a metaphor, of course, a metaphor which is applied, if we know that thanks to a spherical mirror a real image can be produced of an object hidden under what I call a little board. And that, then, if we have there a little bouquet of flowers ready to welcome this circumscribing, the neck of this mirror [vase?], there is here an operation which is precisely the one which constitutes this little physics-for-fun trick, on condition that in order to see it one is in a certain field of the stage which is outlined starting from the spherical mirror. If one does not occupy it, precisely, one can, by having oneself transferred as seeing into a certain point of the mirror, find oneself there in the conic field which comes from the spherical mirror.

Namely, that it is here that one sees the result of the illusion, namely, the flowers surrounded by their little vase. This, of course, as an optical model, is not at all the structure, any more than Freud ever thought of giving you the structure of any physiological functions whatsoever in speaking to you about the ego, the super-ego, the ego ideal, or even the Id. It is nowhere in the body, the body-image, on the contrary, is in it. And here, this spherical mirror has no other role than to represent that which, in effect, in the cortex, may be the system necessary to give us, in its (22) foundation, this image of the body.

But it is a matter of something quite different in the specular relationship, and what gives this image its value for us in its narcissistic function, is what for us it has both encompassed and hidden in terms of this function of (o).

Latent in the specular image there is the function of the look. And nevertheless, I am astonished, without knowing what to refer it to, to distractedness, not I hope to a lack of work, or simply to the desire not to embarrass oneself, is there not here some problem that is at least raised ever since I told you that (o) is not specular. For, in this schema, the bouquet of flowers comes from the other side of the mirror. The bouquet of flowers is reflected in the mirror. This indeed is the whole problematic of the place of the **o**-object.

To whom does it belong in this schema? To the battery of what concerns the subject here in so far as it is involved in the formation of this ideal ego, incarnated here in the vase, of the specular identification on which the ego is based, or indeed to something else, of course, this model is not exhaustive. There is the field of the Other, this field (23) of the Other that you can incarnate in the child's game, that you see being incarnated in the first references that he makes as soon as he discovers his own image in the mirror, he turns around, to have it, in a way, authenticated by the one who, at that moment, is holding him, is supporting him, or is in the neighbourhood.

The problematic of the **o**-object remains entire, therefore, at this level. I mean, that of this schema. Well then, do I need to insist very much in order to allow you to recognise, in this picture from the brush of Velasquez, an image that is almost identical to the one that I have presented to you here.

What resembles more this sort of secret object, in a brilliant garment (*vêture*) which is on the one hand, here, represented in the bouquet of flowers hidden, veiled, taken, encompassed, around this enormous dress of the vase, which is both a real image and a real image seized in the virtual due to the mirror, than the clothes of this little Infanta, the illuminated personage, the central personage, the preferred model of Velasquez who painted her seven or eight times, and you have only to go to the Louvre to see her painted the same year. And God knows that she is beautiful and captivating!

(24) For us analysts, what is this strange object of the little girl that we know well. No doubt, she is already there, in accordance with the good tradition which would have it that the queen of Spain has no legs. But is this a reason for us to ignore it: in the centre of this picture is the hidden object, and it is not because of having the deviant mind of an analyst - I am not here to push you towards a certain easy thematic - but to call it by its name, because this name remains valid in our structural register, and is called the slit (*fente*).

There are many slits in this picture, it seems, and we could set about counting them on our fingers beginning with Dona Maria Agostina de Sarniente, who is the one on her knees, the Infanta, the other who is called Isabelle de Velasquez, the idiot, the monster Maria Barbola, Dona Marcella de Ulora also, and then I do not

know, I do not find that the other personages are of any other kind than that of being personages to remain in a gynecium in complete security for those who protect them. The quaint *guarda damas*, who is on the extreme right, and why not the pooch too, who however much of an actor he may be, seems to me to be a rather tranquil individual. It is really curious that Velasquez should have put himself there, in the middle. He really must have meant it.

(25) But going beyond this anecdote, what is important is the contrast of the fact that this whole scene, which is only supported by being caught in a vision and seen by the personages who, I have just underlined for you, see nothing because of their position. Everyone turns their back on them and only presents to them in any case what is not to be seen there.

Now, everything is also only sustained by the supposition of their looks. In this gap there lies, properly speaking, a certain function of the Other, which is precisely that in which the soul of a monarchical vision at the moment that it empties itself, just as on several occasions, as regards the conception of the classical, omnipresent, omniscient, all-seeing God, I ask you the question: "Is this God able to believe in God, or does this God know that he is God?".

In the same way, what is inscribed here in the structure, is this vision of an other who is this empty other, pure vision, pure reflection, what is seen, properly speaking, at the mirror-like surface of this other void, of this other complementary to the "I think" of Descartes, as I underlined it, of the other in so far as it is necessary that he should be there to support what does not need him in order to be supported, namely, the truth which is there, in the picture, as I have described it for you.

(26) This other void, this God of an abstract theology, pure articulation of a mirage, the God of Fenelon's theology, linking the existence of God to the existence of the ego, is here the point of inscription, the surface upon which Velasquez represents for us what he has to represent for us.

But as I told you, in order for this to hold together, it remains that it is necessary that there should also be the look. This is what is forgotten in this theology, and this theology still lasts in so far as modern philosophy believes that a step forward has been taken with Nietzsche's formula which says that God is dead. So what?

Has this changed anything? God is dead, everything is allowed, says this old imbecile called Karamazov *père* or indeed Nietzsche, we all know well that ever since God is dead, everything is as always in the same position, namely, that nothing is lost, for the simple reason that the question at stake is, not the vision of God and his omniscience, but the place and the function of the look. Here, the status of what has become of God's look has not been volatilised. That is why since I was able to speak to you as I

did about Pascals' wager since, as Pascal says, "we are all committed", and the story of this wager still holds up.

(27) And that we are still playing ball between our look, God's look, and some other tiny objects like the one that the Infanta presents us with, in this picture.

This will allow me to end on a point that is essential for the continuation of my discourse. I apologise to those who are not used to handling what I earlier advanced in the order of my topology, namely, this tiny object called the cross-cap or the projective plane, where there can be cut out, with a simple circuit of a scissors, the fall of the **o**-object, making appear this doubly rolled up **S** which constitutes the subject.

It is clear that in the gap realised by this fall of the object which is, on this occasion, the painter's look, what comes to be inscribed is, as I might say, a double object, for it involves an amboceptor. The necessity for this amboceptor I will demonstrate to you when I take up my topological demonstration; on this occasion, it is precisely the Other.

In place of his object, the painter, in this work, in this object that he produces for us, has placed something which is made up of the Other, of this blind vision which is that of the Other, in so far as it supports this other object.

(28) This central object, the split, the little girl, the *girl* = phallus, which is what, moreover, I earlier designated for you as the slit.

What is involved in this object? Is it the object of the painter or in this royal couple whose dramatic configuration we know, the widower king who marries his niece, everyone is amazed (*s'esbaudit*), twenty-five years in the difference. It is a good gap in age but perhaps not when the husband is around fortys year old. We have to wait a little.

And, between the two of this couple where we know that this impotent king preserved the status of this monarchy which, like his own image, is no longer but a ghost and a shadow, and this woman, jealous, as we also know from contemporary testimony, when we see that in this picture which is called The King's Family, even though there is another one, who is twenty years older, called Marie-Thérèse and who will marry Louis XIV. Why is she not there if it is the family of the king? It is perhaps because the family means something different. It is well known that etymologically, family comes from *famulus*, namely, all the servants, the whole household. It is a household well centred, here on something. on something which is the little Infanta, the **o**-object, (29) and we are going here to remain on the question in which it is brought into play, in a perspective on subjectification as dominant as that of a Velasquez, of whom I can only say one thing, which is that I regret having abandoned its field in the Meninas this year, since moreover, you see clearly that I also wanted to talk to you about something else.

When there is produced this something which is not of course the psychoanalysis of the king since, first of all, it is the function of the king that is in question and not the king himself.

When there appears, in this perfect shot, this central object where there come to join together, as in Michel Foucault's description, these two crossed lines which divide up the picture in order to isolate for us, in the centre, this brilliant image.

Is this not done so that we analysts, who know that here is the meeting point of the end of an analysis, should ask ourselves how, for us, there is transferred this dialectic of the *o*-object, if it is to this *o*-object that there is given the term and the rendezvous in which the subject must recognise himself. Who ought to provide it? Him or us?

(30) Do we not have as much to do as Velasquez did in his construction? These two points, these two lines which cross one another, bearing in the very image of the picture, this frame of the setting, the two up-rights (*montants*) which cross one another.

This is where I want to leave suspended the rest of what I will have to tell you, but not without adding to it this little feature. It is curious that if I end on the figure of the cross, you might tell me that Velasquez is wearing it on this kind of blouse with slashed sleeves in which you see him dressed.

Well then, you are going to learn something that I thought was very good. Velasquez had demonstrated (*démontré*) for the king the setting of this world which depends entirely on phantasy. Well then, in what he first painted, he did not have a cross on his chest and for a simple reason which is that he was not yet a chevalier of the order of Santiago. He was named about a year and a half later and one could only wear it eight months after that. In any case that brings us, all of that brings us to 1659. He died in 1660 and the legend says that after his death, it was the king himself who came, through some subtle revenge, to paint this cross on his chest.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 1 June 1966

We are advancing towards the end of this year, which I see that, as compared to the greater part of my colleagues, I am prolonging with unusual zeal. It is not the custom to ask you to be present after the beginning of June, but, nevertheless, you know that my custom is different, and it is probable that I will not modify it much this year. It all depends on the place that I will give to the closed seminar: one or two

There remain, therefore, two occasions for me to speak to you in today's position, that of the open lecture. This will, of course, be to try to gather together the sense of what I brought before you this year under the title of the object of psychoanalysis, which you know is not at all this sort of vague opening which is offered by a simple reading of the title, but that it very specifically means what I articulated in the structure as the **o**-object.

You can also note that, if the **o**-object is indeed the one which is found to include in its embrace the totality of the objects that psychoanalysts made function under this rubric, (2) I would certainly have failed a little, or even a lot, in my descriptive or collective function. I enumerated them, from time to time, one after another, but one could not say that I dwelt too long on them as a bunch, and since the other day I recalled their representation precisely in the form of a bouquet of flowers, I have not overdone the botanical aspects of each one.

Above all, I spoke about topological elements, and topological elements in which in short, I have not, up to the present, in an explicit fashion, completely highlighted where to put this **o**-object. Naturally, those who listen carefully to me were able, more than once, to gather that the **o**-object is a topological structure, the one that I imaged for you by the figures of the torus, the cross-cap, the mitre, even the Klein bottle, one can detach it from them with a pair of scissors.

They were also able to understand that this is an operation about whose nature one would be completely wrong if one believed that to detach it from them with a pair of scissors in the form of some rings, represents anything whatsoever.

Here, again, the term of representative of the representation would be appropriate, for the representation is absolutely not at all in this operation of isolation, of cutting out, (3) and it is easy to notice that, if these structures on which I operated in order to highlight the articulation of this operation, these structures have as I might say their own resources at points which, curiously, with respect to what they represent, can scarcely be designated, precisely, except by the term of hole.

If our torus is effective in representing something, a repetitive, successive, rolling around, like this famous amphisbaena serpent which represented a symbol of life for the ancients, in short, if this torus has any value it is precisely because it is the topological structure which is marked by this central thing, which is undoubtedly very

difficult to circumscribe somewhere, because it simply seems to be only a part of its exterior but which, undoubtedly, structures the torus very differently to a sphere.

Well then, the **o**-object, I was saying earlier, those who paid attention to what I say and who were even, incidentally, able to see me explicitly pronounce it, the **o**-object is here, in this kind of hole that it is, properly speaking, let us say, representable, properly by the very fact that it is in no way represented.

We are going to see these things coming together later on. Namely, why, in short, we (4) come to a reference that is properly situated in the topological field, but from now on you can see that there is surely some consistency between the fact that in the last phase of the preceding seminars, including the closed seminars, which were entirely spent in developing, in connection with a very outstanding painting, to allow there to be manifested, accentuated in a way, by the painter, the function of perspective, we found ourselves, I must say in a way in which you can have the greatest confidence, I mean that I pushed there as far as possible the rigour with which there can be stated in the case of the scopic field, how the phantasy is composed, indeed, that it is for us the representative of any possible representation of the subject.

You can sense very well that there is a relationship between the fact that I focused the whole spotlight on the scopic field, on the scopic **o**-object, the look, in so far, it has to be said, as it has never been studied, never been isolated, I am speaking here where I have to speak, namely, in the psychoanalytic field, where it is all the same very strange that people did not perceive that there was here something to isolate otherwise than by evoking it, and again, without naming it, in crude analogies. An author whose name is (5) a little bit hackneyed in analytic teaching, Mr Fenichel, demonstrated for us the analogies between scopophilic identification and manducation. But analogy is not structure and it does not isolate within scopophilia what object is involved and what its function is - something quite different again by means of which the look would have been able to make its entry.

At the point that we are at, and where at least some of you were able to hear me the last time, after having situated this look, at the very centre of the picture, hidden somewhere under the robes of the Infanta, to give them, as I might say, from this enveloped point, their radiation and I pointed out that it was there through what function?

If it is true, as I told you, that what the painter represents to us is the image that is produced in the empty eye of the king, this eye which, like all eyes, is made to see nothing and which supports in effect this image, as it is painted for us not at all in a mirror but well and truly its image in the proper sense, right side out (*à l'endroit*). Here the look is elsewhere, there in the object which is the **o**-object with respect to those who, right at the back, the royal couple in the position both of seeing nothing and of seeing by their reflection somewhere at the back of the scene, there where we (6) are, this **o**-object before this, in short, inexistent mirror of the other, we have posed the question of who does it belong to, to those who support it in this empty vision, or

to the painter placed here as a looking subject, who gives rise to the transmutation of the work of art.

This ambiguity of the belonging of the **o**-object, is here what allows us to refer it back to, to link it up to, the preceding thread that we left hanging about the function of the stake in so far as we have illustrated it by Pascal's wager.

The **o**-object rejoining here its most universal combinatorial, is what is operating between the S and the O in so far as neither of them can co-exist with the other except by being marked with the sign of the bar, namely, of being in a position of being divided, precisely, by the impact of the **o**-object.

The impasse, the splitting apart, in which the function of the subject is put, precisely, into the function of the wager, this really crucial, absurd, wager for all of those who have devoted themselves to its analysis, I recall that I made it the introductory chapter, in the course of my presentation this year, about the **o**-object. Today, it is a matter of placing what I am putting forward in this way, of replacing it in the economy of what you know, what serves as a support for you in Freud's doctrine.

(7) For, moreover, it ought not to be forgotten in order to situate the import of what I am teaching you about the procedure of my teaching, that it is nothing other than what it declared itself to be at the beginning, and what gives it its flesh, and its link, for otherwise, one might be astonished at one or other detour in my journeying. And for anyone who takes up what I have been enouncing now for almost fifteen years, in the collection which has been made always with care if not with success, and which will at least allow the general network of it to be preserved, it will be seen that there is nothing there which was not each time, very exactly determined by the fact that what is demanded of me is what? To rethink Freud. This is how I will put it forward first, lending in this way to all sorts of ambiguities or even misunderstandings. *Zurück zu Freud*, return to Freud, I said first of all, at a moment when this took on its sense from the confused manifestations of a colossal deviation in analysis.

It is of secondary importance whether it appears or not, that to what ever little degree, I obviated it. It was less from this contingency that I authorised myself. The very classical ideal, in all sort of idealisations, of a return to the sources was not what I affected (*me poignait*). To rethink, that is my method. But I prefer the second word if, precisely, you study it in order to take it apart a little bit, you realise what the word (8) method can mean exactly: a path taken up again afterwards. The word *meta*, like all Greek prepositions and, in truth, like prepositions in every tongue provided one takes an interest in them, is always an extraordinarily rewarding object of study. If there is a kind of word in connection with which one can say that any kind of pre-eminence given in the study of linguistics to meaning is destined to lose itself in an inextricable labyrinth, it is indeed all the prepositions.

The exploration of the richness and the diversity of the range of senses of the word *meta*, you can yourself try to test out with the dictionaries, and you will see that nothing prevents this word *meta* - I am passing over what is properly necessitated by

the structural forms that I put forward for you this year, and specifically in showing you on the Moebius strip which, apparently, plays in two of these shapes the function of an altogether fundamental, exemplary, relationship, the function of a support for what is their structure, and which is also latent in the third, this Moebius strip which exemplifies for us what I would call the necessity, in the structure, of a double circuit. I mean that with a single circuit, you will only apparently loop around what is circumscribed in it, since you only get back to your starting point on the single (9) condition of having reversed your orientation in it. A non-orientable surface, which requires that after, as I might say, having lost it twice, you will only rediscover it by making two circuits.

This is very exactly the sense that I would give to my method with respect to what Freud taught. If there is, in effect, something strange which is the fastened, closed, completed character, even though marked by a twist, through something which connects up with itself in this point which I have for a long time underlined in his writing, as the *Spaltung* of the ego, and which returns fully charged with the sense accumulated in the course of a long exploration, that of his whole career, towards an original point with a completely transformed sense, an original point from which he started, almost, from the completely different notion of the duplication of personality.

Let us say that he was able to transform completely this current notion by the reference points of the unconscious, it is to it that at the end, in the form of the division of the subject, he gave his definitive seal.

What I have to do is very exactly to describe the same circuit a second time, but in such a structure, doing it a second time has absolutely not the sense of a pure and simple reduplication.

(10) And this structural necessity has something so primary about it that we are only allowed to accede to it along a path that is difficult to map out, something which, I would say, almost requires a sort of compass in which I have to, in the fashion in which I have to operate, speaking to practitioners, I had to trust you to trust mine, very properly in so far as it is supported by a combination of analytic experience and the reading of Freud, but whose trigonometry has all the same a sanction, namely, let us say the word, whether it fits or not.

All of those who come here to listen to me may effectively cross-check that with a construction which, many times, seems to be decked out with elements quite foreign to Freud, it is precisely at these important meeting points that I find myself re-centring him, and in a fashion which illuminates from a completely new perspective the points to which Nietzsche gave the accent of value.

I said earlier that it was not so important that during the time that I am pursuing this operation, there is quite clearly manifested something which from what is announced from the mainstream of psychoanalysis is an overturning of the movement.

It is necessary in any case for me to resign myself to the fact that what I am teaching (11) will not immediately deliver what it is designed to generate, that it be content in the first place to gather together those who can find material in it.

For, moreover, there is a certain order of operations to which I am not going to give a general name, except to say that it is properly the one which is exemplified by what I have just defined, namely, the completion of a structure of which it can be said that it is not so essential that it should be immediately sanctioned by the effects of communication.

To the great astonishment of someone that I am evoking here in my memory, I was able to state that what I had said one day before an audience which was certainly not you, before an audience which was not of too bad a quality, but before an audience that was very little prepared, what I was able to put forward under a title like "*Dialectic of desire and subversion of the subject*". "How", it was said to me, "can you believe that there is the slightest interest in stating what you are stating here in front of people who are so little prepared to understand it? Do you think that this exists in a sort of third or fourth space?"

Undoubtedly not, but that a certain loop (*boucle*) had been effectively looped and that something of it, however little it may be, remains indicated somewhere, this is something which is perfectly sufficient to justify one giving oneself the trouble to state it.

(12) It is here that the notion of intersubjectivity becomes quite secondary; the plan of the structure can wait; once it is there, it is sustained by itself and in the fashion, I would say, - the metaphor only comes to me here extemporaneously - in the fashion of a trap, of a hole, of a ditch. It is waiting for some future subject to be caught in it.

Therefore, there is no need to be disturbed about what one could call the failure of a certain community, on this occasion the psychoanalytic one, or rather one should map out, in this connection, what this failure consists of, precisely in the measure, as I sometimes do, that one can map out that it gives testimony in favour of the structure that has to be sketched out in it.

You will say to me: "Where are the criteria of the one who gives the right structure?" But, precisely, it is the structure itself. In the field where what is in question is the subject, if the structure is only such in the outline, the project that you make of a field of objectification, it is not implied as necessary that you should find the brand, the imprint, the bloody and divided trace of the subject himself, if it is excluded in advance, as I might say, in the name of this false experimental modesty which, believing that it (13) can authorise itself from what has been achieved in the physical

sciences, believes that it can allow itself to project into this field that is described as psycho-sociology this sort of full objectification, and that by right, in the name of some fashion or other of standing back from the game at the beginning, protected by this false experimental modesty, we will say that there is a criteria, a register of proof, which is valid, logically, that I would describe in these terms. There are initial structures in the progress of thinking about which one can say nothing more than that they can or cannot be suspected of being true. That is the test of the structure.

However falsely modest may be the one which is advanced in its field, the one that I named earlier, in a fashion which does not present in itself the necessity of this tearing apart, of this gap, of this wound which will be found, it is the sign in a certain number of paradoxes and, moreover, the field of this no doubt successful science, which ours is in so far as in the whole of its physical field it has succeeded in foreclosing the subject, can only give its foundation, its mathematical principle, by rediscovering the same gap, in the form of a certain number of paradoxes. From this point of view, it continues to be able to be suspected of being true.

(14) But this whole wound that we allow to spread, in the name of not being able to justify what is meant by the fact that it cannot in any case be suspected of being true, this is what leaves the field free to what I called this wound that you can pinpoint again with the term of medico-pedagogical.

Here indeed is the gravity of the case of the psychoanalyst. For this is their whole strength, and I think that the words that I am speaking have enough weight and import, in order that, as regards their place, you will give its sense to this prestige - they have no other one - in the field of science, that they really want to be suspected of being the representatives of a representation that is true.

It is indeed in this register, and what gets caught up and comes to a halt before what is supposed to be normal, a pure and simple position of rejection since moreover, we have not yet succeeded in giving a valid status to the material they bring us.

Now, it is really there and the slippage is the alibi that a formation corresponds to a definition of structure through which it can be suspected of being true. Which, since there is only a suspicion, does not mean sufficiency but implies an "it is necessary" beyond which, perhaps, nothing additional can contribute decisively as sufficiency.

(15) Such is this sign which is the definition of this suspicion, and this is indeed our problematic before what the symptom proposes to us as a question about the truth. Every time, camped in different ways in knowledge, we have to deal with this question about the truth, the same ambiguity is presented that the term of the representative of representation supports and incarnates.

And this is the way in which there has always failed, on the lure that I am going to mention, the critique of religion by the *Aufklärung*.

These representatives know very well the error in which this representative of the truth consists, from attacking it in the representations, in the representations that it gives of it, and this the representatives themselves, namely, the personages that are sacralised in different ways, know very well. They encourage the besiegers of the citadel to discuss the likelihood of the stopping of the sun in Joshua's battle, or one or other little story of the kind in the sacred text. The question is not to be directed at the structure which claims to involve the question of the truth of the representations, whatever they may be, at those that may be the representations of this structure, but at the representatives of the representation.

- (16) That is why of course they prefer that the battle should be waged on the themes that are all the more impregnable in revelation that one can cleave them in twain as long as you wish, since they have the same material as the structure, namely, not the same materiality as the swords that go through them, they will be in the best of health for a long time to come.

So that, what we could call the betrayal of psychoanalysts is the inverse of this. The fact is that even though they are representatives of a position which may be suspected of being true, they believe that they have a duty to embody (*donner corps*) by every other means than the ones which ought to flow from the strictest circumscribing of their function as representatives; they strive on the contrary to authenticate representations in all the ways that are most foreign, and they seek to give them the seal of the generally accepted.

Here then is the goal of what we are trying to construct, the criteria of the structure in so far as they respond to these exigencies, given what is being tackled, namely, the structure of the subject, that a doctrine may be suspected of being true, which implies in those who are its representatives something different than to base themselves on foreign criteria. This is what justifies not alone the method but the limits according to which we ought to approach certain key elements of this (17) structure, and concerning such and such an *o*-object, the one for example of the scopic field, undoubtedly, to impose this discipline on ourselves which does not exclude a certain Puritanism, to make little of the richness of what is offered here to us, for moreover, how can one not note what a point of agreement is this look, around which already Freud, for his part, and he alone, has taught us to locate its function, its value, from the sign of *Unheimlichkeit*, for you can note by taking up his study, that in the works that he brings in as bearing witness to this dimension, the role, the function played in it by the look in this strange form of the eye that is blind because it has been torn out.

..... some attributes which may represent a close equivalent, glasses, for example, or again a glass eye, a false eye. This is the whole thematic of Hoffman, and God knows that it is even richer than what I can evoke here; the reference to *The devil's elixir* is there within your reach.

There is a whole history of the eye, it has to be said. And those who have here their ears open to what may be disguised information, know what I am alluding to in speaking about the history of the eye.

- (18) It is a book published anonymously by one of the most representative personages of a certain essential uneasiness, in our own day, which is supposed to be an erotic novel.

L'histoire de l'oeil is rich in a whole texture that is well designed to remind us, as one might say, of the fitting together, the equivalence, the interconnection of all the o-objects and their central relationship with the sexual organ.

Of course, it is not without effect that we could recall that it is not in vain that it is at this point of the slit between the eye-lids that there is produced the phenomenon of tears, which it cannot be said we do not have to question ourselves about, on this occasion, as regards its relationship to the structural meaning given to this slit.

And how can we not see also that it is not in vain that the eye, or rather this slit, plays the role also, for us, the function of the gateway to sleep.

This is a lot, and enough to make us go astray. Too much richness and too many anecdotes are only designed to make us fall back into the rut of some developmental reference or other or to seek once more the specific moments in history which, whatever may be the interest of these reference points, only dissimulate from us what it is a matter of defining, namely, the function occupied by (19) the scopical field in a structure which is, properly speaking, the one which involves the relationship of the subject to the Other.

It is quite strange, precisely, that while in the course of all this time we have promoted the function of communication in language as being that which, essentially, ought to centre what concerned the unconscious, while from every angle we have not ceased hearing again and again this objection which is really not one, namely, that there is the pre-verbal, the extra-verbal, the ante-verbal, while people were making great play, we are saying, of gesture, of mimicry, of paleness and all the other vasomotor, kinaesthetic, or other forms, where supposedly there is exercised some ineffable communication or other as if we had ever contested it, that no one has ever put forward what was nevertheless the only point on which there was really something to say, namely, the order of communication which passes through the look.

This, in effect, is not language. It is precisely what supports the importance of my recentering of the handling of the unconscious upon language and the word, the fact is, precisely, that Freud inaugurated the analytic position by excluding the look from it. It is a primary truth which one is all the same forced to take into account, because the fact precisely that one elides them and forgets them, proves the degree (20) to which one is missing the point.

Now this **o**-object, the one in question in the scopic field, why is it that this is the one that we have, in a way, put forward in the forefront, and this year found ourselves focusing, what is called, on this occasion, our attention.

The **o**-object is the stake (*l'enjeu*) of what is foundational for the subject in his relationship to the Other. Our question is suspended on the subject of its belonging. Let us look more closely at what is involved, and starting from the most elementary things that are given to us in experience in connection with what analysts call object-relations.

If they have clearly allowed this relationship of the subject to the Other to deviate by reducing it to the register of demand, let us take advantage of it.

The two best known of these objects, the typical objects, as I might say, in the function, the account that analysis gives of them, makes of the good breast, as it is called, an object of the demand made on the other; it is the object of the demand which comes from the other that gives its value to the excremental object.

It is clear that all of this leaves us locked in a perfectly dual relationship, when I say perfectly, I am not writing it here with any accent of getting a good mark but of being closed, of being completely closed.

(21) And one know what results from it in terms of the reduction of every perspective whether it is theoretical, comprehensive, practical, clinical, psychological and even pedagogical to lock oneself into this cycle of demand that is consistent with that of frustration or gratification, frustration or non-frustration.

The restitution that is, in a way, internal, immanent to the function of demand, of what ought to emerge from it as another dimension, from the very fact that this demand is expressed by means of language in so far as it gives primacy to the locus of the Other, and allows sufficient status to be given to the dimension of desire.

In the dimension of desire, there comes to be manifested the specific character of the **o**-object which causes it, in so far as this object takes on an absolute value, this *cachet* which ensures that what we discover in effective terms in experience, is that it is not properly speaking the satisfaction of need that is at stake, it is not that the child is filled, nor that having been filled he sleeps, that counts, it is that something which takes on such a particular accent, an accent of a such absolute condition that it has been isolated in terms that are differently described, that is called the *nipple*, the tip the breast, the good breast, the bad breast, it is not its biological shape that is at stake but a certain structural function which, precisely, allows us to find

(22) whatever equivalent one wishes in a soother, for example, a feeding bottle, or any other mechanical object, or even the little corner of a little piece of a handkerchief, provided it is the mother's dirty handkerchief, will give, will make present the function of this oral object in a fashion which deserves to be specified, structurally, as being there, the cause of desire.

This function of absolute condition to which a certain object is raised, and which is only definable in structural terms, this is what it is important to put the accent on, in order to give it its characteristics.

For, in effect, it is something which is borrowed from the carnal domain and which becomes the stake in a relationship that, to speak quite incorrectly, one could call intersubjective.

But what is the correct status of this object? It is precisely what we are in the process of trying to define. For the first two objects that I highlighted are in operation in the demand but, nevertheless, not without involving the desire of the Other.

The value taken on by the object claimed in the oral as well as in the anal dialectic, plays on the fact that in giving it or in refusing it the partner, in any case, highlights (23) what is involved in his desire in his consent or his refusal.

The dimension of desire arises with the advent of this object which, I repeat, is not the object of satisfaction of a need, but of a relationship of the demand of the subject to the desire of the other. It is at the inauguration of the function of desire and it introduces, into this dimension of demand, which originates in need, the absolute condition of the relationship to the desire of the Other.

This is why these two objects find themselves so prevalent in the structure of neurosis and why, by remaining within a horizon that is all the more easily limited in that it is they themselves who limit it, when I say horizon, it has a sense, since I have been speaking, in a certain fashion, about the scopic object, the psychoanalysts content themselves, so easily, with a theory which puts the whole accent on demand and frustration, without noticing that it is a specific characteristic of neurosis.

The neurotic has this relationship to the Other, that his demand is aimed at the desire of the Other, that his desire is aimed at the demand of the Other. In this interlacing which is linked - I accentuated it several times - to the properties of the structure of the torus, lies the limitation of the neurotic structure.

(24) Another dimension is involved for the objects that I already introduced into a certain foursome which, perhaps, constitutes a dial, namely, the voice and the look.

It is certainly remarkable that I have not [laid stress], this year, given the predilection that I have for the field of the effects of the word, on the voice. No doubt I had some reasons for that, if only that the limits of time imposed on me the necessity perhaps of having to take something from it in order to make understood and to put forward the new things that I contributed, precisely in the scopic field.

That as regards what is involved in the voice, in any case, the **o**-object is directly and immediately implicated at the level of desire, is something obvious. If the desire of the subject is founded on the desire of the other, this desire as such is manifested at the level of the voice. The voice is not alone the causal object but the

instrument in which there is manifested the desire of the Other. This term is perfectly consistent and constitutes, I might say, the high point with respect to the two senses of the demand, either to the Other or coming from the Other.

How then could we situate this object and this scopic field?

(25) Is it not here that we see it allow us, as it were, to be guided by the parallelisms of the terms desire, demand, of, to, that we see there being opened out this singular dimension that is already offered to us by the evocation of the window which, moreover, is willingly itself called a look, in this dimension of the desire of the Other, of openness, of aspiration by the Other which is properly speaking what, at this level, is at stake.

It is then that we can see why it takes on, in topology itself, this privileged function, since, when all is said and done, to whatever combinatorial reduction we can push these topological shapes which I make such a play of before you by making an image of them, it seems that there remains in them some residues of what, perhaps falsely, one calls the intuitive, and what is properly this **o**-object that I call the look.

I am going, to end today, and in order simply to provide a point of scansion, to evoke in a form which will have the advantage of showing you the polyvalence of recourses that one has at the level of structure, evoke for you another just as topological a shape which will crosscheck with the paradigm, the exemplification (26) that I gave you of this scopic structure at the level of *Las Meninas*.

I am going to end my lecture today, in order to find a finishing point, on what I presented to you as the amusing joke of the king sticking the Cross of Santiago on the chest of the painter in the picture *Las Meninas*, whether or not it was, as legend says, by putting his own hand to the brush.

This little feature, if I am to believe the echoes, has moved some good souls in the gathering here, who see in it a secret allusion to what I myself have to carry around. Let these good souls be consoled, I do not feel myself to be crucified, and for a simple reason, which is that the cross from which I began, that of the two lines which divide the picture of *Las Meninas*, the one which goes from the horizon point which loses itself, passing through the door, the person who is leaving, to the foreground at the foot of the big picture, the representative of the representation, and the other line, the one which starts from Velasquez' eye in order to go towards the extreme left, where it connects up with its natural locus where I situated it, namely, at the line to infinity of the picture, are two lines which, quite simply, and however crossed they may appear, do not cross one another for the good reason that they are on different planes.

(27) So that, if it is a cross that I have to deal with in my relationship with the analysts, namely, it has been represented to you like that in an interrupted fashion. We have therefore two lines which are not on the same plane. Well then, you should know, it is a little discovery, made a very long time ago by people who are

occupied with what are called conics, that when one takes as an axis any third line whatsoever between these two preceding ones, which are thus like that, and one turns the whole lot like a top, what is produced?

One produces something to which very few people seem, indeed, in the preceding minutes to have thought about, since I do not hear any cry to tell me what is involved, one produces something like that, which in order to make you understand, because God knows what is still going to be produced, I would ask you to picture to yourselves what is called a diabolus. In other words a surface modelled in this way except for the fact that, of course, since it is a straight line, it goes off to infinity.

What is this surface? This can be shown. It is what is called a hyperboloid of revolution. What does a hyperboloid of revolution mean? It is quite simply what one obtains by making a hyperbola turn, rotate around a line that is called its (28) derivative. A hyperbola, then, is what is there, namely, these two lines that you see here in profile but that now I am isolating on a plane. What is a hyperbola? It is a line, all the points of which have the property that their distance from two points, which are called the foci, have a constant difference. What results from this is that the measure of this difference is exactly given by the distance which separates the two vertices of this curve, the points at which they approach to the maximum without managing to touch one another.

It is remarkable that precisely at the surface of what is obtained by such a revolution one can trace the series of straight lines which have as a property to go off to infinity.

I hope that you are paying a little attention to what I am doing here for it is precisely the key point and a quite amusing one: it is always straight lines that can thus be drawn, as I might say, making there be deployed around the surface defined in a fashion which, starting from its origin as a plane, appears in effect complex and to be what is called a conic, we find then on a hyperbola, on a hyperbola with different revolutions, the same property of straight lines that can indefinitely (29) prolong themselves, as we would find in a cone which is another form of conic of revolution.

What results from that? That precisely each one of the points of what is on this hyperbola, even when it is deployed in space by this revolution, has this property of having with respect to each one of the foci such a distance that the difference between the two distances is constant.

We are now then in a position to illustrate something which is represented by a sphere which might be characterised, exactly, by the fact of having as a diameter the measure of this difference, that this represents something which, within this hyperbolic surface, is precisely what has passed here at its point of maximum narrowness.

This is, if you wish to see another representation of the relationships between S and of O, what would allow us to symbolise the **o**-object in a different way.

But what is important in it, is not this possibility of finding a structural support, it is the function in which we can include it.

This will be the object of our next meeting. No element can have the function of **o**-object if it cannot be associated to other objects in what is called a group structure.

(30) You already see clearly what is possible. For we have other elements. Again, this group structure implies that one can employ any one of these objects with a negative sign.

What does that mean? And where does this lead us? This is what will allow us, this is what I hope to do the next time, to finish this year with something which completes the structural definition implying the combinatorial of the **o**-object and the value that it can take on as such in what is the very foundation of the properly Freudian dimension of desire and of the subject, namely castration.

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..... Take it as having the value of these kind of cork markers, floating on more or less calm water, which can help you to locate where you have left a net hanging. Moreover, neither this schema on the right, nor these bizarre words - whose resonance, I hope, already says something to you - have a strictly operational value; they are reference points, floaters that concern what I have to tell you today, and where, of course, I will try to bring things to the stopping point which is involved in the fact that this is my last open seminar for this year.

To preserve the note of gravity that some people have had the good sense to perceive in some of the things that I was saying the last time, I am going to start again from, start from an analogous point which is, which was provided for me by a conversation that I had this week with one of my mathematician friends: "In mathematics," said this excellent friend, whose name I am not giving because, after all, I do not know whether I have any right to publish these sorts of revelations of the (2) heart - they are not common among mathematicians, they are people who, on the whole, lack a little dash in this department, this is not the case for this distinguished person who said to me: "In mathematics," - in short, and perhaps after all this avowal

was torn from him by a certain fashion that I have of harassing him, of trying to get out of him the most I can for these sorts of vermicular shapes that I afterwards twiddle in front of you in the shape of my topology - "in mathematics," he remarked, "one does not say what one is speaking about (*on ne dit pas de quoi on parle*)", - everything is in this "one does not say" - "one quite simply speaks it; hence a certain air," he said textually, "of pretence (*de faire semblant*)", and this is what he called in a tone, like that, in a style that is not usual in this sort of dialogue, this is what he called, "some air or other of hypocrisy that exists in mathematical discourse". I would not dare myself to put forward something like that, if I had not garnered it from the mouth of a mathematician, who himself, it must be said, is someone who, in this respect, is very (3) exigent. It is as if the person stated, that taken at a certain level, this mathematical discourse always found itself in the position of hiding something; but here my mathematician is lowering the tone a little (*n'est pas sans baisse*) because of the fact that he is expecting something from this confidence, which also depends, perhaps - let us not omit any of the aspects of the situation - on the net that he is offering me, namely, what he also from his side, wants to extract from this knowledge that I am supposed to possess, he comes back all the same on his feet, to his position, and adds that, after all, what he the mathematician conceals is strictly what he ought to conceal. The trick in rational discourse is always to manage to leave concealed what one does not say about exactly the matter, the subject of mathematics what, in any case, one is speaking about, one quite simply speaks it.

A little parenthesis, the result of this is that the thickest people and only those, only those, you should realise, believe that mathematics speaks about things that do not exist. And if I announce that I am making a little drawing, some pencil marks in the (4) margin, it is a pleasure that I am giving you, just like that, in passing, but it is not at all the axis of what I am going to continue to tell you, only I am going to point out to you, for example, that if you open Musil's book, the one of which a very nice film has been made, even though it misses out a little, *Young Toerless*, you will notice that when the schoolboy is a little subtle, there are the closest relationships between the day when his schoolmaster flounders about lamentably in giving him an account of what imaginary numbers are, and the fact that he rushes headlong, as if by chance, around that time, into a properly perverse configuration in his relationships with his little pals.

All of this is only a note in the margin. I wanted to take things up again and to say what is at once the difference and the kinship between the position of the psychoanalyst and that of the mathematician.

When all is said and done, and we will see it in a precise way, at a certain level, he does not say what he is speaking about either. Only, it is for reasons that are a little different to those of the mathematician.

(5) In truth, as everyone knows, if he does not say what he is speaking about, it is not simply because he does not know anything about it, it is because he cannot know it. This is properly what is meant by the fact that there is an unconscious, an irreducible unconscious, and an *Urverdrangung*.

But can one say, as the mathematician says, that he quite simply speaks it? It is quite obvious that he is not at all in the same position. In a certain fashion someone speaks what is at stake, only it is the one to whom he gives the floor, namely, the patient. It is a matter of knowing where he is because he has some responsibility for the position in which he is, in so far as he ensures that the patient speaks. For when the patient speaks, he speaks in his own way about what he has to say, what he speaks about and which cannot be said.

The curious thing is that it is also necessary for psychoanalysts to speak, and that the result of this is not that they speak as the mathematician does, quite simply, what he does not say he is speaking about, but that he speaks about it inexactly. There is a (6) little syndrome that the psychiatrists found a long time ago, which is called Ganser's syndrome. This inexact speaking which characterises the discourse of the analytic community, will perhaps allow us to illuminate in a curious lateral or ambient light, I do not really know, one would have to look carefully at what is involved in Ganser's syndrome, which is called precisely that, the inexact reply.

In short, the psychoanalyst is led to have a sort of discourse which returns to this fundamental necessity, of course, of discourse, namely, that it is short and really to enter further into this subject, it is to metaphors about the usage of money, not even metaphorical, that I should be told, namely, about the difference between a certain discourse which has a forced currency, within this circle, and on the other hand the way in which it has in short to show its value on the exchange markets of outside circles. It is something that I tried to tackle when I wrote an article that I found myself reading for reasons that were not completely contingent, because it is going to (7) reappear with a whole collection, an article about the variations of technique, to which you can refer.

The question is, all the same, the following, a practical one for you analysts. It is formulated in a very nice, very naive, way: Is it really necessary to learn topology in order to be a psychoanalyst? For, when all is said and done, it is not with babies that these dialogues are exchanged, it is at this sort of question that a certain impasse ends up, even though I have to decide between the much more nuanced notes that I had put down on this theme, but one has to cleave the waves, and I have other important things to tell you today in order to cleave them and respond to this question. Whoever poses it is already prepared for me to give him this response. Topology is not something that he must learn as an extra, in a way, as if the formation of the psychoanalyst consisted in knowing with what colour one was going to paint oneself; one does not have to ask oneself the question as to whether or not one ought to learn

something about topology, with the abbreviated and, I would say, imprecise label by (8) which I designate the little bit of it that I bring here, the fact is that topology is the very stuff into which he cuts (*taille*), whether he knows it or does not know it, it does not matter whether he opens a book on topology or not, from the moment that he does psychoanalysis, this is the stuff into which he cuts, into which he cuts the subject of the psychoanalytic operation. Pattern, dress, model, and that what may be at stake, in what he has to unstitch and to restitch, if his topology is constructed in a mistaken way, will be at the expense of his patient. It is not today or yesterday, of course, that I tried to form this construction, these networks, these written indicators, these orientated networks that are called successively Schema L or Schema R or the Graph or finally, this year let us say, for some years, the usage of the surfaces of the *analysis situs*; after all those who have been able to see me working, bringing along these things, know that I constructed them, certainly against wind and tide, but not uniquely from a desire to displease my audience, either the old or the present one, but because I only had to follow this plan to develop, in the very discourse of my (9) patients, or in each one of those at least as far as I could test it, who come within my reach to do what is called in psychoanalysis, a supervision, bring to me in a raw living form these very formulae which on occasion are my own; patients say them strictly, rigorously, exactly as they are said here. If I had not had a little hint of this topology, already, my patients would have made me re-invent it.

The question then is clear, a legacy that one can take from one or other reference to this something as regards which the mathematician does not say what it is, but that he speaks, well then, there is every chance that this will clear the path a little for us, that it will give us instruments, or, on occasion, help us to recognise what we are dealing with, what I posited from the beginning when I got myself involved in speaking about psychoanalysis, namely, the function of language and the field of the word.

And for those who still keep in their heads this kind of objection: yes, but that is not (10) everything! I would repeat once again, ever since the time I first had to repeat it, that in effect it is not everything, but that everything which comes within our horizon in psychoanalysis, comes through this. In other words, as regards what remains hidden about it, much more than hidden, limitless, unknown, scarcely approached at some access points, I said, something that we also only say very rarely; even to the point that it is better not to say it, I am speaking about *jouissance*.

We would have no idea of any kind about this dimension, about this depth, as regards which one cannot say that it offers itself to us since it is prohibited, but at the very least we can name *jouissance*. We would have no idea of any kind of it, were it not the foundation of the subject in language which by way of repercussion in so far as it grounds in us this order, this barrier, this defence, which is called desire, which by repercussion, I am saying, did not force us to question: against what are we defending ourselves? What is involved in this *jouissance*? A question, of course, that no being (11) who is not a speaking being, asks itself! What is profiled for you by the

unfolding of this line at the right? But, if something remains to you from the schema SI, IO, you can see the fundamental arrangement which goes from S to the field of the big Other which designates for you what I am going to remind you of later: namely, that it is from this field that there is withdrawn by the subject, as a belonging, the *o*-object. That something is at stake more on this hither side, concerning another function of the Other, since this Other here, behind the subject, completely hidden from him and perceived only as in a mirage where he projects it, onto the field of the Other, J, *jouissance* is to be placed. This is the general orientation of what I have to say to you today.

In effect, the fundamental value of the object of *jouissance* is to show us by what meshing together, for we have nothing else up to the present, I would defy any philosophy whatsoever to account to us, at present, for the relationship between the emergence of the signifier and this relationship of the individual (*l'être*) to *jouissance*. (12) There is necessarily one. What is it? Effectively, it is in the net of subjective topology that there is collected something from this field of *jouissance*. The fact is, very precisely, that the thing is in suspense at this point where Freud told us, this is the sense of what he says. In this subjective net, in what ensures that the subject is not immanent, but latent, vanishing, in the network of language, within this is *jouissance* caught in so far as it is sexual *jouissance*. This is the originality and the abrupt accent of what Freud tells us. But why is it this way? No philosophy, I am saying, meets up with us at present. And these miserable abortions of philosophy that we drag around behind us, like clothes that are coming apart, are nothing other, since the beginning of the last century, than a way of fooling around rather than attacking this question, which is the only one about truth, and which is called, and what Freud named the death instinct (*instinct*), the primordial masochism of *jouissance*, namely, metaphors, the lightning reflections that our experience projects onto this question. The whole (13) philosophical word deviates and slips away. We do not know, then, anything about what is caught in this net, in this frightening field which had been nevertheless already announced in the whole phantasy of tragedy; we do not know why something comes into our experience in a contingent fashion, perhaps, with Freud, who tells us: what is taken from the field of the word and of language is that part of *jouissance* which has a relationship with this other mystery that has been left intact, I would ask you to note, in the whole development of analytic doctrine, and which is called sexuality.

So then, what I call getting your finger caught in the machine, is the fact that what is at stake is something quite different than accounting for, we are not at the stage of trying to master the why of this adventure, it is already a lot for us to know how to get into it, how we are caught by the little finger; it is perhaps here, by making some reflections, the ones that are required about the topology of this mechanism, that some light about these relationships and these limits may come to us. All the more so, since (14) this whole mechanism has already been functioning for some time, by perceiving things from this angle, we can, perhaps, come to know a good deal, by seeing the way in which, previously, people obliged themselves not to see.

So then, the way in which one enters into it is, obviously, the whole sense of the *o*-object. In this relationship to what we have inscribed as necessary from the locus of the Other, in this relationship which is established by demand and which pushes us towards it starting from need, something very simple comes into play; the fact is that, from this field of the Other, we manage to recuperate our own body in so far as it is already there, that the breast is only an appurtenance of this body which has strayed into this field of the Other by what we will call, provisionally, from our point of view, a biological contingency which is called, simply, being a mammal. We, my little friends, are mammals and we can do nothing about it! And this has many other consequences. It is, in general, accompanied by the following fact: that of having this bizarre apparatus which is called a penis, which ensures that copulation is sustained by a (15) certain *jouissance*. This is nothing very extraordinary (*Ça ne casse pas les manivelles*), as they say, what! After all it is one of them; one of the things that one has within hand's reach. I am making you laugh, but it is the centre of psychoanalytic teaching. It began by starting from there. "Don't touch that or it will be cut off". This was one of the first truths. This was how there was made in the the same wave, this formidable discovery which is called the Oedipus Complex. It is all the same necessary to see that it is at this level of trivial truth, that this other little boat about the relationship with the penis is attached to, in the enormous business of the Oedipus Complex; that ought, all the same, make us reflect a little. Is that everything? In other words, we are faced with the task of what must be taught about castration.

This has a relationship with two terms that I have just put forward: the short cycle of sexual *jouissance* in the mammal. Now, I did not waste my time this year in explaining to you how this might work for bugs. It must be unplumbable! Compared to that, your own can always be overhauled! It is very important, this remark. The second, in (16) effect, is like a lot of things, a lot of things for man, it is within hand's reach for the reason that there are not many beings, outside him, who have a hand. The primates habitually, all day long, make the use of it that I evoked earlier and, consequently, have much simpler questions about *jouissance*. But one should point out that, for example, simply in a dog who has the advantage over the primate of entering into the field of the human word, everything that refers to this rubbing (*frottis-frotta*) takes on a further degree of complication; one can only admire one thing: how well brought up dogs are. It is from this that one must begin. You see that, very quickly, we find ourselves engaged in a kind of collusion, which is indeed the one short-sighted people have precipitated themselves onto, the collusion between the *o*-object of demand and something which concerns what one refuses *from* or *to* the object of *jouissance*. The fact is precisely, that by remaining there, one will not get very far; one will not get very far because, by remaining at this level of demand, at that which some appurtenance of the body. I did not speak about the other one, namely, about the most (17) trivial, the one of which it is said that it is demanded from us by the Other, and by means of which we give her what we have to give with our bodies, by putting it at the locus of the Other, considered as a refuse dump, as a

sewage farm, namely, what we modestly call faeces, the scybalum, “*scubalon*”, what one rejects, it is a very elegant word and, in truth, let us say that it is, in general, the function of bodily waste. By limiting, as tends to happen within a certain analytic horizon, the whole dialectic of the relationships of the subject to the Other to demand, one ends up at this sphere limited to frustration, at the prevalence of the maternal Other, just about raised to the degree of complication that is called the composite parent, and one obtains, in effect, something rather closed which has really only one draw-back, which is that people ask themselves, after that, why the Oedipus Complex was invented, even though, precisely, this invention was original, that it emerged *bille en tête*, fully armed, from Freud’s brain. It is quite certain that it is to this there is referred this dimension of desire, in so far as Freud, for his part, also set it up at first, and that it is only around it that there (18) was built up, that there was discovered the mechanism of demand, and that there is no demand, which not only does not evoke, but which, literally, can only be evoked from the formation at its horizon of the summons of desire.

Let us say that the Other, instead of being this inert field in which one recuperates something, namely, this breast which is the ideal object that is always missing, that human machinery tries to reproduce in all sorts of apparatuses, when all is said and done, whether it is the person who travels in a submarine or the one who flies off into the “cosmos”, as one says nowadays, it is always from a little nursing apparatus he has with him, forming a closed circuit that delimits him, there is no need for that to imagine his nostalgia for the maternal uterus within which, precisely, his equipment was, in this respect, singularly deficient - I mean in the register that I have just evoked - and very poor from the symbiotic point of view. The field of the Other is what it is a matter of involving in desire; desire comes to involve the Other. And this is the different essence of the two other *o*-objects.

(19) That is why, this year, I highlighted, and even isolated, the paradigm of the first of these objects, namely, the look as representing the advanced phase of my presentation; I did not delay on the others that we are able to handle sufficiently well - even though we will have to come back to that - but I spoke about the look. The look has this privilege of being that which goes to the Other, as such. It is, of course, there is here a whole phenomenology on which one can delay, or even feast on, but since it is a slit, at what moment does it function? When it is opened or closed? There is a dream in the *Traumdeutung* on this, which is called “to close the eyes”. Consult it, a little bit, everything is already there, there are a host of questions to be asked; but as regards this function of the look, I put the picturesque completely to one side, I did not ask why it is from the moment that he is blinded that Tiresias becomes a seer. Idiocies which make our curious milieu so full of joy. I gave the structure. And how, with the look, there enters into play, still complete, a topology that I described and which (20) cannot be gone back on, which is the one which justifies the existence of the screen. In the field of the Other, the look is what introduces the screen and the necessity - that one of my pupils, Melman, remarked to me recently, is inscribed in the

article by Freud, “*Über Deckerinnerungen*”, on screen memories - the necessity that the subject should inscribe himself in the picture. There is not described there, of course, this topology which is so essential, so fundamental to the whole Freudian development that it is as important as that of the Oedipus Complex, this topology which is the real foundation and which gives its consistency to this function that is called - why? - the primal scene.

What is it, if not the necessity of these frames, of these struts, that I tried, this year, to set up before you, in order to make you notice in them the structural condition which is only, perhaps, - this is what has to be confirmed - the other side (*l'envers*), the lining, the second circuit, thanks to which, already complete in Freud, but not completed up to now by anyone, not completed because not followed in the order of (21) its double circuit, establishes, alongside the law of desire, in so far as it is the desire conditioned by the Oedipus Complex, this law which links from that through which the subject is attached to the locus of the Other, makes necessary this certain order constructed around the object of the look, which means that when this object of the Other erects itself on something that we are calling, as you wish, the picture, the scene or the screen, what is the attachment, precisely, related to a term whose origin I think you know from André Breton, that I would call the Other, in so far as it is characterised by this little reality (*peu de réalité*) which is the whole substance of phantasy but which is also, perhaps, the whole reality to which we can gain access.

This is why we have left until later, and, not unintentionally, for the requirements of presentation, this other object, which is strange, in short, because it is linked to the object of the look, I mean the voice. But in the measure that, even though it obviously comes from the Other it is, nevertheless, within that we hear it. If the voice, of course, is not simply this noise which is modulated in the auditory field, but what falls (*choit*) (22) in this retroaction of one signifier on the other, which is what we have defined as the fundamental condition for the apparition of the subject. In other words, in the whole measure that you hear very little of all the things that I am telling you, it is because you are busy with your voices, like everyone else.

And now, it is a matter of knowing what is meant, in all of this, by the function of castration. Castration seems to me to be linked to the function of desire in so far as, in this field of the Other, it is literally projected to a limit point, sufficiently indicated in the myth by the murder and the death of the father, and from which there results the dimension of the law. One forgets too easily that, in the myth, it is not only the mother that the father takes over, but all the women, and that after the enunciation of the law of incest, what is at stake is nothing other than to signify that all women are prohibited, just as much as the mother; in other words, the story of the Oedipus Complex needs so many extensions, namely, that it is through transference that the other women etc. It is an accident, as if it were an accident! In short, that the Oedipus myth would, (23) otherwise, have no meaning. In other words, castration presents itself when it is taken from this angle, as something which suggests to us that

we should ask ourselves about the object through which the subject is involved in this dialectic of the Other, in so far as this time it does not respond either to demand or to desire, but to *jouissance*, since we are starting from a question posed by Freud, about the *jouissance* of woman. In a first phase, let us repeat that *jouissance*, here, then, opens out for the first time as a question, in so far as the subject is barred from it, what we have called formerly, in our discourse on *Anxiety*: embarrassed! Of course, all of this has remained a little bit in the air, it is certainly by far the best seminar that I gave; those who took care to nourish themselves on it again in the vacation which followed can bear witness to it. But at that time, I had in the very front row, NCO's who enthusiastically took down what I was writing, but they were thinking so much about something else that one can understand that none of it remained with them.

The subject is embarrassed before this *jouissance*. And this barrier which embarrasses (24) him is very precisely desire itself. It is precisely for that reason that he projects into the Other, into this Other whose mannequin Freud picks out for us in the form of this murdered father, in which it is easy to recognise Hegel's master, in so far as he is substituted for the absolute master. The father is at the place of death and he is supposed to have been able to sustain all *jouissance*. It is true in Freud, except for the fact that, also in Freud, we can perceive that it is a mirage. It is not because it is the desire of the father which, mythically, is posed at the origin of the law, thanks to which what we desire has as a better definition what we do not want, it is not because things are that way that *jouissance* is there, behind the support of the Oedipus myth then what I called its mannequin. It appears, on the contrary, so well that it is only a mirage here, that it is here also that we have no trouble in highlighting the Hegelian error, I am speaking about the one which, in the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, attributes to the master, to him of the fight to the death for pure prestige, - you know the tune I hope - (25) attributes to the master the keeping, in his presence, of the privilege of *jouissance*, this on the pretext that the slave, in order to preserve his life, renounces this *jouissance*. I think, already, on one occasion, a few seminars ago, that I highlighted a little bit the question from this aspect. For where does one get the laws of this singular dialectic. That it would be enough to renounce *jouissance* in order to lose it! But you do not know the laws of *jouissance*!

It is probably the opposite, it is even certainly the opposite. It is precisely on the side of the slave that *jouissance* remains, and, precisely, because he renounces it. It is because the master erects his desire that he comes to grief on the margins on *jouissance*. His desire is even only made for that, to renounce *jouissance*, and that is why he engages in the struggle to death for pure prestige. So that the Hegelian story is a good joke, which is sufficiently justified by the fact that it is totally incapable of explaining what can be the cement of the society of masters; while Freud gives the (26) solution just like that: it is quite simply homosexual. It is the desire, that is true, not to undergo castration, which means that the homosexuals, or, more exactly, the masters are homosexual and this is what Freud says. The starting point for society is the homosexual bond, precisely in its relationship to the prohibition of *jouissance*, the

jouissance of the Other, in so far as it is what is involved in sexual *jouissance*, namely, that of the feminine other. This is what, in Freud's discourse, is the masked part. It is extraordinary that however masked it may be, this truth, which displays itself all over the place, it must be said, in his discourse for anyone who, in any case, comes from our experience, namely, that the whole problem of sexual union between man and woman on which we have emptied all the idiocies about our so-called genital stage, our fabulous oblativity, this problem which is really the one on which analysis has played the role of the most furious obscurantism and this problem reposes entirely on the following, it is the difficulty, the extreme obstacle to the fact that in intersexual union (27) - the union of man and woman - desire should be in agreement; in other words that feminine *jouissance* - this is what has always been known, ever since Ovid: read the myth of Tiresias, there are here twenty verses of Ovid that I put in my first report, that of Rome, because it is an essential point and one that I tried to get across again since, when people were speaking about feminine sexuality in Amsterdam. There were some lovely things said! How can one forget the profound disparity that exists between feminine *jouissance* and masculine *jouissance*! This, indeed, is why in Freud everything is spoken about, activity, passivity, all the polarities that you wish, but never masculine-feminine, because this is not a polarity, and that moreover since it is not a polarity, it is altogether useless to try to speak about this difference. There is a single intermediary for this difference: the fact that in feminine *jouissance* there can enter as an object the desire of the man as such. This means that the question of phantasy is posed for the woman. But since she knows a little bit more about it, (28) probably, than we do, about the fact that phantasy and desire are precisely barriers to *jouissance*, this does not simplify the situation. It is a pity that such primary truths in the analytic field, can take on such an air of scandal; but it is necessary for them to be put forward, because it is properly this that justifies the precise moment that we are at in our presentation, namely, contrary to the fact which would have it that it is one or other appurtenance of the body, an object fallen from the body in a certain field which organises demand and desire as regards what is involved in the relationship of desire to *jouissance*, in so far as it involves the subject of the opposite sex, the intermediary is no longer from an object nor even a prohibited object - from the pedantic prohibition, as I might say, which is a whole register of Freudian castration which goes from the prohibition brought to bear on the hand of the little boy or of the little girl, up to the formation that you receive at the university, it is always a matter of preventing us from seeing things clearly - but the other function of castration that is confused with the first one is much deeper, it is the one through which, if an agreement is possible - an (29) agreement you should understand in the way in which I may try to make a sample of colour which will reproduce, alongside this one, something of the same shade. It is thanks to the fact that this object which is the penis, but that we are forced to raise to this function of being pin-pointed as phallus and be treated in such a fashion as the one which is the same as when one gives oneself over to this exercise of agreement, they are things which, out of discipline, I did not develop this year: but it is a different register to the visual and the look. With any coloured pencil whatsoever one can make a little mixture which

reproduces any other one whatsoever - I am saying: *any one whatsoever* and *any one whatsoever* (*n'importe quel et n'importe quelle*) - except what one allows oneself when it does not work - what is produced on a large enough margin - to make use, to make use of one of the colours of the trio in order to subtract it from the sample on the other side. In other words, there are certain qualities, certain objects, which we must get to take on a negative sign; in other words, it is necessary that in the man-woman relationship, the contingent object, the decrepit (*caduc*) object (30) of mammal *jouissance* should be capable of being negated; it is necessary for the man to perceive that masturbatory *jouissance* is not everything, and, inversely, that the woman should open out to the dimension that this particular *jouissance* is lacking to her. There is no wizardry in what I am saying; but this is the true foundation of the castration relationship, if we want to give it any sense whatsoever as regards the fashion in which it really functions. Saying it as I have just said it to you, ends up by being a common- place. In this case you do not see where the problem lies, namely, what is the nature of this negative sign which must be given to this object, the phallus. These are not, of course, things that I will even try to tackle in the last minutes of my seminar of this year, but it is precisely to respond to such questions that next year's, if God grants it his favour, will be called *The logic of phantasy*.

Nevertheless, I would like, as of now, to point out to you, as an introduction to this (31) logic, that the question of what is involved in the negative, as they say, or of negativity, would deserve us taking an orientation which is not simply fragmentary. And in order, not so much to decipher it, but to clear the way, I will begin, as I have always begun, with instruments: the wooden plough opening up a summary furrow, of course, and it is the one I have amused myself with for a long time, I do not know whether I ever even brought it out in front of you as an audience, by highlighting these three registers which are:

- - the first, the imaginary, which I write like that, in a little Chinese spelling, which we all say when what? When in a field we find the void. And if you think that it is easy to explain that: this notion of field and of void! Of course, the Gestaltist register proposes itself immediately, only the rapidity with which it is contaminated in the direction of a symbolic version in the notion of class, for example, which takes on, precisely, from its presence, all the density which ought to make us extremely prudent in handling it. In any case, to write it with this baroque spelling, (32) of which I am making nothing except an occasion to make it memorable as a transitory instrument, I called that the "hiarien", written as you see here. There is something which is in any case completely settled, and which has nothing to do with the "hiaren", it is the one which I express on
- - the second line, and in this form there are, after all I have no reason to withhold the anecdote from you, this form borrowed from the language of a little boy who was very intelligent since he was my brother. He *gniakavait*, he said to me, conjugating bizarrely in this way a verb whose root would be "*gniaka*". Well

then, a register of “*gniaka*” is absolutely essential! Something through which a present state is supposed to derive from something which ensures that it is amputated from something. This is the most radical form by which there is introduced a whole category where we will, precisely, have to orientate ourselves as regards the properly symbolic constitutions of negation. For “*gniaka*” goes very far, it can be a lack, it can also be a starting point: “*gniaka*”, to take a starting point, one might call that zero, the neutral element. With nothing except this “*gniaka*” here you (33) have what is called an Abelian group. This in order to indicate to you the path along which we will be led to order our reflections next year; but, undoubtedly, this “*gniaka*” does not fail to indicate to us to come back on what we said last year as regards the function of zero as suturing the agency of the subject and of articulating the relationship of the subject to desire and also to castration. “*Gniaka*”, by putting the negative sign onto the penis and the phallic function, is established with all the absolutely blind usage that we know how to make of it.

- - and then there is something for which there is no word, or pin-pointing, at least in my register and this for a good reason: it is because if I named it, or if I supposed it, there would be some relationship with this imaginary function or that of symbolisation. This third term, the one that for the three years that I have been here I have taught you to know along some path that I could not say to be that of palpating, it is much more, I am trying, I solicit, I summon from you so that you (34) may identify yourselves to what one could call in mathematical language the *tor* (t.o.r.) factor which means what there is in the real, in this real that we have to deal with and which is precisely what is beyond, outside this necessity which constrains us to conjoin to *jouissance* only this little reality of phantasy; this real bears witness to a certain torsion. This torsion is not the *ananke* that Freud speaks of, for *ananke* and *logos* are both of the order of the symbolic. The only constraining necessity is the one that the *logos* imposes. And the real only enters beyond, as is manifest in experience, so as, amongst these necessary solutions - for there are always several of them - to designate the one that is impossible. Such is the function of the real and its torsion. This torsion is the very one that we are trying to grasp in our field and I have, at least, this year, tried to bring you the material which will allow you, for the continuation of what we are going to have to say, to map out how there is cut out, in a stuff which is common, this relationship of the (35) subject to the Other, this advent of the subject in the signifier, thanks to which there is sustained this phantasy in its relationship to the real, thanks to which opacity appears to us to be an indefinite *jouissance*.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK XIV

The logic of phantasy

1966-1967

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French manuscripts

FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY

Seminar 1: Wednesday 16 November 1966

Today I am going to throw out some points that are rather in the nature of a promise.

“*Logic of phantasy*”, I entitled, this year, what I count on being able to present to you about what is required at the point that we are at on a certain path. A path which implies, I will recall it forcefully today, this sort of very special return that we have already seen, last year, inscribed in the structure and which is properly speaking fundamental in everything that Freudian thinking uncovers. This return is called repetition. To repeat is not to find the same thing again, as we will articulate later, and contrary to what is believed, it is not necessarily to repeat indefinitely.

We will come back then to themes that I have in a certain fashion already situated for a long time. It is, moreover, because we are at the moment of this return and of its function, that I believed I could no longer put off presenting to you in a unified way what up to now I thought necessary as a minimal indication of this journey, namely, this volume that you already find within hand's reach. It is because this year it will no doubt be possible for us to study in depth the function of this relation to writing - which after all, in a certain way, I forced myself up to the present if not to avoid, at least to delay - that here again I believed I could take this step.

These few indicative points that I am going today to state before you, I have chosen to be five:

The first consisting in reminding you of the point that we are at about the logical articulation of phantasy, which this year will be, properly speaking, my text.

(2) The second, to the reminder of the relation of this structure of phantasy - which I will have first recalled to you - to the structure of the signifier as such.

The third, to something essential and really fundamental which has to be recalled, about what we can, what we ought, this year, call - if we put in the foreground what I called the *logic* in question - an essential remark about the *Universe of discourse*.

The fourth point, some indication relative to its relation to *writing* as such.

Finally, I will end on the reminder of what Freud indicates to us, in an articulated fashion, about what is involved in the relation of thinking to language and to the unconscious.

So, the logic of phantasy. We will begin from the writing of it that I already constructed, namely, from the formula: *S barred diamond small o* (\$ **o**). I recall what the *S barred* signifies: the *S barred* represents, takes the place in this formula of what it returns from concerning the division of the subject, which is found at the source of the whole Freudian discovery and which consists in the fact that the subject is, in part, barred from what properly constitutes it *qua* function of the unconscious. This formula establishes something which is a link, a connection between this subject as thus constituted and something else which is called **small o**. **Small o** is an object whose status what I am calling, this year, "constructing the logic of phantasy", will consist in determining - its status, precisely, in a relation which is a logical relation properly speaking.

A strange thing, no doubt, which you will allow me not to go into. I mean what this term phantasy suggests in terms of a relation to *phantasia*, to the imagination. I will not give myself the pleasure, even for an instant, of marking its contrast with the term logic with which I intend to structure it. The fact is, no doubt, that phantasy as we claim to instaure its status is not so fundamentally, so radically antinomical as one might first think to this logical characterisation which, properly speaking, disdains it. Moreover, the imaginary feature of what is called the **o**-object will appear still better to you - in the measure that we will mark what permits it to be characterised as a logical value - to be much less related, it seems to me, at first sight, to the domain of what is properly speaking the *imaginary*. The *imaginary*, rather, is attached to it, surrounds it, accumulates in it. The **o**-object has a different status. Undoubtedly, it is desirable that those who listen to me this year (3) should have had the opportunity last year to get some grasp, some idea of it. Of course, this **o**-object is not something which is yet, so easily - for all and especially for those for whom it is the centre of their experience, the psychoanalysts, even more - has yet, as I might say, sufficient familiarity for it to be, I would say, presented to them without fear or indeed even without anxiety.

"What have you done then," one of them said to me, "what need did you have to invent this little **o**-object?"

I think, in truth, that taking things from a broader horizon it was about time. Because, without this **o**-object - whose incidences, it seems to me, have made themselves widely enough felt for the people of our generation - it seems to me that much of what is done as analyses, of subjectivity as well as of history and of its interpretation, and specifically of what we have lived through as contemporary history, and very specifically of what we have, rather crudely, baptised with a most improper term, under the name of totalitarianism ... Anyone, who after having understood it, is able to occupy himself in applying to it the function of the category of the **o**-object, will perhaps see there being illuminated what it returned from, in that for which we still lack, in a surprising manner, satisfying interpretations.

The barred subject, in its relation to this **o**-object, is joined in this formula written on the board, by this something which is presented as a lozenge shape, which I earlier called the diamond (*le poinçon*), and which, in truth, is a sign that was forged expressly to join together in itself what can be isolated from it, depending on whether you separate it with a vertical stroke or with a horizontal stroke.

Separated by a vertical stroke, it represents a double relation which can be read in the first place as greater ($>$) or lesser ($<$): \$ smaller or indeed greater than big O. \$ included or in fact excluded from big O [*sic*]. What does that mean, if not that what is suggested at the first level of this conjunction, is something which, logically, is called the relation of *inclusion* or again of *implication*, on condition (4) that we make it reversible and which is articulated ... (I am going quickly, no doubt, but we will have time to expand and to take these things up again; today, I am indicating to you, it is enough for us to take some suggestive steps) ... this relation which is articulated in a logical articulation, which is called: *if and if only S barred* in this sense, namely: the *diamond shape* being divided by the vertical bar, is the subject barred from this relation of *if and if only* with the **o**-object.

This brings us to a stop. There exists, then, a *subject*. This is, logically, what we are forced to write at the origin of such a formula. Something, here, is proposed to us which is the division between *de facto existence* and *logical existence*.

De facto existence, of course, refers us to the existence of *beings* (the word *beings* between two bars) *speaking beings* - or not. These are in general living. I am saying "in general", because it is not at all necessary: we have the stone table companion who does not exist only on the stage where Mozart brings him to life, he walks around among us quite habitually!

Logical existence is something different and, as such, has its status. There is something of the subject (*du sujet*) from the moment we do logic, namely, when we have to handle signifiers.

What is involved in *de facto* existence, namely, that something results from the fact that there is something of the subject at the level of beings who speak, is something which like every *de facto* existence requires that a certain articulation should already have been established. Now, there is nothing to prove that this articulation takes place directly, that it is directly because of the fact that there are living beings or others who speak, that they are for all that and in an immediate fashion determined as subjects.

The *if and only if* is there to remind us of it. I am justifying here for you, the articulations we are going to have to go through; but they are themselves sufficiently unusual, sufficiently untraveled, for me to think I ought to indicate to you the general line of my plan in what I have to explain before you.

The small **o**, for its part, results from an operation which has a logical structure which is carried out not *in vivo*, not even on the living being, not at all properly speaking in the confused sense that the term 'body' preserves for us - it is not necessarily the 'pound of flesh', even though it could be, and that after all when it

is that, this does not arrange things too badly at all - but after all it appears that in this entity of *body* which so poorly grasped, there is something that lends itself to this operation of logical structure that remains for us to be determined. You know: *breast, scybalum, look, voice*, these detachable parts which are nevertheless entirely linked to the body - this is what is involved in the **o**-object.

(5) To make an **o** (*du o*) then, let us limit ourselves, since we are demanding some logical rigour of ourselves, to noting here, that a loan is necessary to provide it (*du pret-a-le-fournir*); for the moment this may be enough for us. But this fixes nothing! This fixes nothing for what we have to advance into: to make a phantasy, something ready-made is necessary.

You will allow me here to articulate some themes in their most provocative form, because in fact what is involved is to detach this domain from the fields of capture which make it inevitably return to the most fundamental illusions of what is called psychological experience. What I am going to advance is very specifically what shall be supported, what shall be grounded, what everything that I am going to unfold before you this year will show the consistency of.

To unfold, I already said it has been done a long time ago. When in the fourth year of my seminar I dealt with '*object relations*' already everything was said about the **o**-object as regards structure. The relation of small **o** to the Other is very specially and every sufficiently outlined in the indication that the subjective structure of the child is going to depend on the imaginary of the mother.

Undoubtedly, what it is a question here of us indicating is how this relation is articulated in properly logical terms, namely, arising radically from the function of the signifier. But it is to be noted that for the person who summarised at that time, what I was able to indicate in this sense, the slightest mistake - I mean: lack - as regards the belonging of each of the terms of these three functions which at that time were able to be designated as *subject, object* (in the sense of love-object) and the beyond of this: our present **o**-object - the slightest mistake, namely, the reference to the imagination of the subject, was able to obscure the relation which it was a matter of outlining there. Not to situate the function of the **o**-object in the field of the Other as such, leads to writing for example, that in the status of the pervert, it is at the same time the function, for him, of the phallus and the sadistic theory of coitus which are the determinants. While it is nothing of the kind, that it is at the level of the mother that these two incidents function.

I advance, therefore, into what is to be stated here: in order to make phantasy something ready-made (*pret-a-le-porter*) is necessary. What the phantasy wears has two names which concern one and the same *substance*, if you do not mind reducing this term to this function of *surface*, in the way that I articulated it last year. You already know some of the shapes of this primordial surface which we require to make our logical articulation function; they are closed surfaces; they have something of the *bubble* about them except for the fact they are not spherical. Let us call them *the bubble* and we will see what motivates, to what the existence of *bubbles* is attached in the real. This surface which I call *bubble* has properly speaking two names: *desire* and *reality*.

It is quite useless to exhaust oneself in articulating the *reality of desire* because, primordially, desire and reality are related in a seamless texture. They have no need of needlework, they have no need to be sewn together. There is no more 'reality of desire', we would say, than it would be correct to say 'the back of the front': there is one and the same fabric that has a front and a back. Again this fabric is woven in such a way that one goes without noticing it, since it has no cut or stitches, from one to the other of its faces, and that is why, before you, I made so much of a structure like that described as the *projective plane*, imaged on the board by what is called the *mitre* or the *cross-cap*. The fact that one passes from one face to the other without noticing, really means that there is only one of them, I mean one face. There nevertheless remains, as in the surfaces that I have evoked, one limited shape of which is the Moebius strip, that there is a front and a back! It is necessary to posit this in an original fashion, to recall how there is grounded this distinction between the front and the back as being *already-there* before any cut. It is clear that anyone - like the little animals that the mathematicians talk about about the function of surfaces - would here be totally implicated in this surface, would see very little in this distinction, which is nevertheless certain, between the front and the back - in other words: absolutely nothing.

Everything that refers, in the surfaces that I talked about before you in a series from the projective plan to the Klein bottle, has what one could call extrinsic properties which go very far! - I mean that most of what seems most evident to you when I image these surfaces, are not properties of the surfaces: it is in a third dimension that this takes on its function. Even the hole in the middle of torus, you must not believe that a purely toric being would even notice its function! Nevertheless, this function is not without consequences since it is in accordance with it that I - it must be now, good God, something almost like six years ago- already tried to articulate for those who were listening to me then (among whom I see some in the first row) - to articulate the relations of the subject to the Other in neurosis. It is, in effect, this third dimension in them of the Other, that is involved as such. It is with (7) respect to the Other and in so far that there is here this other term, that it may be a matter to distinguishing a front from a back, this is still not to distinguish *reality* and *desire*. What is the *front* or the *back* primarily at the locus of the Other, in the discourse of the Other, is played out there as heads or tails. This in no way concerns the subject *for the reason that as yet there is not one*.

The subject begins with the *cut*. If among these surfaces we take the most exemplary one because it is the simplest to handle, namely, the one that I called earlier the *cross-cap* or the *projective plane*, a cut and not just an indifferent one - I mean (I recall it for those for whom these images are still present in some way): if, I repeat, in a purely imaged way but one whose image is necessary, namely on this bubble whose walls (let us call them the anterior and the posterior) come
 here, in this no less imaginary stroke, to
 cross one another, this is how we
 represent the structure of what is
 involved: every cut which crosses this
 imaginary line will establish a total change in the structure of the surface, namely,
 that this entire surface becomes what, last year, we learned how to cut out in this

surface under the name of the **o**-object. Namely, that this entire surface becomes a disc that can be flattened, with a front and a back, with respect to which one has to say that one cannot pass from one to the other except by crossing an *edge*. This *edge* is precisely what makes this crossing impossible, at least this is how we can articulate its function. First of all, *in initio*, the bubble by this first cut - rich in an implication which does not leap to the eyes immediately - by this first cut, becomes an **o**-object.

This **o**-object preserves - because it has this relation from the beginning, for anything whatsoever about it to be explained - a fundamental relation with the Other. In effect, the subject has not at all appeared yet with the single cut through which this bubble, that the signifier establishes in the real, first lets fall this *foreign* object which the **o**-object is. It is necessary and sufficient, in the structure here indicated, that one should notice what is involved in this cut, in order also to notice that it has the property of joining up with itself simply by reduplicating itself - in other words that it is the same thing to make a single cut or to make two of them. I can consider the gap of what is here between my two circuits, which are only one, as the equivalent of the first cut which, in effect: if I separate it, is this gap which is (8) produced; but which - if in the fabric where it is a matter of performing this cut I make a double cut, I separate out from it, I restore what was lost in the first cut, namely, a surface whose front is continuous with the back. *I restore the primal non-separation between reality and desire.*

How, subsequently, we will define *reality*, what I called earlier the *ready-to-wear the phantasy (le pret a porter le fantasm)*, namely, what constitutes its frame and we will then see that reality, the whole of human reality, is nothing other than a *montage* of the symbolic and the imaginary - that the desire, at the centre of this apparatus, of this frame, that we call reality, is moreover properly speaking what covers - as I have always articulated - what must be distinguished from human reality, and which is properly speaking the *real*, which is never more than glimpsed. Glimpsed when the mask which is that of the phantasy vacillates, namely, the same thing as Spinoza grasped when he said: *desire is the essence of man.*

In truth, this word 'man' is a transitional term impossible to preserve in an a-theological system, which is not the case for Spinoza. For this Spinozian formula, we have simply to substitute this formula, this formula, whose miscognition leads psychoanalysts to the crudest aberrations, namely, that *desire is the essence of reality.*

But, this relation to the Other - without which nothing can be glimpsed about the real operation of this relation - is what I tried to sketch out for you as fundamental having recourse to the old support of the Euler circles.

Undoubtedly, this representation is inadequate, but if we accompany it with what it supports in logic, it may be of use. What emerges from the relation of the subject to the **o**-object is defined as a first circle, that another circle, that of the

Other cuts, the small **o** is their intersection.

It is because of this that for all time - in this relation of an originally structured *vel* which is the one in which I tried to articulate alienation for you three years ago now - that never can the subject be established except as a relation of lack to this **o** which is from the Other, except by wanting to be situated in the Other, equally not to have it except amputated from this **o**-object.

(9) The relation of the subject to the **o**-object involves what this Euler image takes as sense when it is raised to the level of the simple representation of two logical operations which are called *union* and *intersection*. Union depicts for us the liaison of the subject to the Other and intersection defines the **o**-object for us. The totality of these two logical operations are the very operations that I posited as original in saying that the **o** is the result effectuated by logical operations which must be two in number.

What does that mean? That it is essentially in the representation of a lack, in so far as it travels around, that there is instituted the fundamental structure of the *bubble* that we at first called the *stuff of desire*.

Here, on the plane of the imaginary relation there is established an exactly inverse relation to the one which links the *ego* to the image of the *other*. The ego is, as we shall see, doubly illusory. Illusory in the fact that it is subject to the avatars of the image, namely, in fact given over of the function of half or total sham (*du demi- ou du faux-semblant*). It is also illusory in the fact that it establishes a perverted logical order whose formula we will see - in psychoanalytic theory - in so far as it crosses imprudently this logical frontier, which supposes that at some given moment or other of the structure that is supposed to be primordial, what is rejected can be called 'the non-ego'. This is very precisely what we contest!

The order in question - which implies without one knowing it and in any case without it being said, the coming into play of language - in no way admits such a complementarity. And it is precisely what will make us put in the forefront of our articulation, this year, the discussion of the function of *negation*. Everyone knows and can see in this collection that is now being put at your disposal, that the first year of my seminar at Sainte Anne was dominated by a discussion on the *Verneinung* in which M. Jean Hippolyte whose intervention is reproduced in the appendix of this volume punctuated excellently what the *Verneinung* was for Freud. The secondary nature of the *Verneinung* is articulated there sufficiently powerfully for it already to be in no way admitted that it should appear right away at the level of this first division that we call *pleasure and unpleasure*.

This is why in this lack established by the structure of the *bubble*, which constitutes the stuff of the subject, there is no question of us limiting ourselves to the term, which is now out of date because of the confusions that it implies, of "negativity". The signifier can in no way - even if propaedeutically it was necessary for a time to repeat by rote its function to the ears that were listening to me - the signifier (and (10) you can note that I never properly articulated it as such) is not simply what

supports what is not there. The *fort-da*, in so far as it refers to maternal presence or absence, is not here the exhaustive articulation of the coming into play of the signifier. *The signifier does not designate what is not there, it engenders it. What is not there at the origin is the subject itself.* In other words: at the origin there is no *Dasein* except in the *o*-object. Namely, in an alienated form which remains to mark up to the end every statement about the *Dasein*. Is it necessary to recall here my formulae that there is no subject except through a signifier and for another signifier. It is the algorithm:

$$\begin{array}{c} \underline{S} \text{ ----- } S' \\ \$ \end{array}$$

S, in so far as it *takes the place* of the subject, only functions *for another signifier*.

Urverdrangung, or primal repression, is the following: what a signifier represents for another signifier. It does not bite on anything, it constitutes absolutely nothing, it accommodates itself to an absolute absence of *Dasein*.

For around sixteen centuries, at least, the Egyptians hieroglyphs remained as solitary as they were uncomprehended in the desert sands, it is clear and it has always been clear for everyone that this meant that each of the signifiers cut into the stone at least represented a subject for the other signifiers. If this was not the way things were no one would ever even have taken that to be writing! It is not at all necessary that a writing should mean something for anyone whatsoever in order for it to be a writing, and in order that, as such, it manifests that each sign represents a subject for the one which follows it.

If we call that *Urverdrangung*, it means that we are admitting that it appears to us to be in conformity with experience, to think about what happens - namely, that a subject emerges in the state of barred subject - as something which comes from a locus in which it is supposedly inscribed, into another locus in which it is going to be inscribed anew.

Namely, exactly in the same fashion in which I structured, formerly, the function of metaphor in so far as it is the model of what happens as regard the return of the repressed:

$$\begin{array}{cc} \underline{S'} & \underline{\$} \\ \$ & s \end{array}$$

In the same way, it is in the measure that with respect to this primary signifier, and we are going to see what it is, the barred subject that it abolishes comes to emerge at a place to which we are going to be able today to give a formula which has not yet been given: *the barred subject as such is what represents for a signifier - this signifier from it has arisen - a sense.*

(11) By sense I understand exactly what I made you understand at the beginning of one year in the formula: "*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously*". Which can be translated into French by the following which depicts admirably the ordinary order of your cogitations: "*Des idées vertement fuligineuses s'assoupissent avec fureur*".

This, precisely, for want of knowing that they are all addressed to this signifier of the lack of the subject that a certain first signifier becomes once the subject articulates his discourse. Namely - as all psychoanalysts glimpsed rather well, even though they were not able to say anything worthwhile about it – namely, the **o**-object which, at this level, fulfills precisely the function that Frege distinguishes from the sign under the name of *Bedeutung*. The **o**-object is the first *Bedeutung*, the first referent, the first reality, the *Bedeutung*, which remains because it is, after all, all that remains of thinking at the end of all the discourses.

Namely, what the poet can write without knowing what he is saying when he addresses himself to “his mother Intelligence from whom all sweetness flows”: “what is this neglect that allows her milk to dry up?”

Namely, a look that is grasped, the one transmitted at the birth of the clinic.

Namely, what one of my pupils, recently, at the Congress of the University of Johns Hopkins, took as a subject calling it “the voice in literary myth”.

Namely, also, what remains of so many thoughts dispensed in the form of a pseudo-scientific hotchpotch and that one can also call by its name, as I have done for a long time, about part of analytic literature and which is called shit. On the admission, moreover, of the authors! I mean except for a tiny failure of reasoning about the function of the **o**-object, one of them can very well articulate that there is no other support for the castration complex than what is modestly called “the anal object”.

This is not then a pinpointing of pure and simple judgement, but much more the necessity of an articulation, the simple statement of which ought to give us pause, since, after all, it is not formulated by the least qualified writers, and since it will be, in fact, this year, our method, formulating the logic of the phantasy, to show where, in analytic theory, it has tripped up. I have not, after all, named this author whom many of you know. Let it be clearly understood that the flaw in reasoning is still reasoned, namely, examinable (*arraisonnable*), but not necessarily so. And the **o**-object in question can in a certain article show itself quite nakedly and not being appreciated by itself. This is what we will have occasion to show in certain texts, after all, as regards which I do not see why, as a kind of practical work, I should not soon distribute rather generally to you, if I have enough at my disposal, which is almost the case. This will happen at the moment when we shall have to attack certain register; and from now, I want, all the same to mark, what prevents there from being admitted certain interpretations which have been given to my function of metaphor, (I mean of those of which I have just given you the least ambiguous example) by confusing it with anything whatsoever that makes of it a sort of proportional relation.

When I wrote that substitution - the fact of grafting a signifier substituted for another signifier into the signifying chain - was the source and the origin of all meaning, what I articulated is correctly interpreted in the form in which, today, through the emergence of this barred subject as such, I gave you the formula. Which requires of us the task of giving it its logical status, but to demonstrate to you immediately the example of the urgency of such a task, or even of its necessity, note that the confusion was made in this four fold relation

:

$$\frac{S'}{S} \qquad \frac{\underline{S}}{s}$$

(the S', the two S's and the small s of the signified) with this relation of proportion in which one of my interlocutors, M. Perelman, the author of a theory of argumentation, promoting once again an abandoned rhetoric, articulates metaphor, seeing in it the function of analogy and that is from the relation of a signifier to another in so far as a third reproduces it by giving rise to an ideal signified that he grounds the function of metaphor. To which I replied, at the appropriate time. It is only from such a metaphor that there can emerge the formula that was given, namely: S' over small s of meaning enthroned above a first register of inscription of which the *Underdrawn*, of which the *Unterdruckt*, of which the other register substantiating the unconscious, is supposed to be constituted by the strange relation of the signifier to another signifier, and we are told that it is from there that language takes its ballast:

$$\frac{\underline{S'}}{s} \\ \frac{\underline{S}}{S}$$

I think that you now sense that this formula, described as that of “reduced language” (*du langage réduit*), is based on an error which is to introduce into this four-fold relation the structure of proportionality. It is difficult to see, in fact, what can emerge from it, since, in fact, the relation then becomes rather difficult to interpret. But we do not see in this reference to a reduced language any other plan (13) (which is moreover admitted) than to reduce our formula that the unconscious is structured like a language – which, more than ever, is to be taken literally.

And since it is obvious that today I will not fulfill the five points that I announced to you, I have nonetheless been able to punctuate for you what is the key of the whole structure and what renders an enterprise, which thus finds itself articulated - precisely at the beginning of the little collection of which I spoke to you earlier which concerns the turning point in my relations with my audience that was constituted by the Congress of Bonneval –by its futility: it is erroneous to structure in this way on a so-called myth of reduced language any deduction of the unconscious, for the following reason: *it is of the nature of each and every signifier not to be able in any case to signify itself.*

It is too late for me to impose on you, in a hurry, the writing of this inaugural point for the whole of set theory, which implies that this theory can only function starting from an axiom described as that of *specification*. Namely, that the only interest in making a set function is when there exists another set which can be defined by the definition of certain x's in the first as freely satisfying a certain proposition. “Freely” means: independently of any quantification: small number or all. The result of this, (I will begin my next lecture with these formulae) the result of this is that by positing any set whatsoever, by defining in it the proposition that I indicated as specifying x's in it, as being simple that *x is not a member of itself*, - that which, as regards what interests us, namely, for the following, which is necessary once one wishes to introduces the myth

of a reduced language: that there is a language which is not one, namely, which constitutes, for example the totality of signifiers. What is proper to the totality of signifiers, I will show it to you in detail, involves the following as necessary - if we simply admit that the signifier is not able to signify itself - involves the following as necessary: that there is something that does not belong to this set. It is not possible to reduce language, simply because of the fact that language cannot constitute a closed set; in other words: that *there is no Universe of discourse*.

For those who may have had some difficulty in understanding what I have just formulated, I will recall simply the following which I already said at the appropriate time: that the truths that I have just stated are simply those which appeared in a confused fashion at the naive period of the establishment of set theory in the form of what is wrongly called Russell's paradox - because it is not a paradox, it is an image -: the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves. What does that mean? Either it contains itself or it contradicts its definition, or it does not contain itself and in that case it fails in its mission. This is not at all a paradox. One has only to declare that in making such a catalogue one cannot take things all the way, and for good reasons

But, what I earlier gave you the statement of, in the formula that in the Universe of discourse there is nothing which contains everything, this is something which properly speaking encourages us to be particularly prudent as regards the handling of what is called whole and part and to require us, at the origin, to distinguish very severely - this will be the object of my next lecture - *the One from the totality* - which precisely I have just refuted, saying that at the level of discourse there is no Universe, which undoubtedly leaves still more in suspense whether we can suppose it to be anywhere else - to distinguish this One from the *countable One* in so far as, of its nature it slips away and slides, so as to be able to be the One only by repeating itself at least once and closing in on itself, to establish, at the origin the lack involved: the one involved in the establishment of the subject.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 23 November 1966

I am going to try today to trace out for your use some relations that, I would say, are essential and fundamental: to firm up at the beginning what constitutes our subject this year. I hope that no one is going to object that they are abstract, for the simple reason that this would be a quite improper term, as you are going to see! There is nothing more *concrete* than what I am going to put forward, even if this term does not correspond to the quality of density which is its connotation for many. It is a matter of making tangible for you one or other proposition like the one that up to now I have only put forward under the appearance of a sort of aphorism, which may have played at one or other turning points of our discourse the role of axiom, such as the following: *there is no metalanguage* - a formula which has the appearance of being properly speaking the contrary of everything that is given, if not in the experience, at least in the writings of those who try to ground the function of language. At the very least, in many cases, they show in language some differentiations that they find it good to begin from, starting for example from an object-language, in order to construct on this base a certain number of differentiations. The very act of such an operation seems to imply that in order to speak about language one should use something which is not part of it and which, in a way, is supposed to envelope it with a different order than the one that makes it function.

I believe that the solution of these apparent contradictions which, in short, manifest themselves in discourse, in what is said, is to be found in a function which it seems to me essential to bring out, at least from the angle that I am going to try to inaugurate it today - to bring out and especially for our purposes - for the logic of phantasy, it seems to me, can in no way be articulated without reference to what is involved - namely, to something that at least in order to announce it I pinpoint under the term of writing (*l'écriture*).

Naturally, this is not to say, for all that, that it is what you know under the ordinary (2) connotations of this word. But if I choose it, it is because it must have some relation with what I have to state.

A point, precisely, on which we are going to have to operate ceaselessly today is the following: *that it is not the same thing, after we have said it, to write it or indeed to write that one is saying it*. For the second operation, essential to the function of writing, precisely from the angle, from the point of view whose importance I am going today to show, as regards our most appropriate references in this year's subject, this, I am saying, immediately and from the beginning presents itself with paradoxical consequences. After all, why not, in order to alert you, start from what I already presented before you from a particular angle? Without you

being able to say, I believe, that I am repeating myself. It is sufficiently in the nature of the things that are discussed here, that they emerge from some angle, from some line that breaks through a surface to which by the simple fact of speaking we are forced to keep - that they should appear at some moment before they really take on their function. Here then, I remind you, is what I one day wrote on the board and which someone, after all, who is here will render me the service of writing in my place, so that I do not have to immerse myself to the level of your dear heads.

Madame! Take this little piece of chalk, make a rectangle, write no! make it very big almost as big as the board, there you are! Write: 1,2,3,4, on the first line. No! inside the frame 1,2,3,4, and then write: the smallest whole number which is not written on the board, beneath 1,2,3,4 (*laughter*). No, write the sentence: "the smallest whole number which is not written on this board".

1 2 3 4
the smallest whole number which is not written on this board

(3) This could have been presented in a different form, namely - instead of doing me the service which has been done, and I thank the person who was good enough to write this sentence that you see written out - that I could have, without writing it, ask you or even, if you wish, make a little person from those mouth there would emerge what they call in comic strips a bubble: "the smallest whole number which is not written on this board", in which case you would all have been in agreement and I would not have contradicted that it is the number 5. It is clear that from the moment that this sentence is written: "the smallest whole number which is not written on this board", the number 5 - being written, there by this very fact - is excluded. You have only to search then whether the smallest whole number which is not written on the board might not, by chance, be the number 6 and you find yourself with the same difficulty, namely, that from the moment that you pose the question, the number 6 as the smallest whole number which is not written on the board, is written on it and so on.

This, like many paradoxes is only of interest of course for what we want to make of it. What follows is going to show you that it was perhaps not useless to introduce the function of writing from this angle from which it may present some enigma to you. It is, let us say, properly speaking, a logical enigma and it is no worse a way than any other to show you that there is, in any case, some close relation between the apparatus of writing and what one can call logic.

This also deserves to be recalled, at the start, at the moment at which - the majority of those who are here, I think, having a adequate notion of it, even for those who have none this can serve as a point to hang onto - at which to recall that undoubtedly, if there is something which characterises the new state, undoubtedly,

undoubtedly new... - in this sense that they are far from and in no way able to be contained, to be reabsorbed within the framework of what was called classical or again traditional logic - the new developments, I am saying, of logic are entirely linked to these operations of writing.

So let us pose a question. Ever since I have been speaking about the function of language, ever since, in order to articulate what is involved in the subject of the unconscious, I constructed - I must say that it was necessary for me to do it stage by stage, and before an audience of whom the least one can say is that they needed to be coaxed in order to listen - that I constructed the graph which is designed to order precisely that which, in the function of the word, is defined by this field, this field which the structure of language requires: it is properly what is called the *paths of discourse* or again what I called the *defiles of the signifier*. Somewhere in this graph there is inscribed the letter capital O on the right, on the lower line: if someone would rub this out I could rapidly draw the whole graph for those who do not know it. This small o that in one sense one can identify to the locus of the (4) Other, which in fact is the locus where there is produced everything that can be described as a statement in the broadest sense of the term, namely, what constitutes what I, incidentally, called the treasury of the signifier - which is not limited, in principle, to the words in the dictionary. When, precisely, correlatively to the construction of this graph I began to speak about the witticism, taking things from the angle, which perhaps appeared the most surprising and the most difficult for my listeners at that time, but which was precisely indispensable to avoid any confusion: the *non-sensical* feature- not senseless but close to this operation that English defines extremely well, makes resonate under the term of *nonsense* - that exists in the witticism; whose kinship, after all, in order to make understood the dimension that it was a matter of bringing out, I then showed - at least at the level of reception, of tympanic vibration - the kinship it has with what was, for us, at a testing time, the *personal message*. I alluded to the personal message - namely, every statement, in fact, in so far as it is cut up "non-sensically" - the last time, by recalling the celebrated: "*Colourless green ideas, etc*". The totality of statements then - I am not saying of propositions - also forms part of this Universe of discourse which is situated in capital O.

The question which is posed and which is properly a question of structure, the one which gives its sense to the fact that I say that the unconscious is structured *like a language*, which in my stating it is a pleonasm, since I identify structure to this "like a language", in the structure, precisely, that I am going to try today to make function before you.

What is involved in this Universe of discourse, in so far as it implies this operation of the signifier? In so far as it defines these two dimensions of metaphor - in as much as the chain can always graft itself (*se enter*) onto another chain along the path of the operation of substitution - in so far as on the other hand, in its essence, it signifies this sliding which comes from the fact that no signifier belongs properly speaking to any meaning. Having recalled this domain of the Universe of discourse which permits this sea (*mer*) of variations in what constitutes meanings - this essentially moving and transitory order, where nothing, as I said at one time, can be guaranteed except from the function of what I called in a metaphorical form:

buttoning points (points de capiton)- today, it is this Universe of discourse that it is a matter of questioning, starting from this single axiom regarding which it is a matter of knowing what it may specify within this Universe of discourse. An axiom which is one that I put forward the last time: that the signifier - this signifier that we have, up to now, defined by its function of representing a subject for another signifier - this signifier, what does it represent faced with itself, with its repetition as signifying unit? This is defined by the axiom that no signifier - even if it is, *and very precisely when it is*, reduced to its minimal form, the one that we call the *letter* - can signify itself.

(5) Mathematical usage depends precisely on the fact that when we have somewhere - and not only, as you know, in an exercise of algebra - when we have posited somewhere a letter capital A, we take it up, subsequently, as if it were still the same the second time that we make use of it; do not raise this objection, today is not the day I am going to give you a class in mathematics; you should know, simply, that no correct statement of any usage whatsoever of letters - even if it were, precisely, in what is closest to us today, for example, in the use of a Markov chain - would require of any teacher (and this is what Markov himself did) a stage, which is in a way propaedeutic, to make clearly sensed the impasse, the arbitrariness, what is absolutely unjustifiable in this employing, the second time, of the A (quite apparent moreover) to represent the first A as if it were still the same. It is a difficulty which is at the source of the mathematical use of this so-called identity. We do not have to deal with it explicitly here today, because we are not dealing with mathematics. I want simply to recall to you that the foundation that the signifier is not grounded by signifying itself is admitted by those very people who on occasion may make a use that is contradictory to this principle - at least in appearance. It would be easy to see through what intermediary this is possible, but I do not have the time to go astray in this. I want simply to pursue - and without tiring you any more - my proposition which is then the following: **what is the consequence in this Universe of discourse of this principle: that the signifier cannot signify itself?**

What does this axiom specify in this Universe of discourse in so far as it is constituted, in short, by everything that can be said? What sort of specification is it and does the specification that this axiom determines, form part of the Universe of discourse? If it does not form part of it, this is undoubtedly a problem for us. What specifies, I repeat, the axiomatic statement that the signifier cannot signify itself, will have the consequence of specifying something which, as such, would not be in the Universe of discourse. Even though, precisely, we have admitted into its ambit to say that it encompasses everything that can be said. Are we going to find ourselves in some diversion which would signify the following: that what, thus, cannot form part of the Universe of discourse, cannot be said in some way or other? And, of course, it is clear that since we are speaking about it, about what I am bringing to you, it is obviously not to tell you that it is the ineffable thematic regarding which you know that from pure consistency and without for all that belonging to the school of Mr. Wittgenstein, I consider as: that it is useless to speak.

(6) Before coming to such a formula, and you can see after all that I am not sparing you either its relief or the impasse that it constitutes, since moreover we are going to have to come back to it - I really do everything to open up the paths to what I am trying to get you to follow me in - let us take care to put to the test the following: that what specifies the axiom that the signifier cannot signify itself, remains part of the Universe of discourse.

What do we then have to posit? What is at stake in, what specifies the relation that I stated in the form that the signifier cannot signify itself - let us take arbitrarily the usage of a little sign which serves in this logic which is founded on writing, this *W* in which you will recognise the shape (these games are not perhaps purely accidental) of my diamond, in a way with its hat knocked off, that has been opened up like a little box, and which serves, this *W*, to designate, in the logic of sets, *exclusion*. In other words, what is designated by the Latin *or*, which is expressed by an *aut*: one or the other. The signifier in its repeated presentation only functions *qua* functioning the first time or functioning the second, between one and the other there is a radical gap, this is what is meant by the signifier cannot signify itself.

S W S

We suppose, as we have said, that what determines this axiom as a specification in the Universe of discourse, and that we are going to designate by a signifier: B - an essential signifier which you will notice can be appropriated to something the axiom specifies: that it cannot, in a certain relation and from a certain relation, generate any meaning - B is very specifically the signifier to which there is no objection to it being specified by the fact that it marks, as I might say, this sterility. The signifier in itself being precisely characterised by the following: that there is nothing obligatory about it, that it is far from being in the first outline that it generates a meaning. It is this that gives me the right to symbolise by the signifier B this feature: that the relation of the signifier to itself does not generate any meaning.

But let us start, to begin with, from the following which after all seems to be required: the fact is that something that I am in the process of stating to you forms part of the Universe of discourse - let us see what results from that. That is why I make use for the moment - because after all it does not seem to me to be inappropriate - of my little diamond in order to say that B forms part of A, that it has relations with it whose richness I will certainly have to bring into play for you throughout this year and whose complexity I indicated to you the last time, by decomposing this little sign in all the binary fashions in which it can be done.

B A

(7) It is a matter of knowing, then, whether there is not some contradiction resulting from it, namely, whether from the very fact that we have written that the signifier cannot signify itself, we can write that this B, not signifies itself, but,

forming part of the Universe of discourse, can be considered as something which, in the style which characterises what we have called a specification, can be written: *B forms part of itself.*

It is clear that the question arises: does B form part of itself? In other words what the notion of specification grounds, namely, what we have learned to distinguish in several logical varieties, I mean that I hope that there are enough people here who know that the functioning of a set is not strictly speaking super-imposable on that of a class, but that in fact all of this at the origin, must be rooted in this principle of a specification. Here, we find ourselves before something whose kinship in fact should sufficiently resonate in your ears with what I called the last time Russell's paradox, in so far as to what I am stating, that here, in the terms which interest us, the function of sets - in so far as it does something that I, for my part, have not yet done, for I am not here to introduce it but to maintain you in a field which logically is on this hither side, but to introduce something which it is the opportunity in this connection to try to grasp: namely, what is grounded by the bringing into play of the apparatus described as set theory, which today is presented as something quite original, undoubtedly, for any mathematical statement and for which logic is nothing but what mathematical symbolism can grasp - this function of sets will also be the principle, and this is what I put in question, of the whole foundation of logic.

If there is a logic of the phantasy it is indeed because it is more fundamental (*principielle*) with respect to any logic which flows into the formalising defiles where it has revealed itself, as I have said, to be so fruitful in the modern epoch.

Let us try then to see what Russell's paradox means, when it covers something which is not far from what is there on the board. Simply, it promotes as altogether enveloping this fact of a type of signifier, that it takes moreover for a class. A strange error! ... To say for example that the word "obsolete" represents a class in which it would itself be included under the pretext that the word "obsolete" is obsolete, is undoubtedly a little conjuring trick, which has strictly no interest except to found as a class the signifiers which do not signify themselves. While precisely we posit as an axiom, here, that in no case can the signifier signify itself and that it is from there that one must start to sort oneself out, even if it were only to see that it is necessary to explain differently that the word "obsolete" can be qualified as obsolete. It is absolutely indispensable to bring into it what the division of the subject introduces.

(8) But let us leave "obsolete" and let us start from the opposition that Russell sets up to mark something which is supposed to be a contradiction in the formula which might be stated as follows:

$$(B \quad A \quad / \quad S \quad W \quad S)$$

from a sub-set B whose status it would be impossible to guarantee, starting from the fact that it would be specified in a different set A, by a characteristic such that an element of A would not contain itself.

Is there some sub-set defined by this proposition of the existence of elements which do not contain themselves?

It is undoubtedly easy, in this condition, to show the contradiction that exists in this because we have only to take an element y as forming part of B , as an element of B :

$$(y \in B)$$

for us to see the consequences that there then are in making it at the same time, as such, form part, as an element, of A :

$$(y \in B) \quad (y \in A \ / \ y \notin y)$$

and not being an element of itself. The contradiction is revealed by putting B in the place of y :

$$(B \in B) \quad (B \in A \ / \ B \notin B)$$

and seeing that the formula operates from the fact that every time we make B an element of B , there results, because of the solidarity of the formula that since B forms part of A , it ought not to form part of itself, if on the other hand - B having been put, substituted for the place of this y - if on the other hand it does not form part of itself, satisfying the parenthesis on the right of the formula, it then forms part of itself being one of these y 's which are elements of B .

This is the contradiction before which Russell's paradox put us.

It is a matter knowing whether, in our register, we can stop at it, provided we notice in passing what is meant by the contradiction highlighted in set theory, which would allow us perhaps to say the way in which set theory is specified in logic, namely, what step forward it constitutes as compared to the more radical one that we are trying to establish here.

The contradiction involved at this level where Russell's paradox is articulated, depends precisely - as the simple usage of words shows us - on the fact that I *say* it. For if I do not *say* it, nothing prevents this formula, the second one, very precisely, from holding up as such, written out and there is nothing to say that its usage will stop there. What I *say* here is no word play, for set theory as such has absolutely no other support except the fact that I *write* as such, that everything that can be *said* (9) about a difference between the elements is excluded from the operation.

To write, to manipulate the literal operation which constitutes set theory consists in writing, as such, what I am saying there: namely, that the first set can be formed at once from the charming person who is in the process today, for the first time, of typing my discourse, from the mist on this window and from an idea which just now is going through my head, that this constitutes a set, from this fact, that I *say* expressly that no other difference exists than the one which is constituted by

the fact that I can apply to these three objects, that I have just named and which you see are rather heteroclitite, a unary stroke upon each one and nothing else.

Here then is what ensures that since we are not at the level of such a specification, since what I bring into play is the Universe of discourse, my question does not encounter Russell's paradox, namely, that there is deduced no impasse, no impossibility to the following, that B about which I do not know, but which I have begun to suppose forms part of the Universe of discourse, undoubtedly for its part, although constituted from the specification that *the signifier cannot signify itself* - may perhaps have this sort of relation to itself which escape Russell's paradox, namely, to demonstrate to us something which might be perhaps its own dimension and in connection with which we are going to see in which status it forms part or not of the Universe of discourse.

In effect, if I was careful to remind you of the existence of Russell's paradox, it is probably because I am going to be able to make use of it to make you sense something. I am going to make you sense it first of all in the simplest fashion and, after that, in a fashion that is a little bit richer. I am going to make you sense it in the simplest fashion because I am prepared, for some time now, for any concession (*laughter*). People want me to say simple things, well then, I will say simple things! You are already all the same, sufficiently formed to following, thanks to my care, to know that there is not such a direct path towards understanding. Perhaps, even if what I tell you appears simple, there will remain with you, all the same, a little suspicion...

A catalogue of catalogues: here indeed, in a first approach, is what is involved as a signifier. Why should we be surprised that it does not contain itself? Naturally, since this seems, to us, to be required from the beginning. Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves from printing itself inside! In truth, nothing would prevent it, even the contradiction that Lord Russell would deduce from it!

But let us consider precisely this possibility that exists, that in order not to contradict itself, it does not inscribe itself in itself.

Let us take the first catalogue; there are only four catalogues, up to then, which do not contain themselves:

A B C D.

(10) Let us suppose that there appears another catalogue which does not contain itself, we add it on: E.

Why is it inconceivable to think that there is a first catalogue which contains A B C D, a second catalogue which contains B C D E, and not to be surprised that each of them lacks this letter which is properly the one which would designate itself?

But from the moment that you generate this sequence, you have only to arrange it around the circumference of a disc and see that it is not because in each

catalogue one of them will be missing, indeed even a greater number, that the circle of these catalogues will not add up to something which is precisely what corresponds to the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves. Simply what will constitute this chain will have this property of being an additional signifier (*un signifiant en plus*) which is constituted from the closure of the chain. An uncountable signifier and which, precisely because of this fact, is able to be designated by a signifier. Because, being nowhere, there is no difficulty in a signifier arising which designates it as *an additional signifier*: the one that is not grasped in the chain.

I take another example: catalogues are not made, in the first place, to catalogue catalogues, they catalogue objects which have some right (*titre*) to be there (the word "*titre*" having here all its importance). It would be easy to become engaged on this path in order to open up the dialectic of the catalogue of all the catalogues, but I am going to go to a more lively path, since it is necessary that I should leave you some exercises for your own imagination.

The book: with the book we enter, apparently, into the Universe of discourse. Nevertheless, in the measure that the book has some referent and that it also may be a book that has to cover a certain surface, in the register of some title (*titre*), the book will include a bibliography. Which means something which is presented properly for us to image the following, what results in so far as the catalogues live or do not live in the Universe of discourse: if I make the catalogue of all the books that a bibliography contains, naturally I am not making a catalogue of bibliographies! Nevertheless, in cataloguing these books, in so far as in the bibliographies they refer on to one another, I am very well cover the totality of all the bibliographies.

Here indeed is where there may be situated the phantasy which is properly the poetic phantasy *par excellence*, the one which obsessed Mallarme: of the *absolute Book*. It is at this level where things are tied together at the level of the usage not of pure signifier, but of the purified signifier, in so far as I *say* - and that I *write* that I *say* - that the signifier is here articulated as distinct from any signified and I then see there being outlined the possibility of this *absolute Book*, whose property would be that it would encompass the whole signifying chain, properly in the following: that it may no longer signify anything. In this, then, there is something that proves to be founded in existence at the level of the Universe of discourse, but (11) we have to suspend this existence on the proper logic which that of the phantasy may constitute, because moreover, it is the only one that can tell us the way in which this region is attached to the Universe of discourse. Undoubtedly, it is not excluded that it should enter it, but on the other hand, it is quite certain that it specifies itself in it, not at all by this purification of which I spoke earlier, for purification is not at all possible of what is essential to the Universe of discourse, namely, meaning. And were I to speak to you for another four hours about this *absolute Book* it would nevertheless remain that everything that I tell you has a sense.

What characterises the structure of this B - in so far as we know where to situate it in the Universe of discourse, inside or outside - is very precisely this feature that I announced earlier, in making for you the circle, simply of this A B C D E, in so far as by simply closing the chain, there results that each group of four can easily leave outside itself the extraneous signifier, which can serve to designate the group, for the simple reason that it is not represented in it, and that nevertheless the whole chain will be found to constitute the totality of all these signifiers, giving rise to this additional unit, uncountable as such, which is essential for a whole series of structures, which are precisely the ones on which I founded, since the year 1960, my whole operation (*opératoire*) of identification. Namely, what you find of it, for example, in the structure of the torus, being quite obvious that by buckling on the torus a certain number of circuits, by making operate a series of complete circuits at a cut and by making of them the number that you like (naturally the more of them there are, the more satisfying it is, but the more obscure it is). It is enough to make two of them to see there appearing at the same time this third required for these two to buckle together and, as I might say, for the line to bite its own tail: it will be this third circuit, which is secured by the buckling around the central hole, through which it is impossible not to pass in order for the first two loops to cut one another.

If I am not making any drawing on the board today, it is because in truth - in saying it - I am saying enough about it for you to understand me and also a good deal too little for me to show you that they are at least two paths, at the origin, along which this can be put into effect and that the result is not at all the same as regards the emergence of this additional One (*Un en plus*) that I am in the process of speaking to you about.

This simply suggestive indication contains nothing to exhaust the richness of what the least topological study provides us with.

What it is a matter today simply of indicating, is that the specificity of this world of writing is precisely to distinguish itself from discourse by the fact that it can close. And, closing on itself, it is precisely from there that there arises this possibility of a "one" which has a completely different status to that of the one which unifies and which encompasses. But from this "one" which already, from the simple closing - without there being any need to go into the status of repetition, which nevertheless (12) is closely linked to it - just from its closing, it gives rise to what has the status of the *additional one*, in so far as it is only sustained by writing and that it is nevertheless open, in its possibility, to the Universe of discourse; since it is sufficient, as I pointed out to you, for me to *write* - but it is necessary that this writing should take place - what I *say* about the exclusion of this *one* is enough to generate this other plane where there unfolds properly speaking the whole function of logic; the thing being sufficiently indicated to us by the stimulus that logic received, by submitting itself to the simple operation of writing, except for the fact that it still fails to remember that this only reposes on the function of a *lack*, in the very thing that is written and which constitutes the status, as such, of the function of writing.

I am saying simple things to you today, and perhaps this in itself risks making this discourse appear disappointing to you. Nevertheless, you would be wrong not to see that this is inserted into a register of questions which henceforth give to the function of writing something which cannot but have repercussions down to the deepest level of any possible conception of structure. For if the writing of which I speak is only supported from the return buckled onto itself, from a cut (as I illustrated it from the function of the torus), we find ourselves lead to the following: that precisely the most fundamental studies, linked to the progress of mathematical analysis, have put us in a position to isolate in it the function of the *edge*.

Now, once we speak about edge, there is nothing which can make us substantify this function, in so far as here you might improperly deduce that this function of writing is to limit this changableness (*mouvant*) of which I spoke to you earlier as being that of our thoughts or of the Universe of discourse. Far from it! If there is something which is structured as edge, what it itself limits is in a position to enter in its turn into the edging function. And here indeed is what we are going to have to deal with.

Or indeed - and this is the other face on which I intend to end - it is the reminder of what has always been known about this function of the *unary stroke* (*trait unaire*).

I will end by evoking the 26th verse of a book which I have already made use of, at one time, to begin to make understood what is involved in the function of the signifier: the book of Daniel and in connection with the story about zouave's trousers which is designated in it by a word which remains in the state of what is called an hapax and which is impossible to translate unless it was the socks that the characters in question wore.

In the book of Daniel, you already have the theory of the subject that I am presenting to you and precisely arising at the limit of this Universe of discourse. It is the famous story of the dramatic festival of which we no longer find, moreover, the slightest trace in the annals, but no matter!

Mene, Mene, for this is how verse 26 is expressed, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin*, which is usually transcribed in the famous *Mene, Tekel, Parsin*. It does not seem useless to me for us to notice that *Mene, Mene* which means "counted" - as Daniel pointed out in interpreting it to the worried prince - is expressed twice in order to show the most simple repetition of what constitutes counting; it is enough to count up to two for everything that is involved in this *additional one*, which is the true root of the function of repetition in Freud, to take place and to be marked in the following: except for the fact that contrary to what occurs in set theory, one does not *say* it.

One does not say the following: that what repetition seeks to repeat is precisely what escapes, because of the very function of the mark, in so far as the mark is original in the function of repetition. That is why repetition takes place, because the mark is repeated, but that for the mark to provoke the sought-for repetition, it is necessary that on what is sought because the mark marks the first time, this very

mark is effaced at the level of what it has marked and that is why what is sought for in repetition, of its nature slips away, allows there to be lost the fact that the mark cannot not be reduplicated, that by effacing, on what is to be repeated, the first mark, namely, to let it slip out of reach.

Mene, Mene ... something in what is rediscovered lacks weight: *Tekel*. The prophet Daniel interprets it, and interprets it by saying to the prince that he was in effect weighed, but that something is missing there, which is expressed as "*Parsin*". This radical lack, this first lack which flows from the very function of the *counted* as such, this *additional One* that one cannot count, it is this which constitutes properly this lack to which it is a matter for us of giving its logical function, in order that it should secure what is involved in the final "*Parsin*", the one which precisely explodes what is involved in the Universe of discourse, of the bubble, of the empire in question, of the sufficiency of what is closed in on the image of the imaginary whole.

Here is exactly the path along which there is brought to bear the effect of the entry of what structures discourse at the most radical point, which is undoubtedly - as I always said and accentuated, to the extent of employing the most popular images for it - the *letter* that is involved, but the *letter* in so far as it is excluded, as it is lacking.

This is indeed about what - that moreover, since today I am making a new irruption into this Jewish tradition - to tell the truth, I had so many things prepared even to the extent of having come to grips with a little exercise of learning to read Massoretic, a whole work which was in a way put in cold storage because of the fact that I was not able to construct the thematic that I had the intention of developing around the Name of the Father - and that moreover, there remains something of all of this and specifically that at the level of history of Creation: "*Berechit, Bara, Elohim*" the Book begins, namely by a beth. And it is said that this very letter that we have used today, the capital A, otherwise called Aleph, was not, at the beginning, among those from which there emerged the whole of creation.

(14) This indeed is here to indicate to us, but in a fashion that is in a way turned in on itself, that it is in so far as one of these letters is absent that the others function, but that no doubt it is in its very lack that there resides the whole fruitfulness of the operation.

I am going to try today to trace out for your use some relations that, I would say, are essential and fundamental to secure at the beginning what constitutes our subject this year. I hope that no one is going to object that they are abstract, for the simple reason that this would be a quite improper term, as you are going to see! There is nothing more *concrete* than what I am going to put forward, even if this term does not correspond to the quality of density which is its connotation for many. It is a matter of making tangible for you one or other proposition like the one that up to now I have only put forward under the appearance of a sort of aphorism, which may have played at one or other turning point of our discourse the role of axiom, such as the following: *there is no metalanguage* - a formula which has the appearance of being, properly speaking, contrary to everything that is given, if not in the experience, at least in the writings of those who try to ground the function of language. At the very least, in many cases, they show in language some differentiations that they find it good to begin from, starting, for example, from an object-language, in order to construct on this base a certain number of differentiations. The very act of such an operation seems to imply that in order to speak about language one should use something which is not part of it or which, in a way, is supposed to envelope it in an order different to the one that makes it function.

I believe that the solution of these apparent contradictions which, in short, manifest themselves in discourse, in what is said, is to be found in a function which it seems to me essential to bring out, at least from the angle that I am going to try to inaugurate it today - to bring out and especially for our purposes - because the logic of phantasy, it seems to me, can in no way be articulated without reference to what is involved, namely, to something that at least in order to announce it I pinpoint under the term of writing (*l'écriture*).

Naturally, this is not to say, for all that, that it is what you know under the ordinary (2) connotations of this word. But if I choose it, it is because it must have some relation with what I have to state.

A point, precisely, on which we are going to have to operate ceaselessly today is the following: *that it is not the same thing, after we have said it, to write it or indeed to write that one is saying it.* Because the second operation, essential to the function of writing, precisely from the angle, from the point of view whose importance I am going to show today, as regards our most appropriate references in this year's subject, this, I am saying, immediately and from the beginning presents itself with paradoxical consequences. After all, why not, in order to alert you, start from what I already presented before you from a particular angle? Without you being able to say, I believe, that I am repeating myself. It is sufficiently in the nature of the things that are discussed here, that they emerge from some angle, from some line that breaks through a surface to which we are forced to keep by the simple fact of speaking - that they should appear at some moment before they really take on their function. Here, then, I remind you, is what I one day wrote on the board and which someone, after all, who is here will render me the service of writing in my place, so that I do not have to immerse myself to the level of your dear heads.

Madame! Take this little piece of chalk, make a rectangle, write... no! make it very big almost as big as the board, there you are! Write: 1,2,3,4, on the first line. No! inside the frame... 1,2,3,4, and then write: the smallest whole number which is not written on the board, beneath 1,2,3,4 (*laughter*). No, write the sentence: "the smallest whole number which is not written on this board".

1 2 3 4

the smallest whole number
which is not written on this board

(3) This could have been presented in a different form, namely - instead of doing me the service which has been done, and I thank the person who was good enough to write this sentence that you see written out - that I could, without writing it, have asked you or even, if you wish, made a little person from those mouth there would emerge what they call in comic strips a bubble: "the smallest whole number which is not written on this board". In which case you would all have been in agreement, and I would not have contradicted you, that it is the number 5. It is clear that from the

moment that this sentence is written: “the smallest whole number which is not written on this board”, the number 5 - being written, there by this very fact - is excluded. You have only to search, then, whether the smallest whole number which is not written on the board might not, perchance, be the number 6, and you find yourself with the same difficulty, namely, that from the moment that you pose the question, the number 6 as the smallest whole number which is not written on the board, is written on it and so on.

This, like many paradoxes, is only of interest, of course, for what we want to make of it. What follows is going to show you that it was, perhaps, not useless to introduce the function of writing from this angle from which it may present some enigma to you. It is, let us say, properly speaking, a logical enigma and it is no worse a way than any other to show you that there is, in any case, some close relation between the apparatus of writing and what one can call logic. This also deserves to be recalled, at the start, at the moment at which - the majority of those who are here, I think, having a adequate notion of it, even for those who have none this can serve as a point to hang onto - at which to recall that undoubtedly, if there is something which characterises the new state, undoubtedly, undoubtedly new... - in this sense that they are far from and in no way able to be contained, to be reabsorbed within the framework of what was called classical or again traditional logic - the new developments, I am saying, of logic are entirely linked to these operations of writing.

So let us pose a question. Ever since I have been speaking about the function of language, ever since, in order to articulate what is involved in the subject of the unconscious, I constructed - I must say that it was necessary for me to do it stage by stage, and before an audience of whom the least one can say is that they needed to be coaxed in order to listen - that I constructed the graph which is designed to order, precisely what, in the function of the word, is defined by this field, this field which the structure of language requires: it is properly what is called the *paths of discourse* or again what I called the *defiles of the signifier*. Somewhere in this graph there is inscribed the letter capital O on the right, on the lower line: if someone would rub this out I could rapidly draw the whole graph for those who do not know it. This **small o** [*sic*] that in a sense one can identify to the locus of the (4) Other, which in fact is the locus where there is produced everything that can be described as a statement in the broadest sense of the term, namely, what constitutes what I, incidentally, called the treasury of the signifier - which is not limited, in principle, to the words in the dictionary. When, precisely, correlatively to the construction of this graph, I began to speak about the witticism, taking things from the angle, which perhaps appeared the most surprising and the most difficult for my listeners at that time, but which was precisely indispensable to avoid any confusion. The *non-sensical* feature - not senseless but close to this operation that English defines extremely well, makes resonate under the term of *nonsense* - that exists in the witticism; whose kinship, after all, in order to make understood the dimension that it was a matter of bringing out, I then showed - at least at the level of reception, of tympanic vibration - the kinship it has with what was, for us, at a testing time, the *personal message*. I alluded to the personal message - namely, every statement, in fact, in so far as it is cut up “*non-sensically*” - the last time, by recalling the celebrated: “*Colourless green ideas, etc*”. The totality of statements then - I am not saying of propositions - also forms part of this Universe of discourse which is situated in capital O.

The question which is posed and which is properly a question of structure, the one which gives its sense to the fact that I say that the unconscious is structured *like a language*, which in my stating it is a pleonasm, since I identify structure to this “like a language”, in the structure, precisely, that I am going to try today to make function before you.

What is involved in this Universe of discourse, in so far as it implies this operation of the signifier? In so far as it defines these two dimensions of metaphor - in as much as the chain can always graft itself (*se enter*) with another chain along the path of the operation of substitution - in so far as on the other hand, in its essence, it signifies this sliding which comes from the fact that no signifier belongs properly to any meaning. Having recalled this domain of the Universe of discourse which permits this sea (*mer*) of variations in what constitutes meanings - this essentially moving and transitory order, where nothing, as I said at one time, can be guaranteed except from the function of what I called in a metaphorical form: *buttoning points* (*points de capiton*)- today, it is this Universe of discourse that it is a matter of questioning, starting from this single axiom regarding which it is a matter of knowing what it may specify within this Universe of discourse. An axiom which is one that I put forward the last time: that the signifier - this signifier that we have, up to now, defined by

its function of representing a subject for another signifier - this signifier, what does it represent faced with itself, with its repetition as signifying unit? This is defined by the axiom that no signifier - even if it is, *and very precisely when it is*, reduced to its minimal form, the one that we call the *letter* - can signify itself.

(5) Mathematical usage which depends precisely on the fact that when we have somewhere - and not only, as you know, in an exercise of algebra - when we have posited somewhere a letter, capital A, we take it up, subsequently, as if it were still the same the second time that we make use of it. Do not raise this objection; today is not the day I am going to give you a class in mathematics. You should know, simply, that no correct statement about any use whatsoever of letters - even if it were, precisely, in what is closest to us today, for example, in the use of a Markov chain - would require of any teacher (and this is what Markov himself did) a stage, which is in a way propaedeutic, to make clear the impasse, the arbitrariness, what is absolutely unjustifiable (quite apparent moreover) in employing A the second time to represent the first A, as if it were still the same. It is a difficulty which is at the source of the mathematical use of so-called identity. We do not have to deal with it explicitly here today, because we are not dealing with mathematics. I want simply to recall to you that the foundation, that the signifier is not grounded by signifying itself, is admitted by those very people who, on occasion, may make a use that is contradictory to this principle - at least in appearance. It would be easy to see the intermediary by which this is possible, but I do not have the time to go astray in this. I want simply to pursue - and without tiring you any more - my proposition which is then the following: **what is the consequence in this Universe of discourse of this principle: that the signifier cannot signify itself?**

What does this axiom specify in this Universe of discourse in so far as it is constituted, in short, by everything that can be said? What sort of specification is it and does the specification that this axiom determines, form part of the Universe of discourse? If it does not form part of it, this is undoubtedly a problem for us. What specifies, I repeat, the axiomatic statement that the signifier cannot signify itself, will have the consequence of specifying something which, as such, would not be in the Universe of discourse. Even though, precisely, we have admitted saying that it encompasses everything that can be said, into its ambit. Are we going to find ourselves in some diversion which would signify that what, thus, cannot form part of the Universe of discourse, cannot be said in some way or other? And, of course, it is clear that since we are speaking about it, about what I am bringing to you, it is obviously not to tell you that it is the ineffable thematic regarding which you know that from pure consistency and without for all that belonging to the school of Mr. Wittgenstein, I consider as: that it is vain to speak.

(6) Before coming to such a formula, and you can see after all that I am not sparing you either its relief or the impasse that it constitutes, since moreover we are going to have to come back to it - I really do everything to open up the paths to what I am trying to get you to follow me in - let us take care to put to the test the following: that what specifies the axiom that the signifier cannot signify itself, remains part of the Universe of discourse.

What do we then have to posit? What is at stake in, what specifies the relation that I stated in the form that the signifier cannot signify itself - let us take arbitrarily the usage of a little sign which serves in this logic which is founded on writing, this *W* in which you will recognise the shape (these games are not perhaps purely accidental) of my diamond, in a way with its hat knocked off, that has been opened up like a little box, and which serves, this *W*, to designate, in the logic of sets, *exclusion*. In other words, what is designated by the Latin *or*, which is expressed by an *aut*: one or the other. The signifier, in its repeated presentation, only functions *qua* functioning the first time or functioning the second. Between one and the other there is a radical gap, this is what is meant by: the signifier cannot signify itself.

We suppose, as we have said, that what determines this axiom as a specification in the Universe of discourse is what we are going to designate by a signifier, B - an essential signifier which you will notice can be appropriated to something the axiom specifies: that it cannot, in a certain relation and from a certain relation, generate any meaning. B is very specifically the signifier which can be specified, without objection, by the fact that it marks, as I might say, this sterility. The signifier in itself being characterised precisely by the fact that there is nothing obligatory, that it is far from being in the first spurt that it generates a meaning. It is this that gives me the right to symbolise by the signifier B this feature: that the relation of the signifier to itself does not generate any meaning.

But let us start, to begin with, from the following which after all seems to be required: the fact is that something that I am in the process of stating to you forms part of the Universe of discourse. Let us see what results from that. That is why I make use for the moment - because after all it does not seem to me to be inappropriate - of my little diamond in order to say that B forms part of A, that it has relations with it whose richness I will certainly have to bring into play, for you, throughout this year, and whose complexity I indicated to you the last time, by decomposing this little sign in all the binary fashions in which it can be done.

B \diamond A

(7) It is a matter of knowing, then, whether there is not some contradiction resulting from it. Namely, whether from the very fact that we have written that the signifier cannot signify itself, we can write that this B, not signifies itself, but, forming part of the Universe of discourse, can be considered as something which, in the style which characterises what we have called a specification, can be written: *B forms part of itself*.

It is clear that the question arises: does B form part of itself? In other words what the notion of specification grounds, namely, what we have learned to distinguish in several logical varieties, I mean that I hope that there are enough people here who know that the functioning of a set is not strictly speaking super-imposable on that of a class, but that in fact all of this at the origin, must be rooted in this principle of a specification. Here, we find ourselves before something whose kinship in fact should sufficiently resonate in your ears with what I called the last time Russell's paradox, in so far as to what I am stating, that here, in the terms which interest us, the function of sets - in so far as it does something that I, for my part, have not yet done, for I am not here to introduce it but to maintain you in a field which logically is on this hither side, but to introduce something that there is an opportunity to grasp in this connection: namely, what is grounded by the bringing into play of the apparatus described as set theory, which today is presented as something quite original, undoubtedly, for any mathematical statement, and for which logic is nothing but what mathematical symbolism can grasp - this function of sets will also be the principle, and this is what I put in question, of the whole foundation of logic.

If there is a logic of the phantasy, it is because it is more fundamental (*princielle*) than any logic which flows into the formalising defiles where it has revealed itself, as I have said, to be so fruitful in the modern epoch.

Let us try then to see what Russell's paradox means, when it covers something which is not far from what is there on the board. Simply, it promotes as altogether enveloping this fact of a type of signifier, that it takes moreover to be a class. A strange error! ... To say, for example, that the word "obsolete" represents a class in which it would itself be included, under the pretext that the word "obsolete" is obsolete, is undoubtedly a little conjuring trick, which has strictly no interest except to found, as a class, the signifiers which do not signify themselves. While precisely we posit as an axiom, here, that in no case can the signifier signify itself and that it is from there that one must start to sort oneself out, even if it were only to see that it is necessary to explain differently that the word "obsolete" can be qualified as obsolete. It is absolutely indispensable to bring into it what the division of the subject introduces.

(8) But let us leave “obsolete” and let us start from the opposition that Russell sets up to mark something which is supposed to be a contradiction in the formula which might be stated as follows:

$$(B \diamond A / S W S)$$

of a sub-set B whose status it would be impossible to guarantee, starting from the fact that it would be specified in a different set A, by a characteristic such that an element of A would not contain itself.

Is there some sub-set, defined by this proposition of the existence of elements which do not contain themselves?

It is undoubtedly easy, in this condition, to show the contradiction that exists in this because we have only to take an element y as forming part of B, as an element of B:

$$(y \in B)$$

for us to see the consequences that there then are in making it at the same time, as such, form part, as an element, of A:

$$(y \in B) \quad (y \in A / y \in y) /$$

and not being an element of itself. The contradiction is revealed by putting B in the place of y :

$$(B \in B) \quad (B \in A / B \in B) /$$

and seeing that the formula operates from the fact that every time we make B an element of B, there results, because of the solidarity of the formula, that since B forms part of A, it ought not to form part of itself. If on the other hand - B having been put, substituted for the place of this y - if on the other hand it does not form part of itself, satisfying the parenthesis on the right of the formula, it then forms part of itself being one of these y 's which are elements of B.

This is the contradiction before which Russell's paradox put us.

It is a matter of knowing whether, in our register, we can stop at it, provided we notice in passing what is meant by the contradiction highlighted in set theory, which would allow us perhaps to say the way in which set theory is specified in logic, namely, what step forward it constitutes as compared to the more radical one that we are trying to establish here.

The contradiction involved at this level where Russell's paradox is articulated, depends precisely - as the simple usage of words shows us - on the fact that I *say* it.

For if I do not *say* it, nothing prevents this formula, the second one, very precisely, from holding up as such, written out and there is nothing to say that its use will stop there. What I *say* here is no word play, for set theory as such has absolutely no other support except the fact that I *write* as such, that everything that can be (9) *said* about a difference between the elements is excluded from the operation.

To write, to manipulate the literal operation which constitutes set theory consists in writing, as such, what I am saying there: namely, that the first set can be formed at once from the charming person who is in the process today, for the first time, of typing my discourse, from the mist on this window and from an idea which just now is going through my head, that this constitutes a set, from this fact, that I *say* expressly that no other difference exists than the one which is constituted by the fact that I can apply to these three objects, that I have just named and which you see are rather heteroclitic, a unary stroke upon each one and nothing else.

Here then is what ensures that since we are not at the level of such a specification, since what I bring into play is the Universe of discourse, my question does not encounter Russell's paradox, namely,

that there is deduced no impasse, no impossibility to the following, that B which I do not know, but which I have begun to suppose forms part of the Universe of discourse, undoubtedly for its part, although constituted from the specification that *the signifier cannot signify itself*, may perhaps have this sort of relation to itself which escape Russell's paradox, namely, demonstrate to us something which might be perhaps its own dimension and in connection with which we are going to see in which status it forms part or not of the Universe of discourse.

In effect, if I was careful to remind you of the existence of Russell's paradox, it is probably because I am going to be able to make use of it to make you sense something. I am going to make you sense it first of all in the simplest fashion and, after that, in a fashion that is a little bit richer. I am going to make you sense it in the simplest fashion because I am prepared, for some time now, for any concession (*laugher*). People want me to say simple things, well then, I will say simple things! You are already, all the same, sufficiently formed to the following, thanks to my care, to know that there is not such a direct path towards understanding. Perhaps, even if what I tell you appears simple, there will remain with you, all the same, a little mistrust...

A catalogue of catalogues: here indeed, in a first approach, is what is involved as a signifier. Why should we be surprised that it does not contain itself? Naturally, since this seems, to us, to be required from the beginning. Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves, from printing itself, inside it! In truth, nothing would prevent it, even the contradiction that Lord Russell would deduce from it!

But let us consider precisely this possibility that exists, that in order not to contradict itself, it does not inscribe itself in itself.

Let us take the first catalogue; there are only four catalogues, up to then, which do not contain themselves:

A B C D.

(10) Let us suppose that there appears another catalogue which does not contain itself, we add it on: E.

Why is it inconceivable to think that there is a first catalogue which contains A B C D, a second catalogue which contains B C D E, and not be surprised that each of them lacks this letter which is properly the one which would designate itself?

But from the moment that you generate this sequence, you have only to arrange it around the circumference of a disc and see that it is not because in each catalogue one of them will be missing, indeed even a greater number, that the circle of these catalogues will not add up to something which is precisely what corresponds to the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves. Simply what will constitute this chain will have this property of being an additional signifier (*un signifiant en plus*) which is constituted from the closure of the chain. An uncountable signifier and which, precisely because of this fact, is able to be designated by a signifier. Because, being nowhere, there is no difficulty in a signifier arising which designates it as *the additional signifier*: the one that is not grasped in the chain.

I take another example: catalogues are not made, in the first place, to catalogue catalogues, they catalogue objects which have some right (*titre*) to be there (the word "*titre*" having here all its importance). It would be easy to become engaged on this path in order to open up the dialectic of the catalogue of all the catalogues, but I am going to go to a more lively path, since it is necessary that I should leave you some exercises for your own imagination.

The book: with the book we enter, apparently, into the Universe of discourse. Nevertheless, in the measure that the book has some referent and that it also may be a book that has to cover a certain surface, in the register of some title (*titre*), the book will include a bibliography. Which means something which is presented properly for us to image the following, what results in so far as the catalogues live or do not live in the Universe of discourse. If I make the catalogue of all the books that a bibliography contains, naturally I am not making a catalogue of bibliographies! Nevertheless,

in cataloguing these books, in so far as in the bibliographies they refer on to one another, I may very well cover the totality of all the bibliographies.

Here indeed is where there may be situated the phantasy which is properly the poetic phantasy *par excellence*, the one which obsessed Mallarmé: of the *absolute Book*. It is at this level where things are tied together at the level of the use not of pure signifier, but of the purified signifier, in so far as I *say* - and that I *write* that I *say* - that the signifier is here articulated as distinct from any signified and I then see there being outlined the possibility of this *absolute Book*, whose property would be that it would encompass the whole signifying chain, properly in the following: that it may no longer signify anything. In this, then, there is something that proves to be founded in existence at the level of the Universe of discourse, but (11) we have to suspend this existence on the proper logic which that of the phantasy may constitute, because moreover, it is the only one that can tell us the way in which this region is attached to the Universe of discourse. Undoubtedly, it is not excluded that it should enter it, but on the other hand, it is quite certain that it specifies itself in it, not at all by this purification of which I spoke earlier, for purification is not at all possible of what is essential to the Universe of discourse, namely, meaning. And were I to speak to you for another four hours about this *absolute Book* it would nevertheless remain that everything that I tell you has a sense.

What characterises the structure of this B - in so far as we know where to situate it in the Universe of discourse, inside or outside - is very precisely this feature that I announced earlier, in making for you the circle, simply of this A B C D E, in so far as, by simply closing the chain, there results that each group of four can easily leave outside itself the extraneous signifier, which can serve to designate the group, for the simple reason that it is not represented in it, and that nevertheless the whole chain will be found to constitute the totality of all these signifiers, giving rise to this additional unit, uncountable as such, which is essential for a whole series of structures, which are precisely the ones on which I founded, since the year 1960, my whole operation (*opératoire*) of identification. Namely, what you find of it, for example, in the structure of the torus, being quite obvious that by buckling on the torus a certain number of circuits, by making operate a series of complete circuits at a cut and by making of them the number that you like (naturally the more of them there are, the more satisfying it is, but the more obscure it is). It is enough to make two of them to see there appearing at the same time this third required for these two to buckle together and, as I might say, for the line to bite its own tail: it will be this third circuit, which is assured by the buckling around the central hole, through which it is impossible not to pass in order for the first two loops to cut one another.

If I am not making any drawing on the board today, it is because in truth - in saying it - I am saying enough about it for you to understand me and also a good deal too little for me to show you that they are at least two paths, at the origin, along which this can be effected and that the result is not at all the same as regards the emergence of this additional One (*Un en plus*) that I am in the process of speaking to you about.

This simply suggestive indication contains nothing to exhaust the richness of what the least topological study provides us with.

What it is a matter simply of indicating today, is that the specificity of this world of writing is precisely to distinguish itself from discourse by the fact that it can close. And, closing on itself, it is precisely from there that there arises this possibility of a "one" which has a completely different status to that of the one which unifies and encompasses. But from this "one" which already, from the simple closing - without there being any need to go into the status of repetition, which nevertheless (12) is closely linked to it - just from its closing, it gives rise to what has the status of the *additional One*, in so far as it is only sustained by writing and that it is nevertheless open, in its possibility, to the Universe of discourse; since it is sufficient, as I pointed out to you, for me to **write** - but it is necessary that this writing should take place - what I **say** about the exclusion of this *one*, this is enough to generate this other plane where there unfolds properly speaking the whole function of logic; the thing being sufficiently indicated to us by the stimulus that logic received, by submitting itself to the simple operation of writing, except for the fact that it still fails to remember that this only reposes on the function of a *lack*, in the very thing that is written and which constitutes the status, as such, of the function of writing.

I am saying simple things to you today, and perhaps this in itself risks making this discourse appear disappointing to you. Nevertheless, you would be wrong not to see that this is inserted into a register of questions which henceforth give to the function of writing something which cannot but have repercussions down to the deepest level of any possible conception of structure. For if the writing of which I speak is only supported from the return buckled onto itself, from a cut (as I illustrated it from the function of the torus), we find ourselves lead to the following: that precisely the most fundamental studies, linked to the progress of mathematical analysis, have put us in a position to isolate in it the function of the *edge*.

Now, once we speak about edge, there is nothing which can make us substantify this function, in so far as here you might improperly deduce that this function of writing is to limit this changeability (*mouvant*) of which I spoke to you earlier as being that of our thoughts or of the Universe of discourse. Far from it! If there is something which is structured as edge, what it itself limits is in a position to enter in its turn into the edging function. And here indeed is what we are going to have to deal with.

Or indeed - and this is the other face on which I intend to end - it is the reminder of what has always been known about this function of the *unary stroke* (*trait unaire*).

I will end by evoking the 26th verse of a book which I have already made use of, at one time, to begin to make understood what is involved in the function of the signifier: the book of Daniel and in connection with the story about the zouave's trousers which is designated in it by a word which remains in the state of what is called an hapax and which is impossible to translate unless it was the socks that the characters in question wore.

In the book of Daniel, you already have the theory of the subject that I am presenting to you, and precisely arising at the limit of this Universe of discourse. It is the famous story of the dramatic festival of which we no longer find, moreover, the slightest trace in the annals, but no matter!

(13) *Mene, Mene*, for this is how verse 26 is expressed, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin*, which is usually transcribed in the famous *Mene, Tekel, Parsin*. It does not seem useless to me for us to notice that *Mene, Mene* which means "counted" - as Daniel pointed out in interpreting it to the worried prince - is expressed twice in order to show the most simple repetition of what constitutes counting; it is enough to count up to two for everything that is involved in this *additional One*, which is the true root of the function of repetition in Freud, to take place and to be marked in the following: except for the fact that contrary to what occurs in set theory, one does not *say* it.

One does not say the following: that what repetition seeks to repeat is precisely what escapes, because of the very function of the mark, in so far as the mark is original in the function of repetition. That is why repetition takes place, because the mark is repeated, but that for the mark to provoke the sought-for repetition, it is necessary that on what is sought because the mark marks the first time, this very mark is effaced at the level of what it has marked and that is why what is sought for in repetition, of its nature slips away, allows there to be lost the fact that the mark cannot not be reduplicated, except by effacing, on what is to be repeated, the first mark, namely, to let it slip out of reach.

Mene, Mene ... something in what is rediscovered lacks weight: *Tekel*. The prophet Daniel interprets it, and interprets it by saying to the prince that he was in effect weighed, but that something is missing there, which is expressed as "*Parsin*". This radical lack, this first lack which flows from the very function of the *counted* as such, this *additional One* that one cannot count, it is this which constitutes properly this lack to which it is a matter for us of giving its logical function, in order that it should secure what is involved in the final "*Parsin*", the one which precisely explodes what is involved in the Universe of discourse, of the bubble, of the empire in question, of the sufficiency of what is closed in on the image of the imaginary whole.

Here is exactly the path along which there is brought to bear the effect of the entry of what structures discourse at the most radical point, which is undoubtedly - as I always said and accentuated, to the extent of employing the most popular images for it - the *letter* that is involved, but the *letter* in so far as it is excluded, as it is lacking.

This is indeed about what - that moreover, since today I am making a new irruption into this Jewish tradition - to tell the truth, I had so many things prepared, even to the extent of having come to grips with a little exercise of learning to read Massoretic, a whole work which was in a way put in cold storage because of the fact that I was not able to construct the thematic that I had intended to develop around the Name of the Father - and that moreover, there remains something of all of this and specifically that at the level of history of Creation: "*Berechit, Bara, Elohim*" the Book begins, namely by a Beth. And it is said that this very letter that we have used today, the capital A, otherwise called Aleph, was not, at the beginning, among those from which there emerged the whole of creation.

Hebrew Quotation

(14) This indeed is here to indicate to us, but in a fashion that is in a way turned in on itself, that it is in so far as one of these letters is absent that the others function, but that no doubt it is in its very lack that there resides the whole fruitfulness of the operation.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 30 November 1966.

Today you are going to hear a piece of work, a paper by Jacques-Alain Miller. This – about which I warned you the last time, perhaps a little late, a part of the audience having already dispersed when I announced it - marks the fact that I would like there to remain justified this curious name of *seminar*, which was attached to my teaching from the time of Sainte-Anne where, as you know, it was held for ten years.

To speak only of the two previous years here, some of you are not unaware - to your great annoyance - that I wanted this seminar to be held in an effective fashion, believing that this effectiveness could be linked to a certain reduction in this so numerous and so kindly audience that you offer me through your assiduity and attention. And, good God, so much assiduity and attention deserve a lot of respect, and they made the sorting out that was necessary for this reduction very difficult. So that, in total, your more reduced number was not such that from the point of view of quantity - which plays such an important role in communication - the scale of things changed to any great extent. So I will leave in suspense this year the solution of this difficult problem. Until further notice and without in any way committing myself to it, I am not closing any of these Wednesdays whether they are terminal, semi-terminal or other.

I would like simply that there should be at least maintained this name of seminar, in a more marked style than we experienced at Saint-Anne, where up to the very last years there were meetings in which I delegated the role of speaking to one or other of those who were following me at that time. Nevertheless, some ambiguity remains, which suspends this appellation of seminar between the proper usage of a

category: - a place where something ought to be exchanged, where the (2) transmission, the dissemination of a doctrine ought to be manifested as such, namely, in the process of being transmitted - there remained some ambiguity between this usage proper to the category and some other usage or other, not properly speaking of the proper name - because every discussion of the proper name can become engaged in this - let us say a nomination *par excellence*, the which nomination *par excellence* might become a nomination *par ironie*. Hence, in order to mark clearly that it is not the state of things in which I intend there to be stabilised the use of this appellation, you will see intervening periodically a certain number of people who show themselves disposed to it.

Undoubtedly, Jacques-Alain Miller, in inaugurating what follows, has some right, this year, since he provided you with this *index* in my book, with this *reasoned index of concepts*, which, according to what I hear is very welcome for many people, who find a great advantage in this Ariadne's thread which allows them to move through a succession of articles in which one or other notion, one or other concept (as the term is used more correctly), is found at diverse stages. A tiny detail: I note, to answer a question which has been put to me by someone, that in this index, the numbers in italics mark the essential passages, the straight or roman numbers, mark the passages where the concept is involved more in passing. It can happen that on the page that is designated for you, what is referred to in this way is simply limited to an indication in one line of the page. This will tell you the care with which this little apparatus, which is so usable, is constructed.

I am told, in this connection, that this book is, as they say in this *français* which I, for my part, do not reject, "out of print", which means *épuisé* [exhausted]. I find "out of print" nicer, with *épuisé* people ask what has happened to it (*laughter*). I hope that this "out of print" will not last too long, it is what is called a success, but a success in terms of *sales*. Let us not prejudge the *other* success. We have to wait and see and this, after all, leaves the question open. It has been remarked that I was hardly in a hurry to put this book into circulation.

If I delayed so long in doing so, one could pose this question: "Why now?" What do I expect from it?" It is clear that the reply: "*that it should be of service to you!*" was no less valid a year or two ago, or even earlier. The question is therefore not simple. It involves everything about my relations with what plays the function of a base, namely, psychoanalysis in its *incarnated* - we might say quickly - or again *subjectified* form, in other words: with psychoanalysts themselves. It is certain that there were many elements which appeared to me to justify that what I was trying to construct should remain in a reserved field, which allowed, in a way, this selection (3) which was made of those who wanted to decide to recognise what the study of Freud implied as a consequence in their practice.

Finally, things never happen in the way you plan, in these difficult matters in which resistance is not restricted to what must be designated in the narrow sense of this term in analytic praxis, but where it has another form, in which the social context is not without its impact. This indeed is what makes it very delicate for me to explain myself before such a large audience.

This indeed is why, in everything which concerns the *external relations* of my teaching – for I do not envisage in any other way the hullabaloo and the to-do around a certain number of my terms, with which I see myself associated in a way that I do not like, including that of *structuralism*, which for the moment benefiting from a certain fashion, is not the least to inspire my suspicion - nevertheless, here again, it is not the case - except in as much as I am forced to it by some incidence of what I called earlier the success of the book - this is something for which I am in no way disposed to take time here, to eat into this measured time in which you see - in which you ought to sense more or less by your experience of these last years - that I have no time to lose, if I want to state things before you at the level of the construction that you saw me inaugurating in its style by my last seminar and the points on which I wanted to establish the beginning of this logic that I have to develop before you this year.

Hence, and since all the same this book exists with the first movements that it is bringing with it - which will be followed by others - and that, in short, the two or three points that I have brought up like that, as principal - but there others - risk remaining in suspense for you, I believe that because of this, I ought to warn you that you will find, faith, the explanation - at least a sufficient explanation to permit you to respond to at least some of the questions which may remain in suspense for you – in two sorts of conversations, as they say, or again interviews, which are going to appear, I believe - if my information is correct, this week - in places, God knows, which have nothing of the fairground about them, which are called respectively the *Figaro littéraire* and *Lettres francaises*, where perhaps you will get to know a little more about these points. Besides, since I cannot help myself, every time that I have one of these kinds of *external relation*, putting into it all the same what is on-going, it is possible that you will find here and there something which refers to our discourse of this year.

It is obvious that I have some scruples - for example, as I did the last time, in speaking to you about the *repetition of the unary stroke*, as being situated, (4) established fundamentally from this repetition (of which one can say that it only happens once, which means all the same that it is double, otherwise there would be no repetition) which right away, in short, for whoever wants to delay on it a little, establishes in its most radical foundation the *division of the subject* - I cannot avoid having some scruple at having announced it before you the last time almost in passing, while at this congress which took place at Johns Hopkins (as a certain number of you know) in October, I chewed it over for about three quarters of an hour. It is perhaps because I give you greater credit than my listeners at that time; certain echoes received since having showed me that the structuralist ear - to take up again the term from earlier - well then, my God, the structuralist ear, whoever may be its bearer on a particular occasion, is capable of showing itself to be a little deaf! (*laughter*).

There are two still more unexpected places, where you will perhaps see... (in the audience: “We can’t hear!” - **Doctor Lacan**: “What? Who can’t hear? How long have you not been able to hear anything?” (*laughter*)) - Good, then, in still more unexpected places you will perhaps find on these different themes - up to and including these little initial indications, my God, which can never come too soon -

on certain themes which I will have to develop subsequently and, for example, in passing, on the function of the *preconscious* - a curious thing, that people do not seem to have occupied themselves with for a long time, namely, ever since people mixed up everything while believing they had kept it distinct, people no longer occupy themselves after all so much with the functions that Freud reserved for it - it slipped in in passing, if I remember rightly, in one of these conversations, I cannot remember which one, to which, then, it would be well to add the two other unexpected ones, I think, for you, which are conversations at the O.R.T.F. There will be one next Friday at 10.45, which is what is called, I have been assured, a "peak listening time" (*laughter*). I am thinking: not for those who are listening to me here at this hour, precisely, because I think at this peak listening time, they are at the hospital. Anyway, too bad, you can organise things as you wish and I hope after all to be able to communicate this text if the Radio is willing to give me the authorisation. There will be another one on Monday - you can see that they are in a hurry. For the first, it is Georges Charbonnier who is kind enough - I will not say to receive it - to give me a place and for the second it is M. Sipridio, thanks to whom you will perhaps have something a bit more lively than the first one, since it will be a dialogue with the person who is most qualified to sustain it, namely, Francois Wahl who is here and was kind enough to agree to carry out this exercise with me.

Now then, (in the audience: "At what time?") Well it appears that it is at ... I (5) would not swear to it, it appears that it is starting at 6.15, only they are not going to be speaking just about my book and I cannot very well tell you at what stage it will appear between 6.15 and 7 p.m., each one having his quarter of an hour.... What then, is there another question? It is a peak listening time (*laughter*) which in general is accompanied by exercises in gymnastics. There you are, anyway, we will see how all of that works out.

And now I give the floor to Jacques-Alain Miller (the audience: "Oh!").

I am going all the same to communicate something very amusing to you, which was brought to me by one of my faithful followers. It is a little paper done by a sort of special journal, linked, I think, both to IBM machines and what has been done on an experimental level in the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT, as it is usually called) and which speaks to us about the use of one of these high-level machines that are being made now, to which there was given - and certainly not for nothing - the name of Elisa; at least it is called Elisa for the use that is made of it - that I am going to tell you about... (Elisa is, as you know, the person who in a well known play - *Pygmalion* - the person who is taught to speak properly; she was a little flower seller on a busy London street and it is a matter of training her to be able to express herself in the best society, when it is noticed that she does not belong to it). It is something of this order which emerges with this little machine; in truth, what is involved is not properly speaking that a machine should be capable of giving articulated answers, simply when one speaks to it - I am not saying when one questions it - it is something which now proves to be a game and which puts in question what can happen in terms of obtaining responses from the one who is speaking to it. The thing, faith, is not absolutely articulated in a fashion which would be completely satisfying for a situation, in effect, that is so usable for us -

which gives us such an interesting reference in the discourse pursued here - it is not properly speaking stated in a fashion which would satisfy us completely - in other words which takes into account the framework into which we might insert it - nevertheless, it is very interesting because, when all is said and done, there is something suggested which may be considered as a therapeutic function of the machine and in a word, it is nothing less than the *analogue* of a sort of *transference* which can be produced in this relationship, about which the question is raised.

The thing did not dissatisfy me. I would like simply in this connection... - since moreover it is not unrelated to everything that I am leaving open concerning the fashion in which, in short, I have to manage the diffusion of what is called my teaching - I could say that what you will find in terms of the handling of a first symbolic chain (designed in its time, for me, to give me the notion that (6) psychoanalysts are required to conceive of ... the notion to which their mind should accommodate itself, to centre in a proper fashion on what Freud called memory (*ré-mémoration*), to give them a sort model that is suggestive of that), in the construction of this symbolic chain and of its own kind of memory, that is undoubtedly consistent and even insistent, which is articulated in what comes now in this book, in the second, let us say chapter or moment, namely, in the inverse position in which the *Introduction to the purloined letter* which precedes it is fixed in this book, namely, just after *The purloined letter*. I recall to those who were listening to me at that time that this construction, like all the others, was made before them and for them, step by step, and that I started very exactly: first of all, from an examination, starting from a text by Poe, about the way in which the mind works on this theme: can one win in the game of odds and evens, and that my second step was the following: to imagine a machine, precisely of this kind - and what is effectively produced today differs in nothing from what I articulated then - simply: the machine is supposed by the subject to be provided with a programme which takes into account the gains and the losses. I mean that starting from this: that the subject might question the aforesaid machine, by playing the game of odds and evens with it - starting from this single supposition, that it preserves, at least for a certain number of throws, the memory of its gains and its losses, one can construct this sequence of: +, +, -, +, -... which encompass, united in a parenthesis of a typical length and which is displaced by a notch each time, allows us to establish this trajectory that I constructed and upon which I am founding this first most elementary type of the model ... (We do not need to consider memory under the register of the physiological impression but only of the symbolic memorial)... It is starting from a hypothetical game with what was not yet perhaps in a position to function then at this level, but which all the same existed as such, as electronic machine, namely, in fact, something which can be written on paper (this is the modern definition of the machine), it is starting from there - well before, then, this got onto the agenda of the pre-occupations of engineers, who devoted themselves to these apparatuses, as you know, that are always progressing, because people expect nothing less than automatic translation - it is starting from there that 15 years ago I constructed a first model for the proper use of psychoanalysts, with the goal of producing in their *mens, mind*, this sort of necessary detachment from the idea that the functioning of the signifier is necessarily the flower of consciousness, which was at that time to introduce a step that was absolutely unprecedented.

Over to you...

(There follows the presentation of **M Jacques-Alain Miller** on Boolean logic)

Doctor Lacan: - I am not going to add any commentary. I consider that the work which has been pronounced before you as being truly able to guarantee by the perfect ease of its presentation, something which supports, grounds, corresponds to what I introduced the last time as being the absolutely necessary starting point for any logic which is properly the one the psychoanalytic terrain requires.

This commentary is not to be considered as a reduplication. It showed you something in the confrontation with the first of these sets, in the mathematical-logic sense of the term: which was given by this Boole set and the confrontation of this Boole set - in so far as it finds itself apparently much more homogeneous with classical logic - you have seen that from this set itself, we are allowed to construct this logical precedence, this necessity which radically distinguishes the status of meaning and its origin in the signifier - I find that you have had there, at once a very elegant demonstration and at the same time this constitutes a moment which was necessary for the assimilation, in a way, and the complement, the control, the configuration of what, the last time, I succeeded in bringing before you and which you will have the continuation of the next time.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 7 December 1966

You were able, the last time we met here, to hear what Jacques-Alain Miller put to you. I was not able to add many observations to it by reason of time.

I think that you were able to notice in this presentation - marked by a sure knowledge of what, properly speaking, was inaugurated, we can say, on the whole, as modern logic, by the work and the labour of Boole - (it is perhaps not a matter of indifference to let you know that Jacques-Alain Miller, who had not been present at my last lecture, let us say, who had not been able either to have it communicated to him, since I myself only got the text two days ago, found himself then, by the path and the presentation that he chose... and you were able also to sense very well, I think, that at the moment that I announced him at my last lecture, I was not too sure of the subject that he had chosen. These remarks have their interest, precisely, because of the extraordinary convergence, let us say, or again if you wish re-application of what he was able to state before you, no doubt, of course, knowing what he was about, namely, knowing what are the principles and, as I might say, the axioms around which, for the moment, my development is turning...).

It is nevertheless striking, that with the help of Boole - in whom, of course, there is absent this major articulation that **no signifier is able to signify itself** - that in starting from Boole's logic ... namely, from this turning point at which, in a way, one sees, by having wanted to formalise classical logic, that this formalisation itself allows there to be brought to it not simply major extensions, but is revealed to be the hidden essence on which this logic had been able to orient itself and to construct itself, while believing it was following something which was not really its foundation, while believing that it was following what we are going to try to (2) circumscribe today in order, in a way, to set it apart from the field in which we are going to proceed, in so far as we have announced: the logic of phantasy.

The surprising ease with which, from fields left blank in the logic of Boole, Miller rediscovered the situation, the place, where the signifier in its proper function is in a way elided, in this famous (-1), whose exclusion he admirably separated out in the logic of Boole - the fashion in which, by this very elision, he indicated the place where what I am trying to articulate here is situated, is here something which I believe, has its importance, not at all that I am complimenting him on it here, but which allows you to grasp the consistency, the straight line, in which there is inserted this logic that we are obliged to found in the name of the facts of the unconscious and which, as is to be expected, if we are what we are, namely, rationalists - what must be expected, is, of course, not at all that the previous logic should be in some way overturned, but that it should rediscover there its proper foundations.

Moreover you were able to see it being marked, in passing, that in this point which requires for us the bringing into play of a certain symbol, this something which corresponds to this (-1) which Boole does not use, or forbids himself to use, not being sure whether this (-1) is the best to use. For what is proper to a logic, to a formal logic, is that it operates, and what we have to bring out this year are new operators whose shadow, in a way, has already been profiled in the fact that, depending on the ears to which I was addressing myself, I already tried to articulate in a manageable fashion - manageable for what had to be handled, which was nothing other, on that occasion, than analytic praxis - but what, this year, we are taking to its limits, to its edges properly speaking, obliges us to give more rigorous formulations to circumscribe what we are dealing with, and which deserves in some aspects to be taken, to be undertaken, in the most general articulation which is given to us at the moment in the matter of logic, namely: what is centred on the function of sets.

I leave this subject, of what Miller brought us then the last time, less as an articulation of what I am developing before you, than as confirmation, assurance, a framework in the margin. It is not without interest to highlight for you that in designating, in Sartre, under the name of "thetic self-consciousness", the fashion in which, in a way, he occupies the place where this logical articulation resides - which is our task this year - what is involved here is indeed only what is called a substitute (*tenant-lieu*) - very properly - namely: that which, what we have to occupy ourselves with, we analysts, only in a fashion that is strictly equivalent to

the way in which we occupy ourselves with other substitutes, when we have to handle what is an effect of the unconscious.

(3) This is the reason why one can say that in no way can what I am stating about the structure be situated with respect to Sartre, since this fundamental point, around which turns the privilege that he tries to maintain of the subject, is properly this sort of *substitute* which can in no way interest me except in the register of its interpretation.

Logic, then, of the phantasy ... It is almost necessary to recall - but we can only do it very rapidly in the way that, touching a bell with the tip of the finger, one makes it vibrate for an instant - to remind you on this point of the unextinguished vacillation of what is attached to the tradition, that the term "university" will pinpoint here (if we give to this sense not at all anything whatsoever which designates or shames a geographical point, but this sense of *Universitas litterarum* or a *cursus classici*, let us say), it is not useless in passing to indicate that - whatever may be the other much more historical sense that one can give to this term of "university" - there is here some allusion to what I called the *Universe of discourse*. At least it is not vain to bring the two terms together.

Now, it is clear that in this hesitation (remember the waltz) that the professor of philosophy - in the year I think you all went through, more or less as many of you as are here - performed around logic, (namely: what is involved in it, the laws of thinking or its norms, the way it functions and that we are going to extract scientifically, will we say, or the way it ought to be conducted?) - you must admit that in so far as this debate has not yet been settled, perhaps a suspicion may arise for us that the function of the University in the sense that I articulated it earlier, is perhaps precisely to put off the decision about it.

All that I can say is that this decision, perhaps, is more involved - I am speaking about logic - in what is happening in Vietnam, for example, than what is involved in thinking, if in fact it still remains suspended in this way, in this dilemma between its *laws*... which in that case leaves us asking ourselves whether it is applied to the "world" as they say, let us say rather: to the real, in other words: whether it is not dreaming? (I am not losing my psychoanalytic bearings. I am speaking about things that interest us, us analysts, because for us analysts, to know whether the man who is thinking is dreaming is a question that has the most concrete sense. To whet your appetite, to keep you in suspense, you should know that I have indeed the intention of posing the question, this year, of what is involved in the waking state...) *Norms* of thinking, opposed to the other, here indeed is something that also interests us, and in the dimension that is not reduced by this little sand papering by which generally, the professor, when he is dealing with logic in the philosophy class, will end up by ensuring that these laws and these (4) norms end up by being presented with the same "smoothness", which allows one to pass one's finger from one to the other, in other words to handle all of that blindly.

For us, the relief has not been lost (I am saying, us analysts) of this dimension which is entitled: that of the true. In so far as, after all, it does not require, does not

imply in itself the support of thinking, and that if in questioning what it is - the true that is at stake - in connection with which there is stirred up the phantasy of a norm, undoubtedly, it clearly appears - from the origin - that this is not immanent to thinking.

If I allowed myself, to touch the ears that it was necessary to make vibrate, to write one day, erecting a figure which it was not moreover very difficult to bring to life - that of the truth, emerging from the well, as it has always been depicted - in order to make it say: "Me, the truth, I speak", it is indeed in effect to highlight this relief in which it is a matter for us of maintaining that to which, properly speaking, our experience is attached and which is absolutely impossible to exclude from the articulation of Freud: for Freud is here put, immediately, up against it - and there is no need to intervene for that: he put himself there himself.

The question of the way in which the field of interpretation is presumed, the mode in which Freud's technique offers an opportunity for it, *free association* in other words, carries us to the heart of this formal organisation from which there are outlined the first paths of a mathematical logic, which has a name which, all the same, could not possibly have failed to tickle the ears of all of you, that is called *network (réseau)* - yes, and it is specified, but it is not my function today to specify and to remind you of what is called a trellis or lattice (an English transposition of the word *treillis*). This is what is involved in what Freud, as much in his first outlines of the new psychology, as in the fashion in which, subsequently, he organises the handling of the analytic session as such, this is what he constructs in advance (*avant la lettre*), as I might say. And when the objection is put to him, at a precise point of the *Traumdeutung* (as it happens I did not bring today the copy in which I had picked out the page for you), he has to respond to the objection: "of course, with your way of proceeding, at every cross-roads you will indeed have the opportunity of finding a signified which will provide the bridge between two meanings and with this fashion of organising the bridges, you will always go from somewhere to somewhere else". (It is not for nothing that I had put the little poster taken from Aulus Gellius, as it happens, namely, from an interpretation in the (5) XVIth century of Egyptian hieroglyphs, on a journal which has now disappeared which was called "*La Psychanalyse*": the Ear and the Bridge.) This is what is involved in Freud, and every point of convergence of this *network* or *lattice*, in which he teaches us to ground the first questioning, is in effect a little bridge. This is how it functions and the objection made to him is that in this way everything will explain everything else.

In other words, what is fundamentally opposed to psychoanalytic interpretation, is not at all any kind of "scientific critique" (in quotes) - as is imagined from what is ordinarily the only piece of baggage that minds who enter the field of medicine still have from their year of philosophy, namely, that the scientific is founded on experience! Naturally, they have not opened Claude Bernard, but they still know the title. It is not a scientific objection, it is an objection which goes back to the medieval tradition, when people knew what logic was. It was much more widespread than in our time, despite the means of diffusion that we have.

Things have, in fact, got to the point that, having let slip recently in one of the interviews that I spoke to you about, that I had got my taste for commentary from an old practice of the scholastics, I asked them to take it out. God knows what people would have deduced from it! (*laughter*).

Anyway, in short, in the Middle Ages people knew that: *Ex falso sequitur quod libet*. In other words, that it is characteristic of the false to make everything true. The characteristic of the false, is that one deduces from it in the same step, on the same footing, the false and the true. It does not exclude the true. If it excluded the true, it would be too easy to recognise it! Only in order to see that, it is necessary precisely to have carried out a certain minimal number of exercises in logic, which up to now, as far as I know, do not form part of medical studies, and it is very regrettable! And it is clear that the fashion in which Freud responds, brings us immediately onto the terrain of the structure of the *network*. He does not express it, of course, in every detail, in the modern specifications that we could give it. It would be interesting moreover to know how he was able and how he was not able to profit from Brentano's teaching, which he was certainly not unaware of - we have the proof in his university *cursus*. The function of the structure of the *network*, the way in which the lines - of association, precisely - come to overlap one another, to cross-check with one another, to converge at elective points from which they depart again electively, this is what is indicated by Freud. We know enough by all his subsequent work, the unease, we would say, the veritable concern, to be more precise, that he had about this dimension which is indeed properly speaking that of the truth. Because from the point of view of reality, one (6) is at ease! Even to know that perhaps the trauma is only a phantasy. In a certain fashion, a phantasy is even more sure, as I am in the process of showing you; it is structural. But this does not leave Freud - who was just as capable of inventing this as I am, as you can imagine - this does not leave him any more at peace. Where is here, he asks, the criterion of truth? And he would not have written the *Wolfman*, if it were not on this track, on this particular requirement: is it true or not?

"Is it true?" He supports this by what is discovered in questioning the fundamental figure manifested in the repetition dream of the *Wolfman*. And "is it true?", is not reduced to knowing whether yes or no and at what age he experienced something which had been reconstructed with the help of this figure of the dream. The essential - it is enough to read Freud in order to perceive it - is to know how the subject, the *Wolfman*, had been able to verify this scene - to verify it with his whole being. It is through his symptom. Which means - for Freud does not doubt the reality of the original scene - which means: how had he been able to articulate it properly in terms of signifier? You only have to remind yourselves of the figure of the Roman five, for example, in so far as it is involved and reappears everywhere in the outspread legs of a woman, or the beating of the wings of a butterfly, to know, to comprehend that what is involved is the handling of the signifier.

The relation of the truth to the signifier, the detour through which analytic experience rejoins the most modern process of logic, consists precisely in the fact that this relation of the signifier to the truth can short-circuit all the thinking which supports it. And just as a sort of aim is outlined at the horizon of modern logic -

one which reduces logic to a correct handling of what is simply *writing* - in the same way for us, the question of verification, concerning what we have to deal with, passes along the direct line of the operation of the signifier, in so far as on it alone the question of the truth remains suspended.

It is not easy to put forward a term like that of the *true*, without making immediately resonate all the echoes in which there come to slip in the most suspect "intuitions" (in inverted commas) and without immediately producing objections, made up from the old experiences that those who engage themselves on this terrain know only too well, so that, like scalded cats, they fear cold water. But who says that because I make you say: "Me, the truth, I speak", that through this I am allowing the re-entry of the theme of *Being*, for example? Let us look twice at it, at least in order to know. Let us be content with this very particular knot that I have just made between the truth - and by this I have not indicated any person, except the one whom I made say these words: "Me, the truth, I speak". No person, divine (7) or human is involved outside her, namely: **the point of origin of the relations between the signifier and the truth.**

What relation is there between this and the point from which I started earlier? Does it mean that by bringing you onto this field of the most formal logic, I forgot the one on which there is played out, as I said earlier, the fate of logic?

It is quite clear that Mr Bertrand-Russell is more interested than M Jacques Maritain in what is happening in Vietnam. This just by itself may be an indication for us. Besides, in invoking here *Le Paysan de la Garonne* - it is his latest outfit - I am not taking as a target ... (you did not know that *Le Paysan de la Garonne* has been published? Well then, go and get it...) (*laughter*). It is the last book of J Maritain, an author who has occupied himself a lot with the scholastic authors in so far as there is developed in them the influence of the philosophy of St Thomas who, after all, has no reason not to be evoked here, in the measure that a certain way of posing the principles of being is, all the same, not without some incidence on what one makes of logic. One cannot say that this prevents the handling of logic, but it can at certain moments be an obstacle to it. In any case I wanted to specify - I apologise for this parenthesis - that if I evoke Jacques Maritain here and if then, as a consequence, implicitly, I urge you to discover, not that the reading of it is contemptible, but that it is far from being uninteresting, I would ask you all the same to consult it in this spirit of paradox which is demonstrated in it, of the maintenance in this author, having arrived at his great age (as he underlines himself), of this sort of rigour which allows there to be seen in it, there being pushed really to a caricatural impasse, in a very exact mapping out of the whole relief of the modern development of thought, the maintenance of the most unthinkable hopes about what ought to develop either in its place, or in its margin, and in order that there should be maintained what is his central attachment, namely, what he calls: "the intuition of Being". He speaks in this connection of "philosophical Eros", and in truth I do not have to repudiate - with what I put forward before you about desire - the use of such a term. But its use on this occasion - namely, in order, in the name of the philosophy of Being, to hope for the renaissance, correlatively with the development of modern science, of a philosophy of nature - is part of an Eros it seems to me that can only be situated in

the register of Italian comedy!...(*laughter*). This in no way prevents, of course, that in passing, while taking one's distance and repudiating it, there being highlighted some remarks, more than one, and in truth throughout the book some sharp, and pertinent remarks, concerning what is involved, for example, in the structure of science. That effectively, our science has nothing in common with the (8) dimension of knowledge (*connaissance*), is something which in effect is quite correct but which does not include in itself a hope, a promise of this renaissance of knowledge, in the ancient and rejected sense that is involved in our perspective.

So then, I take up again then, after this parenthesis, what it is a matter of us questioning. There is no need for us to retreat from the use of these truth tables through which the logicians introduce, for example, a certain number of fundamental functions of propositional logic.

To write that the conjunction of two propositions implies - a table, I remind you, I am not going to make all of them for you, can be seen by anyone - implies that if we put here the values of two propositions, namely, of the proposition p, the value true and the value false (namely, that it can be either true or false), and for the proposition q, the value true and the value false and that in this case, what is called conjunction, namely, that what they are, united together, will not be true unless both are true. In all the other cases, their conjunction will give a false result. Here is the type of table that is involved:

p.q	p	q
T	T	F
F	F	F

I do not have to vary it for you, because it is enough for you to open the beginning of any volume whatsoever on modern logic, in order to find how there is defined differently, for example, disjunction, or again implication, or again equivalence.

And this can be a support for us, but it is only a support and a prop for what we have to ask ourselves, namely, is it licit - what we handle as I might say, by the word, what we say, in saying that there is truth - is it licit to write what we say, in so far as *writing* it is going to be for us the foundation of our manipulation?

In effect, logic, modern logic (I have just said it and repeated it), wants to establish itself - I did not say from a convention - but from a rule of writing; which rule of (9) writing, naturally, is grounded on what? On the fact that at the time of constituting its alphabet, we have posed a certain number of rules, called axioms, about their correct manipulation and that this is, in a way, a word that we have given ourselves.

Do we have the right to inscribe the signifiers T and F, the true and the false, as something that can be handled logically? It is sure that - whatever may be, in a

way, the introductory, preliminary (*premissiel*) character of these truth tables in the tiny logical treatises which may come into your hands - it is sure that the whole effort of the development of this logic, will be such as to construct propositional logic without starting from these tables, even if in fact, after having constructed differently their rules of deduction, one has to come back to them. But for our part, what interests us, is also to know, let us say, at least what was meant by the fact that use was made of them, I am saying here, very especially in Stoic logic. Earlier I alluded to the *Ex falso sequitur quodlibet*... It is of course something that must have appeared a long time ago, but it is clear that it was never articulated with such force, anywhere better than among the Stoics.

The Stoics questioned themselves about the true and the false along this logical path. Namely, what is necessary for the true and the false to have a relation to logic in the proper sense that we put it here, namely, where the foundation of logic is not to be found elsewhere than in the articulation of language, in the signifying chain. That is why their logic is a logic of propositions and not one of classes. For there to be a logic of propositions, for that even to be able to operate, how must the propositions be linked together with respect to the true and the false? Either this logic has nothing to do with the true and the false, or if it has anything to do, the true ought to engender the true. This is what is called the relation of implication in the sense that it makes nothing else intervene but two propositional moments: the *protasis* (I am saying "protasis" in order not to say "hypothesis" which would immediately awaken in you the idea that one believes in something, it is not a matter of belief, nor of believing that it is true, it is a matter of positing: "protasis", that is all. Namely, that what is affirmed is affirmed as true). And the second proposition: *apodosis*. We define implication as something in which there can be, nothing more, a true protasis and apodosis: this can only give something that we put in parenthesis and which constitutes a true liaison.

That does not at all mean that that is all that can happen! Let us suppose the same protasis false and the apodosis true. Well then, the Stoics will tell you that this is true, because very precisely *ex falso sequitur quodlibet*. From the false there can be implied the true just as much as the false and, consequently, if it is true, there (10) is no logical objection here. Implication does not mean the cause, implication means this liaison in which there are united, in a certain fashion, as regards the truth table, the protasis and the apodosis. The only thing that cannot happen, at least this is the doctrine of someone called Philon who played here an eminent role, is that the protasis is true and the apodosis false. The true cannot imply the false. This is the most radical foundation of any possibility of handling, in a certain relation to the truth, the signifying chain as such.

We have here then the possibility of a table which, I repeat, is constructed in this fashion:

.....	p q	p	q
	T	T	T

F F T

Namely, when the proposition p being true, the proposition q is false, then the liaison of implication is connoted as false.

What does that mean? Naturally, the most radical conditions for the existence of a logic, as I told you. The problem is quite obvious. This is what we for our part have to do, when we subsequently shall have to speak about what is written there. In other words, when the stating subject (*sujet de l'énonciation*) comes into play. In order to highlight it, we have only to observe what happens when we say: "it is true that it is false". It does not budge, namely, quite simply the *false* regains some lustre, framework, which makes it become a radiating *false*. All the same, this is not nothing. To say: "it is false that it is true", has the same result, I mean that we ground the false, but, is it quite the same thing? Were it only to indicate the following that we have to note, that we will say rather: "it is false that it might be true". The use of the subjunctive indicates to us here that something is happening.

To say: "it is true that it is true", can also be said and leaves us an assured truth, even though it is tautological, but to say: "it is false that it is false", no doubt does not assure the same order of truth.

To say, "it is not false", does not mean to say for all that: "it is true".

We see again then, with the dimension of stating, there being put in suspense something that was only asking to function, in a quite automatic fashion at the level of writing.

(11) This is why it is altogether striking to note what is the slippery aspect of this point where the drama, as I might say, arises very exactly from this duplicity of the subject, and it is the one that, I must say, I will not hesitate to illustrate with a little story, to which I already alluded on many occasions because it did not fail to have an impact (let us say: the career of my little story). This kind of complaint, indeed exigency, which one day emerged precisely from the throat of someone who was very seduced by what I was contributing in terms of the first articulations of my teaching, a touching ejaculation launched towards the heavens: "Why" said this personage, "why does he not say the true about the true?" This sort of urgency, indeed unease, would already find its answer sufficiently, I think, on this single condition of going again to the written signifier.

The true about the true! The T about the T. The signifier cannot signify itself, except precisely when it is not itself that it signifies, namely, when it uses metaphor. And there is nothing to prevent the metaphor which substitutes a different signifier for this T of the truth, from making the truth re-emerge at this moment, with the ordinary effect of metaphor, namely: the creation of a false signified.

This even happens all the time. And in connection with discourse, however rigorous I am attempting to make it today, this may still, in many corners of what

one calls more or less appropriately your brain, generate these sorts of confusions, linked precisely to the production of the signified in metaphor. Certainly, it is not astonishing that it comes to my ears that from the same source, then, from which there was produced this nostalgic invocation, a recent statement should have taken as aim, concerning what Freud taught, what this mouth articulated so elegantly as a “conceptual watering down”. There is here, in effect, a certain sort of admission in which precisely there is designated the following: the close relation that the partial object has with the structure of the subject. The ideal or even, simply, the fact of admitting that it is possible in any way to comment on a text of Freud by watering down his concepts invincibly evokes what can in no way satisfy the function of the partial object: the partial object ought to be able to be settled. In no way can the mustard pot, the mustard pot that I defined at one time as being necessarily empty (empty of mustard naturally) be filled in a satisfying fashion with what this watering down sufficiently evokes, namely, soft shit.

It is extremely essential to see the consistency, precisely, between these primordial objects and any correct handling of a dialectic that is described as subjective.

To take up again, then, the first steps that we have taken as regards implication, it is necessary to see there arising here - in this joint between the truth and this (12) handling of writing - to see what is involved, namely: **what can be written and what cannot be.**

What is meant by this “cannot be” whose definition, at the limit, remains entirely arbitrary? The only limit posed, in modern logic to the functioning of an alphabet, in a certain system, the only limit being that of the initial, axiomatic, given word. What is meant by this “cannot be?” It has its sense in the initial interdictory word that is given, but what can be written about it? The problem of negation is to be posed at the level of writing, in so far as it regulates it as logical functioning.

Here, immediately, of course, there appears to us the necessity which gave rise at first to this use of negation in these intuitive images marked by the first outline of what people did not even know then was an edge: the images in a way of a limit, the one in which the first logic, the one introduced by Aristotle, predicative logic, marks the field in which a class is characterised by a given predicate and the *outside this field* as designated by *not joined to the predicate*.

Naturally, it is not perceived, it is not articulated in Aristotle, that this involved the unity of the Universe of discourse. To say, as I wrote somewhere in connection with the unconscious, to show its absurdity: “there is black, and then ... everything that is not so”; that this has a sense, is the foundation of the logic of classes or of the predicate. It is very precisely because of what this already involves as suspect, if not of blind alley, that people tried to establish something else.

It is not today, but certainly in the sessions that are going to follow, that I am going to try to distinguish for you, in a complete fashion, what are the logical levels, properly speaking: what it is necessary - what it is necessary from writing itself - to distinguish, concerning negation. It is by means of little letters as clear and also once fixed on this blackboard, that I will show you that there are four different

levels of negation, and that classical negation - the one that invoked and appears to be founded uniquely on the principal of non-contradiction - and that classical negation is only one of them.

This technical distinction, I mean of what can be strictly formulated in formal logic, will undoubtedly be altogether essential to allow us to put in question what Freud says, (and what of course since he said it has been repeated without there ever being the smallest beginning of an examination!): that the unconscious does not know contradiction.

It is really sad that certain remarks should be launched in this form of illuminating arrow - for it really puts us on the track of the most radical developments - should (13) have remained in this suspended state, to the point that even a lady, qualified by this title that she had in effect, officially, of princess, was able to repeat it believing that she was saying something! That is precisely the danger of logic. That logic is only supported where one can handle it in the use of writing, but that properly speaking, no one can be assured that someone who speaks of it is even saying something. This indeed is what makes people suspicious of it! It is also the reason why it is so necessary for us to have recourse to the apparatus of writing. Nevertheless, our danger, our risk, is that we ought to take notice of the mode in which there arises, elsewhere than in the written articulation, this negation. Where does it come, for example? Where are we going to be able to grasp it, where are we going to be forced to write it, simply with the systems that I already produced here before you.

Let us take this implication: the proposition p implies the proposition q . Let us try to see what is involved in this starting from q , namely, what we are able to articulate about the proposition p if we put it after the proposition q . Well then, we ought to write negation before, or to one side, or above, somewhere linked to q .

p implies q indicates that *if not q not p* . I repeat: it is an example, and one of the most tangible ones, of the necessity of the emergence in writing of something that one would be quite wrong to believe is the same as the one that was functioning earlier, as a complementary, for example, namely, which of itself posited the Universe of discourse as One. The two things are so dissimilar that it is enough to decree it to disarticulate one from the other, to make one and the other function distinctly.

Among the varieties of this negation, which is proposed for us as having to be questioned before what can be written, namely: from the point where there is eliminated the duplicity between the stating subject and the subject of the statement - if you wish from the point at which this duplicity is maintained. We will first have the function of negation in so far as it rejects from any order of discourse, in so far as the discourse articulates it, what it is speaking about. Or, I will point it out to you very specifically, what Freud advances and what is misunderstood, when he articulates the first step of experience, in so far as it is structured by the pleasure principle: as being ordered, he says, by an *ego* and an *non-ego*. People are so little logicians that they do not see that at this moment it can only be question - this in a way that is all the more culpable because in the text of Freud the two stages are

distinguished: the *ego* and the *non-ego* in so far as they are defined in the *Lust-Unlust* opposition - and so little to be considered as being of the order of this complementarity imposed by the universe of discourse, that Freud distinguished it by putting in the first line: *Ichsaussenwelt*, which is not at all of the same register.

(14) If *ego* and *non-ego* meant at that moment: grasp of the world in a Universe of discourse - which is properly speaking what is evoked by considering that primary narcissism can intervene in the analytic session - this would mean that the infantile subject, at the point at which Freud already designates it in the first functioning of the pleasure principle, is capable to doing logic. While what is at stake is properly the identification of the ego in what pleases it, in the *Lust*. Which means that the ego of the subject is alienated here in an imaginary fashion. Which means that it is precisely *outside* that what pleases is isolated as *ego*. This first *no* which is foundational as regards the narcissistic structure, in so far as in the rest of Freud it will develop into nothing less than this sort of negation of love, in connection with which - when one finds it as has happened in my discourse - it will not be said that I say the truth about the true, but that I say the truth about what Freud said.

That all love is founded on this primary narcissism is one of the terms from which Freud starts, soliciting us to know what is involved in this supposedly universal function in so far as it has reached out to this famous "intuition" - denounced earlier - of Being.

Here is this negation that we will call the mis- (*me-*) of miscognition (*meconnaissance*) which already poses us its question and which is distinguished from the complement, in so far as in the Universe of discourse it designates - and can it designate? - the counterpart, what we will call if you wish, here the *counter*, in order to say no more and to call it the *contrary*, which is perfectly distinct from it, and is in Freud himself.

Subsequently, it is this which will enter further and in a more manageable way than it is in logical writing - what I made an allusion to earlier in implication - in so far as to regulate it in the appearance of these negations that are completely opaque in their reversal (*retournement*), one can call it in implication itself: the *not without* (*pas sans*) in implication as it is defined by the Stoic tradition, as it cannot be avoided whatever may be its paradoxes. For undoubtedly if there is some paradox in the fact that it is constituted in such a way that any propositions whatsoever, "p" and "q" constitute an implication if you join them together and that it is clear that to say: "If Madame such-and-such has straw-coloured hair, then quadrilateral triangles (*laughter*), equilateral triangles have such and such a proportion to their height". No doubt there is some paradox in this use, but what the position of reversal implies, namely, that the condition becomes necessary to go back from the second proposition to the first, it is from the aspect of the *not without* (this does not happen without). Madame such-and-such may have straw coloured hair, that does not have a necessary liaison for us with the following: that the equilateral triangle should have a particular property. Nevertheless, it remains true that the fact that (15) she has or that she does not have straw coloured hair does *not happen without* the thing which, in any case, is true.

Around the suspension of this *not without* there is profiled at once the place and the mode of emergence of what is called the *cause*. If we can give a sense, a substance to this phantastical being which people have never succeeded in exorcising from this joint, despite the fact that obviously everything that science develops always tends to eliminate it and does not reach its perfection except where there is no longer any need to speak about it, it is the function of this *not without* and the place that it occupies that will allow us to flush it out.

And to end on what will constitute, in short, the whole object and the question of our next meeting, what is meant by the term *no (non)*? Can we even make it emerge as a form of complementary, neither as a form of the *me-* of *meconnaissance*, nor in terms of this *pas sans*, when it comes to be applied to the most radical terms around which I always made turn for you the question of the fact of the unconscious. Namely, might the idea even come to us that when we speak about “*non-being*”, it is a matter of this something which is supposed to be in a way on the periphery of the bubble of being? Is *non-being* then all the space outside? Is it even possible to suggest that this is what we mean when we speak, very confusedly in truth, about this *non-being* that I would prefer, on this occasion, to entitle by what is at stake and that the unconscious puts in question, namely: *the place where I am not*.

As regards *not thinking*, which will lead it to be said that here is something that cannot in any way be grasped, in that around which all the logic of the predicates turns, namely: this famous distinction - which is not one - between *extension* and *comprehension*! As if *comprehension* constituted the slightest antinomy to the register of *extension*, when it is clear that everything that has been taken as a step in logic in the sense of *comprehension*, was always and uniquely when one took things uniquely from the angle of *extension*.

Is this a reason for negation, here, to be able even to continue to be put to use without a primordial questioning about what is involved, if it ought to remain linked to extension? Because there is not only for us this *not to be*, since moreover the fate of *being* which is important for us as regards the subject, is linked to thinking. So then what is meant by *not thinking*? I mean: what does it mean at the point that we can write it in our logic?

This is the question - that of “I am not” (*je ne suis pas*) and of the “I do not think” (*je me pense pas*) – on which I will bring our next conversation to bear.

I think I proved to you the last time that I can tolerate a lot of little trials: the bulb, like that, going on and off... (*laughter*). In previous times, in these bogey-man stories, the explanation was given how people were lead, in certain places, to their auto-critique. It was used for that. In any case, it was less disagreeable for me than for you, I must say - because I had it over me and you had it in your eyes.

You were able to see that these little discomforts are not capable of deviating me from what I have to say. That is why I hope you will not try to refer to any personal sensitivity the fact that today we will not be celebrating, despite the fact that it is the season for it. I am warning you right away; I will not give today the seminar that I had prepared for you. I apologise to those who perhaps might have delayed their holiday plans in some way to benefit from it. At the very least no one will have gone out of his way for absolutely nothing, since I hope you all have the little copy with which I pay homage to you as an end of year gift. I have not gone so far as to put in a dedication for each of you, since there are too many names that I do not know, but of course it can always be done!

We have arrived at the moment at which I am going to formulate formulae about the unconscious that I consider as decisive, logical formulae that you saw appearing written on the blackboard the last time, in the form of this "either I do not think or I am not" (*ou je ne pense pas ou ne suis pas*), with this reservation: that this *or* is neither a *vel* (the *or* of union: the one, the other, or both), nor an *aut* (at least one, but no more: you have to choose). It is neither one nor the other.

And this will be the occasion for me to introduce, I hope, in a fashion which will be acceptable in logical calculation, a different function: the one which, in these truth tables, would be characterised by this operation which should be called by a different (2) name, even though there is one which I have already used, but since it has other applications, may be ambiguous. It doesn't matter! I will make the link with it: it is a matter of nothing other, I point out to you - I am not here to play at mysteries - than what I at one time indicated here under the term of *alienation*, but what matter! It is up to you to make the choice. Meanwhile, let us call this operation *omega* and, in the truth table, let us characterise it by the following: if the two propositions on which it operates are true, the result of the operation is false.

You can consult the truth tables that you have within hand's reach, and you will see that none of those in use up to now from conjunction, to disjunction, to implication, fulfil this condition.

When I say that the conjunction of the true and the true gives, by this operation, the false, I mean that every other conjunction here is true: that of the false and the false, of the false and the true, of the true and the false.

The relation between this with what is involved in the nature of the unconscious, is what I hope to articulate before you on the 11th January, for which in any case I give you a *rendezvous*. You can well imagine that if I am not doing it today - on this point, I think, you can trust me - it is because my formulation is not ready, nor what I could limit it to today. Nevertheless, if, effectively, it is from a certain fear of putting it before you in all its rigour, on a day where I find myself embarrassed, because of the

fact that I spent these last hours questioning myself about something which is nothing less than the appropriateness or not of continuing this: the fact that we are all together for the moment and what is called my seminar.

If I ask myself this question, it is because it is worth posing it: this little volume [*Language and the unconscious*] that I have given you and which it seemed to me ought to be brought to your attention just before I bring forward a logical formula which allows in a way there to be secured in a firm and certain way what is involved in the reaction of the subject caught up in this reality of the unconscious, it is not useless for this volume to bear witness to you of what is involved in the difficulties of this abode, for those whose praxis and function it is to be there. Perhaps it is for want of measuring the relation between this “*being there*” to a certain necessary “*not being there*”. This volume will bear witness to you of a meeting that took place around this theme of the unconscious. There participated in it in an outstanding role two of my pupils, amongst those who were most precious to me, and still others ... everything is in it, even the Marxists of the CNRS.

You will see on the first page in very small characters, a very singular manifestation. (3) Any analyst here will recognise what is called technically, what Freud alluded to at one point of the five great case histories (I will leave it up to you - this will allow you to go through them a little - to find this point) what Freud and the police, with one voice call “the gift” or “the visiting card”. If one day it happens that your apartment is visited in your absence you will be able to note perhaps that the trace that the visitor may have left there is a little shit. We are here on the plane of the little *o*-object. It is not surprising that such things happen in the relations with subjects that you are tracking by your discourse on the paths of the unconscious.

In truth, there are strong and major excuses for the lack that psychoanalysts of today demonstrate in keeping themselves to the theoretical heights required by their praxis. For them, the function of resistances is something regarding which you will be able to see that the formulae that I wish to be as sure of myself as possible, the day when I try to give them to you in their essential and in their true agency...you will see the necessity which is attached to resistance and that it cannot in any way be limited to the non-psychoanalysed. Moreover, from the schema that I will try to give you of the relation, not between the *un-thought* and *non-being* (do not believe that I am on the slopes of mysticism!) but between the *I am not* and the *I do not think* which will allow there to be marked for the first time, I believe, and in a tangible fashion not simply the difference, the non-overlapping of what is called resistance and of what is called defence, but, even, to mark in an absolutely essential fashion, even though it has not been published up to now, what is involved in defence, which is properly what circumscribes and what preserves exactly the *I am not*. It is for want of knowing it that everything is displaced, maladjusted in the perspective in which everyone phantasises what is involved in the reality of the unconscious. This something which we lack and which constitutes the risky part of what we are confronted with not by some contingency, namely: this new conjunction between *being* and *knowledge*.

This distinct approach of the term truth, makes of Freud’s discovery something which can in no way be reduced and criticised by means of a reduction to any ideology whatsoever.

If I am given the time, I will take here ... and if I am announcing it to you it is not for the vanity of waving before you something tawdry designed to allure you in the circumstances, but rather to indicate why you will lose nothing in first re-opening Descartes, since moreover, this is the pivot around which I make revolve this necessary return to the origins of the subject, thanks to which we can take it up, take it up again in terms of subject. Why? Because precisely, it is in terms of subject that Freud articulates his aphorism, his essential aphorism around which I taught to turn not simply myself, but those who listen to me, the *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*. The "Ich" in this formula, and the date when it was articulated - in the *New introductory lectures*, as you know - can in no way be taken for the function "das Ich" as it is articulated in the second topography, as I translated it: "Where it was, there must I" - I added *as subject* but it is a pleonasm: the German "Ich" here is the subject - "become".

Just as I revived before you the sense of the *cogito* by putting around the "I am" the quotation marks which illuminate it, I would go into Freud's aphorism, where we can - a formula more worthy of the tablet than the one he dreamt of: here was discovered the secret of dreams - the "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden", if you are carving it, do not forget to drop the comma: it is "there where it was" that the "Ich" must come. Which means - at the place where Freud places this formula, the final one in one of his articles - which means that what is at stake in this indication, is not the hope that all of a sudden, in all human beings, as it is expressed in a verminous language: "the ego must dislodge the id"; but this means that Freud indicates here nothing less than this revolution of thought that his work requires.

Now, it is clear that this is a challenge, and is a dangerous one for whoever advances, as is the case for me, in order to sustain it in his place. "*Odiosum mundo me fecit logica*" - a certain Abelard, as perhaps some of you still remember, wrote one day these words - "logic made me hateful to the world" ... and it is onto this terrain that I intend to carry some decisive terms, which no longer allow there to be confused what is at stake when what is at stake is the unconscious. We shall see whether or not someone may say that, here, I am slipping outside, or am trying to turn away from it.

To grasp what is involved in the unconscious, I want to mark, so that you can in a way prepare your minds for it by some exercises, that what is prohibited for us in it, is exactly this sort of movement of thought which is properly that of the *cogito*, which just as much as analysis requires the Other (with a capital O). Which in no way requires the presence of some imbecile or other.

When Descartes publishes his *cogito*, which he articulates in this movement of the *Discourse on method*, that he develops in writing, he is addressing himself to someone. He leads him along paths of an always more urgent articulation. And then, suddenly, something happens, which consists in taking off from this path that has been traced out, in order to make emerge from it this other thing which is the "I am".

There is here this sort of movement that I will try to qualify for you in a more precise way, which is one that you find only sometimes in the course of history, and I could (5) designate the same one for you in this VIIIth book of Euclid, in the proof that we

are still enslaved to, for we have not found any others and it is of the same order, very exactly to prove (whatever may be the formula that you might give, if it were found, give to the genesis of prime numbers) that it would be necessary - no one has yet found this formula, but if it were to be found! - that it is necessarily deduced that there are others that this formula cannot name. It is this sort of knot in which there is marked the essential point of what is involved in terms of a certain relation which is that of the subject to thought.

If I touched last year on Pascal's wager, it was with the same intention. If you refer to what appears in modern mathematics, as what is called "diagonal process" (*l'apprehension diagonale*), in other words what allows Cantor to establish a difference between infinities, you have still the same movement, and more simply, if you do not mind, between now and the next time, procuring in this form or in another: *Fides quaerens intellectum* of St. Anselm, in chapter II (so that I will not be obliged, for my part, to read it to you), you will read, even if you have to go to some trouble to procure this little book (this is the translation by Koyre, published by Vrin; I do not know if any of them are left, but undoubtedly they will not be left!) - you will read in chapter II, in order to go over again as an exercise, what is involved in what university imbecility has discredited under the name of the ontological argument. They thought that St. Anselm did not know that it is not because one can think the most perfect that it exists. You will see, in this chapter that he knew it very well, but that the argument has a completely different import, the import of this progress that I am trying to designate for you, which consists in leading the adversary along a path such that it is from its sudden detachment that there arises a dimension unnoticed up to then.

Such is the impossible movement that constitutes the horror of the relation to the dimension of the unconscious; everything is allowed to the unconscious except to articulate: ... "therefore I am". This is what requires different approaches, and properly the logical approaches that I am trying to trace out before you, of what rejects to its nothingness and its futility everything that has been articulated in the woolly ideas of a psychologist about self-analysis.

But if undoubtedly the whole difficulty that I may have in re-animating, in a field whose function is affirmed and is crystallised, precisely the difficulties - let us call them noetics if that suits you - of the theoretical approach to the unconscious, a too comprehensible point, which does not exclude my joining up with this *milieu* on the plane of technique and of precise questionings, precisely, for example, to be able to require that there should be opened up there the terms in which the training analysis is justified.

(6) For me, the question, can be posed about what are the consequences of a discourse, that the circumstances - and also my plan to use the detours imposed on me by these circumstances - to open this discourse on Freud to a larger public.

The honourable man whose signature is at the bottom of what I called "the gift", writes: "Is it becoming, under the pretext of liberty, to tolerate that the forum should be transformed into a circus?" Here, the gift is precious to me: the truth emerges, even from incontinence.

I am the one who is supposed precisely, in this volume, to be substituting the circus for the forum, may God bless me if I really succeeded! Sure! In this little article on the unconscious, I really had, in effect, in composing it, the feeling that I was exercising myself at something which was at once rigorous and breaking through the limits, if not those of the roof of the circus tent at least those of acrobatics, and why not clown if you wish, in order to substitute something which has not, in effect, any relation to what I was able to say in this forum of Bonneval, which was like all forums, a noisy fair! (*Dr Lacan throws the pamphlet on the table!*)

The precision of a circus exercise is all the less within the capacity of everyone that what I am in the process of demonstrating to you, when I speak to you about the *cogito*, is something which, in effect, is in the style of a circus, except that the circuit does not close, that there is somewhere this little projection (*ressaut*) which takes one from this "*I think*" to this "*I am*", which also allowed there to be taken, at such and such a date, something so rare, an essential step in the revolutions of the subject.

The one that I took the last time is that of Cantor. You should know that he, for his part, was spat on to such an extent (*Dr Lacan again throws the pamphlet on the table*) that he finished his life in an asylum. Don't worry, it won't happen to me! (*laughter*) I am a little bit less sensitive than he was to expressions by colleagues and others. But the question that I am asking myself is whether now that I am articulating - in a dimension which is conveyed by the rather stupefying sale of these *Ecrits* - that I am articulating, then, this discourse, whether or not I am going to have to occupy myself this the noisy fair. Because, of course, one cannot count on those whose trade it is to promote themselves, by grabbing in passing any little thing whatsoever that they find in Lacan's discourse, or in the discourse of someone else, to produce a paper in which "he" shows his originality.

Between the Bonneval congress and the time I came here, I lived in the middle of a fair. A fair in which I was the beast: I was the one who was on sale in the marketplace. This does not upset me. First of all, because these operations did not concern me - I mean in my discourse - and also because this did not prevent the same people who were carrying out this service coming to my seminar and writing down everything that I was saying - I mean to write it carefully, and all the more carefully (7) because they knew very well that, given their own plans, they did not have much time. So then, it is not just any fair that is in question.

What is now going to come into the fair, is all sorts of other things, which are going to consist - as has already happened and already before the appearance of my *Ecrits* - which are going to consist in making off with any one of my formulae in order to make it serve God knows what! Like trying to demonstrate to me that I do not know how to read Freud, after the thirty years that I have spent doing nothing but that!

So then, what response should I give? Or should I have given? What a mess! Perhaps I have more useful things to do. Specifically, to occupy myself with the point at which things may bear fruit, namely, among those who follow me in the praxis.

In any case, as you see, this question does not leave me indifferent. It is indeed because it does not leave me indifferent that I found myself posing it with the greatest

acuity. I must say that there is only one thing which prevents me from settling it in the way that you see being outlined here: it is not your quality, ladies and gentlemen, even though I am far from not feeling honoured, to have among my listeners, today or other days, some of the people with the best formation, and those for whom it is not vain for me to offer myself to their judgement. Nevertheless, would this by itself be enough to justify what, moreover, can be transmitted by way of writing? Despite everything, at the level of writing, it happens that what is worth something remains afloat, even though, of course, in a university like the French university where for a hundred years people are Kantian, those responsible - as I already pointed out to you in one of my notes - have not, in the course of the hundred years in which they have herded and pushed before them crowds of students, found a way to produce a complete edition of Kant. What makes me hesitate, what ensures that perhaps (perhaps: if I like the idea) I will continue this discourse, is not therefore your quality but your number. For after all, that is what strikes me. That is why, this year, I abandoned this closing of the seminar which had, in previous years, its little experimental period and the opportunity to show its inefficacy. It is because of this number, of this something unbelievable which makes people, a good share of those who are here, people - whom I salute because, moreover, they are there to prove to me that there is something in what I am saying, something which resonates, which resonates sufficiently for them to come to listen to me, rather than the discourse of one or other of their professors about things that interest them, because that forms part of their programme - should come to listen to me, who does not form part of it; this gives me all the same the sign that through what I am saying, which can certainly not pass as demagogy, there must be something in which they found themselves interested.

(8) It is through this that undoubtedly I can justify myself, if this happens, in pursuing this public discourse. This discourse, undoubtedly, which just as throughout the fifteen years that it had already lasted, is a discourse in which undoubtedly everything is not decided in advance, but which I constructed and of which entire parts still remain scattered in memories, which, faith, will do what they want with it; there are nevertheless parts which deserve more and better.

I will make reference to the witticism in what I will tell you about the formula of what I called earlier "the omega operation". For three months, in front of people who could not believe their ears, who asked themselves whether I was joking, I spoke about the witticism. I would ask you, since you are going to be on holidays to procure, if by chance it is possible (because you never know, the works of Freud are also unfindable), to procure for yourself the *Jokes* book, and to soak yourself in it. If I also have to take holidays, for my part, it is the first thing - from my past seminars - that I would try to give an equivalent of in writing.

On this, there you are now provided for this intermediary time, with what I wanted to say: it is not always a festival. In any case not for me.

The last time that I alluded to festivals, it was in a little writing, which was really not a writing at all, because I wanted it remain in the state of a discourse that I gave before a rather large medical audience. The reception of this discourse was one of the experiences of my life. It was not moreover an experience that surprised me. If I no longer do it, it is because I know its results in advance. I must say that I was not able

to resist adding to it a modification which really has nothing to do with the discourse; this allusion to the festival, to the festival of the Symposium ... if it was in allusion. The public will recognise better in the bulletin of my little Ecole no doubt than in that of the College de Medecine where moreover it will be published, the allusion to the festival of the Symposium. What is at stake is the one where there come, one begging, one astray, two characters, two allegorical characters whom you know and who are called Poros and Penia: the Poros of psychoanalysis and the university Penia. I am in the process of questioning myself about how far I can let the obscenity go. Whatever may be at stake, it is worth looking twice at the matter, I mean: even if what is at stake is what someone called, rather comically, philosophical Eros.

Happy Christmas!

Seminar 8: Wednesday 18 January 1967

I will come back today, to articulate it once again and with more insistence, to the operation that I introduced the last time under the term of alienation.

Alienation is the pivotal point in what I am presenting to you and, first of all, this term transforms the use that has been made of it up to now. It is the pivotal point thanks to which there can and ought be maintained for us the value of what one can call from the angle of the subject; the **Freudian foundation**, the decisive step that the thinking of Freud and, still more, the praxis which is maintained through his patronage under the name of psychoanalysis, have, once and for all, brought to our attention as decisive.

We shall speak about a thinking that is not *I*: such is, from a first vague approach, the way in which the unconscious is presented. The formula is certainly insufficient, the value it has is that it puts at the pivot of what Freud produces for us as decisive, this term of *I*. Naturally, this does not allow us for all that to content ourselves with a formula that is so vague, even though poetic (which, moreover, is never extracted from its poetic context except always with a little misuse) - everything has not been said in putting forward that *I am another*. This is why it is necessary to give a more precise logical articulation to it.

As you know, the function of the Other (as I write it with this big O placed in the top left corner of our board today) is its the determining function.

It is not simply impossible correctly to articulate the logic of thinking as the Freudian experience has established it, it is also impossible to comprehend anything whatsoever in what was represented in philosophical tradition - as it came to us, up to Freud - it is impossible to situate correctly what was represented by this step of putting at the centre of reflection, the function of the subject as such - if we do not bring into play

this function of the Other, as I define it when I mark it with this capital O - if we do not remember that I called the Other, marked in this way, what takes on the function of being the *locus of the word*.

(2) What does that mean? We can never come back to it often enough, even though I think I have hammered it out a little.

Freud - when he speaks to us about this thinking which is not *I*, at the level for example what he calls "*dream thoughts*", the *Traumgedanken* - seems to tell us that this thinking remains singularly independent of any logic. He underlines at first: in fact their system is not embarrassed by contradiction. More than one feature again is articulated: those who say, at a first approach, that negation as such cannot be represented there and that, moreover, causal articulation, subordination, conditioning, seem to flee what, in these thoughts, is apparently linked together and cannot be rediscovered in its thread except by the ways of the most free association. There is something that I am only recalling because, for many people, this is still the received idea about what is at stake in the order of the unconscious. But in fact, to speak about the disconnected linking that is supposed to be presented by thoughts that we locate at the level of the unconscious, which are indeed those of a subject or ought to be such, to say that these thoughts do not follow the laws of logic is only a first approach, which supposes something which is rather an antinomy with a preconceived real or rather a preconception of what ought to be the relations of all thinking with the real.

The real, we think - this is the correct and the proper order of any efficacy of thinking - ought to be imposed on it. In truth, this is too much under the sway of the presupposition of a pedagogical logic which is based on a schema of adaptation, not to justify at once Freud - speaking to people not otherwise formed who may be the people of his ordinary audience - making a reference to it, but that also, for any reflection which takes into account what is different in what is involved in the relation of any subject whatsoever to the real - because of the fact that it, as subject, is only grounded, is only established in so far as, in the real, there already are, and being exercised as such, the powers of language - obliges us to take our questioning further.

The path that Freud makes us take certainly remains no less astonishing - in truth only takes on the value which grounds the appropriate astonishment we experience on hearing it - from the fact that we articulate more precisely what he renews about the relations between *thinking and being*. Undoubtedly a theme that has been brought onto the agenda by the discourse of one or other contemporary philosophers, Heidegger in the first place, but undoubtedly in the noise created around what he articulates, it would be indeed be the most naïve form to translate what he calls - as from some reminder or other which ought, at the turning point at which we are at, come from Being itself to thinking for it to be renewed by it, for it to break with what, because of the thread that it has followed for three thousand years, has lead it to some *impasse* or other where it can no longer grasp itself in its essence, and at which one (3) could ask oneself as Heidegger does: "*Was heisst Denken*"? "*What does thinking mean*"? - to expect the renewal of the sense of this word *think* only from some trans-metaphysical accident or other, which would amount to a complete overturning of everything that thinking has traced out. Undoubtedly this is not the sense of Heidegger's text and, for those who dwell on it, one could evoke the humouristic and

derisory metaphor which is that of the girl who does not know how to give herself other than by spread-eagling herself on the bed, limbs all over the place, waiting for the initiative to come from the person she thinks she is offering herself to - it is not so rare an adventure in a time of mediocre civilisation and everyone knows that the person who finds himself thus confronted is not for all that especially stimulated to take action! It would be well for thinking not to have an image of the same order, but to be willing to recall that it is not always without a little bit of trouble that true unions come about.

It is indeed something that has a contribution to make to this problem of *being*, that the path traced out by Freud brings us. But not otherwise - I am coming back to it - than by gauging the connection, the consequences of what results for thinking from the decisive step, from this step which has been taken, which is the one that we have called, by a sort of convention which is historically founded, the *Cartesian step*; namely, the one which limits the establishment of being as such to that of the *I am* implied by the pure functioning of the subject of the *I think* as such, in so far as it gives the appearance - for it is only an appearance - of being transparent to itself, of being what we could call a *suis-pensee* (*an am-thinking*). Allow me, with the neologism, to translate or to support in a caricatural way what is usually called "self consciousness", a term which resonates badly and insufficiently as compared to the use that the German composition allows of: *Selbstbewusstsein*. But in fact, at the level of Descartes and of the *cogito*, what is at stake is properly a *suis-pensee*, this *I think*, which is only situated at the moment at which it is no longer supported except by articulating: "I think".

It is from what follows as a consequence of this, in so far as it is a decisive step forward, that it is a matter - I mean that it is in a thinking determined by this first step that Freud's discovery is inscribed.

I spoke about the Other ... it is clear that at the level of the Cartesian *cogito*, there is a remitting to the charge of the Other of the consequences of this step. If the *cogito ergo sum* does not imply what Descartes wrote quite literally in his *Regulae* - where there can be so clearly read the conditions which determined it as thinking - if the *cogito* is not completed by a: *sum, ergo Deus est* (which undoubtedly makes things much easier), it is not tenable. And nevertheless, if it is not tenable as an articulation - I mean a philosophical one - it nevertheless remains that the benefit has been won; that the procedure which reduces to this narrow margin of the thinking being, in so far as he thinks he is able to ground himself as *I am*, simply on this thinking, it remains (4) that something has been won whose consequences can be read very quickly moreover, in a series of contradictions. For this is indeed the place to mark, for example, that the supposed foundation of simple intuition, which would see there being radically distinguished the *extended thing* from the *thinking thing*, (the first being founded on the exteriority one from another of its parts, from the foundation of *partes extra partes*, as characteristic of extension) is, in a very short space of time, annihilated by the Newtonian discovery, in which I do not think there is sufficiently underlined that the characteristic that it gives to extension, is precisely that in each one of its points, as I might say, no mass is unaware of what is happening at that very instant in all the other points. An obvious paradox certainly and one which gave to contemporaries, and very specially to Cartesians, a lot of difficulty in admitting - a

reticence which has not dried up and in which there is demonstrated something which, for us is certainly completed by the fact that the *thinking thing* imposes itself on us, precisely, from Freudian experience, as being - for its part - no longer this thing which is always marked with an indefectible unification, but, quite the contrary, as marked, by being characterised by being fragmented, indeed fragmenting - carrying in itself the same mark which is developed and in a way is demonstrated in the whole development of modern logic; namely, that what we call the machine, in its essential functioning, is what is closest to a combinatorial of notations and that this combinatorial of notations is for us the most precious, the most indicative fruit of the development of thinking.

Freud, here, makes his contribution by demonstrating what results from the **effective** functioning of this aspect of thinking. I mean: from its relation not at all to the subject of mathematical proof, whose essence we are going to recall right away, but to the subject that Kant would call the *pathological subject*, namely, to the subject in so far as it may suffer from this sort of thinking. The subject suffers from thinking, in so far, says Freud, as he *represses* it. The fragmented and fragmenting character of this repressed thinking is what our experience teaches us every day, in psychoanalysis.

This is why it is a crude and dishonest mythology to present, as the foundation of our experience, some nostalgia or other for a primitive unity, for a pure and simple pulsation of satisfaction, in a relationship to the Other, which is here the only one who counts, and who is imaged, who is represented as the Other of a feeding relationship. The following step, still more scandalous - as I might say - than the first, becoming necessarily what happens, what is articulated in modern psychoanalytic theory throughout its length and breath: the confusion between this feeding Other and the sexual Other.

There is really no salvation - as I might say - for the thinking, any possible preservation of the truth introduced by Freud (but also indeed technical honesty), that cannot, that ought not to be grounded on the setting aside of this crude lure, of this scandalous abuse that it represents: by a sort of contrary pedagogy; a deliberate use of a capture, by a sort of illusion especially untenable for anyone who throws an honest (5) look at what psychoanalytic experience is.

To re-establish to Other in the only status which is valid, which for it is that of the locus of the word, is the necessary starting point from which everything in our analytic experience can take again its correct place.

To define the Other as the locus of the word, is to say that it is nothing other than the locus where an assertion is posited as veracious. It means, at the same time, that it has **no other kind of existence**. But, since to say it, is still to appeal to it in order to situate this truth, it is to make it re-emerge every time that I speak. And that is why I cannot *say* this expression: "*that it has no kind of existence*", but I can *write* it. And that is why I write S signifier of capital O barred as constituting one of the nodal points of this network around which there is articulated the whole dialectic of desire, in so far as it is hollowed out from the interval between statement and stating.

There is no insufficiency, no reduction to some careless gesture or other, in the fact of affirming that the writing: S (O) plays here, for our thinking, an essential pivotal role. For there is no other foundation to what is called mathematical truth, if not that the recourse to the Other, in so far as those to whom I am speaking are asked to refer to it (I mean: *qua* big Other) in order to see inscribed there the signs of our initial conventions as regards what is involved in what I manipulate in mathematics, which is very exactly what Mr Bertrand Russell, an expert in the matter, would go so far as to dare to designate in these terms: that we do not know what we are talking about, nor whether what we are saying has the slightest truth. And in effect, why not? Simply the recourse to the Other - in so far as corresponding in a certain field to a limited use of certain signs, it is incontestable that, having spoken, I can write and maintain what I have written. (If I cannot, at every moment of mathematical reasoning, make this to and fro movement between what I articulate through my discourse and what I inscribe as being established, there is no progression possible of what is called mathematical truth and this is the whole essence of what is called, in mathematics: proof). It is precisely of the same order as what we are dealing with here - the recourse to the Other, is, in every effect of thinking, absolutely determining.

The *I am* of the Cartesian *I think* not only does not avoid it, but is grounded on it, it is grounded in it, even before it is forced, to place this Other at a level of divine essence in order simply to obtain from the interlocutor what follows: the *therefore* of the *I am* - this Other is very directly summoned, it is to it, it is to the reference to this locus, as locus of the word, that Descartes remits himself, for a discourse which calls for consent to do what I am in the process of doing before you: in exhorting me to doubt, you will not deny that I am; the argument is ontological from this stage and undoubtedly if it does not have the cutting edge of St. Anselm's argument, if it is more (6) sober, it does not fail for all that to involve consequences which are the ones that we are going to come to now and which are precisely those which result from having to write by a signifier, that this Other is not something else.

St. Anselm ... (I had asked you during this vacation to refer to a certain chapter and in order that the matter does not remain in the air, I will recall here the order of this famous argument, which is unfairly disparaged and which is well designed to give all its relief to the function of this Other. The argument concern in any way - as is said in the manuals - the following: that the most perfect essence would imply existence.)

Chapter II of the *Fides quarens intellectum*, articulates the argument by being addressed to what is called "the fool"; the fool who, says scripture, has said in his heart: "there is no God".

The argument consists in saying: "Fool! Everything depends on what you call God, and since it is clear that you have called God the Being who is most perfect, you do not know what you are saying". For, says St Anselm, I St Anselm know well that it is not sufficient that the idea of the most perfect Being exists as an idea, in order for this Being to exist. But if you consider that you have the right to have this idea, that you say, that this Being does not exist, what will you look like, if perchance it exists? For you are proving then, that in forming the idea of the most perfect Being, you form an inadequate idea, since it is separated from the following: that this Being can exist and that as existent it is more perfect than an idea that does not imply existence.

It is a proof of the impotence of the thinking of the one articulating it, through a certain critical bias concerning the inoperancy of thinking itself. It is to prove to him that in articulating something about thinking, he himself does not know what he is saying. That is why what is to be re-examined is elsewhere and very precisely at the level of the status of this Other in which I not simply can but in which I cannot do otherwise than establish myself, every time something is articulated which belongs to the field of the word.

No one, as one of my friends has written recently, believes in this Other. In our time, from the most devout people to the most libertine - if this term still has a sense - everyone is an atheist. Philosophically, anything that is based on any form of existence of this Other is untenable.

That is why everything is reduced in the import of the *I am* which follows the *I think*, to the fact that this *I think* makes sense, but exactly in the same way as any nonsense makes sense. Everything that you articulate, on this single condition, as I already taught you - that there must be maintained a certain grammatical form (do I need to go back on the "green colourless ideas, etc"?), anything which has simply a grammatical form makes sense. And this means nothing else than that starting from there I cannot (7) go any further. In other words, that the strict consideration of the logical import that any operation of language involves, is affirmed in what is the fundamental and sure effect, of what is called *alienation* and which does not at all mean that we remit ourselves to the Other, but on the contrary, that we see the caducity of anything that is founded simply on this recourse to the Other, of which nothing can subsist except what grounds the course of mathematical proof from a reasoning by recurrence; the typical form of which is that if we can prove that something that is true for n is also true for $n - 1$, it is enough for us to know what is involved when $n = 1$ in order to affirm that the same thing is true for the whole series of whole numbers. So what? ...

This in itself does not involve any other consequence than the nature of a truth which is the one that I earlier sufficiently pinpointed in the judgement of Bertrand Russell: for our part, we must posit - since something comes to reveal to us the truth hidden behind this consequence - since it is not our place to retreat before what is essential; that the status of thinking, in so far as alienation is realised in it as the fall of the Other, is composed of this; namely, of this white field which is on the left of S [*pointing to the board*] and which corresponds to this status of the I, which is that of the I in so far as it reigns, and this incontestably, over the majority of our contemporaries and which is articulated by an *I do not think*, which is not only proud but even glories in this affirmation! As a result of which, what completes it is what here, I designated as *Es* and which I articulated the last time as being certainly a complement, but a complement which comes to it from this fallen part of this alienation, namely: from what comes to it from this locus of this vanished (*disparu*) Other, in what remains of it as being the *not-I* and that I called - because it is in this way that it must be designated - nothing but this: **the grammatical structure.**

It is certainly not the privilege of a Freudian to conceive of himself in this way, read Mr Wittgenstein: *Tractatus logico philosophicus* ... You must not believe that because a whole school, which is called logical-positivist, dins into our ears a whole

series of the most insipid and mediocre considerations, that the step taken by Wittgenstein amounts to nothing. This attempt to articulate what results from a consideration of logic in so far as it can do without any existence of the subject, is well worth following in all its details and I recommend you to read it.

For us Freudians, on the contrary, what this grammatical structure of language represents is exactly the same thing as what ensures that when Freud wants to articulate the drive, he cannot do other than pass by way of grammatical structure, which alone gives its complete and ordered field to what, in fact, comes to dominate when Freud speaks about the drive; I mean to constitute the only two *functioning* (8) examples of drives as such, namely the scopophilic drive and the sado-masochistic drive.

It is only in the world of language that the *I want to see* can take on its dominant function leaving it open to know from where and why I am looked at.

It is only in a world of language, as I said the last time in order to highlight it simply in passing, that "a child is being beaten" has its pivotal value.

It is only in a world of language that the subject of the action gives rise to the question of *who* supports it, namely, for whom it acts?

No doubt, nothing can be *said* about what is involved in these structures. Our experience, nevertheless, affirms to us that it is they that dominate and not what prowls along some corridor or other of the analytic assembly, namely, a "genital" drive which anyone would be quite incapable of defining as such - that it is they that give their law to the function of desire. But this cannot be *said*, except by *repeating* the grammatical articulations in which they are constituted; namely, exhibiting in the sentences which ground them what can be deduced from different fashions that the subject may have of dwelling there. Nothing, I am saying, can be *said* about them, except what we in fact hear, namely, the subject in his *complaint*.

To know that for all that he is not found in them, that the desire that he grounds in them has for him this ambiguous value of being a desire that he does not assume, that he is only able *despite himself*. It is indeed to return to this point that we are articulating everything that we have to unfold here before you. It is indeed because this is the way things are and because people *dared to say it*, that we must examine **where** this discourse could have started from.

It could have started from this: that there is a point of experience from which we can see what is involved in the truth, because of what I will call as you wish: the obscuring, the strangling, the impasse of the subjective situation, under this strange incidence whose final source is to be grounded in the status of language.

It is at the level where thinking exists as: *it is not I who think*.

This thinking - as it is here, supported by this little shuttle (*on the bottom right of the schema*) which carries the capital I [*in French*] - this thinking, which has the status of unconscious thoughts, implies the following: that it *cannot say* - and this is the status

that is proper to it - either: *therefore I am*, nor even the *therefore I am not*, which nevertheless completes it and which is its virtual status at the level of the Other.

For it is there and only there that this Other maintains its agency. It is there where the *I*, as such, is only effectively inscribed by an *I am not* - by an *I am not* which is supported by this fact that it is supported by as many others as there are to constitute a dream - that the dream, Freud tells us, is essentially egoistic - that in everything that (9) the dream presents us with we have to recognise the agency of the *Ich*, under a mask; but, moreover, it is in so far as it is not articulated as *Ich*, that it masks itself there - that it is present.

This is why the place of all the dream-thoughts is marked here, on the right-hand side by this blank area where it is designated that the *Ich*, as such, is certainly indicated in each one of these dream-thoughts by finding it, by what is going to constitute what Freud calls *Trauminhalt*, namely, very precisely, this set of signifiers of which a dream is constituted by the different mechanisms of the unconscious: condensation, displacement, *Verdichtung*, *Verschiebung*; if the *I*, the *Ich*, the *ego*, is present in all of them, namely, very precisely in the fact that it is **in all**, namely, that *it is absolutely dispersed in them*.

What does that mean, and what is the status that remains to the thoughts that constitute this unconscious, if not to be what Freud told us, namely, these signs through which each thing - in the sense that I said the last time: *Sache*, affairs, things encountered - play with respect to one another this function of referring on which makes us, in the analytic operation, lose time in harvesting them, as in an unordered world?

But what is the operation realised by Freud going to - be and especially in this part of the *Traumdeutung* which is called the dream-work *die Traumarbeit* - if not to show us what it articulates - what it articulates at the beginning of this chapter in the clearest fashion and *quite literally* (whatever maybe said by people who are reading me nowadays for the first time and who are astonished), - that for so many years I have been articulating - that the unconscious is structured like a language! *Der Trauminhalt* - the dream content - is given to us: *gleichsam* - just like - in a writing made up of images (which designates the hieroglyphs) whose signs are only *zu übertragen* - to be translated - *in die Sprache* - into the tongue - of the dream-thoughts; and all that follows on the *Zeichenbeziehung*, on the comparison with a rebus, on the fact that one only understands a rebus by reading it and articulating it, for otherwise it is absurd to see an image - he tells us - composed of a house on which there is a ship or a person running with a comma in place of his head - that all of this has only sense in a *tongue* and after having told us that the world of dream-thoughts is illogical by nature ... (I would simply ask you to refer to Freud's text) - which is not simply to bear witness to you of what is really patent and crudely illustrated on every page, namely that nothing is spoken about except language - but to see that what Freud articulates, are all the ways that exist in order that in this world - of things, no doubt, but what does that mean? That means: - *das Bedeutung*, of what this refers to, this sense of the rebus, and what that refers to, namely, in effect, the images which constitute it.

(10) What does Freud do if not show us how, in a certain fashion precisely by altering them - these images, for example - one can designate the index thanks to which, in their sequence, we rediscover all the grammatical functions eliminated at first. And to show us how there is expressed the relationship of a subordinate to a principal (read the whole of this enormous chapter VI of the *Traumarbeit*), how a causal relationship can be expressed, how in fact the form of negation makes its way back. And very precisely, you will find things whose kinship with the schemas that I have given you, brought here, will appear obvious, like the function of the either - or, he says, which serves to express - because it cannot be done otherwise - a conjunction. And when you look more closely at it you will find exactly what I told you, namely, that in the either - or, suspended between two negations, you have precisely the same value as in the negation of this conjunction.

Undoubtedly these ... devices, as I might say, will appear to you a little bit further ahead in their results than those that Freud gives you, but Freud gives you plenty of them to encourage you to go along the same path. Namely, that when you take the *Secerno* dream, the dream in which you have to close either one eye or two eyes, you will notice what that signifies, namely, that this means: that one cannot have, at the same time, one eye open or two eyes open, that it is not the same thing.

In short, the legitimacy of the logic of the phantasy is precisely this something for Freud's whole chapter, to speak of only that one, prepares us. Prepares us by showing us that of which Freud is tracing the path is a *logic* of these thoughts, namely, the following which means: *it* requires this support of the locus of the Other, which cannot very precisely, here, be articulated except by a *therefore, I am not*.

So here we are suspended at the level of this function, at a *you are not, therefore I am not*. Does that not tickle your ears in a certain way? Do we not have here, I would say, the most importunate language of love itself?

What does that mean? Must we take further the sense, which moreover gives its truth: *you are only what I am*. Everyone knows and can recognise that if the sense of love, is indeed in effect this formula that I give, love in fact in its agitation, in its naïve *elan*, as in many of its discourses, does not commend itself as a function of thinking.

I mean that if, from a formula such as: *you are not, therefore I am not*, there emerges (11) the monster whose effect we know rather well in everyday life, it is very precisely in so far as this truth - that of the *you are not, therefore I am not* - is rejected (*verworfen*) in love. The manifestations of love in the real is very precisely the characteristic that I state of every *Verwerfung*, namely: the most inconvenient and the most depressing effects - this is a still further an illustration of it - in which the paths of love are nowhere to be designated as so easily traced out.

Undoubtedly, in Descartes' time there was no one unaware of these laws, of course. We were at the time of Angelus Silesius, who dared to say to God: "If I were not there, well then, it is very simple: you, God, *qua* existing God, you would not be there either". In such an epoch one can talk about the problems of our own; more exactly one can put oneself back there to form a judgement on what constitutes an impasse for us.

What does Freud tell us, to take further the examination of his logic? If you have still preserved the slightest doubt about the nature of this subversion, which makes of the *Bedeutung* - in so far as we grasp it at the moment of its alteration, of its torsion as such, of its amputation, indeed of its ablation - the source which can allow us to recognise in it the re-established function of logic. If you still have the slightest doubt, you would see these doubts vanishing by seeing how Freud, in the dream, reintegrates everything that appears there as judgements, whether these judgements are internal to the lived experience of this dream, but still more when they present themselves as - in appearance - waking judgements.

When, he tells us, in connection with the dream, something in the dreamer's account, is indicated as being a moment of oscillation, of interruption, of a lacuna (as formerly I said at the time when I was making something of the "lacuna") *Lucken*, an *Unterbrechung*, a rupture, in the account that I the dreamer may give of it, this itself is to be reinstated, Freud tells us, as forming part of the text of the dream. And what does this designate? It is enough for me to refer, somewhere, in what Freud gives us as an example of it: - I am going, says one of his dreamers, with Fraulein K. - *in das Volksgartenrestaurant* - into the restaurant of the *Volksgarten* ... and here, there is a *dunkel Stelle*, this is the passage of which there is nothing more to be said: he no longer knows, and then it takes up again: "then I find myself in the salon of a brothel, - *in dem ich zwei oder drei Frauen sehe* - in which I see two or three women, one in a chemise and drawers.

The analysis: the Fraulein K. is the daughter of his previous boss and what is characteristic, is the circumstance in which he had to speak to her and which he designates in these terms: "we recognised - *Mann sich erkante*, - *gleichsam*: in a sort of equality - *in seiner Geschlechtigkeit*, in her sexual description, as if what is being (12) said was: I am a man *Ich bin ein Mann* - *und du ein Weib* - and you a woman."

Here, very precisely is why Fraulein K. is chosen: to constitute the beginning of the dream, but also no doubt to determine its syncopation. For what is going to follow, in the dream, proves itself very precisely to be what comes to disturb this lovely relationship full of certainties between man and woman. Namely, that the three persons who are linked, for him, to the memory of this restaurant and who also represent the ones that he finds in the salon of the brothel are, respectively, his sister, the wife of his brother-in-law, and a friend of hers (or of his, it does not matter), in any case three women with whom one cannot say that his relationships are marked by a frank and direct sexual approach.

In other words, what Freud demonstrates to us as being **always** and strictly correlative to this syncopation of the *Trauminhalt*, to the lack of signifiers, is, precisely, once it is approached, anything whatsoever **in language** (and not simply the mirages of looking into one another's eyes) that would put in question what is involved in the relationships of sex as such.

The original logical sense of castration, in so far as analysis discovered its dimension, reposes on this: that at the level of *Bedeutungen*, of meanings, language - in so far as it is what structures the subject as such - is very mathematically lacking, I mean:

reduces what is involved in the relationship between the sexes to what we designate as we can, by this something to which language reduces sexual polarity, namely: *having* or *not having* the phallic connotation.

It is very precisely what the effect of analysis represents – and only represents.

No approach to castration as such is possible for a human subject, except in a renewal - at a different stage (separated by the whole height of this rectangle that I have drawn here) - of this function, that I earlier called: alienation, namely: where there intervenes - as such - the function of the Other in so far as we ought to mark it as barred.

It is precisely in so far as analysis by its work, comes to invert this relationship, which made of everything that was of the order of the status of the subject in his *I am not*, an empty field - a non-identifiable subject; it is in so far as this field is going to be filled (here: in the bottom left corner) that there is going to appear inversely (here) the minus phi (ϕ) of the failure of the articulation of the sexual *Bedeutung*. *Die bedeutung des Phallus* I entitled (because I gave it in German) this lecture that I gave on the meaning of the phallus ... it is starting from there that there ought to be posed the question of what is involved in what distances these two equally alienating operations: that of (13) pure and simply logical alienation and that of the re-reading of the same alienating necessity in the *Bedeutung* of unconscious thoughts. With, in both cases - as you see - a different result (because they even seem - in looking at them as they are there, shaded - to be strictly opposed to one another).

The fact is that the whole distance between the one and the other of these operations, consists in their field of departure, one of which is the reconstructed one starting from which I designate the foundation of any logical operation, namely, the choice offered between *either I do not think or I am not*, as being the true sense of the Cartesian *cogito*; this culminates in an *I do not think* and at the foundation of everything that makes of the human subject a subject especially subjected to two drives that I designated as scopophilic and sado-masochistic.

That if something of the **Other**, which is related to sexuality, is manifested starting from unconscious thoughts, it is very precisely the sense of Freud's discovery, but also that through which there is designated **the radical inadequation of thinking to the reality of sex**.

The question is not to go beyond what is unthinkable here - unthinkable and nevertheless healthy - because this is the very core of why Freud held so essentially to the sexual theory of the libido.

You have to read, in the really ... shamanic, inspired - God knows, I do not know how to qualify them ... writings of Jung his stupor, his indignation, in gathering from Freud's mouth something which seems to him to constitute some strictly anti-scientific bias, when Freud says to him: "And then above all, huh, you, Jung do not forget it: you have to stick to this theory" - "But why", Jung says to him - "To prevent", says Freud the "*Schlammflut*", the tide of mud! - Of what? "Of occultism" say Freud to him, knowing very well everything that is involved in the fact of not having touched this precisely designated limit; because it constitutes no doubt the

essence of language, in the fact that language does not dominate - from this foundation of sex in so far as it is perhaps most profoundly linked to the essence of death - does not dominate what is involved in sexual reality.

This is the teaching, full of sobriety, that Freud gives us.

But then, why are there thus two paths and two ways in? No doubt because there is something which deserves a name in the operation that we have not spoken about, the one which makes us pass from the level of unconscious thinking to this logical, theoretical status. Inversely the one which can make us pass from this status of the subject - in so far as he is the subject of scopophilic and masochistic drives - to the status of analysed subject, in so far as the function of castration has a sense for him.

(14) This, which we will call "operation truth" - because like the truth itself, it blows and realises itself where it will, when it speaks - this, which was linked to the discovery, to the irruption of the unconscious, to the return of the repressed, this allows us to conceive of why we can rediscover the agency of castration in *the objet-noyau*, in the core-object (c-o-r-e, to say it in English) in the object around which the status of the grammatical subject turns, this can be designated and translated starting from this corner obtained because of the fact that language is, by its very status, "antipathetic" (as I might say) to sexual reality.

This is nothing other than the locus of the operation around which we are going to be able to define, in its logical status, the function of the **o**-object.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 22 February 1967

We continue, by recalling what we are starting from - alienation.

Let us summarise, for those who have already heard us and especially for the others. Alienation - in so far as we have taken it as a start for this logical path that we are trying to trace out this year - is the e-elimination, to be taken in the proper sense: a rejection beyond the threshold, the ordinary elimination from the Other. Beyond what threshold? The threshold in question, is the one determined by the *cut* in which the essence of language consists.

Linguistics is of service to us essentially in this, that it has provided us with the model of this cut.

This is why we find ourselves put on the side - approximately qualified as structuralist - of linguistics. And that all the developments of linguistics, specifically, curiously, what can be called semiology - what is described in this way, what designates itself, and what proclaims itself as such recently - does not interest us to the same degree. Which may, at first approach, seem surprising.

Elimination then from the Other. From the Other. What does that mean, the Other, with a capital O, in so far as here it is eliminated? It is eliminated *qua* closed and unified field. This means that we affirm, with the best reasons for doing so, that there is no universe of discourse, that there is nothing that can be assumed under this term.

Language is nevertheless solidary, in its radical practice, which is what psychoanalysis is ... (note that I could also say its medical practice. Someone that I am surprised not to see here today, in his usual place, asked me for this sign that I left as a riddle of the term that I could have given, more strictly, in Latin of the "I think". If no one has found it, I am giving it today. I had indicated that this could only be conceived of by a (2) verb in the middle voice. It is *medeor*, from which there comes both *medicine* that I am evoking just now and *meditation*.)

Language, in its radical practice is solidary with something that we now are going to have to reintegrate, to conceive of in some fashion under the mode of an emanation from this field of the Other, from the moment that we have had to consider it as disconnected (*disjoint*). But this something is not difficult to name. It is what this field of the Other precariously authorises itself by and this is called - a proper dimension of language - the truth.

To situate psychoanalysis, one could say that it has been constituted everywhere the truth makes itself known only in the fact that it surprises us and imposes itself on us. An example, to illustrate what I have just said. There is no other *jouissance* given to me, or giveable, than that of my body. This does not impose itself immediately, but no one has any doubt about it and there is established, around this *jouissance*, which is indeed henceforth my only good, this protective grill of a law described as universal and which is called "Human rights". No one can prevent me from disposing as I wish of my own body. The result, at the limit - we put our finger, our foot on it, we analysts - is that *jouissance* has dried up for everyone!

This is the other side of a little article that I produced under the title of "*Kant with Sade*". Obviously this is not said there up front - it is at the back. It was not for all that less dangerous to say it as Sade said it. Sade is indeed the proof of that. But since all I was doing there was explaining Sade, it is less dangerous for me!

The truth is manifested in an enigmatic fashion in the symptom. Which is what? A subjective opaqueness. Let us leave to one side what is clear. The fact is that the enigma has already this much resolved, that it is only a rebus. And let us base ourselves for a moment on the fact - which by going too quickly one may leave to one side - that the subject therefore can be non-transparent. The fact is also that what is obvious may be hollow, and that it would be better henceforth, no doubt, to make the word agree with the past participle, emptied (*evidé*).

The subject is perfectly thingy (*chosique*). And is the worst kind of thing! The Freudian thing, precisely.

As regards the facts, we know that it is a bubble and that it can be burst. We have experience of it already on several occasions. Such is the plane on which modern thinking makes its way, as Marx, first of all gave it its tone, then Freud. If the status of what Freud contributed is less evidently triumphant, it is perhaps, precisely, that he went further. You pay for that.

You pay for that, for example, in the thematic you will find developed in the two articles that I am proposing for your attention, for your study if you have enough leisure for that. Because they ought here to form the foundation on which there will find its place what I am going to advance, to take things up again at the point I left them the last time, to complete, in this quadrangle that I began to trace out as having (3) to be articulated fundamentally around repetition.

Repetition. A **temporal locus**, in which there comes to act what I first left suspended around the *purely logical* terms of alienation, at the four poles that I punctuated of the *alienating choice* on the one hand, of the establishment on the other hand at two of these poles, of the *Es*, of the *Id*, of the *unconscious*, on the other hand, in order to put at the fourth of these poles, *castration*. These four terms, which may have left you in suspense, have their English correspondents in what I began, the last time, to articulate by showing you the fundamental structure of repetition on the one hand (by situating it on the right of the quadrangle), of the function, on the other hand, on the right-hand pole, of this privileged and exemplary mode of the establishment of the subject which is the *passage à l'acte* is.

Passage	Repetition
à	
l'acte	_____

What are the two other poles that I have to deal with now? One of them was already indicated to you the last time:

acting-out

acting-out, that I am going to have to articulate in so far as it is situated - at this place - in an elided way, in which something of the field of the eliminated Other, that I have just recalled, is manifested in the form of a truthful manifestation. Such is, fundamentally, the sense of acting-out. I am asking you, simply, to have the patience to follow me, since, moreover, I can only introduce these terms - what they refer to, the structure - without preliminaries (*bille en tête*), as I might say. By wanting to make our way by a progression, or indeed a critique, of what has already been outlined about such a formulation in the theories already expressed in analysis, we would, literally, only lose ourselves in the same labyrinth that this theory constitutes.

(4) This does not mean, of course, that we reject either the data or the experience. But that we submit what we are contributing in terms of new formulae to this test of seeing whether it is not precisely our formulae that will allow there to be defined not only the well-foundedness but also the sense of what has already been initiated.

The acting-out, then, that I am putting forward - you already sense perhaps the relevance of putting it forward in this situation of the field of the Other, which it is a matter for us of restructuring, as I might say, if only because of the following. That history, like experience as it is being pursued, indicate to us, at the very least, a certain global correspondence between this term and what analytic experience establishes. I am not saying that acting-out occurs only during analysis. I am saying that it is from analysis and from what was produced in it, that the problem emerged. That there arose the fundamental distinction which lead acting-out to be isolated, to be distinguished, from the act, and from the *passage à l'acte* as it can pose us problems, as psychiatrists, and be established as an autonomous category. I have only put forward a correlate, then, the one that makes it like the symptom *qua* manifestation of truth. It is **certainly not the only one** and other conditions are necessary.

I hope then that at least some of you know - in parallel to these statements that I am going to be lead to put at your disposition - will be able to glance through at least what, at a certain date - which is more or less 1947 or 1948 - the *Yearbook of psychoanalysis* began to be published after the last war - and the formula that Otto Fenichel gave of it: "*Neurotic acting-out*".

I continue ... What is the term that you are going to see being inscribed at the fourth meeting-point of these operational functions that determine what we are articulating on the basis of repetition? Even if this surprises you - and I think I will be able to sustain it as broadly as possible for your appreciation - it is something which, singularly, has remained in a certain suspense in analytic theory and is undoubtedly the conceptual point around which most clouds and false appearances have accumulated. To name it, and moreover it is already written on this board (since it is to this note by Heinz Hartmann that I would ask you to refer to grasp a typical fruit of the analytic situation as such) it is, *sublimation*.

Repetition

Passage _____
à

l'acte

Sublimation

Acting-out

(5) Sublimation is the term - that I would not call mediating, for it is not that at all - is the term that allows us to inscribe the basis and the conjunction of what is involved in subjective stability, in so far as repetition is its fundamental structure and that it involves this essential dimension about which there remains the greatest obscurity, in everything that has been formulated up to the present in analysis, and which is called satisfaction.

Befriedigung, says Freud. You should sense there the presence of the term *Friede*, whose usual sense is peace. I think that we live in a time in which this word, at least, will not appear to be obvious to you.

What is the satisfaction that Freud conjugates for us as essential for repetition in its most radical form? Since, in fact, this is the mode in which he produces before us the function of the *Wiederholungszwang*, in so far as it encompasses not alone a particular functioning of life, for its part quite locatable under the term of the pleasure principle, but that it sustains this life itself about which we can now admit everything, even up to the point, which has become a tangible truth, that there is nothing in the material that it stirs up which, in the final analysis, is not dead (I am saying of its nature inanimate). But which it is nevertheless clear will not surrender this material that it collects together to its domain of the inanimate, "except in its own way", Freud tells us. Namely, everything being in this satisfaction which means that it has to re-pass and retrace, the same paths that it has - how? - constructed, and that undoubtedly it testifies to us that its essence is to retrace them. There is - let us be very modest! - a **world** between this theoretical illumination and its verification.

Freud is not a biologist and one of the most striking things - which might be disappointing if we believe that it is enough to give the chief place in his thinking to the powers of life, that it is enough to do anything whatsoever which resembles the construction of a science which might be called biology - we analysts have contributed **nothing** to anything whatsoever that resembles biology. It is all the same very striking!

But why, nevertheless, do we hold so firmly to the assurance that, behind the satisfaction that we have to deal with when it is a matter of repetition, there is something that we designate - with all the awkwardness, with all the imprudence that can be involved, at the point that we are at in biological research - this term that we designate ... (this is the sense, the attachment point that I would go so far as to call *fideist* in Freud) - that we call *sexual satisfaction*. And this for the reason that Freud advanced before an astonished Jung, to stave off the "black tide of mud", which is how Freud judges it with respect to the thinking that he designates by the term to which one will not fail to come if one does not hold fast, that he designates as the recourse to occultism.

Does this mean that everything happens so simply, I mean that these affirmations (6) are enough to give an acceptable articulation? This is the question that I am trying to advance today before you and which makes me push forward sublimation as the locus which, since it has been up to the present left fallow or covered with common scribbles, is nevertheless the one which is going to allow us to understand what is at stake in this fundamental satisfaction, which is the one that Freud articulates as a subjective opaqueness, as the satisfaction of repetition.

This conjunction of a basic point for the whole of logic, because what we bring with us into this marginal place of thinking, which is the one - a place of penumbra, a *twilight zone* - in which there is developed analytic action, if we bring with us there the requirements of logic, which is something that we are led to make a merit of so that we will be able to pinpoint it with what I think must be its best name: sub-logic. This is what in this very place, this year, we are trying to inaugurate.

I pronounce the term at the very moment that it is going to be a matter taking our bearings about what is involved in this *sublimation*.

Freud, even though he in no way developed it, for the same reasons which render the developments that I added to it necessary, Freud affirmed, in accordance with the mode of procedure which is that of his thinking, which consists - as someone else said, Bossuet, first name Jacques-Bénigne - which consists in holding firmly to the two ends of the chain. Firstly, sublimation. is *zielgehemmt*, and, naturally, he does not explain to us what that means! I already tried to mark for you the distinction already inherent in this term of *zielgehemmt*. I took my references in English, as being more accessible: the difference between the *aim* and the *goal*. Say it in French. It is less clear because we are forced to take words already in use in philosophy. We can, all the same, try to say *la fin*, it is the weakest word, because it is necessary to re-integrate into it the whole journeying which is what is involved in the *aim*, the target. There is the same distance between *aim* and *goal* as there is in German between *Zweck* and *Ziel*. We are not told that *Zweckmässigkeit*, sexual finality, is in any way *gehemmt*, inhibited, in sublimation. *Zielgehemmt*, and it is precisely here that the word is well made to detain us ... what we gargle with this so called "object" of the blessed genital drive, is precisely what can without any inconvenience be extracted, totally inhibited, absent, in what nevertheless belongs to the sexual drive, without it losing anything of its capacity as *Befriedigung*, in terms of satisfaction.

Such is, from the appearance of the term *Sublimierung*, the way Freud defines it in unequivocal terms. *Zielgehemmt* on the one hand, but on the other hand satisfaction encountered without any transformation, displacement, alibi, repression, reaction or defence. This is how Freud introduces, poses before us, the function of sublimation.

You will see in the second of these articles - (there are three texts here, but what I am (7) calling the second, is the second that I named earlier, that of Heinz Hartmann. The first that I named being that of Fenichel, and Alexander is only a reference by Fenichel) - I mean the point designated by Fenichel, the major point of the introduction of the term acting-out in psychoanalytic articulation. Consult the article by Heinz Hartmann on sublimation. It is exemplary. It is exemplary of what, in our

eyes, is not in any way obsolete in the position of the psychoanalyst. The fact is that the approach to what he is dealing with, taking responsibility for a thinking, always drives him back in some respect to one of these two terms that I will designate in the most temperate way as platitude. And everyone knows that for a long time, I designated as its the most eminent representative, Mr. Fenichel. May he rest in peace! His writings have for us the very great value of being undoubtedly the very scrupulous gathering together of everything that can emerge as holes in experience. All that is lacking at the place of these holes is the necessary question mark. As regards Heinz Hartmann and the fashion in which he sustains - for some fourteen or fifteen pages, if I remember correctly - with an interrogative accent the problem of sublimation, I think that it cannot escape anyone who comes to it with a fresh mind, that such a discourse, the one I am asking you to consult in the text, designating for you where it is, where you can easily find it, is properly speaking a lying discourse.

The whole apparatus of a so-called “energetics”, around which there is proposed to us something which consists precisely in *inverting* the approach to the problem, by questioning sublimation - in so far as it is first proposed to us as being identical, and not displaced, with respect to something which is, properly, (with the quotation marks that the use of the word drive imposes at this level) all the same: the “sexual drive” - overturning this and questioning in the most punctuated manner what is involved in sublimation, as being linked to what is proposed to us. Namely, that the functions of the ego - which in the most improper manner has been posited as being autonomous, even as coming from a different source to what is called, in this confused language, an “instinctual” source, as if there had ever been in Freud a question of that! - to know, then, how these completely pure functions of the ego, related to the measure of reality, and providing it, as such, in an essential fashion - re-establishing here then at the heart of analytic thinking, what the whole of analytic thinking rejects - that there is this isolated, direct, autonomous, identifiable relation, a relation of pure thinking to a world that it is supposed to be able to approach, without itself being completely shot through by the function of desire - how can it happen that there can come from what is then elsewhere, the instinctual focus, some reflection or other, some painting or other, some colouring or other, that is called, textually, “the sexualisation of the ego functions”!

(8) Once introduced like this the question becomes literally insoluble, or, in any case, excluded forever from everything that is proposed to the praxis of analysis.

To approach what is involved in sublimation, it is necessary for us to introduce this first term without which (*moyennant quoi*) it is impossible for us to find our bearings in the problem, which is the one from which I started the last time in defining the *act*: the act is signifying. It is a signifier which is repeated, even though it happens in a single gesture, for topological reasons which make possible the existence of the double loop created by a single cut. It is the establishment of the subject *as such*. Namely, that, from a true act, the subject emerges different. Because of the cut, its structure is modified. And, fourthly, the correlate of misrecognition, or more exactly the limit imposed on this recognition in the subject, or if you wish again, his *Repräsentanz* in the *Vorstellung*, to this act, is the *Verleugnung*. Namely, that the subject never recognises it in its truly inaugural import, even when the subject is, as I might say, capable of having committed this act.

Well then, it is here that it would be well for us to notice the following - which is essential for any comprehension of the role that Freud gives to sexuality in the unconscious - for us to remember something that the tongue already gives us, namely, that *people speak about the sexual act*.

The sexual act, this could at least suggest to us - something moreover that is obvious - since, once one thinks about it ... in any case, you touch on it right away ... the fact is that it is obviously not pure and simple copulation. The act has all the characteristics of the act as I have just recalled them, as we manipulate it, as it has presented itself to us, with its symptomatic sediments and everything that makes it more or less stick and stumble. The sexual act clearly presents itself as a signifier, firstly, and as a signifier which repeats something. Because it is the first thing that was introduced to it in psychoanalysis.

It repeats what? The oedipal scene, of course!

It is curious that it is necessary to recall these things which constitute the very soul of what I proposed to you to see in analytic experience.

That it can be the establishment of something that offers no way back for the subject, is what certain privileged sexual acts, which are precisely the ones that we call incestuous, make us literally put our finger on. I have enough analytic experience to affirm to you that a boy who has slept with his mother is not at all, in analysis, a subject like the others! And even if he himself knows nothing about it, this changes nothing in the fact that it is analytically as tangible as this table here! His personal *Verleugnung*, the contradiction that he may oppose to the fact that this has the value of a decisive break-through, changes nothing in it.

(9) Naturally, all of this would deserve to be supported. My guarantee is that here I have listeners who have analytic experience and that, if I said something too gross, would be able, I think, to protest loudly. But, believe me, they will not say the contrary, because they know it as well as I do. Quite simply, that does not mean that people know how to draw out the consequences, for want of knowing how to articulate them.

In any case, this leads us to try, perhaps, to introduce into it a little logical rigour.

The act is founded on repetition. What, at first approach, could be more welcoming for what is involved in the sexual act. Let us remember the teachings of our Holy Mother the Church, huh! The principle: you do not do that together, you do not have it off, huh!, except in order to bring into the world a new little soul! There must be people who think about it while they are doing it (*laughter*)! In any case, it is a supposition! It is not established. It could be that, however much in conformity this thinking may be with dogma - the Catholic one, I mean - it may be, where it happens, only a symptom.

This is obviously designed to suggest to us that there is perhaps room to try to circumscribe more closely - to see through what aspect there is admitted - the function

of reproduction which is there behind the sexual act. Because when we are dealing with the subject of repetition, we are dealing with signifiers, in so far as they are the *precondition of a thinking*.

At the rate that this biology, that we leave so well to its own resources, is going, it is curious to see that the signifier is showing the tip of its nose, there, right at the root. At the level of chromosomes, at the moment, there is a swarm of signifiers - conveying quite specified characters. We are told that the chains - of DNA or of RNA - are constituted like well ordered messages which come, of course, after being brewed in a certain fashion, is that not so, in a big urn, to make there emerge the new kind of eccentric that everyone in the family is waiting to acclaim.

Is this the level at which the problem is posed?

Well then, it is here that I would like to introduce something that, naturally, I did not invent for you today. There is somewhere, in a volume called my *Ecrits*, an article which is called "*The meaning of the phallus*"; on page 693, on line 10 (I had some difficulty, this morning, in finding it), I write: *the phallus as signifier gives the ratio of desire (in the sense that the term -I mean: "ratio" - is used as the "mean and extreme" ratio of harmonic division)*. This in order to indicate to you that, huh, obviously, it was necessary for time to pass, for me to be able to introduce what I am going to say to you today. I simply marked there the 'little white stone' intended to tell you that it was already from this that the meaning of the phallus was taking its bearings.

In effect, let us try to put an order, a measure, into what is involved in the sexual act in so far as it has a relation with the function of repetition.

Well then, it leaps to the eye, not that it is not known, since the Oedipus complex is known from the beginning, but that people are not able to recognise what that means, namely, that the product of repetition, in the sexual act *qua* act, namely, in so far as we participate in it as subjected to what is signifying in it, has its impact, in other words, in the fact that the subject that we are is opaque, that it has an unconscious.

Well then, it should be pointed out that the fruit of *biological* repetition, of reproduction, is already there in this space, well defined for the accomplishment of the act, which is called the bed.

The agent of the sexual act knows very well that he is a son. And that is why the sexual act, in so far as it concerns us psychoanalysts, has been referred to the Oedipus complex.

So let us try to see, in these signifying terms that define what I called just now "mean and extreme", what results from it.

Let us suppose that we are going to have this signifying relation supported by the simplest support, the one that we have already given to the double loop of repetition: a simple line. And, for still greater ease, let us lay it out, quite simply as follows:

+ _____ passage

à l'acte

A line to which we can give two ends. We can cut this double loop anywhere at all, and once we have cut it, we are going to try to make use of it.

Let us place on it the four points (points of origin), of two other cuts that define the mean and extreme ratio:

O = 1 o Passage
à l'acte

- (11) **small o**; the agreeable product of a previous copulation, which, since it happened to be a sexual act, created the subject, who is here in the process of reproducing it - the sexual act.
- capital O. What is capital O? If the sexual act is what we are taught, *as signifier*, it is the mother. We are going to give her ... (because we find her trace everywhere in analytic thinking itself, everything that this signifying term of the mother carries with it in terms of thoughts of fusion, of a falsification of unity – in so far as she only interests us, namely, a countable unit - of a passage from this countable unit to a unifying unit), we are going to give her the value *One*.

What does the value *One* mean as a unifying unit? We are dealing with the signifier and its consequences for thinking. The mother as subject is *the thought of the One of the couple*. "The two shall be one flesh", is a thought of the order of the maternal capital O.

Such is the mean and extreme ratio of what links the agent to what is patient and receptacle in the sexual act. I mean, in so far as it is an act, in other words, in so far as it has a relation with the existence of the subject.

The *One* of the unit of the couple is a thought determined at the level of *one* of the terms of the real couple. What does that mean? It is that it is necessary that something should emerge, subjectively, from this repetition, which re-establishes the *ratio* - the mean ratio as I have just defined it for you - at the level of this real couple. In other words that something should appear, which - as in this *fundamental* signifying manipulation that the harmonic relationship is - is manifested as the following: this magnitude (let us call it small c), as compared to the sum of the two others, has the same value as the smaller has compared to the larger.

But that is not all! It has this import, in so far as this value - of the smaller as compared to the larger - is the same value as that of the larger with respect to the sum of the first two. In other words, that *o over capital O = capital O over (o plus capital O)*, equals what? This other value that I produced here and which has a name, which is called nothing other than *minus phi* in which there is designated castration, in so far as it designates the fundamental value. I am writing it out again a little further: equals *minus phi over (o plus capital O minus phi)*. Namely, the significant relation of the phallic function *qua essential lack* of the junction of the sexual relation with its subjective realisation; the designation in the very fundamental signifiers of the sexual

act of this: that, although everywhere summoned, but slipping away, the shadow of the unit hovers over the couple, there appears nevertheless, necessarily, the mark - this by reason of its very introduction into subjective functioning - the mark of something which ought to represent in it a fundamental lack.

This is called the function of castration *qua* signifying.

(12) In so far as man is only introduced into the function of the couple by way of a relationship which is *not immediately inscribed* in sexual union and which is only represented in it in this same *exterior* where you see there being outlined what is called, for that very reason, "the extreme ratio".

The relation that the predominance of the phallic symbol has, with respect to sexual union *qua* act, is the one which gives both the measure of the relation of the agent to the patient, and the measure - which is the same - of the *thought* of the couple, as it is in the patient, to what the real couple is.

It is very precisely by being able to reproduce exactly the same type of repetition, that everything that is of the order of sublimation - and I would prefer not to be forced here to evoke it specifically in the form of what is called "artistic creation", but, because it is necessary, I am bringing it in - it is precisely in the measure that something, or some object, can come to take the place that the *minus phi* takes in the sexual act as such, that sublimation can subsist, giving exactly the same order of *Befriedigung* given in the sexual act and as regards which you see the following: that it very precisely depends on the fact that what is purely and simply within the couple *is not satisfying*.

This is so true that this kind of crude homily, that has been introduced into the theory under the name of "genital maturation", is only proposed as what? As very obviously, in its very text, (I mean in whoever tries to state it) as a kind of hold-all, refuse dump, where nothing really indicates what is enough to connect the fact, firstly, of a copulation (a successful one, they add on, but what does that mean?) and of these elements that are qualified as "tenderness", "recognition of the object". What object, I ask you? Is it so clear that the object is there, when already we are told that behind any object whatsoever, there is profiled the Other, which is the object which provided a shelter for the nine month interval between the union of the chromosomes and the coming to birth?

I know well that it is here that there takes refuge all the obscurantism which attaches itself madly to analytic proof. But it is not a reason either for us not to denounce it, if the fact of denouncing it allows us to advance more strictly into a logic, as regards which you will see, the next time, how it is concentrated at the level of the analytic act itself.

For if there is something interesting in this representation in a quadrangle, it is that it allows us to establish also certain proportions. If the *passage à l'acte* fulfils certain functions with respect to *repetition*, it is at least suggested by this arrangement, that it ought to be the same as what separates *sublimation* from *acting-out*. And in the other sense, that sublimation with respect to the *passage à l'acte* ought to have something in (13) common in what separates repetition from acting-out.

Undoubtedly, there is here a much bigger *gap*, the one which, undoubtedly, makes of the analytic act, as we are trying to grasp it in what we will say the next time, something which also deserves to be defined as act.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 1 March 1967

I read last evening, somewhere, perhaps some of you too may have encountered it, this singular title: "*Know Freud before translating him*" ... an enormity! As was said by a gentleman whom I do not claim to resemble because I do not go around like him with a stick, even though sometimes with a hat: "*hénaurme*"!

In any case, it is clear that it seems to me that to try to translate him, is a path that is certainly indispensable as a preliminary to any pretension of knowing him.

That a psychoanalyst should claim to know psychoanalysis may be acceptable, but to know Freud before translating him, invincibly suggests this stupidity of knowing him before having read him. This, of course, supposes all the necessary enlarging of the notion of translation. For undoubtedly, what is striking, is that I do not know if we can ever put forward something, which resembles this pretension of knowing Freud. Measure clearly for yourselves what it means - in the perspective that the thinking of Freud, once it has reached the end of its development, offers us - measure clearly for yourselves what it means to have proposed to us the model of subjective satisfaction in sexual union.

Was not the experience - the experience from which Freud himself started - very precisely that it was the locus of subjective dissatisfaction? And has the situation improved for us?

Frankly, in the social context which is dominated by the function of the *employment* of the individual - the employment, whether it is regulated against the measure of his subsistence purely and simply, or that of productivity - what margin in this context, is there left to what might be the proper time for a culture of love? And does not everything testify to us that this is indeed the reality most excluded from our subjective community?

No doubt this is, not what decided Freud to articulate this function of satisfaction as a (2) truth but, what seemed to him to be protected from this risk, that he avowed to Jung, of seeing a profound theory of the psyche finding itself in the rut of what he himself called "the black tide of mud of occultism".

It is indeed because with sexuality – which, precisely, throughout the centuries, had presided over what seems to us the follies, the delusions of Gnosis, of the copulation of the wise man and *sophia* (and along what path!) - it is indeed because in our century and under the reign of the subject, there was *no risk* that sexuality could presume to be some kind of model for knowledge, that, no doubt, he began this tune of the leader of the game, so well illustrated by this tale of Grimm that he loved, of the Pied Piper, drawing behind him this audience which, one can well say, as regards the paths of any kind of wisdom, represented the dregs of humanity.

For undoubtedly, in what I called earlier the line that he traces out for us, and where one must start from the end, namely, the formula of repetition, it is necessary to measure what separates the *panta rhei* of the ancient thinker, when he tells us that nothing ever repasses in its own trace - that one never bathes in the same river - and what that signifies in terms of a profound tearing apart of a thinking, that can only grasp time in this something which only goes towards the indeterminate, at the price of a constant rupture with absence.

What is added to it by introducing here the function of repetition?

Well then, undoubtedly, nothing much more satisfying, than to always, incessantly, renew, a certain number of circuits.

The *pleasure principle*, undoubtedly, does not guide towards anything, and least of all towards the re-grasping of some object or other.

What can the pure and simple notion of discharge account for, in so far as it is supposed to take its model from the established circuit of the *sensorium*, from something, moreover, rather vaguely defined as being the *motor*, the *stimulus-response* circuit, as they say? Who does not see that by keeping to this the *sensorium* can only be the guide of what ensures, in effect, at the simplest level, that when the frog's leg is stimulated, it is pulled back. It does not lead to grasping anything in the world, but to fleeing what injures it.

What is it that the constant defined in the nervous system guarantees by the pleasure principle? The equality of stimulation, *isostime*, I would say - to imitate the *isobar* or the *isotherm* that I spoke about the other day - or *isorespe*, *isorésponse*. It is difficult to ground anything whatsoever on the *isostime*, for the *isostime* is no longer in any way a *stime*. The *isorespe*, the “groping” for the equality of resistance, here is what can define this isobar that the pleasure principle will lead the organism to avoid in the world. Nothing in all of that, in any case, pushes towards the seeking, to the grasping, (3) to the constitution of an object.

The problem of the object as such is left intact by this whole organic conception of a homeostatic system. It is very surprising that its flaw has not been marked up to now.

Freud, here, undoubtedly, has the merit of noting that the seeking of an object is something which is conceivable only by introducing the dimension of **satisfaction**.

Here we again come up against the strangeness of the fact that while they are so many organic models of satisfaction - beginning with digestive repletion and also some of the other needs that he evokes, but in a different register - for it is remarkable that it is precisely in so far as these schemas in which satisfaction is defined as **untransformed** by the subjective agency, (oral satisfaction is something that can put the subject to sleep, at the limit, but undoubtedly it is conceivable that this sleep may be the subjective sign of satisfaction) - how infinitely more problematic it is to highlight that the true order of subjective satisfaction is to be sought in the sexual act, which is precisely the point in which it proves to be the most torn apart.

And this, to the point that all the other orders of satisfaction (those that we have just enumerated as present in effect in the Freudian evocation) only come to take on their meaning when put into a certain dependency - which I would defy anyone to define, to render conceivable, otherwise than by formulating it in terms of structure - into a dependency, I was saying, let us say - crudely - that is *symbolic* with respect to sexual satisfaction.

These are the terms in which I am proposing to you the problem that I am taking up again today and which consists in trying to give you the signifying articulation of what is involved in the repetition implied in the sexual act. Is it truly what I have said - what the tongue promotes for us and what undoubtedly our experience does not invalidate - namely, an *act*, after having insisted on what is involved in the act, in itself, in terms of conditioning, first of all, by the repetition which is internal to it.

As regards the sexual act I would go further, at least I thought I had to go further in order to grasp its import. The repetition that it implies, involves - at least if we follow Freud's indication - an element of measure and of harmony which is, undoubtedly, what the directive function given to it by Freud evokes, but which undoubtedly is what is to be specified by us.

For if there is something that is produced, that is promoted, by any of the analytic formulations, it is that in no case can this harmony be conceived of as being of the order of the *complementary*, namely, as the union of male and female, however simply (4) the populace pictures it, in the style of the union of the key and the lock, or in anything whatsoever which is presented in these habitual modes of gametic symbols. Everything indicates to us - and it seems that I only have to make something of the fundamental function of this third element which turns around the phallus and castration - everything indicates to us that the mode of measure and proportion implied in the sexual act is of a completely different structure and, to say the word, is more complex.

This is what, the last time, in leaving you, I had begun to formulate, in evoking - since it is a matter of harmony - the relation described as anharmonic which ensures that on a simple line that has been drawn, a segment can be divided in two ways:

- by a point which is internal to it - a point *c* between *a* and *b* - giving some relation or other, for example, 1/2.
- Another point *d*, outside, can realise in the segments determined between it - this point *d*, for example - with the points *a* and *b* of the initial segment, the same proportion, 1/2.

Already, this had appeared more suitable to us to guarantee what is involved, according to all our experience. Namely, the relation of one term to another term that is presented to us as a place of unity, the unity, I mean, of the couple. That it is in relation to the idea of the couple, where it is found - I mean effectively, in the subjective register - that the subject has to situate himself, in a proportion that he may find has to be established by introducing an external mediation to the confrontation that he constitutes - as subject - to the **idea of the couple**.

This is only a first approximation and, in a way, the simple schema that allows us to designate what it is a matter of guaranteeing. Namely, the function of this *third element* that we see appearing at every turn of what one could call the *subjective field*, in the sexual relation, whether it is a matter (we pointed it out the last time) of what, subjectively, undoubtedly, appears there in the most distant fashion, namely, its always possible organic product, whether it is considered to be desirable or not. Whether it is this element, at first sight so different, so opposed, and, nevertheless, immediately connected to it by analytic experience, namely, this requirement of the phallus, which appears so internal, in our experience, to the sexual relation as it is subjectively lived. Is not the child-phallus equivalence something from which we can, perhaps, attempt to designate the relevance in some synchrony that we ought to discover in it and which, of course, does not mean *simultaneity*.

(5) What is more, does this third element not have some relation with what we have designated as the division of the Other itself, the $S(\emptyset)$?

It is in order to lead you along this path, that today I am introducing the relation which is structured in a very different order to that of the simple harmonic approach which the end of my last discourse designated. Namely, what constitutes the true *mean and extreme ratio*, which is not simply the relation of one segment to another, in so far as it can be defined in two ways, in a way that is internal or external to their conjunction, but the relation which posits, at the start, the equality of the relation of the smaller to the larger - the equality, I am saying, of this relation - to the relation of the larger to the sum of the two. Contrary to the indeterminacy, to the perfect liberty of the anharmonic relation - which is not nothing as regards the establishment of a structure (for I remind you that this anharmonic relation was something we already had to evoke last year as fundamental to any structure described as projective), but let us leave it now to attach ourselves to the following, which makes of the relation of the mean and extreme ratio, not any relation whatsoever - however directive, I repeat, this may appear, eventually, in the manifestation of projective constants - but a perfectly determined and **unique** relation, I mean numerically speaking.

I put on the board a figure that allows us to give its support to what I am stating here.

Here on the right are the segments in question. The first that I called small o , which for us is going to be the only element that we will be content with to build up everything that is going to be involved in this relation of measure or of proportion. On the single condition of giving to its correspondent, that you see here, from this point to this point (I do not want to give names of letters to these points in order not to

risk confusion, in order not to make your ears spin when they are stated) I designate from here (1) to here (2), we have the value 1.

On condition of giving this value 1 to this segment, we can be content, in what we are dealing with, namely, the relation described as that of the mean and extreme ratio, to give it purely and simply the value o , which means, on this occasion o/I . We have posited that the relation o/I is the same as the relation of $I/I+o$.

(6) Such is this perfectly fixed relation, which has extremely important mathematical properties that I have neither the leisure nor the intention of developing for you today. You should know simply that its appearance in Greek mathematics coincides with the decisive step of putting order on what is involved in the commensurable and the incommensurable.

In effect, this relation is incommensurable. It is, in the search for the mode in which there can be defined - in the way in which there overlap - the succession of points given by the staggered series of two units of measure, incommensurable to one another. Namely, what is most difficult to imagine: the way in which they become confused, if they are incommensurable. What is proper to the commensurable, is that there is always a point where the two measures will come together on the same footing. Two commensurable values will always end up at a certain multiple, different for the one and for the other, constituting the same magnitude. Two incommensurable values, never. But how do they interfere with one another? It is along the line of this research that there was defined this procedure which consists in reducing (*rabattre*) the smaller into the field of the larger and asking oneself what happens - from the point of view of measure - to the remainder.

For the remainder, which is here, which is obviously $I-o$, we will proceed in the same way. We will reduce it within the larger one. And so on to infinity, I mean, without ever being able to arrive at the end of this process. It is in this that there consists precisely the incommensurability of a relation that is nevertheless so simple.

Of all the incommensurables, this one is the one that, as I might say, always leaves the greatest separation in the intervals that define the rationality of the commensurable. A simple indication that I cannot give any further commentary on here.

In any case, you see that it is a matter, anyway, of something which, in this order of the incommensurable, is specified by a very special accentuation, as well as a purity of relation.

(7) To my great regret - because I think that all the guts of occultism are going to tremble on this occasion - I am indeed obliged, for the sake of honesty, to say that this small *o* relation is what is called the *golden number*. After which, naturally, there is going to vibrate, in the inner depths of your cultural acquisitions – especially as regards aesthetics - the evocation of anything you like: cathedrals ... Albert Dürer ... alchemical crucibles and all the other similar fiddle faddles!

I hope nevertheless that the seriousness with which I introduced the strictly mathematical character of the matter - and very specifically its problematic nature, which in no way gives the idea of a measure that is easy to conceive of - made you sense that it is something different that is at stake.

Let us see now some of the remarkable properties of this *small o*. I wrote them in black on the left. You can see already that the fact that $1+o$ is equal to the inverse of o , namely, to $1/o$, was already sufficiently guaranteed in the premises given by the definition of this relation. Because the notion that it consists in the relation of the smaller to the greater, in so far as equal to that of the greater to the sum, already gives us this formula, which is the same as this fundamental one:

$$o = \frac{1}{1+o}$$

Starting from this, it is extremely easy to see other equalities, whose obsolete and, in truth, for us, momentarily unimportant character is marked by the fact that I wrote in red the following equalities.

The only important thing to note being that the *one minus small o* which is here (1), can be equal to *o squared*, which is very easy to prove. And, on the other hand, that *two plus small o* which is here, and you can see - from the simple consideration of *one plus small o over one minus o* - how this *two minus small o* can be easily deduced. Which represents the following. Namely, what happens, when instead of involuting onto itself the reduction of segments, one develops them on the contrary towards the outside. Namely, that the *one over 2 plus small o* – namely, what corresponded earlier to our external segment in the anharmonic relation (it is equal to *one*, being obtained by the outside development of the *one* that the greater length represents) - the *one over two o* has the same value as this initial value that we started from, namely, *small o*, namely, *one over one plus o*. (cf Appendix)

Such are the properties of the mean and extreme ratio, in so far as they are going perhaps to allow us to comprehend something about what is involved in genital satisfaction.

As I told you, *small o* is one of the ordinary (*quelconque*) terms of this genital relation. (8) I am saying, one of the *ordinary* terms, **whatever may be its sex**. The girl, like the boy, in the sexual relation - the experience of the subjective relation in so

far as analysis defines it as oedipal - the girl like the boy enters it first of all as a child. In other words, as already representing the **product** - and I am not giving this term at random, we will have to take it up again subsequently - in so far as it allows to situate, as different from what is called creation, what, in our day, circulates as you know, everywhere and even without rhyme or reason, under the name of *production*.

This relation of the subject as such to what is involved in production should be defined, and is indeed the most imminent, the most current problem proposed to thinking. Whatever may be advanced, I am saying, in a dialectic of the subject where it is not seen **how the subject itself can be taken as a production**, is entirely without value for us. Which does not mean that it is easy to guarantee, starting from this root, what is involved in production.

It is so little easy to guarantee, that if there is anything an unprepared mind might well be astonished at, it is the remarkable silence - the silence of "*Conrard*" - that psychoanalysis maintains on this delicate question, which is nevertheless ... I ought to say which plays its part, however little, in our journalistic, political, domestic, daily, and anything you wish, even commercial life, and which is called *birth control*. We have yet to see an analyst saying what he thinks about it! It is all the same curious, in a theory that claims to have something to say about sexual satisfaction!

There must also, there must also be something in this which is very closely linked - not, I must say, in the most convenient fashion - with what one can call the religion of the Word (*Verbe*), since, undoubtedly, after the very surprising hopes about liberation from the Law (which corresponds to the Pauline generation in the Church), it seems that in what followed, many dogmatic statements were weakened. In the name of what? Of **production** of course, the production of *souls*! In the name of the production of souls, this announcement of the passage of humanity to beatitude as being very near, suffered, it seems to me, a certain postponement.

But you must not believe that the problem is limited to the religious sphere. Another announcement having been made about the liberation of man, it seems that the production of *proletarians* must have played some role, in the precise forms socialist societies took on, starting from a certain idea of the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. As regards this production, it does not seem that a much clearer measure has been reached, and as regards what is produced - just as the Christian field, in the name of the production of souls, has continued to allow there to appear in the world beings of whom the least that one can say is that their soul-like quality is quite mixed - in the same way in the name of the production of proletarians, it does not seem that (9) there is coming to light anything other than this something respectable certainly, but which has its limits, and that one could call, *the production of managers (cadres)*.

Therefore, this question of production and of the status of the subject *qua* product, is now presentified to us at the level of something which is indeed the first presentification of the Other, in so far as it is **the mother**.

We know the value of the unifying function of this presence of the mother. We know it so well that the whole of analytic theory (and practice) has literally tipped over

towards it and has completely succumbed to its fascinating value. The principle, from the origin, and this going (you are able to understand it because you saw it being supported in a debate which ended our last year), the whole analytic situation was conceived of as reproducing, ideally, I mean as being founded on the ideal of this unit of fusion (or this foundational unification if you wish), which is supposed to have united for nine months - as I recalled the last time - the child and the mother. Undoubtedly ...

- **A female voice:** We can't hear you, sir.
- **Dr. Lacan:** What?
- **The same voice:** It's very hard to hear you.
- **Dr. Lacan:** It's very hard to hear me. I'm terrible sorry that all of this is working so badly, but I am very grateful to you for telling me. I going to try to speak more loudly. Thank you.
- **The voice:** It's the microphone.
- **Dr. Lacan:** It isn't working at all today, huh. Good ...

... what unites then the child and the mother. It is precisely *not to make* this union of the infant and the mother ... (whatever way we qualify it, whether we make of it or not the function of *primary narcissism*, or simply the elective locus of *frustration* and of *gratification*) - this is precisely what is at stake, namely, not to repudiate this register, but to put it back in its correct place, that our theoretical efforts are about. It is in so far as there is somewhere - and I am saying at the level of sexual confrontation - this first affirmation of the unity of the couple, as constituted by what the religious statement has formulated as "*one flesh*". What a mockery! Who can affirm in any way whatsoever that, in what is called a genital embrace, the man and the woman form one flesh? Unless the religious statement here has recourse to what is put by analytic investigation, to what, in sexual union is *represented* by the maternal pole. I repeat: this maternal pole - since, in the oedipal myth, it seems to be confused with, to give purely and simply the partner of the little male - has in reality nothing to do with the male-female opposition. Because the girl just as much as the boy has to deal with this maternal locus of unity, as representing for her what she is confronted with at the moment of approaching what is involved in sexual union.

(10) For the boy as for the girl what he is as product, as **small o**, has to be confronted with the unity established by the idea of the union of the child with the mother and it is in this confrontation that there emerges this *I-o*, which is going to bring us this third element, in so far as it also functions as the sign of a lack, or, if you wish again, to use the humorous term, of the *little difference*, of the little difference which comes to play the capital role in what is at stake in terms of sexual union in so far as it involves the subject.

Of course, common humour or common sense, as you wish, makes of this little difference, the fact that, as they say, some people have one and the others do not. This is not at all what is in question, in fact. For the fact of not having it plays for the woman, as you know, just as essential a role, just as mediating and constitutive a role in love, as for man. Much more, as Freud has underlined, it seems that her effective lack confers some advantages on her. And this is what I am now going to try to articulate for you.

In effect, in effect, what do we see if not that, as we said earlier, the extreme ratio of the relation - in other words what reproduces it in its exterior - is going to serve us here in the form of the 1, which gives - which reproduces - the correct proportion, that defined by the **small o**, outside the relation thus defined as the sexual relation.

In order that one of the partners should posit himself *vis-à-vis* the other as an equal *one*, in other words, in order for there to be established the dyad of the couple, we have here, in the relation thus inscribed - in the measure of the mean and extreme ratio - the support, namely, this second 1 which is inscribed on the right and which gives again the proportion with respect to the whole - on condition that there is maintained in it this third term of the **small o**.

It is here, of course, there resides the fact that we can say that, in the sexual relation, it is in so far as the subject manages to make himself equal to the Other, or to introduce into the Other itself, repetition (the repetition of 1), that it finds itself reproducing, in fact, the initial relation, the one which maintains, always pressing, this third element, which here is formulated by the **small o** itself.

In other words, we rediscover here the same process, the one that I previously inscribed, in the form of a bar of division, as making the relation of the subject to the big O begin, in so far as - in the mode in which a division is produced - the O barred is given. That in relation to this big O, it is an S barred which comes to be established, and that the remainder is given there by a **small o** which is an irreducible element of it.

(11) What does that mean? What it means, is that we are beginning to conceive of how it can happen that such a local organ, as I might say, and in appearance a purely functional one, like the penis, can here come to play a role in which we can glimpse what is involved in the true nature of satisfaction in the sexual relation.

Something, in effect, somewhere, in the sexual relation, can symbolise, as one might say, the elimination of this remainder. It is in so far as it is the organ which is the seat of detumescence that, somewhere, the subject can have the illusion - a deceptive one undoubtedly, but even though it is deceptive it is nonetheless satisfying - that there is no remainder, or, at the very least, that there is only a perfectly vanishing remainder.

This, in truth, might be simply of the order of the comic, and certainly belongs to it, because this is, at the same time, what gives its limit to what one can call *jouissance*, in so far as *jouissance* is supposed to be at the centre of what is involved in sexual satisfaction.

The whole schema which supports, *fantastically*, the idea of discharge, in what is involved in instinctual (*pulsionnelles*) tensions, is in reality supported by this schema, where one sees there being imposed this limit to *jouissance*, on the basis of the function of detumescence.

Undoubtedly, this is the most disappointing aspect that one could imagine for a satisfaction, if, in effect, what was involved was purely and simply *jouissance*. But

everyone knows that, if there is something that is present in the sexual relation, it is the *ideal of the jouissance of the other*, and, moreover, what constitutes its subjective originality. For it is a fact that if we limit ourselves to organic functions, nothing is more precarious than this intersection of *jouissances*. If there is, indeed, something that experience reveals to us, it is the radical heterogeneity of male *jouissance* and female *jouissance*.

This indeed is why there are so many good souls occupied, more or less scrupulously, with verifying the strict simultaneity of their *jouissance* with that of their partner. I am certainly not going to lay out today the range of the many failures, lures and deceptions that this lends itself to. But the fact is that what is involved is something quite different to this little exercise in erotic acrobatics.

If something - it is well enough known, the place it has taken in a certain psychoanalytic verbiage is also known - if something comes to be founded around the *jouissance* of the Other, it is in so far as the structure that we have stated today gives rise to the *phantom of the gift*.

It is because she does not have the phallus that the woman's gift takes on a privileged value as regards the individual (*l'être*) and is called love, which is - as I have defined it - *the gift of what one does not have*.

(12) In a love relationship, the woman finds a *jouissance* that is, as one might say, of the order precisely of *causa sui*, in so far as, in effect, what she gives in the form of what she does not have, is also the cause of her desire.

She becomes what she creates, in a purely imaginary fashion, and, precisely, what makes her an object - in so far as in the erotic mirage she can be the phallus - to be it and at the same time not be it. What she gives by not having it, becomes, I have just told you, the cause of her desire. It is only, one can say, because of this, that the woman completes genital union in a satisfying fashion.

But, of course, in the measure that, having provided the object that she does not have, she does not disappear into this object. I mean that this object only disappears - leaving her to the satisfaction of her essential *jouissance* - through the intermediary of masculine castration. So that, in short, she, for her part, loses nothing in it, since she only puts into it what she does not have and that, literally, she creates it.

And this indeed is why **it is always through identification to the woman that sublimation produces the appearance of a creation**. It is always in the mode of a genesis, which is certainly obscure - before I expose its lineaments before you here - but very strictly linked to the gift of feminine love, in so far as it creates this vanishing object - and what is more, in so far as she lacks it - which is the all powerful phallus. This is why there can be somewhere in certain human activities - which remain for us to be examined, according to whether they are a mirage or not - what is called *creation*, or *poetry*, for example.

The phallus is indeed then, if you wish, from one point of view, the penis. But it is in so far as it is its lack with respect to *jouissance* that constitutes the definition of the subjective satisfaction to which there is remitted the reproduction of life.

In fact, in copulation, the subject cannot really possess the body that he embraces. He does not know the limits of possible *jouissance*, I mean the one that he can have of the body of the Other, as such, because these limits are *uncertain*. And this is all that is constituted by this beyond that *scoptophilia* and *sadism* define. That phallic failure takes on the ever renewed value of a fainting of the being of the subject, is something that is essential to masculine experience, and what makes this *jouissance* be compared to what is called *the return of the little death*.

This *fainting* function - for its part, much more direct, directly experienced, in masculine *jouissance* - is what gives the male the privilege from which has emerged the illusion of pure subjectivity.

If there is an instant, a somewhere, when man can lose sight of the presence of the (13) third object, it is precisely in this, this fainting moment at which he loses, because it fails, what is not simply his instrument, but, for him as for the woman, the third element of the relation of the couple.

It is starting from there that there were constructed, even before the advent of what we are calling here the status of pure subjectivity, all the illusions of knowledge.

The imagination of the *subject of knowledge*, whether it is before or after the scientific era, is a male forgery. And male in so far as it has some of the characteristics of impotence, that it denies the *minus something* around which there is constructed the effect of causation of desire, *which takes this minus for a zero*. As we have already said, *taking the minus for a zero*, is proper to the subject and the *proper name* is here designed to mark its trace.

The rejection of castration marks the delusion of thinking, I mean, the entry of the thinking of the *I*, as such, into the real, which is properly what constitutes, in our first quadrangle, the status of the *I am not thinking*, in so far as syntax alone sustains it.

This is what is involved, as regards structure, in what allows there to be edified what Freud designates for us about sexual satisfaction in its relation to the status of the subject.

We will remain there for today, designating for the next time what we now have to advance on the function of *acting-out*.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 15 March 1967.

I want to give all the time, usually reserved for our talk to Dr. Green, whom you see on my right. I am beginning, then, a little bit earlier to say very quickly the few words of introduction that I have thought of for this occasion, without moreover knowing in advance, even, that he had, as he has just told me, many things to tell us, namely, that very probably he will take the whole hour and a half. There you are.

Good. In virtue of the secret and always very sure texture of my super-ego, since today, in short, implicitly, I have given myself a holiday, I found a way to have to speak yesterday evening at 5 o'clock, at 5 o'clock in the evening, to the young psychiatric generation at Sainte-Anne. That means, good God, to the generation of analytic candidates.

What was I doing there? In truth, not a lot, given that those who had preceded me, and specifically my pupils and the ones best equipped to teach them what is destined to illuminate them about my teaching, Mme Aulagnier for example, Piera (what will we not find on this *pierra*?...), Serge Leclair, even Charles Melman, to name them alphabetically, and even others ... yes

Well then, apart from the distraction that pushes me sometimes to say "yes" when I am asked something, I had all the same some reasons to be there. Namely, that all of this was happening in the framework of a teaching which is that of my old friend, of my old comrade, Henri Ey. There you are

Our generation, since it is the same, Henri Ey's and mine, had then some role. This old comrade, in particular, is the one to whom, in my opinion, I would easily give pride of place, as regards a function which is nothing other than the one that I would call that of a *civiliser*.

(2) It is difficult for you to imagine what the students' residence was like in Sainte-Anne, when the two of us arrived there, with others also who had more or less the same vocation, but in fact, who broke down on the way!

The under-development, as I might say, as regards logical arrangements, since we are talking about logic here, were really, at this level, around 1925, huh! - it is not yesterday - something extraordinary. Well then, since that time, Henri Ey introduced his great machine: *organodynamism* ... it is a doctrine. It is a false doctrine, but an incontestably civilising one. In this respect, it has fulfilled its role. One could say that there is not, in the field of psychiatric hospitals, a single mind that has not been touched by the questions that this doctrine puts in the forefront and these questions are questions of the greatest importance.

That the doctrine is false is almost secondary as compared to this effect. First of all, because it cannot be otherwise. It cannot be otherwise, because it is a medical doctrine. It is necessary, it is essential for the status of medicine, that it should be dominated by a doctrine. We have always seen that. The day when there is no longer any doctrine, there will no longer be any medicine either. On the other hand, it is no

less necessary, as experience proves, that this doctrine should be wrong; otherwise it would not be able to lend its support to the medical status.

When the sciences - with which medicine now surrounds itself and helps itself, allows itself ... opens itself to them on all sides - have joined together at the centre, well then, there will no longer be a medicine. There will perhaps still be psychoanalysis, which will then constitute medicine. But this will really be a pity, because it will be a definitive obstacle for psychoanalysis becoming a science. This is why I do not wish it.

Well then, last night, I was lead before this chosen audience, to speak about the operation of alienation. About which, I think, for the majority, given that people do not move so easily from Sainte-Anne to the Ecole Normale, (*It is a long way!*), I thought that, for them, I ought - for those who constitute in short the sector that is summoned to psychoanalytic responsibilities, in other words, for those who are going to become psychoanalysts - I thought I ought to pinpoint for them, because this was really the place, to pinpoint for them how there is posed, as one might say, what is called the inaugural choice which is, as you know, a false choice because it is a forced choice. What are the names suitable for this choice in this central sector of those who are going to be in charge in the future? So then, as a way, like that, of getting them to prick up their ears, I gave it suitable names, appropriate names. I am forced to allude to it, because it is rare for even restricted conversations like these to remain secret, especially in a students' residence, and something about these names may come to your ears in the form of some echoes, as something to gloat over. They are not (3) necessarily helpful names, obviously. But between the "I am not thinking" and "I am not", this has not advanced either, as regards a larger sector, as the fundamental constituents of this primary alienation. This is not very helpful either for the totality of this zone that I detach in the human field, in the shape of the field of the subject. Either he is not thinking, or he is not. Moreover, this changes if you put it in the third person. It is indeed a matter of the "I am not thinking" or "I am not". So then, this tempers a good deal the value of terms that I used last night, especially if you think that in virtue of the operation of alienation, one of these two terms always remains excluded. Then, I showed that the one which remains takes on a completely different value, that is in a way positive, in proposing itself - in imposing itself even - as a scalar term (*terme d'échelle*) which proposes itself, precisely, to the criticism of what I invoked at that moment, that I invoked by considering that the proper position of a candidate is *criticism*. It was very urgent. Because if the old situation was that of the underdevelopment of logic, the current situation in this generation, through a sort of paradox and by an effect which is precisely that of analysis, the incidence, *casus*, of the best optimism, may be in many of these cases *pessimus*, the worst. The others were underdeveloped in logic, but these have a tendency to be its monks. I mean that in the way that monks withdraw from the world, they withdraw also from logic. They wait until their analysis is finished to think about it.

I urged them in a lively fashion to abandon this point of view. I am not the only one, moreover. And it happens that there are others, that there is someone at my side, for example, who is one of those who, in this order, try to awaken, while there is still time, - I mean not at all necessarily at the end of the training analysis, but also perhaps

in the course of it and perhaps this is better - the critical vigilance of those that he may have occasion to indoctrinate.

Nevertheless, I must say that it is as a psychoanalyst, as a representative of this field, the problematic one where for the moment there is still being played out the whole future of psychoanalysis, that Mr. Green is given the floor by me today. This by reason of the fact, good God, which is very important, that he proposed it himself. I mean that it is in no way because he is one of my students if not one of my followers that he is going to tell you today the reflections that the last terms that I have brought forward concerning the logic of the phantasy have inspired in him. I am now going to give him the floor, exactly for all the time that he wants, and reserve to myself the right to profit for your use and for mine, from what he has to say today.

Green, you have the floor.

(presentation by Dr. A. Green)

(32) I want to thank Green very much for the contribution that he brought to us today. I do not need, I think, for people who have their ears well tuned, to underline everything that, in his presentation, was able to satisfy me profoundly. If he contributed numerous questions, on different planes, about my agreement or my distance from Freud, or about the elucidation, the putting in question, of one or other point of what is here a "*work in progress*", of something which is constructed and is developed before you and for your purposes, this is something else that I ought to be grateful to him for. Since, thanks to the stage that his intervention constitutes, the level of these questions is posed which ought to allow us subsequently, not alone what I will undoubtedly do - while also designating the point that I want to connect up with - to reply to him, but even to pursue the construction, I would say, in taking the bearings of this level contributed by the really profound, substantial study that he produced before us today, with reference - I can say it and I think that he will take it as a homage - with reference to my discourse.

I can only add my compliments for the long suffering attitude that he adopted in the course of this little test, to which we were all subjected and I ought in a way to apologise to him since undoubtedly it was not he personally who was aimed at on this occasion.

I am giving you a rendezvous, then, for the next meeting on Wednesday ... four plus seven, that gives us the 11th of April; there will be no seminar on the 4th of April as some might have expected.

In the audience: The 12th, the 12th!

Dr. Lacan: The 12th! The 12th of April.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 12 April 1967

Non licet omnibus adire... since no one ever finishes it: ...*Corintho*. I pronounced the first word in the Latin way, in order to suggest to you the translation that "it is not the bus for Corinth" (*laughter*). The adage, which was transmitted for us in Latin from a Greek formula, signifies more, I think, than the remark that at Corinth the prostitutes were dear! They were dear because they initiated you into something. Therefore, I would say, that it is not enough to pay the price. This is rather what the Greek formula meant.

It is not open to all, either, to (quotation marks)"become a psychoanalyst".

This is way it has been for centuries as regards being a geometer. "*Let there enter here*" ...you know what comes next: "*only those who are geometers*". This requirement was inscribed on the facade of the most celebrated philosophical school of antiquity and it indicates clearly what is involved: the introduction to a certain mode of thinking, that we can specify, by taking a further step, namely, that it is a matter of *categories* (in the plural).

Categories means (as you know), in Greek, the equivalent of the word "*prédicaments*" in Latin: what is most radically predicable to define a field.

This is something that carries with it a specified register of proof. This is why, following the Platonic requirement, there was heard manifested in a reiterated fashion the pretension of proving *more geometrico*; which bears witness to the degree to which the aforesaid style of proof represented an ideal.

You know - I would like you to know, I indicated to you as much as I can, namely, within the limits of the field that is reserved to me - that metamathematics has now, through the range of these categorical reconstructions that have historically punctuated the conquests of geometry, this metamathematics - I am saying - has radicalised still more the status of the *provable*.

As you know, geometry is distancing itself more and more from the intuitions that grounded it - spatial ones for example - in order to attach itself to being no longer (2) anything more than a specifiable, and moreover variously layered, form of proof. To the point that in the end, metamathematics is no longer occupied with anything other than the order of this layering, with the hope of arriving at the most radical requirements for proof.

Let us imagine a science that can only begin with what is - in the reconstructions, thus evoked, of a certain field - their terminal point. There is no point, for such a science, in stammering about an initial survey, in which there would be ordered a first familiarity with the measurable, or even the transmission of the most promising

formulae, emerging singularly under the aspect of the secret of calculation. I mean there is no point in it, or it is at the very least deceptive and vain, to dwell on the Babylonian stage of geometry. This, because every standard of measurement, encountered at the start, carries from it the stain of a mirage that is impossible to dissipate.

This is what we highlighted first of all in our teaching, in denouncing - without naming it yet with its term of the imaginary, as we have pinpointed it - the deceptions of narcissism, when we established the function of the *mirror stage*. Encountering such an obstacle was the lot of many sciences, in effect. It is even here that there is situated the privilege of geometry.

Here of course, there is offered to us almost immediately, the purity of the notion of magnitude. That it is not what foolish people believe is not something that is going to detain us here. For the science that we are imagining, it is a completely different tablature. It is not simply that the standard of measurement is inoperant in it, but that the very concept of a unit does not fit in, as long as one has not realised the sort of equality in which its element is established, namely, the heterogeneity that is hidden in it.

Just remember the equation of value, in the first steps of *Capital* (... by Marx for those who might not know it ... you never know there are perhaps people who are distracted!). Clearly in his writing on this equation, it is the proportion which results from the price of two pieces of merchandise. So much of one equals so much of the other: an inverse relation between the price and the quantity of the merchandise obtained. Now, what is at stake is not at all what is clear, but what it conceals, in terms of what the equation retains in itself, which is the *difference* in nature between values thus connected and the *necessity* of their difference.

It cannot, in effect, be the proportion, the degree of urgency, for example, of two habitual values, which grounds the price, nor of that - and for good reason! - of two exchange values. In the equation of values, one intervenes as a use value and the other as an exchange value. You know that we see a similar trap being reproduced, when it is the value of work that is at stake.

The important thing, is that it is proved, in this "critical" work (as it entitles itself) that *Capital* is, that if it fails to recognise these traps any proof remains sterile and goes astray.

The contribution of Marxism to science - I am certainly not the one who has done this (3) work - is to reveal what is latent as necessary at the start - at the very start I mean of political economy.

It is the same thing for psychoanalysis, and this sort of latent thing, is what I am calling - what I call, for my part - what I call **structure**.

Having given my reservations about every effort to drown this notion - by circumscribing, from starting points necessary in a certain field that cannot be defined otherwise than the critical field - to drown this in something that I identify badly under

the vague name of “structuralism”, you must not believe, of course, that this latency is lacking in geometry! But history proves that it is at its end-point now that one can be content to notice it, since it is not *by chance* that the prejudices about the notion of magnitude, which come from its handling in the real, have damaged its logical progress. Again it is only now that it can be known, by noting that the geometry that has been constructed no longer has any need of measurement, of the metrical nor even of the space that is described *real*.

It is not the same, as I told you, for other sciences and the question: why can some of them not start up without having developed these facts, I mean the facts that one can describe as final, since they belong to the structure. Perhaps we can now pose its question as relevant, if we can make it homologous to these facts.

In truth, we are ready for it, since we have noted as well as practised this structure, from encountering it in our psychoanalytic experience, and because our remarks - if we introduce them from a point of view, that is moreover trivial (I am pushing open doors here) about the order of sciences - our remarks are not without aiming at results such that it is indeed necessary, after all, for this order - I am saying: the order of sciences - to accommodate itself to them.

The structure I have taught, ever since I have been teaching - not since I have been writing, since I have been teaching - the structure is that the subject is a fact of language (*fait de langage*), is something to do with language (*fait du langage*).

The subject thus designated is what the function of the word is generally attributed to.

It is distinguished for having introduced a style of being which is its own energy (I mean in the Aristotelian sense of the term *energy*). This style is the *act* in which he keeps quiet (*il se tait*). *Tacere* is not *silere*, and nevertheless they overlap at an obscure frontier.

To write, as has been done, that there is no point in searching in my *Ecrits* for any allusion to silence, is a stupidity. When I wrote the formula of the drive - on the top right of the graph - as *S barred diamond of capital D* (the demand): it is when the demand keeps quiet that the drive begins.

But if I did not speak at all about silence, it is because precisely *sileo* is not *taceo*. The act of keeping quiet does not liberate the subject from language. Even if the essence of the subject, culminates in this act - if he brandishes the shadow of his liberty - if this *keeping quiet* remains heavy with an enigma, which made heavy, for (4) such a long time, the presence of the animal world, we no longer have any trace of it except in phobia. But let us remember that for a long time the gods were put there.

The eternal silence of anything whatsoever, now only half scares us because of the appearance that science presents to common consciousness of positing itself as a knowledge which refuses to depend on language, without for all that this so-called consciousness being struck by this correlation: that it refuses at the same time to depend on the subject.

What really happens, is not that science does without the subject, but that it clears it out of language, I mean expels it. The fact is that it creates its formulae from a language that is emptied of the subject. It starts from a prohibition on this subject-effect of language. This has only one result, which is to prove that the subject is only an effect of language but it is an empty effect. Henceforth, the void circumscribes it, namely, makes it appear as a pure structure of language. This is the sense of the discovery of the unconscious.

The unconscious is a moment where there speaks, at the place of the subject, pure language; a sentence about which there is always question of knowing who has said it.

The unconscious, its status, that one can well say to be scientific, since it originates because of science, the fact is that the subject ... the fact is that it is the subject which, rejected from the symbolic, reappears in the real, making present there what is now done in the history of science - I mean accomplished - presentifying there its only support, language itself. This is the sense of the appearance, in science, of the new linguistics.

What does language itself speak about, when it is thus unmoored from the subject, but because of that, *representing* it in its structural radicalised void? This we know in general: it speaks. It speaks about sex, with a word - in that I am going to tackle the sexual act to question it - in that the sexual act represents silence, namely - you are going to see how necessary it is - with a tenacious, obstinate word to force this silence and for good reasons.

I will take the time all the same ... I will take the time to dissipate here in a fashion that I do not believe is pointless, the first prejudice to present itself. It is not new, of course! But to illuminate it in a novel way is always important.

The first prejudice to present itself in the psychologising context - the difference is constituted there with reference to the statement, the only true one, that we have given about the unconscious - could be formulated from the fall, in our statement, of an index essential to the structure. Does this unconscious speak in the name of sex, as I said?

Here, frivolous minds - and God knows they abound - swallow this "about" (*du*). The unconscious speaks sex: it bells, it rails, it coos, it mews. It belongs to the order of all those vocal noises of the word. It is a "sexual aspiration". Such is the sense, in effect, that is pre-supposed, in the best cases, by the use that is made of the term life-instinct in psychoanalytic rumination.

Every erroneous use of discourse about the subject has the effect of reducing this discourse itself to the level of what it phantasies in place of the subject. This psychoanalytic discourse of which I speak is itself a rattle. It rattles by summoning up the figure of an Eros that is supposed to be a unitive power and again having a universal impact. To take as the same essence what holds together the totality of the cells of an organism and - as having same essence - the force that is supposed to push the individual thus composed to copulate with another, belongs properly to the domain of delusion, at a time when meiosis, I think, is sufficiently distinguished from

mitosis, at least under a microscope! ... I mean as regards everything that is presupposed by the anatomical phases of the metabolism that they represent.

The idea of *Eros* as a soul with goals contrary to those of *Thanatos* and working through sex, is a discourse of a "*midinette au printemps*"; as it was put by the late lamented Julien Benda, someone who has been quite forgotten in our day but after all who represented, for a while, this sort of swash-buckling style which results from an *intelligencia* that has become useless.

If something was required to put those who are going astray back on the axis of the unconscious *structured like a language*, would not the facts furnished by these objects, that were never yet appreciated in the way that we were able to do it, be sufficient: namely, the phallus, the different partial objects?

We will return to what results from their inmixing into our thinking, on the turn taken by the fumes of one or other vague contemporary philosophy, more or less qualified as existentialism. For us, these objects testify that the unconscious *does not speak sexuality*, any more than it sings it, but that by producing these objects it finds itself - precisely what I said - *speaking about it*. Since it is by being in a relation of metaphor and metonymy to sexuality that these objects are established.

However strong, however simple these truths may be, they must generate a very great aversion. Since it is by avoiding their remaining at the centre, that they can no longer be anything more than the pivot of any articulation of the subject, that there is engendered this sort of droll freedom to which I alluded more than once in these last sentences and which characterises lack of seriousness.

What can be *said* about what the unconscious says about the sexual act?

I might say, if I wanted to imitate here Barbey d'Aurevilly: "What is" - one day he imagined saying one of these demoniacal priests that he excelled in simulating - "what is the secret of the church?" The secret of the church, as you know, which is well (6) designed to terrify old women in the provinces, "is that there is no purgatory".

So then I will amuse myself by telling you what will perhaps have a certain effect on you. And, after all, it is not for nothing that I am punctuating what I am going to say about this stage. The secret of psychoanalysis, the great secret of psychoanalysis, is that **there is no sexual act**.

This could be sustained and illustrated by reminding you of what I called *act*, namely, this reduplication of a motor effect as simple as "I am walking". This ensures simply that by just *being said*, with a certain accent, it is repeated, and, from this reduplication, takes on the signifying function that makes it able to be inserted into a certain chain in order *to inscribe* the subject in it.

Is there, in the sexual act, this something in which - *in the same form* - the subject might inscribe itself as sexed, establishing in the same act its union to the subject of the sex that is described as opposite?

It is quite clear that everything in analytic experience speaks against this. There is nothing born of this act, which does not testify that there can only be established a discourse in which this third *counts*, as I earlier sufficiently announced by the presence of the phallus and the partial objects, and whose function must now be articulated, in such a way that it demonstrates to us what role this function plays in this act. A function that is always sliding, a function of substitution, which is equivalent almost to a sort of juggling and which, never allows us in any case to posit in the act - I mean in the sexual act - the man and the woman opposed in some eternal essence.

And nevertheless ... I would efface what I said about the "great secret" as being that there is no sexual act, precisely by the fact, that it is not a great secret! That it is obvious, that the unconscious ceaselessly cries it at the top of its voice and that this indeed is why psychoanalysts say: "Let us close its mouth when it says that, because if we repeat it along with it, people will no longer seek us out!" What is the point if there is no sexual act?

So then, the accent is put on the fact that there is sexuality (*de la sexualité*).

In effect, it is indeed because there is sexuality that there is no sexual act! But the unconscious, perhaps, means that one lacks it! In any case, it really seems to be so!

Only for this to have its impact, it must be accentuated from the first that the unconscious *says it*.

You remember the anecdote about the parish priest who preaches, huh? He preached against sin. What did he say? He was against it ... (*laughter*). Well then, the unconscious which, for its part, also preaches in its way about the subject of the sexual act, well then, it is *not for it!*

It is from there, first of all, that one must begin to conceive of what is involved when it is a question of the unconscious. The difference between the unconscious and the (7) parish priest deserves all the same to be picked out at this level. The fact is that the parish priest says that sin is sin, instead of, perhaps, the unconscious which for its part makes a sin of sexuality. There is a little difference.

On this point, the question is going to be of knowing how the following is proposed to us: that the subject has to measure himself against the difficulty of being a sexed subject.

This is why I introduced into my last logistical remarks, this reference whose aim I think I sufficiently indicated. To establish the status of the little *o*-object, the one called the *golden number*, in so far as it gives properly in an easily handled form its status to what is in question, namely, the incommensurable.

To introduce it, we start from the idea, that in the sexual act there is no question at all that this small *o*, in which we indicate this something which is in a way the *substance* of the subject ... (if you understand this substance, in the sense that Aristotle designated it in the *ousia*, namely - which is forgotten - the fact is that what specifies

it is precisely the following: that it cannot in any way be attributed to any subject, the subject being understood as *upokeimenon*). This little **o**-object, in so far as it serves us as a module to question the one who is supported by it, does not have to search for its complement in the dyad - what it lacks in order to be two - which would be very desirable. The fact is that the solution to this relation, thanks to which the two can be established, depends entirely on what is going to happen in the reference of the **small o**, the golden number, to the One in so far as it generates this lack, which is inscribed here from a simple effect of continuation (*report*) and, at the same time, of difference, under a form of *one minus o* which, by calculation (very simple calculation that I already wrote on this board so that I can ask you to find it yourselves) is formulated by o^2 .

I am only recalling it here, in order to put - at the start of what I want to introduce, about what it is essential to articulate, for you, as I said earlier - at the beginning, at the start of our science, namely, what necessarily, although paradoxically, introduces us to this sexual knot, in which there flees and makes off from us the act which, for the moment, constitutes our question. The link of this **small o**, in so far as here you see it represents, *darstellt*, supports and makes present first of all the subject himself. That this is the *same* as is going to appear in the exchange, whose formula we are now going to show as being able to make use of this object that we touch in the dialectic of the treatment, under the name of partial object. The relation then of these two aspects of the function **small o**, with this index, this form of object, which is at the principle of castration.

I will not close this cycle today. That is why I want to introduce it by two formulae responding to a sort of problem that we pose *a priori*. What value should be given to this little **o**-object - if it is indeed there as having to represent, in the sexual dyad, the (8) difference - for it to produce two results between which there is suspended our question today?

A question that can only be tackled along the path that I am leading you, in so far as it is the logical path. I mean the path of logic. The *dyad* and its uncertainties is what logic itself develops from the beginning, if one knows how to follow its trace.

I cannot retrace for you here the history of logic, but let it be enough for me to evoke here, at the dawn of the Aristotelian *Organon*, which is something quite different to simple formalism, if you know how to plumb it. At the first point of the logic of the predicate, there is established the opposition between *contraries* and *contradictories*. We have made, as you know, a good deal of progress since, but this is not a reason for not interesting ourselves in what constitutes the importance and the status of their entry into history.

It is moreover not ... (I am saying it also in parenthesis, for those who sometimes open books on logic) to prevent us - when we take up line by line what Aristotle stated at the same time, not even in the margin - introducing what, for example, Lukasiewicz has since completed. I am saying this, because in the excellent book of the two Kneale's, moreover, I was struck by a protestation, like that, which arose in turning a page. Because to say what Aristotle said, Mr. Lukasiewicz, for example, is lead to

distinguish what belongs to the principle of contradiction from the identity principle, and from the principle of bivalence! There you are.

The identity principle, is that A is A. You know that it is not clear that A should be A. Luckily, Aristotle does not say it, but that it should be pointed out is all the same interesting!

Secondly, that a thing can be at once, *at the same time*, A and not A, is again something quite different!

As regards the principle of bivalence, namely, that a thing ought to be either true or false, this is a third thing again!

I find that to point it out rather illuminates Aristotle. And to point out that Aristotle surely never thought of all these niceties, has nothing to do with the question! For it is precisely what allows its importance to be given to what I am going to start again from now, namely, this crude business of contraries. First of all, in so far as, for us - I mean as regards what is not in Aristotle, but which is already indicated in my previous teaching - we will designate it by the **not without** (*pas sans*). (This will be of use of us later. Do not worry! Allow me to lead you a little bit.)

Contraries and this is what gives rise to the logical question of whether, yes or no, the particular proposition implies existence. This has always shocked people enormously. In Aristotle it incontestably implies it. It is even on this that his logic depends. It is curious that the universal proposition does not imply it!

I can say, "every centaur has six limbs". It is absolutely true! Except there are no (9) centaurs. It is a universal proposition. But if I say, (in Aristotle!): "there are centaurs who have lost one", this implies that centaurs exist, for Aristotle. I am trying to reconstruct a logic that is a little less lame as regards centaurs! But this does not interest us for the moment.

Simply there is *no* male *without* a female. This is of the order of the real. This has nothing to do with logic. At least in our day.

And then, there is the *contradictory*, which means the following: if something is *male*, then it is not *non-male*, nothing else.

It is a matter of finding our way in these two distinct formulae. The second is of the symbolic order; it is a symbolic *convention*, which has a name, precisely, *the excluded third*.

This ought to make us sense sufficiently that it is not from this angle that we are going to be able to arrange things since, at the start, we have sufficiently accentuated the function of a difference, as being essential to the status of the sexual dyad. If it can be grounded - I mean subjectively - we will need this third.

Let us try, let us not try ... let us not make an ugly grimace by claiming to attempt what we have already introduced, namely, the logical status of the contrary. Of the

contrary in so far as here *the one and the other* are opposed to *the one or the other* there.

This *one and the other*, is the intersection - I mean logical intersection - male and female. If we want to inscribe in a proper way this *one and the other* in the form of the intersection of Boole's algebra, this means this little lune of spatial overlapping. And it fills me with consternation to have once again to present this figure to you because, of course, you see clearly that it does not satisfy you to any degree! What you would like, is that one should be male and the other female, and that from time to time they step on one another's toes! This is not what is in question. It is a matter of logical multiplication.

The importance of recalling this Boolean figure to you, is to remind you, as opposed to here, which is the very important locus of the game of heads or tails (in which I tried to form those who followed me the first years, at least for a trimester, as a way of making them understand what a signifier was). In opposition to the game of heads or tails, which is inscribed quite simply in a succession of *pluses* or *minuses*, the relation of *the one and the other* is inscribed in the form of a multiplication, I mean a logical multiplication, a Boolean multiplication.

What value - since this is what is at stake - can we suppose for the element of difference, in order that the result should be, quite clearly, the dyad? But, of course, to know it is really within everyone's reach. You have all at least preserved this tincture of the mathematics that you were so stupidly taught, provided you are over thirty. If (10) you are twenty, you have perhaps had the chance to hearing it spoken about in a slightly different fashion. What matter! You are all on the same footing, as regards the formula $(a + b)$ multiplied by $(a - b)$. Here is the difference: there is one of them which has it in addition, the other which has it less. If you multiply them that gives you $a^2 - b^2$. What is necessary for $a^2 - b^2$ to be - quite clearly - equal to two, to the dyad? It is very easy: it is enough to make what is written here, b , equal to the *root of minus 1*. Namely, to a numerical function that is described as an *imaginary number* and which now intervenes in all calculations, in the most common fashion, to ground what is called - an extension of real numbers - *complex numbers*.

If it is a matter of specifying a in two opposite fashions, with plus something and with minus something, and for the result to be 2, it is enough to make it equal to i . This is how one usually writes, in an abbreviated fashion, and moreover one much more convenient, this function of the square root of minus one which is described as imaginary.

You must not believe that what I am explaining here is of any use to us! I am introducing it here, on the brink of what I have to explain to you, because it will be of use of us subsequently and because it illuminates a *rapprochement*. What is presented to us as the other possibility, namely, if we ask ourselves in advance what must be obtained - which also has its interest for us! For it is very interesting also to know why, why, in the unconscious, as regards the sexual act, well then, precisely, what circumscribes, what marks the difference in the first rank of what the subject itself is. Well then! Not alone are we forced to say that this remains at the end, but it is required, for it to be a sexual act that it remain at the end! In other words, that $(a + b)$

multiplied by $(a - b)$ equals ... $a!$ In order for this to be equal to \mathbf{o} - (when \mathbf{o} , of course, is naturally not this O here that I was speaking about). [The convention adopted by the translator requires this switch from a to \mathbf{o}]

The O , here, we are going to make (like earlier, when it was a question of obtaining 2) we are going to make equal to 1. It is to be clearly understood that it is $(1 + i)(1 - i)$ which is equal to 2.

$(1 + \mathbf{o})(1 - \mathbf{o})$ gives \mathbf{o} , on condition that \mathbf{o} is equal to this golden number - it is worthwhile repeating it - that I am using to introduce, for you, the function of the little \mathbf{o} -object. Verify this: when small \mathbf{o} is equal to the golden number the product of $(1 + \mathbf{o})(1 - \mathbf{o})$ is equal to \mathbf{o} . [A note in the margin of one French manuscript says: "Jacques Lacan's golden number is thus the inverse of the golden number of the mathematicians"]

This is where I am going to suspend for a time, the time of the lecture that I have to finish, what I wanted to propose to you in terms of a logical *grid*.

(11) Let us now come to consider what is involved as regards the sexual act.

What is going to be of use to us in dealing with it, is what justifies the fact that earlier I introduced Marx's formula.

Marx tells us, somewhere in the *Philosophical manifestos*, that the object of man is nothing other than his very essence taken as object; that the object also to which a subject refers, by essence and necessarily, is nothing other than the proper essence of this non-objectified subject.

People, some of whom are among those who are listening to me, have clearly shown, the aspect that I would describe as primary, of this Marxist approximation. It would be curious if we were to be very far ahead of this formulation.

This object that is at stake, this proper essence of the subject, but objectified - are we not the ones who can give it its veritable substance?

Let us start from the fact - on which we have based ourselves for a long time - that there is a relation between what psychoanalysis states on the subject of the fundamental law of sex: the prohibition of incest - in so far as for us it is another reflection, already very sufficient, of the presence of the *third* element in every sexual act, in so far as it requires the presence and foundation of the subject.

There is no sexual act - this is the entry of psychoanalysis into the world - which does not carry the trace of what is called incorrectly, the traumatic scene, in other words, of a fundamental referential relation to the parental couple.

You know how things are presented at the other end. Levi-Strauss: *The elementary structures of kinship*, the order of exchange on which there is established the order of

kinship. It is the woman who pays the price, it is women who are exchanged. Whatever they maybe: patriarchal, matriarchal, is does not matter! What the logic of inscription imposes on the ethnologist is to see how the women travel between the lines of descentance.

It seems that between one and the other there is some gap. Well then, this is what we are going to try today to indicate: how this gap, for us, is articulated. In other words, how, in our field, it is filled.

We noted earlier that the origin of economic unmasking, demystification, is to be seen in the conjunction of two values of a different nature. This indeed is what we have to deal with. And, for the psychoanalyst, the whole question is this: seeing that what creates a problem about the sexual act is not *social*, since it is here that the principle of the social is established, namely, in the law of an exchange.

Exchange of women or not, this does not concern us yet. For if we perceive that the problem is of the order of value, I would say that, already, everything begins to be sufficiently illuminated, by giving it its name. At the source of what is reduplicated, (12) of what duplicates, in its structure, value at the level of the unconscious, there is something that takes the place of exchange-value, in so far as, from its false identification to use-value, there results the foundation of the object of merchandise. And one can even say more: capitalism is necessary for this choice, which far anticipates it, to be revealed.

In the same way the status of the subject, as science forges it, is necessary - this subject reduced to its function of interval - for us to perceive that what is at stake, in terms of the equalising of two different values, is suspended here between *use-value* - and why not?, we will see this later! - and *jouissance-value*.

I underline: *jouissance-value* plays here the role of *exchange-value*.

You ought, right away, to sense clearly that this function of *jouissance-value* is something that concerns the **very heart** of analytic teaching. And that, perhaps, this is what is going to allow us to formulate in a completely different fashion what is involved in castration. For, after all, if something is accentuated, in the very notion, however confused it may still be, in the theory of instinctual maturation (*maturation pulsionnelle*), it is all the same the fact that there is no sexual act - I mean in the sense that I have just articulated its necessity - which does not involve (a strange thing!) castration.

What do we call castration?

It is not, all the same, like in the formulae so nicely put forward by little Hans that "the little tap is unscrewed"! For it is necessary for it to remain in its place. What is in question, is what is displayed everywhere, moreover, in analytic theory, is that it cannot take its *jouissance* in itself.

I am at the end of my lecture today. So that here, you can be sure, I am abbreviating. I will come back to it the next time. But it is simply to accentuate the following, from

which I would like to start; namely, what this equation of two values, described as *use* and *exchange*, contains as essential for our material.

Imagine man reduced to what has to be described - he has never yet been reduced institutionally - to the function that the stallion has among domestic animals. In other words, let us use English, where as you know, to say *une chèvre*, you say *a she-goat*, which means an *elle-bouc*. Well then, let us call man, appropriately, a *he-man*. It is quite conceivable, instrumentally. In fact, if there is something that gives a clear idea of use-value, it is what one does when one brings along a bull to cover a certain number of times. And it is quite curious that no one should have imagined inscribing the elementary structures of kinship in this circulation of the all-powerful phallus!

It is a curious thing. It is we who discover that it is the woman who represents this phallic value!

(13) If *jouissance* - I mean penile *jouissance* - carries the mark described as that of castration, it seems that it is in order that, in a way that we will call with Bentham, "fictional", the woman should become what one enjoys (*jouit*).

A singular pretension! Which opens up to us all the ambiguities proper to the word, *jouissance*, in so far as in terms of the juridical development that it involves since then, it implies possession.

In other words, here is something turned inside out. It is no longer the sexual organ of our bull - use-value - which will serve for this sort of circulation in which there is established the sexual order. It is the woman, in so far as she herself has become on this occasion, the locus of transference of this value subtracted at the level of use-value, in the form of *object of jouissance*.

It is very curious! It is very curious, because this leads us: if I introduced earlier for you, the *he-man* - here I am, and moreover in a way very much in conformity with the genius of the English tongue, which calls *la femme* "woman", and God knows that literature has gloated over this "wo", which indicates nothing good (*laughter*) - I would call her *she-man*, or again, in French, by this word - which is going to lend itself, once I introduce it, to some gloating and, I suppose an enormous amount of misunderstanding: *l* - apostrophe - *homme-elle*.

I am introducing here the *homme-elle*! (*laughter*). I present her to you, I hold her by the little finger. She will be of great service to us.

The whole of analytic literature is there to bear witness to the fact that everything that has been articulated about the place of the woman in the sexual act is only in the measure that the woman plays the function of the *homme-elle*.

Let the women who are here not wince, for in truth, it is precisely to reserve, where it is, the place of this Woman (capital W), about whom we have been speaking from the beginning, that I am making this remark.

Perhaps everything that is indicated to us about feminine sexuality - in which moreover, in conformity with eternal experience, a role is played that is eminently one of *masquerade*, namely, the way in which she uses an equivalent of the phallic object, which has always made her the wearer of jewels - "indiscreet jewels", Diderot says somewhere. We are going to be able, perhaps, to finally know how to make them speak.

It is very curious that, from the subtraction somewhere of a *jouissance* which is only chosen for its character of easy handling - if I can designate penile *jouissance* in this way- we should see there being introduced here, with what Marx and ourselves call the *fetish*, namely, this extracted, fixed, use-value, a hole somewhere - the only point of insertion necessary for any sexual ideology.

This subtraction of *jouissance* somewhere, is the pivot.

But you must not believe that the woman - there where she is the *alienation* of analytic theory and that of Freud himself who is the great enough father of this theory (14) to have noticed this alienation in the question that he repeated: "What does the woman want?" - you must not believe that the woman, on this subject, is any worse off! I mean that she disposes of **her** own *jouissance* in a way that totally escapes this ideological grasp.

Even though she is an *homme-elle*, she is never lacking in resources and it is because of this that even feminist demands do not involve anything particularly original. It is still the same masquerade that continues, simply with a contemporary flavour. Where she remains impregnable, impregnable as a woman, is outside the system described as the sexual act.

It is starting from there that we have to gauge the difference between what is involved, concerning the act, as regards the respective status of the original sexes - man and woman - in what the sexual act establishes, in so far as a subject can be grounded on it. They are brought to the height of their disunion through the point to which I have led you today. Because if I spoke to you about the *homme-elle* ... the *homme-il*, for his part has disappeared! Ha! There are no more of them! Since they are precisely, as such, withdrawn from use-value.

Naturally this does not prevent them circulating *really*. Man, as a penile value, circulates very well. But it is clandestine! Whatever may be the certainly essential value that this plays in social climbing. Through the left hand, generally speaking.

I would say further. We ought not to omit this. If the *homme-il* is not recognised in the status of the sexual act in the sense that it is foundational in society, there exists "a society for the protection" of *homme-il*. This is even what is called masculine homosexuality. It is on this point that, in a way, is marginal and humorously pinpointed, that I will stop today, simply because time has set a term to what I had prepared for you today.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 19 April 1967

I brought you a certain number of statements the last time. I formulated ones such as, for example, “*there is no sexual act*”. I believe that the news of this has gone all over town (*laughter*). But anyway, I did not give it as an absolute truth. I said that this is what was properly speaking articulated in the discourse of the unconscious.

That said, I framed this formula and some others into a sort of reminder, that I must say was rather dense, of what gives it its sense and also its premises. This lecture was a sort of stage marked by assembly points, which will perhaps serve as a written introduction to something, then, that I am pursuing, that I want to pursue today, I would say in a form that is perhaps more accessible, in any case conceived of as an easier path, a first way of disentangling the articulations into which I am going to advance, which are still those that I presented to you on the last two or three of my lectures. Namely, this triple articulation between the **small o**, one value *One* (which is only there to give its sense to the value **small o**, given that this is a number, properly speaking the golden number) and a second value *One*.

Naturally, I could, once again, re-articulate them in a fashion that I could describe as apodictic, show their necessity. I will proceed differently, thinking rather to begin by exemplifying the use that I am going to make of them, even if it entails taking things up again subsequently in the necessity way, which I am therefore going to put to one side. I am going to do it in a mode that one could call eristic.

This, then, thinking of those who do not know what is at stake. What is at stake is psychoanalysis. It is not necessary to know what is involved in psychoanalysis to draw profit from my discourse. But you must still have spent a certain time dealing with this discourse. I must suppose that this is not the case for everyone, especially among those who are not psychoanalysts.

If I am concerned in this way about those who are to be introduced to what I called my (2) discourse, it is, of course, not without thinking about psychoanalysts. But it is also the fact that up to a certain point, it is necessary for me to address myself to those whom I have first of all defined, and whom I found myself one day pinpointing as being “the number”. It is necessary for me to address myself to them in order that my discourse should return, in a way, from a point of reflection to the ears of psychoanalysts.

It is in effect striking - and *internal* to what is at stake - that the psychoanalyst does not enter all that easily into this discourse, precisely in the measure that this discourse involves his practice. And that it is demonstrable - the continuation even of my discourse, of my discourse today, will put the point on why it is conceivable - that the

psychoanalyst finds in his very status, I mean in what establishes him as psychoanalyst, this something which creates a resistance very specially to the point that I introduced, inaugurated, in my last discourse.

To say the word: the introduction of *jouissance*-value poses a question, at the very root of a discourse, of any discourse, which can be entitled a truth-discourse. At least in as much - understand me - as this discourse may enter into competition with the discourse of the unconscious, if this discourse of the unconscious is indeed, as I told you the last time, really articulated by this *jouissance*-value.

It is very curious to see how the psychoanalyst always has to retouch a little this competitive discourse. It is precisely where its eventual statement is true, that he always finds something to correct in it. And it is enough to have a little experience to know that this contestation is always strictly correlative - when one can measure it - to this sort of gluttony which is linked in a way to the psychoanalytic institution, that constituted by the idea of having oneself recognised on the plane of knowledge.

Jouissance-value, I said, is at the source of the economy of the unconscious.

The unconscious, I said again - underlining the article *du* - speaks of sex (*du sexe*). Not speaks sex (*parle sexe*) but speaks of sex.

What the unconscious designates for us are the paths of a knowledge. To follow them, one must not want to know before having taken them.

The unconscious speaks of sex. Can one say that it *says* sex? In other words, does it say the truth? To say that it *speaks* it is something which leaves in suspense what it *says*. One can speak in order to say nothing, as often happens. This is not the case with the unconscious.

One can say things without speaking. This is not the case for the unconscious either. It is even the relief - unnoticed of course - like many other features, which depend on what I articulated at this starting point that the unconscious speaks (*ça parle*). If one had a little bit of an ear, one could deduce from it that it is necessary to speak in order (3) to say something! I have never seen anyone yet who brought this out, even though in my Rome discourse it is said in ten different ways. One of these was recently presented to me in the course of conversations with very pleasant young people, very taken by a part at least of my discourse, in connection with the famous formula, which has had its good fortune all the more, of course, because it is a formula - distrust always wanting to gather everything into a formula - when I said that the analysand speaks to you the analyst, then speaks about himself, and that when he speaks to you about himself to you.

The formulae which, like this one, have had the good luck to be picked up, ought to be put back in their context in order to avoid generating confusion.

Does the unconscious, then, *say* the truth about sex? I did not say that, though Freud, you should remember, already raised the question. This of course deserves to be specified. It was in connection with a dream, a dream of one of his female patients,

obviously constructed - this dream - to pull his leg, I mean Freud's; to make him believe the moon is made of blue cheese. The generation of disciples at that time was sufficiently fresh for it to have been necessary for him to explain this as a scandal. In truth it is easy to get out of it. The dream is the royal road to the unconscious! But it is not, in itself, the unconscious.

To pose the question at the level of the unconscious is a different kettle of fish (*paire de manches*) that I already turned inside out- I mean the aforesaid sleeves - which I always do very quickly leaving no place for ambiguity, when, in my text called *The Freudian Thing*, written in 1956 for Freud's centenary - I made emerge this entity which says: "Me, the truth, I speak".

The truth speaks. Since it is the truth, it has no need to say the truth.

We hear the truth. And what it is saying can only be understood by someone who knows how to articulate what it is saying. What it is saying where? In the symptom, namely, in something that is going wrong. This is the relation of the unconscious, in so far as it speaks, to the truth.

It nevertheless remains that there is a question that I opened up, last year, at my first lecture which appeared - when I say last year, I do not mean last October/November, the October/November before - the one that was published in the *Cahiers pour la psychanalyse*, under the title of *Truth and science*. The question remains open in it as to why - the statement by Lenin that introduces this journal - why "the theory will conquer because it is true"?

What I said earlier about the psychoanalyst, for example, does not immediately give to this statement a very convincing sanction.

Marx himself on this matter, as on so many others, let slip something that does not fail to be an enigma. Like many others before him, in effect, beginning with Descartes, he proceeded, as regards the truth, according to a singular strategy that he states somewhere in these pungent words: "The advantage of my dialectic is that I say things (4) little by little and, since they believe that I am finished, in rushing in to refute me, they only display their stupidity". It may appear curious that someone from whom there proceeds this idea that "the theory will conquer because it is true", should express himself in that way.

Politics of the truth and, in a word, its complement, in the idea that, in short, only what I called earlier "the number" - namely, what is reduced to being only number, namely, what is called in the Marxist context "class consciousness", in so far as it is the class of number - cannot be mistaken! A curious principle, nevertheless, on which all those who have the merit of having pursued Marxist truth in faith have never varied.

Why should class consciousness be so sure in its orientation, I mean, when it even knows nothing or knows very little about the theory, when class consciousness functions, to listen to the theoreticians, even at the uneducated level, if it is reduced

properly to those who belong to the level defined on this occasion by the term of “ the class excluded from capitalist profits”?

Perhaps the question about the force of the truth is to be sought for in this field into which we are introduced, the metaphorical one that we can - I repeat in a metaphor - call the *truth-market*, if, like the last time, you can glimpse that the main-spring of the market is *jouissance*-value.

Something is in effect exchanged, which is not the truth in itself. In other words, the link between the one *who speaks* to the truth is not the same depending on the point at which he sustains his *jouissance*.

This indeed is the whole difficulty of the position of the psychoanalyst. What does he do? What does he enjoy (*de quoi jouit-il*) at the place he occupies? This is the horizon of the question that I still have only introduced, marking it at its splitting-point, with the term of *desire of the psychoanalyst*.

The truth, then, in this exchange which is transmitted by a word, whose horizon is given to us by analytic experience, is not in itself the object of exchange. As can be seen in practice, the psychoanalysts who are here bear witness to it by their practice. Naturally they are not here for nothing, they are here for the bit of truth that may fall from this table, even indeed what they can make of it by faking a little.

Such is the necessity they are obliged to by the fact of a status that is fettered as regards the *jouissance*-value attached to their position as psychoanalysts. I had, I can say, confirmation. I will undoubtedly have it again. I am going to take an example.

(5) Someone who is not a psychoanalyst, M Deleuze to name him, presents a book by Sacher Masoch: *Présentation de Sacher Masoch*. He writes on masochism undoubtedly the best text that has ever been written! I mean the best text, compared to everything that has been written on the theme in psychoanalysis. Naturally he has read these texts. He is not inventing his subject. He starts first of all from Sacher Masoch, who has all the same his little word to say when masochism is involved! I know well that his name has been shortened a little, that nowadays one says, “maso” (*laughter*). But in any case it is up to us to mark the difference between “maso” and “masochist”, or even “masochian” or “masoch” just by itself. In any case, this text, to which we will certainly return, for, literally, I can say... (as a subject on which I have not remained mute, since I wrote *Kant avec Sade*, but in which there is literally only a glimpse, specifically on the fact that sadism and masochism are two strictly distinct paths, even if of course, one should always locate both of them in the structure, that every sadist is not automatically “maso”, nor every “maso” a sadist who does not know it. It is not like a glove that one turns inside out. In short, it could be that M Deleuze - I will swear it all the more from the fact that he quotes me abundantly - has profited from these texts. But is it not striking that this text really anticipates everything that I am, now, going to have effectively to say about it, along the path that we have opened up this year. While there is not a single one of the analytic texts which do not have to be completely taken up again and remade in this new perspective.

I took care to have it confirmed to me by the author himself whom I am quoting, that he has no experience of psychoanalysis.

Such are the points that I want to mark here, with their date, because after all, with time, they may change, the points which take on an exemplary value and deserve to be retained even if only to require of me that I take them fully into account, I mean in detail.

With this, it remains for me to enter into the articulation of this structure, whose very simple line, which is on the board, gives the basis and foundation and which you already are not without having had, from my mouth, some clarifications about the way it is going to be of use.

Nevertheless, I repeat, the **small o**, here, is what already, in connection with the object thus designated, I was able to make you sense as being in a way what one could call the "setting" (*monture*), the setting of the subject. A metaphor which implies that the subject is the jewel and the setting - what supports it, what sustains it - the frame. Already, I recall, nevertheless, that we have defined and imaged the little **o**-object as what falls in the structure, at the level of the most fundamental act of the existence of the subject, since it is the act from which the subject, as such, is engendered, namely, repetition. The *fact* of the signifier, signifying what it repeats, is what engenders the subject and something *falls* from it.

(6) Remember how the cut of the double loop, in this tiny mental object that is called the *projective plane*, cuts these two elements which are, respectively, the Moebius strip which, for us, figures as a support of the subject, and the ring which necessarily remains of it, which cannot be eliminated from the topology of the projective plane.

Here, this little **o**-object is supported by a numerical reference in order to image what is incommensurable about it - incommensurable to what is involved in its functioning as subject, when this functioning operates at the level of the unconscious, and which is nothing other than sex, quite simply.

Naturally, this golden number is only a support chosen here because it has the following privilege - which makes us retain it, but simply as symbolic function - has this privilege, that I already indicated to you as I could, for want of being able to give you - this would certainly take us too far - the most modern and the strictest mathematical theory of it, of being, as I might say, the incommensurable which circumscribes least quickly the intervals in which it can be localised. In other words, the one which, in order to arrive at a certain limit of approximation, demands, of all the forms - they are multiple and I think almost infinite - of the incommensurable, to be the one which demands most operations.

I recall to you at this point what is involved. Namely, that if the **small o** is here referred back to the 1, allowing its difference from the 1, ($1-\mathbf{o}$), to be marked by \mathbf{o}^2 - this depending on its own property as **small o**, which is that it should be such that $1+\mathbf{o} = 1/\mathbf{o}$, from which it is easy to deduce that $1-\mathbf{o} = \mathbf{o}^2$. Do a little multiplication and you will see it immediately. The \mathbf{o}^2 subsequently will be referred back to this **o** which is here in the -1 (here for example) and will generate an \mathbf{o}^3 , the which \mathbf{o}^3 will be referred

back to \mathbf{o}^2 , in order for there to emerge, at the level of difference, an \mathbf{o}^4 which will be referred back thus, so that there can appear here an \mathbf{o}^5 .

You see that, on either side, there are displayed, one after the other, all the even powers of \mathbf{o} on the one side and the odd powers on the other. Things being such that by continuing them to infinity, since there will never be a stop or a term for these operations, their limit will nevertheless be \mathbf{o} , for the sum of the even powers, \mathbf{o}^2 – namely, the first difference - for the sum of the odd powers.

It is here then that there will come to be inscribed, at the end of the operation, what in the first operation, was here marked as the difference. Here, at the \mathbf{o} , the \mathbf{o}^2 is going to come at the end to be added, realising in its sum, here, the 1, constituted by the complementing of \mathbf{o} by this \mathbf{o}^2 .

Which here is constituted by the addition of all the remainders, being equal to the first \mathbf{O} , from which we started.

I think that the suggestive character of this operation does not escape you, all the more so because for a good while - for a least a month or a month and a half - I have been pointing out to you how it could support, give an image, for the operation of what is (7) realised on the path of the sexual drive, under the name of sublimation.

I will not come back to it today, because I must advance. Simply, by indicating it in this way, to give you the aim of what we are going to have to do in making use of this support. As you will see and already have suspected, it will not be enough for us. Everything indicates to us - even in the very “sublime” success, it has to be said, of what it presents to us - makes us sense that if things were thus, if sublimation were able to make us reach this perfect *One*, itself placed at the horizon of sex, it seems to me that given the time that people have been talking about this *One*, it should be known. There must remain, between these two series - those of the even powers and the odd powers of the magical **small o** - something like a gap, an interval. In any case, everything in experience indicates it.

Nevertheless, it is not a bad thing to see that with the most favourable support for such traditional articulations, we already see, still, the necessity for a complexity from which, in any case, we ought to start.

Let us not forget that if the first 1, the 1 on which I have projected the succession of operations, is there, it is only there to image the problem with which, precisely, as such, the subject has to be confronted, if this subject is the subject that is articulated in the unconscious. It is, namely, sex. The 1 in the middle of the three elements of my little pocket ruler - this 1 in the middle, is the locus of sexuality.

Let us stay there! We are at the door!

Sexuality, huh, is a type, a moire, a puddle, a “black tide” as has been said for some time. If you put your finger in it and you put it to the tip of your nose, you will smell what is involved. When people say “sexuality”, that refers to sex. For it to be part of sex, it would be necessary to articulate things a little bit more firmly.

I do not know, here, what point of a bifurcation I ought to engage myself on, because it is an extremely litigious point. Must I give you here, immediately, the idea of what the subjectification of sex might be - if it worked! Obviously you can dream about it! Indeed that is all you do, because this is what constitutes the text of your dreams! But this is not what is at stake. What could that be, if it were so? If it were so and if you give a sense to what I am in the process of developing before you: a signifier. On this occasion what is called - and you are going to see immediately how embarrassed you are going to be! - for if I say "male" or "female", all the same, huh, that is very animal, so it is! So then, I do not mind, "masculine" or "feminine". There, it proves right away that Freud, the first one who advanced along this path of the unconscious, speaks quite clearly about this. There is not the slightest way, I am saying ... (not that I am saying to you who are here before me "what proportion of you is masculine and (8) what proportion feminine?") This is not what is at stake. It is not a matter either of biology, nor of the organ of Wolf and Muller) ... it is *impossible* to give a sense, I mean an analytic sense, to the terms *masculine* and *feminine*.

If a signifier, nevertheless, is what represents a subject for another signifier, this ought to be here the elective terrain. For you see how good things would be, how pure, if we could put some subjectification - I mean a pure and valid one - under the term *male*. We would have what we need. Namely, that a subject manifesting itself as male, would be represented as such, I mean as subject, with respect to what? To a signifier designating the term *female*, and there would be **no need** for the latter to determine the slightest subject! The reciprocal being also true!

I underline that if we question sex as regards its possible subjectification, we are not giving proof here of any manifestly exorbitant requirement for intersubjectivity. It may be that this would hold up like that. It would not only be suitable, but what, quite clearly - if you question what I called earlier class consciousness, the class of all those who believe that man and woman exist - could not be anything other than that and as that, it would be very nice if it were so. I mean that the source of what is comically called - I must say, that here, the comic is irresistible - "the sexual relation", if I could make ... (in a gathering like this, which is becoming familiar to me, a gathering in which I can make understood, in just the right way, that there is no sexual act, which means, there is no act at a certain level and this indeed is the reason why we have to search out how it is constituted) ... if I could bring it about that the term "sexual relation" should take on in each one of your heads exactly the farcical connotation that this locution deserves, I would have gained something!

If the sexual relation existed, this is what it would mean: that the subject of each sex could touch something in the other, at the level of the signifier. I mean that this would involve in the other, neither the conscious nor even the unconscious! Simply agreement. This relation of signifier to signifier, when it is found, is undoubtedly what makes us marvel in a certain number of striking little points ... tropisms in the animal. We are far from what is involved in man, and perhaps, moreover, in the animal, where things only happen through the intermediary of certain *phanères* reference points, which, certainly, must lead to some failures!

In any case, the virtue of what I have thus articulated is not completely disappointing. I mean that these signifiers, designed so that one presents and represents to the other, in the pure state, the opposite sex, already exist at the cellular level! They are called sexual chromosomes!

It would be surprising if we were able one day, with some chance of certainty, to establish that the origin of language – namely, what happens *before* it engenders the (9) subject - had some relation with these operations of matter which give us the aspects that we find in the union of sexual cells. We are not at that point and we have other things to do! Simply, let us not be surprised at the distance we are at from this level, in which there would be manifested, in short, something which is not at all designed not to seduce us, at this level where there could be designated something which might be called “the transcendence of matter”. Believe me, I am not the one who invented that, it already appeared in some other people. Simply if I do not designate this extreme point - while expressly underlining that it is completely unresolved, that the bridge has not been made - it is simply to mark for you that on the contrary, in the order of what is called more or less properly thinking, people have, throughout the course of the centuries - I mean those that we know about at least - never done anything other than talk as if this point had been resolved! For centuries, knowledge, under a more or less masked form, a more or less imaged, a more or less contraband one, never did anything other than parody what would be involved if the sexual act existed to the point which allows us to define what is involved, as the Hindus say, between *Purusha* and *Parakrita*, between *animus* and *anima*, and all the rest of the music!

What is required of us, is to do more serious work. Work that is required simply by the following. The fact is that between this interplay of primordial meanings, as they might be inscribable in terms, I underline, implying some subject, well then, we are separated from it by the whole thickness of something that you can call, as you wish, *the flesh* or *the body*, on condition of including in it the specific things contributed by our condition as mammals, namely, a quite specific and in no way necessary condition, as the abundance of a whole kingdom proves to us (I am speaking about the animal kingdom). Nothing implies the form that the subjectification of the sexual function takes on for us, nothing implies that what comes into play here, symbolically, is necessarily linked to it. It is enough to reflect on what this might be in an insect and, moreover, besides, the images which may depend on it - let us not deprive ourselves of using them - to make there appear, in phantasy, one or other singular trait of our relations to sex.

So then, I took one of the two paths offered to me earlier. I am not sure that I was right. Now I have to take up the other again; the other and in order to designate for you why the *One* comes here on the right of the **o**, at this point that I designated as representing here locally, by a signifier, the fact of sex.

There is here a surprising convergence between what is really at stake – namely, what I am in the process of telling you - and what I would call on the other hand the major point of psychoanalytic abjection.

I ought to say that you owe it uniquely to Jacques-Alain Miller, who made a reasoned index of my *Ecrits*, that it does not have the alphabetical index at which I would have, (10) I ought to say, however little, exulted in imagining it beginning with the word *abjection*. It never happened. It is not a reason why this word should not take its place.

The *One* that I am putting here - through a purely mathematical reference, I mean that it images simply the fact that in order to talk about the incommensurable I have to have a unit of measure and there is no unit of measure that is better symbolised than by the One - the subject *in the form* of its support the **small o** is measured, **is measured by sex** (*se mesure au sexe*) - you should understand that as if one were to say that he is measured by the bushel or by the pint. That is what the *One* is: the *sex unit*, nothing more!

Well then, this *One* is not nothing. It is always a matter of knowing the degree to which it converges, as I said earlier, with this *One* which reigns at the very mental foundation of psychoanalysts, to this day, in the form of the unitive virtue, which is supposed to be at the source of everything that they unfold in terms of a discourse on sexuality. The vanity of the formula that sex “unites” is not enough. It is also necessary that the primordial image of it should be given them by ... the fusion from which the enjoyer of his enjoyment (*jouissance*) is supposed to benefit: the little *baby* in its mother’s womb (where no one up today has been able to bear witness that it is in any more comfortable position than is the mother herself in carrying it); and where there is supposed to be exemplified what you heard again here, last year, in the discourse of M Conrad Stein (whom, moreover, we have not seen since, to my regret), as necessary for psychoanalytic thinking, as representing this lost Paradise of the fusion of the ego and the non-ego, which, I repeat, in listening to them, the psychoanalysts, is supposed to be the *cornerstone* (*la pierre angulaire*), without which nothing could even be thought about the economy of the libido - for this is what is at stake!

I think that there is here a veritable touchstone – I take the opportunity to signal it to whoever intends to follow me. The fact is that anyone who remains in any way attached to this schema of *primary narcissism*, may well put in his buttonhole all the Lacanian carnations he wants, the aforesaid person has nothing to do, from near or far, with what I am teaching.

I am not saying that this question of primary narcissism, is not something that poses a question in the economy of the theory and deserves one day to be emphasised.

I am beginning today precisely, by remarking that if *jouissance-value* takes its origin in the lack marked by the castration complex - in other words, the prohibition of auto-eroticism being brought to bear on a precise organ, which only plays there the role and the function of introducing this element of unit (*unité*) at the inauguration of a status of exchange, from which there depends everything that is going to be subsequently economy, in the speaking being whom we are dealing with in sex - it is clear that the important thing is to see the *reversal* which results from it. Namely, that it is in so far as the *phallus* designates - from something raised to a value, by this *less* which the

castration complex constitutes- this something which constitutes precisely the distance between the **small o** and the unit of sex.

(11) It is starting from there, as the whole experience teaches us, that the individual (*l'être*) who is going to come, to be raised, to the function of partner - in this test to which the subject is put, of the sexual act - the woman, to image my discourse, is going to take on, for her part, her value as *object of jouissance*.

But, at the same time and by the same operation, look at what has happened. It is no longer a matter of he enjoys (*il jouit*); he enjoys something (*il jouit de*). *Jouissance* has passed from the subjective to the objective, to the point of sliding to the sense of possession, in the typical function, as we have to consider it as deducible from the incidence of the castration complex and - I already brought this forward the last time - it is constituted by this change of direction which makes of the sexual partner a phallic object. A point I am only highlighting here, in the direction of the "man" to the "woman" (both in inverted commas), in so far as it is here that the operation is, as I might say, most scandalous. For it can be articulated, of course, just as much in the other direction, except that the woman does not have to make the same sacrifice, since it is already attributed to her, at the beginning.

In other words, I am underlining the position of what I would call the *male fiction*, which can be expressed more or less as follows: "one is what has" (*on est ce qui a*). There is no one happier than a chap who has never seen further than the end of his nose and who expresses a provocative formula like that: "to have or not" ... "one is what has". The one who has you know what... And then: "*one has what is*". The two things hold up. "*What is*", is the object of desire: it is the woman.

What I should call this simplistic fiction is being seriously revised. For some time people have noticed that it is a little bit more complicated. But, again, in a report named "*Direction of the treatment and the principles of its power*", I thought I had to re-articulate with care that people do not seem to have seen very clearly what is involved in what I would oppose to this male fiction, as being - to take up one of my words from the last time - the value *homme-elle*: "*one is not what one has*" (*on n'est pas ce qu'on a*). This is not altogether the same sentence, pay attention, huh? "One is what has", but "one is not what one has". In other words, it is in so far as the man has the phallic organ that he is not it. Which implies that, on the other hand, one can and even one *is* what one has - what one does not have. Namely, it is precisely in so far as she does not have the phallus that the woman can take on its value.

Such are the points that it is extremely necessary to articulate at the start of any induction into what the unconscious says about sex, because this is properly what we have learnt to read in its discourse! Only, where I speak about castration complex - with, of course, all the litigiousness that it involves, for the least that one can say is that it may lend, however little, to an error about the person, especially on the male side, concerning what Genesis describes for us so well, namely, the woman conceived of as this something of which the body of man has been deprived. (This is called, in (12) this chapter that you know well, a "rib", for the sake of modesty!) What has to be seen, is that in any case, where I speak about the castration complex as original in the economic function of *jouissance*, the psychoanalyst gargles the term of "objectal

libido". The important thing is to see that if there is something that deserves this name, it is precisely the carry-over of this negated function which is grounded in the castration complex.

The *jouissance-value* prohibited at the precise point, at the organ-point constituted by the phallus, is what is brought forward as "objectal libido"; contrary to what is said, namely, that the libido described as narcissistic is supposed to be the reservoir from which there has to be extracted what will be objectal libido.

This may appear as a subtlety to you. Because after all, you will tell me, if, as regards narcissism, there is the libido which is brought to bear on one's own body, well then - even though you specify things - it is a part of this libido that is at stake, you will tell me. In what I am presently stating, it is nothing of the kind! Very precisely because to tell you that one thing is extracted from another, it would be necessary to suppose that it is purely and simply separated from it by way of what is called a *cut*, but **not simply** by a cut, by something which subsequently plays the function of an *edge*.

Now this is precisely what is debatable and not simply what is debatable, but what is already settled. The fact is that there is no homomorphism, there is no structure such that the phallic scrap (as one might say) is graspable in the same way as a part of narcissistic investment. The fact is that it does not constitute this edge, which is what we must maintain between what allows narcissism to construct this false assimilation of the one to the other which is the doctrine in the traditional theories of love. The traditional theories of love, in effect, leave the object of the good within the limits of narcissism.

But the relation that is really involved - the economy of *jouissance* - is distinct. Objectal libido, in so far as it introduces something which, as one might say, leaves us desiring the exact note of the act which claims to be sexual, is of a nature (it has to be said) that is properly speaking settled, distinct. It is here that there lies the live point, around which it is essential not to weaken. For, as you will subsequently see, it is only around this point that there can take their correct place, especially everything that happens in the field of the analytic act, whether it is a matter of the relation of the analysand-analyst or the effects of regression.

I apologise for leaving things in suspense. The law of my discourse does not allow me to cut it always at the end point that suits me. Time interrupts us here today. I will continue the next time.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 10 May 1967

Good ... I want first of all to announce to you that to my great regret I will not be giving this lecture - or this seminar, whatever you want to call it - next Wednesday. Because of the fact that there is a strike and that after all I intend for my part to respect it, besides the inconveniences that would be caused by the fact that it is announced that, all electricity being cut off, what has given me so much trouble, for several sessions, to make function here for your benefit and my own, would be rendered useless. Therefore, it should be written up again between now and the end of the session, so that the people who arrive late will not be unaware of the fact that the next seminar, since it is called that, will only take place in a fortnight's time. This, I believe, is the 10th May, so that gives us then the 24th. We will meet therefore on the 24th.

Has anyone any observation to make to me about what I communicated to you at the last session? Has anyone reflected especially - I am putting my cards on the table - about what I wrote on the blackboard?

It seems not ... and I do not know whether or not this should make me breathe again! Is it because of the profound distraction with which people receive what I may write? But in any case, I was furious with myself when I went home, for having written on the blackboard the formula of **small o**, which is, of course, the square root of 5 minus 1 over 2 - and then immediately afterwards, the value of the square root of 5 as 2.236 ... anyway, and something ... I was making some jokes about the logarithmic tables, but I would have been better off specifying for you, of course, that what I was writing there was not the value of **small o**, of course, but the square root of 5. You must not imagine that **small o** is two point something or other! Since on the contrary **small o** is less than unity. It is a figure which is a little bit greater than six tenths, and this is something that it is not pointless to know when you want to inscribe these lengths or these lines that I make use of, and to put in an almost exact proportion the length of **small o** next to the (2) length defined as being equivalent to the unit.

The second error that I made, is that after a long series of equalities, specifically that inscribed by the *one plus o over 1*, for example, I finished at the end by writing, equals **small o**, when it was $1/o$ that should have been written. Good, in any case, let those who have copied these formulae correct them!

We continue to advance into our object for this year and, of course, this logic that I am developing before you under the name of a *logic of the phantasy*, has a goal that I frequently defined and which must necessarily finally come to be applied. To be applied to something that could only be, of course, a work of sifting or even properly

speaking criticism, against what is advanced at a certain level of experience and in a theoretical form, which, sometimes, leads to mistakes.

With this in mind, I opened, or rather reopened, for your use, a work which did not fail to appear important to me when it was produced, and it is quite accessible to all of you since it has been translated into French under the name of *La névrose de base*, by someone who undoubtedly lacks neither talent nor analytic penetration and who is called Mr. Bergler. It is a work that I recommend to you - since you are again going to have a fortnight before you - that I recommend to you by way of example or of occasional ... support, of the use that our work here can be put to. In recommending it to you by way of example, of course, this does not mean that I am recommending it to you as a model! It is, nevertheless, as I have already said, a work of great merit. It is certainly not along these paths that we will in any way see being clarified what is involved in the nature of neurosis. But undoubtedly, this does not mean either that something is not glimpsed there about some essential mainspring. The notions of structure which are put forward here (and which, moreover, in the sense that I am using this word at the moment, are not the privilege of this author), what is stated usually in the notion of *layers* - that for the same reason one layers things from the superficial to the deep or, inversely, from the deep to the superficial - those specifically from which the author starts. Which means that in the cases that he envisages, but again it must be added that he considers them as by far the most numerous in neurosis, the cases defined in his sense by what he calls "oral regression", are defined by something that after all I have no reason - since it is summarised there in a few lines - not to directly borrow from his text (it would be safer!):

"Oral neurotics are people who constantly provoke the situation of the following triad of the 'mechanism of orality'::

(1) I shall repeat the masochist wish of being deprived by my mother ..."

(3) Will someone write: 1° *"To be deprived (Etre rejeté)"*, in the top right hand corner. Muriel! If you do not mind, will you do that for me. Take one of these big gadgets that are there for that.

"Secondly, I shall not be" ... I am finishing the first paragraph: *"I shall repeat the masochistic wish"*, therefore, *"of being deprived by my mother, by creating or misusing situations in which some substitute of my pre-oedipal mother-image shall refuse my wishes."*

This is the deepest layer, the one to which access is most difficult, the one against the revelation of which the subject will defend himself most strongly and for the longest time. (I am saying this for listeners in this room who are complete novices).

"(2) I shall not be conscious of my wish to be refused and initial provocation of refusal, and see only that I am justified in self-defense, righteous indignation and pseudo-aggression because of the refusal."

2° *"Pseudo-aggression"*. Write only these words, please.

“(3) Afterwards, I shall pity myself because such an injustice ‘can only happen to me’, and enjoy once more psychic masochistic pleasure.”

I pass over what Bergler adds in terms of what he calls “the clinical picture”, a singular differentiation, moreover, that he makes between what he considers as summarising the genesis of the problem – “the genetic picture” - this clinical form or aspect being defined for him by the intervention of a super-ego, whose vigilance consists precisely in maintaining the presence of the element that he designates here as masochistic, as an always active element in the maintenance of the defence.

This second point of view is in itself debatable and I will not treat it today. What I am putting forward today on this subject is the following: that nowhere is there articulated the way - which, moreover, is correct - the oral position of the subject, let us say, wants to be refused. Why it is not true to say that the oral drive consists in wanting to obtain, specifically, the breast. If the observation is justified in its radical position, at no point in this work by Bergler is there in any way taken into account what this means with respect to the drive defined as oral. And why, in a way, at the start, what seems, let us say, its most natural tendency is thus overthrown. An important point, nevertheless, because of the fact, precisely, that it is from his natural position that the subject will argue to sustain this aggression that Bergler, very correctly, calls “pseudo”, because it is not one. This, of course, leaving open what is involved at the level of an aggression that is non-pseudo.

Since, on this subject, I introduced a register which is properly speaking that of (4) narcissism, equivalent to what, in the generally accepted theory, is called “secondary narcissism”, since I put aggression into it as being its constitutive dimension, distinct, in this respect, from pure and simple aggression, we find ourselves here before a range of notions: from the raw one of aggression, which is almost never appropriate when it is a question of neurotic phenomena, through that of narcissistic aggression, and finally to, this pseudo-aggression that Bergler specifies as emerging, at a certain level, from the oral neurosis.

I am simply highlighting these distinctions, without for the moment giving them their full development.

In any case, the question is posed of what should be maintained as the status - up to the present defined as aggressive - of a certain moment of the oral drive and why, in the oral neurosis, this accent of “to be refused” is posited by Bergler as being the most radical. The only import of my remark is not to settle it as regards the facts, (besides the fact, of course, that to settle it would imply seeking out what he is talking about, namely, what neurosis, and the moment at which it is approached), but on the following, which is lacking in the theoretical text, namely, that there is no need to focus, precisely at the point where here things come to a halt, namely, on what the term “to be refused” means, and why it is relevant.

“To be refused” suggests some questioning suspense: “to be refused” in what respect?
 “To be refused” as what?

All the same, what happens when we present ourselves in a relation, for example, that will be described as intersubjective, is not something novel for us, if we suppose ourselves on the threshold of analytic theory. You know, in this respect, what has been put forward in a certain style of thinking, the Hegelian one, whose value Sartre himself, detaching a branch, has accentuated at a certain level that he takes up, the one that has been qualified by a radical and mutual exclusion of consciousnesses, the incompatible character of their coexistence, of this “*either him or me*” which is supposed to arise once the dimension of subject appears, properly speaking.

This also sufficiently states the degree to which this putting into relief falls within the range of criticisms that have been put forward against the genesis initially taken in the “fight to the death”, the fight to the death which takes its status from this radical conception of the subject as absolutely autonomous, as *Selbstbewusstsein*.

Is it something of this order that is at stake? It certainly seems not. Since everything that analytic experience brings us concerning the stage that is described as oral makes many other dimensions intervene in it, and specifically, this corporal dimension of oral aggression, of the need to bite and of the fear of being devoured.

Is this “to be refused” then to be taken on this occasion as concerning the object? In truth, we would easily see its justification being highlighted in the following: that *to be refused* would be, in this register, properly speaking, to save oneself from being (5) engulfed by the maternal partner.

It would also perhaps be a little bit too simple to answer in this way the question of the status of the “to be refused”. And to say that it is too simple is sufficiently underlined by something which is repeated twice in the lines that I have just read to you, by Bergler, and which associates to this oral neurosis, as being essential to it, the dimension of masochism. The “to be refused” in question is a defeated refusal, it is a “humiliating refusal”, the author again writes elsewhere, and this is why he allows himself to introduce the label of masochism, which he describes as “psychic masochism” on this occasion, consecrating, in a way, a popular use of the term masochism, which I am not saying that one or other text of Freud does not give a pretext for introducing, but understood and taken in this use, which is now more and more current, is properly speaking ruinous.

The allusion to the reference to the object, at the level of this refusal, is here what alone might justify the introduction of the dimension of masochism at this level.

It is incorrect to say that what characterises masochism, is the painful aspect of a situation, assumed as such. To tackle things from this angle culminates in the abuse of making, as some do, the pseudo-masochist dimension, the essential register, for example, of the whole analytic relation. There is here a veritable perversion, as much of Freud’s thinking as of the theory and the practice. And this is, properly speaking, unsustainable, when the dimension of masochism is defined, specifically, no doubt, by the fact that the subject assumes the position of an object, in the most accentuated sense that we give to the word *object*, in order to define it as this effect of falling and of waste, of remainder from the advent of the subject.

The fact that the masochist establishes a situation regulated in advance and regulated in its details, which can go as far as to put himself under the table, in the position of a dog, forms part of a production, of a scenario, which has its sense and its advantage and which, incontestably, is at the source of a gain of *jouissance*, whatever note we may or not add to it, concerning the maintenance, the respect and the integrity of the pleasure principle.

That this *jouissance* is closely linked to a *manoeuvre* of the Other which, I would say, is most commonly expressed in the form of *contract* (when I say “of contract”, I am saying of *written* contract), of something which dictates just as much to the Other - and much more to the Other than to the masochist himself - his whole behaviour - is what ought to instruct us about the relation which gives its specificity, its originality, to masochistic perversion and is supremely designed to illuminate for us, into its depths, the part that the Other - in the sense that I understand this term, I mean the Other with a capital O - plays in it. The Other, the locus in which there is deployed on this occasion a word (6) which is a contract word.

To reduce the use of the term “masochism”, after that, to being something which is presented as simply an exception, an aberration, to reaching the simplest pleasure, is something likely to generate every abuse, of which the first, of which the first is the following, for which, good God, I do not believe I am using too strong nor inappropriate a term, in picking it out in Bergler’s lines, from one end to the other of this remarkable book, full of observations that are very thorough and altogether instructive, in picking out, nevertheless, this something that I would call an exasperation which is not far from producing a spiteful attitude with respect to the patient: all these people that he calls, that he calls as if this were a great wrong on their part, “injustice collectors”! As if, after all, we were in a world in which justice was such an ordinary state that you really would have to go out of your way to have to complain about something! These “injustice collectors”, in whom, undoubtedly, he uncovers their most secret operation in the fact of having been rejected. But, after all, can we not put forward against Bergler this idea that in certain cases, after all, to be rejected - as we have it moreover sufficiently in phantasies, but that is something different, I am speaking here about reality -- it is perhaps better, from time to time, to be rejected than to be accepted too quickly! The encounter that one may have with one or other person, who asks for nothing better than to adopt you, is not always... the best solution is not always not to escape from it!

Why this partiality which, in a way, implies that it would be in the order, in the nature of things, taking them at their proper angle, to do everything necessary to be admitted. This supposing that “to be admitted” is always to be admitted to a benevolent table.

It is, undoubtedly, not something undisturbing or something that may not appear to us, on occasion, to require to be highlighted, to remark that one or other thing that may happen in the world, and for example, quite simply at the moment, in a certain little district of South West Asia. What is at stake? It is a matter of convincing people that they are quite wrong not to want to be admitted to the benefits of capitalism! They prefer to be rejected! It is starting from there, it seems, that there ought to be posed questions about certain meanings. And specifically the following, for example, which will show us - which will show us no doubt, but today it not the day that I will even take

the first steps in this direction - that if Freud wrote somewhere that “anatomy is destiny”, there is perhaps a moment, when people have come back to a sound perception of what Freud discovered for us, that it will be said - I am not even saying “politics is the unconscious” - but, quite simply, *the unconscious is politics!*

(7) I mean that what binds men together, or what opposes them, is precisely to be justified by that whose logic we are trying for the moment to articulate.

Because it is for want of this logical articulation that these slippages can be produced. This means that before noting the fact that in order to be rejected, for the “to be rejected” to be essential as a dimension for the neurotic, the following, in any case, is essential: **that he offers himself.**

As I wrote somewhere: just as much with the neurotic as with what we do ourselves - and with reason, since these are the paths that we are following - this consists precisely, with an offer of trying to make a demand. And such an operation, of course, does not always succeed, either in neurosis or in analytic treatment, especially if it is conducted in a clumsy way. This also, moreover, is of a nature ... (for no analytic discourse fails to present to us with the opportunity - in questioning it - the opportunity of seeing what it implies along a certain innocent path, in which it never knows - I mean, this analytic discourse - how far it is going in what it articulates). This allows us to see, in effect, that if the key to the neurotic position depends on this close relation to the demand of the Other, in so far as he tries to make it emerge, it is indeed - as I was saying just now - because he is offering himself. And that, at the same time, we see here the phantastical and therefore obsolete character of this myth - of this myth introduced by analytic sermonising - called oblativity. It is a neurotic's myth.

But what motivates these needs which are expressed in these biases that are paradoxical and always so badly defined if one refers them purely and simply to the reality gain, collected or not in their train, if one omits this first essential stage, in the light of which alone (I mean, the stage) what emerges from these results in the real can be judged? It is the *logical articulation* of the position, the neurotic one in the present case, and, in fact, of all the others. Without a logical articulation which does not bring in any prejudice about what is to be wished for the subject, what do you know about it? What do you know about it, if the need ... if the subject needs to get married to this or that person? And if he has messed up his marriage at one or other turning point, whether it is not for him a piece of good luck? In other words, what are you interfering with? When the only thing that you have to deal with, is the logical structure of what is involved. Of what is involved specifically, as regards a position like the one in which - to describe it as the *wish to be refused* (*désir d'être rejeté*)- you have first of all to know what the subject is pursuing at this level. What is, for the neurotic, the necessity, the gain, perhaps, in being refused? And to pin to it, in addition, the term *masochist* is simply, on this occasion, to introduce into it a pejorative note, which is immediately followed - as I pointed out earlier - by a directive attitude of the analyst which may on occasion go as far as to be persecutory.

(8) This is why it is altogether necessary to take things up again as I intend to do this year. And while we are at it, to recall that, if I started, this year, from the sexual act in its act structure, it is in relation to the fact that the subject only comes to birth through

the relation of a signifier to another signifier and that this requires of them - I mean of these signifiers - the *material*.

To perform an act, is to introduce this relation of signifiers through which the conjuncture is consecrated as significant, namely, as an *opportunity to think*.

People put the accent on mastering the situation, because people imagine that it is the will that presides over the famous *fort-da*, for example, of the child's games. The essential dimension is not the active aspect of motricity. The active aspect of motricity is only deployed, here, in the dimension of the game. It is its logical structure that distinguishes this appearance of the *fort-da*, taken as exemplary and now become a fashion. It is because it is the first signifying thematising - in the form of a phonematic opposition - of a certain situation, that one can qualify it as active, but only in the sense that, henceforth, we will call active only what has, in a sense that I defined it, the structure of the act.

The putting in question of the act, in a relation as distorted, hidden, excluded, put in the shade, as the relation between two beings belonging to two classes, that are definitive for the registry office and for the army medical board but that, precisely, our experience has taught us to see, to see as being absolutely no longer obvious for familial life, for example, and rather obscured for the secret life. In other words, what defines man and woman.

Analytic experience and theory contribute here the notion of satisfaction. I mean as being essential to this act. *Satisfaction* - in Freud's text, *Befriedigung* - introduces the notion of a supervening peace. Is this satisfaction the satisfaction of discharge, of detumescence? A simple satisfaction in appearance and one that it is quite proper to accept. Nevertheless, it is clear that everything we develop in terms that are more or less appropriate, implies that satisfaction - since we distinguish the one, for example, which is supposed to be of the pre-genital order from that which is genital - implies another dimension, the one implied even by these differences.

That, undoubtedly, at first, a term like that of "object relations" should have imposed itself here, is self-evident. This takes nothing from the ridiculous character of what happens when one tries to inscribe under this term, to vary it, to stagger it according to the greater or lesser ease in which the relation is inscribed. For nothing else is at stake when one distinguishes the genital relation by these two traits; on the one hand, the supposed tenderness that one could easily, simply - I pride myself on doing it - hold to (9) be never anything but the reverse of contempt and, on the other hand, what is accentuated in it about this supposed essence of breaking up, even of bereavement. Thus, the progress of the relation, I mean "the sexual relation" (in inverted commas), in so far as it becomes genital, would be that one could all the more easily think about one's partner: "You can croak"!

Let us take things up on a different plane of certainty. What does the sexual act satisfy?

It is quite obvious, at first, that one can answer, legitimately, simply, pleasure. I do not know a single register where this answer is fully tenable. It is an ascetic plane that is at stake in the story of Diogenes, who makes a public gesture of masturbation, as the sign

of this theoretical affirmation of a hedonism described - by very reason of this mode of manifestation – as cynical, that one can consider as a treatment, *Handlung*, a medical treatment of desire.

It is not without paying a certain price, and since, earlier, I introduced the political dimension - a curious and quite tangible thing, this philosophical type excludes himself, as is seen not simply from anecdotes, but from the position of the personage in his barrel, even if he had a visitor like Alexander - who pays for it by an exclusion from the dimension of the city.

I repeat, there is here something that one would be wrong to smile at, it is a properly speaking ascetic aspect, a way of living. It is probably not as common as it appears. I can say nothing about it. I did not try it.

(You can hear or you can't? You can't hear? So what are all these gadgets for? Good, I will try to speak louder.)

So then, one must not forget this locus of pleasure, of the least tension. Good. Only it is clear that this locus is not enough and many other modes, that a great variety of modes of satisfaction appear at the level of the search implied by the sexual act.

Our thesis - it is the one which our course this year embodies - is about the impossibility of grasping the totality of these modes, outside a logical scrutiny, alone capable of assembling, in their variety as in their breadth, the different modes of this satisfaction. The totality in question is the one which establishes what we will call, provisionally and with reservations, a masculine individual (*être*) and a feminine individual, in this foundational act that we evoked at the beginning of our discourse this year, in calling it the sexual act. If I said that there is no sexual act, it is in the sense that this act is supposed to connect together, in a simple form of distribution, the one evoked in technique, in common techniques, in that of the locksmith, the description of the male piece and the female piece. This simple distribution constituting what one might call the inaugural pact through which subjectivity is supposed to be generated as such, male or female.

(10) I considered at its time and in its place the famous “you are my wife”. Well then, it is quite clear that it is not enough for me to say it for me to remain her husband. But anyway, it is enough that this does not resolve anything!

I found myself as “her” something. It is a wish to belong, which is heavy with a pact, at the minimum, a pact of preference. This situates absolutely nothing about either the man or the woman. At the very most one could say that they are two opposing terms and that it is indispensable that there should be two, but what each one is, is altogether excluded from a foundation in the word, as regards what is involved in the union. The matrimonial one, if you wish, or any other. That a certain dimension raises it to the dimension of sacrament changes absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing in what is at stake, namely, the being of the man or of the woman.

In particular, this leaves so completely to one side the category of femininity, since I took the example of “you are my wife”. And it is never a bad thing to bring in the

example of the master of psychoanalysis himself, of whom one could say that, for him, this pact was extraordinarily dominant. This struck all of those who approached him. *Uxorious*, as they say in English, *uxorieux*, is how Jones describes it, after so many others. And, after all, it is not a mystery either that this thinking up to the end came up against the theme: "What does a woman want?". Which comes back to saying: "What is it to be a woman?"

It must be added that, since then, sixty seven years of psychoanalytic *surgery* have not resulted in us knowing more about what is involved in feminine *jouissance*, even though we ceaselessly speak about the woman and about the mother, people do not really know how to express it. It is all the same something worthwhile noting.

This is why it is important to notice ... and this heuristic schema - which I gave you in the form of these three lines, the **small o**, the One which follows, (a perforated One) and the Other - reminds us simply of this, which is the currency of what we articulate throughout the day, namely, that the sexual act implies a third element at every level. To know, for example, that what is called the *mother* - the mother in the Oedipus complex on whom there are hung all the debasements of love life - is prohibited in every case and, because of this fact, remains always present in desire. Or again the *phallus* in so far as it must be lacking to the one who has it - namely, to the man, in so far as the castration complex means something, something which is still not at all clarified, because it implies that we have to invent in connection with it the import of a special negation; for after all, if he does not have it, in the register and in so far as the sexual act can exist, this is not to say, for all that, that he loses it either!, (the subject of this negation, I hope, will be able to be tackled before the end of this year - that this (11) phallus, on the other hand, becomes the being of the partner who does not have it.

It is here that we no doubt find the reason why Aristotle, as I recalled the last time, however subjected to grammar he may appear to have been, we are told, in developing the range, the list, the catalogue of *Categories*, curiously, after having said everything (quality, quantity, *pote*, *pom*, *toti*, and everything ... all the rest that follows with that lot), did absolutely not breathe a word about it. Even though the Greek tongue, like ours, is absolutely subject to what Pichon calls "*sexuiseblance*", namely, that there is *le fauteuil* and that there is *la photo* (as moreover ... wait a minute ... in passing you can amuse yourself by reversing the spelling; this will tell you a lot about a completely hidden dimension in the analytic relation: the *photeuil* and the *fauto*, it is very amusing!) Anyway, in any case, Aristotle never dreamt of sustaining in connection with any being, what all the same imposed itself just as much in his time as in ours, of knowing whether there was a category of sex.

It is either one thing or the other. Either he was not guided by grammar as much as we are told, or there is some reason, then, for this omission. It is probably linked to the following. When I spoke earlier of a masculine individual (*être*) or a feminine individual, it was perhaps a faulty use, namely, that perhaps, the individual is, as Pichon expressed it again, "*insexuable*"; that the *to ti*, the *quiddity* of sex is perhaps lacking, that there is perhaps only the phallus. This, in any case, would explain many things. In particular, this savage struggle which is established around about and which gives us undoubtedly the visible, if not the final reason for what is called "the battle of the sexes"! Only, I also believe, there again, that the battle of the sexes is something about

which, moreover, history shows that it was the most superficial psychoanalysts who dwelt on it. Nevertheless, it remains that a certain *aletheia*, to be taken in the sense, with the accent of *Verborgenheit* that Heidegger gives it, is perhaps, properly speaking, to be established as regards what is at stake concerning the sexual act.

This is what justifies my use of this schema, which, I underline in passing, in order not to confuse it with other things that I have said in other circumstances and specifically concerning the structure and the function of the cut, of which I sometimes told you, that in the way in which I symbolise it when I make it operate on what is called “the projective plane”, I am claiming not to *construct a metaphor*, but, properly speaking, to speak about *the real support* of what is involved. It is obviously not at all the same in this very simply little schema of this One, that I constructed the last time, in dots and perforated, of this Other and of this **small o**.

It is this very simple triad, around which there can and ought to be developed a certain number of points that we have to highlight in this connection, about what is involved, in referring to sex everything that is symptom, and which, this year, I intend to pose - certainly in a repeated fashion and I cannot repeat things too much when it is a matter of new categories -to repeat what is going to serve us as a foundation:

The One, to begin in the middle, is the most litigious. The One concerns this *so-called* sexual union, namely, the field in which there is put in question whether there can be produced this act of partition which the distribution of functions defined as male and female would necessitate.

We have already said, with the metaphor of the cauldron that I recalled the last time, that there is in any case here, provisionally, something that we can only designate by the presence of a *gap*, of a hole, if you wish. There is something which does not fit, which is not self-evident and which is precisely what I recalled earlier about the abyss which separates any promotion, any proclamation, of the male/female bipolarity, from everything that experience give us concerning the act which grounds it.

I want here for today, in the time that I have been given, to underline, that it is from there, from this field of the One, of this fictional One - of this One to which there is limited a whole analytic theory whose fallacy you heard me denouncing on several occasions these last times - it has to be posited that it is from this, from this field designated as One, numbered One, not assumed as unifying - at least until we have proved it - that it is from there that all truth speaks, in as much as for us, analysts, (and for many others, before we even appeared, even though not a long time before, for a thinking which dates from what we can call by its name after all: the Marxist turning point), **the truth has no other form than the symptom.**

The *symptom*, namely, the significance of the discordances between the real and what it pretends to be. The ideology, if you wish. But on one condition, which is that for this term, you should go as far as to include in it perception itself.

Perception is the *model* of ideology. Because it is a sieve with respect to reality. And moreover why should one be astonished at it? Since everything that exists in terms of

ideologies, ever since the world has been full of philosophers, was never after all constructed except on a first reflection, which was brought to bear on perception.

I am coming back to it. What Freud called the “river of mud”, concerning the largest field of knowledge, this whole part of absolutely inundating knowledge from which we are scarcely emerging, to pinpoint it by the term of mystical knowledge. At the basis of everything that has manifested itself to the world, in this order, *there is only the sexual act*. The other side of my formula: *there is no sexual act*.

It is altogether superfluous to pretend to be referring to the Freudian position in any way whatsoever, if one does not take literally the following. At the basis of everything that (13) has been contributed, up to the present, my God, in terms of satisfaction, knowledge ... (I am saying, *knowledge*, I pinpointed it as mystical in order to distinguish it from what has been born in our day in the form of *science*)... of everything that belongs to knowledge, there is nothing, at its source, *except* the sexual act.

To read, in Freud, that there are, in the psyche, *desexualised* functions, means - in Freud - that one must seek sex at their origin. This does not mean that there is what is called in one or other place, for political needs, this famous “non-conflictual sphere”, for example, an ego that is more or less strong, more or less autonomous, that can have a more or less aseptic apprehension of reality.

To say that there are relations to the truth - I am saying: the truth - that do not involve the sexual act, is properly speaking not true. There are none such.

I apologise for these formulae, whose cutting edge, I suggest, may perhaps be felt in too lively a manner. But I made this observation to myself. First of all, that all of this is implied in everything that I have ever stated, in so far as I know what I am saying. But also this remark: that the fact that I know what I am saying is not enough! That is not enough for you to recognise it there. Because, basically, the only sanction of the fact that I know what I am saying, is what I do not say! This is not a fate proper to me. It is the fate of all of those who know what they are saying.

This is what makes communication very difficult. Either one knows what one is saying, and one says it. But, in many cases, we must consider that it is pointless, because no one notices that the core of what you have to get across, is precisely what you never say! This is what the others say and what continues to make noise and, still more, involves certain effects. This is what forces us, from time to time, and even more often than our turn, to do a good sweeping out. Once one is engaged on this path one has no reason to finish. There was, formerly, someone called Hercules who, it appears, finished his work in the stables of someone called Augias. It is the only case that I know of stables being cleaned up, at least when it is a certain domain that is at stake!

There is only a single domain, it seems - and I am not sure about it - which has no relation with the sexual act in so far as it concerns the truth: it is mathematics, at its point of confluence with logic. But I believe that this is what allowed Russell to say that one never knows whether what one is putting forward is true. I am not saying, truly true! Quite simply, true.

In fact, it is true, starting from a definitional position of the truth. If such and such of some axioms are true, then a system develops, which one can judge to be consistent or not.

What is the relation of this with what I have just said, namely, with the truth, in so far as it requires the presence, the putting into question as such of the sexual act?

(14) Well then, even after having said that, I am not sure, all the same, that this marvellous, this sublime modern deployment of mathematical logic, or of logical mathematics, is altogether without a relation with the hesitation about whether there is or not a sexual act.

It is enough for me to hear the groans of someone like Cantor. Because it is in the form of a groan that at given moment of his life he states that people do not know that the great difficulty, the great risk of mathematics, is that it is a place of freedom. We know that Cantor paid very dearly for this freedom!

So that, the formula that the true concerns the real, in so far as we are engaged in it by the sexual act, by this sexual act about which I am advancing, first of all, that one is not too sure that it exists - even though it is the only thing that interests truth - appears to me the most correct formula, at the point that we are getting to in it.

The symptom, then, any symptom, is knotted together at this locus of the holed One. And this is why it always involves, however astonishing this may appear to us, its aspect of satisfaction. I am saying, for the symptom.

Sexual truth is exigent and it is better to satisfy it a little bit more than not enough.

From the point of view of satisfaction, we can conceive that a symptom, in this respect, may be more satisfying than reading a detective story.

There is a greater relation between a symptom and the sexual act, than between the truth and the fundamental "I am not thinking", with which I reminded you at the beginning of these reflections, man alienates his "I am not", which is not easy to tolerate. Compared to which, our earlier alibi of "to be rejected", even though it is not all that agreeable in itself, may appear more tolerable.

So then? We are finished for the moment with the One. I had to indicate this. Let us go to the Other, as the locus where the signifier takes place. Because I did not tell you up till now that the signifier was there, since the signifier only exists as a repetition. Because it is what brings about the thing that is at stake as true.

At the origin, one does not know where it comes from. It is nothing, as I told you the last time, but this stroke which is also a cut, starting from which the truth can be born.

The Other is the reservoir of material for the act.

Material accumulates, very probably, because of the fact that the act is impossible.

When I say that, I am not saying that it does not exist. It is not enough to say it. Since the impossible is the real, quite simply. The pure real. The definition of the possible always requiring a first symbolisation.

If you exclude this symbolisation, this formula will appear much more natural to you: *the impossible is the real*.

(15) It is a fact that the possibility of the sexual act has not been proved in any formal system. As you see, I am insisting, huh? I am coming back to it!

What proves that one cannot prove it? Now that we know very well that non-computability, non-decidability do not in any way imply irrationality, that people define, that people circumscribe perfectly well, that whole volumes are written on this domain of the status of the non-decidability and that one can perfectly well define it logically.

At this point, then, what is it? What is this Other, the big one, there, with a capital O? What is its substance? Huh?

I allowed myself to say - for in truth, even though in truth, you must believe that I allow myself to say it less and less, because one no longer hears, anyway, I no longer hear: it no longer comes to my ears - I allowed myself to say, for a time, that I camouflaged under this locus of the Other, what is called agreeably and, after all, why not, the spirit. The trouble is that it is false.

The Other, when all is said and done, and if you have not already guessed it, the Other here, as it is written, is the **body**!

Why would one call something like a volume or an object, in so far as it is subject to the laws of movement, in general, like that, a body? Why should one speak about falling bodies? What a curious extension of the word "body"! What relation is there between a little ball which falls from the tower of Pisa and the body which is ours, if not that it is starting from the fact that it is first of all the body, our presence as animal body which is the first locus in which to put inscriptions, the first signifier, as everything is there to suggest to us in our experience; except, of course, that things always impassion us. When one speaks about a wound, one adds narcissistic and one thinks right away that this ought to annoy the subject, who naturally is an idiot! Nobody imagines that what is interesting in a wound, is the scar.

The reading of the Bible could be there to remind us, with roses put at the bottom of the rushes where Jacob's flocks are going to graze, that different devices to impose a mark on the body do not date from yesterday and are quite radical. That if one does not start from the idea that the hysterical symptom, under its simplest form, that of a "*ragade*" does not have to be considered as a mystery, but as the very principle of any signifying possibility. You do not have to rack your brains. The fact that the body is made to inscribe something that is called the mark would avoid a lot of worries for everyone and the resifting of a lot of stupidities. The body is made to be marked. It has always been done. And the first beginnings of the gesture of love, is always to outline more or less this gesture a little bit.

There you are. This having been said, what is the first effect, that most radical effect of (16) this irruption of the One (in so far as it represents the sexual act), at the level of the body.

Well then, this is what gives us our advantage over a certain number of dialogued speculations about the relation of the One and the many. We, for our part know that it is not as dialectical as all that. When this One irrupts into the field of the Other, namely, at the level of the body, the body breaks into fragments.

The fragmented body; this is what our experience shows us to exist at subjective origins. The child dreams of dismemberment! He breaks the beautiful unity of the empire of the maternal body. And what he experiences as a threat, is to be torn apart by her.

It is not enough to discover these things and to explain them by a little mechanics, a little ball game: aggression is reflected, reflects back, comes back, starts again! What began it? Before this, it could well be useful to put in suspense the function of this fragmented body. Namely, the only angle from which it has interested us in fact, namely, its relation to what may be involved in truth, in so far as it is itself suspended on *aletheia* and on *Verborgenheit*, on the hidden character of the sexual act.

Starting from there, of course, the notion of Eros, in the form that I recently railed against as being the force which is supposed to unite by an irresistible attraction all the cells and the organs that our sack of skin gathers together; a conception that is at least mystical, because they do not put up the least resistance to being extracted from it and the rest do not carry on too badly! It is obviously a compensatory fantasy for the terrors linked to this Orphic phantasy that I have just described for you.

Moreover, it is not at all explanatory. Because it is not sufficient that terror should exist for it to explain anything whatsoever. It is rather it that should be explained. That is why it is better to direct oneself along the path of what I call a consistent, logical system for, in effect, it is necessary that we should now come to the following: **why is there this Other** (with a capital O)?

What is the position of this strange double that – you should note - the single takes on? Because the Other (with a capital O), for its part, is not two.

This position, then, of double that the single takes on, when it is a matter of explaining this curious One which, for its part, is tied together in the beast with two backs, in other words in the embrace of two bodies. Because this is what is at stake. It is not this funny One; that the Other, for its part, is still funnier. There is no link between them - I mean: this field of the One, this field of the Other. Quite the contrary. This is even the reason why the Other is also the unconscious. Namely, the symptom *without its sense*, deprived of its truth, but on the contrary always more responsible for what it contains in terms of knowledge. What cuts them off from one another, is very precisely what constitutes the subject.

There is no subject of the truth, unless it is of the act in general, of the act which, (17) perhaps, cannot exist *qua* sexual act. This is very specifically Cartesian; the subject

knows nothing about itself, except that it doubts. Doubt ... doubt, as the jealous man says when he has just seen through the keyhole hindquarters about to affront legs that he knows well. He asks himself whether it is not God and his soul! The foundation of Descartes' subject, its incompatibility with extension, is not a sufficient reason for identifying the body with extension. But its exis... its exclusion as subject is, on the contrary, grounded in that. And by taking it from the angle that I am presenting to you, the question of its intimate union with the body - I am speaking about the subject, not the soul - is no longer one.

It is enough to reflect on the fact that there is (attention, huh, those who are not used to it!) as regards the signifier, namely, for the structure, no other support - of a surface, for example - than the hole that it constitutes by its edge. This is all that defines it. Raise things by a degree, take things at the level of volume. There is no other support for the body than the sharp edge that presides over its cutting up.

These are topological truths as regards which I will not decide here whether they have or not a relation with the sexual act, but every possible development of what is called an algebra of edges, requires the following - which gives us the image of what is involved in the subject, at this joint between what we have defined as the One and the Other - the subject is always a structural degree below what constitutes its body.

This also explains why in no way, can its passivity, namely, this fact through which it depends on a mark of the body, cannot in any way be compensated for by any activity, even its affirmation in act.

So then, of what is this Other the Other?

I am very distressed. The time, a certain inordinate, perhaps also a certain paradoxical use of the cut - but in this case you can take it as intentional - means that I will leave you here, today, at the end of the hour.

The Other is only the Other of what is the first moment of my three lines: namely, this **small o**. This is where I started from during our last talks, in order to tell you that its nature is that of the incommensurable, or rather, that it is from its incommensurability that there arises every question about measure.

It is on this **small o**, object or not, that we will take up our conversation the next time.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 24 May 1967

I am going to try to make you enter today into this arcanum, which, even though it is trivial in psychoanalysis, is nonetheless an arcanum. Namely, the following that you will meet at every turn: that if the analysed subject, if the analysable subject, adopts what is called a regressive, or again, *pre-* (pre-oedipal, pre-genital, anyway pre-something or other ...) position, which would be very desirable, and one might moreover be astonished, on this occasion, that it is not designated as *post-*, since it is in order to evade the operation, the impact of castration, that the subject is supposed to have taken refuge there ...

If I am trying, this year, to sketch out before you a structure that presents itself as logical - a chancy, very precarious logic, perhaps, in which also I am sparing you, not giving too quickly, the forms that I have come to trust in my own scribblings, but am trying to show you what is accessible in an articulation of such a kind, in this easy form that, after all, I chose among others, which consists very simply in taking what is most incommensurable to the One, specifically, the golden number - and this with the aim simply of making tangible for you how along such a path, in which, I repeat to you, I do not claim at all either to have given you the definitive steps, nor even to have taken them myself, but how much more preferable is such a path, which is guaranteed by some truth concerning the dependency of the subject, rather than giving oneself over to these painful exercises of the usual analytic prose which distinguish themselves by these sort of prevarications, of senseless detours, which seem to be always necessary to account for the operation of libidinal positions; the bringing into play of a whole population of subjective entities, that you know well and which can be found everywhere, the ego, the ego ideal, the super ego, the id (*ça*) even, without counting the new and refined things that can be added to them by distinguishing the ideal ego from the ego ideal. Does not all of this carry in itself, indeed - as has been done in Anglo Saxon literature for some time - to add in the *self*, which, by manifestly being added to remedy this ridiculous multitude, nonetheless fails because it only (2) represents, in the way in which it is handled, a supplementary entity. Entities, beings of reason, always inadequate from the moment that we bring into play in a correct way the function of the subject as nothing other than what is represented by a signifier for another signifier.

In no case is a subject an autonomous entity. Only the proper name can give the illusion of it. The *I*, it is too much to say that it is suspect - since I have been speaking to you about it, it ought even no longer be so! - It is only very precisely this subject that - as signifier - I represent for the signifier walk, for example, or for the couple of signifiers: *la boucle*: "I shut up" (*je la boucle*)!

You can sense that if I took this formula, it is to avoid the pronominal form "I keep myself quiet" (*Je me tais*) which undoubtedly would begin to take us very far if we were to pose ourselves the question of what the *me* means in such a form as in many others. And you would see the degree to which its so-called reflexive acceptance is displayed across a range which does not allow it to be given any degree of consistency. But I will not extend myself, of course, in this direction, which is here only a reminder.

There is therefore a function, a subjective function, called castration as regards which one ought to recall how striking it is that it is presented to us (and this had never been

said previously, I mean before psychoanalysis) ... that it is presented to us as essential to gain admission to what is called the genital. If this expression were appropriate to the highest degree - I mean that it is not so - one might marvel at this something which, in that case, might be expressed as follows. That - let us say, in any case, how it might be presented if one tackled it from outside and after all we are, all of us, still there! - that the passage to the phantasy of the organ is, in a certain function - an undoubtedly privileged one, henceforth, the genital precisely - necessary for the function to be accomplished. I do not see any way of getting out of the blind alley, here, except by saying - and a psychoanalyst of importance, one notable in the political topography, used this means. I mean at the turning point of a sentence, without even properly noticing the import of what he is saying, he affirms to us that, after all, castration ... well, it is a dream! This, used in the sense that it is one of the stories told by sick people.

Now it is nothing of the kind! Castration is a subjective structure - as I recalled just now - altogether essential precisely for something of the subject, however slim, to enter into this affair that psychoanalysis calls: "the genital".

I have to say that I think I have made a little opening in this blind alley, changed - as they say - something in it, in as much as, good God, not too long ago - four or five of our meetings ago - I introduced the remark that it could not simply be a matter of introducing the subject into this function of the genital! ... (If in fact we know what (3) we mean when we call it that). Namely, about the passage from the function to the *act*. And the putting into question of whether this act may merit the title of sexual act. There is none? ... There is? ... *Chi lo sa?* There is, perhaps ... We will know perhaps one day whether there is a sexual act - whether, I am going to give a commentary, sex (mine, yours) reposes on the function of a signifier capable of operating in this act.

In any case, one cannot in any way evade the fact, which is not alone affirmed by the doctrine, but that we encounter at every turn of our experience, that the only one who is capable of operating in the sense of the sexual act - I am speaking about something which resembles it and is not ... (this is what I am going to try to refer myself to today, to introduce register of, properly speaking), namely, ... perversion - the only one capable of operating in a fashion that is not faulty (*fautive*) is, let us say, the subject who is *castrated* and - let us repeat ourselves like dictionaries, (a sense to add to the word "castrated") - *in order* (*en règle*), (expressing ourselves in this way does not take us far), *in order* with this complex called the castration complex. Which of course does not mean that one has a complex, but quite the contrary, as any literature worthy of this name (psychoanalytic, I mean), which is not the chatter of people who do not know what they are saying (which happens to even the highest authorities), which means well and truly, in any sound analytic literature, that one is, I would say, normed (*normé*) with respect to the sexual act. This does not mean that one gets to it. It means, at the very least, that one is on the right path!

In any case, *normed* has a very precise sense in the breakthrough from affine geometry to metric geometry. In short, one enters into a certain order of measure, which is the one that I am trying to evoke with my golden number, which here, I repeat, is of

course only metaphorical. Reduce it to the term of the most spaced out incommensurable there is with respect to the One.

The castration complex, then, - I am saying it, good God, I hope I only have to say it here for the ears of novices - can in no way content itself with the support of the little story of the kind: Daddy said "It's going to be cut off ... if you claim to succeed your father". First of all, because most of the time, (as naturally everyone has been able to see for a long time, as regards this little story, this little remark), it is Mammy who says it. She says it at the precise moment when John, or Johnny, in fact, succeeds his father, but in the moderate measure that he fiddles with himself quietly in a little corner, as quietly as a simpleton (*Baptiste*) ... that he fiddles with his little gadget ... obviously, the way Daddy had already done when he was his age!

This has nothing to do with the castration complex. It is an amusing little story which (4) is not made any more likely by the fact that guilt about masturbation is encountered at every turn in the genesis of the troubles that we have to deal with.

It is not enough to say that masturbation is not physiologically harmful and that it is through its place in a certain subjective economy, we will say precisely, that it takes on its importance. We will even say, as I recalled one of these last times, that it can take on a quite clear hedonistic value, since it can, as I recalled, be pushed as far as asceticism. And that one or other philosophy can make of it, on condition of course of adopting behaviour completely coherent with its practice, can make of it a foundation for one's wellbeing. Remember Diogenes to whom it was not alone familiar, but who promoted it as an example of the way one should treat what remains, in this perspective, of the tiny surplus of organic tickling: *titillatio*. It must be said that this perspective is more or less immanent in every philosophical position and even encroaches on a certain number of positions that can be described as religious, if we consider the retreat of the hermit as something that, of itself, involves it.

It only begins to take on its interest - thus on this occasion its guilty value - where one is trying to reach the sexual act. Then the following appears. The *jouissance*, sought for in itself, of a part of the body, and which plays a role - I am saying "which plays a role" because one must never say that an organ is made for a function. One has organs ... (I am telling you that ... if you generalise a little, if you make yourself from time to time into a mussel or some other little beast and if you try to reflect what would it be like if you were in what one can scarcely call their skin, then you would understand quickly enough that it is not the function that makes the organ, but the organ that makes the function. But, in any case, it is a position that goes too much against the obscurantism described as transformist in which we bathe, for me to insist on it. If you do not want to believe me, go back into the main stream.) ... It is therefore completely out of place to allege, in accordance with the moralising tradition ... anyway, according to the way this is explained in the *Divine Comedy* ... that masturbation is culpable and even a grave sin, because it not only deflects a means from its end ... (the end being the production of little Christians, indeed - I come back to it, even though people were scandalised the last time that I said it - indeed, little proletarians) ... well then, the fact that it raises a means to the rank of an end has absolutely nothing to do with the question as it should be posed, because it is that of the norm of an act, taken in the full sense that I recalled about this word *act*, and that

this has nothing to do with the reproductive shoots that it can take on, with the end of perpetuating the animal.

On the contrary, we ought to situate it with respect to the following. The passage of the subject to the function of signifier, in this precise locus - completely outside the ordinary field in which we are at ease with the word *act* - which is called this problematic point that is the sexual act.

(5) That the passage from *jouissance*, where it can be grasped, should be ... - by such an interdiction (to keep to the word that is used), by a certain negating (in order to be more prudent and keep in suspense the fact that, perhaps, one could arrive at the formula in a more precise fashion) - that this passage, in any case, has the most manifest relation with the introduction of this *jouissance* to a *value* function, is what, in any case, can be said without being imprudent.

That experience - an experience, even, in which, as one might say, a certain listener's empathy is not foreign - announces to us the correlation between this passage of a *jouissance* to the function of a value, namely, its profound adulteration: the correlation between this and ... (I have no reason to refuse myself what the literature gives here, since as I have just told you, the only way in here is an empathic one; this should be purified in a second moment, but after all we do not refuse ourselves this way in either, when we are on a difficult terrain) ... should then, this castration, should have the closest relation with the appearance of what is called the object in the structure of orgasm, in so far - I am repeating it to you: we are still talking about empathy - as it is mapped out as distinct from a *jouissance* that is - ah! what are we going to call it?, autoerotic? this is a concession ... *masturbatory*, and that is all, given what is at stake, namely, an organ, and a quite specific one.

Since, like autoerotism ... God knows what has already been made of it and therefore what is going to be made of it! And as you know this is precisely what is in question here, namely, that this autoerotism which has here, in effect, which can have, an altogether specific sense, that of a local and manageable *jouissance*, like everything that is local! is soon going to be made into the oceanic bath in which we are going to have to map out all of this! As I told you: whoever, whoever grounds anything whatsoever on the idea of a primary narcissism and starts from there to generate what is supposed to be investment in the object, is quite free to continue (since it is with this that psychoanalysis functions throughout the world as a guilty industry) but can, moreover, be sure that everything that I am articulating here is designed to repudiate him absolutely.

Good! I said then, I admitted, I spoke about an object present in orgasm. There is nothing easier, from that, than to slip - and of course people do not fail to do so - towards simpering about the dimension of the person! When we copulate, those of us who have arrived at genital maturity, we have a reverence for the person. This is how it was expressed, twenty-five or thirty years ago, especially in the circle of French psychoanalysts, who have after all their interest in the history of psychoanalysis. Yes ... Well then, there is nothing less sure. For precisely to pose the question about the object involved in the sexual act, is to introduce the question of whether this object is Man, or indeed *a* man, Woman or indeed *a* woman.

(6) In short, the interest of introducing the word *act* is to open up the question, which after all is worth opening up - because I am certainly not the one who makes it circulate among you - of whether, in the sexual act (in as much as for any of you it has ever happened: a sexual act), whether it is related to the advent of a signifier representing the subject as sex for another signifier, or whether it has the value of what I called in another register, the *encounter*, namely, the unique encounter! The one which, once it has happened, is definitive.

Naturally, people talk about all of that. People talk about it and - this is what is serious - people talk about it frivolously.

In any case, to mark that there are two distinct registers, namely, whether in the sexual act, man arrives at Man, in his status as man, and the woman in the same way, is a completely different question to whether one has, yes or no, encountered one's definitive partner. Since this is what is at stake when people evoke the encounter. Curious! It is curious that the more the poets evoke it, the less efficacious it is in the conscience of each one as a question.

That it is the person, in any case, may make anyone who has had a little glimpse of feminine *jouissance* smile a little!

There is here, undoubtedly, a first point that is very interesting to put right in the forefront, as an introduction to any question that may be posed about what is involved in what is called feminine sexuality. When what is at stake is precisely *her jouissance*.

There is one thing very certain and which is worthwhile remarking. It is that psychoanalysis, without a question like the one that I have just produced, renders all the subjects installed in its experience - specifically the psychoanalysts - incapable of confronting it in the slightest way.

The males - the proof has been given superabundantly - this question of feminine sexuality has never taken a serious step, when it comes from a subject apparently defined as male by his anatomical constitution. But the most curious thing is that women psychoanalysts, then, for their part, in approaching this theme, manifestly show all the signs of a feebleness that suggests just one fact. That they are absolutely terrified by what they might have to formulate about it!

So that the question of feminine *jouissance* does not seem to be really going to be studied in the near future, since this is, good God, the only locus in which one could say something serious about it. At the very least, to evoke it in this way, to suggest to everyone, and especially the feminine part of those who are gathered here as listeners, the fact that one can express oneself in this way about feminine *jouissance*, is enough for us to place it, to inaugurate a dimension, which, even if we do not enter it, for want to being able to do so, is absolutely essential to situate everything that we have to say along another route.

(7) The object, then, is not at all given in itself by the reality of the partner! I mean the object involved in the normed dimension, described as genital, of the sexual act. It is much closer - in any case it is the first approach that is given to us - to the function of detumescence.

To say that there is a castration complex, is precisely to say that detumescence in no way suffices to constitute it. This is what we have, rather dully, taken care to affirm at first. Now, of course, this fact of experience that it is not the same thing to copulate or to masturbate.

It nevertheless remains, that this dimension which ensures that the question of the value of *jouissance* is attached, takes its point of support, its pivotal point, where detumescence is possible, ought not to be neglected! Because the function of detumescence, whatever we may have to think about it on the physiological plane, (royally neglected by psychoanalysts, who on this point have not brought the slightest little clinical light that is new, which is not already in all the manuals, about the physiology of sex, I mean, which could not be found everywhere before psychoanalysis was born) but what matter! This only re-enforces what it is a matter of knowing: that detumescence is only there for its subjective utilisation, in other words, to recall the limit described as the pleasure principle.

Detumescence, by being the characteristic of the functioning of the penile organ, specifically, in the genital act - and precisely in the measure in which what it supports in terms of *jouissance* is kept in suspense - is there to introduce, legitimately or not (when I say legitimately, I mean, as something real, or as a supposed dimension), to introduce the fact **that there is *jouissance* beyond**. That the pleasure principle, here, functions as a limit at the edge of a dimension of *jouissance* in so far as it is suggested by the union described as the sexual act.

Everything that experience shows us, what is called premature ejaculation, and what it would be better to call, in our register, *premature detumescence*, gives rise to the idea that the function, that of detumescence, can represent in itself the negative of a certain *jouissance*. Of a *jouissance* which is precisely the following, and the clinic only shows us too much of it, of a *jouissance* which is ... what the subject sets his face against. Indeed the subject makes off, in so far, precisely, as this *jouissance* is, as such, too consistent with this dimension of castration, perceived in the sexual act, as a threat. All this precipitation of the subject with respect to this beyond allows us to conceive that it is not without foundation that, in these stumblings, these lapses of the sexual act, there is demonstrated precisely what is at stake in the castration complex. Namely, that detumescence is cancelled out as a good in itself, that it is reduced to the function of protection, rather, against a dreaded evil, whether you call it *jouissance* or (8) castration, as itself a lesser evil. And, from then on, that the smaller the evil is, the more it is reduced, the more perfect is the evasion. This is the mainspring that we put our finger on clinically, in everyday treatments, of everything that can come under the different modes of impotence, especially in so far as these are centred around premature ejaculation.

Therefore, there is no *jouissance*, in any case one that can be located, except of one's own body. And what is beyond the limits that the pleasure principle imposes on it, it is not chance but necessity which associates it as such with the evocation of the sexual correlate, by making it appear only in this conjuncture of the sexual act, without our being able to say any more about it.

In other words, for all those who already have their ears open to the usual terms of psychoanalysis, it is on this plane and on this plane alone that Thanatos can be found or be in any way connected to Eros. It is in the measure that the *jouissance* of the body - I am saying of one's own body, beyond the pleasure principle - is evoked, and is not evoked elsewhere than in the act, precisely in the act which puts a hole, a void, a gap, in its centre, around what is localised in hedonistic detumescence, it is from that moment on that there is posed a possibility of the conjunction of Eros and Thanatos. It is starting from there that the fact is conceivable, and is not a crude mythical lubrication, that into the economy of the instincts, psychoanalysis introduced what, not by chance, it designates under these two proper names.

Well then, all of that, as you see, it still only turning around it! God knows, nevertheless, that I am making an effort so that it will not be like that! We have to believe then that if we are still going around it, it is because it is not easy to enter into it!

We can, at least, retain, gather, these truths: that the sexual encounter of bodies does not pass, in its essence, by way of the pleasure principle.

Nevertheless, that to orient oneself in the *jouissance* that it involves (I am saying, that it involves, supposedly, because to orient oneself in it does not yet mean entering it, but it is very necessary to orient oneself with respect to it) ... to orient oneself with respect to it, it has no other reference point than this sort of negating brought to bear on the *jouissance* of the organ of copulation, in so far as it is the one that defines the presumed male, namely the penis. And that it is from there that the idea arises, (these words are chosen), that the idea arises of a *jouissance* of the feminine object. I said, that the idea arises, and not the *jouissance*, of course! It is an idea. It is subjective. Only what is curious and what psychoanalysis affirms - only for want of expressing it in a logically correct fashion, naturally, no one notices what it means, what it involves! - is that feminine *jouissance* itself can only pass by way of the same (9) reference point! And that this is what is called, in the case of the woman, the castration complex! It is indeed because of that that the woman-subject is not easy to articulate, and that at a certain level I propose to you the *Homme-elle*. That does not mean that every woman limits herself to that, precisely. There is something of the woman somewhere ... "*odor di femina*" ... But she is not always easy to find! I mean, to put in her place! Since, to organise a place there, a reference is necessary whose organic accidents mean that it is only found in what is called, anatomically, the male. It is only starting from this suspense posed on the male organ, that an orientation for the two, the man and the woman, is encountered, that the function, in other words, takes on the value of being, with respect to this hole, this gap of the castration complex, in a reversed (*renversée*) position.

A reversal is a sense. Before the reversal, it may happen that there is no subjectifiable sense! And after all, it is perhaps to this that there must be referred the altogether striking fact that I told you earlier, namely, that women psychoanalysts have taught us nothing more than men analysts had been capable of lucubrating about their *jouissance*. Namely, very little!

Starting from a reversal, there is an orientation, and however little it may be, if it is all that can orientate the *jouissance* involved, in the woman, in the sexual act, well then, you understand that until further notice we have to be content with it.

In short, this leaves us at a point that has its characteristic. We will say that as regards the sexual act, what can be currently formulated about it, is the dimension of what is called, in other registers, *good intentions*. A good intention, concerning the sexual act, here, at least in what can, at the point that we are in it, be formulated, this is what, reasonably, according to the psychoanalysts, here is what reasonably we can and we should be content with.

All of this is very well expressed in the myth, the fundamental myth. When the Father, the original Father is said to “enjoy all the women”, does that mean that the women have any enjoyment, however little it may be? The subject remains intact. And it is not only with a humorous intention that I am evoking it at this point. The fact is, as you are going to see, this is a key question! I mean that everything that I am going to have to articulate, I am saying in our next meeting, concerning what I am going to take up again, namely, what I left open the last time. That if we had to leave deserted and uncultivated this central field, that of the One, of sexual union - in so far as we find slightly unsettling the idea of a process, whatever it may be, of partition, allowing there to be grounded what are called “the roles”, and that we, for our part, call the *signifiers* of man and of woman - that if what I left you on the threshold of the (10) last time, namely, a quite different conjunction, that of the Other, of the big Other, on the register, on the tablets of which there is inscribed this whole adventure, and I told you that this register and these tablets, were nothing other than the body itself, that this relation of the Other, of the big Other, to the partner which remains to him, namely, what we started from - and it is not for nothing that I called it **small o** - namely, your substance, substance as subject, in so far as, as subject, you have none, except this object fallen from signifying inscription, except what ensures that this **small o** is this sort of fragment, belonging to big O, *en ballade*; namely, you yourselves, who are indeed here as subjective presence, but who, once I shall have finished, will clearly show your nature as **o**-object, from the aspect of a great clearance that will take place immediately in this room! Well then, I will leave in suspense the question of what is involved in the phallic object. Because it is necessary - and it is not a necessity which is imposed only on me - for me to carefully examine the way in which it is supported as object. All of this, precisely, in order for me to perceive that it is not supported itself. This is what the castration complex means: there is no phallic object!

This is what leaves us our only chance, precisely, for there to be a sexual act.

It is not castration, it is the phallic object which is the effect of the dream, around which the sexual act fails!

To make you sense what I am in the process of articulating, there is no lovelier illustration than the one given us by the sacred book, by this unique book, by the Bible itself. And if you have become deaf to its reading, go to the narthex of what is called the Church of St. Mark, in Venice, in other words the Doge's Chapel. It is nothing else, but its narthex is worth the trip. Nowhere, in an image, can there be expressed with more relief what is in the text of Genesis. And among others, you will see there, I must say sublimely magnified, what I would call "this infernal idea of God's" when from Adam-Cadmus, from the one who, since he was One, had to become two - he was man under its two aspects, male and female - "It is good", said God (*Lacan punctuates this with a laugh*) "that he should have a companion"! Which would still be nothing, if we were not to see that, in order to proceed to this adjunct, all the more strange in that it seems that up to then, the Adam in question, a figure made of red earth, had done very well without it, God *takes advantage of his sleep*, to take from him a *rib*, from which he fashions, we are told, the first Eve!

Could there be any more gripping illustration of what introduces, into the dialectic of the sexual act, this fact that man, at the precise moment at which there comes to be marked on him a supplementary divine intervention, is found henceforth to have to deal, as object, with a piece of his own body?

Everything that I have just said, the Mosaic law itself and, moreover, perhaps the (11) accent added to it by underlining that this piece is not the penis, since, in circumcision it is in a way incised in order to be marked by this negative sign. Is this not designed to make there arise before us the perverse gate, I would say, there is in the establishment, on the threshold of what is involved in the sexual act, of this commandment: "*They shall be one flesh*".

Which means that in a field interposed between us and what is involved, in what might be, something that can be called the sexual act, in so far as the man and woman valorise themselves in it for one another. First - and we would have to know whether this thickness can be crossed - there would be the autonomous relation of the body to something that is separated from it, after having formed part of it.

Such is the enigma, the sharp threshold where we see the law of the sexual act in its crucial datum. That the castrated man can be conceived of as never having to embrace anything but this complement, with which he can deceive himself - and God knows he does not fail to do so - by taking it as a phallic complement.

I pose today, in ending my discourse, this question: that we still do not know how to designate this complement. Let us call it, logic.

The fiction that this object is other, undoubtedly requires the castration complex.

It is not astonishing that we are told, that we are told in the mythical asides of the Bible, these asides, curiously, that one finds in the little marginal additions by the rabbis, that we are told that something, which is perhaps indeed precisely the primordial woman, the one who was there before Eve, and whom they call - I mean the rabbis, I am not the one who gets involved in these stories! - whom they call

Lilith. That it was she, perhaps, who, in the shape of a serpent and by the hand of Eve has presented to Adam ... what? The apple! The oral object, and which, perhaps, is there for no other reason than to awaken him to the true sense of what had happened to him while he was asleep! It is indeed in this way, in effect, that things are taken in the Bible. Since we are told that starting from there, he enters for the first time into the dimension of knowledge.

It is precisely because, this dimension of knowledge, the effect of psychoanalysis is the following: that we have located in it at least in two or three of its major forms, and one could say also in two others, even though the link to it is not yet made, what the nature, what the nature and function is of this object completely concentrated in this apple. It is only along this path that we may be able to come to specify better, and, precisely, from a series of contrasting effects, what is involved in this object, the phallic object, of which I said that it would be necessary, in order finally to articulate it, for me to carefully examine it first.

Seminar 21: Wednesday 31 May 1967

For the those who find themselves, for example, returning today after having followed my teaching for a while, I have to signal what I have been able, these most recent times, to introduce into it in terms of new articulations.

An important one, which dates from our antepenultimate meeting, is undoubtedly to have designated, expressly, I would say - since, in fact, it was not inaccessible to those who understand me - expressly, the locus of the Other - everything that I articulated as such up to now (I mean since the beginning of my teaching) - designated the locus of the Other in the body. (“*Voilà*”, murmurs a feminine voice.)

The body itself is, from the origin, this locus of the Other, in so far as it is there that, from the origin, there is inscribed the mark *qua* signifier.

It was necessary for me to recall it today, at the moment that we are going to take the next step, in this logic of the phantasy, which is found - you will see it being confirmed in the measure that we advance - which is found to be able to accommodate itself to a certain logical laxity. *Qua* logic of phantasy it pre-supposes this dimension described as fantasy, in the sense that, at the beginning, exactness is not required of it. Moreover, we find that what is most rigorous in the exercise of an articulation that deserves the title of logic includes in itself a growing approximation. I mean a mode of approximation which involves in itself not alone a growth, but a growth that as far as possible is the best, the most rapid there is, towards the calculation of an exact value. And it is because of this that ... in referring to an algorithm of very great generality, which is none other than the one most proper to guarantee the relation of

an ideal incommensurable, the most simple there is, the most spaced out also, by circumscribing what it constitutes in terms of the irrational by its very progress. I mean that the incommensurability of this ϕ ... that I only image as being the golden number for the legibility of my text. Because those who know, know that this sort of number constituted by the very progress of its approximation is a whole family of (2) numbers and, as one might say, can start from anywhere whatsoever, from any exercise whatsoever of relation, on the single condition, that the incommensurable requires that the approximation should have no term, while being, nevertheless, perfectly recognisable at each instant as rigorous.

This then is what is at stake: to grasp what we are confronted with in the form of the phantasy as reflection of a necessity. In other words, the problem, which for a Hegel could be contained in this simple limit constituted by the certainty included in self-consciousness... [*at this point a loudspeaker starts up in the room: "OK then five ... four ... three ..."*]... this certainty about oneself, with which Hegel can allow himself, can allow himself, given certain conditions that I will evoke later which are the conditions of history, to put in question the relation with a truth - this certainty, in Hegel - and this is how he concludes a whole process through which philosophy is the exploration of knowledge. He can allow himself to introduce into it the *telos*, the end, the goal, of an absolute knowledge. It is in so far as at the level of certainty, he finds himself being able to indicate that it does not contain its truth in itself.

[*Another loudspeaker starts up*]

This is the way that we find ourselves being able not simply to take up again the Hegelian formula, but to complicate it. The truth with which we have to deal depends on this act through which the foundation of self-consciousness, through which subjective certainty is confronted with something which of its nature is radically foreign to it and which is properly the fact that...

[*Dr. Lacan is interrupted once again. "The minister has insisted ...", says another loudspeaker.*

Dr. Lacan – "*Can nothing be done to stop this interruption?*" **Madame Aubry** – "*Unplug the microphone!*"

Murmuring and interruptions. One of the audience climbs up onto a window to try to unhook the microphone, without success ... (That's dangerous, someone says, anticipating his gesture). A lot of whispering goes on in the room.

"If there is an examination of perspective, there is an entrance examination."
continues another loudspeaker

Dr. Lacan – "*Which loudspeaker seems to be speaking, at the moment? Are all of them?*"

Dr. Faladé heads towards the tape-recorder

Dr. Lacan – "*Can anything be done?*" **One of the audience:** "*Switch off the mains!*"

Dr. Lacan (*pointing at the emergency exit*) ... "*Yes but it is closed!*"

Madame Aubry – "*It must be in the projection room.*"

Dr. Lacan, (*to the official, who arrives and who is heading towards the emergency exit*) ... "*It's closed. You weren't told? But I have just told you!*"

The official – "*Is it open down there?*" (*He points at the little room on the left, gets into it and fixes the problem without delay*).

What it is a matter of introducing today, then, and all the more rapidly since our time has been shortened, is the following: psychoanalytic experience introduces the fact that the truth of the sexual act gives rise to questions in experience. Naturally, the importance of this discovery only takes on its relief starting from a positioning of the term *sexual act* as such. I mean, for ears already sufficiently formed to the notion of the prevalence of the signifier in any subjective constitution, to notice the difference between a vague reference to sexuality that - one can scarcely say as a function - as a dimension proper to a certain form of life, the one specifically most profoundly linked to death. I mean, intermixed, interlaced with death. This is not the whole story, once we know that the unconscious is the discourse of the Other. From that moment on, it is clear that everything that brings into play the order of sexuality in the unconscious, only penetrates into it around the putting in question of: is the sexual act possible? Is there this knot, definable as an act, in which the subject grounds himself as sexed, that is, as male or female, being in itself, or, if not, proceeding in this act to something which can - even if only at its term - culminate at the pure essence of male or female? I mean, at the disentangling, at the distribution, in a polar form of what is male and what is female, precisely in the conjunction that unites them in something - whose term I am not introducing here, at this hour, nor for the first time - in something that I named as *jouissance*. I mean introduced a long time ago and, specifically, in my seminar on *Ethics*.

It is in effect required that this term *jouissance* should be put forward, and properly so, as distinct from pleasure, as constituting its beyond.

What indicates it to us, in psychoanalytic theory, is a series of converging terms, in the first rank of which is *libido*, which represents a certain articulation of it. And we must point out - at the end of these talks this year - point out how its use can be so slippery as not to sustain, but make slip away, the essential articulations that we are going to try to introduce today.

Jouissance, namely, this something that has a certain relation to the subject, as this confrontation with the hole left in a certain questionable register of act, that of the sexual act. This subject is suspended by a series of modes or states of dissatisfaction. This is what, just by itself, justifies the introduction of the term *jouissance*, which, moreover, is what at every instant, and specifically in the symptom, is proposed to us as being indistinguishable from this register of satisfaction, since at every moment the problem for us is to know how a knot, which is only sustained by discontent and suffering, is precisely that through which there is manifested the agency of suspended satisfaction, the one, properly speaking, to which the subject keeps in so far as he *tends* towards this satisfaction.

Here the law of the pleasure principle, namely, of least tension, only indicates the necessity of detours from the path by which the subject is sustained along the path of his search - search for *jouissance* - but does not give us its end, which is this proper end, an end nevertheless entirely masked for him in its final form, in as much as one can also say that its completion, its completion is so questionable, that one can just as well start from this foundation that there is *no* sexual act, just as much as the fact that it is *only* the sexual act which motivates this whole articulation.

This is why I wanted to bring in the reference - which everyone knows I have used for a long time - the reference to Hegel, in as much as this process - this process of the dialectic of different levels of the certainty of oneself, of the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, as he said - is suspended on a movement which he calls "dialectical" (and which undoubtedly, in his perspective, can be held to be only dialectical) of a relation that he articulates from the presence of this consciousness, in so far as its truth, its truth escapes it as regards what constitutes the operation of the relation of a self-consciousness to another self-consciousness in the relation of intersubjectivity.

Now it is clear, it has been proved for a long time - if only by the revelation of this social gap, in so far as it does not allow us to assimilate to a confrontation of one consciousness to another consciousness, what is presented as a struggle, specifically, (4) of the master and the slave - it is not even for us to criticise what is left open ... what is left open by the Hegelian development. This has been done by others and specifically by one other, by Marx, to name him, and keeps the question of its outcome and of its modes in suspense.

The way in which Freud comes and takes things up at a point that is only analogical to the Hegelian position, is inscribed, is already sufficiently inscribed in this term, in this term of *jouissance*, in so far as Hegel introduced it. The starting point, he tells us, is in the fight to the death between the master and the slave. After which there is established the fact that the one who had not been willing to risk, risk the stake of death, falls into a state of dependency with respect to the other, which for all that is not without containing the whole future of the dialectic in question.

The term *jouissance* comes into it. *Jouissance*, after the end of this fight to the death, of pure prestige, we are told, is going to be the privilege of the master, and for the slave the path then traced out will be that of *work*.

Let us look at things more closely and at this *jouissance* that is at stake. Let us see in Hegel's text ... (that, after all, I cannot produce here and still less with the shortening that we are constrained by today) ... what the master enjoys?

The matter is very adequately seen in Hegel. The relation established by the articulation of the work of the slave means that if, perhaps, the master enjoys, it is not at all absolutely. At the limit and to force things a little, which is to our cost as you are going to see, we might say that he enjoys only his *leisure*. Which means, the disposition of his body.

In fact this is very far from being the case. We will indicate it again later, but let us admit that from everything that he has to enjoy as things, he is separated by the one who is charged to put them at his mercy, namely, the slave, of whom one can then say - and I do not have to defend it, I mean this crucial point, since already in Hegel it is sufficiently indicated - that for the slave there is already a certain *jouissance* of the thing, in so far as he not only brings it to the master, but he has to transform it in order to make it acceptable to him.

After this reminder I have to question myself, with you - make you question - what the word *jouissance* implies in such a register. Of course nothing is more instructive, always, than a reference to what is called the lexicon, in so far as it is attached to goals as precarious as the articulation of meanings. "The terms included in each article", we read somewhere in the note of the preface of this magnificent work called *le grand Robert*, "the terms included in each article constitute just as many references, links, which ought to culminate in the means for expressing thought". "The asterisk", for in effect you can note that in each one of these articles, which fulfil their programme very well, "the asterisk refers on to articles which develop at length an idea suggested (5) from a single word". So that the article *Jouissance* begins with the word *plaisir*, marked by an asterisk. This is only an example, but it is not by chance that the word, no doubt, presents us with these paradoxes. Naturally, *jouissance* was not tackled for the first time by *Robert*. You can also study the word in *Littré*. You will see in it that its use, its most legitimate use, varies from the aspect indicated by the etymology which attaches it to *joie*, to that of possession and what one can dispose of in the final analysis: the *jouissance* of a title. The *jouissance* of a title, that this term signifies some juridical title or some paper representing a value in the stock exchange. To have the *jouissance* of something, of dividends for example, is to be able to give it up. The sign of possession is to be able to resign it. *Jouir de* is something different to *jouir*. And undoubtedly, there is nothing better than these slippages of sense - in so far as they are circumscribed in this apprehension that I called earlier "lexical", in its exercise in the dictionary - to show us to what point the reference to thought is indeed what is most inappropriate there, to designate the function, the radical one, I mean, of one or other signifier.

It is not thinking which gives the effective and final reference of the signifier. It is from the instauration that results from the effects of the introduction of a signifier **into the real**. It is in as much as I articulate in a new way this relation of the word *jouissance* to what is in operation, for us, in analysis, that the word *jouissance* finds and can preserve its final value. And today I intend to make you sense the import of this at its most radical point.

The master enjoys (*jouit de*) something; whether it is himself - he is his own master, as they say - or, moreover, the slave. But what does he enjoy in the slave? Precisely his body. As we read in Scripture, "The master says go and he goeth". As I allowed myself - I no longer know whether I wrote it or whether I simply stated it: if the master says "*jouis!*" (*enjoy*), the other can only answer with this *j'ouis* (*I hear*), with which I amused myself. In general I do not amuse myself by chance. This means something. I might moreover have been picked up by one of those who listen to me. I too often regret gathering nothing more than what forces me to do it myself.

The question is the following: *Does what one enjoys*, if there is this *jouissance* which is inaugurated in the *I* of the subject in so far as he possesses, *does what one enjoys enjoy* (*ce dont on jouit cela jouit-il?*).

It seems nevertheless that this is the real question. Because, moreover, it is clear that *jouissance* is in no way what characterises the master. The master, in so far as he is the one, in the City, who cannot be just anyone, but who is marked by his function as master, has other things to do than to abandon himself to *jouissance*. And the mastery

of his body - for it is not simply a matter of leisure - is something that is only achieved by severe discipline. At every epoch of civilisation, he who is master does not have (6) the time to let himself go even in his leisure!

Types should be distinguished. But after all the type of the ancient master is not of such a purely ideal order that we do not have its reference points. It is sufficiently inscribed, I would say, in the margins of the first philosophical discourse, for us to be able to say that Hegel gives us a sufficient testimony of it.

The question is precisely the following. Is the one - which after all is only just and in conformity with the first stake of the game - who, if we are to believe Hegel, was not able from the beginning to take the eventual risk of the loss of life, (which is indeed, in effect, the surest way to lose *jouissance*), the one who held to *jouissance* enough to submit and to alienate his body, and why then would not *jouissance* remain in his hands?

We have a thousand testimonies of this - that a short sightedness, some phantasy or other, which always wants everything to be on the same side, the whole bunch to be in one hand - we have a thousand testimonies that what characterises the position of the one whose body is put at the mercy of another, is that it is from then on that there opens up what can be called pure *jouissance*. And, moreover, in glimpsing, in following the indices which give us at the very least a crosscheck for it, perhaps certain questions will be eliminated about the sense of certain paradoxical positions and, specifically, the masochistic one. But, after all, it is better sometimes that the most immediately open doors should not be gone through. Because it is not enough for them to be easy to go through for them to be the right ones. I am not saying that this is the source of masochism. Very far from it! Because undoubtedly what has to be said is that if it is thinkable that the condition of the slave is the only one that gives access to *jouissance*, in the measure, precisely, that we formulate him as subject, we will never know anything about it.

Now the masochist is not a slave. He is on the contrary, as I will tell you later, a cute whore, someone very able. The masochist *knows* that he is in *jouissance*. It is precisely in connection with him, for what is to be understood, at stake, about him, that in the end the whole of this discourse progresses, for your use. And in order to make it progress, it was necessary to show that in Hegel there is more than one defect. The first, of course, being the one which allowed me, to produce it before those who listen to me. Namely, that before I put it forward and spoke about it, *with the mirror stage*, I noted that in no case was this sort of aggression which is active and present in the fight to the death for pure prestige, anything other than a lure. And, since then, since then, rendered obsolete any reference to it as a first articulation.

I am only highlighting again in passing the problems posed, posed and left gaping wide, by the Hegelian deduction about the society of masters. How can they get on with one another? And then, good God, the simple reference to what is involved, namely, that the slave, in order to make a slave of him, is not dead! That the result of (7) the fight to the death is something that did not bring death into play. That the master has only the *right* to kill him, but that precisely, and that is why he is called *Servus*, the master *servat*, saves him. And that it is starting from there that the real

question is put: what does the master save in the slave? We are brought back to the question of the primordial law, of what the rules of the game establish, namely, one can kill the one who is defeated, and if one does not kill him, at what price will it be?

At what price? It is indeed here that we re-enter the register of significance. What is involved, in the position of the master, is the following: the consequences - always - of the introduction of the subject into the real.

To measure what is involved concerning the effects of *jouissance*, one has to pose, at the level of this term, a certain number of principles. Namely, that if we have introduced *jouissance*, it is in the logical mode of what Aristotle calls an *ousia*, a substance. Namely, something very precisely which cannot be - this is how he expresses himself in his book of *Categories* - which can neither be attributed to a subject nor put into any subject. It is something that is not susceptible to being greater or lesser, which is not introduced into any comparative, into any *greater* or *lesser* sign, indeed any *lesser* or *equal*.

Jouissance is this something *in which* the pleasure principle marks its traits and its limits. But it is something substantial and which, precisely, is important to produce, to produce in the form that I am going to articulate in the name of a new principle: *There is no jouissance except that of the body (il n'y a de jouissance que du corps)*.

Allow me to say that I consider that the maintenance of this principle, its affirmation as being absolutely essential, appears to me to have a greater ethical import than that of materialism. I mean that this formula has exactly the import, the relief, that the affirmation that *there is only matter* introduces into the field of knowledge. For after all, you have only to see, with the evolution of science, that this matter, when all is said and done, is confused so well with the interplay of elements into which it is resolved, that it becomes at the limit almost indistinguishable to know what is being played out before us, whether it is these elements (*stoicheia*), these final signifying elements, or those of the atom. Namely, what they themselves contain that is quasi-indistinguishable from the progress of your mind, the operation of your research. But what is involved in it in the final analysis is a structure that you can no longer refer in any way to what you have as a common experience of matter.

But to say that there is no *jouissance* except that of the body and, specifically, that this refuses you the eternal *jouissances*, is what is at stake in what I called the ethical value of materialism. Which consists, namely, in taking what happens in your everyday life seriously, and if there is a question of *jouissance*, to look it straight in the face and not reject it into the uncertain future...

(8) There is no *jouissance* except that of the body. This corresponds very precisely to the truth requirement in Freudianism.

So here we are, then, leaving entirely to its wanderings the question of whether what is at stake is to be or not to be. Whether it is a matter of being a man or a woman in an act that is supposed to be the sexual act. And if this is what dominates the whole suspense of *jouissance*, it is also what, ethically, we have to take seriously.

Something in connection with which there arises this something that we could call our right of inspection.

Oedipus is not a philosopher. He is the model of what is at stake as regards the relation of what is involved in a knowledge and the knowledge that he proves to have, this is indicated to us, at least, in the form of the riddle, is a knowledge about what is involved in the body. Through this he breaks the power of a ferocious *jouissance*, that of the Sphinx, which very strangely is offered to us in the form of a vaguely feminine figure, let us say semi-bestial, semi-feminine. What he accedes to after that - which does not make him, as you know, any more triumphant for all that - is undoubtedly a *jouissance*. The moment that he enters it, he is already in the trap. I mean that this *jouissance* is what marks him, already and in advance, with the sign of guilt.

Oedipus did not know what he was enjoying. I posed the question of whether Jocasta, for her part, knew it. And even, why not, did Jocasta enjoy letting Oedipus remain in ignorance of it? Let us say: what part of Jocasta's *jouissance* corresponds to the fact that she left Oedipus in ignorance of it?

It is at this level that, thanks to Freud, there are posed henceforth serious questions about what is involved in the truth.

Now the introduction that I already gave of the function of alienation - in so far as it is consistent with the genesis of the subject as determined by the vehicle of significance - allows us to say that as regards what interests us and is first posited - namely, that there is no *jouissance* except that of the body - the fact is that the effect of the introduction of the subject, himself an effect of significance, is properly to put the body and *jouissance* into this relation that I defined by the function of alienation.

I mean that, as I have just articulated for half an hour before you, the subject, in so far as he is grounded in this mark of the body which privileges him, which ensures that it is the mark, the subjective mark, which henceforth dominates everything that is going to be involved for this body, that it will go here and then there and not elsewhere, and that it is free or not to do so. Here no doubt is what distinguishes the master, because the master is a subject.

Jouissance is, in this first foundation of the subjectification of the body, what falls into dependency on this subjectification, and, in a word, is effaced. At the origin, the (9) position of the master - and this is what Hegel glimpses - is precisely a renunciation of *jouissance*, the possibility of engaging everything on this disposition or not of the body. And not only of his own, but also that of the Other.

The Other is *the set of bodies*, from the moment that the operation of social struggle simply introduces the fact that the relations of bodies are henceforth dominated by this something which, moreover, is called the law. A law that one can say is linked to the advent of the master, but indeed only if one understands it as the advent of the absolute master. Namely, the sanction of death as having become legal.

This, then, allows us to glimpse that if the introduction of the subject as an effect of the signifier, lies in this separation of the body and *jouissance*, in the division put

between the terms which only subsist from on another, it is here, for us, that the question ought to be posed, the question of knowing *how jouissance can be handled starting from the subject*.

Well then, the answer, the answer is given through what analysis discovers as an approximation of this relation to *jouissance*. No doubt, in the field of the sexual act, what it discovers, is the introduction of what I called *jouissance*-value, namely, the cancellation of the *jouissance* most immediately involved as such in sexual union; what it calls *castration*.

This does not solve anything. Of course, it explains to us how it happens that the simplest and the clearest legal form of the sexual act - in so far as it is instituted in a regular formation which is called marriage - was first of all, at the beginning, only the privilege of the master. Not simply, of course, of the master *qua* opposed to the slave, but, as you know, if you know a bit of history and specifically Roman history, even opposed to the pleb. Not everyone who wants it has access to the institution of marriage, only the master.

But, moreover, as everyone knows - everyone knows, good God, through experience, what this marriage, which has since been put within everyone's reach, still carries with it in terms of heartbreak - everyone knows that it does not work automatically! And if you open Livy, you will see that there is an epoch, not all that late in the Republic, when the ladies, the Roman ladies, who are really marked by the true *connubium*, poisoned throughout a whole generation - with a breadth and a perseverance which did not fail to leave some traces in the memory and that Livy wrote down - poisoned their husbands. This was not without reason. It must be believed that the institution of marriage, when it functions at the level of true masters, must bring with it some inconveniences, which are probably not uniquely linked to *jouissance*, since it is rather the accentuated character of the hole put at this level - namely, from the fact that *jouissance* has nothing to do with conjugal choice - that these little incidents result.

When we, for our part, speak about the sexual act at the level that it interests us, us (10) analysts, it is precisely in so far as *jouissance* is in question. As I reminded you the last time, God did not disdain keeping an eye on it. It is enough for the woman to enter into the game of being this object that the biblical myth designates so well for us, of being this phallic object, for the man to be fulfilled. Which means, exactly, to be completely swindled, namely, encountering only his corporal complement.

The discovery of analysis is precisely to notice that it is uniquely in the measure that man is not swindled to the point of only discovering his own flesh - there is nothing astonishing that, from then on, there should only be one flesh, since it is his own - it is precisely in the measure that this swindling operation does not take place, namely, where castration takes place, that there is, yes or no, a chance that there may be a sexual act.

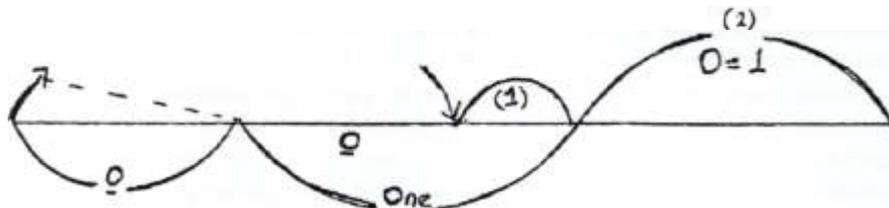
But then! What is meant by what is involved in *jouissance*? Since the characteristic of a sexual act that is grounded, is supposed to be precisely the fact of this lack of *jouissance*, somewhere.

This interrogation about what is involved in *jouissance* as a third function, is precisely what is given to us in a different approach, an approach which is called - exactly the inverse of this step, of this breakthrough, which is made in the sense of the sexual act - which is called ... and precisely, and uniquely because it is in an inverse sense, concerning a certain progression, logical progression - which is called, because of that, *regression*.

And it is here that our algorithm - that our algorithm in so far as it confronts the **small o** with the *One*, or towards the inside as I have already drawn it, namely, **small o** being reduced to the *One*, giving, here (1), the difference *One minus o*, which is at the same time o^2 . There is also another way to treat the question. It is the one suggested to us by the function of the Other, namely, that this *One* here (2), comes to be inscribed here at **o**, that it is the **small o**, here - without being reduced, namely, leaving between it and the capital O the large interval of the *One* - that is in question.

You cannot but see that this privileged fact, that the *One over o* is precisely equal to *One plus o* and that this is what gives its value to this algorithm. It is precisely through this that we are given the locus, the topology of what is involved in *jouissance*.

(11) In the case of the slave, the slave is deprived of his body. How can we know about his *jouissance*? How can we know it, except precisely in what, from his body, has slipped outside subjective mastery. Everything that is involved for the slave, in so



far as his body comes and goes at the whim of the master, allows nevertheless to be preserved these objects which are given to us as emerging, precisely, from the signifying dialectic.

These objects which are its stake but also its forgery, these objects taken at the frontiers, these objects which function at the level of the edges of the body, these objects that we know well in the dialectic of neuroses, these objects on which we will have to come back again and on several occasions, in order to define clearly what gives them their price and their value, their quality as exceptions. I do not need to recall them, as regards what is involved in terms of the *oral* and what is also called the *anal*. But these others also, superior, less known, of a more intimate register, which, as compared to demand, is constituted as desire, and which are called the *look* and the *voice*. These objects, in so far as they cannot in any way be caught in the domination - whatever it may be - of the signifier, were it entirely constituted in the rank of social domination. These objects which, of their nature, escape it, what does that mean?

Is it there? Since for the slave, there is only a *supposed jouissance* on the Other's part (Hegel was mistaken in the fact that it is *for the slave* that there is a *jouissance* of the

master). But the worthwhile question, I posed to you earlier: *does what he enjoys, enjoy?* And if it is true that something of the real of *jouissance* can only subsist at the level of the slave, then it would indeed be for him in this place, left in the margin of the field of his body, that is constituted by the objects whose list I have just recalled. It is there, it is at this place, that there ought to be posed the question of *jouissance*.

Nothing can take from the slave the function, either of his look or of his voice, nor that also of what he is, in his function as nurse, since so frequently this is the function in which antiquity shows him to us, nor indeed either in his function as a warped object, an object of contempt.

At this level there is posed the question of *jouissance*. It is a question and, as you see, it is even a scientific question.

Now, the pervert ... the pervert, well then, this is what he is. Perversion is looking for this point of perspective, in so far as it can give rise to the accent of *jouissance*. But he looks for it in an experimental fashion. Perversion, while having the closest relation to *jouissance*, is - like the thinking of science - *cosa mentale*. It is an operation of the subject in so far as he has perfectly located this moment of disjunction through which the subject tears the body from *jouissance*, but who *knows* that *jouissance* has not only been, in this process, an alienated *jouissance*, that there is also the following: that there remains somewhere a chance that something has escaped from it. I mean that the whole body has not been caught in the process of alienation. (12) It is from this point, from the locus of the **small o**, that the pervert *questions*, questions what is involved in the function of *jouissance*.

By never grasping himself except in a partial fashion, and, as I might say, in the perspective - I would not say of the pervert ... for truly one could say that psychoanalysts comprehend nothing about it ... (was there not one, recently, who posed this sort of equation, in this connection that the pervert cannot be at the same time subject and *jouissance*, and that in the whole measure in which he was *jouissance* he was no longer subject!) ... The pervert remains subject throughout all the time of the exercise of what he poses as a question to *jouissance*. The *jouissance* that he aims at is that of the Other, in so far as *he* is perhaps the only remainder of it. But he poses it through a subject-activity.

What this allows us to reassemble, can be done only on a single condition. It is that we should perceive that these terms - *sado-masochism* - for example, as they are tied together, only make sense if we consider them as researches *along the path* of what is involved in the sexual act.

The relations that we call sadistic between one or other vague unit of the social body are only of interest for the following reason. They image something that involves the relations of man and of woman.

As I will tell you the next time, since this time, faith, I will have been cut short, you will see that in forgetting this fundamental relation, one allows there to escape any means of grasping what is involved in sadism and in masochism. This does not mean

either that these two terms image in any way relations comparable to those of male and female.

A personage of, I must say, unbelievable naivety writes somewhere this truth: that “masochism has nothing specifically feminine about it”. But the reasons that he gives for it go to the level of formulating that undoubtedly, if masochism were feminine, that would mean that it is not a perversion, because it would be natural to the woman to be masochistic. Therefore, starting from there, one can clearly see that, naturally, women cannot be qualified as masochists, because, being a perversion, that could not be something natural!

Here is the kind of reasoning in which people get bogged down. Not at all, certainly, without a certain intuition, I mean the first, namely, that a woman is not naturally masochistic. She is not naturally masochistic, and for good reason! Because if she were, in effect, masochistic, that would mean that she is capable of filling the role that the masochist gives to a woman. Which, of course, gives a completely different sense, in this case, to what feminine masochism would be. The woman has, precisely, no vocation to fill this role. This is what constitutes the value of the masochistic enterprise.

That is why you will allow me to end today on this point, while promising you - as an end point, as the high point of what is put in question by this introduction to perversion - by allowing you to indicate as a high point, that we will finally put, I hope, some order or at least some clarity, about what is at stake, when we are dealing with masochism.

Seminar 22: Wednesday June 7 1967

What is common to what are being called lately the “structuralisms”? It is to make the function of the subject depend on signifying articulation.

This means that, after all, this distinctive sign can remain more or less elided, that in a sense it always is. Naturally, I know that some of you may find that in this regard the analyses of Levi Strauss leave precisely this central point in suspense, leave us, in a word, before this question, in as much as, for some years, this analysis has been centred on myth. Are we to think, after all, that honey was expecting, I mean from all time, was awaiting, in tobacco, the truth of its relations with ashes?

In a certain sense ... [a little laugh from Lacan] ... it is true! And that is why, the putting in suspense of the subject flows from any approach like this. And this is sufficient to make us contribute to something which is nevertheless not a doctrine, which is simply the recognition of an efficacy, which seems indeed to be of the same nature as the one which grounds science.

It nevertheless remains that a notion of class such that it would imply structuralisms, in the plural, that a minimum of characteristics cannot in any way connect into a whole a certain number of researches, in as much as, to take mine, for example: after all, it is not as an office, as a helping system, that it had to encounter, in order to articulate it, this necessity of subjective articulation in the signifier. It is only, in a way, the preface. Nothing can correctly be thought about it without that.

Nevertheless, it is not without good reason that we ought to produce, finally, what in the same field was articulated too quickly, which is the fundamental relation of the *subject* thus constituted to the *body*.

What I am coming to - which accounts for the fact that symbolism always means in the last resort corporal symbolism - had to be set aside for years by me, precisely by reason of the fact that it is thus, from all time, that it is in this way, traditionally, that symbolism was articulated. Namely, in a fashion that lacked the essentials, as (2) happens, from being too precipitate.

The members and the stomach ... I have for a long time, always, evoked at the horizon the fable of Menenius Agrippa. It was not too bad! To compare the nobility to the stomach is better than to compare it to the head! And then it puts the head back in its place, among the members! ...

This all the same is to go a little too quickly. And if we know that, it is because of the fact that what is at the centre of our research, we analysts, is something which, no doubt, passes along no other paths than those of structure, the incidences of the signifier in the real, in so far as it introduces the subject into it. But that its centre ... and it is a sign that I can only recall it with this force at the moment when, properly speaking, I am installing my discourse in what I can legitimately call a logic, that it is at this moment that I can recall that everything turns, for us, around what is involved in what has to be called the *difficulty* - not of *being*, as someone said in his old age - the difficulty *inherent in the sexual act*.

There are other difficulties that foretold this one. To introduce this function of *difficulty*, is not nothing! The day when the difficulty of social harmony took on, legitimately, this name, of *class struggle*, a step was taken. The difficulty of the sexual act may take on a certain weight, if one dwells on it. I mean, if everything that we have to articulate in this field is centred effectively on this difficulty.

I suspect that one of the reasons why psychoanalysts prefer to hold that by putting the Thing, with a capital T, if you wish, that by putting the Thing in the centre, light is thrown on a whole zonal region, I suspect that - apart from something that I will have to signal later - it is, first of all, a logical difficulty.

One could, in this connection, take as an index, that the institution of marriage reveals itself to be all the more, I would not say solid, it is much more than that: *resistant*, as the right is given in our society, for there to be articulated all the "aspirations", as the psychologists say, all the aspirations towards the sexual act. If it has been found that a break-through has been made in the clarification of the difficulty of social harmony, it

is in effect quite striking that it is not especially where the right was most open to articulate aspirations towards the sexual act. That marriage shows itself there - I would not say, more resistant, it did not resist - more established (*institué*) than elsewhere. And that, in the field in which the aspirations are articulated, in a thousand effective forms, in all the fields of art, of cinema, of the word, without counting in that of the great neurotic discontent of civilisation, marriage, of course, remains at the centre, not having budged by an inch in its fundamental status.

In other words, to summarise this institution, to see that it is grounded on this single statement once pronounced, which I used (differently!) as an example, to indicate in it the structuring of the message, in itself: "You are my wife". Which does not even (3) need to be reduplicated by another announcement; which makes it almost purely formal to ask her whether she is in agreement.

It is on this that there depends - and in all the forms in which this institution persists, at least for the moment - it is on this that there depends the inauguration of what we will call a *couple*, defined as productive. This is not quite to say, simply, that it is a matter of the couple in the sense of the sexual pair. Of course it is required, but it should be noted that we could say that its product, is something other than the child reduced to the biological offspring, to the effect of the function of reproduction.

And this is what we mean by designating as **small o** what we have to question, at the start, about its entry into the sexual act. This **small o** - and not simply as a biological offspring - is *already* its product, and I told you could very crudely, if you absolutely want to situate it in your philosophical boxes, identify to what the residue of this tradition has come to in the final term, after having raised to perfection the isolation of the function of the subject and having had to keep mum about the beyond, it nevertheless remains, that before signalling to us, "Bye bye, sail away now", on what succeeds me and into which you have plunged a little, into this world which is stirred up, which is going to be the last to emerge from its contradictions (it is beginning), at that moment also it told you that, all the same, a little residue remained, from the beneficial dialectic to which there was offered in advance total order, *absolute knowledge*, and which is called the *Dasein*. This residue of presence, *qua* linked to subjective constitution, is in fact the only point where we remain in continuity with the philosophical traditions. We receive it from its hand, we who discover it precisely as the *sub-product* of this something that had remained masked in the dialectic of the subject, namely, that it has something to do with the sexual act.

The subjective residue is *already there* at the moment when there is posed the question of the mode in which it is going to operate in the sexual act.

If the whole human discourse is so structured that it leaves gaping wide the very possibility of the subjective establishment implied in the sexual act, the whole human discourse has already produced - not in each subject; at the level of its subjective effect in itself - this rain, this trickling of residues which accompanies each of the subjects involved in the process. And it happens - I think you remember it because it is from this angle that we first approached it - that this residue is, in the final analysis, the surest junction, however partial it may be in its essence, the surest junction of the subject with the body.

That this **small o** presents itself, certainly, as body - but not, as it is said, as total body - as fall, astray with respect to this body on which it depends, according to a structure which must be strongly maintained if one wishes to comprehend it. One can only comprehend it by referring oneself to the centre. And this indeed is what is maintained by certain indications, like those of the incidence of these objects that I am calling **small o**, are all linked – people do not say “to the act”, of course, because I (4) was the first to say it - to something all the same which is destined for it, since it is entirely around, not alone biological prematurity, in so far as it invokes this call made to the body towards the locus of the act, not alone prematurity or its attempt, pre-puberty, we are told, the first pressure which, in a way, indicates its future and horizon and just by itself - but not without invoking a whole conjunction, a whole social circumstance of repression, at least of appreciation, of discursive reference, of demand and of desire - already *pre-formed*, makes the subject, as **small o**, arrive as a sub-product from this central point of difficulty, to the difficulty itself.

Perhaps the relative shirking (*carence*), which, even if it is relative, nevertheless remains radical - I am saying, perhaps - of psychoanalysts, with regard to their task, comes from the fact that they do not posit themselves, as committed to experience, in its extremes, the difficulty of the sexual act.

For if the training analysis is, of course, more than required in order, let us say, to form a scar over the effects of chance that everyone has, of this difficulty, this does not mean that it constitutes in itself the fact of testing oneself against this difficulty!

It is rather convenient, once you have gone through - call it what you will - the cleansing, the purification, to go back to your slippers, which are not, whatever may be said, the chosen locus of the sexual act!

Certainly, it is already a way in to be capable of *thinking about desire* (*Penser le désir*).

Do you believe [a little laugh from Lacan] that I am giving you this slogan that it is a matter of *thinking about the sexual act* (*penser l'acte sexuel*)?

An act, you should note, if you remember the way I introduced it, has no need to be thought, to be an act. The question even arises whether that is not why it is an act! I will not go any further in this sense, which favours seeming acts only too much. It is not an easy business, but it is certain, whether or not one should think it, that one can only think about it afterwards! The nature of the act is that it must first be committed. Which, perhaps, does not prevent it from being thought.

This to tell you that, if one starts from the difficulty of the sexual act, this does not put within hand's reach the *time* to think about it!

So then, let us take up at the lowest level how this is posed. If it is an act, the constitution in act of a signifier - starting from some motion, we will say, invoking here only the register of movement, something measurable in the weighing of a body - there ought to be, if the signifier is reduced to the most simple chain, this opposition

that I already inscribed on two unexpected little plaques in one of my articles, and that we will retranslate here by - I am not even saying *I - am a man*, and its relation to *am a woman*. Namely, that we come back here to what, earlier, was presented as the message, in an inverted form.

Is it not absolutely fabulous that we are absolutely not able, in any case, to account for a link between these terms which would justify our taking them as the inverse of one (5) another? And that it is then necessary for us to question them as they are, namely, as you are not unaware and as it is articulated at every line of Freud, while being totally incapable of giving them any sure correlate whatsoever. Activity, passivity, for example, are only substitutes whose, I would not say inadequate, suspect character Freud underlines every time he uses them.

So then let us pose the question again with the apparatuses furnished by our good little tradition of handling the subject. It ought to be able to be put to the test here! And even if it is of no use, the way in which it will be rebuffed by the object will instruct us perhaps about something concerning the object itself, its elasticity for example!

We are going to find something analogous to the male-being (*l'être-male*), to take him first - but just as much the female-being; they are exactly in the same position at this level of discourse - in what our handling of the subject has lead us to. There must indeed be two aspects there also. Moreover, this leaps to the eye immediately! There is an *in itself* (*en soi*) and then a *for* (*pour*) - a for ... for something! But what is immediately seen is that this is not at all *for itself* (*pour soi*) by very reason of the fundamental requirement of the sexual act. He cannot remain for himself, but let us not say that he is "*for*" the one who makes up the pair!

This is where the introduction of the function of the big Other ought to be of service to us. What corresponds here to our questioning, as opposed to this rather slippery *in itself* - which corresponds to the male-being and much more again to the female-being - is a *for the Other*, with a capital O. Namely, - which we had to evoke first - namely, the locus from which the message returns to him in an inverted form.

I point out to you, it is a little reminder - I will accentuate it more the next time, but here I can only begin it in passing - of this alternative, whose range I broadened by showing that it is not simply that of alienation, since it already allowed us, in the first semester, to establish this logical operation of alienation in its relation with two others - you have perhaps forgotten it - which form with it something that I questioned in the manner of a Klein group. Briefly, the start of this little rectangle in which I situated the fundamental alienation of the subject, precisely in its relation to a possibility which was only the place marked for the sexual act in the logical form of sublimation. This alternative: *either I am not thinking or I am not*, a seductive choice, as you see, which is the start of what is offered to the subject once there is introduced the perspective of an unconscious, in so far as it is constructed from this difficulty of the sexual act. You see here how it is prepared. The *I am not thinking*, is undoubtedly the *in itself*, if ever it manifests itself, of the male-being or of the female-being. The *I am not* being on the other side, namely, on the side of the *for the Other*.

(6) What the sexual act is called on to assure, since it is grounded in it, is something that we can call a *sign* coming from where *I am not thinking*, from where I am as not thinking, in order to arrive where *I am not*, where I am as not being. For, if *I am where I am not thinking* and if *I think where I am not* - this indeed is the occasion to remind oneself of it - in this relation which may well happen where I am not, namely, me, as a male, at the level of the woman. It is here, all the same, that - whatever may have been the pretensions of philosophers to detach the *to phronein*, I am thinking, from the *to khairain*, I am enjoying - it is here, all the same, that my destiny, even at the level of the *to phronein* is played out. The fact of having dialogued with Socrates never prevented anyone from having obsessions that tickle, greatly upset, his *to phronein!*

So then the next step is the one offered us - and this is why I recalled it - by the function of the message. It is a fact that, imprudently and absolutely not knowing what I am saying, I announce myself as being man where I am not thinking, in this form of “*You are my wife*”, where I am not. This has, all the same, the importance of giving to the woman the possibility of announcing herself also. And this is what requires that she should be there *qua* subject. For she becomes it, she, like me, once she announces herself.

This encounter - under the pure form, which is all the more pure, I insist, because one absolutely does not know what one is saying - this is what puts in the very forefront the function of the subject in the sexual act. And it is even as pure subject that we notice, precisely at the level of the foundation of this act, that this pure subject is situated at the junction, or to put it better, at the disjunction of the body and *jouissance*. It is a subject *in the measure of this disjunction*.

How is that best seen here? Naturally, we know from the tradition, since earlier I evoked *Philebus* in particular, where the *to phronein* and the *to khairain* are subjected to this operation of separation, with a rigour which is precisely the reason why on the eve of the last vacation I recommended you to re-read it.

But, here, even if you wanted to tell me that, after all, as regards this act we could well dispense with its exigencies as act, that perhaps one does not need the sexual act in order to fuck in a perfectly appropriate way! It is a matter, in effect, of knowing, in the relief of the act, what in it requires the subject.

It is perhaps not saying much to say that everything depends on the opposition of the signifiers *man*, *woman*, if we still do not know even what they mean.

And, in effect, where one sees the incidence of the subject is not so much in the word *woman*, as in the word *male*.

Jouissance, as I pointed out, is an ambiguous term. It slides. From something which makes us say that there is no *jouissance* except that of the body and which opens the field of the substance in which there come to be inscribed the severe limits in which the subject contains itself from the incidences of pleasure. And then this sense in which to enjoy (*jouir*), as I said, is to possess, the *my*. I enjoy something. Which (7) leaves in suspense the question of whether this something, from the fact that I

enjoy it, enjoys. There, around the *my*, there is very precisely this separation between *jouissance* and the body. Because it is not for nothing that I introduced you to it the last time, with the reminder of this articulation - a fragile one because limited to the traditional field of the genesis of the subject - of the phenomenology of the spirit, of the master and the slave.

My... Henceforth I enjoy your body, namely, your body becomes the metaphor for *my jouissance*.

And Hegel, all the same, does not forget that it is only a metaphor. Namely, that however much of a master I am, my *jouissance* is already displaced, that it depends on the metaphor of the serf. And it remains that for him, as for what I am questioning in the sexual act, there is *another jouissance* which is adrift.

And do I need once more to write it on the board with my little bars?

(my) body	body
?	<u>my</u> <i>jouissance</i>

This body of the woman, which is *my*, is henceforth the metaphor for my *jouissance*. It is a matter of knowing what is there in the form of my body. Of course, I do not even think, innocent that I am, of calling it “*my*”. It is also going to have its metaphor relation, which, undoubtedly, would ground everything in the most elegant and easy fashion, with the *jouissance* that is in question and which creates the difficulty of the sexual act.

You will say to me: “Why is it at the level of the woman that it gives rise to a question?”

We are going to say it right away, very quickly and very simply. Every psychoanalyst knows it! They do not necessarily know how to say it, but they know it! They know it in any case by the following. The fact is that, men or women, they have not yet been capable of articulating the slightest thing that holds up on the subject of feminine *jouissance*!

I am not in the process of saying that feminine *jouissance* cannot take this place. I am in the process of stopping you at the moment where it is a matter of not going too quickly in saying that this is the difficulty of the sexual act!

And this reference - which was less intolerable, uniquely because it is a myth - that I took the last time in the relations of the master and the slave, namely, from the *jouissance* that is adrift, you can well imagine when we are dealing with the slave. Namely, that there is no reason that *jouissance* should not always be there, and this all the more in that he had not, like the master, the foolishness to put it at risk! So then, why would he not have kept it? It is not because his body has become the metaphor of

(8) the *jouissance* of the master that his own *jouissance* should not to continue its little life! As everything proves!

If you read ancient comedy, if you re-read our dear Terence, for example, who is not precisely a primitive, who is even quite the opposite, of whom one can even say that things are pushed so far, in his case, so exhausted, that it supersedes in simplicity anything that we might think up. It is much more simplistic than a film by M. Robbe-Grillet, even when it is slap dash! But it is not slap dash! Only we absolutely no longer see what is at stake! There is a certain story, *Andria*, for example. When you read it you will say: "My God, what a story!" All this because a boy who has a father and who ought or ought not to marry a girl who is from good or bad society. And since, at the end, the bad society turns out to be the good, because of this eternal story of recognition, she had been kidnapped when she was a little girl and so forth and so on. What a story! And what an idiotic story! Only the problem is that if you reason in this way there is one thing you do not see. The fact is there is only a single interesting person in this whole comedy, called Davus! He is well and truly a slave! For one can, quite seriously ... he who directs everything, he who is the only intelligent one among all of these persons, and he does not even dream of suggesting to you that the others could begin to be so. The father plays the paternal role to the degree of ... anyway ... desirable brutishness, anyway ... veritably... completely superfluous! The son is a poor pet who is completely astray! The girls involved? We do not even see them, they are of interest to no one! There is a slave who fights for his master so that he almost risks being, from one minute to the next - it is written down - crucified! And he guides the affair with a master's hand, it has to be said!

This is what is at stake in ancient comedy. Except for the fact that this has only a single interest for us. Namely, to show you that there can be a question of what happens to *jouissance* when there is produced this little movement of displacement, of *Verschiebung*, which is properly speaking constituted once the function of subject is introduced between the body and *jouissance*.

It is not with the *jouissance* proper to a body in so far as this *jouissance* defines it! A body is something that can enjoy. Only there you are. It becomes the metaphor of the *jouissance* of another! And what becomes of its own? Is it exchanged? That is the whole question. But it is not resolved.

Why is it not resolved? All the same, we analysts know. This does not mean that we can always say it! It is a general observation! I am not going to be repeating it all the time! Let us write it.... We are going to do it like that, huh, for the body, it will be more amusing. ... And this resembles my little plaques, on which, in one of my articles, I wrote, "Men", "Women". You see it going into urinals!



J?



J

A little plaque can serve as a body for us. With a certain number of things, in effect, written on it. This is the function of the body, since we have recalled that it is the locus of the Other. So then, one makes the same little bar, so that you will not be disturbed, and here we write, J, to mean, *jouissance*.

Here, then, there is a question mark because it is this and because, finally, we do not know whether it comes there, whether the body of the male is well and truly, surely, what the male affirms, since he does nothing but affirm it! This is where we start from, in the "You are my wife". Namely, that the body of the woman is the metaphor of his own *jouissance*.

There we are. It is enough to add a line to make this little articulation expressive.

In effect, for reasons that depend... that depend on the fact that there is not only the couple involved in the sexual act. Namely, that, as other structuralists who function in different fields have reminded you, the relation of the man and the woman is subject to exchange functions, which imply at the same time an exchange value. And that the locus where something which is in use is struck by this negating which makes of it an exchange value, is here - for reasons taken from the natural constitution of the function of copulation - is here taken from masculine *jouissance*, since one knows where it is! Anyway one believes one does! It a little organ that one can catch hold of! Which is what the baby does immediately, with the greatest ease.

Ah! This is something, I can tell you, in parenthesis, now here really we have ... I really have to show it to you. I was brought a little romantic book on masturbation! With drawings! It is something that is so ... anyway, so absolutely entrancing, that I cannot believe that if I pass it around it will come back to me! [General laughter] So then, I do not know what to do. I do not know what to do. I will have to put it ... I do not know. There ought to be machines where you can project, like that, objects and open it page by page but ... good, anyway, you have to see this! It is called *Le livre sans titre* and it is intended to ... there are at least twenty five drawings, anyway, or about twenty, which show the ravages [Lacan says these last words interrupting them with a laugh] brought on a misfortunate ... on any misfortunate young man, of course, you know what a bad reputation masturbation had at the beginning of the last century, the ravages and the horrors, anyway, that it produced! And all of that with drawings! And colours! Anyway [laughter], to see this misfortunate young man ... the misfortunate young man vomiting blood! Because this is one of the things that are the consequences ... in any case, it is ... something sublime!

I apologise. This has nothing to do with my discourse [laughter] absolutely nothing to (10) do with it! This is going to cost me an awful lot! It is one of the reasons, also, why I did not want to separate myself from it! [laughter] Yes! It is of a beauty that surpasses everything, and if there exist ... machines with which one can project, even if the thing is not transparent ... I would like to show you that ... it is ... it is ... I never saw anything like it! Good, anyway, in brief! ...

Anyway, in short, as you know, this embargo, huh, on masculine *jouissance*, in so far as it is graspable somewhere, is something which is structural - even though hidden - for the foundation of value.

If a woman, who is after all a subject, in the sexual act - I would say even more, I have just articulated that there cannot be a sexual act if she is not, at the start, grounded as a subject - for a woman to be able to take on her function as exchange value, she must cover something which is what is already established as value and which is what psychoanalysis reveals to us under the name of castration complex.

The exchange of women, I am not in the process of telling you that it is easily retranslated by the *exchange of phalluses*! Otherwise, it is hard to see why the ethnologists could not just as well make their tables of structures by calling things by their name! It is the exchange of phalluses, *qua* symbols of a withdrawn *jouissance* as such.

Namely, not the penis, but what ensures, since the woman becomes the metaphor of *jouissance*, that one can in its place take a new metaphor, namely, this negated part of the body that we call the phallus, in order to distinguish it from the penis. And this leaves the problem that we have just articulated no less open! In other words, something is established, on which a different process, that of social exchange, in the foundation of the *material*, as I might say, destined for the sexual act. This leaves no less in suspense whether we can, by reason of this external element, situate something about the woman in her function as metaphor, with respect to a *jouissance* that has passed to the function of value. This is expressed in many myths. I do not need to remind you of Isis and her eternal mourning, of what is involved in this final part of the body that she has reassembled. I simply signal to you in passing that in this extreme myth, in which precisely the goddess is defined as being for her part (this is what distinguishes her from a mortal) *pure jouissance*, certainly also separated for its part from the body, but why? Because there is no question for her of what constitutes a body in its status as mortal body! This does not mean that the gods do not have bodies! Simply, as you are well aware, they change them! Even the God of Israel has a body! You would have to be mad not to notice it. This body is a column of fire in the night and of cloud during the day. This we are told in the Book and what is at stake there is properly speaking his body!

It is, like my other story, (this is a parenthesis), it is one of the things that I would have better developed if I had been able to give a seminar on the Name of the Father.

The goddess is *jouissance*, it is very important to recall it. Her status as goddess is to (11) be *jouissance*. And to fail to recognise it is properly to condemn oneself to understanding nothing of all that is involved in *jouissance*. And that is why *Philebus* is exemplary, when a reply announces to us that in no case do the gods have anything to do with *jouissance*. It would not be worthy of them. Here, as one might say, is the weak point at the start of philosophical discourse. It is to have radically failed to recognise the status of *jouissance* in the order of beings.

I am only making these remarks in an incidental fashion and to recall to you the import of this reading of *Philebus*, in so far as it allows there to be located, with an exemplary exactitude, the limited field in which there develops what is going to be involved in the status of the subject and what is signified by the re-entry, the recuperation, of questions which, because of it, have been isolated.

Here we are then around this question of what *jouissance* is involved in the sexual act.

Let us say, to introduce the end of this discourse, what it is essential, at first, to articulate with the most extreme scansion. The end of this discourse is to allow us to map out the way in which the acts that are put, legitimately, in the register of perversion, concern the sexual act.

If they concern the sexual act it is because at the point where there is question of *jouissance* - and you will see, from the fact that this point exists, that there can be no less a question at the level of the body of the woman, but that it is from another angle that we can tackle it - given that the hold, the model that is given to us, of what is going to appear in the attempts at solution, in *the instauration of the value of jouissance*, is there on the right. Namely, in the fact that there is negated the function of a certain organ, the very organ through which nature, by the offer of pleasure, assures the copulating function, but in a fashion which is completely contingent, subordinate. In other animal species, it assures it quite differently, it assures it with hooks, for example. And nothing can guarantee for us that, in this organ, there is anything whatsoever that concerns *jouissance*, properly speaking. Here we have the term through which value is introduced. **It is through this, that at the level where the question of *jouissance* is, this *jouissance* comes into play**, very precisely, **in the form of a question.**

To pose oneself the question of feminine *jouissance*, well then, this is already to open the door of all perverse acts.

And the result is this. This is why men have, in appearance at least, the privilege of the great perverse positions. But let the question be posed - it is already something to pose it - whether the woman herself has a suspicion of it. Naturally, through the reflection of what this lack of *jouissance* of the man introduces into her, she enters into this field along the path of desire, which, as I teach, is the desire of the Other, namely, the desire of the man.

But the question of *jouissance* is posed *more primitively* for the man. It is posed because of the fact that it is involved, at the start, at the foundation, of the possibility (12) of the sexual act. And the way in which he is going to question it, is by means of *objects*. Of these objects which are precisely the objects that I call **small o**, in so far as they are *marginal*, that they escape from a certain structure of the body. Namely, from what I called *specular*, and which is the mirage through which it is said that the soul is the form of the body.

That everything belonging to the body passes into the soul, is something that can be retained. Here is the *image* of the body. It is through this that the analysts believe they can grasp what is involved in our reference to the body. Hence so many absurdities.

For it is precisely in this part of the body, in this strange limit which, as I might say in commenting on these images, create a ball or create a symphysis in these parts of the

body, that we will call, as compared to the specular reflection, the *anaesthetic* parts, this is where the question of *jouissance* takes refuge.

And it is to these objects that the subject for whom this question is posed - in the first place, the male subject - that this subject addresses himself, **to pose the question of *jouissance*.**

Naturally, at the moment that I am leaving you, this may appear to you to be a closed formula. And it is true. ... In as much as, at the very least, it is necessary to demonstrate it in an exemplary way, for each of these major objects that I have just evoked which are the ones that I designate under the name of little **o**-objects. But what I will demonstrate to you, this will be for our next meeting, is *how* these objects serve as questioning elements.

This can only be given to us if we start from what I first articulated already the last time, and again today, as the *constitutive separation of the body and jouissance*.

Do I simply need to begin to indicate something about it, so that your thoughts may go immediately onto the path of the drive that is called - that is wrongly called! - sado-masochistic, but which is all the same, nevertheless, with scotophilia, the only term that Freud uses as a pivot when he has properly to define the drive.

That the sado-masochistic drive operates, completely, in an interplay where what is in question is there, in this point of disjunction, sufficiently marked by my siglum or algorithm, as you wish, of the *signifier of the O barred*, namely, the disjunction between *jouissance* and the body. It is in as much (and you will see it the next time in all its details) as the masochist - and it is from him that I will start - questions the completeness and the rigour of this separation and sustains it as such, it is through this that he comes to subtract, as I might say, from the field of the Other, what remains available for him in terms of a certain operation of *jouissance*.

It is in so far as the masochist gives a solution, which *is not* the path of the sexual act, but which passes *along this path*, that we can situate, in the correct fashion, the approximate things that are always said about this fundamental position of masochism. In as much as it is a perverse structure and that at its level - for having (13) articulated it at one time, which is here primordial - he alone allows us to distinguish, because they have to be distinguished, what is involved in the *perverse act* and what is involved in the *neurotic act*.

As you will see, I am pointing it out to you because I have the feeling of not having said so much about it to you today and, after all, time is getting on. I am indicating it to you in as much as it may serve already as a theme of reflection for some of you: *you must radically distinguish the perverse act from the neurotic act*.

The *perverse act* is situated at the level of this question about *jouissance*.

The *neurotic act*, even if it refers to the model of the perverse act, has no other goal than to sustain what has nothing to do with the question of the sexual act, namely, the *effect of desire*.

It is only by posing the questions in this radical fashion - and it can only be radical by being articulated logically - that we can distinguish the fundamental function of the perverse act. I mean, perceive that it is distinct from anything that resembles it, because it borrows its phantasy.

There you are! To the next time.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 14 June 1967

Analysis may be interminable but not a course. It has to have an end. So then, the last of this year will take place next Wednesday. Today's then is the second last.

This year, I chose not to have any closed seminars. I nevertheless made room, at least, I apologise if I forgot it, for at least two people who brought their contribution here.

Perhaps at the beginning of this second last lecture there might be someone among you, someone or several, someone who would like to tell me, perhaps, on what he would like to see me, who knows, putting a greater accent ... or give an answer ... to begin a stage for the future. This, either in the second last lecture or in the last one. Anyway, I will see if I can answer today. I will strive at least to indicate in what sense I can answer, or indeed I do not know, not answer, the next time. In short, if some of you would not mind, here, immediately, rapidly, giving me, as I might say, some indication of their wishes on this, about what I left them desiring concerning the field that I articulated this year on the logic of the phantasy, well then, I would be very grateful to them. Well then, who wants the floor? On the other hand we must not delay. Who wants to speak? Good ... It's hot! Good, well then let us speak no more about it, at least for the moment. Those who may have *l'esprit de l'escalier* can perhaps send me a little word ... my address is in the directory in Rue de Lille. I do not think, moreover, you will have any hesitations. As far as I know I am the only one, at least in that place, called Dr. Lacan.

Good. So then let us start again. I am going to continue then at the point that we left things. And since we no longer have much time to complete what can pass as forming a certain circumscribed field, in what I said this year, I am going, by God, to try to indicate to you the final reference points in as simple a way as I can.

I am going to try to do things simply, of course, which presupposes that I should alert (2) you to what this simplicity means.

You see clearly that at the end of this logic of the phantasy, a term sufficiently justified by the fact that I am going once more to re-accentuate today. The phantasy,

is, in a still narrower way than all the rest of the unconscious, structured like a language. Since, when all is said and done, the phantasy is a sentence with a grammatical structure, which seems to indicate then, that to articulate the logic of the phantasy, which means, for example, posing a certain number of logical questions which, however simple they may be, have, some of them, not been articulated too often, I am not saying for the first time by me, but perhaps for the first time by me in the analytic field, (the relation of the subject of the statement, for example, to the stating subject.) Good, well then this does not rule out that, at the end of this first clarification, this indication, this direction given of the sense in which there may develop in the future in a fuller, more articulated, more systematic fashion this logic of the phantasy, I only claim this year to have opened up the furrow. (Its furrow ... yes who is uneasy, you? - [Someone in the hall: "I can't hear] You can't hear, well now you know!) Not alone does it not rule it out, but it indicates, of course, that somewhere, this logic of the phantasy is attached, is inserted, is suspended on the economy of the phantasy. That indeed is why at the end of this discourse I introduced the term of *jouissance*.

I introduced it while underlining, while accentuating that this is a new term, at least in the function that I give it, and that it is not a term that Freud had put in the forefront of theoretical articulation.

And if my teaching, in short, could find its... axis, from the formula of *setting off to advantage* the doctrine of Freud, this indeed is something which implies, precisely, that I announce in it, that I initiate in it, one or other function, one or other reference point which is in a way circumscribed, outlined, required, implied in it. To set Freud off to advantage, is to do what I always do. First as they say, to render to Freud the things that are Freud's; which does not exclude some other allegiance! The one, for example, of setting him off to advantage, with respect to what he indicates, with respect to what he involves, in terms of the relation to the truth.

I would say that, if something like that is possible, it is precisely in the measure that I never fail to render to Freud what is Freud's, and I do not appropriate it to myself. This is a point that, I must say, has its importance, and perhaps I will have the time to come back to it at the end.

It is rather curious to see that for some people, it is by appropriating to themselves, I mean by not rendering to me what they manifestly owe me - anyone can notice it in their formulations - this is not what is important, it is that this failure to render to me, prevents them from immediately taking the next step, which would be nevertheless quite easy in many fields. Instead, alas, of leaving it always to me to make it, even if it entails, subsequently, their despairing that I should have, as it seems, cut the ground from under their feet.

(3) So then, let us approach this function of the phantasy. And first of all to notice, to simply say, as the very start of our question, it is something which leaps to the eye, that it is something *closed*. That it presents itself to us, in our experience, as a closed meaning - for the subjects who, usually, most commonly, most customarily, support it for us, namely, the neurotics - let it be noted, as Freud does with energy, in the exemplary examination that he made of one of these phantasies, "*A child is being*

beaten”; that I already did, if you remember, when I introduced the first schemas of this year (that, of course, I would advise you, when you have assembled what you have been able to take in terms of more or less extensive notes, to which, I hope, you will have recourse anew, in order to grasp the path which has been gone through here) is something closed, therefore is to be situated, and doubly so, in these two terms that I accentuated: one as the correlative of the choice constituted by the *I am not thinking*, in which the *I* is constituted by the fact that the *I*, precisely, comes in reserve, as I might say, as a negative curtailing (*écornage*) in the grammatical structure.

This phantasy - not “one beats a child”, for example, but to be strict, “a child is being beaten” as it is written in German - this phantasy is indeed the structure that at the level of the only possible term of the choice as it is left by the structure of alienation - the choice of “I am not thinking” - this phantasy appears as this grammatically structured sentence: *Ein Kind ist geschlagen*.

But, as I told you, if this structure - the only one that is proposed to us, the forced choice, at the level of *either I am not* or *I am not thinking* - if it is there, it is in the measure in which it may be called on unveil the other, to reject it, and that at the level of the other, that of the *I am not*, it is the unconscious *Bedeutung* which comes correlatively to bite on this *I*, which is *qua* not being. And the relation to this *Bedeutung* is precisely this meaning, in so far as it escapes, this closed meaning, this meaning that is nevertheless so important to underline, in so far as, as one might say, it is what gives the measure of the *comprehension*, the accepted measure, the received measure, the intuition, the experience, that one challenges, as regards making these false discourses which appeal to comprehension, as opposed to explanation: philosophical sanctity and vanity. Mr Jaspers in the first rank.

The point of your gut that he aims at to make you believe that you understand things from time to time, is this little secret, isolated thing that you have within you, in the form of the phantasy, and that you believe you comprehend, because it awakens in you the dimension of desire.

This is, quite simply, what is at stake as regards what is called *comprehension*.

And recalling it is important here. Because ... it is not because on average all of you as you are, I am saying for the majority, a little neurotic around the edges, that the (4) phantasy gives you the measure of comprehension, precisely at this level at which phantasy awakens desire in you - which is not to be sneezed at, because this is what centres your world - this is not a reason for you to imagine that you comprehend what, alone, betrays the logic of the phantasy, namely, perversion.

You must not imagine that for the pervert phantasy plays the same role. And this is why I am trying to explain to you the roots of what the pervert does which can only be defined with reference to the term that I introduced, new also in being so accentuated, which is called the *sexual act*.

Therefore, as you see, there are connections that have to be distinguished. To articulate the nature of the *jouissance* involved in perversion, with respect to the difficulty or to the impasse of the sexual act, is to produce something which has, with

respect to the phantasy, to the phantasy as it is given to us in the closed state - and that is why I recalled earlier this example of “*A child is being beaten*” in the Freudian text - the function of this phantasy which cannot as such present, be anything other, than strictly this formula, *ein Kind ist geschlagen*. It is not because it can involve, in the sense that it has a configuration that you can point, refer to the economy of perverse *jouissance*, by making some terms of the one correspond to some terms of the other, that it is in any way of the same nature! In other words, in order right away to recall this crucial point that is, all the same, not difficult to pick up in passing in this text of Freud, which is so clear, it is, for example, the following: that it has not such a specificity in the cases of neurosis in which he encountered it.

In the structure of a neurosis, this phantasy - to take this one because we have to take something on which to fix our attention - this phantasy is not linked specifically to one or other. Here indeed is something that might retain our attention for a moment!

Indeed, as regards what is involved in the structure of symptoms, I mean what symptoms signify in the economy, there, we cannot say that this arranges the same thing in one neurosis or in another.

I will never repeat it too much, even if I seem astonished when, among those who trust me enough to come to be supervised by me, I energetically protest against the use of terms like these, for example: “hystero (hyphen) phobic structure”. Why that? A hysterical structure is not the same as a phobic structure! No closer to one another than to the obsessional structure, whose symptom represents a structure.

This is the striking point. The fact is, as Freud indicates to us, that in very different structures, this phantasy can be here what wanders around, with this privilege, this privilege of being more *inadmissible* than anything - I am reading Freud - I repeat (5) it here for the moment: *inadmissible* involves many things. One could dwell on it.

In any case, to remain at the level of a crude approach of the year 1919, when this was written, let us say that there is appended to it, like a cherry on a pedicle, the feeling of guilt. It is at this, in any case, that Freud pauses, to relate it to what he calls a scar. That, precisely, of the Oedipus complex.

This is well designed to make us say that, as regards the way in which it emerged in our experience, the phantasy has the characteristics of the experimental aspect, of a foreign body.

That we should have been led - this by reason of a veritable theoretical bridge in Freud - to sense this firm meaning, is related to something else, much more developable, much richer in virtualities, which is called properly speaking perversion. It is not because Freud made this leap, very quickly, that we, for our part, ought not to reinstall the distances, the correct relation, question ourselves, all the same, after having acquired a lot of experience about what is involved in perversion.

Perversion, then, I said, is something which is articulated, is presented, as a proper way into the difficulty which is generated, let us say: by the project - and you should put this word in inverted commas, namely, that it is only analogical here; I am

bringing it in as a reference to a discourse other than my own - the putting in question, to be more exact, which is situated in the angle between these two terms. **There is no ... , there is only ... something of the sexual act, ... the sexual act** (*il n'y a pas ... , il n'y a que ... , d'acte sexuel ... l'acte sexuel*).

There is no sexual act, I said, in so far as we are incapable of articulating its resulting affirmations. Which does not mean, of course, that there are not some subjects who have acceded to it, who can legitimately say, "I am a man", "I am a woman". But we analysts, [**Lacan punctuates this with a little laugh**] this is what is striking. The fact is that we are not capable of saying it.

Nevertheless, there is *only* this act, put in suspense at this level, that can *account* for this something which, after all, - the matter has not simply remained but still remains ambiguous - could be separated from it, which is called perversion. Why?

If it were a perversion in the absolute sense, in the sense that Aristotle takes it, for example, when he sets aside (*teras*, these are monsters) from the field of his *Ethics* a certain number of practices, which were perhaps, why not, more manifest, more visible, more alive even, in his world than in ours (where, moreover, it must not be believed that they are still not there). Namely, the example that he gives of bestial love, indeed, if I remember correctly, the allusion to the fact that some tyrant or other, Phalaris, if I remember correctly, rather liked to put some of his victims - whether they were friendly or unfriendly to him - to put them through some machine or other where (6) they cooked as in an oven for a certain time. Aristotle sets this aside from the field of ethics. This is not, of course, for us an univocal model, since in his *Ethics*, the sexual act, precisely - as in no ethics of the Greek philosophical tradition - the sexual act does not have a central value, I mean one that is admitted, patent. It remains for us to read it. It is not the same for us, thanks to the fact of the inclusion of the Judaic *Commandments* in our morality.

But, undoubtedly, with Freud the thing is definite. The interest that we take in sexual perversion - even if we find it more convenient to loosen its chains, in the form of a reference to some endogenous development or other, or some stage or other that we claim, I do not know why, to be biological - it remains that perversion only takes on its value by being articulated with the sexual act.

I am saying with the sexual act as such. And that is why I chose this little model ... this little model of incommensurable division *par excellence*, of this **small o**, the one to develop its incommensurability in the widest way, which is defined by the *One over o equals One plus o*, $1/o = 1+o$, and allows us to inscribe it in a schema, in the form of a double development. Am I going to have to write it out again today? I indicate only that this being *One*, there is a way of folding back here the **small o**, then what remains of it - which is found, as it happens, to be the square of **o**, itself equal to $1-o$ (it is not difficult to verify it immediately) - to produce here an o^3 , which is folded back on the preceding o^2 in order to give here an o^4 , the which o^4 , etc... and to culminate here as a sum of the odd powers which is found to be equal to o^2 , while the sum of the equal powers is finally found to be equal to **o**. As a result of which, what you have seen first of all being projected into the *One*, namely the **o** on the left, the o^2 on the right, are found at the end to be separated in a definitive fashion an inverted form.

A schema which it would be easy to show - even though in a purely metaphorical fashion - can represent rather well what, in the sexual act can be presented for us in a fashion that is in conformity with Freud's presentiment, namely, realisable, but only in the form of sublimation.

It is precisely in the measure that this path - and what it implies - remains problematic, and that I exclude it this year. For to say that it can be realised in the form of sublimation, is to separate oneself precisely from what we have to deal with, namely, that in its field there arise, structurally, the whole chain of difficulties which unfold, which are included because of a major gap, and a gap which remains, which is that of castration... It is in the measure ... on that, the common vote, as I might say, of the authors, of those who have experience of it, is clear. It is that as a minimum, one might say, along a path that is the inverse of that leading to the stumbling point of castration, that perversion is articulated.

The interest of this schema is the following. It is to show that this measure **small o**, first projected here onto the 1, can also be developed in an external fashion. Namely, (7) that the relation of the *One over one plus o* is also equal to this fundamental relation that the **small o** designates, which means here, I recalled it at one time, *o over one*.

What is at stake at the level of perversion is the following. It is that in the measure that the presumed One, not of the sexual act but of sexual union - of the pact, if you wish - in the measure that this *One*, is left intact, that a partition is not established in it, that the subject described as perverse, comes to find - at the level of this irreducible, of this original **small o** that he is - his *jouissance*.

What renders this conceivable is the following:

that there cannot be a sexual act, any more than any other act, except in the signifying reference which, alone, can constitute it as act;

that this signifying reference, here, does not involve - by this very fact - *two natural entities*, the male and the female;

that from the very fact that it dominates, because it is a lower field of the sexual act, this signifying reference only introduces these beings - which we can in no way maintain in the state of natural beings - introduces them in the form of a subject-function;

that this subject-function - this is what I articulated the previous times - has as effect the *disjunction of the body and jouissance*, and that it is there, it is at the level of this partition, that perversion most typically intervenes.

What it highlights, to try to reconnect this *jouissance* and this body, separated by the fact of the signifying intervention, is here the way in which it situates itself on the path of a resolution to the question of the sexual act.

It is because in the sexual act, as I showed you in my schema the last time, there is, for whoever of the two partners, whoever, there is a *jouissance*, that of the other, which remains in suspense.

It is because the inter-crossing, the required chiasma - which would make of each of the bodies, by right, the metaphor, the signifier of the *jouissance* of the other - it is because this chiasma is in suspense, that we cannot but, from whatever angle we tackle it, see this displacement which, in effect, makes a *jouissance* dependent on the body of the other. As a result of which, the *jouissance* of the other, as I told you, remains adrift.

The man, for the structural reason which means that it is on his *jouissance* that there is taken a sample which raises it to the function of a *jouissance*-value, the man is found, more electively than the woman, to be caught in the consequences of this structural subtraction of a part of his *jouissance*. The man is effectively the first to support the reality of the hole introduced into *jouissance*. This indeed is also why it is he for whom this question of *jouissance* is, not of course of greater weight - it is just as much so for his partner - but is such that he can give it articulated solutions. He can do so because of this: that there is in the nature of this thing which is called the body, something which reduplicates this alienation, which is - from the structure of the subject - alienation of *jouissance*.

(8) Alongside subjective alienation - I mean that dependent on the introduction of the function of the subject - which is brought to bear on *jouissance*, there is another which is the one incarnated in the function of the **o**-object.

Jouissance, Eurydice, as one might say, twice lost, this *jouissance* that the pervert rediscovers, where is he going to rediscover it? Not in the totality of his body, in which a *jouissance* is perfectly conceivable and perhaps even required, but where it is clear that it is here that it creates a problem when it is the sexual act that is at stake.

The *jouissance* of the sexual act can in no way be compared to what the womaniser (*coureur*) with this free and arrogant approach may experience. Nowhere more than in the field of sexual *jouissance* - and it is not for nothing that it is there that it appears to be prevalent - nowhere more than in this field does the pleasure principle - which is properly the limit, the stumbling point, the term put to every form which is situated as an excess of *jouissance* - nowhere does it appear better that the law of *jouissance* is subject to this limit. And that it is here that there is going to be found very specially for the man - in so far as I said that, for him, the castration complex already articulates the problem - there is going to find its field, I mean that there are objects which, in the body, are defined by being, in a way - with respect to the pleasure principle - *outside the body (hors corps)*.

This is what the **o**-objects are. The **small o** is this something ambiguous, which, however little it may belong to the body, to the individual object itself, it is in the field of the Other, and with good reason, because this is the field in which the subject is outlined, that he has to make the request for it, has to find its trace.

The *breast*, this object which must indeed be defined as this something which, even though it is stuck, attached, as on a surface, parasitically like a placenta, remains this something that the body of the child can legitimately claim as belonging to him. One sees this enigmatic belonging clearly. I mean, of course, that through an accident in

the evolution of living beings, it appears that in this way, for some of them, something of them remains attached to the body of the being who engendered them.

And then, the others ... we have already said *excrement*. It is hardly necessary to underline how marginal this is with respect of the body, but not without being extremely linked to its functioning. It is clear enough to see in all its weight what living beings add to the natural domain in terms of these products of their functions.

And then, there are those I designated under the terms of the *look* and of the *voice*. Seeking, at least for the first of these two terms ... having abundantly articulated here what is involved in the vision relation, the question still remains in suspense which is the one, so simple to articulate - which one can say that, in spite of everything, the phenomenological approach, as the work of Merleau-Ponty proved in his last hours cannot resolve – namely, what is involved in this root of the visible, which ought to be rediscovered in the question of what the look *is*, radically.

(9) The look that cannot, any longer, be grasped as a reflection of the body, that none of the other objects in question can be recaptured in the soul. I mean in this regulatory sensibility (*esthésie*) of the pleasure principle, in this representative sensibility, where the individual rediscovers and supports himself, as identified to himself, in the narcissistic relation in which he affirms himself as individual.

This remainder - this remainder which only emerges from the moment at which there is conceived the limit which grounds the subject - this remainder which is called the *o-object*, is where there takes refuge the *jouissance* that does not fall under the influence of the pleasure principle. It is also there, it is by being there, it is because the *Dasein*, not only of the pervert but of any subject, is to be situated in this outside the body; this part which outlines already this presentiment that is somewhere in *Philebus* (in this passage that I asked you to look for) and what Socrates calls, in the relation of the soul to the body, the *anaesthetic* part. It is precisely in this anaesthetic part that *jouissance* lies, as is shown by the structure of the position of the subject in these two exemplary terms, which are defined as that of sadist and the masochist.

To tame you, as I might say, with this way in, do I need to evoke for you the most elementary marionette of what we can imagine about the sadistic act? Except for the fact, of course, that at the start I established my guarantees, and that I ask you clearly to grasp that here I am asking you to dwell on something other than what, for all of you, I said, more or less vacillating on the edges of neurosis, the slightest little phantasy of this order may awaken in you in terms of vague empathy. It is not a matter of “comprehending” how moving or not, imagined or not, one or other practice of this register may be. It is a matter indeed of articulating the following - which will avoid new questions about the economy, in this function, of pain, for example, about which I hope people have stopped agonising - what the sadist plays with, we will say, is the subject. I am not going to introduce any prosopopoeia about this ... first of all I already wrote something on it which is called *Kant avec Sade*, to show that they are in the same vein.

He plays with the subject. What subject? The subject, I would say, as I said somewhere: “that one is subject to thinking or subject to vertigo”, the subject to

jouissance. Which, as you can clearly see, introduces this reflection which, from the subject, makes us pass to what I marked as being its remainder, the little *o*-object.

It is at the level of the Other, with a capital O of course, that he brings about this subversion, in regulating - I say in regulating - what from all time the philosophers have sensed as worthy of qualifying what they call disdainfully the relations of the body to the soul, and which in Spinoza is called, by its true name: *titillatio*", tickling.

Apparently, he enjoys the body of the Other. But you clearly see that the question is to be displaced to the level of the one that I formulated in a field where things are less captivating, when I imaged this relation of the master and the slave by asking, does (10) what one is enjoying, enjoy? So then, you see clearly the immediate relation with the field of the sexual act.

Only the question, at the level of the sadist, is the following. It is that he *does not know* that it is to this question *as such* that he is attached, that he becomes its *instrument*, pure and simple. That he does not know what he himself is doing as a subject, that he is essentially in *Verleugnung*. That he can sense it, interpret it in a thousand ways, which he does not fail to do.

It is necessary, of course, that he should have some powers of articulation, which was the case of the Marquis de Sade, as a result of which, legitimately, his name remains attached to the thing.

Sade remains essential because of having clearly marked the relation of the sadistic act to what is involved in *jouissance* and for having - when he tried in a derisory manner to articulate its law in the form of a universal rule worthy of the articulation of Kant, in this celebrated fragment: "Frenchmen, one more effort to be republican" (the object of my commentary in the article that I evoked earlier) - for having shown that this law can only be articulated in terms, not of *jouissance* of the body - note it clearly in the text - but of *parts* of the body. Each one, in this phantastical State (with a capital S) which is supposed to be founded on the right to *jouissance*, each one being bound to offer to whoever marks his designs on it, the *jouissance* of one or other "part", the author writes (and not in vain here), of his body.

Refuge of *jouissance*, this part, which the sadistic subject does not know is, this part, very exactly what is, for him, his *Dasein*, that it realises the essence of it. Here is what is already given as a key by Sade's text.

Naturally... I do not have the time - because, my God, time is passing - to re-articulate what results from this renewal, from this reclassification, one with respect to the other, of *jouissance* and the subject, and how close it is, of course, to the phantasy immediately articulated by Sade, of *jouissance* where it is, raised to its absolute in the Other, (very precisely in this part of the 1 which is here farthest to the right), where we have seen sliding, at the beginning of the problem, unsupported *jouissance*, the one that is at stake, and for which Sade, the atheist, must construct this figure, who is, nevertheless, the most manifest and the most manifestly like God: that of the *jouissance* of an absolute wickedness.

This essential and sovereign evil, which then and then alone - carried along, as one might say, by the logic of the phantasy - Freud ... Sade admits the sadist is only the servant of; that he ought to open up, for the radical evil that nature constitutes, the paths for the maximum of destruction.

But, let us not forget, what is at stake there is only the *logic* of the thing. If I developed it .. in - or indicated you to refer to its sources - in the so manifestly futile, ridiculous, character, in the always miserably aborted character of sadistic enterprises, it is because it is starting from this appearance that we will better be able to make the (11) truth appear. The truth which is properly given by masochistic practice, where it is obvious that the masochist - in order to withdraw, as one might say, to steal away, to the only corner where manifestly it is graspable, which is the little *o*-object - gives himself over, for his part deliberately, to this identification to this object as rejected. He is less than nothing not even an animal, the animal that is mistreated, and moreover a subject who has abandoned by contract all the privileges of his function as subject.

This search, this almost frantic construction, of an impossible identification to what is reduced to the extremes of waste products, and that this is linked for him to the capture of *jouissance*, here is where there appears naked, exemplary, the economy that is at stake.

Here, let us observe, without pausing at this sublime verse [**a little ironic laugh from Lacan**] which humanises, as I might say, this manoeuvre:

*Tandis que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile, ...*

[“While the base multitude of mortals, under the lash of Pleasure, that merciless executioner, gather only remorse in their slavish feasting...”]

All of this is only a joke! It is a reflection bearing on the law of pleasure. Pleasure is not a “merciless executioner”. Pleasure maintains you precisely within a rather padded limit, because it is pleasure. But, what is at stake, when the poet expresses himself in this way, is very precisely to mark its distance:

*Ma douleur, donne moi la main; vient par ici,
Loin d’eux, etc...*

[My pain, give me your hand; come this way, far away from them, etc...]

Flute music to show us the charms of a certain path which is obtained, by these colours, thus inverted.

If we are dealing with a masochist, a sexual masochist, let us note the necessity of our schema.

What Reik underlines - with an awkwardness that one could say really makes your head spin - about what he calls the “imaginary” or “fantastical” exactly (*Phantasiert*)

character of masochism. He has not really grasped (even though everything that he contributes as examples designates it sufficiently) that what is at stake is precisely what we have projected there at the level of the *One*, on the right, namely, the absolute *One* of sexual union, in so far as, on the one hand, it is this pure - but *detached - jouissance* of the feminine body. (This, Sacher Masoch - just as exemplary as the other person, for having given us the structures of the masochist relation - incarnates in a woman, essentially in the figure of a woman, this Other, from whom he has stolen her *jouissance*. There is no question even for an instant, that this Other absolute but completely enigmatic *jouissance*, can give pleasure, as I might say, to the woman! This indeed is the least of the masochist's worries! This indeed is why, moreover, his wife - whom he provided with a name that was not hers, the name Wanda in *Venus with furs* - his wife, when she wrote her memoirs, shows us the degree to which she is almost as embarrassed about his requests as a fish with an apple).

On the contrary, why torment oneself about the fact that *it is necessary* that this *jouissance - purely imaginary*, as I told you - should be incarnated, on this occasion, (12) by a couple, required precisely - this is obvious - from the structure of this Other, in so far as it is only the reduction of this *One* not yet distributed into the sexual division. One does not, in a word, have to agonise, to get into these oedipal evocations, to see that it is necessary that this being who represents this mythical *jouissance* - here am referring to feminine *jouissance* - should be on occasion represented by two supposedly sexual partners, who are there for the show, for the *guignol*, and alternate.

The masochist then, for his part in a manifest fashion, is situated and can only be situated *with respect to a representation* of the sexual act, and defines, by his place, the *locus* in which *jouissance* takes refuge from it.

This is even what is derisory in it. And it is not simply derisory for us, it is derisory for him. This is how there is explained this double aspect of *dé-rision* - I mean, to the outside - in so far as he never fails to put into the production - as someone who knows something about it, M Jean Genet, has remarked - this little thing which marks, not for an eternal public, but so that any passer-by should make no mistake about it (this forms part of the *jouissance*), that all of this is a device, even a laugh. And this other aspect that one can call, properly speaking, *mockery*, which is directed at ... that it is enough to have re-read (since you now have it within reach following the admirable *Presentation* by Gilles Deleuze), *Venus in furs*. You see the moment when this personage Sacher Masoch, who was all the same a bit of a *lord*, imagine this personage of his novel - whom he makes into a great lord - who, while he is playing the role of a valet running behind his lady, has all the trouble in the world not to burst out laughing, even though he puts on the saddest appearance possible. It is only with difficulty that he restrains his laughter.

And it is again to introduce into it, therefore, as essential, the following. The aspect that I would call - and which also struck Reik without him being able to account for it completely in this connection - the *demonstration*-aspect of the thing, which forms part of this position of the masochist. That he demonstrates [proves] - like me on the blackboard, it has the same value - that he demonstrates that here alone is the locus of

jouissance. Demonstrating it forms part of his *jouissance*. And the demonstration is no less valid for all that.

All perversion has always this demonstrative dimension. I mean not that it demonstrates for us, but that the pervert is himself a demonstrator. And he is the one who has the intention, not of course the perversion.

It is starting from here that there can be soundly posed the questions about what is involved in what we are calling, more or less prudently, moral masochism. Before introducing the term of masochism at every turn in our remarks, we must first of all have clearly understood what masochism is at the level of the pervert.

I sufficiently indicated to you earlier that what links neurosis to perversion is nothing other than this phantasy that within its own field, that of neurosis, fulfils a very special function, about which, it seems, people have never really questioned themselves enough. It is only by starting from there that we can give a correct value to what we will introduce more or less correctly, at one or other turning of neurosis, by calling it masochism.

I am caught for time today and what I am telling you - by not being able to continue onto neurosis - is literally broken in two. This is linked to the fact that, of course, I always badly judge what I can tell you in one go. But today, I clearly articulated what constitutes the source of perversion in itself, and at the same time showed you that sadism is in no way to be seen as a reversal (*retournement*) of masochism. For it is quite clear that both operate in the same fashion, except that the sadist operates in a more naive fashion. Intervening in the field of the subject, in so far as he is subject to *jouissance*, the masochist, after all, knows well that it matters little to him what is happening in the field of the Other. Of course it is necessary that the other should play the game, but he *knows* the *jouissance* that he has to draw from it. As for the sadist, he finds himself, in truth, a slave of this passion, of this necessity, to bring under the yoke of *jouissance*, what he is aiming at as being the subject. But, he does not take into account, that in this game, he himself is the dupe, making himself the slave of something which is entirely outside himself, and most of the time remaining half-ways from what he is aiming at. But on the contrary, not failing to realise *in fact* - I mean in his case without knowing it, without seeking it, without situating himself in it, without placing himself in it - the function of the *o*-object. Namely, to be objectively, really, in a masochistic position, as the biography of our divine Marquis - I underlined it in my article - sufficiently demonstrates. What could be more masochistic than to have remitted oneself entirely into the hands of the Marquise de Montreuil.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 21 June 1967

It is necessary... it is necessary for me, today, to end abruptly. I announced to you, the last time, that this would be my last lecture for this school year. We must close this subject without having done any more than open it up. I hope that others will take it up, if I have been able to animate them with this desire.

To end abruptly, I intend to terminate on what one could call a clinical reminder. Not at all, certainly, that when I speak about logic and specifically about the logic of the phantasy, I leave, even for an instant, the field of the clinic. Everyone knows, everyone testifies, among the practitioners, that it is in the day-to-day declarations of their patients that they rediscover, very frequently, my principal terms. And, moreover, I, for my part, have not gone looking for them anywhere else.

What I am placing, by what I call these reference-terms of my teaching, what I am placing, I mean what I am arranging the place of, is the psychoanalytic discourse *itself*.

No later than the beginning of this week, in this case it is a testimony which is the inverse, in a way, of the one that I very often hear, namely, that such and such a patient seemed to tell his analyst, the very afternoon or the day after my seminar, something which seemed to be a repetition of it, to the point that people were asking themselves if he could have had an echo of it. And if one marvels all the more at cases where this is really impossible, inversely, I could say that, no later than the beginning of this week, I found, in the accounts of three sessions that were brought to me, of a psychoanalysis - it does not matter whether it was a training or therapeutic one - the very terms that I knew (since it was Monday) that I had been ... "excogitating" the night before, in the place in the country where I prepare my seminar for you.

So then, as regards this analytic discourse, I do nothing other than give, in a way, the co-ordinates in which it is situated. But what does that mean? Because I can bring together, because everyone can, so often, bring together this discourse, and it is not enough to say that it is the discourse of a neurotic. That does not specify this (2) discourse. It is the discourse of a neurotic in the conditions, even in the conditioning, it is given by the fact of being held in the office of a psychoanalyst. And from now on it is not for nothing that I am putting forward this condition of the place (*local*).

Does this mean that these echoes, these transfers even, signify something very strange?

Everyone knows, everyone can see, everyone can have experienced, that my discourse, of course, here, is not one of free association.

Does that mean that this discourse to which we recommend the method, the path, of free association, this discourse of the patients, is the same as, overlaps my one here, only when he fails in it in a way and when he speculates ... when he introspects ... when he lucubrates, when he intellectualises, as we put it so nicely. No of course not. There must indeed be something else which, again, can tell us that the patient is

obeying the recommendation of free association in so far as it is the path that we propose to him, can all the same, in a way legitimately, say things, and, in effect, everyone knows well that if we ask him to pass along the paths of free association, this does not mean a slipshod discourse, nor a broken discourse. But all the same, in order for something to reach, sometimes even in its tricks, such a distinction about the impact of his relation to his own demand, to his question about his desire, is all the same something of a nature of make us reflect for an instant on what conditions this discourse beyond our instructions.

And here we have of course to bring into play this element (today I will really remain at the level of what is most commonly obvious) called interpretation.

Before asking oneself what it is, how, when, it has to be made ... something which does not fail to provoke, more and more, in analysts, some embarrassment, for want perhaps of posing the question at a time prior to the one at which I am going to pose it. It is the following: how is the discourse, free discourse, the free discourse which is recommended to the subject, conditioned by the fact that it is, in some fashion, on the way to being interpreted? And this is what leads us simply to evoke some reference points that the logicians, here, have given us for a long time and this indeed is what pushed me, this year, to speak about logic. Not that here, certainly, I was able to give a course on logic. This was not compatible with what I had to cover. I tried to give the framework of a certain logic, which interests us at the level of two registers: of alienation, on the one hand, of repetition on the other. These two quadrangular, fundamentally superimposed schemas that I hope some of you at least will remember. But I hope also to have stimulated some people to open, like that, to open a little, to cast a side-long glance at some book on logic, were it only to remind themselves about the distinctions of value that the logician introduces into discourse when he distinguishes, for example, the sentences called assertive, from imperative or (3) implorative sentences. Simply to signal that it happens, that it can happen, it can be posed, it is localised, at the level of the first of the questions that the others, which are not, of course, any less words full of impact, and which might also interest the logicians. But, a curious thing, they only tackle them by going around them and, in a way, from an angle, which ensures that up to today, they have left this field rather intact. The sentences that I called imperative, implorative, in so far as, after all, what? They solicit indeed something which, if we refer ourselves to what I defined as an act, cannot but interest logic. If they solicit active interventions it can sometimes be under the heading of acts. Nevertheless, only the first would be, according to the logicians, able to be submitted to what can be called *criticism*.

Let us define this as the criticism which requires a reference to the conditions necessary so that, from a statement, there can be deduced another statement.

A person who, today, might have been parachuted in here for the first time and who would never, of course, have heard tell of these things, would find that this is quite banal. But in fact, I suppose all the same that for all of you, there is resonating for your ears the distinction here between stating and the statement.

And the fact that the statement, in order to understand me - to understand me in what I have just said - is constituted by a signifying chain. This means that what is, in the

discourse, the object of logic, is therefore limited at the start by formal conditions, and this indeed is what makes this logic be designated by the name of formal logic.

Good, well then, there at the start - certainly not stated at the start by the one who is here the great initiator, namely Aristotle, only stated by him in an ambiguous, partial, fashion, but undoubtedly brought out in subsequent progress - we see, at the level of what I called the "necessary conditions", there being highlighted the function of negation in so far as it excludes the third.

This means that something cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time from the same point of view. This, at least, is what Aristotle states. Expressly this.

After all, we can indeed here, immediately, put in the margin what Freud affirms to us: that it is still not this principle which is called that of "non-contradiction", a limit that brings to a halt ... brings to a halt, what? What is stated... in the unconscious.

As you know, Freud, from *The interpretation of dreams* on, underlines it. Contradiction – namely, that the same thing can be affirmed and denied very properly at the same time, and from the same angle - this is what Freud designates for us as being the privilege, the property of the unconscious.

If something were needed to confirm, to those into whose skull this has still not (4) entered, that the unconscious is structured like a language, I would say: how then could you even justify Freud taking the care to underline this absence, in the unconscious, of the principle of non-contradiction? For the principle of non-contradiction has absolutely nothing to do with the real! It is not that there is no contradiction in the real, there is no *question* of contradiction in the real!

If the unconscious... Is that not so? Like those who, having to speak about the unconscious, anyway, in places where, in principle, a teaching is given that begins by saying: "those in this room who believe that the unconscious is structured like a language may leave now!". Certainly they are quite right, because this proves that they already know everything! And that, in any case, they have no need to remain to learn that it is something different! But this something different, if it is the "tendencies", as they say, pure tendency or tension, in any case huh! There is no question of it being anything other than what it is! It can be composed, on occasion, according to the parallelogram of forces, it can be inverted - in so far as we suppose it has a direction - is that not so? But it is in a field that is always subject, as I might say, to composition!

But, in the principle of contradiction, something else is at stake. It is a matter of *negation*. Negation is not found like that in the streams! You can go and look under the foot of a horse and you will never find a negation! Therefore, if it is underlined, if Freud, who all the same ought to know something about it, takes care to underline that the unconscious is not subject to the principle of contradiction, well then, it is indeed because, for him, there can be a question about whether it is subject to it! And if there is a question about whether it is subject to it, it is quite obviously because of what is seen: that it is structured like a language! In a language ... the use of a language is prohibited. Which after all has the characteristics a certain convention. The

prohibition has a sense, the principle of contradiction functions or does not function. If one notes that it does not function somewhere, it is because it is a discourse that is at stake! To invoke it means that the unconscious violates this logical law and that proves, at the same time, that it is installed in the logical field and that it articulates propositions.

So then, to recall this is not, of course, except incidentally, to return to the basics, to the principles, but rather, in this connection, to remind you that the logicians teach us that the law of non-contradiction - even though people were mistaken about it for a long time - is not the same thing. It is to be distinguished, from what is called the law of bivalency.

It is one thing to prohibit in logical usage - in so far as it has given us the limited goals that I told you about earlier, limited in its field to assertive sentences, limited to the following: to bring out the necessary conditions so that from a statement there should be deduced a correct chain. Namely, which permits the same assertion to be made (5) about another statement, an assertion which is affirmative or negative - it is one thing to ground that and to say - the law of bivalency -: every proposition is either true or false.

I am not going to develop further here. First of all, because I already did so. I indicated from my first lectures of this year some ... I gave some *hints*, to make you sense the degree to which it is easy to show that it is not simply because one does not know, that a proposition can easily be constructed which makes you sense the degree to which this bivalency - this bivalency as decided on - is problematic. All the nuances there are and which are inscribed in, between *is it true that it is false*, or *it is false that it is true*. It is not at all something linear, univocal and decided.

But, precisely, this indeed is what gives all its value to the presence of this dimension, which is ours, the one within which there is situated this discourse which we ask not to look any further, as I might say, than the tip of its nose. It is enough that you have to pose yourselves the question, I say to those who come into analysis with me, as to whether you should say that or not. The matter is settled. It is the clearest fashion to state the analytic rule. But, after all, what I do not tell him but which is the position from which he starts, is that it is only the truth, in the final analysis, which is here posed as having to be searched for in the faults (*fautes*) of statements. Faults that in short, I give him plenty of time - that I almost recommend him - to multiply, but which then, of course suppose, suppose at the source of the rule itself that I give him, a coherence implying the eventual restoration of the aforesaid faults. A restoration which is to be done, according to what norms if not those evoked, suggested, by the presence of the of the dimension of truth. This dimension is *inevitable*, in the establishment of analytic discourse.

Analytic discourse, is a discourse submitted to this law of soliciting this truth - which I already spoke about in the terms which are here the most appropriate: a truth that speaks - to solicit it, in short, to state a *ver-dict*, a *dict* that is truthful.

Naturally, the rule takes on a quite different value! This truth which speaks and whose verdict one is waiting for... one strokes it, one tames it, one pats it on the back!

This is the true sense of the rule! One wants him to do better. And in order for him to do better one pretends, in short - this is the sense of the rule of free association - one pretends not to be concerned about it and not to give a feck about it, to be thinking about something else, in that way it will perhaps let something important appear. That is the principle. These things... I almost blush, anyway ... to be making something of it here! But do not forget that I am dealing with psychoanalysts. Namely, with those who –as regards what I am saying here, which is, in any case, tangible and almost within the reach of everyone - who have the greatest tendency to forget it and, of course, they have the strongest reasons for that. I am going to say what they are right away.

(6) So then the question is there, I highlight it in passing. The fact is that, in short, one questions the truth of a discourse, which - if it is true, following Freud, as I said earlier - is the truth of a discourse which can say yes or no, at the same time, about the same thing (since it is a discourse that is not subject to the principle of contradiction) and which in being said, in being constructed, as a strange discourse, introduces a truth. This is also fundamental! For proof, so fundamental (even though of course it is not always brought out in the type of teaching that I evoked earlier), it is so fundamental that it is from there, that there comes the startled response with which we know or sense, we have the testimony, Freud had to deal with, when he had ... - it is surely there that it happened - to explain to his band (you know, the Viennese pals, huh, on Wednesday) that he had a patient who had dreams that were *expressly* designed to drop Freud in it! A startled response! A startled response in the audience and even, probably, an outcry! Since, moreover, one sees that Freud ... finally sets about taking some trouble to resolve the question. He explains it, of course, as he can. Namely, that dreams are not the unconscious, that dreams can be liars. It nevertheless remains that the least that one can say is that you must not push this unconscious! I mean if this dimension is to be preserved, as Freud does, it is in the name of the following. That the unconscious for its part *preserves* a truth that it does not avow! And that if one pushes it, well then, of course, it can start lying on all cylinders. With the *means* that it has. But what does all that mean?

Naturally, the unconscious only has a sense, except for the imbeciles who think that it is evil, only has a sense, henceforth, if one sees that it is not, what we will call, like that, if you wish, a “whole subject” (*sujet à part entière*). Or more exactly that it is before, before the whole subject. There is a language before the subject ... is supposed to know anything whatsoever.

There is then a logical priority of the status of the truth with respect to anything, described as subject, which may come to dwell in it.

It is this that ... I know well that when I say these things, when I wrote them for the first time in the *Freudian thing*, this produced ... in any case this had its little romantic resonance. Who cares, I cannot do anything about it. The truth is a personage to whom one has for a very long time given a skin, hair and even a well to dwell in and to act the imp. It is a matter of finding the reason for that. What I want simply to tell you, is that it is, as I told you earlier, *impossible* to exclude, for the reason that you are going to see.

The fact is that if interpretation does not have this relation to what there is no means of calling anything other than the truth; if it is only what, finally, one shelters behind, like that, in our everyday manipulations, huh ... one is not going to worry, like that, the little dears that one is supervising, stick on their backs the responsibility of truth (7) ... So then one tells them that the interpretation has, or not, "succeeded", as they say because it has ... what? - This is the criterion, huh! - Had its discourse-effect! ... Which can be nothing other ... than a discourse! Namely, that there was material, it rebounded, the chap continued to blather on.

Good. But if that is it then ... if it is only a *pure* discourse-effect, this has a name that psychoanalysis knows perfectly well and which is, moreover, a problem for it, which is funny. This, and not anything else, is very precisely what is called *suggestion*! And if interpretation were only something that produces material, I mean, if one radically eliminates the dimension of truth, all interpretation is only suggestion.

This is what puts in their place these very interesting speculations - because one clearly sees that they are only designed to avoid the word *truth* - when Mr. Glover speaks about correct or incorrect interpretation, he can only do so by avoiding this dimension of the truth and he does it, the dear man, (a man who knows very well what he is saying) not simply to avoid the dimension - for you are going to see that he does not avoid it. Only look. The fact is that one can speak about the dimension of truth, but that it is very difficult to speak about a "false" interpretation. The bivalency is polar, but it leaves us embarrassed as regards the excluded third. And that is why he admits the eventual fruitfulness - I mean, Glover - of incorrect interpretation. Consult his text. Incorrect does not mean that it is false. It means that it has nothing to do with what is at stake at that moment, in terms of truth. But sometimes it is not necessarily wide of the mark for all that, because ... because there is no way here of not seeing it re-emerge. Because the truth rebels! That however inexact it might be one has all the same tickled something.

So then in this analytic discourse designed to capture the truth, it is the interpretative interpretation - response that represent the truth, the interpretation ... as being possible there - even if it does not happen - which orients the whole discourse. And the discourse that we have ordered as free discourse has as a function making room for it. It tends to nothing else then to establish a locus of reservation in order that this interpretation maybe inscribed there as a locus reserved for the truth.

This place is the one that the analyst occupies. I point out to you that he occupies it, that is not where the patient puts him! This is the interest of the definition that I give of transference. After all, why not recall that it is specific? He is placed in the position of a subject who is supposed to know, and he knows very well that this only works because he holds that position, because it is there that the very effects of transference are produced, the ones, of course, on which he has to intervene to rectify them in the sense of the truth. Namely, that he is between two stools. Between the false position, of being the subject *supposed to know* (which he knows well he is not) and that of having to rectify the effects of this supposition on the part of the subject, (8) and this in the name of the truth. This indeed is why the transference is the source of what is called resistance. The fact is, if it is quite true, as I say, that truth in the analytic discourse is placed elsewhere, at the place of the one who is listening to it, in

fact the one who is listening can only function as a relay with respect to this place. Namely, that the only thing he knows, is that he himself, as subject, is in the same relation as the one who is speaking to him, to the truth. This is what is usually called the fact that he is necessarily - like everyone else - in difficulties with his unconscious. And this is what creates the function, the limping character of the analytic relation.

The fact is, precisely, that *only* this difficulty, his very own, can answer, can answer *worthily*, where there is awaited - where there is awaited and where sometimes one can wait for a long time - where one awaits the interpretation!

Only as you see, a difficulty - whether it is one of being or whether it is about the relation with the truth - it is probably the same thing - a difficulty does not constitute a status!

This indeed is why it is on this point that people do everything to give to this, which is the condition of the analyst - to be only able to respond with his own difficulty of being...an analyst, why not? – people do everything to camouflage it. In recounting things. For example that, of course, anyway ... for his unconscious the affair is settled, huh! ... He has had a psychoanalysis and even a training one! And, of course, this all the same allowed him, in any case, to be a little bit more at ease about it, when all is said and done.

Though we are not in the domain of greater or less. We are at the very foundation of what constitutes analytic discourse.

This is not going very quickly, huh? Well then, nevertheless, this is how one must advance.

If this truth is related to desire, this is perhaps going to account for the difficulties that we have in handling this truth here, in the same way as the logicians can do it. Let it be enough for me to evoke that desire, is not something like that, in effect, whose truth is so simple to define.

Because, the truth of desire ... [**a little laugh from Lacan**], is tangible! We always have to deal with it, because that is why people come to us. On the subject of what happens, for them, when desire comes to what is called “the moment of truth”! That means, I desired something a lot - whatever it maybe - but I am in front of it, I can have it ...and that is when an accident happens!

Yes. *Desire*, I already tried to explain it, *is lack*. I am not the one who invented that, it has been known for a very long time. Other deductions have been made from it, but it is from there that people started, because one can only start from there. It is (9) Socrates. *Desire is lack in its very essence*. And this has a sense. The fact is that there is no object that desire is satisfied with, even if there are objects that are the *cause* of desire.

What becomes of desire at the moment of truth?

It is indeed these well-known accidents that wisdom takes advantage of and prides itself on considering it as folly, and then, establishing all sorts of dietary measures in order to be preserved from it. I mean, from desire.

There you are. Only... the problem ... the problem is that there is a moment when desire is desirable. It is when it is a matter of what happens, not without reason, in the execution of sexual action. And then there, the error, the considerable error, is to believe that desire has a function that one inserts into the *physiological*. People believe that the unconscious only brings about a disturbance in it. It is an error! It is an error that today, by God, I ... I, like that, I am putting on a pin, because, like that, [Lacan waves goodbye] I am going to say farewell to you for a few months. But one can very easily see that it is, despite everything, an error that remains inscribed at the bottom ... of even the most alert spirits, I mean of psychoanalysts.

It is very strange that people do not comprehend that what appears, after all, as the measure, the test, of desire, in other words, by God ... erection. Well then, by God, that has nothing to do with desire! Desire can function perfectly, operate, have all its impact, without in any way being accompanied by it. Erection is a phenomenon that must be situated *along the path of jouissance*. I mean that, of itself, this erection is *jouissance*, and that precisely, what is demanded, for the sexual act of operate, is that one should not stop there. It is auto-erotic *jouissance*. One does not see, if it were otherwise, why this *jouissance* should be marked by this sort of veil. Normally, I mean when the sexual act - at least it must be supposed - has its whole value, well then, priapic emblems are raised at every cross-roads! It is an object that must be withdrawn from common contemplation only in the measure, precisely, that this erection is questionable, is questionable with respect to the sexual act as act.

The desire in question, *un-con-scious* desire, the one spoken about in psychoanalysis in so far as it has a relation with the sexual act - it is first necessary, it is fitting, to define it properly and to see from where this term emerges before it functions.

It is very important to recall the fact, which has nevertheless from all time been my whole teaching, for the following. The fact is, if one does not remember, if one does not pose in these terms the operation indispensable for the sexual act, if it is not in the register of *jouissance* - and not of desire - that one puts the operation of copulation, its possibility of realisation, one is absolutely condemned to understand nothing of everything that we say about feminine desire; which we explain is, like masculine desire, in a certain relation to a lack, a symbolised lack which is the phallic lack. How (10) comprehend, how situate correctly, the sense, the place of what we are saying here about feminine desire, if one does not start from the following, which - on the plane of *jouissance* - fundamentally differentiates the two partners, creates an abyss between them that I will designate sufficiently, I think, by taking two reference points. That for the man that I defined just now as erection, on the plane of *jouissance*, and that for the woman for which I will find nothing better than the following, and happily I did not wait to be a psychoanalyst to have the confidences and that each one of you may have. It is the way in which young girls designate among themselves what appears to them to be closest to what I am designating at this level, namely, what they call, "*le coup de l'ascenseur*". When it does something like that to them, like what happens when it goes down a little suddenly, they know, they know very well, that

this is something which is of the order, of the register, of what is at stake in the sexual act.

This is where one must start from in order to know the *distance* at which to place desire, namely, what is involved in the unconscious, desire *in its relation* to the sexual act.

It is not a relation of front to back. It is not a relation of epiphenomena. It is not a relation of things that fit together. This is why it is quite necessary to exercise oneself for many years with the knowledge that desire has nothing to do except with *demand*; that it is what is produced as **subject** in the *act* of demand.

And desire is only involved in the sexual act, in so far as a demand can be involved in the sexual act, which, after all, is not obligatory but, in any case, is common! Is common in the measure that the sexual act - which is what I defined for you, namely, what never ends up by making a man or a woman - anyway, let us say that to provoke you. The fact is that the sexual act is inserted into something that is called the sexual *market* or commerce.

So then, people have to make demands. It is from the demand - and fundamentally from the demand - that desire arises. This indeed is the reason why desire, in the unconscious, is structured like a language. Because it emerges from it!

It is unfortunate that I have to mouth these things which are absolutely within everyone's reach. And which are regularly omitted and forgotten in everything that is lucubrated in the simplest theories concerning psychoanalysis.

There you are. This means, at the same time, that this desire which is only a sub-product of demand (I do not have to construct the theory of that for you), is where, (11) indeed, one grasps why it is *of its nature* not to be satisfied.

Because if desire emerges from the dimension of demand, even if the demand is satisfied on the plane of the need which stimulated it, it is of the nature of demand - because it belongs to language - to generate this break (*faillie*) of desire which comes from the fact that it is an articulated demand, which means that there is something *displaced*, which makes the object of the demand unsuitable for satisfying desire. Such as the breast which is everything - ... which is what *displaces* everything that passes through the mouth for digestive needs, which substitutes for it this something which is properly what is lost, what can no longer be given. There is no chance that desire will be satisfied. One can only satisfy the demand.

And that is why it is correct to say that desire is the desire of the Other. Its break is produced at the locus of the Other, in so far as it is to the locus of the Other that the demand is addressed. This is where it finds itself having to co-habit with what the Other is also the locus of, under the heading of truth. In this sense that there is nowhere a shelter for the truth except where language has a place, and that language finds its place at the locus of the Other.

So then? So then, this is where it is necessary to comprehend a little what is at stake concerning this desire in its relation to the desire of the Other.

I tried, for that, to construct for you a little apologue that I borrowed, certainly not by chance, but for reasons that are quite essential to what is called the art of the seller. Namely, the art of making an offer with the intention of creating a demand. You have to make someone desire an object that he has no need of, in order to push him to demand it.

So then, I do not need to describe for you all the tricks that are used for that. One tells him that he is going to miss it, for example, because someone else is going to take it, who, because of this fact, will have an advantage over him (*aura barre sur lui*). I am using words that echo my usual symbols. It is nevertheless literally like that that this functions in the mind of what is called a good salesman. Or again one tries to show him that this will be an altogether major external sign for the style that he is trying to give his life. We believe in it ... In short, it is through the desire of the Other that every object is present when it is a matter of ... buying it (*l'acheter*).

L'acheter, l'acheter ... lâcheté (cowardice). What do you know! ... It is rather curious, it is a word ... *lâcheté, Feigheit* ... You are a coward sir! ... *Tua res agitur!* It is indeed, in effect, a matter of cowardice. But you are the one involved. Yes. This indeed is what is at stake. Which can be seen from the fact that the principal result, as you know very well, that emerges from this series of malversations, the ones that life summarises under the sign of desire, the principal result will be the one that always pushes you further in the sense of redeeming yourself. Of redeeming yourself from cowardice.

I took care, all the same, before introducing this dimension which is, of course, always (12) masked in analytic interventions, but that those, the others, that those who are in the know, I mean the one who speaks an analytic discourse does not mince words about. He knows very well that the dimension of cowardice is involved, but I do not know. I took the trouble to re-open up for you, in any case ... like that, any one at all of the great observations by Freud. I came right away to the *Ratman*, to the fact that the patient immediately introduces this dimension of his cowardice! Only, what is not clear is where this cowardice is. It is just like the earlier dimension, that of truth. The courage of the subject is, perhaps, precisely to play the game of desire, the desire of the Other. It is to give pride of place to something which is moreover, perhaps, the cowardice of the Other who is buying him and to find oneself there at the end, to rediscover oneself. For, when all is said and done, this indeed is where the problem is when neurosis is at stake.

But, for that, it is important to grasp clearly or, more exactly, to recall, to bring back to the forefront of what I have said about desire, what I said in its time about desire, when I said: desire *is* its interpretation. Huh? One could all the same object. Because after all this desire ... this unconscious desire, whose meaning no one wants to know, an unconscious desire. What ought, in principle, to be more conscious than desire? If one speaks about unconscious desire, it is indeed, in effect, because it is the desire of the Other that it is possible. If there exists, precisely, what I have just evoked, by a reminder of the metaphor of buying, as regards which one does not know who it has a

hold on, of this ac-captivation in the desire of the Other ... it is because there is a step to be taken.

Unconscious desire, we are told, if it is unconscious, it is because in the discourse which supports it, a link has been broken so that the desire of the Other ... is what? ... Unrecognisable! It is the best gadget that has been found to stop this machine. There is a step, well then, we create on the hither side of this step, not the *non-desire*, but the *desire-not*. The definition of unconscious desire is this - which allows us to express the subtleties of negation in French – namely, this point of arrival that the *pas*, the *point*, designate for us, and I already made use of it on the subject of the *pas de sens*.

This desire-not, I would even go - if you leave me a little bit of rope – as far as making of it a single written name and to give to this *des* which dominates it, the same accent as *désespoir*, or as *desêtre*, and to say that the unconscious desire of *désirpas*, is something which collapses with respect to some *irpas* or other. An *irpas* which designates very precisely the desire of the Other. With respect to which to interpret it would be verbalised rather well by an *irpassé*. The inversion can be carried out around this. The fact is that the interpretation, in effect, is for its part what takes the place of desire, in the sense that, earlier, you were objecting to me that it is there first, however unconscious it may be. But it is there, also, as one passes by it again, because it is already articulated and interpretation, when it took its place ... luckily (13) that does not settle anything, because it is not at all sure that the desire that we have interpreted has an outcome. We even count on the fact that it will not have one, and that it will always remain, and all the better, a *désirpas*.

This even gives us, a lot of elbow-room in the interpretation of desire.

But then, it is necessary to know here what is meant by its support under the name of phantasy, and what game we are playing in interpreting unconscious desires, specifically those of the neurotic. It is here that we have to pose the question about the phantasy. We have posed it ceaselessly. Let us pose it again here, at the end, one last time.

When the logicians - from whom the whole of this discourse today started - limit themselves to the formal functions of the truth, I told you, they find a *gap*, they find a singular space, between this principle of non-contradiction and that of bivalency. And you find it in Aristotle, precisely in the book called *On interpretation* and which - I point it out to you for your convenience - is in paragraph 19-a, in the notation which designates the classic manuscripts of Aristotle and that you will find on page 100 (it is easy to remember), in the very bad translation that I am recommending to you: that of Tricot, which is the usual one.

Aristotle puts into question the function involved in the bivalency of the *true* and the *false* in its consequences. I mean in what it involves when it is a matter of the contingent, in what is going to happen. What is going to happen, whether yes or no, if we posit that it is true or false. It is therefore true or false immediately, namely, that it already decided. Naturally, that cannot work.

The solution that he gives of it, the one that consists in casting doubt on bivalency, is not what is in question here. I will not push the discussion here. But, on the contrary, what I will point out is that the logical solution - the banal, current, one given, for example, in the volume by the Kneales (I believe I am pronouncing their name correctly) *The development of logic* - the one which consists in saying that what is true, cannot be the signifying articulation, but what it *means*, is a false solution.

This solution is false, as the whole development of logic shows. I mean that what is deduced from the whole formal set-up cannot, in any case, be founded on meaning, for the simple reason that there is no possibility of fixing any meaning that is univocal, and that, whatever may be the signifiers that you put forward to pinpoint true or false, it is always possible to implicate it in a circumstance in which the most clearly stated truth, under the heading of signified content, will be false, and even more than false: a characteristic deception.

It is only possible to establish an order, by attributing - I am speaking about logic - by attributing the function of truth to a signifying grouping. That is why this logical use of the truth is only encountered in mathematics, where as Bertrand Russell says, one (14) never knows in any case what one is talking about. And if one thinks one knows, one is quickly disabused. You have to tidy things up quickly and get rid of intuition.

I recall this in order to question what is involved in the function of the phantasy.

I am saying – model: *A child is being beaten* - that the phantasy is only a signifying arrangement, whose formula I gave a long time ago, by coupling in it the **small o** to the *S barred*. Which means that it has two characteristics; the presence of the **o-object** and on the other hand, nothing other than what engenders the subject as *S barred*, namely, a sentence. This is why *A child is being beaten* is typical. *A child is being beaten* is nothing other than the signifying articulation, *A child is being beaten*. Except for the fact (read the text, consult it) that, over it there wanders, that over it there flies, nothing other than the following, which is impossible to eliminate, which is called the look.

Before bringing into play the three moment of the genesis of this product called the phantasy, it is important all the same to designate what it is!

It is not because Freud was dealing with illiterates that it does not remain interesting to posit the firm framework of the status of the phantasy and to say: it is strictly nothing other - in conformity with what I brought you at the beginning of this year, about the coupling of a part of *I am not thinking*, with the grammatical structure, to tell you that it is at the very place of this grammatical structure that at the fourth vertex of the quadrangle there emerges the small **o-object** and to add - because we have already designated two of them, the two on the left - that the angle on the bottom right, the one from which *I am not* leaves the place, that it curtails (*écorne*) at the level of the unconscious, to the following, which is the complement of the purely signifying grammatical structure of the phantasy, namely, what I started from today and which is called **a truth meaning**.

What must be remembered, to be picked out, in everything that Freud states about the phantasy is simply this little clinical trait - the one he puts forward here in order certainly to demonstrate so many things for us about its usage, how to manipulate it - but what must be remembered is a feature like the following: that the phantasy, the same one, is encountered in very different neurotic structures. But, moreover, as you know, that this phantasy remains at a singular distance from everything that is debated, from everything that is discussed in analyses, in the measure that what is at stake in it is to translate the truth of symptoms.

It seems that it is there as a sort of crutch or foreign body, something to be used, after all, as you know, which has a well-determined function. It is *to supply* for something that, after all, one may well call by its name: a certain *lack* of desire. In so far as it is (15) brought into play, involved - it is necessary that it should be, if only to step inside, to tidy up the room - at the entry of the sexual act.

This distance of the phantasy, with respect to the zone in which there is played out what I highlighted earlier as primordial, about the function of desire and about its link to demand and the following - so obvious that it is from that that there results the inflection of the whole of psychoanalysis around registers described as frustration and analogous terms - this is what allows us to make the point of the difference there is between a perverse and a neurotic structure.

What does it mean when I say that the phantasy here has the role of a truth-meaning? Well, I am going to tell you! I am saying the same thing as the logicians say. Namely, you miss the command by wanting at all costs to insert this phantasy into the discourse of the unconscious, when, in any case, it resists this reduction very well. And when you have to say that in the middle moment, the second phase of *A child is being beaten* - the one where it is the subject who is there, in the place of the child - this you only obtain in exceptional cases. The fact is that in truth the function of the phantasy... I mean in your interpretation and more especially again in the general interpretation that you will give of the structure of one or other neurosis, (which ought always, in the final analysis, be inscribed in the registers that I gave, namely: for phobia, anticipated desire, for hysteria, unsatisfied desire, for obsession, impossible desire. What is the role of the phantasy in this order of neurotic desire? Well then, truth-meaning, I have said. That means the same thing as when you mark with a capital T - a pure convention in the theory given, for example, of such and such a set - when you mark with the connotation of truth something that you will call an axiom: in your interpretation the phantasy has no other role, you have to take it as literally as possible and what you have to do, is to find in each structure, a way to define the laws of transformation which guarantee for this phantasy, in the deduction of the statements of unconscious discourse, **the place of an axiom.**

Such is the only possible function that one can give to the role of phantasy in the neurotic economy. That this comes, that its arrangement is borrowed from the field of the determination of perverse *jouissance*, is something, as you have seen, that I demonstrated and whose formula, I believe, I sufficiently fixed in our previous talks, with respect to the disjunction, in the field of the Other, of the body and of *jouissance*, and of this preserved part of the body in which *jouissance* can take refuge.

That the neurotic finds, in this arrangement, the support designed *to provide against* the lack of his desire in the field of the sexual act, is something, then, which is less likely to surprise us. And if you want me to give you something which will serve at once as reading - I cannot say it will be a very agreeable read for you (it is as annoying (16) as hell!) - but, all the same, as an example of real rubbish in scientific matters, I would recommend to you the reading, in Havelock Ellis, of the celebrated case of Florie. One could not better see to what point a certain mode of approach of a field in which people pride themselves - in the name of some objectivity or other - on breaking down doors, while they are completely enslaved, and enslaved in a fashion that is really singular. There is not one of the lines of this celebrated observation that does not carry, in a way, the marks of the cowardice of the professor.

It is a sensational text, this case of Florie. Undoubtedly, it will appear to you with all the characteristics - after the reference points that I have given you - to be a neurosis. In no way, does the moment at which Florie breaks through - in the sense of this something which can in a way happen to a neurotic without there ever being for her the equivalent of perverse *jouissance*, but breaks through in the ambiguous sense which makes of it at once a *passage à l'acte* and, for us who are reading it, an *acting-out* - something which ensures that Florie, affected by her phantasy of flagellation, manages, for once, to break through the prohibition that they represent for her. It is worth while confronting this with the absolutely manifest lacks in this observations, to the point that - Florie having confessed to him that it is only exceptionally that she brings a real person into these phantasies, someone that she admires and that she venerates - it is really unbelievable to see from the pen of Havelock Ellis there been written: "I did not ask her who was involved". When it is clear ... - as in the case of Père Ubu when you see him again with the pig's tail between his teeth - that of course it is Havelock Ellis, naturally, who is there rolled in flour from one end to the other by this patient, who is involved! And, after that, it is necessary to have more to do with the great personage to correct the members of the analytic community, who have allowed themselves to give an opinion on the same case, with a respect that is moreover completely unjustified, for the collection of this observation by Havelock Ellis.

This, all the same, is indeed of a nature to show you at once, all together, all the difficulties that I wanted to highlight today, concerning what is involved in the appreciation of the phantasy.

If it can be said, I would say, that from the phantasy - as we imagine it, we poor neurotics - from the phantasy in its function at the level described as perverse, to that of its function in the neurotic register there is exactly the distance - I am ending on this to make it sound clinical - of the *bedroom!*

Are there bedrooms? There is no sexual act ... that leaves, as regards the bedroom, huh? - apart from that of Ulysses where the bed is a trunk rooted in the ground - this leaves, on the subject of bedrooms - and especially at our epoch, huh, when everything is ... is ... thrown against the wall! - that leaves a serious doubt. But anyway it is a (17) place which, at least theoretically, exists.

There is all the same a distance between the bedroom and *the toilet*. Pay careful attention to the fact that everything neurotic that happens, happens essentially in the toilet (these questions of the arrangements of logic are very important) in the toilet or in the *ante-chamber*, it is the same thing.

The man of pleasure in the 18th century also, for him ... everything happened in the *boudoir*. Each to his own place!

If you want specifications, huh? Phobia can happen in the *wardrobe* ... or in the *corridor*, in the *kitchen*.

Hysteria happens in the *parlour*, the parlour of nun's convents, of course. What?!

Obsession, in the *bog*.

Pay careful attention to these things, they are very important.

Yes ... all of this leads us to the door of what I will invite you to cross next year, namely, a bedroom in which there happens ... nothing except that the sexual act is presented there as foreclosure, properly speaking: *Verwerfung*. It is what is commonly called the *analyst's office*.

The title that I will give to my lectures next year, will be, *The psychoanalytic act*.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 21 June 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

*That one says remains forgotten
as a fact behind what is said,
in what is understood.*

This statement is assertive by its form,
belongs to the modal in terms of the existence
(*existence*) that it emits.

Today, I am taking leave of you. From those who came and then from those who did not come and who are coming for this leave-taking. There you are. There is no need to put out bunting, huh? Good! What can I do? That I should sum up as they say, is absolutely out of the question. That I should mark something, a point, a point of interruption. Of course, I could say that I continued to circumscribe this impossible in which there is collected what can be grounded for us, for us in the analytic discourse, as real.

There you are! At the last moment, and, faith, by chance, I had the testimony, the testimony that what I say is heard. I had it because of the one who was willing – and this is a great merit – to speak at the last moment, like that, of this year. Who was willing to prove to me that for some people, for more than one, for veins that I cannot at all foresee from what angle they will happen, to find in short an interest in what I try to state. Good! (168) I thank then the person who gave me, not simply me, who gave to all a kind of...I hope that there are enough people who found an echo in that, who saw that this can produce something. It is always difficult naturally to know, to know how far it extends.

So then, in Italy, I made a little allusion to it, because after all this does not seem to be superfluous to me, I met someone that I find very nice, who is involved in, I don't know, the history of art. The idea of the *oeuvre*, we do not know why, but one can manage to understand that what is stated under the title of structure, and specifically what I had been able myself to produce about it, interests him. That interests him because of personal problems. This idea of *oeuvre*, this history of art, this vein, it is certain that this makes you a slave. This can be clearly seen when you sees that someone who was neither a critic nor a

historian, but who was a creator, formed as an image, as image of this vein, the slave, the prisoner, huh? There is someone called Michelangelo who showed that. So then, in the margin, there are historians and critics who...who pray for the slave. It is a mummery like any other, it is a kind of divine service that can be practiced. Yes! It tries to make us forget who commands, because the *oeuvre* always comes from a command, even for Michelangelo.

Well then, the one who commands, this is what I first tried to put forward for you this year under the title of *Yad'lun*, is that not so? What commands is the *One*, the *One* makes Being. I asked you to go looking for that in *Parmenides*. Some of you have perhaps complied. The *One* makes Being as the hysteric makes the man. Yes! Obviously, this Being that the *One* makes, it is not Being, it makes Being. Obviously it is this that supports a certain creative infatuation. And, in the case of the person I am talking about, who was really very nice to me and who clearly explained to me how he had found himself caught up in what he called my system in order to expose its points, its points and this is also why I am pinpointing him today to avoid a certain confusion, he fastened on to the fact that he finds that I do too much ontology.

It's funny all the same isn't it, and I do not think that here, of course, there are only open ears. I think that there are like everywhere a quantity of deaf people. But to say that I am doing ontology, all the same, is rather funny! And to place it in this...in this big Other (169) that I very specifically show as having to be barred and pinpointed very precisely with the signifier of this barring itself, it is curious! Because, what you must see in the reverberation, the response that you obtain, is all the same that, after all, people respond to you with their problems. And since his problem is that ontology, and even Being, already, gets stuck in his craw, because of that, the fact is, if ontology is simply...the grimace of the *One*, it is obvious that everything that is done on command is clearly suspended on the *One* and, good God, that annoys him.

So then, what he would really like, in short, is for the structure to be absent. This would be more convenient for the hey presto! What people would like, is that the conjuring trick, the conjuring trick that takes place, and which is that, the work of art, is that the conjuring trick has no need of thimbles. You have only to look at that, there is a painting by Brueghel who was an artist who was very much above that, he does not hide how, how the people strolling past are captivated. Good! So then here obviously, this is not what we are occupied with. We are occupied with the analytic discourse. And as regards the analytic discourse, I thought all the same that, it would be no bad thing to punctuate something before leaving you, something that gives you the idea precisely that, not simply is it not ontological but...it is not philosophical. It is simply necessitated by a certain position, a certain position that I recall, which is the one in which I thought I could

condense the articulation of a discourse, and show you all the same the relationship that this has with this fact that the analysts, that the analysts have all the same a relationship – and you would be wrong to believe that I do not recognise it – with something that...that is called like that the human being. Yes of course, but I for my part do not call it that. I do not call it that so that you will not get excited, so that you remain where you should, in so far of course as you are capable of seeing what are the difficulties that confront the analyst.

We are no longer talking of course about knowledge (*connaissance*) because the relationship of man to a world of his own – it is obvious that we have started from that for a long time or even from all time – has never been anything but an affectation at the service of the discourse of the master. There is no world of his own other than the world that the master makes work under his baton. And as regards the famous knowledge of oneself, *gnothi seauton*, which is supposed to make a man, let us start from this which is (170) all the same simple and tangible, is that no so, that, that yes! Good! If you wish; if you wish it has a place; it has the place of the body (*elle a lieu du corps*). The knowledge of oneself, is that not so, of oneself, is hygiene. Let us start indeed from that, is that not so. So then throughout the centuries there remained illness of course. Because everyone knows that sickness is not regulated by hygiene. And that it is indeed something hooked onto the body. And sickness, this lasted throughout the centuries, it is the doctor who was supposed to know it. To know it, I mean, knowledge and I think I have sufficiently rapidly underlined during one of our last talks, I no longer even know where, the failure of these two angles, is that not so. All of that is evident in history, it displays itself there in all sorts of aberrations.

So then, all the same, the question that I would like to get you to sense today is that, it is the analyst who is there and who seems to be acting as a relay. People talk about sickness, we do not know, at the same time people say that there is no such thing, that there is no mental illness, for example. Quite correctly in the sense that it is a nosological entity as it was formerly put, it is not at all an entity, mental illness. It is rather the mentality which has flaws, let us express ourselves like that rapidly.

So then, let us try to see what is supposed for example by that, what is written there, and which is supposed to state where there is placed, where there is placed a certain chain which is very certainly and without any type of ambiguity, the structure. You see two signifiers succeeding one another in it, and the subject is only there in so far as a signifier represents it for another signifier. And then there is something that results from it and that we have, over the years, greatly developed with sufficient reason to justify that we should note it as the *little o-object*. Obviously if it is there, in this form, in this form of tetrad, it is not a topology which is...which is without any kind of sense. This is the novelty that was contributed by Freud. The novelty

that was contributed by Freud, is not nothing.

There was someone who had done something very good, in situating, in crystallising the discourse of the master, by reason of a historical illumination that he was able to lay hold of, it was Marx. It is all the same a step, a step that there is no reason at all to reduce to the first, there is no reason either to mix up the two, one could ask oneself why they absolutely be in harmony. They are not in harmony. They are perfectly compatible. They fit together. They fit together and then there is certainly one which has its place (171) with all ease, it is that of Freud. What has he contributed in short that is essential? He contributed the dimension of over determination. Over determination is exactly what I image with my way of formalising in the most radical fashion the essence of discourse, in so far as it is in a turning position with what I have just called a support.

It is all the same from discourse that Freud made emerge, made emerge the fact that what was produced at the level of the support had something to do with what was articulated in terms of discourse. The support is the body. It is the body, and yet, you have to pay attention, when you say it is the body. It is not necessarily a body. Because from the moment that one starts from enjoyment, this means very exactly that the body is not alone, that there is another one of them. This does not mean that enjoyment is sexual, since what I have explained to you this year is that the least that one can say is that this enjoyment is not revoked (*rapportée*) it is hand to hand enjoyment (*de corps à corps*). What is proper to enjoyment, is that when there are two bodies, much more indeed when there are more, naturally, we do not know, we cannot say, which of them enjoys. This is what ensures that there may be caught up in this affair, several bodies and even series of bodies.

So then over determination consists in the following. It is that, the things that, which are not meaning, meaning would be supported by a signifier, precisely what is proper to a signifier, and I do not know, I set about that bit by bit, God knows why, then a little more, what matter. I found something, a seminar that I gave at the beginning of a trimester, just the trimester which was at the end of the year on the...what is called the case of President Schreber, it was the 11th April 1956. It is very precisely just beyond, it is the first two trimesters that are summarised in what I wrote *A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis*, at the end, 11th April 1956. I posited the fact that it was...then like that I am calling it by its name, the name that it has in my discourse, the structure. It is not always what empty-headed people think, but it is perfectly said at that level. It would amuse me to republish it, this seminar, if the typist had not made a large number of little holes because she hadn't heard properly. If she had only reproduced correctly the (172) Latin sentence that I had written on the board, and I don't know any longer what author it belonged to. I will do it, I don't know, in the next edition of *Scilicet*.

The time I am going to need to find again who this Latin sentence comes from, is certainly going to make me lose time. What matter, everything that I said at that time about the signifier, about the signifier at a time when really one could not say that it was *à la mode*, in '56, remains minted with a metal that...where I don't need to alter anything.

Yes! What I say about it very precisely is that it is distinguished by the fact that it has no meaning. I say it in a decisive way because at that time I had to make myself heard by... can you imagine, that what's more it was doctors that were listening to me! What the hell did they care about that? Simply that it was...anyway they were hearing something from Lacan. Anyway, from Lacan, namely this kind of clown, is that not so, that...good! He was marvelous on his trapeze of course. During this time, they already had their eyes on how they could get back to their digestion, because one cannot say that they dream. That would be beautiful. They do not dream, they digest; it is an occupation after all like any other.

What one must all the same clearly try to see is that what Freud introduces is something which – people imagine I am unaware of it because I am talking about the signifier – is the return to this foundation which is in the body. This means that quite independently of the signifiers with which they are articulated, it is four poles that are determined from the emergence as such of enjoyment precisely as ungraspable. Well then! This is what gave rise to the three others, and, in response, the first, which is the truth, already implies discourse. That does not mean that it can be said. I kill myself saying that it cannot be said, or that it can only be half said.

But anyway as regards enjoyment, anyway it exists. It is necessary to be able to talk about it. As a result there is something different called utterance (*le dire*). Well then, I explained in short throughout a year, I spent enough time articulating it, because, to articulate it, this is what is necessary for you to see that...the necessity that I have, the way in which I proceed, precisely, I can never articulate it as a truth. It is necessary, according to what is your destiny for all of you. You have to go around it. More exactly (173) see how it turns, how it tips over, how it tips over once you touch it and how even up to a certain point, it is unstable enough to lend itself to...to all sorts of errors.

In any case, if I put forward, put forward – which all the same demands a certain cheek – the title *D'un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*, I think that it was to get you to sense, and that you have sensed, that discourse as such, is always the discourse of a semblance. And that if there is something somewhere which authorises me some enjoyment, precisely, it is to pretend (*faire semblant*). And it is...from this starting point that one can manage to conceive this something that we can only lay hold of there, but in a way that is already so assured, so assured by someone whose memory I must salute, the memory as I write it, in

giving to the *mé* the same sense as the *mé* of *méconnaissance*, the one who, who has been so well remembered that what is at stake is rather to jeer at his words, namely Plato. All the same, if there is someone who has...grasped what is involved in surplus enjoying, something that makes us think that Plato is not simply Ideas and Form but everything that one has with a certain grid, a grid which, I agree, has some verisimilitude, expresses these statements. Plato is all the same the one who has advanced the function of the dyad as being this stopping point where everything happens, where everything leaks away (*fruit*). No greater without a lesser, no older without a younger. And the fact that the dyad is the locus of our loss, the locus of the leak, the locus thanks to which it is forced to forge this *One* of the Idea, of Form, this *One* which moreover is immediately geared down, is inscribed. Yes, it is indeed because it is like us all plunged into this one supplement – I talked about all of that on 11th April 1956 – the supplement, the difference that there is between the supplement and the complement.

Anyway, I had very, very well said all of that since 1956. This could have served, it seems, to crystallise something on the side of this function that is to be fulfilled, that of the analyst and which it seems to be so, so impossible, more than the others, that people only dream of camouflaging it. Yes! So then, it is around this that it turns and that it is very necessary to see certain things. The fact is that between this support, what happens at the level of the body, from which all meaning arises, but unconstituted. Because after what I have just stated about enjoyment, about the truth, about the semblance and surplus enjoying as constituting here the foundation, the ground, as it was put the other day by the person who was willing here to come to talk to us about Peirce inasmuch as it is in the note by Peirce that he had understood what I was saying. There is no point in telling you (174) that it was more or less around the same epoch that I produced Peirce's quadrants to which – this, of course, was of no use. Because what...you may well think that the remarks on the total ambiguity of the universal, whether it is affirmative or negative, and the same about the particular, what effect could that have on those who only dreamt in all of that of rediscovering their own jingles?

Yes! The *ground* is here then. What is at stake in effect is the body with its radical senses on which there is no hold to be had. Because it is not with the truth, the semblance, enjoyment or surplus enjoying that people do philosophy. Philosophy is done, starting from the moment when there is something that stuffs up, that stuffs up the ... this support which can only be articulated starting from discourse. It stuffs it up with what? Indeed it has to be said, huh, that what all of you are made of, and again all the more if you know a bit of philosophy, that happens sometimes, but when all is said and done it is rare, you are above all *astudées*, as I said one day. You are at the place at which the university discourse situates you. You are caught up as *a-formés*. For some time, there has been a crisis, but we will speak about it later. It is secondary. The question then is different.

You really must take into account that what you most fundamentally depend on – because after all the university was not born yesterday – is the discourse of the master. All the same, it is the first one to arise, and then it is the one that lasts and that there is little chance of shaking. It could be compensated, be balanced, by something which might be, anyway, the day that it will be, the analytic discourse. At the level of the discourse of the master, one can perfectly well say what there is between the field of discourse, between the functions of discourse as they are articulated by this S_1 , S_2 , $\$$ and \mathfrak{o} , and then this, this body, this body that you represent here and to which, as an analyst, I am addressing myself.

Because, when someone comes to see me in my office for the first time and I punctuate our getting down to business with some preliminary conversations, what is important is that it is the confrontation of bodies. It is precisely because it is from this that it starts, this encounter of bodies, that from the moment when one enters into the analytic discourse, there will no longer be any question of it. But the fact remains that at the level at which discourse functions which is not analytic discourse, the question is posed of how this discourse has succeeded in catching hold of bodies.

(175) At the level of the discourse of the master, it is clear. At the level of the discourse of the master, from which you are as a body, moulded, don't pretend otherwise, however you gambol about, this is what I will call feelings and very precisely good feelings. Between the body and discourse, there is what the analysts gargle on about in pretentiously calling it affects. It is quite obvious that you are affected in an analysis. This is what makes an analysis, this is what they claim obviously, they must have some advantage somewhere, to be sure not to slip up. Good feelings, what were they made with? Well then one is forced to get to this, at the level of the discourse of the master, it is clear, they are made by jurisprudence. It is all the same a good thing not to forget at the moment that I am speaking, where I am the guest of the Law Faculty, not to fail to recognise that it is jurisprudence and nothing else that grounds good feelings. And when something like that comes all of a sudden to move your heart because you do not know very well whether you are not a little responsive to the way in which an analysis has gone badly, listen! Huh? Let us be clear all the same! If there were no deontology, if there were no jurisprudence, where would there be this upset, this affect as it is called? It is all the same necessary from time to time to speak a little truthfully. A little means that what I have just said is not exhaustive. I could also say something incompatible with what I have just said. That would also be the truth.

And this indeed is what happens. It is indeed what happens simply, when simply by the fact not of a quarter turn, of a half a full turn, of two quarter turns of the slippage of these function elements of discourse, it happens, it happens because in this tetrad there are all the

same vectors, vectors whose necessity one can very well establish. They do not belong to the tetrad, neither to the truth, nor to the semblance, nor to anything at all of the kind. They stem from the fact that the tetrad is four. On the simple condition of requiring that there should be vectors in both senses, namely, that there should be two that arrive and two that go, or one that arrives and one that goes. You are absolutely required to find that the way they hang together, stems from the number four, and nothing else. Naturally, semblance, truth, enjoyment and surplus enjoying cannot be added together. So then they cannot make four all by themselves. It is precisely in this that the (176) real consists, the fact is that the number four for its part exists all by itself. This is also something I said on 11th April 1956, but very precisely, I had not yet brought out all of that. Moreover I had not even constructed all of that. Only what proved to me that I am following a good vein, since the fact that I said at that moment that the number four was here an essential number for one to be able to remember (*s'en souvient*), proves that I was all the same on the right track since, now, I do not find anything superfluous in all of that. I said it at the time it was necessary, at the time when there was a question about psychosis.

Good! So then, the question is this, whether the feelings - don't get disturbed about the people who are leaving, they have to do so at this time, they have to go to the funeral of someone whose memory I salute here, who was someone from our School, whom I really cherish. I regret, given my commitments, not to be able to go myself. Yes, what is there in the analytic discourse, between the functions of discourse and this support which is not the meaning of discourse, which does not depend on anything that is said? Everything that is said is a semblance. Everything that is said is true. And on top of that everything that is said gives enjoyment. *What is said*. And, as I repeat, as I rewrote on the board today, *that one is saying as a fact remains hidden behind what is said*. What is said is nowhere else than in what is understood, and that is the word. Only to say it is a different thing. It is on a different plane, it is discourse. It is what, in terms of relations holds each and every one of you together, with people who are not necessarily those who are here. What we call relation, *religio*, the social hooking together, happens at the level of a certain number of intermeshings that do not happen by chance, that necessitate, with very little scope for error this certain order in signifying articulation. And for something to be said in it, it is necessary, it is necessary that there should be something else in it than what you imagine, what you imagine under the name of reality; because reality flows very precisely from the saying.

The saying (*le dire*) has its effects from which there is constituted what is called the phantasy, namely, this relationship between the *little o-object*, which is what is concentrated from the effect of discourse to cause desire, and this something around which like a slit, is condensed, and which is called the subject. It is a slit because the *little o-object* for

its part is always between each of the signifiers and the one that follows and that is why the subject for its part, was always not between, but on the contrary gaping.

(177) Yes! To return to Rome, I was able to grasp, put my finger on the effect, the rather startling effect, an effect in which I recognise myself very well, of the copper plates of someone Fontana, who is dead it appears, and who after having shown great ability as a constructor, as a sculptor, etc. consecrated his last years to making, in Italian that is called *spaccatura*, it appears, but I don't know Italian, I had it explained to me, it is a slit, like that, he made a slit in a copper plate. That has a certain effect. That has a certain effect for those who are a little sensitive, but there is no need to have heard my discourse on the *Spaltung* of the subject to be sensitive to it. The first passer-by, especially if she is of the feminine sex, may experience a little vacillation. It must be that Fontana was not among those who totally failed to recognise structure, who thought that it was too ontological.

So then, what is at stake, what is at stake in analysis? Because if I am to be believed, people ought to think that it is indeed as I stated. It is in term of what, *en corps*, with all the ambiguity of this term, which is justified, it is because the analyst *en corps*, sets up the *little o-object* in the place of the semblance, that there is something that exists called the analytic discourse. What does that mean? At the point that we have got to in it, namely, have begun to see this discourse taking shape, we see as discourse and not in what is said, in its utterance, it allows us to grasp what is involved in the semblance.

This is why it is striking to see that, at the end of a cosmological tradition, as we were made sense the last time, how did the universe come to birth? Does that not seem to you to be a little dated? But to be dated from the beginning of time, it nevertheless remains dated. What is striking, is that this led Peirce to a purely logical even *logicienne* articulation. It is a point of detachment of the fruit on the tree from a certain illusory articulation, I will call it, which from the earliest ages had culminated at this cosmology joined to a psychology, to a theology, to everything that followed.

So there, putting your finger as it was stated for you the last time, putting your finger on the fact that there is no discourse on origins except by treating the origin of a discourse, that there is no origin that can be grasped other than the origin of a discourse. And this is what is important for us when what is in question is the emergence of another discourse, (178) of a discourse which, with respect to the discourse of the master, whose terms and their arrangement I am going to retrace quickly, involves the double inversion precisely of the oblique vectors. And this is very important. What Peirce dares to articulate for us,

and there at the joint of an ancient cosmology, is the fullness of what is at stake in the semblance of the body. It is discourse in its relationship, he says, to nothing. That means what every discourse necessarily turns around.

Along this path, what I am trying to do this year by promoting set theory to those who hold the function of analyst, to suggest, it is that it is along this vein, this one exploited by these statements that are formalised in logic, that it is along this vein that they have to discipline themselves, to form themselves; to form themselves for what? To what should be distinguished from what I earlier called the stuffing, the interval, the plugging, the gap between the level of the body and of enjoyment, the semblance and discourse. In order to see that it is here that there is posed the question of what is to be put in and which is not good feelings, nor jurisprudence. Which has to deal with something different that has name, which is called *interpretation*, what the other day was put on the board in the form of a triangle described as semiotic, in the form of the *representamen*, of the interpreter

and here the object And to show that the relation is always ternary, namely, that it is the couple *representamen-object* which has always to be reinterpreted, this is what is at stake in analysis. *The interpreter*, is the *analysand*. This does not mean that the analyst is not there to help him, to push him a little bit in the direction of the C to be interpreted.

It must indeed be said, that this can be done at the level of a single analyst, for the simple reason that if what I am saying is true, namely, that it is only along the vein of logic, of the extraction of articulation of what is said, and not from the utterance, that if in a word the analyst in his function does not know – I mean *en corps* – to gather enough of what he hears from the interpreter who is the one to whom under the name of analysand, he gives the floor, well then! The analytic discourse remains at what, in effect, was said by Freud without budging by a line. And once that forms part of common discourse, which is now the case, this enters into the framework of good feelings.

For interpretation to progress, to be possible, according to the schema of Peirce which was put forward to you the last time, it is in so far as this relation interpretation and object, note, what is at stake? What is this object in Peirce? It is from there that the new interpretation, that there is no end to what it can come to, except that there is a limit

precisely, which is indeed what analytic discourse ought to arrive at, on condition that it does not wallow in its current stagnation.

What must be substituted for Peirce's schema to make it agree with my articulation of analytic discourse? It is as simple as anything, for the effect of what is at stake in the analytic treatment, there is no other *representamen* than the *little o-object*. The *little o-object* of which the analyst makes himself the *representamen* precisely, at the place of the semblance.

(180) The object that is at stake, is nothing other than what I questioned here with my two formulae, it is nothing other than this the fact of speaking *as* forgotten. This is the object of what is the question for everyone, where am I in the utterance? Because if it is quite clear that neurosis displays itself, it is very precisely because of something that explains to us the vagueness of what Freud puts forward concerning desire, especially desire in the dream. It is quite true that there are dreams of desire, but when Freud analyses one of his dreams, one can clearly see what desire is at stake, it is the desire to posit the equation of desire with *equals zero*.

At an epoch which was not much later than that of 11th April 1956, in 1957 precisely I analysed *the dream of Irma's injection*. That was transcribed as you may imagine in a...of a university person, in a thesis in which it currently does the rounds. The way in which this was, I will not say heard, because the person was not there, he worked on notes, he worked on notes and he thought it was possible to add on some of his own ideas. But it is all the same clear that if there is one thing that this sublime, divine dream of Irma's injection allows to show, this is what is obvious, which ought to be, ever since the time that I announced this thing which should have been exploited by anyone whatsoever in analysis, I left that there, because after all as you are going to see, the matter has not all that many consequences, if as I recalled recently, the essence of sleep, is precisely the suspension of the relationship of the body to enjoyment, it is quite obvious that desire which for its part depends on surplus enjoying, is not going to be for all that put in brackets.

What the dream works on, what it knits together, and one clearly sees

how and with what, with the days residues as Freud says, namely, with what is there still altogether on the surface of memory, not in its depths. The only thing that links the desire of the dream to the unconscious, is the way in which one must work to resolve the solution, to resolve the problem of a formula with *equals zero*, in order to find the root thanks to which the way in which it functions is cancelled. If it is not cancelled, as they say, there is an awakening, as a result of which of course the subject continues to dream in his life.

If the desire is of interest in the dream, Freud underlines, it is in so far as there are cases in which one cannot resolve the phantasy, except by noticing that desire – allow me to (181) express myself because then I will have reached the end – has no *raison d'être*. It is that something has happened which is the encounter, the encounter from which there proceeds neurosis, Medusa's head, the slit we mentioned earlier, directly seen, it is in so far as it for its part has no solution. This indeed is why in the dreams of most people, what is at stake in effect is the question of desire. The question of desire in so far as it refers much further on, to the structure, to the structure thanks to which it is the *small o* which is the cause of the *Spaltung* of the subject.

Yes! So then, what binds us to the one with whom we embarked, broke through the first apprehension of the body? And is the analyst there to harbour resentment at her for not being sexual enough or enjoying well enough? So what? What is it that binds us to the one who, with us, embarks in the position that is called that of the patient?

Does it not seem to you, if we marry to this locus the term brother which is on every wall, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, I ask you, at the cultural point that we are at, of whom are we brothers? Who are we brothers of in every discourse except the analytic discourse? Is the boss the brother of the proletarian? Does it not seem to you that this word brother, is precisely the one to which analytic discourse gives its presence, even if only what he brings back what is called the family backpack? You think that it is simply to avoid class struggle? You are mistaken, this stems from a lot of other things than the family din. We are brothers of our patient in so far as, like him, we are the sons of discourse.

To represent this effect that I designate as the *little o-object*, to make ourselves for this lack of being the support, the waste product, the abjection to which there can cling on what is going, thanks to us, to be born to saying, to saying that is interpreting, naturally with the help of something which is what I invite the analyst to support himself with, so as to be worthy of the transference. To support himself with this knowledge which can, by being at the place of the truth, question itself as such about what has always been involved in the structure of knowledge, from know-how up to the knowledge of science. From that of course we interpret. But who can do it if it is not the very one himself who commits himself to saying and who from the brother,

certainly, that we are, is going to give us exaltation?

I mean that what is born of an analysis, what is born at the level of the subject, of the subject who speaks, of the analysand, is something which with, by means of – man (182) thinks, Aristotle said, with his soul – the analysand analyses with this shit that is proposed to him, in the figure of his analyst, the *little o-object*. It is with this that something, this split thing ought to be born which is nothing other when all is said and done – to take up something that was put forward to you the other day in connection with Peirce – than the arm by which a weighing scales can establish what is called justice. Our brother transfigured, this is what is born from analytic incantation and this is what binds us to the one that we wrongly call our patient.

This *parasexual*, discourse huh? It must be said like that ... that, that some batons may be handed back. I would not like to leave you uniquely on something over sweet. The notion of brother, so solidly stamped thanks to all sorts of jurisprudence throughout the ages, by coming back to this level, to the level of a discourse, will have what I called just now its return on the level of support.

I did not speak to you in all of that about the father because I think that enough has been said to you already about him, enough explained, to show you that it is around the one who unites, the one who says no! that there can be founded, that there ought to be founded, that there cannot but be founded everything universal. And when we return to the root of the body, if we revalorise the word brother, he is going to enter under full sail at the level of good feelings.

Since I must not all the same allow you to look at the future through rose coloured glasses, you should know that what is arising, what one has not yet seen to its final consequences, and which for its part is rooted in the body, in the fraternity of the body, is racism, about which you have yet to hear the last word. Voilà!

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Seminar 1: Wednesday 8 December 1971

I could begin right away by passing over my title which after all you will clearly see in a little while what it means. Nevertheless, out of kindness, since moreover it is meant to be remembered, I am going to introduce it by giving a commentary on it.

Ou pire. Perhaps after all some of you have understood it,....Ou pire, in short, is what I am always capable of doing. It is enough for me to show it to get into the heart of the subject. I show it in short at every moment in order not to remain in this meaning which, like every meaning, I think you could put your finger on it, is opaque. I am therefore going to give a textual commentary on it.

Ou pire. Some people have already read it wrongly. They thought that it was.....ou le pire. It is not at all the same thing. Pire, is tangible, it is what is called an adverb, like well, or better. You can say, I am doing well, one can say I am doing worse. It's an adverb, but a disjoined one, disjoined from something which is called somewhere precisely the verb, the verb which is replaced here by three dots. These three dots refer to usage, to ordinary usage to mark – it's curious, but we see this, we see this in every printed text – to create an empty place. It underlines the importance of this empty place and it demonstrates moreover that it is the only way to say something with the help of language. And this remark that the void is the only way of catching something with language, is precisely what allows us to penetrate into its nature, into language.

Moreover, as you know, once logic has come to the point of confronting something, something which supports a reference to truth, is when it produced the notion of variable. It is an apparent variable. The apparent variable x is always constituted by the fact that, the fact is that the x , in what is at stake, marks an empty place. The condition for this to work, is that one puts there exactly the same signifier in all these empty places that are reserved. This is the only way in which language reaches something and that is why I have expressed myself in the formula that there is no meta-language. What does that mean? It might seem that in saying that I am only formulating a paradox. Because from where can I say it? Since I am saying it in language, this would seem to sufficiently affirm that there is one from where I can say it. Nevertheless it is obviously nothing of the kind. Of course it is necessary to develop meta-language as a fiction, every time logic is at stake, namely that there has been forged within discourse what is called object language, as a result of which it is the language that becomes meta, I mean common discourse without which there is no means even of establishing this division. There is no meta-language denies that this division is tenable. The formula forecloses that there is discordance in language.

What then occupies this empty place in the title that I have put forward to catch your attention? As I said, necessarily a verb, because there is already an adverb. Only it is a verb elided by the three dots, and that, in language, once one questions it in logic, is the only thing that one cannot do. The verb as it happens, is not difficult to find, it is enough to tip over the letter which begins the word *pire*, and that gives us *dire*. Only, as in logic, the verb is precisely the only term which you cannot make into an empty place, because when you try to make a function of a proposition, it is the verb that functions and it is from what surrounds it that you can make an argument; by getting rid of this verb then, I am making an argument of it, namely some substance; it is not saying, it is a-saying.

This saying, the one that I am taking up from my seminar of last year, is expressed, like every saying, in a complete proposition, there is no sexual relationship. That is what my title is putting forward, it is that there is no ambiguity, it is that in trying to get out of this, you will only state, you will only say something worse.

There is no sexual relationship is proposed then as a truth. But I already said that truth can only be half said. So then, what I am saying, is that what is in question when all is said and done is that the other half should say worse. If there were not worse, how that would simplify things! Make no mistake. The question is, does that not already simplify them since, if what I started from is from what I can do and that it is precisely what I am not doing, is that not enough to simplify them? Only there you are, there is no way that I cannot do this worse, exactly like everyone else.

When I say there is no sexual relationship, I am putting forward very precisely this truth, in the case of the speaking being, that sex does not in its case define any relationship. It is not that I am denying the difference that exists, from the youngest age, between what is called a

little girl and a little boy. It is even from that that I am starting. Lay hold right away, of the fact that you do not know when I start from there what I am talking about. I am not talking about the famous little difference the one for which, to one of the two, it will appear, when he is sexually mature, it will appear to be altogether something in the style of a joke, of a witticism, to shout hurrah! Hurrah for the little difference! The very fact that it is funny should be enough to indicate to us, to denote, to make reference, to the complex relationship, namely to the fact clearly inscribed in analytic experience which is what the experience of the unconscious has led us to, without which there would be no witticism, to the complex relationship with this organ. The little difference, already separated out very early as an organ, which really says it all: *organon*, instrument. Does an animal have any idea that it has organs? Since when has that been seen and to accomplish what? Is it enough to state that every animal – this is a way of taking up again what I recently stated in connection with the supposition of the enjoyment described as sexual as instrumental for the animal, I spoke about that elsewhere, here I will say it in a different way – every animal that has claws does not masturbate. This is the difference between man and the lobster. There you are! That always has a certain effect.

As a result of this you escape from the historical resonances of this sentence. It is not at all because of what it asserts – I am saying nothing more, it asserts – but the question that it introduces at the level of logic. That is hidden in it, huh? But – this is the only thing that you haven't seen in it – is that it contains the not-all (*pas-tout*) which is, very precisely and very curiously what eludes Aristotelian logic in the measure that it put forward and separated out the function of prosdiorisms which are nothing other than what you know, namely the use of all, *pan*, of some, *ti*, around which Aristotle takes the first steps in formal logic. These steps have serious consequences. They are what allowed to be developed what is called the function of quantifiers. It is with the all that there is established the empty place that I spoke

about earlier. Someone like Frege does not fail, when he comments on the function of the assertion, before which he places – the assertion in relationship with a true or false function $f(x)$ – it is necessary for him in order that the x has the existence of an argument – here placed in the little hollows, an image of the empty place – that there is something that is called every x , which is appropriate to the function.

The introduction of not-all is essential here. The not-all is not a negated universal. The not-all, is not nothing, it is specifically not that; no animal with claws masturbates itself, is, not every animal that has claws is not because of that forced into what follows. There is organ and organ, just as there are faggots and faggots (*Il y a fagots et fagots*) the one who deals the blow and the one who receives it.

And this brings us to the heart of our problem. Because you see by simply outlining the first step, we are slipping towards the centre, without even having the time to turn back, to the centre of something where there is indeed a machine that is carrying us. It is the machine that I am dismantling. But, I am making the remark for the use of some people, it is not to demonstrate that it is a machine, and still less indeed so that a discourse should be taken for a machine, as some people do precisely in wanting to engage with mine, of discourse. In this way what they demonstrate, is that they are not engaging with what makes a discourse, namely the real that passes into it.

Dismantling the machine is not at all the same thing as what we have just done, namely to go without any ceremony to the hole of the system, namely to the place where the real passes through you – and how, because it flattens you!

Naturally for my part I would like – I would really like, I would like much more – I would like to preserve your natural blackguardism which is what is most attractive, but which, alas alas, always starting again as someone or other has said, ends up by being reduced to stupidity by the very effect of this discourse that I am demonstrating.

As a result you ought to sense right away that there are at least two ways of demonstrating this discourse; and it remains open that mine, in a way, is still a third. You must not force me to insist, of course, on this energetics of blackguardism and stupidity to which I never make anything other than a distant allusion. From the point of view of energetics, of course, it does not hold up. It is purely metaphorical. But it is one of those kinds of metaphor by which the speaking being subsists, I mean that it constitutes his bread and butter (*le pain e le levain*).

So then I asked you to spare me as regards of this insistence. It is in the hope that the theory will supply for it. You will have heard the emphasis of the subjunctive, I isolated it because, because it might have been covered over by the interrogative accent. Think of all of that, like that, at the moment that it is happening and especially in order not to miss what crops up here, namely the relationship of the unconscious to truth. The right theory, and it is what opens up the path, the very path where the unconscious was reduced to insisting, it would no longer have to do it if the path has been properly opened up but that does not mean that this would have resolved everything, quite the contrary, the theory, because it would have given this ease, ought itself to be light, light to the point of not seeming to touch it. It should have something natural about it that, up to now is only possessed by errors. Not all (*pas-toutes*) once again of course. But does that make it any more sure that there are some that sustain this naturalness that so many others pretend to?

There you are, I am putting forward that for these, the others to be able to make a pretence, it is necessary that among these errors that sustain what is natural, there is at least one: *hommoinzune*. You should recognise what I already wrote last year with a different ending, very precisely in connection with the hysteric and the *hommoinzun* that she requires. This *hommoinzune*, - its role obviously cannot be better sustained than by the natural itself.

It is in this that I denied at the start, it is what on the contrary, it is the way in which I denied at the start the difference that exists, which can be perfectly noted from the earliest years, between a little girl and a little boy, and that this difference which asserts itself as innate is indeed natural, namely corresponds to the fact that there is something real in the fact that, in the species that calls itself like that the daughter of its works, in that as in many other things, which calls itself *homo sapiens*, the sexes appear to be separated into two numbers of more or less equal individuals, and that rather early on, earlier than one might expect, these individuals are distinguished from one another. They are distinguished, that's certain. Only, I am pointing it out to you in passing, this does not form part of a logic. But they only recognise one another, they only recognise one another as speaking beings, by rejecting this distinction by all sorts of identifications and it is commonplace in psychoanalysis to note that this is the major mainspring of the phases of every childhood. But that is a simply parenthesis.

What is important logically is the following it is what I did not deny, it is precisely here that there is a sliding, is the fact that they are distinguished from one another. This is a sliding. What I did not deny, is precisely not that, what I did not deny, is that they are distinguished. They do not distinguish themselves. This is how people say, oh isn't he a real little man, you can see already that he's completely different to a little girl, he is uneasy, inquisitive, isn't he? Already looking for notice. While the little girl is far from resembling him. She is already thinking of playing with this sort of fan which consists in sticking her face into a hole and refusing to say hello.

Only there you are, people only marvel at that because that's the way it is, namely exactly the way it will be later, in other words in conformity to the type of man and a woman as they are going to set themselves up from something completely different, namely from the consequence,

from the value that was subsequently have been taken on by the little difference. No point in adding on that the little difference, hurrah! was already there for the parents for some time and that it could have had an effect on the way in which the little man and the little woman were treated. We can't be sure, that is not always how things are. But there is no need for it in order that the judgement of recognition of the surrounding adults is based then on an error, which consists in recognising them, no doubt by what distinguishes them, but by only recognising them in function of criteria that are formed depending on language, if it is the case that as I am putting forward, it is indeed because a being is a speaking one that there is a castration complex. I am adding that in order to insist, so that you may clearly understand what I mean.

So then, it is in this way that the *hommoinzune* from an error, gives consistency to the naturalness which moreover is incontestable of what I might call the premature vocation that each one experiences for his sex. One must also add of course that in the case when this vocation is not apparent, that leaves the error unshaken, because it can be easily completed by being attributed to nature as such, this of course no less naturally. When it doesn't fit, people say she's a tomboy (*c'est un garçon manqué*), don't they, and in that case, the lack can easily be considered as a success in the measure that nothing prevents there being imputed to it, to this lack, an extra bit of femininity. The woman, the real one, the proper little woman, is hidden behind this very lack. This is a subtlety that is moreover in full conformity to what the unconscious teaches us about never succeeding better than when one fails.

In these conditions, in order to have access to the other sex, one must really pay the price, that precisely of the little difference which deceptively passes into the Real through the mediation of the organ, precisely, because it ceases to be taken as such and, at the same time, reveals what it means to be an organ, and organ is only an instrument

through the mediation of something by which every instrument is grounded, it is because it is a signifier. So then! It is as signifier that the transsexual no longer wants it and not as an organ. And in this he suffers from an error, which is precisely the common error. The passion of the transsexual is the madness of wanting to free himself from this error, the common error which does not see that the signifier is enjoyment, and that the phallus is only the signified. The transsexual no longer wants to be signified as phallus by sexual discourse, which as I state, is impossible. He is only making one mistake, which is to want to force this sexual discourse which *qua* impossible is the passage of the Real, to want to force it by means of surgery.

There you are. It is the same thing that I stated in a certain programme for a certain Congress *on feminine sexuality*. It is only I said, for those who know how to read of course, it is only I said the homosexual, written here in the feminine, who can sustain the sexual discourse in total security. That is why I invoked the freeing up of the *Précieuses* who, as you know, remain a model for me. The *Précieuse* who as I might say, define so admirable what is excessive to the word, anyway, allow me to stop the word here, the *Ecce homo*, of love. Because they for their part do not run the risk of taking the phallus for a signifier. Phi – then! Signi – phi then! It is only by breaking the signifier in its letter that one gets to the end in the last analysis.

It is a pity nevertheless that this amputates for the female homosexual, the analytic discourse. Because this discourse, it is a fact, casts them, the little darlings into a total blindness about what is involved in feminine enjoyment. Contrary to what one can read in a famous drama by Apollinaire the one that introduces the word surrealist, Therese returns to Tiresias – don't forget that I have just spoken about blindness – not by leaving but by recuperating what are described as the two birds of his weakness. I am quoting Apollinaire, for those who may not have read him. In other words the small and the big balloons

that represent them in the theatre and which are perhaps – I am saying perhaps, because I do not want to distract your attention, I am satisfying myself with a perhaps – which are perhaps this something thanks to which the woman can only enjoy when there is an absence. The woman homosexual is not at all absent in what remains to her in terms of enjoyment. I repeat, this makes the discourse of love easy for her. But it is clear that that excludes her from psychoanalytic discourse which she can scarcely mutter. So then let us try to advance.

Given the time, I can only point out rapidly that as regards everything that posits itself as sexual relationship, emphasising it, establishing it by a sort of fiction that is called marriage, it would be a good rule for the psychoanalyst to say, on this point, that they should sort themselves out as best they can. This is the path that he takes in practice. He doesn't say it, nor does he even say it to himself, in a sort of false shame, because he believes his duty is to mitigate every drama. It is an inheritance from pure superstition. He plays the doctor. Never did a doctor get mixed up in guaranteeing conjugal happiness and since the psychoanalyst has not yet noticed that there is no sexual relationship, naturally, the role of playing providence for households haunts him.

All that, the false shame, the superstition and the inability to formulate a precise rule on this point, the one that I have just stated, let them sort themselves out, comes from a failure to recognise something that his experience repeats to him, but I could even say drums into him, that there is no sexual relationship. It should be said that the etymology of *sernier* (to drum in) leads us straight to *sirène*. That is textually so, it is in the *Dictionnaire Étymologique*, I am not the one who is singing such a tune here in my discourse.

It is no doubt for that reason that the psychoanalyst, like Ulysses did in a similar situation, remains tied to a mast. Yes! Naturally in order for that to continue – what he hears as the song of the Sirens, namely remaining enchanted, namely hearing everything in the wrong way – it

is necessary that the mast, the mast in which naturally you cannot fail to recognise the phallus, namely the major, global signified, well then, he must remain attached to it. That suits everybody, but that only suits everybody in that this has no unfortunate consequences, because it is intended for that, for the psychoanalytic future itself, namely for all those who are in the same boat.

It nevertheless remains that he completely misconstrues this drumming of experience and that is why up to now it has remained a private domain. I private domain, I mean, for those who are on the same boat. What happens on this boat, in which there are also beings of two sexes, is nevertheless remarkable. The fact is that I sometimes hear on the lips of people who sometimes come to visit me from these boats, I who am, good God, on a different one, that the same rules are not enforced there. Which would be nevertheless rather exemplary if the way in which I got a whiff of it was not so peculiar.

In studying what emerges from a certain style of oversight about what constitutes psychoanalytic discourse, namely the consequences that it has on what I will call the style of what refers to the liaison – since after all the absence of the sexual relationship is very obviously something that does not prevent, far from it, a liaison, but something that gives it its conditions – this might perhaps allow us to glimpse what might result from the fact that psychoanalytic discourse remains lodged on these boats on which it currently sails of which we are entitled to fear it may remain the privilege. It may happen that something of this style will come to dominate the register of liaisons in what is inappropriately called the vast field of the word. And in truth that is not reassuring. It would surely be still more unfortunate if the present state which is such that it is to this oversight that I have just highlighted, that it is from it that there emerges something that is after all not unjustified, namely what one frequently sees on entering psychoanalysis, namely fears manifested sometimes by subjects who only know that it is in short if we are to believe the institutionalised

psychoanalytic silence on this point about the fact that there is no sexual relationship which evokes in these subjects fears, namely, good God, about everything that may restrict, affect, their interesting relations, passionate acts, indeed creative disturbances that this absence of relationship requires.

I would like then before leaving you to make a start on something here. Because what is at stake is an exploration of what I called a new logic – the one that has to be constructed from what is not (*ce qui n'est pas*), from this to posit in the first place that in no case, nothing of what happens from the fact of the agency of language, can end up on the formulation of anything satisfying about the relationship – is there not something to be taken from the fact that in logical exploration, namely in the questioning of what to language, not simply imposes a limit, in its apprehension of the real, but demonstrates in the very structure of this effort to approach it, namely to pick out in its own handling what may be in the real that has determined language, is it not appropriate, probably, appropriate to be induced, that if it is at the point of a certain flaw of the real – properly speaking unsayable because it is what is supposed to determine all discourse – that there lie the lines of this field, which are those that we discover in psychoanalytic experience, is it not the case that everything that logic has sketched out, by relating language to what is posited in the real, does not allow us to locate in certain lines to be invented – and this is the theoretical effort from this ease that an emphasis would find – is it not possible here to find an orientation?

Before leaving you today I will only point out that there are three registers, properly speaking, that have already emerged in the development of logic, three registers around which there will turn this year my effort to develop what is involved in the consequences of the fact, posited in the first place, that there is no sexual relationship.

Firstly, what you have already seen, in my discourse, being emphasised the prosdiorismes. Today, in the course of this first approach I have only encountered the statement of not-all (*pas-tout*). Already last year I believe I have isolated this very precisely for you as (blank) with respect to the function itself that I leave here totally enigmatic, of the function not of the sexual relationship, but of the function that, properly, renders access to it impossible. This is it, to be defined, in short to be defined this year. Imagine enjoyment. Why would it not be possible to write a function of enjoyment? It is by testing it that we will see its sustainability, as I might say, or not.

Already last year I was able to put forward to the function of the not-all and certainly from a point much closer as regards what was involved, all I am doing today is tackling our writing, last year I put forward a negative bar (blank), placed above the term which, in the theory of quantors, designates the equivalent. It is only the equivalent of it. I would say more, the purification with respect to the naïve usage made in Aristotle of the prosdiorism all. The important thing, is that I have put forward before you today the function of the not-all pas-tout, pastout.

Everyone knows that in connection of what is involved in the proposition described in Aristotle as particular, what emerges from it as I might say naively is that there exists something which corresponds to it. When you use some, in effect that seems to be self-evident. It seems to be self-evident but it is not self-evident. Because it is quite clear that, it is not enough to deny the not-all for each of these two pieces, if I can express myself like this, existence is affirmed. Of course, if existence is affirmed, the not-all happens. It is around this it exists that our advance should be brought to bear. Ambiguities have been perpetuated around this for such a long time that people have come to confuse essence and existence and in a more astonishing fashion to believe that it is more to exist than to be. It is perhaps precisely that the it exists, undoubtedly, of men and of women, and in a

word who do nothing more than exist, that is the whole problem. Because after all in the correct usage which is to be constructed, starting from the moment when logic allows itself to disengage a little from the real, the only way to really say that it has with respect to it the power to locate itself, it is starting from the moment that it only guarantees that this part of the real in which there is possible a truth, namely mathematics, it is starting from that moment that one can clearly see that what any it exists designates, is nothing other for example than a number to satisfy an equation.

I am not settling whether number is to be considered or not as real. In order not to leave you in any ambiguity, I am going to tell you that I am deciding that number forms a part of the real. But it is this privilege real in connection with which the handling of the truth makes logic progress. In any case, the mode of existence of a number is not properly speaking something that we can hold to be guaranteed as regards what is involved in existence, every time that the prosdiorism some is put forward.

There is a second plane that I am only pinpointing here as a reference to the field we are going to have to advance in terms of a logic that would be appropriate for us, which is that of modality. Modality, as everyone also knows in opening Aristotle, is what is involved in the possible, of what can be. I will also only indicate here the entrance come out (?) the frontispiece. Aristotle plays with four categories, the impossible that he opposes to the possible, the necessary that he opposes to the contingent. We will see that there is nothing tenable in these oppositions and today I am highlighting simply for you what is involved in a formulation of the necessary which is properly this, not to be able not to be (*ne pas pouvoir ne pas*) not to be able not to be, this is properly for us what defines necessity. Where does that take us? From the impossible, not to be able to be able not to be. Is this the possible or the contingent? But what is certain is that, if you want to take the opposite road, what you find is to be able not to be able

(*pouvoir ne pas pouvoir*), namely that that links up the improbable, the out of date, of what can happen, namely not this impossible to which one would return by looping the loop, but quite simply impotence. This simply to indicate as a frontispiece the second field of questions to be opened up.

The third term, is negation. Does it not already seem possible to you, even though I have already written what completes it in the formulae already noted last year on the board, (blank), namely that there are two quite different forms of negation possible, foreshadowed already by the grammarians. But in truth, since it was in a grammar that claimed to go from words to thought, which says it all, embarking on semantics guarantees shipwreck. The distinction nevertheless made between foreclosure and discordance should be recalled at the start of what we will do this year. Again I must specify – and this will be the object of the talks that follow to give to each one of these chapters the development that it deserves – foreclosure cannot be, as Damourette and Pichon, said be linked in itself to *pas*, point, goutte, mie, namely some of these other accessories that appear to support it in French. Nevertheless it should be remarked that what goes against it, is our precisely, *pas tous* (not all). Our not-all is discordance.

But what is foreclosure? Assuredly it is to be placed in a different register to that of discordance. It is to be placed at the point at which we have written the term described as function. Here is formulated the importance of the said (*du dire*). The only foreclosure is of the said, of this something that exists – existence being already promoted to what assuredly, to what assuredly we have to give it as a status – that something can be said or not. This is what is at stake in foreclosure. And as regards something which cannot be said, undoubtedly, the only conclusion can be a question about the real. For example the function (blank), as I have written it, only means the following that for everything that is involved in the speaking being, sexual relationship poses a question. Here indeed is all of our experience, I mean the

minimum that we can draw from it. That to this question, as to any question – there would be no question if there were no response – that the modes in which this question is posed, namely the responses, are precisely what it is a matter of writing in this function.

This is what is going to allow us without any doubt to make a junction between what has been elaborated in logic and that which can, on the principle, be considered as an effect of the real, on the principle that it is not possible to write the sexual relationship, on this very principle of grounding what is involved in the function, in the function that regulates everything that is involved in our experience, in that by being open to question, the sexual relationship which is not, in this sense that one cannot write it, this sexual relationship determines everything that is elaborated from a discourse whose nature it is to be a broken discourse.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 15 December 1971

I was given this morning, I was brought this morning, I was made a present this morning, of this, a little pen. If you knew how difficult it is for me to find a pen that I like, well, you would sense the pleasure it gave me! And the person who brought it to me who is..., who is perhaps here, I think. It is a person...who admires me as they say. I don't give a damn whether I am admired, what I like is to be treated properly. Only, even among those, that rarely happens. Good! In any case, I used it right away to write and it is from this that my reflections start.

It is a fact that, at least for me, that when I write I find something. That does not mean that if I did not write, I would find nothing. But perhaps I wouldn't notice it. When all is said and done, the idea that I have of this function of writing which, thanks to some little smart alecks is on the agenda, and on which I was not too keen, like that, to take sides, but my hand has been forced; why not?

The idea that I have of it, in short, and this is what perhaps in certain cases gave rise to some confusion, I am going to say it, like that, quite crudely, quite grossly. Because today, precisely, I said to myself that writing, can be very useful to help me find something. But to write something to spare myself here, let us say the weariness, or the risk, or indeed other things, while I still want to speak to you, well then in the end of the day that does not give very good results. It is much better (24) that I have nothing to read to you. Besides, it is not the same sort of writing as the writing in which I make some discoveries from time to time, or the writing in which I prepare what I have to say here. And then there is also writing that is intended for publication, which is again something quite different, which has no relationship, or more exactly which...as regards which it would be unfortunate to believe that what I may have written once in order to talk to you, constitutes a quite acceptable writing and that I would put it into a collection.

So then, I take the risk of saying something like that, which skips a step, the idea that I have about writing, in order to situate it, in order to start from there, we can discuss it later, well anyway, let me say it, two points, *it is the return of the repressed*. I mean that it is in this form, and it is that which perhaps gave rise to some confusion in some of my *Ecrits*. The fact is that if I may sometimes have appeared to help people believe that I identify the signifier and the letter, it is precisely because it is *qua* letter that it perhaps touches me most, me as analyst. It is *qua* letter that, most often, I see the signifier returning, the repressed signifier precisely. So then, the fact that I image this

signifier in the *Agency of the letter*, anyway with a letter, and moreover, I must say that it is all the more legitimate in that... everybody does the same. The first time that we enter properly speaking into logic, I am talking about Aristotle, the *Analytics*, well then, the letter is also used. Not quite in the same way as that in which the letter comes back to the place of the signifier that returns. It comes there to mark a place, the place of a signifier that, for its part, is a signifier which is found, which can at the very least be found everywhere. But anyway we see that the letter is in a way made for that. And we notice that it is all the more made for that in that this is how it first manifests itself.

I do not know if you really appreciate it, but anyway I hope that you will think about it, because it presupposes all the same something that is not said in what I am putting forward. It is necessary that there should be a kind of... transmutation which operates between the signifier and the letter, when the signifier is not there, is missing, is that not so, has cleared off, and we have to ask ourselves how that can happen. But this is not what I intend to get involved with today. I will perhaps go into it another day.

Yes! All the same one cannot say that on the subject of this letter, one does not have to deal with the field that is called mathematics, a place (25) where one cannot write any old thing. Of course, it is not... I am not going to get involved in that either. I would simply point out to you that it is in this that this domain is distinguished and that it is even probably this that constitutes something that I have not yet made an allusion to here, namely, here at the seminar, but that I brought forward in some remarks where, no doubt, some of those who are here attended, namely at Sainte-Anne, when I posed the question of what one could call a *matheme*, positing already that it is the pivotal point of any teaching. In other words that the only teaching is mathematical, the rest is a joke. This stems of course from a different status of writing than the one that I first gave you. And the junction, in the

course of this year of what I have to say to you, is what I will try to bring about.

Meanwhile, my difficulty, the one in short that despite everything I hold onto, I do not know whether that comes from me or whether it is not rather through your assistance, my difficulty is that my matheme, given the field of discourse that I have to set up, well then, it is always close to feckology (*connerie*). That is self-evident with what I told you, is it not, because in short, what is at stake, is that as regards sexual relationships, there are none (*il y en a pas*). This should be written *hi! han!*, and *appatât* with two p's and a circumflex accent, and a *t* at the end. Not to be confused, naturally, with sexual relations, there is nothing but that. But sexual encounters always fail. Even and especially when it is an act. Good, anyway let's leave it.

This is what, all the same, gave rise to a remark, like that, I would like while there is still time, that – because, we would have to see it, we will at least have to see things around it – it is a very good introduction to something essential, it is Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. You have to read it in order to ensure that when I come to it perhaps one day, like that, I don't know, at the start of the month of March, to see in it the relationship with what is our business, it is necessary for you to have read it. Naturally, I am not going to talk to you about it. It is not just that I admire feckology, I would say more, I prostrate myself before it. You for your part you do not prostrate yourselves. You are conscious and organised electors. You do not vote for sods. That is where you miss out. A happy political system ought to allow feckology to have its place. And moreover things only work well when feckology dominates. This having been said, it is not a reason to prostrate oneself.

(26) So then, the text that I will take, is something that is a real exploit, it is an exploit since there are a lot of them which are, as I might say unexploited, it is Plato's *Parmenides*, which will be of use to us. But

in order to understand it properly, to understand the relief of this text which is not stupid, you have to have read Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. And I hope, I hope because when I advise people to read *The critique of practical reason* as a novel, as something which is full of humour, I do not know whether anyone has followed this advice and has succeeded in reading it the way I do. I have not been informed, it is somewhere in *Kant with Sade* and I don't know whether it has been read by anyone. So I am doing the same thing, I am going to say to you, read Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, I hope that like me, you will sense that it is bloody stupid. Anyway, I do not want to spend a long time developing this, like that, these little sideways remarks of course that come to me. It cannot fail to strike anyone who reads it, when they read the text, of course.

What is at stake is not Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, like that, in its essence, in the signified, in everything that has been explained to you starting from this magnificent text, namely, everything that metaphysics has done for this part of the world that we are in. Because everything has come out of that. It is absolutely fabulous. People talk about the end of metaphysics. By what right? As long as this book is there it can always be done! This book, it's a book, it is very different to metaphysics, it is a written book that I spoke about earlier. It has been given a meaning that has been called metaphysics, but it is necessary all the same to distinguish the meaning and the book. Naturally, once it has been given all this meaning, it is not easy to rediscover the book. If you really rediscover it, you will see what, all the same, the people, is that not so, who have a discipline and which exists, and which is called the historical, critical, exegetical method, whatever you like, who are capable of reading the text, obviously, with a certain knack of switching off from the meaning, and when one looks at the text, quite obviously, you start to have some doubts.

I would say that, that of course, this obstacle to everything that has been understood about it, this can only exist at the university level and

that the university has not always existed. Anyway in Antiquity, three or four centuries after Aristotle, people naturally began to express the most serious doubts about this text, because, people still knew how to (27) read, did they not. Doubts were expressed, people said that it was a series of notes, or indeed that it was a pupil who did that, who had pulled things together. I must say that I am not at all convinced. It is perhaps because I have just read a book by someone called Michelet – not our one, not our poet, when I say poet, I mean by that that I am putting him in the very first rank, our one – it's a chap, like that, who was at the University of Berlin, who was also called Michelet, Karl Ludwig who wrote a book on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, precisely on this. Because the historical method that flourished at that time had annoyed him a bit with the doubts expressed, not without foundation because it goes back to the earliest Antiquity; I must say that Michelet does not hold that opinion and neither do I.

Because really – how can I put it – feckology acts as a proof of authenticity. What dominates, is the authenticity, as I might put it, of feckology. Perhaps this term *authentic* which is always a little complicated for us, like that, because of the Greek etymological resonances. there are tongues in which it is better represented, there is *echt*; I do not know how you make a noun out of that, it must be *Echtheit* or something like that. What matter. There is all the same nothing more authentic than feckology. So then, this authenticity, is perhaps not Aristotle's authenticity, but the *Metaphysics*, I am talking about the text, is authentic. It cannot be made up from pieces or from fragments. It is always up to the level of what I now must call, what one is justified to call feckology; that is what feckology is. It is what one gets into when one poses questions at a certain level which is precisely determined by the fact of language, when one approaches its essential function which is to fill everything that is left gaping by the fact that there can be no sexual relationship, which means that no writing can take account of it, in a way, in a satisfying fashion, which is written, *qua* language-product. Because of course, ever since we

have seen gametes, we can write on the board, man equals carrier of spermatozoa, which would be a rather funny definition because he is not the only one among animals to carry those spermatozoa, the spermatozoa of man. Ah! So then let's begin to talk about biology. Why are the spermatozoa of man precisely those that man carries? (28) Because it is the spermatozoa of man that makes the man, we are going around in a circle, huh? But what matter, one can write that.

Only this has no relationship with anything whatsoever that can be written as I might say, that is sensible, namely, that has a relationship to the Real. It is not because it is biological that it is any more real. It is the fruit of the science called biology. The Real is something else. The Real is what commands the whole function of significance. The Real is what you encounter precisely by not being able, in mathematics, to write just anything whatsoever. The Real is what involves the fact that in what is the most common function, you are bathed in significance, you cannot lay hold of all the signifiers at the same time, huh? It is prohibited by their very structure. When you have some, a packet, you do not have others. They are repressed. That does not mean that you do not say them after all! Precisely you say them *inter*, they are interdicted. That does not prevent you from saying them. But you say them censured. Either everything that is psychoanalysis has no sense, is to be thrown in the wastepaper basket, or what I am saying to you here ought to be your primary truth.

So then that's it, that is what we are going to be dealing with this year. Which means that in placing oneself at a certain level, Aristotle or not, and in any case the text is there, authentic, when one places oneself at a certain level, things do not happen just like that. It is thrilling to see someone so sharp, so knowledgeable, so alert, so lucid, starting to flounder in this way, because why? Because he is questioning himself about the principle. Naturally, he has not the slightest idea that the principle is that, that there is no sexual relationship, he has not the slightest idea of it. But we see that it is uniquely at this level that all

the questions are posed. And so then what comes out of him like a bird flying out of a hat where simply he has put a question whose nature he is unaware of, you understand, it is like the conjurer who thinks that he has put ..., anyway he has to put in the rabbit, naturally, which is supposed to come out, and then afterwards what comes out is a rhinoceros! That is exactly how it is for Aristotle. Where is the principle? If it is of the genus, and so then if it is the genus, he becomes enraged because is it a general genus or the most specific genus? It is obvious that the most general is the most essential, but that all the same the most specific, is indeed what gives what is unique in each one.

(29) So then without even noticing it, is that not so, because, thanks be to God, thanks to that they are not confused, that this business of essentiality and this business of unicity, is the same thing, or more exactly it is the homonym of what he is questioning. Thanks be to God, he does not confuse them. It is not from there that he makes them emerge. He says to himself, is the principle the One, or indeed is the principle Being? So then at that moment, it becomes bloody well mixed up, huh? At all costs it is necessary that the One should be and that Being should be one. Anyway here we lose our bearings completely because, precisely, the way to avoid being an imbecile is to severely separate them. This is what we will try to do in what follows. Enough about Aristotle.

I announced to you, I already took this step last year, that this non-relationship, if I can express myself in this way, must be written. It must be written at all costs. I mean to write the other relationship, the one which creates a stopper to the possibility of writing what creates the obstacle. And already last year I put on the board some things which, after all, I do not think it a bad thing to posit in the first place. Naturally there is here something arbitrary. I am not going to excuse myself for sheltering behind mathematicians, mathematicians do whatever they want, and so do I. All the same, simply for those who

need to give me excuses, I can point out that in Bourbaki's *Elements* they begin by sticking down letters without saying absolutely anything about what use they may be. I am talking about these...let us call these written symbols, because they do not resemble even any letter, and these symbols represent something that can be called operations. They say absolutely nothing about which ones are at stake, it is only 20 pages later that one will begin to be able to deduce it retroactively from the way they are used.

I will not at all go that far. I will try right away to question what is meant by the letters that I will have written. But since, after all, I think that for you, it would be much more complicated for me to bring them forward one by one in the measure that they animate, that they take on the value of a function, I prefer to put down these letters as what I will subsequently turn around.

Good then, because you stop hearing me when I turn towards the board, there are two ways, either I will write in silence and afterwards I will speak, or else I continue to speak a little bit if people manage to stay within my range. So then can you hear me?

(30) Already last year I thought I could posit what is at stake, , and that I believe, for reasons which are of the order of an endeavour, to be able to write as in mathematics, namely, the function constituted from the fact that there exists this enjoyment called sexual enjoyment and which is properly what creates an obstacle to the relationship. That sexual enjoyment opens the door to enjoyment for the speaking being, and here you should prick up your ears, you should notice that enjoyment, when we describe it as simply that, it is perhaps enjoyment for some people, I am not eliminating that, but really, it is not sexual enjoyment.

The merit that one can give to the text of Sade is to have called things by their name. To enjoy, is to enjoy a body. To enjoy, is to kiss it, is

to embrace it, it is to cut it into pieces. In law to enjoy something, is precisely that, it is to be able to treat something as a body, namely, to demolish it, is that not so, this is the most regular form of enjoyment, that is why these statements always have a Sadian resonance. You must not confuse Sadian with sadistic. Because, so many imbecilic things have been said precisely about sadism that the term is devalued. I am going no further on this point.

What produces this relation of the signifier to enjoyment, is what I express by this notation x . That means that x , which only designates a signifier, a signifier can be any one of you, any one of you precisely at the level, at the slender level at which you exist as sexed. Its thickness is very slight, as I might say, but its surface is much larger than in animals among whom, when they are not in heat, you cannot distinguish them – what I called in the last seminar the little boy and the little girl – from a lion cub, for example. They completely resemble one another in their behaviour. Not you, because precisely, it is as a signifier that you are sexed.

So it is not a matter of making the distinction, of marking the signifier man as distinct from the signifier woman, to call one x and the other y ; because that precisely is the question, it is how one is distinguished. That is why I put this x in the place of the hole that I make in the signifier, namely, that I put there this x as an *apparent variable*. Which means that every time I am going to have to deal with this sexual signifier, namely, with something that has to do with (31) enjoyment, I am going to have to deal with this x , and there are certain someones, specified among these x 's which are such that one can write, for every x , whatever it may be, $f(x)$. Namely, that their functions what is called in mathematics a function f . Namely, that that, that can be written as $f(x)$.

So then I am going to tell you right away, I am going to enlighten – anyway enlighten...you are the only ones who will be enlightened,

anyway, you will be enlightened for a short moment; as the Stoics say, do they not, when it is daytime there is light. Me for my part I am obviously, as I wrote on the back cover of my *Ecrits*, on the side of the *Lumières*, I enlighten, in hoping for the J-day (*jour J*) of course. Only it is precisely it that is in question, the J-day, will not come tomorrow. The first step to be made in the philosophy of the *Lumières* is to know that day has not dawned and that the day in question is only that of some little lights in a perfectly dark field. As a result you are going to believe that there is daylight when I tell you that means the function called castration. Since you believe you know what is meant by castration, I think then that you are happy. At least for the moment. Only imagine that I, if I write all of that on the board – and I am going to continue to do so – it is precisely, I do not know at all what castration is, and that I hope, with the help of this little interplay of letters, to come to the point that finally, precisely, day will dawn. Namely, that people will know that it is necessary to go through castration and that there will be no healthy discourse, namely, which does not leave in the shade half of its status and of its conditioning as long as people do not know that. And it will only be known after having brought into operation at different levels of topological relations a certain way of changing the letters and of seeing how it is distributed. Until then, you are reduced to little stories like *Daddy says it's going to be cut off*, again as if it were not the most typical form of feckology. While there is somewhere a place where one can say that everything that is articulated in terms of signifier falls under the sway of , of this function of castration.

There is a little advantage in formulating things like that. It may come into your head, precisely that, if earlier, not unintentionally – I am much smarter than I appear to be – I put before you a remark on the subject of prohibition, namely, that all the signifiers cannot be there together, ever. This is perhaps related ... I am not saying that the unconscious equals castration, I am saying that it is closely related to

(32) it. Obviously, to write that like that, , is to write a function with an import, as Aristotle might say, that is unbelievably general.

That this might mean that the relationship to a certain signifier, you see that.... I have not said it yet...but anyway let's say it... a signifier which is for example *a man*...all of that is deadly because there is a lot to be stirred up, and because no one ever did it, before me, there is a risk at every instant that it will come toppling down on our heads. *A man*, I have not said *man*....it's funny, the use like that of the signifier *man*, that one says to fellows, *be a man*. One does not say, *be the man*, one says *be a man*, why? What is curious, is the fact that...you don't often hear it said *be a woman*, but on the contrary people speak about *the woman*, the article. There has been a lot of speculation about the definite article, but, anyway, we will rediscover that when we have to. What I simply want to say, is that what is written as , that means, I am not even saying these particular signifiers but those and a certain number of others that are articulated with them, then, have the effect that one can no longer have at one's disposal the totality of signifiers, and that this is perhaps a first approach to what is involved in castration, from the point of view, of course, of this mathematical function that my writing imitates. In a first moment, that I do not ask any more of you than to recognise that it is imitated. This does not mean that for me who have already reflected on it this does not go much further, anyway, there is a way of writing that for every x, that works.

This is proper to a way of writing which has issued from the first logical outlining for which Aristotle is responsible. This has given this prestige which stems from the fact that logic is incredibly enjoyable (*joussif*), precisely because it is connected to this field of castration.

Anyway! How could you justify, throughout history, that a period that was such a great time, so buzzing with intelligence, also flourishing with productivity, that our Middle Ages could have become so excited

to this point about the business of logic, the Aristotelian one, for it to have put them into such a state? Because it got to the point of making people rise up *en masse*. Because through the logicians, this had theological consequences, in which logic completely dominated theology, which is not the case with us where nothing but theology remains, always there, quite solid, in its imbecility and where logic has slightly evaporated. So that this business is enjoyable. It is moreover from that that there arose all the prestige which, in Aristotle's construction, resonated on this famous *Metaphysics*, where he frees (33) things up with all bugles blowing.

But at this level, because I am not today going to give you a class on the history of logic, if you simply want to go to look for the *First Analytics*, what are called more exactly the *Prior Analytics*, even for those, who of course are most of you, who will never have the courage to read it, even though it is fascinating, I recommend to you all the same, at what is called Book 1 chapter 46, is that not so, to read what Aristotle puts forward about what is involved in negation. Namely, on the difference that there is between saying that *the man is not white*, whether this is indeed the contrary of *the man is white* or as many people believed already at his epoch – it has not stopped for all that – or whether the contrary is to say *the man is non-white*. It is absolutely not the same thing. I think that simply by stating it like that, the difference is tangible. Only, it is very important to read this chapter because, you are told so many things about the logic of predicates, at least those of you who have tried to make contact with the places where people speak about these sorts of things, that you might imagine that the syllogism is entirely concerned with the logic of predicates. This is a little indication that I give on the side. Since I did not want to delay on it, perhaps I will have the time to take it up one day. I want simply to say that there has been, for me to be able to write it in this way, at the beginning of the 19th Century, an essential mutation. It is the attempt of applying this logic to what I earlier pointed out to you had a special status, namely, the mathematical signifier. This gave this

style of writing whose relief and originality I think I will subsequently have the time to make you sense, namely, that it no longer in any way says the same thing as propositions – because this is what is at stake – as function in the syllogism. Namely, as I already wrote it last year, the sign of negation placed at the level where there is the \neg , is a possibility that is open to us precisely by this introduction of quantifiers, in the use of these quantifiers that are more generally called quantificators, and that I prefer to call that – I am not the only one nor the first one – because the important thing is that you should know what is obvious, that this has absolutely nothing to do with quantity. It is called that because people found nothing better, which is a sign.

(34) Anyway, this articulation of quantifiers allows us – something that was never done in this logic of quantifiers and what I am doing, because I consider that, for us, it can be very fruitful – is the function of the not all (*pas-tout*).

There is a set of these signifiers that supplies for the function of the sexed, which supplies there for what is involved in enjoyment, at a place where it is the *not all* that functions in the function of castration. I continue to make use of quantifiers. There is a way in which they are articulated, which is to write \exists , which means *there exists*. There exists what, a signifier.

When you treat as mathematical signifiers those which have a different status than our little sexed signifiers, which have a different status and which bite quite differently on the real, it is necessary perhaps all the same to valorise in your minds that there is at least one thing real, and that it is the only thing of which we are sure, it is number. What people have managed to do with it has not been all that bad! To manage to get to the point of constructing real numbers, namely, precisely those that are not such, it is necessary that number, should be something real. Anyway I am addressing that in passing to

mathematicians who are perhaps going to throw cooked apples at me but what matter, they will do it in private because here I intimidate them.

Let us come back to what we have to say, *there exists*. This reference that I have just made is not simply a digression, it is to tell you that *there exists*, it is here that this has a meaning, has a precarious meaning. It is indeed as signifier that all of you exist. You exist certainly, but that does not amount to much. You exist as signifier. Try hard to imagine yourselves, like that, cleansed of all this business, and you can tell me about it. After the war, we were encouraged to exist in an extremely contemporary way. Well then! Take a look at what remains of it, and you will understand. I would dare to say that people had all the same rather more ideas in their head when they were demonstrating the existence of God. It is obvious that God exists, but no more than you! That does not take us very far. Anyway that to highlight what is involved in existence.

What is it that can interest us about this *there exists* in what concerns the signifier? It is that there exists *at least one* for whom this business of castration does not function, and that is why he has been invented, it is what is called the Father, that is why the Father exists at least as much as God, namely, not all that much. So then naturally there are (35) some little smart alecks – I am surrounded by little smart alecks, those who transform what I put forward into intellectual pollution, as one of my patients put it and I thank her for having handed me that, she discovered that all by herself because she is sensitive, huh, moreover in general it is only women who understand what I say – so then there are some people who have discovered that I said that the Father was a myth because it is obvious in effect that does not work at the level of the Oedipus myth. The Father is not castrated, otherwise how could he have them all? Can you imagine! They only exist there as all (*toutes*), because this is applied to women, the *not-all*, but anyway, I will give a further commentary on that soon. So then starting from this

there exists one, it is starting from there that all the others can function, it is with reference to this exception, to this *there exists*. Only there you are, in clearly understanding that one can write the rejection of the function denied, it is not true that it is castrated, that is the myth. Only, what these little smart alecks have not noticed, is that it is correlative to existence and that that posits *there exists* from *this it is not true* of castration.

Good! It is 2 o'clock. So then I am simply going to note for you the fourth way of making use of what is involved in the negation based on the quantifiers, which is to write, *there does not exist*. There does not exist those who what? Why is it not true that the function is what dominates what is involved in the use of the signifier. Is that what that means? Because earlier existence, I distinguished it for you from exception, and if negation here simply meant without the exception of the signifying position, it can be inscribed in the negation of castration, in the rejection, in the *it is not true* that castration dominates everything.

It is on this little riddle that I will leave you today because, in truth, it is very enlightening for the subject. Namely that negation, is not something that one can use like that in such a simply univocal fashion as is done in the logic of propositions, where everything that is not true is false and where, this extraordinary thing, everything that is not false becomes true. Good! I am leaving things at the moment where time cuts me off as it should do. But I will take things up again the second Wednesday of January at the precise point where I left them today.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 12 January 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

If we should find in logic, a means of articulating what the unconscious demonstrates in terms of sexual value, we would not be surprised. We would not be surprised, I mean here, even at my seminar, namely, at the basic level of this experience, analysis, set up by Freud and from which there is established a structure of discourse that I have defined. Let us take up again what I said in the density of my first sentence. I spoke about sexual value. I would like to point out that these values are accepted values, accepted in every language, man, woman, this is what is called sexual value. That at the start there is man and woman, is the thesis from which I am starting today, it is first of all a matter of language.

Language is such that for every speaking subject it is either *him* or *her*. That exists in every tongue in the world. It is the principle of the functioning of gender, feminine or masculine. That hermaphrodites exist is simply an opportunity for playing with more or less wit at getting into the same sentence the *him* and the *her*; it (38) would not be described as that, in any case, except to manifest in this way a type of sacred horror. It would not be described as neutral.

Having said this, man and woman, we do not know what they are. For a time, this bipolarity of values was taken as sufficiently supporting, suturing what is involved in sex. It is even from this that there resulted this muted metaphor that for centuries underlay the theory of

knowledge. As I pointed out elsewhere, the world was what was perceived, even glimpsed as being in the place of the other sexual value. What was involved in *nous*, in the power of knowing, was placed on the positive side, on the active side, of what I shall question today by asking what its relationship is to the One.

I said that the step that analysis made us take, reveals to us, in any tightly woven tackling of a sexual approach, the detour, the barrier, the roundabout paths, the chicane, the defile of castration, is there and properly what cannot be done except by starting from the articulation that I have given of the analytic discourse. This is what leads us to think that castration cannot in any way be reduced to an anecdote, to an accident, to the awkward intervention of some threatening remark nor even of censorship.

The structure is logical. What is the object of logic? You know, you know from experience, from having simply opened a book entitled *Traité de logique*, how fragile, uncertain, eluded may be the first phase of any treatise that is entitled in this way, the art of properly conducting one's thinking – conducting it where, and catching it by what end? – or again, one or other recourse to a normality by which the rational is supposed to be defined independently from the real. It is clear that after such an attempt to define as object of logic, what presents itself is of a different order and one that is much more consistent. I would propose if necessary, if I could not simply leave a blank there, but I am not leaving it, I propose, what is produced by the necessity of a discourse. This is no doubt ambiguous, but it is not idiotic because it involves the implication that logic can completely change its meaning according to where each discourse takes its meaning ...

So then, since this is what gives its sense to every discourse, namely, starting from another one, I have been proposing clearly enough for a long time so that it is enough to recall it here, the Real – the category

of the triad from which my teaching started, the (39) Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real – the Real affirms itself by an effect which is in no way the least, by affirming itself in the impasses of logic. I will explain. The fact is that at the start, in its all conquering ambition, logic proposed for itself nothing less than the network of discourse in so far as it is articulated and that by being articulated, this network ought to close itself into a universe that is supposed to embrace and cover like a net anything that was involved in what was offered to knowledge.

Experience, the experience of logicians, showed things to be different. And without having here to enter into any greater detail, this audience is all the same sufficiently aware of where in our day the logical effort was able to be taken up again, to know that in tackling something that in principle is as simplified as real as arithmetic, it could be demonstrated that in arithmetic, something can always be stated, proposed or not to logical deduction, which is articulated as being ahead of what the premises, the axioms, the fundamental terms, on which the aforesaid arithmetic can be based allows to be presumed as being able to be proved or refuted. Here we put our finger, in a domain that is apparently the most certain, on what is opposed to the whole grasp of discourse, of logical exhaustion, what introduces into it an irreducible gap. This is what we designate as the Real.

Naturally before coming to a certain testing ground of it, which may appear on the horizon, indeed appear uncertain to those who have not carefully circumscribed its final tests, it is enough to recall what naïve discourse is. Naïve discourse proposes from the start, is inscribed as such, as truth. It has always appeared easy to prove to this discourse, the naïve discourse, that it does not know what it is saying, I am not talking about the subject, I am talking about the discourse. This is the dawn – why not say it – of the critique that the sophist, to whoever states what has always posited as a truth, that the sophist demonstrates that he does not know what he is saying. This is even the origin of all

dialectic. And then, it is always ready to be reborn, that someone who comes to bear witness before a tribunal, the very beginning of the art of the advocate is to show him that he does not know what he is saying. But here, we are falling to the level of the subject, of the witness, that it is a matter of getting into a tangle. What I said at the level of the action of the sophist, it is discourse itself that the sophist takes on. This year perhaps, since I announced that I would have to take *Parmenides* into account, we may have to show what is involved in the action of the sophist.

(40) The remarkable thing, in the development to which I referred earlier about the statements of logicians - in which perhaps some will have glimpsed that it is a matter of nothing other than Gödel's theorem about arithmetic - is that it is not starting from the values of truth that Gödel proceeds in his proof that there will always be in the field of arithmetic something that can be stated in the proper terms that it involves, which will not be within the grasp of what posits itself as a means to be held as acceptable in the proof. It is not starting from truth, it is starting from the notion of derivation (*dérivation*). It is by leaving in suspense the true or false value as such that the theorem is demonstrable. And this accentuates what I am saying about the logical gap on this point. A vital point, a vital point in that it illustrates what I intend to put forward, is that if the Real, something that can be easily accessed, can be defined as impossible, this impossible in so far as it proves from the very grasp of discourse, the discourse of the logician, this impossible, this Real ought to be privileged by us.

By us, by whom? By analysts. Because it shows in an exemplary way that it is the paradigm of what puts in question what can emerge from language. There emerge from it, certain types, which I have defined, of discourse, as being what establish a definite type of social bond. But language questions itself about what it establishes as discourse. It is striking that it can only do so by fomenting the shadow of a language which would go beyond itself, which would be a metalanguage. I

often pointed out that it can only do so by reducing itself in its function, namely, by already generating a particularised discourse. I propose, by interesting ourselves in this real in so far as it is affirmed from the logical questioning of language, I propose to find in it the model of what is important for us, namely, of what the exploration of the unconscious shows us which, far from being, as someone like Jung thought he could take up again by getting back into the oldest of ruts, far from being a universal sexual symbolism, is very precisely what I earlier recalled about castration, by simply underlining that it is necessary that it should not be reduced to the anecdote of things that we have heard. Otherwise why isolate it, give it the privilege of some trauma or other, indeed the efficacy of a gap?

While it is only too clear that it has nothing anecdotal about it, that it is rigorously fundamental in what does not establish, but renders (41) impossible the statement of sexual bipolarity as such. Namely as – a curious thing, we continue to imagine it at the animal level – as if each illustration of what in each species, constitutes the tropism of one sex for the other was not as variable for each species as their corporal constitution is. As if, furthermore, we have not learned, already learned for some time, that sex, at the level not of what I have just defined as the real, but at the level of what is articulated within each science, once its object has been defined, that in sex, there are at least two or three stages of what constitutes it, from the genotype to the phenotype, and that after all, after the latest steps taken by biology, do I need to evoke which, it is certain that sex only takes its place as a particular mode in what permits the reproduction of what is called a living body. Far from sex being its typical instrument, it is only one of the forms, and what is too easily confused, even though Freud on this point has given an indication, even if an approximate one, what is too easily confused, is very precisely the function of sex and that of reproduction.

Far from things being arranged so that there is the channel of the gonad on the one hand, what Weissmann calls the *germen*, and the branching of the body, it is clear that, that the body's genotype carries something which determines sex and that that is not enough. From its production as body, from its corporal stasis, it detaches hormones which may interfere in this determination. So then there is not on the one hand sex irresistibly associated, because it is in the body, to life, sex imagined as the image of what in the reproduction of life is supposed to be love, there is not this on the one hand and on the other hand the body, the body in so far as it is protecting itself against death. The reproduction of life as we have come to question it, at the level of the appearance of its first forms, emerges from something which is neither life nor death, which is something that very independently of sex and even on occasions of something already living, something intervenes that we will call the programme or again the codon, as they say in connection with one or other point picked out among the chromosomes.

And then, the life-death dialogue happens at the level of what is reproduced, and to our best knowledge that only takes on a dramatic character starting from the moment when in the equilibrium between life and death enjoyment intervenes. The vital point, the (42) point of the emergence of something which is what all of us here believe more or less we form part of, the speaking being to put it plainly, is this unbalanced relationship to one's own body which is called enjoyment. And this, this has as centre, what it has as a starting point is what analytic discourse shows us, this has as a starting point a privileged relationship to sexual enjoyment. This is why the value of the other partner, the one that I began to designate respectively by man and by woman, is unapproachable by language, very precisely because of the fact that language functions, from its origins, in supplying for sexual enjoyment, that it is in this way that it organises this intrusion, in the corporal repetition of enjoyment.

This is how I am today going to begin to show you, by using logical functions, how it is possible to give to what is involved in castration a different articulation than an anecdotal one. In the line of the exploration of the logic of the Real, the logician began with propositions. Logic only began by having been able, in language, to isolate the function of what are called the prosdiorisms, which are nothing other than *the One, the some, the all* and the negation of these propositions. As you know, Aristotle defined, in order to oppose them the Universals and the Particulars, and within each the affirmative and the negative. What I can mark is the difference that there is between this usage of prosdiorisms and that which, for logical requirements, namely, for an approach which was nothing other than to this Real that is called number, the completely different thing that happened. The logical analysis of what is called the propositional function is articulated by isolating in the proposition, or more exactly from the lack, from the void, from the hole, from the hollow which is created from what ought to function as argument.

Specifically, it will be said that any argument from a domain that we will call as you wish x or the gothic \mathcal{D} , any argument from this domain put at the place that is left empty in a proposition, will satisfy it, namely, will give it the value of truth. This is what is inscribed from what is here on the bottom left, this $\forall x \in \mathcal{D}, P(x)$, it does not matter what the proposition is here, the function takes on a true value for every x of the domain. What is this x ? I said that it is defined as a domain. Does that mean for all that we know what it is? Do we know what a man is by saying that all men are mortal? We learn something about him by the fact of saying that he is (43) mortal and precisely by knowing that for all men it is true. But before introducing the *all men* we only know his most approximate features and they can be defined in the most variable way. This is something, I suppose you have known this for a long time, it is the story that Plato reports, does he not, about the plucked hen. So then, it is a good thing to say that we should question ourselves about the phases of logical articulation, namely, the fact that

what the prosdiorism contains has no meaning before functioning as an argument, that it only takes on one by entering into the function. It takes on the meaning of true or of false. It seems to me that this is designed to make us put our finger on the gap between the signifier and its denotation since meaning, if it is anywhere, is in the function and the denotation only begins from the moment when the argument has begun to be inscribed in it.

This at the same time is to put in question the following, which is different, which is the use of the letter E, also inverted, *there exists*. There exists something that can be used in the function as argument and take from it or not take from it the value of truth. I would like to get you to sense the difference between this introduction of *there exists* as problematic, namely, putting in question the very function of existence as compared to what was implied by the use of particulars in Aristotle, namely, that the use of *some* seemed to carry with it existence so that since the *all* was supposed to include this *some*, the *all* itself took on a value of what it is not, namely, an affirmation of existence. Given the time we will only be able to see this the next time, there is no status of the *all*, namely, of the Universal, except at the level of the possible. It is *possible* to say among other things that *all humans are mortal*. But very far from settling the question of the existence of the human being, it is first necessary, curiously, that he should be assured that he exists.

What I want to indicate, is the path that we are going to begin the next time. I would like to say that the articulation of these four argument conjunctions – function under the sign of quantifiers, it is from there, and from there alone, that there can be defined the domain from which each of these x's takes on its value. It is possible to propose the function of truth which is the following, namely, that all men are defined by the phallic function, is properly speaking what obturates the sexual relationship.

It is in a different way that there is going to be defined this upside- (44) down letter A described as the universal quantifier, furnished, as I do with the bar that negates it . I put forward the essential feature of the *not all*, , as being that from which there can be articulated a fundamental statement as regards the possibility of the denotation that a variable takes on in function of argument.

The woman is situated from the fact that it is *not all* who can be said in truth in function of an argument in what is stated from the phallic function. What is this *not-all*? It is very precisely what deserves to be questioned as structure because, contrary – this is the very important point, to the function of the particular negative, namely, that there are *some* of them which are not so, it is impossible to extract from the *not-all* this affirmation. It is reserved to the *not-all* to indicate that, somewhere and nothing more, she has a relationship to the phallic function.

Now it is from there that there start the values to be given to my other symbols. This means that nothing can appropriate this *all* to this *not-all*, that there remains between what symbolically grounds the argumentative function of terms, the man and the woman, that there remains this gap of an indetermination of their common relationship to enjoyment. They do not define themselves in the same order with respect to it. What is necessary, as I already said using a term which will play a big role about what we have to say subsequently, what is necessary is that despite this *all* of the phallic function on which the denotation man depends, despite this *all*, there exists, and *there exists*, here means there exists exactly as in the solution of a mathematical equation, *there exists at least one*, *there exists at least one* for whom the truth of its denotation does not depend on the phallic function.

Do I need to dot the i's for you and to say that the Oedipus myth, is what was made up to give you an idea of this logical condition which is that of the approach, of the indirect approach that the woman can

make of man? If the myth were necessary, this myth that one can say is already just by itself extraordinary that stating it does not appear farcical, namely, that of the original man who is supposed to enjoy precisely *what does not exist*, namely, *all the women*, which is not possible, not simply because it is clear that...that people have their limits, but because there is no *all* of women.

So then what is at stake, is of course something else, namely, that at the level of the *at least one* it is possible that there is subverted, that (45) the dominance of the phallic function is no longer true. And it is not because I said that sexual enjoyment is the pivot of all enjoyment that I have for all that sufficiently defined what is involved in the phallic function. Provisionally, let us admit that it is the same thing.

What is introduced at the level of the *at least one* of the father, is this *at least one* which means that it can work without him. That means, as the myth demonstrates – because it is uniquely designed to assure that – namely, that sexual enjoyment will be possible but that it will be limited. Which presupposes for each man, in his relationship with the woman, some mastery, at the very least, of this enjoyment. For the woman *at least that* is necessary, that castration should be possible, it is her approach to the man. And she takes responsibility for the aforesaid castration coming into effect.

And so as not to leave you before having articulated what is involved in the fourth term, we will say what all analysts know well, which is what the x means. I will have to come back to it, of course, because today we were a little delayed. I had counted on covering, like every other time moreover, a much larger field, but since you are patient, you will come back the next time.

What does that mean? The *there exists* as we have said, is problematic. It will be an opportunity, this year, to question what is involved in existence. What exists after all? Has it ever even been

noticed that alongside the fragile, the futile, the inessential, that constitutes the *there exists, there does not exist*, for its part means something? What does it mean to affirm that there does exist an x of such a kind that it can satisfy the function _____, furnished with the bar which establishes it as not being true?

Because this is precisely what I put into question earlier. If *not all women* have to deal with the phallic function, does that mean that there are some of them who have to deal with castration? Well, this is very precisely the point at which the man has access to the woman. I mean, I say it for all the analysts, those who dawdle, those who turn, bogged down in Oedipal relationships on the side of the father. When they cannot get out of what is happening on the side of the father, there is a very precise cause, which is that the subject must admit that the essence of woman is not castration, and in a word, that it is starting from the Real, namely, apart from a (46) little insignificant nothing – I am not saying that by chance – they are not castratable. Because the phallus, and I underline that I have not yet said what it is, well then they do not have it. It is starting from the moment when it is from the impossible as cause that the woman is not essentially linked to castration that access to the woman is possible in its indetermination.

Does this not suggest to you – I am sowing the seed so that it can have its resonance here the next time – that what is on the top left, the *at least one* in question, results from a necessity and it is very properly why it is a matter of discourse. The only necessity is one that is said and this necessity is what renders possible the existence of man as sexual value. The possible, contrary to what Aristotle puts forward, is the opposite of the necessary. And this is why _____ is opposed to _____ which is the mainspring of the possible.

As I told you, the *there does not exist* is affirmed from a statement, a statement of the man, the impossible, namely, that it is from the Real that the woman takes on her relationship to castration. And this is

what gives us the sense of _____, namely, of the *not-all*. The *not-all* means, as it was earlier in the left-hand column, means *not impossible*, it is not impossible that the woman should know the phallic function. What is the *not impossible*? It has a name that the Aristotelian tetrad suggests, but arranged differently here, just as the necessary was opposed to the possible, to the impossible it is the contingent. It is in so far as the woman, presents herself to the phallic function in the manner of an argument in contingency, that there can be articulated what is involved in the sexual value *woman*.

It is two sixteen and I am not going to take things any further today. The cut has been made at a place that is not particularly suitable. I think that I have advanced enough with this introduction of the functioning of these terms to have given you the sense that the use of logic is not unrelated to the contents of the unconscious. It is not because Freud said that the unconscious does not know contradiction that it is not the Promised Land for the conquest of logic. Have we come to this century without knowing that logic can do perfectly well without a principle of contradiction? As regards (47) saying that in everything that Freud wrote on the unconscious, logic does not exist, you would have to have never read the use that he makes of one or other term, *I love her, I do not love him*, all the ways that there are to deny the *I love him*, for example, namely, along grammatical paths, to say that the unconscious cannot be explored along the path of a logic.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 19 January 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

The art of producing a necessity of discourse

The signification of the phallus

Die Bedeutung des Phallus

The objective genitive: a desire —→ for a child

The subjective genitive: a desire of a child

The law of retaliation

The art, the art of producing a necessity of discourse, this is the formula that I slipped in the last time, or rather that I proposed about what logic is.

(50) I left you in a hullabaloo, with everyone getting up, by pointing out to you that it is not enough that Freud noted as a character of the unconscious that it neglects, that it holds the principle of contradiction cheap, for logic, as some psychoanalysts imagine, to have nothing to do with its elucidation.

If there is a discourse, a discourse that deserves to be pinpointed from the new institution of analysis, it is more than probable that like every other discourse, its logic ought to be able to be separated out. I remind you in passing that discourse is something about which the least that can be said is that its sense remains veiled. In truth, what constitutes it

is very precisely constructed from the absence of sense. There is no discourse that does not have to receive its sense from another one. And if it is true that the appearance of a new structure of discourse takes on a sense, it is not simply from receiving it. It is just as much so if it appears that this analytic discourse, as I situated it for you last year, represents the final slipping onto a tetrahedric, quadripod structure, as I called it in a text that was published elsewhere, by the last slipping of what is articulated in the name of significance. It becomes tangible that something original is produced from this circle which closes in on itself.

The art of producing, I said, a necessity of discourse, is something other than this necessity itself. Logical necessity, think about it, there cannot be another one, is the fruit of this production. Necessity, *ananke* only begins with the speaking being, and moreover everything that might have appeared to have been produced from it, is always a matter of a discourse. If this indeed is what is involved in tragedy, it is indeed inasmuch as tragedy is concretised as the fruit of a necessity which is nothing other - it is obvious, because it is only speaking beings that are in question - from a necessity I am saying, that is logical. Nothing, it seems to me, appears that can be properly speaking called *ananke* except in the case of the speaking being. This moreover is why Descartes thought of animals as simply automatons. This surely was a something of an illusion, an illusion whose incidence we will show in passing, in connection with what we are going, as regards this art of producing a necessity of discourse, of what we are going, I am going to try to open up.

To produce, in the double sense of demonstrating what was there before, is already why it is not sure that something is not reflected, does not contain the initiation of the necessity that is at stake in a (51) preliminary way, in a preliminary way in animal existence. But since we cannot prove it, what has to be produced should in effect be held as inexistent (*inexistant*) before.

Another meaning, a meaning of produce, the one on which a whole research emanating from the development of an already constituted discourse, described as the discourse of the master, has already put forward under the term of to realise by a work (*réaliser par un travail*). It is indeed in this that there consists what is made of...in so far as I am myself the logician in question, the product of the emergence of this new discourse, that the production in the sense of *proof* can be announced before you here. What must be supposed to have been already there, through the necessity of the proof, a product of the supposition of what was always a necessity, but also precisely bore witness of the no lesser necessity of the work to actualise it.

But, in this moment of emerging, this necessity provides at the same time the proof that it cannot be supposed at first except under the title of the inexistent. What then necessitated it? Not what must be said, it is not this *then*, but what *is*, directly. This *this then* involves in itself too much being. It is directly that there *is* the necessity so that, from the very fact of producing it, it cannot but before being produced, be supposed as inexistent, which means posited as such in discourse.

There is an answer to this question as to all, to every question, for the reason that one only poses it, like every question, when one already has the answer. So then you have it, even if you do not know it. What answers this question *what is necessitated*, etc., is what by doing it logically, even if you do not know it, in your every day pottering around (*bricolage*), this pottering around that a certain number of people here, because they are in analysis with me – there are a certain number, of course not all – come to confide in me without being able to take moreover, without a certain step having been taken, the feeling that by doing it, by coming to see me, they suppose me myself to be this pottering around, to be doing it then, I mean all, even those who do not confide it to me, they already answer. How? By repeating quite simply this pottering around, in an unwearying way. This is what is

called the symptom at a certain level. At another, automatism, a not really suitable term but one whose history can account for it. You realise at every instant, inasmuch as the unconscious exists, the proof by which there is grounded inexistence as preliminary to the necessary. It is the inexistence of what is at the source of the symptom, it is the very consistency of the aforesaid symptom, ever since the term, since it (52) emerged with Marx, took on its value, what is at the source of the symptom. Namely, the inexistence of the truth that it presupposes even though it marks its place. So much for the symptom in so far as it is attached to a truth that is no longer available. In this respect, one can say that, like anyone else who subsists in the modern age, none of you is a stranger to this kind of response.

In the second case, the so called automatism, it is the inexistence of the enjoyment that the automatism described as repetition brings to light from the insistence of this marking time at the door which is designated as an exit towards existence. Only, beyond, it is not altogether what is called an existence that awaits you. It is enjoyment as it operates as necessitated by discourse and it only operates, as you see, as inexistence. Only there you are, by reminding you of these jingles, these refrains as I am doing of course with the aim of reassuring you, to give you the feeling that all I am doing there is bringing along the *speeches* [in English] on that in which...in the name of something which is supposed to have a certain substance, enjoyment, truth, as it happens, as it has been preached in Freud. It nevertheless remains that by sticking to that, you will not be able to refer yourselves to the core of the structure.

What is the necessity, I said, that is established from a supposition of inexistence? In this question, it is not what is inexistent that counts, it is precisely the supposition of inexistence, which is only the consequence of the production of the necessity. Inexistence only becomes a question by having already a double answer certainly, of enjoyment and truth, but it already does not exist. It is not through

enjoyment nor through truth that inexistence takes on its status, is able to inexist, namely, come to the symbol that designates as inexistence, not in the sense of not having existence, but of only being existence because of the symbol which would make it in-existent, and which for its part exists. It is a number, as you know, generally designated by zero. Which clearly shows that inexistence is not the nothingness that one may think, because what could come out of it, for belief, belief in itself. There are not an endless number of beliefs. God made the world from nothing, it is not surprising that this is a dogma. It is belief in itself, it is this rejection of the logic that is expressed as – one of my pupils discovered that one day all by himself – and which is expressed in accordance with the formula that he gave for it, I thank him, “Surely (53) not, but all the same”. That can in no way be enough for us. Inexistence is not nothingness. It is, as I have just told you, a number that forms part of the series of whole numbers. No theory of whole numbers if you do not take into account what is involved in zero. This is what was noticed, in an effort which certainly not by chance is precisely contemporaneous, a little earlier certainly, than the research of Frege. It is the one that was inaugurated by logically questioning what is involved in the status of numbers by someone called Frege, born eight years before him and died some 14 years before.

This is destined to be extremely important in our questioning of what is involved in the logical necessity of the discourse of analysis. It is very precisely what I highlighted about something that was in danger of escaping you in the reference with which just now I illustrated as application, in other words the functional usage of inexistence, that it only happens in the after-effect from which there first arises necessity. Namely, from a discourse in which it manifests itself before the logician, as I told you, comes to it himself as a secondary consequence, namely, at the same time as inexistence itself. The end of this necessity is to reduce itself where it manifested itself before it, I repeat, proving it this time at the same time as I am stating it.

This necessity is repetition itself, in itself, by itself, for itself. Namely, that by which life shows itself to be only necessitated by discourse. Because all it finds to resist death, namely, its allotment of enjoyment, is nothing other than a device, namely, the recourse to the same thing that produces an opaque programming which is something quite different, as I underlined, than the power of life, love or some other nonsense. It is this radical programming which is only beginning for us...to emerge a little from the darkness through what the biologists are doing with bacteria and whose consequence is precisely the reproduction of life.

What discourse does, in demonstrating this level where nothing of a logical necessity is manifested except in repetition, appears here to rejoin as a semblance what is carried out in a message that it is in no way easy to reduce to what we know about this term and which is of the order of what is situated at the level of a short combinatorial whose modulations are those which go from desoxyribose nucleic acid to (54) what is transmitted of it at the level of proteins thanks to the goodwill of some intermediaries that are particularly described as enzymes or catalysers. That this should be what allows us to refer to what is at stake in repetition, can only be done by elaborating precisely what is involved in the fiction through which something appears to us suddenly to be reflected back from the very foundation of what brought it about that one day there was a living being capable of speaking.

There is in effect one among all the others which does not escape from a particularly stupid enjoyment that I would describe as local in the accidental sense, and which is the organic form that sexual enjoyment has taken on for him. He colours with enjoyment all his elementary needs, which are only, among other living beings, a clogging up with respect to enjoyment. If the animal feeds regularly, it is quite clear that it is not to know about the enjoyment of hunger. The one who speaks

then colours – and this is striking, it is Freud's discovery – all his needs, namely, that by which he protects himself against death.

It must in no way be believed nevertheless that because of that sexual enjoyment is life. As I told you earlier, it is a local, accidental, organic production and very precisely linked to, centred on, what is involved in the male organ. Which is obviously particularly grotesque.

Detumescence in the male has generated this special type of appeal which is articulated language thanks to which there is introduced, in its dimensions, the necessity of speaking. It is from this that there springs up again logical necessity as a grammar of discourse. You see how slight it is! In order to notice it, it required nothing less than the emergence of analytic discourse.

The meaning of the phallus, in my *Ecrits* somewhere, I took care to place this statement that I had made, very precisely at Munich, sometime before 1960, it is some time ago; underneath I wrote *die Bedeutung des Phallus*. It was not for the pleasure of making you believe that I know German. Even though, even though it is in German, because it was at Munich that I thought I ought to articulate the re-translated text that I gave there. It seemed opportune to me to introduce under the term of *Bedeutung* what in French, given the degree of culture that we had arrived at at that time, I could only decently translate by *signification*. *Die Bedeutung des Phallus*, was already, was there already, but the Germans themselves, given that they were analysts – I mark the distance by a little note that is reproduced at the beginning of the text – the Germans had not of course, I am talking about analysts, we were just coming out of the war and one cannot say that analysis had made much progress during it – the Germans understood not an iota. All of that seemed to them, as I underline at the final term of this note, properly speaking unheard of. It is curious moreover that things have changed to the point that what I talk about today may have become for a certain number of you already, and quite properly so, common currency.

Die Bedeutung, nevertheless, was indeed referred to the use, to the use that Frege makes of this word by opposing it to the term of *Sinn*, which corresponds very exactly to what I thought I ought to recall to you in my statement today, namely, the sense, the sense of a proposition. One could express differently – and you will see that it is not incompatible – what is involved in the necessity which leads to this art of producing as necessity of discourse. One could express it differently. What is necessary for a word to denote something? Such is the sense – pay attention, there are little changes beginning – such is the sense that Frege gives to *Bedeutung*, *denotation*.

It will be clear to you, if you don't mind opening this book called the *Foundations of Arithmetic*, and that a certain Claude Imbert, who formerly, if I remember correctly, came to my seminar, has translated, which means it is entirely accessible for you, within hand's reach. It will appear clear to you, as might have been anticipated, that for there to be denotation without any doubt, that it would be no bad thing to address oneself first of all, timidly, to the field of arithmetic as it is defined by whole numbers. There is someone called Kronecker who could not prevent himself, so great is the need for belief, from saying that whole numbers, were created by God. As a result of which, he added, man has to do all the rest and, since he was a mathematician, the rest, was for him everything that remained in terms of number. It is precisely in so far as nothing is sure in things of this order, namely, that a logical effort can at least attempt to account for whole numbers, that I brought the work of Frege into the field of your consideration.

Nevertheless, I would like to pause for a moment, if only to encourage you to re-read him, about what this statement that I produced from the (56) angle of *The meaning of the phallus*, in which you will see that at the point that I have got to – anyway this is a little merit that I am proud of – there is nothing to be corrected, even though at that time, no one really understood anything about it, as I was able to see on the

spot. What is meant by *The meaning of the phallus*? It deserves to be dwelt on, because after all, in such a determinative liaison, you must always ask yourself if it is a genitive that is described as objective or subjective, of a kind whose difference I illustrate by the rapprochement... of two directions. Here the direction marked by two little arrows:

a desire for a child, it is a child that one desires, objective.

a desire of a child, it is a child who desires, subjective.

the law of retaliation.

You can practice it, it is always very useful. *The law of retaliation* that I write underneath without adding any commentary can have two senses; the law which is that of the talion, I establish it as law or what the talion articulates as law, namely, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. It is not the same thing. What I would like to point out to you, is that the meaning of the phallus – and what I will develop will be designed to make you discover it – in the sense that I have just specified the word direction, namely the little arrow, is neutral. The meaning of the phallus is something very clever in that what the phallus denotes is the power of meaning.

So then it is not this x , an ordinary type of function, it is this that means that on condition of making use of it, to place in it as argument, this something which has no need at first to have any sense, on this single condition of articulating it with a prosdiorism, there exists either all, on this condition, simply according to the prosdiorism, itself produces from the search for logical necessity and nothing else, what is pinpointed by this prosdiorism will take on the meaning of man or of woman according to the prosdiorism chosen. Namely, either the *there exists*, or the *there does not exist*; either the *all*, or the *not-all*.

Nevertheless it is clear that we cannot fail to take account of what is produced in terms of a logical necessity, by confronting it with whole numbers, for the reason from which I started, that this necessity (57) subsequently implies the supposition of what is inexistent as such. Now, it is remarkable that it should be in questioning the whole number, and having tried to find its logical genesis, that Frege was led to nothing other than grounding the number 1 on the concept of inexistence.

It must be said that, in order to have been led there, we have to believe that what was up to then current about what grounds the 1, did not give him satisfaction, the satisfaction of a logician. It is certain that for some time, people were satisfied with very little. People believed that it was not difficult; there are many of them, there are a lot, they can be counted. This posits of course, insoluble problems for the advent of the whole number. Because if it is only a matter of what it is agreed to do, of a sign to count them – that exists, I have just been brought like that a little book to show me how the...there is an Arabic poem about it, a poem that indicates like that, in verse, what one has to do with one's small finger, then with index finger, and with the ring finger and some others to get across the sign of number. But precisely, because one must make a sign, it is because the number must have a different species of existence than simply of designating, even if it were each time with a bark, each one for example of the people here present. In order for it to have the value of 1, it is necessary, as has always been noted, for them to be stripped of all their qualities without exception. So then what remains? Of course, there have been some philosophers called empiricists to articulate that by making use of tiny objects like little balls, a rosary beads of course, that is the best thing.

But this does not resolve in any way the question of the emergence as such of the 1. This was clearly seen by someone called Leibniz who believed that he ought to start, since it forced itself on him, from identity, namely to posit at first:

$$2 = 1 + 1$$

$$3 = 2 + 1$$

$$4 = 3 + 1$$

and he believed he had solved the problem by showing that by reducing each one of these definitions to the preceding one you could prove that 2 + 2 make 4.

There is unfortunately a little obstacle that the logicians of the 19th (58) Century quickly noted. His proof is only valid on condition of ignoring the brackets that are quite necessary to be put around $2 = 1+1$, namely, the brackets enclosing the $1+1$. And that it is necessary, which is something he neglects, that it is necessary to posit the axiom that $a + b$, in brackets $+ c = a +$, open brackets, $b + c$, close brackets:

$$[(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)]$$

It is certain that this carelessness on the part of a logician so truly a logician as Leibniz, certainly deserves to be explained and that from some angle, something justifies it. In any case, the fact that it is omitted is enough to have the Leibniz genesis rejected, besides the fact that it disregards any foundation for what is involved in the 0.

All I am doing here is pointing out to you from what notion of the concept, of the concept supposed to denote something, they have to be chosen for it to hang together. But after all, one cannot say that the concepts, those that he chooses, the satellites of Mars indeed of Jupiter, do not have a sufficient import of denotation for one not to be able to say that a number is associated with each of them. Nevertheless, the subsistence of the number can only be assured from the equinumericity of objects that a concept subsumes.

The order of numbers from then on can only be given through this trick which consists in preceding exactly in the contrary direction to what Leibniz did, by taking 1 from each number, by saying that the predecessor, is the one - the concept of number, issuing from the concept – *the preceding number*, is the one that, setting aside one or

other object that acted as a support in the concept of a certain number, is the concept which, setting aside this object, finds itself identical to a number which is very precisely characterised by not being identical to the preceding one, let us say, to the nearest 1.

This is how Frege regresses to the conception of the concept *qua* empty, which does not include any object, which is that not of nothingness since it is a concept, but of the inexistent. And that it is precisely by considering what he believes to be nothingness, namely, the concept whose number would be equal to zero that he believes he can define from the formulation of the argument *x different to x*, $x \neq x$, namely, different to itself. Namely, something that is assuredly an extremely problematic denotation because, what would we reach, if it is true that the symbolic is what I say it is, namely, entirely in the (59) word, that there is no meta-language, from where can one designate, in language, an object that one can be assured is not different to itself? Nevertheless, it is on this hypothesis that Frege constitutes the notion that the concept *equal to 0*, gives a different number – in accordance with the formula that he had first given as that for the preceding number – gives a different number from what is involved in 0 defined, held, and well and truly as nothingness, namely, of that to which there is appropriate not equality to 0, but *the number 0*.

So then, it is with reference to this that the concept to which the number 0 corresponds rests on the fact that it is a matter the identical to 0, but not identical to zero. [?] That the one that is quite simply identical to 0 is held to be its successor and as such equal to 1. The thing is based, is based on the fact which is the starting point of what is called equinumericity, it is clear that equinumericity of the concept under which there falls no object in terms of inexistence is always equal to itself. Between 0 and 0, no difference. It is the *no difference* by means of which, from this angle, Frege intends to ground the 1. And this in any case, this conquest remains precious for us in so far as it gives us the 1 as being essentially – listen carefully to what I am

saying, the signifier of inexistence. Nevertheless is it sure that the 1 can be grounded on it? Assuredly the discussion could be pursued along purely Fregian paths.

Nevertheless, for your enlightenment, I thought I should reproduce something that may be said not to have any relationship with the whole number, namely, the arithmetical triangle. The arithmetical triangle is organised in the following way. It starts, as a given, from the succession of whole numbers. Each term, by being written down, is constituted with no other commentary – it is a matter of what is under the bar – by addition – you will note that I have not yet spoken ever about addition, any more than Frege – by the addition of two figures, the one that is immediately on its left and the one which is on its left and above. You will easily verify that it is a matter here of something that for example gives us, when we have a whole number of points that we will call monads, which gives us

$$\begin{array}{r}
 0\ 1\ 0\ 0\ 0\ 0\ 0\ 0 \\
 \hline
 0\ 1\ 1\ 1\ 1\ 1\ 1\ 1 \\
 0\ 1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 6
 \end{array}$$

automatically what is involved, given the number of these points, of the number of the subsets that can, in the set that includes all these points, be formed by any number whatsoever, chosen as being underneath the whole number that is involved.

Thus for example if you take here the line of the dyad

$$0\ 1\ 3\ 6\ 10\ 15$$

in meeting with a dyad, you immediately get that there will be in the dyad two monads. A dyad is not difficult to imagine, it is a stroke with two terms, a beginning and an end.

And if you question yourselves about what is involved – let us take something more amusing – in the tetrad, you will obtain a tetrad,

0 1 5 15

you will get something which is four possibilities of triads, in other words in order to image for you, four faces of the tetrahedron:

0 1 4 10 20

you subsequently get six dyads, namely, the six sides of a tetrahedron

0 1 3 6 10 15

and you get the four vertices of a monad:

0 1 2 3 4 5 1

To summarise:

0 1 2 3 4

0 1 3 6

0 1 4

0 1 5 15 tetrad



column

This to give support to something that only has to express itself in terms of subsets. It is clear that you see that in the measure that the whole number augments, the number of subsets that can be produced within it goes way beyond, and very quickly, the whole number itself:

0 1 4 10 20.

This is not what interests us. But simply that it was necessary, so that I could account by the same procedure, for the series of whole numbers that I should start from what is very precisely at the origin of what (61) Frege did, Frege who comes here to designate the fact that the number, the number of objects that are appropriate to a concept in so far as the concept of number, of the number N specifically, will be by itself what constitutes the succeeding number. In other words, if you count starting from 0, 0 1 2 3 4 5 6, that will always give what is here, namely, 7, 7 what? Seven of this something that I called inexistent, because it is the foundation of repetition.

Again it is necessary, for the rules of this triangle to be satisfied, that this 1 which is repeated here should emerge from somewhere. And since we have everywhere framed this triangle with a 0

0 1 1 1 1 1 1

there is then here a point, a point to be situated at the level of the line of 0, a point which is *one* and which articulates what? What it is necessary to distinguish in the genesis of 1, namely the distinction precisely between *no difference* between all these 0's, starting from the genesis, 010000, of what is repeated, but is repeated as inexistent.

Frege then does not account for the sequence of whole numbers, but for the possibility of repetition. Repetition is posited at first as the repetition of 1, *qua* the 1 of inexistence. Is there not – here I can only put forward the question – something which suggests that by this fact, that there is not a single 1, but the 1 that is repeated and the 1 that is posited in the sequence of whole numbers. In this gap we have to find something which is of the order of what we have questioned by positing as a necessary correlate of the question of logical necessity the foundation of inexistence?

Seminar 5: Wednesday 9 February 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

I ask you

To refuse

What I am offering you... because: it is not that

(*Je te demande/ de me refuser/ ce que je t'offre / parce que: c'est pas ça.*)

You love lectures, that is why I asked, yesterday evening, in a little note that I brought him about 10.15, I asked my friend Roman Jakobson, who I hoped would be present here, I asked him then to give you the lecture that he did not give you yesterday, because after having announced – I mean having written on the blackboard something equivalent to what I have just done here – he thought he should remain at the level of what he called generalities, thinking no (64) doubt that this is what you would prefer to hear, namely, a lecture. Unfortunately - he telephoned me early this morning – he was caught for lunch with some linguists, so that you will not have a lecture.

Because in truth I do not give them. As I said elsewhere very seriously, I amuse myself. Serious or funny amusements. Elsewhere, namely at Sainte-Anne, I tried some funny amusements. No need to talk about it. And if I said – I said over there – that it is also an amusement, here I say that I stick to the serious, but it is all the same an amusement. I put that in relationship moreover, instead of funny amusement, with what I called *la lettre d'a-mur*.

Well then here is one, it is typical. *I am asking you to refuse me what I am offering you* – here a pause because I hope that there will be no need to add anything for that to be understood, that is very precisely the *lettre d'a-mur*, the true one, - *to refuse what I am offering you* – one can complete it for those who by chance have never understood what is a *lettre d-amur* – *to refuse what I am offering you because it is not that (parce que ça n'est pas ça)*.

You see I slipped up, I slipped up because good God it is to you that I am talking, you who love lectures, *ça n'est pas ça*. There is an *n* added on. When the *n* is added on there is no need for it to be an expletive for it to mean something, namely, the presence of the enunciator, the

true one, the correct one. It is precisely because the enunciator is not supposed to be there that the statement would be full and that it ought to be written *parce que*, colon, *c'est pas ça*.

I said that here the amusement was serious, what can that mean? In truth I looked, I informed myself about how *serious* was said in different languages. For the way in which I conceive of it, I found none better than our own which lends itself to wordplay. I do not know the others well enough to have found what, in the others, would be the equivalent, but in ours, *sérieux*, as I hear it, is *sériel* (serial). As you already know I hope, a certain number of you, without me having to tell you, the serial principal, is this sequence of whole numbers that people have found no other way to define than by saying that a property is transferred there from n to $n+1$ which can only be the one that is transferred from 0 to 1, reasoning by recurrence or mathematical induction, other people have said. Only there you are, this indeed is (65) the problem that I am trying to approach in my last amusements. What indeed can be transferred from 0 to 1? There's the rub! It is nevertheless what I have given myself as an aim to circumscribe this year...or worse. I will not advance today into this interval which to begin with is bottomless, of what is transferred from 0 to 1. But what is sure and what is clear, is that by taking things 1 by 1, you must have a sound heart. Because whatever effort has been made to make logical the succession, the series of whole numbers, nothing better has been found than to designate the common property in it, it is the only one, as being that of what is transferred from 0 to 1.

In the meantime, you have been, those of my School, advised not to miss out on the light that Roman Jakobson could bring you about what is involved in the analysis of the tongue, which is in truth very useful in order to know where I am now bringing the question. It is not because I started from it, in order to get to my present amusements, that I should see myself as bound to it. And what assuredly struck me among other things, in what Roman Jakobson brought you, is

something concerning this point of history that it is not just today that the tongue, *lalangue*, is on the agenda. He spoke to you among others, about a certain Boetius Daccus, very important, he underlined, because he articulated *suppositiones*. I think that at least for some people, that will have echoed what I have been saying for a long time about what is involved in the subject, in the subject radically, what the signifier supposes. Then he told you that it happened that from a particular time on this Boetius, this Boetius who is not the one that you know, that one extracted images from the past. He is called Daccus, namely a Dane, he is not the right one, he is not the fellow in the dictionary, he told you that he disappeared like that because of a little question of deviationism. In fact he was accused of Averroism, and, at that time, one cannot say that this could not be forgiven, but this might not be forgiven when people had their attention drawn by something which had a rather solid appearance, as for example speaking about *suppositiones*. So that it is not quite correct to say that the two things are unrelated and that is what strikes me. What strikes me is that for centuries, when you touched on *lalangue* you had to be careful. There is a letter which only appears altogether in the margin of phonetic composition, is that not so, that is pronounced *hache*, in French, *H*. Do not touch the *H*, this was considered prudent for centuries when people touched on the tongue. Because it happened that throughout the (66) centuries, when people touched the tongue, this created in the public an effect that was different to amusement.

One of the questions that it would be no harm for us to look at, like that, right at the end, even though here where I am amusing myself in a funny fashion, I gave an indication of it in the shape of this famous wall (*mur*), it would perhaps be no harm for us to glimpse why, now, linguistic analysis forms part of scientific research. What can that mean? The definition – I am letting myself go a little – the definition of scientific research, is very exactly the following – you do not have to search too far. It is a research that is well named in that it is not to

find that there is a question, in any case nothing that upsets precisely what I was talking about earlier, namely, the public.

I received recently from a distant country – I do not want to make trouble for anyone, so then I will not tell you from where – a question about scientific research, it was a “Committee of scientific research on arms”. Textually! Someone who is not unknown to me – that indeed is why I was consulted about him – was putting himself forward to do some research on fear. What was involved in that, was to give him an advance which, translated into French francs, ought to be slightly more than a million old francs, thanks to which he would spend – it was written in the text, the text itself, I cannot give it to you, but I have it – it was a matter of him spending three days in Paris, twenty eight in Antibes, nineteen in Douarnenez, at San Montano which, I think – Antonella, are you there? San Montano there ought to be a rather pleasant beach there unless I’m mistaken? No, you don’t know? I think it’s close to Florence, anyway I don’t know – at San Montano 15 days, and afterwards three days in Paris.

Thanks to one of my pupils I was able to summarise my judgement in these terms *I bowled over with admiration* [in English]. Then I put a big cross on all the detail of the judgements that were demanded of me on the scientific quality of the programme, its practical and social resonances, the competence of the person involved and all the rest of it. This story has only a moderate interest, but it is a commentary on what I was pointing out, it does not get to the foundation of scientific research. But there is something all the same that it denotes, and this is perhaps the only interesting thing in the business, which is that I had first of all proposed, like that, on the telephone, to the person who (67) thank God, corrected me *I bowled over*. Naturally, you do not know what that means. I did not know either. Bowl, b.o.w.l., is a *boule*. So then I am bowled. I am like a whole set of nine-pins when a good bowl knocks them over. You can believe me if you like, what I proposed on the telephone, I who did not know the expression *I bowled*

over was *I'm blown over*. I am winded. But it is naturally completely wrong, because *blow* which means in effect *souffler*, this is what I had found, *blow*, this gives *blown*, it does not give *blowed*. So then if I said *blowed*, is it because without knowing it I knew that it was *bowled over*?

Here we are getting into paraprases, namely, into serious things. But at the same time, it is designed to indicate to us that, as Plato had already glimpsed in *Cratylus*, that the signifier is arbitrary. It is not as certain as all that, because after all, *bowl* and *blow*, huh, it is not for nothing that they are so close, because it is precisely like that that I missed the *bowl* by a hair's breath. I do not know how you would describe this amusement, but I find it serious. As a result, we come back to linguistic analysis, about which certainly, in the name of research, you will hear spoken about more and more. It is difficult to find one's way there where the split is worth the trouble.

You learn things; for example that there are parts of discourse. I avoided them like the plague, I mean burdening myself with them, in order not to get you stuck in them. But anyway, since certainly research is going to make itself heard – since it makes itself heard elsewhere – I am going to start from the verb. You are told that the verb expresses all sorts of things and it is difficult not to get bogged down between action and its contrary. There is the intransitive verb which obviously here creates an obstacle, the intransitive becomes then very difficult to classify. To stick to what is most emphasised in this definition, people will talk to you about a binary relationship in the typical verb where, it must be said, the same sense of the verb is not classified in the same way in every tongue. There are tongues in which they say *the man beats his dog*. There are tongues where they say *there is a beating of the dog by the man*. This is not essential; the relation is always binary. There are tongues where one says *the man loves his dog*. Is it always as binary when in this tongue – because here there are differences – it is expressed in the following way: *the*

man has love for his dog (l'homme aime au chien), to say not that he (68) *likes* it, that he loves it like a trinket, but that he has real love for his dog? *Aimer à quelqu'un* has always delighted me. I mean that I regret speaking a tongue in which one says *I love a woman*, as one says *I beat her*. *Aimer à une femme* would seem more appropriate to me. This even gets to the stage, I noticed, because we are still talking about parapraxes, let us continue – I wrote *tu ne sauras jamais combien je t'ai aimé* (you will never know how much I loved you) I did not put an *e* at the end, which is a slip, a spelling mistake if you like, undoubtedly. But it was by reflecting on it precisely that I said to myself that if I wrote it like that, it is because I must have sensed *j'aime à toi*. Anyway, it's personal.

In any case, one distinguishes with care from these first verbs those that are defined by a ternary relation *I give you something*. That can go from a rap on the nose to a trinket, but anyway there are three terms here. You will have noted that I have always used the *je te* (I you) as an element of the relation. This already draws you in the direction which indeed is the one that I want to lead you in, since there, as you see, there is something of the *I ask you to refuse me what I am offering you*. This is not self-evident, because one can say that *the man gives the dog a little caress on his forehead*. This distinction between the ternary relation and the binary relation is altogether essential. It is essential in that when the function of the word has been schematised for you, people talk to you about small d and capital D, from the addresser to the addressee (*du destinateur et du destinataire*). To which there is added the relation that, in the present schema, you identify to the message and certainly it is underlined that the addressee must possess the code for that to work. If he does not have it, he will have to master it, he will have to decipher it.

Is this way of writing satisfactory? I claim, I claim that the relation, if there is one – but you know that this can be put in question – if there is one that passes through speech, implies that there should be inscribed a

ternary function, in other words that the message should be distinguished here

(69) and that it nevertheless remains that, there being there an addresser, an addressee and a message, what is stated in a verb is distinct, namely that the fact that what is stated in a verb is distinct. Namely, that the fact that what is at stake is a demand, *d [sic]* here deserves to be isolated. To group the three elements, it is precisely in this way that it is obvious, and obvious only when I use *I and you*, when I use *you and me*. The fact is that this *I* and this *you*, this *you* and this *me* are precisely specified from the statement of the word. Here there can be no kind of ambiguity.

In other words, there is not only what is vaguely called the code, as if it were only there at one point; grammar forms part of the code, namely, this tetrahedric structure that I have just marked as being essential to what is said. When you trace out your objective schema of communication, the emitter, the message and at the other end the addressee, this objective schema is less complete than grammar, which forms part of the code. This indeed is why it was important that Jakobson put forward for you this generality that grammar, also, forms part of the meaning and that it is not for nothing that it is used in poetry.

This is essential, I mean to specify the status of the verb, because soon you will be saddled with substantives according to whether they have more or less weight. There are what I might call heavy substantives that are called concrete. As if there were other things besides substitutes that are substantive. But anyway, substance is necessary, while what I think it is urgent to mark first of all, is that all we are dealing with are subjects. But let us leave things there for the moment.

A critique that curiously only comes to us in a reflected way, from the attempt to logicise mathematics, is formulated in the fact, in the fact where you will recognise the import of what I am putting forward. It is that, by taking the proposition as a propositional function, we will have to mark the function of the verb and not what one makes of it, namely, a function of the predicate. The function of the verb, let us take here the verb *demander, je te demande* (to ask, I ask you) F, I open the brackets, x, y is I and you: F (x, y) what do I ask you? To refuse, another verb. Which means that instead of what may be here this little caress of the dog's head, namely z, you have for example f and again x, y, F (x, y, f (x, y)). And are you forced to end here, namely, to put here z? This is no way necessary because you can very well have, for example I put a , let us not put because later that will cause (70) confusion. I put here a small , and again x, y, what I offer you, as a result of which, we have to close three brackets:

$$F(x, y, f (x, y, (x, y))).$$

What I am leading you to is the following. Not to know, as you are going to see, how meaning arises, but how it is from a knot of meaning that the object arises, the object itself and to name it, since I named it as I could, the *little o-object*.

I know that reading Wittgenstein is very captivating. Wittgenstein, throughout his whole life, with admirable asceticism, stated something that I concentrate as what one cannot say, well then, let us not talk about it. As a result he could say almost nothing. At every instant, he got down from the footpath and he was in the stream, so that he got up again on the footpath, the footpath defined by this requirement. It is assuredly not because in short my friend Kojève had explicitly formulated the same rule – God knows he did not observe it – but it is not because he formulated it that I believe myself obliged to remain at

the demonstration, the living demonstration that Wittgenstein gave of it.

It is very precisely, it seems to me, what one cannot speak about that is at stake when I designate by *it is not that* which just by itself justifies a demand such as *to refuse what I am offering you*. And nevertheless there is something that may be tangible to everybody, it is indeed this *it's not that*. We are confronted with it at every instant of our existence. But let us try then to see what it means. Because this *it's not that*, we could leave it at its place, at its dominant place, as a result of which obviously we would never see the end of it.

But instead of cutting it, let us try to put it in the statement itself. It is not that – what? Let us put it in the simplest way, here the *I*, here the *you*, here, *I ask you*, *D*, *to refuse me*, capital *R*, *what I am offering you*, capital *O* and then there is the loss, capital *C*.

(71) But if it is not what I am offering you, if it is because *it is not that* that I ask you to refuse it, it is not what I am offering you that you refuse, so then I have no need to ask you for it. And you see that here also that is cut up – into *R*,

as a result of which, if I do not need to ask you to refuse it, why do I ask you? It is cut also here – in *D*, as a result of which, to take it up in a more correct schema, where the *I* and the *you* are here, the *demand*,

here, the *refuse*, here, and the *offer* here, namely, a first tetrad which is the following: *I ask you to refuse*; a second: *to refuse what I am offering you*. Perhaps what will not surprise us, we can see in the distance that there is between the two distinct poles of the demand and the offer that it is perhaps there that there lies the *it's not that*.

(72) But, as I have just explained to you, if we have to say here that this space that there is, that there may be between what I have to ask you and what I can offer you, from that moment on, it is also impossible to sustain the relation of the demand to refuse, and of the to refuse to the offer.

Do I need to give a detailed commentary on it? It might not be any harm all the same. For this reason first of all, that you might be asking yourselves how it happens that, after all, I am giving you a spatial schema for all of that. It is not space that is at stake. It is space in so far as we project into it our objective schemas. But that already indicates to us enough about it. Namely, that our objective schemas determine perhaps something about our notion of space, I would say again, before it is determined by our perceptions. I know we are inclined to believe that it is our perceptions that give us the three dimensions. There was someone called Poincaré who is not unknown to you, who made a very nice attempt to prove it. Nevertheless this reminder of what is preliminary to our objective schemas will perhaps be no harm to appreciate more exactly the import of his proof.

What I want, what I want rather to insist on, is not simply this rebounding of *this is not what I am offering you* to *this is not what you can refuse*, nor even to the *this is not what I am asking you*. It is the following, it is that what is not that, that is perhaps not at all what I am offering you and that we take things wrongly by starting from there, it is *that I offer it to you*, because what does it mean that I am offering it to you? It does not mean at all that I give, as you can see by reflecting on it. That does not mean either that you take, which would give a meaning to *refuse*. When I offer something it is in the hope that you will give it back to me. And that indeed is why the *potlatch* exists. The *potlatch*, is what swamps, it is what goes beyond what is impossible in the offering, the impossible in the fact that it is a gift. (73) This indeed is the reason why the *potlatch*, in our discourse, has become completely foreign to us. Which does not make it surprising that in our nostalgia we make of it what supports the impossible, namely, the Real. But precisely, the Real as impossible.

If it is no longer in the *that which* of what I offer you that there resides the *it's not that*, let us observe then what follows from the putting into question of offering as such. If it is, not what I offer you, but *that I offer you* that I ask you to refuse, let us remove the offer – this famous verbal substantive which is supposed to be a lesser substantive, it is nevertheless something quite different. Let us remove the offer and we see that the demand and the refusal lose all meaning, because, what indeed could it mean to ask to refuse?

A small little exercise will be enough for you to notice that it is strictly the same if you take out from this knot *I ask you to refuse what I am offering you*, any of the other verbs. Because if you take out the refusal, what indeed could be meant by the offer of a demand and, as I told you, it is of the nature of the offer that if you remove the demand, to refuse no longer means anything. This indeed is why the question that is posed for us is not to know what is involved in the *it's not that* which would be in operation at each one of these verbal levels, but to

see that it is by unknotting each of these verbs from its knot with the two others that we can find what is involved in this effect of meaning in so far as I call it the *little o-object*.

A strange thing, while I was questioning myself last evening about the way in which I would present that to you today with my geometry of the tetrad, it happened, while dining with a charming person who is following Monsieur Guilbaud's classes that, like a ring on a finger, I was given something that I am now going to, that I am going to show you, something which is nothing less, it appears, I learnt last evening, than the coat of arms of the Borromeans.

It needs a little care, and that is why I am taking it. And there you are! You can redo it, you did not bring any string? You can redo it with pieces of string. If you copy that very carefully, I did not make a mistake, you will notice the following, which is that – pay careful attention – this one, there, the third one there, you no longer see it, you (74) can make an effort like that, it is accessible, you no longer see it. You can note that the two others, as you see, this one passes over the one on the left and it also passes over here. So then they are separated. Only because of the third they hold together. You can make an attempt at that, if you do not have the imagination you have to make the attempt with three pieces of string. You will see that they hold together. But there is nothing to be done, huh? It is enough then for you to cut one of them, for the two others, even though they seem to be knotted together exactly like in the case of what you know well, namely, the rings of the Olympic Games, is that not so, and which for their part continue to hold together when one of them has gone. Well as regards this, it's finished! It is something that all the same is interesting, because you must remember that when I spoke about a signifying chain, I always implied this concatenation.

What is very curious – this is also going to allow us to return to the binary verb – is that the binaries, which does not seem to have been

noticed, have a special status that is very very much in relationship with the *little o-object*. If instead of taking the man and the dog, these two poor animals, as example, I had taken the I and the you, we would have noticed that the most typical of binary verbs, is for example *je t'emmerde* (you piss me off) or indeed the *I look at you*, or again *I talk to you* or again *I eat you*. It is the four species, like that, the four species which are only interesting because of their grammatical analogy, namely, being grammatically equivalent.

So then, do we not have here, reduced, in miniature, this something which allows us to illustrate this fundamental truth that every discourse only takes on its sense from another discourse? Assuredly the demand is not enough to constitute a discourse but it has its fundamental structure which is to be, as I have expressed myself, a quadripode. I (75) underlined that a tetrad is essential to represent it, just as a quaternion of letters f, x, y, z, is indispensable.

But demand, refusal and offer, it is clear that in this knot that I put forward before you today, only take on their sense each from the other, but that what results from this knot as I tried to unknot it for you, or rather, to take on the test of its unknotting, to tell you, to show you that it never holds holds up in twos by itself, that this is the foundation, the root, of what is involved in the *little o-object*.

What does that mean? It is that I have given you its minimum knot. But you can add on others. *Because it is not that*, what? That I desire. And who does not know that what is proper to demand, is very precisely not to be able to situate what is involved in the object of desire? With this desire, what I am offering you which is not what you desire [we could easily put a stopper on the thing with what you desire] that I am asking you. And the letter *d'a-mur* will thus extend indefinitely. But who does not see the fundamental character, for analytic discourse, of such a concatenation?

I formerly said, a long time ago, and there are people who still cherished it, that an analysis only ends when someone can say not *I am talking to you*, nor *I am talking about me*, but *I am talking about me to you*, it was a first sketch. Is it not clear that what grounds the discourse of the analysand, is precisely that, *I am asking you to refuse me what I am offering you, because it is not that?* That is the fundamental demand, and it is the one that by neglecting it, the analyst always makes more pregnant.

I made ironical remarks at one time, with the offer, he creates the demand. But the demand that he satisfies, is the recognition of something fundamental: that what is demanded, *is not that*.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 8 March 1972

The way things stand, since my aim this year is to talk to you about the *One*, I will begin today by stating what is involved in the Other. This Other, with a capital O, in connection with which I picked up, some time ago, the distinct unease of a Marxist, to whom I owed the place

from which I was able to take up my work again, an unease which was the following; that this Other, was the third, and that by putting it forward in the relationship of the couple, he, the Marxist, for his part, could only identify it to God. Did this unease subsequently go as far as to inspire in him an irreducible distrust with respect to the trace that I may have left? This is a question that I will leave to one side for today, because I will begin with the quite simple unveiling of what is involved in this Other that I write in effect with a capital O. The Other that is at stake, the Other is that of the sexual couple, that very thing. And it is indeed for that reason that it is going to be necessary for us to produce a signifier that can only be written by the fact that it bars this capital O. *You* – it is not easy – *you* – I am underlining it without pausing on it because I would not take a step – *you only enjoy from the Other (on ne jouit que de l'Autre)*.

(78) It is more difficult to put forward because, which seems to be required, because what characterises enjoyment, after what I have just said, would slip away. Would I put forward that you are only enjoyed by the Other? This indeed is the abyss that in effect the question of the existence of God offers us, precisely the one that I leave on the horizon as ineffable. Because what is important, is not the relationship with what enjoys what we might believe to be our being, the important thing when I say that you only enjoy from the Other, is the following, is that *you do not enjoy it sexually* – there is no sexual relationship – nor are you enjoyed. You see that *lalangue*, that I write as a single word, *lalangue* which is nevertheless a good girl, resists here. She gives a pout (*elle fait la grosse joue*). You enjoy, it has to be said, the Other, you enjoy it *mentally*. There is a remark in this *Parmenides*, anyway, which... here takes its value as a model. That is why I recommend you to go and clean yourself up a little in it. Naturally, if you read it through the commentaries that are given in the University, you will situate it in the line of descent of philosophers. You will see there that it is considered to be a particularly brilliant exercise. But, after this little salutation, you will be told that not much can be made of it, that

Plato had simply pushed there to its final degree of sharpness something that you will be able to deduce from his theory of forms. You should perhaps read it differently; it should be read with innocence. Notice that from time to time something may touch you, even if it is only for example this remark, when he tackles, like that, altogether in passing, at the beginning of the seventh hypothesis which starts from *if the One is not*, altogether in the margin, and he says, *and if we were to say that the Not-One is not?* And then he sets about showing that the negation of anything whatsoever, not simply of the *One*, of the not-big, of the not-small, this negation as such is distinguished by not denying the same term.

It is indeed as regards what is at stake, the negation of sexual enjoyment, that I would ask you to pause on for a moment. That I write this capital S brackets of O barred, $S(\bar{O})$, and which is the same thing as what I have just formulated, that you enjoy the Other mentally, this writes something about the Other and, as I have put it forward, as a term of the relation which, by fading away by not existing, becomes the locus where it is written, where it is written as these four formulae here are written, to transmit a knowledge.

(79) Because, I think I already sufficiently alluded to it, knowledge, in this business, this knowledge may be taught, but what is transmitted, is the formula. It is precisely because one of the terms becomes the locus in which the relation is inscribed that it can no longer be relation because the term changes its function. It becomes the locus where it is written and the relation is only by being written precisely at the place of this term. One of the terms of the relation must be emptied out in order to allow this relation to be written down.

This indeed is why this *mentally* that I put forward earlier, between the quotation marks that the word cannot state, this is what radically removes from this *mentally* any notion of idealism. This incontestable idealism as we see it being developed from the pen of Berkeley, remarks that, I hope, you know, which are all based on the fact that anything that is thought is only thought by someone. This indeed is the argument or more exactly the irreducible argumentation and which would have more bite if it was a matter, if he admitted what was at stake, namely, enjoyment. You only enjoy your phantasies. This is something that gives an import to idealism that no one, moreover, even though it is incontestable, takes seriously. The important thing is that your phantasies enjoy you and this is where I can come back to what I was saying earlier. The fact is, as you see, even *lalangue* which is a good girl does not allow this word to emerge easily.

That idealism puts forward that there is nothing at stake but thoughts, to get out of it, *lalangue* which is a good girl, but not such a good girl as all that, can perhaps offer you something that I will not all the same need to write to ask you to harmonise what otherwise...anyway if I am to make you understand it, *q.u.e.u.e, queue de pensées*. This is what the good daughterhood of *lalangue* in French allows. It is in this tongue that I express myself, I do not see why I should not take advantage of it. If I were speaking a different one, I would find something else. There is nothing at stake here *queue* thoughts, not, as the idealist says, in so far as one thinks them, nor even simply that one thinks them therefore I am, which is nevertheless a progress, but that (80) they are really thought. That is why I classify myself - in so far as that has the slightest interest, because I do not see why I should classify myself - why I will classify myself philosophically, I through whom there emerges a discourse which is not philosophical discourse, specifically the psychoanalytic discourse, the one whose schema, I reproduced on the right, that I describe as discourse by reason of something that I underlined, which is that nothing takes on meaning except from the relationships of one discourse to another discourse.

This presupposes of course this exercise which I cannot say or even hope that you are really accustomed to. All of this passes over you of course like water off a duck's back, since – and moreover that is what constitutes your existence, you are solidly inserted in the discourses that preceded you, that are there for some time, a long time, including the philosophical discourse, in so far as the university discourse transmits it to you, namely, in what a state! You are solidly installed in it and that is what you are grounded on.

Those who occupy the place of this Other, of this Other that I am bringing to light, should not believe that they have any more advantage over you, they have been handed some furniture that is not easy to handle. In this furniture, there is an armchair whose nature has not yet been fully mapped out. The armchair is nevertheless essential because what is proper to this discourse, is to allow this something which is written there on the top right, in the form of \$, and which is, like every writing, a delightful shape – that the S is what Hogarth proposes as the tracing out of beauty, is not completely by chance, this must have a meaning somewhere, and then the fact that it is necessary to bar it, surely has one also. But in any case, what is produced starting from this barred subject, is something that it is curious to see I write in the same way as what in the discourse of the Master has another place, the dominant place. This S₁, is precisely what I am trying, in so far as I am speaking here, is what I am trying to produce for you. As a result, I already said it on several occasions, I am at the place, the same one, and this is what is educative about it, I am at the place of the analysand.

What is written, is it thought? That is the question. One may no longer be able to say by whom it is thought. And this is even what you have to deal with in everything that is written. The queue of thoughts (81) that I spoke about, is the subject himself, the subject *qua* hypothetical for these thoughts. This hypothetical, it has been drummed into you so much since Aristotle, of the *hupokeimenon*,

which was nevertheless quite clear. It has been made into such a thing has it not, that a cat would not find her kittens in it. I am going to call it the train (*traîne*), the train, precisely, of this queue of thoughts, of this something real which gives this impression of a comet that I called the queue of thoughts and which may well be the phallus.

What happens there is not capable of being mastered by what I have just called the train. It is only conceivable because the effect that it is, comes from the same source as its advent, namely, the disarray, if you will allow me to call it that, the disjunction of the sexual relationship. If what happens there is not capable of being mastered *nachträglich*, if what has been thought is open, within the range of means of rethinking, which consists precisely in noticing, in writing it, that it was thoughts – because writing whatever one says about it, comes after these thoughts, these real thoughts have been produced, it is in this effort of rethinking, this *nachträglich* that there lies the repetition which is the foundation of what analytic experience uncovers. That it should be written, is the proof, but only the proof of the effect of taking it up again, *nachträglich*, is what grounds psychoanalysis. How often in philosophical dialogues do you see the argument, ‘anyway, if you do not follow me that far, there is no philosophy’. What I am going to tell you, is exactly the same thing. It is either one thing or the other. Either what is still commonly accepted, in everything that is written about psychoanalysis, in everything that flows from the pen of psychoanalysts, namely, that if what thinks is not thinkable, and then there is no psychoanalysis. In order for there to be psychoanalysis, and in a word interpretation, it is necessary that what starts from the queue of thoughts has been thought, thought *qua* real thought.

It is indeed for that reason that I gave you these long winded speeches about Descartes. The *I think therefore I am* means nothing if it is not true. It is true because *therefore I am*, is what I think before knowing it and whether *I* want it or not, it is the same thing. The same thing, it is precisely what I called *The Freudian thing*. It is precisely because it

is the same thing, this *I think*, and what I think, namely, *therefore I am*, it is precisely because it is the same thing that it is not equivalent.

(82) Because that was why I spoke about the Freudian thing, it is because in the thing, there are two faces and you can write that as you wish, *face* or *fasse* – two faces are not simply not equivalent, namely, replacable by one another in the statement. It is not equivalent, it is all the same similar. That is why I only spoke about the Freudian thing in a certain way.

What I wrote, can be read. It is even curious that this is one of the things that forces it to be re-read. It is even designed for that. And when you re-read it, you notice that I am not talking about the Thing, because you cannot talk about it, talk *about it*. I make it speak itself. The Thing in question states: *Me, the truth, I speak*. And it does not say it, of course, like that, but that should be seen. That is even why I wrote it, it says it in all sorts of ways and I would dare say that it is not too bad a piece, *I can only be grasped when I play at being mysterious*. What is written about it, about the Thing, must be considered as what is written about her as coming from her, not from the one who writes. This indeed is what ensures that ontology, in other words the consideration of the subject as being, ontology is a shame (*honte*) if you will allow me to say so.

So then you have clearly understood, you have to know what you are talking about. Either the *therefore I am* is only a thought, to prove that it is the unthinkable that thinks, or it is the fact of saying it that can act on the Thing, sufficiently for it to behave otherwise. And it is because of that that every thinking is thought, from its relationships to what is written about it. Otherwise, I repeat, no psychoanalysis. We are not dealing with the *i.n.a.n.* which is currently so widespread, the unanalysable (*inan-analysable*). It is not enough to say that it is impossible, because that does not rule out it being practised. For it to be practised without being u.n.a.n., it is not the qualification of impossible that is important, it is its relationship to the impossible that

is in question, and the relationship to the impossible is a relationship of thinking. This relationship could not have any sense if the impossibility demonstrated is not strictly an impossibility of thinking because it is the only demonstrable one.

If we ground the impossible in this relationship to the Real, there remains to be said the following which I give you as a present. I heard it from a charming woman, long ago in my past, who has remained nevertheless marked with a charming odour of soap, with the Vaudois accent that she knew how to use, in order, even though she had been purified of it, she knew how to take it up again, *nothing is impossible to man* she used to say - I can't imitate the Vaudois accent, I was not (83) born there - *what he can't do, he leaves*. This to centre you on what is involved in the impossible in so far as this term, anyway, is acceptable for anybody sensible.

Well then! The cancellation of the Other is only produced at this level in which there is inscribed in the only possible way, namely, as I inscribe it, \bar{x} , with the bar above it. Which means that one cannot write that what creates an obstacle to the phallic function is not true. So then what is meant by \bar{x} ? Namely, that *there exists an x* such that it could be inscribed in this negation of the truth of the phallic function?

This is what would merit us articulating it according to its phases and you see clearly that what we are going to put into question is very precisely this status of existence in so far as it is not clear. I think that for long enough you have had your ears, and your noodle battered by the distinction between essence and existence, so as not to be satisfied with it. That there is here, in what the analytic discourse allows us to contribute in terms of meaning to earlier discourses, something that I could in the final analysis, from the collection of these formulae, pinpoint only by the term of a motivation which by being unnoticed is what generated for example Hegelian dialectic which, by reason of

what was unnoticed, cannot avoid, as I might say, considering that discourse as such dominates the world. Yes! Here I encounter a little note on the side. I do not see why I would not take up this digression, all the more so that you would like nothing better. You would like nothing better because if I go straight to it, you find it tiring. What leaves a shadow of meaning in Hegel's discourse, is an absence, and very precisely this absence of surplus value as it is drawn from the enjoyment in the real of the discourse of the Master. But this absence all the same notes something. It notes really the Other not as abolished, but precisely as impossibility of correlative and it is by making present this impossibility that it colours the discourse of Hegel. Because you would lose nothing in re-reading, I don't know, simply the preface of the *Phenomenology of the spirit* in correlation with what I am putting forward here. You can see all the holiday homework that I am giving you, *Parmenides* and the *Phenomenology*, at least the preface, because naturally you are never going to read the *Phenomenology*. But the preface is bloody well done. Just by itself it is worth the work of re-reading it and you will see that it...you will see (84) that it confirms, that it takes on meaning from what I am saying to you. I do not yet dare to promise you that *Parmenides* will do as much, take on a meaning, but I hope so, because what is proper to a new discourse is to renew what is lost in the dizziness of old discourses, precisely the meaning.

If I told you that there is something that colours this discourse of Hegel, it is because here, the word colour means something different to *sense*. The promotion of what I am putting forward, precisely, discolours it, completes the effect of Marx's discourse, in which there is something that I would like to underline and that constitutes its limit. The fact is that it includes a protest in which we find that it consolidates the discourse of the Master by completing it, and not simply with surplus value, by encouraging – I sense that this is going to provoke some disturbance – by encouraging the woman to exist as an equal. Equal to what? No one knows, because one can also very

well say that man is equal to zero because he needs the existence of something that denies him in order for him to exist as *all!* In other words, the sort of confusion which is not unusual, we live in confusion and one would be wrong to believe that we live from it, because that is not obvious, I do not see why a lack of confusion would stop people living. It is even very curious that people precipitate themselves into it, make no mistake, people rush into it. When a discourse, like analytic discourse emerges, what it proposes to you is to be sturdy enough to sustain the conspiracy of the truth. Everyone knows that conspiracies can suddenly change direction. It is easier to talk so much blather that one ends up by clearly picking out all the conspirators. People confuse, people precipitate themselves into the negation of sexual division, of difference, if you wish. If I say division, it is because it is operational. If I say difference, it is because it is precisely what claims to efface this use of the *equals* sign, woman equals man. What is extraordinary, is it not, what is extraordinary I am going to tell you, is that not all this feckology, and this is extraordinary, it is the obstacle that they claim, with this grotesque word, *to transgress*. I taught things that did not claim to transgress anything but to circumscribe a certain number of nodal points, points of the impossible. As a result, there are of course people who were upset by that, because they were the representatives, the well established of the psychoanalytic discourse in practice, is that not so, who gave me, like that one of these blows that weakens your voice.

(85) It happened to me, by, by a charming chap, physically, like that, he did that to me one day, he was an angel, it took him a lot of courage! He did it to me *despite* the fact that I was at the same time threatened by a thing in which I did not especially believe, anyway I acted as if, a revolver. But the people who silenced me at a certain moment, did it *despite* the fact that...they did it *because I was* threatened by a gun, this time a real one, not a toy like the other. That consisted in subjecting me to an investigation, namely, to the *standard* precisely of people who...who wanted to understand nothing about the

analytic discourse even though they occupied established positions in it. So then what could I do? From the moment that I was subjected to this investigation, I was condemned in advance, was I not, which naturally made it much easier to silence me, ha!

Because a voice exists. It lasted like that for several years. I must say that I had so little voice, I have all the same a voice from which was born the *Cahiers pour la psychanalyse*, very, very, very good literature, I highly recommend it to you, because I was so entirely occupied with my voice that for my part, these the *Cahiers pour la psychanalyse*, to tell you everything, I can't do everything, I can't read *Parmenides*, re-read the *Phenomenology* and other things and then also the the *Cahiers pour la psychanalyse*. I had to pull myself together! I have them now, I have read them, from one end to the other, they are fantastic! They are fantastic but it is marginal because it was not done by psychoanalysts. Throughout that time psychoanalysts were chattering, there was never so much talk about transgression around me as during the time that I had there... Anyway! There you are!

Yeah! Because imagine when what is at stake is the veritable impossible, the impossible that shows itself, the impossible as it is articulated - and for that of course some time is necessary. Between the first scriblings that allowed the birth of a logic by means of the questioning of the tongue, then the fact that people noticed that these scriblings encountered something that existed, but not in the way that people thought up to then, in the way of being. Namely, in the way that each one of you believes, believes himself to be, on the pretext that you are individuals. It was noticed that there were things that existed in the sense that they constituted the limit of what could hold (86) up from the advance of the articulation of discourse. That is what the real is. Its approach, its approach along the path of what I call the symbolic which means the ways of what is stated by this field, this field, which exists, of language, this impossible in so far as it shows itself, does not transgress itself. There are things that have for a long

time mapped it out. A mythical mapping out perhaps, but a very good mapping out. Not simply of what is involved in this impossible but its motivation. Very precisely, namely, that the sexual relationship is not written.

Along this line nothing was better constructed than, I will not say religion because, as I will tell you, I will explain it to you *per longum et latum*, you do not do ethnology when you are a psychoanalyst. And swamping religion in a general term, is the very thing that ethnology does. I cannot say either that there is only one of them, but there is the one in which we are steeped, the Christian religion. Well then! Believe me Christian religion manages your transgressions bloody well. There is even nothing that it wants more. This is what consolidates it. The more transgressions there are the more satisfied it is.

And this indeed is what is in question, it is a matter of demonstrating where is the truth of what makes a certain number of discourses that encumber you hold up. I will end today – I hope that I have not damaged my ring – I will end today on the same point at which I began. I started from the Other, I did not get out of it because time is passing and then after all you must not believe that at the moment when the session finishes that I for my part do not also have enough.

I will link up then what I said, a local feature, about the Other. Let us leave to one side what may be involved about what I have to put forward to you about what is the pivotal point, the point that I am aiming at this year, namely, the *One*. It is not for nothing that I did not tackle it today. Because you will see, huh, there is nothing as slippery as this *One*. It is very curious, people make things that have faces in order that they should be, not at all innumerable, but singularly divergent, you will see, this indeed is the *One*.

The Other, it is not for nothing that I must first take my support on it. The Other, understand it properly, is then a between (*un Entre*) the between that is supposed to be at stake in the sexual relationship, but displaced and precisely by positing itself elsewhere (*s'Autreposer*). By posing oneself Otherwise, it is curious that in positing this Other what I put forward today concerns nothing but the woman. And it is indeed she who gives us an illustration within our reach of this figure of the Other, by being as a poet has written, *between centre and absence*. Between the sense that she takes on in what I called this *at least one* where she only finds it in the state of what I announced for you, announced no more, by being only pure existence, *between centre and absence*.

Which becomes what for her? Precisely this second bar that I was only able to write by defining it as not all (*pas toute*). She who is not contained in the phallic function without nevertheless being its negation. Her mode of presence is between centre and absence, between the phallic function in which she participates, singularly, by the fact that the *at least one* who is her partner, in love, renounces it for her. Which allows her, for her part, to leave that through which she does not participate in it, in the absence which is no less enjoyment by being *jouis-absence*. And I think that no one will say that what I am stating about the phallic function arises from a failure to recognise what is involved in feminine enjoyment. It is on the contrary from the fact that the *jouisse-presence*, if I can express myself in this way, of the woman, in this part which does not make her completely open to the phallic function, it is from the fact that this *jouisse-presence*, the *at least one* is forced to inhabit it, in a radical misinterpretation about what his existence requires. It is by reason of this misinterpretation which means that he can no longer even exist, that the exception of her very existence is excluded, while this status of the Other, constructed from not being universal, vanishes and that the man's failure to recognise is required by it. Which is the definition of the hysteric.

It is on this that I will leave you today. I put in a full stop and I will give you a rendezvous in a week's time.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 15 March 1972

The last time I told you something that was centred around the Other, which is more manageable than what I am going to talk about today, which I have already characterised for you as what one could call the relationship, the relationship to the Other, very precisely in that it cannot be inscribed, which does not make things any easier.

What is at stake is the *One*. The *One* in so far as I already indicated to you, also indicating to you how its track is opened up in Plato's *Parmenides*. The first step you have to take to understand anything in it is to notice that everything that is stated in it as dialectical, as developing from every possible discourse on the subject of the *One*, is first of all and is only to be taken at this level which is to say nothing else, as he expresses it, except *it is One*. And perhaps there are a certain number of you who have, after my entreaties, opened this book and have noticed that it is not the same thing as saying that the *One* is. It is *One*, this is the first hypothesis, and the *One* is, is the second. They are distinct. Naturally, for this to have any impact, it is necessary for you to read Plato with a little bit of something that comes from you. Plato must not be for you, as it were, simply an author. You have been formed from your childhood to hitch onto authors [*faire de l'auteur-stop*]. Ever since this has become the accepted thing, this way of addressing yourself to somebody or other, who is there as authorised,

you ought to know that it leads nowhere. Except of course that it may take you too far.

(90) Having made these observations, it is about the *One* then, for reasons that I am again going to have to apologise to you for because in the name of what would I concern you with that? It is about the *One* that I am going to talk to you today. That is even the reason why I invented a word which serves as a title for what I am going to say to you about it. I am not very sure, I am even sure of the contrary, I did not invent the unary. The unary trait that in 1962 I believed I was able to extract from Freud who calls it *einzig* by translating it in that way. This appeared miraculous at the time for some people. It is quite curious that the *einziger Zug*, the second form of identification distinguished by Freud, never struck them up to then.

On the contrary, the word that I will give you as an accolade to what I am going to say today is quite new and it is made up as a precaution, because in truth, there are many things that are involved in the *One*. So that it is not possible...I am going, nevertheless, to try to open up for you right away something that situates the interest that my discourse, in so far as it is itself an opening up of analytic discourse, the interest that my discourse has in passing by way of the *One*.

But first of all let us take its field, that *grosso modo* is designated, then as *oneness* (*l'unien*). This is a word that has never been pronounced, which has nevertheless the interest of introducing a note, a wake up note for you every time that the *One* will be involved and that in taking it in this way, in the form of an epithet, this will recall for you what Freud – and what Plato first of all – puts forward, which is that of its nature it has different aspects. That it should be spoken about in analysis is something that does not escape you I think, when you remember the fact that it presides over this bizarre assimilation of Eros to what tends to coagulate.

On the pretext that the body is very obviously one of the forms of the *One*, that it holds together, that it is an individual except in the case of accident, it is, this is singular, promoted by Freud, and it is indeed, to tell the truth, what puts in question the dyad of Eros and Thanatos he puts forward. If it were not sustained by a different image which is quite precisely that in which the sexual relationship fails, namely, that of the *One* and of the *not-one* (*pas-un*), namely, the zero, it is hard to see the function that this stupefying couple could have. It is a fact that it is used, that it is used to the advantage of a certain number of misunderstandings, pinpointings of the death drive, described in this way without rhyme or reason. But it is certain that in any case, the *One* could not, in this wild discourse which is established from the attempt to state the sexual relationship, it is strictly impossible to consider the copulation of (91) two bodies as becoming only one.

It is extraordinary that in this respect, Plato's *Symposium* – while the scholars giggle at *Parmenides* - Plato's *Symposium* should be taken seriously as representing anything whatsoever about love. Some people will perhaps still remember that I used it in a year, exactly the one that preceded the one I mentioned earlier, the year 1961-2. It was in 1960-1961 that I took the *Symposium* as a practice ground and I had nothing else in mind than grounding transference through it. Until further notice, transference, even though there is something of the order of two perhaps at its horizon, cannot be considered as a copulation. I think all the same that I indicated a little bit at that time the style of derision on which there takes place this scene that can very properly be designated as Bacchanal. That it should be Aristophanes who promotes, who invents the famous bi-partition of the being which was first only the beast with two backs who holds tightly onto himself and out of which the jealousy of Zeus made two of them starting from there. It is enough to say in whose mouth this statement is put to indicate that people are amusing themselves, greatly amusing themselves. The most staggering thing is that it does not appear that the one who crowns the whole discourse, the woman called Diotima,

plays any different role. Because what she teaches, is that love only stems from the fact that the beloved, should not be touched whether he is homo or hetero, that the only thing that counts is Uranian Aphrodite. This does not precisely mean that it is the *One* that reigns over Eros.

This would already be a reason by itself for advancing some propositions that have already been opened up moreover on the *One* if there were not besides the following. This is that in analytic experience, the first step is to introduce into it the *One* as the analyst that you are. You make him take the step into it, as a result of which the analysand who is what is at stake, the first mode of the manifestation of this *One*, is obviously to reproach you with only being *One* among others. As a result of which what he shows – but naturally without noticing it – is very precisely that he wants nothing to do with these others. And that is why with you the analyst he would like to be the only one so that that would make two, and that he does not know that what is at stake, is that he should perceive only two, it is this *One* that he believes himself to be, and in which it is a matter of him being divided.

(92) So then there is something of the *One* (*il y a de l'Un*). That should be written, today, I am not very inclined to write, but anyway why not, *Yad'lun*. Why not write it like that? Writing it like that, as you are going to see, has a certain interest which is not without justifying the choice earlier of this *Unien*. The fact is that *Yad'lun* written like that highlights something auspicious in the French tongue, and I do not think one can take the same advantage of *there is* or from *es gibt*. The people who know how to handle it will perhaps indicate it to me. *Es gibt* takes the accusative, does it not? You say: *es gibt einen*...something, when it is in the masculine, *there is*, one can say *there is one*, *there is a*...something. I know of course that there is the *there* which offers a beginning from that point of view, but it is not simple. In French one can say: *Y'en a*. A very strange thing, I have not succeeded – that does not mean that it could not be found, but

anyway like that, in the rather hasty fashion that I proceed despite everything, the function of haste in logic, is something I know a little bit about, I have to hurry, I am short of time – I did not succeed in seeing, in finding something, nor simply situating something – I am going to tell you that I consulted *Littré, Robert* while I was at it, *Damourette et Pichon* and some others all the same, the historical emergence, everything that a dictionary like *Bloch et von Wartburg* is designed to give you – the emergence of a formula that is so important as *il y a*, which means this *y en a*. It is on the basis of the indeterminate that there arises what I am designating and highlight properly speaking *il y a*, of which curiously, *y a* – I am not going to say *n'y a pas* – has no equivalent, it is true, a common equivalent in what we will call ancient tongues.

By what right, precisely, is it designated that discourse, well then, as it is said and as it is demonstrated in *Parmenides* that discourse changes. This indeed is why analytic discourse can represent the emergence and it would be a matter perhaps for you of making something of it, if it is a fact that after I die – in the eyes of many people, always present as possible if not imminent – when I die one can expect, in the same field, a veritable torrent of filth which is already showing itself, because people believe that this cannot be long delayed. Following on the track of my discourse, it would perhaps be better that there should be comforted those who may prolong this path which happily also, I found in a place, a very precise place some premises but rare ones. Because, people spend (93) their time plaguing me and filling my ears with the fact of knowing the relationship between analytic discourse and the revolution. It is perhaps precisely it that carries the germ of any possible revolution, because revolution must not be confused with the emotionalism that you may feel, like that, on all sorts of occasions under this label. It is not quite the same thing.

Y en a, then, it is on the basis, on the basis of something that has no shape. When one says *y en a*, that means usually *y en a du, or y en a*

des. One can even add on from time to time to these *des, des qui*, some who think, some who express themselves some who talk about things like that, there remains a background of indetermination. The question begins about what that means about the *One*. Because once the *One* is stated, the *de* is only there as a slender pedicle about what is involved in this background. From where does this *One* arise? This is very precisely what in the first hypothesis, Plato tries to put forward by saying as he can, since he has no other words at his disposition: *eis an estin, if it is One?* Because *estin* has manifestly the function of supplying for what is not emphasised as in French with *il y a*. And what should surely be translated – I understand the scruple that stops translators from doing it – it should surely be translated: *s'il y a Un*, or *l'Un*, it is for you to choose. But what is certain, is that Plato choses and that his *One* has nothing to do with what encompasses. There is even something remarkable, which is that what he immediately demonstrates about it, is that there cannot be any relationship with anything whatsoever with something whose metaphysical recension he had carried out in a thousand forms and which is called the dyad inasmuch as in experience, in the experience of thinking, it is everywhere, the greater, the lesser, the younger, the older, etc., the enclosing and the enclosed and everything else of that kind. What he begins by demonstrating is very precisely the fact that by taking the *One* by means of a discursive questioning – and *who* is questioned there? It is obviously not the poor little, the little dear, someone called Aristotle if I remember correctly, of whom it seems difficult to believe that it should be he at that moment who left the memory of it.

It is quite clear that, as in every dialogue, in every Platonic dialogue, there is no trace of an interlocutor. This seems to be called a dialogue only to illustrate what I stated a long time ago, that (94) there is no such thing precisely as a dialogue. That does not mean that there is not, present at the foundation of the Platonic dialogue, a quite different presence, a human presence let us say, than in many other things that have been written since. To bear witness to this, all we would need is

the fact that in the first approaches, the way in which there is prepared what constitutes the core of the dialogue, what I would call the preliminary conversation. That which explains to us, as in all the dialogues, how it happens that this crazy thing that does not in the least resemble anything at all that one could call a dialogue – it is here that, truly, you can sense, if already you did not know by the ordinary experience of life that you have never seen a dialogue culminating in anything whatsoever – what is at stake in what is called dialogue, in this literature which is dated, precisely by circumscribing what is the real that may give rise to the belief, that gives the illusion that one can arrive at something by dialoguing with someone. So then this means it is worthwhile preparing the business, that someone should say what kind of yoke is involved. Old Parmenides and his clique, who are there, no less than that was necessary for something to be able to be stated that makes who speak? Well then, precisely, the *One*. And from the moment that you make the *One* speak, it is worth the trouble to look at what use is the person holding the other spittoon, who can only say things like the following: *tauto ananke ou gar oun ti de alethe*, oh, la, la. Even three times more true than you were saying, is that not so? That's what dialogue is, naturally, when it is the *One* who speaks.

What is curious, is the way in which Parmenides introduces it. The *One*, he puts his hand on its back, he explains to him, the little darling: *On you go, speak dear little One, all that is only chatter*. Because do not translate *adoleschia* by the idea that what is at stake are adolescents, I am saying this for those who are not aware of it. Especially since, on the opposite page, you are told it is a matter of behaving like innocents, like young kids, you might become confused. They are not called that, the young kids in the Greek text; *adoleschia* means chatter. But one might consider that this is something of the beginning of the foreshadowing, the foreshadowing of what we call in our crude language, woven by what people were able to do in phenomenology that one might have at that very moment within hand's

reach, what is translated by free associations. Naturally association is not free, if it were free it would be of no interest, would it, but it is the same thing as (95) chat. It is designed to tame a sparrow.

Association, of course is linked. I cannot see why it would be interesting if it were free. The chatting in question, it is certain that, there is no doubt, just as it is not someone who speaks but that it is the *One*, you can see from this the degree to which it is linked. Because this is very instructive.

Putting things into this relief allows us to situate a lot of things, and in particular the step taken from Parmenides and Plato. Because a step had already been taken by Parmenides in this milieu where what was at stake in short was to know what was involved in the Real. We are all still there. After it had been said that there was air, water, earth, fire and that after that you just start up again, there was someone who noticed that, that the only common factor in all this substance that was at stake, was that it was sayable. That is the step taken by Parmenides.

The step taken by Plato is different. It is to show that once you begin to say it in an articulated fashion, what is outlined in terms of structure, as we would say in our...what I called earlier our crude language – the word structure is worth no more than the word free association – but what is outlined creates a difficulty, and that it is along this path that one must search for the Real. *Eidos*, which is wrongly translated as *form*, is something that already promises a tightening up, a circumscribing of what exists as a gap in what is said. In other words, Plato was in a word Lacanian. Naturally he could not have known it. And moreover he was a little handicapped (*débile*). This does not make things easier, but it certainly helped him. I call mental handicap the fact of being a speaking being who is not solidly installed in a discourse. This is what gives his value to the handicapped person. There is no other definition that one could give except that of being a little off beam, namely, wavering between two discourses.

To be solidly established as a subject, you have to stick to the *One*, or otherwise know what you are doing. But it is not because you are on the margin that you know what you are saying. So that in his case, that allowed him solidly – after all there were frames, it must be believed that, in his time, things were not taken up into a solid discourse, and he shows the tip of its ear somewhere, in these preliminary conversations of this *Parmenides*. He all the same is the one who wrote it. It is hard to know whether he is joking or not. But anyway he did not wait for Hegel to construct the Master-Slave (96) dialectic for us. And I should say that what he states has a completely different foundation than what the whole *Phenomenology of the spirit* puts forward. Not at all because he concludes, but he gives the material elements. He advances. He advances, and he can do so because in his time it was no sham. You may ask yourself whether it was rather better than worse, that the masters and the slaves were up front there, that allowed it to be imagined that it could change at any instant. And in effect it did change at every instant. When the masters were made prisoners they became slaves, and when the slaves were freed well then they became masters.

Thanks to this Plato imagines – and he says it in the earlier parts of this dialogue – that the essence of the master, *eidos*, and that of the slave, may be considered to have nothing to do with what is really involved. The master and the slave are between themselves in relationships that have nothing to do with the relationship of the master-essence and the slave-essence. This is why he is a little handicapped. The fact is – we have seen the great mixture, have we not, that always operates, along a certain path and curiously we do not see the aftermath that it promises – the fact is that we are all brothers, huh? There is a region like that of history, of historical myth, I mean of myth in so far as...it *is* history, that has only been seen once, among the Jews where we know what use was made of fraternity, it gave a great model for it. It is designed so that one can sell one's brother, which is something that never failed

to happen in the aftermath of all the subversions which are supposed to revolve around the discourse of the Master.

It is quite clear that the effort that Hegel wears himself out with in the *Phenomenology*, the fear of death, the fight to the death for pure prestige, and I am telling you about it, and leaving it to you, as a result of which, this is what is essential to obtain, there is a slave. But I would ask all of those who have... the shivers to change the roles. I ask, how does it come about, because the slave survives, that there does not come immediately after the fight to the death for pure prestige ...for him, and the fear of death which changes camp. All of that only subsists, has only a chance of subsisting on condition that you see very precisely what Plato puts to one side. What Plato puts to one side – but who will ever know for what reason, because one cannot, good God, examine his heart, it was perhaps simply mental debility – it is clear on the contrary, that it is the best possible opportunity to mark what is involved in what he calls *metechein*, participation. The slave is never a slave except (97) from the essence of the Master. Just as the Master...I am calling that the essence, you can call it what you want, I would much prefer to write S_1 , master-signifier, and as regards the Master, if there were no S_2 , the knowledge of the slave, what would he make of it?

I am delaying, I am delaying to tell you the importance, this unbelievable thing that there should exist, something of the *One*. This is the point to be highlighted. Because, once you question this *One*, what becomes of it, anyway, like something that comes undone, is that it is impossible to put it in relationship with anything whatsoever outside the series of whole numbers, which is nothing other than this *One*. Of course this only emerges, only comes, only arises, at the end of a long development of discourse. In Frege's logic, that inscribed in the *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, you will see both the inadequacy of any logical deduction of the 1, because it has to go through the 0 which one cannot all the same say that it is the *One* and nevertheless

everything unfolds in such a way that it is from this 1 which is lacking at the level of 0 that there proceeds the whole arithmetical series. Even though already, because already, from 0 to 1, that gives two, henceforth that will give three because there will be 0, 1 and 2 before and so on. And this very precisely up to the first of the alephs which, curiously and not for nothing, can only be designated as aleph zero.

This of course may appear to you to be at a learned distance. That indeed is the reason why it must be incarnated and why I first wrote down *Yad'lun!* And that you cannot protest too much about this announcement, in that so many exclamation marks subsequently because precisely aleph zero is just enough to explore what may be involved, if you approach it sufficiently, in the astonishment merited by the fact that there is something of *One*. Yes! That does indeed deserve to be saluted by this yes (*ouille!*) Huh? In the dialect of Northern France I mean *hoc est ille*.

Here, well then, what is at stake, the *One*, the responsible – because it is by catching it by the ear, is that not so, that *y en a* clearly shows the foundation on which it exists; the foundation on which it exists stems from the fact that it is not self-evident. The fact is, to take first of all the first piece of furniture that I had within hand's reach, the mental handicapped *One*, you can add to it a suitcase, a drawer, a *piéd de nez*, a puff of smoke, a welcome to your Catherine!, a civilisation, an odd garter, that makes eight. However scanty that may appear to you. There are bucketloads of them, but they all come when you call them, come, come, and the important thing – (98) because you must obviously become sensitive to one thing, things otherwise than by 0, 1, and by aleph, must you not? – the important thing is that this always presupposes the same *One*, the *One* that cannot be deduced, contrary to the confusion that John Stuart Mill tries to stir up, simply by taking distinct things and holding them to be identical. Because that is simply something that illustrates, that the abacus gives the model of; but the abacus was deliberately made in order for this to be counted and on

occasion there can be counted the eight scattered things that I showed you earlier. Only what the abacus does not give you, is something that can be deduced directly and without any abacus from the *One*.

Namely, that among these eight pieces of furniture that I spoke to you about earlier, there is, because they are eight, 28 combinations two by two, no more and that this, and it is that way because of the *One*.

Naturally, I hope that this strikes you and since I took eight of them, nothing prevents you, this bewilders you, you did not know in advance that this would give 28 combinations even though it is easy it is something or other: $n \quad \binom{n-1}{2}$ 8: 42, you see that doesn't give 28, that gives 21. [?]

Good! And so then that changes nothing. You may know the number, that is what is at stake. If I had put in fewer of them, this is something that would have encouraged you to work, to say to me that perhaps, that all the same I should also have counted the relationships of each one to the totality.

Why do I not do so? This is something that I will be forced to wait for the next occasion to explain to you. Because the relationships of each one to the totality does not eliminate precisely the fact that there is ONE set and that it is by this fact, that means that you put in one of them. Which would culminate in effect in considerably augmenting the number of combinations two by two. In a triangle, if I had simply put three 1's, that would only have given three combinations. You have six right away if you take the totality as a 1. But precisely what is at stake, is to see here another of the dimensions of the *One* that I will try to illustrate for you the next time by the arithmetical triangle. In other words the *One*, then, does not always have the same meaning. It has the meaning, for example, of this 1 of the empty set which, a curious thing, would add two to our numeration of elements, I will show why and from where it comes. Nevertheless we are already approaching something which, by not at all starting from the *One* as

All, demonstrates to us that the *One* as it emerges is not univocal. In (99) other words, we are renewing the Platonic dialogue.

This indeed is how I claim to lead you somewhere to pursue, through this bifidity of the *One* – even though we have to see whether it holds up – of this *One* that Plato distinguishes so well from Being. It assuredly is the case that Being, for its part, is *One*, always, in every case, but that the *One* does not know how to be as being, is what is perfectly demonstrated in *Parmenides*. It is indeed historically from here that function of existence emerged. It is not because the *One* is not that it does not pose the question and it poses it all the more in that wherever from all time there is a question about existence, the question will always turn around that of the *One*.

In Aristotle the matter is only approached timidly at the level of particular propositions. Aristotle imagines that it is enough to say that *some*, only *some*, not all, are like this or like that for them to be distinguished. That it is by distinguishing them from that which, for its part, is like that, if these are not so for example, that is enough to assure their existence. This indeed is why existence already, from its first emergence, begins right away, is announced by its correlative of inexistence. There is no existence except on a foundation of inexistence and reciprocally, *ex-sistere*, to only have your support from something outside which is not. And this indeed is what is involved in the *One*. Because in truth, from where does it arise? At a point where Plato manages to circumscribe it. You must not believe that it is, as it seems simply with respect to time, he calls it to *exaiphnes*. You can translate that as you wish. It is *the instant*, *the sudden*. This is the only point at which he can make it subsist and it is indeed in effect always where every elucidation of number – and God knows that it has been pushed far enough to give us the idea that there are other alephs than that of numbers – and this, this instant, this point, because this would be its real translation, this is indeed what is found to be decisive only at the level of a superior aleph, at the level of the continuum.

The *One* then here precisely seems to be lost and to take to its highest point what is involved in existence. To the point of getting close to existence as such *qua* arising from the most difficult to reach, the most fleeting in what can be stated. And this is what made me find, made me refer to this to *exaiphnes*, this to *exaiphnes* in Aristotle himself, to seeing that when all was said and done, there was the emergence of this term *to exist*.

(100) Somewhere in the *Physics* where you can find it, where you can find it especially if I give it to you. It is somewhere in Book IV of Aristotle's *Physics* – I don't see it here in my notes, but in truth it ought to be there. Aristotle defines it as precisely this something which *anaisthetos chronos*, in a time that cannot be sensed *dia mikrotos*, by reason of its extreme smallness, *en to extan*.

I do not know whether other than in this place, in this place of Book IV of the *Physics*, the term *extan* is uttered in ancient literature. But it is clear that it comes from... – it is a participle, a past participle, the past participle of this second aorist *iotemi*, of this aorist which is called *esten*, it is *otan* but I do not know whether there exists a verb *existemi*. You would have to check it out. In any case, the *sistere* is already there; the stable being, as stable being starting from the domain of *to extan*, *what only exists by not being*. This indeed is what is at stake, this is what I wanted to open up today under the general heading of *Unien*, and I apologise to you, if I choose *Unien*. Excuse me, it is in fact an anagram of *ennui* [boredom].

Seminar 1: Wednesday 8 December 1971

I could begin right away and pass over my title, after all you will clearly see in a little while what it means. Nevertheless, out of kindness, since moreover it is meant to strike you, I am going to introduce it by giving a commentary on it.

... *Ou pire* (...Or worse). Perhaps after all some of you have understood it, ...*Ou pire*, in short, is what I am always capable of doing. It is enough for me to show it to get into the heart of the subject. I show it, in short, all the time in order not to remain in this meaning which, like every meaning - I think you can put your finger on that - is opaque. I am therefore going to give a textual commentary on it.

...*Ou pire*. Some people have already read it wrongly. They thought that it was ...*ou le pire ou le pire* (...either the worst or the worst). It is not at all the same thing. *Pire*, is tangible, it is what is called an adverb, like well or better. You can say, I am doing well, one can say I am doing worse. It is an adverb, but a disjoined one, disjoined from something that is called somewhere precisely the verb, the verb which is replaced here by three dots. These three dots refer to usage, to ordinary usage to mark – it is curious, but we see this, we see this in every printed text – to create an empty place. It underlines the importance of this empty place and it demonstrates moreover that it is the only way to say something with the help of language. And this remark that the void is the only way of catching hold of something with language, is precisely what allows us to penetrate its nature, that of language.

(10) Moreover, as you know, once logic has come to the point of confronting something, something that supports a reference to truth, it

is when it produced the notion of a variable. It is an apparent variable. The apparent variable x is always constituted by the fact that, the fact is that the x , in what is at stake, marks an empty place. The condition for this to work is that one puts there exactly the same signifier in all these empty places that are reserved. This is the only way in which language reaches something and that is why I have expressed myself in the formula that *there is no metalanguage*. What does that mean? It might seem that in saying this I am only formulating a paradox. Because from where can I say it? Since I am saying it in language, this would seem to sufficiently affirm that there is one from where I can say it. Nevertheless it is obviously nothing of the kind. Of course it is necessary to develop metalanguage as a fiction, whenever logic is at stake, namely, when there has been forged within discourse what is called object language, as a result of which it is the language that becomes *meta*, I mean common discourse without which there is no means of even establishing this division. *There is no metalanguage* denies that this division is tenable. The formula forecloses that there might be discordance in language.

What then occupies this empty place in the title that I have put forward to catch your attention? As I said, it must be a verb, because there is already an adverb. Only it is a verb elided by the three dots, and that, in language, once you question it in logic, is the only thing that you cannot do. The verb, as it happens, is not difficult to find, it is enough to tip over the letter which begins the word *pire*, and that gives us *dire*. Only, as in logic, the verb is precisely the only term which you cannot make into an empty place, because when you try to make a function of a proposition, it is the verb that functions and it is from what surrounds it that you can make an argument. By getting rid of this verb then, I am making an argument of it, namely, some substance; it is not saying, it is *a* saying (*un dire*).

This saying, the one that I am taking up from my seminar of last year, is expressed, like every saying, in a complete proposition, *there is no*

sexual relationship. That is what my title is putting forward, it is that there is no ambiguity, it is that in trying to get out of this, you will only state, you will only say something worse.

There is no sexual relationship is proposed then as a truth. But I (11) already said that truth can only be half said. So then, what I am saying, is that what is in question, when all is said and done, is that the other half might say worse. If there were not worse, how it would simplify things! Make no mistake. The question is, does that not already simplify them since, if what I started from is from what I can do and that it is precisely what I am not doing, is that not enough to simplify them? Only there you are, there is no way that I cannot do this worse, exactly like everyone else.

When I say *there is no sexual relationship*, I am putting forward very precisely this truth, in the case of the speaking being, that sex does not in its case define any relationship. It is not that I am denying the difference that exists, from the youngest age, between what is called a little girl and a little boy. It is even from this that I am starting. Lay hold, right away, of the fact that you do not know when I start from there what I am talking about. I am not talking about the famous little difference the one for which, to one of the two, it will appear, when he is sexually mature, it will appear to be altogether something in the style of a joke, of a witticism, to shout hurrah! Hurrah for the little difference! The very fact that it is funny should be enough to indicate to us, to denote, to make reference, to the complex (*complexuel*) relationship, namely, to the fact clearly inscribed in analytic experience which is what the experience of the unconscious has led us to, without which there would be no witticism, to the complex relationship with this organ. The little difference, already separated out very early as an organ, which really says it all: *organon*, instrument. Does an animal have any idea that it has organs? Since when has that been seen and to accomplish what? Is it enough to state that every animal – this is a way of taking up again what I recently stated in connection with the

supposition of the enjoyment described as sexual as instrumental for the animal, I spoke about that elsewhere, here I will say it in a different way – *every animal that has claws does not masturbate*. This is the difference between man and the lobster (*l'homme et le homard*). There you are! That always produces a certain effect.

As a result of this you escape from the historical resonances of this sentence. It is not at all because of what it asserts – I am saying nothing more, it asserts – but the question that it introduces at the level of logic. That is hidden in it, huh? But – this is the only thing that you have not seen in it – the fact is that it contains the not-all (*pas-tout*) which is, very precisely and very curiously what eludes Aristotelian (12) logic in the measure that it put forward and separated out the function of prosdiorisms which are nothing other than what you know, namely, the use of all, *pan*, of some, *ti*, around which Aristotle takes the first steps in formal logic. These steps have serious consequences. They are what allowed there to be developed what is called the function of quantifiers. It is with the *all* that there is established the empty place that I spoke about earlier. Someone like Frege does not fail, when he comments on the function of the assertion, before which he places – the assertion in relationship to a true or false function $f(x)$ – it is necessary for him in order for the x to have the existence of an argument – here placed in this little dip, an image of the empty place – that there is something that is called *every x*, which is appropriate to the function.

The introduction of *not-all* is essential here. The *not-all* is not a negated universal. The *not-all*, is not a *nullity*, it is specifically not that; *no animal with claws masturbates*, it is, *not every animal that has claws* is because of that forced into what follows. There is organ and organ, just as there are faggots and faggots (*Il y a fagots et fagots*) the one who deals the blow and the one who receives it.

And this brings us to the heart of our problem. Because you see by simply outlining the first step, we are slipping towards the centre, without even having time to turn back, to the centre of something where there is indeed a machine that is carrying us. It is the machine that I am dismantling. But, I am making the remark for the use of some people, it is not to demonstrate that it is a machine, and still less indeed so that a discourse should be taken for a machine, as some people do precisely in wanting to engage with mine, of discourse. In this way what they demonstrate, is that they are not engaging with what makes a discourse, namely, the real that passes into it.

Dismantling the machine is not at all the same thing as what we have just done, namely, going without any ceremony to the hole in the system, namely, to the place where the real passes through you – and how, because it flattens you!

Naturally for my part I would like – I would really like, I would like much more – I would like to preserve your natural blackguardism which is what is most attractive, but which, alas, alas, always starting (13) again as someone or other has said, ends up by being reduced to stupidity by the very effect of this discourse that I am demonstrating. As a result you ought to sense right away that there are at least two ways of demonstrating this discourse; and it remains open that mine, in a way, is still a third. You must not force me to insist, of course, on this energetics of blackguardism and stupidity to which I never make anything other than a distant allusion. From the point of view of energetics, of course, it does not hold up. It is purely metaphorical. But it is one of those kinds of metaphor by which the speaking being subsists, I mean that it is his bread and butter (*le pain et le levain*).

So then I asked you to spare me as regards the point of this insistence. It is in the hope that the theory will supply for it. You will have heard the emphasis of the subjunctive, I isolated it because, because it might have been covered over by the interrogative accent. Think of all of

that, like that, at the moment that it is happening and especially in order not to miss what crops up here, namely, the relationship of the unconscious to truth. The right theory, and this is what opens up the path, the very path where the unconscious was reduced to insisting, it would no longer have to do it if the path had been properly opened up but that does not mean that this would have resolved everything, quite the contrary, the theory, because it would have given this ease, ought itself to be light, light to the point of not seeming to touch it. It should have something natural about it that, up to now, is only possessed by errors. Not all (*pas-toutes*), once again, of course. But does that make it any more sure that there are some that sustain this naturalness that so many others pretend to (*font semblant*)?

There you are, I am putting forward that for these, the others, to be able to make a pretence, it is necessary that among these errors that sustain what is natural, there is at least one: *hommoinzune*. You should recognise what I already wrote last year with a different ending, very precisely in connection with the hysteric and the *hommoinzun* that she requires. This *hommoinzune*, its role, obviously, cannot be better sustained than by the natural itself.

This is why I denied at the start, this is why on the contrary, this is why I denied at the start the difference that exists, which can be perfectly noted from the earliest years, between a little girl and a little boy, and that this difference which asserts itself as innate is indeed natural, namely, corresponds to the fact that there is something real in the fact that, in the species that calls itself, like that, the daughter of its works, in that as in many other things, which calls itself *homo sapiens*, the (14) sexes appear to be separated into two numbers of more or less equal individuals. And that rather early on, earlier than one might expect, these individuals are distinguished from one another. They are distinguished, that is certain. Only, I am pointing it out to you in passing, this does not form part of a logic. They only recognise one another, they only recognise one another as speaking beings, by

rejecting this distinction by all sorts of identifications and it is commonplace in psychoanalysis to note that this is the major mainspring of the phases of every childhood. But that is a simple parenthesis.

What is important logically is the following: it is what I did not deny, it is precisely here that there is a sliding, it is the fact that they are distinguished from one another. This is a sliding. What I did not deny, is precisely not that, what I did not deny, is that they are distinguished. They do not distinguish themselves. This is why people say, *oh! isn't he a real little man, you can see already that he's completely different to a little girl, he is uneasy, inquisitive, isn't he? Already looking for notice.* While the little girl is far from resembling him. She is already thinking of playing with this sort of fan which consists in sticking her face into a hole and refusing to say hello. Only there you are, people only marvel at that because that is the way it is, namely, exactly the way it will be later. In other words in conformity to the type of man and woman as they are going to set themselves up from something completely different, namely, from the consequence, from the value that will subsequently have been taken on by the little difference. No point in adding that the little difference, hurrah! was already there for the parents for some time and that it could have had an effect on the way in which the little man and the little woman were treated. We cannot be sure, it is not always like that. But there is no need for it in order that the judgement of recognition of the surrounding adults is based then on an error, which consists in recognising them, no doubt by what distinguishes them, but by only recognising them in function of criteria that are formed depending on language, if it is the case that, as I am putting forward, it is indeed because a being speaks that there is a castration complex. I am adding that in order to insist, so that you may clearly understand what I mean.

So then, it is in this way that the *hommoinzune*, wrongly, gives consistency to the naturalness, which moreover is incontestable, of

what I might call the premature vocation that each one experiences for his sex. One must also add, of course, that in the case when this vocation is not apparent, this does not change the mistake, because it (15) can be easily completed by being attributed to nature as such, this of course no less naturally. When it does not fit, people *say she's a tomboy (c'est un garçon manqué)*, do they not, and in that case, the lack can easily be considered as a success in the measure that nothing prevents there being imputed to it, to this lack, an extra bit of femininity. The woman, the real one, the proper little woman, is hidden behind this very lack. This is a subtlety that is moreover in full conformity to what the unconscious teaches us about never succeeding better than when one fails.

In these conditions, in order to have access to the other sex, one must really pay the price, that precisely of the little difference which deceptively passes into the Real through the mediation of the organ, precisely, because it ceases to be taken as such and, at the same time, reveals what it means to be an organ. An organ is only an instrument through the mediation of something by which every instrument is grounded. The fact is that it is a signifier. So then! It is as signifier that the transsexual no longer wants it and not as an organ. And in this he suffers from an error, which is precisely the common error. The passion of the transsexual is the madness of wanting to free himself from this error, the common error which does not see that the signifier is enjoyment, and that the phallus is only its signified. The transsexual no longer wants to be signified as phallus by sexual discourse, which, as I state, is impossible. He is only making one mistake, which is to want to force this sexual discourse which *qua* impossible is the passage of the Real, to want to force it by means of surgery.

There you are. It is the same thing that I stated in a certain programme for a certain *Congress on feminine sexuality*. It is only I said, for those who know how to read of course, it is only, I said, the homosexual, written here in the feminine, who can sustain the sexual discourse in

total security. That is why I invoked the freeing up of the *Précieuses* who, as you know, remain a model for me. The *Précieuse* who, as I might say, define so admirably what is excessive to the word, anyway, allow me to stop here the word, the *Ecce homo*, of love. Because they for their part do not run the risk of taking the phallus for a signifier. then! Signi- then! It is only by breaking up the signifier in its letter that one gets to the final term of it.

It is a pity nevertheless that this amputates for the female homosexual, the analytic discourse. Because this discourse, it is a fact, casts them, (16) the little darlings, into total blindness about what is involved in feminine enjoyment. Contrary to what one can read in a famous drama by Apollinaire, the one that introduces the word *surrealist*, Therese comes back to Tiresias – don't forget that I have just spoken about blindness – not *by letting go* but *by recuperating* what are described as *the two birds of his weakness*. I am quoting Apollinaire, for those who may not have read him. In other words the small and the big balloons that represent them in the theatre and which are perhaps – I am saying perhaps, because I do not want to distract your attention, I am satisfying myself with a perhaps – which are perhaps this something thanks to which the woman can only enjoy when there is an absence. The woman homosexual is not at all absent in what remains to her in terms of enjoyment. I repeat, this makes the discourse of love easy for her. But it is clear that that excludes her from psychoanalytic discourse which she can barely stammer. So then let us try to advance.

Given the time, I can only point out rapidly that as regards everything that posits itself as this sexual relationship, emphasising it, establishing it by a sort of fiction that is called marriage, it would be a good rule for the psychoanalyst to say that, on this point, they should sort themselves out as best they can. This is the path he takes in practice. He does not say it, nor does he even say it to himself, by a sort of false shame, because he believes his duty is to mitigate every drama. It is an inheritance derived from pure superstition. He plays the doctor. Never

did a doctor get involved in guaranteeing conjugal happiness and since the psychoanalyst has not yet noticed that there is no sexual relationship, naturally, the role of playing providence for households haunts him.

All that, the false shame, the superstition and the inability to formulate a precise rule on this point, the one that I have just stated, *let them sort themselves out*, comes from a failure to recognise something that his experience repeats to him, but I could even say drums into him, that *there is no sexual relationship*. It should be said that the etymology of *seriner* (to drum in) leads us straight to *sirène*. That is textually so, it is in the *Dictionnaire Étymologique*, I am not the one who is singing such a tune here in my discourse.

It is no doubt for that reason that the psychoanalyst, as Ulysses did in a similar situation, remains tied to a mast. Yes! Naturally in order for that to continue – what he hears as the song of the Sirens, namely, remaining enchanted, namely, hearing everything in the wrong way – it is necessary that the mast, the mast in which naturally you cannot fail (17) to recognise the phallus, namely, the major, global signified, well then, he must remain attached to it. That suits everybody, but that only suits everybody in that this has no unfortunate consequences, because it is meant for that, for the psychoanalytic future itself, namely, for all those who are in the same boat.

It nevertheless remains that he completely misconstrues this drumming of experience and that is why up to now it has remained a private domain. A private domain, I mean, for those who are in the same boat. What happens on this boat, in which there are also beings of two sexes, is nevertheless remarkable. The fact is that I sometimes hear on the lips of people who sometimes come to visit me from these boats, I who am, good God, on a different one, that the same rules are not enforced there. Which would be nevertheless rather exemplary if the way I got a whiff of it was not so peculiar.

In studying what emerges from a certain style of oversight about what constitutes psychoanalytic discourse, namely, the consequences it has on what I will call the style of what refers to the liaison – since after all the absence of the sexual relationship is very obviously something that does not prevent, far from it, a liaison, but something that gives it its conditions – this might perhaps allow us to glimpse what might result from the fact that psychoanalytic discourse remains lodged on these boats on which it currently sails of which we are entitled to fear it may remain the privilege. It may happen that something of this style will come to dominate the register of liaisons in what is inappropriately called the vast field of the world. And in truth that is not reassuring. It would surely be still more unfortunate if the present state which is such that it is to this oversight that I have just highlighted, that it is from it that there emerges something that is after all not unjustified, namely, what one frequently sees on entering psychoanalysis, namely, fears manifested sometimes by subjects who only know that it is, in short, if we are to believe the institutionalised psychoanalytic silence on this point about the fact that there is no sexual relationship which evokes in these subjects fears, namely, good God, about everything that may restrict, affect, their interesting ... relations, passionate acts, indeed creative disturbances that this absence of relationship requires.

I would like then before leaving you to make a start on something here. Because what is at stake is an exploration of what I called a new logic – the one that has to be constructed from what is not (*ce qui n'est pas*), (18) from this to posit in the first place that in no case, nothing of what happens from the fact of the agency of language, can end up on the formulation of anything satisfying about the relationship – is there not something to be taken from the fact that in logical exploration, namely, in the questioning of what to language, not simply imposes a limit, in its apprehension of the Real, but demonstrates in the very structure of this effort to approach it, namely, to pick out in its own handling what in the real may have determined language, is it not appropriate,

probable, appropriate to be induced, that if it is at the point of a certain flaw of the Real – properly speaking unsayable because it is what is supposed to determine all discourse – that there lie the lines of this field, which are those that we discover in psychoanalytic experience, is it not the case that everything that logic has sketched out, by relating language to what is posited in the real, allows us to locate in certain lines to be invented – and this is the theoretical effort I designate from this ease that an emphasis would find – is it not possible here to find an orientation?

Before leaving you today I will only point out that there are three registers, properly speaking, that have already emerged in the development of logic, three registers around which there will turn this year my effort to develop what is involved in the consequences of the fact, posited in the first place, that *there is no sexual relationship*.

Firstly, what you have already seen, in my discourse, being emphasised, the prosdiorismes. Today, in the course of this first approach, I have only encountered the statement of not-all (*pas-tout*). Already last year I believe I have isolated this very precisely for you as with respect to the function itself that I leave here totally enigmatic, of the function not of the sexual relationship, but of the function that, properly, renders access to it impossible. This is it, to be defined, in short, to be defined this year. Imagine enjoyment. Why would it not be possible to write a function of enjoyment? It is by testing it that we will see its sustainability, as I might say, or not.

Already last year I was able to put forward to the function of the *not-all* and certainly from a point much closer as regards what was involved. All I am doing today is tackling our writing. Last year I put (19) forward a negative bar $\bar{}$, placed above the term which, in the theory of quantifiers, designates the equivalent. It is only the equivalent of it. I would say even more, the purification with respect to the naïve usage made in Aristotle of the prosdiorism *all*. The

important thing, is that I have put forward before you today the function of the not-all, *pas-tout*, *pas tout*.

Everyone knows that in connection with what is involved in the proposition described in Aristotle as *particular*, what emerges from it, as I might say naively, is that there exists something which corresponds to it. When you use *some*, in effect, that seems to be self-evident. It seems to be self-evident but it is not self-evident. Because it is quite clear that, it is not enough to deny the *not-all* for each of these two pieces, if I can express myself like this, existence to be affirmed. Of course, if existence is affirmed, the *not-all* happens. It is around this *There exists* that our advance should be brought to bear. Ambiguities have been perpetuated around this for such a long time that people have come to confuse essence and existence and in a more astonishing fashion to believe that it is more to exist than to be. It is perhaps precisely that the *There exists*, undoubtedly, of men and of women, and in a word who do nothing more than exist, that the whole problem lies. Because after all in the correct usage which is to be constructed, starting from the moment when logic allows itself to disengage a little from the Real, the only way to really say that it has with respect to it the power to locate itself, it is starting from the moment that it only guarantees that this part of the real in which there is possible a truth, namely mathematics, it is starting from that moment that one can clearly see that what any *There exists* designates, is nothing other for example than a number to satisfy an equation.

I am not settling whether number is to be considered or not as Real. In order not to leave you in any ambiguity, I am going to tell you that I am deciding that number forms a part of the Real. But it is this privileged Real in connection with which the handling of the truth makes logic progress. In any case, the mode of existence of a number is not properly speaking something that we can hold to be guaranteed as regards what is involved in existence, every time that the prosdiorism *some* is put forward.

There is a second plane that I am only pinpointing here as a reference to the field we are going to have to advance into in terms of a logic that would be appropriate for us, which is that of modality. Modality, as everyone also knows in opening Aristotle, is what is involved in the *possible*, of what can be. I will also only indicate here the entrance, the frontispiece. Aristotle plays with four categories, the *impossible* that he opposes to the *possible*, the *necessary* that he opposes to the *contingent*. We will see that there is nothing tenable in these oppositions and today I am highlighting simply for you what is involved in a formulation of the *necessary* which is properly this, not to be able not to be (*ne pas pouvoir ne pas*). *Not to be able not to be*, this is properly for us what defines necessity. Where does that take us? From the *impossible*, *not to be able* to *to be able not to be*. Is this the *possible* or the *contingent*? But what is certain is that, if you want to take the opposite road, what you find is to be able not to be able (*pouvoir ne pas pouvoir*), namely, that this links up the improbable, the out of date, of what can happen, namely, not this impossible to which one would return by looping the loop, but quite simply impotence. This simply to indicate as a frontispiece the second field of questions to be opened up.

The third term, is negation. Does it not already seem to you, even though I have already written what completes it in the formulae already noted last year on the board, , namely, that there are two quite different forms of negation possible, foreshadowed already by the grammarians. But in truth, since it was in a grammar that claimed to go from words to thought, which says it all, embarking on semantics guarantees shipwreck. The distinction nevertheless made between foreclosure and discordance should be recalled at the start of what we will do this year. Again I must specify – and this will be the object of the talks that follow to give to each one of these chapters the development that it deserves – foreclosure cannot be, as Damourette and Pichon said, be linked in itself to *pas*, *point*, *goutte*, *mie*, nor

indeed to some of these other accessories that appear to support it in French. Nevertheless it should be remarked that what goes against it, is precisely, our *pas tous* (not all). Our *not-all* is discordance.

But what is foreclosure? Assuredly it is to be placed in a different register to that of discordance. It is to be placed at the point at which we have written the term described as *function*. Here is formulated the importance of the said (*du dire*). *The only foreclosure is of the said*, of this something that exists – existence being already promoted to what assuredly, to what assuredly we have to give it as a status – that (21) something can be said or *not*. This is what is at stake in foreclosure. And as regards something that cannot be said, undoubtedly, the only conclusion can be a question about the real. For the moment the function , as I have written it, only means the following, that for everything that is involved in the speaking being, sexual relationship poses a question. Here indeed is all of our experience, I mean the minimum that we can draw from it. That to this question, as to any question – there would be no question if there were no response – that the modes in which this question is posed, namely, the responses, are precisely what it is a matter of writing in this function.

This is what is going to allow us without any doubt to make a junction between what has been elaborated in logic and what can, on the principle, be considered as an effect of the real, on the principle that it is not possible to write the sexual relationship, on this very principle of grounding what is involved in the function, in the function that regulates everything that is involved in our experience, in that by being open to question, the sexual relationship which is not, in this sense that one cannot write it, this sexual relationship determines everything that is elaborated from a discourse whose nature it is to be a broken discourse.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 19 April 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

I am beginning now because I have been asked, I have been asked because of...the number of things happening in this place, I have been asked to finish earlier, much earlier than usual. There you are!

So then, to tackle what...what comes, like that, in a thread whose memory I hope is not too distant for you, I am taking up, I am taking up the *Yad'lun*, was that not it, that I already put forward. For those who are here, who have parachuted in from some distant country, I am repeating what that means, because the fact is it does not have a very common sonority. *Yad'lun*, seems to come from somewhere or other, from the *One*, from the *One*, huh? People do not usually express (102) themselves like that. Anyway, it is nevertheless about this that I am talking. About the *One (l'Un)*, the apostrophe, U.N, *y en a*.

It is the way of expressing oneself which will be found, I hope, at least for you, in harmony with something, that I hope is not new for everybody here. And, thank God, I know that I have listeners, certainly some, who are aware of the fields that I must touch on in order to tackle what is involved in the analytic discourse. This will prove to be in harmony, I will explain to you how, this way of expressing oneself with what historically was produced in the theory, the theory of sets...you have heard something about that! You have heard something about that because that is how mathematics are now taught from classes in primary school on. It is not sure that this improves the understanding of them.

The audience – We can't hear a thing.

The audience – We can't hear anything!

J Lacan – What...what's happening?

The audience – We can't hear anything here at the back!

J Lacan – Who...What's happening?

G Gonzalez – They can't hear, get closer to the microphone.

Lacan – I'm terribly sorry...can you hear me better like that?

The audience – No!

Lacan – So then the loudspeaker isn't working?...What? Good! So then let's take the time...like that?...that way that do you hear any better? Is it ok like that?

[J Lacan manipulates the microphone]

The audience – No!

[S. Faladé blows into the microphone]

- It's working fine.

But anyway, the relationship that there is with, with a theory, one of the mainsprings of which is writing – not at all of course that set theory implies a univocal writing, but that like many things in mathematics, it cannot be stated without writing – the difference then between this formula, this *Yad'lun* that I am trying to get across, is precisely the whole difference there is... between writing and the word. It is a break

(103) that is not always...always easy to fill in. It is indeed nevertheless, what I attempt on occasion. And you ought to be able to understand immediately why, if it is true that, as I have re-written them on the board, the upper two of these four formulae in which I attempt to fix what supplies for what I described as the impossibility of writing, precisely, what is involved in the sexual relationship. It is indeed in the measure that, at the upper level, two terms confront one another, one of which is *there exists* and the other *there does not exist*, that I am bringing, that I am attempting to bring the contribution that can be usefully contributed starting from set theory.

It is, it is already remarkable, is it not, it is striking that, that *there should be something of the One* was never the subject of any astonishment as I might say. It is all the same perhaps to go a little quickly to formulate it in this way because, anyway, it can be attributed to what I call astonishment. What I am inviting you to be astonished at, can be attributed precisely to what I have just spoken about, what I have really invited you in the warmest fashion to get to know. It is this famous *Parmenides*, is it not, of dear Plato, which is always so badly read. In any case that I, for my part, practice reading in a way that is not at all the accepted one. For *Parmenides*, it is quite striking to see the degree to which, at a certain level that is properly that of the University discourse, it embarrasses people. The way in which all of those who utter such wise things in the name of the University are always enormously embarrassed. As if it were a question of a bet, is it not, a sort of...purely gratuitous sort of exercise, a ballet. And the unfolding of eight hypotheses concerning the relationships of the *One* and Being remains in a way problematic, an object of scandal. Some people of course distinguish themselves by showing its coherence, but this coherence appears on the whole to be gratuitous and the confrontation of the interlocutors, in itself, appears to confirm the ahistorical character, as one might call it, of the whole.

I would say – if I am able to put forward something on this point – I would say that what strikes me, is really the complete contrary. And if something gave me the idea that there is in the Platonic dialogue some first foundation or other for a properly analytic discourse, I would say that it is indeed this *Parmenides*, that confirmed it for me. It is quite clear in effect that if you remember what I put forward, what I (104) inscribed as a structure – excuse me for saying nothing while I write, because that creates complications –

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ \mathbf{o} & \longrightarrow & \$ \\ \hline & & \\ S_2 & \longleftarrow & S_1 \end{array}$$

What I put forward as a structure is indeed that something that not by chance is inscribed as the signifier indexed 1 that finds itself at the level of production in the analytic discourse. And it is already something that, even though, I agree, could not be clear to you right away, I would not ask you to take it as something obvious, it is an indication of the appropriateness of centring our subsequent questioning very precisely not on the number (*chiffre*), but on the signifier *One*.

It is not self-evident, that there is d'*lun*. It seems to be self-evident like that, because for example, there are living beings. And that to all appearances you indeed have, each and every one of you, anyway, who are so well behaved, is that not so, of being, of being quite independent from one another and of each constituting what is called in our day an *organic reality*, to hold up as an *individual*. This indeed is what, of course, a whole first philosophy took as a certain support. What is striking for example, is that in Aristotelian logic, the fact of putting in the same column, namely, I recall it to you as it happens, to put at the principle of the same specification of the x, namely, I said, I already stated, about man, about the being who is described as masculine among those who speak, if we take the *there exists, there exists at least one* for whom is not acceptable as an assertion, , well then,

from this point of view, from the point of view of the individual, we find ourselves placed before a position which is clearly contradictory, namely, that Aristotelian logic, which is founded, is it not, on this intuition of the individual that he posits as real, Aristotle tells us that, after all, there is no....., it is not the idea of the horse that is real, it is the horse that is well and truly alive, at which point we are forced to ask ourselves precisely how, how there comes the idea from which we draw it. He upends, he upends not without peremptory arguments what Plato was talking about which is, namely, that it is by participating in the idea of the horse that the horse is sustained, that what is most real, is the idea of the horse.

(105) If we place ourselves from the angle, from the Aristotelian approach, it is clear that there is a contradiction between the statement that *for every x*, x fulfils in the function of argument and the fact that there is *some x* which cannot fulfil the place of argument except in the stating, exactly the negation of the first. If we are told that *all* horses – whatever you want, is that not so? – are fiery and if one adds onto it that there are *some* horses, *at least one* that is not so, in Aristotelian logic this is a contradiction. What I am putting forward is designed to make you grasp that precisely if I can, if I dare to put forward two terms, those on the right of my group of four terms – it is not by chance that there are four – if I can put forward something that is manifestly lacking in the aforesaid logic, it is quite certainly in the measure that the term existence has changed meaning in between times. And that it is not the same existence that is at stake when it is a matter of the existence of a term which is capable of taking the place of the argument in an articulated mathematical function.

Nothing here yet makes the connection between this *Yad'lun* as such and this *at least one* which is quite precisely what is formulated by the notion of the inverted E of x, there exists an x, *at least one* which gives, to what posits itself as a function, a value that can be qualified as true. This distance which is posited between existence, as one might

say – I won't call it anything else today for lack of a better word – the natural existence, which is not limited to living organisms, these Ones, for example, we can see them in the celestial bodies that are not for nothing the...among the first to have held a properly scientific interest, it is very precisely in the affinity that they have with the *One*. They appear as being inscribed in the heavens as elements that are all the more easily marked by the *One* in that they are punctiform and it is certain that they have done a lot to put the emphasis, as a form of passage, to put the emphasis on the point.

If between the individual and what is involved in what I will call the *real One*, in the interval, the elements that signal themselves as punctiform have played an outstanding role for what is involved in their transition, is it not tangible to you – and certainly did this not catch your ear in passing – that I speak about the *One* as a Real, of a Real that moreover may have nothing to do with any reality? I am calling reality what is reality, namely, for example your own existence, (106) your mode of sustaining which is assuredly material, and first of all because it is corporal. But it is a matter of knowing what you are speaking about when you say: *Yad'lun*, about a certain way along the path of which science has become engaged. I mean starting from this turning point where definitively it was in number as such that it trusted for its great turning point, the Galilean turning point, to call it by its name. It is clear that from this scientific perspective, the *One* that we can qualify as individual, the *One* and then something which is stated in the register of the logic of number, it is not really appropriate to question oneself about the existence, about the logical support that one can give to a unicorn as long as no animal can be conceived of in a more appropriate fashion than the unicorn itself. It is indeed from this perspective that one can say that what we call reality, natural reality, can be taken at the level of a certain discourse. And I do not pull back from claiming that the analytic discourse is that one. We can always take reality at the level of phantasy.

As regards the Real I am talking about, analytic discourse is designed to remind us that its access is the Symbolic, the aforesaid Real, it is in and through this impossible which *only* defines the Symbolic that we accede to it. I am coming back to it at the level of the natural history of Pliny. I do not see what differentiates the unicorn from any other animal that is perfectly existent in the natural order. The perspective that questions the Real in a certain direction demands that we state things in this way.

I am not at all, for all that, in the process of speaking to you about anything whatsoever that might look like progress. What we gain on the scientific plane which is incontestable, does absolutely not increase for all that for example our critical sense in the matter of...in the matter of political life for example. I have always underlined that what we gain on the one hand is lost on the other inasmuch as there is a certain limitation inherent to what one can call the field of adequation in the speaking being.

It is not because we have made progress since Pliny about life, biology, that it is an absolute progress. If a Roman citizen saw how we lived, it is unfortunately out of the question to summon him here on this occasion in person, but anyway he would probably be overwhelmed with horror. We can only prejudge it from the ruins left by this (107) civilisation. The notion that we can have of it, is to see, or to imagine what the remainders of ours would be in an equivalent time if one can imagine that.

This, is it not, so that you do not get anything into your skull, as I might say, on the subject of the confidence that I particularly have in science. What is at stake in analytic discourse is not a scientific discourse, but a discourse for which science furnishes us the material, which is quite different. So then it is clear that the grip of the speaking being on the world which he conceives himself as plunged into – already a schema which has the odour of his phantasy, does it not? –

that this grasp all the same only increases, this is certain, this grasp only increases in the measure that something is developed and this is the use of number.

I am claiming to show you that this number is reduced quite simply to this *Yad'lun*. So then, we have to see what allows us historically to have a little bit more to say about this *Yad'lun* than what Plato made of it, as I might say, by putting it on exactly the same level as what is involved in Being. It is certain that this dialogue is extraordinarily suggestive and fruitful and if you look at it closely you will find in it already a foreshadowing of what I can, on the basis, on the theme of set theory, state about *Yad'lun*.

Begin simply with the statement of the first hypothesis, if the *One* – it is to be taken for its meaning – if the *One* is *One*, what are we going to be able to do about it? The first thing that he puts as an objection to it is the following, it is that this *One* will be nowhere, because if it were somewhere, it would be in an envelope, in a limit, and that this is quite in contradiction with its existence as *One*.

What's wrong? Ok then! I am talking quietly. That's the way it is, too bad, that's how I am speaking today, it is no doubt because I can't do any better.

For the *One* to have been able to be developed in its existence as *One* in the way that grounds the *Mengenlehre*, *la théorie des ensembles* [set theory] to translate it as it has been translated not unhappily in French, but certainly with an accent that does not quite correspond to the sense of the original in German which, from the point of view that we are aiming at, is no better. Well then, this only came late, and only came in function of the whole history of mathematics itself, of which of (108) course there is no question of me retracing here even in the shortest of summaries, but in which one must take into account

something which has taken all its emphasis, all its import, namely, from what I could call the... the extravagances of number.

This obviously began very early because already in Plato's time the irrational number created problems and he found himself inheriting – he gives a statement of it with all the developments in *Theaetetus* – does he not, the Pythagorean scandal of the irrational character of the diagonal of a square, from the fact that you never finish with it, this is demonstrable in a figure. And this was indeed the most fortunate thing to make appear to them, at this epoch, the existence of what I am calling numerical extravagance. I mean something that goes beyond the field of the *One*. After that, what? Something that we can in what is described as Archimedes' method of exhaustion, consider as the avoidance of what comes so many centuries later in the form of the paradoxes of infinitesimal calculus, in the form of the statement of what is called the infinitesimally small. Something that takes a long time to be developed in positing, in positing some finite quantity about which it is said that in any way, a certain mode of operating will end up by being smaller than the aforesaid quantity. Namely, when all is said and done, making use of the finite in order to define a transfinite. And then the appearance, faith, one cannot not mention it, the appearance of Fourier's trigonometrical series which certainly does not fail to pose all sorts of problems about its theoretical foundation. All of this conjugated with the reduction, the reduction to...to perfectly finite principles of the calculus described as infinitesimal which is happening at the same time and of which Cauchy is the great representative. I am only giving this ultra rapid reminder to date what is meant by the taking up again from Cantor's pen of what the status of the *One* is.

The status of the *One*, from the moment that what is at stake is to ground it, can only start from its ambiguity. Namely, that the mainspring of set theory stems entirely from the fact that the *One* of the set, is distinct from the *One* of the element. The notion of set

depends on the fact that there is a set even with a single element. That is not usually how it is said, but it is proper to the word precisely to advance with its big boots. It is enough moreover to open any presentation whatsoever of set theory to put your finger on what this (109) implies. Namely, that if the element posited as fundamental in a set is this something that the very notion of the set allows to posit as an empty set, well then, having done this, the element is perfectly acceptable. Namely, that a set can have an empty set as constituting its element, which because of this is absolutely equivalent to what is commonly called a *singleton* in order not to announce right away the card of the number *1*. And this in a most justified way for the good reason that we can only define the number *1* by taking the class of all sets which are a single element and by highlighting its equivalence as being properly what constitutes the foundation of the *One*.

Set theory is designed then to restore the status of number. And what proves that it effectively restores it, this from the perspective of what I am stating is that, very precisely, in stating as it does the foundation of the *One* and in making number depend on it as a class of equivalence, it ends up by highlighting what it calls the non-numerable which is very simple and, as you are going to see, immediately accessible, but that, in translating it into my vocabulary, I call not the non-numerable, an object that I would not hesitate to describe as mythical, but the impossible to number (*dénombrer*). This is demonstrated by the method – here I apologise for not being able to show its make-up immediately on the board, but really after all, what is there to prevent those among you that are interested by this discourse from opening the slightest treatise called *Naïve set theory* to see that, by the method described as diagonal, you can put your finger on the fact that there is a way of stating, in a series of different ways, the sequence of whole numbers. Because in truth it can be stated in 36,000 ways. It will be immediately possible to show that whatever way you have organised it, there will be, simply by taking the diagonal and in this diagonal, by changing the values on each occasion according to a rule determined in

advance, one more way of enumerating them. It is precisely in this that there consists the Real attached to the *One*.

And, if indeed it is a fact that today I can push its proof far enough in the time that I promised I would limit myself to, I am going all the same from now on to put the emphasis on what is involved by this ambiguity placed at the foundation of the *One* as such. It is very exactly the fact that, contrary to appearances, the *One* cannot be (110) founded on sameness (*mêmeté*), but that it is very precisely, on the contrary, by set theory, marked as being grounded on pure and simple difference. What governs the foundation of set theory consists in the fact that, when you notice in it, let us say to go to the simplest case, three elements, each one separated by a comma, so then by two commas, if one of these elements appears in any way to be the same as another, or if it can be united to it by some sign of equality, it is purely and simply one and the same as it. At the first level of the framework constituted by what is called set theory, is the axiom of extensionality which signifies very precisely the fact that at the start it cannot be the *same* that is at stake. What is at stake very precisely is to know at what moment in this construction sameness arises.

Sameness does not simply arise late in the construction and, as I might say, on one of its edges. But what is more I can put forward that this sameness as such is counted in number and that therefore the emergence of the *One*, in so far as it is describable from the same, only emerges, as I might say, in an exponential fashion. I mean that it is starting from the moment that the *One* in question is nothing other than this \aleph_0 in which the cardinal of the infinite is symbolised, this numerical infinity, this infinite that Cantor calls improper and which is made up of elements of what constitutes the first proper infinity, namely, the \aleph_1 in question. It is in the course of the construction of this \aleph_1 that there appears the construction of the same itself, and that this same, in the construction, is itself counted as an element.

This is why, let us say, it is inadequate in the Platonic dialogue to make participation of anything whatsoever existent in the order of the similar (*semblable*). Without the breakthrough by which the *One* is first constituted, the notion of the similar could not appear in any way. This is what we are going, I hope, to see. If we do not see it here today because I am limited to a quarter of an hour less than I usually have, I will take it up elsewhere. And why not the next time, on the Thursday at Sainte-Anne, because a certain number of you know the way there. Nevertheless what I want to mark, is what results from this very start of set theory and from what I will call, why not, *Cantorisation*, on condition of writing it c.a.n. of number. This is what is at stake. To (111) ground the cardinal in it in any way, there are no other paths than those that are called the bi-univocal application of one set onto another. When you want to illustrate it, you find nothing better, you find nothing other than to evoke alternatively some primitive rite or other of potlatch because of the prevalence from which there will emerge the establishment of an at least provisional chief. Or more simply the manipulations of the maître d' who confronts one by one each of the elements of a set of knives against a set of forks. It is from the moment when there will again be *One* on one side and nothing on the other, whether it is a matter of herds that make each competitor for the title of chief break through a certain threshold, or whether it is a matter of the maître d' who is in the process of doing his count, what will appear? The *One* begins at the level at which there is *One* lacking.

The empty set is then properly legitimated by the fact that it is, as I might say, the door whose going through constitutes the birth of the *One*. The first *One* that is designated by an acceptable experience, I mean mathematically acceptable, in a way that can be taught, because this is what is meant by the *mathème*, and not because it appeals to this sort of crude imagery which is that... - it is more or less the same thing – what constitutes the *One* and very precisely what justifies it, which is only designated as distinct and not from any qualifying mapping out, is that it only begins from its lack. And this indeed there appears to us, in

the reproduction that I have given you here of Pascal's triangle. The necessity of distinguishing each of these lines which you know, I think for some time, I underlined it enough, how they are made up, each one being made up of the addition of what is above and on the same line, of what is noted on the right, each of these lines is then constituted as follows:

$$\begin{array}{cccccc}
 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & \dots \\
 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\
 & & 1 & 3 & 6 & 10 \\
 & & & 1 & 4 & 10 \\
 & & & & 1 & 5 \\
 & & & & & 1
 \end{array}$$

It is important to notice what each one of these lines designates.

(112) The error, the lack of foundation that is stated in the definition of Euclid, which is precisely the following: *monas esti katen exaston ton outon en legepai Arithmos de to sa monadon sogeimenon plethos* [Euclid, elements, 4, VII]. *The monad is that according to which each being can be said to be One*, and the number, *arithmos*, is very precisely this multiplicity which is made up of monads. It is not for nothing that Pascal's triangle is here. It is here to give an image to what is called in set theory, not the elements, but the parts of these sets. At the level of parts, the parts monadically stated of any set whatsoever are on the second line; the monad is second. What will we call the first, that is in short constituted from this empty set whose breaking through is precisely how the *One* is constituted? Why not use the echo that the Spanish tongue gives us and call it the *nade*? What is at stake in this repeated *One* of the first line, is very properly the *nade*, namely, the way in designated by lack.

It is starting from what is involved about the place where a hole is made, about this something that, if you want an image of it, I would

represent as being the foundation of *Yad'lun*, there can only be that of *One* in the image of a sack, which is a sack with a hole in it. Nothing is *One* except what comes out or which, from this sack, or which does not re-enter this sack; this is the original foundation, if we are to take it intuitively of the *One*.

I cannot, because of my promises, and I regret it, push any further here today what I have brought you. You should simply know that we are questioning ourselves, as I already outlined the image, that we will question ourselves, starting from the triad, the most simple form where the parts, the subsets made up of the parts of the set, where these parts can be imaged in a way that satisfies us, to go back to what happens in the dyad and the monad.

You will see that in questioning, not these prime numbers (*nombres premiers*) but these first numbers (*premiers nombres*) a difficulty will arise which the fact that it is a difficulty of imagery, I hope, will not prevent us from understanding what its essence is and to see what is involved in the foundation of the One.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 10 May 1972

It is difficult for me to open up the path for you in a discourse that does not interest all of you. I mean as in *pas tous* (not all) and I even add, *only* as it were like *not all*. One thing is obvious, it is the crucial character, in Freud's thinking of *all* (*tous*). The notion of the crowd that he inherits from this imbecile called Gustave Le Bon is used by

him to entify this *all*. It is not astonishing that he discovers the necessity of a *there exists* of which, on this occasion, he only sees the aspect that he translates as the unary trait, *der einziger Zug*. The unary trait has nothing to do with the *Yad'lun* that I am trying to circumscribe this year because there is nothing better to do, what is expressed by...*ou pire*, and it is therefore not for nothing that I have to say it adverbially.

I point out right away, the unary trait is that by which repetition is marked as such. Repetition does not ground any all nor does it identify anything, because tautologically, as I might say, there cannot be a first of them. This is why all this psychology of something that is translated by crowds, the *psychology of crowds*, misses what is at stake by seeing in it with a little more luck, the nature of the *not all* that grounds it, the nature which is precisely that of the *woman*, to be put in inverted commas, who for father Freud constituted up to the end the problem, the problem of what she wants. I have already spoken to you about that. But let us come back to what I am trying this year to spin out for you. Anything whatsoever, it is true, can be used to write the *One* of repetition. It is not that it is nothing, it is that it is written with anything whatsoever so that it is easy to repeat in figures. There is nothing easier to represent (*figurer*) for the being who finds himself (114) with the responsibility of ensuring that in language, it speaks (*ça parle*), nothing easier to represent than what it is designed to reproduce naturally, namely, as they say, its fellow or its type. Not that he knows from the beginning how to make its representation. But it marks him and this, he can return to it, return to the mark which precisely is the unary trait. The unary trait, is the support of what I started from under the name of the *mirror stage*, namely, imaginary identification.

But not only does this highlighting of a typical support, namely, an imaginary one, the mark as such, the unary trait, constitute a value judgement – as it has come back to me, it has been said that I was making a value judgement of the imaginary kind as *caca!* Symbolic as,

yum yum. But everything that I said, wrote, inscribed in graphs, schematised in an optical model on one occasion, in which the subject is reflected in the unary trait, and where it is only from there that he locates himself as *ideal ego*, all of that insists precisely on the fact that imaginary identification operate by means of a symbolic mark. So that, whoever denounces this Manicheism – value judgement, bah! – in my doctrine, simply demonstrates what is involved in having listened to me in this way from the start of my discourse, of which it is nevertheless contemporaneous. A pig, even if he gets up on his hind legs and becomes an upright pig, nevertheless remains the pig that he was by pedigree; but he is not the only one to imagine that it is remembered.

To return to Freud as regards whom I have up to now only commented on the function that he introduced under the name of narcissism, it is indeed from the error that he committed in linking the *ego* without any relay to his *Massenpsychologie* that there arises the unbelievable nature of the institution with which he projected what he called *psychic economy*, namely, the organisation to which he thought he had to confide the relaunching of his doctrine. He wanted it that way, why? To set up the *protection* of a *kernel of truth*. This is how Freud thought it out and it is indeed also how those who proved to be the fruits of this conception expressed themselves in order, even if they think this kernel is modest, are drawn to consider it. Which, from the point things have got to in public opinion, is comical. To bring it out it is enough to indicate what is implied in this sort of guarantee of a school of wisdom. That is why from all time it has been called that, *Es*, is that not it? Question mark.

(115) Wisdom as it appears in the very book of patience, of sapience, which *Ecclesiastes* is, is what? It is, as it is clearly said there, it is knowledge about enjoyment. Everything that is posited as such is characterised as esoteric and one could say that, there is no religion outside Christianity which does not adorn itself / protect itself (*s'en*

pare) with it in the two senses of the word. In all the religions, the Buddhist and also the Muslim, without mentioning the others, there is this adornment and this way of protecting oneself, I mean of marking the place of this knowledge about enjoyment. Do I need to recall the *tantras* for one of these religions, the *soufis* for the other? This is what the pre-Socratic philosophies take on as an entitlement and this is what Socrates breaks with, substituting for it – and one can say specifically – the relation to the *little o-object* which is nothing other than what he calls *soul*.

This operation is sufficiently illustrated by the partner given to him in the *Symposium* in the perfectly historical species of Alcibiades, in other words sexual frenzy, at which the absolute discourse of the master normally culminates, as I might say, namely, which produces nothing but symbolic castration. I remind you of the mutilation of the Hermes, I did it at one time when I used this *Symposium* to articulate transference. The knowledge of enjoyment from Socrates on will no longer survive except in the margins of civilisation. Not, of course, without it experiencing what Freud modestly calls its discontents. Some madman from time to time bellowed about finding himself in it, along the thread of this subversion. This only had an effect when he was capable of making it understood in the very discourse that produced this knowledge, the Christian discourse, to dot the i's, because, let there be no doubt about it, it is the inheritor of the Socratic discourse. It is the *up to date* discourse of the master, the most up to date model of the master and of the little model daughters (*filles modèles–modèles*) who are its descendants. I am assured that in this *genre*, what I call model, which now decorates itself with different initials but which always begins with *m*, bucket-loads come here. I know it because I am told it. But for my part from where I am, it is not enough for me to see them, to look at you, because precisely, from the start, they are *not all* models.

Yes! Let us note, this obviously has an effect when, this remark was subversive, and I said that it marked an epoch, it was Nietzsche who (116) uttered it. I am simply pointing out that he can only utter it, I mean make himself understood, by articulating it in the only audible discourse, namely, the one that the *up to date* master determines as his line of descent. All these beautiful people are delighted with it, naturally, but that changes nothing about it. Everything that has been produced is part of it from the beginning and, of course, that the initials themselves, of which there was question earlier, are also there from the start, is only discovered *nachträglich*.

I think it is no harm to mark here that the not all (*pas tous*) has slipped as it is natural into not all (*pas toutes*). It is designed for that. All the blather that I only produce – today when one can highlight some movement in the emergence of discourse – to mark that its sense remains problematic, specifically from what should not be understood in what I have just said, namely, a direction of history because, like every other direction, it is only illuminated by what happens. And because what happens only depends on luck. Nevertheless this does not mean that it cannot be calculated, starting from what? From the *One* that is found in it. Only you must not be deceived about what you find of the *One*. It is never what you are searching for. That is why, as I said after someone else who is in my situation, I do not seek, as he said, I find. The way, the only way, not to be deceived, is with a lucky find, to question yourself about what there was to seek, if you had wished it.

What is the formula by which I one day articulated transference? My artefacts of writing demonstrate in this now famous subject- supposed-to-know a pleonasm. In it one can write subject as \$, which recalls that a subject is never anything but supposed, *upokeimenon*, I only use the redundancy because of the deafness of the Other. It is clear that it is the knowledge that is supposed and no one has ever been deceived by that. Supposed to whom? Certainly not to the analyst but to his

position. And on this you can consult my seminars, because this is what is striking in rereading them, no mistakes, which is different from my *Ecrits*. Yes! That's how it is. It is because I write quickly. I had never said this to myself. But I noticed it because I happened to be talking recently to someone. I noticed it since the last time where some of you heard me at Sainte-Anne.

I put forward things starting from set theory, invoked here to put in question this *One* that I spoke about earlier, just now. I always take (117) risks, you cannot say that at that time, I did not take them, with all the necessary humour.

2 , two to the power of Aleph index zero minus one.

I think that I have sufficiently underlined for you the difference between the index 0 and the function of 0 when it is used in an exponential scale. Naturally this does not mean that I did not tickle the sensibility of the mathematicians who may have been there that evening in my audience. What I meant, while waiting for something of it to come back to me – it was a challenge – what I meant, is that if the *One* is subtracted, this whole edifice of numbers ought, if you understand it as the product of a logical operation, specifically that which proceeds from the position of the 0 and from the definition of successor, the whole chain be undone, and return to its start. It is curious that I had to explicitly call on someone in order, from his mouth, to rediscover the well-founded nature of what I also stated the last time. Namely, that this involves not simply the *One* from the 0 but another that, as such, I marked as locatable in the chain, by the passage of one number to another when it was a matter of counting its parts. It is on this that I hope to conclude. But as of now I will content myself with noting that the person who confirmed me in this way, is the one who, in a dedication that she did me the honour of making to me in connection with a little article, that she herself stated that I wrote quickly.

That idea would never have entered my head because what I write, I redo ten times. But it is true that the tenth time, I write it very quickly. That is why some mistakes remain in it, because it is a text. A text, as the name indicates, can only be woven by making knots. When you make knots, there is always something that is left hanging. I apologise for it, I have never written except for people who are supposed to have heard me and when, exceptionally, I was first writing, the report of a congress for example, I only ever gave a speech on my report. Just consult what I said at Rome for the congress thus named. I did the written report that you know and this was published at one time. What I said, I did not take up again in what I wrote, but you would certainly be much more at ease in it than in the report itself. Those for whom then, in short, I took on (118) the labour of taking it up again logically, this labour which begins with the *Discours de Rome*, once they abandon the critical line that results from it, from this work, to return precisely to the Beings from which I precisely demonstrate this discourse ought to abstain, by returning to these Beings and making of it the support of the discourse of the analysand, are only going back to chit-chat. That is why the very people who decamped after this discourse, once it had been pronounced, once it had been spoken, completely missed its meaning.

This indeed is why, in connection with my *subject supposed to know*, what was found, finally, that they expressed, indeed what they printed in black and white, which is worse again, precisely by noticing that by taking off from where I had brought them, from the line on which I maintained them, they no longer knew anything. And starting with this, I repeat, they went as far as to say that supposing this knowledge in the position of the analyst is a very bad thing, because it means that the analyst is pretending (*fait semblant*). There is nothing to that but a bit of chaff that I already highlighted earlier, it is that the analyst does not pretend, he occupies, he occupies with what? This is what I am leaving to come back to, he occupies *the position* of a semblance. He occupies it legitimately because with respect to enjoyment, to the

enjoyment as they have to grasp it in the remarks of him who under the title of analyst, they are standing surety for in his enunciation as subject, there is no other tenable solution. That it is only from there that there can be perceived how far enjoyment, the enjoyment of this authorised statement, can lead without too noticeable damage.

But the semblance is not fed by the enjoyment that he is supposed to flout. According to those who come back to this 'stuck-in-a-rut' discourse, this semblance gives to something other than himself, his speaking-tube and precisely by showing himself as a mask, I mean openly worn, as on the Greek stage. The semblance takes on its effect by being manifest. When the actor wears the mask his face does not grimace, it is not realistic. Pathos is reserved for the choir who go at it, make no mistake, with a joyful heart. And why? In order that the spectator, I mean that of the ancient stage, should find in it his community surplus enjoying, for himself. This indeed is what gives the cinema its value for us. There the mask is something different, it is the unreality of the projection.

But let us come back to ourselves. It is by giving voice to something, that the analyst can demonstrate that this reference to the Greek stage is appropriate. Because what is he doing, in occupying as such this position of a semblance? Nothing other than (119) demonstrating precisely, by being able to demonstrate, that the experienced terror of desire from which neurosis is organised, what is called defence, is only, with respect to what is produced in it in terms of completely lost labour, only a conspiracy that is to be pitied. You find, at the two ends of this sentence, what Aristotle designated about the effect of tragedy on the listener. And where have I said that the knowledge from which this voice proceeds is a semblance? Ought it even to appear so? Take on an inspired tone? Nothing of the kind. Neither the air, nor the song of the semblance is appropriate to the psychoanalyst. Only there you are! Since it is clear that this knowledge is not the esoterics of enjoyment, nor simply the know-how of a grimace, we have to settle

with talking about truth as a fundamental position, even if we do not know everything about this truth. Because I define it by its half-saying, by the fact that it can do no more than half-say itself.

But what then is the knowledge that the truth is guaranteed by? It is nothing but what comes from the notation that results from the fact of positing it starting from the signifier. This is something whose maintenance is difficult to sustain, but which is confirmed by providing a non-initiatory knowledge. Because it proceeds, if nobody minds, from a subject of a discourse subjected as such to production, this subject that one can find mathematicians describing as creative and specifying that it is indeed the subject that is at stake. This crosschecks with the fact that the subject, in my logic, wears itself out by producing itself as an effect of the signifier, naturally remaining as distinct from it as a real number from a series whose convergence is rationally assured.

To say non-initiatory knowledge, is to say a knowledge that is taught by other voices than the direct ones of enjoyment, which are always conditioned by the fundamental failure of sexual enjoyment. I mean because of the way the constitutive enjoyment of the speaking being is demarcated from sexual enjoyment, a separation and a demarcation whose efflorescence is certainly short and limited. And that is why it has been possible to draw up the catalogue of it, precisely starting from analytic discourse in the quite finite list of the drives. Its finitude is connected to the impossibility that is demonstrated in the veritable questioning of the sexual relationship as such. Exactly, it is in the very practice of the sexual relationship that there is affirmed the bond that we promote, we, as speaking beings, promote everywhere else, about the impossible and the Real, namely, that the Real has no other attestation. All reality is suspect by being – not imaginary, as is imputed to me, because in truth it is rather obvious as it emerges (120) from animal ethology, it is an articulation of the Real – what we have to be suspicious about in every reality, is whether it is phantastical. What allows us to escape from it, is that an impossibility in the

symbolic formula which we are able to draw from it demonstrates the Real and it is not for nothing that here, to designate the symbolic in question, we will use the word *term*.

Love after all could be taken as the object of a phenomenology. The literary expression of what has been produced about it is profuse enough for us to be able to presume that one could get something out of it. It is all the same curious that, apart from some authors, Stendhal, Baudelaire, and let us drop surrealism's phenomenology of love whose moralism is astonishing, make no mistake, it is curious that this literary expression should be so short, so that it does not even appear to be the only thing in it that would be of interest to us, is its foreignness. And that, if this is enough to designate everything that is written about it in the 19th Century novel, for everything that comes before, it is the contrary. It is – consult l'*Astrée* which for its contemporaries was quite something – the fact is that we understand so little about it, what it may have been precisely for its contemporaries, that we experience nothing about it but boredom. So that as regards this phenomenology, it is quite difficult for us to do it and even by taking up again what would be its inventory, one cannot deduce from it anything other than the misery of what it was based on.

Psychoanalysis, for its part, went into this in all innocence. Naturally, what it met up with at first was not very cheerful. It must be recognised that it did not limit itself to it, and that what remains of it, in what it opened up first of all as exemplary, is this model of love in so far as it is given by the care given by the mother to the son, to what is inscribed in the Chinese character *Hao* which means the good, or what is good. It is nothing other than this, which means son, *tseu*, and this, which means the woman:

(121) Extending that to the daughter tenderly loving her senile father and even to what I made an allusion to at the end of my *Subversion of the subject*, namely, to the miner whose wife rubs him down before he fucks her, is not something that is going to enlighten us much about the sexual relationship.

The knowledge about truth is useful for the analyst in so far as it permits him to enlarge a little his relationship precisely to these subject-effects, and of which I say he stands surety for them by leaving the field free to the discourse of the analysand. That the analyst should understand the discourse of the analysand seems in effect to be preferable. But to know from where is a question that does not seem to be required in the eyes of the only notation of what he must be for him in the discourse by occupying the position of semblance. It must of course be emphasised that it is as *small o* that he occupies this position of the semblance. The analyst can understand nothing except in the name of what the analysand says, namely, to see himself, not as cause but as effect of this discourse, which does not prevent him from recognising himself in it by right. And that is why it is better that he has taken this path, in the training analysis, which can only of course have been engaged under this title.

There is an aspect of the knowledge about truth which takes on its energy from totally neglecting its content, by ensuring (*d'asséner*) that the signifying articulation is at its place and at its time. In such a way that something which is nothing other than this articulation, whose display in the passive sense is found to take on an active sense and impose itself as a demonstration on the being, on the speaking being who can do nothing other on this occasion than recognise, for the signifier, not only its dwelling in it, but of being nothing other than its mark. Because the freedom to choose one's axioms, namely, the starting point chosen for this demonstration, only consists in undergoing as subject the consequences of their not being free.

Starting simply from the fact that the truth can be constructed starting simply from 0 and 1, which was done only at the beginning of the last century, somewhere between Boole and Morgan with the emergence of mathematical logic. Which means that it must not be believed that 0 and 1 here note the opposition between truth and error. It is a revelation that only takes on its value *nachträglich*, by Frege and Cantor, from the fact that this 0, described as that of error, which encumbered the Stoics for whom it was that, and that that led to this charming folly of material implication which not for nothing was refused by some people. Because of the fact that it posits that the implication that gives rise to the result of truth (122) formulated from error is the veritable one. The error implying the truth is a true implication. It is nothing of the kind in the position of the following: (0 1) 1 with ~~mathematical~~ logic. That 0 implies 1 is a notable implication of 1, namely, of the true. 0 has just as much truth-value as 1, as 1, because the 0 is not the negation of the truth 1, but the truth of the lack which consists in the fact that 2 lacks 1. Which means, on the plane of truth, that the truth can only speak by affirming itself on occasion, as was done throughout the centuries, as being the double truth, but never as being the complete truth.

0 is not the negation of anything whatsoever, in particular of any multitude. It plays its role in the building up of number. It is quite accommodating, as everyone knows. If there were only 0's, how sweetly everything would flow! But what it indicates, is that when it is necessary for there to be two of them, there will never be more than one, and that, is a truth. 0 implies 1, the all implying One, is to be taken not as the false implying the true, but as two trues, one implying the other. But also affirming that the true will never be except by missing its partner.

The only thing that the 0 is opposed to, and resolutely, is to have a relation to 1 such that 2 may result from it. It is not true, which I am marking with the appropriate bar, that 0 implying 1, implies 2:

$$(0 \longrightarrow 1) \longrightarrow 2.$$

How then grasp what is involved in this 2, without which it is clear that no number can be constructed? I did not talk about numerating them, but constructing them. This indeed is why the last time I brought you as far as aleph . It was in order to make you sense, in passing, that in the generation from one cardinal number to another, in the counting of subsets, something somewhere is counted as such which is another *One*, which I marked by Pascal's triangle, while pointing out that each figure, which on the right marks the number of parts, is made up of the addition of what corresponds to it as parts in the preceding set.

It is this 1, this 1 that I characterised when it was a matter of 3 for example, namely, AB opposed to C, and from BA which comes to the same thing; as regards what is involved in the 4, it is necessary that to the AB, to BA, to AC, there should be ABC, the juxtaposition of elements of the preceding set, their juxtaposition as such, which come into account simply because of 1.

This is what I called *the sameness of the difference*. Because it is in as far as nothing other in their property exists except to be difference, that the elements that come here to support the subsets, that these elements are themselves counted in the generation of parts that are going to follow.

I insist. What is in question, is what is at stake as regards the enumerated, it is the extra One (*l'Un en plus*) in so far as it is counted as such in what is enumerated, in the aleph () of its parts at each passage of a number to its successor. It is to be counted as such from difference as property, that the multiplication that is expressed in the exponential 2^{n-1} of the parts of the upper set, of its bipartition which is proved in the aleph, what, to be put to the test of the enumerable? That it is there that it is revealed in so far as from a One, from the One that

is at stake, it is another that is at stake, that what is constituted starting from the 1 and from the 0 as inaccessibility to the 2 is only given at the level of the aleph, namely, of the actual infinity.

To end I am going to make you sense it and in a quite simple form which is the following, of what one can say as regards what is involved in whole numbers concerning a property which is supposed to be that of accessibility. Let us define this from the fact that a number is accessible by being able to be produced either as a sum, or as exponentiation of numbers that are smaller than it. In this respect, the start of numbers is confirmed by not being accessible and very precisely up to 2. The matter interests us very specially as regards this 2, since as regards the relationship of the 1 to 0, I sufficiently underlined that the 1 is generated from the lack marked by the 0.

With 0 and 1, when you add them, or when you put them with one (124) another, indeed 1 by itself in an exponential relation, never will the 2 be reached. The number 2 in the sense that I have just posited it, that it can from a summation or from an exponentiation be generated from smaller numbers, the test proves to be negative; there is no 2 that is generated by means of the 1 and of the 0. A remark of Gödel is enlightening here, it is precisely because the aleph₀ () namely, the actual infinite, is what is produced in the same case. While as regards everything involved in whole numbers starting from 2, begin with 3, 3 is made with 1 and 2, 4 can be made from a 2 put at its proper exponentiation and so on. There is no number that cannot be realised by one of these two operations starting from numbers smaller than it.

This is precisely what is lacking and the reason why at the level of aleph₀ there is reproduced this flaw that I am calling inaccessibility. There is properly speaking no number which, whether one uses it to make of the indefinite addition with all its predecessors, indeed with all its successors, nor either by taking it to as high an exponent as you wish, that will ever accede to aleph.

It is singular, and this is what today I must leave to one side even though I may take it up again, if that interests some people, in a smaller circle, it is quite striking that from Cantor's construction there results that there is no aleph that starting from \aleph_0 cannot be held to be accessible. It is no less true that in the opinion of those who made this difficulty in set theory progress, it is only on the supposition that in these alephs, there are inaccessible, that there can be reintroduced into what is involved in whole numbers what I will call consistency.

In other words that, without this supposition, the inaccessible being produced somewhere in the alephs, what is at stake and what I started from, is something that is designed to suggest to you the usefulness of the fact that there is *dlun*, so that you may be able to understand what is involved in this bipartition that is fleeting at every instant, of this bipartition between the man and the woman. Everything that is not man...is it woman? One might tend to admit it. But since the woman is *not all*, why would everything that is not woman be man? This bipartition, this impossibility of applying, in this matter of gender, something that is supposed to be the principle of contradiction, that nothing less is necessary than to admit the inaccessibility of something beyond the \aleph_0 for the contradiction to be consistent, that one is grounded in saying that what is not 1 is 0, and that what is not 0 is 1, this is what I am indicating to you as (125) being what ought to allow the analyst to understand a little more than through the spectacles of the little *o*-object what is produced, what is produced in terms of an effect, what is created of the *One* by a discourse which is only based on the foundation of the signifier.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 17 May 1972

You wouldn't have a piece of white paper?

What?....Good!

There you are. This revolves around..., what analysis leads us to formulate, this function, of that with respect to which it is a matter of knowing whether there exists, whether there exists an x which satisfies the function .

So then, naturally, this presupposes articulating what existence may be. It is almost certain that, historically, this notion of existence only arose with the intrusion of the real, of the mathematical real as such. But this does not prove anything because we are not here to do a history of thought, there can be no history of thought, thought is a flight (*fuite*) in itself. It projects under the name of memory, is that not so, the failure to recognise its.....its changing texture.

All of this does not prevent us trying to conduct a certain mapping out and, to start from what not by chance I wrote in the form of functions. I began to state something which, I hope, will be of help to you, a statement that if I write it, it is in a sense, in the sense that it is a function unrelated to anything whatsoever which founds from them – *d'e.u.x. – One*.

So then you see that the whole trick concerns the subjunctive which belongs at once to the verb *fonder* and to the verb *fondre*. *D'eux* is (128) not melted into *One*, nor *One* founded by two. This is what...this is what Aristophanes says in a very pretty little fable in the *Symposium*. They were separated in two, they were first of all in the form of...a beast with two backs or a beast with an egg shaped back.

Which, of course, if the fable dreamt in the slightest way for an instant of being something other than a fable, namely, be consistent, would in no way imply that they should not remake their young with two backs, with egg shaped backs. This is something that luckily nobody notices because a myth is a myth and this one says enough about it, it is the one that I first of all projected in a more modern form in the shape of . This is, in short, what as regards sexual relationships, is presented to us as a kind of discourse – I am talking about the mathematical function – a kind of discourse, at least I am proposing it to you as a model which, on this point, might allow us to ground something other than the semblance...*ou pire*.

Good! This morning I, I began with the worst and despite everything, I do not think it is superfluous to let you know about it, even if it were only to see where that might lead. It was in connection with this little cut of the electricity supply. I don't know whether you had it, but I had it until 10 o'clock. It really pissed me off, because that is the time when I usually put together, I rethink these little notes, and that did not make things easy for me. What's more, because of the same cut, someone broke a tooth-glass that I was very fond of. If there are people here who are fond of me, they could send me another one. In that way I will perhaps have several, which will allow me to break all of them except the one that I like. I have a little courtyard explicitly designed for that. So then I said to myself, in thinking that, of course, that this cut did not come from anyone, that came from a decision of the workers! Me for my part I have a respect that one cannot even imagine for the kindness of this thing that is called a cut, a strike. What delicacy to stop at that! But there it seemed to me that, given the time...what?

The audience – We can't hear a thing.

J Lacan – You can't hear? You can't hear? I was in the process of saying that a strike was the most social thing in the world, that it represents a respect for the social bond which is something fabulous. But here there was a point in this cutting of the current which had the

meaning of a strike. The fact is that it was precisely at the time when, just like me, getting my breakfast ready, like that to speak to you now, might this not also annoy the one who, despite everything, being on this occasion the wife of the worker, is called, from the very mouth of the worker who – all the same, I associate with some of them – is called a *bourgeoise*! It is true that this is what they are called! And then all the same I set about dreaming. Because all of this holds together. There are workers, those who are exploited. It is all the same indeed because they prefer that to this sexual exploitation of the bourgeois woman! There you are! That is worse. It is the...*ou pire*. You understand? Because, what is the point of pronouncing articulations on things that one can do nothing about. One cannot say that sexual relationships are only presented in the form of exploitation. It is before, it is because of this that exploitation is organised because there is not even this exploitation.

There you are, that is worse, it is the...*ou pire*. It is not serious. It is not serious even though one clearly sees that this is where a discourse that might not be a semblance ought to go, but it is a discourse that would end up badly. It would not be at all a social bond, which is what it is *necessary* for a discourse to be. Good! So then what is at stake now is the psychoanalytic discourse and it is a matter of ensuring that the one who plays the function of *small o* in it holds a position – I already explained that the last time, of course, this passed over you like water off a duck's back, but anyway some all the same seem to have got, like that, a little wet – should hold the position of a semblance. Those who are really interested in that, I had all the same some echoes of it, this moved them. There are some psychoanalysts with things that torment them, that cause them anxiety from time to time.

That is not what I am saying that, that I am insisting on the fact that the *little o-object* ought to hold the position of a semblance, it is not to load them with anxiety, I would even prefer if they did not have any. Anyway, it is not a bad sign that this gave them some because that

means that my discourse is not completely superfluous, that it may take on a sense. But that is not enough. The fact that a discourse has a sense assures absolutely nothing, because, it is at least necessary that one should be able to locate this sense, is that not so. If you carry out a Brownian motion indeed at every instant it has a meaning. This indeed is what makes the position of the psychoanalyst difficult, it is because his function is the displacing of the *little o-object*. And since it was not in connection with the (130) psychoanalyst that I made the *little o-object* come down from heaven the first time. I began with a little graph which was designed to give you the core, or the map, for the *Formations of the unconscious* to circumscribe it a point from which it could not move. In the position of semblance, it is much less easy, much less easy to stay there because, the *little o-object* slips away in a flash between your paws, since it is, as I already explained, when I began, to talk about it in connection with language. The fact is that *it runs, it runs, the ferret* in everything that you say. At every instant it is elsewhere.

So then, that is why we are trying to grasp from where there could be situated something that is beyond sense, of this sense which ensures moreover that I cannot obtain any other effect than anxiety when it is not at all my aim. That is why we are interested in the fact that the real should be anchored, this real that I say, not for nothing, is mathematical. Because, when all is said and done, from experience, from the experience of what is at stake, of what is formulated, of what is written on occasion, we see, we can always put our finger on the fact that here, there is something that resists, I mean about which one cannot just say any old thing. You cannot give to the mathematical real any meaning you like. It is even quite striking that those who, in short, at a recent epoch have approached this real with the preconceived idea of making it account for its meaning starting from the true, there was like that a very bizarre person, whom you surely know by reputation, because he has created a little stir in the world, who was called Bertrand Russell, who is at the heart of this adventure

and it is all the same he who formulated something like the following: that mathematics, is something which is articulated in such a way that when all is said and done one does not even know whether what is articulated in it is true, or whether it has a meaning.

That does not prevent that precisely, it proves the following. Which is that one cannot give it any one whatsoever, either in the order of truth, nor in the order of meaning. And that it resists to the point that, to end up at this result that I consider to be a success, the very success, is that not so, the style in which this imposes itself, that it is the real. The fact is precisely that neither the true nor meaning dominate in it, they are secondary. And that from there, the position, this secondary position, of these two things that are called the true and meaning remained unusual for them. Anyway that this gives a touch of the staggers to people when they take the trouble to (131) think. This was the case for Bertrand Russell, he thought, it was...it is an aristocratic idiosyncrasy, is it not, and there is really no reason for finding that this is an essential function. But those who construct – I am not being ironical – the *Theory of sets* have indeed enough to do in this real to find the time to think on the side.

The way in which people engaged along a path not only that they cannot get out of but which also leads somewhere by necessity, and then what is more to a fruitfulness, means that they feel they are dealing with something quite different to what is nevertheless used, and what was the approach in the *initium* of this theory. It was to question everything that was involved in this real, because this is where people started from because, people could not fail to see that number was real, and that for some time indeed there was a battle about the *One*.

It was all the same no small matter to see that you could put in question whether the real number had something to do with the *One*, with the *One* like that, the first of the whole numbers, of the numbers

described as natural. The fact is, people had the time, from the 17th Century up to the beginning of the 19th Century, to approach number a little bit differently than the way the ancients had done. If I start from that, it is indeed because that is what is the essential. Not alone *Yad'lun*, but it can be seen from this that the *One*, for its part, does not think. It does not think therefore I am, in particular. When I say it does not think therefore I am, I hope that you remember that even Descartes, this is not what he says...He says *it thinks (ça se pense)*, “*therefore I am*” in inverted commas. The *One* does not think, even all alone, but it says something; this is even what distinguishes it, and it did not wait for people to pose questions about it, about its relationships, the question about what that means from the point of view of truth. It did not even wait for logic. Because it is logic. Logic is to locate in grammar what takes the form of the position of truth, what in language makes it adequate to be truth. Adequate does not mean that it will always succeed; so then by carefully seeking its forms, people think they are approaching what is involved in the truth.

But before Aristotle noticed that, namely, the relationship to grammar the *One* had already spoken, and not to say nothing. It says what it has to say in *Parmenides*, it is the *One* that speaks itself. It speaks itself, it must indeed be said, aiming at being true, (132) hence naturally the panic that results from it. There is no one, there is no one to talk about people who are in the knowledge business, who do not feel on every occasion that they suffer a heavy blow from it. It breaks the tooth-glass! It is indeed for that reason that after all, even though some put a certain amount of good will into it, a certain courage in saying that after all it can be accepted, even though it is a little far fetched, people have still not been able to master this thing which was nevertheless simple, of seeing that the *One* is, when it is truthful, when it says what it has to say, we see where that leads, in any case to a total disclaiming of any relationship to being.

There is only one thing that comes out of it when it is articulated, it is very exactly the fact that there are not two of them. I told you, it is a statement (*dire*). And you can even find in it, like that, within hand's reach, the confirmation of what I say when I say that the truth can only half-say itself; because you only have to break up the formula. To say that, it can only say either *yen a*, and as I say *Yad'lun* or indeed *not two*, which is interpreted, interpreted immediately for us as there is no sexual relationship. So then it is already, as you can clearly see, within hand's reach. Of course, not within reach of the *unien* hand of the *One*, to make of it something in the sense of sense. This indeed is why I recommend to those who want to hold the position of the analyst with what that involves in terms of knowledge not to slip away from it, to bring themselves up to date with what of course for them can only be read by working on the *Parmenides*. But this would be all the same a little limited, it is a difficult morsel to chew. Instead of something else happening which makes quite clear – if of course one persists with it, if you...if you submit yourself to it, if you are even broken by it, even – which makes quite clear the distinction there is between a real which is a mathematical real from any one at all of these trifles that start from something or other which is our nauseating position which is called the true or meaning.

Naturally of course, that does not mean that this will not have an effect, a massaging effect, a reinvigorating effect, an inspiring effect, a cleansing effect on what for us will appear to be required with regard to the true or indeed meaning. But precisely, this indeed is what I expect of it, the fact is that by forming yourself to distinguish what simply is involved in the *One*, by approaching this Real that number supports, that will already allow the analyst a lot. I mean that, he may be able from this angle where it is a question of interpreting, to renew meaning, to say things that are because of this a little less short-circuited, a little less changeable, than all the imbecilities that may come to us and of which earlier, *ou pire*, like that, I gave you a sample of starting simply the vexation I encountered this morning. I could

have embroidered like that about the worker and his bourgeois woman and draw a mythology from it. That made you laugh moreover, because in things of this kind, there is..., there is a vast field, there is no lack of meaning and the true, it has even become precisely the university feeding trough.

There are so many of them, there is such a range that someone will surely be found, one day to make an ontology out of what I am telling you, to say that...that I said that the word, had the effect of filling this gap that I am articulating, there is no sexual relationship. It is quite evident like that. A subjectivist interpretation, is it not? It is because he cannot tickle it that he goes on talking about it. That is simple, it is simple! What I for my part am attempting, is something different, it is to ensure that there are fewer imbecilities in your discourse – I am talking about analysts. And for that, you would try to ventilate meaning with elements that may be a little new.

So then, it is nevertheless not, it is nevertheless not a requirement that is not necessary. Because it is quite clear that there is no way to divide up any two series – *any*, I am saying – of attributes which would make up a male series on the one hand and on the other hand the feminine series. I did not say *man* at first in order not to create confusion.

Because I am going to embroider that still more to remain in the...in the worse. Obviously it is tempting, even for me. Me for my part, I am amusing myself. And then I am sure to amuse you in showing that what is called the active, if it is on this that you base yourselves because, naturally, it is common currency, that that is what a man is, he is active the little dear! In the sexual relationship then, it seems to me that it is, it is rather the woman who puts some vim into it. Good! Then, it has only to be seen all the same in positions that we will not at all describe as primitive, but it is because they are found in the Third World (*le tiers monde*), which is the world of Monsieur Thiers, is it not, yes, that – that it is not obvious that in normal life – I am not talking of course about the guys in the Gas and Electricity company of

France who have taken their distance from it, who have rushed into work – but in a life like (134) that, let us call it simply what it is, what it is everywhere except in...when a great Christian subversion took place, our great Christian subversion, man does no work, the woman grinds, she pounds, she stitches, she does the shopping and she still finds a way, in these solid civilisations that are not lost, she still finds a way to wiggle her bottom afterwards for...I am talking about a dance of course, huh! – for the gleeful satisfaction of the guy who is there! So then as regards what is involved in active and passive allow me to...it's true that he hunts. And it is nothing to laugh about, my little friends! It is very important!

Because you are provoking me then I will continue to amuse myself. It is unfortunate because that way I will not get to the end of what I had to tell you today about the *One*. It is 2 o'clock. But all the same because that makes you laugh, hunting, I don't know, I don't know if all the same despite everything, it is not absolutely superfluous to...if it is not absolutely superfluous to see in it precisely the virtue of the man, the virtue precisely through which he shows himself to be, he shows himself to be the best thing about himself, to be passive. Because, according to everything that we know, all the same, I don't know if you really realise, because of course, all of you here are incapable (*des Jean foutre*), and unless there are some countrymen here, nobody hunts, but even if there were country people here, they hunt badly. For the country person – a countryman is not necessarily a man, huh, whatever one may say about it – for the countryman, game is there to be shot, bang, bang. All of that is brought back to him. That is not what hunting is about at all! Hunting when it exists, you only have to see the trance that it puts him into, because it is known, after all, tiny little traces were found of all the propitiatory offerings they made to the thing which nevertheless was no longer there. You must understand that they were after all no madder than us, a beast that is killed is a killed beast.

Only, if they were not able to kill the beast, it is because they were so well subjected to everything that is involved in his approach, of his track, of his limits, of his territory, of his sexual preoccupations, in order to be precisely, for their part, substituted to something that is not, all of that, to non-defence, to the non-closure, to the non- limits of the beast, to life it must be said. And when they had to take that life, after having become it so much for their part this very life, it can be understood of course, huh, that they found that this (135) was not only lousy, but that it was dangerous. That this could well happen to them also.

It may be things like this that all the same made some people think like that, because these things all the same continue to be experienced. I heard that, myself, formulated in a curious way by someone extremely intelligent, a mathematician who, who – but in this case the lad is extrapolating all the same, but anyway I will put it to you because it is stimulating – that the nervous system in an organism, was perhaps nothing other than what results from an identification to the prey, huh? Good! I am throwing out this idea like that, I am presenting it to you, you will make what you want of it, of course, but you could make up with that a new theory of evolution that might be a little bit more amusing than the preceding ones. I am presenting it to you all the more willingly first of all, because it is not my own. It was palmed off on me too. But I am sure that...that that will excite ontological brains.

It is also true of course for the fisherman. Indeed in everything through which the man is woman. Because the way that a fisherman puts his hand under the belly of the trout there under his rock, there must be a trout fisherman here all the same, there's a good chance, he must know what I am saying there. That is something! Anyway all of that does not give us a very clear division on the subject of the active and the passive. So then I am not going to develop it because it is enough for me to confront each of these habitual couples with any

attempt whatsoever of bisexual distribution to arrive at results that are just as farcical. So then what could that be?

When I say *Yad'lun* – I must all the same sweep my own doorstep and then I do not see why today I would not remain there because I will be speaking to you then on Thursday, Thursday 1st June I believe, something like that. Can you imagine, the first Thursday of June I am forced to come back from a few days' holidays in order not to miss Sainte-Anne.

So then I will already at this point, all the same, make the remark that *Yad'lun* does not mean – it seems to me that all the same for many that ought to be already known, but why not? – that means that there is an individual. This indeed is why, you understand, that I am asking you to root this *Yad'lun* in what it comes from. Namely, that there is no other existence of the *One* than mathematical existence. There is *One* something, *One* argument (136) which satisfies a formula, and an argument that is completely emptied of meaning, it is simply the *One* as *One*. This is what I had intended, at the start, to clearly mark for you in set theory. I will perhaps all the same be able to indicate it to you at least before leaving you, but it is first of all necessary also to liquidate the following that not even the idea of the individual, constitutes in any case the *One*. Because, you can see clearly all the same, that this could be within reach, as regards what is involved in the sexual relationship, on which in short, a lot of people imagine that it is based, and that there are as many individuals on one side as on the other, in principal, at least among speaking beings. The number of men and of women apart from some exceptions, is that not so, I mean little exceptions, in the British Isles, there are fewer men than women, there are big massacres naturally of men, good! But anyway this does not prevent each having his own. The fact that they go one by one is not at all enough to justify the sexual relationship.

It is even funny that you have seen, that there is here a kind of impurity of set theory and of this idea of biunivocal correspondence. You clearly see here how a set is attached to the class and that the class, like everything that has an attribute pinned to it, is something that is related to the sexual relationship. Only it is precisely this, it is precisely this that I am asking you to be able to grasp thanks to the function of the set. The fact is that there is a *One* distinct from what unifies a class as an attribute. There is a transition through the intermediary of this biunivocal correspondence. There are as many of them on one side as on the other and that some people base the idea of monogamy on that. One might ask oneself how this is sustainable, but anyway it is in the Gospel. Since there are just as many, until there is a social catastrophe, this happened it appears in the middle of the Middle Ages in Germany, it was decreed it appears at that time that the sexual relationship could be something other than biunivocal.

But there is something rather amusing, it is that the *sex-ratio*, there are people who posed themselves the problem as such, are there as many males as females? And there was a literature about it, which is really very sharp, very amusing, because this problem is in short a problem that is most frequently solved by what we will call chromosome selection. The most frequent case is obviously the (137) distribution of the two sexes in a quantity of individuals equally reproduced in each sex, equal in number. But it is really very nice that the question should have been posed about what happens when an imbalance begins to occur. One can easily demonstrate that in certain cases of this imbalance, this imbalance can only increase, if one keeps to chromosome selection, that we will not describe as random because it is a matter of distribution. But then the very elegant solution that was given to it, is that in this case it ought to be compensated for by natural selection. Here we see natural selection showing its naked face. I mean that it can be summarised in saying that the stronger are necessarily the least numerous and since they are the stronger, they prosper and that then they are going to catch up with the other in

number. The connection between this idea of natural selection with precisely the sexual relationship is one of those cases where there is clearly seen what one risks in any approach to the sexual relationship - it is to remain at the level of a witticism. And in effect, everything that is said about it is of this order. If it is important that one should be able to articulate something other than... something that makes people laugh, this indeed is what we are seeking to guarantee the position of the analyst from something other than what it appears to be, in many cases, a *gag*.

The starting point can be read in the fact that in set theory that there is a function of element [member]. To be an element in a set, is to be something that has nothing to do with belonging a register that can be described as universal, namely, something that falls under the influence of an attribute. Set theory attempts to disassociate, to disarticulate in a definitive fashion the predicate from the attribute. What, until this theory, characterises the notion precisely at stake on what is involved in the sexual type, in so far as it is supposed to initiate something from a relationship, is very precisely the fact that the universal is grounded on a common attribute. There is there besides the beginning of the logical distinction between the attribute and the subject, and the subject is grounded by that. This is why something that is distinguished can be called an attribute.

From this distinction of the attribute, what results, is quite naturally the fact that one does not put in the same set apples and oranges for example. Over against this category that is called class, there is that of the set in which not only apples and oranges are compatible but (138) that in a set as such of each of these two species there can only be *One*. In a set there can only be, if nothing distinguishes one apple from another, there can only be *one* apple, just as there can only be *one* orange. The *One* as pure difference is what distinguishes the notion of the element. The *One* as attribute is therefore distinct from it. The difference between the *One* of difference and the *One* of attribute is the

fact that when you use to define a class any attributive statement whatsoever, the attribute does not come in this definition, as a supernumerary. Namely, that if you say *man is good*, and if in this connection, what can be said, because who is not obliged to say it, to posit that man is good does not rule out you having to account for the fact that he does not always correspond to this appellation. You always find moreover enough reasons to show that he is capable of not corresponding to this attribute, of experiencing a failure to live up to it. This is the theory you construct and commit yourself to, you have really only.....you have all meaning at your disposition in order, in order to tackle it, to explain that from time to time all the same he is bad but that changes nothing in his attribute. That if you manage now to balance things from the point of view of number, how many of them are there who hold to it and how many do not correspond to it? The attribute *good* will not come into the balance *in addition*, in addition to each one of the good men.

This is precisely the difference between the *One* of difference, it is that when it is a matter of articulating its consequence, this *One* of difference has, as such, to be counted in what is stated about what grounds it which is a set and which has parts. The *One* of difference, is not only countable, but ought to be counted in the parts of the set.

I am coming to 2 o'clock precisely. I can only then indicate to you what will be the continuation of what, as usual, I am led to cut, namely, very often in any old way. And, today no doubt, by reason precisely of another cut, which was that of my electricity this morning, with its consequences, I am therefore led to being only able to give you an indication of what, will be the reprise of this affirmation, a pivotal affirmation. It is this, the relationship of this *One* that has to be counted *in addition* to that which, in what I state as, not as supplying for, but deploying itself in a locus that in place of the sexual relationship, is specified by *there exists* not of x, but saying that this of x *is not* the truth, that it is from there that the *One*

arises which means that this ought to be (139) put, and it is the only characteristic element, ought to be put on the side of what grounds man as such:

Does that mean that this foundation specifies him sexually? This is very precisely what will subsequently be put in question, because naturally, it nevertheless remains that the relation to of x,

is what defines man, here attributively, as all men (*tout homme*).

What is this all (*tout*) or this all (*tous*)? What is meant by *all men* in so far as they ground one side of this articulation of supplying? This is where we will take things up again when we see one another the next time when I meet you. The question all (*tous*), what is an all, is to be completely restated starting from the function that *Yad'lun* articulates.

Seminar 11: Wednesday 14 June 1972

[Lacan, before beginning, writes on the board]

*That one says
- as a fact –
remains forgotten behind what is said,
in what is understood.*

Naturally this statement which is assertive in its form as a universal is connected with the modal in terms of what it is uttering about existence.

So then! Put a bit of yourselves into it, because it seems, like the last time, to be going rather badly. Am I managing to make myself heard this time? A little more? Good! I will do my best. Sibony, come a

little bit closer. Come a little closer, you never know, that may be of some use later. Can you hear me?

So then taking into account what I called earlier the mixing of communications that may have occurred between my audience here and that of Sainte-Anne, I suppose that now they are unified, make no mistake.

You have been able to see that we have gone from what I called one day here with a predicate formed for your use, specifically the unian (*l'unien*), we passed the last time at Sainte-Anne to the term of a different kind of treatment which might be put forward with (142) the term, with the form of *unier*, *unien*, *unier*. What I spoke to you about, what I put forward the last time at Sainte-Anne, is the pivot that is taken in this order that is founded – write *fonde*, ground it in fact, whether it is *fondé–fondu* (grounded–melted). What's wrong?

The audience – We can't hear anything!

I am saying then that this *unier* which is based, and I asked you to ensure that this founded should be...should not appear too fundamental, it is what I called leaving in the melted down, this *unier* which is grounded. There is *One* of them, there exists *One* of them which says no. That is not quite the same thing as denying it. But this forging of the term *unier*, as a verb which can be conjugated and from which we can advance in short as regards what is involved in the function, in the function represented in analysis by the myth of the father, unifies. It is this that those who are able to hear through the petards, the point on which I would like precisely today, anyway allow you, let us say to accommodate yourselves.

So then the father unifies. In the myth he has this correlate of *all*, *all the women*. It is here, if one follows my quantifying inscriptions, that there is room to introduce a modification. He unifies them certainly, but precisely *not all* (*pas toutes*). Here we touch at once on what he is not ... not something that I was the first to say, namely, the kinship of logic and myth, it simply marks that one may be able to correct the other.

That, that is the work that remains before us. For the moment I recall, is that not so, that, with what I have allowed myself, anyway, in terms of approximations of the father, with what I inscribed about the *l'épater*, you see that the path that on occasion joins myth to derision is no stranger to us. This does not interfere in any way with the fundamental status of the structures involved. It is amusing that, like that, there are people who discover, who discover after some delay, this something that I can say indeed from my place, that for the moment all this effervescence, this turbulence taking place around terms like the signifier, the sign, meaning, semiotics, is a little general. The singular delays shown by everything that for the moment is center

stage are curious.

There is a very good little journal, anyway no worse than another, in which I see (143) emerging under the title of *l'Atelier d'écriture* an article, good God, no worse than any other which is called *l'Agonie du Signe* - can you hear me? - which is called the *Agony of the Sign*. Agony is always very touching. Agony means struggle. But also agony means that one is about to faint and in that case the agony of the sign is really pathetic. I would have preferred anyway that all of this did not turn around the pathetic. It starts, it starts from a charming invention, from the possibility of forging a new signifier which would be that of *fourmi*, *fourmidable*. In effect this whole article is *fourmidable* and it begins by posing the question of what may well be the status of *fourmidable*? For my part I really like that. All the more so because it is someone who all the same has been very aware for a long time of a certain number of things that I put forward and who for, in short, at the start of this article, believes himself obliged to play the innocent. Namely, to hesitate, as regards this *fourmidable*, as to whether it should be classified as a metaphor or as a metonymy and to say that, there is something that is neglected then in Jakobson's theory. This would consist in crashing words one against the other. But I explained that a long time ago! I wrote *The agency of the letter* explicitly for that, S over s with the result one, a meaning-effect, ha!... We have displacement, we have condensation, it is very exactly the path along which in effect one can create, which is all the same a little bit more amusing and useful than *fourmidable* one can create *unier*. And also, this is of some use.

It can be used to explain to you along another path what I completely renounced from tackling by that of the Name-of-the-father. Because, I renounced it because I was prevented from doing so at a particular moment, and then that it was precisely the people to whom this would have been some use who prevented me. That would have been of use to them in their personal intimacy. They are people particularly implicated in the business of the Name-of-the-father. There is in the world a very special clique, like that, that one could pinpoint from a religious tradition, they are the ones that this would have exposed to the air, but I do not see why I should devote myself especially to them.

So then I took up the story of what Freud tackled as best he could, precisely, to avoid his own history, is it not *el'shaddai* in particular, it is the name by which he designates himself, he whose name is not pronounced. He fell back on myths, then he did (144) something that was very proper in short, a little aseptic. He took it no further but this indeed is what is at stake, but people let go the opportunities of taking up again, of taking up again what was directing him, and which would now ought to ensure that the psychoanalyst is at his place in his discourse. His opportunity has gone, of course. I already said it. So that, in the plane that was bringing me back from somewhere or other, which was bringing me back from Milan from where I came back

yesterday evening, good! I did not bring it. It is really very good, it is in the plane, in something that is called *Atlas* and which is distributed to all passengers by Air France. There is a very nice little article, luckily I do not have it, I left it at home, luckily because that would have led me to read out passages for you and there is nothing more boring than listening to someone reading, there is nothing as boring as that!

Anyway, there are psychologists, psychologists of the highest level, is that not so, who are working in America carrying out, carrying out investigations on dreams. Because one investigates dreams, is that not so. People investigate and they notice, in fact, that sexual dreams are very rare. These people dream about everything; they dream about sport, they dream about a pile of things, they dream about falling. Anyway, there is not an overwhelming majority of sexual dreams. From which it results, does it not, that since this is the general conception, we are told in this text, of psychoanalysis, to believe that dreams are sexual. Well then! The general public, the general public which precisely is made from the diffusion of psychoanalysis diffusion – you also are for your part a general public – well then, the general public naturally is going to be put out, is that not so, and the whole soufflé is going to collapse like that, be flattened in the bottom of the pot. It is all the same curious that no one, in short, in this supposed general public, because all of that, is supposition, anyway it is true that with a certain resonance, all dreams, this is what Freud is supposed to have said, that they were all sexual; he never said that precisely! Never, never said that!

He said that dreams were *dreams of desire*. He never said that it was sexual desire! Only to understand the relationship there is between the fact that dreams are dreams of desire and this order of the sexual which is characterized by what I am in the process of advancing because, I needed time to tackle it and not to create disorder in the mind of these charming persons, is that not so, who ensured that at the end of me spending ten years telling them things, is that not so, they dreamt of only one thing, re-entering into the (145) bosom of the International Psychoanalytic Association. Everything that I had been able to say, was of course a beautiful exercise, an exercise in style. They were serious. The serious is the International Psychoanalytic.

Yes! Which means that now I can advance, and let it be understood, that there is no sexual relationship, and that that is why there is a whole order that functions *at the place* where this relationship is supposed to be. And it is there, in this order, that something is a consequence as an effect of language, namely, desire. And that people can advance perhaps a tiny little bit and think that when Freud said that the dream is the satisfaction of a desire, it is satisfaction in what sense?

When I think that I am still at that, is that not so, that no one...all these people who spend their time confusing what I say, making noise about

it, no one has ever yet taken it into his head to advance this thing which is nevertheless the strict consequence of everything that I have put forward, that I articulated in the most precise fashion, if I remember correctly, in '57 – wait a minute, not even! in '55, in connection with the dream of Irma's injection – I took, to show how a text of Freud's should be treated, I clearly explained to them the ambiguities in it. That it was there, precisely, but not at all in the unconscious, at the level his current preoccupations, that Freud interprets this dream of desire which has nothing to do with sexual desire, even if there are all the implications of transference that suit us. The term *inmixing of subjects*, I put it forward in '55, can you imagine? Seventeen years, huh? And then it is clear that – I should publish it, like that, because if I did not publish it it was because I was absolutely disgusted by the way in which it was taken up again in a certain book that came out under the title of *Self-analysis* – it was my text, putting it there, in a way that no one understood anything about it.

What does a dream do? It does not satisfy desire, for fundamental reasons that I am not going to set about developing today because this would be worth four or five seminars, for the reason which is simply the following and which is tangible, and which Freud says. That the only fundamental desire in sleep, is the desire to sleep. That makes you laugh, because you never heard that. Very good! Nevertheless, it is in Freud. How come that your common sense does not immediately grasp what sleeping consists of? It consists in (146) the fact that what is here in my tetrad, the semblance, the truth and enjoyment and the surplus enjoying – I don't have to rewrite it on the board, do I? – what it is a matter of suspending, that is what sleep is designed for, all you have to do is look at an animal sleeping to notice it, what it is a matter of suspending precisely, is this ambiguousness that there is in the relationship to the body with itself, the enjoying (*le jouir*).

If there is a possibility for this body to accede to the enjoying of itself, it is quite obviously everywhere, it is when he gives himself a knock, when he hurts himself, that is enjoyment. So then man has here little ways in that the others do not have, he can make a goal of it. In any case when he is sleeping, that's the end of it. It is a matter precisely of him coiling up this body, it becomes a ball. To sleep, is not to be disturbed. Enjoyment, all the same, is disturbing. Naturally he is disturbed, but in any case as long as he is sleeping, he can hope not to be disturbed. That is why starting from there all the rest vanishes; there is no longer any question either about a semblance, nor about truth, because all of that, that holds together, it's the same thing, nor of surplus enjoying.

Only there you are, what Freud says, is that the signifier, for its part, continues during this time to scoot around. This indeed is why even when I am sleeping, I am preparing my seminars. Monsieur Poincaré discovered Fuchsian functions.....

The audience – [?]

J Lacan – What's wrong?

The audience – A pollution!

J Lacan – Who mentioned that term? You must be particularly intelligent. I have already rejoiced publicly that one of my analysands, I don't know whether she is there but – a particularly sensitive person spoke in effect in connection with my discourse, of intellectual pollution. You see pollution is a very fundamental dimension. We must not, probably, push things to that point today. But you look so proud at having made this term emerge that I suspect that you understand nothing about it. Nevertheless, you are going to see that I am going right away, not simply make use of it, but rejoice a second time that someone brought it up, because this is precisely the difficulty of analytic discourse. I pick up this interruption, I jump on it, I take on board something that, in the (147) urgency of a year ending, I will find myself then having the opportunity to say. It is the following, since it is at the place of the semblance that analytic discourse is characterized by situating the *o*-object. Can you imagine, sir, you who believe you have carried out there a distinguished action, that you are going precisely in the direction of what I have to put forward. Namely, that the most characteristic pollution in this world, is very precisely the *little o-object* from which man takes, and you also you take your substance, and that it is by having, from this pollution which is the most certain effect on the surface of the earth...by having to make of it in one's body, in one's existence as an analyst, a representation, that he looks at it more than once. The little darlings are sick of it, and I should tell you that I am not either for my part any more at ease than them in this situation.

What I try to show them, is that it is not altogether impossible to do it a little decently. Thanks to logic, I manage - if they were willing to allow themselves to be tempted - to make tolerable for them this position that they occupy as *small o* in the analytic discourse. In order to allow oneself to conceive of the fact that it is obviously no small thing to raise this function to a position of semblance which is the key position in every discourse. This indeed is the mainspring of what I always tried to get people to sense as the resistance – and it is only too understandable, - of the analyst, to really fulfilling his function. You must not believe that the position of semblance is easy for anyone. It is really only tenable at the level of the scientific discourse and for a simple reason, which is that there, what is raised to the position of commandment is something that is entirely of the order of the real, in so far as everything that we touch in the real, is the *Spaltung*, is the slit, in other words it is the way in which I define the subject. It is because in scientific discourse, it is the capital S, the capital S barred which is there, in the key position, that it holds up.

For the University discourse, it is knowledge. Here the difficulty is

still greater, because of a kind of short circuit because, in order to pretend (*faire semblant*) to know, one must know how to be a semblance. And that is used up quickly. This indeed is why, this indeed is why when I did there, there from where I have come back as I told you earlier, namely, at Milan, I had obviously a much smaller audience than you, say a quarter, but (148) there were a lot of these young people who are those described as being in the movement. There was even an altogether respectable personage of a rather elevated status who happens to be the representative of it there. Does he know or does he not know, I was only told that he was there afterwards. I did not want to question him. Does he know or does he not know that, being there at this high point, what he wants. It is like all of those who are interested here a little by the movement, it is to restore its value to the university discourse; as its name indicates, it culminates in credits (*unités de valeurs*). They wanted to know a little better how to pretend to know. That is what guides them. Well then in effect, it is respectable and why not? The university discourse has a status that is just as fundamental as any other. Simply, what I am marking, is that it is not the same, because this is true, that it is not the same as the psychoanalytic discourse.

And then this is how I was brought over there, good God, how to deal with a new audience and especially if it may be confusing? I tried to explain to them a little bit what my place in the story was. I began by saying that my *Ecrits*, was a publication (*poubellication*) that they must not think that they can find their bearings with it. There was all the same and then the word *seminar* – naturally how get them to understand that, what I was forced to explain, to admit that, that this seminar, is not a seminar. It is a thing that I spout out all alone, my good friends, for years, but there had been a time formerly a time when it merited its name, when there were people who intervened? So then, this is what put me beside myself, to have been forced to get to this point. And since on the return journey someone pressed me to say, well then, how was it that there was a time when it was like a seminar? I said to myself, today I am going to tell them, for the second last time that I am with you, because I will see you one more time, good God, would someone come and say something!

At this point I received a letter from Monsieur Recanati. I am not going to tell you the story for the moment, I am simply going to make it like an intervention coming from the floor. I am simply saying that I

received a letter which was moreover a response to one of mine, from Monsieur Recanati who is here, which proved to my great surprise, is that (149) not so, that he had understood something of what I said this year. So then I am going to allow him to speak because he wanted to talk to you about something that has the closest relationship with what I am trying to open up, in particular with set theory, is that not so, and with mathematical logic. He is going to tell you which.

F Recanati – The letter to which Dr Lacan has just alluded was in fact some remarks and commentaries, on three texts by Peirce that I gave him. Not so much because he did not know them, obviously, but because these texts, precisely, differed from what he had been able, elsewhere, to refer to. What was at stake, on the one hand, were texts on cosmology, and on the other hand, texts relating to mathematics.

I am first of all going to specify the tenor of these three texts before coming to the way in which I can speak about them. As regards mathematics, Peirce gives a critique of the definitions he knows about continuous sets. He examines three definitions, specifically that of Aristotle, that of Kant, and that of Cantor, all of which he criticises, in function of a unique criterion.

The criterion is that he would like there to be marked in each definition the very fact of the definition since, he says, by defining a continuous set, one cannot fail to determine it in a certain way. And this is important for the result of the definition; the very process of the definition ought to be marked somewhere as such.

As regards cosmology, Peirce talks about an almost similar problem, about a similar preoccupation about the problem of the birth of the universe. He problem is that of a before and an after. One cannot reach what there was there before by carrying out a simple analytic operation which would consist in subtracting from what there was after everything that constituted the character of this after. Because one

would only end up through that at an after that had been erased and that it is precisely in the style of this erasure that the after is constituted, which only differs by a precise inscription, here on the style of the erasure of the before. In other words, the before is in a way an after. Or rather the after is a before that is inscribed and one can absolutely not deduce the before from the after because the before which is inscribed in the after, is precisely the after which in this sense has no longer anything to do, precisely, with the before whose property is precisely not to be inscribed.

In other words, it is the inscription that counts, I mean that the before is nothing, this is (150) what Peirce says when he speaks about the birth of the universe: before, there was nothing, but this nothing is all the same a nothing, something specific. Or rather precisely it is not specific, because in any case it is not inscribed, and one can say that everything that is there afterwards is also nothing, but then as nothing, it is inscribed.

This non-inscribed in general that he is going to discover more or less everywhere, and not simply in cosmology, Peirce calls the potential and this is what I am going to say a few words about now.

But before doing this, I would like to say a few words about my position here which is obviously paradoxical, because I am not a specialist in anything, no more in Peirce than in anybody else, and that everything that I am going to say about this author and about others, because I am going to talk about others, is what I am able to pick up from the discourse of Dr Lacan. Even as I speak, I preserve my status as a listener. And how is that possible? Precisely by only signifying in my own discourse, the fact of having listened. This poses the problem of who I am addressing myself to. Because obviously, if I address myself to those who, like me, have listened, this will be of no use to them, and if I address myself to those who have not listened, I can only inscribe the nothing of their non- listening and permit by this an

elaboration which obviously will be of use subsequently and will have nothing to do with the pure nothing that was there at the beginning. In that event then, that would change nothing. And it is in so far as my intervention as a listener does not disturb anything, that I can effectively represent the audience.

Since when all is said and done all the interventions of Aristotle are only presupposed in the discourse of Parmenides and that precisely the quicker it is terminated, the better it is, generally, as regards Aristotle interventions, so that he can himself give a true discourse, it is necessary that in his turn he has a mute listener to whom he can identify, which explains that the other, Aristotle, in the *Metaphysics* says we Platonicians because it is after Plato has spoken, or if you wish that Parmenides has spoken for the other, that he can himself begin to do so. You see the paradox here; but since this paradox is not due to me, I would leave it to Dr Lacan to comment on it afterwards, because I can say nothing about it for my part.

One cannot, says Peirce, oppose the void, the 0 to something, because the 0 is something, (151) it is well known. The void represents something and Peirce says that it forms part of the secondant concepts, important concepts for Peirce that I will come back to a little in what follows. It is not a monad, as inscribed a void, but it is relative. In effect if one posits this void one inscribes it. On this occasion, the inscription of the empty set may give this: \emptyset . This can be recognised as being the empty set considered as an element of the set of parts of the empty set. So then if the void is constituted as *One* and if one wished to repeat a little the operation and make the totality of the parts of the set from the parts of the empty set, one would quickly have something like this: $\{\emptyset\}$, which gives more or less this: \emptyset . And this can be recognised as being very well able to represent the 2. Moreover this can represent the *One*.

It is in this way that one is led to correct this remark that, of course, it is the *repetition of an inexistence* that can ground many things, and specifically, the succession of whole numbers on this occasion. But what interests Peirce in this remark, is that what is repeated, is not inexistence as such, or rather not exactly, it is the inscription of inexistence, insofar as inexistence is marked by this inscription. And this indeed is what he will develop on several occasions in several texts, I will talk to you about it.

We connect up here with his remarks on mathematics. When one wants, he says, to define a system where this inexistence is repeated, it must be specified that it is repeated as inscribed. It is at the beginning that there is an inscription of inexistence. And this is very important for logic. The universal quantor, all by itself, can define nothing. The universal quantor, for Peirce, is something secondant, however paradoxical that may appear, as he says, it is relative to something. What grounds this quantor, is the previous and inscribed annihilation of variables which contradicted it. So then, from a purely methodological point of view, Peirce attacks Cantor. Cantor is wrong because his definition of the continuous specifically refers to all the points of the set.

Peirce specifies that it is necessary to vary the definition from a logical point of view. An oval line is only continuous, because it is impossible to deny that at least one of its points must be true for a function that absolutely does not characterise the set. For example when it is a matter of going from the exterior to the interior, one must necessarily pass by one of the points of the edge.

(152) This is, in a way, a sidelong approach. One cannot posit like that the universal quantor, it is necessary to pass by way of a prior nihilisation, that itself passes, through a prior function. The negation, here, is itself erected into a function and the set of pertinent sets for this function, in the event in the measure there where it is impossible to

deny etc. is the empty set which inscribes the negation as impossible. The same type of example could be taken up eventually in topology. If one listened to Peirce, the theory of fixed points ought to be stated as follows – I am going to write it – . It is impossible to deny that in a distortion of a disk on its edge, at least one point escapes the distortion which authorises it, by this fact even to escape it.

J Lacan – Start that again.

F Recanati – The theorem of fixed points, if one takes for example something like a disk, what is at stake, in a way, what is at stake is distorting a disk on its edge in a continuous manner. It is certain, and it is given as a theorem, that at least one point of the disc escapes this distortion, namely, remains fixed, and that it is because of this fact that there is a point that remains fixed that one can bring about a general distortion. Otherwise it would not be possible, and here, there is obviously a contradiction. Let us say that there is a very clear liaison between this point that escapes and the function that it authorises.

J Lacan – That is, the theorem that has been proved. It is not simply provable, it has been proved. On the other hand, this theorem is symbolised, you could perhaps comment on this, how it is symbolised by this *there exists x*, because it is a formula which is very close, in short, to the one that I am in the habit of inscribing, there exists an x such that it must be denied that there is no x , that it is necessary to deny that there is not existence of x , such that x is denied.

F Recanati – There is indeed a double negation, certainly, but the two negations are not exactly the same, they are not equivalent. And on the other hand, especially this double negation, in the measure that it is inscribed, is not the same thing as simply affirming it. One could have affirmed it. Here, that is why I cited at the beginning the critique of the universal quantor in a way as given like that. If it is the product of a double negation, this first non-inscribed first negation, according to

him, is brought to bear on a negation that (153) has been erected into a function. For example: the points do not remain fixed. Well then, there is a point which precisely, escapes from this function, and in this sense, the necessity is above all to inscribe them. That is why I did it here. And one would have to mark, perhaps in a specific manner what I said was an impossibility. But at the same time, here, it is simply here the empty set posited as the only functioning set for the function of negation.

J Lacan – I believe that what must be underlined here is the fact that the bar drawn here over these two terms each one as denied is an *it is not true that*, an *it is not true* that is frequently used in mathematics, because it is the key point, it is at this that the proof described as contradiction culminates at. It is a matter, in short, of knowing why, in mathematics, it is accepted that one can ground, but only in mathematics, because everywhere else, how could you ground anything whatsoever that can be affirmed on a *it is not true that*?

It is here indeed that the objection comes within mathematics to the use of a proof by absurdity. The question is to know how, in mathematics, the proof by absurdity can ground something, which is proved in effect as such by not leading to contradiction. This is where the domain proper to mathematics is specified. So then it is under this *it is not true that* – it is a matter of giving the status of the negative bar which is the one that I use at a point of my schema, to say that that, is a negation, *, there does not exist an x which satisfied this, denied.*

F Recanati – In Peirce's terms, this bar here is what comes first, is the first inscription. Because he says, the potential – and I was going to come back to that in the class because it is a concept which is finally sufficiently developed – it is the field of the inscription of impossibilities, but before the impossibilities, the non-inscribed impossibilities again, it is the field of possible impossibilities. And in this field, something comes to subvert it by this feature, in a way which

is here impossibility, which is a kind of cut, a cut which is made within a domain which, previously, is in a way unique and it is for that reason, says Peirce, that the first impossibility must be inscribed at the start. That determines everything. And subsequently, eventually, the negation of all these specifications here continue to determine, but it is already there within the impossible.

(154) In other words, he says that there are two field. There is on the one hand the field of the potential, which is the element of pure 0, one could say of the pure void, but I will come back to that. And, on the other hand the impossibles which are those that are born from the potential, but which oppose it very clearly. And within the impossibles one can say things like that, namely: *there does not exist an x such that non* , or *there exists an x such that* .

But he makes an opposition between these two fields as, fundamentally, opposing one another, one being the element of pure 0, the other the element that I will describe as the 0 of repetition, and it is to this that I would like to get.

J Lacan – You admit, for example, that I transcribe everything that you have said by saying that the potential equals the field of possibilities as determining the impossible.

F Recanati – As determining, but I specify right away that he said, it is this field of possibilities that determine the impossible but not in Hegel's sense. You have to pay attention, he says, it determines it not necessarily, but potentially. Namely, that one cannot say, that must necessarily happen; it is pointed out that it has happened; we know that it is this potential that has determined this impossible, but not necessarily, we are in agreement. So then it is exactly what I meant the potential.....

J Lacan – One could perhaps transcribe it like that: potential = the field of possibilities as determining the impossible.

F Recanati – So then, it is with this sort of consideration that Peirce constructs the concept of potential. It is then the locus in which there are inscribed the impossibilities, it is the general possibility of impossibilities not effected, namely not inscribed. But the field of possibilities as determining the impossibilities. But it does not involve, as has been said, with respect to the inscriptions that are produced there, any necessity, which signifies in particular, for a mathematical problem, that from 2 one cannot account rationally, in Hegel's sense, namely, necessarily. The 2 has come, one cannot say where it has come from, one can simply put it in relation with the 0, with what happens between the 0 and the 1, but to say why it has come, impossible.

The potential allows that, to define the paradox of the continuous, and that, is in a text of Peirce – I am quoting that but in fact I have not looked very closely at it so then I will not (155) develop it – if a point of a continuous potential set sees itself conferring a precise determination, an inscription, a real existence, in that case the continuity itself is broken. And this was interesting not from the point of view of the continuous, but from the point of view of the potential. The fact is that the potential really exists as potential and that henceforth, that it is inscribed in one way or another, there is obviously no more potential, namely, that it is itself produced from an impossible which has come from itself.

X – In that, Cantor was wrong.

F Recanati – As regards cosmology, the absolute 0, the pure nothing, as Peirce calls it is different to the 0 that is repeated in the series of whole numbers. It is nothing other, this 0 that is repeated in the series of whole numbers, than the general order of time, and I will come back

to it, while the absolute 0, is in general the order of the potential thus the absolute 0 has its own dimension. And Peirce tries to insist so that this dimension would be inscribed somewhere, or at least marked, should be presented in the mathematical definitions. The problem is obviously.....

J Lacan – Here, Cantor is not against.

F Recanati - ...how one can pass from one dimension, that of the potential for example to the other which I would describe as that of the impossible for that of time whatever you wish.

This is how Peirce presents the problem: how can one think non-temporally what was there before time? That recalls, certainly, Spinoza and St Augustine, but that recalls above all the Empiricists. And here, I should say that it has often been pointed out that Peirce took up again the style of the Empiricists and their preoccupations. But to really situate the originality of Peirce, people have never referred to the Empiricists, people have never sought what among them could have been a preparation for all of that. But nevertheless, these two dimensions, one potential and the other, if you wish temporal, or rather one dimension of absolute 0, the other of the 0 of repetition, were presented from the beginning of the Empiricists epic. And I would like to say a little word on that to show how it can be separated out.

J Lacan – Off you go, belt it out!

F Recanati – I will do that and afterwards I will come back to Peirce's semiotics in relationship with all of that.

Yes, the object of empirical psychology – this is a first point that is explicitly evacuated (156) each time – it is the signs and nothing other, it is the system of signs. It is a matter of an extension, as one might

say, of the quaternary system of Port Royal, such that, when all is said and done, de Saussure also is only an extension at the limit, the thing as thing and as representation, the sign as thing and as sign, the object of the sign, as sign being the thing as representation. This is the same thing as de Saussure says – I said it but I will not develop it – the sign as concept and as acoustic image. Only with the Scholastics the problem in general of the thing in itself was evacuated and people went as far as to see in the world – and that with all the theories of the great book of the world, the sign of thinking. From then on, one culminates at something like that, the world as representation, in so far as the world, cannot be known except as a representation, replaces the thing in the quaternary system of the sign and the thinking of the world in general replaces the representation, which is the equivalent of bringing face to face thinking about the world – the world of thinking. Now, it is obvious that the thinking of the world and the world of thinking which differ perhaps from certain aspects, is the same thing.

So then there is a problem for the quaternary system because there is an irreducible duality in the quaternary system. It must be either abandoned, or changed. We know that Berkeley abandons it in, precisely, establishing a system of identity between the thinking of the world and the world of thinking; as for Locke, he changes it. When he says, it is, and I apologise for delaying a little bit on this introduction, what he says is the representations, the ideas, do not represent things, they represent among themselves. Thus the more complex ideas represent the more simple. There are faculties, for example, of representation of ideas among themselves, and it is very developed, there is a whole topic which is more or less what is said about it, a hierarchy of ideas and of faculties.

But what I would like now precisely to stress a little, and which is not noted by Locke, and which is precisely the most interesting, because that allowed Condillac and because Condillac in this preceded Peirce in a way, which is that there is another faculty for Locke, which allows

all of that. Because how does that happen, it functions all by itself apparently, something is necessary for the system to function. There is a new faculty, a new operation that he calls – and that has (157) never been located because it is not in his classification, it is always in the notes – *observation*. Observation which is something that functions all by itself, that works at every level, that is found everywhere and which is also intrinsic to every element, something rather incomprehensible and which is at once the process of the transformation and the milieu, the element in general of the transformed. It is at once the milieu...through this observation, in a way, a simple idea is transformed into an image of itself. Namely, into a complex idea because its objectivity is placed beside it in the idea, and in this general idea by which it is transformed, there is an inscription, there is a connotation of the inscription of its transformation into an image. Namely, the idea, once it is transformed, it is in a way that it is inscribed, it is in that that it becomes a complex idea and not a more simple idea.

So then, the whole problem in this respect, is, what makes that possible? Or, what was there at the beginning, what is transformed at the beginning, starting from what does one transform in order to obtain the first cause? What is before the first, in a way? And Locke posits it in these terms when he talks about an irreducible sensation of an original reflection. If a reflection is originating, what is reflected that is preoriginary. Or what is the preoriginary, or what is it that allows, properly speaking, what is it that allows this faculty?

And here it is Condillac who takes up the baton. His method was absolutely exemplary. He is going to circumscribe this something that he saw in Locke, this something unattainable, by giving it a name, by making it function as an unknown in an equation. And subsequently, when the authors wanted to criticise Condillac, they said that his system was not at all uniquely psychology, that it was logic, profoundly, that he had made a logical system of it, this system where there was no content etc., you see, precisely, this is the interest of Condillac. And specifically this sensation, from which he says everything derives, at least in one of his major treatises, this sensation, finally, is nothing. At no moment does he define it precisely, on the contrary, the whole development that he gives of it, everything that he shows derives from it, is a kind of contribution to its definition. But what permits, properly speaking and all the rest derives (158) from it, everything that are properly speaking the attributes of sensation,

everything that permits this attribution, is what he indicates as element 0 which is always given at the start, always given in sensation, and he asks what it is, and we are going to question it with him.

He is going to characterize, to try to reach this irreducible element, everything that happens with the help of this element, but with more than this element, namely, in a word, as he says, everything that happens in understanding (*l'entendement*). With that, we are going to be able to manage to see what really grounds the originality of sensation, if indeed it is a case that it is from sensation that there derives everything that happens in understanding. Now, what is proper to understanding, he says, and this in his first essay – I am emphasizing it because there are little divergences afterwards, he distanced himself from this idea which is obviously his greatest originality – what is proper to understanding, is the order, it is the liaison in general, the liaison as liaison of ideas, liaison of signs, liaison of needs, in fact, it is always a liaison of signs, it is always the same thing.

In man, the order functions all by itself, he says, and he explains this a little, while among animals, there is required, to get the order started, a punctual external impulse. And Condillac specifies, between men and animals, and he pronounces a rather lovely sentence, between men and animals there are imbeciles and the mad. The first do not manage to hold onto order, these are the imbeciles, systematically they do not manage to hang onto order, and the others cannot separate themselves from it. They for their part are completely swamped in the order, they can no longer take any distance, they cannot manage to detach themselves from it.

Order in general is what allows the passage from one sign to another. It is the possibility of having an idea of the frontier between two signs. And Condillac has a conception of the sign, but as always, an inaccurate one, always a metaphor, and he says this time, specifically in a short study, where he gives an apologia for tropes, taking up perhaps, and I am not sure, the terms of Quintilian.

It still remains that for him, a sign, is something that comes to fill in the interval between two other signs. In this sense, in a sign, what is considered? They are the two other adjacent signs, at least two that are considered, but not as signs in so far as they may (159) involve a representation, from the point of view of their edges with them, namely, from a formal point of view. And he clearly specifies that these cannot be, properly speaking, representations, but uniquely signs, because he says, there is no formal representation, there is no abstract representation. There is always a representation that represents a representation, namely, that there is always a mediating of the representation of the sign, but never a mediating of the content, for example. As he says himself, the image of a perception, its repetition, is only its hallucinatory repetition. He says that it is the same thing. One cannot differentiate between a perception and its image, and

through this, he carries out a critique of all previous theories.

So then order is what the sign represents, in so far as an interval between the two signs substantiates it. Only, signs in general, are supposed, through all the theories that he, Condillac, inherits, to represent something. And that, that obviously causes him a problem, he cannot manage to get out of it, how is the liaison between the formal sign and its reference in general constructed? This liaison itself, says Condillac, in order to get rid of it, is derived from the unknown, it derives from sensation. So then the unknown is already a relation between the sign as event and the sign as inscription of the event. And that, I specify, is not said by Condillac but he leaves it to be understood, it is Destutt de Tracy, his exegete, who affirms that, and I find that it is not bad. And Maine de Biran who for his part was the pupil....

J Lacan – The two sentences that I had begun to write throughout the whole business, that some people have perhaps noted, are directly the statement that Recanetti is reproducing here.....

F Recanetti – ... Maine de Biran himself, a disciple of Destutt de Tracy is first of all fed by

By this difference between the event and the inscription of the event. And one sees how it is the pivot of the whole theory. There is, he says, a perpetual displacement in the speaking being, and, I am not joking, between the subject of the statement and the stating subject. It is in the foundations of the psychology of Maine de Biran where he shows more or less that, by representing the ego, in the measure that in every representation, there is already an ego, namely, that at that very moment there are two of them. Once (160) one tries to represent the I, that means that automatically there are two of them. That means that immediately there are two of them, that means that there is never one of them....that there is never one of them except in a mediated way.

For Condillac, the order of signs, in so far as the order of signs in the order of this displacement, has as a model the space that he describes as pluridimensional of time, and I am not going to develop that. One could say that time is only the infinite repetition of punctuations. The punctuations of time-zero is the same problem that was posed above; the punctuality that is repeated in time and that from which time has emerged is not the same thing. The punctuality zero the one from which time emerged, the punctuality zero as transparence, precisely, between the inscription and the event. The punctuality that is repeated in time, always for Condillac, is relativised by being considered in time as that punctuality, present, past or to come. It is also considered from the point of view of its edges, from the point of view of its frontier. Time, rather than being a series of punctualities is then the series of interpunctual frontiers, in so far as the frontier is precisely the highlighting of respective edges of two punctualities and also of two signs. There is then the same difference between absolute punctuality

and the time between the empty set and the set of its parts. It is the inscription of zero which is the element of this, just as it is the inscription of punctuality which is the element of time. So then there is a flaw which is given at the start of this whole theory which Maine de Biran tried perhaps to better discern. The system of sign is only the infinite repetition of this flaw, in so far as, as such, pure flaw and that is repeated in all the writings of the Empiricists, it emerges from the experience and the investigation of their school, namely, it is not spoken about.

Condillac, for his part also, this happens rarely, speaks about human nature at one moment in saying that he would be asking himself how, at the start, this relation and this order is made. Why because precisely it has failed, the order between inscription and the event, why because it has failed, because it does not work, why, all the same it exists? Why is there an inscription of what is only *zero*? This is obviously his problem, and at that moment he responds, after a little piece of bravura, I don't really know, it is human nature.

(161) It is this break in general that permits the automotricity of the system of signs, according to Condillac, about which he says that the system of signs there works all alone, while in his *Traité des Animaux* he tells us a whole lot of things to show how, in animals, there is also a system of signs and how it is dependent on all the exterior objects, dependent on all the.....

With this we rejoin the semiotics of Pierce from which we started. Pierce describes as *Phanéron* from the Greek word, the totality of everything that is present to the spirit, it is moreover, more or less, the sense of *Phanéron*, real or not, the immediately observable. And he starts from there, he decomposes the elements of the *Phanéron*. There are three indissociable elements in the *Phanéron* that he calls, on the one had what one could translate by *primant*, the monad in general I think he uses the word monad, the complete element in itself, on the other hand the *secondant*, a static force, opposition, static tension between two elements, namely, that each element immediately, evokes this other with whatever it is in relationship with and it is in a way a set, an absolutely indissociable set. And the most important is the *tertiant*, the element that is immediately relative both to a first and to a third and Pierce specifies that all continuity, every process in general, comes from the ternary. Starting from there, starting from this conception of the ternary, which one can show derives from his astronomical theories, that he produced at the beginning of his life, but anyway I am not saying anything about that.

J Lacan – Pierce as astronomer.....

F Recanatti....So then starting from this ternary he constructs a logic that is specified in semiotics, *Logic of semiotic*, the semiotic itself being specified at certain levels as rhetoric and that is important for

Pierce. Everything depends on his definition of the sign in general, the sign he calls *representamen*, I apologise for quoting, “the *representamen* is something which for someone takes the place of another thing, from a certain point of view or in a certain manner.” In this there are four elements, for someone is the first, and I re-quote Pierce: “This signifies that the sign creates in the spirit of the addressee a sign that is more equivalent or even more developed.” The second point flows from this, the reception of the sign is then a second sign functioning as *interpreter*.

(162) Thirdly, the thing that the sign is taking the place of is described as ‘its object’. It is in these three elements which will constitute the three vertices of the semiotic triangle. The fourth term that comes is more discreet but no less interesting.

Someone in the audience – That’s bullshit!

J Lacan – You think that Pierce is wrong, you too? [Addressing himself to the person who has intervened on several occasions]

The person replies – I think that he is stretching things.

J Lacan – What does that mean? In any case it’s obscene, then!

F Recanatti – The fourth term, more discreet, is what Pierce calls the ground. The sign takes the place of the object, not absolutely but in reference to a kind of idea called the ground, namely the *sol*, the foundation of the relation of the sign and the object. These four terms, in their totality define three relations. And these three relations are the respective objects of three branches of semiotics.

First relation, the relation sign-ground. This is pure or speculative grammar, Pierce says. It is a matter of recognising...

J Lacan – Because speculative grammar was not invented only a few years ago.....as Monsieur [addressing himself to the person who has already intervened] would like to make us believe and ...

F Recanatti – It is a matter of recognising what must be true for the sign to have a meaning, the idea, in general is the focussing of the *representamen* on the object determined according to the ground or the point of view. We see then that meaning arises, in a way, on a

differentiated background and that the ground, the determination of the ground is almost the determination of the first point of view which determines the inscription, all of this on the potential. Namely, that the ground in general, is already the potential. In the same way, the *representamen* is, with respect to its ground, the determination of a certain point of view which commands the relationship to the object. (163) The ground is then the preliminary space of the inscription.

The second relation, *representamen-object*, is the domain of pure logic, for Pierce. It is the science of what ought to be true for the *representamen* in order for it to take the place of an object.

The third, which is the most important for what we are proposing here, is the relation between the *representamen* and the interpreter that Pierce calls with genius pure rhetoric, which recognises the laws. It functions at the level of laws, according to which a sign gives birth to another sign which develops it according to the *cursus* of the interpreter that we are going to see. And this question of pure rhetoric, Pierce tackles with the help of his semiotic triangle. I am going to specify each of these terms so that they can be better grasped.

Someone in the audience – Mirror!

F Recanatti – I follow Pierce for what is involved in this relation. “The *representamen*, the first one, has a primitive relation to a second object.” The object whose second, the sign, is given first. “But this relation can determine a third, the interpreter to have the same relation to its object as it entertains itself.” In other words the relation of the interpreter is commanded to be, by the relation of the *representamen* with the object, to be the same relation.

The same from the point of view of the order, but nevertheless different, different, that is to say more specified, that is to say in a certain way, we have reduced a little the field of possibilities of the sign that comes, and since that continues to infinity, we reduce it more and more, we are going to see that.

The ground is absent here, determines the relation of the *representamen* to the object itself. And the representation of the *representamen* to the object determines as repetition the relation of the representative to the object to the object which determines as repetition itself – what did I say? I said of the representative? Yes then the *representamen-object* determines the interpreter-object. And in a certain way one can say, and Pierce says it, that the object of the relation between the interpreting and the object, it is not exactly the object, which is the object of the interpreter, but it is the totality of this relation, namely, on the one hand, all of that – R-I-O – it is the object of that, I and that on the other hand this I-O ought to repeat that for the object. And one can take an example, Pierce gives an example.

(164) **J Lacan** – This is what I translate by saying that existence is insistence.

F Recanatti – I mean that the whole problem is the start. It is what happens between the *representamen* and the object. Now precisely it is impossible to say anything about what happens there. All that one knows, is that this, R-O what happens within, between the two, this brings all the rest. I am going to finish by inscribing the rest because that, I, continues to infinity.

When one wants to know, once...that to have a meaning, R-O, says Pierce, the process of signification is created starting from there, in order for that to have a meaning, it is necessary that, from the relationship, if one takes the object *qua* justice, and if one takes the *representamen* as being the weighing scales, it is necessary that precisely this relationship, which in itself is nothing should be interpreted by its interpreters. These interpreters, can be anything whatsoever, it could be equality, and under that heading, the relation, in general, namely, of the interpreter at here, R-O is going to itself be interpreted by a second interpreter. One could down a whole list, one could put Communism, one could put whatever one wishes, and that continues without stopping.

So that at the start, there is all the data, there is a kind of ground, a foundation which is chosen within an indifferenced foundation, and starting from there, there is an attempt of absolutely impossible exhaustion, and he makes a mistake, starting from a first separation which is given in the foundation.

The semiotic triangle, as can be seen, it is very clear, reproduces the same ternary relation that you had quoted in connection with the Borromean coat of arms. Namely, and Pierce says it, he does not say the Borromean coat of arms but he employs the same terms, the three poles are linked by this relation that does not admit of multiple dual relations but an (165) irreducible triad. I quote him: “The interpreter cannot have a dual relation to an object, but the relation that is commanded for him of the sign object that he can only have in the form that is nevertheless identical but degenerate. The relation sign-object will be the proper object of the interpreter as sign”. So then, the triangle develops in a chain as an interminable interpretation, and the word is from Pierce, all the same it is fantastic “interminable interpretation”, as expression, namely, that every time it is what one could call a new interpreter at every point.

This thing that I am marking in dots, in a way, sees itself affirmed as an object subsequently for the new interpreter. And this triangle

continues to infinity.

In the example that I took, the relation equality-justice is of the same order as the relation weighing scales-justice but it is nevertheless not the same. Equality aims not just at justice, but also at the relationship weighing scales-justice. So then to come back to Locke, for example, we see that precisely it is this that is taken as an object of an interpretation. But what is new in a way in the terminal point of view, in the result of the interpretation, is that the inscription of the object is marked there as such, because, precisely, the relationship in general weighing scales-justice is set aside from the object itself, namely, justice.

Such is the model of the process of signification in so far as it is interminable. From a first separation, the one that is given by a first stroke within the ground, *representamen-object*, from a first separation there is born a series of others and the pure element of this first separation was this ground analogous to pure zero. Here again there arises the double function of the void.

Given the time, I am not going to continue because there would be perhaps a whole lot of examples to take and this, moreover more or less everywhere in Pierce, that more or less everywhere in all the theories, here I took empiricism, you have in particular looked towards Berkeley, it is a good idea because it is very rich. One could have taken more or less anything to justify these examples, but this would only be keeping to the level of commentary. Lacan has said that his discourse allowed meaning to be given again to older discourses. It is certainly the first fruit that one can draw from it. But the mapping out of what has been produced in general as an opening up, in Pierce's writings for example, is still only an inscription in what was thought up to then to be easy meat. Up to then, up to Pierce, up to Lacan, as you wish.

Henceforth, as regards what is involved in this inscription here of the zero, there ought to arise an infinite series and it is a matter of making a place for this series.

J Lacan – I had to go to Milan to experience the need to obtain a response. I find that the one I have got is very sufficiently satisfying for you also, for today, to be also satisfied with it.

The Knowledge of the Psychoanalyst

1 June 1972

As you know, here I say what I think. It is a feminine position, because when all is said and done, to think is something very particular.

So then since I write to you from time to time I have, during a little trip that I have just made, inscribed a certain number of propositions of which the first is that it must be recognised that the psychoanalyst is put, by discourse – this is a term of mine – by the discourse that conditions him – what is called, since me, the discourse of the psychoanalyst – in a position that we could say is difficult. Freud said that it was impossible *unmöglich*, it is perhaps a little monastic (*froncé*), he was speaking about himself.

Good! On the other hand, second proposition: he knows – this from experience, which means, however little he has practised psychoanalysis, he knows enough about it for what I am going to say – he knows in any case that he has a common measure with what I am saying. This is completely independent of the fact that he is informed about what I say, since what I am saying culminates, as it seems to me I proved this year, in situating his knowledge. This is the business of knowledge about the truth.

Semblance

Enjoyment

Truth

Surplus Enjoying

This is the place of the truth, for those who come for the first time. This is that of the semblance; this that of enjoyment, and this that of surplus enjoying that I am writing in shorthand here: ‘+ *de-jour*’. For enjoyment we will put a capital E. (*J*)

It is his relationship to knowledge which is difficult, not of course to what I am saying, since overall in the psychoanalytic no-man’s-land, people do not know that I say it. That does not mean that people know nothing about what I say, because it comes from experience. But people have, about what they know of it, a horror, and I can say, like that, really simply that I understand them. ‘I can say’ means: ‘I can say, if people really want me to’. But I understand them, I can put myself in their place all the more easily in that I am in it. But I understand it all the more easily in that, like everyone else, I hear what I am saying.

(110) Nevertheless, nevertheless that does not happen to me every day, because it is not every day that I speak. In reality, I understand it, namely, that I hear what I am saying, the few days – let us say one or two – that immediately precede my seminar, because it is at that moment that I begin to write to you. The other days, the thought of those that I was dealing with submerges me. I have to admit this to you, because at that moment, the impatience of what I called – and so that I can again call, because it is rare that I come back – of what I called in *Scilicet* my failure dominates me. There you are.

Yes. They know, I recall that because the title of what I have to treat here is *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*. *Du* in this case evokes the *le* the definite article, in French anyway it is what is called definite. Yes! Why not of *psychoanalysts* after what I have just said to you? That would be more in conformity with my theme of this year namely *y a d’l’un*. There are some who describe themselves as such. I am all the less going to contest what they say because there are no others. Why do I say *du*? Because it is to them that I am speaking despite the presence here of a large number of people who are not psychoanalysts. The psychoanalyst then knows what I am saying.

They know it, as I told you, from experience, however little of it they may have, even if it is limited to the training which is the minimal requirement for the psychoanalysts they say they are.

Because even if what I called the *passee* is failed, well then, this would be limited to the fact that they have had a training analysis, but when all is said and done that is enough for them to know what I am saying. The *passee* – it is again in *Scilicet* that you can find all of that, this is rather the place that is to be indicated – when I say that the *passee* is failed, that does not mean that they have not presented themselves to the experience of the *passee*. As I have often remarked, this experience of the *passee* is simply what I propose to those who are dedicated enough to expose themselves to it for the simple end of information on a very delicate point and which consists in short, which is affirmed in the surest way, the fact is that it is altogether a-normal – the normal *o*-object – that someone who does a psychoanalysis wants to be a psychoanalyst.

You really would need a kind of aberration that would be worth, that would be worth the trouble of being offered up to everything that one could collect from it in terms of testimony. This indeed is why I provisionally established this attempt at collecting in order to know why someone, who knows what psychoanalysis is through his training analysis, may still want to be an analyst.

So then, I will say no more about what is involved in their position, simply because I chose, this year, *'The knowledge of the psychoanalyst'* as being what I proposed for my return to Sainte-Anne. It is not at all to spare the psychoanalysts, they do not have any need of me in order to have vertigo about their position, I will not increase it by telling them about it.

(111) Yes! What could be done – and I will perhaps do it at another time – what could be done in a rather piquant manner, in a certain reference that I would only call 'historical' – anyway, you will see that when it comes, if I subsist – for those who are the most cunning of them all, I will talk to them about the word temptation..

Here I am only talking about knowledge. And I point out that it is not a matter of the truth about knowledge, but of the knowledge about truth, and that this, the knowledge about truth, is articulated from the high point of what I am putting forward this year about the *'y a d'l'un'*. *'Y a d'l'un'* and nothing more, but it is a very particular One, that which separates the One from the Two and which is an abyss.

I repeat, the truth – I already said it – can only be half-said when the moment of pulsation has passed which means that I can respect the alternation, I will speak about the other aspect, of the half-true: you must always separate the good grain from the *'l'ami-vrai'* [true friend/cockle]!

As I told you earlier perhaps, I have come back from Italy where I have never had anything but praise for the welcome, even of my psychoanalytic colleagues! Thanks to one of them, I met a third who is quite up to date, anyway, to mine, of course. He works on Dedekind, and he found him completely without me. I cannot say that at the date that he began to tackle him, I was not already involved in it, but anyway it is a fact that I spoke about him later than he did. Because I am only talking about him now and he had already written a whole little work on him. He had noticed in fact the value of mathematical elements in making there emerge something that really concerns our experience as psychoanalysts. Well then, since he is very well regarded – he had done everything to achieve that – he succeeded in making himself heard in places that are very highly regarded by what is called the I.P.A. I would translate it as the Admitted Psychoanalytic Institution – so then he had succeeded in making himself heard, but what is very curious, is that he has not been published. He has been not published and he is told: "You understand, no one would understand!" I must say that I am surprised because in short, some "Lacan", of course, anyway, the things in the style that I am supposed to represent among the incompetents dealing with a certain linguistics,

people are in rather a hurry to stuff the *International Journal* with it. The more things there are in the dustbin naturally the less it can be seen! So then why, in the name of the devil, have people in this case believed they should create an obstacle? Because for me, it seems to me that it is an obstacle. And that people say that the readers will not understand is secondary. It is not necessary that all the articles of the *International Journal* should be understood. There is therefore something in this that people are not happy with.

But it is obvious, like the person that I have – not named because you would be profoundly ignorant of his name, he has still not succeeded in publishing anything – is perfectly locatable. I do not despair that, after what will filter through of my remarks today – and especially if it is known that I did not name him – he will be (112) published. Truly, it seems to be close enough to his heart for me to freely help him towards that. If it does not happen, I will talk to you a little more about him!

Let us come back to the present. The psychoanalyst has then a complex relationship to what he knows. He repudiates it, he represses it, to use the term with which in English repression the *Verdrängung* is translated, and it can even happen that he wants to know nothing about it. And why not? Who could be surprised at that? Psychoanalysis, you will say to me, so what! I can hear from here the bla-bla-bla of anyone who has not the slightest idea of psychoanalysis. I reply to what may come from the floor, as they say, I reply: is it knowledge that cures, whether it is that of the subject or the one supposed in the transference, or is it the transference, as it occurs in a given analysis? Why should knowledge, the one that I say every psychoanalyst perceives the dimensions of, why should the knowledge, as I said earlier, be avowed? It is from this question that Freud took on, in short, the *Verwerfung*, he calls it ‘a judgement when faced with the choice that rejects’ he adds ‘that condemns’ but I am condensing it. It is not because the *Verwerfung* makes a subject mad when it happens in the unconscious, that it does not reign, the same and with the same name from which Freud borrows it, that it does not reign over the world as a rationally justified power.

‘Psychoanalysts’ you are going to see, as opposed to ‘the’, psychoanalysts you see they prefer, they prefer themselves, you see. They are not the only ones. There is a tradition in this: the medical profession. In terms of preferring oneself, people have never done better except the saints. The saints: SAINTS, yes people speak to you so much about the others [*seins*: breasts] that I must be specific because the others...anyway let it go! The saints – SAINTS – also prefer themselves, this is even all they want, they consume themselves in finding the best way to prefer themselves, while there are such simple ones, as the *mede-saints* for their part also show. Anyway, they are not saints, that is self-evident.

There are few things as abject to thumb through than the history of medicine. It can be prescribed as an emetic or as a purgative, it does both. In order to know that knowledge has nothing to do with the truth,

there is nothing more convincing. One cannot even say that this reaches the point of making of the doctor a kind of provocateur. This does not mean that medicine has not succeeded – and for reasons that are connected with the fact that their platform with the discourse of science was becoming smaller – that doctors have not succeeded in getting psychoanalysis to fall into step with them. And this they know, this naturally all the more in that the psychoanalyst being very embarrassed, as I started with this, very embarrassed with his position, he was all the more disposed to accept advice from experience.

I am very keen to mark this point of history which is, in my business, in so far as it has any importance, an altogether key point, thanks to this conspiracy against which there is directed an explicit article by Freud on *Laïenanalyse*. Thanks to this conspiracy that occurred shortly after the war, I had already lost the game before becoming engaged in it.

(113) Simply, I would like to be believed on this point, because – why, I will say – if this evening I bear witness – and it is not by chance that I am doing it at Sainte-Anne because I told you that this is where I say what I think – if I declare that it is very precisely because of this, of having lost at that time, that I got involved in this game.

This has nothing heroic about it. As you know, there are a lot of games that are engaged under these conditions. It is even one of the foundations of the human condition, as someone or other has said, and this does not succeed any worse than any other enterprise. Which proves it, huh! The only problem - but it is not just for me – is that this does not leave you very free, I am saying that in passing for the person whom I don't know when, the second last seminar, who questioned me about whether or not I believed in freedom.

Another declaration that I want to make and which after all is important, since after all, I don't know, that is how I am inclined this evening, another declaration which for its part is completely proved – here I would ask you to believe me, that I did not clearly see that the game was lost. After all I was not all that clever, I perhaps thought that I had to charge along and that I would blow up the International Psychoanalytic (*Avouée*). And in this respect no one can say the contrary of what I am going to say, which is that I never dropped any one of the people that I knew were going to leave me before they went off themselves. And it is also true from the moment when the game was, in short, lost for France, which is the one I made an allusion to earlier, this little brouhaha in a doctor- psychoanalyst conspiracy from which there emerged in '53 the beginnings of my teaching. The days when the idea of having to pursue the aforesaid teaching do not come back to me, namely, a certain number, it is obvious that I have, like every imbecile, the idea of what this could have meant for French psychoanalysis (!) if I had been able to teach there where, for the reason that I have just said, I was in no way disposed to drop anyone. I mean however scandalous my propositions on *The function and field...and so on and so forth – of speech and language*, but I was

prepared to go over the furrow for years even for people who were hardest of hearing and, at the point that we are at, not one psychoanalyst would have lost any of it.

I told you that I had made a little trip to Italy. In these cases, I also go...why not, because there are a lot of people who love me: by the way, there is someone who has sent me a tooth glass! I would like to know who it is, in order to thank them, this person, there is a person who has sent me a tooth glass. I am saying that for those who were at the Panthéon the last time. It is someone that I thank all the more because it is not a tooth glass. It is a marvellous little piece of red glass long and curved, in which I will put a rose, whoever has sent it to me. But I only received one I have to say. Anyway let's leave it. There are people who love me a little bit in all sorts of corners, even in the corridors of the Vatican. Why not, huh? There are very good people. It is only there – this for the (114) person who questioned me about freedom – it is only in the Vatican that I know free thinkers. Me, for my part, I am not a free thinker, I am forced to stick to what I am saying, but down there, what ease! Ah! One can understand that the French Revolution was brought about by priests. If you knew how free they were, my friends, you would have shivers up your spine. Me for my part I am trying to bring them back to the tough things, there is nothing to do about it, they go beyond it: psychoanalysis for them is old hat! You see what freethinking can be used for: they can see clearly.

Nevertheless it was a good trade huh? There were good sides to it. When they say it's old hat, they know what they are talking about. They are saying it's finished, because after all we should be doing a little better! I say that after all to warn people, the people who are involved, and particularly, of course, those who are following me. You must have a good look at it before getting your children involved in it because it is very possible at the rate things are going, that it will collapse at a single stroke like that. Anyway, this is only for those who have committed their children to it, I advise them to be prudent.

I have already spoken about what is happening in psychoanalysis. One must all the same clearly specify certain points that I already tackled, consequently that I believe I can treat briefly at the point that we have got to. This is that it is the only discourse – and let us pay tribute to it – it is the only discourse, in the sense that I catalogued four discourses, it is the only one which is of such a kind that blackguards (*la canaillerie*) necessarily end up by being stupid about it. If one knew right away that someone who comes to ask you for a training analysis was a blackguard, one would say to him: “No psychoanalysis for you, old man! It would make you as stupid as a cabbage”. But one does not know, it is precisely carefully dissimulated. But one knows all the same at the end of a certain time, in the psychoanalysis, blackguardism being always, not hereditary, it is not heredity that is at stake, it is a matter of desire, the desire of the Other from whom the person involved has emerged. I am talking about desire: it is perhaps not always the desire of his parents, it can also be that of his grandparents, but if the desire from which he is born is the desire of a blackguard, he is unfailingly a blackguard. I have never seen an exception, and this is even the reason

why I have always been so tender towards the people that I knew were going to leave me, at least in the case when it was I who had analysed them. Because I knew well that they had become completely stupid.

I cannot say that I did it deliberately, as I told you it is necessary. It is necessary when a psychoanalysis is pushed to the end, which is the least of things for a training psychoanalysis. If the psychoanalysis is not a training one, then it is a question of tact: you must leave a guy enough blackguardism so that in the future he can get on with things in one way or another. It is properly speaking therapeutic, you have to let him survive. But as regards the training analysis, you cannot do that, because God knows what the result would be. Imagine a psychoanalyst who remains a blackguard: this haunts the thinking of everyone. Take it easy, psychoanalysis, contrary to what is believed, is always really (115) didactic, even when it is someone stupid who practices it, and I would even say, all the more so. Anyway, the only risk you run is to have stupid psychoanalysts. But it is, as I have just told you, when all is said and done, not inconvenient, because after all the *o*-object at the place of the semblance, is a position that can be held. There you are! One can be originally stupid also. It is very important to distinguish.

Good! So then I found nothing better, for my part, I found nothing better than what I call the *mathème* to approach something regarding knowledge about truth, because it is there in short that one succeeds in giving it a functional bearing. It is much better when it is Pierce who is dealing with it. He puts the functions zero and one which are the two values of truth. On the other hand he does not imagine, that one can write T or F to designate the true and the false. I already indicated that in a few sentences, I already indicated that at the Panthéon, namely, that as regards the *yad'l'un* there are two stages. *Parmenides* and then subsequently we have to get to set theory for the question of a knowledge such that it takes truth as a simple function, and which is far from being satisfied with it. Which involves a real which in truth, has nothing to do – these are mathematics – nevertheless throughout centuries it must be believed that mathematics gave up on this point any questioning, because it is with some delay, and through the intermediary of a logical questioning, that it took a step towards this question which is central for what concerns the truth, namely, how and why '*yad'l'un*'! You will excuse me, I am not the only one.

'*Yad'l'un*', around this One there turns the question of existence. I already made a few remarks on this, namely, that existence had never been tackled as such before a certain age and that people had spent a lot of time in extracting it from essence. I spoke, from the fact that there was not in Greek properly speaking something current that meant 'to exist'. Not that I was unaware of *existimi*, *existamai*, but rather that I knew that no philosopher had ever made use of it. Nevertheless it is here that there begins something that may interest us. It is a matter of knowing what exists. There only exists the One – with all that is putting pressure around us, I am also forced here to hurry – set theory is the questioning of why is there '*yad'l'un*'.

The One is not found on every street corner, whatever you may think about it, including this quite illusory certainty, and illusory for a very long time – that does not prevent people holding onto it – that you also are a One. You are one of them, it is enough for you even to try to lift your little finger to see that, not only are you not One, but that you are, alas, innumerable, innumerable each one of you. Innumerable until you were taught, which may be one of the good results of the psychoanalytic tributary that you are according to cases, completely finished (*fini*) – I am telling you this very quickly, because I do not know for how much more time I am going to be able to continue – completely finished with regard to the fact that there are men – this is clear – finished, finished, finished! As regards the women they can be enumerated.

(116) I am going to try to explain briefly something which begins to open up the path for you about this, since, of course, these are not obvious things, especially when one does not know what is meant by ‘finished’ and ‘numerable’. But if you follow a little my indications, you can read anything whatsoever, because works on set theory pullulate now, even to go against it.

There is someone very nice and that I hope to see later to apologise for not having brought him this evening a book that I did everything to find and which is out of print, which he gave me the last time, and which is called *Cantor a tort*. It is a very good book. It is obvious that Cantor is mistaken from a certain point of view, but he is unquestionably right, from the simple fact that what he put forward has had innumerable descendants in mathematics, and that all that is involved is that. This is what makes mathematics advance, it is enough that it can be defended. Even if Cantor is wrong from the point of view of those who decree, one does not know why, that they know what number is, the whole history of mathematics well before Cantor demonstrated that there is no place where it can be proved, there is no place that it is more true that the impossible is the real.

This began with the Pythagoreans for whom, one day, a blow was struck which they should have known well, because one must not take them either as babies, that the root of two is not commensurable. This was taken up by the philosophers, and it is not because it came to us through *Theatetus* that we must believe that the mathematics of the time were not up to it and were incapable of answering. That precisely by seeing that the incommensurable existed, people began to ask themselves the question about what number was.

I am not going to go through the whole history with you. There is a certain business about the root of minus one, a certain business about the root of minus one that has since been called, we do not know why, imaginary. There is nothing less imaginary than the root of minus one as was proved by what followed, because it is from it that there emerged what can be called the complex number, namely, one of the most useful and the most fruitful things that have been created in mathematics.

In short, the more objections about what is involved in this entry by the One, namely, by the whole number, the more it is demonstrated that it is precisely from the impossible that in mathematics the real is engendered. And it is precisely because of the fact that through Cantor there was able to be generated something which is nothing less than the whole work of Russell, indeed an infinity of other points that were extremely fruitful in the theory of functions, it is certain that, with respect to the real, it is Cantor who has taken the right line as regards what is at stake.

If I suggest to you – I am talking to psychoanalysts – to bring yourself up to date a little about this, it is precisely by reason of the fact that there is something to be taken from it in what is, of course, your venial sin. I am saying that because you have to deal with (117) beings who think, who think, of course, because they cannot do otherwise. Who think like Telemachus like at least the Telemachus described by Paul-Jean Toulet: “*Ils pensent à la dépense*”, well then what is at stake, is to know whether we analysts, and those that you lead are spending their time in vain or not.

It is clear that in this regard, the pathos of thinking that may result for you from a short initiation, even though again it should not be too short either, to set theory, is indeed something of a kind to make you reflect on notions like existence, for example. It is clear that it is only from a certain reflection on mathematics, that existence took on its sense. Everything that had been able to be said about it before, through a sort of presentiment, in particular a religious one, namely, that God exists, has strictly only meaning in that by putting the emphasis – I ought, to put an emphasis because there are people who take me for a master of thinking – is the following. Whether you believe or not, keep this in a little hollow of your ear – for my part I do not believe, but people don't give a damn, for those who believe, it is the same thing – whether you believe or not in God you should tell yourself clearly that with God, in every case, whether one believes in him or whether one does not believe in him he must be taken into account. It is absolutely inevitable.

That is why I rewrote on the board that around which I try to make turn something that is involved in the so-called sexual relationship.

I start again: there exists an x such that there is a subject determinable by a function which is what dominates the sexual relationship, namely, the phallic function – that is why I write it as $f(x)$ – there exists an x which determines the fact that he has said no to the function. You see that from where I am speaking, you see already the question of existence linked to something that we cannot fail to recognise is a

saying (*un dire*). It is a 'saying not' I would even go further, it is 'a saying that not'. This is capital, this is precisely what indicates to us the correct point where there ought to be taken up, for our formation, formation as analyst, what is stated by set theory, there is One 'at least One' who 'says that not'.

It is a reference, it is a reference, of course, that does not hold up even for an instant, which is not in any way teaching or teachable, if we do not connect it to this quantifying inscription of four terms, namely, what is called the universal quantor of x , of x . Namely, the point from which it can be said, as this is stated in Freudian doctrine, that there is no desire, libido – it is the same thing – except masculine. This is in truth, an error which has all its value as a reference point.

(118) That the three other formulae, namely, there does not exist this x , to say that it is not true that the phallic function is what dominates the sexual relationship. And that, on the other hand, we ought – I am not saying we can write – only at a level complementary to these three terms, we ought to write the function of 'not all' as being essential for a certain type of relationship to the phallic function inasmuch as it grounds the sexual relationship. This is obviously what makes of these four inscriptions, a set.

In this set, it is impossible to orientate oneself correctly about what is involved in the practice of analysis inasmuch as it is dealing with this something which currently is defined as being man on the one hand and on the other hand this correspondent generally qualified as woman, which leaves him alone. It leaves him alone, it is not the fault of the correspondent, it is the fault of the man. But fault or no fault, this is a business that we do not have to settle immediately, I am noting it in passing. What is important for the moment is to question the meaning of what these four functions which are only two have to do. The one, negation of the function of the other, the opposite function, these four functions inasmuch as their quantifying coupling diversifies them.

It is clear that what is meant by \bar{x} , namely, the negation of x is something that for a long time – and for a long enough time at the origin for us to be able to say that one is absolutely disconcerted that Freud should have ignored it – of x , the negation of x , namely, this 'at least One'. This One all by itself which is determined by being the effect of the 'saying-that-no' to the phallic function, is very precisely the point under which we must put everything that has been said up to the present about the Oedipus complex, in order that the Oedipus complex should be something other than a myth.

And this is all the more interesting in that what is at stake is not genesis, nor history, nor anything at all that resembles it, as it seems at certain moments in Freud it may have been stated by him, namely, an event. There can be no question of an event for what is represented for us as being before any history. The only event is in something that is connoted by something that is stated. What is at stake is structure.

That one may be able to talk about 'Every-man' as being the subject of castration is why in the most obvious fashion the myth of Oedipus has been constructed.

Is it necessary for us to return to mathematical functions to state a logical fact which is the following. The fact is that if it is true that the unconscious is structured like a language, the function of castration is necessitated there, it is exactly in effect what implies something that escapes from it. And whatever escapes from it, even if it is not – why not, because it is in the myth – something human, after all, but why not see the father of the primitive murder as an orang-utan, many things that coincide in tradition, the tradition from (119) which all the same it must be said that psychoanalysis arose: the Judaic tradition. In the Judaic tradition as I was able to state in the year when I did not want to give any more than my first seminar on the 'Names of the father, I had all the same the time to accentuate that in Abraham's sacrifice, what is sacrificed, is effectively the father, which is nothing other than a ram. Just as in every human line of descendants that respects itself, its mythical descendancy is animal. So that when all is said and done, what I told you, the other day, about the function of hunting among men, this is what is at stake, I did not say a lot about it to you of course, I could have said more to you about the fact that the hunter loves his game, just as the sons, in the event described as primordial in Freudian mythology, they killed their father.....like those that you see traces of in the Grotto of Lascaux, they killed him, my God, because they loved him, of course, as what followed proved, the continuation is sad. What follows is very precisely that all men, of x , the upside down A, the universality of men is subject to castration. That there may be an exception we will not describe it from the mythical point of view from which we are speaking. This exception, is the inclusive function: what is there to be said about the universal except that the universal is enclosed, enclosed precisely by negative possibility. Very exactly, existence here plays the role of a compliment or, to speak more mathematically, of an edge. And this is what includes the fact that there is somewhere an all x , an all x that becomes a small *petit a* I mean an upside down A of a : a – every time it is incarnated, that it is incarnated in what one can call an individual (*Un être*), an individual an individual at least that only posits itself as an individual and specifically under the heading of man.

This is very precisely what ensures that in the other column, and with a kind of relationship that is fundamental, that there might be articulated something in which there can be ranked, there may be ranked, for anyone who knows how to think with these symbols, under the heading of woman...

Simply by articulating it in this way, makes us sense that there is something remarkable, something remarkable for us, that what is stated about it is that there is not one of them who, in the statement, in the statement that it is not true that the phallic function dominates what is involved in the sexual relationship, as its validity disputed.

And in order to allow you to find your bearings in it by means of a reference that you are a little bit more familiar with, I would say, good God since I spoke earlier about the father, I would say what concerns this ‘there does not exist an x which is determined as subject in the statement of the saying that no of the phallic function’, is properly to speak about the virgin. You know that Freud made something of the taboo of virginity, etc...and other madly folkloric stories around this business, and the fact that formerly virgins were not fucked by just anyone at all, it required at least a high priest or a little lord, anyway what matter.

That is not the important thing. The important thing in effect, is that one can say about this function of the ‘living flesh’ (*vif*), this function of ‘living flesh’ so striking in the fact that it is only about a woman after all that one says that she is virile. If you have ever (120) heard talk, at least in our day, of a chap who is so, show it to me, that would interest me! There on the other hand if the man is everything that you could require along the lines of the virtuoso, veer to the port side, prepare to veer, veer anything you wish, the virile is on the side of the woman, she is the only who believes in it. So she thinks! This is even what characterises her. I will explain to you later – I have to tell you right away – that that is why – I will explain to you in detail why – that the virgo is not numerable because she situates herself, contrary to the One which is on the side of the father, she situates herself between the One and the Zero. What is between the One and the Zero, is very well known and it can be demonstrated even when one is wrong, it is demonstrated in Cantor’s theory, it is demonstrated in a way that I find absolutely marvellous.

There are at least a few people here who know what I’m talking about, so that I am going to indicate it briefly to you. It is quite provable that what is between the One and the Zero – this can be shown thanks to decimals – one uses decimals in the system of the same name: decimal, and it is very easy to show that if you suppose – you have to suppose it – if you suppose that it is numerable, the method described as diagonal can always permit there to be forged a new decimal series so that it is certainly not inscribed in what was enumerated. It is strictly impossible to construct this numerable, to give even a way, however slender it might be, of ranking it, which is indeed the least of things, because the numerable is defined by corresponding to the series of whole numbers.

It is then purely and simply from something supposed – and on this you will be very easily accused as is done in this book *Cantor a tort* – Cantor for having simply forged a vicious circle. A vicious circle, my good friends, but why not! The more vicious a circle is the funnier it is, especially if one can get something out of it, something like this little bird that is called the non-numerable, which is indeed one of the most outstanding, the cleverest, the most sticking to the real of number thing that has ever been invented.

Anyway let us leave it! The eleven thousand virgins as it is said in the legend of Doreus [?], is the way to express a non-numerable. Because eleven thousand, you understand, is an enormous figure, it is above all an enormous figure for virgins, and not simply nowadays!

So then, we, we have highlighted these facts. Let us try now to understand what becomes of this *Pas-toute* which is really the key point, the original point of what I wrote on the board. Because nowhere, up to the present, in logic, has there been put, promoted, put forward the function of not all as such. The mode of thinking, inasmuch as it is, as I might say, subverted by the lack of the sexual relationship, only thinks and does not think by means of the One. The Universal, is this something that results from the enveloping of a certain field by something which is of the order of the One. Except, which is the true signification of the notion of set, it is very precisely the following, the fact is that the set, is the mathematical (121) notation of this something where, alas, I have some responsibility, which is a certain definition, the one that I note as S barred (\bar{S}). Namely, of the subject, of a subject inasmuch as he is nothing other than the effect of the signifier, in other words that I represent a signifier for another signifier.

The set, is the way in which, at a turning point of history, people who were the least disposed to bring to light what was involved in the subject, found themselves as one might say necessitated. The set is nothing other than the subject. That indeed is why it cannot even be handled without the addition of the empty set (\emptyset).

Up to a certain point, I would say that the empty set is set apart in its necessity by the fact that it can be taken as an element of the set. Namely, that the inscription of the parenthesis that designates the set with as element the empty set (\emptyset), is something without which there is absolutely unthinkable any handling of this function, of this function which – I am repeating it to you, I think I have sufficiently pointed it out – is designed very precisely at a certain turning point to question, to question at the level of common language – I underline common, because here it is in no way any, meta-language that reigns of any sort whatsoever – to question from the point of view of logic, to question with language everything that is involved in the incidence, in language itself of number. Namely, from something which has nothing to do with language, from something that is more real than anything whatsoever, as the discourse of science has sufficiently manifested it.

Not all – the bar was missing – is very precisely what results from the fact not that nothing limits it, but that the limit is situated differently. This means that the not all, if I may say, and I will say it to go quickly, is the following. It is that contrary to the inclusion in $\forall x$ “there exists the father whose nay-saying situates himself with respect to the phallic function”, inversely it is in as far as there is the void, the lack, the absence of anything whatsoever that denies the phallic function at the level of the woman, that

inversely, there is nothing other than this something that the 'not-all' formulates in the position of the woman in the place of the phallic function. It is in effect, for her, 'not-all' (*Pas toute*). Which does not mean that she denies it under any incidence whatsoever. I will not say that she is other, because it is very precisely the style in which she only exists in this function, to deny it, which is precisely this style, which is that she is what in my graph is inscribed by the signifier of the following that the other is barred, $S(\emptyset)$.

(122) The woman is not the locus of the Other and, what is more, she is inscribed very precisely as not being the Other in the function that I give to the O, namely, as being the locus of the truth. And what is inscribed in the non-existence of what could deny the phallic function, just as here I had expressed it by the function of the empty set of the existence of the 'say that not', in the same way it is by absenting herself and it is even by being this *jouiscentre*, this *jouiscentre* that there is conjugated to what I will not call an absence, but a *dé-sence* – that the woman posits herself for this signifying fact, not only that the capital Other is not there, is not her, but that it is always quite elsewhere, at the place where the word is situated.

There remains to me – since after all you have the patience at a time which is already 11 o'clock, to continue to hear me – to highlight something which is capital in what after all here I am pushing forward for you at the end of the year, a certain number of themes which are crystallising themes, which is to denote the gap that separates each of these terms in so far as they are stated.

It is clear that between the of x, 'there exists', and the 'there does not exist', you should not be talking gibberish, it is existence.

Existence

It is clear that between 'there exists who does not' and 'there is not one who is not', there is the contradiction:

contradiction

When Aristotle notes particular propositions in order to oppose them to universals, it is between a particular positive with respect to a universal negative that he sets up the contradiction. Here it is the contrary: it is the particular which is negative and it is the universal which is positive.

Here, what we have between this not of x not of x which is not the negation of any universality, what we have – I am only going to indicate to you here, I will justify it subsequently – it is the undecidable:

undecidable

Between the two of x whose situation as all of our experience shows us sufficiently, I think, not to be simple, what is at stake is what? We will call it the lack, we will call it the flaw, we will call it if you wish desire and to be more rigorous, we will call it the **o**-object.

lack

flaw

desire

o-object

So then what is at stake is to know how, in the midst of all of that – I hope that at least some people will have taken a note of it – how in the midst of all of that there functions something that might resemble a circulation. For that, we have to question ourselves about the mode in which there are posited these four terms.

existence

contradiction

undecidable

lack

flaw

desire

o-object

This of x on the top left, is literally the necessary. Nothing is thinkable, it is above all not our function to think about us men. Anyway a women thinks, she even thinks from time to time “therefore I am”. As regards that of course she is mistaken. But anyway as regards what is necessary, it is absolutely necessary – and this is what Freud gives us with this extraordinary *Totem* and.....*Debout* – is absolutely necessary to think anything whatsoever about the relationships that are called human we don’t know why – in the experience set up by the analytic discourse, it is absolutely necessary to posit that there exists One for whom castration, is sent packing.....castration means what? That means above all leaving to desire, that

does not mean from the other. So then you see! To think that, namely starting from the woman, it is necessary that there should be one who has nothing left to desire. This is the business of the Oedipal myth, but it is absolutely necessary, it is absolutely necessary. If you lose that, I can absolutely not see what will allow you to locate yourself in it in any way whatsoever. It is very important to be able to locate oneself.

So there you are, this is the of x. I have already told you that it is necessary because of what? Because precisely of the fact that faith, I wrote there for you earlier undecidable, of what one could absolutely say nothing that is like anything whatsoever that can act as a function of truth if, if one did not admit, this necessary: there is at least One who says no. I am insisting a little. I am insisting because I was not able this evening – we were disturbed – to tell you all the nice things that I would have liked to tell you in connection with this. But I had something really good to say and, since I am being teased, I am going to tell it to you. All the same: it is the function of *é-pater*:

People have questioned a good deal the function of the *pater-familias*. We should better centre what we can require from the function of the father. This business of paternal lack, people keep yapping on about it! There is a crisis, that's a fact, it is not altogether false; the *é-pater* no longer amazes (*épater*) us. This is the only really decisive function of the father.

I already noted that it was not the Oedipus complex, that that was finished, that if the father was a legislator, that produced a President Schreber as a child. Nothing more. On any level whatsoever, the father is the one who ought to amaze the family. If the father no longer amazes the family, naturally...but we will find something better! It is not necessary that it should be the biological father, there is always one that will amaze the family which everyone knows is only a herd of slaves. There will be others that amaze. You see how the French tongue can be used for a lot of things. I already explained that the last time, I had begun with a yoke – *fondre* or “to found/melt from them a One” in subjunctive it is the same yoke: to found you have to melt (*pour fonder il faut fondre*) there are things that can only be expressed in the French tongue, this is precisely why there is an unconscious. Because they are equivocations that *fondent* in the two senses of the word. There is even nothing other than that.

If you question yourselves about the *Tous* and try to see how it is expressed in each tongue, you will find all sorts of things, absolutely sensational things. Personally, I made a lot of enquiries into Chinese because I cannot make a catalogue of the tongues of the whole world. I also questioned someone, thanks to the charming treasurer of our School, who had written out by her father how *Tous* was said in Yoruba. But it's mad you know! I am doing that for the love of art, but I know well that in any case, I will find that in every tongue there is a way to say *Tous*.

For my part what interests me, is the signifier, like One, this is what people make use of in each tongue and the only interests of the signifier are the equivocations that can emerge from it, namely something of the order of “*Fondre d’eux un Un*” and other imbecilities of this kind. It is the only interesting thing, because for us what is involved in the *Tous* you will always find it expressed: the *Tous* is necessarily semantic.

The simple fact that I say that I would like to question every tongue resolves the question, since the tongues precisely are not *pas toutes*, that is their definition, on the other hand if you question the *Tous* you understand. Yes anyway semantics comes down to what can be translated. What other definition of it could I give! Semantics is that thanks to which a man and a woman only understand one another if they do not speak the same tongue. Anyway, I am telling you all of that so that you can do some exercises and because I am there for that and then also perhaps to open up your little noodle to the use that I make of linguistics. Yes! I would like to be rid of it. So then as regards what is involved in what necessitates existence, we start precisely from this point that I inscribed earlier, from the gap of the undecidable, namely between the not all and the not one. And afterwards, it goes then to existence. And then afterwards it goes there. To what? To the fact that all men are potentially castrated. It goes towards the possible, because the universal is never anything other than that. When you say that ‘all men are mammals’ that means that all possible men maybe. And after that where does it go? It goes there to the *o*-object. It is with this that we are in relationship. And after that where does it go? It goes there, where the Woman is distinguished by not being unifying.

There you are! It only remains to complete here to go towards contradiction and to come back to the ‘Not all’ (*Pas toutes*), which in short is nothing other than the expression of contingency. You see here, as I already signalled at one time, the alternation of necessity, of contingency, of the possible and the impossible is not in the order that Aristotle gives; because here, it is the impossible that is at stake, namely when all is said and one the real. So then follow closely this little path, because it will be of use to us subsequently. You will see something of it. There you are! It would be necessary to indicate the four triangles in the corners like that, the direction of the arrows is also indicated. Have you got that? And here are the...

(126) There you are! I think I've done enough for this evening. I do not want to finish on a sensational peroration, but the question that, yes, it is well enough written. Necessary, impossible.....

X – We can't hear anything!

Lacan – Huh? Necessary, impossible, possible and contingent.

X – We can't hear anything.

Lacan – I don't give a damn! There you are. This is a way of opening things up. You will hear what follows in almost a fortnight's time. Because it is on the 14th that I will give my next seminar at the Panthéon. I am not sure that it will not be the final one.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

4th November 1971

In coming back to talk at Sainte-Anne what I would have hoped for, is that there would be interns, as they are called, who in my day were called "asylum interns"; now it is psychiatric hospitals, and all the rest of it. It was that audience that I was aiming at in returning to Sainte-Anne. I had hoped that some of them would put themselves out. Are there some of them here – I am talking about people who are actually interns – would they do me the pleasure of raising their hands? It's a crushing minority, but anyway, it is quite enough for me.

Starting from there – and as long as I have enough puff – I am going to say a few words to you. It is obvious that as always I improvise these words, which does not mean that I do not have here some little notes, but they are improvised since this morning, because I am working very hard... But this does not mean that you should feel yourselves obliged to do the same. One point on which I insisted, is the distance there is between work and knowledge, because let us not forget that this evening, it is knowledge that I am promising you, so then no particular need to wear yourselves out. You are going to see why, some already suspect it, because they have attended what is called my Seminar.

If we are talking about knowledge, I remarked, in the already distant past, the fact that ignorance can be considered, in Buddhism, as a passion. This is a fact that can be justified with a little meditation; but since meditation is not our strong point, all we need to get it across is experience. It is the striking experience that I had, a long time ago,

when I was a young doctor. Because I have been frequenting these walls for a long time – not necessarily these ones at that time – and it must be, it must date from somewhere about 1925–26, and the interns at that time – I am not talking about what they are now – the hospital interns and those who are called the asylum interns, it was no doubt a group effect, but as regards holding on to ignorance, they were more or less there, it appears! One might consider that it was linked to a phase in medicine, this phase was necessarily to be followed by the present vacillation. At that time, after all, this ignorance, do not forget that I am talking about ignorance, I have just said that it is a passion, is not for me a lesser value, nor is it a deficit. It is something else: ignorance is linked to knowledge.

(8) It is a way of establishing it, to make of it an established knowledge. For example, when one wanted to be a doctor at an epoch that, of course, was at the end of an epoch, well then, it is normal that people would have wanted to benefit, to show, to manifest an ignorance, that as I might say was consolidated. This having been said, after what I have said to you about ignorance, you will not be surprised if I point out that the *docte ignorantia* as a certain Cardinal put it, at a time when this title was not a certificate of ignorance, a certain Cardinal described *docte ignorantia* as the highest form of knowledge. It was Nicholas of Cusa, to recall him in passing. So that the correlation between ignorance and knowledge is something from which one must start essentially and see that after all, if ignorance, like that, from a certain moment on, in a certain zone, carries knowledge to its lowest level, it is not for want of ignorance, it is even the contrary.

For some time, in medicine, ignorance is no longer *docte* enough to enable medicine to survive with something other than superstitions. I will come back perhaps later if I have the time on the meaning of this word, and precisely for what it involves on this occasion about medicine. But anyway to highlight something which concerns this experience that I really want to link up after some 45 years of frequenting these walls – I am not boasting about it, but ever since I surrendered some of my *Ecrits* for *poubellication* everyone knows how old I am, it is one of the inconveniences – at the time, I must say that the degree of passionate ignorance that reigned in the res of Sainte-Anne was something impossible to conjure up. It is true that these were people who had the vocation and, at that time, to have a vocation for asylums, was something rather special.

Into the same res there came at the same time four people whose names I have no disdain in calling forth because I was one of them. The other one that I would like to recall this evening, was Henri Ey. We can say, can we not, with the length of time that has passed, that Ey civilised this ignorance. And I must say that I salute his work. Civilisation, you know, does not get rid of any discontent, as Freud remarked, quite the contrary, *Unbehagen*, the not being at ease, but anyway it has a precious aspect to it. If you think that there is the slightest degree of irony in what I have just said to you, you would be gravely mistaken. But you cannot but be mistaken, because you cannot imagine the state of the asylums before Ey got stuck into them. It was something absolutely fabulous. Now the story has moved on and I have just received a circular marking the alarm that exists in a certain zone of this milieu with respect to this movement that promises all sorts of sparks and that is called anti-psychiatry. People would really like me to take a stance

on this, as if one could take a stance on something which is already an opposition. Because to tell the truth, I do not know if it would be appropriate to make some remarks about it, some remarks inspired by my old experience, the one that I have just evoked (9) precisely and to distinguish, on this occasion, psychiatry and *psychiatrie*. The question of the mentally ill or of what are called, to put it better, psychoses, is a question that is not at all resolved by anti-psychiatry, whatever may be the illusions that some local enterprises harbour about it. Anti-psychiatry is a movement whose meaning is liberation from the psychiatrist, if I can express myself in that way. And it is quite certain that it does not take that path.

It does not take that path because there is a characteristic that all the same one must not forget in what are called revolutions, which is that this word is admirably chosen to mean, returning to the starting point. The circle of all that was already known, but is amply demonstrated in the book that is called "*The birth of madness*" (*sic*) by Michel Foucault. The psychiatrist has in effect a social service to perform. He is the creation of a certain historical turning point. The one that we are going through is not in any way close to lightening this responsibility, nor to reducing its place, which is the least that one can say. So that this leaves the questions of anti-psychiatry a little out of synch.

Anyway, this is an introductory indication. But I would like to point out that, as regards the medical residences, there is something that is all the same striking which lends them a certain continuity with the more recent ones. It is the degree to which psychoanalysis has not, with respect to the angle that knowledge takes on there, psychoanalysis has not improved anything. The psychoanalyst, in the sense that I posed the question in the year '67 – '68, when I introduced the notion of *du psychanalyste*, preceded by the definite article, at a time when I was trying before an audience that at that time was rather large, to recall the logical value, that of the definite article. Anyway let us leave it, the psychoanalyst does not seem to have changed anything with respect to a certain basis of knowledge. After all, all of that is normal. Changing the basis of knowledge is not something that happens from one day to the next. The future belongs to God, as they say, namely, to good luck, to the good luck of those who had the lucky inspiration to follow me. Something will come out of them if the little pigs don't eat them up. This is what I call good luck. For the others there is no question of good luck. Their lot will be regulated by automatism, which is completely the contrary of luck, good or bad.

What I would like this evening is this. What I would like is that those, what they may commit themselves to, so that the psychoanalysis that they use leaves them no chance, I would like to avoid for them there being established a misunderstanding in the name, like that, of something which is the effect of the goodwill of some of those people who follow me. They have understood well enough – anyway as best they can – what I said about knowledge as being made up of a correlate of ignorance. And so, that tormented them a little.

There were some among them, I do not know what provoked them, a literary provocation of course, things that you find in the writings of Georges Bataille, for example, because (10) otherwise I do not think it would have occurred to them...there is non-knowledge (*le*

non-savoir). I should say that Georges Bataille gave a lecture on non-knowledge, and that you can find that perhaps in two or three places in his writings. Anyway, God knows that he did not gloat about it and in particular on the day of his lecture, there, at the *salle de Géographie*, at St Germain des Prés, which you know well because it is a place for culture. He did not utter a word, which was not a bad way to display non-knowledge. People sniggered and they were wrong, because now non-knowledge is chic. You can find it, can you not, almost everywhere in the mystics, it is even from them that it comes, it is even in them that it has a sense. And then finally, you know that I insisted on the difference between knowledge and truth. So then, if the truth is not knowledge, it is because it is non-knowledge. Aristotelian logic: “Everything that is not black, is not-black” as I noted somewhere. I noted it, it is certain, I articulated that this tangible frontier between truth and knowledge, is precisely where analytic discourse is held. So then there you are, the road is wide open to put forward, to lift the flag of non-knowledge. It is not a bad flag. It can serve precisely to rally what is not, after all, a rare thing to recruit as a clientele: crass ignorance, for example. That also exists by the way, it is becoming more and more rare. Only there are other things, there are aspects... of laziness for example, that I have spoken about for a very long time. And then there are certain forms of institutionalisation, the concentration camps of the good Lord, as people said in the past, within the University, where these things are well received, because it looks chic. In short, a whole dumb show is carried out, is it not, you go first, Madam Truth, the hole is there is it not, that is your place. Anyway it’s a discovery, this non-knowledge.

To introduce a definitive confusion on this delicate subject, the one that is precisely the point in question in psychoanalysis, what I called this tangible frontier between truth and knowledge, one could hardly do better. There is no need to date it.

Anyway, 10 years before, another lucky find was made which was not bad either, with respect to what I have to call my discourse. I had begun it by saying “the unconscious is structured like a language”. People found an extraordinary contraption: the two chaps who could have best worked along this track, spun this thread, were given a very nice job: *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie*. What am I saying *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse*. You see the slip, huh? Anyway it’s as good as Lalande.

Lalangue, as I write it now – I have no blackboard...well, write *lalangue* in one word: that is how I will write it from now on. You see how cultivated they are! So then you can’t hear anything! Is it the acoustics? Will you try to fix it? It is not a ‘d’ it is a ‘gu’. I did not say that the unconscious is structured like *lalangue* but is structured like a language, and I will come back to it later.

(11) But when those responsible that I spoke about earlier were launched on the *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse*, it is obviously because I had put on the agenda the Saussurian term *lalangue* which I repeat I will henceforth write as a single word. And I will justify why. Well then, *lalangue* has nothing to do with the dictionary, whatever it may be. A dictionary has to do with diction, namely, with poetry or with rhetoric for example. This is not nothing, huh? It goes from invention to persuasion, anyway it is

very important.

Only, it is precisely not this aspect that is related to the unconscious. Contrary to what I think, the mass of listeners think, but that all the same a good number know already, already know if they have listened to the few terms in which I tried to make a passage to what I say about the unconscious: the unconscious is a matter first of all of grammar. It also has a little to do, a lot to do, everything to do with repetition, namely, the aspect that is quite contrary to what a dictionary is used for. So that it was a rather good way to ensure that those who could have helped me at that time to follow my trail, to deviate them. Grammar and repetition is a quite different aspect than the one that I pinpointed earlier as invention, which is not nothing of course nor is persuasion. Contrary to what is, I don't know why, still very widespread, the useful aspect in the function of *lalangue*, the useful aspect for us psychoanalysts, for those who have to deal with the unconscious, is logic.

This is a little parenthesis that links up with the fact that there is a risk of loss in this absolutely improvised and ethical promotion, to which I really gave no opportunity for people to be mistaken about it, the one that is propelled from non-knowledge. Is there any need to demonstrate that there is in psychoanalysis firstly and fundamentally knowledge. This is what I am going to have to prove to you.

Let us lay hold of it from one end: this first massive character, the primacy of this knowledge in psychoanalysis. Do I have to remind you that when Freud tried to account for the difficulties that there are in opening up psychoanalysis, an article of 1917 in *Imago*, if I remember correctly, and in any case which was translated, it appeared in the first number of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, "A difficulty in the path of psychoanalysis" is what it is called. The fact is that the knowledge involved does not easily get across, like that. Freud explains as best he can, and it is even in this way that he is open to misunderstanding – not by chance – this famous term of resistance, which I think I have managed at least in a certain zone, to no longer have dinned into us. But it is certain that there is one where, I have no doubt, this famous term of resistance which he is obviously permanently apprehensive about still flourishes. And then, I should say, why not dare to say that we all have our little slippages. It is always resistances that favour these slippages. Sometime soon people will discover some in what I said; but (12) after all, it is not so certain. Anyway, in short, Freud makes a mistake. He thinks that against resistance there is only one thing to do, which is revolution. And in so doing he completely masks what is at stake, namely, the very specific difficulty in bringing into play a certain function of knowledge. He confuses it with carrying out what is pinpointed as a revolution in knowledge.

It is in this little article – he will take it up later in *Civilisation and its discontents* – that there is the first substantial piece on the Copernican revolution. It was a commonplace of University knowledge at the time. Copernicus – poor Copernicus – had accomplished the revolution. It was he – as they say in all the textbooks – who put the Sun in the centre and had the Earth turning around. It is quite clear that despite the schema that clearly shows this in effect in "*De Revolutionibus*.....etc" on this Copernicus had strictly

speaking taken no sides and no one would have dreamt of picking a quarrel with him about it. But anyway, it is in effect a fact, that we have gone from geo- to helio-centrism and that this is supposed to have delivered a coup, a 'blow' as it is put in the English text, to some supposed cosmological narcissism.

The second 'blow', which is biological Freud evokes for us in Darwin on the pretext that as regards what is on Earth, people took some time to get over the new announcement, the one that saw man related as a cousin to modern primates. And Freud explains the resistance to psychoanalysis in this way: what is attacked, is properly speaking this consistency of knowledge which means that when one knows something, the least that can be said about it, is that one knows that one knows.

Let us leave to one side what he recalls in this connection, because this is the core, what he adds, namely, the daubing in the form of the ego which is constructed around that, namely, the one who knows that he knows, well, it's me.

It is clear that this reference to the ego is secondary with respect to the fact that a knowledge knows itself and that the novelty is that what psychoanalysis reveals is that it is a knowledge that is unknown to itself. But I ask you, what would be new in that, namely, of a kind to provoke resistance, if this knowledge was of the same kind as that of everybody else, specifically the animal, where nobody dreams of being surprised that in general the animal knows what he needs. Namely, that if it is an animal that lives on the ground, he is only going to plunge himself into water for a limited time: he knows that this is of no use to him. If the unconscious is something surprising, it is because this knowledge is something different. It is this knowledge of which we have an idea, so little grounded moreover from all time, because it is not for nothing that people have evoked inspiration, enthusiasm, from all time, it is, namely, that this unknown knowledge that is at stake in psychoanalysis, is a knowledge that is well and truly articulated, is structured like a language.

(13) So that here, the revolution, as I might say, put forward by Freud, tends to mask what is at stake: the fact is that this something which does not get across, revolution or no, is a subversion which is produced where? In the function, in the structure of knowledge. And this is what does not get across, because in truth, the cosmological revolution, one cannot really say, apart from the disturbance that this created for some doctors of the Church, that it is something that in any way is of such a nature that man, as one says, should feel himself to be in any humiliated by it. That is why the use of the term revolution is so unconvincing, because the very fact that there was a revolution around this point, is rather exciting, as regards narcissism. And it is exactly the same as regards Darwinism. There is no doctrine that puts human production on a higher level than evolution, make no mistake. In one case as in the other, cosmological or biological, all these revolutions leave man no less in place as the flower of creation. That is why we can say that this reference was really not well thought out. It is perhaps precisely designed to mask, to get across what is at stake. Namely, that this knowledge, this new status of knowledge, is something that ought to involve a completely new type of discourse, which is not easy to hold and up to a certain point, has not yet begun.

The unconscious, I have said, is structured like a language. Which one? And why did I say a language? Because as regards language, we are getting to know a little bit. People talk about object-language in logic, whether it is mathematical or not. People talk about metalanguage. People are even speaking about language, for some time, at the level of biology. People talk about language without rhyme or reason. To begin with, if I say that I am talking about language, it is because what is at stake are common features that can be encountered in *lalangue*. *Lalangue* being itself is subject to a very great variety but there are nevertheless constants. The language that is at stake, as I took the time, the care, the pain and the patience to articulate, is the language where one can distinguish the code from the message, among other things. Without this minimal distinction, there is no place for speech. That is why when I introduce these terms, I call them “Function and field of speech” – for speech it is the function – “and of language” – for language it is the field. Speech, speech defines the place of what one can call the truth. What I mark, from its coming on the scene, for the use that I want to make of it, is its fiction-structure, and also moreover its lying [structure]. In truth, make no mistake, the truth does not tell the truth – not even half – except in one case: it is when she says ‘I am lying’. It is the only case when one can be sure that she is not lying because she is supposed to know it. But Otherwise, namely, Otherwise with a capital O, it is quite possible that she tells the truth all the same without knowing it. This is what I tried to mark with my S, brackets of O, S(Ø) precisely and barred. That at least that, you cannot say that it is not in every case a knowledge, for those who follow me, that it is something that must be taken into account to guide oneself, even if it is out of pure expediency. This is the first point of the unconscious structured like a language.

(14) The second, you did not have to wait for me – I am talking to psychoanalysts – you did not have to wait for me to know it because it is the very principle of what you do once you interpret. There is no interpretation that does not concern...what? The link between what, in what you hear, is manifested in terms of speech, the link between that and enjoyment. It may be that you do it, in a way innocently, namely, without you ever noticing that there is no interpretation that ever means something else, but an analytic interpretation is always that. Whether the gain is secondary or primary, the gain is of enjoyment. And that, it is quite clear that this thing emerged from Freud’s pen, not immediately, because there is a stage, there is the pleasure principle, but anyway it is clear that one day what struck him, is that whatever one does innocent or not, what is formulated, whatever one does, is something that is repeated.

The agency, I said, of the letter, and if I use agency it is, like all the usages that I make of words, not without reason. It is because agency resonates also at the level of jurisdiction, it also resonates at the level of insistence, where it gives rise to this module that I defined just now, at the level of a certain logic. It is in this repetition that Freud discovers the beyond of the pleasure principle. Only there you are, if there is a beyond, let us no longer talk about a principle, because a principle which has a beyond, is no longer a principle, and let us leave to one side at the same time the reality principle. Clearly all of this must be examined again. There are not after all two classes of speaking beings: those who are governed according to the pleasure principle and the reality principle and those who are

beyond the pleasure principle, especially since, as they say – make no mistake – clinically, they are indeed the same.

Primary process is explained in a first moment by this approximation given by the opposition, the bi-polarity of pleasure principle/reality principle. It has to be said, this outline is untenable and only designed to allow the listeners who are the contemporaries of these first statements, who are – I do not want to abuse this term – bourgeois listeners, namely, who have absolutely not the slightest idea of what the pleasure principle is, to swallow what they could. The pleasure principle is a reference to ancient morality: in ancient morality, pleasure, pleasure, which consists precisely of making the least possible of it. *Otium cum dignitate* is an asceticism that one could say rejoins that of the swine, but not at all in the sense in which it is understood. The word swine (*porceau*) did not mean in ancient times to be a pig, it meant that it was very close to animal wisdom. It was an appreciation, a touch, a mark given from outside by people who did not understand what was at stake, namely, the highest refinement of the morality of the Master. What on earth could that have to do with the idea that a bourgeois has about pleasure and moreover, it has to be said, of reality?

In any case – this is the third point – what results from the insistence with which the unconscious gives us what it formulates, is that if on the one hand our interpretation only ever has the meaning of pointing out what the subject finds in it, what does he find in it? (15) Nothing that ought not to be catalogued in the register of enjoyment. That is the third point.

Fourth point: where does enjoyment lie? What does it need? A body. To enjoy, a body is necessary. Even those who promise us eternal beatitude can only do so by supposing that the body is conveyed there: glorious or not, it has to be there. You need a body. Why? Because the dimension of enjoyment for the body, is the dimension of the descent towards death. It is moreover very precisely how the pleasure principle in Freud announces that he knew well from that moment on what he was saying. Because if you read him with care, you will see there that the pleasure principle has nothing to do with hedonism, even if it is bequeathed to us by the most ancient tradition, it is in truth the unpleasure principle. It is the unpleasure principle, to the degree that by stating it at every moment, Freud goes off the rails. In what does pleasure consist he tells us: it is to lower tension. As if it were not the very principle of everything that is called enjoyment, something to enjoy, that it produces a tension. This indeed is why, when Freud is on the path of *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, of the beyond of the pleasure principle, what does he state to us in *Civilisation and its discontents*, if not that very probably well beyond the repression described as social, there ought to be – he writes it textually – an organic repression.

It is curious, it is a pity that one has to take so much trouble for things that are said so obviously, and get the following to be noticed: that the dimension by which the speaking being is distinguished from the animal, is assuredly that there is in him this gap through which he would be lost, through which he is permitted on the body or the bodies, whether it is his own or that of his fellows, or that of animals who surround him, to give rise in

them, for their or his own gain, to what is properly speaking called enjoyment.

It is assuredly more strange that the journeyings that I have just underlined, those which go from this sophisticated description of the pleasure principle to the open recognition of what is involved in fundamental enjoyment. It is more strange to see that Freud, at this level, thinks he has to have recourse to something that he calls the death instinct. Not that it is wrong, only to say it in this way, in this so learned a fashion, is precisely what the savants that he generated under the name of psychoanalysts can absolutely not swallow.

This long cogitation, the rumination about the death instinct, which is what characterises – it can be said – the whole of the international psychoanalytic institution, this way that it has of splitting itself, of sharing itself, of dividing itself up, does it admit it, does it not admit it, here I am stopping, I have not got that far, these interminable labyrinths about this term, which seems to have been chosen to give the illusion that, in this field, something had been discovered that one might say is analogous to what in logic is called a paradox, it is astonishing that Freud, given the path he had already opened up, did not (16) feel he should highlight it purely and simply. The enjoyment which is really of the order of erotology that is within anyone's reach – it is true that at that time the publications of the Marquis de Sade were less widespread – that is why I thought I should, as a way of fixing a date, to mark somewhere in my *Ecrits* the relationship between Kant and Sade.

If, by proceeding in this way nevertheless I think all the same that there is an answer, it is not necessary that he any more than any of us, knew all he was saying. But instead of talking trivially about the primitive death instinct, which comes from the outside or comes from the inside or turning back from the outside onto the inside and generating belatedly, finally falling back on aggressivity and fighting, people could perhaps have read the following. In Freud's death instinct, which lends itself perhaps to saying that the only act, after all – if there is one – which might be an accomplished act – you should understand that I am talking, like I was talking last year, about a discourse that might not be a semblance, in one case as in the other none exists, neither a discourse nor such an act – that would be, if it could be, suicide.

This is what Freud tells us. He does not tell it to us like that, in the raw. Clearly, as it can be said now, now that the doctrine has opened up its path a little and we know that there is no act except a failed one and that it is even the only condition of a semblance of success. This indeed is why suicide deserves to be objected to. The fact is that it does not need to have remained an attempt for it to be in any case failed, completely failed from the point of view of enjoyment. Perhaps the Buddhists with their tins of petrol – because they are in the news – we know nothing about it, because they do not come back to bear witness.

Freud's text is a pretty text. It is not for nothing that he brings in for us the soma and the germen. He senses, he sniffs out that it is here there is something to be explored. Yes, there is something to be explored, it is the fifth point that I stated this year in my Seminar

and which is expressed as follows: there is no sexual relationship.

Naturally, that appears like that to be empty noise, a little '*efloupi*' [?]. All you need is a good fuck to prove the contrary to me. Unfortunately, it is the one thing that proves absolutely nothing of the sort, because the notion of relationship does not quite coincide with the metaphorical use that is made of this simple word relationship: 'they had a relationship' is not quite that. One can seriously talk about relationship, not just when a discourse establishes it, but when the relationship is stated. Because it is true that the real is there before we think about it, but the relationship is much more doubtful: not only must it be thought of, but it must be written. If you are not capable of writing it, there is no relationship. It might be perhaps very remarkable if it proved, as long as this has begun to be a little elucidated, that it is impossible to write what is involved in the sexual relationship. The matter is important, because precisely we are, through the progress of what is called science, in the process of taking very far a whole lot of little affairs that are situated at the level of the gamete, at the level of the gene, at the level of a certain number (17) of choices, of sortings, that one can describe as one wishes, meiosis or differently, and which seem to clearly elucidate something, something passes at the level of the fact that reproduction, at least in a certain zone of life, is sexed.

Only this has absolutely nothing to do with what is involved in the sexual relationship, inasmuch as it is very certain that in the speaking being, there is around this relationship, in so far as it is grounded on enjoyment, a range that is absolutely admirable in its display and that two things have been demonstrated by Freud, by Freud and the analytic discourse. Namely, the whole range of enjoyment, I mean everything that can be done in appropriately treating a body, indeed one's own body, all of that, to some degree shares in sexual enjoyment. Only sexual enjoyment itself, when you want to put your hand on it, if I can express myself in this way, is no longer sexual at all. It is lost.

And this is where there comes into play everything that is built up from the term phallus and which indeed here is something that designates a certain signified, a signified of a certain perfectly vanishing signifier. Because as regards defining what is involved in being a man or being a woman, what psychoanalysis shows us, is very precisely that it is impossible and that to a certain degree, nothing particularly indicates that it is towards the partner of the other sex that enjoyment should be directed, if enjoyment is considered, even for a moment, as the guide of what is involved in the function of reproduction.

We find ourselves here confronted with the shattering of, let us say, the notion of sexuality. Sexuality is at the centre, without any doubt, of everything that happens in the unconscious. But it is at the centre in that it is a lack. Namely, that in the place of anything whatsoever which might be inscribed about the sexual relationship as such, there is substituted the impasses which are those generated precisely by the function of sexual enjoyment, in so far as it appears as this sort of mirage that Freud here gives the mark of being absolute enjoyment. And it is so close that precisely it is not absolute. It is not so in any sense. First of all because as such, it is destined to these different forms of failure that are constituted by castration for masculine enjoyment, division for what is involved in feminine enjoyment. And that on the other hand, what enjoyment leads to

has strictly nothing to do with copulation, inasmuch as it is, let us say, the usual style – it will change – by which reproduction is carried out in the species of the speaking being.

In other words there is a thesis: there is no sexual relationship – I am talking about the speaking being. There is an antithesis which is the reproduction of life. It is a well known theme. It is the current flag of the Catholic Church and in this respect we have to salute its courage. The Catholic Church affirms that there is a sexual relationship: it is the one that culminates in producing little children. It is an affirmation which is quite tenable, simply it is unprovable. No discourse can sustain it, except a religious discourse (18) in so far as it defines the strict separation that exists between truth and knowledge. And thirdly, there is no synthesis unless you call synthesis this remark that the only enjoyment is to die.

These are the points of truth and knowledge that it is important to punctuate as regards what is involved in the knowledge of the psychoanalyst, except for the fact that there is not a single psychoanalyst for whom it is not a dead letter. As regards synthesis, one can trust them to sustain its terms and to see them quite elsewhere than in the death instinct. If you get rid of Nature, as they say, is that not so, it returns at a gallop.

It would be well all the same to give its true sense to this old proverbial formula. Nature, let us talk about it, this indeed is what is at stake. Nature is everything that vests itself with the livery of knowledge – and God knows there is no lack of it – and a discourse that is uniquely designed for knowledge to appear in livery is the University discourse. It is quite clear that the investiture that is at stake, is the idea of nature. It is not ready to disappear from the front of the stage. Not that I am trying to substitute a different one for it. You must not imagine that I am one of those who oppose nature and culture. First of all if only because nature is precisely a fruit of culture. But anyway this relationship, knowledge/truth or if you like truth/knowledge is something that we have not begun to have even the smallest beginning of agreement, like what is involved in medicine, in psychiatry and a whole lot of other problems. We are going to be submerged before too long, in four or five years by all the segregation problems that will be entitled and that will be castigated by the term of racism. All the problems which are precisely those that are going to consist in what is simply called the control of what happens at the level of the reproduction of life among beings who find themselves because of the fact that they speak, having all sorts of problems of conscience. What is completely unbelievable, is that people have not yet noticed that problems of conscience are problems of enjoyment.

But anyway, we are only beginning to be able to say them. It is not at all sure that this has the slightest consequence, because we know in effect that interpretation demands, to be accepted, what I called when I began, work. Knowledge for its part is of the order of enjoyment. We absolutely cannot see why it would change its bed. What people are waiting for, denounce under the heading of intellectualisation, simply means that they are used from experience to notice that it is in no way necessary, it is in no way sufficient to understand something for anything whatsoever to change. The question of the knowledge of the psychoanalyst is not at all that that it should be articulated or not, the question is of knowing what place one must be at to sustain it. It is obviously on this that

I will try to indicate something, and I do not know if I will be able to give a formulation of it that is transmissible. Nevertheless I will try.

(19) The question is to know the measure to which what science, the science to which psychoanalysis, nowadays just as much as in the time of Freud, can do nothing other than tag along behind, what science can reach about what has to do with the term real.

The Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real.

It is clear that the power of the Symbolic has no need to be proved. It is power itself. There is no trace of power in the world before the apparition of language. What is striking in what Freud sketches out about pre-Copernicus, is that it imagines that man was quite happy to be at the centre of the universe and that he believed himself to be the king of it. This is really an absolutely fabulous illusion! If there was something that he got an idea of in the eternal spheres, it is precisely that the last word about knowledge was there. What in the world know something – time is necessary for that to pass – are the ethereal spheres. They know. And this indeed is why knowledge is associated, from its origins, to the idea of power.

And in this little announcement at the back of the big package of my *Ecrits* you will see, because – why not admit it – I am the one who wrote this little note – who other than I could have done it, you can recognise my style and it is not at all badly written – I invoke *les Lumières* (the Enlightened).

It is quite clear that the Enlightened spent a certain time being elucidated. In a first phase, they really made a mess of things. But anyway, like hell, they were paved with good intentions. Contrary to everything that may have been said, the Enlightened had as a goal to state a knowledge that was not a homage to any power. Only, one must really regret to have to note that those who occupied this office were a little bit in the position of valets with respect to a certain type – I must say rather happy and flourishing – of master, the nobles at the time, for them to have been able in any way to end up with anything other than this famous French Revolution which had the result that you know. Namely, the establishment of a race of masters more ferocious than all that one had seen at work up to then.

A knowledge that is able for nothing, the knowledge of impotence, this is what the psychoanalyst, from a certain perspective, a perspective that I would not qualify as progressive, this is what the psychoanalyst may convey.

And to give you the tone of the track along which this year I am hoping to pursue my discourse, I am going to give you the title, the first fruits – to allow you to lick your chops – I am going to give you the title of the Seminar that I am going to give at the same place as last year, thanks to some people who were willing to work to preserve it for us.

(20) It is written as follows. First, before pronouncing it, that's an O and that's a U... Three dots – you can put in whatever you like, that way I give it to you to meditate on...

This OU, is the OU that is called *vel* or *aut* in Latin: ...OU PIRE.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

2nd December 1971

What I am going to do with you this evening is obviously not – any more than it was the last time, it is obviously not what I set out to do this year - to give the next step of my seminar. It will be like the last time, a talk.

Everyone knows – many ignore it – the insistence that I put, in the case of those who ask me for advice, on the preliminary conversations in analysis. That has of course an essential function for analysis. There is no possible entry into analysis without preliminary conversations. But there is something that approaches it about the relationship between these conversations and what I am going to tell you this year. Except that this can absolutely not be the same, given that, since it is I who speak, it is I who am here in the position of the analysand.

So then what I was going to tell you – I could have taken it from many different angles, but when all is said and done it is always at the last moment that I know what I have chosen to say – and for this conversation today, it seemed to be a propitious moment concerning a question that was put to me last evening by someone from my School. It is one of the people who take their position a little to heart and who posed the following question which has of course in my eyes the advantage of getting immediately into the core of the subject. Everyone knows that this rarely happens to me, I make my approach in prudent steps. The question that was put to me is the following: Is the incomprehension of Lacan a symptom?

I am repeating it then textually. It is someone on this occasion I easily pardon for having put my name, which can be explained because he was face to face with me, instead of what would have been more appropriate, namely, my discourse. You see that I am not shirking anything: I call it 'my'. We will see later whether this 'my' deserves to be retained.

What matter. The essential thing in this question was in what it was aimed at, namely, whether the incomprehension in question, whether you call it one thing or another, is a

symptom.

I do not think so. I do not think so first of all because in a sense one cannot say that something which has all the same a certain relationship with my discourse, which is not confused with it, which is what one can call my word, one cannot say that it is absolutely (24) misunderstood. One might say at a precise level, that your number is the proof of it. If my word was incomprehensible, I do not see what you would be doing here in such numbers. All the more so because after all this number is made up in large part of people who keep coming back. And then that, like that, at the level of a sampling that comes back to me all the same, it happens that people express themselves in this way that they do not always understand well or at least that they do not have the feeling of understanding. To take up anyway one of the latest testimonies that I received about it, about the way in which everyone expresses themselves, well then, despite this sentiment of not really being with it, nevertheless, I was told in this latest testimony, that this helped the person in question, to find his bearings in his own ideas, to be illuminated, to be illuminated himself on a certain number of points. One can say that at least for what concerns my word, which is quite obviously to be distinguished from discourse – we are going to try to see how – there is not properly speaking what is called incomprehension.

I underline right away that this word is a teaching word. Teaching then, on this occasion, I distinguish from discourse. Since I am speaking here at Sainte-Anne and perhaps through what I said the last time people might sense what that means for me, I have chosen to take things at what we might call an elementary level. It is completely arbitrary but it is a choice.

When I was giving a paper at the *Société de Philosophie* on what I called at that time my teaching I made the same decision. I spoke as if I were addressing myself to people who were very backward. They were no more so than you, but it is rather the idea that I have of philosophy that required that. And I am not the only one. One of my very good friends who gave a paper recently at the *Société de Philosophie* gave me an article on the foundation of mathematics in which I pointed out to him that his article was at a level 10 or 20 times higher than what he had said at the *Société de Philosophie*. He told me that I should not be surprised at that, given the response he had received. This indeed is what proved to me also, because I had responses of the same kind at the same place, this indeed is what reassured me for having articulated some things at the same level that you can find in my *Ecrits*.

There is then in certain contexts a less arbitrary choice than the one that I am defending here. I am defending it here in function of certain elements in my memory which are linked to the following. The fact is that after all, if at a certain level my discourse is still misunderstood, it is because, let us say for a long time, it was in a whole area, forbidden, not to understand it, which would have been, as experience has proved, within the reach of many, but forbidden to come and listen to. This is what is going to allow us to distinguish this incomprehension from a certain number of others. There was a prohibition. And that, faith, that this prohibition came from an analytic institution is surely significant.

(25) Significant means what? I did not say signifying (*signifiant*). There is a great difference between the signifier/signified relationship and signification. Signification makes a sign. A sign has nothing to do with the signifier. As sign is – I present that in a corner somewhere in the last issue of this *Scilicet* – a sign, whatever one may think of it, is always the sign of a subject. Which is addressed to what? This is also written in this *Scilicet* – I cannot develop it any more here, but this sign, this sign of prohibition assuredly came from true subjects, in every sense of the word, from subjects who obey in any case. That it should have been a sign that came from an analytic institution is well designed to make us take the next step.

If the question was put to me in this form, it is in function of the fact that in psychoanalysis incomprehension is considered to be a symptom. It is accepted in psychoanalysis, it is, one could say, generally admitted. Things have got to such a point that this has passed into common consciousness. When I say that it is generally admitted, it goes beyond psychoanalysis, I mean the psychoanalytic act. Things have a certain consciousness – there is something which gives the style of common consciousness – have got to the point where people say and where you hear people saying: “Go and have yourself psychoanalysed” when...when what?

When the person who says it considers that your behaviour, your remarks are as Monsieur de Lapalisse would say, a symptom. I would point out to you all the same, at this level, from this angle, symptom has the meaning of a truth value. And this is how what has passed into common consciousness is more specific than the idea that, alas, many psychoanalysts can manage to have – let us say that there are too few of them – namely, the equivalence between symptom and truth value. It is rather curious, but moreover it has this historical correspondent that this proves that this sense of the word symptom was discovered, exposed, before psychoanalysis came into play. As I often underline, this equivalence is very properly speaking the essential step taken by Marxist thinking.

Truth value, to translate the symptom into a truth value, we ought here to put our finger, once more, on the kind of knowledge that is presupposed in the analyst by the fact that it is necessary that he should be aware of what he interprets. And to make a parenthesis here simply in passing – it is not along the line of what I am trying to get you to follow – I should mark, I mark nevertheless that this knowledge is as I might say presupposed for the analyst. What I emphasised about ‘the subject supposed to know’ as grounding the phenomena of transference, I always underlined that this does not imply any certainty in the analysand subject that his analyst knows very much. Far from it. But this is perfectly compatible with the fact that the knowledge of the analyst should be envisaged by the analysand as very doubtful, which moreover – this has to be added – is frequently the case for very objective reasons. Analysts after all, do not know as much about it as they ought for the simple reason that often they do not work very hard. This changes absolutely nothing with regard to the fact that knowledge is presupposed for the function of the analyst and that it is on this that the phenomena of transference depend. I close the parenthesis. Here then is the symptom with its translation as truth value.

The symptom is truth value and – I point out to you in passing – the reciprocal is not true, the truth value is not a symptom. It is a good thing to note at this point for the reason that truth is not something whose function I claim can be isolated. Its function, and specifically where it takes place, in speech, is relative. It is not separable from other functions of the word. A further reason for me insisting on the fact that even reducing it to value, in no case is it to be confused with the symptom. It is around this point of what the symptom is that the first phases of my teaching pivoted. Because analysts were in such a fog about this point that the symptom – and after all perhaps it is owing to my teaching that this is no longer displayed so easily – that the symptom is articulated – I mean, in the mouth of analysts – as the refusal of the aforesaid truth value. There is no relationship.

It has no relationship with this one direction equivalence – I have just insisted on it – of the symptom to truth value. This brings into play what I will call – what I will call like that because we are among ourselves and I said it was a conversation – what I would call without any more formalities, without worrying myself that the terms that I am putting forward are already so worn out at the most advanced point of philosophy, this brings into play the being of an individual (*l'être d'un étant*). I am saying the being because it seems clear to me, it seems to be accepted that ever since philosophy has been going around in circles on a certain number of points, I say the being, because what is at stake is the speaking being. It is from being speaking – I apologise for the first being – that he comes to being, anyway that he has this feeling. Naturally he does not get to it, he fails. But this dimension of being that has opened up all of a sudden, one could say that for a good period of time, it had an effect on the system...of philosophers at least. And one would be quite wrong to ironise. Because if it had an effect on the system of philosophers, it is because they have an effect on everybody's system and that what is designated in this exposure by analysts of what they call resistance. Around this I carried on for a whole stage of this teaching of which my *Ecrits* bear the trace, I carried on a fight for a whole stage. It was indeed to question them about what they knew, what they were doing by bringing into play on this occasion what one could then call the fact that the being of this sacred individual of which they speak – not completely without rhyme or reason - they call it 'man' from time to time, in any case, it is called that less and less ever since I have been among those who have expressed some reservations about it – this being does not have any special tropism with respect to the truth. Let us say no more about it.

So then there are two meanings of symptom: the symptom is a truth value, it is the function that results from the introduction, at a certain historical time that I have sufficiently dated, of the notion of symptom. The symptom does not cure itself in the same way in Marxist dialectic and in psychoanalysis. In psychoanalysis, it has to do with something which is the translation into words of its truth value. That this should give rise to what is experienced by the analyst as a being of refusal, in no way allows it to be (27) settled whether this feeling deserves to be retained in any way. Since moreover, in other registers, precisely the ones that I evoked earlier it is to quite different procedures that the symptom has to yield. I am not in the process of giving preference to any one of

these procedures and all the less so in that what I want you to understand, is that there is another dialectic than the one that is imputed to history.

Between the question: is psychoanalytic incomprehension a symptom and is the incomprehension of Lacan a symptom, I would place a third: mathematical incomprehension. This is something that shows itself, there are people, and even young people, because this is only of interest among the young for whom this dimension of mathematical incomprehension exists. Is it a symptom? It is certain that when one interests oneself in these subjects who manifest mathematical incomprehension, fairly widespread still in our time, one has the feeling – I use the word feeling just as earlier, for what analysts have made of resistance – one has the feeling that it comes, in the subject who is the prey of mathematical incomprehension, from something which is like a dissatisfaction, a maladjustment, something experienced precisely in the handling of the truth value.

The subjects who are the prey of mathematical incomprehension expect more truth than the reduction to these values that are called, at least in the first steps of mathematics, deductive values. The articulations that are described as proofs seem to them to lack something which is precisely at the level of a requirement of truth. This bivalency: true or false, certainly and, let us say, not unreasonably, leaves them baffled and up to a certain point one can say that there is a certain distance between the truth and what we can call on this occasion a figure (*le chiffre*). The figure is nothing other than the writing, the writing of its value. That bivalency is expressed depending on the cases by 0 and 1 or by T and F, the result is the same. This by reason of something which is required or appears to be required by certain subjects. And you were able to see or to hear that earlier I did not speak in any way at all about a content – in the name of what would one call it by this name, because content does not mean anything, as long as one cannot say what is at stake. A truth does not have a content, a truth that is described as one. It is truth or it is a semblance, a distinction that has nothing to do with the opposition between the true and the false. Because if it is a semblance, it is a semblance of truth precisely. And what mathematical incomprehension comes from, is that precisely the question is posed as to whether truth or semblance, is not – allow me to say it, I will take it up again more learnedly in a different context – are not all one.

In any case this point is not going to be opposed by the logical development which has been made in mathematics. Because if you read at any point whatsoever the texts of Mr (28) Bertrand Russell, who moreover took the trouble to say it explicitly, mathematics is very precisely what busies itself with statements about which it is impossible to say whether they have a truth, or even if they mean anything whatsoever. This indeed is a rather extreme fashion of saying that all the care precisely that he has lavished on the rigour of putting mathematical deduction into shape, is something that is assuredly addressed to something quite different to the truth, but has an aspect that is all the same not unrelated to it. Otherwise there would be no need to separate it out in such an emphatic fashion!

It is certain that, not identically to what is involved in mathematics, logic, which strives

precisely to justify mathematical articulation with respect to truth, culminates or more exactly is affirmed, is affirmed at our epoch in this propositional logic. About which the least that can be said is that it appears strange that the truth being posited as a value which constitutes the denotation of a given proposition, of this proposition, it is posited in the same logic that it can only generate another true proposition. That implication in a word is defined there from this strange genealogy from which it would result that the true once it has been reached could not in any way by anything that it implies turn into the false. It is quite clear that, however slight the chances that a false proposition – which on the contrary is completely accepted – generates a true proposition, ever since the time that things have been proposed in this alleyway that we are told is one of no return, for a long time there should have been nothing other than true propositions!

In truth, it is curious, it is strange, it is only tolerable by reason of the existence of mathematics, by its existence independently of logic that such a statement could hold up even for an instant. There is somewhere here a confusion which ensures that assuredly the mathematicians themselves are so uneasy about it, that everything that has effectively stimulated this logical research concerning mathematics, everything at every one of its points, this research has come from a feeling that non-contradiction cannot in any way suffice to ground truth, which does not mean that it is not to be wished for, even required. But that it is sufficient, assuredly not.

But let us not go any further along this path this evening because this was only an introductory talk to a handling which is precisely the one whose path I am proposing this year to make you follow. This confusion about mathematical incomprehension is likely to lead us to the idea that as regards the symptom – mathematical incomprehension – it is in short the love of truth, as I might say, for itself that conditions it.

This is something different than the refusal that I spoke about earlier, it is even the contrary. It is even as I might say a positive tropism for truth at a point where people have succeeded in completely conjuring away its pathetic side. Only there happens here, in a certain way of presenting mathematics, which, to illustrate the effort described as logical, something that is nonetheless presented in a way that can be handled, is up to date and with no other logical introduction, in a simple and elementary way in which (29) obviousness, as one says, allows a lot of steps to be conjured away. It is curious that, at the point, among the young, at which mathematical incomprehension manifests itself it is no doubt around a certain void that is felt about what is involved in the truth of what is articulated, that these phenomena of incomprehension happen. And that one would be quite wrong to think that mathematics is something which in effect has succeeded in emptying out everything that is involved in the relationship to truth of its pathetic aspect. Because there is not just elementary mathematics and we know enough history to know the pain, the trouble generated at the moment of their ex-cogitation by the terms and the functions of infinitesimal calculus just to stay with that. Indeed later the regularising, the confirmation, the logicising of the same terms and the same methods, indeed the introduction of a number raised higher and higher, more and more elaborated of what we must at this level call the *mathème*. And to know that assuredly the aforesaid *mathèmes* do not involve in any way a retrograde genealogy, do not involve any possible

presentation for which one would need to use the term historical. Greek mathematics shows very well the points where even there where it had the chance, by procedures described as those of exhaustion, to approach what became of it at the moment of the emergence of infinitesimal calculus, it nevertheless did not reach it. It did not take the path and if it is easy, starting from infinitesimal calculus, or to put it better from its perfect reduction, to situate, to classify, subsequently what was involved at once about the procedures of proof of Greek mathematics and also the impasses that they were committed to in advance as perfectly locatable afterwards, if this is how things are, we see that it is absolutely not true to talk about the *mathème* as something which is in any way detached from the requirement of truth. It is indeed in the course of innumerable debates, of debates about words, that the emergence at every phase of history – and if I spoke about Leibniz and of Newton implicitly, indeed about those who with incredible daring in some element or other of encounter or adventure in connection with the term of *tour de force* or *coup de chance* is recalled, they were preceded, for example, by an Isaac Barrow. And this is renewed at a time very close to us and with the Cantorian effraction where assuredly nothing is done to diminish what I called earlier the dimension of the pathetic which was able to go in Cantor's case as far as a threat of madness. And I do not think either that it is enough to tell us that it was because of his career disappointments, of oppositions, indeed of the insults that the aforesaid Cantor received from the leading university people of his epoch. We are not in the habit of finding madness motivated by objective persecutions – assuredly everything is designed for us to make us question ourselves about the function of the *mathème*. Mathematical incomprehension must then be something different to what I called this requirement which emerged in a way from a formal void. Far from that, it is not sure, to judge from what happens in the history of mathematics, that it is not from some relationship to the *mathème*, even the most elementary one, with a dimension of truth that incomprehension is generated. It is perhaps the most sensitive who understand the least. We already have a kind of indication, of notion of that at the level of Socratic dialogues of what remains to us of (30) them, of what we can presume about them. There are people after all for whom perhaps the encounter precisely with truth, plays a role that the aforesaid Greeks borrowed a metaphor for. It has the same effect as an encounter with the torpedo fish: it numbs them. I would point out to you that this idea which comes – I mean in the metaphor itself – from the contribution, the confused contribution no doubt, but that of course is what it is used for, a metaphor, it is to give rise to a meaning which goes far beyond its means, the torpedo fish, and then the one who touches it and who drops dead from it is obviously - this was not yet known at the moment when the metaphor was constructed - it is obviously the encounter of two fields not in harmony with one another, field being taken in the proper sense here of magnetic field.

I would point out to you also that everything that we have touched on here and that culminates at the word field – this is the word that I used when I said: *Function and field of speech and language*, the field is constituted by what I called the other day in a slip: *lalangue*. This field considered in this way making of it the key to incomprehension as such is precisely what allows us to exclude from it any psychology. The fields in question are constituted from the real, just as real as the torpedo fish and the finger that has just touched it, by an innocent. It is not because we tackled the *mathème* along the

paths of the symbolic that it does not have anything to do with the real. The truth in question in psychoanalysis, is what, by means of language, I understand by the function of psychoanalysis. It is what by means of language, I understand by the function of the word, approaches but in an approach that is in no way that of knowledge, but I would say, of something like induction, in the sense that this term has in the constitution of a field, from the induction of something which is quite real, even though we cannot speak about it as a signifier. I mean that have no other existence than that of the signifier.

What am I talking about? Well then, about nothing other than what is called in common language men and women. We do not know anything real about these men and these women as such, because this is what is at stake: it is not a matter of dogs and bitches. It is a matter of what is really involved for those who belong to each of the sexes starting from the speaking being. There is not a shadow of psychology here. Men and women are real. But we are not able to articulate in connection with them the slightest thing in *lalangue* that has the slightest relationship with this real. If psychoanalysis does not teach us that, what does it say, because it is always coming back to it!

This is what I am stating when I say that there is no sexual relationship for beings who speak. Because their speech as it functions, depends, is conditioned as speech by the fact that the sexual relationship, is very precisely forbidden as speech to function in it in any way that allows us to account for it. I am not in the process of according the primacy to anything in this correlation: I am not saying that speech exists because there is no sexual relationship. That would be quite absurd. I am not saying either that there is no sexual (31) relationship because speech is there. But there is certainly not a sexual relationship because speech functions at this level which is found, through psychoanalytic discourse, to be opened up as specifying the speaking being. Namely, the importance, the pre-eminence in everything that is going to ensure at its level the semblance of sex, semblance of simple men and women as it was put after the last war. They were called nothing else: *les bonnes-femmes*. That is not quite how I will speak about them because I am not an existentialist.

In any case, the constitution through the fact that the individual, that we were talking about earlier, that this speaking individual, the fact that it is only from the word that there proceeds this essential point is absolutely, on this occasion, to be distinguished from the sexual relationship, which is called enjoyment, the enjoyment that is called sexual and which alone determines in the individual I am speaking about what it is a matter of obtaining, namely, copulation. Psychoanalysis confronts us with the fact that everything depends on this pivotal point that is called sexual enjoyment and which finds itself – it is only the remarks that we gather in the psychoanalytic experience that allow us to affirm it – which finds itself not being able to be articulated in a copulation that is a little sustained, even a fleeting one except by requiring to encounter something which only has a dimension from the *lalangue* and which is called castration.

The opaqueness of this core that is called sexual enjoyment and of which I would point out to you that the articulation in this register which has to be explored called castration only dates from the recent historical emergence of psychoanalytic discourse. Here, it

seems to me, is something that well deserves that one should work at formulating its *mathème*. Namely, this something that is proved otherwise than from what is undergone, undergone in a sort of shameful secret, which because it has been made public by psychoanalysis, remains nonetheless just as shameful, just as deprived of an outcome. Namely, that the entire dimension of enjoyment, namely, the relationship of this speaking being to his body – because there is no other possible definition of enjoyment – no one seems to have glimpsed that the question is at this level. What in the animal species enjoys his body and how. Certainly we have traces of it among our cousins the chimpanzees who delouse one another with every sign of the liveliest interest. And so? Why is it that in the speaking being, this relationship to enjoyment that one calls, by reason of the fact that it is the discovery of psychoanalysis is much more developed than sexual enjoyment emerges earlier than the maturity of the same name. This seems to be enough to render infantile everything that is involved in this range, a short one no doubt, but not without variety, of enjoyments that are qualified as perverse. That this should closely relate to this curious enigma which ensures that one can only operate on that with what seems to be directly linked to the operation to which sexual enjoyment is supposed to aim at, that one cannot in anyway engage on this path whose ways are determined by speech, without it being articulated in castration, it is curious that it was never before a ...I do not mean an attempt, because, as Picasso said: “I do not seek: I find”, I do not attempt, I settle, before I settled the key point, the nodal point was *lalangue* and in the field of *lalangue*, the operation of speech. There is not a single analytic interpretation (32) which does not exist to give to some proposition that is encountered its relation to an enjoyment, to what ...what does psychoanalysis mean? That it is speech that assures the dimension of truth to this relation of enjoyment. And again it remains no less assured that it cannot in any way say it completely. It can only, as I put it, half-say this relation, and forge a semblance of it, very precisely what is called – without being able to say very much about it precisely: people make something of it, but people cannot say much about it, it seems on the type – the semblance of what is called a man or a woman.

Some two years ago, I managed along the path that I am attempting to trace out, to articulate what is involved in four discourses, not historical discourses, not mythology - the nostalgia of Rousseau, indeed the Neolithic one are things that only interest University discourse. It is never so happy, this discourse, than at the level of knowledge that no longer means anything to anybody, because the University discourse is constituted by making of knowledge a semblance. Here it is a matter of discourses which constitute in a tangible way, something real. This frontier relationship between the Symbolic and the Real, we live in it, make no mistake: the Master discourse still holds up, and how! I think you can put your finger sufficiently on it for me not to need to indicate to you what I could have done if it had amused me, namely, if I was seeking popularity. Show you the little turning point somewhere which makes of it the discourse of the Capitalist. It is exactly the same thing, simply it works better, it functions better, you are all the better screwed! Anyway, you don't even think about it. Just as for the University discourse, you are firing on all cylinders, in believing to have created dismay, the month of May! Let us say no more about the Hysterical discourse, it is scientific discourse itself. This is very important to know to make little prognostications. This in no way diminishes the merits of the scientific discourse.

If there is one thing certain, it is that I was only able to articulate these three discourses in a *mathème* because the analytic discourse had emerged. And when I talk about analytic discourse, I am no longer in the process of talking to you about something of the order of knowledge. People should have noticed for a long time that the discourse of knowledge is a sexual metaphor and see what follows from that, namely, that since there is no sexual relationship, there is no knowledge. People have lived for centuries with sexual mythology, and naturally, a large share of analysts ask for nothing better than to delight in the dear memory of an inconsistent epoch. But this is not what is at stake. What is said is said, I wrote on the first line of something that I am in the process of cogitating to let you have it at some time, what is said is a fact (*de fait*): from the fact of saying it.

Only there is an obstacle; everything is in it, everything emerges from the obstacle. It is what I call l'*Hachose* – I put an 'H' in front so that you could see that there is an apostrophe, but precisely I ought not to put it there, it ought to be called the *Hachose*, in (33) short the *objet-a*. The **o-object**, is certainly an object, but only in the sense that it is substituted definitively for every notion of the object as supported by a subject. This is not the relationship described as that of knowledge. It is rather curious, when one studies it in detail, to see that this relationship to knowledge, has finished up by bringing it about that one of these terms, the subject in question, was no longer anything more than the shadow of a shadow, a completely vanished reflection. The **o-object** is only an object in the sense that it is there to affirm that nothing of the order of knowledge fails to produce it. It is a quite different thing than knowing. That psychoanalytic discourse can only be articulated by showing that this **o-object**, for there to be a chance of an analyst, it is necessary that a certain operation, that is called the psychoanalytic experience, has brought this **o-object** to the place of the semblance. Naturally, it could absolutely not occupy this place if the other reducible elements in a signifying chain did not occupy the others. If the subject and what I call the master signifier, and what I designate by the body of knowledge were not distributed at the four points of a tetrahedron. This is what, to put you at ease, I drew on the board in the form of little things that cross over like that, within a square with one side missing, it is obvious that there would be absolutely no discourse. And what defines a discourse, what opposes it to speech, I say, because this is what the *mathème* is, I say that this is what determines for a speaking approach, what determines the real. And this real I am talking about is absolutely unapproachable, except along a mathematical path. Namely, in mapping out – for that, there are no other paths than this latest discourse of the four, the one that I define as the analytic discourse and which permits in a way that it would be exaggerated to say that it is consistent. Quite the contrary, it is from a gap, and properly speaking the one that is expressed by the thematic of castration, that one can see from where there is assured the Real from which all this discourse stems.

The Real of which I speak – and this in conformity with everything that is accepted – but this only if it were by the deaf! – accepted in analysis, namely that nothing is assured as regards what seems to be the end, the finality of sexual enjoyment, namely, population, without these steps very confusedly glimpsed, but never separated out into a structure comparable to that of a logic and which is called castration.

It is very precisely in this that the logical effort ought to be a model, indeed a guide for us. And do not make me talk about isomorphism. And the fact that there is somewhere a gallant little wretch from the university who finds that my statements on truth, the semblance, enjoyment and the surplus enjoying, to be formalistic, indeed hermeneutic... why not? What is at stake is what is called in mathematics rather – curious thing – this is a happy encounter – a generative operation. We will try this year, somewhere other than here, to approach like that prudently, from a distance and step by step – because you must not expect, on this occasion, what may be produced in terms of sparks, but they will come.

The **o-object** that I spoke to you about earlier, is not an object: it is what allows these four discourses to be tetrahedric, each of these discourses in its own way – and this of course is what cannot be seen, cannot be seen by whom? A curious thing, analysts. The (34) fact is the **o-object**, is not a point that is localised somewhere the four others or the four that they form together, it is the construction, it is the tetrahedric *mathème* of these discourses.

The question then is the following: from what are these *achosiques* beings, the incarnated **o**'s that we all are in different ways, most a prey to the incomprehension of my discourse? There, it is true the question can be put. Whether it is a symptom or whether it is not one, is a secondary matter. But what is very certain, is that theoretically it is at the level of the psychoanalyst that the incomprehension of my discourse must dominate. And precisely because it is the analytic discourse. Perhaps it is not the privilege of the analytic discourse. After all, even those who, the one who pushed furthest and who obviously missed it because he did not know about the **o-object**, but has pushed furthest the discourse of the Master before I brought the **o-object** into the world, is Hegel to name him. He always told us that if there was someone who understood nothing about the discourse of the Master, it was the Master. As a result, of course, he remains in psychology, because there is no Master, there is the Master-signifier and the Master follows on as best he can. That does not favour in any way the comprehension of the discourse of the Master in the case of the Master. It is in this sense that the psychology of Hegel is correct.

It would be also, of course, very difficult to sustain that the hysteric, at the point where she is placed, namely, at the level of the semblance, that she is in the best place there to understand her discourse. Otherwise there would have been no need for the sudden change brought about by psychoanalysis. Let us say nothing, of course, about university people! No one has ever believed that they would have the cheek to sustain an alibi so prodigiously manifest as is the whole of the university discourse.

So then why would analysts have the privilege of being accessible to what is the *mathème* of their discourse? There is every reason on the contrary for them to install themselves in a sort of status whose interest precisely - but these are not things that can be done in a day – whose interest in effect might be to demonstrate what results in these inconceivable theoretical lucubrations which fill the journals of the psychoanalytic world.

That is not the important thing. The important thing is to interest oneself and I will try no doubt to tell you what this interests consists in. It is absolutely necessary to exhaust all its aspects. I have just given an indication of what may be involved in the status of the analyst at the level of the semblance, and it is not, of course, any less important to articulate in its relationship to truth. And the most interesting thing – make no mistake, it is one of the only meanings that can be given to the word interest – is the relationship that this discourse has to enjoyment, enjoyment that, when all is said and done sustains it, that conditions it, that justifies it, justifies it very precisely from the fact that sexual enjoyment...I would not like to end by giving you the idea that I know what man is.

(35) There are surely people who need me to toss them this little fish, I can toss it to them after all, because this does not connote any kind of promise of progress ...*ou pire*. I can tell them that it is very probably this in effect that specifies this animal species: it is a quite anomalous and bizarre relationship with its enjoyment. This may have some little extensions on the side of biology, why not? What I note simply, is that analysts have not made the slightest progress with regard to the biological reference of analysis, I underline it very often. They have not made the slightest progress, for the simple reason that it is very precisely the anomalous point where an enjoyment, which, an unbelievable thing, biologists can be found in the name of the fact of this limping and also amputated enjoyment, castration itself which seems in man to have a certain relationship to copulation, to the conjunction then, of what biologically, but without, of course, this conditioning absolutely anything in the semblance, which in the case of man culminates at the conjunction of sexes. There were then biologists who extended this absolutely problematic relationship to animal species and display to us – there was a big book on that, which received immediately the favourable patronage of my dear comrade Henri Ey, about whom I spoke to you with the tenderness that you were able to sense the last time – perversion in the animal species, in the name of what? That the animal species copulate, but what proves to us that it is in the name of some enjoyment or other, perverse or not? You really have to be a man to believe that to copulate brings about enjoyment! So then there are entire volumes on it to explain that there are some who do that with hooks, with their *pa-pattes* [?], and then there are others who send things, contraptions, sperm into the interior of the central cavity as in the flea, I believe, and then people are astonished what enjoyment they must have in doing such things!!! If we were to do that with a syringe in the peritoneum it would be voluptuous. This is how people believe they are constructing something properly. While the first thing you can put your finger on, is very precisely the disassociation and that it is obvious that the question, the only question, the very interesting question, is to know how something that we can for a moment say is correlative to this disjunction of sexual enjoyment, something that I call *lalangue*, obviously this has a relationship with something real, but from the fact that this can lead us to *mathèmes* that allow us to build up science, that then, that is really the question. If we were to look a little bit more closely at how science is made up – try to do that one little time, a tiny little approach – *Science and truth*... There was a poor chap, on one occasion whose guest I was at the time, who was sick of hearing me talking about this, and after all this is how people can see that my discourse is understood, he is the only one who was sick of it! He was a man who showed himself in a thousand ways not to be someone very able. Anyway, me, I have no kind of passion for the mentally

handicapped, I distinguish myself in this respect from my dear friend Maud Mannoni, but since one also encounters mentally handicapped people at the Institute, I do not see why I should move. Anyway, *Science and truth* attempted to approach a little thing like that. After all, this famous science was perhaps constructed with almost nothing. In which (36) case one would better explain how things, an appearance so conditioned by a deficit that *lalangue* can lead you straight there.

There you are, these are the questions that perhaps I will tackle this year. Anyway I will do my best.....*Ou pire!*

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

6th January 1972

We do not know whether the series is the source of serious. Nevertheless, I find myself confronted with this question which is posed by the fact that obviously I cannot continue here what elsewhere is defined as my teaching, by what is called my seminar. Even if only because not everyone is aware of the fact that I hold a little conversation here every month. And since there are people who sometimes travel rather far to follow what I say elsewhere under the name of seminar, it would not be right, I mean to continue it here.

So then, in short, it is a matter of knowing what I am doing here. It is certain that it is not quite what I was expecting. I have been influenced by this crowd which means that those whom in fact I convoked to something that was called "The knowledge of the psychoanalyst", are not at all necessarily absent from here, but are a little swamped. To those who are here, even, I do not know whether, in alluding to this seminar, I am talking about something that they know. They must also take into account that, for example, since the last time, those that I encounter here have found themselves at it. Precisely, I have begun this seminar. I opened it up, if one is a little bit attentive and rigorous, one cannot say that this can be done in one go. In fact we have had two of them. And that is why I can say that I began it, because if there were not a second time, there would not have been a first one. This is of interest to recall something that I introduced some time ago in connection with what is called repetition. Repetition can obviously only begin at the second time, which is found, from the fact that, if there were not a second, there would not have been

a first, which finds itself therefore being the one that inaugurates repetition. It is the business of zero and 1. Only with the 1, there cannot be repetition, so that in order that there should be repetition, not for that to be opened up, it is necessary that there should be a third.

This is what seems to have been glimpsed about God. He only begins...it took some time to see it, or indeed it was always known, but it was not noted because after all we cannot swear about anything in this sense, but anyway my dear friend Kojève insisted a lot on this question of the Christian Trinity.

In any case, there is obviously a world, from the point of view of what interests us – and what interests us is analytical – between the second time which is what I thought I ought to underline with the term *Nachträglich*, what is deferred.

(40) These are obviously things that I will take up – not here – but only at my seminar, I will try to come back to it this year. It is important because that is why there is a world between what psychoanalysis contributes and what was contributed by a certain philosophical tradition which is certainly not negligible, especially when we are dealing with Plato who clearly underlined the value of the dyad. I mean that starting from it, everything collapses. He must have known what it was that was collapsing, but he did not say. In any case, that has nothing to do with analytic *Nachträglich*, the second moment. As regards the third whose importance I have just underlined, it is not simply for us that it takes it on, it is for God Himself.

At one time, and in connection with a certain tapestry that was being displayed at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, which was very beautiful, and that I strongly urged everyone to go and see, you saw the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit who were represented strictly by the same figure, the figure of a rather noble and bearded personage. The three of them were looking at one another, that makes more of an impression than to see someone before his own image. From three on this begins to have a certain effect.

From our point of view as subjects, what is it that can begin with three for God himself? This is an old question that I posed very quickly at the time when I began my teaching. I posed it very quickly and then I never renewed it, I will tell you right away why. It is because it is obviously only starting from three that he can believe in himself.

Because it is rather curious, it is a question that was never posed, to the best of my knowledge, does God believe in himself? This would nevertheless be a good example for us. It is quite striking that this question that I posed rather early and that I do not think vain, should not have given rise, apparently at least, to any activity, at least among my co-religionists, I mean those who are instructed under the shadow of the Trinity. I understand that for the others, this did not strike them, but for these, truly, they are ‘*incorreligionible*’.

Nothing can be done about it. Nevertheless I had there some famous people from the hierarchy that is called Christian. The question can be asked of whether it is because they are so much into it – and I have trouble believing this – that they understand nothing or – something that is much more probable – their atheism is so total that this question has no effect on them. This is the solution that I tend towards. You cannot say that it is what I called earlier a guarantee of seriousness because this can only be an atheism, in a certain way a somnolence, which is rather widespread. In other words, they have not the slightest idea of the dimension of the milieu that they have to swim in. They survive – which is not quite the same thing - they survive thanks to the fact that they hold hands. So then like that by the hand...there is a poem by Paul Fort of this type: “*If all the girls in the world – that is how it begins – held hands etc...they could encircle the whole world*”. It is a mad idea, because in reality the girls of the world have always dreamt only of that, but the boys on the contrary – he speaks about (41) them also - in this the boys understand one another. They all hold one another’s hands. They all hold one another’s hands, all the more because if they did not hold one another’s hands, each one would have to confront a girl all alone and that is something they do not like. They have to hold one another’s hands. For girls it is a different business. They are drawn into it in the context of certain social rituals. Consult “*The dances and legends of Ancient China*”. This is...it is chic, it is even Che King – not shocking – it is Che King. It was written by someone called Granet who had a kind of genius that has absolutely nothing to do either with ethnology – he was incontestably an ethnologist – nor with sinology – he was incontestably a sinologist. So then this man called Granet put forward then that, in Ancient China, girls and boys confronted one another in equal numbers. Why not believe him? In practice, in what we know in our own day, boys were always there in a certain number, more than ten, for the reason that I put before you earlier, because to be alone, each and every one confronted with his girl, I explained to you: it is too risky. For the girls it is different things. Since we are no longer at the time of Che King, they form groups of two, they become best friends with a friend up to the point, of course, that they manage to tear a lad out of his regiment. Yes, Mister! Whatever you may think about it and however superficial these remarks may appear to you, they are grounded, grounded on my experience as an analyst. When they have turned a chap away from his regiment, naturally they drop their friend, who moreover does not get on any the worse for all that.

Yes! Anyway with all of that I have let myself go a little. Where do I think I am! It came to me like that from thread to needle, because of Granet and this astonishing story of what alternates in the poems of ‘Che King’, this choir of boys opposed to the choir of girls. I allowed myself to be drawn along like that to talking about my analytic experience of which I gave a lightening glimpse, because it is not the foundation of things. Here is not where I am going to expose the foundation of things. But where am I, that I believe myself, to speak in short, able to speak about the foundation of things. I believe myself to be even with human beings or even the genuine article! That is how, that nevertheless is how I address myself to them. But it is that, it was talking about my seminar that drew me along, towards fundamental things. Since after all, you are perhaps the same, I spoke as if I were speaking to them, what led me to speak as if I were

talking about you and – who knows? – that leads to speaking as if I were speaking to you. This was nevertheless not my intention. It was not at all my intention because, if I have come to speak at Sainte Anne, it was to speak to psychiatrists, and very obviously, you are very obviously not all psychiatrists. Anyway after all, what is certain, is that it is a parapraxis. It is a parapraxis which then at every instant runs the risk of succeeding. Namely, that it may be that after all I am speaking to someone. How know to whom I am speaking? Especially since when all is said and done you count in this affair, because I try... You count at least in the fact that I am not speaking where I intended to speak because I intended to speak in the Magnan Amphitheatre and I am speaking in the chapel.

(42) **Did you hear that? I am speaking in the chapel!** That is the answer. I am speaking in the chapel, that means to the wall!

This parapraxis is more and more successful! I know now who I have come to speak to: to what I was always talking to in Sainte Anne, to the wall! I have no need to come back to it, it was some time ago. From time to time I came back with some title of a lecture, about what I am teaching, for example, and then some others, I am not going to give a list. I was always talking to the wall.

Lacan – Who has something to say?

X: We ought all leave if you are talking to the wall.

Lacan – Who is talking to me there?

X – The wall.

Now I am going to give a commentary on the fact that talking to the wall interests some people. That was why I was asking just now who spoke. It is certain that the walls, in what is called – on what was called in the time when people were honest, an asylum, a clinical asylum, as was said – walls all the same are not nothing.

I will say more: this chapel appears to me as a place that is extremely well made for us to touch on what is involved when I talk about walls. This kind of concession of the layman for those interned, a chapel with its furnishings from well meaning people, of course. Not that it is extraordinary, huh, from the architectural point of view, but anyway it is a chapel with the arrangements that one can expect of it. People forget too often that architecture, whatever effort is made to avoid it, is designed for that: to construct walls. And that walls, faith...it is all the same very striking that since what I was speaking about earlier, namely, Christianity, leans perhaps through it a little bit too much towards Hegelianism it is

designed to circumscribe a void. How we can imagine that this is what the walls of the Parthenon and some other baubles of the kind whose ruined walls remain to us fulfilled is very difficult to know. What is certain, is that we have absolutely no testimony of it. We have the feeling that throughout this whole period that we pinpoint with this modern etiquette of paganism, there were things which happened on different feast days that are called, whose names have been preserved because there were Annals which dated things like that: “*It was at the great Panathemes that Adymant and Glaucon....etc*” you know what follows “*encountered someone called Cephal*”. What was happening there? It is absolutely unbelievable that we don’t have the slightest idea about it!

(43) On the contrary as regards the void we have a very good idea, because everything that has been bequeathed to us, bequeathed by a tradition that is called philosophical, puts the void in a very special place. There is even someone called Plato who made his whole idea of the world pivot around that, make no mistake, he is the one who invented the cave. He made a dark room of it. There was something happening outside, and all of this, passing through a little hole, created all the shadows. It is curious, it is here perhaps that we might have a little thread, some little trace. It is obviously a theory that allows us to put our finger on what is involved in the **o**-object.

Just suppose that Plato’s cave is the wall where my voice makes itself heard. It is obvious that the walls make me enjoy! And that is why you all enjoy, each and every one of you, by participation. Seeing me talk to the wall is something that cannot leave you indifferent. And think about it: if you suppose that Plato was a structuralist, he would have noticed what was really involved in the cave, namely, that it is no doubt there, that there language was born. Matters have to be turned upside down, because, of course, man has been crying for a long time, like any other one of those little animals who mew for their mother’s milk. But to notice that he is capable of doing something, which of course, he understands for a long time – because in the babbling, in the confusion, everything happens – but in order to choose, he must have noticed that K’s resonates better from the back, the back of the cave, from the back wall, and that B’s and P’s come out better at the entrance, this is where he heard their resonance.

I am letting myself go this evening, because I am talking to the wall. You must not believe that what I am saying to you here, means that I got nothing other from Sainte Anne. I only managed to speak at Sainte Anne very late on. I mean that the idea of it never came to me except having to carry out some trivial duties, when I was a *chef de clinique*. I would tell some little stories to those on placement, it is even there that I learned to put myself squarely behind the stories that I tell. I told them one day a story about the mother of a patient, a charming homosexual that I was analysing, and, without being able to do otherwise than seeing the tortoise in question coming, she cried out: “And I thought that he was impotent!”. I was telling this story, ten people among the...the only people there were on placement, recognised her immediately! It could be nobody else but her. You know what a man of the world is! That naturally

created a stir, because I was reproached for it, even though I had said nothing other than this sensational scream. Ever since that inspired me with a lot of prudence in terms of the communication of cases. But anyway that again is a little digression, let us take up our thread.

Before speaking at Sainte Anne, anyway, I had done a lot of different things there, even if it were only to come there and fulfill my function and of course, for me, for my discourse, everything starts from there. Because it is obvious that, if I am talking to the wall, I started on it rather late, namely, that before hearing what they sent back to me, namely, my own voice preaching in the desert – this is a reply to the person...well before that, I heard, I heard (44) things that were quite decisive, anyway, that were such for me. But that, that is my own business. I mean that the people who are here under the heading of being within the walls, are quite capable of making themselves understood, provided one has the proper ears for it!

In a word, and to pay tribute to her for something that she is not at all personally responsible for, it is as everyone knows, around this patient that I pinpointed by the name of Aimée – which was not her's, of course – that I was drawn towards psychoanalysis.

She was not the only one of course. There were some others before and then there are also a certain number that I allowed to speak. It is in this that there consists what is called my case presentations. It sometimes happens that afterwards I speak about it with some people who have attended this sort of exercise, anyway this presentation which consists in listening to them, which obviously is not something that happens to them at every street corner. It sometimes happens that in speaking afterwards to some people who were there to accompany me, to pick up whatever they could, it sometimes happens, in speaking about them afterwards to learn about them, because it is not immediate, one must obviously harmonise one's voice to what the walls reflect back.

It is indeed around this that there is going to turn what I will perhaps try this year to question: it is the relationship of something to which I give a lot of importance, namely, logic. I learned very early on that logic could make you odious to the world. It was at a time when I was studying someone called Abelard, drawn, God knows, by a whiff of something! For my part, I cannot say that logic made me absolutely odious to anyone at all except to some psychoanalysts, because after all...it is perhaps because I managed to seriously sound out its meaning.

I managed to do so all the more easily, in that I absolutely do not believe in common sense. There is sense, but there is no common one. There is probably not one among you who understands me in the same sense. Moreover, I strive to ensure that the access to this sense is not too easy, so that you have to put something

of yourselves into it, which is a salubrious and even therapeutic secretion. Secrete sense vigorously and you will see how much more easy life becomes! [*sens*: sense or meaning]

That is why I noticed the existence of the **o**-object which each of you has the potential germ of. What gives it its power and at the same time the power of each of you in particular, is that the **o**-object is completely foreign to the question of meaning. Meaning is a little daubing added onto this **o**-object to which each one of you has your own attachment.

It has nothing to do with either sense or reason. The question on the agenda, is what reason has to do with that to which, anyway I ought to say that many people are inclined to reduce it: to reduce it to “*résón*”. Write: R.E.S.O.N. write it out. Do it to please me. It is (45) a spelling created by Francis Ponge who, since he is a poet, and since he is a great poet, is someone that we ought in this question, take account of in what he tells us. He is not the only one. It is a very grave question, that I have only seen seriously formulated, outside of this poet, by mathematicians. Namely, what reason - that we will be satisfied for the moment to grasp as part of the grammatical system - has to do with something that is necessary – I am not saying intuitive, because this would mean falling back onto the slope of intuition, namely, something visual – but with something precisely that resonates.

Is what resonates the origin of *res* of what makes reality? It is a question, a question that touches very properly speaking on everything that we can extract from language, under the heading of logic. Everyone knows that it is not enough and that it required some time – one could have seen it coming for some time, since Plato precisely – to bring mathematics into play. And it is there, it is there that the question is posed of where to centre this real to which logical questioning makes us have recourse to and which is found to be in mathematics. There are mathematicians who say that one can in no way orientate oneself on this junction that is described as formalism, this logical mathematical point of junction. That there is something beyond, to which after all homage is only rendered by all these intuitive references from which this mathematics believed it could purify itself and which seeks beyond for what *résón*, to have recourse to for what is at stake, namely, the Real. This evening is not the time, of course, that I am going to be able to tackle the matter here.

What I can say, is that it is from a certain angle which is that of a logic that I was able in a journeying which, to start from my patient Aimée, culminated at my second last year of seminar, to state under the title of four discourses towards which there converge the target of a certain actuality, that I was able, along this path to do what? To give at least the reason for walls. Because whoever inhabits these walls, these walls here, the walls of a clinical asylum, it would be well to know that what is situated and defined by psychiatry as such, is its situation with respect to these walls, these walls through which the lay world brought about in itself the exclusion of madness and what it means. This can only be tackled along the path

of an analysis of discourse. In truth, analysis was so little designed before me that it is true to say that there was never on the part of psychoanalysts the slightest discordance that arose with regard to the position of psychiatry. And that nevertheless, in my *Ecrits*, one can see collected something that I made understood, before 1950, under the title of *Remarks on psychic causality*, I rose up against any definition of mental sickness which took cover behind this construction made of a semblance which, in pinpointing itself as organo-dynamic left nonetheless entirely to one side what was involved, in the segregation of mental illness. Namely, something which is different, which is linked to a certain discourse, the one that I pinpoint as being the discourse of the Master. Again history (46) shows that this discourse has survived in a way that is profitable for everyone, up to a certain point at which it became by reason of a tiny slippage which happened unnoticed for those involved, the thing that specifies it since then as the discourse of the capitalist, of which we would have not the slightest kind of idea if Marx had not busied himself in completing it, in giving it its subject, the proletariat. Thanks to which the discourse of capitalism spreads everywhere that the form of the Marxist state reigns.

What distinguishes the discourse of capitalism is this: the *Verwerfung*, the rejection, the rejection outside of all the fields of the symbolic with what I already said this has as a consequence: the rejection of what? Of castration. Every order, every discourse that has a kinship with capitalism leaves to one side what we will call simply the things of love, my good friends. You must understand, huh, that is simply nothing!

This indeed is the reason why two centuries after this slippage – let us call it the Calvinist one after all, why not – castration has finally made its disruptive entry in the form of the analytic discourse. Naturally analytic discourse has not yet been able to give even an outline articulation of it, but anyway it has multiplied its metaphor and it has noticed that all metonymies emerge from it.

There you are! It is in the name of this, carried by a kind, by a sort of brouhaha which happened somewhere on the side of psychoanalysts, that I was led to introduce what was obvious in the psychoanalytic novelty. Namely, that it was a matter of language and that it was a new discourse.

As I told you, the *o*-object in person, namely, this position into which one cannot even say that the analyst brings himself: he is brought, he is brought there by his analysand...the question that I am posing is: how can an analysand ever want to become a psychoanalyst. It is unthinkable. They come to it like marbles in certain games of tric-trac, like that, that you know well, which finish by falling into the hole. They come to it without having the slightest idea of what is happening to them, anyway once they are there they are there and at that moment all the same something awakens. That is why I proposed that it should be studied.

In any case, when this storm happened among the marbles, you cannot imagine the gaiety with which I wrote this *Function and field of speech and language*. How did it come about that I welcomed like that,

among all other sorts of sensible things, a sort of exergue in the style of a jingle, that you will find in...you only have to look into part 4, as far as I remember, it is something that I found in an almanac...huh...it was called: “Paris in the year 2000”. It is not without talent! It is not without talent even though we have never heard any more about the name of the chap whose name I quote – I am honest – and who tells us this thing that in the end has only...that comes here into this business of ‘function and field’ like a hair in a bowl of soup, it begins like this:

Between man and woman,

There is love,

Between man and love.....

You have never noticed, huh, this thing in his contraption!

There is a world.

Between man and the world

There is a wall.

You see, I had anticipated what I was going to say to you this evening, I am talking to the wall. As you will see this has no relationship with the chapter that follows. But I could not resist it. Since I am talking to the walls here, I am not giving a class, so then I am not going to tell you what, in Jacobson is enough to justify that these six verses of doggerel are all the same poetry. It is proverbial poetry, because it rhymes:

Between man and woman there is love

But of course! There is even nothing but that!

Between man and love there is a world

This is what has always been said, there is a world, like that, there is a world means: you will never get there! It seems like nothing at the beginning: “*Between man and woman there is love*”, that means that (Lacan claps his hands)...it sticks, a world, it floats, huh! But with: “*There is a wall*”...here you have understood that “*between*” means “*interposition*”. Because the “*between*” is very ambiguous. Elsewhere, at my seminar, we will speak about mesology, what has the function of “*between*”. But here we are involved in poetic ambiguity and – it must be said – it is worthwhile.

Réson! Erase *réson* – (from the board).

Love

‘Love is there, here, the little circle.’

(48) Good! What I have traced out for you there, on the board, this board that turns, is a way, a way like any other of representing the Klein bottle. It is a surface that has certain topological properties about which those who do not know about it can inform themselves. It is very like a Moebius strip, namely, to what one simply does in twisting a little strip of paper and sticking it after a half turn. Only here, this constitutes a tube, it is a tube which, at a certain place, turns back on itself. I do not mean to tell you that this is the topological definition of the thing, it is a way to image it of which I make sufficient use for some of the people who are here to know what I am talking about.

So then as you see, since all the same the hypothesis, is that between the man and the woman, this ought to give here, as Paul Fort was saying earlier, a circle, so then I put the man on the left - pure convention - the woman on the right, I could have done the inverse. Let us try to see topologically what pleased me in these six little verses of Antoine Tudal to give him his name. “*Between man and woman there is love*”. That communicates at full blast. Here, you see, it circulates! It makes common cause, the flux, the influx and everything that is added on to it when one is obsessional, for example oblativity, this sensational invention of the obsessional. Good! So then love is there, the little circle which is everywhere, except that there is a place where it is going to return on itself, and in a spectacular way! But let us remain at the first phase: between man (on the left), woman (on the right), there is love, this is the little circle. This person whom I told you was called Antoine, you must not believe in any way that I ever say a word too many, this was to tell you that he is of the masculine sex, so that he sees things from his own side.

It is a matter of seeing what is going to happen now, how it can be written, what is going to happen between the man, namely him, the “*pouète*”, the “*pouète of Pouasie*” as our dear Léon Paul Fargue put it, what is between him and love? Am I going to be forced to go back to the board again? You have seen earlier that it was a rather vacillating exercise. Good! Well then not at all, not at all: because all the same, on the left, it occupies the whole place. So then what is between him and love, is precisely what is on the other side, namely, that it is the right hand side of the schema. Between man and love there is a world, namely, that this covers the territory first of all occupied by the woman, there where I wrote W on the right hand side. That is why the one that we will call the man, on this occasion, imagines that he knows the world, in the biblical sense like that. That he knows the world, namely, quite simply this sort of dream of knowledge which arrives there in the place of what was, here in this little schema, marked by the W of the woman.

What allows us to see topologically what is really at stake, is that, subsequently, when we are told: “*between man and the world.....*” this world substituted for the volatilising of the sexual partner, how has it happened, this is what we will see afterwards, well then, “*there is a wall*”, namely, the place where this

return occurs, this (49) return that I introduced one day as signifying the junction between truth and knowledge. I did not say for my part that it was cut, it was a poet from Papouasie who says that it is a wall, it is not a wall: it is simply the locus of castration. Which means that knowledge leaves intact the field of truth, and reciprocally moreover.

Only what must be seen, is that this wall is everywhere. Because this is what defines this surface, it is that the circle or the point of return – let us say the circle, because I represented it by a circle – is homogenous over the whole surface. This is even what brings it about that you would be wrong to represent it for yourselves as an intuitively representable surface. If I were to show you right away the sort of cut that is enough to volatilise this surface as specific, topologically defined, to volatilise it instantly, you would see that it is not a surface that one can represent to oneself, but that it is something that is defined by certain coordinates – let us call them, if you wish, vectorial – such that in each one of the points of the surface the return is always there, in each of its points. In such a way that as regards the relationship between man and woman, and everything that results from it with regard to each one of the partners, namely, its position and also its knowledge, castration is everywhere.

Love, the love that this communicates, that it flows that it fuses, that it is love! Love, the good that the mother wants for her son, *l'amour*, it is enough to put in the (a) to rediscover what we put our finger on every day, it is that even between the mother and the son, the relationship that the mother has with castration, counts for something!

Perhaps, to have a healthy idea of what is involved in love, we should perhaps start from that which, when it is played out, seriously, between a man and a woman, it is always with castration at stake. This is what is castrating. And what passes by this defile of castration, is something that we will try to approach along paths that are a bit rigorous: they can only be logical, and even topological.

Here I am talking to the wall, indeed to *(a)murs*, and to *(a)murs-sements*. Elsewhere I am trying to account for it. And whatever may be the use of walls for keeping the voice in good shape, it is clear that the walls, no more than the rest, can have this intuitive support, even if we have all the resources of the art of architecture.

A curious thing, when I defined these four discourses which I spoke about earlier and which are so essential to map out what, whatever you do, you are always in some way subjects of, and subjects, I mean supposed, supposed to what happens from what happens to a signifier and it is clear that it is the master of the game and that you are not with regard to something who is another not to say the (50) Other, that you are only its supposed. You do not give it any meaning. You do not have enough of it yourselves for that. But you give a body to this signifier that represents you, the Master- signifier!

Well then! What you are in all of this, shadows of a shadow literally, you must not imagine that substance is the eternal dream of attributing it to yourselves, or indeed something other than this enjoyment from which you are cut off. How can you not see the likeness between this substantial invocation and this unbelievable myth, of which Freud himself became the reflection, of sexual enjoyment which is indeed this object which runs, which runs, like a ferret, but whose status no one is able to state except that it is this supreme status, precisely. It is the supreme point of a curve to which it gives its meaning, and it is precisely also from which the supreme escapes. And it is from being able to articulate the range of sexual enjoyments that psychoanalysis took its decisive step. What it demonstrates, is precisely that the enjoyment that one could call sexual, which might not be a semblance of the sexual, is marked by the index – nothing more, up to now – of what is only stated, of what is only announced as the index of castration.

The walls, before taking on a status, taking shape, it is here logically that I reconstruct them these S_1, S_2 , and this o that I played around with you for some months. This all the same is the wall behind which of course, you can put the meaning of what concerns us, of that whose meaning we believe we know: truth and semblance, enjoyment, surplus enjoyment.

But all the same, with respect to what moreover has no need of walls to be written, these terms, like four cardinal points with respect to which you have to situate what you are, the psychiatrist may well after all notice that the walls, the walls to which he is linked by a definition of discourse...because what he has to deal with is what? It is no other illness than the one defined by the law of the 30th June 1838 namely “someone who is dangerous to himself and to others”.

It is very curious, this introduction of danger into the discourse on which the social order is established. What is this danger? “Dangerous to themselves” anyway, society only lives by that, and “dangerous for others”. God knows that in this sense total liberty is left to each one.

When I see protests arising in our day against the use that was made – to call things by their name and to go quickly, it is late – in the USSR of asylums, or of something that ought to have a more pretentious name, to shelter there, let us say, opponents, but it is quite obvious that they are dangerous for the social order in which they are inserted.

(51) What separates, what distance is there, between the way of opening the doors of the psychiatric hospital in a place where the capitalist discourse is perfectly coherent with itself, and in a place like ours where it is still babbling? The first thing that perhaps psychiatrists, if some of them are here, can receive, I am not saying from my word, which has nothing to do with the business, but from the reflection of my voice from these walls, it is a matter first of knowing what specifies them as psychiatrists.

This does not prevent them, within the limits of these walls, from hearing something other than my voice. The voice, for example, of those who are interned here, because after all that may lead somewhere...even to giving rise to a correct idea of what is involved in the **o**-object.

I shared with you this evening, in short, some reflections and of course they are reflection to which my person as such is no stranger. This is what I detest most in others. Because after all, among the people who listen to me from time to time and who are called, God knows why, my pupils, one cannot say that they deprive themselves of reflecting.

The wall can always be a *muroir* [hospice for the dying ?].

This no doubt is why I came back to say things at Sainte-Anne. It is not properly speaking delusional, but all the same I kept something of these walls close to my heart.

If I was able with the passage of time, to succeed in building up with my **S**, my **\$**, my **S₁**, my **S₂** and the **o**-object, the *raison d'être*, however you may write it, perhaps after all you will not take the reflection of my voice from these walls as a simply personal reflection.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

3rd February 1972

I am going to continue then a little on the theme of the knowledge of the psychoanalyst. I am only going to do it here within the parentheses that I already opened up the first two times. I told you that it is here that I accepted, at the request of one of my pupils, to speak again here this year for the first time since 1963.

I told you the last time something that is articulated in harmony with what surrounds us: I am talking to the wall! It is true that I gave a commentary on this statement: a certain schema, the one taken up from the Klein bottle, which ought to reassure those who may feel themselves to be excluded from this formula. As I have explained for a long time what one addresses to the wall has the property of rebounding. That I speak to you in this way indirectly was certainly not designed to offend anyone, because after all, one can say that this is not a privilege of my discourse!

I would like today to clarify in connection with this wall, which is not at all a metaphor, to clarify what I may say elsewhere. Because obviously, there is a justification, in talking about knowledge, that it is not at my seminar that I do it. What is at stake in effect is not any old knowledge, but the knowledge of the psychoanalyst.

There you are! To introduce things a little, to suggest a dimension to some people, I hope, I would say that...that one cannot speak about 'love', as they say, except in an imbecilic or abject manner, which is an aggravation. Abject is the way that people speak about it in psychoanalysis. That one cannot then speak about love, but that one can write about it, ought to strike you. The letter, the love letter (*la lettre d'(a)mur*), to continue on this little ballad in six (56) verses that I commented on here the last time, it is clear that this should end up by biting its tail, and that, if it begins between man, and nobody knows what he is, "*between man and love there is a woman*" and then as you know, it continues – I am not going to start up again today – and that ought to terminate at the end, at the end there is a wall. Between man and the wall there is precisely ... love, the love letter. The best thing in this curious surge that is called love, is the letter, it is the letter that can take on strange shapes.

There was a chap, like that, 3,000 years ago, who was certainly at the acme of his success, of his success in love, who saw appearing on the wall something that I already gave a commentary on. I am not going to take it up again. *Mene, Mene*, that was said *Tequel, Oupharsim*, which is usually – I don't know why – articulated as *Mane, Thecel, Phares (Daniel, 5, 25-28)*.

When the love letter comes to us – because as I explained on a number of occasions, letters always reach their destination, happily they arrive too late, besides the fact that they are rare. It sometimes happens also that they arrive on time. These are the rare cases when rendezvous are not missed; there are not many cases in history when that happened, as to this rather ordinary Nebuchadnezzar.

In order to get into my subject, I will not push things any further, even though I may take it up again. Because this love, as I am presenting it to you, has nothing very amusing about it. Whereas I, I am unable to sustain myself otherwise than by amusing, serious or comic amusement. What I explained the last time, is that serious amusements took place elsewhere, in a place where I am sheltered, and that for here, I reserved comic amusements. I do not know whether I will be this evening quite up to it, by reason perhaps of this introduction about the love letter. Nevertheless I will try.

I explained, two years ago, something that, once it had passed into the *poubellic* domain, took on the name of quadripode. I was the one who chose this name and you could ask yourselves why I gave it such a strange name: why not quadriped or tetrapode? That would have had the advantage of not being bastardised. But in truth, I asked myself that when I was writing it, I do not know why I stayed with it. Then I subsequently asked myself how bastardised terms like that were described in my childhood, half-Latin, half-Greek. I am sure I knew what the purists called it, and then I forgot. Is there someone here who knows how there are designated these terms that are constructed for example like the word sociology or quadripode, from a Latin element and a Greek element? I am begging whoever might know it to say it! ...Well then it is not very (57) encouraging! Because since yesterday, yesterday, that means the day before yesterday – I began to look for it and since I still haven't found it, since yesterday I telephoned ten people who seemed to me to be the most likely to give me the answer... Well... Well then, *tant pis!*

My quadripodes in questions, I call them that to give you the idea that you can base yourself on them as a way, because I was in the mass media, of reassuring people a little. But in reality, on the inside I explained the following, in connection with what I isolated about the four discourses, four discourses that result from the emergence of the latest one, the discourse of the analyst. The discourse of the analyst contributes, in effect, to a certain contemporary state of thought, an order by which there can be illuminated other discourses which had emerged much earlier. I arranged them according to what is called a topology, one of the simplest topologies, but which is nonetheless a topology, a topology in the sense that it can be put into mathematics. And it is in a rudimentary fashion, namely, that it is based on the grouping of no more than four points that we will call 'monads'.

This seems completely unimportant. Nevertheless it is so strongly inscribed in the structure of our world that there is no other foundation to the fact of the space in which we live. You should carefully note that, putting four points at equal distance, is the maximum of what you can do in our space. You will never be able to put five points at an equal distance from one another. This tiny shape, that I have just recalled here, is there to make you sense what is involved. If the quadripodes are not tetrahedral but tetrade, the fact that the number of vertices are equal to that of the surfaces is linked to this same arithmetical triangle that I traced out in my last seminar (cf. 19.1.72). As you see, to establish either one or the other is not all that easy. You are used to the position on the left, so that you no longer even sense it any longer, but that on the

right is no more comfortable: imagine yourselves sitting on a tetrahedron that is set on its point. It is nevertheless from there that one must start for everything that is involved in what constitutes this type of social seat that is established in what is called a discourse. And this is what I properly put forward in my second last seminar. The tetrahedron, to call it by its present appearance, has curious properties. The fact is that it is not like this one, regular – the equal distance is only there to recall for you the properties of the number four, with regard to space – if it is indifferent, it is properly impossible for you to define a symmetry in it. Nevertheless it has this particular quality. The fact is that if its sides, namely, the little strokes that you see which join what are called in geometry vertices, if you vectorise these little strokes, namely, if you give them a direction, it is enough for you to posit as a principle that none of these vertices will be privileged in something, which would be necessarily a privilege. Because if that happened, there would be a least two which could not benefit from it – if then you posit that nowhere can there be a convergence of three vectors, and nowhere a divergence of three vectors from the same vertex, you will obtain (58) necessarily then the arrangement:

2 arriving	1 parting
2 arriving	1 parting
1 arriving	2 parting
1 arriving	2 parting

Namely, that all the aforesaid tetrahedrons are strictly equivalent and that in every case, you can, by suppressing one of the sides, obtain the formula by which I schematised my four discourses:

The discourse described as that of the Master
 The discourse of the University
 The discourse of the Analyst
 The discourse of the Hysteric

In accordance with this:

Which is the property of one of the vertices, the divergence, but without any vector that manages to nourish the discourse, but that inversely, at the opposite side, you have this triangular trajectory. This is enough to allow there to be distinguished in every case, by a character that is absolutely special, these four poles that I am stating with the terms of truth, of semblance, of enjoyment and of surplus enjoying.

This is the fundamental topology from which there emerges every function of the word and which merits a commentary.

There is in effect a question that the discourse of the analyst is well designed to give rise to: know what is the function of speech (*la parole*). *Function and field of speech and language*, is how I introduced what ought to lead us to this present point of the definition of a new discourse. Not certainly that this discourse is mine: at the moment of time I am talking to you, this discourse has been well and truly established for almost three quarters of a century. Just because the analyst himself is capable in certain zones, of refusing what I say about it, does not mean that he is not a support of this discourse and, in truth, 'to be a support', means simply, on occasion, 'to be supposed'. But the fact that this discourse can take on a sense from the very voice of someone who is in it – this is the case for me just as much as for anyone else – is precisely what makes it worth our while to pause on it, in order to know from where it takes on this sense.

In hearing what I have just put forward, the question of sense, may seem to you not to pose problems, I mean that it seems that the discourse of the analyst appeals sufficiently to interpretation for the question not to be posed. Effectively, in a certain analytic (59) scribbling, it seems that one can read – and this is not surprising, and you will see why – every sense that you wish, up to the most archaic. I mean to have there as an echo, the sempiternal repetition of what, from all time, has come down to us under this term, this term of meaning, in forms of which it should really be said that it is only their superimposition that creates a meaning. Because, why is it that we understand anything whatsoever about the worn-out symbolism in Sacred Scripture, for example? Aligning it to a mythology, whatever it may be, gives rise as everyone knows to one of the most deceptive kinds of slippage? For some time no one has taken it seriously. That when one studies in a serious way what is involved in mythologies, it is not to their sense that one refers, it is to the combinatorial of mythems. You should refer on this point to works whose author I do not think I have to remind you of again.

The question is really then of knowing where meaning comes from.

I used because it was very necessary, I used, to introduce what is involved in analytic discourse, I used without any scruple the path described as linguistic. And to temper the ardour which, may have been awoken too early, to bring you back to the ordinary 'fringe', I recalled that there is only sustained something worthy of this title of linguistics as a science, that there is only sustained something which seems to have the tongue as such, indeed speech, as object that this is only sustained on condition of swearing among themselves, among linguists, to never, never again – because this had been done for centuries – never again even from a distance, to allude to the origin of language. It was among others one

of the slogans that I had given to this form of introduction articulated in my formula: “The unconscious is structured like a language”.

When I say that it was to avoid my audience returning to a certain ‘fringy equivocation’ – it is not for myself that I use this term, it is Freud himself, and specifically precisely in connection with what are called Jungian archetypes – it is certainly not to lift this prohibition now. There is absolutely no question of speculating on any origin of language whatsoever, I said that it is a question of formulating the function of speech.

The function of speech, it is a long time since I put that forward, is to be the only form of action which posits itself as truth. What is, not speech, this is a superfluous question: not only do I speak, do you speak, and even it speaks, as I said, it happens all by itself. It is a fact, I would even say that it is the origin of all facts because nothing whatsoever takes on the rank of being a fact until it is said. It must be said that I did not say “when it is spoken”: there is something distinct between speaking and saying. A word which grounds the fact, is a saying, but speech functions even when it is not grounding any fact. When it commands, when it prays, when it insults, when it utters a wish, it does not ground any fact.

(60) We are able here today – these are not things that I would reproduce down below, at the other place where happily I say more serious things! Here, because it is implied in this seriousness that I am always trying to develop further and remaining always at the aforesaid point, like at my last seminar. I hope that at the next one, there will be fewer people because it was not funny – but anyway we can have a laugh here, these are comic amusements.

In the order of comic amusement, it is not for nothing, that in cartoons speech is spelt out for you on banners, there the word is like something where there is an erection (*bande...rôle*) or not! It is not for nothing that this establishes the dimension of truth. Because the truth, the true, the true truth, the truth which as it happens has begun to be glimpsed only with the analytic discourse, this is what this discourse reveals to each and every one, who simply commit themselves to it in an oriented fashion as an analysand. The fact is – forgive me for taking up this term again, but since I began, I will not abandon it – the fact is that over there, in the *place du Panthéon*, I call . The fact is that to have a hard on, has no relationship with sex, not with the other one, in any case!

To have a hard on – we are here *intra muros* – to have a hard on for a women – we must all the same call things by their name – that means giving her the function of , that means to take her as a phallus. The phallus is not nothing! I already explained, down there where things are serious, I already explained what that brings about, I told you that the meaning of the phallus, is the only case of a genitive that is fully balanced. That means that the phallus, the fact is that what I explained to you this morning – I am saying

that for those who have a little awareness – the fact is that what Jakobson explained to you: the phallus is meaning. It is that through which language signifies, there is only a single *Bedeutung*: the phallus.

Let us start from this hypothesis, this will very largely explain for us the whole function of speech. Because it is not always applied to denoting facts – this is all that it can do, one does not denote things, one denotes facts – but it is quite by chance, from time to time. Most of the time it supplies for the fact that the phallic function is precisely what ensures that in the case of man there are only what you know: bad relations between the sexes. While everywhere else, at least for us, they seem to... go with the flow.

So then that is the reason that in my little...quadripode, in my little quadripode, you see at the level of truth, two things, two vectors that diverge. This expresses that enjoyment, which is right at the end of the right hand branch, is certainly a phallic enjoyment. But that one cannot say sexual enjoyment and that, as regards what maintains any one of these funny animals, those who are the prey of speech, it is necessary that there should be this pole correlative to the pole of enjoyment *qua* obstacle to the sexual relationship. It is this pole that I designate as a semblance. It is just as clear for a partner, anyway if we dare, as is done every day to pinpoint them by (61) their sex, it is striking that the man and the woman make a pretence (*font semblant*) each one in this role. When there is only this business...but the important thing at least when what is at stake is the function of speech, is that the poles should be defined, that of the semblance and that of enjoyment.

If there were in man what we imagine there to be in a purely gratuitous fashion, an enjoyment specified by sexual polarity, that would be known. It was perhaps known, whole ages boasted about it, and after all – we have numerous testimonies – unfortunately purely esoteric – that there were times where people really believed how that could be held up. There was someone called Van Gennep whose book appears excellent to me, who picks out things here and there – anyway, like everyone else, he picks out more closely into what is involved in the written Chinese tradition – whose subject is sexual knowledge. It is not very widespread, I assure you, nor very illuminating either! But anyway, have a look at that if it amuses you: *Sexual life in Ancient China*. I defy you to get anything out of it that might be of use to you in what I was calling earlier the contemporary state of thinking!

The interest of what I am highlighting does not lie in saying that from all time things have been the same as the point to which we have got to. There was perhaps, there perhaps still is somewhere, but, it is curious, it is always in places where you must really seriously prove your credentials before entering it, places where there occurs between men and women this harmonious conjunction which makes them believe to be in the seventh heaven. But it is all the same very curious that we never hear tell of it except from the outside.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that through one of the ways that I have finally to define that it is rather with that each one has a relationship with the other. This becomes fully confirmed once one looks at what is called, using a term that is very fitting, like that, thanks to the ambiguity of Latin and of Greek, is called ‘homos’ – ‘ecco homo’ [*sic*] as I put it. It is quite certain that the homos have much better and more frequent and more firm erections.

What is curious, but anyway it is all the same a fact which for a person that for a certain time we have heard spoken about, this creates no doubt. Do not be deceived by it, all the same, there is ‘homo’ and ‘homo’, huh! I am not talking about André Gide, you must not believe that André Gide was a homo!

(62) This introduces us to what follows. Let us not lose our bearings, what is at stake is meaning. In order for something to have meaning in the contemporary state of thoughts, it is sad to say it, but it has to posit itself as normal. This indeed is why André Gide wanted homosexuality to be normal; and, as you may be able perhaps to have echoes of it, in this sense, there is a crowd of them. In no time at all this is going to be taken as normal, to the point that we will have new clients in psychoanalysis who will come to tell us: “I have come to see you because I don’t think I’m a normal paedophile!” It’s going to create a traffic jam!

And analysis is part of that. If the notion of normal had not taken on, following certain accidents of history, such an extension, this would never have happened. All the patients, not alone that Freud took on but it is very clear to read that it is a condition. To go into analysis, at the start, the minimum is to have a good university formation. This is clearly stated in Freud. I ought to underline it, because the University discourse about which I have a lot of bad things to say, and for the best of reasons, but all the same it is what feeds analytic discourse.

You understand, you can no longer imagine yourselves – this in order to make you imagine something, if you are capable of it, but who knows...drawn along by my voice – you cannot imagine what a zone was at the time that is called, because of that ‘ancient’, when *doxa* – you know about *doxa*...the famous *doxa* that is spoken about in *Menon, mais non, mais non!* – there was a *doxa* which was not of the university kind. But currently there is no *doxa* however futile, however lame, however scattered, however stupid it may be which does not find its place somewhere in university teaching! There is no example of an opinion, however stupid it may be, which is not mapped out, indeed on occasion that it is mapped out, to be taught!

That falsifies everything! Because when Plato spoke about *doxa* as something that he literally knows what to make of as a philosopher who was trying to ground a science, he noticed that *doxa* was found at every street corner: there are some that are true. Naturally, he is not able to say why, any more than any other philosopher, but no one doubts that they are true, because in truth, they are necessary. This gives a context, but one completely different to what is called philosophy, that *doxa* is not normalised. There is no trace of

the word norm anywhere in ancient discourse. We are the ones who invented that, and naturally by seeking out an extremely rare Greek noun!

We must all the same start from there in order to see that analytic discourse did not appear by chance. We had to be at the final state of extreme urgency for it to emerge. Naturally, since it is a discourse of the analyst, it takes on, like all my discourses, the four that I named, the meaning of an objective genitive. The discourse of the Master, is the discourse about the Master, and this was clearly seen at the acme of the philosophical adventure, in Hegel. The discourse of the analyst, is the same thing. We speak about the (63) analyst, he is the **o**-object as I have often underlined. Naturally, that does not make it easy for him to grasp properly what his position is. But on the other hand, it is all ease, because it is that of the semblance.

So then our Gide, to continue the thread – I am taking Gide, and then I will leave him, then we will take him up together, and so on – our Gide there, because he is all the same exemplary, he does not show us a way out of our little affair, far from it! His affair is to be desired, as we commonly find in analytic exploration. There are people who are not desired when they were little children. This pushes them to do things so that they may be so later on. It is very common. But things must be well separated out all the same. This is not unrelated, not at all, to discourse. It is not one of those words that emerge more or less everywhere during Carnival. Discourse and desire have the closest relationship. That is why I managed to isolate – at least I think I did – the function of the **o**-object. It is a key point which not enough advantage has been taken of, I must say. Yet that will come in its own time.

The **o**-object, is that by which the speaking being is determined when he is caught up in discourses. He does not know at all what determines him: it is the **o**-object, by which he is determined, he is determined as subject, namely, he is divided as subject, he is the prey of desire. This seems to happen in the same place as subversive words, but it is not at all the same. It is quite regular, it produces – it is a production – this produces mathematically – make no mistake about it – this **o**-object as cause of the aforesaid desire.

It is again the one that I called, as you know, the metonymical object, the one that runs along what is unfolded as discourse, a more or less coherent discourse, until it runs into something and the whole business ends up in something milk and watery. It nevertheless remains that it is from that – and this is what is interesting in it – that we get the idea of the cause. We believe that in nature, that there must be a cause, under the pretext that we are caused by our own bla-bla-bla. Yes! There are all the features, in André Gide, that things are indeed the way I have told you. There is first of all his relation with the supreme Other. You must not at all believe, despite what he may have said, that the big Other did not have an impact. There where the **o** takes shape he even had a quite specific notion about it, which was that the pleasure of the big Other, was to upset that of all the little ones!... As a result he copped on very well that there was here a troubling point which saved him obviously from the abandonment of his childhood. All

his teasing of God, was, finally, something strongly compensatory for someone who had started so badly. He is not the only one.

I had begun at one time – I only did a single lecture in what are called my seminars – something about the Name of the Father. Naturally I began by the father himself. Anyway, I spoke for an hour, an hour and a half, about God's enjoyment. If I said that it was a mystical ... mockery it was in order never to speak about it (64) again. It is certain that ever since there has only been a single God, a single and unique one, anyway the God who made emerge a certain historical era, he is precisely the one, the one who upsets the pleasure of others. This is even the only thing that counts. There were indeed Epicurians who did everything they could to teach the method, not to allow oneself to be upset by anyone. That was a disaster. There were others, who were called Stoics who said: "But on the contrary one must row along with divine pleasure". But that also fails as you know, it only works between the two. It is worrying that counts. With that you are all in your natural arena. You do not enjoy, of course, it would be an exaggeration to say it, all the more so because in any case, it is too dangerous. But anyway, it cannot be said that you do not have some pleasure, huh! It is even on this that the primary process is grounded.

All of this brings us up against it: what is meaning? Well then, it would be better to start again at the level of desire. The pleasure that the other gives you is well known, this is even called in a more noble area, art (*l'art*). This is where one has to consider the wall attentively, because there is an area of meaning well illuminated for example by someone called Leonardo de Vinci, as you all know, who left some manuscripts and some tiny toys. Not too many, he did not populate museums, but he spoke profound truths. He spoke profound truths that everybody should always remember – he said: "Look at the walls"...like me, then, since that time, he has become the Leonard of families. We give presents of his manuscripts, there is a luxury piece of work, even to me, I was given a pair, can you imagine! But that does not mean that it is not legible...so then he explains to you: look carefully at the wall like here, it's a little dirty. If it were better maintained there would be spots of dampness and even perhaps mildew. Well then if we are to believe Leonardo, if there is a stain of dampness, it is a very good opportunity to transform it into a Madonna or even a muscular athlete. That even lends itself to it still more because in the dampness, there are always shadows, hollows. It is very important to notice that there are a class of things on walls that lend themselves to figures, to artistic creation, as they say. It is the figurative even here, the stain question. It is necessary all the same to know the relationship between that and something else that can come onto the wall, namely ravines, not simply of the word – even though that happens, this indeed is how it always begins – but of discourse. In other words whether mildew on the wall and writing are of the same order. That ought to interest here a certain number of people who, I think, not very long ago – it is beginning to date a bit - busied themselves with writing things, love letters, on the walls. It was a bloody beautiful time. There are some people who have never been consoled for the time when one could write on walls and when from something in *Publicis* people deduced that it was the walls that spoke. As if that could happen!

I would simply remark that it would have been much better if nothing had ever been written on the walls. What is already written on them should be taken away. Liberty–Equality–Fraternity, for example, is indecent! “No smoking” is not possible, all the more so because everyone smokes, there is in that a tactical error. I already said it earlier for the love letter (*la lettre d’(a)mur*) everything that is written reinforces the (65) wall. This is not necessarily an objection. But what is certain, is that you must not believe that it is absolutely necessary, but it is useful all the same because if nothing had ever been written on a wall, whatever it may be, this one or others, well then, it is a fact, we would not have taken a step towards the meaning of what is to be seen beyond the wall.

You see, there is something that I will be led to talk to you a little about this year: it is the relationships between logic and mathematics. Beyond the wall, to say it to you right away, there is only, to the best of our knowledge, this real which is signalled precisely by the impossible, by the impossible of reaching it beyond the wall. It nevertheless remains that it is the real. How were we able to manage to get an idea of it? It is certain that language made some contribution to it. This is even why I am attempting to make this little bridge that you were able to see being initiated in my last seminars, namely, how does the One make its entry. This is what I expressed already for the last three years with the symbols S_1 and S_2 . The first, I designated like that, so that you could understand in it some little thing, about the master signifier and the second about knowledge.

But would there be an S_1 , if there were not a S_2 ? This is a problem, because it is necessary that there should be two first of all in order that there should be S_1 . I tackled the matter at the last seminar, by showing you that in any case, there are at least two even for a single one to emerge: zero and one, as they say, makes two. But that is in the sense that one says that it cannot be gone beyond. Nevertheless one goes beyond it when one is a logician, as I already indicated to you by referring to Frege. But anyway, it appeared no less to you of course that it was gone beyond cheerfully and that I indicated to you at that time – I will come back to it – that there was perhaps no more than a little step. That is not what is important.

It is quite clear that someone whom some of you have heard no doubt speaking for the first time this morning, René Thom, who is a mathematician, he does not favour the fact that logic, namely, the discourse that is held on the wall, is something that is even sufficient to account for number, the first step in mathematics. On the other hand, it seems to him that it can account, not simply for what is traced out on the wall – it is nothing other than life itself, that begins with dampness, as you know – take into account by number, algebra, functions, topology, take into account everything that happens in the field of life. I will come back to it. I will explain to you that the fact that he rediscovers, in a particular mathematical function, the very outline of the curves which construct the first dampness before rising up to man, that this fact pushes him towards this extrapolation of thinking that topology can provide a typology for natural

tongues. I do not know whether the question can be currently settled. I will try to give you an idea where its current impact is, nothing more.

What I can say, is that in any case, the splitting of the wall, the fact that there is something set up in front, that I called speech and language, and that it is from another side that work is happening, (66) perhaps mathematically, it is quite certain that we cannot have a different idea of it. That science is based, not, as is said on quantity, but on number, the function of topology, is something of which there is no doubt. A discourse that is called Science, found a way to construct itself behind the wall. Only what I believe I should clearly formulate and what I think makes me agree with everything that is most serious in the scientific construction, is that it is strictly impossible to give to anything whatsoever that is articulated in algebraic or topological terms the shadow of a meaning. There is meaning for those who before the wall are happy with the stains of dampness that are found to be so favourable for being transformed into a Madonna or the back of an athlete. But it is obvious that we cannot be satisfied, anyway, with these confused meanings. This only serves, when all is said and done, to reverberate on the lyre of desire, on eroticism, to call things by their name.

But in front of the wall, other things are happening, and this is what I call discourses. There have been others than my four, that I enumerated and which are only specified moreover by having to make you perceive immediately that they are specified as such as only being four. It is quite sure that there were others of which we no longer know anything and which converge towards these which are the four which remain to us, those that are articulated from the circuit of o , S_1 and S_2 and even of the subject – who pays the piper – and who from this circuit, by being displaced according to the four vertices in turn, allows us to detach something for us to find our bearings. This is something that gives us the present situation of what is grounded in terms of the social bond, discourse. Namely, something that whatever place one occupies in it, that of the master, of the slave, of the product or of what supports the whole business, whatever may be the place one occupies in it one never hinders anything.

What does meaning arise from? This is why it is very important to have made this separation, an awkward one no doubt, that Saussure made – as Jakobson recalled this morning – between the signifier and the signified, something that he inherited – not without reason – from the Stoics whose very particular position in these sorts of manipulations I described to you earlier. What is important, of course, is not that the signifier and the signified are unified and that it is the signified that allows us to distinguish what is specific in the signifier, quite the contrary, it is the signified of a signifier, what I articulate by the little letters that I showed you earlier. The signified of a signifier, where one can attach something that may resemble a meaning, this always comes from the place that the same signifier occupies in another discourse. It is indeed that which came into all their heads when the analytic discourse was introduced: they thought they understood everything...Poor unfortunates! Happily thanks to the care I have given it, this is not the case

for you. If you understood what I talk about elsewhere, where I am serious, you would not believe your ears. This is even why you do not believe your ears. It is because in reality you understand it, but after all you keep your distance; it is not quite comprehensible (67) since, for the great majority, the analytic discourse has not yet captured you. This will come unfortunately, because it is more and more important.

I would like all the same to tell you something about the knowledge of the analyst, on condition that you do not remain there. If my friend René Thom manages to find so easily by cuts in complicated mathematical surfaces, something like a drawing, a series of stripes, something that he moreover calls a point, a chip, a crease, a fold, and make an absolutely captivating use of it. If, in other words, if there is between a particular slice of a thing that can only exist because one can write: “There exists x which satisfies the function F of x ”, yes if he does that with such ease, it nonetheless remains that as long as this has not accounted in an exhaustive fashion for what after all, despite everything, he is necessarily forced to explain to you, namely, common language and the grammar around it, there will remain here a zone that I call “a zone of discourse” and which is the one on which the analysis of discourses throws a vivid light.

What can be transmitted in this in terms of a knowledge? Anyway, you have to choose! It is the numbers that know, that know because they managed, they managed to move this organised material at a point that of course was immemorial, and which continued to know what they are doing. There is one thing that is quite certain, which is that it is in the most exaggerated fashion that we put a meaning into it, that the whole idea of evolution, of perfecting, while in the animal chain that is presupposed, we see absolutely nothing which bears witness all the same to this so called continual adaptation. To the point that it was necessary all the same to renounce it and to say that after all those who got through, there, are those who were able to get through. That is called natural selection. It means strictly nothing. This has like that a little meaning borrowed from the discourse of a pirate, and then why not that or another one? The clearest thing that appears to us, is that a living being still does not know very well what to do with one of his organs. And after all, it is perhaps a particular case of making obvious, through analytic discourse, the embarrassing aspect that the phallus has.

That there should be a correlation between that, as I underlined at the beginning of this discourse, a correlation between that and what is fomented by the word, we can say nothing more about it. That, at the point that we are at of the contemporary state of thinking – that is the sixth time that I have used this formula, it is quite clear that this does not seem to annoy anybody. It is indeed nevertheless something that it would be worthwhile returning to, the contemporary state of thinking, I am making a piece of furniture of it but it is nevertheless true, huh? It is not idealism to say that thoughts are just as strictly determined as the latest gadget. In any case in the contemporary state of thinking, we have the analytic discourse which, when you wish really to understand it for what it is, is shown to be linked to a curious adaptation. Because when all (68) is said and done, if it is true, this business of castration, that means that in man, castration is

the means of adapting to survive. This is unthinkable, but it is true. All of this is only perhaps an artifice, an artefact of discourse. That this discourse, so learned in completing the others, that this discourse can be sustained, is perhaps simply a historical phase. Sexual life of Ancient China may perhaps flower again, there will be a certain number of pretty filthy ruins to swallow up when that happens...

But for the moment, what is meant by this meaning that we contribute?

This meaning, when all is said and done, is enigmatic, and precisely because it is meaning. There is somewhere, in the second edition of a volume, of this volume that I allowed out at one time that is called *Ecrits*, there is a little adjunct which I call: "The metaphor of the subject". I played for a long time on the formula so much enjoyed by my dear friend Perelman "an ocean of false knowledge". One is never quite sure – I would advise you to start from there – of what I have in the back of my head, precisely when I am amusing myself! "An ocean of false knowledge", is perhaps the knowledge of the analyst, why not? Why not, if precisely it is only from his perspective that there can be decanted the fact that science has no meaning, but that any meaning of discourse, since it is only sustained from another, is only partial meaning.

If the truth can only ever half say itself, this is the core, this is the essential of the knowledge of the analyst, it is that at this place that I called tetrapode or quadriped at the place of truth we have S_2 knowledge. It is a knowledge itself which is then always to be put in question. As regards analysis, there is on the other hand one thing that must prevail: which is that there is a knowledge that is drawn from the subject himself; in the pole place of enjoyment, the analytic discourse puts $\$$. It is in this stumbling, in this failed action, in the dream, in the work of the analysand that there results this knowledge, this knowledge that, for its part, is not supposed. It is knowledge, an out of date knowledge, a scrap of knowledge, a tiny scrap of knowledge: that is what the unconscious is. This knowledge is what I assume, I define since I am able to posit it, the new feature in the emergence, only from the enjoyment of the subject.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

3rd March 1972

I apologise. This is the first time I've been late. I warn you that I am ill. You are here, I am here also. Indeed it is for you. By that I mean that I feel abnormally well under the influence of a little temperature and of some drugs. So that, if ever this situation were to change suddenly I hope that those who have been listening to me for a long time will explain to the new ones that this is the first time that this has happened to me.

So then I am going to try, this evening, to be up to what you expect, what you expect here where as I have said I amuse myself. It is not absolutely necessary that this should always remain on the same tone. I hope you will excuse me, it is certainly not due to my abnormal state. It will indeed be along the line of what I intend to tell you this evening.

Elsewhere, obviously, I do not make things easy for my audience. If some of those who are here – I can see some of them – remember what I spoke about the last time, I spoke in short about this thing that I summarised in the Borromean knot. I mean a chain of three, which is such that by detaching one of the rings from this chain, the other two cannot hold together for a single instant. From what does that arise? I am forced to explain it to you, since after all I am not sure that put forward, quite simply, in a crude way like that it is enough for all of you.

This means a question about what is the condition of the discourse of the unconscious, it means a question posed about what language is. In effect, this is a question that has not been settled. Language ought to be tackled in its grammar, in which case – this is certain, it relates to a topology...

X: What is a topology?

Lacan: What is a topology? What a nice person! A topology is something that has a mathematical definition. Topology is something that is tackled first of all by non-metrical relationships, by relationships that can be put out of shape. It is properly speaking the case for these sort of flexible circles that constitute my:

I ASK YOU TO REFUSE WHAT I AM OFFERING YOU.

Each one is something closed and flexible and which only holds up by being linked to the others. Nothing can be sustained all by itself. (72) This topology, by reason of its mathematical insertion, is linked to relationships – this precisely is what my last seminar demonstrated – it is linked to relationships of pure significance. Namely, that it is in so far as these three terms are three that we see that the presence of the third establishes a relation between the other two. This is what is meant by the Borromean knot.

There is another way to tackle language and, of course, this is a contemporary matter. It is current because of the fact that someone that I named – as it happens I named him just after what Jakobson did, but, as it happens, I had known him just before – it is someone called René Thom. And this person attempts in short, certainly not without having opened up certain paths in it, to tackle the question of language from the semantic angle. Namely, not from the signifying combinatorial inasmuch as pure mathematics can help us to conceive of it as such, but from the semantic angle. Namely, not without having recourse also to mathematics, to find in certain curves, I would add, certain shapes I would add that can be deduced from these curves, something that would allow us to conceive of language as, I would say, something like the echo of physical phenomena. It is starting, for example, with what is purely and simply a communication of the phenomena of resonance that there would be elaborated curves which, since they are valid in a certain number of fundamental relations, are found secondarily to be collected together, to be homogenised, as one might say, to be taken up into the same parenthesis from which there would result diverse grammatical functions. It seems to me that there is already an obstacle to conceiving things in this way: the fact is that one is forced to put under the same term ‘verb’ very different types of action. Why would language, in a way, have gathered together in the same category functions whose origin can only be conceived of under very different types of emergence? Nevertheless the question remains in suspense.

It is certain that there would be something infinitely satisfying in considering that language is in a way modelled on functions that are supposed to be drawn from physical reality, even if this reality can only be tackled from the angle of a mathematical functionalisation.

What I, for my part, am in the process of putting forward for you, is something that fundamentally is attached to the purely topological origin of language. I believe I can account for this topological origin starting from the fact that it is essentially linked to something that comes from the angle, in the speaking being, of sexuality. Whether the speaking being is speaking because of something that happened to sexuality because he is a speaking being, is an affair that I will abstain from settling and leave you to look after.

The fundamental schema of what is involved and that, this evening, I am going to try and push a little further before you is the following. The functions described as ‘sexuality’ are defined inasmuch as we know something about it – we know a little about it even if only by (73) experience – from the fact that there are two sexes, whatever may think a celebrated author who I ought to say, at one time, before she produced this book that is called *The second sex*, believed, by reason of some orientation or other – for, in truth, I had not yet begun to teach anything – believed she should consult me before producing *The second sex*. She called me on the telephone to tell me that undoubtedly she needed my advice to clarify what should be the psychoanalytic contribution to her work. Since I pointed out to her that it would require

indeed at least – this is a minimum, because I have been speaking for 20 years and it is not by chance – that it would require five or six months for me to disentangle the question for her, she pointed out to me that there was no question, of course, that a book that was already in train should wait so long, the laws of literary production being such that it seemed to her that she should rule out her having more than three or four conversations with me. After which, I declined this honour.

The foundation of what I am, for some time, in the process of bringing forward for you, very precisely since last year, is very precisely the fact that there is no second sex. There is no second sex from the moment that language comes into function. Or to say things differently concerning what is called heterosexuality, it is very precisely in the fact that the word *heteros*, which is the term that is used to say ‘other’ in Greek is very precisely in this position for the relationship that in the speaking being is called sexual, of emptying itself *qua* being. And it is precisely this void that it offers to the word that I call the locus of the Other, namely, that in which there are inscribed the effects of the aforesaid word. I am not going to elaborate what I have said – because after all that would delay us here – with some etymological references. How *heteros* is said in a certain Greek dialect that I will even spare you the trouble of naming for you, *ateros*, how this *heteros* is linked to *deuteros* and very precisely marks that this *deuteros*, on this occasion, is, as I might put it, elided.

It is clear that this may appear surprising, since it is obvious that for some time such a formula – because I do not know whether there is a reference to the time when it was formulated – such a formula is very precisely what is ignored. I nevertheless claim and I sustain before you – this is what you see on the board – that this is what psychoanalytic experience contributes. For this, let us recall on what there rests the conception we may have, not of heterosexuality – since it is in short very well named, if you follow what I have put forward just now – but of bisexuality.

(74) At the point that we have got to in our statements concerning the aforesaid sexuality, what do we have? What we refer to – and you must not believe that this is self-evident – what we refer to, is a supposedly animal model. There is then a relationship between the sexes and the animal image of copulation, which seems to be for us a sufficient model of what is involved in a relationship and, at the same time, that what is sexual, is considered as a need. This is not – far from it believe me – what was always the case. I do not need to recall what is meant by ‘to know’ in the biblical sense of the word. From all time the relationship of *nous* to something that would undergo a passive stamp, that is described differently, but undoubtedly whose most usual Greek name is *ule*, from all time the style of the relation that is generated from the spirit was considered as modelling not at all simply the animal relation, but the

fundamental style of being with what was held to be the world. For a long time the Chinese appealed to two fundamental essences which are respectively the feminine essence that they call the Yin opposing it to the Yang which it happens that I wrote – by chance no doubt, underneath.

If there were a relationship that could be articulated on the sexual plane, if there were a relationship that could be articulated in the speaking being, should it be stated – this is the question - about *all of those* of the same sex to *all of those* of the other. This is obviously the idea that suggests to us, at the point that we are at in the reference to what I called the animal model: the aptitude of each one on one side to be true for all the others of the other. You see then that the statement is promulgated in the form, the significant semantic form of the universal. To replace, in what I said ‘each one’ by ‘anyone whatsoever’ or by ‘anyone one at all’ – anyone at all who from one of these sides – we would be completely in the order of what suggests what might be called – you should recognise in this conditional something that is an echo of my *Discourse that MIGHT not be a semblance* – well then by replacing ‘each one’ by ‘any one at all’, you would be right into this indetermination of the fact that it is chosen in each ‘all’ to respond to all the others

This ‘each one’ that I used first has all the same this effect of reminding you that after all, as I might say, the effective relationship does not fail to evoke the horizon of the ‘one to one’, that ‘to each his/her own’. This, this bi-univocal correspondence, echoes what we know, namely, that it is essential to presentify number. Let us note the following, which is that we cannot from the start eliminate the existence of these two dimensions and that one can even say that the animal model is precisely what the animistic phantasy suggests. If we did not have this animal model, even if the choice is to encounter, bi-univocal coupling is what appears to us, namely, that there are two animals who copulate together, well then, we would not have this essential dimension which is very precisely that the encounter is unique. It is not by chance that it is from this, from this alone, that there is fomented the animistic model: let us call this the encounter of soul to soul. Anyone who knows the condition of the speaking being (75) has no reason to be surprised that the encounter, starting from this foundation, will precisely have to be repeated *qua* unique. There is here no need to bring into play any dimension of virtue. It is the very necessity of what in the case of the speaking being happens as unique: it is the fact that it is repeated. This indeed is why that it is not from the animal model that there is sustained and there is fomented the phantasy that I called animistic. Namely, that it is a phantasy that is there to say, language does not exist, which is obviously not without interest in the analytic field.

What gives us the illusion of the sexual relationship in the speaking being, is everything that materialises the universal in a behaviour which is effectively of a herd kind in the relationship between the sexes. I already underlined that in the sexual quest or hunt, as you wish, the boys encourage one another and that for the girls, they like to take it up as long as it is to their advantage. This is an ethological remark that I am making, for my part, but which settles nothing, because it is enough to reflect on it to see in it a rather

equivocal turn- about that will not be able to be sustained for long. To be more insistent here and to stick to the most basic experience – I mean the one that is really at ground level – analytic experience, I will remind you that the Imaginary which is the one that we reconstitute in the animal model – that we reconstitute according to our own ideas of course, because it is clear that we can only reconstruct it by observation. But on the other hand we have an experience of the Imaginary, an experience which is not an easy one, but that psychoanalysis has allowed us to extend. And, to say things crudely, it would not be difficult for me to make myself understood that if I put forward – I am going to call this crudely right away, it is cruel it must be said – well then, good God, that in every sexual encounter, if there is one thing that psychoanalysis allows to put forward, it is indeed some profile or other of another presence for which the popular term of *partouze* [group sex] is not absolutely ruled out. This reference has nothing decisive in itself, because after all one could take on a serious air and say that here precisely is the stigmata of anomaly, as if the normal – in two words – could be situated somewhere. It is certain that in putting forward this term, the one that I have just pinpointed with this vulgar name, I was certainly not seeking to make vibrate in you the erotic lyre. And that if simply it has a little wake-up value, this at least gives you this dimension, not the one that may here have an echo of Eros, but simply the pure dimension of awakening. I am certainly not here to amuse you about this!

Let us now try to open up what is involved in the kinship of the universal with our affair, namely, the statement by which objects ought to be divided into two ‘alls’ of an opposite equivalence. I have just made you sense that there is no need to require the equinumericity of individuals and I would add that I believed I could sustain what I had to put forward simply from the bi-univocity of coupling. These are what would be, if it were possible, two Universals defined by the simple establishment of the possibility of a relationship of one to the other or of the other to one. The so-called relationship has absolutely nothing to do with what is commonly (76) called sexual relationships. We have a whole pile of relationships to these relationships. And as regards these relationships, we have also some little relationships. This occupies our terrestrial life...at the level at which I am placing it, it is a matter of grounding this relationship in universals: how the universal ‘Man’ is related to the universal ‘Woman’? This is the question which is imposed on us from the fact that language very precisely requires that it should be through this that it is grounded. If there were not language, well then, there would be no question either. We would not have to bring the universal into play.

This relationship, to be specific, makes the Other absolutely foreign to what might here be purely and simply secondant. It is what perhaps this evening, will force me to emphasise the O by which I mark this Other as empty, with something supplementary, an ‘H’, the ‘*Hautre*’ which would perhaps not be a bad way of letting there be understood the dimension of ‘*Hun*’ which may come into play here, or for us to notice that, for example, all the philosophical lucubrations we have did not emerge by chance from someone called Socrates who was manifestly hysterical, I mean clinically. Anyway we have the report of

his manifestations of a cataleptic order. If this person called Socrates was able to sustain a discourse which not for nothing is at the origin of the discourse of science, it is very precisely for having brought, as I define it, to the place of the semblance, the subject. And this, he was able to do very precisely because of this dimension which for him presentified the '*Hautre*' as such, namely, this hatred for his wife, to call her by her name. This person, was his wife to the point that she '*s'affemait*' to such a point, that he, it was necessary at the moment of his death for him to ask her politely to withdraw to leave to this aforesaid death all its political signification. This is simply an indicative dimension concerning the point where there lies the question that we are in the process of raising.

I said that if we can say that there is no sexual relationship it is certainly not in all innocence. It is because the experience, namely, a style of discourse which is absolutely not that of the Hysteric, but the one that I inscribed in terms of a quadripodic division as being the analytic discourse and that what emerges from this discourse, is the dimension never up to now evoked about the phallic function. Namely, it is something which means that it is not from the sexual relationship that there is characterised at least one of the two terms and very precisely the one to which there is attached here the word l'*Hun*. Not at all that its position of *Hun* is reducible to this something that one describes by the term male or in the Chinese terminology the essence of Yang. It is very precisely on the contrary because of what is after all by being recalled to emphasise the meaning, the veiled meaning because it comes to us from afar, of the term organ. It is precisely something that is only an organ, to emphasise things, as a tool. It is around the tool that analytic experience encourages us to see turning everything that is stated about the sexual relationship. This is a novelty, I mean responds to the emergence of a discourse which undoubtedly had never yet come to light, and which could not have been conceived of without the previous emergence of the discourse of science inasmuch as it is the insertion of language into the mathematical real.

(77) I said that what stigmatises this relationship as being profoundly subverted in language is very specifically the fact that there is no longer a way, as has been done nevertheless, but in a dimension that appears to me to be a mirage, it can no longer be written in terms of male essence and female essence. That it is the 'not being able to be written' what does that mean, since after all it has already been written. If I reject this ancient writing in the name of analytic discourse, you could put a much more valid objection to me. That I for my part also write it, since moreover – this is what I have shown once more on the board – it is something that claims to support what with a writing? The network of the sexual business.

Nevertheless this writing is only authorised, only takes its form from a very specific writing, namely, what allowed there to be introduced into logic the irruption precisely of what I was asked about earlier, namely, a mathematical topology. It is only starting from the existence of the formulation of this topology that we have been able, from any proposition, to imagine that we might make a propositional function. Namely,

something that is specified from the empty place that is left there and in function of which the argument is determined.

Here, I would like to point out to you that very precisely what I borrow, on occasion, from mathematical inscription, in so far as it is substituted for the first forms, I am not saying formalisations, for the forms outlined by Aristotle in a logical style. That this inscription then under the heading of argument function could, it seems, offer us a term that is easy to specify sexual opposition. What is necessary? It would be enough that the respective functions of male and of female be very precisely distinguished as the Yin and Yang. It is very precisely because the function is unique, that what is at stake is always a $\text{of } x$, that there is generated, as you know – since it is not possible, from the simple fact that you are here, that you do not have some little idea of it – that there is generated the difficulty and the complication.

$\text{of } x$ affirms that it is true – this is the meaning that the term function has – that it is true that what is referred to the exercise, to the register of the sexual act, refers to the phallic function. It is very precisely inasmuch that it is a matter of the phallic function, from whatever side we look at it, I mean from one side or from the other, that something solicits us to ask then how the two partners are different. And this is very precisely what is inscribed by the formulae that I put on the board.

If it proves that from the fact of equally dominating the two partners the phallic function does not make them different, it nonetheless remains that we should search for the difference elsewhere. And this is why these formulae, those written on the board, deserve to be questioned about the two aspects, the aspect on the left being opposed to the aspect on the right, the upper level being opposed to the lower level. What does that mean? What that means deserves to be a little (78) auscultated, as I might say, namely, to be questioned I would say first of all about what they may be able to show about a certain abuse.

It is clear that it is not because I used a formulation made up of the eruption of mathematics into logic that I use it in quite the same way. And my first remarks are going to consist in showing that in effect the way in which I make use of it is such that it is in no way expressible in terms of the logic of propositions. I mean that the way in which the variable, what is called the variable, namely, what gives way to the argument, is something that here is altogether specified by the quadruple form under which the relation of the argument to the function is posited.

To simply introduce what is at stake, I would recall to you that in the logic of propositions, we have, in the forefront – there are others – the four fundamental relations which in a way are the foundation of the logic

of propositions, which are respectively negation, conjunction, disjunction, and implication. There are others, but these are the first and all the others can be referred back to them. I am putting forward that the way in which there are written our positions of argument and of function is such that the relation described as negation by which what is posited as truth can only be denied by the word 'false', well then, very precisely this is unsustainable here. Because you can see that at whatever level it may be, I mean the lower level and the upper level, the statement of the function, namely, that it is phallic, the statement of the function is posited, either as a truth, or precisely as to be set to one side. Since after all the true truth, would be precisely what is not written, but here can only be written in the form that contests the phallic function. Namely: "It is not true that the phallic function is what grounds the sexual relationship". And in the two cases, at these two levels which are as such independent, and it is not at all a matter of making one the negation of the other, but on the contrary of one an obstacle to the other. On the contrary, what you see being divided up, is precisely a 'there exists' and 'there does not exist'. It is an 'All' on the one hand 'every x', namely, the domain of what is there defined by the phallic function. And the difference of the position of the argument in the phallic function, is very precisely that it is 'not every' woman that is inscribed in it. You clearly see that, far from one opposing the other as its negation, it is quite the contrary from their subsistence, here very precisely as negated, that **there is an x** that can be sustained in this beyond of the phallic function. And on the other side, **there is not one** for the simple reason that a woman cannot be castrated for the best of reasons. It is a certain level, it is (79) the level of what is precisely barred to us in the sexual relationship, while at the level of the phallic function, it is very precisely in that to the 'All' there is opposed the 'not all' (*Pas Toutes*) that there is a chance of a division between the left and the right of what is grounded as male and as female. Far then from the relation of negation forcing us to choose, it is on the contrary that far from having to choose we have to divide out, that the two sides are legitimately opposed one another.

I spoke, after negation, about conjunction. Conjunction, I will have no need, to settle its account on this occasion, other than to make the remark, the remark that I hope that there are enough people here who would have vaguely thumbed through a book on logic for me not to have to insist, namely, that conjunction is founded very precisely on the fact that it only takes on its value from the fact that two propositions can both be true. It is precisely what does not allow us in any way what is written on the board. Because you see clearly that, from the right to the left, there is no identity and that very precisely where it is a matter of what is posited as true, namely, of x, it is precisely at this level that Universals cannot join together, the Universal of the left hand side only opposing the other side, the right hand side, by the fact that there is no Universal that cannot be articulated, namely, that the woman with respect to the phallic function is only situated from the fact that 'not all' are subject to it. The strange thing is that inasmuch as the disjunction no longer holds up, if you recall that the arrangement only takes on a value from the fact that two propositions cannot be, it is impossible that they should be false at the same time. It is undoubtedly, we will say, the strongest or the weakest relation. It is undoubtedly the strongest in that it is the hardest one to deal with.

Because a minimum is necessary for there to be a disjunction, for the disjunction to make it valid that one proposition should be true, the other false, that naturally both are true, this adding to what I called ‘one true the other false’ – it is perhaps ‘one false the other true’. There are then at least three combinatorial cases where the disjunction holds up, the only thing that it cannot admit is that both are false.

Now we have here two functions posited as not being – I told you this earlier – the true truth, namely, those that are on top. We seem here to lay hold of something which gives the hope, namely, that at the very least we will have articulated a real disjunction. Now, notice what is written which is something that I will have occasion to articulate in a way that will make it alive, which is that it is only precisely from one side that this $\neg x$ with the sign of negation above it, namely, that it is inasmuch as the phallic does not function that there is a chance of sexual relationship, that we have posited that there must exist an x for that. Now on the other side what do we have? That there exists no other, so that one can say that the fate of what might be a style under which the differentiation of the male and the female, of the man and the woman might be sustained, in the case of the speaking being, this chance that we have that there should be the following, is that if at a level there is discord – and we will see what I mean by that in a little while – I mean at the level of the (80) Universals which are not sustained by the fact of inconsistency of one among them. What happens when we set aside the function itself? The fact is that, if on the one hand it is supposed that *there exists an x* that satisfies a denied $\neg x$, $\neg x$, on the other side we have the explicit formulation that *no x*, which I illustrated by saying that the woman, for the best of reasons, could not be castrated. But there is only precisely the statement *no x*, namely, at the level where disjunction would have the chance of being produced, on one side we only find ONE – or at the very least what I put forward in terms of *at least one* – and on the other very precisely non-existence, namely, the relationship of ONE to ZERO.

Very precisely, at the level that the sexual relationship might have a chance, not at all to be realised, but simply to be hoped for beyond the abolition, by setting it to one side, of the phallic function, we only find as a presence, can I dare say, one of the two sexes. It is precisely the fact that obviously we must bring to the experience that you are used to seeing stated in this form that the woman gives rise to from the fact that the universal for her only gives rise to the phallic function, where she participates, as you know – this is, alas, the only too common experience not to veil the structure – but she only participates in it only by wanting it

- take it away from the man
- or, good God, she requires its service from him, in the case “.....*ou pire*” – make no mistake about it – that she restores it to him. But very precisely this does not universalise it, if only from the fact which is this root of the ‘not all’ (*pas toutes*) that she conceals a different enjoyment to phallic enjoyment, enjoyment that is described as properly feminine which in no way depends on it.

If the woman is 'not all', it is because here enjoyment, for its part, is dual. And this indeed is what Tiresias revealed when he came back after having been, by the grace of Zeus, Thérèse for a time, with naturally the consequences that we know about and which were there in fact as it were displayed, as I might say, visible – make no mistake – for Oedipus to show them what was waiting for him for having precisely existed for his part as a man of this supreme possession which resulted from the dupery in which his partner maintained him about the true nature of what she was offering for his enjoyment. Or indeed – let us put it differently – for want of the fact that his partner asked him to refuse what she was offering him, this obviously manifesting, but at the level of myth, the fact that, in order to exist as a man at a level that escapes the phallic function, there was no other woman than her who for him ought precisely not to have existed.

There you are. Why this 'ought not to have', why the theory of incest? This would make it necessary for me to engage myself on this path of the 'Names of the Father', in which very precisely I said I would never again get involved. That is how it is, because as it happened I re-read, because someone asked me to do so, this first lecture of the year 1963 – you remember – at Sainte Anne. This indeed is why I came back to it, I re-read it, it is worth re-reading, it (81) is readable, it has even a certain dignity so that I will publish it if I publish anything more, which does not depend on me! Others would have to publish something with me that would encourage me. If I publish it, it will be seen with what care I mapped out then – but I have already been saying this for five years – onto a certain number of registers, the paternal metaphor in particular, the proper name. There was there everything that was necessary in order that, with the Bible, one could give a meaning to this mythical lucubration of my sayings. But I will never do it again. I will never do it again because after all I can be satisfied with formulating things at the level of the logical structure which after all has its own rights.

What I want to tell you, is that this \bar{x} , namely, that *there does not exist any other* which, at a certain level, the one at which there would be a chance that there might be a sexual relationship, that this *heteros* as absent, is not at all necessarily the privilege of the feminine sex. It is simply the indication of what is in my graph – I am saying that because it had its little destiny – of what I wrote in terms of the signifier of \emptyset . That means: the Other, from wherever one takes it, the Other is absent, from the moment that what is at stake is the sexual relationship.

Naturally at the level of what functions, namely, the phallic function, there is simply this discord that I have just recalled. Namely, that on one side and the other, here for the moment, we are not in the same position. Namely, that on one side we have the Universal founded on a necessary relationship to the phallic function and on the other side a contingent relationship because the woman is 'not all'.

I am underlining then that at the upper level of the relationship founded on the disappearance, the vanishing of the existence of one of the partners which leaves empty the place for the inscription of the word, is not at that level the privilege of either side. Only in order for there to be a grounding of sex, as they say, they must be two. Zero and One, undoubtedly that gives two, that gives two on the symbolic plane, namely, inasmuch as we agree that existence is rooted in the symbol. This is what defines the speaking being.

Assuredly he is something, perhaps indeed... who is not what he is. Only this being is absolutely ungraspable. He is all the more ungraspable in that he is forced, to support himself, to go by way of the symbol. It is clear that a being when he comes to the point of being no more than the symbol, is precisely this being without being, in which, by the simple fact that you speak, you all participate. But on the contrary it is quite certain that what is supported, is existence, and inasmuch as to exist is not to be, namely, that it is to depend on the other. This indeed is where you are, all from some angle or other, by existing, but as regards what concerns your being, you are not all that much at ease! Otherwise you would not be seeking out an assurance of it with so many psychoanalytic efforts.

There is obviously here something altogether original in the first emergence of logic. In the first emergence of logic, there is (82) something quite striking, which is the difficulty, the difficulty and the oscillation that Aristotle shows about the status of the particular proposition. These are difficulties that have been underlined elsewhere, that I did not discover. And for those who would like to refer to them, I would advise them to read number 10 of the *Cahiers pour l'analyse* where there is a first article by someone called Jacques Brunswig which is excellent on this. They will see there being perfectly highlighted the difficulty that Aristotle had with the particular. It is because assuredly he sees that existence can in no way be established except outside the Universal. This indeed is why he situates existence at the level of the Particular, and the Particular is in no way sufficient to sustain it, even though it gives the illusion of it thanks to the use of the word 'some'.

It is clear that on the contrary what results from a formalisation described as quantors – described as quantors by reason of a trace left, in philosophical history, by the fact that someone called Apulius who was a novelist of not very good taste and certainly an unbridled mystic and who was called Apulius, as I told you, he wrote *The golden ass* – it is this Apulius who one day introduced the fact that in Aristotle what concerned the more and the some was of the order of quantity. It is nothing of the kind. It is on the contrary simply two different styles of what I could call, if you will allow me this which is a little improvised, the incarnation of the symbol. Namely, that the passage into everyday life, that there are 'all's and 'some's in every tongue. This indeed assuredly forces us to posit that language ought all the same to have a common root and that since tongues are very profoundly different in their structure, it must indeed be that it is in relationship to something that is not language.

Naturally, one can understand here that people find things a little tricky and that, that what they sense as being this beyond of language can only be mathematics, people imagine, because it is number, that what is at stake is quantity. But perhaps precisely, but perhaps precisely is it not properly speaking number in its whole reality to which language gives access, but simply by being able to lay hold of the Zero and the One. It would seem to be along this path that the entry to the Real is made, this Real which alone is able to be the beyond of language, namely, the only domain where there can be formulated a symbolic impossibility.

This fact that, from the relationship that for its part is accessible to language, accessible to language if it is grounded very precisely on the sexual non-relationship, that it is unable then to confront the Zero and the One, this will find, will easily guarantee its reflection in the elaboration by Frege of his logical genesis of numbers.

As I told you, or at least indicated, what creates a difficulty in this logical genesis, namely, precisely the gap, that I underlined for you in the mathematical triangle, between this Zero and this One, a gap that reduplicates their opposition in terms of confrontation. That already what may intervene is only there from the fact that we have here the essence of the first couple, that this can only be a third and that the gap as such is still left of the two. This is something that is essential (83) to recall by reason of something that is much more dangerous to allow subsist in analysis than the mythical adventures of Oedipus, which are not of any difficulty in themselves, inasmuch as they admirably structure the necessity that there should be somewhere *at least One* who transcends what is involved in the grip of the phallic function. The myth of the primitive father means nothing else. This is very adequately expressed in it for us to be able to make an easy use of it, besides the fact that we find it confirmed by the logical structuring which I am reminding you of by what is written on the board.

On the other hand, assuredly there is nothing more dangerous than the confusions about what is involved in the One. The One, as you know, is frequently evoked by Freud as signifying what is involved in the essence of Eros which is supposed to be made up precisely of the fusion, namely, that libido is supposed to be this sort of essence which from the two, would tend to make a one and which, good God, in accordance with an old myth which assuredly valid from a mystical point of view, is supposed to be what one of the fundamental tensions of the world depends on. Namely, to only make one, this myth which is really something that can only function on the horizon of a delusion and which properly speaking has nothing to do about anything whatsoever that we encounter in our experience. If there is something that is quite patent in the relationship between the sexes and that analysis does not simply articulate but is designed to bring into play in every sense, and if there is indeed something which creates a difficulty in the relationship, it is very precisely the relationships between men and women and that there is nothing in it that resembles something or other that is spontaneous, precisely outside this horizon that I spoke about earlier, as being in

the last resort grounded on some animal myth or other and that in no way does Eros have a tendency to the One. Far from it!

It is in this measure, it is in this function that every precise articulation of what is involved at the two levels, from the fact that it is only in discord that there is grounded the opposition between the sexes inasmuch as they can in no way be established from a Universal. That at the level of existence, on the contrary, it is very precisely in an opposition that consists in the cancellation, the emptying out of one of the functions as being that of the other, that the possibility of the articulation of language conceals, this is what appears to me what is essentially to be highlighted.

Note that earlier, having spoken to you successively about negation, about conjunction and disjunction, I did not push to the limit what was involved in implication. It is clear that here again implication, for its part, can only function between the two levels, that of the phallic function and that which sets it aside. Now, nothing of what is involved in disjunction, at the lower level, at the level of the insufficiency of the universal specification, nothing implies for all that, nothing requires that it should be *if and only if*, the syncope of existence that is produced at the upper level, is effectively produced, that the discord at the lower level is required, and very precisely reciprocally.

(84) On the other hand, what we see, is once more there functioning in a way that is distinct but separated, the relation of the upper level to the lower level. The requirement that there exists ‘at-least-one-man’ which is the one that seems to be expressed at the level of this feminine that is specified as being a ‘not all’, a duality, the only point at which duality has a chance of being represented, there is only here a requisite that I might describe as gratuitous. Nothing requires this ‘at-least-one’, except the unique chance – and again it is necessary that it should be played out – of the fact that something functions on the other side, but as an ideal point, as a possibility for all men to reach it by what? By identification. There is here only a logical necessity that is only required at the level of the wager.

But note on the other hand what results from it as regards the barred Universal – and this is why this ‘at-least-one’ by which the Name of the Father, the name of the mythical Father, is supported, is indispensable. Here I am bringing forward a glimpse which is the one that is lacking to the function, to the notion of species and of class. It is in this sense that it is not by chance that this whole dialectic was missed out in the Aristotelian forms.

Where finally does there function this of x, this ‘there-exists-at-least-one’ who is not the slave of the phallic function? It is only from a requisite, I would say of a type that is despairing from the point of view of something that is not even supported by a universal definition. But on the contrary note that with regard to the Universal marked of x. of x, every male is a slave of the phallic function. What is meant then

by the 'at least one' as functioning to escape from it? I would say that it is the exception. It is indeed the occasion when what is said, without knowing what it says, the proverb that 'the exception confirms the rule', is there to support us. It is curious that it is only with the analytic discourse that a Universal can find, in the existence of the exception, its true foundation which ensures that undoubtedly we can in any case distinguish the Universal thus grounded from any use rendered commonplace by the philosophical tradition of the aforesaid Universal. But there is a singular thing that I rediscover by enquiring, and because as a result of an old formation, I am not completely ignorant of Chinese, I asked one of my dear friends to remind me of something that obviously I had only more or less preserved as a trace and it was necessary to have it confirmed for me by someone whose maternal tongue it is. It is assuredly very strange that, in Chinese, the denomination of 'all men' if I can express myself in this way, that what is at stake is the articulation of TO that I am not going to write for you on the board because I am tired, or the older articulation which is pronounced as Tchia (?). Anyway if you find that amusing I am going all the same to write it for you.

Can you imagine that one can say for example: all men eat, well then that is said? and? 'Mei' insists on the fact that it is (85) indeed there, and if you have any doubt about it, the numeral 'Go' shows you clearly that they are counted. But this does not give 'all', so then one adds on '(?)' which means without exception.

I could of course quote for you, other things, I could tell you that 'All the soldiers perished', they are all dead, in Chinese they say: 'Soldiers without exception caput'.

The 'all' that we see being displayed for us from the inside and that only finds its limit in inclusion is taken up into larger and larger sets. In the Chinese tongue one never says '?' nor '?' except in thinking of the totality that is at stake as content.

You may say to me 'without exception'...but, of course. What we for our part discover in what I articulate for you as a relation here of unique existence with respect to the status of the universal, takes on the figure of an exception. But moreover is this idea not simply the correlate of what I called earlier 'the void of the other'.

The way in which we have made progress in the logic of classes, is that we have created the logic of sets. The difference between the class and the set, is that when the class is empty, there is no longer a class, but that when the set is empty, there is still this element of the empty set. This indeed is the reason why, once more, mathematics gives rise to a progress in logic.

And this is where we can, because we are continuing to talk, but it is soon going to finish, I assure you, it is to see here then where there can be taken up again the unilaterality of the existential function for what is involved in the Other, of the other partner in so far as it is 'without exception'. This 'without exception', that is indicated by the non-existence of the x on the right hand part of the board. Namely, that there is no exception and that this is something that has no parallel, symmetry, with the requirement that I called earlier 'despairing' of the 'at least one'. It is another requirement which is based on the fact that when all is said and done the masculine Universal can be based on the assurance that there does not exist any woman who has been castrated, and this for reasons that appear obvious to him. Only this does not have in fact – as you know – any more import for reason because it is a quite gratuitous assurance. Namely, that what I recalled earlier about the behaviour of the woman sufficiently shows that her relation to the phallic function is quite active. Only here, as earlier, if the supposition grounded, in a way, on the assurance that it is indeed a matter of an impossible – which is the most complete form of the real – this does not shake for (86) all that what I might call the fragility of the conjecture. Because in any case the woman is not any more assured of it in her universal essence, for the simple reason of the following: the fact is that the contrary of the limit, namely, that there is none, that there is no exception. The fact that there is no exception does not any more assure the Universal that is already so badly established by reason of the fact that it is discordant, does not assure anymore the Universal of the woman. The 'without exception', far from giving to some 'All' a consistency, naturally gives still less to what is defined as 'not all', as essentially dual.

There you are! I hope that this remains for you as a necessary hinge to what we will attempt later in a steep climb, if assuredly we are carried along the path where there should be severely questioned the irruption of this strangest thing, namely, the function of the One. People ask a lot of things about what is involved in animal mentality which is only of use to us here, after all, as a mirror reference, a mirror before which, as before all mirrors, one purely and simply denies.

There is something that one could ask oneself: for the animal, is there a One?

The exorbitant aspect of this emergence of this One, if what we will be lead elsewhere to open up and this indeed is the reason that, for a long time I have invited you to re-read, before I tackle it, Plato's *Parmenides*.

To articulate them – I mean as such, this is a parenthesis – I did not write it – to articulate them in each of these two horizons is then – this I wrote – to proceed according to these horizons themselves, since the mention of their beyond of the horizon – is only sustained by their position – when this starts to bore you, tell me, and I will tell you the things that I have to tell you this evening – by their position, I write, in a discourse of fact.

(90) For the analytic discourse, this ‘of fact’ implicates me sufficiently in these effects for it to be said that they are due to me, that they are designated by my name.

L’amur, what I designated here as such, reverberates it differently by the means of what are called precisely called the edge, the means of the edge (*bord*), of this *bord-homme*. The *bord-homme*, inspired me, I wrote that: “*Brrom brrom – ouap-ouap*”. This was the discovery of someone who in the past gave me children. It is an indication about the voice, *l’a-voix*, which, as everyone knows barks (*aboie*), and the look (*l’a-regard*) also which does not *aregarde* so closely. And the trick (*astuce*) that makes a trick. And then *l’amerde* also which from time to time made a graffito with rather insulting intentions, in newspaper pages about my name. Anyway that’s life. As someone who is amusing himself for the moment says, it’s fun! In short, it is true.

These effects have nothing to do with the dimension that can be measured from what I have done, namely, that it is a discourse that is not properly speaking my own that I give a necessary dimension to. It concerns the analytic discourse which, since it is not yet – and with good reason – properly constituted, finds itself needing some opening up which is what I spend myself on, starting from what? Simply from this fact that my position is determined by it.

Good. So now, let us talk about this discourse and about the fact that the position as such of the signifier is essential in it.

I would like all the same, given the audience that you constitute, to make one remark. It is that this position of the signifier is designated from an experience that it is within the reach of any one of you to have for you to notice what is at stake and how essential it is.

When you know a tongue imperfectly and when you read a text, well then, you understand, you still understand. That ought to make you a little bit aware. You understand in the sense that beforehand you know what is said in it.

Naturally, the result is that the text may contradict itself. When you read for example a text about set theory, you are given an explanation about what constitutes the infinite set of whole numbers. On the next

line, you are told something that you understand, because you continue to read: “You must not believe that just because it goes on forever that it is infinite” since it has just been explained to you that this is what it is, you give a start. But when you look closely at it you find the term that designates what is at stake is ‘deem’[?], namely, that it is not about that that you ought to make a judgement. Because they know that this series of whole numbers do not stop, that it is infinite, it is not because it is indefinite. So you see that it is because, either you have skipped over ‘deem’ or that you are not familiar enough with English, that (91) you have understood too quickly. Namely, that you have skipped over this essential element that a signifier makes possible, this change of level thanks to which you have for a moment the feeling of a contradiction.

You should never skip over a signifier. It is in the measure that the signifier does not bring you to a halt that you understand. Now to understand, is always to be understood oneself in the effects of the discourse, which discourse as such organises the effects of the knowledge that are already precipitated by the simple formalism of the signifier. What psychoanalysis teaches us, is that every naive knowledge – this is written and that is why I am reading it for you – is associated with a veiling of enjoyment which is realised in it and poses the question of what is betrayed in it about the limits of power, namely, what? About the outline that is imposed on enjoyment.

Once we speak, it is a fact that we suppose something about what is spoken, this something that we imagine is supposed in advance, even though it is sure that we only ever suppose it subsequently.

It is simply to the fact of speaking that there is referred, in the present state of our knowledge that it can be perceived that what speaks, anything whatsoever, is what enjoys itself as a body, what enjoys a body that lives it out as what I already stated about the ‘*tu able*’, namely, as *tutoyable*, about a body that *tutoies* and a body about which it says ‘*tue-toie*’ along the same line.

What is psychoanalysis? It is the mapping out of what is understood as obscure, of what is obscured in understanding, because of a signifier which marked a point of the body. Psychoanalysis, is what reproduces – you are going to find yourselves on an ordinary track – a production of neurosis. On this everyone is agreed. There is no psychoanalyst who has not seen it. This neurosis that is attributed not without reason to the action of parents can only be reached in the whole measure that the action of the parents is articulated precisely – this is the term with which I began the third line - from the position of the psychoanalyst. It is in the measure that it converges towards a signifier that emerges from it that neurosis is going to be ordered in accordance with the discourse whose effects have produced the subject. Every traumatic parent is in short in the same position as the psychoanalyst. The difference, is that the psychoanalyst, from his position, reproduces the neurosis and the traumatic parent for his part produces it innocently.

What is at stake is to reproduce this signifier from what was its efflorescence. The operation of the analytic discourse is in short to create a model of the neurosis. Why? In the measure in which it has removed a quantity of enjoyment. Enjoyment requires in effect the privilege: there are no two ways to construct it for everyone. Any reduplication kills it. It only survives because of the fact that its repetition is useless, namely, always the same. It is the introduction of the model that this useless repetition completes. A completed repetition dissolves it because of the fact that it is a simplified repetition.

(92) It is always, of course, about the signifier that I am talking when I talk about “*yadl'un*” to stretch this *dl'un* to the whole measure of its empire, because it is assuredly the master signifier. It must be approached, where its talents have been left, in order to put it, for its part, up against it.

This is what makes the point that I have arrived at this year useful as an incidence, having no other choice but that...*ou pire*. This mathematical reference so called because it is of the order where the *matheme* reigns, namely, what produces a knowledge which even if it is only produced, is linked to the norms of surplus enjoying, namely, of what is measurable. A *matheme* is what is properly and alone teaches: all that is taught is the One. But even then you have to know what is at stake. And that is why this year I am questioning it.

I will not continue my reading any longer, which I read, I think, slowly enough and which is a little difficult, in order that, some questions may arise for you about each one of the terms that I clearly spelled out. And that is why now I am going to talk more freely to you. There was someone, the other day, who coming out from the last thing at the Pantheon – he is perhaps here again – came to question me on the subject of whether I believed in freedom, I told him that he was very funny. And then since I am still rather tired, I broke away from him. But this does not mean that I would not be ready, on this point, to make some personal confidences to him. It is a fact that I rarely speak about it. So that this question comes from his initiative. I would not regret knowing why he asked me it.

So what I would like then to say more freely, is that in making an allusion in this text to the way by which I find myself in the position of opening up this analytic discourse it is quite obviously inasmuch as I consider it as constituting, at least potentially, this sort of structure that I designate by the term of discourse. Namely, that by which, by the pure and simple effect of language, a social bond occurs. People noticed that without for all that needing psychoanalysis. It is even what is usually called ideology.

The way in which a discourse is organised so that it gives rise to a social bond inversely involves that everything that is articulated in it is organised from its effects. This indeed is how I understand what I articulate for you about the discourse of psychoanalysis: the fact is if there were not a psychoanalytic

practice, nothing of what I could articulate about it would have the effects that I expect from it. I did not say 'would not have a meaning'. What is proper to meaning, is to be always confusing, namely, to make the bridge, to believe it is making a bridge between one discourse, in so far as it gives rise to a social bond with what from a different order comes from a different discourse.

The annoying thing, is that when you proceed, as I have just said in this writing 'that it is a matter of proceeding', namely, to envisage (93) from a discourse what plays the function of the One in it, what do I do from time to time? If you will allow me this neologism what I do is '*enologie*'. With what I articulate, anyone can construct an ontology with what it involves, beyond precisely these two horizons that I marked as being defined as the horizons of the signifier.

In the University discourse you can set about taking up what creates a model from my construction, by supposing in it an arbitrary point, some essence or other would become for some reason or other the supreme value. It is quite particularly advantageous to what is proposed to the University discourse in which what is at stake, is, according to the diagram that I sketched out of it, to put S_2 where? At the place of the semblance.

Before a signifier is really put in its place, namely, precisely mapped out from the ideology for which it is produced, it always has effects of circulation. Meaning precedes, in its effects, the recognition of its place, the place that it establishes.

If the University discourse is defined by the fact that in it knowledge is put in the position of the semblance, this can be monitored, this is confirmed by the very nature of teaching in which you see what? A false ordering of what could be displayed, as I might say, throughout the centuries, in terms of different ontologies. Its high point, its culmination is in what is gloriously called 'the history of philosophy', as if philosophy did not have - and it is easily simply - its source in the adventures and misadventures of the discourse of the Master, that must be renewed from time to time. What causes the variability of philosophy is, as is sufficiently affirmed from the points from which precisely the notion of ideology emerged, as if then the cause in question did not lie elsewhere. But it is difficult that every process of articulation of a discourse, especially if it has not yet been mapped out provides a pretext for a certain number of premature blisters of new beings.

I know well that all of this is not easy and that I must all the same - and this in the good tradition of what I am doing here - that I should tell you more amusing things.

So then let us talk about the analyst and love.

Love, in analysis – and of course this comes from the position of the analyst – love, we speak about. With all due respect, it is not spoken about any more than elsewhere, since after all, that is what is love is used for. It is not the most marvellous of things. But anyway in our time people speak a lot about it. It is even prodigious, for some time, that people continue to speak about it (94) because when all is said and done for some time people might have noticed that it does not succeed any better for all that. It is clear then that it is in speaking that one makes love. So then the analyst, what is his role in all of this? Can an analysis really make a love successful? I have to tell you, for my own part, that I don't know any example of it. And nevertheless I tried! For me it was of course, because I did not come down in the last shower, a wager. I hope that the person in question is not here, I am almost sure! I took someone, thank God, that I knew beforehand needed a psychoanalysis, but on the basis of this demand – you can see the sort of rubbish I get into to verify my affirmations! – on the basis of the fact that he had at all costs to make a *conjugo* with the woman who had a place in his heart. Naturally of course it failed, thank God, in the shortest possible time.

Let us cut this short because after all these are only anecdotes. It is a different matter. Some day when I am in form and when I will take the risk of carrying on like La Bruyère I will deal with the question of the relationships of love with the semblance. We are not here this evening to delay on these trifles!

What is at stake is something that I want to come back to because it seemed to me to have opened up the matter. It is the relationship of all these things that I am in the process of restating, that I am recalling to you with a light touch, about the truths of experience, namely, the function of sex in psychoanalysis.

I think all the same that I have opened even the deafest ears on this point by the statement of the fact which deserves to be commented on that there is no sexual relationship. Naturally, this is worthwhile articulating. Why should a psychoanalyst imagine that the foundation to which he refers is sex?

There is not the slightest doubt that sex is real. And its very structure, is the dual, the number 'two'. Whatever people may think, there are only two: men, women, they say and people persist in adding the Auvergnians! That is an error. At the level of the real, there are no Auvergnians. What is at stake when we are dealing with sex, is the other, the other sex, even when one prefers the same one. It is not because I said earlier that as regards what is successful in a love, the help of psychoanalysis is precarious, that you should think that psychoanalyst doesn't give a damn about it, if I can express myself in this way. That the partner in question is of the other sex and that what is at stake, is something that has a relationship with his enjoyment – I am talking about the other, of the third, in connection with whom there is stated this '*parlage*' about love – the psychoanalyst cannot be indifferent to it, because the one who is not there, for him, it is indeed that, the real.

This enjoyment for its part, the one that is not 'in analysis', if you will allow me to express myself in this way, plays the function for him of the real. What he has on the other hand in analysis, namely, the subject, he takes for what he is, namely, as an effect of (95) discourse. I would ask you to note in passing that he does not subjectivise him. That does not mean that all of this, are just his own little ideas, but as subject he is determined by a discourse from which he has derived for a long time and this is what is analysable.

The analyst, I want to specify is in no way nominalist. He does not think about the representations of his subject, but he has to intervene in his discourse, by procuring for him an extra signifier. This is what is called interpretation. As regard what is not within his scope, namely, what is in question, namely, the enjoyment of the one who is not there, in analysis, he takes it for what it is, namely, assuredly as being of the order of the real, because he can do nothing about it.

There is something striking, which is that sex as real, I mean dual, I mean that there are two of them, no one ever, even Bishop Berkeley dared to state that it was a little idea that everyone had in his head, that it was a representation. And it is very instructive that throughout the whole history of philosophy nobody ever thought of stretching idealism that far.

What I have just defined for you in this connection, is the fact that especially for some time, we have seen what was involved in sex by means of a microscope. I am not talking about sexual organs, I am talking about gametes; you should take into account that all of that was lacking until Leuwenhoek and Swammerdam. As regards what is involved in sex people were reduced to thinking that sex was everywhere: ... ? nature, *nous*, the whole bag of tricks, all of that was sex. And female vultures made love with the wind!....

The fact that we know in a certain way that sex is found there, in two little cells which are not alike, from that and under the pretext that as regards sex, of course, well before people knew that there were two types of gametes, in the name of that, the psychoanalyst believes that there is a sexual relationship.

We have seen psychoanalysts, in the literature, in a domain that one can say is not very filtrated, find in the intrusion of the male gamete, of the *spermato* as they say, and again the *zoide* in the envelope of the ovule find there the model of some redoubtable break-in. As if there were the slightest relationship between this reference which does not have the slightest relationship, except in the crudest metaphor, with what is involved in copulation. As if there could be there anything whatsoever that is referred to what is brought into play in the relationships that are described as love, namely, as I said at the very beginning, a lot of words.

This indeed is the whole question. And it is indeed here that the evolution of the forms of discourse is much more indicative for us in what is at stake – it is from the effects of discourse – much more indicative than any reference to what totally, even though it is sure (96) that there are two sexes, to what remains totally in suspense. Namely, of whether what this discourse is capable of articulating includes, yes or no, the sexual relationship.

This is what it is worthwhile putting in question. The little things that I already wrote on the board, namely: [These formulae show some modifications]

the opposition of a x and of a non- x , of a ‘there exists’ and of ‘there does not exist’, at the same level, that of ‘it is not true that x ’ and on the other hand ‘every x is in conformity with the function of x ’ and of this ‘not all’ – which is a new formula ‘not all’ – and nothing more – ‘is able’- in the right hand column – ‘to satisfy the function described as phallic’. It is around this, as I will try to explain in the seminars that follow, namely, elsewhere, it is this, namely, in a series of gaps which are found at every point to presume in function of these terms, namely, here, here and here the four points stated above. But different gaps and not always the same, this is what deserves to be highlighted in order to give its status to what is involved, at the level of the subject, about the sexual relationship.

This sufficiently shows us the point to which in its very grammar language traces out the effects described as those of the subject. This sufficiently overlaps something that was only discovered first of all from logic. So that we are able from now on to attach ourselves, as I have done since some of the appeals that I am making here, to listening to a signifier in order for me to attempt to give it a meaning. Because it is the only case – and with good reason – that this term ‘meaning’ is justified in stating it: “There is something of the One”.

Because there is something which ought all the same to appear to you, which is if there is no relationship, the fact is that in the two each remains one. The unbelievable thing, is that the psychoanalysts whose mythology has been denounced with more or less reason, it is funny that it is precisely the one people have failed to expose that is most within hand’s reach.

When the gametes join together, what results is not the fusion of two. Before that can come about, you need a hell of a lot to be cleared out: that is called meiosis. And the new one is constructed from what we can very correctly call – why not, I don’t want to go too far, I will not say the debris of each one of them, but anyway each of them who have left a certain amount of debris.

To find – and my God, from the pen of Freud – the idea that Eros is grounded (*se fonde*) – in the subjunctive: you see the equivocation, but I do not see why I should not make use of the French tongue, (97) between foundation and fusion – that Eros should found itself by making one out of two. This is obviously a strange idea from which of course there proceeds this absolutely extravagant idea incarnate in the preaching which nevertheless our dear Freud rejects with his whole being. He reveals to us in the clearest fashion in *The future of an illusion*, and in still others things again, in many other places in *Civilisation and its discontents*, his repugnance for this idea of universal love. And nevertheless, the foundational force of life, of the life instinct, as he puts it, is supposed to be entirely in this Eros which is supposed to be a principle of union.

It is not simply for didactic reasons that I am going to put forward before you something on the subject of the One which may be said to combat this gross mythology, besides the fact that it will perhaps allow us not simply to exorcise Eros – I mean the Eros of Freudian doctrine – but our darling Thanatos also with which we have been pissed off for long enough.

And it is no harm in this respect, to make use of something which not by chance was brought to light some time ago. I already introduced the last time, a consideration about what can be referred to as set theory. Naturally, do not rush into it like that! Why not also, because one can also have a little laugh at it: men and women are also a set. That does not prevent each of them from being on their own side.

It is a matter of knowing whether, as regards what is involved in the One of which there is question, we might not be able to draw some light from the set, a set of course that was never designed for that.

So then since here I am sending up trial balloons, I am simply proposing to myself to try to see with you what within this may serve, I would not say as an illustration, what is at stake is something quite different. What is at stake is what the signifier has to do with the One. Because, of course, the One did not simply emerge yesterday. It even arose all the same in connection with two things that are quite different: in connection with a certain use of measuring instruments and at the same time something that was absolutely unrelated to it, namely, the function of the individual.

The individual, is Aristotle. Aristotle was very struck by these beings that were always reproduced in the same way. This had already struck somebody else, someone called Plato, and in truth, I think it was because he had nothing better to offer us to give us the idea of form that he came to the point of stating that the form is real: he had to illustrate, as best he could, his idea of the idea. The other, of course, points out that all the same, form is very pretty, but that what it is distinguished by is the fact that it is simply what we recognise in a certain number of individuals that resemble one another.

We have gone down different metaphysical slopes. We are not in any way interested about the way in which the One is illustrated, whether it is from the individual or whether it is from a certain (98) practical use of geometry, whatever perfecting you may be able to add to the aforesaid geometry by the consideration of proportions, of the difference that is manifested between the height of a post and that of its shadow. For a long time we have noticed that the One poses other problems, and this for the simple fact that mathematics has made a little progress. I am not going to go back on what I stated the last time, namely, differential calculus, trigonometric series and, in a general fashion, the conception of the number as defined by a sequence. What appears very clearly, is that the question is posed here quite differently as regards what is involved in the One, because a sequence is characterised by the fact that it is set up as the sequence of whole numbers. It is a matter of accounting for what a whole number is.

I am not of course going to state set theory for you. I simply want to highlight the point that we had to wait for a long time, the end of the last century, it is only for a little more than a hundred years that people have attempted to account for the function of the One. It is remarkable that the set is defined in such a way that the first aspect in which it appears should be that of the empty set and that on the other hand this constitutes a set, namely, that in which we say that the empty set is the only element: this gives you a set with **one** element.

This is where we are starting from and, the last time – I am saying it for those who weren't there at the Pantheon, where I began to approach this slippery subject – that the foundation of the One by this very fact proves to be very properly constituted from the place of One lack (*d'Un manque*)

I illustrated it crudely from the pedagogical use in which what is at stake is to make the aforesaid set theory understood. To make you sense that the aforesaid set theory has no other direct object than to make it appear how there can be generated the proper notion of the cardinal number. Through bi-univocal correspondence – I illustrated it the last time – it is at the moment where there lacks, in two comparative series, a partner, that the notion of the One emerges: there is **one** lacking.

Everything that is said about the cardinal number emerges from the fact that if the series of numbers always necessarily implies one, and a single successor, if inasmuch as it is in the cardinal that there is realised from the order of number what is at stake, it is properly in the cardinal series *qua* beginning at zero, that it goes as far as the number that immediately precedes the successor.

In stating it to you like this in an improvised fashion in my statement I made a mistake: that for example of speaking about a series as if it were already ordered. Take away this something that I did not affirm, but simply that each number corresponds cardinally to the cardinal that precedes it while adding to it the empty set.

(99) The important thing of what I would like to make you sense this evening, is that if the One emerges as an effect of lack, the consideration of sets lends itself to something which, I believe, is worthwhile being mentioned and that I would like to highlight, from the reference to the fact that set theory has allowed there to be distinguished in the order of what is involved in the set, two types: the finite set and to admit the infinite set.

In this statement, what characterises the infinite set is properly speaking to be posited as equivalent to one or other of its subsets. But as Galileo had already remarked, and he did not have to wait for Cantor, the series of all squares is a bi-univocal correspondence with each one of the whole numbers. There is in effect no reason to ever consider that one of these squares would be too large to be in the series of whole numbers. This is what constitutes the infinite set as a result of which we say that it can be reflexive. On the contrary, as regards what is involved in the finite set it is said, as being its major property, that it is open to being exercised in properly mathematical reasoning, namely, in the reasoning that is used for what is called induction. Induction is acceptable when a set is finite.

What I would like to point out to you, is that in set theory, there is a point that, for my part, I consider as problematic. It is that which relates to what is called the non-numerability of the parts – by that you should understand subsets – as they can be defined starting from a set.

It is very easy, if you start from the following, to take the cardinal number, you have a set that is composed for example of six elements. If you describe as subset the grasping in a set of each one of these five elements, then groups that are formed from two of these elements in five, it is easier for you to calculate how many subsets this will give you. There are very exactly ten. Then you take them in threes: there will still be ten. Then you take them in fours: there will be five of them. And you would arrive at the end to the set in so far as there is only one of them present here, which includes five elements. To which it is necessary to add the empty set which, in any case, without being an element of the set, is manifest as one of its parts. Because the parts are not an element. What is ordered from them, is written as follows:

1	1
4	5
6	10
4	10
1	5

What does it turn out that we have defined as a part of the set?

The empty set is there, the five elements $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta\varepsilon$, for example, are there.

(100) What comes subsequently, is $\alpha\beta$, $\alpha\gamma$, $\alpha\delta$, $\alpha\varepsilon$. You can do the same thing starting from β , then starting from ... etc. You will see that there are ten of them.

Subsequently here you have $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ with a lack of ε . And you can, by having each one of the letters missing, obtain the necessary number of five for the regrouping as parts of the elements. As a result of which, you will find something certain – it would be enough for me to complete this statement of a set at cardinal 5 that you could subsequently put to one side, which is that referred to a set of four elements. In other words, imagine it from a tetrad; you see that you have a tetrad, that you have six lines, that you have four vertices, that you have four faces, and that you also have the empty set (in the left-hand column).

The remark that I am making has something that results from it. I only alluded to the other case to show that in the two cases, the sum of the parts is equal to 2 to the power of n. N being precisely the cardinal number of the elements of the set. We are not dealing here, in any way whatsoever, with anything that shakes set theory. What is stated in this connection about numerability has all its applications, for example, in the remark that nothing changes in the category of the infinite of a set if there is withdrawn from it a series that is in some way numerable.

Nevertheless the contribution which is made of non-numerable in the fact that undoubtedly, that in any case one cannot apply to a set, a finite set, the sum of its parts defined as they have just been, is it – I am asking the question – the best way to introduce the non-numerability of an infinite set?

What is at stake is a didactic introduction. I dispute it from the moment when the property of reflexivity as applied to the infinite set and which includes it lacking the inductivity characteristic of finite sets, allows nevertheless there to be written – as I have been able to see in some places – that the non-numerability of the parts of the finite set are supposed to emerge – I underline it – through the induction of the fact that these parts would be written as the infinite set of whole numbers is written: 2 to the power of alpha prime.

I dispute this, and how do I set about disputing it? I dispute it starting from the fact that there is some artifice, when what is at stake are the parts of the set, taking them in their mounting order whose addition gives in effect 2 to the power of n.

But it is clear that if you have on the one side a, b, c, d, e, - to Frenchify the Greek letters that I wrote on the board, I had a reason for that – and if you contribute to it what corresponds to them a, b, c, d corresponding to e; a, b, c, d, e corresponding to c, you see that the number of parts, if you substitute here a partition,

culminates at a formula that is very different, and you are going to see why it is of interest to me: it is because the number, is two to the power of n minus one.

(101) Here I can only, given the time and then the fact that, after all, all of this does not interest absolutely everyone here, but I would like on this point, I would urge, I have to say as I usually say, in this desperate way – I encourage the grammarians from time to time to give me a little hint, they always send me one, it is always the bad ones – I urged a large number of mathematicians already to reply to me about this and, in truth, they have turned a deaf ear because I have to say to you that they stick to this numerable nature of the parts of the set, like a tick in a dog's hide. Nevertheless I am proposing something which has its little interest, I am going here directly to a goal that is going to leave to one side a point on which I would like to finish afterwards, but I am going straight to one that is of interest. Its interest is the following, the fact is that in substituting for the notion of the parts that of partition, it is necessary in the same way, that we have admitted that the parts of the infinite set, must be two the power of alpha zero. Namely, the smallest of the transfinite, the one that constitutes through the set, the cardinal of the set of whole numbers, instead of having: two to the power of alpha zero, we have: two to the power of alpha zero minus one.

I suspect that this may make anyone at all sense what is exaggerated in the supposition of the bi-partition of an infinite set. If, as the formula itself carries the trace of, what we call the set of parts culminates at a formula that contains the number 2 raised to the power of the parts culminates at a formula which is quite acceptable, and especially from the moment that we put in question induction when we are dealing with the infinite set, how can it be that we should accept a formula that so clearly manifests that what is at stake is not the parts of the set but its partition.

I would add something which has its own interest. I know that alpha to the power of zero, of course, is only an index, an index which is not taken by chance, and an index forged to designate – because there are a whole series of others admitted in principle, the entire series of whole numbers can serve as an index for what is involved in the set inasmuch as it grounds the transfinite. Nevertheless, from the moment that what is at stake, is the function of the power, and that it seems that we have sufficiently abused induction in allowing ourselves to find in it the test for non-numerability of the parts of the infinite set, can it be, that by looking closely at it we might find not here, at this zero, a different function, the one that it has in the exponential power. Namely, that, whatever number it may be, the exponent (*exposant*) zero as regards what is involved in the power, is equal to One, whatever the number may be. I underline: any number whatsoever to the power of one is itself. But a number to the power of zero, is always one, for the very simply reason that a number to the power of minus one, is its inverse. So then it is the one here that serves as a pivotal element.

From this moment on, the partition of the transfinite set culminates at the following. Namely, that if we make aleph zero equal on this occasion to one, we have as regards what is involved in the partition of the set, something that appears in effect to be quite acceptable. Namely, that the succession of whole numbers is supported by nothing other than by the reiteration of the One. It is by reproducing itself that the One that has emerged from the empty set constitutes (102) what I put forward the last time as being, in principle, manifested in Pascal's triangle, what is involved at the level of the cardinal of monads. And that behind there is supported what I called – I am saying it for those who are deaf who have questioned themselves about what I said – the '*nade*'. Namely, the One inasmuch as it emerges from the empty set and is the reiteration of lack.

I am underlining very specifically the fact that the One that is at stake, is very properly what set theory is only substituted for as reiteration, that the empty set, that in which it manifests – it, set theory – the true nature of the '*nade*'.

What is in effect affirmed at the source of the set, this from the pen of Cantor, which is certainly as has been said 'naïve' at the moment when it opened up this really sensational path, what the pen of Cantor affirms, is that as regards what is involved in the elements of the set, this means that what is at stake is something as different as one might wish, on the simple condition that we posit each one of these things. That it will go as far as to say the object of the intuition or of thought, this is how he puts it – and in effect why should we refuse it to him. This means nothing other than something that is as eternal as you wish. It is quite clear that starting from that moment when intuition was mixed up with thought, what is at stake is the signifier which of course is manifested by the fact that all of this is written a, b, c, d.

But what is said, is very properly the fact that it is ruled out then, in the belonging of an element to a set, that any element whatsoever should be repeated as such. It is then as distinct that every element whatsoever of a set subsists, and that as regards what is involved in the empty set it is affirmed at the source of set theory that there can only be one. This One, the '*nade*' inasmuch as it is at the source of the emergence of the numerical One, of the One from which the whole number is made, is then something which is posited as being at the origin of the empty set itself. This notion is important, because if we question the structure, it is only in the measure that, for us, in analytic discourse, the One suggests itself as being at the source of repetition. And that then here what is at stake is precisely a kind of One which finds itself marked by never being in what is involved in the theory of numbers anything but a lack, an empty set.

But there is, from the moment that I introduced this function of partition, a point in Pascal's triangle that you will allow me to question. With the two columns that I have just made, I have enough to show where my questioning is brought to bear. This is (103) what I am stating.

1 1	1 1 1 1 1 1	
4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
6 10	1 3 6 10	
4 10	1 4 10	
1 5		1 5
1	1	

Pascal's Triangle

If it is true that we have as a number of partitions only the number that previously was affected to the set of n minus one, to the set whose cardinal number is less than a unit of the cardinal of a set, look at how, by generating from this number which corresponds to the presumed parts of the set that we will to be brief lower, lower than one, as element, to find as Pascal's triangle has already taught us, the parts that are going to compose – they will find themselves in a bi-partition – that are going to compose as a part, according to the first statement, the upper set. We have on each occasion to make the addition of what corresponds in the left hand column to the two numbers which are situated immediately on the left and above the first one: to obtain here the number ten, here the number four and the number six.

What does that mean if it is not that, to obtain the first number, that of the monads of the set, the elements, of the cardinal number of the set, it is uniquely by having carried out, I would say by an abuse of office, to have put the empty set at the level of the monadic elements. Namely, it is in adding the empty set to each of the four monads of the preceding column that we obtain the cardinal number of the monads of the elements of the upper set.

1 1 1 1 1 1
1 2 3 4 5
1 3 6 10
1 4 10
1 5
1

Let us now simply try, in order to help me to represent the thing, to see what this gives on a schema. And let us take, in order to be more simple, the still earlier column, let us take here three monads and no longer four. The set, we represent by this circle.

(104) But I do not at all require that the empty set should be necessarily at the centre; but simply by representing it we have it here.

We have said that this empty set when it will be a matter of constructing a tetrahedric set, this empty set will come to the rank of the monads of the preceding one. Namely, that to represent it as this, by a tetrahedron – of course it is not a tetrahedron that is at stake, what is at stake is number – if it is designated by Greek letters α , β , γ we will have here, as a fourth element for an element in the order of these subsets, what we will have as an empty set.

But it nevertheless remains that the empty set, at the level of this new set, still exists, and that it is at the level of this new set that what has been extracted from the empty set we will describe differently, and since we already have α , β , γ , we will call it δ . What does this lead us to see? It is at the level of the element of the anti-penultimate subsets, namely, to designate this one, namely, this one, let us say to remain at the level of intuition, of five quadrangles, that one can highlight in, let us also say, a polyhedron with five vertices, here also we have to take up what? The four triangles of the tetrad. In so far as what? In so far as in these four triangles we are going to be able to make three different subtractions, this being added to it, which constitutes it as a set or more exactly as a subset.

How can we have made up our count, except at the same level, at which we would only have three subsets by adding to the these simple elements of the set, namely α , β , γ , δ , as not taken up into a set, namely inasmuch as defined as elements, they are not sets, but as isolated from what includes them in the set, they should be counted, for us to have our count of four. To furnish the part of the figure 5 at the level of a set of 5 elements, we have to bring into play elements of four in number as simply juxtaposed, but not taken up into a set, a subset that in this case means what? That we should notice the fact that in set theory, each element is worth any other. And it is indeed in this way that unity can be generated from it. It is precisely because of the fact that it is said that the concept of ‘distinct’ and of ‘defined’ on this occasion represents the following, the fact is that ‘distinct’ only means ‘radical difference’ since nothing can resemble it. There are no species. Everything that is distinguished in the same way is the same element. That is what this means.

But what do we see? We see the following, that by only taking up the element of pure difference, we can see it also as the sameness of (105) this difference. I mean to illustrate that an element in set theory, as was already proved at the second line, is altogether equivalent to an empty set, since the empty set can also act as an element. Everything that is defined as an element is the equivalent of the empty set. But in taking this equivalence, this sameness of absolute difference, by taking it as isolatable, and this not taken up into this set-like inclusion, as I might say, that would make a subset of it, this means that the sameness as such is counted at a certain point!

This appears to me to be extremely important, and very specifically for example, at the level of the Platonic operation which makes of similitude an idea of subsistence, in the realist perspective, the universal in so far as this universal is reality.

What we see, is that it is not at all at the same level – and this is what I made an allusion to in my last discourse at the Pantheon – it is not at the same level that the idea of the fellow (*semblable*) is introduced. The sameness of the elements of the set is, as such, counted as playing its role in the parts of the set. This matter has certainly its importance for us, because what is at stake in analytic theory? Analytic theory sees the One being highlighted at two of its levels. The One is the One which is repeated; it is at the foundation of this major incidence in the talk of the analysand that it exposes with a certain repetition, with regard to what? A signifying structure.

What is it, on the other hand, to consider the schema that I gave of the analytic discourse, what is produced from placing the subject at the level of the enjoyment of speaking? What is produced and what I designate at the level described as that of surplus enjoying, is that S_1 , namely, a signifying production that I am proposing, while leaving me the duty to make you sense its impact, that I propose to recognise in what is involved in what? What is the sameness of the difference? What does it mean that something that we designate in the signifier by different letters, is the same? What can be meant by saying ‘the same’, if not precisely that it is unique, starting from the very hypothesis from which there starts in set theory the function of the element.

The One that is at stake, that the subject produces, let us say the ideal point in analysis, is very precisely on the contrary what is involved in repetition. The One as single, the One inasmuch as whatever may be the difference that exists, all the differences that exist, all the differences are of equal value, there is only one of them, that is **the** difference.

(106) It is on this that I wanted to finish this discourse this evening, between the late hour and my weariness which both are impacting on me. The illustration of this function of S_1 as I put it in the statutory formula of analytic discourse, I will give in the sessions that follow.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 27 March 1968

J Lacan: This seminar does not at all seem to me to have begun under inauspicious conditions. The reduction of your number is certainly favourable for what I would like, namely, that there should be exchanged here some questions and perhaps answers or rectifications. This small number is probably the result of different conditions, up to and including the fact that there are holidays coming and even also examination periods, and a thousand other factors. One cannot but regret that certain senior members of my School who attend my seminars are not here ... I hope that they will show up because I would like them to get into action. But if they are not there we will do without them.

How to proceed? I received a certain number of letters responding to my soliciting questions. We could read a certain number of them. I have to choose because I received a good number. Is Mr Soury there? I begin with his.

“You have attached the effects of the signifier to the possibility of a consequence ...” This in effect is a quotation, I do not know whether everyone caught it in passing in one of my sentences. I did not have the time to verify the moment at which, under what circumstances I pronounced it but this is not too important; I must, at the beginning of a lecture, have put the accent, probably in response to some contradiction that had been glimpsed, on the term of consequence and on the fact that, to connote it by a biographical figure, the essence of what we put forward as the testimony of our experience, is that events have consequences in it. (259) It is quite certain that the term “consequence”, at the moment that I put it forward, I must have put it forward with the connotation that it takes on from everything that is brought to us in terms of reflection and of what is presentified for us. The fact is that the very notion of consequence as we are able to apprehend it, in so far as we are taught to reflect, is linked to the functions of logical succession. What is there before any consequence, is the articulation of a discourse with what it involves as a continuation, as an implication. One could say that the first field in which we have the apprehension of a necessity, is that of logical necessity. When we say something, it has its importance (*ça tire à conséquence*). Namely, that we can be caught at one or other detour of this sentence, a place to land, a conclusion, a way to close or to conclude. This is implicit in the discourse itself.

You say to me: “consequence can be used for temporal succession, for determinist objects” (I do not see very clearly what you mean by determinist

objects) “ for animal life ...” and you quote right away, to articulate what you are saying: “the consequence of an impact is that the particle has as impulsion ...”. Yes, I do not know if it is the best use of the word ‘consequence’. We try as far as possible, to express the effect of an impact, namely, the transmission of impulsions, in formulae that will include the least consequences possible, and ‘consequence’ comes to take its place, we will speak about it again. We will say rather as regards what concerns the law of the transmission of the impact, namely the effect of action and reaction, that all of this will have its importance when we have to speak about it.

In other words, what is important in analysed, analysable experience is not presented at all, in effect, at all at the level of effects which are conceived uniquely from a dynamic function but at the level of a dimension of effects which implies that a question is posed at a level which is locatable as that of language-consequences.

In other words, it is because a subject has not been able in any way, to articulate something primary, that his subsequent effort to give it, I would not even say meaning, sense, but articulation in the sense properly that this articulation is made up of nothing other than a signifying sequence, which takes on a more precise form, the accent of consequence starting from the moment when scansion is established in it. It is in this dimension that there is carried out the whole of this experience which is analytic experience, in so far as what it concerns, is assuredly (261) all sorts of things which have an effect in completely different registers than those of pure and simple discourse. But the fact is that it is in as much as it is a matter of the domain of what takes effect, is caught up in this language articulation, that it interests us, that it creates a question, that we can grasp it in the analysable field.

By their duration, by their persistence, by their adhesive effect on what lasts, on what is maintained in this effect of articulation, we can in effect indirectly measure what is displaced, into the other field that is precisely the field of real forces. But it is always through some knot of consequences, and of signifying consequences, of signifying articulations that we have a hold on what is at stake.

Naturally, this cannot claim in any way to be sufficient. But since you do not seem to be struck by what I wanted simply to give at this level in terms of a brief remark, the fact is that the term “consequence” takes on its true import, its resonance, its ordinary usage at the logical level. And it is indeed because it is a matter of a re-working, of a work, of a logical development that we have to deal with something analysable.

This is a first approach. Naturally, it is in the whole measure that we have been able to push things much further, to give a formulation of these effects that I call subject-effects, to the point of really being quite close to giving them a status, that all of this is tenable.

But this was only a reminder. I am saying this to you as a way of awaking your attention, to accommodate your ear to the inspiration of a discourse.

You then articulate, as if it were convincing: “a child is the consequence of a copulation”.

Logically, the use of this term ‘consequence’ is suspect. In this connection, you appeal to someone to anticipate a little the consequence of his acts. You will say that precisely because you have passed on to the ethical plane. In the case of the mid-wife you are not going to talk about pregnancy as a consequence; that would seem to be superfluous.

And then you add some remarks who have nothing to do with my course but which are personal to you. I read them since, after all, I do not see why I would not take them into account. “Mathematics are diverted into obscurantism because, probably, the rigour in the handling of the signifier becomes the alibi of the absence of rigour in the use of the signifier - social classification, salary indices, examination marks, statistics. The internal concatenation of demonstration, of definitions, is converted into lectures, a concatenation of lectures. Modern mathematics, with its structure, allows there to be formulated the absence of rigour in question, but this possibility is not utilised”.

What do you mean by that?

M. Soury: That recent mathematics allows there to be formulated abuses in the use of figures. If one wants to make understood obscurantist usage, an example is the zero in class, which has replaced the dunce’s cap. The modern school does not give a dunce’s cap, but zero’s. The zero has come from figures and benefits from the prestige of figures and from the prestige of the rigour of figures.

How has the zero, coming from this tradition, become an insult at the disposition of the professor, an ignominious label used against pupils.

The astonishing passage is how a rigorous creation like figures, and the zero in particular, has become an insult to pupils, a dunce’s cap, but which is more respected than if a real dunce’s cap were used?

J. Lacan: Do you believe that we have to bring modern mathematics into play to rise up against this or pose ourselves some questions about the use of the zero?

What I see interesting in what you are saying, what that suggests to me are little points of history that people do not think about, in effect. Since when has zero been used in class? There must be historical testimonies of this. It is obvious that one could only have been able to give a zero in class from the time that the zero functioned in mathematics, which only happened with the adoption of Arabic figures. Namely, that people did not give a zero in the time of the Roman pedants, since the zero did not exist.

Since when were marks given from zero to twenty, might be interesting. Nevertheless, perhaps to extend the reprobation that is inspired in you by the zero conceived of as a weapon to something or other that is supposed to be inherent in the use of mathematics, appears problematic to me.

(263) **Soury:** Not inherent.

J. Lacan: But in any case you make an allusion to the dimension of modern mathematics. I thought, in truth that your remark was closer to something that I suggested, not that the structures allow there to be formulated absences of rigour, but that, in the logic of this mathematics, we see there arising the necessity that it finds itself brought to by its own development, of elaborating its logic. We find ourselves confronted with knots which are inherent in logic itself and which can for us, appear as a kind of resonance of something that constitutes in our field, the field of analysis, what we have to elaborate in terms of logic from a register that is necessarily different because it is applied to a completely different order. Anyway, let us not go on about this.

I will take other questions. Rudrauf, would you like to make a little choice in what you have written?

M. Rudrauf: In fact I had taken up one of your formulae. You have, it seems to me - this is the way I experienced it - stigmatised a certain inversion of your formula "the unconscious is structured like a language". Someone had said, "why not language is structured like the unconscious"? To which you responded clearly that in logic one should go from the known to the unknown and not from the unknown to the known.

This inversion of your formula seemed to me ... to pose a problem of comprehension about the formula itself, in this sense. To say: "the unconscious is structured like a language", is to suppose language known and the unconscious unknown. Since after all this language - and what language? - in the image of which we see the unconscious being structured, was it so well known? And this unconscious to which we might refer was it so completely unknown?

During a subsequent seminar you made some remarks that seemed to me, where you said: "if I say that the unconscious is structured like a language, that does not mean that I know it".

This is obviously to pose the whole question of the knowledge of the analyst, or of the knowledge through which, or from the angle of which, by means of logical articulation. But all the people who are confronted by analytic problems are (264) confronted with the problem of knowing what is happening, what the sick person knows, what the sick person and ourselves learn about this x, which is the unconscious. After all, this x, why say this x, why do I structure the unconscious

here through x , namely mathematical language or through a mathematical figure ...

J. Lacan: x is not in itself a formulation equivalent to “unknown”. It is in the language of novels that one designates an unknown as Mr X or Mr Y. The mathematical usage of x is not at all something which stands for unknown: x designates what is called a variable. It is not the same thing.

M. Rudrauf: In a problem that is posed, x = the unknown in the language of the little pupil.

J. Lacan: Good, let us leave x aside. I do not believe I ever designated the unconscious, in so far as I consider it - as you say very well - as, if not unknown, at least at the start, for us, in its function as unconscious, much less known, and with good reason, than language, I have not for all that identified it to the function usually in use for the letter x in mathematics.

On the contrary you have brought together two things which obviously it is quite legitimate to bring together, which are the fact that I first said that it is not at all the same thing to say that “the unconscious is structured like a language” and to say that “language is structured like the unconscious”. First of all, because the second thing does not really have any follow-up. People were trying to formulate things and rather closely to me, in a fashion that is much more pointed, much more important, than that the order of the unconscious is what the possibility of language can be founded on. This has greater pretensions than the other, and it is more dangerous, as I might say. It is not less weak, but it is more insinuating.

On the contrary, when I say that I can implicate in this dimension, in this approach of my teaching, this whole part of my position that is not knowledge, it is a correction, it is more than a correction. It is to try to bring in here that there can be, when it is a matter of an analyst, a teaching which is supported without involving this principle that there is somewhere something which entirely settles (265) the question. There is a subject supposed to know.

I am saying that we can, in effect, advance into this teaching and in as much, very precisely, as it has as a start this formula without it implying that we also put ourselves in this position that I called properly professorial and which is the one that always elides the fact that the subject supposed to know is in a way there; that the truth is already somewhere. What is the point of your remark once you have made this connection which I have told you that I accept?

M. Rudrauf: If I take up again the text as I formulated it there, it means that to say that the unconscious is structured like a language, is to mark on first hearing, the unconscious is represented as an existing field, according to another of your formula, namely, existing before it is known. Thus sending us back to other reversible formulae, to ask: how is the unconscious structured?

One could say: the unconscious is structured like symptoms, because we search for the psychoanalytic meaning of the symptom; that the unconscious is structured like a dream - of course one could say that the dream is structured like a language - that the unconscious is structured like a child's drawing.

J. Lacan: If you contest that the unconscious is structured like a language it does not take you very far. I assure you that there are many reasons to contest that the dream is structured like a language. If the dream is structured like a language, it is in as much precisely as the dream is the royal road to the unconscious, but that it is not the unconscious just by itself. It is a phenomenon that has many other dimensions than that of being the royal road to the unconscious, and one can speak about the dream otherwise than by speaking about the unconscious. It is even regrettable that people are not more attached to the phenomenon of the dream when it has been separated out, extracted from its relation to the unconscious.

There are all sorts of dimensions of the dream that would deserve to be explained. When I see one or other person who, happily, writes in an obscure journal so that it avoids me having to fight against a style of objection that is really lamentable. (266) When a person trots out a certain number of features to which he believes he can give consistency in the form that one of the effects of what he calls the dream work is the violence it exercises on something whose material, when all is said and done, he does not at all contest belongs to language, it is a distortion, implied in a quite summary fashion with respect to what concerns the incidences of desire that characterise the dream. He can find, here and there, with no difficulty, in the text of Freud himself, a support for these remarks. But one cannot say that he contributes anything whatsoever to the essence of the question. I am not denying at all that, in the dream, language, if only because of the *Rücksichtsdarstellbarkeit*, considerations of representability, and many other things as well, undergoes extremely important distortions, contractions, deformations. Not only am I not denying it, but who would dream of denying it? If the dream interests me in so far as there appears in it, and from the first, this mechanism that I identified to metaphor and to metonymy because it forces itself on us, it is precisely in the measure that the dream is the royal road to the unconscious. It is not something different. It is not to exhaust the substance of the dream, so that it is not an objection to see something else intervening in it.

So then let us not insist too much on this article, except to mark that the confusion of notions of violence undergone with that of work is to say the least strange from the philosophical point of view. The confusion of dream work with violence is supposed to be a kind of representation which I am not denying, when all is said and done, is related to language, but whose whole interest would be to present to us in such a distorted fashion something quite curious and which obviously only draws its source from the fact of coming from a work place, whose principal goal is to distort what I am saying.

I ask myself moreover how it would it have been possible, in this same tender book, to set about distorting anything whatsoever if the material of what I say did not exist. (I am talking very specifically about the course of Mr Ricoeur).

M. Rudrauf: I think that this question of the dream as the royal road to the (267) unconscious is effectively directly linked to this discovery by Freud that the dream speaks, that the dream is structured like a language and that, to understand the dream, to interpret the dream, it is a matter of translating its language, of transforming what up to then appeared like a series of images into a linguistically organised series of signifiers.

The question I thought I was asking (I find it difficult to take up again the synthesis of this question) is the following: this language which is at the same time the path along which we are trying to arrive at the unconscious, and which is at the same time the object that we are searching for, this language what is it? And whose is it? This brings us back to the question of the subject in so far as it is a fact of language, and of language in so far as it is not language except in so far as it is for us revelatory of the subject, an act of the subject. It is at this level more or less that the question is posed.

J. Lacan: Language is not at all an act of the subject. A discourse can on occasion be an act of the subject. But language, precisely, puts us face to face with something as regards which it is altogether to make a jump, and an excessive jump, if you settle this point as regards which I am not saying either that we can say the contrary. I made an allusion to some dimensions. In particular to one of them which is called the undecidable. Why not use it on this occasion? I am not saying that we can prove that it is not an act of the subject. The fact of not being able to prove it, obviously, does not decide anything. But in any case this does not allow us either to affirm in any way that language is an act of the subject, which is obviously implied by the whole position described as the search, whatever it maybe, for the origin of language, which consists in imagining something that up to the present no one has managed to imagine in a satisfying way. Namely, how it could have happened one day that there were people who spoke.

I note simply that, in the history of linguistics, it is very precisely from the day when a certain number of people came together by engaging their honour to one another not to raise this question that linguistics was able to begin. This is simply a historical fact. It has no more of a consequence that one day, someone (he was called Lavoisier) said to himself, in all of these little manipulations by chemists, one should weigh what had gone into the sphere at the beginning and at the end. This does not mean that chemistry is all a matter of weighing, far from it, as was (268) proved by what followed. But here it is of the same order. It is a decisive act at the beginning. We are precisely going to abstain from thinking about everything that could emerge from language as an act of the subject. From that moment on, the extraordinary thing is that people made some valid discoveries in the matter of linguistics, which it must indeed be said, there was no trace of

before. It is all very well point out, there is no need to tickle one's brain to find that *Cratylus* is not so bad. So there were already people who are capable of saying things that were not bad, but this does not constitute in any way even the beginning of a science of language. Linguistics is born from a certain moment when as in all the moments of the birth of a science, it is a moment of that order, of a practical order, there is someone who began to fiddle with the material by imposing a certain number of exclusive laws on himself and limiting himself to a certain number of operations. From this moment on something is possible; it is no more demonstrative; it begins to become demonstrative from the moment that we pose ourselves questions about what can be called the subject-effect. Namely, how does the prohibition of a certain number of registers happen. Setting them aside allows there to be better determined what is happening as a subject-effect, which is not at all necessarily a subject homogeneous to the one that we have to deal with in the common, ordinary usage language. But when we prohibit precisely something that, when one looks at it closely, comes back to limiting language, not at all dominating it, overcoming it, inscribing it in anything whatsoever that might be called a meta-language or a meta-tongue, but on the contrary by isolating certain fields of it. And then subject-effects are produced which are not moreover necessarily human subjects or speaking subjects.

I think that the term "subject" to indicate the field of a science is not necessarily badly chosen either. I spoke about chemistry or about linguistics. There is a subject of chemistry, or linguistics, just as there is also a subject of modern logic. It is more or less established, it goes more or less far, it is more or less vague, it is altogether capital for us to take this sort of reference to know what we are saying when we are speaking about the status of the subject.

It is quite obvious that the status of the subject that we are dealing with in analysis is none of those subjects, nor indeed any of the other subjects that may be situated in the field of a currently constituted science.

(269) **M Rudrauf:** I would like to specify that when I said: "language is a act of the subject", I meant that the language that you give us, your act of discourse, is your act. But in the measure that language is not an act of the subject, I think that it ought to be defined as being the locus of the act of the other.

J. Lacan: Yes, it is risky. I will redirect the question to our dear Nassif, but Nassif has done on this point a work of condensing everything that I said last year, adding to it a note that we still have to take great advantage of. I do not want to abuse either him or you by asking him to answer you on this subject. It is very daring in any case what you have just said. It is more than daring, it can be criticised. Unfortunately our time is measured and I cannot give all its development to all of this.

I would like, because I always have a little scruple about making you go out of your way without you leaving with something in your knapsack, to try to take advantage of the fact that today we are an informal group. I insist - it is especially

for me that this may be insulting, more than for anyone else - on the absence here, of a certain number of people who at other moments are assiduous in attending what I am putting forward this year in the seminar. Why are they not there? Is it because perhaps I might have summoned them to respond in my place to what is being stated here? Who knows? We do not know. It is perhaps for that reason. It is perhaps also because they have a sense of economising their time. So that if they believe they are going to find themselves fiddling around in what I am stating here, once this is only an attempt at work, they think that they will not get enough benefit from it. Who knows, that is another possibility. In short, I deplore it.

On the other hand, I am delighted at the presence of all of those who have been good enough to come to hear something. And it is for them and because we are in an informal group that after all I would like to be able to give you a sense of things - because there are also here many people I have admitted with pleasure, even though they are not analysts - give a sense of the, of the breadth of what is at stake, and also why I cannot say everything, or indeed particular things before just any audience, I mean before an audience that I can locate less well than I can by (270) looking at your faces, before the one that is here today. We write on the board:

All men love women

All psychoanalysts desire to know

I do not think

I am not

Precisely, this in order to presentify things since what is at stake are subjects, subjects that are obviously much less manageable and about which, luckily, linguistics gives us orientations.

It is quite obvious that we are already a little oriented, thanks to my discourse, not thanks to my language, thanks to my discourse. Here, these are subjects that we find at first sight, designated in Greek as what is usually called the grammatical subject, the subject of the sentence. It is on this occasion the subject that one can quite well introduce into propositional logic and rediscover the Aristotelian formula of predicative logic with the help of tiny changes:

all men are loving to women (sont aimant la femme)

all psychoanalysts are desiring to know (sont desirant savoir)

The interest of the matter is that these are propositions, which because of the presence of the *all* fall under the heading of what I introduced this year, and not without reason, as the implication of what is called the logic of quantification.

It is obvious that to write *all men* or to write *all psychoanalysts*, is a way that is distinct from the one that is going to be marked in the two other articulations underneath, by implying what I always put in question to distinguish it severely, by implying the stating subject in the statement.

This is obviously why the logic of quantification interests us, it is at the level of what is called the universal. And once you make the universal intervene, it is clear that what is interesting, what gives it its relief are things that I present to you here, in short, in a familiar way. I mean that it is not strictly rigorous from the point of view of proof. I mean that the remarks that I am going to make to you before leaving you, are rather things in which I am allowing myself a certain laxity with respect to certain requirements of rigour which are not vain, to which I am absolutely obliged to submit myself in a largely public discourse. Here, since it is on a friendlier basis, I can say things like the one that I am saying just now. Namely, that it is quite obvious for you to sense that the reason why this interests us, a formula like the one that all men, for example, are mortal, is in order to point out that there is something which is always profoundly elided. This gives it in a way its secret charm its sticky side, the side which means that we adhere so much, all the same, that we are so interested in these stupendously inane things, like the exemplary syllogisms that we are given. If truly all that was at stake was knowing that all men are mortal and that Socrates being a man, Socrates is mortal, those who do not understand it like that say - what they have always said: what is all that about? It is a *petitio principii*. If you have just said that Socrates is a man, how could you deny that Socrates is mortal, except by putting in question what you said first. It was Locke who discovered that it was a *petitio principii*.

This is a complete idiocy. There is no *petitio principii*, there is something whose interest lies quite elsewhere. Its interest is obviously in the following - it is in the conjurer's sleeves - that it is not at all vain to speak about Socrates on this occasion since Socrates is not mortal in the way that all other men are. And that this is precisely what, when all is said and done, captures and even excites us. It is not simply by a lateral incidence due to the particularity of the illustration, but because this indeed is what is in question right at the heart of logic. Always to know how one could be rid of this sacred stating subject, which is not done easily, and especially not at the level of quantification which is here particularly resistant.

It is not quite the same thing then as this quantified subject, as this much more disturbing subject that then for its part is qualified, is designated quite specifically and in a way that one could say is unveiled as the stating subject. What (272) linguistics has been indeed forced to recognise by giving to the "I" this definition of being the *shifter* which is the "*chief rate*", in other words the index

of the one who is speaking. In other words "I" is variable at the level of each discourse, it designates the one who is giving it. From which there result all sorts of consequences, in particular that a whole series of statements that have "I" as subject are very disturbing. People have dwelt at length on the *I am lying* throughout the ages. That I for my part should have added to it the *I do not think* and *I am not* assuredly has its interest, an interest that you are all capable of seeing in all its developments. It is quite certain that it is much more interesting to dwell on how impossible the *I am not* is, than on the *I am lying* which is so self-evident that truly one cannot say it, as I might say. This *I am not*, is worth the trouble of dwelling on a little, especially if one can give it a support which is quite precise as regards what is at stake, namely, concerning the subject of the unconscious.

The fact is that, once you have noticed it - I do not know if you are there yet but it may come to you - it is when you have noticed the impossibility of saying at all that it is so, because it is, precisely, that is that I am not. It is just as true for you as for me, and that starting from the moment that you have noticed it, the *I am* appears to become not unpronounceable - it can always be pronounced - but simply grotesque.

Now these things are very important to realise, if they appear coherent and strictly coherent, from the introduction into a certain domain which is that of the questions that are posed by the existence or not of the unconscious.

In any case, it is naturally a matter of knowing why I am occupying myself this year with the psychoanalytic act on the one hand, and with the psychoanalyst on the other. Even though it is centred around this act (we are still with familiar language today, I repeat, "centred around" does not mean very much) that *all men love women*, is obviously false. In our day we have enough experience - it has always been known, precisely - let us say, in one half of society (speaking broadly) this is not true, it is false. But the fact that it is false does not solve anything. The important thing is not at all to know that it is grossly false. The important thing is to notice that if we can simply admit that if it is not true, it is because of the fact that there are some people who make a mistake. I do not know how well aware you are of this, the fact is that this seems to be the (273) hypothesis of psychoanalysis. Let us even say the following, let us be quite precise, I do not mean that psychoanalysis says that, in every case, that it is because there are people who make mistakes that they prefer something else. Psychoanalysis may well (here I am on velvet) allow itself every prudence. It may well say that there are some people, male homosexuals, for whom this is due to organic or glandular things or something or other of that kind. It may say something of this kind; that costs it nothing. Moreover, what is remarkable, is the number of things that do not cost it anything.

But as regards what does cost it, it is much less precise. But it seems that it has never asked itself the question of what is involved for those at least among whom it made the hypothesis intervene. The fact is if it is not true, it is because there are

those - I am summarising - who make a mistake. This has its equivalent in analytic theory, but it is from this that it returns.

This is where I would like to remark the following, which is that it is a matter of knowing whether, yes or no, this thing, to which we may give the most subtle body *all men love women* (you will notice that I said "*la femme*, the woman") namely, the entity of the opposite sex. It is something that a psychoanalyst holds to be true or not. It is absolutely certain that he cannot hold it to be true because what psychoanalysis knows, is that all men love not the woman but the mother.

This has, of course, all sorts of consequences including that it may happen, in extreme cases, that men cannot make love with the women they love, because it is their mother. Why on the other hand they can make love with a woman on condition that she is a debased mother, namely, a prostitute.

Let us still remain in the system. I would like to pose the following question. In the case that a man can make love to the woman he loves - which also happens, he is not always impotent with the women he loves - I would like to know the following, what the following question implies, which is a slight modification of the universal statement that I wrote *all men love women*. Is it true that all men desire a woman (there, it is no longer *la femme*) when she is proposed to them as such, namely *qua* object within their reach?

(274) Let us suppose that there are no impotent people, let us suppose that there is no debasement of love-life. I am posing a question that clearly shows the distinction between what I will call the naturalist foundation, with what is called the organic reserve. For it is absolutely not the same thing to say, in the cases that we have to deal with in psychoanalysis, that there are cases which belong to the organic. It is not at all in the name of that that we want to pose the question of whether it is self-evident. And here you are going to see that you are forced to put things that sufficiently show the artificiality of what I am raising. Because I first have to tell you that outside every context, namely, the context of his engagements, of his links, of links that the woman previously has, of this or of that, is it a fact that it is, in principle, natural, let us say us, that in the situations which it is rather remarkable that novelists have been forced to give themselves all sorts of trouble to invent, namely, the situation that I will call - I do not know what to call it - it is unthinkable, the situation of the mountain chalet; a man, a woman normally constituted, they are isolated, as they say in nature - you always have to bring in nature on these occasions - is it natural that they should copulate? That is the question. It is a matter of the naturalism of the desirable.

Here is the question that I am raising. Why? Not at all to tell you things that are afterwards going to do the rounds of Paris, namely, that what Lacan is teaching, means that the man and the woman have nothing to do (*rien à voir*) together. I am not teaching it; it is true. Textually, they have nothing to do together. It is annoying that I cannot teach this without it giving rise to scandal. So then I do not teach it, I withdraw it.

It is precisely because they have nothing to do with one another that the psychoanalyst has something to do with this affair, *cette affaire là*, (let us write it on the board), *Staferla*. (You also have to know how to use a certain way of writing).

Naturally I do not teach it. Why? Because even if this is what emerges from a way that is strictly required from everything that psychoanalysis teaches us, namely, that it is never “who has *tenus femina*”, I am saying “*femina*” not even “*mulier*” in so far as the “woman” is desired. That desire must be constructed upon a whole order of sources in which the unconscious is absolutely dominant and in which consequently there intervenes a whole dialectic of the subject.

To state in this bizarre fashion, that man and woman finally have no business with (275) one another, is simply to mark a paradox, but a paradox which has no more import but which is of the same order as this paradox in logic that I noted before you. It is of the same order as “I am lying “ or Russell’s paradox of the catalogue of all the catalogues that do not contain themselves. It is the same dependency.

There is obviously no interest in producing them as if it were a matter, precisely, of the only point at which this would constitute on this occasion no longer simply a paradox but a scandal, namely, if this were a naturalist reference.

When someone writes in a little note or elsewhere that, in the way that Lacan re-interprets Freud, it appears, it is a Freud-Lacan, there is an elision of what there would nevertheless be an interest in preserving, the naturalist reference. I ask on the contrary what can now subsist of the naturalist reference concerning the sexual act after the statement of everything that is articulated in Freudian experience and doctrine.

It is precisely by giving to these terms, “man and woman”, a naturalist substratum that people are able to state things which might be presented in effect as follies. That is why I do not pronounce them. But what I am pronouncing today - there is a remarkably inadequate number of psychoanalysts here - is the following question. What does the clinician think “instinctively” - you may well imagine that a word like that never comes from my mouth by chance, - in the name of his clinical instinct - what a clinical instinct is remains to be defined - about the story of the mountain chalet?

You have all only to refer not only to your experience but to your innermost intuition. The chap who comes to tell you that he was with a pretty girl in a mountain chalet, that there was no reason to, not to have a go, simply he did not feel like it. You say “Oh! There is something ... something is not working”. You first of all try to find out if he often has little blockages like that. In short, you launch yourselves into a whole speculation which implies that it ought to work.

This simply in order to show you that what is at stake is the coherence, the consistency of things in the mind of the analyst. For it the analyst reacts like that, instinctively, there is no need even to bring into play the clinical instinct. Behind, (276) there is the naturalist resonance, namely, that the man and the woman are made to go together. I am not saying the contrary. I told you: they can go together without having anything to do with one another. I told you that they had nothing to do with one another.

If the clinician, the clinical essence, intervenes to “wince” in a certain way, it is a matter of knowing if it is something that is – perhaps, why not, that does exist - simply of the order of common sense. I am not against common sense. Or it is something else that is at stake. Namely, whether he allows himself, as analyst, who has every reason to know, whether this woman who, I repeat, for the psychoanalyst is not at all automatically desired by the male animal when this male animal is a speaking being, this woman believes herself to be desirable. Because this is the best thing for her to do when she is embarrassed in a certain way. And then that leads us again a little bit further.

We, for our part, we know that as regards the partner, she believes she loves him, this is even what dominates. It is a matter of knowing why this dominates, in what is called her nature. We also know very well that what really dominates, is that she desires him. That is even the reason why she believes she loves him.

As regards the man, of course, we know the tune. For us it is everlastingly repeated. When it happens that he desires her, he believes he desires her but he is dealing on this occasion with his mother, so then he loves her. He offers her what? The fruit of the castration linked to this human drama. He gives her what he no longer has. We know all that. It goes against common sense.

Is it simply holding on to common sense which ensures that the analyst, with this clinical instinct, believes all the same that if on some occasion there is nothing of all that, because the novelist has done everything for it to be no longer on the horizon (the mountain chalet) if it does not work, it is because there is something wrong?

I am claiming that it is not simply because of common sense. I am claiming that something ensures that the psychoanalyst is precisely, in a way, installed, established, in something consistent. He is so for the very precise reason which ensures that *all psychoanalysts desire to know*, is just as false as what is stated above and we have to know why it is false. Naturally, it is not false because of the fact that it is false, because one can always write it, even if everyone knows that it is false. In both cases there is a misunderstanding somewhere.

(277) After having defined the psychoanalytic act which I defined in a very risky fashion, I even put in the centre this acceptance of being rejected like the *o*-object, it is enormous, it is new, no one ever said that, it becomes tangible, it is tangible. Someone could all the same try to contradict me, to say the contrary, to

bring in something else, to raise an objection. It is curious that, since I said it, it is not so long ago that I put it in the forefront, no one has even simply begun to protest, to say something against it. Even though, in its essence it is absolutely outrageous, one could shout, say: "what sort of carry-on is this! The end of analysis has never been explained to us like that. What is this analyst who is rejected like a piece of shit"? Shit disturbs people enormously. There is not just shit in the *o*-object, but often it is as a piece of shit that the analyst is rejected. That depends uniquely on the psychoanalysand. It is necessary to know whether for him shit is really what was at stake. But it is striking that all the things I say, I can develop this discourse, articulate it, a whole lot of things can begin to turn around it before anyone dreams of raising the slighted protestation and giving another indication, another theory on the subject of the end of analysis. Curious, curious. This abstention is strange, because on the whole, it is something that involves all sorts of disturbing consequences. This might suggest a sort of inventiveness in contradiction. No, nothing!

So then, if no one brings up the slightest contradiction, it is because, all the same, people sense very well, know very well that the misunderstanding, whether we are dealing with the first proposition or the second, turns around the fact that the psychoanalyst, for his part, does not have to put his tuppence halfpenny in - it a metaphor, it means does not have anything to say about it - except in so far as he joins in the ballet. I mean the psychoanalyst. It is absolutely clear that we are lost if we start from the idea that the psychoanalyst is the one who knows better than anyone else, in the sense that, as regards this whole affair of what is involved in the sexual act and the status that results from it, he is supposed to have the distance which would ensure that he knows something about the matter.

This is absolutely not what is at stake. That is also why he does not have to take sides about whether it is natural or not natural, in what cases it is or in what cases (278) it is not. Simply he sets up an experiment in which he has to put his tuppence halfpenny worth in the name of this third function, this *o*-object, which plays the key function in the determination of desire. Which means that it is in effect the recourse of the woman, in what is involved in the embarrassment that the exercise of her enjoyment leaves her in her relation to what is involved in the act.

I can go further, I can say "what is forced on her" from elsewhere. Here I seem to be making a feminist claim but do not believe it, it is much wider than that. What is forced on her is in the structure, the one that designates her, in the subjective dramatisation of the sexual act, that forces on her the function of the little *o*-object, in so far as she masks what is at stake. Namely, a hollow, a void, this thing lacking at the centre and of which one can say - which is this thing that I tried to symbolise - that it seems that the man and the woman together - and hold on to the choice of terms that I have used, have nothing to do with one another (*rien à voir ensemble*). In other words, since she has no reason, for her part, to accept this function of little *o*-object, he finds himself simply on this occasion on the occasion of his enjoyment, and from the dependence of this on his relation to

the act, noticing the power of deception, but a deception which is not hers, which is something other, which precisely is imposed through the establishment, on this occasion, of the desire of the male.

What the man discovers on his side is nothing other than his own impotence to aim at anything other than what? A knowledge, of course. No doubt there is somewhere and from the origin, to give ourselves over to developmental lucubrations, a certain knowledge about sex. But this is not what is at stake. It is not because all male and female children have sensations that they are not without some hold on and that they can more or less properly channel. What it is a matter of arriving at, knowledge of a sex, this is precisely what is at stake, it is that one never has knowledge of the other sex.

As regards what is involved in the knowledge of a sex, on the male side, it is much worse than on the female side.

You must not believe that when I say that there is no sexual act, I am pronouncing something that signifies in any way that what is happening should be put under the title of radical failure. Let us say that by taking things at the level of psychoanalytic experience, it demonstrates to us, by remaining at this level - you see that here I am making a reservation - that this knowledge of one sex for a male, when it is a matter then of his own, culminates in the experience of (279) castration. Namely, at a certain truth which is that of his impotence, of his impotence to do, let us say, anything full in the sexual act.

You see that all of this can go rather far, namely, this pretty literary hesitation between the power of the lie on the one hand and the truth of impotence on the other; there is an interlacing. You see then how easily all of this might tip over into a type of wisdom, indeed a teaching on sexology, as people might say, anything at all that could be resolved by means of an opinion survey. What I would like to point out, is that what is at stake, in specifying what a psychoanalyst is, is to take note that he has no right to articulate at any level whatsoever this dialectic between knowledge and truth in order to make of it a sum, an evaluation, a totality, by recording some failure or other. Because this is not what is at stake. No one is in a position to master what is at stake, which is nothing other than the interference of the function of subject in this act. And we cannot even say where in our experience - I mean analytic - its reference - let us not say "natural" since this is where it vanishes - but its biological reference is tangible.

The point that I am at when I tell you that the rule for the analyst to escape the vacillation which makes him tip over into a sort of an ethical teaching, is that he should notice what is involved in the question, at the very place of what conditions its essential vacillation. Namely, the little *o*-object, and that, rather than at the end of his years of experience, considering himself as a clinician namely, the one who, in every case, knows how to measure the cubic content of the affair, he should rather give himself - as I was saying the last time, at the end of my last discourse, at the high point of what I said the last time, before what I

call a larger audience - this reference, that I borrowed from the discourse of a previous year. Namely, I will not say the apologue because I never give apologues, I show you the reality of what is involved for the analyst imaged in other examples. It is not astonishing that these are examples taken from art, for example, something to take one's bearings from. Namely, in order to have a different kind of knowledge than this kind of fictional knowledge he has and which paralyzes him, when he questions a case, when he carries out the anamnesis, when he prepares it, when he begins to approach it and once he enters it with the analysis, that he searches in the case, in the history of the subject, like (280) Velasquez in the picture of *Las Meninas*, where he, for his part was already the analyst at a particular moment and at a particular point of the history of the subject.

This will have one advantage. He will know what is involved in the transference. The centre, the pivot of transference, does not pass at all through his person. There is something that was already there.

This would give him a completely different way of approaching the diversity of cases. Perhaps, from that moment on he might manage to find a new clinical classification to that of classical psychiatry which he has never been able to touch or to shake and for a good reason, up to the now. He has never been able to do anything else than follow it.

I would like to image for you still more what is involved, and I would like to do it in the few minutes that I am accepting and that I thank you for giving me.

People speak about private life (*vie privée*). I am always surprised that this word "private life" should never have interested anyone, especially among the analysts who ought to be particularly interested by that. A life deprived (*privée*) of what? One could make rhetorical embellishments.

What is the private life? Why is it so deprived, this private life? That ought to interest you. From the moment one does an analysis, there is no longer a private life. It has to be said that women are furious when their husbands do an analysis, they are right. It is all very well for that to annoy us analysts, you have to recognise that they are right, because there is no longer a private life. That does not mean that it becomes public. There is an intermediary lock: it is a psychoanalysed, or psychoanalysing life. It is not a private life.

This is of a nature to make us reflect. After all why is it so respectable, this private life? I am going to tell you. Because private life, is what allows there to be maintained intact these famous norms that in connection with the mountain chalet, I was in the process of exploding. "Private" means everything that preserves on this delicate point of what is involved in the sexual act and of everything that flows from it, in the pairing of individuals, in the "you are my wife, I am your husband" and other essential devices on another register that we know well, that of fiction, this is what allows there to hold up in a field in which

we analysts introduce an order of relativity which, as you see, is not at all easy to (281) master, and which can be mastered on a single condition. If we are able to recognise the place that we hold in it, we, as analysts, not as analysts who are subjects of knowledge but as analysts who are instruments of revelation.

Here there is posed the question of the private life of the analyst. I am only mentioning it in passing because naturally there are works that are widely diffused and which are tissues are stupidity and one of them has had the greatest success, where it is said that the qualification, the pinpointing of the good analyst, the least that one can require, is that he should have a happy life. It is adorable! And what is more, everyone knows the author; I do not want to start speculating. Anyway...

But that an analyst, for example, could maintain what I have just defined as being the status of private life, is really something! It is precisely because the analyst no longer has a private life that it is better, in effect, for him to keep many things under wraps. Namely, that if he, for his part, has to know what place he already was at in the life of his patient, the reciprocal is not inevitably necessary.

But there is a completely different plane on which it operates, this business of private life. It is precisely the one that I have just raised, namely, that of the consistency of discourse. It is precisely because the analyst is not able, up to the present, to sustain to any degree a discourse about his position, that he creates for himself all kinds of other ones. For him everything is good. He gives a sort of teaching that is like every other teaching, even though his ought in no way to resemble the others, no other one, namely, that he is teaching what? What is necessary for the taught who are already that, namely, to teach them, about the subjects in question, what they already know. Namely, precisely everything that is most irrelevant; every reference is the same to him; he will teach everything, anything whatsoever, except psychoanalysis.

In other words, what I took care to begin with by taking things at the lowest possible level, namely, what may seem to be the least contestable, and to show us that psychoanalysis precisely contests it. It is impossible to write, except by way of challenge, the two first lines that are there. What constitutes the status of the analyst is in effect a life that deserves to be called a private life. Namely, the status that he gives himself is properly the one in which he will maintain - it is constructed for that - the authorisation, the investiture of analysis, its hierarchy. (281) Ascending its grades, in such a way that at the level where for him this function, his own, may have consequences, the most risky of all, that of occupying the place of this little *o*-object, this allows him to preserve, nevertheless, stable and permanent, all the fictions that are most incompatible with what is involved in his experience and the fundamental discourse which establishes it as technique.

Here is what I am ending today for you, and will understand that I reserved it for a more limited audience, which is not obliged to drawn from it a harvest of scandals, of gossip or of bla-bla-bla.

Seminar 1: Wednesday 15 November 1967

This year I chose as subject the psychoanalytic act. It is a strange couple of words, which, to tell the truth, has not been common up to now. Assuredly, those who have followed for a certain time what I am stating here, may not be astonished at what I am introducing under these two terms.

What my discourse of last year closed on within this logic of phantasy, all of whose lineaments I tried to bring here, those who heard me speaking in a certain tone and in two registers about what the equally coupled term of the sexual act can and ought to mean, these people may feel themselves in some way already introduced to this dimension that the psychoanalytic act represents. Nevertheless, I have to behave as if a part of this assembly knew nothing about it and introduce today what is involved in this usage that I am proposing. Psychoanalysis, it is understood as least in principle, it is supposed, at least by the fact that you are here to listen to me, that psychoanalysis does something. It does, that is not enough, this is the essential, it is at the central point, it is properly speaking the poetic view point of the thing, poetry also does something. I remarked moreover in passing, having interested myself a little recently in this field of poetry, that people have paid very little attention to what it does and to whom, and more especially, why not, to the poets.

Perhaps to ask oneself that would be a kind of introduction to what is involved in the act in poetry. But this is not our business today since what is at stake is psychoanalysis, which does something, but certainly not at the level, on the plane, in the sense of poetry.

(10) If we have to introduce and very necessarily at the level of psychoanalysis the function of the act, it is in as much as this psychoanalytic doing profoundly implicates the Subject. That to tell the truth, and thanks to this dimension of the subject which completely renews for us what can be stated about the subject as such and which is called the unconscious, this subject, in psychoanalysis, is as I already formulated, activated (*mis en acte*) in it.

Comment [G2LU1]:

I recall that I already put forward this formula in connection with transference, saying at a time already long past, and at a level of formulation that was still approximate, that transference was nothing other than the activation of the unconscious. I repeat that this is only an approach and what we will have to put forward this year about this function of the act of psychoanalysis will allow us to bring to it a specificity worthy of the numerous steps - some decisive I hope - that we have been able to take since then.

Let us approach simply along the path of a certain obviousness, if we keep to this sense that the word act has which can be constituted with respect to what - let us leave that to one side - can constitute a breakthrough.- It is sure that we encounter the act on entering analysis. It is all the same something that merits the name of act to decide, with everything that this involves, to decide to do what is called a psychoanalysis. This decision involves a certain commitment. We encounter there all the dimensions that ordinarily, are accepted, in common usage, in the common use of this word act. There is also an act which can be described, the act by which the psychoanalyst sets himself up as such, here is something which merits the name of act, up to and including the fact that this act can be inscribed somewhere: Mr So-and-so, psychoanalyst.

In truth, it does not appear foolish, inordinate, out of place, to speak about the psychoanalytic act in the same way that one speaks about the medical act. In this sense what is the psychoanalytic act? One could say that it could be inscribed under this rubric in the register of Social Security. Is the psychoanalytic act the session, for example? I can ask what it consists of. What sort of intervention is involved? Because after all one does not write out a prescription. What is the act properly speaking? Is it interpretation? Or is it silence? Or anything whatsoever that you want to designate in the instruments of the function.

But in truth, these are illuminations which scarcely make us advance and to go to the other end of the supporting point that we can choose, to present, to (11) introduce the analytic act we will point out that in psychoanalytic theory, precisely, people speak about it. We are moreover not yet in a position to specify this act in such a way that we are able in any way to establish its boundary with what is called in a general term, not current, faith, in this psychoanalytic theory: action.

People speak a lot about action and it plays a role as a reference. A rather curious reference role since, moreover, to take the case, it is made use of with great emphasis, namely, when it is a matter of accounting, I mean theoretically, and for a rather large field of theoreticians who express themselves in analytic terms, to explain thinking. Through a sort of need of security, as it were, this thinking, which for reasons that we will have to deal with, people do not want to make into an entity which appears too metaphysical, people try to account for this thinking on a foundation that on this occasion they hope is more real. And thinking will be explained to us as representing something that is motivated, that

is justified by its relation to action, for example in the form that it is a more reduced action, an inhibited action, an incipient action, a little model of action. Indeed that in thinking there is something like a sort of taste of what the action that it supposes, or that it renders immanent may be.

These discourses are known to all. I have no need to illustrate them by quotations, but if someone wants to look more closely at what I am leaving understood, I would evoke not just a famous article, but a whole volume written on this by Mr Rappaport, a psychoanalyst of the New York Society. What is striking, is that assuredly for someone who is introduced without prejudice into this dimension of action, the reference in this case does not appear any clearer to me than what is referred to. And that to illuminate thinking by action might presuppose, perhaps, that first of all one should have a less confused idea than the ones which are manifested on these occasions about what constitutes an action, in as much as an action seems indeed, if we meditate for an instant, to presuppose at its centre the notion of act.

I know well that there is a fashion, which is moreover the one to which those who try to formulate things in the register that I have just spoken of cling onto, I mean energetically support themselves with, which is to identify action to motor (12) activity. Here indeed we have to carry out at the beginning of what we are introducing an operation, call it what you will, of simple elucidation or of clarification, but it is very essential. In effect, it is well known and, after all, my God, why not, acceptable, that people want here to apply in a way that is admissible, quite routine, to obey or even simply pretend to obey the rule of not explaining what people continue to call, not always moreover with a lot of justification, the superior and the inferior. Of not I am saying, explaining the inferior by the superior but, as it is said - people now no longer know very well why - that thinking is superior. To start from this inferior which is supposed to be the most elementary form of response of the organism, namely, this famous circle whose model I have given you under the name of the reflex arc. Namely, the circuit that is called, according to the case, stimulus-response, when you are prudent and when you identify to the sensory-excitation couple, whatever it may be, and the motor release which here plays the role of response. Besides the fact that in this famous arc it is not too sure that the response is at all necessarily and obligatorily motor. But that when, for example, if it is excretory, indeed even secretory, the response is that it becomes wet, well then the reference to this model, to situate in it, to take as a starting point in it the foundation of the function we can call action, assuredly appears much more precarious. Besides one can remark that the motor response, if we only pinpoint it from the link defined by the reflex arc, has truly only very little right to give us the model of what can be called action. Because what is motor, once you insert it into the reflex arc, appears quite simply as a passive effect, as a pure and simple response to stimuli, a response which involves nothing other than a passivity-effect.

The dimension which is expressed in a certain way of conceiving the response as a discharge of tension - a term which is also current in psychoanalytic energetics - will then present action to us here as nothing other than a consequence, indeed a flight, following on a more or less intolerable sensation, let us say in the broadest sense of stimulus in as much as we bring into it elements other than those that psychoanalytic theory introduces under the name of intermittent stimulation.

Here we are then, assuredly, in the position of not being able to situate the act (13) from this reference to either motor activity or discharge. We must now on the contrary ask ourselves why the theory still has, and manifests, such a strong penchant for making use of them as support and finding in them the original order in which there is supposed to be established, from which there is supposed to begin, in which there is supposed to be installed as a lining, that of thinking.

It is clear that I am only giving this reminder because we are going to have to make use of it. Nothing produced in the order of these elaborations, however paradoxical this appears when seen from a certain point, can fail to leave us, nevertheless, with the idea that there is some motivation for sustaining this paradox, and that from this very motivation, this is the method that psychoanalysis never fails to use, from this very motivation we can draw certain fruit.

That the theory occasionally takes support then from something that, precisely, analytic theory is in a better position to know to be only a short circuit as compared to what it must indeed establish as the status of the psychic apparatus, that not only the texts of Freud but all psychoanalytic thinking can only be sustained isolating, in the interval between the afferent element of the reflex arc and its efferent element, this famous psi-system of the first Freudian writings. But that nevertheless it feels the need to maintain the emphasis on these two elements, assuredly here testifies to something which urges us to mark its place, (I mean for analytic theory), with respect to what we call, in a more comprehensive way the physiologising theory of the psychic apparatus. It is clear that we see there being manifested here a certain number of mental edifices founded in principle on recourse to the experiment. These try to use, to make use of this first model given as the most elementary, whether we consider it at the level of the totality of a micro-organism, the stimulus-response process at the level of the amoeba, for example, and to make of it in a way a homologue, the specification for an system which is supposed to concentrate, at least on a certain powerfully organising point, its reality on the organism, namely, at the level of this reflex arc once it has been differentiated in the nervous system.

Here is what we have to account for in this perspective, that this difference persists at a level, in a technique - psychoanalysis - which seems to be, properly speaking, the least appropriate to have recourse to it, given what it implies in terms of a completely different dimension, in effect, radically opposed to this (14) reference which results from an obviously lame conception of what is

involved in the act, not satisfactory in an internal fashion, completely opposed in effect to what we have to do, to this position of the function of the act that I evoked at first in its purely obvious aspects, and which, it is well known, is the one that interests us in psychoanalysis. I spoke earlier about commitment, whether it is that of the analysand or of the analyst. But, after all, why not pose the question of the act of the birth (*l'acte de naissance, birth certificate*) of psychoanalysis. Because in the dimension of the act, there immediately comes to light this something that a term like the one that I have just spoken about implies. Namely, the inscription somewhere, the correlative signifier which, in truth, is never lacking in what constitutes an act. If I walk up and down here while speaking to you, that does not constitute an act, but if one day it is to cross a certain threshold by which I put myself outside the law, that day my motor activity will have the value of an act.

I put forward here, in this very room, that it is simply to have recourse to an admitted order of obviousness, of properly speaking language dimensions about what is involved in an act. This allows there to be gathered together in a satisfying fashion all the ambiguity that this term may present, going from one to the other end of the scale that I first evoked, including in it not simply, beyond what I called on this occasion a notarised act, I mentioned this term: the act of the birth of psychoanalysis. Why not? This is how it emerged at a particular turning point of my discourse. But, in fact, if we dwell a little on it, we are going to see there being easily opened up the dimension of the act with respect to the very status of psychoanalysis. Because after all, if I spoke about inscription, what does that mean? Let us not remain too close to this metaphor. Nevertheless, the one whose existence is recorded in an act when he comes into the world is there before the act. Psychoanalysis is not a nurseling. When one speaks about the act of the birth of psychoanalysis, which indeed has a sense, since, precisely, it appeared one day, it is the question that is evoked. Did this field that it organises, over which it reigns in more or less governing them, did this field exist before? It is a question that it is well worthwhile evoking when such an act is at stake. It is a question that is essential to pose at this turning point. Of course, there is every chance that this field existed before. We are certainly not going to contest that the unconscious made its effects felt before (15) the act of the birth of psychoanalysis. But all the same if we pay very careful attention, we can see that the question of who knew it, is perhaps not without import here.

In effect, does this question have any other import than the *epoché*, the idealist suspension, the one founded on the idea, taken as radical, of representation as founding all knowledge and which then demands where reality is, outside of this representation.

It is absolutely certain that the question that I am raising in the form of, who knew this field of psychoanalysis, has absolutely nothing to do with the fallacious antinomy on which idealism is founded. It is clear that there is no question of contesting that reality is prior to knowledge. Reality, yes! But

knowledge? Knowledge (*le savoir*) is not knowing (*la connaissance*). And to touch the minds that are least prepared to suspect this difference I have only to make an allusion to *savoir-vivre*, or to *savoir-faire* [art of living, know-how]. There, the question of what is there before takes on all its sense. *Savoir-vivre* or *savoir-faire* can emerge at a given moment. And then, provided the accent that I have always put on language has ended up by taking on its import for a certain number of you, it is clear that here the question takes on all its weight. That of knowing precisely what was involved in something that we can call the manipulation of the letter, according to a formalisation described as logical, for example, before it was tackled. The field of algebra before the invention of algebra is a question that takes on all its import.

Before people knew how to manipulate something that must be called by its name, figures (*chiffres*), and not simply numbers, I am saying figures - without being able to go into it here, I appeal to the few that I suppose exist among you, who have sufficiently read somewhere in a journal or in popular books, how Mr Cantor proceeded in order to demonstrate to you that the transfinite dimension in numbers is absolutely not reducible to that of the infinity of the series of whole numbers, namely, that one can always fabricate a new number which had not been included in principle in this series of whole numbers, however astonishing this may appear to you, and this, with nothing more than a certain way of operating on the series of figures in accordance with the method that is called diagonal. In short, the opening to this undoubtedly testable order which has a right, quite simply just as much as any other term to the qualification of truthful, was this order there, awaiting Mr Cantor's operation from all eternity? Here is a question that has its value and which has nothing to do with that of the (16) priority of reality with respect to its representation. A question which has all its weight. It is a combinatorial and the dimension of truth that is deployed in it is what allows there to emerge in the most authentic way what is involved in the truth that it determines before knowledge (*savoir*) is born from it.

This indeed is why an element of this combinatorial can come to play the role of representative of representation and justifies the insistence that I put on the fact that this is how there ought to be translated the German term in Freud of *Vorstellungrepräsentanz*. That it is not because of a simple personal sensitivity that every time that I see emerging in one or other marginal note the translation ideational-representative, I only denounce in it, I only designate in it, in a quite valid way, an intention, precisely this confusing intention. And it is a matter of knowing why such and such become the holders of it in a certain place in the analytic field. In this order, formal quarrels are not vain because they bring along with them a whole subjective presumption which is properly speaking in question. We will subsequently have to bring in one or other pinpointing which will allow us to orientate ourselves on this point. It is not my object today when, as I told you, it is a matter only of introducing the function that I have to develop before you. But already, I indicate that in simply marking with three reference points something that has the function of a term like that of set, in mathematical theory, to show in it the distance, the distinction from that of class

in use for a much longer time, and to hook onto it in a relation of articulation which shows that what I am going to say is inserted there by a certain articulated difference, and which implicates it in the same order, this order of the subjective positions of being which was the true subject, the secret title of the second year of teaching that I gave here under the name of *Crucial Problems*, to refer to the distinction between set and class, the function of the object insofar as the σ takes on its whole value of subjective opposition. This is what we will have to do at the right time. I am only marking it here as a boundary stone whose indication and at the same time whose essence you will rediscover when we shall have to start from it again. For today, having marked then what is at stake, I want to start again from the physiologising reference in order to show this something which, perhaps is going to illuminate in the most efficacious way possible, what (17) I mean by the term of psychoanalytic act. And since we have so easily criticized the assimilation of the term action to motor activity, it will perhaps be easier, more comfortable for us, to grasp what is involved in this fallacious model. For to support it with something which comes from everyday experience, for example the triggering of a tendon reflex, I believe that from now on, it will perhaps be easier for you to see that it constitutes a functioning which, I do not see why, is called automatic, since automation has well and truly in its essence a reference to chance, while what is implied in the dimension of the reflex, is precisely the contrary. But let us leave that.

Is it not obvious that we cannot conceive in a rational fashion of what is involved in the reflex arc, except as something in which the motor element is nothing other than what is situated in the little instrument, the hammer with which one triggers it. And that what is picked up is nothing other than a sign, a sign in this case of what we can call the integrity of a certain level of the medullar system. And in this sense a sign of which it must indeed be said that what is most indicative about it is precisely when it is absent, namely, when it condemns the non-integrity of this system. For on the subject of what is involved in this integrity, it does not give us very much. On the contrary, its value as a sign of lack, of lesion, which has a positive value, yes, there is taken on its whole value.

To make of this something which has only the entity and the meaning of being something isolated in the functioning of the organism, isolated in function of a certain questioning that we can call clinical questioning, who knows, we can push it further, indeed, even the desire of the clinician, is something which does not give to this totality that we call the reflex arc, any special title to serve as a conceptual model for anything whatsoever that can be considered as fundamental, elementary, an original reduction of a response of the living organism.

But let us go further, let us go to something which is infinitely more subtle than this elementary model, namely, the conception of the reflex at the level of what you will indeed allow me to call, because this is what I am going to interest myself in: Pavlovian ideology.

This is to say that I intend here to question, not at all certainly from the point of view of any absolute critique, but for what, as you are going to see, it brings us as a suggestion about what is involved in the analytic position. I certainly do not (18) dream of depreciating the totality of the works that have been inscribed in this ideology. I am not saying anything either which goes too far, in saying that it proceeds from a project of materialist development - and it avows it - from something which is a function in which it is a matter precisely of reducing the reference which might be made - as if what was at stake here again is a terrain where it would be necessary to fight - to some entity of the order of the spirit.

The perspective of Pavlovian ideology, in this sense, is much better accommodated, for its part, than this first order of reference that I indicated with the reflex arc and that we could call the organo-dynamic reference. This perspective is much better accommodated in effect because it is organised from the grip of a sign on a function that, for its part, is always organised around a need. I have no need, I think, you have all done enough secondary studies to know that the usual model by which it is introduced into the manuals, and which we can also make use of now to support what we are going to say, of the association of the fact of the sound of a trumpet, for example, to the presentation of a piece of meat before an animal, a carnivorous one of course, is supposed to obtain after a certain number of repetitions the triggering of a gastric secretion, provided that the animal in question has in effect a stomach, and this, even, after the untying, the freeing of the association, which is of course carried out in the sense of maintaining only the sound of the trumpet. The effect being easily demonstrated by the fitting of a stomach fistula. I mean that one collects in it the juice emitted, after a certain number of repetitions, from the simple production of the sound of the trumpet.

I would dare to qualify this Pavlovian enterprise as extraordinarily correct as regards its perspective. For in effect what it is a matter of grounding, when it is a matter of accounting for the possibility of higher forms of such and such a functioning of the mind, it is obviously from this grasp on the living organism of something, which here, only takes on its illustrative value, from the fact of not being an adequate stimulus for the need that is involved in the affair; and even properly speaking to be only connoted in the field of perception by being really detached from any object of eventual fruition, fruition meaning enjoyment (*jouissance*). I did not mean to say enjoyment, for since I already put a certain stress on the word enjoyment, I do not want to introduce it here with its whole context; fruit is the contrary of useful. It is not a useable object that is at stake. It is the object of the appetite founded on the elementary needs of the living (19) being. It is in so far as the sound of the trumpet has nothing to do with anything that might interest a dog, for example, at any rate in the field in which his appetite is awakened by the sight of a piece of meat, that Pavlov legitimately introduces it into the field of the experiment.

Only if I say that this way of operating is extraordinarily correct, it is very precisely in the measure that Pavlov reveals himself there, as I might say, to be a structuralist at the start. At the start of his experiment, he is a structuralist ahead of time, a structuralist of the strictest observance, namely, of the Lacanian observance, in so far as precisely what he demonstrates there, what he holds in a way to be implicated there, is very precisely something that means that the signifier, namely, that the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier.

Here in effect is how to illustrate what I have just put forward. The sound of the trumpet represents nothing other here than the subject of science, namely, Pavlov himself. It represents it for whom? For what? Obviously for nothing other than for something which is not a sign, but a signifier, namely, this sign of gastric secretion, which only takes on its value, very precisely, from the fact that it is not produced by the object that one would expect to produce it, that it is an effect of deception, that the need in question is adulterated and that the dimension in which there is installed what is produced at the level of the stomach fistula, is what is involved, namely, the organism in this case is deceived.

There is indeed an effect then, a demonstration of something which, if you look more closely at it, is not of course that you are going to make a completely different type of animal from a dog. All Pavlovian experimentation would really be of no interest if it were not a matter of constructing the essential possibility of the grasp of something which is well and truly, and not to be defined otherwise, than as the effect of the signifier on a field which is the living field. This has no other repercussion, I mean theoretical repercussion, than to allow it to be conceived how, where there is language, there is no need to search for a reference in a spiritual entity. But who dreams of it now? And who could be interested in it? It must all the same be highlighted that what is demonstrated by the Pavlovian experiment, namely, that there is no operation involving signifiers as such which does not imply the presence of the subject, is not entirely the first thing that foolish people may think about.

(20) It is in no way the dog who gives this proof and not even for Mr Pavlov, because Mr Pavlov constructs this experiment precisely to show that one can do very well without a hypothesis about what the dog thinks. The subject whose existence is demonstrated, or rather the demonstration of his existence, it is not at all the dog who gives it, but, as everyone knows, Mr Pavlov himself, because he is the one who blows into the trumpet, he or one of his helpers, it does not matter. I made a remark incidentally, saying that, of course, what is implied in this experiment, what is implied is the possibility of something which demonstrates the function of the signifier and its relation to the subject. And I added that, of course, no one had the intention of obtaining in this way anything whatsoever of the order of a change in the nature of the animal. What I mean by that is something which has indeed its interest. It is that one does not even obtain a modification of the order of those that we must indeed suppose to have

taken place, at the time when this animal who is called a dog was made pass over to the domestic state.

It must be admitted that the dog has not been domesticated since the time of the earthly paradise. So then, there was a moment when people were able to make of this animal not at all, certainly, an animal endowed with language but an animal as regards which, perhaps, it seems to me that it would be interesting to examine whether this question, the one which is formulated as follows, namely, whether the dog, perhaps, can be said in a way to know (*savoir*) that we are speaking, as is apparently the case. What sense is to be given here to the word *savoir*? This appears to be just as interesting a question at least as the one raised by the *montage* of the conditioned or conditional reflex.

What strikes me, rather, is the way in which in the course of these experiments we never receive from the experimenters the least testimony of what is involved and which, nevertheless, must exist, in the personal relations, as I might say, between the animal and the experimenter. I do not want to play the tune of the Society for the Protection of Animals, but you must admit that it would all the same be very interesting, and that perhaps there, one would learn a little more about what can be called neurosis at the level of animals, than what is registered in practice. For one aims, in the practice of these experimental stimulations, when they are pushed to the point of producing these sorts of diverse disorders which go from inhibition to disorganised barking, and that are qualified as (21) neurosis on the sole pretext of something, which firstly is provoked, secondly, has become completely inadequate with respect to external conditions as if for a long time the animal has not been outside all of these conditions, and which in no case, of course, has the right under any heading to be assimilated to what precisely analysis allows us to qualify as constituting neurosis in a being who speaks.

In short, we see it not alone here, Mr Pavlov shows himself in the fundamental instauration of his experiment, as I said, to be a structuralist and one of the strictest observance. But one could say that, even what he receives as response, has really all the characteristics of what we have defined as fundamental in the relation of the speaking being to language, namely, that he receives his own message in an inverted form. My formula produced a long time ago applies here quite appropriately, for what happens? What he hooked onto, put in second place: the sound of the trumpet as one might say, first, to illustrate with respect to the physiological sequence set up by him at the level of the organ, a stomach fistula, what does he get now? What he gets is an inverse sequence in which the animal's reaction presents itself as attached to this sound of the trumpet. For us in all of this there is very little mystery, which moreover takes nothing from the import of the benefits which were able to be produced in this sort of experimentation, at the level of one or other point of cerebral functioning. But what interest us are its aims. That its aims are only obtained at the cost of a certain miscognition of what constitutes the structure of the experiment at the start, is designed to alert us to what this experiment signifies *qua* act, for this

subject - Pavlov here - who in this case does nothing more than very exactly, and without being aware of it, pick up in the most correct form the benefits of a construction which can be very exactly assimilated to the one imposed on us, once it is a matter of the relation of the speaking being to language. This is something, in any case, that deserves to be highlighted, if only because it has been left out of the demonstrative point, as one might say, of the whole operation.

In connection with the whole field of activities described as scientific at a certain historical period, this aim of a reduction described as “materialist” deserves to be taken as such for what it is, namely, symptomatic. Should they have believed in God, someone is going to shout at me. But in truth, it is so true (22) that this whole construction described as materialist or organicist, as we might say again, in medicine, is very well accepted by spiritual authorities.

In the final count, all of this leads us to ecumenism. There is a certain way of carrying out the reduction of the field of the divine which, in its final term, in its final source, is quite favourable in ensuring that all the little fish are finally gathered into the same big net. This, which is even manifestly more tangible, is spread out - as I might say - before us, this tangible fact which is manifestly spread out before your eyes, ought all the same inspire in us a certain withdrawal as regards what is involved - as I might say - in the relations to truth in a certain context.

If the lucubrations of logicians at a time now ended, considered as relegated in the order of the values of thinking, which is called the Middle Ages, if the simple lucubrations of logicians were able to draw down major condemnations, and if on one or other point of doctrine in the field on which we operate, and which were called heresies, people very quickly came to the point of strangling one another, of massacring one another, why think that these are the effects, as they say, the effects of fanaticism? Why the invocation of such a register, when perhaps it would be enough to conclude from it that one or other statement about the relations of knowledge could communicate, were infinitely more sensitive at that time in the subject, to the effects of truth.

We no longer retain anything from all these debates that are rightly or wrongly called theological - we will have to come back to this, to what is involved in theology - except texts that we know how to read more or less well, and which, in many cases in no way deserve the title of dust-covered. What we, perhaps, do not suspect, for example, is that this had, perhaps, immediate, direct consequences in the market place, at the school door, and if necessary in household life, in sexual relations. Why should such a thing not be conceivable? It would be enough to introduce a different dimension to that of fanaticism, that of seriousness, for example.

How does it come about that, that as regards what is stated in the framework of our teaching functions and of what is called the university, how does it happen

that, on the whole, things are in such a state that it is not absolutely scandalous to formulate that everything that is served up to us by the *Universitas Litterarum*, the Arts Faculty, which still has the upper hand on what are nobly (23) called the Human Sciences, is a knowledge (*savoir*) titrated in such a way that in no case does it have in fact any kind of consequence. It is true that there is the other side, the *Universitas* no longer holds its place very well because there is something else which is introduced into it and which is called the Science Faculty.

I would point out to you that in the Science Faculty, because of the mode of inscription of the development of science as such, things cannot be so distant. Because here it has proved that the condition of the progress of science, is that people want to know nothing about the consequences of what this knowledge of science involves at the level of truth. These consequences are allowed to develop all by themselves.

For a considerable time in the historical field, people who already well and truly deserved the title of *savant* looked twice before they put into circulation certain systems, certain styles of knowledge that they had perfectly well glimpsed. There was a certain Mr Gauss, for example, who is rather well known, who had rather advanced ideas on this. He allowed other mathematicians to put them in circulation thirty years later while it was already in his own papers. It appeared to him that, perhaps, the consequences at the level of truth deserved to be taken into consideration.

All of this to tell you that the complaisance, indeed, the consideration the Pavlovian theory enjoys in the Science Faculty, where it has the greatest prestige, depends perhaps on the fact which I emphasise, and which is properly speaking its futile dimension. Futile, you do not know perhaps what that means, in fact. Neither do I, I did not know up to a certain moment, up to the moment when I found myself, found myself stumbling by chance on the use of the word *futilis* in a corner of Ovid, where that means properly speaking, a vase that leaks (*fuit*).

Leakage (*la fuite*), I hope I have sufficiently circumscribed it, finds itself at the base of the Pavlovian edifice. Namely, that what it is a matter of demonstrating has not been demonstrated, since it is already said at the beginning. That simply Mr Pavlov demonstrates here that he is a structuralist, except that he does not know it himself. But this obviously takes away any import from what may claim to be here any proof whatsoever, and that moreover all that is to be demonstrated has really only a very reduced interest, given that the question of what God is about, is hidden somewhere quite different. And, in a word, everything that is concealed in terms of foundations for belief, of hope for (24) knowledge, of an ideology of progress in the Pavlovian functioning, if you look closely at it, resides only in the fact that the possibilities that the Pavlovian experimentation demonstrates, are supposed to be already there in the brain.

That one should obtain from the manipulation of the dog in the context of signifying articulation, effects, results, which suggests the possibility of a higher degree of complication of these reactions has nothing astonishing about it because we introduce this complication. But what is implied is entirely in what I highlighted earlier, namely, whether the things that one reveals are already there beforehand.

What is at stake when what we are dealing with is the divine dimension and generally that of the spirit, turns entirely around the following: what do we suppose to be already there before we discover it. If in a whole field it proves that it would not be futile, but frivolous, to think that this knowledge (*savoir*) is already there, waiting for us before we make it emerge, this could be of a nature to make us carry out a so much more profound questioning.

This indeed is going to be what is at stake in connection with the psychoanalytic act.

The time forces me to stop here the remarks that I am making before you today. You will see the next time in getting closer to what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, in this ideological model, whose paradoxical constitution as I told you consists in the fact that someone can ground an experience, can ground an experience on presuppositions that are profoundly unknown to himself. And what does it mean that they are unknown to him? This is not the only dimension to bring into play, that of ignorance, I mean, concerning the properly structural presuppositions of the instauration of the experience. There is another much more original dimension, to which I have been alluding for a long time, it is the one that next time I will venture to introduce in its turn.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 22 November 1967.

I cannot say that the crowd of you who are here this year does not pose me a problem. What does that mean for a discourse which, if there were any doubt about it, I repeated it often enough for it to be known, which, essentially is addressed to psychoanalysts. It is true that my place here, the one from which I am speaking to you, already bears sufficient witness to something that happened which puts me in an eccentric position with respect to them. The very place that for years, in short, I have done nothing but question, what I took this year as subject: the psychoanalytic act. It is clear that what I said the last time, could not but encounter this murmur of satisfaction which came to me about the general opinion of the audience, if I can express myself in this way, which in

truth, for a part (those necessarily who are there, given this number, who are coming here for the first time) for a part then, who came to see because they had been told that they would comprehend nothing. And in fact they had a pleasant surprise.

In truth as I pointed out in passing, to speak about Pavlov in this case as I did, was indeed to lend a helping hand to the feeling of comprehension since, as I said, nothing is more respected than the Pavlovian enterprise, especially in the Arts Faculty. But it is all the same from that quarter that on the whole you come to me. Does that mean that this sort of approval pleases me in any way? You have no doubt: certainly not, since after all, moreover, this is not what you come looking for either.

To get to the nub, it seems to me that if something can decently explain this (26) crowd, it is something that in any case would not depend on this misapprehension that I do not lend myself to. Hence, the type of expectation to which I alluded earlier, is all the same something which for its part is not a misapprehension, and it encourages me to do my best to face up to what I called this crowd. The fact is that, to a greater or lesser degree, those who come, on the whole, it is because they have the feeling that here something is being stated which might indeed, who knows, be of importance.

It is obvious that if this how things are, this crowd is justified since the principle of the teaching that we will describe, as a way of crudely situating things, university teaching, is precisely that anything whatsoever in everything that touches on the most burning subjects, indeed current politics, for example, all of this should be presented, put into circulation, precisely in such a way that it is of no importance. This is at the very least the function that university teaching has satisfied for a long time in developed countries. This indeed is the reason moreover why the university is at home in them, because where it does not satisfy it, in underdeveloped countries, there is a tension. So then it fulfils its function properly in developed countries. The fact is that it is tolerable in that whatever is professed in it does not involve any disorder.

Naturally, it is not on the plane of disorder that we will consider the consequences of what I am saying here, but the public suspects that at a certain level, which is precisely that of those to whom I am addressing myself, namely, the psychoanalysts, there is a certain tension. This, in effect, is what is at stake as regards the psychoanalytic act. Because today we are going to advance a little bit further. We are going to see what is involved for those who practise this act. Namely, this is what defines them, those who are capable of such an act, and capable in a way that they can situate themselves in it, as they say among the other acts, sporting or technical, as professionals.

Assuredly, from this act, in so far as one makes a profession of it, there results a position as regards which it is natural that one feels assured in what one knows, in what one possesses from one's experience. Nevertheless, this is one of the

ways, one of the interests of what I am advancing this year. There results from the proper nature of this act a field which, it is not unimportant to say it, I did not even skim the surface of the last time. On the nature of this act there depend more serious consequences as regards what results from the position that must (27) be held, if one is skilled in exercising it.

It is here that there can be situated, curiously, as you are going to see, the fact that I can allow others beside analysts, non-analysts, to conceive of what it is in this act which, all the same, concerns them.

The psychoanalytic act concerns very directly and in the first place, I would say, those who do not make a profession of it. It will be enough here to indicate that, if it is true as I teach that what is at stake here is something like a conversion in the position which results for the subject as regards what is involved in his relation to knowledge, how can we not immediately admit that there cannot but be established a really dangerous gap if only some people take an adequate view of this subversion, since that was what I called it, of the subject. Is it even conceivable that the subversion of the subject, and not of one or other elective moment in a particular life, should be something that is even imaginable as being produced only here and there, indeed at a particular gathering point at which all of those who have not undergone this turnabout, comfort one another?

The fact that the subject is only realisable in each one, of course, leaves no less intact its status as structure precisely, and put forward in the structure. Henceforth, it already appears that to make understood not outside, but in a certain relation to the analytic community what there is in this act which interests everyone, cannot but allow there to be seen more clearly within this community what is desired as regards the status that those who make an active profession of this act can give themselves. And this is how the approach that we find ourselves taking this year in tackling it, as we were able the last time to put forward about what must precisely be distinguished at first, as one can, in flicking through pages see it sometimes presented, the act from motor activity. And attempting immediately to go through some stages, which are in no way presented as an apodictic approach, which cannot, which above all does not, claim to proceed by way of a sort of introduction which is supposed to be on the psychological scale of greater or lesser depth. It is, on the contrary, in the presentation of accidents regarding what is stated about this act, that we are going to seek the diversely situated flashes of light that allow us to grasp where the problem really is. So that in having spoken about Pavlov, I was not looking for any classical reference in this connection, but rather pointing out what is in (28) effect in the corner of not a few memories. Namely, the convergence noted in a classic work, that of Dalbiez, between Pavlovian experimentation and Freud's mechanisms. Of course, this still has its little effect, especially given the epoch. You cannot imagine, given the background of the psychoanalytic position, how precarious it felt, what joy some people experienced at the time, as they say, namely, in the years 1928 or 30, that psychoanalysis was spoken about in the Sorbonne. Whatever may be the interest of this work, carried out, I

must say, with great care, and full of relevant remarks, the sort of comfort that can be drawn from the fact that Mr Dalbiez articulates, my God, relevantly that there is in a sense no derogation between the psychology, the physiology of Pavlov and the mechanisms of the unconscious, is extremely weak, extremely weak, why? For the reasons that I noted for you the last time, namely, that the link from signifier to signifier in so far as we know it to be subjectifying in its nature is introduced by Pavlov in the very setting up of the experiment. And, therefore, there is nothing astonishing in the fact that what is constructed from it rejoins the analogical structures that we find in analytic experience in as much as you have seen that I was able to formulate the determination of the subject in it as founded on this link of signifier to signifier.

It nevertheless remains that except for the fact that they find themselves closer to one another than either to the conception of Pierre Janet, this indeed is what Dalbiez emphasises, we will not have gained very much from such a *rapprochement* founded precisely on the failure to recognise what grounds it. But what interests us still more is Pavlov's failure to recognise the implication that I called, more or less humorously, structuralist, not at all humorously in the fact that it is structuralist, humorously in as much as I called him a Lacanian structuralist, as it happens. This is where I stopped, suspended around the question: what is involved in what one can call here, from a certain perspective, what? A form of ignorance? Is that sufficient? No. We are not going, all the same, from the fact that an experimenter does not question himself about the nature of what he is introducing into the field of experimentation, (it is legitimate for him to do so, but let him go no further into what might be called this prior question!) we are not, all the same, going to introduce here these functions of the unconscious.

(29) Something else is necessary which, in truth, we are lacking. Perhaps this other thing will be given to us in a way that is more manageable to see, something quite different. Namely, let us go at it immediately in a crude way. A psychoanalyst who, before an audience - it is always necessary to take into account the ears that any formula whatsoever is addressed to - a psychoanalyst who puts forward this remark which was recently reported to me: "I do not admit any psychoanalytic concept that I have not verified on a rat!"

Even to ears that were prepared, and it was the case at the time of this statement, they were ears as one might say, and at the time, because this remark was made at an already distant epoch, let us say fifteen years ago, it was to a communist friend since it was he who reported it to me fifteen years later, he was the one addressed by the psychoanalyst in question, even to ears which might have seen in it something or other, like a reminiscence, the remark appeared a little crude.

This then was reported to me recently and far from expressing a doubt, I began to dream out loud, and addressing myself to someone who was on my right during this meeting, I said: So and so it quite capable of having made this

remark. I named him, I will not name him here, he is the one that in my *Ecrits* I call the “*benêt*”.

“*Benêt*” says the excellent dictionary that I often speak to you about, that of *Bloch et von Wartburg*, is a late form of *benoît*, which comes from *benedictus*, and its modern sense is a subtle illusion, which results from this remark written in chapter 5, paragraph 3 of Matthew “Blessed (*bénis*) are the poor in spirit”.

In truth, this is what makes me pin the name *benêt* on the person in question. And, as it happens, my interlocutor immediately said to me: “But yes, he was the one who said it to me”. Up to a certain point, he was the only one who could have said it.

I do not necessarily lack respect for the person who could in a theoretical statement about psychoanalysis make such an astonishing remark. I consider the fact to be rather a fact of structure that, in truth, does not properly speaking involve the qualification of poverty of spirit. For me it was rather a charitable gesture to impute to him the happiness reserved for the aforesaid poor in spirit. I am almost certain that to take up such a position is not any kind of chance, either good or bad that is involved, either subjective or objective, but that, in truth, he must feel himself rather beyond chance to come to such extremes. And (30) also moreover you can see that his case, far from being unique, if you consult a certain page of my *Ecrits*, that of the Rome discourse where I give an account of what is put forward by a certain Masserman who in the United States has the position of what in Alain is called an Important Person. This Important Person in the same search no doubt for comfort, gives a glorious account of the researches of a Mr Hudgins, on which I dwelt at the time, it is already a long time ago, it is the same time as the remarks that I reported to you earlier. He gives a glorious account of what he was able to obtain from a reflex which was also conditioned, constructed in a subject, this time a human one, in such a way that the contraction of the pupil was regularly produced by pronouncing the word “contract”. The two pages of irony that I developed, because it was necessary to do so at the time to be even heard, namely, whether the link supposedly determined in this way between the sound and what he believes to be language, appeared to him to be also sustained if one substituted for “contract”, “marriage contract”, or “contract bridge” or “breach of contract” or even if one concentrated the word until it is reduced to its first syllable, is obviously the sign that there is something here in the breach of which it is not vain to maintain oneself, since others choose it as a key point in the comprehension of what is a stake.

Perhaps after all this personage will tell me that I cannot but see here a contribution to this dominance that I accord to language in analytic determinism. This indeed shows in effect the degree of confusion that one can come to from a certain perspective.

The psychoanalytic act, you see then, can consist in questioning first of all, and starting - of course, this is necessary - from what one considers must be set aside, the act as it is effectively conceived of in the psychoanalytic circle with the critique of what this may involve. But this may, all the same also, this conjunction of two words, "the psychoanalytic-act", evoke for us something quite different, namely, the act as it operates psychoanalytically, what the psychoanalyst directs of his action into psychoanalytic operancy. In this case then, of course, we are at a completely differently level.

Is it interpretation? Is it to transference that we are thus brought? What is the essence of the act of the psychoanalyst *qua* operating? What is his part in the (31) game? This is something which psychoanalysts do not fail, in effect, to question among themselves. Here is something about which, thank God, they put forward more relevant propositions, even though they are far from being univocal or even progressive as the years go by.

There is something else. Namely, the act, I would say, as it is read in psychoanalysis. What is an act for the psychoanalyst? It will be enough, I think, to make myself understood at this level, for me to articulate, for me to recall, what each and every one of you know, that no one is ignorant of in our time, namely, what is called the symptomatic act, so particularly characterised by the slip of the tongue, or moreover by this level which in general can be classified as belonging to the register, as one says, of daily action, hence the awkward term of "*Psychopathology of everyday life*", of what properly speaking has its centre in the fact that what is always at stake, and even when it is a matter of a slip of the tongue, is its aspect of act.

It is here indeed that we see the value of the reminder that I gave about the ambiguity left at the conceptual basis of psychoanalysis between motor activity and act. It is assuredly by reason of these theoretical starting points that Freud favours this displacement precisely at the moment that, in a chapter to which I will perhaps have time to come later, concerning what is involved in mistakes, *Vergreifung*, as it is called, he recalls that it is quite natural that one should come to this after seven or eight chapters on the field of the act, since like language, he says, we will be remaining here on the motor plane. On the contrary, it is quite clear that everything in this chapter and in the one which follows, the one about accidental or again symptomatic actions, there will never be anything else at stake than this dimension that we have posited as constitutive of every act, namely, its signifying dimension. There is nothing introduced in these chapters about the act except the fact that it is posited as signifying.

Nevertheless, it is not so simple, for if it takes on its value, its articulation as a signifying act with regard to what Freud then introduces as unconscious, it is certainly not that it shows itself off, that it posits itself as act. It is quite the contrary. It is more than effaced here as an activity, as the person involved says, an activity to fill a gap, which only occurs if one is not thinking about it, in the measure that one does not concern oneself with it, which is only there where it is

expressed, for a whole part of his activities, to occupy hands that are supposedly distracted from any mental relation. Or again, this act is going to put its sense (32) precisely on what it is a matter of attacking, of shaking, its sense under the protection of awkwardness and failure. Here then is what analytic intervention is. The act then, a reversal similar to the one that we carried out the last time about that of the very motor aspect of the reflex that Pavlov calls absolute. This motor aspect is not in the fact that the leg stretches out because you have tapped a tendon. The motor aspect is where one holds the hammer to provoke this. But if the act is in the reading of the act, does that mean that this reading is simply added on and that it is from the act reduced *Nachträglich* (subsequently) that it takes on its value? You know the stress that I have laid for a long time on this term which would not figure in the Freudian vocabulary, if I had not extracted it from Freud's text. I was the first and, moreover, in truth, for a long while the only one.

This term has its value. It is not simply Freudian. Heidegger uses it, with a different perspective it is true, when it is a matter for him of questioning the relationships between being and *Rede*. The symptomatic act must already contain in itself something which at least prepares it for this way in, for that which for us, in our perspective, will realise its plenitude as act, but subsequently. I insist on it, and it is important from now on to mark it. What is the status of the act? It must be said to be new, and even unheard of if one gives its full sense, the one we started from, the one which has from all time been valid about the status of the act.

And then what? After these three acceptations, the psychoanalyst in his acts of affirmation, namely, what he utters when he has to give an account very especially of what is involved for him about this status of the act. And here a lucky turn of events means that quite recently, precisely, someone, in a certain context, called that of the psychoanalysts of the romance languages, had to give a report, an account of what is envisaged from the point of view of the authorised psychoanalyst about the *passage à l'acte*, or again acting out. Here after all, why not, is a very good example to take, which I did moreover, since it is available to us. I opened the report by one of them called Olivier Flournoy, a celebrated name, the third generation of great psychiatrists, the first being Theodore, the second Henri. And you know the celebrated case by which Theodore remains immortal in the analytic tradition: this deluded clairvoyant with the marvellous name on whom he produced a whole work. And you will greatly profit from it if the work comes into your hands. I believe that it is not widely available at the moment. So then, in the third generation, this young man (33) puts forward something to us which consists in taking at least a part of the field, the one that the other *rapporteur* who spoke about acting out did not take. He is going to deal with *l'agir* [acting], and since, no doubt, people believe not without foundation that there is an acting in what concerns transference, he puts forward some questions about transference which, moreover, have the value of propositions.

I am not of course going to read it for you, because there is nothing more difficult to put up with than reading before such a large audience. Nevertheless, in order to give you the tone of it, I will take the first paragraph which goes more or less as follows:

“From this review of the recent evolution of ideas from which one always gathers the impression of something obscure and unsatisfying. ... Why should a regression imply transference, namely, the absence of memory and an acting in the form of a transformation of the analyst, by projection and introjection, and why does it not simply imply regressive behaviour? Namely, its own structure. In other words, why does it evoke transference? Why does an infantilising situation imply transference, and not an infantile behaviour based on the model of child-parent behaviour, alluding to another register which puts the accent on development and on the antecedents of development and no longer on the proper category of regression which alludes to the phases located in analysis. Indeed, he adds, repeating a conflictual situation and even drawing its force from it.”

Is this enough to confer on this behaviour the epithet of transference? What do I mean, in already announcing to you the question introduced in this tone. It is assuredly, and everything that follows will demonstrate it, a certain tone, a certain style of interrogating transference. I mean, to take things in a rather lively way, and in putting its very concept in question as radically as possible. This is something that I did myself very exactly nine years ago or more exactly almost nine and a half years ago, in what I entitled “*The direction of the treatment and the principle of its power*”.

In truth you can find there in chapter 3, page 102, “Where have we got to with transference”, the questions which are posed here. Posed and developed with infinitely greater breadth and in a way which, at the time, was absolutely without an equivalent. I mean that what since then has made its way, I am certainly not (34) saying thanks to my opening things up, but through a kind of convergence of times which meant, for example, that someone called Sachs [Szasz?] posed the most radical questions about the status of transference. So radical, I would even say, that, in truth, transference is considered as so much at the mercy of the very status of the analytic situation that it is posited as being properly the very concept which would make psychoanalysis worthy of objection. Because things have got to the point that a psychoanalyst of the strictest observance - and one very well placed in the American hierarchy - can find nothing better to say to define transference than that it is a mode of defence of the analyst. That it is to keep at a distance the reactions, whatever they may be, obtained in the situation and which might seem to involve him too directly, concern him, be his responsibility, properly speaking, that analysis forges, invents the concept of transference. Thanks to which he decides, he judges in such a way that he says, in short, essentially, in the radical foundation of this concept, that he has not for his part any share in the aforesaid reaction. And specifically not by being there as an analyst. But simply being able to highlight in them what they contain in terms of a revival, a reproduction, of previous behaviour, of living stages of the

subject, who finds himself reproducing them, acting them instead of remembering them.

Here then is what is at stake and what Flournoy confronts, with some spirit no doubt, but giving its whole place to the conception to which, at the extreme position, there seem to be reduced within psychoanalysis itself, those who believe themselves to be in the way of theorising it.

If this extreme position, which, once it is introduced, is going to have its consequences, I mean that for Szasz everything depends, in the final analysis, on the capacity for strict objectivity in the analyst. And since this can be in any case only a postulate, the whole of analysis from this point of view is doomed to a radical interrogation, to a fundamental putting in question of every point where it intervenes.

God knows I have never gone that far, and with good reason, in the questioning of analysis. And it is, in effect, remarkable as well as strange, that in the circles where people are most attached to maintaining its status socially, the questions can in short within this circle be pushed so far that what is at stake is nothing less than whether analysis in itself is well founded or illusory.

(35) This would be a very disturbing phenomenon if we did not find in the same context, as one might say, the foundation of what is called information, which is established on the basis of total liberty. Only, let us not forget, we are in the American context. And everyone knows that however broad may be the liberty to think, a commonsense liberty and from all the ways in which it is expressed, we know very well what it involves. Namely that, in short, one can say anything at all, that what counts is what is already well and truly established. Consequently from the moment that the psychoanalytic societies are firmly established on their base, one can also say that the concept of transference is worth damn all. That does not affect anything. This indeed is what is at stake. Very precisely, it is also indeed here that, by taking a different tone, our lecturer is going to be engulfed and that henceforth we are going to see the concept of transference remitted to the discretion of a reference, to what one can, all the same, call a little story, the one from which no doubt, apparently, it emerged, namely, the history of Breuer, of Freud and Anna O, which, between ourselves, shows much more interesting things than what is made of it in this case, and what is made of it in this case goes very far. I mean that we are going to see being highlighted the third relation, of course, the fact that Freud first of all protected, defended himself, as it is put, and by means of transference, by sheltering himself from the fact that, as he says to his fiancée - for there is also the fiancée naturally in the explanation we are dealing with, because there is going to be a question of nothing less than what I called the other day the act of the birth of psychoanalysis - he will say to his fiancée that these are things, of course, that could only happen to someone like Breuer.

A certain type of relevance, even cheap daring, which is going to make transference appear to us as being entirely linked to accidental conjunctions. Indeed later, as one of them announces, a specialist in hypnotism, that later when the incident reoccurs with Freud himself, at that very moment the maid came in. Who knows, if the maid had not come in, what might have happened? So in that case Freud was able to re-establish the third party situation. The maidly superego played its role and allowed him to re-establish what has been since then the natural defence. It is written in this report that when a woman coming out of hypnosis throws her arms around you should say to yourself: "I welcome her as a daughter".

This sort of *mühen* of trivialities is obviously what more and more is the law of what I called earlier the act of affirmation of the analyst. The more one affirms (36) oneself from trivialities, the more one engenders respect.

It is all the same curious that this report which, no doubt, this can be seen by many signs, and it is in this sense that I am asking you on this occasion to get to know it - that will increase the sale of the next *Revue de Psychanalyse*, the organ of the *Société Psychanalytique de Paris* - to see if there is not some relation between this audacious meditation and what I was stating nine years previously. In truth the question, will remain eternally undecided, since the author in these lines bears no witness to it. But some lines, some pages further on, something happens to him. Namely, that at the moment when he is speaking, my God, of what is in question - because it is a personal advance - the tone that he has just given to things, consists in highlighting in it what he nobly calls "the inter-subjective relation".

Everyone knows that if you read the Rome Discourse quickly you may think that this is what I am talking about. You can discover the dimension of the inter-subjective relation through intermediaries other than me, since this error, this misconstruction, which consists in believing that this is what I re-introduced into a psychoanalysis that ignored it too much, was made by many people around me at that time. And if you are formed by them you could indeed, in effect, put forward the inter-subjective experience as a reference to be recalled in this context.

"It is this inter-subjective context", he writes, "which appears original to me in analysis. It explodes the straitjacket of the diagnosis described as 'mental affection'. Not that psychopathology is a useless word. It is undoubtedly indispensable for an exchange between individuals outside the experience. But its meaning evaporates during the treatment." You see the tone except that between "not that psychopathology is a useless word", and "it is of course indispensable", a parenthesis explodes and I ask you what justifies it here.

"In this connection in re-reading an *Ecrit* of Lacan, I was astonished to see that he speaks about the sick person (*du malade*), he who is oriented above all towards language".

This relates to me as you are going to see. I must say that I do not know in which of my writings I speak about the sick person. It is not, in effect, quite my style. I am not going to object to it. In any case but the idea of paging through the nine hundred and fifty pages of my *Ecrits* to see where I speak about the sick person is not one that would have come to me.

(37) On page 70 on the contrary, I find 'desire'. "Desire of what one is not, desire which cannot be satisfied, or even a desire to be unsatisfied as Lacan, Lacan in the same *Ecrits* quoted" ... (ah! what a relief, we are going to be able to see) ... "in the same *Ecrits* quoted, unceremoniously presents it with respect to the butcher's wife". And there is a little note on what I say about the butcher's wife, which is fairly well known, because it is a rather brilliant piece. You might expect that this is what is referred to. Not at all. You are referred back to the butcher's wife in Freud. Good for me, I can use that. I can go searching not for the passage about the butcher's wife that you will find on page 620, but what is at stake:

"This theory, (I am taking the second theory of transference) whatever point of degradation it has come to recently in France" - it is object relations that is at stake, and as I explain, I am dealing with Maurice Bouvet - "has, like geneticism its noble origin. It is Abraham who opened up its the register, the notion of partial object is his original contribution. This is not the place to demonstrate its value. We are more interested in indicating its link to the partiality of the aspect that Abraham detaches from transference in order to promote it in its opacity as the capacity to love, as if this were, (this capacity to love), a constitutional given in the sick person in which there can be read the degree of his curability..."

I will spare you the rest, this "in the sick person" is thus attributed to Abraham.

I apologise for having developed before you such a long story. But it is to make the link between what I called just now the psychoanalyst in his acts of affirmation and the symptomatic act which I stressed the moment before. For what does Freud bring us in the psychopathology of every day life in connection precisely with errors and, properly, of this kind?

It is, he tells us, and he says it knowingly, in connection with three mistakes that he made in the interpretation of dreams. He links them explicitly to the fact that at the time he was analysing the dreams in question there was something that he held back, put in suspense in the progress of his interpretation. Something was held back at this precise point, as you will see in chapter ten, which is that on mistakes, in connection with three of these mistakes, specifically that of the famous station *Marburg*, which should have been *Marbach*, Hannibal whom he transformed into Hasdrubal and some one of the Medicis that he attributed to the history of Venice. What is curious in effect, is that it is always in connection

with something when in short he held back some truth that he was lead into (38) committing these errors.

The fact that it is precisely after having made this reference to the butcher's beautiful wife which was difficult to avoid given that there follows a little piece which is written as follows. "The desire to have what the other has in order to be what one is not. The desire to be what the other is in order to have what one does not have. Indeed the desire not to have what one has, etc." Namely, a very direct extract - and I must say a little bit amplified, but amplified in a way that does not improve it - from what I wrote precisely about this direction of the treatment, as regards what is at stake in the phallic function. Do we not see here being touched the fact that it is curious that someone should be grateful for it, by this mistake obviously, if not by the irrepressible reference to my name, even if it is put under the heading of some incomprehensible stumbling or other on the part of someone who above all speaks about language, as he puts it. Is there not something there which makes us question ourselves? About what? About what is involved in the fact that with respect to a certain analysis, a certain field of analysis, people, even while supporting themselves explicitly by what I put forward, can only do so on condition that they repudiate it, I would say. Does not this just by itself pose a problem, which is none other than the problem, on the whole, of the status that the psychoanalytic act receives from a certain coherent organisation and which is, for the moment, the one which reigns in the community which is concerned with it.

To make this remark, to manifest the emergence, at a level which is certainly not that of the unconscious, of a mechanism which is precisely the one that Freud highlights with regard to the act, I would not say the most specific, but the new dimension of the act that analysis introduces. This itself, I mean to make this *rapprochement*, and to pose a question about it, this itself is an act, mine. I ask your pardon only because in order to bring it to a close I took what may appear to you to be an inordinate amount of time. But what I wanted to introduce here is something that is difficult for me to introduce precisely before such a numerous assembly in which things can reverberate in a thousand displaced ways. I would not however want there to be displaced the notion that I am trying to introduce. I will no doubt have to take it up again. It has its importance, as you will see. It is not that in using it for a long time in its key forms I have not announced it coming one fine day.

(39) In praise of stupidity (*Eloge de la connerie*).

It is a long time now since I produced the project, the eventual work, let us say that after all, in our epoch it would be something to merit the truly prodigious success that one cannot be surprised at, which ensures that there still remains in the library of every doctor, pharmacist and dentist, the "*In praise of folly*" by Erasmus which, God knows, no longer touches us.

The praise of stupidity would undoubtedly be a more subtle operation to carry out for, in truth, what is stupidity? If I introduce it at the moment of taking the true essential step concerning what is involved in the analytic act, it is in order to point out that it is not a notion. To say what it is, is difficult. It is something like a knot, a knot around which many things are constructed, and delegate to themselves all sorts of powers which is undoubtedly something stratified, and that one cannot consider as simple. At a certain degree of maturity, as I might say, it is more than respectable. It is perhaps not what merits the greatest respect but it is assuredly what receives it.

I would say that this respect comes from a particular function, which is altogether linked with what we have to highlight here. A function of "*dé-connaissance*", if I may express myself in this way. And if you will allow me to amuse myself a little, to recall that people say "*il déconnaît*" [he was talking rubbish]. Do we not have here a crypto-morpheme? Is it not by taking it in the present that there would emerge the solidly established status of stupidity?

People always think that it is the imperfect. "He was talking rubbish at a mile a minute", for example. But, in truth, the fact is, this is a term which, like the term "I am lying" is always difficult to use in the present.

In any case, it is very difficult not to see that the status of the stupidity in question, *qua* established on the "*il déconnaît*", does not invest simply the subject that the aforesaid verb includes. There is in this approach something intransitive and neuter in the style of "*il pleut*" which gives its whole import to the aforesaid morpheme.

The important thing is what stupidities was he talking? Well then, this is how there is distinguished what I would call the true dimension of stupidity. The fact is this "she was talking stupid", is something which, in truth, is what deserves to be affected with this term, namely, to be called stupidity. The true dimension of (40) stupidity is indispensable to grasp as being what the psychoanalytic act has to deal with. For if you look closely at it and specifically in these chapters that Freud gives us under the heading of mistakes and under that of accidental and symptomatic acts, each and every one of these acts is distinguished by great purity. But not when it is a question for example of the celebrated story of taking out one's keys before a particular door which are precisely the wrong ones. Let us take the case that Jones speaks about, because Freud showed the meaning and the value that this little act may have. Jones is going to tell us a story which ends with, "I would have liked to be at home here". Ten lines later we are at the end of another story which interprets the same gesture by saying, "I would have been better off at home". All the same it is not the same thing!

From the relevance of the noting of this function of slip, of mistake in the use of the key, to its floating, equivocal interpretation is there not an indication that you will easily rediscover in considering a thousand other facts collected in this register? And specifically the first twenty-five or thirty that Freud collects for

us. It is, in a way, what the act transmits to us. It is undoubtedly something that it images assuredly in a signifying way and for which the suitable adjective would be to say that it is not so stupid (*pas si conne*).

Here indeed is the fascinating interest of these two chapters. But that everything that tries to adapt itself to them as interpretative description already represents this certain form of *dé-connaissance*, of fall and of evocation in which it must be said, in more than one case here, quite radical as regards what cannot but be sensed as stupidity. Even if the act, which we have no doubt about, for at this point of the emergence of what is original in the symptomatic act, there is no doubt that there is here an opening, a flash of light, something flooding in which will not be closed off for a long time.

What is the nature of this message which Freud underlines for us that at the same time, he does not know that he is giving it to himself and that, nevertheless, he does not want it to be known. What lies at the final term in this strange register which, it seems, cannot be taken up again in the psychoanalytic act except by falling below its proper level?

That is why I would like to introduce today, before leaving you, this slippery term, this risky term which, in truth, is not easily manageable in such a large (41) social context, which is given the note of curse, of insult and disparagement which is attached in the French tongue to this strange word "*le con*". This is, let it be said in parenthesis, findable neither in *Littré* nor in *Robert*. Only the *Bloch et von Wartburg*, which deserves to be honoured for it, gives us its etymology: *cunnus* (Latin).

Assuredly, to develop what is involved in French as regards the function of this word, "*le con*", which is nevertheless so fundamental in our tongue and in our exchanges, it is indeed the case that it would be the task of structuralism to articulate what links one to the other, the word and the thing. But how can it be done? How can it be done, except by introducing here, something or other which would be the prohibition for under eighteen's, or perhaps it should be the over forties.

This nevertheless is what is at stake. And someone whose words we have in a book which is distinguished by the very special - I do not think anyone has ever made this remark - absence of stupidity, namely, the gospels, has said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's". Observe that naturally no one has ever noticed that it is absolutely extraordinary to say, "render to God" what he has contributed to the operation. It does not matter. For the psychoanalyst, the law is different. It is, "Render to truth what belongs to the truth, and to stupidity what belongs to stupidity".

Well then, it is not so simple. Because they overlap. And because if there is a dimension which is here proper to psychoanalysis it is not so much the truth of stupidity as the stupidity of the truth.

I mean that apart from the cases in which we can aseptically, which comes down to saying de-sex, the truth, namely, to no longer make of it as in logic, only a value with a capital T which functions in opposition to a capital F, everywhere that truth is engaged with something else, specifically with our function of speaking being, the truth finds itself in difficulty because of the incidence by which something which is the centre in what I am designating, on this occasion, by the term of stupidity, and which means the following - I will show you the next time that Freud also says it in this same chapter, even though everyone lets it pass - and which means that the organ which gives, as I might say, its category to the attribute in question, is precisely marked by what I would call a particular inappropriateness for enjoyment. It is from this that what is at stake takes on its relief. Namely, the irreducible character of the sexual act for any truthful (42) production. This is what is at stake in the psychoanalytic act, for the psychoanalytic act, assuredly, is articulated at another level which corresponds at this other level to the deficiency that truth experiences in approaching the sexual field. This is something whose status we must question.

To suggest to you what is at stake, I will take an example. One day I picked up from the mouth of a charming young man who had every right to be called a *con* the following anecdote. He had had a misadventure. He had had a rendezvous with a young girl who had let him drop like a pancake. "I understood right away he told me that once again she was a *femme de non recevoir*". That was what he called it.

What is this charming stupidity, because he said it like that, with all his heart. He had heard three words following one another and he applied them. But supposing that he had done it deliberately this would have been a witticism. In truth, the simple fact that I, I am reporting it to you, that I am raising it to the field of the Other, effectively makes of it a witticism. It is very funny, for everyone except for him and for whoever receives it face to face with him. But once it is told, it is extremely amusing. So that one would be quite wrong to think that the *con* lacks wit, even if it is from a reference to the Other that this dimension is added.

In a word, what is involved in our position *vis-à-vis* this amusing little story is still exactly what we have to deal with every time that it is a question of putting in form what we grasp as a dimension, not at the level of all the registers of what happens in the unconscious, but very properly speaking in what belongs to the psychoanalytic act.

I wanted simply to introduce today this register which you may guess is undoubtedly risky. But you will see that it is useful.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 29 November 1967

(43) At the beginning of an article on counter-transference published in 1960, a good psychoanalyst to whom we will give a certain place today, Dr Winnicott, writes that the word counter-transference ought to be referred back to its original use. And, in this connection, to oppose it, he takes into account the word self. A word like self, he says, here I am going to have to use English: “naturally knows more than we do”, *en sait naturellement plus que nous ne pouvon faire, ou que nous ne faisons*. It is a word which he says, “uses us and commands us”, *nous prend en charge, peut nous commander*, as I might say.

It is a remark, by God, which is interesting to see from the pen of someone who is not distinguished by a special reference to language, as you are going to see.

This feature appeared rather piquant to me and will appear still more from what I will have to evoke before you today about this author. But moreover, for you, it takes on its value from the fact that, whether you suspect it or not, you are integrated into a discourse that obviously many of you cannot see in its totality.

I mean that what I am advancing this year only has its effect from what has gone before, and it is not because you are only approaching it now - if such is the case for some of you - that you are any less subject to its effect. Curiously, because of this, the fact is in short that this discourse - you find perhaps that I am insisting too much on this - is not, in short, directly addressed to you. It is addressed to whom? My God, I repeat it every time: to psychoanalysts, and in (44) conditions such that it has to be said that it is addressed to them from a certain atopia. An atopia which is my own and which therefore has to give its reasons. It is precisely these reasons that are going to be here, I mean today, a little more emphasised.

There is a rhetoric, as I might say, about the object of psychoanalysis, that I claim is linked to a certain style of teaching of psychoanalysis which is that of the existing societies. This relation may not appear to be immediate, and in effect - why should it be - only provided at the price of a certain investigation one may feel to be necessary.

To start from there, namely, from an example of what I will call a normative knowledge about what is useful behaviour with all that this can involve as extension to the general good, and the particular good, I will take an example which is worth what it is worth. But which is worthwhile from the fact that it is typical, and that coming from the pen of a well known author, simply, however little you may be initiated into what is involved in the analytic method to the extent to knowing, in general, that what is involved is to speak for weeks and for

months at the rate of several sessions a week, and to speak in a certain particularly loose way, in conditions which, precisely, abstract from any perspective concerning this reference to the norm, to the useful, precisely, perhaps, to come back to it, but above all to free oneself from it in such a way that the circuit, before returning to it, is the simplest possible.

I believe that the lines that I have chosen, taken where they are found, namely, at the beginning of an article very explicitly from the pen of an author who published it in 1955, put in question the concept of the genital character. Here is more or less where he starts from in order, effectively, to contribute a critique that I do not have to develop. Today it is the style that is at stake. It is a piece from the classical Mr Fenichel, in as much as the author admits, I mean the author specifies it carefully, Fenichel forms part of the basis of this teaching of psychoanalysis in the institutes.

A normal, genital character is an ideal concept, he says himself. Nevertheless, it is certain that the achievement of genital primacy involves a decisive advance in the formation of character. The fact of being capable of obtaining full satisfaction from genital orgasm makes the regulation of sexuality, a physiological regulation, possible and this puts an end to the *damming up*, that is to the barrier, to the stemming of instinctual energies with their unhappy effects (45) on the behaviour of the person. "It also does something for the full development of *love*, of love and hate", he adds in parenthesis, namely, the surmounting of ambivalence. Besides, the capacity to discharge large quantities of excitation signifies the end of "reaction formations" and a growth in the capacity to sublimate.

The Oedipus complex and the unconscious feelings of guilt which have an infantile source can now be really overcome. As regards emotions, they are no longer kept in reserve but can be developed by the ego. They form a harmonious part of the total personality.

There is no longer any necessity to keep the still demanding pre-genital impulses in the unconscious. Their inclusion in the total personality - I am expressing it as it is in the text - in the form of traits or advances in sublimation, becomes possible. Nevertheless, in neurotic characters, the pre-genital impulses retain their sexual character and disturb rational relations with objects. However it is with neurotics, in the normal character they serve, as partial impulses, the goal of fore-pleasure or of preliminary pleasure, under the primacy of the genital zone. But in as much as they come in a greater proportion they are sublimated and subordinated to the ego and to *reasonableness*, *la raisonabilité*, I believe that one cannot translate it otherwise.

I do not know what such an enchanting picture inspires in you or whether you find it alluring. I do not believe that anyone - analyst or not - provided he has a little bit of experience of others and of himself, can for a moment take seriously

this strange lullaby. The thing is properly speaking wrong, completely contrary to reality and to what experience teaches us.

I also allowed myself, in my text, in a text that I evoked the other day - that on the direction of the treatment - some derisive remarks about what was put forward about it, in another context, and in a form that is even literally much more vulgar - the tone in which people were able to speak at a certain date, precisely that of my text, around 1958 - about the primacy of object relations and the perfections in which they reached the effusions of internal joy which came from having reached this highest point, which is properly speaking ridiculous, and in truth is not even worth while taking up again here, no matter who wrote about them at the time.

(46) The curious thing is to ask oneself how such statements can preserve - I will not say the appearance of seriousness, in fact they do not have that for anyone - but appear to respond to a certain necessity concerning, as was said at the beginning of what is stated here, a sort of ideal point which would have at least this virtue of representing in a negative form the absence then of all the inconveniences which would accompany, which would be the ordinary thing, in other states. I cannot think of any other reason.

This is naturally to be taken up in so far as we can grasp the mechanism in its essence, namely, notice the measure in which the psychoanalyst is in a way called, even constrained, for what are wrongly called didactic ends, to speak in a way which, in short, one could say, has nothing to do with the problems that his experience puts up to him in the sharpest and in the most everyday fashion.

The matter, in truth, has a certain import in so far as it might allow it to be seen that a discourse, in the measure - and this says nothing about it - from which there comes a certain number of clichés finds itself, nonetheless, up to a certain point incapable of reducing them in an analytic context, and indeed much more as regards what is involved in the organisation of teaching. Naturally, no one believes any more in a certain number of things, or is completely at ease with a certain classical style. But fundamentally, on many points, of levels of application, it nevertheless remains that this changes nothing. I mean, moreover, that one can simply see my discourse taken up, I mean in some of its forms, of its sentences, of its statements, indeed its turns of phrase, taken up into a context that in its fundamentals has hardly changed.

I asked, a rather long time ago, someone who could be seen in more recent times assiduously attending to what I was trying to bring order into here, I asked: "After all, given your general positions, what advantage do you find in coming to my lectures?" My God, with a smile of someone in the know, I mean of someone who knows what he means: "No one", he answered me, "speaks about psychoanalysis like that." Thanks to which, of course, that gives him material and choice to add to his discourse a certain number of ornaments, flourishes. This does not prevent him on occasion, from referring back radically to the

tendency that is supposed by him to be constitutive of a certain psychic inertia, (47) referring back radically the status, the organisation of the analytic session in itself - I mean in its nature, in its finality also - to a return which occurred along a sort of slide, of slippage, everything that is most natural, towards this fusion where something which was essentially of its nature, this so-called fusion presupposed at the origin between the child and the maternal body, and it is within this sort of figure, of fundamental schema, that there is supposed to be produced what? My famous "it speaks".

You see clearly the use that can be made of a discourse by broadcasting it cut off from its context which was that in saying "it speaks" in connection with the unconscious, I absolutely never meant the discourse of the analysed person - as he is improperly called it would be better to say the analysand - we will come back to this subsequently, but assuredly which, even, unless one wants to abuse my discourse, may suppose that there is anything whatsoever in the application of the rule which comes in itself from the "it speaks", which suggests it, which calls for it. In no way, at least, you see, would I have had this privilege of repeating after Freud, after Breuer, the miracle of a phantom pregnancy, if this way of evoking the concavity of the maternal womb can represent what happens in the analyst's office. Well indeed, in effect, what is found to be justified at another level, I am supposed to have repeated this miracle but on psychoanalysts. Does that mean that I analyse the analysts?

Because after all one could say that. It is even tempting. There are always little smart-alecks who find elegant formulae like that to summarise the situation. Thank God, I put up a barrier to this aspect also, ahead of time, by writing I believe somewhere - I do not know if it has appeared yet - in connection with a recalling, it was a matter of a little account that I gave of my seminar last year, of a reminder of these two formulae that there is not in my language an Other of the Other. The Other in this case being written with a capital O. There is no, to respond to an old murmuring at my seminar at Sainte-Anne, alas, I am very sorry to have to tell you, true about the true. In the same way there is no reason to consider the dimension of the transference of transference. This means of any possible transference reduction, of any analytic taking up of the status of transference itself.

I am still a little embarrassed, given the number of those who occupy this room this year, when I put forward such formulae, because there may be some of you (48) who have not the slightest idea of what transference is, after all. It is even the most usual case, especially if you have heard about it. You are going to see that in the rest of what I have to say today.

Let us highlight here, I already put it forward all the same the last time, that the essence of this position of the concept of transference is that this concept allows the analyst - this is even how certain analysts, I put forward the last time, and by God, how vainly, believe themselves obliged to justify the concept of transference in the name of what, by God, something which appears to them to

be very threatened, very fragile, namely, from a sort of superiority in the possibility of objectifying, of objectification, or from the quality of outstanding objectivity which is supposed to be what the analyst has acquired and which would allow him in a situation that is apparently present to be in a position to refer it to other situations which explain it and that it only reproduces them with this illusory accent or the illusions that this involves.

I already said that, far from this question which appears to impose itself, which appears even to involve a certain dimension of rigour in the one who puts forward in a way its interrogation, its critique, it is purely superfluous and vain for the simple reason that transference, its manipulation as such, the dimension of transference, the first strictly coherent aspect of what I am in the process of trying to produce this year before you under the name of psychoanalytic act, outside what I called the manipulation of transference, there is no analytic act.

What must be understood, is not the legitimising of transference in a reference which would ground its objectivity, it is to grasp that there is no analytic act without this reference. And of course to state it in this way does not dissipate every objection. But it is because, precisely, to state it in this way is not, properly speaking, to designate what constitutes the essence of transference, this is why we have to advance further in it.

That we should be forced to do so, that I should be required to do it before you, at least suggests that this analytic act is precisely what has been least elucidated by the psychoanalyst himself. Much more, that it is what has been completely more or less eluded. And why not, why not in any case question oneself as to whether the situation is not so, because this act cannot but be eluded after all. (49) Why not? Why not up to Freud and his interrogation of the psychopathology of everyday life, what we now call, what is current, what is within the range of our modest understanding under the name of symptomatic act, of parapraxis (*acte manqué*). Who would have dreamed, and even who still dreams of giving to them the full sense of the word act.

Despite everything, the idea of missing out (*ratage*) which Freud says is only a shelter behind which there is dissimulated what are properly called acts, does not count. People continue to think of them in function of missing out, without giving a fuller sense to the term act.

Why then should it not be the same about what is involved in the analytic act? Assuredly what can enlighten us is whether we, for our part, can say something about it that goes a little further. In any case, it may well be that it cannot but be eluded, if for example what happens when it is a matter of an act, is that it is in particular, completely intolerable, intolerable in what regard? It is not a matter of something that is intolerable subjectively, at least I am not suggesting this. Why not intolerable in the way of acts in general, intolerable in one of its consequences. I am approaching, as you can see, by little touches. I cannot say these things in terms that are immediately noticed - as one might say - not at all

that I do not do so on some occasions, but because here in this matter which is delicate, what must above all be avoided is misunderstanding.

This consequence of the analytic act, you will tell me, ought to be well known, ought to be well known through the training analysis. Only I, for my part, am speaking about the act of the psychoanalyst. In the training analysis, the psychoanalytic act is not on the part of the subject who, as it is put, submits to it. This does not mean that he might not have a suspicion of what the result is for the analyst of what is happening in the training analysis.

Only look, things are such up to the present that everything is done to hide from him, in a quite radical way, what is involved at the end of the training analysis on the side of the psychoanalyst.

This masking, which is fundamentally linked to what I was calling earlier the organisation of psychoanalytic societies, this might, in short, be a subtle modesty, a delicate way of leaving something in its place, the supreme refinement of Far Eastern politeness. It is nothing of the kind. I mean that it is (50) not quite from this angle that things ought to be considered, but rather on what results from it for the training analysis itself. Namely, that by very reason of this relation, this separation that I have just articulated, the result is that the same *blackout* exists on what is involved in the end of the training analysis.

A certain number of unsatisfying, incomplete things have all the same been written about the training psychoanalysis. Things have also been written that are very instructive because of their mistakes about the end of analysis. But strictly no one has ever yet succeeded in formulating - I mean black on white - I am not saying anything valid, anything whatsoever, yes or no ... nothing about what might be the end, in every sense of the word, of the training analysis.

I am simply leaving open here the point of whether there is a relation, there is the strictest relation between this fact and the fact that nothing has been articulated either about what is involved in the psychoanalytic act.

I repeat. If the psychoanalytic act is very precisely that to which the psychoanalyst seems to oppose the most frenzied miscognition, this is linked not so much to a sort of subjective incompatibility, the subjectively untenable aspect of the position of the psychoanalyst, which, it can assuredly be suggested, Freud did not miss out on, and much more I would say, from what would result once the perspective of the act is accepted as regards the assessment the analyst may make of what he for his part picks up, subsequent to the analysis, in the order properly speaking of knowledge.

Since, after all, I have here an audience, or it seems so - even though for the past two or three times I cannot locate clearly - in which there is a certain proportion of philosophers, I hope they will not think too badly of me, I was able, even at Sainte-Anne, to obtain permission to go this far. I managed to speak for a whole

trimester and even a little more, about Plato's *Symposium*, precisely in connection with transference.

Well then, today I would ask at least some people, if this is of interest to them, to open a dialogue called *Meno*. I once spoke for a whole semester about Plato's *Symposium* in connection with transference. Today I am asking you to open *Meno*.

It even happened formerly that my dear friend Alexandre Koyré did us the honour and had the generosity to speak to us about *Meno*. This did not last long. The psychologists who were there said "All right for this year, but that's the end (51) of it, that's enough now! No, no, no, no. Among serious people, this is not the sort of water that is going to warm us up".

Nevertheless, I assure you that you would lose nothing by engaging with it a little bit, quite simply by opening it. I found in paragraph 85, according to the numeration of Henri Estienne:

"He will know then without having had a master, thanks to simple questions, having found of his own accord his science in himself".

And the following reply:

"But to rediscover science in oneself of one's own accord is that not precisely to recollect it? Is it not necessary that he should have received at a certain moment the science that he now has, or indeed that he always had it"?

All the same, for analysts, to pose the question in these terms, does one not have the feeling that there is here something that one is not sure applies, I mean in the way in which it is said in the text. But anyway that this is designed to remind us of something.

In fact, it is a dialogue on virtue. To call that virtue, is no worse than something else. For many people, this word and words like it have since resonated differently through the centuries. It is certain that the word virtue has now an opening, a resonance, which is not quite that of the *areté* that is at stake in *Meno*, since moreover *areté* goes rather in the direction of the search for the good. One is struck to grasp it, in the sense of the profitable and useful good, as it is called. This is designed to make us see that we also, for our part, that we have returned there, that it is not completely unrelated to what, after this long detour, has come to be formulated for us in the discourse of a Bentham. I already made a reference to Utilitarianism, at a time that is already in the distant past, when I took on the task of stating throughout a year something which was called *The ethics of psychoanalysis*.

(52) It was, if I remember correctly, the year 1958-59. Unless it was not quite that; then the following year it was transference.

As for the four years since I have been speaking here, a certain correspondence could be made between each one of these years with two. And in the order of the years of my previous teaching, we would arrive then at the level of this fourth year at something which would corresponds to the 7th and 8th year of my preceding seminar, echoing in a way the year on ethics, as can be clearly read in my very statement of the psychoanalytic act and from the fact that this psychoanalytic act is something that is quite essentially linked to the functioning of transference. This should allow some people at least to find their way along a certain path that I am taking.

So then, it is *areté* that is at stake and an *areté* which at the start puts its question in a register which should not at all disorient an analyst since moreover what is at stake is a first model given of what this word means in the Socratic text about good political administration, namely, of the city. As regards man, it is curious that from the first moment there appears the reference to the woman, saying that, my God, the virtue of the woman is the proper ordering of the house. As a result of which, here are the two of them on the same footing, on the same plane. There is no essential difference and, in effect, if that is how it is taken up, why not?

I am only recalling this because among the thousand riches that will be suggestive to you in this text, if you are willing to read it from beginning to end, you will be able to put your finger there on the fact that the characteristic of a certain morality, traditional morality properly speaking, has always been to elude, but it is admirably done, in a way, to conjure away at the start in the first exchanges, so that one no longer has to speak about it, nor even to pose the question that is precisely so interesting for us analysts, in so far as we are analysts, of course, as to whether there is not perhaps a point where the morality of the man and of the woman might perhaps be distinguished, at the moment when they find themselves in a bed, together or separately.

But this is promptly eluded in what concerns a virtue that we can already situate on a more public, more environmental terrain. And because of this fact, the questions posed can proceed in a way that is the one by which Socrates proceeds, and which quickly comes to pose the question of whether, how one can ever come to know [*connaître*] by definition what one does not know since the first condition of knowing [*savoir*], of knowledge, is to know what one is talking about. If one does not know at the beginning what one is talking about, as is proved after a long series of exchanges with his partner who is the Meno in question, there emerges what you know and what appears in the two or three sentences that I read for you earlier, namely, the theory of reminiscence.

You know what is involved, but I will take it up again. It is time to develop it, to show what that means, what that can mean for us, why this deserves to be taken up by us again.

That it is said, that it is expressed that the soul - as it is expressed, it is the language used in any case in this dialogue - does nothing more when it is taught than remember, involves in this text as in ours, the idea of an endless extension or rather a duration without limit as regards what is involved in this soul. It is a little what we also say when we find ourselves out of arguments to refer to. Since we do not see very clearly how this can happen in ontogenesis for things that are always the same and so typical to be reproduced, phylogenesis is appealed to. I do not see much difference.

Then, what more, where is this soul going to be sought out to demonstrate that it is only remembrance as regards everything that it can learn? It is indeed the significant gesture made by Socrates at his epoch. Look Meno, I will show you. You see, there you have your slave, he of course never learnt anything in your house, a completely cretinous slave.

He is questioned and by means of a certain style of questioning, in effect, you manage to make him say things, by God, that are rather sensible, which do not go very far in the domain of mathematics. It is a matter of what happens or of what has to be done to make a surface the double of the one that you started from, if it is a square that is involved. The slave picks up, like that, out of the blue, that it is enough for the side of the square to be twice as long. It is easy to quickly make him see that with a side that is twice as long the surface will be four times bigger.

As a result of which, by proceeding in the same way with questions we will quickly find the right way to operate, which is to operate by the diagonal, to take a square whose side is the diagonal of the preceding one.

What do we get from all these amusements, these primitive recreations which do (54) not even go so far as people had already gone at that epoch as regards the irrational character of the root of two? It is because we have taken an exceptional subject, a slave, a subject who does not count.

There is something more ingenious and better that comes afterwards as regards what must be raised, namely, whether virtue is a science. All in all, it is certainly the best part, the best piece of the dialogue. There is no science of virtue. This is easily demonstrated by experience, by showing that those who make a profession of teaching it are masters who can be very much criticized - it is the Sophists that are in question - and that as regards those who could teach it, namely, those who themselves are virtuous, I mean virtuous in the sense that the word virtue is used in this text, namely, the virtue of the citizen, and that of good politics, it is very manifest that this is developed by more than one example, they do not even know how to transmit it to their children. They teach something different to their children.

So that what we arrive at, at the end of this, is that virtue is much closer to true opinion, as it is put, than to science. Now true opinion, where does it come to us

from? Well, from the heavens. Here is the third characteristic of something which has this in common, it is that what we refer ourselves to, is namely what can be learned.

You sense how close it is - I am being prudent - to the notation that I give under the term of subject. What can teach itself, is a subject who already has this first characteristic of being universal. On this all subjects are at the same starting point. Their extension is of such a nature to them that this supposes they have an infinite past, and therefore probably a future that is no less so, even though the question about what is involved in the afterlife is not settled in this dialogue.

We are not putting forward the myth of the of Er the Armenian, but assuredly that the soul has from all time, and in a properly speaking immemorial fashion, stored up what has formed it to the point of rendering it capable of knowing, this is something that is not simply contested here but is at the very principal of the idea of reminiscence.

That this subject is exceptional (*hors classe*), is another term. That he is absolute in the sense that he is not, it is expressed in the text, as science marks with what is called there by a term that really echoes everything we are able to (54) say here, that he is not marked by logical concatenation, articulation in the very style of our science. This 'true opinion', is it something that ensures that it is much more, and it is said again, of the order of *poiesis*, of poetry? This is what we are lead to by the Socratic questioning.

If I took so much care with this reminder, it is to note for you what is meant, in this archaic point which has remained present in the questioning of knowledge, what is meant by the fact which had not been isolated before I did so, properly in connection with transference, the function, not even in the articulation, in the presuppositions of every question about knowledge, by what I call the subject supposed to know. Questions are posed starting from the fact that there is somewhere this function, call it what you will, here it appears in all its aspects, obvious because mythical, that there is somewhere something which plays this function of the subject supposed to know.

I already put this forward here, as a question mark in connection with one or other advance, breakthrough, progress of a certain sector of our science. Is the question not posed of where there was, of how we can conceive, for example, before one or other new dimension in a mathematical conception of infinity, is it a fact that before this infinity was forged, we can conceive it as having been known somewhere. Can we already report it as known from all time? This is the question. It is not a matter of knowing whether the soul existed before being incarnated. It is simply of whether this dimension of the subject *qua* support of knowledge is something that must be pre-established in a way to questions about knowledge.

Note, when Socrates questions the slave, what does he do? He uses, even if he does not do it on the board, since it is a very simple drawing, one can say that he uses the drawing of this square. And moreover, in the way that he reasons – namely, in the first mode of a metric geometry, namely, by decomposition into triangles and counting the triangles of equal surface. In this way it is easy to show that the triangle constructed on the diagonal will include just the number of little squares that are necessary compared to the first number. And that if the first number had four squares there would be eight if we proceed in this fashion. All the same it is indeed a drawing that is in question and, questioning the slave, it is not we who invent the question. It has been remarked for a long time that (54) this procedure has nothing very demonstrative about it, in as much as far from Socrates being able to find an argument in the fact that the slave never did geometry, and that though he has not been given lessons, just the way of organising the drawing by Socrates is already to give to the slave, as is very tangible, a lesson in geometry. But that is not where the question is for us.

It is, as I might say, to be considered in these terms. Socrates uses a drawing. If we say that in the mind of his partner, there is already everything necessary to respond to what Socrates brings along, that can mean two things that I would express as follows. Either it is a drawing, I would not say a double, or, to use a modern term which corresponds to what is called a function, namely, the possibility of the application of Socrates' drawing onto his own or inversely. It is, of course, not at all necessary for the squares to be correct, either in one case or in the other. But, let us say, in one case it is a square according to a Mercator projection, namely, a square square, and in the other case something twisted in different ways. It will nevertheless remain that the point by point correspondence is what gives to the relation of what Socrates contributes, to that through which his interlocutor answers him, a very particular value which is that of deciphering. This interests us, us analysts. Because in a certain way this is what our analysis of transference means in the interpretative dimension. It is in the measure that our interpretation links in a different way a chain which is nevertheless a chain and already a signifying chain that it works. And then there is another possible way of imagining it. Instead of our seeing that there are two drawings which are not, at first approach, the transfer (*décalque*) one of the other, we can suppose a metaphor, namely, that nothing is seen, I mean from the side of the slave, but in the way that one can say in certain cases: this is a drawing. You see nothing, but it must be exposed to fire. You know that there are inks that are called sympathetic and the drawing appears. There is then, as we say when we are dealing with a sensitive plate, a revelation.

Is it between these two terms that the suspense occurs of what is at stake for us in analysis, in terms of a re-translation, I am saying “re” because in this case already the first signifying inscription is already the translation of something. Is it onto the signifying organisation of the unconscious structured like a language that our interpretation is applied? Or, on the contrary, is our interpretation in a (57) way an operation of a quite different order, one that reveals a drawing hidden up to then?

It is very obviously not that, neither one nor the other, despite what perhaps this opposition might have suggested in terms of a first response, to some people that I teach.

What is at stake is something that makes the task much more difficult for us. Namely, that, in effect, things have to do with the operation of the signifier, which renders highly possible the first reference, the first model to give of what a deciphering is. Only, look, the subject, let us say the analysand is not something flat, as suggested by the image of the drawing. Inside, he is himself the subject as such already determined and inscribed in the world as caused by a certain effect of the signifier.

What results from it is the fact that not a lot is necessary for it to be reducible to one of the preceding situations. All that is necessary is the following: that knowledge, at certain points that may, of course, be still unknown, fails. And it is precisely these points which, for us, give rise to questions in the name of truth.

In this respect, the subject is determined in a way that makes it unsuitable, as our experience demonstrates, to restore what is inscribed by the signifying effect, by its relation to the world, in making it incapable of closing in on itself, of completing itself at certain points in a way that is satisfying, as regards its status as a subject. And they are the points that concern him in so far as he has to posit himself as a sexed subject.

Before this situation, do you not see what results from what is going to be established if the transference is set up, as it is in effect set up, because this has always been the movement, the movement really established from what is traditionally inherent. The transference is set up in function of the subject supposed to know, exactly in the same way that was always inherent in every questioning about knowledge. I would even say more, that from the fact that he goes into analysis, he refers to a subject supposed to know better than the others.

That does not mean, moreover, contrary to what is believed, that he identifies it to his analyst. But this indeed is the core of what I want to designate before you today. It is that immanent to the very start of the movement of analytic research, there is this subject supposed to know. And as I was saying just now, supposed to know better again, so that the analyst submits himself to the rules of the (58) game. And that I can pose the question of whether, when he responds in a way that he ought to respond, whether it is a matter of Socrates' slave and that the slave is told to flounder around as he wishes. Which is not done, of course, at the level of the experience of the *Meno*.

The question of the intervention of the analyst is posed in effect in the suspense I mentioned earlier. The two maps corresponding point by point or on the contrary one map that thanks to some manipulation or other one reveals its

nature as map. This indeed is how everything is conceived of, through, in a way, the data given at the beginning of the operation.

The anamnesis is carried out in so far as what one remembers, is not so much things, as the constitution of the amnesia or the return of the repressed which is exactly the same thing. Namely, the way the chips are distributed at every moment in the squares of the game, I mean in the squares where one has to bet. In the same way the effects of interpretation are received at the level of what? Of the encouragement that it lends to the inventiveness of the subject. I mean of this poetry that I spoke about earlier.

Now, what does the analysis of transference mean? If it means anything, it can only be the following: the elimination of this subject supposed to know. For analysis, and still less for the analyst there is nowhere - and this is the novelty - a subject who is supposed to know. There is only what resists the operation of the knowledge making the subject, namely, this residue that one can call the truth.

But precisely, it is here that Pontius Pilate's question can arise: what is truth? What is truth, is properly the question that I am posing to introduce what is involved in the properly psychoanalytic act.

What constitutes the psychoanalytic act as such is very curiously this feint by which the analyst forgets that, in his experience as a psychoanalyst, he was able to see there being reduced to what it is, this function of the subject supposed to know. Hence, at every instant, all these ambiguities, which moreover transfer, for example, towards the function of adaptation to reality. The question of what is involved in the truth, is to feign also that the position of the subject supposed to know is tenable because it is the only access to a truth from which the subject is going to be rejected by being reduced to his function of cause of a process that is in an impasse.

The essential psychoanalytic act of the psychoanalyst involves this something (59) that I am not naming, that I outlined under the name of feint, and which becomes serious if this becomes forgetting, to feign to forget that one's act is to be the cause of this process. That what is involved there is an act is accentuated by a distinction that it is essential to make here.

The analyst, of course, is not without a need, I would even say to justify to himself what is done in analysis. Something is done, and what is at stake is indeed this difference between doing (*faire*) and acting. It is to this bench that one harnesses, that one puts the psychoanalyst, it is the bench of a doing. He does something. Call that what you will, poetry or breaking in, he does something. And it is quite clear that precisely one part of the instructions of psychoanalytic technique consists in a certain *laisser-faire*. But is that enough to characterise the position of the analyst when this *laisser-faire* involves, up to a certain point, the maintaining intact in himself of this subject supposed to

know in so far as he knows from experience what it is to fall away and be excluded from this subject, and what results from the analyst's side ?.

What results from it, I am not putting forward immediately today since it is precisely what we have to further articulate in what follows. But I will end by indicating the analogy encountered from the fact that in order to advance this new angle of interrogation about the act, I have to address myself to this third that you constitute by reason of the register that I already introduced under the function of number. Number is not multitude, because not much is necessary to introduce the dimension of number. If it is by such a reference that I introduce the question of what can be involved in the status of the psychoanalyst, in so far as his act puts him radically out of synch with respect to these preliminaries, it is to remind you that it is a common dimension of the act, not to include in its agency the presence of the subject.

The passage of the act is that beyond which the subject will rediscover his presence as renewed, but nothing other.

I will give you the next time, because I did not have the time this time, something which is an illustration of it. The Winnicott by whom I introduced in connection with this word "self" the example of a sort of right touch with regard to a certain effect of the signifier. This Winnicott will give us the illustration of what happens to the psychoanalyst in the very measure of the interest that he takes in his object. He will make us touch that, precisely, in the measure that he is someone who is distinguished in the technique as outstanding for having (60) chosen an object that is privileged for him, the one that he qualifies more or less as this latent psychosis which exists in certain cases, he finds himself very curiously disavowing the whole analytic technique in itself.

Now, this is not at all a particular case but an exemplary case. If the position of the analyst is determined by nothing but by an act, the only effect that it can enregister for him is the fruit of an act. And since I employed this word fruit, I recalled already the last time its echo of fruition. What the analyst records as major experience cannot go beyond this turning point that I have indicated of his own presence.

What might be the means for there to be collected what, through this process triggered by the analytic act, is recordable in terms of knowledge, this is what poses the question of what is involved in analytic teaching. In the whole measure that the psychoanalytic act is mis-recognised, in this measure there are recorded negative effects as regards the progress of what analysis can add up in terms of the knowledge, that we have noted, that we can put our finger on. This is manifested and expressed in many other passages and across the whole breadth of the production of analytic literature, a deficit with regard to what can be added up, what it can store up in terms of knowledge.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 6 December 1967

"What's the first thing you remember?"

"The first thing that comes into my head, you mean?"

"No - the first thing you remember.

(Pause) "No it's no good it's gone"

"You don't get my meaning. What is the first thing after all the things you've forgotten?"

(Pause)

"I've forgotten the question".

These few exchanges that I extracted for you (I will give you my sources) from a very skilful and even penetrating little play, which had attracted me by its title which contains two characters rather full of meaning for me: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Both one and the other, the title tells us, are dead. Would to heaven it were true! They are nothing of the kind. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are still there. These exchanges are well designed to evoke the separation, the distance that exists between three levels of mathesis, of learned understanding. The first, that the theory of reminiscence that I represented to you the last time by the evocation of *Meno*, gives an example of. I will centre it on an "I read" as a revelatory test. The second, different, which is made present in the tone - it is the correct word - of the progress of our science is an "I write". I write even when it is in order to follow the trace of a writing already marked out. The bringing out of signifying incidence as such, signifies our progress in this grasp of what knowledge is.

(62) What I wanted to recall to you, not by this anecdote, but by these very well forged exchanges which, in a way, designating their own place, by situating themselves in a new way of handling these puppets essential for the tragedy which is really our own, that of Hamlet, the one I spent a long time on, mapping out the place of desire as such, designating by that something which might have appeared strange up to then: that, very exactly, everyone was able to read his own in it.

These three exchanges designate then this proper mode of knowing apprehension which is that of analysis and which begins with "I lose". I lose the thread. Here is where what interests us begins. Namely, - whoever is astonished or open eyed at it on this occasion will clearly show that he is forgetting what the coming into the world of the first steps of analysis was - the field of the slip, of stumbling, of parapraxis.

I reminded you of its presence from my first words this year. You will see that we will have to come back to it and that it is essential to maintain this reference always at the centre of our perspective if we do not want to lose our advantage as regards the most essential form of what I am calling this year the psychoanalytic act. But you have also seen me on almost every occasion, and from the beginning, in some kind of embarrassment that I apologise for, the reason was nothing other than your gracious attendance. I posed for myself in a form that is being centred today, the problematic of my teaching. What is meant by what I have been producing here, for the past four years now? It is worthwhile posing the question, is it a psychoanalytic act? This teaching is produced before you, namely, in a public way, as such it could not be a psychoanalytic act.

What is meant by the fact then that I am tackling its thematic. Does it mean that I am submitting it here to a critical agency? It is a position which, after all, could be assumed and, moreover, has been assumed many times, even if properly speaking it was not this term act that was used. It is rather striking that the attempt, every time it was made by someone from outside, only gave rather poor results. Now I am a psychoanalyst, and I am myself caught up in the psychoanalytic act. Could there be in my case a different plan than that of grasping the psychoanalytic act from outside? Yes. And here is how this plan is set up. A teaching is not an act. It has never been one. A teaching is a thesis, as was always very well formulated at the time when people knew what a teaching (63) in the university was. In the good old days when this word had a sense, it meant thesis.

Thesis supposes anti-thesis. With the anti-thesis the act can begin. Does this mean that I expect it from psychoanalysts? The matter is not so simple within the psychoanalytic act, since my theses sometimes imply consequences. It is striking that these consequences encounter there, I mean inside, objections which belong neither to the thesis nor to any other formulated antithesis than the ways and customs reigning among those who make a profession of the psychoanalytic act. It is curious then that a discourse that is not up to now within those who are in the psychoanalytic act easy to contradict, encounters in certain cases an obstacle which is not a contradiction. The hypothesis which in my case guides the pursuit of this discourse is the following. Certainly not that there is in it the indication to criticise the psychoanalytic act, and I am going to say why, but on the contrary to demonstrate, I mean in the agency of this act, what it fails to recognise, which is that by not getting out of it one would go much further. We have to believe then that there is something in this act that is intolerable, unsustainable enough for whoever is engaged in it for him to dread approaching, it must be said, its limits. Since, moreover, what I want to introduce is this particularity of its structure that is after all well enough known for anyone to grasp it but is almost never formulated.

If we start from the reference that I gave earlier, namely, that the first form of act that analysis inaugurated for us, is this symptomatic act of which one can say that it is never so successful as when it is a parapraxis.

When the parapraxis is supposed, is tested, it reveals itself for what it is. Let us pin to it this word that I already insisted enough should be revived, the truth.

Observe that it is from this foundation that we analysts start in order to advance. Without this, no analysis would even be possible, because every act even which does not carry this little index of failure, in other words, which gives itself high marks as regards its intention nevertheless falls exactly under the same jurisdiction. Namely, that there can be posed the question of a different truth to that of this intention. Whence it results that this is properly to sketch out a topology that can be expressed as follows. That by simply sketching its way (64) out, one enters into it without even thinking. And that after all the best way to enter it, in a certain way, is to get out of it for good and all.

The psychoanalytic act designates a shape, an envelope, a structure such that, in a way, it makes everything that up to then has been established, formulated, produced as a status of the act, depend on its own law. It is, moreover, what from the point of the one who under some heading or other engages in this act, in a position where it is difficult to find an approach from any angle, henceforth suggests that some mode of discernment ought to be introduced. It is easy to pinpoint, by taking things up again from the start, that if there is nothing so successful as failure with respect to the act, this does not mean for all that, that a reciprocity is established, and that every failure is, in itself, the sign of some success, I mean the success of an act.

It is quite obvious that not all slip-ups are interpretable slip-ups. And this imposes at the start a simple remark which is, moreover, indeed the only objection which was ever produced in their use. It is enough to begin, with some 'common sense' person, as they say, to introduce - if he is new, if he has still not been immunised, if he has kept some freshness - the dimension of analytic cogitations, for people to respond to you: "But what are you at, telling me so much about these stupidities that we know all about, and that are simply without any graspable support, that are only negative"!

It is sure that at this level, there is no certain rule for discernment. And this indeed is how you see that by remaining in effect at the level of these exemplary phenomena, the debate remains in suspense. It is not inconceivable that, where the psychoanalytic act takes its importance, namely, where for the first time in the world there are subjects whose act it is to be psychoanalysts, namely, who in this area organise, group together, pursue an experience, take their responsibilities in something which is of a different register to that of the act, namely a doing (*un faire*). But pay attention: this doing is not their own.

The function of psychoanalysis is clearly characterised by the following: setting up a doing through which the psychoanalysand obtains a certain goal that no one has yet clearly fixed. One can say that, if one is to trust the truly disordered oscillation of the needle that occurs when one questions the authors about it.

(65) This is not the time to give you the range of this oscillation, you can believe me and test it in the literature. The law, the rule as they say, which circumscribes the operation called psychoanalysis structures and defines 'a doing'. The patient, as it is still expressed, the psychoanalysand as I recently introduced the word, a pinpointing that spread rapidly, which proves that it is not inopportune and that moreover it is obvious. To say the psychoanalysed person leaves all sorts of equivocations about the completion of the matter while one is still in psychoanalysis. The only sense that the word psychoanalysis has is to indicate a passivity, which is not at all obvious, it is rather the contrary, since the one who talks the whole time is indeed the psychoanalysand. This is already a pointer.

The psychoanalysand whose analysis is brought to a term whose import as end, as I have just said, no one has yet strictly defined in all the acceptations of this word, but nevertheless it is supposed that it may be a successful doing. Pin on it a word like being, why not, this term remains rather empty for us and full enough, nevertheless, for it to be able to serve us here as a reference point. What could be the end of an operation that undoubtedly, at least at the start, has to do with the truth if the word being could not be evoked at its horizon.

Is it so for the analyst? Namely, the one who is supposed to have gone through such a journey on the principles that it presupposes and which are contributed by the act of the psychoanalyst. It is useless to question oneself whether the psychoanalyst has the right, in the name of some objectivity, to interpret the sense of a given figure in this poetic operation by this doing subject. It is useless to ask oneself whether it is legitimate or not to interpret this 'doing' as confirming the fact of transference. Interpretation and transference are implied in the act through which the analyst gives to this doing support and authorisation. It is designed for that. This all the same gives some weight to the presence of the act even if the analyst does nothing. Hence this separating out of the doing and of the act is essential to the status of the act itself. Where is it graspable that the psychoanalytic act shows it has run into an obstacle? Let us not forget that the psychoanalyst is supposed to have reached this point at which, however restricted it maybe, there has been produced for him this ending which includes the evocation of the truth.

From this point of being, he is supposed to be the Archimedes capable of making turn everything that develops in this structure first evoked, of which the circumscribing of an "I lose" by which I began, gives the key.

(66) Would it be interesting to see there being reproduced here this effect of loss, beyond the operation that the analytic act centres? I think that by posing

the question in these terms, it will immediately appear to you that there is no doubt that it is in the insufficiency, I would say, of analytic production that there ought to be read something which corresponds to this dimension of obstacle. Beyond an act that is supposed to bring to an end (*faire fin*), but whose magisterial point we must suppose if we want to be able to speak about anything at all concerning it. Moreover, there is nothing excessive in evoking it, when the analysts themselves, and those who may most fall under the threat of the designation of this obstacle - there where I am proposing that we should search for the incidence which can complete the support, indeed establish it - of our critique. There is nothing excessive in speaking about this turning point, in speaking about the passage of the psychoanalysand to the psychoanalyst, since among psychoanalysts themselves the reference to the very thing that I have just evoked is constant and given as a condition of any analytic competence.

It could be an infinite task to put the psychoanalytic literature to the test. Moreover, I have highlighted some examples of it on the horizon. In my first class this year I cited the article by Rappaport which could be called in French (it appeared in the *International Journal*) "*statut analytique du penser*". *Thinking*, the present participle. In such a large gathering it would be tedious, inefficient, to take such an article to see there being manifested in it the best of good intentions, as I might say. A sort of flattening of everything that can, from the Freudian statement itself, be organised in terms of stating what is involved for the function of thinking in what is called the analytic economy. The striking thing about it would be that the tearing apart that is marked at every instant, the impossibility of not, for example, making this *montage* or *démontage*, as you wish, of *thinking*, start from the primary process itself, at the level of what Freud designates as primary hallucination. This is linked to the first pathetic search, that supposed by the simple existence of a motor system. When it does not encounter the object of its satisfaction, it is supposed - at the source of the explanation of the primary process - to be responsible for this regressive process which makes the phantastical image of what is sought appear.

The complete incompatibility of this register, which is nevertheless put under the heading of thinking, with what in the secondary process is established in (67) terms of a thinking which is a sort of reduced action, a small scale action which makes it necessary to pass into a completely different register than the one first evoked, namely, the introduction of the dimension of reality testing, does not fail to be noted in passing by the author. In pursuing his path imperturbably he will come to see that not only are there not two modes and two registers of thinking but that there are an infinity of them which are to be more or less echeloned in what psychologists had previously noted in terms of stages of consciousness. And consequently to completely reduce the relief of what had been contributed by Freud to what is called the reduction to general psychology, namely, to its abolition. This is only a trivial example and each one of you can, each one as you wish, can go and confirm it. If other people saw the interest in holding a seminar in which something like this would be followed in its details - why not - the important thing it seems to me is that it is completely eluded in

this perspective of reduction and consequently fails. What is striking, outstanding, extraordinary, implied in this dimension of primary process is something which can be expressed more or less as follows: not “in the beginning is dissatisfaction”, which means nothing. It is not that the living individual chases after satisfaction that is important, it is that there is a status of enjoyment (*jouissance*) which is dissatisfaction.

To elude it as original, as implied in the theory of the one who introduced it, this theory, it does not matter whether or not he expressed it like that, but if he constructed it like that, namely, if he formulated the pleasure principle as it had never been formulated before him, for pleasure from all time served to define the good, it was satisfaction in itself. Except for the fact that no one was able to believe it, because everyone knew from all time that to be in the good is not always satisfying. Freud introduces this other thing. It is a matter of seeing what is the consistency between this point and the one first indicated in the dimension of truth.

I opened a journal by chance. I do not know what it is, a weekly, a tri-annual, in which I saw distinguished signatures, one from the side of the horizon where the divine battle is still firing on all cylinders, that for the good precisely. I saw an article which began with a sort of incantation around “the symbolic, the imaginary and the real”. ... To which the person referred the illumination that had been brought into the world by this tripartition for which I am responsible. And he valiantly concludes: to us this says what it says, the Real is God. This is (68) how people can say that I am a contribution to theological faith.

This, all the same, encouraged me to do something that I will attempt for the numerous people who see that this is mixed up. That what can be indicated, if one takes these terms otherwise than in the absolute, is the following:

Symbolic

Imaginary

Real

The symbolic, if you wish, we are going to put like that.

The imaginary, we are going to put it over here and the real ... it is completely idiotic, like that.

There would really be nothing to make of it, especially not a rectangular triangle, if, perhaps finally, to allow us a little to pose questions.

S

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Enjoyment

Symbolic

Symptom

Imaginary

Real

Truth

You are not going to go around with that on a piece of paper saying to yourself: what square am I in! All the same.

(69) If we remember what I teach about the subject as determined by two signifiers or more exactly by a signifier as representing it for another signifier, why not put the barred Subject like a projection onto the other side? This will allow there to be asked what is involved in the relation of the Subject between the Imaginary and the Real.

On the other hand this I of the unary stroke, the one we start from to see how, effectively, in the development of the mechanism, this mechanism of the incidence of the signifier in development, is produced, namely, the first Identification. We will put it also as a projection on the other side.

The third function will be given me by this “o” which is something like a falling of the Real onto the vector stretched from the Symbolic to the Imaginary, namely, how the signifier can very well take its material, who would see in this an obstacle, in the imaginary functions, namely, in the most fragile, the most difficult thing to grasp as far as man is concerned. Not that there are not in him primitive images destined to provide us with a guide in nature, but precisely, as the signifier lays hold of them, they are always very difficult to locate in their raw state.

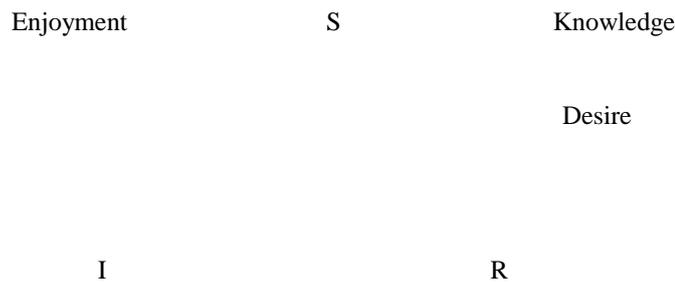
You see that the question can be posed about what the vectors uniting each one of these mapped out points represent. This is going to have an interest - that is why, of course, I am preparing you for this little game. The fact is that, all the same, since we have been speaking about the psychoanalytic act, all we have been able to do is to re-evoked the dimensions in which there are deployed our (70) references concerning the function of the symptom when we have posited it as putting a check on what is knowable, on knowledge, which always represents some truth. We would put here what constitutes the third pole, namely, enjoyment.

This introduces more correctly a certain fundamental attachment of the human spirit to the imaginary. This introduces something that can help you like cardinal points and which perhaps may serve as a support every time I evoke one of these poles, for example, like today, I pose the question of what is involved in the act of the analyst with respect to the truth.

At the start the question can and ought to be posed, does the analytic act take charge of the truth? It seems to do so, but who would dare to take responsibility for the truth without drawing derision on himself? In certain cases I take myself for Pontius Pilate. There is a pretty image in Claudel. Pontius Pilate whose only mistake was to pose this question, he was unlucky, he is the only one to have posed it before the truth. That knocked him a little off centre. The result is, (here I am staying in Claudel's register, it is he who invented that) that when he was travelling afterwards, all the idols (it is still Claudel who is speaking) saw their bellies opening and clattering down with the loud noise of a slot machine.

I am not posing the question, either in this context or with such vigour to obtain this result. But in any case, sometimes, it is close to it. The psychoanalyst does not take charge of the truth. He does not take charge of the truth because none of the poles can be judged in function of what it represents in terms of our three starting vertices, namely, that the truth is at the locus of the Other, the

(71) inscription of the signifier. Namely, the truth is not there like that, any more than enjoyment in fact, which certainly has a relation with the Real, but from which precisely the pleasure principle is designed to separate us. As for Knowledge, it is an imaginary function, an incontestable idealisation, this is what renders delicate the position of the analyst who is in the middle, where there is the void, the hole, the place of desire.



Truth

But this involves a certain number of taboo points, in a way, of discipline, namely, that since one has to answer to something, I mean those who come to consult the analyst in order to find more security (*assurance*), well then my God, it happens that a theory is constructed of the conditions of the security that ought to come to someone who develops normally. It is a very lovely myth.

There is an article by Erik Erikson on the dream of Irma's injection that is constructed in this way. He enumerates in stages, how there ought to be edified the security of the little chap who first of all has had a suitable Mammy, one who has, of course, learnt her lessons in the books of psychoanalysts. And there is a series of stages which goes right to the peak, to give us (I already evoked it at one time) a perfectly secure GI. This can be constructed. Everything can be constructed in terms of psychology. It is a matter of knowing how the psychoanalytic act is compatible with such rubbish. It must be believed that it has something to do and the word rubbish (*déchet*) is not to be taken there as coming by chance. Perhaps by pinpointing, as we should, certain theoretical productions, we can immediately locate on this map, since it is a map, so Socratic a one that it is no more than the one I evoked the other day in connection with *Meno*. That has no more import, import as an exercise, than to see the relation that a production can have which, in no case, has a function with respect to the practice that even the analysts most exuberant about these constructions, in general optimistic, respect no less. No psychoanalyst, unless

through excess or by way of exception, is going to believe in it when he intervenes.

The relation of these productions to the natural high point of rubbish here, namely the *o*, may help us to make progress as regards what is involved in the relation of analytic production to another term. For example, that of the idealisation of his social position that we would put on the side of the I.

In short, the inauguration of a method of discernment of what is involved in the (72) productions of the analytic act, of the perhaps necessary amount of loss, I am not saying, that it involves, may be of a nature not at all simply to illuminate with a bright light what is involved in the analytic act, of the status that is presupposes and that it supports in the ambiguity it deploys. And why stop at any particular point of the extension of this ambiguity, until, as I might say, we have come back to our point of departure, if it is true that there is no way of getting out of it, we may as well complete the circuit of it.

We are going to try this year to give a first trial image of it. For this, for example, I am not, of course, going to take the worst examples. There is rubbish and there is rubbish. There is uninterpretable rubbish, even though you should pay attention that this designation of uninterpretable is not taken here in the proper sense.

Let us take an excellent author: Mr Winnicott. It is remarkable that this author to whom we owe one the most crucial discoveries, I remember, and I will never fail to come to it in homage in my memory, the help the transitional object, as he put it forward, gave me when I was questioning myself about the way to demystify the function of the so-called partial object, as we see it being sustained to support the most abstruse, the most mystifying, the least clinical theory about the so-called developmental relations of the pre-genital with respect to the genital.

The simple introduction of this little object that Mr. Winnicott calls the transitional object, this little piece of cloth that the baby, before the drama around which there have accumulated so many confused clouds, before this drama of weaning, which, when we observe it, is not at all necessarily a drama. As someone who does not lack penetration pointed out to me, it can happen that the person who most resents weaning is the mother. The presence, the simple presence in this case which seems in a way to be the support, the fundamental arch thanks to which everything would no longer ever after be developed simply in terms of a dual relation, the relation of the child to the mother. It is immediately interfered with by the functions of this tiny object whose status Winnicott articulates for us.

I will take up next year (January 10th) these features whose description one can say is exemplary. It is enough to read Mr Winnicott to translate him in a way. It is clear that this little piece of cloth or of blanket, a dirty piece that the infant

(73) clings onto, which in a way is something to see here, the relation to this first object of enjoyment which is not the mother's breast which is never there permanently, but one that is always within reach: the thumb of the child's hand. How can analysts distance themselves to this degree from their experience of what is brought to them in the first place about the function of the hand, to the point that for them human (*l'humain*) ought to be written *l'hu-main* (with a hyphen in the middle).

The reading that I am recommending to you is in number five of this journal which passed as mine for a long time, which is called, *La psychanalyse*. There is a translation of this transitional object of Winnicott. Read it. There is nothing more tiring than reading something and less likely to hold the attention. But if someone wants to do it the next time, who will not understand that all of this is to say what this little *o* object is. It is neither within, nor without, neither real nor illusory. It does not enter at all into this artful construction that the usual analysis edifies around narcissism by seeing in it something completely different than what it is meant for. Namely, not to make two moral aspects, namely, on the one side self-love and on the other that of the object, as they put it.

It is very clear, I already did it here, in reading what Freud said about the *Real Ich* and the *Lust Ich*, that it was to demonstrate to us that the first object was the *Lust Ich*, namely, myself the rule of my pleasure and that it remains so.

So then this whole precious description which is so close to the *o*-object, only lacks one thing, which is that one sees that everything that is said about it means nothing but the bud, the point, the first emergence from the earth of what? Of what the *o*-object commands, namely, the subject. The subject as such, which functions at first at the level of this transitional object. This is certainly not a test designed to diminish the sort of production that can be done around the analytic act. But you will see what is involved in it when Winnicott pushes things further. Namely, when he is no longer the observer of the little baby (he is more capable of it than many others), but maps out his own technique concerning what he, for his part, seeks to know, in an open way. I indicated it to you the last time at the beginning of the lecture, namely, The Truth.

This *self* that he speaks about as something that is there from all time, behind everything that is happening before even the subject is mapped out in any way, something is capable of freezing, he says, the situation of lack. When the (74) environment is not suitable in the first days, in the first months of the baby, something may function which brings about this *freezing*, this *gelation*. Undoubtedly, this is something which only experience can settle. And there again there is, with respect to these psychotic consequences, something that Winnicott saw very clearly. But behind this *freezing*, there is, Winnicott tells us this *self* which is waiting. This *self* which, by being frozen, constitutes the false self that Mr. Winnicott has to return to by a process of regression whose relation to the acting (*agir*) of the analyst it will be the object of my discourse the next

time to show. Behind this false self there is waiting what? The true to start up again. Who does not see, when we already have in analytic theory the *Real Ich*, the *Lust Ich*, the ego, the id, all these references already articulated enough to define our field, that the addition of this *self* represents nothing other than, as it is avowed in the text with *false* and *true*, the truth? But who does not also see that there is no other *true-self* behind this situation than Mr Winnicott himself, who places himself here as the presence of the truth.

This says nothing to involve in any way a disparagement of what this position leads him to. As you will see the next time, extracted from his own text, it is a position which avows that it must as such and in an avowed way emerge from the analytic act, to take up the position of doing, through which he assumes, as another analyst puts it, to answer all the needs of the patient.

We are not here to go into the details of what this leads to. We are here to indicate how the slightest miscognition - and how would it not exist since it is not yet defined - the slightest miscognition of what is involved in the analytic act, immediately draws the one who assumes it, and all the more so if he is more certain, more capable - I am quoting this author because I consider that there is no one who comes near him in English - that immediately he is brought, black on white, to the negation of the analytic position.

This just by itself appears to me to confirm, to give a beginning, if not yet a support to what I am introducing as the method of a critique by theoretical expressions of what is involved in the status of the psychoanalytic act.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 10 January 1968.

I offer you my good wishes for the New Year, as they say.

Why "new"? All the same it is like the moon, when it has finished it begins again. And this point of finishing and of recommencing one could put anywhere, where, perhaps as opposed to the moon which was made, as every knows, and as a familiar saying recalls, for the intention of a not indifferent person. And there is a moment when the moon disappears, which is a reason for declaring it to be new afterwards.

But for the year, and for many other things and generally for what is called the real, there is no assignable beginning. Nevertheless, it is necessary that it should

have one once it had been called “year”, because of the signifying mapping out of what is found, for one part of this real, to be defined as a cycle.

It is a cycle that is not quite accurate, like all the cycles in the real. But once one grasps it as cycle, there is a signifier that does not quite agree with the real. It is corrected by speaking, for example, about a great year in connection with a little thing that varies from year to year until it makes up 28,000 years. In short, it is recycled.

So then, where should one put the beginning of the year, for example? This is where the act comes in. This at least is one of the ways of tackling what is involved in the act, a structure about which, if you search carefully, you will see that people have, when all is said and done, spoken little.

The New Year gives me the opportunity to approach it from this angle.

(76) An act is linked to the determination of the beginning, and very especially where there is need to make one, because, precisely, one does not exist. That is why, in short, what I did at the beginning has a certain sense. To offer you my wishes for a good year, is something that enters into the field of the act. Naturally, a small act, a very lay residue of act. But do not forget that if we make these little bowings and scrapings - which are always more or less going out of fashion, but which subsist, this is what is remarkable - it is as an echo of things that people speak about as if they were gone, namely, ceremonial acts which, in a framework that one can call the Empire, acts which consisted in the fact that on that day the Emperor handled the plough with his own hands.

It is an organised act that marked a beginning in so far as it was essential for a certain order of empire that this foundation renewed at the beginning of each year should be marked. We see here the dimension of what is called the traditional act, the one founded on a certain necessity of transferring something considered as essential in the order of the signifier. That it should be necessary to transfer it presupposes apparently that it is not transferred by itself, that beginning is well and truly renewal. This even opens the door by way of an opposition to the fact that it is conceivable that the act constitutes, if one can express it in this way, without quotation marks, a true beginning. That there should be in a word, an act, which is creative and that this is the beginning.

Now, it is enough to evoke this horizon of any functioning of the act to grasp that it is obviously here indeed that there resides its true structure, which is quite apparent, obvious, and shows the fecundity, moreover, of the myth of creation.

It is a little surprising that it did not emerge in a way that is now current, admitted into common consciousness, that there is a certain relation between

the break produced in the evolution of science at the beginning of the 17th century and the realisation, the advent of the true import of this myth of creation which thus took sixteen centuries to come to its true incidence, to what one can call throughout this epoch, Christian consciousness. I cannot come back too often to this remark which, I underline, is not mine but that of Alexandre Koyré: "At the beginning was the action" says Goethe. A little later, people think that this is a (77) contradiction of the Johannine formula: "In the beginning was the word". This is what makes it necessary to look a little more closely at it. If you are introduced to the question along the path that I have just tried to open up for you in a familiar way, it is quite clear that there is not the slightest opposition between these two formulae. In the beginning was the action because without an act there can quite simply be no question of a beginning. Action is indeed at the beginning because there could not be a beginning without action.

If we can grasp from some angle what is never, or what has never been up to now, put forward quite as it is necessary to do, the fact is that there is no action that is not presented first and foremost with a signifying point. This is what characterises the act, its signifying point, and its efficiency as act has nothing to do with its efficacy as a doing. Something that reaches this signifying point. One can begin to speak about act simply, without losing sight - it is rather curious that it should be a psychoanalyst who can for the first time give to this theme of act this accent, more exactly what constitutes its strange and therefore problematic and double feature - on the one hand, that it is in the analytic field, namely, in connection with the parapraxis (*acte manqué*), that it appeared precisely that an act which presents itself as missing out is an act, and uniquely from the fact that it is signifying. And then, that a psychoanalyst presides, precisely, (let us limit ourselves to this term for the moment) over an operation described as psychoanalysis which, in its principle, commands the suspension of every act.

You sense that when we are now going to engage ourselves on this path, of questioning in a more precise, more insistent way than we were able to do in the introductory sessions of the last trimester, what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, I want all the same, a little bit more than I was able in these first words, to highlight that at our horizon, we know what it can be a question of in every act. Of this act whose inaugural character I showed earlier, and whose type as one might say, is given to us through this vacillating meditation that is carried on around the politics of the act described as that of Crossing the Rubicon, for example. Behind it others are profiled. The Night of the 4th of August, the *Jeu de paume*, the Days of October ...

Where is here the sense of the act?

Certainly we feel, we sense, that the point at which questioning is first (78) suspended, is the strategic sense of one or other breakthrough. Thank God, it is not for nothing that I first evoked the Rubicon. It is a rather simplistic example

completely marked by the dimensions of the sacred. Crossing the Rubicon did not have a decisive military meaning for Caesar. But on the contrary, to cross it was to re-enter his motherland. The land of the Republic, which to attack, was to violate. This was a breakthrough that had been made, in the sense of these revolutionary acts that I find myself - unintentionally of course – to have profiled behind it. Is the act the moment when Lenin gives one or other order, or the moment when there are loosed upon the world the signifiers that give to one or other precise success in the strategy its sense of a beginning that is already traced out? Something in which the consequence of a certain strategy comes to take its place, and to take in it its value as sign.

After all, it is worthwhile posing the question here, at a certain starting point. Because in the way that I am going to advance onto the terrain of act, there is also a certain breakthrough in evoking this dimension of revolutionary act and pinning on it something different to any warlike efficacy and which is called stimulating a new desire.

*“Un coup de ton doigt sur le tambour décharge tous les sons et commence la nouvelle harmonie
Un pas de toi c’est la levée des nouveaux hommes et l’heure en marche.
Ta tête se détourne, le nouvel amour. Ta tête se retourne, le nouvel amour.”*

[Your finger on the drum looses all the sounds and begins the new harmony
A step from you is the rising of new men and time on the march.
Your face turns aside, the new love. Your face turns back, the new love.]

I think that none of you can fail to understand this text by Rimbaud that I am not finishing and which is called *“A une raison”*.

It is the formula of the act.

Can the act of positing the unconscious be conceived of otherwise. And especially from the moment that I recall that the unconscious has a language structure, when having recalled it without recording the profound tremors among those who are interested by that, I take up and speak about its disruptive effects on the *Cogito*.

Here, I take up again, I underline, it happens that in a certain field I can formulate, “I think”. That has all sorts of characteristics. What I dreamt last (79) night, what I missed this morning, or indeed what I touched on yesterday through some uncertain stumbling, without wanting to, by making what is called a witticism, sometimes without doing it deliberately.

In this “I think”, am “I there”? It is quite certain that the revelation of the “I think” of the unconscious implies - everyone knows this whether one has done psychoanalysis or not, it is enough to open a book to see what is at stake - something that, at the level of what Descartes’ *Cogito* makes us put our finger

on about the implication of the “therefore I am”, and this dimension that I would describe as that of defusing. This means that where I most certainly think, because I am aware of it, I was in it, but exactly as they say - you know I already used this example, but experience teaches me that it is not vain to repeat myself - it is in the same sense in which, according to the example extracted from remarks of the linguist Guillaume, in the same sense that this very specific use of the imperfect in French which gives all its ambiguity to the expression “*un instant plus tard la bombe éclatait*” [another second and the bomb was gone off]. Which means that precisely it did not go off.

Allow me to add, to stick this nuance onto the German *Wo Es war*, which does not include it, and by this to add to it the renewed use that can be given of “*Wo Es war soll Ich werden*”. Where it was, where it is no longer anywhere but there, because I know that I thought it, “*soll Ich werden*”. *Ich*: for a long time I have underlined that it can only be translated by, the subject. The subject must become. Only can he? That is the question!

“Where it was ...” Let us translate: “I must become”, continue, “a psychoanalyst”. Only from the fact - it is the question that I posed about this *Ich* translated by the subject - how is the psychoanalyst going to be able to find his place in this conjuncture. This conjuncture is the one that last year I expressly articulated under the title of the logic of phantasy, by a disjunctive conjunction of a very special disjunction which is the one that, more than three years ago, I introduced by giving a new sense to the term of alienation. Namely, the one which proposes this curious choice whose consequences I articulated which is a forced choice and, necessarily, a losing one. “Your money or your life”, “liberty or death”. The last one that we are introducing here and that I am bringing in to show its relation with the psychoanalytic act is: “either I do not think or I am not”. If you add to it, as I did earlier to the *soll Ich werden*, the term which is indeed what is in question in the psychoanalytic act: the term psychoanalyst, it is enough to make this little (80) machine run. Obviously, there is to be no hesitation. If on the one hand I am not a psychoanalyst, the result is that I do not think.

Naturally the interest of this is not simply humorous. It ought indeed to lead us somewhere and particularly to asking ourselves what is involved simply in our experience of last year, in what I will call this starting supposition which is constituted by the “either I do not think or I am not”. How does it happen that it has proved to be not simply efficacious but necessary for what I called last year a logic of the phantasy, namely, a logic of such a kind that it preserves in itself the possibility of giving an account of what is involved in the phantasy and of its relation to the unconscious.

Because it is there as unconscious, again I must not think of what is involved in my unconscious as thinking.. Where I think it, I am no longer at home. I am no longer there. “I am no longer there (*je n’y suis plus*)” in terms of language in the same way that I make the person who answers the door say: “Sir is not at

home". It is an "I am not there" in so far as it is said. This indeed is what gives it its importance. This means in particular, this means that as psychoanalyst I cannot pronounce it. You can see the effect it would have on my clientele! This is also what corners me in the position of "I do not think". At least if what I am putting forward here as logic is able to be followed along its true thread. "I do not think" could be - having drawn the two circles below and their intersection (cf schema), I marked with all the quotation marks of prudence, and to tell you that you must not get too alarmed - this "false-being (*faux-être*)". It is the being of all of us. One is never so solid in one's being as when one does not think. Everyone knows that.

Only all the same, I would like to mark clearly the distinction from what I am putting forward today.

There are two distinct falsehoods. Everyone knows that when I came into psychoanalysis with a little broom which was called the mirror stage, I began by mapping out, because after all it was in Freud, it is said, mapped out, seried. I took the mirror stage to make a portmanteau. It is even much more emphasised immediately than I was ever able to do it in the course of statements that spared peoples sensitivities, that there is no love which does not derive from this narcissistic dimension. That if one knows how to read Freud, what is opposed to narcissism, what is called object libido, what (81) concerns on the bottom left hand corner the *o*-object, for that is object libido. It has nothing to do with love since love is narcissism and the two are opposed: narcissistic libido and object libido.

So then when I speak about "false-being" it is not a matter of what comes to plant itself there upon it, in a way, like mussels on the hull of a ship, if you wish. It is not a matter of an individual (*être*) puffed up with the imaginary. It is a matter of something underneath which gives it its place.

It is a matter of the "I do not think" in its structuring necessity *qua* inscribed at this starting place without which we would not have been able, last year, to articulate the least thing about what is involved in the logic of the phantasy.

(82) Naturally, it is a convenient place, this "I do not think". It is not just the puffed-up individual that I spoke about just now, who finds his place there. Everything comes into it, medical prejudice as a whole, psychological or psychologising prejudice no less. On the whole, note the fact that in any case the psychoanalyst is particularly subject to this "I do not think" because he is inhabited by everything that I have just stated, pinpointed, as prejudices by qualifying them by their origin. He has others besides, for example about doctors. The advantage as I might say, when medical prejudice preoccupies him, and God knows that it preoccupies him a good deal, for example, to take only it. And precisely indeed the doctors do not think about it, even though it still worries them - but not the psychoanalyst. He takes it like that, precisely in

the measure that he has this dimension that it is only a prejudice, but since it is a matter of not thinking he is all the more at ease with it.

Have you ever, unless exceptionally, seen a psychoanalyst who questioned himself about what Pasteur meant in the medical adventure? Pasteur is not a fashionable subject, but this might precisely have caught the attention of a psychoanalyst. It has never been seen. We will see if it changes. In any case, it would be necessary here to propose to oneself this little exercise: what is this initial point? It is worthwhile all the same posing oneself the question, if as we have glimpsed at the beginning - it is the axis of our progress today - the act in itself is always related to a beginning. I quite deliberately did not pose the question of this logical beginning last year, because, in truth, like more than one point of this logic of the phantasy, we would have had to leave it in suspense. Let us pin it down as *arché*, since this is how we have entered today, by the beginning. It is an *arché*, an *initium*, a beginning but in what sense?

Is it in the sense of the zero on a little measuring apparatus? An individual, for example, quite simply. It is not a bad start to ask oneself this question, because already it seems it can even be seen right away that to pose the question in this way is to rule out that it is a beginning in the sense of the unmarked.

We even touch with our finger that the only fact that we have to question this *arché*-point about, namely, is whether it is zero. The fact is that in any case it is already marked, and that, after all, this works out rather well all the same for from the effect of the mark, it appears very satisfying to see there flowing the "either I do not think" or "I am not". "Either I am not this mark", or "I am nothing but this mark", namely, that "I do not think". For (83) the psychoanalyst, for example, this applies very well.

He has the label, or indeed he is not it.

Only one must not be deceived by it. As I have just marked it, at the level of the mark, we see only the necessary result precisely of alienation. Namely, that there is no choice between the mark and the individual, so that if it must be marked somewhere, it is precisely on the top left (cf schema of the "I do not think"). The alienating effect has already taken place and we are not surprised to find there, in its original form, the effect of the mark, which is sufficiently indicated in this deduction of narcissism that I made in a schema that I know that at least some of you know, the one that relates in their dependence the ideal ego and the ego ideal.

So then knowing the nature of the logical starting point remains in suspense in so far as it still depends on the conjunction before the disjunction, the "I do not think" and the "I am not". Assuredly, last year it was towards this, since it was our starting point, and as I might say the initial act of our logical

deduction, we would not be able to come back to it if we did not have what constitutes the opening, the gap that it is always necessary to find in every presentation of the analytic field, which made us, after having constructed the moment of the logic of phantasy, spend the last trimester around the sexual act, precisely defined by the fact that it constitutes an aporia.

Let us take up again then, starting from the psychoanalytic act, this questioning about what is the *initium* of the logic of the phantasy that I had to begin to recall here. That is why I inscribed on the board today this aspect of it that I articulated last year under the terms of operation alienation, operation truth, operation transference, to make of them the three terms of what one can call a Klein group, on condition of course of grasping that in naming them in this way, we are not seeing the return, the operation, of what constitutes for each one the return operation. That here as they are inscribed with these vectorial indications, there is only, as I might say, half a Klein group.

Let us take up the act at the sensitive point that we see it in the analytic institution and let us start from the beginning in so far as this today means that the act establishes the beginning.

(84) Is it an act to begin a psychoanalysis, yes or no? Yes, assuredly. Only who performs this act? We pointed out earlier what it implies for the one who engages himself in psychoanalysis, what it implies precisely in terms of relinquishing the act. It becomes very difficult, in this sense, to attribute the structure of the act to the one who engages in a psychoanalysis. A psychoanalysis is a task, and some people even say that it is a trade. I am not the one who said it, but people all the same who know about it. These people who have to follow the rule or not, however you define them, must be taught their trade. In any case, in that quarter people do not talk about their trade as psychoanalysts. They are going to say it now because the word has become popular. Nevertheless, that is what it means.

So then, it is clear that if there is an act, it is probably necessary to look for it elsewhere. We do not after all have to force ourselves very much to ask ourselves to say that if it is not on the side of the psychoanalyst, it is on the side of the psychoanalyses. There is no doubt about it. Only this becomes a difficulty. Because after what we have just said, as regards the act of positing the unconscious, is it necessary for the psychoanalyst to posit it again each time? Is it really possible, especially if we think that after what we have just said, to reposit it each time would be to give us each time a new opportunity for not thinking?

There must be something else, a relation between the task and the act which has perhaps not yet been grasped and which perhaps cannot be. It is necessary perhaps to make a detour. One sees right away where we can find this detour. At another beginning, at this moment of beginning when one becomes a psychoanalyst.

We must take into account the fact which is in the data that if one is to believe what is said, it is necessary to trust oneself in this domain.

Beginning to be a psychoanalyst, as everyone knows, begins at the end of a psychoanalysis. We have only to take that as it is given to us if we want to grasp something. We must start from that, from this point which is accepted by everyone in psychoanalysis.

So then, let us start from things as they present themselves. You have come to the end once. It is from this that you must deduce the relation that this has with the beginning on every occasion. You have reached the end of your analysis once, and it is this act so difficult to grasp at the beginning (85) of each psychoanalysis that we guarantee. It must have a relation with the end of what once occurred.

Now here it is already necessary that what I put forward last year should be of some use. Namely, the way in which there is formulated in this logic the end of psychoanalysis.

The end of psychoanalysis supposes a certain realisation of the truth operation. Namely, that if in effect this ought to constitute this sort of journey, which, from the subject installed in his false-being makes him realise something about a thinking which includes the "I am not". This does not fail to rediscover as is appropriate, in a crossed and inverted form, its truer place, its place in the form of "where it was" at the level of the "I am not". This is found in this *o*-object whose sense and practice we have done a lot, it seems to me, to give you, and on the other hand, this lack which subsists at the level of the natural subject, of the subject of knowledge, of the false-being of the subject, this lack, which from all time, has been defined as the essence of man and which is called desire, but which at the end of an analysis is expressed by this thing, not only formulated but incarnated, which is called castration.

This is what we usually label with the letter minus phi ($- \phi$). The inversion of this relation of left to right which makes the "I do not think" of the alienated subject correspond to the "where it was" of the unconscious in the discovery of the "where it was" of desire in the subject in the "I am not" of unconscious thinking, this reversing itself is properly what supports the identification of the *o* as cause of desire, and of the minus phi ($- \phi$) as the place from which there is inscribed the gap proper to the sexual act.

It is precisely here that we ought to suspend things for a moment. You see it, you put your finger on it, there are two "*wo Es war*", two "where it was", corresponding moreover to the distance which in the theory splits the unconscious from the Id. There is the "where it was" inscribed here at the level of the subject, and I already said it, I am repeating it so what you will not let it pass, where it remains attached to this subject as lack. There is the other

“where it was”, which at an opposite place is the one is on the bottom right (cf schema), of the locus of the unconscious which remains attached to the “I am not” of the unconscious as object, object of loss.

The initial lost object of the whole analytic genesis, the one that Freud hammered at every phase of the birth of the unconscious, is there, this lost object, cause of desire. We are going to see it as being at the source of the act.

(86) But this is only an announcement. I am not justifying it immediately. There is still a journey to take before being sure of it, we have to pause there for a while. In general, it is only worthwhile pausing for a while to grasp the time that one has passed on it without knowing it, we will say moreover, to correct ourselves. Passed ... it would be better to say “passing (*passant*)” and if you will allow me to play with the words “not without knowing it (*pas sans le savoir*)”.

Namely, with knowledge, one passed it. But precisely, it is because I have presented to you the result of my schemas from last year, that you are supposed to know, though there is not some exaggeration in this. Yes, it is with this knowledge that I passed this time, too quickly, namely, in haste. As you know haste is precisely what allows the truth to escape. This moreover allows us to live. The truth is that the lack (on the top left), is the loss, (of the bottom right). But the loss for its part, is the cause of something else. We will call it the cause of itself on condition, of course, that you are not deceived. God is the cause of himself, Spinoza tells us. Did he realise how right he was? Why not, after all. He was someone very able. It is quite certain that the fact of conferring on God the fact of being the cause of himself, dissipated the whole ambiguity of the *Cogito*, which might well have a similar pretension, at least in the minds of some people. If there is anything that analytic experience reminds us of, it is that if this expression, “cause of itself”, means something, it is precisely to indicate to us that the self, or what is called such, in other words, the subject to which everyone has to come, since even in one or other Anglo-Saxon field where it can be said that people understand nothing about any of these questions, the word *self* had to emerge. It can be adapted to nothing in analytic theory, nothing corresponds to it.

The subject depends on this cause which makes it divided and is called the **o**-object. Here is what marks what it is important to underline: that the subject is not its own cause, that it is the consequence of loss and that it has to put itself into the consequence of the loss, the one that the **o**-object constitutes, to know what he is lacking.

That is why I am saying that we would be going too quickly to state as I have done, these two points of the oblique line, from left to right (cf schema) and from top to bottom, of these two separated terms of the first division. The thing is supposedly known in the statement that the “where it was” is lack starting from the subject. It is only truly such if the subject makes of (87)

himself a loss. Now this is what he cannot think except by making himself be. "I think, he says, therefore I am". He rejects himself invincibly into the being of this false act, which is called the *Cogito*. The act of the *Cogito* is error about being, as we see in the definitive alienation resulting from it of the body, which is rejected into extension, the rejection of the body outside of thinking is the great *Verwerfung* of Descartes. It is stamped with its effect that it reappears in the real, namely, in the impossible. It is impossible for a machine to be a body. That is why knowledge continues to prove it by making it into spare parts. We are in this adventure, I do not need I think to make allusions to it. But let us leave our Descartes here for today to return to what followed and to the punctuation that we must give today to our progress.

We know that the subject of the analytic act can know nothing about what is learnt in the analytic experience, unless there operates in it what is called transference. The transference that I restored in a complete fashion, by relating it to the subject supposed to know.

The term of analysis consists in the fall of the subject supposed to know and his reduction to the arrival of this *o*-object, as cause of the division of the subject which comes in its place. The one who, phantastically, with the psychoanalysand, plays the game with respect to the subject who is supposed to know, namely, the analyst, it is he the analyst who comes to the term of analysis by being able to tolerate being nothing more than this remainder. This remainder of the thing known, which is called the *o*-object, it is around this that our question should be brought to bear.

The analysand who has come to the end of the analysis in the act, if there is one, which carries him to become a psychoanalyst, must we not see that this passage only takes place in the act which puts back in its place the subject supposed to know.

We now see this place where it is because it can be occupied. But it is only occupied in so far as this subject supposed to know, is reduced to this term that the one who up to then guarantees it there by his act, namely, the psychoanalyst, the psychoanalyst for his part has become this residue, this *o*-object.

He who at the end of a training analysis takes up, as I might say, the challenge of this act, we cannot omit that it is knowing what his analyst has become in the accomplishment of this act, namely, this residue, this rubbish, this rejected thing. By restoring the subject supposed to know, by himself picking up the torch of the analyst, he cannot but install, even if he does not (88) touch it, cannot but install the *o* at the level of the subject supposed to know. This subject supposed to know, that he can only take up again as condition of every psychoanalytic act, he knows, at this moment that I called in the pass, he knows that here is the *désêtre* that through him, the psychoanalysand, has struck the being of the analyst. I am saying, without touching it, that this is

how he is engaged. Because he, the subject in the pass at the moment of the analytic act, knows nothing about this *désêtre* established at the point of the subject supposed to know. Precisely because he has become the truth of this knowledge, and that, if I may say a truth that is reached “not without knowing it”, as I said earlier, well, it is incurable: one is this truth.

The analytic act functions at the start, as I might say, with a falsified subject supposed to know. For the subject supposed to know now proves what was quite simple to see immediately: that it is what is at the *arché* of analytic logic. If the one who becomes analyst could be cured of the truth that he has become, he would be able to mark what has happened in terms of a change at the level of the subject supposed to know. This is what in our graph we have marked by the signifier of S (\emptyset).

It would be necessary to grasp that the subject supposed to know is reduced at the end of the analysis to the same “not being there” which is characteristic of the unconscious itself, and that this discovery forms part of the same truth-operation.

I repeat. The putting in question of the subject supposed to know, the subversion of what, I would say, the whole functioning of knowledge implies and that I already questioned before you many times in the form of: “so then this knowledge, whether it is that of the transfinite number of Cantor or of the desire of the analyst, where was it before it was known?”

From that alone perhaps, can one proceed to a revival of the individual (*l'être*) whose condition it is to grasp that if its origin and its re-challenging, that which could take place from the signifier of the other that has finally vanished towards what replaces it, since moreover it is from its field, from the field of the Other that this signifier has been torn, namely, the *o*-object, this would also be to grasp that the individual as it can emerge from any act whatsoever, is an individual without essence as all the *o*-objects are without essence. This is what characterises them.

Objects without essence which are, or not, to be re-evoked in the act starting (89) from this sort of subject which, as we will see, is the subject of the act, of every act, I would say, in so far as like the subject supposed to know at the end of the analytic experience, it is a subject which is not in the act.

(91) In speaking about the “psychoanalytic act”, I have, as I might say, two ambitions: one long term and the other short, but necessarily the short term one is the better. The long term one, which cannot be set aside, is to illuminate what is involved in the act. The short term is to know in what the act of the psychoanalyst consists. Already in some writings in the past, I spoke about the psychoanalyst. I said that I was only starting from the fact that there is something of the psychoanalyst (*du psychanalyste*). The question of whether there is “the” psychoanalyst is not to be put completely in suspense either, but that of knowing how there can be a psychoanalyst is a question that is posed more or less in the same terms as what is called in logic the question of existence.

The psychoanalytic act, if it is an act and it is indeed from this that we began last year, is something that puts to us the question of articulating it, of saying it, which is legitimate. And even going further, implies the consequences of the act in so far as the act itself is in its proper dimension a statement (*un dire*). The act says something. This is what we started from.

This dimension has always been glimpsed. It is present in the facts, in experience. It is enough to evoke for even an instant some pregnant formulae, formulae that have worked, like that of “to act according to one’s conscience”, to grasp what is at stake. To act in accordance with one’s conscience is indeed a kind of middle point around which the history of the act could be said to have turned or that one can take as a point of departure to centre it. To act in accordance with one’s conscience. Why and before whom?

(92) The dimension of the Other, in so far as the act bears witness to something, cannot be eliminated either. Does this mean that this is the true turning point, the centre of gravity? Could we even sustain it for an instant where we are coming from, namely, where conscience as such is put in question, put in question in the measure that it can lead to what? Assuredly not to knowledge or to the truth either. It is from here that we start again by taking the measure of what has not yet been defined, of what has not yet been really circumscribed, of what is only introduced here, not even presupposed, the psychoanalytic act, in order to question again this point of equilibrium around which the question is posed of what the act is.

On the horizon, of course, as we know, a distant murmur, a murmur which comes from afar, which comes from the times described as classical, or again our Antiquity, where assuredly we know that all that is said on the subject of the exemplary act, of the meritorious act, of Plutarchism, if you wish. We surely sense already that there is a little too much self-esteem getting into the game, and nevertheless are we that far from it? I think that today it is around a discourse on the subject that we will take up the act again. And that our advantage comes from nothing other than something which has made us

restrict the supporting point of this subject by imposing on ourselves the most severe discipline, by only wanting to take as certain this dimension by which it is the grammatical subject.

Let us clearly understand here that it is not new, and that last year in our presentation of the *Logic of Phantasy*, we marked at its place, the place of “I do not think”, this form of the subject which appeared as a curtailing of the field reserved to it. This dimension properly of grammar which meant that the phantasy was able to be dominated literally by a sentence which is only sustained, which is only conceived of in the grammatical dimension: *Ein Kind wird geschlagen*, a child is being beaten. We know all about it. This is the surest point we have, around which, in the name of what we posit for disciplinary purposes, that there is no meta-language, that logic itself must be extracted from this given which language is. It is around this logic, on the contrary, that we made revolve this triple operation, to which by a sort of attempt at a trial, a divination, a risk, we gave the form of the Klein group. (93) An operation that we began by highlighting, on the path along which we tackled it, by the terms of alienation, truth, and transference.

Undoubtedly, this is only a pinpointing. And having gone over them in a certain direction we are - to find our way in them, to support what they can represent for us - forced to give them another name, and of course, on condition that we see that it is the same journey that is at stake.

So then it is starting from the subversion of the subject that we have already for some ten years sufficiently articulated, so that people can conceive of the sense that this term takes on, when we say that it is from the subversion of the subject that we have to take up again the function of the act. In order for us to see that it is between this grammatical subject, the one that is there, inscribed in the very notion of act, in the way in which it is made present for us, the *I* of action, and this subject articulated in these terms that are sliding, always ready to flee us by a displacement, by a jump, to one of the vertices of this tetrahedron, in recalling to you the functions of these terms, namely: the position of the *either-or* from which there starts the originating alienation, the one which culminates at the “I do not think”, for it to be even chosen - and what does this choice mean? - the “I am not” articulates its other term. These vectors, or more exactly these directions in which the fundamental operations are taken being those that I recalled earlier under the terms of alienation, truth, and transference.

What does that mean? Where does that lead us?

We posit the psychoanalytic act as consisting in the fact of supporting the transference. We are not saying: who supports, who performs the act, the (94) psychoanalyst therefore implicitly. This transference which would be a pure and simple obscenity, I would say, with some babbling added on, if we did not restore to it its true core, in the function of the subject supposed to know. Here, we have done this for some time by showing that everything that is articulated, about its diversity, as a transference effect, can only be organised by being referred to this truly fundamental function that is always present in everything that is involved in any progress of knowledge. This takes on its value here precisely from the fact that the existence of the unconscious puts it in question - a question never posed because we are still there, as one might say, implicitly - the answer is even unnoticed. From the moment that there is knowledge, there is a subject, and there must be some shift, some split, some shaking, some moment of *I* in this knowledge, for one to notice all of a sudden, for there to be thus renewed this knowledge that he knew before.

This is scarcely noticed when it is happening, but it is the field of psychoanalysis that makes it inevitable. What is involved in the subject supposed to know, since we have to deal with this sort of unthinkable thing which in the unconscious situates for us a knowledge without a subject? Naturally, this is something that one may not notice, by continuing to think that this subject is implied in this knowledge, quite simply by allowing there to escape everything involved in the efficacy of repression, and that it cannot be conceived of otherwise than in the fact that the signifier present in the unconscious, and liable to return, is precisely repressed in that it does not imply a subject, that it is no longer what represents a subject for another signifier, which is something that is articulated to another signifier without for all that representing this subject. There is no other definition possible of what is really involved in the function of the unconscious, in so far as the Freudian unconscious is not simply the implicit, or the obscured, or the archaic, or the primal. The unconscious is always in a completely different register, in the movement established as doing by this act, of supporting, or accepting to support the transference.

The question is what becomes of the subject supposed to know? I am going to tell you that in principle, the psychoanalyst knows what becomes of it. Assuredly, it falls. What is implied theoretically in this suspension of the subject supposed to know, this line of suppression, this bar on the *S* which symbolises it in the becoming of analysis, manifests itself in the fact that

something is produced at a place, that is certainly not indifferent to the (95) psychoanalyst, since it is at his own place that this thing arises. This thing is called the little *o*-object.

The little *o*-object is the realisation of this sort of *désêtre* that strikes the subject supposed to know. That it is the analyst, and as such, who comes to this place is not in doubt. It is marked in all the inferences in which he felt himself implicated to the point of no longer being able to do anything but bend the thinking of his practice in the sense of the dialectic of frustration, as you know. This is linked to the fact that he presents himself as the substance that is operated on and manipulated in the analytic deed. But this is precisely to fail to recognise the distinction there is between this deed and the act which allows it, the act which establishes it, the one that I started from earlier by defining it as this acceptance, this support given to the subject supposed to know, to the fact that the psychoanalyst knows that he is nevertheless doomed to *désêtre* and which thus constitutes, as I might say, an act that is out of synch since he is not the subject supposed to know, since he cannot be it. And if there is someone who knows it, it is above all the psychoanalyst.

Must I now, or a little later, yes, but why not now, why not right away, provided I can come back on something that I want to make you familiar with, by reminding you of its co-ordinates in other registers, in other statements. Must I now remind you that the analytic task, in so far as it is outlined from this point of the already alienated subject, in a certain sense naïve in its alienation, the one that the psychoanalyst knows to be defined by the “I do not think”, that what he sets him to as a task, is an “I think” which takes on precisely its whole emphasis, from the fact that he knows the “I do not think”, inherent to the status of the subject?

He sets him to the task of a thinking that is presented in a way in its very statement, in the rule that he gives him of it, as admitting the fundamental truth of the “I do not think”, that he should associate and do so freely. That he does not seek to know whether or not he is entirely there as subject, whether he affirms himself there. The task to which the psychoanalytic act gives its status is a task which already implies this destitution of the subject, and where does that lead us?

You must remember, you must not spend your time forgetting what is articulated about it, what is articulated about it in Freud, explicitly about the result. It has a name, and Freud did not soften it for us, which is something that is all the more to be highlighted because as subjective experience this was (96) never done before psychoanalysis. It is called castration, which is to be taken in its dimension of subjective experience in as much as nowhere except along this path can the subject be realised. I mean the subject of course.

This subject is only realised exactly *qua* lack, which means that the subjective experience culminates in something that we symbolise by (-). But if every use of the letter is justified by demonstrating that it is enough to have recourse to its manipulation in order not to be mistaken, on condition that one knows how to use it, it nevertheless remains that we have a right to try to be able to put into it an “it exists” - which I evoked earlier in connection with the psychoanalyst at the start of today’s discourse. And that this “it exists” in question, this “it exists” of a lack, must be incarnated by us in what effectively gives it its name: castration. Namely, that the subject realises that he does not have, that he does not have the organ of what I would call unique, unary, unifying enjoyment (*jouissance*). It is a matter, properly, of what makes enjoyment *one* in the conjunction of subjects of opposite sex. Namely, what I insisted on last year, in picking out the fact that there is no possible subjective realisation of the subject as element, as sexed partner in what is imagined as unification in the sexual act.

This incommensurability - that I tried to circumscribe before you, last year, by using the golden number, in so far as it is the symbol that allows the greatest play, this is something on which I cannot insist, because it belongs to the mathematical register - this incommensurability, this relation of **small o**, since it is the **small o** that I took up again not unintentionally to symbolise it in the (97) golden number, of **small o** to 1. This is where there operates what appears as subjective realisation at the end of the psychoanalytic task. Namely, this lack is not the organ, this naturally is not without a background if we remember that the organ and the function are two different things. So different that one can say that there comes back from time to time the problem of knowing what function must be given to each organ, and this is where the true problem of the adaptation of the living being lies. The more organs he has, the more entangled he is.

But let us pause ... It is a matter then of a limited experience, of a logical experience and after all, why not? Because for a moment we have jumped onto a different plane, onto a plane of the relation of the living being to itself, that we only tackle by the schema of this subjective adventure. We must

clearly recall here that from the point of view of the living being all of this, after all, can be considered as a artefact. And that logic is the locus of truth changes nothing in it, because the question that comes at the end is precisely the one to which we will be able to give its whole emphasis in time. What is the truth?

It is up to us to see that from these two lines, the ones that I designated as the task, the path taken by the psychoanalysand in as much as he speaks, a naïve subject who is moreover the subject alienated from this realisation of lack, in as much as, as I pointed out to you the last time, this lack is not what we know to be at the place of the "I am not". This lack was there from the start, and that from all time we have known that this lack is the very essence of this subject that is called man. Sometimes that it is desire, as has already been said, which is the essence of man. Quite simply this lack has made progress in the articulation of its function as *organum*, an essentially logical progress in this realisation as such of the phallic lack. But it involves that the loss in so far as it was there at first, at the same point, before its journey was followed through, and simply for us who know - the loss of the object which is at the origin of the status of the unconscious, this had always been explicitly formulated by Freud - is realised elsewhere. It is so precisely, this is what I started from, at the level of the *désêtre* of the subject supposed to know.

It is in as far as the one who gives its support to transference is there under the black line, that he knows where he is starting from. Not that he is there, he knows only too well that he is not, that he is not the subject supposed to (98) know, but that he is rejoined by the *désêtre* that the subject supposed to know undergoes. That in the end it is he, the analyst, who embodies what the subject becomes in the form of the little *o*-object. So then, as is to be expected, it is in conformity with every notion of structure that the function of alienation which was at the start, and which meant that we started from the top left hand vertex of an alienated subject, finds itself at the end equal to itself, as I might say. In this sense that the subject has been realised, in his castration, along the path of a logical operation. An alienated path, remits to the Other, gets rid - and this is the function of the analyst - of this lost object, from which, in Genesis, we can conceive that the whole structure originates. The distinction of alienation, of **small o** in so far as it comes here and is separated from (-), which at the end of analysis is ideally the realisation of the subject. This is the process that is at stake.

There is a second phase in this statement that I am producing. I open a parenthesis here in order to put what I came to a stop before earlier, in order to give what I should have given to it, an introduction. I will now give a reminder of it, which is that it is not by chance, a scholarly game, a question of taking a familiar point that your brains were tickled by, at the end of secondary school teaching, that I refer to Descartes' *cogito*. The fact is that it includes in itself this element that is particularly favourable for the Freudian detour to be relocated in it. Not at all, of course, in order to demonstrate here some historical consistency or other, as if all of this could be put end to end, from century to century, as a kind of progress, when it is only too obvious that if there is anything that this evokes, it is much more rather the idea of a maze. What matter, let us leave Descartes. In looking closely at the *cogito*, note carefully that the subject who is supposed there as being, may well be that of thinking, but of what thinking, in short? Of that thinking which has just rejected all knowledge. It is not a question of what is done after Descartes by those who meditate on the immediacy from "I am" to "I think", an obviousness that, as they wish, they make consistent or fleeting. What is at stake is the Cartesian act itself, in so far as it is an act. What is reported and said to us about it, it is precisely by saying it that it is an act. It is from this point, where there is completed a suspension of all possible knowledge. That this is what assures the "I am": is it to be "thought" by the *cogito* or is it from the rejection of knowledge?

The question is well worth asking if one thinks of what is called in the manuals of philosophy the successors, the posterity of a philosophical thinking, as if it were simply a question of taking it up again, a piece of treacle to make another mixture out of it. While what is at stake every time is a renewal, an act which is not necessarily the same. And that if we take Hegel, of course, there again, as everywhere else, we find the putting in suspense of the subject supposed to know, except for the fact that it is not for nothing, that this subject is designed to give us, at the end of the adventure, absolute knowledge.

To see what that means, one must look more closely at it, and why not look at it at the start. If the *Phenomenology of the spirit* is explicitly set up by being generated from the function of act, is it not visible in the mythology of the fight to the death for pure prestige, that this knowledge of the origin, by having to trace out its path in order to become this unthinkable thing, this absolute knowledge, and one can even ask oneself - and one is entitled to ask oneself because Hegel formulates it - what kind of subject can depend upon it, for even a single instant. That this starting knowledge, that is presented to us

as such, is the knowledge of DEATH, namely, another extreme, radical form of putting in suspense as the very foundation of this subject of knowledge.

Is it by questioning this again from the point of view of consequences, something that is easy for us to see that, what psychoanalytic experience proposes as the little *o*-object - along the path of my discourse in so far as it only summarises, highlights, gives its sign and its sense to what is articulated everywhere in this experience - this is what generates in disorder and confusion this little *o*-object. Do we not see that it comes in the same place (100) where there is in Descartes, this rejection of knowledge, in Hegel, this knowledge as knowledge of death. And we assuredly know that this is its function. That this knowledge of death, articulated precisely in this fight to the death of pure prestige, in so far as it grounds the status of the master, it is from it that there comes this *Aufhebung* of enjoyment. This explains it. And it is as renouncing enjoyment in a decisive act, in order to make himself the subject of death that the master is established. And it is moreover there, for us, I underlined it at one time, that there is put forward the objection that we can make to this through a curious paradox, a paradox unexplained in Hegel. It is to the master that enjoyment is supposed to return from this *Aufhebung*. Many times we have asked why? Why, if it is because he has not renounced enjoyment that the slave becomes a slave? Why does he not keep it? Why should it come back to the master, whose status is precisely to have renounced it, unless in a form that we can, perhaps, require a little more of than the conjuring trick, the Hegelian *maestria* to account for it? It is no little test if we can feel in the Freudian dialectic a manipulation that is more rigorous, more exact, and more in conformity with experience as regards what is involved in what becomes of enjoyment after the first alienation.

I already sufficiently indicated it in connection with masochism for people to know here what I mean and that I am only indicating a path to be taken up again. We certainly cannot delay on it today, but it was necessary to indicate its beginnings at the right place.

To continue on our path in function of what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, we have done nothing up to now except to demonstrate what it generates by being carried out. To take a further step, let us now come to the only point where the act can be questioned: at its point of origin.

What are we told? I evoked it again the last time. That it is at the end of an analysis that is supposed to be complete that the psychoanalysand may become a psychoanalyst. It is not at all a matter here of justifying the possibility of this connection. It is a matter of posing it as articulated and of putting it to the test of our little tetrahedric schema.

It is the subject who has accomplished the task at the end of which he has realised himself as subject in castration, *qua* something lacking in the enjoyment of sexual union. This is what we have to see by a rotation, or a

tipping over, to a certain number of degrees, as this figure is drawn, by 180° in (101) order to see passing, coming back what has been realised here to the starting position. Except for the fact that the subject who comes here (on the top left), knows what is involved in the subjective experience, and that this experience also implies that on the left, there remains what has become of the one whose act is responsible for the path taken. In other words, that for the analyst as we now see him emerging at the level of his act, there is already a knowledge of the *désêtre* of the subject supposed to know, in so far as it is the necessary starting position for this whole logic.

It is precisely because of this that there is question of what is involved for him in this act, that we have defined earlier as an act that is out of synch. What is the measure of the illumination of his act? Because in so far as he has taken the path that permits this act, he is himself already the truth of this act.

This is the question that I posed the last time, in saying that a truth conquered “not without knowing it” is a truth that I described as “incurable”, if I can express myself thus. For if we follow what results from this tipping over of the whole figure which is the only one in which there can be explained the (102) passage of the conquest, the fruit of the task, to the position of the one who breaks through the act by which this task can be repeated. It is here that there comes the \$ which was there at the start in the *either-or* of the “either I do not think” or “I am not”. And effectively, in so far as there is an act mixed up with the task that sustains it, what is at stake is properly a signifying intervention. The way the psychoanalyst acts, however little it may be, but

where he properly acts in the course of the task, is to be capable of this signifying interference which properly speaking is not open to any generalisation that might be called knowledge.

What analytic interpretation generates is this something, which cannot be evoked from the universal except in the form that I would ask you to notice is

so contrary to everything that has been qualified as such up to now. It is, as one might say, this sort of universal key, the key that opens all the boxes. How the devil can it be conceived of? What does it mean to offer oneself as the one who has at his disposal what initially can only be defined as something or other particular?

Such is the question that I am also leaving only opened up here about what is involved in the status of the one who at the point of this subject, \$, can ensure that there exists something in the task, and not in the foundational act, which corresponds to the subject supposed to know. Here is quite precisely what opens up the question. What is necessary for it to be possible that there should be an analyst? I repeat, on the top left of the schema, what we started from, is that in order for the whole schematisation to be possible, for the logic of psychoanalysis to exist, there had to be something of the psychoanalyst (*du psychoanalyste*).

When he puts himself there, after having himself taken the psychoanalytic path, he already knows where he will be lead to then as psychoanalyst by the path to be re-travelled: the *désêtre* of the subject supposed to know by being nothing but the support of this object called the little *o*-object. What is outlined for us by this psychoanalytic act, one of whose co-ordinates it must be carefully recalled is precisely to exclude from the psychoanalytic experience any act, any injunction to act? It is recommended to what is called the patient, the psychoanalysand, to name him, as far as possible he is recommended to wait before acting. If something characterises the position of the psychoanalyst, it is very precisely that he only acts in the field of signifying intervention that I delimited just now.

But is this not also an opportunity for us to grasp that the status of every act (103) emerges from it completely renewed? For the place of the act, whatever it is, and it is up to us to notice from its trace, what we mean when we speak about the status of the act, without even being able to allow us to add to it, of the human act. The fact is that, if there is somewhere that the psychoanalyst at once does not know himself, and, it is also the point where he exists, it is in so far as he is, assuredly, a divided subject, even in his act. And that the end where he is awaited, namely, this little *o*-object, in so far as it is not his own,

but what the psychoanalysand requires of him as Other, so that with him, he is rejected from it. Is this not an image to open up for us what is involved in the destiny of every act. And this under diverse figures, from the hero where Antiquity from all time has tried to place, in all its breadth, in all its drama, what is involved in the act. Not at all certainly that at this same time knowledge was not oriented towards other traces, for it is also, and it is not negligible to recall it, a time when people sought the reason for what is involved in a wise act - and in truth there is nothing there to be disdained - in a good. "The fruit of the act", here is what seems to give its first measure to ethics. I took it up at one time in commenting on Aristotle's.

The *Ethics to Nicomachus* starts from this: that there is something good at the level of pleasure and that following a correct channel in this register of pleasure will lead us to the conception of the sovereign good.

It is clear that this was, in its way, a sort of act that has its place in the journeying of any act described as philosophical. The way that we may judge it is of no importance here. It was a time, as we know, when there was set up a completely different questioning, the tragic questioning about what is involved in the act, and this was what was remitted to an obscure divinity. If there is a dimension, a force, which was not supposed to know, it is indeed that of the ancient *ananke*, in so far as it was incarnated by these furious (104) madmen that the gods were.

Measure the distance travelled from this perspective on the act to that of Kant. If there is something which in another way renders necessary our statement about the act as a saying (*un dire*), it is indeed in the measure that Kant gives of it, from the fact that it ought to be regulated by a maxim that could have a universal range. Is this not also what I took my time to caricature, by connecting it to a rule as it is stated in the phantasmagoria of Sade?

Is it not true, on the other hand, that between these two extremes, I am speaking about Aristotle and Kant, the reference to the Other taken as such is the one, also very farcical, which was given at least by a classical form of religious direction? The measure of the act in the eyes of God is supposed to be given by what are called good intentions. Is it possible to initiate a more established path of dupery than that of putting this measure at the principle of the value of the act.

Can the good intention in an act in any way remove for a single instant for us the question of what is its fruit? It is certain that Freud is not the first to allow us to emerge from these closed rings. That to put in suspense what is involved in the value of a good intention, we have a quite effective, explicit and useable critique in what Hegel articulates for us about the law of the heart or the delusions of presumption. That it is not enough to rise up against the

disorder of the world, for this very protestation not to be itself its most permanent support. What succeeded the act of the *cogito*, has given us many models, precisely, of this thinking. When the order, arising from the law of the heart, is destroyed by the critique of the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, what do we see, if not the return, that I cannot do otherwise than qualify as offensive, of the ruse of reason.

It is here that we must notice that this meditation opened out very specially on to something called the political act. And that assuredly it is not vain that what was generated not simply in terms of political meditations but of political acts, in which I in no way distinguish the speculation of Marx from the way in which it has been put into effect at one or other detour of the revolution, is it not possible for us to situate a whole line of descent of reflections on the political act, in so far as assuredly they are acts, in the sense that these acts were a saying (*un dire*) and precisely to say in the name of such a one who brought to them a certain number of decisive changes, is it not possible to question them again in the same register as the one at which there will culminate today what is outlined in terms of the psychoanalytic act? There where at the same time it is and it is not, and which could be expressed as follows, in virtue of the slogan that Freud gives to the analysis of the unconscious. *Wo Es war*, he says and I taught you to re-read it the last time, *soll Ich werden?*

Wo \$tat and you will allow me to write the S of the letter barred here, there where the signifier worked in the double sense that it has just ceased or that it was just going to act, not at all *soll Ich werden* but *muss Ich*, I who am acting, I who am launching into the world this thing to which one can address oneself as to a reason *muss Ich (o) werden*. I must become the waste product of what I am introducing as a new order into the world.

Such is the new form in which I am proposing to you to posit a new way of questioning what is involved, in our day, in the status of the act, in so far as this act is curiously related to a certain number of original introductions, in the first rank of which is the Cartesian *cogito*, in as much as the psychoanalytic act permits the question to be posed again.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 24 January 1968

(107) Today there is going to be something a little bit modified in our pact. Naturally, it is understood that in accordance with the good law of offering an

exchange, you give me your presence for something that you are expecting. This is supposed to emerge from a certain background and to have been, up to a certain point - it is a matter of knowing which - predestined. In short you are expecting a lecture, a class.

On several occasions, it happens from time to time that I pose myself the question of whom I am addressing myself to, and where it (*ça*) speaks from. You know the amount of care I take to insist on the fact that I cannot for a single instant lose sight of the original reference point, which is that this discourse on psychoanalysis is addressed to psychoanalysts. There are so many people who are not such and who are gathered here, to hear something. This just by itself demands a certain number of explanations. One would be wrong in this connection to content oneself with historical explanations, namely, an encounter or encounters, the effects of crowd pressure, what it means that I found myself in the position of being heard elsewhere than where I gave it originally. This is obviously not enough to explain things. It is indeed here that one could compare the references of history - for after all, what one in general calls history, this scrum - and of structure.

There are obviously reasons of structure. If I am speaking this year about the act, and am posing the question of the act, that I arrived at the point of what I said the last time which seemed to me by some little samples, proofs that I received, that at least some people have glimpsed the importance of what was formulated the (108) last time in as much as it marks a point which justifies, which allows there to be gathered together at least in a core point, what began to be articulated by me from the start of our year and which of course might have left a fuzzy impression, especially if one starts from the idea that what is first said are necessarily principles. In many cases one is forced to proceed otherwise, even when one has a structural reference and even especially when one has one, because it is of its nature not to be able to be given at the beginning. It has to be conquered. Otherwise I do not see why a schema of the type of the Klein group, upon which I am trying for the moment to articulate what is involved in the act in the perspective that the psychoanalytic act opens up, I do not see why I would not have started from there fifteen years ago.

Today, there will be a pause whose occasion here is only a pretext, although that does not mean, for all that, that it is marginal. It is planned in this year's seminar on the psychoanalytic act, that the 31st January, the 28th February, the 27th March and the 29th May entry will be by invitation. This means that it will be reduced to a certain number of more restricted encounters, in order to allow a conversation.

This has been planned to give a minimum of this something that has always been difficult to handle. The rule governing closed seminars, with all the complications that this involves in the way of choosing. There is always established in things of this order a kind of competition. The place where you do not want to go, you begin to desire once your pal is going. All of this does not

make the principle of who to welcome easy, but it is necessary to try to establish a *milieu* of exchange that has a somewhat different internal relation. I thought of it today but because no one having been warned, I had my reasons for not doing it. It is certain that apart from the people of my school who for their part were, not many candidates would have presented themselves.

Here is how I intend to resolve matters. Something that has nothing to do with the series means that, this 31st, I will not be there. This is not a reason for there not to be a closed seminar. It was agreed that the members of the Paris School described as Freudian, which everyone knows I look after, and this altogether legitimately because moreover they are psychoanalysts, that these should be the ones, in the measure in which they manifest the desire, to come here on the 31st January. I have not even asked yet - I am asking him now - Dr Melman to be (109) there, in short, to organise this meeting.

I had set out the principle that only the members of the School who have shown themselves here in a sufficiently regular fashion to know what I have stated up to now, should come to this meeting. You are going to see the degree to which it is justified. Because I am going to give to this meeting the following object: the idea moreover is not uniquely my own, far from it, I would even say that it was given to me by Dr Melman who, in the context of the teaching of the School, recently proposed to me that in the course of this seminar, which is particularly important all the same, it is hard to see how one could touch on a point more central for psychoanalysts than that of the psychoanalytic act itself, provided of course this word has a sense. This is what I hope has been sufficiently laid out up to the present in your sight, that at the very least I gave a certain shape to this sense. One can articulate it by following a certain number of questions and whether one can answer it and whether these are even questions, is precisely what is left open. This is the way, all the same, the problem is posed. I gave it its initial articulation, as a result of which one can see there being manifested within it certain blanks, in other points squares that are already full or even super-abundantly filled, or even completely overflowing, unbalanced because of not taking others into account. This is precisely the interest of introducing what is called "structure". It is rather curious that we are still at it, and I am obliged to say it since there are certain recent manifestations it among psychoanalysts to even consider whether there can be a question, at the level of principle, about structure. There are things that I really did not have the time to look at and which it is not even sure that I will look at closely but of which, of course, I hear echoes.

One sees people who have a psychoanalytic authority of a certain weight, honourable practitioners as they say, who find themselves manifesting very curiously the point at which things are at. For example, there is a whole *milieu* where is was, as everyone knows, forbidden even to come within range of the accursed word. And then there was a time, a fabulous time - but it has to be said that things go slowly in this very special *milieu* - can you imagine, 1960, there are people here who were fourteen years old at the time. The Congrès de

(109) Bonneval is immemorial, it is dust-covered, unbelievable! It must be said that it took almost six years to produce its proceedings. There are people who, to discuss what I am teaching, think that it is great to take things up again from the Congrès de Bonneval!

I thank very much the people of my school for having produced a journal, which is obviously not mine, which allows these decanting effects. One could not put it elsewhere, elsewhere is not its place. In a certain *Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, as it is called, there is no question of discussing what I teach, and that is understandable, because psychoanalysis is not spoken about in it. So then, at this point, the empty pockets from next door can empty themselves to discuss what I am saying about the signifier. With all that I have been saying for four years, which has largely gone beyond the question of whether it must be known if at the source it is a matter or not of the signifier.

People go back to the Congrès de Bonneval which was a tunnel, this famous tunnel where the blacks fought one another, without knowing who was hitting who, and where there are the most fantastical lucubrations. There was someone called Lefebvre there, unbelievable people, the friendliest of people, my dear friend Merleau-Ponty who intervened on that occasion. But, everyone at that time, was off target. It was simply a matter, for the first time, of publicly discussing what at that time I had been teaching for seven years at Sainte-Anne to a little circle.

That is how things happen, and this is what makes tangible that in every discourse, there are act-effects. If there had only been the dimension of discourse in it, it ought to have spread more quickly. Precisely, this is what must be highlighted. That this discourse of mine, has this dimension of act at the moment that I am speaking about the act, is something that leaps to the eye. If one looks closely at it, it is the only reason for the presence of people who are here, for it is hard to see, particularly at the level of a young audience, what they can come looking for here. We are not on the plane of providing university services. I can bring you nothing in exchange for your presence. What amuses you is that you sense there is something happening. People do not agree. It is already a little beginning in the dimension of act.

It is truly fabulous - naturally I only have this by hearsay - but in any case it has been affirmed to me that these kind of authors that I spoke about earlier, are among the people who object to this structure which is supposed to leave us, we (111) who are persons, so ill at ease. The being of the person is supposed to be something that would suffer from it. I am afraid that here we are into something which altogether merits analysis and study. What is involved in the being of the person of the psychoanalyst, is precisely something that can only be really grasped from its mapping out in the structure.

In this little tetrahedron which we have started from these last times, something all the same must be quite tangible in it: the multiplicity of translations that it lends itself to.

1 - the either/or

2 - the I am not/ I do not think

3 - this worthy unconscious; I am not

4 - the I do not think, which is not a place reserved to the psychoanalyst, all the same. The psychoanalyst reveals its necessity. That is something quite different. He reveals it in the fact that if it is obviously necessary for someone who is dealing only with thoughts “not to think”, what are we to say about the others! This is why this starting point is instructive, and that in short it is something which makes quite clear the fact that this point on the top left then, of the forced choice which is the definition that I gave of alienation in its revised form, alienation as I have explained it here for you, a little improvement given to the notion of alienation as it had been discovered before us. It had first of all been pointed out at the level of production, namely, at the level of social exploitation.

This “I do not think” is what allows us to give its sense, to this word truly manipulated in a way that up to the present was rather abject, in this sense that it reduced the position of the psychoanalyst, the patient, to an attitude that I would qualify as disparaged, if the psychoanalyst, who is rightly or wrongly called the patient in a certain vocabulary, resisted. Anyway you see what that (112) reduces analysis to. To something that analysis certainly is not and that no one had ever thought of making of it, namely, operation of ensnaring, of getting the rabbit out of his burrow; he resists. What resists is obviously not the subject in analysis. What resists is obviously the discourse, and very precisely in the measure of the choice that is at stake. If he renounces the position of “I do not think” as I have just told you, he is all the same drawn to the opposite pole which is that of the “I am not”. Now, the “I am not” properly speaking cannot be articulated. It is certain that what is presented first in resistance, is that discourse is not able to go and be something. What?

One would like to ask the people who speak to us about the being of the person in order to make of it an objection to structure, to articulate what it is for them, what they call in this case Being. It is not easy to see very clearly where they place it. They speak for themselves. There is a certain way of placing the being

of the person in the others which is a rather something of an operation of odd jobbing.

What this act with a rather exceptional structure - we are going to try to say how it is so - that the analytic act is, what it is a matter at least of putting forward, of suggesting, of pointing out, is how it can preside at a certain renewal of what all the same remains, and from all time, the orienting point of our compass, the way in which it can renew the function of the enlightened act. There can be some renewal in it. If I use the term enlightened, it is not without seeing in it an echo of the *Aufklärung*. But it is also to say that if our compass always seeks the same north, and here I endorse this north, it can be posed for us in terms structured a little differently.

At the two poles that I defined and articulated of the position of the psychoanalyst, in as much as I do not refuse him at all the right to resistance, it is hard to see why the psychoanalyst should be stripped of it, this psychoanalyst in so far as he establishes the psychoanalytic act, namely, gives his guarantee to the transference, namely, to the subject supposed to know. While his whole advantage, the only one that he has over the psychoanalysing subject, is to know from experience what is involved in the subject supposed to know. Namely, what he - and in as much as he is supposed to have traversed the psychoanalytic experience in a way of which the least that can be said without entering any further to doctrinal debates, is that it ought to be a way that we could say is (113) pushed a little further than that of treatments - he ought to know about what is involved in the subject supposed to know. Namely, that for him, and I explained to you the last time (cf schema), why it is that the subject supposed to know comes here. For him who knows what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, the outline, the vector, the operation of the psychoanalytic act ought to reduce this subject to the function of the little *o*-object. That is what in an analysis, the one that founded this analysis in an act, his own psychoanalyst has become.

He had become it precisely in as much as at the end he has become joined to what he was not at first, I mean in the subjectivity of the psychoanalysand, he was not at first, at the start, the subject supposed to know. He becomes it, at the end of the analysis, I would say by hypothesis. In analysis, one is there to know something. It is at the moment when he becomes it that also he is vested for the psychoanalysand with the function occupied in the dynamic by him, the psychoanalysand as subject, the little *o*-object.

This particular object that the little *o*-object is, I mean in this sense that it offers a certain diversity which moreover is not very broad, because we can make it quadruple with something empty in the centre, in so far as this little *o*-object is absolutely decisive for everything that is involved concerning the structure of the unconscious.

Allow me to return to my earlier questioning about those who are still there on the edge, hesitating about what is or is not acceptable in a theory sufficiently developed for there to be no longer a question of disputing its principles, but simply of knowing whether at one or other point its articulation is correct, or to be criticised. Is it not the case for any of those who are here, I would even say those, if there are such, who might be arriving for the first time, is not what settles - that does not mean of course that this could have been said so simply before - is not what settles purely and simply the question of the following: can analysis, yes or no, say - it seems difficult to me, in the way that I am going to say it, for people not to see what is at stake - yes or no, does analysis mean that in whatever you wish, a being as they say, or a becoming, or anything whatsoever, something which is of the living order, there should be, whatever there may be, events which have their consequences? Here we have the term consequence, which has all its emphasis.

(114) Is a consequence conceivable outside a signifying sequence? From the very fact that something which happened subsists in the unconscious in a way that one can rediscover it on condition of catching hold of a piece which allows a sequence to be reconstituted, is there a single thing that can happen to an animal that can be imagined as inscribed in this order? Is not everything that has been articulated in analysis, from the beginning, of the order of this biographical articulation in as much as it refers to something that can be articulated in signifying terms? That this dimension is impossible to remove from it, to expel from it from the moment that, as has been seen, it can no longer be reduced to any notion of plasticity or of reactivity or of biological stimulus-response which, in any case, will not be of the order of what is preserved in a sequence. Nothing of what can operate in terms of fixation, of transfixing, of interruption, indeed even of, of setting up, around a system, of what is only a system, and specifically the nervous one, is by itself alone capable of corresponding to this function of consequence. The structure, its stability, the maintaining of the line on which it is inscribed, implies another dimension, which is properly that of structure. This is a reminder and which does not come here at the point that I have got to, at the moment when then I interrupted myself to give this reminder.

Here we are then at this point \$ which situates what is specifically involved in the psychoanalytic act, in so far as it is around it that there is suspended the resistance of the psychoanalyst. The resistance of the psychoanalyst in this structuring is manifested by the fact, which is altogether constitutive of the analytic relation - that he refuses to act. It is in effect quite original in the status of what is involved in the analytic function. Every psychoanalyst knows it, and finally this ends up by being known even by those who have not approached its field. The analyst is the one who is surrounded by a whole zone, who is called frequently by the patient, to make an intervention in terms of act. Not simply in as much as he may be called from time to time to take sides, to be on the patient's side, with regard to a close relation or anyone else. And even simply to perform the sort of act that is indeed one which consists in intervening by an

approbation or the contrary, to give advice. This is very precisely what the structure of psychoanalysis leaves blank.

(115) It is very precisely for that reason that I put on the same diagonal - I am saying that to give an image, because of course what happens on that line (the diagonal) has no more right to be called diagonal than what happens on the others. It is enough to turn the tetrahedron, to make horizontal or vertical lines of it, but for reasons of imagination, it is more convenient to represent in this way. You must not be taken in by it. Even though there is nothing more diagonal in transference than in alienation, or in what I called the truth operation. If there are diagonals it is by reason of the schema. It is indeed because the act remains blank that it is also the one which in the other direction can be occupied by transference. Namely, in the course of what the psychoanalysand does by moving towards its horizon, the mirage, the point of arrival at which I already sufficiently defined the rendezvous in so far as it is defined by the subject supposed to know \$. At the start, the psychoanalysand picks up his staff and puts on knapsack, to go to meet the subject supposed to know at the rendezvous.

This alone is what permits this careful prohibition that the analyst imposes on himself with respect to the act. In other words, if he did not impose it on himself, he would be quite simply a deceiver, because he knows in principle what is to become in analysis of the subject supposed to know. It is because analysis is, as we have more or less the original experience of it, this artefact, this something which only appears, perhaps, in history from a certain moment as an extremely limited type of episode, of extremely particular cases of a practice, which by chance opened up a completely different style of act relations between humans. This would not for all that be its privilege. I believe I gave you enough indications the last time of the fact that in the course of history the relation of the subject to the act has been modified. That it is not even what can still be found in manuals of morality or sociology that effectively give us an idea of what is effectively involved in act relations in our epoch. For example, it is obviously not only a matter of your having to remember Hegel, in the way the professors speak about him, for you to be able to measure the importance of what is involved in what he represents in terms of a sharp turn with respect to the act.

Now, I do not know what I ought to do at this turning point. To advise you to read something is always so dangerous because everything depends on the degree to which one has previously been more or less cleaned up. It seems (116) difficult to me not to have been sufficiently so, to be able to situate a book, to give a sense, a weight to what I have just stated. A little book appeared by someone whom I believe I saw at this seminar at one time, who sent it to me because of this, which is called the *Discours de la guerre* by André Glucksmann.

It is a book which perhaps can give you the dimension on a certain plane, in a certain field of what can arise from something which is rather exemplary and rather complete in as much as the relation of war is something about which everyone speaks without rhyme or reason. But as regards the influence of the

discourse of war on war, an influence which is not nothing, as you will see from reading this book, namely, one which corresponds to a certain way of taking Hegel's discourse in so far as it is a discourse on war in which one sees clearly how many limits there are on the side of the technician, on the side of the soldier. And then alongside the discourse of the soldier, here again one would be wrong to despise the soldier from the moment that he knows how to sustain a discourse. This rarely happens, but when it happens it is all the same very striking that it is rather more effective than the discourse of the psychoanalyst.

The discourse of Clausewitz in so far as it is connected with that of Hegel and contributes its counterpart to it, can give them some idea of what my discourse could contribute along this line about a relation, which would allow it to be believed, that in our epoch, there is a discourse acceptable outside the discourse of war. This perhaps might also account for a certain gap between Hegel and Clausewitz at the level of a discourse on war. Naturally, Clausewitz did not know the little *o*-object. But if by chance the little *o*-object has allowed us to see a little bit more clearly into something that Clausewitz introduced as the fundamental asymmetry between two parties in war, namely, the absolute heterogeneity there is. And this asymmetry is found to dominate the whole game between offensive and defensive, even though Clausewitz was not precisely someone to go on about the necessities of the offensive. This is only a simple indication.

I am filling in, in a way, hastily, a certain number of lacks in the foundation of what I am articulating in connection with what the psychoanalytic act allows us, in short, to establish or to restore about what constitutes the co-ordinates of the act, of what we are trying to open up the path of this year.

(117) You see then that there are several lacks. First of all something that ought to be taken for granted, namely, what in a logical structure establishes for our mapping out at the minimal level of something quite privileged, psychoanalysis, in so far as it constitutes the connection between an act and a doing. If we do not set up this logical structure, with the parts that are alive in the operation, and then those that are left for dead, we cannot find our bearings in the analytic operation. It is therefore something primordial and something that is not simply important for our practice itself but also to explain the paradoxes of what is produced in its surrounds. Namely, how it can lend itself and very especially on the part of those who are engaged in it, to a certain number of elective misrecognitions which correspond to the dead or suspended parts in the very operation that is at stake.

That gives already two aspects. The third which is no less thrilling, is this something to which, at the end of my discourse the last time, I gave a too facile, too tempting an indication to express rapidly something about which an echo came back to me. One that I cannot subscribe to and which is quite amusing having come from one of these numerous voices that I have at my disposal. It is someone, I no longer remember whom. I no longer know who repeated it to me.

He said to me today, decidedly, this is a Che Guevara seminar. All that because in connection with the subject supposed to know, the \$ barred on the bottom left, I had said that what is perhaps - at least this model poses the question for us - the end, the finish, the tipping over, the somersault, which is the normal end in itself of what is involved in the act, in so far as if there is something this psychoanalysis reveals to us, and this from the start, it is that it is not an act of which anyone can say that he is entirely master. It is not something to tear us away from all our certainties, from everything that we have picked up fundamentally from our experience, from what we know about history and a thousand other things again. Every act and not simply the psychoanalytic act promises to the one who takes its initiative only this end which I designate in the little *o*-object. And it is not something to make eardrums burst out of their orbits. It is hardly worthwhile because of that to believe that this is a Che Guevara seminar. There have been others before. I am not in the process of polishing up the tragic in order to make it shine. What is at stake is perhaps something else.

(118) What is at stake is something which is obviously more within our reach, if we bring it back to what we must know about the logical structure of the act to truly conceive of what is happening in the limited field of psychoanalysis.

It is here that questions can be formulated among those who belong to my School who one are presumed to be able to put what I am stating in its place, all along a construction, the necessity of whose different stages they have been able to follow. Let them bring me through the intermediary of Doctor Melman, and this no later than next Wednesday, something like a testimony. A testimony that they are capable of pushing a little bit further the turning points, the living things, the hinges, the doors, the way of using this apparatus in so far as it concerns them.

I mean that what I am expecting from the meeting, from which, I apologise, the majority of those who are here will find themselves excluded in advance, is a certain number of questions which prove to me that, at least up to the point that I have gone this year concerning what is involved in the act, people can question themselves about something, propose an interpretation and to this interpretation an objection. "If you interpret things in this way this is what it means" or "it is in contradiction with one or other point of our experience". In short, to show that up to a certain point I am being understood. This is what will serve then for the following closed seminar (28/2), in as much as the only people who will be invited, are those of my School who have taken part in this first meeting. It is an act to go out of one's way. It is especially an act not to go out of one's way. It happens, for example, that I can ask someone why a particular analyst, who is very aware to what I am teaching, and I ask, why he is not here, precisely this year, at what I am stating about the act. You will say that people take notes. In passing, I would like to point out that it is better to take notes than to smoke. Smoking is not such a good sign as regards listening to what I am saying. I do not disapprove of smoking ...

It seems to me that since I made an allusion to the fact that what seems to me to motivate this audience which honours me by its presence, is the aspect of opening up of what is happening before you. And I do not even find that on the part of analysts, not to be present here at the moment that I am speaking about the act - namely, that it is not just any discourse whatsoever - even if they are given faithful and well informed notes, there is something rather telling, significant, and which may well lie where I inscribed the term, resistance.

(119) I intended to ask one or two or three people to put one or two questions to me, to give a model for entering the closed seminar. It would not be a bad thing. I also know the freezing effect that results from this large number. I propose, nevertheless, that it should be established that apart from a few exceptions, that for the regulation of the seminar of those admitted on the 28/2, it is those who will have sent me a written question which seems to me to be on the right lines about what I am trying to bring you who will receive the little invitation card for the 28/2.

It only remains for me to pinpoint something here and there to advance us a little, even if today it is not of the *ex cathedra* order that I habitually adopt, alas. It must all the same be noted that this gap, which still remains between the act and the doing, is what is at stake. This is the burning point around which people have been racking their brains for a certain very limited number of centuries, from the few great, great-grandfathers that are necessary to be right away at the epoch of Caesar. You have no idea of the degree to which you are implicated in things that only history manuals make you think belong to the past.

If people rack their brains - look at Hegel - about the difference between the master and the slave, you can give to this as elastic a sense as you wish, if you look carefully at it, it involves nothing other than the difference between the act and the doing, to which we are trying to give a different body, a little bit less simple than the subject who poses the act. It is not at all necessarily and uniquely - this is what is disturbing - the subject who commands. Pierre Janet constructed a whole psychology around that. That does not mean that he was badly oriented, on the contrary, simply his analyses are rather rudimentary. They do not allow very much to be understood. Because outside the fact of what is represented on Egyptian bas-reliefs, namely, a pilot, moreover, that there is a conductor at Pleyel or elsewhere, that there are those who have - this does not explain very much, because where there is truly a master, that does not mean so much those who have a cushy time as people think - there are those who have to deal with the act and those who have to deal with the doing. So there is doing and doing. This is where one can begin to understand how this doing, despite its futile character, I am speaking about psychoanalysis, has perhaps a greater chance than any other of allowing us access to enjoyment.

(120) Look carefully at this doing in a feature that I would like to underline. There is no need to say that it is a doing of pure speech. It is something that I

have killed myself recalling for years in order to try to see its function in the field of speech and of language. What is not noticed, is that, because it is a doing of pure speech, that it gets close to being an act as compared to common doing and that one could moreover express it by the signifier in act. If we look at things very closely, namely, what is truly the sense of the fundamental rule, it is precisely, that up to a point that is as advanced as possible, these are the instructions: that the subject should absent himself from it.

The task, the doing of the subject is to leave this signifier to its operation. The “in act” is a device, but it is not the act of the signifier. The signifier in act has this connotation, this evocation of the signifier that one could call in a certain register, in potency. But to know what our doctor earlier would like there to be recalled among those who put the stress on structure, there are so many there ready to rabbit on about the person. Being is so superabundant that for us to try to catch ourselves in its precise rails, in this logic which is not a logic at all, about which one cannot in any way and by any right put the sign of emptiness. It is not so easy to construct this logic, you see here what it results from. Let us say, that for an analyst to bring up terms like that of the person is something excessive, at least to my ears. But if he wants to reassure himself, let him observe that I would define this logic a little bit like one that would remain as close as possible to grammar. That startles you, I hope. So then, Aristotle, quite calmly, huh? Why not?

We must quite simply try to do better. I point out to you that if this logic of Aristotle has remained un-punctured for long centuries up to our own, it is because of the objections that were made to it of being, as they said, a logic which did not notice that it was doing grammar. I admire enormously professors in the university who know that Aristotle did not notice something. He is the greatest naturalist who ever existed. You can still reread his *History of animals*. It still holds up. It is fabulous. It is the greatest step ever taken in biology. Not that some have not been taken since. In logic also, steps taken precisely starting from grammar. It is still something that we can rack our brains about even after (121) having added to it some very astute things, quantifiers for example. They have only one inconvenience, which is that they are quite untranslatable into language. I am not saying that this does not bring up to date the question on which I took a kind of dogmatic stand, a label, a banner, a slogan: there is no meta-language. You can well imagine that it worries me also if perhaps there is one. In any case, let us start from the idea that there is not. This would not be a bad thing. It would avoid us believing wrongly that there is one.

It is not sure that something that cannot be translated into language does not suffer from a quite effective deficiency. In any case, following my remarks, bringing us to the question of quantifiers, it is obviously going to be a matter of posing certain questions, which are going to concern what is involved, what is going to happen in the corner of the \$ of the subject supposed to know which has been removed from the map. What we will have to lubricate about the availability of the signifier in this place, will perhaps leads us to this joint of

grammar and logic. This is - I am only remarking it in this connection and to recall it to mind - very precisely the point by which we have always navigated, this logic that my entourage of the time called, with tentative sympathy, an elastic logic. I am not in complete agreement about this term. Elasticity is not the best thing that one could hope for as a standard of measurement.

The joint between logic and grammar, is also something perhaps which will make us take some further steps. In any case, what I would like to say in ending, is that I cannot summon psychoanalysts too much to meditate on the specialness of the position which happens to be theirs, of having to occupy a corner completely different to the one where they are required, even if they are forbidden to act. It is all the same from the point of view of act that they have to centre their meditation on their function.

But it is not for nothing that it is so difficult to get it. There is in the position of the psychoanalyst, and by function, if this schema renders it sufficiently tangible for no offence to be seen in it, something like taking cover (*de tapi*). We will try to decipher somewhere “an image in the carpet”, or in the ..., as you wish. There is a certain way for the psychoanalyst to centre himself, to savour something that ends up in this position of taking cover. They call that what they (122) can, they call it listening, they call it the clinic. You cannot imagine all the opaque words that are found on this occasion. For I ask myself what can in any way, what can allow the accent to be put on what is quite specific about this flavour of an experience. It is certainly not accessible to any logical manipulation. In the name of this, I do not dare to say solitary enjoyment, morose delectation, in the name of this to allow oneself to say that all theories are of equal value. That above all you must not be attached to any one of them, whether one expresses things in terms of instinct, of behaviour, of genesis, of Lacanian topology. All of that, we should find ourselves equidistant from this sort of discussion. All of this fundamentally is a hypocondriacal enjoyment. This centred aspect, peristaltic and anti-peristaltic at the same time is something intestinal to psychoanalytic experience. It is indeed this that effectively you are going to see imaged, which displays itself on a rostrum, it is not necessarily the easiest point to win through the effect of a dialectic. This is the essential point around which there is played out, alas, what Clauswitz describes as asymmetrical between offensive and defensive.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 31 January 1968

Jacques Lacan did not attend this “seminar”.

Among those who participated in the discussion were: C Melman, G Michaud, J Oury, P Lemoine, F Tosquelles, J Rudrauf, X Audouard, I Roublef, E Lemoine, T Abdoucheli, C Conté, J Ayme, M Noyes, L Mélése, C Dorfeuille, F Guattari, J Nassif and others.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 7 February 1968

I am taking up again then after a fortnight the continuation of what I am advancing before you this year about the psychoanalytic act. It is parallel to a certain number of propositions, to employ the proper term, that I proposed in a circle composed of psychoanalysts.

The responses to these propositions, which moreover are not limited to those entitled such, are followed by a certain number of other productions. There is going to appear at the end of this month a journal which will be the journal of the School. All of this has as a result a certain number of responses or manifestations, which are certainly not in any case without interest for those to whom I am addressing myself here. It is clear that some of these responses, of these reactions, made to the most lively point where my propositions are rather consequent with what I am producing before you on the psychoanalytic act, are assuredly full of sense to define through a test that can be described as crucial, what is involved in the status of the psychoanalyst.

In effect the last time, I left you with the indication of a logical reference. It is quite certain that at the point that we are at, where the act defines by its cutting edge what is involved in the passage in which the psychoanalyst is instaured or established, it is quite clear that we cannot but pass again by way of the kind of testing that logical questioning constitutes for us.

Will it be, to take the inaugural reference of Aristotle, at the moment when, as I evoked, he takes the decisive steps from which there is instaured, as such, the (146) logical category in its formal species? Is it a matter of an approach with an demonstrative or dialectical intention? The question, as you are going to see, is secondary.

Why is it secondary? Because what is at stake is instaured from the discourse itself, namely, that everything that we can formulate about the psychoanalysand and the psychoanalyst, is going to turn - I think I am not going to surprise you in stating it as I am going to - I prepared it sufficiently for the thing to appear to you now as already said - is going to turn around the following: how contest the fact that the psychoanalysand, in his place in the discourse is at the place of the subject? Whatever reference we arm ourselves with to better situate him, it is naturally in the first place with the linguistic reference. He is essentially the one who speaks.

He is the one who speaks and on whom there are tested the effects of the word. What is meant by this “on whom are tested” (“*sur qui s'éprouvent*”)? The formula is deliberately ambiguous. I mean that his discourse as it is regulated, set up, by the analytic rule, is designed to be the test of the way in which, as subject, he is already constituted as effect of the word. And nevertheless, it is also true to say that this discourse itself, as it is going to be pursued, be sustained as task, finds its sanction, its evaluation, its result *qua* discourse-effect, above all from this proper discourse itself, whatever may be the way the analyst inserts himself into it by his interpretation.

Inversely, we should notice that if the always current, indeed sometimes burning question is brought to bear on the psychoanalyst, let us say, to be prudent, to say the minimum, that it is in so far as the term “psychoanalyst” is given as a qualification. Who, what, can be said to be - predicate - “psychoanalyst”?

Assuredly, if even this way of getting into the question appears to be going too quickly, it is by a twist that it will be justified if this is the way that, to go to the kernel, I am announcing under what escutcheon, under what rubric I intend to place my discourse today. You can trust me, it is not without having, in this connection, renewed contact, as I might say, with what is enlightening in the very history of logic, in the way in which, in our time, the handling of what is designated by this term logic see-saws in such a way, a way which truly makes, as I might say, not always more difficult, but makes us more and more confused before Aristotle's starting point.

(147) You have to consult his text, and specifically the *Organon*, at the level of the categories for example, or the *Prior Analytics*, or the first book of the *Topics*, to notice how close to our problematic is the thematic of the subject, as he states it. For assuredly, from the first statement, nothing is already more tangible to enlighten us about what, in this subject, is of its nature something that slips away *par excellence*. Nothing that at the start of the logic is more firmly affirmed as being distinguished from what has been translated, very insufficiently undoubtedly as “substance”, *ousia*. What is at stake in translating it by substance is clearly seen, in the course of time, to be an excessive slippage in the function of the subject in its first Aristotelian steps, for the term “substance”, which constitutes here an equivocation with what the subject includes in terms of supposition, for the term “substance” to have been so easily put forward.

There is nothing in the *ousia* in what is – namely, for Aristotle - the individual, of a nature to be able to be or situated in the subject, nor affirmed, namely, nor attributed to the subject.

But what else is more likely to make us immediately jump with both feet into the formula in which I believed I could, in all rigour, bear witness to this truly key, truly central point of the history of logic. The one which by being dulled by a growing ambiguity, the subject rediscovers on his path as in modern logic, this other aspect of a sort of turning point which makes its perspective tip over, as one

might say, the one which, in mathematical logic, tends to reduce it to the variable of a function. Namely, something which is going to enter subsequently into the whole dialectic of the quantifier, which has no other effect than to make it henceforth irremediable in the way in which it is manifested in the proposition. The term "turning point" seems to me well enough fixed in the formula that I thought I should give of it, in saying that the subject is very precisely what a signifier represents for another signifier.

This formula has the advantage of re-opening what is eluded in the position of mathematical logic. Namely, the question of what is initial, initiating, in positing any signifier whatsoever, by introducing it as representing the subject. For this is, and this is since Aristotle, what is essential about it and what alone allows there to be situated in its correct place the difference between this first bipartition, the one which differentiates the universal from the particular, and the second bipartition, the one which affirms or which denies. One and the other as you know cross over (148) one another to give the quadripartition of the universal affirmative, the universal negative, and of the particular negative and affirmative, by turns.

The two bipartitions have absolutely no equivalence. What is meant by the introduction of the subject, in so far as it is at its level that there is situated the bipartition of the universal and the particular? What can that mean, to take things as did someone who found himself, as happened to Peirce, Charles Sanders, at this historic point, at this level of the joining of traditional logic to mathematical logic? Which means that in a way, we find from his pen this moment of oscillation in which there is outlined the turning point that opens up a new path. No one more than he - and I already produced his testimony when I had to speak in 1960 about the term identification - has better underlined, or with more elegance, what is the essence of this foundation from which there emerges the distinction between the universal and the particular and the link of the universal to the term subject.

He did it by means of a little exemplary drawing that those who have already followed me for some time know well, but that moreover it is not without interest to repeat, to designate here. The fact is that it gives the facility of giving as a support to the subject what is really involved in it, namely, nothing. In this case a stroke (*trait*).

None of these strokes that we are going to take in order to exemplify what is involved in the function of the subject for the predicate, there is none of these (149) strokes as we are going to inscribe them which is not already specified by the predicate around which we are going to make the statement of our proposition turn, namely, the “vertical” predicate.

- 1) In the first box, on the top left, the strokes correspond to the predicate, they are vertical strokes.
- 2) And then there are others in this bottom left box, some of which are not so.
- 3) Here on the bottom right none is.
- 4) Here, as you see, there are no strokes. This is where the subject is.

This is where the subject is, because there are no strokes. Everywhere else, the strokes are masked by the presence or absence of the predicate. But to make you grasp clearly why it is the “no stroke (*pas de trait*)” that is essential, there are several methods, even if it were only by instauring the statement of the universal affirmative, for example, as follows. There is no stroke that is not vertical.

You will see that it is making the “no” function on the “vertical” or by removing it that will allow you to make the affirmative or negative bipartition, and that it is by suppressing the “no” before the stroke, and that it is by leaving, the stroke that is or not vertical, that you enter the particular. Namely, at the moment when the subject is entirely subjected to the variation of vertical or not vertical. There are some that are, and others that are not. But the status of universality is only instaurated here for example by the union of two boxes. Namely, the one which has only vertical strokes, but the one moreover where there are no strokes. For the statement of the universal, which says that all the strokes are vertical, is only substantiated, legitimately, from these two boxes and their union.

It is also true, it is more essentially true, at the level of the empty box. There are no strokes except vertical ones means that where there are no verticals, there is no stroke. Such is the acceptable definition of the subject in so far as beneath every predicative stating, it is essentially this something that is only represented by a signifier for another signifier.

I will only mention quickly, for we are not going to spend our whole talk dwelling on what we can draw from Peirce’s schema. It is clear that it is similar from the union of these two boxes (the right hand bracket) that the statement: no stroke is vertical takes its support, why? This indeed is why it is necessary for me (150) to accentuate how it is demonstrated - what is already known if one reads Aristotle’s text in an appropriate way - that the universal affirmative and the universal negative in no way contradict one another, that they are both acceptable on condition that we are in this top right hand box. It is also true at the level of this box to state that all the strokes are vertical, or that no stroke is vertical, the two things are true at the same time, something that curiously Aristotle, if my knowledge is correct, failed to recognise.

At the other points of the crucial division you have the instauration of particulars. There are in these two boxes (those on the left) vertical strokes, and, at the junction of the two lower boxes, there are only, and nothing more, strokes which are not so.

You see then that at the level of the universal foundation, things are situated in a way that involves an exclusion, that of this diversity, the one in the box on the bottom left. Likewise at the level of the particular differentiation, there is an exclusion: that of the box on the top right.

This is what gives the illusion that the particular is an affirmation of existence. That it is enough to speak at the level of "some", some man, for example, of yellow colour, to imply that from this fact that is stated in the form of a particular, there is supposed to be from this fact, if I may express myself thus, from the fact of this stating, the affirmation also of the existence of the particular. This indeed is something around which innumerable debates have turned on the subject of the logical status of the particular proposition. And this is assuredly what makes it derisory, for it is not enough for a proposition to be stated at the level of the particular, to imply in any way the existence of the subject, except in the name of a signifying arrangement, namely, as effect of discourse.

The interest of psychoanalysis is that it ties together, as has never been able to be done up to the present, these problems of logic, by contributing to them what, in short, was at the source of all the ambiguities that developed in the history of logic, by implying in the subject an *ousia*, a being. That the subject can function as not being (*comme n'étant pas*), is properly - I have articulated it, I have insisted on it from the beginning of this year - what can bring us the enlightening opening thanks to which there can be re-opened an examination of the development of logic. The task is still open - and who knows, perhaps by stating it here, I will (151) provoke a vocation - of showing us what is truly meant by so many detours, so much embarrassment, sometimes so curious, so paradoxical, manifested in the course of history. These are what have marked logical debates throughout the ages and render so incomprehensible, seen from a certain age, at least from ours, the time they sometimes took, and which appear to us for a long time to have constituted stagnations, even passions around the stagnations, whose import we can hardly sense as long as we do not see what was truly at stake behind them. Namely, nothing less than the status of desire whose link, because it is secret, with politics, for example, is altogether tangible at the turning point which constituted the instauration in one philosophy, English philosophy specifically, of a certain nominalism. It is impossible to comprehend the consistency of this logic with politics, without noting what the logic itself implies about the status of the subject and about the reference to the effectiveness of desire in political relations.

For us, for whom this status of the subject is illustrated by questions - and I marked again that all of this happens in a very limited, indeed very short *milieu*, marked by discussions about its pregnancy - whose burning character, participates I would say in these ancient underpinnings, which is why, in this case, we take as

example, what we are able to articulate. This is why it cannot but have an incidence on a much larger domain in as much as it is assuredly not just in the practice which turns around the function of desire in so far as analysis discovers it, it is not simply here that the question of it is played out.

Here then are the psychoanalysand and the psychoanalyst placed by us in these distinct positions which are, respectively, what is going to be the status of a subject defined by this discourse, by this discourse that, I told you the last time, is established by the rule, especially because of the fact that the subject is asked to abdicate from it. This is the aim of the rule, and by committing himself, at the limit, to the drift of language, he is going to attempt by a sort of immediate experience of its pure effect, to connect up with its already established effects.

Such a subject, a subject defined as effect of discourse, to the point that he undertakes the trial of losing himself in it in order to find himself, such a subject whose exercise is in a way to put himself to the test of his own resignation, when can we say to what is a predicate applied? In other words, could we state (152) something that falls under rubric of the universal? If the universal did not already show in its structure that it finds its source, its foundation in the subject in so far as he can only be represented by his absence, namely, in so far as he is never represented? We would assuredly have the right to pose the question if anything whatsoever could be stated of the order, for example, of "every psychoanalysand resists".

I am however not going to decide yet whether any universal whatsoever can be posited about the psychoanalysand. We will not set it aside, despite the appearance, that in positing the psychoanalysand as this subject who chooses to make himself, as one might say, more alienated than any other, to dedicate himself to the fact that only the detours of an unchosen discourse, namely, this something which is most opposed to what is here - in the schema - at the start. Namely, that it is of course by a choice, but a choice that is masked, eluded, because made earlier. We have chosen to represent the subject by the stroke, by this stroke that is no longer seen because it is henceforth qualified. There is nothing more opposed, in appearance, to how the psychoanalysand constitutes himself, which is all the same by a certain choice, this choice that I earlier called abdication, the choice of testing oneself against the effects of language. It is indeed here that we are going to find our bearings.

In effect, if we follow the thread, the web that the use of the syllogism suggests to us, what of course we ought to arrive at, is something that is going to connect this subject to what is here advanced as a predicate, the psychoanalyst - if a psychoanalyst exists. And, alas, this is what we lack to support this logical articulation. If one psychoanalyst exists, everything is assured. There can be a crowd of others.

But for the moment, the question for us is to know how the psychoanalysand can become a psychoanalyst. How does it happen that, in the most well grounded

way, this qualification is only supported by the task completed by the psychoanalysand. Here indeed we see there being opened up this other dimension, which is one that I already tried to profile before you, about the conjunction of the act and the task. How do the two connect up? We find ourselves here before another form of what created a problem and ended up by being articulated in the Middle Ages. It is not there for nothing this *inventio medi*, from which there starts with this admirably lively step the *Prior Analytics* (153) of Aristotle. Namely, the first figure of the middle term, of this middle term about which he explains to us that by being situated as a predicate, it will allow us to connect in a rational fashion this vanishing subject to something which is a predicate. Through the middle term, this connection is possible. Where is the mystery? How does it happen that it appears that something exists which is a middle term and which appears in the first figure as predicate of the major where the subject awaits us, as subject of the minor which is going to allow us to lay hold again of the predicate in question. Is it yes or no, attributable to the subject?

This thing which, with the passage of time, passed through different colours, which appeared, at the turn of the 16th century, when all is said and done - there is no doubt that one sees it from the pen of the authors - to be a purely futile exercise. We will give it body again by noticing what is at stake.

What is at stake is what I called the **o**-object which is for us here the true middle term that is proposed, assuredly, as a plus one, of a more incomparable seriousness by being the effect of the discourse of the psychoanalysand. And by being on the other hand, as I have stated it, in the new graph that you see me using here for the last two years, not what the psychoanalyst becomes, what is implied at the start by the whole operation, what ought to be the outcome of the psychoanalysing operation, what liberates in it something of a fundamental truth. The end of psychoanalysis, namely, the subject being unequal to any possible subjectification of sexual reality and the requirement that, in order that this truth should appear, the psychoanalyst should already be the representation of what masks, obtrudes, stoppers this truth and which is called the **o**-object.

Note well, in effect, that I will return at length to the essential of what I am articulating here, the essential is not that at the end of the psychoanalysis, as some people imagine - I saw it from the questions posed - the psychoanalyst becomes the **o**-object for the other. This "for the other" here curiously takes on the value of a "for oneself", in as much as, as subject there is none other than this Other to whom the whole discourse is left. It is neither for the Other, nor in a for oneself which does not exist at the level of the psychoanalyst, that there resides this **o**. It is indeed an in itself (*en soi*), an in itself of the psychoanalyst. It is in as much as, as the psychoanalysts themselves protest moreover - it is enough to open the (154) literature on it to see the testimony of it at every moment - they are really this breast of the "oh, my mother Intelligence", of our Mallarmé; that they are themselves this waste product, presiding over the operation of the task, that they are the look, that they are the voice. It is in so far as they are in themselves the

support of this *o*-object that the whole operation is possible. There is only one thing that escapes them, which is the degree to which it is not metaphorical.

Now let us try to take up again what the psychoanalysand is, this psychoanalysand, who is engaged in this curious task that I described as being supported by his abdication. Are we not going to sense here that, in any case, there is something enlightening in whether he can or cannot be taken, we do not know, under the function of the universal? There is perhaps another thing that is going to strike us. It is that we have posited him as subject not without intention. That means that the sense of what this word, psychoanalysand, means when we articulate it at the level of the subject, in so far as he is the one who plays with all these colours taken, like those of a murena on the plate of a rich Roman, cannot be put to use except by changing its sense as an attribute. The proof is that when one uses it as an attribute, one uses the term psychoanalysed, as foolishly as possible. But one does not say that these or those or all of these or all of those are psychoanalysands. I did not use, as you notice, the singular term. This would be still more outrageous. But let us leave the singular to one side, experiencing at this turning point the same repugnance that ensures that Aristotle does not use singular terms in his syllogistics.

If you do not sense right away what I am aiming at in connection with this tangle testing of the use of the term psychoanalysand, as subject or as attribute, I am going to make you sense it.

Use the word worker, as it is situated in the perspective of: “workers of the world unite”, namely, at the level of the ideology which picks out and emphasises their essential alienation, the constitutive exploitation which considers them as workers. Oppose this to the use of the same term in the paternalistic expression, the one that would describe a population as hardworking (*travailleuse*). These people are workers by nature, they are (attribute) “good workers”. This example, this distinction is one which perhaps is going to introduce you to something which will perhaps make you pose the question after all, of why, in this so curious (155) operation which is the one by which, as I told you, the subject of the psychoanalytic act is supported, how, on the principle of the fact that the act by which psychoanalysis is established, starts elsewhere? Is this not designed to make us grasp that there is here also, a kind of alienation. And after all, you are not surprised at it since it was already present in my first schema, that it is from a necessary alienation, the one in which it is impossible to choose between the “either I do not think” and the “or I am not”, that I derived the whole first formulation of what is involved in the psychoanalytic act.

But then, perhaps like that, in a sidelong way, it is a way that I have, like that, a heuristic one, of introducing you, you might ask yourselves - I put the question because the answer is already there of course - what does this psychoanalysing task produce?

To guide us we already have the **o**-object. For if at the end of a terminated psychoanalysis, this **o**-object, which is no doubt always there, at the level of our question, namely, the psychoanalytic act, it is all the same only at the end of the operation, that it is going to reappear in the real, from another source. Namely, as rejected by the psychoanalysand.

But this is where our middle term functions, that we find it weighted with a completely different accent. This **o** that is at stake, as we have said, is the psychoanalyst. It is not because it is there from the start, that at the end, from the point of view of the psychoanalysing task this time, it is not what is produced. I mean that one can ask oneself the question of what description can we give of the psychoanalyst. One thing in any case is certain, there is no psychoanalyst without a psychoanalysand. And I would say more, that this thing which is so curious for having entered into the field of our world, namely, that there are a certain number of people of whom we are not so sure that this has the power to establish their status as subject. There are, all the same, people who work at this psychoanalysis. The term work has never been excluded from it for a single instant, from the origin of psychoanalysis. *Durcharbeitung, working through*, is indeed the characteristic to which we must indeed refer ourselves in order to admit the aridity, the dryness, the detours, even sometimes the uncertainty of this area.

But if we put ourselves at the level of an omnitude where all the subjects frankly affirm themselves then, in their universality, as no longer being, and as being (the (156) box on the right) the foundation of the universal. What we see is that, assuredly, there is something that is going to depend on it, which is the product and even properly speaking the production.

Here already I can pinpoint what is the nature of these “people”, of this species: the psychoanalyst, by defining him as production. If there were no psychoanalysand, I would say, like in some classic humour or other that I am reversing: if there were no Poles there would be no Poland. It can also be said: if there were no psychoanalysands, there would be no psychoanalyst. The psychoanalyst is defined at this level of production. He is defined as being this sort of subject who can approach the consequences of discourse, in a fashion so pure that he can isolate its plane in these relations with the one for whom, by his act, he sets up the task and the programme of this task. And through all the sustaining of this task, only sees in it relations which are properly those that I designate when I handle this algebra: the \$, the **o**, indeed the **O** and the **i(o)**. The one who is capable of maintaining himself at this level, namely, of only seeing the point at which the subject is at this task, whose end is, when there falls, when there drops, at the final term the **o**-object. The one who is of such a kind, which means the one who is capable, in relation to someone who is here in the position of treatment, of not letting himself be affected by everything involved in that by which every human being communicates in every function with his fellow.

And this has a name, which is not simply the one that I have always denounced, namely, narcissism, up to its extreme term, which is called love. There is not

only narcissism, nor luckily only love between human beings, as it is called. There is something that someone who knew how to speak about love happily distinguished. There is taste, there is esteem. Taste is one aspect, esteem is perhaps not the same, but they connect up admirably. There is fundamentally this something which is called "I like you, *Tu me plais*", and which is made up essentially of this titration, of what ensures that in an exact and irreplaceable proportion, of what you can put in the bottom left hand box, the relation, the support the subject takes from the **o** and from this i(o) which grounds the narcissistic relation, resonates, is for you exactly what is necessary for you to like him. This is what ensures that in relations between human beings there is an encounter. It is very precisely from this, which is the flesh and blood of everything that has ever been articulated in the order of what in our day people try to mathematicise in a farcical way under the name of human relations. It is from (157) this that the analyst precisely distinguishes himself, by never having recourse in the relation within analysis, to this unexpressible, to this term which gives its only support to the reality of the other which is the "I like you" or "I do not like you".

The extraction, the absence of this dimension means that there is a being, the being of the psychoanalyst who can make everything that is at stake in the fate of the psychoanalysing subject turn, by being himself in the position of the **o**. Namely, in truth, to make his relation to him turn purely and simply around these terms of an algebra which are in no way concerned with a crowd of existing and more than acceptable dimensions. A pile of givens, of substantial elements in what is in operation, in place and breathing there on the couch. Here is a production that is altogether comparable to that of one or other machine which circulates in our scientific world and which is, properly speaking, the production of the psychoanalysis.

Here is something original. Here all the same is something that is rather tangible, which is not all that new, even though it is articulated in a way that may appear striking to you. Because what does it mean if one asks the psychoanalyst not to bring into play in analysis what is called counter-transference? I would defy anyone to give it another sense than the following. That there is no place either for "I like you", or "I do not like you", after having defined them as I have just done. But then we find ourselves up against the question of what is involved, after having transformed the **o**-object for you at this point into an assembly line production, if the psychoanalyst produces the **o** like an Austin. What can the psychoanalytic act mean, if in effect the psychoanalytic act is, all the same, committed by the psychoanalyst?

This of course means that the psychoanalyst is not entirely **o**-object. He operates as **o**-object. But I think I have already articulated the act in question strongly enough up to the present to be able, to take it up again without commentary, the act which consists in authorising the psychoanalysing task, with what this involves in terms of having faith in the subject supposed to know. The thing was quite simple as long as I had not announced that this faith is unsustainable. And

that the psychoanalyst is the first, and up to now the only one, to be able to measure it. It has not yet been done. Thanks to what I am teaching it is necessary for him to know that:

1 - The subject supposed to know is precisely what the transference considered as a gift from heaven, depended on.

2 - But that also from the moment that it proves that transference is the subject supposed to know, he the psychoanalyst, is the only one able to put in question the following. The fact is that if this supposition is in effect quite useful in order to engage in the psychoanalytic task, namely, there is a – call it what you wish the omniscient, the Other - there is someone who already knows all of that, everything that is going to happen. Naturally not the analyst. But there is someone. The analyst, for his part, does not know that there is a subject supposed to know and even knows that everything involved in psychoanalysis, because of the existence of the unconscious, consists precisely eliminating from the map this function of subject supposed to know.

It is then a curious act of faith that is affirmed by putting one's faith in what is put in question, since by simply engaging the psychoanalysand in the task one prefers this act of faith, namely, one saves him.

Do you not see here something that overlaps in a curious way a certain quarrel? One of these things that have now lost their relief a little, to the point that now no one gives a damn about them. At Luther's last centenary it appears that there was a postcard from the Pope: "Best wishes from Rome". Is it faith or works that save? You see perhaps there a schema where the two things are connected. Between psychoanalysing work and psychoanalytic faith, there is some tie-up, which may perhaps allows there to be clarified retrospectively the validity and the asymmetrical order in which there these two formulae of salvation by the one or by the other were posited.

But it will no doubt seem more interesting for us - at least I hope so - to see there being highlighted at the end of this discourse something that I must say, for myself, it is a surprise to find.

If it is true that in the field of the psychoanalytic act what produces the psychoanalysand is the psychoanalyst, and if you reflect on this little reference that I took in passing about the essence of the universal consciousness of the worker, properly speaking, *qua* subject of exploitation of man by man, does not focusing the whole attention about economic exploitation on the alienation of the product of work not mask something in the constitutive alienation of the economic exploitation of man? Is this not to mask an aspect, and perhaps not without motivation, the cruellest aspect of it which perhaps a certain number of political facts make likely? Why would we not ask ourselves the question of (159) whether it does not appear at a certain degree of the organisation of production, precisely, that the product of the worker, under a certain aspect, is

precisely the singular form, the figure that capitalism takes on in our day. I mean that by following this thread, and in then seeing the function of capitalist faith, take some little references in what I am indicating about the subject of the psychoanalytic act. And keep that in the margin, in your head, for the remarks with which I am going to pursue my discourse.

I am going to continue then in a fortnight in virtue of the very vacation that is given to the little brats in secondary school. I am giving it to myself and I am giving you an appointment in a fortnight's time.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 21 February 1968

(161) One of these days a little journal is going to appear that I am not responsible for presenting to you. You will find it out there, at St. Germain des Prés, in a few days. You will see in it a certain number of features which will be particular to it in the first rank of which, the fact that apart from my own, for reasons that I shall explain, the articles in it are not signed. This fact astonished people and created a certain fuss, naturally, principally where it ought to have been grasped almost immediately. I mean among those who, up to now were the only ones to have been informed that this was the way the articles would appear. I mean not simply psychoanalysts, but, better still, people who are members of my School, who, because of that ought to have their ears a little alerted to what is said here. In any case, I hope that after what comes in the order of what I am teaching you, namely, what I am going to say today, the explanation, the source of this admitted principle that the articles in it will not be signed will, perhaps, appear clearly. Since it seems that few people are capable of taking this little step forward, even though it is already indicated by the earlier approach.

The piquant thing is still that in the news report, it was specified that the fact that these articles were not signed did not mean that one would not know the authors. Because it was said that the aforesaid authors would appear in the form of a list at the end of each year. The term of unsigned article was immediately picked up, amplified by ears, anyway ... ears that are like seashells, from which there emerge singularly ridiculous things about what the function of anonymity is. I will spare you all the things that have been said in this connection. Because if I (162) communicated with some people about this, uniquely for instructional purposes, namely, how one thing can be transformed into another. There is no worst deafness than when one does not wish to hear the first time. Others have gone further and in copious personal correspondence have pointed out to me the degree to which the visage of anonymity represented a way of using one's

collaborators like employees. This is done, it appears, in certain journals that are perhaps not more badly placed because of that, in any case from the outside. This is how people allow themselves to describe the fact that in journals of critics in which it is not usual for the critic to put his name, they are only, it appears, employees of the management. In that case who knows how far the notion of employee can be taken! Anyway, I heard everything that can be heard, as I do every time that I have to get a response to an innovation.

An innovation of something important that is beginning to come to the fore today following the psychoanalytic act. Namely,, what results from that act as a position of the subject described as a psychoanalyst, precisely in so far as this predicate is to be affected to him. Namely,, his consecration as psychoanalyst. This, if the consequences of it that we see, as in the case I have just quoted for you, this would take the form of a sort of, of a sort of very obvious stunting of the faculty of comprehension. If this is demonstrated as being, in a way, included in the premises, as the consequence of what results from the inscription of the act, in what I called the consecration in a predicative form, it would greatly relieve us as regards the comprehension of this singular effect that I called stunting, without pushing any further what one can say about it at the level of the people involved. On occasion the term puerile is used, as if truly, in truth, one should refer to the child as regards what is at stake in its effects.

Naturally, it happens, as has been demonstrated in very good places, that children become mentally handicapped because of the action of adults. It is not all the same to this explanation that one can refer, in the case we are dealing with, namely, that of psychoanalysts. Let us take up again what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, and let us clearly posit that today we are going to try to advance in this direction, which is that of the psychoanalytic act.

Let us not forget the first steps that we have taken in explaining it, namely, that it (163) is essentially inscribed as a language effect. Assuredly, in this case, we were able to notice, or at least simply recall that this is how it is for every act, but of course this is not what specifies it. We have to develop what is involved in it, how the language effect in question is organised. It is in two stages. It presupposes psychoanalysis itself precisely as language effect. It is only definable, in other words, at least by including the psychoanalytic act as being defined by the accomplishment of psychoanalysis itself. We have shown that we have here to reduplicate the division. Namely,, that psychoanalysis cannot be instaured without an act, without the act of the one who authorises its possibility, without the act of the psychoanalyst. And that within this act of psychoanalysis, the psychoanalysing task is inscribed, within this act. I already made there appear in a way this first structure of envelopment.

But what is at stake, and, moreover, it is not the first time that I am insisting on this distinction at the very heart of the act, is the act through which a subject gives to this curious act, its strangest consequence. Namely, that he himself should be the one who institutes it, in other words that he posits himself as psychoanalyst.

Now this does not happen without having to hold our attention. Because what is at stake is that he takes this position, that in short he repeats this act, knowing full well what is involved in the continuation of this act. That he makes himself the champion of something whose ending he knows. Namely, that by putting himself in the place of the analyst, he will finally come to be, in the form of the **o**, this rejected object, this object in which there is specified the whole movement of psychoanalysis. Namely, the one that comes at the end, by coming to the place of the psychoanalyst, in as much as here the subject separates himself off decisively, recognises himself as being caused by the object in question. Caused in what way? Caused in his division as subject. Namely, in so far as at the end of the psychoanalysis, he remains marked by this gap which is his own and which is defined in psychoanalysis in the shape of castration.

Here at least is the schema commented, summarised as I am making it for the moment, that I gave of the result, the effect of psychoanalysis. And I marked it on the board for you as represented by what happens at the end of the double movement of psychoanalysis marked in this line by transference, and by what is called castration, and which comes finally to this disjunction of (-) on the one hand and of the **o** which comes to the place at the end of the psychoanalysis.

(164) There is the psychoanalyst, through the operation of the psychoanalysis, an operation he authorised, in a way, knowing what its end is. And an operation whose culminating being he himself establishes, as I told you, despite, as one might say, the knowledge he has of what is involved in this end.

Here the opening remains agape, as one might say, about how this leap can operate, or again, as I did in a text which was a text meant as a proposition, to explore what is involved in this leap that I have called the pass (*la passe*). Until we have looked at it more closely, there is nothing more to be said about it, except that it is, very precisely, a leap. Naturally, many things are done, one could say that everything in the organisation of psychoanalysis is done to conceal that this leap is a leap. That is not all. On occasion people will even make a leap of it, on condition that there is a kind of blanket stretched over what has to be got over, which does not let it be seen that it is a leap. It is still the best case. It is, all the same better, than putting a little safe, convenient foot-bridge, which in that case no longer makes of it a leap at all.

But as long as the matter has not been effectively questioned, interrogated in analysis, and why wait any longer to say that my thesis is that every organising of what is done and exists in psychoanalysis is designed so that this exploration, this

interrogation will not take place. As long as, effectively, it has not taken place, we cannot say anything more about it than what is said nowhere, because in truth it is impossible to speak about it all alone.

On the contrary, it is easy to designate a certain number of points, of things, as being, to all appearances, the consequences of the fact that this leap is put in parenthesis. Question for example what is involved in the effects, as I might say, not of official, but of *officiale* consecration, of consecration as office, of what a subject is before and after this leap is presumed to have been taken. Here indeed (165) is something that, after all, is worth questioning and which it is worthwhile making the questioning of more urgent. I mean that is not simply worth questioning but is the prelude to the response. The insistence, as one might say, of the question of whether it proves that in the very measure of the duration of what I called consecration in the office, something fundamental becomes opaque, about what is effectively involved in the necessary pre-supposition of the psychoanalytic act. Namely,, what I ended on the last time by designating it as being in its own way what we call an act of faith.

An act of faith, I said, in the subject supposed to know and precisely by a subject who has just learned what is involved in the subject supposed to know, at least in an exemplary operation, which is that of psychoanalysis. Namely,, I mean that far from psychoanalysis being able to be established as has been done up to now from the statements of a science, I mean, this moment at which what has been acquired from a science passes over to the state of being teachable, in other words professorial. What is stated from a science never puts in question what it was before the knowledge emerged. Who knew it? The matter, I ought to say, came into nobody's head, because it is so obvious that there was, beforehand, this subject supposed to know. The statements of science, in principle the most atheistic, is firmly theist on this point. For what else is this subject supposed to know, and in truth I know nothing serious that was put forward in this register, before psychoanalysis itself posed us the question. Namely, something that is properly speaking untenable. That the subject supposed to know pre-exists its operation, when this operation consists precisely in the sharing between its two partners of two terms of what is at stake as regards what is operating. Namely,, what I learned to articulate in the logic of phantasy. These two terms of $\$$ and \mathbf{o} , in as much as at the ideal end of psychoanalysis, the psychoanalysis that I would describe as finite, and note clearly that here I am leaving in parenthesis the accent this term may receive in its use in mathematics, namely, in set theory. Namely,, this step that is taken when what is at stake is a finite set, to the one where one can treat by means that are tested, inaugurated at the level of finite sets, a set which is not such.

Let us keep for the moment to the level of finite psychoanalysis and let us say that at the end the psychoanalysis, we are not going to say that he is all subject since precisely he is not all, because he is divided. We cannot say for all that that he is two, but that he is only a subject and that he is not this divided subject. That he is not without (*pas sans*), according to the formula to which I accustomed the few

people who were listening to me when I was giving my seminar on *Anxiety*, that he is not without this object, finally rejected to the place prepared by the presence of the psychoanalyst, so that he can situate himself in this relation of cause of his division as subject. And that, on the other hand, we will not say either that the analyst, for his part, is all object, that he is nevertheless at the end simply this rejected object. It is indeed here that there lies some mystery or other that conceals, in short, what all practitioners know well. Namely, what is established at the level of human relations, as it is put, at the end, after the end, between the one who followed the path of psychoanalysis and the one who was "his guide".

The question of how someone can be recognised otherwise than along the very paths that he is sure of, namely,, recognised otherwise than by himself to be qualified for this operation, is a question, after all, which is not special to psychoanalysis.

It is solved habitually, as in psychoanalysis, by election or by a certain kind of choice. Seen from the point of perspective as we are trying to establish it, election or choice, all of that is resumed as being more or less of the same order, from the moment that this presupposes as being still intact, not put into question, the subject supposed to know. In the kinds of election that aristocrats declare to be the most stupid, namely,, democratic elections, I do not see why they should be any more stupid than the other, simply this supposes that the base, the member, the voter, knows something about it. It cannot depend on anything else. It is at his level that the subject supposed to know is put. As long as it is there, things are always very simple, especially from the moment that it is put in question. For if there is put in question, what one maintains nevertheless in a certain number of operations, it becomes much less important to know where it is put. And it is difficult to see in effect why it should not be put at the same level as everyone else.

That is why the Church has been for a long time the most democratic institution, namely, where everything happens through elections. It is because she, she has the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a notion that is infinitely less stupid than that of the subject supposed to know. There is only one difference, at this level to be put forward in favour of the subject supposed to know, it is that on the whole one (167) does not notice that the subject supposed to know is always there, so that one is not at fault in maintaining it.

It is from the moment that it can be put in question that one can raise categories like the one that I have, as a way of tickling your ears, brought out under the name which cannot naturally be in any way be sufficient, of stupidity (*bêtise*). It is not because one is obstinate that one is stupid. It is sometimes because one does not know what to do. As regards the Holy Spirit, I would point out to you that it is a much more elaborated concept, whose theory I am not going to develop, but as regards which it is all the same easy, for anyone who has reflected a little about what is involved in the function of the Christian Trinity, to find quite precise equivalents as compared to the functions that psychoanalysis allows to be

elaborated. And especially those that I highlighted in one of my articles, the one on the questions preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis, under the terms of the *as regards* which precisely it is not in a very tenable position, except in the categories of psychosis.

Let us leave there pointing, in a way, this detour which has its interest and let us come back one more time to the transference. But it is today very necessary to articulate the degree to which, since I introduced it as constituting the psychoanalytic act, the degree to which it is essential for the configuration as such of transference. Naturally, if one does not introduce into it the subject supposed to know, transference maintains all its opaqueness. But once the notion of the subject supposed to know is fundamental and the fracture that it undergoes in psychoanalysis is brought to light, transference is singularly illuminated. And this, of course, takes on all its value by taking a look back and noticing, for example, how every time transference is at stake, the authors, the good ones, the honest ones, evoke that the notion, the distance taken which permitted the instauration, in our theory of transference, goes back to nothing less than to the precise moment when as you know, when in emerging from a triumphant session of hypnosis, the patient, Freud tells us, threw her arms around his neck. There you are.

So then what is that? Naturally people stop and marvel. Namely,, that Freud was not very moved for all that. “She is taking me for someone else”, people translate the way in which moreover Freud expressed himself. “I am not that *unwidersetzlich*, irresistible”, there is something else. People marvel as if there were here, I mean at this level here, something to marvel at. It is perhaps not so (168) much that Freud, as he puts it, in his humorous way, did not believe himself to be the object in question. It is not because one believes oneself or not to be the object. It is that when this is what is at stake, namely, love, people think they know what they are at. In other words, people have this sort of complacency which, however little, gets you caught up in this treacle that is called love.

Because in fact, for the moment, people perform all kinds of operations, of arabesques around what must be thought about transference. We see some people showing courage and saying: but come on! Let us not reject the whole of transference onto the side of the analysand (*analysé*), as it is put. “We are involved in it too”, and how! And we are involved in it and the analytic situation is also a little responsible for it. Starting from there comes a different kind of excess. The analytic situation determines everything. Outside the analytic situation there is no transference. Anyway you know the whole variety, the scale, the roundabout that emerges when each one is in rivalry to show a little more freedom of spirit than the others. There are very strange things also. There is a person who, like that, during one of the last congresses where we were dealing with things that were put in question during the meeting of the closed seminar here, was asking at what moment of the psychoanalytic act, I was going to link all of that to the *passage à l'acte*, to *acting-out*.

Of course I am going to do it. In truth, the person who best articulated this question is someone who, exceptionally, remembers what I was already able to articulate about it on a certain 23 January 1963. The author whose personality I began to introduce earlier is an author who, in connection with *acting-out* - no one properly speaking asked him to do it - gives on this subject a little class on transference. He gives this class on transference, which is modelled on this little article which, now, is spreading more and more. Things are articulated about transference that would not even be conceived of if Lacans' discourse did not exist. Moreover, it is consecrated by demonstrating, for example, that a particular formulation that Lacan put forward in his report on *The function and field of speech and language*, namely, for example that the unconscious is this something which is lacking to discourse, that must in a way be supplied, completed in the history for the history to be re-established in its completeness, in order that, etc. the symptom should be removed. And naturally your man sniggers "Wouldn't it be lovely if that was how things were".

(169) Everyone knows that it is not because the hysteric remembers that everything is arranged. Moreover, that depends on the case, but what matter. People go on to show the degree to which what is at stake in the analytic discourse is more complex. And that it is necessary to distinguish something which is not only, it is said - believing they are taking up arms against me - the structure of the statement, but that it must also be known what use it is to know if one is telling the truth or not. And that sometimes to lie is properly speaking the way in which the subject announces the truth of his desire, since precisely there is no other angle from which to announce it than the lie.

It is something which, as you see, consists precisely in saying only things that I articulated in the most explicit way. If I mentioned earlier this seminar of the 23 January 1963, it is because it is exactly what I said about the function of a certain type of statement of the unconscious, in so far as the stating of desire which is involved is very properly that of the lie. Namely,, the point that Freud himself put his finger on in the case of the female homosexual. And that it is precisely thus that desire is expressed and is situated. And that what is advanced in this connection as being the register where analytic interpretation is played out in its originality, namely,, precisely what ensures that in no way is it possible in a kind of anteriority for there to have been known, what is revealed by the interpretative intervention. Namely,, what makes of transference, something quite different to the object already there, in a way inscribed in everything that it is going to produce. A pure and simple repetition of something which already, from previously, would only be waiting to express itself there, instead of being produced by its retroactive effect.

In short, everything that I have said for the last three years which it must not be believed, of course, does not make its own little way, like that, by absorption. And, in a second moment, remembering what I said ten years before and by making of the second part an objection to the first, in short, people easily arm themselves, on occasion, against what I am stating with what I may have stated

after a certain number of stages, built up and shot through with what I am constructing to enable you to find your bearings in the analytic experience. And objections are made from what I said at a later date, as if they were inventing it themselves, to what I first said and which, of course, can be understood as partial, especially if it is isolated from its context. In short, what is involved in the effect of certain purely complementary interpretations of a particular piece of history at the level of the hysteric, was effectively specified by me as being extremely (170) limited and absolutely not corresponding, since that very epoch when I articulated this too objectifying notion of history which would consist in taking the function of history otherwise than as the history constituted starting from present pre-occupations, namely, like every kind of existing history, and very specifically in my discourse described as the Rome discourse, I rather insistently put my foot in it on this point. Namely, that no kind of function of history can be articulated, can be understood, without the history of the history, namely, from what does the historian construct.

I am only making this remark about a statement which presents itself as a banality to designate this something which is not after all without a certain relation with what I called earlier the structure of what happens in connection with the step that has to be taken, the one that I am trying to get psychoanalysts to take. Namely, what results from the putting in question of the subject supposed to know. What results from it, namely, the style of exercising the question, the formulation of a logic which makes something manageable starting from the necessary revision at the level of this preliminary step, of this pre-supposition, of this pre-establishment of a subject supposed know, which can no longer be the same at least in a certain field. The one in which what is at stake is to know how we can handle knowledge, there, at a precise point of the field where what is at stake is not knowledge but something which, for us, is called truth.

To obtain this sort of answer where, precisely, my question can only be felt as most annoying, because the whole ordering of analysis is constructed to mask this question about the function to be revised of the subject supposed to know. This very precise type of answer which consists - for anyone who knows how to read - in a way that is purely fictitious, in decomposing two phases of my discourse in order to create an opposition between one and the other. Which is moreover quite impossible to find in most cases and which only results from the fiction which would have it that the author who is expressing himself is himself supposed to have discovered the second part. While I would be supposed to have limited myself to the first, to this rather derisory thing which does not fail to stick, if one can also say it here, it must be recognised where things are inserted in their reality, to what is involved at the very foundation of the question.

When I spoke about transference in order to bring it back to its simple and very miserable origin, and if I was able to speak in this connection, so badly, about the (171) terms of love, is it not because the difficulty of putting in question what transference constitutes is neither that it is love, as some people say, nor that it is not so as others are happy to advance. It is that it puts love, as I might say, puts

love on the spot. And precisely in this derisory way, the one which allows us to see here, in this gesture of the hysteric coming out of the hypnotic capture, to see what is at stake in what is indeed here, at bottom, in what is affected. What is affected, first of all, is that through which I define what is involved in this thing, which is so rich and instructive and, in truth, new to the world which is called psychoanalysis.

The hysteric reaches the goal immediately. The Freud she is kissing is the **o**-object. Everyone knows that this is what a hysteric needs especially coming out of hypnosis. Things are in a certain way, as one might say, cleared away. Of course Freud, this indeed is the problem about him, how was he able to put in suspense in this radical way what is involved in love? We can perhaps be sure of it by mapping out what is strictly involved in the analytic operation.

The question is not there. Putting it in suspense allowed him to establish, from this original short circuit that he was able to lay out, to the point of giving it this excessive place of the analytic operation in which one discovers the whole human drama of desire. And in the end what? This immense acquisition is not nothing. The new field opened out onto what is involved in subjectification. In the end what? The same result which was reached in this brief instant, namely,, on the one side this \$ symbolised by this moment of the emergence, this overwhelming moment of 'between two worlds' in awakening from a hypnotic sleep, and the **o** suddenly clasped in the arms of the hysteric. If the **o** for its part is so suitable, it is because it is what is at stake at the heart of the apparel of love. What is grasped there - I sufficiently articulated and illustrated it - it is around this **o**-object that there are installed, that there are established all the narcissistic coatings with which love is supported.

But the hysteric for her part, clearly knows here what she needs, I mean what necessitates this "I want and I do not want" at the same time, which proceed at the same time from the specificity of this object and from its intolerable rawness.

So that it is amusing incidentally to think that in making this whole construction of psychoanalysis, this Freud, up to the end of his life, asked himself, what does a woman want? Without finding the answer. Precisely that, what he had made, a psychoanalyst. At the level of the hysteric in any case, it is perfectly true. What (172) the psychoanalyst becomes at the end of the psychoanalysis, if it is true that he is reduced to this **o**-object, this is what the hysteric wants. One understands why, in psychoanalysis, the hysteric is cured of everything except her hysteria. This of course is only a marginal remark, in which you would be wrong to see a greater import than that on which it is quite simply inscribed.

But what must be known, is what in a recent fashion, I indeed was lead to say to make a certain number of those who hear these things, here, more sensitive. Is there not here in this expulsion of the **o**-object something which evokes for us (since the telly shows it to us) a little penchant that one might rather easily take by

finding analogies between what we are operating on and something or other that might be found at the most abyssal levels in biology.

Biologists are happy to express chromosomic terms in terms of messages. Someone can come to the point, as I recently heard - because when there are stupidities to be said one can say that the opportunity is never missed - someone made this discovery that one could say that language is structured like the unconscious. People will like that, there are people who believed that one should go from the known to the unknown, but here off you go, huh? Let us go from the unknown to the known, that is often done, it is called occultism. It is what Freud called the taste for the *mystisch Element*. It is very precisely the reflection he made when the hysteric flung her arms around his neck. He speaks very precisely at this moment of the *mystisch Element*.

The whole sense of what Freud did, consists precisely in advancing in such a way that you go against the *mystisch Element* and do not start from it. Let us not forget that it is spoken about. And if Freud protests against the protestation, for it is exactly what he did, which arose around him the day he said that a dream is lying, he repeats at that moment that if people are indignant at the thought that the unconscious can be a liar it is because there is nothing to be done. Whatever I said about the dream, they will continue to want to maintain in it the *mystisch Element*, namely,, that the unconscious cannot lie.

Let this not prevent us from taking a little metaphor. Whether this *o*-object that has to be expelled at the end of analysis, which comes to take the place of the analyst, does not resemble something. You have not heard of that? The (173) expulsion of polar globules in meiosis. In other words, from what the sexual cells get rid of in their maturity. This, in short, would be elegant, this would be what is at stake. Thanks to which the comparison is pursued. What becomes then of castration? Castration is precisely that. It is the result, the reduced cell in a way. Starting from there the subjectification is carried out, which is going to allow them to be, what they say. God made them male or female. Castration is supposed to be truly the preparation for the connection of their enjoyments (*jouissances*).

From time to time, in the margins of psychoanalysis, this naturally does not involve any seriousness but in any case there are those who dream, this has counted. I am saying that. There is only one little misfortune, which is that we are at the level of the subjectification of this function of the man and the woman. And at the level of subjectification, it is *qua o*-object, this object to be expelled, that there is going to be presented in the real the one who is called to be the sexual partner. It is here that there lies the difference between the union of gametes and what is involved in the subjective realisation of the man and of the woman. Naturally, one can see all the female lunatics in the world precipitating themselves onto this level. In any case, thank God, in our field there are not too many of them. Those who are going to look for their references concerning some supposed obstacles of feminine sexuality in the fear of penetration which is

supposed to be circumscribed at the level of the break that the spermatozoid makes into the capsule, into the envelope of the ovule. You see that it is not I who, for the first time, waves it in front of you. But so that we can distinguish ourselves from it, so that we can clearly mark in this connection the differences to supposedly biological phantasies.

When I say that it is in the *o*-object that there will subsequently always necessarily be rediscovered the sexual partner, we see arising a truth inscribed in a corner of Genesis. The fact that the partner, God knows that this does not involve her in any way, figured in the myth, as being Adam's rib, the *o* then.

That is why things have gone so badly since that time, at regards what is involved in this perfection which might be imagined as being union of two enjoyments. In truth I am sure of it. It is from this first simple recognition that there emerges the necessity of the medium, of the intermediary of the defiles constituted by the phantasy. Namely, this infinite complexity, this riches of desire, with all its tendencies, all its regions. This whole map, which can be drawn, all the effects at (174) the level of these slopes that we call neurotic, psychotic or perverse and which are inserted, precisely, in this distance forever established between the two enjoyments.

That is why it is strange that in the Church, where they are not so, not so stupid all the same, they should notice that here Freud is saying the same thing as what they are presumed to know to be the truth. Which obliges them, precisely to teach it. There is something that does not work on the side of sex. Otherwise what use is this stupefying technical network? Well then, not at all. Their preference in this area goes much more rather towards Jung, whose position it is clear is exactly the opposite. Namely,, that we enter into the sphere of Gnosis, namely,, the obligatory complementarity of the Ying and the Yang and of all the signs that you see turning around one another. As if, from all time, they were there to connect up with one another, *animus* and *anima*, the complete essence of the male and the female.

You can take it from me: ecclesiastics prefer that.

I am opening the question as to whether it is not precisely because of that. If we were in the truth like them, what would happen to their magisterium? I am not giving myself over to vain excesses of language simply for the pleasure of going for an uncomfortable stroll in the field of what is called *aggiornamento*. Because, of course, these are remarks that, at the point at which we are at, I can go as far as to make them to the Holy Office. I went there not long ago, they were very interested in what I told them. I did not push the question to the point of saying to them, is it because it is the truth that you do not like it? The truth that you know to be the truth? I gave them time to become accustomed to it.

If I am only speaking to you about it here, why is that? It is to tell you that what is perhaps so annoying at the level of power in certain areas, where there is a little

more bottle than among us, can be something of the same order. What can happen at the level of this something, of this kind of bizarre Principality of Monaco of the Truth called the International Psychoanalytic Association. There can be effects of the same order. To know exactly what is happening is not always easy. All the more so because, when all is said and done, we for our part can dot the i's for a certain number of things. Namely,, that the analytic adventure, as long as it allows things to be articulated, very precisely in the whole field of the (175) unconscious of human desire, perhaps contributes something which renews what was beginning to be put forward on a certain slope of cretinisation, such as the one accompanied by the idea of obligatory progress, the seed of science. You have to see where this renewal of the truth is situated. If this is how the analytic experience is defined, by instauring its defiles, this formidable production which is installed where? In a gap that is not at all constituted by castration itself, of which castration is the sign, the most accurate tempering, the most elegant solution. But it nevertheless remains that we know very well that enjoyment, for its part, remains outside. We do not know a single word more about what is involved in feminine enjoyment. It is not a question that dates from yesterday, all the same. There was already a certain Jupiter, for example, this subject supposed to know, well then, he did not know that, he asked Tiresias. An extraordinary thing, Tiresias knew something more about it. He only made one mistake, which was to say it. At that, as you know, he lost his sight.

You see that these things have been inscribed for a long time, in truth, in the margins of a certain human tradition. In any case it would be worth our while, perhaps, to notice in order to understand properly, this moreover is what renders legitimate our intrusion of logic into what is at stake in the psychoanalytic act. It is, moreover, what is here able to encompass our bubble. It is certainly not reducing it to nothing to describe it as a bubble if it is there that there is situated everything that happens which is sensible, intelligible and also even senseless. But in any case it would be worth our while knowing where things are situated, for example, as regards what is involved in feminine enjoyment. There it is quite clear that it is left completely out of consideration.

Why am I talking to you first of all about feminine enjoyment? It is perhaps to already specify something that the subject supposed to know that we are dealing with - some people, we must not deceive ourselves about it, may believe with all the confusion that is being produced that we are somewhere on the side of the subject supposed to know - how one goes to enjoyment! I call on all psychoanalysts, those who all the same know what we are talking about and what can be aimed at, reached. We clear the ground in front of the door, but as regards the door, I believe that we are not very competent.

After a very good analysis, let us say that a woman can find her feet. All the same, if there is a little advantage won, it is very precisely in the measure and in (176) the case that, just before, she might have taken herself for the mentioned earlier. Because, in that case of course, she is frigid.

There is not only that. Freud noted that when what is at stake is the libido as he defined it, namely, the field that is at stake in psychoanalysis, the libido desires, there is only the masculine sort, he tells us. This ought to make us prick up our ears and show us precisely, even though I already stressed it, that the operation and what is at stake is the relation of subjectification concerning the sex thing. But in as much as this subjectification culminates in the relation logically defined by \$ ϕ , in which case everyone is equal.

As regards the libido, it can be qualified as masculine or feminine, as you wish. It is quite clear that what makes us think that it is rather masculine, is that, from the side of enjoyment, as regards the man, this means again going back much further, since feminine enjoyment, we still have it there from time to time within reach of what you know. But for masculine enjoyment, at least as regards analytic experience, it is a strange thing, no one has ever seemed to notice that it is very precisely reduced to the Oedipus myth.

Only there you are. Ever since I have been killing myself in saying that the unconscious is structured like a language, no one has yet noticed that the original myth, that of *Totem and Taboo*, the Oedipus complex in a word, is perhaps an original drama, but it is an aphasic drama. The Father enjoys all the women, such is the essence of the Oedipus myth, I mean from Freud's pen. There are some for whom that does not work. It is botched or it is eaten. It has nothing to do with any drama. If psychoanalysts were more serious, instead of spending their time fiddling around in Agamemnon and Oedipus to draw something or other out of them, always the same thing, they could begin by making this remark. That what is to be explained is why precisely this should have turned into a tragedy. But there is something much more important to be still explained: why psychoanalysts have never explicitly formulated that the Oedipus complex is only a myth thanks to which they put in place the limits of their operations. It is so important to say it. This is what allows there to be put in its place what is involved in psychoanalytic treatment, within this mythical framework destined to contain in an outside already within, from which there is going to be able to be put the realised division from which I started. Namely, that at the end of the analytic act, there is on the stage, this stage which is structuring, but only at this level, the ϕ , at (177) this extreme point that we know to be at the end of the destiny of the hero of tragedy. He is no longer any more than that. And everything that is of the order of subject is at the level of this something which has this divided character that exists between the spectator and the choir.

It is not a reason, but this is what is to be looked at closely, since this Oedipus has come one day onto the stage so that we do not see that its economic role in psychoanalysis is elsewhere. Namely,, this putting in suspense of these enemy poles of enjoyment, male enjoyment and the enjoyment of the woman.

Assuredly, in this strange division which already escapes, we notice what, in my sense already truly throws into relief the difference between the function of the

myth of Oedipus, namely, the father of the primordial horde, who has no right to be called Oedipus, as you see, and the usage imaged on the stage when Freud recognises him, transposes him, and brings him into play on the stage, whether it is the Sophoclean stage or that of Shakespeare. This is what allows us to create the distance between what really operates in psychoanalysis and what does not operate in it.

To be complete, and before continuing, I would add that you will note that there is in Freud's text a third term, that of *Moses and monotheism*. Freud does not hesitate in this third case, any more than in the first two which have no resemblance, to claim to make function there, still in the same way, the Father and his murder. Ought this not begin to awaken in you some little suggestions? By doing nothing more than bringing up such a question and especially about the obvious tripartition of the function summarised as Oedipal in Freudian theory, and that not the least little beginning of a development at the true level of what is at stake, nothing has yet been done and specifically not by me. You know why.

I had prepared it by the analysis in my seminar on the Name of the Father, everything having proved at that moment that it was not by chance that it happened like that. If I began to enter into this field, let us say that they appeared to me to be a little fragile. I am speaking about those interested in this and who have quite enough of their psychoanalytic field that we now see defined as being in no way something which, in any way, can claim to take the stage again, either of tragedy or of the Oedipal circuit.

(178) What are we doing in analysis? We notice failures, differences, with respect to something that we know nothing about, to a myth, to something which allows us to put order on our observations. We are not going to say that we are in the process, in psychoanalysis, of doing anything whatsoever to mature a so-called pre-genital. Quite the contrary, since it is by regression that we advance into the fields of prematurity. Just as it leaps to the eye, like anyone who is not absolutely caught up by the things to which we must come, by women who are assuredly in psychoanalysis those who are most efficacious, in certain cases the least stupid, by women, by Melanie Klein. What do we do? We notice that it is precisely at the pre-genital levels that we have to recognise the function of the Oedipus complex. It is in this that psychoanalysis essentially consists.

Consequently, there is no Oedipal experience in psychoanalysis. The Oedipus complex is the frame in which we can regulate the game. I am intentionally saying the game. It is a matter of knowing what game one is playing. That is why I try to introduce here a little logic. It is not usual to begin playing poker, and to say all of a sudden, oh, excuse me, I have been playing manille for the last five minutes. That is not done, especially in mathematics. That is why I am trying to take some reference points from it.

I am not going to detain you any longer today, especially as in this respect we are in no hurry. I do not see why I should make the cut here or there, I will do it according to the time. I am going to posit important elements in terms of logic,

why? Because in all of science - I am giving you this new definition of it - logic is defined as this something that properly has as end to resorb the problem of the subject supposed to know.

In it alone, at least in the modern logic from which we are going to start the next time when it will be a matter precisely of posing the logical question, namely,, of these literal figures thanks to which we can progress in these problems, by figuring in them in literal terms, in terms of logical algebra, how there is posed the question of what "a psychoanalyst exists" means in terms of quantification.

We will be able to make progress where up to the present people have been able to do nothing except something as obscure, as absurd as ratification of a (179) qualification of everything that has ever been done elsewhere and that I evoked earlier, and which, here precisely, by following an experience that is so particularly serious concerning the subject supposed to know, takes on an aspect, an accent, a form, a value of relapsing which precipitates in it such dangerous consequences. Consequences which can figure in an implacable and as it were tangible way, by simply supporting them by these traits, these units, these figures, these propositions of modern logic. I am speaking about the one that introduced what I already announced in a word. I already emitted the word quantifiers.

Well then, if this is of service to us, you should know that it is precisely in function of what I put forward earlier, a definition which, certainly, was never given by any logician, because he is a logician, because this dimension was always for them resorbed, conjured away. They do not notice - everyone has his black spot - that the function of logic is the following. That there should be duly resorbed, conjured away the question of the subject supposed to know. In logic, this is not posed. There is absolutely no kind of doubt that before the birth of modern logic there was very certainly no one who had the slightest idea of it. Within logic, I am not going to prove it to you today, but it would be easy to do so, in any case I am proposing its trace and its indication, it could be the object of an elegant work, more elegant than I would be able to do myself, on the part of a logician, what grounds and legitimates the existence of logic, is this minute point. Very precisely, when the field is defined in which the subject supposed to know is nothing.

It is precisely because it is nothing there, and that moreover it is fallacious, that we are between the two, finding support on logic on the one hand, on our experience on the other. We can at least introduce a question which it is not sure - the worst, as Claudel says, is not always sure - is ever without an effect on psychoanalysts.

Seminar 11: Wednesday 28 February 1968

(181) Someone who had already been alerted the last time through the good offices of Mr Charles Melman, who was kind enough the last time to take this place for the closed seminar at the end of January, found himself solicited by him and in a way that is all the more legitimate in that Jacques Nassif, who is the person in question, was good enough to produce, for the *Bulletin de l'Ecole Freudienne*, a summary of my seminar of last year, that on *The logic of phantasy*. He was good enough to answer this call which consisted in asking him if he did not have something to say or to question, or to present, which gives an idea of the way in which he understands the point that we have got to this year.

I am very grateful to him for having been willing to give this answer, namely, for preparing something which is going to serve as an introduction to what is going to be said today.

I can say already the sense in which this brings me satisfaction. First of all, for the pure and simple fact that he has prepared this work, that he has prepared it in a competent fashion, being perfectly *au fait* with what I said last year. And then it happens that what he extracted from this work, I mean what he highlighted, what he isolated with respect to the content of what I said last year, is properly speaking the logical network. And above all its importance, its accent, its meaning in what is, perhaps, defined, indicated as the orientation of my discourse, indeed its perspective, its end, to say the word.

That we should be precisely at the point at which, in this development, this question that I am posing about the analytic act which presents itself as something (182) that profoundly implicates each one of those who are listening to me here as analysts. We are coming precisely to the point at which I am going to put a still stronger stress than has been put up to now, precisely, in order not, simply, on this something which might be understood in a certain way as: "there is a logic in everything". No one knows very clearly what it means to say that there is an internal logic to something. Here one would be simply looking for the logic of the thing, namely, that the term "logic" would be here put to use in fashion that is in a way metaphorical. No, it is not quite to that we are coming. And the last time, at the end of my discourse, there was an indication of it in this certainly audacious affirmation, to which I do not expect in advance to find an echo, a resonance. I hope, at least, for the sympathetic ear of one or other of those that I may have in my audience, who are here present as logicians. Anyway, what I indicated is that that there ought to be (and, of course, I hope to show that I am in a position to contribute some arguments in this direction) some relation, some

possibility even of defining logic as such, logic in the precise sense of the term. Namely, this science which has elaborated, specified, defined itself. Saying “defined” does not mean that it was defined from the first step, from the first stroke. Let us say at least that perhaps its property is that it cannot, of course, be properly speaking established other than from an already very articulated definition. This, indeed, is why, in effect, people only began, properly speaking, to distinguish it with Aristotle, and that one has already, here and now, the feeling that it was immediately brought to a sort of perfection. Which does not rule out all the same that there are very serious slippages, dislocations even, which, in a way, will allow us to go more deeply into what is at stake.

I posited the other day that there was perhaps a definition that no one had ever dreamt about up to now and that we are trying to formulate in a quite precise fashion which could be articulated around the following. That what one is trying to do through logic - this “one” will indeed also merit to be retained here and, in a way, signalled by a parenthesis as a point to be elucidated in what follows - is something which is supposed to be of what order? The mastery or the getting rid of (it is sometimes the same thing) what here we pinpoint in our practice as analysts, as the subject supposed to know. A field of science which would have precisely as an end - and here even it would not be too much to say as object (183) because the word “object” here takes on all its ambiguity - by being internal to the operation itself, let us say it right away, to exclude, from something that is nevertheless not only articulatable but articulated, to exclude, as such, the subject supposed to know.

To define it thus is an idea that could only have come, obviously, by starting from the point we are at. At least we are at it. , I have sufficiently accustomed you to posing the question like that. Namely, for you to notice that in psychoanalysis, and this is truly the only core point, the only knot, the only difficulty, the point which at once distinguishes psychoanalysis and puts it profoundly in question as science. It is precisely this thing which, moreover, was never properly speaking criticised, grappled with, as such. Namely, that what knowledge constructs - this not self-evident - someone knew beforehand.

A curious thing, the question appears superfluous everywhere else in science. It is quite clear that this comes from the way in which this science itself originated. You will see that in what Mr Nassif is going to tell you later, there is the precise location of the point at which, in effect, one can say that this is how science originated.

Only this, in following what I am articulating, is precisely what for psychoanalysis is not instituted in this way. The question proper to psychoanalysis, the one which constitutes, or at least around which there is instituted, this obscure point that we are trying this year to put in a certain light, the psychoanalytic act.

In other words, it is not possible to make the least advance, the least progress as regards this act itself, because it is an act that is at stake. This is really what is serious about this discourse, that it is not thought out of in terms of act. It is a discourse that is established within the act and, as one might say, this discourse ought to be organised in such a way that there can be no doubt that it is articulated otherwise. This indeed is what is most difficult and most risky, and what does not allow it to be welcomed at all in the way that there are in general welcomed the discourses of philosophers. These are heard in a way that is well known, which is the following. What sort of music can one make around them since, after all, on the day of the examination, the philosophers also must be put where they are, namely, on the school desks. The music around the discourse of the professor (*professeur*) is all that is demanded of you.

(184) But I am not a professor since, precisely, I put in question the subject supposed to know. This is precisely what the professor never puts in question because he is essentially, *qua* professor, its representative. I am not in the process of speaking about learned men (*savants*). I am in the process of speaking about the learned man when he begins to be a professor.

My analytic discourse, moreover, has never ceased to be in this position which constitutes precisely its precariousness, its danger, and also its succession of consequences. I remember the veritable horror that I produced in my dear friend Maurice Merleau-Ponty, when I explained to him that I was in the position to say certain things, which now have become part of the music, of course, but which at the time I was saying them were all the same said in a certain way, always from this angle. It was not because I had not yet posed the question as I am posing it now that they were not already really established as that. And what I was saying about analytic material was what it had always been. Of such a nature that precisely in passing by this cleavage, this slit which gives to this discourse this character which is so unsatisfying, because one does not see things carefully arranged there in the positivist construction, with stages. It goes up to a point, which is obviously very restful. It corresponds to a certain classification of sciences that remains dominant in the minds of those who enter into anything whatsoever, medicine, psychology and other jobs, but which is obviously not tenable once we are engaged in psychoanalytic practice.

So then, since this sort of discourse has always generated, of course, this certain malaise or other which comes from the fact that it is not at all a professor's discourse, this is what brought along in the margin the sort of rumblings, murmurs, commentaries, which culminate at formulae as naïve as the following - all the more disconcerting because produced in the mouth of people who ought to be the least naïve. The celebrated pillar of editorial committees, like that, who ought all the same to know a little about what is said and what is not said, that one should obtain from him this childish cry, that I reproduced somewhere, namely, "why does he not say the true about the true"? It is obviously rather comical. And this gives a little bit of an idea of the measure, for example, of reactions, differently experienced, tormented, even panicked, or on the contrary

(185) ironic, that I was able to receive - it is in these terms that I expressed myself to Merleau-Ponty - on the very afternoon of the day that I was speaking. There I had the privilege of having this test (*ponction*), this sampling of my audience because it is the people who come to my couch who communicate to me the first shock of this discourse.

The horror, as I expressed it, immediately manifested by my interlocutor, Merleau-Ponty on this occasion, is truly, just by itself, significant as regards the difference between my position in this discourse and that of the professor. It depends, precisely, entirely, on the putting in question of the subject supposed to know, because everything is there. I mean that even by taking the most radical, the most idealist, the most phenomenologising positions, it nevertheless remains that there is one thing that is not put in question. Even if you go beyond thetic consciousness, as it is called. If, by putting yourself into non-thetic consciousness, you take a step backwards *vis-à-vis* reality, which appears to be something altogether subversive. In short, if you take the existentialist step, there is still something that you still do not put in question, which is whether what you are saying was true beforehand.

Here precisely is the question for the psychoanalyst, and the most curious thing, is that any psychoanalyst whatsoever, I would even say the least reflective one, is capable of sensing it. At the very least he will even go to the point of expressing it in a discourse, for example, to which I made an allusion the last time. The personage who is certainly not in my wake since precisely he believes himself to be obliged to express it in opposition to what I say. Which is truly comic for he could not even begin to express it if he had not had previously my whole discourse. It is to this that I made an allusion in speaking about this article which, moreover, forms part of a congress which has not yet come out in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* where it will certainly appear one day.

Now, after this introduction you are going to see that Nassif's discourse, to which I will add whatever is appropriate, is going to come at its destined point by gathering together what constituted the essence of what I articulated last year as logic of the phantasy. At the moment when, precisely, my discourse of this year, this presence of logic - and not this logical development - this presence of logic as exemplary agency which, in so far as it is explicitly designed to rid itself of the subject supposed to know, perhaps - and this is what in the continuation of my discourse of this year I will try to show you - gives us the outline, the indication of a path which is in a way the one predestined for us. This path that, in a way, it may have pre-figured for us in the whole measure that the variations, the vibrations, the palpitations of this logic, and precisely since the time, co-relative to the time of science - it is not for nothing - when it itself began to vibrate, by no longer being able to remain on its Aristotelian bases. The way, in short, in which it cannot rid itself of the subject supposed to know. Whether it is in this way that we ought to interpret the difficulty of completing this logic which is called mathematical logic or logistics. There is here something in which we can find an outline of the way in which the question which concerns us is posed about what is

involved in the analytic act. Because it is precisely at this point, namely, where the analyst ought to situate himself - I am not only saying recognise himself - in act, situate himself. It is there that we can find help, this at least is what I thought, from logic, in a way that enlightens us at least as regards the points about which we must not tip into, we must not let ourselves be caught, by some confusion concerning what constitutes the status of the psychoanalyst.

You have the floor.

Jacques Nassif's summary of the "Logic of the Phantasy" (186-201)

J Lacan: I am delighted that this applause proves that this discourse was to your taste. So much the better. Moreover, even if it had not been, it nevertheless would remain what it was, namely, excellent. I would even say more. I would not like all that much there being brought to it the rectifications and perfectionings that the author may bring to it. I mean that, as it is, it has its interest and that for all of those who attended the session today it will certainly be very important to be able to refer to it for everything that I will subsequently say.

Now, my function being precisely, because of the place that I defined earlier, not to rule out any appeal to interest at the level of what I have just called taste, I would simply add some words as a remark.

I underline explicitly that outside the people who are already invited because they are here and now in possession of a card, no person will be invited to the last two closed seminars who has not sent me within the week some question. And I have no need to specify how I will find it relevant or not relevant. In truth I suppose that it cannot but be relevant once it has been sent to me!

I am going to make the following remark. There has been mention here of a new negation. What is going to be at stake, in effect, in the coming seminars is nothing other than the use, precisely, of negation. Or very precisely of this: how this path of logic, which was constituted by the introduction of what are called in (202) the most crudely improper way, I dare to say, and I think that no sensitive logician will contradict me, of "quantifiers". Contrary to what this word seems to indicate, it is essentially not quantity that is at stake in the use of quantifiers. On the other hand it will be a matter for me of bringing forward for you, and this from the next time, the importance - at least in a very enlightening way, because of being linked to the turning point which made the function of the quantifier appear - of the term double negation. Precisely in this, which is within our reach - it is quite curious that it is in grammar that it is most tangible - that it is in no way possible to acquit oneself of what is involved in double negation by saying, for example, that what is at stake is an operation which cancels itself out. That it leads us, bring us back to the pure and simple affirmation. In effect this is already present and altogether tangible, even in the logic of Aristotle. In as much as, by putting us face to face with the four poles constituted by the universal, the particular, the affirmative and the negative, it shows us clearly that there is

another position, that of the universal and of the particular, in so far as they can manifest themselves through this opposition of the universal and of the particular, by the use of a negation. And that the particular can be defined as a “not all” and that this is truly within reach of our hands and of our preoccupations.

At the moment we are at in the statement about the psychoanalytic act, is it the same thing to say that all men are not psychoanalysts - the principle of the institution of societies that bear this name - or to say that all men are non-psychoanalysts?

It is absolutely not the same thing. The difference resides precisely in the “not all” which gets across the fact that we put in suspense, that we push to one side the universal, which introduces the definition, on this occasion, of the particular.

Today, I am not going to push any further what is involved in this. But it is quite clear that what is at stake here is something that I indicated already. Several features of my discourse already initiate it for you, when I insisted, for example, on the fact that, in grammar, the stating subject was nowhere more tangible than in this use of this *ne* that grammarians know nothing about. Because naturally, grammarians are logicians, that is why they are lost. This leaves us the hope that the logicians have a tiny little idea of grammar. It is precisely what we put our (203) hope in here. Namely, that this is what leads us to the psychoanalytic field. In short, they call this *ne* expletive, which is expressed so well in the expression for example: I will be there - or I will not be there - before he comes (*avant qu'il ne vienne*) employed in a sense which means exactly: *avant qu'il vienne*. For it is there uniquely that this *avant qu'il ne vienne*, which introduces here the presence of me *qua* stating subject, takes on its sense. Namely, in so far as it interests me - it is moreover here that it is indispensable - that I am interested in whether he comes or does not come.

It must not be believed that this *ne* is only graspable there, at this bizarre point of French grammar where people do not know what to make of it and where, moreover, it can be called expletive. Which means nothing other than that, after all, it would have the same sense if one did not use it.

Now that precisely is the whole point: it would not have the same sense. Likewise in this way of articulating quantification which consists in separating its characteristics, and even, to highlight the point, by no longer expressing quantification except by these written signs which are for the universal and for the particular.

This presupposes that we apply it to a formula which, when put in brackets, can in general be symbolised by what is called a function.

When we try to construct the function which corresponds to the predicative proposition - it is indeed in this way that things are introduced into logic since it is on this that there reposes the first statement of Aristotelian syllogisms - to

introduce this function we are led, at least let us say that historically it was introduced within the parenthesis affected by the quantifier, very specifically in the first text in which Pierce put forward the attribution to Mitchell – who, moreover, had not said quite that - of a formulation which is the following: to say that every man is wise, we put the quantifier \forall - it was not accepted as an algorithm at the time, but what matter - and we put in parenthesis $(m + w)$ - namely the union, the non-confusion, contrary to identification. I am writing it in the form that is more familiar to you: \forall , so then we have: $(m + w)$, which means that, for any object i , it is either not man, or wise.

Such is the signifying mode in which there is introduced historically, in a qualified fashion, the order of “quantification”, a word that I will never pronounce (204) except in inverted commas until something comes to me. Until the visitation, the same one as when I gave its title to my little journal, will perhaps make logicians admit some qualification or other which would be much more exciting than “quantification”, which one could perhaps substitute for it.

But, in truth, in this respect I can only keep waiting, expecting. This will come to me of its own accord or it will never come to me. In any case, you will find there this little accent that I already introduced precisely in connection with the schema from the period when Pierce was, in a way, for his part also, giving birth to quantification. Namely, what allowed me, in the quadripartite schema that I wrote out the other day concerning the articulation of “every line is vertical”, and what I pointed out to you, that it is properly on the fact of resting on the “no stroke” that the whole articulation of the opposition of the universal to the particular, of the affirmative to the negative were based, in the schema at least which was given at that time by Pierce, the Piercian schema that I have for a long time put forward with certain articulations, around the “no subject”, around the elimination of what constitutes the ambiguity of the articulation of the subject in Aristotle. Even though, when you read Aristotle, you see that there is no kind of doubt, that the same putting in suspense of the subject was already accentuated, that the *upokeimenon* is in no way confused with *ousia*.

It is around this putting in question of the subject as such, namely, on the radical difference that he maintains about this sort of negation as compared to negation in so far it is brought to bear on the predicate, it is around this that we are going to be able to make revolve certain essential points in subjects that interest us quite essentially. Namely, the one that is at stake, in the difference between the fact that not all are psychoanalysts - *non licet omnibus psychanalytas esse* - or indeed: none of them is a psychoanalyst.

For some people who may find that we are in a forest that is not theirs, I would all the same point out something as regards the subject of this report, this great knot, this buckle that our friend Jacques Nassif has traced out, in reuniting this, this so disturbing fact that Freud stated, when he said that the unconscious did not know contradiction, that he should have dared, like that, to have launched this arch, this

(205) bridge, to this point at the heart of the logic of phantasy, upon which my discourse of last year ended, by saying that there is no sexual act.

Here indeed there is a relation, and the strictest relation, between this gap of discourse involved in representing the relations of sex, and this pure and simple gap defined by the pure progress of logic itself. For it is by a purely logical process that it is demonstrated - and I will recall it incidentally for those who might not have the slightest idea of it - that there is no universe of discourse. Naturally, it is ruled out for the poor discourse, that it should notice that there is no universe. But here precisely is the logic that allows us to demonstrate in a very easy, very rigorous and very simple way that there cannot be a universe of discourse.

It is, therefore, not because the unconscious does not know contradiction that the psychoanalyst is authorised to wash his hands of contradiction, which I ought to say, moreover, only concerns him in a quite distant way. I mean that for him it seems to be the *cachet*, the blank cheque, the authorisation given to cover in any way he wishes, to cover with its authority, pure and simple confusion.

Here is the mainspring around which turns this sort of language-effect that my discourse implies. I will illustrate. It is not because the unconscious does not know contradiction. It is not surprising, we put our finger on how this happens. It does not happen in just any way whatsoever. I immediately touch on this because it is at the very principle of what is inscribed in the first formulations of what is at stake as regards the sexual act. The fact is that the unconscious, we are told, is that, the Oedipus complex, the relation of man and woman it metaphorises it. This is what we find in the unconscious, in the relations between the child and the mother. The Oedipus complex is first of all that, it is this metaphor. It is all the same not a reason for the psychoanalyst not to distinguish these two styles of presentation. He is even explicitly there for that. He is there to make the analysand hear the metonymical effects of this metaphorical presentation.

He can even be, later, the occasion for confirming with regard to one or other object, the contradictory principle inherent in any metonymy, the fact that there results from it that the whole is only the ghost of the part, of the part *qua* real. The couple is no more a whole than the child is a part of the mother. This is what psychoanalytic practice makes tangible, and it is to profoundly vitiate it to affirm the contrary, in the name of the fact that this is what is at stake. Namely, to designate in the relations of the child and the mother what is not found elsewhere, where one would expect to find it, namely, the fusional unity in sexual copulation. And it is all the more erroneous to represent it by the relations of the child and the mother because, at the level of the child and the mother, it exists still less.

I sufficiently underlined the matter in pointing out that it is a pure phantasy of contemporary psychoanalysis to imagine that the child is all that well inside her. What do you know about it? One thing is certain, it is that the mother does not

necessarily find herself completely at ease in it. And a certain number of things can happen even, that I do not need to insist on, called mother-foetus incompatibilities, which sufficiently show that it is not at all clear that one should naturally represent the biological basis being the high-point of beatific unity.

Moreover, do I need to recall to you on this occasion - because it is perhaps the last one - that in Japanese engravings, namely, almost the only works of art fabricated, written, that are known where something is attempted to represent for us what you must not believe I am at all depreciating: copulatory fury. It must be said that it is not within everyone's reach. You have to be in a certain order of civilisation which never engaged in a certain dialectic that I will try to define more precisely for you one day, incidentally, as being the Christian one. It is very strange that every time you see these personages who embrace in such a truly striking way and which has nothing to do with the truly disgusting aestheticism of the habitual representations of what happens at this level in our painting, a curious thing, you very often, almost always, have in a little corner of the engraving, a little personage as a third party. Sometimes it seems to be a child. And, perhaps, even the artist, as a way of having a little laugh - for after all, you are going to see that it does not matter how he is represented - this third personage, we have no doubt that what is at stake here, is precisely something which supports what I call the little *o*-object. And very precisely in the form where it is there truly substantial, where it ensures that in inter-human copulation there is this something irreducible which is precisely linked to the fact that you never see it reaching its completeness, and which is called quite simply the look. And that is why this little personage is sometimes a child and sometime, quite bizarrely, enigmatically for us who ogle it from behind our spectacles, simply a little man who is exactly a man, constructed and drawn with the same proportions as the male who is in action there; simply completely reduced. A tangible illustration of something which is truly basic and forces us to revise the principle described as that of non-contradiction, at least of what is involved in the field of what is at stake there, a radical point at the origin of thinking and which might be expressed, to employ a colloquial, familiar, formula as "never two without three". You say that without thinking about it. You simply believe that it means that if you already have had two sh--s you will necessarily have a third. No! This is not at all what it means! It means that to make two, it is necessary for there to be a third.

You never thought of that. It is nevertheless because of this that we are required to introduce into our operation this something that takes account of this intercalary element that we are going to be able to grasp, of course, through a logical articulation. Because, if you expect to catch it in reality, like that, in a corner, you will always be swindled because, precisely, reality, as everyone knows, is constructed on your *I*, on the subject of knowledge (*connaissance*), and it is precisely constructed so that you will never find it.

Only for us as analysts, it is our role. We, for our part, have the resources for it.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 6 March 1968

P	Je ne connais pas tout	
U	J'ignore tout	de la poésie
P	<i>I don't know everything</i>	<i>about poetry</i>
U	<i>I don't know anything</i>	

I wrote "*Je ne connais pas*" and "*J'ignore*". I am confronting this "*Je ne connais pas*" and this "*J'ignore*" with something that is going to serve me as a foundation: "about poetry".

For greater rigour, I am saying that I posit that "*je ne connais pas*" is equivalent to "*j'ignore*". I admit, I accept that negation is included in the term "*j'ignore*". Of course, another time, I could return to *ignosco* and to what it indicates very precisely in the Latin tongue from which it comes to us. But logically I am positing today that these two terms are equivalent. It is starting from this supposition that what follows is going to take its value.

I am writing the word *tout*, twice. They are indeed equivalent. What results from this? That, from the twice-repeated introduction of this identical term at these two levels, I obtain two propositions of essentially different value. It is not the same thing to say "I don't know everything about poetry" and "I don't know anything about poetry". Between one and the other there is the distance - I am saying it immediately to clarify, since it is necessary, where I want to get to, it is to the signifying distinction, I mean in so far as it can be determined by signifying procedures - between what is called a universal proposition, to express it like (210) Aristotle, and, moreover, also like everything that has been prorogued in logic ever since, and a particular proposition.

Where then is the mystery if these signifiers are equivalent term by term. Let us say that here we have posited it by convention, I repeat, it is only a scruple about the etymology of *j'ignore*. *J'ignore* means well and truly what it means on this occasion: *je ne sais pas*, *je ne connais pas*. How does that end up with two propositions, one of which is presented clearly as referring to a particular of this field of poetry (there are some things within it that I do not know; I do not know

everything about poetry) and this well and truly universal, even though negative proposition: I know nothing about anything that belongs to the field of poetry, I don't have a clue (which is the case in general).

Are we going to stop at this which, immediately, introduces us into the specificity of a positive tongue, into the particular existence of French which, as very learned people have put it in their time, presents a duplicity in the terms negation is supported by. Namely, that the *ne* which seems to be the sufficient support, (adjunctive, as they say) necessary and sufficient for the negative function, is supported, in appearance is reinforced, but perhaps after all is complicated, by this adjunction of a term which only the usage of the tongue allows us to see what it is for. On this, someone that I can only quote in the margin, namely, a psychoanalytic colleague and eminent grammarian named Pichon, in the work on French grammar that he excoited with his uncle Damourette, introduced some very pretty considerations, in accordance with his method and procedure, concerning what he calls the rather discordant function of the *ne* and the rather foreclusive one of the *pas*. About this he said things that were very subtle and packed with all sorts of examples taken at every level and very well chosen without, I think, being on the axis which, at least for us, may be truly important.

How this importance is determined for us, is what I shall make you understand later, at least I hope so, and for the moment by referring myself to this specificity of the French tongue. I only want to take the support of this something that must indeed also happen elsewhere, if it happens in our tongue. The fact is - for example - one could raise the following. If the result of this statement depended, for example, on the fact that we can group together the *pas tout*, in which case the sense of the sentence would return, rendering superfluous, in a way, allowing (211) there to be elided, as happens in familiar conversation (I am not saying to suppress, to elide, to swallow) the *ne*. *J'connais pas tout* with *pas tout* together, would be the non-separability of negation, that we can describe as included in the term of *j'ignore*, and which would here be the source of it, and everyone would be happy. I do not see why one should not be satisfied with this explanation if all that were involved, of course, was to solve this little riddle. It is funny but anyway this does not perhaps go so far as it seems to.

Yes, it goes further, as we are going to try to demonstrate by referring to another tongue, the English tongue, for example.

Let us try to start from something that corresponds in meaning to the first sentence:

I don't know everything about poetry,

and the other sentence:

I don't know anything about poetry.

What is nevertheless going to appear to us, in considering things expressed in this other tongue, is that, although producing these two meanings equivalent to the distance between the first two, the explanation that we evoked earlier of the

blocking together of two signifiers is going to find itself necessarily inverted. Because this blocking of the *pas* with the term *tout* in the first example is realised here - at the signifying level I mean - in what corresponds to the second articulation, the second proposition, the one we have qualified as universal.

“*Anything*”, as everyone knows, is there in effect as the equivalent of “*something*”, something which is transformed into “*anything*” in the measure that it intervenes as negative.

Consequently, our first explanation is not fully satisfying, since it is by something completely opposite, it is by a blocking carried out in the second sentence, the one which realises the universal on this occasion, that there is produced this blocking, this equally ambiguous detaching moreover, the *don't* not disappearing for all that, to obtain this sense, I am completely out of it as regards poetry.

On the contrary it is where “*everything*” is joined to “*I don't know*” that the first sense is realised. This is well designed to make us reflect on something that (212) involves nothing less than - as I told you already, showing my hand - what is involved in the mystery of the relations between the universal and the particular.

We will try later to say what was the fundamental preoccupation of the one who introduced this distinction into history, namely, Aristotle.

Everyone knows that, on the subject of the angle from which these two registers of the statement should be taken, a little revolution of the spirit occurred, one that I already pinpointed on several occasions as the introduction of quantifiers.

There are perhaps some people here - I would like to suppose it - for whom it is not simply something that tickles their ears. But there must also be many for whom it is truly only the announcement that I made that at a given moment I would speak about it and - God knows how - I am going to have to talk to you about it from the point where it interests us, the point that I am at, the point then where it seemed to me it could be of use to us. Namely, that I cannot give you its whole history, all its antecedents, how it arose, it emerged, it was perfected and how (when all is said and done, this is what I have to limited myself to) it is thought of by those who make use of it. How can one know that? Because it is not at all certain that because they make use of it, they think about it, I mean that they situate in any way what their way of using it implies in thinking.

So then, I am going to be forced to start from the way in which I for my part think about it, at the level that I think interests you, namely, at the level where this can, be of some use to us.

In Aristotle, everything depends on something that is designated as a sign, which he believes he can allow himself. He allows himself to operate in this way,

namely, that if he said that *every man is an animal*, he can for any useful purpose, if this appears to him to be of some use, extract from it: *some man is an animal*.

This is what we will call - it is not quite the term that he uses - since what is at stake is a relation that has been qualified as subalternate between the universal and the particular, an operation of subalternation.

I will probably have to make some remark more than once regarding the fact, the way that "man" is dinned into our ears in the examples, the illustrations the logicians give to their developments, which is certainly not without a (213) symptomatic value. We can begin to be sure of it in the whole measure that we have made the remark that we perhaps do not know as well as all that what man is. Anyway this would take us ...

The question of whether two sets, as is said in our day, can have something in common is a grave question which is in the process of involving a whole revision of mathematical theory. Because after all, we might very well, from the beginning, and without making vain gestures, I dare to say it, like those of our friend Michel Foucault performing the last rites for a humanism, so long dead that it has gone down the river without anyone knowing where it has got to, as if it were still a question and as if it was what was essential about structuralism. Let us pass on ... Let us say simply that, logically, we can only retain the fact that all that is important for us is whether we are talking about the same thing when we say - I mean logically - *every man is an animal*, or, for example, *every man speaks*. The question of whether two sets, I repeat, can have a common element, is a question that is very seriously raised in as much as it raises the following. Namely, what is involved in the element, if the element itself can only be - it is the foundation of set theory - something in connection with which you can speculate exactly as if it were a set. This is where the question begins to arise, but let us leave it.

You know that the fatherland is at once the most beautiful reality, and that of course it is self-evident that *every Frenchman ought to die for it*. But it is from the moment that you subalternate to know whether some Frenchmen ought to die for it that it seems to me that you ought to notice that the operation of subalternation presents some difficulties. Since *every Frenchman ought to die for it* and *some Frenchman ought to die for it*, is not at all the same thing! These are things that you see every day.

This is when you notice the amount of ontology, namely, something a little more than was his intention in constructing a logic, a formal logic, how much ontology his logic still brings with it.

I am avoiding, I assure you, many digressions. I do not want you to lose my thread ...

(214) Here I am going to introduce right away by an opposition process that is obviously a little decisive. I am happy, perhaps wrongly, but usually there is an eminent logician here in the first row. I always keep the corner of my eye on him to see when he is going to start shouting. He is not there today, I do not believe I see him. On the one hand that reassures me, on the other hand it annoys me. I would like to have known what he would say to me about it at the end. Normally he shakes my hand and tells me that he is in complete agreement, which always does me a lot of good. Not at all because I need him to say it to know naturally where I am going, but everyone knows that when you venture onto a terrain which is not your own, properly speaking, you are always at the risk of - bang bang! Now for my part, of course, it is not encroaching onto terrain that is not my own that is important to me. It is to find, in logic, something that would be for you an example, a thread, an exemplary guide in the difficulties we have to deal with. We, those in the name of whom I am speaking, those also to whom I am speaking - and this ambiguity is here quite essential - namely, the psychoanalysts with respect to an action which concerns nothing less and nothing other than what I tried to define for you as "the subject". The subject is not man. If there are people who do not know what man is they are indeed the psychoanalysts. It is even their merit to put him radically in question, I mean *qua* man, in as much as this word has even still an appearance of sense for anyone.

So then I pass to the logic of quantifiers. And I allow myself, with this *bulldozer* approach that I use from time to time, to indicate that the radical difference in the way of opposing universal to particular, in the logic of quantifiers, resides in the fact (naturally, when you open books on it, you will find your bearings again with what I am telling you, you will of course see that it can be tackled in a thousand different ways, but the essential, is that you should see that this is the principal thread, at least for what interests us) that the universal, at least the affirmative one, must be stated as follows. "There is no man who is not wise" (*pas d'homme qui ne soit sage*).

There you are, believe it from me at least for a moment. The important thing is that you are able to follow the thread to see where I want to get to, which gives the formula of the universal negative. Namely, what in Aristotle, might be articulated as: *All men are wise*, a reassuring statement that on this occasion, (215) moreover, is of no importance. What is important to us, is to see the advantage that we may find in articulating this statement differently.

Here, right away, you can note that this universal affirmative will bring into play to support itself nothing less than two negations. It is important for you to see the order in which things are going to be presented. Let us put on the left the Aristotelian forms, the universal affirmative and negative. It is the letters A and E which designate them among Aristotle's posterity, and the letters I and O are the particulars, I being the particular affirmative (all men are wise, some man is wise).

A	E
I	O

How, in our quantifying articulation, is *some man is wise* going to be expressed?

I had said first of all *there is no man who is not wise*. Now we articulate *there is a man who is wise* or *man who is wise*. But we will support this *man*, who might remain suspended in thin air, as it is appropriate, with a *he is*, just as *no man who is not wise* is *there is no man who is not wise*, *il n'est homme qui ne soit sage*.

But you also see that there is no longer a *ne*, in *is not wise*. This is how it has to be for *who is wise* to have a meaning. Or, if you again want to articulate *there is a man such that he is wise*, this *such that* is not excessive because you can also put it at the level of the universal: *there is no man such that he is not wise*. So then, to give the equivalent of our Aristotelian subalternation we had to efface two negations. This is very interesting. Because first of all we can see that a certain use of the double negation is not meant to be resolved into an affirmation, but precisely to allow - according to the sense in which this double negation is used, whether it is added or removed - to assure, the passage from the universal to the particular.

This is striking and makes us ask ourselves what indeed must be said for us to be able, in certain cases, to assimilate the double negation to a return to zero.

(216) Namely, what existed in terms of affirmation at the start, and in other cases with this result.

But let us continue to interest ourselves in the property presented by the function we started from, that we have pinpointed, because it is correct, because this is what it corresponds to the quantifying operation. Let us only remove one negation, the first one: *there is a man such that he is not wise*. There also, I particularise, and in a fashion that corresponds to the particular negative. It is what Aristotle would call *some men are not wise* - no longer of subalternation but of the opposite subalternation which is diagonal, the opposition between A and O, from *all men are wise* to *some men are not wise* - this is what he calls "contradictory".

The use of the word contradiction interests us, us analysts. All the more so because, as Mr. Nassif recalled at the last closed seminar, it is an altogether essential point for psychoanalysts that Freud once threw out for them this assuredly primary truth that the unconscious does not know contradiction.

The only inconvenience - you never know the fruits borne by what you announce as a truth, especially a primary one - is that this had as a consequence that psychoanalysts, from that moment on, thought they were on holidays, as I might

say, with respect to contradiction. They thought that this at once allowed them to know nothing about it, namely, not to be interested in it in the slightest.

It is a consequence that is obviously excessive. It is not because the unconscious, even if it were true, does not know contradiction that psychoanalysts should not have to know it, even if it were only to know why it does not know it, for example!

Anyway, let us remark that “contradiction” deserves a more attentive examination which, of course, logicians have carried out a long time ago. And that it is something quite different to speak about contradiction in the principle of contradiction, namely, that A cannot be not-A from the same point of view and at the same place, and the fact that our particular negative is not contradictory here. It is true that it is. But you see from the angle *there is a man such that he is not wise*, I am only raising it, with respect to the formula which served us as a point of departure, founded on the double negation, I am only raising it to the position of an exception.

(217) Of course the exception does not confirm the rule, contrary to what is usually said and which suits everyone. It simply reduces it to the value of a rule without a necessary value. Namely, it reduces it to the value of rule. That is even the definition of the rule.

So then you begin to see the degree to which these things can be of interest to us. I am appealing here to my psychoanalytic audience a little in order to allow it not to be bored. You see the interest of these articulations that allow us to nuance things as interesting as the following, for example. It is not the same thing to say (this is why I made this distinction at the level of contradiction) *man is non-woman* - here, of course, we will be told that the unconscious does not know contradiction - but it is not quite the same as to say (universal) *there is no man* (we are dealing with the subject, of course) *who does not rule out the feminine position, the woman*, or (the state of exception and no longer of contradiction) *there is a man who does not rule out the woman*.

This may show you, however, something manageable and designed to show the interest of these logical researches, even when the psychoanalyst believes himself (a thing which well deserves, with time, to be called obedience) obliged to have his gaze fixed on the horizon of the pre-verbal.

Let us continue, for our part, on the contrary, our little path of conducting an experiment.

There is a man such that he is not wise, I have said. You have been able to note that we have been able, up to the present, to do without the “*pas*”. Let us try to see what that is going to give. *There is a man such that he is* - for example - *not wise*. There is no problem about this, it means the same thing. There are still some who are not wise.

Let us be careful. This *not wise* may well serve us as a passage to something a little unexpected.

If we restore the “*ne*” it still works. *There is a man such that he is not wise (ne soit pas sage)*”, that will still work.

Let us come then to the *not wise* and let us come back in the diagonal to the A, the universal affirmative of Aristotle being the quantifying locution: *there is no man such that he is not not wise (pas d’homme tel qu’il ne soit pas sage)*. The fact is that this gives a funny sense, all of a sudden. It is the universal negative: they are all not wise.

What could have occurred? This added *not*, which was perfectly tolerable at (218) the level of the particular negative, here if we put it into what previously was the universal affirmative, which appeared altogether designed to tolerate it just as well, with this *not*, it swerves towards blackness and towards some colour or other at E in the Rimbaud’s sonnet. But at the Aristotelian level, it is black, it is the universal negative: *all of them are not wise*.

I am going to tell you right away the lesson we are going to take from this. It is obviously something which makes us put our finger on the fact that the relation of the two *ne*, as it exists in the fundamental structure of the quantified universal affirmative, which is this formula, *there is nothing which does not*, has something which suffices in itself. And we have the proof of it in the liberation of this *pas* which all of a sudden, while inoffensive elsewhere, here makes one universal turn into the other.

This is what allows us to advance and to affirm that the distinction of the quantifying operation, when we give it its rectifying (*rectrice*) function, a normal function of logical operation, is distinguished from the logic of Aristotle by the following. It substitutes - at the place where the *ousia*, the essence, the ontological is not eliminated, at the place of the grammatical subject - the subject that interests us *qua* divided subject. Namely, the pure and simple division as such of the subject in so far as he speaks, of the stating subject *qua* distinct from the subject of the statement.

The unit in which this presence of the divided subject is presented, is nothing other than this conjunction of two negations. This, moreover, is what justifies that to present it to you, to articulate it before you, whether you have noticed it or not - but it is time to notice it - things would not work without using a subjunctive. *There is nothing which is not (qui ne soit)* wise or not wise, the thing is of little importance. It is this *soit* which marks the dimension of this slippage from what happens between these two *ne* and which is precisely where there is going to operate the distance which always subsists between stating and stated. It is therefore not for nothing that in giving you, a few sessions ago, the first example of what is involved in Pierce’s formulation, I well and truly pointed

out to you that, in this exemplification that I showed you of these little lines divided, well chosen, in four boxes, what constituted the veritable subject of every universal, is essentially the subject in so far as he is essentially and fundamentally this no subject (*pas de sujet*) which is already articulated in our (219) way of introducing it: *no man who is not wise*.

It is difficult to stay on this cutting edge. The theory, of course, is very exactly constructed to eliminate it. I mean that what interests us, is that the theory of quantifiers, if we articulate it, forces us to uncover in it this relief and this irreducible flight. Which means that we do not know where there is slipped in the properly instituting core of what only seems to be at first repeated negation, and is, on the contrary, creative negation, in so far as it is from it that there is instaurated the only thing which is truly worthy of being articulated in knowledge. Namely, the universal affirmative, what is valid everywhere and in every case. This alone interests us.

This is how you will see there being formulated from the pen of the logicians of quantification that we can treat as equivalent what is expressed by a \forall , namely, the universal value of a written proposition such as $\forall x, F(x)$, we must write in algebraic terms of symbolic logic. Namely, that this universal truth is valid for every x , that x functions in the function $F(x)$, namely, - for example - on this occasion the function of being wise, and that man will be an x which will be always at its place in this function.

The transformation which is acceptable in the theory of quantifiers is represented as follows: by \exists , this being the symbol that specifies quantification for us, the existence of an x , of a value of x such that it satisfies the function $F(x)$. And we will be told that $\exists x, F(x)$ can be expressed by $\neg \forall x, \neg F(x)$. Namely, that no x exists that is such that it explodes the function $F(x)$. $\neg \forall x, \neg F(x)$. In brief, that the conjunction of these two minus signs (and it is indeed something which is found to overlap the articulated, nuanced language form under which I put it forward to you) is enough to symbolise the same thing. It is not true at all. For it is quite clear that even though it is a minus in logical symbolisation, these two minuses do not have the same value. There exists no x which, I was lead to tell you, explodes, namely, renders false this function $F(x)$. I symbolised these two terms. That of non-existence and that of the effect, which end up with the falsity of the function, are not of the same order. But this is precisely what is at stake. It is to mask something that is precisely the fissure and is altogether essential for us to determine and to fix in its plane, which is the distance between the stating subject (220) and the subject of the statement. I will again point this out to you, for example, in connection with another way, among other authors, of giving to the function an image that is more manageable at the level of its properly predicative application. For, in truth, $F(x)$ can designate all kinds of things, including all kinds of mathematical formulae that you can apply to it. It is the most general formula.

On the contrary, if you want to remain at the level of my *all men are wise*, here is the formula: $(m \vee w)$, with the sign of disjunction \vee that I already put on the board the last time. A formula to which, according to the logicians who introduced quantification, it would be enough to add the \exists of *pan* to make of it the universal or particular proposition: $(\exists m \vee w)$ and which means, in short, that what we are dealing with is the disjunction between *no man* and this *w*. This means that if we choose the contrary of *no man*, namely, *man*, we have the disjunction: he is wise, either in every case, or in certain particular cases.

Comment [G2LU2]:

If we take the negation of wise, namely, if we renounce wise, we are at the other side of the disjunction, namely, on the side of no man. This can still work, up to this point.

But this in no way implies the requirement of not wise for what is not man. Now this is not indicated in the formula. For this it is necessary that the disjunction should be marked, for example, like that, $(\exists m \vee w)$, a sign then which would be the inverse of the one of the square root. This is designed to show us that with respect to implication, if we know here, in short, at the level of the universal that man implies wise, that not wise, certainly, does not imply no man. But that wise is perfectly, for its part also, with no man. Namely, that there can be something other than man who is wise is elided in the way of presenting quite crudely the formula of disjunction, between a subject which is negated and the predicate which is not.

A point, also, which demonstrates something that, in the system described as that of double negation, to express oneself in this script (*scription*) of Mitchell, always allows to escape this something which, this time, far from suturing the fissure, leaves it gaping without knowing it. A confirmation that it is the fissure that is always at stake.

In other words, what is at stake, as regards logic, I mean formal, is always this. What can be drawn, and up to what point, from a statement, namely, to get a (221) reliable statement. It is indeed from there also that Aristotle started.

Aristotle, of course, let us not say that he was at the dawn of thinking, because what is proper to thinking is precisely never to have had a dawn. It was already very old and it knew something. In particular it knew that of course there would be no question of knowing, if there were no language. That is not enough, of course, because knowledge does not depend only on language. But what was important for it, was to know precisely - because thinking did not date from yesterday - what could make of a stating, something necessary. There is no way of yielding on this point. The first *ananke* is the *ananke* of discourse.

The formal logic of Aristotle was the first step in knowing what properly and distinguished as such, at the level of the statement, could be formulated as giving this source - which does not mean that it was the only one, of course - its necessity for stating. Namely, that here there is no way of retreating. Moreover,

it is the sense that the term *episteme* had at that time, it is that of a stating about the distinction between *episteme* and *doxa* is nothing other than a distinction situated at the level of discourse.

It is the difference between what is for us science, to go in the same direction, namely, between a strictly reliable statement, and indeed it is certain for us, who have made some original contributions to what is involved in the statement, and in fact in no other place than in mathematics. These laws of the statement, to be reliable, have become, still become every day more and more exigent and, in this respect, do not fail to show their limits. I mean that it is in the whole measure that we have taken, in logic, some steps, among which of course is the one that I am presenting to you here. But it is the original step, that interests us. Why? Because we analysts find ourselves beyond this attempt at capturing stating by the networks of the statement. But what luck that the work has been pushed so far elsewhere, if through this there are given to us some rules to carefully map out the fissure.

When I state that the unconscious is structured like a language, that does not mean that I know it, since, what I completed it with, is properly this *one (on)* on which I put the emphasis and which is the one which gives vertigo to all the (222) psychoanalysts. The fact is that one knows nothing about it. *One*, the subject supposed to know, the one who must always be there to make us comfortable.

If I state it, therefore, it is not because I know it, it is because my discourse, in effect, organises the unconscious. I am saying that the only discourse that we have about the unconscious, that of Freud, makes sense. This certainly is not what is important, because it makes sense as one makes water: everywhere. Everything makes sense, as I showed you. "*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously*", also makes sense. It is even the best characterisation that one could give to the totality of analytic literature. If in Freud this sense is so full, so resonant with respect to what is at stake, - the unconscious. If, in other words, it is distinguished from everything that he rejected in advance as occultism, if everyone knows and senses it is not Mesmer - that it why it subsists despite the senselessness of the analytic discourse - it is a miracle that we can only explain indirectly. Namely, by the scientific formation of Freud.

The important thing in this discourse is not its sense which must first of all exist so that what I put forward with "the unconscious is structured like a language" has its reference, its *Bedeutung*. Because it is here that one notices that the reference is language. In other words that everything that my discourse articulates about that of Freud on the unconscious ends up with isomorphic formulae, the ones required if what is at stake is language taken as object. The isomorphism that the unconscious imposes on my discourse about the unconscious, with respect to what is involved in a discourse on language, is what is at stake. Which means that every psychoanalyst ought to be caught up in this discourse, in so far as he is engaged in this field defined by Freud for the unconscious.

Starting from there, I can only barely state, before leaving you, some pinpointing designed for you not to lose your heads in this business. I hope that what I have said at the final term concerning the formula “the unconscious is structured like a language” will preserve all the same its value as a turning point for those who have heard for a long time as, moreover, for those who refuse to hear it.

Of course our science, the one that is ours, is not defined simply by these coordinates, which mean that there is no knowledge except through language. It nevertheless remains that science itself cannot be sustained except by putting in reserve a knowledge made up purely of language. Namely, of a logic that is (223) strictly internal and necessary for the development of its instrument in so far as the instrument is mathematics. And everyone can put his finger at every instant on the properly language impasses in which the progress of the mathematical instrument itself puts it. In as much as it both welcomes and is welcomed by every new field of these factual discoveries and is an altogether essential resource for modern science.

It remains indeed then that there is a whole level where knowledge is about language. And it is a vanity to say that this field is properly tautological, that it is at the very origin of what constitutes the start of science, namely, taking the measure of the cleavage thus defined in discourse, from a logical asceticism called the *cogito*. It is a sign that I was able to develop this asceticism sufficiently to found on it the logic of the phantasy. The one whose articulations were, I must say, very well isolated the last time during the closed seminar by one of those who are working here in the field of my discourse.

It is not a matter, as he said, and as he said in a legitimate fashion in the perspective of what he was trying to contribute as an answer to this discourse, of a “new negation” which is supposed to be the one that I am producing. May heaven preserve me from giving again to anyone whomsoever with the introduction of a novelty the opportunity of conjuring away what is at stake. Which is indeed the complete contrary of this thing that is plugged up because it is something that cannot be plugged. May heaven grant that I do not in any way give to the psychoanalyst a renewed alibi to the one that he has by being in the analytic discourse. Namely, in the proper and Aristotelian sense, his *upokeimemon*, his subjective support certainly, but in so far as he himself assumes its division.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 13 March 1968

What is it to be a psychoanalyst? It is towards this aim that there is making its way what I am trying to tell you this year, under this title of the psychoanalytic act.

It is strange that some, among the messages that are sent to me and for which, since I asked for them, I thank those who were good enough to take this step, it is strange that there sometimes crops up the following. That I am doing here something that is supposed to be close to some kind of philosophical reflection. Perhaps all the same some sessions, like the last one, which, of course, if it did not fail to grip those among you who are best following my discourse, sufficiently warns you nevertheless, that what is at stake is something else. Experience - an experience, it is always something which one recently has had the echoes of - proves that the state of mind produced in a certain order of studies described as philosophical, adapts itself badly to the whole precise articulation of this science called logic. In this echo, I even picked out and retained this humorous judgement, that such an attempt to bring in, properly speaking, what has been constructed as logic into the classes, into what is imposed for the philosophical cursus or gradus, would be something akin to this ambition of the technocrat, whose final slogan among all auricular resistances, is to accuse those who, on the whole, are trying to contribute this more precise discourse, which my own is supposed to be a part of, under the title of structuralism. This, in short, is distinguished by this common characteristic, of taking properly as object, what is constituted, not under the heading of what (226) constitutes the ordinary object of a science, namely, something from which one is once and for all at a sufficient distance to isolate in the real as constituting a special species, but to be occupied properly by what is constituted as language-effect.

To take the language-effect as object is indeed, in effect, what can be considered as the common factor in structuralism. And that assuredly, in this connection, thinking finds its basis, its angle, its way of escaping, in the form of a reverie, from this something which, precisely, around this strives to become embodied, and to restore to it, what? Ancient themes which, under different headings, always found themselves flourishing around every discourse in so far as it is properly the backbone of philosophy. Namely, keeping oneself at the point of what, in the use of discourse, has certain effects. Where precisely there is situated the way in which this discourse unfailingly comes to this sort of mediocrity, inoperancy which means that the only thing left outside, eliminated, is precisely this effect.

Now it is difficult not to notice that psychoanalysis offers a privileged terrain for such reflection.

What in effect is psychoanalysis? I happened, incidentally, in an article, the one found in my *Ecrits* under the title "*Variants de la cure type, Variants of the standard treatment*", to write something that I took care to re-extract this morning. That to ask oneself what is involved in psychoanalysis, since precisely

it was a matter of showing how there could be defined, established, these variants, which presupposes that there is something typical. And it was indeed precisely to correct a certain way of associating the word *type* to that of the efficacy of psychoanalysis, that I wrote this article. So then I said, incidentally: "This criterion rarely stated because it is taken to be tautological" - it was already so well before, it is more than ten years ago - I write, "a psychoanalysis, standard or not, is the treatment that one expects from a psychoanalyst".

"Rarely stated", because in truth, in effect, people back away from something that might be not only, as I wrote, tautological, but either would be, or would evoke, this something or other unknown, opaque, irreducible which consists precisely in the qualification of the psychoanalyst.

Observe, nevertheless, that this indeed is what is involved, when you want to verify whether someone is correct in claiming to have gone through an analysis. (227) Who did you go to? Is that person a psychoanalyst or not? This is something that is not settled in the question. If for some reason - and the reasons are precisely what are to be opened up here with a big question mark - the person is not qualified to call himself a psychoanalyst, a scepticism at least is generated as to whether, yes or no, in the experience from which the subject authorises himself, it was indeed a psychoanalysis that was at stake.

In effect, there is no other criterion. But it is precisely this criterion that it would be a matter of defining, in particular when it is a matter of distinguishing a psychoanalysis from this broader thing, whose limits remain uncertain, that is called a psychotherapy.

Let us break up this word "psychotherapy". We will see it being defined by something that is "psycho", psychology, namely, a material of which the least that can be said is that its definition is still subject to some contestation. I mean that nothing is less obvious than what people have wanted to call the unity of psychology, since moreover it only gets its status from a series of references, some of which appeared to be reassuring, because they are most foreign to it. Namely, what is most opposed to it, for example, as belonging to the organic. Or, on the contrary, by the establishment of a series of severe limitations that in practice render what has been obtained, for example, under certain experimental conditions, in the laboratory context, more or less inadequate, indeed inapplicable, when what is at stake is something that is still more confused, called therapy. Therapy. Everyone knows the diversity of styles and of resonances that this evokes. The centre of it is given by the term suggestion. At least, it is that of all of them. What is referred to the action, the action of one individual on another, being exercised in ways that certainly, cannot claim to have received their full definition. At the horizon, at the limit of such practices, we will have the general notion of what are called on the whole, and what have been rather well situated as techniques of the body. At the other end, we will have ... - I mean by that what, in many civilisations, is manifested as what is propagated here in the erratic form of what people are happy to pinpoint in our

epoch as Indian techniques, or again what are called the different forms of yoga. At the other extreme, Samaritan help, which confusedly loses itself in the field, in the abysses, of the elevation of the soul; indeed! It is strange to see it taken (228) up in advertising what is supposed to be produced at the end of the exercise of psychoanalysis; this curious effusion described as the exercise of some goodness or other.

Psychoanalysis let us start then from what is for the moment our only firm point: that it takes place with a psychoanalyst. "With" must be understood here in the instrumental sense, or at least I am proposing that you should understand it in that way.

How does it happen that there exists something that cannot be situated except with a psychoanalyst. As Aristotle says, not at all that one should say, he assures us, "the soul thinks" but "man thinks with his soul" indicating explicitly that this is the sense that should be given to the word "with", namely, the instrumental sense. A strange thing, when I made an allusion somewhere to the Aristotelian reference, things seem rather to have brought effects of confusion to the reader, for want no doubt of recognising the Aristotelian reference.

It is with a psychoanalyst that psychoanalysis penetrates into this something that is at stake. If the unconscious exists and if we define it, as it seems at least, after the long march that we have been making for years in this field, to go into the field of the unconscious is properly to find oneself at the level of what can be best defined as language-effect, in this sense that, for the first time, it is articulated that this effect can be isolated in a way from the subject. That there is knowledge, knowledge in so far as here is what the typical language-effect constitutes. That knowledge is incarnated without the subject who is holding his discourse being conscious of it, in the sense that here, being conscious of his knowledge, is to be co-dimensional with what the knowledge includes, it is to be complicit in this knowledge.

Assuredly, there is here an opening onto something through which there is proposed to us the language-effect as object, in a way that is distinct. Because it excludes from this dialectic, as it has been constructed at the end of the traditionally philosophical questioning, and which would put us on the path of a possible, exhaustive and total reduction of what is involved in the subject, in so far as it is what states this truth, which claims to give the final word on discourse in these formulae. That the *en-soi* is of its nature destined to be reduced to a *pour-soi*. That a *pour-soi* would envelop at the end of an absolute knowledge everything involved in the *en-soi*. That things are different, by the (229) very fact that psychoanalysis teaches us that the subject, because of the effect of the signifier, is only established as divided and this in an irreducible fashion. This is something that solicits from us the study of what is involved in the subject as language-effect. And how this is accessible, and the role that the psychoanalyst plays in it, is assuredly something essential to ground.

In effect, if what is involved in knowledge always leaves a residue, a residue in a way constitutive of its status – is not the first question posed about the partner, about the one who is there, I am not saying as aid, but as instrument, for something to occur, the psychoanalysing task, at the end of which the subject, let us say, is aware of this constitutive division, after which, for him, something opens up which cannot be called otherwise nor differently than *passage à l'acte*, let us say an enlightened *passage à l'acte* - it is precisely from the fact of knowing that in every act, there is something which escapes him as subject, which will have an incidence there, and that at the end of this act, the realisation is, let us say for the moment, at the very least veiled about what he has to accomplish, from this act, as being his own realisation.

This, which is the end of the psychoanalysing task, leaves completely to one side what happens to the psychoanalyst, in this task that has been accomplished. It would seem, in a kind of naïve questioning, that we could say that by setting aside the full and simple realisation of the *pour-soi* in this task taken as asceticism, its term could be conceived of as a knowledge which at least would be realised for the other. Namely, for the one who is found to be the partner of the operation, to have established its frame and authorised its process.

Is this how it is? It is true that in presiding, as I might say, over this task, the psychoanalyst learns a lot about it. Does this mean that in any way he is the one in the operation who, in a way, can pride himself on being the authentic subject of a realised knowledge? The specific objection to this is that psychoanalysis disputes all exhausting of knowledge and this at the level of the subject himself, in so far as he is brought into play in the psychoanalytic task.

What is at stake in psychoanalysis is not at all a *gnothi seauton* but precisely a grasp of the limit of this *gnothi seauton*. Because this limit is properly of the nature of logic itself, and because it is inscribed in the language-effect that it always leaves outside itself. And, consequently, in so far as it allows the subject (230) to be constituted as such, this excluded part which means that the subject, of his nature, either only recognises himself by forgetting what firstly determined him in this operation of recognition, or indeed even by grasping himself in this determination, as denial, I mean only sees it arising in an essential *Verneinung* by failing to recognise it.

In other words, we find ourselves, with the basal schema of two forms, specifically the hysterical and the obsessional from which analytic experience starts. These are here only an example, an illustration, a flowering, and this in the measure that neurosis is essentially constructed from the reference of desire to demand. We find ourselves face to face with the same logical schema that I produced the last time, in showing you the framework of what quantification is. The one that links the elaborated approach that we can give of the subject and of the predicate, which here, would be inscribed in the form of the repressed signifier *S*, in so far as it is representative of the subject for another signifier S^O . Let us give this signifier the co-efficient *O*, in so far as it is the one in which the

subject has in fact to recognise himself or fail to recognise himself, where it is inscribed as fixing the subject somewhere in the field of the Other, whose formula is the following: $\$ (\$ V S^O)$. That for every subject in so far as it is of its nature divided, here exactly, in the same way as we can formulate that every man is wise (mVw), we have the disjunctive choice, between the *no man* and the *to be wise*. We have fundamentally this. As the first analytic experience teaches us, the hysteric, in her final articulation, in her essential nature, quite authentically, if authentic means “to find one’s own law only within oneself”, is sustained in a signifying affirmation which, for us, looks like theatre, looks like comedy. And in truth it is for us that she presents herself in this way as authentic $\$ (\$ V S^O)$. No one will be able to grasp what is involved in the true structure of the hysteric, if he does not take it on the contrary as being the most firm and most autonomous status of the subject, the one that is expressed in the signifier on condition that the first, the one that determines it, remains not alone forgotten, but in ignorance of the fact that it is forgotten. While it is quite sincerely at the level of the structure described as obsessional that the subject produces the signifier that is at stake, in so far as it is his truth, but provides it with the fundamental *Verneinung*, through which he announces himself as not being what precisely he is articulating, that he admits he is formulating. (231) Consequently, he only establishes himself at the level of the predicate, maintained in its pretension of being something else, only formulates himself, as it were, in a failure to recognise in a way indicated by the negation itself with which he supports it, by the denegatory form with which this failure to recognise is accompanied.

$$\$ (\$ V S^O)$$

(predicate) sincere
Verneinung

authentic

[other version: mVw
sincere]

It is then from a homology, from a parallel to what has been inscribed in writing in which, more and more there is established what is imposed from the very progress which forces, in discourse, the enriching it is given by having to match itself with what comes to us from the varieties, the conceptual variations, that the progress of mathematics imposes on us. It is from the homology of forms of inscription - I am making an allusion for example to Frege’s *Begriffsschrift*, Frege, which is the writing of the concept. As you know, it is enough to open him. As a writing of the concept, I already gave you some examples of it. And in so far as we are trying to begin with Frege to inscribe in this writing predicative forms which, not only historically, but because of the fact that throughout history they hold up, they are inscribed in what is called the logic of predicates, and first degree logic. Namely, which contributes no quantification at the level of the predicate.

Comment [G2LU3]:

Assertoric judgment _____

Let us say, to take up our example again, in truth it is important not to spare it too much, that the use that I made the last time of the quite humorous universal affirmative: all men are wise, that the way in which, in his *Begriffsschrift*, Frege would write it, would be in a form which posits, in the horizontal lines, the (232) simply propositional content, namely, the way in which the signifier are stuck together, without anything for all that being required of them except syntactical correctness. By the bar he puts on the left, he marks what is called the implication, the presence of the judgement. It is starting from the inscription of this bar that the content of the proposition is affirmed, or passes to the stage that is called assertoric. The presence here of something that we can translate by "it is true" assuredly we must translate it. And this "it is true" is precisely what, for us, namely, where what is at stake is a logic, which does not deserve in any way to be called technically primary logic, for the term is already used in logical constructions. It designates specifically what can only operate by combining truth values. It is indeed for this reason that what might well be called primary logic, if the term were not already employed, we will call sub-logic. This does not mean inferior logic, but logic in so far as it is a matter of a logic *qua* constitutive of the subject. This "it is true", is indeed for us at the level at which we are going to place something other than this assertoric position, it is indeed in effect here that for us the truth is in question. $\forall (Fx) - x - (Fx) \rightarrow$ double negative, this little hollow, this concavity, this hollowing-out in a way, that here Frege reserves to indicate in it what we are going to see. This is why it seems indispensable to him to assure its correct status to his *Begriffsschrift*. It is here that there is going to come something which operates in the proposition inscribed here under the heading of content, "all men are wise", that we are going to inscribe in this way, for example,

|----- Wise (m)

by putting the "wise" as being the function, and here man as what he calls in the function the argument.

There is, for him, no other correct way of proceeding for any subsequent handling of this *Begriffsschrift*, writing of the concept, than to inscribe here, in the hollow and in a form explicitly indicative of the function that is at stake, that the same m of the man in question, indicating by this that, for every m, the formula "man is wise" is true.

I do not have to develop for you here the necessity of such a procedure, because it would be necessary to give what follows, its riches and its complications. Let it be enough for you here to know that in the link that we might make, between (233) such a proposition and another which is supposed to be, in a way, its condition, a thing which in the *Begriffsschrift* is inscribed thus:

_____ P x V

————— $\Gamma_x F$

namely, that a proposition F has a certain relation with a proposition P, and that this relation is defined once, (I am saying it for those for whom these words have a sense), in accordance with the module of what is called Philonian implication. Namely, that if this (P) is true, this (F) cannot be false. In other words, that to give order, coherence to a discourse, there only has to be ruled out, and simply ruled out the following: that the false can be conditioned by the true. All the other combinations, including the fact that the false determines the true are admissible.

I am simply indicating this to you, in the margin, that by writing things in this way, we will have the advantage of being able to distinguish two different forms of implication, according to whether it is at the level of this part of the *Begriffschift*, namely, at the level at which the proposition is posited as assertoric, that the conditional incidence will come to connect itself:

————— —————
conditional incidence

or on the contrary this:

|----- ----- (1)

at the level of the proposition itself. Namely, that it is not the same thing to say that, if something is true, we might state that man is wise, or that if something else is true, it is true that all men are wise. There is a world between the two things.

This is only designed, moreover, to indicate to you in the margin, and to show you what the necessity of this hollow corresponds to, which is the following. That somewhere there deserves to be isolated the term which logically, at the point of adequate advancement of logic that we are at, gives body to the term **all** as being the principle, the base starting from which, through the simple operation of diversified negation, there can be formulated all the first positions defined, contributed by Aristotle. Namely that, for example, there is to be put (233) here, in the form of this vertical line, the negation,

that it will be true for every man, that man is not wise, namely, that we will incarnate the universal negative.

On the contrary, to say in this way:

we are saying that it is not true that for every man we can state that man is not wise. We obtain by these two negations, the manifestation of the particular universal. For if it is not true that for all men, it is true to say that man is not wise, it must be then that there is one little fellow, lost somewhere, who is. And that inversely, if we remove this negation here and only leave that one, we are saying that it is not true that for every man, man is wise, namely, that there are some who are not so.

You sense some artifice in articulating things in this way. Namely, that the fact you sense as artifice, for example the appearance of the last particular described as negative, highlights that in the original logic, that of Aristotle, something is masked from us, precisely by implying these subjects to be a collection, whatever they may be, whether by grasping it in extension or in comprehension. That the nature of the subject is not to be sought in something that is ontological, the subject functioning in a way itself as a sort of first predicate, which it is not. What the essence of the subject is, as it appears in logical functioning, starts whole and entire from the first writing, the one that posits the subject as affirming itself of its nature as all. For every m, man, the formula: "man is wise" is true. And it is starting from that, in accordance in a way with a deduction the inverse to the one that I highlighted before you the last time, that existence, comes to light and specifically the only one that is important for us, (235) the one that the particular affirmative supports: there is a man who is wise. It depends, and through the intermediary of a double negation, on the affirmation of the universal. Just as the last time, in presenting the same thing to you (for we are still dealing with quantifiers), it was the double negation applied to existence that I showed you could express the function of all. That the function, $\forall (Fx)$, I said could be expressed be reversed into a $\exists (x)$. No x exists which renders the $F(x)$ function false, namely a double minus, $\neg\neg Fx$.

This presence of the double negation is what for us, creates a problem. Since in truth, the connection with it is only made in an enigmatic fashion with what is involved in the function of the all, because this fact again of course that the linguistic nuance, of the function opposite to *pan* or of *pantes* in Greek, is opposed to the function of *olos*, just as *omnis* is opposed to *totus*. It is, nevertheless, not nothing that Aristotle himself, as regards what is involved in the universal affirmative, says it is posited *kath olon* "for the whole", and the ambiguity in French remains unaffected, because of the confusion between two signifiers, between which fundamentally has some relation, namely, this function of the all (*du tout*).

It is clear that if the subject, that we manage, with the perfection of logic, to reduce to this "no one who is not" (*pas qui ne*) that I noted the last time, that this subject, nevertheless, in what one might call its native pretension, poses itself as being of its nature capable of apprehending something like all, and that what gives it its status and also its mirage, is that it can think of itself as subject of

knowledge. Namely, as an eventual support, just by itself, for something which is all.

Now it is there that I want to lead you, to this indication. I do not know whether the discourse that I am making today as short as I can, as I always do, after having very seriously prepared its stages for you, depending on the attention of the audience - or my own state - I am indeed forced, as in every articulated discourse, and more especially when it is a matter of a discourse about discourse, about logical operations, to take a short cut when it is necessary. It is the fact that, in the way I already indicated to you, the first division of the subject is set up in the repetitive function, what is at stake is essentially the following. The fact is that the subject is only set up as represented by a signifier for another signifier (S and S¹). And it is between the two, at the level of (236) primitive repetition, that this loss, this function of the lost object takes place, around which, precisely, the first operational attempt of the signifier turns, the one that is established in the fundamental repetition;



that what comes here to occupy the place given in the establishment of the universal affirmative, to this factor called "argument" in Frege's statements, which is why the predicative function is always acceptable. And that in every case the function of **all** finds its base, its original turning point and, as I might say, the very principle that establishes its illusion, with reference to the lost object, in the intermediary function of the **o**-object, between the original signifier in so far as it is repressed signifier, and the signifier that represent it in the substitution established by the repetition which itself is first.

And this is illustrated for us in psychoanalysis itself, and by something capital, in the fact that it represents, that it incarnates in a way in the liveliest fashion, what is involved in the function of the **all** in the economy, I would not say of the unconscious, in the economy of analytic knowledge, precisely in so far as this knowledge tries to totalise its own experience. It is even the bias, the slope, the trap into which analytic thinking falls when, for want of being able to grasp itself in its essentially divisive operation, at its term with respect to the subject, it establishes as primary, the idea of an ideal fusion that it projects as original, but which, if you wish, operates here around this universal affirmative, which is precisely the one that it is supposed to be created to make problematic, and which is expressed more or less as follows: no unconscious without the mother. No economy, no affective dynamic, without this thing which is supposed in a way to be at the origin, that man knows the all, because he was in an original fusion with the mother.

This kind of parasitic myth, for it is not Freudian, it was introduced from an enigmatic angle, that of the birth trauma, as you know, by Otto Rank. To bring in birth from the angle of trauma is to give it a signifying function. The thing

then in itself was not intended to contribute a fundamental vitiating to the exercise of a thinking which, as analytic thinking, can only leave intact what is (237) at stake. Namely, that on the final plane where the identificatory articulation stumbles, the gap remains open between man and woman, and that consequently, in the very constitution of the subject, we can in no way introduce, let us say, the existence in the world of male and female complementarity.

Now how was the introduction by Otto Rank of this reference to birth from the angle of trauma used? To profoundly vitiate it subsequently in analytic thinking, because it is said that at least this all, this fusion which means that, for the subject there was a primal possibility, and therefore the possibility of reconquering, a union with what constitutes the all. It is the relation of the mother to the child, of the child to the mother in the uterine state, at the stage before birth, and here we put our finger on where the bias and the error is. But this error is exemplary, because it reveals to us where this function of the all originates in the subject, in so far as it falls under the bias of unconscious destiny. Namely, that it is only recognised authentically by being forgotten, or it is only sincerely recognised by being mis-recognised.

And here in effect, very simply, is where the mainspring is, from the moment that we take things at the level of the function of language: there is no demand that is not addressed to the mother.

We can see this manifesting itself in effect in the development of the child, in so far as he is first of all *infans* and that it is in the field of the mother that he will first of all have to articulate his demand.

What do we see appearing at the level of this demand? This, uniquely, is what is at stake and what every analysis designates for us: it is the function of the breast. Everything that analysis makes operate, as if what were at stake here were a process of knowledge, namely, that the fact that the reality of the mother is first of all only brought to us, designated by the function of what is called the partial object. But this partial object - I do not mind it being called that - in effect, except that we ought to notice that it is at the source of the imagination of the all. That if something is conceived of as totality between the child and the mother, it is in the measure that, at the heart of the demand, namely, in the gap between what is not articulated and what is articulated as demand, the object around which there arises the first demand, it is the only object which brings to this little newly born being this complement, this irreducible loss, which is its (238) only support. Namely, this breast, so curiously placed here for this use, which of its nature is logical: the *o*-object, and what Frege would call the variable, the variable I mean in the instauration of any function Fx whatsoever. If a variable is quantified, it passes to another status, precisely by being quantified as universal. This means not simply any one whatsoever, but that fundamentally, in its consistency, it is a constant. And that it is for this reason that, for the child who begins to articulate, with his demand, what will constitute

the status of his desire, if an object has this favour of being able for an instant to fulfil this constant function, it is the breast. And, moreover, it is strange that there did not immediately appear, in speculating on the biological terms that psychoanalysis aspires to, since it refers to them, that people do not notice that this thing, which seems to be stated as self-evident, that every child has a mother - and people even underline, in order to put us on the track, that assuredly for the father, we are in the order of faith! But would it be so certain that there is a mother if, instead of being a human, namely, a mammal, it was an insect? What are the relations of an insect with its mother?

If we allow ourselves perpetually to play - and this is presentified in psychoanalyses - between the term, the reference, of conception and that of birth, we see the distance there is between the two. And that the fact that the mother is the mother does not depend, except by a purely organic necessity - I mean, of course, that up to the present, she is the only one who can produce in her own uterus her own eggs, but after all, since people practise artificial insemination nowadays, people will also perhaps perform ovular insertion - the mother, is not, essentially at the level that we take her in analytic experience, this something which is referred to sexual terms. We always speak about the relation described as sexual, let us also speak about the sexual described as relation. The sexual described as relation is completely masked by the fact that human beings of whom we can say that if they did not have language, how would they even know that they are mortal? We will also say, moreover, that if they were not mammals, they would not imagine that they had been born. For the emergence of being, in so far as we operate in this constructed knowledge, which moreover becomes perverting for the whole operational dialectic of analysis, that we make turn around birth, is it anything other than something that was presented in Plato in a manner that I for my part find more sensible. Read the myth of Er. What is this wandering of souls once they have left the body, who are there in a hyperspace before entering to re-lodge themselves somewhere, according to their taste or chance, it does not matter, what is it if not something which has much more sense for us analysts. What is this wandering soul, if not precisely what I am speaking about: the residue of the division of the subject? This metempsychosis appears to me logically less flawed than the one constituting what happens before everything that happens in the psychoanalyzing dynamic, the sojourn in the mother's womb. If we do not imagine this sojourn, as it is after all, at the beginning of the mammal line of descent, namely, the sojourn in a marsupial pouch, this would strike us less. What creates an illusion for us is the function of the placenta. Well then! The function of the placenta is something that does not exist in the first mammals. It seems that the placenta indeed ought to be situated at the level precisely of this stuck-on object, of this something which, in biological evolution - which we do not have to consider to be a perfecting or not - is presented as this appurtenance at the level of the Other, the breast stuck to the chest. And this breast around which turns what is at stake, at the level of an exemplary appearance of the **o**-object.

That the **o**-object is the indicator around which is forged the function of the all, in so far as it is mythical, in so far as it is precisely what is opposed, what is contradicted, by all research into the status of the subject as it is established in the experience of psychoanalysis - here is what is to be mapped out and what alone can give its function of pivot, of turning point, to this **o**-object from which other forms are deduced. But always in effect with this reference that it is the **o**-object that is at the source of the mirage of the all. I am going to try before I see you the next time, and try to bring it alive for you around the other supports, which are the waste product, the look, the voice. You will see that in grasping the relation of this **o** in so far as, precisely, it is what allows us to discharge from its function the relation to the term all. It is within this question that I will be able to take up for you what is involved in an act. I said nothing up to now except act, but of course this act implies function, status and qualification. If the psychoanalyst is not someone who situates his status around this something that we can question which is, namely, a subject, is there any way of pinpointing, qualifying the term **o**? Can the **o** be a predicate? This is the question on which I am leaving you today and whose response I am already designating for you. It cannot in anyway be established in a predicative fashion, and it is very precisely because of this that negation can in no way be brought to bear on the **o** itself.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 20 March 1968

“Every man is an animal, except that he names himself”
(Tout homme est un animal, sauf à ce qu'il se n'homme)

I put that on the board for you as a way of getting you going, since in reality I am not in a very good mood. This little formula has no pretension to being thinking. It may however serve a number of you as something to hold onto, as a pivot for a certain number of you who will understand nothing, for example, of what I will say today, something that is not unthinkable. They will understand nothing, but this will not prevent them from dreaming about something else. I am not insulting you, I do not think that this is the generality of cases, but anyway let us say an average!

The reverie aspect of what is always produced in every kind of statement with thinking pretensions or is believed to be such, must always be taken into account and why not give it a little point to hook onto. Suppose, for example, that this aspect of my teaching, namely, what can pass for being thinking, does not have - as has happened to many people, and those of greater stature than mine - any

follow-up. There will remain little things like that, it has happened to the very great. So then on this point, there is produced what is called as in the animal kingdom a sort of very special fauna, these kinds of little beasts of the insect class, individuals with wing-sheaths, there are a whole lot of them which feed on cadavers. They are called death squads in legal medicine. There are about ten generations that come to consume what remains in terms of human debris. When I say generation, I mean that they succeed one another, that different species come (242) at different stages.

This is more or less what the use of a certain number of university activities around the remainders of thinking is like, death squads. There are already some busying themselves, for example, without either waiting for me to die, or seeing the result of the things that I have stated before you in the course of the years, at gauging at what moment, in what is constituted by what I collected, as I was able, with a brush, under the title of *Ecrits*, I really began to speak about linguistics, at what moment, and up to when, what I am saying overlaps what Jacobson says. You will see, this is going to develop. Moreover, I do not at all believe that such an operation is a result of my merits. I believe indeed that it is a rather deliberate operation on the part of those directly interested by what I am saying and who would like the people whose business it is to set about proliferating right away about what can be retained from my statements under the title of thinking. That gives them a little anticipation of what they are hoping for. Namely, that what I am announcing, and which is not necessarily thinking, is without consequences, I mean for them. There is some feeding in it!

Nevertheless, you will see that this has a certain relation with what I am going to tell you today. We are still of course, at the psychoanalytic act. Why, in short, am I speaking about the psychoanalytic act? It is for psychoanalysts. They are truly the only ones who are implicated in it. Moreover, everything is in that. Today, I am advancing onto a terrain which is obviously little designed for such a large public, namely, how the psychoanalytic act can operate to bring about this something that we will call the identification of the psychoanalyst.

It is a way of taking up the question that at least has this interest: it is new. I mean that up to the present nothing sensible or solid has been articulated about what is involved in what qualifies the psychoanalyst as such. People speak, of course, about rules, about procedures, about modes of access, but this still does not say what a psychoanalyst is. The fact that I am speaking about the psychoanalytic act, from which in short I hope we will be able to take a step forward in what is called the qualification of the psychoanalyst, that I should be lead to speak about the psychoanalytic act before a public which is only in part concerned with it, like this one, is something that in itself gives rises to a problem. A problem that, moreover, is not at all insoluble. Because I want once more to mark what justifies - not what conditions: what conditions, is a series of (243) position-effects which, precisely, what we are able to push forward in our discourse today is going to allow us perhaps to specify something about. But in any case, whatever may be the conditioning [*Lacan interrupts his seminar to*

make an intervention directed at the audience "... please! Stop that messing! I have enough of it! I am asking you to put that wherever you want and leave me in peace"] what justifies that, when one is speaking about the act before a wider public than the one interested in it, namely, properly speaking the psychoanalysts, it is obviously because the psychoanalytic act has a particularity. I could do a little more scribbling on the board to show you what it comes from in the famous quadrangle, the one that starts from "either I do not think, or I am not". With what it involves in terms of "I do not think", which is here on the top left, and "I am not", which is here on the bottom right. And you know that the psychoanalytic act takes place on this axis, culminating in this ejecting of the **o**

I do not think

either I do not think
or I am not

I am not
(**o**)

which has devolved, in short, to the charge of the psychoanalyst who has posed, has allowed, has authorised the conditions of the act, at the price of coming himself to support this function of the little **o**-object. The psychoanalytic act is obviously what gives this support, authorises what is going to be realised as the psychoanalysing task, and, it is in as much as the psychoanalyst gives to this act his authorisation that the psychoanalytic act is realised.

Now there is something quite curious in the fact that this act whose trajectory, in a way, ought to be accomplished by the Other, with this at least presumed result that what is properly speaking act, in so far as we might be lead to ask ourselves what an act is, is obviously not either in this condition, nor in this quite atypical trajectory that there ought to be drawn at least on this quadrangle, but in this one (-). Namely, in as much as the psychoanalysing subject, for his part, having come to this realisation of castration, it is a return achieved to the inaugural point, which in truth he never left, the statutory one, that of the forced choice, the (244) alienating choice between "either I am not" and "or I do not think", which ought, by his act, accomplish this something finally realised by him. Namely, what makes him divided as subject. In other words, that he accomplishes an act while knowing, being fully aware, why this act will never realise him fully as subject.

The psychoanalytic act then, as it presents itself, is of a nature to - because it introduces another dimension of this act which does not act of itself, as I might say - may allow us to throw some light on what is involved in an act, the one that I drew just now crossways, the act without qualification. For I am not all the same going to call it human. I am not going to call it human for all sorts of

reasons which this little hooking term that I quoted at the beginning can give you an inkling of, since it grounds man in principle. Or rather it grounds him again, or that it grounds him again every time the act in question, the act just by itself, the act that I am not naming, takes place ... which does not happen often.

At this point, naturally, I all the same tried to give some definitions so that we know what we are talking about. Specifically, that the act is a matter of the signifier (*un fait de signifiant*). It is indeed from this that we started when we began to stammer about it. A matter of the signifier where there takes its place the return of the effect described as the subject-effect which is produced by the word, in language of course, a return of this subject-effect in so far as it is radically divided. This is the novelty brought as a challenge by the psychoanalytic discovery that posits as essential that this subject-effect is a division-effect. This division-effect is that in as much as it is once realised, something can be its return. There can be a re-act. We can speak about act and this act that the psychoanalytic act is, which, for its part, is posited in such a curious fashion, because it is quite different in this sense that nothing requires it to be produced after what, in psychoanalysis, leaves the subject in the position of being able to act. Nothing implies that this, henceforth isolated by the action of the Other who guided him in his psychoanalysis, by a psychoanalysis whose act allowed the task to be accomplished, nothing explains this leap through which this act which allowed the realising task, the psychoanalysing task, the psychoanalysand, as one might say, to assume what? The programme.

As regards the act - this is a little reflexive parenthesis that I will give here at the start and which is important, which refers moreover to the words by which I (245) began concerning the future of all thinking - all organised thinking is situated in a *bivium*, or starting from a *bivium*, which in our day is particularly clear. Either it rejects this subject-effect I am starting from by linking it once more to itself in a moment which would be original. This is the sense that the *cogito* had historically, the *cogito* is its model, and the honest model as one might say and it is honest because it posits itself as origin. When you see someone beginning to speak about the phantasy of the origin, you can know that he is dishonest. There is no phantasy to be grasped except *hic et nunc*. From now on this is the origin of the phantasy, after that, we can talk about it when we have found out where we are with it. As regards the *cogito* it did not posit itself as origin. Nowhere does Decartes say: "at the origin, the one who thinks gives rise to being". He says: "I think, therefore I am". And, starting from there, it is a good thing in fact, there is no need to be worried about it any more. He completely freed up the entry of science which will absolutely never worry again about the subject. Except, of course, at the required limit where this subject is found, when it has, after a certain time, to notice what it is operating with, namely, the mathematical system and, at the same time, the logical system.

It will do everything then in this logical system, to systematise it without having to deal with the subject, but it will not be easy. In truth, it will only be at these logical frontiers that the effect of the subject will continue to make itself felt, to

make itself present and to create some difficulties for science. But for the rest, by reason of this initial approach of the *cogito*, one can say that to science everything was given, and, in short, in a legitimate way. Everything fell into its hands, it has to be said, with a immense field of success. But it is in a way at the price that science has absolutely nothing to say about the subject of the act. It does not impose one. It allows a lot to be done. Not everything that one might wish, it can do what it can, what it cannot do, it cannot. But it is able to do a lot. It is able to do a lot but it does not justify anything, or, more exactly, it gives no explicit reason for doing anything. It only presents itself as a temptation to do (*de faire*), an irresistible temptation, it is true. Everything that we can do with what science has conquered for three centuries, is not nothing, and we do not deprive us (246) ourselves of doing it. But it is in no way said that any act will measure up to it. Where it is a matter of act, where it is decided, where one makes use of it knowingly for ends that appear justified, it is a matter of a completely different style of thinking. It is the other part of the *bivium*. Here thinking gives itself up to the dimension of the act and, for that, it is enough for it to touch the subject-effect.

An example: the fundamental remark of a doctrine that is easy, I think, for you to recognise. The subject does not recognise itself, namely, is alienated in the order of production which conditions his work. This by reason of the subject-effect called exploitation. No need to add "of man by man", because we have seen that one must be a little suspicious of man on this occasion, and then everyone knows that it was possible to turn this usage into an agreeable witticism. This by reason of the subject-effect then, which is at the foundation of all exploitation, here is something that has consequences as act. That is called the revolution. And, in the act consequences, thinking has the greatest difficulty in recognising itself as has been demonstrated to you, I think, your whole life long, since for a certain number of you it had even begun before your birth. The difficulties that what is called the *intelligenza* had, continues to have, with the Communist order.

All thinking, then, of this category which touches on the subject-effect participates in the act. To formulate it indicates, as one might say, the act and its reference. Only as long as the act has not got going, it is a reference, of course, that is difficult to sustain in the whole measure that it is only isolated at the end, as everyone knows. Any thinking that, in the past, gave rise to a school - the things that remain, like that, pinned up in university herbariums, the Stoic school, for example - had this end of act. This sometimes stops abruptly. I mean that, for the moment, for example, in the circle to which I made allusion, the act which in our time is pinpointed by the term revolutionary, the result is not there yet. It is not isolated nor isolatable, this reference to the act. But anyway, for the Stoics as I evoked them earlier, the fact is that this stopped short, that at a moment, people had nothing more to take than what had been taken from those who were engaged in this path of thinking. Starting from which the necrophagia that I spoke about earlier can begin, and, thank God it cannot go on forever either since there do not remain that many things as wrecks, as debris of this Stoic thinking. But in any case that keeps people busy!

(247) Having said this, let us come back to our psychoanalytic act. And let us take up again this little cross-piece exhibited on the board, about which I already made the remark many times, that you do not have to give a privileged value to the diagonals in it. You ought rather, to have a correct idea of it, see it as a sort of tetrahedron in perspective. That will help you to notice that the diagonal has no privilege in it.

The psychoanalytic act essentially consists in this sort of subject-effect that operates by distributing, as one might say, what is going to constitute the support. Namely, the divided subject, the \$, in so far as this is the acquisition of the subject-effect at the end of the psychoanalysing task. It is the truth conquered by the subject whatever he is and under whatever pretext he has become engaged in it. Namely, for example, for the most banal subject, the one who comes to it with the goal of getting relief. Here is my symptom. I now have the truth of it. I mean that it is in the whole measure that I did not know everything about what was involved in me. It is in the whole measure that there is something irreducible in this position of the subject that is called, in short, and is quite nameable, the impotence to know everything about it. That I am here and that, thank God, the symptom that revealed what remains masked in the subject-effect reverberates with a knowledge. What is masked there I had lifted, but assuredly not completely. Something remains irreducibly limited in this knowledge. It is at the price - since I spoke about distribution - of the fact that the whole experience turned around this little *o*-object of which the analyst became the support. The little *o*-object in so far as it is what is, was and remains structurally the cause of this division of the subject. It is in the measure that the existence of this little *o*-object has been demonstrated in the psychoanalysing task, and how? But you all know it. In the transference-effect. It is in so far as the partner is the one who is found to fulfil, from the structure established by the act, the function that, ever since the subject has operated as subject-effect, as caught in the demand as constituting desire, he found himself determined by these functions that analysis pinpointed as being those of the feeding object, of the breast, of the excremental object, of the scybalum, of the function of the look and of that of the voice. It is in so far as it is around these functions, in so far as in the analytic relation they have been distributed to the one who is the partner, the pivot, and to say the word, the support of it, as I said the last time, the instrument, that there has been able to be realised the essence of what is involved in the function of \$, namely, the impotence of knowledge.

(248) Will I evoke here the analogy between this distribution and the tragic act? For you sense clearly that in tragedy, there is something analogous. I mean that what there is for us, in tragic fiction as it is expressed in a mythology in which it is not at all ruled out that we should see incidents that are altogether historical, lived, real. I mean that the hero, each and every one who engages himself alone in the act, is doomed to this destiny of finally being only the waste product of his own enterprise. I have no need to give examples. Just the level that I call that of fiction or of mythology suffices to fully indicate its structure. But, all the same,

let us not forget, let us not confuse tragic fiction - I mean the myth of Oedipus, or Antigone, for example - with what is truly an acceptance, the only valid grounded one of tragedy, namely, the staging of the thing. In the staging we are obviously closer to this *schize* as it is supported in the psychoanalysing task. At the end of psychoanalysis, one can support the division of the psychoanalysing subject that has been realised, with the division in the arena in which there could be played out the tragic production in the purest form. We can identify this psychoanalysand, to the divided and related couple of the spectator and the chorus. While the hero, there is no need for there to be a crowd of them, there is never more than one, the hero, is the one who, on the stage, is nothing but that figure of waste product with which there closes every tragedy worthy of the name.

The structural analogy hovers there in such an obvious fashion that it is the reason why it was brought in massively, as one might say, under the pen of Freud. It is why this analogy haunts, as one might say, the whole analytic ideology. Only with an effect of exaggeration which is close to the grotesque and which ensures, moreover, the total incapacity revealed in this literature that is called analytic to make anything other, around this mythical reference, than an extraordinarily sterile kind of circular repetition. With from time to time, all the same, the feeling that there is something there about a division. And people do not see what separates it, people do not see where is the radical insufficiency which makes us inadequate to it.

This strikes certain people. It is not the worst that it strikes. But it gives results that truly cannot go much further than yapping. Let us not forget the Oedipus complex, nor what the Oedipus complex is, nor the degree to which it is the interring, integrally linked to the structure of all our experience. And when one (249) has produced this reminder, one does not have to go much further. It is indeed why, moreover, I do not consider that I am wronging anyone by having sworn to myself never to take up again the theme of the Name of the Father. Upon which, seized by some vertigo or other which has happily abated, I once said I would engage myself in the circuit of one of my years of seminars. Things taken up at this level are *hopeless*, while we have a much surer way of tracing it concerning the subject effect, and which has to do with logic.

If I led you to the cross-roads of this properly logical effect that modern logic has so well defined under the term of the function of quantifiers, it is obviously for a reason very close to the one that I announced to you as being the question for today. Namely, the relations of the psychoanalytic act to something of the order of a predication. Namely, what is involved, how can we say that it situates the psychoanalyst.

Let us not forget, if it is at the end of an experience of the division of the subject that something called the psychoanalyst can be established, we cannot trust a pure and simple identification of the term of the one which is at the source of the definition of the signifier, that every signifier represents a subject for another signifier. Precisely, the signifier, whatever it may be, cannot be all that represents

the subject. Precisely, as I showed you the last time, because the function that we pinpoint as “all” is dependent on a cause which is none other than the little *o*-object, if this little *o*-object, fallen into the interval which, as one might say, alienates the complementarity - I reminded you of it the last time - of what is involved in the subject represented by the signifier of the subject S with the S , whatever it maybe, a predicate that can be established in the field of the Other. So then, that what is involved, through this effect, of the “all” in so far as it is stated, involves something completely different to that towards which, as I might say, identification does not go. Namely, towards the recognition come from the Other, since this is what is at stake, that in nothing of what we can inscribe of ourselves in the field of the Other, can we recognise ourselves.

This “all”, what represents us in this business of recognition could have to do with this void, with this hollow, with this lack. Now this is not the way things are.

The fact is that at the source of the establishment of this “all” that is required (250) every time we state anything universal, there is something other than the (*im*)possibility that it masks, namely, that of having oneself recognised. And this has been proved in analytic experience by something that I will articulate in a very condensed way because it is exemplary: that sex is not an *all* (*pas tout*), for this is the discovery of psychoanalysis. It is all very well to see there emerging today all sorts of collections by people who have been delegated to collect a certain number of texts about what is involved, about this famous field so bizarrely preserved, reserved, which psychoanalysis is. A research bursary is given to a gentleman called Brown who wrote something not all that bad: *Life against death*, once upon a time. He took advantage of it to say rather sensible things about Mr Luther, and since it was for the benefit of the Wesleyan University, all of that was rather well justified. But in the end losing all sense of measure in these collecting operations, he published something called *Love's body* in which there is a commentary in a note that speaks about Freudian pansexualism. Now precisely, if what Freud said signifies anything, it is of course that there was a reference to what people might expect should be produced from sexual conjunction, namely, a union, a whole (*un tout*). If there is something that is forced on us, precisely, at the end of the experiment, it is that, in the sense that I am indicating to you and that I am making resonate for you, sex is not everything (*tout*). The all finds its place, which does not at all mean that this place is the place of the all. The all usurps it by making it believe, as I might say that it, the all comes from sex. This is how the function of truth changes its value, if I can express myself in this way, and that what is found to fit in very well, which is encouraging, with certain discoveries which have been made in the field of logic, which can be expressed as follows, make us put our finger on the fact that the all, the function of the all, the quantifier all, the function of the universal, that the all should be conceived of as a displacement of the part. It is in as much as the little *o*-object, alone, justifies and gives rise to the function of the all as such, that we find ourselves subjected in logic to this category of the all. But at the same time that there are explained a certain number of curiosities which

isolate it in the totality of logical functions, I mean this field in which there reigns the system of the quantifier, which isolates it by giving rise in it to curious difficulties, strange paradoxes.

Of course, there is every interest in the greatest possible number of you - and I am also saying for everyone just as much as for you - should have a certain logical (251) culture. I mean that no one here has anything to lose by going to educate himself in what is taught in places about the already constituted fields of the progress of present day logic. You have nothing to lose in going very precisely to educate yourself in it in order to understand what it is I am trying out here, in outlining a logic functioning in an intermediary zone, in as much as it has not yet been handled in a appropriate fashion. You will lose nothing, by grasping what I am alluding to when I say that even though the logic of quantifiers has managed to obtain its proper and truly quite rigorous status, I mean has every appearance of having excluded the subject from it, I mean can be managed by means of pure and simple rules which depend on the handling of letters, it nevertheless remains that, if you compare the use of this logic of quantifiers with such and such another sector, segment, of logic as they are defined in different terms, you will notice that it is curious that while, for all the other logical systems you can always give a rather large number, for example, of geometrical, economic, conceptual interpretations, I mean that each one of these manipulations of logical systems is quite multivalent as regards interpretation, it is quite striking, on the contrary, to see that whatever may be the rigour to which people have been able, when all is said and done, to push the logic of quantifiers, you will never manage to remove from it this something which is inscribed in the grammatical structure, I mean in ordinary language, and which makes intervene these functions of all and some.

This has consequences one of which has only been able to be highlighted among logicians, I mean where people knew how to make use of what a deduction is. Namely, that anywhere we underpin a system, an apparatus such as the one at stake in the use of the quantifiers, we cannot create algorithms such that it is enough for it to be settled in advanced, that every problem is purely and simply subjected to the use of a rule, of a calculation fixed once and for all. Once we are in this field, we will always be capable of making the undecidable emerge in it.

A strange privilege. For those here who have never heard tell of the undecidable, I am going to illustrate what I am saying by a little example. What does "undecidable" mean? I apologise to those for whom what I am going to say will appear to be an old refrain. I take an example, there are many. You know - or (252) you do not know - what a perfect number is. It is a number such that it is equal to the sum of its divisors. For example: the divisors of the number 6 are 1, 2 and 3, $1+2+3 = 6$. It is also true for 28. It is not a matter of prime numbers, it is a matter of divisors, which means: given a number, into how many equal parts can you divide it? For 28, that will give 14, 7, 4, 2 and 1 that gives you 28.

You see that these two numbers are even numbers. We know lots of them like that. We do not know any odd number that is perfect. That does not mean that

they do not exist. The important thing is that one cannot prove that it is impossible that some exist. This is something undecidable. Something undecidable whose link with the structure, the logical function of quantifiers it is not my role here to make you touch. Let us say that if it is really necessary this could be reserved for a closed seminar. I will ask someone whose job it is more than mine to do it in association with me.

But this privilege of the function of quantifiers in so far as it interests us to the highest degree, as you are going to see right away, this privilege - I am raising the hypothesis provisionally, let us say - this impasse in so far as it is, you should note, a fruitful impasse. For if we had the slightest hope that everything could be subjected to a universal algorithm, that in everything we could settle the question of whether a proposition is true or false, this would be rather a closing down. The hypothesis that I am raising depends on the fact that this privilege of the function of quantification depends on what is involved in the essence of the all and its relation to the presence of the little **o**-object.

There exists something that functions so that every subject believes himself to be all, so that every subject believes himself to be all subject, and through that very fact the subject of all (*tout*), from this very fact having a right to speak about everything.

Now what analytic experience shows us is that there is no subject whose totality is not an illusion, because it comes from the little **o**-object *qua* elided.

We are now going to try to illustrate it, by showing why this interests us in the most direct fashion. How is there correctly expressed what is involved in the properly analytic dimension if not as follows: all knowledge is not conscious.

(253) The ambiguity, the problematic, the fundamental *schize* that the function of quantifier introduces in so far as it introduces a “for all” and an “it exists”, consists in the fact that it admits but at the same time puts in question the fact that if we say: “it is not true that for all ... what follows, things are such and such”, this implies that it exists. That there is, of this all, something which is not, because it is not true that for all that there are some which are not (*il y en a qui ne pas*).

In other words that, because a negation operates on the universal, something arises from the existence of a particular and that, in the same way, because not all is affected with a not (*ne pas*), something still more striking, there are some - as they say - who, giving rise to a positive particular existence from a double negation, that of a truth which, withdrawn from the all by not being, will make a particular existence emerge from it.

Now, is it enough that it is not demonstrated that all something for there to exist something which is not? You clearly sense, there is here a danger, a question which, just by itself, is enough to render very suspect this use of negation in so far

as it would be enough just by itself to assure the link, the coherence of the reciprocal functions of the universal and the particular. As regards what is involved in knowledge, if from the fact that all knowledge is not conscious, we can no longer admit as fundamental that knowledge knows itself, does that mean that it is correct to say that there is something unconscious (*de l'inconscient*)?

It is very precisely what, in this article included in my *Ecrits* called *Position of the unconscious*, I tried to make tangible by using in it what I was able to construct at that time. Namely, a little parable which was nothing other than a way of imaging in a species that even, if I remember correctly, I called, because I rather like playing on the word *homme*, "*l'homelette*" and which is nothing other than the little *o*-object. Naturally, this may be the opportunity for a future "scholar" to imagine that when I was writing my *Position of the unconscious*, I had not the slightest idea about logic, as if of course what constitutes the order of my discourses did not consist precisely in adapting them for a certain audience, as it is supposed to be. This is, moreover, not entirely so, because one knows well what the ears of psychoanalysts are capable of receiving or not receiving at a given moment...

(254) As regards qualification, for a very long time, for everything involved in knowledge, the constructive reflection around *episteme* put in question what is involved for the practitioner when it is knowledge that is at stake. At the level of Plato every time it is a matter of assuring a knowledge in its status it is the reference to the artisan which predominates. And nothing seems to me to prevent it being announced that every human practice - I am saying practice (*pratique*) because this is not at all to say, because we are making the act predominate that we reject the reference to it - every practitioner supposes a certain knowledge if we want to advance into what is involved in *episteme*. To know everything about carpentry is what for us will define the carpenter.

This secretly implies that carpentry knows itself as an art - I am not saying as material, of course - which is prolonged for us analysts by the fact that knowing everything about therapeutics qualifies the therapist, which implies, and in a more doubtful manner, that therapy knows itself.

Now if there is something which most - excuse me, I am going to say it! - instinctively repels the psychoanalyst, it is that knowing everything about psychoanalysis qualifies the psychoanalyst, and it is not without reason, very precisely because of the following. Not of course that we know any more in that way about what the psychoanalyst is. But that all knowledge about psychoanalysis depends so much on the reference to the experience of the little *o*-object, in as much as at the end it is radically excluded from any subsistence as subject. That the psychoanalyst in no way has the right to posit himself as giving an evaluation of the experience of which he is properly speaking only the pivot and the instrument. Any knowledge which depends here on this function of the little *o*-object assuredly does not guarantee anything, and is precisely not able to answer for its totality, except in a reference to this instrumentation, certainly

requires that should be nothing that can present itself as an all of this knowledge. But that precisely this absence, this lack, does not in any way require one to be able to deduce from it either that there has been or that there has not been psychoanalysis. The reflection, the rebounding of negation at the level of the all does not imply any consequence at the level of the particular that the status of the psychoanalyst as such depends on nothing other than the following. That he offers himself to support, in a certain process of knowledge, this role of object of demand, or cause of desire, which means that the knowledge obtained can only be taken for what it is: a signifying realisation linked to a revelation of the phantasy.

If the *not all* that we put in the *not all knowledge is conscious*, represents the (255) non-constitution of all knowledge, and this at the very level at which knowledge is required, it is not true that there necessarily exists unconscious knowledge that we can theorise in accordance with just any logical model.

Is the psychoanalyst that the psychoanalysand is, at the end of his task, what it is? A whole way of presenting the theory, because it implies a way of thinking, puts into psychoanalytic action this factor which intervenes as a parasite. The psychoanalyst has the last word about what must be thought of it. Namely, that he is the one who has the thinking out of the whole affair. That the psychoanalysand at the end is supposed to be regularised, which implies that he brings into being a certain subjective conjunction, that he re-positions himself anew with a renewed *I do not think* only it goes from the special to the general.

Is that how things are? Never. It is not a simple riddle that the psychoanalyst, who knows it better than anyone through experience, should set about conceiving in this form of science fiction, it has to be said, the fruit that he himself obtains from it.

Is it then in the order of *pour-soi* that the psychoanalysand's trajectory is completed? This is something that is no less contradicted by the very principle of the unconscious, through which the subject is condemned not alone to remain divided from a thinking which cannot be assumed by any *I am who is thinking* which posits an *en-soi* of the *I think* that is irreducible to anything thinking it for itself. It is precisely the end of psychoanalysis that he should realise himself as constituted by this division, this division in which every signifier, in so far as it represents a subject for another signifier, includes the possibility of its inefficacy precisely by bringing about this representation of its failure as a representative. There is no one psychoanalysed, there is someone "who has been a psychoanalysand", from which there results only a subject who has been made aware, of what he cannot think of as constitutive of any of his own actions.

We do not yet have any existing type to conceive of what must be involved in this experienced subject. It can only be judged with regard to an act which is to be constructed like the one that, reiterating castration, is established as a *passage à l'acte*. Just as its complement, the psychoanalytic task itself, is reiterated by cancelling itself out as sublimation.

But this tells us nothing about the status of the psychoanalyst for, in truth, if its essence is to assume the place, in which the *o*-object is situated in this operation, (256) what is the possible status of the subject who puts himself in this position? The psychoanalyst in this position may not at all have what I have just developed, namely, not the slightest idea of what conditions it; not the slightest idea of science. This is even the usual thing. In truth, he is not even asked to have it, given the field he occupies and the function that he has to fulfil in it. He will have a lot to learn on the contrary about the logical support of the science. But if I refer in its connection to the statutes of the practitioner whatever they may be, is it to be ruled out that in any of these statutes, as they have been evoked for us since antiquity, in terms of reflection on science, but still in fact present in a certain number of fields, is what can be defined as obvious in the light of, no doubt, and only by, psychoanalysis, in a practical function, by highlighting the presence of the little *o*-object, not a resource, a value for him?

Why, at the end of the year on the *Crucial problems of psychoanalysis*, did I make so much here of the function of perspective? It seems that it is a theory, an operation that only interests an architect, if it is only to show, what he himself had isolated from all time, I mean ever since the time when, we do not know too well how, to justify the ideal which directed, for example, what is bequeathed to us in the *grammatismes* of a Vitruvius. That what is at stake, what dominates, what we would be quite wrong, given the presence of ideals, to reduce to the utilitarian function of building, for example, what dominates, is a reference that I tried to explain to you in relation to the subject-effect when perspective comes into its proper structure with Dessargue. Namely, when it establishes this other definition of space called projective geometry. And this putting in question of the very domain of vision could it seem, as a first approach, be entirely supported by a patterning of squares. But, on the contrary, there appears there this closed structure, starting from which I was able to try to isolate, to define for you amongst all the others, and because it is the most neglected in the analytic function, the function of the little *o*-object called the look.

Is it for nothing that at the end of this same year, around the painting of *Las Meninas*, I made a presentation to you that is no doubt difficult but that must be (257) taken as an apologue, an example, a reference for the behaviour of a psychoanalyst. Because what is involved in the illusion of the subject supposed to know is always around what is admitted so easily by the whole field of vision. If on the contrary, around this exemplary work, the painting *Las Meninas*, I wanted to show inscribed the function of what is involved in the look, and the fact that it has to operate in such a subtle way that it is at once present and veiled, it is, as I pointed out to you, the very existence of us spectators, that it puts in question. Reducing it to being in a way no more than a shadow with respect to what is established in the field of the painting in terms of an order of representation that does not, properly speaking, have anything to do with what any subject can represent to himself. Is this not the example and the model in which something of a discipline which relates to the very core of the position of the psychoanalyst

could be exercised? Is it not the trap to which there yields, in this curious fictitious representation that I tried to give you earlier as that where the psychoanalyst ends up by coming to a halt, with regard to the experience he calls clinical. Could he not find there the model, the reminder, the sign, that nothing can be established in the world, that nothing can be established in the world of his experience without there being, in all necessity, presentified there, and as such, the function of his own look.

Assuredly this is only an indication. But an indication given, as I often do at the end of one or other of my discourse, very much ahead of time. It depends on the fact that if, in psychoanalysis - I mean in the operation situated within the four walls of the office in which it is practised - everything about the little *o*-object is brought into play, it is with a very curious reserve, and this is not by chance, concerning what is involved in the look. And there, I would like to indicate before leaving you today the proper accent the little *o*-object takes on from a certain immunity to negation which may explain the way in which, at the end of the psychoanalysis, the choice is made which leads to the establishment of the psychoanalytic act, namely, what is undeniable in this little *o*-object.

Notice the difference in this negation when it is brought to bear, in predicative logic, on the not-man, as if that existed, but it is imagined, it is supported. "I do not see", the negation depends on something indistinct, where it is a matter of a failure of my sight or a failure of the lighting, that motivates the negation. But, "I am not looking", is this not something that just by itself gives rise to more complementary objects than any other statement. I mean that I am looking at this or that, "I am not looking" means assuredly that there is something undeniable, since I am not looking at him. And the same thing in the four other registers of the little *o*-object which would be incarnated in a "I am not taking" for what concerns the breast - and we know what that means, the appeal that it realises at the level of anorexia nervosa. Of the "I am not letting go" and we know what that means in this structuring avarice of desire. And will I go on to evoke, at the end of what I have to say to you today, what we make understood with an "I am not saying", is in general understood as, "I am not saying no". Hear it yourselves as that: "I am not saying no".

Annex 1

Lecture of 19th June, 1968

(293) I am not a fake; I did not give notice that I would say a few words to close the present year, as the document of the Ecole puts it, in order to give you what is called a seminar. I will rather say a few words of a ceremonial order.

This year, if I remember rightly, I made an allusion somewhere to the sign of the opening of the year in traditional civilisations. This time, it is for the school year that is ending.

There may remain some regrets that after having opened up a concept like *the psychoanalytic act*, fate decided that you would only have on this subject half of what I had intended to say about it; half ... in truth a little less because the entry procedures, for something that is so new, which had never been articulated as a dimension, as is the case for the *psychoanalytic act*, required in effect some time to open it up.

In truth, things do not have the same speed. It is rather something like when a falling body is subjected to the same force, during its fall, its movement, as they say, accelerates. So that you have not had half of what there was to be said about the *psychoanalytic act*; let us say that you have had a little less than a quarter of it.

It is very regrettable from some points of view, because in truth, it is not my custom to end so late, and in a way by a lucky fluke, something that was interrupted for whatever reason, internal or external.

(294) In truth, my regret is not unaccompanied by another aspect of some satisfaction. Because indeed in this case, the discourse was not interrupted by just something indifferent, but by something which brings into play, certainly at a very baby level, but which brings into play all the same some dimension which is not altogether unrelated to the act. So that, good God, it is not so dissatisfying.

Obviously, there is a little discord in all of that. The psychoanalytic act, this dissertation that I was projecting, was forged for psychoanalysts, as they say, matured by experience. It was destined above all to allow them, and at the same time to allow others, a more correct estimate of the weight that they have to lift, when something precisely marks a dimension of paradox, of internal antinomy, of profound contradiction that does not fail to allow us to conceive of the difficulty that is represented for them in having to bear its weight.

It must be said, that it is not those who best know this weight in practice, who have shown the most lively interest for what I was saying. At a certain level, I must say that they really distinguished themselves by an absence that was certainly not due to chance. So that, because we are at it, I will tell you by the way a little anecdote to which I already made an allusion, but that I am going to clarify further. One of these people, to whom I had gallantly sent a little letter to ask him whether this absence was an act, replied: "What are you thinking about! Not at all! It is neither an act, nor a parapraxis. As it happens this year, I made an appointment at 11.30 for a long job (he was having work done on his teeth) with a very capable practitioner, at 11.30 every Wednesday". It is not an act, as you can see. It is pure chance.

This tempers for me the regret that something remains as it were in suspense in what I have to transmit to the psychoanalytic community and very especially to the one that goes under the title of my School.

On the contrary, a certain dimension of the act which has, for its part also, its ambiguity, which is not necessarily made up of parapraxes, despite the fact that it gives plenty of work to those who would like to think things out in the traditional terms of politics. All the same, something was found, I mean just now, that the babies brought up one fine day under the heading (295) of act, which may well, like that, give some people work to do in the years to come.

In any case the question - and that is why today I wanted to address a few words to you, precisely to know if I am right to find in this something like a little balance or compensation, to feel myself in a way a little bit relieved of my own responsibility.

For after all, if it is in connection with psychoanalysis, or more exactly about the support it offered me and because this support was the only one, that it was not possible otherwise to grasp a certain knot or, if you wish, a ball, something singular, not located up to then in something that it is not easy to give a label to in our day, given that there are a certain number of traditional terms that are going down the drain: man, knowledge, knowledge, as you wish, this is not quite what is at stake. This particular knot which over there I was able with a red pencil ... on this kind of a knot-bubble that you know well. It is the famous internal eight that I have been producing for some eight years, these terms: knowledge, truth, subject and the relation to the Other, there you are, there is no word to put all four of them together. These four terms have nevertheless become essential for something that is to come, a future that may interest us, those of us who are here, in an amphitheatre not simply to be the plaintiff in the complaint but precisely with a concern to know. This teaching which showed something or other in terms of dissatisfaction, we can perhaps have a concern for what, after this great tearing apart that makes it so obvious that there is something in that quarter that is no longer working. What was infatuated with a term that is not at all random, the University, that takes its authority from the universe, this precisely is what is at stake.

Does the universe hold up? The universe has made many promises, but it is not sure that it is keeping them. It is a matter of knowing if something that was announced, that was a kind of opening out of the gap of the universe will be sustained long enough for us to see the last word on it.

This question passes by way of what we have seen manifesting itself these last months, in a place, like that, that is bizarrely permanent in history. We have seen the function of place being re-animated. It is curious. It is essential. Perhaps we would not have seen things crystallise so vividly if there had not been a place to which they always returned to be beaten up.

(296) You must not imagine that what is being opened up, what was opened up as a question in this place, is the privilege of our national fabric. I have been, as a way of getting some fresh air, for two days in Rome where such things are not conceivable simply because in Rome there is no Latin Quarter. This is not a simple chance! It is funny but anyway that is how it is.

There were things there that really pleased me. It is easier to pick out there those who know what they are doing. A little group. I did not see a lot of them but even if I had only seen one of them that would have been enough. They are called the Birds, *Ucelli*.

As I said to one of those close to me, in Italy I am - to my amazement, it has to be said, it is the term that is used: (I am ashamed!) - popular. That means that they know my name. Naturally they do not know anything I have written! But, this is what is curious, they know that the *Ecrits* exist.

We have to accept that they do not need them, for the *Ucelli*, the birds in question, for example to be capable of actions like the one that obviously have the same relation to Lacanian teaching that the posters of the *Beaux-Arts* have with what is at stake politically, truly. But that means that they have a quite direct relation. When the dean of the Faculty in Rome, accompanied by an eminent representative of the Vatican intelligentsia, gives to them, all gathered together because there are general assemblies there also at which people speak to them, people are for dialogue, naturally where it is useful. So then the *Ucelli* come with one of these big devices that exist, when you go to a restaurant in the country, in the centre of a round table, there is an enormous umbrella, they all go under it for protection, they say, from language!

I hope you understand that that leaves me with some hope. They have not yet read the *Ecrits*, but they will read them! Do they really need them since they have discovered that? After all, the theoretician is not the one who finds the way. He explains it. Obviously, the explanation is useful to find the rest of the path. But, as you see, I trust them. If I have written some little things that might have been of use to psychoanalysts, this will be of use to others whose place, whose determination is quite specified by a certain field. This field is circumscribed by this little knot (see the scheme) that is constructed in a certain way by cutting into a certain bubble (297) extraordinarily purified by the antecedents of what culminated at this adventure that I tried to map out before you as being the moment that science was engendered.

So then, this year, in connection with the *psychoanalytic act*, I had come to the moment when I was going to show you what is involved in having to take up one's place in the register of the *subject supposed to know*, and this precisely when one is a psychoanalyst. Not that he is the only one but that he is particularly well placed to know its radical division. In other words this position, inaugural for the psychoanalytic act, that consists in operating on something to which your act gives the lie. This is why I have reserved throughout the years, kept under covers, put to one side the term *Verleugnung* that undoubtedly Freud brings up in connection with an exemplary moment of the *Spaltung* of the subject. I wanted to reserve it, to bring it to life there where undoubtedly it is pushed to its high point of pathos, at the level of the analyst himself.

(298) Because of that, I had to undergo, throughout the years, the harassment of those individuals who followed on the trace of what I contribute to see where they could patch together a little piece, where I might stumble. When I spoke about *Verwerfung*, which is an extremely precise term, and which situates perfectly what is involved in psychosis, people reminded me that it would be cleverer to use *Verleugnung*. In any case you find traces of all that in pathetic lectures and mediocre articles. The term *Verleugnung* could have taken on its authentic place and its full weight, if I had been able to speak to you this year as I had intended.

It was the next step to take. There were others that I cannot even indicate. Undoubtedly, one of the things that most struck me in the course of a teaching experience which you will allow me today to cast a backward glance at, precisely at this turning point, is the violence of the things that I allowed myself to say. Twice at St Anne's, for example, I said that psychoanalysis was something that at least had this in its favour that in its field - what a privilege! - blackguardism could only turn into stupidity. I

repeated it on two consecutive years like that, and I knew what I was talking about!

We are living in an area of civilisation where, as they say, there is free speech, namely, that nothing of what you say is of any consequence. You can say anything whatsoever about someone who may well be at the origin of some of indecipherable murder or other; you can even create a play about it. The whole of America - the New York part, no more - crowds into it. Never previously in history would such a thing have been conceivable without the theatre being immediately closed. In the land of liberty, one can say everything, because this has no consequences.

It is rather curious that from the moment simply when some little paving stones start flying, for at least a moment everyone has the feeling that the whole of society might be involved in it in the most direct way in its daily comfort and its future.

We have even seen psychoanalysts questioning the future of the trade. To my eyes, they were wrong to question it publicly. They would have done better to keep it to themselves, because all the same, the people who saw them questioning themselves about it, precisely when they were questioning them about something completely different, found this a little funny. In any case one cannot say that the stock of psychoanalysis rose!

(299) I have a crow to pluck with the General. He stole a word from me that for a long time I had - it was certainly not of course for the use that he made of it: psychoanalytic disorder (*chienlit*). You cannot imagine for how long I wanted to give that as a title to my seminar. Now the chance has gone!

But then I am going to tell you, that I do not regret it because I am too tired. It is visible enough like that. I have no need to add a commentary.

In any case there is one thing all the same that I would really like - not everyone would like it but I really would - teaching psychoanalysis in the Faculty of Medicine.

You know there are some very restless people around, I do not know what has got into them, who push themselves forward to be there, in that place. I am not speaking about anyone from the *Ecole Freudienne de Paris*. I know well that in the Faculty of Medicine, they know the history of medical doctrines. That means that things have happened there, of the order of, to our eyes, with the perspective of history, of the order of mystification. But that does not mean that psychoanalysis as taught where it is officially taught - they talk to you about libido as if it were something that passed into communicating vessels, as an absolutely unbelievable personage expressed it, at the start of the time when I began to try to

change things a little, as a libidinal hydraulics - to teach psychoanalysis as it is taught, let us say the word, at the Institute. That would be marvellous especially at the time that we are living through, when all the same those taught, as they say, are starting to be a bit demanding. I find that marvellous. You should see what is done in certain quarters in terms of a teaching of psychoanalysis. And after having done this little survey you will have been shown the hopes for better times that the course of events reserves for some people. You will tell me, of course, that the personage in question, for example, could always set about teaching Lacan. Obviously it would be better! But again he would have to be able to do it! Because there is a certain article that appeared in *Les cahiers de psychoanalyse* on the *o*-object in connection with which, (I regret to say it, this again is going to shock some of my closest and dearest colleagues), it was nothing but a long little squib of laughs for these damned Normaliens, as it happens. For my part, I was forced in a little discreet note, somewhere, just before my *Ecrits* appeared, to indicate that, whatever may be the need one may have (300) to work on psychoanalytic marketing, it is not enough to talk about the *o*-object for it to be quite that!

In any case, I would like to take things from a slightly higher level. And since I have prepared a few words - not these, I must say that I let myself go a little given the warmth, the familiarity, the friendship that I find in this company, namely, faces of which there is not one that I do not recognise because of having seen them from the beginning of this year - since I spoke about these four terms, let us map out, for those who are a little short sighted and who might not be aware of the quite critical importance of a certain conjuncture, let us recall their principal articulations. Namely, first of all knowledge because, when all is said and done, it is all the same rather curious on the side of knowledge, up to the present, in the classics, that people are wise, and one part of the wise position is obviously to keep quiet. That it should be at the level and as is very correctly said at a privileged level of the transmission of knowledge that so many things are happening, makes it perhaps worth the trouble to take advantage of stepping back a little to take a look.

There is a function, naturally, I apologise to the people who are here - there are a few - who are coming here for the first time, and come in order to see a little what I might say if I was questioned about the "events". I am not going to be able to give the theory of the Other, and this is already something that makes such a conversation, such an interview, very difficult. What the Other is must be explained. We begin with it because it is the key. So then for people who do not know what the Other is, I can say that on the one hand I defined it strictly as a locus, the locus where the word has taken its place. That is not self-explanatory: the locus where the word has taken its place. But in any case it is a quite indispensable topological function to bring out the radical and logical structure that is at stake in what I called earlier this knot or this bubble, this hollow in the

world in connection with which there is the notion, this old notion of subject. The old notion of subject which is no longer reducible to the image in the mirror, nor to anything whatsoever of the order of an omnipresent reflection. But effectively this bubble still wanders around as a result of which this world is no longer properly speaking a world. This Other has been there for a long period of time, of course. It has not really being separated out because it is a good place and because there had already been installed in it something that is still there for many of you, called God. *Il vecchio con la barba!* He is still there. The psychoanalysts have not really added very much to (301) the question of whether, an essential point, whether he exists or does not exist. As long as this *or* is maintained, he will be always there.

Nevertheless, thanks to the bubble we can act as if he were not there. We can deal with his place. There was never any doubt that at his place precisely there lay what was at stake as regards knowledge. All knowledge comes to us from the Other - I am not talking about God I am talking about the Other. There is always an Other where there is a tradition, an accumulation, a reservoir.

No doubt people suspected that things could happen. That was called discovery, or even again one of these changes of lighting, one of these ways of dispensing teaching that, in a way, changed its accent and its sense, which ensured precisely that for a certain time, it still held up. Have you ever noticed that what ensures that a teaching gains a foothold, is perhaps that precisely in a certain way of redistributing it, there is inscribed in its design, in its outline, in its structure something that is not immediately said, but is what is heard? Why after all would the subject not appear a little bit worn out for those on the benches? I mean that what is not said to be understood still needs to be something worth the trouble and not a simple hypocrisy, for example. There is some reason, in fact, that it was in the Faculty of Letters or again in the Schools of Architecture that things really became enflamed.

To this relation of the subject to the Other, psychoanalysis contributes a radically new dimension. It is more than what I called just now, like that, a discovery. A discovery still preserves something anecdotal about. This is a profound modification of the whole relationship.

There is a word that I brought in here a few years ago, into this dialectic. It is the word truth. And then, in truth, before articulating it precisely as I did here on a particular day, the perfectly logical mark of which the article *Truth and science*, in my *Ecrits* bears witness to, I had given to the word another function, in an article called *The Freudian thing*, where one can read these terms: *Me, the truth, I speak*.

Who? The *I* that is speaking? This piece, in truth a prosopopoeia, one of these enthusiastic games that I happened to allow myself to articulate for the centenary of (302) Freud, and at Vienna. It was rather a scream of the order of what Münch put so well into a celebrated engraving, this twisted mouth in which we see arising the sublime annihilation of a whole landscape.

A long time ago, in Vienna, I said it especially there where people had not heard for a long time the word truth. It is a very dangerous word. Apart from the use that is made of it when it is castrated, namely, in logical treatises. We know for a long time that people do not know what it means.

What is truth? This is precisely the question that must not be asked. I made an allusion in Lyon when I was speaking there last October to a certain piece by Claudel, a very brilliant one that I recommend to you. I did not have time to find the page for you before coming here - I did not know that I was going to speak about it - but you will find it by searching carefully in the subject index of Claudel's prose, if you look for Pontius Pilate, naturally.

This text describes all the misfortunes that happen to this benevolent colonial administrator for having pronounced in the wrong place at the wrong time this question: "What is truth?"

Among people who for the moment situate themselves in this futile zone of these chaps to whom it is dangerous to state psychoanalytic truth, who give a terrible application to these words picked up in turning one of my pages *Me the truth I speak*, they are going to tell the truth in places where there is no need for it but where it has its effect.

It is very possible that a particular thing that people succeeded in damping down so well under the name of class struggle all of sudden becomes a very dangerous thing. Naturally, one can count on the healthy functions that have existed from all time to maintain what is at stake, namely, to leave things in the field of the sharing out of power.

Make no mistake, people who know a little bit about the handling of truth are not that imprudent. They have the truth, but they teach: all power comes from God. All. That does not allow you to say that it is only the power that suits them. Even the power that is against God comes from God, for the Church. Dostoyevsky grasped that very clearly. Since he believed in the truth, God put him into a blue funk. That is why he wrote *The grand inquisitor*. It was the conjunction, in short, foreseen in advance, of Rome and (303) Moscow. I think that all the same some of you have read it. But it is almost done, my little friends, and you see clearly that it is not as fantastic as that! When you are in the order of power, everything can be arranged!

That is why it is useful for the truth to be somewhere, in a strongbox. Privilege, revelation, is the strongbox.

But if you take seriously *Me, the truth, I speak* this can at first have, alas, great disadvantages for the one who takes this path.

Let us see all the same what novelty we analysts may have contributed to it. Obviously our field is very limited. It is at the level of the bubble.

How is the bubble defined? Its import is very limited. If after so many years, after having shown what is properly speaking its structure, I am now speaking to you about logic, it is not by chance. It is because, all the same, it is clear that this knowledge that interests us analysts is properly speaking only what is said. If I say that *the unconscious is structured like a language*, it is because this unconscious that interests us is what can say itself and that in saying itself, it generates the subject.

It is because the subject is a determination of this knowledge that it is what runs under this knowledge but does not run there very freely, that it encounters stumbling blocks. It is for this reason and for none other that we have to deal with a knowledge. Anyone who says the contrary is led onto paths that I earlier called those of mystification. It is because the unconscious is the consequence of what has been able to be circumscribed that has shown that this relation to discourse has much more complex consequences than had been seen up to then. It is specifically that the subject by being secondary with respect to knowledge, appears not to say everything that it knows, a point that was not doubted, even if for a long time people suspected it does not know everything it says.

This is the point that allowed the constitution of the bubble; it resides very precisely in the fact that in this connection we grasp how the dimension of truth is produced. The truth, this is what psychoanalysis teaches us, lies at the point where the subject refuses to know. Everything that is rejected from the symbolic reappears in the real. This is the key to what is called the symptom. The symptom, is this real knot where the truth of the subject lies.

(304) At the beginning - very early on - of these little episodes, I told that you: "They are the truth". They are the truth, does not mean that they tell it. The truth is not something that knows itself like that, without labour. This is even why it takes this body that is called the symptom, that it demonstrates where is the lair of what is called the truth.

So then this refused knowledge that you come looking for in the psychoanalytic exchange, is it the knowledge of the psychoanalyst? Illusion. The psychoanalyst knows something perhaps; he knows in any case about the nature of the truth. But for the rest, namely, about refused

knowledge, he does not know very much. That is why the teaching of psychoanalysis taken at the level of what is supposed to be substantial appears for what it is, pantaloony. The libido that I spoke to you about earlier for example, if this means what I call desire, it is really rather piquant that it was discovered, tracked down, in the neurotic, namely, in the one whose desire is only sustained by fiction. To say that they are the truth is certainly not to deliver it to you, neither to you nor to them. But it is perhaps of some importance that one should know this mechanism of an exchange, a strange exchange which ensures that what is said by the subject, whatever it may be, whether he knows it or not, only becomes knowledge by being recognised by the Other. And this precisely moreover is what is meant by the quite primitive, rough-hewn notion, called censorship. It is the Other that for a long time, during the time of authority, always defined what could be said and what could not be. But it would be quite vain to link that to configurations that experience clearly shows, because they can be null and void, already were so when they were functioning.

It is in a structural way that it is only at the level of the Other that what determines the subject is articulated in knowledge. Stating, the subject of which is not at all necessarily the one who was speaking, stating - by the other - designates the one who said it. The Other was first of all the one he always was when the analyst interprets, and who says to the subject "you I" (this I that is you) I am saying: is that. And as it happens this has consequences. It is what is called interpretation. For a time this Other who was a philosopher, forged for his part, the *subject supposed to know*. It was already a deception as can be seen by simply opening Plato. He made the poor subject say everything that he wanted him to say. At the end, the subject learned. He learnt to say by himself "I say: black is not white", for example. "I say: either it is true or it is false". But (305) the total of what I am saying there, is certainly true because: either it is true or it is false.

Naturally, it is as childish as the movement of the 22nd March. It is not true that: either it is true or it is false. But that can be sustained. The subject has learned to endorse with an *I say* something that he declared himself ready to answer in a debate whose rules were fixed in advance, and that is what is called logic.

A strange thing. It is from what was purified by this path of the isolation of logical articulation, by the detaching of the subject from everything that can happen between him and the Other (and God knows things can happen, up to and including prayer) that there emerged science, knowledge. Not just any kind of knowledge, a pure knowledge that has nothing to do with the real, nor at the same time, with the truth. Because the knowledge of science is, as compared to the real, what is called in logic the complement of a language. It functions alongside the real. But it bites on the real. It introduces the bubble, namely, after all, something that, from the point of

view of knowledge, has no more importance than a gag. But it finally gives the only thing that after all really incarnates Newton's laws, namely, the first Sputnik, which is undoubtedly the best gag that we have seen because it throws everything into question, it Gag...arins it. Because what has it to do with the cosmos, in so far as we have a relation with it, that one can set about turning around the world six times in 24 hours, in a way that undoubtedly completely transcends the understanding of those who believed that movement was related to effort?

Anyway the bubble has made others its own since then. Only there remains a residue of it, in a way. It is that the one who speaks is not always capable of saying *I say* as is proved - it is in this way that we are witnesses, we psychoanalysts - by the fact that we, psychoanalysts, are capable of telling him what he is saying. We were able in a small number of cases, especially if they put an enormous amount of goodwill into it, if they come to us to speak enormously, it can happen that we interpret something to them and what does it mean to interpret something? We never interpret the world for them; we bring them, like that, a little piece of something that appears to be something that has kept its place in their discourse without them knowing it. Where do we analysts pull this out of? There is something that I would have liked to have made you meditate on this (306) year, it is the *frozen words* of Rabelais. In truth, like many things, it has already been written for a long time, but no one has noticed it. I put a strong emphasis on a certain Mr Valdemar described by Poe. I made what one could call a satirical use of him. I spoke in this connection about something that is nothing other than what I denounced here one more time, namely, this survival of the Freudian discourse and of the dead societies that it appears to keep talking.

It is a myth that goes much further. What interpretation uncovers is not always very clear as regards what is at stake, whether they are the realities of life or of death. What I would have led you towards this year, if I had been able to speak about the psychoanalytic act up to the end, would have been in order to tell you that it is not for nothing if I spoke to you about the desire of the psychoanalyst. Because it is impossible to draw it elsewhere than from the phantasy of the psychoanalyst. And this is what undoubtedly may give you the shivers. But we are not next or near it in our day - that it is from the phantasy of the psychoanalyst, namely, from what is most opaque, most closed, most autistic in his word that there comes the shock by which the word is unfrozen in the analysand, and in which there comes to be multiplied insistently this function of repetition in which we can allow him to grasp this knowledge of which he is the plaything.

Thus it is confirmed that the truth makes itself known through the Other. This justifies that it has always emerged in this way. What we know more, is that it is in relation to the Other which no longer has anything mystical or transcendental about it that this is produced. And the knot whose curve

I drew on the blackboard in the form of this little loop which is there and which can almost, you see, be close to appearing to be nothing more than a circle, to be fused in its duplicity as loop. This is what experience teaches us. Namely, that the *subject supposed to know*, where it truly is, namely, not us, the analyst, but in effect what we suppose this subject knows. This in so far as it is unconscious is duplicated by what the practice, this practice which is a little bit hedge-hopping, puts in parallel with it, namely, this *subject supposed demand*. Did I not see someone who appeared very proud to be questioning a member of the movement of the 22nd March, let us not name him, in order to ask him "What are you demanding of us analysts?" I wrote somewhere that the analyst was this privileged personage, a comic (307) one undoubtedly, who with the supply created the demand. It is quite obvious that here it did not work, but that does not prove that we have nothing to do with what is happening at this level. It means that they are demanding nothing of us. And afterwards! It is precisely the error of the analyst to believe that where we have to intervene as analysts, is at the level of demand, which never ceases to be theorised. While what is at stake, is very precisely this interval between the *subject suppose to know* and the *subject supposed demand*, and in the fact that it is nevertheless known for a long time that the subject does not know what he is demanding. Which allows him subsequently not to demand what he knows.

If we recognise this interval, this gap, this Moebius strip, where it is, in this little knot scribbled as I was able to do it on the board, in truth and I did not take much care, this is what is called this residue, this distance, this something to which there is entirely reduced for us the Other, namely, the **o**-object.

This role of the **o**-object which is of lack and of distance and not at all of mediation, it is on this that there is posed, that there is imposed this truth which is the discovery, the tangible discovery - and may those to have to touch on it not forget it - that there is no dialogue, the relation of the subject to the Other is of an essentially asymmetrical order, that dialogue is a dupery.

It is at the level of the subject in so far as the subject has been purified that the origin of science has been established. That at the level of the Other, there has never been anything more true than prophecy. It is on the contrary at the level of the Other that science is totalled, namely, that with respect to the subject it is completely alienated. It is a matter of knowing where there can still reside at the level of the subject something that is precisely of the order of prophecy.

End.

MEETING of 15 May 1968

I came here today, like last week, anticipating that there would be a certain number of people, as a way of keeping contact.

I am not going to give, any more than last week, what I habitually give under the heading of a class or a seminar. This in the measure that I am keeping to the call for strike action that I think exists at this time in the Syndicat Nationale de l'Enseignement Supérieur.

This is a simple question of discipline. It is nevertheless not enough to do what would be desirable – to be worthy of the events that are taking place.

In truth it is not very convenient for many people. Since I for my part have only to concern myself with psychoanalysts – I have always underlined it, I am not going to deny now what I always took care to repeat – am only addressing myself to psychoanalysts. It is for psychoanalysts that I have sustained for several years a work that is not meagre. I would even say up to a certain point that this is an opportunity for me to realise it because the simple fact of not having to prepare one of these seminars (since it was already prepared for the last time) I feel as a great relief for me.

Naturally this opens the door to all sorts of things. By the same token I notice something that effort and work always mask, namely, my dissatisfactions. It also gives me the opportunity also perhaps to read articles that I necessarily let pass like that, and only read their signatures. You have even to read the articles of people that you know in advance there is nothing to be expected (286) from. I have on occasion been very surprised. (I am speaking about articles by my colleagues, of course.)

Anyway, for the moment, to be worthy of the events, I would say that even though psychoanalysts bear witness to their sympathy for those caught up in pretty hard encounters, for which one needs to have – and this should be underlined – great courage. You would have to have received, as we analysts do, the testimony of what is experienced at these moments to measure better and at its true value what is represented by this courage. Because from the outside, like that, you can admire, of course, but you cannot always realise that the merit is no less great because these lads are really at certain moments carried away by the feeling of being absolutely bound to their comrades. They express this as they want to, that it is exalting to sing the International while being battered, this is the surface. The International is a very fine song, but I do not think that they would have this irrepressible feeling that they could not be anywhere other than

where they are if they were not carried along by a feeling of absolute community, there, in action with those they are shoulder to shoulder with. This is something that should be explored - as people say without knowing what they are saying – in depth.

I mean that it does not seem to me, to come back to our psychoanalysts, that the fact of signing, in this connection, even if there also people are very much shoulder to shoulder (but of course it is not quite the same thing), 75 people can, this is the number mentioned last night, sign a text protesting against the regime and its operatives (I mean its police operatives). Of course it is meritorious and one would not turn anyone away from putting his signature at the bottom of such a protest, but it is slightly inadequate, it is clearly not enough. If everyone signs it, people coming from every origin and horizon, fine, but to sign as a psychoanalysts – besides it was very quickly opened to people coming from psychology – appears to me to be a rather comfortable way of doing what I was saying earlier: to consider that one had done one's bit for the events.

It seems that when something of this order occurs, of such a seismic order, one could perhaps question oneself when one has had a responsibility oneself. (287) Because after all psychoanalysts had responsibilities, one cannot say in education because they are not in it, any of them. I am in it like that on the edges, on the margin but none of them is properly speaking in the University. But it is not just the University that has responsibilities in teaching. Perhaps after all one might say to oneself that the psychoanalysts did not concern themselves much with what, after all, by being connoted easily at the level of relationships, that since they are collective relationships, fell no less directly under a certain heading, under a certain field, under a certain knot that is their own. Let us try call that without insisting too heavily on the fact that after all I myself highlighted that somewhere in my *Ecrits* there is a text called *Science and truth* which is not completely out of season, since it has a little idea that one cannot reduce what is happening to what we might call the effects of a turbulence that is more or less everywhere.

There is someone whom I could not say I do not esteem, he is a comrade, we sat on the same benches, with links together and we got to know one another. It is a friend, M Raymond Aron, who published an article this morning in a paper that reflects the thinking of honest people who says: it is happening everywhere. But in saying that, for him that means, precisely, they are disturbed everywhere. Everyone must calm them down depending on what is not working out in each place. It is because in all these places there is something that is not working out that they are creating a disturbance. It is beginning as you know in Columbia, namely, in the middle of New York (I had very precise echoes very recently) and now it is going to Warsaw. I do not need to draw a map. What people do not want to ask themselves, or at least want resolutely to put to one side, which is

the sense of this article, written in a very fine tone, is that there must be here a much more structural phenomenon. Since I made an allusion to this quarter, this knot, this field, for me it is quite clear that the relationships between desire and knowledge are put in question. Psychoanalysis also allows this to be tied to a level of shirking, of inadequacy that is properly speaking stimulated, evoked by these relationships which are relationships of the transmission of knowledge. As an echo there reverberate all kinds of currents, elements, forces as they say, a whole dynamic. And on this point I allude again to the article I read recently. (288) There was an insistence on the fact that in a certain order of teaching – my own, to name it – the whole dimension of energetics is supposed to be neglected.

I much admire the fact that these energeticists have not noticed the underlying displacements of energy that may be here. Perhaps this energy has a certain interest as a theoretical evocation, and to tie things together at the level of a logical or logicist reference, on an occasion when people are talking a lot about dialogue, might have a certain interest.

In any case I think, and I am it seems to me confirmed by the events in the fact of finding that this is the articulatable, manipulatable part of what we have to deal with, I am not wrong in leaning on it as much as I can. Where this is not done, where people even think they ought not to do it, where people freely talk about intellectualising – this is the big word as you know – we find no proof of a particular sense of orientation as regards what is happening nor a more correct estimate of the weights in question nor of the true and authentic energetics of the thing.

I note in passing, a simple pinpointing for your information. We had at a meeting last night, in this thing called my *Ecole*, one of the heads of this insurrection, a not too badly shaped head. In any case he is not someone who lets himself be taken in nor does he say silly things. He knows how to give a quick answer and when he was asked a rather touching question, I must say, like the following: “Tell us, my friend, from the point that you are at, what might you expect from psychoanalysts?” This is an absolutely crazy way of posing the question! I kill myself saying that psychoanalysts ought to expect something from the insurrection and there are those who retort: what does the insurrection expect from us? The insurrection answers them: what we expect from you for the moment, this is the time to help throw some paving-stones!

As a way of lightening the atmosphere a little, I point out that in that case – it is a discreet indication – that at the level of dialogue, the paving-stone fulfils exactly a function that has been foreseen, the one I called the **o**-object. I already indicated that there is a certain variety in the **o**-object. The fact is the paving-stone is an **o**-object that that responds to another that is really, for its part, capital for any future ideology of dialogue when it starts from a certain level: the one called a tear-gas grenade!

(289) Let us leave that. We learned in effect, from an authorised speaker (who found himself taking an immediate advantage about what could have unfolded differently) that at the start, all the disturbances at the start in a certain field, and specifically at Nanterre (this was really news) we learned that the ideas of Reich – you can believe me if you like, many of the people here are disposed to believe something because I transmit it to them, that astonishes me but it is true – really opened things up for them. And this in term of the very precise conflicts that manifested themselves in a certain *cit  universitaire*. It is interesting all the same. It is interesting for psychoanalysts who may consider – this is my own position – that Reich’s ideas are not simply incomplete, that they are demonstrably, fundamentally false.

The whole of psychoanalytic experience, if we really want to articulate it and not consider it as a kind of locus of whirlpools, of confused forces, an energetics of life instincts and death instincts co-embracing one another, if we really want to put a bit of order into what we objectify in an experience that is a language experience, we will see that Reich’s theory is formally contradicted by our everyday experience.

Only since analysts do not testify to absolutely anything of things that might really interest everybody precisely on this subject of the relationships of one sex to another, things of this order are really open. I mean that anybody can say anything he wants. And this is seen at every level.

I was reading yesterday – since I have been left time to read – a little organ called *Concilium* (this is something done by priests). There were two rather brilliant articles on the accession of women to the functions of the priesthood, in which there were discussed a certain number of categories, that of the relationships of the man and of the woman. It is exactly, of course, as if psychoanalysts had never said anything about it. Not, of course, because the authors do not read psychoanalytic literature. They read everything. But if they read this literature they will find nothing that brings them anything new whatsoever as compared to what has always been discussed about this confused notion: who, the man or the woman, is, with regard to anything you (290) wish, Being, more superior, more worthy and all the rest of it. Because when all is said and done, it is all the same striking that what has been denoted by psychoanalysts at the level of experience, has been so perfectly swamped by them that when all is said and done it is exactly as if there had never been any psychoanalysts.

Obviously, all of this is a point of view that you may perhaps consider a bit personal. It is obvious that in this kind of note with which I believed I should open on a certain tone a certain publication which is mine and that I accentuate with a denotation that I call failure. Namely, that almost everything that I, for my part, tried to articulate - and that I must say it is enough to stand back from a little to see that it is not only articulated but articulated with a certain force and will remain like that attached as a testimony to something in which one can find one’s bearings, where there is a north, a south, an east and a west, this will be seen perhaps, in short, when the psychoanalysts are no longer there to surrender it, by the very fact of what they do with it -has absolutely no bearing.

Meanwhile, people sign manifestos of solidarity with the students as would also be done when anyone at all might get beaten up in an affray.

In short, all the same there is this something that is happening, something that can be found well written in advance. I said that in any case even if the psychoanalysts do not want at any price to be worthy of what they have charge of, what they have charge of nevertheless exists, and in any case will make its effects no less felt – the first part of my propositions, we have got there – and it will all the same be necessary for there to be

people who try to be worthy of a certain type of effect, those that were there in a way, offered and predestined to be treated by some people in a certain framework. If it is not they it will be certainly others, because there is no example that when effects become a little insistent, it must all the same be noticed that they are there and try to operate in their field.

I said this to you like that, so that you would not have put yourselves out in order to hear nothing.

8 and 15 May 1968: Notes

Since Lacan stood by the call for a strike by the *S.N.E.S.* [the union of teachers in higher education] he refused to give his seminar on the 8th and 15th May, but he was present, knowing that some of his audience would be there. He insisted on the fact that his discourse is addressed uniquely to psychoanalysts, and to them alone, and on the fact that these strikes give him time to read things that usually he only judges on the signature.

Then, as regards contemporary events, he highlights the effect of the shoulder-to-shoulder - of those who are batonned while singing the *Internationale* - as surface: those who are in this field allow themselves to be carried along by it with the feeling of absolute community.

He asks the question, that the events of the moment have again given rise to, of the responsibility of psychoanalysts. They are not at the university, and nevertheless the question of teaching is crucial for them. He then evokes his 1966 text "*Science and truth*" as having contemporary relevance for what is not simply unruliness, as Raymond Aron would like us to think. Contrary to the latter, for Lacan what is at stake is a structural phenomenon, in which the relations between desire and knowledge are put in question. These relations, which are those of the transmission of knowledge, psychoanalysis establishes on the level of lack, of inadequacy.

Once there is a question of dialogue, support should be taken on logic, even that of logicians, but in any case not on an energetics.

Evoking then the relations of expectations between psychoanalysts and insurgents, he says that if the psychoanalysts ought to expect something from the insurrection, the insurrection for its part only expects throwers of stones, which, like the tear gas, occupies the function of *o*-object.

The way for this whole insurrection was prepared in the *cit  universitiare* of Nanterre, by the ideas of Reich. Ideas, says Lacan, that are demonstrably false. And this interests psychoanalysts, because it leads to the fact that anyone can say anything at all. The testimony of psychoanalysts as regards what they can say from a experience of language involving the relations of one sex to the other, is not simply passed over in silence or swamped in a flood of other things by psychoanalysts themselves but, when it is said, is not taken into account. It is all happening as if there never had been psychoanalysts.

Lacan insists on what has always guided him in his teaching: to give reference points, so that what is insisting can be heard. And his failure, with which he opens his publication, is that psychoanalysts make of it something of no importance. Psychoanalysts do not want to be up to what they have taken responsibility for.

15.11.67

I 195

Things exist and have their effects. There have to be people to take these effects into account and operate in their fields.

End

Seminar 25: Wednesday 25 June 1969

(319) Try not to lose the thread about what you are as effect of knowledge. You are split apart in the phantasy ($\$ \diamond \circ$). You are, however strange this may appear, the cause of yourself. Only there is no self. Rather there is a divided self. Entering onto this path is where the only true political revolution may flow from. Knowledge serves the master. I am coming back today to underline that knowledge is born from the slave. If you remember the formulae that I aligned the last time, you will understand that, in parallel, I state: knowledge serves the woman, because it makes her the cause of desire. Here is what I indicated to you the last time, in a commentary on the schema that I am writing out again. I think I should take it up again, even for those who may be occupied elsewhere by concerns that appear more important to them.

Here is this schema. This schema emerges from the logical definition that I gave at our second last meeting of the Other as empty set and of its indispensable absorption of a unary trait, the one on the right, in order that the subject may be able to be represented there for this unary trait, under the species of a signifier. Where does this signifier that represents the subject for another signifier come from? From nowhere, because it only appears at that this place in virtue of the retro-efficacy of repetition. It is because the unary trait aims at the repetition of an enjoyment that another unary trait arises subsequently, *nachträglich* as Freud puts it. This term I was the first to extract from his text and to highlight as such. Whoever amuses himself in translating a certain “*Vocabulaire*”, will be able to see that at this rubric of *après-coup*, which would not even exist without my discourse, I am not even mentioned. The unary trait arises in a deferred way, in the place therefore of S_1 , of the signifier, in so far as it

represents a subject for another signifier. On this I say: everything that is going to arise from this repetition that is repeated by the introduction of the in-form of **o**, here the sign of the empty set, is first of all this in-form itself, and this is the **o**-object.

At this people get alarmed: I am told: “So then, you are giving a purely formal definition of the **o**-object.” No, because all of this is only produced from the fact that at the place of the 1 on the left, of S_1 , there is what there is, namely, this enigmatic enjoyment attested to by the fact that we know nothing about it except the following, that I am going to reproduce at every stage where it is distinguished, nothing is (320) known about it except the fact that it wants another enjoyment. This is true everywhere. 4, 2, 3, the little fable to which is given the ridiculous answer that you know; at the answer, to have another one. In this Oedipus, the hysteric who has answered, answered in so far as the truth about the woman must indeed have been said for the Sphinx to have disappeared because of it. That is why, in conformity with the destiny of the hysteric, he subsequently played the man.

The hysteric, I will tell you...because there is going to be some little time before we meet again, the hysteric fills me with joy. She reassures me more than she did Freud, who was not able to understand that the enjoyment of the woman was perfectly sufficient in itself. She erects this mythical woman called the Sphinx. She articulates that the original game is that she must have something else, namely, enjoy the man, who for her is only the erect penis by means of which she knows herself as other, namely as phallus, of which she is deprived, in other words as castrated. Here is the truth that allows some lures to be dissipated and remind you that this is the year that I posited the **o** as *surplus enjoying*, in other words the stake that constitutes the wager in order to gain the other enjoyment.

That is why the last time I wrote the dialectic of the master and the slave differently by clearly marking that the slave is the ideal of the master. That he is also the signifier to whom the master-subject is represented by another signifier since what is at stake is the third term of data representations other than formal. Here it is in the form of the stake which here is **o**. In this dialectic, as a philosopher named Hegel glimpsed, the stake is indeed what can hold up in a signifying in-form as 1, a life. It is true that you only have one. Equally, it is an idiotic formulation because you cannot formulate that

you only have one on the principle that you might have others, which is manifestly outside the game. A life, this indeed is what Hegel said, but he was wrong about which one. The stake is not the life of the master, it is that of the slave. His other enjoyment is that of the life of the slave. Here is what this formula of the fight to death envelopes, so completely closed, what one finds in the box. The fight to the death is a signifier, that is what it is.

It is all the surer in that it is very probably nothing other than the signifier itself. Everyone knows that death is outside the game. We do not know what it is, but the verdict of death, is the master as subject, a signifying verdict; perhaps the only true one. What he lives from, is a life, but not his own, the life of the slave. That is why any time the wager on life is at stake, it is the master who speaks. Pascal is a master and, as everyone knows, a pioneer of capitalism. For reference: the calculating machine, and then the bus. You have heard tell of that in some corner or other, I am not going to give you a bibliography.

This has a dramatic air; up to a certain point it has become such. At (321) the beginning it was not so, for the reason that the first master knows nothing about what is doing. And the master-subject is the unconscious. In ancient comedy, whose value as an indicator could not be exaggerated for us, it is the slave that brings to the master or to the son of the master – it is better again than the Son of Man, that imbecile – who brings him news of what is being said in the town, for example, from which he has come post-haste. He also tells him what to say, the passwords. The slave of antiquity, read Plautus better again than Terence, is a jurist, he is also a PR man. The slave was not a latecomer in antiquity. Do I need to pinpoint in passing two or three little notes that will perhaps be heard by an ear or two here, namely, that of course there are masters who have tried out knowledge, but after all why should the whole knowledge of Plato not be an unconscious philosophy? It is perhaps for that reason that it is of such profit to us. With Aristotle we pass onto a different plane. He serves a master, Alexander, who for his part undoubtedly absolutely did not know what he was doing. All the same he did it very well. Since Aristotle was at his service, he produced after all the best natural history there has ever been, and he began logic, which must mean something.

Along what path then did the master come to know what he was doing? In accordance with the schema that I gave you earlier, along the hysterical path, by making of the slave the damned of the earth. He worked hard. He substituted for the slave surplus value, which was not something easy to find, but which is the awakening of the master to his own essence. Naturally, the master-subject could only articulate himself at the level of the signifier slave. Only this elevation of the master to knowledge permitted the realisation of more and more absolute masters than have ever been known from the beginnings of history.

To the slave, there remains class-consciousness. This means that he can just shut up. Everyone knows that I am telling the truth and that the problem of the relationships of class-consciousness to the Party are the relationships of the one to be educated to the educator. If something gives a sense to what is called Maoism, it is a taking up of these relationships between the slave and knowledge. But let us wait to see things more clearly. Up to now, the proletariat, like this philosophy of the master, the first one, had the gall to call it, had the right as you know, to abstention. You see that if people dare to say in these places of misinformation quite explicitly forged for this goal, that psychoanalysis only ignores class struggle it is not perhaps altogether certain, and it can perhaps restore its true sense to it.

You must not imagine that speaking out, as it is put, frees you in any way whatsoever, just because the master, for his part, speaks out and even a lot. But it is enough to take this phantasy at its place for the affair to be resolved; it is puerile. Do I need to say that this year I began my discourse on psychoanalysis by saying that psychoanalysis, (322) is a wordless discourse. Knowledge displaces things, not necessarily to the profit of the one for whom it claims to work. It claims moreover for, as I told you, knowledge is nothing like work. The only solution is to enter the defiles without losing the thread, it is to work at being the truth of knowledge.

If then, to take up at the two levels of the master and the slave what is involved in these three terms, I rewrite here S_1 , S_2 , \mathbf{o} , sufficiently commented on I think, and I remind you, at the same time as I am completing it, of what I wrote the last time under another form, what concerns this relationship of the woman to her Other enjoyment, as I articulated it earlier. The woman who becomes cause of desire is the subject of

whom it must be said – re-read the Bible a little bit – who would ever say (.....?.....) about this story if he had not first been offered the apple, namely, the **o**-object. That is why, the signifier at the end, this Φ , the sign of what is assuredly lacking to the woman in the affair, and that is why he must furnish it.

It is amusing that after 70 years of psychoanalysis nothing yet has been formulated about what a man is. I am speaking about *vir*, the masculine sex. What is at stake here is not the human or other nonsense about anti-humanism and all this structuralist disorder, it is a matter of what a man is. He is active, Freud tells us. In effect, there is good reason for it. He even has to make an effort not to disappear into the hole. Anyway, thanks to analysis, he now knows that he is castrated; anyway he knows it at the end, that he always was so. Now he can learn it, a modification introduced by knowledge.

As you have seen, here there is something funny, it is this kind of non-adjustment; things have been detached from the 2, we have jumped from S_1 to **o**.

S_1	S_2	o
S_2	o	S_1
o	S_1	2

Why would this not be done 1 by 1, that first of all there would have been this S_2 , **o**, then S_1 . We ought to be able to find our bearings in what that means. I am going to say the word to you right away, especially since you should be prepared. Earlier, I showed you a passage from the master to the schoolmaster, then the S_2 , wherever it is, is the mapping out of knowledge. So then it is perhaps this that is at stake in the middle line. The hysteric marks what has remained at the S_2 on top, in the first line. But in any case where the S_2 is in its place, namely knowledge, at a master's place, look, you should recognise the place of stating.

I spoke to you about the *hommelle*. Does not all of this converge towards her, the *hommelle*, the one who is at once the master and knowledge? She speaks, she utters. If you wanted to have an image of (323) her, you should go and see something, but go in at the right time, as I did. It is a detestable film called *If*, my word, God knows

why. It is the English university displayed in its most seductive forms, the ones that conform to everything that, in effect, psychoanalysis was able to articulate about what is involved in a society of men, a society in the earlier sense, a society of homosexuals. There, as you will see, the *hommelle* is the rector's wife, she is a ravishing, really exemplary disgrace. But the lucky find, is the moment – I should say that it is the only stroke of genius that the author of this film had – of making her walk all alone and naked, and God knows if there are not some, among the pans of knowledge, in the kitchen, altogether sure that she is of being queen in her own house. While the whole little homosexual *bordel* is in the yard marching preparing for some military occasion. So then you are beginning perhaps to see what I mean. The *hommelle*, the *alma mater*, the university in other words, the place where because of having practised a certain number of intrigues around knowledge gives you a stable institution, under the crook of a spouse. There you have the true figure of the University. So then we could perhaps identify rather easily what represents the \bullet here, the pupils, the little dears taken in charge, themselves the creation of the desires of their parents. So this is what they are asked to bring into play, the way in which they have escaped from the desires of their parents. And the bet is this S_1 that ought to be identified to this something that is happening round about called the student insurrection. It seems that it is very important for them to agree to enter into this game, by the way in which they argue about the subject of what is sold at the end, namely, a parchment, let us say, that may perhaps have some relationship with this S_1 . If you do not play the game, you will have no diploma this year. There you have, my God, a little system that permits in any case an approximation of the sense of these things where people no longer find their bearings, concerning what is now happening in certain places. I am not claiming to contribute any historical key. What I am stating, is the following. It is that to refuse to, only makes sense if the question is centred around the relationships that are precisely those around to which psychoanalysis takes the question, namely, what is called the relationship of knowledge and the subject.

What are the subjecting or subjection effects of knowledge? Student have no vocation for revolution. You can believe it from someone who having entered for historical reasons into the field of the University, very precisely because with psychoanalysts there was no way of getting them to know anything whatsoever. So

then a little hope that through the effect of reflection, the field of the University would make them reason differently. In short, a resonating drum for the drummer when he does not resonate himself, make no mistake. So then students, you understand, I have seen some throughout the years; to be a student is quite normally a servile position. And then you cannot (324) imagine that because you have spoken out in some little corner, the affair is settled. Students, in a word, continue to believe the professors about what should be thought in such and such a case about what they say. There is no doubt for students, there is an established opinion that in one or other case this is not worth much. But it is still the professor, namely, one expects from him all the same what is at the level of S_1 , which is going to make of you a master on paper, a paper tiger! I have seen students who have come to me saying: "You know, So-and-So, it's scandalous, his book is copied from your seminar". That's students for you. Me, I am going to tell you, I did not even open this book, because I knew in advance that there was nothing in it but that! They came to tell me, me. But to write it, is a different affair. And that is because they were students.

Good, what in the world could have happened so that all of a sudden there was this movement of insurrection. What does a revolt mean, Sire? In order for this to become a revolution, what would be necessary? It would be necessary for the question to be attacked not at the level of tickling some professors but at the level of the relationships of the student as subject to knowledge. It is because psychoanalysis says, this point connected for a long time, every knowledge implies a subject, as a result of which there quite gently slides in as well substance, well then no, it cannot work like that. Even the *upokeimenon* can be disconnected from knowledge. A knowledge that the subject is unaware of, this is not a concept, as I had the sadness to read in a review of what, in a certain place, where psychoanalysis is put to the test. Naturally it is not for nothing. Psychoanalysis in such conditions would be better off not being charming and not to say that in short there is only a single Freudian concept, and to call it the unconscious, not even what I have just said, a knowledge the subject is unaware of. It is not a concept, at either of the two levels. It is a paradigm. It is starting from there that the concepts that, thank God, exist to mark out the Freudian field, and Freud produced others that, acceptable or not, are concepts, starting from this first phase of the experience, of this example which was the unconscious he discovered. The neurotic, is $s(O)$. This means that he teaches us that the subject is

always another, but that in addition, this other is not the right one. He is not the right one to know what is in question, of what causes him, the subject. So then people try as best they can to reunify this \emptyset in the measure of what is involved in every significant statement, namely, to rewrite it $s(O)$, which is on the left and on the lower line of my graph. It should be stated, in other words, where one knows what one is saying. It is there that psychoanalysis stops, while what should be done, is to reconnect what is on the top left, the S, signifier of \emptyset .

(325) It is the same thing for the pervert who, for his part, is precisely the intact signifier of O, as I told you, and people try to reduce him to the s of the same O. Always the same thing, so that that means something. There you are. Do you believe that I am going to continue for long like that, huh? And under the pretext that today is my last class, to continue to tell you things so that at the end you will applaud, for once, because you know that after that, watch out, huh, I am off!

The discourse that I am speaking about has no need for these sort of glorious endings. It is not a classical *oratio*. And in effect, a discourse that is like a classical oration is not liked. A gentleman, who is here the administrative director of this establishment that is privileged with respect to the university, it seems that because of this the aforesaid establishment should have some control over what happens within it. It seems that there is no question of it, since it appears that in law, after having welcomed me at the request of one of the agencies of the school, like that, in a hospitable way, he has the right to tell me, that's it! I for my part agree, I completely agree. Because first of all it is true I am only here out of hospitality, and what is more, he has very good reasons that I have known about for a long time. It is that my teaching appears to him to be exactly what it is, namely anti-university in the sense that I have just defined it. He nevertheless took a very long time to say it to me. He only told me quite recently, on the occasion of a final little telephone call that I thought I should make to him, because there had been, I think, a type of misunderstanding that I absolutely wanted to dissipate before saying to him: "Of course, there is no question that..." etc. It is very curious that at that point he let it drop, in other words he told me that that was why. "Your teaching, he told me, your teaching is very with it (*dans le vent*)". You see that, the wind... I would have believed that I was going against the wind here, but no matter!

Good, so then that he is within his rights, I have absolutely no reason to doubt, as regards myself. As regards you, it may be something else. But that is up to you. That for six years a certain number who have had the habit of coming precisely here are being evacuated, you see that does not count! This is even very explicitly what is at stake. In this respect, you understand I have some apologies to make to you, not because you are being evacuated, I have nothing to do with it; I could have warned you earlier. I have a little note here that I received, intentionally, since the 19th of March. The 19th of March. It is very funny, because on the 19th of March, I did not give a seminar. I tried by every means since, because I could not be bothered. And then, as you will understand, I am not moved by the fact of speaking before you for the last time, because every time I come here, as I told you, I tell myself that perhaps finally it is going to be the last time.

So then one day when I was questioning myself, when I was (326) questioning you about this flood of people that you make up, I cannot even say that it was when I was going home, the following morning I received this little note that I am going to read to you. I did not tell you about it because I said to myself, if by chance that disturbed them, what complications there would be! For my part you understand I was once in a similar state for two years. There were people who spent their time trying to liquidate me; I allowed them to continue their little work so that my seminar should continue, I mean that I should be heard at the level where I had certain things to say. It is the same thing this year, as a result of which then I received this on the 20th of March, and it is dated the 18th of March. So then there is no relationship. I even kept the envelope. I had torn it up at first, I picked it up, and it is indeed stamped 18th. As you see, trust reigns!

Dr Lacan, 5, rue de Lille – as some of you know – Paris (7e).

“Doctor,

“At the request of the 6th section of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, the Ecole Normale has put at your disposal a room to give a course for more than five years.

“The reorganisation of studies at the Ecole, which is a consequence of the general reform of the Universities...(laughter)....and of the recent law on the orientation of

third level studies, as well as the development of teaching in several disciplines, is going to make it impossible for us to lend you the salle Dussane or any other room in the Ecole... (laughter)... for your course.

“I am giving you enough notice... (that’s true!) ... so that you can envisage from now the transfer of your course to another establishment at the re-opening of the next academic year 1969-70”.

Me, I really like that! I really like it; all of this is correct historically, it is quite true. It was in effect here at the request of the 6th section of the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, like that, following a transmission of personal debt that there was..... anyway there was an eminent man called Lucien Fèbvre who had, one could not say the unfortunate idea, he is not to blame for it, of dying before giving me what he had promised me, namely a place in this Ecole. Others had availed of this personal debt. The university is very feudal. That is the way it happens in..... One is indeed, as you know in the university, something like that, a liegeman. The liegeman, the *l’hommelle*, all of that holds together!

So then it is under this title, it is at the request, as they say, that I was there. Good. So then I am delighted that it should be highlighted here. I am not against, you understand, the reform (*laughter*) being the reason that is put forward. You understand, I am not a complete baby, I know well that at half past twelve on Wednesday, who wants the *salle Dussane*? Some trouble was taken to make the acoustics in this (327) room work. By the way, there are people here, I am going to tell you all the same what you came to hear, I found that it was worth the trouble to make a number of photocopies that I hope is sufficient for my listeners today. The people to whom I gave these documents are going to distribute them to you; I would ask you to take only one each. What is more, this will be something or other. It is the S_1 you understand. You will all be bound together by something, you will know that you were here on the 25th of June 1969. And that there is even a chance that the fact that you were here on that day bears witness to the fact that you were here for the whole year. It is a diploma! (*Applause*)

You never know, that may help us to find one another because who knows, if I disappear into the wilds and one day I come back, it will be a sign of recognition, a symbol! (*Laughter*) I may very well say one day that any person can enter a particular room for a confidential paper on the subject of the function of psychoanalysis in the political register, because you cannot imagine the degree to which we are questioning ourselves about this! It is true that fundamentally there is here a veritable question about which one day, who knows, the psychoanalyst, even the University, may have some advantage in getting some idea of! I would be rather inclined to say that if ever I was the one who was asked to put forward something about it, I would give you a rendezvous in this room (*laughter*), so that you would have a final class for this year, the one that you are not getting, in short, because I stopped earlier. I stopped in order not to give a final class. This does not amuse me. So then you have this little object in hand. There are 300 all the same, 300 evacuees!

Since that is how we are now, after all I must leave you to leave you a little time among yourselves; it would not be a bad thing; because when I am there, despite everything, nothing comes out. Who knows, you may well have things to say to one another. But in any case one would scarcely believe that...your habits of smoking, for example, you know well, you see that plays a role, all of that! And then there are the people from administration also, because you know, in an affair like that, no one is missing. The admin staff said that I was receiving a strange group of people here (*laughter*) as such! It even appears that they had to repair the seats. Something happened! Jean-Jacques Lebel, you were not the one who was here with a band-saw? From time to time I heard a little noise, you must have been sawing the arms of the chairs!

One learns something every day! You are going to be able to fan yourself with that thing when I say goodbye to you in a moment! The smell on it will be substituted for the smoke.

What would be good, you see, is that you should give to this the only fate that it should really have worthy of what it is, a kind of signifier. You are going to find a sense for this word, *la Flacelière*. I for my part put that in the feminine like that; I would not say that this is a penchant but anyway it sounds rather feminine, the

cordelière, or the *flatulencière*! What if this got into common usage, “do you take me for a *flacelière*? (Laughter).

That may be of use to you given the way things are happening! Do not pull too hard on the *flacelière*! I will leave you to find that. Me for my part I always taught that it is the signifiers that created the signifieds. That makes me dream a little. I realised a lot of things, in particular the complete ignorance of a certain use of paper that obviously could only happen when people had paper. Before that this was not done with a parchment or with a papyrus! We do not know at what date, I telephone the mother houses as I might call them, nobody knows, when this use of paper began; in a flash, because it is a question that I had posed myself only in connection with chapter XIII of Gargantua. Someone could perhaps inform me about the subject. Anyway do not use it for that; I did not give you a package, I only gave you one each.

My dear friends, at this point I will leave you. I point out to you that these papers are signed, signed, actually I was not going to put my signature on the back of this paper, but I put the date. On 191 samples, this date is from my hand. On the 150 others, it is from the hand of my faithful secretary, Gloria, who was kind enough to substitute herself for me in that – you know it gives you a cramp. To write 25.6.69 151 times may well be very graphic, all the same I took the trouble.

On this, if you have some reflections to make to one another or some message to send to me, I will leave you in the hands of the faithful Gloria who is going to collect messages on this occasion. Anybody who would like to give an opinion in any way that seems opportune to him, has a good 20 minutes to do it.

As for me I will say adieu and thank you for your fidelity. (*Lively applause*).

Seminar 1: Wednesday 13 November 1968

The essence of psychoanalytic theory is a discourse without words.
(L'essence de la théorie psychanalytique est un discours sans parole)
(Written on the board)

We find ourselves here again this year for a seminar for which I chose the title *From an Other to the other (D'un Autre à l'autre)* to indicate the major reference points around which my discourse ought, properly speaking, to turn. That is why this discourse is crucial at the moment of time that we are at. It is so in as much as it defines what is involved in this discourse called the psychoanalytic discourse, whose introduction, whose coming into play at this time brings so many consequences with it.

A label has been put on this process. It has been called structuralism, a word that moreover was not necessary on the part of the publicist who suddenly, not so many months ago, God knows, put it forward in order to encompass a certain number of people whose labour had for a long time marked out some avenues of this discourse.

Thus it is the doing of what I have just called a publicist - everyone knows the play on words that I have made about "*poubelliciation*" - that a certain number of us, thanks to the labour of this agency, find ourselves together in the same dustbin (*poubelle*). One could have more disagreeable company! In truth, those that I find myself connected to being people for whose labour I have the greatest esteem, I could not in any case find myself uncomfortable in it, especially, since we know little bit about what is involved in dustbins in this period dominated by the genius of Samuel Beckett. For me personally, after having now lived almost 30 years, in three sections of fifteen, ten and five years, in three psychoanalytic societies, I know a little bit about what is involved in living with household refuse.

As regards structuralism, in truth one can understand the unease that may be produced among some people from the treatment that people pretend to inflict from the outside on our common habitat, and also that people may want to get out of it to stretch their legs a little. It remains, nevertheless, that ever since this impatience seems to all appearances to be taking hold of some people, I notice that I do not find myself all that uncomfortable in this basket, since moreover in my eyes it does not (8) seem to me that this structuralism should be identified to anything other than what I call very simply seriousness, and in no way certainly to anything that resembles in any way what one could call a philosophy, if by this word there is designated a vision of the world, or even some way of assuring on the right or the left the positions of a thinking. Let it suffice, to refute the first case, if it is true that as a psychoanalyst I cannot in any way claim to introduce in any fashion what is ridiculously called a psychoanalytic anthropology - it would be enough to recall, at the very entry into this domain of constitutive truths everything that psychoanalysis brings into this field, namely, that there is no union of man and woman without castration:

- a) determining by way of phantasy, precisely, the reality of the partner for whom it is impossible,
- b) without castration operating, in this sort of hiding place that posits it as a truth in the partner for whom it has been really spared, apart from some accidental excesses.

Let us strongly insist that, developing this formula from Genesis that God created them - there is also created *him* - man and woman – make no mistake, God knows why! - in the case of one the impossibility of the accomplishment of castration comes to posit itself as determining her reality; in the other, the worst thing that is threatened as being possible does not need to happen to be true, in the sense that this term offers no recourse.

This simple reminder, it seems, implies that at least at the heart of the field that is apparently ours, no harmony, however we may designate it, is in place, that assuredly some purpose is required of us which is precisely that of a suitable discourse. In order to sustain it, we will have in a way to ask ourselves the sort of question from which all philosophy started. Faced with so much knowledge, which is not without its value

and efficacy, what is it that can distinguish this discourse, guaranteed of itself, grounding itself on a criterion that thinking would take as its own measure, and would make it deserve to be entitled *episteme*: science. We are brought, even if it is only at first by this challenge that I have just outlined as that put by truth to the real, to a greater prudence in this approach of harmonising thinking with itself.

A rule of thinking that has to guarantee itself from non-thinking as being that which may be its cause, this is what we are confronted with in the notion of the unconscious. It is only in the measure of the beyond-sense of remarks and not, as is imagined and as the whole of phenomenology supposes, from sense, that I am as thinking. My thinking cannot be regulated – whether one adds or not alas! – as I wish; it is regulated. In my act, I am not trying to express it but to cause it. But it is not a matter of the act. In the discourse, I do not have to obey its rule, but find its cause. It is in (9) the inter-sense – and you can understand this in as obscene a way as you may imagine – there is the being of thinking. What has passed through my thinking, is the cause. It allows to pass purely and simply what has been, as being, and this from the fact that always and ever, wherever it has passed, it has always passed producing effects of thinking.

“It is raining, *il pleut*” is a thinking event each time it is pronounced, and the subject of it is first of all this it (*il*), this hilum (*hile*), I would say, that it constitutes in a certain number of meanings. And that is why this “it” finds itself comfortable in everything that follows because by “it is raining” you can understand “it is raining primary truths”, “there is some abuse, *il y a de l’abus*”; especially by confusing rain, a meteor, with *pluvia*, *aqua pluvia*, rain and the water that one collects from it. The meteor lends itself to metaphor and why? Because it is already made up of signifiers. It is raining. The being of thought is the cause of thinking *qua* beyond sense. It was always and ever the being of a thinking before.

Now using this structure rejects any promotion of infallibility. It is only helped precisely from the gap or rather from the very process because there is a process of gap, and it is the process helped by the structure of the practice, but it can only be helped by it by following it, which does not mean in any way going beyond it, except by allowing it to be grasped in the consequences that fix it to time, to the very point

that the reproduction of the process comes to a halt. This means that it is when it stops that the result is seen. And this is what explains, let us say here with a discreet touch in passing, that all art is defective. It is from collecting what, at the point where its failure to be completed is hollowed out, it is from collecting this that it takes its force. And that is why music and architecture are the supreme arts – I mean supreme technically, as being at the height of the basal, producing the relation of the harmonic number with time and space, precisely from the angle of their incompatibility. Because the harmonic number is now only, as is well known, a strainer, since it does not hold on either to the one or to the other, neither to this time nor to this space.

This is what structuralism takes seriously. It takes seriously the fact of knowledge as cause, as cause in thinking and, most usually, it has to be said, in a delusional perspective. Do not be frightened, these are opening remarks, reminders of certainties, not truths. And I would like, before introducing today the schemas from which I intend to start, to mark that if something here and now ought already to be in the palm of your hand, it is what I took the care to write earlier on the board about the essence of the theory. The essence of psychoanalytic theory is the function of discourse and very precisely because of something that may appear new to you, or at least paradoxical, that I am saying that it is without words. It is a matter of the essence of the theory because this is what is at stake.

(10) What is the state of theory in the psychoanalytic field? About this, I hear strange echoes being bruited around me. There is no lack of misunderstanding. On the pretext that by positing a whole field of thought as manipulation, I seem to be putting in question traditional principles. I mean – and this is expressed astonishingly because it is in places or in minds that are close to me – by something or other called “theoretical impossibility”. Indeed, did I not find this at a turn in some lines that what I one day announced in a context that clearly said what it meant, *that there is no universe of discourse*, so then why tire ourselves out, people seem to conclude. No doubt it would be less important in my eyes to correct my statement, because it does not lend itself to any ambiguity, and it is hard to see how the fact that one can state precisely what has been stated, that there is no point of closure in a discourse, that discourse is for all that, far from that, neither impossible, nor even simply devalued. It is precisely by starting from there that you are responsible for this discourse, and

especially for managing it properly, taking into account what is meant by this statement that there is no universe of discourse. There is certainly nothing therefore in this respect to be corrected by me, except simply to come back to it to take the following steps; of what consequences are induced from the discourse that has already been put forward but also perhaps to return to what is meant by the fact that being attached to the degree that an analyst may be to the conditions of this discourse, he can at every moment be in a position to show its flaws.

There was a time – allow me a little interlude before getting into this domain – when I took the example of the pot, not without there being such a scandal that I left this pot, as I might say, in the margin of my *Ecrits*. What was at stake was the fact that the pot is, in a way, the tangible image that it is this meaning modelled by itself, thanks to which, manifesting the appearance of a form and a content, it allows there to be introduced into thinking the idea that it is the contents that is the meaning, as if thinking showed here this need to imagine itself as having to contain something else, for this is what the term “to contain” designates when it is highlighted with regard to an inopportune act. The pot, and I called it mustard in order to remark that far from necessarily containing any, it is precisely because it is empty that it takes on its value as a mustard pot. Namely, that it is because the word “mustard” is written on it, but mustard which means that there is much delay (*moult lui tarde*) for this pot before it reaches its eternal life as a pot which begins at the moment when this pot will be holed. Because it is under this appearance throughout the ages, that we find it in digs, namely, by searching in tombs something that will bear witness to us about the state of a civilisation. The pot is holed, it is said, as a homage to the dead person and so that a living person cannot make use of it. Of course it is a reason. But there is perhaps another one which is the following; it is that this hole is intended to produce, so that this hole produces, illustrating the myth of the Danaï. It is in this state that, (11) this pot, when we have resurrected it from its burial place, occupies a place of honour on the shelf of the collector and, in this moment of glory, for it just as much as for God, it is in this glory that it reveals its nature. The structure of the pot – I am not saying its material – appears there as what it is, namely, correlative to the function of the tube and the drum. And, if we are going to search for preformations in nature, we will see that for a horn or a shell, it is still there, after the life has been extracted from it, that it shows what its essence is, namely, its capacity for producing sound.

Entire civilisations are no longer represented for us except by these little pots in the form of a head or again of some animal, covered by signs that are impenetrable to us, for lack of correlative documents. And here we sense that the meaning, the image is altogether outside, that what is left to being inside is precisely what lies in the tomb in which we find it, namely, precious materials, perfumes, gold, incense and myrrh as they say. The pot explains the meaning of what is there by virtue of what? By virtue of a use value, let us rather say of an exchange value, with another world and another dignity, of a token value. That it should be in pots that we find the manuscripts of the Dead Sea is something to make us sense that it is not the signified that is within, it is very precisely the signifier. And it is with it that we have to deal when it is a matter of what is at stake for us, namely, the relationship between discourse and the word in analytic efficacy.

Here, I ask you to allow me a short circuit at the moment of introducing what, I think, is going to image for you the unity of the theoretical function in this approach rightly or wrongly called structuralist. I shall appeal to Marx whose remarks I have had a lot of trouble not introducing earlier, importuned as I have been for a long time about him, into a field in which he is nevertheless perfectly in his place. I am today going to introduce in connection with the *o*-object the place in which we have to situate his essential function. Because it is necessary, I will proceed by way of a homologous stage and I will first of all recall something that was, by labours that are still recent, precisely and up to the disavowal of the author designated as structuralist, was perfectly highlighted, and not too far from here, in a commentary on Marx. The question is posed by the author whom I have just evoked of what the object of *Capital* is. We are going to see what, in a parallel way, psychoanalytic investigation allows there to be stated on this point.

Marx starts from the function of the market. His novelty is the place that he situates labour in it. It is not the fact that labour is new that allows his discovery, it is the fact that it is bought; that there is a labour market. This is what allows him to demonstrate what is inaugurating in his discourse - what is called surplus value. As it happens this approach suggests the revolutionary act that we know about, or rather that we know (12) very badly, because it is not sure that taking power resolved what I will call the

subversion of the capitalist subject expected from this act. But for the moment it matters little to us. It is not sure that the Marxists did not in fact undergo many inauspicious consequences from it. The important thing is what Marx is designating and what his approach means. Whether his commentators are structuralist or not, they still seem indeed to have demonstrated that he for his part is structuralist. Because it is properly by being at the point, for his part, as a being of thought, being at the point that the dominance of the labour market determines, that there is brought out as cause of his thinking this function, an obscure one it has to be said – if this obscurity can be recognised in the confusion of the commentary – which is that of *surplus value*. The identity of discourse with its conditions is what I think is going to find some clarification from what I am going to say about the analytic approach.

No newer than labour was in the production of merchandise, is the renunciation of enjoyment (*jouissance*), whose relation to labour I do not have to define any further. Since, from the beginning and quite contrary to what Hegel says, or seems to say, it is what constitutes the master who clearly intends to make of it the principle of his power. What is new is that there is a discourse that articulates this renunciation and which makes appear in it – for this is the essence of the analytic discourse – what I would call the function of the *surplus enjoying* (*plus de jouir*). This function appears because discourse occurs, because what it demonstrates in the renunciation of enjoyment is an effect of discourse itself. To accentuate things, it must be supposed that in the field of the Other, there is this market, if you wish, which adds up its merits, its values, the organisation of choices, of preferences which implies an ordinal, indeed cardinal structure. Discourse holds the means of enjoying in so far as it implies the subject. There would be no reason of subject, in the sense that one can say reasons of state, if there were not a correlative in the market of the Other, which is that a *surplus enjoying* is established that is captured by some people.

A discourse must be pushed very far to demonstrate how the *surplus enjoying* depends on stating, is therefore produced by discourse, so that it appears as an effect. But in fact this is not something very new to your ears if you have read me, because it is the object of my writing on *Kant with Sade* in which the proof is given of the total reduction of this surplus enjoying to the act of applying to the subject the term \circ of the phantasy, through which the subject can be posited as cause of itself in desire.

I will develop this in the time to come by a return to this wager of Pascal that illustrates so well the relation of the renunciation of enjoyment to this element of wager in which life in its totality is itself reduced to an element of value. A strange way of inaugurating the market of enjoyment, to inaugurate it, I am clearly saying, in the field of discourse. But after all is this not a simple transition from what we have (13) just now seen being inscribed in history in this function of goods devoted to the dead? Moreover do we not have here what is now in question for us. We have to deal with theory in as far as it has been lightened precisely by the introduction of this function of the *surplus enjoying*. Around the *surplus enjoying* there is played out the production of an essential object whose function it is now a matter of defining, it is the **o**-object.

The crudeness of the echoes received at the introduction of this term is and remains for me the guarantee that it is indeed in effect of the order of efficacy that I bestow on it. In other words, there is a well known, well marked and celebrated passage in which Marx savoured, during the time he spent developing his theory, the opportunity to see the survival of the living incarnation of its miscognition!

I stated: *the signifier is what represents the subject for another signifier*. This like every correct definition, namely, is required. It is required that a definition should be correct and that a teaching should be rigorous. It is quite intolerable, at the moment when psychoanalysis is called on to give to something that you must not think I intend to elide, to the crisis that traverses the relation of the student to the university, it is unthinkable that one should respond by the statement that there are things that one cannot in any way define in a knowledge. If psychoanalysis cannot state itself as a knowledge and be taught as such, it has strictly nothing to do in a place where nothing else is at stake. If the market of knowledge is very properly shaken by the fact that science contributes to it this unit of value that allows there to be plumbed what is involved in its exchange even in its most radical functions, it is certainly not in order for something that can articulate something about it, namely, psychoanalysis should present itself by throwing in the towel. All the terms that may be employed in this connection, whether they are those of “non-conceptualisation” or any other evocation of some impossibility or other, can only designate in any case the incapacity of those

who put them forward. It is not because the strategy with the truth in which the essence of therapy may reside does not lie in any particular intervention described as interpretation, a point where undoubtedly all source of particular functions, of lucky operations in the order of the variable can find their opportunity but only have sense by being situated at the precise point where theory gives them their weight.

This is what is well and truly at stake here. It is in the discourse on the function of the renunciation of enjoyment that there is introduced the term of **o**-object. The *surplus enjoying* as a function of this renunciation under the effect of discourse, is what gives its place to the **o**-object, like in a market, namely, because it defines some object of human labour as merchandise. Just as each object carries in itself something of (14) *surplus value*, in the same way *surplus enjoying* is what allows the isolation of the **o**-object.

What are we doing in analysis, if not establishing, by the rule, a discourse of such a kind that the subject suspends what on it? Precisely his function as subject. Namely, that he is dispensed from sustaining his discourse with an “I say” because it is a different thing to speak and to posit “I say what I have just stated”. The subject of the statement says “I say”, says “I posit”, as I do here in my teaching. I articulate this word; it is not poetry; I am saying what is written here and I can even repeat it, which is essential, in the form in which by repeating it, to vary it I add that I have written it.

Here then is the subject dispensed from sustaining what he states. Is it then in this way that he is going to come to this purity of the word, this full word of which I spoke in a period of evangelisation, it has to be said, for the discourse called the Rome discourse. To whom was it addressed if not to ears that were most closed to hearing it. I will not qualify what made these ears provided with these opaque qualities. This would be to make a judgement that could not be in any way other than offensive.

But notice that it is in speaking about *The Freudian thing*, that I happened to launch myself into something that I myself called a prosopopoeia? It is a matter of the truth stating: “For you then I am the enigma of her who vanishes as soon as she appears; men who try so hard to hide me under the tawdry finery of your proprieties. But I am prepared to believe that your embarrassment is sincere.” I note that the term

“embarrassment” was highlighted for its function elsewhere. “For even when you take it upon yourselves to serve as my heralds, you place no greater value on wearing my colours than your own, which are like what you are, phantoms that you are. Where then will I pass into you? Where was I before I entered you? Perhaps one day I will tell you.” It is discourse that is at stake here. “But so that you will find me where I am, I will teach you by what sign you will recognise me. Men, listen, I am giving you the secret. Me, the truth, I speak (*Moi, la vérité, je parle*).”

I did not write, “I say”. What speaks undoubtedly, if it came, as I also wrote ironically, the analysis, of course, would be closed. But it is precisely what does not happen, or what when it does happen deserves to be punctuated in a different way. And for that reason we must take up again what is involved in this subject that is here put in question by an artificial procedure, of whom it is demanded, in effect, not to be the one who sustains everything that is advanced. It must not be believed nevertheless that he is dissipated, for the psychoanalyst is very precisely there to represent him, I mean to maintain him throughout the time that he is not able, in effect, to place himself as regards the cause of his discourse.

Thus it is that it is a matter now of referring to fundamental formulae, namely, to those that define the signifier as being what represents a subject for another signifier. What does that mean? I am surprised that no one has ever remarked in connection (15) with this proposition that the result, as a corollary, is that *a signifier cannot represent itself*. Of course this is not new either because in what I articulated about repetition, this indeed is what is at stake. But there we have to pause for a moment in order to grasp it clearly in real life. What can be meant here in this sentence by this “itself” of the signifier? Note well that when I speak about the signifier I am speaking about something opaque. When I say that the signifier must be defined as what represents a subject for another signifier that means that no one will know anything about it except the other signifier. And the other signifier has no head, it is a signifier. The subject is stifled, effaced, immediately, at the same time as it appears. It is a matter precisely of seeing why something of this subject which disappears in emerging, produced by one signifier in order to be immediately extinguished by another, how somewhere this something can be constituted which can at the limit be taken as *Selbstbewusstsein*, for something that is satisfied to be identical to itself.

Now, very precisely, what this means, is that the signifier in whatever form it is produced, in its presence as subject of course, cannot connect up with its representative signifier without there being produced this loss of identity that is properly speaking called the *o*-object. This is what Freud's theory about repetition designates. As a result of which nothing is identifiable from the recourse to enjoyment in which, by virtue of the sign, something different comes to its place, namely, the stroke that marks it. Nothing can be produced there without an object being lost in it .

A subject is what can be represented by a signifier for another signifier. But is this not something traced out on the fact that as an exchange value the subject in question, in what Marx is deciphering, namely, economic reality, the subject of exchange value is represented for what? Use value. And it is already in this gap that there is produced, that there falls what is called surplus value. This loss is all that counts at our level. Henceforth no longer identical to himself the subject certainly no longer enjoys but something is lost that is called *surplus enjoying*; it is strictly correlative to the coming into play of what then determines everything involved in thinking. And in the symptom what else is involved. Namely, in terms of being more or less at ease in approaching this something that the subject is quite incapable of naming. But if he does not make a circuit of it he will not even know what to do. He does not simply have to deal with relations to his fellows, [but?] with his most profound relation, with the relation that is called vital, and for which economic references and configurations are much more suitable than the often distant, even though of course not completely wrong ones offered to Freud, those of thermodynamics.

(16) Here then is the way, the element that can allow us to advance into what is involved in analytic discourse. If we have *a priori* posited theoretically and without needing a long recurrence to constitute these premises, if what is at stake in the definition of the subject as caused by the inter-signifying relationship, of something that, in a way, forever prohibits us from grasping it, here also is the opportunity to perceive what gives it this unity, let us call it provisionally preconscious, not unconscious, the one that has permitted up to the present the subject to be sustained in his so-called self sufficiency. Far from being self sufficient, it is around the formula namely, it is around the being of the *o*, around the *surplus enjoying*, that there is

constituted the relationship that allows us up to a certain point to see there being created this soldering, this precipitation, this freezing which means that we can unify a subject as subject of a whole discourse. I will draw on the blackboard something that images in a certain way what is at stake on this occasion.

This is what happens in the relation of a signifier to another signifier, namely, that it is the subject that is represented there, which here will never know. Once any signifier whatsoever in the chain can be put into relation with what is nevertheless only an object, namely, what is fabricated in this relationship to *surplus enjoying*, in this something that is able through the opening of the operation of the organism to take on the figure of these vanishing entities that I have already given the list of, which go from the breast to dejections and from the voice to the look, the fabrication of the discourse of the renunciation of enjoyment. The mainspring of this fabrication is the following, it is that around them can be produced the surplus enjoying. That assuredly if already in connection with Pascal's wager I told you that if there were only one life to be wagered to win beyond death, it would be well worth our while labouring enough in this one to know how to behave in the other. In this labour and its exchange as a wager with something, when we know that it is worth the trouble, there is found the mainspring of the fact that at the very foundation of the idea handled by Pascal it appears with the extraordinary blindness of someone who is himself at the beginning of a period of unleashing of the function of the market and its correlative the one that introduced scientific discourse. Let us not forget that he is also the one who wanted, at the most extreme moments of his retreat and his conversion, to inaugurate in Paris a *Compagnie des Omnibus Parisienne*. If this Pascal, who does not know what he is saying when he speaks about a happy life, we have the incarnation of it, what else is graspable under the term of happy if not precisely this function incarnated in the surplus enjoying? And moreover we have no need to wager on the beyond to know what it is worth.

(17) Where the surplus enjoying is unveiled under a naked form has a name. It is called perversion. And that is why a holy woman has a perverse son. There is no need for the beyond to see what happens in the transmission from one to the other in terms of the operation of an essential discourse.

Here then is opened the figure, the schema of what allows it to be conceived how it is around the phantasy, namely, of the relationship of the reiteration of the signifier that represents the subject in relation to itself that there is played out what is involved in the production of *o*. But inversely, by this fact, their relationship takes on consistency and it is from this that there is produced here something that is no longer either subject nor object, but that is called phantasy. Henceforth, the other signifiers can, by linking up, articulating and at the same time here, freezing in the effect of meaning, introduce this effect of metonymy which means that this subject, whatever he may be, whether it is in the sentence, at the level of the child of “A child is being beaten, *On bat un enfant*”, at the level of the *on*, something equivalent solders this subject and makes of him this solidary being that in the discourse we have the weakness to give the image of as an omnivalent image, as if there could be a subject of all signifiers.

If there is something that, through the analytic rule, can be sufficient relaxed in this chain for there to be produced these revelatory effects, what sense, what accent should we give to it so that it can have some import? The ideal no doubt is that this mythical [critical?] “I speak” which will bring about in analytic experience the effect, the image of the appearance of the truth.

It is here precisely that it must be understood that this emitted truth is suspended there, caught between two registers, those whose two limits I posed precisely in the two terms that figure in the title of my seminar this year. Because this *either*, a reference to the field where the discourse of the subject would take on its consistency, namely, to the field of the Other that I defined as this locus where every discourse at least posits itself in order to be able to offer itself to what is or not its refutation. That it can demonstrate, and in the most simple form – you will excuse me for not having the time to do it today – that the problem of whether or not there is a God who guarantees as for Descartes the field of truth is completely uncalled for. It is enough for us that it can be demonstrated that in the field of the Other there is no possibility of a complete consistency of discourse and this I hope the next time to be able to articulate for you precisely in function of the existence of the subject.

I already wrote it out once very rapidly on the board. It is a proof that is very easy to find in the first chapter of what is called set theory. But again it would be necessary, at least for part of the listeners here, to show why it is relevant to introduce into the elucidation of the function of a discourse such as ours, we analysts, in some way (18) extract it from a logic that it would be quite wrong to believe is a way of excluding it into the neighbouring amphitheatre to call it mathematical logic. If nowhere in the Other there can be assured in any way the consistency of what is called the truth, where then is it unless this function of the \mathbf{o} corresponds to it. Moreover, have I not already on some other occasion expressed what is involved in the cry of the truth. "*Me, the truth, I wrote, I speak, and I am pure articulation expressed to your embarrassment*". What the truth can say is there to move us. But what the one who is suffering says by being this truth, ought to know that its cry is only a mute cry, a cry into the void, a cry that already at one time I illustrated by the celebrated engraving of Münch, because at this level nothing else can correspond to it in the Other than what gives it its consistency and in the naïve faith that it is like me, namely, that it is its true support, namely, its fabrication as \mathbf{o} -object. Faced with it, there is nothing but that, than *the additional one (l'un en plus)* among so many others, that can in no way correspond to this cry of the truth except that it is very precisely its equivalent, non-enjoyment, misery, distress and solitude. It is the counterpart of this \mathbf{o} , of this surplus enjoying that gives its coherence to the subject *qua* ego.

There is nothing else, unless for today to want to leave you on something that makes one smile a little. I take up again the words that, in *Ecclesiastes*, an old king who did not see the contradiction between being the king of wisdom and having a harem, who tells you, "All is vanity no doubt, enjoy the woman that you love, namely, make a ring of this hollow, of this void at the centre of your being, there is no neighbour if not this very hollow in you, it is the emptiness of yourself". But in this relationship undoubtedly guaranteed only by the figure that allowed Freud no doubt to hold on throughout this whole perilous path and to allow us to clarify the relationships which, in this myth, would otherwise not be tolerable, the divine law that leaves in its entire primitiveness this enjoyment between man and woman of which it must be said: "Give her what you do not have, because what can unite you to her, is only

enjoyment". It is on this point that in the style of a simple, total, religious riddle, of one that is only approached in the Cabbala that I will discharge you today.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 20 November 1968

The last time, which was a premiere, I made reference to Marx in a relation that, in a first moment, I presented as homologous, with all that this term involves by way of reservations. I introduced alongside, let us say, surplus value what is called, in the original tongue – not that this notion of course was being named for the first time but discovered in its essential function – *Mehrwert*. I wrote it because God knows what would happen if I only pronounced it, in front of what I have here as an audience, and especially psychoanalysts when they are recruited from among those that are described as being by nature or heredity, double agents. Soon people will be telling me that it is the sour mother (*mère verte*), that I am rediscovering familiar paths. It is with this, with my "it speaks", people reintegrate the supposedly obstinate desire of the subject to find himself again nice and warm in the maternal womb. So then to this surplus value, I hooked on, I superimposed, I plastered on the other side the notion of *surplus enjoying*. It is said like that in the original tongue. It was said the last time for the first time, namely, in French. To restore it to the tongue from which the inspiration for it came to me, I would call it, provided no German scholar in this assembly does not oppose it *Merhlust*.

Naturally, I did not bring forward this operation without making a discreet reference, in the way I sometimes do, an allusive one, a discreet allusive reference to the one, why not, whose researches and thinking led me to it, namely, Althusser. Naturally, as

usual, in the hours that followed, this created some stir in the cafes where people gather, and how flattered I am at it, even delighted, to chew the fat over what has been said here. In truth, what can be said on this occasion, and what I do not deny since it was on this plane that I introduced my remarks the last time, namely, this factor, the *pouvellicant* or *pouvellicatoir* factor, whatever you want to call it, of structuralism. I had precisely made an allusion to the fact that according to the last echoes I had Althusser was not very comfortable in it. I simply recalled that, whatever he may avow or renounce in structuralism, it seems indeed to whoever reads it that his discourse makes a structuralist of Marx and very precisely because he underlines his seriousness.

It is to this that I would like to come back since moreover, what I am indicating, is that one would be wrong to see in some mood or other that what is essential here is to (20) rally behind a flag. Namely, that as I already underlined on other occasions, what I am stating at least for myself when we are dealing with structure, I already said, is to be taken in the sense of what is most real, the real itself. And when I said at the time when here, on the board, I drew, indeed manipulated some of these schemas with which there is illustrated what is called topology, I already underlined that in this case, it was in no way a kind of metaphor. Either one thing or the other. Either what we are talking about has no kind of existence, or, if the subject has one, I mean as we are articulating it, well then it is exactly constructed like that, namely, it is constructed like these things that I wrote on the board, on the paper I use. On condition of course that you know that this little image which is all that one can put down, in effect, to represent it, on a page, that this little image obviously is only there to image for you certain connections that cannot be imagined but on the other hand can perfectly well be written. The structure is therefore real. It is determined by convergence towards an impossibility, in general. But that is how it is and it is because of this that it is real. So then there should almost be no need to talk about structure. If here I am speaking about it, if I speak about structure, if I speak about it again today, it is because I am forced to do so. Because of the chit-chat in the cafes! But I ought not to need to talk about it because I say it. What I say sets up the structure because it aims, as I said the last time, it aims at the cause of the discourse itself. Implicitly, and like each and every one who teaches, by wanting to fulfill this function, I defy in principle that I can be refuted by a discourse that justifies discourse differently to the way I have just said

it. I am repeating it for those who are deaf. Namely, what it aims at is the cause of discourse itself. That someone should justify discourse in a different way as an expression of or as a relationship to a content for which a form is invented, that's up to him! But I remark then that it is unthinkable, with this position, that you should inscribe yourself under any heading whatsoever in the practice of psychoanalysis. I mean even not as charlatanism. You should understand that the question is whether the psychoanalysis I am indicating here exists. It is precisely this that is at stake.

But on the other hand there is something by which it indisputably affirms itself. It is the symptom of the point in time that we have come to, let us say, in this provisional word that I would call, like that, civilisation. I am not joking! I am not talking about culture. That is vaster! It is moreover a question of convention. We will try to situate culture in the current usage that is made of this term at a certain level that we will call commercial.

Good! Let us come back to my discourse.

To employ a metaphor here that I already used on several occasions to make you (21) sense what I mean by a discourse that is valid, I would compare it to a scissors' cut in this material that I talk about when I talk about the real of a subject. It is through this scissors' cut in what is called structure, in the way that this happens, that it is revealed for what it is. If one makes the scissors' cut somewhere, relationships change in such a way that what is not seen before is seen afterwards.

This is what I illustrated by saying that it is not a metaphor, in recalling to you that the scissors' cut in the Moebius strip makes a strip that no longer has anything to do with what it was previously. To take the next step, one could even say that in grasping this transformation, one perceives that it is the scissors' cut that, in itself, is the whole strip, I mean, as long as it is, in so far as it is, a Moebius strip.

This is a way of speaking about the slightest metaphor. In other words, in principle, whether you call it structuralist or not, let us say that it is not worth the trouble to talk about anything except the real in which discourse itself has consequences. Whether you call that structuralism or not, it is what I called the last time the condition of

seriousness. It is particularly required in a technique whose pretension it is that discourse has consequences in it since the patient only submits himself in an artificially defined fashion to a certain discourse regulated in order that there should be consequences. Nothing prevails against these remarks, not even those that one sees displayed in books whose text is otherwise marked by this discourse itself, by saying that I neglect the energetic dimension for example. Things like that, I let pass. I let them pass when it is a matter of polemical responses. But here, we are at the heart of the subject since, as I pointed out the last time, for this exalted reference – especially for those who do not even know what it means – to energetics, I substituted a reference that, in our time, one would have difficulty in suggesting is less materialist, a reference to the economy, the political economy. But let us not disdain energetics on this occasion. For it to have a reference to our field, if we apply what I have just said, it is necessary that the discourse should have consequences in it.

Well then, precisely, it has! I am speaking about real energetics, about where it is situated in science, about physics. I even at one time, and well before these laughable objections were published, put into lectures that those involved were perfectly able to hear because they made use of them afterwards in their own lectures. I precisely underlined that energetics is not even conceivable otherwise than as a consequence of discourse. It is not because it is physics that it is not clear, that, without a signifying mapping out of the dimensions and the levels with respect to which there can be estimated, evaluated the initial function of the labour, naturally in the sense of (22) physics, there is not even the probability of beginning to formulate what is called the principle of all energetics in the literal sense of this term, namely, the reference to a constant, which is precisely what one calls energy, in relation to a closed system which is another essential hypothesis. That one can make with that a physics and one that functions, is indeed the proof of what is involved in a discourse that has consequences.

This implies at the same time that physics implies the existence of a physicist and, what is more, not just anyone whatsoever, a physicist who has a correct discourse in the sense that I have articulated it. Namely, a discourse that is worth the trouble saying and is not simply something that is all of a flutter; which is what energetics becomes when it is applied to a usage as delusional and hazy as that made of the

notion of libido when people see in it what is called “a life drive”. In short, to say that physics does not labour without the physicist is not, since I hope there will not be found any understanding here to formulate the objection – which would be rather ridiculous with what I have just stated – that this is an idealist postulate. Because what I am in the process of saying, is that it is the discourse of physics that determines the physicist and not the contrary. Namely, that there were never real physicists until this discourse prevailed. Such is the sense that I give to an acceptable discourse in what I am calling science.

Only there you are. Inevitably, people imagine that the realistic argument is to make an allusion to the fact that, whether we are there or not, we and our science, as if our science were ours, and if we were not determined by it, well then people say nature is always there. I absolutely do not dispute it. Nature is there. The way physics distinguishes itself from nature is that physics is worth saying something about, that discourse has consequences in it. In nature, as everyone knows – and that is even why it is so loved – no discourse has any at all! This is what differentiates nature from physics. To be a philosopher of nature was never taken at any period as a certificate of materialism, for example, nor of scienticity.

But let us take things up again, because that is not where we are. If physics does indeed give us a model of a discourse that is worthwhile, the necessities of our discourse ought to be taken at a higher level. Every discourse presents itself as heavy with consequences, but ones that are obscure. Nothing of what we say, in principle, fails to imply some. Nevertheless we do not know which. We notice in language – for it is at the level of language that I will take things up, and to clearly mark the limits – a syntax that is incarnated by a great number of tongues that, for want of boldness, are called positive tongues. Because I am there, and because I have just made a remark about nature that, I think, does not at all seem to you irrelevant, but (23) why, why should we inconvenience ourselves and not call them natural tongues? One would see better in this way what concerns linguistics and what allows it to be situated in the discourse of science. It is quite clear that even vis-à-vis language – whatever prevalence we may accord to it because we forget it as a natural reality – every scientific discourse about the tongue is presented by a reduction of its material. A functioning is highlighted in which consequences are grasped. I would say more, in

which there is grasped the very notion of consequence with its varieties of necessary or contingent for example. There is carried out then a discursive split and this is what allows there to be given its whole value to the fact that I first of all affirm that there is no meta-language, which is true in the field of natural language. But why do you carry out this reduction of the material? I have just told you. It is to highlight a functioning in which consequences are grasped, and once you grasp consequences, you articulate them in something that you have the right to consider as meta-language, except for the fact that this “meta” can only create a confusion. And that this is why I would prefer what gives rise to the detaching in discourse of what must be called by its name, logic – I am indicating here nothing more – always conditioned by nothing other than by a reduction of material. And I illustrate here what I mean.

Reduction of material means that logic begins at this precise date in history when, for certain elements of language as functioning in their natural syntax, someone who understands it, who inaugurates logic, substitutes for certain of these elements a simple letter. It is starting from the moment when with, “if this, then that” you introduce an A or a B that logic begins. And it is only starting from there that in language you are able, about the use of this A and of this B, to pose a certain number of axioms and laws of discussion that will merit the title of being articulated as meta- or if you prefer para-language. So then no more than physics extends, like the goodness of God, to the whole of nature, does logic circumscribe the whole of language.

It nevertheless remains, as I have said, that either it is a delusion, absurd folly to dwell on it – this indeed in effect is the whole appearance that one has of it in these publications, most of them – to dwell on psychoanalysis, or what it states is that everything that you are, to be understood as up to now, as a sentient being – I did not say simply as a thinking being, even though after all there is no reason to have any repugnance for this term; is the fact of thinking the privilege of intellectualistic intellectuals who, as everyone knows, are the poison of this nether world, of this nether psychoanalytic world I mean – everything that you are as a sentient being falls under the influence of the consequences of discourse. Even your death, I mean the (24) quaint idea that you may have of it, is not separable from the fact that you can say it, and I mean by that not just to say it naively. Even the idea that I call quaint,

because in effect it does not have any great weight for you, that you have of your death is not separable from the maximal discourse that you may weave about it. This indeed is the reason why the feeling that you have of it is nothing but quaint. I would even say that naively, you cannot begin to say it. Because what I am alluding to, is not at all to the fact that primitive people are naïve and that is why they speak about it in such a funny way. That for them it is always a device, a poisoning, a spell that has been cast, a gadget that is not labouring somewhere, in short an accident, this does not at all prove that they speak about it naively. Do you find that that is naïve! It is quite the contrary. But it is precisely for that reason that they also fall under this law. The feeling they have about their death is not separable from what they can say about it, which was what had to be proved.

There is a person, like that, earlier, among those who might instruct themselves a little bit here and get rid of their nonsense, who left because she finds no doubt that what I am saying are banalities. Apparently it is necessary to say them; otherwise why would I take the trouble, after all I have just said, about the fact that a discourse has consequences or not. It had in any case as a consequence this leaving, which serves as a signal. This indeed is why it is essential that in psychoanalysis we should have some minds formed in what is called - I do not know why - “mathematical logic”, like that, through an old constraint, as if there were any other. It is quite simply logic. It happens that it has interested mathematics. This is all that distinguishes it from Aristotelian logic that very obviously did not interest mathematics. It is a progress for logic that it interests mathematics, yes! This mathematical logic, to call things by their name, is altogether essential for your existence; whether you know it or whether you do not know it. It is precisely because you do not know very much about it that things happen that stir things up from time to time, very recent things. People are waiting for me to talk about them, but I will speak about them, I will speak about them! It all depends on the time that I am going to spend in unfolding what I prepared for you today and I would like to have a little point, like that, to give you before leaving you. But it is not sure, because I never know too well. What I bring you is never absolutely measured out.

That is not where the question is. Whether you know it or whether you do not know it, the bizarre question is that obviously I have just alluded to the fact, since I told you

that whether you knew it or whether you did not know it, whether it has always been true that mathematical logic has consequences as regards your existence as a subject, (25) which I have just said are there whether you know it or whether you do not know it. Because then the question is posed, of how it could happen before the logic that is called mathematical came to birth? It is the question of the existence of God. I have already remarked it but I repeat – one cannot repeat oneself too much – was mathematical logic already there, in the divine brainbox, before in your existence as a subject, which would have thus been conditioned from that moment on, you were already affected by it?

It is a problem that has all its importance because it is around this that there takes effect this advance that a discourse has consequences. Namely, that something close to the effects of discourse was required for there to be born that of mathematical logic. And that in any case, even if something could already represent in an existence of a subject something that retroactively we can attach to some facts in this existence of the discourse of logic, it is quite clear, it ought to be firmly held that they are not the same consequences as since this discourse, I mean that of mathematical logic, has been put forward.

Here there is situated the necessary and the contingent in the discourse that is effectively held. This indeed is where I have trouble in seeing why the structural reference is supposed to overlook the dimension of history. It is simply a matter of knowing what one is talking about! History as it is included in historical materialism appears to me to conform strictly to structural requirements. Was surplus value there before abstract labour, I mean what this abstraction is separated out from, I mean as a social means, resulted from something that we will call – I am not guaranteeing the exactitude of the first word but I want to say a word that has weight – the absolutisation of the market. It is more than probable, and for a good reason which is that we have, for that, introduced the *surplus enjoying*. That one can consider that this absolutisation of the market is only a condition so that surplus value can appear in discourse. There was therefore required this thing that can with difficulty be separated from the development of certain effects of language, namely, the absolutisation of the market to the point that it encompasses labour itself, for surplus value to be defined in the fact that in paying with money or not, with money because

we are in the market, for labour, its true price, as the function of exchange value is defined in the market, there is an unpaid value in what appears as the fruit of labour, in a use value, in what is the true price of this fruit. This unpaid labour, even though paid in a correct fashion with respect to the consistency of the market, this, in the functioning of the capitalist subject, this unpaid labour is the surplus value. It is the fruit of the means of articulation that constitutes the capitalistic discourse from capitalist logic.

(26) No doubt, when it is articulated in this way this involves a claim about the *frustration* of the labourer. This involves a certain position of the “I” in the system, when this “I” is in the place of the worker, which is more and more generally the case. That this involves that is strange. This is what should be said. Because it is only the consequences of a perfectly well defined discourse, into which the labourer inscribes himself as a labourer, as “I”. I said “I” here. Notice that I did not say subject although I spoke about the capitalist subject. I am going slowly because after all I will come back to it, we will look at it again – except I hope those who leave in the middle! – and you will see that it is not for nothing that I am saying here “subject”, and that there I say “I”. Because that will be found at a certain level, and at a level that must have functioned for a long time because it is that of my graph that I constructed more than ten years ago before an audience of donkeys. They still have not found where the “I” is on this graph! So then I will have to explain it for them. In order to explain it for them, I must prepare. We labour. It is work. Let us hope that I can tell you before the end how the labour, for us, at the level of this discourse, of the teacher, is situated. So then it is strange that this involves the idea of frustration, with the complaints which follow, the little reconstructions that are distinguished under the name of revolution. It is strange. It is interesting.

But I cannot from now on not articulate that at this precise point the conflictual dimension is introduced. It is difficult to designate it otherwise. I said that it was strange, and that it is interesting. That ought at least to encourage you to recognise it, no? I will designate it by this strange word, not less interesting but strange, which is the word truth. You know, the truth is not grasped just like that, huh! Of course I introduced it, like that, at one time, in its junction whose topology I tried to draw, in its junction with knowledge, because it is difficult to speak about anything whatsoever

in psychoanalysis without introducing this junction. This clearly shows the prudence that is necessary because God knows what has come back to me in this connection in terms of the idiocies that are doing the rounds!

We are going to try to approach it a little bit more closely and to see how the capitalist reality does not have such bad relationships with science. It can function like that, in any case for some time yet, to all appearances. I would even say that it accommodates itself to it not badly at all. I am speaking about reality, am I not? I did not speak about the Real. I spoke about what is constructed about the capitalist subject, what is generated from the complaint fundamentally made about the recognition – otherwise the discourse of Marx has no sense – called surplus value. This is properly the scientific incidence into the order of something that is the order of the subject. Obviously, at a certain level this does not accommodate itself badly at all (27) to science. People send into the spatial orbs objects that are quite well shaped as well as being habitable. But it is not sure that at a closer level, at the one where there is generated revolution and the political forms that it generates, something is entirely resolved on the plane of this frustration that we have designated as being the level of a truth. No doubt the labourer is the sacred locus of this conflictual element which is the truth of the system. Namely, that a knowledge which holds up all the more perfectly because it is identical to its own perception of being, is torn apart somewhere. So then let us take this step that is allowed us by the fact that what is at stake without any doubt is the same substance. Let us feel what is involved in the structural stuff and let us make our scissors' cut. It is knowledge that is at stake. It is in relation to it, in its scientific form, that I have just given a prudent appreciation about what is involved in the relations, in the two realities that are opposed in our political world.

Knowledge, even though earlier I seemed to begin my discourse from it, knowledge is not labour. It is worth labouring at sometimes but you can get it without labour. Knowledge, at the extreme point, is what we call the price. The price is sometimes incarnated in money, but just as much in knowledge! It is worth money and more and more so. This is what ought to enlighten us! The price of what? It is clear, the price of the renunciation of enjoyment. Originally it is through this that we begin to know a little bit. No need to labour for that. It is because labour implies the renunciation of

enjoyment that every renunciation of enjoyment is only accomplished through labour. An illumination like that comes to you provided you know how to hold yourself back, or to contain yourself, as I alluded to it the last time to define thinking.

A little moment of pause. You can perceive for example that the woman does not live on bread alone, but also on your castration, this for the males. After that you will be able to conduct your lives with more certainty. That is a use value, so it is!

Knowledge has nothing to do with labour. But in order that something should be clarified in this affair it is necessary that there should be a market, a market of knowledge that knowledge becomes merchandise. Now this is what is being precipitated. If you had no idea of it you ought at least to have a little suggestion of it, in seeing the form that things are taking, in seeing the atmosphere of a fair that for some time it took on in the University for example.

There are things like that, that I spoke about incidentally from other angles. There is no intellectual property, for example. That does not mean that there is not theft. It is even like that that it begins, property! All of this is very complicated. All of this only exists, of course, since lectures given abroad were paid for. I mean that one pays the foreigner. And even in France that is starting. It is from that moment that one can (28) discern what I once called, in an intimate circle, a heart lifting price (*prix haut-le-coeur*) to whoever shows himself to be specially in view in this sort of speculation. But all of this is only anecdote. Knowledge becomes a market not at all through the effect of corruption or the imbecility of men. You should understand for example that the Sorbonne, this has been known for a long time, is the elective place for this sort of negative quality, this sort of weakness. That was known everywhere throughout history. At the time of Rabelais, they were already swine. At the time of the Jansenists...it never fails, they are always on the right side; which means the wrong one! That is not what is new. That is not it! I looked for the root of what are ridiculously called the "events"; there was not the slightest event in this business. But I will explain this for you another time.

The very process by which science is unified in so far as it takes its node from a consequent discourse that reduces all knowledge to a single market, and this, for what we are questioning, is the nodal reference. It is starting from there that we can

conceive that there is something there also that *qua* paid at its true price of knowledge according to the norms which are constituted from the market of science, is nevertheless obtained for nothing. This is what I called *surplus enjoying*. Starting from knowledge, what is not new but is only revealed starting from the homogenisation of knowledge on the market, one finally sees that enjoyment is organised and can be established as *recherchée* and perverse. What is it then on this occasion that represents the discontent of civilisation as it is put? It is a *surplus enjoying* obtained from the renunciation of enjoyment, there being respected precisely the principle of the value of knowledge. Is knowledge a good [commodity?]? This is the question that is posed because its correlative is the following: *non licet omnibus* – as I already said – *adire Corinthum*. Not everybody has for all that access to *surplus enjoying*.

What is there then in this affair paid or not? Labour as we have seen above. But in this register what is at stake? What I already highlighted earlier as regards what emerges in terms of conflict from the function of plus value puts us on the path, and this is what I already called the truth. The way in which each one suffers in his relationship to enjoyment in so far as he does not insert himself into it only through the function of *surplus enjoying*, this is the symptom, and the symptom in so far as it appears from the fact that there is no longer anything but an average social truth, an abstract truth. This is what results from the fact that a knowledge is always paid no doubt in accordance with its true price, but below the use value that this truth always generates for other than those who are in the truth. This is what the function of the *surplus enjoying*, of the *Mehrlust* involves, this *Mehrlust* that completely mocks us because we do not know where it is ensconced. Good! That is why your daughter is (29) mute, my dear children, namely, why in May we had our squalls. A great “speaking out, *prise de parole*” as someone who does not have in my field a negligible place expressed it. Taking the floor, I think that one would be wrong to give to this taking any homology with the taking of any particular Bastille. I would say rather taking tobacco or coke. The fact is that it was positively the truth that was manifested on this occasion. A collective truth, and which must be seen in the sense that the strike did not resonate at all badly with this truth, is precisely this sort of relationship that welds the collectivity to labour. It is even the same. Because one would be completely wrong to believe that a chap caught up in an assembly line

works in it collectively in it. After all he is the one who does the work! In a strike, the collective truth of labour is manifested and what we have seen in May, was the strike of truth. There also the relationship to the truth was obvious. The truth was displayed on the walls. Naturally, you should remember at this moment the relationship that happily I had highlighted 3 months before that the truth of stupidity (*vérité de la connerie*) does not fail to pose the question of the stupidity of truth. There are even stupidities that have been said about Lacan's discourse. It reproduced it like that – it was by chance, of course – almost textually. This obviously depends on the fact that things extracted from their context may well be truths but that does not prevent them being stupidities. This indeed is the reason why what I prefer is a discourse without words.

The strange thing was what one saw in terms of a passionate questioning, the one that emerged in the soul of what I would call – I think that you will see there being profiled his silhouette – the communist priest, the one whose goodness does not have a limit either in nature. Receiving, with him, moral propositions, you can count on it, these are things that come with age. There was one that I pinpointed forever with the title of *Mudjer Muddle*. This is the name I gave him, I thought it up myself. It evokes the crocodile and the mud that he bathes in and the fact that with a delicate tear he draws you into his well-meaning world. I met *Mudjer Muddle* on the pavement of Boulevard Saint-Germain. He told me that he was looking for Marxist theory and that he was inundated – by what? By the happiness that all of this bathed in. But it never occurred to him that happiness could come from the strike of the truth. Who would not be happy of course; from the weight that it weighs on us at every moment of our existence, we can be aware of what is involved by no longer having anything but a collective relationship with it.

So then I do not depreciate the fact that these truths displayed on the walls were sometimes stupid. As I told you no one has remarked that they are also in my discourse. That is because in mine they frighten people. But on the walls they frightened people also. And it is indeed from this that it comes, so many stupid things give rise to an unequalled fear. When collective truth emerges you know that any discourse can clear out.

(30) There you are. Things have returned to order a little. But it is smouldering. That is why there is an outflow of capital. Well then! Since I have taken the risk today of giving my interpretation of what are called the events, I would like to tell you, you should not think for all that that this will stop the process. You would be wrong not to notice that, for the moment, there is even no question of it stopping, what I called the market of knowledge! And you yourselves are the ones who will act for it to become more and more established. The appearance in the reform of a notion like that of credits (*unités de valeur*), in the little bits of paper that you may be granted, the unit of value is that! It is the sign of what that knowledge is going more and more to become in this field, in the market that is called the University.

So then of course things ought to be followed very, very closely in order simply to map out there what is quite obvious that the truth may have its spasmodic functions here, but that this is not at all what will regulate for each of you your existence as a subject. Of what the truth, I reminded you of it the last time, the truth, my God, in a text, I was very kind, I made it state the most intelligent propositions that I could attribute to it. I loaned it what I say when I am not telling the truth. In other words, no discourse can tell the truth. The discourse that holds up, is the one that can hold up long enough without you needing to account for its truth. Wait there, with your backs to the wall, those who may present themselves to you by saying “psychoanalysis you know, huh, for our part we can say nothing about it.” It is not the tone you require if you want to master the world by a value called knowledge. If a discourse is slipping away you have only one thing to do, call it to account. Why? In other words, a discourse that is not articulated to say something is a discourse of vanity.

You must not believe that the fact of saying that all is vanity which is what I left you on the last time, is something other here than a lure on which, as I told you, I wanted you to leave with your souls in pain until I took up this discourse again. And as regards what is involved in those who posit as a principle an essential vanity of all discourse, this is what the one I hold will have to take up with you again the next time.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 27 November 1968

We arrived the last time at a point that requires me to give you today some clarifications that I would call topological. It is not something new to what I am introducing here. But it is necessary for me to link it to what, precisely, I introduced this year under this form that designated the relation of knowledge to something, certainly more mysterious, more fundamental. To something that runs the danger of being taken to have the function of background as compared to the field of a form, while what is at stake is something quite different. I am talking about enjoyment (*jouissance*). It is only too obvious that enjoyment is of course the substance of everything we speak about in psychoanalysis. Through it we know well that it is not formless. Enjoyment has here the significance of allowing us to introduce this properly structural function, that of the *surplus enjoying*. This *surplus enjoying* appeared, in my last talk, in function of a homology with respect to the Marxist surplus value. Homology, clearly means – and I underlined it – that the relation is not one of analogy. It is indeed the same thing that is at stake. It is a matter of the same stuff in so far as what is at stake is the scissors' mark of discourse.

Am I making myself understood?

If it is quite true that what is involved here in mine – because everyone who has followed for a sufficient time what I am stating here sees what function this relation of *surplus enjoying* to surplus value turns around – it is the function of the **o**-object. If in a certain sense I invented this **o**-object as one can say that the discourse of Marx invents, what does that mean, it is the lucky find of surplus value, this is not to say, of course, that it was not approached before my discourse. And it was called, but in a

frankly inadequate way, as inadequate as was the definition of surplus value before the discourse of Marx made it appear in its rigour. But the important thing is not to underline this equivalence in the order of the importance of the discovery. The important thing is to pose the question of what we can think of the very fact of the discovery if, first of all, I define it as an effect of discourse. Because it is not a matter of theory in the sense that it might overlap something that at a given moment, may become apparent. The \mathbf{o} -object is an effect of analytic discourse and, as such, what I say about it is only this very effect.

(32) Does this mean that it is only an artifice created by analytic discourse? This is the point that I designate, which is consistent with the foundation of the question as I am posing it, as regards the function of analysis. If the analyst himself were not this effect, I would say more, this symptom that results from a certain incidence in History, implying the transformation of the relationship of knowledge to this enigmatic foundation of enjoyment, of the relationship of knowledge in so far as it is determining for the position of the subject, there would be neither analytic discourse nor of course a revelation of the function of the \mathbf{o} -object. But the question of artifice, as you see clearly, is modified, is suspended, finds its mediation in this fact that, what is discovered in an effect of discourse, already appeared as effect of discourse in History. That psychoanalysis in other words, only appears as a symptom in so far as a turning point of knowledge in History – I am not saying the history of knowledge – a turning point of the incidence of knowledge in History is already there that concentrated, as I might say, to offer us, to put this function within our reach. I am speaking about the one defined by the \mathbf{o} -object. It is clear that no one, except one, my Italian translator whose modesty I will not offend, because she missed the plane this morning and is not here, who very clearly perceived, some time ago, the identity of this function of surplus value and the \mathbf{o} -object. Why were there not more? Why not more people to have stated it unless of course it may have happened that the matter was not communicated to me?

This is the strange thing. The strange thing that undoubtedly is tempered by grasping in real life as I do, it is my destiny, the difficulty of the progress of this analytic discourse, the resistance that grows in the very measure that it is pursued. And nevertheless is it not curious, since moreover here I have a testimony that after all

takes its value because it comes from someone who is of the youngest generation, is it not curious to see, through an effect, assuredly, that I will not designate as being that of my discourse, but as being that of the growing difficulty that is generated from what I called this absolutisation of the market of knowledge, I am able to touch very frequently, much more easily, in the coming generation, is my exchange with those who after all, through a little experiment of calculation, I was able to give the average age of, let us say with those who are 24 years old.

I would not go so far as to say that at 24 everyone is Lacanian! But surely that in a way, nothing of what I have been able to encounter over time, as they say, in terms of difficulties to make this discourse understood happens any longer, at least not at the same place as where I have to deal with someone or other – I am saying even being in no way a psychoanalyst – who approaches simply the problems of knowledge from their most modern angle and let us say has some openness to the domain of logic.... You want me to speak a little bit louder over there? You are making a little gesture, good, good.

(33) Also, since it is in this generation that people are beginning – I have echoes of it already, fruits, results – to study my *Ecrits*, and even beginning to produce what are called diplomas or theses, anyway, putting them to the test of a university transmission, I was able recently, and I was not at all surprised by it, to note undoubtedly the difficulty that these young authors have in extracting from these *Ecrits* what can be called a formula that is acceptable and classifiable in the pigeonholes that are offered to them. Assuredly, what escapes them most is what is in it, what gives it its weight and essence, which is no doubt what grabs these readers that I am always so astonished to know are so numerous, is the dimension of work which, so precisely, is represented there. I mean that each one of them, each one of the *Ecrits* represents something that I had to displace, to push, to transport in the order of this dimension of resistance which is not at all of an individual order. It is simply, because the generations, already at the time when I began to speak, were recruited already at an older level, were in this slippery relationship to knowledge, in a word, formed, anyway, in such a style that nothing, in itself, was more difficult than to

situate them at the level of this annunciating, denouncing experience that psychoanalysis is.

This indeed is why I am trying to articulate today, I am doing it in a certain hope that something can be connected up between what is offered to me in the attention of the younger generation and what is effectively presented as a discourse. Nevertheless, let there be no kind of expectation that this discourse can become an articulated profession of a position of distance with respect to what is really happening in the progress of analytic discourse.

What I am stating about the subject as itself an effect of discourse absolutely excludes that mine should become a system. While what constitutes its difficulty is to indicate, by its very process, how this discourse is itself determined by a subordination of the subject, of the psychoanalytic subject that I am here supporting with respect to what determines it and belongs to all knowledge. My position, as everyone knows, is identical at several points to what under the name of epistemology, poses a question that one could in a way always define as follows: what is involved in the desire that sustains in the most hidden fashion the apparently most abstract discourse, let us say mathematical discourse?

Nevertheless, the difficulty is of a completely different order at the level where I have to place myself for the reason that, if what animates mathematical discourse is uncertain, it is clear that each of its operations is constructed to scupper, to elide and stitch up again, to suture this question at every instant. And remember what already appeared here four years ago about the function of the suture. While on the contrary, what is at stake in analytic discourse is to give its full (34) presence to this function of the subject. This reverses, on the contrary, the movement of reduction in logical discourse which is perpetually centred, and in a way all the more problematic in that it is in no way permitted to us to supply for what is a flaw, except by artifice, and by clearly indicating what we are doing at the moment when we allow ourselves to designate this lack, effect of significance (*signifiance*) of something that, claiming to signify it, cannot be, by definition, a signifier.

If we indicate the signifier of \emptyset - $S(\emptyset)$ - it is in a way to indicate this lack, and, as I articulated on several occasions, this lack in the signifier. What does that mean? What does this lack in the signifier represent if moreover we can admit that this lack is something specific to our misguided destiny? There we designate the lack. It has always been the same, and if there is something that puts us in relationship with History, it is to conceive the degree to which, for so much time, men have been able to protect themselves from it. But this is not the question that I have come to raise before you today; on the contrary, I told you, it is a matter of topology. If there is a formula that I repeated these days, these times with insistence, it is the one that roots the determination of the subject in the fact that a signifier represents it, represents it for another signifier.

This formula has the advantage of inserting into the simplest, the most reduced connection, that of a signifier 1, S_1 , to a signifier 2, S_2 , $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$. This is what we must start from in order not to lose, no longer be able to lose for a single instant the dependency of the subject. The relation of this signifier 1 to this signifier 2, all those – and it is not at all rare to be able to hope, from a certain moment – all those who have heard something about what is involved in logic, in what is properly involved in set theory, in what is called an ordered pair. Here I can only give an indication of it even if it entails giving a commentary on it later if a demand comes to me. This theoretical reference is nevertheless important to be attached here.

Nevertheless, what I am calling my discourse does not date from today or yesterday. I mean that as I announced the last time to you, there is something that our path leads us to the edge of. It is what is already constructed at the very level of experience and I would say of work, of the work that consists in bringing into my discourse, in an “I say” provoking those who want to overcome the obstacle that is encountered by the simple fact that this discourse, at one time, began in an institution that, as such is designed to suspend it. And I tried to situate, to construct this discourse in its fundamental relation to the relationship of knowledge in something that some of those who may have opened my book may have found at a certain page drawn under (35) the name of graph – ten years! Ten years already since this operation culminated in its coming to birth in the seminar of 1957-58 on *The formations of the unconscious*. And to clearly mark things in the real life situation that was in question, I would say

that it is through a commentary on the *Witz*, on the witticism as Freud puts it, on the witticism then I am saying that this construction began. In truth I did not work directly at referring myself to this discourse itself – to take up here the point at which I left it the last time – but much more to something that, it has to be said, without being perfect and even without bearing witness to singular carelessness, has the importance nevertheless of bearing witness that at a particular date, namely, this report, this summary was printed in the *Bulletin de Psychologie*. One can see in it that from that time, so prehistoric with respect to the emergence as such of the **o**-object that had not yet been designated – at this level which followed what I had done the previous year on object relations – that is not designated – but well and truly prefigured for whoever heard what followed – the **o**-object was only designated in the function of the metonymical object. Things are put in their place from that moment on and everyone can without referring to unpublished notes, find a testimony to it here in this report on *The formations of the unconscious* which covers in a first section the lectures of the 6th, 13th and 20th of November 1957. We find a first drawing which is presented as follows (figure 1).

In the clearest fashion it is here at that this line starts and culminates here at ; whether we put in or whether we do not put it in, it is clear that in looking at the drawing of this curve with this arrow at the end and this little pyramid at the start, there is no question of making it start here to go in the opposite sense. What matter, except for this detail, the testimony of the author of the summary retains its interest. Its interest above all in the fact to which he bears witness that if, since the matter has become banal, that this first outline of the graph has the function of inscribing somewhere what is involved in a unit of the signifying chain in so far as it only finds

its completion where it cuts again the intention at the future perfect that determines it. Namely, that, if something is established which is the meaning (*le vouloir dire*), (36) let us say that what is unfolded from the discourse will only be achieved by rejoining it, in other words only takes on its full import in the way designated here, namely, retroactively. It is starting from there that one can carry out a first reading of this relation to an O taken as Other, the locus of the code, namely, of what must already be supposed as a treasury of language in order for there to be extracted from it, under the seal of the intention, these elements that have been inscribed one after the other in order to unfold from there in the form of a series S_1, S_2, S_3 , in other words a sentence that is only completed when something is firmly realised in it.

What would be more natural, if only in a didactic fashion, than to have articulated then – and after all, why would I myself not tremble now when I think how long this march was – to have let myself then slip into such weakness. Thank God there is nothing of the kind. I read from the pen of the scribe of that time who, despite his carelessness nevertheless very well retained here what is essential: “*Our schema represents not the signifier and the signified, but two states of the signifier*”. The circuit, I am not going to repeat it for you in the way he states it because he states it wrongly, but it is obviously the following; the circuit designated as: ,
 “*represents the signifying chain in so far as it remains permeable to the effects of metaphor and metonymy, that is why we hold it to be constituted at the level of phonemes. The second line – it is the one you see drawn here whatever confusion is introduced into it by a bad mapping out on a schema that is poorly produced here, I am telling you simply almost at the level of literal designations – represents the circle of the discourse, common discourse constituted by semantemes that, of course, do not correspond in a univocal way to something of the signified but are defined by their use*”. You clearly sense the degree to which this, at the level at which I am constructing it, can be conditioned by the necessity of putting in place – even though it still had to be seen that this was the most evident access – of putting in place the *formation of the unconscious* in so far as it can produce on this occasion the *Witz*, what is involved in the formation of the word “*famillionnairely*”. Is it not obvious that this can only be produced in so far as there can be re-cut in a precise structurally definable interference something that operates at the level of phonemes with something that belongs to the circle of discourse, of the most common discourse?

When Hirsch Hyacinth – and it is essential here that it is not recounted here by Heinrich Heine the other H. H. – when Hirsch Hyacinth speaking about Solomon Rothschild says that he received him in ‘a quite familiar way’, familiarly comes into the circle of discourse, coming to say that he received him *famillionairely*. Namely, that there is inscribed there, that he brings into it supplementary phonemes, that he produces this priceless formula which does not fail to have an import, for anyone at all, this familiarity that, as Freud expresses it somewhere, does not fail to have (37) an aftertaste of millions. This is not a witticism, nobody will laugh if you express it in that way; if it is expressed, if it appears, if it makes a breakthrough in the form of *famillionairely*, laughter will not fail to be produced.

Why after all will it not fail? It will not fail very precisely because of the fact that a subject is involved in it. When it is a matter of knowing where to place it, and very obviously we can only here – as Freud himself articulates it – notice that the subject is always functioning in a triple register. There is a witticism only with respect to the presence of a third. The witticism does not hold up, as such, between one interlocutor and another. Namely, at the moment when Hirsch Hyacinth tells the thing to his pal, the latter sees himself as being elsewhere, as being ready to tell it to another third person. And effectively this tripleness is maintained when this other third person repeats it. Because in order for it to have its effect on the one to whom he is going to tell it, it is precisely in so far as Hirsch Hyacinthe here remains alone and questions from his place what is involved for the one who recounts it to the one towards whom the message is referred, namely, the new listener. Where is the sensitive point of this “famillionaireness” if not, very precisely in the fact that will escape each of those who transmit it. It is, namely, this novelty of the subject that I will not hesitate on this occasion to transplant into this field of the relation that I made intervene, that I introduced into our discourse under the term of capitalist subject. What is the function of each of those who pass between the links of the iron network that this constitutes and is insufficiently pinpointed by the notion of the exploitation of some men by others. All those who are not caught in these two extremes of the chain, what are they in this perspective if not employees? It is in so far precisely as each of the interlocutors feels himself, without knowing it, at the passage of this gentle fun of “famillionaireness”, involved as an employee or if you wish, as implicated in the tertiary sector, that this causes laughter.

I mean that it is not at all indifferent that it is Heinrich Heine who tells us that he got it from the mouth of Hirsch Hyacinth. But let us not forget that after all if Hirsch Hyacinth had existed, he is also the creation of Heinrich Heine. I already showed what the relations between Heinrich Heine and Baron Betty were, and that whoever is introduced from this angle into this something which appears to be only a point, a sally, a witticism, if he laughs, it is *qua* involved in this capture exercised, not just by something indifferent, a certain form of riches, certain modes of its incidence in a relation that is not simply that of social oppression, but of the involvement of every position of the subject in the knowledge that it commands.

But the interest of recalling the structure, in recalling that from this point on I distinguished here in a rigorous way the circle of discourse, (38) is indeed to show that in this way there was prepared the true function of what completes this first approximation of what is involved in discourse. Namely, that nothing can be articulated concerning the function of the subject if it does not to duplicate him with what seems, at another level, uniquely in virtue of the dimensions of paper, to be presented as a higher stage, but which is only there – one could just as

easily describe it upside down – in so far as it is precisely appended to this function of the big O which is the one that we have to question today.

We question it because there is no part of the discourse that, of itself, does not question it. I said in what well articulated way, so well highlighted by the analytic discourse itself in the way I introduced the hook as I might say, when I began to draw

it in this way, stitching onto this simplified graph a question mark on top of it. I called it “*Che vuoi?*” in a reference to the *Diable amoureux*. What does it want? What does the Other want? I ask myself.(Figure 2). This duplicity of

the relation to the Other which means we have here reduplicated what is presented as discourse or, let us say it in the more refined way, stating that is presented as demand, in a way that is perfectly well indicated here, that this barred subject put into a conjunction, the one defined by what I will call provisionally the diamond shape, , with the demand D, articulated as such (Figure 3). This is moreover what this text and this account bear witness to, that already, it is well and truly as demand that this line is constituted.

If here, what is contributed as homologous to the function $s(O)$, namely, to what is produced as subject-effect in the stating, here then, (39) the indication or the index $S(\emptyset)$ is now what we have not I would say to interpret for the first time, for I already did it in several forms, but to question again in the perspective that we are introducing today. We must therefore start again from the point that the subject is defined at the lowest point of what here is presented as a ladder, as being what a signifier represents for another signifier.

It is not simply through the superimposition of the function of the Imaginary on the Symbolic that I indicated here in my first schema the presence of the object then simply called metonymical object, to put it in correspondence with something which is its image and its reflection in e , in other words the ego, the image of o . The questioning about the desire of the Other is here the mainspring of Imaginary identification. It is apparently Imaginary, that is why I am putting it in red, but we are going to see it also is articulated in a symbolic way. Here as you know there appeared for the first time the formula of phantasy, in the form of \$ diamond \circ . (Figure 4).

If from this moment on it is clearly indicated that the chain that retroverts this one, , is the chain of the signifier, it is indeed because there is here already contained the relation of the signifier 1, S_1 , to this minimal form that I called the ordered pair to which there is limited the statement of the signifier as being what represents a subject, a subject for what? For another signifier. This other signifier in this radical connection, is very precisely what represents knowledge, knowledge then, in the first articulation of what is involved in the function of the signifier in so far as it determines the subject. Knowledge is this opaque term in which, as I might say, the subject loses himself, or again is extinguished if you wish and this is what the notion that I underlined by using the term *fading* always represents. In this relation, in this subjective genesis, at the start, knowledge presents itself as this term in which the subject has extinguished itself; this is the sense of what Freud designated as *Urverdrängung*. This so-called (40) repression that is said, explicitly formulated, not to be such, but as being this kernel already beyond the reach of the subject while at the same time being knowledge. This is what the notion of *Urverdrängung* signifies in so far as it makes it possible for every signifying chain to connect up with it, implying

this enigma, this veritable contradiction *in adjecto*, which the subject as unconscious is.

We have therefore sketched out here, from a very early or sufficiently early time in the articulation of this discourse that I find myself supporting in analytic experience, we have already put in question, interrogated, this question of what can be meant, at the level of discourse, of the formation of the unconscious, of the *Witz* on this occasion, who can say here: “I say”. Because I precisely distinguished, and this from the origin of this discourse, what is involved in discourse and the word. And the key formula that I inscribed this year at the first of these seminars, about what is involved in a discourse without words, the essence as I said of analytic theory, is indeed here to remind you that it is at this joint that there is going to be brought into play, this year, what we have to advance so that, in *From an Other to the other* who are we allowing to speak? It is not at all the word that is at stake here and I have not yet shown you, though already nevertheless I brought it into play by reminding you of the discourse that I attributed to this essentially ungraspable person that I called the Truth. If I made her say: “*Me, I speak.....*”, it is indeed, as I underlined, because it is a matter of something different to what she says. I am indicating it here to mark that it is in the background, that she is waiting for us as regards what we have to say about the function of discourse. Let us take it up again now and observe that what is involved in the signifying chain – always the same, I am drawing it again – is the relationship of the signifier to another signifier.

Let us be satisfied, it is an artifice of presentation – I have no reason to hide it here – that allows me to avoid an introduction along the path of set theory and the reminder – if I had to do it, I would have to do it in some articulated way – the reminder of this fact that at the first step, this theory stumbles over a paradox, the one called Russell’s paradox. Namely, what is to be done in a certain definition, that of sets, namely, what is closest to the signifying relation, a relation of connection. Nothing else is yet indicated in what the first definition of the function of signifier articulates, if not that it is the signifier 1, in a relationship that we can define as we wish, the simplest term will be that of belonging, the relationship of a signifier to another signifier. In this relationship we have said, it represents the subject $S_1 \quad S_2$. This so simple connection is enough to indicate to us if so many other traits did not indicate it to us,

to indicate to us that from mathematical logic, as several linguists have perceived, it is set theory that finds itself most able to treat it. I am not saying to formalise it, but to treat this (41) connection. I remind you, for those who have heard it spoken of a little bit, that the first step that is met with is that with this single condition of considering as a class – and this can even be proved – every element of such a connection in so far as one can write that it does not belong to itself, is going to involve a paradox. I repeat, I am only giving this introduction here to indicate the place, to develop it would make us rebound onto still more curious statements. Perhaps if we have the time or if we take it later on we will be able to do it.

I am going to proceed differently and only starting from my graph try to show you in a way, a formal one, what we are led to by the fact that we take the formula, the signifier represents the subject only for another signifier, that we take the elements that are offered us by the graph itself at the start, from here. It is S, a signifier that we are going to put here. If we take as other signifier this one constituted by O, if

we called it first of all big O, the locus, the treasury of signifiers, do we not find ourselves in a position to question the following arrangement: what is involved in posing as signifier of the relation itself the same signifier that intervenes in the relation? In other words, if it is important, as I underlined, that in this definition of the signifier there only intervenes the alterity of the other signifier, what are we going to be led to? Can it be formalised in a way that leads somewhere, by pinpointing from this same signifier big O, the otherness of O? What is involved in the relation? This way of posing the question – I say it also to reassure those that it may disturb – is not at all foreign to what constitutes the starting point of a certain phylum of formalisation in mathematical logic. This, at this level, would require me to develop sufficiently the difference constituted by the definition of a set as compared to the class. The question is so well posed in mathematical logic that it is a point where it is indicated in this logic that, would to heaven concerned us more closely, because the problems are

resolved in it. Namely, that the class of sets that contain themselves – you see here at least indicated an example of it under the form of this inscription – this class does not exist. But we have something different to do than mathematical logic.

Our relationship to the Other is a more burning relationship. And the (42) fact of knowing whether what emerges from the simple fact of the demand that the Other contains already in a way, everything it is articulated around, if it were simply a question of discourse. In other words if there were a dialogue, that very precisely, at the end of last year, I proposed here that there is not this dialogue, if then this Other could be conceived of as a closed code, one whose key you would only have to press for the discourse to be established without fail, so that the discourse can be totalised in it. This is what, in this rudimentary fashion, and in a way in the margin of set theory, I am questioning. In place of this S_I , I could have put a little b like that you would have noticed that it is a matter of b , a , ba . We are at the b , a , ba of the question. And from the ba you are going to see how it is dug out and this topologically. And this is how we have posed the question. It is clear that O in the ordered pair that constitutes this set is taken as identical to the O that designates it. We are therefore going to write as follows, the relationship of S with S in relation to big O , S (S O).

I substitute for this O what this O is in so far as it is the signifier of the set constituted by the relationship of S to O , a relationship of ordered pair. This is quite usual in any development of a set theory whose very foundation is the fact that every element is supposed to be able to be the set itself. You see then what happens. Starting from this process we are going to have a series of – I do not know what the circles that I am drawing are, they helped us to make the set and its designation as such function – we have an indefinite repetition of S without ever being able at the end to stop the withdrawal, as I might say, of the big O .

You must not get it into your head nevertheless that it is reduced, that it vanishes, as I might say spatially, that there is indicated here in any way something that constitutes whether it is of the order of an infinitesimal reduction of distance, or of some passage to the limit. It is only a matter of the ungraspability, even though it remains always (43) the same, of this O as such. This ungraspable character should not surprise us since we have made of this O the locus of the *Urverdrängung*. It allows us to see precisely that what I was questioning earlier, namely, what was involved in what is designated here as a circular drawing. It is in the measure that the O is multiplied in this way, simply from that fact, we can write it outside and inside, these circles are only indexing this identity. In other words, that this circle, pushed further in one direction, from which there emerges this notation of asymmetry will always in the final analysis join up with the starting circle. That this flight which ensures that it is in its own interior that an envelope finds its outside, this is what – you may or may not sense the kinship – what we have drawn in one of the previous years in the topological form of the projective plane and illustrated in a materialised fashion for the eye by the cross-cap. That the big O, as such, has in itself this flaw that one cannot know what it contains if it is not its own signifier, is the decisive question in which there is highlighted what is involved in the flaw of knowledge. To the degree that it is at the locus of the Other that there is appended the possibility of the subject in so far as it is formulated, it is most important to know that what guarantees it – namely, the locus of truth – is itself a locus that is holed.

In other words, what we already know about a fundamental experience that is not a random experience, an out of date production of priests, namely, the question *does God exist?* We perceive that this question only takes on its weight because precisely it depends on a more fundamental structure, namely, at the locus of knowledge can we say that in some way knowledge knows itself? It is always in this way that I tried, for those who listen to me, to displace this question that can only be the object of a wager about the existence of God, to displace it onto something that can be well and truly articulated. Namely, that however we support the function of knowledge, we are not able, it is a fact of experience, to support it except by articulating it in the signifier. Does knowledge know itself or is it gaping wide in its structure?

The circle that draws this shape that, more simply again, I mean O, for you to be able to find your bearings in it, I could - given this character that my drawing has of being a circle that rediscovers itself, but turned inside out, since what is most interior is connected up in order that a sense can be given to it as an index of the difficulty that is at stake - have referred myself, I said, to the Klein bottle, which I made enough drawings of here, I hope, for some people to remember it. What appears from it is what? It is that this structure, and in so far as you see, as we can give it some imaginary support - and this indeed is why we ought to be particularly sober - this structure is nothing other than the \mathfrak{o} -object. It is precisely because of that that the \mathfrak{o} -object is the hole that is designated in the Other as such, that is put in question for us in (44) its relation to the subject.

Because let us try now to hold onto to this subject where it is represented. Let us try to extract this S, this signifier that represents it from the set constituted by the ordered pair. It is here that it would be very simple for you to find yourself on familiar terrain, it is Russell's paradox. What are we doing here if not extracting from the set O the signifiers that we can say do not contain themselves. It is enough - and I will let you search in the first pages of any theory at all, naïve or not, of sets - it is enough for you to have consulted it to know that, in the same way as it is perfectly illustrated in the articulation of the sophism, the class of all the catalogues that do not contain themselves cannot in any way be situated in the form of a set for the good reason that it cannot in any way be recognised in the elements already inscribed of this set. It is distinct from it, I already went over this theme. It is well known. It is trivial. There is no way of inscribing in a set this something that you could extract from it by designating it as the set of elements that do not contain themselves.

I am not going to show it here on the board. It is enough simply that what results from simply posing the question of whether S is in O - in so far as contrary to it, it does not start from the fact, that as O, with respect to itself, it contains itself - by simply wanting to isolate it, you do not know, try it out, where to place it. If it is outside it is inside. If it is inside it is outside. In other words that in no way, for any discourse that posits itself as being essentially founded on the relationship of a signifier to another signifier, it is impossible to totalise it as discourse in the measure in which this is said and is posed as a question. The universe of discourse - I am

speaking here not simply of the signifier, but of what is articulated as discourse – will always have to be extracted from whatever field whatsoever that pretends to total it.

In other words, that what you will see being produced inversely to this schema, is that, in the measure that you question yourself about the belonging to the set of any S whatsoever first of all posited in this relation, the S will be necessarily excluded from the small **o**. And that the next S you question – I said small **o** that was a mistake – the next S that you question is the one reproduced in the relation S(O) that I here showed, reproduced, will also leave it. They will all leave it indefinitely given the essence of what is essentially metonymical in the continuity of the signifying chain. Namely, that every signifying element is extracted from any conceivable totality.

This, I apologise, to end, is no doubt a little difficult. But note that (45) in seeing this process being displayed with successive exits from envelopes that are never unfruitful, and not ever being able to be encompassed in it either, what is indicated, is that what is tangible in terms of the division of the subject emerges precisely from this point – that, in a spatial metaphor we call a hole, in so far as it is the structure of the cross-cap or of the Klein bottle – emerges precisely from this centre where the **o** is posited as absence.

This is enough to make you apprehend the continuation of the consequence that I will pursue as regards the graph and which may take on its full import as regards the place of analytic questioning between the chain of demand and the enunciating chain. Between the enunciating by which the subject only states himself as “he” and between what appeared not simply in terms of the demand, but of the relationship of the demand to the enunciating chain, as “I” and as “thou”. This will be the object of our next meeting.

Let us go to the heart of things because we are late and let us take things up by recalling on what, in short, were centred our last remarks about the Other, in short, about what I called *the big Other*. I ended by putting forward certain schemas, while sufficiently warning, I think, that they were not to be taken uniquely from their more or less fascinating appearance, but were to be referred to a logical articulation, the one properly made up of this relationship of a signifier to an Other signifier, $S_1 \quad S_2$, that I tried to articulate in order to draw out its consequences by starting from the function, elaborated in ~~set~~ theory, of the ordered pair. At least it was on this logical foundation that I tried the last time to make you sense this something that has a point, a point around which there turns the interest - the interest for all I hope - the interest that it should be well articulated, that the Other, this big Other, O, in its function as I already approached it, the Other enclosed no knowledge that one can presume, let us say, will one day be absolute. You see, there I am pointing things towards the future while ordinarily I articulate towards the past, that this reference to the Other is the erroneous support of knowledge as already there. Good! So then here I am highlighting - because in a moment we are going to have to say it again - I am pointing up the use that I made of the function of the ordered pair. Because I had, my God, something that could be called the good luck, to receive from a hand that I regret is anonymous, a piece of paper posing the question of explaining myself perhaps a little more about this use of the ordered pair that, no doubt, to the author of this note seemed a little precipitous, if not excessive. He perhaps does not all the same go that far - precipitous. I am not going to begin with that, but I take note to say that later then I will come back to it.

That the Other should be put in question, is extremely important for the continuation of our discourse. There is not in this statement, let us say first - this statement that the Other contains no knowledge that is either already there or to come, in an absolute status - there is not in this statement anything subversive.

I read something recently somewhere, at an ideal point that moreover will remain in its corner, as I might say, the term 'subversion of knowledge'. This term 'subversion of knowledge' was there, my God, advanced more or less under my patronage. I regret it because in truth I advanced absolutely nothing of the sort, and such slippages

can only (47) be considered as very regrettable and enter into this sort of shoddy usage that can be made of fragments that are not even very well detached from my discourse. A screwing together again of terms that my discourse, precisely, never dreamt of bringing together to make them function on a market which would not be at all happy if it took the turn of being used for university colonisation. Why should knowledge be subverted because it cannot be absolute? This pretension, wherever it shows itself, or wherever it has shown itself, it must be said, has always been laughable. Laughable, precisely, we are here at the heart of our subject. I mean that this new start made in the witticism in so far as it provokes laughter, it provokes laughter, precisely, in short, in so far as it is properly attached to the fault inherent in knowledge.

If you will allow me a little parenthesis, I will recall, I will recall somewhere in – I thought I still had 25 minutes when I began, thank God, to signal that I wanted a taxi to be called, so that I did not find exactly the page of the first chapter of the third part of *Capital, The production of absolute surplus value* and chapter V on *Labour and its valorisation*. It is there I believe that there are found a few pages, something that, make no mistake, I did not wait for the recent researches on the structuralism of Marx to pick out. I mean that this old volume that you see more or less coming apart in pieces, I remember the time when I read it in what was my transportation of that time, when I was 20 years old, namely, the Metro, when I was going to the hospital. And at that time, there was something that caught me and struck me, namely, how Marx, at the moment he introduces surplus value, he introduced a little more, a little surplus value, he did not introduce it, nor value, I am confusing you, but he introduces it and he introduces it after taking some time. Taking time like that, in a gentlemanly way, he allows the person involved, namely the capitalist, to speak. He allows him, in a way, to justify his position through what is then the theme. In any case the service that is rendered, in a way, by putting at the disposition of this man who only has, my God, his work, and at the very most a rudimentary instrument, his jointer, the lathe and the milling machine thanks to which he is going to be able to do marvels. An exchange of good and even loyal services. A whole discourse that Marx takes his time to develop, and what he signals, what struck me at that time, at the time of these good old readings is that he highlights there that the capitalist, a ghostly personage he is confronting, the capitalist laughs.

This is a feature that seems superfluous. It nevertheless seemed to me, it appeared from then on that this laughter is properly something that refers to what at that very moment Marx is unveiling, namely, what is involved in the essence of this surplus value. “My good apostle”, he says to him, “keep talking. The service as you understand it, if you wish, of putting the means that you find you have at the disposition of (49) the one who can work. But what is at stake, is that this labour, this labour that you are going to pay for, that he can fabricate with this lathe and milling machine, you will not pay him any more for it than for what he was doing with his jointer that I evoked earlier. Namely, what he would have been able to guarantee by means of this jointer, namely, his subsistence.” What is highlighted in passing, and of course not noted, about the conjunction of laughter with this relationship, this relationship here to a pleading that appears to be nothing but the most honest of discourses, is this relationship to this radically eluded function, whose proper relationship to this characteristic elision in so far as it properly constitutes the o-object, I already sufficiently indicated in our discourse

Here again, I am saying it because of not having been able to do so at the time when I began to construct the graph around the witticism, here is the fundamental relationship around which there still turns the shock, the forcing, a little more, a little less that I spoke about earlier, the conjuring trick, the hey presto that grabs our gut in the effect of the witticism. In short, the radical, essential function of the relation that is hidden in a certain relationship of production to work is indeed, as you see there as elsewhere, at another deeper point which is the one to which I am trying to lead you. Around *surplus enjoying* there is something like a fundamental *gag* that depends properly speaking on this joint into which we have to drive our wedge when what is at stake is this relationship that operates in the experience of the unconscious in its most general function. This is not to say – and here again I am going to take up something that may be used for risky formulae – this is not to say that there can in any way be a theory of the unconscious. In what I am doing, trust me, it is nothing of the kind that I am aiming at.

That there is a theory of psychoanalytic practice, undoubtedly, of the unconscious, no. Unless you want to pour in what is involved in this theory of psychoanalytic practice,

which what? In the unconscious gives us what can be taken up in this field in the field of this practice, but nothing else. To speak about the theory of the unconscious, is really to open the door to this sort of ridiculous deviation that I am hoping to prevent. This is what has been displayed already, for long years, under the term of 'applied psychoanalysis', and has allowed all sorts of abuse. To apply it precisely to what? In particular to the fine arts! In short, I do not want to insist any more, towards this form of tipping over or dumping on the edge of the psychoanalytic road, the one that ends up in a hole that I find dishonourable.

Let us take things up again. The Other only gives the stuff of the subject, or his topology or that through which the subject introduces a subversion certainly, but that is not only his own in the sense that I have pinpointed when I spoke about the subversion of the subject. The subversion of the subject with respect to what has been stated about it up to now, this is what is meant by this articulation in the title I put it into. But the subversion that is at stake is the one that the subject (50) introduces certainly, but that the Real sticks to, which in this perspective, is defined as the impossible. Now, there is no subject at the precise point where it interests us, except the subject of an assertion (*dire*). If I posit these two references, that to the Real and that to the assertion, it is to clearly mark that here that you may still vacillate and pose the question, for example, whether this is not what was always imagined about the subject. It is moreover also there that you have to grasp what the term subject states in so far as it is the effect, the dependent (*la dépendance*) of this assertion. There is no subject except of an assertion, this is what we have to correctly circumscribe in order never to detach the subject from it.

To say moreover that the Real is the impossible, is also to state that it is only the most extreme circumscribing of the assertion in so far as it is the possible that it introduces and not simply that it states. The flaw remains no doubt, for some people, that this subject would then be, in a way, a subject taking its worth from this discourse. That if would only be the deployment, a canker crossing in the middle of the world where the junction takes place that, all the same, brings this subject to life.

It is not just anything in things that makes a subject. This is where it is important to take things up again at the point where we do not tip over into confusion in what we

are saying - the confusion that would allow there to be restored this subject as thinking subject, any pathos whatsoever – about the signifier, I mean, through the signifier, does not of itself make a subject of this pathos. What this bathos defines is in every case, quite simply, what is called a fact. And it is here that there is situated the distance in which we have to question what our experience produces. Something different that goes much further than the being that speaks in so far as it is man that is at stake. More than one thing can suffer from the effect of the signifier, everything in the world that does not properly become a fact (*fait*) unless its signifier is articulated. Not ever, never, does any subject come unless the fact is said. Between these two frontiers is where we have to work. What cannot be said about the fact is designated in the assertion, by its lack, and that is the truth. That is why the truth always insinuates itself, but can be inscribed also in a perfectly calculated way where it simply has its place, between the lines. The substance of the truth is precisely what suffers from the signifier. That goes very far. What suffers from it in its nature. Let us say, when I say that this goes very far, this precisely goes very far in nature.

For a long time people seemed to accept what is called the spirit. It is an idea that got across in some little way. Moreover, nothing ever gets across as much as people think. In any case it got across a little because of the fact that it proves that there is never anything else at stake under the name of spirit than the signifier itself. Which obviously puts a lot of metaphysics out of sync. As regards the relationships of our effort to metaphysics, as regards what is involved in a putting in question that tends not to lose all the benefit of the (51) experience of metaphysics, something of it remains. Namely, the following which is indeed in a certain number of points, of areas more varied and better equipped than one might think at first approach and of very different qualities, it is a matter of knowing what ‘structuralism’ has to bring about. The question is raised in a collection that has just appeared, I got the first fruits of it, I do not know whether it is in circulation: “*What is structuralism?*” which we owe to the summons addressed to some people by our friend François Wahl. I advise you not to miss it, it brings a certain number of questions up to date. But undoubtedly this means that it is rather important to mark our distinction from metaphysics. In truth, we have, on this point, marked something that it is not useless to state, that one must not believe too much in what advertises itself as disillusion. The disillusion of the spirit is not a complete triumph if elsewhere it sustains the superstition that would

designate in an idealness of matter this very substance that one first puts into the spirit as impassible. I am calling it superstition because after all we know its genealogy. There is a tradition, the Jewish tradition curiously, in which one can indeed highlight what a certain transcendence of matter may be able to sketch out. What is stated in the scriptures, singularly unnoticed of course, but quite clear concerning the corporeality of God. These are things that we cannot develop today. It was a chapter of my seminar on *The name of the father*, which as you know [*the sign of a cross in the air*] I have definitively renounced, make no mistake. But in any case, this superstition described as materialist – one may well add popular, that changes nothing at all – deserves the share of love that everyone has for it, because it is indeed what has been most tolerant up to now of scientific thinking. But you must not believe that this will always last. It would be enough for scientific thinking to make people suffer a little in this quarter – and it is not unthinkable – for the tolerance in question not to last!

A sensitivity that is evoked already, my God, towards remarks like the ones I made one day before an honourable member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, that cosmonaut appears to me to be a bad name. Because in truth, nothing appeared to me less cosmic than the trajectory that was his support. A kind of disturbance, of agitation for such a gratuitous remark, my God, the properly speaking rash resistance, that it is not sure, after all – that is what I meant to say – that anything whatsoever, whether you call it God in the sense of the Other, or Nature – it is not the same thing – but it is indeed to one of these two aspects that there must be reserved, attributed a prior knowledge of the Newtonian law for people to have been able properly speaking to talk about cosmos and cosmonaut. This is where one senses the amount of metaphysical ontology that continues to find shelter even in the most unexpected places.

(52) What is important for us is what justifies the rule that sets up psychoanalytic practice, quite stupidly, the one described as free association. Free means nothing other than dismissing (*congédiant*) the subject. To dismiss the subject is an operation, an operation that does not necessarily succeed; it is not always enough to tell somebody to quit for him to go. What justifies this rule is that the truth, precisely, is not said by a subject but is suffered. Let us pinpoint here what we will call

phenomenological infatuation. I already picked out one of these tiny monuments that are displayed in a field where statements easily take on a patent of ignorance.

Essence de la manifestation, is the title of a book very well received in the university field, and after all I have no reason to give the author because I am in the process of qualifying him as a conceited ass. The essence of his own manifestation, in any case, from this title as well as the power with which at a particular page there is articulated that there is one thing given to us as certain, it is that suffering, for its part, is nothing other than suffering. I know, in effect, this always does something to you when you are told that! It is enough to have a toothache and never to have read Freud to find that rather convincing. Here after all is why one may think incidentally – but there truly I think that I am also a little traditional – why one may give thanks for such blunders (*pas de clerics*), make no mistake, to call them that, to promote, as one might say, what is not to be said, for one to clearly mark the difference to what there has to truly be said. It is a little bit too much of a justification to give to error and that is why I am signalling in passing that in saying this, I do not completely adhere to it. But for that, my God, I would have to re-establish what is involved in an apologia for sophists, and God knows where that would lead us.

In any case, the difference is the following. If what we are doing, we analysts, works, it is precisely because suffering is not suffering and to say what should be said one should say: “Suffering is a fact”. This seems to be saying almost the same thing, but it is not at all the same, at least if you have well understood what I told you earlier about what a fact is. Rather let us be more modest; there is some suffering that is a fact, namely, that conceals an assertion. It is through this ambiguity that we refute that it is unsurpassable in its manifestation, that suffering can be a symptom, which means truth. I make the suffering speak, as I made the truth speak in a first approach – the effects of discourse must be tempered – I made them say, although in terms not modulated in the same tone for the one and the other, *I speak*. I am recalling it since I came back to it recently.

Let us try to be more rigorous as we advance. Suffering has its language and it is quite unfortunate that anybody at all can say it without knowing what he is saying. But, in any case, that is precisely (53) the trouble with all discourse. It is from the moment that it is rigorously stated, since true discourse is a discourse without words,

as I wrote this year as a frontispiece, anyone could repeat it after what I have said to you. It no longer has any consequences. This is one of the risky aspects of the situation. Let us then leave suffering to one side and, as regards the truth, let us specify what we are going to have to focus on subsequently.

The truth, for its part, essentially speaks. It speaks "I" and you see defined there two extreme fields, the one in which the subject is only located by being the effect of the signifier, the one in which there is the pathos of the signifier without any mooring point yet being made in our discourse to the subject, the field of fact, and then what finally interests us and what was not even touched on anywhere but on Sinai, namely, what speaks "I". On Sinai – I apologise, that just slipped out – I did not want to rush on to Sinai but since it has come out I have to justify why. Some time ago, just around this little flaw in my discourse called *The name of the father* and which remains gaping wide, I had begun to question the translation of a certain – I do not pronounce Hebrew well – "Haye". I think that this is pronounced "Hacher Haye", what the metaphysicians, the Greek thinkers translated by "I am the one who is". Naturally they had to have being. Only that does not mean that. There are middle terms, I am talking about people who say: "I am who am". That means nothing; it has the blessing of Rome. I pointed out, I believe that it should be understood as "I am what I am". In effect, this has all the same the value of a punch in the face. You asked me my name, I answer "I am what I am and go and screw yourself". This indeed is what the Jewish people have been doing ever since that time.

Since Sinai came out there in connection with the truth that speaks "I", it was Sinai that came out of me! But I had already thought about the question. I did not think I was going to speak to you about it today. But in any case since it has happened, let's go. I think it must be translated: "I am what I is" (*Je suis ce que je est*). That is why Sinai slipped out of me like that. It is to illustrate for you what I intend to question around what is involved in the 'I', in so far as the truth speaks 'I'. Naturally the rumour will spread in Paris, in the little cafes where all the gossip takes place that, like Pascal, I have chosen the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. Let the souls from whatever quarter they are carried to welcome this news, put their emotion back in the drawer, the truth speaks "I" but the reciprocal is not true. Not everything that says "I" is the truth, without that where would we be?

This does not mean that these remarks are completely superfluous. Because you should clearly understand that in putting in question the function of the Other, and on the principle of its very topology, what I am disturbing -it is not too great a pretension, it is really the question on the agenda - is properly what Pascal called the God of the (54) philosophers. Now to put that in question is not nothing! Because all the same, up to the present, he has had a hard life. And in the way that earlier I made an allusion to, he remains all the same quite present in a whole load of modes of transmission of this knowledge when I tell you that it is not at all subverted, even and much more, by putting in question this Other who is supposed to be able to totalise it. This is the sense of what I contributed the last time.

On the other hand, whether he told the truth or not, the other God that we should pay homage to our Pascal for having seen that he has strictly nothing to do with the other, the one who says "I am what I is". That this should have been said had some consequences. And I do not see why, even without seeing in it the slightest chance of truth, we should not enlighten ourselves from some of its consequences in order to know what is involved in the truth in so far as it speaks "I".

An interesting little thing, for example, is to notice that because the truth speaks "I" and because the response is given to it in our interpretation, for us psychoanalysts, it is an occasion for noting that interpretation is not simply our privilege. It is something I already spoke about at one time under the title of *Desire and its interpretation*. I pointed out that in putting the question around the "I" in this way, we ought, even if only to take a warning or indeed umbrage from it, to perceive that from then on, interpretation ought to be better circumscribed. Because prophetism is nothing else. To speak "I" in a certain furrow which is not that of our suffering is also interpretation. The destiny of the Other is suspended then, I would not say at the question, I would not say at my question, at the question posed by psychoanalytic experience. The drama is that whatever may be the fate this putting in question reserves for it, what the same experience demonstrates, is that it is from the desire of the Other that I am (*je suis*) - in the two marvellously homonymic senses of these two words in French - that I follow (*je suis*) the trace. It is moreover precisely for that reason that I am interested in the destiny of the Other.

So then we have another quarter of an hour and the little note that I received goes as follows: “*Last Wednesday you related, without specifying, the ordered pair and a signifier represents the subject for another signifier, (S S)*”. That is quite true. That is why no doubt my correspondent put a bar underneath and underneath the bar “Why?” with a question mark. Underneath the why another bar, then marked by two big points or more exactly two little circles filled in in black. “*When the ordered pair is introduced into mathematics some force is necessary to create it.*” From this I recognise that the person who sent me this sheet knows what she is saying, namely, that she has at least a shadow, and probably more, of mathematical instruction. It is quite true. One begins by articulating (55) the function of what a set is and if one does not introduce into it, in effect, the function of the ordered pair by this sort of force that in logic is called an axiom, well then, there is nothing more to be done with it than what you have first defined as a set. In parenthesis, one adds on – either directly or indirectly – the set has two elements. “*The result of this force is to create one signifier that replaces the co-existence of two signifiers*”. This is quite correct. A second remark “*The ordered pair determines the two components, while in the formula a signifier represents the subject for another signifier, it would be astonishing for a subject to determine two signifiers.*” I only have a quarter of an hour and nevertheless I hope to have the time to clarify as it should be done, because it is not difficult, what I stated the last time, which proves that I did not state it adequately since someone, who as you can see is very serious, questions me in these terms.

I am therefore going to write on the board – whatever may be the inconvenience that was pointed out to me the last time about using the board which ought to be put there so that everyone can see what I am writing and that is not going to happen today given the difficulties that conditioned my arriving late – this: $\langle S_1, S_2 \rangle$ At no time did I subsume the co-existence of two signifiers into one subject. If I introduce the ordered pair, as my interlocutor surely knows, I write for example the following: $\langle S_1 S_2 \rangle$, these two signs by a lucky chance find themselves to be the two pieces of my diamond shape when they are connected up, these two signs only serve on this occasion to very specifically write that this is an ordered pair. The translation in the

form of a set, I mean articulated in the sense of the benefit expected from the force in question, is to translate this into a set whose two elements, the elements in a set being always themselves the set, you see there being repeated the bracket sign $\{(S_1), (S_1 S_2)\}$, the second element of this set $\{S_1, S_2\}$, an ordered pair is a set which has two elements, a set formed from the first element of the pair and a second set; they are then both one and the other subsets formed from the two elements of the ordered pair.

$$\{(S_1), (S_1, S_2)\}$$

Far from the subject here in any way subsuming the two signifiers in question, you see, I suppose, how easy it is to say that the signifier S_1 here does not stop representing the subject as my definition *the signifier represents a subject for another signifier* articulates it, while the second subset makes present what my correspondent call this “co-existence”, namely, in its broadest form this form of relation that one can call “knowledge”. The question that I am posing in this (56) connection and in the most radical form, whether a knowledge is conceivable that reunites this conjunction of two subsets in a single one, in such a way that they can be under the name of O, of the big O, identical to the conjunction as it is here articulated in a knowledge of the two signifiers in question.

That is why after having pinpointed by the signifier O a set of S means that I no longer need to put 1, 2.... because I substituted O for $\{S_1, S_2\}$. I questioned what followed from this as regards the topology of the Other and it is following this that I showed you in a way that was certainly too imaged to be logically fully satisfying, but whose necessity as an image allowed me to tell you that this succession of circles involuting in an asymmetrical way, namely, now always in the measure of their apparently greater interiority the subsistence of O, but in so far as this imaging might suggest a topology which is the one thanks to which the smallest of these circles comes to be joined to the largest in this figure and the topology suggested by such an imaging, makes of it the index of the fact that big O, if we define it as possibly including itself, namely, having become absolute knowledge, has this singular consequence that what represents the subject is only inscribed there, is only manifested there in the form of an infinite repetition, as you have seen there being inscribed under the form of this S, big S, in the series of inner walls of a circle in which they are indefinitely inscribed.

Thus the subject, by being inscribed only as an infinite repetition of itself, is inscribed there in such a way that it is very precisely excluded, and not by a relationship that is neither from the inside nor from the outside, from what is posited first of all as absolute knowledge. I mean that there is here something that takes into account, in the logical structure, what the Freudian theory implies as fundamental in the fact that originally the subject, with respect to what refers it to some fall of enjoyment, can only be manifested as repetition and unconscious repetition. It is therefore one of the limits around which there is articulated the link of maintaining the reference to absolute knowledge, to the *subject supposed to know*, as we call it in the transference with this index of repetitive necessity that flows from it which is logically the little *o*-object, the little *o*-object in so far as here its index is (57) represented by these concentric circles.

On the other hand, what I ended on the last time is the other end of the questioning that we have to pose to big *O*, to big *O* in so far as we impose on it the condition of not containing itself. Big *O* only contains S_1, S_2, S_3 which are all distinct from what big *O* represents as signifier. Is it possible that in this other form the subject can be subsumed in a way that, without rejoining the set thus defined as universe of discourse, can be sure of remaining included in it? This is the point perhaps that I passed over a little quickly and that is why to end today I am coming back to it.

The definition of a set in so far as it joins elements, means that there is defined as a set every point to which several others are attached. I take point because there is no more tangible way of imaging the element as such. These points, for example, are with respect to this one, elements of a set that this fourth point can only image starting

simply from the moment that we define it as element. Within the big Other then in which no O figures as an element, I can define the subject in this ultra- simple way in which it is precisely constituted, which seems to be exhaustive, by any signifier in so far as it is not an element of itself. Namely, that neither S_1 nor S_2 nor S_3 are signifiers like big O, that big O is the Other for all of them?

Am I going, as subject of the assertion – by simply putting forward this proposition that S, any signifier whatsoever, S_w meaning whatsoever, is not an element of itself – am I going to be thus able to assemble something which is this point here, namely, the set that connects all the signifiers thus defined, as I said, by an assertion (*dire*)? This is essential for you to remember for what follows. Because this “by an assertion” in other words, proposition, that around which we must first make the function of subject turn in order to grasp the flaw, because whatever use you subsequently give to a statement, even its use of demand, is because of having marked what, as a simple assertion, it demonstrates as a flaw, that you can most correctly, in the flaw of the demand, circumscribe in the stating of the demand what is involved in the flaw of desire.

Structuralism everywhere is logic, which means, even at the level at which you may question desire – and God knows of course that there is more than one way – there are types that bell, there are types that (58) shout, there are types that dramatise! And it is worthwhile! Simply you will never know anything about what that means for the simple reason that desire cannot be said. Of the assertion it is only the ending and that is why this ending must first of all be circumscribed in a pure assertion, there where lay the apparatus of logic can demonstrate the flaw. Now it is clear that what here has the role of the second signifier, in essence – here I call them S alpha, S beta, S gamma – the second signifier, the subject in so far as it is the subset of all the signifiers in so far as they are not elements of themselves, in so far as O is not O, what can we say about it?

We have posited as condition – let us take here to be simple the letters you are already more used to, namely, X is not an element of X. In order that something may be inscribed under the rubric of S_2 , the subset formed by this signifier for which the subject is going to be represented by all the others, namely, precisely the one that

subsumes it as subject, it is necessary for X, whatever it may be, to be an element of B here, the first condition is, that X is not an element of X and secondly, we take X as element of O, since the big O collects all of them. So then! What is going to result from this? Is this S_2 an element of itself? If it were an element of itself it would not respond in the way in which we have constructed the subset of elements in so far as they are not elements of themselves. It is therefore not an element of itself. It is therefore not among S alpha, S beta, S gamma. It is where I placed it in so far as it is not an element of itself. S_2 is not an element of itself. This is what I am writing here: $S_2 \notin S_2$.

Let us suppose that S_2 is an element of big O, what does that mean? It is that S_2 is an element of S_2 since everything that is not an element of itself while being an element of big O, we have defined as forming a part, as constituting the subset defined by X element of $S_2 \notin S_2$. It must therefore be written that S_2 is an element of S_2 , which we have (59) rejected earlier because the definition of this subset is that it is composed of elements that are not elements of themselves. What results from that?

For those who are not used to these sorts of reasonings which are nevertheless simple, I am picturing it, even though the picturing is here completely puerile. The fact is that S_2 not being an element of big O, can only be pictured here, namely, outside. This demonstrates that the subject in whatever way it intends to be subsumed, either from a first position of the big Other as including itself, or in the big Other by limiting itself to the elements that are not elements of themselves, implies something that, what? How are we going to express this exteriority in which I posited for you the signifier of

the subset, namely, S_2 ? This means very precisely that the subject, in the last analysis, cannot be universalised. There is no proposition that says in any way, even in the form of the fact that the signifier is not an element of itself, that what this defines is an encompassing definition with respect to the subject. And this also demonstrates not that the subject is not included in the field of the Other, but that what can be the point where it is signified as subject, is a point let us say “outside” the Other, outside the universe of discourse. To say, as I also heard being repeated as an echo of my articulation, that there is no universe of discourse, meaning that there is no discourse at all. It seems to me that if I had not sustained here a rather tight discourse, this is precisely what you would have absolutely no idea about. May this serve as an example for you and a support for our method and also a point of expectation for what the next time, 11th December, I hope we will succeed in pushing further in terms of this articulation into what interests us. Not simply in so far as, as psychoanalysts you are the living point of it, but also in so far as psychoanalysands you are looking for it.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 11 December 1968

I sometimes note, privately, little remarks intended for you. So then, in going through these papers I find one that is going to give me my starting point. “*What a pity*”, I wrote, I no longer know when, “*that God is used, by what we call the proscription of his name, to conceal*” – this took on the form of a prohibition precisely no doubt where people best knew what is involved in the function of this term, God, namely, among the Jews. You know that among them he has a name that cannot be pronounced – well then! “*this proscription, precisely, helps to conceal*”, I had started to say, “*a certain number of references that are absolutely essential for maintaining the “I” in a sufficient light, sufficient for it not to be able to be thrown (jeter) – there is a je in that – to be thrown to the dogs, namely, to professors*”.

Which is what I started from the last time in order, in short, as you have heard if not seen, almost despite myself, to push forward at first this “I” reference. Through the intermediary of the God in question I translated what was once put forward in the form: *Eye acher eye*, [Hebrew inscription], by “I am what I is, *je suis ce que je est*”. I told you then that I was myself a little bit overwhelmed by the way this stating that I justified, or believe I justified, came about as a translation. Then I said that, after all, Sinai emerged in spite of me from the ground between my legs. This time I did not receive a little note like the last time. I was expecting nevertheless that someone would point out to me that these words came from the burning bush. You see what the result would have been if I had told you that the burning bush had come out from between my legs. That is why the sentence orders itself, retroactively. It is indeed because I wanted to define it between my legs that I first of all put Sinai in the place of the burning bush. All the more so because after all, in Sinai, it is the consequences of it that are at stake. Namely, that, as I already remarked in the seminar on *Ethics*, the one who announced himself – in my assertion at least – as “I am what I is”, he, under the form of what ever since has been transmitted in the imperative of the list of the Ten Commandments that are said to be from God, did nothing, I explained it a long time ago, but announce the laws of “I speak”. If it is true, as I stated, that the truth speaks “I”, it appears to be self evident that: “You will adore the one who has said: I am what I is” and you will only adore him alone, by the same consequence: “You will love”, as it is also said, “your neighbour as yourself”. Yourself being nothing (62) other than that to which it is said, in the same commandments, what is addressed as a “thou” and even as a “Thou art” (*tu es*) whose really magical ambiguity in the French tongue I underlined a long time ago. This commandment whose underlying prelude is this “thou art” that establishes you as “I” is also the same slope offered to this “thou-ing [*tu-ant*]” that is present in every invocation. And you know that we are not far from the order to respond to it. The whole of Hegel is constructed to show what is built on this.

One could take them one by one, by passing, of course, by way of the one the lie, then subsequently to this prohibition on “coveting the wife, the ox, the ass of your neighbour” who is always the one who kills you (*qui te tue*). It is hard to see what else one could covet! The cause of desire being, indeed, precisely there. It should be pointed out that undoubtedly, through a solidarity that has a certain obviousness, there

is no word, properly speaking, except where the closure of one or other commandment preserves it. This clearly explains why, since the world has been the world, no one has exactly observed them. And that is why the word, in the sense that the truth speaks "I" remains profoundly hidden and only emerges to show a little tip of its nose, from time to time, in the interstices of discourse.

It is necessary then, it is necessary in so far as there exists a technique which trusts this discourse in order to find something there, a path, a way as they say which is presumed not to be unrelated, as it is put – but let us mistrust always the reverse sides of discourse – to truth and life. It would perhaps be well to question more closely what, in this discourse, is grounded as being able to initiate, give us a bridge towards this radical, inaccessible term, that with some boldness the last of the philosophers, Hegel, thought he could reduce to his dialectic.

For us, in an approach that I began to open up, it is before the Other - as allowing a logical failing to be circumscribed, as locus of an original flaw brought to bear on the word in so far as it might respond - that the "I" appears as, firstly subjected (*assujetti*). *a-sujet* I wrote somewhere to designate this subject, in so far as in discourse it is never produced except as divided. The speaking animal can only be embraced by the partner by being first of all subjected. It is because he has always been speaking, that in the very approach to this embrace he can only formulate the "thou art" (*tu es*) by killing himself in it, that he makes the partner other, that he makes of her the locus of the signifier.

Allow me here to come back for a moment to the "I is" (*Je est*) of the last time, since moreover, and from a well informed mind I saw coming back the objection that in expressing it in this way I was opening the door, let us say, to at least a reference to being. That this "is" was, at least by one ear, heard as an appeal to being. To being, (63) since according to the terminology of tradition, it depends on the fact that I state it – by reason of some order of nature, in the most original sense – as subsistent in this nature. Tradition constructs this supreme being in order to answer in it for all 'beings'. Everything changes, everything turns around the one who takes up the place of pivot of the universe, this *x* thanks to whom there is a Universe. Nothing is further from the intention of this translation than what I formulated, that to make understood,

I can take up again as “I am what I is”. Let us say that here the “is” is better read and that we come back to state what properly gives the foundation of the truth in the ‘I’ in so far as it simply speaks. These commandments that sustain it, as I said earlier, are properly anti-physical, and nevertheless there is no way, without referring to them, to tell the truth, as they call it. You should try! In no case! It is an ideal point, make no mistake. No one even knows what that means. Once you hold a discourse, what emerge are the laws of logic, namely, a subtle coherence, linked to the nature of what is called signifying articulation. This is what ensures that a discourse is sustainable or not, through the structure of this thing called the sign, that has to do with what is commonly called the letter as opposed to the spirit. The laws of this articulation are what first of all dominate discourse.

What I began to state in my presentation this year is this field of the Other in order to experience it as conceivable under the heading of the field of inscription of what is thus articulated in the discourse. This is not, at first, to give any incarnation to this field of the Other. It is starting from its structure that there can be defined the possibility of “Thou” that is going to reach us and appeal to something, in a third moment, that will have to say it is “I”. It is clear that what is going to show itself is what we are expecting, what we know well. This “I” cannot be pronounced, in all truth is always unpronounceable. This indeed is why everyone knows how cumbersome it is and that, as the laws of the word itself to which I referred earlier recall, it is preferable never to say “I swear”.

So then, before prejudging what is involved in the Other, let us leave the question open. If it is simply a blank page, even in this state, it will give us enough difficulties. Because what I showed on the board the last time, is that supposing you have written on this blank page, on condition that it is a page, namely, finite, the totality of signifiers, which after all is conceivable since you can choose a level where it is reduced to phonemes, it can be proved that on the single condition of believing that you can collect on it anything whatsoever about which you can announce this judgement - it is the subject, the term required (64) by this collecting – this choice will necessarily have to be situated outside this totality. It is outside the blank page that the S_2 , the one that intervenes when I state *that the signifier is what represents the subject for another signifier*. This other signifier, the S_2 will be outside the page.

$$R(x) = R: x \quad x$$

You must start from this phenomenon, that can be proved to be internal to every stating as such, to know everything that we can say subsequently about anything whatsoever that is stated. And that is why it is again worth while delaying on it for an instant.

Let us take the simplest statement. To say that someone announces that it is raining (*il pleut*), can only be judged, can only fully be judged by pausing at the fact that something emerges in that it is said that there is raining (*du "pleut"*). This is the discourse-event through which the very person who says it posits himself as secondary. The event consists in a saying; the one no doubt of which the "he/it" marks the place. But you have to be careful. The grammatical subject that, moreover, can present, depending on the tongue, distinct morphologies, that are not necessarily isolated. The grammatical subject here has a relationship with what I earlier called 'outside the field', more or less individualised as I have just recalled it. Namely, moreover, for example, reduced to an ending, "*pleut*". The *t*, this little *t* moreover that you will find wandering in all sorts of corners of French itself, why does it lodge itself here where it has nothing to do? In an *orne-t-il* [does he embellish], for example. Namely, where it was not in the conjugation. This grammatical subject then, so difficult to properly circumscribe, is only the place where something comes to be represented.

Let us come back to this S_1 in so far as it is what represents this something, and let us recall that when the last time we wanted to extract this S_2 from the field of the Other, as appeared necessary, because it could not maintain itself in it, in order to collect together the S alpha, S beta, S gamma in which we claim to grasp the subject. It is in so far precisely as in the field of the Other we have defined these three S's by a certain function, let us call it R defined elsewhere, namely, that x was not an element of x and that this $R(x)$ (Fig 5) is what transformed all the signifying elements on this occasion into something which remained undetermined because open, which took on, in a word, the function of a variable. It is in so far as we have specified what this variable must correspond to, namely, a proposition that is not an indifferent one, not, for example, that the variable must be good, or anything else whatsoever, or red or blue but that it ought to be subject, that there arises the necessity for this signifier as Other, that it cannot in any way be inscribed in the field of the Other. This signifier is properly, in the most original form, what defines the function described as knowledge. I will of course have to come back to this, because this place, even as compared to what was stated up to now as regards logical functions, is perhaps not yet sufficiently emphasised. To try to qualify the subject as such puts us outside the Other. This "puts us" (*nous met*) is perhaps a form of *noumen* that will take us further than we think.

Let it be enough for me here to question whether it is not true that the difficulties that come to us, in a logical reduction, from the classical statements, I mean the Aristotelian ones of the universal and particular propositions, come from the fact that people do not perceive that it is there, outside the field, the field of the Other, that there ought to be placed the "all" and the "some". And we would be less embarrassed in perceiving that the difficulties generated by the reduction of these classical propositions to the field of quantifiers results from this. Rather than saying that all men are good, or bad, or whatever, the correct formula would be to state men, or anything else, anything that you can provide with a letter in logic, are all good, or are some good. In short, that by putting the syntactical function of the universal and the particular outside the field, you will find fewer difficulties in reducing them subsequently to the mathematical field. Because the mathematical field consists precisely in working desperately to ensure that the field of the Other as such holds up. It is the best way of testing that it does not hold up. But to test it by articulating all the stages, because it is at many different levels that it does not hold up. The

important thing is to see that it is in so far as this Other is as they say technically, “consistent”, that stating turns into demand, this before anything whatsoever, that carnally may correspond to it, has even come to lodge itself in it.

The interest of going as far as possible in the questioning of this field of the Other as such, is to note in it that it is at a series of different levels that its failing is perceived. It is not the same thing, and in order to put it to the test mathematics brings us an exemplary field of experience, because it can allow itself to limit this field to well defined functions, arithmetic, for example. It matters little yet, for the moment, what in fact this arithmetical research reveals. You have heard enough (66) about it to know that these fields, even if you choose the most simple, there is great surprise when we discover, for example, that completeness is lacking. Namely, that one cannot say that anything whatsoever that is stated there can either be proved or can be proved not to be. But, more again, that in such a field, and among the most simple, it can be put in question whether something, some statement can be proved in it, that another level is outlined of a possible proof, that a statement cannot be proved in it. But it becomes very curious and very strange that in certain cases this step that can be proved itself escapes for something that is stated in the same field. Namely, that since it cannot even be affirmed that it is not provable, a distinct dimension is opened up, called the *undecidable*.

These echelons, not of uncertainty but of defect in the logical texture, are the very ones that may allow us to grasp that the subject as such might, in a way, find there his support, his status. In a word the reference that, at the level of stating, is satisfied by adhering to this fault itself. Does it not seem to you that just as, perhaps, - on condition that such a numerous audience would be so obliging - as perhaps we can make it felt in some construction, even if it entails, as already I did in connection with the field of the Other, abbreviating it, it may be, in a way, rendered necessary in a statement of discourse, that there could not even be a signifier there, as, it appears, one can do. Because in tackling this field from the outside, from logic, nothing prevents us, it appears, from forging the signifier by which there is connoted what is wanting in the signifying articulation itself. If this something could, and I am still leaving this in the margin, be articulated, and this has been done, that proves that this signifier with which a subject, in the final analysis, can be satisfied by identifying

himself to it as identical to the very lack of discourse, cannot be situated, if you will allow me here this abbreviated formula, are not all of those here who are analysts not aware that it is for want of any exploration of this order that the notion of castration, which is indeed what I hope you have sensed in passing to be analogous to what I am stating, that the notion of castration remains so vague, so uncertain and is handled with the thickness and the brutality that we know? In truth, in practice, it is not handled at all. People substitute for it quite simply what the other cannot give. People speak about frustration when it is something quite different that is at stake. On occasion, it is along the path of privation that people approach it, but as you see, this privation is precisely what participates in this defect inherent to the subject that it is a matter of approaching.

In short, I will only - to leave what today I am only tracing the outline of without being able even to foresee what between now and the end of the year I will manage to get you to tolerate - indicate simply, in (67) passing, that if something was able to be stated in the field of logic, you can, all those, at least, who here have some notion of the last theorems advanced in the development of logic, all of those know that it is very precisely in so far as this S_2 , in connection with a particular system, the arithmetical system for example, properly plays its function in so far as it is from outside that it counts everything that can be made into a theory within a well defined O . That it is in so far, in other terms, that a man of genius called Gödel had the idea of perceiving that it was by taking literally "it counts", that on condition of giving to each of the statements of the theorems as situatable in a certain field, their number called the *Gödel number* that something surer could be approached than had ever been formulated about these functions that I could only make an allusion to in what I have previously stated, when they are called *completeness* or *decidability*.

It is clear that everything is different from a time in the past when it could be stated that after all mathematics was only tautology, that human discourse can remain, because it is a field that, according to this assertion, is supposed to have come from tautology, that there is somewhere an O that remains a big O identical to itself. Everything is different from the time that this is refuted, refuted in the surest fashion. That it is a step forward, that it is something that has been learned and that for anyone who finds himself confronted in experience, in an experience which appears to us like

a transcendental aporia with regard to natural history as analytic experience does, we do not see the interest in going to find support in the field of these structures. Of these structures, as I said in so far as they are logical structures to situate, to put in their place this x that we are dealing with in the field of a quite different stating, the one that the Freudian experience allows and that moreover it directs.

It is therefore first of all in so far as the Other is not consistent that stating turns into demand and this is what gives its bearing to what in the big completed graph, the one that I drew here (Fig 6), is inscribed in the form of $\$ D$. All that is at stake is what is stated in a way that is not stated in what distinguishes any statement. The fact is that there is subtracted here this "I say that" which is the form where the "I" is limited. The "I" of grammar can be isolated outside any essential risk, can be subtracted from stating, and by this fact reduces it to the statement since this "I say that", by not being subtracted, leaves it whole and entire that, from the very fact of the structure of the Other, all stating, whatever it may be, becomes demand. Demand of what this Other is lacking. At the level of this $\$ D$ the double question is: *I ask myself (je me demande) what you desire*, and its double which is precisely the question we are highlighting today, namely: *I ask you, not who I am, but further again what I is (ce qu'est Je)*.

(68) Here there is installed the very knot, the one I formulated in putting forward that the desire of man is the desire of the Other. Namely, that, as I might say, if you take the vectors as they are defined on this graph, namely, coming here from the start of the pure signifying chain, in order here, from the cross roads designated by $\$ D$, with this return that completes the retroaction marked out here, it is well and truly at this point described as *d of O*, desire of the Other, that there converge these two

elements that I articulated in the form of *I ask myself what you desire*. It is the question plugged into the very level of the setting up of O. “What you desire”, namely, what you are lacking linked to the fact that I am subjected to you.

And on the other hand, I ask you what “I” is, the status of the “I” as such, in so far as it is here that it is established. I am marking in red this status of the “Thou”, constituted by a convergence, a convergence that does occur. If all stating as such, the indifferent stating of analysis, because this is how the rule posits it in principle, turns into demand, it is because it is radically, from its very function as stating to be demand, concerning the “Thou” and the “I”. As regards the “Thou”, it is a convergent demand, a questioning stimulated by lack itself in so far as it is at the heart of the field of the Other, structured from pure logic. This is precisely what is going to give its value and its bearing to what is outlined, just as vectorised on the other side of the graph. Namely, that the division of the subject is made tangible there as essential to what posits itself as “I”. To the demand of “What is I?”, the structure itself replies by this signifying refusal of O, as I inscribed it in the functioning of this graph. In the same way the “Thou” here, establishes it from a convergence between the most radical demand, the one addressed to us analysts, the only one that sustains in the final term the discourse of the subject. “I come here to ask you”. In the first phase, it is indeed “who I am” that is at stake even though it is at the level of “who is I” that the response is given. It is of course because logical necessity is what gives this step back (*recul*).

A convergence, then, of this demand and here, something of a promise, of something that, in S_2 is the hope of gathering together this “I”. It is (69) indeed what in transference I called the *subject supposed to know*. Namely, this prime conjunction, S_1 linked to S_2 , in so far, as I recalled the last time, in the ordered pair, it is it, it is this conjunction, this knot that grounds what knowledge is.

What does that mean? If this “I” is only tangible in these two divergent poles, one called what I here am articulating as the “no”, the refusal that gives form to the lack of the reply, and this something different articulated there as $s(O)$, this meaning, what is it? Because is it not tangible that the whole discourse that I am spinning out to give the framework of the “I” of the questioning from which this experience is established,

is it not tangible that I am pursuing it while leaving outside, at least up to this point that we have come to here, any meaning?

What does that mean? That after having formed you for long years to ground, on the differentiation of a linguistic origin, the signifier as material, from the signified as its effect, I am allowing it to be suspected, to appear here that some mirage lies at the source of this field defined as linguistic, the sort of astonishing passion with which the linguist articulates that what he tends to grasp in the tongue is pure form, not content?

Here I am going to bring you back to this point, that in my first lecture, I first brought forward before you, and not unintentionally, in the form of the pot. Nothing, those who are taking notes should know, is unpremeditated in what one could call, at first sight, my digressions. If I came back in an apparently digressive way to the mustard pot, it is certainly not without reason. And you may remember that I gave a place to the fact that, in the first forms of its apparition, it is to be strongly signalled, that there are never lacking, on the surface of this pot the marks of the signifier itself. Is there not introduced here something in which the "I" is formulated? The fact is that what sustains the whole of human creation, of which no image has ever appeared better than the work of the potter, is very precisely to make this something, the utensil, that pictures for us by its properties, that pictures for us this image that the language of which it is made – for where there is no language there is no worker either – that this language is a content. It is enough to think for a moment that this very fabrication is there to introduce the reference to this philosophically traditional opposition of form and content. It is not for nothing that in my first introduction of this pot I signalled that where it plays the part of an accompaniment to death in burial there is put this addition that properly speaking holes it. It is indeed in effect because its spiritual principle, its origin in language, the fact is that there is that there is somewhere a hole through which everything escapes. When it rejoins at their place those who have gone beyond, the pot for its part also, finds its true origin, namely, the hole that it was designed to mask in language. There is no meaning that does not leak away as regards (70) what a cup contains, and it is quite curious that I made this discovery that was certainly not made at the moment that I stated this function of the pot for you. Searching, my God, in what I usually refer myself to, namely, in the *Bloch et von Wartburg*, what is involved in a pot, I had, as I might say the happy surprise of

seeing that this term - as is testified, it appears, by lower German and Dutch with whom we share it - is a pre-Celtic term. Therefore it comes to us from afar, from the Neolithic no less. But there is better. It is that because of having this idea, at least to give it a little base, we ground ourselves on these pots that are found before the Roman invasion, or more exactly as representing what was established before it, namely, the pots that are dug up, it appears, in the region of Trier. *Bloch et von Wartburg* express themselves as follows: "We see inscribed there the word Potus". This is enough, for them, to designate the very ancient, because it is a usage that is at stake, that they indicate that Potus, hypochoristically, as they put it, can designate the makers. What matter! The only thing that is important for me is that when the pot appears it is always marked on its surface by a signifier that it supports. The pot here gives us this function distinct from that of the subject, in so far as in the relation to the signifier the subject is not a preliminary but an anticipation. It is supposed, *upokeimenon*. It is its essence, it is its logical definition, supposed, almost induced, certainly, it is not the support. On the contrary, we can legitimately give to the signifier a fabricated support and even, I would say, a utensil. The origin of the utensil in so far as it distinguishes the field of human fabrication is even properly speaking there.

The meaning as product, this is what serves, and as a lure, to veil from us what is involved in the essence of language, in so far as, by its essence, it properly does not mean anything. What proves it is that the assertion in its essential function is not an operation of meaning and this indeed is how we analysts understand it. What we are seeking is what, not from the Other, but outside the Other as such, suspends what is articulated from the Other, the S_2 , as outside the field. Here is the question of knowing what is involved in the subject, and whether this subject cannot in any way be grasped by discourse; here also is the justification for what can be substituted for it.

The sense of what is involved in castration is balanced with that of enjoyment. But it is not enough to grasp this relation as assuredly in what was manifested in a time that is close to us, of something in which at the same time this scream, need for truth, is an appeal to enjoyment. It is assuredly not enough to aspire to enjoyment without hindrances, if it obvious that enjoyment can only be articulated for every individual – himself included in language and the utensils – can only be articulated in this register

of remainder inherent to one and the other that I defined as the *surplus enjoying*. It is here that on 8th of January we will take up our discourse again.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 8 January 1969

(71) So then I wish you a Happy New Year, the New Year of '69. It is a good number! To open it, I am pointing out to you that on one or other occasion I always receive from some horizon a little gift. The last one, the one on this occasion, is a little article that appeared in the January 1st number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* in which there is an article entitled "Some extracts from the style of Jacques Lacan". In effect, huh, my style is a problem! This is what I could have begun my *Ecrits* with. It is an old article that I never re-read, which was precisely on the problem of style. Perhaps if I re-read it, it will enlighten me! Meanwhile, of course, I am the last one to be able to account for it, and my God, I cannot see why somebody else should not try. This has happened. It comes from the pen of a professor of linguistics and I do not have to judge personally the result of his efforts. I will make you the judge of them. In general, I rather had an echo that in the present context, where suspicion is thrown, in any case, in some out of the way places, about the general quality of what is dispensed in terms of teaching from the mouths of professors, one might think that it was perhaps not the time to publish this. It is not the most opportune moment. In any case, I have heard that some people did not find it very good.

Anyway, as I said to you, you can be the judge. For my part I am not complaining about it! I find it difficult to see how anyone could get the slightest idea in it of what I have spread as a teaching. Nevertheless, there is a point; I am supposed to have dared, it appears, to write somewhere: "Freud and me". You see that, huh, he doesn't think that he's a nobody! This has perhaps not quite the sense that the indignation of the author thinks he should give it, but it shows clearly the field of reverence, at least in certain domains, in which we live. Why, for this author who admits to not having

the slightest idea of what Freud contributed, should there be something scandalous that someone who spent his life at it should say “Freud and me”? I would say more, reverberating myself from this outrage to the degree of respect that I am reproached with here, I could not do otherwise than remember the anecdote that I quoted here, about the time when in the company of P’tit Louis, as I recalled, I spent some time in the most difficult way at the tiny industries that people on the coast live on. With these three excellent people whose names are still dear to me, I (72) did many things that I am going to pass over. But I also happened to have with P’tit Louis the following dialogue. It was, as I told you, about a sardine tin that we had just eaten and that was floating next to the boat, and P’tit Louis said these very simple words to me: “Hah, this tin, you see it because you are looking at it. Well then it, for its part does not need to see you to look at you”.

The relation between this anecdote and “Freud and me” leaves the question open of where I place myself in this couple. Well then reassure yourselves, I place myself always as the same place, at the place where I was, and where I still remain, alive. Freud does not need to see me in order to look at me. In other words, as a text I already quoted here states, “a living dog is worth more than the discourse of a dead person”, especially when this has come to the degree that it has reached of international rottenness.

What I am trying to do, is to give to Freudian terms their function in so far as what is at stake in these terms, is an overturning of the very principles of questioning. In other words – which does not mean, says the same thing – in other words what is involved here is the minimal requirement of the passage to this renewed questioning. The minimal requirement is the following, it is a matter of making psychoanalysts. Because this questioning, in order to be posed, requires the subject to be replaced in his authentic position, and that is why I recalled at the beginning of this year what position was at stake. It is the one that puts it from the beginning into one of dependency on the signifier. So then around this requirement, this fundamental condition, there is organised everything acceptable that is affirmed up to now whose elements existed in the first practice of analysis where people undoubtedly took into account word play and language play. And with good reason! This level, I simply took up again, legalised I might say, by laying hold of what linguistics provided in

this foundation that it brought forward called phonology, the operation of the phoneme as such. Because it was really necessary to see that what Freud had opened out quite simply found its status there, with some delay certainly, but obviously with less delay than that of the public in general, and at the same time psychoanalysts.

This is not a reason to remain there. This is why you see me, whatever might otherwise have been the degree of competence I previously showed in this use of what is, after all, only a part of linguistics, pursuing this work that consists in grasping everywhere already established disciplines offer the opportunity, pursuing this research that, from the level where it was really a matter of a coincidence, because it is really phonematic material itself that is at stake in the operations of the unconscious, pursuing it at the level where another discipline allows us to map out an isomorphism of approach between this status of the subject and what it develops, but that may just as well (73) reveal itself as covering an identity of material, as I already affirmed.

And what is this discipline? I would call it logical practice (*la pratique logicienne*) a term which does not seem to me a bad one to designate what exactly is involved, because it is from a place where this practice is exercised that it now finds what makes it necessary. But it is not inconceivable that it should find itself being brought to bear elsewhere. The place where effectively it is exercised, where something has happened that detached logic from the tradition in which, throughout the centuries, it remained enclosed, is the domain of mathematics. It is certainly not by chance, it was altogether foreseeable, unfortunately, subsequently, that it would be at the level of mathematical discourse that logical practice would find itself being exercised. What could be more tempting, in effect, than this place where discourse, I mean the demonstrative discourse, seemed to be based on a complete autonomy, an autonomy with respect to what is called experience. It seemed, it could not [?] have seemed that this discourse only took its certainties from itself, namely, from the requirements of consistency that it imposed.

What are we going to say about this reference? Are we going, in order to give a sort of image of this logic that has attached itself to the mathematical domain, to designate it as a recess of what would only be itself, in a certain style of thinking for

mathematics, also something separated off, even though sustaining the scientific current. Something that, with regard to a certain progress, would be that and then that again: *recessus*. It is an image, but an image that it is worthwhile exorcising because we are going to see that nothing of the kind is at stake.

It is an opportunity to recall that the recourse to the image to explain metaphor is always false. Any domination of metaphor by the image ought to be suspect, its support being always the specular, anthropomorphic body image, which is faulty. Because it is very simple to illustrate again that it is only an illustration, this image simply masks the function of orifices. Hence the value as an apologue of my holed pot on which I left you last year. It is quite clear that one does not see the hole in this pot in the mirror if one looks through the aforesaid hole. Hence the inverted value of this utensil that I only put forward, I recalled it also in leaving you, to indicate the fact that under these simplest, most primary shapes what human industry fabricates is constructed properly speaking to mask what is involved in the true effects of structure. It is with this name that I return - and my digression was constructed to introduce it - to this explicit distinction by recalling that form is not formalism. It happens in certain cases that (74) even the linguists - I am not speaking of course about those who do not know what they are saying - make little errors on this point. The author of whom I spoke earlier, who gives me no proof of his explicit competence, charges me with having spoken about Hjelmsev, which is precisely what I never did. On the contrary, the name of Jakobson, as far as I could see - because I read his article, as he puts it himself, diagonally - is remarkably absent, which no doubt avoids him having to judge whether yes or no the use that I made of the functions of metaphor and of metonymy is relevant.

To return to this crucial point about the distinction between form and formalism, I will try, because this is what is first necessary to illustrate it from some forms. It is very necessary for whoever is engaged as is the case for the psychoanalyst in the cuts that, by affecting a field to which the body is exposed, culminate indeed at the fall of something that has some form. Nevertheless, I would recall - to touch on one of these images that psychoanalytic experience isolates and one does not know how - the cup/cut (*coupe*) that contains the milk, the one that evokes its being taken inside out under the name of breast, the first of the **o**- objects, this cut is not the structure

through which the breast is affirmed as homologous to the sticking on of the placenta, because it is the same physiologically, and, unless the word comes into play, its reality. Only even to know what I have just said, namely, before this breast is implicated in the dialectic of the *o*-object, even to know what it is there, I mean physiologically, a rather advanced zoology is necessary. And this by the explicit use, otherwise it is not visible, of a classification whose relations to logic one would be wrong to minimise. Aristotelian logic has been reproached for having, with its use of the terms of genus, species, simply stuck onto a zoological practice the existence of individuals zoologically defined. One must be consistent and, if one states this more or less reprehensible remark, note that inversely this zoology itself implies a logic, made up of a structure, and of a logical structure, of course. As you see, it is the frontier between what every explorative experience already implies and what is going to be put in question about the emergence of the subject.

In mathematics, formalism will be brought out better in its function as cut. And in effect, what do we see as regards what is involved in the way it is used? Formalism in mathematics is characterised as follows. It is grounded on the attempt to reduce this discourse that I announced earlier, mathematical discourse, a discourse of which people have been able to say – and certainly not from the outside, it has also been said from the outside, it was what Kojève said but he was only taking it up from the mouth of Bertrand Russell – that this discourse has no sense and that one never knows whether what is said in it is true. An extreme, paradoxical formula regarding which it is worth recalling that it comes from Bertrand Russell one of the initiators of the logical (75) formalisation of this discourse itself. This attempt to take this discourse and to submit it to this test that we could define in short in these terms, to take one's assurance from what indeed it appears to be, namely, functioning without the subject. Because indeed to make even those who are not immediately with it sense what I am designating here, who then will ever speak, as regards what guarantees mathematical construction, of any incidence whatsoever of what can be detached from it as observer? There is no conceivable trace there of what is called "subjective error", even if it is here one can give the systems that allow it to be given a measurable sense elsewhere. This has nothing to do with mathematical discourse itself; even when it discourses about subjective error, it is in terms – I mean the terms of the discourse – for which there is no middle. They are exact, irrefutable, or they

are not so. Such is at least its requirement; nothing will be accepted that is not indispensable as such.

It nevertheless remains that there is the mathematician. The use, the search for the formalisation of this discourse consists, as I said just now, in assuring oneself that even if the mathematician completely evaporates, the discourse holds up of itself. This implies the construction of a language that is very precisely the one called rather appropriately then, as you see, mathematical logic. It would be better to say practice of logic, logical practice in the mathematical domain, and the condition for realising this test is presented in a double form that may appear an antinomy. On one point this language seems to have no other concern than to reinforce what is involved in mathematical discourse whose character I have just reminded you of, namely, to refine its unequivocal character. The second condition, and this is why it appears antinomical, is that this unequivocal concerns what? Always something that one can call object, naturally not an indifferent one. And that is why, in the whole attempt to extend this new logical practice beyond the field of mathematics – to illustrate what that means, I am speaking about Quine's book *Word and object*, for example – when it is a matter of extending this practice to common discourse, people feel themselves required to start from what is called object-language, which is nothing other than to satisfy this condition of a language without equivocation. An excellent opportunity moreover to highlight what I always put the emphasis on from the start of my reference to language. It is of the nature of discourse, of fundamental discourse, not simply to be equivocal, but to be essentially made up of the radical slippage of meaning, essential for any discourse.

A first condition then, I said, to be unequivocal. This can only be referred to a certain object aimed at, of course, in mathematics, not an object like others. And that is why, once Quine transfers the handling of this logic to the study of common discourse, he speaks about “ob” (76) language, stopping prudently at the first syllable! But on the other hand, the second condition is that this language must be pure writing. That nothing of what concerns it ought to be constituted only by interpretations. The whole structure – I mean that one can attribute to the object – is what constructs this writing. Hence there is nothing in this formalisation that is not posited as interpretation. To the nevertheless fundamental equivocation of common discourse

there is opposed here the function of isomorphism, namely, what constitutes a certain number of domains as falling under the capture of one and same written formula.

When one enters into the experience of what is thus constructed, if one takes a little trouble that I did not believe was unworthy of me to take, as the article evoked above seems to suppose, and if one approaches Gödel's theorem, for example – and after all it is within the reach of each of you, it is enough to buy a good book or go to some good places. We have gone multi-disciplinary, after all it is perhaps a requirement that did not emerge from nothing. It is perhaps from seeing the trouble one has from what is improperly called mental limitation – a theorem like this, moreover there are two of them, will tell you that as regards the domain of discourse that seems to be most assured, namely, arithmetical discourse, two and two are four all the same, there is nothing on which one is more securely based. Naturally people did not remain at that! Since that time, many things have been glimpsed, but which in appearance are only in the strict development of this two and two are four, in other words, that starting from there, there is a discourse that, to all appearances, can be called consistent. This means that when you state a proposition in it, you can say yes or no, this is acceptable, is a theorem, as they say, of the system. This one is not and is its negation which is, on this occasion, if one thinks one should take the trouble of making a theorem of everything that can be posited there as negative. Well then, this implies that this result is obtained by way of a series of procedures on which no doubt is brought to bear and that are called proofs.

The progress of this logical practice has allowed to be assured, but only thanks to the use of formalisation processes, namely, by putting into two columns, as I might say, what is stated from the first discourse of mathematics, and this other discourse subjected to this double condition of getting rid of equivocation and of being reduced to a pure writing. It is starting from there and only starting from there, namely, from something that distinguishes the first discourse, the one in which mathematics has boldly made all this progress and without having, a curious thing, to correct it epoch by epoch, in a way that ruins the acquisitions generally accepted in preceding epochs, in opposition to this discourse pinpointed on this occasion, and very wrongly in my view, by the term of meta-language – the use of this formal language (77) called, for its part, no less wrongly, language – because it is from something that a practice

isolates as a closed field in what is quite simply language, the language in which mathematical discourse could not properly speaking be stated. It is starting from there, I am saying, that Gödel shows that in this apparently most certain system of the mathematical domain, that of arithmetical discourse, the very supposed consistency of discourse implies what limits it, namely, incompleteness. Namely, that by starting even from the hypothesis of consistency, there will appear somewhere a formula, and it is enough for there to be one for there to be many others, to which it cannot, by the very paths of the accepted proof *qua* law of the system, be answered yes or no. The first phase, the first theorem.

The second phase, the second theorem. Here I must abbreviate. Not simply can the system, I mean the arithmetical system, not therefore assure its consistency except by making of it its very incompleteness, but it cannot, I am saying in the very hypothesis grounded on its consistency, demonstrate this consistency within itself.

I took a little trouble to get across here something that is not assuredly properly speaking our field, I mean the psychoanalytic field, if it is defined by some olfactory apprehension or other. But let us not forget that at the moment of telling you that it is not properly speaking about what the sentence implied that I am finishing with another subject, you see clearly where I land, on this vital point. Namely, that it is unthinkable to operate in the psychoanalytic field, without giving its correct status to what is involved in the subject.

What do we find in the experience of this mathematical logic? What, if not precisely this residue where the presence of the subject is designated? At least is this not what a mathematician himself, certainly one of the greatest, Von Neuman, seems to imply in making this rather imprudent reflection that the limitations, I mean the logically tenable ones, it is not a matter of any antinomy, of any of these classical mind games that allow it to be grasped that the term obsolete, for example, is an obsolete term. And that starting from there we are going to be able to speculate on the predicates that are applied to themselves and those that are not so applied, with all that this involves as a paradox. That is not what is at stake. What is at stake is something that constructs a limit that uncovers nothing, no doubt, that mathematical discourse has itself not discovered since it is on this field of discovery that it tests out a method that

allows it to question it about something that is all the same essential. Namely, up to what point can it account for itself, up to what point can its coincidence with its own domain be affected if these terms had a sense, while it is the very domain in which the notion of content had properly speaking been (78) emptied. To say with Von Neuman that after all this is all very fine because it bears witness to the fact that mathematicians have still a reason to be there, since it is with what presents itself there in its necessity, its proper *ananke*, its necessities of detour, that they will indeed have their role. It is because something is missing that the desire of the mathematician is going to come into play.

Well then, I think that here indeed Von Neuman is going a little too far. Namely, I believe that the term residue is wrong, and that what is revealed here about this function that already I have evoked from several angles under the title of the impossible has a different structure than the one that we have to deal with in the fall of what I call the \mathbf{o} -object. Much more, I believe that what is revealed here in terms of lack, even though no less structural, reveals no doubt the presence of the subject, but no other subject than the one that brought about the cut, the one that separated out the so-called meta-language from a certain mathematical field, namely, quite simply its discourse, the cut that separates this language from another isolated language, from an artificial language, from formal language. That is why this operation, the cut, is no less fruitful in so far as it reveals properties that are indeed the very stuff of the mathematical discourse, in that whether it is a question of whole numbers on the status of which you know people have not finished and that people will scarcely finish cavilling about for some time as to whether these numbers have such a place ontologically or not is a question that is totally foreign to the experience of discourse in so far as it operates with them and that can perform this double operation, 1) construct itself and 2) formalise itself.

We are far, no doubt, at first sight, from what interests us at the centre, and I do not know, given the little time that remains to me, how I can bring you back to it today. Nevertheless, allow me to recall rapidly, to sketch out here that the point that we had got to at the end of our last session was the following: the truth speaks "I". What about this "I"? If the "I" is here to be strictly distinguished from the subject that as you see one can somewhere can be reduced to the function of the cut, impossible to

distinguish from the one called unary trait in so far as it isolates a function of the One as simply unique, and simply a cut in numeration. The “I” is not for all that in any way assured, because we can say the following about it. That it is and that it is not according to whether, as subject, it operates, and that operating as subject, it is exiled from the enjoyment which for all that is no less “I”.

And it is here that I must remind you that in this graph (fig 6), constructed to respond very precisely to the constitutive questioning of analysis, what lies between the two lines called stating and stated, namely that, cut again by that of signifying material, by the elementary differential chain of phonemes, it allowed us to guarantee these four (79) crossing points whose status is given precisely in terms of writing. Here the \$ D, here the O, the field of the Other, here the small s of O, namely meaning, and here finally the big S of Ø, the signifier of something approached several times, but never completely elucidated called the O barred. You know that here, homologous to the imaginary return line that integrates the narcissistic relation into the field of the statement, homologous, I am saying, you have here, halfway incarnated in this written form what is necessary at the pure enunciating level which is the following, namely, what is articulated as \$ D, which means here as elsewhere, everywhere I write it, *demand*. Demand, not an indifferent one, “I ask myself”. And let us write here in this form, “what you want”, the desire of the Other, in this complete ambiguity that still allows there to be written “I ask you...what I want”, since my desire is the desire of the Other. There is no distinction here, except one induced by the very function of stating in so far as it bears in itself its sense as first of all obscure, as if all stating, as I already said, the most simple, only evokes its sense as a consequence of its own emergence. “It is raining” is a discourse-event and it is only secondary to know what it means about rain. Anyone at all is capable of evoking “It is raining” in a particular context. It can have very different senses. Do I need in this connection to recall that “Get out” does not sound the same everywhere as it does in *Bajazet*.

If there is something that is more important to map out from this graph than this discourse that accompanies it, it is the structural vectors as they are presented here at the level where the You, as dominating the I, as the you-ing (*tu-ant*) as I said at the level of the desire of the Other, the vectors that converge. It is around the desire of the Other that the demand of the discourse, of the discourse as we organise it in

analytic experience, of the discourse precisely that, under its aspect that fallaciously pretends to be neutral, leaves open the sharpest accent of the demand at its point. It is in a converging fashion around the desire of the Other that everything that is at the source, as the retroactive arrow indicated, everything that is at the source converges towards the desire of the Other.

(80) It is at the point that, as imaginary support, corresponds to this desire of the Other, what I have always written under the form of \$ \circ , namely, the phantasy, that there lies hidden this function of the "I". The "I" in so far as, contrary to the point of convergence called desire of the Other, it is in a diverging fashion that this "I" hidden under the \$ \circ , is directed under the form that precisely I called at the beginning that of a true questioning, of a radical questioning, towards the two points where there lie the elements of the answer. Namely, in the line on top, big S, which means a signifier, a signifier of the fact that O is barred, and which is precisely what I took, what I also gave you the trouble to have a support to conceive of what I am here stating. Namely, that the field of the Other does not secure, does not assure at any place, to any degree, the consistency of the discourse that is articulated here, in any case, even the most apparently certain.

And on the other hand, the lower line, a meaning in so far as it is fundamentally alienated. And it is here that you must grasp the sense of my starting this year with the definition of the *surplus enjoying* and its relationship with everything that one can call, in the most radical sense, the means of production, at the level of meaning, if already the pot, as I have pointed out to you, is only an apparatus to mask the

consequences of discourse, I mean the major consequences, namely, the exclusion of enjoyment.

You see that in this way there is put into this *Entzweiung*, the term is Hegelian, into this radical division which is the very one at which Freud's discourse culminates at the end of his life, the division of the "I" articulated as such. It is nothing less than that between these two terms, namely, the field where the Other in a way, in some imagining, for a long time that of the philosophers, could correspond to any truth and where precisely this is cancelled out by the simple examination of the functions of language. I mean that we know how to make intervene in it the function of the cut that answers "no!", no to the God of the philosophers. And that, on the other hand, on a different register, the one in appearance where enjoyment is waiting. It is there precisely that it is a slave, and in the same way people said that up to now that one could reproach psychoanalysis for overlooking the conditions in which man is subjected to the social, as it is put, without seeing that one is contradicting oneself. The materialism described as historical only has a sense precisely by grasping that it does not depend on the social structure since it affirms itself that it is on the means of production. Namely, only from that with which one makes things that deceive *surplus enjoying*. Namely, that, far from being able to hope to fill the field of enjoyment, are not even sufficient for what is lost in it, because of the Other.

I was not able, my God, as usual, to go any quicker than my own violins. Nevertheless, I can announce here where I intend to take things up the next time. I will tell you that it is not in vain that from (81) the mouth of the God of the Jews, what I held onto is "I am what I is". It is indeed here that it is time for something to be finally dissipated, something already clearly said by someone called Pascal. If you wish, perhaps this will help you to understand what I am going to tell you the next time, to read a little book that has appeared in Desclée de Brouwer under the title of *Pascal's wager* by a M Georges Brunet, who knows admirably well what he is saying. As you have seen earlier this is not true for every professor! But he for his part knows. What he says, moreover, does not go very far, but at least he knows what he is saying. On the other hand, it is a disentangling that is indispensable for you about what is involved in this little sheet of paper folded in four, that, as I already said, I already spoke about this, was found in Pascal's pockets, the dead Pascal. I speak a lot

about the dead God, it is probably to deliver us from many other relationships with others that I evoked earlier, my relationships with the dead Freud; that has a completely different sense.

But if you would not mind reading this *Pascal's wager* by Georges Brunet, at least you will know what I am talking about, when I speak about this text, which is scarcely a quarto, as you know. It is a writing that overlaps, that becomes entangled, that criss-crosses, that is annotated. It was a text for the pleasure, of course, of professors. This pleasure is brief, because they were never able to get absolutely anything from it.

There is something that is, on the contrary, quite clear, and it is with this that I will begin the next time. That strictly nothing else is at stake except precisely the "I". People spend their time asking whether God exists as if it were even a question. God is, there is absolutely no kind of doubt about that, that absolutely does not prove that he exists. The question does not arise. But it is necessary to know if "I" exists.

I think I will be able to make you sense that it is around this uncertainty, does "I" exist, that Pascal's wager is played out.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 15 January 1969

(83) I announced the last time that I would talk about Pascal's wager. It is a responsibility. I even learned that there were people who changed their timetable, who came to Paris one more time than they had planned. This is to tell you how heavy such an announcement is to bear. In any case it is certain that I cannot set out here to bring you, to give an exhaustive discourse about everything that has been stated about Pascal's wager. I am obliged then to suppose that you have a certain

rough knowledge of what is involved in Pascal's wager. I cannot properly speaking enunciate it again because, as I told you the last time, it is not properly speaking a statement that holds up. This is even what has astonished people: that someone who one is sure is capable of some rigour should have proposed something so untenable.

I think that I introduced sufficiently, just about sufficiently, the last time what justifies in general the use that we are going to make of it. But in any case let us not lose time in recalling it, you are going to see what this use is.

It is not the first time moreover for me to speak about it. On a certain day of February 1966, I believe, I already brought in this wager, and very precisely in connection with the *o*-object; you will see that today we are going to remain around this object.

Already those who remember – perhaps there are some of them, I am even sure of it – what I said at that time can clearly see what is at stake. It happens that I was asked to go to speak about it again in October 1967 at Yale. And I was so busy with the people who motivate this effort of teaching, namely, the psychoanalysts, that I missed the opportunity of speaking to the people at Yale; I did not know until much later that this created a little scandal. It is true, it was not very polite. We are going to try today to say what I could have said over there, without there being moreover any preparation at all to hear it.

But, let us begin right at the ground level, as if we were at Yale. What is at stake? In general, you must have heard tell of something that is stated and that is written several times in the text of what has been collected under the title of *Penseés*, Pascal's *Penseés*, and that at the start there is something rather risky in the use that is made of what is called the wager itself. As you know, these *Penseés*, were notes taken (84) for a major work. Only this work was never done, so it was done in his place. First of all a work was created – this is the edition of the Messieurs de Port-Royal – it is not at all a work that is badly done. They were pals, and as someone called Filleau de la Chaise who is not properly speaking a luminary but who is very readable testifies, Pascal had very carefully explained to them what he wanted to do and they did what Pascal had indicated. It nevertheless remains that this left out a lot of things in the statements that were written out in notes for the purposes of the construction of this work. So then others ventured on a different reconstruction. And then others said: "Since in

short as our culture advances, we perceive that the discourse, is not so simple a thing as that and that in putting it together, well, there is some loss” so then people set about making editions that were called critical, but that take on a completely different import when what is involved is a collection of notes. There again there was some difficulty. We have several editions, several ways of grouping these bundles as they say; that of Tourneur, that of Lafuma, that of X, that of Z. This does not simplify things, but be assured, it certainly clarifies them.

As regards the wager, it is quite separate. It is a little piece of paper folded in four. That was the interest of what I recommended to you, it was for you to grasp this. Since, in this book there is a reproduction of the piece of paper folded in four and then a certain number of transcriptions. Because this too posed a problem given that they are notes, written freehand, with different divisions, a lot of things crossed out, whole paragraphs written between the lines of other paragraphs, and then a utilisation of the margins with references. All of this moreover is rather precise and gives ample material for examination and for discourse. But there is one thing that we can take as certain, it is that Pascal never claimed that he made his wager stand up. This little paper must all the same have been close to his heart since everything indicates that he had it in his pocket, in the same place that I have here this device, this microphone, this absolutely useless thing. In general, you have heard tell of something that sounds like *to renounce pleasures*. This thing which is said in the plural is also repeated in the plural. And moreover everyone knows that this act is supposed to be at the source of something that might be called the Christian life. It is the background noise. Through everything that Pascal and others around him tell us in terms of an ethics, this can be heard in the distance like the sound of a bell. What we have to know is whether it is a knell. In fact, it is not all that much of a knell. From time to time it has a gayer aspect. I would like to make you sense that it is the very principle on which there is installed a certain morality that one can qualify as modern morality.

To make understood what I am in the process of putting forward, I am going to give a few reminders of what is effectively involved. The (85) reinvestment, as they say, of profits, which is fundamental, this again is what is called enterprise, the capitalist enterprise, to designate it in its proper terms, does not put the means of production at the service of pleasure. Things have even got to the stage that a whole aspect of

something that is manifested in the margins is, for example, an effort, a quite timid effort that does not at all imagine sailing towards success but rather casts doubt on what can be called our style of life. We will call this an effort to rehabilitate spending, and someone called Georges Bataille, a thinker in the margin of what is involved in our affairs, has thought out and produced on this point some quite readable works that are not for all that dedicated to efficiency.

When I say that it is modern morality, what I mean by that, is a first approach to the question, that looking at things historically, this is responding to a break. In any case, there is no reason to minimise it. This does not mean either that like every historical break, one must remain with it to grasp what is involved. And it is just as good to mark its time. The search for well being (*bien-être*) – I cannot insist a lot, because our time is measured out, of course, as always, on what justifies the use of this term. But in any case all of those who follow, even from time to time, superficially, what I say ought all the same to remember what I recalled in this place about the distinction between *Wohl, das Wohl*, there where one feels good, and *das Gute*, the good, in so far as Kant distinguishes them. It is quite clear that this is one of the core points of what I earlier called the break. Whatever may be the justification of Kant's statements, one must find in them the very soul of ethics, or indeed, as I did, illuminate by its relationship to Sade. It is a fact of thinking that this happened.

We have the notion for some time that the facts of thinking have a background, perhaps something that is already of the order of what I recalled. Namely, the structure that results from a certain use of the means of production that is in the background, but, as what I am articulating this year is proposing, there are perhaps other ways of taking it. In any case, by this well-being, I am aiming at what in the philosophical tradition is called *hedone*, pleasure. This *hedone*, as it has been used, presupposes that there corresponds to pleasure a certain relationship that we will call a relationship of the right tone, to nature of which we, men, or presumed to be such, would be in this perspective less the masters than the celebrants. It is indeed this that guides those who, let us say, from all antiquity, when they began, in order to ground morality, to take this reference point, that pleasure ought all the same to guide us along this path, that it is the original link in any case, that what is going to be at stake, is rather to pose as a question why certain of these pleasures are outside this correct

tone. It is a matter then of pleasuring, as I might say, pleasure itself. Of (86) finding a module with the correct tone at the heart of what is involved in pleasure, and to see what is in the margin and what appears to function in a perverted fashion and is nevertheless justifiable with respect to what pleasure gives the measure of. Something is to be noted, which is that one can quite correctly say that this perspective involves an asceticism, an asceticism to which one can give its escutcheon which is the following: not too much work.

Well then up to a certain moment, that did not seem to do the trick. But I think all the same, all of you in so far as you are here, see that we are no longer in this atmosphere because in order to obtain this “not too much work”, we have to make a ferocious effort! The strike, for example, that does not simply consist in folding one’s arms but also of starving at the same time. Up to a certain time, people never needed to have recourse to means like that. This is what clearly shows that something has changed for so many efforts to be necessary to have “not too much work”. This does not mean that we are in a context that follows its natural incline. In other words, the asceticism of pleasure, was something that scarcely needed to be stressed in so far as morality was grounded on the idea that there was somewhere a good and that it was in this good that the law resided. Things seem to be all of a piece in this sequence that I am designating.

Otium cum dignitate reigns in Horace, as you know – or you do not know; everyone knew it in the last century because everyone worked on Horace, but thanks to the solid education that you have received in the *lycée* you do not even know what Horace is. In ours, we are at the point when soon *otium*, namely, the life of leisure - naturally not our leisure which are forced leisures, you are give the leisure to go looking for a ticket in the Gare de Lyon, and then helter-skelter, and then you have to pay it, and then you have to transport yourself to the winter sports. There for a fortnight you are going to apply yourself to a solid *pensum*, that consists in queuing at the bottom of ski-lifts. You are not there to amuse yourself! The person who only does that, who does not work during his leisure time, is unworthy. *Otium*, for the moment is *cum indignitate*. And the further it goes, the more it will be like that unless there is an accident. In other words, to refuse to work, in our day, is something like a challenge. It is posed and can only be posed as a challenge. Excuse me for insisting

again. St Thomas, in so far as he formally re-injects Aristotelian thinking – I am only saying formally - into Christianity, can only organise, even he, St Thomas, who may appear to you, like that to be a little grey faced, he can organise the Good as sovereign Good only in terms that in the last analysis are hedonistic. Naturally, this must not be seen in a monolithic fashion, if only because all sorts of misunderstandings are introduced into these (87) sorts of propositions that were already obvious even when they reigned. And it is certain that to follow their trace and see how the different spiritual directors got out of them would imply a great effort of discernment.

What I want to do is simply to recall here where we are centred by the fact that undoubtedly there has been in this respect a radical displacement. And that for us the starting points can only quite obviously be to question the ideology of pleasure through what renders everything that sustained it a little out of date. This by placing ourselves at the level of the means of production in so far as, for us, these are what really condition the practice of this pleasure. It seems to me that I sufficiently indicated already earlier how one can put on one side of a page the publicity for the proper use of holidays, namely, the hymn to the sun, and on the other side the obligatory conditions of the ski-lift. It is enough to add to it that all of this happens completely at the expense of the simple arrangement of ordinary life and of the cankers of sordidness in the midst of which we live, especially in big cities.

It is very important to recall in order to perceive that in short, the use that we make in psychoanalysis of the pleasure principle starting from the point at which it is situated, where it reigns, namely, in the unconscious, means that pleasure, what am I saying, its very notion, are in the catacombs. And that Freud's discovery about this plays the function of the evening visitor, the one who comes from afar to find the strange slippages that have taken place during his absence. "Do you know where I found it, he seems to say to us, this flower of our age, this lightness, pleasure? Now it is panting in the underground *Acheronta*, says Freud, simply concerned to prevent everything exploding, by imposing a measure on all of these enthusiasts, by slipping into it some lapse or other, because if it worked correctly, where would we be?" There is therefore in Freud's pleasure principle, something like that, a power of rectification, of tempering, of least tension as he puts it. It is like a sort of invisible weaver that is careful that there is not too much heat in the wheels.

What relationship is there between that and the sovereign pleasure of contemplative *farniente* that we pick up in the statements of Aristotle for example? This may be of a nature – if I am coming back to it, it is not in order to be always be going around in a circle – to make us suspect that there is perhaps all the same here some ambiguity. I mean a phantasy that we must also be careful perhaps not to take too literally, even though of course the fact that it comes to us after so much drifting renders it no doubt very precarious to appreciate what it was in its time. This to correct what in my discourse, up to the point that I have got to, may seem to be like a reference to the good old days. We know that it is difficult to escape from it, but it is not a reason (88) either not to mark that we do not give it too much credence.

In any case, the presentation of pleasure, even in Freud, is struck by an admitted ambiguity, the one precisely of the beyond, as he says, of the pleasure principle. We are not going to develop things here. To be quit of it, we will say that Freud writes, “Enjoyment is fundamentally masochistic”. It is quite clear that this is only a metaphor, because moreover masochism is something at a level that is differently organised than this radical tendency. Enjoyment would tend, Freud tells us when he tries to elaborate what is at first only articulated metaphorically, to lower the threshold necessary for the maintenance of life. This threshold that the pleasure principle itself defines as an *infimum*, namely, the lowest of the heights, the lowest tension necessary for maintaining this. But one can fall still lower, and that is where pain begins and can only be exalted, if really this movement, as we are told, tends towards death. In other words, behind the affirmation of a phenomenon that we can hold to be linked to a certain context of practice, namely, the unconscious, it is a phylum of a completely different nature that Freud opens up with this beyond. No doubt it is certain that here the ambiguity as I have just stated it has not failed to preserve its agency, that a certain ambiguity is profiled between this theoretical death drive on the one hand and a masochism that is only a much more astute practice, but of what. All the same of this enjoyment in so far as it is not identifiable to the rule of pleasure. In other words with our experience, psychoanalytic experience, enjoyment, if you will allow me this to abbreviate, is coloured. There is a whole background, of course, to this reference. It must be said that with respect to space with its three dimensions colour, if we knew how to deal with it, could no doubt add one or two perhaps three to it. Because from

this note, you should note that on this occasion that the Stoics, the Epicureans, the doctrinaires of the reign of pleasure with regard to what is opened up to us as a questioning, this still remains black and white.

I have tried, since I introduced into our handling this function of enjoyment, to indicate that it is essentially a relationship to the body but not an indifferent one. This relationship that is founded on the exclusion at the same time inclusion and constitutes our whole effort towards a topology that corrects the statements accepted up to now in psychoanalysis. Because it is clear that at every stage people speak only of this – rejection, formation of the non-ego, I am not going to recall all of them for you – but a function of what is called incorporation and what is expressed as introjection, as if what were at stake was a relationship of the inner to the outer and not a much more complex topology. Analytic ideology, in short, as it has been (89) expressed up to now is remarkably awkward and this is explained by the fact of the non-construction of an adequate topology.

What must be grasped is that this topology, I mean that of enjoyment, is the topology of the subject. It is what *poursoit*'s our existence as subject. The verb *poursoir* is a new word that emerged just like that. I do not see why, after all the time that we have been speaking about *en-soi* and *pour-soi* one could not construct variations. It is extraordinarily amusing, for example you could write the *en-soi* like that, *anse-oie* or again *en-soie*. I will spare you. When I am all alone I have great fun! The interest of the verb *poursoir*, is that it immediately it finds little friends, *pourvoir* for example or again *surseoir*. You have to change the spelling if it is on the side of *surseoir* you have to write *pourseoit*. The interest is that if this helps to think out things and in particular a dichotomy: is the subject pursued against enjoyment? In other words does he test himself against it? Is he carrying on his own little game in the affair? Is he master when all is said and done or is he *poursised* to enjoyment? Is he in a way dependent on it, a slave? It is a question that has its interest, but in order to advance in it, you must start from the fact that in any case our access to enjoyment is commanded by the topology of the subject. And that, I assure you gives rise to some difficulties at the level of statements concerning enjoyment.

I speak from time to time with people who are not necessarily in the public eye but are very intelligent. There is a certain way of thinking that enjoyment can be assured by this impossible conjunction that I stated the last time between discourse and formal language. This is obviously linked to the mirage that all the problems of enjoyment are essentially linked to this division of the subject; but it is not because the subject is more divided that one will discover enjoyment. You must pay very careful attention to this. In other words, the subject creates the structure of enjoyment, but as far as we know, all that one can hope from it, are practices of recuperation. This means that what he recuperates has nothing to do with enjoyment, but with its loss. There was someone called Hegel who already posed these problems very clearly. He did not write “*pour-soi*” like me, and this is not without consequences. The way that he constructs the adventure of enjoyment is certainly, as it should be, entirely dominated by the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, namely, of the subject. But the error is there from the beginning as I might say and as such it cannot but have its consequences up to the end of what he says. It is very curious that in making this dialectic start, as it is put, from the relationship of the master and the slave, it is not manifest, and in a quite clear way from the very fact that he begins with, namely, the fight to the death, for pure prestige he insists, that this assuredly means that the master has renounced enjoyment. And since it is for nothing other than for the salvation of his body that the slave accepts to be dominated, it is hard (90) to see why, in such an explanatory perspective, why he should not be left with enjoyment. One cannot all the same have one’s cake and eat it. If the master has taken the risk at the start it is indeed because he leaves enjoyment to the other.

Do I have to indicate, to recall, to evoke on this occasion what the whole of antique literature bears witness to, namely, that to be a slave, was not as troublesome as all that. It spared you, in any case, many political difficulties. Please do not misunderstand. I am speaking about the mythical slave, the one at the start of Hegel’s phenomenology. And this mythical slave has his correspondents. It is not for nothing that in comedy – open Terence – the young girl destined for the final triumph of marriage with the nice daddy’s boy is always a slave. For everything to be correct and to make us look foolish, because it is the function of comedy, it happens that she is a slave but from a very good family. It has happened by accident! And at the end everything is revealed. At that point, daddy’s boy has put too much into it to be able

to say in all decency “I am not playing the game; if I had known that she was the daughter of daddy’s best friend, I would never have got involved with her!” But the sense of ancient comedy, is precisely that. It is to designate to us, when it is enjoyment that is at stake, that the daughter of the master of the allotment next door, is not the one that is recommended. She has something a little bit stiff about her, she is a little bit too attached to the patrimony that is attached to her.

I apologise for where these little fables take us, but it is in order to say that what historical evolution recuperates by freeing the slaves is of a different order. It frees them from something or other. But there is one thing certain. At every stage, it links them, at every stage of recuperation it links them to *surplus enjoying* which is, as I think I have sufficiently stated from the beginning of this year, something different. Namely, what responds not to enjoyment but to the loss of enjoyment in so far as from it emerges what becomes the cause conjugated by the desire for knowledge and this animation that I recently qualified as ferocious that proceeds from *surplus enjoying*. Such is the authentic mechanism, and it is important to recall it at the moment when all the same we are going to speak about Pascal, because Pascal like all of us is a man of his time.

Naturally the wager has to do with the fact that in the same years – and on these points of the sidelights of history, trust me, I have gone through everything that can be read. I simply signal to you that my friend Guilbaud has written in the reviews, I have only the offprint but I will try all the same to know where you can get it, some short, very short little articles that are quite decisive as regards the relationship of this wager. He is not the only one moreover. In Brunet’s book the (91) thing is also dealt with. The rules of games (*la règle des partis*) are something that one should say a lot about to show you its importance in the progress of mathematical theory. You should simply know that there is nothing more up to date with regard to what is at stake, for us, when it is the subject that is at stake. To interest oneself in what is involved in what is called a game, in so far as it is a practice that is fundamentally defined by the fact that it involves a certain number of events that take place within certain rules. Nothing isolates in a purer way what is involved in our relationships to the signifier. Here, in appearance, nothing else interests us than the most gratuitous manipulation in the order of combination. To pose the question, nevertheless, of what is involved in

the decisions to be taken in this field of the gratuitous, is designed to underline that nowhere does it take on more force and necessity. It is in this respect that the wager that is made in it takes on its importance, when we see that everything is lacking to it in terms of acceptable conditions in a game. The efforts of authors to rationalise it, in a way, with respect to what was in effect for Pascal the reference – but he was certainly the first to know it – and to demonstrate that it does not work, gives its value to the way Pascal's wager is handled. And there in the text of Pascal and taken up by the authors in a short sighted way that is here the most exemplary thing and of which one can say that after all the authors do us the service of showing how there is installed the impasse that they persevere in, this way of highlighting, with respect to this decision, the relationships of extension to what is at stake. Namely, on the one hand a life whose enjoyment one renounces in order to make of it, in exactly the same way as Pascal signals it in the study of what is called the rules of games, which is that when it is in play, it is lost. This is the principle of the bet, the bet on the other side, on the side of the partner, is what Pascal articulates, *an infinity of infinitely happy lives*.

I am signalling to you that here a point is opened up of whether this infinity of lives is to be thought of in the singular or the plural. An infinity of life, in the singular, does not mean very much except changing the sense that in this context, the context of the rules of games, the word infinity has. Nevertheless we are here at the mercy of the ambiguity of little sheet of paper. The word happy (*heureuse*) is not finished; why should the word life (*vie*) be complete? The 's' that may well also belong to it, the numeral aspect of a comparison promoted here, namely, the numeral relationship between the stakes, with something that has no other name than uncertainty and that is itself taken, as such, numerically. Pascal writes that with respect even to a chance of gain one may suppose an infinity of chances of loss. To introduce then as a numerical element of chance, while it was properly speaking excluded in what he stated about the rules of games, which in order to be stated involves an equality of chances, shows clearly that in any case it is on the numerical plane that the stake ought to be (92) measured.

I insist, because in this little paper, which is in no way something edited or in a definitive state, which is a succession of written signs that are made, it is moreover

stated at other points that to stake what is in question, namely, the fundamental uncertainty, namely, is there a partner. At other points Pascal states “there is one chance in two”, namely, God exists or does not exist, a procedure that we of course see to be rather untenable and has no need to be refuted. But can it not be seen that in this everything resides precisely at the level of uncertainty? Because it is quite clear that nothing is imposed by this calculation and that one can always oppose to the proposition of the wager “what I have I hold and with this life I already have enough to do”. Pascal lays it on and he says that it is nothing, but what does that mean? No, not zero, because there would be neither game, there would be no game because there would be no stake. He says that it is nothing, which is a completely different business, because this is precisely what is at stake when it is the *surplus enjoying* that is involved. And moreover if there is something that carries to the most essential, to the most radical point our passion for this discourse, it is precisely because this is what is at stake. The opposition no doubt still holds up. By betting in such a game, am I wagering too much?

And this indeed is why Pascal allows it to be inscribed in the argumentation of his supposed contradictor, a contradictor who moreover is nowhere except in himself because he is the only one to know the contents of his little piece of paper. But he answers him: “You cannot not wager because you are engaged”. And in what way? You are not at all engaged except if the fact that you have to take a decision dominates. Namely, what is in the game, in games theory as it is called in our day, which is only the absolutely direct continuation of what Pascal inaugurated in the rules of games where decision is a structure. And it is because it is reduced to a structure that we can manipulate it in an entirely scientific way. Only there, at this level, if you have to take a decision, whichever of the two it may be, if you are engaged anyway, it is from the moment that you are questioned in this way, and by Pascal. Namely, at the moment that you authorise yourself to be “I” in this discourse. The veritable ambiguity, the dichotomy is not between God exists or does not exist, whether Pascal likes it or not. The problem becomes of a completely different nature from the moment that he affirmed we do not know, not whether God exists, but neither whether God is, nor what he is. And therefore the business about God will be – our contemporaries have perfectly sensed it and have articulated it – a matter of fact, which, if you refer to the definition that I gave of fact, is a matter of discourse. The

only fact is one that is stated. And that is why we are entirely given over to the tradition of the book. What is at stake in Pascal's wager is the following. Does "I" exist or whether "I" does not exist, as I already (93) told you, at the end of my previous discourse. I have spent a time that was as it happens and perhaps I am a little bit too used to doing this, too much time introducing the core of what is involved, but I think that these premises were indispensable. This leads me then in a not particularly timely way to our cut today. You should know simply that contrary to what is believed, the wager is not on the promise but on the existence of the "I", something that can be deduced beyond Pascal's wager. Namely, if we put in its place the function of the cause as it is placed at the level of the subject, namely, the **o**-object. It is not the first time for me to write it thus, **o**-cause. It is precisely in so far as the whole wager has this essence of reducing this thing that is all the same not something that we can, like that, hold in the hollow of our hands, namely, our life of which after all we may have a completely different apprehension, a completely different perspective. Namely, that it comprehends us and without limit, and that we are here a place of passage, a phenomenon. Why should this not be sustained? It has been after all.

That this life should be reduced to this something that can thus be brought into play, is this not the sign that what dominates in a certain rise of the relationships to knowledge, is the **o**-cause. And it is here that in our subsequent steps we will have to measure what results, beyond this **o**-cause, in terms of a choice. To say *I exist o*, with regard to this relationship to the **o**-cause, a whole succession of consequences perfectly and immediately formalisable. I will do a calculation of it for you the next time. And inversely, the very fact of being able to calculate in this way the other position, the one that speaks in favour of seeking what is involved in the *I* that perhaps does not exist, goes in the direction of the **o**-cause, in the sense of what Pascal proceeds to when he invokes his interlocutor to renounce it, here for us there takes on its sense, the direction of a research that is explicitly ours, as regards psychoanalysis.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 22 January 1969

The most difficult thing to think about, is the One. That people strive to do so is not new. The modern approach is scripturist (*scripturaire*). There was a day when I extracted, to the astonishment, I remember, of one of my listeners who marvelled at it. “Ah! How did you manage to get your hands on that, *einziger Zug*”, which I translated in a way that has lasted as the unary trait. It is in effect the term with which Freud pinpoints one of the forms of what he calls identification. I showed at that time in a sufficiently developed way for me not to have to come back to it today, except simply to recall that in this trait there is the essential of the effect of what for us analysts, namely, in the field that we have deal with the subject, is called repetition.

This thing, that I did not invent, but which is said in Freud, provided only one pays attention to what he says, this is linked in a way that one can call determining to a consequence that he designates as the lost object. Essentially, to summarise, it is in the fact that enjoyment is aimed at in an effort of rediscoveries and that it can only be so by being recognised by the effect of the mark, that this mark itself introduces into it a blemish from which this loss results. A mechanism that is fundamental and essential to confront with what already appeared in a research that, after all, was pursued along the same path, concerning every essence and culminated at the idea, the pre-existence of every form and at the same time by appealing to this thing that is not easy to think out. This is Plato, it is reminiscence.

These points having been recalled, we are dealing with Pascal’s wager. Its relationship to repetition, I think, is not altogether unnoticed by many of you who are here. Why am I now going through Pascal’s wager? It is certainly not in order to sound clever, nor as a philosophical reminder, nor of the philosophy of the history of philosophy. What happens at the level of Jansenism, to recall the Pascalian context, is an affair that interests us precisely in this that the historian, as in many other things, is quite incapable of finding his bearings in it.

Read a little *Que-sais-je?* I apologise to its author for having forgotten his name, but I read the text from beginning to end, and naturally not to inform myself about Jansenism. Besides I will not say anything more about what is involved in my relationship to it, it would be too good an opportunity for you to precipitate yourself into the historical or (96) biographical determinations of my interests. In any case, some time ago, as it happens, I was able to get a grasp of it outside this sort of ghost that remains of it, namely, that they were people that are called rigorist, in other words who prevented you from living the way you wanted to. That is all that remains of it in effect, through one of these surprising effects of silting up that it must not be forgotten is also a dimension of history. But in reading this little book then, I was getting the testimony about what is said of it, simply by taking things precisely as the title of the collection indicates, at the level of *Que sais-je?* The author knows a lot of things. He starts from the origin, if indeed there was one, of the questions it gives rise to. He ends up at the point where it is drowned in the upheavals of the French Revolution, and he very nicely admits at the end that in the last analysis, you cannot really see, taking everything into account what Jansenism meant. Which is all the same, for a work of historical review, a rather curious but exemplary conclusion.

One thing appears in this history. It is that in taking it at the level of its historical recording, it begins as an affair among theologians. And moreover it is quite true that Jansenius is found to be the most representative of them, let us even say the most worthy to represent them, if only because of this exemplary thing which is that it appears that everything that was being stirred up at the epoch around the debate, about the contradiction and condemnations that followed it, the fundamental question, the one that almost none of the participants in the debate does not bring up, is: “And first of all you have not read him!” And it seems indeed in effect that the very great majority of those who were so passionate at that time, not only had not read him but had not even opened him. Some however, the two or three leaders, the Grand Arnaud must have read him; moreover was there any need to read him? People had read a lot of other things that were fundamental and in particular - before, well before this work that appeared posthumously, as you know perhaps, that is called *Augustinus*, by the person that I have just named, Bishop Jansenius - there was the thinking of St Augustine that one cannot deny is at the foundation of Christianity. In a word, the question is obvious once it is precisely Christianity that is at stake.

The measure in which Christianity interests us, I mean at the level of theory, can be measured precisely by the role given to Grace. Who does not see that Grace has the closest relationship with the fact that I, starting from theoretical functions that certainly have nothing to do with the effusions of the heart, designate as $d(O)$, the desire of the Other. Man's desire, I said at one time when, to make myself understood, I had to risk certain improbable words like Man, for example. I could have contented myself with saying, desire as it concerns you, this desire operates in the field of the Other in so far as it is articulated as the locus of the word. Who does (97) not also see what is implied, if what is stated here is correct, this relation orientated by the vector starting from $\$ D$ on the graph towards this desire, the desire of the Other to question it in an "I ask myself what you want" which is also balanced by an "I ask you what I want". Anything that tends in any manifestation of desire towards a "Thy will be done" deserves to be posited first of all, in any judgement – it is not necessarily the privilege of spiritual people – about what is the nature of prayer. Its inextricable intermeshing with the functions of desire could be clarified from it.

This *tutoiement*, [Thying], I have said, does not have a simple start, because at the level of the subject, the question of who is speaking remains intact. It is nonetheless essential to note that this Thy is addressed to a faceless Other. There is no need for him to have one at all for it to be addressed to him, if we know how to distinguish this field of the Other from the relationship to one's fellow. Now this is precisely what articulates its definition in my theory. The relationship, the knot, the link between the disputes about Grace, which it seems that those responsible by right, namely, the Church, at the time that we are speaking about, could not get out of in any other way except by prohibiting in a repeated fashion for two centuries that anything whatsoever should be articulated either for or against in this debate. This prohibition of course only made the struggle rebound and multiply the books and the pamphlets. This is something in which what concerns us is that this frenzy that some people say is purely intellectual is completely solidary to a movement whose incidences of fervour there is no question of contesting. Nor in this case the properly convulsive effects. And this was pinpointed at the time. However we may be able to gauge as psychopathological what happened on the tomb of a certain Paris deacon. And when, the doors were closed at the entrance of the cemetery, so that there could be written over them *By*

order of the king God is prohibited from doing miracles in this place the aforesaid convulsions continued elsewhere. It seems that even if it were only to pinpoint things in this ultimate consequence, we can see that this field is close to our own. And that after all, to take it in a way that is not altogether at basic, namely, “should they be interned or not?” we have all the same the right to try to articulate something and why not, in the freest, the most lucid, the most speculative way about the wager precisely of Pascal.

The *Name of the Father* – I am going to announce it like that at the start because it will perhaps be the best way to detach you from the effort of fascination that emerges from these confusions – the *Name of the Father*, that I am insisting on to say that it is not by chance that I was not able to speak about it, the *Name of the Father* takes on here a singular form that I am asking you to carefully locate at the level of the wager. This will change for you perhaps the haggling that the authors on this subject have usually devoted themselves to about whether it is worthwhile to wager. (98) What is worthwhile, is to consider how it is formulated from the pen of Pascal. I would say that this singular form, in the statement of what comes at the top of this little paper, this singular form is what I would call the absolute real; and the absolute real, on this little paper, is what is stated as heads or tails. Heads or tails (*croix ou pile*), it is not a matter of the cross, you can get that out of your heads. “*Croix ou pile*” was the way at the time of saying what we would call today heads or tails.

I want you to get the idea that if it is conceivable that we should arrive, at some point, at the final term of any science whatsoever in the modern sense, namely, by the operation of what is called a measure, it can only be very precisely at the point when what is to be said, is “heads or tails”, “it is that or it is not that”. It is what it is, there, because up to then, nothing confirms for us that we are not just measuring our own measures. It must come to a point, heads or tails, at which it is only the real that is involved as a check.

Pascal’s wager contains at its start something that is referred to this pole point, the absolute real. And this all the more in that what is at stake, is precisely something that is defined: that we cannot know *either whether He is or is not*. This is explicitly what Pascal articulates as regards what is at stake, which of course, at the level of the

wager, if the question of its act is posed, may well in effect be expressed by the question of the existence or not of the partner.

But there is not just the partner. There is the stake. And this is the interest of Pascal's wager. The stake, the fact that he can pose in these terms the question of our measure with respect to the real, the stake supposes that a step has been taken that, whatever the amateurs of historical ferreting out may say, namely, that already Raymond Sebond, Père Sirmond and Pierre Charron had brought up something of the order of this risk. Overlooking that if Pascal can advance in a fashion that makes it not at all a matter of chance that it has been so profoundly felt in the field of where it thinks, it is because he profoundly modified the approach of what is involved in the "I say", I mean of the I of the gambler. And this by proceeding as I might say to something that might be called an exorcism, the day he discovered the rules of games.

The resistances he encounters after having posed the problem of the just way to divide up the stake when, for some reason or other, necessary or by mutual consent, an interruption takes place during a game whose rules had already been given, the pivot of what allows him to settle it in such fruitful way, that it is through this that he articulates the foundation of what is called the mathematical triangle. This assuredly, of course, had already discovered by someone called Tartaglia. But he did not necessarily have to know that, moreover, besides, he draws different consequences from it. Because it is through it that he rejoins, takes up again and gives a new push to what, in the laws of the maximum and the (99) minimum in Archimedes, a prelude to what is going to be born from integral calculus. All of this rests on this simple remark, to settle what is at stake, which is that the essence of the game, in what it involves in terms of logic because it is regulated, depends on the fact that what is bet is lost at the start. While the question of the lure of gain distorts, refracts, in a way that does not allow theoreticians not to be weakened in their articulations, this initial purification allows there to be stated in a proper way what has to be done in order to carry out at every moment a sharing out of what is there at the centre as stake, as lost.

The question is interesting for us analysts, because it allows us to attach to it the essential motivation for the emergence of such a concatenation. If there is an activity whose starting point is grounded on the assumption of loss, it is indeed because what

is at stake in the very approach of any rule - namely, of a signifying concatenation, of an effect of loss - is very precisely what I have been trying to dot the i's of from the beginning. Because of course our experience, as they say, in analysis confronts us at every instant with this effect of loss. And if one does not grasp what is at stake, one attributes it, under the name of narcissistic wound, to an imaginary injury. This is how innocent experience testifies that this effect of loss is met with at every step. It bears witness to it in an innocent way, namely, in the most harmful way, by referring it to this schema of narcissistic wound, namely, from a relationship to one's fellow that on this occasion has absolutely nothing to do with it. It is not because some fragment that is supposed to be part of the body is detached from it that the wound in question functions, and every attempt at reparation, whatever it may be, is condemned to prolong its aberration. What is at stake, the wound, is elsewhere in an effect that at the start, to recall it, I distinguished from the imaginary as symbolic. It is in the gap that is produced or aggravated, because we cannot plumb how much of this gap was already there in the organism, of this gap between the body and its enjoyment. In as much as then, as I have said, what determines it or aggravates it, and it is only this aggravation that is important, is the incidence of the signifier. The very incidence of the mark, the incidence of what I earlier called the unary trait, which gives it its consistency.

So then what is at stake is outlined by measuring the effect of this loss, of this lost object in so far as we designate it by \mathfrak{o} , at this locus without which it could not be produced, at this still unknown, still unmeasured locus called the Other. What does it mean, that one must first take this measure of which it is enough to have the experience, indeed the passion for gaming to see its relationship with the way we function as desire. What is going to be involved between this proportion that we must now (100) measure? Well then, there is something very strange. This proportion, this measure, is already there in the figures, I mean in the written signs with which we articulate the very idea of measure.

We do not know anything, at this point, about the nature of the loss. I can behave as if we never give it any particular support. We give points, I will not say where we are able to scoop things out, where we get the wood shavings; but there is no need to know. As I said, on the one hand we only know the function of loss and on the other,

we undoubtedly do not know what is involved in the 1 because it is only the unary trait. This *not knowing* is only what we are happy to retain of it. And nevertheless it is enough for us to write $1/o$ in which the proportion is inscribed. Namely, that the relationship of this 1, determining for the effect of loss, is equal and should be, since it seems indeed that it is a loss that is at stake, to something in which there is connected by an additive “and” this 1 and the written sign of this loss, $1/o = 1+o$. Because such indeed in effect is the inscription from which there results what is involved in a certain proportion whose harmony, if it must be evoked, does not depend assuredly on aesthetic effects. Simply I would ask you, in order to measure it yourselves, to allow yourselves to be guided first of all by the examination of what is involved in its mathematical nature. The harmonies in question are not constructed by luck, from a lucky encounter. As I think the bringing together of the series that results from the recurrent function generated from this equality, as I think I can show you that one finds in it the characteristic note, that of **o**, in a whole other series generated from another starting point, but which interests us just as much. As you will see, it is the one that by taking things from another end would be generated from what we have called the *Spaltung* or the original division of the subject, in other words from efforts to make two disjointed units connect up. This is a field that must be gone through step by step.

It is necessary to write out in a clear way what is involved in the aforesaid series. We write it in the following form. We put here the **o** and here the 1, a direction, this direction only exists, I underlined it in passing, from the fact of our starting point. After the 1, we put $1+o$. After the **o**, $1-o$. The series is generated from the addition of two terms in order to produce the following term. So here we have:

o	1
1- o	1+ o
2 o -1	2+ o
2-3 o	3+2 o
5 o -3	5+3 o
5-8 o	8+5 o

(101) from which you can see that it does not fail to present some relationships with the opposite list. I pass on, I pass on because it is easy for you to check the fact that the continuation of these values represents a proportion that is maintained, namely, that $1+\mathbf{o}$ is to 1 as $2+\mathbf{o}$ is to $1+\mathbf{o}$. It is very exactly what is written in the initial formula. This might just as well be written:

$$1, 1/\mathbf{o}, 1/\mathbf{o}^2, 1/\mathbf{o}^3, 1/\mathbf{o}^4, \text{ etc....}$$

a number that, since \mathbf{o} is less than 1, will keep on increasing.

Here on the contrary you write $\mathbf{o}^2, \mathbf{o}^3, \mathbf{o}^4, \mathbf{o}^5, \mathbf{o}^6$ a number that as I repeat since \mathbf{o} is less than one, will always decrease.

Let us not leave our Pascal because, on the little paper where what he is working on is an articulation, therefore there is no need for it to be destined for someone else in order for the exchanges to have a value that is not persuasive but logically constructive. People have seen very clearly in our day that, for certain problems, there is a way to resolve them where the number of attempts counts. Namely, at the end of how many attempts one party has the last word. If he wins because of what one could call, but purely retrospectively, a mistake by the other party, it is clear that the test will consist in connection with the other party in a more risky response. But that, if the result is the same we can attribute to a logical articulation, I mean one that is accepted. It is enough to define it at the start, by way of a demonstration, which would be articulated as follows:

It is a pity that people forget at an epoch, ours, which has very well been able to codify the laws of this function of yes or no, refutable yes or no, and to notice that it opens up a greater field than the pure and simply demonstrable. It is in this way - I pointed it out, I already announced it, initiated it the last time - that Pascal's process, the one that first of all made him sound out with regard to a pure "heads or tails" what is rational in the engagement of betting something in life which is precisely not defined against something that is at least an infinity of lives qualified, without specifying what they mean, as indefinitely happy. But perhaps it would be

worthwhile, if we come after him, for us to re-question the (102) signs. We see that they are capable of delivering up something that necessarily specifies the sense.

This indeed is what we are in the process of carrying out at the level of these signs. And we perceive that if we lay hold of the \mathbf{o} whose value we still do not know but only what it generates as a series in its relationship to 1, we see a series, nothing more. And one might even say that the question of what is involved in \mathbf{o} and 1 as such, as terms set up in some way or other, even mathematically, does not have a sense. It is not like when it is a matter of defining whole numbers and what one can do with them, neutral elements. This 1 has nothing to do with the 1 of multiplication. Supplementary actions are necessary to put them to use. Nor is the \mathbf{o} . The \mathbf{o} and the 1 are everywhere, everywhere there is the relation of $1/\mathbf{o}$, namely, in the whole series. This is precisely the interest of starting from it because the only reason that requires us to start from it is that it is starting from them that we write. In any real whatsoever that appears to correspond to this scale, they have nowhere a place. Only without them we would not be able to write this scale. It is starting from it, from this scale, that I can allow myself to image, starting from another writing, also the most simple, we remain, it seems, within our limits, within those of the unary trait. Except for the fact that we are going to prolong it indefinitely, to try at least to prolong it indefinitely.

Here is the \mathbf{o} , here is the 1. We are not obliged to measure them for them to be correctly written. Here also, I think that you will excuse me for abbreviating and for saying that we project this \mathbf{o} onto this field considered in its function as 1. What we have just written indicates to us that what will be here will be \mathbf{o}^2 . The folding back of the \mathbf{o}^2 gives us here an \mathbf{o}^3 ; the folding back of \mathbf{o}^3 gives us here an \mathbf{o}^4 . I hope you are following. You see then that there is going to be added together by operations that go in a certain direction all the even powers of \mathbf{o} : $\mathbf{o}^2, \mathbf{o}^4, \mathbf{o}^6$. And that here there are going to be reproduced, because if we refer the \mathbf{o} , we will have \mathbf{o}^5 , the sequence of the odd powers $\mathbf{o}^3, \mathbf{o}^5, \mathbf{o}^7$.

(103) It is very easy to see that in this way, we will find at the converging meeting point of these powers, one even the other odd, the measure of \mathbf{o} as a total for all the even powers, \mathbf{o} itself being of course excluded. The measure \mathbf{o}^2 as a sum of all the odd powers of \mathbf{o} , \mathbf{o}^2 and \mathbf{o} giving a total of 1. Namely, that it is by this very operation of separated addition of even powers on the one hand and odd powers that we effectively find the measure of this field of the Other as 1, namely, something different to its pure and simple inscription as unary trait.

I only obtained this result by taking in isolation the proportional foundation of \mathbf{o} . But if I take its development in the sense of growth, you easily see that by simply adding these already growing powers, if I were to tell you what this gives, at the moment that we can add the $1/\mathbf{o}$ to some power until there has emerged \mathbf{o}^{100} . It is very easy to make a calculation, if you have a page, and this takes no more than ten minutes, not about what $1/\mathbf{o}^{100}$ is but the addition of the whole series. There are very well known and very easy formulae one can see that it is 2,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

I mean that in effect, in a sense, we find what? Nothing more wonderful than a series including a growth that is called infinite of whole numbers, but that is all the same in the final analysis of the order of what is called numerable. A series constituted in this way, which is called a geometrical progression, in other words described as exponential, remains numerable.

When I pointed out to you that it is only in a scripturist way that the point where the 1 and the \mathbf{o} lies is important for us, this is not to neglect its incidence now and to say that it is starting from some points that we see a difference. The decreasing infinity is the same in its generation. Only it culminates, instead of culminating at infinity since all the same we know a little bit more about infinity and we have learned to reduce this infinity of whole numbers to its proper and distinct value. Only on the other hand, as I showed you here, by beginning from there, because this has its interest, you

will have a limit, a limit that the series can approach as closely as possible, in a way less than any size that is chosen, however small it may be, namely, very precisely $1 + \mathbf{o}$.

The starting point of Pascal who in his notes writes simply *infinity-nothing* is in effect exactly the point where there lies at once his sureness (104) of touch and the really functional point from which everything that follows is determined. Because what he calls *nothing*, as moreover he indicates in the most explicit fashion in other notations of his, is simply that starting from a point, besides I told you any one whatsoever, we obtain in one direction, the decreasing direction, a limit. But it is not because it has a limit that it is less infinite. On the other hand what we obtain on the other side, namely, a growth that, for its part, has no limit, this does not specify this direction as more specifically infinite. Moreover, when Pascal writes *nothing*, it is not by chance; he himself suspects, that nothing is not nothing, that it is something that can be put on the scales, and very especially at the level that we have to put it in the wager.

But here does there not appear something, something that must be seen, that in the final analysis, if in the field of the Other there is stated a revelation that promises us, I repeat, an infinity of infinitely happy lives, I am sticking to their numerical statement. And for a while Pascal sticks to it also. Because he begins to ponder, one life against two lives, is that worth the trouble? But yes, but yes, he says; against three lives, still more; and naturally the more of them there are the more worthwhile it is!

Only we see this important thing, which is that in all the cases that we choose even when it is *nothing* that we lose we are deprived of a semi-infinite. This corresponds to the field of the Other and in the way that we can precisely measure it as 1 by means of the loss. As regards the genesis of this Other, if it is true that we can distinguish it from the 1 before the 1, namely enjoyment, you see that by having affirmed the $1 + \mathbf{o}$, by having done the addition of it with infinite care, it is indeed about \mathbf{o} in its relation to 1, namely, about this lack that we have received from the Other as compared to what we can build up as the complete field of the Other, it is from there, from the \mathbf{o} , and in an analogical fashion that we can hope to take the measure of what is involved in the 1 of enjoyment with respect precisely to this sum that is supposedly realised.

(105) We know that; we find that again, we analysts. The most characteristic, the most subtle form that we have given of the function cause of desire, is what is called masochistic enjoyment. It is an analogical enjoyment, namely, that at the level of the *surplus enjoying*, the subject takes on in a qualified fashion this position of loss, of waste product that is represented by \circ . And his whole effort is to constitute the Other as the field simply articulated in the style of this law, of this contract which our friend Deleuze has so happily emphasised to supply for the trembling imbecility that reigns in the field of psychoanalysis!

It is in an analogical way and by playing on proportion that there steals away what is approached about enjoyment along the path of *surplus enjoying*. It is through this point, at least that by tackling things along the starting path that we have taken, we see here that we have a way in that experience justifies. The question no doubt is not without interest as regards the way a certain renunciation functions in Pascal. But do not go too quickly. To treat those who have struggled with this logic without knowing it as universally masochistic, this is the order of short circuiting where there is designated what I called in this field blackguardism that turns into stupidity.

Today I was only able to lead you to the following approach: the proportion already inscribed in the simple entry into a field along the simple scripturist path. We have of course to verify it from other angles. If this \circ , I have said - and this is even, I underline, the image, the illustration and nothing more - is what conditions the distinction of the "I" as sustaining this field of the Other and being able to totalise itself as a field of knowledge, what has to be known, precisely, is that by being thus totalised, it will never reach the field of sufficiency that is articulated in the Hegelian theme of *Selbstbewusstsein*. Because precisely in this measure and in the very measure of its perfection the "I" of enjoyment remains completely excluded. What is important for us, is to confirm that not alone would no addition of one to the other not

add up in the form of any figure whatsoever, of an added 2, this divided “I” finally connects up with itself. What is most piquant at this point, is to notice, as I will show you the next time, because this field, as you see, far from being interminable is simply long and I need time to articulate it for you, anyone between now and then, and I must say that I hope that there are a good number who will not need to do it, informs himself about what the Fibonacci series means will obviously be better prepared than the others for what I do for the others. That is, explain to them, namely, and it is very important, that a series constituted by the simple addition of 1 to 1, then of this last 1 to what precedes it to constitute the third term, in other words 2, then $1 + 1 = 2$, $1 + 2 = 3$, then $2 + 3 = 5$ etc. 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13 etc. You can note in passing that these numbers are already inscribed and (106) that it is not without reason, only the relation of each of these numbers to the other is all the same not the \bullet relationship.

I will start the next time from this fact that in the measure that they grow, namely, for any Fibonacci series – all the Fibonacci series are homologous – you can start from any number whatsoever and make it grow by any number whatsoever, if you simply observe the law of addition, it is a Fibonacci series and it is the same one. And whatever it may be, if you make it grow, you will obtain between these numbers these proportions that are already inscribed, namely, the relationship of 1 to \bullet . And you will notice that it is from \bullet as it was in relationship to 1 that the number leaped from one term to the other. In other words, whether you start from the division of the subject or whether you start from \bullet , you will notice that they are reciprocal.

I wanted to leave you here, on this approach that I am calling that of pure logical consistency. This will allow us to situate better what is involved in a certain number of human activities. That the mystics should have attempted along their path this relationship of enjoyment to the 1, is not a field that I will be tackling here for the first time. Because already in the first years, the obscure times of my seminar, I put forward for you then, for those who were there, three or four, Angelus Silesius. Angelus Silesius is a contemporary of Pascal. Try to explain what his verse means without having his distichs. *Le Pèlerin Chérubinique*, I recommend it to you; you can buy it at Aubier, it is not out of print!

What is involved in it, certainly, does not directly concern our path. But if you want to see the place that the *I*, the *Ich* holds in it, you will see that it refers back to the question that is here our real goal and that I am repeating at the end today, do I exist (*est-ce que j'existe*)? You see how an apostrophe, is enough to falsify everything. If I say, I exist, that's it, you believe it, you think that I am talking about me, simply because of an apostrophe. Does it exist, speaking this time about the "I". But this it, ugh! Third person, we have said that it was an object. There we are making an object of the "I". Simply by omitting the third person, that can be used also to say *it is raining*. You do not talk about a third person, you do not say "he is raining", it is not your pal that is raining. It is raining. It is in this sense that I am using *it exists*. Is there something of the "I" (*du "Je"*) that exists?

Seminar 9: Wednesday 29 January 1969

(107) I left you the last time rather firmly advanced into the field of Pascal's wager at the point punctuated by what I have just written on the board. Namely, on the remark about the essential identity of the series that I told you we place at a starting point situated between 0 and 1 in a completely arbitrary way. Arbitrary takes on its sense with the same accent that de Saussure gives this word when he talks about the arbitrary character of the signifier. I mean that at the point that we have placed the cut between a series decreasing to infinity and an increasing series, in the same way we have no reason to situate this point except from writing. Namely, that here the 1 has no other function than that of the trait, of the unary trait, of a stroke, of a mark. Only, however arbitrary it may be, it nevertheless remains that without this 1, this unary trait, there would be no series at all. This is the sense that must be given in de Saussure – an author who is no doubt super-competent declares that I betray him at my pleasure – that without this arbitrariness, language would not have, properly speaking, any effect.

So then, this series is constructed on the fact that each of its terms is produced by the addition of the two terms that precede this term. This is the same as saying that in the other direction, each is made up of the subtraction of the smaller of the two that follow it from the greater. It is constructed on the principle that the relationship of one of these terms to the following is equal to the relationship of the following one as it is produced by being added to it, which seems to add a second condition to it. To posit that the ϕ , the term I have just spoken about, is equal to the following 1, in its relationship to what again is going to follow it, namely, to the addition of this 1 to ϕ , seems to specify this series by a double condition. Now, this is precisely what is erroneous as can be seen by the fact that if you posit as a law of a series that each of its terms should be formed from the addition – no doubt the function of addition here deserves to be specified in a more rigorous fashion but since it is not a matter here, in this connection, of me having to go into extensive considerations about what is involved in set theory, we will stick to the operation commonly known under this term and which is already, moreover, given at the source of what we have posited, at the source of this series, I mean the first one.

Here then is the series 1, 1. It is enough to establish it to write that in this (108) series U_0 will be equal to 1, that U_1 will be equal to 1 and subsequently that any U_n will be the sum of U_{n-1} and of U_{n-2} . This series is called the Fibonacci series and you see that it is subject to a unique condition. What is going to be produced in this series demonstrates that it is essentially the same as the series first posited. Namely, that if you operate between them by any defined operation whatsoever, if you add for example term to term, if you multiply term to term, also for example, you can also take other operations, there will result another Fibonacci series. Namely, that you confirm for yourself that the law of its formation is exactly the same, namely, that it is enough to add two of its terms to get the following.

What becomes then of this marvellous proportion, this ϕ that seems, in the series that I started with, that you can decorate as you know with the function of the golden number that, in effect, appears there, from the beginning under the form of this ϕ , manifested here by the fundamental position of ϕ : $\phi = 1/1+\phi$. This little ϕ is not missing in any Fibonacci series, for the following reason. If you make the relationship of each of its terms to the following term, namely, $1/1$ first of all, that I

did not write because $1/1$ means nothing, then $1/2$, then $2/3$, $3/5$, $5/8$, you will obtain a result that very rapidly tends to inscribe the first two decimals, then the three, then the four, then the five, then the six, of the number that corresponds to this small \mathbf{o} . And it does not matter that it is written as 0.618 and what follows, something that is very easy to verify. We already knew that \mathbf{o} was less than unity and that the important thing is that we see that this \mathbf{o} very quickly, once you get away from the starting point of the Fibonacci series, is going to be inscribed as a relationship of one of its terms to the following term. This to demonstrate that there is not in the choice of \mathbf{o} , that we have precisely because it is placed before the problem of the represented command, which is lost in the position, in the fact of posing the inaugural 1 as reduced to its function of mark, this choice of \mathbf{o} for its part, has nothing arbitrary because it is in the same way as the loss that we are aiming at, that which, at the horizon, at the goal of our discourse, constitutes *surplus enjoying*. Like this loss, the \mathbf{o} , the limiting relationship of a term of a Fibonacci series to the one that follows it, like this loss the \mathbf{o} is only an effect of the position of the unary trait.

Besides, if something is necessary to confirm this for you, it is enough for you to look at the decreasing series as I have written it, or rather rewritten it, because I already wrote it the last time on the left. It is enough for you to see how it is constructed. The series of numbers that constitute the Fibonacci series appears there in an alternating fashion, namely, that there is here an \mathbf{o} , $3\mathbf{o}$, $5\mathbf{o}$, $8\mathbf{o}$ and that as regards whole numbers, they also alternate 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13.....it is in an alternating fashion that what is written as whole number is at the right and then on the left and so on.

(110) In the same way as regards what is involved for the number that is affected to \mathbf{o} ; but as you see, the \mathbf{o} has always here an advance on the whole number. It is 1, here, while the whole number will only be 1 at the following term and so on. That is why it changes places because, for a positive result to be maintained, and what is involved in this series, so that each of its terms should be written in a positive fashion, it is necessary that there should pass alternately from one side to the other what is numbered as a whole number and what is numbered as \mathbf{o} . Now, as you see, since \mathbf{o} is less than 1 and because we know on the other hand, because of the position of this first equality that it is going to be expressed by a growing power of \mathbf{o} , the result of this difference is going to become smaller and smaller with respect to something that it

constitutes as a limit. This is what is called a converging series and converging towards what? Towards something that is not 1 but, as I showed you the last time by the image of the folding back of this \mathfrak{o} onto the 1, then of the remainder which was \mathfrak{o}^2 onto the \mathfrak{o} , which produces here \mathfrak{o}^3 , the \mathfrak{o}^3 being folded back, which produces here \mathfrak{o}^4 , the whole arriving here at a cut that produces $\mathfrak{o}/\mathfrak{o}^2 = \mathfrak{o} + \mathfrak{o}^2 = 1$.

It is because of this that the limit of the converging series inscribed here is placed at the level of $1 + \mathfrak{o}$, itself equal to $1/\mathfrak{o}$. What does that mean? What is represented, properly speaking, by what is functioning here? The question of how it is possible to correctly represent what is involved in a possible conjunction of the division of the subject in so far as it would result from a rediscovery of the subject. Here, a question mark as regards this subject. What is involved in the absolute subject of enjoyment and the subject that is generated from this 1 that marks it, namely, the point of origin of identification. There is a great temptation to put forward the writing of the Hegelian *Selbstbewusstsein*, namely, that the subject being posited by this inaugural 1, has only to connect up with its own figure *qua* formalised. The subject of knowledge is posited as knowing itself. Now, it is precisely here that the fault appears, if it is not seen that this can only be effective by positing the known subject, as we do, in the relationship of the signifier to another signifier. This shows us that here it is the relationship not of 1 to 1 but of 1 to 2 that is at stake, and that therefore, at no moment is the original division abolished.

It is only at the horizon of an infinite repetition that we can envisage the relationship, here simply imitated, as something that corresponds to this relationship of 1 to 1, the subject of enjoyment as compared to the subject established in the mark whose difference remains irremediable since, however far you push the operation that this reduction generates, you will always find between one term and the other and inscribed as the result of the loss, the relationship that you start from, even if it is not inscribed in the original inscription, namely, the \mathfrak{o} relationship. This is all the more significant because it is a matter precisely of a relationship and not a simple difference that, in a way, will become more and more negligible with regard to the pursuit of your operation. So that if, as it is easy to (111) verify, you take this operation in the sense of the increasing series here, the difference between the whole numbers, namely, between what is inscribed in 1, the foundation of the original subjective

identification and the number of \circ will always continue to increase because here, in the direction of the addition, it is always from the relationship of a number of \circ that corresponds to the smallest term to a number of whole numbers that correspond to the greatest term that is at stake. Namely, with respect as I might say to an extension of the whole numbers of the subject, taken at a mass level, there will always be a greater lack of \circ units. There will perhaps not be \circ for everyone. Take this, I am passing on, I will come back to it perhaps in an apologue question. What is important for us undoubtedly, what is going to count in our plumbing of Pascal's wager is what becomes of it in the sense that, in a no less infinite fashion, the \circ can be approached. That once more there appears to us what gives in an analogical form what is involved in the relationships of 1 to $1 + \circ$. Namely, this \circ in which alone there can be grasped what is involved in enjoyment as compared to what is created from the appearance of a loss.

Let it be enough for me to add here this trait or more exactly to this highlighting of the distance between what is involved in the Hegelian solution of *Selbstbewusstsein* from the one that a rigorous examination of the function of the sign gives us every time that there reappears in any way whatsoever that it is in a relationship of 1 to 1 that the solution can be found. I am writing it here in a humorous fashion, make no mistake. Ask yourselves what is involved. What tends to give this image as representing an ideal that one day could be closed by an absolute knowledge? Is it indeed like the H that I have just translated humorously, is it indeed man, *homo*? Or why not the hysteric, because let us not forget that it is at the level of neurotic identification – re-read the text and preferably in German, in order not to be obliged to have recourse to these painful publications that the attention of some zealous people ensures are the only thing that we have recourse to when we only want to use French. Crappy editions, there is not even a table of contents. Anyway you will see – if you refer to the appropriate article, *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego*, in the chapter on identification, that it is, of the three types of identification stated by Freud, in the middle one that he inserts properly speaking into the field of neurosis, that there appears, that there arises the question of the *einzigster Zug*, this unary trait that I extracted from it. If I recall it here, it is in order to indicate that in the continuation of my discourse I will have to come back to it. Because very curiously, it is in neurosis from which effectively we started, that there appears the most ungraspable form,

contrary to what you may imagine - and it is in order to allow you to ward it off that I am announcing it here - the most ungraspable form of the \bullet -object.

(112) Let us come back now to Pascal's wager and to what can be inscribed about it. The fastidiousness of philosophers seems in effect to make us lose the greater part of its meaning. It is nevertheless not because every effort has not been made for that including inscribing the data within a matrix in accordance with the forms in which there are today inscribed the results that are described as those of games' theory. In this form it is put, as I might say, in question. You are going to see how, strangely, people claim to refute it.

Here in effect is what is involved. Let us clearly observe that the wager is consistent from the following position, we cannot know either whether God is or what He is. The division then of the cases that result from a wager engaged on what? On a discourse that is attached to it, namely, a promise imputed to it, that of an infinity of infinitely happy lives thanks to the fact that I speak and I do not write. Here, even though I speak in French, you cannot know any more, I point out to you, than on the little bit of paper by Pascal which is in shorthand whether this infinity of lives is in the singular or in the plural. Nevertheless, it is clear, in everything that follows in Pascal's discourse that we ought to take it in the sense of a plural multiplication, since moreover he begins to argue that it would be worthwhile to bet simply in order to have a second life, indeed a third and so on. What is at stake then is indeed a numerical infinity.

Here then is what is engaged, something, as has been said that we have at our disposition for the game, namely, a bet. Let us picture this bet. It is legitimate from the moment that we ourselves have been able to advance in order to grasp what indeed is at stake in the question, namely, this enigmatic surplus that makes us all be in the field of any discourse whatsoever, namely, the \bullet . It is the stake; what we are going to have to justify is why we write it here in this little box. It is the stake and on the other hand, the infinity of infinitely happy lives. What are we dealing with? Ought we to imagine it as this support for the burgeoning of whole numbers, for the burgeoning that is always moreover behind the \bullet -objects by a term. It is a question

that is worthwhile evoking here if, as you see, it did not already involve some difficulties. But undoubtedly what was involved was the increasing series.

The infinity at stake is the one that Pascal illustrates by representing it by a sign analogous to the one here, the infinity of whole numbers, since it is only in relation to it that the starting element becomes ineffective, I mean neutral. It is under this heading that it becomes zero because it is (113) identified to the addition of zero to infinity, the result of the addition only being able to be represented by the sign that designates one of the two terms. Here then is how things are imaged and if I made this matrix it is not because it appears adequate to me but because it is the ordinary one that people use. Namely, that people remark that according to whether there exists or not what we image here in a legitimate fashion by \mathfrak{o} , since it is the field of a discourse depending on whether this \mathfrak{o} is to be admitted or to be rejected. You are going to see there being represented in each of these boxes which here have no more importance than the matrices by which a combinatorial is pinpointed in games' theory.

If this \mathfrak{o} is to be immediately retained, we have zero as the equivalent of this \mathfrak{o} , which represents nothing other than a risky stake that in games' theory must be considered as lost. If we want to articulate in a wager what is involved in Pascal's wager it is not at all a sacrifice. It is the very law of the game that there must be a zero possible, if the promise - just as there is not acceptable anything that is situated beyond death - is no longer tenable, and we ourselves, we have here a zero, but this means nothing, except that here also the bet on the other side is lost.

In fact, in Pascal's wager the stake is identical to the promise. It is because this promise is stated that we can construct this matrix and once it is constructed it is absolutely clear that the asymmetry of the stakes requires that effectively, if the conduct of the subject is only defined by what is determined from a signifying pinpointing, there is no question. The difficulty only begins when we see that the subject is not at all something that we can frame, any more than, earlier, from the relationship of 1 to 1, from the conjunction of any number of signifiers, but from the falling effect that results from this conjunction. And that gives to our \mathfrak{o} here written in the lower left hand box a liaison that is in no way separable from the construction

of the matrix itself. It is very precisely what is at stake in the progress that is generated from psychoanalysis. It is this liaison that must be studied in its consequences that precisely creates the divided subject, namely, not linked to the simple establishment of this matrix. Because henceforth it appears obviously quite clear that the zeros in the matrix are themselves only a fiction because of the fact that you can lay out a matrix, in other words, write it. Because the zero written at the bottom is the starting zero, well marked by Peano's axiomatisation as (114) necessary for infinity to be produced from the series of natural numbers. Without infinity, there is no zero to be taken into account because the zero was there essentially to produce it.

It is also indeed from such a fiction as I reminded you earlier, that the \mathbf{o} is reduced to zero when Pascal makes his argument. Besides, all you are doing is losing zero given that the pleasures of life, this is how he expresses himself, do not amount to much and especially with respect to the infinity that is opened out to you. This is very precisely to use a mathematical liaison, the one that states in effect that no unit, whatever it may be, added to infinity will do anything more than leave intact the sign of infinity. Except that, nevertheless, as I showed you on several occasions that we can absolutely not say that we do not know whether infinity, as Pascal argues to make it opaque in a way homologous to the Divine Being, that we cannot rigorously say, that it is ruled out that you can say that the addition of a unit will not ensure that we cannot say whether it is odd or even. Since, as you have seen in the decreasing series, all the even operations will be piled up on one another and all the odd operations on the other, to totalise the infinite sum which nevertheless remains reducible to a 1 of a certain type, the 1 that enters into connection with the \mathbf{o} .

You sense here that I am only indicating in passing all sorts of points illuminated by the progress of mathematical theory that in a way, make the veil move. What is under this veil is very precisely what is really involved in the articulation of this discourse whatever it may be, including that of the aforesaid promise. The fact is that in neglecting what it hides, namely, its falling effect at the level of enjoyment you fail to recognise the true nature of the \mathbf{o} -object. Now, what our practice, which is a practice of discourse and nothing else, shows us, is that it is necessary to divide up differently what is involved in the stake if we want to give it its true sense. Pascal himself

indicates to us, this is what confuses it in minds, it must be (115) said, that seem to be singularly little prepared by a professorial function to master what is at stake, when what is at stake is a discourse, you are engaged, he tells us, what is less engaging than such a matrix?

You are engaged, what does that mean if not to play on words, it is the moment of the entry of the “I” into the question. What is engaged is the “I”. If there is a possibility in the game of engaging anything whatsoever to be lost, it is because the loss is already there, this indeed is why you cannot cancel the game. Now what we learn from psychoanalysis, is that there are effects that are masked by the pure and simple reduction of the “I” to what is stated. And how can we, for even an instant, when it is a matter of a game imaged by Pascal’s pen, neglect the function of grace, namely, that of the desire of the Other. You must not believe that it may also have come into Pascal’s mind that even to understand his so ridiculously imaged wager grace was necessary. As I told you, in every naive imaging of the relationship of the subject to demand, there is in short a latent “Thy will be done”. This indeed is what is put in question when this will, which is precisely not ours, is lacking. In other words, let us not delay any longer and let us pass on to this God who is indeed the one, the only possible one in question, from Pascal’s pen. The fact of giving him the same letters will change nothing about the difference, we are already going to see it being sufficiently articulated in the distribution on the table by which we are indeed going to see that this distribution is no different from itself.

Let us say things crudely: God exists. For the subject supposed to know it, we will then write the couple zero , in one of the squares of the matrix. I am supposed to know it but something has to be added, that I am for it. And if I am against it, all the while supposing the knowledge that God exists, in that case the choice is between the

o, and this indeed is what is involved throughout the whole thread of the thinking that Pascal states, I deliberately lose the infinity of infinitely happy lives.

And then, I am supposed to know that God does not exist, well then, why not think that I can all the same engage the o, lose it, quite simply. It is all the more possible because it is its nature to be a loss. Because to measure what is involved in a game where here I keep it at a certain price, the price of less than the infinite, it can be legitimate to ask if it is worth the trouble, to give oneself so much difficulty to keep it. If there are some people who keep it at the cost of the loss minus infinity you must picture to yourselves that there were many people who threw out the o without having any concern about the immortality of the soul. These in general are what are called wise men, the granddads, not simply fathers, granddads. This has a lot to do with the father as you are going to see.

Here, you have those on the contrary who keep the o and let nothing (116) disturb their sleep. As regards the next zero, what is striking in this distribution, is the consistency that comes from the subject supposed to know but is it not a consistency made up however little of indifference.

He is, I am wagering for, but I do not know very well what He is. He is not, naturally I wager against, but it is not a wager, all of this has nothing to do with a wager. On the diagonal, you have people who are so certain that there is no wager at all, they go with the wind of what they know, but what does to know mean in these conditions? It means so little that even those who know nothing can form a unique box of it.

Namely, that whatever it may be – and you will allow me to remark in passing that I am not extrapolating at all on what is in this respect Freud's tradition, namely, that I am not going beyond my borders – if you consult the volume that I recalled earlier, you will see that all the time Freud makes this calm remark that when all is said and done, everything involved in the belief of a Christian does not lead him to change his behaviour all that much as compared to those who are not so. It is in the position, as I might say, of a purified subject that what happens on the left-hand diagonal can be organised in the little matrix on top. But what is important, what undoubtedly shows us something unexpected is the one who wagers against, on the foundation of what he

knows to be and the one who wagers for, just as if what he knows very well not to be, was.

You must think that here this becomes very interesting, namely, that this minus infinity that you see appearing in the top right hand box, this is expressed in the little writings of Pascal by the name of hell. Only this presupposes that there should be examined why the function of the \mathbf{o} culminated in this most questionable idea that there is a beyond of death. No doubt because of its indefinite, mathematical slippage, in any kind of signifying chain wherever you pursue the final circumscribing, it always subsists intact as I already articulated at the beginning of the year in a certain schema of the relationships of S and O. But then this may induce us to ask ourselves what is meant by the emergence under the form of minus infinity of something on this table. Is this minus not to be expressed in a way more homologous to its arithmetical function, namely, that when it appears, the series of whole numbers is duplicated which means is divided. There is here the sign of this something that appeared to me the only thing worth recalling at the end of my last discourse. It is that by taking as an \mathbf{o} -object and not otherwise what is brought into play (117) in the renunciation proposed by Pascal there is just as much infinity where there is a limit as where it does not encounter this operation of \mathbf{o} . In any case, it is a half infinity that we engage with which singularly balances out the chances in the first matrix.

Only it may well be that we should remember differently what is represented in this myth which, even though it forms part of dogma does nothing, as Pascal reminds us, but bear witness that the mercy of God is greater than his justice since he plucks out some chosen ones, while they ought all to be in hell. This proposition may appear scandalous. I am astonished at it since it is quite clear and manifest that we have never been able to imagine this hell beyond what happens to us every day. I mean that we are already in it, that this necessity that surrounds us of not being able, except at a horizon whose limits need to be questioned, to realise the solid \mathbf{o} , except by an indefinite repeated measure of what is involved in the cut of \mathbf{o} . Is this not enough, just by itself, to make the most courageous lose heart? Only there you are. There is no choice. Our desire is the desire of the Other, and depending on whether grace has been lacking to us or not, what is played out at the level of the Other, namely, of

everything that has preceded us in this discourse that has determined our very conception, we are determined or not to the course of stopping up the σ -object.

So then there remains the fourth box, the lower one. It is not for nothing that I allowed myself today to smile about them. They are just as numerous, just as divided up as those who are in the field of the top right. I call them, provisionally, the granddads. You would be wrong nevertheless to minimise the with which they get around, but all the same what I would like to point to you is that, in any case, it is here that we in analysis, have placed the proper norm. *Surplus enjoying* is explicitly modulated as foreign to the question. If the question at stake in what analysis promises us as a return to the norm, how can we not see that this norm is well and truly articulated there as the law, the law on which the Oedipus complex is grounded. And it is quite clear that whatever end one takes this myth from that enjoyment is absolutely distinguished from the law. To enjoy the mother is forbidden, we are told, and this does not go far enough. What has consequences is the fact that to enjoy the mother is forbidden. Nothing is organised except from this first statement. This can be clearly seen in the fable in which the subject, Oedipus, never thought – God knows because of what distraction, I mean because of everything that was developed around him in terms of charm and probably also of harassment by Jocasta – the idea never came to him, even when proofs were flooding in. What is forbidden is to enjoy the mother and this is confirmed in the formulation in another form. It is indispensable to bring all of them together in order to grasp what Freud is articulating, that of *Totem and Taboo*. The murder of the father blinds all these imbecilic young bulls that I see circling around me from time to time in ridiculous arenas. The murder of the father means precisely that you cannot kill him. He has been dead for all time. It is indeed for this reason that something sensible is attached, even in places where it is paradoxical to see there being belled: God is dead. It is because obviously, by not thinking about it, you run the risk of missing one aspect of things.

At the start the father is dead. Only there you are. There remains the Name of the Father and everything turns around that. If that was the way I began the last time it is also with that that I am ending. The virtue of the Name of the Father, is not something I am inventing, I mean that it is not something I made up; it is written in Freud. The difference, he says somewhere, between the field of man and that let us

say of animality, consists, wherever it may be, even when this only happens in a masked form, namely, when it is said that there are some people who have no idea of what is the role of the male in generation, why not? What it demonstrates, I mean the importance of this function of the Name of the Father, is that even the very people who have no idea of it invent spirits to fill it. In a word, what is characteristic is that Freud in a very precise place articulates it – I am not going to waste my time telling you on what page and what edition because now there are places where Freudian readings are done and there are all the same competent people to indicate it to those that are interested in it – the essence, in a word, and the function of the father as Name, as pivot of discourse, depends precisely on the fact that after all, you can never know who the father is. You can always look, it is a question of faith. With the progress of science, you manage to get to know in certain cases who he is not, but in any case he remains all the same an unknown. It is altogether certain that this introduction moreover of biological research into paternity cannot be without an impact on the function of the Name of the Father.

Therefore, it is here, at the point where it is precisely only by maintaining oneself in the symbolic, that there is the pivot around which turns a whole field of subjectivity. We have to take the other aspect of what is involved in the relationship to enjoyment and, in a word, to be able to advance, which is our object this year, a little further into what is involved in the transmission of the Name of the Father. Namely, what is involved in the transmission of castration. I will end today, as usual, at the point that one gets to one way or another and I will see you the next time.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 5 February 1969

I am going to restart from where I left you the last time. I said a lot of things the last time, and in particular I succeeded in touching some people by the mathematical evidence that I believe I succeeded in giving of the genesis of what is involved in **o**, through the simple virtue of the One *qua* mark. This depends on this *factum*, this fabrication that results from the simplest use of this One in so far as it multiplies once it is repeated, since it is only posited in order to attempt the repetition of, to rediscover enjoyment in so far as it has already fled. The first One, by rediscovering what was not marked at the origin, already alters it, since at the origin it was not marked. It is already posited then by grounding a difference that it does not constitute as such but in so far as it produces it. This is this original point that makes of repetition the key of a process about which the question is posed, once it has been opened up, of whether or not it can find its term.

You see that we are immediately brought to the question that is only terminal when applied to a single career, that of Freud, in so far as subject on the one hand, he was also a man of action, let us say a man who inaugurated a path. How did he inaugurate it? This is something that is worthwhile recalling perhaps at a detour in what I will say to you today. But every man's career is committed to something that has death as its limit, and it is only from this point of view that we can find the term of the path traced by Freud in the question that he poses, of the end of analysis, terminable or interminable. This only marks the phase of the question that I am opening up in saying: is what is engaged for the subject by the fact of repetition as origin, itself a process that has its limit or not? This is what I left open, in abeyance, but nevertheless advanced, by showing on the board the last time in the clearest possible fashion what I was able to express as the division, the bi-partition of two infinities, marking that this is what is fundamentally in question in Pascal's wager. The infinity on which it is based is the infinity of number. Now, by taking this infinity, as I might say, by further accelerating by setting up the Fibonacci series, which it is easy to show is exponential, that the numbers that it generates grow not arithmetically but geometrically. This is the very thing that generates, and precisely in the measure that we are more distant from its origin, the proportion articulated in **o**. In the measure that these numbers grow, **o** intervenes there under its inverted form in a more circumscribed and constant fashion. This is all the more striking in that it ties the 1 to

\mathbf{o} , that it is $1/\mathbf{o}$, that this proportion of one number to another ends up in the more and more rigorous constant of this $1/\mathbf{o}$, in the measure that the numbers increase.

I also wrote, taking it at its origin, the series that results from taking things in the other sense. There, because of the fact that \mathbf{o} is less than 1, you see the process ends up not simply in a proportion but in a limit. Whatever you add of what is produced, inversely, by proceeding through subtraction, in such a way that it is always true that, in this chain, by taking things in an ascending way, each term is the sum of the two preceding ones, you will find again the function of \mathbf{o} in so far as this time it reaches a limit. That in whatever numbers you add these terms, you will not go beyond $1 + \mathbf{o}$, which seems to indicate that by taking things in this direction, what repetition generates has a term.

This is where there intervenes the well known table in which those, in short, who miss what is involved in Pascal's wager, write what is involved in terms of games theory. Namely, in a matrix that is constructed from distinct boxes, formulate what is involved, if God exists, and write as zero what results from the observation of these commandments, confused here with the renunciation of something. Whether we call it pleasure or something else, it nevertheless remains that here, in appreciating it by a spontaneity whose astonishing aspect we will see, that they write what is left in this life for believers as zero. As a result of which a future life is marked by the term infinity, an infinity of lives promised to be infinitely happy. In other words, by supposing that God does not exist, the subject, which we write as \mathbf{o} , is presumed to be still caught up in the game, make no mistake, literally to know the limited and moreover problematic happiness that is offered him in this life. It is not groundless to choose this if, since God does not exist, it seems clear that there is nothing to expect from the other life.

What I am pointing out here is the fragile character of this sort of writing, inasmuch as by following games' theory, the conjunctures can only be determined from the intersection of the play of two adversaries. Namely, that the subject ought to be in this position, while the enigmatic Other, the one involved in short as to whether he

holds the wager or not, ought to find himself in that place, God exists or does not exist.

But God is not involved. In any case, nothing allows us to affirm it. It is from this fact that it paradoxically results that face to face with him, on the table, as I might say, there is not man but the subject defined by this wager. The stake is confused with the existence of the partner, and that is why the signs written on this table have to be reinterpreted. The choice is made at the level of God exists or God does not exist. The formulation of the wager starts from that. And starting from there, only from there, it is clear that if there is no reason to hesitate, namely, that what you may win by wagering that God exists is not comparable to what you can certainly win, even though this certainty can easily be questioned. Because what will you win? \circ is precisely not defined.

It is here that I open the question - not at the level of a formula that has nevertheless the interest of taking at its source the question of the intervention of the signifier, of what is involved in any act of choice whatsoever. This is where I pointed out the inadequacy of a table that is incomplete because it does not highlight that in taking things at the second stage, the one, perhaps, that restores the correct position of what the matrix involves as it is used in games' theory, is where there should be placed what I distinguish from the subject, the subject that is purely identical to the inscription of the stakes as well as the one that can envisage the case where even if God exists, he wagers against, namely, chooses \circ to his cost. Namely, knowing what this choice involves, that he positively loses the infinite, the infinity of happy lives that is offered him, so that there is reproduced in the two boxes that are marked here what first of all occupied the first matrix, there still remains this fourth to be filled. Namely, that it can be supposed that, even if God does not exist, the \circ as holding the (122) place that you see it occupying in the first box can be abandoned, this time in an explicit way. And because of this fact it appears in the negative, the subtraction of \circ with what we are writing here without any further commentary. And you see that even though it appears to be self-evident as zero, in effect it still constitutes a problem

In effect, let us now extract in order to isolate it simply in a new matrix something added on by our second composition, namely, \mathbf{o} , $\mathbf{-o}$, zero. To be honest, I explicitly mark what I have just indicated in passing in this very discourse, that this zero takes on the value of a question.

In effect, if the zeros were able to be thus posited in the first matrix, this is something that deserves to hold our attention, because what did I say earlier if not that in truth the only thing that counts in this position of the gambler, of the subject who alone exists, the only thing to be taken into account is the infinite and the finite \mathbf{o} . What do these zeros designate if not that by putting some stake on the table, as Pascal underlined in introducing the theory of gaming, nothing correct can be stated about a game unless you start from this, unless by having a beginning and an end fixed in the rule. What is put on the table, what is called the bet, is lost from the start. The game only exists starting from the fact that it is on the table, as one might say, in a common mass. What the game is is implied and therefore from its constitution the game can here only produce zero. This zero only indicates that you are playing; without this zero, there is no game. Assuredly you could say the same thing about the other zero, namely, this one, that it represents the loss to which the other player resigns himself by bringing this infinity into play. But since precisely what is at stake is the existence of the other player, it is here, in the first matrix, that the zero *qua* sign of the loss becomes problematic.

(123) After all, since nothing forces us to precipitate any movement, because it is precisely in these precipitations that errors are produced, we can indeed abstain from justifying this zero in a way that is symmetrical to what is involved in the other. Because we have something that appears sufficiently in the discussion that the philosophers have had about Pascal's montage. Namely, that it appears in effect that the zero represents not the constitutive loss of the bet but, at least in the dialogue

between Pascal and Méré which is not unimportant for the way Pascal writes and at the same time leads us astray – it is never, of course, without our collaboration – about the interest of the montage itself. Namely, that what dominates, is in effect that this zero can be the inscription of one of the choices that are offered which is not to sit down at this table. This is what is done by the person who, in this not simply ideal but effective dialogue, the one to whom there is addressed this schema of the wager. The zero does not mean the constitutive loss of the bet, but inscribes on the table the “no bet”, namely, the one who does not sit down at the gaming table.

It is starting from there that we have to question what is produced in the second matrix to see how, in it, there can be divided up what is involved in the game. In effect, I already indicated the last time the representations that can be given in the text of our practice. In truth, I was able to indicate it as rapidly as I did because already a certain graph of it had been constructed with what I recalled earlier at the beginning of my articulation. Namely, not the hypothesis, but what can be inscribed and hence the tangible. This means that \emptyset itself may well be only the effect of the entry of the life of man into the game. Pascal warns us about it in these terms no doubt not explicitly formulated, I mean in the very one that I am going to state: “You are engaged”, he tells us, and it is true. It does not seem necessary to him, because he grounds himself on the word, on the word that for him of course is that of the Church. It is curious that he does not distinguish from it what – this is the blind point of centuries that were not for all that obscurantist – nevertheless provides him with a lot. It is assuredly because of the uneliminatable character of Holy Scripture throughout centuries of thought, that the most radical writing that, for us, appears in it in filigree is not really distinguished. But if I go looking for the weave of this writing in mathematical logic, this leaves my position homologous to his, except that, for us, we can no longer avoid (124) posing the question whether the stake itself is not as such essentially dependent on this function of writing. Let us observe yet another difference, the one that I put as an *exergue* in the first phase of my statements this year and which can be expressed, since it is not the exact formula, as simply: what I prefer, is a discourse without words, which means nothing other than this discourse that writing supports.

Here a little time to measure the import, the line, the absolutely solitary character of what I am stating at this point this year, with everything that I began to announce under the triad of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. Note carefully, and this is something that should be insisted on, the difference between philosophical discourse, whatever it may be, and what we are introduced to by this nothing other that is distinguished by starting from repetition.

Philosophical discourse, whatever it may be, always ends up by detaching itself from what it nevertheless brandishes as a system in the material of language. The whole philosophical tradition comes up against the refutation by Kant of the ontological argument; in the name of what? Of the fact that the forms of pure reason, the transcendental analytic, fall under the influence of an imaginary suspicion, and this moreover is what constitutes the single objection, it is philosophical, to Pascal's wager. "*This God whose existence you may conceive to be necessary, says Kant, it nevertheless remains that you only conceive of him in the framework of a thinking that is only based on the prior suspense from which there comes the aesthetic*" qualified on this occasion as transcendental. This means nothing other than: you cannot state anything, state anything in words, except in the time and in the space whose existence, by philosophical convention, we put in suspense in so far as it is supposed to be radical.

Only there is a problem, and this is what gives Pascal's wager its interest. That is why I will permit myself, whatever people may think about having recourse to outworn ideas, to find in it an exemplary turning point. The fact is that in no case is the God of Pascal to be put in question on the imaginary plane because it is not the God of philosophers; it is not even the God of any knowledge. We do not know, writes Pascal, either what he is, of course, or even if he is. This indeed is why there is no way of leaving Him in abeyance by means of any philosophy, because it is not philosophy that grounds him.

Now what is at stake and what my discourse in particular means, when I take up again that of Freud, is very precisely that in grounding myself on what this discourse has opened up, it is essentially distinguished from philosophical discourse, in the fact that it is not detached from what we are caught up and engaged in, as Pascal says. But

that, rather than making use of a discourse, when all is said and done, to fix its law to the world, its norms to history or inversely, it puts itself at this place where first of all (125) the thinking subject perceives that he can only recognise himself as an effect of language. In other words that before being thinking, to go quickly, to pinpoint in the shortest possible way what I am in the process of saying, once you set up the gaming table, and God knows if it has already been set up, he is first of all *o*. And it is afterwards that the question is posed of harmonising with it the fact that he thinks. But he did not need to think to be fixed as *o*. It is already done, contrary to what can be imagined, precisely because of the lamentable shirking, of the more and more striking futility of all philosophy, namely, that you can upset the gaming table. I can upset this one, of course, and blow up the tables at Vincennes and elsewhere, but that does not prevent the real table, the gaming table from being still there. It is not the university table that is at stake! The table around which the boss is reunited, whether with the pupils in a pretty little interior, when this interior is his own, nice and warm and grandfatherly, or the one in which it is framed in model nurseries!

This precisely is where the question is. That is why I allowed myself, in a scribbling that I do not know whether you will see appearing or not – it is not at all a scribbling, I spent a lot of time on it the day before yesterday – anyway I do not know whether you will see it appearing, because it will appear in only one place or it will not appear at all, and I am interested in whether it will appear or not appear! In short I went as far as this delusional exorbitance – because for some time I have been deluding in my own heart, these things always come out one day, in one form or another – I would like it to be noticed, this is my delusion or not, that it is no longer possible to play the role that is necessary for the transmission of knowledge if it does not involve the transmission of value, even though now this is inscribed in the registers of credits (*unité de valeur*), but to grasp what can be called a formation effect. This is why, in any case, whoever in the future, precisely because something has happened to this value of knowledge, wants to occupy a place that contributes in any way to this place of formation, even if it is mathematics, biochemistry or anything else whatsoever, would do well to be a psychoanalyst, if this is how there must be defined someone for whom there exists this question of the dependence of the subject with respect to the discourse that holds him, and not that he holds.

So then it is worth saying, since you see that I have just avoided something because of the fact that you are all products of the school, namely, of philosophical teaching. I know that I cannot tackle in too abrupt a fashion what is involved in terms of the change that is written in the second matrix, namely, pose the question of what is meant by the fact that here it is not \circ or zero because it has never been \circ or zero as I have just indicated it to you and as Pascal says. But since it is only ever philosophers that have read him, everyone has remained deaf. He said \circ is zero, which means that (126) \circ is the bet. It was nevertheless clearly specified in games' theory. No, that changed nothing, they remained deaf! And zero is zero with respect to infinity. Rubbish! What is changed by the fact that there is now not, as has been vainly said, in an imaginary fashion \circ or zero, but \circ or $-\circ$. And if $-\circ$ effectively means what it seems to say, namely, that it is inverted, what can this thing be? And then also that in one case, whatever happens, even if it is at the cost of something that to be inscribed, appears to need to be costly, what again is this correlation, this equivalence that perhaps allows us to put elsewhere, to perceive that our connecting signs are upset. In any case here are two links that appear to me to be worth questioning. You see that they are not classified quite like the earlier ones.

Here, I regret not being further on than what I already, but too quickly, articulated in the last minutes of the last time. Namely, that I recalled that to start from the figure that is indicated here in Pascal's scribbling, the first link, this horizontal line from small \circ to - , we say, is hell. I shouted it out to people who were already making for the exit. But, on the whole, I pointed out to you that hell is something we know. It is everyday life. A curious thing, people know it, people say it, people say nothing but that. But it is limited to discourse and to some symptoms of course. Thank God, if there were no symptoms, it would not be noticed! If neurotic symptoms did not exist, there would not have been Freud! If the hysterics had not already opened up the question, there is no chance that even the truth would have show the tip of its ear!

So then here, we must make a short halt. Someone that I thank – because you should always thank people through whom presents arrive – reminded me for external reasons about the existence of the chapter of Bergler called “The underestimated superego”, it is in the famous *Basic neurosis* that explains everything. You are not going to tell me that I explain everything. I explain nothing, precisely. This is even what interests you! I try at different levels, not simply here, to ensure that there are (127) psychoanalysts who are not imbeciles. My operation is an advertising operation, not to draw people into the hole of a school, but to try to give the equivalent of what psychoanalysts ought to have to people who have no means of getting it. It is a despairing enterprise. But experience proved that the other also, that of teaching it to psychoanalysts themselves, seems destined to fail, as I already wrote. Imbeciles, I mean as subjects, because as regards getting on in their practice, they are pretty smart! And it is precisely a consequence of what I am in the process of stating here. It is in conformity with the theory. This is what proves not alone that there is no need to be a philosopher but that it is much better not to be one. Only that has a consequence, which is that one understands nothing. Hence what I also spend my time stating, that it is much better not to understand. Only the problem is that they understand all kinds of little things, so it is swarming. For example “The underestimated superego” is a brilliant chapter, first of all because it collects together all the ways in which the superego has been articulated in Freud. Since he is not a philosopher, he absolutely does not see that they all hang together. Moreover he is charming, and he admits it. That is what is good about psychoanalysts, they admit everything! He admits that he has written to a gentleman, it is in a note, Mr H H Heart, who was making extracts from Freud. So then he wrote to him: “Send me some quotations about the superego”. After all that can be done; it is moreover also in conformity with the theory; you can take things like that, with a pair of scissors, if writing is so important, everywhere there is superego, snip, snip, you cut it out! You make a list of fifteen quotations. And I must say that here I am being humorous. But he is reaching out to help me. Because of course Bergler has read Freud, anyway I like to imagine it! But all the same he admits that in order to write this chapter, he wrote to H H Heart to give him quotations about the superego. The result is that he can obviously clearly mark, exactly at the same level that all the existing psychoanalytic reviews are at, except mine, of course, the degree to which it is

incoherent. It begins with the censor at the level of dreams; people believe that the censor is an innocent, as if it were nothing precisely to have the pair of scissors with which one subsequently constructs the theory. And after all, this becomes something that titillates you. And then afterwards it becomes a big bad wolf. And then after that, there is nothing more. And after that, Eros is evoked, Thanatos and the whole caboodle! Thanatos is going to have to find its place there. And then, I make arrangements with this superego; I bow and scrape to it. Ah! Dear little superego!

Good. Thanks to this presentation, of course, you get something it must be said that is rather laughable. You really have to be in our epoch for no one to laugh. No one laughs. Even a professor of philosophy. It must be said that they have got to a point, (128) in our generation! Even a professor of philosophy can read this stuff without laughing. They have been checkmated! There was all the same a time when there were people who were not especially intelligent, a chap called Charles Blondel, who shouted and roared about Freud. At least it was something. Nowadays even the people least in a position to imagine what is involved in a psychoanalysis read these absolutely astounding things without complaint. No. Everything is possible everything is accepted. We are – moreover things are showing their lineaments elsewhere than in the real before descending into it – really in a regime of intellectual segregation.

Well then, this chap has noticed a whole lot of things. When something is there, under his nose, he understands it. And I would say that this is what is sad because he understands it at the level of his nose, which cannot of course be absolutely like that; it is necessarily pointy. But he sees a tiny little thing. He notices that what is explained to him, like that, in the quotations from Freud, as being the superego, he notices, that this ought to have a relationship with what he sees all the time. So then he begins by noticing, but like that in an intuitive way, at the level of sensation, that what is called *Durcharbeitung*, *l'élaboration* as it is translated in French – people spend their time noticing that it is untranslatable. *Durcharbeitung*, is not *élaboration*, we can do nothing about it; since there is not in French a word to say “work through”, drilling, it is translated as *élaboration*; everyone knows that in France, people elaborate; it is something like smoke.

Analytic elaboration is not at all like that. People on the couch see that it consists in coming back the whole time to the same thing. At every turn one is brought back to the same thing. And it is necessary for that to last in order to get precisely to what I have explained to you, to the limit, to the end, naturally when one is going in the right direction, when one encounters a limit. He says "That's an effect of the superego". Namely, he notices that this kind of big wicked thing that nevertheless is supposedly extracted from the Oedipus complex, or again from the devouring mother, or from anyone of these see-saws. He notices that this has a relationship with this exhausting, boring, necessary, especially repeated aspect by which one arrives at something that, in effect, sometimes, has an end. How does he not see that this has nothing in common with this kind of picture of a scenario where the superego is, as people say, an agency, which would be nothing, but where people make it live like a person. Because, people have not well understood what an agency is, we attach the idea to the superego.

All of this must happen not on the other stage, the one that Freud spoke about, the one that functions in dreams, but in a kind of little play, where what is called analytic (129) teaching makes you play with puppets. The superego is the police superintendent and he hits the Guignol, which is the ego, on the head. Why, by simply seeing this rapprochement that he senses so well from the clinical point of view, with elaboration, *Durcharbeitung*, does this not suggest to him that the superego may well be found in something that would not require, like that, the multiplication of agencies in the personality. And then at every instant he lets it slip, he admits it, namely, that people have clearly mapped out, he says, that this has a relation with the ego ideal. But it must be admitted that absolutely nothing is known about it; no one has yet put things together.

All the same, in order that these discourses should be something other than memoirs of the psychoanalyst, namely, evoking the case of a young woman who, in this connection, one sees clearly that it was a guilt feeling that made her come into psychoanalysis. Let us hope that it was the same thing that made her get out of it! You can perhaps all the same note that, for example, this kind of little manoeuvre of a measure that is precisely the measure of what cannot be measured because it is the starting bet. This can in effect in some cases be represented with the greatest

precision and be written on the board. It is in the manner of a certain way of regularly balancing that one manages to fill up this something that can in certain cases be represented as the One. You can all the same see that there is some interest in articulating in a way that is really precise something that allows it to be conceived that it is not at all in effect an abuse of terms to bring together, even in the name of a minimal intuition like that, the *élaboration*, the *Durcharbeitung* in the treatment, with the superego.

So then you have to choose. You cannot tell us that the superego is the big bad wolf and rack your brain to see whether it is not in the identification that I have with some person that this severe superego is born. That is not how questions should be put. It is like the people who tell you that if so-and-so is religious, it is because his grandfather was. That is not enough for me, because even if you had a religious grandfather you may also perhaps see that it is stupidity, is that not so?

It is necessary all the same to distinguish the direction of identification as compared to other things. It is necessary to know whether identification in analysis is the goal or is the obstacle. But this might well perhaps be the means by which one engages people precisely no doubt to do it, but by the same fact, it is abolished. And it is in the fact that it is abolished precisely because one has done it that they can appear something else that we can call the hole on this occasion.

I am going to leave you there today. I tried at the end of this discourse, to show you that it is a discourse that is of direct importance to bring some fresh air into our (130) practice. By that I mean that by using what were certainly not experiments in smell, it was not by following his nose that Freud advanced, one can in effect see in it, in the development of a function through his thinking, the framework that allows its consistency to be given. But it is indispensable if one wants to advance with something other than little stories, to assemble this coherence and to give it consistency and solidity. This would perhaps allow there to be seen quite different facts than simply analogical facts.

What I am saying does not take anything away from the importance of detail, precisely as Bergler insists. But read this chapter to see that even something that is

relevant, well oriented, but oriented like particles of iron filings when you tap into a field already magnetised, contains no kind of true motivation for the power and the importance of detail. And why in effect it is only the details, it is quite true, that interest us. Again it is necessary to see in every case what is interesting. Because if one does not know it, one brings together disparate details in the name of pure and simple resemblance, while this is not what is important. We will take it up the next time at the level of the third figure.

Seminar 11: Wednesday 12 February 1969

(131) Very bored with everything that is happening, huh! You too I think. One cannot all the same not notice it, because I am in the process of asking myself whether I am here to do my usual thing or whether I am occupying the place! Anyway! Some benevolent ears were prepared to understand that some of the things that I put forward, specifically during my second last seminar, had some relationship with a science – who knows? With perhaps not a new science, but with a bringing up to date of what is involved for the conditions of science.

Today I sense, for all sorts of reasons, even if it is only because we are getting close to Mardi-Gras, so then it is appropriate, that I should gently change the direction of things. I sense it, like that, after balancing what I thought out this morning before seeing you. I am going to bend myself a little bit towards something that you can call whatever you want, but which is rather a moral note. How could one moreover escape it, in the aura, in the margin, in the limits of that through which I tackled something which is Pascal's wager. It is certain that we cannot fail to recognise this incidence, even though, of course, what inspired me to speak to you about it, is that Pascal's wager is at a certain joint, and this, all the same, I am going to recall,

But, like that, as a way of introducing things a little and of relaxing, however little, the atmosphere – I told you that we were getting close to Mardi-Gras – I am going to read you a letter that I received. I am not going to tell you who sent it to me, nor even from what town it came.

“Dear Mr Lacan. We are students and we have read almost all of your Ecrits. We find a lot of things in it. Obviously it is not always easy to approach but this all the same deserves our congratulations.....” I don’t get those every day! *“We would really like to know how one sets about writing such difficult things...”* I am not sending anyone up, and certainly not these chaps that I find really... anyway I will tell you what I think about it; there must have been two of them to write that! *“...it would be useful to us in our examinations. We may well have a degree in philosophy, but it is getting more and more complicated to get through the selection. We think that it would be better to use trickery and astonish the teachers rather than persisting in a style of banal down-to-earth discourse”.* And they add *“make no mistake. Could you point us to some little fiddles in this direction?”* That strikes (132) me, because all I am saying is that, fundamentally, that is what I am in the process of doing! *“On the other hand, we would like again to ask you something if it’s not too daring: Do you think you could send us as a souvenir one of your lovely bow ties? We would really like that. Thanking you in advance, we say farewell, Mr Lacan, and please receive our most respectful homage.”* I am not going to leave that lying around because ...they are not really up to date. They do not know that I have been wearing a polo neck for some time!

For me, that gives an echo, confirmation, a resonance to something that moves me when I hear right minded people going on, like that, since the month of May: “Things are no long the way they were”. I think that where we are at, it is more than ever like it was before. And after all, I am very far of course from limiting the phenomenon to this little report that this letter gives of what is a corner of the affair. Obviously there are many other things at stake.

Only what is striking, is that from a certain point of view, this letter in my eyes may very well sum up the way people have listened to me, but in a zone that is not at all as

distant from me as this town which is all the same a good distance away. As you see, they are not very up to date! But in any case, it is an aspect of the way that teaching is received. And then I do not see why one would blame them for the bow tie. Because there is someone who played a pivotal role in a certain examining board, like that, that a certain British Society sent us a long time ago, who put that down as a point that was quite worthy of putting in the scales with the rest of my teaching. I mean that that was how it was, this was on one pan and on the other, my bow tie. Namely, with the help of this accessory the identification of those who presented themselves at that time as my pupils was supposed to be possible. So then you see that this is not limited to the level of these little dears, nice naïve people. They are perhaps not so naïve as that because, as they told you, you have to be a little tricky. We will come back to it.

So then we will take things up where we had dismantled them a little, namely, in the table of the wager. On the left – the blue lines are made to show where the limits of each one of these schemas stop, so that they do not overlap one another, either really or in your minds – so then the one on the left is the one with which I believed I should complete the matrix in which, in imitation of what is practised in games theory, one could schematise what was effectively discussed throughout the whole of the nineteenth and even during a good part of the beginning of our century around Pascal's wager. Namely, the way of demonstrating how, in a way, Pascal was trying to swindle us.

I think that I have sufficiently made you sense that by reason of the (133) function of the zeros that do not really form part of the results of a wager that might be made against a partner, because it is precisely the existence of the partner that is in question and that it is what you have to wager on. In these conditions the two lines of possibility that are offered to the gambler do not intersect with any line of possibility that might belong to the Other, since one cannot even be sure of the existence of the Other. It is then at the same time on the existence or non-existence of the Other, on

what promises his existence and what allows his inexistence, it is on this that the choice is brought to bear, and in this case it is plausible – I am saying, it is plausible, of course if one has a mathematical mind – to wager, and to wager in the sense that Pascal proposes.

Only, you will not forget that I introduced at this state of the affair, in order of course not to give rise to misunderstanding and the belief that here I am lending myself to something which would be the indication of the advantage of this solution, I effectively remarked the following. And in the very introduction to the reminder of the wager as it is presented, much less than it is through the grid of the discussions that have become classic, I pointed out that at this level one could substitute for the choice to be made on the subject of the existence of God, the remark that one would fulfil the function – which would completely change its sense – this remark that what is at stake, that what could be at stake, is this radical formulation which is that of the real, in so far as we can conceive of it and as moreover we sometimes put our finger on it, that it is not conceivable to imagine any other limit of knowledge than this stopping point at which one has only to deal with this, something unsayable and which either is or is not. In other words something that is related to heads or tails.

This was of course to put you in tune with what is involved in not losing the plot. Namely, that we are not amusing ourselves. We are in the process of trying to give articulations of such a kind that there can be played out for us the most important decisions that are to be taken. As it happens our times mark more and more that these most important decisions, in so far as they may be those of the psychoanalyst, may (134) also coincide with those required at a key point in the social body, namely, the administration of knowledge, for example.

But then, even though on this point it is well understood that I cleared the board, that I am not doing history and that I do not see why such a precise system, especially if we correctly conceive the joint at which it is situated, that Pascal's wager would have less resources for us than it had for its author. And we will indeed come back to this question of the situation, all the better because we are going to illuminate it now. It is therefore not, as you are going to see right away, doing history, to remind you, as I recalled the last time to remind you that in Pascal's time, Revelation existed. And I

even stressed what was at stake with these two levels, the word of the Church, and then Sacred Scripture, and the function that Sacred Scripture played for Pascal. And it is obviously not to remind you that Newton also, who had other things on his mind, produced a big book – my hobby being bibliophilic, it happens that I have it, it is superb – which is a commentary on the Apocalypse and of Daniel’s prophecy. He gave just as much care – I mean in the calculation, in the manipulation of numbers that are nevertheless extremely problematic as those that are at stake when it is a matter of situating the reign of Nebuchadnezzar for example – as in his study on the laws of gravity. This should be remembered then in the margin, but it does nothing for us.

What is at stake at this stage, is to remark that at the level that Pascal then proposes his wager to us, whatever may be the relevance of our remarks about what is involved in it in the final term, namely, that such a proposition can only be conceived of when the knowledge of science is born, it nevertheless remains that, for him, the wager reposes on what we can call the word of the Other, and the word of the Other naturally conceived of as truth.

So then, if I am taking things up again at this point, it is because some people are not unaware, and I am informing the others - it would moreover be easy if they had behaved like my charming correspondents, if they had read almost all my *Ecrits* - that they should know about the connected and disconnected function that I articulated in a dialectic, as distinguishing if not opposing knowledge and truth. It is the last article that I collected; its title is very precisely *Science and Truth*. And as regards what is involved about the truth, everyone also knows, that in another one of these articles called *The Freudian Thing*, I wrote something that could certainly be understood as follows: that its property is that it speaks. We are thus supposed to be, or rather I am, I am supposed to be on a certain axis that, why not, could than be described as obscurantist since it connects up with this. Namely, that I am supposed to be giving a leg up to what Pascal is instilling, in so far (135) as he tries to bring us back to the plane of religion. So then, obviously, the truth certainly speaks, you will tell me. But obviously it is what you would say if you have understood nothing about what I say – which is absolutely not to be ruled out! – because I never said that. I made the truth say: “Me the truth I speak”. But I did not make it say: “Me the truth I speak, for

example, to express myself as truth”, nor “To tell you the truth”. The fact that it speaks does not mean that it tells the truth. It is the truth. It speaks. As regards what it says, you are the ones who are going to have to sort yourselves out with that. That could mean, this is what some people do: “Talk away, it’s all you are able to do”. If I may dare say so, I grant a little bit more to the truth. I have since even attributed to it the fact that it talks (*cause*), in effect, and not simply in the sense to which “talk away” (*cause toujours*)”. It even causes, talks at full tilt. I mean that, in the same article, I recalled Lenin’s word on the Marxist theory of society, which, he says: “Will triumph because it is true”. But not necessarily because it tells the truth. That can be applied there also.

Naturally, I am not going to dwell too long on it. Because it is said that my name is quoted to advantage – I did not go looking for it, I must say, because I did not have the time – in *l’Humanité*, because supposedly I am supposed to have begun this year, like that, seeing the way the wind was blowing, by making a mediation between Freud and Marx. Thank God, since I had the flu last weekend, this gave me all of a sudden a stimulus for what is called work, namely, great agitation. I set about going through the terrifying quantity of paper that I must make sure to destroy before I die, because God knows what would be done with it otherwise! I notice that I spoke about Marx, of use value, of exchange value, of surplus value. I noticed, in a word, that my Italian translator, whom I pinpointed, when I made the leap, to draw this sort of analogy between surplus value and *surplus enjoying*, that my Italian translator, it happened that she was there two years ago, had no merit in telling me that, in short, this was surplus value. Because I already spoke so much about Marx in connection with a certain number of fundamental articulations around what is involved in psychoanalysis that I ask myself whether I contributed anything new except this name *Mehrlust*, *surplus enjoying* as an analogy for *Mehrwert*. All of this to indicate moreover that through these radical points, naturally they absolutely do not develop in the same field, but since we are evoking Lenin, it is not any worse then to recall that what is at stake in Marxist theory, in so far as it concerns the truth, is what it states in effect. The fact that the truth of capitalism is the proletariat. It is true. Only it is from that very thing that there emerges the series and the import of our remarks about what is involved in the function of the truth. It is that the revolutionary consequence of this truth, this truth from which Marxist theory starts, naturally it goes a little bit

(136) further since what it constructs the theory of, is precisely capitalism, the revolutionary consequence is that the theory starts in effect from this truth, namely, that the proletariat, is the truth of capitalism.

The proletariat, what does that mean? It means that labour is radicalised to the pure and simple level of merchandise; which of course means that this reduces the worker himself to the same measure. Only once the worker, because of the theory, learns to know of himself as that, one can say that through this step, he finds the paths of a status – call that what you will – of a *savant*. He is no longer a proletarian, as I might say *an sich*, he is no longer pure and simple truth, he is *für sich*; he is what is called class consciousness. And he can even at the same time become the class-consciousness of the party in which people no longer speak the truth.

I am not satirising. I am only recalling that obvious things – that is why it is a relief – do not arise in any way from the scandal that is made of them, when people understand nothing about anything. Or that, if one has a correct theory of what is involved in knowledge and the truth, there is nothing easier to expect, that in particular it is hard to see why people should be astonished that it is from the most Leninistically defined relationship to the truth that there flows this whole Leninising in which the whole system is swamped! If you get it into your heads that there is nothing more soothing (*lénifiant*) than the hard men, you will be recalling, like that, a truth that has already been known for a long time. And then truly has that not always been known from all time? If people had not for some time, and I will tell you why, been so persuaded that Christianity is not the truth, people would have been able to recall all the same that for a certain time and not a short one, it was. And that what it proved is that around every truth that claims to speak as such, there prospers a clergy that is necessarily lying.

So then I ask myself why people are so high and mighty about the functioning of socialist governments! Will I go so far as to say that the pearl of the lie is the secretion of the truth? That would sanitise the atmosphere a little, an atmosphere moreover that only exists because of the fact that a certain type of cretinisation whose name I must give right away because at the end of what we have to say today, I will have to pin it again into one of these little squares. It is what is called a belief in

progress (*progressisme*). I will try, of course, to give you a better definition than this reference to these effects of scandal, I mean producing scandalised souls. These things ought to have been ventilated a long time ago by a reading of Hegel, the law of the heart and the delusions of presumption. But in the way of all things that are a little rigorous, when they come out, of course, no one thinks of remembering them at the appropriate moment. That is why I put as an (137) exergue at the beginning of my discourse this year something that means that what I prefer, is a discourse without words.

So then what is at stake, what might here be in question if one wished, as they say, to lick the plate to the point that we can profit from it, putting our finger on it, is to notice that things do not have such bad effects as all that. Since, when I say that the service of the field of truth, the service as such – a service that is not asked of anyone, you have to have the vocation for it – necessarily leads to lies, I want also to point out the following, because one must be fair. This gives rise to enormous work. For my part I adore that, when it is the others, of course, who work! That is why I treat myself to the reading of a good number of ecclesiastical authors and I admire the patience and the erudition they must have had to cart around so many quotations that come at the right point for me or that are of some use to me. It is the same thing for the authors of the communist church. They are also excellent workers. I may well, like that, for some of them, in day to day life, not be able to tolerate them any more than personal contacts with priests. That does not prevent them from being capable of doing very good work and I enjoy myself when I read one of them on *The hidden God*, for example. This does not make the author any easier to associate with.

So then, in short, the fruit of what is involved, after all, all the same, for knowledge is not at all to be neglected. Because people are a little bit too concerned with the truth and they are so bogged down in it that they end up by lying. The only real question – because I said that here I would go to the limit – is not at all that this should have consequences. Because you see that after all it is a form of selection of elites, that is why they pick up also, in one field as in the other, so many mentally handicapped. There you are, that is the limit! That is the limit. But you must not believe that it is simply to amuse myself, by giving like that a little rap on the nose to groups of whom one does not know, after all, why they should be any more preserved than others from

the presence of the mentally handicapped. It is because we analysts can perhaps on this point begin something that is precisely very important.

Here I refer you to the key that was quietly contributed by our dear Maud – Maud Mannoni for those who do not know who she is – the relationship of the mentally handicapped to the configuration that interests us, that for us analysts, is obviously burning precisely at the level of the truth. That is even why we are not able any more than the others to take precautions; even our lies, to which of course we are forced, are less impudent than the other – less impudent but more timid, it must be said. There are some all the same that, in this relationship, preserve some vivacity and precisely the works that I am evoking on the subject of what all of a sudden starts floating into (138) mental handicap with which, I must say that in my own regard, I got rather used to in the first phase of my experience. I was full of admiration at seeing the armfuls of flowers that I collected, flowers of truth when, inadvertently, I took into analysis what Freud, and how wrong he was, seems to have thought one should exclude from it, namely, a mentally handicapped person. There is no psychoanalysis, I must say, that goes better, if one means by that the joy of the psychoanalyst. It is perhaps not altogether uniquely what one might expect from a psychoanalysis, but in any case it is clear that, as regards what it conceals in terms of truths that precisely he brings out as pearls, unique pearls. Because here I only evoked this term in connection with lies, it must all the same be, that in the mentally handicapped person not everything is as handicapped as all that. And what if the mentally handicapped person were – you will understand better what I mean if you are able to refer to good authors, namely, to Maud Mannoni – a little trickster? This is an idea that came to some people. There is someone called Dostoyevsky who called one of his characters the Idiot, the one who conducted himself most marvellously, no matter what social field he was traversing and whatever embarrassing situation he found himself in.

I sometimes evoke Hegel, it is not a reason not to recast him. “The ruse of reason”, Hegel tells us, I must say that this is something I have always been suspicious of. For my part, I have very frequently seen reason being screwed, but as for succeeding in one of its ruses, I must say that during my lifetime I have not seen it. Perhaps Hegel saw it. He lived in the little courts of Germany where there are many mentally

handicapped and in truth, it was perhaps there that he found his sources. But as regards the ruse that may be in simple spirits, and it is not for nothing that someone who knew what he was saying baptised them as blessed, I am leaving the question open. And I am ending with this simple reminder very necessary and very healthy to recall in the context that we are living in.

What I would like to do now, is to take up at the level at which I left you the last time, namely, in the matrix that is isolated by the fact that it is no longer a matter of knowing what one is playing, a game where after all, all that Pascal's wager means, is that you cannot play this game in a correct fashion unless you are indifferent. Namely, that it is in the measure in which there is no doubt that the stake, infinite in so far as it is on the right, on the side of the existence of God, is a much more interesting stake than this kind of thing that I do not know what it is and that is represented as what? After all, in reading Pascal, this comes down to saying all the dishonesties that you will not do by following the commandments of God, and by following the commandments of the Church, some little supplementary inconveniences specifically in the relationships to the holy water font and some other accessories.

(139) It is a position of indifference, when all is said and done, with regard to what is involved. And this properly speaking all the more easily reaches the level of the wager as Pascal presents it in that after all, this God, he underlines it and it is worthwhile having it from his pen, this God, we do not know what he is nor if he is. It is in this sense that we can take Pascal. And it is here, namely, that there is an absolutely fabulous negation. Because, after all, in the preceding centuries, the ontological argument – I am not going to let myself be drawn into it but, to the eyes of all sensible spirits, and we would do well to follow its grain – had its whole weight. This amounted to nothing except to say what I am also in the process of teaching you, namely, that there is a hole in discourse, there is somewhere a place where we are not able to put the signifier that is necessary for all the rest to hold together. He thought that the signifier God could make things stick. In fact, it works at the level of something, about which after all it is a question of whether it is not a form of mental handicap, namely, philosophy. In general it is accepted, I mean among atheists, that the Supreme Being has a sense. Voltaire, who is generally thought to be pretty smart,

held onto it *mordicus*. He had respect for Diderot, who had a clear advance, a good length over him as can be seen in what he wrote. It is also probably for that reason that almost everything that Diderot wrote that was really important only appeared posthumously, and then that as a total it is much less substantial than in the case of Voltaire. Diderot for his part had glimpsed that the question is that of the lack somewhere and very precisely in so far as naming it means putting a stopper into it, nothing more.

It nevertheless remains that in Pascal, we are at the point of the joint, at the point of the leap where someone dares to say what was there from all time. It is like earlier, it is more like before than ever, only there is a moment when that is separated. It ought to be known that he says “the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob”, has nothing to do with “the God of the philosophers”. In other words he is one who speaks, I would ask you to pay attention to it, but he has this originality that his name cannot be pronounced, so that it is in this way that the question is opened up.

That is why, a curious thing, that it is through a son of Israel, someone called Freud, that we find ourselves really seeing for the first time at the centre of the field, not simply of knowledge, but of what makes knowledge grab our guts and even, if you wish, our balls, that here there is properly speaking evoked the Name of the Father and the tralala of myths that he lugs about. Because if I had been able to do my year on the Name of the Father, I would also have told you the result of my statistical researches; it is extraordinary that even in the Fathers of the Church people speak so little about this business of the Father. I am not talking about the Hebrew tradition, where very obviously it is everywhere in filigree and also, of course, if it can be in (140) filigree, it is because it is very veiled. That is the reason why, in the first seminar, the one after which I closed shop that year, I had begun by speaking about the sacrifice of Isaac, noting that the sacrificer is Abraham. These are obviously things that there would be every interest in developing, but that by reason of the change of configuration, of context and even of audience, there is in effect very little chance that I will ever be able to come back to it.

Nevertheless, a tiny little remark because there are words that are very much *à la mode*. From time to time, I pose questions like that; does God believe in God, for

example? I am going to ask you one. If at the last moment, God had not held back Abraham's arm, in other words if Abraham had been in too much of a hurry and had butchered Isaac, would it have been what is called a genocide or not? People are talking a lot at the moment about genocide and the fact of pinpointing the locus of a truth about what is involved in the function of genocide especially concerning the origin of the Jewish people, I believe that this landmark deserves to be noted. In any case, what is certain, as I underlined in this first lecture, is that to the suspension of this genocide there corresponded the butchering of a certain ram that is quite clearly there as a totemic ancestor.

So then here we are at the second phase, the one that is brought out by taking what is involved when there is no longer indifference, namely, the initial act of what is involved in the game. What is in the game, Pascal settles. I have already lost it, or I am not playing at all. This is what is meant by each of the two zero's that are there in the central figure (page 3); they are only the indices of the bet on the one hand or the "no bet" on the other. Only, all of this only holds up if the bet, as Pascal says, is taken to be worth nothing. And in a certain way it is true. The \circ -object has no use value. It has no exchange value either as I already said. Only this, what was in question in the bet, once one has noticed the way it functions, and that is the reason that psychoanalysis is what has allowed us to take a step into the structure of desire, it is in so far as the \circ is what animates everything that is at stake in the relationship of man to the word. Precisely that a gambler, but a different gambler to the one that Pascal speaks about, namely, the very one that, because he sensed something all the same, Hegel understood, even though despite appearances his system is faulty. Namely, that there is no other game except risking everything for everything, that this is even what is called simply to act. He called that the fight to the death for pure prestige. This is precisely what psychoanalysis allows to be rectified. It is a matter of much more than life about which we do not after all know very much. We know so little about it that we do not hold onto it all that much, as can be seen every day provided you are a psychiatrist or simply are 20 years old. It is a matter of what (141) happens when something different, which has not been named and which is not any more so because I have called it \circ , is at stake. And this has meaning precisely only when it is brought into play with, on the opposite side, what is nothing other than the very idea of measure, measure in its essence that has nothing to do with God but that is in a way

the condition of thinking. Once I think about something, however I name it, it comes back to calling it the universe, namely, One.

Thanks be to God, thinking has had enough of swarming around inside this condition to notice that the One, does not happen just by itself. And what is at stake, is to know the relationship that this has with this "I". This is described by the fact that in the second table there is an **o** on the one hand, which is no longer the **o** abandoned to the destiny of the game, the bet, which is the **o** in so far as it is me who represents myself, that here I am playing against, and precisely against the closure of this universe that will be One if it wishes, but that I am an extra **o**.

This ineradicable God who has no other foundation when one looks closely at him, than being the faith in this universe of discourse which is certainly not nothing. Because if you imagine that I am in the process of doing philosophy, I am going to have to give you an apologue. It is necessary to put in the corners big figures to make what is meant understood. You know that the modern era began like the others, this is why it deserves to be called modern, because otherwise, as Alphonse Allais says, look how modern we were in the Middle Ages! If the modern era has a sense, it is because of certain breakthroughs one of which was the myth of the desert island; I could just as well have started from it as from Pascal's wager. This still continues to worry us. What kind of book would you take with you onto a desert island? Ah! That would be amusing, a pile of the *Pléiade*, what fun one would have behind the leftover shrimps, somewhere, in reading something from the *Pléiade*, it would be really exciting! Nevertheless that has a sense. And to illustrate it I am going to give you my response. A moment of suspense: "What book would he take onto a desert island?" So then, tell me!

X – The Bible.

Lacan: The Bible, naturally!!! I can do without it! What do you think I would do with it on a desert island! Onto a desert island I would take Bloch et Von Warburg. I hope all the same that you all know what it is, it is not the first time that I have spoken about it. Bloch and Von Warburg is entitled - that lends itself to misunderstanding of course - *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française*. Etymological does not

particularly mean that you are given the sense of words starting from the thinking that preceded their creation. It means that in connection with each word, you are given a little pinpointing with the dates of their forms and of their uses in the course of history. This has (142) such an enlightening, fruitful value, that just by itself, in effect, one can do without anyone. You see the degree to which language, is company all by itself. It is extraordinarily curious that Daniel Defoe, to take the one who did not invent the desert island – the one who invented it, is Balthazar Gracian, who was someone of a different class. He was a Jesuit, and moreover not a liar. It is in *Criticon*, in which the hero, returning from somewhere or other in the Atlantic, spends a certain time on a deserted island, which has for him at least the advantage of protecting him from women. It is extraordinary that Daniel Defoe did not notice that Robinson did not need to wait for Friday. That already the simple fact that he was a speaking being and knew his language perfectly well, namely, the English tongue, was an element absolutely as essential for his survival on the island as his relationship with some tiny natural trifles from which he succeeded in making a hut and feeding himself.

Whatever may be the case for what is at stake in this world which is that of signifiers, I cannot do better today, with the advancing time than to draw again what I gave here in the first terms that I put forward, namely, those to which the moment we have got to in mathematical logic allows us to give some rigour to. And in starting from the definition of the signifier as being what represents a subject for another signifier, this signifier, I am saying, is other, which simply means that it is signifying.

S O.



Because what characterises, what grounds the signifier, is absolutely nothing whatsoever that is attached to it as sense as such. It is its difference. Namely, not something that is stuck to it, to itself, and would allow it to be identified but the fact that all the others are different to it. Its difference resides in the others. That is why this constitutes a step forward; but an inaugural step by asking oneself whether from this Other one can make a class, one can make a sack, and one can, in a word, make what is involved in this famous One.

Because then, as I have already drawn it, if the O is 1, it must include this S in so far as it is the representative of the subject, for what? For O. And this O, by being the same as the one that you have just seen here, as you see, is found to be what it is, a predicate in so far as the 1 in question is no longer the unary trait but the unifying 1 that defines the field of the Other. In other words, you see there being indefinitely reproduced the following, with here something that never finds its name, unless you give it in an arbitrary fashion. And that it is precisely in order to say that it does not have a name that names it that I designate it by the most discreet letter, the letter **o**.

What does that mean? Where and when is there produced this process (143) which is a process of choice? It is very precisely as regards the One, the game that is involved in so far as he really plays, not *jocus*, here a play with words, but *ludus* as it is forgotten from its Latin origin of which many things are to be said but undoubtedly this comprises this deadly game that I spoke about earlier, and that this varies the ritual games that Rome had inherited from the Etruscans – the word is very probably itself of Etruscan origin – up to the games of the circus, neither more nor less. And something else again, that I will signal for you when the time has come. It is in so far as in this game there is something that, with respect to the 1, is posited as questioning what the 1 becomes when I, **o**, am lacking to him. And at this point where I am lacking to him, if I posit myself once again as “I”, it will be to question him about what results from the fact that I posited this lack.

It is here that you will have the series that I already wrote as the decreasing series, the one that goes towards a limit, in the series that I do not know how to describe otherwise, the series that is summarised by the double condition which is only one because of being the Fibonacci series, whatever it may be, namely, the relation between 1 and **o**.

I already wrote the results of this series in this line that continues to infinity, and signalled for you the total of that which, from the value of these different terms, is necessary in the measure that you continue towards the formulae of a decreasing order that culminate at a limit. Culminate if you have started from the withdrawal of **o** at something that, in totalising the even powers and the odd powers of **o**, easily realises the 1 as their total.

It nevertheless remains that, up to the end, what defines the relationship of one of these terms to the following one, namely, its true difference, is always and in a way that does not decrease but that is strictly equal, the **o** function.

This is what is demonstrated by the written statement, formulated from (144) this decreasing chain. It is that, whatever may be the appearance linked to the schematisation, it is always the same circle that is at stake. And that this circle, in so far as we ground it, but in an arbitrary, chosen fashion, it is by an act that we posit this Other as field of discourse – namely, what we take care to distance any divine existence from– it is by a purely arbitrary, schematic and signifying act that we define it as One, namely, faith in what? Faith in our thinking. While we know very well that this thinking only subsists from signifying articulation, in so far as it already presents itself in this indefinite world of language. What then are we going to do and what are we doing in the logical order about this circumscribing in which we try to make appear in this all the **o** as remainder, if nothing more than, by having let it go, by having lost it, by having played in the knowledge of some “the loser wins” or other, to arrive at nothing other than identifying what is involved in the Other itself as **o**. Namely, by finding in the **o** the essence of the supposed One of thinking. Namely, to determine thinking itself as being the effect, I am saying more, the shadow of what is involved in the function of the **o**-object. The **o** at the point where here it appears to us, deserves to be called the cause, certainly, but specified in its essence as a privileged cause, plays an admirable sense...that play precisely gives us, the play of language in its material form. Let us call it as I already called it more than once on the board the **o**-cause (*l'a-cause*). Moreover in French does this not make an explosive sound

because there exists the expression “à cause de”. And have its resonances always been clearly seen? “A cause de”, does this constitute the avowal that this “à cause de” is only an **o**-cause. On this every language has its price. And Spanish says “por l’amor”. One could easily take the same effect from it.

But this - at which the limit of time that is imposed on us every time stops me - makes me have to announce to you that I am confirming it. And in confirming it completes the inverted test, namely, the one belonging to the field, to the goal, to the career in which there is engaged for us the relationship to knowledge. Not that of questioning the One in so far as at the start I put this lack into it and that then I find from the fact that it is identified to this lack itself, but to question this 1 because I am adding this **o** to it $1 + \mathbf{o}$; $1 + \mathbf{o}$, such is the first form, such is the upper line as I have written it in the matrix on the right.

What does the $1 + \mathbf{o}$ give when it is in its field that there is engaged the radical questioning of knowledge? Knowledge added to the world in so far as, let us say it can, armed with this formula, with this preliminary banner, transform it. What is the logical consequence of it, questioned in the way in which I did it at the level of progressive differences? This is what will perhaps allow us to clarify more radically what is involved in the function of **o**. Its correlative is in which it is easy to glimpse many things, this thing that the authors were deluded by for a long time, and not just at an indifferent epoch, (145) precisely at the moment when the ontological argument had a sense. Namely, that what is lacking to desire is properly speaking the infinite; perhaps we will say something about it that will give it a different status.

Notice again that the fourth box of the matrix on the right, this zero is found, in the way in which I articulated it by the schema entitled the relationship of S to O, to clearly present the way it is radically distinguished from what is on the first schema, namely, the bet or on the contrary indifference. It well and truly represents the hole and, in a third phase, we will have to demonstrate what it corresponds to in the analysis of what takes its origin in this very hole.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 26 February 1969

(147) You have been good enough to follow me up to the present along narrow paths and I think that, for a number of you, the line I am taking seems to pose the question of its origin and its sense. In other words, it may easily happen that you no longer know very well where we are. That is why it seems an opportune time to me, and not in a contingent way, to pose the question of my title, for example, *From an Other to the other*, under which my discourse for this year is presented. It is indeed in effect conceivable that it is not at the start, by way of a preface, indeed by way of a programme, that something can be elucidated about the end. It is necessary to have travelled at least a bit of the path so that the start is illuminated by retroaction. This not simply for you, but for myself. Since for me this means, in what I might call this drilling operation, which is indeed what interests you, what holds your attention, this means that for at least for a certain number of you who are here, if not for all, I must spend some time to take my bearings in what constituted its stages in the past.

Thus it is that I happened to take up the text – who knows, perhaps with publication in mind – of what I stated ten years ago now, I mean in the seminar 1959-60, it is a long time ago, under the title of *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*. It gave me some satisfactions of an intimate order to bring to light something that strives to reproduce as faithfully as possible the outline of what I did at that time. This of course, cannot but have all these retroactive effects from what I have stated since, and specifically here. This is therefore a delicate operation and the only thing that meant I could not keep to the excellent summary that had been done two years later by one of my listeners, namely, Safouan. I would have to give the reasons why I did not publish this summary at that time, but it will rather be the object of a preface to what will come out of it. My satisfaction on this occasion, that you can share if you trust me about the fidelity of the outline that I will try to produce of it, is due to the fact that

not only does nothing force me to revise what I put forward at that time but that after all, I can lodge in it, as in a sort of little cup, the more rigorous things, let us say, that I am able to state today about this project.

In effect, what I thought I had to start from during this putting into (148) question, which had never before been done, of what is involved, on the ethical plane, is a new term. This, in a first attempt at an initial drafting that I tried to give of what new things are contributed by what I am stating in the way that seems to me to be the most rigorous, by the Freud event (*l'événement Freud*). I now have, at the date that we are at, the satisfaction of seeing for example as regards what is involved in the function of an author like Freud, I would say that a very broad minded society finds itself in a position of being able to measure his originality and in connection with him, as Michel Foucault did for example last Saturday, in a sort of evil place called the *Société de Philosophie*, in posing the question “*What is an author?*”. And this led him to highlight a certain number of terms that deserve to be stated in connection with such a question, what is an author? What is the function of the name of an author? It was really, at the level of a semantic interrogation properly speaking that he found the means of highlighting the originality of this function and its situation closely internal to discourse. This involves, of course, a putting into question on this occasion, an effect of splitting, of tearing apart of what is involved in it for everyone, namely, for what is called the society of fine minds or the republic of letters, of this relationship to discourse. And whether Freud, in this respect, did not play a capital role, that moreover the author in question, Michel Foucault, not only accentuated but properly speaking put at the high point of his whole articulation. In a word, “The function of the return to...” he put three dots after it, in the little announcement that he had made of his project of questioning “*What is an author?*”. “The return to...” was found at the end, and I must say by that very fact I considered myself as having been invited, there being no one after all, in our day who, more than me, has given weight to “return to...” in connection with a return to Freud. Moreover he highlighted it very well and showed how perfectly well informed he was about the very special sense, the key point that this return to Freud constitutes, compared to everything that is currently a slippage, an alteration, a profound revision of the function of the author, especially of the literary author. And of what in short is provided by this circle in terms of a critical function which, after all, there is no reason to be astonished in our day lags

behind, or backwards, with respect to what is happening. Something that in other times, a critical function thought it could pinpoint with this bizarre term that undoubtedly none of those who are in the forefront of it accept but by which we now find ourselves affected as it were by a bizarre label that has been stuck on our backs without our consent, structuralism.

So then ten years ago, in beginning to introduce the question, as I told you, which had never even been raised, which is quite curious, about the ethics of psychoanalysis, assuredly perhaps the strangest thing is (149) this remark by which I thought I should illustrate it, not immediately certainly but I do not even know if I gave enough support at that moment to the thing, I had an audience of psychoanalysts, I thought I would be able in a way to address myself directly by something that must be given a name, when it is a matter of morality, of conscience, add on moral, so I did not remark too much at that stage that the ethics of psychoanalysis as it is constituted by a deontology did not even give a sketch, a beginning, the smallest feature of the beginning of the ethics of psychoanalysis. On the contrary, what I announced from the beginning is that, through the Freud event, what has been brought to light, the key point, the centre of the ethics is nothing other than what I supported at that time by the final term of these three references, categories, from which I had started my whole discourse, namely, the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. As you know it is in the Real that I designated the pivotal point of what is involved in the ethics of psychoanalysis. I pre-suppose, of course, that this Real is subjected to the very severe interposing, if I can express myself in this way, of the conjoined function of the Symbolic and the Imaginary. And that it is inasmuch as the Real, as one might say, is not easy to gain access to that it is for us the reference around which there ought to turn the revision of the problem of ethics. In effect it is not by chance that, in order to connect it, I started then from the reminder of a work that, even though it has remained a little bit in the shade, and, a curious piece of luck, was only resurrected by the operation of these people that we can consider as not being the best oriented as regards our questioning, namely, those we can call neo-positivists, or again those who believe that they have to question language from the angle of something whose futile destiny I pointed out at one time, to question something that they express in an exemplary fashion, namely, the question put about *the meaning of meaning*, about what is involved in the sense of the fact that these things have a meaning. It is quite certain that this is a path

completely opposed to what interests us. But it is also of course not by chance that it should be them, and specifically Ogden who brought out or brought out again, edited rather, this work of Jeremy Bentham called *The theory of fictions*.

It is quite simply the most important work in what is called the utilitarian perspective, and you know that at the beginning of the nineteenth century people were trying to find a solution to the very current problem at that time, and with good reason, an ideological one in a way, described as the sharing of goods. *The theory of fictions* is already at this level, and with an exceptional lucidity, the putting in question of what is involved in all human institutions. And, properly speaking, nothing could be done, taking things from the sociological angle, that better isolates what is involved as such in this category of the symbolic which is found to be precisely the one that is reactualised, (150) but in a completely different manner, by the Freud event and what came after it. It is enough to understand the term fictions as not representing, not affecting by its domination, what it regards as in no way having an illusory or deceptive character. The way in which the term fictions is put forward does nothing other than overlap what, in an aphoristic way, I promoted by underlining the fact that the truth, in so far as its locus could only be the one where the word is produced, that the truth in essence, if one can express it in this way, forgive me this “in essence”, it is to make myself understood, do not give it the whole philosophical stress that this term involves, the truth, of itself, let us say has the structure of fiction.

Here is the essential starting point that in a way allows there to be posed the question of what is involved in ethics in a way that can moreover accommodate all the diversities of culture. Namely, from the moment that we can put them within the brackets, in the parentheses of this term of the structure of fiction, which supposes, of course, reaching a state, acquiring a position with regard to this character in so far as it affects the whole foundational articulation of discourse in what one can call in general social relationships. It is starting from this point, that cannot of course be reached except by starting from a certain limit, let us say once again to evoke our Pascal, all of a sudden, at this turning point I remember him, who therefore dared before him to note simply as something that ought to form part of the discourse that he left incomplete, the one rather legitimately, rather ambiguously also collected under the term of *Pensées*, the formula “truth on this side of the Pyrenees, error on the

other side". It is starting from certain degrees of relativism, and of the most radical type of relativism with respect not simply to morals and institutions but to truth itself, that there can begin to be posed the problem of ethics. And it is in this way that the Freud event shows itself so exemplary. In the fact, as I underlined it and with some support, with some stress in the first trimester of the articulation of the ethics of psychoanalysis, namely, the radical change that results from an event which is nothing other, as we are going to see, than his discovery, namely, the function of the unconscious. It is correlatively that we are going to see later why, in a way that, I think, will sufficiently strike you by its elegance, he made the pleasure principle function in a radically different way to everything that had done up to then. In short, I think that there are enough of you, after all, who have found themselves in one way or another permeated or traversed, let us say, by my discourse that I only need to recall in the briefest fashion what is involved in this principle.

The pleasure principle is essentially characterised at first by this paradoxical fact that its surest result, is not, even though it is written in (151) this form in Freud's text, hallucination, let us say the possibility of hallucination. But let us say that hallucination in Freud's text is its specific possibility. What in effect does the whole apparatus that Freud constructs to account for the effects of the unconscious show us? As you know this is found in Chapter VII of the *Traumdeutung*, when it is a matter of clarifying dream processes, *Traum-Vorgänge*. But we have had the chance, the luck, to see falling into our possession and under our examination what is in a certain way its underpinning in a certain *Entwurf*, in a certain outline that corresponds to these years when, correlatively to the discovery that he was making, guided by these admirable theoreticians that hysterics were – that hysterics are! - guided by them he had his experience of what is involved in the unconscious economy, correlatively he wrote this *Entwurf* to Fliess. A really very developed project, infinitely richer and more constructive than what he thought he could summarise of it, because it is sure that he himself could not fail to preserve a reference to it in this chapter of the *Traumdeutung*. What he constructs at that moment then, under the terms of the psi-system, inasmuch as it is what regulates in the organism the function of what he calls the pleasure principle, let us say to schematise it roughly, we can put it at the heart of something that is not simply a relay in the organism but a veritable closed circle that has its own laws. And that in order to be inserted into the cycle classically defined by

the general physiology of the organism, of the stimulus-motor activity arc, and not response, which is an abuse of the term because response has a sense that ought to have for us a much more complex structure where something is interposed in the function, is defined very precisely not simply by being the hindrance effect imposed on the basal arc but properly speaking creating an obstacle to it, namely, constituting an autonomous psi-system within which the economy is such that it is certainly not the adaptation, the adequation of the motor response that, as you know, is far from being always sufficiently adapted, we suppose it to be free, but everything that happens at the level of the fact that a living animal, in so far as it is defined by the fact of being gifted with a motor activity that allows it to escape too intense stimuli, destructive stimuli that may threaten its integrity, it is clear that what is at stake at the level of what Freud articulates, is that something is lodged as such in certain of these living beings, and not just any ones. And without him being able to say certainly that the same apparatus may be defined simply from the fact that the being in question is a superior vertebrate or something simply provided with a nervous system, it is about what happens properly speaking at the level of human economy that is at stake. And it is at (152) this level, even if from time to time he risks the possibility of interpreting what is happening at the level of other neighbouring beings in reference to what happens in the human being defined in a necessary fashion simply through the consequences and the text of Freud's discourse as a speaking being, it is at this level that there is produced this homeostatic regulation which is defined by the return to perceptual identity. Namely, that in his research, in the broadest sense of the word, in the detours that this system carries out to maintain its own homeostasis, what its functioning ends up with as constituting its specificity, is the fact that what will be rediscovered about the identical perception inasmuch as what regulates it is repetition, what will be rediscovered does not carry in itself any criterion of reality. It can only be affected by these criteria in a way from outside and through the pure conjunction of a little sign, of something qualificatory that a specialised system already distinguishes from the two preceding ones that you see inscribed in this schema, namely, the reflex circle *qua* constituting the phi-system, the central circle that for its part defines a closed area and constituting the proper type of equilibrium, namely, the psi-system. It is from this afference of something whose function he closely distinguishes from energetics that can be applied to each of these two systems, and that for its part only intervenes in function of signs qualified through specific periods

and which are those afferent to each of the sense organs and that eventually come to affect certain of the perceptats [?] that are introduced into this system of a *Wahrnehmungzeichen*, from a sign that what is at stake here is something that is an acceptable perception with respect to reality.

What does that mean? Certainly not that we should approve this use of the term hallucination that for us has clinical connotations. For Freud also, certainly, but he no doubt wanted to accentuate very particularly the paradox of the functioning of this system *qua* articulated onto the pleasure principle. Hallucination requires quite different co-ordinates. But moreover we have in a text by Freud himself what constitutes its major reference. It is enough that he refers to exemplify it to the function of the dream to help us find our feet again; it is essentially the possibility of the dream that is at stake. In a word, we find ourselves before this adventure that, to justify what is involved in the functioning of the apparatus that regulates the unconscious in so far as, we are going to recall it later and in the appropriate style, it governs an absolutely essential and radical economy that allows us to appreciate not simply our behaviour but also our thinking. Here the world, in a (153) completely opposite way from what is traditionally the support of philosophers when it is a matter of tackling what is involved in the good of man, here we have the world entirely suspended on the dream of the world.

This means that this step, the Freud event, which consists in nothing other than properly a supposed arrest of what, in the traditional perspective, was considered as the foundation encompassing every reflection, namely, the rotation of this world, celestial rotation so manifestly designated in the text of Aristotle as constituting the referential point where every conceivable good ought to be attached. The radical questioning then of every effect of representation, of any connivance of what is involved in the represented as such, not at all in a subject, let us not say it too early because if in Aristotle this term of *upokeimenon* is put forward exactly in connection with logic, it is nowhere isolated as such. It took a long time and the whole progress of philosophical tradition for knowledge to be organised in its final term, the Kantian term, from a subject relation and something that remains entirely suspended, this is the sense of idealism in so far as there appears, with the *phainomenon*, leaving out the

noumemon, namely, what is behind, again this representation is comfortable. What is to be underlined in the essence of idealism, is that after all, the thinking being is only dealing with his own measure, that he poses as a terminal point, the referential point that is in question for him. Now it is from this measure that he believes he is able to state in an *a priori* fashion at least the fundamental laws. It is properly speaking in this that the Freudian position differs. Nothing is tenable any longer about what is involved in representation except what is articulated at a point profoundly motivating for behaviour. And this by passing completely outside the circuit of any subject in which the representation is claimed to be unified, to a structure, to a structure made up of a weave and a network. And this is the true sense of these little schemas that the recent discovery of neuronal articulation allowed him to construct. It is enough to refer to this project, to this *Entwurf*, to see the decisive importance in the articulation of what is involved in this trellis, lattice, of this texture and since of course it has not been possible for us for a long time, as already Freud had no doubt a suspicion of, to identify to these movements, to these transfers of energy that we have been able to map out moreover, by other physical means, to these displacements that happen all along the neuronal texture. It is in no way under this mode that proves from experience to be quite distinct, that we can find the appropriate usage of these schemas that I have just qualified as network, lattice. We see clearly that what Freud used these schemas for, was in a way to support, to materialise in an intuitive form nothing more than what was at stake and that moreover is displayed on the (154) same schemas. At every one of these crossing points it is a word that is described, namely, the word that designates a particular memory. This word articulated as a response, a particular word striking, marking, engraving as I might say the symptom. And what is at stake in these little schemas that I would ask you to refer to – buy *The origins of psychoanalysis*, as a collection of letters to Fliess, to which is joined this *Entwurf*, is translated – and you will clearly see that in effect what Freud found a convenient support from in what was as that time within his hand's reach by what had also just been discovered, namely, neuronal articulation, was nothing other than the articulation, under the most elementary form, of signifiers and of relations that can be fixed in a way that, in our day the same schema that would have the same shape. Buy the last little book that has appeared, or rather buy *The axiomatic theory of sets* by M Krivine. You will see there exactly Freud's schemas except for the fact that what is at stake are little schemas oriented more or less like this, and that are necessary to make

us understand what is involved in set theory. This means that every point, in the measure that it is linked by an arrow to another, is considered in set theory as an element of the other set. And you will see that it is a matter of nothing less than what is necessary to give a correct articulation to what is most formal in order to give its foundation to mathematical theory. And already you will see there, by simply reading the first lines, what is involved in every axiomatic step that is taken. Namely, the veritable necessities taken from the formal angle in what is involved in a signifying articulation taken at its most radical level. Notably this particularly exemplary one, the notion defined there of a part concerning its elements, elements that are always sets, the way it is said that one of these elements is contained in another, depends on these formal definitions which are such that they are distinguished, that they cannot be identified to what a term like “be contained in”, intuitively means. Because if you suppose that I make a schema that is a little more complicated than that one and that I write on the board as a note “the identification of each one of these terms in the set (*ces termes ensemblistes*)”, it is not at all enough that one of them is written, namely, constitutes in appearance a part of the universe that I am establishing here, for it to be able in any way to be said that it is contained in any of the other terms, namely, to be an element of it. In other words what is articulated from a configuration of signifiers in no way signifies that the entire configuration, that the universe thus constituted can be totalised. Quite the contrary, it leaves outside its field as not being able to be situated as one of its parts, but only articulated as an element in a reference to others, the sets thus (155) articulated. It leaves the possibility of a non-coincidence between the fact that intuitively we might say that it is part of this universe and the fact that formally we can articulate it to it. This indeed is an altogether essential principle and is the one through which mathematical logic can essentially instruct us, I mean allow us to put in their correct place what is involved for us about certain questions. You are going to see which ones.

This minimal logical structure as it is defined by the mechanisms of the unconscious, I have for a long time summarised under the terms of difference and repetition. Nothing else grounds the function of the signifier except its absolute difference. It is only in the way that the other signifiers are different from it that the signifier is sustained. On the other hand these signifiers should be and function in a repetitive articulation. This is the other part of what is involved in the other characteristic, that a

first logic can be established from what on the one hand results from this signifying pinpointing itself, not to fix but on the contrary to slide, that what fixes is a reference to the signifying pinpointing, is destined to slide from this pinpointing itself. Here is the fundamental function of displacement. That on the other hand it is of the nature of the signifier *qua* pinpointing to allow the substitution of one signifier for another, with certain expected effects that are effects of sense. That is the other dimension. But the important thing is the following and it is appropriate for us to accentuate it here to allow us to grasp what is really involved in our functions, I mean psychoanalytic functions. If at the level of the possibility of the dream, namely, of this pleasure principle through which essentially and at the start the function of the reality principle is constituted as precarious – certainly not cancelled out for all that but essentially dependant on the radical precariousness to which the pleasure principle subjects it – what must be grasped is the fact that what we see in the dream, since at the start it is here that there takes place essentially the approach of this function of the signifier, of this minimal logical structure whose terms I articulated again just now, there must be pushed to the end what is involved in the Freudian perspective. If, as everything seems to (156) indicate in our way of treating the dream, what is involved are sentences – let us leave aside for the moment the nature of their syntax – they have an elementary one at least at the level of the two mechanisms that I have recalled of condensation and of displacement. What must be seen, is that the way in which it appears hallucinatory for us, with the accent that Freud gave to this term at this level, what does it mean if not that the dream is already in itself interpretation, a wild one certainly, but interpretation. It is there besides that it can be grasped that this interpretation, which is to be taken as Freud himself quite calmly wrote – if I have underlined it, I am certainly not the one who discovered or invented it in the text – that if the dream is present as a rebus, what does it mean if not that to every one of these articulated terms that are signifying from a diachronic point of its progress where there is established its articulation, the dream, through its function, and the function of pleasure, therefore this imaged translation that itself only subsists because it can be articulated in a signifier, what do we do then in substituting for this wild interpretation our reasoned interpretation? On this it is enough to invoke the practice of each person but for the others, let them re-read in the light of this the dreams quoted in the *Traumdeutung* in order to grasp that what is at stake, is in this reasoned interpretation, nothing other than from a reconstituted sentence, to grasp the point

where there is a flaw which is the one where, *qua* sentence, and not at all *qua* meaning, it allows there to be seen what is not working, and what is not working, is desire.

Take the dream, something really exemplary, and in a way put by Freud at the very start of the chapter where he questions dream processes, the *Traum-Vorgänge* and in which he tries to give what he calls their psychology. There you will read the dream of “*des alten Mannes*”, of the old man that tiredness had forced to abandon in the room next door the body of his dead son to be watched over by another old man. What he dreams about, is about this son standing, alive, who comes close to his bed, who grasps him by the arm and in a voice full of reproach says: “*Vater, siehst du denn nicht dass ich verbrenne?*”, father, do you not see I am burning? What could be more moving, what could be more pathetic than what happens. Namely, that the father awakes and going into the next room sees that effectively a candle has fallen over and has set fire to the sheets that are already licking at the body while the watcher has fallen asleep? And Freud tells us that undoubtedly apart from the fact that the dream was only there to prolong sleep in the face of the first signs of what had been perceived of this horrible reality, do we not further grasp that it is precisely by considering that reality overlaps this dream that proves that the father is still sleeping. Because how can we not understand the accent there is in this word when Freud tells us moreover that there is no word in the dream that has not come somewhere in the text of (157) words effectively pronounced. How can we not see that it is a desire that burns this child, but in the field of the Other, in the field of the one to whom he addresses himself, to the father on this occasion? What is at stake is some flaw that comes from the fact that he is a desiring being, some flaw he had shown with respect to this beloved object that his son was. And that it is from this which, Freud tells us, is not analysed but very sufficiently indicated, it is from this that reality itself protects him, in its coincidence. The interpretation of the dream is not in any case, and Freud agrees with this, what caused it in reality.

So then, when we interpret a dream, what guides us, is certainly not “what does that mean?” nor is it “what does it mean in saying that?” but “what by saying that does it wish?” Apparently it does not know what it wants. Here indeed is where the question lies and our formulae, in so far as they establish this first relationship linked in a way

to the most simple function of number in so far as it is generated from this most elementary something that has a name in mathematics and that is called a sub-group where there intervene additions, what I called the Fibonacci series, simply the joining up of the two preceding terms to constitute the third: 1 1 2 3 5 ... that it is from that very place, as I told you, that there is generated this something that is not of the order of what is called the mathematical, the rational, namely, this unary trait, but something that, at the origin, introduces this first proportion, the most original one of all that we have designated and that is designated in mathematics where it is perfectly well known:

$$\mathbf{o} = 5 - 1$$

simply by this proportion $\mathbf{o}/1-\mathbf{o} = 1/\mathbf{o} = 1+\mathbf{o}$.

Now at the place of \mathbf{o} , write knowledge. We do not know yet what it is since this is what we are questioning ourselves about. If 1 is the field of the Other and the field of truth, the truth in so far as it does not know itself, we write:

Let us try to see what these relationships mean. This means that knowledge about the unconscious, namely, that there is a knowledge that says “there is somewhere a truth that does not know itself” and it is this that is articulated in the unconscious, it is here that we ought to find the truth about knowledge. Does our relationship, the one that we made earlier, between the dream – I am isolating it from the totality of the formations of the unconscious – this is not to say that I could not (158) also extend it but I am isolating it for clarity, this role of which we may wrongly pose the question “what does that mean?”. Because this is not what is important, it is where is the flaw in what is said? This is what is important for us. But it is at a level where what is said is distinct from what it presents as meaning something. And nevertheless it says something without knowing what it is saying since we are forced to help it by our reasoned interpretation. To know that the dream is possible, that is to be known, and that this is how it is. Namely, that the unconscious should have been discovered, is what indicates to us the singular proportion that we can write with the help of the term \mathbf{o} *qua* original effect of the inscription itself, provided we simply give it this little push

of being able to renew itself by connecting repetition and difference in this minimal operation called addition.

It is there that, inasmuch as in this register it is written $o/1-o = 1/o$ we can see that this knowledge about the diminished truth of knowledge, it is there that we have to take not simply the truth, namely, a word that is affirmed, truth about what is involved in the function of knowledge, but even on this occasion to be able to confront them on the same line and, in a word, to question what is involved in this junction which ensures that we can write truth plus knowledge.

Now all I am able to do, since I am pressed for time, is to recall the economic analogy that I introduced here about what is involved in truth as work, an analogy that is very sensitive to something in our experience. The fact is that a discourse, at least the analytic one, the work of truth is more obvious because it is painful. To make one's way without falling to the right or to the left into some intuitive identification or other that short-circuits, in a way, the sense of what is at stake in the least relevant references, that of need for example. And on the contrary, it is to the function of price that I homologated knowledge. Now price is certainly not established by chance, any more than any effect of exchange. But what is certain, is that the price in itself does not constitute a work and here indeed is the important point. It is that neither does knowledge, whatever may be said about it. It is an invention of pedagogues that knowledge is acquired by the sweat of your brow, we will soon be told, as if it were necessarily correlative to burning late oil. With good electrical light one can do without it! But I ask you: have you ever, I am not saying learned anything, because to learn is a terrible thing, you have to go through all (159) the stupidity of those who explain things to you. This is painful to bring up, but is it not a fact that getting to know something always happens in a flash?

Everything that is said about any learning by experience, having something to do with one's hands, knowing how to handle oneself on a horse or on skis, that has nothing to do with knowledge. There is a moment when you know how to sort out the things that are presented to you, which are signifiers, and in the way that they are presented to you, it means nothing. And then all of a sudden it means something and that from the very beginning. It is tangible from the way in which a child handles his first

alphabet that what is in question is not any learning but the collapse that unites a big capital letter with the shape of the animal whose initial is supposed to correspond to the capital letter in question. The child makes the connection or does not make it. In the majority of cases, namely, in those where he is not surrounded by too much pedagogical attention he makes it. And that is what knowledge is. And every time a piece of knowledge is produced, of course, it is not useless for a subject to have passed through this stage in order to understand what happens from an effect of knowledge in the little schemas that I feel scrupulous about not having made you sense properly earlier on, but I was pressed for time, set theory. We will come back to it if necessary.

What is it to know? If we ought, pushing things further, to question what is involved in this fundamental analogy, the one which means that knowledge still remains perfectly opaque because it is a matter for the numerator of the first relation of a singular knowledge which is the fact that there is truth, and perfectly articulated to what it lacks *qua* knowledge. And that, by reason of this relation, it is from this very relation that we are expecting the truth about what is involved in knowledge. It is clear that I am not leaving you here at the level of a pure and simple riddle and that the fact that I have introduced it through this term \circ shows you that it is effectively in the articulation that I already, it seems to me, sufficiently circumscribed about the \circ -object that there ought to depend any possible manipulation of the function of knowledge.

Will I here, at the moment of ending, need to have the necessary boldness to give a plausible sense to what will be written in terms of a cross conjunction of the type that people use in arithmetic. From this knowledge about the unconscious to this knowledge questioned as a radical function. In so far, in short, as it constitutes this very object towards which there tends every desire in so far as it is produced at the level of articulation. How knowledge *qua* knowledge is lost at the origin because desire appears in every possible articulation of discourse. This is what we will have to consider in the talks that follow.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 5 March 1969

I left you the last time on a formula balanced according to what we will call a harmonic proportion that I developed before you in these terms that

$$o/1-o = 1/o$$

which I was able to translate easily, because of what had been previously said, by something that carries in itself a certain degree of obviousness and is of a nature to satisfy by an *a priori* formula what is commonly accepted as being what the analytic conquest is. This is the fact that we know that somewhere, in this part that we call the unconscious, a truth is stated which has this property that we can know nothing about it. This, I mean this very fact, is what constitutes a knowledge. I therefore wrote: knowledge over the function of truth minus knowledge, this is what ought to give us the truth about knowledge.

$$\text{Knowledge/Truth} - \text{Knowledge} = \text{Truth/Knowledge}$$

At this point, to give you notice of a tiny episode among my encounters, I happened this week to hear a formula – I apologise to its author if I distort it a little. It was a matter of a formula at the beginning of a research into the line of my teaching, which was to situate the function of psychoanalysis not at all costs as a science but as an epistemological indication. Since research on the function of science is on the agenda, the formula is the following: “Psychoanalysis is supposed to be, in the sciences, something that one could formulate as a science without knowledge”. My interlocutor went as far as that. And carried along no doubt by what is involved in a certain current movement, in so far as at a level that is indeed also one of experience, there is posed a question of what is involved in terms of a sort of relativity that is

accused of being the style of social domination in the transmission of knowledge. I took up my interlocutor sharply, precisely in the name of the fact that it is false to say that nothing of psychoanalytic experience, that nothing in a (162) teaching could be properly articulated, be put forward as knowledge. And that because of that fact, because this is what is at stake at present, able to be stated in a magisterial fashion in the terms that are precisely those in which I state this knowledge here. And nevertheless from a certain angle, in a certain fashion, what my interlocutor was putting forward was the truth.

It is the truth at the level of this analytic knowledge that is not one, of knowledge, as compared to what it seems to be. What one might take it for if, under the pretext that it has stated the original, radical relationship of the function of knowledge to sexuality people precipitated themselves too quickly – this is a pleonasm! – to deduce from it that it is a knowledge about the sexual. Who has ever learned in psychoanalysis how to treat his wife properly? Because it is a fact that a wife counts! There is a certain way of taking her from the right angle, she is to be held in your arms in a certain way and she for her part has no doubt about it! She is capable of saying to you: “You are not holding me the way a woman should be held”. That in an analysis the paths that prevented this man, to whom this woman was addressing herself in the way I have just said, from doing it properly can be clarified, is what people like to believe happens at the end of an analysis. And as regards technique, if you will permit me to express myself in this way, the result depends on his natural knowledge, his skill (*adresse*), if you will allow me to use this word, with all the ambiguity it possess in French from the ordinary resources of the language: the faculty pinpointed by this name and also the sense of whom that is addressed to, the address that is supposedly given at the end of a certain clearing out.

It is clear that there is nothing in common between the analytic operation and anything whatsoever pertaining to this register that I have just now called technique. Its extent can be measured when one maps out this domain, as Mauss did incidentally, for example, speaking about the characteristics in culture of this very widespread function, for which it is not without reason that in our civilisation, it is not properly speaking eluded but repressed into corners, this function he calls “the techniques of the body”. I have here only to make an allusion to the dimension of properly erotic

techniques in so far as they are put forward in one or other culture that one could not in any way describe as primitive, the Hindu culture for example, to make you sense that nothing of what is stated in what for you, in no case reaches you except under the heading of playthings, of pornography, in reading a book like the Kama-Sutra for example. And nevertheless, in another dimension that this text can be understood, it can take on an import that, with regard to the complete confusions about this word, the one that I am going to use, will be mapped out, not incorrectly, but approximately, as metaphysical. The angle then from which sexual knowledge is tackled in psychoanalysis, is why it takes on its weight in (163) the way that I write it. There again, once more, what is at stake, is a recourse to what is obvious from the start, and this is indeed the prohibition properly speaking that can cover this knowledge, sexual knowledge. The angle from which I would not say we enter into it but are confronted by it, is again the following, in the sense that this angle was never taken. It is to tackle it from the point where this prohibition is brought to bear, and that is why the first statements of Freud with respect to the unconscious put the accent on the function of censorship as such.

This prohibition is exercised as affecting a certain “there”, that place, where it speaks, where it avows itself, where it avows that it is preoccupied by the question of this knowledge. And admire there, in passing, once again the riches of language. Is not this “preoccupied” to translate *Besetzung*, the Freudian *Besetz*, not better than this “investment” or this “invested” that the translations deafen us with? It is pre-occupied, occupied in advance by this something whose position, henceforth, is going to become more ambiguous. What can be meant – and this is what requires us to return to it again, to this function of the unconscious – what can be meant by this knowledge whose mark at a certain level that is articulated from truth is defined by the fact that this knowledge that preoccupies you is what you know least. And this is what allows us to state perhaps, to clarify things that one can say from a certain point of view, that in our culture, our civilisation, in our sauce, for this frying pan or in any case it is indeed the only term that justifies this gathering here, one could go as far as to sustain that psychoanalysis has this function of maintaining this sort of hypnosis which means that after all, it is quite true, huh, among us the sexual is maintained in an unprecedented torpor.

All of this is not a reason for psychoanalysis to be used in any way to contest - because this is what is at stake - the well-foundedness of the transmission of any knowledge whatsoever, not even its own. Because after all it discovered something, however mythical its formulation, it discovered what in other registers is called the means of production, of what? Of a satisfaction. It discovered that there was something articulatable and articulated, something that I pinpointed, that I exposed as *montages*, and literally not being able to conceive of itself otherwise, that it calls the drives. And this only has meaning – which means that it does not present them as such – in as far as on occasion it is satisfying, and that, when one sees them functioning, that implies that it brings satisfaction with it. When, from the angle of a theoretical articulation, it exposes in behaviour the functioning of oral drives, anal drives, and of others again, scopophilic or sado-masochistic drives, it is indeed to say that something is being satisfied and it is self-evident that it cannot be designated otherwise than as what is underneath, a subject, an *upokeimenon*, whatever division must necessarily result for (164) it, because here it is only the subject of a functioning instrument, an *organon*. The term is used here less with an anatomical accent, a prolongation, the more or less animated natural appendix of a body, than properly in its original sense, where Aristotle, uses it in logic as an apparatus, as an instrument. Naturally, the domain is no longer limitroph. And it is indeed because of this that some organs of the body that are moreover ambiguous in different ways, hard to grasp, because it is too obvious that some are only waste products, are found to be placed in this function of instrumental support. So then a question is opened up. How can we define this satisfaction? We have to believe that there must here be something, all the same, that is not working because what we spend our time on, with regard to these *montages*, is dismantling them. Does that mean that the pure and simple dismantling implies in itself, as such, in the foreground, that it is curative? If that was how things were, things might have gone a little quicker, and we would perhaps have covered the whole area a long time ago! If we put forward the function of *fixation* as essential, it is indeed because the affair is not so easy as that. And that what we have to retain in the psychoanalytic field is perhaps in effect that there is something that is inscribed as its horizon, and that this is the sexual. And that it is in function of this horizon, maintained as such, that the drives are inserted into their function as system.

You see then the prudence with which I am bringing forward my assertions here. I spoke about horizon; I spoke about field. I did not speak about sexual act, since moreover for those who were already here two years ago, I posed for the question of the act different premises, undoubtedly, than those that take it as a given that there is a sexual act. They will remember that I concluded that by taking as an aim the question of the sexual act, we can state that by taking the act with the structural emphasis where alone it subsists, there is no sexual act. We will come back to it. Moreover, you can be sure that it is indeed in order to return to it from another angle, that of this year, the one that goes from an Other to the other, that we find ourselves on this path where there deserves nevertheless to be recalled what we concluded using a different approach.

What is questioned about satisfaction as essential to the drive we are also forced to leave in suspense, if only in order to choose our path in order to be able to define it. For the moment we can make the leap from the living experience that is found somewhere at the level of the equals sign of the equation written here. Here indeed is what is at the centre of our questioning today. To what satisfaction can knowledge itself correspond, a knowledge that it is not for nothing I am, in short, putting forward here as notionally approachable, as the knowledge that will be identical to this field that I have just circumscribed, which would be “knowing one’s way around, *savoir y faire*” in this field. Is (165) this even enough? This knowing one’s way around it is still a little too close to know-how (*savoir faire*), about which there may have been earlier a misunderstanding that I encouraged, moreover, as a way of catching you where you have to be caught, in the gut. It is rather “knowing how to be with it, *savoir y être*”, and this brings us back to the angle that is in question for us here. This always brings us back, as it should, to the basis of what is at stake for us. That what the Freudian discovery puts forward is that one can be with it without knowing that one is with it. And that to believe oneself more certain by being wary of this being with it, to believe oneself to be elsewhere, in a different knowledge, means one is fully in it. This is what psychoanalysis says, one is in it without knowing it; one is in it in all the fields of knowledge. And that is why it is from this angle that psychoanalysis is found to be important for putting knowledge in question. It is nowhere from any truth and specifically not from any ontology. Wherever one may

be, wherever one functions, through the function of knowledge, one is in the horizon of the sexual.

You must admit that it is all the same worth the trouble to look more closely at this. One is in it without knowing it. Does one lose oneself in it? There seems to be no doubt about that, because that is what people start from. One is screwed up to the hilt. The dupery of consciousness lies in the fact that it is used for something that it does not think it is used for. I said dupery, not deception. Psychoanalysis does not question itself about the truth of the matter. Nowhere can we extract from it discourses about the veil of Maya or about the fundamental illusion of the *Wille*. Dupery implies something, but it is here less easy to resolve than elsewhere. A dupe, is someone that someone else exploits. Who exploits here? The accent being put on dupery, all the same the question spreads out (*fuse*). And that is why in a zone which is the continuation of Marxist theory, there is some unease. Might this bloody psychoanalysis not give here – this is the term that I heard advanced like that, emerging in these words, I prefer, as I told you, a discourse without words but when I go to see people it is in order to talk, so they talk, they talk more than me, and then they say something like that: “After all, psychoanalysis might well be a further guarantee for the theory of social exploitation”. They are not wrong; only here the exploiter is less easy to grasp; the style of revolution also. It is a dupery that benefits no one, at least in appearance.

So then is the knowledge of analytic experience only the knowledge that can be used not to be a dupe to the tune that is being played? But what use is it if it is not accompanied by a knowledge of how to get out of it or even, more specifically an introit knowledge, knowing how to enter into what is in question as regards this flash that can result from it because of the necessary failure of something which is perhaps not the privilege of the sexual act. It is this question about which psychoanalysis, in fact, has remained on the threshold. Why has it remained on the threshold? The fact that it remains on the threshold in (166) practice, is something that can only be justified in a theoretical way. This is what we are striving for. But that it should also have remained there on the theoretical plane is, I would say, its problem. Let us leave

it to get out of it by itself; that does not prevent us, all of us as we are here, in so far as we are in the frying pan, from trying, we also, like the others, to go further.

It is certain that here, precisely, we find ourselves at the crossroads where, in a completely inverse way to what I stated earlier, we have perhaps to learn from the experience of other dimensions with regard to a certain text which proves with time not to be too different to ours, since the function of the sign and even of the signifier here has its own value, namely, the Marxist critique. It would perhaps be enough for a little bit less belief in progress on one side and the other for us to arrive at fruitful conjunctions - I mean theoretical ones. On this point, everyone knows that I am contributing something that is also an *organon*, precisely the one that may be of use to cross this frontier, and that some people pinpoint as the logic of the signifier. It is true, I managed to make some statements about this. And they stimulated in a lively way minds that nothing coming from psychoanalysis had prepared, but who found themselves stimulated by things that came from elsewhere. Elsewhere, which is not so simple to specify, because it is not simply a matter of political allegiance. But, moreover, a certain number of styles that in the present time, namely, well after I began to state the aforesaid logic, there were produced all sorts of questions about the handling of this signifier, about what a discourse is, about what a novel is, even about what the proper use of formalisation in mathematics is. So people are, there as elsewhere, in a bit of a hurry. Haste has its function, I already stated the logic of it. Again I only stated it to show the mental traps, I would go as far as to qualify them as such, into which it precipitates. People will end up, by wanting to accentuate the degree to which what I am stating as a logic of the signifier remains in the margin, in some way, of what a certain frenzy, adherence to pure formalisation would allow to separate out from it as, they say, metaphysics. We will end up with the notion that, even in the domain of pure mathematical exercise, the use of formalisation does not exhaust everything but leaves in the margin something in connection with which the question about what is involved in the desire to know is still valid. And, who knows, someone around me suggested it a few days ago, there will be perhaps despite myself one day in mathematics something that will be called the Lacan theorem! It is certainly not what I would have looked for, because I have other fish to fry, but this is

precisely the way these things happen. By wanting to consider as closed – and this is indeed a characteristic of something that normally ought to end up elsewhere – an uncompleted discourse, one produces waste products like that. One (167) can still leave the statement of this theorem to an obscure future.

For the moment, let us come back to knowledge and let us start again from what is being stated here. It is not the same thing to state a formula if you start at one end rather than the other. Knowledge, one can say, contrary to our experience, is what truth lacks. That is why truth – which obviously, just by that, puts out of synch the debate of a certain logic, the logic of Frege in so far as it starts on the two crutches of two very notable values, 1 or 0, truth or error. Observe carefully the trouble he has in finding a proposition that he can describe as truthful. He has to invoke the number of satellites that Jupiter or some other planet has. In other words something nice and round that can be isolated, without noticing that this is only to have recourse to the oldest prestige of the way the real first appeared as what always comes back to the same place. Because he cannot advance anything other than the recourse to these astronomical entities, because of course there is no question of a mathematician stating as a formula bearing inherent to itself the truth of 2 and 2 are four. Because it is not true if by chance in each of the 2 there was one that was the same. They would only add up to 3. There are not many other formulae that can be stated as truth.

That the truth is the desire to know and nothing else is obviously only designed to put in question precisely the following, whether there was a truth before? Everyone knows that this is the sense of the Heideggerian *letting be*; is there something to *let be*? It is in this sense that psychoanalysis contributes something. It is there to say that there is something, in effect, that one can let be. Only it intervenes in it. And it intervenes in it in a way that interests us, beyond the threshold behind which it lies, in so far as it makes us question ourselves about what is involved in the desire to know.

That is why we come back to the drive. It is no doubt mythological, as Freud himself wrote. But what is not so, is the supposition that a subject is satisfied by it. Now it is not thinkable without the implication already, in the drive, of a certain knowledge, of its character of taking the place of the sexual. Only there you are, what does that mean, that it is not thinkable? Because things can go as far as to question the effect of thinking as suspect. Perhaps we know absolutely nothing about what that means, to take the place of the sexual (*tenir lieu du sexuel*). The very idea of the sexual can be an effect of the passage of what is at the heart of the drive, namely the *o*-object. As you know, that was done a long time ago. Dear Eve passed him the fatal apple! After all, this is also a myth. It is starting from there that he sees her as a woman. He becomes aware of all the things I told you about earlier. Beforehand, he had not noticed that she was (168) something extracted from the side of his ribcage. He found it, like that, nice, very agreeable. They were in Paradise! It is probably at that very moment – and in reading the text there is no doubt about it – that not only does he discover that she is the woman, but he begins to think, the little dear! That is why that to say “it is not thinkable” that the drive already involves, implies a certain knowledge, does not take us very far. And the proof, moreover, is that here is the connecting point with idealism. There was someone called Simmel who spoke, in his time, about sublimation, before Freud. It was in order to start from the function of values. And so then he explains very well how the feminine object comes to take on, within this, a privileged value. It is a choice like any other. There are values, one thinks in values; and then one thinks in accordance with values; and then one builds up values.

I told you that psychoanalysis and Freud are not worried either about illusion nor the veil of Maya, it is precisely because one and the other, the practice and the theory, are realist. Enjoyment is something that is only noticed by seeing how constant it is in Freud's statements. But it is also what is noticed from experience, I mean psychoanalytic. Enjoyment is here an absolute, it is the real, and in the way that I have defined it as what always returns to the same place. And if one knows it, it is because of the woman. This enjoyment as such is such that originally only the hysteric puts it in order logically, it is she in effect who posits it as an absolute, that is why she

unveils the logical structure of the function of enjoyment. Because if she posits it in this way, which makes her a correct theoretician, it is at her own expense. It is precisely because she posits it as an absolute that it is rejected, and can only respond to it from the angle of a desire unsatisfied with respect to herself.

This position in logical unveiling starts from an experience whose correlation is perfectly tangible at every level of analytic experience. I mean that it is always from a beyond of enjoyment as an absolute that all the articulated determinations of what is involved in desire logically find their correct place. This reaches a degree of consistency in the statements that refutes all the out-of-datedness linked to the randomness of origins. It is not because the hysterics were there at the start through a historical accident that the whole affair was able to take its place. It is because they were at the right point where the incidence of a word could highlight this hollow which is the consequence of the fact that enjoyment plays here the function of being outside the limits of the game. It is because as Freud says, the enigma of what a woman wants is there, which is an altogether displaced way of pinpointing what is involved, on this occasion, about her place, which takes on its value from what a man wants. That the whole theory of analysis, as is sometimes said, has developed along an androcentric channel, is certainly not the fault of men, as is believed. It is not because they are (169) dominant, in particular, it is because they have lost their way and that from then on, it is only women, and especially hysterical women, who understand something about it.

If in the enunciation of the unconscious as I have written it, the mark of **o** is raised to the level where knowledge is lacking, it is in the measure that we know nothing about this absolute and this is even what constitutes it as absolute. It is because it is not linked in the statement but that what is affirmed, and this is what stating is in its unconscious part, is that this is what desire is *qua* lack of the 1. Now this does not guarantee that this is what desire is *qua* lack of the 1. This does not guarantee that the lack of the 1 is the truth. Nothing guarantees that it is not the lie. That is even why in the *Entwurf*, in the *Project for a scientific psychology*, Freud designates what is

involved in the unconscious concatenation as having its start in a *proton pseudos*, which can only be translated correctly, when one knows how to read, by the sovereign lie. If that is applied to the hysteric, it is only in the measure that she takes the place of the man. What is at stake, is the function of this 1 in so far as it dominates everything that is involved in the field that has correctly been pinpointed as metaphysics. It is what is put in question much more than being by the intrusion of psychoanalysis. It is what has forced us to displace the accent from the sign to the signifier.

If a field were conceivable where sexual union functions, it would only be a matter, where it appears to work, in the animal, of the sign. “Make me a swan (*cygne*)”, as Leda said to one of them! After that, everything is fine. Each one has been given a half of the dessert, we are united, that makes One. Only, if analysis introduces something, it is precisely that this One does not work. And that is why it introduces something new, in the light of which moreover even the exploits of eroticism that I made an allusion to earlier, in so far as it engages with them, can alone take on a meaning. Because if sexual union, at the same time, only involved its goal of satisfaction, there would be no subjective process to be expected from any experience. By which I mean not those that, in analysis, give the configurations of desire, but those that, well beyond, in a terrain that is already explored, already practised, are considered to be the paths of an asceticism where something of the order of being can come to be realised. Enjoyment, this enjoyment that is here only highlighted from the exclusion in a way of something that feminine nature represents. Do we not know that nature does not always seem to need to have recourse to it, in order to provide for the necessity of union in its thousands and ten of thousands of species? There are many other systems other than tumescent systems that function in particular arthropoda or arachnida. What is involved in enjoyment can in no way be reduced here to a (170) naturalism. The naturalistic aspect of psychoanalysis is simply this natural aspect of the systems that are called drives, and this natural aspect is conditioned by the fact that man is born into a sea of signifiers. There is no reason to give it any consequence at all in the sense of nature worship.

The question that we are going to open up and which will be the object of our next talk will be clarified, I think, by these premises that I put forward today. How can it happen – it is from here that the question should be taken up - not that sublimation, which is the point where Freud himself marked what I called earlier the coming to a halt of analysis on a threshold. About sublimation he has only told us two things: that it had a certain relationship *an Objekt*. *Am, an*, you already recognise the *an sich*. It is not at all the same as the French *en*. When the *an sich* is translated by *en soi*, it is not that at all. This indeed is why my “*en-je*” when it is the *o* that is at stake is also ambiguous. I would have liked to have called it “*o-je*”, putting in an apostrophe, *l’o-je*”, and you will see immediately in this way where we are sliding. This is the correct use of tongues in practice. But, to take up again what is involved, when Freud articulates sublimation, he underlines that if it has a relationship with the object it is through the intermediary of something that he exploits at the level at which he introduces it and that he calls idealisation. But that, in its essence it is *mit den Trieb*, with the drive. This is in the *Einführung zur Narzissmus*. But to refer you to other texts, there are a certain number, I do not think that I need to enumerate them for you, from the *Three essays on sexuality* to *Group psychology*, the accent is always put on the fact that as opposed to the censoring interference that characterises *Verdrängung*, and, in a word, from the principle that creates an obstacle to the emergence of work, sublimation is properly speaking and as such a mode of satisfaction of the drive. It is with the drive, a drive that he qualifies as *zielgehemmt*, diverted, people translate, from its goal. I already tried to articulate what is involved in this goal, and that perhaps it is necessary to dissociate at the level of the goal what is the path for what is properly speaking the target in order to see more clearly into it. But what need for such quibbling after what I have produced before you today. How can it not be seen that there is nothing easier than to see the drive being satisfied outside its sexual goal. However it may be defined, it is outside the field of what is defined in its essence as the system of the drive.

In a word, to conclude, I would only ask one thing of you, to see where it has ended up everywhere when, not through instinct, that we would have a lot of trouble from today on to situate somewhere, but a social structure that is organised around the

sexual function. We may be astonished that none of those who have applied themselves to showing us the society of bees or of ants have not put the accent on the fact that while they are occupied with quite different things, with their groupings, with their communications, with their revels, with their (171) marvellous little intelligence, to see that an anthill like a hive is entirely centred around the realisation of what is involved in the sexual relationship. It is very precisely in the measure that these societies are different from ours, that they take on the form of a fixedness which proves the non-presence of the signifier. This indeed is why Plato, who believed in the eternity of all relationships between ideas, created an ideal *Politeia* where all the children are in common. From that moment on, you are sure of what is involved, it is a matter of properly speaking centring society on what is involved in sexual production. The horizon of Plato, however idealistic you may imagine him to be, was nothing else, except of course a sequence of logical consequences of which there is no question that they carry in their fruits to cancel out in society all the effects of his dialogues. I will leave you with this for today and I am giving you a rendezvous the next time on the subject of sublimation.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 12 March 1969

(On the board)

The Woman?	The Other?	The Thing?
X	The locus of the word with which one makes love	the vacuole of enjoyment Enjoyment The object (otolithic)

Sublimation to reach the Woman
courtly love, the idealisation of the object
Sublimation to reach Enjoyment
with the drive
The representative of representation.

(173) I put some little words on the board so that they may serve you as hooks for some of the remarks that I will make before you today. In fact, with the time that has passed, that ought to be enough for you! I mean that starting from these hooks that figure on the first line, question marks, I ought to be able to hand over to at least some of you so that they can carry out in my place this weekly work that consists in drilling into this discourse. In truth, it would not be a bad thing for people to take up the baton. I mean that, as has been done moreover in previous years, there should be people who are willing to devote themselves to pushing further along a certain number of subsisting objects, that it would be no harm to bring up to date after a certain lapse of time.

(174) It is quite obvious in effect that in what I state, there are phases, levels, especially if you think of the point from which I had to start in order first of all to hammer home this point that was nevertheless clearly visible in what I occupy myself with. Namely, that the unconscious, I mean the unconscious that Freud speaks about, is structured like a language. This is visible to the naked eye, there is no need for my spectacles to see it but in fact they were necessary. A friendly person said to me

recently that reading Freud, in short, is too easy, because one can read him and be completely hoodwinked. After all, why not, because taking things in the round, this has been clearly proven by the facts. And the first massive thing, the one that people had to disentangle themselves from had not even been noticed, thanks to a sequence of configurations that one can call the operation of popularisation. Nevertheless time was necessary for me to get it across, and this even in the circle that in this respect had been most alerted to notice it.

Thanks to all these delays things happen that I cannot say are discouraging for me, far from it. It happens, for example, that a M Gilles Deleuze, continuing his work, has brought out in the form of his theses two capital books the first of which is of the greatest interest to us. I think that simply from its title *Difference and repetition*, you can see that it ought to have some relation with my discourse, of which of course he is completely aware. And because like that, without any delay, I had the happy surprise to see appearing on my desk an additional book that he is giving us. This moreover is a real surprise because he had not announced it in any way to me the last time I saw him after passing his two theses. It is called *The logic of sense*. It would be no harm all the same for someone, for example, among you to get to know a part of this book. I am not saying the whole thing because it would be a lot to bite off, but in any case it is constructed in a way that a book ought to be constructed. Namely, that each of its chapters implies the whole, so that by taking a well chosen part, it would not be a bad thing to notice that he, with his felicitous style has been able to take the time to articulate, to assemble in a single text not simply what is involved at the heart of what my discourse has stated – and there is no doubt that this discourse is at the heart of his books since it is admitted there as such and that the seminar on the purloined letter forms in a way the opening step of it, defines its threshold – but in any case he, he was able to have the time for all these things that have nourished my discourse, have aided it, have occasionally given it its apparatus, such as the logic of the Stoics, for example. He allows himself, he is able to show its place as essential support, he is able to do so with this supreme elegance of which he has the secret. Namely, he takes advantage of the works of all those who have clarified this difficult point of Stoic doctrine, difficult because moreover it is only left to us in scattered pieces, outside testimony, with which we are forced to reconstitute, in a way by tiresome illuminations, what (175) effectively was its relief, the relief of a thinking that was

not simply a philosophy but a practice, an ethics, a way of conducting oneself in the order of things.

It is moreover why for example the fact of finding on a particular page, page 289, something, the only point on which, in this book where I am evoked on several occasions, he indicates that he separates himself from a doctrine that is supposed to be mine, at least, he says, if a certain report that at a turning moment of my teaching brought before the assembled psychiatric community the essential of my doctrine on the unconscious, that of the two excellent workers that Laplanche and Leclaire were. How on this point, to keep to it, he says, he makes this reservation. But he does not hesitate, of course, given the great relevance that on the whole this report has, to ascribe to me also something that seems to imply, namely, what he calls, what he translates as the plurivocity of signifying elements at the level of the unconscious. Or more exactly what is expressed in a particular formula that in re-reading this report, because I had my attention drawn to it by this remark of Deleuze, the possibility of any sense, it is written there, is produced from this veritable identity of the signifier and the signified that results, as perhaps some of you may remember, from a certain way of manipulating the metaphorical function, a little bit beyond the way I had done it. And to make the S, rejected below the limit, the bar, by the metaphorical effect of a substitution, function, to bring into play this S joined to itself as representing the essence of the relation in question and operating as such at the level of the unconscious. Undoubtedly, this is a point that I would leave all the more willingly to the authors who represented me in this remarkable report, represented me, because it is in effect what results from a certain manipulation by them of what I had stated up to then.

If anyone was willing to spend some time here going into the detail, that assuredly the excessive duties of my progress which is destined of its nature not to be able to stop at, given that it must still be a long one. If someone were able, in bringing together what Deleuze states in the whole of this work about what is here advanced absolutely not without relevance but undoubtedly in a way that represents a flaw, to establish why it is a flaw, to circumscribe in a more precise fashion what is faulty there, and what makes that fault very precisely consistent with what in this report plays around what I insisted on on several occasions the previous years, namely, what is essential in

a correct translation, which comes back to saying in a correct articulation, of the function described as *Vortellungsrepräsentanz* and of its effective incidence with respect to the unconscious. If someone were willing to propose himself to clarify this which would have the advantage, as is always (176) necessary, to allow, and on this occasion in a public way, those who refer to my teaching - and who, of course, complete it, nourish it, accompany it - from what was able to be stated in a way that they complete and sometimes in a clarifying way, the works of my pupils. To allow there, all the same, to be clarified what in one or other place of this work does not entirely express not, I would say, what was at that moment the axis of what I was stating but what subsequently was demonstrated to be its true axis. While waiting for someone of good will to put himself forward, I underline that the article that I am alluding to *The unconscious, a psychoanalytic study* was published, moreover I do not know why, in *Les Temps Modernes* in July 1961, namely, a considerable time after this report had been given at a congress described as that of Bonneval, the one to which there refers what I contributed myself in something edited that itself was much later, in my *Ecrits*, under the title of *Position of the unconscious*.

I am returning now to our agenda and I pursue my remarks of the last time and along the axis of what I announced to you as being on the agenda today, which is sublimation. The last time, I highlighted and stressed two things: that what was at stake, from Freud's point of view - there are of course many other passages to be quoted but this one is capital, it is in the *Introduction to narcissism* - first of all of the relation of idealisation *am Objekt*, to the object, and on the other hand the fact that sublimation is essentially attached to the fate, to the avatar, to the *Schicksal* of drives. It is one of those avatars, the ones stated by Freud in the article entitled *Trieb und Triebchicksal*, drives and their avatars. It is the fourth of them, and this fourth is characterised by the fact that it is constructed *mit dem Trieb*, with the drive. This term "with" that it is striking to rediscover here from Freud's pen, at least for those who have heard me in the past hammering out this "with" on several occasions. And particularly in taking up the formula of Aristotle: "it must not be said that the soul thinks but that man thinks with his soul". Something is satisfied with the drive. What is it when on the other hand Freud tells us that this drive that he dismantles for us, from these four dismantled terms - it is the formula that I have always underlined as essential to the drive, it is a *montage* of these four terms: the source, *Quelle*, the

Drang, the pressure, the *Objekt*, the object, and the goal (*but*), *Ziel* – the drive will find itself satisfying what? This is today what is in question, very precisely because of the fact that it is inhibited as regards the goal, that it elides what is involved in the sexual goal.

It is not enough all the same to translate this into what is undoubtedly the usual thing by thus imagining that it is at the expense of their sexual satisfaction that the authors, whoever they may be, whose works we appreciate, whose works take on a social value, because this is the term with which Freud himself accentuates the matter, that there is (177) here some obscure substitution or other. It is not enough to stay there to give its import to what Freud has stated. This indeed is why the premises, the time that I spent in tackling this subject by articulating explicitly in our two last meetings that sexuality, with respect to what interests us from the psychoanalytic field, certainly constitutes a horizon, but that its essence is much further away again, as I said. Neither its knowledge nor its practice, I am speaking about that of sexuality, are for all that either illuminated or modified by it.

This is what I would like to bring your attention back to again at a time when, on the biological plane, things are certainly clarifying a little. Everything we discover at the level of regulatory structure sometimes take on a strange isomorphism with our statements about the functioning of language. It is assuredly more than prudent not to remain, with regard to sex, at these crude schemas. If you approach with a little attention the works of someone like François Jacob on what is called bacteriography and everything that a rigorous experimental technique allows to begin to be seen about what is involved in the operation of living material, it may enter your head that even before there is a question of sex, there is a lot of copulating in it! That is why perhaps it is not unrelated that at another end of the field, our one, that has certainly nothing to say on the subject of biology, people also notice that it is a little more complicated than that to speak about sex. And that, for example, it would be well not to confuse what is involved in the relationship, this term being taken in its logical sense, of the relation that grounds the conjoined function of two sexes. This seems like that to be self evident, huh, that there should only be two! Why should there not be three or more? There is not the slightest allusion here to the frivolous uses that have been made of this term of the third sex, for example – a book that is particularly

remarkable, I am saying in parenthesis, for the irresponsibility it bears witness to – biologically. Why in effect should there not be three of them? The fact that there are two constitutes certainly one of the fundamental bases of reality. In this regard it would be well to notice how far its logical incidences go. Because, by a curious return, every time we have to deal with the number two, behold, at least in our mental arithmetic, sex re-enters by the side door. This all the more easily because one knows nothing about sex. A little indication, like that, that there is an extra chromosome somewhere. It is rather curious moreover that one can never say in advance for a particular species on what side, male or female, this extra chromosome, this disconnected, asymmetrical chromosome is going to be found. So then people would do better to pay attention to the fact that to state something about the sexual relationship, has nothing to do with what is completely substituted for it, and especially in psychoanalysis. Namely, the phenomena of identification with a type described, on this occasion, as male or female.

(178) Having said that, despite appearances, what psychoanalysis demonstrates, is precisely that even this identification with a type is not so easy as that. On the whole, it is only with great awkwardness that people manage to state something about it. The masculine position or the feminine position, people say. Very quickly people slip, people talk about the homosexual position. The least of things, is to be even the slightest bit struck that every time that Freud wants to make a precise statement, he admits himself that it is altogether impossible to rely on this opposition of male or female, and that it is that of active or passive that he substitutes. It would be interesting to pose the question of whether if any one whatsoever of the two terms masculinity, maleness or femaleness (*'malité' ou 'femellité'*) femininity is an acceptable qualification as a predicate. Can one say “all males”, can this even be stated in a naïve manipulation of adjectives. Why should an Aristotelian proposition not be dressed up as follows: “Every male in creation”, for example? It is a question that would involve the following: does all the non- males, mean the females? The abysses opened up by such a confident recourse to the principle of contradiction might perhaps also be taken in the other sense and make us question ourselves, as in the approach I earlier announced, about what recourse to the principle of contradiction may itself contain in terms of sexual implications.

Of course there are modes other than yes or no that come into play in these phantasies coming from the improbable approach of the sexual relationship. There is the polarity, for example, of the sexual couple. This in the name of a more microscopic view of these filaments that are produced at the moment that, when the fecundating of the egg has taken place, something is established like a field between the two nuclei, a field that should be conceived of less as a kind of field of gradation than as a field involving, according as one approaches the two poles, an increasing and decreasing bivectoriality. Is the fact that it is supported in this way by this image of the field so fundamental in other domains, that of electromagnetics, for example, sufficient to allow us to think that sex and its fundamental relationship, is of that order, two poles, something that is organised, a texture of a spherical order between the two?

Naturally, if one begins to ask oneself the question, one sees that the foundations are perhaps not so obvious as that. If we have forms that favour such a support, there are many other questions that may be raised, effects of dominance, influence, repulsion, indeed of rupture that are perhaps indeed of a nature to encourage us to put in question again what, I am saying, is only possible to put in question of course starting from the moment that people perceived the degree to which what controls it is not discussed, is naïve as they say.

In any case, it is very necessary, when people speak about (179) *Fortpflanzung* for example, of what is going to be made, speaking about the finality of sex, namely reproduction, to see that it is not simply at the level of, when two people sleep together, from time to time a little baby arrives, that this is what gives the image of what is involved in sex. If I began by starting from the effects of sexual copulation at the cellular level, it is quite obviously to indicate that what is at stake is less the third that is produced than the reactivation in sexual union of a fundamental production which is that of the cellular form itself that, stimulated by this passage, becomes capable of reproducing something that is at its very heart, namely, its arrangement. Let us pay attention therefore to these contaminations which make it so easy for us to cover over a function the whole essential of which escapes us perhaps, with the position of plus or minus in mathematics, indeed that of the one or zero in logic. And this all the more because, as I might say, Freudian logic puts us precisely at the sharp end of the fact that it cannot function in polar terms. Everything that it has introduced as a logic of sex comes under the jurisdiction of a single term which is truly its

original term, namely, the connotation of a lack, an essential minus that is called castration. Without this, nothing would be able to function at its level in so far as its level is of a logical order. All normativity is organised for the man as for the woman around the transfer (*passation*) of a lack. This is what we see at the level of the logical structuring such as it flows from Freudian experience.

I ought to recall here what I developed at length in a year that I evoked at one of our last encounters under the title of the *Ethics of psychoanalysis*. It articulates that the very dialectic of pleasure, namely, what it involved in terms of a level of stimulation that is at once sought and avoided, a correct level of a threshold, implies the centrality of a forbidden zone, let us say, because the pleasure would be too intense. This centrality is what I designate as the field of enjoyment, enjoyment itself being defined as everything relating to the distribution of pleasure in the body. This distribution, its inner limit, is what conditions what at that time and of course with more words, more illustrations than I can give here, what I put forward, I designated as a vacuole, as this prohibition at the centre that constitutes, in short, what is nearest to us, while at the same time being outside us. It would be necessary to make up the word “extimate, *extime*” to designate what is at stake. At that time, I drew out of Freud’s texts – I do not have time to expand on which ones – the putting into operation from his pen of this term that I picked out, all the more striking in that it is distinguished from everything that he may have been able to say about things. Things are always *Sachen* for him. Here, he says *das Ding*. I am not going to take up again here, because again I do not have the time, the stress I put on this *das Ding*. All that I can say or recall is (180) that Freud introduces it through the function of the *Nebenmensch*, this man who is closest, this man who is ambiguous because one does not know how to situate him. Who then is he, this neighbour who resonates in the evangelical texts in the name of the formula “love your neighbour as yourself”. Where can he be grasped? Where is there, outside this centre of myself that I cannot love, something that is more neighbour to me? This moreover is what Freud, at the moment when, forced in a way by its necessity along deductive paths, cannot characterise it otherwise than by something absolutely primary that he calls the scream. It is in this ejaculatory exteriority that this something is identified, through which what is most intimate to me is precisely what I am constrained to recognise only outside. This indeed is why this scream does not need to be emitted to be a scream. I demonstrated in this

magnificent engraving called *The scream*, by Munch, that nothing is more appropriate to its value as expression than the fact that it is situated in this calm landscape, with, not far down the road, two people taking their distance and not even turning back. It is of the essence that from the twisted mouth of the feminine individual that represents this scream in the foreground, nothing should emerge but absolute silence. It is from the silence that this scream centres that there emerges the presence of the closest being, of the being all the more awaited in that he is always already there, the neighbour, who has no *Erscheinung* except in the acts of the saints.

This neighbour, is it what I have called the Other, what I make use of to make function the presence of signifying articulation in the unconscious? Certainly not. The neighbour, is the intolerable imminence of enjoyment. The Other is only its cleared out terreplein. I can, all the same, say these things rapidly, like that, given how long I have articulated for you the definition of the Other. It is precisely that, it is a terrain cleared of enjoyment. It is at the level of the Other that those who take the trouble will be able to situate what, in the book by Deleuze, is entitled with an admirable rigour and correctness, and as distinct, in agreement with everything that the modern thinking of logicians allows to be defined from what are called events, the production (*mise en scène*), and the whole carrousel linked to the existence of language. It is there, in the Other, that there is the unconscious structured like a language.

The question for the moment is not that of knowing how and by whom this clearing out was able to be made. We must begin first of all by recognising it. Perhaps afterwards we will be able to say sensible things. Only it is very important to define it like this because it is only starting from there that one can even conceive of what is perfectly well expressed in Freud, what I expressed in two terms that I think it is important to emphasise. On the one hand the formalisation, on the other hand the impassability, of what? Of desire. Because this is what Freud expresses, it is the last sentence of the *Traumdeutung*, the desire that is at stake, unconscious desire, maintains itself in its stability in an (181) impassable way, transmitting the requirements of what Freud calls, rightly or wrongly, the past. It is not because there is *Vergänglichkeit* that this ought right away to make us drift towards thoughts of good or bad impressions, of the traumatic neurosis of the little child that still persists

in each one of us, and other commonplaces that, of course, are not unusable. But what is essential, is this permanence, this constancy, and by the fact itself, what is meant by this impassability of desire that can therefore be completely reduced to the formal. So then, at what level is the sexual relationship situated as regards what we can formulate about it? This is the sense of the question as it is written on the first lines on the board: the Woman, the Other, the locus of desire that slides intact, impassable under every word or indeed the Thing, the locus of enjoyment?

So then, of course, this indeed is the moment to remind you that if there is a point where what I said to you - there is no sexual relationship - is affirmed, quite calmly in analysis, it is that one does not know what a woman is. Unknown in the box, except, thank God, through representations, because of course from all time she has never been known except like that. If psychoanalysis highlights something precisely, it is that it is by one or several representatives of representation, this is indeed a case of highlighting the function of this term that Freud introduces in connection with repression. It is not a matter of knowing at the moment whether women are repressed, it is a matter of knowing whether the Woman as such is, and of course moreover, and why not in herself, of course. This discourse is not androcentric. If the Woman in her essence is something, and we know nothing about it, she is just as repressed by women as by men, and she is doubly so. First of all by the fact that the representative of her representation is lost, we do not know what the woman is. And then that the representative, if it is recuperated, is the object of a *Verneinung* because what else can be attributed to her as a characteristic except that of not having what precisely there was never any question of her having. Nevertheless, it is only from this angle that, in Freudian logic, the woman appears: an inadequate representative, alongside the phallus and then the negation that she has it. Namely, the reaffirmation of the solidarity with this thing that is perhaps indeed her representative but that has no relationship with her. So then, this ought to give us just by itself a little lesson in logic and see that what is lacking to the whole of this logic, is precisely the sexual signifier. When you read Deleuze – there are perhaps some who will take the trouble – you will be initiated into things that the weekly frequentation of my discourses was apparently not enough to make familiar to you, otherwise I would have more productions of this style to read. The fact is that the essential, as is said somewhere, of structuralism, if this word has a sense – only since it has been given a sense at the

level like that of a whole forum, I (182) do not see why I would take on the privilege of it – the essential is at the same time this blank, this lack in the signifying chain, with what results from it in terms of wandering objects in the signified chain. So then the wandering object, here, for example, is a pretty little bladder that has been blown up, a little balloon, with two painted eyes and a little moustache on it. You must not believe that this is the man. What is written is that this is the woman, because it is indeed like that that one sees this ungraspable woman going about everyday; this is even what allows us to have a certain sense of the relative with regard to the fact that it might not be like that.

In a less logical epoch, when we go back into pre-history, where perhaps there was not yet the Oedipus complex, there are made little statuettes of women that must all the same have been precious for them to be still discoverable – they must all the same have been stuck into corners – who had a shape like that (drawing on the board). Here there is no longer a little bladder, or eyes or moustache, here huge buttocks and good, that is how a prehistoric Venus is composed. I have not drawn it very well but it was to give you an impression. It was less andromorphous. This does not at all mean what palaeontologists imagine, that does not at all mean that they were like that. The representative of the representation was different than it is for us. It was not one or two balloons. If you remember also the breasts of Tiresias, “Fly away, birds of weakness...”. The representative of the representation was undoubtedly like that. This proves to you that depending on the times, the representative of the representation can be different.

So then, on these premises, we can now advance a little as regards what is involved in sublimation and I told you enough earlier about how Freud articulated it in order not to have to repeat it, *Zielgehemmt*, idealisation of the object, and working with the drive. Freud takes a certain number of doors through which it can happen. The simplest are obviously the *Reaktionsbildung*. If we know where the barrier is, namely, on the side of enjoyment, it is quite clear that one can imagine it, classify it, which moreover does not clarify it, among the *Reaktionsbildung*, the formation of reactions at the approach of enjoyment. But this is still not enough to explain to us how it gets out of step. Now Freud indicates to us in a little note, a sentence at the end, that there are outside all the approaches that he defines as possible for

sublimation, other quite simple ones. Simply he does not say what they are. Perhaps he had some trouble thinking them out, in function of the fact after all that if he gave us the elements that can be called intuitive or again much more improperly naïve in mathematical logic about what constitutes our logical material, this does not mean for all that that he himself quite realised that it lent itself to formalisation.

(183) One sublimates, he tells us, with the drives. On the other hand, what do we know? Where do these drives come from? From the horizon of sexuality. Not in the slightest way clarified up to the present because of the fact that they involve a sexual satisfaction. But what we are told, is that their enjoyment is linked to sexuality. It is not a bad thing at this level that we first began by positing that we know nothing about sexuality. On the contrary what we have articulated and what I have articulated, is that in the drive there intervenes what is called in topology an edge structure, that it is the only way of explaining some of its traits. Namely, that what functions is essentially something always roughly characterised by orifices and where there is found the edge-structure. Because only this edge-structure, taken in the mathematical sense, allows us to begin to comprehend what Freud articulated no less at the level of *Drang*, of pressure. Namely, the constancy of the flux that this edge conditions. I put in a note on this, I improved it again in the last edition, referring to what, in vector theory is defined as rotational flux.

The drive, in a word, just by itself, designates the conjunction of logic and corporeality. The enigma is rather the following: as edge enjoyment, how was it able to be called to the equivalence of sexual enjoyment? If you have all the same a little imagination, I mean the possibility of linking up what you cogitate somewhere in your convolutions with your experience that is certainly obviously accessory and always between two doors, you might all the same say, at the level of sexual enjoyment, it is rather a matter of tumescence for example, and then of orgasm, what does that have to do with the functions of the edge? If there were not the configuration of the vacuole, of the hole proper to enjoyment, to this something intolerable for what is essentially regulated as a tempered tension, you would see nothing in the sexual that is analogous to what I am calling in the drive an edge structure. Here the edge is constituted by a sort of logistics of defence. If one did not know after all that this logistics of defence is met at every turn, even in sexual practice, and precisely in the measure that this

practice is something different to what is done in a rush, like that, with the vague little directive flotsam that remains to you from the Freudian vocabulary about the enjoyment of the woman, perhaps something might begin to interest you in a closer, more intimate, more direct way about what is involved, not in the sexual relationship about which you cannot say very much, but about what is involved in the handling of sexual enjoyment. All the enigmas that appear, we do not know why, when people study feminine sexuality, the enigma the sensitivity of the vaginal wall presents to the eyes of some people and makes it in a way I am not saying unsituateable but limitrophe to (184) feminine enjoyment is something that will find itself much more easily in agreement with the topology that we are trying to approach here. But it is not our subject in its details. What is important is what I am putting forward, that something here resembles the Thing. And this indeed is why we give this Thing, that I made speak at one time under the title of the Freudian Thing, the features of a woman when, in the myth, we call it the Truth. Only it must not be forgotten – this is the sense of these lines on the board – that the Thing, for its part, is undoubtedly not sexed. This is probably what allows us to make love with her, without having the slightest idea of what the Woman is as a sexed thing.

So then that will perhaps allow us to introduce, given the time, the two directions from which sublimation can be studied. If I took care in my seminar on ethics to give a large place to courtly love, it is because this allowed us to introduce the fact that sublimation concerns the woman in the love relationship at the cost of constituting her at the level of the Thing. It is necessary, alas, because I am not going to redo all that this year, for you to refer – but I will try to make sure that you will have the text soon – to the long study I carried out at that time on courtly love to give its import to this. It is very enlightening, and it could be very advantageously re-read in the light of the formulae that I can finally now give in their absoluteness. The ritual of approach, the stages of gradus, as I might say, towards an enjoyment that is arranged, but moreover almost sacralised, is not one of the least amusing aspects of the affair, when one approaches and studies it. To see the awkwardness and I do not mean it is touching, it is simply repugnant, with which the people in these places where there is concentrated the run of the mill of these texts which, of course, no longer interest anyone. These people are irreducibly professors, namely, living in conditions that we all know when we go to visit them. Their major symbol I would say was very prettily given by

Anatole France under the title of *Le mannequin d'osier*. I should also have made another drawing for you of the wicker mannequin, it would be in the opposite direction. This kind of stupor, of bewilderment that lays hold of them, and then, my God, how these people, at that epoch, the dark night of the Middle Ages were so unrefined – can you imagine they were less refined than the professor in question and his little wife. How were these people able to imagine such exalted homage, what does all that mean, all these women that the poets sing to us about, they are all, all of the same characteristics. Obviously they all have the same characteristics, it is also a representative of representation, they are like the prehistoric Venus, they all have the same characteristics. That does (185) not mean that these women did not exist nor that the poet did not make love to them in function of their merits! There were many other things again that stupefied them, including the stress put on trials, cruelty, a thousand things of this kind. I had great fun for two and a half months, and I hope those who were listening to me at that time also had, I will try to clean this up in a way that it can be transmitted. In any case it is a homage, anyway this is what remains to us of it, restored by poetry to what is its principle, namely, sexual desire. The attempt, in other words, to go beyond what is involved, whatever is said about it in Freud's text, in accessible love, outside special techniques, namely, to remain always narrowly narcissistic.

Only there is the other aspect, the relationship of sublimation to what is called the work of art. When Freud tells us that sublimation gives the satisfaction of the drive and this in a production regarding which the characteristic of esteem that society gives it is quite unexplained. Why the devil, when we have so many concerns, if it is not indeed on the hypothesis of diversion. Namely, that it is precisely in order not to be occupied by worries that are much more important that we get a taste for some of the things that are poured out within reach of our purses in the form of novels, paintings, poetry and novellas. Taking the thing from this angle there appears to be no way out. Nevertheless, I will give you, as regards what I will introduce the next time, too rapid a way in. The relationship of sublimation to enjoyment, since this is what is in question, in so far as it is sexual enjoyment, can only be explained by literally what I will call the anatomy of the vacuole. That is why I made on the right the outline of this something circumscribed that represents the vacuole. Imagine for a moment this vacuole as being the auditory apparatus of one these little animals that are called, I do

not know why, primitive – nothing is more primitive than anything else – but take a daphne [?], it is like a tiny shrimp, but much simpler, it is found in waterways. The daphne, in something or other that one can say serves it as an auditory organ but at the same time as a vestibule, namely equilibrating, has what is called an otolith. If I know all that, it is because I have looked at the reviews...it is an article by a psychoanalyst, I will tell you who the next time, that drew my attention to it. It becomes very amusing, if, in place of the otolith you put a little piece of iron and afterwards you play around with magnets. This gives him enjoyment! Naturally one can presume it from the extraordinarily different attitude it takes up. Altogether a man in its moral life!

This is what I want to indicate to you as an introduction to the next time. It is that the *o*-object plays this role with respect to the vacuole. In other words it is what tickles *das Ding* from the inside. There you are. This is what constitutes the essential merit of everything that is (186) called a work of art. Nevertheless the thing deserves to be detailed. And since the *o*-object has more than one form as Freud explicitly states in saying in his analysis of the drive that the object can be very variable, it waltzes around, nevertheless we have managed to state four of them, between the oral object, the anal object, the scopophilic object and the sadomasochistic object. What is that one? Let us say that in connection with this one I am reserving some surprises for you the next time.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 19 March 1969

I am laying my cards on the table, I am not going to give my seminar – you can call it what you like: my seminar, my lecture, in any case, my thing...I will start again. It is

not for nothing that you did not hear me at first. I am not inclined to speak loudly, because I am not inclined to speak at all. And besides that is what I am going to do, or, more exactly, not do. My intention is not to speak to you today. There is a certain relief in that. Because it may be that I have had enough! But in any case, precisely, there is not much relief in it because, as you see, I am rather tired. Imagine whatever you like, a little Hong-Kong, like that, during the weekend, because naturally a psychoanalyst cannot allow himself to be sick except at the weekend. Anyway, the result is there, I will not speak to you today. Moreover this is what I had resolved, to say to you: "Listen, there you are, I am reporting sick; the seminar, as you call it, will not take place today", and then clear off.

It would be too simple. I already announced the last time the pleasure that it would give me to be able to hear something that might come to me as a response, a certain testimony that might come to me of what you are making of what is happening to you in terms of what I am trying to outline this year. It is obvious that many things push me to want it. First of all, a certain feeling, at the limit, of what I might be doing in pursuing here could be, what is pinpointed, it is hard to know why, in fact, as teaching. Does it really fit into the framework of teaching, apart from the fact that it takes place within the perimeter of the Ecole Normale? It is not certain. And then, my God, it has to be said today, why are there so many people? It truly is a problem. But it must be all the same that there is something interesting in it, like that. I have no reason to believe that it will be long lasting, at the rate things are going, I mean this interest taken in what is happening here.

I happened this week, which was necessarily not very stimulating - I rarely get a temperature of 39°, I spent a certain time, I spent two days telling myself that it is surely because there must be something like that not very stimulating in this state that I am still in - to ask myself what is happening here. So then I made a working hypothesis, make no mistake, that what I was doing here whether you know it or not, has (188) really all the nature of a work. This is what perhaps may allow you to glimpse certain things that I said this year. But in any case it is certain. The way I usually talk to you, when I have my little notes, that may astonish you, I more or less look at them; there are a lot of them, there are surely too many, it has really all the characteristics of what happens on a work bench, and why not? Indeed on an

assembly line. The papers come from somewhere and will end up also by being transmitted to others. And with that, in effect, something happens as regards which, when I go out, I am always rather perplexed to question, with sometimes a little anxiety, those whom I know are able to say something that interests me. It is certain that I did on this something that has really the character of a work that has been produced with a certain material and which is something constructed, realised, a production.

Obviously, it is interesting; it is interesting to see it being done. It is not all that widespread to have the opportunity of seeing someone doing his work. For most of you in any case, I have the feeling that what this work is aimed at, what it is destined for, cannot but completely escape them. This is still more interesting. Only this gives to the thing, the fact of looking at someone working without knowing where it is going, of what use it is, this gives a rather obscene dimension to the thing. Naturally, it is not true for everyone. There are those who know well of what use it is. Anyway, what use it is in the short term. Since I am in the process of pushing this working metaphor, I would say that my bosses, for their part, know what use it is. Or, inversely, if you wish, those who know what use it is are my bosses. There are some here who are part of them. It is for them that I work. And then there are some others who are between the two classes and who, for their part also, have an idea of what use it is. These are the ones who, in a way, insert the work that I am doing here into a different text, or into a different context, which is that of something that is happening, for the moment, at what one can call the level of the University. I am very interested in it. I mean that there is something in what is happening anew in the University that has the closest relationship with the work that I am doing.

Because of this temperature and this pause that it gave me, anyway, you cannot imagine how happy one can be in taking advantage of having a temperature of 39°, I mean one is necessarily, one can usually put oneself in a horizontal position; it is very agreeable. Finally, when it subsides a little, at a certain turning point, one can open things, entertaining journals. There is one, as you know, the one managed by someone called Jean Daniel called *Le Nouvel Observateur*. It is no doubt called that in order to make you believe that there is something new in what is observed. You would be wrong to expect it, and the proof is that what I was able to read in it like

that, horizontally, is the (189) sort of thing that, if I remember rightly, is something that is called “*The young ensnared, La jeunesse piégée*”. I do not know why, it is perhaps due to my 39^o, but this absolutely enraged me. First of all the title. Let every person that uses the word *piégé* know that the use of this word is considered to be repugnant – this is my own idea – a way of crudely stirring up castration anxiety, especially when one is talking to the young, and for the moment that seems to me to be in very bad taste. And then, faith, there is nothing in it but things that are very astute, very relevant. There is perhaps not a single one that, taking it as a sentence, as an indication of the justification, legitimising of whatever you want, not a sentence against which I could obviously, seriously raise any opposition. All of that is very good. It is very boring because it leaves completely to one side what is at stake. Because of course, I am not against any of the forms, even the most extreme ones, of what associates, for the moment, the contestation, as the student contestation is described, with the most revolutionary unions. But I think that none of this goes beyond the axis of something that has happened as a consequence of certain facts, of certain facts which are the following. “The university was inadequate in fulfilling its function and, all of a sudden, it had got to such a point, to such an excess, people believe, that was why ‘May’ happened.” It is a very serious point as regards the interpretation of the thing. It was inadequate with regard to a certain traditional function, a certain glorious time that it had enjoyed and which had responded to the use at different epochs, of different functions, that had different incidences, precisely according to the epochs, about the transmission of knowledge.

If we place ourselves from the point of view of quality, lustre, historical influence, it is certain that for some time this had taken a turn that was not particularly brilliant, but in any case, there were islands that still held up very well. If it proved to be inadequate at a certain level, it is that because of certain social requirements it was no longer up to the task. The question should be posed if the fact that it was no longer up to the task – not of all, but of certain tasks – it was not, when all is said and done, intentional. I mean that, if, taking things from the angle of power, it was not something that was regulated precisely in a way not to embarrass it too much. It is certain that a certain evolution, which is that of science, risks posing altogether new and unexpected problems to the functions of power. After all, the thing had been announced perhaps for some time. This is how it is perhaps and, it must be said, it

would really have a retroactive sense effect to notice that it is perhaps in function of this that the word revolution has taken a different sense, a different accent from the one it always had in history, where revolutions, by definition, were not new. From all time powers only came to an end by revolutions. The Revolution, like that, with a (190) capital R, did not notice soon enough that it is linked to something new which is highlighted from the side of a certain function of knowledge, something that is happening, which in truth renders it difficult to handle in the traditional way.

In order to indicate a little bit what I mean by that, I will bring it back to this something that I indicated earlier, namely, the fascination that can be produced about a work whose meaning people do not know, nor where it is leading. As a way of exemplifying, taken in the model given by what might motivate, in this supposition, your presence here, because obviously, from a certain angle, the reference that I found in the worker-boss relationship also has its prolongation here. The boss knows what the worker is doing, in the sense that he is going to bring him profits, but it is not sure that he has a clearer idea than the worker about the sense of what he is doing.

When you are dealing with the assembly line in Fiat or elsewhere, I am talking about that of Fiat because I already evoked it, here or elsewhere. I was there. I really had this feeling, in effect, of seeing people occupied with work and my absolutely not knowing what they were doing. That made me feel ashamed. It does not make you so, so much the better. But in any case, I was very embarrassed. I was precisely with the boss, Johnny, as he is called, as I call him. Johnny was also obviously...in any case, he too was ashamed. That expressed itself afterwards by the questions he asked me, which all had the obvious aim designed to dissimulate his embarrassment, the obvious aim of telling me that, to all appearances, they were happier there, with him, than in Renault.

I did not take this question seriously and I only interpreted it as you see, as a displacement, or perhaps as a way of avoiding on my part the question: "Finally, of what use is all of this?" Not that I am say that capitalism is of no use. No. Capitalism is precisely of use for something and we ought not to forget it. It is the things that it makes that are of no use. But that is a completely different affair. This is precisely its problem. In any case, what it is supported by, and it is a great force,

ought to be clarified. It operates in the same sense as the one that I was telling you about earlier, it goes against power. It is of a different nature. And it causes great embarrassment to power. There also, it is obviously *nachträglich*, it is subsequently that we have to see the sense of what is happening. Capitalism completely changed the habits of power. They have perhaps become more excessive, but in any case they have changed. Capitalism introduced something that had never been seen before, what is called liberal power.

There are very simple things about which, after all, I can only speak from very personal experience. Observe that as far as historians can remember we have never heard tell of an organ of government that one leaves by handing in one's resignation. Where authentic, serious, subsistent powers exist you do not hand in your resignation, because it (191) has very serious consequences. Either it is a simple way of expressing oneself, you hand in your resignation, but you are shot on the way out. I call those places where power is serious. The idea of considering as a progress, and again as a liberal one, institutions where, when someone has completely bungled everything that he had to do for three months or six months and has proved to be incompetent, he has only to hand in his resignation and nothing will happen to him. On the contrary, he is told that he will have a wait before he comes back the next time; that all the same means what? That had never been seen in Rome! In places where it was serious! You have never seen a consul hand in his resignation, nor a tribune of the people! It is properly speaking unimaginable. That simply means that the power is elsewhere.

It is obvious – the whole nineteenth century illuminates it – that if things occur through this function of resignation, it is because power is in different hands. I am talking about positive power. The interest, the only one, of the communist revolution, I am speaking about the Russian Revolution, is to have restored the functions of power. Only we see that it is not easy to hold onto, precisely because in the time when capitalism reigns, capitalism reigns because it is closely connected with this rise in the function of science. Only even this power, this camouflaged power, this secret and, it must also be said anarchic power, I mean divided against itself, and this without any doubt through its being clothed with this rise of science, it is as embarrassed as a fish on a bicycle now. Because all the same something is happening

in the science quarter, something that transcends its capacity for mastery. So then what is necessary is that there at least a certain number of little heads that do not forget the fact that a certain permanent association of contestation with initiatives that are not controlled in the sense of revolution is vain. Well then, this again is what in the system, the capitalist system, can best serve it.

I am not in the process of telling you that things must be reformed. The reform itself, an incontestable consequence of the agitation in May, is exactly of a nature to aggravate its effects. If you have inadequate teachers, you will be given them by the shovel load, and you can be sure ones that are even more inadequate! Through reform the effects will always get worse. The question is what to do with regard to this phenomenon. It is certain that it cannot be responded to by a slogan, but that a process which tends towards the elimination of the best, in the long run, by the path of contestation, which is imposed, in effect, on the best people, will have exactly the wished for effect. This will be to bar for the very best people the interesting route, this joint, this access to a turning point, to a sensitive point, to a full stop put at present, concerning the function of knowledge in its most subversive mode. Because it is obviously not at the level of agitation (192) and hue and cry that there can be refined, treated, produced something that can give a decisive turn to things. I am not saying what, and for the best of reasons, it is precisely because one cannot say it. But it is only there that there can be presented something new, the only new thing in whose name there can appear what grounds the putting in question of what is presented up to now as this or that, as philosophy. Namely, any function tending to put order, a universal order, a unitary order, this mode of relationship to oneself that is called knowledge.

This trap (*piège*), that consists in refusing and doing nothing more is, properly speaking, for the moment, for everything that exists, for everything that subsists, most disadvantageous. The assured promise of subsisting and in the most unfortunate way, for anyone who creates illusions about what is called progress, I intend to posit the fact, I can only – to come back to this something, like that, which served as an occasion for it – find in it a further sign, in the fact that the entourage of the one under whose name – since it is an interview that allowed this article under the title of “*Jeunesse piègée*” – and that since this is how things are, all I can do, at this level, is

to bestow on him the title of what, in this connection, has always been my thinking, namely, that after all, his thinking does not go any further, objectively, than that of an entertainer. This is serious enough. It is the testimony, after all, of a man who has lived long enough to testify, in a way, to two between-the-wars. The one between the two previous ones, that I lived with Giraudoux, Picasso, and other surrealists and it wasn't only Giraudoux that was original in all of that, this to tell you that I did not amuse myself a lot. Picasso existed from long before. Whatever you may think about them, these surrealists were a re-edition. Everything that constituted their core had existed before 1914, everything that projected something irreducibly unsatisfying in their presence between 1918 and 1939. You will note that I was their friend and that I never signed the least thing with them. This did not prevent a little scoundrel, named Laurin, who was a Canadian, from noticing it and making of it – I do not know...like that to initiate the public of Saskatchewan – about what I might be, in order to make a big deal of this surrealist root. There was also Parcheminey, a very special personage of the top drawer, with whom I was associated and made a lot of that. I explicitly told him that he should not take it into account, because I myself had taken care not to mark my link to any degree. This did not prevent him from writing “Lacan and the surrealists” ...You cannot be too accurate in feeding error.

And then, since the new between-the-wars, a failed between-two-wars because there is no end to it, this indeed is what embarrasses them, it is the expiry date. The fact is that capitalist power, this singular power whose novelty I would ask you to measure, needs a war every twenty (193) years. I am not the one who invented that; others have said it before me. This time, it cannot achieve it, but in any case it will manage all the same. It cannot arrange one and meanwhile it is very bothered. Finally, in this between-two-wars there was Sartre. He was no more amusing than the others. That did not disturb me. I never said anything about it, but anyway is it not curious that someone should feel the need to encourage so many of these young people to throw themselves against these obstacles that are placed before them, like that, to go to war, in short, a very mediocre war. Is it not beautiful to be able to go up against these muscle bound apparitors, because I approve of this thing called courage. Courage, physical courage is not a very great merit. I have never noticed that it caused a problem. I do not think that it is at that level that it is decisive. And above all it is of no interest. On some occasions, to throw oneself against the obstacles that are

presented to you, is to behave exactly like the bull, is it not. What should be at stake precisely is to go somewhere other than where the obstacles are; in any case, not to be particularly interested in obstacles.

There is, in all of that, a veritable tradition of aberration. People begin by saying that philosophies for example throughout the centuries were only ideologies, namely, the reflection of the superstructure, of the dominant classes. So then the question is settled. They are of no interest. You have to aim elsewhere. Not at all! People continue to fight against ideologies *qua* ideologies. They are there for that. It is completely true that there have always been, naturally, dominating or enjoying classes, or the two, and that they had their philosophers. They were there to be abused in their place. That is what is done, namely, people follow orders. In fact, it is not at all correct, is that not so, it is not at all correct! Kant is not the representative of the dominant class of his epoch. Kant is still not only perfectly acceptable but you would do well to follow his line were it only to try to understand a little bit what I am in the process of telling you about the *o*-object. Anyway we will come back to that. Yes.

The last time I spoke to you about sublimation. So then obviously, we must not all the same remain there with it. It is not by chance, all the same, that it is at this point that there is a little suspension, or a little suspense, as you wish. Try to describe the relationships of this co-presence seen from your side? From mine? The question can be asked. Let us put it on the side of sublimation. It would be better, in any case, to put it there today, because that puts you in the position of the feminine pole. There is nothing dishonourable about that, especially at the level at which I placed it, the highest elevation of the object.

There are things that I did not underline the last time, but in any case I hope that you have good ears. The idea that sublimation is this effort (194) to allow love to be realised with the woman, and not simply... to pretend that it is happening with a woman. I did not underline that in this institution of courtly love, in principle, the woman does not love. Or at least one does not know anything about it. Can you imagine what a relief it is? Moreover, it all the same happens sometimes, in novels, it happens that she becomes inflamed. You also see what subsequently happens. At

least, in these novels you know where you are going. In any case, in a sublimation like the one that can be realised here, I am saying that because it is about time to say it before we tackle another phase of sublimation that I began the last time, the one that is at the level of the drive and which, alas, concerns us much more, to which I gave the first prototype in the shape of the function of the bell (*grelot*). Something round with a little thing, the little *o*-object, which is strongly shaken inside. Let us use then, before this comes on the scene, more agreeable forms.

At the level, then, of man-woman relationships, if from the side of my audience I do not have to fear that any madness will occur, nevertheless if someone now wished all the same to bring me a sign of having heard by posing a question, either about what I have just said, or, which I would prefer, about what I have been saying since the beginning of the year. I would like a question or two to be directed to me, on this agreeable terrain for which, you see, I myself make a courteous effort not to disappoint, even on a day that I am at the end of my tether.

Who is there who can pose a few questions?

Do not discourage me too much. Because, after all, I could for my part be also tempted to resign...suppose for example that those whom I called my bosses, namely, the people for whom I work, do not threaten, once my work has consequences that interest them, do not threaten for their part their resignation. That may happen one day. Well then! I will be content to do my work before them. You are not there, all of you, all of you who are not, in short, psychoanalysts in my eyes, anyway from my point of view, my principal use is to give them the feeling indeed that they cannot, for their part, hinder me in continuing to do my work. Even if nobody answers me, from this field of non-psychoanalysts, I see very interesting faces down there. All the same I know my people.

If none of those who are not psychoanalysts ever give me a response, not really a response that amuses me a little, suppose that one day I managed all the same to undo the psychoanalysts, by showing them that it would be just as interesting for them to work because they think that it is the privilege of the psychoanalysand. What is absolutely exaggerated in my way of working for them, is that I am doing, in short,

what the psychoanalysand does. They have put the work (195) definitively into the hands of the psychoanalysand. They reserve the listening for themselves. There is among them, according to the latest news, one who summons them by saying “come and listen to me listen. I invite you to listen to my listening.”

Now, perhaps, I am going to manage to shake up something on the side of this strange terrain, closely linked in its crucial points, about what is involved in this subversion of the function of knowledge. But I will not give an open seminar. I find that is not very serious. In a way, I question myself before the word of “handling knowledge” because this word “handling, *manier*” begins to take on a disturbing extension. There is a person, a marvellous chap moreover, who came to find me, who will do very well. Naturally, in the first meeting with me things happen. He came back the second time because you have to see someone at least twice. He told me that the previous time he had “manipulated”. I searched my brain...I made him explain it...that means that I had manipulated him. The slippage of words is always interesting to see. The word “manipulate”, has become, now, in the permanent vocabulary, through a type of fascination that comes from the fact that people do not think that one can perform any effective action on any group whatsoever without “manipulating” it. This, like that, in a way that is henceforth admitted, recognised. And after all it is not sure that in effect, as they say, the worst is perhaps certain, but after all, that is what it is, yes. But then, that this takes on an active value when one is manipulated, this is a tipping over point that I am signalling for you. If it should spread, you will let me know if you see it continuing like that.

Anyway, this is obviously not the best of conditions in which to pursue questions concerning knowledge at the level at which they are presented, in the measure that psychoanalysis can bring something to it. The last time I highlighted the book of our dear Deleuze, about the *Logic of sense*. I asked Jacques Nassif, since in truth I am not astonished, I am as they say very embittered by the total absence of response after a provocation that has been pushed that far. It is not manipulation, precisely. There are other ways of working. But this total silence, this total absence of response to my desperate appeals for at least a little testimony! I will leave you a repeat examination. You can write to me. The written happens after the oral. Anyway, if one day, at the end of the year, I gave two or three sessions with closed doors, you should know that

apart from the people that I already know, the people who have written to me will have the privilege of it.

Nassif, do you still feel you have the courage, after this exhausting session, at least for me, to take the floor? Well then! You are extremely kind.

(196–203) **Jacques Nassif on Gilles Deleuze**

Seminar 16: Wednesday 26 March 1969

(205) Today I am going to put forward primary truths, since moreover it appears that it would be no harm to touch base again. On the other hand, it also seems very difficult to organise these complementary fields of work that would allow us to be in accord, to attune our violins with everything contemporary that is being produced and is profoundly interested by what a certain step in psychoanalysis can put forward at the point we are at.

At our second last meeting, I left things at the point where sublimation should be questioned in its relationship to the role played in it, in short, by the *o*-object. It is this remark that showed me that it was necessary, that it was certainly, in any case, no harm for me to come back to what distinguishes this function, and that I should come back to it at the level of the experience from which it has emerged, from psychoanalytic experience as it has been extended since Freud. On that occasion, I was led to return to the texts of Freud in so far as they progressively established what is called the second topography. This, assuredly, is an indispensable echelon for comprehending everything that I myself was able to put forward, I mean in terms of discoveries, at this precise point that Freud remained at in his research. I already put

the accent on what this word means in my speech, *circare*: to turn around a central point, as long as something is not resolved. Today, I will try to mark the distance at which psychoanalysis remained up to my teaching, a key point that assuredly from all sides the experience preceding it had formulated, sketched out in certain assertions. It had not been absolutely purified, resolved, completed, and we will say at least now that we can construct other steps, but that do not correct it, namely, this function of the **o**-object.

Because it interests us at the level of sublimation, it is indeed certainly, as with this sort of almost clumsy prudence with which Freud put it forward, the work of art, to call it by its name, that today centres, constitutes the aim of what we are stating about sublimation. The work of art is not presented otherwise at the level where Freud grasps it, obliges himself not to grasp it otherwise than as a commercial value. It is something that has a price, perhaps no doubt an exceptional price, but once it is put on the market, not all that distinguishable from any other price. What is to be emphasised, is that this price is something it receives from a privileged (206) relationship of value to what in my discourse I isolate and distinguish as enjoyment. Enjoyment being this term established only by its evacuation from the field of the Other and by that very fact by the position of the field of the Other as locus of the word as such.

What makes of the **o**-object something that can function as equivalent to enjoyment, is a topological structure. It is very precisely in the measure that simply by taking the function through which the subject is only grounded, is only introduced as an effect of the signifier and by referring ourselves to the schema that I repeated a hundred times before you since the beginning of the year of the signifier S as representative of the subject for a signifier that, of its nature, is other. This means that what represents it can only posit it as before this other. This necessitates the repetition of the relationship of this S to this O as locus of other signifiers, in a relationship that leaves intact the locus which is not to be taken as a part but - in conformity with everything that is stated about the function of the set, as leaving the element itself as a potential set - makes this residue, even though it is distinct under the function of the **o**, equal to the weight

of the Other in its totality. It is in so far as it is here a place that we can designate by a term connecting the interior (*l'intime*) to radical exteriority, it is in so far as the **o**-object is extimate (*extime*) and purely in the relationship set up by the establishment of the subject as an effect of the signifier, as determining by itself in the field of the Other this structure in which it is easy for us to see the kinship, the variations in what is organised from any edge structure in so far as it has the choice, as one might say, to reunite itself in the form of a sphere, in so far as the edge thus drawn joins together at a most problematic point, even though apparently the most simple, of topological structures. Whether we pursue it in this shape, of what produces the torus, by joining the two opposite edges that correspond point by point in a double vectorial line, or on the contrary we have the structure – I am only here recalling it – of the cross cap, or that we have by combination of two different possibilities the structure described as the Klein bottle.

Sphere

Torus

Cross cap

Klein bottle

(207) Now it is easy to see that the **o**-objects as they effectively function in the relationships engendered between the subject to the Other in the real, reflect one by one, these four topological structures, there are also four of them. But this is something that, to indicate it immediately, I will only come back to later, and by first reanimating for you the concrete function, the function that the **o**-object plays in the clinic. The **o**-object before being possibly, through the methods developing its production in the form that earlier we have described as commercial is at levels precisely exemplified by the clinic, in a position to function as the locus of the capture of enjoyment.

And here I will make a jump, I will go quickly and straight away to a certain core of the subject which perhaps my first remarks, coming to you here today, made a greater

detour around. Very quickly, in theoretical statements, I am speaking about those of Freud, the relationship between neurosis and perversion was seen to emerge. How did that in a way force itself on the attention of Freud? Freud introduced himself into this field at the level of neurotic patients, subjects of all sorts of disturbances and who, through their stories, tended rather to lead him into the field of a traumatic experience as it appeared first of all to him, even though assuredly in the problem of what, in a way, welcomed this experience in the apparently traumatised subject, the question of the phantasy was introduced. This is indeed, in effect, the knot of everything that is at stake concerning an economy for which Freud produced the word libido. But again we should entirely trust the fact that these phantasies might allow us, in a way, to reclassify, to rearrange from outside, namely, from an experience that did not come from perverts, what at first in the same epoch – do I need to recall simply the names of Krafft-Ebing and of Havelock Ellis – presented in a descriptive fashion this field described as that of sexual perversion.

We know the difficulty that very quickly arose, after this first approach, already of a topological order because it was neurosis that was at stake, of finding in a way, because people spoke about the reverse side, something or other that already was presented as the announcement of these surfaces that interest us so much because they emerge when a cut slices them. But very quickly, the matter appeared to be in no way resolved, simplified in any way by being presented perhaps a little quickly as a function in stages, (208) neurosis assuredly, presenting itself with regard to perversion as at least repressing it on the one hand, as a defence against perversion. But is it not clear, was it not immediately so, that no resolution could be found by simply bringing out a perverse desire in the text of the neurosis? If this formed part of the spelling out, of the deciphering of this text, it nevertheless remains that in no case, is it on this plane that the neurotic finds his satisfaction in the treatment. So that in tackling perversion itself, it appeared very quickly that it presented with regard to structure no fewer problems and defences on occasion than neurosis. All of this fell under the jurisdiction of technical references whose impasses seem after all, when one looks at them from a distance, to come only from a relative dupery undergone by the theory, from the very terrain to which, whether in the case of the neurotic or the pervert, it has to stick.

If we take things from the level that the return to this solid ground that nothing happens in analysis that ought not to be referred to the status of language and to the function of the word allowed us to articulate, we obtain what I did one particular year under the title of *The formations of the unconscious*. It is not for nothing that I started from what, in appearance, from what in these formations is most distant from what interests us in the clinic, namely, the witticism. It is starting from the witticism that I constructed this graph which moreover, even though it has not yet demonstrated to everyone how obvious it is, nonetheless remains fundamental on this occasion. As everyone knows and can see, it is made up of the network of three chains, two of which find themselves already marked, if not elucidated, by certain formulae some of which have been abundantly commentated on. Since \$ ♦ D marks as fundamental the dependence of the subject on what, under the name of demand, has been strongly distanced from need. The very signifying form, the defiles of the signifier, as I expressed myself, specifying it, distinguishing it and in no way allowing the its effect to be reduced to the simple terms of physiological appetite. This of course is required but illuminated by this medium, is required from the simple fact that in our experience these needs only interest us in so far as they take up the position of being equivalent to a sexual demand. The other junctions, signified as coming (209) from O as the treasury of signifiers, only constitute, at the point that we are at, a simple reminder.

What I want to advance here, since moreover I never saw it distinguished by anyone, is that, even though what is at stake in these three chains are chains that can only be superimposed, established, fixed in so far as there is something of the signifier in the world, that discourse exists, that a certain type of being is caught up in it who is called man, or the speaking being, that here, starting from the existence of the possible concatenation as constituting the very essence of these signifiers, what we have there and what the complement of this graph demonstrates, is the following. If this symbolic function here of the possibility of return is operating, which is made up of the statement of the simplest discourse, of this fundamental one at the level of which we can affirm that there is no metalanguage, that nothing of all that is symbolic could be built up except from normal discourse. This we can specify from the category that I distinguish as the symbolic, and we notice that what is involved in the upper chain is

very precisely its effects in the real. Moreover the subject, which is its first and major effect, only appears at the level of the second chain.

If there remains here something that assuredly, even though always discussed and particularly in my discourse of this year, did not take on, because this is the object starting from which I advance, its full agency, it is what is involved in the signifier as such through which there appears the fundamental incompleteness of what is produced when it is constituted as the locus of the Other, or more exactly what in this locus traces out the path of a certain altogether fundamental lure. The locus of the Other as evacuated of enjoyment is not simply a clear place, a burned circle, of what is not simply this Other, this place open to the interplay of roles, this something structured of itself from the signifying incidence, it is very precisely what introduces into it this lack, this bar, this gap, this hole that can be distinguished by the title of the **o**-object. Now this is what I intend to make you sense here by examples taken at the level of the experience to which Freud himself has recourse when it is a matter of articulating what is involved in the drive.

Is it not strange, after having put so much emphasis in experience on the oral drive, on the anal drive, so-called outlines, described as pre-genital, of something that is supposed to come to maturity by fulfilling some myth or other of completeness prefigured by the oral, some myth or other of gift, the giving of a present, prefigured by the anal, that Freud to all appearances, should articulate what, in these fundamental drives, is involved in the *montage* of the source, of the pressure, of the object, of the end, of the *Ziel*, with the help of the scopophilic and sadomasochistic drives. What I would like to advance, just like that, is that the function of the pervert, the one he fulfils, far from being - as has long been said, as (210) people no longer dare to say for some time and principally because of what I have stated - founded on some contempt for the other or, as they say, of the partner, is to be measured in a much richer fashion. And that to allow it to be grasped, at least at the level of the heterogeneous audience that I have before me, I would articulate it by saying that the pervert is the one who devotes himself to filling this hole in the Other. That, up to a certain point, to give here the colours that give their relief to things, I would say that he is in favour of the Other existing, that he is a defender of the faith.

Moreover, in looking more closely at the observations, in this light that makes of the pervert a singular auxiliary of God, one will see there being clarified the bizarre things that are advanced from pens that I would describe as innocent. In a treatise of psychiatry very well done, faith, as regard the observations it collates, we can see that an exhibitionist does not manifest his frolics only in front of little girls. He may also do so in front of a tabernacle. It is certainly not simply by such details that something can be illuminated. But simply, first of all, by having been able to map out, which was done here already a long time ago, the function that can be isolated in everything that is involved in the field of vision, from the moment that these problems are posed in the work of art, what is involved in the function of the look. By definition, it is not easy to say what a look is. It is even a question that can very well sustain an existence and ravage it. I was able to see at one time a young woman for whom it was properly this question, joined to a structure that I do not have to indicate any further, that went as far as producing a retinal haemorrhage whose sequelae were lasting.

What prevents people from realising that before questioning oneself about what is involved in the effects of exhibitionism, namely, whether it frightens or not the witness who appears to provoke it, namely, if it is indeed the intention of the exhibitionist to provoke this shame, this fright, this echo, this something coy or consenting, who does not see first of all that what is essential in this aspect that you can describe as you wish, active or passive, I leave you the choice, of this scopophilic drive – in appearance it is passive because it offers itself to be seen – is properly and above all to make the look appear in the field of the Other? And why, if not to evoke there this topological relationship of what is involved in the flight, in the ungraspable nature of the look in its relationship with the limit imposed on enjoyment by the function of the pleasure principle. It is the enjoyment of the Other that the exhibitionist watches over. It seems that here, what creates the mirage, the illusion, and gives, suggests this thinking that there is a contempt for the partner is the forgetting of the fact that beyond the particular support for the Other that this partner gives, there is this fundamental function which is nevertheless present there (211) every time the word functions, the one in which every partner is only included, namely, from the locus of the word, from the reference point where the word is posited as true.

It is in this field, the field of the Other *qua* deserted by enjoyment that the exhibitionistic act is posited to give rise there to the look. This is how one sees that it is not symmetrical to what is involved for the voyeur. Because what is important for the voyeur, and very often is the way in which everything that can be seen is in a way profaned at his level, is precisely to question in the Other what cannot be seen. The object of desire of the voyeur in the slender body, the profile of a little girl, is very precisely what can be seen there only by the fact that it supports [is supported by?] the ungraspable itself, a line where it is lacking, namely, the phallus. That the little boy sees himself sufficiently maltreated for nothing of what, for him, can be attached to this level of mystery, does not appear to hold the attention of an indifferent eye, to project all the more, this thing neglected in him, by restoring it in the Other, by supplementing the field of the Other with it, without even being aware of its support. Here, from this unawareness, the enjoyment for the Other, namely, the very end of perversion finds itself in a way escaping. But it is moreover what demonstrates first of all that no drive is simply the return of the other. They are asymmetrical and what is essential in this function is a supplement, something that at the level of the Other questions what is lacking in the Other as such, and provides for it (*y pare*). This is why certain analyses, and always in effect the most innocent ones, are exemplary. It is impossible for me, after having, as I did the last time, thrown doubt on the lack of seriousness of a certain philosophy, not to remember the extraordinary relevance of what is grasped in the analysis of the function of the voyeur. The one who, when he is looking through the keyhole, who is truly what cannot be seen, nothing more assuredly can make him fall from a height than being surprised in his capture by this slit, as regards which it is not for nothing that a slit itself, is called a look, even a day. The return is what is at stake, namely, his reduction to the humiliated, indeed ridiculous position which is not at all linked to the fact that he is precisely beyond the slit, but that he can be grasped by another in a posture that only collapses from the point of view of the narcissism of the upright position, that of the one who sees nothing because he is so sure of himself. This is what, at a page that you will easily find in *Being and nothingness*, has something imperishable about it, whatever may be the partial aspect of what is deduced from it as regards the status of existence.

But the following step is of no less interest. What then is the *o*-object in the sadomasochistic drive? Does it not seem to you that highlighting the prohibition

proper to enjoyment, ought also to allow us to put back in its (212) place what people believe to be the key of what is involved in sado-masochism, when they speak about playing with pain and immediately retract and say that after all, it is only amusing if the pain does not go too far. This sort of blindness, of lure, of false fright, of tickling the question reflecting in a way after all the level at which there remains everything that is practised in this kind of thing, does this not run the risk, is it not in fact the essential mask thanks to which there escapes what is involved in sadomasochistic perversion?

You will see later, if all of this does not appear too daring to you, indeed a speculation that is not favourable to an *Einfühlung*, and with good reason. For the majority of you, all of you such as you are, whatever you may believe, what is involved in perversion, in true perversion escapes you. It is not because you dream about perversion that you are perverse. Dreaming about perversion can be used for something completely different, and principally, when one is neurotic, to sustain desire, which one really has need of when one is neurotic! But this does not at all allow you to believe that you understand perverts. It is enough to have worked with an exhibitionist to see that one understands nothing about what in appearance I will not say makes him enjoy himself, since he does not enjoy himself. But he enjoys himself all the same, and on the single condition of taking the step that I have just said, namely, that the enjoyment that is at stake, is that of the Other. Naturally, there is a gap. You are not crusaders; you do not consecrate yourself to ensuring that the Other, namely, something or other blind and perhaps dead, should enjoy. But the exhibitionist for his part is interested in that. It is in that way that he is a defender of the faith.

That is why to catch up, I let myself go in speaking about crusaders. To believe in the Other, the cross, the French words [*croisés, croire, croix*] linking up like that. Every tongue has its echoes and its encounters – *croa-croa*, as Jacques Prévert also said - the crusades existed, they were also for the life of a dead God; it would mean something just as interesting to find out what, since 1945, is the game between communism and Gaullism. This has had enormous effects. As long as the knights went on crusades, love could become civilised where they had left the place vacant. While, when they were elsewhere, they encountered civilisation, namely, what they were looking for, a high degree of perversion, and at the same time they reduced everything to rubble.

Byzantium has never recovered from the crusades. You have to pay attention to these games because this may still happen, even now, in the name of other crusades.

But let us return to our sadomasochists who are precisely still separated. Namely, that because, as I said earlier, in the scopophilic drive, there is one who succeeds in what has to be created, namely, the enjoyment of the Other, and an other who is only there to fill the hole with his own look, without ensuring that the other even sees there a little bit more about what (213) there is. It is more or less the same case in the relationships between the sadist and the masochist, on the single condition that one notices where the *o*-object is.

It is strange that, living in an epoch in short where we have resurrected very well all the practices of interrogation, of interrogation at the time that it played a role in judicial mores at a superior level, now that this has been left to operatives who do that in the name of some madness or other like the interests of the country or of the troop, it is curious, after also having seen some little games on the stage with which, after the war in which a lot of things happened, the latest of this type, the pleasure was prolonged a little for us on the stage by showing simulacrum, it is strange that people do not notice the essential function played at first at this level by the word, by confession (*l'aveu*). Despite everything, sadistic games are not simply interesting in the dreams of neurotics. One can all the same see, where it happens, people may well have their reasons, we know very well what must be thought of the reasons, the reasons are secondary as compared to what happens in practice. Whether effectively it is always around something where what is at stake is to peel the subject of what? Of what constitutes him in his fidelity, namely, his word, one could say that this has a part to play in interrogation. It is an approach. I am telling you right away, the *o*-object is not the word, but it is to put you on the track. Tackling the question from this angle is very open to misunderstanding, as you are going to see right away. Namely, that there is going to be precisely what I reject, namely, a symmetry, namely, that it is certain that the florid, the beautiful, the true masochist, Sacher Masoch himself, organises the whole business in a way that he can no longer speak.

Why does this interest him so much? Let me be frank. What is at stake is the voice. That the masochist should make of the voice of the other just by itself what he is

going to give the guarantee of answering like a dog, is essential in the matter. And it is illuminated by the fact that what he seeks out, is precisely a type of other who, on this point of the voice, can be put in question. The dear mother, as Deleuze illustrates, with the cold voice containing all sorts of arbitrary currents, is here something that with the voice, this voice that perhaps he has heard only too much of elsewhere, from his father's side, comes in a way to complete and here also to fill the hole. Only there is something in the voice that is more topologically specified, namely, that nowhere is the subject more interested in the other than through this \circ -object. And it is indeed there that the topological comparison, the one that is illustrated here by the hole in a sphere which is not one since precisely it is in this hole that it folds back on itself. An attentive examination of what happens at the level of organic structures, very specifically of the vestibular system or the semicircular canals, brings us to these radical forms of which I already gave you a glimpse a fortnight (214) ago by referring to one of the most primitive animals. Let us add to the one that I named the crustacean called the Palemon [*Palaemonias ganteri?*], a pretty name full of mythical echoes. But let it not distract us from the fact that the animal, when, at each moulting, it is stripped of all the outside of its systems, is obliged and with good reason, because otherwise he would not be able to move in any way, to set up, in the hollow opened up at his animal level on the outside, in the hollow of what is nothing less than an ear, some little grains of sand, so that they tickle it in there. It is strictly impossible to conceive what the function of the Superego is if one does not understand – this is not everything but it is one of the mainsprings – the essential of what is involved in the function of the \circ -object realised by the voice *qua* support of signifying articulation, by the pure voice in so far as it is, yes or no, established in a perverse way or not at the locus of the Other.

If we can speak about a certain moral masochism, this can only be founded on this point of impact of the voice of the Other not in the ear of the subject but at the level of the Other that he establishes as being completed by the voice. And, in the way that earlier the exhibitionist enjoyed himself, it is in this supplement of the Other - and not without a certain derision being possible which appears in the margins of masochistic functioning - it is at the level of the Other and of the remitting to him of the voice that the functioning axis, the axis of gravitation of the masochist operates. Let me say it. It is enough to have lived in our epoch to grasp, to know, that there is an enjoyment in

this remitting to the Other, and all the more when he is less valorised, has less authority, in this remitting to the Other of the function of the voice. In a certain way, this style of evasion, of stealing of enjoyment can be, of all the perverse ones imaginable, the only one that is ever fully successful.

It is certainly not the same when the sadist tries in his way, he also, in the inverse way, to complete the Other, by removing the word from him, certainly, and imposing his voice on him. In general that fails. Let it suffice in this regard to refer to the work of Sade where it is really impossible to eliminate this dimension of the voice, of the word, of discussion, of debate. After all, we are told about all the most extraordinary excesses exercised with respect to the victims as regards whom one can only be surprised by one thing, their unbelievable survival. But there is not a single one of these excesses that is not in a way not simply commented on but in a way fomented from an order about which the most astonishing thing is that moreover it does not provoke any revolt. But after all we have been able to see through historical examples that this is how it can happen. There was apparently never seen in these herds that were pushed towards the crematory furnaces someone who all of a sudden (215) simply bit the wrist of a guard. The operation of the voice finds its full register here, there is only one thing, which is that enjoyment escapes here exactly as in the case of the voyeur. Its place is masked by this astonishing domination of the \circ -object, but enjoyment for its part is nowhere. It is quite clear that the sadist here is only the instrument of something that is called a supplement given to the Other, but which in this case the Other does not want. He does not want, but he obeys all the same. Such is the structure of these drives, in as much as they reveal that a topological hole just by itself can fix a whole subjective behaviour and make everything that may be forged around so-called *Einfühlung* highly relative.

Since the hour is late and since moreover it required a lot of subtlety to get this across, I had to give it all the time necessary, I announce nevertheless that the problem of the neurotic is the following. You can consult the article that I wrote under the title *Remarks on the discourse of Daniel Lagache*. It is indispensable to find our bearings in all the distractions of everything that is said in the Freudian texts about identification. The uncertainty, the clear contradiction there is throughout his works, throughout his statements about what is involved in what he calls *the reservoir of*

libido, that sometimes is put forward as the *Ich*, namely narcissism, sometimes on the contrary as the Id, the ego being obviously inseparable from narcissism is found in a problematic position. Namely, is it because of the object that it offers the covetousness of the Id, that the ego must be said to introduce itself as the effective agency from which there would re-emerge in its turn the interest bestowed on objects.

Is it on the contrary, from the object fomented at the level of the Id, that the ego finds itself secondarily valorised, as a fellow, as well as the objects? This introduces us to posing in a radical fashion, to posing again the whole question of what is involved in identification. It is only in so far as the neurotic wants to be the One in the field of the Other, it is only in so far as idealisation plays a primordial logical role that it finds itself from then on confronted with narcissistic problems. But to simply make this remark, that I am suggesting to you at the same time, of asking ourselves whether we are not undergoing, with Freud in imagining primary narcissism, a deferred, imaged effect, even one that is unspeakably falsified. We add a little bit to it, just what is needed to fall into the snare of the neurotic. Namely, that it is in the measure that secondary narcissism, in the form characterised by imaginary capture, is the level where there is presented for him in a way whose problem is completely different from what is involved for the pervert. This is what I will try to make you sense the next time. It is in the measure that we believe that we are able to think that there was somewhere this relation not of supplement, but of complement for the One and that we invest the oral drive that it presents, nevertheless apparently on the single condition that (216) one is undeceived from the fascination of the neurotic, that there is presented apparently the same character of being centred around a third object which slips away, just as ungraspable in its way as the look or the voice and this famous breast, which with the help of a play on words one makes into the maternal lap. Behind the breast and just as stuck on as it onto the wall that separates the child from the woman, the placenta is there to remind us that far from the child in the body of the mother forming a single body with it, it is not even enclosed in its envelopes. It is not a normal egg. It is broken, broken in this envelope by this element of sticking on through which moreover we now know, there can be bound and played out all the conflicts, that fall under the jurisdiction of 'Byzantism', in the mixture of bloods and the incompatibility of one group with another.

This function of a third object that I call a plaque, or I might say pendant, because we will see it in its outstanding forms in everything that is built up from culture, the thing that is hung on the wall and that lures people. Is this not what appears effectively in the experience of the neurotic? I mean that by converting it, by completing it with the myth of a primitive unity, a lost paradise, supposedly ended by the trauma of birth, we do not fall into what is precisely at stake in the neurotic's affair. What is at stake for him, we will see, I will articulate it in detail and already you can find its first lines sketched in a perfectly clear fashion in this article, is the impossibility of bringing this little \circ -object onto the imaginary plane in conjunction with the narcissistic image. No representation supports the presence of what is called the *representative of representation*. One sees only too well here the distance, marked by this term, that there is between one and the other. Between the representative and the representation, there is no equivalence. This is what allows me to initiate, to indicate the point where all of this will be reorganised. The third line of the graph, the one that crosses the two others, is properly speaking what from a symbolic concatenation is carried on to the imaginary where it finds its ballast. It is on this line that in the complete graph you will encounter the ego, desire, the phantasy and finally the specular image before its point, its point which can only here on the left, at the bottom, be grasped as a retroactive effect. Its point only consists in the equally retroactive illusion of a primary narcissism. It is around this that the problem of the neurotic will be re-centred, the manifestation also of the fact that, *qua* neurotic, he is precisely destined to a failure of sublimation. So then, if our formula of S barred diamond \circ , ($\$ \blacklozenge \circ$), as formula of the phantasy is to be put forward at the level of sublimation, it is very precisely not before a critique has been brought to bear on a whole series of lateral implications which were given in an unjustified fashion because the experience, which nevertheless could not have taken place otherwise, the experience of the incidences of the signifier on the subject, was carried out at the level of neurotics.

Seminar 17: Wednesday 23 April 1969

(On the board)

Truth on the hither side of thinking, knowledge beyond?

Censorship

Sense – cens

Truth Knowledge

The Klein Bottle

(217) The vacation time interrupted our remarks. As you see, I also took my time in starting up again.

I left you on the subject of sublimation once it had been opened up, and we will have to continue on with some tallying about what is involved, from the point of structure, about what is involved in perversion. To this, I contributed this specification that we have to define, in a way that my schemas, my notions if you wish at a push, make very simple and very accessible. Namely, does the subject, in perversion, himself take care to supply for this flaw in the Other, which is a notion that you do not get into right away, since it requires a certain development of psychoanalytic experience. It is then uniquely for those who are familiar with my terms that this formula can take on the value of a step forward. This is certainly an inconvenience that is not the privilege of my teaching. It is a common factor in every science from the moment that it begins to be constructed. That is not for all that, of course, enough to authenticate as scientific what my teaching tries to provide against, to provide against something that in the name of a so-called reference to the clinic, always leaves the review of this experience at what one might well call a function reduced to some sort of sniffing out or other. This of course could not be exercised if there were not already given to it

the points of an orientation that, for its part, was the (218) fruit of a construction and a very learned one, that of Freud. It is a matter of knowing whether it is enough to lodge oneself in it, and then, starting from there, to let oneself be guided to what one takes to be a more or less living apprehension of the clinic, but which is only quite simply giving a place to what the blackest prejudices regulate in it. That is taken as having a sense. It is to this sense that I think there ought to be applied a rating (*censitaire*) requirement, namely, that those who boast of it should prove themselves with sufficient guarantees taken from elsewhere. I will try to say today why these guarantees ought to be taken from somewhere other than in the field where ordinarily they have done nothing either to authenticate what they have received from Freud concerning what makes up the structure of this field, or – which is indeed the minimum requirement – account for it, in order to try to continue it.

I was among the first to hear about the publication of a scurrilous satire whose title, just by itself, is disgraceful, and I will not mention it here because of that fact. Under the avowed patronage of authors who declare themselves from the first lines to be two analysts, it claims to draw up an account, to measure, to reduce to its value - which does not go any higher than horizons that I must say are despicable, that are the rule in a certain field of psychoanalytic experience - to reduce what is involved to what they call, the name is included in their title, to what they broadly speaking designate as contestation. After that, you know what you can expect! The psychic regression, infirmity, sordid infantilism that is supposed to be shown by all of those who, under whatever heading, manifest themselves in this register – and God knows how nuanced it can be. These are really brought down to the level of what in a certain field, in a certain frame of psychoanalytic experience, people are capable of thinking. It does not go any further! I will not add another word. Simply I note, I record that, whatever suspicion there may have arisen in some of my most authentic pupils, this does not come from anyone whose face has ever been seen here. It is a fact. It is a fact that I even confirmed, in addressing myself to one or other person who may have fallen under suspicion.

I must say that the very fact of posing this question had something a little offensive about it. But in any case, from where I am, I have to be able to respond, and respond in the firmest way that none of those who, at any time appeared here to collaborate on

occasion, to answer me, who to some degree attended this seminar, did anything other than repudiate with horror the slightest approbation that they may have given to this extravagant initiative, to this veritable debagging of the lowest kind of thinking.

So then these things have been aired. This moreover does not also rule out that, from some quarter, particular people that I am evoking just now may not also engage on a slope that, in the final analysis, does not fail to rejoin (219) what can be expressed in a certain register. That they do not do so, that the whole of French psychoanalysis is not behind the two authors whose names I happen to know through certain communications, and they are not trivial ones, they belong to an eminent Institute that everyone knows, that things are not at the stage that the whole of psychoanalysis is behind them in connection with contestation, after all I can indeed pride myself that it is because of my teaching.

One cannot say that it had much success in psychoanalysis. But, as was said on one occasion at a certain turning point of the adventures, the avatars of this teaching, by one of the very people that I thought I should question, without my suspicions properly speaking going to the point of believing that he would not repudiate this work, it is all the same the same person who, on one of these occasions, in connection with what I was stating, spoke about nothing less than terrorism. It is supposed to be then the terrorism brought out by my teaching that ensures that French psychoanalysis, after all, let us say, apart from certain rare exceptions, has not distinguished itself either by a great originality, nor by a particularly effective opposition to my teaching, nor by an application of it either. It nevertheless remains that certain types of discourse are impossible because of this teaching. One must really, and this exists, live in a milieu where it is properly speaking forbidden even to thumb through the few pages that I allowed to be published, for such statements to be produced that, I repeat, you will very quickly get to know. If I am speaking about it, it is because a particular weekly that is done by computer already highlights the narcissism imputed in this work to those who carry on a contestation, totally ignoring, of course, the renewal, make no mistake that I brought to this term.

Well then, since there is terrorism and because after all it is not limited to me, that it might perhaps have caught the attention of the authors, for example, that terrorism is

not absent from the field they are considering, that it is not simply a search for comfort and reciprocal mirages that governs it. That certainly, in a rather varied way, something is exercised in it that cuts and that excludes, indeed that cuts people off from one another. This reflection, this description of what is an essential and characteristic effect of certain functions in our epoch and very especially of those that, under whatever heading, may be authorised by a school of thought, made me think that I ought to share with you today some reflections that connect very well to this term of what is involved in what must be understood under the register of the customary term that is brandished rightly and wrongly as freedom of thought. What does that mean? How the devil can people even consider that there is a value inscribed in these three words?

(220) As a first approach, let us spell out that if thought has some reference, if we consider it in what we could quickly call its objective relationship, naturally there is not the slightest freedom. The idea of freedom in this quarter of objective references has all the same a core point around which it arises. It is the function, or more exactly the notion of the norm. From the moment that this notion comes into play, there is introduced correlatively that of exception, indeed even that of transgression. It is here that the function of thinking can take on some sense by introducing the notion of freedom. In a word, it is by thinking about Utopia that, as its name states, is a place that is nowhere, no place, it is in Utopia that thinking would be free to envisage a possible reform of the norm. This indeed is how in the history of thinking from Plato to Thomas More things have been presented. With regard to the norm, the real locus in which it is established, it is only in the field of Utopia that freedom of thought can be exercised. This indeed is what results in the works of the last of those that I have just named, namely, the very creator of the term Utopia, Thomas More. And moreover by going back to the one who put forward, who consecrated under the function of the Idea the term of norm, Plato. Plato at the same time constructs for us a Utopian society, the Republic, where there is expressed freedom of thought with regard to the political norm of its time. Here we find ourselves then in the register not simply of the Idea. And moreover the slightest exercise of everything that I have promoted as distinguishing the imaginary from the real makes us clearly see the framing and formative effect in this register of a reference which goes entirely to its term in the register of the body image. As I underlined, the very idea of macrocosm

was always accompanied by a reference to a microcosm that gives it its weight, its sense, its height, its depth, its right, its left. This is the basis of a mode of apprehension described as knowledge, the one in which there is exercised a whole development that quite correctly, is inscribed in the history of thinking.

On my graph where the two horizontal lines that I retraced the last time in order to have them intersected by this hook-shaped line that cuts both of them and determines the four essential crossroads where there is inscribed a certain mapping out. This hook-shaped line that rises and descends to cut both of them, is precisely, I remind you, the line in which there are inscribed and very precisely in the interval left by the two respective lines of stating and stated, in which there are inscribed the properly speaking imaginary formations, specifically, the function of desire in its relationship to phantasy, and of the ego in its relationship to the specular image. This means that the registers of the symbolic, in so far as they are inscribed in the two horizontal lines are not without a relationship, do not fail to find support in the imaginary function. But what is legitimate about them, I mean what can be rationally assimilated, must remain limited. This is why (221) the Freudian doctrine is a rationalist doctrine; it is uniquely in function of what can be articulated in defensible propositions, in the name of a certain logical reduction, that anything whatsoever can be admitted or on the contrary ruled out.

What is the status, at the point that we are at in science, of this imaginary function taken as a foundation for scientific investigation? It is clear that it is completely foreign to it. In anything we tackle, even at the level of the most concrete sciences, biological sciences for example, what is important is not to know how things are in the ideal case. It is enough to see the embarrassment of having recourse to the thinking that solicits from us every question of this order, namely, what is health for example? You should consider that what organises our scientific advance is not situated in the order of the ideal. What is important, in connection with everything that is and that we have to question, is how it can be replaced.

I think that this is sufficiently illustrated for you by the way it is used with the organic questioning of the functions of the body. It is not by chance, excess, acrobatics, exercise, that what appears to be most clear in the analysis of a particular function, is

that one can replace an organ by something that does not look the least bit like it. If I started from an example that is raging today, it is certainly not to create an effect, because what is at stake is of a quite different nature. If this is how things are, it is because science did not develop from the Platonic idea but from a process linked to the reference to mathematics. Not what manifested itself as such at the origin, the Pythagorean one for example to give you an idea, namely, the one that connected the number to an ideal of the sort of those that I was referring to in speaking about Plato. In Pythagoras there is an essence of the One, an essence of the Two, even of the Three, and at the end of a certain time one comes to a stop. When one gets to Twelve, one is out of breath, this has absolutely nothing to do with the way in which we now question what number is. Between the formulae of Peano and this Pythagorean exercise there is absolutely nothing in common.

The idea of function, in the mathematical sense, but here it is not for nothing that it is homonymous with the style in which I said earlier the organic function could be questioned, this function is always in the final analysis organised from a concatenation between two signifying chains, $x = \text{function of } y$. Here is the starting point, the solid foundation on which mathematics converge, because it did not at all appear so pure at the start. In accordance with the style, properly speaking, of the symbolic chain it is the point of arrival that gives its sense to everything that went before.

In so far as the theory of mathematics, I will not say has culminated, because already it is sliding forward, but let us stay with what constitutes (222) its point of equilibrium in our time, set theory, we note that the essential of numerical ordination is reduced in it to what it is, to its articulatory possibilities. It is constructed to strip this numerical order of all its ideal or idealised privileges, those that I was evoking as I could just now in recalling for you what was the One, the Two, indeed one or other number, in a tradition that we can describe broadly speaking as Gnostic. Set theory precisely is constructed to strip this numerical ordering – and this is what I call of ideal or imaginary privileges – of the unit. There is no trace of the unit in Peano's definitions, a number is defined with respect to zero and the function of the successor. The unit has no privilege in it – of unity, of corporeality, of essentialness, of totality itself. It must be clearly marked by the fact that an example cannot in any way be confused

with a class. And by some feature like the fact that to speak about the part is profoundly contrary to the functioning of the theory, that the term sub-set is very precisely constructed to show that one cannot in any way inscribe in it that the whole is made up of the sum of the parts. As you know, sub-sets constitute from their union something that is in no way identifiable to the set, even by stripping away from it at the foundation, this is the sense of set theory, of recourse to space itself.

I apologise for this introduction designed to mark out the terms of an opposition that is as profound as it is necessary, the one in which there is defined what? The revolution or the subversion if you wish of the movement of a knowledge because, for some time, it is clear that I have taken off from the functioning here which is only inaugural, indeed supposed by thinking. It is indeed because I started from Plato that I could speak about thinking. So then it is not at all from the side of objective orientation that we have to question thinking about its freedom. In that quarter, it is not free, in effect, except in Utopia, which has no place in the real. Only, one of the interests of the very process that I took, is that undoubtedly, this discourse has something to do with thinking. This retreat from what is involved in the two aspects of knowledge, we shall call what? A reflection? A debate? A dialectic? It is in the subjective field, quite obviously, and inasmuch as, if the thing were possible, you would have an occasion to answer me, that we would, no doubt, have to make other diversities intervene.

In the foreground first of all, the notion of “all” (*tous*). In what I have just said what can be accepted by all? Does this “all” have a sense? We will rediscover the same opposition here. We will notice the moulting that logical requirements have taken on, and that moreover, to push such a debate sufficiently far, we would be led, to promote the function of the (223) axiom. Namely, a certain number of logical prefigurations that are held to ground what follows and moreover, to make what follows depend on the assent given or not to the axiom. The uncertainty of this “all” will be put in question not at all simply from the fact that concretely the unanimity of the “all” is the most difficult thing to obtain, but that the logical expression of the “all” proves to be very precarious, provided that, in the order of logic, we have the order of requirements that necessitates the theory of quantifiers. Pulling back from this, not going to involve myself in developments that would send us astray with respect to

what we have to question, I will ask how there is expressed in this register what is involved in freedom of thought.

Here Hegel is a reference point that is not simply convenient but essential. In this axis that interests us, he prolongs the inaugural *cogito*. Thinking surrenders itself if one questions the centre of gravity of what is qualified there as *Selbstbewusstsein*. I know that I think. The *Selbstbewusstsein* is nothing else. Only what he adds to Descartes, is that something varies in this “I know that I think”, and this is the point where I am. This, I was going to say by definition, in Hegel, I do not know. The illusion is that I am where I think. Freedom of thought here, is nothing other than what Hegel forbids me to think about, which is that I am where I want to be. In this respect, what Hegel reveals, is that there is not the slightest freedom of thought. The time of History is necessary so that at the end, I think at the right place, at the place where I will have become Knowledge. But, at that stage, there is absolutely no longer any need for thinking. I am carrying out a rather mad exercise before you because it is obvious, for those who have never opened Hegel, all of this cannot go very far. But in any case I hope all the same that there are among you enough people who are more or less introduced to the dialectic of the master and the slave, to remember what happens to the master who has the freedom – this is how he defines him at least, he is the mythical master – what happens when he thinks, namely, when he puts his mastery into the strangeness of language. He enters into thinking, perhaps, but undoubtedly it is the moment when he loses his freedom. That the slave, as ‘vile consciousness’, is the one who realises History. In work, his thinking is at every phase the servant of the step that he has to take to accede to the kind of state where there is realised what? The domination of knowledge. It is almost impossible to undo the fascination of Hegel. It is only some people of bad faith who consider that I have

promoted Hegelianism within the Freudian debate. Nevertheless, you must not imagine that I think that one can finish with Hegel like that. This notion that the truth of thinking is elsewhere than in itself and is necessitated every moment by the relation of the subject to knowledge, and that this knowledge itself is conditioned by a certain number of necessary phases, is a grid whose applicability we cannot but sense at every instant, at every detour of our experience. It is of exemplary value as an exercise, (224) as a formation. It is really necessary to make an effort at disorganising, of veritable awakening to ask ourselves why, however little I may know it, there is this delay which means that I must think in order to know.

If one looks more closely at it, questions oneself, what does the articulation of effective knowledge with the way in which I think about my liberty matter, namely, “I am where I want”? It is clear from Hegel’s demonstration that I cannot think that I am where I want. But it is no less clear in looking closely at it that it is this and nothing else that is called thinking. So that this “I am there where I want” which is the essence of freedom of thought as a stating is properly what cannot be stated by anyone. At that moment there appears this strange thing that in Hegel, in the *Phenomenology* and not in the *Encyclopaedia*, but where there is marked in the sharpest way this dialectic proper to thinking, this can be done in the absence of any history of knowledge. In the whole of the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, it is a matter of a reference to a truth that allows to be highlighted what thinking does not know about its function. From then on it is clear that where does Hegel detect it if not from his knowledge, I mean the knowledge of his time, of his epoch, of this scientific knowledge as Kant had accounted for it, Newtonian knowledge. Let us say in a word,

for those who understand, this limit-knowledge that marks the apogee and the end of theology.

The difference between Hegel and Freud is the following. Thinking is not simply the question put about the truth of knowledge, which is already a lot and essential in the Hegelian step. Thinking, says Freud, bars the entry to a knowledge. Do I need to recall what is at stake in the unconscious, namely, how the first access to a knowledge had been thought out? The *Selbstbewusstsein* of Hegel, is “I know what I think”. The Freudian trauma is an “I do not know”, itself unthinkable since it supposes an “I think” dismantled of all thinking. The point of origin, not to be understood developmentally but structurally when it is a matter of understanding the unconscious, is that it is in this nodal point of a failing knowledge that there is born, in the form then of what can be called, on condition that you put the two last words in a sort of parenthesis, the desire (to know). This is simply unconscious desire in its structure. Moreover, I have for a long time marked on the upper line of my graph “he did not know” in connection with the celebrated dream of “he did not know that he had died”. The “he did not know” is the putting in question of the stating as such of the subject divided at the origin. This is what creates the dimension of desire, being that of the desire of the Other. It is in so far as in the traumatic phantasy this desire of the Other cannot be formulated, that desire takes seed in what can be called, on the condition of putting the last words in parenthesis, the desire (to know). And we find there right away the fundamental themes on which I insisted. If the desire of the (225) Other is such that it is closed off, it is because it is expressed in what is characteristic of the traumatic scene, that the body is glimpsed there as separated from enjoyment. The

function of the other is incarnated here. It is this body perceived as separated from enjoyment.

The step that Freud makes us take concerning this function of thinking with respect to *Selbstbewusstsein*, is that the essence of the “I know that I think”, of this *Selbstbewusstsein* is nothing other than the excessive accent that is put on what “I know” while forgetting this “I do not know” which is its real origin. It is already against the division that this “I do not know” implies that the simple fact of the presence of the negation puts in suspense, as I might say – but precisely I am not saying it. It is an “I do not know” that the “I know that I think” is designed to screen in a definitive fashion. The truth henceforth is no longer the place where this “that I think” in Hegel really is. The truth is the designation of the place from which this “that I think” is motivated. Note that if this ought to be taken in all its rigour, there is nothing to be said about this place which has any sense. It is created by a “that means nothing”. It is the place where “that means nothing” commands a replacement “that means”.

I do not know for how many of you this recalling of these primary truths may be of use. But for the others I put some key words on the board which recall what I have already elucidated at length in a topology. Namely, this reference to the Klein bottle in so far as it gives us in a surface topology the possibility of a division, in which what is at the neck, namely, this little circle, where the surface is supposed to retrogress. And we will put on the one hand the truth and on the other knowledge. Note that in this schematisation there should be here a somewhere that reunites them, that is the same shape as the one that I am trying to make present more simply in the Moebius strip.

What is important is to pose some questions here. This truth which is the one that we question in the unconscious as creative failure of knowledge, as the original point of the desire to know, is the schema that comes from a knowledge condemned never to be in a way anything but the correlate of this failure. Is this not for us, in questioning things further, whether all thinking, and not simply the spontaneous thinking of whoever is oriented in the established realities of life, but thinking as such, namely, as

questioning itself on this Hegelian point which is where a certain style of knowledge really situates the subject. If all of this thinking is defined as being essentially censorship, because this is what the Freudian articulation means, it is that this “I do not know”, from the fact that it is radically forgotten, is impossible to return to its place, thinking-censorship, call that what you wish, slide the words, *pensée-censure*. Do we not sense there at least one of these essential correlatives of what is put abroad in our epoch (226) about a so-called end of philosophy?

There is an objection of structure, precisely, which is that philosophy, or even as is better said on occasion metaphysics, metaphysics never did anything but that, to consider itself as at an end. So then it must not be believed that because people bring in Kierkegaard, Marx and Nietzsche, as they say, this takes us so much outside the limits of the blueprint, uniquely seen from this point of view. This is only interesting in order to continue to question what is in our day, you should note it all the same, the most contested thing in the world, even though people arm themselves with nothing else, namely, freedom of thought. Wherever people work to realise something that seems to be the domination of knowledge – I mean where people work seriously, not where it is a fair – there is no freedom of thought. That does not prevent the students in Prague from going on strike for it.

So then what does that mean? It is in the measure that our analytic experience can perhaps contribute here an outline of reflection that this whole discourse is being carried on. If we proceed in experience by making hold up what? A discourse that is defined how? Free associations, that means without a link to the Other. You speak in analysis. This means that you have been freed from all the rules of the game. And to what, great God, is that going to lead? Not even to an aesthetic text. Because the surrealists, when they wanted to proceed along this path, you can imagine that at the end they made good use of a pair scissors, for that to end up by making something that we will speak about again, the work of art. That one should be able to arrive at it like that is already strongly indicative but quite impermeable to anyone who does not have an idea of the *o*-object.

We are not talking today about the *o*-object. What we are talking about is the following. That in order to give oneself over to such an exercise, that normally can

only end up at a profound logical inadequacy – and that is all Freud means in reality when he says that the unconscious does not know the principle of contradiction, the principle of contradiction is something extraordinarily elaborated in logic and that one can even do without in logic, one can construct a whole logic without making use of negation, I am talking about a formal logic in the field of knowledge – if we can use a discourse that is free of logic, it is certainly not unattached to grammar. The fact is that in grammar there must remain something very rich in properties and consequences which ensures that we notice that a phantasy is expressed in nothing better than a sentence which has no sense other than grammatical. That in its operation in any case, as regards the formation of the phantasy, it is only debated grammatically, namely *A child is being beaten*, for example. It is in so far as something is only censored in it and can only be censored in it from the grammatical (227) structure, namely, the agent for example, that something can operate around this sentence.

The neuroses then revealed the distinction between grammar and logic. It might be a matter of taking a further step and even if they do not reveal it right away, like that, openly, to tell us that if we discover – and this is what I am striving for – the homology of something that one can only know obviously by having done a little logic, the homology of flaws that is demonstrated by a correct logic, namely, one that is not more than a century old. Namely, which ensures that one sees for example that it is from the localisation somewhere of an undecidable that there depends the consistency of one of the most secure systems, namely arithmetic. That there is a homology between these flaws of logic and the structure of desire in so far as it is in the final term a connotation of the knowledge of relationships of the man and the woman by something that is most surprising, through the lack or the non-lack of an organon, of an instrument, in other words the phallus. That the enjoyment of the instrument creates a barrier to the enjoyment that is the enjoyment of the Other in so far as the Other is only represented by a body, in a word, as I stated it, I think, with sufficient force. That there is nothing that can be structured that is properly the sexual act, if this is correctly demonstrated, joins it, buckles it, is something that rejoins truth and knowledge from behind is conceivable. Thinking is precisely this *Vorstellungsrepräsentanz*, this thing that represents the fact that there is something unrepresentable because barred by the prohibition of enjoyment. At what level? At

the most simple, at the organic level. The pleasure principle, is this barrier to enjoyment and nothing else.

That it should be metaphorised in the prohibition of the mother is after all something that is historically contingent and the Oedipus complex itself is only attached to that. But the question lies deeper. Castration, namely, the hole in the apprehension of this “I do not know” as regards the enjoyment of the Other, ought to be rethought as regards its relationships to the widespread, omnipresent effects of our science – these two points that seem to be very far from this dam which ensures that this sex that we speak about all the time, far from taking a step in any solution whatsoever of the field of the erotic, continues rather to obscure it, and marks out more the inadequacy of our reference points - that there is a relationship between that and these effects that I called widespread of our knowledge. Namely, this prodigious unfurling of the relationship to the ϕ -object that the use of our mass-media are only the return, the presentification of, is not this just by itself the indication of what is involved in freedom of thought?

Because suppose that the structure is effectively here that of the Klein bottle, that the limit is effectively this locus of turning inside out where what was the front becomes the back and inversely, where apparently truth (228) is separated from knowledge. Let it be sufficient for us to think that this limit is not fixed, that of its nature it is everywhere, namely, that the question is posed for us of what to do so that there should not be stuck at a purely imaginary fixed point this division between truth and knowledge. And it is indeed this about which, for want of having even begun to suggest the problem in this way, the psychoanalysts are content to give a demonstration in this form of absolutely not being able to detach themselves from a certain stasis of this limit. Every treatment of neurosis that limits itself to the exhaustion of the identifications of the subject, namely, very precisely of that by which he is reduced to the other, no treatment of these identifications, we will come back to it, carries in itself any promise of resolution of what constitutes the knot for the neurotic.

What constitutes the knot for the neurotic, I will not say here today, I would be forced to go too quickly. But what I mean, is that because of what is involved in the nature

of the neurotic, which is profoundly that he is asked what is involved in his desire, can the question not be posed whether the psychoanalyst is not here complicit by sustaining without knowing it the foundation of the structure of the neurotic, namely that his desire can only be sustained from this demand. In a word, curiously, if one can say that analysis consisted in a rupture with hypnosis, it is perhaps for a reason that is quite surprising when one considers it. It is that in analysis, at least in the form in which it stagnates, it is the analyst that is hypnotised. At the end, the analyst ends up by becoming the look and the voice of his patient. This is very different from what is presented, an illusion of thought, as recourse to the clinic. It would perhaps not be separating oneself from the clinic to pay attention to the fact that this mutation does not take place. I am only, as you can well imagine, indicating the ways that we will push forward in the sessions to come.

I would only like to end by making this remark. If I limited myself in my life to commenting my experience and questioning it in its relationships to Freud's doctrine, it is precisely with the aim of not being a thinker but, a thinking, the one Freud already constituted. To question it while taking into account what determines it, as regards what, speaking in a Hegelian way, constitutes or not its truth.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 30 April 1969

(229) Perhaps some of you, who by chance, might be philosophers, may glimpse that a question that has been put behind us, through some sort of lassitude rather than from having received an effective solution, the one that opens up between the terms of idealism and realism, is being asked again here. As we are going to see later, it is fairly easy to get the measure of idealism, you can pick it up from the writings of those who have proposed this doctrine. You will see that up to a certain point I will

take support in something that has not been refuted. It has not been refuted philosophically. This means that common sense which is, of course, realist, realist in the terms that idealism poses the question, namely, that according to it we are only supposed to know the real from representations, it is clear that this position that, from a certain schema, is irrefutable, can all the same be refuted once one does not make of the representation the pure and simple reflection of the real. I am going to come back to it.

It is notable that it is from within philosophy itself that the decisive blows have been dealt against idealism. Namely, that what was put forward first of all in the mythology of representation was able to be displaced into another mythology, the one that puts in question not representation but the function of thinking *qua* ideology. Idealism could only hold up by confusing the order of thought with that of representation. The matter is articulated, as you see, very simply and one can believe one is a realist by making of thinking what it is, something that is dependent on what is called on this occasion the real. Is this sufficient? It is difficult not to perceive that even within the mythology, that is what I call it, of ideology as dependent on a certain number of conditions and specifically social ones, namely, those of production, is it a position of realism to refer oneself to a real that as such, namely, in the fact that thinking is always dependent on it, cannot by this fact be fully apprehended, and this all the more in that we consider ourselves to be in a position to transform this real properly speaking. These are global reflections. What I want to point out, is that this real with respect to which we ought to consider – this is the sense of what is called the critique of ideology – our knowledge as in progress, is an integral part of the subversion that we are introducing into the real. The question is the following, is this knowledge in progress already there somewhere? It is the question that I posed (230) under the terms of *subject supposed to know*.

It is always as a presupposition and, in a word, a prejudice that is all the less criticised because it has not been seen that, even in excluding what the idea of knowledge indicates in terms of mysticism, even by having understood that the step of science consists properly speaking in having renounced it, by constituting a knowledge which is a system developing from the radical presupposition that we are dealing with nothing other than systems, that the subject does not only handle but in which he can

purify himself as such, being nothing more than the support of what is articulated as organised knowledge in a certain discourse, a discourse separate from that of opinion, and that as such is distinguished from it as a discourse of science. It remains that even when this step has been taken, no serious question has been posed about the implications that, despite ourselves, persist of this prejudice in so far as it is not criticised. Namely, that in order to discover this knowledge ought we, yes or no, to think - a fact of thinking - that there is a place where, whether we want to or not, we conceive of this knowledge as already organised. As long as the consequences properly speaking of a radical putting in suspense of this question of the *subject supposed to know* have not been tested, we remain in idealism and, in a word, in its most backward form. In the one that, when all is said and done, has remained unshaken in a certain structure and that is called, neither more nor less, theology. The *subject supposed to know* is God, full stop, nothing else. And one can be a *savant* of genius, and not, as far as I know, for all that be obscurantist, one can in a word be Einstein, and have recourse in the most articulated way to this God. He has to be already there, supposed to know, since Einstein, arguing against the restructuring of science on the foundations of probability, argues that the knowledge that he articulates in his theory presupposes somewhere, commends itself, by something that is homogenous to what is indeed a supposition concerning this subject. He names him in the traditional terms the good old God, difficult perhaps to penetrate in that he sustains the order of the world, but not a liar. He is fair. He does not change the goalposts during the game.

And it is on this admission that the rules exist already, that somewhere the rules of the game, the one that presides over this deciphering that is called knowledge, are established simply by the fact that the knowledge already exists in God. It is at this level that one can question what results from a veritable atheism, the only one, as you see, that merits the name, which is the following: is it possible for thinking to sustain the confrontation of the putting in question of the *subject supposed to know*.

This, it must be said, is a putting in question that, though I am reformulating it, in no way means that again this formula here constitutes a step forward in anything whatsoever. Not of course that it is not a step that essentially occupies me. The fact is, in what I have to (231) articulate, which is solidary with it, namely psychoanalysis,

I can only manage by getting across first of all what I solicited from the analysts: at least to have an up-to-date discourse about what they are effectively handling. Call that what you want, treatment, analytic experience, it is all one. And, in this respect, their thinking remains backward to the point that it is easy to put your finger on the fact that it is, when all is said and done, to one of the briefest forms of summing up the subject that there are attached particular notions that are by no means harmless. To take account of what the subject does in the treatment, to account for it in terms that by being attached to prejudices that for their part are summary, a veritable degradation of what critical thinking has been able to touch on at one or other of its turning points, is not without multiple consequences. First of all, by reinforcing everything that is signalled to us in thinking as being essentially constituted by a resistance. And then styles of intervention that can only reinforce in the subject described more or less correctly as the patient, but in any case, anyway, treated, woven into the very act of psychoanalytic experience, reinforce the same prejudices in the subject.

And to say what is at stake in a really obvious way, I will focus it on the terms of inside and outside that are evoked. That these terms are, of course, in Freud's discourse from the origin, is not a reason for us not to question them in the closest possible way. Otherwise we risk seeing being produced these sorts of deviations that hinder what might be glimpsed in analytic experience that is of a nature to nourish or at the very least flow into the essential question, that of the *subject supposed to know*. As long as the *subject supposed to know* before we know has not been put in question in the most serious way, one could say that our whole approach remains attached to what, in a thinking which is not detached from it, is a factor of resistance. Because a defective conception of the terrain on which we pose questions inevitably leads to their radical distortion.

How, with the use that is currently made by the analyst, not simply day by day but every minute, of the terms projection and introjection, how, if they are not criticised in themselves in a correct fashion, how can we not see their inhibiting effect on the thinking of the analyst himself. And much more their suggestive effect in the interpretative intervention and in a style that there is no excess in saying can only be cretinising. Does an inside and an outside, which seem to be self-evident if we

consider the organism, namely, an individual who in effect is indeed there - what is inside, is what is in his sack of skin, and what is outside, is all the rest. That from there the step should be taken that what he represents to himself about this outside ought also to be inside the sack of skin is something that, in a first approach, appears a modest, self-evident, step. It is exactly on this after all that there is (232) based the articulation of Bishop Berkeley. After all, about what is on the outside, you only know what is in your head and what will consequently under some heading always be representation. Whatever you may put forward about this world, I can always point out that it comes from the way you represent it to yourself. It is really very curious that such an image was able to take on, at a moment in history, a dominant character. To the point that a discourse was able to be based on it that effectively, in a certain context, that of a representation that is designed to sustain this idea of representation, could not be refuted. I would like to imagine this representation that allows there to be given to representation this advantage in which there consists, when all is said and done, the secret knot of what is called idealism.

It is certainly quite striking that by simply approaching it in the way that I do, its canvas, as one might say, vacillates. If it is so simple, how were people even able to consider it? And to give body to this vacillation, I am going to do something that is of course required, namely, show how this mirage-representation is constructed. It is the simplest thing there is. There is no need even to have recourse to something that is all the same rather striking, Aristotle's text in his little treatise on *Sense and sensibilia*, to notice the style with which he tackles what is involved in sight, in the eye. What he says about it, where he tackles it from, the way in which he intends to account for the fact of vision, is something that just by itself makes us notice that he is lacking in a striking way what is unquestioned for us. Namely, the most elementary apparatus of optics. This is the time to say what an advantage it would be for a study to be made of the point that ancient science was at about optics, properly speaking. This science went very far, much further even than is believed, in all sorts of mechanical views. But it seems in effect that, on the proper point of optics, it presented a remarkable blank. In this model which gives its status at that time to representation in which the kernel of idealism was crystallised, the very simple model is that of the dark room. Namely, a closed space protected from all light, in which only a little hole opens up to the outside world. If this outside world is illuminated, its image is depicted and

moves around, according to what is happening outside, on the inner wall of the dark room.

It is extremely striking to see that at a certain detour of science, and it is not for nothing that it is Newton's, who as you know was just as inaugurating and brilliant as regards optics as he had been as regards the law of gravitation. It is not for nothing at this turning point that I will recall that what earned him the praise of his time, was very exactly to have been able for – this was articulated by the best minds – the plans of God that he found himself deciphering. This to confirm the remark that I was making earlier about the theological envelope of the first steps of our science. Optics is therefore essential to this (233) imagination of the subject as something in an inside. A singular thing, it seems to be admitted from the place of this little hole on which the site of the image depends. It is enough because this little hole, this place is indifferent. An image will always be produced, in effect, in the dark room opposite the little hole. The difference of the place of the little hole does not appear to give rise to a question about the fact that one only sees the world from the side that the little hole is turned towards. It seems to be implied in this function of the subject modelled on the dark room that, in the room, this apparatus of the little hole should be compatible with the fact that, from what is outside and is only an image since it can no longer be expressed except as an image inside, outside in a space that nothing limits, in principle, everything can come to take up a place within the room. It is nevertheless manifest that if the little holes were multiplied, there would no longer be any image anywhere.

Nevertheless we are not going to insist too heavily on this question, this is not what is important to us. It is simply to remark that here, and here alone, is the support for the fact that what concerns the psyche is to be situated in an inside limited by a surface. A surface, of course, we are told, is already something in Freud's text. It is a surface turned towards the outside and it is on this surface that we henceforth localise the subject. It is, as they say, defenceless with respect to what is inside which is not of course simply representations but also, since the representations cannot be put elsewhere, at the same time one puts all the rest there, namely, what is called differently, confusedly, affects, instincts, drives. All of that is inside.

What reason is there, to know the relationship of a reality with its locus, whether it is inside or indeed outside. It would be well first of all to question oneself about what it becomes *qua* reality and perhaps for that to detach oneself from this fascinating virtue that there is in the fact that we can only conceive the representation of a living being inside its body. Let us go out of it a moment and let us pose the question of what is happening in the inside and the outside when it is a commodity that is at stake for example. The nature of commodity has been sufficiently illuminated for us for us to know that it is distinguished between use value and exchange value. Exchange value is, all the same, what functions outside. But let us put this commodity in a warehouse. That must also exist. A warehouse is an inside. That is where it is kept, that it is preserved. The barrels of oil, when they are outside, are exchanged and then consumed, use value. It is rather curious that it is when they are inside that they are reduced to their exchange value. In a warehouse, by definition, one is not there to break them up or to consume them; they are kept. The use value on the (234) inside, where one might expect it, is precisely prohibited, and it only subsists there by its exchange value. Where things are more enigmatic, is when it is no longer commodity that is at stake but the fetish *par excellence* of money. In that case, this thing which has no use value, which has only exchange value, what value does it preserve when it is in a safe? It is nevertheless quite clear that it is put there and that it is kept there. What is this inside that seems to make what is locked up in it completely enigmatic? Is it not in its way, with respect to what constitutes the money, is it not an inside that is altogether outside, outside of what constitutes the essence of the money?

The only interest of these remarks is to introduce what is involved in thinking which also has something to do with exchange value, in other words, circulates. This simple remark should suffice to mark the timeliness of the question for those who have not yet understood that a thinking cannot be properly speaking conceived of unless it is articulated, unless it is inscribed in language, unless it can be sustained in conditions that are called dialectic. This means a certain operation of logic, with rules, and of knowing then if there is any way of us not questioning ourselves in exactly the same way as we were doing a moment ago for the money placed in a safe. What is meant by a thinking when one keeps it to oneself? And if one does not know what it is when one keeps it to oneself, it is all the same because its essence must be elsewhere, namely, already outside, without one needing to make a projection to say that thinking

is involved. In other words, something must be noticed that perhaps did not appear right away to everyone. This is that what is convincing in Berkeley's argument, what gives it its force, is perhaps indeed this intuition grounded on a model, I cannot have representation elsewhere. But the important thing in the affair is not that, namely, that we allow ourselves to be caught by another image, and one particularly dependent on a certain state of technique. The fact is that effectively his argumentation is irrefutable. In order for idealism to hold up, there must be not simply Bishop Berkeley but some other people with whom, on this subject of whether we only have an apprehension of the world that the philosophical limits of idealism defines. It is in the measure that one cannot get out of it, that, in the discourse, one has nothing to retort to it that it is irrefutable.

(235) So then on the subject of idealism/realism, there are quite obviously those who are right and those who are wrong. Those who are right are in the real, I am speaking from the realists' point of view; and those who are wrong, where are they? This should also be inscribed in the schema. The important thing is the fact that in the debate, the articulated discussion, Berkeley, at the point that he is at in the philosophical discussion of his epoch, is right, even though, of course, he is clearly wrong.

This is precisely what proves that the first outline of the field of objectivity grounded on the darkroom is false. But then is it necessary or not to substitute another one for it? And how can it be done? What becomes of inside and outside? And if what we are forced to redraw to find ourselves on this limit, on this middle line between the symbolic and the imaginary that a minimum of support, of intuitive support, for our cogitations, demands does this not involve us having, in analytic intervention, to radically abandon these terms of projection and introjection, as we constantly use them without contributing in the slightest to the schema that, in order to designate it, we will call Berkeleyan, the one marked by this little ring on top. This is the darkroom, in which I put the subject of representation with a real outside that is distinguished simply as being, as if it were self-evident, everything that is there outside. It is the real.

Probably another very unfortunate apprehension of things, because it does not distinguish in everything that is constructed outside different orders of the real. To pose the question simply of what this building, this house owes to an order that is not at all necessarily the real, because we made it, is something it would be well to put in place if we have to intervene in a field that is not at all the one that has been said to be that of elementary, organic, carnal, facts, biological pressures but of something that is called the unconscious. And that by being simply articulated as being of the order of thinking, does not escape from the fact that it is articulated in language terms. The radical character of what is at the foundation not of what I teach but of what I have only to recognise in our daily practice and in Freud's texts, poses the question of what is involved in the inside and the outside, and the way in which we can and ought to conceive of what corresponds to the facts always so awkwardly handled in the terms introjection and projection. To the point that Freud dares, it has to be said, at the origin of the definition of the Ego, to articulate things in these terms. Namely, that starting from a certain state of confusion (236) with the world the psyche is separated out into an inside and an outside. In his discourse, nothing is distinguished about what is involved in this outside, namely, whether it can be identified to what in this representation in common opinion, whether this outside can be identified to this indeterminate space. And this inside to something that we will hold henceforth to ground a rule of the organism all of whose components we are going to find inside.

It is quite clear that one can already take a step, in demonstrating how unthinkable the schema of the darkroom is. There is no need to go back to Aristotle to see that because he does not refer himself to the dark room, the questions are completely different to the ones that are posed to us and render properly speaking unthinkable the whole conception, let us say, of the nervous system. Read this text, it is piquant, this text with which there begin some chapters of a little treatise that he calls *Sense and sensibilia*. He already touches on the problem, namely, this something that is going to give rise to so many developments subsequently, namely, that there is something in vision that opens out to reflection. He approaches the "seeing oneself seeing" of Valéry in the drollest way in the fact that when one puts pressure on an eye, this gives rise to something, it gives rise to phosphenes, namely, something that is like light. It is only there that he finds himself able to apprehend that this eye that sees, also sees itself in a way, since it produces light if you press on it. Many other things are

piquant, and the formulae that he ends up with, make the dimension of the diaphanous essential to things. This accounts for the fact that the eye sees from the fact, and uniquely from the fact that, in this order of the diaphanous, it represents a particularly qualified system. Namely, that far from us having something that in any way resembles an inside and an outside, it is in so far, as one might say, as the eye shares a quality that we would describe as visionary (*visionnaire*) that the eye sees. It is not so stupid. It is a certain way, on this occasion, of plunging the subject into the world.

The question has become a little bit different. In truth, the people that Aristotle had to fight with, namely, a thousand other theories stated at his time, all of which moreover, from some point of view, share in something that we have no difficulty in finding in our images, including projection. Because, I ask you, what does this term projection presuppose, when it is a matter no longer of what sees itself but of the imaginary, if not that we suppose, with regard to a certain affective configuration, the one around which, at a particular moment, at a particular date, we suppose the patient-subject modifies the world. What is this projection if not the supposition of the fact that it is from inside that there begins the luminous pencil that is going to paint the (237) world, just as in ancient times, there were certain people who imagined these rays that, starting from the eye, went on in effect to illuminate the world and objects for us, however enigmatic this radiation of vision was. But we can, we prove it in our metaphors, be still at this point. And when you refer to this Aristotelian text, it is not the least brilliant aspect of what he shows us, that one can put one's finger on in a way, not so much what he constructs himself but everything that he refers to. Empedocles, notably, who makes the eye share in the function of fire, to which he himself retorts by an appeal to the element of water. Incidentally, what is annoying, is that there are only four elements, and since there are five senses, it is hard to see how the link can be made; he says it quite literally. He gets out of it at the end by unifying taste and touch as equally referring to earth, but let us not amuse ourselves any longer, moreover these things have nothing especially comical about them, there are rather exemplary. What appears in a way, in reading these texts, is this something that, for us, localises this field of vision by revivifying it, as I might say, with what we have put into it, thanks to perversion, with the desire that is put into it. One can see this, by simply allowing oneself, as one might say to be impregnated by what animates these texts which, however futile they may appear to us, were nevertheless not produced by

stupid people. The mainspring of why they could be said in this way is in a way suggested to us, provided we have done some exercises in what is involved in the visual field in terms of the function of the **o**-object.

The **o**-object in the visual field, as regards the objective structure, falls under the jurisdiction of the function of this third term. And it is striking that the ancients literally do not know what to make of it, miss out on it, even though it is the crudest thing there is. They too found themselves between the two, sensation, namely the subject, and then the world that is sensed. They have to shake themselves, as one might say, to bring into play as third term, quite simply light, the luminous focus in so far as its rays are what are reflected on the object and which, for ourselves, come to form an image inside the darkroom. And then? Then we have this marvellous stupidity of the conscious synthesis which is somewhere, and, it appears, particularly easily thinkable uniquely from the fact that we can lodge it in a cortical fold. And why would the image in the cortical fold become something synthesising, all of a sudden, just because it is in a cortical fold rather than on the retina? The concept of the **o**-object is sufficiently indicated to us by the very hesitations that are outlined throughout tradition and which ensured in effect that they grasped very well that the solution of the problem of vision is not at all simply light. Light is a condition, of course; for one to see something there must be daylight; but how does (238) this explain the fact that one sees?

The **o**-object, in what concerns the scotophilic field, if we try to express it at the level of sensibility (*esthésie*), is very exactly what you like, this white or this black, this something lacking behind the image, as one might say, and that we put so easily, by a purely verbal (*logomachique*) effect of synthesis, somewhere in a cortical fold? It is very precisely in so far as something is lacking in what is given as an image of it, that there is the mainspring of which there is only one solution, that, like the **o**-object, it is precisely *qua* lack and, if you wish, *qua* stain. The definition of the stain, is precisely what, in the field, is distinguished as the hole, as an absence. And we know precisely from zoology that the first appearance of this thing that astonishes us, which is so well constructed as a little optical apparatus, and that is called an eye, begins in lamellar beings as a stain. Will we make of this stain purely and simply an effect, because light produces stains? This is something certain. We are not at that point.

To put the stain as essential and structuring as a place of lack in all vision, to put the stain at the place of the third term of the objectified fields, to put the stain at the place of light as the Ancients could not prevent themselves from doing – and this was their nonsense – here is something that is no longer nonsense. If we see that this effective metaphor, the metaphor of the point denied in the field of vision, as being at the source of what constitutes not its deployment more or less as a mirage but what attaches the subject, in so far as this subject is something whose knowledge is entirely determined by another more radical, more essential lack. This is the one that concerns it *qua* sexed individual, this is what shows how the field of vision is inserted into desire. And after all why is there no means of admitting that what ensures that there is sight, contemplation, all these relationships that have a hold on the speaking being, that all of this only really takes on its attachment, its root, at the very level of that which, by being a stain in this field, can succeed in filling, in completing what is involved in the lack. Of the lack itself perfectly articulated and articulated as lack, namely, the only term thanks to which the speaking being can find its bearings with respect to what is involved in its sexual belonging.

It is at the level of this *o*-object that there can be conceived this articulated division of the subject into a subject who is wrong because he is in the truth – this is Bishop Berkeley – and another subject who, putting in doubt that thinking is worth anything, in reality proves the fact that thinking is of itself censorship. And that what is important, is to situate the look *qua* subjective, because it does not see. This is how it can be thought that thinking itself is based on the fact that it is (239) censorship and on this alone. It is this that allows it to articulate itself metaphorically as creating a stain in logical discourse.

What I want to say today at the end of this long articulation - at least I can begin it - is the following. We had remained at the level of perversion founded on a different way of inscribing this outside. This outside, for us, is not a space open to infinity where we put anything whatsoever under the name of real. What we have to deal with, is this Other, which has its status as such. It is certainly not only from the efforts of psychoanalysts that we can articulate this status today as presenting itself to be explored by a simply logical questioning, as marked by a flaw. Which in the schema here, presents the big Other, the sign as giving the term of what is posited at the level

of enunciating, of desiring enunciating. The fact is that the response that it gives is very exactly the flaw that this desire represents.

After all, it is not for nothing that these terms are manifested by little letters, by an algebra. What is proper to an algebra is to be able to have different interpretations. $S(\emptyset)$ can mean all sorts of things, up to and including the function of the death of the father. But at a radical level, at the level of bringing logic into our experience, $S(\emptyset)$ is exactly, if it is somewhere and can be fully articulated, what is called structure. If one can in any term qualify as structuralism – and you know the reservations I have about this philosophical label – it is in so far as the relationship between what allows there to be edified a rigorous logic and what on the other hand is shown to us in the unconscious by certain irreducible faults of articulation from which proceeds this very effort that bears witness to the desire to know. As I told you, what I defined as perversion, is in some way the primary restoration, the restitution, of the **o**, to this field of **O**. This is made possible because this **o** is an effect of the grasping of something primitive, primordial. (240) And why would we not admit it, on condition of not making a subject of it. It is in the measure that this animal being that we were taking earlier at the level of its sack of skin is caught up in language that something in it is determined as **o**, this **o** given over to the Other, as one might say. That indeed is why the other day, in introducing the pervert before you, I compared him to the man of faith, indeed ironically to a crusader; he gives to God his veritable plenitude.

Allow me to end on some rather humorous word play. If it is true that the pervert is the structure of the subject for whom the castration reference, the fact that the woman is distinguished by the fact that she does not have the phallus, that this if filled, masked, completed, by the mysterious operation of the **o**-object, is it not here that there is articulated this formula that I once put forward once. That this way of warding off the radical gap in the order of the signifier that the recourse to castration represents, warding it off is the basis and the principle of the perverse structure. And providing something that completes, that replaces the phallic lack, in providing this Other, in so far as he is asexual, is this not what one day, before you, I designated by the term *l'hommell*. This is a reference that, as regards the basis of a certain outside with regard to the operation of the unconscious, will render you some service by this pinpointing, even though it appears to be simply picturesque.

But to leave you and moreover because today, as usual, I was not able to go through, as usual, as much of the field as I wanted to open up for you. Because this is what leads from perversion to phobia, by seeing in it the intermediary that is going to finally allow you to situate the neurotic authentically and what is involved at his level by inside and outside. If we write this *hommelle*, by modifying the term which is here, S(O), by modifying it in this sense that it is an unfailing O, that this O of a signifier of O, that is at stake, and which gives the key to perversion, is it not – I will show you more in our next meeting – is it not inversely at the level of the signified s(O) of the flaw, that the division of this O is brought to bear in the neurotic? This is of great interest in topological organisation. Because it also shows that it is at the level of the statement that the text of the neurotic symptom is articulated. Namely, that this is how it is explained that it is between the field of the ego as it is organised in a specular way and that of desire in so far as it is articulated with respect to the field dominated by the *o*-object that the fate of the neurosis is played out.

This is what we will see better the next time when, founded on the old graphs, I will be able to show you the place taken in the operation of neurosis – I will take it up first of all in the phobia, taking up again everything that I already articulated in connection with little Hans and which was, I noticed, rather inadequately transmitted in the accounts (241) that were given of it.... So then, but if this signified of O *qua* barred, *qua* marked by its logical failure, if it comes to signify itself fully in the neurotic, this is indeed also what enlightens us about the way in which the experience of the neurotic was inaugural. He does not mask what is involved in terms of conflictual articulation at the level of logic itself. That because thinking falters in its own place of well regulated game, this is what gives its true import to the distance that the neurotic himself takes from it in his own experience. And in a word and to end on this wordplay that I announced to you, what is astonishing, if we amuse ourselves with the word *hommelle*, on the stage beneath to transform it into *famil*. The games and the encounters the state of the tongue allows, is this *famil* not truly something that appears to show us, like a sort of flash between two doors, what is involved in the metaphorical function of the family itself?

If for the pervert, it is necessary that there should be an uncastrated woman, or more exactly if he makes her so and *hommelle*, can it not be noted at the horizon of the field of neurosis that this “He” somewhere, of which the “I” is truly what is at stake in what is involved in the family drama, it is this \circ -object *qua* liberated. It is what poses all the problems of identification. It is with it that it is necessary, at the level of neurosis, to finish off, so that the structure of what it is a matter of resolving, namely mere structure, the signifier of \emptyset , is revealed.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 7 May 1969

Anxiety, as I once said, is not without an object. This means that this something called objective, starting from a certain conception of the subject, that there is something analogous corresponding to anxiety, something – this is how it is expressed in psychoanalysis – of which anxiety is the signal in the subject. This is the sense of this “not without” in the formula which unveils nothing other than that this term, this something analogous to the object, is not missing. But this “not without” does not designate it; it simply presupposes the support of the fact of the lack. Now any evocation of lack supposes an established symbolic order, more than simply a law, an accumulation, and again a numbered, ordered one, as I underlined at the time.

If we define the real as a sort of thought abolition (*abolition pensée*) of symbolic material, nothing can ever be lacking. The animal, any one whatsoever, that dies because of a succession of perfectly adapted physiological effects, and the fact of calling that the effects of hunger, for example, is completely ruled out; it is the end of the organism *qua* soma. It lacks nothing. It has enough resources within the perimeter of its organism to measure what is described as its mortal reduction. The

cadaver is also a real. It is through the effects by which the organism subsists that we are forced to conceive the imaginary. Something indicates to it that a particular element from the outside, from the milieu, from the *Umwelt* as they say, can be absorbed or more generally is favourable for its preservation. This means that the *Umwelt* is a sort of halo, a double of the organism, and that is all. That is what is called the imaginary. A whole order of the *Umwelt* can be described certainly in terms of adequation; without this the organism would not subsist for an instant. The category of the imaginary implies in itself that this *Umwelt* is capable of failing. But here also, this failure is not a lack of anything. It is the beginning of a succession of effects through which the organism is reduced, like earlier, carrying its *Umwelt* with it. It dies with its mirage which can very well be what is called, it is hard to say why, an epiphenomenon of this hunger that I evoked earlier.

So then up to this everything is reduced to a different level of the structuring of the real. For the fact of lack to appear, it is necessary that it should be said somewhere “it does not add up”. For something to be lacking, things must be counted. Once there is something counted, there are also the effects of counting on the order of the image. These are the first steps of *episteme*, of science. The first (244) copulations of the act of counting with the image, is the recognition of a certain number of harmonies, musical ones for example. They give the type of it. This can be noted from lacks that have nothing to do with what, in harmony, are simply posed as intervals. There are places where there is no counting. The whole science that we describe as ancient consists in wagering that these places where there was no counting would be reduced one day in the eyes of the wise man, to the constitutive intervals of musical harmony.

It is a matter of establishing an order of the Other thanks to which the real takes on the status of world, cosmos, implying this harmony. Things were done in this way once there were in the world, in this world of adventure and of concreteness called historical, emporiums, shops where everything is properly arranged. The emporiums and the empires that exist for some time, we are not the ones who invented them, are the same thing. It is the lining and the support of this conception of ancient science that is based, in short, on the fact that was accepted for a long time, that knowledge and power are the same thing. Because the one who knows how to count can divide up, he distributes, and by definition the one who distributes is just. All empires are

just. If some doubt has been cast on this recently, there must be a reason for it. The horizon of what is happening here – and this is the excuse for this public discourse, for this something that I continue despite the fact that in principle it is only addressed to psychoanalysts – is something the times bear witness to, something that the wise men do not want to see, something that is already no longer a prodrome but an open tear. That fact is that a discordance has exploded between knowledge and power. It is a matter - it is interesting, in order quite simply for things not to delay any longer in this discordance, with all that it involves in terms of strange stammerings, of restatements, of absurd collisions - it is a matter of defining how this disjunction operates and to name it as such. So that people do not think it can be warded off in some episodic fashion or other by changing whoever is in power. To say that everything is all right because it is those who up to now were oppressed who are now going to exercise it, for example.

Not of course that I am personally setting aside in any way the possibility of this happening. But it seems sure to me that it only has meaning in as much as it is inscribed in what I have just called the essential change of course, the only one that is of a nature to change the sense of everything that is organised as presumed empire, even if it were knowledge itself, namely, this disjunction between knowledge and power. This formula which has only a crude value, which does not lead properly speaking to anything, which does not consist in any *Weltanschauung*, a utopian presumption or not of a mutation pushed by something or other, ought to be articulated. And it can be, not by reason of the fact that Freud allows it to be grasped, renewing in a (245) system that is in any way comparable to the one that wanted the myth of the conjunction of knowledge and power to perdure. But Freud here is himself much more the patient, the one who, by his word, the word of a patient, testifies to what I am inscribing here under this title, the disjunction between knowledge and power. He does not testify to it alone. He reads it in the symptoms that are produced at a certain level of the subjective. And he tries to ward it off, precisely where it can be read that he himself as well as them, those who testify in their particularity to this disjunction of knowledge and power, he is like them a patient of this effort, of this work, of the testimony given at one point of the effects that I am entitling the disjunction of knowledge and power.

This is how, at the point that I myself am only following this discourse, that in my very discourse I bear witness to what the testing of this conjunction leads to. Namely, to nothing that apparently completes it nor permits it to be hoped that it will ever be reduced to a norm, to a cosmos. This is the sense of what I am trying to pursue before you in terms of a discourse that Freud inaugurated. That is why I began by a careful reading of what this discourse bears witness to, and not simply in its mastery, because very precisely it is in its inadequacies that it is more instructive.

I re-read the seminar that I gave in 1956-57, a derisory distance of 13 years that, all the same, allows me to measure something of the path that has been taken, by whom? By what? By my discourse on the one hand and then, on the other hand, by a sort of obviousness, a manifestation of a tearing apart that this discourse designates. This, of course, owes nothing to this discourse itself but thanks to it perhaps testimony can be given that there is a discourse that I would not say of course is up to date, let us say is not trailing too far behind what has been produced. This having been said, by reason of the laws that pass as the reigning ones, those described as being of the status of the university, it is necessary in effect that this discourse should not simply be trailing behind but should always be forced to correct itself in principle as *nachträglich*, subsequently. This by reason of the fact that nothing registers it in a renewal of form like the one where there subsists what is involved in terms of major steps taken for some time in knowledge and in such a way that it is marked as an interring disconnected from any effect of power.

We will start again then at the source and this term of *o*-object that I produced, which was not there in 1956-57 while I was trying to work things out. If this were now published beyond the summary, moreover not so badly done, presented in the *Bulletin de Psychologie* under the heading of *Object relations and Freudian structures*, it could, if it could be done, follow the very text of what throughout more than a trimester I followed the scent of. This text just by itself, so confusing because it is like a labyrinth, attesting to a sort of spelling out, stammering, turning in circles, and in truth, whose outcome, apart from (246) the fact that little Hans is no longer afraid of horses, and so what? Is the interest of such a research to ensure that one or a thousand little boys are freed from something embarrassing that is called a phobia? Experience proves that phobias do not take any longer to cure spontaneously than

with an investigation like the one involved on this occasion, that of his father, a pupil of Freud's and Freud himself. What at that epoch, 13 years ago, I had to underline, I had to spell out, is the real import of what is at stake, in terms of the study of a frontier, of a limit of what is played out at every instant - it goes well beyond the case - the frontier, the limit between the imaginary and the symbolic. And it is here that everything is played out. I will come back to it perhaps to add a few strokes in the course of what I say today.

But let us start again from the point where we have to fix what is involved in the operation of three orders, the real, the symbolic and the imaginary. What is really at stake, this turning point at which we are all patients, whatever may be the misadventures and symptoms of each one of us. Namely, what I am designating as a certain disconnection between knowledge and power. Let us posit somewhere at a point – let us be crude, let us be summary – what I earlier called the real. It is quite obvious that as I described it, it is involved. I have not yet gone to see it but there is, it appears, a film by Louis Malle on Calcutta. In it you see a great number of people dying of hunger. That is what the real is. Where people are dying of hunger, they die of hunger. There is nothing lacking. Why do people start talking about lack? Because they formed part of an empire. Otherwise, it appears, there would not even be a Calcutta. Because it appears – I am not enough of a historian to know but I accept it because we are told that – without the requirements of this Empire there would have been no conurbation in this place. Modern empires allow their dimension of lack to manifest itself precisely in the fact that knowledge achieved a certain growth in them, no doubt a disproportionate one, with respect to the effects of power. The modern empire has also this property that everywhere it stretches its wings, this disconnection also appears. And it is uniquely in the name of this that one can make of the famine in India a motive to incite us to a subversion or a universal revision of something, the Real!

In what concerned the symbolic, it must be counted as at least 1. For a long time, people believed that counting could be reduced to the One. To the One of God – there is only one – to the One of the Empire, to the One of Proclus, to the One of Plotinus. That is why there is nothing excessive in our symbolising the field of the symbolic here by this 1. What has to be grasped, is that of course, this 1 that is not simple and

which – that was where the progress took place – people noticed, functioned as a numerical 1, namely, generated an infinity of (247) successors, on condition that there was a zero. This to give an example of the symbolic by one of the systems that are currently best established, it must be emphasised here. The fact is that this counting, whatever it is, at whatever level of structure we may place it in the symbolic, has its effects on the imaginary. And what is established, what is organised in my discourse, for those who follow it by experiencing it, is that these effects of symbolic counting, in the order of the imaginary that we recalled earlier, namely, in the fact that the imaginary is the order through which the real of an organism, namely, a quite established real is completed by an *Umwelt*, counting has, at the level of the imaginary, the effect of making appear in it what I call the **o**-object.

Now in the human being - and without this making of him a particular exception in the domain of living beings - one image plays a privileged role, as in many other animals. It is the one that is at the source of this dimension that we call narcissism, it is the specular image. We know that this is not limited to men, that among many other animals, at certain levels of their behaviour, of what is called ethology, animal behaviour, images of an apparently equivalent structure, privileged in the same way, exercise a decisive function on the organism. Everything that is observed, articulated by psychoanalysis as a phase in the relationships between $i(o)$ and this **o**-object, this is the key point that for us is of primary interest, $r: i(o)/\mathbf{o}$, to estimate at its value as a model everything that psychoanalysis gives us at the level of symptoms. This in function of what is involved, as is obvious in our epoch, about the effects of disconnection between knowledge and power.

I therefore first defined the **o**-object as essentially founded on the effects of what happens in the field of the Other, in the symbolic field, in the field of arranging, in the field of order, in the field of the dream of unity, on these malicious effects in the field of the imaginary. Note that this implies the very structure of the field of the Other as such, as I tried, thanks to a schema, to make you sense in more than one of my previous lectures this year. What is indicated here as effect in the field of the imaginary, is nothing other than the fact that this field of the Other is, as I might say, in the form of **o**. In this field, this is inscribed in a topology that, to image, because of course this is only an intuitive (248) image, presents itself as holding it.

The following step, the one that I made by stating in a way that after all is striking in that when I say things like that, they get across, like slicing butter – which obviously proves that the analysts have not a very sure idea of what they can hold onto in such a field – I said something simple. Namely, that to bring back these effects of the *o* in the imaginary to the Other, the field that they start from, to render to Caesar as I might say the things that are Caesar's - as was said one day as you know by a little imp, because he was that, the blackguard - was the essence of perversion, to render *o* to the one from whom it comes, the big Other. It is of course a rather apologetic way of presenting things. What has to be known, is what one can draw from it. If effectively something that is the subject, from some quarter, because an effect of the symbolic on the field of the imaginary we can consider still problematic, what place is it going to take? But that touches the subject, we can have no doubt about it, we who make of the subject something that is only inscribed from an articulation of one foot inside and another outside the field of the Other.

Let us try to recognise this aspect of what is at stake about the subject. It is of interest, it is important here to recognise what is involved in a term that Freud put forward, the one that before me had begun to take the dimensions of a certain room whose blackness is much less easy to calibrate than the one that I evoked the last time, the one that served for two centuries in the name of an optical model. That he should have done the circuit several times and given different names to the same things that he found himself discovering after his periplus should not surprise us. Freud spoke a lot about love, keeping the appropriate distance. It is not because this has gone to the heads of those who followed him that we do not have to put things back at the level at which he started them. At the level of love, he distinguished the anaclitic relation and the narcissistic relation. Since it happens that in other places he opposed object cathexis to that of the body, described as narcissistic on this occasion, people thought they could build on this some type of communicating vases or other thanks to which it is object cathexis that, just by itself, proved that one had got out of oneself, that one had brought the libidinal substance to bear where it should be. It is on this that there reposes this lucubration which that I went through that year, because it was still lively, on object relations, with the whole myth of the so-called oblativ stage, also qualified as genital. It seems to me that what Freud articulates about the anaclitic, about the

support taken in the Other, with what it implies about the development of a sort of mythology of dependency, as if this were what was at stake, that the anaclitic takes on its status, its true relationship by defining properly (249) what I am situating in fundamental structure of perversion. Namely, this operation through which the status of the Other is assured by being covered, by being filled, by being masked by a certain operation described as perverse, from the operation of \mathfrak{o} and which by this fact makes a stage of it, by taking – I am saying discursively if we want to give a logical approximation to what is in operation in all sorts of effects that interest us – the anaclitic relation here as being primary. And moreover this is the only foundation by which there can be justified a whole series of supposedly significant clouds through which the child is supposed to long for his paradise in some maternal physiological environment that, properly speaking, never existed in this ideal form. It is only essentially as an operation of this object definable as an effect of the symbolic in the imaginary, as the operation of this imaginary with regard to something that can claim, under some heading, for a while – and in this respect the mother can play this role just as well as anything else whatsoever, the father, an institution, even a desert island. It is as the operation of \mathfrak{o} , as mask, what I called this structure that is the same thing as this \mathfrak{o} , the in-form of \mathfrak{o} of the Other, it is uniquely in this formula that there can be grasped what one can call the effect of masking, the effect of blinding, that is precisely how the whole anaclitic relation is fulfilled.

To express things in this form, the important thing is not what it says because, as you can grasp, it is not easy to get into, precisely on the plane of what is called imagination. Because living imagination, the one from which we take, pick up what we avidly call varyingly pleasant meanings, depends on a completely different sort of image, and one much less obscure, the specular image. Much less obscure especially since our mirrors have become clear. We will never know, unless we reflect a little bit on it, what we owe to the emergence of clear mirrors. Every time that, in Antiquity, and this continues of course in the time of the Fathers of the Church, you see something indicated as being in a mirror that means something completely different to what it is for us. Their mirrors, because they were polished metal, gave much more obscure effects, this is perhaps what allowed there to subsist for such a long time a specular vision of the world. The world might well appear obscure to them, as for us, but this went along quite well with what was seen in the mirror. That

was able to make the idea of a cosmos last for a rather long time, it was enough simply to perfect mirrors. It is because we have done so, along with other things, the elucidation of the symbolic, precisely, that things appear less simple to us.

Let us note that in this we have not yet advanced very far but, since it is knowledge that is at stake, let us observe that the order of satisfaction rendered to the Other, by way of this inclusion of the \mathfrak{o} , the (250) novelty, the one that analytic experience allows us to envisage

It is very precisely this that, whoever he may be, the one that finds himself in the role, in the position of functioning as this Other, from all time, as long as he has been functioning, never knew anything about what was happening there. This is what I allow myself to articulate under some heading here and there, by posing insidious questions to theologians, of the type as to whether, for example, it is all that sure that God believes in God. If the question introduced as fundamental in any psychoanalytic approach is thinkable – I believe I formulated it along the line of something that, like all prodromes, had begun to be outlined at a certain philosophical turning point – the fact is that the interesting thing, in an altogether living fashion, and this in the measure that the impasses in which knowledge corners us progresses, is not to know what the Other knows. It is to know what he wants. Namely, with his form, his form in-form of \mathfrak{o} (*en-forme de a*), which is outlined quite differently than in a mirror. But in an exploration of perversion that has, moreover, scarcely been touched on, which makes us say that this topology that is outlined, and that the advance of knowledge specifies at many other levels than that of pathological experiences, means what? Where does it lead? It is not moreover quite the same thing. The question is still being studied. If one imagines that even as regards perversions, psychoanalysis closes the circle, that it has found the last word, even by using the \mathfrak{o} -object relation in a more applied way than I can do here, one would be wrong.

The important thing, is to take up, under the heading of symptoms that in a way enlighten us about what is involved in the relationships of the subject to the Other, ancient themes which are not the same at different epochs. And if I have not been able to make room here for Angelus Silesius of the *Cherubinic Pilgrim* whom I made such use of at one time in those lost years - and I do not know whether one day someone will be able to measure out the journey along which I brought to light the

precarious sequence of this discourse - whom I made such use of, it is in the light of this relation that I define as anaclitic that there can be taken up the demistichs of his Cherubic pilgrim, these distichs cut, balanced in four parts in which there is outlined the proper identity of what appeared most essential for him, what was impossible to grasp otherwise than in terms of the \circ -object and of God himself. Suffice it to note that everything that can be inscribed in function of order, of hierarchy and moreover of division, everything that is of the order of this fact of exchange, of transitivity, of identification itself, all of this depends on the quite different relation that we posit as specular. All of this refers to the status of the body image in so far as it is posited at a radical turning point as linked to this essential thing in the libidinal economy, considered as being the mastery of the motor activity of the body. It is not for nothing that the same consonants are found in the (251) one and the other, mastery of motor activity (*maîtrise motrice*), everything is there. And it is through this that witness is born on every occasion to what is called good behaviour. Thanks to this mastery of motor activity, the organism qualified from its relationships to the symbolic, man on this occasion as he is called, moves about without ever leaving an arena that is well defined by the fact that it prohibits a properly central region which is that of enjoyment. It is there that the body image as I organise it from the narcissistic relation takes on its importance.

Consult the schema that I gave under the title of remarks to some propositions of a gentleman whose name will survive thanks to me. You will see there that the relationship that is designated is very properly the following. From the relationship that is established of the subject to the field of the Other, in so far as here I cannot do anything other in an image than something homogeneous to common space, and it is indeed for this reason that I make the Other function there. And why not, because moreover it is not withdrawn from the imaginary, like a mirror. This with the only purpose of being able to posit the second term. The signifier for whom the subject is represented by another signifier, is found there to be highlighted at a place that is none other than the one that I designate here by this enigmatic I [*in French*], from which there is presented the conjunction in another mirror, the conjunction of the \circ and the body image. This precisely designates what happens in phobia.

If we take any observation of phobia whatsoever, provided it is a little bit serious, which is the case, one cannot afford the luxury of publishing an observation in psychoanalysis without a rather complete anamnesis. To take for example in the book by Helene Deutsch on the *Psychoanalysis of the neuroses* the chapters that refer to phobia, what do we see, for example, by taking any of them? She was asked to treat someone because he had at a particular moment a phobia about hens. What do we see? The matter is perfectly articulated, but is only revealed of course, in a second phase of exploration. Namely, that at a time before the emergence of the symptom, hens were certainly not indifferent for him. They were birds that he looked after with his mother and from whom he also collected eggs. We are given all the details, namely, that in the way in effect of all of those who work with these fowl, feeling the cloaca from the outside is enough to see whether the egg is there, and ready to be laid. After that you just have to wait. This indeed is what interested the little the X in question to the highest degree. Namely that when he was being washed by his mother, he asked her to do the same thing to his own perineum. How can one not recognise that at this very place he points to himself as aspiring precisely to furnish the object of what no doubt, for reasons that are not otherwise explored but that are quite tangible there, were the object of a quite particular interest for the mother. The first phase, (252) is quite obviously “since you are interested in eggs I’m going to have to lay some for you”. But moreover it is not for nothing that the egg here takes on all its weight. If it can happen that the o-object is thus involved, it is indeed in this sense that there is what I might call a demographic aspect of the relationships between the subjects which implies that, naturally, what is born is found in place of an egg.

I repeat, I am only evoking this moment in order to give right away the sense of what is going to be at stake when the phobia is unleashed. An older brother, much older in fact, much stronger than him, takes hold of him one day from behind, and this boy who knows perfectly well of course everything that is happening in the farmyard, says to him: “I’m the cock and you’re the hen”. He defends himself and fights back with the greatest energy declaring: “I won’t be the hen!” Note that this “hen” in English, has exactly the same pronunciation with the aspiration as the “n” of the “un” that I spoke to you about earlier. He does not want to be the “hen”. There was already someone called Alain who thought he made a great discovery when he said that to think, is to say no. He says no. Why does he say no when earlier he was so happy

with his mother at being able to be for her, as I might say, an extra hen, a deluxe hen, one that was not in the farmyard, if not because narcissism is involved there. Namely, the rivalry with his brother, the passage, as has been well proved, to a power relation. The other holds him by the waist, by the hips, immobilises him and keeps him in a certain position as long as he wants.

The transfer (*virement*), I am not saying the tacking (*virage*), of what is invested in a certain meaning between one register and the other is the point at which the earlier function comes to grief. There comes to birth the fact that the hen is henceforth going to take on for him a perfectly signifying function, and no longer an imaginary one. Namely, that she frightens him. The passage from the field of anxiety, the one by which I inaugurated my discourse today, namely, that it is not without an object, on condition that one sees that this object is what is involved for the subject in the field of narcissism. It is here that there is unveiled the true function of phobia which is to substitute for the object of anxiety a signifier which is frightening. As compared to the enigma of anxiety, the relation to the danger that is signalled is reassuring. Moreover what this experience shows us, is that on condition that there is produced this passage to the field of the Other, the signifier is presented as what it is with respect to narcissism, namely, devouring. And it is indeed here that there originates the type of prevalence that the oral drive has taken on in the classical theory.

What I wanted to begin today, is properly speaking the following. That it in phobia that we can see not at all something that is a clinical entity but that is in a way a sort of turntable. It is by elucidating its relationships with what it most commonly veers towards, namely, the two great orders of neurosis, hysteria and obsessional neurosis, but also (253) by the junction that it realises with the structure of perversion, that this phobia enlightens us about what is involved in all sorts of consequences that have no need to be limited to a particular subject to be perfectly perceptible. Because it is not a matter of something that can be isolated from the clinical point of view but much more rather a figure clinically illustrated in a brilliant fashion no doubt, but in infinitely diverse contexts. It is from the point of this phobia that we will question again what we started from today, namely, the disjunction between knowledge and power.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 14 May 1969

(255) It is impossible not to consider the incidence of the subject as primary in psychoanalytic practice. It is ceaselessly in the forefront in the way, to listen to him, the psychoanalyst thinks, at least if we keep to what is reported. It is from a particular point defined by what is called an identification that the subject is found to act, for example, to manifest a particular intention. A particular paradoxical behaviour will be stated to come from the fact that he goes back, for example, to himself, and from what point if not from another that he had been taking up. He goes back, to the place of someone to whom he is going to be identified, his first aggression. In short, at every instant the subject presents himself as provided with what is at least a curious autonomy, a mobility, especially, equal to none. Because there is almost no point in the world of his partners, whether or not they are considered as his fellows, that he cannot occupy, at least, I repeat, in a thinking that tends to account for a particular paradox in his behaviour. Let us say that the subject – and here there is no place, in this literature, to contest the legitimacy of this term – the subject is moreover absolutely not criticised. At the end in fact there are produced these singular statements that go as far as to talk about choice of neurosis, as if at one moment it was to some privileged point or other of this pulverised subject that the switching of points was reserved.

Naturally, it can be admitted that, in a first phase of analytic research, we were not in any way in a phase when there could be articulated in any kind of logical way what might be involved, in effect, in what presents itself as being apparently altogether determining at the beginning of an anamnesis, in a certain way of reacting to trauma. It would be enough perhaps to see that this point considered as original, directive in an anamnesis, is a point that was well and truly produced retroactively by the totality of interpretations. I am not talking only about the interpretations that the

psychoanalyst makes, as they say, in his head or when he is writing his observation, but where he has intervened in what links him to the patient. This register, this register of questioning, of suspension of what is involved in the subject, is far from being able in any way to be purely and simply described as a relationship of one power to another, even when subjected to all that can be imagined there about the transference.

(256) That is why it is always essential to take up again the question of structure in psychoanalysis at the level of the subject. It is what constitutes the real progress. It is, of course, the only thing that can make what is improperly called the clinic progress. I hope that no one is deceived and that if, the last time, you were able to take some pleasure in seeing my discourse being illuminated at the end by the evocation of a case, it is not specifically the fact that a case was evoked that constitutes the clinical character of what is stated in this teaching.

Let us take things up then at the point where we can formulate them after having on several occasions, on several occasions, marked how there is formed, from a first and very simple definition, namely, that where we start from is a signifier. This is where we start from, this is where we start from because after all the only element analysis gives us certainty about - and I must say that it gives it its full relief - gives its weight to, is the signifier. If one defines the signifier, *the signifier is what represents the subject for another signifier*. Here is the formula, the originating formula, as I might say, that allows us to situate correctly what is involved in a subject, which we would not in any way be able to handle according to formulae that are apparently those of common sense, of good sense. Namely, that there is indeed some thing that constitutes this identity that differentiates this gentleman here from his neighbour. By being satisfied with this, we find ourselves in fact making every statement, every simple descriptive statement of what effectively happens in the analytic relation look like a puppet show. In it, I repeat, the subject is as mobile as the word itself, the very word of the master of these so-called puppets. Namely, that when he talks in the name of the one that he is holding in his right hand, he cannot at the same time speak in the name of the other one. But he is in fact capable of passing from one to the other with the rapidity that we know.

Here then is something that has already been sufficiently described here for me not to have to redo its whole construction and commentary, the first relationship that moreover is pregnant with all the others, from S_1 to S_2 , from this signifier that represents the subject for another signifier. In the effort that we make to circumscribe what is involved as regards the other of these signifiers, we try, as we have already written, to open up the field in which everything that is second signifier, namely, the body, at the level of which the subject is going to be represented by a signifier, to inscribe at the locus of O, this locus which is the big Other. I think that you sufficiently remember that by writing what is involved in this way, all we can do, at the level of the very inscription of S_2 , is to repeat that for everything that follows, namely, everything that may be inscribed subsequently, we must put the mark of O again as locus of inscription. Namely, to see in short there being hollowed out from what I called the last time the in-form (*l'en-forme*) of this O - a new noun that we are making up for our own (257) use, *the in-form* of O - the **o** that holes it.

Let us pause for a moment at something that I consider as sufficiently understood because of having been - I had some testimony of it - tangible to some people who found some evidence, I mean in clinical work, for this *in-form* of O, a formula designed to show what is really involved in **o**. Namely, the topological structure of O itself, which means that the O is not complete, is not identifiable in any case to a 1, to a whole. In a word that this O is absolutely to be felt, to be represented, as if it were at the level of paradox, the paradox that logicians had good reason for creating, the paradox of the set described as that of all the sets that do not contain themselves. I think that you have already handled this paradox sufficiently. It is quite clear that as regards this set of all the sets that do not contain themselves, we have either one thing or the other. Either it is going to contain itself and that is a contradiction, or it does not contain itself, so then not being one of those that does not contain itself, it contains itself, and we find ourselves before a second contradiction. This is quite simple to resolve: the set of all the sets that do not contain themselves can only in

effect be written as a function in the following form. Namely E, having as a characteristic this x in so far as it is different from x . \

$$E(x \neq x).$$

Now this is where it overlaps our difficulty with the big Other. If the big Other presents this topological character which means that its *in-form* is \mathfrak{o} , and we are going to be able to touch very directly what that means, it is because it is true. It is because it must be posited that, whatever may be the conventional usage that is made of it in mathematics, the signifier cannot in any case be held to be able to designate itself. S_1 or S_2 in themselves are not each, in any way, cannot be, the representative of themselves except by being distinguished from themselves. This alterity of the signifier to itself is properly what is designated by the term of big Other marked by an O. If we inscribe this big Other, marked by an O, if we make of it a signifier, what it designates is the signifier as Other. The first Other there is, the first encountered in the field of the signifier is radically other, namely, other than itself. It introduces the Other as such into its inscription, as separated from this inscription itself.

This O, *qua* exterior to S_2 that inscribes it, is the *in-form* of O, namely, the same thing as \mathfrak{o} . Now this \mathfrak{o} , as we know, is the subject itself in (258) so far as it can only be represented by a representative that is S_1 on this occasion. The first otherness, is that of the signifier which can only express the subject in the form of what we have learned to circumscribe in analytic practice in terms of a particular strangeness. And it is this that I would like, I would say not to open up today because moreover in a seminar that I gave at one time, it was in the year 1961-62, on *Identification*, I laid its foundations. It is these foundations themselves that I am recalling, simply summarised and brought together today, to make you sense something that is not to be taken as given to any analyst, of course, except by analytic experience. He knows what is involved in this \mathfrak{o} as essential to the subject and as marked by this strangeness. Besides I already enumerated these \mathfrak{o} 's long enough ago for it to be well known, from the breast to excrement, from the voice to the look, what is meant in its ambiguity by the word strangeness, with its affective note and also its indication of a topological margin. What is at stake, is to make those who do not have this as a datum of experience sense something or other that can evoke its reasonable place in the reference points of what is considered as practical experience – wrongly, it is no more practical than analytic experience. But let's go! What might be least strange in

appearance could represent the subject for us here. Take it, at the start, as being as undetermined as you wish. What distinguishes the one who is here from the one who is there and who is only his neighbour, of course, we can grasp. We can make a start on it, from something that is supposed to be not strange at all, from a type of quite common material. This is what I did when I was talking about identification, I designated the trace (*trace*). The trace means something, the trace of a hand, the trace of a foot, an imprint. Observe carefully here, at this level, that trace is distinguished from signifier differently to what in our definitions we have already distinguished as sign. The sign, I said, is what represents something for someone. Here there is no need for someone. A track is sufficient in itself. And starting from there are we going to be able to situate what is involved in what I called earlier the essence of the subject?

We can here and now posit that what the trace becomes through metaphor, the sign if you wish, through metaphor also, these words are not in the right place because I have just ruled them out, what a subject signifies *qua* this trace, this sign, contrary to the natural trace has no other support than the *in-form* O. What does that mean? The trace passes on to the *in-form* of O the ways (*façons*) in which it was effaced. The subject is the very ways by which, as imprint, the track finds itself effaced. A witticism that I already pinned to this remark, entitling what could be said about it: the four effacings of the subject (*les quatre effaçons du sujet*). The subject is the one that effaces the trace, by transforming it into look, look to be understood as slit, half glimpse. It is through this that he tackles what is involved in the other who has left the trace. He has passed that way, he is beyond.

(259) It is not enough to say, of course, that a subject as such does not leave a trace. What defines him and at the same time delivers him (*le livre*), is first of all something through which he is effectively distinguished. As compared to any living organism what is involved in the animal that speaks, is that he can efface them, and efface them as such, as being his tracks (*traces*). This is enough for him to be able to make of them something other than tracks, rendezvous' that he gives himself, for example. When Tom Thumb lays a trail of white pebbles, it is something different to a track. You should sense here the difference that is already being outlined in the pack that, in pursuing something, behaves in a particular way, make no mistake about it, but

behaves in a way that is inscribed in the order of smell, of sniffing, as they say. And this is not necessarily foreign to the human animal himself. But this behaviour is different to the scansion of a track that has been mapped out as such on the support of the voice.

Here you are touching the limit. At the level of the pack, who would dare to sustain that their baying covers their tracks? It is all the same already what can be called an outline of the word. But it is distinct, this support of the voice is distinct, this the datum of the voice, where there is language, where there is this support that characterises in an autonomous way a certain type of track. A creature that can read its tracks is able through this to re-inscribe himself elsewhere than where he found them. This re-inscription is the link that makes him henceforth dependent on another whose structure does not depend on him.

Everything opens up to what belongs to the register of the subject defined as “what effaces his tracks”. The subject, at the limit and to make you sense the original dimension of what is at stake, I would call him the one that replaces his tracks by his signature. And you know, a signature, not much is asked to constitute someone as a subject. An illiterate at the *mairie* who does not know how to write, it is enough for him to make a cross, a symbol of the bar barred, of the effaced track, the clearest form of what is at stake. When first you leave a sign and then something cancels it, that is enough as a signature. And the fact that it is the same for whoever is asked for it, changes nothing in the fact that this will be accepted to authenticate the act in question, the presence well and truly of someone who, juridically, is held to be a subject. Nothing more and nothing less but whose level I am trying to define, certainly not to make an absolute of it but precisely to mark its links of dependency. Because the remark begins here. The signifier is born from effaced tracks. What is then the consequence of this? It is that these effaced tracks are only worthwhile through the system of others, whether they are similar or the same. It is only in these others established in a system, that there begins the typical import of language. These effaced tracks are the only ones accepted. Accepted by whom? Well then, here we land on our feet again. In the same way (260) that in the definition of the subject a signifier represents for another signifier, they are the only ones accepted by whom? Answer: By the other traces. A *pa-â-té* does not count, as Bridouin says in *The*

marriage. That indeed is why he takes such an interest in it because for him, Bridoison, who takes tracks seriously, it might count. It is a step taken in haste (*pas hâté*).

So then, if we know that these traces, these traces that are only effaced because they are there, an effaced embossing, these traces that have a different support that is properly the *in-form* of O in so far as it is necessitated by the fact that it makes an O, an O that functions at the level of the subject, we have then to consider them from the level of their substance. This indeed is what constitutes the import of an element like a look, for example, in eroticism and that the question arises, because it is tangible, of the relationship between what is inscribed in the look and the trace. Does an erotic look leave traces where it is inscribed, in the other, namely, in someone else? It is at this level that there is posed, inserted, the dimension of shame. It is demonstrated here in a tangible fashion. Shame is simply a dimension proper to the subject as such.

Will we briefly, at this turn, organise in a way that is a little different to the usual litany, this relation of the signifier to the *in-form* of O? Certainly yes, even though rapidly, to recall that it is not by chance that, at the high point of our contemporary life, writing is affirmed to be a relationship of writing to the look as **o**-object. This alone is what gives its correct status to a grammatology. The look, in all the ambiguity that I already marked earlier in connection with the relationship to the track, the glimpse and, in a word, the cut in what is seen, the thing that opens out beyond the seen. Undoubtedly the accent to be put on writing is capital for a correct evaluation of what is involved in language. And that writing is first and ought to be considered as such with regard to speech, is something after all that can be considered not simply as licit but made obvious by the simple existence of a writing like Chinese where it is clear that what is of the order of apprehension of the look is not unrelated to what is translated into the voice. Namely, that there are phonetic elements, but that there are many also that are not so. This is all the more striking in that, from the point of view of structure, of the strict structure of what is involved in a language, no tongue holds up in a purer fashion than this Chinese tongue where every morphological element is reduced to a phoneme. So then it is there that it would have been most simple, to say that writing is only a transcription of what is stated in words. It is striking to see that, quite the contrary, writing, far from being a transcription, is a

different system, a system to which eventually there is attached what is cut up in a different support, that of the voice.

(261) Undoubtedly, the term cut is what predestines these supports, definable materially as look and voice, what predestines them to this function of being what, replacing the track, establishes this sort of totality from which a topology is constructed as defining the Other, at its term. As you see, only substructural considerations are involved here. Not at all, of course, original ones because, after all, this does not say how this Other began. It says how it holds together when it is there. Where it originated, is indeed something that up to the present is left in parenthesis. A marginal remark, because I continue, after this 1 and 2 concerning look and voice, to say what can come subsequently in an approach taken from this angle. It is not, as you see, immediately in the relationship of the subject to the Other *qua* structured that there comes what is announced now as *demand*.

It is a curious thing that while in the order of the **o**-object the breast and the waste product seem to come in the forefront, to the point almost of leaving in a certain shade, in the most frequent handling of what is at stake in analytic regression, the terms of look and of voice, you see here that we are forced on the contrary to suppose as constructed on the support of look and voice, what is going to be of course an element in the demand. And if we rediscover an **o**-object here, it is for all that an opportunity to highlight that what is demanded is never anything but a place. And it is not for nothing that place evokes this sticking on (*placage*) which is the essence from which we define the breast as analogous to the placenta, in so far as it defines the subjective relationship founded, as it should be established, on the relationships of the child to the mother. The amboceptor role of the breast between the child and the mother is in reality a prevalent role. It is *qua* **o**-object, in so far as he is stuck onto its wall, that the child- subject is articulated, that his message is received from the mother and he is answered. The third term is what one asks for with these signifiers, and you see its link with this other element “**o**”.

Finally, by articulating things from this angle, we will see, we will put our finger on the fact that what is generated, namely, any sense, the signified properly speaking, it is as an effect of a fall from this operation that it is to be situated here. Sense, which

is not simply an effect but a rejected effect, an effect that is carried away, and moreover an effect that accumulates, culture in a word, participates in this something that flows from an economy founded on the structure of the *o*-object. Namely, that it is indeed as waste product, as excrement of the subjective relation as such, that what gives material for dictionaries, about what is said to be the accumulation of senses that have been concentrated around a signifier, in the course of a certain recordable practice, as having become common, it is indeed in the register of the second *o*-object, of the anal object that it must here be inscribed, in this perspective.

(262) Such are the four fashions/effacings (*effaçons*), in which the subject can be inscribed, the subject that, in the middle of this, is of course properly speaking ungraspable because of only able to be represented by a representative. It is in so far as it is inscribed in the field of the Other that it subsists, and this is what we have to deal with if we want to account in a correct fashion for what is at stake in psychoanalysis. The distance can be measured between what is defined as a subject and what is held to be a person. The distance can be measured, namely, they must be very severely distinguished. Every kind of personalism in psychoanalysis lends itself to every deviation, to every confusion. In the psychoanalytic perspective, what is defined, marked, in other registers described as moral, as being the person, we cannot situate at any other level than that of symptom. The person begins where, of course, this subject as I have situated it for you, is differently anchored, is anchored in a much broader way, the one that brings into play what, no doubt, is placed at its origin, namely, enjoyment.

It is because analytic experience teaches us here to outline differently the cartographical atlas, as I might say, of what is involved in these operations that refer to the subject, that it takes on its importance. It is in this that it inaugurates a method. It does not claim to reconstitute any new whole, but assuredly, here and now it upsets the old systems of projection that constituted a whole.

Obviously there should here be pointed out in the margin all sorts of indications that are suggestions, indices. An important point in the meaning of the index, in a discovery in progress, is assuredly something quite different to the way we are able to distinguish it, for example, in the tongue. To make of it something distinctive in a

certain sort of signifying indication, that I propose to those who may here have a penchant to come back to what Freud stated in *Group psychology and analysis of the ego*. To consider the degree to which the chief, the leader, the key element in identification as he states it, becomes clearer in this perspective in that there is shown there the solution that makes possible the way in which the subject is strictly identified to **o**. In other words that he becomes what he truly is, namely, a subject that is itself barred.

What we have seen and what henceforth ought to be considered by us as always being able to be reproduced, the passage from a whole mass to the function of univocal look, as I might say, is something that can only be accounted for by the perception of the possibilities offered in this register to the signifier that is privileged by being the most summary one, by being reduced to what Freud designates as being purely and simply the mark, the function of the **l** as unique. Now here then is the system to which thinking is entirely subject. From it, you should clearly sense, there is no question in any case of anything that can be articulated, and specifically as knowledge, going outside it. The consequences on something living of language, the system of signifiers, enveloping it, is very specifically that starting from it, the image is always more or less marked by being assumed into the system as signifying. This is necessary from the function of the type, and of what is called the universal.

Why is it not tangible? Why has it not yet become common, and why is it not yet in some way effective in the renewal of institutions, that the fact that the images are taken up in the operation of the signifier is there to make us sensitive, the whole of psychoanalytic experience bears witness to it, to the fact that what is lost there, is the imaginary function in so far as it corresponds to the harmony of male and female. If there is something that analysis demonstrates it is that it is because of the grip in the subject not simply that everything that can be designated as male is ambiguous, indeed can be revoked when closely criticised, but that it is just as true on the other side. And that this is sanctioned by a very specific fact of experience that at the level of the subject, there is no recognition as such of the male by the female nor of the female by the male. Everything that any kind of deep exploration shows us about the history of the couple, is that identifications are multiple, overlapping one another and always at the end forming a composite whole. The ambiguity that remains about

everything that could be inscribed in the signifier about what is involved in what distinguishes radically, as we know, at the biological level – when I say radically I am omitting of course at the level of mammals the characteristics described as sexually secondary and the possible distinction between sex tissue as compared to phanerogamic sex. But let us leave to one side what may be involved in this. Let us note that what analytic experience designates is very precisely that at this level, there is no signifying coupling. It is at the point that, in the theory, although active-passive, voyeur-seen, etc oppositions are made, no opposition designating male-female has ever been promoted as fundamental.

The important thing, and the important thing that is in a way preliminary to the question that is raised of what is involved, in the signifying system, of the function described as the phallus, in so far as it is what is effectively found to intervene, and in a way which it is of course never in any case anything but a third function. It represents either what is first defined as what is lacking, namely, grounding the type of castration as establishing that of the woman, or what on the contrary, on the side of the male, is indicated in a way that is so problematic, what one could call the enigma of absolute enjoyment. In any case, it is not a matter here of correlative reference points, of distinctive reference points. One and the same reference point dominates the whole register of what is involved in the relation of being sexed. This privileged signifier, I want to mark here, justifies (264) in a long construction, which was made in close contact with the analysis articulated of what has been written, from what remains as a testament of our experience of neurotics, I was able to qualify as *missing signifier*? The question is important because if assuredly for what is involved in the articulation of the function of the subject, you clearly see that, however far the articulation of knowledge may be pushed, the subject shows the flaw there. To say that the phallus is the missing signifier at the level that I was able to state it, at the point of my discourse when I risked, let us say, first putting it forward, I believe that the context was not yet sufficiently articulated for me to be able to say what I am now specifying.

Let us start again, and this is the interest of our reference today, of starting from the trace. Let us start from this supporting point and let us remember the Arab proverb that, in my *Ecrits*, I quoted somewhere a long time ago. There are four things (I no

longer know which, I must say that I forgot the fourth or that I am not trying to remember it immediately) that leave no trace, the one that I evoked at this turning point. The foot of the gazelle on the rock, there is also the fish in the water and what interests us more, the man in the woman, says the proverb, does not leave a trace. This can on occasion be objected to in the following form, whose importance one knows in the phantasies of neurotics, a little sickness from time to time. But precisely this is what is instructive. The role of venereal diseases is not at all random in the structure. We cannot start from any trace to ground the signifier of the sexual relationship. Everything is reduced to this signifier the phallus, precisely, which is not in the system of the subject since it is not the subject that it represents but, as one might say, sexual enjoyment *qua* outside the system, namely, absolute. Sexual enjoyment in so far as it has this privilege as compared to all the others, the fact is that something in the pleasure principle, that we know constitutes a barrier to enjoyment, the fact is that something in the pleasure principle allows it access all the same. You must admit that even from Freud's pen, we read that this is enjoyment *par excellence*, and what is more it is true. But that it should be read from the pen of a savant who merits so much this title as our Freud does, this has all the same something that may make us dream. But it is not in this system of the subject, there is no subject of sexual enjoyment.

And these remarks have no other interest than to allow us to specify the sense of the phallus as missing signifier. It is the signifier outside the system, and in a word the conventional one to designate what is involved in sexual enjoyment as radically foreclosed. If I spoke about foreclosure quite rightly to designate certain effects of the symbolic relation, it is here that it must be seen, that the point must be designated where it cannot be revised. And if I add that everything that is repressed in the symbolic reappears in the real, it is indeed (265) because enjoyment is quite real. The fact is that in the system of the subject, it is nowhere symbolised, nor can it be symbolised. This indeed is why there is necessarily, in Freud's remarks, this enormity that seems to disturb no one, except a few people: a myth that strictly does not resemble any myth known to mythology. Old Kroeber and Levi-Strauss see very clearly that this does not form part of their universe and they say so, but it is exactly as if they had said nothing, since everybody continues to believe that the Oedipus complex is an acceptable myth. It is so, in effect, in a certain sense, but note that this

means nothing other than the place where this enjoyment that I have just defined as absolute must be situated. The myth of the primordial father, is of the one who confuses in enjoyment all the women. The simple form of the myth says enough about it. It means that we do not know what enjoyment is at stake, is it his own or that of all the women? Except that feminine enjoyment has remained, as I have pointed out to you, also still at the state of an enigma in analytic theory.

What is meant then by this phallic function that seems, by not representing the subject, to mark nevertheless a point of his determination as a field limited by a relationship to what is structured as Other. It is by auscultating more closely, by coming back from these radical perspectives towards our experience, that we are immediately going to see how things are expressed. The turning point from which the birth of a neurosis emerges, is what? It is the positive intrusion of an auto-erotic enjoyment that is perfectly typified in what are called the first sensations more or less linked to onanism, however you want to describe it, in the child. The important thing is that it is at this point, for the cases that fall under our jurisdiction, namely, those that generate a neurosis, it is at this precise point, at the very moment that this positivisation of erotic enjoyment is produced that correlatively there is also produced the positivisation of the subject as dependency, anaclitism I said the last time, on the desire of the Other. Here there is designated the entry point through which the structure of the subject becomes a drama. The whole experience that is going to confirm at what frontiers, at what junctions this drama is going to explode, deserves to be articulated. I think that I already sufficiently marked the last time the weight the **o**-object takes in it, not so much in so far as it is presentified but in demonstrating retroactively that it was what previously constituted the whole structure of the subject.

We are going to see at what other frontiers the drama breaks out. But here and now we know from the fall-out of these effects, that it is thanks to the positive relation, to the enjoyment described as sexual, but without, for all that, the sexual conjunction being in any way (266) assured, that something is designated as essential for the position of the subject. It is the desire to know. The decisive step taken by Freud about the relation of sexual curiosity to the whole order of knowledge, is the essential point of the psychoanalytic discovery. And it is from the connection between what is involved in **o** - namely, where the subject can rediscover his real essence as

essentially lack of enjoyment, and nothing more, whatever representative he may be designated by subsequently - and the field of the Other, on the other hand, in so far as the knowledge that is at the horizon of this domain forbidden of its nature which is that of enjoyment is organised in it. With it the question of sexual enjoyment introduces this minimum of diplomatic relations that I would say are so difficult to sustain. It is in as far as something is produced that I called drama, that the significance of the Other *qua* structured and holed is something different to what we can metaphorically call the signifier that holes it, namely, the phallus. It is in so far as it is something different that we see what happens when the young subject has to respond to what is produced by the intrusion of the sexual function into his subjective field.

I made great play, and those who attended still remember it, in connection with little Hans. Little Hans which is the exemplary observation of a first absolutely disorganised exploration, going around in circles, up to a certain point undirected, with nevertheless the imperialist direction of the reference to the father first who plays a role whose flaws I marked and the Freud does not dissimulate. But Freud himself is for his part also the final reference, that of a knowledge presumed to be absolute. I took care, as I said, to take up at length everything that is outlined in this disorder in order to show its different strata. But one of them is nothing other than the game that little Hans indulges in which is that of the confrontation of the big giraffe and the small giraffe. I was able to underline its importance by showing what the phobia reveals at its foundation. Namely, the impossibility of making the *hommelle*, namely, this phallic mother - which is the relationship that Hans expresses in the big giraffe - co-exist with, on the other hand, anything whatsoever that might reduce it. If he draws the little giraffe, it is clearly to show not that it is an image comparable to the other, but that it is a writing on a sheet of paper. And for that reason, he *zerwurzelt's* it, as it is put in the text, he crumples it up and sits on it.

The important thing here is not the imaginary or identificatory function of Hans to this complement of the mother, the phallus, which is fundamentally his great rival. It is that he makes this phallus pass over into the symbolic because it is there that it is going to have its efficacy, and everyone knows what the order of efficacy of phobias is. If there is one thing that is useful in political vocabulary, and it is not for nothing

at the joining of power and of knowledge, it is to launch into a corner of the world to which I already made an allusion earlier with language, that of the paper tiger. What is more of a paper tiger than a (267) phobia, since very often, the phobia is a phobia that a child has for the tigers that are in his album, tigers that are really paper. Only, if politicians have all the trouble in the world in persuading the masses to put paper tigers in their place, here the function, or more exactly the indication, to be given is exactly the opposite. It is to give all its importance to the fact that, to complete something, something that cannot be resolved at the level of the subject, at the level of intolerable anxiety, the subject has no other resource than to foment for himself the fear of a paper tiger. This all the same is what is instructive, because as well, of course, it is not a subject of the type that psychoanalysts imagine. Namely, the way it expresses itself, is a facility of style. He does all of that by arranging it as best he can. The paper tiger, at a moment, at the moment when what is at stake is precisely the person of little Hans, is entirely a symptom. At that moment, all by itself, the world, or at least its foundation, the *hommelle* before whom he is, all by herself is transformed into a paper tiger.

There is the closest link between the structure of the subject and the fact that the question is thus posed that the *hommelle*, is something that all of a sudden grimaces, is frightening. And whether it is a tiger or a smaller animal, a cat, this is of no importance, no analyst is deceived about its true function. If then we have been led, at the end, to see the importance of lack as regard the quite real object that the penis is in everything that determines what one can call a sexed relationship, it is because the path has been opened up for us by the neurotic, and by the castration complex, in so far as it effectively realises the place of lack in the field of the signifier. It is only the result of the discourse through which we have to ward off the questions posed by the neurotic. It is only at the end of a psychoanalysis that it is necessary that what is and well and truly remains, as little Hans says, rooted, *angewachsen*, and thank God, one would wish it to be, at least for most, in a position to be put to use, it is necessary that on a certain plane it should have been *zerwurzelt*, that one should clearly show that it is only a symbol.

Hence, of course, what I already said was a problem at the end of the treatment of little Hans. If it is necessary, of course, that he like every neurotic should come at the

end to the formula that to become a man I do not have the penis as a symbol, because that is the castration complex. But it must be observed that this can be cut in two ways. The “I do not have the penis” which is precisely what is meant by saying that the end of analysis, is the realisation of the castration complex. This, of course, rejects elsewhere the pure and simple function of the penis as it functions, namely, outside the symbolised register. But this could also be cut differently. Namely: “I do not have the penis as a symbol, it is not the penis that qualifies me as signifier of my virility”, and this was not obtained from little Hans because this is (268) what passed through the mesh of the net. Little Hans who never stopped during all this time playing with little girls his role of the one who has it, preserves, as I well and truly made the reservation at one time, preserves in sexual relationships this something that puts in the foreground the penis as an imaginary function. Namely, that this is what defines him as virile. Namely, that however heterosexual he may show himself to be, he is very exactly at the same point that the homosexuals are at, I mean those that recognise themselves as such. Because one cannot extend the field of what structurally corresponds properly to homosexuality too far into the field of the appearances of normal relations, when what is at stake are sexual relationships.

Hence the importance of the exploration and the statement of this joint that, between the imaginary and the symbolic, is at its correct place the function, or more exactly the aspects of the function that we define as castration complex. How this is further fed by the experience we have of the joint between the Other and enjoyment in other forms of neurosis, is what I will subsequently continue with.

(269) The system of nowhere (*nulle part*), one could say, is what we have to present. It is here indeed that the term utopia would finally take on its sense, but this time realised from the proper end, as I might say. The old “nullibiquity” to which, in the distant past, I had given again the lustre it deserves for having been invented by Bishop Wilkings, is nowhere. What is it? It is enjoyment. What analytic experience demonstrates, it must be said again, is that by a link to something that is nothing other than what permits the emergence of knowledge, enjoyment is excluded, the circle is closed. This exclusion is only stated from the system itself in so far as it is the symbolic. Now, it is through this that it is affirmed as real, the last real of the functioning of the system itself that nowhere excludes it. It has become everywhere again from this very exclusion which is the way through which it is realised. This indeed, as we know, is what our practice applies itself to unmasking, unveiling in what we have to deal with, in the symptom, unmasking this relation to enjoyment, our real, but in so far as it is excluded.

That is why we advance these three terms as a support: enjoyment in so far as it is excluded, the Other as locus where that is known, the **o** as an effect of the fall that results - because that is what is at stake in the affair - that results from the fact that, in the operation of the signifier, it is nevertheless enjoyment that is aimed at. The signifier arises from the unspeakable relationship of this something that, by having received from somewhere, this means, the signifier, is stamped by it with a relation to this something that from there develops, takes shape as the Other. This link of the subject to the Other, an Other which has avatars, has not said its final word. This indeed is what we are grappling with. It is at the level of these terms that we have to situate this psychoanalysis which is, as I might say, from its origin the crude experience of them, which came to birth no doubt in an exceptional flash through Freud. Ever since, it has never ceased to be at the mercy of the different aspects presented to it, which are identical to those in whose network the subject it treats is caught.

I would like to start from something that is as close as possible. Listen, you can talk to me about morality as much as you want, analytic morality if you wish, or another one, it does not matter. Good. Here is an object that I have a preference for, a

preference as an apparatus. It is a fountain pen that in its slenderness is as close as possible to a pen, a pen in the antique, antediluvian sense; there are only very few people (270) who use it. As such its content is very limited because as you see, its reservoir can fit in and end up by becoming reduced to something that can be held in the palm of your hand. Its reservoir contains very little. The result is that it is very difficult to fill, because osmotic effects are produced, which means that when one pours in a drop, the drop is just the same size as the entrance. It is therefore very inconvenient; and nevertheless I am fond of it. I have a very special preference for it, because it reproduces a certain type of pen with a feather, a real feather and in effect it dates, it dates from an epoch when it really was a feather and not something rigid like it is now. Someone who knew that I was looking for one gave this pen to me. It was a present that had just been made very few minutes, or hours or days before, it does not matter, by someone who certainly made of it a homage of a rather precise order, that was in fact fetishistic. It was moreover an object that was distinguished by coming from the grandmother of the person who donated it to the person who gave it to me. That indeed is why it is not easy to find. There are very particular shops, it appears, in New York where they sell pens from the Belle Epoque. I got one as you see along a different path.

I have then a glimpse of the history of this object that, moreover, is close to my heart for its own sake, altogether independently of this history, because in truth I am not specially grateful to the person who gave it to me for having made this present. My relation to it is independent; it is certainly very close to what the *o*-object is for me. I have a glimpse of its history but, for every object, do you not see something from the way I have brought this one to life, that this question of its history is posed just as much as for any subject. How can one imagine that one knows this history, who can answer for it except by establishing this Other as the locus where it is known. And who does not see, if one opens up this dimension to him, that at least for some people, and, I would dare to say, for everyone, it exists. For some people it is altogether prevalent, but for everyone it forms a foundation. There is somewhere where everything that has happened is known. Once one begins to question oneself along this path, one recognises that the signifier of *O* as completed is implicit and that for the obsessional neurotic it is much more so than for the others. That is why, at the level of history, in so far as – that is why I took this angle – it is suggested not at all

directly about the subject but moreover about the fate of objects, it is along this path that we can see how mad is the presupposition of some locus or other where it is known. This is important because it is clear that “it is known, *ça se sait*” turns immediately into the interest the question takes on. There where it is known, in the neutral sense that we have introduced it, this is where the question is posed about whether it knows itself.

Reflexivity only emerges from consciousness by this detour that must (271) be verified, the fact is that where one supposes that it – everything - is known, does it know that it is known? If one questions oneself about what is involved in mathematical activity, it is a funny thing to note that the mathematician very specially is still just as incapable of saying anything about its foundation, except that he knows very well when he is doing mathematics. As far as telling you how he discerns it, up to the present, *mum's the word*. He can say that this is not it, but what it is has not yet been found. We are putting forward a statement that perhaps may begin something along this path; to organise things, things that are said, in such a way that it knows itself, undoubtedly, at every instant, and that it can bear witness to it. As someone said to me quite recently, a mathematician with whom I was speaking about it, what characterises a mathematical statement is the freedom of its context. A theorem can be stated all by itself and be defended. It carries in itself this sufficient dose of overlapping itself that makes it free of the discourse that introduces it. The matter is to be looked at again closely. This aspect of difference to other discourses where every quotation risks being excessive with respect to what surrounds it, what is called context, is important to note. This substance of instantaneous “it knows itself” as such, is accompanied by the fact that it supposes that everything that is reached there is known, in the sense of “it overlaps itself”, it is known as a whole. Namely, that what is revealing, is that the presuppositions of a discourse that aspires to be able to entirely overlap itself encounters limits. It encounters limits in the fact precisely that points exist in it that cannot be posited. The first image of them will moreover be given by the sequence of integers and by something that articulates that what is defined as being greater than any other one can precisely not be posited, I mean in an infinite series, as they say, of integers.

It is precisely because this number is excluded, and properly *qua* symbol – nowhere can there be written this number greater than any other – it is very precisely from this impossibility of writing it that the whole series of integers takes on its character, not of being a simple representation (*graphie*) of something that can be written, but of being something that is in the real. This very impossibility is what the real arises from. This mechanism is very precisely what allows it to be taken up again, at the level of the symbol, and to write under the heading of transfinite this very sign that cannot be posited in the series of integers, and to begin to question what can be done starting from this sign that has been posited as not able to be posited in the series of integers. And to notice that effectively this sign, a symbol taken up at the level of what constitutes the reality of the series of integers, allows a new symbolic treatment where the relations acceptable at the end of the series of integers can be taken up again. Not all but very certainly a part of them. And this is the progress that is being pursued by a (272) discourse that, knowing itself at every instant, is never found without this combination of limits with holes that is called infinity. Namely, not graspable until precisely it is, by being taken up into a different structure, reduced to this limit, the *aporia* in any case only being the introduction to a structure of the Other.

This is what is very clearly seen in set theory, into which one can for a certain time in effect advance innocently. It interests us in a particular way because after all, at the more radical level that we have to deal with, namely, the incidence of the signifier in repetition, in appearance there is no objection. There is no objection at first to the O being the entire inscription of all possible histories. Every signifier refers all the more to the Other in that it cannot refer to itself except as other. There is no obstacle then to the signifiers being divided up in a circular fashion, which, under this heading, allows it very easily to be stated that there is a set of everything that of itself is not identified to itself. By going around in a circle, it is perfectly conceivable that everything is organised, even the catalogue of all the catalogues that do not contain themselves. It is perfectly admissible on this single condition that one knows, and it is certain, that no catalogue contains itself, except by its title. This does not prevent the set of all the catalogues having this closed character that each catalogue, in so far as it does not contain itself, can always be inscribed in another that it contains itself. The only thing excluded, if we trace out the network of these things, is the sketch that

would be written in this way. The one that admits from one point to another of any network whatsoever from an oriented network, that excludes, if b refers to a certain number of other points, d, e, f that excludes the fact that b refers to itself. It is enough on this occasion for b to refer to c, and that c itself refers to b for there no longer to be any obstacle to the correlative subsistence of b and c and that a set includes them.

If something questions us, it comes precisely from analytic experience as locating somewhere this point at the infinity of everything that is organised in the order of signifying combinations. This point at infinity being irreducible in so far as it concerns a certain enjoyment, that has remained problematic, and that for us sets up the question of enjoyment under an aspect that is no longer external to the system of knowledge. It is around this signifier of enjoyment, this signifier excluded in so far as it is the one that we promote under the term of (273) phallic signifier, it is around this that there is organised all the biographies to which analytic literature tends to reduce what is involved in neurosis.

It is not because we can overlap with as complete a homology as possible what are called the interpersonal relations of what we call an adult – an adult, it must be said, fundamentally adulterated. Because what we find throughout these relations, we seek in the second biography that we say is original, which is that of his infantile relations. And there, at the end of a certain familiarisation by the analyst, we take as accepted the relations of tension that are established with respect to a certain number of terms, the father, the mother, the birth of a brother or a little sister that we consider as primitive. But that, of course, only takes on this sense, only takes on this weight by reason of the place that they hold in my articulation. Like for example – there will perhaps be more developed ones, I hope so – but like in fact the one I am articulating for you with respect to knowledge, enjoyment and a certain object in so far as primordially it is with respect to them that there are going to be situated all these primordial relations. In these it is not enough to bring up simple homology by going into the past with whoever comes to tell us about his present day relations. Whether we want it or not, whether we know it or not, we bring into play its weight, its presence and its agency in the whole way in which we understand this second primary biography, described as infantile. This is only there, quite often, to mask the question from us, the one on which we for our part should really question ourselves, I mean we

analysts. Namely, what determines in this way the infantile biography whose mainspring is quite obviously always only the way in which there are presented what we call desires in the father, in the mother. These consequently stimulate us to explore not simply the history but the style of presence in which each of these three terms, knowledge, enjoyment and *o*-object were effectively presented to the subject. This is what ensures, and here there lies, what we call improperly the choice of neurosis, indeed the choice between psychosis and neurosis. There was no choice, the choice was already made in what is presented to the subject but is only perceptible, locatable in function of three terms as we have just tried here to bring them out.

This matter has more than one implication. It has a historical aspect. Who does not see that if we must posit what psychoanalysis signifies in history, and if certain choices are also offered to it, it is in as far as we live in a time when the dimension of community, the relationships of knowledge to enjoyment, are not the same as they were, for example, in ancient times. And that, undoubtedly, we cannot take our position as being comparable, for example, to that of the Epicureans or (274) any other such school. There was a certain position of withdrawal with respect to enjoyment that was possible for them, in a way that was rather innocent. At a time when, through the bringing into play of what we call capitalism, a certain position includes all of us in relation to enjoyment in a characteristic fashion, as one might say, by the purity of its framework. What is called the exploitation of the worker does not consist, very precisely, in the fact that enjoyment is excluded from work. At the same time, it does not give it all its real in the same way as we have evoked earlier the effect of the point at infinity. It is through this that there arises this sort of aporia that suggests the new sense with regard to the dominion of society, the new sense - without precedent in the ancient context - that the word revolution takes on. And this is why we have our word to say in it. To recall that this term is, as Marx perfectly well saw, and this is why he articulates the only thing that has been found efficacious up to the present, it is the close solidarity of this term called revolution with the very system that carries it, which is the capitalist system.

That on this we have something that can perhaps offer the opening through a series of examples of what can be involved in a joint where the circle will open out, this is the interest of psychoanalysis. I mean its interest in history. It is moreover what it must

totally fail at. Because to take things at the level of biography, what we see being offered at the turning point that the moment of the outbreak of neurosis constitutes biographically is the choice that is offered. It is offered in a way that is all the more insistent in that it is what is determining in this turning point. The choice between what is presentified, namely, the approach to this point of impossibility, of this point at infinity, that is always introduced by the approach of sexual contact. And the correlative aspect that is announced from the fact that at the level of the subject, by reason of the premature moment – but how would it not always be premature with regard to impossibility – by reason of the premature moment that it comes into operation in childhood, what projects, masks, diverts this impossibility by having to be exercised in terms of inadequacy, of being only *qua* living being, a living being reduced to his own forces, necessarily not up to it. The alibi taken for impossibility in inadequacy, is moreover the slope that what I called the direction of psychoanalysis may take. And this, after all, is not humanly speaking something in which in effect we cannot fail to feel ourselves the ministers of a help that on one or other point, with respect to one or other person, may be the occasion of a benefit. Nevertheless, this is not what justifies psychoanalysis. It is not from there that it emerged. It is not there that it has its sense and for a simple reason, which is that it is not this that the neurotic bears witness to. Because what the neurotic testifies to us, if we want to hear what he (275) is telling us through all his symptoms, is that where his discourse is placed it is clear that what he is looking for is something different than to be equal to the question he poses.

The neurotic, whether it is a hysteric or an obsessional that is at stake – we will subsequently make the link between the two aspects and this *o*-object that we have brought forward in the efficacy of phobia – the neurotic puts in question what is involved in the truth of knowledge. And very precisely in the fact that he/it is attached to enjoyment. And in re-posing the question, is he right? Yes certainly, because we know that it is only from this dependency that knowledge has its original status and that in its development, it articulates its distance. Is he right? His discourse is certainly dependent on what is at stake in the truth of knowledge. But as I already articulated before you, it is not at all because this discourse relates to this truth, that it is true. The consistency of the suspension of knowledge on the prohibition of enjoyment does not render any more legible in what, at a certain level, exposes this

constitutive knot, and moreover why would it also not express, in the final term, a certain form of aporia? If I said it earlier, in what is presented as a position taken up in the impasses that are formulated as the law of the Other, when it is the sexual that is at stake, I would say that in the final term, after having sifted as much as I could the angle from which the obsessional and the hysteric are distinguished, the best formula that I could give proceeds precisely from what is offered in nature, naturally, as a solution of the impasse of this law of the Other. For the man who has to fulfill this identification to this function described as that of the symbolic father, the only one that is satisfying - and this is why the position of virile enjoyment in what is involved in sexual conjunction is mythical - for the man, what is offered at the level of the natural is very precisely what is called knowing how to be the master. And, in effect, this was, this probably still is, this was and this still remains sufficiently within someone's reach.

I would say that the obsessional is the one who refuses to take himself as master because, with respect to what is at stake - the truth of knowledge - what is important for him, is the relationship of this knowledge to enjoyment. And what he knows of this knowledge, is that it has nothing, nothing more of what remains from the first incidence of its interdiction, namely, the *o*-object. Any enjoyment is only thinkable for him as a treaty with the Other as whole always imagined by him as fundamental, with whom he deals. Enjoyment for him is only authorised by a payment, by an always renewed payment, into the insatiable jar of the Danaï, into this something that is never finished and that makes of the modalities of the debt the ceremonial where alone he encounters his enjoyment.

Inversely, on the opposite side, the hysteric, and it is not for nothing that there is met this form of answer to the impasses of enjoyment, at the opposite side, the hysteric - and it is precisely because of this that this style is more especially found among women - the hysteric is (276) characterised by not taking herself for the woman. Because in this impasse, in this aporia, just as naturally as for the master, things are offered just as plainly to the woman to fulfill a role in sexual conjunction in which naturally she has a rather large part. What the hysteric, they say, represses, but what in reality she promotes, is this point at infinity of enjoyment as absolute. She promotes castration at the level of this name of the symbolic father in the place of

whom she posits herself, or as wanting to be, in the final moment, his enjoyment. And it is because this enjoyment cannot be reached that she refuses any other which, for her, would only have this diminished character of only being, which moreover is true, something external, by only being at the level of sufficiency or insufficiency, with respect to the absolute relationship that it is a matter of positing.

Read and re-read the observations of hysterics in the light of these terms, and you will see in a completely different way from that of anecdote, from a biographical going around in circles, that the transference by repeating no doubt makes more manageable, but only tempers, to understand the source of what comes to us as an opening, as a gap, by whatever means moreover we try to calm it. Is it not essential to spot this source from which it arises and which is nothing other than the way in which the neurotic questions again this frontier that nothing can in fact suture, the one that is opened up between knowledge and enjoyment.

If, in the articulation that I gave of the 1 and the \circ , which is certainly not promoted here by chance or in an out of date way, which is nothing other, as I told you, than the way in which, in a mathematical model there is inscribed – and there is no reason to be surprised at it because it is the first thing that you have to encounter – there is inscribed in a series what is connected to the simple repetition of the 1, on the single condition that we inscribe its relation in the form of an addition. After two 1's, a 2, and to continue indefinitely, the last 1 joined to the 2, a 3, 5, and afterwards an 8 and after that a 13, and so on. It is this, as I told you, that by the proportion that it generates, that gets tighter and tighter as the numbers grow, strictly defines the function of \circ . The series has this property of exposing by being taken up in the opposite sense, by proceeding by subtraction, of culminating at a limit in the negative sense. Which, marked by this proportion of \circ , will continue to diminish and come to what one makes of it, in this direction, the sum, at a perfectly well defined limit that, then, taken up again is a starting point.

What the hysteric does can be inscribed in this direction, namely, that he or she subtracts this \circ as such from the absolute 1 of the Other, by questioning it. By questioning whether it delivers or not this final 1, that is in a way her assurance. In this process, it is easy with the help of the model that I have just recalled, to

demonstrate that at best all her effort, I mean the effort of the hysteric after having put in question this (277) \circ , will be nothing more than to find herself as such, strictly equal to this \circ and to nothing else. Such here is the drama that is expressed, by being transposed from the level where it is, where it is stated in a perfectly correct way in another, is expressed by the irreducible gap of a castration that has been realised.

There are other ways out of the impasse opened up by the hysteric by the fact that it is resolved at the level of statements, at this level that I characterised by the label “*famil*”, by the encounter with castration. But at the other level, at that of stating, at that which promotes the relation between enjoyment and knowledge, who does not know that illustrious historical examples allow it to be grasped that at the level of a knowledge that is supposed to be a knowledge overlapping itself by an experienced knowledge of the relation as it is presented, of the sexual relation as it is only grasped from the apprehension of this point at infinity which is impasse and aporia, certainly, but which is also a limit, the solution can be found of a subjective equilibrium, on this single condition that the correct tribute is paid from the edifice of a knowledge.

For the obsessional, everyone knows that it is the same; everyone knows that a whole sector depends on the productivity of the obsessional; even those most blind, most closed to historical reality have glimpsed his contribution to what is called thinking. Is this not also here what expresses his limit, what necessitates it being exercised to the highest degree? It is to here that Freud takes the question when he speaks about the relationships of obsessional ritual to religion. Assuredly all religion is not exhausted in these practices. And this indeed is what is anxiety-provoking in Pascal’s wager. It makes us see that by taking things even at the level of the promise, by proving oneself to be a partisan of the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, and by rejecting the Other, by rejecting him to the point of saying that one does not know whether he is, nor of course much more what he is. It is nevertheless him, at the level of whether he is or not, of odds or evens, that he questions in the wager, because he is caught up, given his epoch, in this questioning of knowledge.

It is at this point that I will leave you today.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 4 June 1969

(279) There are fewer people standing. For their sakes I am not sorry, but if this means that the audience is becoming depleted, I am sorry since moreover it is necessarily – this is my style – in the final meetings that I will say the most interesting things! This reminds me that last year, of my own volition and for reasons that I will not repudiate, I suspended what I had to say at the beginning of a memorable month of May. However legitimate these reasons may have been, it nevertheless remains that what I said about the psychoanalytic act remains truncated. Given what was at stake, namely, precisely the psychoanalytic act, that no one had even dreamt of naming as such before me, which is an altogether precise sign that people had not even posed a question about it. Since otherwise it was the simplest way to name it, once people realised that in psychoanalysis there was somewhere an act, we must believe that this truth had remained veiled.

I do not think that it is by chance that what I had to state that year about the act found itself then, as I have just said, truncated. There is a relationship, a relationship that is naturally not one of causation, between this shirking of psychoanalysts about the subject of what is involved in an act – specifically the psychoanalytic act – and these events. But there is a relationship all the same between what causes events and the field in which the psychoanalytic act is inserted. So that up to the present one can say that it is no doubt because of some lack of interest in this act that psychoanalysts have not shown themselves to be very prepared or available to even give a hint of a grasp, even a superficial one, of these events. Naturally, it is only accidental that, in the other sense, the events interrupted what I might have had to say about the act, but all the same it does not fail either to represent something that, for my part, I consider to be a certain rendezvous. A rendezvous that I do not regret because it spared me, on the subject of the psychoanalytic act, in short, from coming to say what should not be said.

There you are. All the same, we find ourselves, after what I put forward the last time, brought back to something that is not far from this field. Because what is at stake, as I announced last year, is indeed an act in so far as it is in relationship with what I called, stated, (280) proposed, as being the *o*-object. Let it be quite clear that, since it is in my title this year and this is what is at stake in my discourse, this is something that ought to find its most formal expression in these final meetings. And, at least for those who are *au fait* with what I ended on the last time, it seems to me that it is no harm to recall – I advanced it in terms of Pascal's wager – that it is at least the path that I chose this year to introduce it. To introduce it as being in the field of the Other, as defining a certain game (*jeu*), precisely the stake (*enjeu*), with the play on words that I make about this term *en-je*.

It may appear curious that a position that, in this respect, is not ambiguous, that is certainly not a position of religious apologetics, should introduce this element of the wager. And of a wager that finds itself formulated as responding to a certain partner. A partner who is taken there, as one might say, at his word, at the word of a statement that is attributed to him, under a heading, my God, that is generally accepted, the promise of eternal life, for every believer who follows God's commandments. This is held to be something accepted, at least in the field of what constitutes with respect to him, this God, the largest religious reference, namely, the Church.

It is not out of season to start from there, because it has a quite lively relationship with what is at stake as permanent in our structures, and in structures that go much further than structures that could be qualified as mental structures. Structures in so far as they are defined by common discourse, by language, obviously go much further than what can be reduced to the function of mentality. As I very often insisted, this enfolds us from every side, and in things that, at first sight, do not seem to have an obvious relationship. So that this structure which is the one that I am aiming at to start again from today, the original structure, the one that I called that of an Other, to show where, through the incidence of psychoanalysis, it is going, to reveal a quite different other, namely the *o*. This Other – let there be no doubt about it within our horizon – this Other which is precisely the God of the philosophers, is not so easy to eliminate as people believe. Since in reality it undoubtedly remains stable at the horizon, in any case, of all our thoughts. It is obviously not unrelated to the fact that there is the God

of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob – you will see it, I will come back to it – and this will be my subject today, the structure of this Other. Because it is very necessary carefully to establish what is to be designated there. It is no less timely, at the outset, to indicate that what constitutes for us, in a certain horizon of structure, in so far as it is determined by common discourse, it is clear that it is no harm to recall that, if this structure, that of the big Other, is for us in a certain field, the very one Freud designated as civilisation, namely, Western civilisation. The presence of the other God, the one that speaks, (281) namely, the God of the Jews, the God of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob, is not for nothing in the maintenance of this Other.

This is not simply because the God of the philosophers, this big Other is One. What distinguishes the God of the Jews, the one designated as being at the origin of monotheism, is not some development that the One was subsequently able to make. It is not that he posits himself as being himself One that characterises him. The God of the burning bush, the God of Sinai did not say that he was the only God. This deserves to be recalled. He says: “I am what I am”. That has a completely different meaning. That does not mean that he is the only one. That means that there is none other at the same time as him where he is. And in truth, if you look at it closely in the text of the Bible, you will see that this is what is at stake. There where he is, in his field, namely in the Holy Land, there is no question of obeying anyone but him. But nowhere is the presence of others denied, where he is not, where it is not his land. And if you look closely at it, it is only when there is an encroachment of the honours rendered to others where there reigns alone the one who said “I am what I am”, that chastisements rain down. This might seem in the eyes of some people to have only a historic interest. But I am laying my cards on the table. It is only coming back to what I stated at first, which is that this god that is in question, designates himself by the fact that he speaks. This is what makes it legitimate that whatever distortion was undergone later by this word, because it is not sure that they are saying quite the same thing in the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, in any case the God that is defined by his relationship to the word, is a God that speaks. This indeed is why the prophets, as such, are pre-eminent in the Jewish tradition. In other words, the dimension of Revelation as such, namely, of the word as carrying the truth, was never highlighted as much outside this tradition. Elsewhere the place of the Truth is filled, it is necessary for it to be covered, on occasion by myths for example. It is not so by

prophesy except in a quite local way that is called oracular but which has a completely different sense to that of the prophetic tradition.

A rather heavy introduction, but all the same necessitated by the reminder of certain quite massive reliefs to be maintained in order to properly understand what is at stake when we put forward, that with regard to the field of truth that interests us as such in an outstanding way, even if we do not identify it to revealed formulae, with respect to this field of the truth, knowledge is elsewhere. That indeed is why, once the dimension of Revelation is introduced, there is introduced at the same time the dimension traditional in our culture that one must not believe extinguished because we are in our time, the dimension of what is improperly called the double truth. That means the distinction between truth and knowledge.

(282) So then what interests us, because this is what psychoanalysis revealed, is what is produced in knowledge. What is produced in knowledge, but was not suspected before psychoanalysis, is the *o*-object in so far as analysis articulates it for what it is. Namely, the cause of desire, of the division of the subject, of what introduces into the subject as such what the *cogito* masks. Namely, that alongside this “to be, *à être*” that it thinks it can reassure itself with, it is essentially and from the beginning lack. It is here that I remind you that I am taking up again the plan through which I believed last year I should introduce the paradox of the psychoanalytic act, which is that the psychoanalytic act is presented as a stimulus to knowledge. It implies, in the rule that is given to the psychoanalysand, it implies this, since you can say anything you want. And God knows what this may represent at first in terms of being senseless, if we were taken at our word, if people really set about saying - and if this had a sense for those that we introduce to this practice - everything that passed through their heads. If everything that passed through their heads really meant anything at all, where would we end up? If we can have faith in those that we introduce into this enterprise, it is very exactly because of the fact that, even if the person that we introduce into this practice is not capable of saying it, is nevertheless there. Namely, that what is implicit, is that whatever you may say, there is the Other, the Other who knows what it means.

The God of philosophers, however he may have been throughout history attached to the train of the God that speaks, is certainly not foreign to him of course. It was not illegitimate to make of this God of the philosophers the base, the throne, the support, the seat of the one who spoke. That the seat remains even when the other has risen to go, at least for some, the seat remains of this Other, of this Other in so far as he situates this unifying, unified field that has a name for those who think. Let us call it, if you wish, the principle of sufficient reason. That you may not suspect, I mean at least a part of you, a part that I suppose, after all - I do not know whether it exists - you are perhaps all capable of perceiving that you are sustained by the principle of sufficient reason. If you do not perceive it, it is exactly the same thing. You are in the field where the principle of sufficient reason sustains everything. And it would certainly not be easy to make you conceive of what is happening where things are otherwise. What is perfectly conceivable from the moment that it is put to you, when it is stated as being, for example, at the horizon of what renders psychoanalytic experience possible, namely, that if there is not a sufficient reason for whatever you may say, in looking no further than to say what passes through your head, there will always be a sufficient reason for it. And that is enough to put on the horizon this big Other, the one who knows.

The thing is in any case quite clear in the privileged subjects of this (283) experience, namely, the neurotics. The neurotic seeks to know. We are going to see more closely why, but he seeks to know. And at the beginning of analytic experience, we have no trouble in encouraging him, in short to have faith in this Other as a locus where knowledge is established, in the *subject supposed to know*.

It is then as an intervention on the subject of what, at the most basic level, at the most basic level there is, is already articulated as knowledge, that we intervene by an interpretation that is distinguished from what supports the term interpretation everywhere else. Everywhere else an interpretation, that for example of any logical system whatsoever, is to give a system of lesser import that, as they say, illustrates, illustrates it in a way that is more accessible by the fact that it is of lesser import. We remain at the superimposition of articulations of knowledge. Analytic interpretation is distinguished by the fact that, in what is articulated here and now as knowledge,

however primitive it may be, what it aims at, is an effect, an effect of knowledge by being articulated there and that it makes tangible under the heading of its truth.

Its truth, as we have said, is on the side of desire, namely, of the division of the subject. And to go straight to it, because naturally we cannot go over the whole path here and what I have to say today is something different to be gone through, which is that the truth that is at stake is summarised as follows. That the Freudian thing, namely, this truth – the Freudian thing, this truth is the same thing – has the property of being asexual, contrary to what is said, namely, that Freudianism is pansexual. Only since the living being who is this being through whom a truth is conveyed has a sexual function and position, there results something from it, something that I tried to articulate for you two years ago now and not simply one. Namely, that there is not, in the precise sense of the word relationship, in the sense where sexual relationship is would be a relation that is logically definable, there is precisely none. What could be called sexual relationship is missing, namely, a relation definable as such between the sign of the male and that of the female. Sexual relationship, what is usually called by this name, can only be made by an act. This is what allowed me to put forward these two terms that there is no sexual act in the sense that this act is supposed to be that of a correct relationship, and that inversely, there is only the sexual act, in the sense that there is only the act to make the relationship.

In what psychoanalysis reveals to us, the fact is that the dimension of the act, of the sexual act in any case, but at the same time of all acts, what has been obvious for a long time, is that its proper dimension is failure. That is why at the heart of the sexual relationship, in psychoanalysis, there is something called castration. I spoke to you earlier about what is produced in knowledge. Necessarily, of course, you did not pay much attention to it. I should have said, what knowledge produces. I was not able to say it in order not to go too (284) quickly. Because in truth, for that to have a sense, it is necessary to come back to it more closely and to denote here the relief of this dimension that is articulated as properly speaking production. This dimension that only a certain process of technical progress has allowed us to discern, to distinguish as being the fruit of work.

But is it so simple? Is it not apparent that in order for production as such to be distinguished from what was always *poiesis*, fabrication, work, the level of the potter, it is necessary that there should be made autonomous as such what is very well distinguished in capitalism, namely, the means of production. Since it is around this that everything turns, namely, who disposes of these means. It is by such a homology that the function of knowledge and what its production is will take on its relief. The production of knowledge *qua* knowledge is distinguished by being a means of production and not simply work of the truth. What knowledge produces, is what I designate under the name of **o**-object. And this **o** is what comes to be substituted for the gap that is designated in the impasse of the sexual relationship. This is what is going to duplicate the division of the subject by giving him what was not graspable up to then in any way, because what is proper to castration, is that nothing can properly speaking be stated, because the cause is absent. In its place there comes the **o**-object as cause substituted for what is radically involved in the flaw of the subject.

And what I told you last year, after having defined the function of the **o**-object in this way the previous year, is that the psychoanalyst is the one that by this incitement to knowledge even though he does not know all that much about it, and simply by having this path, this means, this device, this analytic rule, finds himself taking on the charge of what is truly the support of this *subject supposed to know*. And I told you on every tone of the scale that the problem of our epoch, of the state of psychoanalysis, is only itself to be taken as one of the symptoms. The fact is that it is certain that this *subject supposed to know*, this Other, this unique locus where knowledge is supposed to connect up, does not exist. Nothing indicates that the Other is One, that it is not like the uniquely signifiable subject of the signifier of a particular topology that is summarised by what is involved in the **o**-object.

How can the psychoanalyst then, and this is where I accentuated the enigma and the paradox of the psychoanalytic act, the psychoanalyst in so far as he induces, as he incites the subject, the neurotic on this occasion, onto the path where he invites him to meet the *subject supposed to know*, how can the psychoanalyst, if it is true that he knows what a psychoanalysis is, how can he proceed to this act. Because he knows what is involved about what, at the end of the operation and with his very in-self (*en-soi*) he the analyst is going to represent the evacuation of the **o**-object. From this

incitement to knowledge that ought to lead to the truth and that represents the gap in it, he falls by becoming himself the rejected fiction.

(285) I put forward here the word fiction. As you know, I have for a long time articulated that the truth has the structure of fiction. Is the \circ -object to be taken as simply marking this subject of the truth as division, or ought we as it seems give it more substance? Do you not sense there where we find ourselves at this crucial point, the one already properly marked in Aristotle's logic and that justifies the ambiguity of substance and subject. Of *hupokeimenon* in as much as it is logically nothing else properly speaking than what mathematical logic was afterwards able to isolate in the function of the variable, namely, what can only be designated by a predicative proposition. The ambiguity is maintained right through Aristotle's text not without there being distinguished like a tress the function perfectly isolated by him of *hupokeimenon* and that of *ousia*. Honestly, it would be much better to translate it by being or by "étance", by Heidegger's *Wesen* on this occasion, than by this word that only conveys this aforesaid ambiguity of *substantia*, substance. It is indeed there that we find ourselves brought when we try to articulate what is involved in the function of the \circ -object.

It is around the enigma, the questioning that remains here about an act that cannot be initiated for the very one that inaugurates it except by a veiling of what would be for it, I mean the one that inaugurates this act and specifically the psychoanalyst, its term. And not simply its term but properly speaking its end, in as much as it is the term that determines retroactively the sense of the whole process, is properly its final cause, which does not deserve any derision because everything that belongs to the field of structure is unthinkable without a final cause. The only thing that deserves derision in terms described as finalistic, is that the end is of the slightest use.

Does the analyst know or not what he is doing in the psychoanalytic act? This is the precise term where there came to a halt in the previous year suspended by the eventful encounter with which I introduced my remarks today. As I told you, this was what dispensed me, at the horizon of such a difficult knot, so rigorously questioned by a putting in question of what is involved in the psychoanalytic act, dispensed me from

the undoubtedly embarrassing resonances around which, nevertheless, can be questioned what is involved both in the theory and in the psychoanalytic institution.

Before indicating perhaps a little more about it, let us clearly recall what results from this way of posing between knowledge and truth and in the proper field of a production as regards which in short you see, it is the psychoanalyst as such that himself incarnates it. It is in terms of this production, it is in these terms that there ought to be situated the question, for example, of what is involved in transference. What need is there for everything that we designate as transference to be (286) interpreted in analysis in terms of repetition, except by those analysts who are absolutely astray in this network as I articulated it. What need is there to put in question what is objective in it and to claim that transference is a retreat before something or other that is supposed to be what is really operating in analysis. Since it is a situation that only takes its support from the structure, nothing can be stated within as discourse of the analyst that is not of the order of what the structure commands, and which then can grasp nothing except the order of repetition. The question is not of knowing here whether repetition is a dominant category or not in the story. It is that in a situation designed to question what is involved in what presents itself starting from the structure, nothing of the story is organised except from repetition. It is a matter, I repeat, of what can be said at the level of this putting to the test of the effects of knowledge. So that it is not correct to say that transference isolates in itself the effects of repetition. Transference is defined from the relationship to the *subject supposed to know* in so far as it is structural and linked to the locus of the Other, as the locus as such where knowledge is articulated in an illusory way as One. And that by questioning in this way the functioning of whoever seeks to know, it is necessary for everything that is articulated to be articulated in terms of repetition.

To whom are we indebted for such an experience? It is clear that it would never have been established if there were not the neurotic who needs to know the truth. Only those that the truth makes uncomfortable. That is the definition of the neurotic. This we are going to have to circumscribe more closely. And there again, before leaving this field, and with good reason, where I have not looped the loop, I want, in something that with respect to what I outlined may pass for a parenthesis, to highlight all the same a final one of these reference points with which I try to punctuate in a

correct way this field in so far as we operate in it. If this is how it is, as I have reminded you, in a way accepted as partial, we ought to admit that the only thing that can be interpreted in analysis is repetition, and this is taken to be transference.

On the other hand, it is important to punctuate that this end that I designate as the capture of the analyst, of the analyst in himself in drilling for \mathbf{o} , is precisely what constitutes the uninterpretable. That in a word, in analysis, the uninterpretable, is the presence of the analyst, and that is why to interpret him as has been seen, as has even been printed, is properly to open the door to what is called this place, namely, acting out. I recalled it in my seminar on the act, that then of last year and in connection with the myth of Oedipus. Namely, the distinction to be made between the heroic staging that serves as a mythical reference for our analytic practice, and what is articulated behind it, in terms of a knot of enjoyment at the origin of all knowledge. It is the psychoanalyst who is at the place, certainly, of (287) what was played out on the tragic stage and it is this that gives its sense to the psychoanalytic act. And on the other hand, it is striking that he renounces there, that all he does is to be at the place of the actor, in so far as one actor is enough just by himself to hold the stage of tragedy. This division between the spectator and chorus in which there is modelled and is modulated the division of the subject in the traditional play, I recalled it last year, to designate what is involved exactly in the place of the analyst. Another paradox of the psychoanalytic act, this actor who is effaced, rejoining earlier what I said about him evacuating the \mathbf{o} -object. If the *passage à l'acte* is in the rule of analysis what the person who enters into it is asked to avoid, it is precisely to privilege this place of *acting out* that the analyst just by himself takes and keeps charge of. To keep quiet, to see nothing, to hear nothing, who does not remember that these are the terms in which a wisdom that is not ours indicates the path to those who want the truth. Is there not something strange on condition that one recognises the sense of these commandments to see there an analogy in the position of the analyst? But with this singular fruit that gives it its context. Because he is isolated from it by keeping quiet, the voice that is the kernel of what, by being said, creates speech. By seeing nothing, which is very often only too well observed by the analyst, isolating the look that is the knot tightened on the sack of everything that is seen at least. And finally to hear nothing of these two demands into which desire has slipped, of these two demands that summon

him, these two demands that block him from the function of the breast or indeed of excrement.

What reality is there to push him to fulfill this function? What desire, what satisfaction can the analyst encounter there? I do not intend to designate this right away even if before leaving you I should say something more about it. It is appropriate here to throw into relief the dimension of *scapegoat*, a theme cherished by Frazer. We know that its origin is properly speaking Semitic. The scapegoat, the one who takes on himself this *o*-object, the one who ensures that forever, the subject can be relieved from it. The one that ensures that the fruit of a terminated analysis, I was able last year to designate as a truth of which the subject is henceforth incurable, precisely because one of the terms of it have been evacuated. How can it not be seen that it is from there that there is explained the singular position that, in the social world this community of psychoanalysts occupies, protected by an international association for the protection of scapegoats! The scapegoat escapes by forming a group, and better still by degrees. It is true that it is difficult to conceive of a society of scapegoats. So then you make sergeant majors out of some scapegoats. And from the scapegoats who are only waiting in the antechamber to become so. Curious!

This facile derision would have no other reason for existing if, in the text that I have just received of an upcoming congress that will have the cheek to be held at Rome, there were not already texts, I mean (288) already published exemplary ones. Because it is not because people do not know Lacan's discourse that they do not find themselves face to face with the difficulties that I have just articulated here, and particularly what is involved in transference. When people struggle to define what is non-transferential in the analytic situation, some statements have to be brought out that are the confession, properly speaking, of the fact that nothing is understood about it. Nothing is understood about it because people do not have the key. And they do not have the key because they do not go looking for it where I stated it! In the same way, they invent a term called the *self*, and I must say that it would be no harm for someone who has some curiosity to see how this can both be justified and be resolved in a discourse like the one that I have articulated today. If I have the time at our next meetings, I will say more about it then. Likewise the error and properly speaking the ineptitude of what is put forward on the subject of what is involved in psychoanalytic

treatment of psychosis, and the radical failure marked in it to situate precisely psychosis in a psychopathology that is of an analytic order, comes from the same source.

Undoubtedly, if I indicated that I could have articulated something different, something from which I declared I was happily dispensed, about the subject of the psychoanalytic act, it is in the horizon of what is involved in the masochist that this articulation should be posed. And assuredly, of course, not in order to confuse them, psychoanalytic and masochistic practice. But it would be instructive and, in a way opened up, already indicated by what we were able to say, by what is literally displayed in masochistic practice, namely, the conjunction of the perverse subject with the *o*-object properly speaking. In a certain way, one can say that as long as he wants it, the masochist is the true master. He is the master of the true game. He can fail at it, of course. There is even every chance that he will fail, because he needs nothing less than the big Other. When the Eternal Father is no longer there to fulfill this role, there is no longer anyone. And if you address yourself to a woman, Wanda of course, there is no chance. She will understand nothing about it the poor thing. But even though the masochist fails he enjoys it all the same. So that he can say that he is the master of the real game. It is quite obvious that we do not dream for an instant of imputing such success to the psychoanalyst. That would be to trust him about the search for his enjoyment and we are far from according this to him. Besides it would be very inappropriate.

To put forward a formula that has its interest because I will have to take it up again and you must not be surprised, in connection with the obsessional, we will say that the psychoanalyst plays/makes the master (*fait le maitre*) in the two senses of the word *faire*. Pay a little bit of attention for just five minutes more because it is very much of a short circuit and it is delicate. You sense well that the question about the psychoanalytic act, is, as I told you earlier, that of the decisive act that (289) from the psychoanalysand makes there arise, be inaugurated, be established the psychoanalyst. If, as I indicated to you earlier the psychoanalyst is confused with the production of the doing, of the work of the psychoanalysand, it is here that one can really say that the psychoanalysand makes (*fait*), in the strong sense of the term, the psychoanalyst. But one can also say that at the precise moment the aforesaid psychoanalyst emerges,

if it is so hard to grasp what can push him into this, it is indeed because the act is reduced to playing, in the sense of a pretence, to playing the psychoanalyst, to playing the one that guarantees the *subject supposed to know*. And who, at the start of his career, has not confided to whoever wants to aid him in his first steps that he has precisely this feeling of pretending to be a psychoanalyst (*de faire le psychoanalyste*)? Why remove its value from this testimony?

But this is what allows, by taking up these two functions of the word *faire*, to say that it is quite true that in leading someone to the term of his psychoanalysis, to the term of this incurable truth, to the point of the one who knows that if there is indeed an act, there is no sexual relationship, is it not here, even if this does not happen too often, to ensure somewhere a true mastery? But on the other hand, contrary to the masochist, if the psychoanalyst for his part also can be said to have some relationship to the operation, it is certainly not because he is the master of it. But that all the same, he supports, he incarnates the trump card, in so far as he is the one who brings into play the whole weight of what is involved in the *o*-object.

What then, after having only pushed this discourse this far today, what about the point where this discourse itself can be situated, namely from where I state it? Is it from where the *subject supposed to know* keeps himself? Can I play the scholar in speaking about the psychoanalytic act? Certainly not. Nothing is closed off about what I am opening up as a question concerning what is involved in this act. That I am the logician of it, and in a way that is confirmed by the fact that this logic makes me odious to everyone, why not? This logic is articulated from the very co-ordinates of its practice and from the points where it takes its motivation. Knowledge in so far as it is produced by the truth - is this not what a certain version of the relationships between knowledge and enjoyment imagine?

For the neurotic, knowledge is the enjoyment of the *subject supposed to know*. This indeed is why the neurotic is incapable of sublimation. Sublimation for its part is the proper of what makes the circuit of what the *subject supposed to know* is reduced to. Every artistic creation is situated in this circumscribing of what remains irreducible in this knowledge *qua* distinguished from enjoyment. Something nevertheless comes to

mark its enterprise, in so far as never in the subject does it designate what is its inaptitude for its full realisation.

Does not this imputation that the work of the exploited person is supposed in the enjoyment of the exploiter find something like its analogue at the entrance of knowledge? In the fact that the means that (290) it constitutes will make those that possess these means profit from those who win this knowledge by the sweat of their truth. No doubt the analogy would miss the point by operating in such distinct domains, if for some time, knowledge had not shown itself so complicit with a certain mode of exploitation. Under the name of capitalist, as it happens, the excess of exploitation is something that is not liked. I am saying is not liked because there is nothing more to be said. The principle of revolutionary agitation is nothing other than that there is a point where things are not liked. Now, if you remember, did I not mark last year that the position of the analyst, if it ought to remain in conformity in all rigour to his act, was that, in the field of what he inaugurates with the help of this act as doing, there is no place for there to be something that he does not like, nor that he likes either. And that if he makes room for this, he leaves it.

But this is not to say for all that that he will not have his word to say about what can divert, limit those who, in a certain field which is the field of knowledge, have got to the point of rebelling about a certain going astray of knowledge, about the correct way, that favours knowledge emerging once again from a field where it exploits. It is on this last word that I am leaving you, promising you for the next time to enter into the detail of what is at stake concerning the respective positions of the hysteric and the obsessional with regard to the big Other.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 11 June 1969

(291) This little weekly festival not being destined to last for all eternity, today we are going to try to give you an idea of the way in which, in a more favourable, better structured context we can set about putting a little rigour into the theory. When I chose this year as a title for my seminar *From an Other to the other*, one of the people that, I must say, most distinguished himself by a ear ready to understand me in this place, but who, like St Paul, had been floored by this thing that happened to us last year - as you all know, its memory lives on - like St Paul on the road to Damascus, saw himself being flung to the ground from his theoretical mount by the inner light of Maoism, this person listened to this title and said to me: “Yes...that sounds banal”. I would like all the same, if you do not already suspect it, to clearly highlight that this means something, something that necessitates the very explicit choice of these words that, as I dare to hope, you will write in your head, are written: *From an Other to the other*. The big O, I happen, I happened this year to rewrite it on several occasions on these sheets where from time to time I recall the existence of a certain number of graphs, and the *other* concerns what I write with an **o**. If this term obviously no longer resonated in an ear deafened by another noise except as the air of a ballad, of the style “from one to the other”, from the one to the other, off we go for a walk, it is all the same no small thing to say it. From one to the other marks the points of scansion of a displacement; from here to there. But in any case, obviously, for us who are not at every moment bitten by the itch to act, we can ask ourselves whether it matters if it is two ones (*deux un*) that are stake, why one more than the other, if the other is still one of them.

It is a certain prepositional use of these terms, one and the other, to insert them between a *from* and then a *to* which has the effect of establishing between them what I called at other times - you remember perhaps, anyway I imagine you do – a metonymical relationship. This is what I have just designated by saying what use is it, if it is still a one. Nevertheless, if you write things as follows:

$$\frac{\text{from the one}}{1} \quad \text{to} \quad \frac{\text{the other}}{1}$$

(292) the metonymical relationship is 1 in each case. It is important to write it like that, because a writing like that, is a privilege signified effect that is generally known under the term of number. Namely, that this one is characterised by what is called numerical identity. Since nothing is designated by these terms here, because we are

not at the level of any unary identification, of a one placed for example on your palm like a tattoo that identifies you in a certain context - it has happened - since we are not at that level, since it is a stroke that does not mark anything that is at stake in each case, we are strictly at the level of what is called numerical identity. Namely, of something that marks pure difference in so far as nothing specifies it, the other is not different (*n'est l'autre*) in any way, and it is precisely because of that that it is the other.

There you are. So then one can ask oneself why, from the one to the other, why there are these kinds of things that hang around, that are called definite articles. In French *le* is not clearly seen immediately in the first. The one (*l'un*), why the one? We would be quite ready to qualify this 1 of the one as euphonic if experience did not make us distrust these sorts of explanations. On this point we have been sufficiently warned by previous encounters. Let us try to see better if this *l'*, this *le*, the definite article is better justified before the Other. The definite article in French is distinguished from its use in English, for example, where the demonstrative accent remains so strongly stressed. The definite article has a privileged value in French. It is what is called its value of functioning for what is common knowledge (*le notoire*). From the one to the other from which we started, does this mean the other among all, in the sense in which we are going very gently to push it? Among all, are there then others? It is good to notice here, to remember if you can, that we have posited that at the level of the Other, at least when we have written it with an O, we have also formulated that there is no Other of the Other. And this is very essential for our whole articulation. So then we will look for another well-known fact. If there is no Other of the Other does this mean that there is only one of them? But that too is impossible, because without that, it would not be the Other.

All of this may seem to you to be a tiny bit rhetorical. It is. People speculated a lot in very ancient times about these themes that were set out in a rather different way. People spoke about the other and the same, and God knows where that led a whole lineage that is called properly speaking Platonic. It is not the same thing as talking about the one and the other. Not that the Platonic line of descent was able to do otherwise than to manage to pose the question of the one, but very precisely in a way

that when all is said and done we are going to interrogate in the sense of putting it in question.

(293) The one as we are taking it here is of a different order to this One developed by Platonic meditation. It is clear that, for those who already heard me this year, this relationship of the one to the Other is directed towards nothing less than recalling, than making tangible the function of the ordered pair. And you have seen in passing the major role it has in the introduction of what is bizarrely called set theory (*des ensembles*). Because everyone seems to accommodate themselves very easily to these sets, in the plural, even though it is precisely a question and a very lively one, although not entirely settled yet, whether they can be put in the plural. In any case it is not so easy if the question remains open of whether one can consider in any way that a member can belong to two different sets, while remaining the same. This is a little parenthesis designed to remind you that this does not fail to constitute the very powerful logical innovation introduced by everything that relates to what I will call setting (*l'ensemblissement*) – for reasons of consonance, I prefer that to *ensemblement* – even though set theory runs aground from time to time. But it resets itself very easily. It is obviously in the margins of such a reference that I would like to recall to you this quite radical innovation that set theory constitutes by introducing this step, and literally at its origin, that no member whatsoever should be confused with the set, even though it might be its only member. It is not the same thing. And this is the step of logical innovation that ought to serve us exactly to introduce this problematic Other as we should, as regards which I have just questioned why we should give it this value of something well-known; the Other.

In this sense, which is the one in which we introduce it as provided with this O, it takes on this well-known value, not of being the Other among all, nor moreover of being the only one, but simply because of the fact that there might not be any of them, and that in its place there might be only an empty set. This is what designates it as Other. Perhaps, on this occasion, you remember the schema that I inscribed on several occasions this year, on these white pages, the schema of S_1 outside a circle designating precisely the limit of the Other as empty set. It is the big O, the Other. This to designate the relationship of this S_1 to an S_2 which is inscribed in the field of the Other and which is properly this signifying Other of which I speak as being that

on which the constitution of the subject depends in that the S_1 represents this subject for another signifier.

$$S_1 \begin{pmatrix} O \\ S_2 \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{pmatrix} O \\ S_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

I also insisted on the fact that by having this position there would be renewed the limit of O, again called empty set, with S_3 and so many (294) others that could here take the place of a certain relay. It is this relay that we are going to explore today and I only gave this reminder for those who because they were absent did not see what I am designating, because they were absent when I already wrote the formulae in this way.

Note carefully that there is nothing arbitrary in identifying by the same O this limit of the line drawn here. Because it is not the least curious point of set theory that at whatever level the empty set occurs, when you question a set - and this, you are going to be able to imagine very easily right away - suppose the set is made of the member 1 and of the set whose only member is the member 1. Here is a set with two distinct members, since one cannot confuse in any way a member with a set that only includes this member as member of this set.

$$\begin{pmatrix} (& &) \\ (& (&) &) \\ (& 1, & (& 1 &) &) \\ (& & (& &) &) \\ (& & (& &) &) \end{pmatrix}$$

Now, we can always at any instant produce the empty set under the heading of what is called a subset. This operation described as subsets is perhaps not the least interesting thing, it is perhaps even the principal one of set theory. I regret having to recall it, but it is the widening of my audience that forces me to recall that to make (x,y,z,n) the members of a set, if one calls subset another set that is included in this set in the form of this type, that x, y, z constitute a subset of it. You quickly see that the number x, y, n, for example and then y, z, n, and so on, that the number, I think I do not need to insist for that to appear obvious, it is clear that numerically, to assemble the members of subsets, in other words what here at first sight might look like parts are obviously not in any case numerically equal to the members of the set T from which we started

to articulate these subsets. And it is even easy to imagine the exponential formula that will show us that in the measure that the number of members of a set increase, the numerical sum of subsets that one can construct of it largely exceeds the number of these members. This is very important to recall to loosen this sort of attachment to a supposedly natural geometry and especially to a postulate of which, if I remember correctly, somewhere around the tenth book of Euclid – I hope I am not wrong – a certain Eudox makes a great deal.

(295) Now this is capital because we are going to put our finger on it immediately in the following form. The fact is that by enumerating the subsets of our Other here reduced to its simplest function, namely being a set bearing the 1, of this signifier that is necessary as being the one to which there is going to be represented from the one to the Other the one of the subject. You will see later to what limits it is legitimate to reduce these to S's, S_1 and S_2 to the same one. This indeed is the object of our remarks today. It is clear that by questioning the 1 inscribed in the field defined as Other, as a set as such, we will have as subsets 1 and this, which is the way the empty set is written. This is the simplest illustration of what I recalled: that the subsets constitute a collection numerically superior to that of the members that define a set.

$$1 \quad \{1\} \quad \{1, \emptyset\} \quad \bigcirc \quad 1 \quad 1$$

Is it necessary to insist, that you see there being reproduced here in the shape of this double parenthesis which is indeed effectively the same as that of the line that O designates here, exactly the identity of this O as empty set, in these two points of the schema that reproduce it. Here then we are reminded that once something as simple as the unary trait can be inscribed in the field of the Other, once this is conceivable, from the same movement there arises, by the virtue of the set, the function of the ordered pair. Because it is enough to see that from then on the two 1's that can be inscribed, the one here as first member of the set and the other by filling the second empty set, if it is possible to express oneself in this way, because as empty set, it is the same, these two 1's are distinguished by a different belonging (*d'une appartenance différente*).

Here indeed lies the virtue, not encountered up to now, of this apparently unimportant ‘from the one to the Other’, from which we started earlier in order to recall in it what is specific in the relation that interests us and justifies this year our title of *From an Other to the other*. It is in so far as everything that constitutes our experience can only turn, return and always come back to be highlighted around the question of the subsistence of the subject. This is always an axis, an indispensable axiomatic never to be lost that we have to deal with in the concrete in the most efficacious way. Namely, that if this axis and this axiom are not preserved we enter into confusion. This was shown recently in everything stated about analytic experience and especially in the more and more invasive integration of this function described as *the self* which has a primary role in the present articulations of Anglo-American analysis.

What is involved, in effect, from the first steps that this distinction allows us, this asymmetry upon which, as you see, there is grounded the difference between the signifier that represents the subject and the (296) one with which it is going to be inscribed in the field of the Other in order for there to emerge the subject of this very representation? This fundamental asymmetry allows us to pose the question: what about the Other? Does he know? I am not asking you to answer all together. If I had a brochette of two rows before me that were pupils of a certain type, luckily I do not have to consider them as typical, I can all the same recall them as amusing, and after all why would I not be told: “But no, he does not know. Everyone knows that; *the subject supposed to know*, bang, bang! no longer exists!” There are still people who believe that, who even teach it, certainly in unexpected places even though they have only emerged recently. But that is not at all what I said. I did not say that the Other does not know, it is those who say that who do not know very much, despite all my efforts to teach it to them! I said that the Other, as is obvious since it is the place of the unconscious, knows; only it is not a subject. The negation “there is no *subject supposed to know*”, if in fact I ever said it in that negative form, it concerns the subject, not the knowledge. It is moreover easy to grasp provided one has an experience of the unconscious. It is distinguished precisely by the fact that in it one does not know who it is that knows. That can be written in two ways:

Who it is that knows (*qui c’est qui sait*)

Who knows who it is (*qui sait qui c’est*)

French is a beautiful tongue, especially when one knows how to use it. As in every tongue no pun is ever produced in it by chance.

So then this reminder of the status of the Other, is what in my symbolism is written like that, $S(O)$. S , which means signifier, and O , to which I gave today the figure of the empty set. I put it there because, in the same passionate style as earlier – imaginarily since of course I am forced to imagine demands and responses here – as earlier I supposed imaginarily that I was being told that the Other did not know. I would not like you to get the idea from that that what I am in the process of explaining is what is on the top left of my graph, namely S signifier of \emptyset . That is something different. Since I will give two more seminars I have the time to explain the difference! For the moment, what I am deducing today with some slowness, but very important to go through for reasons that I will perhaps let you glimpse at the end of this session, is that there is no confusion about a certain number of notations. $S(O)$, this is what has been stated here about what is involved in the Other under the heading of empty set. Do I have to go back to it once again? Because I have been speaking about nothing but that since the beginning. But it is not yet proved that I do not have to go back to it, because that means that in no case does this (297) mean that it is One. It is not because there is no other that it is One.

Now for the subject to have himself represented from the outside, it is necessary that one signifier should find another; it cannot find it anywhere but there. This is the source of the confusion. It is that from this painful necessity that it should start from elsewhere, naturally not without reason, but I cannot all the same redo the history of this for you. Namely, how this animal with ants in his pants (*feu au derrière*) comes to have to promote himself as subject. It is quite certain that it is these ants in his pants that push him to it. Only if I am talking about ants in his pants, that is not the only thing that interests you. So then it is necessary all the same that from time to time I have to talk, properly speaking, about what is happening, neglecting the ants in his pants that is nevertheless the only thing of course that can motivate him to have himself represented in this way for what in effect we must start from. Namely, not from the Other but from this an other. Namely, from this one inscribed in the Other, a necessary condition for the subject to become attached to it, a fine occasion also not to remember what is a condition for this one, namely, the Other.

There you are. So then I do not know if you saw that coming. But in any case it is clear that if I spoke to you about Pascal and about his wager like that, at the beginning of the year, it was not simply to display an erudition that moreover I completely hid as usual about my Jansenistic affinities and other stupidities for the journalists. It is not quite this that is at stake. What is at stake is to study what is happening from what I have just written on the board and about which you ought to be already three-quarters of an hour ahead of me. The fact is then something is going to announce the subject under the simplest heading from this same unary One to which we reduce, in the strict hypothesis, what is involved in what he can attach himself to in the field of the Other. And that there is a mode of this, which is the simplest one that I wrote there today, it is to count himself as One. You must admit it is tempting; it is even so tempting that there is not a single one of you that does not do it, the whole of psychoanalysis having been poured over your heads, you can do nothing about it. You have believed for a long time that you are One. It must be said that you have strong reasons for that.

I am not for the moment in the process of speaking about mentality nor about cultural context, nor about other such stammerings. And after all this makes me rather vacillate, namely, fall into the lamentable weakness of evoking here what in any case you are incapable of comprehending, because I don't either. The fact is that there are all the same zones in the world that it is the goal of religion to avoid, it is an Other. Only this involves such a way of behaving with the divinity, not simply like Pascal to say that one does not know what it is but that one does not even know whether it is. But no! One cannot say that, because already to say that, is to say too much for a Buddhist. This presupposes a discipline that obviously is required from then on, (298) consequences that are going to result from it in the relationships – but that you suspect all the same – between truth and enjoyment. And people put on some DDT or other there, on the field of the Other, that obviously allows them to do things that are not allowed for us.

What would be good, what would be amusing, is to see the relationship that what I am here in the process of telling you has, with the fact that logic, like that, which was produced at a certain moment of history in parallel with what we were cooking up, which is not too bad, which is full of things still completely unexploited, Aristotle.

This ought all the same to have a relationship with the fact that among them, the way they cook this dish takes on a different form. Instead of there being simply a major, a minor and a conclusion, there are necessarily at least five terms. Only to grasp it properly, you would have to begin first by carrying out some exercises that ought to allow a different relationship to be made between truth and enjoyment. Which is not common in a civilisation strongly centred on its neurotics.

There you are. So then as a result what is at stake is the fact that One the subject is announced to this an Other. This an Other who is there as inscribed first of all as unary signifier, with respect to which he has to posit himself as One. And you see here the import of my Pascal's wager, it is a matter of doubles or quits (*quitte ou double*). A doubles or quits that, as I pointed out to you in Pascal's wager, is played by a single player, since the Other, as I insisted when I was speaking about Pascal's wager, is the empty set, he is not a player. He knows things but since he is not a subject, he cannot play. Doubles or quits, Pascal here articulates the thing clearly for us. He even says that even if it were only that, to have a second life after the first, that would be worth everything! This makes a certain impression. Since precisely we are in a civilisation whose axis is constituted by neurotics, as I was saying just now, people go along with it, people believe in it. People believe in it with all their hearts. I believe in it just as you believe in it. It would be worth the trouble to get rid of this one in order to have another. Why? Because this would allow an addition to be made, to make two of them. It is all the more likely that one is sure to win because there is no other choice.

I do not know whether you grasp very well the way in which what I am in the process of stating overlaps a certain little schema that is found somewhere in the remarks made in connection with the report of Mr Someone-or-other. It is a mirror relationship with the field of the Other, and constituted exactly from the relationship to the ideal, to which it is perfectly sufficient to give the support of the unary trait in order to establish it. The remainder of the schema show us that this is going to have a decisive value on the way in which there is going to be taken up something that here, at the level of this figure, I am forced to establish like every datum, namely, this \circ that I put somewhere, so that it also comes to be reflected in the mirror in the proper way. But anyway it was a stage of the explanation. It is a matter of knowing (299) where

this **o** comes from. And that has the closest relationship with this unary trait in the Other in so far as it is the foundation of what, in this schema, takes its importance from being the ego ideal.

Have you not already seen that what is at stake in this doubles or quits, is something that is a little too charged in a certain text that I have been speaking about for a very long time, so that all the same some of you must have half opened it - Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. The re-introduction in this way has the interest of bringing out from it what is, as I might say, the core of the proof. Because this little apologue of the master and the slave, with its dramatics, you understand, he was speaking in a Germany, there like that, that was completely stirred up by the rows of people who happily represented something else. It was a matter of soldiers led on by someone rather clever, who had no need to come to my seminar to know how one had to operate in politics in Europe. So then the master and the slave, the fight to the death for pure prestige, that shoves something right into your face! The fight to the death, there is not the slightest fight to the death, because the slave is not dead, otherwise he would not become a slave! There is not the slightest need to fight, to the death or not; there is simply a need to think about it, and with this fight, to think means that yes, in effect, if we have to do it we will! People made a unary trait with the only thing after all, reflect carefully on it, with which a living being can do it, with a life. In effect on this point we are easy, we will only have one. Everyone knows that, fundamentally, but that does not prevent there being only one interesting thing. To believe that one has an infinity of them, and above and beyond this, that it is promised that these infinite lives, God knows how and in the name of what, this is what we are going to try to elucidate, will be infinitely happy.

To be Pascal is quite something. When he wrote on little pieces of paper not designed for publication, it had a certain structure. With the fight that is only to the death in order to transform his life into a signifier limited to the unary trait you constitute pure prestige. And moreover it has all sorts of effects because it comes to take its place at the level of existing things, that are no more mortal in the case of the animal than they are in the case of man. Since in the animal, this is what happens in the struggle of the males described so well for us by our dear Lorenz, whom the weeklies feast on twenty years after I showed its importance in my seminars at Sainte-Anne. It was the period

of the mirror stage and of something or other, the pilgrim cricket, the stickleback and people who asked what it was: "What is a stickleback?" I made a drawing for them. Sticklebacks, or any of the others, do not necessarily kill each other, they intimidate each other. Lorenz showed staggering things about this, what happens among wolves; the one who is effectively intimidated offers his throat, the (300) gesture is enough, there is no need for the other to butcher him. Only after that the winning wolf does not think it is two wolves. The speaking being believes he is two, namely that, as they say, he is master of himself. This is what creates pure prestige. If there were no signifier, or some such thing, you would have trouble trying to imagine it. Only it is enough to see anyone at all to know that he believes himself to be at least two. Because the first thing that he always tells you is that if things had not happened like that, it would have been different and it would have been so much better because that corresponded to his true nature, to his ideal. The exploitation of man by man begins at the level of ethics, except for the fact that one can see better what is at stake at the level of ethics, namely, that it is the slave who is the ideal of the master. He is the one that brings him what is necessary, the additional One (*le Un en plus*). The ideal is service-service. Yes, he is there. This makes much less astonishing the fact that what happens to the master in Hegel, is obvious, you only have to look at what happens at the end of history, namely, that the master is as completely enslaved as is possible. Hence the formula that I chose at a turning point in Sainte-Anne, since I recall it, of being the cuckold of history. But cuckold he is from the start, he is a magnificent cuckold. The ideal, and the ego ideal, is that, a body that obeys. So then he is going to look for it in the slave. Naturally he does not know what the slave's position is. Because after all, in all of that, absolutely nothing shows that the slave does not know very well what he wants from the beginning. I often remarked that the question of his relationships with enjoyment is something that has not been at all elucidated. In any case, this is enough to leave his own choice in the affair completely in the shadow. Because nothing says after all that he refused the fight or even that he has been intimidated. Because if this affair of doubles or quits between the One and the One costs something, there is nothing to say that it cannot leave its mark on all situations other than this animal one in which one finds the eventual attachment point, but which is not at all necessarily unique.

One can imagine the slave who takes things completely differently. There are even people called the Stoics who had precisely tried to do something of this kind. But anyway they were, like that, like the lobster in the story, the Church painted them in green and hung them on the wall. So then we are no longer very aware of what was at stake. They are no more recognisable attached to the wall and painted in green than the lobster is. The Stoic had a certain solution that he had given to that, the position of the slave, to ensure that the others could continue their fight as they wanted, he was busy with something else.

All of that is to repeat for you what I just told you earlier, that the exploitation of man by man, is also let us say to be considered at the level of ethics. And that the operation that is at stake in my right to (301) consider myself as two, for the constitution of my pure prestige, is something that deserves to take on its importance from the reminder of all these co-ordinates. Because this has the closest relationship with what is called discontent in civilisation. Where things go from the fight to the death that for its part is perhaps a little bit more complicated than its start, we have an affirmation of it in a civilisation that precisely is characterised by having taken this starting point. Because to take the subject up again, the master, Hegel's ideal, represented by 1, and who of course wins because he is playing by himself, it is clear that since it is exactly for that reason, to signify oneself by 2, having won, that a relationship is going to be established now between this 2 and this 1, to which he can be attached. Because he puts this 1 into the balance on the table, in the field of the Other; and there is no reason why he should stop; against this one he is going to play two.

1) 1) 2) 3)

In other words against anyone who is going to be caught by the same bug as him and believe himself to be master, he is going to go into action, helped by his slave. This continues in that way in accordance with the series that I already spoke to you about at one time, because you cannot say that I do not make things easy for you: 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 and that continues up to 289 or some remarkable figure of this kind. Each of these figures being considered, it is the Fibonacci series, as the sum of the two previous figures, the Fibonacci series being characterised by the fact that $U_0 = 1$, that $U_1 = 1$, and that $U_n = U_{n-1} + U_{n-2}$. You see that what is at stake is not very far from what our civilisation involves. Namely, that there are always people to take up

the relay of mastery, and that it is not astonishing that now, in the final term, we have a One of about 900 million people on our hands becoming master of the previous stage.

The interest of this of course is not at all to give rather crude reminders like that of what is going on at present. If I am talking to you about the Fibonacci series, it is because of the following. That in the measure that the figures that represent it increase, the relationship U_{n-1}/U_n is more and more close, more and more rigorously strictly equal to what we have called, and not by chance although in another context, by the same sign that we designate the \mathbf{o} -object. This little irrational \mathbf{o} , equal to $\sqrt{5/2} - 1/2$ is something that is perfectly stabilised as a relationship in the measure that what is generated from the representation of the subject by a numerical signifier with regard to another numerical signifier is obtained very quickly, there is no need to go into the millions. When you are more or less at the level of 21 or after that 34 and so on, already you obtain a value very close to that of \mathbf{o} . So then this is what is at stake. It is a matter of comprehending, of trying to comprehend by something other than the reference to the ants in the pants that I spoke about earlier, namely, by the procedure itself of what happens when there is played out the game of the representation of the (302) subject.

If we try to justify this unbelievable start of double or quits, of 1 against 1 so that it makes 2, and then that this no longer stops up to the end, until finally having as a result simply, but this is no small thing, of defining in a strict way a certain proportion, a certain difference that functions at the level of this system, the one that I designated as \mathbf{o} in figures. This master, in short, has given his little finger, because fundamentally, pure prestige does not cost very much, to make a 1, it was his life. But since at this level after all it is not sure that people grasp the import of what they are doing, as is demonstrated by the fact that in effect one must know a lot about it to look twice at it, he gave his little finger once and then the whole system gets into it. I mean that the master, with his slave, is going to go into the pot in his turn. The Trojans knew something about it. Do you not believe that one could see in this Other, this empty set, something like a representation, the true one of what is involved in the Trojan horse. Except for the fact that it does not have quite the same function as the image shows us. Namely, that to pour these warriors into the heart of a human

gathering that is not able for them. But that through this appeal, this procedure of the 1 that is equal to 1, of the game of mastery, the Trojan horse absorbs more and more into its belly, and that costs more and more.

That is the discontent of civilisation. But I have to go further without making little verses and that leaving this whole population that celebrates him, this Trojan horse, queue up before the castle of power, a Kafkaesque castle. I specify that the thing only takes its sense by taking this \mathbf{o} into account. Namely, that the \mathbf{o} , only the \mathbf{o} , accounts for the fact that the wager that is first established between the 1 and the 1 one is double or quits. Why double or quits since what it is a matter of winning, one already has, as someone very well remarks in the dialogue of Pascal. Only it must be believed that this \mathbf{o} that is separated out from the pressure of the process up to the end, must have been already there, and when one puts 1 against 1, there is a difference;

$$1 + \mathbf{o} - 1 = \mathbf{o}$$

If the master brings into play the 1 against the theoretical 1 which is what a life other than his own is, it is by reason of the fact that $1 + \mathbf{o}$ and 1, between the two, there is a difference that is seen subsequently. Which means that, whatever way you tackle what follows, namely, whether you begin your series by 1, if the law that forms the third term from the addition of the two that precede it is observed, you have this series which is remarkable very exactly by the fact that the number \mathbf{o} , the co-efficient of \mathbf{o} will reproduce the whole numbers in the previous series. Namely, if you wish, the number of slaves at stake. It is in this relationship of the growth of the series to a growth that is behind because it is what is enslaved, a growth behind by a notch as regards (303) the coefficients. It is from the \mathbf{o} that I called the *surplus enjoying* in so far as it is what is sought in the slavery of the other as such, without anything being highlighted except something obscure with regard to its proper enjoyment of the other, it is in this relationship of risk and of gaming that there resides the function of the \mathbf{o} . It is in the fact of having the disposition of the body of the other, without being able to do anything more about what is involved in his enjoyment, that there resides the function of the *surplus enjoying*. And it is important to underline it in order to illustrate not what is always the function of the \mathbf{o} , because it is the \mathbf{o} privileged by the inaugural function of the ideal that is at stake, but to demonstrate that we can, at this level, assume a purely logical genesis of it.

This is the only value properly speaking of what we are advancing today. But from its illustrative character and from the link made with what I called the disposal of the body, it is not by chance that our civilisation described as liberal, and it is not at all a bad thing that Levi-Strauss should have pinpointed it for the ravages that it brings with it at the strict level of the civilisation of the Aztecs. Among them simply it was more conspicuous, the **o** was taken from the chest of the victim on the altars. At least that had a value as regards which it was conceivable that it was able to serve a cult that was properly that of enjoyment.

We are not in the process of saying that in our culture, everything is reduced to this dialectic of the master and the slave. Let us not forget that in the genesis of Judaeo-Christianity, the first murder is one that I do not need to remind you of, but about which no one seems to have remarked that if Cain kills Abel, it is to do the same thing as him. The lambs that he was sacrificing pleased God so much, tickled his nostrils in a manifestly visible way. Because after all, the God of the Jews has a body – what is the column of smoke that precedes the Israelite migration if not a body. Cain sees Abel furthering God's enjoyment to this point by his sacrifice. How could he not take this step of sacrificing the sacrificer himself in his turn?

We are here at a level where there can be touched what the **o** can have in terms of this relationship that is masked by all this hazy hope in what our lives will be in the beyond. And we leave completely to one side the question that can arise about the enjoyment that is behind it. This empty set, this field cleared of the Other, here are questions that undoubtedly allow to give in what I called earlier our general civilisation, the value of a slogan like that described as *habeas corpus*. You have your body, it belongs to you. Only you can dispose of it so that it finds itself in the frying pan.

This no doubt would allow us to see something that is not vain. That the body's rate, if I can express myself in this way, of what in this (304) dialectic passes into exploitation, this rate of the body participates as they say in the same style, of the logically prior rate of the *surplus enjoying*. Whether $5 + 3o$ can come or not come to possess, as they say, $3 + 2o$, it nevertheless remains that 3 had all the same its 2o,

these 2o that are inherited from 2, from the still earlier stage. The body, the body idealised and purified of enjoyment, calls for the sacrifice of the body. This is a very important point to comprehend what I announced to you the last time and that I only need to telescope, namely, the structure of the obsessional.

The obsessional like the hysteric of whom we will speak the next time, since moreover this time I was only able to describe the series for you in the ascending direction, namely, of doubles or quits, but there is another direction. There is the direction of the subject, that, why not, can make himself be represented to the One that is in the Other as empty set, this is what is generally called castration. And psychoanalysis is designed to illuminate this other direction of the experience, from which you will see that it culminates at quite different results. To announce it from now, it is here that the structure of the hysteric will be inscribed.

But today let us limit ourselves to highlighting that the obsessional is situated entirely with respect to what I believed I should articulate for you today about these numerical relationships in so far as they are grounded in a well specified series. I repeat, that it is only by way of having a value as example and in a way in conformity to what is involved in the essence of the neurotic who himself is an example for us. And only an example of the way in which it is appropriate to treat what is involved in the structure of the subject, the obsessional then does not want to take himself for the master. He only takes it as an example in his way of escaping from what? Is it death? Of course, at a certain surface level, as I articulated, the obsessional who is very smart can take the place of the **o** itself which in any case always survives in the profits of the fight. Whatever happens the *surplus enjoying* is always there. It is a matter of knowing for whom. The *surplus enjoying* is the true stake of the wager, and there is no need for me to recall what I articulated about it in order for it to have its full sense. Here is where the obsessional looks for his place, in the Other, and finds it, since it is at the level of the Other that in this ethical genesis, the **o** is forged like that. So what is he about? What is the end of the obsessional? It is not so much to escape death which is present in all of this, but is never, as such, graspable in any logical articulation. As I presented it to you earlier, the fight to the death is a function of the ideal, not of death that is never perceived, except written from a limit that is well beyond the game, the logical field.

On the contrary what is at stake, and just as inaccessible in this dialectic, is enjoyment and it is from that that the obsessional means to escape. This is something that I hope to be able to articulate clinically enough to show you that it is the centre of it. And since I have not been able to push things any further today, not even to the point of communicating something that I had to illustrate today by a letter, I will stop there for today. I simply indicate to you that if you come the next time you will know why in any case it will not be in this room that, next year, I hope to pursue my remarks for you and with you.

Seminar 24: Wednesday 18 June 1969

(307) I would be in an even more excellent mood if I didn't feel like yawning as you have just seen me do, because of the fact that I had, I do not know why, by pure chance, a short night. My excellent mood is founded on these things that you have between two doors and that is called a hope. On this occasion, that it is possible, if things turn out in a certain way, that I may be liberated from this weekly sublimation that consists in my relations with you. "You do not see me from where I look at you", I stated in the course of one of these seminars of the previous years, to characterise what is involved in a type of *o*-object in so far as it is grounded in the look, that it is nothing other than the look. "You owe me nothing from where I devour you, *tu ne me dois rien d'ou je te devore*". Such is the message that I might well receive from you in the form that I defined in its inverted form in so far as it is itself mine. And I would no longer have to make the return journey here every week around an *o*-object which is properly what I am designating thus by a formula that as you sense – duty (*devoir*), devouring (*dévoration*) – is inscribed in what is properly called an oral drive. It would be better to refer it to what it is, the placental thing onto which I stick myself as I am

able. This great body that you constitute, to constitute from my substance something that might be for you the object of a satisfaction. “Oh! My mother Intelligence” as someone or other has said.

Today then, I am only going to half keep my word about what I told you the last time. Because it is only in the form of a riddle that I am rapidly questioning you about what may take shape in your minds about something which explains why, from next year, I will no longer have at my disposition this place where you do me the honour of crowding in, because of what I produce here. I was made an assistant lecturer by a rather noble school, the one described as *Hautes Etudes*. I was offered shelter by this School in this School here, *Normale Supérieure*, a protected place, that is distinguished by all sorts of privileges within the university. It was an eminent philosopher, whom I am designating, I think, sufficiently in these terms – an eminent philosopher, there are not a lot of them – who teaches here, who became my intercessor with the administration here so that I could occupy this room. Is it this very occupation that serves as a reason for my no longer disposing of it? I do not think that I am occupying it at a time that anyone else might envy. Is it because my presence here (308) generates a sort of confusion in that my teaching is authorised by the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, that I have just characterised here by the eminence it benefits from being in the university or more exactly excluded from it in a certain way. It should be remarked here that I have never authorised myself here by anything except the field whose structure I am trying to maintain in its authenticity. And that in truth I never authorised myself by anything else, and very especially not from the fact that these statements are produced in the *Ecole Normale*. Perhaps having me as a neighbour induced a certain movement in the *Ecole Normale*, a short, limited one moreover, that in no case seems to be able to be inscribed as a deficit. The *Cahiers pour l'analyse* that have appeared, in a way induced by the field of my teaching, cannot be seen as a deficit, even if one can say that it was not at all by me that the work was done.

So then, many reasons here for there to be no urgency to distinguish me from the *Ecole Normale*. Certainly there was somewhere, in a single place, a confusion made in this respect. Namely, a person I told you about on 8th January last. In an article that I must say is rather comical, that appeared in a journal that protected him very well,

the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, someone brought up something or other that was called an extract, indeed an exercise of my style. And in this connection I was qualified, entitled by what was called my quality of professor, that I certainly am not, and still less at the *Ecole Normale*.

If it is because of this confusion in an article that moreover was marked by many other confusions, I mean that articulated my teaching in function of something or other that made of it a commentary on de Saussure, which it never was. I took de Saussure as one takes an instrument, a system, to be used for quite different ends, those of the field that I designated earlier. In this connection something or other was stated which is supposed to be articulated from nothing other than from the fact that I am supposed to have read him, as they say, diagonally. This simply shows in the person who wrote this article a surprising ignorance of the uses that this word diagonal can have. Because it is quite clear that I did not read de Saussure diagonally in the sense that I read the articles in *Le Monde* diagonally. They are made for that, de Saussure's course is certainly not. On the other hand the method described as diagonal is well known for its fruitfulness in mathematics, namely, by revealing that from any series (*sériation*) that claims to be exhaustive one can, by the diagonal method, extract some other entity that it does not include in its series. In this sense, I would be happy to accept that I made a diagonal use of de Saussure. But that from this, namely, from something that comes from an uncritical attitude that one might benevolently account for by an oversight that goes completely beyond this lack of criticism, to find in it material to (309) consider that some third person might see in it the justification for taking precautions, while it would simply be enough to point out that this oversight is nothing but that, and this on the part of someone who gave sufficient proofs of it in the rest of his text, there is obviously something or other rather curious. It suggests that when all is said and done the discussion about knowledge is excluded from the university. Because one can accept that someone who obviously is mistaken on one point may be able on another one to advance an incorrect qualification. This of itself justifies that it should be corrected by a measure other than pointing out to the person that there could be no confusion. This indeed is the conclusion that I am indicating now and that deserves to be drawn from it.

I will leave things there then, leaving you in suspense about whether any more can be said about it today. I am giving you explicitly a rendezvous then, the next time. This will be my next seminar when, accepting that it is in any case the last for this year, I believe I will be able in any case to promise you that I will distribute a certain number of little papers that I have in this briefcase, already prepared for you. In the case that this accent of finality is subsequently reinforced, this will mark at least something that will of course not be a diploma but a little sign that will remain to you of your presence here this year.

At this point, I am taking up again what I stated then the last time. Namely, what is pointed up by what I meant to articulate this year about the terms *From an Other to the other*, to which I was able the last time to give a certain structural form. I recall in short that what is involved is the following. That anything that allows itself to be caught up in the function of the signifier can nevermore be 2 without there being hollowed out in the locus described as that of the Other this something to which I gave the last time the status of empty set. This to indicate the way in which, at the present point of logic, there can be written what, on this occasion and without excluding that this can be written differently, what, I say, changes the relief of the real.

I am writing again the 1, this circle that we first used to write the Other. And in this circle, taken here to function as a set, two members, the 1, and then something that, if it is still the Other, is to be taken here under the heading of set. A set in which for reasons linked to mathematical usage it would be wrong to put a zero to designate the empty set. It is therefore more correct to represent it according to the classical style of set theory as follows, namely, to mark it with this oblique bar that you know moreover I make use of. Anything that allows itself to be taken up into the function of the signifier can no longer be 2 without there being hollowed out, and in a way that organises the field of this dual relation, in such a way that nothing can (316) any longer happen in it without being obliged to turn around this thing here at the extreme right that I called an empty set. That is properly – this for those that have put in the time to understand it – what, in my *Ecrits* as well as in my propositions, I always designated as the *additional one (un-en-plus)*. This then means, indicates, that in the measure that my discourse, as I might say, advanced, if I had to introduce into the

function and into the field of speech and language what was involved in the function of the unconscious by having recourse to this fragile and oh so problematic term of intersubjectivity, to put the accent more and more on what, of course, is required by Freud's second topography, namely, that nothing functions or is regulated there except intra-subjective correlates. Here comes the decisive accent put on this function of the *additional one* as exterior to the subjective.

Let us consider the drawing in which already the last time I made operate what I wanted to articulate for you about these remarks that I am taking up again today. Who does not see, I said, how by implicating a subject in the formula that a signifier represents it for another signifier, *from an Other* is already inscribed in this formula. This signifier for which the subject is represented is properly this *an Other* that is at stake in my title. This *an Other* that here you see inscribed because it is the resource for which what has to function as a subject is represented, in this field of the Other. This *one in the Other* as such cannot work without involving the *additional one*. That is why it is only at the moment that these three basic signifiers are inscribed, in so far as of themselves they already carry an effect of signifier and that it is sufficient to have to be inscribed in this way, as you see in a way that is not self-evident, that demanded months and years of explanation for those very people whose practice could not be sustained for a moment without being referred to this structure, I mean psychoanalysts. Just by themselves, these three terms inscribed under this mode of inscription, these three terms indeed constitute, in terms of what they already imply, before there is a question of making the apparition of the subject arise from it, a structure. Already, by their articulation, they constitute a knowledge.

This *an Other* here inscribed by 1 on the left of the circle, shows itself for what it is, namely, one in the Other, the one for whom the subject is found to represent itself from the One. What does that mean? Where does this 1 come from, this 1 for whom the subject is going to be represented by the 1? It is clear that it comes from the same place as this 1 that represents, that this is the first phase from which the Other is constituted. And if the last time I compared this locus of the Other to a Trojan Horse that functions in the opposite sense, namely, that each (311) time swallows a new unit into its belly instead of allowing them to be disgorged into the nocturnal city, it is because in effect this entry of the first 1 is foundational. Foundational in something

that is very simple, namely, that it is the minimum necessary for this to be. The Other cannot in any way contain itself except in the state of subset.

Let us clearly understand one another. Can one say that here this Other contains itself, if I furnish this empty set with something that repeats these members, first a 1, and the empty set? It is not true that one can say that this means it contains itself. Because this set transformed in this way, is inscribed from members that we have just mentioned. And the totality of these members is not what is reproduced here from the couple first inscribed as that of the first set E_1 , namely, the member 1, then the empty set, the empty set where now there is reproduced the member 1, the empty set. There is therefore no question of the set of all the sets that might not contain themselves, for the simple reason that at the level of the set, there are never sets that contain themselves. To talk about the set of all the sets that do not contain themselves does not constitute a set. But it is clear that the question of whether the set can, yes or no, contain itself is only posed, can only be posed by having absorbed this *an Other*, so that by its inclusion there appears as the *additional one* the empty set, for the reason that grounds the empty set as not being able to be in any case 2. There is no empty set that contains an empty set. There are not two empty sets.

The inclusion then of the first 1 is what makes it necessary that in the field of the Other, the most simple formula for 2 to be inscribed is the 1, member, and the empty set, inasmuch as it is nothing else but what is produced in a set with one member, by distinguishing the subsets from it. The 1 just by itself sufficed for a long time. This allowed it to be said that the Other, was the 1, a confusion in that the structure of the set was not recognised. Even in the set with one member posited as such, there emerges as a subset this *additional one* that the empty set is. In other words the Other needs an other to become *additional one*, namely, what it is itself. What is produced then from the one to the other, in so far as it is a second, is another signifier, And in the Other, it is properly this that ensures that it is only at the level of the second 1, of S_2 if you want to write it in this way, that the subject comes to be represented. The intervention of the first 1, of S_1 as representation of the subject only implies the apparition of the subject as such at the level of S_2 , of the second 1. And from then on, as I pointed out the other day, namely, that the *additional one*, the empty set, is $S(O)$ namely the signifier of the Other, the inaugural O.

What this shows us, is that there is going, in the structure thus defined, that the relationship of the 1 inscribed in the first circle of the Other, to this second circle of the *additional one*, which can itself contain the 1 + the *additional one* which is distinguished from this relationship to this 1, and only by this not being the same empty set, but can repeat the same structure indefinitely. This same indefinitely repeated structure of the 1, circle 1, circle 1 and so on, this is what defines the Other. Namely, this is the very thing that constitutes the agency of the **o**-object as such. It is indispensable that there is at least one member reduced to the member 1 in the Other. This is what made the Other be taken for 1 for a long time. As I told you, there is a psychical structure that restores, as I might say, the apparent integrity of O, that grounds in an effective relation the S(O) as not marked by what the bar on the top left of our graph designates, S(\emptyset). This is nothing other than the identification of this indefinitely repeated structure that the **o**-object designates. In truth, I would employ the following metaphor to designate as a perverse structure the apparent restoration of the integrity of the Other in so far as it is the **o**-object, that is in a way the imaginary moulding of the signifying structure.

We are going to see later in effect what fills the place of this O, in the operation of psychic identification. In a word, let us see it right away. Let us spell out the texts, taking the first case to be presented under the figure of the hysteric, to Freud. We are going to see how he, who gives to this economy its first explanation, goes along with her. How in connection with Anna O, he does not question himself about what is involved in the relationship between these narratives, this *talking cure*, as she herself puts it, inventing the term, and this symptom that is particularly clearly designated in the case of the hysteric. Something at the level of the body that is emptied out, a field where sensitivity disappears. *An other* connected or not whose motor activity becomes absent without anything other than a signifying unit being able to account for it. The anti-anatomical nature of the hysterical symptom was sufficiently highlighted by Freud himself. Namely, if a hysterical arm is paralysed, it is because it is called arm (*bras*) and nothing else. Because nothing in any real distribution of impulses whatsoever accounts for the limit that designates its field. It is indeed the body here that comes to serve as a support in an original symptom, the most typical in that, because it is at the origin of analytic experience itself, we question it.

Where then is, with respect to the progress operated by the talking cure, *la cure parlante*, how not remain as close as possible to the text. And even without knowing any more about it – which is not the case because we know a lot more, I mean that it is necessary to organise this structure differently – how can we not see that Freud here is at the place of the 1, here placed as inside. It is in Freud that there is established a certain subject. Without the listener, Freud, the question (313) is to know how he could subject himself to this function for one year, two years, to listen every evening, at the moment that a dissociated state marked the cutting, the cut by which Dora, by which a symptomatic Anna was separated from her own subject. How can we not question ourselves about the hidden relationship that ensured that simply by taking things as they were presented, that it is from the fact that a subject comes to know something that is a feature (*trait*), if you remember this observation, a feature moreover followed like a historical reprise, not lost in the darkness of some forgetting or other, simply cut off just the previous year. And that, in the measure that with this delay which just by itself ought to have a sense for us, means that when Freud was informed about it, the symptom whose relationship is only a distant one, is only forced with respect to what is articulated in it, the symptom is removed.

This foundation of a subject creates knowledge in a field which is that of the Other, and its relationship with this something creates a hollow at the level of the body. Such is the first outline that when we have elaborated it sufficiently after decades in order to be able from this structure in its unicity to make the collection, under the heading of what functions as the object described as \circ , which is this structure itself, we might say that with regard to this body emptied in order to function as a signifier, there is something that can be moulded there and this metaphor will help us to conceive as a statue properly speaking what, at the level of the pervert, comes to function as that which restores as plenitude, as O without a bar, this O. To appreciate the imaginary relation of what is involved in perversion, it is enough to grasp the statue of which I speak at the level of a baroque contortion whose representation of an incitement to voyeurism is only tangible in so far that it represents a phallic exhibition. How can we not see that used by a religion concerned with re-establishing its empire over souls at the moment that it is contested, the baroque statue, whatever it may be, whatever male or female saint it represents, indeed the Virgin Mary, is

properly this look that is designed so that the soul may open up before it. If the rapprochement I made between a single feature of the perverse structure and some capture or other of the faith that must indeed be called idolatrous, puts us at the heart of what is presentified in our West by a quarrel over images, it is something exemplary that we have to draw profit from.

I said that I would tackle today what is involved in neurosis. And, as you heard, I began at the level of the obsessional, by articulating that nothing of the obsessional can be conceived of except by referring to a structure in which, for the master, in so far as he functions as 1, a signifier that only subsists by being represented for a second 1 that is in the Other, in so far as this represents the slave in whom alone resides the subjective function of the master. Between one and the other there is nothing in common except what I said had first been (314) articulated by Hegel as the bringing into play at the level of the master, of his own life. The act of mastery consists in this, the risk of life. Somewhere in this little book that has come out under the heading of the first number of *Scilicet*, I highlighted in the miraculous remarks of a child, what I gathered from the mouth of his father, because he had told him that he was “a trickster of life, *tricheur de vie*”. An extraordinary formula, like those that undoubtedly one can only see flowering in the mouths of those for whom no one has yet confused matters. The risk of life, this is the essential of what one can call the act of mastery. And its guarantor is none other than what is, in the Other, the slave as signifier by whom alone the master is supported as subject. His support being nothing other than the body of the slave in so far as it is, to use a formula that had good reason to come into the forefront of spiritual life, *perinde ac cadaver*. But it is such only in the field by which the master is supported as subject. Something remains outside the limits of this whole apparatus, which is precisely what Hegel wrongly brought into it, death. Death, as has been sufficiently noted, is only profiled here in that it does not contest the whole of the structure except at the level of the slave. In the whole of the phenomenology of the master and the slave, only the slave is real. And this indeed is what Hegel glimpsed and it would be enough to ensure that nothing goes any further in this dialectic. This situation is perfectly stable. If the slave dies there is no longer anything. If the master dies everyone knows that the slave is still a slave. As long as we have known about slaves, the death of the master never freed anyone from slavery.

Such is, I would ask you to note, the situation when it is the neurotic that introduces the dialectic. Because it is only from the moment that we presuppose somewhere the *subject supposed to know* that in effect, with this horizon and with good reason, just like the rabbit in the hat, it is put in at the start, we can see there progressing then in a dialectic what is stated about the relationships of the master and the slave. And where? At the level of the slave himself towards an absolute knowledge. The subject, it is in so far as the master is represented at the level of the slave that the whole dialectic is pursued and culminates at this end which is nothing other than what is already put there under the function of knowledge. This function precisely in so far as it is not criticised, that nowhere is there questioned the order of underpinning of the subject in knowledge. This thing which nevertheless leaps to the eye, which is that the master himself knows nothing. Everyone knows that the master is a fool (*un con*). He would never have entered into this whole adventure, with what the future designates for him as a resolution of his function, if for an instant there existed the subject that, in his facile way of talking, Hegel imputes to him. As if this function of the fight to the death, of the fight for pure prestige, could be set up, in so far as it also makes him substantially depend on his partner, if the (315) master were not something other than what we properly call the unconscious, namely, unknown to the subject as such. I mean this unknown from which the subject is absent, the subject of which is only represented elsewhere.

All of this is only done to introduce the next step of what I have to articulate today. Previously, I spoke in connection with the hysteric about the analogue she took on from her reference to the woman. Just as I said that nothing that is articulated about the obsessional constitutes him except to introduce into the dialectic of the subject-master, what necessitates something that calls him, namely, the truth of this process. And, on the path of this truth, the taking up, the bringing into play of the *subject supposed to know*.

I am taking this up at the level of the other neurosis, of the hysteric. And to put at the heart of it the analogous apparatus, the model that is at stake, to which the obsessional refers himself, I already said, the hysteric, just as one can say that the obsessional does not take himself to be the master but supposes that the master knows what he wants, in the same way, the hysteric for the woman – not that the hysteric is for all

that obligatorily a woman any more than the obsessional is obligatorily a man, it is a matter of the reference to the model of the master – in the same way, the hysteric, her model, is what I am now going to state in that what is involved in the model in which the woman establishes this thing that is much more central, as you are going to see, in our analytic experience.

When I put it forward, sometime around the 21st May, someone here posed me the question: but do we know what the woman is? Naturally, no more than we know what the master is. But what one can outline, is the articulation in the field of the Other of what is involved in the woman. It is just as stupid as the master, make no mistake. I am not for the moment talking about women, I am speaking about the subject “the woman”. Do we not see what is involved in these two 1’s when we are dealing with the woman? The inner 1, S_2 , make no mistake, what it is a matter of seeing being erected does not appear doubtful to me and it then becomes very clear. It is to know why the 1 by which the woman subject is supported is so ordinarily the Phallus with a capital P. It is at the level of the 1 that it is a matter of bringing up that the identification of the woman in the dual mirage in so far as this Other is at its horizon, the empty set, namely a body, a body here emptied of what? Of enjoyment. Where the master-subject takes on the risk of life, in the inaugural wager of this dialectic, the woman – I did not say the hysteric, I said the woman because the hysteric, as the obsessional earlier does, is only explained by reason of these references – risks, wagers this enjoyment which everyone knows is for the woman inaugural and existing, and is such that without any of these efforts, of these detours that characterise autoerotism in the man, not only does she obtain but she always subsists distinct from and parallel to the one that she takes from being the wife of a man, the one (316) who is satisfied by the enjoyment of the man.

This enjoyment of the man that the woman takes, captures for herself as the master does to the slave, this is the stake of the game and gives its radical origin to what is involved in what here plays the same role as death for the obsessional and is just as inaccessible. Namely, that to say the woman identifies to it – I said the woman – is just as false, is just as vain as to say that the master identifies to death. On the contrary, just as the slave is bound and in the same way, I mean only subsists through the relation to death and with this relation makes the whole system subsist, the

relationship of man to castration is also what here makes the whole system hold together. And moreover, if I earlier spoke of *perinde ac cadaver*, I would evoke here something rather remarkable that for the being caught up in the field of the signifier, the dimension called necrophilia exists, in other words erotism and very properly applied to a dead body. Do I need to evoke here on the horizon the figure Jeanne la Folle and her trailing about for a fortnight the body of Philippe le Beau?

It is only with respect to these structures, to these inaugurating functions in so far as they alone correspond to the introduction of what is properly the dependency on the signifier as analytic experience allows us to articulate it, that we can here see, just as for the obsessional, the hysteric is introduced as not taking herself for a woman. How does she not take herself for a woman? Precisely in the fact that she supposes that, in this structure, that I have just articulated as being that of the woman subject, this subject, at the level of the starting S_1 , she makes into something supposed to know. In other words she is captivated, interested – remember Dora – by the woman in so far as she believes that the woman is the one that knows what is necessary for man's enjoyment. Now, what results from this something that is absent in the model, the function of the woman- subject, God be praised, make no mistake, does not know that what she is sustaining culminates in the castration of the man.

But, on the contrary, the hysteric is not unaware of anything about it and that is why she questions herself beyond what I already articulated about Dora, centred on a first approach that I made to transference. Beyond. Re-read the observation, and moreover do not omit everything that in the prior observations, those of *Studies in hysteria*, allows simply the following to be seen. The correlation between the fact that, for the hysteric, the woman supposes her knowledge of what is in the model, she does it unconsciously. That is why the two models not being able to be distinguished by this factor that is introduced that reunites under the heading of neurosis one type just as much as the other, you can note that the correlate of death is at stake in what the hysteric tackles about what is involved in being a woman.

The hysteric plays the man (*fait l'homme*) who supposes that the (317) woman knows. That indeed is why she is introduced into this game from some angle where

the death of the man is always involved. Is there any need to say that the whole introduction of Anna O to the field of her hysteria does nothing other than turn around the death of her father? Is it necessary to recall the correlate, in the two dreams of Dora, of death in so far as it is implicated by the mother's jewel box. "I do not want, says the father, my children and me to perish in flames because of this box" and in the second dream that it is a matter of the burial of the father. Hidden truths, neuroses suppose them known. They must be disentangled from this supposition so that they, the neurotics, stop representing this truth in the flesh.

It is in as far as the hysteric, as one might say, is already a psychoanalysand, namely, already on the path of a solution, of a solution she seeks starting from the fact that in what she refers herself to she implies the *subject supposed to know*, and that is why she encounters contradiction. The fact is, as long as the analyst does not practice the cut between the unconscious structure, namely, the models that I properly articulated here of the 1, 1, the empty set, as much at the level of the master as at the level of the woman, namely, from what has made the neurotic naturally a psychoanalysand because here and now constituting in herself, and before any analysis, the transference. The coalescence of the structure with the *subject supposed to know*, this is what is testified in the neurotic by the fact that she questions the truth of these structures and becomes herself in the flesh this questioning. And that if something can make drop the fact that she is herself symptom, namely, precisely by this operation of the analyst practicing the cut thanks to which this supposition of the *subject supposed to know* is detached, is separated from what is at stake. Namely, the structure that she correctly locates, except for the fact that neither the master, nor the woman can be supposed to know what they are doing.

The operation of analytic treatment turns around this cut which is a subjective cut, because undoubtedly everything that we say about an unconscious desire, always, of course, supposes that a subject ends up by knowing what he wants. And what does that mean? Do we not here again still preserve, in stating such formulae, this something that means that there is knowledge and what one wants. Assuredly there is

a locus where the two terms are distinguished. It is when it is a matter of saying yes or of saying no to what I called, what one wants. This is what is called the will. But to know what he wants, is for the master, as for the woman, desire itself, just as earlier I unified the three words of *an additional one* (*un-en-plus*), the knowing-what-he-wants that I mean here, is desire itself. What the hysteric supposes, is that the woman knows what she wants, in the sense that she is supposed to desire it, and this indeed is why the hysteric does not manage to (318) identify herself to the woman except at the price of an unsatisfied desire. In the same way, with respect to the master, whom he makes use of in the game of hide and seek to claim that death can only touch the slave, the obsessional is the one who, from the master, only identifies this thing which is the real, that his desire is impossible.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN
BOOK XVII

Psychoanalysis upside down/The reverse side of psychoanalysis

1969-1970

**Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French manuscripts with an eye to
the official published version**

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Translator's Note

I have been asked why I undertook the translation of this seminar when an official translation had been signalled. There are a number of reasons:

First: The reading-group at St Vincent's University Hospital, for whom my translations are primarily intended, needed a text to work on in autumn 2000. We had sight of a first draft of the official translation but it was clearly unfinished and not adequate for our needs.

Secondly: A shadow of suspicion hangs over the official French version of the seminar. It was published in March 1991 at the same time as the seminar on *Transference*. The latter was so flawed that it gave rise to considerable criticism from serious students of Lacan's work, recently exemplified by Moustapha Safouan's very negative assessment in *Lacanian* published by Fayard in 2001. As a result, a corrected French version has now appeared. The published version of the current seminar has not received the same attention from critics but one is surely justified in wondering whether it too may not contain errors.

Thirdly: There is no critical French version of this seminar to compare with the acclaimed *Stécriture* version of *Transference* – cannibalised but not acknowledged in the corrected version. But when the official French text is compared to the 'pirate editions' that have been widely used by students over the years, a number of rather curious editorial decisions come to light. Here are the most obvious:

- The four replies to the questions of *Radiophonie* read by Lacan to his seminar are omitted.
- Only one of Lacan's two memorable visits to the University of Vincennes is reported.
- The discussion on *Hosea* with Professor André Caquot has been truncated and omits many of the lively exchanges with Lacan.
- A number of passages in the 'pirate' editions ring truer and are certainly more vivid than the corresponding ones in the official version.

Fourthly: These gaps and changes made me think it worthwhile, at least for our little group and for those who use these translations, to try to produce something that may be more complete and closer to the spirit of the seminar. I am also trying to highlight the need for a good critical edition of Jacques Lacan's seminars in French because only this will provide the basis for adequate translations.

Dublin
October 2001

Overview of the seminar of 1969-70

Cormac Gallagher

This seminar took place against a background of the on-going street violence and disruption of public services which followed the 'events' in Paris of May 1968. For Lacan personally it was a difficult period in that he had been expelled from the prestigious *Ecole Normale Supérieure* and had also been confronted with the refusal of some of the most talented members of his School to go along with his *Proposition* on the formation and recognition of psychoanalysts.

His response was the production of the four discourses which cast a cold eye on the underpinnings of a society which has abandoned its foundations. The University, with the revolt of the students, offers the clearest example of what has gone wrong. But matters cannot be righted by the Hysterical dramatics of the protesters which will only lead to a reinforcing of the discourse of the Master. Hence an attempt to re-articulate the position of the Analyst in terms of a discourse that may contribute to the amelioration of the situation by tackling it from the reverse side.

I: 26.11.69

What does that mean? Last year, with great insistence, I distinguished discourse as a necessary structure that goes well beyond words, which are always more or less occasional. What I prefer, I said, and even wrote one day on the board, is *a discourse without words*. The fact is that, in all truth, it is well able to subsist without words. It subsists in certain fundamental relations that literally could not subsist without language. Through the instrument of language a number of stable relations are established within which there can be inscribed something that is much larger, that goes much further than actual utterances. There is no need for these utterances, for our conduct, for our acts, to be inscribed within the framework of certain primordial statements. If this were not so, how could we account for what we rediscover, in our experience and especially psychoanalytic experience – analytic experience only being evoked in this connection because it has designated it – how could we account for what we rediscover under the aspect of the superego?

We will consider the battery of signifiers to be designated by the sign S_2 . It is a matter of those that are already there, because at the point of origin at which we place ourselves in order to fix what discourse is about, discourse conceived as the status of the statement, S_1 is to be seen as intervening. It intervenes on a signifying battery that we have no right ever to take as dispersed, as not already forming the network of what is called a knowledge.

No doubt it is around this word “knowledge” that there exists the ambiguous point that we have to stress today, and I have already rendered your ears sensitive to it by taking several paths, tracks, moments, flashes of light. Shall I mention it for those of you who noted it down, for whom it is still trotting around in their heads? Last year I described knowledge as ‘the enjoyment of the Other’. A funny business. It is a formulation which, to be honest, had never yet been put forward. (4) It is not new, since already last year I made it sound sufficiently convincing, and upheld it without any special protests. This is one of the rendezvous that I announced for this year.

Repetition has a certain relationship with the limit of this subject and this knowledge, which is called enjoyment (*jouissance*). This is why it is a logical articulation that is at stake in the formula that ‘knowledge is the enjoyment of the Other’. Of the Other, of course, in so far as – for there is no other Other – the intervention of the signifier makes it

emerge as a field. You will no doubt tell me that here, in sum, we are still going around in circles – the signifier, the Other, knowledge, the signifier, the Other, knowledge, etc. But this is where the term enjoyment enables us to show the point of insertion of the system. In doing this we are no doubt going outside what is authentically involved in knowledge, what is recognisable as knowledge, and are referring ourselves to the limits, to an outside field as such, the one that Freud's word dares to confront.

Because you must not forget that it is not by looking at how people behave that the death drive can be discovered. We have the death drive here. We have it where something happens between you and what I am saying. I said *what I am saying*, I am not speaking about what I am. What is the use, since in short this can be seen thanks to your presence. It is not that it speaks in my favour. It speaks sometimes, and most often, instead of me. In any case, what justifies that here I am saying something, is what I would call the essence of this manifestation [demonstration?], constituted by the diverse, successive audiences that I have attracted according to the places where I have spoken. I was particularly keen to add on somewhere the following remark, because today, when I am in a new place, seemed to me to be the day to do so. The place has always carried weight in giving its style to what I called this manifestation.

There is a primitive relationship between knowledge and enjoyment, and it is here that there is inserted what emerges when the apparatus of the signifier appears.

Let us go back to then to the discourse of the Master. I must justify the designation of the present algebraic formula as giving the structure of the discourse of the Master. S_1 , let us say to go quickly, is the signifier, the function of the signifier on which is based the essence of the Master.

On the other hand you remember perhaps what I stressed last year on several occasions – the proper field of the slave is knowledge, S_2 . There is no doubt about it reading the testimonies that we have of ancient life, in any case the discourses about this life – on this read Aristotle's *Politics* – what I put forward about the slave as characterised as being the one who is the support of knowledge is not in doubt.

What philosophy designates throughout its whole evolution is the following: the theft, the abduction, the removal from the slave of his knowledge, through the operations of the Master.

The function of *episteme* in so far as it specified as transmissible knowledge - consult Plato's dialogues – is still entirely borrowed from the techniques of the craftsman, that is to say, of serfs. It is a matter of extracting its essence so that this knowledge becomes the Master's knowledge.

In short, it is the status of the Master that is at stake on this occasion. As an introduction today I only wanted to tell you how much this status is of profound interest to us, and it is worth keeping back the articulation of it until we take the next step. It is of interest to us when what is unveiled, and at the same time reduced to a corner of the landscape, is the function of philosophy.

If there is one thing that psychoanalysis should force us to maintain *mordicus*, it is that the desire to know has no relationship with knowledge – unless of course we are happy with the lustful word of transgression. The radical distinction, which has far-reaching consequences from the point of view of pedagogy, that the desire to know is not what leads to knowledge, is something I will allow myself to justify in the more or less long-term. What leads to knowledge is the hysteric's discourse.

A real Master, as we have seen in general until a recent era - and a real Master is seen less and less - desires to know nothing at all, he wants things to work.

Analyticon 1: 3.12.69

Here I am then, as a guest, at the Experimental Centre of the said University, an experiment which seems fairly exemplary to me. Since what is in question is an experiment, you might wonder what part you play.

X: Why cannot the students at Vincennes at the end of the teaching they are supposed to have received, become psychoanalysts?

JL: (*Speaking in a falsetto*) This is precisely what I am going to explain, Mademoiselle. That is precisely what is at stake. Psychoanalysis is not transmitted like any other knowledge.

JL: (*turning to the board*) This is a sequence, an algebraic sequence

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_2} & \longrightarrow & \underline{\mathbf{o}} \\ S_1 & & \$ \end{array}$$

X: A man can't be reduced to an equation.

JL: It holds up by constituting a chain, the start of which is in this formula:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_1} & \longrightarrow & \underline{S_2} \\ \$ & & \mathbf{o} \end{array}$$

the one I put forward as a signifier is defined as representing a subject for another signifier. It is an altogether fundamental way of writing it. It can in any case be taken for one. It was developed through my efforts from an attempt - after having put the necessary time into giving it its shape, the one I have now ended up with - it is an attempt to establish what was required in all decency to manipulate a notion by encouraging subjects to trust it and to operate with it. These are called psychoanalysts.

You are the products of the University. The surplus value is you and you are proving it, even if only in this respect – which you not only consent to but which you also applaud – and I see no reason to object – which is that you leave here, equal to more or less to credits. You have all made yourself into credits. You leave here stamped with credits.

(8) It is a matter of articulating a logic which however frail it may seem to be – my four little letters look harmless, except that you have to know according to what rules they function - a logic which however weak it appears is still strong enough to comprise what is the sign of this logical force, namely, incompleteness.

The psychoanalyst initially only had to listen to what the hysteric was saying. What the hysteric says is pure gold ...

X: So the Hysteric is the psychoanalyst's Master.

JL: "I want a man who knows how to make love". Ah yes, man stops there. He stops at the fact that he is, in effect, someone who 'knows'. As for making love, call back later!

X: While this class drones quietly on there are 150 comrades from Beaux-Arts who were arrested by the cops and who since yesterday have been at Beaujon because they are not giving classes on the **o**- object like this mandarin here, and whom no one could care less (9) about. They went to give an open-air class at the *Ministère de l'Équipement* about the shanty towns and on the politics of M. Chalandon. So I think that the droning

on of this formal class is a fairly good expression of the current state of rottenness in the University.

JL: OK, I would like to make one little remark. The configuration of Workers and Peasants has all the same led to a form of society where it is precisely the University that is in the driving seat. What reigns in what is commonly called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the University.

JL: If you had had a bit of patience and if you really wanted our *Impromptus* to continue I would tell you that the revolutionary aspiration has only one possible way of ending, only one: always with the discourse of the Master, as experience has already shown. What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a Master. You shall have one!

II: 10.12.69

I was warned in various ways that the protesters were on the lookout for me. People do not take it into account enough that I too am on the look out for the protesters, but for an object that interests me in a very particular way: whether they confirm or invalidate what at this level at which I situate the structure of a discourse. I have just said **I**. Obviously it is because I look at the discourse in question from elsewhere, from a place that another discourse, whose effect I am, situates **me**. In such a way that, on occasion, it is the same thing to say this discourse situates *me* or situates *itself*.

III: 17.12.69

Something that is well designed to show how little impact the schools have had, is that the idea that knowledge can constitute a totality is, as I might say, immanent to politics as such. This has been known for a long time. The imaginary idea of the whole as given by the body, based on (3) the good form of satisfaction, on what at the limit is a sphere, has always been used in politics, and is part of political preaching. What is more beautiful, but also less open? What resembles more a closure of satisfaction? The collusion of this image with the idea of satisfaction is what we have to struggle against any time we encounter something that forms a knot in the work of bringing the paths of the unconscious to the light of day. It is the obstacle, the limit, or rather it is the cotton wool in which we lose sight of meaning, and in which we find ourselves obstructed.

What occupies the place that we will provisionally call dominant is S_2 which is specified not as being knowledge of everything, we are not at that point yet, but total knowledge (*tout-savoir*). You should understand by this: what affirms itself as being nothing other than knowledge, and what is called, in ordinary language, bureaucracy. We cannot say that there is not something there that creates a problem. In my first remarks three weeks ago we started from the fact that in the initial status of the Master's discourse, the slave's share is knowledge. And I was able to indicate, without being able to develop it the last time because of a slight contretemps that I regret, what happens between the discourse of the antique master and the modern master who is described as capitalist is some modification in the place of knowledge. I thought I could even go as far as to affirm that the philosophical tradition had a certain responsibility for this transmutation. So that it is because he has been 'dispossessed' of something – before, of course, of common property which means that the proletarian can be described as dispossessed, which justifies the undertaking and also the success of revolution. Is it not tangible that what is restored to him is not necessarily his share? Capitalist exploitation in effect frustrates his knowledge by making it useless. But what is given him through a type of subversion is something different – the knowledge of a master. And that is why he has only changed master. What remains is indeed in effect the essence of the master, namely, that he does not know what he wants because this is what constitutes the true structure of the Master's discourse. The slave knows a lot of things but what he knows above all (4) is what the master wants, even if he himself does not know it, which is the usual situation, because otherwise he would not be a master. The slave knows and that is his function as slave. That is also the reason why things work, because all the same, things have been working for rather a long time. The fact that all knowledge has shifted into the place of the master, is something that, far from clarifying, makes a little bit more opaque what is in question, namely, the truth from which it emerges that there is a signifier of master.

Because here the S_1 of the Master is well and truly coiled up, showing the problem of what is involved in the new tyranny of knowledge. This is what makes it impossible in the course of historical movement for truth to appear, as we might perhaps have hoped. The sign of truth is now elsewhere. It is to be produced by those who are the substitutes for the slaves of antiquity, namely, by those who are themselves products, as they say, that are just as consumable as the others.

What the analyst sets up as an analytic experience can be simply put – it is the hystericisation of discourse. In other words, it is the structural introduction, under artificial conditions, of the discourse of the Hysteric, the one indicated here by a capital H. I tried to highlight it last year by saying that this discourse existed, and that it would exist in any case whether psychoanalysis was there or not. I imaged it by giving it its most common support from which there has emerged for us the major experience, namely, the detour, the zigzag lines on which is based this misunderstanding that sexual relationships constitute in the human (5) species. Since we have the signifier it must be

that we are able to understand one another, and that is precisely the reason why we do not understand one another. The signifier is not designed for sexual relationships. Once we have a speaking human being we've had it, there is no hope of this perfect, harmonious copulation which moreover is impossible to find anywhere in nature. Nature presents an infinite number of kinds of it, the majority of which do not involve any copulation, which shows the degree to which there is very little in the intentions of nature for things to become, as I mentioned earlier, a whole, a sphere.

In any case, one thing is certain, if for man it works more or less well, it is thanks to something that allows it, but initially makes it insoluble. This is what is meant by the discourse of the hysteric, industrious as she is. In saying *industriouse*, we are making the hysteric a woman, but this is not her privilege. Many men go into analysis, and by that very fact are also forced to pass by way of the hysterical discourse, because it is the law, the rule of the game. It is a matter of knowing what can be got out of it as regards the relationship between men and women. So then we see the hysteric fabricating a man as best she can, a man animated by the desire to know.

But if it is her discourse that is at stake, and this discourse ensures that there is a man animated by the desire to know, it is because it is a matter of knowing what? What she herself is worth, this person who is speaking. Because *qua* o-object she is something fallen, fallen due to the effect of discourse, always broken somewhere in her turn. (6) In the final analysis, what the hysteric wants the man to know, at the limit, is that language cannot cope with the breadth of what she as a woman can open up about enjoyment. But this is not what is important to the hysteric. What is important for her, is that the other, the other called man, should know what a precious object she becomes in this context of discourse. Is not this after all the very foundation of analytic experience?

Only what must be understood about these schemas – as was already indicated by putting S_2 in the discourse of the Master at the place of the slave, and to subsequently put it in the discourse of the modernised master at the place of the master – is that it is not the same knowledge. Here, in the discourse at the far right, what place is it at? At the place that in the discourse of the Master, Hegel, the most sublime of hysterics, designates for us as being that of the truth, because it cannot be said, in effect, that the *Phenomenology of the spirit* consists in starting from a so-called *Selbstbewusstsein* supposedly grasped at the most immediate level of sensation, implying that all knowledge knows itself from the start.

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In Italy, in one of the lectures I was asked to give, I do not know why, and which I faced into, as I know, in a mediocre way, I evoked the chimera, in which there is precisely incarnated the original character of the discourse of the hysteric. She sets a riddle for the man Oedipus, who perhaps already had a complex, but not necessarily ... certainly not the one to which he was to give his name. He answers in a certain way, and that is how he becomes Oedipus. There could have been many different answers to what the chimera asked him.

A knowledge *qua* truth – this defines what ought to be the structure of what is called an interpretation. If I have insisted at length on the difference of level between stating and stated, it is so that the function of the riddle may take on a meaning. The riddle is properly speaking that, a stating. I am giving you the task of making it become a statement. Work it out, as best you can – as Oedipus did – and you will suffer the consequences. This is what is at stake in a riddle

IV: 14.1.70

its value as an example also by what it promotes in terms of an almost obligatory distortion by reason of the translation of something that has its own laws into University discourse. I have to trace out these laws, they are those that claim to give at least the conditions of a properly analytic discourse. Naturally, this remains subject to the fact that, as I underlined last year, the fact that I am stating it here from a podium on high involves in effect a risk of error, an element of refraction, which means that from some angles it falls under the influence of the University discourse. This results from the fact that there is fundamentally something out of synch. To be sure, I do not in any way identify myself to a certain position. I assure you that every time I come here to bring you the word, what is at stake for me is certainly not what I have to say to you, or *what am I going to say to them this time?* In this respect I have no role to play, in the sense

that the function of the one who teaches can be seen in terms of role, of a place to occupy which is, incontestably, a place of some prestige. That is not what I demand of myself, but rather something that is a putting into order which imposes on me the duty to submit this exploration to this test. Like anyone else, I would, of course, avoid this putting into order when confronted with this sea of ears among which there is perhaps a critical pair, having, with this dreadful possibility, to give an account of the path my actions have taken with respect to the fact that something of the psychoanalyst exists (*qu'il y a du psychanalyste*).

It is certainly notable – I mean worth noting – that after ten years, I have come, all the same, to articulate this position of the psychoanalyst in a way that I describe as his discourse, let us say his hypothetical discourse, since moreover this is what is proposed for your examination this year. Namely – what about the structure of this discourse? I have come to articulate the position of the psychoanalyst in the following way. I say that it is substantially constituted by the **o**-object, by the **o**-object in so far as here, in the articulation of what I give as regards the structure of a discourse, in so far as it interests us, and let us say in so far as it is taken at a radical level where it has an import for psychoanalytic discourse, it is substantially that of the **o**-object in as much as this **o**-object precisely designates what, in the effects of discourse, presents itself as the most opaque, as having been for a long time overlooked, and nevertheless essential. What is at stake is the effect of discourse which is in effect one that rejects. I will try later to highlight place and function of this rejection.

In the discourse of the Hysteric, it is clear that we see this dominant appear in the form of the symptom. It is around the symptom that there is situated and organised what is involved in the Hysteric's discourse. This is an opportunity for us to grasp something. If this place remains the same and if, in a particular discourse, it is that of the symptom, this will lead us to question the same place as being that of the symptom when it is put to use in a different discourse. This indeed in effect is what we see in our own time – the law being called into question as a symptom. And it is not enough to say that this has become clear to us in the light of our times in order to account for it. I mentioned earlier how this same dominant place can be occupied, in the case of the analyst. The analyst himself must here represent in some ways the effect of what is rejected by discourse, in other words the **o**-object.

Here then the idea might come to us of (6) seeking what, in each of these discourses – to designate at least one place – might appear altogether certain to us, as certain as the symptom when hysteria is at stake. I already allowed you to see that, in the discourse of the Master, the **o** is precisely identifiable to what emerged from a hard-working thought,

that of Marx, namely, what was involved, symbolically and really, in the function of surplus value.

As everything indicates to us in the facts, in experience, in the clinic, (8) repetition is founded on a return of enjoyment. And what is properly articulated by Freud himself in this connection is that in this repetition itself, there is produced something which is a defect, a failure. I highlighted here at one time its kinship with Kierkegaard's remarks. By virtue of the fact that it is explicitly repeated as such, that it is marked by repetition, what is repeated can be nothing other, as compared to what it is repeating, than in a state of loss (*en perte*). Losing whatever you wish, losing speed – there is something that is a loss. As regards this loss, from the beginning, from the articulation that I am summarising here, Freud insists that in repetition itself, there is a waste of enjoyment. It is here that the function of the lost object takes its origin in the Freudian discourse.

That's Freud! Let us add that we do not need all the same to recall that it is explicitly around masochism, conceived of only in the dimension of the search for this ruinous enjoyment, that the whole text of Freud turns. Here now is where what Lacan contributes comes in: it concerns this repetition, this identification of enjoyment. Here, I borrow from Freud's text the function of the unary trait to give it a sense that is not highlighted there, namely, the simplest form of mark, namely, what is, properly speaking, the origin of the signifier. And I put forward something that is not in Freud's text, not seen in Freud's text, but that cannot in any way be set aside, avoided, rejected by the psychoanalyst, that everything that interests us analysts as knowledge originates in the unary trait.

No, there is nothing in common between the subject of knowledge and the subject of the signifier.

The signifier is articulated then as representing a subject for another signifier. This is where we start from to give a sense to this inaugural repetition in so far as it is a repetition aimed at enjoyment.

What appears from this formalism, to continue to follow Lacan, is, as we have said earlier, that there is a loss in enjoyment, and it is at the place of the loss of this something which introduces repetition, that we see arising the function of the lost object, of what I call *o*. What does this impose on us, if not this formula that at the most elementary level, that of the imposition of the unary trait, working knowledge produces, let us say an entropy.

But there is all the same something altogether radical, which is the association in what is at the base, at the very root of phantasy, of this glory, if I can express myself in that way, of the mark. I am talking about a mark on the skin, from which there is inspired in the

phantasy something that is nothing other than a subject identifying himself as being object of enjoyment. In the erotic practice that I am evoking, flagellation to call it by its name in case there are people here who are really hard of hearing, enjoying takes on the very ambiguity which means that it is at its level and no other, that the equivalence between the gesture that marks and the body object of enjoyment, can be touched. Whose enjoyment? That of the one who carries what I called the glory of the mark? Is it sure that this means the enjoyment of the Other? Certainly it is one of the ways the Other enters his world, and undoubtedly one that cannot be refuted.

It is in *Beyond the pleasure principle* that Freud forcefully marks that what constitutes in the final term the true support, the consistency, of the specular image in the system of the ego, is that it is sustained within by, that it only clothes this lost object by which enjoyment is introduced into the dimension of the being of the subject.

But the *o*, as such, is properly speaking what results from the fact that knowledge, at its origin, can be reduced to signifying articulation. This knowledge is a means of enjoyment. And I repeat, when it works, what it produces is entropy. This entropy, this point of loss, is the only point, the only regular point by which we have access to what is involved in enjoyment. In this there is expressed, there is completed, there is justified what is involved as regards the incidence of the signifier in the destiny of the speaking being. This has little to do with his word. It has to do with the structure, which is invested by the (13) fact that the human being, who is so-called no doubt because he is only the *humus* of language, has only to make himself *wordy* (*s'apparoler*) through this system.

What is this 'indestructible desire' that (14) Freud speaks about to close the final lines of his *Traumdeutung*? What is this desire that nothing can change, or weaken, when all else changes? The lack of forgetting is the same thing as the lack of being, because being is nothing other than to forget. The love of truth, is the love of this weakness whose veil we have lifted, it is the love of something that the truth hides, and which is called castration

It is on this that everything involved in the truth is built. That there should be love of weakness is no doubt the essence of love. As I have said, love is to give what one does not have, namely, what could repair this original weakness. And at the same time there can be imagined, there opens up, this role – I do not know whether I ought to call it mystical or mystifying – that has been given from all time, in a certain vein, to love. This so-called universal love, whose flag is waved at us to calm us, is precisely what we use to create a veil, an obstruction to what the truth is.

What defines the analyst? I have said it. I have always said it, always – simply, no one has ever understood anything, and what is more, it is natural, it is not my fault – I have always said, analysis is what one expects from a psychoanalyst. But this *what one expects from a psychoanalyst* - we obviously have to try to comprehend what that means. It is so much there, like that, within hand's reach – I have the feeling all the same, always, that I am only restating it – the work is for me, the surplus enjoying is for you.

What one expects from a psychoanalyst is, as I said the last time, to make his knowledge function in terms of truth. This indeed is why he limits himself to a half saying.

V: 21.1.79

But the fact that this analytic discourse completes the quarter circle displacements by which the three others are structured does not mean that it resolves them. That it allows us to pass to the reverse side (*à l'envers*) resolves nothing. This reverse side does not in any way explain the front side (*l'endroit*). It is a relationship of texture, of text that is at stake – of tissue, if you wish. It nevertheless remains that this tissue has a relief, that it captures something.

Seminar 15: Wednesday 17 June 1970

It has to be said: dying of shame is an effect that is rarely produced. Nevertheless, it is the only sign - I have been speaking to you for some time about how a signifier becomes a sign – the only sign whose genealogy we can be certain of, namely, that it is descended from a signifier. Any sign after all can always fall under the suspicion of being a pure sign, that is to say obscene, *vinscène*, dare I say, a good example that will make you laugh.

Dying of shame then. Here, the degeneration of the signifier is certain – certain of being produced by a failure of the signifier, that is being (*l'être*) for death, in so far as it concerns the subject – and who else could it concern? Being for death, that is, the visiting card by which a signifier represents a subject for another signifier – you are beginning to know that off by heart I hope. This visiting card never reaches a safe haven, the reason being that since it bears the address of the dead person this card has to be torn up. *It's a shame (un honte)*, as they say, which should produce a *hontology [hontologie]*, to finally give it its correct spelling.

Meanwhile, to die of shame is the only affect of death that deserves – deserves what? Deserves it. People have kept mum about it for a long time. To speak about it, in effect, is to open up this retreat, not the final one, the only one on which there depends what can be said honestly about honesty, the honesty that stems from honour – all that is shame and companion of not mentioning shame. Precisely because for the honest man to die of shame is impossible. You know from me that this means the real. *That does not deserve death!*, people say about anything and everything, thus reducing everything to futility. Said in that way, with that aim in mind, it elides the fact that death may be deserved.

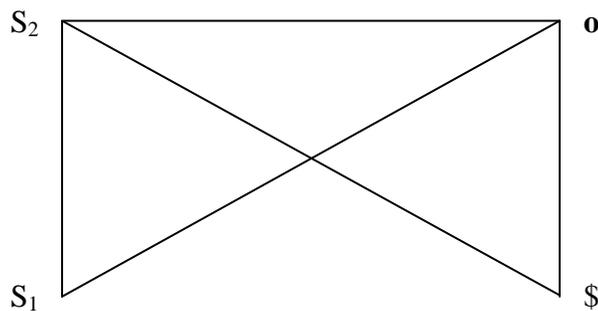
Now, in fact, it should not be a matter of eliding the impossible, but of being its agent. To say that death is deserved – the time at least to die of shame that there is nothing doing, that it is (2) deserved. If this happens now, well then, it was the only way to deserve it. It was just your luck. If it does not happen, which, given the preceding surprise, is bad luck, then you are left with life as a shame you have to swallow because it is not worth dying for it. It is worthwhile my speaking about it in this way, when as soon as you speak about it, the *vingt-scènes* I mentioned above are only waiting to take it up again in the form of buffoonery. Vincennes, precisely. It appears they were happy there with what I said, happy with me. It was not reciprocal. I was not very happy with Vincennes. Despite one nice person trying to fill up the front row, *faire Vincennes*, there was obviously no one from Vincennes there, or very few, only the ears most worthy of awarding me good marks. It was not quite what I was expecting, especially since my teaching had been, it appears propagated there. There are times when I am aware of a certain hollowness. But anyway there was nonetheless just what was needed to show the point of agreement between *Minute* and *Les temps modernes*. I only mention it because, as you will see, this touches on our topic today – how to behave with regard to culture? Sometimes a tiny thing is enough to throw a glimmer of light, here a memory that I do not know how I myself became aware of. Once you remember the publication of a certain tape-recording in *Les temps modernes*, the relationship with *Minute* is striking. Try it, it is fascinating, I have done it. You cut out paragraphs in the two journals, you stir them around a bit, and you pull them out. I assure you that except for the paper, you will not be able to find your bearings so easily.

This is what allows us to take up the question in a different way than on the basis of the objection that I made earlier in touching on things in a certain tone, with a certain word, for fear they might be carried away by buffoonery. Let us start rather from the fact that buffoonery is already there. Perhaps by mixing in a little shame, who knows, we may be able to hold it back. In short, I am playing the game that you understand me because I am addressing you. Otherwise, there would rather be an objection to your understanding me, since in many cases, it prevents you from hearing what I am saying. And this is a pity, because the young among you, at least, have moreover for quite a while now been

well able to say it without me. For that, all you are lacking precisely is a bit of shame. That may come. Obviously it is not found under a horse's hoof, and still less under that of a hobbyhorse, but the furrows of the *alethosphère* that, as I said, take (3) care of you, and even *Soyuz* you alive as you are already, would perhaps already be enough shame to take on board. You should recognise why Pascal and Kant fluttered around like two valets playing Vatel to you. Truth has been missing up above for three centuries. The meals have nevertheless arrived, reheated a go-go, even a musician from time to time, as you know. Do not look so sour, you have been served, you can say that there is no longer any shame. These pots which made you wonder what I was at, when I said they had no mustard in them – well then, quickly, make provision in them for enough shame, so that when the festivities begin, there will be no want of seasoning. You will tell me: *What is the benefit of shame? If that is the reverse of psychoanalysis it is of very little use to us.* My reply to you is: *You have enough of it to give it away.* If you don't know it yet, do a *tranche*, as they say. You will see this stale air of yours, at every step, coming up against the shame of upper-crust living. That is what psychoanalysis discovers. With a bit of seriousness you will see that this shame justifies itself by not dying of shame, that is, by maintaining with all your energy a perverted discourse of the Master, which is the University discourse.

I say: *Rehegellate yourselves!* Last Sunday I returned to this blessed lampoon called *Phenomenology of spirit*, wondering whether I had not misled you the last time in dragging you through the reminiscences that I was enjoying myself with. Not at all. It is mind-blowing. You will see there, for example – vile consciousness is the truth of noble consciousness. And it is delivered in such a way as to make your head spin. The more ignoble you are – I did not say obscene, there has been no question of that for a long time – the better it will work. That really clarifies the recent reform of the university, for instance. Credits (*unités de valeur*) for everyone! Having the baton of culture, of a bloody marshal too, in your rucksack, plus some medals, like beasts at a show, will pinpoint you as having what is boldly called mastery. Wonderful! You will have it in bucket loads! To be ashamed for not dying of it would perhaps lend it a different tone, that it involves the real. I said the real and not the truth, because as I already explained to

you last time, it is tempting to suck the milk of truth, but it is toxic. It sends you to sleep, and that is all that is expected of you. I advised a charming person to re-read Baltasar Gracian, who, as you know, was a Jesuit living at the cusp of the 16th and 17th century. He wrote his great works at the start of the 17th century. In fine, it is here that the view of the world that we are used to came to birth. Even before science climbed to our zenith, its coming was sensed. It is curious, but that is how it is. It should even be recorded for any truly experimental appreciation of history, that the baroque which suits us so well – and (4) modern art, whether figurative or not, is the same thing – began before, or just at the same time as, the initial steps of science. In the *Criticon*, which is a sort of apologue in which the plot of Robinson Crusoe, for example, can already be found – the majority of masterpieces are the crumbs of other unknown masterpieces – in the third part, on the descent into old age – since he takes this graph by ages – in the second chapter we find something called *the truth in labour (la vérité en couches)*. Truth is in labour in a town that is inhabited only by beings of the greatest purity. This does not prevent them from taking flight, in a blue funk, when they are told that truth is child's work. I wonder why I am asked being to explain this, when it was someone else who found it for me – for, in truth, I was not the one who located it – unless you did not come to my last seminar, because this is precisely what I was saying at it. It is here that one has to hold fast, because, if you want your remarks to be subversive, take care that they do not get bogged down too much on the path of truth. What I wanted to articulate the last time, by putting on the board these things that I cannot keep drawing every time, is that the S_1 , the master signifier that constitutes the secret of knowledge in its university situation, is very tempting to stick to. You remain caught up in it.



What I am telling you, and perhaps this is all some of you will be able to retain from this year, is to focus on production – on the production of the university system. A certain production is expected of you, and it is a matter, perhaps, of obtaining the effect of substituting a different one for it. On this point, simply by way of a stage, of a relay, and because I put them down as a marker of what I had stated before you last time, I am going to read three pages to you. I apologise to those people on whom I have already tested this. These three pages are a reply to this curious Belgian who asked me questions that held my interest sufficiently for me to wonder whether I had not dictated them to him myself without knowing it. He certainly deserves credit for that. Here then is the charmingly naïve sixth one, *In what respect are knowledge and truth – everyone knows that I have tried to show how these are stitched together, these two virtues – incompatible?* I say to him, *To express myself as it comes to me, nothing is incompatible with truth: we piss on it, we spit on it. It is a place of passage, or to put it better, of evacuation, of knowledge, like everything else. One can stick to it permanently, and even be infatuated with it: there are some depraved people. It is worth noting that I warned the psychoanalyst (5) about connoting as love this locus he is engaged to through his knowledge. I am telling you straight away: you do not marry the truth, there can be no contract with her, and even less an open liaison. She does not tolerate any of that. Truth is firstly seduction, and that in order to screw you. In order not to be taken in, you have to be strong – which is not the case with you. Thus shall I speak to psychoanalysts, this ghost that I hail, even that I haul, to the joy of all of you who throng in here at an invariable hour and day, for as long as I have been sustaining for you the wager that the psychoanalyst understands me. It is therefore not you that I am warning; you do not run the risk of being bitten by the truth; but who knows, if my phantasy comes alive, if the psychoanalyst takes up my baton, at the limits of the hope that this does not happen, I warn him; this commonplace that you have everything to learn about truth destines you to get lost in it. Everyone knows something about it, that will do, and he would do well to stick with that. It would even be better to do nothing with it. There is no more treacherous instrument. We know how **a** – not **the** – psychoanalyst ordinarily gets out of it; he leaves the thread of this truth to the one who is already concerned with it and who, in this capacity, truly becomes his patient, in return for which he worries about it as if it*

were a hex. Nevertheless, it is a fact that some people, for some time, have made a whole business of feeling themselves more concerned by it. This is perhaps my influence. I have perhaps played some part in this correction. And it is precisely what makes it my duty to warn them not to go too far, because if I have got it, it is by seeming not to touch it. But this is precisely what is serious, moreover, of course, people pretend to be somewhat terrified by it. It is a refusal. But a refusal does not exclude collaboration. A refusal itself can be such.

With those listening to me on the radio and who do not, as I was saying before, have any obstacle to understanding what I say, which is to hear me, I now go further. That is why I am reading it to you, because if I can say it from a particular level of the mass media, why not also make the attempt here? And then, these initial responses that have so bewildered you here, and which, it seems, got across much better than people think on the radio, have confirmed the principle I adopted, and which is along the line of things that today I would like to bequeath you. It is one of the methods by which one can act on culture. When one is caught up by chance in a large audience, one of these masses that a type of medium gives you, why not precisely raise the level, in proportion to the presumed ineptitude – which is pure presumption – of this field? Why lower the tone? What sort of mob are you trying to (6) gather? The game of culture is precisely to engage you in this system, namely, if the goal is reached, a cat will no longer be able to find its kittens. Here then, and even though it can be quite well said in this room, I am saying how remarkable it is that there has not been noticed my formula of the supposed subject of knowledge, which is put at the source of transference.

The supposed knowledge from which, I say, the psychoanalysand constructs the transference, I did not say that the psychoanalyst is supposed to know the truth any better. Think about it, and you will understand how adding this complement to it would be fatal for the transference. But equally, do not think about it, if understanding it, precisely, would prevent its effect from remaining true. I take on board the indignation at the fact that someone dresses up what I am exposing about the little knowledge out of which transference does the work. It is up to her to furnish it with something other than

the armchair that she says she is ready to sell if I am right. She leaves no way out, simply because she does not limit herself to what she has at her disposal. The psychoanalyst only holds up by not having the slightest flaw in his being. The famous non-knowledge that people mock us over is dear to his heart only because he, for his part, knows nothing. He will have nothing to do with the way of unearthing a shadow in order to pretend it is dead meat, by having himself classified as a hunting dog. He is penetrated by his discipline by virtue of the fact that the real is not initially there to be known – it is the only dike that can contain idealism. Knowledge is added to the real; this indeed is why it can bring the false into being, and even into being a bit there. I Daseine with all my might on this occasion, we need help for this. To tell the truth, it is only when it is false that knowledge is preoccupied with truth. Any knowledge that is not false could not care less! In being established itself there is only its form as a surprise, a surprise of dubious taste, moreover, when by the grace of Freud, it speaks to us of language, since it is only a product of it. Here is where the political incidence occurs. There, what is at stake, is the question: out of what knowledge does one make law? When you discover it, it may happen that it changes. Knowledge falls to the rank of symptom, seen from another angle. And that is when truth arrives. For the truth, one fights, which all the same only happens because of its relationship with the real. But the fact that it happens is much less important than what it produces. The effect of truth is only a fall of knowledge. It is this fall that constitutes production soon to be taken up again. The real for its part is neither better nor worse off as a result. In general it shakes itself off until the next crisis. Its momentary benefit is that it has re-found its lustre. This might even be the benefit that could be expected from any revolution - this lustre that would shine in this long-time, always murky, locus of truth. Except that here you have it, people have always been hoodwinked by this lustre.

This is what, the day after the last seminar, I had thrown into a corner – for you obviously, since it is no longer a question of adding it to my (7) little radiological raft. In this respect what has to be understood is the following: what is appalling about truth is what it puts in its place. If you look at my little four-lettered schema, the locus of the Other is designed, as I have always said, for truth to be inscribed there, that is to say,

everything that is of that order, the false, even the lie – which does not exist except on the foundation of truth. This, in the free operation of speech and language. But what about truth in this quadrupedal structure which presupposes language, and takes discourse as structured, namely, conditions any speech that may be produced therein. What does it put in its place, this truth that is at stake, the truth of this discourse, namely, what conditions it? How is it that the discourse of the master holds fast? It is the other face of the function of truth, not the open face, but the dimension in which it is made necessary as a debt for something hidden. Our furrows of the *alethosphère* are traced out on the surface of the long deserted heavens. But what is at stake, is what I one day described, using this word that has tickled enough of you for you to wonder what came over me – the *lathouse*. I was not the one who invented this dimension of truth, that it is hidden, that it is *Verborgenheit* that constitutes it. In short, things are such, that it makes us think that it has something in its belly. Very soon, there were clever little creatures who noticed that if that came out it would be terrible. It is probably, moreover, so that it looks better on the landscape. Now, it is equally possible that this is where the entire thing is, that it would be terrible if it got out. If you spend your time waiting, then you are done for. In short, you must not tease the *lathouse* too much. To engage oneself in it is always to guarantee what? What I spend myself explaining to you – guarantee the impossible, in that this relationship is effectively real. The more your quest attaches itself to the side of truth, the more you uphold the power of the impossibles, which are those that I respectively enumerated for you the last time – governing, educating, analysing in this case. For analysis, in any case, it is obvious. The supposed subject of knowledge scandalises people when I simply approach the truth. My little quadrupedal schemas – I tell you this today as a warning – are not the turntable of history. It is not necessary for it always to pass by way of them, and for things to turn in the same sense. They are only an appeal to you to take your bearings in relation to what can be called radical functions, in the mathematical sense of the term. As regards functions, the decisive step is taken somewhere around this epoch that I designated earlier as regards what is in common between the initial step of Galileo, the emergence of integrals and differentials with Leibniz, and then the arrival of logarithms. A function is something (8) that enters into the real, which had never entered there before and which corresponds, not to discovering,

experimenting, circumscribing, detaching, extracting, but rather to writing – writing two orders of relations to exemplify what logarithms come from. In one case, the first relation is addition. Addition is all the same intuitive. There are things here, things there, you put them together, and you get a new set. The multiplication of the loaves is not the same as putting the loaves together. It is a matter of one of these relations being applied to the other. You invent the algorithm. It starts to run wild in the world, according to little rules that seem to be unimportant, but do not believe that the fact that they exist leaves you, any of you who are here, in the same state as before they emerged. Their presence is what is important.

Well then, I am telling you that these more or less winged terms, S_1 , S_2 , \mathbf{o} , $\$$, can be used in a very large number of relations. You simply have to familiarise yourself with the way they are handled. For example, starting from the unary trait, in so far as you may be happy with it, you can try to question yourself about the functioning of the master signifier. Well, it is all together usable, if, by simply properly grounding it structurally, you notice that there is no need to rely on any of the great comedy of the struggle to death for pure prestige and its outcome. Contrary to what has been concluded by questioning things at the level of true nature, there is no contingency in the slave's position. There is the necessity that, in knowledge, something is produced that plays the function of master signifier. You cannot of course prevent yourself dreaming, or trying to find out who was the first to do it, and then, one finds the beauty of the ball going back and forth between master and slave. But it was perhaps simply someone who was ashamed, who pushed himself forward, like that. Today, I brought you the dimension of shame. It is not easy to put forward. It is not one of the easiest things to speak about. That is perhaps what it really is, the hole from which the master signifier springs. If it were, it would perhaps be of some use for measuring how close you have to get to it if you want to have something to do with the subversion, indeed even just the circulation of the Master's discourse. Be that as it may, one thing is certain, you have this introduction of the S_1 within your reach in the least discourse – it is what defines its readability. There is, in effect, language and speech and knowledge, and all that seems to have worked in the Neolithic era, but we have no trace that any dimension called reading existed. No need yet for any writing or

any (9) impression, not that it was not there for a long time, but in some way, by a retroactive affect. How is it that we can always ask ourselves, in reading any text, what distinguishes it as readable? We have to look for the joint in terms of what makes the master signifier. I would point out to you that in works of literature, you read nothing but incredible things. Why then do they hang together? I do not know. It happens in my last *faux pas* – I adore them. I happened to read *The reverse side of contemporary life* (*L'Envers de la vie contemporaine*) by Balzac. That is really is something incredible. If you have not read it, it does not matter that you have read everything on the history of the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, the French Revolution to call it by its name. You may even have read Marx, you will understand nothing about it, and there will always be something that escapes you, which is to be found only there, in this story that will give you the sweats, *The reverse side of contemporary life*. Please consult it. I am sure that not many of you have read it. It is one of the least read of Balzac's works. Have you read it, Philippe? You haven't read it. Neither have you! You see! It's crazy! Read it, and do some homework. Do exactly the same as what about a hundred years ago, I tried to get the characters I was speaking to at Sainte-Anne to do about the first scene of Act One of *Athaliah*. All they heard were the quilting points (*points de capiton*). I am not saying that it was an excellent metaphor, in fact it was this S₁, the master signifier. God only knows what they made of this quilting point, they even took it off to *Les temps modernes* – which is, all the same, not *Minute*. It was something of a master signifier. It was a way of asking them to give an account of how something that is spread throughout language like a trail of powder, is readable, that is to say that it catches on, creates a discourse. I still maintain that there is no metalanguage. Everything you may think is of the order of seeking the meta in language is always simply a question about reading. Let us suppose, pure supposition, that I am asked for my advice on something in which I have only been involved with from my position in this place – it has to be said a rather peculiar one, and it would astonish me if this were to make an open book of my place with respect to the university. But anyway, if others, wherever they come from, and for reasons that are not at all negligible, but which appear all the more clearly when you refer to my little letters, find themselves in the position of wanting to subvert something in the order of the university, where can they look? They can look in that

quarter where everything happens under a little baton, where their little (10) crowd can be put, and then others are dominated, which is in the nature of the progression of knowledge. Here it can be glimpsed that there might be a knowledge of how to live with it. Since that time it has been like a myth. I am not here to preach that to you. I have spoken to you about the shame of living.

If they look in that quarter, they may find that with my little schemas they can justify the fact that it is not out of place for the student to feel that he is a brother, as they say, not of the proletariat but of the sub-proletariat. The proletariat is like the Roman *plebs* – they were very distinguished people. The class struggle perhaps contains this little source of error at the start that it absolutely does not happen on the plane of the true dialectic of the Master's discourse. Class struggle is to be situated on the plane of identification – *Senatus Populusque Romanus*. They are on the same side. And the whole Empire includes the others into the bargain. What is at stake is to know why students feel that they belong with *all the others*. They do not seem to be able to see clearly at all how to get out of it. I would like to point out to them that an essential point of the system is production – the production of shame. That can be translated – it is impudence (*impudence*). That is the reason why it would not be a very bad thing not to go in that direction. In effect, to designate something that is very easily inscribed in these little letters, what is produced? Something cultural is produced. And when you follow the university route, what is produced is a thesis. This order of production is always related to the master signifier, but not simply because you are awarded it, quite simply because it forms part of the pre-suppositions that everything of this order is related to the name of an author. It is very refined in the university. There is a sort of preliminary approach which is on the threshold of the university. You will have the right to speak there, subject to this strict convention that you will always be pinpointed by your thesis. This gives your name its weight. Nevertheless, you are in no way bound afterwards to what is there in your thesis. Usually moreover you are satisfied with it. But it does not matter, you can say whatever you want once you have made your name. It is what plays the role of a master signifier. Can I say – because I would not like to give too much importance to what I have done – that this is how the idea came to me of a thing that you have not

heard much about for some time, *Scilicet*. Some people all the same were struck by the fact that I said that it would be a place where things would be published unsigned. You must not think that mine are either. Look at what I wrote there – it sings all alone about a painful experience, the one I had with what is called a school, to which I had contributed some propositions so that something would be inscribed in it, which moreover has not failed to be inscribed, some effect of catalepsy. The fact that it is signed by me would only be of interest if I (11) were an author. I am not at all an author. Nobody dreams of this when they read my *Ecrits*. It had for a very long time remained carefully confined to an organ that had no other interest than to be as close as possible to what I am trying to define as a calling into question of knowledge. What sort of disaster does analytic knowledge produce – that is what was in question, what has been in question as long as they did not get the itch to become authors. It is very curious that the non-signed appears paradoxical, whereas all the same, over the centuries, every decent man that has ever existed behaved, at least, as if someone had torn his manuscript from him, as if someone had played a dirty trick on him. He was not expecting to be sent congratulatory notes when it came out!

In short, if something could come out of a serious calling into question of the knowledge that is lavished and propagated in the established framework of the university, there is no reason why it cannot be done in a little shelter, a place like this, that would adopt the same law for itself, namely, not to present something so as to give someone importance, but so as to say something structurally rigorous, whatever may become of it. This could have a greater impact than one might initially expect from it. Someone called Diderot brought out *Le neveu de Rameau*, allowed it to fall out of his pocket, someone else took it to Schiller, he knew very well it was by Diderot. Diderot never worried about it. In 1804 Schiller passed it on to Goethe, who immediately translated it, and up to 1891 – I can tell you, because here is the volume, which I searched out in my library – we only had a French re-translation of the German translation by Goethe, who had moreover completely forgotten it a year after it had appeared, and who perhaps had never seen it, for they were in the middle of a Franco-Prussian row, and people did not take well to this revolutionary intrusion. In short, this translation went unnoticed. Goethe himself was no

doubt unaware that it had come out, and this did not all the same prevent Hegel from making it one of the sinews of this booklet so full of humour to which I have referred lately, *The phenomenology of the spirit*. So as you see, there is no need for you to worry that what comes out of you, carries the label of what you are concerned with. This is a damned awful obstacle, I assure you, to the publication of something decent – if only because of the fact that even within what (12) you may be naturally interested in, you feel obliged, in the name of the laws of the thesis to refer it to the author: he is talented, it is far fetched, he has no ideas, what he says is not totally stupid. And if he has contributed something important that in no way concerns him, you are absolutely required to think that he has a great brain. That sort of thing can screw you up for a long time. As for psychology, it is striking that there is no shadow of it in things that are enlightening, like *L'envers de la vie contemporaine* that I was telling you about earlier. It is a little *montage* that gets its value from its master signifiers, which is worthwhile because it is readable. No need in the least for psychology. To spell it out for you, to get myself out of jail, what saves the *Ecrits* from the accident that befell it, namely, that it was immediately read, is that it is all the same a “worst-seller”.

I am not going to prolong any further today, in this heat, this discourse which is the last that I will give this year. It is clear that there are a lot of things missing in it but it is surely no harm to specify the following: if, to talk like Hegel, there are, for your presence here, in such numbers, which has so often perplexed me, reasons that are less than ignoble, this is obviously a question of tact, as Goethe would say. I do, it would seem, not too much but just enough – if this phenomenon takes place, which is frankly incomprehensible, given what I put forward, for the majority of you, it is just that: I manage to make you ashamed, not too much but precisely enough.

Seminar 1: Wednesday 26 November 1969

(1) I cannot prevent myself, once again, from questioning this audience which has stood by me, in every sense of the term, particularly today, by following me, for some of you in the third of my shifts. Before returning to this question, I can do no less than specify, so as to thank those I should, how I have come to be here. It is due to a loan that the *Faculté de droit* has kindly made to several of my colleagues at the *École des Haute Etudes* with whom it has kindly associated me. I would like to thank, and I believe I have your endorsement, the *Faculté de droit*, and in particular its higher authorities, most notably the Dean.

As my announcement has perhaps informed you, I will only be speaking here – not that the place was not offered me for every Wednesday – the second and third Wednesdays of each month, thereby freeing me, no doubt, for other duties, the other Wednesdays. And in particular, I believe I can announce that the first Wednesday of each month - at least for some of the time - that is, every second one, and therefore the first Wednesday of December, February, April and June, I will go to Vincennes to give, not my seminar as was erroneously announced, but what in contrast, and to emphasise that it is something different, I have taken care to call four *Impromptus*, to which I have given a humorous title which you can learn about on the spot where it has already been advertised.

Since, as you can see, I am happy to leave certain information in suspense, I shall take advantage of this to air a scruple that stayed with me after the reception I gave someone,

because on reflection it was not very friendly. Not that I wanted it that way, but that was how in fact it turned out. One day somebody who is perhaps here, and will no doubt not make herself known, accosted me in the street just as I was stepping into a taxi. She pulled over on her scooter and said to me, “Are you Dr Lacan?” “Yes, I am”, I said to her. “Why?” “Are you going to start (2) your seminar again?” “Yes, of course, soon.” “Where?” And then, I undoubtedly had my reasons for this, I hope she believes me, I answered, “You shall see.” She then took off on her little scooter, at such speed that I was left both nonplussed and full of remorse. It is this remorse that made me want to convey my apologies to her today, if she is here, in the hope that she will forgive me. In fact, this is surely an opportunity for observing that it is never, in any way at all, through the extreme behaviour of someone else that one shows oneself to be, at least apparently, exasperated. It is always because someone else’s extreme behaviour happens to coincide with your own. It is because at the time I was already in a certain state of exaggerated preoccupation that no doubt I thus expressed myself in a very inappropriate way.

So then, let us go into what is involved in what we are tackling this year.

I thought I should call this seminar The reverse side of psychoanalysis (*La psychoanalyse à l’envers*). You must not think that this title owes anything at all to the current situation that believes it is in the process of turning a certain number of places and formulations upside down. As proof, I will only mention this. In a text from 1966 – and specifically in one of these introductions that I wrote when I was collecting my *Écrits* and which punctuate this collection – a text that is called *On my predecessors*, on page 68, I make a specific allusion, or more exactly I characterise what my discourse is about as ‘*taking up again the Freudian project*’, I say, ‘*from the reverse side*’. So it was written down well before the events.

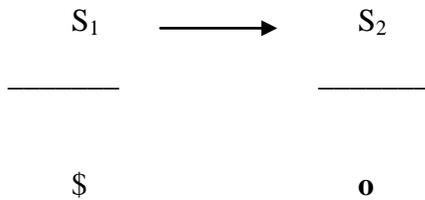
What does that mean? Last year, with great insistence, I distinguished discourse as a necessary structure that goes well beyond words, which are always more or less occasional. What I prefer, I said, and even wrote one day on the board, is *a discourse without words*. The fact is that, in all truth, it is well able to subsist without words. It subsists in certain fundamental relations that literally could not subsist without language.

Through the instrument of language a number of stable relations are established within which there can be inscribed something that is much larger, that goes much further than actual utterances. There is no need for these utterances, for our conduct, for our acts, to be inscribed within the framework of certain primordial statements. If this were not so, how could we account for what we rediscover, in our experience and especially psychoanalytic experience – analytic experience only being evoked in this connection because it has designated it – how could we account for what we rediscover under the aspect of the superego?

(3) There are structures, we cannot designate them in any other way, to characterise what can be disengaged from this “in the form of, *en forme de*” a particular usage of which I stressed last year. Namely, what happens by virtue of a fundamental relation, the one that I define as that of one signifier to another signifier. This is the fundamental relationship. From this there emerges something that we call the subject – through the signifier which, on this occasion, functions as representative of this subject for another signifier.

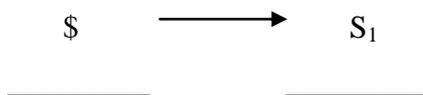
How is this fundamental form to be situated? This year without further ado, we are going to write this form in a new way, no longer as we did. last year as the exteriority of the signifier S_1 which is the point of departure of our definition of discourse as we are going to emphasise it in our first step. I put down the signifier S_1 to show what results from its relationship to the circle whose outline I am drawing here. I constructed a circle marked with the sign O, that is to say the field of the big Other. but let us simplify it. We will consider the battery of signifiers to be designated by the sign S_2 . It is a matter of those that are already there, because at the point of origin at which we place ourselves in order to fix what discourse is about, discourse conceived as the status of the statement, S_1 is to be seen as intervening. It intervenes on a signifying battery that we have no right ever to take as dispersed, as not already forming the network of what is called a knowledge. What arises initially from the moment that S_1 comes to represent something, through its intervention in the field defined, at the point we have come to, as the field already structured by a knowledge, its sup-position, its *hupokeimenom*, is the subject, in so far as it represents this specific trait, as distinguished from the living individual. The latter is

certainly its locus, its reference point, but it is not of the order of what the subject brings into play by virtue of the status of knowledge.



No doubt it is around this word “knowledge” that there exists the ambiguous point that we have to stress today, and I have already rendered your ears sensitive to it by taking several paths, tracks, moments, flashes of light. Shall I mention it for those of you who noted it down, for whom it is still trotting around in their heads? Last year I described knowledge as ‘the enjoyment of the Other’. A funny business. It is a formulation which, to be honest, had never yet been put forward. (4) It is not new, since already last year I made it sound sufficiently convincing, and upheld it without any special protests. This is one of the rendezvous that I announced for this year.

Let me complete first of all what initially had two legs, then three, let us give it its fourth. I think I have been insisting on it for long enough, and especially last year, since last year the seminar was designed for this – *From an Other to the other*, I called it. This other, the little other, with its famous *the*, was what we designated at this level, that of algebra, which is a signifying structure, as the \bullet -object. At this level of signifying structure, we only have to find out how it operates. Thus we are free to see what happens if we write things after giving the entire system a quarter turn, this famous quarter turn that I have been speaking about for long enough, and on different occasions – notably since the appearance of what I wrote under the title *Kant with Sade* – for people to realise that one day it would not be limited to the schema Z, and that there are other reasons for this quarter turn than this pure accident of imaginary representation.



o

S₂

This is an example. To put things clearly, if it seems justified to say that the chain, the sequence of letters of this algebra, cannot be disturbed by undertaking this operation that I have described as a quarter turn, we will obtain four structures, no more, the first of which, in a way, shows you the starting point. It is very easy quickly to produce on paper the three remaining ones. This is only so as to specify an apparatus that has absolutely nothing obligatory about it, as one would say from a certain perspective, nothing abstracted from any reality. On the contrary, it is already inscribed in what functions as this reality I was speaking about earlier, that of discourse, which is already in the world and which upholds it, at least the one we know. Not only is it already inscribed but it forms part of its arches.

Of course the form of letters in which we inscribe this symbolic chain is of little importance provided it is distinct – this is enough for something to be manifested about constant relations. Such is this formula. What does it mean? It situates a moment. What we will subsequently develop in our discourse will tell us what sense it is appropriate to give to this moment. This means that it is at the very instant at which the S₁ intervenes in the field that is already constituted by other signifiers in so far as they are already articulated to one another as such, that in intervening within another system this \$ emerges, which is what we (5) have called the subject as divided. Its entire status is to be reconsidered this year, in the strongest sense. Well, we have always stressed that, from this trajectory there emerges something to be defined as a loss. This is what is designated by the letter that is to be read as o.

We have, of course, not failed to indicate the point from which we extracted this function of lost object: from Freud's discourse about the specific sense of repetition in the speaking being. Because, it is in no way a question in repetition of just any effect of memory in the biological sense. Repetition has a certain relationship with the limit of this subject and this knowledge, which is called enjoyment (*jouissance*). This is why it is a logical articulation that is at stake in the formula that 'knowledge is the enjoyment of

the Other'. Of the Other, of course, in so far as – for there is no other Other – the intervention of the signifier makes it emerge as a field. You will no doubt tell me that here, in sum, we are still going around in circles – the signifier, the Other, knowledge, the signifier, the Other, knowledge, etc. But this is where the term enjoyment enables us to show the point of insertion of the system. In doing this we are no doubt going outside what is authentically involved in knowledge, what is recognisable as knowledge, and are referring ourselves to the limits, to an outside field as such, the one that Freud's word dares to confront. What results from everything that this word articulates? Not knowledge, but confusion. Well then, from this very confusion we have to draw some reflections, since it is a matter of limits, and get out of the system. Get out of it in virtue of what? A thirst for meaning (*sens*), as if the system needed it! The system has no needs, but we beings of weakness, such as we will find ourselves to be over the course of this year at every turning point, we need meaning.

Well then, here is one. It is perhaps not the true one. But then, it is certain that we are going to see that there are lots of these *it is perhaps not the true one*, and this insistence properly suggests to us the resignation (*démission* [a slip?]), the dimension of truth. Let us just note

the very ambiguity that the word *Trieb* has taken on in psychoanalytic stupidity, instead of people applying themselves to grasping how this category of the word *Trieb* is articulated. It is not without forbears, I mean the word has already a use which goes back a long way, as far back as Kant, but what it is used for in psychoanalytic discourse would make it worthwhile for us not to rush in and translate it as *instinct*. But after all, it is not for nothing that these slippages occur, and though for a long time we have been insisting that this translation is an aberration, we have the right to take advantage of it. Not of course to consecrate, and above all in this respect, the notion of instinct, but to remind you of (6) what, in Freud's discourse, makes it something we can live with – and simply to try to make people 'inhabit' this discourse in a different way. In the popular mind, the idea of instinct is indeed the idea of a knowledge – a knowledge whose meaning we are unable to give, but which is supposed, and not without reason, to have as its result that life subsists. If we give a meaning to what Freud says about the pleasure

principle as essential to the functioning of life, because it is the one that maintains tension at the lowest level, is this not already saying what his discourse will subsequently demonstrate as necessary for him? Namely, the death drive. This notion became necessary for him because of the development of an experience, the analytic experience, in so far as it is a structure of discourse. Because you must not forget that it is not by looking at how people behave that the death drive can be discovered. We have the death drive here. We have it where something happens between you and what I am saying. I said *what I am saying*, I am not speaking about what I am. What is the use, since in short this can be seen thanks to your presence. It is not that it speaks in my favour. It speaks sometimes, and most often, instead of me. In any case, what justifies that here I am saying something, is what I would call the essence of this manifestation [demonstration?], constituted by the diverse, successive audiences that I have attracted according to the places where I have spoken. I was particularly keen to add on somewhere the following remark, because today, when I am in a new place, seemed to me to be the day to do so. The place has always carried weight in giving its style to what I called this manifestation.

I do not want to let the opportunity pass for saying that it has a relationship with the usual sense of the term *interpretation*. What I said by, for, and in your presence is, on each of these moments that I have defined as geographical locations, always already interpreted. I will come back to it, because this will have to take its place in the little revolving quadripodes I am starting to make use of today. But so as not to leave you completely in the void, I will point out something to you straight away. If I had to interpret what I said at *Sainte-Anne* between 1953 and 1963, I mean pin down its interpretation – interpretation in a contrary sense to analytic interpretation, which makes you feel how much analytic interpretation itself goes against the grain of the ordinary meaning of the term – I would say that what was most tangible, the chord that was really struck was fun. The most exemplary character of this audience, which was medical no doubt – but then there were some participants who were not doctors – was one that punctuated my discourse with a sort of continuous stream of gags. This is what I will take as most characteristic of what was, over ten years, the essence of (7) my manifestation. One

further proof is that things only started to go sour from the day I dedicated a trimester to the analysis of wit.

This is a big parenthesis, and I cannot go any further in this direction, but I must add what was the characteristic of interpretation in the place where you left me the last time, the *Ecole normale supérieure*. E.N.S. – it is absolutely magnificent in initials. It revolves around being. One must always know how to profit from literal equivocations, above all when they are the first three letters of the word *enseigner*. Well then, it was in *rue d'Ulm* that it was noticed that what I was saying was a teaching. Before, this was not at all obvious. It was not even accepted. The professors, and especially the doctors, were very disturbed. The fact that it was not at all medical left a strong doubt over the fact that this was a teaching, until these young chaps from the *Cahiers pour l'analyse*, came along, formed in a place where – as I had said a long time before, precisely at the time of the gags – people know nothing from their formation, but they teach it admirably. That they should have interpreted what I was saying as that does indeed have a sense. It is a different interpretation!

Naturally, no one knows what will happen here. I do not know whether the law students will come, but in truth, this would be crucial for interpretation. This will probably be by far the most important phase of the three, since it is a question this year of taking psychoanalysis from the reverse side, and perhaps, precisely, of giving it its status, in the sense of the term that is called juridical. In any case, it has always surely been concerned with the structure of discourse, and to the nth degree. If that is not what law is, if that is not where one touches on how discourse structures the real world, where would it be? That is why we are no less at our place here than elsewhere and that it is not simply for reasons of convenience that I accepted this godsend. But it is also what causes you the least disturbance about my travels, at least for those who were accustomed to the other place. I am not sure that for parking it is very convenient, but then for that you still have *rue d'Ulm*. Let us take things up again.

We had come to our instinct and our knowledge as situated in short, with respect to what Bichat defines as life. *Life*, he says – and this is the most profound definition, it is not at all just a smart remark if you look at it closely - *is the totality of all the forces that resist death*. If you read what Freud says about life's resistance to the descent towards Nirvana, as the death drive was also designated at the time he introduced it, no doubt this descent towards a return to the inanimate is present at the heart of the analytic experience, which is an experience of discourse. (8) Freud goes that far. But what constitutes, he says, the subsistence of this bubble – really this image is required when you read these pages – is the fact that life only returns there along paths that are always the same, and which it has once traced out. What is it, if not the true sense of what we find in the notion of instinct in terms of the involvement of a knowledge. This track, this pathway, is known to us, it is ancestral knowledge. And what is this knowledge, if we do not forget that Freud introduces what he himself calls beyond the pleasure principle, which is not for all that overthrown. The proof is that knowledge is what causes life to stop at a certain limit on the way to enjoyment. For the path towards death – this is what is in question in is a discourse on masochism – the path towards death is nothing other than what is called enjoyment. There is a primitive relationship between knowledge and enjoyment, and it is here that there is inserted what emerges when the apparatus of the signifier appears. From now on it is conceivable that we are linking up with the function of this emergence of the signifier.

This is enough, you will say, what need do we have to explain everything? And the origin of language, why not? Everyone knows that in order to structure a knowledge correctly you have to abandon the question of origins and that what we are doing in articulating this is superfluous with respect to what we have to develop this year, which is situated at the level of structures. It is a useless search for meaning. But as I have already said, let us take note of what we are.

I will go on then. It is at the joint of an enjoyment – and not just any one, it must undoubtedly remain opaque – it is at the joint of one enjoyment privileged above all others, not because it is sexual enjoyment, since what this enjoyment designates as being at the joint is, as I have just said, the loss of sexual enjoyment, it is castration, it is in

relation to this joint with sexual enjoyment that there emerges, in the Freudian fable of repetition, the engendering of something radical that gives body to a literally articulated schema. And this is what S_1 , having emerged, first moment, repeats itself for S_2 . From this entering into a relationship the subject emerges, the subject which something represents, a certain loss, and it is worthwhile to have made this effort towards meaning in order to understand its ambiguity. Because it is not for nothing that last year I called this same object, that I had designated moreover as the one around which the entire dialectic of frustration organises itself in analysis, *surplus enjoying* (*plus-de-jouir*). This means that the loss of the object is also the gap, the hole, opened up to something which one does not know whether it is the representation of (9) the lack in enjoying, which situates itself with respect to the progress of knowledge, in so far as it takes on there a completely different accent through being henceforth knowledge punctuated by the signifier. Is it even the same?

The relationship to enjoyment is suddenly accentuated by the still virtual function called that of desire. Moreover, it is for this reason that I articulate as surplus enjoying what appears here, and not by force or by a transgression. Let us put a halt, I beg you, to this nonsense. What analysis shows if it shows anything – I am appealing here to those whose soul is a little bit different to the one that we could say, as Barrès says of the cadaver, talks rubbish – is very precisely that nothing is transgressed. To make one's way is not the same as transgressing. Seeing a half open door does not mean going through it. We shall have the opportunity of rediscovering what I am in the process of introducing.

This is not transgression then but rather breaking into, falling into the field of something that is of the order of enjoyment – an extra bonus. Well then, perhaps that is even what one has to pay for. That is why I told you last year that in Marx, the small \bullet which is recognised there as functioning at the level that is articulated – by the discourse of the analyst, not by any other – as surplus enjoyment. Here you have what Marx discovers as what is really happening in surplus value. Naturally, Marx is not the one who invented surplus value. Except that before him nobody knew how to place it. It was the same

ambiguous place as the one I have just mentioned, of excess work, of surplus work. What does this pay for, he says, if not precisely enjoyment, which must go somewhere. What is disturbing is that if one pays for it, one has it, and then when one has it, it is very urgent to squander it. If one does not squander it, it has all sorts of consequences.

Let us leave the matter in suspense for the moment. What am I in the process of doing? I am starting to get you to admit, simply by having situated it, that this four-legged apparatus, with four positions, is able to help define four radical discourses. It is not by chance that I gave you this form first, but there is no reason why I should not have begun with a different one, with the second for example. But it is a fact, determined by historical reasons that this initial form, the one that expresses itself on the basis of this signifier that represents a subject for another signifier, has a very special importance, in so far as in what we are going to state this year, it will be pinpointed as being, of the four, the articulation of the discourse of the Master.

(10) I think that there is no point in telling you about the historical importance of the discourse of the Master, since all the same, you are, on the whole, recruited through this sieve that is called the university, and because of this you cannot but know that philosophy speaks only of that. Even before it speaks about it, that is to say before it calls it by its name – it jumps out in Hegel and is quite specially illustrated by him – it was already manifest that it was at the level of the discourse of the Master that something appeared that concerns us, concerns us as regards the discourse that despite its ambiguity is called philosophy. I do not know how far I will be able to take what I have simply to pinpoint, to point out to you today, because we must not delay if we want to go through the four discourses in question. What are the others called? I will tell you right away, why not, if only to whet your appetite! This one, the second on the blackboard, is the discourse of the hysteric. It is not obvious straight away but I will explain it to you. And then the two others. One is the discourse of the analyst. The other – no definitely, I will not tell you what it is. Saying it just like that today would lead to too many misunderstandings. You will see, it is a discourse that is really in the news.

Let us go back to then to the discourse of the Master. I must justify the designation of the present algebraic formula as giving the structure of the discourse of the Master. S_1 , let us say to go quickly, is the signifier, the function of the signifier on which is based the essence of the Master.

On the other hand you remember perhaps what I stressed last year on several occasions – the proper field of the slave is knowledge, S_2 . There is no doubt about it reading the testimonies that we have of ancient life, in any case the discourses about this life – on this read Aristotle's *Politics* – what I put forward about the slave as characterised as being the one who is the support of knowledge is not in doubt. In ancient times it is not simply, as with our modern slave, a class, it is a function inscribed in the family. The slave Aristotle speaks about is just as much in the family as in the State and more in one than in the other. This is so because he has a know-how. This is very important because before knowing whether knowledge knows itself, whether one can ground a subject on the perspective of a knowledge totally transparent to itself, it is important to know how to take on board the register of what know-how is at its origin.

(11) Now what is happening before our eyes, and is giving a meaning, an initial meaning – you will find there are others - to philosophy is something that, luckily, we have traces of in Plato. And it is quite essential to remember this, in order to situate what is in question and, after all, if there is some sense in what is exercising us, it can only be to put things in their place.

What philosophy designates throughout its whole evolution is the following: the theft, the abduction, the removal from the slave of his knowledge, through the operations of the Master. To see this it is enough to be a little bit familiar with the dialogues of Plato, and God knows, over 16 years I have been making an effort so that those who hear me might acquire this familiarity. Let us begin by distinguishing what I will call on this occasion the two aspects of knowledge, the articulated aspect and this know-how that is so close to animal knowledge, but which in the slave is not absolutely deprived of the apparatus that makes it into a network of language of the most articulated kind. It is a question of

seeing that this, the second layer, the articulated apparatus, can be transmitted, which means transmitted from the pocket of the slave to that of the Master – assuming that they had pockets in those days! This is the whole effort of separating out what is called *episteme*. This is a funny word, I do not know whether you have ever thought about it a lot – *putting oneself in the right position*, in short it is the same word as *verstehen* [*Vorstellung?*]. It is the question of finding the position that enables knowledge to become knowledge of the Master. The function of *episteme* in so far as it specified as transmissible knowledge - consult Plato's dialogues – is still entirely borrowed from the techniques of the craftsman, that is to say, of serfs. It is a matter of extracting its essence so that this knowledge becomes the Master's knowledge. And then, that is naturally increased by a little return shock, which is called a slip, a return of the repressed. But, says someone or other, Karl Marx or someone else, where am I in this? consult *Meno*, when it is a question of the square root of 2 and its incommensurable. Someone says, "Hey, look get the slave over here, the little darling. You see he knows." They ask him questions, the Master's questions of course, and the slave naturally answers with what the questions already dictate as their response. There is a sort of derision in all this. It is a way to scoff at the character who is being given a roasting. It is shown that the serious business, the aim, is to show that the slave knows, but to acknowledge it only in this derisory way hides the fact that it is a matter of robbing the slave of his function at the level of knowledge. To give its sense to what I have just stated, it has to be seen - and this is the step we will take the next time - how the slave's position with respect to enjoyment is articulated. This is what I already began to say last year in the form of a colourful *hint* [myth?]

(12) What is usually said is that enjoyment is the privilege of the Master. What is interesting on the contrary, as everyone knows, is what belies this. In short, it is the status of the Master that is at stake on this occasion. As an introduction today I only wanted to tell you how much this status is of profound interest to us, and it is worth keeping back the articulation of it until we take the next step. It is of interest to us when what is unveiled, and at the same time reduced to a corner of the landscape, is the function of philosophy. Given the space, shorter this year than others, that I have allowed

myself, I am of course unable to develop it. It is not important, I hope that someone else will take up this theme and do what he will with it. Philosophy, in its historical function is this bargaining, this betrayal I would almost say, that pressures the slave's knowledge, so as to obtain its transmutation into the Master's knowledge. Does this mean that what we see emerging as the science that dominates us is the fruit of this operation? Here again, far from it being necessary for us to rush in, we note on the contrary that there it is nothing of the kind. This wisdom, this *episteme*, constructed with every kind of recourse to every dichotomy, only leads to a knowledge that can be designated by the term that Aristotle himself used to characterise the Master's knowledge, 'theoretical knowledge', not in the weak sense that we give this word, but in the emphatic sense that the word *theoria* has in Aristotle. A curious thing - I come back to this, because for my discourse it is a vital point, a pivotal point. - it is only from the day when, by renouncing what I may call this wrongly acquired knowledge, someone, I mean Descartes, for the first time extracted the function of the subject as such from the strict relationship of S_1 to S_2 - Descartes as I believe I can articulate him, not without the agreement of at least a good number of those who have dealt with him - it is on this day that science was born. It is important to distinguish the time at which the turning point emerges between this attempt at the transferring of knowledge from the slave to the Master and the time it starts again, which is only motivated by a certain way of positing, in the structure, any possible function of the statement in so far as it is only the articulation of the signifier that supports it. Here is a small example of the illumination that the type of work that I am proposing for you this year can bring.

Do not think that it stops there. What I have advanced here, once it has been shown, presents at least this character of uncovering something obvious: who can deny, once it has been said, that philosophy has ever been anything else but a fascinating enterprise to benefit the Master? We will of course come back to it.

At the other end we have Hegel's discourse, with its outrageous 'absolute knowledge', as it is called. What can this absolute knowledge (13) possibly mean, if we begin with the definition that I allowed myself to recall as being the originating one for our way of

proceeding concerning knowledge? It is perhaps from this that we will start the next time. It will at least be one of our points of departure, for there is another one, which is no less important, and which is quite particularly salubrious because of the really overwhelmingly outrageous things one hears from psychoanalysts about what is involved in the desire to know.

If there is one thing that psychoanalysis should force us to maintain *mordicus*, it is that the desire to know has no relationship with knowledge – unless of course we are happy with the lustful word of transgression. The radical distinction, which has far-reaching consequences from the point of view of pedagogy, that the desire to know is not what leads to knowledge, is something I will allow myself to justify in the more or less long-term. What leads to knowledge is the hysteric's discourse. But when all is said and done, there is in effect a question to ask oneself. Does the Master who operates this operation of displacement, of bank transfer, of the slave's knowledge, long to know? Does he have the desire to know? A real Master, as we have seen in general until a recent era - and a real Master is seen less and less - desires to know nothing at all, he wants things to work. And why would he want to know? There are things that are more fun than that! So then the question is how the philosopher managed to inspire the Master with the desire to know? I will leave you on this note. It is slightly provocative. If there are any of you who find this out between now and the next time, they can let me know!

ANALYTICON

VINCENNES – Impromptu No. 1: 3rd December 1969

Jacques Lacan: [*a dog walks across the podium*] I will talk about my egeria, who is just like that. She is the only person I know who knows what she speaks, I am not saying what she says. Because it is not that she does not say anything: she does not say it in words. She says something when she is anxious, which happens sometimes. She puts her head on my knee. She knows that I am going to die which a number of people also know. She is called Justine.

X: - What's going on here? He's talking to us about his dog!

JL: That's my dog, she is very beautiful, and you would have heard her speak.....the only thing she lacks in comparison to the one who has just passed is that she did not go to the University.

Here I am then, as a guest, at the Experimental Centre of the said University, an experiment which seems fairly exemplary to me. Since what is in question is an experiment, you might wonder what part you play. If you ask me, I will make a drawing for you I will try. Because after all the University is very powerful, it has deep foundations.

I have kept for you the announcement of one of the four discourse positions I have announced elsewhere, where I have begun my seminar. I spoke about the Master's discourse since you are accustomed to hear this spoken of. And it is not easy to give an example, as someone who is very intelligent observed yesterday evening. I will try all the same because it is simple. This is where I am, having left things unfinished at my seminar. And, to be sure, here it is not a matter of continuing it. "Impromptu" I said. You can see that the thing with its tail down provided me with one earlier. I will continue in the same tone.

Secondly, the discourse of the Hysteric. This is very important because it is with this that the discourse of the psychoanalyst takes shape (*se dessine*). Except that there would have to be some psychoanalysts. This is what I spend my time at.

(2) **X:** Not at Vincennes in any case!

JL: You've said it, not at Vincennes.

X: Why cannot the students at Vincennes at the end of the teaching they are supposed to have received, become psychoanalysts?

JL: (*Speaking in a falsetto*) This is precisely what I am going to explain, Mademoiselle. That is precisely what is at stake. Psychoanalysis is not transmitted like any other knowledge.

The psychoanalyst has a position that sometimes proves eventually to be able to be that of a discourse. He does not thereby transmit a knowledge. Not that there is nothing to know, contrary to what is foolishly asserted, because this is what is called into question – and why not quite rightly – the function in society of a certain knowledge, the knowledge that is transmitted to you. It exists.

X: Could you speak a little bit more slowly, because some students are not able to take notes.

X: You have to be sick to be taking notes! It means that you understand nothing about psychoanalysis and in particular nothing about Lacan!

JL: (*turning to the board*) This is a sequence, an algebraic sequence

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_2} & \longrightarrow & \underline{\mathbf{o}} \\ S_1 & & \$ \end{array}$$

X: A man can't be reduced to an equation.

JL: It holds up by constituting a chain, the start of which is in this formula:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_1} & \longrightarrow & \underline{S_2} \\ \$ & & \circ \end{array}$$

the one I put forward as a signifier is defined as representing a subject for another signifier. It is an altogether fundamental way of writing it. It can in any case be taken for one. It was developed through my efforts from an attempt - after having put the necessary time into giving it its shape, the one I have now ended up with - it is an attempt to establish what was required in all decency to manipulate a notion by encouraging subjects to trust it and to operate with it. These are called psychoanalysands.

I first asked myself what could come of it for the psychoanalyst where he was at. For on this point it is quite obvious that the notions (3) are not clear, since Freud, who knew what he was saying, said that it was an impossible function and yet one that is carried out every day. If you re-read his text very closely you will see that it is not the function that is in question but the being of the psychoanalyst. What is generated by the fact that one fine day a psychoanalysand commits himself to be a psychoanalyst?

This is what I tried to articulate when I spoke about *The psychoanalytic act*. My seminar that year, it was 1968, I interrupted before the end, in order, like that, to show my sympathy with the disturbances that were taking place and which continue in a moderate way. Contestation makes me think of something that was invented one day, if I recall correctly by my good and now dead friend Marcel Duchamp: "*The bachelor makes his own chocolate*". Take care that the agitator is not making his own chocolate [is not being swindled?]. In short, this *Psychoanalytic act* remained at a sticking point, if I can put it

like that. And I have not had the time to come back to it, especially as examples of what it leads to are breaking out all around me.

X: You mean a relative deafness.

JL: An issue of a journal called *Etudes freudiennes* has appeared. I cannot recommend you highly enough to read it, never having hesitated to advise you to read bad things. Of themselves they are already like *best sellers*. If I recommend this to you it is because there are very, very good texts. Not like the little grotesque text on the remarks about my style that had naturally found its place in the uninhabited locus of *Paulhanerie*. This is different. You will draw the greatest benefit from it. Apart from an article by its editor which I could not praise enough, you have statements that are all indisputably agitating against the psychoanalytic institution. There is a charming, dependable Canadian who says, my God, some very relevant things about it; there is someone from the *Institut psychanalytique de Paris* who has a very important position there on what is called the education committee, who makes a critique of the psychoanalytic institution as such, in so far as it is strictly in contradiction with everything that the very existence of the psychoanalyst demands. It is really marvellous. I cannot say that I would put my name to it myself, because I already have put my name to it. These are my own remarks! But for me this had a sequel, namely a certain *Proposition* that draws its consequences from this (4) impasse that is so masterfully demonstrated. It might have been possible to say somewhere in a tiny little note, that there was somewhere an extremist who tried to put that into a proposition that radically renews the sense of all psychoanalytic selection. It is clear that it is not being done. And I really do not know if one should complain about it since in the opinion of the people concerned, this contestation is completely up in the air, gratuitous. There is absolutely no question of this modifying anything whatsoever as regards the present functioning of the institute that the authors belong to.

X: Ah, Lacan is a great talker!

X: I haven't understood a word yet. Anyway you could start by explaining what a psychoanalyst is. For me he is a kind of cop. The people who go into psychoanalysis say nothing and only worry about themselves.

X: We had priests already but since that no longer worked now we have psychoanalysts.

X: Lacan, we have been waiting for over an hour now for what you are implicitly stating: the critique of psychoanalysis. That is why we are saying nothing because this would also be your own self-critique.

JL: But I am not criticising psychoanalysis in the slightest, there is no question of criticising it. He is not hearing me! I am not at all an agitator.

X: You said that psychoanalysts were not being trained at Vincennes and that this was a good thing. Because at Vincennes knowledge is being dispensed and that psychoanalysis was not a knowledge. In any case it is not supposed to be knowledge. So what?

JL: A bit of patience. I will explain it to you. I was invited, I remind you. It's beautiful, it's big, it's generous but I was invited.

X: By whom?

JL: By the philosophy department.

X: Is psychoanalysis revolutionary?

JL: Now there's a good question!

X: Is it knowledge or is it not knowledge? You're not the only paranoiac around here.

(5) **JL:** I will speak about a certain aspect of things that have happened here around some contestation in a department that I am not part of, namely, the Department of Psychoanalysis. There was the difficult question of credits (*unités de valeur*).

X: The question of credits is settled and this is not the time to be talking about it. There was all this scheming on the part of the academics in the Department of Psychoanalysis so as to drag them out all through the year. We couldn't care less about credits. It is a question of psychoanalysis. Do you understand? We don't give a damn about credits!

JL: For my part, I do not get the sense that no one gives a damn about them. On the contrary people are very sold on credits. It is a habit. I put the schema for the fourth discourse on the board, the one I did not name last time which is called the University discourse. Here it is in the position of mastery, as we say, S_2 knowledge. I explained the last time ...

X: Who do you think you're kidding here? The University discourse is in the credits? That is a myth and what you are asking us is to believe in is a myth. The people who refer to it lay down the rules of the game inside, the more people try to get out of this rule the more they are stymied by it. So do not say that the University discourse is on the board, because it is not true!

JL: The University discourse is on the board, and knowledge occupies a place on the board, on the top left, already designated in a previous schema...

X: On top and to the right of God we have Lacan.

JL: ...Already designated in a previous discourse. Because what is important in what is written are the relations, that is where it works or where it does not work. If you begin by putting in its place what essentially constitutes the discourse of the Master...

X: What is a Master? It's Lacan!

JL: ...namely, that he ordains, that he intervenes in the system of knowledge, you can ask yourself the question what it means when the discourse of knowledge, by this quarter turn, which has no need to be put on the board because it is in the real, by this displacement, knowledge has the whip hand. When that happens, where you are, is where there has been defined the result, the fruit, the fall, of the relationships between the Master and the slave. Namely, in my (6) algebra what is designated by the letter, the object, *o*. Last year when I made the effort to announce something called *From an Other to the other*, I said that it was the place revealed, designated by Marx as surplus value.

You are the products of the University. The surplus value is you and you are proving it, even if only in this respect – which you not only consent to but which you also applaud – and I see no reason to object – which is that you leave here, equal to more or less to credits. You have all made yourself into credits. You leave here stamped with credits.

X: So the moral is it would be better to leave here stamped with Lacan.

JL: I don't stamp anyone. What's that about? Why do you presume that I want to stamp you? What nonsense!

X: No you won't stamp us, you can be sure of that. What I mean is that the people here are stamped because, wanting to maintain the discourse that you maintain for them, they are unable to maintain it in the style that is appropriate to their presence here. People want to speak in the name of a contestation that you describe as useless. There are others who go "*Tra-la-la, boum-boum, bang-bang*" in their little corner and that is what generates opinion. None of that is said under the pretext that it is up to you to say it. What I would like is for you to have the desire to shut up!

JL: Ah, aren't they wonderful! They think I would say it much better than they do (*then in a sharp voice*). Me, I am going home, that's what I am being reproached for.

X: Hey! Lacan don't make fun of people, eh?

JL: You are putting forward a discourse which is so exigent that...

X: What I am proposing is that one should not mock people. When they ask a question, you shouldn't answer in that tone of voice as you've already done three times already. When they ask a question, you give a reply and that's it. Now what questions have you asked?

And then there is something else since there are people here who think that psychoanalysis is all about the problem of getting a bit of ass, we should just have a wild 'love-in'. Are there any people who would like to change all this into a wild 'love-in'?

(He starts undressing and stops when he has taken off his shirt).

(7) **JL:** Listen, old boy, I already saw that last night. I was at The Open Theatre, there was a bloke who was doing that, but he had more guts than you have, he stripped completely naked. Go on, go on, for fuck's sake!

X: Come on, give us a break! Why does Lacan confine himself to such a minor criticism of our comrade's behaviour? To say to our comrade that he cannot undress, while you bang the table, might be very funny but it's also very simplistic.

JL: But I am simplistic.

X: And that makes them laugh, which is interesting.

JL: But I don't see why they shouldn't laugh all of a sudden.

X: Well, I would really like them to laugh at that precise point.

JL: That's sad.

X: Just as sad as to see people leaving here as if it were the Metro at six in the evening!
That is sad too.

JL: So where have we got to? It seems that people cannot speak about psychoanalysis because they expect me to. Well then, they are right because in fact I will do it better than them.

X: That's not quite right since they feel the need to whisper into each other's ears!

JL: That's the proof!

X: There are a certain number of people, the same ones who take notes and who laugh, who when Lacan takes the audience in hand, say to one another without ever moving from their seats: "It is of the order of a certain topology, a certain number of things." Well then, it is these people that I would like to hear.

X: Come on, let Lacan speak.

JL: In the meantime you say nothing.

X: Lacan you're with us!

JL: I am with you.

Time is getting on. Let me all the same try to give you a little idea of what my project is in another place.

(8) It is a matter of articulating a logic which however frail it may seem to be – my four little letters look harmless, except that you have to know according to what rules they

function - a logic which however weak it appears is still strong enough to comprise what is the sign of this logical force, namely, incompleteness.

That makes them laugh! Except that it had a very important consequence, especially for revolutionaries, which is that nothing is all (*rien n'est tout*).

X: Oh good!

JL: Whatever way you come at things, whatever way you turn them, the property of each of these little four legged schemas is to leave to each its own gap. In the discourse of the Master, it is precisely that of the recuperation of surplus value. In the discourse of the University, it is a different one; it is the one that torments you. Not that the knowledge you are given is not structured and solid, but that you have only one thing to do, which is to weave yourselves into it with those who work, namely, those who teach you, very precisely as means of production and, by the same token, of surplus value.

In the discourse of the Hysteric, which is what has made possible the decisive shift by giving its sense to what Marx historically spelled out, namely, that there are historical events that can only be judged in terms of symptoms. No one saw how far this would take us until we had the discourse of the Hysteric to make the shift, together with something else, which is the discourse of the psychoanalyst. The psychoanalyst initially only had to listen to what the hysteric was saying. What the hysteric says is pure gold ...

X: So the Hysteric is the psychoanalyst's Master.

JL: "I want a man who knows how to make love". Ah yes, man stops there. He stops at the fact that he is, in effect, someone who 'knows'. As for making love, call back later! There is nothing that is all and you can always make your little jokes, there is one that is not funny, which is called castration. This is what was finally discovered...

X: While this class drones quietly on there are 150 comrades from Beaux-Arts who were arrested by the cops and who since yesterday have been at Beaujon because they are not giving classes on the **o**- object like this mandarin here, and whom no one could care less (9) about. They went to give an open-air class at the *Ministère de l'Équipement* about the shanty towns and on the politics of M. Chalandon. So I think that the droning on of this formal class is a fairly good expression of the current state of rottenness in the University.

X: Because, honestly, everything he's saying is bullshit, huh?

JL: Yeah!

X: If people don't want me to speak it is obviously because no one knows how good I am at shouting. Lacan, I would like to tell you a few things.

It seems to me that we have reached a point where it is obvious that a protest can become more or less a form of possibility in this room. It is clear that people can shout a bit, that they can make jokes, but it is also clear and perhaps in an obvious way today, that we will never manage to get to a critique of the University if we remain in the University, in its classes, and within the rules that it established before we intervened in it.

I think that what our comrade has just said about the students from Beaux-Arts who went out of the University to give an open air class on the shanty towns and on the politics of Chalandon is a very important example. This makes it possible to find an outlet for our desire to change society and amongst other things to destroy the University. And I would like Lacan to give us his point of view on this in a moment. Because to destroy the University will not take place with a majority of students from the inside, but much more with an alliance that we students must make about revolutionary positions with people who work with the peasants and the workers. I am well aware that the relationship with what Lacan was saying earlier does not exist, but...

JL: But not at all, not at all. It does exist.

X: Perhaps it does exist, but it is not obvious. The relationship between the actions that we must take outside and the discourse, since it is one, of Lacan, is obviously implicit. And it would be a good thing now if Lacan stated what he thinks of the necessity to leave the University and stop nit picking over words, challenging one (10) or other teacher over this or that quotation of Marx. Because the academic Marx: we're fed up with him here. We've been hearing drivel about it in this University all year. We know it's shit, and going on about the academic Marx means overall serving a bourgeois University. If the University has to be blown up, it would be from outside with others who are outside.

X: So why are you inside?

X: I am inside, comrade, because I want the people to leave, I have to come in to tell them.

JL: You see. It's all there, old boy. To get them to leave you come in.

X: Lacan, please, I want to finish. That's not the whole story because some students still think that by listening to M Lacan's discourse they will find the elements that will enable them to challenge his discourse. I claim that this is to let yourselves get caught in the trap.

JL: You're quite right!

X: If we think that it is by listening to Lacan's discourse or Foucault's or Dommergues' or Terray's or someone else's that we will have the means to criticise the ideology that they are making us swallow we are blinding ourselves. I claim that it is outside that we have to go to find the means of blowing up the University.

JL: But outside of what? Because when you leave here you become aphasic. When you leave you continue to speak, consequently you continue to be inside!

X: I don't know what aphasic means.

JL: You don't know what aphasic means? It's absolutely disgusting that you don't know what an aphasic is. There are some minimum things...

X: I don't spend 24 hours a day in this faculty.

JL: Anyway you don't know what an aphasic is?

X: When some people leave the University it is so as to frig about in their own way. Others leave so as to militate outside if possible with people from the University that they have won over. That's what leaving the University means. It's not just leaving on your own, it's to have brought people with you. Now, quickly, give us your own point of view on this!

(11) **JL:** In short create a critical University? You mean what is happening here. Is that it? You don't know what a critical University is either. No one has ever spoken to you about it! What's the point ...

X: There is nothing to understand.

JL: OK, I would like to make one little remark. The configuration of Workers and Peasants has all the same led to a form of society where it is precisely the University that is in the driving seat. What reigns in what is commonly called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the University.

X: Who gives a fuck? We are not talking about revisionism but Marxist Leninism.

JL: That's enough. That's enough! You asked me to speak so I will speak. I am not saying things that are up in the air, I am saying something precise there.

X: You are saying nothing!

JL: Have I not just said how I think the organisation of the USSR functions?

X: Absolutely not.

JL: Did I not say that it was knowledge that was king? I didn't say that? No?

X: So?

JL: So that probably has some consequences. You, my friend, would not be very comfortable there.

X: You have been asked a question about a particular society and you talk about another society. What needs to be said is why you think it is ineluctable.

JL: I am in total agreement. That is exactly what I am saying. The fact is that there are unsurpassable limits to a certain logic which I have called a weak logic, but still strong enough to leave you a bit of incompleteness ... and which you effectively bear witness to in a perfect way.

X: I wonder why this amphitheatre is stuffed full with 800 people. (12) Lacan is a great clown and he is famous and he has come here to speak. So he tells a few jokes and he's off! One of our comrades showed us earlier that by shouting loud enough you could go on for 10 minutes to say that groups were unable to get themselves out of the University and everyone, while recognising that there is no answer, is talking on with nothing to say, so if there is nothing to say, nothing to understand, nothing to do, why is everyone here? And Lacan why do you stay?

X: Gaspard has led us a bit astray into a false problem, because our comrade said that he came to the University in order to leave again with other comrades.

X: People talk about a New Society. Will psychoanalysis have a function in that new society and what will it be?

JL: Society is not something that can be defined like that in general. What I am trying to spell out, because psychoanalysis gives me the evidence for it, is that what dominates it, is the way language is used (*la pratique du langage*). The proof is perhaps that you envisage changing it; I mean what dominates it. Aphasia means that there is something that has broken down in this respect. Just imagine: there are people who happen to have something wrong with their brain and who no longer have any idea how to manage language. That makes them somewhat crippled.

X: One can say that Lenin almost became aphasic.

JL: If you had had a bit of patience and if you really wanted our *Impromptus* to continue I would tell you that the revolutionary aspiration has only one possible way of ending, only one: always with the discourse of the Master, as experience has already shown. What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a Master. You shall have one!

X: We already have one, Pompidou.

JL: Do you really think that you have a master in Pompidou? What kind of joke is that? I too would like to ask you some questions. For whom here does the word liberal have a sense?

X: Pompidou is liberal, Lacan too.

JL: I am a liberal, like everyone else, only to the extent that I am anti-progressive, except that I am caught up in a movement that deserves to be called progressive. Because it is progressive to see the (13) psychoanalytic discourse established in so far as it completes the circle that could perhaps enable you to situate what exactly you are revolting against. Which does not stop it from continuing to function, and bloody well too. And the first people to collaborate with it, and here in Vincennes itself, are yourselves. Because you play the role of serfs in this regime. You don't know what that means either? The regime is showing you off. It says: "Look at them enjoying themselves!"

OK then! Right! Goodbye for today. Bye-bye. It's all over.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 10 December 1969

(1) I was warned in various ways that the protesters were on the lookout for me. People do not take it into account enough that I too am on the look out for the protesters, but for an object that interests me in a very particular way: whether they confirm or invalidate what at this level at which I situate the structure of a discourse. I have just said **I**.

Obviously it is because I look at the discourse in question from elsewhere, from a place that another discourse, whose effect I am, situates **me**. In such a way that, on occasion, it is the same thing to say this discourse situates *me* or situates *itself*.

At the level of this discourse, it is not blowing my own trumpet, or giving a good lecture, as they say, that matters. This is not irrelevant, of course, and no one can tell me that up to now you have not had a chance to take notes, and in truth I cannot complain of ever having been disturbed. But I do not think that protesting means disturbing a lecture - it would be unfortunate if I had to teach this to the protesters themselves - in truth, just as essential, in fact as whether or not I speak in a calm atmosphere is what those who listen

to me are immersed in. In effect what I am speaking about signals the coming into action of this discourse that is not my own, but the one of which I am, to limit myself to this provisional term, the effect.

I think it is no harm, after having gone to Vincennes last week, where people might have thought that what took place was not to my taste. It was in effect agreed that my going, solely in the capacity of being a prominent person, would be the occasion for some obstruction. Does anyone think that this could in any way surprise me? Do I need to say that I was forewarned about what I might encounter there? And why do people want to turn this incident into a novelty in this context, whereas this obstruction did not start yesterday? To go back to the beginning, when I began my discourse at Sainte-Anne, what I am calling *what my listeners are immersed in*, was at that time constituted by a little enquiry, the frequency of which I do not know, but which must have been monthly, then quarterly. They were subjected to an anxious questioning by the old master whose guest I was, as to whether my teaching corresponded to the requirements of what constitutes a medical teaching. It had been said, which was strangely anxiety-provoking, (2) that my teaching did not possess the characteristics of a medical teaching. As regards the subject that I chose to begin with namely, *Freud's technical writings*, what, could have been the characteristics of a medical teaching? Was it meant only to consist in some act of reverence, I did not say reference, to terms considered to be sacred because they themselves are situated right in the centre, in the heart of medical teaching? Should I have indicated, so that my teaching might be medical, that perhaps some day endocrine causes will be found for neurosis? Or quite simply have recalled that there is one of these little elements that we cannot fail to take into account and which is called the constitutional element? That would have been medical!

In short, since I did not delay over these salutations in order to stop them, they were convinced that they were confronted with the sad necessity of having to endure, at the heart of a place that is essentially medical, a teaching that was not such. It was then that I was made aware by people they were only too sure would get the message to me, since they were in analysis with me, what people thought of my audience. I mention this

because in the audience that you make up today, I discern a bit better than the last time the components. I locate the faces better – there are many who are familiar, and I am delighted by this. But I am also delighted with the relative reduction that I observe – last time it was a bit like a busy metro station in here.

Do not forget all the same what you are immersed in - because a good number of you were already in this old audience before following me into that place from which, as it happened, I had to emigrate - is the quality of this audience seen from outside, which truly consisted then of those who afterwards were the pillars of the *École Freudienne*. One could not say that they were people who inspired great confidence! Well, good God, there was a sense, it appears, merely by seeing their silhouettes passing certain windows before coming to listen to me at half past twelve, as usual, that they exhibited some sign or other of drug addiction and homosexuality. People sensed that. It was quite clearly what the general shape and the appearance of these strollers reflected. All this to tell you that it was not today or yesterday that my audience gives rise – to what, this is precisely what I am questioning – through its make up, to I know not what effect of discomfort. We experienced this in a place that made arrangements for us to stay and to be sure I am (3) grateful to those who ensured that the stay lasted so long. You must not imagine all the same that it is with these accidental places that the pinpointing of my audience as causing discomfort began. It was the students at the *Ecole normale*, these *normalians*, these little princes of the university, who know something about the fact that there is no need to know something in order to teach it, it was they who discovered that very curious things were happening at my seminar. It appears that over there when you were smoking – in truth because of this I gave a little echo, from time to time, to the fact that you might stop – something happened that I have never seen happening anywhere else, which is that the smoke went through the ceiling of the room, so that those whom I have just called elegant *normalians*, who were apparently in the libraries above, were not able to breathe. These are things that obviously only occur because of the kind of audience you are, and that was what I wanted to underline.

[A porter appears]

I who was in doubt about these protests at Vincennes, you really see it there, in the real. Make no mistake, what is rejected in the symbolic re-appears in the real!

All of this is happening in a zone that for all that does not lose its meaning.

[The porter turns off the lights and closes the blackboard]

However amusing these jokes that come from the organisation on high, I declare the session closed and I will give it in a week's time.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 17 December 1969

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
 \begin{array}{c} \text{U} \\ \underline{S_2} \longrightarrow \underline{\mathbf{o}} \\ S_1 \quad \$ \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{M} \\ \underline{S_1} \longrightarrow \underline{S_2} \\ \$ \quad \mathbf{o} \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{H} \\ \underline{\$} \longrightarrow \underline{S_1} \\ \mathbf{o} \quad S_2 \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{A} \\ \underline{\mathbf{o}} \longrightarrow \underline{\$} \\ S_2 \quad S_1 \end{array}
 \end{array}$$

(1) It is useful to have these four formulae here to refer to. Those of you who were at my first seminar were able to hear the reminder of the formula that the signifier, as distinct from the sign, is what represents a subject for another signifier. The term 'represents' is to be distinguished, of course, from the word 'representative' and the word 'representation'. Since nothing indicates that the other signifier knows anything about the matter, it is clear that it is not a representation that is at stake but a representative. As

a result, on that same occasion, I was able to use it to illustrate what I called the discourse of the Master. If we are able to see the discourse of the Master reduced to a single signifier, this implies that it represents something. Calling it some thing already says too much – it represents *x* which is precisely what is to be elucidated in the matter. Nothing, in effect, indicates how the Master might enforce his will. That this consent is necessary is beyond question, and the fact that in this instance Hegel can only refer to death as the signifier of the absolute master, is on this occasion a sign, a sign that nothing has been resolved by this pseudo-origin. In effect, in order for things to continue nobody must die, not the master who would demonstrate that he is its master only if he rose from the dead, namely, if he had effectively gone through the test. As for the slave, it is precisely the same thing: he has specifically renounced confronting it. So then the riddle of the function of the master is not immediately soluble. I began, I indicated, because it is already on the path, a path that we need not pretend to have discovered, and which is not that of the theory of the unconscious, but the discovery of something that assures us that it is not at all self-evident that all knowledge, by virtue of being knowledge, knows itself to be such. Because what we discover in any experience of psychoanalysis is indeed precisely of the order of (2) knowledge (*savoir*) and not of information (*connaissance*) or of representation, is very precisely something that links, in a network relation, one signifier S_1 to another signifier S_2 . It is in these rather hazy terms, I would say, if I may, using this metaphor, to try to get you to see the accent that should be placed, on this occasion, on the term *knowledge*. It is nevertheless in such a relation and precisely in so far as it does not know itself that there resides the foundation of what knows itself, of what is calmly articulated as little master, as *ego*, as that which knows quite a lot about it. All the same, we see from time to time that it gets out of kilter. Here we have the eruption of the entire dimension of slips and stumblings in which the unconscious reveals itself. But we do much better and go much further when we allow ourselves to read a biography in the light of analytic experience, when we have the means for it, when we have enough documents to bear witness to what it believes, what it believed it had been as a destiny, step by step, indeed even in certain circumstances, how it brought this destiny to a close.

Nevertheless, in the light of this notion that it is not sure that a knowledge knows itself, it does not appear impossible for us to be able to read at the level of what unconscious knowledge there has been carried out the work which betrays what effectively is the truth of everything it had believed itself to be. In order to operate on the schema of the discourse of the Master, M, let us say that it is invisibly slave labour, which constitutes an unrevealed unconscious, which betrays whether it is worthwhile speaking about this life. That which from truth, from true truth, gave rise to so many detours, fictions, and errors.

Knowledge then is put in the centre, in the dock, by psychoanalytic experience. This just by itself imposes on us the duty of a questioning which has no reason to restrict its field. In a word, the idea that knowledge can bring about in any way, or at any moment, even were it a hope in the future, a closed totality, is something that did not have to wait for psychoanalysis in order to appear dubious. Anyway it is clear that this doubting, perhaps, was tackled at a lower level when the Sceptics were involved, I mean those who were so called at the time when they constituted a school, something that we no longer have anything but the vaguest idea of. But, after all, how do we know whether it was worth the trouble? What do we know about it? It would perhaps be better not to judge. Everything we know about their knowledge only comes perhaps from what others were able to pick up from them, those who did not know from where there came the Sceptics' formulae about the radical questioning of all knowledge, and *a fortiori* of the totalisation of knowledge.

Something that is well designed to show how little impact the schools have had, is that the idea that knowledge can constitute a totality is, as I might say, immanent to politics as such. This has been known for a long time. The imaginary idea of the whole as given by the body, based on (3) the good form of satisfaction, on what at the limit is a sphere, has always been used in politics, and is part of political preaching. What is more beautiful, but also less open? What resembles more a closure of satisfaction? The collusion of this image with the idea of satisfaction is what we have to struggle against any time we encounter something that forms a knot in the work of bringing the paths of the

unconscious to the light of day. It is the obstacle, the limit, or rather it is the cotton wool in which we lose sight of meaning, and in which we find ourselves obstructed.

It is important to know that it has always been used in politics and it is strange, it is curious to see that a doctrine like the one Marx began to articulate on the function of struggle, the class struggle, has not prevented it from giving birth to what is, for the moment, the problem that confronts all of us, namely, the persistence of the discourse of the Master. Undoubtedly, it does not have the same structure as the old one, in the sense that it is installed in the place indicated under this capital M. It is installed under the one on the left, which is capped by the U. I will tell you why. What occupies the place that we will provisionally call dominant is S_2 which is specified not as being knowledge of everything, we are not at that point yet, but total knowledge (*tout-savoir*). You should understand by this: what affirms itself as being nothing other than knowledge, and what is called, in ordinary language, bureaucracy. We cannot say that there is not something there that creates a problem. In my first remarks three weeks ago we started from the fact that in the initial status of the Master's discourse, the slave's share is knowledge. And I was able to indicate, without being able to develop it the last time because of a slight contretemps that I regret, what happens between the discourse of the antique master and the modern master who is described as capitalist is some modification in the place of knowledge. I thought I could even go as far as to affirm that the philosophical tradition had a certain responsibility for this transmutation. So that it is because he has been 'dispossessed' of something – before, of course, of common property which means that the proletarian can be described as dispossessed, which justifies the undertaking and also the success of revolution. Is it not tangible that what is restored to him is not necessarily his share? Capitalist exploitation in effect frustrates his knowledge by making it useless. But what is given him through a type of subversion is something different – the knowledge of a master. And that is why he has only changed master. What remains is indeed in effect the essence of the master, namely, that he does not know what he wants because this is what constitutes the true structure of the Master's discourse. The slave knows a lot of things but what he knows above all (4) is what the master wants, even if he himself does not know it, which is the usual situation, because otherwise he would not be

a master. The slave knows and that is his function as slave. That is also the reason why things work, because all the same, things have been working for rather a long time. The fact that all knowledge has shifted into the place of the master, is something that, far from clarifying, makes a little bit more opaque what is in question, namely, the truth from which it emerges that there is a signifier of master. Because here the S_1 of the Master is well and truly coiled up, showing the problem of what is involved in the new tyranny of knowledge. This is what makes it impossible in the course of historical movement for truth to appear, as we might perhaps have hoped. The sign of truth is now elsewhere. It is to be produced by those who are the substitutes for the slaves of antiquity, namely, by those who are themselves products, as they say, that are just as consumable as the others. *Consumer society*, we say. *Human material*, as was stated at one time – to the applause of some people who saw this as evidence of tenderness. This deserves to be highlighted, because moreover what now concerns us is to question what is involved in the psychoanalytic act. I shall not take it up at the level that remained interrupted two years ago when I had hoped to be able to loop-the-loop about the act on which the psychoanalyst is based, is established, as such. I will take it at the level of experience and of his interventions, once the experience has been established within its precise limits. If there is a knowledge that does not know itself, as I already said, it is to be situated at the level of S_2 , which I describe as the other Signifier. I already insisted enough on this last year. This other Signifier is not alone. The belly of the Other, of the capital O, is full of them. This belly, like a monstrous Trojan horse, is what gives rise to the phantasy of total knowledge. It is clear however that its function implies that something comes and strikes it from outside, otherwise nothing would ever emerge from it, and Troy would never have been taken. What does the analyst establish? I hear a lot of talk about the discourse of psychoanalysis as if that meant something. If we characterise a discourse by focussing on what is dominant in it, there is the discourse of the analyst, and this should not be confused with the discourse of the psychoanalysand, with the discourse effectively sustained in the analytic experience. What the analyst sets up as an analytic experience can be simply put – it is the hystericisation of discourse. In other words, it is the structural introduction, under artificial conditions, of the discourse of the Hysteric, the one indicated here by a capital H. I tried to highlight it last year by saying that this

discourse existed, and that it would exist in any case whether psychoanalysis was there or not. I imaged it by giving it its most common support from which there has emerged for us the major experience, namely, the detour, the zigzag lines on which is based this misunderstanding that sexual relationships constitute in the human (5) species. Since we have the signifier it must be that we are able to understand one another, and that is precisely the reason why we do not understand one another. The signifier is not designed for sexual relationships. Once we have a speaking human being we've had it, there is no hope of this perfect, harmonious copulation which moreover is impossible to find anywhere in nature. Nature presents an infinite number of kinds of it, the majority of which do not involve any copulation, which shows the degree to which there is very little in the intentions of nature for things to become, as I mentioned earlier, a whole, a sphere.

In any case, one thing is certain, if for man it works more or less well, it is thanks to something that allows it, but initially makes it insoluble. This is what is meant by the discourse of the hysteric, industrious as she is. In saying *industrieuse*, we are making the hysteric a woman, but this is not her privilege. Many men go into analysis, and by that very fact are also forced to pass by way of the hysterical discourse, because it is the law, the rule of the game. It is a matter of knowing what can be got out of it as regards the relationship between men and women. So then we see the hysteric fabricating a man as best she can, a man animated by the desire to know.

I put the question at my last seminar, the question that emerges from the fact that we note that historically, the master has slowly frustrated the slave of his knowledge in order to make of it a master's knowledge. But what remains mysterious, is how the desire for it could have come to him. If you believe me, he was quite happy to do without desire because the slave satisfied it before he even knew what he might be desiring. This is what my reflections would have dealt with the last time if this charming thing had not emerged from the real – I am assured that it is the real of decolonisation. He is supposed to be someone who was hospitalised, who supported us in the old Algeria, and has been fixed up here. As you see a charming frolic, thanks to which you will not know, at least for a certain time, because I have to press on, the kinship I establish between the

philosophical discourse and the discourse of the hysteric, since it seems that the philosophical discourse animated the Master with a desire to know. What could be the hysteria that is in question here? Here is a domain that should not be despoiled. If there are people whose thinking likes to run a little ahead of what the speaker is telling them, they will find there an opportunity to exercise their talent. I assure them that the path seems to me to be a promising one. In any case, to give a fuller formula than localising it in the man-woman relationship, let us say that by simply reading what I have written here about the discourse of the hysteric, we still do not know, of course, what this \$ is. But if it is her discourse that is at stake, and this discourse ensures that there is a man animated by the desire to know, it is because it is a matter of knowing what? What she herself is worth, this person who is speaking. Because *qua* \circ -object she is something fallen, fallen due to the effect of discourse, always broken somewhere in her turn. (6) In the final analysis, what the hysteric wants the man to know, at the limit, is that language cannot cope with the breadth of what she as a woman can open up about enjoyment. But this is not what is important to the hysteric. What is important for her, is that the other, the other called man, should know what a precious object she becomes in this context of discourse. Is not this after all the very foundation of analytic experience? If I say that he gives to the other as subject the dominant place in the discourse of the Hysteric, if he hystericises his discourse, if it makes him into this subject who is asked to abandon any other reference than that of the four walls that surround him, and to produce signifiers that make up this free association which in a word is the mistress of the field. How could talking off the top of your head lead anywhere, if it had not been determined that there is nothing in the random emergence of signifiers that, from the very fact that we are dealing with signifiers, is not related to this knowledge which does not know itself, and which is really what is at work? Only there is no reason why in this way he should not know a little bit more about it. If the analyst does not speak, what will become of this abundant production of S_1 ? Many things surely. The analyst who listens may register many things. With what an average contemporary may say, if he is not paying attention to anything, you could build up the equivalent of a little encyclopaedia. This would yield an enormous number of keys if it were recorded. Afterwards one could even construct it, get a little electronic machine made.

This moreover is the idea that certain people may have – they construct the electronic machine thanks to which the analyst has only to take a ticket to give them the answer. This is what is at stake in the discourse of the Analyst. In the experience, it is he who is the master. In what form? This is something that I will have to keep in reserve for future talks. Why in the form of \circ ? I have already underlined it elsewhere, but what is remarkable is that it is on his side that there is S_2 , that there is knowledge – whether he acquires this knowledge by listening to his analysand or whether it is a knowledge that has already been acquired, mapped out, something that at a certain level, one can limit to analytic know-how. Only what must be understood about these schemas – as was already indicated by putting S_2 in the discourse of the Master at the place of the slave, and to subsequently put it in the discourse of the modernised master at the place of the master – is that it is not the same knowledge. Here, in the discourse at the far right, what place is it at? At the place that in the discourse of the Master, Hegel, the most sublime of hysterics, designates for us as being that of the truth, because it cannot be said, in effect, that the *Phenomenology of the spirit* consists in starting from a so-called *Selbstbewusstsein* supposedly grasped at the most immediate level of sensation, implying that all knowledge knows itself from the start. What use would all this phenomenology be if it were not something else that is at stake? Only what I am calling the hysteria of this discourse stems precisely from the fact that it avoids the (7) minimal distinction that would allow it to be seen that if ever this historical advance, which in fact is only the progress of the schools and nothing more, culminated in absolute knowledge, it would only be to mark the cancellation, the failure, the vanishing at the end of what alone motivates the function of knowledge – its dialectic with enjoyment. Absolute knowledge would be purely and simply the abolition of this term. Anyone who closely studies the text of the *Phenomenology* can have no doubt about it.

Now what does the position of S_2 at the place of truth bring us? What is truth as knowledge? Make no mistake about it: how can you know without knowing? It is a riddle. That's the answer – it is a riddle – among others. And I am going to give you another example of what it can also be. The two have the same characteristic, which is

proper to the truth – one can only ever half tell it. Our dear little truth that we get in holy pictures who emerges from the well, is never anything but a half-body. In Italy, in one of the lectures I was asked to give, I do not know why, and which I faced into, as I know, in a mediocre way, I evoked the chimera, in which there is precisely incarnated the original character of the discourse of the hysteric. She sets a riddle for the man Oedipus, who perhaps already had a complex, but not necessarily ... certainly not the one to which he was to give his name. He answers in a certain way, and that is how he becomes Oedipus. There could have been many different answers to what the chimera asked him. For example he could have said – two feet, three feet, four feet, that is Lacan's schema. That would have given a completely different result. He said – it is a man, a man as a baby, as a baby he began on all fours. If he starts using two, and then a third, right away he flies like a bullet into his mother's belly. This is what is called in effect, quite correctly the Oedipus complex. But I think that you can see here what the function of the riddle means – it is something half-said (*un mi-dire*), just as the chimera appears to be a half-body, even if it completely disappears when the solution is given.

A knowledge *qua* truth – this defines what ought to be the structure of what is called an interpretation. If I have insisted at length on the difference of level between stating and stated, it is so that the function of the riddle may take on a meaning. The riddle is properly speaking that, a stating. I am giving you the task of making it become a statement. Work it out, as best you can – as Oedipus did – and you will suffer the consequences. This is what is at stake in a riddle. But there is something else, that is scarcely ever thought about, that I have touched on, tickled, from time to time, but in truth, it sufficiently concerns me for it not to be easy for me to speak easily about it. It is called the (8) quotation. What does a quotation consist of? It means that in the course of a text into which you are advancing more or less well, if you are, like that, in the right places of social struggle, all of a sudden you quote Marx, you add – *Marx said*. If you are an analyst you quote Freud, and you put in – *Freud said* – this is very important. The riddle is the stating – and make out as best you can as regards the statement.

The quotation is – I posit the statement and for the rest it is the solid support that you find in the name of the author whose responsibility I hand over to you. It is fine like that, and this has nothing to do with the more or less shaky status of the function of the author.

When people quote Marx or Freud – it is not by chance that I chose these two names – it is in function of the way the supposed reader shares in a discourse that they are quoted.

In its own way, the quotation is also something half-said. It is the statement which indicates to you that it is only acceptable in so far as you participate already in a certain discourse, structured at the level of the fundamental structures that are there on the board.

You will note that this is the only vital point – could I have explained it before now – which ensures that the quotation, the fact that one quotes an author or not, may have an importance at the second degree. I am going to make you understand this - and I hope that you will not take this badly – by something quite familiar. Suppose that at a second moment, you quote a sentence indicating where it comes from, with the name of the author, M Ricoeur, for example. Suppose you quote the same thing and you attribute it to me. This can absolutely not have the same meaning in the two cases. I hope that in this way I can get you to sense what is involved in what is called a quotation.

Well then, these two registers, in so far as they partake of the half-said, give the medium – and, as one might say, the ethics – under which interpretation intervenes. Interpretation – those who make use of it notice this – is just as much and halfway a riddle. A riddle picked out as far as possible in the texture of the psychoanalysand's discourse, and that you, the interpreter, can in no way complete by yourself, that you cannot consider as a confession without lying. A quotation on the other hand, sometimes taken in the same text, a particular statement. This can be taken as a confession, if only you connect it up to the whole context. But here in this case you are appealing to whoever is its author. What is striking, in effect, in this establishment of the analytic discourse, which is the mainspring of transference, is not, as certain people have believed they heard from me, that it is the analyst who is placed in function of the supposed subject of knowledge. If the psychoanalysand is invited to speak so freely – it is precisely in this way that he receives this liberty – it is because it is recognised that he can talk like a master, namely, like a birdbrain, but this would give just as good results as in the case of a true (9)

Master, that it is supposed to lead to a knowledge – a knowledge that the one who accepts in advance to be the product of the cogitations of the psychoanalysand, namely the psychoanalyst, becomes the pledge and the hostage of – in the measure that, as this product, he is at the end destined to the loss, to the elimination of the process, I mean that he can assume this place if in the discourse of the Master, already in the simple functioning of the relationships between the master and the slave, it is clear that the desire of the master, is the desire of the Other, since it is the desire that the slave anticipates. It is a different question when it comes to knowing what the analyst takes the place of, to unleash the movement of investment of the supposed subject of knowledge – a subject who, by being recognised as such, is, at his place, a fertile source of what is called transference. Undoubtedly it is only too easy to see passing here the shadow of a satisfaction in being recognised. This is not what is essential, if one supposes that the subject knows what he is doing even more than the hysteric, the truth of whose behaviour it is, but not at all its very being, the analyst for his part makes himself the cause of the desire of the analysand. What does such a strange thing mean? Ought we to consider it as an accident, a historical emergence that appeared in the world for the first time? Anticipating on a subsequent path which will draw us perhaps into a long detour, I will simply indicate for you that the function had already appeared, and it is not for nothing that Freud preferred to have recourse to so many pre-Socratics, Empedocles among others, as you know.

Because I know that at two o'clock there is something on in this amphitheatre, in future I will finish, as I am doing today, at a quarter-to-two. I will give you a rendezvous for the second Wednesday of January.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 14 January 1970

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
 \begin{array}{c} \text{U} \\ \hline \text{S}_2 \longrightarrow \text{o} \\ \hline \text{S}_1 \quad \$ \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{M} \\ \hline \text{S}_1 \longrightarrow \text{S}_2 \\ \hline \$ \quad \text{o} \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{H} \\ \hline \$ \longrightarrow \text{S}_1 \\ \hline \text{o} \quad \text{S}_2 \end{array} &
 \begin{array}{c} \text{A} \\ \hline \text{o} \longrightarrow \$ \\ \hline \text{S}_2 \quad \text{S}_1 \end{array}
 \end{array}$$

I have been given red chalk, extremely red. Red on black – it is not obvious that it will be legible. Anyway, these are not new formulae because I already wrote them on the board the last time. It did not give rise to any protests. It is useful to have them presented there because – however simple they may be, however simple to deduce from one another, since it is just a matter of a circular permutation, with the terms remaining in the same order – it appears that our capacities for mental representation are not such that they can make up for the fact that they are written on the board or not.

We are therefore going to continue, to continue what I do here, a here that is always at the same time, here or elsewhere, Wednesday at 12.30 for the last 17 years.

This is well worthwhile recalling again at a moment when everyone is rejoicing at entering a new decade. For me it is rather an opportunity to turn back towards what the previous one has given me. Ten years ago, two of my students presented something that fell under the remit of Lacanian theses, under the title of *The unconscious: a psychoanalytic study*. This occurred, good God, by virtue of what one could call a princely gesture. The prince is the only one who is capable of a liberal act, it being understood that a liberal act means an arbitrary act, it being also accepted that arbitrary means: not determined by any necessity. There was no necessity exerting pressure on this point, either in one direction or another, on the prince, my friend Henri Ey, who put *The unconscious* on the agenda of a certain congress, that of Bonneval, and entrusted at least a part of its composition to two of my students. This work is, in a way, taken to be definitive and, in truth, not without reason. It is very definitive in the way that these students of mine thought they could reach, get across something about what I was putting forward on this interesting subject, since what was at stake was nothing less than the

unconscious, or in other words what my teaching had taken off from at the beginning – to get it across to a certain group. This group had been distinguished by a sort of instruction it had been given about what I was saying. The interest that it took in it was in effect made manifest by something that I expressed recently in a little preface – I no longer know where - as *forbidden to the under 50's*. This was in 1960, let us not (2) forget, and we were far – are we any closer, that is the question – from any contestation of authority and, among others, that of knowledge. And as a result, this prohibition, *forbidden to the under 50's*, that was put forward had curious characteristics. In any case – one of them compared it to a sort of monopoly, a monopoly of knowledge – this prohibition was purely and simply observed. This shows the kind of work that confronted those who had been willing to take it on – it was to make the ears in question understand something properly speaking unheard of. How did they do it? It is not too late for me to take stock of it, since moreover there was no question of my doing so at the time, for the good reason that it was already a lot to see this being brought into play for ears that were absolutely not prepared, who had not been exposed to the slightest bit of what I had been articulating at that time for seven years. It was obviously not the moment to contribute anything whatsoever that might have seemed like a correction directed at the very people who had devoted themselves to this pioneering work. Moreover, there were, in fact, many excellent elements in it. This point comes up here then in connection with a thesis, a recent thesis, which, faith, was produced at the frontier of the French language area, where people are valiantly struggling to maintain its rights. It is at Louvain that a thesis has been written on what is called, perhaps inappropriately, my 'work'. Let us not forget that this thesis is a university thesis and that things must be put forward in a university style, and the least that can be said is that my 'work' lends itself badly to it. That indeed is why it is no bad thing that right up front of such a proposition, of a university thesis, there should be put in their place what university-style contributions had already been made in terms of being a vehicle of the aforesaid 'work', still in inverted commas. This moreover is why one of the authors of this Bonneval report is also put in the forefront of it, and in a way this meant that in my preface I could not avoid pointing out that some distinction should be made between what is eventually a translation of what I state and what I properly speaking said. In the little preface that I

wrote for this thesis which is going to appear in Brussels – and it is obvious that a preface from me will give it a lift – I am forced to point out clearly – this is the only useful thing about it – that it is not the same thing to say that ‘the unconscious is the condition of language’, and to say that ‘language is the condition of the unconscious’. Language is the condition of the unconscious: that is what I say. The way it is translated stems from reasons that certainly could be completely justified in detail, by strictly university motives – and this certainly would take us far, and (3) will perhaps take you far enough this year. From strictly university motives, I am saying, there flows the fact that no one who translates me, who has been formed in the style, the kind of requirements of the University discourse, can do anything other, whether he believes or not that he is commenting on me, than to reverse my formula. Namely, give it an implication, it has to be said, strictly contrary to the truth and without the slightest homology to what I put forward. Undoubtedly, the difficulty attached to translating me into university language is also what will strike all of those who for whatever reason attempt it, and in truth, the author of the thesis I am speaking about was animated by the best of reasons, those of an immense goodwill. This thesis, which is going to be published then in Brussels, nonetheless retains all its value, its value as an example in itself, its value as an example also by what it promotes in terms of an almost obligatory distortion by reason of the translation of something that has its own laws into University discourse. I have to trace out these laws, they are those that claim to give at least the conditions of a properly analytic discourse. Naturally, this remains subject to the fact that, as I underlined last year, the fact that I am stating it here from a podium on high involves in effect a risk of error, an element of refraction, which means that from some angles it falls under the influence of the University discourse. This results from the fact that there is fundamentally something out of synch. To be sure, I do not in any way identify myself to a certain position. I assure you that every time I come here to bring you the word, what is at stake for me is certainly not what I have to say to you, or *what am I going to say to them this time?* In this respect I have no role to play, in the sense that the function of the one who teaches can be seen in terms of role, of a place to occupy which is, incontestably, a place of some prestige. That is not what I demand of myself, but rather something that is a putting into order which imposes on me the duty to submit this

exploration to this test. Like anyone else, I would, of course, avoid this putting into order when confronted with this sea of ears among which there is perhaps a critical pair, having, with this dreadful possibility, to give an account of the path my actions have taken with respect to the fact that something of the psychoanalyst exists (*qu'il y a du psychanalyste*). That is my situation and the status of this situation as such has not been regulated, up to the present, in any way that is appropriate to it, except by imitating, except by encouraging, a resemblance to numerous other established situations. In the event, this leads to hypersensitive selection (4) practices, to a certain identification to an image, to a way of behaving, even to a human type that nothing seems to suggest should be obligatory, even to a ritual, indeed to some other measure that, at a better time, a time long past, I compared to that of a driving school, without moreover provoking from anyone any protest whatsoever. There was even someone close to me among my students of that time, who pointed out to me that this was in truth what was desired by anyone who became committed to an analytic career – to obtain a driving licence just like at a driving school, along well mapped out paths involving the same type of examination.

It is certainly notable – I mean worth noting – that after ten years, I have come, all the same, to articulate this position of the psychoanalyst in a way that I describe as his discourse, let us say his hypothetical discourse, since moreover this is what is proposed for your examination this year. Namely – what about the structure of this discourse? I have come to articulate the position of the psychoanalyst in the following way. I say that it is substantially constituted by the **o**-object, by the **o**-object in so far as here, in the articulation of what I give as regards the structure of a discourse, in so far as it interests us, and let us say in so far as it is taken at a radical level where it has an import for psychoanalytic discourse, it is substantially that of the **o**-object in as much as this **o**-object precisely designates what, in the effects of discourse, presents itself as the most opaque, as having been for a long time overlooked, and nevertheless essential. What is at stake is the effect of discourse which is in effect one that rejects. I will try later to highlight place and function of this rejection.

Here then is what is substantially involved in the position of the psychoanalyst. But this object is distinguished in it in a still different fashion, which is that it comes here at the place where the discourse is ordered, from where there is emitted, as I might say, what is dominant (*la dominante*). You clearly sense the reservations I have about using this. To say what is dominant means exactly what I finally designate to distinguish each of these structures of discourse, giving them different names, that of the University, of the Master, of the Hysteric and of the Analyst, according to the diverse positions of these radical terms. Let us say that, because I am unable to give right away a different value to this term, I call dominant what I use to name these discourses. Dominant does not imply dominance, in the sense that this dominance might be supposed to specify - something that is not sure - the discourse of the Master. Let us say that one can for example give, depending on the discourses, different substances to this dominant. Let us take the dominant in the discourse of the Master, where S_1 occupies the place. If we were to call it the law (*la loi*), we would be doing something that has all its subjective value, and would not fail to open the door to a certain (5) number of interesting insights. It is certain for example that the law – by which we understand the law as articulated, this same law within whose walls we are finding shelter, this law that constitutes the body of laws (*le droit*) – should certainly not be taken as a homonym for what can be stated elsewhere under the heading of justice. On the contrary the ambiguity, the investiture that this law receives by claiming authority from justice, is here, very precisely, a point that our discourse may allow to be better sensed as regards its true sources, I mean those that allow ambiguity, and ensure that the law remains something that is first and foremost inscribed in structure. There are not an infinite number of ways of making laws, whether good intentions or the inspiration of justice animate them or not, because there are perhaps laws of structure which ensure that the law will always be the law situated at this place that I am calling dominant in the discourse of the Master.

In the discourse of the Hysteric, it is clear that we see this dominant appear in the form of the symptom. It is around the symptom that there is situated and organised what is involved in the Hysteric's discourse. This is an opportunity for us to grasp something. If this place remains the same and if, in a particular discourse, it is that of the symptom, this

will lead us to question the same place as being that of the symptom when it is put to use in a different discourse. This indeed in effect is what we see in our own time – the law being called into question as a symptom. And it is not enough to say that this has become clear to us in the light of our times in order to account for it. I mentioned earlier how this same dominant place can be occupied, in the case of the analyst. The analyst himself must here represent in some ways the effect of what is rejected by discourse, in other words the *o*-object. Does that mean that it will be just as easy for us to characterise the place described as dominant when it is the University discourse that is at stake? What other name can we give it? I mean one which would allow the sort of equivalence that we have posited as existing at least at the level of the question, between the law, the symptom, indeed what is rejected, in so far as this indeed is the place to which the analyst is destined in the psychoanalytic act. Well then, precisely, our perplexity in giving an answer to what constitutes the essence, the dominant of the University discourse, ought to warn us about something in our research – because what I am tracing out before you, are the very paths around which, when I question myself, my thinking wanders and strays before finding the points of which I can be sure. Here then the idea might come to us of (6) seeking what, in each of these discourses – to designate at least one place – might appear altogether certain to us, as certain as the symptom when hysteria is at stake. I already allowed you to see that, in the discourse of the Master, the *o* is precisely identifiable to what emerged from a hard-working thought, that of Marx, namely, what was involved, symbolically and really, in the function of surplus value. We would then already be in the presence of two terms, and, from there, it would only remain for us to slightly modify them, to give them a freer translation in order to transpose them into the other registers. Here the following suggestion takes shape – since there are four places to be characterised, perhaps each one of these four permutations might give us, within itself, the place that constitutes the most striking step forward in an order of discovery which is none other than what is called structure. Well then, however you put it to the test, such an idea will have the consequence of allowing you to put your finger on something that perhaps is not apparent to you at first sight. Independently of this place that I suggested to you might be the one to interest us, simply try, in each of these figures of discourse, as we will call them, to require yourself simply to choose a different place, defined in

function of the terms above, below, on the right, on the left. No matter how you go about it you will not succeed in getting each of these places to be occupied by a different letter. Try, in the opposite direction, to set yourself as a condition of the game the task of choosing in each of these four formulae a different letter. You will not succeed in getting each one of these letters to occupy a different place. Try it out. It is very easy to do on a piece of paper, and also if you make use of this little grid or figure called a matrix. With such a small number of combinations, a sample drawing is enough to illustrate this immediately in a perfectly obvious way. But if we think that there is here a certain signifying link that one can posit as altogether radical this simple fact is also an opportunity for us to illustrate what structure is. By positing the formalisation of discourse and, within this formalisation, giving oneself some rules designed to put it to the test, an element of impossibility is encountered. This is properly at the foundation, at the root of what a structural fact (*fait de structure*) is. And this is our interest in structure within analytic experience. And this, not at all because we might be supposed to be here at an already high degree of elaboration, at least in its pretensions, but from the start. If we allow ourselves to be (7) embraced by this handling of the signifier and its eventual articulation, it is because it is there in the data of psychoanalysis. I mean, it is in what came to a mind as insufficiently acquainted with this sort of elaboration as Freud was, given the formation we know he had in a kind of parapsychical science, physiology armed with the first steps of physics, and especially of thermodynamics. What Freud was led to formulate, following the vein, the thread of his experience, in a second phase of his teaching, has only greater importance, because after all, nothing seemed to require it of him in the first phase, that of the articulation of the unconscious. The unconscious allows desire to be situated, that is the meaning of the first step Freud took, already not simply implied but properly speaking articulated and developed in its entirety in the *Traumdeutung*. He takes this as given when, in a second phase, the one opened up by *Beyond the pleasure principle*, he articulates that we ought to take into account this function that is called what? Repetition. What is repetition? Let us read his text and let us see what it articulates. What makes repetition necessary is enjoyment, a term that is explicitly spelt out. It is in so far as there is a seeking for enjoyment *qua* repetition, that there is produced something which is in operation in the step taken by this Freudian

breakthrough. What interests us in terms of repetition, and what is going to be inscribed in a dialectic of enjoyment, is properly speaking what goes against life. It is at the level of repetition that Freud finds himself constrained in a way, and this by the very structure of discourse, to articulate the death instinct. A hyperbole, a fabulous and in truth scandalous extrapolation for anyone who might take literally the identification of the unconscious and instinct. Which means that repetition is not simply the function of the cycles that life comprises, cycles of need and of satisfaction, but of something different, a cycle that involves the disappearance of this life as such, and is a return to the inanimate. A point on the horizon, an ideal point, a point that goes beyond the frame, but whose sense is indicated by a structural analysis, it is perfectly well indicated by what is involved in enjoyment. It is enough to start from the pleasure principle, which is nothing other than the principle of least tension, of the minimal tension to be maintained for life to subsist. This demonstrates that in itself enjoyment goes beyond it, and that what the pleasure principle maintains is the limit as regards enjoyment. As everything indicates to us in the facts, in experience, in the clinic, (8) repetition is founded on a return of enjoyment. And what is properly articulated by Freud himself in this connection is that in this repetition itself, there is produced something which is a defect, a failure. I highlighted here at one time its kinship with Kierkegaard's remarks. By virtue of the fact that it is explicitly repeated as such, that it is marked by repetition, what is repeated can be nothing other, as compared to what it is repeating, than in a state of loss (*en perte*). Losing whatever you wish, losing speed – there is something that is a loss. As regards this loss, from the beginning, from the articulation that I am summarising here, Freud insists that in repetition itself, there is a waste of enjoyment. It is here that the function of the lost object takes its origin in the Freudian discourse.

That's Freud! Let us add that we do not need all the same to recall that it is explicitly around masochism, conceived of only in the dimension of the search for this ruinous enjoyment, that the whole text of Freud turns. Here now is where what Lacan contributes comes in: it concerns this repetition, this identification of enjoyment. Here, I borrow from Freud's text the function of the unary trait to give it a sense that is not highlighted there, namely, the simplest form of mark, namely, what is, properly speaking, the origin

of the signifier. And I put forward something that is not in Freud's text, not seen in Freud's text, but that cannot in any way be set aside, avoided, rejected by the psychoanalyst, that everything that interests us analysts as knowledge originates in the unary trait.

The psychoanalyst in effect starts from a turning point, the one where knowledge is purified, as I might say, of everything that might create an ambiguity with natural knowledge, be caught up in something or other that is supposed to guide us in the world around us, with the help of some sensors or other which are supposed to be able to orient us in it from birth. Not of course that there is nothing of the kind to be found. When a learned psychologist writes in our own day – I mean, not so long ago, 40 or 50 years – something called *Sensation, the guide to life*, he is of course not saying anything absurd. But if he can state it in this way, it is precisely because the whole evolution of a science allows us to grasp that there is no co-naturality between this sensation and what, through it, can come to birth in terms of an apprehension of a supposed world. If the properly scientific development, the questioning of the senses of sight, indeed of hearing, proves anything to us, it is nothing other than something that we should accept as it is, with exactly the co-efficient of artificiality with which it is presented. Among the vibrations (9) of light, there is an ultra-violet one of which we have no perception – and why should we not have? At the other end, infrared, it is the same thing. It is the same for the ear, there are sounds that we stop hearing, and it is not very easy to see why it should stop there rather than further on. In truth, when it is illuminated in this way, the only thing that can be grasped is that there are filters, and that we manage with these filters. It is said that the function creates the organ. On the contrary, one makes use of the organ as best one can.

This something regarding the mechanisms of thinking, about which a whole traditional philosophy wanted to construct, to argue, attempting, along the paths that you know, by giving an account of what happens at the level of abstraction, of generalisation, to construct this something on a sort of reduction, of passing through the filter, of what is considered to be basic in sensation – *Nihil in intellectu quod non prius, etc* – this subject,

this subject who can be deduced as subject of knowledge, this subject that can be constructed, in a way that now looks so artificial to us, on the basis of vital systems and organs which it is not clear in effect we can do without – is this what is at stake in signifying articulation? – those where there can begin to operate these first terms of spelling out which we put forward here, these most elementary terms, that bind, as I said, one signifier to another signifier, and which already have an effect in that this signifier can only be handled in its definition, if this has a meaning, that it represents for another signifier a subject, a subject and nothing else. No, there is nothing in common between the subject of knowledge and the subject of the signifier. There is no way of escaping this extraordinarily reduced formula, that there is something underneath. But precisely, we cannot designate this something by any term. It cannot be an *etwas*, it is simply a beneath, a subject, a *hupokeimenon*. Even for a thinking as invested with the contemplation of the primary and not at all constructed exigencies of the idea of knowledge, I mean the thinking of Aristotle, the simple approach of logic, the simple fact that he introduced it into the circuit of knowledge, requires him to rigorously distinguish *hupokeimenon* from any *ousia* in itself, from anything at all that could be thought of as essence.

The signifier is articulated then as representing a subject for another signifier. This is where we start from to give a sense to this inaugural repetition in so far as it is a repetition aimed at enjoyment. This allows (10) us to see that knowledge is, at a certain level, dominated, articulated by purely formal necessities, necessities of writing, which culminates in our day at a certain type of logic. Now, this knowledge to which we can give the support of an experience which is that of modern logic, which is in itself and above all, the handling of a writing, this type of knowledge, is the very one that is at stake when it is a matter of measuring in the analytic clinic the incidence of repetition. In other words, the knowledge that seems most purified to us, even though it is quite clear that it could not in any way be extracted from empiricism by purification, is found to be the same knowledge that is introduced from the beginning. This knowledge shows its roots here, in the fact that in repetition, and in the form of the unary trait to begin with, it is found to be the means of enjoyment – of enjoyment precisely in so far as it goes beyond

the limits imposed, under the term of pleasure, on the usual tensions of life. What appears from this formalism, to continue to follow Lacan, is, as we have said earlier, that there is a loss in enjoyment, and it is at the place of the loss of this something which introduces repetition, that we see arising the function of the lost object, of what I call *o*. What does this impose on us, if not this formula that at the most elementary level, that of the imposition of the unary trait, working knowledge produces, let us say an entropy. This is written *e, n, t*. You could write it *a, n, t, h*, that would be a nice play on words. This should not surprise us. Do you not know that energetics, is absolutely nothing else, whatever the ingenuous hearts of the engineers may think, than the sticking onto the world of the network of signifiers? I defy you to prove in any way, that going down 500 metres with a weight of 80 kilos on your back and once you have gone down climbing up the 500 metres, amounts to zero, no work. Try it out, go to work, you will see that you will have the proof of the contrary. But if you stick some signifiers onto it, namely, if you enter onto the path of energetics, it is absolutely certain that there has been no work.

So then, when the signifier is introduced as an apparatus of enjoyment, we have no reason then to be surprised to see appearing something that is related to entropy, since entropy was precisely defined when people began to stick this system of signifiers onto the physical world. And you must not think I am joking. When you construct a factory anywhere, naturally you collect energy from it, you can even accumulate (11) it; after all it's a factory. Then, systems are brought into operation so that there can function these sorts of turbines, to the point that one can put energy in pots fabricated with the same logic that I am in the process of speaking to you about, namely, the function of the signifier. In our day, a machine has nothing in common with a tool. There is no genealogy between the shovel and the turbine. The proof is that you can quite legitimately call a little drawing you have made on a page a machine. Almost nothing is needed. It is enough simply for you to have conducting ink for it to be a very efficient machine. And why should it not be conducting, when the mark in itself already conducts pleasure (*volupté*)? If there is one thing that analytic experience teaches us, it is what concerns the world of phantasy. In truth, if it does not seem to have been tackled before analysis, it is because people had absolutely no knowledge of how to extricate themselves

from it, except by having recourse to the bizarre, to the anomalous, from which came these terms, this pinpointing with proper names, which make us call this *masochism* and that *sadism*. When we put in these *isms* we are at the level of zoology. But there is all the same something altogether radical, which is the association in what is at the base, at the very root of phantasy, of this glory, if I can express myself in that way, of the mark. I am talking about a mark on the skin, from which there is inspired in the phantasy something that is nothing other than a subject identifying himself as being object of enjoyment. In the erotic practice that I am evoking, flagellation to call it by its name in case there are people here who are really hard of hearing, enjoying takes on the very ambiguity which means that it is at its level and no other, that the equivalence between the gesture that marks and the body object of enjoyment, can be touched. Whose enjoyment? That of the one who carries what I called the glory of the mark? Is it sure that this means the enjoyment of the Other? Certainly it is one of the ways the Other enters his world, and undoubtedly one that cannot be refuted. But the affinity between the mark and the enjoyment of the body itself, is precisely where there is indicated that it is only from enjoyment, and not along any other paths that there is established the division by which narcissism is distinguished from a relation to the object. There is no ambiguity about this. It is in *Beyond the pleasure principle* that Freud forcefully marks that what constitutes in the final term the true support, the consistency, of the specular image in the system of the ego, is that it is sustained within by, that it only clothes this lost object by which enjoyment is introduced into the dimension of the being of the subject. In effect, since enjoyment is prohibited, it is clear that it is only because of an (12) initial chance, a contingency, an accident that enjoyment comes into play. The living being that operates normally, purrs with pleasure. If enjoyment is remarkable, and if it is ratified by having the sanction of the unary trait and of repetition, which establish it henceforth as mark, if that happens, it can only originate from a very slight gap in the meaning of enjoyment. These gaps, after all, will never be excessive even in the practices that I evoked earlier. It is not a matter of a transgression, of an irruption into a forbidden field by a wearing away of vital regulatory systems. In fact it is only in this effect of entropy, in this wastage, that enjoyment takes on its status, that it makes itself known. This is why I initially introduced the term *Mehrlust*, surplus enjoying.

It is precisely because it is glimpsed in the dimension of loss that something requires there to be compensated, as I might say, what is initially a negative number on that something or other has come to strike, resonate on the sides of the bell, has created enjoyment, and an enjoyment to be repeated. It is only the dimension of entropy that gives body to the fact that there is a surplus enjoying to be recovered. And this is the dimension that necessitates work, working knowledge, in so far as it initially stems, whether it knows it or not, from the unary trait, and, in its wake, everything that is going to be able to be articulated as signifier. It is starting from there that there is established this dimension of enjoyment, so ambiguous in the speaking being, who can just as well theorise and make a religion of living in apathy, because apathy is hedonism. He can indeed make a religion of that, and nevertheless everyone knows that in its very mass – *Massenpsychologie* is the title of one of Freud's writings, at the same epoch – what animates him, what preoccupies him, what makes him be a different order of knowledge than these harmonising knowledges that link the *Umwelt* to the *Innenwelt*, is the function of surplus enjoying as such. This is the hollow, the gap that is no doubt initially filled by a certain number of objects that are, in a way, adapted in advance, designed to serve as stopper. This no doubt is where every classical analytical practice stops, by highlighting these diverse terms oral, anal, scopic, even vocal. These are the different names by which we can designate as object what is involved in the **o**. But the **o**, as such, is properly speaking what results from the fact that knowledge, at its origin, can be reduced to signifying articulation. This knowledge is a means of enjoyment. And I repeat, when it works, what it produces is entropy. This entropy, this point of loss, is the only point, the only regular point by which we have access to what is involved in enjoyment. In this there is expressed, there is completed, there is justified what is involved as regards the incidence of the signifier in the destiny of the speaking being. This has little to do with his word. It has to do with the structure, which is invested by the (13) fact that the human being, who is so-called no doubt because he is only the *humus* of language, has only to make himself *wordy* (*s'apparoler*) through this system. With something as simple as my four little signs, I was earlier able to make you put your finger on the fact that it is enough to give this unary trait the company of another trait, S_2 after S_1 , to be able to situate from

this signifier, which is also licit, what is involved in its meaning and on the other hand, its insertion into the enjoyment of the Other – of that through which it is the means of enjoyment. At this point labour begins. It is with knowledge as a means of enjoyment, that there is produced this labour that has a meaning, an obscure meaning. This obscure meaning is that of the truth. No doubt, if I had not already tackled these terms from different illuminating angles, I would certainly not be so bold as to introduce them in this way. But a considerable amount of work has already been done. When I speak to you about knowledge having its primary locus in the discourse of the Master at the level of the slave, who, if not Hegel, has shown us that what the work of the slave is going to yield us is the truth of the master? And no doubt the truth that refutes him. But to tell the truth, we are perhaps in a position to put forward other forms or schemas of discourse, and to see where the Hegelian construction gapes open, is left gaping, or is brought to a close in a forced way. If there is one thing that our whole approach delimits [to myths?], and which has undoubtedly been renewed by analytic experience, it is that no evocation of the truth can be made except by indicating that it is only accessible through the half-said, that it cannot be said in its entirety, because beyond this half, there is nothing to say. That is all that can be said. Here, consequently, discourse is abolished. One cannot speak about the unsayable, no matter what pleasure some people seem to find in this. It nonetheless remains that I illustrated this knot of the half-said the last time, by indicating how it is necessary to emphasise what is properly interpretation about it, what I articulated about the stating without a statement, about the statement with the stating in reserve. I indicated that these were points of axis, of balance, the axes of gravity, proper to interpretation, from which our progress ought to profoundly renew what is involved in the truth.

What is the love of truth? It is something that pokes fun by [is caused by?] truth's lack of being. This lack of being, we could describe in a different way – a lack of forgetting, that is recalled to us in the formations of the unconscious. It is not something that is of the order of being, of any kind of full being. What is this 'indestructible desire' that (14) Freud speaks about to close the final lines of his *Traumdeutung*? What is this desire that nothing can change, or weaken, when all else changes? The lack of forgetting is the same

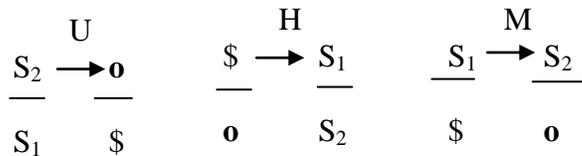
thing as the lack of being, because being is nothing other than to forget. The love of truth, is the love of this weakness whose veil we have lifted, it is the love of something that the truth hides, and which is called castration. I should not need these reminders, which are in a way so bookish. It seems that it is among the analysts, particularly among them, that in the name of these few taboo words that make a blot on their discourse people never see what the truth is: impotence. It is on this that everything involved in the truth is built. That there should be love of weakness is no doubt the essence of love. As I have said, love is to give what one does not have, namely, what could repair this original weakness. And at the same time there can be imagined, there opens up, this role – I do not know whether I ought to call it mystical or mystifying – that has been given from all time, in a certain vein, to love. This so-called universal love, whose flag is waved at us to calm us, is precisely what we use to create a veil, an obstruction to what the truth is. What is asked of the analyst, and what was already indicated in my discourse the last time, is certainly not something that falls under the jurisdiction of this subject supposed to know, by which – understanding me, as usual, a little bit incorrectly -people believed I thought transference could be grounded. I often insisted on the fact that we are supposed not to know a great deal. What analysis sets up, is something that is quite the contrary. The analyst says to the one who is going to begin – *off you go, say anything whatsoever, it will be marvellous*. He is the one that the analyst establishes as subject supposed to know. After all, it is not such a matter of bad faith, because in the present case, he cannot trust anyone else. And transference is grounded on the fact that there is a chap who tells me, poor sod, to behave as if I knew what it was all about. He can say anything at all it will always result in something. There is good reason to talk about transference. It is not something that happens every day.

What defines the analyst? I have said it. I have always said it, always – simply, no one has ever understood anything, and what is more, it is natural, it is not my fault – I have always said, analysis is what one expects from a psychoanalyst. But this *what one expects from a psychoanalyst* - we obviously have to try to comprehend what that means. It is so much there, like that, within hand's reach – I have the feeling all the same, always, that I am only restating it – the work is for me, the surplus enjoying is for you.

What one expects from a psychoanalyst is, as I said the last time, to make his knowledge function in terms of truth. This indeed is why he limits himself to a half saying. I said it the last time, and I will have to come back to it, because it has consequences.

It is to the analyst and to him alone that there is addressed this formula that I so often commented on, the *Wo Es war soll Ich werden*. If the analyst is able to occupy this place on the top left that determines his discourse, it is because he is absolutely not there for himself. It is to where surplus enjoying was, the enjoying of the Other, in so far as I am producing the psychoanalytic act, that I for my part must come.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 21 January 1970



Analytic discourse, at the level of structure where we are trying to articulate it this year, completes the roundabout of the three others, named respectively – I recall it for those who come here sporadically – the discourse of the Master, that of the Hysteric, which I put in the middle today, and finally the discourse that is of great interest to us here, because what is at stake is the discourse positioned as that of the University. But the fact that this analytic discourse completes the quarter circle displacements by which the three others are structured does not mean that it resolves them. That it allows us to pass to the

reverse side (*à l'envers*) resolves nothing. This reverse side does not in any way explain the front side (*l'endroit*). It is a relationship of texture, of text that is at stake – of tissue, if you wish. It nevertheless remains that this tissue has a relief, that it captures something. Not everything, of course, since language shows the limit, precisely, of this word which has no existence except as language. It shows that even in the world of discourse, there is nothing that forms a whole, as I say – or better still, that the whole as such is rejected, is even supported, by having to be restricted in its use. This by way of introducing us to what today will be the object of an essential approach, with the goal of demonstrating what an *envers* is. *Envers* resonates with *vérité*. In truth, something deserves to be supported by this distinction – *truth* is not a word that is easy to handle outside logic, propositional logic, where it is made into a value, reduced to the inscription, to the manipulation, of a symbol, usually capital T, its initial. This use, as we shall see, is particularly hopeless. Indeed, this is what is healthy about it. Nevertheless, everywhere else, and specifically among analysts, I have to say and with good reason, particularly women analysts, it provokes a curious tremor, not unlike the one that has been pushing them, for some time, to confuse analytic truth with revolution. I have already spoken about the ambiguity of this term, which, in the use it has in celestial mechanics, can mean a return to the beginning. This is indeed from certain angles, what analytic discourse, as I said at the beginning, can accomplish with regard to three other orders, situating three other structures. It is not by chance that women are less enclosed than their partners in this cycle of discourses. Man, the male, the virile one, as we know him, is a creation of discourse. (2) Nothing, at least of what can be analysed in him, can be defined otherwise. The same cannot be said of the woman. Nevertheless, no dialogue is possible unless it is situated at the level of discourse. That is why, before trembling, the woman animated by the revolutionary virtue of analysis may tell herself that, much more than man, she has to take advantage of what we will call a certain culture of discourse. It is not that she has no gift for it, quite the contrary. And when she is animated by it, she becomes an outstanding guide in this cycle. This is what defines the hysteric, and that is why on the board, breaking the order of what I usually write there, I placed her in the centre. It is nevertheless clear that it is not by chance that the word *truth* provokes this particular tremor in her. Only truth, even in our context, is not

easy to access. Like certain birds that I was told about when I was small, it can only be caught by putting salt on its tail and of course this is not easy. My first reading book had as its first text a story entitled *The story of half a chicken*. It's true that is what it was about. It is not a bird that is any easier to catch than the others when the condition is to put salt on its tail.

What I teach, after all, ever since I have been articulating something about psychoanalysis, could well be entitled *The story of a half a subject*.

Where is the truth of the relationship between this story of half a chicken and the story of half a subject? It can be taken from two angles. One could say that the first story I read determined the development of my thinking, as one might say in a University thesis. Or else, the structural point of view, the story of half a chicken might well have represented for the author who wrote it something that reflected some presentiment or other, not of *sychanalisse*, as it is put in *Le paysan de Paris*, but of what is involved in the subject. What is certain, is that there was also an image. The image of the half chicken was its profile from the good side. You did not see the other one, the cut, the one where the truth probably was, because you saw on the right hand page the half without the heart, but not without the *foie*, in the two senses of the word, no doubt. What does that mean? The fact is that the truth is hidden, but perhaps it is only absent. That would settle everything if that was how it was. You would only have to know everything there is to be known. After all, why not? When you say something, there is no need to add that it is true. Around this turns a whole problematic about judgement. You are well aware that Mr Frege puts the assertion in the form of a horizontal stroke, and distinguishes it from what is involved when you affirm that it (3) is true, by putting a vertical stroke on the extreme left. This then becomes an affirmation. Only what is true? Good God, it is what has been said. What has been said is the sentence, but there is no way of supporting the sentence by anything other than the signifier, in so far as it does not concern the object. Unless, like a logician whose extremist views I will put forward later, you posit that there is no object except a pseudo- object. For our part, we stay with the fact that the signifier does not concern the object, but the sense. As subject of the sentence, there is only sense.

Hence this dialectic that we started from, that we call the *pas-de-sens* with all the ambiguity of this word *pas*. This begins with the non-sense forged by Husserl – *the green is one for*. This however may very well have a sense if what is in question for example is a vote with green balls and red balls. Only what leads us onto the path where what is involved in being depends on sense, is what has most being. It is along this path, in any case, that we have gone beyond this *pas-de-sens* of thinking that what has most being cannot not exist.

Sense, as I might say, is responsible for being. It does not even have any other sense. Except, people have noticed for some time that this is not enough to make up the weight, the weight precisely of existence. A curious thing non-sense can make up the weight. That gets at your gut. And this is the step taken by Freud, when he showed that what was exemplary in the witticism, was the word with neither head nor tail. This does not make it any easier to put salt on its tail. In that case truth flies off. Truth flies off just when you no longer want to catch it. Moreover, since it does not have a tail, how could you have? Astonishment and illumination. As you remember, a little story, a rather flat one, the exchanges about the golden calf (*veau d'or*) may be enough to wake up this calf that sleeps (*dort*) standing up. You can then see that he is, as I might say, made of hard gold (*or dur, ordure*). Between the implacable desire to endure (*le dur désir de durer*) of Eluard and the desire to sleep, which is indeed the greatest riddle - without anyone appearing to notice it - that Freud puts forward in the mechanism of the dream. Let us not forget it. *Wunsch zu schlafen*, he says, he did not say *schlafen Bedürfnis*, the need to sleep, that is not what is at stake. It is the *Wunsch zu schlafen* that determines the operation of the dream. It is curious that to this indication he adds the following, that a dream wakes you up just at the moment at which it might reveal the truth, so that you only wake up in order to continue dreaming – to dream in the real, or to be more exact, in reality. All this is striking. It is striking because of a certain lack of sense, when the truth, like nature comes rushing back. And at such a gallop, that scarcely has it crossed our field than it has already exited on the other side. The absence I mentioned earlier has produced a curious contamination in French. If you take the *sans*, which is supposed to come from the Latin *sine*, which is highly unlikely since its first form was something like

senz, we can see that the *absentia*, in the ablative, used in juridical texts and from which there comes this *sans*, a term without head or tail. We have already put forward this little word from the beginning of what we have been talking about today. So what? In talking about *senz* and then *sans* (*puis sans*), are we not dealing with a *puissance*? One quite different to this *en puissance* (in potency) of an imaginary virtuality, which is only power by being deceptive – but rather the being in sense, which is to be taken differently than being in the fullest sense, and is rather what escapes being, as happens in the *mot* quite correctly described as *esprit*. As moreover, we know, always happens in the act. In any act whatsoever, what escapes is what is important. And this is also the step taken by analysis, in the introduction of the bungled act as such, which is, after all, the only one that we know with certainty is always successful.

Around this there is a whole operation of litotes whose weight and accent I try to show in what I call the not-without (*pas-sans*). Anxiety is not without an object. We are *not without* a relation to the truth. But can we be sure that we ought to find it *intus*, within? Why not to one side? *Heimlich, unheimlich* – everyone has been able, from reading Freud, to remember the ambiguity hidden in this term which, by not being within, and nevertheless evoking it, emphasises precisely everything that is strange. On this, tongues vary strangely among themselves. Have you noticed that *homeliness*, in English means plain? Nevertheless, it is indeed the same word as *Heimlichkeit*, but it does not have quite the same accent. This indeed is also why *sinnlos* is translated into English as *meaningless*, namely, the same word that in translating *Unsinn*, will give us *non-sense*. Everyone knows that the ambiguity of roots in English leads to curious avoidances. On the other hand, strangely, and in an almost unique way, English will call *without* (*sans*), with and being outside. Truth does indeed seem in effect to be foreign to us, I mean our own truth. It is with us no doubt, but without us being all that concerned that we want to speak it. All we can say, this is what I said earlier, is that we are *not without* it. A litotes of the fact that, in short, being within its reach, well, we would happily do without it. We (5) go from *without* to *not without*, and from that to not doing without (*sans-passer*).

Here I will make a little jump, and go to the author who has formulated most forcefully what results from the enterprise of positing that there is no truth except as inscribed in some proposition, and trying to articulate what in knowledge as such – knowledge being constituted on a foundation of proposition – can in all rigour function as truth. Namely, of articulating what, in whatever may be proposed, is true and can be sustained as such. The person in question is Wittgenstein who is, may I say, easy to read. Certainly. Try it. This requires you to be willing to move around in a world that is strictly one of cogitation, without looking for any fruit in it - which is a bad habit you have got into. You are very fond of collecting apples under an apple tree, or even gathering them up from the ground. There are better things for you to do than gathering up apples. Living for some time under this apple tree whose branches, I assure you, are enough to capture your entire attention, provided you set your mind to it, will all the same have the following characteristic: that you will get nothing from it, except for the affirmation that nothing can be said to be true other than the conformity to a structure that I will not even situate, by placing myself for an instant outside the shade of this apple tree, as logical, but as grammatical, as the author states quite clearly. For this author, this constitutes what he identifies to the world.

Grammatical structure is what the world is. And the only truth, in short, is a composite proposition comprising the totality of the facts that constitute the world. If we choose on the whole to introduce into it the element of negation that allows it to be articulated, we will have a whole set of rules to separate out which constitute a logic, but the whole is, he says tautological, namely, as stupid as the fact that whatever you state is either true or false. To state that this indeed is either true or false, is necessarily true, but that also cancels out the meaning. Everything that I am telling you, he concludes in proposition 6.51, 2, 3, 4 - because he numbers them – everything that I have stated here is properly speaking *Unsinn*, namely, cancels out meaning. Nothing can be said that is not tautological.

What is at stake, is that the reader, after having followed the long circuit of statements, every one of which I would ask you to believe me is extremely attractive, should be overcome by everything that has just been said in order to conclude that there is nothing else that can be said – but anything that can be said is only non-sense. I have been a little (6) quick in summarising the *Tractus logico-philosophicus* of Wittgenstein. Let us simply add this remark, that nothing can be said, that nothing is true, except on the condition of starting from the idea, and this is Wittgenstein's approach, that a fact is an attribute of a crude proposition. I am calling a crude proposition one that elsewhere is put in quotation marks, in Quine for example, where the statement is distinguished from the stating. This is an operation that, even though I constructed my graph precisely on its foundation, I nevertheless have no hesitation in describing as arbitrary. It is clear, in effect, and this is Wittgenstein's position, that to say that there is no need to add a sign of affirmation to what is a pure and simple assertion, can be sustained. An assertion announces itself as truth. How then can one escape what is involved in Wittgenstein's conclusions except by following him to the very place that he is led to, namely, towards the elementary proposition, whose notation as true or false is what should, in any case, whether it is true or false, guarantee the truth of the composite proposition. I would say further that whatever the facts of the world may be, whatever we may state about it, what constitutes the world is the tautology of the totality of discourse.

Let us take the most restricted proposition, I mean from a grammatical point of view. It is not for nothing that the Stoics had already used it as a basis, by introducing it into the simplest form of implication. I will not even go that far, I will only take the first part, since, as you know, an implication is a relation between two propositions. *It is daylight*. This indeed is the minimum. The neutral *it*. *It is, that is* – in certain cases it has the same meaning. So then Wittgenstein only sustains the world by facts. There is no thing, unless it is sustained by a web of facts. No thing, moreover, except the inaccessible. Facts alone are articulated. This fact that it is daylight is a fact only by virtue of being said. The true only depends – this is where I have to re-introduce the dimension I am arbitrarily separating from it – on my stating, namely, if I state something about it. The

true is not internal to the proposition where there is announced only the fact, the factitiousness of language. It is true that it is a fact, a fact constituted, in the event, by my saying it, while it is true. But that it is true is not a fact, if I do not explicitly add on that, moreover, it is true. Except that as Wittgenstein points out quite correctly, it is superfluous for me to add that it is true. Only there you are. What I have to say in place of this superfluity, is that I must really have a reason to say it, and this will be explained in what follows. Precisely, I do not say that I have a reason, I continue with what follows, (7) namely, my deduction, and I integrate *it is daylight*, perhaps as a fallacy – even if it is true – to my encouragement which may be to take advantage of it to make someone believe that he will clearly see what my intentions are. The stupidity, if I can express myself in this way, is to isolate the factitiousness of *it is daylight*. It is a prodigiously fruitful stupidity, because it creates a support, one that very precisely has as a result that there is pushed to its final consequences what I took support on myself, namely, that there is no meta-language. There is no other meta-language than every form of blackguardism (*canailerie*), if by this we designate these curious operations that are deduced from the fact that the desire of man is the desire of the Other. All blackguardism comes from wanting to be the Other - I mean the big Other - for someone, in which there is outlined the shapes in which his desire is captured. So then this operation described as Wittgensteinian is nothing other than an extraordinary display of, a hunting down of philosophical blackguardism. The only sense is that of desire. This is what one can say after having read Wittgenstein. There is no truth except of what the aforesaid desire hides about its lack, in order to pretend to make nothing of what it finds. Nothing throws a more certain light on what results from what the logicians have always articulated simply by dazzling us with the aura of paradox surrounding what is called material implication. You know what it is. It is simply implication. It has only been called material recently, because, all of a sudden, people rubbed their eyes, and began to comprehend the enormities involved in implication, I am speaking about the one that a particular Stoic supported. Namely, that the three following implications are legitimate: undoubtedly the false implies the false and the true implies the true, but it cannot be ruled out that the false implies the true, since, in short, what counts is what is implied, and if what is implied is true, the whole of the implication also is. Only, this means something.

Why could we not, by slightly displacing the word *implies*, notice what is obvious in the fact – which was very well known in the Middle Ages - *ex falso sequitur quodlibet* that the false also involves the true on occasion, also means that the true, for its part, can come from anything whatsoever. But if, on the contrary, we reject that the true involves the false, that it can have a false consequence – because this is what we reject, otherwise there would be no possible articulation of propositional logic – we end up at this curious fact that the true has then a genealogy, that it always goes back to a first true, from which it cannot depart. This is such a strange piece of information and one so contested by our whole life, I mean our life as subject, that, just by itself, it would be enough to put in question whether (8) the truth can in any way be isolated as an attribute, an attribute of anything whatsoever that can be articulated to knowledge.

So then, the analytic operation, for its part, is distinguished by advancing into this field in a fashion distinct from what is found, I would say, incarnated in Wittgenstein's discourse, namely, a psychotic ferocity, alongside which Occam's well known razor, which states that we should not accept any logical notion except it is necessary, is as nothing. The truth, we start again at the beginning, is certainly inseparable from the effects of language taken as such. Certainly, no truth can be localised except with reference to the field in which it is stated – where it is stated as it can be.

So then, it is true that there is no true without a false, at least in principle. This is true. But that there is no false without a true, is false. I mean that the true can only be found outside any proposition. To say that the truth is inseparable from the effects of language taken as such, is to include the unconscious in it. On the contrary, to put forward, as I recalled the last time, that the unconscious is the condition of language takes on its meaning here, because it holds that an absolute meaning corresponds to language. One of the authors of the discourse on *The unconscious*, subtitled, *a psychoanalytic study*, formerly wrote it by superimposing an S on itself, by putting it over and under a bar, arbitrarily treated moreover with respect to what I had done with it. The signifier thus

designated, whose meaning is supposed to be absolute, is very easy to recognise, because there is only one that can answer at this place. It is the 'I', the 'I' in so far as it is transcendental, but is also illusory. This is the final, radical operation, the one that, precisely, is irreducibly guaranteed by what I designate as the discourse of the University – and this is what shows that it is not by chance that we find it here.

The transcendental 'I', is the one that whoever has announced a knowledge in a certain way conceals as truth, the S_1 , the 'I' of the master. The 'I' identical to itself, it is very precisely from this that the S_1 of the pure imperative is constituted. The imperative is very precisely where the 'I' is developed [concealed?], because it is always in the second person. The myth of the ideal I, of the I that masters, of the I by means of which something at least is identical to itself, namely, the speaker, is very precisely what University discourse cannot eliminate from the place where its truth is found. From every university statement of any philosophy whatsoever, even if it were one that strictly speaking could be pinpointed as being most opposed to it, namely, if it were the philosophy, the discourse of Lacan – the *I-cracy* unfailingly emerges. Naturally, no philosophy is reducible to this.

(9) For the philosophers the question has always been much more supple and pathetic. Remember what is at stake. They all admit it more or less, and some of them, the most lucid ones, state it clearly – they want to save the truth. This took one of them, faith, very far – to the point, like Wittgenstein, of ending up with the fact that by making it the rule and the foundation of knowledge, there is nothing more to be said, nothing in any case that concerns it as such – in order to refuse, to avoid this rock. Undoubtedly there is something in the author that brings him close to the position of the analyst, which is that he eliminates himself completely from his discourse. I spoke earlier about psychosis. There is, in effect, such a coincidence between an unquestioning discourse and something or other that is strikingly indicative of psychosis, that I say it once I have simply felt its effect. How remarkable it is that a university like the English university should have

made a place for him. A place apart, make no mistake, an isolated place, which the author completely collaborated with himself, to such an extent that he withdrew from time to time to a little house in the country, in order to return to and to pursue this implacable discourse, by which, one can say, that even that of Russell's *Principia mathematica* is falsified. He did not want to save the truth. Nothing can be said about it, he said, which is not sure, because moreover we have to deal with it every day. But how then did Freud define the psychotic position in a letter that I have often quoted? Precisely by something that he calls, a strange thing, *unglauben*, to want to know nothing about the quarter where truth is at stake. The matter is so pathetic for the university academic that one can say that the discourse of Politzer entitled *Foundations of concrete psychology*, which the approach of psychoanalysis stimulated him to produce, is a fascinating example of it. Everything is determined by this effort to get out of the University discourse that had formed him from head to toe. He is well aware that there is here a kind of ramp by which he could get out of it. You should read this little book, re-edited in paperback without, to my knowledge, anything being able to show that the author would himself have approved of this new edition, whereas everyone knows the drama created for him by the bouquets that buried something that from the start was meant to be cry of revolt. These scathing pages on psychology, especially of the University kind, are strangely followed by some steps that, in a way, bring him back to it. But what made him grasp that there was some hope for him of emerging from this psychology, is that he put the accent on the fact – as nobody had done at his epoch – that what was essential to the Freudian method in tackling what was involved in the formations of the unconscious, was that it put (10) its faith in the narrative. The accent is put on this fact of language, from which everything, in truth, was able to start. There was no question at the time – this by the by – of anyone, even at the *École normale*, having the slightest idea of what linguistics was, but it is all the same curious that he got close in this way to the fact that it is the mainspring that offers a hope for what he strangely calls concrete psychology. Curious ... you should read this little book, and if I had it here, I would read it with you. Perhaps one day I will make it the material for our talks here, but I have enough to say without having to delay on something whose significant strangeness every one of you can see – that it is by wanting to get out of the University discourse, that one implacably goes

back into it. This follows step by step. What objections does he raise to the statements, I mean to the terminology, the mechanisms, that Freud puts forward in his theoretical progress if not that, in stating around facts that can be isolated by formal abstraction, as he confusedly puts it, Freud allows there to escape what for him is the essential required in matters of psychology, namely, that any psychic act can only be stated if there is preserved what he calls the act of the I, and still better, its continuity. This is written down – the continuity of the I. This term is undoubtedly what allowed the author of the report whom I spoke about earlier to shine at the expense of Politzer, to whom he brings in a little reference, as a way like that, of persuading the audience that he had at that time. What a lovely occasion to produce a University man who moreover had also proved himself to be a hero. It is always consoling to have one from time to time, but that is not enough, if people take advantage of it without for all that being able to demonstrate how irreducible the University discourse is in relation to analysis. Nevertheless this book bears witness to a very particular struggle, because Politzer cannot fail to sense the degree to which analytic practice is very close, in fact, to what he outlines ideally as being completely outside the field of everything that had been done up to then as psychology. But he cannot do otherwise than fall back onto the requirement of the I. Not of course that I myself see in it something irreducible. The author of the report in question rids himself of it too easily when he says that the unconscious is not articulated in the first person, and by arming himself with one or other of my statements, about the fact that the subject receives his message from the other in an inverted form. This is certainly not a sufficient reason. Elsewhere I clearly said that the truth speaks I. *Me, the truth, I speak*. Only what does not occur either to the author in question or to Politzer, is that the I in question is perhaps innumerable, that there is no need for the continuity of the I for it to multiply its acts. But let us leave this, it is not the essential thing.

(11) Over against this use of propositions, shall we not, before leaving, present the following – *A child is being beaten*. This indeed is a proposition that constitutes the whole of this phantasy. Can we attribute to it anything whatsoever that can be described in terms of true or false? This case, which exemplifies what cannot be eliminated from

any definition of the proposition, allows us to grasp that if this proposition has the effect of being sustained by a subject, no doubt, it is by a subject as Freud immediately analyses it, divided by enjoyment. Divided, I mean that just as much the one who states it, this child that *wird*, *vertu*, *verdit*, *verdoie*, because of being beaten, *geschlagen* – let us play around a little bit more – this child who grows green, is beaten, jokes (*verdit*, *battu*, *badine*), *virtue*, these are the misfortunes of *vers-tu*, namely, the one who is hitting him, and who is not named, however the sentence is stated. The *you are beating me* is this half of the subject whose formula creates its link to enjoyment. To be sure, he does receive his own message in an inverted form – that means here, his own enjoyment in the form of the enjoyment of the Other. This indeed is what is at stake when the phantasy finds itself, in the first place, linking the image of the father to another child. It is the fact that the father enjoys beating him that here puts the stress on meaning and also on this truth which is a half – because moreover, the one who is identified to the other half, to the subject of the child, was not this child, unless, as Freud says, one reconstitutes the intermediary stage – never in any way substantiated by memory – where in effect it is himself. It is he who from this sentence creates the support of his phantasy, who is the beaten child.

Thus we are led back in fact to the fact that a body can be faceless (*sans figure*). The father, or the other, whoever he may be, who here plays the role, guarantees the function, provides the locus of enjoyment, is not even named. A faceless God, make no mistake. He nevertheless cannot be grasped except as body. What has a body and does not exist? Answer – the big Other. If we believe in this big Other, he has a body that cannot be eliminated from the substance of the one who said *I am what I am*, which is a quite different form of tautology. This is why before leaving you I will allow myself to put forward something which is so striking in the story that, in truth, it is astonishing that it has not been sufficiently emphasised, or indeed not at all – materialists are the only authentic believers. Experience has proved it – I am talking about the time of the most recent historical eruption of materialism in the 18th century. Their God is matter. Well then, why not? This holds up better than all the other ways of grounding him. Only for

us that is not enough, precisely because we have logical needs, if you will allow me to use this term. Because we are beings born from surplus enjoying, the (12) result of the use of language.

When I say *the use of language*, I do not mean that we use it. It is we who are used by it. Language uses us, and that is how it enjoys itself. That is why the only chance of God's existence, is that He – with a capital H – enjoys, it is that He is enjoyment. This indeed is why it is clear to the most intelligent of materialists, namely Sade, that the goal of death, is in no way the inanimate. Read the remarks of Saint-Fond towards the middle of *Juliette* and you will see what is at stake. If he says that death constitutes nothing other than the invisible collaboration with a natural operation, it is of course because for him after death, everything remains animated – animated by the desire for enjoyment. He can, moreover, call this enjoyment Nature, but it is evident from the whole context that it is enjoyment that is at stake. Enjoyment of what? Of a unique being who only has to say – *I am what I am*. And why is that then? How does Sade sense it so clearly? This is where there comes into operation the fact that in appearance he is sadistic. He refuses to be what he is, what he states he is. In making this furious call to give to nature in its murderous operations, from which forms are always reborn, what is he doing if not displaying his incapacity to be anything other than the instrument of divine enjoyment. That is Sade the theoretician. Why is he a theoretician? I will perhaps have the time in the final minutes, as is my usual practice, to tell you. The practitioner is something different. As you know from a certain number of stories which are testified to us by his own writings, the practitioner is simply masochistic. It is the only clever and practical when enjoyment is at stake, because to exhaust oneself at being God's instrument, is backbreaking.

The masochist for his part is a delicate humorist. He does not need God for that, his lackey is enough for him. He gets his foothold by enjoying himself within very careful limits, naturally, and like every good masochist, as can be seen, it is enough to read it, he

splits his sides laughing. He is a Master humorist. So then why in the devil is Sade a theoretician? Why this exhausting wish, because it is completely outside his influence, this wish he wrote, designated as such, that these particles which are all that is left of the fragments of lives that are torn, shredded, dismembered after the most extraordinary acts imaginable, must really, in order to finish things off, be subjected to a second death. Who could ensure that? Naturally, it is within our reach. I stated this a long time ago in connection with Antigone. Only, being a psychoanalyst, I was in a position to notice that the second death comes (13) before the first, and not after, as Sade dreams. Sade was a theoretician. And why? Because he loves the truth. It is because he wants to save it that he loves it. What proves that he loves it, is that he refuses it, that he does not seem to notice that in decreeing the death of God, he exalts Him, that he bears witness for Him, by the fact that he, Sade, only reaches enjoyment by the little means I mentioned earlier. What can be meant by the fact that in loving truth, one thus falls into a system that is so obviously symptomatic? Here one thing stands out – to posit oneself as the residue of the effect of language, as the one who ensures that, from enjoying, the language effect only extracts what the last time I stated about the entropy of a surplus enjoying – this is what is not seen – the Truth as outside discourse, what – it is the sister of this forbidden enjoyment. I say *it is the sister*, because it is related only by the fact that, if the most radical logical structures are attached effectively to this pedicle torn from enjoyment, the question is posed inversely as to what enjoying these conquests that we are making in our day in logic correspond to. The fact, for example, that the only consistency in a logical system, however weak it may be, as they say, comes from designating its force as an effect of incompleteness, in which its limits are marked. To what enjoyment does the way in which the foundation of logic itself proves to be bursting open correspond? In other words, what is the truth here? It is not in vain nor by chance that I designate as sisterly the position of truth with respect to enjoyment. Except by stating it in the discourse of the Hysteric. We will have to develop this. Curiously quite recently someone gave a lecture to the Americans about something that everyone knew. Freud had what is modestly called an affair, *une affaire*, with his sister-in-law. So what? We have known for a long time the place that Minna Bernays held in Freud's preoccupations. The support of some Jungian tittle-tattle changes nothing. But in it I hold onto this

position of sister-in-law. Sade whom everyone knows was separated from his wife by Oedipal prohibitions – as the theoreticians of courtly love have always said there is no love in marriage – is it not because of his sister-in-law that he loved the truth so much?

I will leave you on this question.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 11 February 1970

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Today we are going to move forward, and to avoid perhaps one misunderstanding, among others, I would like to give you this rule as a first approximation for the reference of a discourse: it is what it declares it wants to master. This is enough to classify it as having a kinship with the discourse of the Master. This indeed is the difficulty of the one that I am trying to bring as close as possible to the discourse of the Analyst – it ought to find itself at the very opposite of any will for mastery, at least a declared one. I am saying *at least a declared one*, not because he should dissimulate it, but because after all it is always easy to slip into the discourse of mastery because in truth, we start from there in what constitutes teaching. The discourse of consciousness has been taken up again, is taken up every day, indefinitely. One of my best friends, someone very close to me, in

psychiatry, of course, found the most appropriate note – the discourse of synthesis, the discourse of the consciousness that masters. It was to him that I was responding in certain remarks that I made a long time ago on psychic causality, and they are there to bear witness to the fact that well before taking in hand the analytic discourse, I had already taken a certain orientation, in particular when I told him more or less the following: how can this psychical activity be apprehended otherwise than as a dream, when one hears thousands and thousands times a day *this bastard chain of destiny and inertia, of dice throws and stupor, of false success and unrecognised encounters that make up the everyday text of a human life?* So then, you must not expect anything more subversive in my discourse than not claiming to have a solution.

Nevertheless it is clear that there is no more burning issue than what, in discourse, refers to enjoyment. Discourse ceaselessly touches on it because it originates there and it stirs it up anew once it tries to return to this origin. It is in this respect that it challenges any pacification. Freud's discourse is a strange one, it has to be said, one that is most contrary to the coherence, to the consistency of a discourse. The subject (2) of the discourse does not know himself *qua* subject giving the discourse. That he does not know what he is saying might be acceptable, we have always managed to make up for this. But what Freud says, is that he does not know who is saying it. Knowledge – I think that I have insisted enough already on this for it to get into your head – knowledge is something which is said, that speaks itself. Well then, knowledge speaks all by itself, and that is what the unconscious is. That is where it ought to have been attacked by what is called in a more or less diffuse way, phenomenology. To contradict Freud, it was not enough to recall that knowledge knows itself ineffably. The attack should have been directed at the fact that Freud puts the accent on what everyone should know – knowledge counts, knowledge enumerates, details itself, and this is what is not obvious. The fact is that what is said, the rosary, is said by no one, it happens all by itself. If you will allow me, it was with this that I wanted to start with that aphorism. You will see why I pulled back. I did so to as usual, but luckily I did it before 12.31pm so as not to delay the end of our meeting this time. If I were to begin in the way I always feel like doing, it would be in an abrupt way. It is because I feel like doing it that I do not do it. I

am trying to win you over, I spare you sudden shocks. I wanted to begin with an aphorism which, I hope, is going to strike you by its obviousness, because it is indeed because of this that Freud has carried the day, despite the protests that welcomed his entry into the world of the commerce of ideas. What carried the day was that Freud does not bullshit [*ne déconne pas*]. This is what imposed this sort of prestige that he has in our times. It is probably also the reason why there is someone else who as we know, despite everything, survives rather well. One and the other, Freud and Marx, are characterised by the fact that they do not talk bullshit. This can be noticed in the fact that by contradicting them, people always slip, slip very easily into talking bullshit. They disorganise the discourse of those who want to trip them up. Very often they fix it irreducibly in a sort of conformist, retarded, academic recursion. Would to Heaven that these contradictors, as I might say, would talk bullshit. They would continue the work of Freud, they would be in a certain order, the one that is in question. People ask themselves after all why from time to time so and so is described as stupid [*con*]. Is it all that disrespectful? Have you not noticed that when people say that someone is stupid, that means rather that he is not all that stupid? The depressing thing is that people do not know too well how it is involved in enjoyment. And it is for this reason that it is called that. This is also (3) what gives Freud's discourse its merit. He is up to it. He is up to a discourse that sticks as closely as possible to what is related to enjoyment – as close as was possible up to him. It is not all that easy. It is not easy to situate oneself at this point where discourse emerges, or even, when it returns to it, stumbles, when it gets close to enjoyment.

Obviously, in this regard, Freud sometimes slips away, abandons us. He abandons the question around feminine enjoyment. According to the latest news, Mr Gillespie, an eminent personage who distinguished himself by all sorts of wheeler-dealing between the different currents that have traversed analysis during these last 50 years, shows a sort of joy, a curious joy, in the latest issue of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, at the fact that, thanks to a certain number of experiments, which are supposed to have been carried out at the University of Washington on vaginal orgasm, a clear light is supposed to have been projected on what had caused the debate, namely, the primacy or not, in the development of the woman, of an enjoyment initially restricted to the equivalent of male

enjoyment. This work by a certain Masters and Johnson is in truth not without interest. Nevertheless, when, without having been able to consult the text directly, but on the basis of certain quotations, I see that the major orgasm, which is supposed to be that of the woman, comes from the whole personality, I wonder how a movie camera picking up images in colour, placed inside an appendage representing the penis, recording from within what is happening on the wall that surrounds it when it is introduced, is capable of grasping the whole personality in question.

It is perhaps very interesting, as an accompaniment, in the margin of what Freud's discourse allows us to put forward. Indeed this gives its meaning to the word *déconner*, just as one says *déchanter* [to change one's tune]. Perhaps you know what descant is – it is something that is written alongside plain chant. It can also be sung, it can act as an accompaniment, but ultimately, it is not quite what one expects from plain chant. Indeed, it is because there is so much descant that it is necessary to recall here in its brutal relief what emerges from what I could call the attempt at economic reduction that Freud gives to his discourse on enjoyment. It is not for nothing that he masks it in this way. You are going to see the effect it has when it is stated directly. But this is what I thought I should do today in a form that, I hope, will strike you, even though it will teach you nothing, except the proper tone (4) of what Freud discovers. We are not going to talk about enjoyment in that way. I have already told you enough for you to know that enjoyment is the barrel of the Danaids, and that once you get into it you do not know where it will end up. It begins with a tickle and it ends like a blaze of petrol. That is how enjoyment always is. I will take things from a different angle that cannot be said to be absent from analytic discourse. If you read the veritable body of work that makes up this anniversary issue of the *International Journal*, you can understand why the authors congratulate themselves on the solidity revealed by the past 50 years. I would ask you to put it to the test – take any issue whatsoever in these 50 years, you will never know its date. It always says the same thing. It is always just as insipid, and since analysis is a preservative, it is also always the same authors. Except that out of tiredness they have reduced their input from time to time. One of them expresses himself on a single page. They congratulate themselves that, in short, these 50 years have well confirmed these primary truths, that

the mainspring of analysis is goodness, and that what fortunately has been made evident throughout these years, with the progressive effacing of Freud's discourse, is in particular the solidity and the glory of a discovery described as *the autonomous ego*, namely, the conflict free ego. This is the result of 50 years of experience, in virtue of the injection of three psychoanalysts who had flourished in Berlin, into American society where this discourse about a solidly autonomous ego certainly promises attractive results. In terms of a return to the discourse of the Master, in effect, one could hardly do better. This gives you an idea of what one could call the regressive impact that follows any kind of attempt at transgression, which was all the same what analysis was at one time.

So then, we are going to say things in a particular way, around a word that you will easily find in going through this issue, since it is already one of the current themes of analytic propaganda – in English, it is called *happiness*, in French we call it *bonheur*. Unless we define it in a rather miserable way, namely, that it is to be like everyone else, which is what *the autonomous ego* comes down to, it must be said that no one knows what happiness is. If we are to believe Saint-Just who said it himself, happiness has become since his own time, a political factor. So then, let us try here to give body to this notion by another abrupt statement that I would ask you to note is central to Freudian theory: there is no happiness except from the phallus (*il n'y a de bonheur que du phallus*).

(5) Freud writes this in all sorts of ways, and even writes it in the naïve fashion which consists in saying that there is no more perfect way of approaching enjoyment than the masculine orgasm. Only what the Freudian theory puts the accent on, is that it is only the phallus that is happy and not its bearer, even when, not out of oblativity, but out of desperation, he brings it to a partner who is supposed to be in desolation at not being herself the bearer of it. Here is what psychoanalytic experience positively teaches us. The aforesaid bearer, as I express it, struggles to get his partner to accept this privation, in the face of which all his loving efforts, his little attentions and tender services are in vain, because they reawaken the aforesaid wound of privation. This wound, then, cannot be compensated for by the satisfaction that the bearer would have in calming it. On the contrary it is reawakened by its very presence, by the presence of that whose loss causes

this wound. This is very exactly what is revealed to us by what Freud was able to extract from the discourse of the Hysteric. It is starting from there that it can be conceived that the hysteric symbolises this primary dissatisfaction. I have highlighted her promotion of unsatisfied desire by basing myself on the minimal example that I commented on in this writing that remains under the title of *The direction of the treatment and the principles of its power*, namely, the dream described as that of the butcher's beautiful wife. Let us remember there is the butcher's beautiful wife and her husband who likes to screw, a man who is a really supreme sod (*un con en or*). Because of this she has to show him that she does not agree with the fact that he is in addition trying to fulfill her, which means that this would settle nothing as regards the essential, despite the fact that this essential is something that she has. There you are. What she, for her part, does not see, because she also has limits to her little horizon, is that this would mean leaving this essential of her husband to another who, for her part, would find the surplus enjoying, because this indeed is what is at stake in the dream. All we can say is that she does not see it in the dream. There are others who do see it, for example, this is what Dora does. By adoring the object of desire that the woman has become on her horizon, the woman she is enveloped by, who in the case history is called Frau K, whom she contemplates in the shape of the Madonna of Dresden, by this adoration, she puts a stop to her penile claims. And this is what allows me to say that the butcher's beautiful wife does not see that ultimately, like Dora, she would be happy to leave this object to someone else.

These are only pointers. There are other solutions. If I am pointing this one out, it is because it is the most scandalous. There are many other refinements in the way of substituting for this enjoyment, whose system, which is the social one, and which culminates in the Oedipus complex (6) means that, because she is the only one who could bring happiness, precisely because of that, she is excluded. This is properly speaking the meaning of the Oedipus complex. And this indeed is why what is interesting in analytic investigation, is to know how, in supplying for the prohibition of phallic enjoyment, something is contributed whose origin we have defined by something quite different to phallic enjoyment, which is situated, and, as one might say, cross ruled (*quadrillée*) by the function of surplus enjoying. All I am doing here is recalling glaring facts in the

Freudian discourse that I have already highlighted on several occasions, and that I want to insert into their configuration relationship, which is not central, but connected to the situation that I am trying to describe about the relationships between discourse and enjoyment. That is why I am recalling them, and want to give them an additional emphasis, designed to change whatever aura may still persist for you around the idea that the Freudian discourse is centred on the biological data of sexuality. I will take my measure here, from something that, I must confess to you, I discovered not too long ago. It is always the most visible things, those that display themselves, that one sees least. I suddenly asked myself: how does one say sex in Greek? The worst thing about it is that I did not have a French-Greek dictionary and in any case none exist - well there are small, pretty pathetic ones. I had found *genos*, which of course has nothing to do with sex, because it means a whole lot of other things, race, lineage, generation, reproduction. Subsequently another word appeared on the horizon for me, but its connotations are quite different: *phusis*, nature. This dividing up of living beings, on the one hand among themselves in two classes, with what we see this involves, namely, very probably, the irruption of death, - since the others, good God, those that are not sexed, do not appear to die all that much – this is not at all what we are saying, this does not in any way have the same accent as when we talk about *sex*. The stress of course is not at all on this biological reference. This shows that one must be very, very careful before thinking that there is here a suspicion, not simply of any organicity whatsoever, but even a reference to biology, that pushes the function of sex to the forefront in Freudian discourse. It is here that you notice that *sex*, with the accent that it has for us and its order of use, its significant diffusion, is *sexus*. As regards Greek, it would be necessary to pursue the enquiry into other positive languages but in Latin it is very clearly attached to *secare*. In the Latin (7) *sexus*, there is implied what I first highlighted, namely, that it is around the phallus that the whole operation turns. Naturally, the phallus is not the only thing in sexual relations. Only what is privileged in this organ, is that in a way one can clearly isolate its enjoyment. It can be thought of as excluded. To use violent words – I am not going to swamp it in symbolism for you – it has precisely a property that we can consider, in the whole field of what constitutes the sexual apparatus, as very local, very exceptional. In effect, there are not very many animals among whom the decisive organ

of copulation is something that can be isolated so clearly in its functions of tumescence and detumescence, determining a perfectly definable curve, described as orgasmic – once it is done, it is done. *Post coitum animal triste*, as Horace said. Not necessarily. But this clearly marks that he feels he has been frustrated. There is something in this that does not concern him. He can approach things differently, he may find it great fun, but anyway Horace found it rather sad – and this proves that he had still retained some illusions about relationships to the *phusis*, to this bud that sexual desire is supposed to constitute. So that puts things in their place, when we see that, all the same, this is how Freud presents things. If there is something in biology that might be an echo, a vague resemblance, but in no ways a root, for this position whose roots in discourse we are now going to point out, if there is something that, by saying *bye-bye* to the domain of biology, would give us an approximate idea of what is represented by the fact that everything is played out around this stake, that one does not have and the other does not know what to do with, it would be more or less what happens in certain animal species. Quite recently, and that is why I am speaking to you about it, I saw some very pretty fish, monstrous as ought to be a species in which the female is about this size [*arms apart*], and the male is like that, really small [*shows little finger*]. He hooks himself onto her belly, and he hooks on so well that his tissue is indiscernible – one cannot see, even under a microscope where the tissues of one and the tissues of the other begin. He is there, hooked on by the mouth, and from there he fulfils, as one might say, his functions as a male. It is not unthinkable that this greatly simplifies the problem of sexual relationships, when the exhausted male, at the end, reabsorbs his heart, his liver, nothing of all that remains, he is there suspended at his proper place, reduced to what remains, after a certain time, in this little animal pocket, namely, principally the testicles.

(8) It is a question of articulating what is involved in this phallic exclusion in the great human game of our tradition, which is that of desire. Desire has no immediately proximate relationship to this field. Our tradition posits it as what it is, *Eros*, the making present of lack. It is here that one can ask – how can one desire anything at all? What is lacking? There is someone who one day said – do not tire yourselves out, there is nothing lacking, see the lilies of the fields, they sew not, neither do they spin, but they

have their place in the kingdom of heaven. It is obvious that to put forward such challenging proposals, you would really have to be the very one who identified with the negation of this harmony. This at least is how he has been understood, interpreted, when he was described as the Word (*le Verbe*). He had to be the Word itself to deny what was as obvious as this. Anyway, this is the idea that people had of him. He did not say as much. He said, if we are to believe one of his disciples – *I am the way, the truth and the life*. But that he was made into the Word, is what clearly marks that people knew all the same more or less what they were saying when they thought that only the Word could disavow himself to this extent. It is true that we can well imagine the lilies in the fields as a body entirely given over to enjoyment. Every step of its growth identical to a formless sensation. The enjoyment of a plant. Nothing in any case allows us to escape it. It is perhaps infinitely painful to be a plant. Anyway, no one amuses themselves dreaming about that, except me.

It is not the same thing for an animal, which has what we interpret as an economy – the possibility of moving around in order to obtain the minimum of enjoyment. This is what is called the pleasure principle. Let us not stay where there is enjoyment, because God knows where that might lead, as I already said earlier.

Now, there is this fact, that, all the same, we know the means of enjoyment. I spoke to you earlier about tickling and grilling. Well then we know what to do, that is even what knowledge is. In principle no one wants to make too much use of it, and nevertheless, it is tempting. This is even what Freud discovered precisely around 1920, and this is, in a way, the retrogressive point of his discovery. His discovery was to have spelt out the unconscious and I defy anyone to say that this could be anything other than the remark that there is a perfectly articulated knowledge for which, properly speaking, no subject is responsible. When a subject happens to encounter it all of a sudden, to touch this knowledge that he did not expect, as a speaking being, he finds himself, faith, quite confused. This was the first discovery. Freud said to his (9) subjects: ‘Speak, speak then, act like a hysteric, and we will see what knowledge you encounter, and the way you are sucked into it, or on the contrary reject it, we shall see what is going to happen.’ And

this led him necessarily to this discovery that he calls the *Beyond the pleasure principle*. This is what essentially determines that what we are dealing with in the exploration of the unconscious, is repetition. Repetition does not mean that when one has finished something one begins again, like digestion or some other physiological function. Repetition is the denoting, the precise denotation of a trait that I distinguished for you in the text of Freud as being identical to the unary trait, to the little stroke, to the element of writing, of a trait in so far as it commemorates an irruption of enjoyment.

This is why it is conceivable that the rule and principle of pleasure can be violated, why it gives way to unpleasure - for there is nothing else to say, not necessarily pain - to unpleasure, which means nothing other than enjoyment. It is here that the insertion of generation, of the genital, of genetics (*du génésique*), into desire, is shown to be completely distinct from sexual maturity. No doubt, to talk about premature sexualisation has its interest. Undoubtedly, what is called the first sexual surge in man is very obviously what people say it is, namely, premature. But alongside this fact that it can imply, in effect, the operation of enjoyment, it nevertheless remains that what is going to introduce the cut between the libido and nature is not simply organic auto-eroticism. There are other animals besides men who are able to excite themselves, and this has not led monkeys to a very advanced elaboration of desire.

On the contrary, the favour found here in function of discourse is not just a matter of talking about prohibitions, but simply of the dominance of the woman as mother, mother who says, mother on whom one makes demands, mother who orders, and who at the same time establishes the dependence of the little man. The woman allows enjoyment to risk the mask of repetition. She is presented here as what she is: the setting up of a masquerade. She teaches her child to make a display. She leans towards surplus enjoying, because she, the woman, plunges her roots, like the flower, into enjoyment itself.

The means of enjoyment are opened up to the principle of the fact that the closed and foreign enjoyment of the mother has been renounced. This is where there will come to be

inserted the huge social complicity that inverts what we could call the natural difference of the sexes, into a sexualisation of organic difference. This overturning implies the common denominator of the exclusion of the specifically male organ. Henceforth the male is and is not what he is with respect to enjoyment. And from this also, the woman is produced as an object, precisely by not (10) being what he is, on the one hand in terms of sexual difference, and on the other by being what he renounces in terms of enjoyment.

It is absolutely essential to give these reminders at a time when, in speaking about ‘the reverse side of psychoanalysis’, the question is posed about the place of psychoanalysis in politics. The intrusion into politics can only be accomplished by recognising that there is no discourse, and not just analytic, except about enjoyment, at least when one expects from it the work of the truth. The characterisation of the discourse of the Master as involving a hidden truth (*une vérité cachée*) does not mean that this discourse hides itself, that it takes cover. The word *caché* has etymological virtues in French. It comes from *coactus*, from the verb *coactare*, *coacticata*, *coacticare* – that means that there is something compressed, as in a superimposition, something that needs to be unfolded in order to be legible. It is clear that his truth is hidden from him, and someone called Hegel articulated that it is given to him through the labour of the slave. Only there you are, this discourse of Hegel is the discourse of a Master, which depends on the substitution of the State for the Master by way of the long path of culture, in order to culminate at Absolute Knowledge. It does indeed seem to have been definitively refuted by some discoveries made by Marx. I am not here to give a commentary on him, and I will not offer an appendix here, but I will simply show the degree to which, from the psychoanalytic belvedere, we can, from the start, confidently put in doubt the claim that at the horizon, work generates an Absolute Knowledge, or even any knowledge. I have already put this forward before you and I cannot take it up again here. But it is one of the axes on which I would ask you to situate yourselves in order to grasp what is involved in subversion.

If knowledge is a means of enjoyment, labour is something different. even if it is accomplished by those who have knowledge. What it generates can certainly be truth, but no labour has ever generated knowledge. There is something against it, as can be

seen by a closer observation of the relationships in our culture between the discourse of the Master to something that has arisen, and from which has started the examination of something that, from Hegel's point of view, entwined itself around this discourse: the avoidance of absolute enjoyment, in so far as it is determined by the fact that in fixing the child to the mother, social complicity makes of her the elective site of prohibitions. Moreover, does not the formalisation of a knowledge that renders all truth problematic suggest to us that, rather than a progress that has been brought about through the work of the slave – as if there had been the slightest progress in his condition, quite the contrary – what is at stake is a transferring, a plundering of what was, at the beginning, knowledge, inscribed, concealed in the world of the slave. The discourse of the (11) Master had to impose itself on this. But also, by this very fact, in getting into the mechanism of its repeated assertion, he had to grasp the loss involved by his own entry into discourse, and in a word, see emerging this \circ -object that we have pinpointed as surplus enjoying.

This in short, this and no more, is what the Master had to make the slave, the only possessor of the means of enjoyment, pay for. The Master was satisfied with this little tithe, with a surplus enjoying, and there is nothing to indicate after all that the slave was unhappy in himself at having to give it. The case is completely different as regards what is found at the horizon of the rise of the Master-subject in a truth that is affirmed by its equality to itself, by this I-crazy (*je-cratie*) I once spoke about, and which is it seems, the essence of every affirmation in culture that has seen this discourse of the Master flourish more than all the others.

Looking at it more closely, the subtraction from the slave of his knowledge is the whole history of this dialectic whose stages Hegel follows step by step – a curious thing, without having seen where it was leading, and for good reasons. He was still in the field of the Newtonian discovery. He had not seen the birth of thermodynamics. If he had been able to take on board formulae that, for the first time, had unified this field described as thermodynamics, perhaps he would have been able to recognise something about the reign of the signifier, of the signifier repeated at two levels, S_1 , S_1 again. The

first S_1 is the dam. The second S_1 , underneath, is the reservoir that collects it and makes the turbine turn.

The conservation of energy has no other meaning than this mark of an instrumentation that signifies the power of the Master. What is collected in the fall must be conserved. That is the first of the laws. There is unfortunately something that disappears in the interval, or more exactly, does not lend itself to a return, to a restoring of the point of departure. This is what is called the Carnot-Clausius principle, even though a certain Meyer contributed a lot to it. Does not the analogy of this discourse, which in its essence gives pride of place to everything that concerns the beginning and the end, while neglecting everything that, in between, may relate to knowledge, does not the putting at the horizon of the new world of these pure numerical truths, of what is countable, not signify, just by itself, something quite different than the coming into play of an Absolute Knowledge? Is it not the very ideal of a formalisation where nothing is considered except as the count – energy itself is nothing other than what can be counted, the thing that, if you manipulate the formulae in a certain way, is found always to make up the same total – is this not the sliding, the quarter turn – which means that at the place of the Master there is established a completely new articulation of knowledge, one that can be completely reduced formally, (12) and that in place of the slave, there comes not something that could be inserted in any way into the order of this knowledge, but which is much more rather the product. Marx exposes this process as plundering. Only he does so without noticing that its secret is in knowledge itself – just like the reduction of the worker to being nothing more than value. When surplus enjoying has passed to a higher level it is no longer surplus enjoying, but simply inscribed as a value, to be inscribed or deducted from the totality of what is accumulated – what is accumulated from a nature that has been essentially transformed. The worker is only a credit (*unité de valeur*) - a warning to those for whom this term has an echo. What Marx exposes in surplus value is the plundering of enjoyment. And nevertheless this surplus value is the memorial of surplus enjoying, an equivalent of surplus enjoying. Consumer society takes its meaning from the fact, that to the element of it that is qualified as “human”, in quotation marks, there is given the homogenous equivalent of any surplus enjoying whatsoever that is the

product of our industry, in a word, a pinchbeck surplus enjoying. Moreover, this may take on. One can pretend to surplus enjoying, a lot of people are still at that stage.

If I wanted to give you material for your dreams about where there begins this process whose rules are given by our science, I would tell you, because I recently re-read it, to amuse yourself with *Satiricon*. I think that what your man made of it is not at all bad. What he will never be forgiven for, is to have made a spelling mistake in writing *Satyricon*, whereas there is no y, but apart from that, it is not bad. It is less good than the text, because in the text, things are taken seriously, you do not stop at images, and you see what it is all about.

In a word, it is a good example to show the difference between being a Master and being a wealthy man (*un riche*). What is marvellous in discourses, in any discourses whatever, even if they are the most revolutionary, is that they never say things crudely, as I have been trying to do a little bit – anyway, I did what I could for Freud's discourse.

Ever since there have been economists, we see how interesting this is for us analysts, because if there is something that has to be done in analysis, it is the setting up of this other field of energetics, which would necessitate different structures. If you are Maxwell, you can unify the fields of thermodynamics and electromagnetics as much as you like, but you will all the same run into a difficulty as regards gravity, and this is rather curious because everyone began with gravity, but anyway, what matter.

As regards the field of enjoyment – which, alas, will never be called the (13) Lacanian field as I would have wished, because I will surely not have the time even to sketch out its foundations, even though I wanted to – there are some remarks to make. It is very curious, that in the crowd of authors into whom I stick my nose from time to time, there is, as everyone knows, one called Smith who has written something called *The wealth of nations*. And he is not alone, they are all there racking their brains, Malthus, Ricardo and the others – what is the wealth of nations? They are here trying to define it: is it use-value - that must count for something - or exchange-value? Marx was not the one who

invented all that. He was very perplexed by it. Now it is extraordinary that ever since there have been economists nobody, up to now - even for an instant, I am not saying to dwell on it - has made this remark that wealth is the property of the wealthy. Just like psychoanalysis, as I said one day, is something done by a psychoanalyst, it is its principal characteristic, you must start from the psychoanalyst. When it is a question of wealth, why not start from the wealthy? I have to stop in two minutes, but I am all the same going to make a remark that stems from an experience that is not specially that of an analyst, but that anyone could have. The wealthy man - this is very important - has a property. He buys, he buys everything, in short - anyway he buys a lot. But I would really like you to meditate on the fact that he does not pay. People imagine that he pays, for reasons of accountancy that stem from the transformation of surplus enjoying into surplus value. But in the first place, everyone knows that surplus value is added to very regularly. There is no circulation of surplus enjoying. And very specifically, there is one thing that he never pays for, which is knowledge. In effect, there is not only the dimension of entropy in what happens on the side of surplus enjoying. There is something else that someone has noticed, which is that knowledge implies an equivalence between this entropy and information. Of course it is not the same, it is not as simple as Mr Brillouin says. But all the same you have to see something: the wealthy man is only a master - and this is what I would ask you to go and see in *Satiricon* - because he has redeemed himself. The masters involved at the horizon of the antique world are not businessmen. See how Aristotle speaks about it - it disgusts him. On the contrary, when a slave has redeemed himself, he is only a Master in that he begins to risk everything. This indeed is how a personage who is none other than Trimalcion himself expresses himself in *Satiricon*. From the moment that he is wealthy, why is he able to buy everything without paying? Because he has nothing to do with enjoyment. That is not what he repeats. He repeats his purchase, he buys everything, or rather he redeems everything that presents itself. He is the proper material for a Christian. His destiny is to be redeemed. And why does one allow oneself to be bought by a wealthy man? Because what he gives you is part of his essence as a wealthy man. In buying from a rich man, from a developed nation, you believe - this is the meaning of the wealth of nations - that you are simply going to participate at the same level as the rich nation. Only in this

affair, what you lose, is your knowledge, which gave you your status. Into the bargain the rich man acquires this knowledge. Simply, precisely, he does not pay for it.

We have arrived today at the limit of what I can say before we evacuate this room. To end, I would simply introduce, the question of what can happen about the promotion, of the taking up again of the voice, of what is involved in surplus enjoying, of **o**, at the level where there is played out the function of the rich man for whom knowledge is only a system of exploitation. It is here, in a way, that the function of the analyst offers something like a dawn. I will try to explain to you the next time what its essence is. It is certainly not to refashion this element into an element of mastery. In effect, as I will explain to you, everything revolves around lack of success.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 18 February 1970

Right! It must be beginning to dawn on you that the reverse side of psychoanalysis is the very thing that I am putting forward this year under the title of the discourse of the Master. Not of course in an arbitrary way since this discourse of the Master already has its letters of credence in the philosophical tradition. Nevertheless, in the way I am trying to separate it out, it takes on here a new accent by virtue of the fact that in our day, it so happens that it can be separated out in a kind of purity because of something that we experience directly in politics. What I mean by that is that it encompasses everything, even what believes itself to be revolution, or more exactly what is romantically called revolution with a capital R. The discourse of the Master accomplishes its revolution in the opposite direction to the circuit that completes itself.

Highlighting it in this way is a little aphoristic, I agree, but it is done as an aphorism is intended to do, to illuminate things by a simple flash. At its horizon, there is something that interests us - I mean you and me - there is the fact that the discourse of the Master has only a single counterpoint, the Analytic discourse, which is still so unappropriated. I call it counterpoint because its symmetry - if one exists, and it does exist – is not with respect to a line, nor with respect to a plane, but with respect to a point. In other words, it is obtained by the completion (*bouclage*) of this discourse of the Master to which I referred just now. In other words, what I was not able, because it is starting to weary me, to write again on the board, namely, the arrangement of these four terms, the two numbered S's, \$ and o, as I wrote it out the last time, and as I hope that you have it more or less transcribed on your notebooks. This inscription that I did not have time to write out because I was struggling with something else, sufficiently illustrates this symmetry with respect to a point, which means that the Analytic discourse is located very precisely at the opposite pole to the discourse of the Master.

Right! In psychoanalytic discourse, we sometimes see certain terms that serve as a *phylum* in the explanation, that of father for example. (2) And we sometimes see someone attempting to gather together its main elements. A painful exercise, when it is carried out within what people expect, at the point that we have got to, from a psychoanalytic statement and stating, namely, within a developmental reference. As regards the father, people think that they are obliged to start from childhood, from identifications, and then it turns into something that can really go as far as extraordinary nonsense, strange contradictions. We will be told about primary identification as being what links the child to the mother, and this seems in effect to be self-evident. However it is very curious that if we consult Freud, in his discourse of 1921 which is called *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego* it is very precisely the identification to the father which is given as primary. This is certainly very strange. Freud highlights here, that primordially the father proves to be the one who presides over every first identification, and precisely in this, that he is, in an elective fashion, the one who deserves love. This is certainly very strange, because it is in contradiction with everything that the development

of analytic experience was found to establish about the primacy of the mother-child relationship. A strange discordance between the Freudian discourse and the discourse of psychoanalysts. Perhaps these discordances are the result of confusion, and the order that I am trying to establish by a reference to what are in a way primordial discourses is there to remind us that it is strictly unthinkable to state anything whatsoever that is ordered with respect to analytic discourse without remembering the following. To be effective, our effort, which is, as we know perfectly well, a reconstructive collaboration with the one who is in the position of analysand whom we allow, in a way, to make his way into his own quarry, this effort that we make to extract, in the form of imputed thinking, what has in effect been lived by the one who well merits on this occasion the title of 'patient', should not make us forget that because of signifying links the subjective configuration has an objectivity that can be perfectly well mapped out and grounds the very possibility of the help that we contribute in the form of interpretation. Here, at a particular point of the linkage, specifically the altogether initial one, between S_1 to S_2 , it is possible that there opens up this fault which is called the subject. Here linkage-effects, in this case signifying ones, are brought into operation. Whether this lived experience that is called more or less properly thinking is or is not produced somewhere, there is here produced something that is due to a chain, exactly as if it came from thinking. Freud never said anything else when he spoke about the unconscious. This objectivity (3) not only induces but determines this position, which is a subject position, in so far as it is the focus of what are called defences.

What I am putting forward, the new thing that I am going to announce today, is that in transmitting itself (*en s'émmentant*) towards the means of enjoyment which are those described as knowledge, the master signifier, not only induces, but determines castration.

I am going to come back to what you should understand by master signifier, starting from what we have put forward in this connection. At the outset, undoubtedly, there is none. All signifiers are equivalent in some sense, since they only operate on the difference of each one to all the others, by not being the other signifiers. But it is also through this that each one is capable of attaining the position of master signifier, very precisely because its

eventual function is to represent a subject for every other signifier. This is how I have always defined it. Only the subject that it represents is not univocal. It is represented, no doubt, but it is also not represented. At this level, something remains hidden in relation to this same signifier. It is around this that the operation of the psychoanalytic discovery is played out. Like any other it was not without (*pas sans*) preparation. It had been prepared for by this hesitation – which is more than a hesitation – this ambiguity, sustained under the name of dialectic by Hegel, when it is posited from the outset that the subject affirms himself as knowing. Hegel dares to start, in effect, from the *Selbstbewusstsein* as it is most naively expressed, namely, that all consciousness knows that it is conscious. And nevertheless he weaves a series of crises into this starting point – *Aufhebung*, as he says – the result of which is that this *Selbstbewusstsein* itself, the inaugural figure of the master, finds its truth in the work of the other *par excellence*, the one who knows himself only by having lost this body, this very body by which he is supported, because he wanted to keep it and its access to enjoyment, in other words, the slave.

How can we not try to break down this Hegelian ambiguity? How can we not be led to make an attempt along another path starting from what we are given by analytic experience, to which we must always return in order to better circumscribe it.

More simply, starting from the fact that what is at stake is that there is a use of the signifier that can be defined by starting essentially from the split between the master signifier and the body that we have just been speaking about, the body lost by the slave in order to become nothing other than the one in which all the other signifiers are inscribed. This is how we could give an image to this knowledge that Freud defines by putting it within the enigmatic parentheses of the *Urverdrängt* – which means precisely what did not need to be repressed because it was so from the beginning. This headless knowledge (*savoir sans tête*), as I might call it, is indeed a political fact (4) whose structure can be defined. Starting from there, everything that is produced – I mean in the proper, full sense of the word *produce* – by labour, everything that is produced about the truth of the master, namely, what he hides as subject, is going to connect up with this knowledge in

so far as it is split off, *urverdrängt*, in so far as it is and no one understands anything about it. Here is something that I hope has an echo for you – without you knowing, moreover, whether this echo comes from the right or from the left. It is initially structured in what is called the mythical support of certain societies that we can analyse as ethnographic, namely, as escaping the discourse of the Master. For the discourse of the Master begins with the predominance of the subject, in so far as it tends precisely to be supported only by this ultra-restricted myth, of being identical to its own signifier. This is why I pointed out the last time the natural affinity mathematics has with this discourse, where A represents itself, without needing a mythical discourse to establish its relations everywhere else. This is how mathematics represents the knowledge of the master in so far as it is constituted on laws other than those of mythical knowledge.

In short, the knowledge of the master is produced as a knowledge that is entirely autonomous with respect to mythical knowledge, and this is what is called science. I showed you its face the last time by means of a rapid evocation of thermodynamics and, further, of any unification of the field of physics. This depends on the preservation of a unit which is nothing other than a constant, always found in the count – I am not even saying in quantification - from a manipulation of numbers, that is defined in such a way that it makes this constant appear in every case in the count. This is sufficient and it is the only thing that supports what, at the foundation of physical science, is called energy.

This support depends on the fact that mathematics can only be constructed on the basis of the fact that the signifier can signify itself. The A that you have written once can be signified by its repetition as A. Now this position is strictly untenable and constitutes an infringement of the rule as regards the function of the signifier. It can signify anything, except of course itself. It is this infraction of the initial postulate that one must rid oneself of in order that mathematical discourse can be inaugurated. Between the two, the original infraction (5) and the construction of the discourse of energetics, the discourse of science is only sustained, in logic, by making of truth an operation of values, by radically eluding all its dynamic power.

In effect, the discourse of propositional logic is, as has been underlined, fundamentally tautological. It consists in organising propositions composed in such a way that they are always true, whatever the true or false value of the elementary propositions. Does this not mean getting rid of what I have just called now the dynamism of the work of truth?

Well then, analytic discourse is specified, is distinguished, by raising the question of what use is this form of knowledge that rejects and excludes the dynamic of the truth. A first approximation: it serves to repress what dwells in mythical knowledge. But by excluding this, it finds itself at the same time knowing nothing more about it except in the form of what we rediscover under the species of the unconscious, namely, as a wreckage of this knowledge, in the form of a disjointed knowledge. What is going to be reconstructed from this disjointed knowledge will in no way make its way back to the discourse of science or to its structural laws. This means that here I am distinguishing myself from what Freud states about it. This disjointed knowledge as we rediscover it in the unconscious is foreign to the discourse of science. And this is precisely why it is striking that it imposes itself. It imposes itself exactly because of something that I stated the other day in a particular form – and if I used it, you have to believe that I did not find a better one – that it does not bullshit (*qu'il ne déconne pas*). However stupid (*con*) this discourse of the unconscious may be, it corresponds to something that depends on the establishment of the discourse of the Master itself. This is what is called the unconscious. It imposes itself on science as a fact. This constructed, namely, factitious science, cannot it is true fail to recognise what appears before it as an artefact. Only it is prohibited from raising the question of the artisan, precisely because it is the science of the master, and this will make the fact all the more of a fact.

Very shortly after the last war – I had been born a long time before – I took into analysis three people from the high country of Togo, who had spent their childhood there. Now, I was not able, in their analysis, to find any trace of tribal practices and beliefs. They had not forgotten them but they only knew them from the point of view of ethnography. It has to be said that everything was designed to separate it from them, given what they were, courageous little doctors who were trying to make their way into the medical

hierarchy of France, and do not forget we were still at the colonial stage. What they knew about it then from the point of view of the ethnographer was more or less what you find in the newspapers, but their unconscious functioned according to the good old rules of the Oedipus complex. This was the unconscious that (6) they had been sold along with the laws of colonisation, an exotic, regressive form of the discourse of the Master, in the face of the capitalism described as imperialism. Their unconscious was not that of their childhood memories – you could feel that – but their childhood was retroactively experienced in our *fam-il-ial* categories – write the word the way I taught you to last year. I defy any analyst to contradict me, even if he were to go out into the field. Not that psychoanalysis is of any use in carrying out an ethnographical enquiry. That having been said, this enquiry has no chance of coinciding with native knowledge, except by referring to the discourse of science. And unfortunately, this enquiry has not the slightest idea of this reference, because it would have to relativise it. When I say that it is not through psychoanalysis that one can get into an ethnographical enquiry, I certainly have the agreement of every ethnographer. I will perhaps have less when I tell them that, to get a little idea of the relativisation of the discourse of science, namely, to have perhaps a small chance of carrying out a correct ethnographical enquiry, it is necessary, I repeat, not to proceed by way of psychoanalysis, but perhaps, if that exists, to be a psychoanalyst.

Here, at the crossroads, we are stating that what psychoanalysis enables us to conceptualise is nothing other than something that is on the path that Marxism opens up, namely, that discourse is linked to the interests of the subject. This is what Marx on occasion calls the economy, because these interests are, in capitalist society entirely commodity-based (*marchands*). Only since commodities are linked to the master-signifier, exposing it in this way solves nothing. Because commodities are no less linked to this signifier after the socialist revolution.

I am now going to write out plainly the proper functions of discourse, as I have stated them.

Master-signifier → knowledge

subject enjoyment

This activation (*mise en fonction*) of discourse is defined by splitting, precisely by the distinction between the master-signifier and knowledge.

Note that this is the question for anyone who wants to know more about ‘primitive’ societies in so far as I classify them as not being dominated by the discourse of the Master. It is fairly probable that the (7) master-signifier is mapped out in a more complex economy. Indeed, the best sociological research in the field of these societies gets close to this. Let us rejoice, all the more so since it is not by chance that the functioning of the master-signifier is simpler in the discourse of the Master. In it, it can be entirely handled by this relationship of S_1 to S_2 that you see written here. In this discourse the subject finds himself bound to the master-signifier with all the illusions that this involves, whereas the insertion into enjoyment is the doing of knowledge.

Well then, my contribution this year is that these functions specific to discourse can find different sites. This is what is defined by their rotation around these four places, which you do not see designated here in any way by letters, but only by what, whenever necessary, I call *above, on the left, below and on the right*. I add, a bit late in the day, in order to enlighten those who on the basis of their common sense, might have decided that here for instance is desire, and on the other side, the site of the Other. Here we find represented what I spoke about in an older framework, at a time when I was happy with this sort of approximation, that man’s desire is the desire of the Other.

(8) The place that figures beneath desire is that of truth. Under the Other, it is the one where loss is produced, the loss of enjoyment from which we extract the function of surplus enjoying.

<u>desire</u>	→	<u>Other</u>
truth		loss

Here is where the discourse of the Hysteric shows its worth. It has the merit of maintaining the question of what is involved in sexual relations in the setting up of a discourse, namely, how a subject can sustain them or, to put it better, cannot sustain them. In effect, the answer to the question of knowing how he can sustain them is this: by allowing the Other to speak, and precisely in so far as it is the locus of repressed knowledge.

The interesting thing, is this truth: that what is involved in sexual knowledge is entirely presented as foreign to the subject. This is what is originally called the repressed in the Freudian discourse. But that is not what is important. Taken in its purist form, this has no other effect, as one might say, than to justify obscurantism – the truths that are important to us, and they are not few, are condemned to being obscure.

They are nothing of the kind. I mean that the discourse of the Hysteric is not there to bear witness to the fact that the inferior is below. On the contrary, it is not distinguished, as a battery of functions, from those assigned to the discourse of the Master. And that is what allows there to figure in it the same letters used by the latter, namely, \$, S₁, S₂ and **o**.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{\$} & \longrightarrow & \underline{S_1} \\ & & \underline{\mathbf{o}} \quad S_2 \end{array}$$

Only, the discourse of the ~~HYSTERIC~~ reveals the relation of the discourse of the Master to enjoyment, by the fact that in the discourse of the Hysteric knowledge goes to the place of enjoyment. The subject himself, the hysteric, is alienated from the master-signifier as being the one whom this signifier divides – the one (*celui*), in the masculine, represents the subject – the one who refuses to become its body. People talk about somatic compliance in hysterics. Even though the term is Freudian can we not see that it is very strange, and that what is at stake is rather a refusal of the body. In following the effect of the master-signifier, the hysteric is not a slave. Let us now give it the sexual gender in which this subject is most often incarnated. In her own way she is on a kind of strike.

She does not surrender her knowledge. She nevertheless unmask the function of the master with which she remains solidary, by highlighting how much of the master is in the One - with a capital O - from which she withdraws herself *qua* object of his desire. This is the proper function that we have pinpointed a long time ago, at least in my School, under the title of the idealised father.

So now, let us go straight to the point, and let us recall *Dora* – there is (9) no escaping it - which I presume is known by all those who are here to listen to me. Those who have not opened it –too bad! You have to read *Dora* and, throughout all the ‘convoluted’ interpretations – I am using the explicit term that Freud gives to the economy of his manoeuvring – not lose sight of something that I would dare say Freud covers up with his prejudices. I am making little parenthesis. Whether you have the text in your heads or not, consult it and you will see these sentences that for Freud seem to be self-evident – for example, that a girl all by herself can work out particular difficulties. Even when a gentleman jumps on her, there is no need to make a scene about this, if she is a good girl, of course. And why? Because this is how Freud thinks about it. Or again, which takes things a little further, that a normal girl should not be disgusted when someone pays court to her. This seems self-evident. We have to recognise that there is in operation what I am calling prejudice, in a certain way of approaching what is revealed here by our *Dora*. If you read this text keeping in mind some of these reference points that I am trying to get you accustomed to, you will see that is not illegitimate for you yourselves to pronounce the word *convoluted* that I pronounced earlier. The lavish subtlety, the astuteness, of these reversals whose multiple planes Freud explains, showing how there is refracted, by way of three or four successive defences, what I call *Dora*’s manoeuvres in matters of love, which echo what Freud himself had designated in his text of *Traumdeutung*, may perhaps allow you to see that these complications depend on a certain style of approach. In accordance with what I stated at the beginning of my discourse today about the father, namely, that the subjective conjuncture of his signifying articulation receives a certain kind of objectivity, why not start from the fact that *Dora*’s father, a pivotal point of the whole adventure, or misadventure, is properly speaking a castrated man, I mean as regards his sexual potency? It is obvious that he is at the end of his tether, very sick.

In every case, from *Studien über hysterie* on, the father becomes what he is through a symbolic judgement. Because after all even a sick person or a dying one is what he is. To consider him to be deficient as compared to a function that he is not occupying, is to give him a symbolic role (*affectation*). It is to state implicitly that the father is not simply what he is, that it is a title like *a war veteran* – he is *a veteran of generation*. He is a father, like the veteran, up to the end of his life. This implies in the word *father* someone who potentially can still create. And it is with respect to this, in the symbolic field, that it must be remarked that the father, in so far as he plays this major, pivotal role, this master-role in the discourse of the Hysteric, that it is precisely from the angle of the power of creation that he sustains his position (10) with respect to the woman, even though he is out of action. This what characterises the function from which there springs the hysteric's relation with the father and it is very precisely this that we designate as being the idealised father.

Let us note again, in order to stick to it ... I said that I would go straight to the point, I am taking Dora, and I would ask you to re-read the case in my sense to see whether what I say is true. Well then, how does what is organised in Herr K, whom I shall curiously call here the third man, suit Dora? I said it a long time ago, but why not take it up again while sticking to the structural definition that we can give it with the help of the discourse of the Master? What suits Dora is the idea that he has the male organ. Freud spots this and he indicates very precisely that it plays the decisive role in Dora's initial approach, initial run-in as I might say, with Herr K when she was 14 and he corners her in a window recess. This does not affect in any way the relations between the two families. Nobody thinks, moreover, that there is anything surprising in it. As Freud says, a girl works this sort of thing out on her own. What is curious is that, as it happens, she does not work it out on her own, she gets everybody else involved – but later. So then, why? Certainly, it is the organ that makes the third man, Herr K, worthwhile, but not so that Dora can find her happiness in it, as I might say, but so that someone else may deprive her of it. What Dora is interested in is not the jewel, even an indiscreet one. Remember this case history that lasted for 3 months, and which is entirely designed to serve as a

cupule for two dreams. The first dream, the one described as that of the jewel box, bears this out – it is not the jewel, it is the box - the dream says ‘the jewel box’ - envelope of the precious organ, this is the only thing she enjoys. She knows very well how to enjoy it by herself, as is borne out for us by the decisive importance for her of infantile masturbation, the style of which, moreover, is not indicated in the observation, except that it is probable that it has some relationship with what I will call the fluid, flowing, rhythm, the model of which is enuresis. In her history her enuresis is described as having been induced belatedly by that of her brother who was a year and a half older than her and at eight years of age was affected by an enuresis of which she in a way belatedly took up the baton.

This enuresis is completely characteristic and is like the stigma, as one might say, of the imaginary substitution of the child for the father, precisely as impotent. Here I call on all those who, from their experience of children are able to pick out this event for which people quite frequently seek the intervention of an analyst. To this we can add (11) what I might call the theoretical contemplation of Frau K as she appears full-blown in Dora’s open-mouthed session before the Dresden Madonna. This Frau K is the one who knows how to sustain the desire of the idealised father, but also how to contain what corresponds to it, as I might say, and by the same token to deprive Dora of it. She thus finds herself doubly excluded from laying hold of it. Well then, by that very fact, this complex is the mark of the identification to an enjoyment in so far as it is that of the master. A little parenthesis. It is important to recall the analogy that has been made between enuresis and ambition. But let us confirm the condition imposed on Herr K’s presents – it has to be a box. He gives her nothing else, a jewel box. Because she herself is the jewel. His own jewel that I earlier described as indiscreet, can lodge itself elsewhere, and let that be clear. Hence the breakdown whose meaning I marked a long time ago, when Herr K says to her – *my wife means nothing to me*. It is very true that at that moment the enjoyment of the Other is offered to her, and she wants none of it. Because what she wants is knowledge as a means to enjoyment, but to make it serve the truth, the truth of the master that she incarnates, as Dora. And this truth, to finally state it, is that the master is castrated. In effect, if the only enjoyment to represent happiness, which I defined the last

time as perfectly closed, that of the phallus, dominated this master – you see the term I am using, can only dominate the master by excluding it – how would the master establish this relationship to knowledge – that held by the slave – whose profit is the forcing of the surplus enjoying? Moreover, the second dream stresses that the symbolic father is indeed the dead father, that one only reaches him from a place that is empty and without communication. Remember the structure of this dream, the way in which she receives the news through her mother. *Come if you want to*, says the mother, echoing, as it were, what Frau K had proposed to her the other time, to come to the place where all the dramas with her husband that we have spoken about were to take place. *Come if you want to, your father is dead, and he is being buried*. And the way she goes there, without ever knowing in the dream how she managed to arrive at a place where she has to ask whether it is indeed where this gentleman, her father, lives, as if she did not know. Well then, in the empty box of this apartment deserted by those who after having invited her, have gone to the cemetery, Dora easily finds a substitute for this father in a large book, a dictionary, in which one learns about sex. She clearly marks here that what is important for her, even beyond the death of her father, is what he produces in terms of knowledge. A knowledge, not just any knowledge – a knowledge about the truth. With this she has enough of the analytic experience. This truth towards which Freud has helped her (12) in a precious way – and that is why he is attached to it – she will get the satisfaction of getting everyone to recognise it. What was really involved in the relations of her father to Frau K as well as hers to Herr K, everything that the others wanted to bury about the perfectly authentic episodes that she was the representative of, all this has to be done. And this is enough for her to conclude her analysis with dignity, even if Freud does not seem to be at all satisfied with its outcome as regards her destiny as a woman.

In passing, there are a few little remarks that it would be no harm to make. For example, in the dream about the jewels, where Dora has to leave because of the threat of fire, Freud, pausing in the analysis, tells us that it must not be forgotten that for a dream to stand on its own two feet, it is not enough for it to represent a decision, a lively desire of the subject as regard the present, there must be something which gives it a support in a childhood desire. And here he takes his reference – this is usually taken to be a stylistic

flourish – from the entrepreneur, the entrepreneur who makes the decision, and his relationship to the capitalist whose accumulated resources, the capital of libido, will allow this decision to be actualised. These are things that are supposed to be only a metaphor. Is it not amusing to see that they take on a different value after what I have told you about the relation of capitalism to the function of the master – of the quite distinct character of what can be done between the process of accumulation and the presence of surplus enjoying – of the very presence of this surplus enjoying to the exclusion of a good old orgasm (*bon gros jouir*), the simple orgasm, the orgasm that is realised in the raw in copulation? Is it not precisely from this that the infantile desire gets its energy – its accumulated energy with respect to this object that constitutes the cause of desire, namely, what is accumulated in terms of libido capital because precisely of infantile immaturity and the exclusion of the enjoyment that others will call normal. This all of a sudden gives its proper accent to the Freudian metaphor when he refers to the capitalist.

But on the other hand, if Freud was able to carry to its term a certain success of Dora through his lucid courage, nevertheless, let us say, the clumsiness of his attempts to hold onto his patient is no less apparent. Read these few lines where, in a way despite himself, Freud indicates some disturbance or other which is, faith, overwhelming, pathetic, by telling himself that perhaps if he had shown more interest – and God knows he shows her plenty of it, the whole case study testifies to it – he would no doubt have succeeded in getting her to take further this exploration in which one cannot say that, on his own admission, the way he led her was without error. Thank God, Freud did not do it. (13) Fortunately, in giving Dora the satisfaction of being interested in what he experiences as her demand, her demand for love, he did not take on, as is usually done, the place of the mother. Because one thing is certain, is it not to this experience, even though it subsequently weakened its attitude, that we owe the fact that Freud noted – and before it his shoulders drop, it makes him lose courage - that anything he was able to do for hysterics ended up in nothing other than what he pinpointed as *Penisneid*? Which means specifically, when it is articulated, that it ends up with the reproach by the girl addressed to the mother of not having created her a boy. Namely, to the carrying forward onto the

mother, in the form of frustration, of something that, in its signifying essence - and in a way that it gives its place and its vital function to the discourse of the Hysteric with respect to the discourse of the Master - is reduplicated on the one hand in the castration of the idealised father, which betrays the secret of the master, and on the other hand, in privation, the assumption by the subject, whether feminine or not, of the enjoyment of being deprived.

But why did Freud make a mistake at this point when, if my analysis today is to be believed, he only had to nibble what was being handed to him?

Why did he substitute for the knowledge that he had collected from these golden mouths, Anna, Emmy, Dora, this myth, the Oedipus complex? The Oedipus complex plays the role of a knowledge that has pretensions to being true, namely, a certain knowledge that is situated

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbf{o} & \longrightarrow & \$ \\ \hline & & \\ S_2 & & S_1 \end{array}$$

in the figure, that is precisely not written, of the discourse of the analyst at the site of what I earlier called that of the truth.

If the whole of analytic interpretation has taken the path of gratification or non-gratification, of responding or not to demand, in short, towards an ever increasing avoidance of the dialectic of desire in favour of demand, a metonymical sliding, where people try to maintain a constant object, it is probably because of the strictly unworkable nature of the Oedipus complex. It is strange that this did not become clearer more quickly. And in effect, who uses it, what place is held in an analysis by the reference to this famous Oedipus complex? I ask all those here who are analysts to answer. People from the Institute, of course, never use it. Those from my School make a little effort. Naturally it does not produce anything, it comes down to the same thing as for the others. It is strictly unworkable, except in terms of a crude reminder of the value of the mother as an obstacle to any investment of an object as cause of desire. Hence the extraordinary

lucubrations that analysts arrive at about what they call the *combined parent*. That only means one thing – constructing a receiver of (14) enjoyment, O, that is generally called God, with whom it is worthwhile playing the doubles or quits of surplus enjoying, namely, this operation called the superego.

Ah! I am spoiling you today. I never have never yet tackled this business of the superego. I had my reasons for that. I had to get at least to the point that I am at, in order that what I stated last year about Pascal's *Wager* could become operative and demonstrate, perhaps some of you have guessed it that the superego is exactly what I began to state when I told you that life, the provisional life that is played out in favour of a chance of eternal life, is the *o*, but that it is only worth the trouble if the O is not barred, in other words, if it is everything at once. Only, like the combined parent, it does not exist, that there is the father on one side and the mother on the other, just as the subject also does not exist. It also is divided in two, since it is barred, as, in a word, it is the answer my graph designates to stating. This calls seriously into question whether one can play doubles or quits between surplus enjoying and eternal life.

Yes indeed, this recourse to the Oedipus myth is really something sensational. It is really worth our trouble stretching out towards it. And today I wanted to make you sense the enormity of the fact that Freud, for example, in the last of his *New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis*, could believe that he had settled the question of the rejection of religion from any acceptable horizon, could think that psychoanalysis plays a decisive role in this and believed that he had finished with it by having told us that what supports religion is nothing other than this father to whom the child has recourse in his childhood, whom he knows to be all loving, that he anticipates, prevents any discontent that may manifest itself in him. Is this not a strange thing when one knows in fact what the function of the father is? Certainly, this is not the only point where Freud presents us with a paradox, namely, the idea of referring it to some original enjoyment or other of all the women, when it is well known that a father has enough with just one of them, and even then he should not boast about it. A father has with the master – I am talking about the father as we know him, as he functions – only the most distant relation, because in

short, at least in the society Freud had to deal with, he is the one who works for everybody. He is responsible for the *famil* that I spoke about earlier. Is there not enough strangeness in all of this to suggest to us that after all, what Freud preserves, in fact if not in intention, is very precisely what he designates as being most substantial in religion – namely, the idea of an all-loving father. And this indeed is what is designated by (15) the first form of identification among the three that he isolates in the article that I mentioned earlier, the purely loving identification to the father – the father is love, and the first thing to be loved in this world is the father. A strange survival. Freud believes that this will make religion evaporate, whereas he is preserving what is really its very substance with this bizarrely constructed myth of the father.

We will certainly come back to it, but you can already see what is essential – all this culminates at the idea of murder. Namely, that the father, the original father is the one that the sons killed, as a result of which it is from the love of this dead father that a certain order evolves. In these huge contradictions, in their baroqueness and in their superfluity, does this not appear to be nothing more than a defence against these truths that the superabundance of all myths clearly articulates - well before Freud, in choosing that of Oedipus, restricted these truths? What is he trying to dissimulate? It is the fact that, once he enters into the field of the discourse of the Master in which we are trying to orient ourselves, the father from the beginning is castrated.

Freud gives us an idealised form of this and one that is completely masked.

Nevertheless, the experience if not the words of the hysteric, at least the configurations that she offered him, would have better guided him here than the Oedipus complex, and led him to consider that this suggests that everything is to be put in question again, at the level of analysis itself, about what knowledge is necessary, in order that this knowledge can be put in question at the locus of the truth.

This is the goal of what I am trying to develop before you this year.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 11 March 1970

What is remarkable in the formulation I am going to try to give you of the discourse of analysis, situating it by starting from what, by all sorts of traces, it already manifests itself at first sight as related to, namely, the discourse of the Master, is, we would rather say, is that it is from the fact that the truth of the discourse of the Master is masked, that analysis derives its importance. In the four places where there are situated the articulating elements on which I ground the consistency that can emerge when these discourses are put into relation with one another, it is clear that the place that I have designated as that of truth can only be distinguished by approaching what is involved in the functioning of what comes from the articulation at that place. This is not peculiar to it, the same can be said for all the others. For example, the localisation that, up to now, consisted of designating the places as *top right* or *top left* and so on, is not of course satisfactory. What is at stake is a level of equivalence in the functioning, for example, of what one could write as follows: that the S_1 in the Master's discourse can be said to be congruent with, or can be equivalent to what comes to function as S_2 in the discourse, which I have described in order to fix your ideas or at least your mental accommodation, as the University discourse.

$$M(S_1) \approx U(S_2)$$

This place will be described as functioning as the place of orders, of commands, whereas the place underneath in my various little four-legged schemas, is the place of truth, which of course poses a problem.

In the discourse of the Master, in effect, it can be occupied only by this \$, which in truth, at first sight, nothing necessitates, because what in the first instance does not calmly posit itself as identical to itself? We will say that the principle of not mastered but *master-ised* discourse, with a hyphen, of discourse as made master – is to think of itself as univocal. And surely the step taken by psychoanalysis is to make us posit that the subject is not univocal. Two years ago when I was trying to articulate *The psychoanalytic act* - a project that has remained stalled and that, like others, will never be taken up again – I gave you the striking formulation of *either I do not think or I am not*. This alternative, just by being put forward, cuts a figure, and a fairly (2) resounding one, once the discourse of the Master is at stake. Again, to justify it, we have to bring it forward from somewhere else, where it is obvious. It has to put itself forward in the dominant place, and this in the Hysteric's discourse, in order for it to be in effect quite certain that the subject is placed before this *vel* that is expressed in *either I do not think or I am not*. Where I think, I do not recognise myself; where I am not, that is the unconscious. Where I am, it is all too clear that I go astray. In truth, presenting things in this way shows that if this has remained obscure for such a long time in the discourse of the Master, it is precisely because it is at a place that, by its very structure, masked this division of the subject.

What did I tell you, in effect, about any possible speech (*dire*) at the place of truth? The truth, I tell you, can be stated only by a half-saying (*mi-dire*), and I gave you a model of it in the riddle, for it is truly thus that it always presents itself to us, and certainly not in the shape of a question. A riddle is something that presses us for an answer as if we were in mortal danger. Truth is a question, as has been long known, only for administrators. *What is truth?* – we know by whom that was, once and for all, pronounced in a really memorable way. But this form of half-saying that truth is constrained to, is something different, as is this division of the subject who takes advantage of it to mask itself. Because the division of the subject is something quite different. If *where he is not, he thinks*, if *where he does not think, he is*, it is because he is indeed in both places, and I would even say that this formula of *Spaltung* is incorrect. The subject participates in the real by the fact, precisely, that it is apparently impossible, or to put it better, if I had to

employ a figure that does not appear here by chance, I would say that he is like an electron, as it is proposed to us at the junction of wave theory and corpuscular theory. We are forced to admit that it is as one and the same that it passes through two distant holes at the same time. So then, the order of what we image as the *Spaltung* of the subject, is different to the one that requires that truth be represented by being stated only in a half-saying. Here there appears something that it is important to stress, because in truth, from this very ambivalence, as we take up the word in a different sense, which means that truth is represented only as a half-saying, each of the formulae by which a discourse is situated takes on singularly opposed meanings. Is this discourse that I intentionally pinpoint as University good or bad, because, in a way, it is the University discourse that shows where it can go wrong, but in its fundamental arrangement it is also the one that shows what guarantees the discourse of science.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_2} & \longrightarrow & \underline{\mathbf{o}} \\ S_1 & & \$ \end{array}$$

(3) Because you should locate S_2 as occupying the dominant place in the University discourse in so far as it is to the place of orders, of commands, to the place first held by the master, that knowledge has come. How does it happen that we find nothing other at the level of its truth than the master-signifier as such in so far as it operates to bring about the order of the master. This indeed is what the present movement of science comes from, after marking a moment of hesitation which Gauss bears witness to, for example, when we see in his note-books that he had been close to the statements made at a later date by Riemann, and that he had made the decision not to publish them. *I am not going any further* – why put into circulation even this purely logical knowledge if it looked likely that as a result of it, much of the tranquil state of affairs that existed might in effect be disturbed?

It is clear that we are no longer at this stage and that this is due to the progress, to this tipping over by a quarter turn that I have described, which brings to the dominant place a knowledge that is denatured from its primitive localisation at the level of the slave, by having become pure knowledge of the master, and regulated by his command. Who in

our day would dream for even an instant of stopping the movement of the articulation of the discourse of science in the name of anything whatsoever that might result from it? Good God, things have already happened. They have shown where we are going, from molecular structure to atomic fission. Can anyone think for even an instant that it is possible to stop something that, by the operation of signs and the upsetting of contents in the changing of combinatorial places, encourages the theoretical attempt to put itself to the test of the real, in a manner which, by revealing the impossible, makes a new power emerge from it? It is impossible not to obey the command that has taken the place of the truth of science – *Keep going. Go on. Keep going to get to know still more.* Very precisely because of this and because of the fact that the sign of the master occupies this place, any question about the truth is properly speaking crushed, and specifically any question about what this sign of the S₁ of the command to *Keep on knowing* may be concealing, about what this sign, by occupying this place, may contain as a riddle about what it is.

Only the riddle is, the riddle is, in the field of the sciences that have the cheek to call themselves human sciences we see clearly that the command *Keep on knowing* is creating something of a stir. In effect, (4) as in all the other little four-legged squares or schemas, it is always the one here on the top right that does the work – so as to get the truth to emerge, because this is the meaning of work. The one who occupies this place in the discourse of the master is the slave, in the discourse of science it is the *a-studé*.

We could play around with this word, it might revitalise the question a little. Earlier we saw him compelled to continue to know at the level of physical sciences. In the human sciences we see something for which a word would have to be made up. I do not yet know if this is the right one, but like that, as a way of approach, instinctively, from its resonance, I would say *astudé*. If I manage to get this word accepted in the vocabulary, I will have more luck than when I wanted to change the name of the floor mop (*serpillière*).

Astudé has more reason for existing in the human sciences. The student feels himself *astudé*. He is *astudé* because like every worker – you can take your bearings from the other lower orders – he has to produce something. It sometimes happens that my discourse gives rise to responses that have some relationship to it. Rarely, but it does happen from time to time, and I am delighted. When I arrived at the *Ecole Normale*, some young people began discoursing about the subject of science, which I had made the object of the first of my seminars in 1965. The subject of science was relevant but it is clear that it is not self-evident. They got rapped over the knuckles, and it was explained to them that the subject of science did not exist. And at the vital point at which they thought they had made it emerge, namely, in the relationship of zero to one in the discourse of Frege, it was pointed out to them that the progress of mathematical logic had allowed the subject of science to be completely reduced, not by suturing it but by vaporising it.

The discontent of the *astudés* is nevertheless not unrelated to the fact that they are all the same asked to constitute the subject of science with their own hide, and this, according to the latest reports, seems to present some difficulties in the area of human sciences. And that is why, in a science that is so well established on the one hand, and so obviously all-conquering on the other - sufficiently all-conquering to describe itself as human, no doubt because it treats humans like *humus*, things are happening that allow us to land on our feet again, and make us put our finger on what is involved in the fact of substituting at the (5) level of truth a pure and simple commandment, that of the master. You must not imagine that the master is always there. It is the commandment that remains, the categorical imperative *Keep on knowing*. There is no longer any need for somebody to be there. We are all embarked, as Pascal says, in the discourse of science. It nevertheless remains that the half-saying finds itself justified by the fact that it is clear that, on the subject of human sciences, there is nothing that holds up. You would be quite wrong to believe ... I would like to protect myself in advance against the idea that might stir in some little retarded brain or other, that my remarks imply that one should put a brake on this science, and that when all is said and done, there might perhaps be some hope of salvation by returning to the attitude of Gauss. If such conclusions were imputed to me

they could quite correctly be described as reactionary. I am highlighting them because it is not unthinkable that, in zones that in truth I do not think I am very inclined to frequent, given what I talk about, people might deduce this sort of misunderstanding from what I am talking about. I would like however to get it across that in anything whatsoever that I am articulating with a particular aim of clarification, there is not the slightest idea of progress, in the sense that this term might imply a happy solution. The resolutions proposed by truth, when it arises, may from time to time be happy ones – and then, in other cases, disastrous. It is hard to see why the truth should always necessarily be beneficial. You would have to be particularly wrongheaded to imagine such a thing, when everything proves the opposite.

In short, it is certain that in what is described as the position of the analyst – in cases that moreover are improbable, because is there even an analyst who knows it, but it can be posited theoretically – it is the *o*-object itself that takes the place of the commandment. It is as identical to the *o*-object, namely, what presents itself to the subject as the cause of desire, that the psychoanalyst offers himself as a target for this insane operation of psychoanalysis, in so far as it engages itself on the track of the desire to know.

I told you at the start that the desire to know, the *epistemological drive* to give the name that they invented to depict it, was not all that obvious. It a matter of seeing where it comes from. As I pointed out, it is not the master who invented this all by himself, someone must have imposed it on him. It was not the psychoanalyst, who, good God, has not always been around, and what is more, he is not the one that stimulates it, he offers himself as a target point for whoever is bitten by this particularly problematic desire. We will come back to it.

(6) Meanwhile, let us try to highlight that in the structure described as that of the discourse of the analyst, he, as you see, says to the subject: *Off you go, say everything that goes through your head, however divided it may be, however obviously this demonstrates that either you are not thinking or you are nothing at all, it's fine. What you produce will always be accepted.*

$$\frac{\mathbf{o}}{S_2} \longrightarrow \frac{\$}{S_1}$$

Strange. Strange for reasons that we will have to punctuate, but that from now we can begin to sketch out, in that you were able to see on the upper line of the structure of the discourse of the Master a fundamental relation, which is, to put it quickly, the one constituted by the bond of the master to the slave, by means of which, Hegel *dixit*, with time the slave will show him his truth – by means of which also, Marx *dixit*, he will have taken all this time to foment his surplus enjoying. Why does he owe this surplus enjoying to the master? This, of course, is what is masked, what is masked in Marx. It is that the master to whom this surplus enjoying is due has renounced everything, and in the first place enjoyment, because he has exposed himself to death, and remains well fixed in this position so clearly articulated by Hegel. He has, no doubt, deprived the slave of the disposal of his body, but that is nothing, he has left him enjoyment. So then, how does this enjoyment come back within reach of the master and manifest its requirements? I think I clearly explained it to you at one time, but I am taking it up again, because you cannot repeat important things too often. In all of this, the master makes a little effort so that everything may work, namely, he gives the order. By simply fulfilling his function as master, he loses something. It is through this something lost that at least some bit of enjoyment ought to be restored to him – precisely surplus enjoying.

If, because of this rage that possessed him to castrate himself, he did not take this surplus enjoying into account, if he had not made it into surplus value, in other words if he had not grounded capitalism, Marx would have seen that surplus value is surplus enjoying. Despite all this, of course, capitalism was founded, and the devastating consequences of the function of surplus value is designated with great pertinence by Marx. Nevertheless, to finish it off, it would have perhaps been necessary to know at least what the first phase of its articulation is. It is not because in the socialism of a single country you nationalise the means of production that you have for all that (7) finished with surplus value, if you do not know what it is.

So then, this surplus enjoying, this surplus enjoying shows us that in the Master's discourse, since it is there all the same that surplus enjoying is situated, there is no relationship between what is more or less going to become the cause of desire of someone like the master who, as usual, understands nothing about it, there is no relationship

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbf{S}_1 & \longrightarrow & \mathbf{S}_2 \\ \hline \$ & & \mathbf{o} \end{array}$$

between that and what constitutes his truth. In fact there is a barrier here at the lower level. The barrier that it is immediately possible for us to name in the discourse of the Master is enjoyment, quite simply in so far as it is prohibited, fundamentally prohibited. Enjoying is something you take in little morsels, but as for going right to the end, I have already told you how this is incarnated – no need to stir up any more lethal phantasies. This formula defining the discourse of the Master, has the interest of showing that it is the only one to make impossible this articulation that we have highlighted elsewhere as phantasy, in so far as it is the relation of \mathbf{o} to the division of the subject – ($\$ \diamond \mathbf{o}$). From its very start the Master's discourse rules out phantasy. And this is what makes it completely blind at its foundations. The fact that elsewhere, and specifically in the Analytic discourse, it is displayed along a horizontal line in a completely balanced way, phantasy can emerge, tells us a bit more about what is involved in the foundation of the Master's discourse.

Be that as it may, for the moment, taking things up again at the level of the Analyst's discourse, you should note that it is knowledge, namely, the whole articulation of the existing \mathbf{S}_2 , everything that one can know, which is, in my way of writing – I am not saying in the real – put in the place of truth. What can know is, in the Analyst's discourse, requested to function in the register of truth. What does that mean? We sense that this concerns us but what on earth can it mean? It is not for nothing that I have made

this detour into what is going on today. The poor tolerance, let us say, a certain mad rush that knowledge has made in the form known as science, as modern science, is something that perhaps, without our always understanding it beyond the tip of our noses, can make us sense that surely, if, somewhere, there is a chance that knowledge questioned as a function of truth may make sense, it (8) must be in our little merry-go-round, at least if we have confidence in it.

May I tell you that this, incidentally is what justifies me – this is completely incidental, we will see where it takes us - in saying that, since I had my trap shut when I was about to talk about the names of the father, I will never again talk about it. This might seem to be a tease, not very nice. And then – who knows – there are even people, science fanatics, who tell me *Keep on trying to know. What's this about? Of course you must say what you know about the names of the father.* No, I will not say what the name of the father is, precisely because I am not part of the University discourse. I am a little analyst, a stone that was first rejected. Even if in my analyses I become the cornerstone, once I get up from my armchair I have the right to wander. This is a turnabout, the rejected stone that becomes a cornerstone. It may also be, inversely, that the cornerstone goes walkabout. This is how I may even have some chance that things will change! If the cornerstone wandered off, the entire edifice might collapse. Some people are tempted by that. Anyway, let's not make a joke of it. I simply do not see why I should speak about the name of the father. Because, in any case, where it is situated, namely, where knowledge functions as truth, you should note that we are properly speaking condemned to not being able, even on this point that is still vague for us, about the relationship between knowledge and truth, to state anything whatsoever, except by a half-saying.

I do not know whether you sense the import of this. It means that, if we say something in a certain way in this field, there will be another part of it which, by virtue of this saying itself, will become absolutely irreducible, completely obscure. So that, in short, there is a degree of arbitrariness, there is a choice that can be made about what must be clarified. So that, if I do not speak about the name of the father, this will enable me to speak about

something else. It will not be unrelated to the truth, but it is not as it is for the subject – it will not be the same. Good! That was a parenthesis.

Let us come back to what we have noted about what becomes of knowledge in the place of truth, I mean in the discourse of the analyst.

I do not think that you have had to wait for what I am going to tell you now for it to have become obvious to you. You must all the same remember that what occurs there at the start has a name, it is myth. To (9) see it, we did not have to wait for the discourse of the Master to fully develop and show its last word in the discourse of the capitalist, with its curious copulation with science. People have always seen that, and in any case, it is all we see when it is a matter of truth, at least of the first truth, of the one that interests us a little, all the same, even though science makes us renounce it by simply giving us its imperative, *Keep on trying to know* but in a certain field – a curious thing, in a field that is in some discord with what concerns you, old boy. Well then, it is occupied by myth.

Myth today has been made into a branch of linguistics. I mean that the most serious things said about myth come from linguistics. On this I cannot but recommend you to refer to chapter 11, “The structure of myths” in *Structural Anthropology*, a collection of articles by my friend Lévi-Strauss. Obviously, you will see there being expressed the same thing as I am telling you, namely, that truth can only be supported by a half-saying. The first serious examination of these large units, as he calls them, for they are mythemes, obviously yields something that I do not impute to Lévi-Strauss, because I am going to read what he writes, literally. “*The impossibility of connecting up groups of relations*” – what is at stake are bundles of relations which is how he defines myths – “*is overcome, or, more exactly, replaced by the affirmation that two relations that contradict one another are identical in the measure that each is, like the other, self-contradictory.*” In short half-saying is the law internal to every kind of stating the truth, and what best incarnates it, is myth.

We can all the same declare ourselves to be not completely satisfied that in psychoanalysis we are still at the stage of myth. Do you know the effect that the use of

the central typical myth of psychoanalytic discourse, the Oedipus myth, has on mythographers? I think you can all answer this question. It is very amusing. There are people who have been occupied with myth for a long time. No one had to wait for my dear friend Claude Lévi-Strauss, who brought an exemplary clarity to it, to be intensely interested in the function of myth. There are circles where people know what a myth is, even if they do not (10) necessarily define it as I, for my part, have just tried to situate it for you – even though it is difficult to admit that even the most obtuse worker does not see that, all that can be said about myth, is that the truth shows itself by an alternation of strictly opposite things that must be got to turn around one another. This holds for whatever has been constructed ever since the world began up to and including the higher, very elaborate myths like Yin and Yang. You can bullshit (*déconner*) a lot about myths, because it is precisely the field for bullshitting. And bullshitting, as I have always told you, is the truth. They are identical. Truth allows everything to be said. Everything is true – on condition that you rule out the contrary. Only the fact that this is how things are nevertheless plays a role. Well, the Oedipus myth as Freud made it function – I can tell you for the sake of those who do not know this – makes the mythographers laugh! They find it completely inappropriate. Why is this myth so privileged in analysis? The first serious study that was made of it shows moreover that it is much more complicated. As luck would have it Claude Lévi-Strauss, who relishes a challenge, lays out in this same article the complete Oedipus myth. It can be seen that it concerns something quite different than knowing whether or not you are going to screw your mammy!

It is nevertheless curious, for example, that an excellent clear-headed mythographer from a good school, from a good tradition that began with Boas and which has converged upon Lévi-Strauss, a certain Kroeber, after having written an inflammatory book on *Totem and taboo* has, 20 years later, written something to point out that it must indeed all the same have its *raison d'être*. That there was something, he could not say what, moreover, and that this myth of Oedipus was a tough nut to crack. He says no more than that but, given the critique he made of *Totem and taboo*, it is well worth noting. It tormented him, it worried him, that he had spoken so ill of it, especially when he saw that it was spreading,

namely, that the most insignificant student believed he could chime in. That he could not tolerate. It would be necessary – I do not know if you want me to do it this year – to study the composition of *Totem and taboo*, because it is one of the most lunatic things you can imagine. After all, it is not because I preach a return to Freud that I cannot say that *Totem and taboo* is lunatic. That is why you have to return to Freud – to see that if it is so lunatic, given (11) that he was a chap who knew how to write and think, there must be a reason for it. I do not want to say any more – *Moses and monotheism* is something else again – because on the contrary we are going to speak about it. You can see all the same that I am putting things in order for you, even though I did not begin by presenting you with a well-worn path. I made sure, all by myself, nobody helped me, for example, that people knew what *The formations of the unconscious* are, or *Object relations*. You might think that now I am simply doing little somersaults around Freud. That is not quite what is at stake.

Let us try set up some blocks to things that are said about what is at stake in the oedipal myth in Freud. As I am in no hurry, I will not finish it today. I do not see why I should tire myself. I speak to you as it comes to me, and we shall see, in our own little way, where it will take us.

I will start at the end, by telling you straight away what I am aiming at, because I do not see why I should not show my hand. This is not quite how I intended to speak to you, but at least it will be clear. I am not at all saying that the Oedipus complex is of no use, or that it has no relationship with what we do. True, it is of no use to psychoanalysts, but since it is not sure that psychoanalysts are psychoanalysts, that proves nothing.

Psychoanalysts are becoming increasingly involved in something that is, in effect, extremely important, namely, the role of the mother. These are things, good God that I have already begun to tackle. The role of the mother is the mother's desire. This is of cardinal importance. The mother's desire is not something that can be tolerated just like that, that you are indifferent to. It always causes damage. A huge crocodile between whose jaws you are – that is the mother! You never know what may suddenly come over her and make her shut her trap. That is the mother's desire. So then, I tried to explain

that there was something reassuring. I am telling you simple things, I am improvising, I have to say. There is a cylinder (*rouleau*), a stone one of course, which is there, potentially, at the level of her trap, and it acts as a restraint, a wedge. It is what is called the Phallus. The cylinder protects you, if, all of a sudden, it snaps shut. These are (12) things that I have presented in their own time, at a time when I was talking to people who had to be handled with kid gloves: I mean psychoanalysts. They had to be told things crudely, like that, so that they could understand them. What is more, they did not understand any better. I spoke therefore at that stage about the paternal metaphor. I introduced it, I have never spoken of the Oedipus complex except in that form. That should be a bit suggestive, should it not? I said that it was the paternal metaphor, even though that was not how Freud presents things to us. Especially since he really believes that this blessed story of the murder of the father of the horde, this Darwinian buffoonery, actually happened. The father of the horde – as if there had ever been the slightest trace of the father of the horde. We have seen orang-utans. But not the slightest trace has ever been seen of the father of the human horde! Freud holds onto it as real. He clings to it. He wrote all of *Totem and taboo* in order to say so – it necessarily happened, and it is from there that everything began. Namely, all our troubles, including that of being a psychoanalyst.

It is striking – someone might have got a little bit excited about this paternal metaphor, and known how to make a little breakthrough. This is what I have always desired, that someone should go forward, open up a track for me, begin to show a little path. Would that someone had anticipated me! Anyway, be that as it may, it has never happened, and so the question of Oedipus remains intact. So then, I am going to make some preliminary remarks because the thing really does have to be hammered home. This affair cannot be conjured away. There is one thing that we are really inured to, trained in, in analytic practice, which is this business of manifest content and latent content. That is our experience. For the analysand who is there, the latent content is his knowledge. We are there to get him to know everything that he does not know even while knowing it. That is what the unconscious is.

For the psychoanalyst, the latent content is on the other side, in S_1 . For him, the latent content is the interpretation that he is going to make, in so far as it is not this knowledge that we can discover in the subject, but what is added onto it so as to give it a meaning. This remark could be useful for some psychoanalysts. Let us now leave to one side for the moment this manifest content and this latent content, except for retaining the terms.

What is a myth? Do not answer all at once! It is a manifest content. If there is one thing that is quite clearly a manifest content, it is a myth. That is not enough to define it and we defined it differently earlier. But it is clear that, if you can put a myth on index cards – using the technique proposed by Lévi-Strauss – and then stack them up to see what combinations emerge, it is the manifest order. Two myths in relation to one another are exactly like my little things that make a quarter turn and then give results. They are not latent, my little letters on the board, they are manifest.

So what is it doing there? The manifest content has to be put to the test. And by doing this, we shall see that it is not so manifest as all that. Let us do it this way – I am doing the best I can – let us recount the little story. The Oedipus complex as Freud talks about it when he refers to Sophocles is not at all treated like a myth. It is Sophocles' little story minus, as you will see, its tragic component, namely, he limits himself to that. According to Freud, what Sophocles' play reveals is that you sleep with your mother when you have killed your father. Murder of the father and enjoyment of the mother - to be understood in the objective and subjective sense, you enjoy the mother and the mother enjoys, there is a link. The fact that Oedipus absolutely does not know that he has killed his father nor that he is making his mother enjoy, or the fact that he enjoys her, in no way changes the question, since precisely it is a fine example of the unconscious. I think I have exposed for a long enough time the ambiguity involved in the use of the term *unconscious*. As a substantive, it is something that has in effect as its support the repressed representative of representation. In the adjectival sense, one can say that poor old Oedipus was unconscious (*était un inconscient*), the very least one can say is that there is some equivocation here.

In any case, this does not bother you. But, all the same, we have to see what things means. So here is this myth of Oedipus, borrowed from Sophocles, and then there is the unbelievable story I was speaking about earlier, the murder of the father of the primal horde. It is rather curious that the result is exactly the opposite. The old daddy had the women all to himself, which is already is incredible – why would he (14) have them all to himself – while there are other blokes around, all the same. The women too may have their own ideas. He is killed. The consequence is completely from the myth of Oedipus – for having killed the old man, the old orang-utan, two things happen. I am putting one of them in parenthesis, because it is incredible – they discover that they are brothers. Well, that may give you some idea of what fraternity is about, I will give you a little elaboration, as a little tooting-stone – we will perhaps have the time to return to it before we separate this year. The energy that we have from all being brothers very clearly proves that we are not so. Even with your blood brother nothing proves that we are his brother – we can have a completely opposite batch of chromosomes. This passion for fraternity, not to mind the rest, liberty and equality, is something that is outrageous and we would do well to see what it is covering over. I know of only a single origin for fraternity – I mean human, always *humus* – it is segregation. We live of course in a period where segregation, ugh! There is no longer any segregation anywhere. It is unheard of when you read the newspapers. Only in society – I do not want to call it *human* because I use terms sparingly, I am careful about what I say, I am not a man of the left - I note everything that exists, and in the first place fraternity, is founded on segregation. No fraternity is even conceivable, has the slightest foundation, as I have said, the slightest scientific foundation, except through the fact that people are isolated together, isolated from the rest by something. It is a matter of knowing how it works, and of why it is that way. But in any case, that it is like that leaps to the eye, and acting as if it were not true must necessarily have some drawbacks. What I am telling you here is a kind of half-saying. If I am not telling you why it is like this, it is first of all because, if I say this is how it is, I am unable to say why it is like this. Here is an example. In any case, they discover that they are brothers, one wonders in the name of what segregation. This means that, as regards the myth, this is a little weak. And then, they all decide, with one heart, that no one will touch the little mammies. Because, besides, there is more than

one of them. They were interchangeable, since the old father had them all. They could sleep with the brother's mother, precisely, since they are brothers only through their father.

(15) No one ever seems to have been amazed by the curious fact of the extent to which *Totem and taboo* has nothing to do with the usual use of the Sophoclean reference.

Moses is the last straw. Why does Moses have to be killed? Freud explains it for us, and this is really rich – it is so that Moses can return in the prophets, by the path of repression, no doubt by mnemonic transmission through chromosomes, it must be admitted. The remark that an imbecile like Jones makes, that he seems not to have read Darwin, is accurate. Nevertheless, he had read him, since it is on Darwin that he bases himself to carry off *Totem and taboo*.

It is not for nothing that *Moses and monotheism* like the rest of everything that Freud writes, is absolutely fascinating. If you are a free spirit you might say that it seems to have neither head nor tail. We will speak about it again.

What is certain, is that what is at stake for the prophets is not something that has anything at all, this time, to do with enjoyment. I want to let you know – who knows, perhaps someone might do me a good turn – that I started looking for the book that serves as a linchpin for what Freud states, namely, the work of a certain Sellin published in 1922. *Mose und seine Bedeutung für die israelitisch – jüdische Religionsgeschichte*.

This Sellin is not an unknown. I managed to get hold of *Die Zwölf Propheten*. He begins with *Hosea (Osèe)*. He is a minor prophet but he is daring (*osè*). So daring that, it seems it is in him that one finds a trace of the supposed murder of Moses. I should tell you that I did not have to wait to read Sellin to read *Hosea*, but the fact that, in my whole life, I have never been able to get hold of this book is beginning to madden me. It is not in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, it is not in the *Alliance Israélite universelle*, and I have moved heaven and earth all over Europe to get it. I think all the same that I will manage to get

my hands on it. If any one of you has it in your pocket you could bring it to me at the end of the seminar. I would give it back!

In any case, in *Hosea* there is one thing that is quite clear. This text of *Hosea* is extraordinary. I do not know how many people here read the Bible. I cannot say that I was brought up in the Bible, because my (16) roots are Catholic. I regret it. But on the other hand, I do not regret it, in the sense that when I read it now – well, now, it's a fair while ago – it has a fantastic effect on me! This familial delusion, these entreaties by Yahweh to his people which contradict one another between one line and the next, is enough to make your head spin. There is one sure thing, all relations with women are *znout* [?] as he says in his strong language, in fact outside the law. I will write it on the board for you in Hebrew, in very beautiful letters, in cursive script. It is prostitution, *Znunim*. [*Hebrew added*]

When he addresses Hosea this is the only thing that matters – his people have definitively prostituted themselves. Everything that surrounds him, the entire context, epoch, is prostitution. What analytic discourse uncovers when we explore the discourse of the Master is that there is no sexual relationship. I already told you this in the strongest terms. Well then, the idea we get is that the chosen people found themselves implicated in something where things were very probably different, where there were sexual relationships. This is probably what Yahweh calls prostitution.

In any case, it is quite clear, that if it is the spirit of Moses that is returning here, it is not exactly a murder that has engendered access to enjoyment that is at stake. All the same, you have to see things as they are. All of this is so fascinating that no one has ever seemed to see – it would no doubt have appeared too immediate, too stupid, to make these objections, and moreover, they are not objections, we are at the heart of the subject – that the prophets, when all is said and done, never mention Moses. One of my best students made this remark to me – it must be said that she is a Protestant, so that she knew these verses a long time before I did. But above all they absolutely do not speak about something that for Freud seems to be the key, namely, that the God of Moses is the

same God as the God of Akhenaton, a God who is supposed to be One. As you know, this is very far from being the case, Yahweh talks all the time about other gods. As regards the other gods, the God of Moses simply says that one must not have relations with them, but he does not say that they do not exist. He says that one must not throw oneself at idols, but after all, this also concerns idols that represent him, as was certainly the case of the Golden Calf. They were expecting a god, they made a golden calf. It was quite natural.

We can see that there is here a completely different relation, which is a relation with Truth. I have already said that Truth is the little sister of (17) enjoyment, we will have to return to this. What is certain is that the crude schema *murder of the father – enjoyment of the mother* totally elides the tragic dimension. Of course it is through the murder of the father that Oedipus gains free access to Jocasta, but that she is given to him, is due to popular acclaim. Jocasta, as I have always told you, knew something about it, because women never fail to have little pieces of information. She had a servant who had been present at the whole affair, and it would be curious if this servant, who had returned to the palace and who turns up at the end, had not told Jocasta, “he’s the one who bumped off your husband”. Be that as it may, it is not the important thing. What is important is that Oedipus gained access to Jocasta because he had triumphed in a trial of truth. We shall come back to the riddle of the Sphinx. And then, if Oedipus comes to a very bad end – we will see what this *comes to a very bad end* means and to what extent it is called coming to a bad end – it is because he absolutely wanted to know the truth. This is where we see that it is not possible to tackle seriously the Freudian reference without bringing to bear, beyond murder and enjoyment, the dimension of truth.

That is where I can leave you today. Simply, in seeing how Freud articulates this fundamental myth, it is clear that it is really excessive to include everything within the same Oedipal bracket. What does Moses, in the name of the good God – make no mistake – have to do with Oedipus and the father of the primal horde? There really must be something there that is linked to the manifest content and the latent content. To

conclude today, I would say that what we are proposing is to analyse the Oedipus complex as being a dream of Freud's.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 18 March 1970

Someone in this audience thought it right, and I thank her for it, to pick up on what I had said the last time about a certain disappointment of mine, that no one, I said, had given me the pleasure - pleasure as you know is the law of least effort - of anticipating me on a track that I had to open up! So then the person in question - I can see she is smiling, she is here, why not name her, Marie-Claire Boons, sent me an off-print from a highly interesting journal called *L'Inconscient*. I have an excuse for not having read her article before. This journal, in effect, in which I must say some very good things have appeared, is not sent to me, paradoxically perhaps, because of the very fact that when it started, at least in its editorial committee, it took its authority from my teaching. Having had my attention drawn to this issue on *La paternité*, I first of all read the article by Marie-Claire Boons with great care, and then another one by our friend Conrad Stein. I am quite prepared, if Marie-Claire Boons wants, to give today a commentary on her article, in which a certain number of questions about the path she chooses on the murder of the father in Freud might be brought to light. I believe, in truth, that it could easily be shown that nothing in it goes any further than what I had already put forward about the Oedipus complex at the date at which she published it - put forward, as I said, very modestly.

There is another method, which is that today I try to make progress by showing that it is already implicit in the careful progress I have made up to now. So then, perhaps, at a second stage, on the occasion of one of our meetings, retroactively, what I want to say would be clearer than if I were just to leave you hanging on the various points of an article which, in effect, presents from many angles a sort of opening up, of questioning, and, if you will, of preparation, for a second step. You can express a wish now for one or other of these methods – I will leave (2) it to Marie-Claire Boons (*inaudible response*)... So then, I will proceed in the second way.

The death of the father. In effect, everyone knows that this seems to be the key, the vital point of everything that is stated and not only in the name of myth, about what psychoanalysis has to deal with. Marie-Claire Boons, by the end of her article, would even give us to understand that many things flow from this death of the father, and notably something or other that would make psychoanalysis, in a certain way, free us from the law. Some hope! I am well aware that it is in this register that a libertarian focus is supposed to attach itself to psychoanalysis. I think that nothing of the kind is involved – and this is the entire sense of what I am calling the reverse side of psychoanalysis.

The death of the father in so far as it echoes this sentiment with a Nietzschean centre of gravity, this statement, this good news, that God is dead, does not seem to me, far from it, something that liberates us. The primary foundation for proving this, is indeed Freud's own utterance. Marie-Claire Boons, at the start of her article, quite rightly points out something I already said two seminars ago, that the announcement of the death of the father is far from being incompatible with the justification for religion given by Freud, by way of an analytic interpretation of it. This is that religion itself is supposed to be based on something that, quite astonishingly, Freud advances as primary, that the father is the one who is recognised as deserving love.

Here already there is the indication of a paradox, which leaves the author I have just named in some perplexity about the fact that, in short, psychoanalysis would seem to

prefer to maintain, to preserve, the field of religion. Here too, it can be said that nothing of the kind is involved. The point of psychoanalysis is well and truly atheism, provided we give this term a different sense than that of *God is dead*, since everything indicated that, far from calling into question what is at stake, namely the law, it rather consolidates it. A long time ago, I observed that to the sentence of old father Karamozov, *If God is dead then everything is permitted*, the conclusion required by the text of our experience is that to *God is dead* the response is *nothing is permitted anymore*.

(3) To illuminate something whose horizon I am announcing for you, let us start from the death of the father, if in fact this is what Freud puts forward as being the key to enjoyment, to the enjoyment of the supreme object identified with the mother, the mother aimed at in incest. It is certain that it is not by starting with an attempt to explain what ‘sleeping with the mother’ means, that the murder of the father is introduced into Freudian doctrine. Quite the contrary, it is starting from the death of the father that the prohibition of this enjoyment is established as primary.

In truth, it is not only the death of the father that is at stake, but the murder of the father, as the person about whom I am speaking also put it very clearly in the title of her investigation. It is here in the Oedipus myth, as it is stated to us, that the key to enjoyment is found. But if this indeed is the way that this myth – we are examining it closely – is presented to us when it is stated, I have already said that it would be well to treat it as what it is, namely, a manifest content. By virtue of this fact, one has to begin by articulating it properly. The Oedipus myth, at the tragic level at which Freud appropriates it for himself, clearly shows that the murder of the father is the condition for enjoyment. If Laius is not put out of the way - in the course of a struggle in which, moreover, it is not certain that it is by this step that Oedipus is going to succeed to the enjoyment of the mother – if Laius is not put out of the way, there will not be this enjoyment. But is it at the price of this murder that he obtains it? Here is where the most important thing appears and takes on all its relief, because the reference is taken from a myth enacted in tragedy. It is obtained by virtue of having delivered the people from a question that is decimating the best of them as they tried to answer what presents itself as

a riddle, namely, is represented as being supported by this ambiguous being of the Sphinx, in which strictly speaking a double disposition is incarnated, because it is made up, like the half-saying, of two half bodies, by answering it, Oedipus finds himself - this is where the ambiguity lies - suppressing the suspense that the question of truth thus introduces into the population. He surely has no idea to what extent the answer he gives to the question anticipates his own drama, but also to what extent, in making a choice, his answer falls perhaps into the trap of truth: "*It's man*". Who knows what man is? Has everything been said about him by reducing him to this process, so ambiguous in the case of Oedipus, which has him first going around on all fours, then on his two hind legs – in which Oedipus like his entire line, is distinguished, as Claude Lévi-Strauss has very well pointed out, (4) by not walking straight – then, at the end, with the aid of a stick, which even though not the white cane of the blind man, was nonetheless to be for Oedipus of the most unusual kind, this third element being, his daughter Antigone?

The truth has been set aside. What does that mean? Is it so as to leave the field open to what will remain the way back for Oedipus. Because the truth will re-emerge for him, and this, because he wanted once again to intervene, in the presence of a misfortune that is twice as great this time, no longer decimating his people through the choice of those who volunteer for the Sphinx's question, but striking it in its entirety in this ambiguous form that is called the plague, with everything that it involved in the thematic of antiquity. It is here that Freud points out to us that, for Oedipus, the question of truth is renewed, and that it ends up with what? With what we are able to identify, in a first approximation, to something that has at least a relationship with paying the price of castration. Does that really say it all? Even though at the end, what happens to him is not that the scales fall from his eyes, but that his eyes fall from him like scales. Is it not in this very object that we see Oedipus being reduced, not to undergoing castration, but, I would rather say, to being castration itself? Namely, what remains when one of the privileged supports of the *o*-object disappears from him in the form of his eyes. What does this mean, if not that the question arises whether what he has to pay for is to have mounted the throne, not by the path of succession, but by the path of this choice made of him as a master, for having effaced the question of truth. This is what he has to pay for.

In other words, introduced as you already have been to my statement that what constitutes the essence of the master's position is to be castrated, can you not see that we find here, veiled to be sure, but well sign-posted that it is also from castration that what is properly speaking succession proceeds.

If – since the phantasy of it is always very curiously indicated, but never properly linked up to the fundamental myth of the father's murder – if castration is what strikes the son, is it not also what makes him accede by the proper path to what the function of the father is about? This is indicated in all our experience. And does it not indicate that it is from father to son that castration is transmitted? Henceforth, what about death presenting itself as being at the origin? Do we not have here the indication that it is perhaps a way of covering things over? Although it emerges, is experienced, in the very position of the analyst in the subjective process of the function of castration, is there not something here that nevertheless hides it, veils it, in some way (5) places it as one might say under its aegis, and so avoids us carrying to its very core what would allow the position of the analyst to be stated in a final and rigorous manner. How does this come about? It is no harm to notice that the myth of the father's murder as essential is initially encountered by Freud in the interpretation of dreams, and that a wish, a desire for death is manifested there. Conrad Stein's article produces a remarkable clarification and critique of it by highlighting a renewed outbreak of these death wishes towards the father at the very moment his death has become real. If it is true that, *The interpretation of dreams* emerged, according to Freud himself, from the death of his father, Freud thus wants to see himself as guilty of the death of his father. Is this also, as the author repeats and underlines, the mark of something that is hidden there, and is properly speaking the wish that the father should be immortal? This interpretation is put forward in line with analytic psychologism, which takes as a basic assumption, that the essence of the infantile position has its foundation in an idea of omnipotence that would see it as beyond death. When put forward by an author who does not abandon these presuppositions, this interpretation is, as I might say, valid. Quite the contrary, the result of criticising what is said about the essence of the child's position, is that the death wishes and what they mask, if they mask anything, must be tackled along a different path. And first of all, how

can we think that, in what we have to state about the subjective structure as depending on the introduction of the signifier, we can we give pride of place in that structure to anything whatsoever that might be called a knowledge of death?

By reading in a different way Freud's analyses of some of his major dreams, such as the famous request to close the eyes, with the ambiguity of this *an eye* under a bar - which moreover is brought forward by him as a way of expressing an alternative - Conrad Stein uses it very skilfully in line with his interpretation, which is that of a denial of death in the name of omnipotence. But it can be read in a different sense. In effect, it is perhaps open to another meaning, if we take the last dream in the same series and make it the centre, as I once did. Freud himself puts the emphasis on a dream that comes not from him but from one of his patients, a dream which states, *he did not know that he was dead*.

(6) I broke this dream down in order to analyse it, by aligning it along the two lines of stating and stated. This was done to remind us that it is either one thing or the other. Either death does not exist, there is something that survives, but the question is not resolved for all that, of whether the dead know that they are dead. Or there is nothing after death, and it is quite certain in that case that they do not know. This in order to say that no one knows, no living being in any case, what death is. It is remarkable that the spontaneous productions that are formulated in the unconscious are expressed on the basis that death, for everyone, is properly speaking unknowable.

I once emphasised that it is indispensable for life that something irreducible does not know – I will not say that we are dead, because this is not what must be said – that in the name of *us*, we are not dead, not altogether in any case, and this indeed is our foundation, that something does not know that I am dead. I am dead, very exactly, in so far as I am destined to die – but in the name of this something that does not know it, I do not want to know it either. That is what enables us to place at the centre of logic this *all men – all men are mortal* – whose basis is precisely the non-knowledge of death, and by the same token what makes us believe that *all men* means something.

All men born of a father, who, we are told, in so far as he is dead – he, the man – does not enjoy what is there to be enjoyed. The equivalence is therefore established in Freudian terms, between the dead father and enjoyment. It is he who keeps it in reserve, as I might say. As it is expressed no longer at the level of the tragic, with all its subtle suppleness, but in the statement of the myth of *Totem and taboo*, the Freudian myth is the equivalence between the dead father and enjoyment. It is to this that we can attribute the term of structural operator. Here the myth transcends itself, by stating under the heading of the real – for this is what Freud insists upon, that it really happened, and that it is the real - the dead father is in charge of enjoyment, is where the prohibition of enjoyment started, where it came from. The fact that the dead father is enjoyment presents itself to us like the sign of the impossible itself. And this is why we rediscover here those terms that I define as fixing the categories of the Real, in so far as it is radically distinguished, in what I articulate, from the Symbolic and from the Imaginary – the Real is the impossible. Not in the name of a (7) simple obstacle we bang our heads against, but the logical obstacle of what, in the symbolic, is declared to be impossible. This is where the Real arises.

There in effect, beyond the Oedipus myth, we recognise an operator, a structural operator, the one described as the Real Father – with, I would say, even this property that as paradigm it is also the promotion, at the heart of the Freudian system, of the father of the Real, which places at the centre of Freud's teaching the term impossible. This means that Freudian teaching has nothing to do with psychology. There is no conceivable psychology of this original father. Only, the presentation given of him in Freud's teaching evokes derision, and I do not need to repeat what I said about it during the last seminar – he who enjoys all the women, an inconceivable idea, when it can normally be seen that it is already a lot to satisfy one. Here we are thrown back on a completely different reference, that of castration, once we defined it as the source of the master signifier. I will show you at the end of today's discourse what that may mean.

The Master's discourse shows us enjoyment as coming to the Other. It is he who has the means for it. Language only obtains it by insisting to the point of producing the loss by

which surplus enjoying is embodied. At the start, language, even that of the master, can be nothing other than demand, a demand that fails. It is not from its success, it is from its repetition that something of a different dimension is generated that I have called the loss – the loss by which surplus enjoying is embodied. This repetitive creation, this inauguration of a dimension that organises everything by which analytic experience is going to be able to be judged, can also start from an original impotence, in a word, that of the child - which is a long way from omnipotence. If people have noticed that psychoanalysis shows us that the child is father to the man, it is very much because there must be somewhere, something that mediates between them, and it is very precisely the agency (*insistance?*) of the master, in so far as it managed after all to produce, out of any signifier whatsoever, the master signifier.

At the time when I was formulating what was involved in object relations and its relations with Freudian structure, I proposed that the Real Father is the agent of castration. But I had put it forward after having taken care to separate out first of all what was distinct in the (8) essence of castration, frustration and privation. Castration is an essentially symbolic function, namely, conceived from nowhere other than signifying articulation, frustration is imaginary, privation, as is self-evident, from the Real. What can be defined about the fruit of these operations? This is from the riddle that the phallus proposes to us *qua* manifestly imaginary that we must make the object of the first of these operations, castration. It is, why not, faith, something quite real that is always in question in a frustration, even if the only resource of the claim that grounds it, is to imagine that this real is owed to you, which is not self-evident. It is clear that privation on the other hand can only be situated with respect to the symbolic, for when we are dealing with something real, nothing can be lacking. What is real is real, and it is necessary that this introduction, even though essential, should come from elsewhere, otherwise we ourselves would not be in the real, namely, that something is lacking in it and this indeed is what initially characterises the subject. I remained less explicit at that time about the role of agents - though I did not fail to indicate it. The father, the Real Father, is none other than the agent of castration – and this is what the affirmation of the Real Father as impossible is designed to mask from us. What does *agent* mean? In a first approach, of course, we

slip into the phantasy that it is the father who is the castrator. It is very striking that none of the forms of the myth to which Freud attached himself gives any idea of it. It is not because at a first hypothetical phase the sons, the sons who are still animals, cannot get at the flock of women, that they are, as far as I know, castrated. Castration, as statement of a prohibition, can in any case only be grounded on a second phase, that of the myth of the murder of the father of the horde. And according to the myth itself, it comes from nothing other than a common accord, a singular *initium* whose problematic character I showed you last time.

Moreover, the term *act* should be noted here. If what I told you about the act when I dealt with the psychoanalytic act is to be taken seriously, namely, if it is true that there can only be an act in a context already filled with everything involved in the incidence of the signifier, from the moment it is brought into play in the world, there cannot be any act in the beginning, in any case no act that can be described as murder. The myth can here have no other sense than the one to which I reduced it, a statement of the impossible. There can be no act outside (9) a field already so completely articulated that the law does not situate itself therein. There is no other act than the act that refers to the effect of this signifying articulation and involves its whole problematic – with on the one hand, the fall (*chute*) involved in, or rather involving the very existence of anything whatsoever that can articulate itself as subject, and, on the other hand, what pre-exists there as legislative function.

So then, is castration linked to the nature of the act that the function of the Real Father proceeds from? This is very precisely what the term agent that I have proposed allows us to put on hold. In our tongue the verb *agir*, has more than one resonance, beginning with that of actor. *Actionnaire* [shareholder] also – why not, the word is made up from action, and this shows you that *une action*, is perhaps not altogether what one believes it to be. Activist also – does not the activist define himself, properly speaking, on the basis of the fact, that he considers himself to be rather the instrument of something? Of Actaeon, huh, while we are at it – it would be a good example for whoever knows what this means in terms of the Freudian thing. And finally, what one simply calls *my agent*. You see

what this means in general: *I pay him for that*. Not even that, *I compensate him for having nothing else to do* or *I honour him*, as they say, pretending to begin from the fact that he is capable of something else. This is the level of the term where what is involved in the Real Father as agent of castration should be taken up. He does the work of the master-agency. We are increasingly familiar with the functions of the agent. We live at an epoch in which we know what it conveys in terms of fakery, advertising, stuff that has to be sold. But we also know that this is how things work at the point that we have come to in the expansion, the paroxysm, of the discourse of the master in a society that is founded on it. All of this would encourage us ... It is getting late. Here I am going to be forced to make a little cut which I indicate to you in passing, because we shall perhaps take up again what is at stake, which for me is worthwhile, and does not seem to be unworthy of making the effort to clarify it. Since I put the stress on, attach a very special note to, the function of agent, one day I will have to show you all the developments that result from introducing the notion of double agent, which everyone knows is in our day one of the most indisputable, the most certain, objects of fascination. The agent who takes this on does not simply want the ordinary dealings of the master, which is everyone else's role. He (10) thinks that what he is in contact with, namely, that anything that is really worthwhile, I mean in the order of enjoyment, has nothing to do with the strands of this net. In his little job, he tells himself that this is ultimately what he preserves. A strange story, one that takes us very far. The true double agent is the one who thinks that what escapes the strands, also has to be adjusted (*agencer*). Because if this is true, the adjustment is going to become so, and by the same token the first adjustment, the one that was obviously fake, will also become true. This is most likely what was guiding a character who put himself, no one knows why, into the function of the prototypical agent of this discourse of the master, in so far as he assumed the authority to preserve something whose essence an author, Henri Massis, has profiled by uttering these prophetic words, *walls are good*. Well, someone called Sorge, with this so Heidegerian name, found a means of infiltrating Nazi agents and of becoming a double agent for the benefit of whom? For the benefit of the Father of the Peoples who everyone hopes, as you know, will be the one to ensure that the true will also be adjusted properly.

The reference that I am recalling, with the Father of the Peoples, has many links with that of the Real Father *qua* agent of castration. Since Freud's teaching cannot do otherwise, if only because it speaks about the unconscious, rather than starting from the discourse of the Master, all he can make of this famous Real Father is the impossible. But all the same, we know this Real Father – he is something of a quite different order. First of all, in general, everybody admits that he is the one who works, and does so in order to feed his little family. If he is the agent of anything, in a society that obviously does not give him a big role, it remains the case, nevertheless, that there is an exceedingly nice side to him. He works, and then, he would very much like to be loved. This is something that shows that the whole mystification that makes him into a tyrant quite obviously lies elsewhere. It is at the level of the Real Father *qua* language construct, as moreover Freud always pointed out. The Real Father is nothing other than an effect of language, and does not have any real other. I am not saying other reality, since reality is something different. It is what I was talking to you about a moment ago. I could even go a little bit further immediately by pointing out to you that the notion of the Real Father is scientifically unsustainable. There is only one Real Father, it is the (11) spermatozoon, and up to now at least, nobody has ever thought of saying that he was the son of this or that spermatozoon. Naturally, one can raise objections by means of a certain number of examinations of blood groups, of rhesus factors. But this is quite new, and it has absolutely nothing to do with everything that up to now has been stated as being the function of the father. So that there is something that analysis can raise as a question - I sense that I am entering dangerous territory, but who cares – it is after all not only among the Arunta tribes that the question could be raised of who is really the father when a woman finds herself pregnant. If there is one question that analysis might ask itself, this is it. Why? In a psychoanalysis, might it not be – one suspects this from time to time – the psychoanalyst who is the Real Father? Even if he is not at all the one who has done it at the level of the spermatozoon. From time to time one suspects it, when it is around a patient's relation to – putting it modestly – the analytic situation, that she has finally become a mother. There is no need to be an Arunta to ask oneself questions about what is involved in the function of the father. We notice, by the same token, because it gives a broader perspective, that there is no need to take the reference in analysis that I have

taken as the most burning one, for the question to be raised. One can very well give one's husband a baby that is, even if one has not slept with him, someone else's child, precisely the person you would have liked to be the father. It is all the same because of that that you have had a child.

This takes us, as you see, make no mistake, some way into the dream. I am only doing it in order to wake you up. If I said that everything that Freud has lucubrated – not to be sure at the level of myth, nor about the recognition of death wishes in the dreams of patients – is a dream of Freud's, it is because the analyst should, in my opinion, tear himself away a little from this plane of the dream. What the analyst has encountered, guided by the striking things introduced by Freud, what he has learned from this encounter, has in no way been fully decanted as yet. Last Friday, I presented at my case presentation a gentleman – I do not see why I should call him sick – to whom things had happened, which meant that his encephalogram, as the technician told me, is always at the border of sleep and waking, oscillating in such a way that you never know when he is going to pass from one to the (12) other, and that is how things stand. That is a little bit how I see all our analytic colleagues, the shock, the birth trauma of analysis, leaves them like that. And that is why they flutter around, in order to extract something more precise from the Freudian articulation. This is not to say that they do not get close to it, but what they would have to see is, for example, the position of the Real Father as Freud articulates it, namely, as an impossible, which means that the father is necessarily imagined as depriving. It is not you, nor he, nor I, who imagine, it is due to the position itself. It is not at all surprising that we ceaselessly encounter the imaginary father. It is a necessary, structural dependency of something that precisely escapes us, namely, the Real Father. And defining the Real Father in a sure way is strictly ruled out, unless it is as the agent of castration.

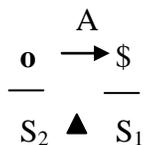
And this castration is not necessarily what is so defined by someone who psychologises about it. This was seen to emerge, it seems, not so long ago, at a thesis defence, when someone, who has decisively chosen the path of making psychoanalysis into the psychopedagogy we are familiar with, said "For us, you know, castration is only a phantasy".

But no, no way!. Castration is the real operation introduced by the impact of any signifier at all, on the sexual relationship (*rapport du sexe*). And it goes without saying that it determines the father as being this impossible real that we have described. It is a matter now of knowing what is meant by this castration, which is not a phantasy.

It has as a result that there is no cause of desire that is not produced by this operation, and that phantasy dominates the entire reality of desire, namely, the law. As regards the dream, everyone now knows that it is demand, that it is the signifier at liberty, which insists, which squeals and stamps its foot, which has absolutely no idea of what it wants. The idea of putting the omnipotent father at the origin of desire is very adequately refuted by the fact that it is from the hysteric's desire that Freud extracted his master-signifiers. It must not be forgotten, in effect, that this is where Freud began, and that he has avowed what remains at the centre of his question. It is all the more precious to have got hold of this, because it was repeated to us by a donkey who had no idea what it meant. It is the question: *What does a woman want?* A woman. But not just anyone at all. Merely posing the question means that she wants something. He did not say: *What does the woman want?* Because after all there is nothing to say that *the* woman wants (13) anything at all. I will not say that she adapts to every circumstance. She is unadapted to all circumstances, *Kinder, Küche, Kirche*, but there are many others, *Culture, Kilowatt, Culbute*, as someone has put it, *Raw and cooked (Cru et Cuit)* all that suits her equally well. She absorbs them. But as soon as you ask the question: *What does a woman want?*, you are situating the question at the level of desire, and everyone knows that situating the question at the level of desire for the woman, means questioning the hysteric. What the hysteric wants – I say this for those who do not have this vocation, there must be many – is a master. That is absolutely clear. This is so even to the point that the question must be asked if it is not from this that the invention of the discourse of the Master started. This would complete what we are in the process of tracing out in a very elegant manner. She wants a master. This is what resides in the little top right hand corner, to give it no other name. She wants the other to be a master, to know many things, but all the same not to know enough not to believe that she is the supreme prize of all his knowledge. In other words, she wants a master over whom she reigns. She reigns,

and he does not govern. It is from this that Freud started. She, is the hysteric, but this is not necessarily specific to one sex. As soon as you ask the question *What does so-and-so want?* you enter into the function of desire, and you bring out the master-signifier.

Freud produced a number of master-signifiers which he covered with the name of Freud. A name can also be used as a stopper for something. I am astounded that people can associate with this stopper which is a name of the father, whatever it may be, the idea that there can be at this level any kind of murder whatsoever. And how can people think that it is by reason of their devotion to the name of Freud that analysts are what they are? They are unable to disentangle themselves from Freud's master-signifiers, that is all. It is not so much Freud that they hold onto, but to a number of signifiers – the unconscious, seduction, trauma, phantasy, the ego, the id, and all the rest – there is no question of their leaving that orbit. At this level they have no father to kill. One is not the father of signifiers, one is at most a father *because of them*. No problem at this level. The real mainspring is the following – enjoyment separates the master-signifier, in so far as one would like to attribute to the father, knowledge *qua* truth. If we take the schema of the discourse of the analyst, the obstacle put up by enjoyment is found where I drew the triangle, namely, between what can be produced, in whatever form, as master-signifier, and the field that knowledge has at its disposition in so far as it posits itself as truth.



And this is what allows us to articulate what is really involved in castration – it is that, even for the child, whatever you may think, the father is the one who knows nothing about the truth. I will take things up the next time at this point.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 8 April 1970

I don't know how you spent the time we were apart. You have in any case taken advantage of it in one way or another. For my part, I was lucky enough to find, I am indicating it to the person who so kindly indicated to me that she was an *astudée* at the Sorbonne, I indicate to her that I found, that I had the Sellin I spoke to you about sent from Copenhagen. Namely, this little book of 1922, which subsequently suffered a certain rejection by Sellin, and is the book around which Freud makes revolve his confidence that Moses had been *tudé*.

Of course the importance of having it is that, apart from Jones and perhaps one or two others, I am not aware that many psychoanalysts took an interest in it. Nevertheless, this Sellin deserves to be examined in the text, since Freud considered that he carried weight, and it is naturally appropriate to follow him so as to put this high regard to the test. This seems to me to be in line with what I am advancing this year about the reverse side of psychoanalysis. But as I have only had this book, written in a very vigorous German, for roughly five days, you will understand that despite the assistance a number of great and little rabbis – actually, well, there are no little rabbis, there are Jews – have been kind enough to give me, I am not yet ready today to give you an account of it, at least not one that would satisfy me.

On the other hand, it so happens that I have been asked – not for the first time, this soliciting has been going on for a long time – to reply on Belgian radio to a man, M GeorGIN, who frankly won my respect by sending me a long text which provides at least the proof that he, unlike many others, has read my *Ecrits*. He got what he could from it, by God, but all things considered it was quite something. Truthfully, then, I was rather flattered by it.

To be sure, this does not make me any more inclined towards this exercise which consists in having oneself recorded on the radio – it always wastes a lot of time. However, as he appears to have organised things so that it will take as short a time as possible, I will perhaps concede to it. The person who will perhaps not concede to it, on the other hand, is him, given that, in order to answer these questions of (2) which I will give you three examples, I did not think I could do better than not yield to the inspiration of the moment, to the kind of exploration that I carry out here every time I stand before you, which is nourished by abundant notes, and which gets across, good God, because you see that I am driven by this exploration. It is even, perhaps, the only thing that justifies your presence here.

The conditions are different when it is a matter of speaking to some tens – who knows even hundreds - of thousands of listeners, among whom the abrupt test of presenting oneself without the support of the person may cause other effects. I will in any case refuse to give anything other than these texts that have already been written. So this means putting a lot of confidence in this condition since, as you will see, the questions put to me come necessarily because of the gap between what is produced by a constructed articulation, and what is expected by what I will call a common consciousness, and a common consciousness also means a series of common formulae. This language, the ancients, the Greeks, had already called it, in their tongue, *Koine*.

That can be immediately translated into French – *la couinée*. It squeaks. I do not despise *Koine*. Simply I believe that it may favour the production of some effects of precipitation, at the introduction precisely of the most abrupt of discourses.

Right! That is why today I am going to tell you about my replies to three of these questions. This is not simply a way of sparing myself some effort, because, believe me, it will be a far greater effort to read these texts to you than to proceed as I usually do.

Without further delay, I will spell out the first of these questions, which is this:

In your Ecrits you state that Freud anticipated, without realising it, the research of Saussure and that of the Prague Circle. Can you explain what you mean by that?

This is what I will do then, not by improvising, as I warned you, but by replying as follows:

Your question surprises me, I say, because it carries with it a relevance that separates it from the pretensions of a conversation that I have put to one side, it has even a reduplicated relevance, or rather one of two degrees. You prove that you have read my *Ecrits*, which apparently people do not think is necessary in order to understand me. In them you choose a remark which implies the existence of a different type of enquiry than one that can be mediated to the masses (*la médiation de masse*). The fact that Freud anticipates Saussure does not imply that some rumour passed from the first to the second. So that in quoting me, you show that I have answered before having made up my mind about it, this is what I describe as surprising me.

Let us start from the end point: Saussure and the Prague Circle (3) produced a linguistics that has nothing in common with what this name covered previously, even though its keys could be found in the hands of the Stoics, but what did they do with it!

Linguistics, with Saussure and the Prague Circle, is established from a cut which is the bar placed between the signifier and the signified, so that there dominates in it the difference from which the signifier is constituted absolutely, but is also organised from an autonomy that is in no way inferior to crystal-type effects, in the system of the phoneme, for example, which is its first successful discovery. The idea was to extend this success to the whole symbolic network by only admitting as sense what corresponds to it in the network, in terms of the incidence of an effect, yes, of a content, no. This is the wager that can be won because of the inaugural cut. The signified will be or will not be scientifically thinkable depending on whether or not there can be sustained a field of the signifier which, through its very material, is distinguished from any physical field obtained through science. This implies a metaphysical exclusion, to be taken as the fact of a lack of being (*désêtre*). No meaning can henceforth be held to be self-evident: that it is bright when it is daytime, for example, in which the Stoics have anticipated us, but I already asked: to what end? Even if I go as far as to neglect some of what I might call the semiotic acceptations of the word, any discipline which starts from the sign taken as object, in order to mark that this was what created an obstacle to grasping the signifier as such. The sign presupposes the someone to whom it gives a sign of something. It is this someone whose shadow concealed the way into linguistics. No matter how you describe this someone it will always be foolish. The sign is sufficient for someone to appropriate language as a simple tool. Language is no longer anything but the support for abstraction, as in the average discussion, with the whole progress of criticism, or I should say of thinking, as the key.

I will have to anticipate myself, taking up my own word to myself, about what I intend to introduce by writing it (*sous le graphie de*) as *l'achose* (athing) to give a sense of the effect in which linguistics takes up its position. It is not a progress, rather a regression. This is what we need against the unity of obscurantism which is already welded together

with the goal of forestalling *l'achose*. No one seems to recognise around what the unity is constructed and that at the time of someone who collected there the signature of things, *signatura rerum*, not enough account was taken of cultivated stupidity by daring to inscribe language in the register of communication.

The return to communication protects, as I might say the rear of what makes linguistics out of date by covering in it what is ridiculous which often can only be discerned *a posteriori*, namely, what in the occultation of language, only looked like a myth by being called 'telepathy'. Lost child, little beggar of thought which boasted about transmission without discourse, the myth, this myth, still managed to captivate Freud who did not unmask in it the kingpin of this den of (4) thieves (*cour des miracles*) that he was promising to clean up. Miracles, make no mistake, when everything goes back to this first one performed by the fact that one 'telepathises' with the same stuff as one compromises. Social contract, in short, a communicative effusion of promises of dialogue even though every man – and who does not know what he is – is mortal. Ah! We should sympathise because we have been put into the same box. Let us talk about everything – make no mistake – of everything together, except about what invited the mind of the syllogist to involve Socrates in it, because from this it emerges that no doubt death is administered like the rest, and by and for men, but without them being from the same quarter as what is involved in the telepathy that is conveyed by a telegraphy that the subject is ceaselessly embarrassed by every time one gets to this piece of nonsense. That this subject is difficult to communicate, is indeed determined by what gives energy to linguistics, going as far as putting the poet, yes the poet, in its pocket. Because the poet is produced by being – allow me here to translate the one who demonstrated it, my friend Jakobson - eaten by verses/worms (*vers*) who find their own arrangement among themselves without worrying – it is obvious – about what the poet knew about it. Hence the consistency, in Plato, of the ostracism with which he deals with the poet in his *Republic* and the lively curiosity that he shows in *Cratylus* for these little beasts that words appear to be, as they do whatever suits them. We see how precious formalism was in sustaining the first steps of linguistics.

But it is all the same from stumblings in the steps of language, in what is called speech, that it really took off. That the subject is not what knows what it is saying, when there is well and truly said something through the mouth in which it lodges, of course, but also in the blunderings of a behaviour for which the brain is supposedly responsible but by which it is only helped when it is asleep, because this organ is shown to hold its subjective importance only from the fact that it regulates sleep, here is what Freud unveils as the unconscious. For my passage in this world, under the name of Lacan, will have consisted in articulating that it is that and that it is nothing else. Anyone at all can now assure himself of it, simply by reading me. Anyone at all therefore who operates according to these rules, by psychoanalysing, must hold to it, or otherwise pay for it by slipping into stupidity. So then, in stating that Freud anticipates linguistics, I am saying, for my part, what has to be recognised and is the formula that I am now releasing: the unconscious is the condition of linguistics. Without the eruption of the unconscious, there is no way for linguistics to emerge from the dubious light by which the University, in the name of the human sciences, still eclipses science. Crowned at Kiev by the good offices of Baudouin de Courtenay, it would no doubt have remained there. But the University has not said its last word, it is going to make this a subject for theses: ‘The influence on the genius of Raymond [*sic*] de Saussure of the genius of Freud, show how the first got wind of the second, before radio existed!’ To be that deaf is to behave as if it had not always happened. And why would Saussure not have realised, to borrow the terms of your quotation, I say to Monsieur Georgin, better than Freud himself, what Freud anticipated, specifically the Lacanian metaphor and metonymy, the locus where Saussure generated Jakobson?

If Saussure does not get away from the anagrams that he deciphers in Saturnian poetry, it is because he knows their true importance. Blackguardism does not make him stupid, because he is not an analyst. In this position on the contrary, the evil procedures that University infatuation is invested with do not miss their man – there is some hope in this – and lead him straight into the fib of saying that the unconscious is the condition of language, when he tries to make himself into an author at the cost of what I said, and drummed into those interested, namely, that language is the condition of the unconscious.

I still smile at this procedure which has become stereotypical, to the point that two others, but for the internal use of a Society, that its University bastardy has killed off, dared to define *passage à l'acte* and acting-out, very exactly terms that I had put forward to them as opposing one another, but simply inverting what I attributed to each one of them, as a way, they thought, of appropriating to themselves what no one had been able to articulate previously.

If I were to weaken now, the only work I would leave are these chosen rejects of my teaching that I made an obstacle to being made into news items, and the fact that they diffuse it says it all. What I stated in a confidential discourse nevertheless displaced the way people commonly hear things, to the point of bringing me an audience which bears witness to it by being so large and so stable. I remember the discomfort with which I was questioned by a man who had attended the presentation of my *Dialectic of desire and subversion of the subject* in front of an audience made up of people from the Party, the one and only, into which he, as a Marxist, had strayed. Very kindly, in the way I am always kind, I highlighted at the end of this reject in my *Ecrits* the bewilderment that had greeted it. “*Do you believe then, he said to me, that it is enough for you to have said something, written letters on the blackboard to produce a result?*” Such an exercise has nonetheless had its effect, I had the proof of it by way of a rejection which found a rightful place in my book, the funds of the Ford Foundation which had justified this meeting by paying for it, unbelievably dried up on the spot.

The effect that is propagated is not that of the communication of speech – this is intended for you – but the displacement of discourse. Freud not understood, even by himself, because of having tried to make himself understood, is less well served by his disciples than by this propagation, the one without which the convulsions of history remain a riddle, like the events of the month of May that baffle those who spend their time trying to make them a slave of a sense whose dialectic presents itself as derisive.

Right! If you are not too tired, I will tell you what I replied to the second question which was formulated as follows – you will see that it (6) is important:

Linguistics, psychoanalysis and ethnology have in common the notion of structure. Starting from this notion, Monsieur Georjin asks me, could one not imagine the articulation of a common field that would one day unify psychoanalysis, ethnology and linguistics?

I reply and I think that this answer is more important than the first impressionistic one that I gave. I answer as follows:

Structure is a word by which there is indicated the coming into play of the effect of language, starting from the fact that it a *petitio principii* to make of it an individual or collective function, or that it is supposed to be the support of something supposed in an existence which, whatever it may be, me or an organism adapted for knowledge, implies the someone of whom I spoke earlier. A function by which, then, someone represents for himself, as I might say, the relations that constitute the real, this latter term being posited as a Lacanian category. On the contrary it is from the presence already in reality, which is not categorical, but given, from the presence, not of relations in the first place, but of formulae of the relation, which are embodied in language, that we start to follow the effect of it which is properly structure. That is how a discourse can dominate reality without presupposing the consensus of anyone, because it is what determines difference by creating a barrier between the subject of statements and the stating subject. There is nothing more exempt from idealism, on the other hand there is no need to confine structuralists, unless one wants them to take responsibility for the inheritance of the rottenness covered, I am not saying caused, by existentialism. Anybody at all who takes his bearings from structure easily locate himself in it. In order to present here my answer to the unification – you remember: psychoanalysis, ethnology and something or other, linguistics – to the reunification that you propose to me. Note: what is special to the tongue is the way in which structure falls under the crystal-type effect described above. To describe this particular thing as arbitrary is the lapse that Saussure committed from the fact that reluctantly, of course, but because of that all the more open to stumbling, he took it up starting from this University discourse whose hidden aspect, as I show you, is

precisely this signifier that dominates the discourse of the Master, the signifier of the arbitrary. You see that to speak about the body is not a metaphor when the symbolic is at stake; because the aforesaid body is found to be a determinant for the body taken in the naïve sense. The first makes the second by being incorporated in it. Hence the incorporeal that remains to mark the first, from the time after its incorporation. Let us give due credit to the Stoics for having known how to stamp, by this term incorporeal, the way in which the symbolic is involved in the body. What I am going to speak about are incorporeal, namely, the function, not of the subject, but of what creates the reality of mathematics, the application of the same effect that gives reality to topology, or analysis in the broad sense for logic. But it is as incorporated that the structure creates affect, neither more nor less, an affect to be taken from the fact that an individual (*l'être*) is (7) articulated since it is only a being of fact, or because of having been said somewhere. In this way it is shown that it is secondary to the body, whether it is dead or alive. Who does not know the critical point from which we date man as a speaking being: the burial place, which is where in one species it is affirmed that contrary to any other, the dead body preserves in itself what gave to the living being the character of body. "Corpse", remains that do not become dead meat (*charogne*), the body in which there dwelt the word, that language "corpsified". Zoology can start from the pretension of the individual to be the being of whatever lives, but it is only to reduce it, to pursue it to the level of a colony of polyps. The body, taken seriously, is first of all what can bear its own mark by being ranked in a sequence of signifiers. From this mark, it is the support of the, not eventual, but necessary relation, because even to withdraw from it, is still to support it. Before any date, 'minus-one' (*moins-un*) designates the locus described by Lacan as the Other (with the abbreviation O). From the 'less one' (*un-en-moins*) the bed is made for intrusion which anticipates extrusion; it is the signifier itself. This is not the way of all flesh. Of those only that the sign by negating them, raises up, because bodies are separated from them, the clouds, the upper waters from their enjoyment, charged with a lightening that redistributes body and flesh. A re-division that is perhaps less countable, but with regard to which people do not seem to notice that ancient burial represents in it this very 'set' from which our most modern logic is articulated. The empty set of bones is the irreducible element from which are organised other elements, the instruments of

enjoyment, necklaces, goblets, arms: sub-members more to enumerate enjoyment than to make it enter into the body. Have I brought the structure to life? Enough, I think to announce that, as regards the domains that it is supposed to unite to psychoanalysis, nothing destines the two that you have spoken about in any special way.

Linguistics may define the material of psychoanalysis, or even the apparatus of its operation. It leaves blank the question of where there is produced what makes it effective, I mean what, by articulating it as the psychoanalytic act, I thought I could illuminate more than any other act. A domain is only dominated by an operator. The unconscious may be, as I said, the condition of linguistics; this does not give linguistics the slightest hold over it. I was able to put this to the test by the contribution with which I had asked the greatest French linguist to bestow an illustriousness on the beginnings of a journal done in my style, which because of this fact I had wanted to make more specific in its title: it was called *La Psychanalyse*, to recall it to those who held it cheap. From this request to the linguist, I had been hoping for a step forward in the problem of antithetical words, which you can well imagine I am not astonished was introduced by Freud. If the linguist can do no better, as it appeared, than to formulate that the comfort (*bon aise*) of the signified requires a choice in an antithesis, this ought to give people who, because they speak Arabic, have to deal a lot with such words, as much trouble as replying to an anthill that has (8) come alive.

There is no less a barrier on the side of ethnology. An investigator who allows his indigenous informant to tell him sweet nothings about her dreams will be brought up sharp if he attributes them to what is called the field. And the censor, in doing this, as he calls it, does not appear to me, even if he is Lévi-Strauss himself to show contempt for my little patch. What would happen to the field if he went soft on the unconscious? That would not give it, whatever might be dreamt, any exploratory effect, but rather our sort of puddle.[?] Because an enquiry that limits itself – it is its very definition – to the collection of a knowledge, will find itself being fed by our own type of knowledge. And you must not expect even a psychoanalysis to record the myths that have conditioned a subject just because he grew up in Togo or in Paraguay. Because psychoanalysis – I

already pointed this out to you here – operates from the discourse that conditions it and that I am defining this year by taking it from its reverse side.

One will obtain, even from it, no other myth than the one that remains in our discourse: the Freudian Oedipus complex. As regards the material from which the analysis of a myth is carried out, let us listen to Lévi-Strauss stating that it is untranslatable, if you understand this correctly, because what it says literally, is that it does not matter in what tongue they are collected. They will always be themselves analysable by being theorised in large units – this is the term of Lévi-Strauss – by means of which a definitive mythologising will articulate them. One can grasp here the mirage of a common level with what I would call the universality of analytic discourse, but, and because of the one who proves it, Lévi-Strauss on this occasion, without the illusion being produced. Because psychoanalysis does not operate by means of an interplay of mythemes. The fact that it can only take place in a particular tongue that is called a positive tongue, even if use is made of translation in the course of analysis, guarantees “that there is no metalanguage”, as my own formula goes. The effect of language is only produced there from the linguistic crystal. Its universality is only the topology that is rediscovered, because of the fact that a discourse is displaced in it, this discourse specified by the fact that mythology at the final limit is reduced to it. Should I add that the myth, in the articulation of Lévi-Strauss, is: the only ethnological form to justify your question, I say to Georgin – the unification – that the myth therefore in this articulation alone rejects everything that I promoted about the agency of the letter in the unconscious. The myth does not operate either from metaphor nor even from any metonymy. It does not condense, it explains. It does not displace, it dwells, even in changing the order of the tents. It only operates by combining its heavy units, in which the complement that guarantees the presence of the couple, demonstrates the weight of a knowledge. This knowledge is precisely what ruins the apparition of its structure. So then in (9) psychoanalysis – because also moreover in the unconscious – man knows nothing about the woman, nor the woman about the man. It is in the phallus that there is summarised the mythical point by which the sexual is implicated in the passion of the signifier. That this point appears moreover to multiply itself is what particularly fascinates the academic

in whose discourse this point is lacking. From this there proceeds the recruiting of novices into ethnology. And this marks the humorous effect, black humour of course, of painting oneself in the colours of a particular sector.

Ah! For want of a University that might be ethnic, we are going to make a University out of an ethnic. Hence the wager of this fishing expedition that defines the field as the locus where there can be written down a knowledge whose very essence is that it cannot be transmitted by writing. Since we despair of ever seeing the final class, let us recreate the first, the echo of knowledge that there is in classification. The professor only comes back at dawn... I would say as a counter point to Hegel. You know the story of the owl and twilight.

I would even keep my distance from saying that I take structure on board: because of what your question brings into play in terms of psychoanalysis. First of all, just because I defined the signifier as no one had ever dared to, you should not imagine that the sign is not my concern! Quite the contrary it is my first and it will also be my last. But this detour was necessary. What I exposed in terms of an implicit semiotics whose disarray was the only thing to allow linguistics, does not mean that it does not have to be redone, and in that same name, because in fact it is from the one that remains to be constructed that we will refer back to the ancients. If the signifier represents a subject, says Lacan – not a signifier – and for another signifier – let us insist: not for another subject – so then how can it fall to the level of the sign which as long as logicians have been around, represents something for someone? I am thinking about the Buddhist in wanting to bring life to my crucial question, the one that I have just posed, the fall of the signifier to the sign, I will bring it to life with the: no smoke without fire. As a psychoanalyst, it is by the sign that I am warned. If it signals to me the something that I have to treat, I know, by having through the logic of the signifier found a way to break the lure of the sign, that this something is the division of the subject, which division is due to the fact that it is the other who makes the signifier, which means it will only be able to represent a subject by only being a one of the other [?] This division has repercussions on the avatars of the (10) assault which this division as such confronted it with the knowledge of the sexual,

traumatically, from the fact that this assault is condemned to failure in advance for the reason that I have said, that the signifier is not suitable for giving body to a formula about sexual relationships. Hence my statement: there is no sexual relationship, to be understood as: that can be formulated in structure. This ‘something’ into which the psychoanalyst, by interpreting, brings about an intrusion of the signifier, certainly I have been wearing myself out for twenty years to ensure that he will not take it to be a thing, because it is a fault (*faillie*), indeed one of structure. But if he wants to make someone of it, it is the same thing, because it goes from the personality to the total person, that ne’er-do-wells sometimes go on about. The slightest memory of the unconscious requires, nevertheless, the maintenance at that place of the two of some kind, with this supplement from Freud that it cannot satisfy any other unification than that of the logic that is written as: either one or the other. If this is how things are at the beginning, when the signifier turns into a sign, where now can we find the someone that has to be urgently procured for it? This is the *hic* that turns into *nunc* by simply being a psychoanalyst, but also Lacanian. Who does not know that soon everyone will be such – my audience is a prodromus of it – and so the psychoanalysts as well. For that, the rise to the social zenith of the object described by me as *o* will be enough, through the anxiety effect that is obviously provoked, which the product of our discourse [*a slip*] ... which our discourse provides by failing to produce it. That it should be by such a fall that the signifier drops to the sign, is proved among us by the fact that when people no longer know which way to turn (*à quel saint se vouer*), in other words when there are no more signifiers to cook – that is what the saint provides, as you know – you buy anything whatsoever, specifically an automobile, which is enough to give a sign of understanding, as one might say, one’s boredom, or in other words the affect of the desire for something Other – with a capital O. This says nothing about the small *o* because it is only deducible to the measure of the psychoanalysis of each one, which explains that few psychoanalysts handle it properly, even if they have got it in my seminar.

I will speak therefore in a parable, namely, to throw people off the scent. In looking more closely at the ‘no smoke’, as I might say, perhaps one might take the step of noticing that it is of the fire that this ‘no’ gives a sign. What it gives a sign of conforms

to our structure. Because since Prometheus, smoke is rather the sign of this subject that is represented by a match, first signifier, for its box, the second, that for Ulysses approaching an unknown shore, smoke in the first place allows him to presume that it is not a desert island. Our smoke is therefore the sign, why not, of the smoker? But go on to the producer of the fire: it would be more materialistic and as dialectical as one could wish. That Ulysses nevertheless gives the someone, is put in doubt by recalling also that he is 'no one'. He is in any case no one in that a foolish Polyphemus is deceived by it. But the obvious fact that it is not to give a sign to Ulysses that the smokers have pitched camp, (11) suggests to us a greater rigour at the source of the sign. Because it makes us sense, as in passing, that the mistake made in seeing the world as a phenomenon, is that the noumenon, by thus being only able to give a sign to the *nous*, in other words, to the supreme someone, another sign of intelligence, shows the poverty from which yours proceeds in supposing that everything gives a sign: it is the someone from somewhere, from nowhere, who must be manipulating everything. Let that help us to put the 'no smoke without fire' at the same level as 'no prayer without God', so that we may understand what has changed. It is curious that forest fires do not show the someone to whom the careless sleep of the smoker is addressed. And that it required the phallic joy, the primitive urination with which man, says psychoanalysis, replies to fire, to put us on the path of the fact that there is, Horatio, in heaven and earth, more materials to make a subject than the objects that your knowledge imagines. Products for example for the quality of which, in the Marxist perspective of surplus value, the producers, rather than the master, could hold to account for the exploitation that they undergo. When one has recognised the sort of surplus enjoying that makes one say 'that's really someone', one will be perhaps on the path of a dialectical matter perhaps more suitable than the Party-fodder (*chair à Parti*), well known for making himself the *babysitter* of history. It could be the psychoanalyst if his *passee* were illuminated.

This is how I answered the second question. There is a third which is the following:

Would not one of the possible articulations between psychoanalysis and linguistics be the privilege accorded to metaphor and metonymy, by Jakobson on the linguistic plane and by you on the psychoanalytic plane?

I will not read the reply I gave to this question, because it is so impertinent that it pisses me off. There has been enough nonsense talked about whether or not I borrowed metaphor and metonymy from Jakobson. When I produced them, I thought all the same that among my listeners, there were some who knew who Jakobson was! They only discovered it a fortnight later because I said it when I brought out my contraption. Only at that people said to me: look at Lacan, he is not quoting Jakobson! After which they read Jakobson, and realised that I had all the less reason to quote Jakobson in that I was saying something completely different. And at that point they said to me: Ah! He's turning Jakobson upside down. He's distorting him! Anyway, these are all anecdotes!

Question Four: You say that the discovery of the unconscious culminates at a second Copernican revolution – Ha! That makes your hearts sink! – In what way is the unconscious a key notion that subverts the whole theory of knowledge?

(12) OK, let's go and after that we'll leave it.

Your question gives rise to some hopes tinged with a certain 'frighten me', that is inspired by the meaning that has come down to our epoch in the word: revolution. One could note the passage of this word to a super-egoistic function in politics, to an ideal role in the prize list of thinking. I note that I am not the one who plays here on these resonances whose deadening I say, only the structural cut can combat, I mean the resonances. I say that the structural cut alone can give its full sense to the word revolution. Why not start from the irony that revolution should be made the responsibility of celestial revolutions, which don't quite catch its tone? What is revolutionary in the re-centring of the sun around the solar world? After all, in listening to what I am articulating this year about a discourse of the Master, one may find that it completes very well its revolution, which, by the loop taken by science, by the *episteme*

that I am demonstrating to be its aim, can be accounted for by its start from an absolute master-signifier which here is represented by the sun. In common consciousness, the idea that it turns around, this is heliocentrism – what I love, is that Gloria made a typing error a little earlier, because this morning she typed that as, she wrote: *hegocentrism*. I find that sublime! And it implies that it turns around, without there being any further need to look at it. Can I blame Galileo for the political insolence of the *Roi-Soleil*? The Ancients, on the contrary, found a kind of dialectical usage to which the appearances, which result from the tipping over of the earth onto the ecliptic, lend themselves. The images of light and shade are ready there for an articulated discourse. I would put in opposition to heliocentrism, a photocentrism, as being much less enslaving. The metaphor that Freud takes from Copernicus, and to connote from it, for his part, if you remember his text, rather an effect of collapse than of subversion, is aiming in fact at attacking centrism itself. Exactly, the received pretension of a psychology that one can say all the more unbroached at his epoch in that it is still so at ours: the pretension of consciousness of wanting to classify what it has at its disposition in the register of representation. It is clear in reading this figure of an encompassing completely insouciant, we could say, of the requirements of a topology because of what it is simply unaware of, that this is what is aimed at in the metaphor. It is in deepening this that one encounters its relevance and this is why I am taking it up again. Because the history taken textually from where the Copernican revolution is inscribed, demonstrates that it is not the change of centre that is its essential, to the point - in parenthesis - that for Copernicus himself it was the least of his worries. That around which there turns – but precisely it is not the word to use – around which there gravitates (13) the effect of a knowledge which is on the way to locating itself as imaginary, is clearly – it can be read, by keeping a diary of Kepler's approach as Koyré did – to free oneself from the idea that the circular form, because it is the most perfect, is the only one that is appropriate to be applied to the celestial body. To introduce, in effect, the elliptical trajectory is to ensure that it aims at getting closer to the focus occupied by the master body, but also of the other, as empty as it is obscure, which slows it down. Here is where the importance of Galileo lies, not in this ellipse, which he does not seem to have spent much time on in any case, except in the skirmishing of his trial, whose stake I indicated earlier is ambiguous,

even though not the side to be taken in it. His importance lies in the first steps that he arranges to have carried out in the research about the fall of bodies by which this ellipse is going to be illuminated. What I mean, is that if there is something in history, to illustrate, in the most opaque fashion moreover, the definition that I gave of structure, it is the formula that Newton finally gives as a key to this fall of bodies, by definitively explaining through it the path of the stars. Because it is also the presence at every point of the real, in other words in every element of mass, of the formula of attraction taken in itself, in other words a second-degree equation. Because this is what we have succeeded in stifling, by no longer thinking about it, by completely forgetting the surprise and the scandal shown by Newton's contemporaries, at the fact that every point in the world is aware at every instant of the masses in operation and exercises a pull on them as far as this world extends. Is it necessary to recall here that the gravitational field is distinguished by its weakness compared to other fields, the electromagnetic one, for example, brought into play by physics, and that it moreover resists the ideal, that is nevertheless almost realised, of the unification of the field. In any case from the twist in transcendental aesthetics – I mean these terms in the Kantian sense – that is constituted by the Einsteinian correction, in its stuff, the curvature of space, and in its justification, necessitated by a transmission that the limited speed of light does not allow to cancel out, it remains that the Newtonian revolution has proved to be unthinkable – this is what Newton himself admits in his "*Hypotheses non fingo*" – and that it confirms my formula that the impossible is the Real. There is no point in underlining that in the moon landing, the LM, it is the same formula, this time realised in an apparatus, that is at stake. This is what makes me underline the a-cosmicity of present reality. All of this is in no way saying that Newton should be put under the heading of structuralism, or even ascribed to structure, but first of all that our science finds itself in the field of the exact, already articulated from the fact that the problem is posed in the field of the conjectural ones. In order underline subsequently the form that one could describe as uneducatable which, in the theory of knowledge, is specified by (14) psychology. Because if as it is claimed, Kant is justified by a so-called cosmology that needs to be renovated after Newton, how does it come about that there is nothing articulated in it about what Newton put forward in terms of the formula of the relation as intruder into the real? The thing in itself, on the

contrary, the one Kant requires, is quite simply nothing other than psychology, which is stated there, just as in Wolf, indeed in d'Alembert. And in just the same way, there will be the "autonomous ego" dragged in straight up by the New York clique despite the Freudian revolution. Let me show my hand, about this ego and this psychology: the thing in itself is the knowledge that the world has of itself. It is not surprising that the forms of this knowledge are defined as *a priori*, since this world, is, by this fact, total. But what had these forms got to do with the Newton's equations and what can be deduced from them as acceleration? There is nothing astonishing in that pure or practical reason are incapable here of demonstrating again anymore that they are not as organs, in this respect like the rest, just as intrinsically specularised as the being of a solid may be when it is constructed by a revolution, in other words derived from an intuitive geometry that is not revolutionary at all. I note here that revolution, no matter what capital R is attached to it in French, is nevertheless at present reduced to what it is for Chateaubriand: the return of the master, the very one, the great one, our own, who only precipitates for a historian, worthy of this name, Tocqueville, the ideologies of the *Ancien Régime*, indeed for another, Taine, a madness that is worth a precautionary internment until it has calmed down. Without mentioning the rhetorical debauchery that is supposed to disqualify it. This is how it would be if Marx had not given it its structural titles, by justifying it from the discourse of the capitalist, with the discovery that this involves, of surplus value as foreclosed in this discourse, but animating by this fact class consciousness, in other words allowing the political work that Lenin brought about. This is why my analysis of Freud reiterates Copernicus from a different angle to that of metaphor. Freud in the unconscious discovers the incidence of a knowledge such that in escaping consciousness, because it is outside its grasp, is nevertheless denoted as properly articulated, structured I say, like a language, otherwise unthinkable as regards the effects by which it is marked, but moreover, not implying anything whatsoever that knows it, in the double sense of: know about things, as an artisan knows about things, complicit with a nature to which it is born at the same time as it, and of recognising oneself in it in the way in which conscience makes us believe that there is no knowledge that does not know itself to be knowing. Such is this knowledge described as unconscious, as regards which it seems, without my being able to immediately sanction it, that once more, it is the impossible that

rejects it into the real. If it exists, it is sufficient to disqualify the illusion of a simple knowledge, not that it does not exist, but as a mirage to be contradicted. Knowledge is a function of a nature, which here only knows itself from a denaturing produced with (15) respect to this knowledge, by a succession of retorts, the first affecting this – this knowledge – by producing in it the repression of signifiers. Most especially the negative figure, adding to itself the condition of representability which, however material it may be, the fact of the signifier rejects. Nevertheless that there comes back from it, an expressly articulated retort – and this is what gives it its value – the denial – I underline the term – that corresponds to it in Freud, *Verleugnung*, the denial that the unconscious contributes of what in its effects that I have just mentioned be interpreted as a meaning (*sens*). This means that the unconscious exults only in non- sense, precisely in ‘nonsense’, later it takes part in nature only to avoid meeting it. I am only recalling, to remind you, and for those who are unaware of them, these Lacanian banalities, which through my work are inscribed under the rubric of *Formations of the unconscious*. And I underline, that here I did not articulate neuroses. If I have to complete these banalities, it is because of the fact that there is rejected this operation of the insistence of unconscious knowledge starting from a conceivable subject, in order to pronounce on them what Freud calls the verdict – remember these terms: a judgement that rejects and condemns – that, as I say foreclosed from the symbolic, this knowledge reappears in the real of hallucination. It is in order to fix these terms correctly that I had for years, to roll over and over at the feet of those for whom it was their day-to-day experience, without dragging them from these dreams that for them are fairly representable so that they can continue to sleep. It was enough that, afraid of an eventual waking, they believed in my reality, and rejected me from these symbolic delights. From which, brought back to the real of the *ENS*, of being, therefore – you can write that with a ‘g’ if you wish – of the *étang* of the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, I heard myself from the first day being really summoned to declare what being I accorded to all of that. I answered that the question appeared to me to be inappropriate, that I did not believe myself to be responsible for any ontology with respect to my listeners. The fact is that by breaking them into my *logie* I made *honteux* of its ‘onto’. I have drunk deep of all ‘onto’ for a long time as my answers here bear witness. I will go straight to the point and not allow the wood to hide the trees:

being is only born from the flaw that the *étant* produces by speaking. A formula that relegates the author to putting his act as its means. This *étant* must then have the time to express itself. This “needs the time” (*faut du temps*) is properly how being solicits us in the unconscious. It is indeed to being that there corresponds each time that “time is necessary”, but listen, I operate decisively with the crystal of my tongue to refract the signifier, to decompose the subject. Time is necessary for it: it is French that I am speaking to you (*que je vous cause*), not distress I hope. What is necessary in this ‘time is necessary’ describes the flaw from which I started. It is on the term: ‘what is necessary (*ce qui faudra*)’ that I operate. And even though the practice in a grammar designed to prevent Belgians from committing Belgicisms – it is a book I have a lot of respect for – is not (16) recommended by this *faudra*, it is recognised in it. Otherwise the grammar *faudrait* its duties. However necessary it is that it should be there, you touch by this little proof that it is indeed from lack that in French the *falloir* becomes necessity. Even though *l’estuet* – because that was how it was pronounced: *est opus, est opus temporis* on this occasion, even though *l’estuet* started, as I might say, by drifting from the *l’estuair* (estuary) of old French. Inversely, this *falloir* returns to *faillie*, not by chance, from the subjunctive modality, to *défaillance: à moins qu’il faille* (unless it is necessary...). At what level for the articulation of the unconscious can we find the attachment of saying to being? Undoubtedly, the degree to which time is part of its stuff is not an imaginary currency, but let us say that it is textile, made up of knots which only means the holes that are found there. This level has no *en-soi* (in itself) except what falls into it from masochism. This is precisely what psychoanalysis picks out by relegating it from a someone, who is going to support the “needs time” as long as is necessary so that from this saying, *l’étant* makes being of something. You know that I wanted for a few months to introduce the enormity of the psychoanalytic act. This someone, picked out by the psychoanalyst, is that by which the being to come is determined, in the same way as someone has defined the path of the true. This was done by the Stoics, not without some coherence – no, I beg your pardon, I skipped, I’m tired, I skipped a little paragraph. There is only one knowledge that mediates the true, it is logic which only got going in the right way when it made the true and the false into pure signifiers, T, F, or as they say again, values. This was done by the Stoics, not without coherence with the morality of a

politicised masochism. The rejection of Greek mechanics barred the access to mathematical logic from which alone there could be built up a purely textured true. That is why the Stoics could be harassed by the Sceptics, whose critique is only sustained – paradoxically – from the supposition of a true of nature, even if they held it to be inaccessible. This is precisely what psychoanalytic experience refutes, everyone learning from it that the true of nature can be summed up in the enjoyment that allows the true of texture. The interval that someone operates on by intervening in it, in psychoanalysis, is only representable by the distance between the written and the word. It is only from the written that a logic could be sustained, the logic described as mathematical, in which the Sceptics would be surprised to note that it obtains the irrefutable assurance of the true on assertions just as empty as, for example:

- A system defined as the order of arithmetic only achieves consistency by always obtaining a separation of the true and the false by confirming itself as being incomplete, in other words by requiring formulae that can be verified elsewhere to be unprovable:
- (17)
- Or again, this unprovable is derived on the other hand from a demonstration which decides on it independently of its truth;
 - Or again, there is an undecideable that is articulated from the fact that the unprovable cannot even be decided.

The cuts of the articulated text of the unconscious must be recognised from such a structure, namely, from what they allow to lapse. Because here once again I am going to take advantage of the crystal of the tongue, to remark that this *chu*, because it is *falsus* in Latin, links the false certainly, very distinctly in its sense as opposed to the true, to our “needs time” and to its “*faillir*”, because it is the past participle of *fallere* from which the two verbs *faillir* and *falloir* come, each from its detour. And note that I only bring in etymology in order to support the effect of the homophonic crystal. The fact is also that the dimension of the false has to correct itself when it is a matter of interpretation. It is

precisely by being *falsa*, even if not completely appropriate, that an interpretation operates because being is to one side. It must not be forgotten that in psychoanalysis the *falsus* is causal of being in the process of verification. Freud no doubt, at his epoch, did not need any more in this field than the support of Brentano, which is perfectly distinguishable even though discreet, in a text like that of the *Verneinung*. It would be enough to indicate where the someone is up to the job from the side of the analyst, even if I did not force the way finally to his purity as a logical bottle-imp. But there is added to it in Freud this feature that I believe to be decisive, the unique faith that he had in these Jews with whom moreover he rejected what must be carefully noted by his mark of aversion: occultism. This unique faith was had in them of not failing the earthquake of the truth. Why them and not others, if not because the Jew – and Freud ended up like them – is the one who, throughout all the centuries starting from the return from Babylon wherever he went, knew how to read and that the Midrash is his path – the Midrash, I am going to tell you what it is. Because they had the book with the most historical, the most anti-mythical style there is, the Bible, the Hebrew people interrogated literally each one of its letters and these even from an inflection of a desinent, from an inversion, or even the placing together of something that is not held to be preconceived, to question the Book for example about what it had not been able to say about the childhood of Moses. Why in this interval where Freud had so clearly seen the false operating, was it necessary for him to push the death of the father, and not be satisfied, another crystal-type effect, with simply the sickle of time (*la faux du temps*)?

Seminar 11: Wednesday 15 April 1970

I will not say that I am introducing to you Professor André Caquot, director of studies at the fifth section of Religious Sciences at Hautes Etudes, where, as you know, I am a lecturer. I will not say that I am introducing him because I do not have to introduce him to you. I introduce myself as having been, by his grace and kindness, entirely dependent on him during the time that has passed since two days before our last meeting, that is, from the moment I decided I wanted to get to know a thing or two about, to approach the question of, Sellin's book. I have said enough about this book for you to be aware of its importance. For those who by chance have come here for the first time I recall that this is the book that comes at the right moment, or again, as I expressed myself, like a ring on a finger, for Freud, so that he is able to defend his thesis that the death of Moses was a murder, namely, that Moses is supposed to have been killed.

I learnt, thanks to Monsieur Caquot, how this book is situated first of all with respect to exegesis, namely, its insertion in the flowering of what can be called textual criticism as it was established, especially in the 19th century, in German universities. It was necessary to locate Sellin with respect to those who preceded him and those who came after him, Edouard Meyer and Gressman, before many others, to grasp the point of view that he introduced, whose dimensions are given in this text. It was not without some difficulty, as I indicated the last time, that I managed to get hold of this book, since it was nowhere to be found in Europe. Through the efforts of the *Alliance Israélite Française* I ended up by getting it from Copenhagen and thus I had a text that I could bring to the attention of Monsieur Caquot who is one of the rare people not only to have heard of it but to have already had it in his hands sometime before I came and made my request. And we examined this text very specially as regards the point at which it (2) enables Freud to situate what he has his heart set on, and not necessarily for the same reason as Sellin. That necessarily obliged us to turn to this field in which my ignorance is profound. You

are incapable of knowing everything that I do not know! Fortunately, moreover, because if you knew everything that I do not know you would know everything! As a result of the attempt I made to put into order what I myself was able to learn from Monsieur Caquot, I suddenly realised that there is a big difference between knowledge, knowing what one is speaking about, what one believes one is capable of speaking about, and what is involved in what I will presently describe using a term that will serve to explain what we are going to do here. For the second time then, there will be a break in the way I address you. Last time you were subjected to a difficult trial, to the point that some of you suggested the hypothesis that it was done in order to air the room a bit – not very successfully, I see. This time I believe you will, on the contrary, have grounds for staying. And if, subsequently, I had to offer you again what I am able to do today thanks to Monsieur Caquot, it would be in a different way. Let us say that, all things considered, I felt myself drawing back from the thought of handling again today what we have been forced to handle, namely, Hebrew letters. In the text I read out to you the last time I inserted a definition from the *Midrash*. What is at stake is a relationship to written material (*l'écrit*) that is subjected to certain laws that are of great interest to us. In effect, as I told you, it is a question of placing oneself in the interval of a certain relationship between written material and a spoken intervention which is based on it and refers to it. The whole of analysis, I mean analytic technique, can, in a certain way, be elucidated by this reference, by being considered as an 'operation' – in quotes – of interpretation. This term has been used indiscriminately ever since people have been talking about conflicting interpretations, for example – as if there could be any conflict of interpretations! At the very most, interpretations complement one another, they operate precisely with this reference. What is important here is what I told you the last time: the *falsum*, with the ambiguity that around this word there can be established the fall (*chute*) of the false, I mean what is contrary to the true. I said that on occasion, this falsity of interpretation may even have its impact by displacing the discourse.

(3) So then what we are going to do is this. I cannot wish for better in order to transmit to you what is at stake. For me this can in no way meet the requirements of a knowledge in this field, but rather something that I have called getting a whiff (*une mise-au-parfum*) of

something. I am going to continue the operation in your presence, that is, continue trying to get a whiff of something, by a way that has nothing fictitious about it, by questions that necessarily remain unexhausted, the ones I put to Monsieur Caquot over the last few days. In this respect I will be, like you, in a relationship of getting a whiff of a certain knowledge, that of biblical exegesis. Do I need to tell you that Monsieur Caquot is in this fifth section as an expert in Comparative Semitic Religions? I believe, from the experience I have had of him, that nobody in this domain could be more appropriate, in the sense that I found him to be so myself, to make you feel what Sellin's approach is all about, when he extracts from the text of *Hosea* - you will see by what procedures - something that he himself really wants to bring out. He has his reasons for this, and these reasons are important for us. What Monsieur Caquot taught me about this matter is also precious.

I mentioned ignorance earlier. To be a father, I mean not only a Real Father but a father of the real, there are things that one must be fiercely unaware of. It would be necessary, in a certain way, to be unaware of everything that is not concerned with what I tried to fix in my text last time as the level of structure, this having been defined from the order of the effects of language. This is where one falls, as I might say, on truth – the on (*sur*) being equally able to be replaced by from (*de*). One falls from truth, namely, a remarkable thing, if we envisage this absolute reference, we could say that anyone who sticks to it – but of course it is impossible to stick to it – would not know what he is saying. Saying this certainly does not in any way specify or serve to specify the analyst. This would be to put him - or more exactly, you are ready to tell me that this would be to put him - on the same level as everybody else. Who knows, in effect, what he is saying? But this would be a mistake. It is not because everybody speaks that everybody says something. What might be at stake is an entirely different reference, of knowing into what discourse one is inserted, at the limit of this position that is in a way fictitious. There is someone who corresponds to that position, and whom I am going to name without hesitation, because it seems to me to be essential to the interest that we analysts should have in Hebrew history and to the fact that it is perhaps (4) not conceivable for psychoanalysis to have been born anywhere other than in this tradition. And someone

was born into it who insists, as I have emphasised, on the fact that to advance things in the field he has discovered, he has confidence properly speaking only in these Jews, who have known how to read for quite a long time, and who live – this is the *Talmud* – with reference to a text. He, or what, I am going to name, who realises this radical position of fierce ignorance, has a name: it is Yahweh himself.

In his challenge to this chosen people, the characteristic of Yahweh is that he is fiercely unaware of everything that exists, at the time he announces himself, of certain practices, of certain relationships, of the religions that existed and flourished at the time, and which are founded on a certain type of knowledge – precisely sexual knowledge. When we talk about *Hosea* presently, we shall see the extent to which his invective against them is directed at this point, at whatever is involved in a relationship that mixes supernatural agencies with nature itself, which in a way depends on it.

What right do we have to say that was based on nothing, that the way to touch Baal who, in return fertilised the earth, did not correspond to something that might be effective? Why not? Simply because there was Yahweh, and because a certain discourse was inaugurated that I am trying this year to isolate as the reverse side of analytic discourse, namely, the discourse of the Master, precisely because of that, we no longer know anything about it. Is this the position that the analyst should take up? Surely not. The analyst – and I would go as far as to say that I have been able to experience it in myself – the analyst does not have this fierce passion that surprises us so much where Yahweh is concerned. Yahweh situates himself at the most paradoxical point with respect to another perspective that would be, for example, that of Buddhism, where one is recommended to purify oneself of the three fundamental passions, love, hate and ignorance. What is most striking in this unique religious manifestation is that Yahweh lacks none of them. Love, hate and ignorance, as you can see, are passions that are not properly speaking absent from his discourse. What distinguishes the analyst's position – today I am not going to write it on the board using my little schema, where the analyst's position is indicated by the \bullet -object on the top left – and it is the only sense that can be given to (5) analytic neutrality, is not to partake in these passions. This means that he is all the time in an uncertain zone where he is vaguely in quest of getting into step with, getting a whiff of,

what is involved in the knowledge that he has nevertheless, properly speaking, to repudiate. What is at stake today is a way of tackling Yahweh's dialogue with his people, namely, what Sellin might have had in mind, and also what is revealed to us by the encounter that came about with what interests Freud – which is properly speaking along this line, but in which he stops, in which he fails, making the thematic of the father a sort of mythical knot – which is now one of the perspectives that I have to develop for you - a short circuit, or, to be exact, a failure.

I told you that the Oedipus complex is Freud's dream. Like any dream it needs to be interpreted. We have to see where this displacement- effect is produced, which is to be understood as what can be produced by a certain shift in a writing. The Real Father, if we can try to rehabilitate him from Freud's articulation, can be properly articulated to what concerns only the imaginary father, namely, the prohibition of enjoyment. On the other hand, what makes him essential is masked, namely, the castration that I was alluding to just now in saying that there was here an order of fierce ignorance, I mean at the place of the real father. This is what I hope I may to be able to demonstrate to you all the more easily in that today we shall have clarified a certain number of things about Mr Sellin. This is why, if you don't mind, I will be the first to put a few questions to Monsieur Caquot.

He is well aware, since I have told him about it in a thousand ways, what our basic problem is about – how, why, did Freud need Moses? It is obvious that it is essential to know this to have some idea of what is meant by Moses. Sellin's text effectively begins by raising this question *Who was Moses?* And by summarising the various positions of those who came before him, and who are working along with him.

There is no question of these positions being clarified except in function of the question of knowing how long Yahweh has been (6) around. Was Yahweh already the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Is this a tradition that we can trust? Or was this tradition retroactively reconstituted by the religious founder who would then be Moses inasmuch as, at the foot of Horeb, or more precisely on Horeb itself, he is supposed to have

received in writing, you should note, the Tablets of the Law? Obviously it is completely different. Sellin's book revolves, properly speaking around *Mose und seine Bedeutung für die israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte*.

Why was it necessary for Sellin to present us a Moses who had been killed? This is a question I do not even want to begin to answer, so as to leave the field completely open to Monsieur Caquot. It is certain that this is closely linked to the fact that Moses is regarded as a prophet. Why is it in his capacity as a prophet that he has to be killed? More precisely, Sellin thinks he has undergone the death of a martyr because he is a prophet. This, I think, is what Monsieur Caquot wants to clarify for us

Monsieur Caquot: Allow me first of all to present the personage we are talking about because we are here not to explain the text of *Hosea* – we would need to spend the rest of the year on that – but to explain an opinion on *Hosea*, that of Ernst Sellin.

Ernst Sellin is the very model of these German University professors at the beginning of the century, of the 20th century. He was born in 1867 and he had an absolutely rectilinear career as a professor of the Old Testament in the Protestant faculties of theology in Germany. At the time, in 1920, he was a full professor of the Old Testament at the University of Berlin. It is perhaps no harm to know something about his ideology.

Sellin was a fairly typical representative of evangelical Protestantism, what we would rather describe as liberal today, in this Germany at the end of the 19th century. The religion of Israel is above all seen by people of this tendency as, if you wish, a lesson in morality. They always insist on the ethical elements in “revelation”. Now these ethical elements we find – and this was the most common opinion in Sellin's time – on the one hand in what are called the major prophets such as the *Isaiahs*, *Jeremiah*, and then in the minor prophets also, the 12 minor prophets among which *Amos* and *Hosea* are the oldest representatives, and on the other hand this moral revelation is found (7) in the Decalogue, the Decalogue, in particular what is called the ethical Decalogue of *Exodus* 20 which you know as the Ten Commandments. Sellin attributes the Ten Commandments – and he is not the only one – to Moses himself. And so then how can

we link up these two high points of Old Testament revelation? Sellin then posits the following, which is a sort of postulate: the prophets, the great prophets who wrote, are the inheritors of the Mosaic tradition, of the true tradition that has come from Moses and which also comprises, conveys, authentic elements about the life, the fate of Moses who is the first prophet. There is supposed to be then, if you wish, a continuity between Moses and Hosea since we are talking about him. The second element that determined his reflection in *Mose und seine Bedeutung* and which led him to affirm, to advance this thesis, which I hasten to say is extremely uncommon. The thesis of the death of Moses had never been defended before him except by Goethe in a passage that I do not know, but which has been picked out and that Sellin himself did not know. It was a few years later that Karl Bude, one of Sellin's colleagues, pointed out that this idea of the death of Moses had already been put forward by Goethe.

So then, why the death of Moses? I will venture to redo in the opposite direction, if you wish, the presentation of the book *Mose und seine Bedeutung* by Ernst Sellin. The point is that there is a rather significant fact. At the moment when Sellin was writing his *Mose und seine Bedeutung*, which appeared in 1922, he had just finished a commentary on the twelve minor prophets including naturally the book of *Hosea*, which had been published in the same year, 1922, in a series of exegetical commentaries that are called the *K.A.T.: Kommentar zum Alten Testament, "Die zwölf Propheten Buch"*, the book of the twelve minor prophets. In this commentary on *Hosea*, there is no question for even an instant of the death of Moses. He skips over the passages that he discusses throughout the book of the *Mose und seine Bedeutung*, he gives a completely different exegesis of it. He still had not made, as one might say, this discovery, he had not yet conceived this hypothesis of a death of Moses. So then I think that it is after having completed the writing of his commentary on Moses (*sic*) that Sellin came on this idea while reflecting on something else. And this something else, is another biblical passage quite different to *Hosea*, but which is equally prophetic, it is the *Deutero-Isaiah*, chapters 40 and following of the *Book of Isaiah* and in particular the chapters, the end of chapter 52 to the beginning of chapter of 53, a collection by a prophet of the 6th century in which there is question of a servant of Yahweh whose sufferings have an expiatory value for the sins of the people,

which is considered by the Christian tradition and also by this Protestant (8) exegetical tradition as also being one of the high points of Old Testament revelation because it introduced the idea of a redemptive death and that there is certainly in the Gospel or in Christian writings the appropriation of the figure of the suffering servant onto the person of Jesus. That is undeniable. So then starting from that, look at the importance that he attaches to Moses, the importance that he attaches to the prophets, from *Hosea* up to the *Deutero-Isaiah*, who is also a prophet, as hereditary successors of Moses. Sellin, I believe, made the following discovery: the suffering servant of *Deutero-Isaiah*, whose death has a redemptive value, is Moses himself. And starting from there, he set about trying to rediscover, in the earlier prophetic books, allusions to the death of Moses. And this is where he reinterpreted a certain number of passages from *Hosea* in order to get them to say – I really mean to get them to say – that there was a question of the death of Moses. *Hosea*, right, one of the oldest prophets, a guardian of the prophetic tradition, namely, of the authentic tradition about Moses, is supposed to have expressed – it has to be said in covert words, and words that are so covert that they are probably not there – the death of Moses.

Lacan: Not that they were not there, but they had never been previously read.

Caquot: ...that had never been read, never read before Sellin and which were never read after Sellin. But as you can see, I believe that it is obviously a type of study that you are not accustomed to, but it is rather amusing to see how Sellin proceeded and that gives you an idea; moreover there is no need to cast a stone at him: the exegetes of that epoch considered in a way that the copyists of the Bible did not know Hebrew. I am putting this in a rather crude way, but when all is said and done that's it. They said: it's bad Hebrew, so then it has to be corrected. So then the results: they took a sentence that was obviously enigmatic, very difficult, because this Hebrew of the 8th century was practically above all a poetic Hebrew which had become a dead language. And the rabbinical commentaries, by the Rabbis and the Jewish authors at the beginning of our era, for example, the translation of the *Septuagint* was made by Jews who knew Hebrew, well then, they did not understand it any more than we do. Nevertheless they very often had the same text.

So then starting from there, they said: the Hebrew text, the text of the Hebrew Bible is corrupt, let us correct it, let us replace a word that appears bizarre, let us replace it by a word that is well known and in that way they sometimes manage – this is the general rule – to banalise the text, making the text of the Bible express something really impoverished; and sometimes they manage to make it say – and this is Sellin's case – exactly what the exegete wanted it to say.

(9) **Lacan:** Would the people who composed the *Septuagint* have had a text that is earlier than the text that we have?

Caquot: Earlier, yes, because the oldest Hebrew manuscripts are – the complete Bible – come from the 9th century of our era and the *Septuagint* version was certainly developed before the Christian era. But it appears that – obviously it is not always the case, but personally I believe, I have a certain experience, that the Greek version of the *Septuagint* has very often before its eyes or in its ears the same text as the printed Bible, the Massoretic Bible, the traditional Bible, but that sometimes, not understanding it, they interpret it. This is how you have to envisage the study of the old translations of the Bible.

So then I don't know...if we continue to...

Lacan: I think that really if you could get across in this gathering an idea of the manipulations that took place around certain really key words...

Caquot: So then for the subject that interests us, namely Sellin's Moses, right, you have to start from two texts, texts of *Hosea* and also another text that I will first of all present to you very rapidly, which is chapter 25 of the *Numbers*, a very curious, a very difficult text, certainly recast by ancient traditions before of course finding its fixed form in writing in the Bible and which describes, as you know, the idolatry of the Israelites on the plains of Moab – the cult of the Baal of Peor – and this happens in a place called Shittim. The text is very difficult. I will venture to re-read the end: *Numbers 25* – I am reading a

translation, the text is easy and here we can take any translation whatsoever – “*while Israel dwelt at Shittim, the people gave themselves over to debauchery with the daughters of Moab*” – I am skipping over, right - ... “*the anger of God flamed up against Israel. And here a man from the children of Israel...*” and then here a very curious passage, “*a man from among the children of Israel brought to his brothers a Medianite before the eyes of Moses and before the eyes of the whole assembly of the children of Israel. At that very moment the priest Phinehas*” – the ancestor of the Jerusalem priesthood at the royal epoch – a fictitious ancestor – “*Phinehas pierced the man of Israel and the Medianite woman through the belly and this brought to a halt the scourge*” – we don’t really know what it was, probably it seems to have been a plague, but we are not too sure and the text skips over it – “*brought to a halt a scourge, the scourge that had been (10) unleashed to punish, as a punishment for the idolatry on the plains of the Baal of Peor*”. OK. This text is very important but for a different reason: because it grounds – I am pointing it out in passing – it grounds the election of a priestly dynasty that claims to go back to Phinehas. Phinehas receives at that very moment a priestly alliance, namely the guarantee of the perpetuity of the priesthood in his descendants as a reward for the zeal he showed in punishing the Israelites who had sinned on the Plains of Moab. But then here – starting from verse 14 – another indication which seems to come, which appears to be a kind of incident “*the man of Israel who was killed with the Medianite was called Zimri, the son of Salou. He was a prince, a Simeonite, and the Medianite woman was called Cozbi.*”

Sellin’s hypothesis: the text has been distorted. They wanted to efface the memory of something completely different and this completely different thing was the following: that in the place called Shittim, on the plains of Moab, the man who had been put to death to expel the scourge, the plague that had struck Israel, was not this person Zimri from the tribe of Simeon, it was Moses himself. It was Moses, and the redemptive death of Moses was veiled. In effect he adds on some arguments: it is quite obvious who it is that had married a Medianite. It was Moses, because in the tradition Moses’ wife, Zippora, is the daughter of a Medianite priest. So then this spouse of a Medianite whose name has also been dissimulated because she is called Cozbi, and not Zippora – if it had been Zippora, it

would be too easy – Cozbi which is an insulting nickname, derived from a name that signifies a lie, so then, you see, the priests, the priestly tradition which is at the origin of chapter 25 of the *Book of Numbers*, as we know it, are supposed to have eliminated Moses and are supposed to have replaced him by this kind of stopgap that is called Zimri. But if we re-establish the tradition that Sellin believes to be authentic, what is at stake here was a murder of Moses at Shittim. All that, I am presenting it, but once again what Sellin says is absolutely arbitrary.

So then starting from there, we can look at the passages of *Hosea*. There are three passages that are particularly significant. The first is in chapter 5 in verses...2. Now here, it must be said, I have to give up trying to translate of *Hosea* 5, 2. I could read *Hosea* chapters 5 verse 2 for you in Hebrew; but we have to admit, it is unintelligible and the most honest thing to do is to translate it by a series of dots.

Hosea 5, 2, I read a translation, it is one of the last to appear in French, it is the translation described as that of the ecumenical Bible, which is said in principle – these at least are the instructions – to be as close as (11) possible to the Hebrew text:

5, 1 “*Hear this, you priests, pay attention, Houses of Israel, Houses of the King, lend me your ear. It was up to you to deliver justice. But you have been a trap at Micpa and a net that was stretched out on Tabor*” – namely, that you have really walked people into it in a way.

Verse 2.....

Lacan: Do we know anything else about what happened at Micpa?

Caquot: Oh yes, this is an allusion to the episodes of...Micpa was a place of...in the pre-Royal epoch, Micpa was a gathering place, if you like, where justice was pronounced. As regards Tabor, it is more mysterious.

So then, after, our Bible, the most faithful edition possible, says the following: “*The infidels have dug a deep grave.*”

Literally, there are so few words that I am going to write them out for you. I am going to transcribe them, anyway, if there are any of you who read Hebrew: *shahata settim he einikou.*

The verb “*he einikou*” – they have dug deep, they have made something deep. This word “*settim*” that is translated by infidels, the subject of “*he einikou*”: “*the infidels made something deep*” that’s acceptable. But “*shahata*” all that one can say is that this noun is a substantive whose function we cannot see in the sentence, but which is attached to a verbal root “*shahat*” which signifies to disembowel, to massacre.

Now look at what this becomes with Sellin. Yes, so then I am reading the up to date translation:

“*The infidels have dug a deep grave*” a mistranslation, yes one can say that the infidels have dug, but the deep grave no. There is no deep grave in this text because “*shahata*” has been confused with “*shahat*” with a *tav*, namely an emphatic consonant with a simple consonant. There is no deep grave in the text and so then here is what Sellin made of it, I am writing it underneath: “*shahat hasshitim he einikou*”. Which gives: they have deeply dug a grave or the grave (*shahat* with a *tav*) of Shittim, and so we rediscover the Shittim of *Numbers* 25, verse 1 which is, according to Sellin’s hypothesis, the place where Moses is supposed to have been assassinated. There you are. First example.

That is not all because we also have to look, if it does not bore you (12) too much, at the two other passages that Sellin invokes for his hypothesis. So then the other passage is *Hosea* 9 verses 7 – 14. The *Book of Hosea* 9, is a rather easier passage while there, frankly this verse 2 of chapter 5 for the moment I will not translate it. It is not worth the trouble, it is certain there is a word that signifies, as the commentary says, which evokes, a massacre: they have dug, or the infidels have dug (or deepened) but we do not know

what. I do not know whether the text is corrupt or whether quite simply, we no longer understand it and that the writers of the *Septuagint* did not understand it either.

Lacan: The writers of the *Septuagint* spoke about laces, shoe laces....

Caquot: That's further on.

The second passage, then we were saying *Hosea* 9, 7 – 14. It is a passage which seems to be speaking about the contempt in which the prophet is held. *“The days of chastisement have come, the days to render up an account. Let Israel know it! The prophet becomes mad. The man possessed by the spirit becomes delusional because of the greatness of your crime and the greatness of the attack that you are undergoing. The sentry of Ephraim is with my God, he is the prophet. They lay a trap for him on all his paths, he is attacked even in the house of his God.”*

In verse 7 there is question of a prophet. This prophet, I believe that almost everybody – and this appears to be the most obvious interpretation – recognises that this is a way that Hosea designates himself after having been the victim of the persecution of his contemporaries, the contempt of his contemporaries. But Sellin, once he sees the word prophet, jumps on it: it's Moses. So then this is how verse 8 is arranged and this is not easy either. I will begin again by giving you the text of the Bible on one line and on another line what Sellin makes of it:

Translation by Monsieur Caquot: *“The sentry of Ephraim is with my God and the prophet is a trap laid on all his paths”* (it is a nominal sentence without a copula) *“tshofe Ephraim im elohai”* and underneath *“navi pah iahoush al kol derekai”*.

Well then, look at what this becomes in Sellin: *navi* is not Hosea nor a collective noun *“Ephraim looks towards the tent of the prophet”* (meaning, to play a dirty trick on him) namely, that he transposes two words and makes of *“elohai”*, good God, he makes it into

a substantive “*ohel*” or its plural “*ohelai*” which signifies the tent or the tents: Ephraim looks towards the tent of the prophet...

Subsequently, further on, he discovers in the following verse the word Shittim, still in this chapter 9. There is a word which signifies adversary: “*mastema bebeit elohav*”, “*someone who attacks an adversary in the house of his God*”.

This is in parallel to the trap on the path that we have seen earlier. This is the end of verse 8 and verse 9: “*he einikou*” and then we rediscover something that we have seen earlier “*shiheitou*”: *they have gone to the depths of corruption* our version translates it, namely, that they have done something profoundly, they are corrupt. So then for (13) Sellin now, this “*mastema*” he reads as: at Shittim – still the same business, the Shittim of *Numbers 25, 1*, “*he einikou*”, they have dug and in place of “*shiheitou*” obviously he preserves the consonants, but he reads it as “*shahato*” instead of “*shieitou*”. “*Shiheitou*” is a verb in the third person plural that signifies “they are corrupt” and “*shahoto*” is a substantive that signifies “his grave”: at Shittim, they have dug his grave, the grave of Moses naturally!

And even then he is not finished. Here is the text of *Hosea* which, for its part, might have a certain power of conviction, but which will be somewhat less weakly interpreted than the others by Sellin. It is the end of chapter 12, the beginning of chapter 13 of *Hosea*. In this passage we are undoubtedly dealing with Moses and Moses described as a prophet. I will read the end of it for you – what was in question in the earlier part was the patriarch Jacob and then we pass on to Moses....

Lacan: What appears to be striking all the same is that the transformation of “*elohim*”, namely God, into “*ohel*”, the tent, was done by other modern commentators.

Caquot: Yes, it is possible, but Sellin is not the only one of his kind to work like that. Only he all the same has gone a little bit further than the others who do not draw such risky conclusions from it.

Chapter 12: “*Jacob has fled to the Plains of Aram* – an allusion to the episode of Genesis 29 – *Israel*, namely Jacob – it is the same name taken up again – has served – *has worked* if you like – *for a woman* (Leah and Rachel). *And for a woman he made himself into a guardian of the flock* – literally he has protected it – *but through a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt and by a prophet Israel was protected*”. There is a play on words in which a comparison is made between the action of God through Moses and the action of Jacob to have his women. The constructions of verses 13 and 14 are a very nice and very conscious parallel because both end on the word, the verb “*sharmar*” and “*mishmar*” and here it is certain that the prophet (*navi*), who is in question in verse 14 is Moses, he is the one who brought Israel out of Egypt. Moreover it is not the only case, one of these cases where Moses is called a prophet, it is characteristic of this passage of *Hosea* and of the translation of the *Book of Deuteronomy*. And we know that there are certainly links between *Hosea* and *Deuteronomy*, which comes a little bit later than it.

So then verse 13. You will see that fundamentally the liberty that Sellin takes with this text does not make it any more convincing than the interpretations that he took from chapter 5 and from chapter 9. “*Hirahis Ephraim tamrourim*” So then the subject, Ephraim irritated.*tamrourim*, now that is annoying, it’s something that one could understand: Ephraim irritated “*tamrourim*” bitterly, and this is obviously a plural substantive that can be employed adverbially: in a bitter way. There is certainly the root of bitterness in that word.

Lacan: It’s a rare word.

Caquot: Yes, yes, rare!

(14) “*Vdamav alav iatosh v’herfato*” he will spill his blood on him.

“*Iashiv lo adonav*” and his opprobrium will restore his Lord to him.

This is a verse which is not very easy, but that one can all the same understand. Ephraim has suffered or has afflicted “*tamrourim*” in a bitter manner, you have to supply a complement, he has afflicted someone who is probably his Lord – “*adonav*” a common factor in the two hemistichs. The translation of the ecumenical Bible: “*Ephraim has caused bitter pain to God.*”

Subsequently, the following verse: “*yitosh*” he will reject, subject, probably “*adonav*” his Lord which is the common subject of the two verbs of the hemistich 14b: the Lord will reject his blood upon him. To reject one’s blood on someone is a fixed juridical formula. It indicates a punishment. And “*iashiv lo*” he will render to him, the Lord will render to Ephraim, his shame “*vherfato*”, the shameful act that he has committed. He will pay him back for his shameful behaviour.

Chapter 13, 1, is the continuation of the preceding development according to Sellin: “*kedabber*” when Ephraim spoke, “*reuteit*” that’s a difficult word. Literally: while Ephraim was speaking “*reuteit*” a very surprising substantive which occurs only once in the Bible and signifies shaking. What we understand as: when Ephraim spoke, “*reuteit*”, there was terror, shaking. It is an elliptical expression, which is altogether conceivable in Hebrew poetry and in archaic Semitic poetry in general. It is one of these extremely concise formulae in which there is not a word too many.

When Ephraim spoke it was terror, shaking, “*nasa hou eb Israel*”. This verb “*nasa*” signifies to carry: it carried into Israel, but which can sometimes be an ellipse to signify as in the expression “*nasa kol*”, to raise one’s voice, which amounts to saying ‘to speak’. When Ephraim spoke it was terrifying, and he raised something or other, he raised his head, he raised the word in Israel. And so then 12, 1b: “*vaiahisham baBaal vaiamot*” he sinned through Baal and he is dead. The idea of verse 13 is clear enough: formerly Ephraim was a person to be dreaded, but he sinned through Baal and he is dead.

Now look at what this becomes in Sellin. It is rather complicated because, moreover not alone does he correct one word in every two, but he changes the verses or the place of the

hemistichs! First of all, instead of “*reuteit*”, this word seems a little bizarre to him, and indeed it is because it is found only once in the Bible, so then if it is only found once, people have a tendency to believe that it has no right to exist. So then he reads it quite simply as “*torati*” – my law – when Ephraim spoke my law. Moreover it is a correction that was taken up again five years ago by Père Tournaix (?) in an article, he took up the correction of Sellin, which really is not credible. Instead of “*nasahou eb Israel*” he reads “*nasi*”, this is a minor correction. And that becomes: he was a prince in Israel. But above all he transposes verse 13, 1a, as he has corrected it, and he puts it after the preceding sentence, he transposes, if you wish 12, 15b, he puts 12, 15b after 13, 1a. And so you see we get the following, with other corrections, I will read Sellin’s translation:

*“But by a prophet, I led Israel out of Egypt
and by a prophet, he was protected.”*

This is more or less the Hebrew text.

“Ephraim irritated him, he made Israel bitter.”

And so then this is where he puts 13, 1a.

*“As long as Ephraim spoke my law “(Ephraim *torati* instead of *reuteit*)*

*“He was a prince in Israel” (*nasi hou eb Israel* instead of *nasa hou eb Israel*. 13b now.*

The verb that Sellin, I don’t know why, translates as “he has expiated”, while it signifies “he has sinned”: “He expiated because of Baal, and he has been killed”.

I do not know why, I have not even looked, he translated “*iesham*” which signifies quite simply that he has committed a sin, he turned it back to front, he made of it: he expiated, he expiated his sin because of Baal: and instead of “*iamot*” he died, he has read “*iumat*” by change in the vowels: he has been killed. And the person in question is of course (15) Moses!

And so now we rediscover the element of 12, 15b that Sellin again corrects. He corrects the third person “*yitosh*”, he turns it upside down, will make his blood fall on him. Sellin corrects it to: “I will make his blood fall on you”!

In the Hebrew text it is the blood of Ephraim, but in Sellin's interpretation it becomes the blood of Moses!

“I will make his blood fall on you and I will call you to account for the opprobrium that he has undergone.”

This means that in this passage of *Hosea* 12, 14, and 13, 1, there is supposed to be a question of an assassination of Moses for which God will call the Israelites to account.

But anyway you see the artifices through which, because one cannot call them anything else, by what artifices Sellin has managed to make the text of *Hosea* say something that it certainly did not intend to say and which has never been seen in the text of *Hosea*, either by the old translators, nor by modern commentators on the whole, except for Sellin.

And I believe that we have here the most characteristic place - in this *Mose und seine Bedeutung* - to grasp the approach of this exegete.

Obviously we can debate about the servant of *Isaiah*, there are features that could be understood as alluding to Moses, that is incontestable. Only I have the impression that Sellin overvalues them.

Just as when he makes a big deal, he also wants to see an allusion to the assassination of Moses in a personage of *Deutero-Zechariah*, of the prophet Zechariah in chapter 13, if I am not mistaken, of Zechariah, where there is a question of a personage who has been transpierced. It is certainly not Moses, anyway it is equivocal, it is vague.

Here you see where Sellin might have hung his explanation, it was on these three passages of *Hosea* and you see how he proceeded.

Once again, it is not his fault, it was the times he was living in: it was usual, at his time, to allow oneself such liberties with the text. And what happened, given the authority of Sellin, is that it was taken seriously by people who were not quite of his profession.

Lacan: What is remarkable to me, is that in the article of 1928, which you have one of the sheets of there, he started working in a different way. He worked using the version of the *Septuagint* and he finally culminated at quite different kinds of corrections.

Caquot: Here is the interpretation Sellin gives of our passage in 1928: “Through a prophet, I led Israel out of Egypt and through a prophet (naturally Moses) it was protected.”

(16) That’s fine.

“*Ephraim was bitterly irritated, every time that Ephraim spoke quarrelsome words*”. So then this time it is “*reuteit*” that is tricked about differently. At one time he corrected it as “my law” and now as “quarrelsome remarks”, the last correction by Sellin in his article of 1928.

Lacan: Through an unbelievable detour from a word in the authors of the *Septuagint*...

Caquot: Yes, [.....]. It is perfectly possible, but this does not mean that the authors of the *Septuagint* had read that.

“Every time that Ephraim made quarrelsome remarks, they had to be tolerated in Israel.”

“*Anasahou*”, he tolerated it.....in Israel. This time he kept the verb “*nasa*”.

“He expiated because of Baal and underwent death.”

“I will reject his blood on you and his opprobrium, I will visit on you.”

That is exactly the same solution as in 1921. I could spend more time studying the way in which Sellin proceeded but it would probably be a little pernickety.

Lacan: In Sellin's thinking it is nowhere said that if you suppose that the text has the same import as figures and so then restoring a text has a certain sense, it is nowhere said that this text, as one might say, or this vocalisation could be understood by someone. Because to say, for example, that paragraph 25 of *Numbers* hides the event of "the murder of Moses", there is complete ambiguity.....

Caquot: Well, a complete postulate.

Lacan: Yes, that's it. In Sellin's thinking which, I do not think, brings into play the categories of the unconscious.....

Caquot: Certainly not!

Lacan:the fact of hiding the event at Shittim with a whole unbelievable story – which is probably not such an unbelievable story moreover but which would be so if it effectively replaced it – we are here at the level of something that oscillates, of something completely untenable in the register of the thinking of Sellin himself. And I believe that this is what makes it interesting, it is in a way to see the extraordinary latency that is involved in such a way of proceeding. We can accept up to a certain point that Freud found a certain reinforcement, in a way, in the idea that what is at stake was something which emerged, despite every intention, despite the strong resistance to remembering which is supposed to be part of its register. But it nevertheless remains obviously very strange that this is supported by writings and that it is with the help of these writings that it can be deciphered again. Because there is one thing that Jones bears witness to, which is that Freud is supposed to have had – this is something that is supposed – is supposed to have had from Sellin himself – Jones takes note of it, a communication to the fact that

after all he was not as sure as all that, namely, something that you indicated to us earlier that (17) in the second edition of the K.A.T. he takes up more or less.....

Caquot: In the 1929 edition, he drops the exegesis that I have sketched out from 1922 for chapter 5 and for chapter 9. The case for the death of Moses...

Lacan: So he keeps 12?

Caquot: He keeps 12 and there Moses is at stake. Simply on the other hand, I think that he gave up putting forward his hypothesis about the death of Moses because it is in his works on the famous dead servant of the *Deutero-Isaiah*, the servant of Yahweh. The Mosaic hypothesis that Sellin defended in 1922, he himself renounced, and I specified that in 1929 and since then he twice changed his opinion about the servant. He completely abandoned it: the servant is not Moses. He perhaps kept this idea of a death of Moses, but he gave up to making use of it, if you wish, as a way of interpreting the theme of the servant. I really wonder if Freud was not the victim of the academic prestige of Sellin...

Lacan: The question that I ask myself, is whether Freud had read him very carefully...

Caquot: Ah yes, I think so, the book of *Mose und seine Bedeutung* is clear and rigorous.

Lacan: That's quite true...

Caquot: It's false but it's true!

Lacan: But on the other hand Freud does not look for any support in this articulation. He simply notes that there is someone called Sellin who recently forward an acceptable hypothesis that Moses is supposed to have been killed. And he signals it by this very short note which indicates the reference, no more, the reference to the work of 1922 of *Mose und seine Bedeutung* and nothing more. So then I pointed out earlier, because I forgot to do it up to now, that Jones mentions that in the work of 1935, namely, later again than what we have been able to verify ourselves, in a work of 1935, he is supposed to have maintained his position...

Caquot: Yes, I could perhaps find that text.....I'll send it to you.

Lacan: Listen, if I really have not over-abused your time up to now in what I asked you to do, and I am very grateful to you for it, and everyone else thanks you for it, I think that it would be simply interesting for the rest of what I am going to have to say if you would all the same give us an idea that *Hosea* has a meaning that has absolutely nothing to do with what Sellin tells us, and that for *Hosea*, in fact, the important point, the use of the word '*ich*' that we were (18) speaking about the other day, which is really connected and is close to what...in any case, the novelty of *Hosea*, if I have correctly understood, is in short this summons, this very particular type of summons, because I hope after all that everyone will go looking in a little Bible, anyone at all moreover, to simply have an idea of the tone of *Hosea*! This kind of furious invective that is really itching, that of the word of Yahweh speaking to his people in a long discourse which I already pointed out when I spoke about it, when I spoke about *Hosea* before having Sellin's book. For my part I read in *Hosea*, I never read anything like that, far from it, but on the contrary I pointed out to you in passing the importance of invective, of the indication of rituals of sacred prostitution from one end to the other. So then the putting into opposition of that of sort invitation through which Yahweh declares himself to be the spouse – and one can say that here there begins what in itself is a kind of long rather mysterious tradition in which it clearly appeared to me we could really situate the meaning, which makes Christ the spouse of the Church, and the Church the spouse of Christ. This begins here, there is no trace of it before *Hosea*, is there? The term used for spouse, '*ich*', the one we looked at together, is the very one by which, in the second chapter of *Genesis*, at the moment when the '*ich*' in question names his wife. The first that is spoken about, that is to say on verse 27 of the first chapter in which God creates them man and woman, is, if I read it properly, *zakhar* and *nekevah*. The second time – since things are always repeated twice in the Bible – '*ich*' indicated the being, the object, made from his rib, in the form *ichã*. As if, by chance, you only need to add a little *a*.

This '*ich*' to designate the term spouse, is it a matter of something even more stripped of sexuality...

Caquot: The ‘*ich*’ is not sexed in any way. The conjugal uses are only a small part of the acceptations of the word ‘*ich*’ which designates man in general. It is no more astonishing than when one says “my man” for my husband. In French, *mon homme* is rather more colloquial.

Lacan: Even though in the following verse this thing which could be called ‘your spouse’ is really linked to the repudiation of the term Baal, which can have the same meaning on occasions, namely, the lord and the master in the sense of spouse.

Caquot: Even though Baal is the master. We can observe that the feminine, Beoula, is the woman as husband in potency. The terminology is extremely fluid. In *Hosea* the acceptations are restricted so as to play upon Yahweh who is the Baal, in opposition to Baal who is in operation. It is I who am your Baal, you should not be (19) running after other Baals!

Lacan: There is here a formation and an extremely sharp difference, which remains, in short, fairly opaque, despite the centuries of commentaries. It is quite curious.

Caquot: It is the conjugal metaphor. This is the first time it appears in the Bible. It is what enables, much later, the allegorisation of the *Song of songs*. It is *Hosea* that makes this allegory possible. I wondered whether there was not some kind of de-mythisation, namely, the transference onto the collectivity of Israel of the goddess who is the *parêdre* [?] or the wife of Baal in the Semitic religions. There are at times when Israel is indeed described as a goddess. But that has never been said. This remains in the mentality of the Semitic religions of the Orient which cannot conceive of a God without his goddess. Prophetic religion replaces the goddess with Israel. This might be the case with *Hosea*.

Lacan: That is very important. Ultimately, around that there revolves something of what I had begun to announce earlier. You did not point that out to me!

Right! Given the time I think we can leave it there and thank Monsieur Caquot.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 13 May 1970

[As the Law Faculty was closed because of the date, the Seminar could not be held. Lacan answered a certain number of questions that were put to him 'on the steps of the Pantheon'. This is the transcription of Lacan's answers. Several questions, inaudible on the recording, are missing.]

I would really like to have some explanation of the unmannerly carry-on that brings us here. For the moment, I am waiting for someone to ask me a question.

X: *[On Hegel's dialectic]*

I became aware in recent days that I had already spoken quite precisely, though not at all intentionally, about the functions of master and slave, extracted from Hegel's discourse, and indeed even more than I am doing now. I only ever put forward things that I come up against, and for me it was therefore already supposedly settled. But it is not the same thing as rechecking the text of my seminar, which is always taken down in shorthand, as you know. In November 1962, when I began my seminar on *Anxiety* at Sainte-Anne and, from the second seminar on, I articulated in an extremely precise way, something which

is, in short, identical with what I am now developing about the discourse of the Master. I indicated how the positions of the master and the slave, established in the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, can be distinguished. This is Kojève's starting point, even though there is a section prior to their coming on the scene. There is a whole section at the beginning about sense perception – but this is not what I am emphasising. What I find I am now developing under the heading of the discourse of the Master was already motivating the way in which I approached anxiety. This has a certain importance because recently, someone whose intentions I do not need to characterise did a whole (2) report, which will be published in two days time, in order to expose in a note the way I put affect into the background, or even rubbish it. It is a mistake to think that I neglect affect – as if already the behaviour of this whole crowd was not enough to affect me. My entire seminar that year was on the contrary articulated around the fact that anxiety, is the central affect, the one around which everything is organised. I do not date things from my seminar on *Anxiety*. If in it I introduced anxiety as the fundamental affect, it is all the same a good thing that already, I had not been neglecting affect – not by a long shot. I have simply given all its importance, in the determination of the *Verneinung*, to what Freud says explicitly, that affect is not what is repressed. Freud has recourse to this famous *Repräsentanz* that I translate as representative of representation, and which others, and moreover not for nothing, persist in calling ideational representative, which does absolutely not mean the same thing. In one case the representative is not representation, in the other case the representative is only one representation among others. These are two radically different translations of the term. My translation implies that affect, through repression, is displaced, is effectively displaced, unidentified, not located in its roots – it slips away. This is what is essential in repression. It is not that the affect is suppressed, it is that it is displaced, and unrecognisable.

X: [*On the relations between existentialism and structuralism*]

You're talking as if existential thinking was of itself a guarantee of giving its place to affect.

X: *What do you think of the relations that exist between you and Kierkegaard as regards anxiety?*

You cannot imagine, my friend, the extent to which people attribute kinfolk to me. It is enough for me to speak about someone for me to be considered a descendant. It is typical university-style giddiness. Why in effect would I not have spoken about Kierkegaard? It is clear that if I put all this emphasis on anxiety in the economy, because what is at stake is an economy of enjoyment, it is obviously not so as to (3) neglect the fact that at a certain historical moment there was someone who represents the emergence, the advent, not of anxiety, but of the concept of anxiety, as Kierkegaard himself explicitly entitled one of his works. He wrote ‘the concept of anxiety’. It is not for nothing that historically this concept emerged at a certain moment. This is what I had intended to present to you this morning.

I am not alone in making this rapprochement with Kierkegaard. Yesterday I received a book by Manuel de Dieguez, published by Gallimard in the collection, *Idées* – is it there by any chance? Well, the things he says about me! Since I had to prepare my stuff for you and because everything is done at the last minute – what I say to you is only put together in the final few hours, everything I write and say to you is in general written down between five in the morning and eleven – I have not had the time to find my bearings in this great hustle and bustle into which I am inserted, not only in relation to Kierkegaard but Occam and Gorgias as well. It is all there, and also huge chunks of what I talk about. It is rather exceptional because he gives quotations which is good, half the book is called “*Lacan and – I’ll give you three guesses – transcendental psychoanalysis*”. Read it. To me it seems to be pretty overwhelming. I had not thought of myself as being all that transcendental, but then it is always hard to know. Someone once said to me apropos books that were published about him, “*Ah! Don’t we have ideas my friend, don’t we just!*” Let’s move on.

X: *Do you think, then, that the ideas that you get from the practice of psychoanalysis with patients give you something that cannot be found outside of it?*

It is precisely because I think it that I have taken all this trouble for the last eighteen or nineteen years. Otherwise I do not see why I would do it. And I do not see why my fate should be to have had my name explicitly added to the list of philosophers, which is what some people have taken the liberty of doing. This does not seem to me to be entirely justified.

(4) X: *Can you go back to what you started to say about Hegel?*

I am certainly not going to give this morning's seminar here. I am not here for that. I am using the opportunity to learn a bit more about what some of you may have to say to me, which does not happen too easily when we are in a lecture theatre. It may happen here this morning.

X: *You have spoken about the Other as the treasury of signifiers, and you have said that there was no confronting it, because given that free association is not coherent it is not the Other. Could the Other not include incoherent things? The signifier is not necessarily coherent.*

Are you sure I said what you are imputing to me? Where did I say that there was no confronting the Other? I do not think I ever said that. I would be amazed. If I did say it, it was clumsy, but it would surprise me just as much if I had committed such a blunder.

X: *[Inaudible]*

I will try to give you the guts of it at my next seminar, if it takes place.

X: *[Inaudible]*

I am having a go at philosophy? It's very exaggerated to say that.

X: *I have that impression.*

Yes, people have that impression. I was asked just a moment ago whether I believed that things I talk about may not be problematic. I said I did. The only reason I put them forward is because of a specific experience, the psychoanalytic experience. If it were not for that I would consider that I had neither the right, nor above all the desire, to prolong the philosophical discourse very much beyond the moment at which it was quite rightly effaced.

X: *But that it transforms the philosophical discourse.*

It does not transform it. It is a different discourse. That is what I am trying to demonstrate to you at every instant by recalling, since this is what I really think, to those who have no idea of the analytic experience that this is what I am aiming at and that I start from that. (5) Otherwise this discourse would not have such a philosophically problematic appearance as was pointed out earlier by the gentleman over there, who spoke first, expressing it in sophisticated terms. I do not think that this is right, even if the person I evoked earlier, Michel de Dieguez, situated me as someone to be underlined, situates me at the centre of some mixture or other, a sort of crack, or opening up of philosophical discourse. The way he positions me is not badly done, it is done in an extremely attractive way, but at first sight – I will perhaps modify what I think about it – in reading it, I said to myself, all the same, to put me into that lineage is quite some *Entstellung*, quite some displacement away from the import of what I am saying.

X: *What you say is always decentred with respect to meaning (sens), meaning is something you eschew.*

That is precisely why my discourse is an analytic discourse. The structure of analytic discourse is to be like that. Let us say that I stick to it as well as I can, if I am able to, without daring to say that I strictly identify myself to it. At the present time there is no way it can be sustained. Yesterday I read an amazing article in a review called

L'Inconscient, that, for personal reasons, I had never opened. In the latest issue someone called Cornelius Castoriadis, no less, has this question about my discourse, taken supposedly in reference to science. What does he say? He says what I kill myself repeating, namely, that this discourse has an extremely precise reference to science. What he exposes as being the essential difficulty of this discourse is what you have just said, namely, let me be precise, this never-ending displacement, is the very condition of analytic discourse. And it is in this respect that one can say it is conditioned by - I will not say complementary to - but conditioned by the discourse of science precisely, in that the discourse of science leaves no place for anxiety.

I had intended insisting on this for you this morning. I will not spoil what I have to say about it in a week's time, but you will see it is centred on that.

(6) X: *As regards anxiety, I thought it was the opposite of enjoyment.*

What I insist on when I tackle affects, is that this affect precisely can be distinguished from all others, in that it is said to be without an object. Look at everything that has been written about anxiety, this is what people always insist on - fear can be referred to an object, if this object can be expressed, it is formed. Whereas anxiety is said to be without an object. I say on the contrary that anxiety is not without an object. I already articulated this eight years ago, and it is very clear that I still have to explain it to you. At that time I did not designate this object as surplus enjoying, which proves that there was something that had to be constructed before I could name it as such. It is very precisely the... I cannot say the name, because precisely it is not a name. It is surplus enjoying, this is what we will have to look at, but it is not nameable, even though it can be approximately named, expressed, in this way. That is why it has been expressed in terms of surplus value. This object without which there is no anxiety, perhaps cannot be tackled in any other way. This is precisely what I have given a clearer and clearer shape to over the years. In particular, I have given a lot of chatterboxes the opportunity to rush into print and produce hasty compositions about what I may have had to say under the heading of the **o**-object. Anything else?

X: [*Inaudible*]

In the little schemas I put on the board for you this year, my four-footed contraptions, you will find the essential reference points, even though they are not easy to use. In the articulation that I describe as the university discourse, with S_2 on the top left and S_1 underneath, the \mathbf{o} is in the place of what? In the place, let us say, of the one exploited by University discourse, who is easy to recognise – it is the student to whom there is affected the notation \mathbf{o} . It is by focussing our reflection on this place of \mathbf{o} in the notation that many things can be explained about the singular phenomena that for the moment are taking place around the world. To be sure, we have to distinguish in a radically polarised way between the emergence of his radicality – this is what is produced – and the way the function of the university has become clogged up, blocked, maintained – that can last for a long time. It has, (7) in effect, an extremely precise function, related at every moment to where we have got to with the discourse of the Master – namely, its elucidation. In effect, this discourse has for a long time been a masked discourse. It will become less and less so, simply through its internal necessity. What use has the university been? This can be read according to each epoch. It is by virtue of the fact that the discourse of the master is more and more thoroughly negated, that the discourse of the university shows – you must not believe for all that that it is shaken or finished – that for the moment it is encountering some funny old difficulties. These difficulties are manifest and can be approached in terms of their close relationship to the position of the student as being, in the discourse of the university, in a more or less masked manner, always identified with this \mathbf{o} -object, which is charged with producing what? The $\$$ that then comes on the bottom right. That is the difficulty, because it is charged with producing a subject. What kind of subject? In any case, a divided subject. That it is less and less tolerable that this reduction should be limited to producing teachers is quite clearly brought to the light of day in the present epoch, and this requires a study that is all the less improvised for being in the process of actually happening. What is happening, and what is called the crisis of the university, can be inscribed in this formula, because it exists, it is posited, it is grounded at an altogether radical level. It is not possible to restrict oneself to treating it in the way that is being done. It is uniquely on the basis of the revolving, revolutionary,

relationship, as I describe it - in a slightly different sense from the usual one - between the university position and the three other discourse positions, that what is happening in the university at the moment can be illuminated.

X: [*On revolutionaries and the proletariat*]

The proletariat? When did I mention the proletariat? In the discourse of the master his place is quite clear. In its beginnings, the discourse of the Master was concerned with everything that initially passed as being the proletariat, who was initially the slave. We come back here to the Hegelian term. At the start, as I have stressed, the slave was Knowledge. The evolution of the discourse of the Master is there. Philosophy played the role of constituting a master's knowledge, extracted from the slave's knowledge. It has, as I might say, been decanted. Science as it has currently come to the light of day, properly consists in this transmutation of the function, as I might say – we are more or less led at some moment to come up against one archaic theme (8) or other, and as you know, I encourage you to be prudent about this. In any case, there is certainly a difficulty in knowledge, which derives from the opposition between know-how and *episteme*, properly so called. *Episteme* was constructed from an interrogation, from a purification of knowledge. The philosophical discourse shows at every moment that the philosopher refers to it. It is not for nothing that he called on the slave to answer and that he demonstrates that he knows, that he knows what he does not know. You can only show he knows when the right questions are put to him. It is along this path that the displacement came, which means that today our scientific discourse is on the side of the master, that it represents him as such. It is precisely this that cannot be ignored.

X: *Where then do you place the proletariat?*

Listen! He can only be at the place at which he has to be, on the top right, at the place of the big Other, is that not so? Very precisely there knowledge no longer carries any weight. The proletariat is not simply exploited, he is also the one who has been stripped of his function of knowledge. The so-called abolition of slavery has had, as always, other

correlatives. It is not only progressive. It is progressive only at the price of a stripping away. I will not risk going into that. I will only go into it with prudence, but if there is something whose tone strikes me in the thematic that is called Maoist, it is its reference to the knowledge of manual labour. I absolutely do not claim to have an adequate view on this, but I am simply highlighting a point that struck me in function of the schemas I have been telling you about. The re-emphasising of the knowledge of the exploited seems to me to be very profoundly justified in the structure. It is a matter of knowing whether there is not something here – for me, this is how the question is posed - that is entirely dreamed up. Because how, in a world in which there has emerged, in a way that indeed exists and is a presence in the world, not the thinking of science, but science in some way objectified, I mean these things entirely forged by science, Hertzian waves, simply these little things, gadgets and things, which for the moment occupy the same space as us, in a world in which this emergence has taken place, can know-how at the level of manual work carry enough weight to be a subversive factor? This is how, for me, the question arises.

Right, I'm off!

Seminar 13: Wednesday 20 May 1970

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since our last meeting, I am speaking about the one in April and not the most recent one which took place elsewhere and with only some of you. The remarks that were exchanged on the steps of the Pantheon were not of a poor standard since they enabled me to go over a number of points that deserved to be made more precise, in response to a questioning that was not at all inapt. That is what I think looking back after a week. But my first reaction immediately afterwards, to someone who was seeing me home, had nevertheless been of a certain inadequacy. Even the best of those who spoke, and whose questions were not unsatisfactory, seemed to me, at first sight, to be lagging behind a little. This seemed to me to be reflected in the fact, that at least in this familiar challenge that was not yet a questioning, I was situated by them within a certain number of reference points that are certainly not to be entirely rejected. I recall that the first was to *Gorgias*, which I am supposed to be repeating here in some sort of way. Why not? But the trouble is that, in the mouth of the person who was evoking this character whose efficacy we, in our days, cannot assess very well, what was in question was someone belonging to “the history of thought”. That is where there is a pulling back that seems to me unfortunate – this term allows for a sort of sample of long distance snapshots with regard to one or other person who has been bracketed within the thinking function. It seems to me that there is nothing less homogenous, as I might say, nothing that would allow a species to be defined. It is not legitimate to give to some people, in whatever capacity one might imagine them, a function that would be that of a species, as representing thought. Thought is not a category. I would almost say that it is an affect. Even so, this does not mean that it is what is most fundamental from the point of view of affect. The fact that in terms of affect only one exists constitutes a certain position, a new one to be introduced into the world, which I say is to be referred to what I gave you a schema of, put up on the blackboard when I was speaking about psychoanalytic discourse. In truth putting it on the blackboard is distinct from talking about it. I remember that at Vincennes, when I appeared there on an occasion that has not happened since but which will happen again, someone felt obliged to shout out at me that there were real things that truly preoccupied the assembly. Namely, that people were being beaten up at a place more or less distant from where we were gathered, that this is what we should be thinking about, that the blackboard had nothing to do with this real.

That is where the error lies. I would go as far as (2) to say that, if there is any chance of grasping something called the real, it is nowhere other than on the blackboard. And even, what I may have to say about it, what takes shape in speech, is related only to what is written on the blackboard.

That is a fact. And it is demonstrated by this fact, by this artifice, that is science, whose emergence one would be completely wrong to register only as coming out of the philosophical kitchen. Metaphysical science, perhaps, rather than physics. Does our scientific physics deserve to be called metaphysical? That is what would need to be specified. It seems possible to me to specify it particularly on the basis of the psychoanalytic discourse. In effect, on the basis of this discourse, there is only one affect, namely, the product of the speaking being's capture in a discourse, in so far as this discourse determines it as object. It is from this that the Cartesian *cogito* takes on its exemplary value, on condition that one examines and revises it, as I am going to do rapidly, once again, today.

I recalled the affect by which the speaking being of a discourse is determined as object. What has to be said, is that this object is not nameable. If I try to name it as surplus enjoying, this is only a system of nomenclature. What object is constructed by the effect of a certain discourse? We know nothing about this object except that it is the cause of desire, namely, that strictly speaking it is as lack of being that it manifests itself.

So then, no being is determined by this. Certainly, what the effect of a given discourse impacts on may well be a being called man, for example, or else a living being that one may add is sexed and mortal. And people boldly advance towards thinking that this is what the discourse of psychoanalysis is brought to bear on, under the pretext that what is constantly being debated in it is sex and death. But from our starting point, if effectively we start with what initially reveals itself, and as the primary fact, as structured like a language, this is not where we are at. No individual (*étant*) is at stake in the effect of language except a speaking being.

At the outset we are not at the level of the individual (*l'étant*) but of being (*l'être*). However, we must beware here of the mirage of believing that being is thus posited, and of the error that lies in wait for us, of assimilating this to everything that has been organised as dialectic from an initial positing of being and nothingness. This effect – let us now add inverted commas – of “being”, its first affect, appears only at the level of what becomes the cause of desire. Namely, at the level of what we situate, through this initial system–effect of the analyst, the analyst as a place, as a position, that I am trying to circumscribe with these little letters on the blackboard. This is where (3) the analyst posits himself. He posits himself as cause of desire. An outstandingly original or even paradoxical position that is ratified by a practice. The importance of this practice can be measured by being referred to what has been designated as the discourse of the Master. What is at stake here is not a relationship of distance, nor of overview, but a fundamental relationship: analytic practice is properly initiated by [is intermingled with?] this discourse of the Master. There is something that is made present by virtue of the fact that every determination of the subject, therefore of thinking, depends on discourse. In this discourse, in effect, there arises the moment which it would be quite wrong to believe is at the level of a risk. This risk is after all quite mythical. It is a trace of myth that still remains in Hegelian phenomenology. Is the master supposed to be nothing other than whoever is strongest? This is certainly not what Hegel writes. The struggle for pure prestige at the risk of death still belongs to the reign of the imaginary. What does the master do? This is what the articulation of discourse that I am giving you indicates. He operates on what I have called, in different terms, the crystal of the tongue. Why not use in this respect what can be designated in French by the homonymy of *m'être*, *m'être* ‘à moi-même’? It is from this that there emerges the *m'être* signifier which I leave you to write as you prefer – [*maître or m'être*].

I began to articulate how this unique signifier operates by means of its relation with what is already there, already articulated, in such a way that we can only conceive of it from the presence of a signifier that is already there, I would say, from all time. In effect, if this unique signifier, the signifier of the *master*, to be written as you wish, is articulated to something of a practice that it organises, this practice is already shot through with,

woven with what, certainly has not been separated out from it, namely, signifying articulation. This is at the source of all knowledge, even though initially it could only be approached as know-how (*savoir-faire*).

We find the trace of the primary presence of this knowledge even where it is already distant, because of having been adulterated for a long time in what is called the philosophical tradition, precisely through the engagement of the signifier of the master with this knowledge. Let us not forget that when Descartes posits his *I think therefore I am*, it is because for a long time he sustained his *I think*, by questioning, by doubting, this knowledge that I described as adulterated which is the knowledge already elaborated at length by the interference of the master.

What can we say about current science that will allow us to find our bearings? Here out of didactic weakness I recall only three stages, because I am not sure that you are keeping up with what I am saying. Three stages: science; behind that philosophy; and beyond something of which we have some notion if only through biblical anathemas. If I dealt at length this year with the text of *Hosea* in connection with what Freud, after Sellin, extracted from it, the greatest benefit of it is (4) perhaps not – though there is also that – the calling into question of the Oedipus complex, which I have called this *residue of myth*, in psychoanalytic theory. Undoubtedly, if we needed something here to presentify, some ocean or other of mythical knowledge ruling the lives of men – and how can we know whether it was harmonious or not – the best reference might well be to what Yahweh curses with what I called his fierce ignorance, by the term of prostitution. To my eyes this approach is quite adequate, and surely better than the usual references to the fruits of ethnography. Ethnography conceals within itself some confusion or other because it clings to what is collected as if it were natural. And collected how? Collected in writing, that is to say, detailed, extracted, forever falsified because of the so called field work from which people claim to have uncovered it. This is certainly not to say that mythical knowledge says anything more, or better, about the essence of sexual relationships. If psychoanalysis makes present to us sex, and death as its dependency – even though here we are not sure of anything, apart from a general apprehension of the

link between sexual difference and death – it is by demonstrating in a way that I would not call empty, but simply articulated that, because of the capture in discourse of this being – whatever he may be, namely, even if he is not a being – nowhere does there appear the articulation in which the sexual is expressed except in a complex manner, which one cannot even say is mediated, even though there are *medii* – media, if you like – one of which is this real effect that I call surplus enjoying, which is the small **o**. In effect what does experience indicate to us? That it is only when this small **o** is substituted for woman that man desires her. That inversely, what the woman has to deal with, assuming that we are able to speak about it, is her own enjoyment which is represented somewhere by an omnipotence of man, which is precisely that through which man, articulating himself, articulating himself as master, finds himself lacking. This is where we have to start from in analytic experience. What might be called man, that is to say the male as speaking being, disappears, vanishes, because of the very effect of discourse, of the discourse of the master (*du maître*) – write that as you will - because of only being inscribed in castration, which in fact is properly to be defined as a privation of the woman – of the woman in so far as she is realised in an adequate signifier. The privation of the woman – this, expressed in terms of the failure of discourse, is what castration means. It is indeed because it is not thinkable, that as a go-between, the speaking order establishes this desire, constituted as impossible, which makes the mother the privileged feminine object in so far as she is prohibited. This is how there is dressed up in an organised way, the fundamental fact that there (5) is no place possible in a mythical union defined as sexual between man and woman. Here indeed is what we grasp in psychoanalytic discourse, the unifying One, the whole One, is not what is involved in identification.

The pivotal identification, the major identification is the unary trait, it is the being marked *one*. Before any promotion of any individual (*étant*), by virtue of a singular *one*, of what bears the mark, from this moment on, there re-emerges the language effect and the first affect. This is what the formulae I wrote on the blackboard recall.

$$\frac{1}{1 + 1} = ? \quad \frac{\text{I am (one)}}{\text{I think = therefore I am one}}$$

Somewhere there is isolated this something that the *cogito* only marks also by the unary trait that can be taken to underlie *I think* in order to say *therefore I am*. Here the division is already marked by an *I am* which elides *I am marked by the one* – because Decartes is of course inserted into a scholastic tradition, from which he extracts himself by an acrobatic feat, which is not at all to be disdained as a way of getting out. Moreover, it is in function of this initial position of the *I am* that *I think* can even be written. You will remember how I have been writing it for a long time now – *I think: therefore I am*.

This *therefore I am* is a thought. It is infinitely better tolerated because it bears its characteristic of knowing, which does not go beyond the *I am marked by the one* of the singular, of the unique, of what? – of this effect which is, *I think*. But there again, there is an error of punctuation, which I expressed as such a long time ago – the *ergo*, which is nothing other than the *ego* at stake, is to be put on the side of the *cogito*. The *I think, I am* is what gives the formula its real significance. The cause, the *ergo*, is thought. This is where we should start as regards the effect of what is involved in the simplest order, from which the effect of language operated at the level of the emergence of the unary trait. To be sure, the unary trait is never alone. Therefore, the fact that it is repeated – that it is repeated by never being the same – is properly speaking the very order, the one at stake by virtue of the fact that language is present and already there, already effective. Our first rule is never to question the origin of language, if only because this is sufficiently demonstrated by its effects.

(6) The more we extend its effects, the more this origin emerges. The effect of language is retroactive, precisely in that the more it develops it manifests what it is as lack of being. Moreover, I would indicate – in passing because today we have to push ahead – that we can write it like this, and bring into play, in the strictest form, what, from the origin of the rigorous use of the symbolic, is manifest in the Greek tradition, namely, at the level of mathematics. The fundamental reference is Euclid and the definition he gives us of proportion is primary, was never given before him, I mean before what

remains as having been written under his name. Of course who knows from where he might have borrowed this strict definition. The one that gives the only true foundation of geometrical proof is found, if I remember correctly in Book 5. The term proof is ambiguous here. By always highlighting the intuitive elements in the diagrams he makes it easy for you to overlook the fact that very formally, the requirement in Euclid is one of symbolic proof, of an order arranged in equalities and inequalities, which alone allow proportion to be guaranteed, not in an approximate, but in a properly provable way, in this term *logos* – this is the sense of proportion.

It is curious and illustrative that we had to wait for the Fibonacci series to see there being distinguished what is involved in the apprehension of the proportion known as the proportional mean. I will rewrite it here – you know that I used it when I was talking about *From an Other to the other*.

$$\frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1 + 1}}} = \gamma$$

There is a romanticism that still continues to call it the golden number, and wears itself out finding it on the surface of everything that was painted or drawn throughout the ages, as if it were not certain that all this was only too easy to see. You only have to open a book on aesthetics that takes this reference into account to realise that, even though it can be seen that way, it is certainly not because the painter drew the diagonals in advance, but because there is, in effect, some kind of intuitive harmony or other which means that this is always what is most appropriate. Only there is also something else that you will easily grasp. Taking each of these terms and starting to calculate them from the bottom up, you will quickly see that you are dealing first with a half, then with two thirds, next with three fifths. So you find the numbers whose sequence makes up the Fibonacci series, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, (7) each being the sum of the two preceding numbers, as I pointed out to you at one time. This relation of two terms we can write for instance as $U_{n+1} = U_{n-1} + U_n$. The

result of the division U_{n+1}/U_n will be equal, if the series is taken far enough, to the effectively ideal proportion that is called the proportional mean or again the golden number.

If we now take this proportion as an image of what is involved in affect in so far as there is a repetition of this *I am (one)* on the next line, there retroactively results what causes it – the affect. This affect we can temporarily write as *equal to o*, and we know that it is the same **o** that we find in the effect.

$$\frac{1}{\mathbf{o} + 1} = \mathbf{o}$$

The effect of the repetition of the 1, is this **o**, at the level of what is designated here by a bar. The bar is precisely only the fact that there is something to be got over for the 1 to affect it. In short, it is this bar that is equal to **o**.

And there is nothing astonishing in the fact that affect can legitimately be written below the bar, as the thought, overturned effect because it makes the cause emerge. It is in the first effect that the cause as thought cause emerges. This indeed is what justifies us in finding, in this first tentative use of mathematics, a surer articulation of what is involved in the effect of discourse. It is at the level of the cause, in so far as it emerges as thinking on reflection of the effect, that we touch on the initial order of what is involved in lack of being. Being initially affirms itself only by the mark of the 1, and everything that subsequently follows is a dream – specifically, the mark of the 1 in so far as it may encompass, reunite anything whatsoever. It can not reunite anything at all except precisely the confrontation, the addition of the thought of the cause to the initial repetition of the 1. This repetition already costs, and institutes, at the level of the **o**, the debt of language. Something is to be paid to the one who introduces its sign. This year I have given a title to something, a nomenclature that tries to give it its historical weight – it is not strictly speaking this year, but let us say that for you it is this year – by using the term *Mehrlust*. What is reproduced from this infinite articulation? Because **o** is the same

here and there, it is self evident that the repetition of the formula cannot be the infinite repetition of the *I think* within *I think*, a mistake phenomenologists never fail to make, but simply the following: *I think*, if it is an effect, can only be replaced by *I am*: '*I think therefore I am*'. (8) I am the one who thinks *therefore I am*, and so on indefinitely. You will observe that the small **o** always gets further and further away in the series that reproduces exactly the same order of 1's, as they are here deployed on the right, except that for the final term there would be a small **o**.

$$\frac{1}{\mathbf{o} + 1} = \mathbf{o}$$

$$\frac{\mathbf{o} + 1}{\mathbf{o} + 1}$$

A remarkable thing, you should note. It is enough for this small **o** to subsist, however far down you take it in a descending order, for the equality to be the same as in the formula I first wrote, namely, that the repeated and multiple proportion equals in total the result of the small **o**. What is distinctive about this series? In short it does nothing other, if I am not mistaken, than mark the order of converging series whose intervals are greater because they are constant. Namely, still the small **o**.

This, in a way, is only a localised articulation. It certainly does not pretend to settle, by a fixed and guaranteed proportion, the effectiveness of the most primary manifestation of number, namely, the unary trait. It is only done to remind you what is involved in science as we are now, as I might say, lumbered with it – I mean have it present in our world in a manner that goes well beyond anything that might be speculated on as a result of knowledge (*connaissance*). In effect we should all the same not forget that the characteristic of our science is not that it introduced a better and more extensive knowledge of the world, but that it made emerge into the world things that did not exist in it in any way at the level of our perception. People try to organise science according to a mythical genesis starting from perception, on the pretext that such and such a

philosophical meditation is supposed to have dwelt for a long time on the question of knowing what guarantees that perception is not illusory.

This is not what science came from. Science came from what was in embryo in the Euclidean proofs, even though these remain very suspect because they still contain that attachment to the diagram whose obviousness is taken as a pretext. The entire evolution of Greek mathematics proves to us that its highpoint is the manipulation of numbers as such. Consider the method of exhaustion which already in Archimedes prefigures what will culminate at what is essential, at what is for us the structure, as it happens, namely, calculus, infinitesimal calculus. There was no need to wait for Leibniz, who moreover, with his first touch reveals a certain awkwardness in its regard. This was already begun by Cavalieri by simply reproducing Archimedes' exploit on the parabola, in the 17th century but well before Leibniz.

(9) What is the result of all this? You can no doubt say about science that *nihil fuerit in intellectu quod non prius fuit in sensu*. What does that prove? *Sensus* has nothing to do, as we know, with perception. *Sensus* is only there by way of what can be counted, and the fact of counting dissolves it rapidly. Taking what is involved in our *sensus* at the level of the ear or of the eye, for example, ends up with an enumeration of vibrations. And indeed it is thanks to this operation of number that we well and truly set about producing vibrations that had nothing to do either with our senses or with our perception. As I was saying the other day, on the steps of the Pantheon, the world which was presumed to have always been ours is now populated, in the very place where we are, by a considerable and intersecting number of what are called waves without you having the least suspicion of it. This is not to be neglected as a manifestation, presence, existence of science, and this would require us not to be content to speak, to describe what is around our earth as atmosphere, stratosphere, whatever you feel like spherising, as long as we can apprehend particles. Account should also be taken in our epoch of what goes well beyond and which is the effect of what? Of a knowledge that has progressed less through its own filtering, through its critique as we might say, than through an audacious leap from an artifice, that of Descartes, of course – others will choose others – the artifice of

remitting the guarantee of truth to God: If there is a truth, let Him take responsibility for it. We take it at face value. By means of the simple operation of a truth that is not abstract but purely logical, by the simple operation of a strict combinatorial simply subject to the fact that it is necessary that rules, under the name of axioms, should always be indicated by the simple operation of a formalised truth, a science is constructed that no longer has anything to do with the presuppositions that the idea of knowledge has always implied. Namely, the dual polarisation, the imagined ideal unification of what knowledge is, where one can always find, by whatever name one dresses them up, *endosune*, *eidos*,, for instance, the reflection, the image, always ambiguous moreover, of two principles, the male principle and the female principle.

The space in which the creations of science are deployed can henceforth only be qualified as unsubstance (*insubstance*), as a-thing (*l'achose* with an apostrophe) a fact that entirely changes the sense of our materialism. The oldest representation of the infatuation of the master – write it as you like – is that man imagines he forms woman. I think you all have sufficient experience to have encountered this (10) comical story at one or other stage of your lives.

Form, substance, content - call it what you will – this myth is what scientific thinking must detach itself from. I consider that I am allowed to move forward here with a somewhat crude ploughshare in order to properly express my thought. I lose standing by acting as if I had one, whereas, precisely, this is not the issue, but, as everyone knows, thinking is communicated by means of misunderstanding, of course. So then, let us practice communication and say what is the nature of this conversion by which science is established as distinct from any theory of knowledge. In fact that means nothing, because it is precisely in the light of the apparatus of science, to the extent that we can grasp it, that it is possible to ground what is involved in the errors, the impasses, the confusions that in effect did not fail to appear in what was articulated as knowledge, with this underpinning that there were two principles to split apart – the one that forms and the

other that is formed. This is indeed what science allows us to put our finger on and this fact is reinforced in that we find an echo in analytic experience. To express myself in these large approximate terms, let us for example take the male principle – what effect does the incidence of discourse have on it? It is that *qua* speaking being, he is summoned to account for his “essence” – irony, in inverted commas. It is very precisely, and only from the affect that he undergoes from this effect of discourse, namely, in so far as he receives this feminising effect which is the small **o** – that he recognises what makes him, namely, the cause of his desire. Conversely, in the case of the so-called natural principle, which not for nothing has always been symbolised, in the bad sense of the word, by a female reference, it is on the contrary, from unsubstance as I said earlier that this void appears, the void of what? The thing that is at stake, if we want, very much in the distance, a very long way away, to give it the horizon of the woman, let us say that it is in what is involved in unformed enjoyment, precisely without any form, that we can find the place in the *operçoit* in which science comes to be constructed. What I perceive (*perçois*), in a supposedly original way, must in effect be replaced by an *operçoit*. It is in as far as science refers only to an articulation which is only taken from the signifying order that it is constructed out of something of which nothing existed beforehand.

This is precisely what it is important to grasp if we want to understand something that is involved in what? In the forgetting of this very effect. All of us, such as we are, to the extent that the field extends by virtue of the fact that science perhaps functions as the discourse of the (11) Master, we do not know the point to which – for the reason that we have never known at any point – each of us is initially determined as small **o**-object.

I was speaking earlier about these spheres with which the extension of science – which curiously is found to be very effective at what happens to the individual – circles the earth, a series of zones that it describes as what it finds. Why not take into consideration the locus where these fabrications of science are situated, if they are nothing other than the effect of a formalised truth? What are we going to call this locus?

Here again I am overemphasising what I want to say, and I am not necessarily very proud of what I am putting forward on this occasion, but I think it is useful, you will see why, to raise this question which is not one of nomenclature. What indeed is at stake is the place that is well and truly occupied – by what? I spoke earlier about waves. That is what is at stake. Hertzian or other waves, no phenomenology of perception has ever given us the slightest idea of them and it would certainly never have led us to them. We will certainly not call this locus the noosphere which is supposed to be populated by ourselves [*noumena?*]. If there is one thing that is put to the back row of anything that may be of interest to us this indeed is it. But using *aletheia* in a way which, I agree, has nothing emotionally philosophical about it, you could, unless you find something better, call it the *alethosphere*.

Let us not lose the run of ourselves. The *alethosphere* can be recorded. If you have a little microphone here you are connected to the *alethosphere*. What is really stunning is that if you are in a little vehicle that is taking you towards Mars you will still be able to plug into the *alethosphere* and even this surprising effect of structure which means that two or three people went for a stroll on the moon, believe me that in terms of their exploit, it is certainly not for nothing that they always remained within the *alethosphere*. These astronauts, as they are called, who ran into some little difficulties at the last minute, would probably not have got out of them so well – I am not even talking about their relationships with their little machine, because they might well have got out of them on their own – if they had not been accompanied all the time by this small *o* of the human voice. By virtue of this they were able to allow themselves to talk nothing but bullshit, as for example that everything was going well, when everything was going badly. But what matter. The important thing is that they remained in the *alethosphere*. It will take time to notice all the things that populate it, and that is going to make me introduce you to another (12) word. It is all very well to say the *alethosphere*. It is because we suppose that what I call formalised truth already has sufficiently the status of truth at the level at which it operates, at which it *operçoit*. But for the operated on, for what wanders about, the truth is not unveiled at all. The proof of this is that the human voice, with its effect of

supporting your perineum (*périnée*), as I might say, in no way unveils its truth. We shall name it with the help of the aorist of the same verb that a famous philosopher pointed out *aletheia* came from. Only philosophers would think of such things, and perhaps some linguists. We are going to call it the *lathouses*. The world is increasingly populated by *lathouses*. Since you seem to find that amusing, I am going to show you how it is written. Notice that I could have called it *lathousies*. That would have gone better with *ousia*, it is open to all sorts of ambiguity. *Ousia* is not the Other. It is not the individual (*l'étant*), it is between the two. It is not quite being, either, but ultimately it is pretty close.

As for feminine *unsubstance* I would be willing to go as far as *parousia*. And for the tiny little *o*-objects that you are going to encounter when you leave, on the pavement at every street corner, behind every shop window, in the superabundance of these objects designed to cause your desire in so far as it is now science that governs it, think of them as *lathouses*. I notice a bit late since I invented it not too long ago that it rhymes with *ventouse* [windy]. There is wind in it, lots of wind, the wind of the human voice. It is quite comical to find that there to meet us. If man had taken less to God's spokesman by believing that he is united with woman, this word *lathouses* would perhaps have been found a long time ago.

In any case this sudden little apparition is designed to make you not to take your relationships with the *lathouses* for granted. It is quite certain that everyone has to deal with two or three things like that. The *lathouses* has absolutely no reason to put a limit on its multiplication. What is important is to know what happens when one really puts oneself into relationship with the *lathouse* as such. The ideal psychoanalyst would be the one who commits this absolutely radical act, of which the least that can be said is that to see it being done is anxiety provoking.

One day, at a time when I was being treated as a commodity, I tried, because that was part of the ceremony, to put forward a few little things on this subject. In effect, while I was being treated in this way, people were very keen to pretend they were interested in what I might have to say about analytic formation, and I advanced - naturally in a (13) spirit of absolute indifference, since people were only interested in what was happening in the corridors - that there was no reason why a psychoanalysis should cause anxiety. It is quite certain that if the *lathouses* exists, anxiety – since this is what is at stake – is not without an object. That is where I started from. A better approach to the *lathouse* ought to calm us a little bit. The question is to put oneself into a position such that there is someone that you have been dealing with because of his anxiety, wants to come to the point of occupying the same position that you hold, or that you do not hold, or that you barely hold – comes to the point of knowing how you hold it, or how you do not hold it, and why you hold it, and why you do not hold it. This will be the object of our next meeting whose title I can already give you – it will be on the relationships, still supported by the same little schemas, between impotence and impossibility. It is clear that it is altogether impossible to hold the position of the *lathouse*. However that is not the only thing is that is impossible, there are many other things as well, on condition that one gives a strict sense to the word impossible, namely, determines them only from the level of our formalised truth. Namely, that in every formalised field of truth, there are truths that cannot be proved. It is at the level of the impossible, as you know, that I define what is real. If it is real that there is the analyst, it is precisely because it is impossible. That forms part of the position of the *lathouse*. The trouble is, that in order to be in the position of *lathouse* it is really necessary to have circumscribed it as impossible. It is for this reason that people much prefer to put the emphasis on impotence which also exists, but which is, as I will show you, at a different place to strict impossibility.

I know that there are some people here who sometimes suffer to see me, as we say – how can we put it – abuse, challenge, vociferate against analysts. These are young people who are not analysts. They do not realise that I am doing something nice. These are little signs of recognition that I direct at them. I do not want to set them too arduous a

test. And when I allude to their impotence, which is therefore my own, it means that at that level we are all brothers, and we have to sort ourselves out as best we can. I hope that this will win them over before I talk to them about the impossibility of the analyst's position.

ANALYTICON

Vincennes - Impromptu Number 2: Wednesday 4 June 1970

...I regret that the properly speaking Vincennes attendance is not more numerous, because the first time they gave me a welcome that I would describe as warm, in the sense that things got a little heated. I was very pleased with that. I left feeling a little bit warmer myself...

...It is precisely about this that I would like to question you. I am talking about things, especially this year, concerning the reverse side of psychoanalysis....

What is that? Well, my friend, this is precisely the question! Now would you shut that thing or I will give it a kick (*a tape recorder*). Turn that thing off now and get the hell out of here!

Because it is very precisely the reason why I did not come back on two occasions, it is because the Department of Psychoanalysis took the liberty of reproducing in a text and I

have the stamp here on the cover: Department of Psychoanalysis. Now I consider, as regards my relations with the Department of Philosophy, this business of publishing – because inasmuch as what happened here had a certain value, in any case the value of illustrating what I am talking about when I talk about dialogue, namely, of course that there is no dialogue, but all the same it was something that happened: things got heated! To reproduce that as coming from the Department of Psychoanalysis is what I call treachery, because naturally when you read it, it was absolute bullshit! I am talking about those who intervened, because me, for my part, I did what I could to make it the least stupid possible. So the guy who published that and who wanted to start up again today, where is he? Where is the person called Bernard Mérigot, so that I can see him? It's you? It's you! Well you have the sort of mug that I expected! What do you mean this wasn't done under the auspices of the Department of Psychoanalysis! It is printed on it! It's kind of treachery! That is the way they try to trick you! Because here you can read it: this is what happens in effect in the Department of Philosophy! And you were going to start up again today, huh! Everyone does it, in effect as he will and I know that it's considered amusing in Paris to have little meetings in the evening with "there will be a tape of Lacan". In any case, that does not mean in any way that the Department of Psychoanalysis which had absolutely nothing to do with my coming to the Department of Philosophy, had to produce this publication. And if everyone has the right, in effect, to record, everyone has not the right to publish what I might want to say here. And this is what was going to happen once again!

(2) There were things today that I had hoped to say to the people from Vincennes. I wanted to question myself with them about what they may understand about the things that I am talking about, I mean in their position, their position as people who are at the *Centre Expérimental de Vincennes*. How do they experience this experiment? What do they hope for from it? Because, of course, as regards hopes, there are people other than you who hope for something in the results of the *Centre Expérimental de Vincennes* and even inside Vincennes there are also people who are hoping for something, there is a great variety!

All right, I am not going to do this thing without some support. I received this morning a little text that was put together yesterday. Someone was good enough to bring me to bring me this thing that is called “*La loi d’orientation*” which is in the *Bulletin Officiel de L’Education Nationale*. Here is the final paragraph of article one: “*In a general manner, higher education, the totality of the teaching that follows secondary studies, contributes to the cultural promotion of society and by that very fact to its evolution – evolution to society – towards a greater responsibility of everyone in their own destiny.*” Huh? So you see!

I admit that for my part I would not be reassured if I was in your situation. The evolution of society towards a greater responsibility then added to each man in his own destiny, because it is rather curious to see written in the same sentence the society which evolves thanks to cultural promotion and we will try to say where it can be situated. You will then be more and more responsible for your own destiny, this is the purpose of the totality of the teaching that follows on secondary studies!

I will allow myself, because there is such a majority here of people who are used to my seminar, to put down here without further commentary this little schema that I consider I promoted as specific to what I articulated, this year, about the University discourse.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & & \text{U} \\ & & \text{S}_2 \longrightarrow \mathbf{o} \\ \hline & & \hline \text{S}_1 & & \$ \end{array}$$

(3) This schema signifies that knowledge is here represented by this S_2 which has the meaning of specifying that the only knowledge is an articulated one. Even intuitive knowledge needs to be such to have the consistency of knowledge, to be able to be verified. What is involved in the S_1 is precisely what we are going to have to try to say, then what is involved in the \mathbf{o} , which is on the same line as the S_2 , the small \mathbf{o} is what in the University discourse is specified by an object whose essential function I have been trying for some time to show in every effect of discourse.

It is in connection with this \circ that I make the connection between what in analytic discourse allows there to be articulated what is called desire, and something that is posited as its cause, except that this cause cannot properly speaking be found except by situating it in the locus of the Other. Namely, that what psychoanalysis reveals is that our desire, our desire, what appears to us, although barely graspable, to be nevertheless what is most proper to us, for it we are dependent on what I call the locus of the Other, in so far as it is there that there is inscribed through destination, because it is only here that there can be inscribed everything that is articulated.

I mean that it is ruled out that anything whatsoever should take a written form outside this locus that is not neutral, that is inhabited, that is inhabited not by anything whatsoever, that is inhabited first of all by what one can imagine to be at the horizon of the phases of the first knowledge, this first knowledge in which an irruption is made, a bite, that I am claiming to take advantage of, to exploit... (*another episode with the man with the tape recorder*).

I am going to summarise in the shortest possible way what I intended to say to you. I regret having to pass over the other extracts from the *loi d'orientation* that I highlighted, but all the same the following deserves to be mentioned: "*Teachers and researchers enjoy complete independence, a complete liberty of expression in the exercise of their function of teaching and in their activity of research, within the reservations that are imposed on them in conformity with University traditions and the arrangements of the present law, the principles of objectivity and of tolerance.*"

What I wanted to say to you today was a first remark about what constitutes 'objectivity', with respect to you, because what you represent here in this picture, what is properly speaking its support, is the \circ -object. If analysis is the practice that has allowed there to be brought out from the \circ -object its character of irreducible residue in everything that is caught up in the effect of language, it is indeed in order to show that it is not something negligible. And that it is not at (4) all by chance that you find yourselves very properly,

as those who enter into the field of the University discourse, entering it here essentially in the name of the fact that you are so many **o**-objects. And you can do nothing about the fact that you are in a line of progenitors which roots you in it, very far back, but luckily you only have to know the last two or three generations. It is because of the fact that each and every one of you have been brought forth to fill the hole, that you are the cause of the desire of these last two or three generations.

It is in this capacity that you are projected as objects of hope, in that one cannot otherwise define that you are what succeeds to secondary studies, secondary studies themselves being the preparation for this continuation, in other words the period when people tried to form you to render you suitable for the function that you are going to occupy here, in higher education.

For the moment, the objectivity in question has been embodied. Objectively, you are, each one of you individually a credit (*une unité de valeur*). Little *va-va*, little *leu-leur*, each one of you is a credit. You are valued. One has to bow before so many credits!

One thing about this reform of the University is that it sets out clearly what is involved. In the University, there was what is called a discontent, a discontent that is due to something which is of the order of a peculiar social imbalance. For example – I am bringing things out clearly – it says that what is at stake as regards this troop that higher education takes on the responsibility of forming even though it is ten times too late: you should understand, when one is in higher education one has no longer any need to be formed, one is already super-formed!

As objects, you are credits and like little **o**-objects, as I reminded you: the principles of objectivity and of tolerance, as they say, as **o**-objects you are tolerated!

This is the point on which I would have liked to put forward some remarks for you today. In other words, I would have liked to disorient you. Naturally, I am going to be forced to return quite simply onto my little track, I mean to say things that are simply the beginning

of what I am going to continue to say at the *Faculté de Droit*. I am going to give you the guts of what will be taken up at my next talk. I will give a commentary on it with the support of what I had more or less prepared for you today.

There is something that defines the function which is occupied on the top left successively by one of these four letters of our algebra. This (5) function is primordial to introduce us to what is involved in the discourse of the Master. The discourse of the Master is a funny old thing. It is very curious that people do not spend more time on the fact that it is completely ruled out that what establishes, installs, maintains the discourse of the Master is force, because, after all, those to whom this discourse is applied are the great majority. It is absolutely impossible to see why the discourse of the Master would hold up. The discourse of the Master, is a fact of discourse. It is that the signifier can function as a Master signifier. This is obviously more and more masked for us for the reason that, far from this discourse being in the slightest way shaken by all the attempts that think they are subversive, just take the measure of something you can put your finger on: the degree to which, with respect to what you can imagine about the past, precisely force is always manifest and more crushing here to sustain effectively now the discourse of the Master. Simply in coming to see you today, I encountered 36 vehicles that, just by themselves, bear witness to the mass of force ...!

It is a false appearance. We have only got to that stage by reason of the fact that it began with something completely different which was well and truly the signifier of the Master, the signifier S_1 in so far as it is what precipitates, what integrates, what polarises everything that can be found as most precious in the world. Namely, this immense human knowledge which finds itself caught, squeezed, in this movement inaugurated by the establishment of the discourse of the Master.

You should not allow yourself to be impressed by these deployments of force. It is a consequence, of course, of the fact that a certain number of things have happened to the Master, and in particular he has succeeded in making slide towards him, nice and quietly, the apparatus of knowledge. This is what is called science, the science which is not at all

an affair of the progress of knowledge, but which is something that functions, which in particular always functions to the advantage of the discourse of the Master.

This is the prestige which still allows what is involved in the university to hold up; because what the university has to support historically, is something that is quite incapable of holding up in present conditions. This idea of this knowledge which is supposed to be the sum total of all that can be collected in scarce memories, the wrecks, the things that float, that have happened, that are called cultural. These would have had their day a long time ago if it were not for the fact that they are sustained by this apparatus that is still (6) functioning which introduced into it everything that it can support in terms of science, I am talking about this old human discourse. What it can support in terms of science, are the methods of filing, of classification. So then, in the name of that, this old knowledge preserves like that the appearance of holding up.

And for reasons that have nothing to do with the virtue of this discourse – a certain number of people are here as students, namely, are pushing themselves forward to be recognised in this society which is in the process of really losing the run of itself, namely, of very quickly getting rid of its principal supports – credits pass progressively from a use value to an exchange value. You are predestined, whatever you may wish, in this little mechanism, to play the same role of everything that is involved as ϕ -object in capitalist society, namely, to function as surplus value. You are the true values in the sense that you form part of the movement, of the numerical movement, that is going to sustain the style of exchange, the style of market, that capitalist society constitutes.

Only it is one thing to be an incarnated surplus value and something else to be a countable surplus value. When one is an incarnated surplus value, this collection is added up - the credits - that also of course generates things, namely, a discontent whose import you would be wrong to believe that I limit to the noisy complaints that I hear here. Because in truth the things that I am in the process of telling you are very serious things and which are altogether of a kind, - naturally, on a different plane to these squeals - to question very seriously the society that is at stake, namely, capitalist society.

If I had the time, I would note that what is happening highlights something important, namely, what you are explicitly charged with proving, what you are beginning to prove in fact, naturally in a different way than by these squeals. It is that as regards the masses, you can count on nothing, as the whole progress of history shows you, because imagine that if it is in effect in the masses that you can find revolutionaries, you no longer find them in the masses when they are organised *en masse*. At that stage those who have made the revolution are rebels. For example, the sailors at Kronstadt.

So then, there are perhaps in effect some people who for the moment are charged with demonstrating that. There is nothing to say that (7) they will not also succeed in doing something, but we do not know what. For the moment, what they are dealing with, is what Freud in *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* demonstrates, which is that what the mass produces is idealisation, imaginary idealisation. It reproduces very precisely the re-emergence of the discourse of the Master.

That is the reason why, when people have tried to associate Freud with Marx – I am not all the same the only one to have this attitude that I am going to tell you about – it makes me laugh, because if there is something precisely that Freud contributes, it is something beyond Marx and specifically something which allows it to be seen why after the effect, the effect delivered by the discourse of Marx, as regards the stability of the discourse of the Master, nothing has changed.

So then, it is a matter of seeing what at the level of the **o**-object that you constitute, namely, from the quarter where it has its incidence in a discourse, what you are offered. This is something that I cannot take any further today, but which I will continue at my next seminar with two terms that I have not yet put forward. These two terms are called impossibility and impotence. They are not the same. Impossibility, as you can imagine, as if by chance, is put forward, is highlighted, illuminated in Freud's discourse, and is so very specifically in connection with analysing, *Analysieren*. It is one of these *unmögliche*

Beruf, one of these impossible professions to which he associates *Regieren*, governing and also what interests us, the formation of men, *erziehen*.

The impossible, I have stated, I, Lacan, the impossible is the real. If you find that this is not sufficiently proved by the fact that to govern, to bring up, to educate, to analyse also – why not, we are not stinting ourselves – is the real. What is at stake, the connection by which science can connect up with something that concerns you, is precisely this, that this impossible is demonstrated as such, I said demonstrated.

I mean that what the questioning about language contributes to us is the following: it allows us to see that here mathematics, the logic which flows from it, once again does not fail us. This is what they demonstrate. It is precisely that we should not lose ourselves – because it is just as well not to lose oneself – in seeking the truth, with catching it in the toils of language, in formalising it. Mathematical logic teaches us, makes us take the step that there is an impossible to be proved as true in every system whatever it may be, even at a certain level of elevation – one can hardly say that arithmetic is too much – that there is something impossible that demonstrates the true. Here we hold the real.

(8) Do not place your trust in the truth, it has a relationship to what? Not to knowledge certainly but precisely to this real. It was the way to orient oneself towards this real, as long as one did not have any other means. This indeed is the reason why it can only be expressed in a half-saying. Naturally it is there, in its place: this thing that plays the role of truth, in what might be a knowledge, a knowledge put in its place, it is the S_1 of the discourse of the Master.

Everyone can carry out the test that this is what the real supports with a certain knowledge. And I began with that by saying that science is what constitutes, maintains in force the discourse of the Master, and this is precisely the trap that is being set for you, if you allow yourself to be fascinated by this truth, because precisely it is only the half of it. It is one aspect. This is what requires the half-saying of the truth.

And what you have to experience is this: it is not on the side of what is hidden under this statutory a-cephalic – you can write that as you like – knowledge, which is the one in which there is presented – and it is not near being grounded – the University. Under this system, this statute, this collation, this imagination of an established knowledge, of course, one senses that things are cracking up a little bit. A little more rope is being given in terms of humanism, or of the humanities. Believe me, the system will remain just as healthy, at least for a good period of time. What is asked of you, who are in effect at a place which is that of the Other, is to produce, to produce something that helps out this affair. What you have to produce, is there on the bottom right, it is called culture. As you were told: the cultural promotion of society.

In the whole measure that you are able to produce some agreeable nonsense, you will feed the system. Because this is what impossibility protects itself with; it is to demonstrate an impotence in the whole measure that you yield to this capture, where you get excited like young dogs. I am surprised that there is not one there today as there was the other time. There was already someone called Goethe who spoke about that in connection with a dog that he called *Studentenscholar*, the true animal formed by the studies that he *lait* [?], as you remember, sometimes; perhaps. Anyway there is no dog, but you should not imagine that by throwing yourself into the hunt for everything that your indignation offers to you, that you are not serving the system. On the contrary, you are feeding it!

The thing that you might have to do, is to keep in the closest way to the impossible. It is in this that one or other, or even all, undoubtedly (9) all are not ready to take up this function, it is in this that one or other of you may accomplish what really deserves the title of revolution as regards the discourse of the Master. It is to complete the circuit. I mean that *anar* [anarchist] or not, it is perhaps to be *ana* without the *r* that would be better for you, in other words to be analysts, in other words to be in the position of questioning what is involved in culture in the Master position.

You should not be wasting your time while you are here at the *Centre Expérimental* or elsewhere. You do not have to produce culture, you have to seek out a lower notch, seek out the less rather than the more, not the truth, the impossible of the real. That is what those who are the best among you, who are not there precisely because they are in the clink, this is what they should attach themselves to. It is a matter of truly seeing over against what is involved in the system, a functioning and a real.

That particular way is, properly speaking, only operable precisely because of the following, namely, *qua* cause of desire, the cause of what is lacking as a matter of course even in what may appear highest in human activity, namely, this function of language in the system of science, of what you have to deal with, here and now. What am I doing but that. Making the effort so that people should come to birth who know how to maintain themselves in this position of analyst from which effectively and only from which, there can be accomplished, brought about, what I called this circuit (*tour*) of the discourse of the Master.

Because after all if you modify here my little schema in order to substitute that of analytic discourse, what you will see when the **o** for its part, has gone to the position on the top left, is what? It is something that is going to be produced on the bottom right. It is the S_1 that you will rediscover there, namely, a new Master signifier.

I am damned well not progressive, because what I am explaining to you is that things go round in a circle. Things go round in a circle all the same, but you change a notch. It is when the step has been taken of what is effectively involved in the incidence of analytic discourse, that a new loop will be able to begin, which no doubt will not do as much as we might presume by making vanish the whole system on which we are basing this demonstration, but which, after a circuit, will obtain perhaps something of a change of phase. The Master signifier will perhaps be a little bit less stupid. You can be sure that if it is a little bit less stupid, it will be a little more impotent. This will not be absolutely speaking a progress. This will mean that what you will have done will have a meaning,

and to tell you what meaning depends on, well, you can wait until I have got a little bit further on in my discourse.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 10 June 1970

This is not the time of year to be proposing long-drawn-out trials. So I am going to try to lighten things. Fortunately, we are winding up, as they say. I would even be inclined to leave it at that, if I did not have to propose a little complement designed to bring out what was essential in what I hope I got across this year. A little point for the future through which, by being circumscribed a little better, notions that are somewhat new, may perhaps give you a glimpse of the way in which they possess this characteristic that I always emphasise, and which those who find themselves working with me at a more practical level can confirm, of being absolutely in touch with experience.

We do not rule out that this may be of use elsewhere, at the level of something that is happening at the moment, without our knowing quite what is at stake. Naturally, when things happen, we never quite know, when they are happening, what is at stake, especially when these things are covered over with news stories. But in any case, something is happening in the University. In various places people are surprised. What is has got into these students, our little sweethearts, our favourite sons and daughters, the darlings of civilisation? What is happening to them? Those who say that are idiots, they are paid for that.

It may be the case, nevertheless, that some part of what I am spelling out about the relationship between the Analyst's discourse and the Master's discourse could show the way in which it would be possible in some way to justify, to understand, what is happening and to reach some agreement. What is happening at the moment, is that everyone is competing to minimise the impact of failed, compressed, little demonstrations that will be increasingly pushed into a corner. While I said I could justify it, explain it, I would like you to understand that to the extent I could manage to do so, succeed in getting you to understand something, you can be certain that I have stuck a finger in your eye. Because, in short, this is what, what I want to articulate today as simply as I can, amounts to.

The fact is that there is a relationship between what is happening, and the things I have taken the risk of manipulating for some time which, by that very fact, provide a kind of guarantee that this discourse hangs together. I am taking the risk of manipulating them in a way which, when all is said and done, is absolutely wild! I do not hesitate to speak about the real and that for some time, since it is even in this way that I took the first steps in this teaching. Then, as the years passed, a little formula emerged that the impossible is the real. God knows it was not overused at the beginning. Then I happened to propose some references or other to Truth, which is more common. There are, all the same, some very important remarks to make, and I feel obliged to (2) make a number of them today before leaving all of that to the innocents who will use them without rhyme or reason, which is really par for the course, sometimes in my own entourage.

I went to visit Vincennes a week ago as a way of indicating succinctly that I was responding to an invitation from that place. Moreover, I announced this to you the last time, so as to give you the right starting point for a reference with which I began and which is far from being innocent – that is even why you have to read Freud. We read in effect in *Analysis terminable and interminable*, lines that concern what is involved in being an analyst. It is pointed out there that one would be very mistaken to require of him too much normality and psychical correctness, this would make him too much of a rarity. “And finally we must not forget that the analytic relationship, *und endlich ist nicht*

zu vergessen, dass die analytische Beziehung auf Wahrheitsliebe, is based on a love of truth and d. h. auf der Anerkennung der Realität gegründet ist, that is, on a recognition of reality” [SE XXIII 248; GW XVI 94]. *Realität* is a word you will recognise even if you do not know German since it is copied from our Latin. It is in competition, in the way Freud employs it, with the word *Wirklichkeit* which also sometimes signifies what the translators looking no further, translate quite simply, in both cases, as reality. In this connection I have a little memory of the truly foaming rage that overcame a couple or more particularly one of them – I really do have to call him by his name, it is not an accident, it is someone called Laplanche, who as everyone knows had a certain role in the avatars of my relations with analysis – at the thought that another – whom I am also going to name, since I named the former, someone called Kaufmann – put forward the idea that it was necessary to distinguish between this *Wirklichkeit* and this *Realität*.

The fact of having been anticipated by the other in making this remark, which was in effect altogether primordial, unleashed a kind of passion in the first of these two characters. This pseudo-contempt displayed for this fastidiousness is all the same something quite interesting. The sentence finishes as follows: “*und jeden Schein und Trug ausschliesst*, precludes any kind of sham or deceit” [*ibid*].

A sentence like this is very rich. And immediately, in the lines that follow, it appears – despite the little friendly greeting that Freud gives the analyst on the way – that in short there is no *das Analysieren*. We are quite ready here truly to have, it has all the appearances of this function called the analytic act. *Das Analysieren* means nothing other than this term that I used as the title of one of my seminars. The (3) analytic act is supposed to be the third ‘impossible profession, *unmöglichen Berufe*’ in inverted commas. Freud quotes himself here in making reference to the fact that he is supposed to have already mentioned – where did he say it, perhaps my research is incomplete, perhaps it is in the letters to Fliess that he first used it – the three professions in question which he calls in this previous passage *Regieren, Erziehen, Kurieren*, which is obviously in agreement with commonplace use. Analysis is new and Freud inserts it into this series by substituting it for healing. The three professions if indeed it really is a

matter of professions are therefore *Regieren, Erziehen, Analysieren*, that is governing, educating and analysing. You cannot fail to see the close overlap between these three terms and what I am distinguishing this year as constituting the radicality of three or even four discourses. The discourses in question are nothing other than signifying articulation, the apparatus, whose simple presence, whose existing status, dominates and governs everything that may at a given moment emerge as speech. These discourses, as I said one day, are discourses without words. Words subsequently come to lodge themselves in them. Thus I am able to tell myself, as regards this intoxicating phenomenon called speaking out (*prendre la parole*), that certain reference points in the discourse in which it is inserted would perhaps be of such a nature that, from time to time, you do not speak out without knowing what you are doing.

Given a certain style of speech used in the month of May (*l'émoi*), the idea cannot fail to occur to me that one of the representatives of **o**, at a level that is not established in historical but rather in pre-historical times, is surely the domestic animal.

One can no longer employ in this case the same letters, but it is quite clear that what corresponds to our \$ - a certain knowledge was necessary in order to domesticate the dog, for instance - is barking. One cannot but have the idea that, if barking is indeed that, is giving tongue, the S_1 takes on a sense that there is nothing abnormal in locating at the level at which we situate it, at the level of language. Everyone knows that the domestic animal is only implicated in language by a primitive knowledge and that it does not have one. It only remains for it to turn over what it has been given that is closest to (4) the signifier S_1 , which is dead meat (*la charogne*). You must all the same know this, you must have had a good dog whether a watchdog or some other kind, one that you have been on familiar terms with. Dead meat is irresistible to them, they adore it. Look at Madame Bathory, a charming woman in Hungary, who from time to time liked up carving up her servants, which is of course the least one can allow oneself when one is in a certain position. If she ever placed the said morsels a little close to the ground her dogs would bring them back to her straight away. This is a side of dogs that is a little

neglected. If you did not stuff them full all the time at lunch or dinner by giving them things they only like because they come from your plate this is what they will bring you.

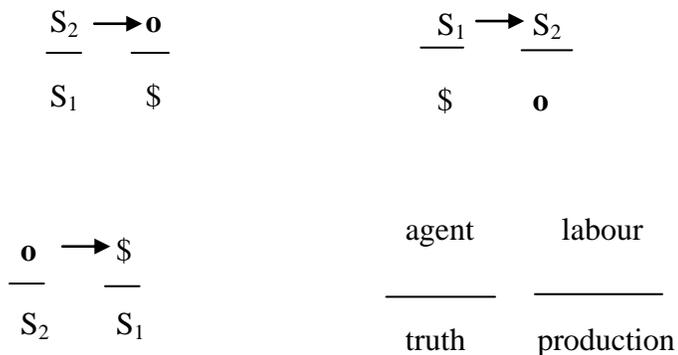
You have to pay very close attention to the fact that at a higher level – that of an *o*-object of a different kind which we will try to define later, and which will bring us back to this old *astudé* I have already mentioned – speech can very easily play the role of dead meat. In any case, it is no more tempting. This is what has contributed a lot to the fact that the importance of language was poorly grasped. The manipulation of this speech, which has no other symbolic value, has been confused with what was involved in discourse. As a result, it is never in any old way or any old time that speech functions as dead meat.

The aim of these remarks is to awaken some surprise in you, and at least get you to ask yourselves this question about the discourse of the Master – how can this discourse, which is so wonderfully well understood, have maintained its name – as is proven by the fact that whether exploited or not, workers work. Work has never been held in such high esteem since humanity began. It is even ruled out that one should not work! That is a success, surely, of what I call the discourse of the Master. To achieve this it was necessary for it to go beyond certain limits. In a word it comes down to something whose change I have tried to point out to you. I hope you remember it, and if you do not remember – which is quite possible – I am going to recall it to you straight away. I mean the crucial change which also gives the discourse of the Master its capitalist style.

Why, good God, does this happen, and it does not happen by chance. You would be wrong to think that there are wise politicians somewhere who calculate exactly everything that has to be done. You would also be wrong to think that there are none such – there are. It is not certain that they are always in the place from which one can act appropriately (5) but at bottom this is not what is so important. It is enough that they exist, even in another place, for the order of displacement of the discourse to be nevertheless transmitted. Let us now ask ourselves the question of how this society described as capitalist, can afford the luxury of allowing a relaxation of the University discourse. This discourse is, however, only one of these transformations that I have been

presenting to you all along. It is the quarter turn as compared to the discourse of the Master. Hence the question which is worth the effort to envisage: by embracing this relaxation, which, it has to be said, is offered, are we not going to fall into a trap? This is not a new idea. It so happens that I wrote a small article on the university reforms, which I had been explicitly invited to write for a newspaper, the only one to have a reputation for balance and honesty, called *Le Monde*. They had been very insistent that I write this little page about the reorganisation of psychiatry, about the reforms. Now despite this insistence it is quite striking that this little article, which I will publish sometime later, was not allowed through. It was entitled *D'une réforme dans son trou, A reform in a hole*. It was precisely a question of putting up with this whirlwind hole, to take a number of measures about the University. And, good God, to referring correctly to the terms of certain fundamental discourses, you might have certain scruples, let us say about acting, you might look twice before jumping in to profit from the lines that are opening up. It is a responsibility to carry dead meat into these corridors!

This is what our remarks today, which are not the usual line, which are not common, must be articulated with.



This is like an apparatus. You should at least get the idea that it can be used as a lever, a pair of pliers, that it can be screwed down, be constructed this way or that.

There are several terms. If I have only given these little letters here, it is not by chance. It is because I do not want to put in things that look like signifieds. I do not want them to signify at all but to authorise them. It is already a bit more to authorise them than to write them. I have already spoken about what constitutes the places where these signifiers are inscribed and I have already given a destiny to the agent. This term underlines a sort of riddle in the French tongue – the agent is (6) not at all necessarily the one who does, but the one who is made to act. So that as you may already suspect, it is not at all clear that the master functions. That defines, in all probability, the place of the master. It is the best thing one can ask oneself about him, and naturally you have not had to wait for me to do it. Someone called Hegel had a go at it, but you have to look a little bit more closely at it. It is very annoying to think that there are perhaps not five people here who have truly read, since I have been talking about it, *The phenomenology of spirit*. I do not want to ask them to raise their hands. It really pisses me off that I have until now seen only two people who have read it completely, since I too, I have to confess, have not been into every corner of it. The two are my master, Alexander Kojève, who proved it a thousand times, and another person of a kind you would not believe. He has truly read *The phenomenology of spirit* in an illuminating manner, to the extent that everything in Kojève's notes that I took and that I passed on to him was truly superfluous. What is astounding is even though I killed myself at one stage making people aware that *The critique of practical reason* is manifestly a book of eroticism, extraordinarily more amusing than what is published by Eric Losfeld, this produces no results. And that if I tell you that *The phenomenology of spirit* is madly humorous, well then, it will not fare any better. And nevertheless this is what is at stake. It is truly the most extraordinary thing. It is also a cold, not to say black humour. There is something you can be absolutely convinced of, which is that he knows perfectly well what he is doing. What he is doing is a sleight of hand and he takes everyone in. This, on the basis of the fact that what he says is the truth. There is obviously no better way to pinpoint the master signifier S_1 , which is there on the board, than by identifying it with death. And so what is at stake? It is to show in a dialectic, as Hegel puts it, the zenith, the highpoint, the thought of the function of this term. What in short is meant by the coming into play of this brute, the master, in the phenomenology of spirit as Hegel puts it? The truth of what he articulates

is positively seductive and sensational. We can really read it in front of our eyes provided we let ourselves be taken in by it, because I for my part am articulating precisely that it cannot be read head on. The truth of what he articulates is this: the relationship to this real, in so far as it is properly speaking impossible. It is not at all clear why a master should emerge from the struggle to death for pure prestige. And this despite the fact that Hegel himself says that he would result from this strange initial set up.

(7) To crown it all, Hegel finds the means – true, in a conception of history that looks a little odd in terms of what emerges from it, namely, the succession of phases of dominance, of composition of the operations of the mind, which is situated right through this thread that is no small thing, which is what was called in his day, or up to his day, philosophical thought – Hegel finds the means of showing that what results from this is that in the end it is the slave, through his work, who reveals the truth of the master by pushing him underneath. By virtue of this forced labour, as you can see from the beginning, the slave arrives, at the end of history, at this term which is called Absolute Knowledge. Nothing is said about what happens then, because in truth, in the Hegelian proposition, there were not four terms, but first of all the master, and then the slave. I call the slave S_2 , but you can just as well identify him here by the term of enjoyment, which firstly he had not wished to renounce and, secondly, he really wanted, because he substituted one for the other worth, which is not all the same its equivalent. [?] Thanks to what? Thanks to a series of dialectical mutations, to the ballet, to the minuet that is established starting with this initial moment, and which it traverses from one end to another, from one thread to another, the whole development of culture. Anyway, history rewards us with this knowledge that is not described as complete – there are many reasons for that – but absolute, incontestable. And the master only now appears to have been its instrument, the magnificent cuckold of history. It is sublime that this very remarkable dialectical deduction was undertaken, and that it was, as one might say, successful. Right along – let us take for example what Hegel says about culture – it is swarming with the most pertinent remarks as regards the operation of the incidences and the exercises of the spirit. I repeat, there is nothing funnier.

The ruse of reason is, he tells us, what has directed this whole operation. This is a very lovely term which has all its value for us analysts and we can follow it at the level of an a,b,c that is reasonable or not, because we have to deal with something very clever in the word, when it is the unconscious that is at stake. Only the highpoint of this ruse is not where you think. It is no doubt the ruse of reason, but you have to recognise the ruse of the reasoner, and take his hat off. If it had been possible at the beginning of the last century, at the time of the Battle of Iena, for this extraordinary piece of trickery called *The phenomenology of the spirit* to subjugate someone, it would probably have been successful. It is quite obvious, in effect, that we cannot hold for a single instant that we are getting close in any way whatsoever to the ascension of the slave. This unbelievable way of attributing to him – attributing to his work – any progress whatsoever of what is (8) described as knowledge, is really extraordinarily futile.

But what I am calling the ruse of the reasoner, is there to make us see an essential dimension that we have to be careful about. If we designate the place of the agent – whatever it may be, it is not always that of the master signifier, because all the other signifiers are going to pass there in their turn – the question is the following. What is it that makes this agent act? How can there be produced this extraordinary circuit around which there turns something that merits properly speaking to be signalled by the term of revolution? We rediscover here, at a certain level, the term of Hegel, of restoring work to the world. What is the truth? Here indeed is where it is placed, with a question mark. What inaugurates, what brings into play this agent, because after all, it has not been that way for all time, it is there since historic times began. It is a good thing to notice, in connection with such a brilliant, such a dazzling case, that because of this precisely you do not think, you do not see – Hegel is the sublime representative of the discourse of knowledge, and of university knowledge. We in France, the only philosophers we ever have are people who are always on the road. Little society members of provincial societies like Maine de Biran, or again fellows like Descartes, who wandered across Europe. You must all the same know how to read him too, and understand his tone – he speaks about what he was expecting from his birth. You see the type of chap he was.

Nevertheless he was no fool, far from it. In our country, it is not in the universities that one finds philosophers. That could be put down as an advantage for us. But in Germany, it is at the university. And people are capable, at a certain level of university status, to think that the poor pets, the little dears, those who at this moment are only just entering the industrial era, into the great era of drudgery, of exploitation to the death, are going to be caught by the revelation of this truth, that they are the ones who make history and that the master is only the fife player who was necessary to start the music at the beginning. This remark has its value, and I want to underline it with energy because of the sentence of Freud, that the analytic relation ought to be founded, *gegründet*, on the love of truth. Freud really was a charming chap. He really was full of fire, full of flame. He also had his weaknesses. His relationship with his wife, for example, is something unimaginable. To have put up with such a wagon for his whole existence, is surely something. Anyway you should be convinced of this – if there is anything that ought to inspire you with the truth if you want to sustain the *Analysieren*, it is certainly not love. Because truth, on occasion, is what gives rise to the signifier (9) of death. And even, to all appearances, if there is something that gives a completely different sense to what Hegel put forward, it is indeed what Freud had nevertheless discovered at that epoch, and that he described as he could, as death instinct, namely, the radical character of repetition, this repetition that insists, and which characterises psychic reality, if it exists, because it is inscribed in language. Perhaps the truth has no other face. This is not enough to make one mad about it. In truth, this is not correct either. Truth has more than one visage. But precisely the first line of conduct for analysts, is to be a little bit mistrustful, not to become all of a sudden mad about a truth, about the first pretty face met at a street corner. It is precisely here that we encounter this remark of Freud's in which, accompanied by this *Analysieren*, we find reality: *dass heisst auf die Anerkennung der Realität*. This is enough to make us say that, in effect, there might be, like that, a quite naïve real – and this in general is how people speak – that passes itself off as truth. The truth is experienced. This does not mean at all, for all that, that it knows more about the real, especially if one speaks about knowing, if we remember the features of what I indicate on the real. It is at the stage where it was found defined as impossible to prove the register of symbolic articulation true, that the real finds its place, if the real is defined as impossible. Here is something

that can be of use to us to measure our love for the truth – and also which can allow us to put our finger on why governing, educating, analysing also, and why not ‘making desire’, to complete by a definition what is involved in the hysterical discourse, are operations that are properly speaking impossible. These operations are there, they hold up bloody well, and pose us the question of what is involved in their truth, namely, how there are produced these mad things that are only defined in the real by being only able to be articulated when one approaches them as impossible. It is clear that their full articulation as impossible is precisely what gives us the risk, the chance that is glimpsed that their real, as one might say, might explode. If we are forced to muse so long in the corridors, the labyrinths, of the truth it is because there is precisely something that ensures that we do not reach it. And why should we be surprised at that when what is at stake are those discourses that are for us completely new? It is not that we have not had already a good three quarters of a century to envisage things from this angle, but sitting (10) around in armchairs is perhaps not the best position for getting a grip on the impossible. In any case, the fact that we are always turning round and round in the dimension of the love of truth, while everything indicates that it makes slip between our fingers the impossibility of what is maintained as real, very precisely in the discourse of the master, as Hegel said – this is what requires the reference to what analytic discourse fortunately allows us to glimpse, and to articulate exactly. And that is why it is important for me to articulate it. I am persuaded that there are five or six people here who could very well displace what I am stating in such a way that it has an opportunity to re-emerge. I am not saying that it is Archimedes’ lever. I am not telling you that it has the slightest pretension to renew the system of the world, or the thinking of history. I am simply indicating how analysis puts us on a footing to receive, in chance encounters, a certain number of things that may appear illuminating. In my case for example, I might very well never have met Kojève. If I had never met him, it is fairly probable that like every Frenchman educated throughout a certain period, I would perhaps never have suspected that the *Phenomenology of the spirit* was something important. It would be no bad thing if analysis allowed you to see the source of the impossibility, namely, what sets up an obstacle to the circumscribing, to the grasping of what alone may perhaps in the final term introduce a change, namely, the naked real, not the truth. Only there you are,

between us and the real there is the truth. The truth, I already stated one day in a lyrical outburst that it was the dear little sister of enjoyment. I hope that it has come back into the mind of at least some of you, at the moment when I am going to emphasise, in each of the four formulae that I have given you, the contrast between the first line and the second. The first line involves a relation which is indicated here with an arrow, a direction, is always defined as impossible. In the discourse of the master, for example, it is in effect impossible for there to be a master who is able to make his world work. To make people work is even more exhausting than to work oneself, if one really had to do it. The master never does it. He makes a sign, the master signifier, and everyone runs away! It is from this that one should start, something that is in effect quite impossible. You can put your finger on it every day. It is a matter of seeing now how the impossibility written on the first line is already indicated by the place given to the term truth, whether it is not on the second line that one would have the final word. Only on the second line, there is no arrow at all. And not only is there no communication, but there is something that blocks it. (11) What is it that blocks it? This is what results from labour. And the discovery of someone called Marx is really to have given its whole weight to a term that was known before him, and which designates what labour works at – this is called production. The essential thing to see is that whatever may be the signs, the master signifiers that come to be inscribed at the place of the agent, production has not in any case any relationship with the truth. You can do whatever you want, you can say whatever you want, you can try to connect this production with needs, which are needs that are forged, there is nothing to be done. Between the existence of a master [human existence?] and the relationship of a production with the truth, there is no way out. In every impossibility, whatever it may be, the terms that we bring into play here are always articulated around the following: if it leaves us breathless around its truth, it is because something is protecting it that we call impotence. Let us take for example, in the University discourse, this first term, the one that is articulated here under the term of S_2 and which is in this position, insanely pretentious, because of having as production a thinking being, a subject. As subject, in its production, there is no question of him being able to grasp himself for a single instant as master of knowledge. This can be touched here in a tangible way, but it goes back further, in the discourse of the master that, thanks to Hegel I allow myself to presuppose,

because, as you are going to see, we only know it now under a considerably modified form. This surplus enjoying that I articulated this year and that I put at the beginning as a support, is a construction and even a reconstruction, but it seems to me to be important. It is a truer support. But let us be careful, this indeed is what makes it dangerous, but all the same, it really derives its force from being articulated in this way, as can be seen in reading people who for their part had not read Hegel, and principally Aristotle. In reading Aristotle, we have a sense that the master's relation to the slave really posed a problem for him. He searched for its truth, and it is really magnificent to see the way he tries to extricate himself in the three or four fascinating passages where he deals with it – he only takes one path, that of the difference in kind from which the slave's good would emerge. He was not a university professor. He was not a clever little fellow like Hegel. He really senses that when he states this, it slips away from him, it slides all over the place. He is neither very sure nor very attached to it. He does not impose his own opinion. But in any case, he feels that this is the quarter where there well could be something that justifies the relationship between the master and the slave. Ah! If they were not of the same sex, if they had been man and woman, this would have been truly sublime, and he hints that there would be some hope. Unfortunately that is not how it is, they are not different sexes, and his (12) head drops. We can see clearly what is at stake, it is to know what in terms of surplus enjoying the master receives from the slave's work. This might seem to be self-evident. And what is astounding is that nobody seems to notice that there is precisely a lesson to be learned from the fact that it is not self-evident. Here the problems of ethics start to crop up everywhere. The *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Eudemian Ethics*, and several other works of moral reflection. There is no way out. This surplus enjoying – nobody knows what to do with it. What does it mean? In order to have managed to put a sovereign good at the heart of the world, it was really necessary to be as embarrassed as a fish with an apple. And yet the surplus enjoying that the slave brings us is within hand's reach. What is proved, what is attested by the entire thought of Antiquity and what Hegel makes us revisit thanks to his wonderful sleight of hand and other acts including the politicised masochism of the Stoics, is that to calmly set oneself up as the master's subject cannot be done as surplus enjoying.

Let us now take the discourse of the Hysteric as it is articulated – put the \$ on the top left hand corner, the S_1 on the right, the S_2 underneath, the \mathbf{o} in the place of truth. It cannot be either that the division, the symptomatic tearing apart of the hysteric, is justified as production of knowledge. Her truth is that she must be the \mathbf{o} -object in order to be desired.

The \mathbf{o} -object is a bit thin when all is said and done although, of course, men are mad about it and they cannot even imagine going along another path – another sign of the impotence covering the most subtle of all impossibilities. Let us move on to the level of the discourse of the analyst. Naturally, nobody has made the remark – it is rather curious that what it produces is nothing other than the Master's discourse, since it is S_1 that comes to occupy the place of production. And as I was saying last time as I was leaving Vincennes, perhaps it is from the discourse of the Analyst, if you make these three quarter turns, that there can emerge another style of master signifier. In truth, whether it is another style or not, it is not tomorrow or the day after you will know what it is, and at least for the moment, we are completely impotent as regards putting it in relation with what is in operation in the analyst's position, namely, this seduction of truth that it presents, in that it is supposed to know something about what it (13) represents in principle. This is what I am stressing by putting into relief, the impossibility of the situation, in so far as the analyst puts himself in the position of representing, of being, the agent cause of desire. Here then there is outlined the relation between these four terms. The one I have not named is the unnameable one because it is upon its prohibition that the entire structure is founded – namely enjoyment. This is where the view, the little skylight, the look that analysis has contributed, introduces us to what may be a fruitful step, not of thought but of act. And it is in that this step is revolutionary. This is not situated around the subject. Whatever the fruitfulness shown by the questioning of the hysteric which, as I have said, introduced it for the first time in history, and although the entry of the subject as agent of discourse has had very surprising results, the first of which is that of science, it is not here, for all that, that the key to everything is to be found. The key lies in the questioning of what enjoyment is about. Enjoyment is limited by natural processes. But to tell the truth we know nothing about these natural processes.

We simply know that we have ended up by considering as natural the mollycoddling in which a more or less organised society maintains us, except that everyone is dying to know what would happen if it really hurt. Hence this sadomasochistic obsession that characterises our pleasant little sexual ambience. This is completely futile, even secondary. What is important is that whether natural or not, it is well and truly in so far as it is bound up with very origin of the coming into play of signifiers that it is possible to speak of enjoyment. No one will ever know anything about what the oyster or the beaver enjoys because without the signifier there is no distance between enjoyment and the body. The oyster and the beaver are at the same level as the plant, which after all perhaps does have an enjoyment at this level. Enjoyment is very precisely correlative to the initial form of the coming into play of language, of what I call the mark, the unary trait, which is a mark of death, if you want to give it its sense. Observe that nothing takes on any sense except when death comes into play. It is on the basis of the cleavage, of the separation between enjoyment and the henceforth mortified body, it is from the moment that there is an operation of inscriptions, the mark of the unary trait, that the question is raised. There is no need to wait until the object has revealed itself well hidden at the level of the truth of the master. The division of the subject is without doubt nothing other than the radical ambiguity that attaches itself to the very term truth.

It is in as far as language, everything that sets up the order of (14) discourse, leaves things in a gap that in short we can be sure that in following our thread we are always doing nothing other than following a contour. But there is something more that it brings us, and it is the least we should really know in order to reply to the question with which I began, namely, what is currently taking place in University discourse. It is necessary to begin by seeing why the Master's discourse is so solidly established, to the extent that few of you, it seems, can measure the extent to which it is stable. This stems from what Marx demonstrated – without, I have to say, throwing it into relief - about the production which he calls surplus value and not surplus enjoyment. Something changed in the Master's discourse at a certain moment in history. We are not going to bore ourselves finding out if it was because of Luther, or Calvin, or some traffic or other of ships around Genoa, or in the Mediterranean Sea, or somewhere else, because the important point is

that from a particular day on, surplus pleasure can be calculated, can be counted, totalised. Here what is called ‘the accumulation of capital’ begins.

Do you not feel, in relation to what I stated earlier about the impotence to connect surplus value with the master’s truth, that we are gaining ground here? I am not saying that the latter is decisive but the impotence of this junction is all of a sudden emptied out. Surplus value combines with capital – no problem, they are homogeneous, we are in the field of values. Moreover, we are all swimming in it, at this blessed time in which we live. What is striking and what no one seems to see is that from that moment on, by virtue of the fact that the clouds of impotence have been aired, the master signifier only appears even more unassailable precisely in its impossibility. Where is it? How can it be named? How can it be located, except, of course through its murderous effects. Denounce imperialism? But how can this little mechanism be stopped?

How do things now stand with the University discourse? There cannot be any possibility anywhere else to make things turn a little. How? I reserve the right to point it out to you later since as you can see I am going slowly. But I can already tell you that in the University discourse the **o**-object comes to occupy a place that is in operation every time things shift, that of more or less tolerable exploitation. The **o**-object is what makes it possible to introduce a little bit of air into the function of surplus enjoying. The **o**-object is what you all are in your serried ranks – so many miscarriages of what has been, for those who engendered you, the cause of desire. And this is where you have to resituate yourselves in it, as psychoanalysis teaches you. Please do not (15) bore me by telling me that I would do well to point out to those who are agitating here and there that there is a world of difference between the miscarriage of the upper bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. After all, the miscarriage of the upper bourgeoisie, *qua* miscarriage, is not obliged constantly to drag around its incubator with it. There remains the claim to situate oneself at a point that is supposed to be all of a sudden illuminated, illuminating, and which could manage to budge these relations. It should not all the same be raised to the point to which a person – a little memory that I pass on to you – pushed things, a person who kept company with me for two or three months of what is customary called the

madness of youth. This ravishing person told me, "*I am of pure proletarian stock*". We will never entirely finish with segregation. I can tell you that it will only start up again even stronger. Nothing can function without it – what is happening here, the **o** in a living form, miscarriage that it is, manifests that it is the effect of language.

This is a parenthesis.

Be that as it may, there is in every case a level at which things do not work out, the level the effects of language have produced, since no child is born without having to deal with this traffic through the mediation of those dear people called his progenitors who were caught up in the whole problem of discourse, they too, with the previous generation. And it is at this level that things would have to be questioned. If you want something to work – of course in the final term things never work, as I have emphasised often enough – it is certainly not by being progressive, it is simply because things cannot stop working. If they do not work there is a creaking where things raise questions, namely, at the level of the putting into place of something that can be written as **o**, over against something described as 'to educate'. Has that ever existed? Yes, no doubt, and it is the ancients who after all give us the best proof of it, and subsequently over the course of ages, the formal, classical things, in some way copied from them. For us, at the level at which things are happening at the moment, what can be hoped for by this point of auscultation, everything that in the body remains alive, remains as knowledge, this nurseling, why not, this look, this cry, this squawking, this bark – what can it do?

I will try to tell you the next time what 'the strike of culture', as I call it, signifies.

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN
BOOK XVIII

On a discourse that might not be a semblance

1971

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French manuscripts

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Seminar 10: Wednesday 16 June 1971

I am going to try today to fix the meaning of this road along which I have led you this year under the title of *Of a discourse which might not be a semblance*. This hypothesis – because this title is presented to you in the conditional – this hypothesis is the one by which every discourse is justified. Do not forget that last year I tried to articulate in four typical discourses, these discourses which are the ones that you have to deal with, in a certain established order, which of course is itself only justified from history. If I broke them into four, this is something I believe I justified from the development that I gave them and from the form that in a writing paradoxically described as *Radiophonie*, not all that paradoxical if you heard what I was saying the last time, a certain order then whose terms this writing recalls to you and the slippage, the always syncopated slippage, of the slippage of the four terms among which there are always two which create a gap. This discourse that I designated specifically as the discourse of the Master, of the University discourse, of the discourse that I privileged with the term of Hysteric and the discourse of the Analyst, if I used them, these discourses have the property of always having their organising point, which is also moreover the one with which I pinpoint them, of starting with a semblance. What is privileged about analytic discourse because it is the one that allows us, in short, in articulating them in this way, to also divide them up into four fundamental arrangements. It is paradoxical, it is curious, that such a statement is presented as being at the end of what the one who found

himself to be at the origin of analytic discourse, namely Freud, permitted. He did not permit it starting from nothing. He permitted it starting from what is presented; I articulated it clearly (160) on several occasions as being the principle of this discourse of the Master, namely, of what is privileged by a certain knowledge that illuminates the articulation of the truth with knowledge. It is properly speaking prodigious that those very people who, caught up in certain perspectives, those that we might define as putting themselves forward, as it were, with respect to society, those therefore who, in this perspective, present themselves as infirm, let us be kinder, as limping, and we know that beauty limps, namely, the neurotics, and specifically the hysterics and the obsessionals, that it was from them that there started, this overwhelming flash of light that travels the length and breadth of the *demansion* that conditions language. The function that is the truth, indeed, on this occasion indeed, everyone knows the place it holds in Freud's statements, indeed this crystallisation which is the one we know in its modern form, what we know about religion, and specifically the Judeo-Christian tradition on which everything that Freud stated about religions is brought to bear.

This is consistent, I remind you, with this subversive operation of what up to then had been sustained throughout a whole tradition under the title of knowledge (*connaissance*), and this operation originates from the notion of symptom. It is historically important to note that it is not in this that there resides the novelty of the introduction of psychoanalysis brought about by Freud. The notion of symptom, as I indicated on several occasions, and it is very easy to locate by reading the one who is responsible for it, namely, Marx. The fundamental dupery that is contained in the theory of knowledge, this dimension of semblance that introduces the dupery exposed as such by Marxist subversion, the fact that what is exposed in it is precisely still in a certain tradition that reached its acme with the Hegelian discourse that some semblance is established in function of weight and measure, as I might say, as being the genuine article

(*argent comptant*), and it is not for nothing that I use these metaphors, because it is around money, around capital as such that there operates the pivot of this exposure that makes the fetish reside in this something, a turning back of thinking, to put it back in its place, and very precisely *qua* semblance.

The curious thing about this remark is all the same also designed to make us notice that it is not enough for something to be stated in this exposure which puts itself forward as truth, in the name of which there emerges, there is promoted, surplus value as being the mainspring of what reduced to its semblance, what up to then was sustained by a certain number of deliberate oversights. It is not (161) enough, I remarked, and history proves it, for this irruption of truth to be produced for what is sustained by this discourse to be laid low. This discourse that we could call on this occasion that of the Capitalist, in so far as it is a determination of the discourse of the Master, finds itself at ease there, in fact, and is rather indeed its complement. It appears that, far from this discourse suffering from this recognition as such of the function of surplus value, it subsists no less, since moreover a capitalism caught up in the discourse of the Master is indeed what seems to distinguish the political consequences that resulted, under the form of a political revolution, that resulted from the Marxist exposure of what is involved in a certain discourse about semblance.

This indeed is why I am not going to dwell here on what is involved in the historic mission devoted in Marxism, or at least in its manifestos, devoted to the proletariat. There is, I would say, a left-over of humanist entification which, in a way, proliferates on what guarantees what in capitalism finds itself more and more stripped down to essentials, shows no less that something subsists, that makes it subsist effectively in this state of deprivation. And the fact that it is the support, the support of what is produced under the species of

surplus value, is not for all that something that will in any way free us from the articulation of this discourse.

This indeed is why this exposure reverts back to a questioning about this something which may be more original and which might find itself at the very origin of every discourse in so far as it is a discourse of semblance. This is also why that what I articulated under the term of surplus enjoying, refers you to what is questioned in the Freudian discourse as putting in question the relationship of something which is articulated properly speaking and anew as a truth, in opposition to a semblance. And this truth is this opposition, and this dialectic of the truth and of the semblance is found, if what Freud has said has a meaning, is situated at the level of what I designated by the term of sexual relationship.

In short, I dared to articulate, to encourage people to notice, that if this revelation that is bestowed on us by the knowledge of the neurotic about something, is nothing other than something which is articulated as *there is no sexual relationship*, what does that mean? Certainly not that language, since already, already I am saying, there is no sexual relationship, is something that can be said since now, it is said, but of course it is not enough to say it, it still has to (162) be justified. And we take the justifications from our experience obtained from the unbroken thread of what is hooked onto this fundamental gap and this unbroken thread is knotted, this is its central starting place, entwined around this void, in what I call the discourse of the neurotic.

The last time, I sufficiently made you sense, sufficiently underlined, attempted to begin from a writing, how there can be situated what is involved as the starting point of this thread. My intention today - not at all of course, the thing is beyond, at the limit of anything that can be said in this limited space of a seminar - not at all about what the neurotic indicates about his relationship to this distance, but about

what the myths, the myths from which there are formed, as I might say, not always under the dictation, but as an echo of the discourse of the neurotic, the myth that Freud forged. In order to do it in such a brief period, we have to start from the central point, which is also the enigmatic point of the psychoanalytic discourse, of the psychoanalytic discourse in so far as it is here only listening to this final discourse, the one which might not be the discourse of semblance. It is listening to a discourse which might not be and which moreover is not. I mean that what is indicated is only the limit imposed on discourse, when the sexual relationship is at stake. I tried, for my part, at the point that I have got to, where I am going ahead of everything that may be formulated later, to tell you that it is its failure at the level of a logic, of a logic which is sustained from what every logic is sustained by, namely, writing. The letter of Freud's work is a written work. But moreover also that what it outlines from these writings, is something that surrounds a veiled, obscure truth, one that is stated by the fact that, a sexual relationship, as it happens in some accomplishment or other, can only be sustained, can only be established, from this composition between enjoyment and the semblance called castration. That we see it re-emerging at every instant in the discourse of the neurotic, but in the form of a fear, of an avoidance, is precisely the reason why castration remains enigmatic. That none of its realisations, in fact, is as changeable, as shimmering. Or moreover the exploration of the psychopathology of analysable phenomena, at least of this psychopathology, that excursions into ethnology allow, it nevertheless remains that something from which there is distinguished everything that is evoked as castration, we see it, in what form, always in the form of an avoidance. If the neurotic, as I might say, bears witness to the necessary intrusion of what I called just now this composition of enjoyment and the semblance that is presented as castration, it is precisely because of the fact that he (163) shows himself to be inapt for it in some way. And if everything that is involved in rituals of initiation which, as you know, or if you do

not know, consult the technical works, and to take two of them which were produced within the analytic field itself, I designate for you respectively the *Problems of bisexuality as reflected in circumcision*, namely, *Problèmes de la bisexualité en tant que réfléchis dans la circoncision*, by Herman Nunberg, published by Englewoods, namely, when all is said and done, by the Imago publications of London, and on the other hand, the work entitled *Symbolic wounds*, *Blessures symboliques* by Bruno Bettelheim. You will see in them deployed in its whole ambiguity, in its fundamental vacillation, hesitation, in a way, of analytic thinking between explicatory ordering which leaves the fear of castration completely opaque and in a way to good or bad fortune as you wish, the accidents through which there is presented something which in this register is only supposed to be the effect of some misunderstanding or other. On this tangle of prejudices, of blunders, of something that can be rectified, or on the contrary of a thinking which notices that there is indeed here something of the constancy, at the very least, an immense number of productions that we can record on every register, even though the catalogues have been more or less done, whether those of ethnology or of psychopathology, that I evoked earlier, there are others confronting us with the fact that it is from – and Freud expresses it on occasion, it is very well said in *Civilisation and its discontents* – it is in connection with something which after all does not make all that new what I formulated in terms of *there is no sexual relationship*. He says that, he indicates of course as I did, in quite clear terms, that no doubt, on this point, very precisely in connection with sexual relationships, some fatality is inscribed that makes necessary in it what then appear as being the means, the bridges, the passerels, the buildings, the constructions, in a word, which at the deficiency, at the deficiency of this sexual relationship inasmuch as after all, in a sort of respective inversion, any possible discourse will only appear as a symptom, within this sexual relationship, arranges in conditions that as usual we refer to pre-history, to extra-historical domains, that in these conditions, gives a kind of success to what can

be established as artificial, as a supplement, as supplying for what is lacking, is inscribed in short in the speaking being without one being able to know whether it is because he is speaking that it is like this, or on the contrary because the origin is that the relationship is not speakable. It is necessary for all of those who (164) inhabit language, it is necessary that for them there should be developed this something which makes possible in the form of castration, the gap left in this something that is nevertheless essential, biologically essential, biologically essential for the reproduction of these beings as living beings, for their race to remain fruitful. Such indeed, in effect, is the problem that is confronted by everything that is involved in the rituals of initiation. That these rituals of initiation comprise... let us call them manipulations, operations, incisions, circumcisions, that are aimed at and put their mark very precisely on the organ that we see functioning as a symbol in that which through psychoanalytic experience is presented to us as going well beyond the privilege of the organ, since it is the phallus, and that the phallus, in so far as it is to this third that there is ordered everything which, in short, creates an impasse in enjoyment, which makes of the man and of the woman, in so far as we might define them by a simple biological pinpointing, these beings who very precisely are with a sexual enjoyment and in an elective way among all other enjoyments, in difficulty with it, this indeed is what is at stake and it is from this that we have to start again if we want there to be maintained a correct meaning to what is inaugurated from analytic discourse.

And that if it is, as is supposed, something defined, this is what we call castration, which is supposed to have the privilege of warding off this something whose undecideability forms the basis of the sexual relationship, in so far as it presents enjoyment as organised, with regard to something that seems to me to be not avoidable. I am talking about the statements, the theatricals, about constraint which are a daily experience in analytic discourse is quite the opposite – this, it is a remark which gives its value to the second book, that of

Bruno Bettelheim, that I highlighted for you – which is obviously altogether contrary to something which is the only important thing. It is not a matter of pushing back into prehistory what is involved in rituals of initiation, rituals of initiation, like everything that we would like to reject into prehistory, are there, they still exist, they are alive throughout the world, there are still Australians who have themselves circumscribed or subincised, there are entire zones of civilisation that submit to it, and to fail to recognise in a century described as illuminated that these practices not only subsist but flourish, are very healthy, and it is obviously from that that we must start in order to notice that it is not from any conceivable theatricality of constraint whatsoever, there is no example that it is simply constraint, it is still a matter of knowing (165) what a constraint means. A constraint is never just the production of something that the so-called prevalence of a so-called physical superiority or other, it is supported precisely by signifiers. And if it is the law, the rule, that is such here, that a particular subject wants to submit to it, it is indeed for reasons, and these reasons are what are important for us. And what is important for us, and it is here that we ought to question what is the compliance, to use a word which, by leading us straight to the hysteric, and which no less has an extremely general range, this compliance which ensures that there subsists well and truly and in times that are quite historical what is involved and what is presented as something whose image all by itself would be intolerable, it is perhaps intolerable as such, this is what is at stake, it is to know why.

This is where I take up my thread again, it is in following this thread that we give a meaning to what is articulated in language in what I will call this unpublished (*inédite*) word, because it was unpublished up to a certain epoch, a well and truly historical one within our reach, this unpublished word, and which is presented, in short, as having always partly to remain so. There is no other definition to be given to the unconscious. Let us come now to the hysteric because I like to start from the hysteric, to see where the thread leads us. The hysteric,

we have asked ourselves, have we not, what it is, but precisely, this is the meaning, it is to such a question: “What is it?”, what is it, what does it mean, the hysteric in person? It seems to me that I have worked for a long enough time starting from the imaginary, to indicate “that in person”, to recall simply, what is already...inscribed in the terms “in person”...in a mask (*en masque*), no reply can be given at the start to this meaning. To the question “what is the hysteric?”, the answer of the discourse of the analyst is: “You’ll see”. You will indeed see, precisely, by following where she leads us. Without the hysteric, of course, there would never have come to light what is involved in what I am writing, of what I am writing, anyway, I am trying to give you the first logical step of what is now at stake, of what I write as phi of x ($\phi(x)$), which is, namely, that enjoyment, this variable in the function written in x, is not situated from this relationship with the capital Φ that here designates the phallus, the central discovery, or rather rediscovery or as you wish re-baptism, since I indicated to you why it is from the phallus as an unveiled semblance in the mysteries that the term is taken up again, not by (166) chance. That it is very precisely, in effect, that it is to the semblance of the phallus that there is referred the pivotal point, the centre of everything that can be organised, be contained in terms of sexual enjoyment, that from the first approaches to hysterics, from the *Studien über Hysterie* Freud leads us. The last time I articulated the following, that in short, in taking things from the point that could in effect be questioned, about what is involved in the most common discourse, that if we wish, not to push to its term what linguistics indicates to us, but simply to extrapolate it. Namely, to notice that nothing of what language allows us to do is ever anything but metaphor, or indeed metonymy. That the something that every word, whatever it may be, claims to name for an instant can only ever refer back to a connotation. And that if there is something that may in the final term be indicated as that which is denoted by any function apperelled in language, I already said it the last time, there is only one *Bedeutung, die Bedeutung des Phallus*. It is there alone what is

involved in language, denoted, of course, but without ever anything corresponding to it, since, if there is something that characterises the phallus, it is not, not to be the signifier of lack, as some people thought they understood some of my words, but to be assuredly in any case that from which no word emerges. *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*, it is from there, I recalled the last time, it is from this opposition articulated by the really inaugurating logician who is Frege, *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*, define the models that go further than those of connotation and denotation. Many things in this article in which Frege establishes the two aspects of *Sinn* and of *Bedeutung*, many things are to be retained and especially for an analyst.

Because undoubtedly, without a reference to logic which of course cannot just be to classical logic, to Aristotelian logic, without a reference to logic, it is impossible to find the correct point in the subjects that I am putting forward. Frege's remark turns entirely around the fact that when we are brought to a certain point of scientific discourse what we note, is, for example, facts like the following. Is it the same thing to say Venus or to call it in the two ways that it was for a long time designated the Morning Star and the Evening Star? Is it the same thing to say *Sir Walter Scott* and to say *the author of the Waverley novels*? I inform those who might be unaware of it that he is effectively the author of this work that is called *Waverley*. It is in examining this distinction that Frege notices that it is not possible in any case to replace *Sir Walter Scott* by *the author of the Waverley novels*. This is how he distinguishes the fact that *the author of the Waverley novels* conveys a sense, a (167) *Sinn*, and that *Sir Walter Scott* designates a *Bedeutung*. It is clear that if one posits with Leibnitz that, *salva veritate*, to save the truth, it must be posited that everything that is designated as having an equivalent *Bedeutung* and which can be replaced indifferently, and if one puts the thing to the test as I am doing right away put it to the test along the paths traced out by Frege himself, that, it does not matter whether it was George III or George IV, on this occasion that has little

importance, was asking, was informing himself, as to whether Sir Walter was the author of the Waverley novels. If we replace “the author of the Waverley novels” by “Sir Walter Scott” we obtain the following sentence: “George III was enquiring whether Sir Walter Scott was Sir Walter Scott”, which quite obviously has absolutely not the same sense. It is starting from this simple remark, a logical operation, that Frege establishes, inaugurates his fundamental distinction between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*. It is quite clear that this *Bedeutung* refers of course to an always more distant *Bedeutung*, which refers of course to the distinction between what he calls oblique discourse and direct discourse. It is inasmuch as it is in a subordinate clause that it is King George III who asks, that we ought to maintain here the rights of *Sinn* and in no way replace *the author of the Waverley novels* by *Sir Walter Scott*.

But this of course is an artifice which, for us, leads us onto the path of the following, namely, that Sir Walter Scott, on this occasion, is a name. And moreover when Mr. Carnap takes up again the question of *Bedeutung*, it is by the term *nominatum* that he translates it. And thus, precisely, he slips here into what he should not have slipped.

Because the thing that I am giving a commentary on, may allow us to go further, but certainly not in the same direction as Mr. Carnap. It is the matter of what is meant by a name, I repeat, like the last time. It is very easy for us to make the connection here with what I pointed out earlier. I pointed out to you that the phallus is something that puts us on the path of this point that I am designating here in an accentuated way, the fact is that the *nom*, the name and the noun, but one only sees things clearly at the level of the proper name, as someone or other has said. The name, is what summons, no doubt, but to what? It is what summons you to speak. And this indeed is what constitutes the privilege of the phallus, it is that you can summon it as much as you like, it will always say nothing.

Only this then gives its sense, gives its sense to what I called at one time the paternal metaphor and this is what the hysteric leads to.

(168) The paternal metaphor, of course, when I introduced it, namely, in my article on *A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis*, I inserted it into the general schema extracted from the rapprochement between what linguistics tells us about metaphor and what the experience of the unconscious tells us about condensation. I wrote S over S₁, multiplied by S₁ over a small s, I relied heavily, as I also wrote in *The agency of the letter*, on this aspect of the metaphor, which is to generate a sense. If *the author of the Waverley novels*, is a *Sinn*, it is very precisely because *the author of the Waverley novels*, replaces something else, which is a special *Bedeutung*, the one that Frege thinks he should pinpoint with the name of *Sir Walter Scott*. But still it is not only from this angle that I envisaged the paternal metaphor. If I wrote somewhere that the Name of the Father is the phallus – God knows what tremor of horror this evoked among some pious souls – it is precisely because at that date I could not articulate it better. What is sure is that it is the phallus, of course, but that it is all the same the Name of the Father. What is named Father, the Name of the Father, if it is a name which, for its part, is efficacious, it is because someone stands up to answer. From the angle of what happened in the psychotic determination of Schreber, it is *qua* signifier, signifier capable of giving a sense to the desire of the mother, that I could in a correct manner situate the Name of the Father. But at the level of what is at stake when it is, let us say, the hysteric who summons him, what matters is that someone should speak. I would like here to point out to you that if Freud sometimes tried to approach a little bit more closely this function of the Father which is so essential to analytic discourse, that one can say in a certain way that it is the product of it, if I write the analytic discourse for you as o/S_2 , namely, the analyst over the knowledge he has from the neurotic, who questions the subject to produce something, one can say that the master signifier, up to the present, of the analytic discourse, is indeed the Name of the Father. It is extremely curious

that the analytic discourse was necessary for questions to be posed about this. What is a Father? Freud does not hesitate to articulate that it is the name in essence which implies faith (or the law; *foi/loi*). That is how he expresses himself. We might perhaps all the same have desired a little bit more from him. After all, taking things at the fundamental biological level, one might perfectly well conceive that the reproduction of the human species – this has already been done, it has already emerged from the imagination of a novelist - might (169) happen without any kind of intervention designating itself under the Name of the Father, artificial insemination is not there for nothing. What in short constitutes presence – and this did not come from today or yesterday – is it not this essence of the Father, and after all, do not we analysts ourselves really know what it is? I would like all the same to point out to you that in analytic experience, the Father is only ever a referent (*référential*) (?). We interpret one or other relation with the Father. Do we ever analyse anyone *qua* Father? Let someone bring me a case-study. The Father is a term of analytic interpretation. To him something is referred.

It is in the light of these remarks – I have to cut things short – that I would all the same like to situate for you what is involved in the myth of the Oedipus complex. The myth of the Oedipus complex causes trouble in some way, is that not so, because supposedly it establishes the primacy of the Father, which is supposed to be a kind of reflection of patriarchy. I would like to make you sense something which, through which, for me at least, it appears to me to be not at all a patriarchal reflection. Far from it. It shows us simply this: a point first of all through which castration might be circumscribed, through a logical approach and, in the way that I will designate as being numeral.

The Father is not alone castrated, but is precisely castrated to the point of being nothing but a number. This is indicated quite clearly in dynasties. Earlier I was talking about a king, I no longer knew

what to call him, George III or George IV....you should be under no illusion that this is precisely what seems most typical to me, in this presentation of paternity, namely, that in reality, this is how it happens, George I, George II, George III, George IV. But still, it is quite obvious that this does not exhaust the question, because...there is not simply the numeral (*numéro*), there is a number (*nombre*). In a word, I see in it the apperception point of the series of natural numbers (*nombres*), as it is put. And as it is not put too badly, because after all it is very close to nature, I would like to point out to you that because people always evoke at the horizon of history something that, of course, is an extremely suspicious reason, I would simply point out the following to you. That matriarchy, as it is put, has no need to be pushed back to the limit of history.

Matriarchy consists essentially in the following, the fact is for what is involved in the mother as production, there is no doubt. One can on occasion lose one's mother in the Metro, of course, but still there is no doubt about *who* is the mother. There is also no doubt about (170) who is the mother of the mother. And so on. The mother, in her line of descent, I would say, is innumerable. She is innumerable in all the proper senses of the term, she is not to be numbered, because there is no starting point. The maternal line of descent may well necessarily be in order, one cannot make it start from any point. I could point out to you on the other hand the following which appears to be the thing that one most usually puts one's finger on, because it is after all not rare, it is not at all rare that one may have as father one's grandfather. I mean as a true father. Or even one's great-grandfather. Yes! Because...people lived as we are told in the first line of descent of patriarchs, for around 900 years. I looked over that again recently, it is very pithy, it is absolutely sensational fakery. Everything is designed so that the two most direct ancestors of Noah died there just at the moment that the flood happened. That is what you see, it is titillating, anyway let us put that to one side, it is simply to put you in the perspective of what is involved in the Father.

From this, you see, what results – I am forced to go a little quickly, because time is passing – is that if we define the hysteric by the following, a definition that is not particular to him, the neurotic, namely, the avoidance of castration, there are several ways to avoid it. The hysteric has this simple procedure, the fact is that she unilateralises it on the other side, the side of the partner. Let us say that for the hysteric, a castrated partner is necessary. That he should be castrated, it is clear that this is at the source of the possibility of the enjoyment of the hysteric. But it is still too much. If he were castrated, there would perhaps be a little chance, since castration is precisely what I put forward earlier as being what allows the sexual relationship, it is necessary that he should be simply *what answers* in the *place* of the phallus.

So then, since Freud himself indicates to us, I will not tell you, all the same at what page, indicates himself that everything he elaborates as a myth – this is in connection with Moses: “I will not here criticise”, he says about what he had written himself, at the date when he published it in 1938, about his historical hypothesis, namely, the one from Sellin that he had renovated, “because all the results that have been required”, says the translator, “constitute psychological deductions which flow from it and ceaselessly refer to it”. As you see that means nothing. In German that does mean something, it is “*denn sie bilden die Voraussetzung*”, because they form the supposition, “*der psychologischen Erörterungen*”, of psychological manifestations which, from these data, “*von ihnen ausgehen*”, there flow and always anew “*auf sie zurück-kommen*”, (171) and come back to them. It is indeed in effect under the dictation of the hysteric that, there is not developed, because the Oedipus complex was never really developed by Freud, it is indicated in a way, at the horizon, in the smoke, as one might say, of what raises itself up as a sacrifice of the hysteric. But let us clearly observe what is now meant by this

nomination, this response to the summoning of the father in the Oedipus complex.

If I told you earlier that this introduces the series of natural numbers, it is because there, we have, what is the most recent logical development of this series, namely, that of Peano, proved necessary, namely, not simply the fact of succession, when one tries to axiomatise the possibility of such a series, one encounters the necessity of zero in order to posit the successor. The minimal axioms of Peano – I am not insisting on what may have been produced as a commentary, in the margin, in order to perfect it – but the final formula, is the one that posits zero as necessary for this series, without which it would then be innumerable, as I said earlier. The logical equivalence of the function is very precisely that this function that I have made use of is too often linked, I can only do it in the margin and very rapidly, I would point out to you that we will enter into the second millennium in the year 2000, as far as I know. If you simply admit that – on the other hand, you could moreover not admit it – but if simply you admit it, I would point out to you that this makes it necessary for there to have been a year zero, after the birth of Christ. This is what the authors of the Republican Calendar forgot. They called the first year, year 1 of the Republic. This zero is absolutely essential for any natural chronological mapping out. And then we understand what is meant by the murder of the Father. It is curious, singular, is it not, that this murder of the Father never appears even in dramas, as has been very relevantly been pointed out by someone who has written on this a chapter that is not bad at all, that even in dramas, no playwright has dared, the author says, to present, to manifest, the deliberate murder of a father by a son. Pay careful attention to that, even in Greek theatre this does not exist, a Father *qua* Father. On the contrary, it is all the same the term “murder of the Father” which appears at the centre of what Freud develops starting from the data constituted by, because of the hysteric, and those around him, the refusal of castration. Is it (172)

not precisely in so far as the murder of the Father, here, is the substitute for this rejected castration, that the Oedipus complex was able to impose itself on Freud's thinking as he worked his way through these approaches to the hysteric? It is clear that in the hysterical perspective it is the phallus that fecundates, and that what it engenders, is itself, as one might say. Fecundity is phallic forgery, and it is indeed in this way that every child is a reproduction of the phallus, in so far as he is pregnant (*gros*), if I can express myself in this way, from his engendering.

But then, we also glimpse, since it is from the *papludun* that I have inscribed the logicised possibility of the choice in this unsatisfied relation of sexual relationship, that it is from the no more than one that I designated it for you. It is through this that the unbelievable complicity of Freud in a monotheism whose model he is going to seek, a very curious thing, quite elsewhere than in his tradition, it is necessary for him that it should be Akhenaton. There is nothing more ambiguous, I would say, on the sexual plane, than this solar monotheism, when you see it radiating with all its rays provided with little hands which are going to tickle the nostrils of innumerable little humans, children, of one sex and the other. And it is quite striking, in this imagery of the Oedipus structure, that, make no mistake, they resemble one another like brothers, and even more like sisters. If the word sublime can have an ambiguous meaning, it is indeed here. Since moreover it is not for nothing that the last monumental images, those that I was able to see the last time that I left Egyptian soil, of Akhenaton, are images that are not simply castrated but quite bluntly feminine.

It is altogether clear that if castration has a relationship to the phallus, this is not the place where we are going to be able to designate it. I mean that if I made the little schema which is supposed to correspond to the *pas tous* or the *pas toutes*, as designating a certain type of the relation to the x , it is indeed in this sense it is to the x that all

the same the elect refer themselves to. The passage to “mediation”, is indeed nothing other than this *au moins un* that I underlined and that we rediscover in Peano through this $n+1$ always repeated, the one that in a way presupposes that the n which precedes it is reduced to zero. In what way? Precisely, by the murder of the Father. By this ...this mapping out of, as one might, the detour, to use the term of Frege himself, make no mistake, oblique, *ungerade* way, whose *sense* of the murder of the Father is referred to a different *Bedeutung*, this indeed is what I have to limit myself to today, while apologising for not having been able to push things further. So that will be for next (173) year. I regret that things were this year, were necessarily truncated, but you will be able to see that *Totem and Taboo* on the contrary, namely, what I put on the side of the Father in terms of original enjoyment, is something to which there corresponds a no less strictly equivalent avoidance of what is involved in castration, strictly equivalent. And this is what clearly marks that fact that the obsessional, the obsessional who corresponds to the formula: *there is no x that exists that can be inscribed in the variable of x* , the obsessional, how the obsessional slips away. He slips away simply by not existing. It is this something to which, why not, we will link up what follows in our discourse, the obsessional in so far as, he is in the debt of not existing with respect to this no less mythical Father who is the one of *Totem and Taboo*, how? It is to this that there is attached, that there is really attached everything that is involved in a certain religious construction, and the reason why it is not, alas, reducible, and not even by what Freud hooks on to his second myth, that of *Totem and Taboo*, namely, neither more nor less than his second topography. This is what we will subsequently develop. Because you should note, the second topography, his great innovation, is the superego.

What is the essence of the superego? It is on this that I can finish by putting something into the hollow of your hand, that you can try to manipulate for yourselves, what is the general order of the superego?

Precisely, it originates from this more than mythical original father, from this summons as such to pure enjoyment, namely, also to non-castration. And what does this father say in effect, at the dissolution of the Oedipus complex? He says what the superego says. What the superego says – it is not for nothing that I have never really tackled it yet – what the superego says is: “Enjoy!”

Such is the order, the impossible to satisfy order, and as such it is at the origin of everything that is elaborated there, however paradoxical that may appear to you, in terms of moral conscience. To really sense the operation of the definition, you will have to read in *Ecclesiastes*, under the title: ‘Enjoy as long as you can, enjoy’, says the enigmatic author of this astonishing text, ‘Enjoy with the wife you love’. This indeed is the height of paradox, because it is precisely loving her that creates the obstacle.

Seminar 1: Wednesday 13 January 1971

[Lacan writes on the board]

D'un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant
(On a discourse that might not be a semblance)

A discourse, it is not mine that is at stake. I think I made you sense well enough last year what should be understood by this term *discourse*. I remind you of the discourse of the Master and what we could call its four positions, the displacements of its terms with

respect to a structure, reduced to being tetrahedral. I left whoever wanted to work on it to specify what motivates... these ...slidings (*glissements*) which could have been more diversified, I reduced them to four. If no one has worked on it, I will perhaps this year give an indication in passing about the privileged status of these four.

I only took up these references with respect to what was my end, stated under the title of *The reverse side of psychoanalysis*. The discourse of the Master is not the reverse side of psychoanalysis, it is where there is demonstrated the torsion that is proper, I would say, to the discourse of psychoanalysis, what ensures that this discourse poses the question of a front and a back (*un endroit et un envers*) because you know the importance, the emphasis, that is put in the theory, ever since Freud stated it, the importance and the stress that is put on the notion of double inscription. Now what I wanted you to put your finger on, is the possibility of a double inscription, on the front, on the back, without an edge being crossed. It is the structure well known for a long time, that I only had to use, which is called the Moebius strip.

(10) These places and these elements, are where there is outlined that what is properly speaking discourse, can in no way be referred from a subject, even though it determines him. This, no doubt, is the ambiguity of that through which I introduced what I thought I should make understood within psychoanalytic discourse. Remember my terms, at the period that I entitled a certain report as the function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis. At that time I wrote *intersubjectivity*, and God knows the number of false tracks that the statement of terms like that can give rise to. I hope I will be excused for having been the first to make these tracks. I was not able to go ahead except through a misunderstanding. *Inter*, certainly, in effect, is the only thing that subsequently allowed me to talk about an inter-significance (*intersignifiance*), subjectivity from its consequences, the signifier being what represents a subject for another signifier

where the subject is not. This indeed is how it is, because of the fact that where he is represented he is absent, that nevertheless being represented, he thus finds himself divided. As for discourse, it is not simply that it can henceforth only be judged in the light of its unconscious sources, it is also the fact that it can no longer be stated as anything else than what is articulated from a structure where somewhere he finds himself alienated in an irreducible fashion. Hence my introductory statement: *On a discourse* – I stop – it is not mine. It is from this statement, a discourse not being able, as such, to be a discourse of any particular person, but being founded from a structure, and from the emphasis that is given by the division, the sliding of certain of its terms, it is from this that I am starting this year for what is entitled “*On a discourse that will not be a semblance*”.

For those who were not able last year to follow these statements which were made previously, I indicate that the appearance, which dates already for more than a month, of *Scilicet 2/3*, will give them the written references. *Scilicet 2/3*, because it is a writing, it is an event, if not an advent of discourse. First of all by the fact, that it is the one that I find myself to be the instrument of, without avoiding the fact that it requires the pressure of your numbers, in other words that you should be there and very precisely, under this aspect, a singular aspect of which creates this pressure, undoubtedly with, let us say, the incidences of our history which is something that can be touched, which renews the question of what is involved in discourse in so far as it is the discourse of the Master, this something that can only be made of something that one questions oneself about in naming it. Do not go on too quickly to make use of the word revolution. But it is clear that it is necessary to discern what it is in (11) short that allows me to pursue my statements, with this formula *On a discourse which will not be a semblance*. Two features are to be noted here in this number of *Scilicet*. I put to the test, after all, more or less, something which is moreover my discourse of last year,

in a setting which precisely is characterised by the absence of what I called this pressure of your presence. And to give it its full emphasis, I will say it in these terms, what this presence signifies, I would pinpoint as a pressurised surplus enjoying (*plus-de-jouir pressé*). Because it is precisely from this figure that there can be judged, if it goes beyond a discomfort, as they say, as regards too much semblance in the discourse in which you are inscribed, the University discourse, the one that is easy to denounce for neutrality, for example, that this discourse cannot claim to be sustained by a competitive selection when all that is at stake are signs that are addressed to those who are in the know, in terms of a formation of the subject, when it is something quite different that is at stake. Nothing allows us to go beyond this kind of discomfort of semblances - so that something can be hoped for which allows us to get out of it - than to posit that a certain style, that a certain style that is required in the advancement of a discourse, does not split, in a dominant position in this discourse, what is involved in this triage, these globules of surplus enjoying, in the name of which you find yourselves caught up in the University discourse. It is precisely that someone, starting from the analytic discourse, places himself with respect to you in the position of an analysand. This is not new, I already said it but no one paid any attention to it. This is what constitutes the originality of this teaching. This is what justifies what you contribute to it by your pressure and that is why in speaking on the radio, I put to the test this subtraction precisely of this presence, of this space into which you press yourselves, cancelled out and replaced by the pure It exists (*Il existe*) of this inter-significance that I spoke about earlier in order that the subject can vacillate in it. It is simply a switching of points towards something whose possible import we will learn in the future.

There is another feature of what I called this event, this advent of discourse, it is this printed thing that is called *Scilicet*, it is, as a certain number already know, that people write in it without signing.

What does that mean? That each of these names that are put in a column on the last page of these three issues that constitute one year, can be permuted with each of the others, affirming in this way that no discourse can be that of an author. This is a wager. Here, it speaks (*ça parle*). In the other case, it is... here the future will tell if it is the formula that, let us say, in five or six years all the other journals will adopt. I mean the good journals. It is a gamble, we shall see!

(12) I am not trying in what I am saying to escape from what is experienced, sensed in my statements, as accentuating, as sticking to the *artefact* of discourse. This means of course, it is the least that can be said, that doing this rules out my claiming to cover all of it, it cannot be a system and in this regard it is not a philosophy. It is clear that for whoever takes from the angle that analysis allows us to renew what is involved in discourse, this implies that one moves around, I would say, in a *désunivers*, it is not the same thing as *divers* (diverse). But I would not even reject this diverse and not simply because of what it implies in terms of diversity, but of what it also implies in terms of diversion. It is very clear also that I am not talking about everything. It is even in what I state, it resists anyone saying everything about it. You can put your finger on that every day. Even on the fact that I state that I am not saying everything, that is something different, as I already said, that comes from the fact that the truth is only a half-saying.

This discourse then, which limits itself to acting only in the artefact, is in short only the prolongation of the position of the analyst, in so far as it is defined by putting the weight of its surplus enjoying at a certain place. It is nevertheless the position that here I cannot sustain, very precisely by not being in this position of the analyst. As I said earlier, except for the fact that you lack knowledge about it, it is rather you who will be in it, by the pressure of your numbers. This having been said, what can be the import of what, in this reference, I am stating?

On a discourse which might not be a semblance, that can be stated from my place and in function of what I previously stated. It is a fact in any case that I am stating it. Note that it is a fact also *because* I state it. You may be completely hoodwinked by it, namely, think that there is nothing more than the fact that I am stating it. Only, if I spoke in connection with discourse about the artefact, it is because for discourse, there is no fact, as I might say, already there, there is only a fact from the fact of saying it, the stated fact is entirely a fact of discourse. This is what I am designating by the term artefact, and of course, this is what has to be reduced. Because if I speak about artefact, it is not to give rise in it to the idea of something that might be different, a nature, that you would be wrong to get engaged in with a view to tackling its obstacles, because you would never get out of it. The question is not set up in the terms: is it or is it not discourse, but in the following: it is said or it is not said. I start from what is said, in a discourse whose artefact is supposed to be sufficient for you to be there; a cut here, because I am not adding, that you should be (13) here in the state of *pressurised surplus enjoying*. I said a cut because it is questionable whether it is already as pressurised surplus enjoying that my discourse gathers you together. It is not decided, whatever one or other may think, that it is this discourse, the one made up of the series of statements that I present you, that places you where? In this position from which it can be questioned by the “not talking” of the discourse which might not be a semblance.

D'un semblant, what does that mean in this statement? A semblance of discourse, for example. You know that this is the position described as logical positivism. The fact is that if starting from a signifier, to be put to the test of something that decides by yes or no, what cannot present itself for this test, this is what is defined as meaning nothing. And with that, people think they have finished with a certain number of questions described as metaphysical. This is certainly not what I hold to. I want to point out to you that the

position of logical positivism is untenable, in any case starting from analytic experience in particular.

If analytic experience finds itself implicated by taking its claims to nobility from the Oedipal myth, it is indeed because it preserves the cutting edge of the oracle's enunciation, and I would say more, that in its interpretation always remains at the same level. It is only true by its consequences, like every oracle. Interpretation is not put to the test of a truth that can be settled by a yes or a no, it unleashes truth as such. It is true only in so far as it is truly followed. We will see later that the schemas of implication, I mean of logical implication, in their most classical form, these schemas themselves require the foundation of this truthfulness in so far as it belongs to the word, even if it is properly speaking senseless. The passage from the moment where the truth is settled by its simple unleashing, to that of a logic that is going to try to embody this truth, is precisely the moment when discourse, *qua* representative of representation, is dismissed, disqualified. But if it can be so, it is because some part of it is always there, and this is what is called repression. It is no longer a representation that it represents, it is this continuation of discourse that is characterised as effect of truth.

The effect of truth is not a semblance. The Oedipus complex is there to teach us, if you will allow me, to teach us that it is red blood. Only there you are, red blood does not reject the semblance, it colours it, it makes it re-semble (*re-semblant*), it propagates it. A little bit of sawdust and the circus starts up again. This indeed it is why it is at (14) the level of the artefact of the structure of discourse, that the question can be raised about a discourse that might not be a semblance. In the meantime, there is no semblance of discourse, there is no meta-language to judge it, there is no Other of the Other, there is no true of the true.

I amused myself one day by making the truth speak. I ask where is the paradox, what could be more true than stating 'I am lying'? The classical quibbling that is stated under the term of paradox is only embodied if you put this *I am lying* on paper, as something written. Everyone knows that there is nothing truer that one can say on some occasions than to say: 'I am lying'. It is even very certainly the only truth that in this case is not broken (*brisée*). Everyone knows that in saying: 'I am not lying', one is absolutely not protected from saying something false. What does that mean? The truth that is at stake, when it speaks, the one that I said speaks I, which states itself as an oracle, *who* speaks?

This semblance is the signifier in itself. Who can fail to see that what characterises this signifier that, as far as linguists are concerned, I use in a way that embarrasses them, there were some who wrote these lines designed to clearly warn that undoubtedly Ferdinand de Saussure did not have the slightest idea about it. What do we know about it? Ferdinand de Saussure was like me, he did not say everything; the proof is that people found in his papers, things that were never said in his classes. People think that the signifier is a nice little thing that has been tamed by structuralism, people think that it is the Other, *qua* Other, and the battery of signifiers, and everything that I explain, of course. Naturally it comes down from heaven, because from time to time I am an idealist!

Artefact, I said initially; naturally, the artefact, it is absolutely certain that it is our everyday fate that we find it at every street corner, within reach of the slightest gestures of our hands. If there is something that is a sustainable, or at least sustained discourse, specifically that of science, it is perhaps no harm to remember that it started very specially from the consideration of semblances. The start of scientific thinking, I am talking about history, what is it? The observation of the stars, what is it if not the constellation, namely, the very type of a semblance. What do the first steps of modern physics

turn around at the start? Not, as is believed, elements, because the elements, the four and even if you wish to add a fifth essence, are already discourse, philosophical discourse, and how! They are (15) atmospheric phenomena (*météores*). Descartes wrote a *Traité des Météores*. The decisive step, one of the decisive steps turned around the theory of the rainbow, and when I talk about a meteor, it is something that is defined by being qualified as such as a semblance. No one has ever believed that the rainbow, even among the most primitive people, that the rainbow was something there, set up in a curve. It is questioned as an atmospheric phenomenon. The most characteristic atmospheric phenomenon, the most original one, the one that without any doubt is linked to, has the very structure of discourse, is thunder. If I ended my Rome discourse on the evocation of thunder, it is absolutely not like that, by fantasy, no *Name of the Father* is tenable without thunder, and everyone knows very well that we do not even know what thunder is the sign of. It is the very figure of the semblance. This is why there is no semblance of discourse, everything that is discourse, can only present itself as semblance, and nothing is built on it that is not at the basis of this something that is called signifier, which, in the light in which I put it forward for you today, is identical to this status as such of the semblance.

On a discourse that will not be a semblance; for it to be stated, it is necessary then that this *a semblance* can in no way be completed by reference to discourse. It is something else that is at stake, the referent no doubt! Restrain yourselves a little bit. This referent is probably not immediately an object, because precisely what that means, is that this referent, is precisely what is walking around. The semblance in which the discourse is identical to itself, is at the level of the term *semblance*, it is the semblance in nature. It is not for nothing that I reminded you that no discourse that evokes nature ever did anything other than start from what in nature is a semblance. Because nature is full of them. I am not talking about animal nature, which quite obviously superabounds with them. This is even what

ensures that there are gentle dreamers who think that the entire animal nature, from fish to birds, sings divine praises, it is self-evident. Every time they open like that, something, a mouth, an operculum, it is a manifest semblance, nothing requires there to be gaps. When we go into something whose efficacy has not been settled, for the simple reason that we do not know how it has come about that there were, as I might say, an accumulation of signifiers, because signifiers, huh, I can tell you, are scattered throughout the world, in nature, they are there by the shovelful. For language to come to birth, it is already something to initiate that, for language to be born, it was necessary that there should be established somewhere (16) this something that I already indicated to you in connection with the wager, it was Pascal's wager, we do not remember it. In presupposing this, the trouble is that this already presupposes the functioning of language because what is at stake is the unconscious. The unconscious and its operation, means that among the numerous signifiers that travel the world there is going to be in addition the fragmented body. There are, all the same, things from which one can start by thinking that they already exist. They already exist in a certain functioning in which we would not be forced to consider the accumulation of the signifier. It is this business about territory. If the signifier 'your right arm' enters the territory of your neighbour to pick up something – these are things that happen all the time – naturally your neighbour grasps your signifier 'right arm' and throws it back over the dividing wall. This is what you very curiously call *projection*, do you not, it is the way of understanding one another! It is from a phenomenon like that that we have to start. If your right arm, in your neighbour's property, was not entirely occupied in picking apples, for example, if it had stayed quiet, it is fairly probable that your neighbour would have adored it, it is the origin of the master signifier, a right arm, the sceptre. The master signifier only needs to begin like that, right at the beginning.

Unfortunately it requires a little bit more, it is an unsatisfactory schema. Going a little further, that gives you the sceptre, right away you see the thing materialising as signifier. The process of history shows itself according to every testimony, in the ones that we have, a little more complicated. It is certain that the little parable, the one with which I first began, the arm that is thrown back from one territory into another, it is not necessarily your arm that comes back to you, because signifiers are not individual, one does not know who owns which. So there you see, here we enter into a different kind of original operation as regards the function of chance and that of myths. You construct a world, on this occasion let us say a schema, a support divided like that into a certain number of territorial cells. This happens at a certain level, the one at which it is a matter of putting forward, where it is a matter of understanding a little what has happened.

After all, not alone can one get an arm that is not one's own, in the process of expulsion that you have called, I do not know why, *projection*, if it is only that, you are projected, of course, not simply an arm which is not yours, but several other arms, so then from that moment on, it is no longer important whether it is yours or whether it (17) is not yours. But anyway, since after all, inside a territory, one only knows one's own frontiers, one does not have to know that on this frontier there are six other territories. You throw it a little bit as you wish, so then it can happen that there is a whole shower of territories. The idea of the relationship that may exist between the rejection of something and the birth of what I earlier called the master signifier, is certainly an idea to remember. But for it to have its whole value, it is certainly necessary that there should have been, by a process of chance, at certain points, an accumulation of signifiers. Starting from there it is possible to conceive something that might be the birth of a language. What we see properly speaking being built up as a first way of supporting in writing what serves as language, gives in any case a certain idea. Everyone knows that the letter A is a

bull's head turned upside down, and that a certain number of elements like this, movable, still leave their trace. What is important, is not to go too fast and to see where holes continue to remain. For example, it is quite obvious that the start of this outline was already linked to something marking the body with a possibility of ectopia and of excursion (*d'ectopie et de balade*) that obviously remains problematic. After all here again, everything is still there. We have finally, this is a very sensitive point, that we can still test every day. Not too long ago, again this week, something, very pretty photos in the newspaper, that everyone was delighted with, the possibilities of the practice of cutting up a human being on another human being are quite impressive. It is from there that everything started.

There remains another hole. As you know, people have tormented themselves about it, people have noted that Hegel is all very well, but there is all the same something that he did not explain. He explains the dialectic of the master and the slave, he does not explain how there can be a society of masters. It is quite clear that what I have just explained to you is certainly interesting in that, by the simple operation of projection, of retort (*rétorsion*), it is clear that at the end of a certain number of throws, there will certainly be, I would say, a greater average of signifiers in certain territories than in others. Anyway, it still remains to be seen how the signifier is going to be able to construct a society of signifiers in this territory. One should never leave in the shadows what one does not explain, under the pretext that one has succeeded in giving some little beginning of explanation.

(18) In any case, the statement of our title this year, *On a discourse that is not a semblance*, concerns something that deals with an economy. Here we will hide (*nous tairons*) the *a semblance* from itself, it is not a semblance of something else, it is to be taken in the sense of the objective genitive, what is at stake is the semblance as proper object by which there is ruled the economy of discourse. Are

we going to say that it is also a subjective genitive? Does *du semblant* concern also what gives the discourse? The word subjective is the only one to be rejected here for the simple reason that the subject only appears once there has been established somewhere this liaison of signifiers. A subject can only be the product of signifying articulation. A subject as such never masters in any case this articulation but is properly speaking determined by it.

A discourse, by its nature, appears (*fait semblant*) as one might say to be a success, or to be light, or to be chic. If what is stated in words is precisely true by always being very authentically what it is, at the level we are at, of the objective and of articulation, it is then very precisely as object of what is only produced in this aforesaid discourse that the semblance is posited. Hence the properly senseless character of what is articulated and it must be said that it is here indeed that there is revealed what is involved in the richness of language, namely, that it contains a logic that surpasses by far everything that we succeed in crystallising of it, in detaching from it.

I employed the hypothetical form of a discourse which might not be (*ne serait pas*) a semblance. Everyone knows the developments that logic took on after Aristotle, by putting the emphasis on the hypothetical function. Everything that is articulated by giving the value True or False to the articulation of the hypothesis, and combining what results from the implication of a term within this hypothesis, as being signalled as true. This is the inauguration of what is called the *modus ponens*, and of still many other modes and everyone knows what was made of them. It is striking, at least as far as I know, that no one has ever formalised the resource involved in the use of this hypothetical in the negative.

A striking thing, if one refers for example to what is collected about it in my *Ecrits*, when someone at the epoch, a heroic epoch at which I began to clear up the terrain of analysis, when someone came to

contribute to the deciphering of the *Verneinung*. Even though in commenting Freud letter by letter, he noticed very clearly – because Freud says it quite literally – that the *Bejahung* only involves a judgement of attribution, which means that Freud ... shows a finesse (19) and a competence that are quite exceptional at the time he wrote this – because only some logician who is not widely known was able at that time to underline it – the judgement of attribution, in no way prejudges existence. The simple positing of a *Verneinung*, implies the existence of something which is very precisely what is denied. A *discourse which might not be a semblance* posits that the discourse, as I have just stated, *is* a semblance.

The great advantage in putting it like that is that one does not say a semblance of what. Now, it is here of course, it is around this that I propose to advance our statements, namely, to get to know what is involved where it *might not be* a semblance. Naturally, the terrain is prepared by a singular even though timid step, which is the one that Freud took in *Beyond the pleasure principle*.

Here I do not want, because I cannot do any more than indicate the knot formed in this statement, by repetition and enjoyment. It is in function of this that repetition goes against the pleasure principle which, I would say, does not recover from it. Hedonism, in the light of analytic experience, can only go back to what it is, namely, a philosophical myth. I mean, a myth of a perfectly defined (and clear) class. And I stated last year the help that they have given to a certain process of the master, by permitting the discourse of the master as such to build up a knowledge. This knowledge is the knowledge of the master. This knowledge has supposed, since the philosophical discourse still carries its trace, the existence over against the master of another knowledge and, thank God, philosophical discourse did not disappear without first pinpointing that there ought to be at the origin a relationship between this knowledge and enjoyment. The one who thus closed philosophical discourse, Hegel to give him his

name, naturally only sees the way in which, through work, slavery comes to accomplish what? Nothing other than the knowledge of the master.

And what is introduced, what is introduced anew by what I will call the Freudian hypothesis? It is, in an extraordinarily prudent, but all the same a syllogistic form, the following: if we call *pleasure principle* the fact that always, by the behaviour of the living being, he comes back to a level which is that of minimal excitation, and that this rules his economy; if it proves to be the case that repetition is exercised in such a way that a dangerous enjoyment, an enjoyment that goes beyond this minimal excitation, is brought back – is it possible, it is in this way that Freud states the question – that it could be imagined that life, caught up itself in its cycle – it is a novelty with (20) respect to this world which does not universally comprise it – that life includes this possibility of repetition which would be the return to this world in so far as it is a semblance?

high point

I can point out to you by a drawing on the board that this involves, instead of the series of ascending and descending curves of excitation, all close to a limit, which is an upper limit, the possibility

of an intensity of excitation that can moreover go to infinity, what is conceived as enjoyment not involving in itself, in principle, any other limit than this lower tangential point, this point that we will call high (*supreme*), in giving its proper sense to this word which means the lowest point of a higher limit, in the same way as the lowest (*infime*) is the highest point of a lower limit. The coherence given of the mortal point, then conceived without Freud underlining it, as a characteristic of life but in truth, what people do not think of is, in effect, the fact that we confuse what is non-life, and which is far, my word, from not stirring up the eternal silence of the infinite spaces that dazed Decartes. They talk, they sing, they move about in every (21) way, now when we look at them. What is called the inanimate world is not dead. Death is a point, is designated as a terminal point, a point at the term of what? Of the enjoyment of life.

This is precisely what is introduced by the Freudian statement, one that we could qualify as hyper-hedonism, if I can express myself in this way. Who can fail to see that the economy, even that of nature, is always a fact of discourse. It cannot grasp that this indicates that nothing else could be at stake here but enjoyment in so far as it is itself not only a fact, but an effect of discourse.

If something that is called the unconscious can be half-said as a language structure, it is so that finally there can appear to us the relief of this effect of discourse that up to then appeared to us as impossible, namely, surplus enjoying. Does that mean, to follow one of my formulae, that in so far as it was impossible, it functioned as real? I am opening up the question, because in truth, nothing implies that the irruption of the discourse of the unconscious, however stammering it remains, implies anything whatsoever, in what preceded it, that was subjected to its structure. The discourse of the unconscious is an emerging, it is the emerging of a certain function of the signifier. That it existed up to then as a token, is indeed the reason why I put it at the source of the semblance.

But the consequences of its emerging, is what ought to be introduced so that something may change, which cannot change, because it is not possible. It is on the contrary because a discourse is centred from its effect as impossible that it will have some chance of being a discourse that might not be a semblance.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 20 January 1971

If I was looking through these sheets, it was not to assure myself, but to reassure myself about what I said the last time, the text of which I do not have at the moment. I have just been complaining about it. Remarks of this kind come back to me - I do not have to go to any trouble for that - it happens that some people were asking themselves at certain points of my discourse the last time as they express it, what I was getting at (*où je veux en venir*). Other remarks came to me from elsewhere, that it is very hard to hear at the back of the room. I will try – I was absolutely unaware of it the last time, I thought that the acoustics were just as good as in the previous amphitheatre – if you don't mind giving me a sign when my voice lowers despite myself, I will try to do my best.

So then, at certain turning points, people may have asked themselves the last time what I was getting at. In truth, this sort of question seems to me to be too premature to be significant, namely, that it is people who are far from being insignificant, people who are very well

informed from whom this remark was reported, and sometimes quite calmly by themselves. It would perhaps have a greater implication, given precisely what I put forward the last time, if they were to ask where I am starting from or even where I want you to start from. Already, this has two meanings, this perhaps means, to go somewhere, and again this may also mean, to get a move on from where you are. This 'what I am getting at' is in any case a very good example of what I put forward about the desire of the Other: *che vuoi?* What does he want? Obviously when you can say it right away, you are much more comfortable. This is an opportunity to note the factor of inertia that is constituted by this *che vuoi*, at least when (24) you can answer it. This indeed is why in analysis one strives to leave this question in suspense.

Nevertheless, I clearly specified the last time that here I am not in the position of the analyst. So that in short, I believe I am obliged to answer this question, and in saying this I ought to give the reason why I have spoken. I spoke about the semblance and I said something that is not common knowledge; first of all, I insisted, I laid stress on the fact that the semblance that presents itself as what it is, is the primary function of truth. There is a certain *I speak* that brings this about, and it is not superfluous to recall it in order to give to this truth, which gives rise to so many logical difficulties, its correct positioning. This is all the more important to recall in that, if there is in Freud, to designate like that a certain tone, if there is in Freud something revolutionary - I already warned about the excessive use of this word - but it is certain that, if there was a moment when Freud was revolutionary, it is in the measure that he put in the foreground a function which is also the one, it is the only common element moreover, which is also this element that Marx contributed, namely, to consider a certain number of facts as symptoms. The dimension of the symptom is that it speaks, it speaks even to those who do not know how to hear; it does not say everything, even to those who know it. This promotion of the symptom, is the turning point that we

are living through in a certain register which, let us say, was pursued, rumbling quietly throughout the centuries, around the theme of knowledge. It cannot all the same be said that from the point of view of knowledge we are completely lacking, and we clearly sense what is outmoded in the theory of knowledge when it is a matter of explaining the order of a process constituted by the formulations of science. Physical science gives models of it today. The fact that we are, in parallel to this revolution of science, in a position that one can qualify as being on the path of a certain truth, is what shows a certain heterogeneity of status between the two registers. Except for the fact that, in my teaching, and only there, an attempt is made to show their coherence, which is not obvious, or which is not obvious for those who, in this practice of analysis, go on about the semblance. This is what I will try to articulate today.

I said a second thing. The semblance is not only locatable, essential, to designate the primary function of truth, it is impossible without this reference to qualify what is involved in discourse. What defines discourse, this at least is the way I tried last year to give some weight (25) to this term by defining four of them whose titles I was only able to recall last time, to hastily recall, at which point certain people found that they were out of their depth. What is to be done? I am not going to go through, even rapidly, an account of what is involved, even though of course I will have to come back to it and to show what is involved in it. I pointed out that you could refer in the answers described as *Radiophonie* in the last *Scilicet*, to what is involved in them, in what there consists this function of discourse as I announced it last year. It is supported by four privileged places among which one precisely remained unnamed, and precisely the one which, gives the title of each of these discourses, by the function of its occupant. It is when the master signifier is at a certain place that I speak about the discourse of the Master; when a certain knowledge also occupies it, I speak of that of the University; when the subject in its division, fundamental for the unconscious, is in place there, I

speak about the discourse of the Hysteric, and finally when *surplus enjoying* occupies it, I speak about the discourse of the Analyst. This place, which in a way is sensitive, that of the top left, for those who were there and who still remember, this place which is here occupied in the discourse of the Master by the signifier as master, S_1 , this place still not designated, I am designating by its name, by the name that it deserves, it is very precisely the place of the *semblance*. This shows, after what I stated the last time, the degree to which the signifier, as I might say, is here at its place. Hence the success of the discourse of the Master, the success all the same that makes it worth while to pay attention to it for an instant, because after all, who can believe that any master ever ruled by force? Especially at the start, because after all, as Hegel reminds us in this admirable sleight of hand, one man is worth another. And if the discourse of the Master gives the basis, the structure, the strong point around which several civilisations are organised, it is indeed because its mainspring is all the same of a different order to violence.

This does not mean that we are in any way sure that, in these facts, which it must be said we can only articulate with the most extreme caution, that once we pinpoint them by some term or other, as primitive, pre-logical, archaic, and anything whatsoever of whatever order it may be, archaic, *archè*, are the beginning, why? And why would this not also be a waste product, these primitive societies? But nothing settles it. What is certain, is that they show us that it is not necessary for things to be established in function of the discourse of the Master; first of all the mytho-ritual configuration, which is the best way of pinpointing them, does not necessarily imply the (26) articulation of the discourse of the Master. Nevertheless, it must be said, it is a certain form of alibi to interest ourselves so much in what is not the discourse of the Master, in most cases it is a way of confusing things completely; while you busy yourself with that, you are not looking after something else. And nevertheless the discourse of the Master is an essential articulation, and the way I expressed it

ought to be something that some people, I am not saying everyone, some people, should try to get their heads around. Because what is at stake, and this I also clearly stressed the last time, what is at stake, anything new that can happen and is called, I have always said it, insisting on the tempering that should be applied to it, because what is called revolutionary can only consist in a change, in a displacement of discourse, namely, of each of these places. I would like in a way, to give an image – but you know the sort of cretinising that an image can lead to – to represent by what one might call four bowls, each of which would have its name, the way that into these bowls there slide a certain number of terms, specifically what I have distinguished by S_1 , S_2 in so far as, at the point that we are at, S_2 constitutes a certain body of knowledge, the \mathfrak{o} , in so far as it is directly a consequence of the discourse of the master, the $\$$ which in the discourse of the master, occupies this place which is a place that we are going to talk about today, that for its part I have already named, which is that of the truth.

Truth is not the contrary of semblance, the truth as I might say is this dimension, or this *demansion*, if you will allow me to make up a new word, to designate these bowls, this *demansion* which is strictly correlative to that of the semblance. This *demansion*, I told you that the latter, that of the semblance, supports it. So then, something is indicated all the same about what this semblance is getting at. It is clear that there is a question that is a little inexact, I mean the one that came back to me along quite indirect paths. Two young sages, whom I greet if they are here again to day, I hope they will not be offended that they were overheard in passing, gravely nodding their heads, it appears, asking one another: ‘Is he a dangerous idealist?’ Am I a dangerous idealist? That seems to me to be completely beside the point! Because I began – and with what emphasis, I would say that I said the opposite of what exactly I wanted to say – by putting the emphasis on the fact that discourse is an artefact. What I am initiating with that, is exactly the contrary, because the semblance is

the contrary of an artefact. As I pointed out, semblances flourish in (27) nature. The question, once knowledge is no longer at stake, once we no longer believes that it is along the path of perception, from which we are supposed to extract some quintessence or other, that we know something, but by means of an apparatus which is discourse, there is no longer any question of the idea.

The first time, moreover, that the idea made its appearance, it was a little better positioned than after the exploits of Bishop Berkeley. It was Plato who was involved, and he asked himself where was the real of what was called a horse. His idea of the idea, was the importance of this naming. In this multiple and transitory thing which was moreover perfectly obscure in his epoch more than in ours, is not the whole reality of a horse in this idea in so far as that means the signifier, *a horse*. You must not believe that because Aristotle put the emphasis of reality on the individual, that he got any further. The individual means exactly what one cannot say. And precisely at a certain point, if Aristotle had not been the marvellous logician that he was, who took the unique step, the decisive step, thanks to which we have a reference point about what an articulated sequence of signifiers is, one could say that in his way of highlighting what *ousia* is, in other words the real, he behaves like a mystic. What is proper to *ousia*, he says it himself, is that it cannot in any way be attributed, it is not sayable. What is not sayable, is precisely what is mystical. Only it appears, he is not of that opinion, but he leaves the place to the mystic. It is obvious that the solution to the question of the idea could not come to Plato. It is from the angle of the function and of the variable that all of that finds its solution.

If it is clear that if there is something that I am, it is not a nominalist, I mean that I do not start from the fact that the name is something that is stuck like that onto the real. And you have to choose; if one is a nominalist, one must completely renounce dialectical materialism, so that in short the nominalist tradition, which is properly speaking the

only danger of idealism that can be put forward here in a discourse like mine, is very obviously rejected. It is not a matter of being realist in the sense that people were in the Middle Ages, the realism of universals. But it is a matter of designating, of highlighting the fact that our discourse, our scientific discourse, only discovers the real because of the fact that it depends on the function of the semblance.

The effects of what I call the algebraic articulation of the semblance and as such it is only letters that are at stake, is the only system by (28) means of which we designate what is real; what is real, is what makes a hole in this semblance. In this articulated semblance which is scientific discourse, scientific discourse progresses without even asking itself any more whether or not it is semblance. It is simply a question of whether its network, its net, its *lattice*, as they say, makes the holes appear in the right place. The only reference is the impossible at which these deductions culminate; this impossible, is the real. The apparatus of discourse in so far as it is what, in its rigor, encounters the limits of its consistency – it is with this that we aim, in physics, at something that is real.

What is important for us in what concerns us, namely, the field of truth – and why it is the field of truth, only qualified as such, that concerns us, I am going to try to articulate today – in what concerns us, we are dealing with something that takes into account that it differs from this position of the real in physics, this something that resists, that is not permeable to every meaning, which is a consequence of our discourse, and which is called phantasy. And what has to be tested are its limits, its structure, the function, the relationship in a discourse of one of the terms, of the \mathfrak{o} , the surplus enjoying, the $\$$ of the subject, or precisely the point which is broken (*rompu*) in the discourse of the master. This is what we have to test in its functioning, when in the completely opposite position, that in which the \mathfrak{o} occupies this place, it is the subject that is opposite, this

place where it is questioned, it is here that the phantasy must take on its status, its status which is defined by the very part of impossibility that there is in analytic questioning.

To illuminate what is involved in *where I want to get to*, I will go to what I want to mark today, about what is involved in analytic theory. Because of this, I am not coming back, I am skipping over a function that is expressed in a certain way of speaking that I use here when I address you. Nevertheless, I cannot but draw your attention to the fact that, if the last time, I challenged you with a term which might have appeared impertinent, and rightly so, to many, of *plus de jouir pressé* (a pressurised surplus enjoying) ought I then talk about some kind of pressurised...? Nevertheless this has a meaning, a meaning which is one from which I preserve my discourse, that in any case has not the character of what Freud designated as the discourse of the leader. It is indeed at the level of discourse, at the beginning of the 20's, that Freud articulated in *Massenpsychologie und Ichanalyse* something which curiously was found to be at the source of the Nazi phenomenon. Consult the schema that he gives in this article, at the (29) end of the chapter on *Identification*; you will see indicated there almost open to view the relations between capital I and small o. Truly, the schema seems to be designed for the Lacanian signs to be imposed on it.

That which, in a discourse, is addressed to the Other as a Thou, gives rise to an identification to something that one can call the human idol. If I spoke the last time about red blood as being the blood that is most useless to propel against the semblance, it is indeed because, as you have seen, one cannot advance and overthrow the idol without immediately afterwards taking its place, and we know that this is what has happened to a certain type of martyr! It is indeed in the measure that something in every discourse that appeals to the Thou provokes a camouflaged, secret identification, which is only one to this enigmatic object that may seem to be nothing, the tiny little

surplus enjoying of Hitler, that went no further perhaps than his moustache, this was enough to crystallise people who...who had nothing mystical about them! Who were the most committed to the process of the discourse of the capitalist, with what that involves in terms of a questioning of surplus enjoying in its form of surplus value. It was a matter of seeing whether, at a certain level, one would still have one's little bit (*son petit bout*) and indeed this was enough to provoke this effect of identification. It is amusing simply that this should have taken the form of an idealisation of the race, namely, of the thing which on that occasion was least involved. But one can find where this character of fiction comes from, one can find it. What must be simply said, is that there is no need for this ideology for a racism to be constituted, and that all that is needed is a surplus enjoying that recognises itself as such. And that whoever is a little bit interested in what may happen would do well to tell himself that every form of racism, in so far as a surplus enjoying is very well capable of supporting it, is now what is on the agenda. This is what is in store for us in the years to come.

You will understand why better, when I tell you what the theory, the authentic exercise of analytic theory, allows us to formulate as regards what is involved in surplus enjoying. People imagine, people imagine they are saying something when they say that what Freud has contributed, is the underlay of sexuality in everything involved in discourse. People say that when they have been touched a little by what I state about the importance of discourse to define the unconscious. And then when they do not pay attention to the fact that I have not yet for my part, tackled what is involved in this term sexuality, sexual relationship. It is certainly strange – it is only strange from one point of view, the point of view of the charlatanism (30) that presides over every therapeutic action in our society – it is strange that people have not noticed the world there is between this term sexuality, wherever it is beginning, where it is only beginning, to take on a biological substance - and I would point out to you that,

if there is somewhere that one can begin to notice the sense that this has, it is rather on the side of bacteria - of the world that there is between that and what is involved concerning what Freud states about the relations that the unconscious reveals. Whatever stumblings he himself may have succumbed to in this order, what Freud reveals about the functioning of the unconscious has nothing biological about it. This only has the right to be called sexuality because of what is called the sexual relationship. It is completely legitimate, moreover, until the moment when one makes use of sexuality to designate something else, namely, what is studied in biology, namely, the chromosome and its combination XY or XX, or XX, XY. This has absolutely nothing to do with what is at stake, and has a name that can be perfectly well stated, called the relationships of man and woman. It is necessary to start from these two terms with their full sense, with what that involves in terms of *relation*. Because it is very strange when one sees the little timid attempts that people make at thinking within the framework of a certain system which is that of the psychoanalytic institution. They notice that not everything is regulated by the frolics that are presented as conflictual, and they would really like something different, the non-conflictual, that is more restful. And so then they notice for example, that there is no need to wait for the phallic phase to distinguish a little girl from a little boy, they are not at all the same. They marvel at this! And then – I am pointing it out to you because between now and when we meet again, it will be only in the month of February, the second Wednesday of February, you will perhaps have the time to read something, because once I recommend a book, that improves its circulation, which is called *Sex und Gender, and Gender*, it is in English, pardon me! It is by someone called Stoller, very interesting to read, because this gives on an important subject, that of transsexuals, a certain number of very well observed cases with their familial correlates. You know perhaps that transsexualism consists very precisely in a very forceful desire to cross over by every means to the other sex, even by having oneself operated on, when you are

male. There you are! With the co-ordinates, the observations that are there you will certainly learn a lot about this transsexualism because these are observations that are quite usable. You will also learn the (31) complete...the completely invalid character of the dialectical apparatus with which the author of this book treats these questions, and which means that there arise quite directly the great difficulties he encounters in explaining his cases. One of the most surprising things, is that the psychotic aspect of these cases is completely eluded by him, because he has no reference points, Lacanian foreclosure never having reached his ears, which immediately and very easily explains the form of these cases. But what matter! The important thing is this, that to speak about gender identity, which is nothing other than what I have just expressed as this term, man and woman, it is clear that the question is posed of what emerges precociously from the fact that at adult age, it is the destiny of speaking beings to divide themselves up between men and women and that to understand the emphasis that is put on these things, on this agency, one has to take into account that what defines the man, is his relationship with the woman, and inversely. That nothing allows us in these definitions of man and woman, to abstract them from the complete speaking experience, up to and including in the institutions where they are expressed, namely marriage.

If one does not understand that in adult age, what is at stake is to be-a-man (*de faire-homme*), that this is what constitutes the relation to the other party, that it is in the light, at the start, starting from something that constitutes a fundamental relation, that there is questioned everything that in the behaviour of the child can be interpreted as being oriented towards this being-a-man, for example and that one of the essential correlates of this being-a-man, is to indicate to the girl that one is so, that we find ourselves, in a word, put right away into the dimension of the semblance. But besides, everything bears witness to it, including references that are common, that one finds everywhere, to sexual display principally in the higher

mammals, but also among ... in a very great number of insights that we can have very, very far into the animal phylum, which shows the essential character, in the sexual relationship, of something that should be clearly limited to the level at which we touch it, that has nothing to do either with a cellular level, whether it is chromosomic or not, nor with an organic level, whether it is a matter or not of the ambiguity of one or other tract involving the gonad, namely, an ethological level which is properly one of a semblance. It is in so far as the male, most often the male, the female is not absent from it because she is precisely the subject affected by this display, it is in so far as there is a display that something which is called sexual (32) copulation, no doubt, in its function, but which finds its status in particular elements of identity, it is certain that human sexual behaviour easily finds its reference in this display as it is defined at the animal level. It is certain that human sexual behaviour consists in a certain maintenance of this animal semblance. The only thing which differentiates it from it, is that this semblance is conveyed in a discourse, and that it is at this level of discourse, at this level of discourse alone, that it is carried towards, allow me, some effect that might not be a semblance. That means that instead of having exquisite animal courtesy, it can happen, it can happen that a man rapes a woman, or inversely. At the limits of discourse, in so far as it strives to make the same semblance hold up, there is from time to time something real, this is what is called the *passage à l'acte*, I see no better place to designate what that means. Note that in most cases, the *passage à l'acte* is carefully avoided. It only happens by accident; and this is also an occasion to illuminate what is involved in what I have long differentiated from the *passage à l'acte*, namely, acting out, to bring the semblance onto the stage, to put it on the stage, to make an example of it, this is what in this order is called acting out. Or again, it can be called passion. But, I am forced to go quickly, you will notice that it is in this connection, and here as I have just illuminated things, that one can clearly highlight, clearly designate what I am always saying: it is that discourse is there in so

far as it allows the stake of what is involved in surplus enjoying, namely, I am giving it the full treatment, it is very precisely what is forbidden to sexual discourse.

There is no sexual act [or relationship?], I already expressed this on several occasions, I am tackling it here from a different angle. And this is made quite tangible in a massive way by the economy of analytic theory, namely, what Freud encountered, first of all so innocently, as I might say, that this is why it is a symptom, namely, that he advances things to the point that they concern us on the plane of truth. Who can fail to see that the myth of Oedipus is necessary to designate the real, because this indeed is what it pretends to do, and more exactly what the theoretician is reduced to, when he formulates this hyper-myth, the fact is that the real properly speaking is incarnated...by what? By sexual enjoyment, as what? As impossible, since what the Oedipus complex designates, is the mythical being whose enjoyment – his enjoyment – is supposed to be that of what? Of all the women. That such ... a system is here in a way imposed by discourse itself, does this not provide the surest (33) cross-check in terms of what I state as theory, concerning the prevalence of discourse, concerning everything that is precisely involved in enjoyment? What analytic theory articulates is something whose character, graspable as an object, is what I designate by the **o**-object, in so far as through a certain number of favourable organic contingencies - breast, excrement, look or voice – it comes to fill the place defined as that of surplus enjoying.

What does the theory state if not the following: something that tends, this relationship of surplus enjoying, a relationship in the name of which the function of the mother comes to such a predominant point in all our analytic observation, surplus enjoying is only normalised from a relationship that one establishes to sexual enjoyment, except for the fact that this enjoyment, this sexual enjoyment is only formulated, is only articulated from the phallus in so far as the

phallus is its signifier. Someone one day wrote that it is the signifier that designates the lack of signifier. This is absurd, I never articulated such a thing. The phallus is very properly sexual enjoyment in so far as it is co-ordinated, is solidary with a semblance.

This indeed is what happens and this is what it is rather strange to see all the analysts striving to turn their gaze from. Far from having insisted more and more on this turning point, this crisis of the phallic phase, they use every opportunity to elude the crisis, the truth, to which not one of these young speaking beings does not have to face up to, which is that there are some of them who do not have the phallus. A double intrusion into lack, because there are those who do not have one, and then this truth was lacking up to the present. Sexual identification does not consist in believing oneself to be a man or a woman, but in taking account of the fact that there are women, for the boy, and that there are men, for the girl. And what is important, is not so much what they experience, it is a real situation, if you allow me, the fact is that for men, the girl is the phallus. And this is what castrates them. That for women, the boy, is the same thing, the phallus and this is what castrates them also, because all they acquire is a penis and that spoils things. Neither the boy nor the girl initially run risks except through the dramas that they unleash, they are the phallus for a moment. This is the real, the real of sexual enjoyment in so far as it is detached as such, it is the phallus, in other words the Name of the Father, the identification of these two terms having in its time scandalised some [pious?] people.

(34) But there is something that is worth insisting on a little more. What is the fundamentally foundational part in this operation of the semblance, such as the one that we have just defined at the level of the relationship of man and woman, what is the place of the semblance, of the archaic semblance? This assuredly is why it is worth the trouble to hold on a little more to the moment of what the woman represents. The woman is precisely in this relation, this

relationship, for man, the moment of truth. The woman is in a position, with respect to sexual enjoyment, to punctuate the equivalence of enjoyment and the semblance. In this indeed lies the distance that man finds himself from her. If I spoke about a moment of truth, it is because she is the one that the whole formation of man is designed to respond to, and now over and against everything, the whole status of her semblance. It is certainly easier for a man to confront any enemy on the plain of rivalry than to confront the woman in so far as she is the support of this truth, of the semblance in the relationship of man to woman.

In truth, that the semblance is here enjoyment, for the man, is sufficiently indicated by the fact that enjoyment is semblance. It is because it [he?] is at the intersection of two enjoyments that man suffers in the highest way the malaise of this relationship that is designated as sexual. As someone or other said, these pleasures that are called physical.

On the contrary, no one other than the woman, because it is in this that she is Other, no one other than the woman knows better what is disjunctive between enjoyment and the semblance, because she is the presence of this something that she knows, namely, that enjoyment and semblance, if they are equivalent, in a dimension of discourse, are nonetheless distinct in the test, that the woman represents for man the truth, quite simply, namely, the only one that can give its place as such to the semblance. It has to be said, everything we have been told as being the mainspring of the unconscious represents nothing but the horror of this truth. It is this, of course, that today I am trying, I am attempting to develop for you just as one makes Japanese flowers. It is not particularly agreeable to listen to, because this is what is usually packaged under the register of the castration complex. By means of which, in that case, with this label, one is at peace, one can leave it to one side, one has no longer anything else to say about

it, except that it is there and that one makes a little genuflection to it from time to time.

But that the woman is the truth of man, that this old proverbial business, when it is a matter of understanding something, the *cherchez la femme*, to which people naturally give a police-style (35) interpretation, is something completely different, namely, that to grasp the truth of a man, one would do well to know who his wife is. I mean his spouse in this instance, and why not? This is the only situation that can give a meaning to something that one day someone in my entourage called the *pèse-personne*. To weigh a person, there is nothing like weighing his wife. When the woman is at stake it is not the same thing! Because the woman has a very great liberty....

Louder!

What's that?

We can't hear!

You can't hear?

No.

I said: the woman has very great freedom with respect to the semblance! She will manage to give weight even to a man who has none. These are...these are truths, of course, that in the course of the centuries, have been perfectly well noted for a long time, but which are never said except from mouth to mouth, as I might say. And a whole literature has been constructed, exists, it would be a matter of getting to know its breadth, naturally it is only of interest if one takes the best.

Someone, for example, that someone must take responsibility for one day, is Baltazar Gracian, who was an eminent Jesuit, who wrote some of the most intelligent things that could be written. They are absolutely prodigiously intelligent in that everything that is involved, namely, to establish what one could call the sanctity of man, he

resumes in one word, resumes it in what? His book on the *Courtier*, in a word, two points: to be a saint. It is the only point of western civilisation where the word *saint* has the same sense as in Chinese, *Tchen-Tchen*. Note this point, because, this reference, because all the same it is late, today, I am not going to introduce it today, I will give you this year some little references to the origins of Chinese thinking.

In any case, yes, I have noticed one thing, which is that perhaps I am a Lacanian because I formerly did Chinese. I mean by that that I notice that in re-reading things like that, that I had gone over, but mumbled through anyway like a like a simpleton, with donkeys ears, I notice in re-reading them now that, it is on all fours with what I am (36) telling you.

I don't know, I will give an example; in Mencius, which is one of the fundamental, canonical books of Chinese thought, there is a chap who is his disciple moreover, not him, but who begins to state things like the following: "What you do not find on the side of *yen*, this is discourse, do not look for on the side of your spirit". I translate it for you as *spirit*, it is *hsin*, but that means, that by *hsin* which means heart, what he designated was well and truly the spirit, the *Geist* of Hegel. But anyway that would demand a little bit more development. "And if you do not find it on the side of your spirit, do not look for it on the side of your *tchi*", namely, of what the Jesuits translated like that, as best they could, losing breath a little, your sensibility. I am only indicating these stages to tell you the distinction which is very strict between what is articulated, what belongs to discourse, and what belongs to the spirit, namely, the essential, if you have not already found it at the level of the word, it is hopeless, do not try to find it elsewhere at the level of feelings. *Meng-tseu*, *Mencius*, contradicts himself, it is true, but it is a matter of knowing along what path and why.

This to tell you that a certain way of putting discourse right in the forefront is not at all something that makes us go back to archaisms because discourse at that epoch, and the epoch of Mencius, was already perfectly well articulated and constituted. It is not through references to primitive thinking that one can understand it. In truth, I do not know what primitive thinking is. Something much more concrete that we have within our reach, is what is called underdevelopment. But that underdevelopment is not archaic, everyone knows that it is produced by the extension of the capitalist reign. I would even say more, what one notices, and what will be noticed more and more, is that underdevelopment is precisely the condition for capitalistic progress. From a certain angle, the October Revolution itself is a proof of it.

But what must be seen, is that what we have to confront is an underdevelopment that is going to be more and more patent, more and more widespread. Only what in short is at stake, is that we should put the following to the test: if the key of the different problems that are going to propose themselves to us is not to put us at the level of this effect of capitalist articulation that I left in the shadows last year by simply giving you its root in the discourse of the master, I will perhaps give you a little more of it this year. It would be well....we must see what we can draw from what I would call an underdeveloped logic. This is what I will try to articulate before you, as the Chinese texts say, “for your better use”.

Seminar 3: Wednesday 10 February 1971

I was asked if I was going to give my seminar because of the strike. There were two or perhaps just one, but perhaps two of these people who asked me what I thought of the strike, more exactly they asked my secretary. Well I for my part ask you! Nobody has anything to bring up in favour of the strike? At least in connection with this seminar? I will not absent myself from you...from your presence. Nevertheless this morning I was myself rather inclined to go on strike. I was led to this because the person that I have just spoken about, my secretary, showed me a little rubric in a newspaper about the aforesaid strike. The slogan of the strike, to which there was added, given the newspaper in question, a communiqué from the Ministry of National Education about everything that had been done for the University; the averages of the teachers employed per number of students, etc. Naturally, I am not going to dispute these statistics. Nevertheless the conclusion that is drawn from them, of this very extensive effort which ought in any case to satisfy people, I will say that it does not agree with my information which nevertheless comes from a good source. So that...because of this, I was rather inclined to go on strike. Your presence will force me, let us say by a fact which counts, it is what is called in our tongue courtesy, and in another that I announced like that, as a sort of come-along, that I would refer to, namely, the Chinese tongue about which I went as far as to confide to you that there was a time, when I learned a little bit of it, it is called *yi*.

The *yi*, in the grand tradition, is one of the four fundamental virtues, (40) of whom? Of what? Of a man at a certain date. And if I speak about it like that, as it comes to me, because I thought I was going to have to make some casual remarks to you, it is moreover on this plane that I am going to give this discourse today. It will not be, properly speaking, what I had prepared. In my own way all the same

I will take account of this strike and it is in a way - you are going to see, the level at which I am going to put things - it is in a more familiar way to reply in a fair-minded way. This is more or less the best sense that can be given to this *yi*, to reply in a fair-minded way to this presence. You will see that I shall take advantage of it to tackle a certain number of points that have given rise to an equivocation for some time. Namely, that since moreover there is something in question in the University, it is also at the level of the University - the movements of which in many cases I disdain to remark on when I hear about them - that today I think I should respond.

As perhaps you know – how can we know whether your presence bears witness to it or not - in my relationship to the aforesaid University I am only in what could be called a marginal position. It believes it should give me some shelter, for which certainly I pay it homage, even though for some time something has manifested itself that I cannot but take into account, given the field in which I find myself teaching. It is a certain number of echoes, of rumours, of murmurs that come to me from a quarter of a field defined in a university fashion and which is called linguistics.

When I speak, of course about disdain, I do not mean a feeling; what is at stake is a way of behaving. At a time which already, precisely, if I remember correctly, is something like...how long ago is it, two years, it is not enormous, there came out in a journal that nobody reads any more, whose very name seems out of date, *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, there appeared a certain article called *Exercices de style de Jacques Lacan*. It was an article that I signalled, moreover, at that time I was under the roof of the *Ecole Normale*, anyway under the roof!...under the porch roof, at the door. I said: “You should read that, it will give you a laugh”. It proved, as you saw subsequently, that it was perhaps a little less funny than it seemed, because it was in a way the bell in which I was rather, even though I was deaf, to hear the confirmation of what had already been announced to me: that my

place was no longer under that porch roof. It is a confirmation that I could have heard, because there was written in the article, there was written something that I must say is rather crude, that one might (41) hope, now that I am no longer under the porch roof of the *Ecole Normale*, for the introduction into the aforesaid Ecole, of linguistics, I am not sure of exactly quoting the terms, you can well imagine that I did not refer to it this morning, because all this is improvised, high quality, high tension linguistics, something or other of this kind, perhaps, something that designated the fact that something was besmirching the name of linguistics, good God, within this *Ecole Normale*. In the name of what, great God, I had no responsibility in the *Ecole Normale* for any teaching, but if the *Ecole Normale* found itself, according to this author, so little initiated in linguistics, it was certainly not I who should have been blamed for it.

This indicates to you the point on which I intend all the same to specify something this morning. It is in effect the following, something which is raised and for some time with a sort of insistence, the theme is taken up in a more or less frivolous way in a certain number of interviews, there is a question which is raised about something: is one a structuralist or not when one is a linguist? And people tend to demarcate themselves and say: I am a functionalist. Why am I a functionalist? Because structuralism, is something, moreover, that is a purely journalistic invention. I am saying, structuralism is something which serves as a label and which of course, given what it comprises, namely, a certain seriousness, does not fail to be disturbing, so that, of course, people want to stake out their own preserve. [*André Martinet interviewed in Le Monde, 5 January 1971.*]

The question of the relationships of linguistics to what I teach, is, in other words, what I want to put in the forefront in order, in a way, to dissipate, dissipate I hope in a way that will mark an epoch, a certain equivocation. Linguists, the university linguists, would like in

short to reserve to themselves the privilege of speaking about language. And the fact that it is around the development of linguistics that the axis of my teaching operates, is attached to, is supposed to be excessive in some way and is denounced in different formulae the principal one of which is the following, in any case it seem to me to be the most consistent one. That of linguistics there is made - in the field which happens to be the one that I am inserted into, in the one also in which someone who certainly, on occasion, would deserve to be looked at a little more closely, much more as regards what comes from me, because...which people might have only a rather vague idea of, at least it is proved, Levi- Strauss for example, and so then Levi-Strauss and then some others again, Roland Barthes - we also are supposed to be making of linguistics a use, I quote, "a metaphorical use". Well now! It is in effect about (42) this that I would like to clearly make some points. First of all there is something from which we should start because all the same it is written, written in something that counts, the fact that I am still here sustaining this discourse, the fact that you are also here to listen to it, the fact is, we have to believe that a formula is not altogether displaced as regards this discourse, in so far as I pronounce it, the fact is in a certain way finally, let us say that I know...I know what? Let us try to be exact, it seems to be proven that *I know what I should keep to (je sais à quoi m'en tenir)*. Holding a certain place, I am underlining this, this place is no other – I am underlining it because I am not stating it for the first time, I spend my time clearly repeating that this is what I hold onto – than the place that I identified as that of a psychoanalyst – the question can after all be debated, because many psychoanalysts debate it – but in any case this is what I hold to.

It is not quite the same as if I were to state, *I know where I stand (je sais où je me tiens)*, not because the I is repeated in the second part of the sentence, but this is where language always shows its resources, it is because to say *I know where I stand*, it is on the *where* that the emphasis would be put as regards what I was priding myself

knowing. I would have, as I might say, I would have the map, the *mapping* of the thing. And why after all would I have it?

There is a strong reason why I could not even sustain that I know where I stand. This is truly the axis of what I have to tell you this year. The fact is that the principle of science in so far as the process is engaged for us, I am talking about what I refer to when I give its centre as Newtonian science, the introduction of the Newtonian field, the fact is that in no domain of science, does one have this *mapping* this map, to tell us where we are. And what is more, everyone agrees with this, but whatever the worth of the ell, of the objection that may be raised once one begins to speak precisely of a map, of its chance and of its necessity, well then, anyone at all is in a position to object to you that you are no longer doing science, but philosophy. That does not mean that anyone at all knows what he is saying when he says it. But anyway, it is a very strong position.

The discourse of science rejects this *where we have got to* (*où nous en sommes*) it is not with this that it operates. As regards the hypothesis, remember Newton affirming that he did not claim to construct any, the hypothesis, although used, never concerns the foundation of things. A hypothesis, in the scientific field, and whatever anyone may think, a hypothesis is, above all, something to do with logic. There is an *if*, the conditional of a truth that is never (43) articulated except logically; so then, *apodosis*: a consequent ought to be verifiable. It is verifiable at its level, as it is articulated. This in no way proves the truth of the hypothesis. I am absolutely not in the process of saying that science is swimming about there like a pure construction, that it does not engage with the real. To say that it does not prove the truth of the hypothesis, is simply to recall what I have just said, namely, that implication in logic in no way implies that a true conclusion cannot be drawn from a false premise. It nevertheless remains that the truth of a hypothesis in an established scientific field is recognised from the order that it bestows on the

totality of the field in so far as it has its status and its status cannot be defined otherwise than by the consent of all those who are authorised in this field, in other words the status of the scientific field is of a university kind (*universitaire*).

These are things that may appear crude. It nevertheless remains that this is what justifies situating the level of the articulation of the University discourse, as I tried to do last year. Now it is clear that the way that I articulated it is the only one that allows it to be noticed why it is not accidental, out of date, linked to some accident or other. The status of the development of science involves the presence, the subvention of other social entities that are well known, the Army for example, or again the Navy, and of some other elements for a certain provisioning. It is quite legitimate if we see that radically the University discourse can only be articulated if it starts from the discourse of the Master.

The distribution of domains in a field whose status is university-like, is the only place where there can be posed the question of what is happening and first of all of whether it is possible for a discourse to be entitled differently. Here there is introduced in its massiveness – I apologise for starting again from such a basic point, but after all since there are directed at me, and from people authorised as being linguists, objections like the one that I only make a metaphorical use of linguistics, I ought to recall, I ought to respond whatever may be the occasion I do so, and I am doing it this morning because of the fact that I was expecting to meet a more combative atmosphere – well then, I ought to recall here then, that if I can say decently that I know, I know what? Because after all perhaps I put myself somewhere in a place that the person called Mencius, whose name I introduced to you the last time, the person called Mencius, may perhaps allow us to (44) define, good, it remains that if – may Mencius protect me! – *I know what to limit myself to*, I have to say at the same time that I do not know what I am saying. I know that what I am saying, in other

words, is what I cannot say. This is the date, the date that marks the fact there is Freud and that he introduced the unconscious. The unconscious means nothing if it does not mean that whatever I say, or wherever I stand, even if I behave correctly, well then, I do not know what I am saying, and that none of the discourses, as I defined them last year, leave any hope, allows anyone to put forward anything at all, to claim, to hope even in any way to know what he is saying.

I say, even if I do not know what I am saying; only I know that I do not know it. And I am not the first to say something in these conditions. It has already been heard. I say that the cause of this is only to be sought in language itself and that what I am adding, what I am adding to Freud, even if in Freud it is already there, open to view, because whatever he demonstrates about the unconscious is never anything but language material, I add this: *that the unconscious is structured like a language*. Which one? Well then, precisely, look for it!

I will talk to you (*je vous causerai*) about French and about Chinese. At least I would like to. It is only too clear that at a certain level, what I cause is bitterness, especially on the side of linguists. This is of a nature rather to make one think that the university status is only too obvious in the developments that force linguistics to turn into a funny mixture; from what one sees of it, there is no doubt about it. That I should be denounced on that occasion, good God, is not that important. That people will not debate with me, is not very surprising either, because I do not take my stand from a certain definition of the university domain, nor could I do so.

The amusing thing is, since it is obvious that it is not our fault, a certain number of people among whom I ranked myself earlier, adding to it two other names and one could add a few more, it is obviously starting from us that linguistics sees there increasing the number of posts, those counted out this morning in the review of the

Ministry of National Education, and then also the number of students.
Good!

The interest, the wave of interest that I contributed to bringing to linguistics, is, it appears, an interest that comes from the ignorant. Well then! That already is not too bad! They were ignorant before, now they are interested. I succeeded in interesting the ignorant in (45) something that, in addition, was not my goal, because linguistics, I can tell you, I don't give a damn about it! What interests me directly, is language, because I think that this is what I am dealing with, that that is what I am dealing with when I am dealing with a psychoanalysis.

It is up to the linguists to define the linguistic object. In the field of science, every domain progresses by defining its object. They define it as they wish and they add that I am making a metaphorical usage of it. It is curious all the same that linguists do not see that every use of language, whatever it may be, moves around in metaphor, and that the only language is metaphorical, as is demonstrated by every attempt at metalanguage, if I can express myself in this way, which can do nothing other than to try to start from what has always been defined, every time people advance onto an effort described as logical (*logicien*), to define first of all an object-language in which it is clear, in which one puts one's finger, in the statements of any one of these logical efforts, that this language-object is ungraspable. It is of the nature of language, I am not saying of speech, I am saying of language itself, that as regards approaching anything whatsoever that is signified in it, the referent is never the right one, and this is what makes a language.

Every designation is metaphorical; it can only be done through the mediation of something else. Even if I say: that! That and pointing at it, well then, I already imply, by calling it that, that I chose to make it nothing but that. Even though that is not that, the proof is that

when I light it, it is something different, even at the level of that, this famous that (*ça*) which is supposed to be the redoubt of the particular, of the individual, we cannot omit that it is an event of language to say: 'that'. What I have just designated as that is not my cigar, it is so when I smoke it, but when I am smoking it, I do not talk about it. The signifier to which the discourse refers to on occasion, when there is discourse – it appears that we can scarcely escape from what is discourse – is what the discourse about something refers to and this signifier may be the only support. Of its nature it evokes a referent. Only this cannot be the right one and that is why the referent is always real, because it is impossible to designate it. In consideration of which, the only thing that remains is to construct it. And one constructs it if one can.

There is no reason why I should deprive myself, anyway I am not going to remind you all the same of what you all know about because you have read it in a pile of occult thrash that you drink in as (46) everyone knows, do you not, I am speaking about the *yang* and the *yin*. Like everyone else you know that, huh, the male and the female. They are drawn like that. They form very beautiful little characters. Here is the first as *yang* and as for the *yin*, I will make it for you another time.

I will make it for you another time because...in this connection...I do not see why I should misuse...these characters that count so little for you. I am going to make use of them all the same. We are not here either to do conjuring tricks. If I speak to you about it, it is because it is quite obvious that...here is the example of unfindable referents. That does not mean, damn it, that they are not real. The proof is that we are still encumbered with them.

If I make a metaphorical use of linguistics, it is starting from the fact that the unconscious cannot adapt itself to a research, I mean linguistics, that is unsustainable. This does not prevent it continuing,

of course, it is a wager. But I have already made enough use of the wager to know, for you to know rather, that you should suspect that it can be of some use; it is just as important to lose as to win.

Linguistics can only be a metaphor that is fabricated in order not to work. But when all is said and done, it is of great interest to us, because you are going to see - I am announcing it to you, this is what I have to tell you this year - is that psychoanalysis for its part, moves about in this same metaphor under full sail; this indeed is what suggested to me this return, like that, after all, we know what it is, to the Chinese I learned in the past. After all, why would I not have understood it too badly when I learned it from my dear master Demiéville? I was already a psychoanalyst.

So then, for there to be a tongue all the same in which the following, this is read *wei* and it functions both in the formula *wu wei* which means inaction, so then it means to act, and then you see *wei* used as *like*, it means like, namely, that it acts as a conjunction to make a metaphor. Or again it means, *in so far as that refers to something* which is even more into metaphor, in so far as it refers to something, (47) namely, precisely, it is not one because one is forced to refer to it. When one thing refers to another, the greatest possible breadth, the greatest possible flexibility is given to the eventual use of this term *wei* which nevertheless means *to act*. It is not bad, a tongue like that! A tongue where the verbs and the plus-verbs – to act, what is more of a plus-verb, what more active plus-verb is there? – is transformed into tiny conjunctions. That is the usual thing. This helped me a lot all the same to generalise the function of the signifier, even if it fits in badly with some linguists who do not know Chinese. For my part I would really like to ask a particular one, for example how for him the double articulation that he keeps talking about for some years – I tell you this double articulation is killing us – what does he make of the double articulation in Chinese? Huh? In Chinese, you see, it is the first that is all alone, and then finds itself

like that producing a meaning which from time to time means that, since all the words are monosyllabic, one cannot say that there is a phoneme which means nothing, and then the word that means something, two articulations, two levels. Well then, yes, even at the level of the phoneme, that means something. This does not prevent when you put several phonemes together, which mean the same thing, this gives a big word of several syllables, just like with us, which has a meaning that has no relationship with what each of the phonemes mean. So the double articulation looks rather funny there! It is funny that it is not remembered that there is a tongue like that, when one states as general a function of the double articulation as characteristic of language. I don't mind if all I'm saying is pure stupidity, but explain it to me! Let a linguist come here who can tell me how the double articulation holds up in Chinese [cf. André Martinet, *Eléments de linguistique général*, new edition, Paris 1967.]

So then, this *wei* like that, to get you used to it I am introducing it, but very gently. I will bring you a minimum of other things, which may in fact be of some use. It illuminates many things moreover that this verb is at the same time to act and the conjunction of the metaphor. Perhaps the *Im Anfang war die Tat*, as your man says, there where the act was right at the beginning it is perhaps exactly the same thing as to say *en arché*, in the beginning was the word. There is perhaps no other act than this. The terrible thing is, is that I can lead you like that for a long time with metaphor and the further I go, the more you will go astray because precisely, what is proper to the metaphor is not to be all alone. There is also metonymy which functions at this time and even while I am speaking to you, because it is after all the metaphor, as very competent, very friendly people called linguists tell us; they are even so competent that they have been forced to invent the notion of competence. The tongue is competence in itself. What is more it is true. One is competent in nothing else. Only, since they have also perceived, there is only one way to prove it, which is performance. They are the ones who call it

that, performance. I don't, I have no need of it. I am in the process of giving it, the performance, giving the performance of speaking to you about metaphor, naturally I confuse you, because the only interesting thing, is what happens in the performance, it is the production of surplus enjoying, of yours and of the one that you impute to me when you reflect. That happens to you. That happens to you especially when you ask yourselves what I am doing here. It must be that this gives you some pleasure, at the level of this surplus enjoying that pressurises you; as I already explained to you, it is at that level that the operation of metonymy is carried out, thanks to which you can be more or less led anywhere at all, led by the nose, naturally not simply to go along the corridor. But this is not what is interesting, to lead you into the corridor, nor even to beat you in the public square. The important thing, is to keep you there, well arranged, close together, well pressed against one another. As long as you are there, you are doing nobody any harm! This will take us rather far, this little banter, because it is all the same starting from there that we are going to try to articulate the function of *yin*.

You understand, I remind you of this business of the surplus enjoying, I remind you of it anyway as I am able; it is quite certain that it was only definable by me starting from what? From a serious construction, that of object relations as it can be separated out from the experience described as Freudian. That is not enough. I had to scupper these relations to make them the bowl of Marx's surplus value, which nobody had ever dreamt of as having this use. Marx's surplus value cannot be imagined just like that. If it is invented, it is in the sense that the word invention means that one finds a good thing already well established in a little corner, in other words that one makes a lucky discovery. To make a lucky discovery, it was necessary that it should be there already well polished, grounded, by what, by a discourse. So then, surplus enjoying, like surplus value, is only detectable in a developed discourse, that there is no question of debating whether it can be defined as the discourse of the capitalist.

(49) You are not very curious, and then especially not very interventionist, so that last year, when I spoke to you about the discourse of the Master, no one pushed me to ask me how the discourse of the Capitalist was situated within it. For my part I was expecting that, I was only waiting to explain it to you, especially because it is the simplest thing possible. A tiny little contraption that turns and your discourse of the master shows everything that is highly transformable into the discourse of the capitalist. That is not what is important, the reference to Marx was enough to show you that it had the closest relationship with the discourse of the master. What I am trying to get to is the following, it is to catch hold of something as essential as what is here, let us say the support – the support, everyone knows that I do not pile it on for you, it is indeed the thing that I am most distrustful of in the world, because it is indeed with that of course that people make the worst extrapolations, it is with this in a word that people construct psychology, psychology, this is what is necessary to be able to manage to think out the function of language – so then when I realise that the support of surplus enjoying is metonymy, it is because here I am entirely justified, this is what ensures that you follow me, through the fact that this surplus enjoying is essentially a sliding object. Impossible to stop this slide at any point of the sentence.

Nevertheless, why should we refuse to notice that the fact that it is useable in a discourse - a linguistic one or not, as I already told you, it is all the same to me - in a discourse which is my own, and that it is only such by being borrowed not from the discourse, but from the logic of the capitalist, something that introduces us, or rather brings us back to what I contributed the last time and which left some people a little bit perplexed. Everyone knows that I always finish what I have to tell you in a little gallop, because perhaps I dragged things out too much, dawdled along earlier, some people tell me, what matter, everyone has his own rhythm. That is how I make love.

I spoke to you about an under-developed logic. That left some people scratching their heads. What could that be, this under-developed logic?

Let us start from this. I had clearly marked out beforehand that what carries along the extension of capitalism, is under-development. Anyway I am going to say it now because someone that I met on the way out and to whom I confided something, I told him “I would really like to have illustrated the thing by saying that Mr Nixon, is in fact *Houphouet-Boigny* in person”, “Oh”, he told me, “you should have said it”. Well then I am saying it. The only difference between (50) the two, is that Mr Nixon is supposed to have been psychoanalysed! You see the result! When someone has been psychoanalysed in a certain way, and *this is always true* in every case, when he has been psychoanalysed in a particular way, in a certain field, in a certain school, by people that one can name, well then, he is incurable. All the same you have to say things the way they are. He is incurable. It even goes very far. It is for example obvious that it is ruled out that someone who has been psychoanalysed somewhere, in a certain place, by certain people specifically, not by just anyone, well then, he can understand nothing of what I am saying. That has been seen and there are proofs. Books even come out every day to prove it. Just by itself, that gives rise all the same to questions about what is involved in the possibility of performance, namely, of functioning in a certain discourse.

So then, if the discourse is sufficiently developed, there is something, let us say no more, this something as it happens is you, but that is a pure accident, nobody knows your relationship to this something, it is a something that interests you all the same.

You see this is how this is written. That can be read, in a classical French transcription *sing*. If you put an *h* in front – *hsing* – this is the English transcription, and the most recent Chinese transcription, if I

am not mistaken, because after all it is purely conventional, is written like that: *xing*. Naturally that is not pronounced *xing*, it is pronounced 'sing. It is nature. It is this nature which you have been able to see I am far from ruling out of the affair. If you were not completely deaf, you were able to notice all the same that the first thing that was worth retaining in what I told you in our first talk, is that the signifier – I strongly insisted – can be found everywhere in nature. I spoke to you about stars, more exactly of constellations, because there is a star and a star; for centuries all the same that is what the sky is: it is the first feature, what is above, that is important. It is a tray, a blackboard. I am reproached for using a blackboard. It is the only thing that remains to us to serve as a sky, my good friends, that is why I use it, to put on it what ought to be your constellations.

(51) So then, a sufficiently developed discourse. From this discourse the result is that all of you no matter how many of you there are, and whether you are from here or from the USA, it is the same thing, and even elsewhere, you are underdeveloped with respect to this discourse. I am talking about this thing, this something by which people are interested but which is certainly what people speak about when they speak about your underdevelopment. Where is it to be situated exactly? What can be said about it? It is not doing philosophy to ask where it comes from, what is its substance. There are things in this dear Meng-Tzu, I do not see, after all, any reason to drug you, I really have no hope that you will make the effort to stick your nose into it, so then I will go moreover, why not, to what I have to set out in three stages, especially since he tells us extraordinarily interesting things. There is one thing, there is no knowing how it came out moreover, because it is made God knows how, it is a collage, this book of Meng-Tzu, things follow one another, as they say, and are not alike. Anyway! Alongside this notion of *hsing*, of nature, there emerges all of a sudden that of *ming*, the decree of the heavens.

Obviously, I could very easily stick with the *ming*, with the decree of the heavens, namely, continue my discourse, which means in short: that is how it is because that is how it is, one day, science will grow on our terrain. At the same time capitalism did its own thing, and then there was a chap, God knows why, heaven's decree, there is Marx who has, in short, ensured a rather long survival for capitalism. And then there is Freud who all of a sudden was disturbed by something which obviously became the only element of interest that still had some relationship with this thing that people had previously dreamt about and which was called knowledge. At an epoch when there was no longer the slightest trace of something which had a meaning of this kind, he noticed that there was the symptom.

(52) This is where we have got to. It is around the symptom that there turns everything that we can, as they say, if the word still had a meaning, have an idea of. It is around the symptom that you orient yourselves, as many of you as are here. The only thing that interest you, and which does not fall flat, which is not simply inept as information, are the things that have the appearance of a symptom, namely, in principle, things that make a sign to you, but that you understand nothing about. It is the only sure thing, that there are things that make signs to you that you know nothing about.

I will tell you how man, it is untranslatable, that is how it is, he is a good chap, made up of curious little turns of juggling and exchange between *hsing* and *ming*. It is obviously much too subtle for me to speak about it to you today, but I put it at the horizon, at the point, in order to tell you that this is where we have to get to, because in any case, this *xin*, is something that does not work out, that is underdeveloped; we really have to know where to put it. That it can mean nature, is not very satisfactory given the state that things are at as regards natural history. This *hsing*, there is no kind of chance that we will find it in this thing that requires great cunning to get, to get a close hold of, which is called the surplus enjoying. If it is so

slippery, that does not make it easy to get one's hands on it. It is all the same not, certainly not to this that we refer when we talk about underdevelopment.

I know well that by ending now, because time is passing, I am going to leave you perhaps a little bit in suspense. All the same, I am going to go back, onto the plane of metaphorical acting and to tell you how, because today that was my pivot, linguistics properly filtered, criticised, focussed, in a word, on condition that we make of it exactly what we want and what linguists do, good God, why not take advantage of it? They may happen to do something useful. If linguistics is what I was saying earlier, a metaphor that is deliberately fabricated in order not to work, this may perhaps give you ideas about what may well be for us the goal. From where we situate ourselves with Meng-Tzu and then some other people at his epoch who knew what they were talking about, because you must not confuse all the same underdevelopment with the return to an archaic state, it is not because Meng-Tzu lived in the 3rd Century before Jesus Christ that I am presenting him to you as a primitive mentality. I am presenting him to you as someone who, in what he said, probably (53) knew part of the things that we do not know when we are saying the same thing. So then, this is what may serve to teach us with him to sustain a metaphor, not fabricated in order not to work, but whose action we suspend. It is here perhaps that we will try to show the necessary path.

I will remain there today for a discourse that might not be a semblance.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 17 February 1971

[Before the seminar Lacan writes on the board a quotation from Meng-Tzu: probably the following.]

“Everywhere under the heavens, when one speaks about nature, what is meant are natural effects”

- This is the name of the author of this little formula...
- *Louder!*
- This is the name of the author of this little formula!
- *Thank you.*
- this little formula to which, despite the fact that it was written around 250BC, in China as you see, in chapter 2 of Book IV, the second part, sometimes it is classified in a different way, so that in that case it would be part VIII, of Book IV, the second part of paragraph 26 of Meng-Tzu, whom the Jesuits called Mencius, because they are the ones who took a step forward, well before the epoch when there were sinologists, namely, at the beginning of the 19th Century. I had the pleasure of acquiring the first book on which there are found conjointly a plaque of Chinese printing, it is not quite the same thing as the first book in which there were at the same time Chinese characters and European characters, it is the first book in which there was a Chinese printing plate with things written, with things printed, from our part of the world. It is a translation of Aesop's fables. This appeared in 1840, and it prides itself, quite rightly in being the first book in which this conjunction was realised. (56) 1840, you can say that it is more or less, precisely, the notice of the moment when sinologists came on the scene. The Jesuits were in China for a very long time, as perhaps some of you may remember. They almost made the connection between China and what they represented as missionaries. Only they allowed themselves to be a

little, a little bit impressed by the Chinese rites, and as you know perhaps, in the middle of the 18th Century, that created some difficulties for them with Rome, which did not show on this occasion particular political acuity. That happens sometimes in Rome. Anyway in Voltaire, if you read Voltaire, but of course no one reads Voltaire anymore, you are making a great mistake, it is full of all kinds of things. In Voltaire, there is, very exactly in *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, an appendix, I think that it forms a particular lampoon, a long elaboration about this Quarrel of the Rites, of which many things in history now find themselves in a position of filiation.

In any case then, we are talking about Mencius, and Mencius wrote this – because I wrote it on the board....to begin with that does not form properly speaking a part of my discourse today, that is why I finished it before the exact hour of 12.30 – I will tell you, or I am going to try to make you sense what it means, and then this will get us into the swing of what, properly speaking, is the object of what I want to state today, it is namely that....in what preoccupies us, what is the function of writing (*l'écriture*).

Since writing, exists in China since...time immemorial, I mean that well before we have to properly speak of works, writing already existed for an extremely long time, and one cannot evaluate how long it did exist. This writing has, in China, an altogether pivotal role, in a certain number of things that happened, and it is rather...it is quite illuminating as regards what we may think about the function of writing. It is certain that writing has played a quite decisive role in supporting something, something to which we have... this particular access and no other, namely, a type of social structure that was sustained for a very long time and from which, until a recent epoch, one could conclude that there was a completely different filiation as regards what was supported in China, than what was engendered among us, and specifically by one of these phyla that interest us particularly, namely, the philosophical phylum in so far as, I

highlighted it last year, it is nodal to understand what is at stake as regards the discourse of the Master.

(57) So then this is how this exergue is stated. As I showed you on the board the last time this designates the heavens, it is called *tien*. *T'ien hsia*, is under the heavens, everything that is under the heavens. Here there is a determinative *tchih*, what is at stake is something that is beneath the heavens; what is beneath the heavens, is what comes afterwards. What you see there is nothing other than the designation of the word that on this occasion we will state as *yen*. *Yen hsing*, I already put it on the board the last time, in signalling to you that this *hsing*, was precisely one of the elements that will preoccupy us this year, in so far as the term that gets closest to it is nature. And *yeh* is something that concludes a sentence without saying, properly speaking, that what is at stake is something of the order that what we are stating here *is, being*, it is a conclusion. It is a conclusion or let us say a punctuation, because the sentence continues here since things are written from right to left, the sentence continues here with a certain *tse* which means *consequently*, or which in any case indicates the consequence. So then let us see what is at stake. *Yen* means nothing other than language, but like all the terms stated in the Chinese tongue, it is liable also to be used in the sense of a verb. So then that can mean both the word and the one who speaks, and who speaks what? In this case that would be what follows, namely *hsing*, nature, what speaks about nature under the heavens, and *yeh* would be a punctuation.

Nevertheless, and this is why it is interesting to take an interest in a sentence of the written tongue, you see that you can cut things up differently and say: the word, indeed the language, because if it was a matter of specifying the word, we would have another character that is slightly different. At this level, as it is written here, this character can just as well mean word as language. These sorts of ambiguities are altogether fundamental in the use of what is written, very

(58) precisely, and this is the importance of what I am writing. As I pointed out to you, as I pointed out to you at the start of my discourse this year, and especially the last time, it is very precisely in so far as the reference as regards everything involved in language is always indirect that language takes on its import.

We could then also say: language, in so far as it is in the world, as it is under the heavens, language, is what makes *hsing*, nature, because this nature is not, at least in Meng-Tzu, just any nature, what is at stake is precisely the nature of the speaking being, which, in another passage, he is careful to specify is the difference between this nature and the nature of the animal, a difference, he adds, he highlights in two terms which mean what they mean, “an infinite difference.” And which perhaps is the one that is defined there. You will see, moreover, whether we take one or other of these interpretations, the axis of what is going to be said as a consequence will not be changed.

Tse therefore, is the consequence. In consequence, *ku*, is here *ku*, in consequence, relates to the cause – because cause means nothing else, whatever may be the ambiguity that in a certain book, a certain book called *Mencius on the mind*, namely, a book produced by someone called Richards, who was certainly not a newcomer – Richards and Ogden are two leaders of a position originating in England and altogether in agreement with the best tradition of English philosophy, who established at the beginning of this century the doctrine described as logical positivism, whose major work is entitled *The meaning of meaning*. It is a book to which you will already find an allusion in my *Ecrits* where I take up a certain disparaging position with regard to it. *The meaning of meaning* means *le sens du sens*. Logical-positivism proceeds from this requirement that a text should have a graspable meaning, which leads it to a position which is the following: a certain number of philosophical statements find themselves in a way devalorised in principle by the fact that they are not...that they give no graspable result as regards a search for

meaning. In other words, if a philosophical text is caught red handed in non-sense, it is ruled out for that very reason. It is only too clear (59) that this is a way of pruning away the things that scarcely allows us to find our way, because if we start from the principle that something that has no meaning cannot be essential in the development of a discourse, we quite simply lose our bearings. I am not saying of course, that such a requirement is not a procedure, but that this procedure forbids us in a way any articulation whose meaning is not graspable, this is something which, for example, may culminate in the fact, for example, that we can no longer make use of mathematical discourse, which, on the admission of the most qualified logicians, is characterised by the fact that it may be that at one or other of its points, we can no longer give it any meaning - which does not prevent it from being precisely, among all the discourses, the one that is developed with most rigor. We find ourselves moreover, because of this fact, at a point that is quite essential to highlight concerning the function of writing.

So then, it is *ku* that is at stake, it is *ku* that is at stake and as *i wei*, because I already told you that this *wei* that can in certain senses mean *to act* indeed something that is of the order of *to do* even though it is not just anything whatsoever, *i* here has the sense of something like *with*, it is with that we are going to proceed like, like what? Like *li*, this is the word about which I point out to you, I am highlighting for you the fact that *li*, I repeat, that this *li* which means *reward, interest, profit*, and the thing is all the more remarkable in that precisely Mencius, Mencius in his first chapter, in presenting himself to a certain prince, it does not matter who, of what made up the kingdoms described, described afterwards, as the warring kingdoms, finds himself with this prince who demands his advice, with this prince, pointing out that, he is not there to teach him what constitutes our law which is present to everyone, namely, what is appropriate for the increase of the wealth of the kingdom, and specifically what we would call surplus value. If there is a meaning

that one can give retroactively to *li*, this indeed is what is at stake. (60) Now, it is indeed here that it is remarkable to see that what Mencius points out on this occasion, is that starting then from this word which is nature, or if you wish from the word that concerns nature, what is going to be at stake, is to arrive at the cause, in so far as the aforesaid cause, is *li, erh, i i*, which means the *li, erh* is something that means at the same time like and, and like but, *erh i*, is simply that, and so that there can be no doubt about it, the *i* that ends, which is a conclusive *i*, this *i* has the same accent as *simply*. It is *li*, and that is enough. Here I am allowing myself in short to recognise that, as regards the effects of discourse, as regards what is under the heavens, what emerges from it is nothing other than the function of the cause, in so far as it is surplus enjoying.

You will see, if you refer to the text of Meng-Tzu, you have two ways of doing it, you can find it on the one hand in an edition that in short is very good which was produced by a Jesuit at the end of the 19th Century, someone called Wieger, in an edition of the *Four fundamental books of Confucianism*. You have another way, which is to get hold of this *Mencius on the mind*, which was published by Kegan Paul in London. I do not know if nowadays there are a lot of copies still *available*, as they say, but after all it is worth the trouble, why not, to try to get it for those who might be curious to consult something that is so fundamental, for a certain illumination of a reflection on language which is the work of a neo-positivist and which is certainly not negligible. *Mencius on the mind*, therefore, by Richards, can be found in London at Kegan Paul. And those who find it worthwhile to take the trouble of getting a copy, if they cannot get the book, could get perhaps a photocopy, and they will understand all the better a certain number of references that I will make to it this year because I will come back to it.

It is one thing then to speak about the origin of language, and another thing of its link to what I am teaching, to what I am teaching in

conformity with what I articulate, what last year I articulated, as the discourse of the analyst. Because you are well aware, linguistics began with Humboldt with this sort of prohibition, not to ask oneself the question of the origin of language, otherwise one would certainly go astray. It is no small thing that someone should have noticed at the height of the period of developmental mythmaking, this was the style at the beginning of the 19th Century, should have posited that nothing would ever be situated, established, articulated, about language, if one did not start first of all by forbidding the questions of (61) origin. It is an example which might well have been followed elsewhere, this would have avoided us a lot of lucubrations of the type called primitivist. There is nothing like a reference to the primitive to...make thinking more primitive. It is what regularly regresses to the very measure of what it claims to discover as primitive.

The discourse of the Analyst, I have to tell you, because in short you have not heard it, the discourse of the Analyst is nothing other than the logic of action. Why have you not heard it? Because in what I articulated last year with these little letters on the board, in this form, the small **o** over the S_2 and of what happens at the level of the analysand, namely, the function of the subject in so far as he is barred and in so far as what he produces as signifiers, and not just any ones, master signifiers. It is because it was written like that, because I wrote it down on many occasions, it is for that very reason that you did not hear it. It is in this way that writing is differentiated from speaking, and it is necessary to put the word back into it and to butter it up seriously, but naturally not without fundamental drawbacks for it to be heard. One can write then a whole pile of things without them reaching any ear. It is nevertheless written. That is even the reason that I called my *Ecrits* as I did. That scandalised, like that, sensitive people and not just anyone. It is very curious that the person that this literally threw into convulsions was a Japanese woman. I will deal with that later. Naturally here, it did not give

anyone convulsions, the Japanese woman that I spoke about is not here. And anybody at all, who comes from that tradition, will be able I think on this occasion to understand why this kind of effect of insurrection was produced. It is through the word of course that the path towards writing is opened up. If I entitled my *Ecrits* that, it is because they represented an attempt, an attempt at writing, which is very sufficiently marked by the fact that it culminated in graphs. The trouble, is that, is that people who claim to give a commentary on me start immediately from the graphs. They are wrong, the graphs are only understandable in function, I would say, of the slightest effect of style of the aforesaid *Ecrits*, which are in a way the steps to reach it. As a result of this the written, the written taken up all by itself, whether it is a matter of one or other schema, the one that is called L or any other one whatsoever, or the big graph itself, presents an opportunity for all sorts of misunderstandings. What is at stake is a (62) word, in so far as, of course, and why, it tends to clear the way to these graphs that is at stake. But it would be well not to forget this word, for the reason that it is the very one that is reflected by the analytic rule which is as you know, speak, speak, speak. It is enough for you to speak, here is the box from which there come all the gifts of language, it is a Pandora's box. What is the relationship then with these graphs? These graphs of course, no one has yet dared to go that far, these graphs in no way show you anything whatsoever that allow you to return to the origin of language. If there is something that appears there immediately, it is that not alone do they not give it, but they do not promise it either.

What is going to be at stake today is the situation with respect to the truth that results from what is called free association, in other words a free use of the word. I have never spoken about it except with irony. There is no more free association than one could say that a variable linked to a mathematical function is free, and the function defined by analytic discourse is obviously not free, it is bound, it is bound by conditions that I will rapidly designate as those of the analytic

consulting room. At what distance is my analytic discourse as it is here defined by this written arrangement, at what distance is it from the analytic consulting room, this is precisely what constitutes what we will call my disagreement with a certain number of analytic consulting rooms. So then this definition of analytic discourse, to highlight where I am, does not appear to them to be adapted to the conditions of the psychoanalytic consulting room. Now, what my discourse outlines, or at least delivers, is one part of the conditions that constitute the analytic consulting room. Just measure what one does when one goes into analysis, it is something that indeed has its importance, but in any case as far as I am concerned, is indicated by the fact that I always undertake numerous of preliminary conversations.

A pious person that I will not designate otherwise found, it appears, according to the latest news, anyway news three months old, at least it was an unsustainable wager for her to ground transference on *the subject supposed to know*, because moreover the method implies that it is sustained by a total absence of prejudice as regards a case. *The subject supposed to know* what, then? I would allow myself to ask this person, if the psychoanalyst should be supposed to know what he is doing, and if he effectively does it? Starting from there, starting from there one will understand that I pose my questions on transference in a certain way, in *The direction of the treatment* for example, which is a text to which I see with pleasure in my school (63) something new is happening. The fact is that in my school people are starting to work as a school, this is all the same a step that is new enough to be noted. I was able to note not without pleasure that people had seen that in this text, I do not in any way settle what is involved in transference. It is very precisely by saying *the subject supposed to know*, as I define it, that the question is...remains untouched as to whether the analyst can be supposed to know what he is doing.

To take it up in a way at the start, the start of what today is going to be stated, and for which this little Chinese character because this is one, it is one of them, I greatly regret that the chalk did not allow me to put in the accents that the brush would allow, it is one of them which has a meaning, to satisfy the requirement of the logical positivists, a meaning which you are going to see is completely ambiguous because it means at the same time *twisted (retors)* that it also means *personal* in the sense of private. And then there are still other ones. But what appears remarkable to me, is its written form, and its written form is going to allow me to tell you immediately where there are placed the terms around which my discourse today is going to turn.

If we place here somewhere (1) what I am calling in the broadest sense – you are going to see that it is broad...I should say that I have no need, it seems to me, to underline it – the effects of language, it is here (2) that we will have to put what is involved, where they find their source. Where they find their source, is in the fact that analytic discourse reveals something which, which is a step, I tried to recall it, even though what is at stake for analysis is primary truth. It is with this that I am going to begin right away. We would have here then (3) the fact of writing.

(64) It is very important at our epoch, and starting from certain statements that have been made and that tend to establish very regrettable confusions, to recall that all the same writing is not the first step but the second with respect to a whole function of language, and that nevertheless without writing, it is in no way possible to come back and question what results in the first place from the effect of

language as such, in other words the symbolic order, namely the dimension, to please you, but you know that I introduced the term of *demansion* the *demansion*, the residence, the locus of the Other of truth. I know that this *demansion* raised a question for some people, echoes have come back to me, well then, if *demansion* is in effect a term, a new term that I fabricated and if it still has no meaning, well then, that means that it is up to you to give it one. To question the *demansion* of the truth, of the truth in its dwelling place, is something, here is the term, the novelty of what I am introducing today, which can only be done by writing, and by writing in so far as it is only from writing that logic is established. This is what I am introducing at this point of my discourse this year. There is no logical question unless it starts from writing, in so far as writing is precisely not language. And this is why I stated that there is no meta-language, that writing itself in so far as it is distinguished from language is there to show us that, if it is from writing that language is questioned, it is precisely in so far as writing is not it, but that it only constructs itself, only fabricates itself from its reference to language.

After having posited this which has the advantage of opening up to you my perspective, my project, I start again from something which concerns this point, this point which is of the order of this surprise to which there is signalled the effect of retrogression by which I have tried to define the junction between truth and knowledge, and that I stated in these terms that there is no sexual relationship in the speaking being. There was a first condition which could have immediately allowed us to see it, which is that the sexual relationship, like every other relationship when all is said and done, only subsists from the written. What is essential in the relationship, is an application, a applied onto b ($a \rightarrow b$), and if you do not write this a and b , you do not sustain the relationship as such. This does not mean that things are not happening in the real. But by what right would you call it a relationship? Something as crude as that would be already enough, let us say, to make it conceivable, that there is no

sexual relationship, but it would in no way settle the fact that one cannot manage to write it. I would even say more, there is something that has been done for some time, which is to write it like this: ♂ ♀, (65) using little planetary signs, namely, the relationship of what is male to what is female. I would even say that for some time, thanks to the progress that the use of the microscope allows, because let us not forget that before Swammerdam, one could have no kind of idea of it, this...may seem to articulate the fact that the relationship, however complex it may be, however meiotic the process may be by which cells described as gonadic give a model of fecundation from which proceeds reproduction, well then, it seems that in effect something is founded, established there, that allows there to be situated at a certain level described as biological what is involved in the sexual relationship. The strange thing assuredly – and after all, good God, not all that much so, but I would like to evoke for you the dimension of strangeness of the thing – is that the duality and the sufficiency of this relationship have from all time had their model, I evoked it for you the last time in connection with little Chinese signs, they are those whose signs, all of a sudden I became impatient to show you, this seemed to be done simply to startle you, well then, the *yin* that I did not make for you the last time here it is – and the *yang*, here it is. I am repeating myself am I not, right! Another little feature here. The *yin* and the *yang*, the male and female principles, are things which after all are not special to the Chinese tradition. This is something that you will find in every kind of cogitation about the relationships of action and passion, about the formal and the substantial, about Purusha, the spirit, and Prakriti some feminised matter or other. The general model of this relationship of the male to the female is indeed what has always haunted for all time the mapping out, the mapping out of the speaking being as regards the forces of the world, those which are *t'ien hsia*, under the heavens.

It would be well to mark something completely new, what I called the effect of surprise, to understand what has emerged, whatever it

may be worth, from analytic discourse. It is that it is untenable to (66) remain in any way with this duality as sufficient, the fact is that the function described as the phallus, which is to tell the truth very awkwardly handled, but which is there, which functions in what is involved, not simply in an experience, linked to something or other that would be considered as deviant, as pathological, but which is essential as such for the establishment of analytic discourse. This function of the phallus renders henceforth untenable this sexual bipolarity, and untenable in a way that literally makes vanish into thin air anything involved about what can be written about this relationship.

It is necessary to distinguish what is involved in this intrusion of the phallus, from what some people thought they could express by the term of “lack of signifier”. It is not the lack of signifier that is at stake, but the obstacle raised to a relationship. The phallus, by emphasising an organ, does not designate, does not in any way designate the organ described as the penis with its physiology, nor even the function that one may, faith, attribute to it with some verisimilitude, as being that of copulation. It aims in the least ambiguous way, if one refers to analytic texts, at its relationship to enjoyment. And this is how they distinguish it from the physiological function. There is, this is what is posited as constituting the function of the phallus, there is an enjoyment which constitutes in this relationship, different from the sexual relationship, what, what we will call its condition of truth. The angle from which the organ is taken which, with respect to what is involved for the totality of living beings, is in no way linked to this particular form; if you knew the variety of organs of copulation that exist in insects, you could, which is after all the source of what is still wearing well, namely, astonishment, to question the real, you could certainly, in effect, be astonished that it is like that in particular that it functions in vertebrates. What is at stake here is the organ in so far – I have to go quickly here, because I am not after all going to go on forever and

take up everything again, people can consult the text that I spoke about earlier, *The direction of the treatment and the principles of its power* – the phallus is the organ in so far as it *is*, it is being that is at stake, in so far as it *is* ...feminine enjoyment. This is where and in what there resides the incompatibility of being and having. In this text, this is repeated with a certain insistence, and putting into it certain emphases of style, which I repeat are just as important to make one's way as the graphs at which they culminate. And behold, I had in front of me, like that, at the famous Congrès de Royaumont, some people who laughed derisively, if everything is there, if it is a matter of being and having, that did not seem to them to have any great importance, being and having. One makes one's choice, huh! (67) This is nevertheless what is called castration.

What I am proposing is the following, it is to posit that we will put language here (1), in its reserved field in this gap of the sexual relationship, as the phallus leaves it open, by positing that what it introduces here, is not, not two terms that are defined as male and female, but this choice between these terms of a quite different nature and function that are called being and having. What proves, what supports, what renders this distance absolutely obvious, definitive, is the following, something whose difference it does not seem people have noticed, is the substitution for the sexual relationship of what is called *sexual law*. It is here that there is this distance in which it is inscribed that there is nothing in common between what can be stated as a relationship which lays down the law in so far as it derives, in some form or other, from the application that a mathematical function circumscribes most closely, and a law that is coherent to the whole register of what is called desire, of what is called prohibition, of what underlines that it is from the very gap of the inscribed prohibition that there derives the conjunction, indeed the identity, as I dared state, of this desire and of this law, and what is posited correlatively for everything that derives from the effect of language, from everything that establishes the *demansion* of the truth from a structure of fiction.

The correlation that has always been made between ritual and myth, whose ridiculous weakness is to say that myth is supposed to be simply a commentary on the ritual, what is done to sustain it, to explain it, while it is, in accordance with a topology that I have already for long enough given a destiny not to have to recall it, ritual and myth are like the front and the back (*l'endroit et l'envers*), on condition that this front and this back are in continuity. The maintaining, the maintaining in analytic discourse of this residual myth that is called the Oedipus complex, God knows why, which is in fact that of *Totem and taboo*, in which there is inscribed this myth that is entirely invented by Freud, of the primordial father in so far as he enjoys all the women, it is all the same here that we ought to question a little further from the point of view of logic and of writing, what it means.

It is a long time since I introduced here the schema of Peirce about propositions in so far as they are divided into four, universal, particular, affirmative and negative, the two terms, the two couples of terms interchanging. Everyone knows that to say that: *every x is y*, if the schema of Peirce, Charles Sanders, has an interest, it is to show, it is to define as necessary that *every something* is provided with such an attribute, is a perfectly acceptable universal position without there being for all that any *x*. In Peirce's little formula, little schema, I remind you, here we have a certain number of vertical strokes, here we have none, here we have a little mixture of the two, and that it is from the overlapping of two of these boxes that there results the specificity of one or other of these propositions. And that it is by bringing together these two quadrants that one can say: every stroke is vertical. There is no stroke if it is not vertical. To give the negative, it is these two that must be brought together. Either there is no stroke, or there are none that are vertical. What the myth of the enjoyment of *all the women* designates, is that there are not *all the women*. There is no universal of the woman. Here is what is posed

by a questioning of the phallus, and not of sexual relationship, as regards what is involved in the enjoyment it constitutes, because I said that it was feminine enjoyment.

It is starting from these statements that a certain number of questions can be radically displaced. After all, but it is possible that there is a knowledge of the enjoyment that is called sexual which is attributable to this *particular woman*. This is not unthinkable, there are like that, mythical traces of it in certain corners. The things called *Tantra*, it is said that this is practised. It is all the same clear that for a good while, if you will allow me to express my thinking in this way, the skill of female flute players is much more open to view. It is not to ... play with obscenity that I am putting forward that at this point. The fact is, there is here, and I suppose there is at least one person who knows what it is to play the flute, it is the person who recently, pointed out to me in connection with this flute playing, but one can (69) say it also with respect to any use of an instrument, what division from the body the use of an instrument, whatever it may be, makes necessary. I mean a breakdown of synergy. It is enough to play any instrument whatsoever. Get onto a pair of skis, and you will see immediately that your synergies have to be broken. Take up a golf club, I do this from time to time, I started again, it's the same thing, huh? There are two types of movement that you have to make at the same time, at the beginning you will absolutely not succeed in doing it, because synergetically, it is not arranged like that. The person who reminded me about the thing in connection with the flute, also pointed out to me that for singing, where in appearance there is no instrument, this is why singing is particularly interesting, it is because here too you have to divide your body, that you divide two things which are quite distinct, in order to be able to sing, but which usually are absolutely synergetic, namely, the placing of the voice and breathing. Good! These primary truths which I did not need to be reminded of, because moreover I told you that I had my last experience of it with a golf club, this is what leaves open, as a

question, whether there is still somewhere a knowledge of the instrument phallus.

Only the phallus instrument is not an instrument like the others, it is like singing, the phallus instrument, I already told you that it is not at all to be confused with the penis. The penis, for its part, is regulated by law, namely, by desire, namely, by surplus enjoying, namely, by the cause of desire, namely, by phantasy. And this, the supposed knowledge of the woman who is supposed to know encounters a problem (*un os*) precisely the one that the organ is lacking, if you will allow me to continue in the same vein. Because in certain animals there is one of bone. Yes! Here there is a lack, it is a missing bone, it is not the phallus, it is desire or its functioning. The result is that a woman has the testimony of her insertion into the law, of what supplies for the relationship, only through the desire of the man. Here it is enough to have a tiny little bit of analytic experience to be certain of it, the desire of the man, as I have just said, is linked to its cause, which is surplus enjoying, or again as I put it on several occasions, if it has its source in the field of...from which everything starts, the effect of language, in the desire then of the Other, and the woman, on this occasion, one sees that it is she who is the Other. Only she is the Other from a completely different source, from a completely different register than her knowledge, whatever it may be.

(70) Here then the phallic instrument is posited, with inverted commas, as “cause” of language, I did not say the origin. And here, despite the late hour, good God, I will go quickly, I will point out the trace that one can have of it, namely, the maintaining, whatever you may wish, of a prohibition on obscene words. And because I know that there are people who are waiting for this something that I promised them, to make an allusion to Eden, Eden, Eden, ah! And to say why I do not sign, what are they called, these things, these petitions, in this connection, the fact is, it is certainly not because my esteem for this attempt is lukewarm. In its way, it is comparable to

my *Ecrits*. Except that it is much more despairing; it is completely hopeless to language the phallic instrument. And it is because I consider it as being hopeless at this point that I also think that nothing but misunderstandings can develop around such an attempt. You see that my rejection is placed at a highly theoretical point on this occasion.

What I want to get to is this: from where does one question the truth? Because the truth can say whatever it wants. It is the oracle. That has always existed, and after that, we can only do the best we can. Only there is a new fact, huh? The first new fact ever since the oracle has been functioning, namely, from all time. The new event is one of my writings called *The Freudian thing* where I indicated something that no one had ever said, huh? Only since it is written, naturally you have not heard it. I said that “the truth speaks I, *la vérité parle Je*.” If you had given its weight to this kind of polemical luxuriance that I carried out to present the truth as that, I no longer even know what I wrote, like coming into a room to the sound of a shattering mirror, that would perhaps have opened your ears. This sound of breaking mirrors does not strike you in something written. It is nevertheless rather well written, this is what is called an effect of style. This would certainly have helped you to understand what is meant by “the truth speaks I”.

That means that you can say thou to it and I am going to explain what use that is to you. You are going to think of course that I am going to tell you that it can be used for a dialogue. It is a long time now since I said that there was no dialogue. And with the truth, naturally, still less. Nevertheless, if you read something *La Métamathématique* by Lorenzen, I brought it along, it is published by Gauthier-Villars et Mouton. Good! And then I am even going to indicate the page where you will see some very clever things. They are dialogues, they (71) are written dialogues, namely, that it is the same person who writes the two rejoinders. It is a quite particular dialogue, only it is

very instructive. Look at page 22. It is very instructive and I could translate it in more ways than one, including making use of my earlier being and having. But I will tackle things more simply in order to recall to you something that I already emphasised, namely, that none of the so-called paradoxes that classical logic dwells on, specifically the one of *I am lying*, hold up except from the moment they are written. It is quite clear that to say *I am lying* is something that creates no obstacle, because we do nothing but that, so then why would it not be said? What can that mean? That it is only when it is written that here there is a paradox, because people say: “Well here, either you are lying or you are telling the truth?” It is exactly the same thing that I pointed out to you at one time, as to write: “The smallest number that can be written in more than 15 words”. You see no obstacle to it when you say it. If it is written, you count them, you see that there are only 13 of them, in what I have just said. But that is only counted when it is written. Because if it is written in Japanese, I would defy you to count them. Because here you ask yourself the question all the same, there are little bits of wailing like that, little *o*’s and little *oua*’s, about which you ask whether they must be stuck to the word, or whether they must be detached and counted as a word, it is not even a word, it is eh, it is like that. Only when it is written, it is countable.

So then the truth, you will notice that exactly as in the metamathematics of Lorenzen, if you posit that one cannot at the same time say *yes* and *no* on the same point, there you win. You will see later what you win. But if you bet that it is either *yes* or *no*, there you lose. Consult Lorenzen, but I am going to illustrate it immediately. I posit: it is not true, I say to the truth, that you are telling the truth and that you are lying at the same time. The truth can answer many things. Because it is you who make it answer, it costs you nothing. In any case, this is going to culminate at the same result, but I will detail it for you to remain close to Lorenzen. She says: “I am telling the truth!”; you answer her: “I am not making

you tell it!”. So then to piss you off, she says to you: “I am lying.” To which you reply: “Now I have won, I know that you are contradicting yourself!” It is exactly what you discover with the unconscious, it is no more important. That the unconscious always tells the truth and that it lies, is, from its point of view, perfectly (72) sustainable. It is simply up to you to know it. What does that teach you? That you do not know something about the truth until it is unleashed; because it is unleashed, it has broken your leash, it has told you the two things, moreover, when you said that the conjunction was not sustainable.

But suppose on the contrary, that you had said to her: “Either you are telling the truth, or you are lying”. Well in this case you have had all your trouble for nothing. Because what is she going to answer you: “I grant it to you, I put myself in chains; you tell me: either you are telling the truth or you are lying and in effect that is quite true.” Only in that case then, you for your part know nothing. You know nothing about what she has told you, since either she tells the truth or she lies, so that you lose out. I do not know whether you see the relevance of this, but it means something that we have constant experience of, which is that if the truth refuses itself, in that case it is of some use to me. This is what we have to deal with all the time in analysis and that, that she gives up, that she accepts the chain, whatever it may be, well then, it’s all Greek to me. In other words that...that leaves me desiring. That leaves me desiring and that leaves me my position of demanding, since I am wrong to think that I can only deal with the truth that I can only recognise when it is unchained, showing you in what un-chaining you are participating.

There is something that deserves to be highlighted in this relationship, it is the function of this something that for a long time I have been putting like that on the mat, and which is called freedom. It happens that through the phantasy, there are people who lucubrate about certain ways in which if not the truth itself, at least the phallus

could be tamed. I am not going to tell you about all the variety of details in which these lucubrations can be laid out. But there is one striking thing. It is that, apart from a certain kind of lack of seriousness which is perhaps the most solid way to define perversion, well then these elegant solutions, it is clear that the people for whom that ... it is serious, this whole little affair, because good God, language counts for them and so does writing, if only because it allows for a logical questioning, because when all is said and done, what is logic if not this absolutely fabulous paradox that only allows writing to take the truth as a referent? It is obviously through this that one communes, when one begins by giving the first, the very first formulae of propositional logic, one takes as a reference that there are propositions that can be marked as True and others that can be marked as False. It is with this that there begins the reference to (73) truth. To refer oneself to the truth, is to posit an absolute false, namely, a false to which one could refer oneself as such.

Serious people, I take up again what I am in the process of saying, to whom there are proposed these elegant solutions which might bring about the taming of the phallus, you know it is very curious, it is they who reject them. And why, if not to preserve what they call liberty, in so far as it is precisely identical to this non-existence of the sexual relationship. Because after all, do we need to point out that this relationship of man and woman, in so far as it is radically falsified by the law, the law described as sexual, is all the same something that leaves it to be desired that each man has his woman (*qu'à chacun il y ait sa chacune*) to respond to it. If this happens what can we say? Certainly not that this is something natural, because in this respect there is no nature, since The woman does not exist – that she exists is the dream of a woman, and it is the dream from which Don Juan emerged, if there were A man for whom The woman existed, it would be marvellous, one would be sure of one's desire. It is a feminine lucubration. For a man to find *his* woman, what else if not the romantic formula: it was destined, it was written.

Once again, we have come to this crossroads at which I told you I would tip over what is involved in the true lord, this chap who is translated, very badly, faith, by man, like that a little bit above the common, it is this see-saw, between the *hsing*, this nature as it is inscribed by the effect of language, inscribed in this disjunction between a man and a woman. And on the other hand this: “it is written”, this *ming*, this other character, whose shape I already once showed you here, which is the one before which freedom retreats.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 10 March 1971

Lacan writes on the board:

“*L’achose*”

Am I, am I present when I am speaking to you? It is necessary that the thing I am addressing you about should be there. Now, it is enough to say that the thing (*la chose*) can only be written as *l’achose* as I have just written it on the board, which means that it is absent there where it holds its place. Or more exactly, that the **o**-object which holds that place, when it is removed – when this **o**-object is removed – only leaves, in this place, only leaves the sexual act as I emphasise it, namely, castration. I cannot bear witness from there, if you will allow me, that *la-na-lyse* is anything whatsoever, but only by this, what concerns it (*la*) I am saying concerns it, *la*, castration. Make no mistake: Oh-la-la! The philosophical patter which is not nothing – patters, churns, it does no harm – was of some use for a

long time, but for some time it wearies us. It ended up with producing a *being-there*, that is sometimes translated more modestly in French as *presence*, whether or not one adds living to it, anyway, what for the learned is called *Dasein*. I rediscovered with pleasure, in a text, I will tell you which one later, and so that the moment that I reread it, a text of my own, I noticed with surprise that it goes back a long way, this formula that I had stated at one time for people, like that, a little hard of hearing: “Eat your *Dasein*.” What matter! We will come back to it later. The philosophical patter is not so incoherent. It only incarnates this presence, the ‘being there’, in a discourse that begins (80) precisely by disincarnating through an *epoché*. You know that, the *epoché*, putting in brackets, that is simply what it means, it is all the same better, because it does not have quite the same structure, it is all the same better in Greek. So that...it is obvious that the only way to be there takes place by putting oneself in brackets. We are approaching what I have essentially to tell you today.

If there is a hole at the level of *l'achose*, this allows you already to have a presentiment that it was a way of representing this hole, that this only happens in the shape of what? Let us take a quite derisory comparison, in the shape of this retinal stain that the eye has not the slightest desire to become entangled with, when after it has fixed the sun, first of all, it looks around the landscape. It does not see in it its being-there, this eye is no fool. There are for all of you a whole lot of Klein bottles...of the eye [*Klein d'oeil = clin d'oeil*, a wink?] There is no philosophical patter, which does not, as you clearly see, fulfil here its university office, whose limits I tried to give you last year, at the same time moreover as the limits of what you can do from inside, even if it is revolution.

To denounce, as has been done, to denounce as logocentric the aforesaid presence, the idea as they say of the inspired word, in the name of the fact that the inspired word, of course one could laugh at it, to make the word responsible for all the kinds of foolishness into

which a certain discourse has strayed and to lead us towards a mythical archi-writing, uniquely constituted in short from what is perceived, quite correctly, as a certain blind point, that one can expose in everything that has been cogitated about writing, all of this scarcely marks an advance. One only ever speaks about something else in speaking about *l'achose*. What I said, for my part, at one time, one should not be exaggerated. I am not always talking about the full word and I think all the same that the great majority of you have never heard me in any way taking it into account. What I said about the full word, is that it fills (*elle remplit*). This is one of the lucky finds of language; they are always rather pretty, it fulfils (*remplit*) the function of *l'achose* which is on the board. The word, in other words, goes beyond the speaker, always, the speaker is someone spoken, this is all the same what I have been stating for some time. How can this be seen? This is what I would like to indicate in this year's seminar. Can you imagine, I am still at ... "I would like". After the 20 years that this has been going on.

Naturally, that is how things are because, after all, I did not say it, it has been clear for a long time, it has been clear first of all by the fact that you are there for me to show it to you, only there you are, if what (81) I am saying is true, your being there is no more convincing than my own. What I have been showing (*montrer*) you for some time is not sufficient for you to see it, I have *to prove* (*démontrer*) it to you. To prove on this occasion, is to say what I was showing, naturally not just anything, but I did not show you *l'achose*, like that, *l'achose* precisely cannot be shown, it is proved. So then I will draw your attention to the things that I showed, in so far as you have not seen them, so that they can be proved. To play the card that is at stake today, we will call it, with all the ambiguity that it may represent, writing (*l'écrit*).

Writing all the same, you cannot say that I have overburdened you with it. I mean that there really had to be extracted from me those

that I collected one fine day, because of my total incapacity to make myself understood by psychoanalysts, I mean even those who remained tied in, like that, because they were not able to get on board elsewhere. Finally, it appeared to me that there were so many other people than they who for their part were interested in what I was saying, a little beginning of an absent being-there, that I let these *Ecrits* out. And then, faith, they were consumed like that, in a much larger circle than, in short, you represent, if I am to believe the figures that my editor gives me. It is a funny phenomenon that is worthwhile dwelling on, if indeed, to stick with what I always do. It is very exactly in terms of an experience that can be clearly fixed and that in any case I strove to articulate, specifically in recent times, last year, in trying to situate in its structure what characterises the discourse of the analyst. It is then by reason of this use of mine - which has no pretension to providing a conception of the world, but simply of saying what it seems self-evident to me to be able to say to analysts - about this, I gave for 10 years, in a rather well known place that is called Sainte-Anne, a discourse that did not claim certainly in any way to use writing otherwise than in a very precise way, which is the one that I am going to try to define today. Those who constitute, or who remain as witnesses of this epoch cannot protest against it, there are all the same not many in this room, of course, but all the same some. Anyway they could be counted on the fingers of one hand, those who were there the first months, can bear witness that what I did, with patience, tact, sweetness, bowing and scraping, I (81) constructed for them bit by bit, and fragment by fragment, things that are called *graphs*. There are some of them still sailing on, you can find them very easily thanks to the work of someone whose devotion I pay homage to, and whom I allowed to make, just as he wished, a reasoned index, in the text of which you can easily find the pages on which these graphs are to be found. That will avoid you having to search. But it can be seen, by simply doing that, one can already note that there are things which are not like the rest of the printed text. These graphs that you see here do not fail, of course, to

set a little difficulty of what? Of interpretation, of course. You should know that for whom I constructed them, were not able to win even a single trick. Before putting forward the direction of a line, its crossing with a particular other, the indication of the little letter that I put at this crossing point, I spoke for a half an hour, three quarters of an hour, to justify what was at stake.

I insist, of course, not to make a merit out of what I did, fundamentally I liked doing it, no one asked me to do it, it was rather the contrary. But because we are entering here, with that, into the heart of what is involved in *l'écrit*, indeed even *l'écriture*, so now imagine it is the same thing, people speak about *l'écriture*, like that, as if it were independent of *l'écrit*. This is what sometimes greatly embarrasses discourse. Moreover this term, “*ure*”, like that, that is added on, allows you to clearly sense the funny sort of drunkenness (*biture*) that is involved on this occasion. What is certain, is that to speak about *l'achose*, as it is here, well then, that ought already, just by itself, enlighten you that I had to take, let us say no more, as apparatus, the support of writing (*l'écrit*) in the form of the graph.

It is worthwhile looking at the shape of the graph. Let us take here – I don't know - any one of them, the last one, here, the big one that you are going to find, I no longer know myself where it is, where it can be found, I think it is in *Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire*. It is a thing that looks like that, in which there are here letters added in brackets, \$ ◇ D of demand, and here is the S of the signifier, the signifier bearer of the function of O barred, Ø. You clearly understand that if writing can be of some use, it is precisely because it is different to the word. Who can take support on the word. The word cannot express S(Ø) for example. Only if it is based on that, even if it were only this shape, of course, it ought to remember that this shape does not work without there being here the other line (83) cutting the first, marked at these points of intersection of s(O) and of O itself. That there is here a capital I – I apologise for these

infringements, but after all some people have this figure enough in their heads for this to be enough for them and for the others, good God, let them consult the proper page – what is certain, is that one cannot but, at least through this, through this figure, feel oneself, let us say, called on to answer the requirement of what it commands, when you begin to interpret it. Everything depends, of course, on the sense that you are going to give to capital O. There was one proposed in the writing where I happened to insert it. And then the sense that is imposed for all the others is not all that free.

What is certain, is that what is proper to what anyway, I think, is certainly sufficiently specified for you since. Namely, that this graph, this one like all the others, and not simply mine, I will tell you that in a moment, that this graph, what it represents, is what is called, in the evolved language that has been given to us little by little by the questioning of mathematics by logic, is what is called a topology. There is no topology without writing. You have even perhaps been able to notice, if ever you really opened the *Analytics* of Mr Aristotle, that in it there is a little beginning of topology which consists precisely in making holes in what is written. “All animals are mortal”. You say “animals” and you say “mortal” and you put in their place, the high point of writing, namely, a quite simple letter. So it is perhaps true, huh, that this was facilitated for them by some particular affinity or other that they had with the letter, one cannot really say how. On this you can consult things that are very...very attractive, as Mr James Février said, about some artifice, fakery, forcing, involved in the invention of logic with regard to what can rather sanely be called the norms of writing – *les normes*, not *l'énorme*, even though both are true. I am suggesting in passing to you today that this has something to do with, let us say, the fact of Euclid.

There you are, because I can only throw that out in passing, since after all it has to be checked out. I do not see why I also, why from

time to time, I would not give, even to people very experienced in a certain area, a little suggestion that they will perhaps laugh at because they have noticed it a long time ago. I do not see why in effect they would not have noticed, they would not have noticed the fact that a triangle, because this is the start, that a triangle, is nothing other than, nothing else than a writing (*écriture*) or an *écrit*, precisely. And that the fact that you define *equal* in it as *metrically superimposable* that goes against it. It is a writing, where the metrically superimposable can be talked about. This does absolutely not depend on the separation, it depends on you the talker. No matter how you write the triangle, even if you do it like that, you will demonstrate the history of the isosceles triangle, namely, that if there are two equal sides, the two other angles are equal. It is enough for you to have made this little writing, because it is never much better than the way in which I have just written it, the figure of an isosceles triangle. They were people who had gifts for writing, huh! That does not take them very far!

One could perhaps go a little bit further. For the moment let us record, let us record the following in any case, which is that they very clearly perceived what a postulate was, and that this has no other definition than the following, which is that...in the demand, in the demand that one makes to the listener, in order not to say right away a hook (*crochet*), in this demand, this is what *is not required* of discourse, by the simple fact of the graph.

The Greeks seem then to have possessed a very clever handling, a subtle reduction of what already existed in the world under the species of writing. It was extremely useful. It is quite clear that there is no question of empire, if you will allow me the word, even the slightest empiricism, without the support of writing. If you will allow me here, an extrapolation with respect to the line that I am going along, I mean that, I am going to indicate the horizon, the distant perspective that guides all of this. Naturally, this is only

justified if the lines of perspective prove effectively to converge.
(85) What follows will show it to you. At the beginning, *en arché*, huh, as they say, which has nothing to do with any temporality whatsoever, because what flows from it is, in the beginning was the word. But the word, there is a good chance that during times that were still not centuries, imagine, they are only centuries for us, thanks to radioactive carbon and some other retroactive affairs of this kind, which start from writing, anyway throughout a whole part of something that one can call, not time – *l'aion*, *l'aion* of *aion* as they say - there was a time when people had great fun with things like that. They had their reasons, they were closer than us. Anyway the word made things. Things that were certainly less and less discernible from it, because they were its effects.

What is meant by writing? It is necessary all the same to circumscribe it a little. It is quite clear and certain when one sees what it is usual to call writing, that it is something that in a way rebounds on the word. About the dwelling place of the word, we have I think, said enough the last few times, to see that our discovery is, at the very least, closely articulated with the fact that there is no sexual relationship, as I defined it. Or if you wish, that the sexual relationship, is the word itself. You must admit that all the same, that leaves something to be desired, moreover, I think that you know something about it.

The fact that there is no sexual relationship, I already fixed under this form that there is not for the relation any way at present of writing it. Who knows, there are people who dream that one day this will be written; why not, huh? The progress of biology, M. Jacob is all the same there, huh? Perhaps one day, there will be no longer the slightest question about the sperm and the ovum, they are made for one another, it will be written, as they say, it is on this that I ended the lecture the last time. When that happens you will tell me about it,

won't you? One could make science fiction, huh? Try it, it is difficult to write. Why not, that is how we push things forward.

Whatever about the present, this is what I mean, the fact is that this cannot be written without bringing into play something a little funny - because precisely, one knows nothing about its sex - which is called the phallus. If everything one manages to write – I thank the person who told me the page where in my *Ecrits* there is what is involved in the desire of man, written as (\bullet) , is the signifier phallus, this for people who believe that the phallus is the lack of the signifier, I know (86) that that is debated in the cafes. There you are, and the desire of the woman....I don't give a damn about the *Ecrits*, huh? The desire of the woman is written \emptyset (), which is the phallus where people imagine it is, the little wee-wee.

Here is something that we are able to write better after, good God, something that we will simply call, like that, the fact of having arrived at, at a certain scientific moment. A scientific moment, is characterised by a certain number of written co-ordinates in the first rank of which is the formula that Mr Newton wrote, concerning what was at stake under the name of the gravitational field, which is simply a pure writing. No one has yet managed to give any substantial support, a shadow of verisimilitude to what this writing states, which seems up to the present a little hard, because people cannot manage to resorb it into the schema of other fields where, like that, people have more substantial ideas. The electromagnetic field gives you an image, huh? Magnetism, is always a little bit animal; the gravitational field for its part is not. It is a funny contraption. When I think of these gentlemen and soon these ladies and gentlemen who stroll around in this absolutely sublime place, which is certainly one of the incarnations of the sexual object, the moon, when I think that they go there simply carried by a writing, there is much to hope for. Even in the field where it might be of use to us, namely, desire.

Anyway, it is not for tomorrow, huh! Despite psychoanalysis it is not for tomorrow or the day after.

Here then is writing in so far as it is something one can speak about. How? There is something that surprises me, even though it comes from the pen of a very special book that has been published by Armand Colin, anyway it is something that is very easy to find, it is in I don't know what number of the *Congrès de Synthèse*, and it is called, quite simply and nicely, *L'écriture*. It is a series of reports that begins with one by Métraux, this dear and now dead Métraux who was an excellent and really clever man. It begins with something by Métraux where he talks a lot about the writing of Easter Island. Anyway it is delightful. He starts simply from the fact that he, for his part, really understood absolutely nothing about it, but that there are some other people who succeeded a little better, that naturally it is debatable but anyway that his efforts, which obviously were absolutely unsuccessful, are here what authorise people to speak in effect about what the others were able to get from it with a questionable success. It is a quite marvellous introduction and well (87) designed to make you feel very modest, after which, innumerable papers deal with each of these writings. And after all, good God, it is rather sensible. It is rather sensible, anyway, it did not immediately happen, and we are going to see why it did not happen immediately that people started to say sensible things about writing. There was surely required, during this time, serious effects of intimidation, those which resulted from this blessed adventure that we call science, and none of us in this room, me included, of course, can have the slightest idea of what is going to come of it. Good, anyway let's leave it. People are going to get worked up a little bit like they do about pollution, about the future, a certain number of stupidities like that. And science plays its little tricks, and it would be no harm to see, for example, what its relationship with writing is, that may be of some use.

In any case, to read this large collection which is already a good ten years old, on writing, is something, compared to what is produced in linguistics, something fresh, you can breathe in it. It is not absolutely stupid. It is even very salubrious. There is even no question, when you come out of it, of you thinking that the business of writing only consists in something which seems to be nothing, but since it is written everywhere and no one reads it, it is all the same worth saying, that writing is the representation of words. That ought all the same mean something to you, *Wortvorstellung*. Freud wrote that, and he said that – but naturally everyone giggles, and people see clearly that Freud does not agree with Lacan – it is the secondary process. It is annoying all the same that, like that, in the circulation perhaps of your thoughts, of course you have thoughts, you even have, some of you who are a little bit backward, knowledge (*connaissances*). So then you imagine that you represent words for yourselves...it's hilarious! Because let's be serious! The representation of words, is writing.

And from this thing that is as simple as 'good day', it seems that people have not drawn the consequences which are nevertheless visible there, which is that every tongue that uses something that can be taken as figures, and that are called something or other, pictograms, ideograms, it is unbelievable, this ended up with absolutely mad consequences. There are people who imagined that with logic, namely the manipulation of writing, one would find the means for what? "New ideas", *de nouvelles idées*. As if we didn't have enough of them already. Whatever it may be, this pictogram, (88) this ideogram, if we study a writing, it is only because of this, there is no exception, it is because of the fact because it seems to represent, it is *pronounced* like that. Because of the fact that it seems to represent your mammy with two teats, it is pronounced *wu*. And after that, you can make whatever you want of it. Everything that is then pronounced *wu*, what the hell does it matter, whether there are two teats and that it represents your mammy? There is someone

called, I no longer know what, Fu-hsien, that does not date from today or yesterday, you understand, you will find that more or less at the beginning of the Christian era, it is called the *Chouo-wen*, namely, precisely, *what is said qua written*. Because *wen*, is 'written', huh? There you are, try to write it all the same, because for the Chinese it is the sign of civilisation. And what is more it is true. So then, representation of a word, means something, it means that the word is already there before you make the written representation of it, with everything that it involves. What it involves, is that the gentleman from *Chouo-wen* had already discovered, at the beginning of our era, that one of the most essential sources of writing, is what is called, what he believes he has to call, because he still has prejudices the little darling, he imagines that there are written signs that resemble the thing that the word designates. I need room to write that, for example. That's it isn't it? What is it? It's a man. Ah! the people who knew that! They have been taught things! It is obvious that this for you is a man. What is represented? What I mean is how is it the image of a man? There is the head and the legs. I completely agree! And why not? There are dreamers. For my part what I see there is rather an inner leg...why not?

There is something funny, huh? The fact is all the same that we have signs since the *yin*. The *yin*, there is some little time, huh, this has lasted at least 2000 years, but before? And we still have these signs. (89) Which proves that all the same they knew something about writing. They are found on tortoise shells, there were people, fortune-tellers, people like us, who scribbled that, like that, alongside other things that were put on the tortoise shell, in order to give a commentary on it in writing. This probably created a greater effect than you believe. Anyway what matter. But there is something in effect that vaguely resembles – I do not know why I am telling you this, I am telling you this because I am letting myself be drawn along, I still have things to tell you, I am allowing myself to be drawn along all the same; anyway, too bad! It's done. Good – so then there is

something that you see like that, that is good enough, right? Ah, it's pretty! Good, we will follow it because as you know writing, does not let go from one day to the next, if you are depending on the audio-visual, you can stick around, right! You will still have writing for a while because I tell you that it is the support of science, science is going to abandon its support like that. It is all the same in these little scribblings that your fate is going to be played out, just as at the time of the *yin*, the little scribblings that these guys did in their little corners, guys like me, and there are a lot of them. So then you follow me, you follow me epoch by epoch, you go down to the Tchou, to the Tchou, right, and after that, you have the Tsin, right, the epoch when they burned the books. He was someone. He had the books burned. This Tsin had understood things, he was an emperor, it did not last twenty years. Right away writing started up again, and all the more painstakingly, anyway I will spare you the different forms of Chinese writing because the essential relationship of the writing with what was used to inscribe it, the quill, is absolutely superb. Anyway, I do not want to anticipate what this gives us as regards the value of the instrument, the quill. Well, you follow that, right, and then after a while, what do you find? You do not find at all what you are expecting, the dear little darling, here, which is called the *jen*. I am pronouncing it right or I am pronouncing it wrong, in any case I did not put in the tone, I apologise if there is a Chinese here, they are very sensitive to that, the tone, this is even what proves the...one of the ways of proving the primacy of the word, it is that in the four contemporary present ways, huh, this does not mean that in the Chinese world, the four usual ways of saying – precisely, this comes (90) at the right moment – of saying *i*, well that means four things at once, and which are not at all unrelated. Anyway I am going to let myself be carried along, perhaps I will tell you, I will often take it into account, when I have carefully practised the four pronunciations of *yi*, there is *i*, *i*, there is *i*, there you are. And this has not at all the same meaning, but I have learned from a very learned man that this has its place in linguistic consciousness. I mean that the tone itself,

and that is why it is necessary to look at this more than once, before talking about arbitrariness, that the tone itself – can you hear me, Jenny? – that the tone itself has for them an indicative substantial value, and why reject that, when there is a tongue much more within our reach, English, whose modulatory effects are obviously quite seductive.

Naturally of course, it would be completely exaggerated to say that it has a relationship with the meaning, only for that you have to give to the word meaning a weight that it does not have. Because the miracle, the marvel of something that proves that from language, there is something to be made. I mean the witticism; that depends precisely on non-sense. Because anyway, if one refers to some other writings which have been published (*poubelliqueés*), one might have said to oneself that it is all the same not for nothing that I wrote *The agency of the letter in the unconscious*. I did not say the agency of the signifier, this dear Lacanian signifier, that people say, that people say, that people say, when people mean that I wrongly stole it from Saussure. Yes! The fact that the dream is a rebus, as Freud says, is naturally not something that will make me yield for a single instant on the fact that the unconscious is structured like a language, only it is a language in the midst of which there appeared its writing. That does not mean, of course, that one should put the slightest faith - and when indeed would we do so - in these figures that stroll around in dreams, once we know that they are representations of words. Because it is a rebus, it can be translated, *überträgt*, into what Freud calls thoughts. The thoughts, *die Gedanken*, of the unconscious.

And what is meant by the fact, what is meant by the fact that a lapse, a blunder, a mistake in some psychopathology of everyday life, no but what can that mean that you call at least three times in the same five minutes... I do not know why I am saying this to you, because it is not all the same an example in which I am revealing one of my patients, but anyway, in effect, not long ago, one of my patients, for

five minutes, and every time correcting himself and laughing, but he (91) was not particularly worried about it, right, called his mother “my wife”. “It is not my wife, because my wife...” etc and he went on for five minutes, he repeated it at least 20 times. But what is missing in this word, when what I am killing myself telling you, is that it is really a successful word, all the same! And it was like that because his mother was his wife! He called her what he should have called her. So then there is only a lapse with respect to what? With respect to what the authors of *archiécriture*, the writing that is in the world from all time prefigures the word. A funny exercise, right? I don't mind ...it is a function of the university discourse, to confuse things like that. So then everyone fulfils his function, so I also do mine, it also has its effects ... so then we are going to have a new figure of progress which is the coming into the world, the emergence, it is a substitute given to this idea of evolution which ends up as you know, at the top of the animal scale, with this conscience that characterises us, thanks to which we shine with a brilliance that you know all about. So then, it appears in the world of programming, I will only take up this remark, in effect, that there would be no conceivable programming without writing, in order to remark from another angle that the symptom, lapse, faulty action, psychopathology of every day life, does not have, cannot be sustained, has no meaning, unless you start from the idea that what you have to say is programmed, namely, written. Naturally if he writes “my wife” instead of “my mother”, there is no doubt that it is a lapse, but there is no lapse except *calami*, even when it is a *lapsus linguae*. Because the tongue for its part, knows very well what it has to do. It is a little phallus that tickles nice and gently. When it has something to say, well then, it says it. There was already someone called Aesop who said that it was at once the best and the worst. That means many things.

In any case, you can believe me if you wish, given the state of weariness in which you certainly find me, after having tackled these

things on writing, from one end to the other, right, because I do that, right? I believe myself obliged to do it, the only thing that I have never dealt with, is the superego. I believe myself obliged to read this stuff from one end to the other. That's how things are! To be sure, to be sure of the things that are affirmed or demonstrated by my experience of everyday life, but anyway all the same, I respect learned people. There are some perhaps who might well have unearthed something here, which might go against, and in effect why not, an experience that is so limited, so narrow, so short, limited to an (92) analytic consulting room, when all is said and done, there is perhaps all the same a certain need to know. Anyway, all that, I must say, I cannot impose on anyone, but on the whole, it is not appreciated.

There is something else, *The debate on writing and hieroglyphs in the 17th and 18th Century*. I hope you are going to rush. But you would perhaps not find it because for my part, I had to order it from a library, the general library of the *Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes*, 6th section, and I see the indication S.E.V.P.E.N., so that this must be some sort of publishing organisation, 13 rue du Four, Paris, if it exists. Well then! This work by Madeleine David – you should all the same from time to time take the trouble to read something, you could read that, anyway let us go on – because for what I am going to end up by telling you, what I am going to end up telling you, that writing, this is where we will remain for today, that writing in short is something which is found, because of being this representation of the word on which, as you clearly see, I did not insist, representation, that also signifies repercussion, because it is not at all sure that without writing there would be words. It is perhaps the representation as such that makes these words.

When you have tinkered a little with a tongue like the one that I am in the process of learning here, and in effect I am not after all sure that in this case it is an effect of the superego, the Japanese tongue,

well then, you will notice then the degree to which a writing can work upon a tongue. And as it is constructed, this melodious tongue, which is a marvel of subtlety and ingenuity, when I think that it is a tongue in which the adjectives are conjugated, and that I had to wait to be my age to have that at my disposition, I really do not know what I was doing up to now. For my part I aspired to nothing but that, that adjectives could be conjugated. And a tongue in which the inflections had this absolutely marvellous quality that they go off on their own. What is called the moneme, here, in the middle, is something you can change. You give it a Chinese pronunciation, quite different to a Japanese pronunciation, so that, when you are in the presence of a Chinese character, you have, if you are initiated, but naturally only the naturals know it, when you pronounce it *oniomo* or *kuniomi* depending on the case, which are always very precise, and for the chap who arrives there, like me, there is no question of knowing which of the two must be chosen; furthermore, you can have two Chinese characters. If you pronounce them *kuniomi*, namely, the (93) Japanese way, you are absolutely incapable of saying to which of these Chinese characters the first syllable of what you are saying belongs, and to which the second belongs, the one in the middle, of course, still less. It is the totality of the two Chinese characters that dictates to you the Japanese pronunciation in several syllables, that can be perfectly well understood, a pronunciation that corresponds to the two characters at once, because you must not imagine, on the pretext that a Chinese character corresponds in principle to a syllable, that when you pronounce it in the Chinese way, *oniomi*, if you read it in the Japanese way, one does not see in effect why one should be obliged to decompose this representation of words into syllables. Anyway, that teaches you a lot. That teaches you a lot about the fact that the Japanese tongue is nourished by its writing. How is it nourished by it? In a linguistic way of course, namely, at the point at which linguistics affects the tongue, namely, always in writing.

Because you have to admit naturally, that something that leaps to the eye, is that if M de Saussure found himself relatively in a position to qualify signifiers as arbitrary, it is uniquely by reason of the fact that what is at stake were written representations. How could he have done his little bar with this thing underneath and these things above, that I have sufficiently used and abused, if there were no writing? All of this to remind you that, when I say that there is no metalanguage, this leaps to the eye. It would be enough for me to give you a mathematical proof, you would see that I am forced to talk about it because it is something written, otherwise nothing would get across. If I speak about it, it is not at all metalanguage, it is what is called, what the mathematicians themselves, when they present a logical theory, call discourse, the common discourse the ordinary discourse. It is the function of the word, in so far as it is applied, not in an altogether unlimited, undisciplined way, this is what I earlier called “to prove”, of course, but language, this is what is at stake, writing is what is at stake, what one is speaking about. There is no metalanguage in this sense that you never speak about language unless you start from writing.

So then, I am telling you all of this, all of this, I must say that this does not weary me, if you wish, it wearies me a little bit all the same. You can believe me if you wish, what I said to myself this morning, as I woke up, having read Madeline David until one o'clock, I said to myself that all the same it was not for nothing that my *Ecrits* began (94) with the seminar on the *Purloined Letter*. The letter is taken there in a different sense than that of *The agency of the letter in the unconscious*, the letter, the epistle. I am not very fresh, I went to bed late, after midnight; anyway, Gloria will bear witness to you that I spent from eight o'clock to half past nine re-reading the seminar on the *Purloined Letter*. It was worth the trouble, it is something that is quite clever. I never re-read myself but when I do re-read myself, you cannot imagine how much I admire myself! Obviously I had taken the trouble, I did something that was worked out with great

difficulty, which was not too bad, which got across, which got across, when I did it, I no longer know at what date, it was still in front of the rabble at Sainte-Anne. Anyway I laboured at that in a place that I put at the end, I am conscientious, San Casciano, in the neighbourhood of Florence, and it really spoiled my holiday. Anyway, you know I have a tendency for that, for spoiling my holidays. Listen, it is getting late, and after all, I think it would be better for me to talk to you about it the next time.

But anyway, perhaps, who knows, that may tempt you to read it, and after all, it would be better not to tell you where you should go right away, I am going to tell you all the same, because, there are some people who may not notice, that at the end, in speaking about the *Purloined Letter*, when I speak about that, the function of the letter, you will remember perhaps, this letter that the Queen receives, you have perhaps read the story by Poe that is in question, the Queen receives..., it is a rather funny letter all the same. We will never know what was in it. This is precisely what is essential, it is that one will never know what is in it. And all the same nothing contradicts the fact that she is the only one who knows it when all is said and done. Moreover, to set the police on it, you understand, it is all the same necessary, she clearly has the idea that in any case, this would give no information to anyone. There is something, which is that it is certain that it has a meaning. And since it comes from a certain Duke of something or other who has addressed himself to her, if the King her good Master, gets his hands on it, even if he understands nothing either, he will say: "All the same! There is something funny going on!" and God knows where that might lead. I regret the old business that this led to in the past. It led the Queen to the scaffold, things like that. Good! So then at this point, at this point, I cannot do for you the thing I did on what Poe did, under the title the *Purloined Letter*, that I translated like that, approximately, *la lettre en souffrance*. Well then, read that between now and the next time, right? Because that will perhaps allow me to continue to bring out, to support you, what

you see converging in my discourse today, from page 31 of the *Ecrits* (95) to the end.

What I am talking about, in speaking about what is at stake, you have perhaps vaguely heard talk of the effect of the displacements of this letter, of the way it changed hands, as you know, the minister pinched it from the Queen, after which Dupin, Dupin, Poe's genius, right, the most cunning of the cunning, who is not as cunning as all that; but Poe for his part is cunning, namely, that Poe for his part is the narrator of the story... I put a little question to you, here I am opening a parenthesis, the narrator of the story, this is of general importance, is he the one who writes it? Ask yourself this question for example when you read Proust. It is very necessary to pose it, because otherwise you are screwed, you think that the narrator of the story is a simple someone, like that, a little asthmatic, and after all a bit of a dope in his adventures! That has to be said, right! Only you do not at all have the impression, when you have worked on Proust, that it is in any way stupid. It is not what Proust says about the narrator, it is something different that he writes, anyway let us go on. From page 31, at a particular page, you will see when I speak about the letter, of its conveyancing, of the way in which the Minister took it from the Queen or when Dupin takes the baton from the Minister, and the consequences that result from being the one who holds (*le détenteur*) this letter; it's a funny word, right? That means perhaps: to have the possibility of *détente* (relaxation), this letter, you will see that from this page to this page, what I am talking about, I am the one who wrote it, did I know what I was doing? Well, I will not tell you. What I am talking about, is the phallus. And I would even say more, no one has ever spoken better about it. That is why I am asking you to consult it. It will teach you something.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 17 March 1971

As regards this seminar on *The purloined letter*, then...I do not know yet what it may yield. Can you hear me there, in the fourth row? Wonderful! At least we can breath. That may allow more effective relationships. For example, in one case, I might ask someone to leave. In the extreme case I might have an attack of nerves, and leave myself. Anyway in the other one, in the other amphitheatre, it was a bit too much like the majority of cases where people think a sexual relationship exists. Because you are stuck together in a sardine tin. This is going to allow me to ask you to raise your hand. Who are the people who, following my explicit suggestion, made the effort to re-read pages 31-40 of what is called my *Ecrits*? Anyway, lift your hand all the same! Here you can raise your hand. There are not as many as all that. I don't know if I might not have an attack of nerves. Simply to leave, because in short it is necessary to have some minimal resources to ask someone what relationship he was eventually able to sense in these pages, in these pages, to what I said I was speaking about there, namely, the phallus. Who feels in the mood – you see I am very nice, I am not challenging anyone – who feels himself in the mood to say something, even that, why not, that there is scarcely any way of seeing it. Would someone be kind enough to communicate to me some of the reflections that may have been inspired in him, I am not saying by these pages but by what I said the last time about what they consisted of, according to me. X, listen, you, have you re-read these pages?

X:

You haven't re-read them? Get the hell out of here! Anyway, it's very annoying. You don't expect me to read them for you. That (98) really is asking too much of me. But anyway, I take it as it comes. I am a little bit astonished all the same, I am a little bit astonished, not to be able to get an answer unless I take a teasing line. Yes! All the same it is very annoying. In these pages, I am very precisely only speaking about the function of the phallus in so far as it is articulated, as it is articulated in a certain discourse. And this was nevertheless not a time at which I had even sketched out the construction of this whole variety, this tetrahedric combination, with four vertices, that I presented to you last year. And I note nevertheless, from this level one cannot say, from this level, I mean, of my construction, from this time if you also wish, I directed my attack, as I might say, I directed my attack – this is saying a lot - to being able to shoot (*tirer*), it is already that, in such a way that it seems to me now not to be misleading. I mean in a further stage of this construction. Naturally, when I said the last time, I let myself go like that, especially when it is necessary to pretend one is breathing, I said the last time that I admired myself, I hope that you did not take that literally. What I was admiring, was in effect rather the outline that I had created at a time when I was simply beginning to plough a certain furrow as a reference point, which is not now to be completely rejected, which does not make me feel ashamed. It was on this that I ended last year, and it is rather remarkable. One might even perhaps take something from it, an outline, like that, some encouragement to continue. That it is altogether striking that everything that can be caught in it (*y est péchable*), as I might say, in terms of the signifier, is there. This indeed is what is at stake. I started to fish from this seminar on the *Purloined Letter* on, and I think that after all this time, the fact that I put it in first place, in spite of any chronology, showed perhaps that it was necessary, that I had the idea, that it was in short the best way to give an introduction to my *Ecrits*. So then the remark that I make about this famous man *who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a*

man, it is quite certain that if I insisted at that moment to say that not to translate it literally “*ce qui est indigne aussi bien que ce qui est digne d’un homme*” shows that it is in a block that the unsayable, shameful aspect, what is not said, as regards what concerns a man, is indeed there, in a word, the phallus. And it is clear that to translate it by fragmenting it in two: “*Ce qui est digne d’un homme aussi bien que ce qui est indigne de lui*”, that what I am insisting on here, is that (99) it is not the same thing to say “*the robber’s knowledge of the loser’s knowledge of the robber*”, that this element of knowing who knows, namely, by having imposed a certain phantasy of oneself, precisely the man who dares everything, is here as Dupin says right away, the key to the situation. I am saying that, I am saying that and I am going to come back to it. Because to tell the truth, what I indicated to you could have - for someone who would have taken the trouble - allowed there to be advanced directly in a text like this, most of the articulations that I will perhaps have to develop, to unfold, to construct today. As you are going to see, if you do not mind, in a second phase, after having heard what I will more or less have succeeded in saying. It was in fact well and truly written there, and not simply written there, with all and the same necessary articulations, those that I believe I have to take you through. So then everything that is there is not simply sieved and bound, it is clearly made up of signifiers that are available for a more elaborate meaning. That, in short, of a teaching - my own - that I can say is without precedent, other than that of Freud himself. And precisely in so far as it defines the previous one in such a way that one must read its structure in its impossibilities.

Can one say that properly speaking, for example, Freud formulated this impossibility of sexual relationships? Not as such. I am doing it simply because, and after all it is very simple to say, it is written everywhere. It is written in what Freud wrote. It only has to be read. Only you are going to see later why you cannot read it. I am trying to say it. To say why I for my part do read it. The letter then,

purloined, not stolen, but as I explain, I begin with that, which makes a detour, or as I translate it for my part, the letter *en souffrance*, it begins like that and it ends, this little *écrit*, with the fact that it arrives nevertheless at its destination. And if you read it, I hope that there will be a few more who will read it between now and the time I am going to see you again, which will not be in the near future. Because all of this is very well calculated. The second and third Wednesday, I chose them because during the month of April, they fall during the Easter holidays. So then, you will only see me in May. You will have the time to read the 40 pages of *The purloined letter*. At the end I try to underline what is essential in it, and why the translation of “*la lettre volée*” is not a good one. The *purloined letter*, this all the same means, this all the same means, that it reaches its destination. And I give the destination. I give it as the fundamental destination of every (100) letter, I mean epistle. It reaches, let us say, not even him or her or those that can understand nothing about it, including the police on this occasion. Naturally they are completely incapable of understanding anything whatsoever, as I underline and explain for a number of pages – precisely that is even why they were not able to find it – about this substratum, this material of the letter. This is very prettily said, this invention, this magnificent fabrication of Poe, the letter is of course beyond the reach of explanation by space, since this is what is at stake. This is what the Prefect has come to say, indeed what the police first of all came to say, which is that everything in the Minister’s house, given that they know that the letter is there, that it is there so that he always has it within hand’s reach, they say why, that the space had literally been cross-ruled.

It’s amusing, right?, to let myself go, like that, I don’t know, every time I allow myself a little, from time to time, to follow a certain slope, why not, to certain considerations, like that, about space. This famous space which has been indeed for our logic, for a good while, since Descartes, the most bothersome thing in the world. This is all the same a good occasion to talk about it, even if it is necessary to

add it on as a sort of note in the margin, like something that I isolate, like something that I distinguish as the dimension of the imaginary. There are all the same people who worry themselves, not necessarily about that *écrit*, about others, or even also sometimes who kept notes of what I may have said at a certain time, for example on identification. It was the year, 1961/62, I must say that all my listeners were thinking about something else, except, I do not know, one or two who came from outside, who did not know what exactly was happening. I spoke there about the unary trait and people worry themselves now, it seems that this is legitimate, about where this unary trait should be put. On the side of the Symbolic, or of the Imaginary? And why not of the Real? In any case just like, because this is how it is passed on, a baton, *ein einziger Zug*, because it is of course in Freud that I picked that out. This poses some questions, since I introduced it to you a little the last time, by this remark that it was completely impossible to think about anything whatsoever that holds up about this bipartition that is so difficult, so problematic for mathematicians. This is, namely, whether everything can be reduced to pure logic, namely, to a discourse that is sustained by a well-determined structure. Is there not an absolutely essential element that (101) remains, whatever we do to insert it into this structure, to reduce it, that all the same remains as a final kernel and that is called intuition. Assuredly, it is the question from which Descartes started. I mean, I would point out to you, that mathematical reasoning, as he saw it, extracted nothing efficacious, creative, anything whatsoever that was of the order of reasoning, but simply its start, namely, an original intuition, the one that is posited, established by its original distinction between space and thinking. Naturally, this Cartesian opposition, having been constructed more by a thinker than by a mathematician – one who was certainly not incapable of producing things in mathematics, as the effects have proved – was of course much more enriched by the mathematicians themselves. It is indeed the first time that something came to mathematics by way of philosophy. Because I would ask you to note something which seems

to me to be very certain – let people contradict me if they can, it would be easy to find someone more competent than I on this matter – it is all the same very striking that the mathematicians of antiquity should have, for their part, pursued their progress without paying the slightest attention to everything that might have been happening in the schools of wisdom, in any of the schools of philosophy whatever they may have been. It is not the same in our day in which assuredly the Cartesian impulse concerning the distinction between intuiting and reasoning is something which has really tormented mathematics itself. This is indeed the reason why I cannot fail to find in it a vein, an effect of something that has a certain relationship with what here, in the field that is at stake and that I am struggling with. And that it seems to me that the remark that I can make, from the point that I am at, about the relationships between the word and writing, about what there is, at least in this first line, about what there is special about the function of writing with respect to any discourse, is of a nature perhaps to ensure that the mathematicians notice what I indicated the last time, that the very intuition of Euclidean space owes something to writing. On the other hand, if as I am going to try to push it a little further for you, what is called in mathematics logical research, logical reduction, a mathematical operation, is something that in any case is not going, cannot have any other support – to notice it, it is enough to follow history – than the manipulation of small or big letters, diverse alphabetical lots, I mean Greek letters or German letters, several alphabetical lots. Any manipulation by which logistical reduction in mathematical reasoning is advanced requires this support. As I am repeating to you, I do not see the essential difference between it and (102) what was, for a long time, for a whole epoch, the 17th and 18th centuries, the difficulty of mathematical thinking. Namely, the necessity of a drawing for Euclidean proof, that at least one of these triangles should be traced out. And at this point everyone gets frantic. This triangle that has been traced out, is it the triangle in general or a particular triangle? Because it is quite clear that it is always particular, and that what you prove for the triangle in general,

namely, always the same story, namely, that the three angles made by two straight lines, well it is quite clear that you must not say that this triangle has not the right to be at once an isosceles rectangle at the same time as being equilateral. So then it is always particular. This worried mathematicians a great deal. I pass over, of course, this is not the place to recall it here, I am not here to show my erudition, through what and from what this flows since Descartes, Leibnitz or others. It goes up as far as Husserl. They seem to me, all the same, never to have seen the real problem, that writing is there on both sides. It is indeed homogenising intuiting and reasoning, that writing, in other words little letters, has no less of an intuitive function than the one outlined by our friend Euclid. What is at stake all the same is to know why people think that this makes a difference. I do not know whether I ought to point out to you that the consistency of space, of Euclidean space that ends with its three dimensions, should, it seems to me, be defined in a quite different way. If you take two points, they are at equal distance from one another, as I might say, the distance is the same from the first to the second as from the second to the first. You can take three of them and arrange for it to be still true, namely, that each one is equidistant from the two others. You can take four of them and organise it so that it is still true. I don't know, I have never heard that being explicitly highlighted. You can take five, don't rush into saying that here also you can put them at equal distance from each of the other four because, all the same in our Euclidean space, you will not manage it. It is necessary, in order to have five points at equal distance, you hear what I am saying, from each of all the others, for you to fabricate a fourth dimension. There you are! Naturally, it is very easy, to the letter, and then it holds up well, it can be proved that a four dimensional space is perfectly coherent in the whole measure that one can show the link between its coherence and the coherence of real numbers. It is in this very measure that it can be sustained. But anyway, it is a fact, that beyond the tetrahedron, already, intuition has to be supported by the letter. I got into this in order to tell you, because I said that the letter that

(103) reaches its destination is the letter that reaches the police, who understand nothing about it, and that the police as you know, did not come to birth today or yesterday, three pikes like that in the earth, three pikes in the campus, provided you know a little bit about what Hegel wrote, you will know that it is the State. The State and the police, for anyone who has reflected a little, one cannot say that Hegel takes up such a bad position in this regard, is exactly the same thing. It is based on a tetrahedric structure, in other words, once we put in question something like the letter, we have to leave my little schemas of last year, which were constructed as you remember like that:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{S_1} & \longrightarrow & \underline{S_2} \\ \$ & & \circ \end{array}$$

Here is the discourse of the Master, as you perhaps remember, characterised by the fact that of the six lines (*arêtes*) of the tetrahedron, one is broken. It is in the measure that one makes these structures turn on the four lines of the circuit that follow one another in the tetrahedron, this is a condition, are fitted in the same direction, in this direction that turns around one, it does not matter which of the two others, of the three others, that the variation is established about what is involved in the structure of discourse, very precisely in so far as it remains at a certain level of construction which is the tetrahedric one, this tetrahedric one that we cannot be satisfied with once the agency of the letter is brought out. It is even because one cannot be satisfied with it, that to remain at its level, there is always one of the sides of what makes the circle which is broken. So then, it is from this that it results that in the world as it is structured by a certain tetrahedron, the letter only reaches its destination by finding the one who in my discourse on *The purloined letter*, I designated by the term Subject which is not at all to be eliminated in any way or to be withdrawn, on the pretext that we are making some steps in structure,

and as regards which it is all the same necessary to start from the fact that if what we have discovered under the term unconscious has a meaning, the Subject, I repeat, which is irreducible - we cannot, even at this level, not take it into account - but the Subject is distinguished by its very special imbecility. This is what counts in Poe's text, because of the fact it is not for nothing that the one whom he jokes (104) about on this occasion is the king, who here manifests this function of Subject. He understands absolutely nothing and his whole police structure will not prevent, nevertheless, the letter coming within his reach, given that it is the police that are holding onto it and that they can do nothing about it. I even underline that, even if it were found in their files, it would be of no use to the historian. In one or other page of what I wrote in connection with this letter, one can say that very probably only the Queen knows what it means, and that what gives it its weight, is the fact that, if the only person that it involves, namely the Subject, the King, got his hands on it, the only thing he would understand is that it surely has a meaning and this is the scandal, that it has a meaning that escapes him the Subject. The term of scandal, or again of contradiction, is in the right place in these last four little pages that I gave you to read, I underline.

It is clear that it is uniquely in function of the circulation of the letter that the Minister – because there must have been all the same some people here who have read Poe sometime, you ought to know that there is a Minister involved, the one who had nicked the letter – that the Minister shows us in the course of the displacement of the aforesaid letter, variations, like a fish going through variations of colour and in truth that its essential function, that my whole text plays on a little bit too much – but one cannot insist too much in order to make oneself understood – plays on the fact that the letter has a feminising effect. But once he no longer has the letter, because he knows nothing about it himself, once he no longer has it, we find him in a way restored to the dimension, precisely that his whole plan was

designed to give to himself, that of a man who dares all things. And I emphasise this turn of events. It is on this that this statement of Poe ends. It is that at this moment that the thing appears, *monstrum horrendum*, and it is put in the text, what he wanted to be for the Queen, who naturally had taken account of it, because she tried to recover it, this letter, but anyway the game was played out with him. This is for our Dupin, namely, the cutest of the cute, the one to whom Poe gives the role, the role of throwing something that I would be quite happy to call, I underline it in the text, some dust in our eyes. Namely, that we believe that the cutest of the cute exists, namely, that he really understands, knows everything, that being in the tetrahedron, he can understand how it is made.

I have sufficiently ironised about these certainly very clever things, namely the play on words around *ambitus*, of *religio* or of *honesti homines*, to show and to say simply, in my own regard, that I went (105) further in seeking out the little beast, is that not so, and that in truth it is somewhere; it is somewhere to follow Poe, one can ask the question of whether Poe really noticed it. Namely, that the simple fact of the letter passing through the hands of Dupin, feminised him in his turn, enough to ensure that, with respect to the Minister, even though he nevertheless knows that he has deprived him of what might allow him to continue to play his role if ever he has to show his hand – it is precisely at this moment that Dupin cannot contain himself and manifests with respect to the one who is believed to be already sufficiently at his mercy in order to no longer leave a trace, sends him this message in the piece of paper that he substitutes for the stolen letter, “*un destin si funeste.....*”, anyway you know the text, “*s’il n’est digne d’Atrée, est digne de Thyeste*”.

The question, as I might say, is to notice, as I might say, whether Poe on this occasion clearly sees the import of the fact that Dupin, in this sort of message that goes beyond all possibilities because, God knows, if the Minister ever took out his letter, and found himself at

the same time deflated, this to tell you that castration is here, like it, suspended, perfectly realised.

I am also indicating this perspective which seems to me anyway not to be determined in advance. This only gives a greater value to what Dupin writes as a message to the person that he has just deprived of what he thinks is his power. This little *billet doux*, which makes him exult at the thought of what will happen when the person involved, before whom, to what end, will have to make use of it, what one can say is that Dupin enjoys (*jouit*). So then, here is the question, the question that I opened up the last time by asking you, whether the narrator and the one who writes are the same thing? What is incontestable, is that the narrator, the subject of the statement, the one who speaks, is Poe. Does Poe enjoy the enjoyment of Dupin or is it from elsewhere? This is what I am going to try to show you today.

I am speaking to you about *The purloined letter* as I articulated it myself, this is an illustration that I can give to the question that I asked the last time. Is the one who writes not radically different from the one who speaks in his own name as the narrator in a writing? At this level it is tangible. Because what happens at the level of the narrator, when all is said and done, is what I could call, I apologise for insisting on the demonstrative character of this little essay, is that when all is said and done, it is the most perfect castration that is demonstrated. Everyone is equally cuckolded, and no one knows (106) anything about it. It is certain that the King, of course, is asleep from the beginning and will sleep to the end of his days without noticing anything; the Queen does not realise that she is almost fated to become mad about this Minister, now that she has him in her grasp. Now that she has castrated him, right, it is love! The Minister has really been had, but when all is said and done it does not matter to him. Because as I very clearly explained somewhere, it is either one thing or another: either he will be happy to become the Queen's lover and that ought to be agreeable, in

principle, people say that. Not everybody likes it, or if really he has for her one of these feelings which are of the order of what I for my part call the only lucid feeling, namely hatred, as I very clearly explained to you, if he hates her, she will only love him all the more, and that will allow him to go so far, that he will end up all the same by becoming sure that the letter has not been there for a long time. Because he will surely make a mistake. He will tell himself that if she goes that far with him, it is because she is sure of things, so then, he will open his little paper in time, but in no case will he get back to what he wished for, the fact is that the Minister will end up by making himself ridiculous. He will not be so! Good! Well then, there you are, here is what I succeeded in saying in connection with what I wrote, and what I wanted to tell you, is that it takes on its importance from the fact that it is unreadable.

That is the point, which if you would not mind listening to me again I am going to try to develop. Like many people, I am saying it to you right away because there are worldly people, the only people who are capable of telling me what they think about what I palm off on them. It was at a time when my *Ecrits* had not yet appeared, they gave me their point of view as technicians, “we can’t understand anything in it” they told me. Note that this is quite something. Something that one understands nothing about, is full of hope, it is the sign that one is affected by it. It is a good thing that they understood nothing about it! Because one can never understand anything except what of course one has already in one’s head. But anyway, I would like to articulate it a little better. It is not enough to write something that is deliberately incomprehensible, but to see why the unreadable has a meaning. I would point out to you first of all that...our whole business, which is the story of sexual relationships, is it not, revolves around the fact that you may think that it is written because in short, this is what was discovered in psychoanalysis, we were all the same clearly referred to a writing. The Oedipus complex, is a written myth and I would even say more, this is very exactly the thing that

specifies it. One could have taken precisely any one at all, provided it was written. What is proper to a myth that is written, as Claude (107) Lévi-Strauss has already pointed out, is that by writing it, it has only a single form. While what is proper to myth, as the whole work of Lévi-Strauss tries to demonstrate, is to have a great deal of them. This is what a written myth constitutes as myth.

So then this written myth might very well seem to be the inscription of what is involved in sexual relationships. I would like all the same to point out a certain number of things to you. There you are! The fact is, that for that it is not a matter of indifference that I started from this text, the fact is that if this letter, this letter on this occasion may have this function, this feminising function, is that not so, it is with respect to what I told you about the fact that the written myth, the Oedipus complex is designed very exactly to highlight for us that it is unthinkable to say: the woman (*la femme*). Why is it unthinkable? Because one cannot say: *all the women*. One cannot say *all the women* because it is only introduced into the myth because of the fact that the Father possesses *all the women*, which is manifestly a sign of an impossibility. On the other hand, what I underline in connection with this purloined letter, is that there is only one woman, that in other words the function of the woman is only deployed in what the great mathematician Brouwer in the context of what I stated for you, put forward earlier about the mathematical discussion called multiunity(?) (*multinunité*), namely, that there is a function which is very properly speaking that the Father is there, the Father is there because he makes himself recognised in his radical function, in the one he has always manifested, every time for example monotheism was at stake. It is not for nothing that Freud landed on this, because there is an altogether essential function that should be reserved as being at the origin very properly speaking of writing. This is what I will call the *not more than one* (*pas plus d'un*). Aristotle, of course, makes altogether entrancing, considerable efforts, as he usually does, to make this accessible to us by stages, in the name of his principle

that can be described as the principle of climbing the ladder from cause to cause and from being to being, etc. You really do have to stop somewhere, anyway what is very nice is that he really spoke for imbeciles. Hence the development of the function of the subject. The *not more than one* is posited in an altogether original way. Without the *not more than one*, you could not even begin to write the series of whole numbers. I will show you that on the board the next time. There must be a one, and then all you have to do subsequently is purse your lips anytime you want to start again, so that each time (108) this gives a further one, but not the same one. On the contrary, all those that are repeated in this way are the same, they can be added up. That is called an arithmetical series. But let us come back to what seems to us essential for this subject as regards sexual enjoyment. It is that, from experience, there is only one structure, whatever may have to be the particular conditionings, it is that sexual enjoyment is found not to be able to be written, and it is from this that there results the structural multiplicity, and first of all the tetrahedron in which something is outlined that situates it, but is inseparable from a certain number of functions that have nothing to do, in short, that can specify in the general case the sexual partner. The structure is such that man as such in so far as he functions is castrated, and on the other hand, something exists at the level of the feminine partner that one can simply trace out by this feature, whose importance I highlight, the whole function of this letter on this occasion, that the woman has nothing to do with it, if she exists – now, that is why she does not exist, it is in so far as *the woman*, has nothing to do with the law.

So then, how are we to conceive of what has happened? All the same we make love, right? All the same we make love and people have noticed from the time they became interested in it, for a long time, and people have perhaps always been interested in it, only we have lost the key to the way in which people were previously interested, but for us, at the heart, in the efflorescence of the scientific era, we

learn what is involved in it through Freud. What is it? When what is at stake is to structure, to make function by means of symbols the sexual relationship, what creates an obstacle to it? It is that enjoyment gets mixed up in it. Can sexual enjoyment be treated directly? It cannot be, and it is for this reason, let us say, let us say no more, that there is the word. Discourse begins from the fact that here there is a gap. We cannot remain at that, I mean that I reject any position of origin, and after all, nothing prevents us from saying that it is because discourse begins that the gap is produced. It is a matter of complete indifference for the result. What is certain is that discourse is implied in the gap and since there is no metalanguage, it cannot get out of it. The symbolisation of sexual enjoyment, as is made obvious by what I am in the process of articulating, is the fact that it borrows all its symbolism from what? From what does not concern it, namely, from enjoyment in so far as it is prohibited by certain confused things, confused but not all that much, because we have managed to articulate it perfectly under the name of pleasure (109) principle. Which can only have one meaning, *not too much enjoyment*. Because the stuff of every enjoyment is close to suffering, this is even how we recognise how it is dressed up. If the plant was not manifestly suffering, we would not know that it was alive. It is clear then that the fact that sexual enjoyment only found as a way to structure itself the reference to prohibition, as named, of enjoyment, but an enjoyment which is not the one, which is this dimension of enjoyment, which is properly speaking a fatal enjoyment, in other words that sexual enjoyment takes on its structure from the prohibition laid on the enjoyment directed at one's own body, namely, very precisely at this crunch point, the frontier where it is close to mortal enjoyment. And it only reconnects with the dimension of the sexual by bringing a prohibition to bear on the body, from which one's own body emerges, namely the body of the mother. It is only in this way that there is structured, that there is connected up in discourse, what alone the law can contribute to it, what is involved in sexual enjoyment. The partner on this occasion is

indeed in effect reduced to one, but not just anyone whatsoever, the one who gave birth to you. And it is around this that there is constructed everything that can be articulated once we enter the field in a way that can be verbalised. When we shall have advanced further, I will come back to the way in which knowledge comes to function as enjoying. We can skip it here. The woman as such finds herself in this position uniquely assembled because of the fact that she is, I would say, subject to the word. Naturally, I am sparing you the detours. That the word is what establishes a dimension of truth, the impossibility of this sexual relationship, is indeed also what gives its import to the word in the fact of course that it can do everything, except be of use at the point where it happens. The word strives to reduce the woman to subjection, namely, to make of her something from which one expects signs of intelligence, if I can put it this way. But naturally, we are not dealing with any real being here, to say the word, the woman on this occasion, as this text is designed to prove, the woman, I mean the woman in herself, the woman – as if one could say *all the women* – the woman – I insist, who does not exist – is precisely the letter. The letter, in so far as she is the signifier that there is no Other: S(O) (*sic*).

And it is about this that I would like, before leaving you, all the same to make a remark to you that outlines the logical configuration of what I am in the process of putting forward. In Aristotelian logic, you have the affirmatives, I am not going to put them in the usual (110) letters of formal logic. I am not writing A, I am writing the universal affirmative, and I am writing this as universal negative, this is what that means. I write here particular affirmative and particular negative. I would like to point out that at the level of Aristotelian articulation, it is between these two poles – because it is from Aristotle that these propositional categories are borrowed – it is between these two poles that logical discrimination is carried out. The universal affirmative states an essence. I insisted often enough in the past about what is involved in the statement *every stroke is*

vertical and that it is perfectly compatible with the fact that no stroke exists, the essence is essentially situated in logic. It is a pure statement of discourse. Logical discrimination, its essential axis in this articulation, is very exactly this oblique axis that I have just noted here. Nothing runs contrary to any identifiable logical statement whatsoever, nothing, except the remark that: “There are some that...do not” A particular negative, there are some strokes that are not vertical. This is the only contradiction that can be made against the affirmation that it is a matter of the essence. And the two other terms are, in the functioning of Aristotelian logic, quite secondary. Namely, “there are those that...”, a particular affirmative, and afterwards how can we know if it is necessary or not, this proves nothing, and to say “there are none that” which is not the same thing as to say: “there are some who are not”, namely, the universal negative. *There are none that*, well that proves nothing either. It is a fact. What I can point out to you, is what happens when, from this Aristotelian logic, we pass to their transposition in mathematical logic, the one that is constructed by means of what are called quantifiers. Don’t complain that you cannot hear me for a while, first of all I am going to write it and precisely this is what is at stake. The universal, I was saying, the universal affirmative is now going to be written in this unverbalisable notation: it is an ‘A’ upside down; I say an ‘A’ upside down, anyway it is not part of discourse, it is writing. But it is a signal as you are going to see, in order to be able to babble on. $\forall x.F(x)$, the universal affirmative, $\exists x.F(x)$ here particular affirmative. $\exists x.F(x)$, I want to express that this is a negative. How can I do so? I am struck by the fact that it has never been really articulated the way I am going to do it. What you have to do is to put a bar of negation above the $F(x)$ and not at all, as is usually done above both. You are going to see why. And here, it is on the $\exists x$ that you have to put the bar. I am putting here now myself a bar (111) equivalent to the one that was here, and since the one that was there separated out in two zones the group of fours, here, it divides up by two in a different way.

What I am putting forward, is that in this way of writing, precisely, everything depends on what one can say about writing, and that the distinction in two terms united by a point from what is written in this way has the value of saying that one can say about every 'x' – it is the signal of the upside down 'A' – that it satisfies what is written, $F(x)$, that it is not displaced into it. In the same way, but with a different accent, the fact that there is something unwriteable, namely that it is here that the emphasis of writing is brought to bear, there exist x's that you can make function in $F(x)$, of which you then speak, that what is at stake, in what is here called a quantifying transposition by means of the quantifiers of the particular. On the other hand, it is so true that it is around writing that there pivots the displacement of the distribution, namely, that for what is put in the foreground, is acceptable, nothing is changed for the universal. It still has its value, even though it is not the same value. On the contrary what is at stake here, the cleavage consists in noticing the non-value of the universal negative, since here, the fact is that whatever 'x' you speak about, cannot be written as $F(x)$. And that just as for the particular negative, there is the fact, that just as here the 'x' could be written, was acceptable, inscribable in this formula, here simply, what is said, is that it is not inscribable. What does that mean? The fact is, what has been neglected in a way, without value, in these two structurings, namely, the universal negative, the universal negative in so far as it is what allows there to be said that you must not write this if you are speaking about any 'x' whatsoever, in other words that it is here that there functions an essential cut. Well then, it is the very one around which there is articulated what is involved in the sexual relationship. The question concerns what cannot be written in the function $F(x)$, from the moment when this, the function $F(x)$, is itself not to be written, namely, that it is what I said, stated, a little earlier, which is the point around which there is

going to revolve what we will take up when I see you in two months time, namely, that it is properly speaking what is called unreadable.

x.Fx x.Fx

x.Fx x.F

Seminar 7: Wednesday 12 May 1971

Lituraterre

This word that I have just written gives its title to what I am going to offer you today. Because needs must, since you have been summoned here, that I should throw out something to you. It is obviously inspired by current events. It is the title with which I strove to respond to a demand that was addressed to me to introduce an issue that is going to appear on *Literature and psychoanalysis*.

This word, *lituraterre*, which I invented, is legitimised by *Ernout et Meillet*, since there are perhaps some people here who know what it is; it is a Latin dictionary that is described as etymological. Look up *lino*, *litura*, and then *liturarius*. It is clearly specified that this has nothing to do with *littera*, the letter. I don't give a damn about the fact that it has nothing to do with it. I do not necessarily submit to etymology when I let myself go in this word play with which from

time to time one constructs a witticism, the art of the spoonerism, which is obvious on occasion, coming to my lips and upsetting the ear. It is not for nothing that when you learn a foreign tongue, you put the first consonant of what you hear second, and the second first.

So then this dictionary, you should consult it, is a lucky omen for me, because of being grounded on the same starting point that I took in a first movement. You should understand starting point in the sense of restart, a starting point from an equivocation with which Joyce, I am talking about James Joyce, slips from *a letter* to *a litter*, from a *lettre*, I am translating, to *ordure*.

(114) There was, perhaps you remember, but very probably you know nothing about it, there was a rich patron who wanting, to do him a good turn, offered him a psychoanalysis, and she even offered to pay for him to do it with Jung. From the word play that we are recalling, he would have gained nothing from it because he went straight away, with this *a letter*, *a litter*, straight to the best thing that one can expect at the end of an analysis.

By making stable litter of the letter, is it St Thomas again - you remember perhaps, if you ever knew it, *sicut palea* - St Thomas again, who comes back to Joyce, as his work bears witness throughout its whole length? Or indeed is it psychoanalysis that bears witness to his convergence with what our epoch shows up in terms of an undoing of the link, of the ancient link by which pollution is contained in culture?

I had embroidered on this, as it happens, a little while before May 1968, in order not to disappoint, on that day, the wretches among the crowds that I now find come to see me when I visit somewhere. It was at Bordeaux. Civilisation, I recalled as a premise, is a sewer. It should no doubt be said, that it was a little while after my proposition of October '67 had been welcomed in the way you know, to tell you

no doubt that, in playing on that, I was a little weary of the dustbin with which I had thrown in my lot. Still, you know that I am not the only one, in order to share things around, to admit it, *l'avouère*, to pronounce it in the old way, the 'having' that Beckett puts in the balance with the deficit that makes rubbish of our 'being'. This *avouère* saves the honour of literature and, which pleases me a great deal, relieves me of the privilege that I might believe I hold in my own place.

The question is whether, what the manuals seem to display ever since they have existed, I am talking about manuals of literature, that literature is only a way of accommodating oneself to leftovers. Is it a matter of collecting in a writing, what was first of all, primitively, song, spoken myth, dramatic procession?

As regards psychoanalysis, the fact that it is appended to Oedipus, to the Oedipus of the myth, in no way qualifies it to find its way in Sophocles' text. It is not the same thing. The evocation by Freud of a text by Dostoyevsky is not enough to say that textual criticism, up to now the preserve of university discourse, has received any more fresh air from psychoanalysis.

Here, nevertheless, my teaching takes its place in a change of configuration that, currently, under the heading of actuality, currently is promoted in terms of slogans that promote the written (*l'écrit*). But, this change, including this testimony, for example, that it is in our day that Rabelais is finally being read, shows that it (115) is based perhaps on a literary shift that suits me better.

As an author I am less implicated than people might imagine. My *Ecrits*, a title that is more ironic than people might believe because what is at stake in short are reports produced in function of congresses. Or let us say, I would really like them to be heard like

that, as open letters, in which no doubt I bring into question every time a slice of my teaching, anyway, that gives their tone.

Far in any case from my committing myself to this literary brou-ha-ha, which a psychoanalysis short of alibis is attaching itself to, I expose in it an unfailing tendency, by demonstrating the incapacity of its practice to justify the slightest literary judgement.

It is nevertheless striking that I opened this collection of my *Ecrits*, with an article that I isolated by extracting it from its chronology - chronology was the guiding principle there - and that here, what is at stake is a story that one must say is quite curious because it cannot be entered into the organised list - you know that this has been made - of dramatic situations.

Anyway let us leave that. The story for its part, is constructed from what happens with the posting of a letter, a missive, without knowing what is going to happen. It is about following it and from what terminus there can be based the fact that I for my part can say about this letter, say in connection with it, that a letter always reaches its destination. And this, after the detours that it underwent in the story, renders a final account, as I might say, without having any recourse to the contents of the letter. This is what renders remarkable the effect that it brings to bear on those who one after another come into possession of it, however ardent they may be about the power that it confers. And to claim that this effect of illusion can only be articulated, which is what I did, as an effect of feminisation. This means - I apologise for coming back to it - clearly distinguishing, I am talking about what I am doing, the letter and the master signifier in so far as here it carries it. It carries it in its envelope, since here what is at stake is a letter in the sense of an epistle. Now, I claim that I am not making here a metaphorical use of the word letter, since precisely the story consists in the fact that there passes in it like 'Hey

presto!' the message of which it is the writing (*l'écrit*), the letter itself then, which makes the journey.

My critique, if there is any reason to take it as literary, can only be brought to bear then, and this is what I try to do, on what Poe does, being a writer himself, in formulating such a message about the letter. It is clear that in not saying it as such, in the way that I for my part say it, he is not avowing it inadequately but all the more rigorously.

(116) Nevertheless, the elision, the elision of this message can in no way be elucidated by any trait whatsoever of his psycho-biography; this elision would rather be filled in by it. A psychoanalyst who, perhaps you remember, scoured the other texts of Poe, here abandons her dishcloths! Marie does not even touch it! So much for Poe's text.

But as regards my text, could it not be solved by my own psycho-biography? The wish that I might formulate, for example, of being one day properly read. But, for that, for that to be worthwhile, it would be first of all necessary to develop, that whoever undertakes this interpretation, should develop what I mean by the fact that the letter carries far enough to always arrive, as I say, at its destination.

It is there perhaps that I am for the moment closely linked with those devoted to writing (*l'écriture*). It is certain that as usual psychoanalysis here is on the receiving end from literature and it might first of all take from it the line which would make of resorting to repression a less psycho-biographical idea. For my part, if I propose the text of Poe, with what is behind it, to psychoanalysis, it is precisely because it is unable to tackle it without showing its failure. It is in that way that I illuminate psychoanalysis, and you know, you know what I am invoking in this way, it is at the back of my book, in this way I am invoking those who seek enlightenment (*les lumières*). Nevertheless I illuminate psychoanalysis by demonstrating where the

hole is in it. There is nothing illegitimate in that. It has already borne fruit, as has been known for a long time, in optics, and the most recent physics, that of the photon, makes use of it. It is by this method that psychoanalysis may better justify its intrusion into literary criticism. This means that literary criticism may effectively renew itself from the fact that psychoanalysis is there so that texts can measure themselves against it, precisely from the fact that the riddle is on its side, and that it remains coy about it. But those, those psychoanalysts about whom it is no lie to say that rather than they exercising psychoanalysis, they are exercised by it, badly understand my remarks, at least when they are taken as a body.

As a way of getting to them, I oppose truth and knowledge. It is the first, in which immediately they recognise that their office is put in the dock, it is their truth that I am waiting for. I insist, correcting my aim, by saying a knowledge that is checkmated (*en échec*), this is where psychoanalysis shows itself at its best. A knowledge that is checkmated as one might say a shape that is damaged, that does not mean a failure of knowledge (*échec du savoir*). And forthwith I learn that people feel themselves dispensed from showing that they have any knowledge.

Is it supposed to be a dead letter that I put as a title to one of these (117) pieces that I call *Ecrits, The letter the agency (La lettre l'instance)* as reason of the unconscious? Does this not sufficiently designate what in the letter, by having to insist, is not there of right, if it is with the force of reason that it advances. To say that this reason is mean or extreme, I have already done it on occasion, shows clearly the bifidity in which any measure is engaged. But is there nothing in the real, which can do without this mediation? This might be perhaps a frontier. A frontier, by separating two territories, has only one defect, but it is an important one. It symbolises that they are the same, as I might say, in any case for whoever crosses it. I do not know whether you have thought about it, but it is the principle for

which one day a man called von Uxküll made up the term *Umwelt*. This is done on the principle that it is the reflection of the *Innenwelt*, it is the promotion of the frontier to ideology. It is obviously an unfortunate starting point that a biology, because it was a biology that von Uxküll wanted to found with that, a biology which already gives itself right at the beginning, the fact of adaptation, in particular, which forms the basis of this coupling *Umwelt-Innenwelt*. Obviously, selection, selection is no better when it is an ideology. It is in canonising itself as natural that it is shown to be all the less so.

I am going to propose something, like that, quite bluntly to come after *a letter, a litter*. For my part I am going to say, is not the letter the literal because it is founded on the littoral? Because that is something different to a frontier. Moreover you have perhaps noticed that they are never confused. The littoral, is something that posits a domain, as being entirely making with another, if you wish, a frontier, but precisely because they have absolutely nothing in common, not even a reciprocal relation. Is the letter not properly speaking littoral? The edge of the hole in knowledge that psychoanalysis designates precisely, when it tackles it, from the letter, is this not what it designates?

The funny thing, is to note how psychoanalysis is obliged in a way by its own movement to fail to recognise the sense of what nevertheless the letter says *literally (à la lettre)*, make no mistake, when all its interpretations can be summed up in enjoyment. Between enjoyment and knowledge, the letter might be the littoral. All of this does not prevent that what I said about the unconscious remaining there, all the same taking precedence, otherwise what I am putting forward would have absolutely no sense. We still have to know how the unconscious, which I say is the effect of language because it presupposes its structure as necessary and sufficient, how it commands this function of the letter.

(118) The fact that it is the instrument proper for the inscription of discourse does not make it in any way inappropriate to serve for what I make of it, when in the agency of the letter, for example, that I spoke about just now, I use it to show the operation of what your man, someone called Jean Tardieu, called one word taken for another, indeed the word taken by another, in other words metaphor and metonymy, as an effect of the sentence. So that it easily symbolises then all the effects of signifiers, but this does absolutely not require that the letter, in these very effects, for which it serves me as an instrument, should be primary. An examination is required less about this primary character, which is not even to be supposed, but about what in language calls the littoral to the literal.

Nothing of what I inscribed with the help of letters about the formations of the unconscious in order to rescue them from the way Freud formulates, states them, more simply as facts of language, nothing allows there to be confused, as has been done, the letter with the signifier. What I inscribed with the help of letters about the formations of the unconscious does not authorise making a signifier of the letter and of granting it, what is more, a primacy with regard to the signifier.

Such a confusing discourse could only arise from the discourse that is important to me, and precisely, which is important to me in another discourse that I pinpointed when the time had come as University discourse. In other words, as I have underlined sufficiently for a year and a half, I think, in other words knowledge put to use starting from the semblance.

The slightest feeling for the experience that I am warding off, can only be situated from a different discourse than that one. I should have protected the product of this discourse which I designated, no more, without admitting it, as mine. I was spared it, thank God, even

though by bringing it to me, in the sense I mentioned earlier, I am being pestered.

If I found acceptable the models that Freud articulates in a project about how to describe the clearing, the drilling of imprecise routes, I would not for all that have taken up the metaphor of writing. And precisely, it is on this point of the *Project* that I do not find it acceptable. Writing is not an impression, despite everything that is being said in terms of a blah-blah about the famous *Wunderblock*.

When I took advantage of Letter 52, it was in order to read there what Freud was able to state under the term that he forges of WZ, *Wahrnehmungszeichen*, and to note that it was what he was able to find closest to the signifier at a time when Saussure had still not (119) brought to birth this famous signifier, which, all the same, does not date from him, because it dates from the Stoics. That Freud writes it there with two letters, since I moreover only write it with one, in no way proves that the letter is primary.

So then I am going to try to indicate to you today the core of what for us the letter appears to produce as a consequence, and of language, precisely from the fact that I say, that it dwells in whoever speaks. I will borrow its features from what in an economy of language allows to be outlined what advances, to my way of thinking, that literature may be in the process of turning towards *lituraterre*. You must not be surprised to see me setting about a literal demonstration because this means marching in step with the way in which the question is advanced. One might perhaps see in it, indeed see there being affirmed what a demonstration that I call literary might be. I am still a little bit at the edge. Why not, this time, throw myself into it?

I have just come back from a trip that I had wanted to make to Japan, because on a first, a first trip, I had experienced the littoral. You can understand me from what I said a little earlier about the *Umwelt*

which I repudiated, precisely because of that, because of making the trip impossible, which, if you follow my formulae, would be to guarantee its real. Only there you are, it was premature. It is the departure that this makes impossible, unless we sing: "Let's go, let's go!" That is done a lot moreover. I would only note one moment of this trip, the one that as it happens I gathered, from what, from a new route, which as it happens I took simply because of the fact that the first time that I went there, it was simply prohibited. I have to admit that it was not on the outward journey, along the Arctic Circle, which traces this route for the aeroplane, that I managed to read what? What I was seeing of the Siberian plain.

I am in the process of proposing for you a Siberian trial (*un essai de sibériétique*). This trial would not have seen the light of day if the distrust of the Soviets, not in my regard, but with regard to aeroplanes, had allowed me to see the industries, the military installations which makes Siberia important. But anyway, this distrust, is a condition that we will call accidental. Why not even occidental, if one puts a little killing (*occire*) into it; what is being piled up in southern Siberia is what we are in for!

The only decisive condition is here precisely the condition of littoral. For me, because I am a little hard of hearing, it only operated on the return journey as being literally what Japan, from its letter, had no doubt done to me, a little bit too much tickling, which is just what is necessary for me to experience it. I say that I am (120) experiencing it because of course, in order to locate it, to anticipate it, I had already done it here, when I spoke to you a little bit about the Japanese tongue. About the fact that what properly creates this tongue, is writing, I already told you that.

What was required no doubt for that, was just this little bit too much that I needed in terms of what is called art should represent something. This stems from the fact of what Japanese painting shows

here about its marriage to the letter, and very precisely in the form of calligraphy. I am fascinated by things that are suspended, *kakemono*, that is how it is said, things that are suspended on the wall of every museum over there, bearing the inscription of characters, Chinese information, that I know a little, very little about. But inasmuch as I knew it, it allowed me to measure what is elided in cursive writing where the particularity of each hand crushes the universal, in other words, taking up what I teach you, only takes its value from the signifier. You remember? The stroke is always vertical. It is still true even if there is no stroke.

So then, in cursive writing I cannot find the character, because I am still a novice; but this is not the important thing, because what I am calling this particularity can be based on a firmer shape. The important thing is what it adds to it. It is a dimension, or again, as I taught you to play on that, a *demansion*, where there dwells what I have already introduced to you in the last or the second last seminar, a word that I write to amuse myself as *papludun*. It is the *demansion* which you know allows me, it is all very well to say all that, from the little mathematical game of Peano, etc., and the way in which Frege has to tackle it to reduce the series of natural numbers, in inverted commas, to logic, the one then, from which I establish the subject in what I am going to call again today, because I am doing literature and I am happy, you are going to recognise it, I had written it in a form, in recent times, as the *Hun-en-peluce*. The Hun is of great use, it can be put in the place of what I call *l'Achose*, and that puts a stopper in it with the small **o** (*petit a*) which not by chance can be reduced like that, as I designate it, to a letter. At the level of calligraphy, this is the letter that is at stake in a wager, but which one? That is won with ink and a brush.

There you are, this is how it invincibly appeared to me in a circumstance that must be remembered, by the fact that it is necessary then that there should be distinguished erasure. Namely, that between

the clouds, there appeared to me the trickling down which is the only trace to appear by operating in it still more than indicating the relief at this latitude in what one could call the Siberian plain. A plain that is really desolate, in the proper sense of (121) the word, of any vegetation, except the reflections, the reflections of this streaming which push into a shadow what does not reflect.

What is this trickling? It is a bouquet. It acts like a bouquet, in the fact that elsewhere I distinguished by its first feature and from the fact that it effaces. I said it one time, but people always forget a part of the thing, I said it in connection with the unary stroke, it is from the effacing of the stroke that the subject is designated. This is noticed then in two phases. It is necessary therefore that erasing should be distinguished from it.

Litura, Litureterre. The erasing of any trace that was there before, this is what makes a land of the littoral. *Litura pure*, is the literal. Here, to produce this erasing, is to reproduce this half by which the subject subsists. Those who have been here for some time, but there must be fewer and fewer, ought to remember what one day I narrated about the adventures of half a chicken. To produce the only, definitive erasure, this is the exploit of calligraphy. You can always try, try to do simply what I am not going to do because I would fail, first of all because I have no brush. Try to make this horizontal bar, which is traced out from left to right, to represent by a stroke the unary one as a character, frankly. You will spend a long time finding out what erasure that is attacking and what is the suspense that arrests it, so that what you will do will be lamentable, it is hopeless for an Westerner. A different movement is necessary that can only be caught by being detached, from whatever you cross out.

Between centre and absence, between knowledge and enjoyment, there is littoral which only veers towards the literal from the fact that this bend is one you can take in the same way at every instant. It is

only from that that you can hold yourself to be the agent who sustains it.

What is revealed by my vision of streaming, by what dominates the erasure, is that by being produced between the clouds, it is conjugated at its source. It is indeed in Aristophanes' clouds that I am called to find what is involved in the signifier, I mean the semblance *par excellence*, since it is from its rupture that there rains down this effect from the fact that there is precipitated from it something that was a material in suspension.

It has to be said that the Japanese painting which I told you earlier mixed in calligraphy so very well, why? And that here there is no lack of clouds. It is from where I was at that moment that I really clearly understood the function of these golden clouds which literally block, hide a whole part of the scenes which in places, (122) places which are things which unfold in a different sense, the ones that are called *makemono*. They preside over the distribution of little scenes. Why? How can it be that these people who know how to draw, experience the need to mix them into this pile of clouds, if not precisely that this is what introduces the dimension of the signifier. And the letter which erases, is distinguished by being a rupture then, of the semblance, which dissolves whatever pretended to be a form, a phenomenon, a meteor. That's it, I already told you, that science operates at the start in the most tangible way on perceptible forms. But at the same time it must also be that in ridding them of what from this rupture constitutes enjoyment, namely, by dissipating from them what they sustain from this hypothesis, if I can express myself in this way, of enjoyment, which in fact constitutes the world, because the idea of the world, is that. To think that it is made up of such drives that moreover represent its void?

Well then, what is evoked in terms of enjoyment because of the fact that a semblance is broken, this is what in the real - this is the

important point - presents itself in the real as furrowing (*ravinement*). This defines for you the way in which writing can be said to be in the real the furrowing of the signified, in other words the amount of semblance that has rained down in so far as it is what makes the signified. Writing does not trace out the signifier. It only goes back to it by taking a name, but exactly in the same way as this happens to all the things that have been named by the signifying battery after it has numbered them. Since, of course, I am not sure that my discourse is being understood, I am going, all the same, to have to pin it down by an opposition. Writing, the letter, is in the real, and the signifier, in the symbolic. Like that, this can act as a little jingle for you.

I come back to a later moment in the aeroplane. We are going to advance a little like that: I told you that it was on the return journey. So then there, what is striking is to see them appearing. There are other traces that one sees for their part being sustained in isobars; obviously, traces that are of the order of an embankment, anyway, in general, isobars. This makes them normal to those whose slope, one could say, stands out in the clearest relief, and is marked by curves.

Where I was, it was very clear, I had already seen at Osaka how the auto-routes seemed to come down from the sky, that is the only place that they were able to set them up like that, one above the other. There is a certain Japanese architecture, the most modern one, which is very well able to recapture the ancient. Japanese architecture consists essentially in the flapping of a bird's wing. This helped me to understand, to see right away that the shortest path between one point and another, would never have shown itself (123) to anyone, if there were not the cloud that quite frankly takes on the appearance of a road? Nobody in the world ever follows a straight line, neither man, nor the amoeba, nor the fly, nor the branch, nor anything at all. According to the latest news, we know that a beam of light does not

follow it either, completely solidary as it is with the universal curvature.

The straight line in all of this all the same inscribes something. It inscribes distance, but distance, according to Newton's laws, is absolutely nothing but an effective factor of a dynamic that we will call a cascade, the one that ensures that everything that falls follows a parabola.

So then, there is no straight line except in writing, of surveying except from the sky.

But they are both one and the other, in so far as they are such to sustain the straight line, they are artefacts because they only dwell in language. This all the same should not be forgotten. Our science is only operational from a streaming down of combined little letters and drawings.

Sous le pont Mirabeau, like under that of a journal that was mine in which I had put up as an ensign a bridge-ear borrowed from Horus Apollo, *sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine*, a primal scene, it is a scene such, do not forget, in re-reading Freud that there may beat in it the Roman V of five o'clock. It is in the *Wolfman*. But moreover that one does not enjoy it, is the misfortune of the interpretation.

That the symptom sets up the order on which our politics proves to be established - this is the step that it took - implies on the other hand that everything that is articulated of this order is open to interpretation. That is why we are quite right to put psychoanalysis under the heading of politics. And this may not be a very peaceful situation, if psychoanalysis proved to be more aware of what figured in politics up to now.

It would perhaps be enough, to put our hope elsewhere, which is what my men of letters do, if I can make them my companions. It would be enough for us to make a different use of writing than that of a tribune or tribunal in order for there to operate in it other words that we have to make up ourselves, that we would have to make our tribute.

I said, and I never forget it: there is no meta-language. Any logic is falsified by starting from a language-object, as it does not fail to do up to today. There is then no meta-language, but the writing that is fabricated from language might perhaps be the material that would bring about a strain and make me change my remarks. I see no other hope for those who are writing today.

(124) Is it possible in short to constitute from the littoral a discourse such that it is characterised, as I am putting the question this year, by not being emitted by a semblance? This is obviously the question that is only proposed in what is called *avant-garde* literature, which itself is a littoral fact and, therefore, is not sustained by a semblance, but for all that proves nothing, except, by showing the break that a discourse alone can produce. I say produce, put forward with a production effect, this is the schema of my quadrupeds of last year.

What a literature seems to claim in its ambition, is what I pinpoint as *lituraterrir*, it is to organise itself by a movement that it calls scientific. It is a fact that in science, writing has done marvels, and that everything shows that this marvel is not ready to run dry. Nevertheless, physical science finds itself, is going to find itself led to the consideration of the symptom in events by pollution. There are already scientists who are sensitive to it by the pollution of the part of the terrestrial that is called without any further critique, environment. This is the idea of Uxküll: *Umwelt*, but behaviourised, namely, completely cretinised.

In order to *litturaterrir* myself, I point out that in furrowing I created here images certainly but no metaphor: writing is this furrowing. What I wrote is included in it. When I talk about enjoyment, I legitimately invoke the audience I accumulate, and no less naturally the one I deprive myself of; the crowd you are keeps me busy. I prepared the furrowing.

That there should be included in the Japanese tongue, this is where I take things up again, a writing-effect, this is the important thing, offers us some resources to give an example of *lituratterrir*. The important thing is that the effect of writing remains attached to writing. That what conveys the writing effect in it is a specialised writing by the fact that in Japanese, this specialised writing can be read in two different pronunciations. In *oniomi* – I am not trying to bluff you, I will say as little Japanese as possible – *on-yomi* that is how it is called, and its pronunciation in character, is pronounced as such distinctly in *kun-yomi*, the way in which one says in Japanese what the character means.

But naturally you are going to walk straight into it, namely, that under the pretext that the character is a letter, you are going to believe that I am in the process of saying that in Japanese, the wreckage of the signifier flows on the river of the signified. It is the (125) letter and not the sign that here acts as a support to the signifier. But like anything else, by following the law of metaphor which I reminded you in recent times constitutes the essence of language, it is always moreover through it that language, discourse, catches anything whatsoever in the net of the signifier, therefore writing itself.

Only there you are! It is promoted from this to the function of a referent, just as essential as any things and this is what changes the status of the subject. It is through this that it takes its support from a constellated heaven and not simply from the unary trait for its fundamental identification. Well then! Precisely, there are too many

of them, too many supports, it is the same thing as not to have any. That is why it takes its support, elsewhere, on 'thou'. The fact is in Japanese, you see all the grammatical forms for the slightest statement; to say something like that, anything whatsoever, there are more or less polite ways of saying it, according to the way I implicate him in the thou. I implicate him if I am Japanese. Since I am not Japanese, I do not do it, it would wear me out.

When you have seen - it is really within everyone's reach to learn Japanese - that the slightest thing is subject in it to variations in the statement, which are variations of politeness, you will have learned something. You will have learned that in Japanese, the truth reinforces the structure of fiction that I denote in it, precisely, by adding to it the laws of politeness.

Curiously, this seems to have as a result that there is nothing to defend against the repressed, because the repressed finds itself lodging in this reference to the letter.

In other words, the subject is divided by language, but one of its registers may be satisfied with the reference to writing and the other to the exercise of speech.

This no doubt is what gave my dear friend Roland Barthes this intoxicating feeling that with all his good manners, the Japanese subject envelops nothing, at least this is what he says in a way that I recommend to you, because it is a sensational work, *L'empire des signes*, he entitles it. In titles, people often make an incorrect use of terms. That is done for the editors. Which means obviously that it is the empire of semblances. It is enough to read the text to notice it.

The mythical Japanese, the little commonplace Japanese, I have been told, does not think much of it, at least that is what I heard over there. And in effect, however excellent this writing of Roland Barthes may

be, I would oppose to it what I am saying today (126) namely, that nothing is more distinct from the void hollowed out by writing than the semblance. First of all by the fact that it is the first of my bowls that are always ready to give enjoyment a welcome, or at least to invoke it by its artifice. From our practices, nothing communicates less of itself than a particular subject who, when all is said and done, hides nothing. He only has to manipulate you, and I assure you that he does not fail to do so. For me it is a delight, because I adore that. You are an element among others of the ceremonial in which the subject is composed precisely by being able to decompose himself. The *bunraku*, perhaps some of you saw that sometime ago when they came to Paris. I went to see it again over there, I had already seen it the first time. Well then, the *bunraku* is the mainspring, it shows the very ordinary structure for those to whom it gives their very customs. You know that you see alongside the puppet clearly in view the people who are operating it, moreover as in the *bunraku*, everything that is said in a Japanese conversation may be read by a reciter. This is what must have relieved Barthes. Japan is the place where it is most natural to be supported by an interpreter, one is very happy, one can duplicate oneself with an interpreter, this does not require in any case an interpretation. You can imagine how relieved I was! Japanese, is the perpetual translation of the events of language.

What I love, is that the only communication that I had, outside the Europeans of course that I am able to understand with our usual misunderstanding, the only one that I had with a Japanese is also the only one which, there as elsewhere, might possibly be a communication, by not being a dialogue, it is the scientific paper (*communication*).

I went to see an eminent biologist whom I will not name, by reason of the Japanese rules of politeness, this encouraged him to show me his works, naturally, where they are done, on the blackboard. The fact that for lack of information I understood nothing about it, in no

way rules out that what he wrote, his formulae, by being entirely valid, valid for the molecules of which my descendants will make themselves the subject without me ever having to know how I will transmit them to them which made it likely that for my part I classify them among living beings.

An asceticism of writing takes nothing away from the advantages that we can find in literary criticism. This seems to me, to close the loop on something more coherent, because of what I already put forward, this it seems to me can only get across by joining up with this impossible “it is written” from which there will be established perhaps one day the sexual relationship.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 19 May 1971

If I begin with the abruptness, in short, of what I have to tell you, it could be explained as follows. The fact is that in what we are exploring, starting from a certain discourse, mine as it happens, mine in so far as it is that of the analyst, let us say that this determines functions, in other words, that the functions are only determined starting from a certain discourse. So then, at this level of functions determined by a certain discourse, I can establish the equivalence that writing is enjoyment (*l'écrit, c'est la jouissance*). Naturally, that can only be situated within this first articulation of functions determined by a discourse. Let us say that it holds exactly the same place within these functions.

This being stated quite abruptly, why? In order that you may put it to the test. You will see that it will always lead you somewhere. And even by preference to something exact. This of course does not dispense me from taking care to introduce you into it along suitable paths, namely, not those which justify it for me, given from where I speak to you, but those by which it can be explained. I suppose, I do not necessarily suppose, that I am addressing myself here always to analysts, besides, this is what accounts for the fact that my discourse is not easily followed. It is very precisely in so far as there is something that, in the discourse of the analyst, creates an obstacle to a certain type of inscription. This inscription, nevertheless, is what I leave, it is what I propose, it is what I hope will get across, will get across from a point, from which, as one might say, the analytic discourse takes on a new energy.

(128) So then, it is a matter then of making tangible how the transmission of a letter has a relationship with something essential, fundamental in the organisation of discourse whatever it may be, namely, enjoyment. For that of course, it is necessary that each time I get you into tune with the thing. How to do it, if not by recalling the basic example from which I started, namely, that it is very explicitly by studying the letter as such, in so far as what?, in so far as, as I said, it has a feminising effect, that I open my *Ecrits*. This letter in short, I underlined it again the last time functions very specifically in the fact that no one knows anything about its content, and that up to the end, when all is said and done, no one will know anything about it.

It is very exemplary. It is very exemplary in the fact that, naturally, it is only to the simpleton and even there, I think all the same it is only to the simpleton that the idea has not come, that this letter is something as summary, as crude, as something that might bear witness to what is commonly called a sexual relationship. Even

though it may have been written by a man and it is said and it is underlined by a nobleman, by a nobleman and to a Queen, it is obvious that it is...that this is not what creates the drama, and that this letter, is in the style of the Court, as I might say, namely, something well grounded, is the best definition that can be given about the distribution of enjoyment. It is in the style of the Court that in this distribution, it puts what one can call properly speaking the sexual relationship in its place, namely, quite obviously, the lowest one. No one picks out as remarkable the services that a great lady may in this respect receive from a lackey.

With the Queen, of course, and precisely because it is the Queen, things ought to have a different emphasis. But first of all, then, it is posited, what we know from experience, is that a man born if I might say from a certain ancestry is one who cannot take umbrage at a liaison of his wife except in the measure of decency, namely, of respecting the proper forms. The only thing that could raise an objection to it is of course the introduction of bastards into the line of descent, but even that, after all, may serve to rejuvenate the bloodline. We see ourselves here obviously, in the framework that, even though it is not especially present in contemporary society, is nonetheless exemplary and fundamental in order to think out what is involved in social relationships. By this it can be seen, I am saying in short that, there is nothing like an order founded on artifice to make there appear this element which here, in appearance, is precisely the (129) one which must appear irreducible in the real, namely, the function of need. If I have told you that, there is an order in which it is altogether put in its place, that a subject however highly placed, reserves for himself this irreducible share of enjoyment, the minimal share that cannot be sublimated, as Freud explicitly puts it, only an order founded on artifice, I specified the Court, the Court in so far as it duplicates the artefact of nobility with this second artefact of an organised distribution of enjoyment, and it is only there that need can

decently find its place. The need explicitly specified as such is sexual need.

Only what appears on the one hand to specify the natural, as what, from a point of view that is a biological theorising of the sexual relationship, might make of need the starting point for what must result from it, namely, reproduction, we note that if the artefact is satisfying for a certain limited type of theorising on the one hand, on the other, it obviously yields to the fact that reproduction may moreover in this case not be, in quotes, a 'legitimate' reproduction. This need, this irreducibility in the sexual relationship, one can admit, of course, that it always exists, and Freud affirms it. But what is certain, is that it is not measurable - as long as it is not explicitly, and it can only be so in an artefact, in the artefact of the relation to the Other with a capital O – it is not measurable, and it is indeed in this element of indetermination that there is signed what is fundamental, which is very precisely that the sexual relationship is not inscribable, cannot be grounded as a relationship.

This indeed is why the letter, the letter from which I start to open my *Ecrits*, is designated by the fact that it is, and by the fact of how it indicates everything that Freud himself develops, which is that if, if it can be used for something that is of the order of sex, it is certainly not a sexual relationship, but a relationship, let us say, that is sexed (*sexué*). The difference between the two is the following. It is that, this is what Freud proved, the decisive thing he contributed, the fact is that by the mediation of the unconscious, we glimpse that everything that belongs to language has to deal with sex, is in a certain relationship with sex, but very specifically in that the sexual relationship cannot, at least up to the present moment, in any way be inscribed in it. The so called sexualisation by Freudian doctrine of what is involved in functions that are called subjective, provided one situates them clearly, situates them in the order of language, the so-called sexualisation consists essentially in the fact that what ought to

result from language, namely, that the sexual relation in some way or (130) other should be able to be inscribed in it, shows precisely, and this in fact, shows its failure, it is not inscribable. You already see functioning here something that forms part of this effect of setting aside, this effect of division which is the one with which we still regularly have to deal, and it is indeed for that reason that you must in a way form yourself in it. The fact is that I state for example that for the sexual relationship, it is precisely in the measure that something fails (*échoue*), fails because it is – is it stated in language? - but precisely what I said is not ‘stated’, it is ‘inscribable’, inscribable in that what is required, that what is required for it to have a function, is that from language, something can be produced which is explicitly a writing as such of the function. Namely, this something that I already once symbolised for you in the simplest fashion, namely, f , in a certain relationship with x ($f \quad x$).

So then, at the moment of saying that language is this something that does not take into account the sexual relationship, how does it not take it into account? By the fact that the inscription that it is able to comment, there is no way that this inscription can be, because it is in this that it consists, can be what I define as an effective inscription of something which is supposed to be the sexual relationship in so far as it would put into relationship the two poles, the two terms which would be entitled man and woman, in so far as this man and this woman are sexes respectively specified as masculine and feminine, in whom, in what? – in a being *who speaks*. In other words, who dwelling in language, draws from it this usage which is that of the word.

That is why, that is why that here it is not unimportant to put forward the letter, properly speaking, as being in a certain relationship, a relationship of a woman with what in terms of written law, is inscribed in the context where the thing happens. Namely, because of the fact that she is, under the title of Queen, the image of the woman

as conjoined to the King. It is in as far as something is incorrectly symbolised here, and typically around the relationship as sexual – and it is not indifferent that precisely it can only be incarnated in beings of fiction – it is in this measure that the fact that a letter, that a letter should be addressed to her, takes on its value, takes on the value that I designate to read myself, to state myself in my own remarks, *this sign*, this sign, I mean the letter, is indeed that of the woman “because she valorises her being in it, by establishing it outside the law, which still contains her through the effect of its origins, in a position of signifier, indeed of fetish”. It is clear that without the introduction of psychoanalysis, such a statement, which (131) is nevertheless the one from which there proceeds, I would say, the revolt of the woman, such a statement saying that the law always contains her through the effect of her origins in a position of signifier, even of fetish, could not of course, I repeat, be stated outside the introduction of psychoanalysis.

So then, it is precisely in this that the sexual relationship is, as I might say, made into an affair of state (*étatisé*), namely, by being incarnated in that of the King and the Queen, highlighting the fictional structure of the truth, it is starting from there that the letter takes on its function, its effect, which is surely posited by being in relationship with deficiency, the deficiency marked by a certain arbitrary and fictive promotion of the sexual relationship, and that it is here that, taking on its value, it poses its question. It is all the same an opportunity here – you should not consider that this is connected in some way in a direct fashion with what I have just recalled, but this sort of jump, of change of phase, is properly required by the point to which I want to lead you, it is an opportunity to mark that here there is confirmed, of course, there is confirmed the fact that the truth only progresses, only progresses from a structure of fiction. Namely, that precisely, in its essence, it is from the fact that there is promoted somewhere a structure of fiction, which is properly the very essence of language, that something can be produced which is what? But

precisely, this sort of questioning, this sort of pressure, of circumscribing, which puts the truth, as I might say, up against the wall of verification.

That is nothing other than the dimension of science. This is what shows precisely that as regards the path by which there is motivated, the path by which we see science progressing, the fact is that logic plays no small part in it. Whatever may be the originally, fundamentally, basically fictitious character of what makes up the material by which language is articulated, it is clear that there is a path that is called verification. It is what is attached to grasping where the fiction, as I might say, comes up short, and what brings it to a halt. It is clear that here, whatever it may be that has allowed us to write, and you will later see what that means, the progress of logic, I mean the written path along which it has progressed, it is clear that this checking is quite efficacious because it is inscribed within the very system of a fiction. It is called contradiction.

That if science apparently has progressed quite differently than along the path of tautology, this in no way changes the import of my remark, namely, that the summoning, brought to bear from a certain point, on truth to be verifiable, is precisely what has forced the (132) abandonment of all sorts of other supposedly intuitive premises, and that if – I am not going to go back on it today, I have sufficiently insisted on the characteristic of everything that preceded, opened up the path to the Newtonian discovery, for example – it is quite precisely from the fact that no fiction will prove to be satisfying other than one of them which precisely had to abandon any recourse to intuition and limit itself to something that can be inscribed. This therefore is why we have to attach ourselves to what is involved in the inscribable in the relationship to verification. In order to finish, of course, with what I said about the effect of the letter in *The purloined letter*, what did I explicitly say? That it feminises those who find themselves in the position of being in its shadow.

Of course, it is here that we touch on the importance of this notion, the function of the shadow, in as much as already the last time I stated to you what precisely a writing is, I mean something that presented itself in a literal, or literary, form. The shadow, in order to be produced, needs a source of light. Yes, and what I did was only tangible for you because of what is involved in the *Aufklärung*, from something that preserves the structure of fiction. I am speaking about the historical epoch, of course, which was not short, and it may be of use to us, it is so here, and this is what I am doing, to retrace its paths, or to take them up again. But in themselves, it is clear that what creates the light, is precisely what, starting from this field, defines itself as being that of the truth. And it is as such, as such a way, that the light that it spreads at every instant, even if it has this effect, effective by the fact that what is opaque in it projects a shadow, and that it is this shadow which carries the effect, that we always have to question this truth itself about its structure as fiction.

It is in this way that when all is said and done it emerges that, as it is stated, stated explicitly in this *écrit*, the letter, of course, it is not the woman, the woman whose address it bears, that it satisfies in reaching its destination, but the subject, namely, very precisely, to redefine it, what is divided in the phantasy. Namely, reality in so far as it is generated by a structure of fiction. This indeed is how the tale ends, at least in the way that in a second text, my one, I redo it, and it is from that that we should start to further question again what is involved in the letter. It is very precisely in the measure that this has never been done that, in order to do it, I ought to prolong in the same way this discourse on the letter.

(133) There you are! What we have to start from is all the same the fact that it is not for nothing that I summon you, that I call on you, to neglect nothing that is produced in the domain of logic. It is certainly not that you should oblige yourselves, as one might say, to follow its

constructions and its detours. It is in the fact that, nowhere like in these constructions that entitle themselves “symbolic logic”, nowhere does there better appear a deficit of any possibility of reflection. I mean that nothing is more embarrassed, this is well known is it not, than the introduction of a treatise of logic, the impossibility of logic to posit itself in a justifiable way is something that is quite striking. This is why the experience of reading these treatises, and they are all the more striking, of course, in the measure that they are more modern, as they are more in the vanguard of what effectively and very effectively constitutes a progress of logic. This is a project of the inscription of what is called logical articulation, the articulation of logic itself being incapable of defining itself or its goals, or its source, nor anything whatsoever that even resembles a [scientific] subject. It is very strange. It is very strange and it is precisely this that makes it very suggestive, because this indeed is what makes it worthwhile to touch, to explore, to explore what is involved in it, what is involved in something which only situates itself undoubtedly with respect to language. And to grasp that if perhaps in this language, nothing that is only ever put forward in an awkward way as not being a correct usage of this language, can very precisely not be stated except by not being able to justify itself, or by only being able to justify itself in a most confused way, by all sorts of attempts like, for example, those which consist in dividing language into an object language and a metalanguage. This is completely contrary to what is immediately demonstrated, namely, that there is no way for a single instant of speaking about this so called object language without using of course, not a metalanguage, but well and truly a language which is an everyday language. But in this very failure there can be exposed what is involved in the articulation that specifically has the closest relationship with the functioning of language, namely, the following articulation, which is, namely, that the relationship, the sexual relationship, cannot be written.

So then, in this respect, and with the goal only, as I might say, of making some movements that recall to us the dimension in which we move around, I will recall how first of all there is presented, there is presented what inaugurates the outline of logic, as formal logic, in (134) Aristotle. Naturally I am not going to take up again for you – even though it would be very instructive, it would be very instructive but after all, each one of you can simply take the trouble to open the *Prior analytics*, you can test yourself against this reprise. Open then the *Prior analytics*, and you will see what a syllogism is. And after all it is from the syllogism that we must start, at least it is from there that I am taking things up again, since at our second last meeting, it was on this that I ended.

I do not want to take it up by giving examples, because we are limited by time for that, by giving examples of all the forms of the syllogism. Let it be enough for us to highlight rapidly what is involved in the Universal and the Particular, and quite simply in their affirmative form. I am going to take the syllogism described as *Darii*, namely, made up of one Universal affirmative and two Particulars, and I am going to recall to you everything that is involved in a certain way of presenting things. Well then, it is simply that, here nothing in any case can function, can function except by substituting into the texture of discourse, to substitute for the signifier the hole made by replacing it by the letter. Because, if we state the following, just taking *Darii*, that, to use Aristotle's terms, "*every man is good*", the "every man" is the Universal and I have sufficiently underlined for you, sufficiently prepared you in any case to understand the fact that I can with nothing else recall, that the Universal does not have, in order to stand up, the need for the existence of any man. "*Every man is good*" may mean that there is no man who is not good, everything that is not good is not a man, right? Second articulation: "*Some animals are men*", and third articulation, which is called the conclusion, the second being the minor, "*therefore some animals are good*".

It is clear that this specifically only holds up from the usage of the letter for the reason that, it is clear that, unless they are supported by a letter, there is no equivalence between the “every man”, the “every man” subject of the Universal, which here plays the role of what is called the middle term, and this same middle term at the place where it is employed as an attribute, namely, that “some animals are men”. Because in truth, this distinction, which deserves to be made, nevertheless demands a lot of care. The man of “every man”, when he is the subject, implies a function of a Universal which very precisely only its symbolic status gives it as a support. Namely, that something is stated as “man”.

(135) Under the species of the attribute and to sustain that some animals are men, it is necessary of course, it is the only thing that distinguishes them, to state that what we call “man” among the animals, is very precisely this type of animal which happens to inhabit language. Of course, it is justifiable in that case to posit that man is good. It is a limitation, it is a limitation very precisely by the fact that the thing on which there can be grounded that man is good depends on the fact, brought out a long time ago, and before Aristotle, that the idea of *good* can only be established from language. For Plato, it is at the foundation of it; there is no language, possible articulation, since for Plato, language is the world of ideas, there is no articulation possible without this primary idea of the good. It is quite possible to question differently what is involved in the good in language, and simply in this case, to have to deduce the consequences which will result from it for the universal position of the fact that “man is good”. As you know, this is what Meng-Tzu does, and it was not for nothing that I put him forward in my previous lectures. Good, what does that mean? Good for what? Or is it simply to say, as has been said for some time “you are very kind, *vous êtes bon*”. If things have got to a certain point that, in the putting in question of what is truth and, moreover, discourse, it is

indeed perhaps in effect this change of emphasis that has come about as regards the use of the word “good”. Good, good! No need to specify: good for the services, good for war, is saying too much about it. The “you are good” has its absolute value. In fact, this is the central link that there is good in discourse; once you dwell in a certain type of discourse, well then you are ready (*bon*) for it to command you.

This indeed is how we are led to the function of the master signifier, which I underlined is not inherent in language in itself, and that language only requires, anyway....I mean, only makes possible a certain determined number of discourses and that all of those at least up to the present, I articulated especially for you last year, that none of them eliminates the function of the master signifier.

To say that some animals are good, is obviously in these conditions not at all a simply formal conclusion. And this was why I underlined earlier that the use of logic, whatever it may state itself, cannot in any way be reduced to a tautology. That some animals are good precisely, is not limited to those who are men, as the existence of (136) those that are called domestic animals implies. And it is not for nothing that for some time I have underlined that you cannot say that they do not have some speech. If they lack language, and, of course, much more the resources of discourse, that does not render them any less subject of the word. It is even this that distinguishes them and that makes them means of production. This, as you see opens a door for us that might lead us a little bit further. I would point out to you that...I leave it to your meditation that in the commandments described as the Decalogue, the woman is assimilated to the aforesaid in the following form: “You shall not covet the wife of your neighbour nor his ox, nor his ass”, and anyway there is an enumeration which is very precisely that of the means of production. This is not to give you an opportunity to snigger but to reflect by bringing together what I am pointing out to you here in passing, with

what formerly, formerly I wanted to say about what was expressed in the commandments, namely, nothing other than the laws of the word, which limits their interest. But it is very important precisely to limit the interest of things in order to know why, really, they have an effect.

Good! Well then, this having been said, faith, as well as I could, namely, by a clearing of the way which is as usual, is that not so, the one I am forced to make of the inverted A, of the buffalo head, I pass on to the next stage, namely what allows us to inscribe the progress of logic. You know that something happened which moreover is very, very beautiful, like that, a little bit more than 2000 years ago, something happened that is called a reinscription of this first attempt made by means of holes in the right place. Namely, by the replacing of terms by letters, terms described as major, minor and middle terms, the terms described as extreme and middle terms, major and minor being the proposition, I apologise for this lapse. You know that with the logic inaugurated by de Morgan and Boole, we have come, it was only inaugurated by them and not pushed to its final point, we arrived at the formulae described as quantifiers.

- Who cannot hear? Nobody? How long have you not been able to hear me?

- When you were at the board.

- So then up to then it was OK? I am grateful to you for telling me when it's not working out. So then listen, I am going to write it rapidly and I'll come back here.

(137) Good. So then I have made these little circles to show you that the bar is not a bar between two $f(x)$, which would besides mean absolutely nothing, and that the bar that you find in the right hand column between each one, each one of the pairs of $f(x)$, this bar is

uniquely linked to the $f(x)$ which is below, namely, signifies its negation. Time is passing quicker than I had imagined, so that this may force me to shorten things a little. The fruit of the operation of complete inscription, the one that was allowed, suggested, by the progress of mathematics, it is because mathematics managed through algebra to be entirely written, that the idea of making use of the letter for something other than for making holes came. Namely, of writing in a different way our four kinds of propositions, in so far as they are centred on the All, on some, namely, on words that it would really not be difficult to show what ambiguities they supported. So then, starting from that idea, people wrote what presented itself first of all as subject. On condition of affecting it with this inverted A, we could take it as the equivalent of “every x ” and that henceforth, what was at stake, was to know in what measure a certain “every x ” could satisfy a relationship of function.

I think that I do not need to underline here – nevertheless I have to, otherwise all of this will appear empty – that the thing has altogether its full sense in mathematics, namely, that precisely in so far as we remain on the letter where there lies the power of mathematics, this x on the right, in so far as it is unknown, can legitimately be posited, or not posited, as being able to find its place in what happens to be the function that corresponds to it; namely, where the same x is taken as a variable. To go quickly, because I told you that it was getting late, I am going to illustrate it. I underlined, I said, I stated, that the x at the left, in the of x specifically, is an unknown. Let us take, for example, the root of a second-degree equation. Can I write, for every root of a second-degree equation, that it can be inscribed in this (138) function that defines x as a variable, the one from which real numbers are established? For those who might be completely like that, for whom this is really a language they have never heard, I underlined that real numbers, are in any case, for them, all the numbers they know. Namely, including irrational numbers even if they do not know what they are. They should simply know that real

numbers, anyway, are done with, they have been given a status; since they do not suspect what imaginary numbers are, I am only giving them an indication to give them an idea that it is worthwhile making a function of real numbers. Good! Well then, it is quite clear that it is not true that for any x , namely, any root of a second-degree equation, one can say that every root of a second-degree equation satisfies the function on which real numbers are founded. Quite simply because there are roots of second-degree equations that are imaginary numbers, which do not form part of the function of real numbers.

Good! What I want to underline for you is the following, it is that with that, people think they have said enough. Well then, no. Enough has not been said, because moreover for everything that is involved in the relationships of every x as well as the relationship that people think they can substitute for some – with which one can be satisfied on occasion – namely, that there exist roots of the second-degree equation which satisfy the function of the real number, and also, that there exist roots of the second-degree equation that do not satisfy it. But in one case as in the other, what results, far from us being able to see here the purely formal transposition, the complete homology of Universal and Particular affirmatives and negatives respectively, the fact is, that what this means, is not that the function is not true. What can be meant by the fact that a function is not true? From the moment that you write a function, this function is what it is. Even if it goes way beyond the function of real numbers. This means that as regards the unknown that constitutes the root of the second-degree equation, I cannot write to lodge in it the function of real numbers. This is something quite different to the Universal negative, whose properties moreover were well designed for us to put it in suspense, as I sufficiently underlined at one time. It is exactly the same at the level of *there exists an x* , there exists an x in connection with which, there exist certain x 's, certain roots of the second-degree equations in connection with which I can write the function described

as real numbers by saying that they satisfy it. There are others in (139) connection with which – it is not a matter of denying the function of real numbers – but in connection with which I cannot write the function of real numbers.

Well then, this is going to introduce us into the third stage which is the one, in short, that everything that I have said to you today is designed, of course, to introduce you to. The fact is, as you have clearly seen, I slipped quite naturally, by trusting the memory of what it is a matter of re-articulating, I slipped over to writing, namely, that the function, with its little bar above, symbolised something completely inept with respect to what I had effectively to say. You have perhaps noticed that, it never entered my head, at least up to the present, nor yours either, to think that the bar of negation perhaps had something to do, to say, not in the right-hand column but in the left. Let us try, what advantage can we draw from it? What can we have to say about the fact that the function did not vary, let us call it x , as it happens, and to put, which we have never had to do up to the present, the bar of negation. It can be said or indeed written. Let us begin by saying it: “It is not about every x that the function of x can be written; it is not from an existing x that the function of of x can be written”.

There you are! I still have not said whether it was *inscribable* or not. But in expressing myself in this way, I am stating something whose only reference is the existence of writing. In a word, there is a world between the two negations, the one which ensures that I do not write it, that I exclude it, and, as someone who was a rather subtle grammarian formerly expressed it, it is *forclusive*. The function will not be written. *I want to know nothing about it*. The other is *discordant*. It is not in so far as there is a whole x that I can write or

not write of x; it is not in so far as there exists an x that I can write or not write of x.

This is very properly what puts us at the heart of the impossibility of writing what is involved in the sexual relationship. Because after there has subsisted for some time as regards this relationship, the well known structures of fiction, those on which there repose all religions in particular, we have come, and this through analytic experience, to the foundation of the fact that this relationship cannot work without a third term, which is properly speaking the phallus. Naturally I mean, (140) as I might say, a certain little understanding being formulated that this third term, is self-evident; precisely there is a third term, and this is why there must be a relationship! It is very difficult, of course, to image that, to show that there is something unknown there, man. There is something unknown here, woman. And that the third term *qua* third term, is precisely characterised by the fact, which is precisely, that it is not a middle term (*médium*), that if one links it to one of the two terms, the term of man for example, one can be certain that it will not communicate with the other, and inversely. That it is specifically this which is the characteristic of the third term. That naturally, even if the function of attribute was one day invented, why would it not be in relationship, in the first ridiculous steps of the structure of the semblance, that every man is phallic, every woman is not so. Now what has to be established, is something quite different. It is that *some man* is, starting from something that the second formula expresses here, starting from the fact that it is not as a particular that he is so. Man is a phallic function in so far as he is every man. But as you know, there are the greatest doubts to be had about the fact that *every man* exists. That is what is at stake: it is that he can only be so under the heading of *every man*, namely, of a signifier, nothing more.

And that on the contrary, what I stated, what I told you, is that for the woman, what is at stake is exactly the contrary. Namely, what is expressed by the discordant statement above, the one that I only wrote as I might say by not writing it. Because I am underlining that what is at stake is a discordant which is only sustained by the statement, it is that the woman, the woman can only fill her place in the sexual relationship, she can only be it under the heading of *a-woman, d'une-femme*. As I strongly emphasised, there is no *every woman*.

What I wanted to open up today, to illustrate for you, is that logic carries the mark of the sexual impasse, and that by following it in its (141) movement, in its progress, namely, in the field where it appears to have least to do with what is at stake in what is articulated as regards our experience, namely, analytic experience, you will discover in it the same impasses, the same obstacles, the same gaps, and in a word the same absence of the closure of a fundamental triangle.

I am astonished that things, I mean time, has gone so quickly, with what I had to open out for you today and that I now have to interrupt myself. I think that it will be easy for you perhaps before we meet again on the second Wednesday of the month of June, to notice for yourselves the appropriateness of this, from which it results, from which it results, for example, that nothing can be grounded about the status of man, I mean seen from analytic experience, except by constructing artificially, mythically, this *every man* with this presumed one, the mythical father of *Totem and Taboo*, namely, the one who is capable of satisfying the enjoyment of *all the women*.

But inversely, there are consequences in the position of the woman, in the fact, that it is only, starting from being *a-woman* that she can be established in what is inscribable by not being so. Namely, what is involved in the sexual relationship remaining gaping open, and that

there arrives the following, so easy to read in what is involved in the so precious function of hysterics. The hysterics are the ones who, as regards what is involved in the sexual relationship, *tell the truth*. It is difficult to see how this path of psychoanalysis could have opened up if we had not had them. That neurosis – that one neurosis at the very least, I will demonstrate it also for the other – that one neurosis should not be strictly the point at which there is articulated the truth of a failure, which is no less true anywhere else than where the truth is told. This is where we should start from to give its meaning to the Freudian discovery. What the hysteric articulates is, of course, that as regards constructing the *every man*, she is just as capable as the *every man* himself, namely, by imagination. So then because of that, she does not need him. But if by chance the phallus interests her, namely, what she sees herself as castrated of, as Freud sufficiently underlined, only by the progress of the treatment, of analytic treatment, she only has to put up with it. Because we have to believe that she has this enjoyment, that she has it herself, and that if by chance sexual relationships interest her, she has to be interested in this third element, the phallus. And since she can only be interested in it through the relationship to the man, in so far as it is not sure that he even has one, her whole policy will be turned towards what I call having *at least one* of them.

(142) This notion of *at least one*, it is on this, good God, that I end, because the time shows me my limit. You will see that I will subsequently, of course, have to put it in function with what, of course, you already see there, already articulated, namely, that of the *un en peluce*, which does not come only from here, is that not so, as I wrote it last time: *un en peluce*. It is not for nothing that I wrote it like that. I think that this may all the same have some echoes for some people. We will write the *au-moins-un* as essential function of the relationship, in so far as it situates the woman with respect to the key third point of the phallic function, in this way because it is inaugural. It inaugurates a dimension which is very precisely the one

on which I insisted for a discourse which might not be a semblance, the *hommoinzin*.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 9 June 1971

I am going to dwell today on something that I took the trouble to write out. There you are. I am not saying this, simply like that, in passing. It is not superfluous. I will allow myself, like that eventually, to hum something about some term or other of writing (*l'écrit*). But if you have sufficiently heard what I have been tackling this year about the function of writing, well then I will have no need to justify any more that it is effectively an act. In effect it is not a matter of indifference that what I am going to say now is written. It has absolutely not the same import if I simply say or if I tell you that *I wrote*.....

- We can't hear you!

A man – can you hear me? – and a woman can understand one another, I am not saying no to that; they can as such hear one another crying out. That would be a jest if I had not *written* it. The written supposes that at least you have some hint, at least some of you, of what I said at another time about the cry. I cannot go back on it. It can happen that they cry out, in the case where they do not otherwise succeed in understanding one another, otherwise, namely, about an affair which is the test of their understanding. There is no lack of these affairs, including on occasion - this is the best of them - understanding in bed. There is no lack of these affairs, certainly,

then, and this is why they lack something, namely, that to make oneself understood as man, as woman, which means sexually, would the man and the woman only understand one another by saying nothing? There is no question of that, because the man, the woman, have no need to speak to be caught up in a discourse. As such, as such, drawing on the same term as I used earlier, as such, they are facts of discourse. A smile here would be enough, it would seem, to (144) posit that they are not just that. No doubt, and who does not agree. But that they are also that, effects of discourse, fixates the smile and it is only in this way, fixated by this remark, that the smile on ancient statues finds its meaning. Infatuation, for its part, sniggers. It is in a discourse, then, that natural men and women, as one might say, have to valorise themselves as such.

There is no discourse except a semblance. If that was not self-evident, I exposed it, and I will recall how it is articulated. The semblance is only stated starting from the truth. This truth, no doubt, is never evoked in science. That is no reason for us to be any more concerned about it. It can do quite well without us. In order to make itself heard, it is enough to say, "I speak", and people believe it because it is true: whoever speaks, speaks. The only wager, I am recalling what I said about the wager, illustrating it with Pascal, the only wager is about what it says. As truth it can only say the semblance about enjoyment, and it wins over sexual enjoyment on every occasion.

I would like here, to put on the board for the eventual use of those who have not come these last times, the algebraic figures with which I thought I could punctuate what was at stake in the bind (*coinçage*) to which one is led, by writing what is involved in the sexual relationship.

The two bars put on the symbols on the left and with which there are respectively situated everything that is capable of answering to the semblance of sexual enjoyment, the two bars of negation, as they say, are such kind that precisely they are not to be written because what cannot be written, one quite simply does not write. One can say that they are not to be written, that the function of x cannot be written about *every* x , and that it is from *this is not all* that the woman establishes herself. There does not exist an x which satisfies the function from which there is defined the variable of being the function of x , that it does not exist, it is from this that there can be formulated what is involved in the man, in the male I mean. But precisely here the negation only has the function which is described as the *Verneinung*, namely, that it is only posited by having first of all put forward that there exists *some man*, and that it is with respect to *every woman* that a woman is situated. This is a reminder. That does not form part of what I have written which I am now taking up again.

(145) That I am taking up again. Which means that – I see that it is rather widespread, you are quite right in fact to be taking notes, the only important thing about writing is that afterwards you can situate yourself with respect to it. Good! Well then! You would do well to follow me in my discipline of the name, *n.o.m.* I will have to come back to it, especially the next time which will be the session with which we will conclude this year. What is proper to a name, is to be a proper name, even for a drop (*tombé*) among others for the use of a common noun, it is not a waste of time to find a proper use for it. And when a name has remained sufficiently proper, have no hesitation, take the example, and call the thing by its name, *the Freudian thing* for example, as I did, as I like to imagine you know. I will come back to it the next time. To name something is a summons, moreover in what I wrote, the Freudian thing in question, stands up and struts its stuff. I am not the one who dictates to it. It would even be perfect peace. Like the perfect peace of the semblance to which so many lives tie themselves. If I were not as a

man, in the masculine, exposed here to the wind of castration. Re-read my text. The truth for its part, my unscrewable (*imbaisable*), partner is certainly exposed to the same wind. It even carries it: to be up to date (*dans le vent*) is that. But this wind does not make the slightest difference to it. For the reason that enjoyment is of little account to it. Because it leaves truth to the semblance. This semblance, for its part, also has a name, taken up from the mysterious times when the mysteries were being played out, nothing more, where it named the knowledge presupposed by fecundity and as such offered to adoration in the figure of the semblance of an organ. This semblance exposed by pure truth is, we have to recognise, rather phallic (*assez phalle*), rather involved in what for us is initiated by the virtue of coitus, namely, the selection of genotypes, with the reproduction of the phenotype and everything that results from it, sufficiently involved then to merit this ancient name of phallus. Even though it is clear that the inheritance that it covers nowadays is reduced to the acephalic nature of this selection, in other words the impossibility of subordinating the enjoyment described as sexual to that which *sub rosa* is supposed to specify the choice of the man and the woman taken as carriers each one of a precise batch of genotypes. Because in the best of cases, it is the phenotype that guides this choice. In truth, make no mistake, a proper name, because the phallus is still one, is only completely stable on the map where it designates a desert. These are the only things on a map that do not change their name. It is remarkable that even the deserts produced in the name of a religion, which is not rare, are never designated by the (146) name that was devastating for them. A desert is only re-baptised by being fecundated. This is not the case for sexual enjoyment, which the progress of science does not seem to be able to conquer for knowledge. It is on the contrary by means of the dam that it constitutes to the advent of the sexual relationship in discourse that its place was emptied out until, in psychoanalysis, it became obvious.

Such is, in the sense that this word has in Frege's logic *die Bedeutung des Phallus*. This indeed is why – I have my little tricks, huh? – it was in German, because it was in Germany, that I carried the message to which this title corresponds in my *Ecrits*, and it was to honour the centenary of the birth of Freud. It was a lovely thing in this country that was chosen out to be the place where this message had its resonance, the bewilderment that it produced. You cannot have the slightest idea, now that you are all strolling around with something like that under your arm. At that time, *die Bedeutung des Phallus* produced an effect. To say that I was expecting it would mean nothing, at least in my tongue. My strength is to know what it means to wait. As regards the bewilderment I am talking about, I am not taking blaming here the 25 years of racial cretinisation. This would only be to sanction that these 25 years have triumphed everywhere. I would insist rather that this *die Bedeutung des Phallus* is in reality a pleonasm. In language there is no *Bedeutung* other than the phallus. Language in its function as an existent, only connotes, in the final analysis, I said connote, huh, the impossibility of symbolising the sexual relationship among the beings that inhabit it, that inhabit language, by reason of the fact that it is from this habitat that they are able to speak. And let no one forget what I said, because speech, henceforth, is not the privilege of these beings that inhabit it that they evoke speech in everything that they dominate by the effect of discourse. It begins with my dog, for example, the one that I have been speaking about for a long time, and extends very far. The eternal silence, as someone or other has said, of infinite space, will not, like many others, other eternities, have lasted more than an instant. There is a hell of a lot of talk in the zone of the new astronomy, the one that was opened up immediately after this little remark by Pascal. It is because language is only constituted from a single *Bedeutung* that it borrows its structure, which consists in the fact that one can only, once one inhabits it, make use of it for metaphor, from which there result all these mythical insanities on which its inhabitants live, for metonymy, from which they take the

little bit of reality that remains to them, under the form of surplus enjoying.

(147) Now this, what I have just said, only gets its stamp in history, once writing has appeared, and this is never simply an inscription, even if it takes on the appearance of what is put forward in the audio-visual. Writing from its origins, up to its last protean techniques, is only something that is articulated as bone (*os*) of which language is the flesh. And this indeed is how it proves that enjoyment, sexual enjoyment, has no bone, which we were already left in no doubt about by the habits of the organ which cuts such a comical figure in the speaking male. But writing, for its part, not language, writing provides a bone for all the enjoyments which, through discourse, open up for the speaking being; giving them bones, it underlines what was certainly accessible, but masked. Namely, that the sexual relationship is missing in the field of truth, in that the discourse that establishes it only proceeds from a semblance by only clearing the way for enjoyment that parody – this is the correct word – the one that is effective there but that remains foreign to it. Such is the Other of enjoyment, forever prohibited, the one that language will only allow a habitation for by providing it – why would I not use this image - with a diving suit.

Perhaps that means something to you, this image, huh? There are, all the same, some of you who are not so occupied by the function of trade unions that you cannot all the same be moved by our lunar exploits. Man has been dreaming about the moon for a long time. Now he has set foot on it. To really take account of what that means, you should do what I did before returning from Japan. That is a place where you can realise that dreaming about the moon was really a function. A person, whose name I will not mention, I do not want to indulge in erudition here, who is still there, locked up in fact, him, the very one. You realise what is meant by *persona*, it is the person

himself, it is his mask that is locked in a little Japanese cupboard. It is shown to visitors.

We know that it is him, that the place to put him can be seen there, it is found in the place that is called the Silver Pavilion, at Kyoto. He dreamt about the moon. We like to believe that he contemplated it rather phallically. We like to believe it, but anyway, that leaves us somewhat embarrassed all the same. We no longer know what to make of it. The path that has been taken - is that not so? - to inscribe it, to get out of this embarrassment, you should understand that it is the achievement of the barred O of my graph, S(Ø).

All of this is only banter. It is a banter that gives a signal, a signal to (148) me of course. It warns me that I am touching on structuralism. I am forced to touch on it, like that, naturally, it is not my fault. It is for you to judge, but I blame it on the situation that I am undergoing. Time is passing and naturally I am going to have to shorten things a little, so that it is going to become more difficult to follow what I have written. But this situation that I am undergoing, I am going to pinpoint, pinpoint it by something that is not going to appear to you right away but that I have to say between now and the time that we leave one another, in a week's time. It is what I would pinpoint as a refusal of performance. It is a sickness, a sickness of our epoch, through whose 'Fork' one has to pass, because this refusal constitutes the cult of competence. Namely, of a certain idealness (*idéalité*) to which I am reduced, like, moreover, many fields of science, to authorise myself before you. The result - these are anecdotes you know - my *Ecrits* are for example.....one of them is translated into English, *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage* has been translated as *The language of the self*. I have just learned that in Spanish, there is also something of this type, the translation of a certain number of them is entitled: *Structuralist aspects of Freud*, something like that. Good, anyway, let's leave it! Competence overlooks the fact that it is based on incompetence, by proposing that

its idealness should be worshipped, that is how it leads to concessions, and I am going to give you an example of this. The sentence with which I began: *a man and a woman can understand one another, I am not saying no*. Well there you are, it was to sugar the pill for you, but the pill does not fix anything. The notion forged in the term *structuralism* tends to extend the delegating that occurred for some time to certain specialists, the specialists of truth, the delegating of a certain void that is noticed in the rarefying of enjoyment. This is what existentialism had flawlessly picked up, after phenomenology, much more hypocritical, had thrown down the gauntlet of its breathing exercises. It occupied the places left deserted by philosophy because they were not appropriate places. At the present time, they are just about suitable as a memorial for its contribution - which is no little thing - to philosophy, to the discourse of the master which it definitively stabilised with the support of science. Marx or not, whether he put philosophy on its feet or on its head, philosophy, it is certain that philosophy in any case, for its part, was not sufficiently phallic (*pas assez phalle*). Let no one count on me to structuralise this business of the impossible life, as if it were not from there that life had a chance to give proof of its real. My jocund prosopopea, "*I speak*", in the article quoted earlier, the (149) *Freudian thing*, even though it was attributed in a rhetorical way to the truth in person, did not make me fall into what I drew it from. Nothing is said there except what speaking means, the irremediable division between enjoyment and the semblance. The truth is to enjoy being a semblance, and in no way to admit that the reality of each of these two halves only predominate by affirming itself as being from the other, or by lying (*mentir*) in alternate jets. Such is the half-saying of the truth. Its astronomy is equatorial, in other words already completely out of date when it was born from the couple night-day. An astronomy is made reasonable by submitting itself to the seasons, by being seasoned. This is an allusion to Chinese astronomy, which, for its part, was equatorial and produced nothing.

It was not his competence as a linguist, and for good reason, that allowed Freud to trace out the paths of the thing we are dealing with. What I, for my part, remind you of is that he was only able to follow these paths by demonstrating a performance in language that was nothing short of acrobatic. And that here, only linguistics allows them to be situated in a structure, in so far as it is concerned for its part with a competence that is called linguistic consciousness, which is all the same quite remarkable, precisely by never shying away from its enquiry. Hence my formula that the *unconscious is structured like a language* implies that at the very least, the condition of the unconscious is language. But this takes nothing away from the impact of the enigma which consists in the fact that the unconscious knows more about it than it appears to, since it is because of this surprise that I started to name it as I did. It knows about things. Naturally, right away, the aforesaid unconscious was brought up short by attributing to it all the instincts, which moreover are still there like a wet blanket. Read anything at all that is published outside my school. The whole business was sewn up, there was nothing more to be done than to put on the label addressed to the truth, precisely, which skips over it sufficiently in our time, as I might say, not to disdain the black market. I put sticks in the hinge of clandestinity by hammering out that the knowledge in question could only be analysed by being formulated as a language, indeed in a particular tongue, even if this suffers from cross-breeding, which means moreover that it does no more than these aforesaid tongues permit themselves frequently, by their own authority.

No one challenged me about what language knows, namely *die Bedeutung des Phallus*, I said it but no one noticed it because it was the truth. So then, who is interested in the truth? Well, people.

(150) People for whom I drew the structure of this crude image that is found in family-friendly topology. That's how it is drawn, huh? In this family-friendly topology, this is how the Klein bottle is drawn.

There is no – I am coming back to it - point of its surface, that is not a topological part of the retrogression which is figured here by the circle, drawn here, of the circle which alone can properly give to this bottle the bottom that the other bottles are too proud of, because they have a bottom, God knows why!

So then it is not where people think it is, but in its structure as subject that the hysteric – I am coming to some of the people that I designated just now – conjugates the truth of her enjoyment with the implacable knowledge that she has that the Other proper to cause it, is the phallus, in other words a semblance. Who could fail to understand Freud's disappointment in grasping that the no-cure at which he arrived with the hysteric resulted in nothing more than making him claim the aforesaid semblance suddenly provided with real virtues, by having hung it at this point of retrogression which since it is not unfindable on the body, is a quite incorrect topological figuration of enjoyment in the woman. But did Freud know that? We may well ask. In the impossible solution of her problem, it is by measuring the cause in the most accurate way, in other words by making of it a just cause that the hysteric comes to agree about what she feigns to be the holder of this semblance, at least one, (*au moins un*) that I write - do I need to write it again? - as *l'hommoizn*, in conformity with the problem (*l'os*) that her enjoyment requires for her to gnaw on it. Her approaches to the *hommoizn* - there are three ways of writing it. There is the usual way of spelling it, huh, because (151) after all I really have to explain it to you, (1). And then there is this, there is this expressive value that I am always able to give to a scriptural operation, (2). Then on occasion you can all the same bring it together and write it *a (u moins un)* like that, (3), so as not to forget that occasionally it can function as the **o**-object (*objet a*) *au moins un*

hommoizn

a (u moinzin)

Since his approaches to the *au moins un*, can only be made by admitting to the aforesaid cynosure which captures him, depending on his tendencies, the deliberate castration that she reserves for him, his chances are limited. You must not believe that his success passes by way of one of these men, men in the masculine, that the semblance rather embarrasses, or who prefer it to be more frank. Those that I am designating in this way are the wise men, the masochists. That situates the wise men. They have to be brought back to their correct place. To judge the result in this way is to fail to recognise what can be expected from the hysteric if only she is willing to inscribe herself in a discourse, because her destiny is to bring the master to heel (*mater le maître*), so that thanks to her, he falls back on knowledge.

There you are! I am not contributing here anything more am I? What is interesting in this *écrit*, is that it generates a whole lot of things, but you really have to know where the points are that have to be remembered. Nothing other than to mark that the danger is the same at this crossroads as in the one that I have just pinpointed by having been warned by it that it is from there that I started earlier, I have come back to the same point, huh? I am going around in circles.

To love the truth, even that which the hysteric incarnates as one might say, in other words to give her what one does not have on the pretext that she designates it, is very specifically to commit oneself to a theatre which it is very clear can no longer be anything than a parish fête (*fête de charité*). I am not just talking about the hysteric. I am talking about this something which is expressed in, I will tell you like Freud, the *malaise* of the theatre. For it still to be able to hold up, you have to have.....you have to have Brecht, do you not,

who understood that that could not hold up without a certain distance, a certain cooling down. This *it is clear*, as I have just said, *which can no longer be, etc.*, is properly speaking precisely, an effect of the *Aufklärung*, which is scarcely believable, is it not, linked to the coming onto the scene, however awkwardly it was done, of the discourse of the analyst. It was enough that the hysteric, the qualified (152) hysteric, I am in the process, as you can clearly see, of approaching the function for you, it was enough for the hysteric to renounce the extravagant clinic with which she furnished the gap in the sexual relationship. It is to be taken, it is to be taken as the sign, it is perhaps to be taken as the sign made to someone, I am talking about the hysteric, huh, that she is going to do better than this clinic. The only important thing here is what goes unnoticed, namely, that I am talking about the hysteric as something that supports quantification. In listening to me something might be written as an upside down A of x, and that is why I wrote it on the board, since it is always apt, while unknown, to function in of x, as a variable. This indeed is what I write and it would be easy in re-reading Aristotle to disclose what relationship to the woman, precisely identified by him to the hysteric – which rather gives the women of his epoch a very good ranking, at least they were stimulating for the men – to disclose what relationship to the woman identified to the hysteric allowed him - this is a jump - allowed him to establish his logic in the form, in the form of *pan*, the choice of *pas*, *pasa*, *pan*, the choice of this vocable rather than *ekastos*, to designate the proposition of the universal affirmative, and also the negative. Anyway the whole pantaloony of the first great formal logic, is absolutely essentially linked to the idea that Aristotle had of the woman. This does not prevent, precisely, that the only universal formula that he did not allow himself to pronounce was *all women (toutes les femmes)*. There is no trace of it. Open the *Prior Analytics*. No more than he, even though his successors rushed into it headfirst, would have allowed himself to write this incredible enormity, on which formal logic has lived ever since, *all men are mortal*. Which is something that completely

prejudges the future fate of humanity. *All men are mortal*, that means that all men, because what is at stake is something that is stated in extension, all men *qua* all, are destined to death, that is that the human race is going to be extinguished, which to say the least is rather daring. That \times requires the passage to a being, to an *every woman* (*toute femme*) that an individual as sensitive as Aristotle never in fact wrote this *every woman*, is precisely what allows it to be advanced that *every woman* is the statement by which there is decided the hysteric as subject, and that it is for this reason that a woman is solidary with a *papludun* which properly lodges her in this logic of the successor that Peano gave us as a model. The hysteric is not *a woman* (*une femme*).

It is a matter of knowing whether psychoanalysis as I define it gives access to *a woman* or whether, for *a woman* to come to pass, is the business of *doxa*. Namely, if it is like virtue, to listen to the people who were dialoguing in *Meno* – you remember *Meno*, but no (*mais non*) – like this virtue, and this is what gives its value, its meaning, to this dialogue, this virtue is what cannot be taught. This can be expressed, that what can be about her, about a woman, as I have defined the step, be known in the unconscious, i.e., in an articulated fashion. Because after all – I will stop there – someone who precisely puts it up on the stage again, as if this were a question worthy of absorbing great deal of activity – it is a book that is very well done - a great amount of activity on the part of the analyst, as if it were really what an analyst should specialise in, someone accords me the merit, in a note, of having introduced the distinction between truth and knowledge. Outrageous! Outrageous! I have just been talking to you about *Meno*, have I not? Naturally, he never read it, he only reads theatre. Anyway it was with *Meno* that I began to open up the first phases of a crisis that a certain analytic system has confronted me with. The distinction between truth and knowledge,

the opposition between *episteme* and the true *doxa*, the one that can ground virtue, you will find written, quite crudely, in *Meno*. What I highlighted, is precisely the contrary, it is their junction. Namely, that there, there where they are knotted together in appearance, in a particular circle, the knowledge that is at stake in the unconscious is the one that slides, that is prolonged, which at every instant proves to be a knowledge of the truth.

And this is where just now I am putting the question. Does this knowledge effectively allow us to make progress with respect to *Meno*? Namely, is this truth, in so far as it is incarnated in the hysteric effectively capable of a subtle enough sliding to be the introduction to *a woman*. I know well, the question has risen by a notch since I proved that there is something that can be articulated in language which cannot for all that be articulated in words, and that it is on that simply that desire is based. It is nevertheless easy to settle, it is precisely because what is at stake is desire, in so far as it puts the emphasis on the invariance of the unknown, of the unknown which is on the left (*à gauche*), the one that is only produced under the heading of a *Verneinung*. It is precisely because it puts the emphasis on the invariance of the unknown, that obviously what belongs to desire cannot be inscribed by analysis in any function of a variable. This is the stumbling block by which there is separated as such the desire of the hysteric, from what nevertheless is produced, and allows innumerable women to function as such, namely, by playing the function of the *papludun* of their being for all their situational variations.

(154) The hysteric here plays the role of functional schema, if you know what that means. This is the import of my formula of desire described as *unsatisfied*. It can be deduced from this that the hysteric

is situated by introducing the *papludun* by which each one of the women is established along the path of *it is not of every woman that it can be said that she is a function of the phallus (ce n'est pas de toute femme que se peut dire qu'elle soit fonction du phallus)*. That this is the case with every woman is what constructs her desire and that is why this desire is sustained by being unsatisfied. The fact is that *a woman* results from it, but one who cannot be the hysteric in person. This indeed is how she incarnates my earlier truth, the one that after having made it speak I restored to its structural function.

The psychoanalytic discourse is established by this restoration of her truth to the hysteric. It was enough to dissipate the theatre in hysteria. This is why I say that it is not without a relationship to something that changes the appearance of things in our epoch. I had insisted on the fact that when I began to state things that carried all of that in potency, I immediately had as an echo the *splash* of an article on *Le théâtre chez l'hystérique*. Present day psychoanalysis is only dealing with a hysteric who is not up to date. When the hysteric proves that even when the page that has been turned, she continues to write on the back and even on the next one, people do not understand. She is a logician. This poses the question of the reference to the theatre made by Freudian theory, the Oedipus complex no less. It is time to attack that aspect of theatre that it has appeared necessary to maintain in order to sustain the Other scene, the one that I speak about, that I was the first to speak about. After all, sleep is enough perhaps, and that it shelters on occasion, this sleep, the *gésine* (?) of Fuchsian functions, as you know, perhaps, has happened, may justify a desire being constructed for it to be continued. It may happen that the signifying representatives of the subject always get across more easily when borrowed from imaginary representation. We have the signs of it in our epoch. It is certain that the enjoyment that one has by being castrated only has systemic relationships (*rappports*

d'appareil) with representation. This indeed is why the Sophoclean Oedipus, which only has its privilege for us because the other Oedipus' are incomplete, and more often than not lost, is still much too rich and too diffuse for the articulation that we need. The genealogy of desire, in so far as what is in question is how it is caused, relates to a more complex combinatorial than that of myth.

That is why we have no need to dream about what myth was used for in olden times, as they say. To engage oneself along that path is metalanguage, and in this respect, the *Mythologiques* of Lévi-Strauss make a decisive contribution. They show that the combination of the (155) nameable forms of mythem, many of which have disappeared, operate according to laws of transformation that are precise but very short on logic. Or at the very least what we must say about them, this is the least that can be said, is that our mathematics enriches this combinatorial. Perhaps we would do well to question whether the psychoanalytic discourse does not have better things to do than to devote itself to interpreting these myths in a style which does not go beyond ordinary commentary, which besides is completely superfluous. Because what interests the ethnologist is the collection of the myths, pinpointing its collation and its re-collation with other functions, of ritual, of production, registered just as in a writing whose articulated isomorphisms are enough for him. No trace of any supposition, I was going to say, about the enjoyment that is circumscribed there. This quite true, even taking into account the efforts made to suggest to us the eventual operation of obscure knowledge which is supposed to be lodged in them. The note given by Lévi-Strauss in the *Structures* about the display-action exercised by these structures with respect to love luckily settles things here. This did not prevent it passing well over the heads of the analysts who were in favour at the time.

In short the Oedipus complex has the advantage of showing how man can respond to the requirement of the *papludun* that is in the being of a woman. He himself is supposed not to love *papludune* of them. Unfortunately it is not the same one; it is always the same rendezvous, when the masks are removed, it was neither he nor she. Nevertheless this fable is only supported by the fact that the man is never anything but a little boy. And that the hysteric is unable to let go of this is something that casts doubt on the function of her truth as being the last word.

A step towards seriousness could, it seems to me, be taken here by engaging with the man, and you will have noted that up to this point of my presentation I have given him the more modest part. Even though it is one of them, your servant, who forms part here of this beautiful world. It seems to me *impossible* - it is not for nothing that I come up against this word from the start - not to grasp the split that separates the Oedipus myth from *Totem and taboo*. I am showing my hand right away. The first is dictated to Freud by the dissatisfaction of the hysteric, the second by his own impasses. There is no trace in the second myth of the little boy, or of the mother, or of the tragic passage from the father to the son – passage of what, if not the phallus – of what is the very stuff of the first myth. Here, *Totem and taboo*, the father enjoys, a term that is veiled in the first myth by power. The father enjoys all the women until his sons slay him, which they only set about after a prior agreement, according to which (156) no one would succeed to him in his gluttony for enjoyment. The term is required by what comes in return, because the sons devour him, each one necessarily only having a part of him and by this very fact the whole making a communion. It is starting from that that there is produced the social contract. No one will touch, not the mother here, it is clearly specified, in *Moses and monotheism*, in Freud's own writing, that among the sons only the younger ones are

still listed in the harem. So then it is no longer the mothers but the wives of the father, as such, who are concerned in the prohibition. The mother only comes into play precisely for her babies which are the grain of heroes. But if this is how there is constructed, according to Freud, the origin of law, it is not the law described as that of maternal incest, which is nevertheless given as inaugural in psychoanalysis. While in fact, this is a remark, apart from a certain law of Manou which punished it by a real castration, you will go to the west with your balls in your hand, etc., this law of maternal incest is everywhere more or less elided. I am not at all disputing here the prophylactic grounds for the analytic prohibition. I am underlining that at the level at which Freud articulates something about it, *Totem and taboo*, and God knows he stuck by it, he does not justify this prohibition mythically. The strangeness begins with the fact that neither Freud, nor moreover any other person either, seems to have noticed this.

I stride on. Enjoyment is promoted by Freud to the rank of an absolute which brings back to the care of the man, I am talking about *Totem and taboo*, of the original man - and this is all admitted - of the Father of the primitive horde, it is simple to recognise here the phallus, the totality of what 'femininely' can be subject to enjoyment. This enjoyment, I have just noted, remains veiled in the royal couple of the Oedipus complex, but it is not only from the first myth that it is absent. The royal couple is not even put in question until something which is stated in the drama, that they are the guarantors of the enjoyment of the people, which moreover agrees with what we know about all royalties, whether ancient or modern. And the castration of Oedipus has no other end than to end the Theban plague. Namely, to render to the people the enjoyment of which others are going to be the guarantors, which of course, given where it has started from, will not happen without some bitter adventures being experienced by all.

Must I underline that the key function of myth is strictly opposed in the two? The law first of all in the first, so primordial that it exercises its retortions even when the guilty have only contravened it innocently, and it is from the law that the profusion of enjoyment has (157) emerged. In the second, enjoyment at the origin, then law, whose correlates with perversion you will spare me having to underline. Since it is, when all is said and done, with the promotion, sufficiently insisted on, of sacred cannibalism, that all the women are prohibited, in principle, for the community of males, which has been transcended as such in this communion. This indeed is the sense of the other primordial law, otherwise, what grounds it? Eteocles and Polynices are there, I think, to show that there are other resources. It is true that they proceed from the genealogy of desire. It must be that the murder of the father has constituted – for whom, for Freud, for his readers? – such a supreme fascination, that no one has ever even dreamt of underlining that in the first myth this murder happens without the knowledge of the murderer, who not only does not recognise that he is attacking the father, but who cannot recognise him because he has another, who, from all antiquity is his father, since he adopted him. It was even explicitly in order not to run the risk of attacking the aforesaid father that he exiled himself. What the myth is suggestive of, is to show the place that the generating father has at an epoch in which Freud underlines that, just like our own, this father is problematic.

Because, moreover, Oedipus would be absolved, if he were not of royal blood, namely, if Oedipus did not have to function as the phallus, the phallus of his people, and not of his mother. And that for a time, what is most surprising is that it worked, namely, that the Thebans were so implicated that it is from Jocasta that the turn-about had to come. Is it because of what she knew or of what she was

unaware of? What is there in common in any case with the murder of the second myth which we are led to believe is one of revolt, of need, that in truth is unthinkable, indeed unthought, except as proceeding from a conspiracy.

It is obvious that all I have done there is to approach the terrain on which, in any case, let us say, a conspiracy also prevented me from ridding myself of my problem, namely, in *Moses and monotheism*, namely, from the point at which everything that Freud articulated becomes truly significant. I cannot even indicate to you what is necessary to bring you back to Freud. But I can say that in revealing to us here his contribution to the analytic discourse, he proceeds no less from neurosis than from what he picked up from the hysteric in the form of the Oedipus complex. It is curious that I have had to wait until now in order that such an assertion, namely that *Totem and taboo* is a neurotic product, for me to be able to put it forward, which is absolutely indisputable, without for all that my questioning in any (158) way the truth of the construction. That is even how it bears witness to the truth. One does not psychoanalyse an *oeuvre*, and that of Freud less than any other, is that not so? One criticises it, and far from a neurosis making its solidity suspect, it is the very thing that solders it in this case. It is to the testimony that the obsessional contributes about his structure, to the aspect of the sexual relationship that proves to be impossible to formulate in discourse, that we owe the myth of Freud.

I will stop there for today. The next time I will give to this its exact import, because I would not like there to be any misunderstanding. The fact of articulating in a certain way what the contribution of Freud is to the fundamental myth of psychoanalysis, I underline, is not at all rendered suspect because its origin is underlined in this

way. Quite the contrary, it is simply a matter of knowing where it can lead us.

Seminar 15: Tuesday 11 June 1974

Voilà! I had to make an effort to ensure that this room was not occupied today by people who are doing exams and I must say that people were good enough to leave it to me. It is obvious that it is more than kind on the part of the University of Paris I to have made this effort since, classes being over for this year – which of course I did not know, this room should have been at the disposition of another part of the administration whose business is to channel you. There you are.

So then all the same, since it cannot be done again, beyond a certain limit, today will be the last time this year that I will speak to you. This forces me naturally to cut things a little short, but that is not going to hold me back since in short one must always finish by cutting things short. For my part I do not know moreover very well why I am lodged in this place, since in short the University, if this is what I am explaining to you, it is perhaps *the woman*. But it is the prehistoric woman, it is the one whom you see is made of folds (*replis*). Obviously for my part it is in one of these folds that she shelters me. She does not realise – when one has a lot of folds one does not feel very much – otherwise, who knows, she would perhaps find me burdensome. Good.

So then, on the other hand, on the other hand – you'll never guess – you will never imagine what I wasted my time on – wasted, in short,

yes, wasted – what I wasted my time on in part since I last saw you gathered together here. You'll never guess: I was in Milan at a (226) semiotic congress. That is extraordinary. It is extraordinary and of course, it left me, it left me a little nonplussed. It left me a little nonplussed in the sense that it is very difficult precisely from a University perspective to tackle semiotics. But anyway, this very lack that I, as I might say realised in it, threw me back, as I might say, on myself. I mean made me realise that it is very difficult to tackle semiotics – for my part of course, I did not make a face because I was invited, like here, very, very kindly, and I do not see why I would in short have disturbed this Congress by saying what – that the same, in short, cannot be approached like that in the raw starting from a certain idea of knowledge, a certain idea of knowledge that is not very well situated, in sum, in the university. But I reflected on it and there are reasons for that which are, perhaps, due precisely to the fact that the knowledge of *the woman* – since it is like that that I situated the university – the knowledge of *the woman*, is perhaps not quite the same thing as the knowledge with which we are occupied here.

The knowledge with which we are occupied here – I think I have made you sense it – is the knowledge in which the unconscious consists. And it is, in sum, on this that I would like to close this year.

I never, in sum, I never attached myself to anything other than what is involved in this knowledge described as unconscious. If for example I marked the accent, in short, about knowledge in so far as the discourse of science may situate it in the Real, what is singular and that whose impasse I believe I have articulated in a way here, the impasse which is the one for which Newton was assailed inasmuch as, not making any hypothesis, any hypothesis inasmuch as he articulated the thing scientifically, well then, he was quite incapable, except of course for the fact that he was reproached for it, he was quite incapable of saying where there was situated this knowledge thanks to which in short the heavens move in the order that we know, on the foundation of gravity.

If I emphasised, is that not so, this character of a certain knowledge in the Real, this may seem to be beside the question, beside the question in this sense that unconscious knowledge, for its part, is a knowledge that we have to deal with. And it is in this sense that one can say that it is in the Real.

This is what I am trying to support for you this year with the support of a writing, of a writing that is not easy, since it is the one that you have seen me handle more or less adroitly on the board in the form of the Borromean knot. And this is how I would like to conclude this year; it is by coming back to this knowledge and to say how it is (227) presented. How it is presented, I would not say altogether in the Real, but on the path that leads us to the Real.

I must all the same start again from that, from what was also presentified to me, presentified in this interval, namely, that there are some very funny people in short, people who continue in a certain Society described as International, who continue to operate as if all of that was self-evident. Namely, that this could be situated, be situated in a world; in a world like that that is supposed to be made up of bodies, of bodies that are called living – and of course there is no reason for them to be called that, is that not so – that are plunged into a milieu, a milieu that is called ‘world’ and all that, in short, why should it be rejected all of a sudden?

Nevertheless what comes out of a practice, of a practice which is based on the ek-sistence of the unconscious, ought all the same allow us to detach ourselves from this elementary vision which is that of...I would not say of the ego, even though it is encumbered by it and that I read things directly extracted from a certain congress that was held at Madrid where for example, one sees that Freud himself, I must say, said things just as outrageous, just as outrageous as what I am going to put forward to you: that it is from the ego (*le moi*) – the ego, is something other than the unconscious, obviously, it is not underlined

that it is something different, there is a moment where Freud redid his whole topography as it is called, is that not so. There is the famous second topography which is a writing, simply, which is nothing other than something in the form of an egg, the form of an egg which it is all the more striking to see, this form of the egg, that what is situated in it as the ego comes at the place where in an egg, or more exactly on its yolk, on what is called the vitellus, is the place of the embryonic point. It is obviously curious, it is obviously very curious and it brings the function of the ego closer to where, in short, there is going to develop a body, a body which only the development of biology allows us to situate the way it is formed in its first morulations, gastrulations, etc. But since this body – and it is in this that there consists Freud's second topography – since this body is situated by a relation to the id, to the id which is an extraordinarily confused idea; as Freud articulates it, it is a locus, a locus of silence - that is the principle thing he says about (228) it. But in articulating it in this way, he only signifies that what is supposed to be id, is the unconscious when it says nothing. This silence is a saying nothing. And this is no small thing, it is certainly an effort, an effort in the direction, in the direction that is perhaps a little regressive as compared to his first discovery, in the direction let us say of marking the place of the unconscious. It does not say for all that what this unconscious is, in other words, of what use it is. There it says nothing: it is the place of silence. It remains beyond doubt that it complicates the body, the body in so far as in this schema, it is the ego, the ego which is found, in this writing in the form of an egg, the ego which is found to represent it.

Is the ego the body? What makes it difficult to reduce it to the functioning of the body, is precisely that in this schema, it is supposed to develop only on the foundation of this knowledge, of this knowledge in so far as it says nothing, and to draw from this what must indeed be called its nourishment. I repeat: it is difficult to be entirely satisfied with this second topography because what happens,

what we have to deal with in analytic practice, is something which indeed seems to be presented in a quite different way. Namely, that this unconscious, as compared to what would couple so well the ego to the world, the body to what surrounds it, what would order it in this sort of relationship that people persist in wanting to consider as natural the fact is that, as compared to this, the unconscious is presented as essentially different from this harmony. Let us say the word: discordant (*dysharmonique*). I am blurting it out right away, and why not, it must be emphasised. The relationship to the world is certainly, if we give it its meaning, this effective meaning that we see in practice, is something about which one cannot but immediately feel that, as compared to this quite simple vision in a way of exchange with the environment, this unconscious is parasitic. It is a parasite to which it seems a certain species, among others, accommodates itself very well, but it is only in the measure that it does not experience its effects that must indeed be said, to be stated for what they are: namely, pathogenic. I mean that this happy relationship, this supposedly harmonic relationship between what is living and what surrounds it, is disturbed by the insistence of this knowledge, of this knowledge that no doubt is inherited – it is not by chance that it is there – and this speaking being, to call him that, as I call him – this speaking being inhabits it but he does not inhabit it without all sorts of (229) drawbacks. So then if it is difficult not to make life the characteristic of the body, because it is almost all we can say about it, *qua* body, it is there and it seems to be able to defend itself, to defend itself against what? Against this something to which it is difficult not to identify it, namely, what remains of that body when it no longer has life. It is because of this that in English the cadaver is called ‘corpse’; in other words, when it is living, it is called ‘body’. But that it is the same, has a satisfying air like that, materially. In short, one sees clearly what remains of it is the waste scrap, and if one must conclude that life, as Bichat said, is the totality of forces that resist death, it is a schema, it is a schema, in spite of everything, that is a little crude. It does not say at all how life is sustained. And in truth, in truth, we

arrived very late, very late in biology, before having the idea that life is something other – it is all that we can say about it – something other than the totality of forces that oppose the dissolution of the body into a corpse. I would even say more: everything that may allow us to hope a little for something else, namely, about what life is, takes us all the same towards a quite different conception: the one in which I tried this year to situate something by talking to you about a biologist, an eminent biologist, about Jacob and his collaboration with Wollman, and of that which moreover, well beyond - it is through this that I tried to give you an idea of it – of that which, well beyond, is found to be what we can articulate about the development of life, and specifically the fact at which biologists are coming to, thanks only to the fact that they can look at things more closely than has always been done, that life is supported by something as regards which I am not, for my part, going to take the step and say that it resembles a language, and talk about messages that are supposed to be inscribed in the first molecules and which could have obviously singular effects, effects which are manifested in the way in which there are organised all kinds of things that are turned into manure, or to all sorts of constructions that are chemically located and locatable. But in fact, there is certainly a profound eccentricity which happens and which happens in a way as regards which it is at least curious that this comes to be noticed everywhere only from some articulated thing, up to and including a punctuation.

(230) I do not want to enlarge on that; I do not want to enlarge on it, but after all, it is indeed because I in no way assimilate this kind of signalisation that biology makes use of, I in no way assimilate it to what is involved in language, contrary to a sort of jubilation that seems to have laid hold in this connection of the linguist who meets up with the biologist, shakes his hand and says: ‘We’re in this together’. I think that concepts, for example, like that of structural stability can, as I might say, give a different form of presence to the body. For after all, what is essential, is not only how life manages

with itself for there to be produced things that are capable of being living, the fact is that all the same, that the body has a form, an organisation, a morphogenesis, and that it is a different way also of seeing things, namely, that a body, reproduces itself.

So then it is not the same, all the same, it is not the same as the way in which things are communicated inside, as one might say. This notion of communication which is all that is at stake in this idea of first messages thanks to which a chemical substance is supposed to be organised, is something else. It is something else and then, this is where the leap must be taken and we must note that signs are given within a privileged experience, that there is an order, an order to be distinguished, not of the Real, but in the Real, and that it originates, is made original by being solidary with something which, despite us, as I might say, is excluded from this approach of life, but of which we do not take account – that is what this year I wanted to insist on – that life implies it, imaginarily implies it as one might say. What strikes us in this fact which is the one to which Aristotle really adhered, that it is only the individual who truly counts, the fact is that without knowing it, he supposes enjoyment to it. And that what constitutes the One of this individual, is all sorts of signs, but not signs in the sense that I understood earlier, signs which give this privileged experience that I situated in analysis, let us not forget – there are signs in its displacement, in its motion, in short, that it enjoys. And that indeed is why Aristotle had no trouble making an ethics, the fact is that he supposes, the fact is that he supposes *hedone*, that *hedone* had not received the meaning that it received later from the Epicureans; the *hedone* that is at stake, is what puts the body into a current which is one of enjoyment. He can only do so because he is himself in a (231) privileged position. But since he does not know which, since he does not know that he thinks about enjoyment in this way because he belongs to the class of masters, it happens that he tackles it all the same, namely, that only one who can do what he wants, that only he has an ethics.

This enjoyment is obviously linked much more than is believed to the logic of life. But what we discover, is that in a privileged being – as privileged as Aristotle was compared to the totality of human beings – in a privileged being, this life, as I might say, varies or even is damaged (*s'avarie*) is damaged to the point of being diversified into what? Well this precisely is what is at stake: what is at stake are semes namely, this something that is incarnated in *lalangue*. Because one must indeed accept to think that *lalangue* is solidary with the reality of the feelings that it signifies. If there is something that really makes us get in touch with that, it is precisely psychoanalysis. That 'impediment' – as I said at one time in my seminar on *Anxiety* which I regret, after all, is not yet at your disposal – that 'impediment', 'dismay' – dismay as I clearly specified it: dismay is the withdrawal of a power – that 'embarrassment' are words which have meaning, well, they only have the meaning conveyed on the traces opened up by *lalangue*. Of course, we can project these feelings onto animals. I would simply point out to you that if we can project impediment, dismay, embarrassment onto animals, it is uniquely onto domestic animals. That we may be able to say that a dog was dismayed, embarrassed or impeded in some way, is in the measure that he is in the field of these semes, and this by way of our mediation.

So then I would like all the same to make you sense what analytic experience implies: the fact is that when it is a question of this semiotics, of what creates meaning and of what involves feeling, well then, what this experience demonstrates, is that it is from *lalangue*, as I write it, that there proceeds what I will not hesitate to call animation – and why not, you know very well that I do not bore you with the soul: animation, is in the sense of a series fiddling about, a fiddling, a scratching, in a word of a fury – the animation of the enjoyment of the body. And this animation is not experience, does not come from just anywhere. If the body is animated in its motive power, in the sense (232) that I have just told you, namely, that it is the animation that a

parasite gives, the animation that perhaps I give to the University for example, well then, that comes from a privileged enjoyment, distinct from that of the body. It is certain that to speak about it, in short, one is rather embarrassed because to put it forward like that is laughable, and it is not for nothing that it is laughable: it is laughable because it makes us laugh. But it is very precisely this that we situate in phallic enjoyment. Phallic enjoyment is what, in short, is contributed by the semes, since today alongside – since today, worried as I was by this Congress on semiotics, I allow myself to put forward the word ‘seme’. It is not that I insist on it, you understand, because I do not try to complicate your lives. I do not try to complicate your lives, nor especially to make semioticians of you. God knows where that could lead you! That would lead you moreover into the place where you are, namely, that would not lead you out of the University. Only here is what is at stake: the seme is not complicated, it is what makes meaning. Everything that creates meaning in *lalangue* proves to be linked to the ek-sistence of this tongue, namely, that it is outside the business of the life of the body, and that if there is something that I have tried to develop this year before you – that I hope to have made present, but who knows – it is that it is in so far as this phallic enjoyment, that this semiotic enjoyment is added on to the body that there is a problem.

I proposed to you to resolve this problem if indeed it is a complete solution, but to resolve it simply in short, from the observation that this sliding semiosis tickles the body in the measure – and this measure, I propose to you as absolute – in the measure that there is no sexual relationship. In other words, in this confused totality that only the seme, the seme once one has awakened it to ek-sistence, namely, that one has said it as such, it is by this, it is in the measure that the speaking body inhabits these semes that it finds the means to supply for the fact that nothing, nothing apart from that, will lead it towards what we have indeed been forced to bring out in the term ‘other’, in the term ‘other’ which inhabits *lalangue* and which is designed to

represent the fact precisely that there is no relationship with the partner, the sexual partner, except by the mediation of what creates meaning in *lalangue*. There is no natural relationship, not that if it (233) were natural, one could write it, but that precisely one cannot write it because there is nothing natural in the sexual relationship of this being which finds itself less a speaking being than a spoken being.

That imaginarily, because of that, this enjoyment as regards which you see that in presenting it to you as phallic, I qualified in an equivalent way as semiotic, of course, it is obviously it appears to me quite grotesque to imagine this phallus in the male organ. It is all the same in that way indeed that it is imagined in the facts that analytic experience reveals. And it is certainly also the sign that there is in this male organ something which constitutes an experience of enjoyment which is apart from the others, not only which is apart from the others, but which ... the other enjoyments, the enjoyment which is, faith, quite easy to imagine. Namely, that a body, good God, is designed so that one has the pleasure of lifting one arm and then another, and then of doing gymnastics, and of jumping and running and of pulling and doing whatever you want, good. It is all the same curious that it should be around this organ that a privileged enjoyment should come to birth. For this is what analytic experience shows us, namely, that it is around this grotesque shape that there begins to pivot this sort of supplying that I described as what in Freud's statement, is marked by the privilege, as one might say, of sexual meaning, without it being truly realised, even though all the same, that tickled him also and he glimpsed it, he almost said it in *Civilisation and its discontents* – namely, that meaning is only sexual because meaning is substituted precisely for the sexual which is lacking. That is what is supposed by everything implied by its use, its analytic use of human behaviour: not that meaning reflects the sexual, but that it supplies for it.

Meaning, it must be said, meaning like that when one does not work on it, well then it is opaque. The confusion of feelings, is everything

that *lalangue* is designed to semiotise. And it is indeed because of that that all words are designed to be pliable in every direction. So then what I proposed, what I proposed from the start of this teaching, from the Rome discourse on, is to grant the importance that it has in practice, in analytic practice, to the material of *lalangue*. A linguist, a linguist of course, is altogether introduced right away to this consideration of the tongue as having a material. He knows this (234) material well: it is what is in the dictionaries, it is the lexical, it is morphology also, in short, it is the object of his linguistics. There is someone who, naturally, is a hundred cubits above a congress like the one that I told you about, who is Jakobson. He spoke a little about me in the margins, not in his opening discourse, but immediately afterwards, he was determined to specify clearly that the use that I had made of Saussure, and behind Saussure – I knew enough about it to know all the same – the Stoics and Saint Augustine. Why not? Me, I retreat before nothing. The fact is that what I borrowed from Saussure simply and from the Stoics under the term of *signatum*, this *signatum*, is meaning and that it is just as important as this accent that I put on the *signans*...

The *signans* has the interest of allowing us to operate in analysis, to resolve, even though like everyone else we are only capable of having one thought at a time, but to put us in this state that is modestly described as floating attention. This means precisely that when the partner, here the analysand, for his part expresses one, a thought, we can have a quite different one, that it is a lucky chance from which there springs forth a flash. And it is precisely here that an interpretation can occur, namely, that because of the fact that we have a floating attention, we hear what he has said sometimes simply because of a kind of equivocation, namely, a material equivalence. We perceive that what he said – we perceive it because we undergo it – that what he said could be understood in the wrong way. And it is precisely in understanding it in the wrong way that we allow him to perceive where his thoughts, his own semiotics, where it comes from:

it comes from nothing other than the ek-sistence of *lalangue*.

Lalangue ek-sists elsewhere than in what he believes to be his world.

Lalangue has the same parasitic quality as phallic enjoyment, with respect to all other enjoyments. And it is what determines as parasitic in the Real what is involved in unconscious knowledge. *Lalangue* must be conceived of. And why not, why not speak of what *lalangue* might be in relationship with phallic enjoyment like the branches of a tree. It is not for nothing – because all the same I have my own little idea... – it is not for nothing that I pointed out to you that this famous tree at the start, there, the one from which the apple was picked, one could ask the question of whether it enjoyed itself just like any other (235) living being. If I put this forward to you, it is not entirely without reason, of course. And then let us say that *lalangue*, any element whatsoever of *lalangue*, is, with respect to phallic enjoyment, a strand of enjoyment. And that is why it stretches its roots so far into the body.

Good, so then what one must start from – you see that this is being dragged out, it is late, good – is this strong affirmation that the unconscious is not a knowing (*connaissance*): it is a knowledge (*savoir*), and a knowledge in so far as I define it from the connection of signifiers. First point. Second point: it is a discordant knowledge which does not lend in any way to a happy marriage, to a marriage which would be happy. This is implied in the very notion of marriage, this is what is outrageous, what is fabulous: does anybody know a happy marriage? No, but in short... Let us go on. Nevertheless the name is designed to express happiness. Yes, the name is designed to express happiness and it is the one that came to me to tell you what one could imagine in terms of a good adaptation, as they say, of a fitting together, in short of something which would ensure that what I have said to you about life, the life of the body in the one who speaks, this could be judged in terms of a just, of a noble exchange between this body and its milieu, as they say, its old pal the *Welt*.

All the same, these remarks have their historical importance, because you will see, you who will survive me, you will see: everything that has begun to be babbled about in biology clearly gives the impression that life has nothing natural about it. It is something mad. The proof is that they have shoved linguistics into it! In a word, it's outrageous. This life will keep some surprises, when people have stopped talking like bird brains, namely, imagining that life is opposed to death. It's absolutely crazy, this business! First of all what do we know about it? What is dead? The inanimate world we are told. But it is because there is a different conception of the soul than the one that I represented for you now, namely, that the soul is ...is ridiculous (*un crabe*).

So then, I am going to tell you, even: at the point that we are at in it, it is paradoxical. It is paradoxical, I say that because I read a little torchon paper that was produced there in the last congress of the *Société de Psychanalyse* and which bore witness to something that at the very least is paradoxical: which is that as regards what I am in the process of rejecting, namely, that there is a knowing, that there is the slightest harmony between what is situated in terms of enjoyment, of (236) corporal enjoyment and what surrounds it. But there is only one place where this famous knowing can happen, a place, according to me and you will never guess it: it is in analysis itself. In analysis, one can say that there can be something that resembles knowing. And I find the testimony for it in the fact that in connection with the paper, the torchon paper that I am talking to you about which deals with the dream, the innocence with which this is acknowledged is absolutely marvellous. There is someone and someone about whom I am not at all surprised should be that person, because all the same he received a little finishing touch that I gave him at one time, the fact is that everything is centred around the fact that he sees there being reproduced in one of his dreams a note, a properly speaking semantic note – namely, that it is only truly here as noted, articulated, written –

he sees there being reproduced in one of his dreams a semantic note of the dream of one of his patients. He is quite right to stick knowing into his title. This kind of co-vibrating, semiotic co-vibrating, it is not surprising that it is called like that modestly transference. And people are quite right also to call it only that. I'm for that. It is not love, but it is love in the ordinary sense, it is love as it is imagined. Love is obviously something else. But as regards the idea, as one might say, that people have of love, there is nothing better than this sort of analytic knowing. I am not sure that it goes very far, this is indeed moreover also why all analytic experience remains bogged down. And that is not what should be at stake. It should be a matter of elaborating, of allowing the one that I call the analysand to elaborate, to elaborate this knowledge, this unconscious knowledge which is in him like a canker, not like a depth, like a canker.

This is something different, of course, it is something different to knowing. And it would need a discipline obviously a little different than the philosophical discipline. There is something in Cocteau – because from time to time I do not see why I should spit on writers, they are rather less stupid than the others – there is a thing in Cocteau that is called *Le Potomak* where he created something that I am not going to try to tell you what it is: *les Eugène*. But there is also within it the Mortimers. The Mortimers have only a single heart, and it is represented in a little drawing where they have a dream in common.

*Si plein, si rond,
(un seul pour deux)
le rêve des Mortimer,
qu'en vain les Eugène
cherchent, pour y pénétrer,
une issue*

[So full, so round, (a single one for two) the dream of the Mortimers
that in vain the Eugenes seek a way out of in order to penetrate it]

Jean Cocteau, *Le Potomak*

It is someone in the style of my psychoanalyst of just now, the one that I did not name: between the analysand and the analyst, it is like among the Mortimers. It is not frequent, it is not frequent even among people who love one another, for them to have the same dream. It is even very remarkable. It is indeed what proves the solitude of each one with what emerges from phallic enjoyment. Good.

So then all the same – there is less than a quarter of an hour left – I would like all the same to make some remarks, I would like to make all the same some remarks about the import – because this seemed to strike like that a pal who is there in the first row, I blurted that out to him like that during a dinner and I had the surprise to see that it filled him with pleasure, so then I realised how badly I explain myself: because I had written for you on the board:

Which means:

There must be one who says no to phallic enjoyment

Thanks to which and to which alone

There are alls (des tous) who say yes

(238) I put you face to face with the fact that there are – I must have, I must have given rise to some confusion – that there are others among whom there are none who say no. Only, that has as a curious consequence that among these others, in short, there are none at all who say yes. That is the inscription, it is the attempt at inscription in a mathematical function, of something which uses quantifiers. There is nothing illegitimate – I am not going to argue that today because we don't have any more time – there is nothing illegitimate in this quantification of meaning. This quantification stems from an identification. The identification stems from a unification. What did I write for you formerly in the formulae of four discourses? An S_1 that has fixed itself, that has pointed towards an S_2 . What is an S_1 ? It is a signifier, as the letter indicates. What is proper to a signifier – it is the

feature of a tongue about which one can do nothing – is that any signifier can be reduced to the import of the signifier *One*. And it is as signifying *One* – I think that you remember formerly my little brackets: $S_1 S_2$ in brackets, and there were S_1 's that stuck themselves in front again, etc., to express the business that I am defining to ensure that the signifier should be what dominates in the constitution of the subject: a signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier. Good so then, so then, any letter x , whatever it may be means this *One* as indeterminate. This is what is called in the function, in the function in the mathematical sense, the argument. This is where I started to talk to you about identification. But if there is an identification, as sexed identification and if, on the other hand, I am telling you that there is no sexual relationship, what does that mean? That means that there is a sexed identification only on one side, namely, that all these pinpointings of identification described as functional, are to be put – and it is in this that the pal in question manifested his lively satisfaction, it is because I had told him like that in a solid way, instead of to you, I left you in the soup – the fact is that all these identifications are on the same side: that means that it is only a woman who is capable of making them. Why not the man? Because you note that I say of course 'a woman' and then I say 'the man'. Because the man, the man as he is imagined by *the woman*, namely, she who does not exist, namely, an imagination of the void, the man for his part is twisted by his sex. Instead of a woman being able to make a sexed (239) identification. She has even nothing to do but that, because she must pass by way of phallic enjoyment which is precisely what is lacking to her. I am saying that to you because I could speckle it with a reference to my four little pinpointings, there: – I am not going to the board because you won't hear if I write on the board – what does that mean for *the woman*, because you may have been able to believe that with that, that what I was designating were all the men? That means the requirement that *the woman* shows – it is obvious: that the man should be all hers. I begin with this, because it is the funniest bit. It is in the nature of the woman to be jealous, in the nature of her

love. When I think that in 10 minutes I am going to have to explain to you what love is! It's annoying to be hassled to that extent. Good. The not-all (*pas-toutes*) by which I inscribed the other relationship to is that by which this same love, the love that is at stake and that I put like that, generously, entirely on the side of women, we must all the same put, as I might say, a brake (*pédale*) on it, I mean by that, that it is not all that she loves: there remains a bit for herself, for her corporal enjoyment. This is what is meant by the the 'not-allness'. Good. And then after the , existence, the existence of the x , that for its part, as near as may be – as near as may be and then because I said it clearly here – which is the one where God is situated... One must be more temperate, I mean by that that one must not be too haughty about this business of God, since with time it has become worn out, and it is all the same not because there is knowledge in the Real that we are forced to identify it to God. I for my part am going to propose to you, a different interpretation. The , is the locus of the enjoyment of *the woman* who is much more linked to the saying than is imagined. It has to be said that without psychoanalysis it is quite obvious that in this I would be a complete novice like everyone else. The link of the enjoyment of *the woman* to the impudence of the saying, this is what it appears to me to be important to underline. I did not say shamelessness (*impudeur*). Impudence is not the same, it is not at all the same. And the , both barred, is the way in which *the woman* does not exist, namely, the way in which her enjoyment cannot be grounded on her own impudence.

I am handing you that like that, it is, I must acknowledge that it is... I find you patient. These, these are hammer blows that I am landing on your mug. But anyway, since I am a little bit rushed, I would like all (240) the same to conclude on this fact that the unconscious as discordant knowledge is more foreign to a woman than to the man. It is funny that I should be saying such a thing to you! So then, so then what is going to result from it? What is going to result from it is that there is all the same the woman's side. It is not because it is more

foreign that it is not foreign to the man also. It is more foreign to her because that comes to her from the man, from the man of whom I spoke earlier, from the man of whom she dreams because if I said that the man exists, I clearly specified that it is in the measure that he is, more cankered or even more notched by the unconscious. But a woman preserves, as I might say, a little bit more fresh air in her enjoyments. She is less notched contrary to appearances.

And it is on this that I would like to end. I would like to end on something which is an extract from Peirce: namely, that it was noticed all the same that logic, Aristotelian logic, is a purely predicatory and classificatory logic. So then he started to think around the idea of the relation, namely, what is perfectly, what is self-evident, what is like a billiard table, a billiard table concerning not the function of pinpointing to a single argument that I have just given you as being that of the identification by putting the thing back into the woman's pocket. He started to cogitate around the $x R (R, \text{the sign of an ideal emptied-out relation, he does not say which}) R$ and $y: x R y$: a function with two arguments. What, starting from what I have just put forward for you today, what is the knowledge relation? There is something very, very clever that is noted in Peirce – you see I pay tribute to my authors – when I make a discovery in one, I attribute it to him. I attribute it to him like that, I might moreover not have attributed it to him. Formerly, I spoke about metaphor and metonymy, and all the people started crying out, on the pretext that I had not said immediately that I owed that to Jakobson. As if everyone should not have known that! Anyway it was Laplanche and Lefebvre-Pontalis who were shouting about that. Anyway, what a memory! Make no mistake!

If what I am saying to you today, what I am putting forward is founded, knowledge does not have a subject. If knowledge is made up in the connection of two signifiers and if it is only that, it only has a subject if we supposed one that only serves as a representative of the

(241) subject for the other. There is all the same something which is rather curious there: it is the relation, if you write $x R y$ in this order, is the result that x is related to y ? Can we support what is expressed in the active or passive voice of the verb by the relation? But that is not self-evident. It is not because I said that feelings are always reciprocal – because this is how I expressed myself at one time before people who as usual understood nothing about what I was saying – it is not because one loves that one is loved. I never dared say such a thing. The essence of the relation if in effect some effect is referred back to the starting point, means simply that when one loves one becomes enamoured as I said. And when the first term is knowledge? There we have a surprise, which is that knowledge is perfectly identical, at the level of unconscious knowledge, to the fact that the subject is known. At the level of meaning in any case, it is absolutely clear: knowledge is what is known.

So then let us try all the same to draw some consequences from something that analysis shows us, which is that what is called transference, namely, what I called earlier love, everyday love – the love on which one calmly rests and then, no more trouble – is not altogether the same as what happens when the enjoyment of *the woman* emerges. But there you are, I will reserve that for you for next year. For the moment, let us try to clearly grasp that what analysis has revealed as truth, is that love, the love of which I spoke earlier, love is directed towards the subject supposed to know and so that it would be the reverse side of what I questioned the relation of knowledge about, well then, it would be that the partner, on this occasion, is borne along by this sort of motion that is described as love.

But if the x of the relation that might be written as sexual, is the signifier in so far as it is connected to phallic enjoyment, we have all the same to draw out its consequence. The consequence is that if the unconscious is indeed the support of what I told you about today, namely, a knowledge, the fact is that everything I wanted to tell you

this year about the non-dupes who err means that anyone who is not in love with his unconscious errs. That says nothing whatsoever against past centuries. They were just as much in love with their unconscious as the others and so they did not err. Simply, they did not know where they were going, but as regards being in love with their unconscious, (242) they certainly were! They imagined that it was knowing (*la connaissance*) because there is no need to know that one is in love with one's unconscious in order not to err. One only has to offer no resistance, to be its dupe. For the first time in history, it is possible for you for you to err, namely, to refuse to love your unconscious, since in short you know what it is: a knowledge, a knowledge that pisses you off. But perhaps in this impetus (*e-r-r-e*), you know, this thing that pulls, when the ship is riding at anchor – it is perhaps here that we can wager on rediscovering the Real a little more in what follows, to perceive that the unconscious is perhaps no doubt discordant, but that perhaps it leads us to a little more of this Real than this very little of reality which is ours, that of the phantasy, that it leads us beyond: to the pure Real.

Seminar 1: Tuesday 13 November 1973

I begin again. I am beginning again because I had thought I might have been able to finish. This is what I call elsewhere the *passe*: I believed that it had passed. Only there you are: this belief – ‘I believed that it had passed’ – this belief gave me the opportunity to notice something. This is even what I call the *passe* is like. It gives

the opportunity all of a sudden to see a certain relief, a relief of what I have done up to now. And it is this relief that is exactly expressed by my title for this year, the one that you have been able to read, I hope, on the notice and which is written:

Les non-dupes errent: The unduped wander/are mistaken. That has a funny sound, huh? It is my kind of little air. Or to put things better, a little *erre* – *e*, double *r*, *e*. You know perhaps what is meant by an *erre*? It is something like the initial impetus. The impetus of something when what is propelling it stops and it still continues to move on. It nevertheless remains that this sounds strictly the same as *les noms du père* (the names of the father). Namely, what I promised to never speak about again. There you are. This because of certain people that I no longer need to describe, who, in the name of Freud, precisely, made me suspend what I had planned to state about *the names of the father*. Yeah. Obviously, it is in order not to give them in any way a consolation for the fact that I could have brought them some of these names that they are ignorant of because they repress them. It could have been of use to them. Which is what I would have precisely nothing to do with. In any case, I know that (10) they will not find them all by themselves, that they will not find them, given the way they have started, under Freud's impetus. Namely, under the way psychoanalytic societies are set up. There you are.

So then *les non-dupes errent* and *les noms du père* are so consonant, are all the more consonant that contrary, like that, to a certain leaning that people who believe themselves to be literate have in making liaisons, even when it is a matter of an 's', you do not say *les non-dupes z'errent*, you do not say either *les cerises z'ont bon goût*, you say: *les cerises ont bon goût* and *les non-dupes errent*. They are consonant. That's the richness of the tongue. And I would even go further – it is a richness that not all tongues have, but this indeed is why they are varied. But what I am putting forward, from these encounters that are described as witticisms, perhaps I will manage

before the end of this year to make you sense it – to make you sense a little better what the witticism is.

And I am even right away going to put forward something about it.

In these two terms put into words, *les noms du père* and *les non-dupes qui errent*, it is the same knowledge. In the two. It is the same knowledge in the sense that the unconscious is a knowledge from which the subject can decipher himself. It is the definition of the subject that I am giving here. Of the subject as the unconscious constitutes him. It deciphers him, the one who by being a speaker is in a position to set about this operation, who is even up to a certain point forced until he reaches a meaning. And that is where he stops, because...one has to stop. One even asks for nothing but that! One asks only for that because one does not have the time. So then he stops at a meaning, but the meaning at which one ought to stop, in the two cases, even though it is the same knowledge, is not the same meaning.

Which is curious.

And which allow us to put our finger right away on the fact that it is not the same meaning, simply by reason of the spelling. Which allows us to suspect something. Something whose indication, in fact, you can see in what, in some of my previous seminars, I noted about the relationships of writing to language.

Do not be too astonished, anyway, that here I am leaving the thing as a riddle, since the riddle, is the fullness of meaning. And you should not even believe that on occasion, it remains there, in connection with (11) this rapprochement, of this phonematic identity, of *les noms du père* and *les non-dupes errent*, you must not believe that there is no riddle there for me myself – and this indeed is what is at stake.

This indeed is what is at stake, and also this: that there is no difficulty in the fact that I imagine I comprehend. It illuminates the subject in the sense that I said earlier, and it gives you work. It must indeed be said, that for me, there is nothing more deadly than to give you work...but anyway, it's my role!

Work (*le travail*), everyone knows where that comes from, in the tongue, in the tongue that I am chatting to you in. You have perhaps heard talk of it, it comes from *tripalium*, which is an instrument of torture. And which was made of three stakes. At the Council of Auxerre it was said that it was not appropriate for priests or deacons to be alongside this instrument by means of which *torquentur rei*, the guilty are tortured. It is not fitting that either the priest or the deacon should be there (it would perhaps give them a hard-on).

It is in effect quite clear that work, as we know it through the unconscious, is what makes relationships, relationships to this knowledge by which we are tormented is what makes these relationships to enjoyment.

So then I said: there is no objection to me imagining. I did not say 'I imagine myself'. It is you who imagine that you comprehend. Namely, that in this 'you-you', you imagine that it is you who comprehend, but I did not say that it was me, I said 'I imagine'. As regards what you imagine, I am trying to temper the matter. I am doing everything I can in any case, to prevent you. Because one must not comprehend too quickly, as I have often underlined.

What I put forward, nevertheless, with this 'I imagine', in connection with meaning, is a remark that I will put forward this year. It is that the imaginary, whatever you may have heard about it, because you imagine you comprehend – the fact is that the imaginary, is a *dit-mansion*, as you know I write it, just as important as the others. This can be very clearly seen in mathematical science. I mean in the one

that is teachable because it concerned the real that the symbolic conveys. Which moreover only conveys it because of the fact that what constitutes the symbolic is always enciphered (*chiffré*). The imaginary is what stops the deciphering, it is meaning. As I told you, one must indeed stop somewhere, and even as soon as one can.

(12) The imaginary, is always an intuition of what is to be symbolised. As I have just said, something to chew on, to think, as they say. And, in a word, a vague enjoyment. Human wanking is more varied than is believed, even though it is limited by something that stems from the body, the human body, namely what, in the present state of things – but precisely it has not finished, something else may perhaps arrive – in the present state of things, assures the dominance of the *opsis* [appearance] in the little that we know about it, about this body, namely, anatomy.

This dominance of the *opsis*, is what ensures that...is what ensures that all the same there is always intuition in what the mathematician starts from. I will perhaps this year make you sense the knot (make no mistake), the knot of the affair, in connection with what they call – I am talking about mathematicians, I am not one of them, I regret – of what they call ‘vector space’.

It is very nice to see how this business, which is perhaps anyway, some of you must have heard it vaguely spoken about, I can in any case affirm to them, that it is truly the last great step in mathematics, it starts like that from a philosophical intuition *Ausdehnungslehre*: the maths (*Lehre* is what is taught), the maths of extension, as Grassmann calls it. And then it comes out of that vector space and the calculus of the same name, is that not so, namely, something that is mathematically quite teachable, as I might say, something strictly symbolised, and which, at the limit, anyway, can...can function with a machine, huh?

It does not need to comprehend anything about it.

Why would it be necessary to return to comprehending – we will speak again about vector space, allow me simply to be satisfied today with an announcement – why is it necessary to return to comprehending, namely to imagining, in order to know where to apply the system?

More geometrico. Anyway, the most stupid geometry on earth, the one that you were taught at school, the one that proceeds from the cutting up of space with a saw: you saw a space in two, then after that you cut the shadow of the sawing along a line, and after that you mark a point...good. It is all the same amusing that *more geometrico* should have appeared like that throughout the centuries to be the model of logic. I mean that this is what Spinoza wrote at the head of the *Ethics*. Anyway that is how it was before logic, all the same, (13) learned certain lessons, lessons which mean that we have all the same arrived at emptying out intuition, is that not so, and that, at present, it has even gone to the extremes in a book of mathematics, of these modern mathematics that according to some people are execrable, for many chapters one can do without the slightest figure. But all the same – and this is what is strange – one gets there. One always finishes by getting there.

So then I am putting forward, I am putting forward this for you this year: one always gets there, and it is not because geometry is done in space, in the intuitive, is that not so, the geometry of Greeks, anyway, of which one can say that...it was not bad, but in the end it was no great shakes. One gets to it for a different reason. Singularly, I will tell you: the fact is that there are three dimensions of the space inhabited by the speaking being (*le parlant*), and that these three *dit-mansions*, as I write them, are called the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. This is not quite like Cartesian co-ordinates; it is not just because there are three of them, do not be misled. Cartesian co-

ordinates belong to the old geometry. It is because...it is because it is a space of mine, as I define it from these three *dit-mansions*, it is a space whose points are determined quite differently. And this is what I tried – since this went beyond perhaps my capacities, it is perhaps this that gave me the idea of dropping the matter – it is a geometry where the points – for those who were there, I hope, last year – whose points are determined from the squeezing (*coincage*) of what you remember perhaps, what I called my ‘rings of string’.

Because there is perhaps another way of making a point than beginning by sawing space, then afterwards tearing the page, then with the line which, one does not know from where, floats between the two, breaking this line, and saying: that is the point, namely nowhere, namely nothing, it is perhaps by noticing that, simply by taking three of them, of these rings of strings, as I explained it for you, when there are three, even though if you cut one of them, the two others are not linked, they can, simply because they are three (before this three the two remaining separate), simply by being three, they squeeze one another in such a way as to be inseparable. Hence the squeezing. The squeezing is written something like that: namely, if you pull somewhere on any one of these rings of string, you see that there is a point, a point which is somewhere around there where the three are squeezed.

(14) It is a little bit different to everything that has been lucubrated up to now *more geometrico*, because it requires that there should be three rings, three rings of string, something much more consistent than this void with which one operates on space; three of them are required always, in any case to determine a point. I will re-explain that for you still better, namely *per longum et latum*, but I am pointing out to you that it starts, it starts, this notion, from a different way of operating with space, with the space that we really inhabit...if the unconscious exists. I am starting from a different way of considering space; and that in qualifying these three dimensions, in pinpointing them by the

very terms that I appeared up to now to strongly differentiate in terms of Symbolic, Imaginary and Real, and that I am in the process of putting forward, the fact is that one can make them strictly equivalent.

This is a question Freud asks himself at the end of *The interpretation of dreams* on the second last page: he asks the question of how what he calls – and one clearly sees that he does not any longer call it with such certainty, that he no longer pinpoints it by something that would separate it out – what he calls reality, that he describes as *psychical*: what does that have to do with the real?

So here then, he vacillates, he vacillates again a little, and he catches hold of material reality, but what does *material reality* mean in its relationships with *psychical reality*?

We are going then, we are going then to try to distinguish them, to still keep an ounce of distinction between these three categories, while marking what I am putting on the agenda, namely, clearly marking that, as dimensions of our space – our space inhabited *qua* speaking beings – these three categories are strictly equivalent.

We already know the knack for that, huh? They are designated by (15) letters. This is the quite new way that has been opened up by algebra, and you see there the importance of the written. If I write R.I.S. (Real, Imaginary, Symbolic), or better: Real, Symbolic, Imaginary (you will see later why I am correcting it), you write them in capital letters, you cannot do otherwise, and they remain for you like that, sticking, in a way to the thing, simply a question of writing,

it is quite heterogeneous, you continue like that because you have always comprehended – you have always comprehended, but wrongly – that the progress, the forward step was to have marked the overwhelmingly importance of the Symbolic with respect to this misfortunate Imaginary with which I began, I began by firing bullets at it, anyway, under the pretext of narcissism; only you know it is altogether real that the mirror image is inverted. And that even with a knot, especially with a knot, and despite appearances, because you imagine perhaps that there are knots whose mirror image can perhaps be superimposed on the knot itself, that is not at all the case.

Space – I mean, like that, intuitive, geometrical space – is orientable. There is nothing more specular than a knot. And that indeed is why (that indeed is why...) that it is something completely different if you make the choice of writing this same capital RSI – you see where the trick lies – of writing them a, b, c. Here everyone senses that, at the very least that brings them together, huh, an a is worth a b, a b is worth a c, and...and it turns around, like that. It is even on this that the combinatorial was founded. It was on this that the combinatorial was founded and that is why when you put the three letters in a sequence, well then, there are no more than six ways to order them. Namely, according to the factorial law that presides over this business, it is 1 multiplied by 2 multiplied by 3: that gives 6, huh? Once you have 4, there are 24 ways of ordering them.

Only if, if you submit yourself to a conception of space in which the point is defined in the way that I have just showed, by squeezing – excuse me today for not writing all of that in figures on the board, I will do it afterwards – you notice that it is not by reason, like that, of a scansion that goes from the better to the worse, from the Real to the Imaginary, putting the Symbolic in the middle, it is not by reason of some preference or other, that you should notice that, in taking things (16) from the angle of squeezing, in other words by the Borromean knot: one ring of string is the Real, one ring of string is the Symbolic,

one ring of string is the Imaginary, well then, you must not believe that all the ways of making this knot are the same.

There is a laevogyratory knot and a dextrogyratory knot.

And even this, even if you have written the three dimensions of space that I define as being the space inhabited by the speaking being, even if you have not defined these dimensions by small letters, even if you define these dimensions by a, b, c, that you do not put here any emphasis on a diversely preferential content, you notice that, if you write a, b, c, there is a first series, and despite yourself, you will qualify it as the right one: the series that I call laevogyratory, which will be a, b, c, then b, c, a, then c, a, b, namely, that there is the series – the laevogyratory series which always leaves a certain order, which is precisely the order a, b, c,: it is the same one that is conserved in b, c, a. And that the c comes first is of no importance. It is legitimate for you to imagine, since it was the capital ‘I’ that I pinpointed with a small c, to imagine the reality of the Symbolic.

It is sufficient if the Real remains before it. And you must not believe for all that that this ‘before’ of the Real with respect to the Symbolic, is all by itself some kind of guarantee of anything whatsoever!

Because if you re-transcribe the a, b, c, of the first formula you will have R. S. I., namely: what produces (*réalise*) the Symbolic from the Imaginary.

Well then, what produces the Symbolic from the Imaginary, what else is it except religion...for me? What produces in proper terms the Symbolic from the Imaginary, is indeed what ensures that religion is not about to end. And that puts us, us analysts, on the same side, on the laevogyratory side, by means of which imagining what has to be done, imagining the Real from the Symbolic, our first step taken a long time ago, is mathematics, and the final one, is what the consideration of the unconscious leads us to, in so far as it is from that

that there is opened up – I have always professed it – it is from there that linguistics is opened up.

Namely, that it is by spreading the mathematical procedure which consists in noticing the fact that there is some Real in the Symbolic, that it is by this that a new passage is outlined for us.

The Imaginary does not need then to be placed at any rank (17) whatsoever. It is the order that is important, and in the other dextrogyratory order, curiously, you have the formula a, c, b, as a result of which it is in the second phase that c comes first, but b is before a, and in the third phase, it is b, a, c, namely, three terms which we will see are of no little importance in discourse, it is from there no less that there emerged some distinct structures, which are precisely all those by which other discourses are supported, only those that the laevogyratory discourses permit to demonstrate by the space that they determine – certainly not as having had at one time their efficaciousness, but as properly speaking put in question by the other discourses. And here I am not showing any partiality, since I am putting us on the same side as where religion functions.

I will say no more about it today. But what I am putting forward is this: if in the tongue, the structure, it must be imagined, is this not what I am putting forward by the formula: *les non-dupes errent?* Since this is not immediately accessible, I am going to try to show it to you.

There is something in the idea of dupery, which is that it has a support: it is the dupe. There is something absolutely magnificent in this business of the dupe. It is that the dupe, if you will allow me, the dupe is considered to be stupid. One must really ask why. If the dupe is truly what we are told – I am speaking etymologically, this has no importance – if the dupe is this bird called the hoopoe (*huppe*) the hoopoe because it is smart (*huppée*), naturally nothing justifies that

smart should be called hoopoe, it nevertheless remains that that is how it is summed up in the dictionary, the dupe, it appears, is the bird one can trap, precisely because it is stupid. We can absolutely not see why a hoopoe should be more stupid than any other bird, but the remarkable thing for me, is the accent the dictionary puts on specifying that it is feminine. Dupe is *la*.

There is somewhere a thing that I picked out, that I picked out in Littré: that it was a mistake for La Fontaine to make the dupe masculine. He dared write somewhere:

*Du fil et du soufflet pourtant embarrassé,
Un des dupe un jour alla trouver un sage*
Embarrassed by the thread and the snub,
One of the dupes went one day to find a wise man.

(18) ‘This is quite wrong’, Littré says clearly, ‘one does not say, *un dupe*, anymore that one can say *un linnotte* (a linnet, a featherbrain) to describe *un étourdi* (a scatterbrain).’ That’s a powerful reason.

The interesting thing is to know what gender the (*le*) *non-dupe* is. You see? I say right away: *le non-dupe*. Is it because what is highlighted by a *non* is neutral? I am not going to decide this: but there is one thing that in any case is clear, it is that the plural, by not being marked, makes this reference to the feminine completely uncertain. And there is something, anyway, which is still funnier that I – I cannot say that I found it in Chamfort – I found it also in the dictionary, in another one, this quotation of Chamfort, but it’s not bad all the same, anyway, that it should be at the word *dupe* that I picked out this: ‘One of the best reasons’, writes Chamfort, ‘that one can have for never marrying’ (ah!) ‘is that one is not completely *la dupe* of a woman as long as she is not your own’. *La vôtre!* Your wife or your dupe. Now there’s something, all the same, that appears, anyway... illuminating, huh?

Marriage as reciprocal dupery.

This indeed is why I think marriage is love: feelings are always reciprocal, I have said. So then...if marriage is such at this point...it's not sure, huh! Anyway, if I let myself go with the flow a little, I would say that – this is what Chamfort means – also no doubt – a woman never makes a mistake. Not in marriage in any case. This is why the function of spouse has nothing human about it.

We will explore that another time.

I spoke about the *non-dupe*. And I seemed to have marked him, in short, by an irremediable weakness in saying that...he *errs*. Only we must clearly see what is meant by: *ça erre*.

I pointed out to you earlier that *errer* (anyway you are going all the same to consult the dictionary of Bloch et von Wartburg, because I am not going to spend my time doing etymology with you, which means simply highlighting the usage throughout the ages, that etymology makes perfectly obvious, does it not?) the fact is that exactly as in my title *les Non-dupes errent* and *les Noms du père*, huh, it is exactly the same thing for the word *erre*, or more exactly for the word *errer*.

Errer results from the convergence of 'error', *erreur*, with something (19) that has strictly speaking nothing to do with it, and which is akin to this *erre* of which I spoke to you earlier, which is strictly the relationship with the verb *iterare*. *Iterare*, what's more (because if it were only that, it would be nothing) is there uniquely for *iter* which means a journey. This indeed is why the knight errant is simply an itinerant knight.

Only, all the same, *errer* comes from *iterare*, which has nothing to do with a journey, since it means to repeat, from *iterum* (re!).

Nevertheless, this *iterare* is only used for what it does not mean, namely *itinerare*, as is proved by the developments that have been

given to this very *errer* in the sense of wandering, namely, by making of the knight errant an itinerant knight.

Well then, that is the point of what I have to say to you, considering the difference, the difference that is...pinpointed from the fact that there are non-dupes. If the non-dupes are those (*ceux ou celles*) that refuse to be captured by the space of the speaking being, if they are those who keep their hands free of it, as I might say, there is something that we must know how to imagine, which is the absolute necessity that results from it, not wandering but error.

Namely, that as regards everything that is involved in life and at the same time in death, there is an invention (*imagination*) that cannot but support all those who want to be non-dupes in structure. It is this: that their life is only a journey.

Life is that of the *viator*. Those who in this lower world – as they say – are in a foreign land.

The only thing that they do not notice, is that simply by bringing out this function of foreigner, they give rise at the same time to the third term, the third dimension, the one thanks to which they will never get out of the relationships of this life, unless it is to be then still more duped than the others, by this locus of the other that with their Imaginary they nevertheless constitute as such.

The idea of *genesis*, of development, as they say, of what is supposed to be some norm or other, thanks to which a being which is only specified by being speaking, in everything that is involved about its effects, precisely, will be commanded by something or other that no one is capable of defining, which is called development. And that is why, by wanting to reduce analysis, one fails, one makes the complete error, the radical error as regards what is involved in what the unconscious uncovers.

This indeed is why it is only by...by no longer wishing to be a dupe of the structure, that one imagines in the maddest way, that life is woven from some contraries or other of life drives and death drives, is already all the same to float a little bit higher, anyway, than the notion – the age old notion of a journey.

(21) Those who are not dupes of the unconscious, namely, who do not spend their whole effort sticking to it, is that not so, who only see life from the point of view of the *viator* – this indeed is how moreover, that there arose...anyway...a whole stage of logic, the one from which subsequently, of course, and with I do not know what consequences, there appeared these things which one does not even see the degree to which they are paradoxes, is that not so: all men are mortal. Namely, what I said, travellers, huh.

Socrates is a man – and he is a man, he is a man, if he wishes, huh, he is a man if he throws himself into it, is that not so, this indeed moreover is what he does, and this indeed is why moreover, the fact that he should have asked for death, there is all the same quite a little difference; but this difference did not prevent what followed being absolutely fascinating. Nor was it any worse because of that....with his hysteria, he allowed a certain shadow of science, the one that precisely is founded on this categorical logic. It was a very bad example.

But this must [spread], huh. In any case this essentially imaginary function of the *viator*, ought to put us on our guard against any metaphor that comes from the way. I know well that the way, the way that is at stake, the Tao, imagines itself as being in the structure. But is it quite sure that there is only one Way? Or even that the notion of the way, of the method, is worth anything at all? Might it not be in forging for ourselves a quite different ethic, an ethic that would be founded on the refusal of being *unduped*, on the way of being always

more strongly the dupe of this knowledge, of this unconscious which, when all is said and done, is our only lot in terms of knowledge.

I know well that there is this blessed question of the truth, huh. We are not going like that, after what I have said to you about it, returning to it and turning around it, set about sticking to it without knowing that it is a choice, since it can only be half-said. And after all, behind what we choose to say about it, behind there is always a desire, an intention, as they say.

It is on this that there was founded, in any case, all phenomenology, I am talking about that of Husserl. According, like that, as you vary the 'bits to say' of the truth, of course, to see the sort of things it produces: there are some very funny things. I do not want to compromise God too much in this business, everyone knows that I consider that...he is rather of the order of the super cherished; so then (22) why would he always tell the truth, when it works out just as well if he is totally deceptive, huh? Admitting that he made the Real, he is all the more subject to it in that precisely, if it is he who made it, so then, why not? I believe that, when all is said and done, this is how there must be interpreted the famous business of Descartes, is that not so, the evil genius (*le malin génie*). Well then, he is the evil genius and things work out like that. The smarter (*malin*) he is, the better things will go. That is even why it is necessary to be a dupe.

It is necessary to be a dupe, namely to stick, to stick to the structure.

Good, well listen, I've had my bellyful of this!.

Seminar 2: Tuesday 20 November 1973

There is a little book, there that.....I am going to begin like that in a confidential way, huh, because, obviously I ask myself, I ask myself in starting up again, is that not so: am I enough of a dupe – am I enough of a dupe, huh – not to make a mistake (*errer*)?

To make a mistake in the sense that I specified for you the last time, which means: am I sticking enough to...to the analytic discourse, which does not all the same fail to comprise a certain sort of cold horror. Am I sticking to it enough not to...to be distracted from it, namely, not to truly follow it along its thread, or even, to employ a term that I will use later, there where I am expected, onto vector spaces, I am saying this to you right away; anyway, I will not tackle that today, but spaces introduces a notion, like that, another space in space. That is called fibred space (*espace fibré*).

But anyway, this analytic discourse, this must not all the same be forgotten, to excuse myself if I do not completely stick to it, the fact is that I founded it. I founded it in a written elaboration, the one that writes the small **o** and the S_2 superimposed on the left, and then the $\$$ and the S_1 on the right.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbf{o} & \longrightarrow & \$ \\ \hline S_2 & & S_1 \end{array}$$

When what is at stake is being dupe, is that not so, it is not a matter on this occasion of being the dupe of my ideas, because these four little letters are not ideas. They are not even ideas at all, the proof, is that it (24) is very, very difficult to give them a meaning. Which does not mean that...one cannot make something of them. This is what is inscribed from a certain elaboration of what I will call, it is the same thing to say that it is inscribed as to say what I am going to say now

namely, the mathematics of Freud, what is locatable in the logic of his discourse, in his own wandering. Namely, the way he tried to render this analytic discourse adequate to the scientific discourse. That was his *erre*. This is what – I cannot say prevented him in a word – to construct the mathematics of it; since the mathematics that he did like that, needed a second step in order to be able to be inscribed subsequently.

So then, while I was speaking to you the last time, there came back to me, like that, blasts of memories, of something which of course did not happen to me here, which had worried me that morning in preparing what I had to say to you.

There you are, it is called – let us say it right away – it is called *die Grenzen der Deutbarkeit*. It is something which has a close relationship, in fact, with the inscription of the analytic discourse; the fact is if this inscription is indeed what I am saying about it, namely, the beginning, the key kernel of its mathematics, there is every chance that it can be used for the same thing as mathematics. Namely, that it carries in itself its own limit. I knew that I had read that, because I had it in an old yoke that I had bought like that, second hand, in the debris of what survived from the story of Freud, after the Nazi business, so then I had this debris...and I said to myself that all the same that must have been collected somewhere, given the date. It's true. It had been collected in volume III of the *Gesammelte Schriften*. But! But nowhere else, namely, where it ought to have appeared, being already edited in 1925, in fact, and even already appeared, in fact, the first time, if I remember correctly, in... Well then, it had not appeared at all before...before that, before what I had then.

So then it was then – it came out in the *Gesammelte Schriften* but it did not appear where it should have appeared at the time it came out, namely, in the 8th edition of the *Traumdeutung*. And it did not appear because, in the additional notes in question, there is a third chapter –

the first being constituted by these *Grenzen der Deutbarkeit*, the second I will skip over, I will talk to you about it again – and the third signifies *Die okkulte Bedeutung des Traumes*. Namely, *the occult significance*. That is why it did not appear.

(25) What remained in my mind, what worried me, was *die Grenzen*. But because of the fact that these *Grenzen* were associated to the occult significance, it did not come out. Jones says that somewhere: there is an objection in fact to the occult. There is an objection from the side of scientific discourse. And in effect, as it is presented now, the occult, is defined very precisely, anyway, as what scientific discourse cannot stand. This is even one might say its definition. So then, it is not astonishing that it should object to it. This objection came, like that, conveyed by Jones, and this may appear a quite simple explanation of the fact that it did not appear where it should have appeared, namely, in the 8th edition.

Freud, as you know, there was nothing new, in fact, in that he worried about the occult. He did so, like that, by...by an *erre*. By an *erre* concerning scientific discourse. Yes, because he imagined that scientific discourse ought to take all the facts into account. It was a pure *erre*. And a still more serious *erre*: an *erre* that was pushed to the point of being an error. Scientific discourse does not take into account the facts that do not stick to its structure, namely, where it began to advance its relationship with its own mathematics. But for it not to stick to it, it is still necessary that it should come within reach of this mathematical structure.

So that it takes into account all the facts which create a hole in its, let us say, I am going quickly, here, because it is not a valid word...but which create a hole because it is more tangible, right away, to say it like that, which make a hole in its system! But it wants to know nothing about what does not belong at all to its system. So then, in worrying himself like that, about occult phenomena – ones described

as occult, that does not at all mean that they are occult, that they are hidden, because, what is hidden is what is hidden by the form of the discourse itself, but what has absolutely nothing to do with the form of the discourse is not hidden, it is elsewhere.

You there, such as you are, like that – I am appealing to your feeling, in fact – there is nothing in common between the unconscious and the occult. In any case at the level that you are at here to hear me, I think that all the same you have been sufficiently broken to the idea that the unconscious... belongs fundamentally to language, huh. And if you were able the other day to look at what I had begun to do like that, (26) vaguely on the board with the line described as a journey, and then that you have simply been able to admit what I have been drumming into you for 20 years – indeed even more – namely, what closes, what finishes the *Traumdeutung*: what I recalled the other day, namely, this famous indestructible desire which travels along, which, on the line of the journey, once the entry into the field of language has occurred, accompanies from one end to the other and, *Ebenbild* always the same, without variation, accompanies the subject structuring his desire.

As Freud says, *Ebenbild*, (it is translated as *in the image* [SE: perfect likeness], but it is not in the image, it is *Ebenbild*, it is a fixed image, always the same!) in the image *der Vergangenheit*, namely, what in the image of this *Ebenbild* cannot even be called the past: it is always the same thing, there is no past once what is at stake is spatial function, the crossing of the line with this network of the structure which is displaced, for its part, according to the line, but of which one can say at the same time is not displaced since the line does not vary. It is with respect to life as journey that one can say that there is a part that is past and another which remains, like that, to be consumed, which is called the future. These inscriptions of the indestructible desire go with the flow. But in going with the flow, at the same time they stop it, they fix it, is that no so, since all movement is relative, is

that not so. And the flow within it is only a flow, it does not constitute a point of reference, huh. There you are.

So then the symbolic structure, is that not so, is at the end of this *Traumdeutung* perhaps still to be discovered, but it is on this that Freud concludes his notion in this title, in this conclusion that comes here like the very point of everything he had ever stated about the dream in the *Traumdeutung*: his notion is there. This indeed is why that what retroacts in it, is that – this is what he explained about the dream, is that not so – is that there is something of the unconscious, and that the unconscious is that: that he was able to say on occasion that the unconscious is the irrational, but that simply means that its rationality is to be constructed, that even if the principle of contradiction, the yes or the no, do not play the role that is believed in classical logic, is that not so – since classical logic has been superseded for a long time, at that very moment, well, it is necessary to construct another one... Yeah...

And I, I suspect, that if the *die Grenzen der deutbarkeit, the limits of interpretation*, (that's what that means) did not come out in the (27) following edition of *The interpretation of dreams*, it is not simply because it was in the shadow of the occult, it is because all the same here, that...that relied on it (*en remettait*). This went a little beyond the business about the affirmation that *desire is indestructible*, it showed in this structuring of desire itself something which precisely would have allowed its nature to be mathematicised differently. That is why it is worth the trouble, all the same, for me to give you like that – it is obvious that before such an audience it is not possible for me to give a commentary on the 25 pages of Freud, there are no more, there are even fewer – but I could all the same tackle the first paragraph, that will encourage you to go to find it because all the same it finished up by being published, as was pointed out to me by my dear friend Nicole Sels, whom after the last session I got into this business, I said to her: 'But where the devil in fact is this thing?', this thing which

nevertheless in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, is indicated immediately after this point on which I terminated about the indestructible and invariable desire, because this is what was at stake.

So then as she commented to me – that is worth the trouble, is it not, commenting to me - as my dear Nicole who knows something about what is involved in searching for the edition of a text (who knows a bit about it and who can really do something about it, in fact, it is unimaginable how I make her run around, I mean, that she runs around, and that she brings it back to me within two hours; here she spent longer: she spent at least three days), yes, this supplementary chapter does not figure, because I had said to her: “All the same, it would be curious if I were not to find it in the *Gesammelte Werke*. And I can’t find it!” She replied to me that it is not in any logical place in this work, nor in the volume that corresponds – about the *Traumdeutung*, I had of course noticed, this is even what had enraged me - nor in volume XIV which corresponds to the year 1925. It appeared *in extremis* and – she added – sneakily in volume I, for this volume was the last one to appear: in 1952. Here she is referring me back to the opinion of Strachey, who had translated it himself in the *Standard Edition*, is that not so, but in volume XIX – namely, in its normal year, yes, that’s true – but he thinks that this fate is due to the grimace everyone made before the *okkulte Bedeutung* of dreams. This is what Strachey thinks. I do not know what Nicole Sels thinks about it, but it is, with respect - simply - to the facts that she brought me, secondary.

(28) So then I am not going to read the thing for you right away in German.

This is how it is put: ‘The question of whether one can give a complete and assured translation of dream life’ – *vollständige und gesicherte bersetzung* – already this use of *Übersetzung* is not bad, it is very Lacanian, good – *in die Ausdruckweise des Wachtlebens*: ‘into

the mode of expression of waking life', and here he puts in brackets: *Deutung*, namely meaning; *Deutbarkeit* means interpretation but *deutung*, means meaning, *Traumdeutung*, means the meaning of dreams – 'cannot be treated in the abstract but in the *Beziehung* to *Verhältnisse*' – this is another term to express relations – 'with the relations' – designated then by another word, namely, posited differently: *Beziehung* is something, like that approximate; *Verhältnisse*, can be taken in the sense of relations that are written, I mean of what is constituted properly speaking in an articulation proper to the sense of the term, is that not so, as something that may happen to be posited there – 'the relations, *unter denen*', under whose influence one works at interpreting dreams: *man an der Traumdeutung arbeitet*. [cf. *SE XIX* 127 – I have translated from Lacan's French & *GW I* 561.]

And this is where we go a little further in it.

'Our *geistige* activities' – those of the spirit, that is how it is put: *unsere geistigen Tätigkeiten*. For Freud, that means 'what one thinks.' The activities of the spirit are what are generally designated as thoughts.

Streben. *Streben*, is a word which has different resonances, is that not so, than what it is translated by in English, namely, – on this occasion, is that not so, it is precisely Strachey's translation – *pursue*. It does not pursue anything at all. It pursues nothing at all, *streben* when one follows carefully what it is, when one sees the stuff of the word, which is done obviously with its previous usages, is something which is, to be inscribed, something like this: you understand if you have a vaulted arch, like that, something in wood: it is the tie-beams (*tirants*). They appear to support it like that; if you have the slightest notion about architecture, you will know that the tie-beams, in a vaulted arch, well then, they pull. I mean that they pull towards the outside. The tie-beams are not supports. Anyway, it does not matter for the *streben*

what they pull: what they may hold together, is ‘either *ein nützliches Ziel*’ and you rediscover the essentially Lacanian functions of the (29) useful and of enjoying (*jouir*), they are specified as such, it is on this that at the start I made entirely pivot what I said about the ethics of psychoanalysis – ‘a useful goal’, is, or what they *anstreben*, what they pull, ‘or indeed, *oder unmittelbaren Lustgewinn*’, namely, quite simply my surplus enjoying (*plus-de-jouir*).

Die Frage ob man von jedem Produkt des Traumlebens eine vollständige und gesichert Übersetzung in die Ausdrucksweise des Wachlebens (Deutung) geben kann, soll nicht abstrakt behandelt werden, sondern unter Beziehung auf die Verhältnisse unter denen man an der Traumdeutung arbeitet.

Unsere geistigen Tätigkeiten streben entweder ein nützliches Ziel an oder unmittelbaren Lustgewinn. (GW, idem.)

For what is meant by a *Lustgewinn*? A gain of *Lust*. If the ambiguity of this term in German, is that not so, does not allow there to be introduced into the *Lustprinzip*, translated as the pleasure principle, precisely this formidable divergence that there is between the notion of pleasure as it is commented on by Freud himself according to the ancient tradition, the only outcome of Epicurean wisdom, which meant to enjoy the least possible, because what really fucks us up is enjoyment! This is precisely why they were described as swine, because in effect, swine, good God, do not enjoy as much as is imagined, is that not so, they stay in their little pig house, nice and quiet, anyway, they enjoy the minimum possible...

That is why they are described as swine, because all the others, in fact, were seriously worried by enjoyment. Anyway they had to work at it, in fact: they were slaves of enjoyment. That is even why, listen...I am

going to let myself be carried along, huh, that is even why there were slaves, huh. The only civilisation that was really bitten by enjoyment, had to have slaves. Because the ones who enjoyed were them! Without slaves, no enjoyment, huh. You for your part you are all employees. Anyway you do what you can to be employees. You haven't quite arrived at it, but believe me you will get there.

Good, I let myself be carried away a little, there like that. Reflect all the same a little on that, in fact, is that not so, that only slaves enjoy. (30) It is their function. And that is why they are isolated, that people have not even the slightest scruple in transforming free men into slaves, because in making them slaves, one allows them to devote themselves only to enjoying. Free men only aspire to that. And since they are altruistic, they make slaves. It happened like that in history, in our own history. Obviously there were places where it was more civilised: there was no slavery in China. But the result was that, despite what was said, they never managed to do science, huh. Now, they have been touched a little by Marx, so they are waking up. As Napoleon said: Above all, do not wake them up! Now they are awake. They will not have needed to go by way of this affair of slaves. Which proves, all the same that there are grafts, is that not so, that it is not the worst thing to avoid. One may avoid the best. And get there all the same.

Good, anyway, *unmittelbaren Lustgewinn*, means 'a surplus enjoying, there, immediate'. 'In the first case, huh, that with the goal of usefulness, it is, (these *geistigen Tätigkeiten*, the spiritual operations) they are intellectual decisions, preparations for the manipulation, huh, *Handlung*, or communications *an andere*, to others', namely, that one talks in order – as I have just said – to manipulate them, as you say.

'In the other case, we call that – *nemmen wir sie* (*sie*, namely, the *geistigen Tätigkeiten*) *Spielen und Phantasieren*, we call that games

and the fact of phantasising. Naturally as he says, *bekanntlich*, is that not so, the useful, is simply also all the same a detour, *ein Umweg*, for a satisfaction of enjoyment'. But it is not in itself that it is aimed at, is that not so.

'Dreaming' – he did not say the dream – 'the fact of dreaming is then an activity of the second kind', namely, what he had defined by *unmittelbaren Lustgewinn*. 'It is an error, *irreführend*, to say that dreaming strives towards these pressing needs of daily life that are always imminent and tries to bring to a proper end the day's work, *Tagesarbeit*. That is what concerns preconscious thinking: *das vorbewusste Denken*. For the dream, this utilisation, this useful intention, is that not so, is just as foreign as the bringing into play, into operation, the preparation, the niggling, is that not so, of a communication *einer Mitteilung* to another, *an einen anderen*'. This (31) is why our dear Freud has something Lacanian about him is that not so, since everything that he has just told us about the dream, is uniquely a construction, an enciphering (*un chiffrage*), this enciphering which is a dimension of language has nothing to do with communication.

The relationship of man to language, which can only be... simply be tackled on the basis of the following: that the signifier is a sign, that is only addressed to another sign; that the signifier, is what makes a sign to a sign, and that that is why it is the signifier. That has nothing to do with communication to someone other, it determines a subject, it has as an effect a subject. And the subject, it is quite enough that he should be determined by that, qua subject, namely, that he should emerge from something which can only have its justification elsewhere. Except for the fact that in the dream, as we see, namely, that the operation of enciphering is done for enjoyment. Namely, that things are done in order that in the enciphering one wins this something which is the essential of the primary process, namely, a *Lustgewinn*. That is what is said there.

And then it continues. And it does not simply continue, it stresses. And this clearly shows how, why the dream function, namely, that it is only constructed and is in no way constructed, and that is why it functions, for that: it is made for nothing – ‘except to protect sleep, *den Schlaf verhüten*’. It protects sleep. What Freud only said, like that, incidentally in different points, here he insists. I mean that the question that he introduces, this is why precisely what is involved in the dream depends on the unconscious, namely, on the structure, on the structure of desire – what in the dream might well discommode sleep.

As regards sleep, it is clear that we do not know very much. We do not know very much precisely because, because those who study it, like that, as facts, with two little encephalographs, encephalopodes, encephalo-whatever-you’re-having-yourself, well, they link things together, but finally...it is all the same curious, is it not, that something so widespread in life, here, as they say, as sleep – in fact I am not putting anything forward here I am simply noting: the question has never been put about what it had to do with enjoyment. All that because enjoyment, anyway, is, it must be clearly said that it has not been made an altogether major mainspring of the conception of the world as it is put.

What is sleep? It is perhaps here that Freud’s formula could (32) obviously take on its meaning and rejoin the idea of pleasure: if I spoke about swine earlier, it is because they often take a snooze, yes. They have the least possible enjoyment in the measure that the more they sleep the better it is. In any case that would agree with – if my hypothesis is right, namely, that enjoyment is in the enciphering; one can also see, one can see by that, in any case, something, which is that the enciphering of the dream, after all, is not pushed all that far, as far as people say anyway! It is... I already explained condensation, displacement, it is ... it is metaphor, it is metonymy, and then it is all

sorts of little manipulations, like that, which expand the thing in the Imaginary.

It is in that direction, huh, that enjoyment must be seen. So then one could perhaps raise oneself up, is that not so, to a structure, like that in conformity, in conformity to the history of enciphering, the fact is that if it is in the direction of that something which happens...to what? *Die Grenzen*, the limits. That's the error. The limits *der Deutbarkeit*, if you read these four pages carefully, because there are no more than that, you will notice that, that what signals this limit, is exactly the same moment when it reaches meaning. Namely, that meaning is, in sum rather bitty. You do not discover ninety-nine meanings at the *bi-du-bout* of the unconscious: it is the sexual meaning. It is very precisely non-sense meaning. The meaning where the *Verhältnis* is in a mess. The *Beziehung*, for its part, takes place with the following: that there is no sexual *Verhältnisse* except that the *Verhältnis* qua written, in so far as it can be inscribed or that it is a matheme, always funks it.

And this indeed is why there is a moment when the dream collapses namely, that one stops dreaming and sleep remains protected from enjoyment. It is because when all is said and done one can see the end of it (*le bout*).

But the important thing, the important thing for us, if it is true that this sexual meaning can only be defined by not being able to be written, is to see precisely what in this enciphering – not in the deciphering – that which in the enciphering necessitates *die Grenzen*, the same word, here employed in the title, the same word serves for what in mathematics, is designated as *limit*. As limit of a function, as limit of a real number. The variable can increase as much as it likes – the function will not go beyond certain limits. And language is made like that. It is something which, however far you push its enciphering, will (33) never manage to let go what is involved in meaning, because it is

there in the place of meaning; because it is there at that place. And what ensures that the sexual relationship cannot be written, is precisely that hole there, that all language as such fills, the access, the access of the speaking being to something which indeed presents itself, as touching the Real at a certain point, there, at that point here; at that point there, is justified the fact that I define the real by the impossible, because here precisely, it does not manage ever – it is the nature of language – it never arrives, ever at the point where the sexual relationship can be inscribed. Yeah... Yeah...

So then there remains our business with Freud and his *occult*.

The business of the occult, is very curious, is it not? I spoke to you about the 8th edition, but not the 7th. It is impossible to get one's hands on the 7th, not because of the Nazis, this time, but because it probably appeared in very few copies, anyway, it came out in 1919, can you imagine! The fabulous thing, is that all the same, thanks to another friend (you see that I have nothing but friends) Nanie Bridgman, Nanie Bridgman who is in the *B.N.* got her hands on the 7th. Well then that relieved me, huh. Because the way in which Freud is translated – it is true that that began especially with Marie Bonaparte, good....but before that there was Isaac Meyerson; I had got to the point, I beg his pardon for this, of thinking that for him it was the same thing, namely, that he wrote in any old way; I had got to that point, and why? Because (I didn't bring it here, like that, it's unfortunate, I forgot it, that's the truth) there is a little sentence, there is a little sentence at the moment when Freud asks the question, this is what culminates in this final paragraph that I spoke to you about, at the moment when Freud asks the question of what is involved, what is the order of reality of this dream – he is forced to call it psychical, but at the same time it worries him to call it psychical, because he clearly feels that the soul, in fact, this business does not hold up, anyway that the soul is all the same no different to the body, good.

There then he evokes material reality, he had not very clearly seen at that time that he had the material there; it was his whole book, very simply namely, the way in which he had dealt with the dream, dealing with it by the manipulation of deciphering, namely, after all simply with what language involves in terms of a dimension, of enciphering.

(34) So there, he gets involved in what is involved, when all is said and done, in this reality, and he is struck – he is struck only there, it is the only edition in which there is a sentence like that, a sentence where all of a sudden, he repudiates this fact: a savant, a modest savant certainly, he describes him like that, there are all the same two things that in any case – anyway here he puts a barrier, he cannot take it on board – it is the subsistence of what is dead.

This, this is directed at the immortality of the soul.

And secondly that all the elements of the future can be calculated. Which obviously here, rejoins is that not so, rejoins the solid ground of Aristotle, huh. The soul in Aristotle is so defined that it in no way implies its immortality, and it is moreover thanks to that that there can be progress in science, it is starting from the moment when in effect people interest themselves in the body – and then secondly, secondly the following: the maintenance of the contingent as essential. And after all why the contingent, namely, that we cannot predict what is going to happen tomorrow? In many things we can predict it. What does Aristotle use in his definition of the contingent? Knowing who is going to be victorious tomorrow, knowing if from today, in the name of this, tomorrow something will be called “the victory of Mantitheus” can we from today write: the victory of Mantitheus. It is this alone that is involved in the arguments of Aristotle about the contingent. It is all the same a nice opportunity for us to question ourselves about why events which are moreover not just any old events, which are let us say human events – I do not see why I would refuse here to state it like that – why is it that this is the contingent?

Because after all, there are all the same human events that are all the more predictable because they are constants. For example: I was sure that you would be just as numerous today as the last time – for reasons moreover that are just as obscure – but anyway it can be calculated.

Why can a victory not be calculated?

Who is going to answer me? [*To Gloria Gonzales, his secretary: Give me a cigar*].

Listen: a victory cannot be calculated.....

[*Someone in the audience*]: Because there must be two...!

(35) There is something in that idea...

There is something in the idea, it is obvious, anyway, it is true, as you say, there must be two, and sometimes even a little more... But by going in that direction, is this not so, you clearly see that, despite everything, you slide gently to the side, to the side where these two, where these two funk it: namely, to the side of the sexual relationship. It is a whole business, huh, to be two. Yes. When I think that I will not have the time today to tell you all the beautiful things that I had prepared for you about love, well then, this disappoints me a little but it was because I dragged things out, and then I dragged things out like that because...because I wanted all the same to make a careful enciphering, namely, not to wander too much, huh, so that for the rest, anyway, you can perhaps wait a little bit.

But to refer to something that I already put forward – I said it in a thousand ways, very often, but one day I said it quite crudely, like that, clearly, I said that the effect of interpretation – to limit myself to what, is that not so, I must remain stuck to, I must remain the dupe of, and still more a dupe without forcing myself, because if I am a dupe by forcing myself, well then I will write the *Discourse on the passions of love* precisely what Pascal wrote, and you can really see that he is forcing himself, huh.

After that naturally it slackened, it died, he was never able to come back to it, but anyway, it is probable enough (I am not sure) that he forced himself, all the same when he wrote that. The results are absolutely stupefying, are they not. It is absolutely magnificent in fact: by forcing oneself one manages to say...one manages, one truly manages not to go astray. Read that, anyway it works, that is how love happens. Absolutely disconcerting, but that is how it happens. Good.

What is meant by saying that interpretation is incalculable in its effects? That means that its only meaning is enjoyment; it is enjoyment, moreover, that creates a complete obstacle to the sexual relationship being able to be written in any way whatsoever, and that in short, this allows there to be extended to enjoyment this formula that the effect of interpretation is incalculable. If you carefully reflect, in effect, on what is happening at the encounter of these two herds that are called armies, is that not so, and which moreover are discourses, walking discourses, I mean that each of them only holds together because people believe that the captain is S_1 . Good...it is all the same quite clear that if the victory of one army over another is strictly (36) unforeseeable, it is because one cannot calculate the enjoyment of a combatant. That this is what it's all about, in short: if there are some who enjoy being killed, they have the advantage. There you are. This is a little glimpse concerning what is involved in the contingent, namely, of what is only defined by the incalculable... Yeah.

So then now, all the same, I am not all the same going to leave you without telling you, anyway some few little words about what is completely opposite to the line, like that, with which we are in fact exercised – or indeed I am exercising myself before you – but where all the same – anyway there is some chance, like that – followed a little, at least followed by your silence, is that not so...

The occult, cannot all the same simply be defined by the fact anyway that it is rejected by science. Because, as I have just told you, it is crazy how much it rejects, I mean science, huh! In principle, everything that we have just said, and which nevertheless exists all the same. Namely, war. There they all are, the savants scratching their heads; *warum Krieg?* Ah! Ah! Why war? They cannot manage to understand that, the unfortunates...yeah...They tackle it in twos, huh, Freud and Einstein. It is no credit to them...

But anyway, the occult, the occult is well and truly surely that: this absence of relationship. And I would even tell you a little bit more about it, in fact, if I did not have all the same to specify clearly how it presented itself in Freud's time. Because there it is quite clear. Everything that he wrote, is that not so, *Psychoanalyse und Telepathie, Traum und Telepathie*, and God knows we know the bad use that has been made of this by people who have isolated it under the name of psy-phenomena, they are fraudsters, are they not. It must all the same be clearly seen that Freud, then – read the texts, is that not so, those whose title I have just given, all the same, those, they can be found. Contrary to *Grenzen der Deutbarkeit*, it is quite clear: he says that the dream and telepathy, for example, have strictly nothing to do with one another. It even gets to the point that he goes as far as to say that telepathy, is something of the same order, anyway, I admit it, why not, it is of the order of communication. And in the dream, it is treated like any other, namely, the first part of what I stated for you earlier, namely, *etwas nützliches*, is that not so, something that is of use for the day's scheming. And it is taken up in the same way in the (37) dream, not only does he prefer to admit, but very specifically he demonstrates that in every case where there was so-called *dreamt* telepathy, there are cases where one can admit the direct fact that there was a message, namely, announced along a special wire if I can express myself like that, because that is what telepathy is, is that not so, it is a special wire. One can, you only have to treat the case, you only have to envisage it, to operate with it, in thinking that, like any

other day's residue, there was a telepathic warning. In other words he doesn't give a damn whether it is telepathic or not, the only thing that interests him is that it is taken up in the dream, this (I don't want to be reading it for you because it is too late, is it not) this is stated in Freud: one must consider, to conceive something about the relationships of telepathy to the dream, that the telepathy is produced as a remainder, a residue of the preceding day. He prefers to admit that, even though of course naturally...he prefers to admit the telepathic phenomenon – this is the meaning of his position – than to bring it into the dream. And he underlines, he underlines, namely, he says why: because the dream is made – and he gives the whole list – with a whole series of encipherings and that these encipherings can only be brought to bear on a material which is constituted by the day's residues. He prefers to put telepathy, to range it with current events: in no way to attach it to the mechanisms of the unconscious. It is easy to confirm, it is enough for you to consult it – of course naturally in French it was never translated but all the same, there are some of you who read English, even a lot I hope, and on the other hand a certain number who read German – consult the texts of Freud on the unconscious and telepathy: there is never any ambiguity, he prefers to know everything, in short, not simply what he doubts, but about that...about what he washes his hands of, about which he says: I have no competence in that matter. But he prefers to admit that telepathy exists to simply bringing it close to what is involved in the unconscious. In other words everything that he emits, everything that he advances as remarkable, considering certain dreams, everything that he advances as remarkable, consists always in saying: nothing else happened except the relationship to the dream as an enciphering. Or again only the relationship of the unconscious of the occultist or the fortune teller with the unconscious of the subject. In other words he denies any telepathic phenomenon in (38) connection with this – he denies it with regard to the following: that there was nothing else except a mapping out of desire. This mapping out of desire, he considers as always possible, which means – which means as compared to my inscription of the other day about

life as a journey and the structure which is displaced at the same time as the journey is outlined, outlined linearly.

The question can be raised, and how would it not be raised, whether the structure is truly punctuated by the desire of the Other, as such, if already the subject is born included in language, included in language and already determined in his unconscious by the desire of the Other, why would there not be between all of that a certain solidarity? The unconscious does not exclude – if the unconscious is this structure, this structure of language – the unconscious does not exclude, it is only too obvious, the unconscious does not exclude the recognition of the desire of the Other as such, in other words the network, the network of structure of which the subject is specially determined, and it is conceivable that it communicates with the other structures: the structures of parents certainly, and why not on occasion with these structures which are those of an unknown, provided, provided, Freud underlines, his attention is, like that, a little elsewhere.

And the best part, what he underlines, is that not so, is that this diverting of attention, is precisely obtained by the way in which the fortune teller worries himself with all sorts of mythical objects. That sufficiently diverts his attention for him to be able to apprehend something which allows him to make the following prediction to a certain young woman who had taken off her wedding ring to make him believe that...anyway to remain anonymous; he tells her that she is going to get married and that she will have two children when she is 32. There is no explanation for this prediction – which moreover does absolutely not happen, but which despite the fact that it does not happen, leaves the subject for whom it was destined, absolutely enchanted. Each time that Freud underlines a telepathic fact, it is always a fact of this order, namely, where the prediction is in no way realised; is in no way realised, but which on the contrary leaves the subject in an absolutely expansive state of satisfaction. She could not have been told anything better. And in effect, this figure of 32 years

on this occasion, was inscribed in her desire. If the unconscious is what Freud tells us, if these figures chosen by chance, is that not so, are in reality never chosen by chance, it is precisely by a certain (39) relationship with the desire of the subject; this is what is displayed right throughout *The psychopathology of everyday life*.

The interest. The interest is something that Freud knows very well how to underline eventually, is that not so, which is, the only remarkable point of these facts that are described as occultism, is that they always concern a person that is important for us, in whom one has an interest. That one loves. But there is nothing more conceivable than that one should have some unconscious relationships with a person that one loves. But it is not, it is not in so far as one loves him, because in so far as one loves him, it is well known, is that not so, one misses him. One does not manage it. So then what is at stake all the same are two things, in this so-called telepathic news (*information*). There is the content of the news. And then there is the fact of the news. The fact of the news, is very properly speaking what Freud rejects. He is quite willing to admit it as possible, but in a world with which he has strictly nothing to do. As regards the content of the news, it has nothing to do with the person that it is a matter of having news about. It is uniquely concerned with the desire of the subject, in so far as love includes only too much this part of desire. It would desire to be possible.

So then, what I would like simply to accentuate in leaving you, is that there is all the same something that is conveyed from the deepest past, and which is called initiation. Initiation is what we have the debris of under the heading of occultism. This proves simply that it is the only thing that, when all is said and done, still interests us in initiation. I do not see why I should not give to initiation, as it was known in Antiquity, in fact, a certain status. Everything that we can glimpse about the famous Mysteries – and everything that still remains of it in countries that can be situated ethnologically, as regards something of

the order of initiation – is linked to what somewhere, someone like Mauss, is that not so, called *techniques of the body* – I mean that, what we have and what concerns us in this discourse, the analytic as much as the scientific, indeed the university, indeed that of the Master and whatever else you wish ... is that, is that initiation presents itself, when one looks at the thing closely, always as this: an approach, an approach that does not happen without all sorts of detours, of deliberation, an approach of something where what is opened, revealed, is something which strictly concerns enjoyment. I mean (40) that it is not unthinkable that the body, the body in so far as we believe it to be living, is something that is much more clever than what the anatomical physiologists know. There is perhaps a science of enjoyment, if one can express it thus. Initiation in any case cannot be defined otherwise. There is only one misfortune, which is that in our day, there is no longer a trace, absolutely anywhere of initiation.

Voilà.

Seminar 3: Tuesday 11 December 1973

You can say that it is indeed because you are there that I am speaking. Don't tire me, huh, because otherwise I'm off, huh! Here is a little thing that I took the trouble to construct, to show it to you. It is a Borromean knot. Namely – take that one away for me, the blue – you see here the blue, it is taken away, huh. The result is that the two others are free. You have seen that I did not need to dismantle them for them to be free. There you are. There, Gloria can do it again for

you. But anyway, I think that it is already sufficiently demonstrative. That is done with cubes, on occasion, it is done with cubes and one can see that there must be three in width and five in length for the minimal Borromean knot. Good.

The idea, is obviously to make something which...which corresponds to three planes. Namely, which are fabricated like the Cartesian coordinates. When you want to fabricate that, you will notice, well then, that you have all the same...some difficulties. You have some difficulties, that are not at all real: you have difficulties in taking into account right away what that is going to lead to, how much of it you have to put into one direction and then into the other. Try yourselves, won't you. Try above all – there was another thing that I did not bring for you, there was another thing which, which for its part corresponded not to the Borromean knot, which has the characteristic of...that each of the two rings (*ronde*) that this constitutes, they are not round (*ronde*), it is just as if, the two rings that it constitutes are freed if you wish, if you cut one of them. You also have the well (42) known arrangement that I am not going to reproduce for you on the board because, anyway I have it here but I am tired, you only have to think again of the three circles that serve as an emblem for the Olympics. There you can note that it is done differently, namely, that not only are two of these rings knotted, but the third is fastened (*se boucle*), not to one of the two, that does not make three which would make a chain, but to the two. Well then try. Try to make a montage, a montage of cubes so that it is like that, namely, that the continuity of the montage that you will have made, like that, you will make the yellow, the red and the blue, that this is done, that it is possible that you set up on three planes – the assurance that what is at stake are planes is given by the cubic form precisely, you are forced to, to make them on three planes – try it.

You will certainly not see right away that in this case, it is necessary that, that the side, as I might say, the side that is going to show itself,

should be at a minimum four cubes. But that these four cubes are also found in the other dimension. Namely, instead of having twice $5 + 2$, as in this case, which gives 12, you have twice $4 + 2 \times 2$, which also gives 12 - which is curious. But look, the very difficulty that you will have in making this little construction, will be a good experience of something that I am going to begin with: it is that you will notice here the degree to which we do not sense (*nous ne sentons pas*) volume. Because you will be very hesitant. You will be very hesitant as I was myself. Because, starting for example from three simple series of 4, when you have fitted them together in such a way that this gives these famous three axes that are used in the Cartesian construction, when you only see four of them, you have moreover for an instant the feeling that it could be fastened, that it could be fastened, for example, like here, as if there were only four of them, and then, only three in width. You will have that feeling.

This is a way to make you experience the fact that we do not have the sense of volume, whatever we may have succeeded in imagining as three dimensions of space. The sense of...of depth, of thickness, is something we lack, much more than we believe. This to put forward what I want to tell you at the start: that we are beings, you as well as me, of two dimensions, despite appearances. We inhabit 'Flatland' [in English] as the authors who have produced a little volume on this (43) subject express it, and they seem to have a lot of difficulty, in fact, in imagining two dimensional beings. There is no need to look far. It is all of us.

At least this is how, truly, things present themselves.

The best thing that we can manage to do is in fact what we limit ourselves to - it would all the same be astonishing that in an assembly, here where people are in the process of...of scribbling, that I, that I might not be able to make myself understood: that is what scribbling is, it is the best we can do. And this is what was very well articulated

by the fact that, people were found, in fact, to proclaim in a different area than ours, that *the ink of the learned is very superior to the blood of martyrs*. There are people who have dared say that! They have dared to say this obvious thing. It must indeed be said, this last one, the blood of martyrs, huh, what do we have of it? The subjects of paintings. This with the obsessional structure that Freud was able to recognise in what is a single thing: religion and art. I apologise to the artists, there are perhaps some here, who have wandered into this audience, even though I find it hard to believe. I apologise to the artists if they hear about this: they are worth no more than religion. It is...it is not saying much.

The stupid thing (*connerie*), and it is not the first time that I evoke it here, so that, I hope, you are not going to think it is directed at you – the stupid thing is our essence, a part of which is the fact that your demand – I have racked my brain for a long time to know why you are so immoderately numerous – anyway through racking my brain, finally, a flash emerged from it. Precisely, your demand, the one that herds you in here, is how to have a chance to get out of this stupidity. This is even what you are counting on me for. Except for the fact that this demand forms part of the stupidity.

So then, this demand, to which I am yielding for one more day, you should know that it is not because your number is so great that – precisely, I am not going to try to pretend. It is because, not that it is great, but that it is number. And this is why I dedicate myself to the abjection, I must say, with which, in this place I am merged. There is a thing that I called *la passe*, which is practised in my school, uniquely because I wanted to try to have the testimony of it. It is necessary that I should be or that I am part of it, namely, today, in order to see clearly for myself what it is: to devote oneself to (44) responding to anyone whatsoever, to anything whatsoever – but respond what? What analytic discourse responds is this. What you are doing; everything that you are doing. And of its nature, as one might

say, by its structure, more exactly, contrary to everything that was thought up to the present, among the specialists, ‘philosophers’ they are called, not ignorance – natural ignorance, as Pascal puts it, and I thank someone who, while I was working last Sunday in fact, took the trouble to call me, moreover because I had explicitly charged him to do so...but, it was like that, I will tell you again a little later, in the form of a little suggestion that had come to me from him about Pascal – well then, I had charged him with looking in Pascal at all the stages which go from natural ignorance to true science, with between the what he designates, like that, in his scribbling, the semi-skilled (*semi-habiles*). It is the person who rendered me this service, in fact, who...who wiped Pascal clean, like that, to avoid me having to do it, because I was wrecked – he thought he could identify these semi-skilled with the non-dupes. I hope I will manage, anyway in this effort, to make you sense that...it is not at all, at all, at all, what I mean. Not that the semi-skilled are not perhaps in effect non-dupes, I believe for my part that they are just as much dupes as the others but, contrary to what you may imagine, it is not enough to be a dupe in order not to err!

I said: *the non-dupes errent*, again you must not simply be a dupe of just anything. And even one must be a dupe especially of something that I am going to try, to try, that I would like to try today to get you to reach.

So then, what analytic discourse responds is this: what you do, far from being a matter of ignorance, is always determined. Determined already by something which is knowledge, and that we call the unconscious. What you do, knows (*sait*), knows what you are, knows you. What...you...do not sufficiently sense – anyway I cannot believe it in such a numerous assembly – is to what point this statement, is new. Never did anyone among the Grand Guignols who busied themselves with the question of knowledge, and God knows it is not without some unease that I rank Pascal there also, since he is the

greatest of all these Grand Guignols! No one has ever dared to pronounce this verdict that I am pointing out to you here: the response of the unconscious, is that it implies, that it implies no pardon (*le sans-pardon*), and even in attenuating circumstances. What you do is (45) knowledge, completely determined. Which is why, which is why the fact that it is determined by an articulation supported by the preceding generation in no way excuses you, since this only makes the saying, the saying of this knowledge, more hardened knowledge, as I might say. At the limit, a knowledge that was always there. I separated out this meaning from Freud, because he says it. He says it by his whole work. But I beg you not to comprehend me, you see that there is a reason for it! But for my part I can do nothing but hear it in what Freud says, because there is nothing, nothing to do than to let the consequences flow. Once it is stated, it founds a new discourse. Namely, an articulation of structure which is confirmed to be all that exists in terms of a bond between speaking beings. There are no other bonds between them than the bond of discourse. That does not mean, naturally, that one does not imagine something else.

I told you earlier that...if we do not have volume, we are all the same two dimensional, huh. So then there is the profile, the projection, the silhouette, in fact everything that one adores in a beloved being. One never adores anything more. And since I started from that, huh, in connection with this famous story of the mirror, people imagined that I disparaged it. I did not disparage it at all, huh, because, like everyone else, I am very satisfied with it! As regards volume, thickness, the simple handling of what I advised you earlier, will inform you of the degree to which we are absent. But there is all the same something different huh, that we take for volume. And precisely it is the knot, huh? People have made of it metaphors – not unfounded – the knots of friendship, the knots of love. Well then, that comes from the fact, anyway: it is our only way of approaching volume. When we squeeze, like that, someone against us – that happens to me too, yeah, but...are we in short so sure of these knots? For adoration

we will remain, will we not, at what I called earlier two dimensions the two dimensions (pretty, pretty) – there is a recent author, like that (I apologise to him if he is there, I have not yet had the time to read him) he calls it the *Singe d'or*. Since he paid me the homage of his book, I think that it perhaps all the same because he had some echoes of what I talk about, and perhaps even, who knows, he read me – and that...and in order to talk in this way anyway about the *Golden monkey*, he must have had indeed some echo of what I have just been (46) pushing forward, about what attaches us to the image, to the image in two dimensions. I am far from having disparaged it. Not only am I far from having disparaged it, but it would be completely absurd to say so, because the signifiers themselves, we are forced to pass by the same image, the image of 'Flatland', the image in two dimensions, huh, to demonstrate that they are articulated..

I first showed you the Borromean knot flattened out. Naturally, thanks to artifices, there are places where you see the break appearing, what can only be represented as a break, even though it is a knot, a knot precisely that I tried to put into volume for you, so that you would clearly see that it is not only flattened out that one can tackle it, besides the fact that when you have yourself handled this volume, you will notice that...the volume, here, produced in volume, this does not at all allow there to be distinguished, as I might say, this knot from its specular image. It is no more laevogyrotory than dextrogyrotory, it is not simply perfectly symmetrical but it is so on three axes, which makes it strictly impossible for its specular image to be different from it.

Writing, for its part, is done in a space that is no less specular than the others. This is even the principle of this very pretty exercise that is called the palindrome. It nevertheless remains that this hotch potch that I have just made between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, does not swamp anything. It does not swamp in particular the difference there is between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, it is well and truly

the same thing, once imagined, it is our common notion of space that...that we imagine does not have an end. You should read on this the juicy remarks of Leibniz discussing with Newton: the so-called supposition, in fact, of a limit of space, would become unthinkable, Leibniz says, because if there was a limit, then outside of this limit, then, one could...one could make a little hole in the limit with a nail...It is absolutely extraordinary what one can read, what one can read about imagination. And notably about this fact that in order to imagine space – because it would be no less an imagination, but perhaps an imagination that would have opened up to something quite different; people did not start from the fact that in space there are knots. There surely would be an advantage in our seeing, as I might say, that the Imaginary and the Symbolic are only modes of approaching it.

(47) I am taking them from the angle of space. Why are these two modes still not enough? But anyway I underline in passing that the word mode, is to be taken in the sense that this term has in the couple of words *modal logic*, namely, that there is meaning only in the symbolic, in other words in its grammatical articulation. When you approach certain tongues – I have the feeling that it is not wrong to say it about the Chinese tongue – you will notice that less imaginary than ours, the Indo-European tongues, they play on the knot. It is not a terrain onto which I am going to venture today, because I have enough to say like that, but perhaps...perhaps I would ask, I would suggest to a Chinese to take things from this angle, and to come to tell you what...what he thinks about it, if perchance what I tell him opens up his thinking about it, because it is not enough even to inhabit a tongue to have an idea of its structure, especially if as is necessarily the case, since I can only address the supposed Chinese in question, if I speak to him in my tongue, namely, that, if he understands me, it is because already with regard to his own, he is in a mess.

What is terrible is that when we distinguish an order, we make a *being* of it. The word *mode* on this occasion is supposed to be illuminated if we gave its true import to the expression *mode of being*. Now, there is no other being than one of mode, precisely. And the imaginary mode has proved itself, with respect to what is involved in the being of the symbolic. It proved itself so well that one might well risk...trying to see if the symbolic mode might not illuminate...the being of the Imaginary. This indeed is what I tried to do, whether you are aware of it or not. I would like to say in this third session in the year of this seminar, the place it has at the seminar and in its programme. And that is why I stated it in speaking to you right away, at first, about the Borromean knot. The Borromean knot which, like that, I saw emerging, in fact, I mean that in a kind of a way it invaded me, the Borromean knot has no kind of being. It does not at all have the consistency of geometrical space of which we know that there is no limit to it being cut into slices, is that not so, to its projection, to whatever you wish...and even that this goes further. That...it invades. And this indeed is why it is instructive: it invades the other order. We are so captured by this imaginary mode, that, when we try to (48) manipulate the symbolic order, we arrive, in fact – remember the way in which sets are tackled, we are told about bijection, surjection, injection...all of that does not happen without images, in any case it is with images that you support these modes which nevertheless are designed to free you from the Imaginary. It is with little points that you will notice that between a domain and a co-domain there is an injection, or a bijection, or a surjection.

But by supporting it with points, you are carrying out nothing but an imaginary lucubration. Why has the flattening out of the Borromean knot not succeeded, did it not first come to evoke for us another start concerning the point...concerning the point, here incarnated, as I might say, because of the fact that at the heart of this little construction you have, whatever you do, an empty cell. Which is no less true than the other knot, not Borromean, huh, the knot that I called

earlier Olympic. Except for the fact that there are...more complicated consequences. But let us leave that.

Why did the Borromean knot not evoke another start concerning the point? The point, the point that we are, huh, because even in the best case, this is what we are. Up to the present I am only talking to you about the Imaginary and the Symbolic, but precisely, my discourse tends to show you that these two dimensions must be completed by that of the Real. In other words, there must be three of them. Three for there to be this point, which could all the same perhaps, anyway, if...if one was not what is absurdly called a geometrician, because, think about it, what does our geometry really have to do with the earth, anyway? Is the earth not something which is not at all flat? If we did not have a vocation for mapping, for the cadastral in what way would the earth suggest to us something flat? Why would we not have started from this point, on condition of starting from the knot, from the idea that a point sets out. It departs at the start, in its definition, from the tugging point, for example. That means nothing to you? Between your Symbolic, your Imaginary and your Real, given all the times that I have been sifting them for you, do you not sense that your time, your time is spent being pulled in different directions? What is more it has an advantage, huh, it suggests that...that space implies time, and that time is perhaps nothing other, precisely, than a succession of instants of being pulled about. This would in any case express rather well the relationship between time (49) and this swindle...that is designated by the name of eternity.

Time is, it is perhaps that, finally, the trinities of space...what emerges there from a squeezing without remedy. Yeah.

The Borromean knot is definitely not at all something negligible. If you flatten it out, here, you will see everything that can be drawn from it. For example, here I am going to give you one of them like that, like that as a way of manipulating it for you. It is like that, like that as

a way of manipulating it for you. It is like that. You can see a little what can be thought about it from the fact that in short to transform it – when it is flat – from a dextrogyratory into a laevogyratory, it is enough in the first position that you have seen here, to do that to any one of them. If you do this subsequently to the other, huh, this is how it must be done, and if you do it subsequently to a third – that is how it must be done – each time you invert it. Namely, that from the laevogyratory first of all you make it dextrogyratory, and when you have tipped over the third, it is laevogyratory again. It is...it is not without interest. This illuminates the question of this famous business, like that, that the universe is supposed to be ambidextrous, in any case it allows us to throw a little bit of light on it. It is worth the trouble dwelling on it. It gives a different idea of spatialising. It is in any case a structure which...which completely changes the import of the word space in the sense that it is used in *The transcendental aesthetics*. Namely, that we can only perceive things from the angle of a space, which in Kant is simply imaginary. If there are three dimensions of space and if we begin to enumerate these three dimensions by the Symbolic and the Imaginary, the test must be carried about what that means for the third, namely, for the Real. There is only one thing to say about it for the moment. There. I cannot say that it is the date of the baptism of this Real: ‘I baptise you Real, huh, *qua* third dimension...’ I did that a long time ago. It is even by this that I began my teaching. Except for the fact that I added in my inner forum: ‘I baptise you Real because if you did not exist, you would have to be invented.’ That indeed is why I invented it. Not at all of course that it had not been denominated for a long time – because this is what is remarkable in the tongue, huh, it is that ‘naming’ (luckily we have English, huh, to distinguish naming from nomination, ‘naming’ means ‘to name’ which means to give a proper name, yes) – it is not for nothing, naturally, that I said: ‘I baptise you’. I am not afraid of words which have a savour of religion, I do not sense any taboo for anything that smells of priestlings nor even for anything that they propagate.

‘Naming’ *qua* proper name precedes, in fact, the necessity by which it is no longer going to cease to be written. As long as you do not take – this is the meaning of what I put forward in a mode of apparent underestimation for the Imaginary – as long as you do not take on the Symbolic in a hand to hand struggle, you will not get to the end of it. Nor at the same time of what, my God, what I call in my notes the Church, but...but which is Christianity. Because that is where Christianity fucks you up. It is the true religion. This is what should make you look twice at it. It is the true in religion. It is all the same worth the trouble being interested in it (perhaps) if for nothing other than to see what it offers. But nothing of what I say will ensure it (*n’y fera*). I say – I deafen you with it – *the truth can only be half said*. That means confirming that there is no truth unless it is mathematicised, namely, written, namely, it can only be suspended, as truth, from axioms. Namely, that there is no truth except about what has no meaning. Namely, of that from which there are no other consequences to be drawn than in its register, the register of mathematical deduction, in this case – and how after that can psychoanalysis imagine that it proceeds from the truth?

This is only an effect – a necessary effect, even though of course this necessity does not manifest itself anywhere outside my office, the office that I am in the process of serving, is that not so – this is only an effect, this kind...of odour of truth in analysis. Only an effect of the fact that it uses no means other than the word. Strictly none. Do not start telling me, huh, that it uses transference. Because transference, for its part, is not a means. It is a result, that stems from the fact that the words, by its means, the means of the word, reveals something that has nothing to do with it, and very precisely the knowledge that exists in language. There again, I never said that it is language that is knowledge. Language, if you do not mind remembering some of the things that I drew on the board when I had the energy for it, language is an effect of the fact that there is something of the signifier *one*.

(51) But knowledge is not the same thing. Knowledge is the consequence of the fact that there is another. And so in appearance that gives two. For this second holds its status precisely from the fact that it has no relationship with the first, that they do not form a chain even if I said, somewhere, in my scribblings, the very first ones, huh, *Function and field* was not all that stupid. In *Function and field*, I perhaps slipped in that they formed a chain. This is an error. Because to decipher, I had to make some attempts, hence this stupidity. It is what is proper to deciphering. When one deciphers, one confuses things. And this is even how I did indeed manage, all the same, when all is said and done, to know what I was doing. Namely, what it was to decipher. It is to substitute the signifier I for the other signifier. The one that only makes two because you add the deciphering to it. Which allows you right away to count three. This does not prevent it being written – as I did – S index 2, because that is how it should be read, the formula of the link between S_1 to S_2 . It is pure forcing, but it is not the forcing of a notion. This is what puts us under the yoke of knowledge. Since I am in the process of speaking to you about psychoanalysis, I add: the yoke of knowledge, at the very place of truth. At the place moreover of religion, of which I have just told you that it, for its part, is true.

This is one of the pillars of psychoanalytic discourse.

Even this discourse, like all the others, I described as quadripetal. Perhaps I described it as I have just told you, huh, I described it, precisely – I consider that quadripetal is a qualification and not a quantification, huh, because the further I go the more I am convinced that we only count up to three. And even if it is only because we count *three* that we can manage to count *two* – again the true religion, huh, since it is indeed of Christianity that I am speaking looked twice at it. The Orthodox, in particular, which wants nothing to do with the *filioque*. This is not by chance, huh, it does not want it to be two

because a third proceeds from it. Because on the contrary it is from the third that the two emerges. So that it is not for nothing that it calls itself *Orthodox*, huh, it is right. That does not mean at all that it is successful in it. To succeed, as I have endlessly pointed out to you: is the sign of nothing. But that precisely it fails...I can indeed say that for us analysts this is rather in its favour, huh, which does not prevent it having to be eliminated, huh. Ecumenism is not there for nothing. (52) Good! Anyway I am spreading myself, and I am chatting, I have enough of my old refrains, because, they only amuse you, but again, it is the old refrains (*des bateaux*) that float, huh. All that is directed, is directed at the fact that...that I am made sweat a little by being always answered by an eternal *two*. Even though I never produced it except as an index, namely, as a symptom. The word moreover even admits it. What falls together, that is what it means. It does not mean it explicitly, but it means it all the same. The two can be nothing other than what falls together from the three. And that is why this year, I am taking as subject, that is what this means – that means it in any case today when I am insisting on it: the Borromean knot.

It is obvious that it is a pedagogical effort. It is because all the same of something of the order of this debility that is called love, in which one can scarcely do better than to get on as best you can, it is because of this that, my God, that Kant's text on pedagogy... - which I opened because I had acquired an original edition, I have to have my little pleasures, huh – but you can find it, it was edited, anyway I believe re-edited by the *Presses Universitaires*, anyway someone here made me a present of it, and it is...thrilling in fact. It is thrilling. On the subject of...as regards what is involved in debility, nothing better has ever been written, not even what Maude Mannoni wrote. Yeah.

The child is designed to learn something. Here is what Freud states, here is what Kant states – it is all the same, all the same something – anyway, something extraordinary! It is something extraordinary that he had in short the presentiment of it: because how could he justify it?

He is designed to learn something, namely, for the knot to be properly made. Because there is nothing easier than for it to fail, especially if you put it in this form namely, the same as this. Look! Here is the green circle and here is the red circle – anyway, the ring – suppose for the third, to construct it, I start from the inside of this one, the red, which is the outer one. In order to construct it, I have to plait it and that it goes somewhere, either under or over the green. But if I have started from under the red – you see the red is there, bigger than the green – if I have started from underneath the red, whether I make it pass over or under the green, the result is the same: namely, that there (53) would be no knot. In other words, if I do not start from above the red, together with having to go underneath the green, there would be no Borromean knot. Kant cannot know – because that is not where he started from – in short why the child must learn something. He must learn something so that the knot is properly made. In order that he should not be, as I might say, non-dupe, namely, a dupe of the possible, huh. Dupe, dupe is a little bit too much. The non-dupes are two times dupes. They are precisely dupes because they are two. And it is in short the only objection that... from which I believed I should start like that, because I was dealing with ears, that had not precisely in fact been awakened – it is the objection, the only one, the only objection that I made to the moiety (*moi-ité*). This is an expression, like that that was attributed to me, rightly or wrongly, because I perhaps said it on one occasion, by one of my analysands, recently, and who has attended my seminar for a long while. The *moi-ité* as he expresses it, is obviously right away to fall into the two: since the *moi-ité* is necessarily made of two moieties. And if I said that religion is, is the truest thing that one can do, in religion – I will point out to you something about which I chattered on for a good while, huh: that thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, huh, does that mean that you will be three, yes or no? Yeah...

The Borromean knot can only be made from three. The Imaginary, the Symbolic, that is not enough, the third element is necessary, and I designate it by the Real.

There must be this determining solidarity of which there is a subject – spoken subject in any case; the loss of any one at all of these three dimensions, the condition for the knot to hold up, is that the loss of any one of these three dimensions must render the two others mad, namely, free from one another.

These three dimensions, how do I represent them for you? With rings of string, as someone decided and very rightly, in a relevant way to entitle my second last seminar of last year. What is a ring of string in terms of dimension huh? I point out to you that a ring of string is not even a knot, huh, because a knot, can be seen, huh, can be made, can be written on the board...on condition of making the necessary little interruptions and God knows that they must be put in, people have such little imagination, huh. There you are, there you see I must correct it again, a knot is that. In other words, a knot can be (54) unknotted. If you unknot it, you are finished, because you cannot do anything else than make another, and because you will never manage to distinguish one knot from another knot. Because they are not all alike, these knots. And that indeed is why a ring of string is necessary. Not that it is a knot, but it is necessary for the theory of knots.

For in effect, in order to be able to distinguish one knot from another, it must in no case be unknotted, or then when you make another knot you will have the feeling that it is the same one. That is why there are only two things: either to extend the cord that makes the knot to

infinity – and so then you cannot unknot, huh – or indeed join the two ends, which is exactly the same thing. And this is what justifies the ring of string. The ring of string is something that allows you to have a theory of the knot. That is what requires it to be cut in order to break it. Cutpability (*coulpabilite*). This is what is distinguished – but totally, this has perhaps not yet come to your mind but I hope all the same for some – is that it is a topology. A ring of string is a torus. And it is this alone that allows a knot to be elaborated.

You do not knot two spheres together. But the interesting is that you do not knot two rings of string, in this affair, you knot three of them, but in such a way that only the third knots the two others. There is somewhere, in an article called *La causalité psychique*, a place, a place around which a certain number of people have sparred like that, where I knot – because this is what is at stake, liberty and madness, where I say that the one cannot be conceived of without the other, which, of course disturbs people, because all the same, they think immediately, anyway that I am saying freedom is madness, huh...since in order to make myself comprehended why not, I (55) understand myself in it; only, what I would like to point out to you, is that the interest of joining in this way in the Borromean knot the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, is that what results from it, not only results from it, but it must result from it, namely, in the best case (*si le cas est bon*) – you will allow me this abbreviation given the time that we are getting to – in the best case it is enough, it is enough to cut any one of the rings of string for the two others to be free of one another. In other words, in the best case, allow me to imply that it is the result of good pedagogy, namely, that one has not failed in one's primal knotting; in the best case, when one of these rings of string is missing, you should go mad. And this is why, this is why the best case consists, namely, that if there is something normal, it is because, when one of the dimensions fails you for some reason or other, you should go, you should really go mad.

And it is on this that I would like to finish, to show you its importance. Imagine the case of another knot, the knot that I called earlier Olympic, if one of your rings of string... fails you, fails you I might say, because of something that does not concern you, you do not for all that go mad. This because, whether you know it or not, the two other knots hold together, and that is what means that you are neurotic. This is why, always, I affirmed something that is not sufficiently known: neurotics are indefatigable. The only people that I saw behaving in an admirable way... during the last war, to recall it, God knows this does not give me any special pleasure, were my neurotics, those that I had not yet cured. They were absolutely sublime. Nothing disturbed them. Whether it was the Real, the Imaginary or the Symbolic that they lacked, they held up.

I do not know whether some of you, anyway remember, I did something, at one time, about the phobia of Little Hans. It is very curious. I never saw anyone highlighting this, this thing that I not only wrote but repeated, resifted, is that not so, I never saw anything else in trying to find out, anyway, what was, in fact, this blessed story of a horse, because, of course, I asked myself the question, like everyone else: why the horse, is that not so? Why did that make him so afraid... The explanation that I found – because I gave it, I worked on it, I insisted did I not; it was that the horse was the representative – (56) I can all the same say it: of three circuits. I did not underline the truth that they were three, these circuits. But the horse represented a certain number of circuits, that I even went looking for in a map of Vienna, to mark them out clearly, because first of all it is in Freud's text, how would I have found it otherwise? It is in the measure that the phobia, the phobia of little Hans, is very precisely in this triple knot whose three rings hold together, it is because of this that he is neurotic: the fact is that if you cut one, the two others always hold together.

It is not the case certainly, that we attend to this, which is why precisely there are other couples in neurosis which are simpler than that of phobia, we will come back to them. The importance, the importance is not even in this, which makes such a pretty image, huh, you were able to say in short that I defined the normal in this sense that it is constructed in such a way that it cannot but drive you mad, when one of these three rings fails. But the important thing is not that at all.

The important thing is that even though they are coloured with different colours with respect to one another, these three rings, these rings of string, are strictly equivalent. I mean that the important thing is that the Real just as much as the Imaginary or the Symbolic can play exactly the same function with respect to the two others. This is not self-evident. If I present you the knot like that: namely, the red above the green and squeezing it, and the black – I am calling this one the black provisionally because there are black points (*points noirs*), and the black in a good position – it is not self-evident that I can easily put the two others into a different position, namely, ensure that the green should be above the red, the Borromean knot being just as correct. Namely, not having to be cut at any moment. One may believe that there is an obstacle to me putting the green in the place of the red, starting from a fixed position of the black, it is nevertheless the case. It is nevertheless the case and it is also what must be said concerning the three dimensions of our Real.

The Real of which there is question at the end of *The interpretation of dreams* – and what must be said, what must be said is the following: it is that if I bored you the last time with this business of the occult, it is precisely because of something that for Freud is in a way the manifest avowal: the fact is that in three of these dimensions, two of which he (57) exposes so well for us, what is the Real for Freud? Well then, I am going to tell you today: it is precisely the occult. And it is precisely for this reason that he considers it impossible. Because this

business of occultism and telepathy, he warns us, he insists, that he in no way believes in it.

How was it that someone like Freud was able to pursue in fact with such obstinacy, this shadow of the occult, that he considered properly speaking as cogitated by imbeciles? Read him carefully and you will see.

Well then, the importance of what I wanted to put forward for you the last time, and that I did not say, except by the sentence at the end, that there is no initiation, which those who have ears were well able to pick out as the only interesting sentence, is precisely that Freud – this is indeed something which deserves us looking at it twice – he was a dupe of the Real.

He was a dupe of the Real even if he did not believe in it. And this indeed is what is at stake. The good dupe, the one who does not err, must have somewhere a Real of which she is the dupe.

Seminar 4: Tuesday 18 December 1973

There you are. It is certain that...it is certain that in making me raise my voice to no purpose there by wanting to piss me off, to tease me, to excite me before I begin my thing today, things will not have been improved. Anyway, it will not have been improved, at least I suppose. There you are, because all the same, the last time...I made an effort, and today I would only have wished, anyway, to spread out from these

margins, as I might say anyway to say things *mezza voce* as they say. Perhaps in order to try to illuminate for you, in fact, I mean for yourselves, its resonance. I presume this resonance after all, because what I said was designed to obtain it. I had echoes of it, but I do not see why moreover I would not say what I was trying to obtain.

What I said (*mon dit*) was about this knot that I did not introduce today or yesterday and whose import deserved my insisting on it. That means it could not appear immediately. It is not so much this knot that is important, it is its saying (*son dire*).

Its saying that in short, the last time, I tried to, to support sufficiently, like that. What is good about this knot, is that not so, is that it precisely makes quite clear that this saying, in so far as it is mine, is implicated in it. That means that, from this quarter where, you should note, I did not say *the word*, I said *the saying*. Not every word is a saying, otherwise, otherwise every word would be a happening (*un événement*), which is not the case, otherwise people would not speak about *empty words*!

(60) A saying is of the order of a happening. It is not a happening that overflies, it is not a moment of knowing. In a word, it is not philosophy. It is something that is right up with what is going on. Right up with what determines us in so far as it is not quite what people believe. It is not every kind of local condition, like that, of this, or that, of what makes you yawn, of the Real, this is not what determines us speaking beings. And this stems precisely from this pedicle of knowledge, short certainly, but always perfectly knotted, which is called our unconscious, in so far as for each of us this knot has quite particular supports.

It is thus with bits and pieces, as I was able...that I constructed this topology by means of which I dare to split differently what Freud supported by these terms: *psychical reality*. For in fact my topology is

not the same. Someone, someone, who like that, among the people who come to chat with me, like that, put my knot, there, the Borromean one, like that, at the same stage, as I might say, is that not so as this famous egg [SE XIX 24?] made up of something which – you know that it is Freud in fact who made that – obviously, one could make a metaphor about nutritional reserves with what it...with what it is supposed to nourish, with enjoyment on the one hand and whatever you want on the other, the...the embryology of the soul. Good.

I would like to make a remark about what is called *love*. Because it is that, that is what I called earlier the resonance, the resonance among you, whether you know it or not, of what I supported the last time with my Borromean knot.

Love, in everything that, what people have allowed themselves to smear on top of it up to now, is all the same something which comes up against the objection that one cannot conceive how being – if of course you have already heard speak of that, anyway, it is dinned into your ears in metaphysics and...even elsewhere, in fact, in sermons, they speak of nothing but that – how being is supposed to be manipulated starting from any individual (*étant*). This presents a great logical difficulty. Since being, when people speak to you about it, is not nothing, and it ends up in this aspiration which is supposed to be made starting from God, of love. I know well that you are not believers, is that not so? But you are even more stupid, as I already had occasion to tell you the last time, because even if you are not (61) believers, in this aspiration, I will show it to you right throughout what I am going to tell you today, in this aspiration you do believe. I will not say that you suppose it: it supposes you.

People try, in short, to empty out all that – or to fill it, what matter – by schematising it in the old metaphor of knowing. One knows whom one is dealing with – the one that one is dealing with, one knows in love...Only I object: what is being, if not the aseptic business of the

imaginary perfections of which one dreams, of which you yourselves, I have just told you, whatever you may know about it, you dream, you dream of its ladder. The ladder whose final rung will or not be this God that I spoke about earlier...but if it is not that one, it is another. This is what is called daydreaming. Only what is demonstrated, precisely by the study of the dream, the true one, the one that you have when you are asleep and that strongly reproves you, has, whatever one says about it absolutely nothing to do with your dream, whether waking or not. This is even what distinguishes you as speaking beings: that there is a knowledge that you hear in the dream, that has nothing to do with what remains to you of it when you are supposedly awake. This indeed is why it is so important to decipher this dream – this dream that you only have at a certain time. Up to then, you are, you are, this has lasted for a time but you are not still so far from it, believe me, the time of the *signatura rerum*, from the reading of the daydream, from the readability of the world; you should not believe at all that because it is no longer the priests that dictate it to you, that you are not at the same point!

Love: if it is indeed here the metaphor of something, it is a matter of knowing what it refers to. We must start from what I said earlier about the happening. It refers, nothing more – in any case this is what I will limit myself to today, simply...to shift, anyway, is that not so, what I have just traced out about the tradition, about the metaphor of knowing – let us say that it refers first of all to the happening. To the things that happen, let us say when a man meets a woman. And why not? Because it is in general the fish that people try to play to death; when I say: ‘when a man meets a woman’, huh, it is because I am modest, I mean by that that I do not claim to go as far as speaking about what happens when a woman meets a man...because my experience is limited, huh.

(62) I would like to suggest the following to you, anyway, since we have started from two extreme points, I propose to you, in connection

with the commandment of divine love, that I evoked for you the last time in challenging you to say yes or no, huh, does it make two or three? You remember perhaps, anyway those who were there. So then, I modify it slightly: what effect does it have on you if I state ‘thou shalt love thy neighbour (*ta prochaine*) as thyself’? That makes you sense something all the same, huh, which is that this precept founds the abolition of the difference between the sexes. When I tell you that there is no sexual relationship, I did not say that the sexes are confused, far from it! Without that all the same, how could I even say that there is no sexual relationship, what would that mean? It is important to situate – you certainly have not done it yet – like that, to situate it in an exact fashion, I am making a little remark since today I am giving a commentary on myself, there is no sexual relationship, well it is of the same order, huh, as what I concluded my second lecture with, the one that was not all that understood: I spoke a lot about the *occult* – and believe me, I am putting myself in the same place, huh – I spoke a lot about the occult but the important point, there were one or two people who remarked it, is that I said that there is no initiation. It is the same thing as to say that there is no sexual relationship. Which does not mean that initiation is the sexual relationship, because it is not enough for two things not to exist for them to be the same! Yeah...

It is clear that, that love, in short, that here is the problem with which what I said the last time reverberates, it is all the same a fact, that is how there is described the complex relationship – it is the least that can be said – between a man and a woman.

So then here, perhaps I can hang the following, anyway, which is at the heart of my title, in fact, a first lineament of which I put forward in my first seminar, huh. Are we going to attribute what is rightly described as the complex relationship between a man and a woman simply to the fact of having made together what I called, I remark, not an error but a wandering, *viator*, as I articulated it, the journey on this

earth, the category, the category comically which precisely excludes us from the world, is this what love is: to have done a bit of the path together?

(63) You see where that takes us, huh?

We would have helped one another. Yeah, there will always be, on the horizon, in fact, this promise. And then...and then it is true that there is something true in it, huh? Because we are man and woman (*bonhomme, bonne femme*), as the existentialists used to say, I am talking about *la bonne femme*, the idea never came to them of talking about *bonhomme*, God knows why, even though it is better. A man and a woman who would have done a bit of the path together. On the horizon of love there would be the grandfather and the grandmother. There is that in the unconscious. There is also that.

I would like all the same to suggest that this is perhaps not all. The question that I am asking: along what path does one love a woman...if I ask the question, that is an old Lacanian refrain, it is no doubt because I have the answer. But there are many of them. There is even no question that has more answers. Naturally, you don't know any of them, because you let yourselves be led by the thing – by the whirlwind. If one has first of all answers, the first thing to do is to count them, huh. And there is one that I find very good.

How does a man love a woman? By chance.

Yeah, that one I already gave you, huh, it is the luck (*l'heur*) of which I have been speaking like that for not all that long, when I say that the lucky chance (*bon-heur*), that it trickles down, that there is some of it everywhere, that you know nothing but that, even! It is simply a matter of having the feeling a little more that you are surrendered to this happiness (*bonheur*). Because anyway, it has to be said, to take my earlier reference the circumstances are not always of mutual help,

when love happens between a man and a woman, and then, since I heard just now a little voice, down there singing its little song there, I would like all the same to point out in the margin that the fellow traveller, huh, ought to awaken more echoes than you believe in your dear little souls, huh, it forms part of a certain vocabulary, the vocabulary of the quarter where people speak about *imagination in power*. I should tell you, the left, appears to me to be all that is most traditional. And the metaphor, is that not so, of fellow traveller, does not appear to me to be enough, if it is not precisely in the Christian register of the *viator*.

As regards imagination in power, I am not the one who made them say it! No more than I make anyone at all say anything whatsoever. (64) My function is rather to listen. Naturally, anyway, here I re-launch things, but it is rather because what I listen to comes out my ears. Good.

What am I doing now, huh? I am giving you a snapshot, like that, of another answer. Of another answer which is the one that justifies my question. It is obvious that...I mean, like that, anyway, to look twice at it. Because if saying is a happening, God knows the consequences that it can have! Bah, I am going all the same to give it to you.

Love is nothing more than a saying, *qua* happening. A happening without any smudges. And that love has nothing to do – with the truth, is to say a lot, since all the same what it shows, is that it cannot all be said. This saying, this saying of love is addressed to knowledge in so far as it is there, in what must indeed be called the unconscious. Let us say in this...this knot of being, if you wish, but in a quite different sense, than what first of all started from confusion, this knot, I said: it is the word knot that is important, it is not being, the being of this knot, that I drew the last time, and which is only justified by the unconscious. That implies then, everything it comprises, precisely this saying from the last time, in so far as it takes account of the place

of this knowledge. What constitutes this saying is not knowledge, this knot is not in any way, it is not a knowledge of anything whatsoever. It implies my saying as a happening in what it is. With its three faces that it is imaginable since I made an effective image of it; that it is symbolic because I can define it as knot; and that it is altogether real by the very happening of this saying, which happening consists in that, in any case, every one of you can give it the meaning that it has.

And that is why, as always, I beg you not to comprehend too quickly. Because obviously, I must ward off, as they say, any kind of precipitation. This is what accounts on occasion for my slowness. I am here Master Jacques from the fact that one must ward off all precipitous interpretations, it is in nothing but this that there is constituted the exploit that there may be in this saying. That is why I have to decide, and that means that I am abbreviating.

The import of this Borromean knot is that from each one of the three rings of string its rupture as a set follows. While in a simple chain, I am going to put it on the board for you – Gloria please draw a chain, a (65) chain simply with three rings, and make them correctly, huh? Good...like that. Huh, yes, but then you have to stop there, like that, after that, huh, and there also, you have to stop to do it that way. A simple chain of three huh it is only from the ring in the middle that you can break the extremes. Otherwise, if you take first of all one of the two extremities, the two others remain knotted. It is precisely in this that there consists the difference to the Borromean knot and of the Borromean knot on the other hand with the Olympic knot. The fact is that the Olympic knot, however paradoxical that may appear, this time it is by taking away anyone whatsoever of the three that the two others remain knotted. But it is simply symmetrical from what happens in this one here for the ring in the middle.

The consistency of all of that, of course, is only imaginary, huh, except that we reduplicate it with the Symbolic, simply by imagining it as a knot, and what is it, to imagine it on the one hand, but to formulate it as a knot, that pushes us towards mathematical formulae. Those of what is only barely sketched out, namely, the theory of knots, except for the fact that all the same this is indeed the representative (*representant*), of language and that *lalangue*, written in my way, reflects it in its very formation, that the more, in a word, we plough ahead in talking about it, the more we confirm what is self-evident, that we are moreover in the Symbolic, and after this why not admit the Real, real from the fact that in this business we pay with our hide? Namely, what may be most efficacious, and however far one goes, of our real presence. This real presence, let us say, nothing more, in fact, that after all, there is no need for hash to reveal it to you by its transformation into a light substance. We are deep enough in this business for us to be able to say that the important thing in what makes a knot here is that it is this ring of string, this is what gives consistency in each one of these terms that I distinguish in three (66) categories, what gives consistency is strictly equivalent. Since – give me my little instruments, I am going to give you a present, while I’m at it, huh, ah! [*Lacan throws rings of string into the audience*] – if I say that, as I showed you the last time – not without, as was pointed out to me by someone who was good enough to write a little note on these subjects which showed that the person had not understood very much, but who all the same pointed out to me incidentally that it was not without awkwardness that I had manipulated these instruments for you, good – if what I am saying is true, namely, that the Borromean knot has this curious property, huh, that...that one can in this construction put each one in strictly the same place as any one of the two others, even though that is not immediately self-evident, first of all, well, if each one can, in this function be qualified for its consistency of being strictly equivalent whether it is considered as

Real or as Imaginary or as Symbolic, well then with this ring, which consists precisely in a Borromean knot, I can make a Borromean knot by simply, if I had the time, linking these three Borromean knots. I would like all the same for you to look at them a little bit closely, like that, and that you would do something with them. Yeah.

What is important, namely, that they are distinct, it is only important precisely that they are distinct, in so far as it is necessary that they make up three. They consist first and foremost in their difference. Like that, if something got into me, anyway, I would write like that something on the board to which I am not so inclined, given my mood today, to give a special status to, namely, to give you that in... with a significance that is more than... outlined. There you are.

2

I am not going to put around it something, like that, something that isolates it, that aseptifies it as a precaution, I am putting it quite crudely:

2

The figure (*chiffre*) of love, huh – *ils sont hors deux* [they are outside two, they are beside themselves] – as I told you, it is *lalangue*, anyway which mathematics is expressing, huh.

$$2 = 1 \text{ or } 3$$

$$2 = 1 \vee 3$$

(67) Ah! That is simply idiotic, but it is not idiotic if one puts – here I must put down some signs used in logic, namely, brackets, and which will serve me here as a sign of equivalent implication, which is precisely as you know what grounds equivalence, huh. What is it equivalent to? It is equivalent to the fact that 2 or 1 is equal to 2 or 3.

$$(2 = 1 \vee 3) \longleftrightarrow (2 \vee 1) = (2 \vee 3).$$

Which is a formula on which you... anyway that you will try to situate, like that, in what is given in the premises of propositional logic. You can make whatever you like of it, huh, I am letting you look after it.

I am letting you look after it because I must advance, I must advance into the...the properties, the properties of the triple, of the triple that we have to deal with. Yes. In these properties of the triple, there is the following: that since each one of the terms of these three of the Borromean knot frees the other two, I know well that there is a relationship, a real relationship – in any case that can be symbolised – with this middle, this middle which, for its part, leaves the two extremes well emptied of omnipotence. But in the case of the Borromean knot, the two extremes have the same. So then, we can consider them from the angle, from the angle of making each one of them the middle.

[Someone in the audience]: *What is meant by the v, Monsieur, is it a v or a multiplied?*

What is he saying? It is a *vel*, it is an *or*, or, one or the other! It is used in logic, in written logic, like that, one puts a little v to say or. This is read: $2 = 1 \text{ or } 3$, *this implies the equality of 2 or 1 with 2 or 3...*

To show you the importance of it, namely, the importance of this: by taking in the Borromean knot that I am going to draw for you all the same since there are people who seem to be interested in what I am saying, good, that I am going to draw for you like that, I do not know if you remember, that's it, and there you are. The interest of taking each one as a middle – since today I am talking about meaning – is to push them forward for you, like that, interpreted. There you are. I am (68) rather easy, rather easy about the fact that I am taking care that you will not give too much meaning too quickly to what I am saying, there is also a good way, anyway, to obtain the same result, it is...to give you so much of it that you will vomit it out, huh. Namely, that I am not going to do it with the back of the spoon. I am going to tell you things to make you vomit, and then after all, huh, you will have

the time to swallow them again, like the dog in Scripture. There is even here something that shows why one should not retreat. If I want to give to this exactly its import, anyway, we must have a go at it.

Let us take this as the Symbolic, that one as the Real, that one as the Imaginary. If we take the Symbolic [*clean the board for me if you don't mind, the thing*] as playing the role of middle [*thanks, you are too kind*] as playing the role of middle between the Real and the

Imaginary...here we are at the heart of what this love is that I spoke about earlier under the name of divine love. It is enough for this that this Symbolic taken *qua* love, divine love – that suits it – is there in the form of this commandment which puts at the pinnacle *being and love*. For it to conjoin something *qua* being and *qua* love, these two things cannot be said except by supporting the Real on one hand, the Imaginary on the other, respectively, beginning with the last, of the body and the other, the Real, of death. It is indeed here that there is situated the core of religion in so far as it preaches divine love. It is indeed here also that there is realised this crazy thing, from this emptying out of what is involved in sexual love on the journey. This perversion of the Other as such, establishes in the sadistic story of Original Sin, and in everything that follows from it, by having adopted, naturally, this pre-Christian myth, why not, it is perhaps just as good as any other, establishes in the Imaginary, in this body precisely, this sort of levitation, of insensibility about what concerns (69) it, which is after all, I do not need to insist any more on it, the whole history of what is called Arianism, indeed of Marcionism.

Here is where the dimension of *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* acquires its imperative.

Be a dupe of it, you will not err, I must say. Because one cannot say that such religion is nothing. Since as I told you the last time, it is the true one, it is the true one since it invented this thing – this sublime thing – of the Trinity. It saw that there had to be three of them. That there had to be three rings of string of strictly equal consistency for *nothing* to function. It is all the same quite curious that for every end, it should produce that with regard to love. But read *Works of love* by Kierkegaard – it has just been published by Aubier. There are a lot of you, you are all going to rush into Aubier when you leave, huh, because usually, when I say a book should be read, it has effects! I have a copy, already, so then you can put it out of print, but read it! Read it because there is no more implacable logic, nothing better has ever been articulated on love, I mean divine love. There is not the slightest wandering, everything is traced out logically. Love is charity, woman – a curious slip – is charity, faith and hope and thanks to that charity is, as you see in art, anyway, rather lamentably symbolised by this woman with innumerable breasts, is that not so, on which are hung innumerable kids. But it is all the same something, to do that, precisely it is at the origin of my slip, to make that from the image of the woman. The finality, the finality in so far as there are two extremes and a middle, I am pointing it out to you, the whole specification of ends – and moreover ends that can always be articulated from rec...I do not dare to say the word reciprocity, it is not correct on this occasion. But I mean that moreover what is the start becomes the end, when the end plays the function of start. The relationship of the body and of death is articulated by divine love in such a way that it ensures that on the one hand the body becomes dead, that death becomes the body on the other hand, and that it is by means of love.

But it is quite general that the very idea of finality should be something that is attached to the intermediary of desire. The love of God is the supposition that he desires what is accomplished for all

ends, as I might say. It is the definition of teleology in itself. It is a transformation of the term *desire* into the term *end*. But in this articulation, what creates the end is the means/middle (*moyen*) [*In the following pages it is often hard to know how moyen should be taken*]; in the (70) articulation (of the Borromean knot, there is a confusion between the *moyen* and the end. Every end can serve as a *moyen*. Let us here, precisely make this simply parenthesis: this simple parenthesis that, in taking this place, in taking this place divine love has chased away what I have just defined as desire. With this gain of a truth, the truth of the three who, as I might say, pays the thing and compensates: it can be properly speaking situated at this place, at the place of the Symbolic in so far as it only becomes a *moyen*, is desire. I am pointing it out to you in passing, Christian love has not extinguished, far from it, desire. This relationship of the body to death, has as I might say, baptised love. But I am not insisting any more for the moment, I am taking another connection.

Very exactly what can result from taking, this time no longer the Symbolic, but the Imaginary as middle. If like earlier, and it is in this that there is pinpointed what I articulated for you as something to make you vomit, I always give this summary meaning of death to the Real, as constituting its kernel, and to the Symbolic, because up to now I did not have to put it forward, to the Symbolic what it reveals to us by its use in the word, and especially in the word of love, to support what in effect all analysis makes us sense – to support enjoyment.

So then, what does the ring of string of the Imaginary taken as middles demonstrate to us? It is that what it supports is nothing less than what must indeed be called love. Love, as I might say, at its place, that that it has always had. And if once, in my *Ethics*, I gave an account of courtly love, of courtly love in what it imagines about enjoyment and about death, this is something that it is – I was going to say miraculous – very surprising and well designed to hold our attention, that it should have been feudalism that produced this order of courtly

love. Not that I believe that what is testified to in it is something like a rectification, a counter-theory about divine love, a compensation, but much more rather of an ancient order through which there is testified precisely how much there remained, more than is believed of this ancient order in feudalism. For the ancient order has nothing to do with the one that we know. It is – I do not see moreover why some economist would contradict me since beyond the feudal age, he no longer wants to know anything – it is what was conserved in the feudal era. And in a word, I would ask you to verify it, I do not see any distinction as regards the emphasis, as regards the meaning of (71) love, between what remains to us of it; the very elegant theories of courtly love and the whole romance that is deployed around it, I do not see any difference between that and what the literature of Catullus bears witness to us and the homage to Lesbia, however much of a prostitute she was. I think that here, namely, the Imaginary taken as middle, here is the foundation of the true place of love.

How did there occur this displacement, after all very fruitful, which in Christian love situates love at the place – you will see at the end why – at the place that seems to me to be that of desire? The thing was only possible – and that is why I am talking about something about which I have thought a bit, huh – from what Christ taught. I am not talking about his Passion, which is the passion of the signifier, I am speaking about his saying (*son dire*). I am speaking about his saying! *Imitate the lilies of the fields*’, he proposes. *They do not weave or sew*, he says. And this is the important point: this failure to recognise the presence in nature of what knowledge took some time to discover, namely, that, who has woven or sewn more than the lilies of the field? To utter, to articulate this as a model, is here, properly, to add denegation to misrecognition, and the denegation of what? Since it is only a metaphor? The denegation of the unconscious. Namely, of what it weaves and sews, this knowledge without which there is no proper situating of love if what love consists in, is very precisely this saying, this saying that starts, you should note, from the Imaginary

taken as middle. What there is in courtly love, is that what still remained in Plato suspended on the Imaginary of the beautiful, it is this that is crystallised, which, in love as middle takes on a body, as opposed as I might say, for all of this can be done, be articulated by a series of triple oppositions to the Imaginary of love as it is articulated in the *Symposium*, is opposed to taking it as means of what is involved in courtly love.

This is something that deserves to be put forward. You must not believe that, if I said that divine love took the place of desire, that means that it is quite simple, that they should be put back in their place, namely, that each should take up its own again; this is not at all what happened. If courtly love was, as I might say, ousted from its place, in order to preside in place of desire at the ascension of a Christian love, that does not mean that desire is exchanged: it was pushed elsewhere. It was pushed elsewhere, namely, there where the Real itself is a middle between the Symbolic and the Imaginary. And (72) if this Real, this is what is audacious, in fact, in my interpretation today, anyway this evening – if this Real is indeed death, this is a crude figuration but if this Real is indeed death, there where desire was chased, if you will allow me to speak in terms of a happening – where desire was chased to, what we have is masochism. Certainly not, of course, in so far as it is supposed to be, in any way at all, the vehicle of death – it is only psychoanalysts who believe that, the poor little things, huh! Life instinct, death instinct, that is all they occupy themselves with in their interpretation; they are completely off the mark – but there is no doubt that it is masochism that stirred them up, the connection, the use as a middle, as a middle to unify, to unify enjoyment and the body, the use of this perversion as middle, is certainly what rivets them. What rivets them, as I might say, for a time, anyway irremediably, to what a part of their theory is constructed on. It nevertheless remains that love is the relationship of the Real to knowledge. And psychoanalysis must correct itself by this displacing, by this displacing which stems from the fact that after all,

it only followed the out-of-place turnaround of desire, it must indeed come to know that if psychoanalysis is a means, it holds itself at the place of love. It is the imaginary of the beautiful that it has to affront, and it is to open up a path of a re-flowering of love in so far as $l'(a)mur$, as I said one day, writing the little a object in brackets plus the word mur , since $l'(a)mur$ is what limits it.

Love is the specific imaginary of each one, which unites it to only a certain number of people not at all chosen by chance. There is the mainspring of the surplus enjoying. There is the relationship of the real of a certain knowledge and love fills the hole. As you see, huh, it is a little difficult.

It is a little difficult, but all the same, what I must say to you to end – because after all, all these things do not end – what I must show you to end is something that is going to answer to what I told you the last time about the structure of this knot, of the Borromean knot that you now have in your hands, namely, that starting from a certain badly chosen point, there is no means of getting out. All of this means that everyone weaves his own knot. There is something that I want to show you, to show you how this failure happens. Because there is all (73) the same an inverse! I seem to be singing the *los* of love to you, yes there is an inverse: the fact is that you are going to see how, if love becomes really the middle by which death is united to enjoyment, the man and the woman, being to knowledge, if it really becomes the middle, love no longer defines itself as a failure. Because there is nothing more than truly the middle that can unknot the one from the other. And this happens in a way that I am going to show you which is the following.

The Borromean knot – there is a charming person listening to me, who sent me a whole document on this – the Borromean knot, was tackled along mathematical paths, as you know, I told you, the theory of knots

is still at the abc stage; the amusing thing is that it comes to light, not by taking things at the level of knots, but at that of the plait.

Ah! What is a plait?

First of all, it has relationships with three, otherwise it would not be called a plait (*une tresse*)...one, two, three...How can I make a plait with that? Anyone at all who has taken care of a woman's hair will all the same know it, but you naturally do not know it because now women have short hair. So then a plait is made like that, no? Namely, huh, you change the place of the two into the place of the one and the three being in its own little corner. Good, one must truly mark the place of the result because otherwise you will understand nothing about it. If I knot it again too quickly you will not be able to see where the cuts are made. I had myself, of course, to run into this trouble and I am avoiding it for you, so then now, change the place of the three with the place of the two. You had there (since this is 1, 2, 3) you had there 2, 1, 3. After that then you will have 2, 3, 1 and if you continue the thing once more, you will have from one end to the (74) other 3, 2, 1. Good. Imagine they are in the order, the starting order: between 1, 2, 3 and 3, 2, 1 it is the inverse order, there is nothing easier than to join them up, it is enough in short to adopt the procedure, as was very well seen by the charming person who wrote to me about this thing, it is a matter of procedures as in the Moebius strip. The funny thing is that when you look, there, what circulates, at least I hope, namely, my Borromean knots from earlier, fiddle around with it: you will see that between the places where this appears to form a knot and the places where it can be flattened out, it is a

question, of course, of choice, it can vary infinitely but it puts itself, naturally in...in three phases, as I might say. You might imagine for yourselves that the Borromean knot is made up of three of these exchanges, and only of three. Well then not at all, not at all, if you only make three of them, namely, if you proceed by re-sticking together the 1, 2, 3 to the 3, 2, 1, namely, without waiting to see whether if it does six phases, you have the 1, 2, 3 in the proper direction, and that it is like that, nicely, that one obtains the Borromean knot – try it out. Try this out, namely, by only making three phases of the plait, what you will obtain is not the Borromean knot, it is that. This to tell you how easy it is to fall into the middle. (75) And that the face, the equivalent face of what I situated of love as being the essential bond between the Real and the Symbolic, is that taken as a middle, it has every chance of being what it also is at the level of finality, namely, what is called a pure failure.

Seminar 5: Tuesday 8 January 1974

I wish you a Happy New Year, huh, even though naturally several people here, I imagine, have begun it badly. In fact I am one. I am one of them. So that after all, my inclination was to excuse myself because of the fact that the Tuesday with which the year began was not because of that fact a true Tuesday and to put you off to the next one. It would have been a good way of getting rid of my duty today... I still remain, it must be said very tempted by it, there is only one thing that holds me back, I must tell you, it is that today, you are less numerous. I am so grateful to you for this that it is perhaps what is going to push me, like that, as best I can, to state some of the things that, necessarily, I continue to cogitate, like that, by habit. The fact also that this morning, my secretary was disturbed a lot, with people asking if I was going to do it, effectively, and since I had not confided in her, she had answered yes. Among them, my God, were some of the best, if I am to believe certain names that were reported to me. So then since they also put themselves out, these, the better ones, I am going to try to have a go at it.

So then let us start from this, let us start from something that I do not hold to particularly: namely, that words have a meaning, and that it is a fact, whatever the problem may be, starting from this fact, of knowing where to lodge them. This indeed is what I have done, lodge these words of course, I must all the same chew things for you, this indeed is the effort that I made, that I made the last time, starting from (78) love. It is a fact that I started from the fact that the word exists. And this is why the thing, the thing is to be conceived as possible. Which is expressed in my saying (*mon dire*) by the fact that the thing, the love thing, is founded, that it is only founded – since it is simply a matter of its possibility – it is founded as I said by ceasing to be

written. Namely, on what remains from the fact that it ceases to be written. What remains of it, I articulated since the time, since this almost infinite time for me, that I have been repeating myself, namely, the letter *d'(a)mur*. The letter *d'(a)mur* in so far as, in fact, it constitutes nothing other than a pile (*tas*). A little pile, a *petit a* of habits, not much more. At least this is how I read, translated into Italian, my famous object with which this *petit a* of the letters *d'(a)mur* has only of course the slightest of relationships.

All this does not prevent me saying things which take their air of seriousness from the fact that I am expressing something of the serial. It is a fact, also, that I change the order of the series that is repeated, in other words that is called ordinary. Is that all that is involved in my saying, changing the ordinary order? It is to this that I would like today to contribute an argument. An argument to give meaning to functions that are more purely cardinal. This is what I am trying to do with my Borromean knot. As you know, this distinction between cardinal and ordinal, it... – the step was taken only thanks to set theory, namely, thanks to Cantor. How can this be of use to us as regards the exploration of a new discourse, as you know, this is how I designate the analytic discourse. This discourse announced itself from a decanting of meaning.

What does decanting (*décantage*) mean on this occasion? It is properly – and this is why the metaphor of decanting can be sustained here – it is properly about the condensation of what, in terms of meaning, is concentrated by this discourse from the fact that meaning – the meaning of words – are only a garb (*appareil*) for what we will call if you don't mind nothing more than sexual coitus. This is what is new in analytic discourse. And this indeed is what must be said, if indeed it is what, from this discourse is necessary, it is only necessary in this – and that is why I inflect in this way the meaning of *necessary* – that its characteristic, in this discourse, is that this discourse does not cease to write it.

Is it true for all that? It is true with the sort of truth that establishes this discourse, namely, a truth of the middle (*moyen, cf previous seminar*), if in fact some of you remember the way in which the last (79) time, and precisely concerning love, I distinguished through what is involved in the Borromean knot, the function of the middle as such. The middle precisely, is what only makes a knot because there is an order. Namely, that, to take these ‘ones’ that the rings of string constitute, let us say quite simply, there is only one of the three which, when cut liberates the two others. This is what you see in a chain of three, with three ordinary links, there is only one of the three that frees the two others. The distinction between this chain, this chain which tangibly, it seems, is of the order of the Symbolic: a subject, a verb and whatever you wish, a complement; a 2, 3, can, having this order, this order that there is something which acts as middle, and this is the very thing that is called, with the ambiguity of this word, the verb – one could begin with the complement and finish with the subject – but it is the verb that acts as middle.

And in this way it can be glimpsed, at the limit, that language for its part is not made of words; for it is the link by which the middle establishes this unity between the first and the last which only has to be broken for the meaning to disappear; this indeed is what shows that language is not made of words, and how what is called – for it is this and nothing more that is called a proposition – a proposition is at least a relative effacing – I am saying that: ‘at least relative’, to facilitate your access to things – it is the effacing of the meaning of words. Which is not true of the tongue, *lalangue* as a jingle, you know that I write it in one word, *lalangue* if it, is made up of meaning, namely, how, through the ambiguity of each word, it lends itself, it lends itself to this function that meaning trickles down in it. It does not trickle down in your sayings. Certainly not. Nor in mine either. This indeed is why, this indeed is why meaning is not reached so easily. And this trickling down of which I speak, how imagine it? Make no mistake.

How imagine it if it is a trickling that little cups finally bring to a halt? For the tongue is that. And this is even the meaning to give to what ceases to be written. It would be the very meaning of words, which in this case is suspended. This is how the mode of the possible emerges from it. That when all is said and done, something which has been said ceases to be written, this indeed is what shows that at the limit everything is possible with words, precisely on this condition that they no longer have a meaning.

And the very thing that I am aiming at this year, is that you should not (80) confuse words with letters, since it is only letters that found the necessary, as impossible, in an articulation which is that of logic. If my way of situating the modes is correct, namely, that what does not cease to be written, the necessary – what does not cease to be written, the necessary – is the very thing that necessitates the encounter with the impossible, namely, what does not cease not to be written, which can only be tackled by letters. This indeed is what only allows us to tackle by some saying the structure that I designated as the Borromean knot; that is why, the last time, love was a good test for the precariousness of these modes. This love is brought into existence which is indeed the result of its very meaning, by the impossible of the sexual bond with the object, the object whatever may be its origin, the object of this impossibility. It requires as I might say, this root of the impossible. And this is what I said by articulating this principle: that love is courtly love.

It is obvious that the *(a)musant* in it, if I may express myself thus, is the love of the neighbour in so far as it is sustained by emptying love of its sexual meaning. It is in ceasing to write the sexual meaning of the thing, that one makes it, as is tangible, that one makes it possible. Namely, in so far, it must indeed be said, as one ceases to write it. Once the thing, love, has happened it is obvious that it is starting from there that it imagines itself necessary. This indeed is the meaning of

the love letter, which does not cease to be written but only in so far as it preserves its meaning, namely, not for long.

This is how there intervenes the function of the Real. Love thus proves to be contingent in its origin, and at the same time there is proved the contingency of the truth with regard to the Real. For these modes are veritable and even definable in fact by our pinpointing of writing. They quarter, as I might say, the verification of love, and in a way that by one of its faces, it is certain, founds what is called wisdom. Except for the fact that wisdom cannot in any way be what results from these considerations on love. Wisdom only exists from elsewhere. For in love it is of no use.

For my knot, described as Borromean, and the fact that I strive to make my saying equal to what it comprises, if what it knots together as I state, is properly the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, this only stems from the fact that it commands what I state only by the fact (81) that I tie them with the Borromean knot, that each one of the three is only produced from a consistency which is the same for the three. Namely, that from the angle that I take them this year in my saying, it is only writing that distinguishes them. Which here is tautology, if all three are not written, I have just said that they are the same, it is only writing that makes them three. What must be clearly articulated, is that in this writing of the very knot – because reflect carefully, this knot is only some strokes written on a board – it is in this writing itself that there resides the happening of my saying. My saying in so far as this year I could pinpoint it by carrying out what we could call *édupation*, if in fact it is by putting the stress on the fact that the non dupes err, which does not prevent this from not meaning that any old dupery does not err, but that it is by yielding to this dupery of a writing in so far as it is correct, that there can be correctly situated the different themes of what emerges, emerges as meaning, precisely from analytic discourse.

At this point I should right away get on with it right away, if something did not tell me that you are already so... groggy, I would say, groggy from this saying, that I must first of all make a filter, which is a mode of writing specified by mathematics at the very source of topology, a filter from which words rediscover their meaning, I mean the way in which they function in the sexual order, which order, it is patent, is only the source of an ordinary. In other words to justify, not them, the terms of this order, but this order of them (*d'eux*) except for the fact that you are going to see it – because this is what today I have to say not knowing who will follow me – this knot has a quite different function, quite different than founding this order, whatever order in which you could enchain the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. What we must find, is not the diversity of their consistency, it is this consistency itself, namely, what one cannot say, this consistency itself in so far as it no longer diversifies them but only that it knots them. To emancipate you then, since I presume not unreasonably that I have stunned (*sonné*) you, I must *raie-sonne* with you. Namely, I must try again.

The Imaginary is distinguished, is distinguished in meaning from the fact that it is imagined, as someone might say – if in fact they say it among you – you must all the same look at it more closely, to say then that it is not self-evident, and for this reason which perhaps you may (82) be lacking: that it is not the privilege of the Imaginary. For the Symbolic, what else am I doing except trying to get you to imagine it? Allow me to believe that I am getting there. As regards the Real, well, that's ok, that is what is at stake this year, it is a matter of seeing what Real there is, precisely, in this Borromean knot. And this is why I began, began in my second articulation before you, in my second seminar as this is called, I began by saying that there is no initiation. There is no initiation. I mean that there is only the veil of meaning, there is only meaning in what is operculated, as I might say, by a cloud: *nuptiae* is only articulated when all is said and done from

nubes. This is what veils the light which is all there is in the way *nuptiae*, the rites of marriage, sustain their metaphor.

There is nothing other behind except what one must hold onto, with the support of the semblance, certainly, in so far as this semblance is similar (*semblable*) to the articulation of what can only be said in the form of a stated truth.

Namely, as necessary, that is to say incessant, unveiling. The articulation is the knot in so far as the light does not illuminate it, that there is no enlightenment, much more: that it rejects all light into the Imaginary. And what I state, what I am aiming at this year, is precisely to tell you that the Imaginary, because it is itself of the order of the veil, is not for all that darkened by it. Consistency is of a different order to the obvious. It is constructed from something of which I think that by supporting it with rings of string, there will get across something of what I am telling you: that it is much more a hollowing out.

The circle, for its part, lends to intuition, it radiates. It is not a matter of obscuring it. It is what makes *the One*. It is a matter of receiving the effect of the knot. To receive the effect as from its Real, namely, that it is not *One*. The Real of the Borromean knot, is to hold together only by, I do not dare to say 'being', it is not three: it forms a plait. It forms a plait, and it is here that there must be seen how what I put forward earlier, namely, that the order is not essential in it, is here the important point.

You must clearly sense that it is by ranking them in threes, *qua* cardinal number – I beg your pardon for the aridity of what I have to say to you today – this, which is proper to the three, implies no ordination. No matter how it seems to you, namely, that 1, 2, 3, begins with 1 – no matter how it appears to you, it is not possible to (83) properly order 1, 2, 3 on this simple condition that it is repeated,

and this is what happens in the Borromean knot. But it is not simply because of the Borromean knot, it is because of the cardinal numbers 1, 2, 3 whether they are knotted or not.

What does that mean, what I have just said?

It is that in threes, cardinal, one can only – on this single condition that there are not two of the same in succession – one can only manage to write them by finding all the orders such that they can, can be cogitated by a combinatorial.

Write on the board 1, 2, 3, - 1, 2, 3, nothing prevents you from reading them, on the single condition of taking it in the palindromic order, namely, back to front, from left to right, instead of from right to left, instead of from left to right: 1, 3, 2. This means, starting from the knot, from the Borromean knot, something that I am going to try to put on the board for you – give me a piece of chalk – here is how I simplify the Borromean knot. It will be enough for you, to see that this indeed is what is at stake, to complete it in this way, namely, what is summarised by three central strokes in so far as these are what mark how the knot holds together.

I turn this knot over. What is that going to give us? What is proper to a knot, when it is flattened out, an essential dimension, because the Borromean knot, I think I pointed it out to you when I showed you a little construction in cubes that I brought I no longer know what time, the last time or perhaps the second last time – is made like that: and to avoid the headache of making these little interruptions it should be

noted that it is completed by this, this is what constitutes it, it has in, let us say, the three planes on which my little construction was situated, it has on the three planes, complete symmetry, you see

(84) clearly that here this one is to be put, to make clearly sensed as being underneath the one that cuts it, it is from a flattening out that there comes from the other writing that I gave of the Borromean knot. What is to be said of it from the moment when, having flattened it out, I turn it over? There must be by the simple fact linked to the fact that the writing implies that the ‘over-crossing’ [English], the *croisement supérieur* should be written in this way, namely, that it cuts what is the ‘under-crossing’ the *croisement par en dessous*, what is that going to give if we turn it over? What was not underneath comes on top. Well then, I think that it will not be necessary for me to complete, to complete these three strokes, for you to clearly see that, by turning over the knot, the Borromean knot, what you are going to find when all is said and done, is something which is distinguished by the fact that it is not its mirror image, that you are going to find, of course, as it would be, for example, for the orientation of each of these circles, if you orientate them, I am not going to go into it yet, if you orientate ...any circle whatsoever, if you turn it over, what you have is its mirror image. Far from it, when you turn over the Borromean knot,

(83) you have a...a completely different aspect which in no case represents the mirror image of the first aspect. Far from the direction, the orientation as it is defined, for example very simply, by a watch, make no mistake, the clockwise direction, if you turn over the watch, becomes the inverse direction, namely, the mirror image. On the contrary, Borromean knot remains what it is when it has been turned

over, namely, that the second image, the turned-over image, is exactly in the same direction as the first, namely, laevogyratory. You clearly count on the fact that there can be another direction, namely, this one, which would be *dextro*, namely, the clockwise direction.

Given what I pointed out to you earlier, namely, that the order in the three – and by the fact that precisely, it is enough to invert the direction of 1, 2, 3, to go in the palindromic direction to find in it any order whatsoever, you find here a distinction between the effect of order with what you will allow me to call the effect of the knot, or in other words the effect of nodality. This is why it is appropriate, that it is appropriate for you to remember what I stated first, namely, that it is the pure and simple ternarity of the knot, namely, that the import of this ternarity is only sustained by the fact that we only made them first ...that we only took them from the angle of what does not distinguish (86) them among themselves by any quality that there is no

diversification of the Imaginary with respect to the Symbolic and the Real, that their substance is not diverse, that we do not make qualities of them, that we will simply consider them under the species of this consistency which makes each of them one.

Since I use the word *quality* which is a feminine noun, should I say that their quality is *une*, it would be a good opportunity to set out here around this one what is involved in terms of *one* if we take it as *qualificative*. Does *lalangue*, *lalangue* in so far as it has a meaning, does *lalangue* allow *un* and *une* to be considered equal? Is *une* not a different mode of *un*? It must be said that this would be a rather comic angle to make duality re-enter at the level of the one. *Yad'lun*, I said, but also when I said it that it is that with which there is founded what? Uniquely – it was the meaning of what I put forward at the end of my seminar last year – uniquely the numerable, namely, , and nothing more, namely, what says it is a One, but in so far as saying ‘it is a One’, is to cut it off from any ordination. It is to take it – and this is what only Cantor permits – under its purely cardinal aspect.

Certainly, you will tell me, it can only do it – if in fact you were to say something to me – it can only be done by alienating its unity in the set, as a result of which the elements preserve nothing more of this unity, except that of being open to the fact that one can count them, namely, subjective computation; which does not prevent the objectivity of the one, I will say, only giving rise to a question by the fact that it is surely not without an answer. And this answer is precisely why I state that it is in the three.

What does the 3 make of the 1, if there is no 2? Is it simply because there are 3 of them, is already there? It is certain that if I state that there is no 2, because this would be to inscribe at the same time in the Real the possibility of the relationship as it is founded from the sexual relationship, is it not only through the three and as I wrote it the other time on the board by the difference between one and three that there

proceeds this 2, is it – all of this brings us to asking the question – it was required, for us to take this step, that ceased not to be written? In other words that it is contingency, the happening, of Cantor's saying that alone allows us to have a glimpse of what is involved, not (87) in number, but of what constitutes in its ternarity the relationship of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. Must we then from the contingency of this saying of Cantor go to the necessary of the fact that this no longer ceases to be written, that it no longer ceases henceforth to be written in order that there should subsist what? Nothing other than a notion of truth.

The truth in effect, up to the present in logic, could only ever consist in contradicting. It is in the dualism of the true and the false. The true only being supposed by knowledge, in so far as knowledge imagines itself – this is its meaning – as the connection between two elements. And it is precisely why it is imaginary if the One, if a One, a third One, does not come to connect it at the cost of making an addition to it. An addition not of the same categorical circle, not of the same order, as I was saying earlier, but coming from nodality.

Well then, since, today, I had to force myself to lead you to there, you will allow me to stay with it, and after all, if there are some people that it discouraged, I do not see for my part any disadvantage, since the only reason that I spoke to you today, was because you were less numerous.

Seminar 6: Tuesday 15 January 1974

Voilà. Ah! You saw me the last time a little bit overcome by your number. Since it is...that leaves me with some hope that it will reduce. So then I continue.

The trouble with this number is that – I thought about it earlier – I am...I am led, anyway, every time to...to be inclined, anyway, towards the fact that if I am speaking to you, this can only be for the first time. Namely, that it is a notion of order. This notion of order obviously embarrasses me and it is what I try to get out of by showing you something else, namely, that there is nodality.

In order to say it, is that not so, the question is to know what unconscious knowledge – there, inevitably, I see clearly that...I see clearly that I am making a link, namely, that I posit unconscious knowledge. I posit it as what works. And what works can work – there is no kind of grip on work except in a discourse. It is a matter of grounding what is working in the analytic discourse. If there were not this social bond and this social bond in so far as it is founded by a discourse, the work would be ungraspable. Let us say, with the irony that it involves, that in nature, work is not done. So then, it seems indeed, anyway – this moreover is what grounds nature – that the idea we have of it, is that it is the place, it is the place where work is not done. Knowledge, knowledge *qua* unconscious, in so far as it works in us, seems then to imply a supposition. It is a supposition, you will tell me, for which we have no need to force ourselves, since in short, (90) we ourselves are the subject, the *hupokeimenon*, all that means exactly the same thing, namely, that it is supposed that something exists, which is called – that I in fact designated as – the speaking being. Which is a pleonasm, because there is no being except from speaking; if there were not the verb to be, there would be no being at all. Nevertheless, nevertheless, we know well that the word *to exist* has taken on a certain weight. A weight in particular through the quantifier, the quantifier of existence. The quantifier of existence, in

reality, has completely displaced the meaning of this word *ex-sist*, and if I even can write as I have written it: ex hyphen sist, it is precisely there how...how...how there is marked the originality of this quantifier.

Only there you are. The originality only displaces the order, namely, that what ex-sists, is what is supposed to be original. It is starting from existence that we find ourselves questioning again what is involved, what is involved in supposition. A simple displacement, in short. And what I am trying, what I am trying to, what I am trying to do, this year, huh, with my non-dupes, is to see what one must, in short, be a dupe of for all of that to hold together, and for it to hold together in a consistency. And that is why I am introducing this ternary, or more exactly that I notice that by starting, because of having started from this ternary, of the Symbolic the Imaginary and the Real, I ask a question, or more exactly, since for every question, for every question it is from the answer that it started...from the answer which, in maintaining, in maintaining as distinct, the Real, makes us ask the question: where is this knowledge situated, this unconscious knowledge that...which we are worked over by in the analytic discourse. It is quite certain that it is the discourse that makes us stick, the psychoanalytic discourse, that makes us stick to this knowledge in a way that has no precedent, has no precedent in History.

Why after all could we not consider this discourse itself as contingent since it starts from a saying (*un dire*), from a saying that constitutes a happening, the one that I am trying to...that I am trying to prolong before you, and the question of the contingency of this saying, is indeed what we are turning around. If this saying is only contingent, and moreover this is what we have to account for, where is the Real situated? Is the Real never anything but supposed?

(91) In this knot, this knot that I put forward, in this knot, this knot made up of the Symbolic and of the Imaginary in so far as it is simply something that makes three of them, which knots them, it is the Real that is at stake. The Real stems from the fact that they are three. Why is the Real three? It is a question that I ground, that I justify from the fact that there is no sexual relationship. In other words, that I specify, that I specify from something that can be written, as a result of which, as a result of which what is written, is that, for example, there does not exist an f , an f such that between x and y which here signify the foundation of such and such speaking beings, to be chosen from the male part or the female, this, function which would constitute the relationship, this function of the man with respect to the woman, this function of the woman with respect to the man, there does not exist one that can be written.

This is the thing, the thing that I am putting forward before you, this is what, somewhere – because I repeat myself like everyone else, you are not the only ones who notice it – this is what I already stated under the name of the Freudian thing; it is there in all its length and breadth and of course, it passed completely unnoticed for a simple reason, which is that we remain in this Imaginary. In this Imaginary which is precisely what is put in question by the slightest experience of the analytic discourse, it is that there is nothing more fuzzy than belonging, than belonging to one of two sides: the one that I designate by x and the other by y , precisely by the fact, that at the same time I must note that there is no function that links them. So then, it is a matter of knowing how, all the same, it functions, namely, that all the same people fuck within it.

In stating that, I must all the same take off from something which is a... a supposition, a supposition that, there is a subject male or female. This is a supposition that experience quite obviously renders untenable, and which implies that what I am putting forward, that

what I am putting forward as a statement by my stating, by the stating of which I am only the subject inasmuch as I myself am working in the analytic discourse, that I must not put the subject under this x and under this y . It must be then that the statement – and already simply by writing it on the board – it must be then that my statement does not imply a subject. If there is something, if there is something that is found written there, it is that there is no question of a subject except in (92) the function, and precisely that what I am writing is that under this function, precisely because it is denied, there is no existence. The *there does not exist*, means that: there is no function. What is at stake, what is at stake, is to prove that if this function has no existence, this is not simply a contingent matter it is a matter of the impossible.

It is a matter of the impossible, and to prove it is no small matter. It is no small matter because the fact is by simply writing, by simply stating, even only in writing, the thing only holds up until there is proof of the contrary, namely, until the moment, until the moment where something contingent denies this saying, and by good luck – as I might say - good luck (*bon heur*), the two words separate, are written $f(x,y)$, there is a function which knots the x and the y , and that it has ceased not to be written.

For it to have ceased not to be written, it must be possible, and up to a certain point it remains so, since what I am putting forward, is that it has ceased to be written. Why would that not begin again? Not only is it possible, it is possible that one might write $f(x,y)$ but it is clear that people have not deprived themselves of it. To demonstrate the impossible then, one must take one's foundation elsewhere.

Elsewhere than in these precarious writings since after all, they have ceased, and that from the moment they have ceased, one might believe that it can start up again. This indeed is the relationship between the possible and the contingent.

By basing myself on the knot so that something of the impossible can be demonstrated, what am I doing? I am basing myself – perhaps the question deserves to be raised – on a topology.

Since as regards what is involved in order, well then one can say that it is indeed what, up to the present, has not been lacking, namely, that it is in order to establish order that people support everything that has been able to be put forward about the relationship described as sexual. It is true that as regards this order, people have got their paws in a bit of a tangle in it, and that it is certain that it is not the same, it is not the same order, in any case, that is established, that is established by what analytic discourse puts forward, or appears to put forward, about what concerns the sexual relationship. The order 1, 2, 3, well, there is a 1 that comes first, and it is not by chance – we do not know moreover which comes first – it is not by chance that it is the 1, since the second (93) seconds it and that the third simply results from their addition. This gives a sequence that has been qualified as natural. Which leaves us something to ponder on. Which leaves us something to ponder on all the more because the last time I remarked to you that in writing them in a sequence, the privilege of these first three, in fact it is enough to take them in reverse for every order to be possible. It is enough in effect that there should be 1, 2, 3, or 1, 3, 2, this is what I mean by taking them in reverse, for the six other ways of arranging the 1, 2, 3, to be possible.

The idea of a successor, is that not so, and that, in terms of successor there is only one, only one in the natural sequence of numbers, this is an idea that was only separated out rather late, which is rather curious, because it really seemed it was the most tangible, the most real thing there is about the natural sequence. Why should there not be a multitude of successors? It is not self evident. We have a crowd of examples, that of the tree in particular, of the tree that we encounter everywhere, towards our descendants as towards our predecessors, why should the idea of a successor be inherent to a privileged

sequence of successors being founded on the fact that there is only one of them?

That there are three of them in a particular case, a particular privileged case, is certainly related to the fact that there is something of the *One*. *Yad'lun*, that is how I expressed myself. But it is quite imaginable that the three should not be taken in order. That is not new, huh, the famous triangle that the Greeks profited from – the profit that you know – rests on that, and with, and with that, all the geometry that they extracted from it, and through which for a long time the clear idea took priority over the distinct. The clear and distinct idea, as they say! As a result it was *more geometrico*, that things were proved for centuries and that this was an ideal and still remains one. The link between measure and the phenomenon of the shadow (I underline phenomenon), namely, with the Imaginary, in so far as it presupposes light, established this order that is called harmonic, established, founded, everything that is involved in proportion, a proportion which was the only foundation of measure, and established an order, an order which served to construct a Physics.

It is from there that there started this idea of supposition. Because, by founding things on this Imaginary, there had to be something else behind: a sub-stance, it is the same thing, it is the same word as supposition, subject and everything that follows from it. This whole (94) business was far, as I might say, far too phenomenal. When I testify, when I say that the knot, is what cogitates me, and that my discourse - in so far as it is the analytic discourse – that my discourse testifies to it, it happens that, because I have taken a few more steps than you, that this knot is Borromean, on this occasion, this knot, but it could be a different one. Even if it were a different one, my question, my question of knowing, of knowing how this is related to what distinguishes topology, to what distinguishes topology from the space founded by the Greeks, space in so far as it gave a prime matter to be disengaged from supposition.

What does topology presuppose? Topology only presupposes, only presupposes, as regards what is involved in space a consistency – you know that or you do not know it, in any case, I cannot give you a course in topology, but it is not ruled out that you might consult a mathematical text in which this notion is elaborated, starting from the abandonment of measure as such, namely, whatever may be the relativity of this measure, since moreover it is only produced from homothety, in order to know the time and the height of the sun, we have nothing except the relationship of the shadow with the stick that projects it, and that it is on a triangle that there rests everything about measure. Topology for its part, elaborates a space which only starts from the following, from the definition of neighbourhood, of proximity, it has the same meaning, it is a definition of the neighbour (*proche*), which starts...from an axiom, namely, that everything that forms part of a topological space, if it is to be put in a neighbourhood, implies that there is something else that is in the same neighbourhood. The pure notion of neighbourhood already implies then triplicity, and is not founded, is not founded on anything that unites each of these triple elements, if not that they belong to the same neighbourhood. It is a space that is only supported from the continuity that is deduced from it, because in topology there are no other relationships described as continuous except those founded on the neighbourhood and at the same time imply what I will call – which is not said, stated, formulated as such in topology – what I will call malleability. This is what the mathematicians for their part call continuous distortion. You see that the reference to the continuous is in the word, and joined, stuck, to the word distortion, which, to be more correct is stated as: continuous transformation.

These are also images. But it must be said, they are less well grasped. The fact that I talk about grasping, *Begriff*, *begrifflich* implies a (95) reference to what is well grasped, namely, solid. The supple is less well grasped, if you take it in your hand. The idea, the idea that

grounds topology, mathematically defined, is to tackle what is involved from the fact that it supports, it is topology which, here, supports, it is not a subject that is supposed to it; what topology supports, the idea, is to tackle it without an image, not to suppose to them, not to suppose to these letters, as they ground topology, not to suppose to them anything but the Real. The Real in so far as it does not add... - do you notice that this term is still excessive, since it evokes addition – as it does not add, to what we are able to distinguish as the Imaginary, this suppleness linked to the body, or as Symbolic, the fact of denominating the neighbourhood, the continuity, that it only adds something, the Real, and not from the fact that it is third, but from the fact that all of them make up three. And that this is all the Real they have, nothing more. I mean each and every one. It is the only Real they have. This does not seem much, but it is not nothing.

It is not nothing since, as has been clearly felt from all time, it is precisely on this that the Real was supposed. It is a matter of ousting it from this position of supposition which when all is said and done subordinates it, subordinates it to what one imagines or to what one symbolises. The only Real they have, is that they make up three. Here, three is not a supposition thanks to the fact that we have, thanks to the theory of sets, elaborated the cardinal number as such. What must be seen, what you must support, is the following: it is to put in question, to put in question that it is not a model, which would be of the order of the Imaginary. It is not a model because, because with respect to this three, you are not its subject imagining or symbolising it you are, you are squeezed (*coincés*): you are only – *qua* subjects – you are only the patients of this triplicity.

You are the patients, first of all, because, it is already in the tongue. There is no tongue in which the three is not stated. It is in the tongue, and it is also in the functioning that is called language, namely, the logical structure such that, quite naively, in fact, the first one who

began in that, for example – the first as far as we know, of course – the first as far as we know, namely, Aristotle, in fact, the one whose writings we have precisely, he had to manipulate the thing with little letters, and it cannot be manipulated without there being three of (96) them. Apart from the following, of course, apart from the fact of course that there remained something of the supposition of the Real, and that he did not believe he could support this Real by any other thing than the particular, the particular which he imagines is the individual, while precisely, in situating it in logic as particular, he clearly shows that of the individual, he only had... a quite imaginary notion. The particular is a logical function and that he gave it the individual body as support is very precisely, in short, the sign that he needed a supposition. A saying that supposes nothing, except that the triple is the Real, I said triple, namely, three, not third, it is in this that there consists the saying that I am constrained to put forward through the question of non-relationship, of non-relationship in so far as it specifically touches what is involved in the subjectifying of the sexual. My saying consists in this Real, in this Real which is what the three insists on, insists to the point of being marked in the tongue.

It is not a matter here of a thought, since *qua* thought it is, as I might say, still virginal; and moreover thought, with respect to what is supported by this advancing of the three, of the three as knot, and as nothing else, thought is only what I earlier called what is cogitated, namely, a black dream, the one in which, commonly, you dwell. For if there is something that analytic experience initiates you into, it is that what is closest to lived experience, to lived experience as such, is the nightmare. There is nothing that is more of an obstacle to thought, even to thought that claims to be clear and distinct: learn to read Descartes as a nightmare, that will make you progress a little. How can you even not notice that this guy who says to himself: *I think therefore I am*, is a bad dream?

The happening for its part, the happening is only produced in the order of the Symbolic. There is no happening except the saying. I think that, in the century in which you live, you should all the same be able to see that every day. This flood of information, as I might say, in the midst of which you may be astonished that you still subsist, that you preserve your common sense, namely, that in the last analysis you do not make too much, huh, of what the paper announces every morning. Well, thank God, it runs off you, as they say, like the water off a duck's back... Otherwise, where would you end up? There must indeed all the same be something fallacious, in which alas, the (97) misunderstanding of my saying – I mean the very one that I am giving you here, in so far as I am myself its victim – to which it must then be that a certain saying, the saying about the said, has contributed, for you to be able to believe that in what holds your body together, it is a circulation of information starting from some places or other, first of all from the DNA, as we are told, or from the DN something or other, that it is on this that you are supported, that everything is only, in short ... only a piece of information about which luckily we are warned in fact, that this information only holds up by violating one of the very foundations of that which moreover is built up as energetics, is not all of this also of the order of cogitation? Are we in other words obliged to take account of it when what we have to deal with in politics what we have to deal with, is a type of information whose meaning has no other import than to be imperative, namely, the signifier *One*. It is in order to command us, in other words, so that our noses will follow, that all information, in our epoch, is poured out as such.

In what I state to you then about a certain saying, the important thing is nothing other than the consequences that it may have. Again, in order that it may have its consequences, I must take trouble over it. This saying is only veritable – here I am putting it forward in the more than probable case that you have not noticed it - it is only veritable in so far as it constitutes a limit to the import, to the import of what

interests us in the very first place, in analytic discourse, in that it puts a limit to the import of the truth.

There was formerly like that an... an office boy who cried out after each one of my seminars, cries which were resumed in: "Why does he not tell us the true about the true?"

This character is well known, there was even confided in him the care of a *Vocabulaire*...I did not say the true about the true, for the reason that I can only say this about it: it is that the true is what contradicts the false. But on the contrary I can say, I can say but again I had to spend some time on it, for there is a time for everything, I can tell the truth about the truth.

The truth is that it cannot be said, since it can only be half-said. The truth is only founded, as I have just said, on the supposition of the false: it is contradiction. It is only grounded on the no. Its statement is only the denouncing of non-truth. It says nothing except by the half-. Let us say the word it is *mi-métique* [mimetic?]; it is from the (98) Imaginary. And this indeed is why we are forced in my opinion to take this path. It is from the Imaginary in so far as the Imaginary, is the false second, with respect to the Real, in so far as the male, in the speaking being, is not the female, and that he has no other angle from which to posit himself. Only, these are not angles with which we can be satisfied. It has got to the point that one can say that the unconscious is defined by this and by nothing but this: that it knows more than this truth, and that the man is not the woman.

Even Aristotle did not object to that! First of all how could he, huh? To say *no man is a woman* would have been really cheeky, especially in his time! So then he didn't do it...if he had said *every man is not a woman*...Huh? Well then you see, huh, you see the meaning that takes on: that of an exception; there are some of them who are not. It

is as all that he is not a woman. Here, the of the quantifier, huh, the quantifier of x , full stop, and y barred:

Only the annoying thing is that it is not at all true and that it is obvious that it is not true. The only thing that one could write, is that there does not exist an x of which one can say that it is not true that to be a man is not to be a woman:

All of this, of course, it must be noted in passing, presupposes that the *One* is triple. Namely, that, there is the *One* of which we make the all, namely, what is unified as such, there is the *One* which means any one whatsoever, namely, what I will tell you later, and then there is the unique *One*, which alone grounds the all.

To deny the unique *One*, is the meaning of the bar over the quantifier of existence. As regards any one whatsoever, it must be considered as a pure void. That unconscious knowledge is topological, namely, that it only holds up from the proximity of neighbourhood, not of order, is why I am trying to say, to ground on it that it is nodal. Which is to be expressed by the fact that it is written or is not written. It is written when I write it, when I make the Borromean knot, and when you try at that instant to see how it holds together, namely, that you make of it...that you break one, two others wander off. It is no longer written. And it is here that it is seen that the convergence of the nodal and the modal is initiated.

(99) So then this unconscious knowledge is not supported by the fact that it insists, but by the traces that this insistence leaves. Not of the truth, but of its repetition in so far as it is *qua* truth that it is modulated. Here I must introduce what grounds neighbourhood as such. Neighbourhood as such is founded on the notion of open. Topology immediately plays this card. It is on sets as open that it is founded. And this indeed is why it tackles, it tackles from the correct

angle the fact that the class does not close. Namely, that it accepts the paradox, the paradox which is only a paradox because of predicative logic, namely, that if logic simply renounced being, namely, if propositional logic were purely and simply crossed out, there would be no problem, the problem, if there is one, the problem designated as paradox, being simply this: that the class Man is not a man. All the paradoxes come down to that.

What does that mean, except that at the limit what we can designate as Man is an open set, which is obvious?

So then let us clearly see that the truth has a limit on one side, and that is why it is half saying. But on the other side it is limitless, it is open. And that indeed is why unconscious knowledge can inhabit it, because unconscious knowledge is an open set.

You see, you see, I am flaunting it, huh, that love plagues me. You too, of course. But not like me! Yeah...that is even why, a parenthesis, your number makes me uncomfortable: for some time, I can no longer identify you to a woman. That pisses me off.

Good love, I will say then since – you will excuse me, that this plagues me – love is the truth, but only in so far as it is starting from it, starting from a cut, that there begins a different knowledge than propositional knowledge, namely, unconscious knowledge. It is the truth in so far as it cannot be said about the subject, in so far as what is supposed, as what is supposed to be able to be known about the sexual partner. Love is two half-sayings that do not overlap. And this is what gives it its fatal character. It is the irremediable division. I mean why it cannot be remedied (*remédier*), which implies, which implies that the '*médier*' might already be possible. And precisely, it is not only irremediable, but without any mediation. It is the connectiveness between two knowledges in so far as they are irremediably distinct. (100) When that happens, it creates something ...quite privileged.

When the two unconscious knowledges overlap that makes an awful hotchpotch.

And here, I am going to put forward, at the end of this lay (*laius*) this indeed is the proper word – I am going to put forward something which...is like that, anyway, that settles things: masculine knowledge, in the speaking being, is irremediably a track (*une erre*); it is a cut, initiating a closing, precisely, that of the start, this is not its privilege; but it starts in order to close; and it is because it does not get there that it ends up by closing without noticing it. This masculine knowledge, in the speaking being, is the ring of string. It goes around in circles. In it there is something of the *One* at the start, as a stroke that is repeated moreover without being counted, and by turning round in circles it closes, without even knowing there are three of these rings. How can it, how can we suppose that it gets there, to know some little thing about this elementary distinction. Well then, luckily, for that, there is a woman. I already told you that the woman – naturally this is what results from what I already wrote on the board, that the woman does not exist – but a woman ... can happen, when there is a knot, or rather a plait.

It is a curious thing, the plait, is only produced from the fact that it imitates the male speaking being, because it can imagine him, it sees him strangled by these three categories that suffocate him. He is the only one who does not know it up to then. She sees him imaginarily, but it is an imagination of his unity, namely, of what the man identifies himself with. Not of his unity as unconscious knowledge, because unconscious knowledge remains rather open. So then, with this unity, she completes a plait. To make a Borromean knot, as I told you, six gestures are necessary and six gestures thanks to which, thanks to which they are in the same order, except for the fact that precisely, nothing allows them to be recognised. That indeed is why one must make six of them, namely, exhaust the order of permutations two by two, and know in advance that one must not make more,

otherwise one makes mistakes. This indeed is why, in fact, a woman is not at all necessarily trained (*dressée*), so that it is not at all necessarily with the same element that she completes the round when all is said and done. That is even why she remains a woman, among others, because she is defined by the plait that she is capable of, well then, this plait, it is not at all inevitable that she knows that it is at the end of six that it holds together to make a Borromean knot. It is not at all sure that...she knows either that the three has a relationship to the (101) Real, she may lack the distinction, so that it makes a knot, as I might say that is still more knotted, from a unit still more one. In the best case, huh, in the best case, it may be that...it only makes one, of cord, of ring of string when all is said and done. It is enough for you to imagine, is that not so, that the 1, 2, 3 joins up with 2, 3, 1. This will make a still more beautiful (*beau*) knot, if I can express myself thus, is that not so. I mean that everything is continued in everything, and after all, it nonetheless remains a knot, because if you have made a plait, that inevitably gives something, something which knots inevitably at least two, and if two of the strands join up, well then, that will make something that will be knotted or not knotted to the third. That is not where the question lies. The failure, as I might say, of this affair, namely, that by which *the* woman does not exist, is indeed how, the very thing by which she manages to succeed the sexual union. Only this union is the union of one with two, or of each one with each one, each one of these three strands. Sexual union, as I might say, is internal to its threading (*filage*). And this is where she plays her role, by clearly showing what a knot is, it is that by which man for his part succeeds in being three. Namely, because the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real are only distinguished by being three, quite crudely. Namely, that...without her subject discovering itself, it is starting from this triplicity by which a woman, sometimes, reaches her success by failing it, namely, by which she is satisfied as realising in herself sexual union, it is starting from there that the man begins to grasp, by a little common sense, the idea that a knot is of some use.

I told you that the hysteric makes the man. But it is as formed by the hysteric that man starts from the idea, the first idea, the right one, the one that leaves him a little chance, starts from the idea that he knows nothing. Which is moreover her own case, because she makes the man. She does not know that sexual union only exists in her and by chance. She knows nothing, but the man finds himself due to the backlash noticing this knot. And that gives in him a second result which is quite different in short: it is that by refusing his open knowledge, at the same time, he closes it. He constitutes the correct Borromean knot. He accedes to the fact that the only Real is the 3, he knows, he knows that, he knows that when he speaks to say nothing, but to obtain effects, that he imagines with all his force that these effects are effective, even though they go round in circles, and that he supposes the Real, as is appropriate, since supposing it involves (102) nothing, nothing except preserving his mental health. Namely, to be in conformity with the norm of man, with the norm of man which consists in the fact that he knows that there is something impossible and that, as was said by this charming woman, in fact, that I quoted for you already: 'Nothing is impossible for man, what he cannot do he leaves'. This is what is called mental health. In particular never to write the sexual relationship in itself, except in the lack of his desire, which is nothing but its squeezing in the Borromean knot. This is why I expressed for the first time, some time ago, but there are people that have only noticed it now, I was able to affirm – it is true that it is someone who, who only had notes, anyway to inform himself: 'I ask you to refuse what I offer you because it is not that'. Not what I desire you to accept, nor to arrive at anything whatsoever of this kind, because I am only dealing with this knot itself.

Seminar 7: Tuesday 12 February 1974

Good, well then I was hoping...I learned late that we were on what are called the *Mardi gras* holidays, precisely because it is not *Mardi gras*. So then I kept to my...my something or other, my seminar, did I not, I kept to it today because I was hoping that thanks to that I...could perhaps walk among you because you would be less numerous, and in short talk a little with the people who are supposed to be listening to me. True you are a little less numerous which allows me moreover to do so, but anyway, I regret not having had this opportunity to express myself in a more familiar and direct way. There you are.

On this point...on this point I announce to you, a sort of a little booklet like that has just come out (Lacan tosses the booklet into the audience) that I am sending you, there is an inset in it, the inset is as interesting as the booklet, so that it works just as well if it is not the same people who received it. There you are. In principle – in principle, this is supposed to be shown on television – give the inset to someone else...there you are. It is the questions that Jacques-Alain Miller was good enough to ask me in the hope of making...*Télévision*. Naturally, naturally it is a completely unwarranted hope: he asked me the questions he is capable of asking me, starting from the idea that he is doing television. He asked me Kantian questions in particular, as if (104) everyone was a Kantian, but up to a certain point it is true, everyone is Kantian, so that the questions that he asked me simply gave me an opportunity to...an opportunity to answer at what is presumed to be a television level by Jacques-Alain Miller. The result seemed to me all the same worth being remembered since I had it published. There you are.

So now, I am going to talk to you a little, today, trying to remain on the note of what I was hoping, what I was hoping to tell you, was in

short, it was something, let us say, in general, like that, whose aim, anyway, you can give it the title that you wish – whose aim was to tell you, to tell you the difference (this is what appeared to me, this is what appeared to me important in what I am trying to bring you this year) to tell you the difference between the true and the Real.

As you have perhaps noticed, is that not so, I advanced this year with you, I advanced this year with you, as in Courteline's *La paix chez soi*, is that not so, 'the whatsit on one side and the thingamajig on the other', this is all she succeeded in obtaining, the little woman, buying some chandelier or other, anyway which precisely is in two pieces... anyway, contrary to her, my three pieces, namely, the three, the three consistent rings with which the Borromean knot is set up, this is what I am holding in my hand in order to speak to you about the *non-dupes err*. This does not seem to have a direct relationship, an immediate one at least, it is not self-evident. But you know perhaps that one of these... one of these three rings, I denominate, I denominate as Real, the two others being the Imaginary and the Symbolic, and that it is around that that I am trying to get you to sense something.

To get you to sense this, first of all what I already put forward, but this does not inevitably leap to your eye, is that not so, is that, is that precisely I take them simply from this angle that they are three, that they are three and equally consistent. This is a first way of tackling, of tackling what is involved in the Real. It is quite certain that the Real, is what makes them three, without for all that the third being what makes them three. If they are added to one another, it is only to make three. And precisely they are not added together. Because each one of the three is added on just as much, without for all that, without for all that being the third. It is only there because the two others do not constitute a knot without three, if I can express myself thus.

And this is what I would like to say to you: that logic can only be defined by being the science of the Real. The annoying thing, is that it (105) only talks and it only starts from the true. It did not immediately begin like that. There was perhaps, as all the same on the whole, anyway you know, there was someone called Aristotle who opened up the question. Obviously the word true, *to alethes*, is found a lot in this thing that he calls the *Organon* from which logic has since been constructed. He opened up the path, he worked things out as best he could, and the trouble, currently in our business with the *Organon*, is that it cannot appear without half the page being taken up by, let us say, commentaries on the *Organon*, which are not at all properly speaking what one can call commentaries, but a certain way of organifying about the *Organon*, namely, making it edible.

This begins with a certain Alexander, another who was called Simplicius, and then later someone called Pacius, and then after that anything you like, a Peter of Spain, a St Thomas Aquinas, anyway, thanks to that, the thing was, anyway, completely diverted. It has got to the point that it is not at all easy, because despite everything we have a kind of scumble, we have a smattering of these different authors, and we hear them, we hear Aristotle, despite everything, through them.

It would be good if someone, if someone managed to make the effort, in short to read, to read for example, just this, which is the second volume of this *Organon*, to read what is called – what is called, it is because it has been entitled that, it is also a title that came later, it is called *Prior analytics* – managed to read, not of course in a first impression, because someone who might read it in a first impression, simply, will not understand it any more than on the whole, anyway you understand what I am talking about, namely, not a lot... The thing that someone must absolutely manage to do some day, is precisely to get to know well enough the difference between what Aristotle said and what has been transmitted. In fact, those who have sifted out the

thing to see well enough in it the difference by seeing the degree to which Aristotle opened things up and how he opened things up and why not, even the places where he slipped up, where he twisted his ankle, where...it's a whole world! Yeah...

It is quite clear that I am not adding anything on here. Or rather what I am adding on, is designed to propose, anyway at least a task, namely, up to what point, and in Aristotle, it seems to me, one can (106) grasp, the degree to which it is a clearing of the ground (*unfrayage*) and a clearing of the ground that is only illuminated starting from the fact that I stated just now: that logic is properly the science of the Real.

In Aristotle we are not all that encumbered by the true. He does not talk about the true in connection with the predicate. He is stumbling, of course, and because of that people believed that they were obliged to do the same, they speak about man, about animal, about living being (*vivant*), on occasion, and again, here I am saying things that immediately have a vague sense. Man, animal, living being, all dovetail; every animal is living, every man is an animal, as a result of which man is living...yeah...It is quite clear from this start, as what followed moreover clearly showed, that all of that means nothing. In other words, that the true, in the affair, is altogether out of season, displaced.

And what renders it tangible, what renders it tangible, is that it is...these compartments, is that not so, these...that he fills as he can with these, for example these three words that I have just said: man, animal, and living being, is that not so, he can moreover put anything whatsoever, is that not so, the swan, blackness...in fact anything else, the white...the white is found everywhere, we do not know what to do with it; it is made manifest in what I called his clearing of the ground, that these terms, his whole effort, is precisely to be able to do without them. Namely, that he empties them of meaning, and he empties them

of meaning in this way that he replaces them by letters, namely, α , β , γ , for example, instead of my first three terms there that I extracted for you, which are in Aristotle...he says is that not so, it only begins to take shape starting from the moment when he will announce that all β ...all α is β , all γ is β ...no, all β is γ , as a result of which everything will be γ . In other words, he proceeds by way of being able to qualify two of these terms, those that make the connection, of middle, as a result of which he will be able to establish a relation between these two extremes. That is why at the start, from the start, it can be felt that it is not the true that is at stake. Because it matters little that such an animal should be white or not, everyone knows that there are black swans – *des cygnes c-y-g-n-e-s* - the important thing is that something should be articulated thanks to which there is introduced the Real as such.

It is not for nothing that in the syllogism, there are three terms: the two extremes and the middle. The fact is when all is said and done – I say ‘when all is said and done’ because it is only a first attempt – everything happens as if there was something like a presentiment of (107) the Borromean knot. Namely, that right away he puts his finger from the moment that he tackles the Real, on the fact that there must be three. Obviously these three, he handles completely wrongly, namely, he imagines that they hold together two by two. This is an error. He imagines that they hold together two by two, and even, up to a certain point, one can express the thing by saying that he makes them concentric. Namely, that there is the sphere of the living, for example, then inside the sphere of animals – the sphere or the ring – and then more inside again the sphere of men. This is what is called ‘translating in extension’. Naturally, people have worked on it, because they are just as perplexed by it as by a term that I use a lot, but it is not without a *raison d’être*: people are perplexed by it like a fish with an apple.

To allow you to relax, I am making here a clear parenthesis. It has nothing to do with Aristotle, because Aristotle, had not the slightest idea of it... Me, for example, I am perplexed by your number, exactly like a fish with an apple. And nevertheless there are other moments when I say to you that the relationships of my saying with, in short, this audience precisely that I do not know what to do with, are of the order of the relationships of a man with a woman. I will point out this to you like that, something I found this morning, that leaped to my eyes, that... well then, that it is already in *Genesis*. What *Genesis* indicates to us by Eve's offer, is nothing other than this: that man – here there is a vacillation at that moment, it is the woman, but as I told you, the woman does not exist, is that not so, but just like Aristotle, hesitates a little, I do not see why *Genesis*, even though inspired, should have done any less, and that this offer of the apple is very exactly what I am saying, namely, that there is no relationship between the man and the woman, which is incarnated very manifestly by the fact that, as I underlined, the woman does not exist, the woman is not not-all, and from that the result is that man with a woman is as perplexed about her as a fish with an apple, which normalises our relationships, and which allows me to assimilate them to something of which it would be a lot to say to say that it is love, because in truth, I do not experience the slightest feeling of love for you. And no doubt it is reciprocal, as I stated: in what is involved in love, feelings are always reciprocal. That's a parenthesis, let us come back to Aristotle.

(108) Aristotle what? Shows clearly that the true, is not at all what is in operation. Thanks to the fact that he clears the ground, that he opens up the business of his science that I am calling the Real, of the Real, namely, of the three, at the same time he demonstrates that he only gets to the three by opening things up by means of writing, namely, that from the first steps in the syllogism, it is because he empties these terms of all meaning by transforming them, by transforming them into letters, namely, into things which of

themselves mean nothing, this is how he takes the first steps in what I called the science of the Real.

What is logic thus conceived, caught hold of by that end, what is logic doing in analytic discourse?

The reason why you are, in short, as I complain, so numerous hearing me, is in the measure that what I am conveying is what is emitted by analytic discourse. In analytic discourse things proceed in a different way and that is why – and that is why you are there – in so far as here I am drawing it out; what constitutes the body of what I am saying, is something quite different to what, up to the present, logic has been founded on, namely, the said (*des dits*). The said that is manipulated. Aristotle does it, but as I have just told you, the characteristic of his step forward is to empty this said of its meaning. And it is in this way that he gives us an idea of the dimension of the Real. There is no way to trace the paths of logic, except by passing through writing. This is what Aristotle demonstrates from his first steps, and this is the way the written shows itself to be of a different dimension to the saying.

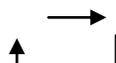
On the contrary what holds you, what excites you, and what will no doubt excite you more and more, is that the true saying is something quite different. The true saying, is as I might say the groove, this is what defines it, the groove along which there passes what... what it must indeed supply for the absence, for the impossibility of writing, of writing as such the sexual relationship. If the Real is indeed what I am saying, namely, what is only opened up by writing it, it is indeed what justifies my putting forward that the hole, the hole that will ensure, that ensure forever the impossibility of writing the sexual relationship as such, this is what we are reduced to, as regards what it is, this sexual relationship, to realise it all the same.

There are little channels, there are things that weave in and out, there are things that one gets lost in, but where one gets lost in such a way

that this is properly what constitutes what is described as the metaphor of the labyrinth. One never gets to the end of it, but the important (109) thing is not that, it is to show why one never gets to the end of it, namely, to tightly circumscribe what is happening when what is at stake, everything by which we touch the Real, of that which no doubt ensures that the Real. We have, like that, a proper and distinct idea of the Real, the Real is what is determined by the fact that there cannot in any way be written in it the sexual relationship. And it is from this that there results what is involved in the true saying, at least what the practice of the analytic discourse demonstrates, it is that by saying true – namely, stupidities, those that come to us, those that drip out of us like that – one manages to open the path towards something as regards which it is not altogether contingent that sometimes and by error, it ceases not to be written, as I define the contingent, namely, that this leads to establishing between two subjects something which has the air of being written like that: hence the importance I give to what I said about the letter *d'amur*.

This distinction that specifies analytic discourse, which allowed me to discern it among four others that were there because...they really seem, like that, to live, and not only do they seem, but they are infinitely more robust than the analytic discourse which still has everything to do as regards clearing its path. Analytic discourse not only reserves the place of the truth, but it is properly speaking what allows to be said what, as regards the sexual relationship, flows in it, fills the groove. It is very important. It is very important because this completely changes the meaning of this saying true that I have just posited at first as distinct from any science of the Real. It completely changes the meaning because, as I have just said, for once, this groove is not empty: something passes along it.

If some of you remember what I put forward, structured, as the discourse of the master, they can read in it, if they are capable of reading something, they can read in it that the truth of the master, is



nothing other than the subject. For the deaf I recall that the discourse of the master is this: with here two arrows and here two arrows like that, and here nothing at all: S_1 S_2

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(110) What the discourse of the master is based on, is what I have called S_1, S *index 1*. In other words: the commandment, the imperative. The discourse of the master is there. And for quite a while. Simply because, because the signifier exists. Because S_1 namely, the signifier 1, is nothing other than the fact that the signifier, there are piles of them, but they are all some one or other. And this is all the existence of the One is based on: it is that there is something of the signifier, and that each is not unique, but all alone, which is not quite the same thing.

It is precisely because there are not two...two what? Two speaking beings that can be conjoined, make two, it is precisely for that reason that there are signifiers, namely, that they speak. And what analytic discourse demonstrates, is that what happened as regards the place of those who could be subjects, subjects of something, of the sexual relationship, when at their place there are two signifiers, well then it is that, and it is nothing else, that flows in what I called the groove of the true saying.

For that, it must be that the S_2 has nothing to do with the true saying. In other words: that S_2 is Real. And if you are following me in what I tried to open up, in my first stammerings in this seminar, you will conceive that S_2 , this is what I wrote in my schema of the analytic discourse, that S_2 , namely, knowledge *qua* unconscious, is what flows in the groove of the true saying. What I am in the process of telling you does not mean nothing! It means that it is a Real, there is some knowledge that even if there is no subject who knows it, remains being of the Real. It is a depot. It is a sediment that occurs in

everyone when he begins to tackle this sexual relationship to which of course he will never get, whatever education he is given, because if there is indeed something which will in no way improve the situation, the situation of the relationship, it is indeed everything that you can bullshit them with on the subject of what this relationship might supposedly be.

It will nonetheless remain that it is from quite incidental angles that there will enter for him what makes the three, namely, the Real. Because, of course, thank God, when the speaking being begins, he has not the slightest idea that he is a subject. He counts one and two, whatever you want, but not himself, and as three, he will put into it anything you wish, even what fakes (*maquille*) the two others, namely, himself, the child, as you might say. It is a good pretext for making the Real enter while completely veiling it: the Real is only a (111) child; if it is not the child itself it will be any third whatsoever, it will be Aunt Yvonne, in fact, is that not so, or anybody else... Grandfather whatshisname: once it makes up three, anything is acceptable in order not to notice that what is at stake is only the three as Real. As a result of which there are things which, through Aunt Yvonne or Grandfather whatshisname or by the child himself, namely, his pathos, namely, that he is relegated, nobody understands anything about it, and for good reason. There is nothing to understand.

There will all the same be something that will be imprinted, namely, not three, because the three is always veiled from some side, the three steals away, the three is the support, there will be S_2, S index 2, 2 S's, two signifiers S which will be imprinted, and which will give along the path of pure chance, namely, of that which, above all, was missing in the relationships with those who were there to preside over what is called his education, his formation, he will form this knowledge, this indelible and at the same time absolutely not subjectivised knowledge, he will form for himself this Real knowledge, imprinted there somewhere, imprinted just like in Aristotle, the α , the β and the γ , and

this is what will be the unconscious and there will be nothing else, huh, as was said by the character going through customs: “That’s food for my goat”. To which the customs man says: “Listen, that’s amazing, because they are braces (*bretelles*), no?” The other answers: him: “Anyway, that’s how it is, and if she didn’t have that, she would have nothing else...” It is the same for unconscious knowledge: as truth, there will be nothing other than these braces.

Unconscious knowledge, this is what must be connected up for the true saying to succeed in some way, namely, to succeed in being understood somewhere to supply for the absence of any relationship between the man and a woman (some, not all). Here is the distance, the difference between the true saying and the science of the Real. That is why that as regards dealing with the unconscious, we are much closer to it by manipulating logic than anything else, because it is of the same order. It is of the order of the written, as I pointed out to you; moreover the great opener up of analytic discourse, Freud himself, was not able to eliminate it, or when he gives his little schemas, is that not so, in his projects, those by which he tried to understand what the knowledge of the hysteric might well be, well (112) what does he do? He does exactly nothing other than that, namely, these little points and these little arrows, these modes of writing thanks to which he accounts – he believes he accounts – for something which was as old as the world, namely, anamnesis. It is obvious that for a long time anamnesis was considered as a mark, as an impression, it must moreover also be said that this is quite vacillating and insufficient. Here our dear Freud confirms in a way that this indeed is what is at stake, when it is the Real that is at stake, that what is at stake is something that is written, something that is written and that it is a matter of reading, of reading by deciphering it, and what does that mean? That means nothing except this something which, in – as I might say – in reanimating it in the sense of this something, of this something which creates a barrier to every attempt to debouch onto the relationship properly so-called, by reanimating

thanks to this something which is this kind of parasite, of movable part of the body, that analytic discourse designates by the phallus, ensures that what acted as a stopper, which is properly speaking enjoyment, and phallic enjoyment as such, what acted as a stopper thanks to something that discourse manages to obtain, is that not so, namely, to separate it in the Imaginary, to accomplish Symbolic castration, allows something to succeed or to fail, most often to fail, which establishes at least between two subject something which resembles a relationship, something that ceases not to be written for some rare and privileged cases.

I am speaking of course here about what is obtained along the proper path, through analytic discourse, because, it must indeed be said that this concern for the truth is only necessitated in extremely rare cases, those for whom the aid of the analytic discourse which I said is required in the other discourses, is much easier to obtain. In the discourse of the master, indeed why not in the university discourse, huh... In the discourse of the hysteric, huh, a knot becomes a dream... But in the two other good old discourses, the king and the queen, listen, it happens automatically! It is enough to be a king and to be a queen to understand one another. It is even unthinkable that they should not understand one another. Of course, this has nothing to do with the truth of the sexual relationship, but the important thing is not that, huh, it is that it supplies for it.

So then, because in some cases unconscious knowledge is lame – not only is it lame, but it clearly creates an obstacle for the sexual (113) relationship being established. So then, in those cases, one is dealing with the necessity of going by way of the analytic discourse, namely, one has the need to speak true, and especially to suspect a little what bad company speaking true keeps. Namely, that everything that comes to muddy, disturb, good God, the calm and tranquil discourse that we usually have to deal with, which grounds the normal, namely, that what comes to muddy these perfectly well

established discourses, never brings out anything except cases, cases where there is a need, in short of a psychoanalysis, namely, the cases of truth.

This does not make me reduce them to being unworthy, which is what I am telling you: the fact that they are not normal – is because they have with the truth a kind of... a kind, like that, of kinship, which stems from the fact that they are in the connection where it does not work for a single Real, namely, what is involved in the relationship described as sexual.

Let it be well understood then – I am making here, like that, some remarks which seem useful to make to you so that you do not make errors – let it be well understood then that the analytic discourse does not at all consist in making what is not working out, what is not working out re-enter normal discourse, huh, two of which I have designated for you. This is not at all what is involved. It is not at all a matter of making them enter into it. It is simply to note that the discourse which only proceeds by the true saying, is precisely what, what does not work. As has always been demonstrated, it is enough for someone to make an effort, to say true, for it to upset everyone. I am simply restoring things here to their context.

What I simply want to point out to you is that in constituting this break, this break between the true saying and the science of the Real, in reconstituting it for what its worth, in reconstituting it at the very place where it is situated, I am not fixing here, very far from it, any *system of the world*. On the contrary. For a system of the world to exist, there is only one means, is that not so, it is to make suppositions in it. The fact is that ... a discourse like that of Aristotle (who was surely not an idiot, nor even a sod) is full of hard edges, I mean stimulation. What is stupefying is that there is no text where what is called supposition is clearer.

This distinction that I have articulated for you today, between the true saying and the science of the Real, I called it that, I called it as best I could: the true saying, is there, this is what I am trying to do, the (114) science of the Real, is this something which is logic, and which, also holds up, is that not so, which holds up for those who know, of course, how to locate themselves in it. The distinction is somewhere, I could show you where, somewhere in the *Prior analytics*, huh: 1–37, there, yeah...37...no it's at...if you take your reference from the manuscripts, is that not so, it is towards the 7th line of the page of the manuscripts of what is numbered as 49a. Good, the 37 is the division of translation. It is a matter of different kinds of attribution, of expressions...No that's not it, it's further on...Ah!

There must also be brought into operation the exchange of...it's further on, is it not, it's at 49b, there must also be brought into operation the exchange of terms of an identical value, words for words, expressions for expressions, word and expression one for the other, and always prefer a word to an expression in order to facilitate in this way the presentation of terms

He seems to be only talking about his own little affair. But it is when he gives an example...

For example, there is no difference between saying...

And then in connection with this he says something true: but, if I may say so it is indeed a risk, you are going to see what he says about the true,

...the object of supposition is not the genus of the object of opinion and to say the object of opinion is not identical with a certain object of supposition (for the meaning is the same in the two judgements), instead of the expression that has been stated, it would be better to posit as terms...

By blocking them...and this is what he calls *hupolepton*, the object of the supposition and the object of opinion *doxaston*, *dokaston*.

(I beg your pardon, I'm tired...)

What is the object of opinion?

Well then the object of opinion is what works. Opinion is just as true as something else. True opinion, it is precisely about this that Plato racks his brain in *Meno*. The object of opinion is what ensures that one does not notice that...(until it falls on your head, naturally), that there is no sexual relationship. The object of supposition is not identical, he says on this occasion. Namely, that everything that he talks about in the *Prior analytics*, is something which makes us understand how much, when one is in the order of the Real, one must make suppositions.

In the order of the Real we are all the time forced to suppose. We are forced to suppose, in fact those crazy things: spirit, matter too, sometimes, and even some other things of the same kind, is that not so, which are luckily a little bit closer to us, but which are nonetheless suppositional. Here I am trying to proceed along a path where I am not making suppositions, where I do not suspect anything of being suspect. Since supposition, has that aspect. Yes.....in Aristotle, he called that *hupokeimenon* sometimes, but there, in that case it is something that can only be translated into Latin by *suspicabile*, it is *to hupolepton*, it is the suspect (*la soupçonnable*).

Of course, the suspect is very respectable, like the rest, is that not so, this is what we must suspect as being Real, and that takes us very far, that leads to all sorts of constructions. The important thing would perhaps be to remain with simply what the science of the Real allows there to be affirmed, namely, that the kernel of all of that is above all logic, namely, what has never succeeded in advancing by a step, by a quarter of a step, by the tip of its nose, huh, except by writing. Which is already something.

Good, I told you that, and then I made you my Borromean knot, you must really try to imagine that this Borromean knot here, is as I might say the only one which... which is presented decently, as I might say.

It is presented decently because it has the place to be deployed but that does not prevent it easily being the object of all sorts of deviations. You will note in it for example, that it is very easy to find in it, for example the three planes of reference of Cartesian co-ordinates. And this indeed is what is fallacious about it. Because the Cartesian co-ordinates, are all the same something quite different, they are something which by the very fact that they imply the surface as existent, is that not so, are at the source of all sorts, of all sorts of fallacious images: the *more geometrico* which sufficed throughout the centuries to guarantee many things a supposedly demonstrative character, comes entirely from that.

(116) The fact that, the fact that the fallacious character of the surface, is that not so, is demonstrated by the fact that when you try to join it

up with this apparatus here, you obtain, what constitutes the – for some time, anyway, I think for you – the siglum of what is involved in the Borromean knot, namely, the joining at which the three rings are knotted together. And where they are knotted, in short, in a way which is properly speaking concise, namely, the one, the way, which allows it for example to be seen that that is how it is squeezed, in fact, huh. And there you are: that is how you must conceive that the... that the knots are connected up to define this something which is a

completely different definition of the point: namely, the point where the three rings are squeezed together.

Yes, this is not quite what I had foreseen, in fact, telling you today, but since after all I felt like improvising, I allowed myself to be led, like that, to tell you other things. This has a sequel, of course, it will have a sequel the next time, I would like all the same to point out to you that there are points in the *Prior analytics*, for example, among others – there are others, there are points of logic, there are points of the *Organon* – where we see all of a sudden that Aristotle himself, (117) who knew bloody well what he was doing, does not fail to stumble. I mean without letting out what, when all is said and done worries him [me?] like everyone else.

There is a thing somewhere, I must find that for you, I am going to find it for you right away, at...at page 68 still the page number of the manuscript... There is something unbelievable. I note – I spoke to you earlier about...about ‘all A is B’, ‘all B is γ ’ and about what is deduced from it that ‘all A is γ ’. He questions himself apparently about what results from that, by inverting the conclusion, namely, for example to say that ‘all γ is α ’. He shows its overwhelming consequences, namely, that the conclusion must be put at a different place, namely, at the place of a major or of a minor in order for it to culminate properly speaking at a conclusion that is the one that inverts one of the premises. Good. All that seems to be unimportant and nevertheless it certainly is not unimportant, because it is on this occasion that there begins to emerge something else, namely, the qualifications that are applied to every kind of being.

I must tell you that I spared you something which is the degree to which, the degree to which the use of the term *huparchein*, ‘to belong to’, creates a problem. Because in his definition of the universal, it is completely beyond question to give a univocal sense to this ‘to belong to’. It is impossible to know in a univocal fashion if the subject belongs to the predicate or if the predicate belongs to the subject. It depends on the passages. It cannot be, of course, that someone as vigilant as Aristotle must have been, did not notice that.

In any case in this chapter, this small little chapter which is extremely instructive, one sees by progression – and by this progression which consists in that, from well defined universal beings, it passes on to all beings – it is very singular that it is in connection with that, that there emerges, that there emerges like an irruption, the following passage:

*If then (textually) every lover, in virtue of his love, prefers A (it is not prefers to, huh, it is the written A), to know that the beloved is disposed to grant him his favours (that is described as *suneinai*, to go together) without for all that granting them to him (which we image by the γ , it is then non-*suneinai*, to call it by its name: he does not sleep with him) rather than see the beloved accord him his favours (which is imaged by Δ)...*

(118) It’s marvellous.

So then, Δ what have we said, that, that the...what?...ah! yes!

It is then γ not to grant them to him, rather than to see...etc. Good.

Good, so then it is obvious that α namely, to be disposed, which stands in Aristotle for loving him, is that not so – it is obvious that the object of love A, is to be loved, is to be disposed to grant his favours to him, this is what, in Aristotle, is perfectly well designated in this

text (I would ask you to consult it), is described as *phileisthai*. Good, to love, is then *philein*.

What is at stake for him is to demonstrate the following: after this passage concerning the whole conversion, and quite especially the conversion of predicates which concerns every being – what is at stake is that if one starts from that, is that not so, that the conjunction of this A with this B, namely, to be loved by the partner – a partner who does not grant you his favours – if one posits that this is preferable to the contrary combination, is that not so, namely, that he grants his favours without for all that loving you, he demonstrates that, if one posits this – it is the object of his demonstration – there results from that at the end love, A, is something, if one posits it here, is that not so, the result is, what seems in effect inevitable to be admitted, that the *suneinai* is worth less than the *kharixesthai* namely, this good disposition which testifies to being loved. The emergence, in this place, and in a way that is all the more problematic in that it is absolutely characteristic of love as homosexual, is a quite striking thing, concerning, as I might say the eruption in the middle of what I defined as being articulated as the science of the Real, as the eruption (119) at a certain point, a point which, I repeat is at 68b to which I would ask you to refer in the *Prior analytics*, a thing which is truly the irruption of the true, and of the true which is precisely a true to which there is only, when all is said and done, the approach, since the problem we are dealing with is precisely that of a love which, when all is said and done, is of concern only by the mediation of enjoyment, of the *suneinai* that is at stake, namely, a perfectly localised homologous, homogeneous, enjoyment, in fact, the one that ensures that when all is said and done, if there is, in effect, something that allows the non-existence of the sexual relationship as such, it is very precisely that the

homoios is assuredly something like a step in it no doubt, but a step, in a way, that confirms, that supports the non-existence of the relationship [or: that the non-existence of the relationship confirms, supports].

And what I would like to conclude on is the following, is this not so, that in so far as it is around this *x* which is called the phallus that there continues to turn – to turn only because it is at the same time its cause and its mask – the non-existence of the sexual relationship, I am announcing, if I can say the theme of my next seminar; as regards man – and first of all when I say man, I write it with a capital L (*L'homme*) namely, that there is an all-man – for man, love, I mean, what is hooked onto, what is situated in the category of the Imaginary, for man, love goes without saying. Love goes without saying because his enjoyment is enough for him, and that is moreover very exactly why he understands nothing about it.

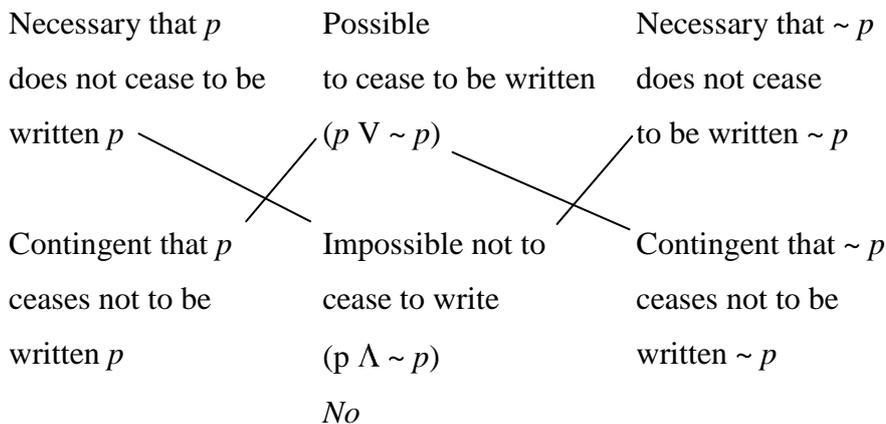
But for *a* woman, things must be taken from a different angle, is that not so. If for a man it goes without saying because enjoyment covers everything, including precisely that there is no problem concerning what is involved in love, the enjoyment of the woman – and it is on this that I will end today – the enjoyment of the woman for her part, does not go without saying, namely, without the saying of the truth.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 19 February 1974

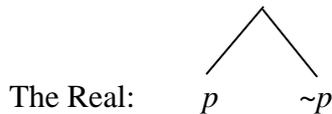
So, my dear Rondepierre, I pinched it from you, huh? I pinched it from you. You had ordered it, but I took it. There you are.

So, what I pinched from Rondepierre, is a book by Hintikka called *Models for modalities*. It is a very good read. It is a very good read that is well designed to demonstrate what should not be done. In this respect, it is useful. Good. There you are. Yeah...what time is it?

This Hintikka is a Finn, a logician, it is not because he did what should not be done, that as I have just told you it is not very, very, very, very useful. It is precisely particularly demonstrative. If you read what I have just written on the board:



Does not cease not to be written



Both are logically unverifiable

(122) You see perhaps where that can be placed, you see perhaps what must not be done. Anyway, you will see it better when I will have said a little more about it. Yeah...

On the other hand – since I still have a minute – on the other hand there is a good example, a good example of what one can do. It is another book. It is another book by the same Jaakko, Jacques, that is

how it is pronounced, it appears – Jaakko Hintikka, so then he is called Jacques. Jaakko Hintikka produced another book called *Time and necessity*, subtitled: *A study of the theory of Aristotle's modalities*. It is not bad. It is not bad and...it implies – I have only had it two days – it implies that someone, the Hintikka in question, had anticipated me, had anticipated me long ago, since his book has not simply been written but has been published... – anticipated me long ago in what I was pointing out to you the last time, that Aristotle's *Organon*, is worth reading. Because the least that can be said, is that, is that it, is that it will make you rack your brains, and that what is difficult is indeed to know, with somebody who opens things up (*un frayeur*), as I called it, like Aristotle, is indeed to know why, why...why he chose these terms and not others. There you are. He chose these and not others because...it is not possible when all is said and done; it is not possible, it is not possible to say why if, if I do not begin by articulating what I have to say to you today.

What I did the last time, naturally, is no small thing. Make no mistake about it! Naturally it went unnoticed, I imagine, by more than one of you, but anyway there were some who realised how important it was. Good. So then, if I am not going astray, and I do not seem to, how does the game that guides me, play out (*joue le jeu*)?

That makes a verb, huh: *jouljeu*, you *jouljeux*, that continues, that holds up to *il jouljeut* and then afterwards it becomes uncertain. We *jouljouons*, or the verb *jouljouer* does not hold up. That proves that one only *jouljeut*'s in the singular. In the plural, it is doubtful, the *jouljeu* cannot be 'conjugated' in the plural. And the fact that there is no plural does not prevent there being several people all the same in the singular. There are precisely three of them. This is how there is recognised the three of the Real, as I have already...tried to get you to sense: it is three (*trois*), huh, and even *étroit* like *La porte*... So then, what I did the last time shifted something. What? What I am claiming, precisely, is that it does not shift the not-all (*pas-tout*).

(123) This not-all is something else. This is even why I am lucky to be serious...lucky to be serious, because the serious does not squeeze (*serre*) all. It squeezes the series closely. What I put forward, is the fact that there is already a logic. And this is even something that may surprise you. If Aristotle had not begun it, it would not have been there already.

So then, I get that far and I say: it is the knowledge of the Real. I demonstrated this on every occasion, make no mistake. I recognise the three in it. But the three as knot. My beloved structure, huh, my nutty structure proves to be a Borromean knot. Naturally, it is not enough to name it, to call it that; because it is not enough for you to know that it is called a Borromean knot for you to be able to make something of it. Make no mistake, is that not so: it must be made (*faut l'faire*). Here there emerges a little light about what I am doing, because that is what I started from, I am going to tell the truth. That already proves that it is not enough to say it to be in it, in the true. And I put forward right away, is that not so, one of the pivotal points of what I intend to advance into today, in what I am doing here, as an analyst, since that is where I am speaking from: I do not discover the truth, I invent it. To which I add that it is that, knowledge.

Because the funny thing, huh, it is really amusing: no one has ever asked what knowledge was! Ah! Me neither. Except the first day when like that, held by the arm, in fact, in this thesis, in this thesis that between ourselves, huh – where is François Wahl? I don't know but anyway what matter, he is there perhaps, he is perhaps not there, but anyway, if he is there I point out that I promised one day publicly, like that, yielding to a, a tender pressure, that I would re-publish this thesis. I said it, this was enough for them, for *Seuil*. In order to publish it...naturally they never stopped snapping at my heels at the start, when I brought out the *Ecrits*, so that I would re-publish, this thesis. I said at that time that I did not want to, I have changed my mind, but now they are not in a hurry. In short, after all, what matter,

I promised, but if it does not happen, huh, it is obviously not my fault. Anyway, that is all the same how I was nibbled by something, by something which made me slide like that gently...towards Freud. It was something which had here and now, the closest relationship with the question, indeed, that I am formulating today.

It is curious – it may appear striking, is that not so, that it was like (124) that, in connection with psychosis, is that not so, that I had, that I had slid towards the question of...that it required Freud in fact, for me to truly ask it, it is: what is...what is knowledge?

Knowledge seems to discover, to reveal as they say, *aletheia*, my beloved. I show you to the world. Completely naked. I unveil you. The world is not able for it (*n'en peut*), but of course! Because it is what is at stake: when I show her, this truth, my beloved, it is what I am showing. If I said that logic is the science of the Real, this has obviously a relationship, a very close relationship with the fact that science can be conscience-less. Because precisely, this is hardly ever said, huh, that logic is the science of the Real. That this is hardly ever said, is already a sign, huh, it is a sign that it is not taken to be true...What is curious is that, for want of saying it, people are not in a position to say anything worthwhile whatsoever about what logic is. It is demonstrated in class, but when it is announced, there, at the start, open any book whatsoever of logic, you will see the hesitations. It is even quite curious. It is certainly moreover why...why Aristotle did not at all call his *Organon*, 'Logic', and he got into the thing...The astonishing thing is that he called it *Organon*.

In any case, conscience-less science then, there is someone who said one day – he was called Rabelais, like that he was someone particularly astute, and it is enough to read what he wrote to perceive it. To write what Rabelais wrote, that is why I say: it must be made/done (*il faut le faire*). 'Science without conscience', he said, 'is but the ruin of the soul'. Well then, it is true. Only it is to be taken

not as the priests take it, namely, that it works havoc in this soul which as everyone knows does not exist, but that it brings the soul down to earth (*ça fout l'âme par terre*)! No doubt you do not see that, that I am saying that it brings the soul down to earth, namely, that it renders it completely useless, is exactly the same thing as I have just said to you in saying to you that to reveal the truth to the world, is to reveal the world to itself. That means that there is no more a world than there is a soul. And that consequently, in fact, every time you start from...from the state of the world, as they say, to highlight the truth in it, you put your foot in it! Because the world, well then, if it is already enough to affirm it, is a hypothesis that sweeps away all the rest. (125) Including the soul. And that is clearly seen in reading Aristotle; *On the soul*. Just like Hintikka, I strongly advise you to read it.

If there is knowledge, if the question can be asked of what knowledge is, well it is quite natural, of course, that I was held, because the patient in my thesis, *le cas Aimée*, well she knew, simply she confirms, she confirms what you will comprehend I started from. She was inventing, of course that is not enough to assure, to confirm that knowledge is invented, because as they say, she was talking nonsense...Only, that is how the suspicion about it came to me. Of course, I did not know it! This indeed is why a further step is required in logic, and one must note that knowledge, contrary to what epistemic logic puts forward, which starts from the following: about the hypothesis, it is even on this that there rests the clean sweep that it constitutes, it is to see what this will give if you write it, that is how they write it, there, the knowledge of a , small a – it is not so badly chosen, this little a , anyway, it is by chance if it is the same as mine – the knowledge of small a , this must obviously be commented on. Here it designates the subject; naturally they do not know that the subject is what the small a is the cause of, but anyway it is a fact that they write it like that:

$$S(a, \alpha)$$

Epistemic logic starts from the fact that knowledge is inevitably to know the true. You cannot imagine where that leads. To madness....even if it were only this, in fact, which unconscious knowledge disputes, that it is impossible to know anything whatsoever that is supposed to be true as such, without knowing it. I mean knowing that one knows.

From which it results that it is altogether impossible, it is not very difficult to obtain, but anyway there is a very nice mathematician, who breaks with Hintikka, and who in effect gives a very pretty proof – the notes have been communicated to me – that the knowledge which is supposed to be supported by the fact that one does not know that one knows is strictly inconsistent, in fact impossible to state in epistemic logic. Yeah.

You can put your finger here on the fact that knowledge is invented, since this logic is a knowledge. A knowledge like another – and here I would like to get your feet back on the ground a little again, like that – this is simply to remind you, what unconscious knowledge is. It (126) fully deserves the title of knowledge, huh! It must indeed be said, that Freud is uneasy about its relationship to the truth, it, even to the point that it gives him quite a turn when one of his...– they were called patients at that time, the term analysands had not yet been found – when one of his patients brings him a dream that deliberately lies.

The fact is that this is where the break (*faillie*) lies.

There is something in Freud that lends itself to this confusion that was created, when all is said and done, by translating *Trieb* as ‘instinct’. Everyone knows that instinct is...is a knowledge, like that, that is supposedly natural. But there is something all the same which takes a trick, in Freud’s case, which is the death instinct. Naturally, I took a little step further than him. But it is in the wrong direction. He turns

around it. He, he for his part is well aware of it. For that you have to read the famous *Beyond*, yes, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, as it happens. In this *Beyond*, in short...he worries himself about, how something whose module is to remain at a certain threshold; the least possible tension, that is what suits life, as he says. Only he notices in practice that this does not work. So then he thinks that it goes lower than the threshold. Namely, that this life that maintains tension at a certain threshold, starts to slacken all of a sudden, and that beneath the threshold, we see it succumbing, succumbing to the point of rejoining death. That is how when all is said and done, he makes this thing acceptable. Life is, it is something that arose one day God knows why, make no mistake, and then which only asks to go back like all the rest. He confuses the inanimate world with death. It is inanimate, that means that it is supposed to know nothing. That means nothing more for whoever gives to the soul its sensible equivalent. But this fact that it knows nothing, does not prove that it is dead. Why should the inanimate world be, why should it be a dead world? That certainly does not mean very much, but to ask the question has in any case a meaning...

In any case, correlatively to this question of the *Beyond of the pleasure principle*, Freud is at sea in something which is much closer to the question of death, namely, of what it is; he starts, he starts and then he lets the thing drop, and it is very annoying. He starts from the question of the germen and the soma. He attributes it to Weismann. I cannot develop this. This is not quite what Weismann said. The person who started from the separation between the germen and the (127) soma, is a chap who lived a little earlier, called Nussbaum. Moreover, for what you make of it, let us stay with that, it does not have any great importance. What is important, and what Freud touched on, on this occasion, is that there is death only where there is reproduction of the sexual type. That's all.

If we employ Aristotle's term, the *huparkhein* in question, the 'belonging to', and if we employ it in the right way, in the way Aristotle uses it, namely, without knowing from what end to tackle it, we see that sex *huparkhei*, 'belongs to' death, unless it is death that belongs to sex, and we remain there, precisely, with the sleeve by which we caught the thing in our hands, yeah.

Where the break is shown by its consequences, is that it is in this connection that Freud, under the pretext that there is something in the world which shows that life sometimes goes towards death, he marries, he marries to it something that is all the same difficult to, to eliminate from sex, which is enjoyment; and that, making the slip that he would not have made if he had firmly held in his hands the Borromean knot, he designates as masochism the supposed conjunction of this enjoyment, sexual enjoyment, and death. It is a collapse. Yeah.

If there is a place where the clinic, practice, clearly shows us something – and that is why I congratulated, like that, in passing, someone who has since taken the wrong road – if there is something that is quite obvious it is that masochism is a sham (*du chiqué*). It is a knowledge, certainly, a know-how even! But if there is then a knowledge in which we can put our finger on the fact that it is invented, that it is not within everyone's reach, it is indeed there! It must be said that the person in question there that I congratulated in passing, was not a clinician, but he had simply read Sacher-Masoch. If it is here that it can be seen, in short, that masochism is invented, and that it is not within everyone's reach, that it is a way of establishing a relationship where there is not the least one involved, between enjoyment and death, it is quite clearly manifested by the fact that, all the same, huh, one only puts the tip of one's little finger into it, huh, one does not let oneself be sucked like that into the machine. Good.

So then this is what all the same, allows there to be envisaged the import of what I am stating. The fact is that knowledge, knowledge where we grasp it for the first time, like that, in a way that can be handled; can be handled because, because it is not we who know – it (128) is not we who know, as one of my pupils says, and calling it non-knowledge, poor chap! He fancies that he does not know! What a funny business...But we all know, because all of us invent something to fill up the hole in the Real. Where there is no sexual relationship this gives a '*troumatisme*'. One invents. Naturally one invents what one can. When one is not very smart, one invents masochism. Sacher-Masoch was a sod. You should see the fire tongs, anyway is that not so, the person who wanted to play the game, like that, to answer him, the fire tongs with which she dealt with him, this Sacher-Masoch! She did not know what to make of him. Only *Le Figaro* expressed itself, huh, which says it all! Anyway let us leave Sacher-Masoch! There are knowledges that are more intelligently invented. And this indeed is why I say that the Real, not simply where there is a hole, is invented, but that it is not unthinkable that it is through this hole that we might advance into everything that we invent about the Real, which is not nothing because it is clear that there is a place where the Real works. It is when we bring it in as three, this bastard thing, because it is sure that this connotation '3' for the Real is difficult to manipulate logically..

All that we know is that 'one' connotes enjoyment very well, and that 'zero' means there is none, what is missing, and that if zero and one make two, this does not render any less hypothetical the conjunction between the enjoyment of one side with the enjoyment of the other. Yeah.

Not only does it not make it more sure, but it spoils it. In a world that is neither made nor to be made, a totally enigmatic world, once one tries to bring in this something which is supposed to be modelled on logic, and on which there is supposed to be grounded that in the

species described as human *one is either man or woman*. This is very especially what experience rises up against – and I do not need to go far, someone reported to me, no later than a few hours ago, her encounter with a taxi driver – they're all over the place, huh, make no mistake – as regards whom not only was it impossible for the person who was speaking to say whether it was a man or a woman, but that she had even asked and he was not able to answer her. When I say that you find that everywhere, huh, all the same, it is no small thing! And it is even from there that Freud starts.

(129) He starts, like that, as a commentary. Experience is not enough for him because he has to hook on more or less everywhere, to science, huh, from the moment that there is nothing, that there is nothing that more resembles a masculine body than a feminine body, if one is able to look at a certain level, at the level of tissue, huh. That does not prevent an egg from not being a spermatozoon, that it is here that the sex thing is to be found. It is quite superfluous, huh, to point out that as regards the body, in short, it can be ambiguous as in the case of the taxi driver earlier. It is quite superfluous. Because you see clearly that what determines it is not a knowledge, it is a saying (*undire*). It is only a knowledge because it is a logically inscribable saying. It is the one that I wrote for you, in clear letters, make no mistake with my:

Namely, the exception around which there pivots the fact that it is in the measure that this exception carries a consequence for all of those who believe that they have, that they have what? What we do not even dare to call the prick, we call it the phallus, and this is what remains to be determined.

While on the other side it is about the saying, the formal saying, even though the saying of a non-existent person x. Namely, that it is only for every other that the function is denied, that negation, let us say, to illustrate, is left, I am not all the same going to say to God,

because that pisses us off, this business, this sticking of the Other onto God. But all the same, for anyone who realises this sort of universality that there is no negation of the function \forall , and it is the only form of universality of the saying of a woman, whoever she may be. It nevertheless remains – I think that you remember all the same what I wrote on the board, and that I am not going to be required to rewrite here – it nevertheless remains that in this set, it is not every saying that formulates the function \forall . In other words, that what must be substituted for my little bar that I put over the inverted A, the sign of the universal quantifier, the little bar by which I inscribe the not-all, what must be substituted, is the sign of the denumerable, namely, \aleph_0 , aleph zero.

What opposes the one of the all of man – and there is only one of them, as everyone knows, the proof is that it is designated by the definite article – what opposes the ‘all’ of man, here, is, is, it must be said, ‘the’ women, in so far as there is no way to get to the end of them, except by enumerating them. I cannot say all (*toutes*) because what is proper to the denumerable, is precisely that one never gets to the end of it. And if I give you this reference point, it is because this – this must be of use to you for something, it must illustrate what I said the last time about the true saying. The true saying is what comes to grief, is what comes to grief on this: that for, in an untenable *either-or* which would be that everything that is not man is woman and inversely, what decides, what clears the way, is nothing other than this saying, this saying which is engulfed in what is involved in the hole by which there is lacking to the Real what could be inscribed about the sexual relationship. So then, so then, what is involved in knowledge?

Naturally, I have not managed at this time, namely, 1.20, or something like that...24, I have not managed at this hour, to tell you even a quarter of what I should get into your guts, because that is the function of the saying. If I do not say it to you it is not enough for me to write

it, but I am all the same going to give you a little sample of what can be written. Because without this reflection on writing, without what ensures that the saying comes to be written, there is no way for me to make you sense the dimension in which unconscious knowledge subsists. And what you must do as a supplementary step, is to notice that if I make you sensitive to it by telling you that the unconscious does not discover anything, because there is nothing to discover, there is nothing to discover in the Real, since here there is a hole. If the unconscious, here, invents, it is all the more precious for you to notice that in logic it is the same thing, namely, that if Aristotle had not invented it, the first clearing of the way, namely, to make the saying go into this grinder of being thanks to which he makes syllogisms – naturally syllogisms were made before him, simply people did not know that they were syllogisms. In order to notice it, it must be invented: to see where the hole is, the edge of the Real must be seen.

And since we are already far gone, and I have not managed to say a quarter of it for you – it will have to be ‘too bad’, it will ornament, (131) in short, what will come subsequently – I must all the same make you sense the import of a certain way in which I open up modal logic.

The best part about it, huh, is that naturally, that as regards constructing, as regards inventing – and you can see there all the intuitionist echoes you wish, if indeed you know what that is. One day I translated the necessary for you, huh, by *what does not cease to be written*. Good. You should know, there is a trace in Aristotle, that propositional logic, namely, that something is true or false, what is marked as zero or one, according to the case, there is a little trace, there is a spot where Aristotle goes astray – I will show you that whenever you like – into the *peri hermeneias*, as it happens, *On interpretation*, for those who do not hinder it: there is a spot where it is fused, that propositional logic is just as modal as the others. It is true that, if it is true that this is only situated where I am telling you,

namely, where contradiction is only when all is said and done an artifice, a deputising artifice, but which for all that remains no less true, the true playing here the role of something from which one starts in order to invent the other modes. Namely, that ‘necessary that: p ’ whatever truth it may be, can only be expressed by this ‘does not cease to be written’. Everyone sees between this fact, this fact that something does not cease to be written – you should understand by this that it is repeated, that it is always the same symptom, what always falls into the same fold. You see clearly that between the ‘does not cease to be written: p ’ and the ‘does not cease to be written: $non-p$ ’ we are here in the artefact that is testified to precisely, and which bears witness at the same time to this gap concerning the truth and that the order of the possible is as Aristotle indicates, connected to the necessary. What ceases to be written is p or $non-p$. In this sense the possible bears witness to the break of the truth. Except for the fact that there is nothing to be drawn from it. There is nothing to be drawn from it and Aristotle himself testifies to it. He testifies there to his confusion at every instant between the possible and the contingent. What is written here my V towards the bottom: Λ - because after all, what ceases to be written can in short cease not to be written, namely, come to light as the truth of the business... It can happen that I love a woman like any one of you – these are the sort of adventures into which you may slip – this however does not give any assurance about the sexual identity of the person that I love any more than of mine. Only there is something that, among all these contingencies, may well testify to the presence of the Real. And this is indeed what only (132) advances from the saying inasmuch as it is supported by the principle of contradiction. Which of course, naturally, is not the usual everyday saying. Not only do you ceaselessly contradict yourselves in the current everyday saying, namely, that you do not pay any attention to this principle of contradiction, but it is truly only logic that raises it to the dignity of a principle, and allows you, not at all of course to

assure any Real, but to find your bearings in what it might be when you have invented it.

And this indeed is why what I marked about the impossible, namely, what separates, but otherwise than is done by the possible, it is not an *either-or*, it is a *both-and*. In other words, that it should be at the same time p and $non-p$ is impossible, it is very precisely what you reject in the principle of contradiction. It is nevertheless the Real since it is from there that I am starting, namely, that for every knowledge there must be invention, that this is what happens in every encounter, in every first encounter with the sexual relationship.

The condition for logic to pass into the Real, and this is why it is invented, and that logic is the most beautiful recourse of what is involved in unconscious knowledge. Namely, of that by which we steer ourselves into the doldrums. What logic has managed to lucubrate, is not to remain with this: that one must choose between p and $non-p$, and that by travelling along the vein of the principle of contradiction, we will manage to get out of it as regards knowledge. What is important, what constitutes the Real, is that through logic, something happens, which demonstrates not that p and $non-p$ are both false, but that neither one nor the other can be in any way be logically verified. This is the point, the point of re-departure, the point on which I will take things up again the next time: this impossible on one side and the other, is the Real as logic allows us to define it, and logic allows us to define it only if we are capable of inventing the refutation of both the one and the other.

Seminar 9: Tuesday 12 March 1974

[Dr. Lacan arranges four sketches on the board].

Good, so then I am entering into the core of the subject, even though I would of course prefer to talk about something else. To say for example that...that I have no reason to complain, that...that I am giving, in a word, at the same time, I am giving you – I apologise - I am giving you hay to eat. All of that is hay. These are things that cross over one another, and, well, which do not get across. So that I have no reason to complain in this sense that, it is either one thing or the other: either I am given back my hay right away, this is what (134) happens, like that, my hay as such, in short, it is not at all something that cannot be tolerated, it is served up to me again just as, just as I have propounded it. This is what happens with some people. And then there are people, for example that this hay tickles so much as it goes down their throat, that they vomit Claudel, at me, for example. It is because they already had him there...I am annoyed, I am annoyed because the person that I made vomit Claudel telephoned – Gloria naturally – at the moment...to ask her where my seminar was held. Anyway, I am terribly sorry, I hope that she has ended up by finding out. She is perhaps here, in any case if she is not here let her be brought my apologies, because Gloria sent her packing, and it is not at

all what... what I would have wanted: why would she not come to eat hay like everyone else... Good, good, well then the hay in question, anyway, is what you know is on the agenda, is that not so, because of me: the Borromean knot.

I can say that I am spoiled, because I have just been brought an African one. It is the Borromean knot in person is it not. It is... I certify its authenticity for you, because ever since I have been handling it, I have begun to know a bit about it... and I like it a lot, because if there is one thing about which I rack my brain – I even asked about it, in short, it is... it is to know where it comes from. It is called Borromean, it is not at all because there was a chap who one day discovered it. It was of course discovered a long time ago, and what astonishes me is that, is that it has not been used more, indeed, because it was truly, it was truly a way of tackling what I call the three dimensions. They were taken up differently and there must be reasons for that. There must be reasons for that, because I cannot at all see why – anyway, I do not see this at a first approach – I do not see why people would not have tried to squeeze the point, to make the point, if you wish, with it, rather than with things that cut themselves. It is a fact that it did not happen like that. What a fate it would have had if it had happened like that, it is probable that it would have trained us quite differently.

It is not at all that those who are called philosophers, namely, good God, those who try to say something about our... our condition, in a word, to respond to it, it is not at all the case that there is no trace of the fact that this business of knots, precisely, did not interest them, because: for truly, for truly a very long period of time there have been (135) people who find themselves curiously having, as far as we know – by being classed for a long time as far as we know, among the women, anyway, what I call ‘the women’ – and it is in the plural since as you know, in fact, there have been some of them there for a long time – that women reached an understanding of that, by making

tissues, fabrics. And this might have put people on the track. It is very curious that quite the contrary, this rather inspired intimidation. Aristotle indeed talks about it, and it is very curious that he did not take it as an object. Because that would have been a start no worse than any other. What is it, what is it that ensures that knots, knots, are so poorly imagined? This one like that, because it is made in a certain way, holds up. [*Lacan is talking here about the African knot in his hand*]. But it is only when it is flattened out that it is not easy to handle, and it is probably not for nothing indeed, that with these knots it is always things that make a fabric, namely, that form a surface, that people tried to fabricate. It is probably because the flattened out thing, the surface, is very much linked, in fact, to all sorts of uses. Yes. I am going to give you right away a proof of the fact that knots are poorly imagined. Good.

You make a plait. A plait of two. You do not have to do very much with it, it is enough for you to cross over once, then a second time, after two you find your two in order. Knot them now end to end, namely, the same with the same. Well then it is knotted. One could even say it is knotted twice. That makes a double buckle. It holds together, the... what you have joined together, namely, as my faithful Achates put as a title of my [second-] last seminar of last year, he called that 'rings of string (*les ronds de ficelle*). I don't know whether in the text I had called it that or something else, it is probable that I had called it that, but he put it into the title. Good.

Good. Now make a plait of three. Before you rediscover, in the plait of three, the three strands – let us call them strands (*des brins*), today, for example – the three strands in order, you have to perform 6 times the gesture of crossing over the strands, as a result of which, after you have performed this gesture 6 times, you rediscover the three strands in order. And then again you join them. Well then, it is all the same something that is not self-evident, that is not immediately imagined: the fact is if once this knot that I quite simply told you was a

(136) Borromean knot, namely, such as it is in the most simple form, the one there on the left, it is not self-evident that having plaited as in the first case, you can see when all is said and done that this stems from a double knot, it is not self-evident that it is enough for you to break one of these strands for the two others to be free. Because at first sight, they seem to be very well twisted around one another, and one might presume that they hold together just as well as in the plait of two. Well then not at all: you see right away that they separate. It is enough to cut one of the three for the two others to prove not to be knotted. And this remains true no matter what the multiple of six with which you pursue the plait. It is quite certain in effect that, since you have found your three strands in order at the end of six gestures of plaiting, you are also going to find them in order when you make a further six. When you make a further six of them this will give you this Borromean knot here (sketch 3). Namely, that what you see here passing once, inside the two other knots, which you can see are – and that is why I presented them like that – free from one another, you do that, in reality here you see it, twice. And it is still a knot described as Borromean, in that whatever may be the one that you break, the two others will be free. With a tiny little bit of imagination, you can see why. It is because, let us take these two here for example, they are such that, let us say to say things simply, that they do not cut one another, that they are one above the other. You can note that this is true for each couple of two. Good. Here are two ways of making a Borromean knot, but which in reality are only one, namely, that to plait them an indefinite number of times multiple of six, it will still be just as authentic a Borromean knot.

(137) I apologise to those that this may weary, what I am telling you here all the same has an end. I would like simply to point out to you that the count is not complete for all that. You can plait for as long as you like, provided you stick to a multiple of six, as long as you like, the plait in question will always be a Borromean knot. Already just by itself, this seems to open the door to an infinity of Borromean knots.

Well then this infinity, already realised virtually since you can conceive of it, this infinity is not limited to this. Such and such an example of it that I give you on the board in the shape of this way (one cannot say that the instruments are suitable, good...) in the shape of this way of inscribing it, namely, that you see that here [sketch 2], the buckle, as I might say, is double, and that if the Borromean knot is realised in a way that I had first traced out in such a way that it can be clearly seen, by pulling from here that this makes two. You can for that matter draw it by making come back here the buckle which you see has passed under one of the levels of my rings of string, and for each of the two to come back, it will do the circuit, of one of these rings, and will come back here to inscribe itself by crossing underneath the two buckles that are found here to be parallel because of the arrangement, and to give the shape in short of a cross. If you arrange the Borromean knot in this way – I hope I was...I made you imagine what this drawing could be, if you want me to trace it out, I will trace it out for you – it becomes entirely symmetrical, and it has the interest of presenting for us in a different form the materialisation that it can give in this shape of symmetry, precisely (the symmetry, in two words, is it not: the symmetry from another side). Namely, to show us that there is a way of presenting the Borromean knot which, in its very tracing out, imposes on us the emergence of symmetry, namely, of the two.

(138) There was no need for us to go so far to notice it. Namely, that by simply, I would say ‘pulling’ on this part of the ring of string, you can easily imagine for yourself the result that it will give, namely, to fold in two this ring on the right [sketch 1]. Namely, to obtain this result which is presented as follows:

As a result of which, you see that what results from it is the following: namely, that one of these rings pulls the knot folded in two, the buckle folded in two in this direction \longrightarrow while the other that you have there is presented in a manifest way, perhaps moreover less salient to your eyes, the particular thing which ensures that you cannot unknot these knots of three but it is enough for one of them, any one at all of them to be missing for the two others to be free. It is even one of the clearest ways to image the fact that you can, if you pass your ring inside the knot that I am calling...of the buckle that I am calling ‘the folded buckle’, if you put through another buckle folded in the same way, you can knot an indefinite number of these rings of string, and it is enough for one to be broken, for one to be lacking, for one to be missing, for all the others to be free. As a result of which, as a result of which, what cannot but come to mind, is that, since you have added an indefinite number of times, they are folded knots taken up one into the other, you are not forced to end because you see here functioning, namely, a simple ring of string. You can buckle this complete circle in a way that makes...the thing to be closed by a folded circle.

Namely, that if you had more than three of them, it would be quite easy for you to imagine that to close, it is with one of these folded (130) circles that you would bring about the closure. If you bring about the closure with three, what you obtain is in fact very precisely this result [sketch 2]. Namely, that starting from there you can produce this buckle, namely, that from the handling in threes of the Borromean knot – which as you see can function on a much greater number, from the handling in threes you give rise to this figure of which I told you that it presented the symmetry in the Borromean knot itself. Namely, that it inscribes the two in it.

What must be underlined, before closing what we might call this ‘depicted’ demonstration, that we can describe as depicted, what should be underlined is the following. It is that to each of these rings of string – to call them such in the way that gives the best image – to each of these rings of string, you can give, by a sufficiently regular

manipulation (you must not be surprised at the patience you will require) to each of these three, namely, as much to this ring of string here as to this ring of string there also, you can give exactly the same place which is the one that you see depicted here as the third.

What use do I make of this Borromean knot of three? It is of use to me, as I might say for inventing the rule of a game, in such a way that there can be figured by it the relationship of the Real very properly to what is involved in the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Namely, that the Real, like the Imaginary and the Symbolic, is what makes three of it. That makes three of it, and nothing more.

It is striking that up to now there is no example that there was ever a saying that posited the Real, not as that which is third, because that would be to say too much, but as that which, with the Imaginary and the Symbolic, makes three. That is not all... 'with the Imaginary and the Symbolic makes three'...that is not all! By this presentation what (140) I am trying to hook onto, is a structure such that the Real, by defining it in this way, in other words the Real of before the order, that nodality gives us this something which, by saying that it is before order in no way supposes a first, a second, a third. And as I have just underlined for you, not even a middle with two extremes. For even in the first form of the Borromean knot, the one that I...that I showed you allows there to be depicted as middle term knotting two extremes, this folded circle, that I am showing you here, even in this case any one at all of the three circles can play this role. Namely, that it is in

no way linked, except to make you imagine it, the figure on the left only being there in order to make accessible to you the fact, is that not so that there is a middle in the folded circle; but any one at all of the two others can fulfil the same function, the others then taking the position of extremes.

Where does this get us?

It is to be noted that if we interest ourselves in the 'two' – which is indeed the problem presented by something which is truly, one can say, insistent in what the experience of the analytic discourse brings us, it is not for nothing that it introduces this two par excellence which is the love of one's own image, it is indeed the essence of symmetry

itself. Does this not introduce us, because of this knot, to this consideration that the Imaginary is not what is to be most recommended for finding the rule of the game of love. What experience tells us about it, if it is specifically marked by imaginary representation, since we have come, from the experience itself, to impose it on ourselves, we imagine that love is two. Is it all that (141) proved, other than by imaginary experience? Why would it not be this middle – as moreover is indicated by the fact that it is at the level of this middle that there is produced, this time, two times two, why should it not be this middle – which I have just underlined for you is moreover *gyrovague* (*gyrovague*) namely, vagabond, that it can just as well be fulfilled by any one of the three – why would it not be this middle which, by providing itself in a suspect way with this form, with this form of the image of itself – this middle which would give correctly thought out, namely, through the Real of these connections, the mainspring of these knots?

In other words, is the Borromean knot not the mode in which there is delivered to us the One of the ring of string as such, the fact on the other hand that there are three of these Ones, and that it is by being knotted, only by being knotted, that we get the two. There are many considerations into which I could go astray, as I might say, because they would not yet circumscribe any more closely what I might call the first character of the three.

It is first, not in the sense that it would be the first to be first, because as everyone knows there is another which is described as such, but if the two is so described, it is in a quite singular way, since it is not in any way said, that one can accede to it starting from the One. If only because of the fact that – as has been noted for a long time – to say that one and one gives two, comes from the simple fact of the mark of addition, supposedly a reunion, namely, already the two.

In this sense the two is as one might say something of a vicious order, since it reposes only on its own supposition. To join two ones by a plus is already to install the two.

But for the moment let us stick simply to the following, which is that what the Borromean knot illustrates for us, is that the two is only produced from the junction of the one to the three. Or more exactly, let us say that if you say that – as has been humorously done, that ‘the number two rejoices at being odd’, it is certainly not without reason that it rejoices – it would be wrong to rejoice at being odd, because if it were to rejoice for that reason, it would be a pity for it, it certainly is not so, but that it is engendered by the two odds one and three, is in short what the Borromean knot brings out for us, as I might say.

You should all the same clearly sense the relationship that this (142) lucubration has with our analytic experience. Freud is certainly a genius. He is a genius in that what analytic discourse brought out by his pen, is what I will call primitive terms (*des termes sauvages*). Read *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego* and very specifically the chapter on *Identification*, to grasp the quality of genius there is in the distinction that he formulates between three sorts of identification, namely, those that I denoted, when I highlighted them by the unary trait, by the *Einzigiger Zug*, and the way in which he distinguishes them from love in so far as carried to a term which, undoubtedly, is indeed the one that we must reach, namely, this function of the Other, in so far as it is given by the Father, and on the other hand, the other form, that of the identification described as hysterical, namely, from desire to desire, in so far as he distinguishes all three forms of this identification.

That presented in this way, it is only a knot of riddles, I will say: a further reason to work, namely, to try to give to this a shape that involves a more rigorous algorithm. This algorithm is precisely the one that I am trying to give in the three itself, in so far as this three, as

such, makes a knot. This is obviously the reason, as I might say, the reason to work. But a reason which, as I might say does not fail to damage us, not because the ring of string is already a toric, or indeed a twisted figure, it is much more still from this very singular fact even mathematics has not yet managed to find the algorithm, the most simple algorithm, namely, the one that would allow us, in the presence, certainly of other forms of knot than that of the Borromean knot, to find this something that would deliver to us for the knots in so far as they involve more than one ring of string – because for a single ring of string, being knotted to itself, it has, this algorithm. I could easily, I already did it, put on the board for you the figure of something which would have more or less the same aspect as the central figure, and which would nevertheless only be a single ring of string (I say ‘more or less’ because obviously it would not be the same) – for a single ring of string, it may know what is homomorphous; for several rings of string the algorithm has not been found. This is not nevertheless a reason to abandon a task which engages nothing other than this two which is what is most involved in this figure of love as I have just reminded you.

(143) Love – I hope that already you feel more at ease – love is thrilling (*passionant*). To say that, is to say simply the truth of experience, but to say it like that, seems to be nothing, but is all the same it is all the same to take a step. Because, for whoever has his ears a little open, it is not at all the same thing as to say that it is a passion. First of all there are many cases where love is not a passion. I would even say more. I doubt whether it is ever a passion. I doubt it, my God, because of my experience. Because of my experience – it does not stem only from mine – I mean that my experience in the analytic discourse gives me enough material – for what? For me to be able to allow myself in short to make what I defined the last time as knowledge, namely, to invent it. Which in no way protects you, especially if you are in analysis with me, from supposing that I have this knowledge, as something that I am not supposed to invent. But if

knowledge, even unconscious, is precisely what is invented to supply for something which is only perhaps the mystery of the two, one can see that there is all the same a step taken, in daring to say that if love is thrilling, it is not because it is passive. It is a saying which, as such, implies in itself a rule. Since to say that something is thrilling, well, is to speak about it, as a game, where one is only in short active starting from rules.

There are all the same some people who have noticed that for a long time. As regards everything that is said, there is someone called Wittgenstein, in particular, who distinguished himself at that.

So then, what I am putting forward, is that my formula there, 'love is thrilling', if I put it forward, it is as strictly true. Yes. Strictly true: it is all the same a long time since I since I emitted some reservations about this, namely, that strictly true is never more than half-true, that one can only ever half-say the truth. We will all the same have to manage, have to manage before the end of the year to formulate what that involves, and that I explain it for you later. It is the true – there is here all the same something that analytic experience can put us in contact with - yeah...the true has no other way of being able to be defined than that which in short brings it about that the body goes towards enjoyment, and that in this, what it is forced by, is nothing other than the principle, the principle by which sex is very specifically (144) linked to the death of the body. It is only among sexed beings that the body dies. And this forcing of reproduction, is indeed where the little bit of the true that we can state is of use.

I will even say more. Since it is death that is at stake – that is even why we never have more than the verisimilitude, since this death, the principle of the true, this death in the speaking being in so far as he speaks, is never anything more than a sham – death, truly, even though it confronts us, is not within reach of the true. Death pushes it.

Even though it confronts us, even though we have to deal with death, it only happens with the Beautiful, and there it keeps its rendezvous.

I already demonstrated that at a time, at the time when I was doing the *Ethics of psychoanalysis*, and why does that keep its rendezvous? Because things being in a certain rotating order, it keeps its rendezvous in so far as it glorifies the body. There the principle of enjoyment, which is forced, is the fact of death, and everyone knows...that it is 'in the name of the body' that all of that happens. This indeed is what I formerly illustrated by the tragedy of *Antigone* and which curiously passed into Christian myth – because I do not know whether you have clearly perceived why there took place, this whole story, this story of Christ who speaks of nothing but enjoyment: the lilies of the fields which neither weave nor sew – who traverses, for his part, the myth affirms, traverses death. All of that when all is said and done has no goal, what we see, in a word, being spread out over kilometres of canvas, has no end than the production of glorious bodies about which one may ask what they are going to do throughout eternity, even if they are put in a ring in a circle of a theatre, what indeed they are going to be able to in contemplating something or other. It is all the same curious that it is along this path, this path not of the true, but of the beautiful, that it is along this path that there was manifested for the first time the dogma of the divine Trinity. It must be said that it is a mystery! It is a mystery that... which has been approached, but, but not without a certain number of slippages. If in Aristotle's logic, the other day, I demonstrated for you the irruption of, of some theories or other of love – of some theories or other of love where there are very clearly distinguished love and enjoyment, this is already not bad, huh?

It is already not bad, but that only gives two, it does not at all give a trinity. But what is amusing to read in a treatise *On the Trinity* by a certain Richard de Saint Victor, the same unbelievable irruption, in fact, of the return of, of the return of love, of the Holy Spirit

(145) considered as 'a little friend'. It is something that I would ask you to go to see in the text, in fact – I will get it out for you one day, I did not bring it along here this morning because, because I have enough to say today, but it is worthwhile, it is worthwhile touching that. How is it that it is by the Beautiful, that something which is there...the very truth, and what is more, what is true in the Real, namely, what I am trying to, to articulate this morning, like that, limping along: it is all the same quite curious. Yes.

In what way are the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real something which at least have the pretension, in short of going a little further than...than this going round in a circle of enjoyment, of the body and of death. Is there here something from which we might reach, reach better than what only...that what only appears to us as a signal, as a trace, I have just spoken of the True, of the Beautiful, in a way which in a word makes them function for us as middles (*moyens*) – I must deal with what is involved, what is involved in the Good.

In this business of the Borromean knot can the Good be situated somewhere? I tell you right away, there is very little chance, huh: if the True and the Beautiful did not hold up, I do not see how the Good would do any better. The only virtue that...that I see coming out of this questioning – and I am indicating it to you here while, while there is time, because it will no longer be seen – the only virtue, if...if there is no sexual relationship, as I state, is shame (*pudeur*). There you are, this indeed is why I ...I think it was a stroke of genius by the person who put a certain *atterrita* on the cover of my *Télévision*. It is a...it forms part of a theme in which the central personage, the one who gives its meaning to the whole picture, is, is a demon, in a word, who...was perfectly well recognised by the Ancients as being the demon of shame. It is not particularly funny, that is even why that the person, the *atterrita*, opens her arms in a kind of panic. Yes.

So then, the non-dupes err, is perhaps the unashamed (*non-pudes*) err. Which as a result is promising, huh, it is promising because since on the other hand I think that, in fact, we should expect nothing, absolutely no progress from anything...I said that like that, to someone who spat out this hay, very kindly, because it is a person who spat out, truly, strictly only the hay that I had put into her mouth. It is no worse than anything else. It is...it is my hay, is it not...So (146) then, this does not all the same mean that there are not things that change. I am in the process of questioning love. And I begin to read things, like that, which are a little approach, simply, I do not know how it can happen...I will perhaps say more about it...if the result of an extension of the psychoanalytic discourse, since after all I am doing no less than considering it, but as a canker! I mean that it can explode a lot of things, if being well spoken is only governed by shame, well then, obligatorily, it shocks. It shocks but it does not violate shame...

So then let us try to question ourselves about what might happen if one made serious ground from the angle that...love is thrilling, but that this implies that one follows the rule of the game in it. Naturally, for that, it must be known. That is perhaps what is lacking: it is that people have always been here in the most profound ignorance, namely, that they play a game whose rules they do not know. So then if this knowledge must be invented in order for there to be knowledge, it is perhaps for that that analytic discourse may be of use.

Only if it is true that what you win on the one hand you lose on the other, there is surely something that is going to suffer. It is not hard to find: what is going to suffer is enjoyment. Because, in short, enjoyment is not lacking to this thing that is pursued blindly under the name of love! It is there by the shovelful! What is marvellous is that nothing is known about it: but it is probably what is proper to enjoyment, precisely, that nothing can ever be known about it...What is all the same surprising, is that, that there has not been a discourse on

enjoyment. People have spoken about whatever you want, about extended substance, about thinking substance, but the first idea which might come, namely, that if there is something by which the body can be defined, it is not life, since we only see life in bodies which are, after all, what? Things of the order of bacterias, of things which flourish like that, in fact, you quickly get three kilos when you start with a milligram...the fact is ...it is not easy to see what relationship there is between that and our body... But that the very definition of a body is that it is an enjoying substance, how is it that this has never yet been stated by anyone? It is the only thing outside a myth which is really accessible to experience. A body enjoys itself, it enjoys itself (147) well or badly, but it is clear that this enjoyment introduces it into a dialectic in which incontestably there must be other terms for it to hold up, namely, nothing less than this knot which I, which I am serving up to you in a sandwich.

That enjoyment may suffer when love becomes something a little civilised, namely, when people know that it is to be played as a game - in fact it is not sure that this will happen. It is not sure that it will happen, but it might all the same occur to you, as I might say. It might occur to you all the more in that there are little traces, like that. There is all the same a remark that I would really like to make to you, concerning the pertinence of this knot: it is that in love, what bodies tend towards - and there is something piquant that I am going to say to you afterwards - what bodies tend towards, is to knot themselves together. They do not manage to do so, naturally, because...you clearly see...what is extraordinary is that a body never manages to be knotted. There is not even a trace of a knot in the body! If there is something that struck me when I was doing anatomy it was indeed that: I was always expecting to see at least, like that, in a corner, an artery, or a nerve, which...which hoopla, would do that...Nothing! I never saw anything like it, and that is even why anatomy, I should tell you thrilled me (*m'a passioné*) for two years. That really pisses off people who do their medicine as forced labour, like that. Not me.

Naturally, I did not notice right away, that that was why it thrilled me, I noticed it afterwards; you never know until afterwards. And it is absolutely certain that what I was looking for in dissecting, was to find a knot. Yeah.

Which is why this Borromean knot rejoins all the same the why of the fact that, that love, in fact, is not designed to be tackled by the Imaginary. Because the simple fact that when it is working out badly, is that not so, for want of knowing the rule of the game, it articulates the knots of love, huh... It is funny all the same that this remains as a metaphor, that it does not illuminate things, that it does not give the idea that, on the side of this thing whose strange consistency I have, I hope, like that, made you sense a little, and the fact that... that it is surprising in fact that the Real, when all is said and done, is only that, a matter of knots; in short all the rest can be dreamt about. God knows, the dream in fact has a place in the activity of the speaking being.

I am letting myself go a little bit, like that, like that by putting in parentheses – you will pardon me, because you usually pardon me – but it is all the same, it is all the same unbelievable that the power of the dream should have gone so far as to make a desire out of a corporal function, sleep. No one has yet, has ever highlighted that something which is a rhythm – well, manifestly, because it exists among many other beings than speaking beings - the speaking being manages to make into a desire. He manages to pursue his dream as such, and because of that, to desire not to wake up. Naturally there is a moment where it lets go. But that Freud should have been able to go that far is something whose autonomy, originality, no one has really highlighted. Good.

So let us come back to our metaphorical knots. Do you not sense that what I am trying to do, by having recourse to them, is to do something which would not involve any supposition. Because people have spend

their time positing, but never being able to posit except by supposing. Namely, that people posited the body – that was required – and people supposed the soul in it. It would be all the same necessary - this is a thing, there, like that, that I brewed up, because of the level I was at in this *Télévision*, huh, to speak about the soul and the unconscious...the unconscious, might be something quite different to a ‘supposed’, since knowledge (if what I advanced about it the last time is true), it is not at all required, it is not at all required to suppose it: it is a knowledge in the course of construction.

If it happened, if it happened that love were to become a game whose...whose rules one knew, this would perhaps, have many disadvantages with regard to enjoyment. But this would reject it, as I might say, towards its conjoined term. And if this conjoined term is indeed what I am putting forward about the Real, for which, as you see, I am satisfied with this slender little support of the number (I did not say the figure (*chiffre*)), of the number three. If love, becoming a game of which one knows the rules, were to be found one day, since that its function, at the end of the fact that it is one of the One of these threes – if it functioned to conjoin the enjoyment of the Real with the Real of enjoyment, would that not be something to make the game worthwhile?

The enjoyment of the Real has a meaning, huh. If there is somewhere an enjoyment of the Real as such, and if the Real is what I am saying, namely, to begin with the number three – and you know that it is not to the three that I hold huh: adding 1416 to it would still give the same (149) number, huh, for what I use it for, and you could also write 2718, it is a particular Napierian logarithm, that plays the same role – the only people who enjoy this Real, are the mathematicians. So then it would be necessary for the mathematicians to pass under the yoke of the game of love, that they should state something about it to us, that they should do a little more work on the Borromean knot – because I should admit to you, in fact, I am really embarrassed, more than you

can believe; I spend my days making Borromean knots, while it is...there, like that, I knit.

Only there you are, the enjoyment of the Real does not work without the Real of enjoyment. Because for one to be knotted to the other, the other must be knotted to the one. And the Real of enjoyment, is stated. But what meaning can be given to this term: the Real of enjoyment?

This is where I am leaving you for today, with a question mark.

Seminar 10: Tuesday 19 March 1974

Whatever I may say – I say ‘I’, in quotes, because I sup-pose myself in this saying (*ce dire*), of which nevertheless there is the fact that it is in my voice – whatever I may say is going to give rise to two aspects: a good and a bad. This is precisely because people attribute it to me wanting the Imaginary to be excrement, muck, a bad thing, and that what is supposed to be good is the Symbolic. Here I am again then formulating an ethics. It is the misunderstanding of this that I want to dissipate because this year I am taking you forward from this structure of the knot, in which I put the emphasis on the following: that it is from the three that the Real is introduced into it.

All of this does not stop this knot itself being singular, if what I put forward the last time is true (inform yourselves among mathematicians), namely, that this so simple knot, the algorithm of

this knot of three, namely, what would allow there to be brought to it what the Symbolic culminates in, namely, the demonstration, the articulation in terms of truth, we are reduced to affirming our failure with regard to this algorithm, our failure to establish it, to handle it. Hence the result that at least until further notice, these knots – these knots whose writing I was able to produce, I did it for you the last time, in more than one form – you are reduced, on the basis of this writing, to imagine it in space. It has even got to the point that if what I can make in the simplest form, these projected knots as I am going to show you, stem from the fact that here what I am drawing for you, is something that you can imagine. Namely, how this third buckle, by (152) establishing itself from a trajectory [that of?] these two independent knots, as you see, namely, imagine from these two independent knots, made by this triple knot, that I call the Borromean knot, this thing which thus represented can be imagined by you in space, you can see, just as well as any other way in which I might have written this knot – you can note that it also is a writing: namely, that by effacing one, I can calculate that the two others are free, I mean any one whatsoever. That what constitutes the Imaginary, in the way in which you can sense here that in the space they are held, that this itself is writing, because it is enough for you to efface one of them to be able to spot that the two others are free, on the simple condition that they cut one another in a particular way which for its part is nameable from the following: namely, that the above and the below form two couples, two matching couples from the fact that the two above follow one another, and that the two beneath are not on the same line. I mean that they succeed one another with respect to the two above, that there is a trick (*tour*) which means that, to demonstrate that two of these circles are free, it is enough that there should be two above which follow one another, then two below which come afterwards – I said: on the same line – I probably made an error earlier in saying that they are not on the same line. That was a slip.

The enigma of writing, of writing *qua* flattened out, is there: it is that moreover, by tracing out what is essentially of the order of the imaginable, namely, this projection into space, it is still a writing that I (153) am producing, namely, what can be stated, stated from the simplest algorithm here, namely, a succession.

This squeezing, namely, that by imagining it, you rediscover the idea of the norm, that the norm is imaginable once there is the support of an image, and that here we are always led to privilege one of them, an imagination of what makes a good shape; a curious relapse, why is the shape described as ‘good’? Because after all why should it not have been called simply what it is, namely, beautiful? We slip again, with the ancient *kalos kagathos* into this ambiguity, which for its part, proves at this date, at the date when that was how the Greeks expressed themselves, and that when all is said and done, we still find the title of nobility, the antiquity of the family, which, as you know, can always be found by the genealogist, for any imbecile whatsoever and also then for any imbecility whatsoever.

I do not see why I would prevent myself from imagining anything whatsoever, if this imagining is the right one, and what I am putting forward, is that the right one can only be certified by being able to be demonstrated, be demonstrated in the Symbolic, which means entitling it Symbolic, by a certain dislocation of *lalangue*, in so far as it gives access to what? To the unconscious.

The Imaginary remains nonetheless what it is, namely, precious (*d'or*), and this is to be understood as, it sleeps (*il dort*). It sleeps, as I might say, *au naturel*. This in the measure that I do not especially awaken it, on the point of previous ethics. Too careful as I am of this, of this ethics, specifically, from which I would like to break, that precisely of the Good. But how can this be done if to wake up, is, on this occasion, to fall asleep again, if in the Imaginary, there is something that requires the subject to sleep?

Dreaming (*rêver*) does not simply have, in *lalangue*, the *lalangue* that I make use of, this astonishing property of structuring the awakening (*réveil*). It also structures the revolution, and the revolution, if we understand it carefully, is stronger than the dream. Sometimes, it is falling asleep again, but in a cataleptic way. I have to manage to promote, to make there enter for you into your cogitations the fact that the Imaginary is the prevalence given to a need of the body, which is to sleep. It is not that the body, the body of the speaking being, needs more sleep than other animals - without our still being able to know moreover how to give a sign of it - than other animals, who, for their (154) part, function with sleep. The function of sleep, of hypnosis, in the speaking being, only takes on this prevalence of which I spoke to identify it to the Imaginary itself, only takes on this prevalence from the effects of this nodality, of this nodality which only knots, only knots the Symbolic to the Imaginary – but in fact you could put here any other couple of the three – only knots them from the agency, the agency of the three in so far as I make it that of the Real.

If then I wake you up to that whose formula all the same our ancient *kalos kagathos* allows us to date in Aristotle's Sovereign Good; when I did the *Ethics of psychoanalysis*, it was to the *Nicomachean Ethics* that I referred, referred to as a starting point. But I was careful on this point not to wake up, because if I wake people up to the manifest Imaginary of this Sovereign Good, what are they not going to

imagine? Not that there is no Good, which would take them a little bit too far for their own well-being, but that there is no sovereign, as a result of which, the effective sovereign, the one who knows how to use the knot, finds his satisfaction because it is by this, because it is by this that sleep makes itself desired by those, enough by those, for it to encounter among them the complicity of the dream, namely, the desire that it will continue to sleep well. It is appropriate then that every statement should take care precisely in that it *rêve*-olutionises by maintaining the reign of what he wakes up to.

A little parenthesis, since moreover this is not easy to comprehend as a motive of this discourse in which I find myself caught up, due to the fact of being its subject by my experience, the experience described as analytic.

Naturally, there are those who, in order that this experience should not put them up against it, do not expose themselves to it as such, but have all the same a suspicion of something that makes them itch. Those simply afflicted by the itch have not much imagination. When they smell something about the consequences of my discourse, they dig up some biographical feature, for example, the fact that I frequented the Surrealists and that my discourse bears the trace of it. It is all the same curious that I never collaborated with these aforesaid Surrealists. If I had said what I was thinking, namely, that with language, I mean, by making use of it, what they demolished, was the Imaginary, what would have happened! I would perhaps have woken them up. Woken them up with a start to the fact that I would have been found to have well and truly said, the fact is that between the one and the other of the (155) Imaginary and the Symbolic whose existence precisely they did not suspect, they re-established order.

Can I get you to understand that the fate of the speaking being, is that he cannot say, that he cannot even say: 'I slept well', namely, a deep sleep, 'I slept well between this and that time', for the simple reason that he knows nothing about it, his dreams framing this deep sleep

having consisted in the desire to sleep. It is only on the outside, namely, when he is submitted to the observation of an electroencephalogram, for example, that it can be said, that effectively between such and such a time, the sleep was deep, namely, not inhabited by dreams, these dreams that I say are the tissue of the Imaginary, that they are the tissue of the Imaginary in so far as it is by being caught up in the knot, this Real, that his need, his principal need becomes this elective function: the function of sleeping.

Is this passage of the Imaginary through the sieve of the Symbolic enough to give, to state the first, that of the Imaginary, the stamp of 'Good', fit to serve. To serve what? I do not believe I am forcing things in asking this question, because it must indeed be said, no one has ever approached this question without giving rise from some angle to an idea of sovereignty, namely, of subordination. It is true that the Good can only be called sovereign. Do you not sense that here is where there is exposed something like an infirmity – I am appealing to those who, have a wide awake Imaginary, on condition that this does not support among them any hope, because it is altogether understood that I am not saying, for my part, anything of the kind, but that I am not saying the contrary either: namely, that the Good is sovereign. So that in our day my saying operates in the aforesaid Imaginary, certainly, but it is not how it attacks it. It simply says that the Imaginary, is that by which the body ceases to say anything worthwhile by being written differently than: 'I slept from such a time to such a time.'

All this changes nothing in the fact that it makes us itch. The truth makes us itch, even those - without believing in it too much – that I call the rabblement, because, when all is said and done, it is enough for the truth to itch for it to touch the true from some angle. Say anything at all, it will always touch the true. If it does not touch yours, why would it not touch mine? Here is the principle of the analytic discourse, and that is why I said somewhere – and to someone

(156) who, faith, produced a very nice little book on transference, someone called Michel Neyraut – I told him that by beginning as he did by what he called ‘counter-transference’, if by this he means the way in which the truth touches the analyst himself, he is surely on the right path, since after all, this is where the true takes on its primary importance, and that, as I have pointed out for a long time, there is only one transference, that of the analyst, since after all he is the subject supposed to knowledge. He should clearly know what to stick to in this regard, in his relationship to knowledge, the point to which he is ruled by the unconscious structure that separates him, from this knowledge, which separates him from it even though he knows something about it, and I underline, as much by the test that he made of it in his own analysis as by what my saying can convey to him about it.

Does this mean, does this mean that transference is the entry of the truth? It is the entry of something which is the truth, but the truth of which precisely transference is the discovery, the truth of love.

This is worth noting. The knowledge of the unconscious, the knowledge of the unconscious was revealed, was constructed, this indeed is the value of this little book, it is its only value moreover, but this makes it worth buying, the truth of the unconscious, namely, the revelation of the unconscious as knowledge, this revelation of the unconscious was made in such a way that the truth of love, namely, the transference, only irrupted into it. It came secondarily. And people have never clearly known how to bring it back in, except in the form of misunderstanding, of the unexpected thing, the thing we do not know what to do with, except to say that it must be reduced, indeed even liquidated. This remark just by itself justifies a little book knowing how to highlight it, because moreover one must be penetrated by the fact that from experience, from analytic experience, the transference is what it expels, it is what it cannot tolerate without getting very bad stomach pains from it.

If love passes here along this narrow defile of what causes it, and by that fact reveals what is involved in its veritable nature, here there is, is there not here something which makes it worthwhile repeating the question about it? Because it is difficult not to admit that love holds a place, even if up to now we have been reduced, as they say, to paying our respects to it. We discharge our obligations with regard to love, we pay our contribution to it, anyway, we try by every means, to allow it to distance itself, to hold itself satisfied.

How then tackle it? I promised at Rome, to give a lecture some day or other on love and logic. It was indeed in preparing it that I became (157) aware of the enormity, in short, of what my discourse supports. For it appeared to me that there was almost nothing in the past to account for it in the slightest way. That is how I notice that when all is said and done, it is not for nothing that Freud, in what I quoted the last time, namely, what is entitled the *psychology* that is described precisely as being that of *the group* and the *analysis of the ego*, while signalling that there he contrasts (*confronte*) identification and love, and this without the slightest success, to try to make it acceptable that love participates in any way whatsoever in identification.

Simply, it is indicated there that love is concerned with what I isolate under the title of the Name of the Father. It is quite strange. The name of the father to which I made the ironic allusion that you know earlier, namely, that it is supposed to be related to the antiquity of the family, what does that mean? On this what does Oedipus, the aforesaid Oedipus teach us?

Well then, I do not think that this can be tackled head on. That is why, in what I proposed to say to you today, this no doubt in terms of an experience that had tired me out, I would like to show you how this name is minted, this name, this name that, that in few cases, we do not see in the least repressed. It is not enough to bear this name, for the one in whom the Other is incarnated, the Other as such, the Other with a capital O, the one I am saying, by whom the Other is incarnated, is

only incarnated moreover, incarnates the voice, namely, the mother. The mother speaks, the mother through whom the word is transmitted, the mother, it must be clearly said, is reduced, to expressing this name by a no, precisely, the no the father says, which introduces us to the foundation of negation – is it the same negation which creates a circle in a world, which by defining some essence, an essence of a universal nature, in other words what is supported by the all – precisely rejects, rejects what? – outside the all, led by this fact to the fiction of a complement to the all, and makes all men respond: by this fact [...] what is non-man, do you not feel that there is a gap from this non-logic to the nay-saying (*dire-non*)? To the propositional nay-saying, I would say, in order to support it. Namely, what I make function, in my schemas of sexual identification, namely, that not all men can acknowledge themselves in their essence, namely in their phallic enjoyment, to call it by its name, that not all men manage to ground themselves on this exception of something, the father, in so far as propositionally, he says no to this essence. The defile, the defile of (158) the signifier through which there passes this exercise of this something which is love, is very specifically this name of the father, this name of the father which is only no at the level of saying, and which is cashed in on by the voice of the mother in the nay-saying of a certain number of interdictions. This in the case, the fortunate case, the one in which the mother is willing indeed to make some nods of her little head.

There is something whose incidence I would like to designate. Because it is an angle on the moment that we are living through in history. There is a history, even though it is not inevitably the one that we believed. What we are living through is very precisely the following: that curiously, the loss, the loss of what might be supported by the dimension of love, if it is indeed the one not that I am saying, I cannot say it, I cannot say it, for this name of the father, there is substituted a function which is none other than that of naming-to (*nommer-à*). To be named to something is what is highlighted in an

order which is effectively being substituted for the name of the father. Except for the fact that here, the mother all by herself is generally enough to designate its project, to trace it out, to indicate its path.

If I defined the desire of man as being the desire of the Other, it is indeed here that this is designated in experience. And even in the cases where, like that, by chance, in fact, it happens that by an accident she is no longer there, it is all the same she, she, her desire, that designates to her kid this project that is expressed by the naming-to. To be named-to something, is what, for us, at this point of history we are at, is found to be preferred – I mean effectively preferred, to go before – to what is involved in the name of the father.

It is quite strange that here, the social should take on the prevalence of a knot, and which literally makes up the fabric of so many existences, the fact is that it holds this power of naming-to to the point that after all, there is restored an order, an order which is an iron one. What is this trace, this trace designated, as return of the name of the father in the Real, in so far precisely as the name of the father is *verworfen*, foreclosed, rejected, and in this capacity it designates whether this foreclosure which I said is the principle of madness itself, is this naming-to not, is this naming-to not the sign of a catastrophic degeneration?

To explain it, I must give its full meaning to what I designated by the term that I write as ‘ek-sistence’. If something ek-sists with respect to something, it is very precisely because of not being coupled to it, of (159) being thirded (*troisé*), if you will allow me this neologism. The form of the knot, since moreover the knot is nothing other than this form, namely, imaginable, is it not here that the imaginable is designated as not being able to be thought? Thought, namely, put in order, rooted not simply in the impossible, but in the impossible in so far as it is demonstrated as such; nothing is demonstrated by this knot, but simply shown. To show what is meant by ek-sistence, of a ring of string to make myself understood, a ring of string in so far as it is only

on it that there reposes the knot of what otherwise remains mad.
Explanation having no grip on the inexplicable.

Is it not here that we ought to search in what possesses us, possesses us as subjects, which is nothing other than a desire, and what is more the desire of the Other, a desire by which we are alienated from the start, is it not here that there ought to be brought to bear - namely, in this phenomenon, this apparition to our experience, that as subjects, it is not simply not having any essence, except to be squeezed, *squeezés* in a certain knot, but moreover as subject, supposed subject of what squeezes this knot – as subject it is not simply essence that we lack, namely, being, it is besides that there ek-sists for us everything that constitutes a knot. But to say that all of this ek-sists us does not mean for all that that we exist in it in any way. It is in the knot itself that there resides everything that for us is only when all is said and done pathetic, which Kant rejected as if anticipating our ethics, namely, by the fact that nothing of what we suffer can in any way direct us towards our good. This indeed is something that must be understood some way or other as a prodrome, as a prodrome I dare say, and that is why I once wrote *Kant with Sade*, as a prodrome of what effectively constitutes our passion, namely, that we no longer have any kind, any kind of idea of what might trace out for us the path of the Good.

At the moment that that path peters out, at the moment when Kant made the gesture of this slender recourse, of this tiny link with what Aristotle had established as the order of the world, what are the arguments that he puts forward? To make the dimension of duty sensed, what does he put forward? What he puts forward is supposedly that a lover close to obtaining success in his enjoyment would look twice at it if, in front of the hall door, a gibbet was already erected from which he was going to be hanged; and to oppose to this (160) that of course no one would ever risk such a thing - while it is on the contrary quite obvious that anyone at all is capable of doing it, simply if he wants to. So then what does he oppose to that? It is that

– as if this were a sign of superiority – it is that summoned by the tyrant to defame another subject, anyone would look twice at it before bearing false witness.

To which in my text, *Kant with Sade* – because I wrote very good things, things that no one understood anything about, of course, but that is simply because they are deaf – to which I opposed: but what if to put into the tyrant's hand the one the tyrant wants to get at, not a false but a true testimony sufficed! Which is enough of course to demolish all the systems because the truth, the truth is always for the tyrant. It is always true that one cannot tolerate the tyrant, and as a consequence, the tyrant always has reasons to get at the person he wants. What he needs is a semblance of truth. The angle, the angle from which Kant here makes the split, this angle is not the right one. Hence there results the formula which is separated out simply from these two terms between which Kant brings about the re-entry of practical reason, namely, moral duty, which is that the essence, the essence of what is at stake in the Good, is that the body forces its enjoyment, namely, curbs it and this simply in the name of death, of one's own death or the death of someone else, on this occasion, the one that he will imagine sparing. But once this formula is circumscribed, does not this reduce the Good to its correct import, is it not the case that outside these terms, these terms of which there are made the three, the three of the Real, in so far as the Real itself is three, namely, enjoyment, the body, death, in so far as they are knotted, as they are knotted only, of course, by this unverifiable impasse of sex, it is there indeed that there is conveyed the import (*la porte*) of this newly arrived discourse as regards which it is not for nothing that something should have necessitated it, the analytic discourse whose relay you will allow me to take up again on the 9th May, the 9th May the second Tuesday and not after that the third, but the fourth, which will not be then the one after Easter, the 16th April but that of the 23rd

The 9th April, not May, April!

Seminar 11: Tuesday 9 April 1974

Good, today...- what's happening? – today for reasons, like that, of personal choice, I am going to start from a question, a question of course that I ask myself, believing at least that the answer is there – that's an old refrain, as you know – and this question is: what, what has Lacan here present, invented? You know that I put forward this word 'invented', I made it recognised by you, as I might say, apparently at least, by linking it to what necessitates it, namely, knowledge. Knowledge is invented, I said, which the history of science seems to me to testify to rather well. So then, what did I for my part, invent? This does not at all mean that, that I form part of the history of science, since my starting point is different, being that of analytic experience.

What? I will answer, because it is understood that I already have the answer – I will answer, like that, to get things going: the little **o**-object. It is obvious that I cannot add, the little **o**-object, for example. It, it can be touched immediately. It is not among others that I invented the **o**-object, among other things, as some people

imagine. Because the \mathbf{o} -object is solidary, is solidary at least at the (162) start, with the graph. You know perhaps what it is, I am not even sure, but anyway it is something which has a shape like that, with two things that go across, there, and then in addition, that: I say that, because at the point that we are at it is necessary. From the graph, then, of which it is a determination and specifically at the point at which the question is asked: what is desire, if desire is the desire of the Other? Anyway, that is where it emerged. That does not mean of course, that it is not elsewhere. It is also elsewhere, it is also in the schema called the *schema L* and then it is also in the quadripodes of the discourses to which I believed I should give a place, in fact, some years ago. And then, who knows, perhaps there is a question of it being put at the place of the x in these already celebrated quantifying formulae that today I will call like that because when I woke up this morning I wrote some notes, that I will call of sexuation. And while I was at it, in taking these notes, the following came to me, something which, of which it is curious anyway that I never hear echoes, is that not so. I obviously, even, even in Rome where I made a little trip, I heard tell of these quantifying formulae, which proves already rather widely diffused. And I was asked questions, namely, whether these quantifying formulae, because there are four of them, might well be situated somewhere in a way that, that would correspond with the formulae of the four discourses. This is...this is not necessarily unfruitful, because what I am evoking, anyway, is that the small \mathbf{o} comes at the place of the x in the formulae that I call 'quantifying formulae of sexuation'. Do I need to write them again, it would surely not be useless. I recall that it is those marked by \square on the left, and that are continued by four other formulae which are like that in a square, good.

Something might have come back to me about it if, of course, it did not require a little bit of trouble; but if there is something that I would like to point out to you, it is that these formulae described as quantifiers of sexuation could be expressed differently, and this would (163) perhaps allow progress to be made. I am going to tell you what is implied by it. It could be put like this: ‘the sexed being is only authorised by him/herself’. It is in this sense that, that there is a choice, I mean that what one limits oneself to, in short, to classify them as male or female, to be officially registered, in short, this, this does not prevent there being a choice. This is something, of course, that everyone knows. He is only authorised by himself – and I would add: ‘and by some others’.

What is the status of these others, on this occasion, if not that it is somewhere, I am not saying in the locus of the Other, it is somewhere that must be clearly situated, known, where my quantifying formulae of sexuation are written. Because I would even say that I am going rather far: if I had not written them, would it be just as true that the sexed being is only authorised by himself?

This appears difficult to dispute, given that people had not waited for me to write these formulae, these quantifying formulae of sexuation in order for there to be, in short, a serious handful of people who are labelled ... as is done, in short, who are labelled with homosexuality. Neither on one side nor on the other. It would then be undeniably true, except for the fact that, a curious thing, in fact, it seems, that even though this has been widespread from all time, that people have spent some time precisely in labelling with these terms that, as chance would have it are wrong, by this term of ‘homosexual’, for example. It is curious that, that I can say they are wrong. In fact, it is altogether wrong as a nomination. Well before, in short, people did not have these terms, in short, this was called, for example - anyway for one side - and the fact that they were distinguished in a serious fashion

even to the extent of giving them a different place on the geographical map is already sufficiently indicative. These were called, for one side, sodomites: *Sumus enim sodomitae*, wrote a prince who, I believe, was himself from the Condé family: *Sumus enim sodomitae igne tantum perituri*. He said that to reassure his companions when they were crossing a river: nothing can happen to us, we are not going to be drowned since we are *igne tantum perituri*, we must perish only in fire, so we are safe. Good.

In the meantime, might it not have come into someone's head in my School that this balances my saying that the analyst is only authorised by himself? That does not mean for all that that he is all alone in (164) deciding it, as I have just pointed out to you, pointed out to you as regards what is involved in the sexed being. I will even say more, indeed, what I wrote in these formulae implies at least that, to make a man, there must at least be written somewhere the quantifying formula that I have just written there, and that there exists – it is a writing – that there exists, this x which says that it is not true, that it is not true, as a foundation for an exception (*comme fondement d'exception*), that it is not true that namely, that what supports in writing the propositional function in which we can write what is involved in this choice of the sexed being, that it is not true that it holds up, that it always holds up, that even the condition for the choice to be made in a positive way, namely, that there should be something of the man, is that castration should be somewhere.

I am saying then that the analyst is authorised only by himself, which is something, in a word, so crushing, in a word, to think about, that if the analyst is something in the mode of...being named-to, to analysis, as I might say, to analysis in this form which means, well, an associate member, a titular member, some member or Other; everything that I tried like that with which I tried to make people laugh in a little article by marking the stages of what I called the Sufficiencies, the little Slippers, indeed the Blessed, to be named Blessed, is this not

something that in itself might make you laugh a little? This made people laugh, but, but not very much, because at that time I wrote that, it only interested specialists, who for their part, scarcely laughed, of course, because they were in the system.

But this would imply all the same that this formula that I produced in an altogether pivotal *Proposal*, that this formula should receive the few complements, the few complements implied by the fact that if, assuredly one cannot be named to psychoanalysis, that does not mean that just anyone can enter into it like a rhinoceros into a china shop, namely, without taking account of the following. Which is that it must indeed be inscribed, that there must be inscribed what I expect from it being inscribed, because it is not like when I invent, like when I invent what presides over the choice of the sexed being. There, I cannot invent, I cannot invent for a reason that, that a group, that a group is Real. And even if it is a Real that I cannot invent because of this fact that it is a Real that has newly emerged. Because as long as (165) there was not this analytic discourse, there was nothing of the psychoanalyst (*du psychanalyste*). This is why I announced that there is something of the psychoanalyst, of which for example, I, I was the testimony, but that does not mean for all that that there is a psychoanalyst. It is a properly hysterical perspective to say that there is at least one, for example; I am not at all on this slope, not being by nature in the position of the hysteric. I am not Socrates, for example. Where I situate myself in fact, we will eventually see, well, why not, but for today I do not need to say any more about it.

So there are things, there are things at the level of what emerges in terms of Real, in the form of a different functioning, of what? Of what is involved when all is said and done about letters, because letters, what is at stake is letters, this is what I wanted to put forward in my quadripodes. There can be a certain way in which a certain bond is established in a group, there can be something new and which only consists in a certain redistribution of letters. That I can invent.

But the way of pursuing this new arrangement of letters in order to pinpoint in it a discourse, pre-supposes, pre-supposes a sequence, precisely, and why not, as I was asked, asked in Rome, when I was asked the question about what was the link between the four quantifying formulae of sexuation, what was their link with the formula – this is what was at stake – the formula of analytic discourse as I thought I should put it forward at first. To connect them up, this would be to give this development which would be made in a school, in mine, why not, with a little bit of luck, that in a school there would be articulated this function from which the choice of the analyst, the choice of being so, can only depend. Because while only being authorised by himself, he cannot but be authorised also by others. I am reducing myself to this minimum because, precisely, I am waiting for something to be invented, to be invented in the group without slipping into the old rut, the one from which it results that by reason of old habits, against which after all we are so little protected that these are the very ones that form the basis of the discourse described as university, that one is named-to, to a title.

This pushes us, pushes us because I chose to be pushed there – but pushes you at the same time since you listen to me – to try to specify the link there is between the invention of knowledge and what is (166) written. It is quite clear that there is a link. It is a matter, of specifying this link. In other words, to notice, to ask the question about what one can put one's finger on: where is there situated, where is writing situated? This indeed is what I have been trying to give you an indication of for a long time, by substituting, which I did very early, in sub-slipping as I might say, into the statement that I attempted to give about ...the *Function and field of speech and language*. I did not all the same entitle a certain article, like that, a pivotal writing, I did not entitle it *The agency of the signifier in the unconscious*, I entitiled it *The agency of the letter* and it is around letters, as you remember perhaps a bit, in short, like that, in the mist,

that S, S₁, S₂, etc. over s, over small s. Anyway, it is all that, all this implying a certain relation that I pinpointed as being that of metaphor, another one of metonymy, it is around that that I made turn a certain number of proposals that can be considered as a forcing, I mean as giving a certain agency not of the letter, but of linguistics. But I would point out to you that linguistics does not proceed any differently than the other sciences, namely, that it only proceeds from the agency of the letter, hence the agency of linguistics, passing by the letter, in short, to propose some remarks to those who practice analysis.

This does not prevent of course, because I believe that with time, well, is that not so, there are those Surrealists, is that not so, that I am pestered with. Anyway, when people want to write articles about me, these Surrealists, I knew one who still survived at that time, Tristan Tzara. I gave the *Agency of the letter* to him and of course, it meant nothing to him. Why? Because this indeed shows what I pointed out to you – you perhaps heard it – at my last seminar. What I pointed out to you, namely, that when all is said and done, with all this row, is that not so, they did not really know what they were at.

But that, that stemmed from the fact that, in short, they were poets, and as Plato pointed out a long time ago, it is not at all inevitable, it is even preferable that the poet does not know what he is doing. This is even, this is even what gives, this is what gives to what he does its primordial value. And before which one can truly, one can truly only bow one's head. I mean that if one can make a certain analogy, anyway a certain homology, let us say – but with for the word homo (167) the approximate meaning that I underlined for you earlier – a certain homology between, between what one has in terms of works, works of art, and what we pick up in analytic experience.

Interpreting art is something that Freud always ruled out, always rejected. What is called, what is called the psychoanalysis of art, well,

is still more to be ruled out than the famous psychology of art which is a delusional notion. With art, we have to learn a lesson (*prendre de la graine*). Learn a lesson, learn a lesson for something else, namely,, for us, to make of it this third which is not yet classified, to make of it this something which, which leans on science on the one hand, which learns a lesson from art on the other. And I will even go further, it can only be done in the expectation of having at the end to fail to find the answer.

What analytic experience testifies for us, is that we are dealing, I would say with untameable truths, with untameable truths that we...that we nevertheless have to bear witness to, as such. Are these the only ones that can allow us to define how, in science, what is involved in knowledge, in unconscious knowledge, how, in science, this may constitute what I will call an edge, namely, that by which science itself, as such, is, for want of a better word, I will say structured. If what I am putting forward to you corresponds to something, I mean that you waited long enough on me before I stated that there was no sexual relationship, that is what this means.

There again I underline that this does not go so far as to say that the little Real that we know, which is reduced to number, that the little Real that we know, if it is so little, this stems from the famous hole, to the fact that in the centre there is this *topos*, that one can only plug; that one can only plug with what? With the Imaginary. But that does not mean for all that that the little **o**-object, belongs to the Imaginary. It is a fact that it can be imagined, it can be imagined in whatever way one can, namely, with what is sucked, with what is shitted, with what constitutes the look, what tames the look, and then, and then the voice. It is I who have added to the list the two last in number, in any case certainly the last one in so far as it is imagined.

But the fact that it is imagined removes nothing from the import of the little **o**-object as *topos*, I mean, as what is *squeezed* to give an image

of it. I have done nothing more to give an image of it which has only one advantage, which is that it is a written image, the one that I gave (168) in the Borromean knot. It is here that the little **o**-object is knotted. There are therefore two faces, here, to the little **o**-object, a face that is as Real as possible, simply by the fact that it is written. You see what I am trying to do, there, I am trying to situate writing for you, and it goes a long way to put it forward, as this edge of the Real, situated on this edge.

In order, because I must, in fact give you different fodder than this abstraction, as you would say, because precisely what is tangible here, is that this is not an abstraction. It is as hard as iron. It is not because a thing is not succulent that it is abstract. It is obviously amusing that I experience here the need, for you, the desire of man being the desire of the Other, that I experience here the need for you to have a little funny interlude, to point out to you that it is amusing, in fact, a thing, a little anecdotal sample that I am going to give you, is that not so. It is rather curious, for example, that knowledge, in so far as it is invented, happens like that, as I am going to tell you. When Galileo noticed, in short, some of his inventions, in fact, which completely upset knowledge about the celestial Real, he took care to note it, in the following form. He sent to some people a certain number of Latin couplets, no more, two lines, in which, through which he could in a way fix the date, and by taking a certain number of letters from three to three, for example, demonstrate that he had invented the thing that was impossible to swallow at his time, that he had already invented at such a date. I mean that it was indisputably inscribed by the very way in which he had made these couplets, whose content moreover does not matter, given that of course, one can in fact write anything whatsoever in this style, this does not matter to anyone, all that interests someone, when one receives a letter from a personage like Galileo, it is not what he wanted to say, it is that one has an autograph. And the way under what, in a way, we will call the apparent stupidity of these two lines, there was inscribed, in short, the date, the date of a

particular thing, the thing that was at stake, namely, about the sky and the principle of the journeyings that it offers to our sight, is this not something that illustrates in a way that is certainly only amusing, but you have many other illustrations of it, since as I did it, I insisted with leaden feet, it is obvious that if logic is what I am saying, the science of the Real, and not something else, if precisely what is proper to logic, and *qua* science of the Real, is precisely to make of the truth (169) only an empty value, namely, exactly nothing at all, something about which you simply write that non-T is F, namely, that it is false, namely, that it is a way of treating the truth that has no kind of relationship with what we commonly call truth. This science of the Real, logic, cleared its way, could only clear its way from the moment when people had been able to sufficiently empty words of their meaning to substitute letters purely and simply for them. The letter is in a way inherent to this passage to the Real. Here it is amusing to be able to say that the writing was there to prove, to prove what, to prove the date of the invention. But in proving the date of the invention, it proves also the invention itself, the invention, is the written, and what we require in a mathematical logic, is very precisely the fact that nothing in the demonstration reposes on anything but a certain way of imposing on oneself a combinatorial perfectly determined by an interplay of letters.

Here I ask the question: is the anagram then, since this is what is at stake in the verses of Galileo, the anagram about which our dear Saussure racked his brains in private, is the anagram not simply here to prove that this is the nature of writing, even when people have not yet the idea of there being anything to prove. Is the anagram at the level that Saussure questioned himself about it, namely, at the level where in verses described as Saturnian, one can rediscover precisely the number of letters required to designate a god without there being anything in the heavens to help us to know whether it was the intention of the poet, to have riddled what he had to write, since the

writing, already functioned, to have riddled it with a certain number of letters that ground the name of a god.

Can we not sense here that even when it is not supported by anything, by nothing to which we can bear witness, we must admit that it is the writing that supports it, that we have here, that we have here a sort of entity of the written. How will we express entity (*entité*), are we going to push it towards the side of being or towards the side of a particular being (*l'étant*), is it *ousia* or is it *on*? I think it would be better to abandon this direction.

And I am proposing something to you which is of interest because it goes in the same direction as what I have previously traced out; as was remarked, like that, by an old sage, at the time when people knew all the same already how to write what was required by language, is that not so, a road that ascends is the same as the one that descends, so (170) then, I could propose to you as a formula of writing, the knowledge supposed subject (*le savoir supposé sujet*). That there is something which attests that such a formula may have its function, it is in any case the best that I can find today to situate for you the function of writing, for this reason and that...to what our question about the entity of writing *ousia* or *on*, introduced us to, to situate the fact that it is defined above all by a certain function, by the place of the edge (*bord*).

There you are. It is quite evident is it not, that as – I underlined it like that, incidentally because I spend my time having it out with philosophers – it is quite evident that it is my kind of materialism. Yeah. I scarcely say it, I scarcely say it because I don't give a damn about materialism. This certain materialism, like that, which is always there, which consists in kissing the ass of matter in the name of the fact that it is supposed to be something more Real than the form, in short, that, of course, has already been cursed. It has been cursed starting from historical materialism which is strictly nothing other

than a resurgence of Bossuet's Providence. Yeah. In any case, this material of the written, in short, of the supposed written, like that, because it is the little new, in short, would deserve to have its dugs pulled a little, in order to come back to our fundamental little o-object. Let it be exploited a little, at least for a while, huh.

For this exploitation to become possible is that not so, it is...that means precisely, if you translate modality as I have taught you, that means that it ceases to be written, and not at all the contrary. This must cease to be written for it to prove something. Namely, that it does not cease starting up again. But precisely here is this scansion of which I am trying, of which I am trying to give you an idea. It is a scansion which is curious. Because the pulsation that it implies, namely, what everyone knows, only the possible can be necessary, namely, what I situate by the 'ceasing to be written', is precisely something which does not cease to be repeated, which is here something that we have been clearly able to touch, is that not so, in this function of repetition produced with such genius by Freud.

This is a fundamental thing and I am trying to approach it here for you, to approach it in this sense that this establishes a time two (*un temps deux*). Far from making time linear, this establishes a time two as altogether fundamental. And I would even go as far as to ask the (171) question of those who might be able to say a little bit about it to me, and I would be very amused if someone were to reply to me, on this point. The fact is that in taking a set of dimensions, set not supposing anything cardinal, but let us say a finite set – how determine on this set of dimensions, why not imagine the dimension as I define it, namely, there where the saying is situated, how arrive at formulating the fact that if we start from the idea that the function of two, two dimensions are situated there on one side of the surface, but from 'to cease' and 'to not-cess' as I have just said to you, is there not here something which gives very exactly the import of writing? In Other words, on a set of dimensions, that we will not determine in

advance, how find what acts as surface-function and which at the same time according to my saying would make a time-function? Which is in any case very close, very close to the knot that I am suggesting to you.

I formerly risked producing something called *Logical time*. And it is curious that I put a second time in it, the time to comprehend, the time to comprehend what is there to be comprehended. It is the only thing in this form that I made as refined as possible, it was the only thing that had to be comprehended. The fact is that the time to comprehend does not work if there are not three. Namely, what I called the instant of seeing, then the thing to comprehend, and then the moment to conclude. To conclude, as I believe I sufficiently suggested in this article, to conclude wrongly. Otherwise, if there are not these three, there is nothing to justify what manifests with clarity the two, namely, this scansion that I described, which is that of an arrest, of a ceasing and of a re-departure. Thanks to which it is obvious that these are the only convincing movements, which are valid as proof, is that not so, when the three characters for whom as you know it is a matter of them getting out of prison, as it happens, it is only subsequent to these scansions that they can make them function as proof, namely, do what they are asked, not simply that they should have got out, which is a quite natural movement, but what they are identical to, namely, each one strictly to the two Others. They have the same, the same black or white ring on their backs. They cannot, which is what is asked of them, give an explanation for it unless from the fact that they have all performed the same ballet to get out. That is the only explanation.

It is a way which is altogether, well, altogether charming, is that not so, to explain something which is furthermore quite obvious. The fact is that this does not involve any kind of identity of nature among them, that the illustration, the commentary in the margin that I give of it, namely, that it is like that that people imagine some universality or other. There is no trace of it in this apologue – since we are dealing

with an apologue – there is no trace in this apologue of the slightest relationship between the prisoners since precisely this is what is prohibited to them: namely, to communicate among themselves. They are simply, identifying themselves or distinguishing themselves by having or not having a white disk or a black disc on their backs. I apologise for being so long for people who have never opened the *Ecrits*, there must be many here in this situation, of course. To define then what in a set of dimensions constitutes at once surface and time, this is what I am proposing to you as a follow up, good God, as a follow-up, to what I propose to you about *logical time* in my *Ecrits*. Good. Yeah.

Am I, am I a bad judge when I answer that the little **o**-object was perhaps what I had invented...Perhaps, it is surely, in any case...no one invented it apart from me. Good. But I may be all the same be a bad judge. And that is why it is not unrelated to *ousia* like that, which I used like a rag earlier. The fact is that if my schema of analytic discourse is true, I must become this little **o**-object, this is what I have to make come to pass. It is not the 'I', in my case, namely, when I am in front of you. It is the small **o**. Yes, this place of no one (*personne*) is of course, as the name of person indicates, a place of rank to be held as semblance, is that not so. It is a matter of holding the role of the analyst. And this indeed is why I put forward a certain something, that is what is asked by the question which is always the same: 'Can I be it?' To authorise myself, might just about pass, huh, but to be it is a different matter. It is here that obviously, there is forged what I stated with the verb *désêtre*. I 'un-am' the analyst; the little **o**-object has no being.

I insisted sufficiently, is that not so, I insisted sufficiently at one time on something that psychoanalysts exult in, is that not so, namely, this face, this support, this pathetic aspect of the little **o**-object when it takes on the form of a waste scrap. I insisted a lot on it, one day, I turned up like that at Bordeaux, and I explained to them that

civilisation was a sewer, that there is strictly no other kind of trace of (173) it, and that it is all the same something quite strange, that we should turn our minds to it. Because as far as we know all the other animals that exist do not encumber the earth with their waste, while it is altogether singular that, that everything that man makes, always ends up as waste, is that not so. A single thing which preserves a little dignity, are the ruins, but get out of your shells, all the same, a little bit and you will notice the number of broken-down automobiles that are piled up in places, and you will notice that wherever you put your foot, you put your foot on something that – where people have tried in every possible way to recompress old rubbish in order not to be submerged by it, literally.

Yes...it is a whole business that! It is a whole business of organisation, is that not so. Of imaginary organisation, as one might say. To simulate, to simulate with the crowd, because it is the other face of what I earlier called the choice, the group, simulate with the crowd – and you always have to deal with that when you are assembling a group – to simulate with the crowd something that functions like a body. Yeah. Good. But anyway, this little **o**-object, all the same what is that...or what is the face of what interests you, not when I write it – because I write it as little as I can, I have too much of a sense of my responsibilities for me not to leave this writing its chance, its chance of ceasing, in order that, if it does not cease, it proves itself. But there, there when I am chatting, what interests you, about this little **o** of which I speak? There is something that may indeed come into my head, because it is like all the rest, huh, I invent as regards what is involved in knowledge, but as regards what is involved in the truth, I do not invent: the truth is brought to me, I have whole buckets of it.

And then, there is a chap who came to see me, I cannot say how long ago, and then I would not want him to recognise himself, he came to tell me that what he needed, was my voice! It was not for a vote

(*voix*), huh, it was the voice (*voix*). No, but it is a very serious question, for me, is it the voice – because it is quite obvious that there is something here. It is not a question of timbre, if the little o-object is what I am saying, we must not confuse the phonetic and the phoneme. The voice is defined by something Other than what is inscribed on a disc, and on a magnetic tape the way so many people entertain themselves, it is nothing to do with that. The voice can be strictly the scansion with which I tell you all of that. I am persuaded that there is (174) here a source of your gathering in this enclosure, a gathering that today is decent. There is something, like that, that is linked to...to the time that I spend in saying things, since the little o-object is linked to this dimension of time. It is completely distinct to what is involved in the saying.

The saying, is not the voice. And to be loved, since you love me, of course, to be loved for the one or for the other, is not at all the same, huh. The saying that the little o-object involves, in short, is all sorts of things that I even set down in writing, huh, *Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire*, and so on and so forth. That is on a completely different path, is that not so, than the exhibition of the voice, namely, like that, of a pathetic testimony, make no mistake, is that not so, of it being squeezed in this whole affair.

On the other hand, the saying, the saying is not writing either. Yeah. Saying is not writing either, it is not enough to have something to say to be able, to be able to know a lot about it. It is a distinction, is that not so, that I would very much like for you to get into your little heads. Yes. Even about what is involved in the truth, is that not so, there is a place for knowledge. There is a place for knowledge in so far as there is question, at every instant, of inventing, is that not so, to reply to the tissue of contradictions of the truth, huh. And this indeed is why the first step to be taken, is to follow it in all its affectations. It is not simply a matter of the fact, is that not so, that the lie forms part

of it. I insisted enough on that, is that not so. And it must be seen, in fact, what it is capable of making you do.

The truth, my dear friends, leads to religion. You never understand anything about what I tell you about this thing because I seem to be sneering, is that not so, when I speak about it, about religion. But I am not sneering, I am grinding my teeth! It leads to religion, and to the true, as I already said. And since it is the true, that is precisely why there would be something to be got out of it for knowledge. Namely, to invent. Well then you are not equipped to do it, huh! And it is not tomorrow that you will get to the end of it. Because into all of that you put absolutely no seriousness. It is obvious, is it not, that those who invented the most beautiful things about knowledge – I name them, huh, it is an honours list, huh: Pascal, Leibniz, and Newton! Newton, in fact, do you realise what Newton wrote about the Book of Daniel and about the Apocalypse of St. John! You have never looked at that, of course, because it is not in paperback, but I (175) regret it. I do not reproach you either for not having gone looking for it. There should be a paperback of that and one well translated. He had a cast-iron belief in religion. And the two Others...it seems to me that it is difficult to renounce what is obvious, huh. They talk of nothing but that. It is even the only thing that interests them.

When one...I must...when I think that I have to go looking in the middle of, a mountain of ‘addresses to the curé of Paris’, what Pascal wrote about the cycloid, for example, anyway which is the very type, is it not, of the step which meant that people invented, nothing less than integral calculus – do you imagine that integral calculus is anything other than writing? The parabola from which it started - the parabola – I am talking about the parabola that is traced out, the parabola and then any other lunule or thingamajig or yoke, whatsoever, in short, these are written things, it is only there that we

touch what is involved in the Real. Good, these three were passionate about the true. The true about the true.

The path to take is to start up again. If you do not question in an appropriate way the true of the Trinity, well you are made, you are made like rats, like the Rat Man. It is obvious, it is obvious all the same that religion, anyway has its limits, all the same! Anyway, I have just come back from Italy, you understand, so I am, so I am swamped by bodies that stream down all the walls, in a word, there is nothing but that. There are enough pictures to stifle you, moreover it is altogether magnificent, but I do not see why I should say *proh pudor!* before this streaming of bodies. But anyway, this gives all the same its limit to the thing, it shows all the same that one is in the truth, and that one remains there, that one does not get out of it. What is required, what would be at stake, is to get out of the truth, there, indeed I do not see any other way except inventing, and to invent in the right way, in the analytic way, is that not so, it is to start up again, to go along entirely in this direction is that not so. Yes. Yes.

There is only one thing which is all the same quite annoying and on which I would like to end if you, if you don't mind. It is not by chance that it is among my pupils, a woman, she is made like that, she, good, well, produced like that a whole lot of chattering about the desire to know; it is certainly not from me that she got it...I never even, even suggested such a thing, huh. Yes. There is no shadow of a desire to know, apart from something about which I question myself (176) and about which I have nothing to tell you because I don't know anything about it, which is that there is mathematics, which cannot proceed, it seems to me, unless it is an effect of the unconscious, which do not produce the slightest desire, but it is all the same curious to see that mathematics continues. People imagine that there are among people of your kind, in short, namely, that the mathematicians, are – I think that there are perhaps not two of them in this room, I am

talking about the true, the really bitten: there is not the slightest desire to know. There is not the slightest desire to *invent* knowledge.

Anyway, there is a desire to know attributed to the Other. One sees that. That is how there arises, anyway, the manifestations of obligingness that the child gives in his 'whys'. Everything that he poses as a question, in fact, is designed to satisfy what he supposes the Other would want him to ask. Not all children, huh! Not all children, because I am going to do a little thing for you, I must from time to time give you a little something to get your teeth into, this thing attributed to the Other, is very often accompanied by a 'very little for me' (*très peu pour moi*). And 'very little for me', a 'very little for me' of which the child gives proof in this form to which I am sure you have not dreamt, but, as you know, I also learn something every day. I educate myself, I educate myself of course along the line of what I like, along the line of what I invent inevitably, but anyway I do not lack food. And if you knew as I know, is that not so, the degree to which what I already illustrated about anorexia nervosa by making this action state, for an action states: 'I eat nothing'.

But why do I eat nothing? That is something you have not asked yourselves, huh, but if you ask the anorexics, or rather if you let them come, I for my part have asked it, I have asked it because I was already in my little vein of invention on this subject, I asked it: so then what did they answer me? It is very clear: she was so preoccupied about knowing whether she was eating, that in order to discourage this knowledge, this knowledge like that, the desire to know, is that not so, just for that the kid would have let herself die of hunger! That is very important. This dimension of knowledge is very important, and also to notice that, that it is not desire that presides over knowledge, it is horror.

(177) Yes. You will tell me that, you will tell me that there are people who work, and who work like that to get the *agrégation*. But that, you

understand, has nothing to do with the desire to know. That is a desire which is, which is as I might say, as always the desire of the Other, and I already explained that it is enough for the Other to desire for, of course, one to fall under its influence. The desire of man is the desire of the Other but the circuit is more or less complicated. There is the desire of the Other, which, which, which is communicated on an equal footing because it is already at sea (*nage*) in the Other, the subject.

There is the hysteric. The hysteric, is another affair, huh, I will have to take up my schema, is that not so, to show you the exact place held by knowledge, is that not so, for the hysteric. It is a knowledge, in short, that is particularly specified, is that not so, it is a knowledge from which, from which she picks up the thing. Yes. It is a knowledge that does not go very far. It is a knowledge which to stick to the origin - it is a knowledge which is very often, not produced by discourse, the desire of the Other, but palmed off, as one might say.

I mean that it can very well be that a person, in short, who, who had not the slightest desire to know anything about anything whatsoever, is that not so, noticed all the same that in society, the university discourse assures for those who know, a good place, and that it is palmed off on the young one, here, to the kid who is going to become hysterical, and precisely for that reason, that it is palmed off to her that it is a means to power. Naturally, she receives the thing, for her part, without knowing that that is why, she receives it when she is very young, and there, it is a rather frequent case of transmission, in fact, is that not so of the desire to, of the desire to know, but it is something that is acquired altogether secondarily. In other words, what I am trying to get into your head and in connection with this experience, with this experience of the child, who naturally speaks to you about these 'whys', and these 'whys' which concern: Why this, why are children born, how is that done, etc., and all they want is, it is to hear something which, which gives pleasure, which, to show that, who, that they do everything as if they were interested in it. But as

soon as they know it, they repress it, as you know well, and they repress it immediately, in fact, they think no more about it, in fact. You should all the same have an idea that is a little clearer about what (178) is really happening. This desire to know, in so far as it takes on a substance, takes on the substance of the social group.

In truth, I will not go so far as to be satisfied with this answer as regards mathematical invention, is that not so. It is quite clear that there are people bitten by that, is that not so, I mean that solving the problem of the cycloid was not a way of promoting oneself at the Sorbonne. There was, like that, in fact a miraculous time, a time that that I would like to see being reproduced, is that not so in the form of psychoanalysts, I would like to see being reproduced in them this kind of Republic, is that not so, which meant that Pascal corresponded with Fermat, with Roberval, with Carcavi, with a whole pile of people, is that not so who were all interrelated with one another, in fact, in order that something or other should happen. This indeed is what I would want one day to draw out of the story, something or other happened which ensured that there were people who wanted to know more about the most unlikely things, is that not so, who drew for themselves like that the cycloid. You know what it is, is that not so, whether it is a circle, a little wheel that turns around another one, you can see what that can give, that gives, I don't know, something like that which is called cardioid, which you can believe, at that moment, did not confer anything, with any Lord, is that not so, that made their reputation. In fact their thing was strictly among themselves, is that not so, they did not go outside that.

Naturally, from there, there has come your television, this television thanks to which you are definitively stupefied, good, good but anyway, they did not do it for that, they provided for the little *o*-object – of course, but precisely it was without knowing it, but they had all the same, in a word, all the better realised that the object was the little *o*-object, namely, what you are stifled by, is that not so. They realised

it all the more in that without knowing where they were going, they passed by the structure, by the structure that I told you about, namely, this edge of the Real.

Seminar 12: Tuesday 23 April 1974

Good, I am going first of all, by beginning three minutes before the time, I am going first of all to fulfil a duty that I did not carry out the last time. I did not do so, because I believed it would happen all by itself, but since even in my School, I saw that no one had taken this step, I am encouraged to urge others to take it. A book has just appeared in the *Champ Freudien*, as they say, huh, it is a collection which, as it happens, I direct. If it has appeared in this collection, I am obviously not uninvolved, I even had to force it into it. This book is called – this is a title – this one is worth as much as any other – is called: *L'Amour du Censeur*. It is by someone called Pierre Legendre, who happens to be a professor in the Law Faculty. There you are. So then, I strongly encourage those who, I do not really know why, indeed, are gathered together here around what I am saying, I strongly encourage them to get to know it, namely, to read it, to read it with a little attention because they will learn something from it.

There you are. With that, I begin.

I begin, or rather I begin again. This is what most astonishes me. Namely, that I have the opportunity each time to notice that if I spoke of hope in certain terms, in connection with a Kantian question that I

was asked: ‘whether I might...’, ‘what might I hope for?’ And I had said that hope, I had retorted that hope was something proper to each (182) one. There is no common hope. It is quite useless to hope for a common hope. So then I, I am going to admit mine to you. It is the one that possesses me all week until the morning when I wake up with you in mind – namely, for example this very morning – until that moment, I, always have the hope that it will be the last time, that I will be able to say to you *n, i, ni*: finished. The fact that I am here, because the day when I say it, it will be before, it will be before beginning, the fact that I am there proves to you that, however special this hope may be for me, it is disappointed.

Good, as a result of which, in waking up, I naturally thought of something quite different than, than what I had fomented to say to you. There arose in me like that, in short, that if there is – I already said it, in short, but I must repeat it – that if there is something which analysis has discovered the truth of, it is the love of knowledge. Since, at least if what I point out to you has some emphasis, an emphasis that moves you, transference reveals the truth of love and precisely in that it is addressed to what I stated as being the subject supposed to know. That may appear to you, after what I stated the last time, with I believe some emphasis, at least I imagine so, anyway I hope you remember it, not only did I put forward that there was no desire to know, but I even spoke about something which...that I effectively articulated about the horror of knowing. There you are.

So then, how connect that up, as I might say? Well precisely it is not connected up. It is the *Marriage of heaven to hell*. There is someone called William Blake, as you know, who at his time, at his epoch, with his, with his own little material – which was not slight – who stirred up that: he even gave it exactly this title. There you are. So then perhaps what I am in the process of saying to you, is that the marriage in question is not quite what is believed, what is believed, in reading William Blake, precisely. Yeah. This only re-emphasises something

that I told you elsewhere, something that our experience implies in any case, the analytic experience that I am only here to situate for you.

What is a truth if not a complaint? At least this is what corresponds to what we charge ourselves with, as analysts, if in short there is something of the psychoanalyst, that we charge ourselves with gathering. We do not gather it all the same without noting that division marks it. Marks the truth. That perhaps not-all of it can be (183) said. There you are. It is our way (*voie*), the way people have been speaking about for a long time, huh. And if it is put first in a statement that, that I hope is finally making your ears ring, if it is put first – it is indeed because this is what is at stake first, even though the solutions that are put forward greatly differ among themselves. It is a matter of having a little idea of our own. And then immediately after, when one states this term, the way, immediately afterwards people talk about the truth which, if it is what I have just said, is something like a rotten plank, and then as a third, people dare, anyway someone, in any case, has dared, like that: someone called Saint John, he spoke about life. These are imprudent utterances. Utterances of what? Of the voice. Of the voice which is to be written quite differently: *v, o, i, x*, for these. They are imprudent utterances of the voice that state these couplings. You can note that this...that the coupling, on this occasion, goes in threes. And what is life on this occasion? It is indeed something which, which in this three, then, makes, makes, makes, makes a hole, huh. I do not know if you know what life is, huh, but it is all the same curious that, that it creates a problem. Life (*lavie*) that on this occasion I would write indeed as I did, as I did with *lalangue* in a single word. This would only be to suggest that, that we do not know much about it except that it needs washing (*elle s'lave*). It is almost the only tangible mark of what enters into life.

Anyway, these couplings, what am I suggesting here, starting from the experience that is defined as analytic, what am I suggesting here? Is it to think out these couplings? Yeah. If that were it, it would be in

short, this kind of tipping over, which would mean falling into University discourse. That is where people think. Namely, where they fuck. Good, I am pointing out to you that in this discourse, I am not – like that, it is a little test, simply, it is not at all that I pride myself on it, I am not accepted, I am rather put up with, yes, tolerated – all that brings us back to the status, to the status of, of what I stated the last time, anyway, linked to our relationship, of you, of me, and that I put in suspense between the voice and the act of saying. I dare hope that the act of saying has a greater weight in it, even though this is what I might doubt, since this doubt is what I expressed the last time as such. If it is the act of saying, this is what I get from a codified experience.

I also stated – you see, I insist on repeating myself – I also stated the (184) following: what is required, in the sense of what is lacking, so that this codified experience is not, should not be within everybody's reach? It is not a question of the division of labour, namely, that everybody cannot spend their time analysing the rest. It is not within everybody's reach, due to a fact of...of structure about which I tried to recall the last time, or at least to indicate what I intended to connect it up with. It cannot be within everybody's reach to fulfil this office that I defined just now as gathering up the truth as a complaint.

What is the status of this marriage that I evoked just afterwards, by putting it under the patronage of William Blake? When I say that it is not within everybody's reach that goes a very far. It implies that there are those for whom it is in short prohibited. And when I state things thus, I intend to set myself apart from what is involved in something, in something that Hegel advances somewhere, about this rejection, inscribed, he says, in what he calls 'the law of the heart', this rejection of the disorder of the world. Hegel shows that if that is done, it is easy. And he is quite right. It is not a matter of producing here the disorder of the world, it is a matter of reading the not-all (*pas-tout*) in it. Is this a substitute for the idea of order? This is very specifically

what, into what I am proposing today to advance, to advance; with this question left just now, of what pushes me. What pushes me to bear witness to it.

What does this not-all consist in? It is obvious that it cannot be referred to what would make an all, to...to a harmonious world. So must the not-all be grasped somewhere in an element? An element which sins precisely by not being harmonised with it? Is it enough that, that everything in it should be won over – allow me here, to put it forward – to bifurcation, to the tree. Yeah. I would point out to you that here, as if nothing was happening, by asking you a question like that, this bifurcation is also indeed what I have just made, a sign, a y, of something which is tangible, in short, with what we are clearing the way for: there is the tree, there is the vegetable, it makes up a branch, it is its mode of presence. And I do not see why I would not wade in there, into something which all the same is recommended to our attention, because it stems from writing, huh: the old *Urszene*, the primal scene, as it is inscribed in the Bible, at the beginning of the aforesaid *Genesis*. The tempter, huh. And then the fathead, is that not so, the one called Eve. And then the asshole of all assholes, is that not so, the first Adam? And then what circulates, there, the thing that gets stuck in his throat, the apple as it is called. And worse, that's not (185) all, huh: there is the granddad who turns up and then let's fly at them.

For my part, when I read that, I am not against it. I am not against it since it is full of meaning. This indeed is precisely what it must be cleansed of. Perhaps if...one scratched away all the meaning huh, one would have a chance of reaching the Real. This is even what I am in the process of teaching you. That it is not the meaning of the complaint that is important for us, it is what one might find beyond, as definable in terms of Real, yeah. Only to clean away the meaning, it must not be forgotten, because otherwise it turns into a shoot, huh, and in all of that there is something that is forgotten. And it is precisely

the tree. What is outrageous is that it is not noticed that it is what was what was forbidden. It was not the snake, it was not the apple, it was not the assholes, him or her: it was the tree that was not to be approached! And nobody thinks any more about it, it is admirable! But for its part, what does the tree think about it? Here I am making a leap, huh, because what does that mean, what does it think about it? That means nothing other than something that is in suspense, and this is very precisely what makes me suspend everything that can be said under the heading of life, of the life that is washed. Because despite the fact that the tree is not washed – that can be seen! – despite that, does the tree enjoy? It is a question that I would call essential. Not that there might be an essence outside the question: the question is the essence, there is no other essence than the question. Since there is no question without an answer, I have been dinning that into you for a long time, this means that the essence also depends on it, on the answer. Only there, it is missing. It is impossible to know whether the tree enjoys, even though it is no less certain that the tree is life. Yeah.

I apologise to you for having, like that, imagined that, imagined presenting that to you, like that, with the help of the Bible. The Bible does not frighten me. And I would even say more, I have a reason for that. It is because there are people like that who are formed by it, huh, they are generally called Jews. One cannot say that they have not thought about this thing, the Bible. I would even say more: everything proves, everything proves in their history [*to Gloria Gonzales: Give me a cigar...*], everything proves in their history that they are not preoccupied by the way that they have Talmudized, as they say, this Bible. Well then I must recognise that it has worked out well for them. And where do I put my finger on that? I put my finger on it from the fact, yes, that they have truly well contributed, when it (186) came within their reach, to this domain that interests me, even though it is not mine – mine in the sense of the domain of analysis – that they have truly contributed, with particular astuteness, to the

domain of science. What does that mean? It is not they who invented it.

The history of science started from a questioning about (put that in inverted commas, I beg you) about ‘nature’, about *phusis* – in connection with which Mr. Heidegger wriggles in convolutions. What was nature for the Greeks, he asks himself. They had an idea of nature. It must be said that the idea that they had of it - as the same Heidegger suggests – is completely lost. It is lost, lost, lost, lost. I do not see why one would regret it! Since it is lost, huh? Well then, it is not to be mourned all that much because we know even more about what it is. Yeah. We know even more about what it is because it is quite obvious that if science has succeeded, has succeeded in emerging, it does not appear, moreover, that the Jews put much of themselves into it at the beginning. It is subsequently, when the prize had been won, that they came to add their grain of salt, huh, and that it was noticed, that, it is clear, in short, what Einstein, by adding something to the great construction of Newton, that he is the one who takes things from the right angle. And then he is not the only one, there are others – that I will name for you when the occasion arises, but I cannot speak about everything at the same time, because they are to be found in profusion and then they are not all in the same quarter. What is certain is that, it is all the same striking that, that this blessed written thing was enough, the Scriptures par excellence, as they say! – that this was enough for them to enter into the thing the Greeks had prepared and prepared by something which is not to be distinguished from writing, from writing in so far as what specifies it, in short, is that it is possible to read it, that when it is read, it gives a saying (*un dire*) – an extraordinary saying, naturally, as I told you earlier about this scene that would make you collapse (*à la mors-moi le doigt*), a saying that would make you think you are sleepwalking - but a saying! It is quite clear that if the Talmud has a meaning it consists precisely in emptying this saying of its meaning, namely, of only studying the letter. And from this letter to induce absolutely crazy combinations,

in the style of the equivalence of the letter and the number, for example, but it is all the same curious that this is what formed them, and that they find themselves up to date when they have to deal with science... Yeah!

(187) So then, that is what authorises me, I would say to do like them, not to consider as a forbidden field what I will call religious froth (*mousse*) to which I had recourse earlier. What I call 'froth', here, is quite simply the meaning! The meaning in connection with which I was trying precisely to carry out, to carry out a cleansing, by asking the question, the question about the tree: what is the tree? And what is it on a very precise point that I designated, because I do not remain up in the air: does it enjoy? Religious froth can then, in short, be also laboratory material! And why not, and why not make use of it because it comes to us with what I call, with what I call by making it entirely tip over to one side, what I call the truth, because of course, it is not the emptied out truth, huh, it is the truth like that flourishing.

There you are. I can all the same clearly indicate to you that it is not for nothing, in short, that there are Jewish biologists, huh. For my part, I have just read something of which moreover I will give you the title... I will give you the title, anyway, it is the book, there, *On sexuality and bacteria*. There is something that, that struck me, anyway, in reading this book which I read with passion from start to finish, because it was along my line, like that, the fact is that if, the fact is that if the amoeba, em... this little piece of filth, there, that you look at in the microscope, there, huh, and then which obviously wriggles, it eats things on you... it... good. It is certain that it enjoys! Well then as regards bacteria, I am questioning myself! Does bacteria enjoy? Well it's funny, huh, the only thing which can, in short, suggest the idea of it to us, is – I can all the same say that it is in Jacob that I discovered it, we must not exaggerate, I had heard like that a rumour... but in this Jacob, who moreover is on this occasion associated with someone called Wollman, what really fascinated me,

huh, is that what is characteristic of the aforesaid bacteria is that there is nothing in the world like a bacteria for being infected. It is in a word that bacteria would contribute absolutely nothing to us if there were not the bacteriophage. And the link that is made by – that is made by: he does not make it, that emerges – but anyway it is certain that, the fact that, as his name indicates Jacob is a Jew, is certainly not indifferent that his relationship, his relationship of accumulated, minute, swarming experiences in short, that his report about what happens between bacteria and the bacteriophage, that it is here that we may have the ‘feeling’, let us say that from infection, from its (188) infection with the bacteriophage, the bacteria eventually enjoys.

And if one looks at it very closely – anyway, consult the text, I am indicating it to you, it will only take a second for you to look through the paperbacks, only its very difficult to find, this yoke is really exhausted, it appeared in America...It really would piss you off! It would be no bad thing all the same for you to make some photocopies. There is perhaps also one in French around, but I cannot say, for my part... I did not rush out looking for it, since I read it in English, anyway, there is also one in French, but I do not even know whether it can still be found. You see the extent of my benevolence, I am indicating it to you just when you are going to enter into the most appalling rivalry with me if I want to get it. Anyway too bad, there are always photocopies...

When all is said and done, it is from there that you can touch on a connection, a very particular connection. If Jacob makes manifest through this that there is sex at the level of bacteria, he only makes it manifest by the following fact - read this book carefully - that between two mutations of bacteria of the same line of descent, in other words of this famous *escherichia coli* which has served as laboratory material at that level, that between two mutations of bacterias from the same source, what constitutes sex, is that between them, between these mutations, no relationship is possible. This means that one line

of descent of bacteria whose mutation consists in a possibility of a greater multiplication than in the other, while it is at the level of this possibility of multiplying that the other is distinguished:

foisonnement-plus, fertility they call that in English, fertility-less.

When the more fertile encounter the less fertile, they make them transfer to the side of fertility. While the less fertile, when they go towards the more fertile, for their part, do not make them transfer towards the side of the less fertile. It is then essentially from the non-relationship between the two branches – here we find our little tree again! – it is then from the non-relationship between the two branches of a same tree, that for the first time there is suggested, at the level of bacteria, the idea that there is a sexual specification.

So then you see the register in which this, this may affect me, because, in finding again this non-relationship at a completely different level of this so called evolution of life which is the one by which I specify the speaking being, is all the same something which, in short, which is well designed to hold my attention, and at the same time to try to give (189) you a little whiff of it... Because in short, what that means, is that in its first apparition – which moreover has strictly nothing to do with its second apparition which is a pure homology – sexuality is not at all the same thing, but that it may be so on occasion at the level of the tree, something linked to infection and to nothing else, is all the same, is all the same worth our dwelling on. Naturally, that does not mean either that we should rush into it, huh, you must not rush, especially, because it is, it is the best way to put your foot in it! But anyway, it is tangible. And that, that the question of enjoyment is suggested from infection, sexuality with a limited import, is also worth remembering. Good. When I say: not to rush, huh, that also means: not to let yourself be led by the nose.

Is there – I am making a break here, I am taking things from the other end – is there knowledge in the Real? It is essential that here I should break, since otherwise I, at least you, you have let yourselves up to

now be led by the nose, namely, that you stop there where I stop myself, in order not to let myself be led by the same end. To ask the second question, the one that I am putting forward now, after having allowed myself to be led into religious froth, of what interest is it that now I start over again? It is all the same – it is not difficult to, to sense, is that not so, enjoyment, it erupts (*sic*) into the Real. And that there will be a moment - which will be later, because things must be carefully put into a series, huh - when the question turns back on itself. What does the Real answer if enjoyment questions it? And that is why I begin – here you see the link – why I begin to ask the question: knowledge is not the same as enjoyment. I will even say more, if there is a point to which I have led you, anyway, in starting from this knowledge that is inscribed in the unconscious, it is indeed because it is not inevitable that knowledge should enjoy itself.

And that indeed is why, now - a break - I am taking up again a thread from a different end, no term of which is encountered in what I first put forward. I am taking up the thread from another end, and I am putting the question about knowledge in the Real. It is quite clear that this question, like all the others, is only asked from the answer. I would even say more: from the answer such as I have already emphasised it. The unconscious in Freud's sense, is that in whose name I asked the question about knowledge in the Real. But I do not ask it in giving to Freud's unconscious all its import. I am simply saying that the unconscious is at first only conceived of from the (190) following: that it is a knowledge. But I am limiting myself to that. It is in the name of this that the question about knowledge in the Real takes on its meaning.

There is some. And there is no need for Freud's unconscious for it to be so. There is some to all appearances. Otherwise the Real would not work. Here is where I am starting from, which as you see is a quite different aspect. This one, precisely, has a Greek aspect. The Real, is like the discourse of the master: it is the Greek discourse. The

Real must work. And we cannot see how it would work without there being some knowledge in the Real. So then there also, huh, no rushing. Here it is no longer a matter of being led by the nose, there, it is to get limed in this step. One must cut through its casing. If I take this step in the Real, I must cut away...all the glue around, in order not to remain stuck in it, huh. And that in the Real, may I dare say, means nothing outside a meaning.

That means in the Real: which does not depend on the idea that I have of it. A further step with the same paste on one's feet: as regards which, what I think of it does not matter. The Real does not give a damn whether I think of it like that. And this indeed is why the first time that I tried to make this category vibrate, in short, in the ears of my listeners, those of Sainte-Anne, I cannot say that I was not kind, huh, I said to them: the Real is, is what always returns to the same place. Which is precisely to put it in its place. The notion of place, arises from that.

So then, in saying that, I put the Real – I situate it precisely, I put it in its place, with a meaning, let us not forget, with a meaning *qua* known: the meaning knows itself. So much so that it is astonishing, huh, that people should have become entangled in it: the sensible, the tangible, anything you wish, but that it did not end up by being crystallised: the known meaning (*le sensu*). It must be believed that it had echoes we did not like.

What I am in the process of saying by that, in any case putting forward to you about the Real, is first of all that, it is that the knowledge at stake in the question, is there knowledge in the Real, is to be completely separated from the use of known in the known meaning. It is from meaning, starting from there that I detach the Real, but it is not from the same knowledge that I question to know whether there is a knowledge in the Real. The knowledge at stake in

the question is not the order of knowledge which conveys meaning or more exactly, which is conveyed by meaning.

(191) And I am going to illustrate it right away. To illustrate it from Aristotle. It is quite striking that in his *Physics*, Aristotle for a good long while, in short, made the leap, the leap by which, it is demonstrated that his *Physics* has strictly nothing to do with the *phusis* whose ghost Heidegger tries to make re-emerge for us. It is because what he is tackling, he is tackling to answer the question which is the one that I am asking now: is there knowledge in the Real? He tackles it by way of the knowledge of the artisan. The fact is that the Greeks did not have the same relationship to writing. The flower of what they produced, is drawings, it is the making of plans. That is their idea of intelligence. It is not enough to have an idea of intelligence to be intelligent. This recommendation is especially addressed to you. And it is surprising that it should be Aristotle who proves it to us.

This artisan, God knows what he imputes to him, make no mistake. He imputes to him, first of all, knowing what he wants: which all the same is a bit thick! Where have we ever seen anyone struggling along as an artisan, knowing what he wants? It is Aristotle who lays that on his back. Thanks to Aristotle, the artisan is the 'final cause'. And then also, while he is at it, I really do not see what stops him, is that not so, he is also the 'formal cause', he has ideas, as they say. And then after that, he, he, he causes 'cause' (*il cause 'cause'*), he even causes 'means', he causes 'efficient' in a word, and it is a lucky thing that Aristotle leaves some bit of the role to matter. There it is: it is the 'material cause'! It causes, it causes, it causes even without rhyme or reason [*causer* = to cause, or to chat, to blather on].

Because, to take things, like that, at the level from which they come, namely, the pot – that is how it came out, not at all of course that they only knew how to make that, the Greeks, they knew how to make

much more complicated things, but all of that, all of that comes from the pot. When I ask a question of whether there is knowledge in the Real, it is precisely to exclude from this Real what is involved in the knowledge of the artisan. Not only does the knowledge of the artisan not cause, but it is exactly this order of knowledge that the artisan makes use of because another artisan taught him to do it like that.

And far from the pot having an end, a form, an efficacy and even some matter or other, the pot, is a mode of enjoying. He was taught to enjoy making pots! And if someone did not buy his pot – and that depends on the good sense of the client – if his pot is not bought, well then he has the reward of his enjoyment, namely, that he is left with it, (192) and that this does not go very far. It is a mode that is essential to detach from what is at stake when I ask the question: is there knowledge in the Real?

There must all the same simply be some people here who have been, who have been, I don't know, to the exposition of Chinese archaeological excavations, as it is called, Chinese excavations which were the best thing that they found to send us from the land of Mao. There you can see – at that level because there are reasons why, in this zone, in short, one can still see the pots at the moment that they emerge. It is quite clear that these pots are absolutely gripping, admirable, is that not so, these pots from the time of the apparition of words, when for the first time, people made pots – three legs are stuck onto them, as it happens, but they are legs which are not legs, legs that are screwed on, you understand, they are legs, legs which are there in continuity with the pot. These are pots which have spouts of which one can say in advance that any mouth is unworthy. They are pots which are in themselves, with their advent, in short things before which one prostrates oneself.

Do you believe that this emergence here, is something...is something that has anything whatsoever to do with Aristotelian decomposition?

It is enough to look at these pots to see that in short they are of no use for anything. But there is one thing certain, which is that this grew, is that not so, this grew, in short, like a flower. That Aristotle, finally, decomposes them, in short, is that not so, con-causes them with at least four different causes, is something that just by itself, in short, demonstrates that the pots are from elsewhere.

But why am I talking to you about them since precisely I put them elsewhere? I am talking to you about them because if it is the client who finally has to judge the pot, in the absence of which the potter, in short will have to tighten his belt, this demonstrates something to us, which is that it is the client who not only buys the pot, but who, ‘potters’ the artisan, if I can express myself thus. And it is enough to see what follows from this link between the fact that the pot, in short, is so well made that people imagine that God is a potter, exactly like the artisan. The God in question is, is...at one time, anyway, my old friend André Breton believed that he was pronouncing a blasphemy in saying that, in saying that God is a pig (*un porc*). It is not for nothing that the last time I told you that I never encouraged the Surrealists. Not at all that I for my part would abbreviate and I would say that God is a pot. God is clumsy (*un empoté*)! True, God is the potter, but the potter also is awkward. He is the subject, in short, of the knowledge supposed to his art.

But this is not what is at stake when I ask you the question: is there knowledge in the Real? Because this, this is what was encountered the day when from the Real someone succeeded in tearing out a strand, namely, at the time of Newton, when all the same, it happened, and that there in order that the Real should function, at least the Real of gravity, namely, not nothing, all the same, because we are all screwed to this gravity and by nothing less than our bodies, until we hear differently, not that it is a property of it, as what followed clearly demonstrated – but one is screwed onto this Real. And there, what is it, in short, that worried people in Newton’s time? It was nothing less

than this question which I would say, in short, concerned what was at stake, namely, masses – make no mistake. Masses. How these masses could know the distance at which they were at from other masses so that they would be able to observe Newton's law? It is absolutely clear that God is required here. One cannot, all the same, claim that the masses, the masses as such, namely, defined by their simple inertia, where would the notion come to them of the distance that they are from other masses? And what is more, as regards what is involved in these masses themselves in order to behave correctly? At the time of freshness when this Newtonian lucubration came out, this escaped no one! It was the only notion in short, that – the only notion that could be opposed to him, were Descartes' vortices; unfortunately Descartes' vortices did not exist and everyone could see that quite clearly... So then, God was required to inform, is that not so, at every instant, in short it has even got to the point that not only was he required to be there to inform the masses at every instant about what was happening to the others, but... it was even supposed that he had perhaps no other means than to push the masses himself with his finger... Which, of course was exaggerated, in short, was exaggerated because it was clear that once acceleration is already inscribed in the formula, time was also there, so then there was no need for the finger of God! But as regards informing all the same, it was difficult to exclude him. And what I am talking to you about, for my part, here, is the knowledge in the Real.

(194) You must not imagine that because Einstein came afterwards and put something else into it, huh, you must not imagine that things are any better, huh, because there is all the same a funny story, is that not so, which is that this relativity of space, which is henceforth de-absolutised, because indeed it is some time, in short since people have been able to say that in short, that after all God was absolute space – indeed that is, that is only banter. But the relativisation of this space with respect to light, this has a funny feel for you of *fiat lux*, and that, that has every appearance of starting to put its ass once again into the

religious froth. So then, let us exaggerate nothing. It is perhaps here, you understand, that – this is how, in any case for today, I will limit myself, indeed to what made the analyst emerge. You have clearly sensed, *sentu*, huh, that all of this comes from this fact indeed that we have only spoken up to now about what comes from Heaven. Everything that we have of the Real however little sure it is, including our monsters, huh, has uniquely, uniquely come down from heaven. If it were not from there that we had started in order to always return to the same place, the definition that I give of the Real, we would not have today either watches nor televisions nor all these charming things thanks to which you are not only minuted but I would dare to say ‘seconded’. You are so well seconded that you no longer even have living space.

Luckily there is something of the analyst, huh. The analyst – I am going to end on a metaphor: the analyst is the will-o’-the-wisp. It is a metaphor which, for its part, does not amount to *fiat lux*. It is all that I have to say to excuse him. I mean that it opposes to the stars from which everything has descended in terms of what encumbers you and organises you so well here, indeed, to listen to my discourse, is that not so. Namely, that this has absolutely nothing to do with what you will come in to complain about to me in a moment.

The only advantage that I find in this will-o’-the-wisp, is that this does not amount to *fiat lux*. The will-o’-the-wisp does not illuminate anything, it emerges even ordinarily from some pestilence. That is its strength. This is what can be said, starting from the will-o’-the-wisp, whose thread I will try to take up, the wisp of thread, the next time.

Seminar 13: Tuesday 14 May 1974

The non-dupes-err... That does not mean that the dupes do not err. If we start from what is proposed as an affirmation – can you hear? Can you hear like that, if I am in front of this thing? Would the person who said that he can hear nothing answer: can he hear? Let us say that there is introduced by this affirmation that the non-non-dupes, may well, no more, not err. But already, this introduces us to the question that is posed by double negation. To be...not to be a non dupe, does that come back to being a dupe? This supposes, and supposes nothing less, than that there is a universe; that one can put forward that the universe, is divided by every statement; that one can say ‘the man’, and that if one says it – I mean to say it – all the rest becomes non-man.

A logician – because I am putting forward that logic is the science of the real – a logician took a step a long time after Aristotle. We had to wait for Boole to publish in 1853 *An investigation of thought*, which, has already this advantage over Aristotle of being a step, an attempt to stick to what he claims to observe, to found in short *a posteriori* as constituting the laws of thought. What does he do? He writes very precisely what I have just told you, namely that starting from anything whatsoever that is said and that is stated, and things are such for him that he cannot but put forward the idea of the universe, he symbolises it by a number (*un chiffre*), a number which is appropriate for it, it is the number 1. He will write then, about anything that is proposed as (196) notable, notable in this universe, he will then write x , he leaves this x empty, because this is the principle of the use of this letter, it is whatever may be notable in the universe [*to Gloria Gonzales: if you would carry that away from me, it would help me to go to the board*]. Yes, x , he writes, multiplied by $1-x$, this cannot but equal zero:

$$x(1-x) = 0$$

This cannot but, provided one gives this meaning to multiplication, note the intersection. That is where he starts from. It is in so far as x is notable in the universe that something is sustained simply by no, to men there being opposed non-men as such, everything that subsists as notable being here considered as subsisting as such. Now, it is clear that what is notable is not as such individual; that already in this way of positing logical ek-sistence, there is something which, from the start, appears to be awkward.

How does it happen that there should be posited without criticism, the theme, the theme of the universe that is posited? If I believe this year to be able to support by the Borromean knot something, something which, certainly, is not, is not a definition of the subject, of the subject as such of a universe, it is in that, I will remark once again, my attempt has nothing metaphysical about it. I mean, I mean in this connection that metaphysics is what is distinguished by supposing, by supposing as such the subject, the subject of a knowing (*connaissance*). It is in so far as it supposes a subject, that metaphysics is distinguished from what I am trying to articulate the elements of, namely, those of a practice, and this along the line of having defined it as distinguishing itself, distinguishing itself from something which is pure place, pure topology, and which means that there be generated from there the definition situated only from the place of this practice, from what is announced, from then on is advanced as being three other discourses. This is a fact, a fact of discourse, a fact by which I try to give to analytic discourse its place of ek-sistence.

What is it, that properly speaking, ek-sists? There only ek-sists as the spelling by which I modified this term stresses, there only ek-sists in any practice something that acts as a foundation of the saying (*du dire*), I mean what the saying contributes as an agency in this practice. It is under this heading that I try to situate under these three terms, the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, the triple category which

makes a knot, and by this gives its meaning to this practice. For this (197) practice has not simply a meaning, but gives rise to a type of meaning that illuminates the other meanings to the point of putting them in question again, I mean by suspending them. With that, as an articulation, an articulation which at the end of a progress made to stimulate among those who sustain this practice, the idea of what for them this Real is, I say: the Real, is writing. The writing of nothing other than this knot as it is written to say it, as it is written when it is according to the law of flattened out writing. And I submit what I am stating to this test of putting in suspense the distinction, the precisely subjective distinction of the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, in so far as they might in a way already carry with them a meaning, a meaning which would hierarchise them, would make a 1,2,3 of them. Naturally, this would not avoid us falling again into another meaning – as already it may have appeared to you by the fact of what I emphasise about the association of the Real with a three, of the Imaginary with a two, and of the Real precisely – [a slip by Lacan] – and of the Symbolic precisely with the *One*.

Something in, at the level, in terms of the Symbolic, is posited as *One*. Is it a *One* sustainable from any individuation in the universe? That is the question that I ask, and from now on, I will put it forward under this form, namely, to ask the question in connection with Boole's writing. If the *One* that Boole advances as sufficient to divide up the truth, if there is an x , it is only true if, if the x subtracted from the *One* is something different to all the rest, than all the rest of the nameable. It is nothing less than gripping to note that Boole himself, by writing what results, what results from the writing of these terms in a mathematical formula, should be led to found on it that the proper of any x , of any x *qua* stated, is that x minus x^2 equals 0, which is written:

$$\begin{aligned}x - x^2 &= 0 \\x &= x^2\end{aligned}$$

I mean to be supported by a mathematical formula.

It is strange that here a note in his book, a book whose date I gave you earlier, the major date in this sense that it is starting from there that a new... a new start is taken by logical speculation, and that someone Charles Sanders Peirce of whom I already spoke to you, can for example ameliorate, according to him, Boole's formulation by showing in it that at certain points the result of it can be that it goes (198) astray, let us say. This to highlight what results from functions of two variables, namely, not simply x but x and y , and showing in it that which... that where I myself believed I ought to take up that the function described as relationship, can here serve to show us that, as regards what is involved in the sexual, this relationship cannot be written.

Why, Boole asks himself, rather than writing $x = x^2$ and the inverse, cannot one write $x = x^3$? It is striking that Boole – and this starting from the notion of truth as radically separating what is involved between the One and the zero, because it is by zero that he connotes error – it is striking that this universe, from then on solidary as such with the function of truth appears to him to limit the writing, the writing of what is involved in the logical function, to the second power of x while he refuses the third power. He refuses it because of the fact that mathematically, it would only be supposable in writing by adding to it a new term of the product, which he certainly does not refuse when what is at stake is to make the operation of multiplication work, he writes on this occasion:

$$x y z$$

and he can, according to the case, mark that $x y z$ such that the variables were situated by a certain function, that $x y z$ for example also equals 0. But since he limits himself to the values zero and one, it can just as well take on the function, the function taking its value from a certain... from a certain ciphering of zero and one for each of the three – he can, by making x , y and z each equal to one, notice that zero is not the fruit of it.

So then, what can prevent him from adding to his $(I - x)$ a $(I + x)$ and to add it not as addition, to add it as a term of multiplication? He sees then very clearly that $(I - x)$ multiplied by $(I + x)$ giving $I - x^2$, he will end up, I do not need to underline it for you, with this: the fact is that $x - x^3$ will be equal to zero and from this fact x will be equal to x^3 :

$$\begin{aligned}x(I - x)(I + x) &= 0 \\x - x^3 &= 0 \\x &= x^3\end{aligned}$$

Why does he stop, stop at what? In the interpretation of what this x might be precisely as added to the universe. Is it not proper to what (199) ek-sists the universe, to be added to it? This is properly what we do every day, and precisely what I designate by a plus in supporting it by the small \circ -object. But then this suggests to us, this suggests the following: namely, to ask ourselves whether the *One* in question, is well and truly the universe, to be considered as a set or collection of everything that can be individualised in it.

I suggest – there is suggested to me, let us say in connection with this writing of Boole – founding what he establishes in terms of universe – because it is as such that he articulates it, that he gives it its meaning – to suppose that this *One*, far from arising from the universe, arises from enjoyment. From enjoyment and not just from any enjoyment, from the enjoyment called phallic, and this in so far as analytic experience demonstrates its importance. That from this sequence of what is posited as logical, as signifier, but literal, I mean inscribable, in so far as the inscription is where there arises in our experience the function of the Real, at least if you follow me, that something like an x can be added to this enjoyment, and constitute what I already defined as grounding surplus enjoying (*plus-de-jouir*).

It remains that Boole is far from not indicating that it is not simply the relationship of enjoyment to surplus enjoying, in so far as surplus

enjoying is supposed to be precisely what ek-sists, ek-sists with respect to what? Precisely the knot whose use and function I am trying for the moment to illuminate for you. He sees very clearly that in order to end up with the function $x = x^3$ and no longer simply x^2 , he sees very clearly that the third term, the term $(1 + x)$ can be written differently and specifically $(-1 -x)$. I mean $(-1 -x)$ taken in brackets, which is equivalent mathematically – I mean in so far as writing is what is mathematical – what can be inscribed here by minus before the brackets and by $(1 + x)$, put on the inside:

$$-(1 + x)$$

I write $-(1 + x)$ and I say that it is the equivalent to the addition here of $(-1 -x)$ and that Boole adds them in order to reject them, to reject them in so far as logic is supposed to be designed to assure the status of the truth.

But for the moment, what we are aiming at, is not to give its status to the truth, since the truth, we say, is never stated except from a half-saying, that it is properly speaking unthinkable, except at the locus of the saying, to mark that a proposition is not true, and to mark it with a bar, with an upper bar that excludes it, and marks it with the sign of false.

(200) In the order of things, in so far as the symbol is designed to ek-sist it in this order of things, it is properly, whatever may be said, whatever Boole may say studying or claiming to establish the status of thought, it is unthinkable, precisely, it is unthinkable to split anything whatsoever nameable, to split by a pure not, to designate what is not named. Does this mean that we ought to put to the test, put to the test what results from $x^3 = x$, assuredly it is already something to see functioning in it this three by which I mark as such the Real, and this is where we are going to take up again our Borromean knot.

I would like once more to give the example of the fact that even if the statement of the Borromean knot ek-sists with respect to analytic

practice, it is what permits it to be supported in this space of ours. And this without our knowing, at the present time, despite Aristotle's quotations, what the number of the dimensions of this space is, I mean even the one where we name things. Look, this is the same thing as what I first drew on the board, namely, that we have here a ring, a ring of string as I precisely called it the first time that I introduced this function.

Here is the ring of string, the three rings of string. You see that they hold together. They hold together in so far as there is here one which I put on the horizontal, the two others being vertical and the verticals crossing over one another. It is obvious that this cannot be unknotted. The Borromean knot as such has made a lot of people here work, and they have even sent me the testimony of this. This is the simplest form.

(201) It is striking that in the works – it is veritable works that have been sent to me on this point – works which do their share in all sorts of other ways, they are innumerable, to knot these three in such a way that they allow, with the unknotting of a single one of the three rings, exactly to free all the others, and as I told you, whatever may be the number of them. But to limit ourselves to three, since this three goes with our three functions of the Imaginary the Symbolic and the Real, this very precisely not to distinguish them, to see up to what point the fact that they are three, and by this fact to construct from them the very logic of the Real. Namely, to see at what moment we are going to be able to see arising, simply from these three, strictly equivalent, as

you can immediately see – from these three to give rise to the beginning of what would be differentiation in it. Differentiation is initiated, is initiated from the fact, and I am astonished that in the works that I have received, no one has pointed it out to me, here you are: through these three as they are arranged here, there are determined let us say eight quadrants, *1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8*. I take one of them, any one whatsoever, and from this quadrant I pull the flattened out one, the one that you are going to see – you are going to see from where you are, but by being where I am, it is certainly exactly the same, namely, that you see that something is already found there, because of this flattening out, is found to be already oriented. I mean that you certainly see the same inscription of the knot which is the one that I see, namely, on this occasion, for what I have shown you, by having taken my knot in the way it has been depicted, the fact is that by the flattening out something is outlined that is inscribed in following out its shape, which is inscribed as dextrogyratory.

Once it is flattened out as it is and turned over, I know in advance that it is the same dextrogyratory. It is enough to do this small job, indeed to imagine the turning over – and this also can be written – you will

see that it is not the mirror image, that in turning over the Borromean knot you do not see something which is its mirror image.

(202) Does this not render all the more striking this fact: it is that in taking up again my quadrants – let's say that I chose earlier – I do not know if it is effectively what I did – that one for you on the top right – if I take this one, that not only as I said on the top and at the right but

I also say, in front, if I take the one no longer on the top right and in front, but below on the left behind, the one that is strictly opposite it and if it is from there that I start to flatten it out in the same way that I previously did, it is quite notable – and you can verify it – that what will result from this flattening out will be a way in which the knot is squeezed, in which the knot is tightened in the exactly inverse way, namely, laevogyratory.

There comes out then from the simple handling already of the Borromean knot, there arises a distinction which is of the order of orientation. If one is in the clockwise direction, the other is in the inverse direction. We must certainly not be astonished, be astonished that something of this order can happen, because it is in the nature of things that space should be oriented. It is even from there that there proceeds the function described as that of mirror image, and of all symmetry.

I apologise for the asperity of what my discourse today implies. Simply, I note for you that this fact of orientation for the opposite

quadrants is something that already indicates to us that it is in (203) conformity with the structure, from the simple fact that the orientation arises from the single support from the single nodal support for which here I take up arms. It is conceivable from these rings themselves to mark a direction in them, namely, an orientation. In other words, to take the last, the one that is written here (1), to ask ourselves the question about what results from making use of an orientation in conformity with the one that we have abstained from of two species [?] and of two species alone which are different, namely,

to realise that there will result from it a figure, a figure such that its periphery will mark by that fact the same orientation. What is required for one of these figures to be transformed into the other, namely, this one equally completed (2)? You have seen from my hesitation the very mark of the difficulty that is encountered in the handling of the aforesaid rings of string. This is the mirror image of the other. But what is enough to transform the one into the other? Something which is definable in the following very simple way: namely, that, as you see the Borromean knot itself displayed, you see that any one of them is manifested by cutting each of the two others in such a way that the one being freed, the one being sectioned, the two others are free. Which means that one of these rings can turn around one of the two others, and that this all by itself will give us a new Borromean knot. The law of what is happening on this occasion is the following: here you only have to – I apologise for not having coloured chalk, it would be better, I am drawing it in chalk – what happens if we fold back one of these knots, one of these rings, around another?

This is exactly what we get – from this we get a new figure which – I'm going to rub out the old one so that you can see it better – we get a new figure which has as a property to be of this kind. Namely, that, (204) you see – this one is rubbed out – namely, that you see it, the figure is presented in this way, we have this which has remained invariable, and two others...two other elements. There you are: the two other elements present the sort of orientation which is the one defined here...namely, that, as compared, is that not so, to this...this being marked by *a* for example you will subsequently have a presentation like this, namely, if this is *b*, you will have an inversion

of direction from the b and of the c and an inversion of orientation of their curves, things being completed in the following way. There you are.

What matters is the following: it is to see that, by inverting the a what results from it, is a totally different orientation of the tightening of the knot. Namely, that from the simple fact that we have turned over one of the rings, the two other elements, those that we have not inverted, the two other elements change direction. I mean that, as is conceivable, the segment, the segment that I section in this mess, the segment that is found to be sectioned by the turning over of this ring which was first of all there, the segment has changed direction.

Namely, that to one, to this one here, this other segment and this one has fitted here in a way that we will call if you wish, centripetal, while previously the three were centrifugal. This indeed is why, when we turn over a further ring of string, this ring of string will remain in its primal orientation for the segment itself that we are going to have to turn over. Namely, that if now, after having turned over a we turn over b , b will find itself keeping this centripetal direction, but then it is these two others, namely, one centrifugal and the other centripetal, that will be inverted so that the result of this will be that the centripetal becomes centrifugal and the centrifugal becomes centripetal, we will have here anew one centrifugal and two centripetal. But the one that will be centrifugal will be one of the turned over centripetals.

Do I have to do all of that again, or has someone followed it?

I exposed myself to, to not even looking at notes, for this simple reason, which is that the very difficulty of handling, the so small imaginable, as one might say, of this Borromean knot from which we are trying to draw some profit, is the very thing that that I am not unhappy, in short, to highlight, is that not so, to highlight a way...of ...there you are, after the second circuit, is that not so, a laevogyratory that has been reproduced like the preceding one, is that not so, and it is

(205) in so far as we have turned over the b after having turned over the a that we obtain the following: that we have a centripetal in place of a centrifugal which is here, and a centrifugal at the place of the centripetal which is here, is that not so. As a consequence, we have here c , a , and b .

I was asked the question, I was asked the question in a place where people were working, I was asked the question as to what relationship this Borromean knot had with what I have stated about the four – I would say – options, described as sexed identification. In other words, what relationship this might have with the

I am now going to try to tell you. Suppose that we give to this position in a quadrant that we designate according to the mark in Cartesian co-ordinates, the eight quadrants in question. You should be

able to see, to notice that, let us take the top right quadrant in front, it is by folding over – ah, finally...good there you are! – it is by the folding back of the ring of string marked here, I mean in so far as this ring of string, this one then, is held – there you are – in so far as this ring of string is held by this one, namely, the one that I will call the ‘in depth’, we will call this one here ‘the top’, and this one here ‘the flat’.

Good, so then the flat comes here...and it is the one that comes there [*Lacan demonstrates with a knot that he has in his hand*], so then, green, blue, red. This is how things will present themselves. Good. (206) It is a little bit...a little bit different. There you are. You will have to take a bit of trouble, yourselves, to make the things, because after all, I note that it doesn't work out all that easily. Good.

The important thing is the following: it is, it is to indicate that it is by folding back this one, namely, the vertical towards the in depth; by folding back this one, is that not so, namely, the one that was first of all well marked at its place here, it is by folding it back in this way that we are going to get the ring, the Borromean knot as it is situated in this quadrant on the left of whatever quadrant we started from. In this quadrant, then, with inversion, inversion of the laevogyratory, is that not so, namely, a passage to the dextrogyratory, because the one that I did at the bottom was a laevogyratory. I took it that way because in the way that the knots are arranged – the way that the rings of string are arranged, this is how it is knotted. So then here we have an inversion. Which means that, to take things by placing them like

here for example, in this quadrant there, is that not so, we have to pass into this one, we have a first inversion. By passing into this one, we have a second inversion, as in some direction – on condition that it is a direction of symmetry with respect to one of the planes of intersection we have, at the three extremities, a change in the Borromean knot, we have an inversion. Good, if we pass along here, namely, that we go through it from the top to the bottom we have a new inversion, namely, a return of what was here, of the laevogyratory. These

operations are commutative, namely, that by passing in this way, we arrive at the same return.

(207) In others words, it is at the four opposite points, namely, on the eight quadrants of four definable quadrants by as I might say the inscription in the cube of a tetrahedron, it is with that that we are going to see appearing four homogenous figures, all three, on this occasion, laevogyratory, since we have started from a laevogyratory. Good. What results from this? How consider this multiplication, as I might say, by four, from what results from simply the flattening out, or the writing of the Borromean knot. I propose simply something that, given the time, I will only be able to give a commentary on the next time, it is this. If, as you have just seen, what is at stake is a tetrahedral figure, a tetrahedral figure in so far as it is produced by the tipping over of two of the rings of string, and one can say two, whatever they are. Whatever they are, we come back to the laevogyratory figure, to specify it. We come back to it whatever the one of the two that has been folded over. There will remain one which has not been folded over. The one that remains is obviously the third, I mean the one that remains after the two others have been folded over. That for example, if we make of these rings of string, the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, what will remain in short, and what will remain in a centrifugal position, this again I would have to verify for you, I mean that you should be able to see that it is by tipping over the S and the I that at the end the R remains centrifugal. There is a good reason for that. If you have clearly seen the last figure, it is the R, namely, let us say the Real, that must be tipped over to obtain the last figure, which itself will be dextrogyratory and will be entirely centrifugal. It is a convenient way for you to remember what is involved in the second phase of what happens after two tipping overs, since you ought as I showed you, you ought shortly find in the strictly opposite quadrant, the one about which I spoke to you when I made this remark to you, this remark that was not found, namely, that in passing from one quadrant to the strictly opposite quadrant, to the

contradictory quadrant, to the diagonal quadrant, we obtain a knot, a knot no more if we start from the laevogyratory – we obtain a dextrogyratory knot. Good.

So then, verify all of this when you have a chance, in short, by making small manipulations like the ones that I made such a mess of before you and you will see in short the following: that by staying with the laevogyratory knot, we obtain what I qualified or specified as a tetrahedron, because you see how things happen. You can make, reconstitute: here for example you have to take one of the faces of the (208) square, you pull it, you reconstitute the cube, you reconstitute the cube starting from this, the fact is that it is always in a diagonal arrangement with respect to one of the faces of the cube that there are found the quadrants which are of the same kind of orientation and specifically on this occasion, of the laevogyratory kind.

I am simply going to suggest the following to you: this is what comes out of it starting from the function of enjoyment, what comes out is the following: it is that somewhere in one of these extremities of the tetrahedron somewhere there is situated the

there is no x to say no to of x

somewhere, and we are going to put it,

there is something which says no to

somewhere, there is

namely, that: all (tous) are a function of it

And that somewhere, you have:

not all (pas-toutes)

It is not for nothing that I put it in this form, namely, a basic form.

We will have in a way to put the following in question: the not (*pas*), not the exclusive not like the earlier one, the step of what exists by saying no to the phallic function. We will on the other hand have what says yes to it, but which is reduplicated, namely, that there is the all, on the one hand, and on the other hand the not-all (*pas-tous*) in other words what I qualified as not-all (*pas-toutes*). Does it not appear to you that we have here a programme, namely, to take in what is a subject to be examined, to take the criticism of what is involved in the not, of what is implied by the saying no, namely, the interdiction, (209) and very specifically, when all is said and done, that which, specifying itself by the saying no to the function, says no to the phallic function.

Saying no to the phallic function, is what we call, in the analytic discourse:

the function of castration

There is what says yes to the phallic function, and says it as all, namely, very specifically a certain type which is altogether necessitated by the definition of what we call man. You know that the not-all very essentially served to mark that there is no *the woman*, namely, that there are only as I might say the diverse and in a way one by one, and that all of this finds itself in a way dominated by the privileged function of the following, that there is nevertheless not-one to represent the saying that prohibits, namely, the absolutely-no. *Voilà.* .

So then because there is an exam now, I simply began the thing today. I beg your pardon for having spent so long on it, we will take it up the next time.

Seminar 14: Tuesday 21 May 1974

I apologise for being late and I want to thank you for waiting. You see that I am persevering, as regards the foundation that I am giving this year to my discourse in the Borromean knot. The Borromean knot is here justified by materialising, by presenting this reference to writing. The Borromean knot is only on this occasion a mode of writing. It finds itself in short presentifying the register of the Real.

When, at the start, I questioned myself about what the unconscious was, I only intended to take it at the level of what analytic experience effectively constitutes. At that time, I had in no way elaborated discourse as such; the notion, the function of discourse was only to come later. And it is in so far as discourse is where there is situated a social bond and then, it must be said, a political one, it is inasmuch as this discourse situates it, that I spoke about discourse. But I started from experience alone, and in this experience, it is clear that language, that something which undisputedly is required by the practice of analysis, that the practice of analysis is founded on a pathos, on a pathos that must be situated, and it is a matter of situating how one intervenes in it.

To intervene gives rise to the notion of act. It is also essential to think out, this notion of act, and to demonstrate how it can come to consist in a saying. At one time, as they say, I thought I should point out that the analyst, not only operates by the word alone, but is specified by only operating with that. Refusing this intervention on the body, for example, which passes by the absorption, in any form whatsoever, of (212) substances that then enter into the chemical dynamics of the

body, for example medications, as they are called, good. The point that I am at in it, is simply something, the circuit, is that not so, it is the circle that you see drawn here. The fact is that there is a link – but it is a matter of knowing which one, between sex and the word. It is clear that sex involves the duality of corporal structure. A duality which is reflected in a cascade, as one might say, about the duality for example of the soma and the germen, on the opposition between the living and the inanimate world, etc.

Is the notion of duality enough to homogenise everything that is two? You see right away that this is not true. The simple enumeration that I carried out, is that not so, of the duality of corporal structure, of the duality of the soma and the germen, of the opposition between the living and the inanimate world, ought to be enough for you to see that this polarity, to call it by its name, in no way homogenises the series of poles that are at stake, is that not so. It does not in any way suffice to ensure that the notion of world, or universe, is correlated to this unthinkable thing which is the subject, in so far as it is supposed to be what? The reflection, the consciousness of the aforesaid world. And this by reason of what I will call the pathos of meanings. There is no need to marvel at the fact that there is a being to know what? The rest, is that not so, and it is obviously from all time that the metaphor of the sexual relationship has been cherished for this patent duality. Patent, but specified, local, distinct from other dualities. Hence the accent given to the word 'knowing' (*connaître*), hence also the idea of active and passive, without one being able to know, moreover, in this polarity described as the subject and the world, where is the active, where is the passive. There is no need for an active for the pathos to

subsist and attest itself in our lived experience, as they say, is that not so. We suffer. That is what is at stake when we are dealing with (213) analysis. We act also in order to get out of it, of this suffering, and on occasion, we put a lot into it. It is a matter of knowing what our two persons, as they say, namely, two animals situated by a very specified political organisation that I called a discourse, it is a matter of knowing what is the saying of an exchange ritualised in words, and what is called, what is supposed to be at stake in this exercise, namely, the unconscious.

There I am trying to tell you: there is some knowledge in the Real, which functions without our being able to know how the articulation is made in what we are used to see being realised. Is this what is at stake and what we would indeed have to admit, is that not so, as stemming from an organising thought? This is the option that religion and metaphysics take, and in this respect they are on the same side; they join hands in the suppositions that they ordain for being.

So then what I want to say, is that unconscious knowledge, the one Freud supposes, is distinguished from this knowledge in the Real in such a way, that whatever of it there is, even science manages to make this knowledge providential, namely, something, a subject, guarantees it as harmonic. What Freud puts forward – but I note in passing that it is not all – is that it is not providential, that it is dramatic. Arising from something which starts from a default in being, a disharmony between thought and the world, and that this knowledge is at the heart of this something that we name ek-sistence, because it insists from outside and it is disturbing. It is in this sense that the sexual relationship shows itself in the individual – whom I am not the only one to characterise as a speaking being, is that not so – shows itself to be disturbed. This in contrast with everything that seems to happen among other beings. It is even from this that there has come the distinction between nature and culture. And very specifically this nature, as I might say, we must indeed characterise as not being as

natural as all that. Because from where we are living, nature is not indispensable (*ne s'impose pas*). For us what is indispensable, is a different mode, a different mode of knowledge, a knowledge which is in no way attributable to a subject who is supposed to preside over its order, who is supposed to preside over its harmony, and it is in this that, first of all, in my first statements, to characterise Freud's unconscious, there was a formula that I find... – that I came back to on several occasions – that I find I put forward at Sainte-Anne, which is the following: that God does not believe in God.

(214) To say: 'God does not believe in God', is exactly the same thing as to say 'there is something of the unconscious'. Of course, given the level of the audience, is that not so, that I had then, namely, psychoanalysts as they were able to present themselves at that time, that had no effect. It had no effect except for the fact that they asked me the question whether, whether I in short believed in him. There is someone since, in short, is that not so, who defined me by saying that I was someone who believed he was Lacan, is that not so, it was the way in which I had myself defined Napoleon, but... about the end of his life, in short, when in sum, my God, he was mad, is that not so, because to believe in one's own name, in short, is... is the very definition of it. Good. Contrary to what someone called Gabriel Marcel imagined, in short, I do not believe in Lacan. But I ask the question of whether there is not a strict consistency between what Freud puts forward as being the unconscious, and the fact that there is no one to believe in God, especially not himself, because it is in this that the knowledge of the unconscious consists.

The knowledge of the unconscious is completely contrary to instinct, namely, to what presides, in short, not simply over the idea of nature, but over every idea of harmony. It is inasmuch as, somewhere, there is this break which ensures that the most natural thing, as one might say, the one that appears from our point of view, when we look, indeed animals, are completely different, objects in the world: we construct

on this all the extrapolations that we can. What we note is something which seems to produce something between two bodies which indisputably is completely different, moreover, among most species, than the relationship of the body described as masculine to the one that is acknowledged as feminine. Namely, that there is in sum between these two bodies, I would say very little resemblance, while among animals, what is striking is the degree to which male and female – let us say the word to go quickly and to indicate my thought – are narcissistic.

So then, I would like to put forward today, because I must all the same put forward something, something which is important, is that not so. It is that if I put the accent on the fact that what creates an obstacle to the sexual relationship, is nothing other than this function that I found myself the last time rewriting on the board in the form of and it is not for nothing that I wrote it thus, mathematically. It is inasmuch as what can be written, I trust to be in the right direction to (215) reach the Real. What does that mean? Is it because here I sometimes happen – in the whole measure that you allow me because of this microphone – to write things on the board, is it this that supports my relation with you as it is established in this discourse? I do not believe so, I ceaselessly question it: what I want to highlight here, is something which implies, which is that I say, I always say the truth, and that this is inscribed in the Symbolic, I always say the truth not simply because I repeat it, I open up the path that makes a saying exist, and that your relationship with me in this situation, is that this makes you enjoy. I have more than once asked the question, in short, I turn around it, but what is certain, is that here there is to be found the accent, in short, of this proper saying that I am trying to state inasmuch as elsewhere no doubt, I take support on writing, but that it is on the side of writing that there is concentrated what I try to question about the unconscious when I say that the unconscious, is something in the Real.

I said 'knowledge' (*savoir*), on the one hand, but I also underlined the following: that if this dimension of knowledge touches the edges of the Real, that it is by grasping, by playing with what I would call, in short, the folds, the edges of the Real, it is inasmuch as I have faith in the fact that writing alone supports this Real as such, that I can say something that is simply orientated, orientated simply. Because to say the truth is, as I might say, within everybody's reach, and in a certain way, for us in the analytic experience the truth is our material (*éttoffe*). In what way is it our material? In the fact that it is the truth about this pathos, about this suffering that I designated as such, which leads to this circumscribing of an experience structured like a discourse. And I tried to give the articulation of these discourses, but a written articulation: it is only by this that something can bear witness to the Real in it.

So then what is at stake when the last time, I recalled to you the four terms, the four punctuations, the written punctuations of the identification that I would call on this occasion not 'sexual' but 'sexed', when I recalled that the Borromean knot allowed there to be situated each of these writings in which something can be mapped out starting from the primal knot. This knot that I showed you as best I could with these rings, the rings of string that I held in my hand, in the four quadrants that they determine, that they determine starting from a (216) first flattening out, and from a first flattening out in that two of these rings must – and I said two and not the same ones, not the same since moreover, if it were the same it would come back to the same place. Namely, that there must be two of them, two different ones for us to be able to reach a quadrant that is homologous to the first that was flattened out. I thought I was able, able at that moment to show you on the board in a way that was obviously risky, since, as you were able to see – and to my great exasperation – I became entangled in it, is that not so. I became entangled in it because, a curious thing, there is in sum, this is what this experience signifies, there is something of the...of the still not mastered in – you know it, I pointed it out to you,

I remind you – of the still not mastered in what is of the order of knots. It is strange, it is singular, even though already something was able to be put forward about it, that the Borromean knot had been identified to the plait of six movements, six, and not three, as it might seem to be able to appear there. It is already something, and today what I am showing you...to put...to refer to what I already marked for you, already wrote, already wrote as being the simplest form, the simplest form of the Borromean knot which is very exactly the following. Namely, the one where there is nowhere a third ring, the third ring here being represented only by a straight line that you will allow me to suppose to be infinite. It is an altogether capital and even illuminating supposition in itself, I would say. Illuminating in that it is very well known, it is the first remark that any elaboration of knots, that of Artin, for example, whose volume you know perhaps – some of you in any case have surely got hold of it – that of someone like Artin who says the following: the fact is that there is only a single way on a simple line to affirm that the knot (217) cannot be unknotted, it is either one thing or the other: either the two ends in effect stretch to infinity, which makes it impossible not to recognise anything whatsoever that is formed in a knot, or the two ends are connected, in which case it can be checked out whether or not it is indeed a knot.

What kind of remark does this suggest to us? The fact is that if this

straight line, this straight line of which the knot consists, the Borromean one on this occasion, and which is specified by the fact of crossing the knots, I would say, in a way that cuts the first inasmuch as the first cuts the second, which at the same time requires alternation, namely, that it will cut the first and will be cut by the

second that it encounters in so far as it is itself within the first ring and that it will then cut the blue ring twice just as it will be cut twice by the green ring, the blue ring and the green ring being distinguished by the fact that it is the blue ring that cuts the green ring.

It is then from a triadic relationship that what makes the knot is situated on this occasion: and you can see that the infinite straight line requires, requires that it cannot be given any orientation. For where does it start? It must be known whether there is a start in order that with respect to this start an orientation can be taken.

On the other hand, it is enough for this infinite straight line to be joined end to end in a ring, to express ourselves in a way that does not imply any geometrical shape but simply a consistency, for us the very fact that we give it the consistency of a ring, there appears something which is of the order of orientation, not on what I called just now this straight line that all of a sudden I turned into a ring, but in the knot itself, for you see – marked it for you each time by a correspondence – (218) that it is by the fact that the individual specified here as being orange or yellow, it is by the fact that it is flattened out in the form of

a ring, it is by this fact and by none other, that there appears here this orientation that I can call laevogyratory. If I force myself to follow the direction that each of the three indicates to me, outside of a knot that they make, while from the other side, the rings appear quite differently, namely here, dextrogyratory. It is in so far as here we have the things under this form that we can say that what, in the other,

is presented under a certain mode is precisely, in the other form, inverted.

It is clear that it is inasmuch as we take things in this form that we have here a dextrogyratory form, just as it is inasmuch as we take the things here under the edge, under the opposite side to the point where we have folded back the orange line, that we have here a laevogyratory form. That means that what appears here, is something of that order. At the same time we note the following: that as compared to what is inverted, namely, the orange line, there is inversion of the side: here the blue line is on the right, here it is on the left, and it is in a relationship of extremity with respect to the orange line that the green line finds itself. Namely, that it is easy to understand, this is what I tried to show you the last time, namely, that in folding back one of these rings of string with respect to the two others, what we find of course is that it is elsewhere, elsewhere on one of these circles, namely, [*a slip*] the one here, the green, that it is the one that is here, the blue, that it is elsewhere we find that we cut it, in other words, that the yellow line [*previously called orange*] inasmuch as it is the one that we have folded back, is continued and cuts.

There is then every time something that changes, that changes in the orientation of the knot. Each time we pass from one quadrant, from one quadrant into another, there is something that changes in the orientation of the knot. And that is why the knot, the knots are specified four by four, that they have this relationship among one another that I qualified the other day as tetrahedral, and where I wanted to recognise what is involved in the mode of four places reserved for the modes of identification, the identification called sexed. It is obviously striking that you see that today again, is that not so, I found myself, even in this ultra-simple form, in difficulty. Is this not enough to make you sense, in the difficulty in demonstrating it (219) myself in writing, what is involved in the effect, the effect of folding back, inasmuch as already what is at stake is one of the terms

chosen as such and in a way previously distinguished from the two others.

It is certain that it is in this that this object of writing presents us with something particularly gripping: it is that here is a writing that in a way, I will say, we master with difficulty; it is striking enough that already in a second phase, namely, after having believed that I would get out of it easily by this artifice, that I found myself anew, perplexed, entangled with this writing. Is there not here the sign of this something that has presided over the aversion, the quite striking aversion in mathematics, an aversion that happened with respect to what the knots are. For after all, it would not have been inconceivable that this something which was drawn in a developed geometry which effectively functioned just like a writing, a writing by which science was initiated, I mean in Greek geometry, it is quite striking to see that this might also have been able to be in an effort concerning the squeezing for example that is produced when we set aside here this knot with respect to the line which serves to constitute it properly speaking as knot, just as in folding it here, we see quite manifestly that we squeeze something, we squeeze, what can we say except what is at stake, namely, something squeezed, there is nothing more to be said about it. And it is this squeezed that is in question, that is in question in this function through which, in order to say the relationship of the Symbolic, of the Imaginary and of the Real, I say that it is here that there is taken up something, something which, on this occasion, is indeed in effect the subject. Again I must try to illuminate this something, try to illuminate it in a way by individualising what indeed each one of these rings indeed is, namely, how the Symbolic differs from the Imaginary and differs from the Real.

To illuminate very quickly, as best I can, no more, this lantern, I would say that the Symbolic, I would put forward that the Symbolic is of the order of the One, this One that, the last time, I already put forward to you as constituting in the logical order that our friend

Boole tries to construct as being the universe. I pointed out to you at the same time that there is something disputable in this; for to make (220) the universe something of One is already to posit a hypothesis over against this and along the very line that Boole proceeds in posing the formula:

$$x(1-x) = 0$$

Namely: *everything that is not x, is what is x subtracted from the Universe, and their product, their intersection, their encounter is strictly equal to zero.* It is on this foundation that Boole believes he is able to advance a formalisation of what is involved in logic.

As opposed to this, I propose, I propose to give to the One the value of that in which, through my discourse, there consists, there consists phallic enjoyment in so far as it is what creates an obstacle to the sexual relationship. It is inasmuch as phallic enjoyment – and there, let us say that I make an organ of it, I suppose it to be incarnated by what, in the man, corresponds to it as organ – it is inasmuch as this enjoyment takes on this privileged emphasis, privileged in such a way that it stamps itself on all our experience, our analytic experience. It is around this, because it is only there, around, around the sexed individual himself who supports it, it is inasmuch as this enjoyment is privileged that the whole of analytic experience is organised. And I propose, and I propose that it should be to it that there is referred the function of the One in the logical formalisation as Boole promotes it.

In other words, that if there is signifier – and signifier is not sign. The signifier is distinguished from the sign in the fact that we can make the sign circulate in an objective world. The sign is what goes from the emitter to the receiver and which to the receiver gives a sign of the emitter. But it is quite otherwise in the form of what I called the message received in an inverted form that the signifier is posited as what it is in so far as it has a relationship to another signifier that it gives rise to a subject, namely, in its configuration. What is suggested by this, is that in so far as something which is designated in Boole by

an x , something is precipitated as signifier, this signifier is in a way stolen, subtracted, borrowed from phallic enjoyment itself. And it is in so far as the signifier is the substitute for it that the signifier itself is found to create an obstacle to there ever being written what I called the sexual relationship, I mean something which was supposed to be able to be written xR and then y . Namely, that in no way can there be written in a mathematical way what is involved in what is presented as a function with regard to the phallic function itself. I mean that it is in so far as what is written is:

negation of the phallic function itself and completely opposite that there is no such thing, namely,

that there does not exist an x to deny the function of x , to be opposed to it, and that inversely I introduce at the level of the Universal this something which, sticking to the phallic function, is characterised on the one hand by a universal quantifier, an inverted capital — you know that this is how it is written:

but in the other, it puts a negative bar, namely, it says that there is somewhere a function that is distinguished from it by being ‘not-all’ (*pas-toute*).

Not all, what does that mean? The least that can be said is that there are two of them. It is in the measure where at the level where there is articulated this ‘not all’, there is not just one enjoyment. Here do not go too quickly, here do not go too quickly and do not start supposing that what I am distinguishing, is something or other like that which sexually would correspond to this so called division of enjoyment called clitoral from an enjoyment called vaginal. That is not what is at stake. What I am talking about is this distinction that must be made between phallic enjoyment in so far as in the speaking being it predominates and that it is from there that there has been stolen the whole function of significance. That there is a distinction to be made

between this prevalent enjoyment in so far as it creates an obstacle to what is involved in the sexual relationship, that there is a distinction to be made between this enjoyment and that which, alongside – I introduced it to you the other day, I think sufficiently with what was involved in the tree, the tree described as that of science, of the knowledge (*science*) of Good and Evil – there is the fact that undoubtedly the animal, the animal is distinguished by subsisting not simply in a body, but that this body as such is only identified, only has (222) identity, not as has been said from all time traditionally, of thought, of this something or other which by the fact that it thinks would make it be, but from the fact that it enjoys itself. I mean that there is not only this apperception, apprehension, sensation, pressure, touch, sight, or any other mode of appropriation through the senses, it is only in so far as it consists and that it consists in a body, what is at stake is an enjoyment and an enjoyment which is found according to our experience to be of a different order than what is involved in phallic enjoyment.

This is how I began from the beginning of my teaching by authenticating, by making original from the imaginary relation, made reference to what I would call the homology, the resemblance, precisely this part which is so hesitant, when it is the speaking being that is at stake, the homology of bodies. That in the animal we must clearly note that phallic enjoyment whatever it may be does not have the same prevalence, does not have the same weight, the same weight in a way of opposition that it has with respect to enjoyment in so far as two bodies enjoy one another. This is the break through which there is damaged, as one might say, in analytic experience everything that is organised about love. That if one speaks as I said, I recalled it earlier, if one speaks about the knot, it is to make an allusion to the embrace, to the hug. But very different is the way in which there irrupts into the life of each one this enjoyment which, either belongs, as one might say to one of the bodies, but to the other only appears in the form, as I might say, of reference to another as such, even if something in the

body can give it a slight support, I mean at the level of this organ which is called the clitoris.

It is in so far as we must conceive of the Symbolic as stolen, subtracted from the order One of phallic enjoyment and in so far as the relationship of bodies *qua* two, by this very fact, cannot but go by way of the reference, the reflection onto something which is different to the Symbolic, which is distinct from it, and it is to know what here and now appears of the three in the slightest writing. What language in a way sanctions, is the fact that in its formalisation it requires something other than the simple homophony of the saying. The fact is that it is in a letter, and that is why the signifier shows, shows this precipitation through which the speaking being can have access to the Real. It is inasmuch as from all time every time it was a matter of (223) configuring something which is supposed to be in a way the encounter of what is emitted, of what is emitted as a complaint, as a statement of the truth, every time it is a matter of everything that is involved in this half-saying, an alternating, contrasting, half-saying, an alternating chant of what leaves the speaking being separated in two halves every time this is what is at stake, it is always, it is always from a reference to writing that what can be situated in language finds its Real, and it is inasmuch as I will try to push further for you this reference to the Real, to the Real as third, that I will leave that for today, apologising for not having been able to advance further.

Introduction

Preliminary to the Seminar of R.S.I.

19 November 1974

There is no mike. So you're going to have to tell me whether you can hear me.

There you are, there are people, I know because I was told so, who are living the strike like a celebration. I know it, of course, through analysis. One gets to know things by analysis! One gets to know even that there are people twisted enough for that. But anyway, why not? It's subjective, as they say. That means that there are people who can tackle a lot of things from the right angle. Nevertheless, I am not one of them; as analyst, I can only take the strike to be a symptom, in the sense that this year perhaps, I will manage to convince you of it, that the symptom, to refer to one of my three categories, belongs to the Real. The annoying thing – and this is why I have some reservations – is that it is an organised symptom; that is what is bad, at least from the point of view of the analyst.

So then, if all the same I am going to go on strike, it is not because for me it is a celebration, but it happens that this strike comes to me like a ring on my finger; I mean that it happens that today, namely, at the start of this year 74-75, I have not the slightest inclination to do a seminar for you, as is attested by the fact that you have not seen any

notice of it, announcing the title like every other year. I must say that nevertheless your number today does not fail to shake me. You know that every year I question myself about what it could be that motivates this crowd. It is not any more resolved now, it is not any more resolved for me, but all the same I consider it as an appeal, an appeal (10) linked to the fact that what I wrote, did nothing more than write, I mean what is written on the board with little signs, the \circ , the S_1 , the S_2 , the $\$$ of the subject, the fact is that the analytic discourse is something that stirs you, I mean which stirs *you*. It is not a *you*, a *stirs you* in the neutral sense. It is true that to have written it, is an attempt, a tentative approximation. One could perhaps do better. I hope that one will do better.

But in short this year, I have to tell you that I have other concerns. That would, I hope, only give me greater merit in your eyes, if I pursue this seminar here. I have other concerns and I question myself as to whether I ought not let them take precedence. I mean that among you – I see numerous faces of them here – there are people who belong to my School. And perhaps after all my lassitude comes from something that is eating me, namely, that this seminar prevents me from paying more attention to this School.

This year to stimulate this School, I took a tack of which some among you have perhaps heard an echo. I am not going to put the concerns that this gives me into the public forum. Not, of course, that this is something private, quite the contrary, since what is at stake is that there is elsewhere, somewhere other than here, something that gives a place to other teachings than mine. It is strange, strange in the properly Freudian sense, *unheimlich*, it is strange that it is by some people who do not find themselves properly speaking yet authorised by analysis, but who are on the path, that there comes this resistance to the reason why I am stimulating them. I am stimulating them in short to make effective, to make effective what? In a testimony that they would contribute about the point where they are at, to make

effective this *passee* which perhaps some of you know is what I am trying to introduce into my School, this *passee* by which in short what is at stake is that each one contributes his stone to the analytic discourse by bearing witness to how one enters into it.

It is strange that among them there are some who are fully formed analysts and who when literally – this is what I did in this place where I wanted certain teachings to take place – when literally I beg their help – this is what I did – refuse it in the most categorical way, and go as far as to answer me with the insult, the insult which can be found in the newspapers for example – these are not things that have an effect on me but which, all the same about this insult, which is already not (11) bad to find in the newspaper, in the newspaper *Le Monde* in particular, as it happens, inflate this insult, and add to it. Yeah.

If I speak this year, I will take things from the angle of the identity of self to self. The question is whether this applies to the analyst. Can the analyst be considered as an element? Does he make, in other words, a *set*? Making a set/doing it together (*faire ensemble*), this is something that I will try to explain to you, is not to form a trade union. They are two different terms. *Faire ensemble* might mean, that means being able to make a series. And what I am questioning myself about is where this series stops? Among other terms, can an analyst, like the example of what I have just alluded to about the insult, behave like an imbecile (*imbécile*)? This is a very important question. How judge what I am describing as imbecility? It surely has a meaning, even in the analytic discourse; elsewhere, of course, in every discourse no one has any doubt, one is an imbecile or not, I am saying with respect to this discourse specifically to the discourse of the master, the discourse of the university, the scientific discourse, there is no doubt about it. How define imbecility in the analytic discourse? Here is a question, a question that I introduced, faith, I would say, from the first year of my seminar in stating that analysis is certainly a remedy against ignorance, that it is without effect against being an asshole (*connerie*).

Hang on, pay attention! I already said that *connerie* is not imbecility. How can you situate imbecility, specify it as being an asshole?

The annoying thing and what is difficult in the question that I evoke, is something is perhaps something that you got wind of from me, I did not heavily insist on it, but all the same it must be said there are subjects for whom analysis, I mean the analytic experience, when they present themselves to it, does not succeed. And I specify that this makes them imbeciles. It must indeed be that there is something flawed at the start. That means perhaps that they would be more useful, I mean useable elsewhere. I mean that for something else they have obvious gifts. This brings us back to the ethics of each discourse and it is not for nothing that I put forward the term ethics of psychoanalysis. Ethics is not the same in it and it is perhaps with those whose ethics would have made them shine elsewhere that analysis does not succeed. Simple hypothesis, but that perhaps – this cannot be without twists and turns – perhaps if I decide, we will put here, finally we will put, it is a manner of speaking, I will put to the test here, (12) starting from the fact that I am indicating that there is no other ethics than to play the game according to the structure of a discourse and that we rediscover there my title of last year; it is the non-dupes, those who do not play the game of a discourse, who find themselves liable to err. It is not inevitably any worse for that. Only it is at their own risk. Those who err, in each discourse, are not inevitably useless in it. Far from it! Only it would be preferable in order to found a new one of these discourses, that people should be a little bit more dupe.

There you are. So then since all the same it would be quite useless to tell you that I am suspending myself, that I am questioning myself about what I will do this year, it would be quite vain to do so, but to do it for two hours which is what you were expecting, well then, I am not going to do it. I am going to stop there while asking you simply to trust, in order to know if you are to come back here on the 10th December, the second Tuesday, to trust the little notices on which I

will inscribe the title that I will have chosen, if do this seminar this year. It is quite superfluous, and I would even say contra-indicated for you to bombard Gloria with telephone calls. The poor woman can't take any more! It will be one thing or another, either this notice will be put up there, let us say to leave the time to do it and then I must also think things out, the notice will be in the corridor two days before, or else it will not be. If it is not there, well then! You can tell yourselves that I am taking a year's sabbatical. If it is there, I am counting on seeing you as numerous as you are today.

Seminar 11: Tuesday 13 May 1975

There are no, there are no moods (*états d'âme*). This has to be said, to be demonstrated. And to promote the title under which this saying will be pursued next year, if I survive, I would announce it as: 4, 5, 6.

This year I said R.S.I. Why not 1, 2, 3? – “*Un, deux, trois, nous irons aux bois* (1, 2, 3 we will go to the wood) – you know the rest perhaps? – “*Quatre, cinq, six, cueillir des cerises*, (4, 5, 6 to pick cherries)” – Yes – “*Sept, huit, neuf, dans mon panier neuf*, (7, 8, 9 in my new basket). – Well, I will stop at 4, 5, 6. Why?

Why are R.S.I given as letters? That they are three can be said to be secondary. It is not because they are three that there is one which is the Real. Which, which of these three letters would deserve this title of Real? I say that at the level of logic, what matter! And that meaning yields it to number to the point that it is number that, am I going to say, dominates this meaning? Not at all! Determines it. The number three is to be demonstrated as what it is if it is the Real, namely, the Impossible. It is the most difficult sort of demonstration. What one wants to demonstrate does without saying, it must be impossible, a condition required for the Real. It ek-sists as impossible.

Again it must be demonstrated, not simply shown! Demonstrating refers to the Symbolic. If the Symbolic is thus a step ahead of the

Imaginary, that is not enough, it only gives the tone. And when all is said and done, it is not tone that one must trust but number. This is what I am trying to put to the test. But is a knotted number still a number? Or indeed is it something else?

(166) That is where we have got to. I have kept you throughout this year around a certain number of news flashes. For my part, I am not all that important in it, being determined as subject by the unconscious, or indeed by the practice, a practice that implies the unconscious as presupposed. Does that mean, that like every sub-posed, it is imaginary? It is the very meaning of the word *subject*, sup-posed as imaginary.

What is there in the Symbolic that is not imagined? What I want to tell you is that there is the hole. Someone who saw me preyed on, make no mistake, by this knot, that here [XI-1] I am drawing for you in its simplest form, someone who saw me preyed on by it, in more complicated forms, told me that I was contradicting myself in a way by having put forward at one time, in terms that are not even my own, which are from Picasso as everyone knows, 'I do not seek, I find', someone said to me: 'Well then there, I see you really searching.'

To search (*chercher*), is a term that comes from *circare*, as you can find in any etymological dictionary. I find all the same, because that not in the etymological dictionary, I found the hole, Soury's hole, if I dare to express myself in this way, through which I am reduced to pass. Does it have to do with what people imagine determines it,

namely, the circle? A circle may be a hole, but it is not always so... While I am at it, at this subject, I would say – I recall what can already be found in the last lines of my *Remarks on psychical causality* – an Arabic proverb which states that there are a certain number of things, he also names three of them, on which nothing leaves a trace, the man in the woman, he says first, indeed the step of the gazelle on a rock. I anticipated it, recalling the third term of this ending with a comma, ‘more inaccessible to our eyes, this trace, made for the signs of the (167) moneychanger.’ That is the third term. There is no trace on the coin that has been touched, only wear.

Yes! It is indeed here that there comes to be settled, make no mistake, this knotted thing that is at stake, I find, enough to have to foment the circle which is only the consequence of the hole, I find, enough to be able to move around (*circuler*). I do not know if you have noticed that the police whom Hegel posits very well are at the root of everything political and that there is nothing in politics that is not, when everything has been boiled down, purely and simply police, that policemen have only one word to say: keep moving (*Circulez!*). The gyre that I spoke to you about the last time does not matter to them, whether it is gyring to the right or to the left, they don’t give a damn, make no mistake, what is at stake is to keep moving! That becomes, that only becomes serious if one starts from the hole through which one must pass. What is remarkable in the knot called ‘bo’, I am not saying beautiful (*beau*), in the beau knot, as I will call it on this occasion, is exactly the fact that it forms a knot, while not moving around in a way that uses the hole as such. There is a difference between this knot and that one [XI-2] that the hole uses. This is what makes a chain.

It is striking ever since chains have been made that the thing that has not been noted, is that in the 'bo' knot, there is no need to use the hole because it makes a knot without making a chain. How does it make a knot? In such a way that, to redo it in the way the rings do [XI-3] which is exactly the same thing as that [XI-4], despite the appearance

as you see it in this form, this form of pure appearance, it is in the measure that these two rings are not knotted [XI-4] that the third, in this very measure, bends one of the two, that are free among themselves, bends it in such a way that necessarily when it gets to the other end of one of these circles, it will bend the other in its turn, and thus, it will turn around, if this ring, the small one there, we suppose it to be the Symbolic, it will indefinitely make a circuit of the – in inverted commas since it is not a true chain – of the 'false chain' of the Imaginary and the Symbolic. This indeed is what is at stake.

How recognise oneself in this coupled double circle and precisely, by not being knotted? In order for a knot to be Borromean, for a knot to be 'bo', it is not enough that it should be a knot, it is necessary that each of the elements, this term it is necessary and it is sufficient, is not

given its full meaning unless it is referred to the knot; to say it is necessary, is something, but to say it is sufficient implies, which is always forgotten because people do not make the hole (*trou*), the only hole that is worthwhile, the discovery (*trouvaille*)! Because one does not make the hole, one does not see that if the condition is lacking, nothing is going to work out! Which is the opposite of the ‘it is necessary’, the always eluded opposite. I am going to show it to you right away.

You knot two circles [XI-5] you knot them in a way which implies, since here it is not demonstrated but simply shown, you knot them in

(169) such a way that they are not knotted; that they make here something which is just as much the consistency of a circle as an infinite straight line. This is sufficient because it is identifiable to this figure [XI-1], the ‘bo’ knot. This is enough to make a Borromean knot. Nothing is going to be easier for you to imagine than the fact that if you make another one pass here like that, you have a figure which will have the air – how can you not believe it? – of being a

Borromean knot. Nevertheless it is not sufficient to cut this consistency for each of the three elements to be free from the two others. For it to be thus, it would be necessary that things should be differently arranged, which nevertheless indeed seems to be the same thing, namely, [XI-6] that the arrangement in four elements should be in this form, *qua* showable. What demonstrates it? For in this form, it is clear that any one of the elements being broken, the three others are free, which was not the case in the first figure that I gave you.

(170) And first of all what is there in common in the way in which I depicted these four elements for you, what is there in common between the straight line as infinite and the circle. What is in common is that their breaking liberates the other elements of the knot. The breaking of the circle is equivalent to the breaking of the infinite straight line. How? From the point of view of the knot – not in so far as the breaking in its effects on the knot, not in its effects as a remainder on the element. What does there remain of the circle after its breaking? A finite straight line as such, you may as well say ready to be thrown out, a little rag, a piece of cord that is good for nothing. The zero of the cut circle! Allow me to depict this cut up by what separates it, namely, the two, zero over two equals, at the very most, this little one worth nothing at all. The infinite straight line, the big One, once it is sectioned, gives all the same two half-straight-lines that start as they say, from a point, from a zero point, in order to go to infinity. One over two equals two. This in order to make you sense that when I state that there is no sexual relationship, I give to the meaning of the word relationship the idea of proportion. But everyone knows that the *mos geometricum* of Euclid, which sufficed for so long to appear the paragon of logic, is quite insufficient and to get into the figure of the knot. There is a completely different way of supporting the figure of the non-relationship of the sexes, it is to support them by two circles *qua* not knotted. That is what is at stake in what I state about non-relationship, each of these circles which are constituted we do not yet know of what, in the relationship of the sexes, each one in

its way of turning around as sex, is that not so, is not knotted to the other. This is what my non-relationship means.

It is quite striking that language has for a long time anticipated the figure of the knot, about which mathematicians have begun to spar only in our own day, to call a knot what unites the man and a woman, without naturally knowing what is at stake, in speaking metaphorically about the knots that unite them. It is these knots that it would no doubt be worth referring to in showing that they imply as necessary this elementary 3 by which as it happens I support them by this three indications of meaning, of materialised meaning, that are depicted in the nominations of the Symbolic the Imaginary and the Real.

I have just introduced the term nomination. I had to answer for it recently in connection with what was collected in a little work by logicians on the subject of what the logicians have managed to state (171) up to now, concerning what is called the referent. I fell there from the heights of my knot, and this did not facilitate things for me at all because that is the whole question: does nominations stem, as it apparently seems, from the Symbolic? You know, in short, perhaps you remember it! I made for you one day the figure that is required when one wishes to foment a knot of four. The least that can be said is that if we introduce nomination at this level, it is a fourth element. This figure, I made it for you in this way [XI-7]: one must start from the unknotted circles, and I even have no repugnance in evoking the case where I was found lacking with regard to this figure. Here is what is appropriate for a fourth circle to knot the three that first of all were posited as unknotted. This figure, contrary to the one in which one day I was just as entangled as you may be on occasion, for want

of having disciplined yourself to this exercise, one of these circles remained outside the operation.

It is in this that however full in its simplicity the Borromean knot of three may be, it is starting from four, and I underline, by being engaged in this four, that one finds a path, a particular path that only goes up to six. In other words, which makes of the coupled circle, taken for each one of the elements qualifiable from the fact that the three is dictated, not from distinction, but quite the contrary from the identity between the three terms of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real to the point that it seems to us to be required to find in each one, this triplicity, this trinity of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. Namely, to recall that the Real holds up in these terms that I already fomented with the name of ek-sistence, of consistency and of hole, to make of ek-sistence written as I write it, namely, what operates up to a certain limit in the knot, this supports the Real. What gives consistency is of the Imaginary order which is supposed by the (172) fact that it is truly tangible for us that if there is something from which the rupture springs, it is indeed consistency, to give it its most restricted meaning. There remains then – but does there remain – for the Symbolic the affectation of the term hole, this in so far as mathematics, the one properly qualified as topology, gives us a figure in the form of the torus of something that can depict the hole. Now topology does nothing of the kind, if only because the torus has two holes, the internal hole with its gyre and the hole that one can call external, thanks to which the torus is demonstrated as participating in the figure of the cylinder which is one of the ways which best materialises for us the figure of the straight line at infinity. Everyone knows the relationship of the straight line at infinity to what I simply call the ring of consistency. Everyone knows this relationship, and not simply for having seen me depict it in the Borromean knot, the one that carries the indication o.k. (*n.bo.*).

Someone named Desargues, the *Arguésien*, as they say, noticed a long time ago that the infinite straight line is in every way homologous to the circle. In this he anticipated Riemann, he anticipated him.

Nevertheless a question remains open to which I already give an answer by the attention that I am bringing to bear on the Borromean knot. Which will not prevent you, at least I hope, from maintaining present to your minds a form of question.

[*At the board*] As you see in this figure on the left [XI-1] of the Borromean knot constituted by the equivalent of this circle in the form of a straight line knotted to a circle, of the couple [XI-4] supposed by what here, to give your mind a support, could be the Symbolic. The two others, without us knowing what straight line should in particular depict the Real, for example this one, or the Imaginary for that one, what is required for that to make a knot? The point at infinity must be such that the two straight lines do not make a chain. Here is the condition that the two straight lines, whatever they may be, from wherever one sees them – I am pointing out to you in passing that this from wherever one sees them supports this reality that I state about the look, this look is only definable from wherever one sees them from – where one sees them from is in truth, if we think of a straight line as going round a point, a unique point at infinity, how not see that the fact that they are not knotted has a meaning. Not alone does it have a meaning that they are not knotted, but that it is by not being knotted that they will effectively be knotted at infinity, a point that to the best of my knowledge Desargues, Desargues whom I used at the time that (173) somewhere other than here, at *Normale Supérieure*, to evoke it by its name, I was giving my seminar on *Las Meninas*, the *Las Meninas* of Velasquez that I took advantage of to pride myself on situating where was this famous look which quite clearly is the subject of the painting. I situated it somewhere, in the same interval – perhaps one day you will see this seminar appearing – in the same interval that I am establishing here on the board, in a different form, namely, in the

one that I define from the fact that the infinite straight lines at their supposed point at infinity, are not knotted in a chain.

Here indeed is where the question begins for us. It does not seem that Desargues ever asked himself about the form in which he supposed these infinite straight lines, in posing the question of whether they knotted or not. It is quite striking that Riemann, for his part, should have settled the question in a way that gives little satisfaction by making of all the points at infinity, whatever straight line they belong to, a single and unique point which is at the principle of Riemann's geometry.

By raising the question of the knot, we are going to see, I am going to depict something for you here [XI-8], ah!, that I hope to get to the end of, in the form of a knot, a true one, which, a curious thing, presents a sort of analogy with this form [XI-3]. If we study this knot as the mathematicians do, what we, all that we can do, is to initiate the notion described as that of the fundamental group, namely, define the structure of this knot by a series of journeys (*trajets*) that will be made from any point whatsoever, this one, for example. We define the knot by something called the fundamental group which involves a number that differs according to the knots, a number of journeys that are necessary to indicate its structure. These journeys, even if they make several buckles in each one, but here I am asking the question, I am putting the hole in quotation marks, in each one of the holes which, apparently, make this knot, will be a certain number of them, and (174) contrary to what you may imagine, this number, in this case, in this case where the flattened-out figure seems to involve four, four distinct fields, that will not make for all that four individualised circles

of the journey, but contrary to what one may imagine, this is not the number which will be characteristic of this fundamental group, it will be the relation between a certain number of journeys.

We are supporting here, in a pure state, the notion of relationship, in so far as, precisely, it brings us back to the knot, to the Borromean knot, since this very relationship makes a knot, except for the fact that the knot lacks numbers. In taking this stage of the Borromean knot, we support by the very number the circles or the journeys that are at stake for any knot whatsoever, even if this knot, the one that I have just drawn, as you see, only has a unique consistency. We take the number as a go-between, as an intermediary, as itself an element to introduce us into the dialectic of the knot. What I will come to this time is the following, it is that namely, nothing is less, as I might say, natural than to think this knot. That there is something of the one, which I put forward at one time to support it by the circle is something to which, precisely, the movement of thought is limited, to make a circle, and that is why there is nothing more natural, make no mistake, than to reproach its circle as vicious. That if, to depict the relationship of the sexes without otherwise specifying any more, I find the figure of two one (*sic*), in the form of two circles, that a third knots precisely by the fact that they are not knotted with one another, for what is at stake is not simply that they are not so, that they are free when this third is broken, it is that this third, as I showed you in the figure [XI-9], this one, what is at stake is that it is because this third explicitly knots them by the fact that they are not knotted and if all I had done was to get this function into your heads, I would consider that today I (175) had not spoken in vain. This is the very thing that is at stake, it is from the fact that they are not knotted that they knot. And the

necessity of a fourth term should come here to dictate its first truths is precisely what I want end on. Namely, that without the fourth, nothing is properly speaking highlighted – I was not able to do it today – highlighted about what the Borromean knot truly is.

In any chain, to imagine the simplest one for you, in every Borromean chain, there is a one then a two [XI-10] according to the form that I drew for you earlier, you will find here the one and the two, which is the beginning of the chain after which, here, there will be a third circle that act as a buckle. What is implied by the fact that in any chain whatsoever, since it makes a chain, it always makes a chain, we place any one whatsoever of the first two in the third rank? Whatever may be the chain, the operation that is at stake will imply for us limiting the chain 1-2-3-4, [XI-11] will imply that if we wish to put any one whatsoever of these two in the third rank, the one will be then knotted to the two, both by the three and the four. Try it out, for moreover there is nothing like it to try to think out this knot than to manipulate

(176) rings of string. I repeat, although already having no more space on the board, 1-2-3-4, [XI-12] to limit ourselves to that, in any chain whatsoever, from whatever end we take it, will imply that by putting

either the 1, or the 2 in the place described as the third, by making the effort, we will obtain the following. The fact is that by choosing one of the two, since here it is the 2 that we choose, to put the 2 here in the third row, the 3 and the 4 will necessarily knot this 1 to the 2 that is shifted in this way. It is quite clear that the 1 and the 2 are interchangeable, namely, that at the start of a chain, the first and the second are indefinitely interchangeable [XI-13]. It is by placing the one of these two there in the third rank, by striving to aim at placing it in row three that we will see not simply the three involved and passing to the place of the 2, but with the 3, the fourth. And this is why the interest that I have in the knot of four is justified on this occasion and that I will develop it next year.

From then on, since we do not know what to couple nomination with, the nomination which here constitutes the fourth term, are we going to couple it to the Imaginary, namely, that coming from the Symbolic, nomination is there to have a certain effect in the Imaginary? This indeed in effect is what seems to be at stake among logicians when they talk about the referent. The descriptions of Russell, those that question themselves about the author, those that ask why it is legitimate and logically fragile to question the fact of whether or not (177) Walter Scott is the author of *Waverley*, it seems that this reference explicitly concerns what is individualised by the thought-out support of bodies. It is certainly in fact nothing of the kind. The notion of referent aims at the Real. It is as Real, that what the logicians imagine as Real, gives its support to the referent. For this imaginary nomination, the one that is written by this for example, that from the relation between R and S, we have a nomination index i , and

then the I to stick with the knot of four, as constituting the link between the Real and the Symbolic.

I would propose the following, which is that Imaginary nomination is very precisely what I have supported today by the infinite straight line, and that this straight line, in this circle that we compose of a circle and a straight line, that this straight line is very precisely not what names anything whatsoever of the Imaginary but what, precisely, creates a bar, inhibits the handling of everything that is demonstrative, of everything that, articulated as Symbolic, creates a bar at the level of the Imagination itself and renders what is at stake in the body as regards which everyone knows that what interests the body, at least in the analytic perspective, is the body in so far as it creates an orifice, that that by which it is knotted to some Symbolic or Real that is involved, is precisely from this knot, the highlighting of a circle, of an orifice that the Imaginary is constituted.

(178) This infinite straight line which here completes the false hole [XI-15] that is at stake, since an orifice is not enough to make a hole, each one of them being independent of the other, is very precisely the inhibition that thought has with respect to the knot. We can question in the same way, whether between the Real and the Imaginary, it is the nomination index of the Symbolic, namely, in so far as in the Symbolic there arises something that names, we see that at the beginning of the Bible, except for the fact that what is not noticed is that the creationist idea, the inaugural *Fiat lux*, is not a nomination.

That it is from the Symbolic that the Real arises – that is the idea of creation – has nothing to do with the fact that in a second phase, the same God gives their name to each of the animals that inhabit Paradise.

What nomination is at stake, in what I am calling here to indicate it by a Ns, what nomination is involved, in this, in one of the two of those we are mythically told about? This indeed in effect is a question that is worth dwelling on a little, because this stems from the meaning which, in each case, is a different meaning. The nomination of each one, which moreover is a common name, not a proper name in Russell's sense, what does the nomination of each one of the species represent? Assuredly a narrowly Symbolic nomination, a nomination limited to the Symbolic. Is this sufficient for us to support what happens at a point that is certainly not indifferent in this elementing of four of the knot that is supported by the name of the Father. Is the Father the one who has given their name to things? Or indeed should this Father be questioned *qua* Father, at the level of the Real? In a word is the eternal Father, in whom of course nothing would prevent us from believing if it was even thinkable that he himself believes in himself, while it is quite clearly unthinkable, should we put the term (179) nomination as knotted at the level of this circle by which we support the function of the Real? It is between these three terms, nomination from the Imaginary as inhibition, nomination from the Real as what is found to happen in fact, namely, anxiety, or nomination from the Symbolic, I mean implicated, flower of the Symbolic itself, namely, as it happens in fact in the form of the symptom, it is between these three terms that I will try next year, it is not a reason because I have the answer that I do not leave it to you as a question, that I will question myself next year about what substance should be given to the name of father.

Seminar 1: Tuesday 10 December 1974

Voilà. So then you saw my notice, which is written like that, Rsi. It can be read like that. It can also be read, since it is in capital letters, it can be read R.S.I. Which perhaps suggested to those who are in the know the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary.

I would like this year to talk to you about the Real, and to begin by pointing out to you that these three words, Real, Symbolic and Imaginary have a meaning. They are three different meanings, but you can also note that I said three meanings, like that, because it seems to be self-evident. But if they are different, is that enough for them to make three, if they are as different as I say? Hence the notion of a common measure, which is difficult to grasp, except by defining the unit in it as a function of measure. There are so many, one, two, three. Again it must be, for it to be able to be said that there are so many, again this unit must be grounded on the sign, whether it is a sign or whether it is written equals, or indeed that you make two little strokes to signify equals, the equivalence of these units. But if by chance they were different, as I might say from one another, we would be very embarrassed and, after all, what would bear witness to it, would be the meaning itself of the word other. Again there must be distinguished, in this meaning of other, the other made up of a distinction defined by an external/internal relationship, for example, as Freud did, whether he wants to or not, in his second topography which is supported by a geometry of the sack where you see a thing,

somewhere in the *New introductory lectures*, a thing which is supposed to contain, contain what? It's a funny thing to say, the (14) drives. This is what he calls the Id. Naturally this forces him to add to it a certain number of tools, a sort of lunula which all of a sudden is transformed into a sort of vitellus on which there is supposed to be differentiated an embryo. This is obviously not what he means, but it is regrettable that it suggests it. Such are the disadvantages of imaged illustrations. I am not telling you everything else that he is forced to add, without counting the number of hatchings (*hachures*) that he entitles Superego. This geometry of the sack is indeed this thing that we have to deal with at the level of topology, except for the fact that, as perhaps the idea has come to you, this is drawn on a surface and that we are forced to put the sack onto it. On a surface this gives a ring (*rond*) and, with this ring, there is an inside and an outside.

It is with that that one is led to write inclusion, namely, that something, I for example is included in an E, a set. Inclusion you know perhaps how that is written, like that, $I \subset E$, whence people have deduced a little quickly that one could slip from inclusion which is there above to the lesser sign $I \subseteq E$, namely, that I is smaller than E, which is a manifest imbecility.

Here then is the first other, the other defined from the outside to the inside. Only there is another Other, the one that I marked with a capital O, which for its part is defined as not having the slightest relationship, however small you may imagine it...when you begin to convey yourself in words, you are immediately caught in a wolf trap. Because this however small you imagine it, brings the Imaginary into play, and when you bring the Imaginary into play, you have every chance of becoming entangled. This is even how people started out for the infinitesimal: people had all sorts of trouble getting out of the Imaginary.

That they should be three, this Real, this Symbolic and this Imaginary, what does that mean? There are two slopes. One slope, a very steep one, leads us to homogenise them; because what relationship have they among themselves? Well then! This is precisely where I want to open up the path for you this year. One could say that the Real is what is strictly unthinkable. That at least would be a start. That would make a hole in the affair and that would allow us to question what is involved in, do not forget, what I started from, namely, from three terms in so far as they convey a meaning. What is this business of meaning, especially if you introduce into it what I am striving to make you sense? The fact is that as regards what is involved in (15) analytic practice, this is where you operate from, but on the other hand, you only work to reduce this meaning; it is in the measure that the unconscious is supported by this something, it must be said, the most difficult thing that I had to introduce, this something defined by me, structured like the Symbolic. It is from the fundamental equivocation of this something that is at stake in the term Symbolic that you always operate - I am talking to those here who are worthy of the name analyst. Equivocation is not meaning. Meaning is that through which there responds something which is different to the Symbolic, and there is no means of supporting this something otherwise than by the Imaginary. But what is the Imaginary? Does it even ek-sist? Since you hint, simply by pronouncing the term Imaginary, that there is something which ensures that the speaking being shows that he is destined for mental defectiveness. And this results from the simple notion of the Imaginary, in so far as the starting point for it is the reference to the body and to the fact that its representation, I mean everything that for it is represented, is only the reflection of its organism. It is the least of the suppositions that the body implies.

Only here there is something that immediately makes us stumble, which is that in this notion of body, there must be immediately implied the following, which is its very definition: it is something

about which one presumes that there are specified functions in the organs, so that an automobile, even a computer according to the latest news, is also a body. It is not self-evident, we should say, that a body is living. So that what best attests to the fact that it is living, is precisely this *mens* in connection with which, more exactly that I introduced along the path, the journeying of mental defectiveness. It is not given to all bodies, in so far as they function, to suggest the dimension of imbecility. This dimension is introduced by this something that the tongue, and not just any one, Latin... – this to put in their place those who impute precisely this imbecility to Latin – is precisely the only one that instead of sticking on the soul an opaque term like *nous*, or another metaphor of something or other, of a knowledge, which we for sure do not know whether it exists, since it is the knowledge supposed by the Real. This knowledge of God, it is certain that it ek-sists. We have given ourselves enough trouble in spelling it out, it ek-sists, but only in the sense that I am writing this term ek-sistence, by (16) writing it differently than is usually done. It *sists* perhaps, but we do not know where. All one can say, is that what consists gives no testimony of it, so then, there is something a little bit striking in seeing that the tongue that is suspected of being the most stupid one is precisely the one that has forged this term *intelligere*, to read between the lines, namely, elsewhere than the way in which the Symbolic is written. It is from this effect of writing of the Symbolic that there stems this meaning-effect, in other words imbecility, to which there bear witness up to today all the systems described as natural. Without language, not the slightest suspicion could come to us of this imbecility, which is also that by which the support which is the body bears witness to us, I remind you that I said it earlier but this did not do anything for you, bears witness to us of being alive. In truth this *mens*, attested to by mental defectiveness, is something from which I do not hope to get out in any way.

I do not see why what I am contributing to you would be less defective than the rest. This might indeed be the meaning of this

banana skin that was slipped under my foot, by catching me like that on the telephone, to give a lecture in Nice. You'll never guess, they slipped this title under my foot, the Lacanian phenomenon! Ah yes! What I am in the process of telling you, is that precisely I do not expect it to be a phenomenon, namely, that what I am saying is any less stupid than all the rest. The only thing that makes me persevere, and you know that I do not persevere without looking twice at it, I told you the last time why I was hesitating to set about it again this year, it is because I believe that there is something I have grasped (*sais*), I cannot even say with my hands, with my feet, it is the coming into play of this trace that is outlined, which quite obviously is not easily tolerated, especially by analysts, by the analytic experience. So that if there is a phenomenon, it can only be the *Lacanalyste* phenomenon or indeed *lac-à-pas-d'analyste* [*être dans le lac*: to be in the soup?].

There is something which happened nevertheless, I am sharing it with you like that, because I am letting myself be drawn along; naturally, I could not explain anything about all of that to them, because for them, I was a phenomenon. What the organisers wanted in fact was to collect a mob. There is always a mob to look at a phenomenon. So, I was not going to tell them, listen I am not a phenomenon! That would (17) have been a *Verneinung*. Anyway, I let myself go for a good hour and a quarter. I cannot say that I am at all satisfied with what I told them, because what can you say in an hour and a quarter! For my part I imagine that with you of course I have a number of hours, since it is a little bit more than three, it is limitless. I am quite wrong, because in reality, there are no more than 50, including all that I will have between now and the end of the year. But that helps me to take to the road.

In short, at the end of an hour and a quarter of chat, I asked them questions, I mean, I asked them to ask me some. It was a demand. Well then! You can believe me if you wish, contrary to you, they asked me them for three quarters of an hour! And I will say more,

these questions were striking in that they were relevant questions, relevant of course like that, in a second zone. In short it was the testimony of the fact that in a certain context, the one in which I do not insist, questions could come to me, and questions that were not stupid, questions that in any case required me to respond. So that I found myself confronted with the situation, without having had to reject the Lacanian phenomenon, of having demonstrated it. That naturally, it was not even sure that they noticed themselves, that that was the Lacanian phenomenon. Namely, that I was an effect for an audience, which had only heard like that, on the rebound, from very far, what I may articulate in this place here, where I give my teaching, my teaching to open up for the analyst the very discourse that supports him. If indeed it is from a discourse, and always from a discourse, that this Thing that we are trying to manipulate in analysis suffers, from a discourse.

I am saying then that this is the phenomenon. It is, in short, part of the wave (*vague*), if you will allow me to employ a term that might have tempted me to write the letters in a different order. Instead of R.S.I., R.I.S., that would have given a laugh, this famous *ris de l'eau*, on which precisely, somewhere in my *Ecrits*, I equivocate. I was looking for the page earlier, there was someone here, a pal of the first order, who had the *Ecrits*; I found it, it is on page 166, that I play on the *ris d'eau (rideau)*, indeed implicating there 'my dear friend Leiris dominating' something or other.

I must obviously cheer myself up by telling myself that this (18) phenomenon is not unique, it is only particular. I mean that it is distinguished from the universal. The annoying thing is that it is up to now unique at the level of the analyst. It is nevertheless indispensable that the analyst should be at least two, the analyst to produce effects, and the analyst who theorises these effects. That was why it was precious for me that I was accompanied by a person, who perhaps, I did not ask him, at this precise level of the phenomenon, of the

phenomenon described as Lacanian, was able to notice precisely there, at the level of what I had to say, about what I have just now stated, namely, that on that occasion I simply demonstrated this phenomenon by the fact that from that, from this mob, I received questions and that alone is where the phenomenon lies. If this person, and I have no doubt about it, is an analyst, she was able to notice that I had in the little I said - which was, I am repeating to you, execrable - demonstrated this phenomenon.

That closes the brackets. I would like now to come back to what I have to advance in today, namely, that I only found, in a word, a single way of giving these three terms, Real, Symbolic, Imaginary their common measure by knotting the, with this bo-bo...bo-bo...Borromean knot. In other words, that you must pay attention to what I drew there on the board, and you have been able to see, not without difficulty, because I made a mistake in the colour on several occasions. Because it is indeed here that we will find the whole time the question, what distinguishes the way in which each one consists, of those things which at one time, I designated as rings of string, what distinguishes each one from the others? Absolutely nothing but the meaning. And that is why we have the hope, a hope, good God, on which you can thoroughly depend, because hope, in short for me is only in this affair. And if I did not have the answer, as you know, I would not ask the question.

We have the hope, I am leaving you the hope in the short term, there is none other, that we will take this year a step together, a step which only consists in the fact that, if we have won something somewhere, it is inevitably, it is surely, at the expense of something else. That in other terms, if analytic discourse functions, it is sure that we lose something in it elsewhere. Moreover, what could we well lose, if truly what I have just said, namely, that all the systems of nature that have emerged up to now are marked by mental deficiency, why should we hold on to them so much! There remain to us all the same these

(19) pivotal systems whose manipulation may allow us, I mean us analysts, to account for our own operation.

I would like to keep you for an instant on the Borromean knot. The Borromean knot consists strictly in the fact that 3 is the minimum for it. If you make a chain, with what this word has for you, in terms of ordinary meaning...If you unknot two rings of a chain, the others will remain knotted (I-1).

The definition of the Borromean knot starts from 3. Namely, that if [I-2] you break one of the rings of the 3, all 3 are freed, namely, the two other rings are freed.

The remarkable thing in this, which is a matter of consistency, is that starting from there you can put an indefinite number of rings. It will always be true that if you break one of these rings, all the others, however numerous they are, will be freed. I already, I think, sufficiently made you sense, at a time that has already gone, that to take the example of a ring thus fabricated [I-3], it is quite conceivable that another comes to pass into the buckle which consists, which is realised by the bending of this little circle, and that you grasp, in short, immediately, that simply here by breaking the circle which, here, (20) prevents the third from being liberated, the bent buckle is going to slip from this, and that, in putting an indefinite number of these

bent circles, you will see through what really tangible, immediately imaginable mechanism, all the rings are freed, whatever may be their number.

This property is all by itself what homogenises everything in terms of number starting from 3; which means that, in the sequence of numbers, of whole numbers, 1 and 2 are detached; something begins at 3, which includes all the numbers, however far they are denumerated, and it is indeed on this that I intended to put the emphasis, in my seminar, particularly last year. That is not all. There is much more than a single way of Borromeanising a certain number of consistent toruses, there is much more than a single way. I already indicated it at the appropriate time, there are very probably a quantity that there is no reason not to qualify as infinite, infinite in the sense of numerable, because you have only to suppose for an instant the following way of making a buckle [I-4] for you to perceive that you can multiply it indefinitely. Have you got that? Namely, to make of

(21) these buckles, as many turns as you wish to knot the two toruses together. There is no plausible limit to this arrangement, and consequently, already simply in this dimension, there is a way of tying together, one to the other, as many ways as it is possible to dream of on this occasion. You can even find others, it will be no less true that the Borromean knot whatever it may be has as a lower limit the number 3, that Borromean knot will always bear the mark of three,

and that under that heading, you have right away to ask yourself the question of the register to which the Borromean knot belongs? Is it to the Symbolic, to the Imaginary or to the Real?

From today I am putting forward what subsequently I will allow myself to demonstrate, I am putting forward that the Borromean knot, in so far as it is supported by the number three, belongs to the register of the Imaginary. It is in so far as the Imaginary is rooted in the three dimensions of space. I am putting forward something which is nowhere going to be conjugated with a transcendental aesthetic. It is on the contrary because the Borromean knot belongs to the Imaginary, namely, supports the triad of the Imaginary, of the Symbolic and of the Real, it is in so far as this triad exists, from the fact that there is joined to it the addition of the Imaginary, that space *qua* sensible finds itself reduced to this minimum of three dimensions, in other words from its attachment to the Symbolic and to the Real.

Other dimensions are imaginable, and they have been imagined. It is by sticking to the Symbolic and to the Real that the Imaginary is reduced what is not a maximum imposed by the sack of the body, but on the contrary, is defined by a minimum, the one which ensures there is only a Borromean knot from the fact that there are at least three of them.

I am going here, before leaving you, to give you a little indication, some points, some punctuations of what we are going to have to demonstrate this year. If here [I-2] I depicted the Real with a blue ring, the Symbolic with a white ring, and with a red ring the one that is found to be supported by the three, to be depicted here, dominating them, I would like to point out to you that it is in no way implied in the notion of the knot as such, of the Borromean knot, whether we are dealing with rings of string or with toruses, that it is just as conceivable that, in conformity with the intuition of Desargues in ordinary geometry, these rings open up, or, to say it simply, become

(22) cords supposed, why not, nothing prevents us from positing it as a postulate, to join up at infinity.

There is nevertheless a means of defining what is called a point, namely, this something strange that Euclidean geometry does not define, and of which it nevertheless makes use as a support because on occasion, it punctuates the individual there. Namely, that the point, in Euclidean geometry, has no dimension at all, that it has zero dimensions, contrary to the line, to the surface, indeed to volume which respectively have one, two, three of them. Is there not, in the definition that Euclidean geometry gives of the point – as the intersection of two straight lines – something, I will allow myself to say, something that falls short? Namely, what would prevent two straight lines from sliding onto one another?

The only thing that would allow a point to be defined as such is presented like this [I-5], three straight lines which are not here simple lines, marks of a saw, shadows, but effectively three consistent straight lines which, at the central point here, produce what constitutes the essence of the Borromean knot, namely, which determine a point as such, something for which then, we must invent something other than simply the indication of a dimension which is supposed to be zero, which for its part has no dimension (*ne dimense pas*).

I am suggesting to you to try this out, that there is not simply here a banal stroke, namely, that this is also supported by three surfaces, I mean that with three surfaces you will obtain the effect described as a point in just as valid a way as the one depicted here, let us say, with three cords. That on the other hand, you can render tangible that you will obtain here these straight lines here, these cords from free (23) interplay, namely, on three surfaces that are not being squeezed, if you start not from the chain such as it is constituted in the Borromean knot, but in this chain two by two whose ghost I evoked earlier in passing, that in untying buckles knotted two by two, what

you get are three straight lines, free one on the other, namely, not being squeezed, not defining the point as such.

What I want to announce to you before leaving you, is then the following. It is clear [I-6], here, from the fact that we can see that with two infinite straight lines, we can, by knotting a single ring of string, maintain the property of the Borromean knot, on this single condition that the two straight lines are not able to cut themselves somewhere between this knot and infinity except in a single way. To take the straight line, R, it must be pulled forward, as I might say, while the line S of the figure on the right can only be pulled backwards. They must not, in a way, be brought to buckle with one another two by two, which, in any case excludes the central figure, which, having already made one of the buckles, that one of the rings, let's say the white ring on the red ring, defines by that simple fact, whatever may be its future fate, the strict position of the blue infinite straight line which must pass under what is below and over what is above, to express myself in a simple way. On this condition the Borromean knot functions.

I would like to indicate to you the fact that if we situate this blue ring of the Real, if we situate this ring of the Symbolic, and that of the Imaginary, I am allowing myself to indicate to you that here there is situated a flattening out, in other words a reduction of the Imaginary. For it is clear that the Imaginary always tends to be reduced to a (24) flattening out. It is on this that there is founded all depiction, it being well understood that it is not because we may have crumpled these three rings of string that they are any the less knotted in a Borromean way in the real, namely, with regard to the fact that each

one of them, unknotted, frees the two others. This thing will always be true. How does it happen that we must have this flattening out in order to be able to depict any topology whatsoever? It is very certainly a question which reaches out towards that of the defectiveness that I qualified as mental, in so far as it is rooted in the body itself.

- Small **o**, I have written here; in the Imaginary but just as well in the Symbolic, I am write the function described as meaning.
- The two other functions, those that stem from what is to be defined with respect to the central point allowing there to be added three other points, this is something to be defined. We have enjoyment...

It is a matter of knowing that there are two enjoyments:

- for example, one we could define, but which one? As enjoying life, if the Real is life, we are led to refer to it, but is it sure? Enjoyment, in so far as it participates in the Imaginary of meaning, the enjoying of life in a word, is something that we can situate in the fact that, let us note it, is no less a point than the central point, the point described as that of the **o**-object, because it links together, on this occasion, three surfaces which also are squeezed.
- And on the other hand what about this other mode of enjoyment, the one depicted by an overlapping, a squeezing where the Real comes here to squeeze it at the periphery of the two other rings of string? What about that enjoyment?

These are, close up, the points that we will have to elaborate, since moreover they are the ones that question us.

One point that I am suggesting here and now is this, to return to Freud, namely, to something triadic, he stated it as *Inhibition, Symptom, Anxiety*.

I would say that inhibition, as Freud himself articulates it, is always a matter of the body, or of functioning. And to indicate it already on this schema [I-8] I would say that inhibition is what somewhere stops interfering, as I might say, in a figure which is the figure of a hole, the hole of the Symbolic. We will have to discuss this inhibition in order to know if what is encountered in the animal, where there is in the nervous system these inhibiting centres, is something of the same order as this arrest of functioning *qua* Imaginary, *qua* specified in the speaking being, whether it is conceivable that something should be of the same order, namely, the bringing into function in the *nevras*, in the central nervous system, of an activity that is positive *qua* inhibiting. How is it conceivable that the being presumed not to have language finds itself joining in the term inhibition something of the same order as what we grasp there, at the level of the exteriority of meaning, that what we grasp there as stemming from what is found in short outside the body, namely, as a surface to topologise it in the way in which I told you that it is assuredly only on two dimensions that this is depicted, how inhibition can have to deal with what is a type of arrest which results from its intrusion into the field of the Symbolic.

(26) It is starting from there, a not simply starting from, it is quite gripping to see that *anxiety*, in so far as it is something that starts from the Real, it is altogether tangible to see that it is this anxiety that is going to give its meaning to the nature of the enjoyment that is produced here, under **o**, of the cross-checking brought to the surface, the Eulerian cross-checking of the Real and Symbolic.

Finally, to define the third term, it is in the *symptom* that we identify what is produced in the field of the Real. If the Real manifests itself in analysis and not only in analysis, if the notion of the symptom was introduced, well before Freud by Marx, so as to make it the sign of something which is what is not working out in the Real, if in other words, we are capable of operating on the symptom, it is in as far as the symptom is the effect of the Symbolic in the Real. It is inasmuch as this Symbolic, as I it drew here, must be completed here, and why is it outside? This is what I will have to manipulate for you in what follows, it is in so far as the unconscious is, in a word, what responds to the symptom. It is inasmuch as this knot, this knot quite real for its part even though only reflected in the Imaginary, it is in so far as this knot accounts for a certain number of inscriptions by which the surfaces respond to one another, and that we will see that the unconscious can be responsible for the reduction of the symptom.

Seminar 2: Tuesday 17 December 1974

Voilà. Hm! Like that, since I don't like much writing on the board, I am writing the minimum for you. This minimum is enough for you to

recognise in it on the left the Borromean knot [II-1]. I think so anyway, inasmuch as you remember what I say. In short, you take notes, or at least some of you do. I think I have justified how the Borromean knot can be written; since it is a writing, a writing that supports a real. This already, just by itself, designates that not only can the Real be supported by a writing but that there is no other tangible idea of the real.

This Real, this Real that is the knot, the knot which is a construction, this Real is enough to leave open this trait, this trait of writing, this trait which is written which supports the idea of the Real. This because of the fact that the knot being made only from the fact that each of its elements is only knotted by a third, you can leave open one of these three. Since this is a fact that I highlighted, that I believe I highlighted the last time, that each of its elements can have two forms, the form of the infinite straight line, and the form that I designate, because it seems to me the best for your imagination, that I designate by a ring of string, which proves when one studies it to be a torus.

Having made this little bit of knot with what I said the last time, as a way of bringing it back to you, I find myself like that, this morning, preferring rather to read what I elaborated with you in mind. It seems to me that there are remarks, preliminary remarks in short, that may (30) well be of use to you in responding, in justifying, as questions, questions that I suppose you must have asked.

So then I am not going to make these preliminary remarks numerous, I am going to make three of them. [On the board].

This may come to mind, in short, for some people who open books, they do not even need to open them. It's there on the covers! They may ask themselves...

[On the board] This knot that I put forward by way of uniting in it the R.S.I. in the most certain way, namely, when the S, this is the white ring that you see there, and the Imaginary, that's the red ring, this knot is held to be sufficiently defined, by not presenting an ambiguity, when the two rings are crossed by the Real, in a way, as I stated the last time, that the Real crosses them by being underneath the one of the two rings that is underneath and being above the one that is above. That is enough for the squeezing, whether you make it on the left or on the right. I point out to you in passing that it is impossible from this single knot to give the characterisation of this left or of this right; otherwise we would have the expected miracle that would allow us to make a message of the difference between the left and the right for the eventual subjects capable of receiving the aforesaid message. The Borromean knot can in no way serve as a basis for such a message which would permit the transmission of a difference between left and right. It is then a matter of indifference to place on the left or on the right what results because of the fact of this knot, something that we (31) will designate as external, as being the meaning, in so far as it is starting from it that there are defined the terms Real, Symbolic and Imaginary.

The very fact that I am advancing with these terms is something that ought to make you ask the question, it seems to me, by simply having read some titles of books, is the knot a model? A model in the sense

that this is understood for example with respect to mathematical models, those that frequently serve us to extrapolate as regards the Real? Namely, as in this case, to establish from a writing what can be imagined from the very fact of this writing, which finds itself then allowing there to be accounted for the questionings which will be brought by experience to this real itself, which in any case is only a supposition there, a supposition which consists in this meaning of the word Real. I claim to repudiate for this knot the qualification of model, this in the name of what we must suppose to a model; the model as I have just said and this, because of its writing, is situated from the Imaginary. There is no Imaginary which does not suppose a substance. This is a strange fact, but it is always in the Imaginary, from the spirit that gives a substance to this model, that the questions formulated from it are secondarily asked of the Real.

And this is why I claim that this apparent model that consists in this knot, this Borromean knot, is an exception even though it also is situated in the Imaginary, is an exception to this supposition, by the fact that what it proposes, is that the three function here as pure consistency, namely, that it is only by holding together among themselves that they are consistent. The three hold together among themselves really, which implies metaphor all the same, and asks the question of which one is the impetus (*erre*), in the sense that I meant it last year, which is the impetus of the metaphor. For if I state, which can only be done from the Symbolic, from the word, that the consistency of these three rings is only supported by the Real, it is indeed because I use the setting aside of meaning which is permitted between R.S.I. as individualising these three rings, specifying them as such. The setting aside of meaning is supposed there to be taken from a certain maximum. What is the accepted maximum of the setting aside of meaning? This is a question that I can only, in the present state of things, put to linguists. How the linguist – and there is one who honours me today by his presence in the front row – how can a linguist define the limits of metaphor? What can define a maximum

of the divergence of metaphor, in the sense that I have stated it, a (32) reference to the *Agency of the letter*, in my *Ecrits*; what is the permitted maximum of the substitution of one signifier for another? I apologise, perhaps I have been a little quick here but it is certain that we cannot afford to delay. We cannot afford to delay and, because of that, I must pass on to my second remark.

To operate with this knot in an appropriate manner, you have to ground yourselves on a little stupidity. The best thing is still to use stupidly what is meant by being its dupe. One must not get into this subject with obsessional doubt, or haggle too much. One thing struck me in reading a work which it happens my daughter had got wind of, though her work on Buffon. She borrowed it from someone who moreover promptly gave her indications on the appearance of this text. This text is by Maupertuis, who at the Berlin Academy, had given under the title of *The physical Venus* a report of what was in short at the high point, in his time, of what is known about the phenomenon of the reproduction of living bodies. For him to have introduced it with the term of *The physical Venus*, shows that he only wants to deal with sexed reproduction.

It is quite striking, to my eyes at least, to see that this reading of Maupertuis – on this occasion, for someone who can be located in history, certainly the first thing that stands out, is the date of this statement, 1756 – bears witness to the time taken by these speaking beasts which men are, let us take them as defined by that, to realise what was specific in sexed reproduction. It is quite clear to my eyes that it is because of not being simply dupe, of not sticking to what his time furnished him as material, namely, already a lot, the mapping out in the microscope by Leeuwenhoek and Swammerdam, of what were called at the time animalcules, namely, the spermatozoon and the eggs on the other hand; namely, what is ordinarily supported by two bodies which, by this fact, are defined as being of opposite sexes, with some exceptions of course, namely, that the same body, may support the

two, which happens with snails as you are not unaware of. It is assuredly because of not sticking to this massive fact of the distinction between the animalcul and the egg, nevertheless here and now present in the simple diversity of theories, that Maupertuis, by not being a dupe, by not sticking to this massive fact, and in a word by not being stupid enough, does not realise the point properly speaking of discovery that this constitutes for what is involved in terms of a real (33) apprehension of the distinction between the sexes, does not stick to what was he was brought. If he had been a dupe, he would have erred less. Not that of course his impetus was stupid because he gets to something that is in a way the prefiguration, as one might say, of what was revealed by the later examination of more powerful microscopes to constitute the existence of genes. Between ovism and animalculism, namely, what puts the whole stress on one of these elements or the whole stress on the other, he goes as far as to imagine that the facts of attraction and repulsion can lead things to this composition as regards which moreover the experiment, the experiment conducted by Harvey on the examination of what is stated as existing in terms of a first manifestation of what he calls the living point at the back of the uterus of does that Charles I had placed at his disposition. He manages certainly to have an idea, or at least to suggest it, about what may happen, and as regards which one can say that it effectively happens at the level of what might be a morula, for example, indeed at a further stage which is that of the gastrula, but precisely by guessing...by guessing he does not advance.

What escapes him is that each cell of what someone like Harvey discovered, and for him to blind himself to it as being the substance of the embryo, is the puzzle, the mixture apparently that one might imagine about it, namely, something that Maupertuis does not fail to imagine. The fact is that in this puzzle, in these cellular elements, there are some that are supposed to be male and others female. Which is certainly not true. It must be pushed much further, and to tell the truth in such a way that the living point can in no way be recognised.

We are at the level of these distinguishable genes in the caryosome in the innermost part of the cell. It is because one must go that far that the idea of the mixture, towards which Maupertuis leans, is simply a premature idea, not a forging ahead, precisely! It is, as I might say, by being a non-dupe that he imagines very badly. He is not dupe in the measure that he does not stick strictly to what is provided to him, that in short he makes hypotheses. *Hypotheses non fingere*. The repudiation of hypotheses seems to me to be what is appropriate and what I designate properly by this advice to be stupid enough not to ask oneself questions concerning the use of my knot, for example. It is certainly not with the help of this knot that one can go further than from where it emerges, namely, from analytic experience. It is analytic experience that it accounts for, and that is what gives it its value.

(34) Third remark, also preliminary. In what does there consist in the knot, as it is presented, this something which, from the first remark, made someone ask me the question of whether it was a model? The fact is of course, that apparently the Imaginary dominates in it; the Imaginary dominating in it is something in effect that reposes on the fact that this grounds its consistency. What I am introducing by this remark is the following. It is that enjoyment, with regard to this Imaginary consistency, can do nothing but ek-sist, or parody it, it is with regard to the Real, it is something other than meaning that is at stake in enjoyment. With that the signifier is what remains. For if the signifier, by this fact, is deprived of meaning, it is because the signifier, all that remains, proposes itself as intervening in this enjoyment. Not of course that the 'I think' is enough to assure ek-sistence – it is not for nothing that Descartes stumbled there – but up to a certain point, it is all the same true that it is only by effacing all meaning that ek-sistence is defined. And indeed, moreover, he himself floated between the *sum, ergo* and the *exsisto*. Assuredly the notion of ek-sistence, was not then assured. For something to ek-sist, there must be a hole somewhere. It is around this hole simulated by

Descartes' *I think*, since this *I think*, is empty, it is around this hole that the ek-sistence is suggested. Assuredly we have these holes here at the heart of each of these rings, since without this hole it would not even be thinkable that something can be knotted.

It is a matter of situating, not what Descartes thought, but what Freud touched, and for that, I propose that what ek-sists to the Real, to the Real of the hole, should be symbolised in writing by an intermediary field, intermediary like flattened out, because this is all that writing permits us. It is quite striking in effect that writing requires, as such, this flattening out. And if here I suggest that something supposes, incarnates I would say, that the Symbolic, for example, shows in two-dimensional space [II-2] defined by the fact that something ek-sists by

only being supposable in writing from the opening, the opening of the ring into this indefinite straight line, that is here what moreover with respect to one of the elements of the knot as to all the others, what allows to situate what stems from existence.

Why then, on the right, have I marked that what is concerned in ek-sistence is something that is metaphorised from phallic enjoyment? This is a proposition which presupposes that I should say more about this enjoyment. To situate it in a way which will not give rise to ambiguity, it is with a blue stroke that I draw what is involved in the Real, and with a red stroke, the Symbolic. I propose, even if only with the aim of completing it subsequently, to situate here, as such, phallic enjoyment, in so far as it is in relation to what ek-sists to the Real, namely, what is posited from the field produced by the fact that the

Real ring, that's how I am calling the ring connoted as the Real, from the fact that it opens out to posit itself as this infinite straight line, isolated, as one might say, in its consistency. It is to the Real as making a hole that enjoyment ek-sists.

This is due to what analytic experience has contributed to us as such. There is in Freud... - I am not going, quite simply for want of having collected them – there is in Freud a kow-towing, as I might say, before phallic enjoyment as such. This is what analytic experience discovers, the nodal function of this enjoyment *qua* phallic. And it is around it that there is founded what is involved in this sort of Real with which analysis has to deal.

What is important to see, is that if there is something by which the knot is supported it is precisely that there is with regard to this phallic enjoyment, as Real, this something that only situates it from the squeezing that results from nodality, as I might say...the nodality proper to the Borromean knot and from the fact that something which here is drawn as a ring, as a ring of string, as a ring *qua* consistency that constitutes the Symbolic. It is in the measure that a third point, which is defined as what defines meaning, is external to the more (36) central of the points of this nodality. It is in this sense that there is produced what is called phallic enjoyment. Phallic enjoyment always involves the knot that is made with the ring of the Symbolic, to name it only in the way as it ought to be. That this enjoyment as such is linked to the production of ek-sistence is something that I am proposing this year to put to the test.

For you see what results from it is that this knot, as I stated, this knot is reduplicated by another triplicity, the one linked to meaning in so far as it is from meaning that there starts the distinction of meanings which from these terms makes three terms. It is from this that we ought, can, start for the knot to consist as such. There are three elements, and it is as three that these elements are supported; we

reduce them to being three. That simply is what gives them their meaning. On the other hand, under the heading of ek-sistence they are each distinct, and moreover it is with regard to enjoyment as real that they are differentiated, and that at this level what analytic experience contributes, is that it is in the measure that enjoyment is what ek-sists, that it makes the Real, that it justifies it precisely by that, by ek-sisting. Assuredly, there is here a passage which is important, because to what does ek-sistence ek-sist? Certainly not to what consists. Ek-sistence as such is defined, is supported by what in each of these terms, R.S.I., creates a hole. There is in each something which means that it is from the circle, from a fundamental circularity, that it is defined, and this something is what has to be named.

It is striking that in Freud's time, all that is named about it is Imaginary. I mean that the function for example described as the ego, is this something that Freud, in conformity with this necessity, with this penchant which means that it is to the Imaginary that the substance as such goes, Freud designates it by what? Nothing other than what in representation creates a hole. He does not go so far as to say it but he represents it in this phantastical topography which the second is, while the first marked his amazed distance with regard to what he had discovered about the unconscious. It is in the sack, the sack of the body, it is with this sack that the ego is depicted, and this moreover induces him to having to specify something about this ego which is precisely to make a hole in it to allow the world to enter it, to necessitate that this sack should be, in a way stoppered by perception. It is in as far that Freud does not designate as such, but betrays, that the ego is only a hole.

(37) What are the holes constituted on the one hand by the Real and on the other by the Symbolic? This is something that we assuredly will have to examine very closely. For something, of course, is opened up to us, which seems in a way to be self-evident. Namely, to designate this hole in the Real by life, and moreover this is a slope

which Freud himself did not resist, in opposing life instincts to death instincts. I note that in questioning by our knot what is involved in the structure necessitated by Freud, that it is on the side of death that the function of the Symbolic is found. It is in so far as something is *urverdrängt* in the Symbolic that there is something that we can never give a meaning to, even though we are, it is almost a refrain to state it, we are capable logically of saying that *all men are mortal*. It is in so far as *all men are mortal* does not, from the very fact that this *all*, properly speaking has no meaning, that at least the plague must be propagated at Thebes, in order that this *all* may become something imaginable and not purely Symbolic; that each one must feel himself concerned in particular by the threat of the plague, that there is revealed at the same time what supposed that. Namely, that if Oedipus forced something, it is altogether without knowing it, that, as I might say, he only killed his father for want of having, if you will allow me to say it, for want of having taken the time to *laiusser*. If he had taken the time that was required, but it would have required certainly a time that would have been almost the time of an analysis, since for himself, it was precisely for that reason that he was on the road, namely, that he believed through a dream precisely, that he was going to kill the one who under the name of Polybus was well and truly his veritable father.

What Freud brings us concerning what is involved in the Other, is precisely this, that there is only an Other by saying it. But that this Total-Other (*Tout-autre*) is quite impossible to say completely, that there is an *urverdrängt*, an irreducible unconscious, and that to say it, is properly speaking what is not only defined as impossible, but introduces as such the category of the impossible.

That religion is true, is something that I said on occasion. It is surely more true than neurosis in that it represses this fact that it is not true that God simply *is* (*soit seulement*), as I might say, in which Voltaire had a cast iron belief. It says that he *ek-sists*, that he is ek-sistence par

excellence, namely, that in short he is repression in person, he is even the person presupposed for repression. And it is in that that it is true. (38) God is nothing other than what ensures that starting from language, there cannot be established a relationship between the sexes. Where is God in all of that? I never said that he was in language. Language, well then! Precisely, it is what we will have to question ourselves about this year. Where can it come from? I certainly did not say that this came to fill a hole, the one constituted by the non-relationship, the constitutive non-relationship of the sexual, because this non-relationship is only suspended on it. Language is not then simply a stopper, it is that in which there is inscribed this non-relationship. That is all we can say about it. God, for his part comprises the totality of the effects of language, including the psychoanalytic effects, which is no small thing to say!

To fix things, what are called ideas, is that not so, and which are not at all ideas, to fix things there where they deserve to be fixed, in logic, Freud does not believe in God, because he operates along his own line as is testified by the powder that he throws into our eyes in order to *en-moiser* us [play on Moses and *moi*?]. The *en-moisement* may also be the *en-moisement* of which I spoke earlier. Not alone does he perpetuate religion but he consecrates it as the ideal neurosis. This indeed is what he says moreover in attaching it to obsessional neurosis which is the ideal neurosis, which deserves to be called properly speaking ideal. And he cannot do otherwise because it is impossible namely, that he is dupe, for his part, in the right way, the one that does not err. Not like me! I cannot testify that I err; I err in these intervals that I try to situate for you, of Meaning, of Phallic Enjoyment, indeed of the Third Term, which I have not illuminated, because it is what gives us the key to the hole, the hole as I am designating it. It is Enjoyment in so far as it would involve, not the other of the signifier, but the other of the body, the other of the other sex.

When I say, state, announce that there is no sexual relationship does this not mean this fact that is there in experience, that everyone knows, but about which we must learn why Freud did not take it into account. Why Freud qualified Eros by the One, handing himself over to the myth of the body, of the united body, of the body with two backs, of the completely round body, by daring to refer himself to this Platonic blunder? Is it not that the fact that we may well embrace any other body whatsoever is nothing more than the sign of the most extreme perplexity? It happens that thanks to a fact that Freud (39) catalogues quite obviously as is required as regression, and what's more we suck it, what matter? Apart from breaking it into fragments, it is hard to see what one can really do to another body, I mean another body described as human! There is thus justified that if we seek what this enjoyment of the other body can be bordered by, in so far as it surely makes a hole, what we find is anxiety.

This indeed is why at a time, a time where it was certainly not for nothing that I had chosen this theme of anxiety, I had chosen it, because I knew that it would not last. I knew that it would not last because I had faithful followers who were busying themselves with giving rise to points of order which would subsequently have me declared unsuitable for transmitting analytic theory. Not at all that this provoked anguish in me, or even embarrassment. Anyway that can return any time. This provoked neither anxiety nor embarrassment in me. But I wanted all the same precisely in connection with this anxiety, *Inhibition, symptom, anxiety*, to say certain things which should now in short bear witness to the fact that it is quite compatible with the idea that the unconscious is conditioned by language, to situate affects in it. This simply means that it is to language and that it is from language we are manifestly and in an altogether overwhelming way affected. And what's more, at the time of my seminar on *anxiety*, if I introduced something, it is precisely the qualities of affect. That for a long time the affectionate, there, the affected had not simply not found them, but it was completely ruled

out that they should be even able to glimpse them. That indeed is why you can find in the mapping out that I made at the time, about what is involved in *Anxiety, inhibition, symptom* that I staggered on three planes

Inhibition

Symptom

Anxiety

in order precisely to be able to demonstrate what from that time is tangible, namely, that these three terms inhibition, symptom, anxiety are just as heterogeneous among themselves as my terms of Real, Symbolic and Imaginary. And that specifically, anxiety is that, it is (40) what is obvious, it is what within the body ek-sists, ek-sists when there is something that awakens it, which torments it. Look at little Hans, when it happens that there is made tangible the association to a body, specifically a male one on this occasion, defined as male, the association of a body and a phallic enjoyment. If *Little Hans* rushes into phobia, it is obviously to give body, I demonstrated it for a whole year, to give body to the embarrassment that he is in about this phallus, and for which he invents a whole series of differently prancing equivalents in the form of the phobia described as that of horses. *Little Hans*, in his anxiety, source of the phobia, source of the phobia and it is in this sense that in giving him what one might call this pure anxiety, they manage to get him to accommodate himself to this phallus about which, when all is said and done, like all of those who find themselves being charged with it, what I one day qualified as being a smuggler (*bandoulière*), well then, he simply has to accommodate himself to it, namely, that he is married to this phallus. This is something that the man can do nothing about. The woman, who does not ek-sist, can dream about having one, but the man is afflicted with it. He has no other wife than that.

This is what Freud said, is that not so on every register. What did he say, in saying in short that the phallic drive is not the genital drive, if not that the genital drive, in the man, make no mistake, is not at all

natural. Not only is it not natural, but if he did not have this devil of the symbolic pushing him from behind, so that when all is said and done he ejaculates and that this is of some use, but long ago there would have been no more of these speaking beings, of these beings who do not speak simply to be, but which are so by being [*parlêtres*]. Which is really the high point of the high point of futility.

Good! Well then, it is a quarter to two. For my part I find that today since I more or less improvised everything that I wanted to tell you, I am rather tired like that. This will all appear in a different shape, since after all I am not all that satisfied with this one.

Seminar 3: Tuesday 14 January 1975

Voilà! What I am saying concerns, you are the proof of it, concerns everybody. It does not concern me, for my part, like everybody else. And that indeed is why it concerns everybody, because that is sensed in what I say. Why is that sensed? Because what I am saying is an opening up that concerns my practice, an opening up that starts from this question that of course I would not ask if I did not have the answer in my practice. It is: what is implied by the fact that psychoanalysis works?

You come to see me, but this has nothing to do with what I do in terms of psychoanalysis, you come to see me operating on the board. This was, as you have been able to see, no small matter...I corrected myself time after time, even though I had a piece of paper in my

pocket to guide me, otherwise I would have become even more entangled in it, I would have got into even more of a mess than I did! In effect...

What you see on the right [III-1] is the good old granddaddy Borromean knot, the Borromean knot of four, in which it is easy, immediate to see, that if you cut any one of these rings of string, the three others are free. There is then not the slightest complication in making a Borromean knot as long as you wish, namely, to knot to one another any number at all of rings of string. I already pointed out that as I draw it there, the number, the number of rings of string is not, as I might say, homogeneous. As you can see, simply by looking at this schema, there is what you might call a first and a last. The way it is done like that, there cannot be more than four and if I proceed in the same way for there to be five of them, I would have in a way to give to the one that – if you wish, the one on the extreme right – [here on the bottom figure] we will call the last, a different way of being knotted.

Because when all is said and done, it is the last that holds the whole chain, which ensures that there are four of them there, and if I go a little further, there will be five, on condition that I do not give to the last the same role, because it will be holding five instead of four.

You know this by, I must have made an allusion in passing to it, the way of articulating the essence of number that Peano produced by means of a certain number of axioms, it seems that here the $n+1$, the successor that Peano highlights as structuring the whole number, this on a single condition, which is that there should be one at the start which is not the 'successor' of anyone, namely, what this ring of string imitates very well, what he designates by zero. It is in an axiomatic fashion that Peano expresses himself, that Peano makes his statement, namely, that he posits a certain number of axioms and that it is from there, in conformity with mathematical requirements, arithmetical on this occasion, that he constructs something that gives us the definition of a series which will be in numbers, in homological whole numbers let us say, since we are here homological, namely, that everything that will be done by means of such axioms will be homological to the series of whole numbers.

But what am I showing you here? Something different, since here there is specified the function of this $+1$ as such. It is this $+1$ which (43) ensures that, eliminate that one for example, there is no longer a chain here, there is no longer a series since from the simple fact of cutting out this one-among-others, all the others, let us say, are freed as ones. It is a way, would I call it material, to make it sensed that 1 is not a number, even though this sequence of numbers is made up of a sequence of ones.

By using rings of string, let us say that I am illustrating something that is not unrelated to this sequence of numbers which, as you know, we have the greatest difficulty not to take as a constituent of the Real. Every approach to the Real makes it very difficult not to take account of number. Number seems (*semble*)...why not welcome this word which comes to me here prematurely? First of all the Real is woven by number. There is in number a *consistency* which is indeed of a nature that we can say is not natural at all. Since, for me to make you sense that I am tackling this category of the Real in so far as there is

something which knots what I am led to give consistency to also – the Imaginary and the Symbolic – how does it happen that this, as I might say, pushes me first of all to use the knot?

It is by virtue of being the same consistency in these three something that I originated in terms of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, it is in virtue of being the same consistency that I produce – and why so, to give myself an explanation of my practice – that I produce this Borromean knot. That was never done, never done what consists...consists in what? Disregarding consistency as such. I isolate consistency as this something that I will call like that, to give you an image because I do not stint myself in giving images.

What is there here [on the board] if not images, images about which the most astonishing thing is that you can locate yourself in them. Because you must not believe that these images function just by themselves! No doubt you are used to the blackboard, but what do you see on it? The very trouble you have seen that I had to go to for these images, which have this property that flattened out, nevertheless a line must pass over, *crossing over* [III-1] or go underneath, *undercrossing* [III-2] that this should make an image is already in itself miraculous. I am moreover not quite sure that you will grasp these images as easily as that.

You clearly see that there is nevertheless a difference. I am putting (44) the problem to you: is this knot, as it is there, as it is made, in the granddaddy way that I have signalled to you for a long time, is it the same? In other words, by simply fiddling around with the thing, are you able I am not saying to transform it into this one here since it is supposed to be the same? Set yourself that as a little exercise... In other words, this is the meaning of what I am asking you, does it work in fours? Is it the same knot, or is one more required? For I am telling you already that in a chain made up like that one, the transformation can be obtained. But I am not telling you, to leave the

delight for yourselves, I am not telling you from how many on, because there is one thing certain, which is that with three, you will not produce this very particular little complication that apparently distinguishes the figure on the left from the figure on the right.

If there is something that illustrates that consistency, this something which is in a way underlies everything that we say, that this consistency is something other than what is qualified, in language, as non-contradiction, it is this sort of figure, in so far as it has this something that I am indeed forced to call a *real* consistency, because this is what is supposed.

The fact is that a cord holds together. We never think about it, we never think about the fact that there is a metaphor in the term consistency. There is even something more, which is that I am communicating to you this real consistency by way of an intuition of which, all the same, I can say, that since I transmit it to you by image, it is by way of an imaginary intuition that I am communicating it to you. And the fact that I am sure that you are not more familiar than I am with these sorts of figures – the few openings out that I am creating of it for you by drawing it on the board – I am sure that, let us say, for the great majority of you, the question I am posing, that of the transformation which is not a transformation, which would be a transformation if the knot had to be remade so that the one on the left is transformed into the one on the right, or inversely, I asked you this question, is it the same knot? There are not many who could tell me out of the blue like that. And still fewer tell me why.

Here we are then, as I might say, with this cord in hand as supposed foundation of consistency, in such a way that it cannot be said what is at stake there is something to which we are already habituated, (45) namely, the geometrical line. It is all the same something quite different. Not only is the geometrical line not that, but everyone knows that what it generates, are all sorts of problems about its

continuity, which are not nothing and which are not nothing, why? Precisely because we cannot support the line with something that has precisely this consistency, that makes a cord. This is even the principle, the principle of the fact that the first bluff perpetrated about the functions described as continuous. It seemed that one could not construct a line which does not somewhere have a tangent, that this tangent was straight or curved, moreover, was of little importance. It is from this idea that the line was not after all without width that there were produced these mirages with which mathematicians had to fight for a long time and that moreover it took time for them to wake up to the fact that one could make a perfectly continuous line which did not have a tangent.

This is to say all the same the importance of this image, but is it indeed an image? After all, it is not for nothing that you are told ‘Hold fast to the cord, huh’ (*T’nez bien la corde hein!*). ‘Hold fast to the cord’ means that when the other end of the cord is knotted, you can hold onto it. This has something to do with the Real, and it is that here indeed, good God, it does not seem to me to be missing the point to remind you that in his rule among the proper *Rules for the direction of the mind (esprit)*, someone called Descartes did not think it was superfluous, in this *Rule X*, to make the remark that ‘...since not all minds are equally inclined to spontaneously discover things by their own strength, this rule – the one that he is stating – teaches that one must not busy oneself immediately with the more difficult and arduous things – less important – but that one must first of all study thoroughly the less important and the simplest arts, those in particular where greater order reigns, like those of artisans who make cloth and carpets, or those of women who embroider or do lace work, as well as all the combinations of numbers and all the operations that refer to arithmetic, and other similar things...’.

There is not the slightest suspicion that in saying these things, Descartes had the feeling that there is a relationship between

arithmetic and the fact that women do lace work, indeed that upholsterers make knots. On the other hand it is certain that Descartes never in the slightest interested himself in knots. Quite the (46) contrary we had to be well advanced into the 20th Century for something to be outlined that could be called a theory of knots. You know on the other hand, what I have told you, that this theory of knots is in its infancy, is extremely clumsy. And as it is fabricated, there are many cases where at the sight of simple figures such as the ones that I have made for you on the board, you could not in any way give an explanation for the fact, whether yes or no, the tangle that you have drawn is or is not a knot, whatever may be the conventions that you have given yourself in advance to account for the knot as such. The fact is moreover that there is something that is worth dwelling on. Is it because of an intuition? But what I am demonstrating to you, is that it goes much further than that, it is not simply that vision always more or less makes a surface, it is for more profound reasons that in a way these knots make tangible for you, it is for more profound reasons for what is in the nature, in the nature of things as they say. The being who speaks, since after all we cannot say a whole lot about the others, at least until we have gone a little bit more keenly into the slant of their meaning, the being who speaks is always somewhere badly situated between two and three dimensions.

This indeed is why, you have heard me putting forward here something that is the same thing, the same thing as my knot, this equivocation on *dit-mansion*, that I write, as you know because I have dinned it into you, that I write as *d-i-t* hyphen *mansion*, a stage set [?] of the said. We do not know very well whether in the saying we have the three dimensions written as they customarily are. I mean whether we are able to move around in it so easily, *Ta zoa trexei* [animals run] And we are undoubtedly there, *zoon*. We walk, but it must not be imagined that because we walk, we are doing something that has the slightest relationship with three-dimensional space. That our body has three dimensions is something about which there is no doubt as long

as we can pierce the skin of this body. But this does not at all mean that what we call space is not always more or less flat. There are even mathematicians who wrote that explicitly, all space is flat.

Any manipulation of something real is situated in this case in a space that in fact we are able to handle very badly outside techniques that are required by this three-dimensional space. It is obviously quite (47) striking that it is a technique, a technique that can be reduced to what it apparently is, namely, this chatting which for me forces my hand about the weighing up, as I might say, of space as such.

If we start again from something that must indeed be said to be science, does science not allow us to suspect, that in treating space in the same way as the one a technique in fact requires, requires of me at least, what it encounters is a paradox. Because in short, one cannot say that matter, you have heard tell of it a little bit, that matter does not create a problem for it at every instant. A problem, namely, that's what problem means, an advance defence, something to crush before getting to see what it is defending. Science has perhaps not yet completely realised that if it treats matter, it is as if the aforesaid matter had an unconscious, as if it knew somewhere what it was doing. Naturally it is a truth that was very rapidly extinguished. People noticed it, there is a little moment of awakening, at the time of Newton, he was told, listen, this business of this blessed gravity that you are telling us about, be serious! How moreover how could it have been represented before, apart from Aristotle's *topos*! Anyway! Be serious! That is unthinkable for us! Unthinkable because...why? Because we have Newton's little formulae and we understand nothing about them, which is what gives them their value. Because when these formulae made their entry, it was to this that right away an objection was raised, namely, but how can each one of these little particles know the distance it is from all the others? Namely, what was evoked was the unconscious, in short, of the particle, of course!

All that, all that has died down. Because why? Because people have simply given up trying to understand anything about it and that, moreover, it is in the measure that people have come back to it that we have been able to arrive at more complicated formulae by knotting a few more dimensions into the affair. This indeed is the problem. What is this analysis, in the proper sense of my technique, one that I have in common with a certain number of people who are here, and what place does this technique occupy with regard to what constitutes science? Science counts, it counts matter, but what does it count in this matter? Namely, if there were not the language that number (48) already conveys, what meaning would have to count? Does the unconscious for example have an accountant (*comptable*) in it? I am not saying something that can be counted, I am asking whether there is an accountant in the sense of the character that you know who scribbles numbers. Is there an accountant in the unconscious? Quite obviously, yes. Each unconscious is not something of the accountant, it is an accountant, and an accountant who knows how to do addition. Naturally it has not yet, of course, got to multiplication, this is even what perplexes it. But as regards counting things, counting the blows, I will not say that it knows how to deal with it, it is extremely awkward, but it must count in the style, in the style of these knots.

It is from this that there comes the famous guilt feeling about which you have probably sometimes heard talk...the guilt feeling is something that does accounts, that does accounts and of course cannot work them out, can never work them out. It gets lost in its accounts. But it is indeed there that it can be felt that there is at least a knot, this knot of which, if you will allow me to say it, nature abhors. I mean a different sort than nature abhors a vacuum, nature abhors the knot. Nature abhors the knot, and very especially the Borromean and, a strange thing, that is why I am going over the thing with you. The thing, is nothing less than the *urverdrängt*, the original repressed, the primal repressed, and that is why I advise you to practice my two little things [III-1 & III-2]. It is not because it will tell you anything

whatsoever about the repressed, since this repressed is the hole. You will never get to it. But en route, by manipulating this little knot, you will familiarise yourselves, at least with your hands, with this something about which in any case you will never understand anything, because it is altogether ruled out that you should know this knot. That is indeed why, as history bears witness, that indeed is why geometry has gone through everything, through cubes, through pyramids, the different forms of hedgehog about which in short people have cogitated. In short, rigour is what means nothing other than solids! While it had within hand's reach, something which was well worth, good God, the stones with which it made the carriage, or the fields, precisely what could not be measured without stretching out cords. Never has anyone seemed to have reserved for these cords the slightest attention up to very recent times.

(49) In a certain sense, I would say that there is something new, in the fact that people have been interested in words, in terms like that for example of mesology; what is there between, between what and what? It is a matter of defining what does between mean. Yeah! I between you (*je t'entre*), it is my own *tentrisme*. Between, is a category that made its appearance, in short, quite recently in mathematics and, that indeed is why, in short, hat from time to time I consult a mathematician so that he can tell me where they have got to in this respect.

Yes! There is something that to take...*[on the board]*.

You see, I am making progress. I have almost managed to draw a Borromean knot without being forced to rub bits out. I would like today, since already time is passing, to announce what I have to say, and what will occupy our year.

Here [III-3] at the joint of the Imaginary and of the Symbolic, and not just in any joint, in this joint here, where you may confuse these two

points – even though they still do not come from the same movement, from the same relative movement of the Imaginary and the Symbolic – here, in these two points which moreover are confused, when the squeezing between the Imaginary and the Symbolic occurs, in these

two points, there is meaning. I must split things a little, because I apologise, I must have delayed to give you a little of a *dit-mansion*, a *dit-mansion* that concerns me, that of the knot.

(50) Here, and there, you can see how difficult it is, I must all the same fiddle around a bit, we have something that is called phallic enjoyment. There you are! Why do we call it phallic enjoyment? Because there is something called ek-sistence. Ek-sistence, I ought to say, has a history. It is not a word that was used so easily, nor voluntarily, at least in the philosophical tradition, and since we do not know how people in the first centuries spoke, I mean that we certainly have glimpses, about a certain Latin tongue, the popular tongue. Perhaps it was spoken over a considerable area, this core tongue from which there came by differentiation the romance tongues. In this popular Latin tongue, we have no testimony that *existo* nor *existere* was used. Nevertheless, it is curious that this term emerged, and emerged in a field that we will call philosophico-religious. It is altogether in the measure that religion sucked in, the religious *humante*, that religion sucked in philosophy that we have seen emerging this word existence, which seems nevertheless to have had, make no mistake, many *raisons d'être*.

What is this existence, and where indeed can we situate it? This existence is very important in itself, because if we have the idea, the

idea that something that comes in place of this kind of naïve production and which only starts from words, namely, what Aristotle advanced into, namely, that the *dictum de omni et nullo*, he says somewhere, this is what the Universal is, *what is said about all can also be applied to a particular*. It is from this that the first linguistic disentangling took place. The serious thing is that what followed consisted in demonstrating to Aristotle, who could not accept it for a long time, that universality did not imply existence. But this is not what is serious in a certain apprehension of things. That universality does not imply existence, we sweep aside every day. It is that existence implies universality that is serious. It is that in what is existence, we chatter on about something which participates in the general, while the very reason that my little Borromean knot is made, is to show you that existence is of its nature what *eks*. What turns the consistent but what creates an interval, and which in this interval has many ways of being knotted, precisely in the measure that we do not (51) have the slightest manual or mental familiarity with these knots. Moreover, it is the same thing!

Many people have suspected, in short is that not so, that man is only a hand. If only he were a hand! There is his whole body. He thinks also with his feet, I even advised you to do so, because it is after all the best thing that can be wished for you. Here, what resists the test of existence, to be taken as what is squeezed in the knot?

There is all the same an opening up, the opening up made by Freud. Freud certainly did not have the notion of the Imaginary, of the Symbolic and of the Real that I have, because it is the least that one can have, call that what you wish, provided there are three consistencies, you have the knot. What Freud did is not unrelated to existence and, by this fact, comes close to the knot. I am going, like that, because I am nice and because I have pissed you off enough today, I am all the same going to show you something that I find for my part rather funny and it is naturally something I invented! And in

my opinion, this illustrates well something that gives its value to what I asked you to question yourselves about, namely, whether the two in the middle [on the board] are the same knot? [III-1 & III-2] Freud had no idea about the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, but he had all the same a suspicion of them. The fact that I have been able to extract, with time no doubt and with patience, that I began with the Imaginary and, that after that, I had to chew on this business of the Symbolic, with this whole reference, this linguistic reference in which I effectively did not find in short everything that would have suited me, and then, this famous Real that I end up by presenting to you in the very form of the knot.

There is in Freud a reference to something that he considers to be Real. It is not what people believe. It is not the *Realitätsprinzip*, because it is too obvious that this *Realitätsprinzip* is a matter of saying, namely, social. But let us suppose that he had the suspicion simply, that he did not say to himself that this could make a knot. In short, Freud, contrary to a prodigious number of people, from Plato to Tolstoi, Freud was not a Lacanian. I have to say it, but to slip this banana skin under his foot, in short, is that not so, of the R.S.I., of the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary, let us try to see how he effectively disentangled himself from it.

(52) These here [on the board] do not hold up, huh! [III-4] I am pointing out to you, they are placed on top of one another, the Real is

there, the Imaginary there and the Symbolic is there, just like in the earlier schema. Ah! What did Freud do? Ah! I am going to tell you. He made the knot of four with these three, these three which I suppose to be a banana skin under his feet. But then, here is how he proceeded; he invented something that he calls *psychical reality*. I should have put the third knot here, the third field of ek-sistence, namely, the enjoyment of the Other. Since these two figures, since they are figures, are the same, you see that it is from a line that is found to cross, to cross these fields which are designated as ek-sistence of something around consistency, to cross these fields, namely, here to be in the enjoyment of the Other, then in the Imaginary, then in meaning, then from the hole of the Symbolic and by breaking through it, to be somewhere in an existence which is outside the Symbolic and the Real, that it returns towards this point which is none other than the one that I designate as the \circ -object. This is what can knot with a fourth term, the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, in so far as Symbolic, Imaginary and Real are left independent, go with the drift in Freud. It is as such that he requires a *psychical reality* that knots these three consistencies.

I said, I said here or if it was not here it was elsewhere, it is in my Rome discourse, the last one that I gave, the one called *La troisième*, I said that if I had not done the Names-of-the-father written this time correctly, I would have stated a consistency such that it would have (53) explained for us a certain number of slippages in Freud. Freud needed not three, the minimum, but four consistencies for it to hold together, to suppose it being initiated into the consistency of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. What he calls *psychical reality* has perfectly well a name, it is what he calls the Oedipus complex. Without the Oedipus complex, nothing holds together, nothing of the idea that he has holds together, about the way in which the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real hold onto the cord. That by which, with time, I was determined to proceed, comes from the fact that I believe

that, what Freud stated not, not I am saying about the Oedipus complex, is to be rejected, it is implicit.

And this is demonstrated and each one of the points can in itself be specified, it is implicit in that while having the same effect, but this time at a minimum, it is enough to make what was below pass above

into these two points [III-5]. In other words, the Real must surmount, as I might say, the Symbolic in order for the Borromean knot to be produced.

This is what by having four terms, Freud himself was not able to do, but it is very precisely what is involved in analysis. It is to ensure that the Real, not reality in the Freudian sense, that the Real at two points, that I will name as such, that the Real at two points surmounts the Symbolic.

It is clear that the thing that I am stating here in this form has nothing to do with the surmounting in the Imaginary sense that the Real ought, as I might say, dominate. Because it is enough for you to go back to this little thing for you to note that in the opposite sense, of course, this does not work and one cannot see why the Borromean knot would be less real, if you turn the thing over. I am pointing out to you, I pointed it out to you already once in passing, that if you turn it over, it has exactly the same aspect, namely, that if you turn it over, it is not (54) with its mirror image that you have to deal, it is exactly the same laevogyrotory thing that you have in the Borromean knot that you find at the back.

This to specify that it is not a matter, of course, of a change of order, of a change of plane between the Real and the Symbolic. It is simply that they are knotted differently. Being knotted differently is what

constitutes the essential of the Oedipus complex, and it is very precisely what analysis itself operates on, namely, it is by going into the finesse of these fields of ek-sistence, that we will proceed this year.

It is rather late already, I am renouncing, as I might say, given the difficulty, the slowness of what I presented to you today, I abandon going any further, putting off to our next meeting which will take place in a week's time the rest of what I wanted to say to you today.

I can all the same mark something, which is that if ek-sistence is defined with respect to a certain consistency, if ek-sistence is when all is said and done only this outside which is not a not-inside, if this ek-sistence is in a way that around which there is elaborated a substance, if ek-sistence, as someone like Kierkegaard puts it forward to us, is essentially pathetic, it nevertheless remains that the notion of a break, that the notion of a hole, even in something as worn out as ek-sistence, preserves its meaning. That if I told you first that there is in the Symbolic a repressed, there is also in the Real something that makes a hole, and there is also something of it in the Imaginary, as Freud clearly saw, he niggled out everything that is involved in drives in the body as being centred around the passage from one orifice to an other.

Seminar 4: Tuesday 21 January 1975

Precisely because – can you hear or not? – of what I am talking to you about, the knot, I cannot have, I cannot be sure of having a plan,

because the knot, if you see the way I draw it there, on the extreme right [IV-1], I will explain to you afterwards why it takes that form, let us say, of three pages. Let us imagine then stitched, [on the board] tied together here. Here then is the first, which is a piece of page, this to make myself understood, it seems to be self-evident, the second, is S which is just below and you see here the third that it is easy for you to imagine starting from this stitching on the left, it is necessary for the third to be palmed off (*refile*) on the first.

(56) Nevertheless, there are places [on the board] where by perforating these pages, you will only find one of them. [Here] there are three of them. Here, you only find page 2, here only page 1, and here, only page 3. But everywhere else you will find the three, which prevents me from having a plan, since there are three of them.

There are several modes of stating the meaning, that all refer back to the Real that they correspond to. So that you will not get entangled all the same, I am marking the Real for you here [IV-2]. It is marked by the edge of a hole, the Imaginary, here and there the Symbolic, that is so that you can follow. All these meanings refer back to the Real, to the Real that each corresponds to. It is here that there is confirmed the suppleness of the knot, which also creates its necessity. The principle of the knot is that it does not come undone, unless it is broken. What is this unknotting of the knot, which is impossible? It is the return to a

form described as trivial, and which is precisely that of the ring of string! So that it is a knot, it is a second degree knot, it is a knot that holds together, as you have already several times heard from my voice, it is a knot that holds together because it has three rings.

The true knot, the knot with which we busy ourselves in the theory of knots, is that which, as you see here on figure IV-3, I have just added, is precisely what is not transformed by a continuous distortion into the trivial figure of the ring.

If one starts from a knot [IV-3] made with three trivial figures, namely, three rings, it is something that is designated or rather is (57) drawn from the following, it is that by cutting in this way something which is, as one might say, the Borromean knot itself, you will obtain by joining together what you have cut every time, you will obtain the proper figure of a knot in the proper sense of the word [IV-4].

What is the most convenient way of showing that a knot is a knot?
For this knot there, the one on the right, is the simplest knot that exists. You get it by simply making a ring of a cord and passing it for example over the right of the piece that you are holding. It is by making the cord re-enter by the left on the inside of the ring that you have thus formed, that you see there being made what is called a knot in a cord, a knot that you can unknot; but which can no longer be unknotted from when on? From the moment that you suppose that the two ends of the cord are rejoined by a splice or indeed that you suppose that this cord has no end, stretches to the thinkable limits or more exactly goes beyond even these limits. In which case, you will properly speaking be dealing with the most simple knot, this knot which, when you close it, has the form that you see there on the right, namely, what is called *un noeud-trèfle*, clover-leaf in English.

It is clover in that it is three. It outlines, flattened out it allows there to be drawn, not three fields, but four fields. These are fields that you rediscover in the form, the form of the Borromean knot, the one that is only made up of this: one of each figure that I called trivial, the ring of string, one of each of these figure makes from two others a knot, namely, that it is by being three that there is a link, knot-link that is constituted for the two others.

If you hear talk sometimes about a four dimensional world you will know that in this world, calculable but not imaginable, there could not be such knots. Impossible to knot a cord in it, if in fact this world exists, impossible to knot a cord in it because of the fact that every figure, whatever it may be, is supported not by a line but by a cord consistency, that every figure of this kind can be distorted into any other whatsoever.

Nevertheless, if the thing was imaginable for you, it would be possible to understand, namely, by hearsay, because moreover the demonstration of it is not simple, but is doable, the fact is that in a

space that is supposed to be of four dimensions, it is not the consistencies of lines but of surfaces that can make a knot. Namely, that there subsist in the indefinite order, dimensions supposable as being more than three with which there is constituted, this indeed is where I must stop, with which there is constituted assuredly our world, namely, our representation. When I said world, should I not have said our real, on this single condition that it is seen that the world, here as representation, depends on the conjunction of these three consistencies that I name Symbolic, Imaginary and Real, the consistencies moreover being supposed to them. But that it is a matter of three consistencies and that every representation depends on them, is something that is well designed to suggest to us that there is more in the experience that necessitates, I would say, this trivision, this division into three, of diverse consistencies, that it is from that, without our being able to settle it, that it can be supposed that the consequence should be our representation of space as it is, namely, in three dimensions.

The question evoked, at this time of my statement, is something that responds to the notion of consistency: what can be supposed, since the term consistency presupposes that of demonstration, what can be supposed to be a demonstration in the Real? Nothing other supposes it than the consistency of which the cord is here the support. The cord here is, as I might say, the foundation of agreement (*l'accord*). To make a leap into that which, from what I am stating, will only be produced a small later, I would say that the cord thus becomes the symptom of the way in which the Symbolic consists. Which does not go badly after all with the fact that language bears witness to us that the formula to be threadbare (*montrer la corde*), by which there is (59) designated the wearing-out of a cloth, has its bearing, since when all is said and done to be threadbare, namely, that the weaving is no longer camouflaged in something where metaphorical use is so permanent, is no longer camouflaged in what is called – with the idea that in saying that, one is saying something – in what is called the

material (*l'étoffe*). The material of something is what, as near as may be, will give the image of substance, and which moreover is usual in the use made of it. It is a matter in this formula of which I spoke, to be threadbare, of seeing that there is no material that is not woven.

I had prepared for you a paper, because it is too complicated to draw on the board, made a whole tissue, uniquely made up of Borromean knots. One could cover the surface of the blackboard with it. It is easy to see that one arrives at what I might call a hexagonal fabric. You must not believe nevertheless, that the section of any one of the rings of tissue, let us call them that here, will free anything whatsoever from what it is knotted to, since by only cutting a single one of them, the six other rings freed by one cut, held together moreover, held together by the six times three, eighteen other rings with which it is knotted in a Borromean way.

If I earlier produced prematurely, but it has to be done – it is even the law of language that something should come out before being able to be commented on – if I produced the term symptom, it is indeed because the Symbolic is what from consistency makes the simplest metaphor. Not that the circular figure is firstly a figure, namely imaginable. It is even there that the notion of the good form was founded. And this notion of the good form is indeed something that is designed, as I might say, to make re-enter into the Real what is involved in the Imaginary. And I would say more, there is a kinship of the good form with meaning, which should be noted. The order of meaning is configured, as one might say naturally from what this form of the circle designates. The consistency supposed to the Symbolic is in agreement with this image that is in a way primary and we had to wait for psychoanalysis to see that it is linked to the order of this body on which the Imaginary depends. For who doubts, it is even on this slender thread that there survived everything that is called philosophy down to today, who doubts that there is a different order than the one

in which the body believes it moves around in? But this order of the body is not any more explained for all that.

Why does the eye see spherically while it is indisputably perceived as (60) a sphere, while the ear, you should note hears sphere just as much, even though it is presented in a different form that everyone knows is that of a snail? So then can we not at least question whether, if the two organs so manifestly *diffeomorphic*, if I can express myself in this way, perceive in the same way spherically, is it by taking things starting from my object described as small **o** that by a necessary conjunction which links the small **o** itself to make a ball of in fact of the small **o** under different forms. Except for the fact that it does not have a form, but it is thinkable in a dominant way, orally or moreover, as I might say shittily (*chialement*), the common factor of the small **o**, is to be linked to the orifices of the body. And what is the impact of the fact that the eye and the ear are also orifices on the fact that perception for both is spherical?

Without the small **o**, something is lacking in any possible theory of any reference, of any appearance of harmony, and this from the fact that the condition of the subject, the supposed subject, is to be only supposable, only knowing something by being himself, *qua* subject, caused by an object which is not what he knows, what he imagines he knows (*connaitre*), namely, which is not the Other of knowing as such, but that on the contrary, this object, the small **o**-object, removes this Other. The Other is thus, the Other that I write with a capital O, the Other is thus a matrix with a double entrance, of which the small **o** constitutes one of these entrances, and of which the other... what are we going to say about it? Is it the One of the signifier?

Let us begin to question whether it is not thinkable there? I would say that it is even thanks to that, that I was able one day, if in fact that some of those who are here were there, to couple for you the One and my small **o**, that on that occasion, I had put it in relationship to the one

by supposing it to be of the golden number. This was rather useful to me in introducing that which, that where I had already been led to by the experience, namely, that it can be read rather well there that between this One and this small \mathfrak{o} , there is strictly no rationally determinable relationship. The golden number, as you remember, is $1/\mathfrak{o} = 1 + \mathfrak{o}$; from this there results that no proportion is ever graspable between the 1 and the \mathfrak{o} , that the difference between the 1 and the \mathfrak{o} will always be an \mathfrak{o}^2 and so on indefinitely, a power of \mathfrak{o} , namely, that there is never any reason for the overlapping of the one by the other to end, that the difference will be as small as it can be represented, that there is even a limit but that within this limit, there will never be a (61) conjunction, a copulation of any kind between 1 and \mathfrak{o} .

Does that mean that the One of meaning, for this is what the Symbolic has as a signifying effect, is something related to what I called the matrix, the matrix that removes the Other from its double entry. The One of meaning is not to be confused with what makes the One of the signifier. The One of meaning is being, being specified by the unconscious, in so far as it ek-sists, that it ek-sists at least to the body. For if there is one thing that is striking, it is that it ek-sists in the dis-body (*dis-corps*). There is nothing in the unconscious - if it is made as I have stated to you - that makes an agreement with the body. The unconscious is discordant. The unconscious is that which, by speaking, determines the subject as being, but being to be removed from this metonymy, by which *I* support desire, as forever impossible to say as such.

If I say that the small \mathfrak{o} is what causes desire, this means that it is not the object of it. It is not its direct or indirect complement, but simply this cause which, to play on the word as I did in my first discourse at Rome, this cause which always talks (*cause*). The subject is caused by an object that can only be noted by a writing, and that indeed is why a step is made in the theory. What is irreducible in this is not a language-effect, because the effect of language is *pathein*, it is the

passion of the body. But from language there is inscribable, there can be noted in so far as language does not have an effect, this radical abstraction which is the object, the object that I designate, that I write with the figure of writing **o** and about which nothing is thinkable, except for the fact that everything that is subject, subject of thought that one believes to be Being, is determined by it. The One of meaning is so little involved here that what it is as an effect, effect [is made up of] from the One of the signifier. We know it and I am insisting on it, the One of the signifier only operates in fact by being able to be employed to designate any signified whatsoever.

The Imaginary and the Real are here knotted to this One of the signifier. What would we say about it if not that as regards their quality, what Charles Sanders-Peirce calls the *firstness* of what divides them up as different qualities, where put for example, how divide among them on this occasion something like life or indeed death? Who knows where to situate them, since moreover the signifier, the one of the signifier as such, causes just as much on one or the other of the aspects? One would be wrong to believe that from two, from the (62) Real and from the Imaginary, it is the Imaginary that is mortal and that it is the Real that is living. Only the ordinary of the use of a signifier can be said to be arbitrary. But where does this arbitrary come from, if not from a structured discourse!

Will I evoke here the title of a journal, *Ornicar*, that you see appearing at Vincennes, under my auspices. Is it not an example of what the signifier determines? Here it does so by being agrammatical, this by presenting only one category of grammar. But it is by this that it demonstrates the configuration as such, the one, as I might say, which with regard to Icarus only ornaments it. Language is only an *ornure*. There is only rhetoric, as Descartes underlines in rule X. Dialectic can only be supposed from the use of what goes astray towards a mathematically ordered ordinary, namely, towards a discourse, the

one that associates, not the phoneme, even understood in the broadest sense, but the subject determined by Being, namely, by desire.

What is the affect of ek-sisting, starting from my terms? It is to see, with regard to this field where I situate here the unconscious, namely, this interval between, as I might say, two consistencies, the one that is noted here by an edge that I made the edge of a page [IV-1] and the one that is buckled here [IV-2], is buckled, being buckled implying the hole without which there is no knot. What is the affect of existing? It concerns this field in which not just anything whatsoever is said, but where already the texture, the trellis of what I designated for you earlier by a double entry, of the crossing of the small **o** with what is defined as being from the signifier. What is it that makes ek-sistence from this unconscious? This is what I depicted here [IV-2] and what I underline just now as a support of the symptom.

What is it to say the symptom? It is the function of the symptom, a function to be understood as the mathematical formulation $f(x)$ would do. What is this x ? This is what can be expressed of the unconscious by a letter, in so far, that only in the letter is the identity of self to self isolated from every quality. From the unconscious every One, in so far as it sustains the signifier in which the unconscious consists, every One is capable of being written by a letter. No doubt, there needs to be a convention. But the strange thing is that this is what the symptom operates in an untamed way. What does not cease to be written in the symptom stems from that.

Not long ago someone, someone that I listen to in my practice – and nothing of what I tell you comes from anywhere other than from this (63) practice, this indeed is what constitutes the difficulty, the difficulty I have in transmitting it to you – someone with regard to the symptom articulated to me this something that would compare it to points of suspension.

The important thing is the reference to writing. The repetition of the symptom is this something that I have just said is writing in an untamed way, this for what is involved in the symptom as it is presented in my practice. That the term should have come from elsewhere, namely, from the symptom as Marx defined it in the social, takes nothing away from the well-foundedness of its employment, as I might say, in the private. That fact that the symptom in the social is defined by unreasonableness does not prevent it being signalled by all sorts of rationalisations as regards each one. All rationalisation comes from a particular rationale, namely, not of exception but of anyone whatsoever. Anyone whatsoever must be able to make an exception in order that the function of the exception may become a model. But the reciprocal is not true. The exception must not be found in just anyone to constitute, by this fact, a model. This is the ordinary state of affairs. Anyone at all who reaches the function of exception that the father has, we know with what result, that of his *Verwerfung*, or of his rejection, in most cases, through the filiation that the father generates with the psychotic results that I have exposed.

A father has only a right to respect, indeed to love, if the aforesaid, the aforesaid love, the aforesaid respect, is, you are not going to believe your ears, per-versely (*père-versement*) orientated, namely, made by a woman (*fait d'une femme*), the small **o**-object which causes her desire. But what this woman picks up in the small **o**, if I may express myself in this way, has nothing to do with the question! What she is occupied with, are the other **o**-objects who are the children with whom the father nevertheless intervenes, exceptionally in the right case, to maintain in repression, in the correct half-God (*mi-Dieu*) if you will allow me, the version of his perversion that is proper to him, the only guarantee of his function of father, which is the function, the function of the symptom that I wrote it there, as such. For that, it is enough that he should be a model of the function. That is what the father ought to be, in so far as he can only be an exception, he cannot be the model of the function except by realising its type. What matter if he

has symptoms, if he adds to that something of the paternal perversion, namely, that the cause of it is a woman that he has acquired to give her children and, that whether he wants to or not he takes paternal care of (64) them. Normality is not the paternal virtue par excellence, but simply the proper *mi-Dieu* described just now. In other words the correct non-saying, naturally on condition that this non-saying should not be stitched up in white thread, namely, that one does not see right away in short what is at stake in what he does not say.

It is rare! It is rare and it will renew the subject to say that it is rare that he succeeds in this correct *mi-Dieu*! It will renew the subject when I will have the time to take it up again for you. I said it simply in passing to you in an article on *Schreber*. Here there is nothing worse, there is nothing worse than the father who proclaims the law on everything, above all no father educator! But rather standing back from any magisterium.

I am going to end like that by talking to you about a woman. Well then, this indeed is all I did to avoid speaking about a woman, since I tell you that *The woman* does not ek-sist. Naturally all the journalists said that I had said that women did not exist! There are things like that that one cannot...*le donne*...that are expressed in short...things like that that one... They are not even, not even capable of noticing that to say *The woman*, is not the same thing as to say *women*, while they mouth on about the woman all the time, is that not so! The woman, is obviously something who can be perfectly, perfectly well outlined. *All women*, as they say, but I, I also say that women are not-all so then that creates a little objection, does it not! But *The woman* is, let us say that it is *all the women*, but then it is an empty set, because this set theory, is all the same something that allows a little bit of seriousness to be put into the use of this term *all*.

Yeah! A woman first of all, the question is only posed for the other, namely, of the one for whom there is a set definable by this thing that

is written on the board. It is not J(), it is not phallic enjoyment, it is that ; ek-sists, is the phallus. What is the phallus? Well then, since of course people drag out...hum! anyway I am the one who drags things out...who drags along the whole convoy. So then I will not tell you today what the phallus is.

In short, all the same, you can have all the same a little suspicion about it. If phallic enjoyment is there, it must be that the phallus must be something else, huh? So then, the phallus, what is it? In short, I am asking you the question because I cannot go into it today for very (65) long. It is enjoyment without the organ, or the organ without enjoyment? In short, it is in this form that I am asking you to give meaning, alas, to this figure.

Anyway! I am going to skip this step. For the one encumbered with a phallus, what is a woman? It is a symptom. It is a symptom and that can be seen, that can be seen from the structure there that I am in the process of explaining to you. It is clear that if there is no enjoyment of the Other as such, namely, if there is no guarantee that can be met in the enjoyment of the body of the Other which ensures that to enjoy the Other as such exists, here is the most manifest example of the hole, of what is only supported from the small *o*-object itself, but by misunderstanding, by confusion. A woman, no more than a man, is not an *o*-object. She has her own, that I mentioned earlier, that she occupies herself with, that has nothing to do with the one by whom she is supported in some desire or other. To make this *a* woman a symptom is all the same to situate her in this articulation to the point where phallic enjoyment as such is moreover her affair. Contrary to what is said, the woman has to undergo castration neither more nor less than the man. She is, with regard to what is involved in her function of symptom all together at the same point as her man. It must simply be said how, for her, this ek-sistence, this ek-sistence of the real that is the phallus I mentioned earlier, the one on which I left you with your tongue hanging out, it's a matter of knowing what

corresponds to it for her. You must not imagine that it is the little yoke that Freud talks about! It has nothing to do with that.

These points of suspension of the symptom are in fact questioning points, as I might say, in the non-relationship. I would like all the same to open up what I am introducing here to show you from what angle this definition of the symptom is justified. What is striking in the symptom, in this something which gives a little peck to the unconscious, is that it is believed. There are so few sexual relationships that I recommend for that the reading of something which is a very beautiful novel *Ondine*. *Ondine* manifests what is at stake. A woman in the life of a man is something he believes in, he believes that there is one, sometimes two or three, and what moreover is interesting here is that he can only believe in one. He thinks that there is a species, in the style of sylphs or water sprites (*ondins*).

(66) What is it to believe in sylphs or water sprites? I point out to you that one says believe in (*croire à*) in this case. And even that the French tongue adds to it this reinforcement of what is not believe in, but believe in it (*croire y*), believe there. What does believing in it mean? Believing in it only strictly means as follows: it can only mean, semantically, believing in beings in so far as they can say something. I would ask you to find me an exception for this definition. If they are beings who can say nothing, say properly speaking, namely state what is distinguished as truth or as lie, it means nothing. Only that, the fragility of this *believing in it* to which manifestly there is reduced the fact of non-relationship so tangibly cross-checked everywhere, I mean that it crosschecks. There is no doubt that whoever comes to present us with a symptom believes in it. What does that mean? If he asks our help, our aid, it is because he believes the symptom is capable of saying something, that it must only be deciphered. It is the same for what is involved in a woman, except for this, which happens, but which is not obvious, the fact is that one believes that she effectively says something, it is there that you come a cropper. To believe in it, one believes her. One believes what she

says. This is what is called love. And that is why it is a feeling that I described on occasion as comic. It is the well known comic, the comic of psychosis. That is why we are usually told that love is a madness. The difference is nevertheless manifest between believing 'in', a symptom, or believing 'it'. This is what makes the difference between neurosis and psychosis. In psychosis, the voices, it's all there, they believe in them. Not only do they believe in them, but they believe them. Now it is all there, in this limit.

Believing her is, thank God, a widespread condition because, all the same, it provides company, you are no longer all alone. And that is why love is precious, eh!, rarely realised, as everyone knows only lasting for a time and all the same made up of the fact that it is essentially this breaking down of the wall where one can only give yourself a bump on the forehead, in short, that is at stake. If there is no sexual relationship, it is certain that love, love is classified according to a certain number of cases whose petals Stendhal has very well plucked, in short. There is the love of esteem, there is that in short. It is not at all incompatible with the love of passion, is that not so, nor with the love of taste; (*l'amour-estime, -passion, -gout*). But all the same it is the major love, it is the one which is founded on the (67) fact that one believes *her*, that one believes *her* because one has never had the proof that she is not absolutely authentic. But this believing *her* is all the same this something about which one is totally blinded, which acts as a stopper, as I might say, this is what I already said, to believing *it*, which is something that can be very seriously put in question. For to believe that there is one of them, God knows where that takes you, that takes you precisely towards believing that there is *The, The* which is altogether a fallacious belief. Nobody says the sylph or the water sprite. There is a water sprite or a sylph, there is a spirit. There are spirits, for some people. But all of this never gives anything except a plural. It is a matter of knowing what is its meaning. What meaning is there in *believing it* and whether there is

not something altogether necessitated in the fact that, in order to believe *in it*, there is no better way than to *believe her*.

Voilà, it is ten to two. I introduced today something, I introduced something that I believe to be able, to be able to be of use to you. Because the business of points of suspension earlier, it was someone who said this to me about a connection, is that not so about what is involved in women, and my God, that fits so well that in the practice, is that not so to say that a woman is a symptom, as no one has ever done up to the present, I believed I should do so.

Seminar 5: Tuesday 11 February 1975

I was told that the last time people heard nothing. It was explained to me since that it is because tape recorders are being hung on the loudspeakers. So then I would be grateful to the people who are in the process precisely of hanging them to take them away, so that all the same the loudspeakers may be of some use. At the same time, I would like the people who might find themselves in the position of not hearing anything to make a sign to me, so that I do not trust the loudspeakers and try to raise my voice. Because it is obviously painful to hear the remark, since there are some people who come to see me, to hear the remark that perhaps indeed I said interesting things, the preceding day or the day before that, that they were there, but that they did not hear.

I am delighted that today all the same, because I chose to come on Mardi gras, that the doors are not too congested. This could be an opportunity for me, to confide something in you. I reported to you, reported because it was instructive for me, I reported to you the fact that I had been at Nice, that I had accepted any title whatsoever. In short, I would say that it was in virtue of any one whatsoever that I had accepted, this title, obviously a little shocking for me, of *The Lacanian phenomenon*. And then I had pointed out to you that, in sum, I had provoked it, but that this informed me about something, which is perhaps a presumption, that what I say, has meaning effects. It seems in measuring things that these effects are not immediate, but (70) with the time that I have put into it and also, it must be said, the perseverance, since when all is said and done, for me, at least, it took 20 years for me to notice them, I mean for me to record them, that it should appear to me that this has had effects and I told you how surprised I was. One never knows whether a surprise is good or bad, a surprise is a surprise, it is outside the field of the agreeable or the disagreeable, since after all what is called good or bad is agreeable or disagreeable. So then [when] a surprise is lucky, let us say, this signifies what is called an encounter, namely, when all is said and done something that comes to you from yourself. I hope that this happens to you from time to time. So then I was able to renew this surprise that I am calling lucky, rather than good or bad, by going since, since I left you until the first Tuesday of February, first, in short, the second, the one that I speak on, I made a little trip to Strasbourg where I was able to note without even being too surprised at it because it is the Strasbourg group that takes charge of it, that I had effects, meaning effects in Germany. I mean that, from the Germans that I met in the Strasbourg group, I obtained when all is said and done questions which gave me the lucky surprise that I spoke about just now.

I was less surprised than at Nice, given that it was the Strasbourg group that were taking care of it – not that no one was taking care of

what I was saying at Nice! – but in short it happened, like that, that I was expecting less. It must be said that, in the interval, I cheered up a little, and that that was perhaps the reason that however lucky it was, the surprise was less at Strasbourg. I had a greater one, because, I have just spent a week, you'll never guess where? I have just spent a week in London. It is quite certain that neither the English, nor I will not say English psychoanalysts, I only know one who is English, and even then he is probably a Scot!...*Lalangue*, I think it is the English *lalangue* that creates an obstacle. That is not very promising, because the English *lalangue* is in the process of becoming universal, I mean, that it is making its way. Anyway, I cannot say that there are not people who strive to translate me into it. Those who read me, like that, from time to time, can get, can have an idea in short of how difficult it is to translate me into the English *lalangue*.

(71) One must all the same recognise things as they are. I am not the first to have noted this resistance of the English *lalangue* to the unconscious. I made remarks, like that, I allowed myself to write something that was well or less received which I am used to, something on returning from a journey to Japan where I believe I said for the Japanese something that is opposed to the play, and even to the handling to the unconscious as such in what I called at the time, in a little article that I wrote, that I brought out I no longer know where, I completely forget, that I called *Lituraterre*. I thought I saw, in a certain, let us say, duplicity, duplicity in the case of the Japanese *lalangue*, of pronunciation, I thought I saw there something that reduplicated by the system of writing which is also double, I believed I saw there a certain special difficulty, a special difficulty in operating on the plane of the unconscious, and precisely in something which ought to appear a help to it, if what is involved in the unconscious is localised at the locus of the Other and if I made the remark that there is no Other of the Other, namely, that what in my little schema depicting the Borromean knot (IV-2) is characterised by a special accentuation of the hole in what faces up, as I might say, in what faces

up to the Symbolic and that I highlighted, I think the last time, by putting there, by putting there a J followed by a capital O, that I translated in short, that I tried to state as designating the enjoyment of the Other, not a subjective but an objective genitive. And I underlined that it is here that there is very especially situated something which, I believe, legitimately, healthily, corrects the notion that Freud has of Eros as a fusion, as a union.

I put the accent, in this connection, like that incidentally, more or less before having brought out this Borromean knot, I put the accent on the fact that it is very difficult to for two bodies to melt into one another. Not only is it very difficult but it is an obstacle of everyday experience and that if one finds its place well indicated in a schema, it is all the same of a nature to encourage us, concerning the value of what I am calling, here, a scheme (*schème*).

Today I must open up, open up the path to a certain number, I will not say of equivalences, but of correspondences. It is quite obvious that I have several times in my scribbling work, since it is with rough drawings that I prepare what I have to say to you here, encountered (72) these equivalences, and that I look twice at them before sharing them with you. I am rather prudent. I do not try to speak without rhyme or reason.

Good! Is there here, for example, anyone who knows, because I do not know whether François Wahl is there, is there someone here who knows whether *Queen Victoria* by Lytton Strachey – who is a well known, indeed celebrated author, I read at one time a little book translated, if I remember correctly, by *Stock*, about Elizabeth and the Count of Essex – is anyone here in a position to tell me, since there are people who are at *Seuil*, are there any of them here? I think that they would be able to tell me whether Lytton Strachey on *Queen Victoria* has been published in translation by *Seuil*. [In the audience]: ‘In *Seuil*, no’ – What’s that? I can’t hear properly. It has not been

published? That really pisses me off. It really pisses me off, because I would have recommended you to read it. Yes that really pisses me off! Who was it that said that to me? Good, anyway, I'm very annoyed, because that could be found everywhere in the form of a Penguin book, but it is *out of print* so then I cannot recommend you to read it, but in short, all those who can get their hands on it, because there are all the same libraries and there are also second hand bookshops, all those who can lay their hands on this *Queen Victoria* by Lytton Strachey, I warmly invite them to read it, because on my return from England, that is to say last Saturday and Sunday, I could not put this book down. I could not put it down and that does not mean that I am going to talk to you about it today, because I must, to make something of it, in short, make it enter into my discourse I would have to titrate it, I would have to melt it down, I would have to wring it dry, I would have to squeeze the juice out of it, it is – I may well have taken pleasure in it – it is too tiring, and then I don't have the time.

Nevertheless, it could, it seems to me, show that there is perhaps more than one origin of this stupefying phenomenon of the discovery of the unconscious. If the 19th Century, it seems to me, had not been so astonishingly dominated by what I must really call the action of a woman, namely, Queen Victoria, well then, it would perhaps not have been realised the degree to which this kind of havoc was required in order that with it there should occur what I am calling in short an awakening. The awakening is one of my old refrains. It is a flash of (73) lightning. It is situated for me, in short when it happens to me, not often, it is situated for me, for me, that does not mean that that is how it is for everybody, it is situated for me at the moment when effectively I am emerging from sleep. I have at that moment a brief flash of lucidity, that does not last, of course, I enter like everyone else into this dream that is called reality, namely, into the discourses of which I form part, and among which I try to open up for you the path of analytic discourse. It is a very painful effort.

I believe that this book seems to me to make something tangible for you, in short tangible with a particular relief, the fact that love has nothing to do with the sexual relationship. And to confirm that this starts, not, I am going to say, from the woman, since precisely as regards this, I saw, I saw once again, in short it is a point on which even people who are most friendly to me, I mean those who believe they should pay homage to me vacillate and even come off the tracks, it must be said! If, if I say that *The woman* does not exist, there is obviously no way back, as I might say, but *a woman*, a woman among others, a woman well isolated in the English context by this kind of prodigious selection that has nothing to do with the discourse of the master, it is because there is an aristocracy that there is a discourse of the master. This aristocracy moreover does not have a lot to do with a local selection, as I might say. The true masters, are not those who are the, those who could be called worldly, in short nice people, people who are good company, people who know one another, in short, or who believe they know one another... The fate which ensured that a certain Albert of Saxe-Coborg fell into the hands of the *Queen*, he had no penchant, that is what is marvellous in short, this is what Lytton Strachey underlines, not the slightest penchant for women. But when one encounters a *vagina dentata*, if I can express myself thus, of the exceptional proportions of Queen Victoria, in short, a woman who is Queen, namely, what is really the best thing done in terms of *vagina dentata*! It is even an essential condition. In short, Semiramis must have had a *vagina dentata*, it is inevitable, it can be seen moreover when Degas makes a drawing of her. Elizabeth of England must also, in short, that can be seen for Essex. It had consequences... Why did it not have the same for him who is called, when they designed the museum that subsists to their memory the *Victoria and Albert*, because you do not say *Victoria – and – you say Victor (ia) and Albert*, why did the Albert in question not suffer the fate of Essex? It (74) is because he did not... it is not even sure that he did not undergo it, because he died very young. He died very young of what is called

a natural death, but you will look very closely at that, I hope. You will look very closely at that, this seems to me the most marvellous thing there can be had as an announcement of this truth that I had found without it, in short, this truth of the sexual non-relationship.

It seems to me an altogether sensational illustration, and since all the same all of this happened very quickly, and in sum had gone through its principal episodes before the birth of Freud, it is not, it seems to me all the same not a reason for saying that if Freud had not emerged there, by some mysterious encounter of History, immediately after this exercise of what women have, I do not know if it is a power – people are very, very fascinated by notions, categories like that, power, knowledge, all that. They are silly notions in fact, silly notions which leave the whole place to women, and I did not say *The woman*, to the women who are not concerned with it, but whose power goes immeasurably beyond all the categories. Good, in short, God rest the soul of *r-and Albert!* It is certain that what I am saying does not quite go in the direction, despite everything, of what women can, nor take their chance, if one can call that a chance in a kind of integration into the categories of the man. I mean, neither power, nor knowledge, in fact they know about them, they know so much more about them, in short, is that not so, from the very fact of being a woman that it is to this indeed that I take off my hat. And the only thing that astonishes me, is not so much as I said like that on occasion, that they know better how to treat the unconscious, I am not too sure. Their category with respect to the unconscious is very obviously of a greater force, they are less bogged down in it. They treat it with a savagery, indeed a liberty of approach which is quite gripping for example in the case of Melanie Klein. It is something that, like that, I leave to the meditation of each one and women analysts are certainly more at ease with respect to the unconscious. They busy themselves with it, they do not busy themselves with it, it must be said, without it being, without it being at the expense...it is perhaps here that the idea of merit is upset, that they lose something of their chance in it which,

simply by being one among women is in a way without measure. If I (75) had, which obviously would never come into my head, if I had to localise somewhere the idea of liberty, it would obviously be in a woman that I would incarnate it. A woman, not obligatorily anyone whatsoever, because they are *not-all* and the anyone whatsoever slides towards the *all*.

Good, let us leave that to one side. Let us leave that to one side because it is a subject which, fundamentally, like Freud himself, I could say that I can make neither head nor tail of (*J'y perds mon latin*). Which is not a bad way of saying things. But in short, if you get your hands on it, I had the good luck that a person who is one of those who had invited me there, I mean to London, that a person gave me this out of print thing, in short, his own copy in a word, and I think it is a read that no one here should miss if he has a little something, a little touch, a little vibration with respect to what I am saying. Good...

It is obviously quite extraordinary, I am passing onto another subject, quite extraordinary to see that the art, the very art that has treated subjects that are called geometrical in the name of the fact that a prohibition is brought to bear by a certain religion on human representation, that even Arab art then, to call it by its name, makes the friezes but that among the friezes and these plaits that it involves, there is no Borromean knot. Even though the Borromean knot lends itself, lends itself to a quite flourishing richness of figures of which there is precisely no trace of in any art. It is something that in itself is very surprising. It is not easy, it is not easy to give an explanation for that, if not perhaps that if no one has sensed its importance this is all the same designed to give us this dimension that something was required that does not at all go without the requirement of the emergence of what I will call certain consistencies. It is precisely those I give to the Symbolic, to the Imaginary and to the Real. But it is by homogenising them that I give them this consistency, and to

homogenise them is to restore them to the value of what commonly in short is considered as the lowest. One might well ask in the name of what? It is to give them a consistency in a word from the Imaginary. It is indeed in that that there is something to be corrected. The consistency of the Imaginary is strictly equivalent to that of the Symbolic, as to that of the Real. It is even by reason of the fact that they are knotted in this way, namely, in a way that puts them strictly in a relationship to one another, the one with respect to the two others, (76) in the same relationship; it is even here that an effort must be made which is of the order of a meaning effect, that is of the order of a meaning effect, I mean that analytic interpretation altogether implies a tipping over in the bearing of this meaning effect. It is certain that it is brought to bear, analytic interpretation is brought to bear in a way that goes much further than the word. The word is an object of elaboration for the analysand, but what the analyst says – for he says – what the analyst says has effects about which it is not nothing to say that transference plays a role in it, but, it is not nothing but it does not illuminate anything. It would be a matter of saying how the interpretation is brought to bear, and that it does not inevitably imply a stating. It is quite obvious that too many analysts have the habit of keeping their mouths shut, I dare to believe, I mean to shut up, not to open it, as they say, I am talking about the mouth. But I dare to believe that their silence is not simply the result of a bad habit but of a sufficient apprehension of the import of a silent saying. I dare to believe it, but I am not sure of it. From the moment we enter into this field, there is no proof. There is no proof, if not in the fact that an appropriate silence does not always succeed.

What I am trying to do here – where, alas, I chatter, I chatter a lot – is all the same designed to change the perspective about what is involved in a meaning effect. I would say that this meaning effect consists in squeezing it, squeezing it but of course on condition that it is done in the right way, namely, squeezing it by a knot, and not just any one. I am very astonished at succeeding in substituting, I believe, this

meaning effect as it makes a knot, and a knot in the right way, for what I would call what happens at a perfectly designatable point, designatable on the knot itself, something in which I do not believe I participate at all, if not at this precise point, and which is called the fascination effect. For, to tell the truth, it is what, it is on this cord that there slides, that there are brought to bear most of the effects of art, and it is the only criterion that can be found which separates it from what science, for its part, manages to co-ordinate. That indeed why that a man of letters, like I don't know, Valery, for example, is content with remaining on the fact that it is a matter of explaining, on fascination effects, whose analysis is all the same required.

The meaning effect required of analytic discourse is not Imaginary, it is not Symbolic either, it must be Real. And what I am occupied with (77) this year, is in trying to closely squeeze what the Real of a meaning effect may be. Because on the one hand, it is clear that we are used to this meaning effect being conveyed by words and not being without reflection, without Imaginary undulation. One could even say that even on my little schema [on the board] as I reproduced it for you the last time, as I am going to redo it no – get into the habit, is that not so, of drawing it like that, namely, not to do what is done, what is regularly done, in short the junction once one has started with this élan – the meaning effect is that, it is at the connection of the Symbolic and the Imaginary that I situated it. It does not in appearance have a relationship with this, namely, the circle consisting of the Real, in principle it only has a relationship of exteriority. I say in principle, because that is why it is there, flattened out. It is flattened out from this fact that we cannot think otherwise. We only think on the flat.

It is enough to depict this Borromean knot [on the board] differently. You are going to see the trouble of course that this is going to give us, is that not so. You see already...Ah! That is what is marvellous, it's

that...[he draws on the board],[V-1]. Let us take it like that. I could of course have taken it in any way whatsoever.

You clearly see that what is at stake is to make this knot Borromean, namely, that you clearly see the two that are depicted here separate easily from one another. There is not only one way and only one single way, because there is more than one to make this knot Borromean. This is what I am depicting to you with all the awkwardness which, I hope, will also be yours on this occasion. Because I want to show you that the difficulty is this. You see that by (78) the fact that the third buckle that I added passes, as I might say, across the two ears that allow to be distinguished the passage of this element of the knot to the inside of what I would call the hole of the third knot, it is in this measure that the knot holds together.

Do we have to stop there? Namely, to think that three consistent elements are enough, one of which makes a knot of the two others. There is already something that we posit with this knot, something which goes against the image described as concatenation. It is in so far as the discourse at stake does not constitute a chain, namely, that there is no reciprocity of the passage of one of these consistencies into the hole that the other offers it, namely, that one of the consistencies, in the common sense of the term, is not knotted to the other, I mean, does not make a chain, it is in this that there is specified the relationship of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. This is how the question is put first of knowing whether the meaning effect in its Real stems from the use of words, I am saying use in the usual sense of the term, or simply by there being uttered (*leur jaculation*), as I

might say, it is the term that is used for what concerns words. From all time many things have made people think, but the distinction was not

made in this use of the uttering. People believed that it was the words that were important. While if we give ourselves the trouble of isolating the character of the signifier we clearly see that uttering preserves a meaning, a meaning that can be isolated.

Does that mean that it is here, in this that we should trust, for it to come about that the saying makes a knot? As distinct from the word which very often slips, allows there to slip, and that our intervention with regard to what the analysand is asked to provide, namely, as they say, everything that passes through his head, which does not for all that in any way imply that this only bla-blah, for behind precisely there is the unconscious. And it is because of the fact that there is the unconscious that already in what he says, there are things that make a knot, that there is already saying (*du dire*), if we specify the saying as being what makes a knot.

It is not enough to call this knot the Real - the Imaginary in this schema is not an imaginary ring. If the knot holds together, it is precisely because the Imaginary ought to be taken in its proper consistency and that, no doubt, since this schema is what presses us, at least through my mediation, the fact is that the use of the Symbolic is obviously not to be taken there, as everything indicates in the technique of analysis, in the common sense of the word. The

Symbolic is not simply blah-blah. What they have in common is that. It is not the Real, that is the Real! The Real, is that there should be something that is common to them in their consistency. Now, this consistency resides simply in the fact of being able to make a knot. Is a mental knot real? That is the question. I agree that I am not making things easy for you today, but it is all the same to give you the answer immediately: there is the Real, the mental knot, there is the Real of ek-sistence. There is the Real of ek-sistence, as I write it from these equivalences which I told you earlier it was my goal to introduce today. I am speaking, I am speaking prudently about correspondence, I am speaking now about functions. And that is why I am putting forward the word *equivalence*.

It is rather curious, if we wish to give some support to what we are putting forward, that this precisely forces us not to put the Real in consistency. And consistency, to designate it by its name, I mean by its correspondence, consistency, I would say, is of the Imaginary order, which is demonstrated, which is demonstrated lengthily in all human history. And what ought to inspire in us a singular prudence, is that much of the consistency, all the consistency that already has been proved is pure imagination. I am bringing back the Imaginary here to its stress on meaning. Consistency for the *parlêtre*, for the (80) speaking-being, is what is fabricated and what is invented. On this occasion, it is the knot in so far as it is plaited. But precisely this is the last word on the business, as I might say. It is not in so far as it has been plaited that it ek-sists, even if I do not make a figure of my Borromean knot on the board, it ek-sists. For, once it is traced out, anyone can clearly see that it is impossible for it not to remain what it is in the Real, namely, a knot. And this indeed is why I believe I am putting forward something which may perhaps be useful to the analysts who are listening to me in their practice. It is that they should know that what they are plaiting, that what they are plaiting in terms of the Imaginary does not any the less ek-sist. That this ek-sistence is what corresponds to the Real. There is something, thank God, that has

introduced us to this notion of ek-sistence, it is the use of the writing in connection with this something which, on this occasion, is called a variable, linked, designated by the letter x . There exists an x that can be brought into $f(x)$, namely, into a function of x , whether this function is a function in the general sense of the term or simply an equation. In the case of an equation, it can happen that no root exists, as it is expressed, if an equation is always something equal to zero. It can happen that there is no root, that no root exists, and when it does not exist, that does not upset us, we make it exist, namely, that we invent the category of the imaginary root and what is more, that gives results.

Here lies the vacillating point by which one sees that the term imaginary does not mean pure imagination, since moreover, if we can bring it about that the Imaginary ek-sists, it is because another Real is at stake. I am saying that the meaning effect ek-sists, and that in this, it is Real. This is not apologetics, it is consistency, Imaginary consistency, no doubt, but it seems that there is a whole common domain of the Imaginary function that for its part lasts and holds together. I can only dialogue with someone that I have fabricated to understand me at the level at which I speak, and this indeed is why I am not only astonished that you are so numerous, but I cannot even believe that I fabricated each one of you to comprehend me. You should know simply that this is not what is at stake in analysis. It is simply a matter of accounting for what ek-sists as interpretation. The astonishing thing is that to work, as I might say, on these three functions, of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, I fabricated enough people at a distance who had only to open – when all is said (81) and done I cannot even believe that there was ever an Englishman who did more than that, to look a little bit or to open my books, when they know French, because it is not yet translated – and that all the same there is something that allowed them to respond to in it. What is meant by the fact that there ek-sists a construction whose consistency must not be imaginary? There is only a single condition which is

quite readable, readable here on the blackboard, for that there must be a hole. And this is what brings us to what is called the topology of the torus which is the one by which for a long time I was, I cannot say altogether willingly, it was not one of these things that were so familiar to me, even though everyone knows well what a bangle is, simply what I note, is that mathematical topology, the one being entitled such and constituting the introduction of these relationships to the soft (*mou*), to the woolly (*flou*), as my dear friend Guilbaud expresses it, and with that to the knot, should be something, which, in mathematical theory, gives me so much trouble and will give you just as much, I must say, because I do not see how a theory of knots needs to pass through the function described as filters, for example, or to require the consideration of sets, the ones open, the others closed, when these terms of open and of closed take on an imaginary consistency no doubt, but a consistency quite different from the practice of knots.

The hole of which I speak, which seems to me ought to be put in the centre of this, which seems to me the point from which we can take off from this circular thinking, from this thinking that obligatorily flattens out, and which by that fact, simply by that fact, says that what is within it [V-3], is something other than what is outside, while it is

(82) enough to imagine it, to imagine it as consistent cord to clearly see that the inside that is at stake here and the outside, are exactly the same thing. There is only one inside, the one that we imagine as being the interior of the torus. But precisely, the introduction of the figure

of the torus consists, in not taking account of this inside of the torus. This indeed is the relief and the importance of what is provided to us.

The last time, in connection with my knot, I made the remark and I even drew the figure of the fact that if we start from the requirement

of making a Borromean knot not of three, but of four, we must suppose these three independent toruses [on the board] namely, to draw them like this [V-4, an error of Lacan's, taken up in the following session]: here is the one above, the one that is intermediary and the one that is beneath.

I depicted for you the last time how, by a figure which is that of a fourth torus, these three depicted as independent can be knotted, can and must be knotted, and I even made an allusion to the fact, which is that in Freud, there is an elision of my reduction to the Imaginary, to the Symbolic and to the Real, and as being all three knotted with one another, and that what Freud establishes with his Name-of-the-Father, which is identical to psychical reality, to what he calls psychical reality, specifically to religious reality, for it is exactly the same thing, that it is thus by this function, by this function of the dream that Freud establishes the link of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real.

Those who, I hope, were here the last time, preserved, I think, the notes, the outline, of the simply way in which here there can be traced out this torus [on the board] like, of course, here. I believe if I remember correctly...I could draw it, it is possible that I might make a (83) mistake, because it is not at all easy. Let us try like that, all the same this amuses me, it amuses me because each time one gets lost in it! Let's see, starting from this...Ah! What do we get from that?

Yeah, this seems to have succeeded by good luck, namely, to hold together, namely, to reproduce what I gave you the last time.

But this is not what is important. What is important to me, is the following; this figure, this figure here, let us suppose it is my knot, namely,, as you see, here what I traced out the last time as third circle, as third cord, knots nothing. How can we make the drawing on this of what would knot these three?

I am going to present it to you in another way which is this one [V-5]. It is very easy to conceive of it, in the form that was materialised in a thousand and one ways throughout the ages, namely, astrolabes. It is very easy to conceive of three metallic circles here where we find our bearings much more easily, of course, since we are only able to make a geometry of solids. [On the board] Here is how I am going to represent them; suppose something which was very frequently produced throughout the ages, in naval instruments. I am going to draw it for you simply. Here is a circle seen head on. The equatorial circle that I am drawing for you now is seen flattened out, and that is why I pretended to draw it for you in perspective. Let us now make a third vertical circle and let us trace out this little dotted line to give you the notion of the way in which you ought to see it in perspective. It is a distinct way because it appeals, it appeals, without any hope moreover, to your sense of space, you who do not have one anymore than anybody else! You think you are seeing things in relief, but you do not even imagine in relief.

I would like here [V-6] to depict how there is conceived in space the outline of what I gave you earlier, what I posed as a problem to you earlier about what can unite these three, the disunited Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. If you proceed in this way, you will see that you have to trace out this line, this consistency; that it is necessary and sufficient that this should be, let us say, depicted for there to be a knot here, a knot of four, a knot starting from a disjunction conceived as originating the Symbolic the Imaginary and the Real. I would advise you to keep a note of it because it is of a rather fruitful nature to make you reflect on what is involved in this function of knot, namely, why, for example, this line that I isolated as pink [in black on the drawing] must pass twice for us in front and above of this circle the only flattened out one, and pass, be content to pass in short within the one which here occupies the second rank with regard to an idea that we could have of the outside, of the middle and of the inside, of depth. This is largely sufficient in effect and it is illustrative of the function of the knot.

I will posit, as I might say, this year the question of knowing whether, as regards what is involved, namely, the knotting of the Imaginary, of the Symbolic and of the Real, there is required in short this supplementary function of an extra torus, the one whose consistency is to be referred to the function described as that of the Father. It is indeed because these things have interested me for a long time, even though I had not yet at that time found this way of depicting them, that

I began *The Names-of-the-father*. There are in effect many ways of illustrating the way in which Freud, as is obvious in his text, only makes the conjunction of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real (85) hold up through the *Names-of-the father*. Is this indispensable? It is not because that would be indispensable and I am saying the contrary that it could always be shown to be false that it is in fact so, always!

It is certain that when I began to do the seminar on *The Names-of-the-Father*, and that I, as some people know, at least those who were there, that I put an end to, I had surely – it is not for nothing that I had called it *The (Les) Names-of-the-Father* and not *The (Le) Name-of-the-Father*! I had a certain number of ideas about the way in which the analytic domain, discourse, takes temporary support (*suppléance*) from Freud's putting forward of the Names-of-the-Father. It is not because this support is not indispensable that it does not take place. Our Imaginary, our Symbolic and our Real are perhaps for each one of us still in a state of sufficient dissociation for the Name-of-the-Father alone to be able to make the Borromean knot, and to hold all that together, to make a knot of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and of the Real. But you must not imagine that - it would indeed not be my usual tone – that I am in the process of prophesying that we can in any way do without the Name- of-the-Father in analysis and for that matter the Name-of-the- Father elsewhere, that we can in any way do without for our Symbolic, our Imaginary and our Real since it is the fate of all of you not to take off quite well each one in his own direction. It is certain, without our being able to say that this constitutes a progress, because it is hard to see how a further knot on one's back, on one's neck and elsewhere, it is hard to see how a knot, a knot reduced to its strictest would constitute a progress, from the simple fact that it is a minimum. It surely constitutes a progress in the Imaginary, namely, a progress in consistency. It is quite certain that in the present state of things, you are each and every one of you as

inconsistent as your fathers, but it is precisely from the fact of being entirely dependent on them that you are in your present condition.

Seminar 6: Tuesday 18 February 1975

The last time, I bore witness to you about my experiences of wandering, and since I was disappointed that the Mardi-gras had not thinned out the fullness of this room, since I was disappointed about that, I allowed myself to slide into telling you what I think.

Nevertheless today for reasons that, I must say, are personal to me, because my work was a bit disturbed this week, I would like to take up the relay of what seemed to me to be required and which, after all, I can imagine, demanded some time. Today this time seems to me, I repeat, for simple personal reasons, the time might well have come – at least, I hope so – for some, some among you, to ask me, to ask me questions to which, I repeat, I would be happy at least to be able to answer to what I might seem in the present state of things to have an answer for.

I would really be very, very grateful to these people who certainly in the sense that I understand it, ek-sist, to these people if they would throw me the ball, as I might say; and to the person that will devote himself to it first, because after all, it is enough for one to decide, for others to be found who will open up the path. There you are! I am appealing to whoever would be willing to speak first, man or woman (*le premier ou la première*). I would really like to be asked a

question. First of all that would give me the note of what might take hold. It seems to me that the last time already, in putting forward what I said about an effort made, to distinguish, not simply to distinguish, and I will show you when the occasion arises where that starts from... it starts from a flattening out of the knot. In the knot there must be distinguished the fact that it is very difficult to bring it (88) into mathematical theory, this to the point that, let us say, I have found nothing whatsoever that corresponds to this knot, to this knot which – I was led to it in short step by step – to the knot qua Borromean that I ended up with. How did I end up with it? It is certain that currently, in short, if I, of course, know what is coming subsequently, the only thing that will allow the thread to be found, namely,, what gives it its consistency, the only thing that will allow the thread of the sequence, the sequence of seminars of which you have the first and the last, thanks to the care of someone, and also the one that is not the median, the one that is the eleventh. This is assuredly what will give to it what I designate as consistency.

How does it happen that something which, I recalled it, might have been the start of a different mode of thinking, with rigour, *more geometrico*, is what, is what Spinoza, for example, prided himself on spinning out, on deducing something according to the mode and the model given by the Ancients. It is clear that this *more geometrico* defines a mode of intuition which is properly mathematical and that this mode of intuition, after all, is not self-evident.

The way in which the point, the line, is in a way fomented from a fiction, and for that matter the surface which is only sustained by the split, by the break, by a break that is no doubt specified, specified as being in two dimensions – but since the line is only a dimension by being without consistency properly speaking, it is not saying a lot to say that one is going to add on one – and on the other hand the third, the one that in sum is erected by a line perpendicular to the surface, is something very strange. How, without something giving a support to

what must be said to be an abstraction founded on the cut of a saw, how, without rediscovering the cord, make such a construction hold up? But on the other hand, it is not by chance either that things happen like that. No doubt there is here a necessity which is, let us say, my God, because I do not find any better, which is the weakness of a manual being, *homo faber* as he was described. But why should this manual being, the *homo faber* who for that matter, if only, as I remarked, for carrying around what he attacks, what he manipulates, starts from something that has consistency, starts from the cord? What necessity requires that this cord, this cord – which in the tenth rule, that of Descartes, that I recalled – Descartes evokes that moreover, after all, the art of the weaver, the art of the plait, the art of the sewer could give the model, how does it happen that these things (89) become so exhausted, become exhausted to this point that their thread becomes inconsistent?

Perhaps there is here this something which is related to a repression? Before going as far as to say that this repression, is the primordial one, is the *Urverdrängt*, is what Freud designated as inaccessible in the unconscious... [*Uproar at the back of the hall*]. It would perhaps be no bad thing if someone at the back should take the floor and ask me a question, that would show me how loudly I must raise my voice for people to hear me, since these things seem to work badly. Could someone at the back open up this path that I wished for earlier?

We must start from the fact, is that not so, of how easy it is to make a mistake in the depiction of this knot, of this special knot that I designate as being Borromean and which has this singular property that it is enough to break something which nevertheless is simply depicted in it, namely, a torus, namely, a torus which precisely it is enough to cut to have in one's hand this thickness, this consistency, namely, what makes a cord.

This indeed is why, questioning, questioning my knot that can be drawn in this way [on the board, VI-1] and in fact is drawn, I noted the fact that it was no less drawable and that it remained a knot on this single condition that one of its buckles is opened out [VI-2] and that it is transformed into a straight line. We rediscover here the question that I asked at the start, that of the straight line and the slightness of its mathematical, geometrical consistency. Here this restored consistency supposes that we extend it to infinity for it to continue to fulfil its function. We must then see this cord infinitely prolonged, on the top and on the bottom, for the knot to remain such, to remain a knot. This (90) indeed is how the straight line, the straight line on which in short this cord takes its support in its present state, the straight line is scarcely consistent and it is indeed on this moreover that geometry has, as one might say, slipped. In other words starting from the moment when, in a geometry described as spherical, one has restored infinity to this straight line, by making of it a new ring. Without noticing that from the position of the knot, of the Borromean knot, this ring is implicated and that there was no need then perhaps to have made this whole circuit.

In any case, the last time you saw me extending this geometry of the Borromean knot of three, to the depiction of what is required for it to be valid for four. This was to give you the experience of the difficulty of what I called the mental knot. But I know well that it is with the attempt to flatten it, to flatten out this mental knot, namely, to submit oneself to the fact that this supposed thought, namely, something that sticks to extension, has a condition. Far from being separated from it, as Descartes supposes, thought is only extended, and again, it needs an extension, not just any one whatsoever, an extension in two dimensions, an extension that can be drawn. For this indeed is the way that it will not be displaced, in which it will not be inopportune to define this surface whose geometry I showed earlier, the one that is

imagined, that is essentially sustained by an Imaginary. It is indeed like that that one could moreover define this surface, this cut of a saw on a solid, the fact is that it presents something, something to draw.

It is singular that the only way people have managed in short to reproduce this ideal surface, is precisely something that people back away from, namely, the plait of a canvas. And that it should be on a canvas that the painter has in short to draw, because it is all that he finds himself able to do to tame the look, as I expressed it at one time, what is involved in this function of the painter. And that here also it is on something specified, the blackboard, that I find myself inevitably flattening out, flattening out what I have to communicate to you about the knot. It is indeed here that in effect there is sensed in a particular way, there is sensed the fact that, the knot that I have on the other hand depicted thanks to your perspective imagination, namely, how the Borromean knot of three holds up, how it is made. It is made of two knots which are independent of one another, and it is a matter of knowing where the third passes for this to make a knot.

I asked you the same question concerning what was required for it to (91) be a knot, even if at the start we leave the three rings of string of the first problem, we leave them independent, and I depicted for you by also flattening it out, even though in a way which bore its perspective, by depicting for you what is involved in what happens for these three rings that I drew independent, contenting myself, to simplify things for you, to show how they must be traced out in order that the fourth, the fourth that I represented a bit differently from the way in which I am now doing, highlighting for you the quadruple function of the fourth ring of string [VI-3].

But when I wanted to flatten it out in a way that reproduces in modifying it, namely, in making the three knots, the three rings of string independent from the start, I found that I had made an error. And I can say that this error was a matter rather of a mistake linked to the fact that being weary of it, weary of remembering these things that I had seen myself as correctly depicting what results from the flattening out, from a flattening out modelled on that of the knot of three, I omitted, I missed as I might say, I explicitly missed, through weariness, and moreover to give you, good God, an example of how little naturalness there is in the way these things work, namely, the representation of the knot. [On the board]. Here then, to take up the mental thing, the way in which first of all this operates. If from the upper to the lower, you note by 1, 2, 3 [VI-4] that which, of course, has nothing to do with an upper and a lower, since moreover it would be enough to turn them upside down for the problem to be renewed, here is how one should proceed. That I knew, but precisely it was by neglecting the fact that I found myself operating in the way that you have seen, and which left circle 1 outside the knot, but at the same time moreover all the others. It would be well to start from the fact (92) that the three circles flattened out in this way, and the 3 outside the 1, and to finish by the 3 in the 2. When one operates in this way, things work.

It is no less true that it is easy to see that they can also function in a different way, but that there is a third one, precisely the one that I took the last time and which leaves one of these knots free and specifically the 1, by which at the same time, it leaves the others free.

Why in short did the blundered action work here, if not in order to testify that no analysis, after all, can avoid something, something not resisting in this theory of the knot. And it is indeed what after all, I do not think it is a bad thing to have made you sense, and to have made you aware of in an extremely experimental way. It is quite clear that the other way, that the other way, the other way that is distinguished by this, which is that by inverting these two propositions, namely, starting from what of the 2 is outside the 1, but what I am doing there has not...[on the board] what I am doing there and what I did not do at first confuses, since moreover it is by depicting things for you in a way which makes the two green rings of string seem to re-cross one another. Simply cancel out these four points and you will see that in every case the two ways of proceeding are quite appropriate.

How are they so appropriate? They are so appropriate in that the function of the 2 and then of the 3, like the other figure, the one that is in perspective shows, as the other figure makes it appear, the function of the 2 and of the 3 are strictly equivalent and that with regard to the circle that might here be designated as 1, these two others are strictly equivalent, namely, as regards the way in which the pink ring goes around them, the mode is the same if we adopt this depiction.

What is there to say? What is there to say except that what this central figure highlights, is that the infinite straight line that figures there, the straight line described as infinite, but about which I remarked on one (93) occasion what it presupposes, namely, properly speaking the impossible, that this infinite straight line is opposed, is opposed by virtue of its rupture, and how can this rupture not be considered as a refinement (*affine*) of something which is quite essential to the knot, this straight line is opposed to what constitutes a ring as to what I called consistency, on the other hand to something on which I did not insist the last time and which is indeed what is essential to what we call a ring, and specifically a ring of string, namely, the hole that it has

in the middle. Hence the question that I put the last time as to whether there was not a correspondence, a correspondence between consistency, ek-sistence and the hole and each one of the terms that I am putting forward as Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. If consistency is indeed as I stated the last time of the order of the Imaginary, since moreover the cord goes towards this vanishing point of the mathematical line, we have to question ourselves about what is involved in making the ring of string as such, and that if we say it is the hole, it is a fact that we are not satisfied with it: what is a hole, if nothing circumscribes it?

Now, the last time, I had clearly marked that ek-sistence [on the board] namely, this something which, with regard to the opening and of what makes a hole, that the ek-sistence, namely, to flatten out things, this something that we ought, in the flattening out, to depict [VI-5] that ek-sistence belongs to this field, which is, as I might say, supposed by the rupture itself and that it is through it, through this in, in the a – write that l apostrophe a – that there is played out as one might say the fate of the knot, that if the knot has an ek-sistence, it is by belonging to this field and this indeed is why I stated that ek-sistence is with regard to this correspondence of the order of the Real, that the ek-sistence of the knot is Real to such a degree that I was able to say, I was able to put forward that the mental knot ek-sists, that the *mens* depicts it or not to itself, since what we see is that this ek-sistence of the knot is still to be explored, to be explored not without trouble, since there is not, to the best of my knowledge, anything at all, except to learn to constitute it and to learn it by the plait, which assuredly is not properly speaking a mental way of resolving the question, while it seems, it

seems that there is properly speaking a resistance of the *mens* to 'mentaling' this knot. I gave you an example of it earlier.

No doubt it is by a procedure called that of the remainder and which supposes as fundamental the order explored, explored starting from my experience, explored from the properly analytic experience which I said had led me to this infernal trinity, let us call it by its name, this infernal trinity of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. I do not think that I am playing a tune (*cord*) here which is not Freudian.

Flectere si nequeo Superos our dear Freud wrote at the head of the *Traumdeutung, Acheronta movebo*. And it is no doubt here that there is illustrated, in short, what I called the truth, the truth of a certain religion, for which I highlighted that it is not at all by chance that it arrived at a divine notion which is of a trinity this one, contrary to the tradition to which it is itself connected. I am not telling you how I let myself go in confiding to an audience that was none other, if I remember correctly, than the one I believe in England, unless it was the one in Strasbourg. What matter, I did not go so far as to tell this secret that the desire of man, which is nevertheless tangible, is hell, hell very precisely in that it is hell that he is missing! And with this consequence that it is what he aspires to, and we have the testimony of it, the testimony in neurosis which is very exactly the fact is that neurosis is something that only happens in so far as it is for him a mirage in which he might be satisfied, namely, a perversion, that a neurosis is a failed perversion.

A simple illustration of the knot, of the knot and why it is to the knot that I come to try to sustain, as I might say, what is produced and which your number here bears witness to, namely, some interest. It is indeed because you are much more interested in short than you suppose each one of you, in this nodalising of the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, that you are there, it seems to me. For moreover why would you take this strange satisfaction in listening to my stammering on this occasion, for moreover this is what I have to

accept today, namely, that I can only clear the way to what this involves in terms of consequences.

If it is indeed in effect in this mode that the ek-sistence of the knot is supported, namely, from this field that, flattened out, is intermediary to what gives rise to a question in this knot, intermediary to what makes a body out of the hole, while what the body supports, is something quite different, it is the line of consistency. A body, a body such as the one that you are supported by, is very precisely this something which for you has only the aspect of being what resists, what consists before being dissolved. And if the Real is to be localised somewhere, namely, in this field intermediary to the flattening out that I depicted, denoted as ek-sistence, it remains that it can only be by elimination that we may do it, and this is what gives rise to a question for us, that it is only, it is only by asking the question of whether the hole is indeed what is of the order of the Symbolic that I founded on the signifier, this indeed is the point that we will find ourselves having to settle in the course of this year.

[On the board] We find ourselves then at present, under an interrogative form, to put here the hole with a question mark and nothing else.....

[break in the recording]

...in question what is involved in the Symbolic while here it is the Real, it is ek-sistence, and that consistency here corresponds to the Imaginary.

It is certain that these categories are not easily handled. They have in their favour nevertheless the fact of having left some traces in history, namely, that if it is at the end of the account, of the account of a traditional philosophical extenuation whose summit is given by Hegel that something sprung forth again under the name of someone called Kierkegaard, and you know the degree that I exposed him as converging with the experience that appeared much later in Freud, his promotion as such of ek-sistence. There is there something, it seems,

of which one cannot say and of which one cannot find in Kierkegaard himself the testimony for, that it is not simply by the promotion of repetition as something more fundamental in experience than the resolution described as thesis, antithesis, synthesis on which Hegel wove History. The highlighting of this repetition as being a (96) fundamental function whose stamp is found in enjoyment and whose relations, the relations lived by the Kierkegaard in question, are those of a knot never avowed no doubt, but which is that of his father to sin. Namely, the introduction not of his own experience, but of the experience of the one who is found, with respect to him, to occupy the place of the father, that this place of the father at the same time becomes problematic. Namely that, a singular thing for a tradition that manipulated the *Abba* without rhyme or reason, that it should be at this date, and only at this date that there was promoted at the same time existence as such, which no doubt does not have the same accent as the one that I put in it by fragmenting it with a hyphen that it should be at this epoch that ek-sistence emerges, as I might say, emerges for me, emerges so that I can make something of it that is written differently, and that this is what is touchable, tangible in something that is defined by the knot. I do not believe that this is something of a nature to put me, as I might say, in continuity with a philosophical questioning, but much more rather into a mode of rupture which is moreover what is imposed if the emergence of the unconscious as a knowledge, as a knowledge proper to each one, to each particular person, is of a nature to completely change the conditions in which the very notion of knowledge has dominated, let us say, from ancient times, let us say even Antiquity. There has entered this character of knowledge along paths that we must question, that we must question in a way which, in any case puts its substance in question. If knowledge is something so dependent, so dependent on the relationships of generations to the Symbolic, to the hole of which I spoke of earlier, to call it by its name, if it is so dependent on the fact that the succession of generations fomented as knowledge, how can we not re-question its status. Is there, one, some knowledge in the

Real? It is quite clear that the supposition from all time, but a supposition that was not properly speaking made, not avowed, is that to all appearances there was, since the Real worked, it operated properly. And this indeed is what manifests that for all of us, there is a change, because this *in the Real* we touch a knowledge in it in a quite different form.

It is specifically to take up again here my construction [goes to the board], it is specifically this that if we insist that a knowledge, should have as a support, not, I am not saying a hole, the consistency of the (97) Symbolic, what appears in the Real... What appears in the Real, is properly speaking this, because perhaps you remember that the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary are situated in this way. It is the something which, flattened out, flattened out because we think, that flattened out appears in the Real, namely, within the domain that the consistency of the ring of string alone allows to be defined, that is presented not like the knowledge immanent to the Real that there is no way of resolving except of putting it into it in the form of, of *nous*, in the form of something that the Real would know what it has to do, and when it is not this *nous* well then, it is the whole power and wisdom of God! I do not have to come back on the fact that you know, that you know because I dinned it into you, namely, that the world is not thinkable without God. I am talking about the Newtonian world, because how would each one of the masses know the distance it is at from all the others? There is no way out! Voltaire believed in the Supreme Being. I was not let into his confidence, I do not know what idea he had of it, but it could scarcely be far from the idea of all-knowing, namely, that he was the one who made the machine work. The old business of knowledge in the Real, we know that it has, good God, sustained in short all these old metaphors. These old metaphors when all is said and done, it must be said! Aristotle was a populist in short, was he not! It is the artisan who gives him the model for all his causes, his final cause if I may express myself thus, his formal cause, it (*sa*) causes, it even causes at full tilt, it causes even material and that

is only the most hopeless of them [*causer*: cause, chat] It is certain that at the level of the cause, of the physical cause, of that which is inscribed by him in his *Physics*, all the haughtiness, is that not so of the *nous*, of the *nous* present to the world is reduced, is reduced to what I described in short as the artiginal, the artiginal which means that this was received with open arms everywhere the metaphor of the potter dominates and where it is a divine hand that makes the pot. How does it continue to turn nevertheless all by itself? This indeed is the question and the question on which the refinements of knowledge, if it continue to occupy itself with it, namely, to make it turn, or whether it leaves it turn all by itself after having ejected it, is truly secondary.

But the whole question of knowledge is to be taken up again simply starting from the fact that a knowledge is only supposed from a relation to the Symbolic, namely, to this something that is incarnated by a material as signifying, which is not all by itself to ask an easy question. Because what is a signifying material? We have only the (98) tip of its muzzle in Aristotle, at the place where he talks about *stoicheion* but it is certain that the very idea of material is only strictly thinkable as coming from signifying material in which it finds its first examples.

So then! To try simply to note something, which will be what my notation will unfold around, it is certain that it is from an experience, from an experience of the depiction of the symptom as reflecting in the Real the fact that there is something that is not working and where, not in the Real of course, in the field of the Real, this something that does not work holds up. Holds up how? Holds up only by what I support in my language as a *parlêtre*, from what is only a speaking being, because if he did not speak, he would not have the word being, and that to this speaking being, there is a field, a field connected to the hole that I depicted here – I apologise, I do not insist especially that my figures should be elegant, or symmetrical – it is in the measure

that there is no possible opening, rupture, consistency coming from this hole, the locus of ek-sistence, Real, that the unconscious is here [VI-6] and that what here is tenuous (*y fait tenue*) passing behind the hole of the Real, behind on this figure, because if you turn it over, it is in front, that there is coherence, that there is consistency between the symptom and the unconscious. Except for the fact that the symptom cannot be defined otherwise than by the way in which each one enjoys the unconscious in so far as the unconscious determines it.

To look for the origin of the notion of symptom, which is not at all to be looked for in Hippocrates, which is to be looked for in Marx, who was the first in the link that he made between capitalism, and what? The good old times, what people call them when they want, in short, (99) to try to call them something else, feudal times. Read all the literature on this. Capitalism is considered as having certain effects, and why in effect would it not have some! These effects are on the whole beneficial, since it has the advantage of reducing to nothing the proletarian man, thanks to which the proletarian man realises the essence of man, and by being stripped of everything is charged with being the Messiah of the future. Such is the way in which Marx analyses the notion of symptom. He gives of course crowds of other symptoms, but the relation of this with a faith in man is quite indisputable.

If we make of man, no longer anything whatsoever who conveys a future ideal, but if we determine him from the particularity, in every

case, of his unconscious and the way in which he enjoys it, the symptom remains at the same place that Marx put it, but it takes on a different meaning. It is not a social symptom, it is a particular symptom. No doubt, these particular symptoms have types, and the symptom of the obsessional is not the symptom of the hysteric. This is very precisely what I will try to get across to you in what follows.

For the obsessional nevertheless, I note it right away, there is a very particular symptom. No one, of course, has the slightest apprehension of death, otherwise you would not be so calm there. For the obsessional, death is a parapraxis (*un acte manqué*). It is not so stupid, because death is only approachable by an act. Again, for it to be successful, someone would have to commit suicide knowing that it is an act, which happens very rarely. Even though it was very widespread at a certain epoch, at the epoch when philosophy had a certain import, an import other than that of sustaining the social edifice, there are some people who managed to group themselves in a school in a way that had consequences. But it is quite singular and indeed of a nature also to make us suspect the authenticity of commitment in these so-called schools, that there was no need to have reached any wisdom whatsoever, that it was enough to be a good obsessional to know from a sure source that death is a parapraxis. Not of course that this presumes that I will not give some development to it, but I will stay with that today, since moreover I have not been able, as one might have expected, to tackle the difficulty (*l'os*) of what I wanted to tell you, namely, whether by saying that the woman does not ek-sist, as someone has objected to me, I did not make her ek-sist! Don't believe a word of it. This will be the thing that I will tackle the next time. I think I can sustain that it is in the state of one or of innumerable ones...but ones that are numerable, I will not say innumerable, but from perfectly numerable one, that women ek-sist, and not in the state of *The*.

Seminar 7: Tuesday 11 March 1975

I have two reasons for being encouraged, in short, to take things from an angle different to the one which you saw me at the last time.

The fact is, since I had the frailty to authorise the publication of these seminars in a certain bulletin I was, at the same time, constrained to look at the first two which were due to come out in the second number of this bulletin. And all things considered, I said to myself...in short, despite the difficulty, not, of course, in orientating myself but in sustaining your interest, in sustaining your interest because I am talking this year about the R.S.I., well then, good God, even these first explorations, these two first seminars did not seem to be so intolerable.

The second reason for encouragement was brought to me by the response, in short the response, I am not sure that it is simply a response... I mean that the people who sent me two papers on knots, and very especially on Borromean knots, namely, Michel Thomé and Pierre Soury, their paper had something that was altogether worthy of interest. It is to these papers that the little drawings on the lower row respond to. For the first, those of the first row, they continue, follow on from what I had to tell you, from what I proposed to myself to tell you this year.

So then, R.S.I., I write this year as a title. They are only letters, and as such presuppose an equivalence. What results from the fact that I speak these letters, by using them as initials, and that I speak them as

Real, Symbolic and Imaginary? That takes on a meaning, and this (102) question of meaning is indeed what, nothing less, I am trying to situate this year. It takes on a meaning, but what is proper to meaning, is that one names something in it. And this gives rise to the *dit-mansion*, the *dit-mansion* precisely of this vague thing that are called things, and that only take on their foundation from the Real, namely, from one of the three terms from which I made something that could be called the emergence of meaning.

Names them, I said. What I did in, I am not saying yet in demonstrating (*démontrant*), because this amounts to something that is no more demonstrable than the Borromean knot, this amounts to a showing (*monstration*). If I have been led to the showing of this knot, while what I was looking for was a demonstration of a doing, the doing of analytic discourse, that is already enough, I would say, whether it is a showing or a demonstrating. In any case what I would like to advance today, is something about which I – it is not without guile, because I always slip in things like that, quite gently, there is something of a ruse in it and it is not nothing either to recognise it – the fact is that I indicated to you one day that Freud's work revolves around the Name-of-the-Father. It makes no use at all of the Symbolic, the Imaginary nor of the Real, but it nevertheless implies them. And what I want to tell you, is that it is not for nothing that I did not speak about *the Name-of-the-Father*, when I began, as I imagine some know because I go over it enough, I spoke about *the Names-of- the-Father*. Well then, the Names-of-the-father is this:

[On the board] the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real according to my meaning, with the weight that I gave earlier to the word meaning.

That is what the Names-of-the-father are, the first names, in so far as they name something as is indicated – yes, as the Bible indicates in (103) connection with this extraordinary yoke that is called the Father there, the first phase of this human imagination that is God is consecrated on giving a name, good God, to something that is not indifferent, namely, a name to each of the animals. Of course, before the Bible, namely writing, there was a tradition. This did not come from nothing. It is tangible, tangible to the point that it ought to strike the lovers of tradition, the fact is that a tradition is always, what I would call fucked-up. That is even why people have a devotion to it, there is no other way of being attached to it than devotion, it is always so appallingly... what I have just said. All that one can hope from a tradition is that it should be less fucked up than another one. How can that be judged? There we enter into the more and the less. That is judged by the surplus-enjoying (*plus-de-jouir*) as production.

The surplus-enjoying, is obviously all we have to get our teeth into. It is because it is a matter of enjoying that one believes in it. Enjoying, as one might say, is at the horizon of this more and of this less, it is an ideal point. An ideal point that one calls as one can, the phallus, and I already underlined at one time that in the speaking being, this always has the closest relationship, it is the essence of the comic. Once you talk about something that has a relationship to the phallus, it is the comic. The comic has nothing to do with the witticism as I underlined at one time when I spoke about the witticism. The phallus is something else, it is comical like everything comical. It is a sad comic. When you read *Lysistrata*, you can take it from two sides, laugh or find it bitter. It must be said that the phallus is what gives body to the Imaginary. I recall here something that greatly struck me at one time. I saw a little film that Jenny Aubry brought to propose to me, by way of illustration, what I called at that time the mirror stage. There was a child before the mirror, and I no longer know whether it was a little girl or a little boy – it is even quite striking that I no longer remember... someone here perhaps remembers – but what is certain, is

that the little girl or the little boy, grasps there, in a gesture, something that to my eyes had this value: that in supposing as I do on foundations that are not too sure, that this mirror stage consists in the unity that is grasped, in the collecting together, in the assumed mastery by reason of this image of the fact that this premature body, uncoordinated up to then, seems to be collected together. By making (104) a body of it, a knowledge that he masters it – this does not happen, without one being able to affirm it, of course, to the same degree in animals that are born mature, there is not this joy of the mirror stage – what I called jubilation. Well then, there is truly a link, a link between that and something which was made tangible in this film, by something which, whether it was a little boy or a little girl, I underline for you had the same value, the elision, in the form of a gesture, the hand that goes in front, the elision of what was perhaps a phallus, or perhaps its absence. A gesture, clearly, removed it from the image. And this was tangible to me as a correlate, as I might say of this prematurity. There is here something whose link is in a way primordial with respect to something that will later be called shame, but which it would be exaggerated to take into account at the stage described as that of the mirror.

The phallus then is the Real. Especially in so far as it is elided. If you come back to what I opened up this year by trying to harmonise for you consistence, ek-sistence and hole, with, on the other hand, Imaginary, Real, for ek-sistence, and Symbolic, I would say then that the phallus, is not the ek-sistence of the Real. There is a Real that ek-sists with respect to this phallus, which is called enjoyment, but it is rather its consistency. It is the concept, as I might say, of the phallus. With the concept, I am echoing the word *Begriff*, which does not work out so badly since in sum it is, it is this phallus that is taken in the hand! There is something in the concept that is not unrelated with this announcement, this announcement this prefiguring of an organ that is not yet taken as consistency, but as an appendix and which is fairly well manifest in what prepares man, as we are told...in short, or what

resembles him, what is not far, namely, the monkey (*singe*). The monkey masturbates, it well known! And that is how he resembles man, it is quite certain! In the concept, there is always something of the order of the grimace (*singerie*). The only difference between the monkey and the man, is that the phallus does not consist any less in him in his female aspects than in what are described as male in what he has, a phallus, as I illustrated it by this brief vision earlier, being equivalent to its absence.

Hence the special accent that the speaking being puts on the phallus, in this sense that enjoyment ek-sists in it, that this is the emphasis proper to the Real. The Real, in so far as it ek-sists, namely, the Real (105) as Real, the Real to the power of two. It is all that this speaking being knows about the two, it is the power, or a semblance through which he remains the one, alone. This is what is called being. This from the start, one to the power of two equals one, $1^2 = 1$.

There must be a link, since I told you like that, indicated it at one time, there must be a link between that and meaning, in other words that by which one is so well applied to zero. It is Frege who discovered it and I chattered at one time about the difference between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*, namely, something which... where there can be seen the difference between zero and one, while suggesting that it is not a difference. There is nothing as good as an empty set to suggest the one.

There you are. So then, how the Symbolic – the Symbolic like that, about which I simply remarked that it has its weight in analytic practice, how the Symbolic, namely, what is ordinarily called blah-blah, or again the Verb, all that is the same, how does it cause meaning? Here is the question that I am only asking you because I have the answer. Is it in the idea of the unconscious? Is that what I have been saying since the first Rome discourse? – Question marks, huh! – It is not in the idea of the unconscious, it is in the idea that the

unconscious ek-sists, written as I write it, namely, that it conditions the Real, the Real of this being that I designate as a speaking being. He names things, as I recalled earlier, here, in connection with this first fooling around of the Bible in the Terrestrial Paradise. He names things for this speaking being, namely, that this being who himself is a kind of animal, but who singularly differs from one. He is only animal in this, because animal means nothing, huh, it means nothing except to characterise the animal by his way of reproducing, sexed or not sexed, an animal is that, it is what reproduces itself.

Only, how is this animal is parasited by the Symbolic, by the blah-blah? Yes, there, it seems to me, it seems to me but it is not very probable, that I distinguish myself from people of the same animal species, who as far as human memory goes, make no mistake, know that they speak but do not pay explicit attention to it. And what shows that they do not pay explicit attention to it, is not, of course, that they have not said it, everything is said in the blah-blah, they do not pay explicit attention to it for this reason: they dream of not being the only ones (*les seuls*). That, that catches them in the gut! Write *laisseuls*, if you wish, to evoke the left alone (*laissés seuls*) in this talk.

(106) In our day, it is manifested like that, by this frantic need to discover language in dolphins, in bees. Anyway! Why not.! It is always a dream! Formerly, it had different forms, which shows clearly that it is always a dream. They dreamt that there is *at least one* God who speaks, and who does not speak especially without that having an effect. Who causes/talks! The unheard of thing is this tangling of paws which means that they absolutely must shore up this God with sub-speakers, angles they are called, I mean by the commentators!

In short there is all the same something more serious, is that not so, which has come from this fact that there is all the same a tiny little advance, not a progress, of course, because there is no reason for

people not continuing to get their paws entangled. The fact is that in linguistics, namely, as regards talking there is all the same distinguished the *giving a name*, *naming*, and *consecrating a thing*, in the name of speech (*parlotte*). You see all the same here that it is distinct from communication. That it is there that speech, properly speaking, is knotted to something of the Real. *Naming* yes! *Naming*. [English] What is the relationship of this *naming*, as the title of a book puts it, with necessity?

The unheard of thing is that for a long time, is that not so, there was someone named Plato who realised that the third was required in it, the third term, of the idea, of the *eidos*, which is all the same a very good Greek word to translate what I call the Imaginary, huh! Because that means image! He very clearly saw that without the *eidos*, there was no chance that names would stick to things. This did not get to the point of him stating the Borromean knot of three, of the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. But it is because chance had not provided him with it. The idea gave, for him, the consistency of the Real. Nevertheless the idea being nothing in his time except the nameable, the result was what was deduced; of course! What was deduced like that, with the university discourse, the realism of the name. It must be said, the realism of the name is worth more than the nominalism of the Real, namely, that the name, well, good God, one can put any one at all on it to designate the Real. Philosophical nominalism, like that, it is not so that I am marking a preference, I note simply that nominalism is an enigma that is tangible in this sense, that it pays homage to the effect of the name on the Real, namely, to what is added to it by the fact of naming it. All nominalism, to distinguish itself from the realism of the name, has founded itself on (107) the Imaginary. The fact is that there is a saying less. One is forbidden to admit this homage, this is found in the prestige of the University, but this does not appear to us, to us analysts, to constitute an advantage. We remain in thought. You will tell me that I am having a good time with it and even to the point that it tires you, but I

do not see why the fact that I have a good time with it, on occasion, should be expressed by anything other than an effort to extricate myself from it. To extricate myself from what is fundamental for thought, namely, what I would call the imbecility typical, typical of the *mens*, of the human mood, with respect to the Real that it nevertheless has to deal with. Hence the urgency that the meaning of this word Real should be discerned.

Up to the present what I said there, in connection with tradition, preserves all its value. There is nothing more negotiable than religion, the 'green pasture' [English], to go here straight to the goal, the at-least-one God, huh, the true about the true, is Him – capital H! Who taught the speaking being to give a name to each thing? The non-dupe of the name of the name of the Name-of-the-Father, the non-dupers without that, for the *siste* or the zest eternity. Hence it results all the same, by standing back a little, that the Real, is what ek-sists with regard to meaning, in so far as I define it by the effect of *lalangue* on the idea, in other words on the imaginary supposed by Plato, in the speaking animal, among others animal-bodies or the devil-in-the-body, as you wish. Because why not like that, since we are dealing with mental deficiency, one mental defective is as good as another, why not Plato? Aristotle who, for his part, argues about the idea of the donkey, in order to say that the donkey is a donkey, and that it is indeed him, and that there is no capital donkey, huh, and well! He also *anistotes!*

The Real must be conceived as what is expelled from meaning. It is the impossible as such. It is the aversion from meaning...it is also, if you wish, the aversion of meaning into anti-meaning and ante-meaning. It is the return shock of the Verb, in so far as the Verb is only there for that. A that (*un ça*) which is not for nothing, if it takes into account what is at stake, namely, the filth from which the world cleanses itself, in principle, if in fact there is a world. That does not mean that it manages to do it! Man is still there. The ek-sistence of

the filthy (*immonde*), namely, of what is not world (*monde*), this is the Real full stop! But it is worthwhile pushing this as far as the elaboration of the quantifier \exists , there ek-sists an x such, which rather than an x , it would be better to say, yes one (*une*) x in order that she henceforth ek-sists, this one, the ek-sistence as one. This is what (108) we must ask ourselves, it is to what does she ek-sist? She ek-sists with respect to the ideic consistency of the body, that which, reproduces this body, just as Plato situates it very well, according to the formula, now that we are contaminating the idea with the supposed message of genes. It ek-sists with regard to the Symbolic in so far as the Symbolic turn in circles around an inviolable hole, otherwise the knot of three would not be Borromean. Because that is what it means, the Borromean knot, it is that the hole, the hole of the Symbolic is inviolable.

There you are. So then why not write it like this, in the order where it is simplest to write it, the Symbolic, here [VII-1] this is what I make into a ring, there, this Symbolic imposing itself on the Imaginary that I put in green, the colour of hope, huh!

We see how the Real ek-sists there, by no longer being compromised by being knotted with the said Symbolic in particular, any more than the Imaginary does. So there, I showed you while I was at it that whatever may be the meaning, is that not so, into which one turns this Imaginary and this Real, they will cross one another, as it is here flattened out, in a way in any case that will not make a chain. For the indication here, in this form of crossing, is moreover that these two consistencies may be straight lines at infinity; but that what must be

specified, is that however one conceives of this point at infinity, which was dreamt up by Desargues as being specific to the straight line, a straight line that returns from one of its ends to the other, this must be carefully pointed out, that there is in no way a question that it is imagined as folding back on itself, without that which, first passed over, still passing over the other.

So then what we come to is that to demonstrate that the Name-of-the-Father is nothing other than this knot, there is no other way of managing than to suppose them unknotted [on the board]. let us no longer pass the Symbolic in front of the Imaginary. Let us do it like that. Here is what you have then. And then, how knot them? By a ring which knots these three independent consistencies. There is a way which is the one that I call the Name-of-the-Father which is what Freud did. And at the same time I reduce the Name-of-the-Father to

its radical function which is to give a name to things, with all the consequences that this involves, because it does not fail to have consequences! And, up to the day in particular, which I indicated to you earlier.

I already made a drawing for you, a drawing of these four knotted, as such. I even made one that failed. But the big one, the right one, is that one here that I am reproducing for you today but in profile namely, that instead of seeing it vertically, I see it transversely. It is this one, the big circle about which I showed you that by distinguishing these three circles as they are in an armillary sphere, namely, containing one another, one must hook the innermost circle,

pass over the outermost circle, by putting oneself before returning (110) onto the outermost circle within the middle circle. This is what was expressed by the first schema that I gave you.

Who can fail to see that this business leaves us in the three, namely, as one might expect, what is involved in the distinction in the Symbolic of *name-giving* forms part of this Symbolic, as is demonstrated by the fact that the addition of this four is in a way superfluous. Namely, that what you see here in a particularly clear way, I repeated it because here perhaps this does not stand out clearly, is that the Borromean knot is that.

It is that before being flattened out in any way whatsoever. The Borromean knot is what, for two circles that circumscribe one another, introduces this third to penetrate into one of these circles in such a way that the other, as I might say, should with respect to the third be brought into the same relationship as it is with the first circle.

Is there a discernible order here? Is the Borromean knot a whole, a conceivable whole, make no mistake, or indeed does it imply an order? At first approach, one could say that it implies an order in the

case where each of these circles remains coloured, as was very correctly expressed precisely by someone who sent me a text where he uses the word coloured, which means on this occasion that each one remains identified to itself. One could say that if they are coloured, there is an order, that 1, 2, 3, is not 1, 3, 2. The question nevertheless is to be left in suspense. It is perhaps with regard to all the effects of the knot that this order is indifferent: 1, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, which would put us on the path indeed that they are not to be identified. It was in so far as three making a knot, making a Borromean knot, namely, of which (111) no ring forms a chain at any moment with another of these rings, it is as such that we must support the idea of the Symbolic, of the Imaginary and of the Real. What suggests it to me is what I received from one of those who are interested in the knot, as I said earlier: someone named Michel Thomé sent me a little letter to show me that in a certain figure, a figure that I did not check out and that I never drew here in any case, that in a certain figure, someone who had introduced into the publication of my seminar XX, had made what he calls an error, and an error of perspective. He had highlighted the fact that from one circle to the other of the three the first by being knotted to it, the simplest form of the Borromean knot, was, since I have used this term, the circle folded in two ears. The person who had the goodness to edit me (*m'éditer*, m-apostrophe), the person who had the goodness to edit me, made this error of perspective while keeping the folded form in the same order, [on the board] here corresponding to this, and here corresponding to this, and so on, to consider that the two wings of these two ears simply made two and not to cross them. Hence there results immediately this succession of consequences that Michel Thomé has very clearly seen, namely, that these knots are intertwined and that, as a consequence, [on the board] by cutting the one that here is supposed to hold together the totality of these two buckles, these two ears that I spoke about earlier, would end up with what it is easy to see, this figure here first, indeed those at the extreme end, where one clearly sees that these knots are intertwined.

But that is not all. This is not all for, as Michel Thomé had very well deduced right away, is that there will result a Borromean knot of a special type, which will be such that to limit ourselves here, for example, to four, but you can see that it works just as well with three, since I have pointed it out to you, these two here remain knotted, either this one, or that one, remain knotted; if one sections the third, no need then to put four of them.

(112) To see this, that only the four highlight, the fact is that there is no means of manifesting the Borromean quality of this knot of four for example, except by cutting a single one of them, namely, the one that we can call here the last, as a result of which each of the others will be freed from its follower up to the first. But as one might say, a distinction must be made here, they will not be freed together, they will be freed one after the other. While on the contrary, if you begin to cut the one that I have called the first, all the others up to the last will remain knotted. There is something here that is very interesting to demonstrate something particular about certain knots, that one can call Borromean in one sense but not in the other. Which evokes already the idea of the cycle and of orientation.

I am not insisting because I think that it is really only those who devote themselves to a searching study of this knot, that are likely to take a veritable interest in it.

[On the board] Here I had myself drawn a knot whose only interest is that it cannot be produced from this error of perspective to which Michel Thomé has given its fruitfulness. It is only strictly producible (113) by having been explicitly made, as I might say, by confusing the two buckles which hold on each side the forms of the ears which are the ones that I proposed as the simplest form to generate the Borromean knot. You see it here. Here there could be an external knot, an external ring that would hold these two buckles, these two buckles of ears, why not say it, and so on if you reunite these two knots, these two rings, I already alluded to it at one time, you obtain the following form which is a buckle that is quite distinct from the forms that I will call on this occasion, as I might say *thoméenes*, namely, those that are produced from an error of perspective such as

this one, indeed an error of perspective such as this one which is not the same.

I will not insist and I will pursue what is involved in the Name-of-the-Father to bring it back to its prototype and to say that God, God in the elaboration that we give to this Symbolic, to this Imaginary and to this Real, God is *The* woman made all. I told you, she is not-all. In the

case in which she might ek-sist from a discourse which might not be a semblance, we would have this that I formerly noted for you, such that , the God of castration. This is a wish that comes from the man with a capital M, a wish that there might exist women who would order castration. The trouble is that there are none, that in conformity with what I wrote in a first formulation which was correlative to the not-all, , there does not exist *The* woman, as I said. But the fact that *The* woman does not exist, *The* all-woman does not imply, contrary to Aristotelian logic that there are some who order castration. ‘Protect what is the most loved’, they say, in Rabelais. Naturally, that belongs to the comic, as I told you earlier.

(114) This nevertheless not-all, does not mean that any one of them say the contrary, that there exists an *x* of the woman who formulates the ‘do not protect it’; very little for them, the nay-saying. They simply say nothing. They say nothing, except as *The-all* (*La-toute*) which I said earlier was God, *The-all*, if she existed. There are none to carry castration for the Other and this has got to the point that it does not prevent her, as they say, wanting the phallus for herself as I indicated earlier. There is nothing more phallogocentric, as was written somewhere about me, there is nothing more phallogocentric than a woman, except for the fact none *ne-toute* wants the aforesaid phallus. Each of them of course want it, except for the fact that this does not weigh too heavily on them. It is just like what I highlighted in the dream described as that of the butcher’s beautiful wife. She indeed does want some of the smoked salmon as you know on condition of not making use of it. She only gives it in the measure that she does not have it. This is what is called love. It is even the definition that I gave of it, to give what one does not have, is love. It is the love of women, in so far, namely, that it is true that one by one, they ek-sist. They are real and even terribly so, they are even nothing but that. They only consist in so far as the symbolic ek-sists, namely, what I was saying earlier, the unconscious. This indeed is how they ek-sist as symptom, the consistency of which is provoked by this

unconscious, this apparently in the flattened out field of the Real. This is what must be called really, which means, not enough attention is paid to this distinction between the adverb and the adjective, to the way of the Real, but in reality to the way in which there is imagined in the Real. I do not need to redo this schema, I think, in which there is imagined in the Real the effect of the Symbolic. [On the board] This is something all the same that I must draw, yeah! *Voilà*. Here is the symptom, the effect of the Symbolic in so far as it appears in the Real, and even it is in this direction here.

I apologise to Soury who sent me a very beautiful little schema concerning the Borromean knot about which I will not have the time to speak today. I am going all the same to indicate something to him, which is that the two schemas that he sent me precisely involve an orientation, a direction. In other words, that these three essential elements of the Borromean knot are orientated in what I might call a centrifugal way. To which he opposes to me the contrary form, that in which the three are – did I say centrifugal just now? It was a slip – centripetal, to which he opposes me with the centrifugal form. I am (115) pointing out this to him like that in passing, which is that by not identifying, namely, colouring the three rings, by not specifying which is the Symbolic and which is the Real, these knots, very far from being untransformable into one another, are only the same, seen from another side. I ought to add to it the fact that if you make of this the Real, by taking things from the other side, the Real and the Symbolic are inverted, which is not foreseen in his schema. And that leaves nevertheless intact for us the question as to whether, the one that I asked earlier, whether it is indifferent that in this form [VII-4] this form that is not flattened out, that in this form the order ek-sists or does not ek-sist. I am allowing myself to signal to him that there is a distinction between the order of the three terms, the orientation given to each one and the equivalence of the knots.

This having been said, I could and I point out that the idea of supplying for the unreal woman, is not for nothing. That the imbeciles of *L'amour fou* call themselves Surrealists. They were themselves, I should say, symptoms, symptoms of the post-war of 14-18, except for being social symptoms. But it is not said either that what is social is not linked to a knot of resemblance. Their idea then of supplying for the woman who does not ek-sist as *The*, to the woman about whom I said in short that she was the very type of wandering (*l'errance*), put them back into the angle, into the rut of the Name-of-the-Father, of the Father as naming, about whom I said that it was a thing that came out of the Bible, but about which I add that it is for man a way of getting out of the phallic venture without loss.

That a God, good God, as tribal as the others but perhaps used with a greater purity of means, does not prevent the fact that we must touch the weight of it, in the same way as operating with this knot. The fact is that this tribal God, whether it is this one or indeed another, is only the quite useless complement, that is what this expresses, of the conjugation of this knot four to the Symbolic [VII-3]. It is the quite useless complement of the fact that it is the signifier one and without a hole, without a hole that it is permitted to use in the Borromean knot, which, to the body of the man a-sexed in itself, Freud underlines, gives the partner what she is lacking. Which she is lacking how? By the fact that he is, as I might say *aphligé*, *aphligé* to be written like that, really *aphligé* by a phallus which is what prohibits for him the enjoyment of the body of the other. He would need an Other of the Other for the body of the Other should not be for him a semblance, for (116) him not to be so different from animals, of not being able like all sexed animals to make of the female, the God of his life. For the mental of man, namely, the Imaginary, there is the affliction of the phallic Real because of which he does not know how to be anything but the semblance of power. The Real, is meaning in a blank, in other words the blank meaning by which the body pretends (*fait semblant*). A semblance on which there is grounded all discourse, in the first

rank, the discourse of the Master which makes of the phallus the signifier index 1. Which does not prevent that if in the unconscious there were not a crowd of signifier to copulate among one another, to be indexed by flourishing two by two, there would be no chance that the idea of a subject, of a *pathème* of the phallus of which the signifier is the One who essentially divides him, would come to light. Thanks to which he sees that there is unconscious knowledge, namely, unconscious copulation. Hence the crazy idea of making this knowledge a semblance in its turn with respect to what partner? If not the product of what is produced, by a blind copulation, make no mistake, for only signifiers copulate among one another in the unconscious, but the *pathématiques* subjects that result from it in the form of body are led, good God, to do the same, they call that fucking. It is not a bad formula. Because something warned them that they could do no better than to suck the body signified other, other simply because of some writing in a civil register. To enjoy it, what would be called to enjoy it like that, it would have to be torn to pieces, huh! Not that there are not in the other body dispositions for it, like that, being born prematurely, it is not inconceivable. The concept here is not lacking. It is called sadomasochism, I do not know why. But it can only be dreamt from the unconscious naturally since it is the path about which it must be said, about which it must be said that it is a slap in the face to call it royal.

King, another name, another name in the business and about which everyone knows that it always springs from the business of the Name-of-the-Father. But it is a name to lose like the others, to let drop in its perpetuity. The Names-of-the-Father huh! The *Anons* of the Father, what a herd had I not prepared to do it, or to shove their braying back down their throats if I had not done my seminar. I would have *h-uni*, a word that comes from the *hune* woman, some new stupidity. But why these *hanes-à-liste*, a waiting list of course, were queuing at the doors of the *Interfamilial Analytic Association* and Anna was humming/Freuding in the corridor the return to the cradle by making

(117) up for me upper crust motions? I am certainly not insensible to the weariness of ek-sisting (*d'ek-sisterre*) Land (*terre*)! Land! that one always believes one will reach! At last! I have only persevered in my impetus ever since. 'Laurent, bring my hairshirt and my discipline' [Molière], because this one benefits from it.

Seminar 8: Tuesday 18 March 1975

- *Soury, where are you? Good! So then have you distributed them? I saw, huh! Good, you have distributed how many of them?*
- *There are three texts each of 150 copies.*
- *What?*
- *There are three texts with 150 copies each.*
- *Yeah! So nobody has them! That's very annoying! You had told me that you would make...distribute 500?*
- *We can bring more the next time, but there we only brought 150.*
- *Yes, no but it's already very kind of you, I am not reproaching you, it is already very kind of you only, only it is...some people are not going to have it. They are not going to have it moreover uniquely because others have it!*

Good! So then I am forced to say, for those who do not have it, what there is in these papers that Pierre Soury and Michel Thomé have distributed. There is this something that you saw the last time, I cannot say the explanation of, because precisely I did not really explain it, this drawing which, it seems to me, in so far as I know

something about it, which is a discovery, a discovery that Michel Thomé made on a certain figure 6 which is somewhere in my last (120) nseminar, that which is called, which is entitled *Encore*. He made there the discovery of an error, an error in this drawing.

I presume, I cannot say any more about it, I presume that it is a lucky error, *felix culpa*, as they say. It is a fortunate error if it is on the occasion of this error that Michel Thomé – but perhaps he invented it all by himself – invented all by himself what I have indicated – in short, the last time, in one of these pages that I have had stuck to the board – and which demonstrates that there is in short, that it is possible to depict, I am not saying to write, to depict the Borromean knots, in such a way, let us things rapidly, that they only come undone from one end, starting from one end. If – ah! it's not easy! – if we attack any one of them, any one at all of the rings of string that are knotted in a certain way, precisely in a non-Borromean way since if it were Borromean, it would be enough to break any one of them at all for all the others to be immediately independent of one another, while the definition of these knots, of these knots such that they only come undone from one end signifies that in attacking any one whatsoever, it is only in one direction, and not in the other, that all are unknotted, but in the direction where all are unknotted, it is one by one and not immediately that they are unknotted.

I do not know whether it was on the occasion of this error or off his own bat that Michel Thomé made what I called earlier this discovery. He is perhaps there, so let him say it! Is he there?

- You made this discovery on the occasion of the error? It was on the occasion of the error? Yes? It is indeed what I am saying, it is a lucky error! But this proves at least the following, the fact is – I must admit my surprise because I do not get proof of it every day – that I do not speak absolutely without effect. You will tell me that I cannot measure these effects since I am not given any trace of them. But in

short, precisely, it something about which I know thanks to this couple of friends, Soury and Thomé, to have given me a trace of it, it is encouraging all the same! I would like from time to time to have other traces of it! It must be said that people look twice at it before giving it to me, not unreasonably moreover because it might well be that the traces that I collect, are not as solid, are not such well-made knots.

That obviously gives an idea that these knots are something rather (121) original, I would say, with the ambiguity perhaps, I am not sure, of original. What they would confirm, is that it is not so easy to go back, and then, the original does not mean that it is from there that one starts. It is even quite sure that historically well let us say...the Borromean knot was not found under a horses hoof! It was very late when people got interested in it. Let us say that, if in fact I have the shadow of a merit, I do not know what that means moreover, merit, it is that when I got wind of this thing, the Borromean knot – I found that in the notes of a person that I meet from time to time and who had picked it up at Guilbaud's seminar – there is one things certain, it is that I immediately had, in short, the certainty that it was something precious. Precious for me, for what I had to explain.

I immediately related this knot to what from then on, appeared to me like rings of string. Something provided with a particular consistency, that remains to be supported and which was for me recognisable in what I had stated from the start of my teaching. Which, no doubt, I would not have expressed, being little inclined to it by nature, without an appeal, an appeal linked in a more or less contingent way, to let us say a crisis in analytic discourse. It is possible that with time, I would have glimpsed that this crisis all the same would have to be unknotted, but circumstances were required for me to pass into action.

So then, these Borromean knots came to me like a ring on the finger and I immediately knew that this had a relationship that put the

Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real into a certain position with respect to one another, about which the knot encouraged me to state something which, as I already said here, homogenised them. What is meant by homogenised? It is obviously, as Pierre Soury previously remarked in a little note that he communicated to me, because I am very keen to give everyone his due, that they have something similar. As the same Pierre Soury remarked to me 'between the similar and the same' – that's from him – between the similar and the same, there is room for a difference. But it is very precisely in putting the accent on the similar in that that homogenisation consists, the pushing forward of the *homoios* which is not the same, which is similar.

What is similar about them? Well then, this is what I believe I have to (122) designate by the term of consistency, which is already to put forward something unbelievable! What can the consistency of the Imaginary, that of the Symbolic and that of the Real have in common? By this mode, this statement, do I make tangible for you - it seems to me that it is difficult to make it more tangible for you - that the term consistency henceforth belongs to the Imaginary?

Yeah! Here I stop to make a parenthesis designed to show you that the knot is not easy to depict. I am not saying to depict it to *oneself*, because in this business I eliminate completely the subject who is depicting it, since I start from the thesis that the subject is what is determined by the figure in question, determined, not that in any way he is the double of it, but that it is by the squeezing of the knot, of what in the knot determines the triple points from the fact of the tightening of the knot that the subject is conditioned. I am going perhaps later to remind you of this in the form of a drawing on the board. In any case, to depict this knot is not easy. I already gave you the proof in messing about more or less myself with one or other little drawings that I made. In any case the last episode of my relationships with the aforementioned Pierre Soury consists, make no mistake, in something which is certainly very strange, it is that after having

acceded on one occasion to what he had put forward, put forward very correctly, namely, that there was in the Real of the Borromean knot, a Real to which you add the fact that you orientate each of these rings.

To orientate it is a business which only seems to concern each one of the rings. There is supposed to be another way, let us not say of recognising these rings, for recognise would already be to enter into all sorts of implications, let us say differentiating them, which would be to colour them. You clearly sense the whole distance there is between colouring, and this is something that ought to come in at the level where Goethe took up things: but there is not the slightest trace of it in *The theory of colours*, and a level where that by which colour is something which is heavy with differentiation. Obviously, there is a limit, namely, that there are not an infinite number of colours. There are nuances no doubt. But thanks to the colour, there is difference.

I had asked the question at one of my preceding seminars, whether these knots, I had taken one, a bit more complicated than the (123) Borromean knot of three, not that they were not three, but I had asked the question of whether this knot was only one, namely, whether the introduction of differentiation into the knot left the knot not similar, but always the same. It is effectively always the same, but there is only a single way of demonstrating it, which is to demonstrate that in every case – what is meant by ‘case’? – it is reducible to the similar.

This indeed in effect is what happened. In fact I was in effect quite convinced that there is only one coloured knot, but I had a vacillation, which is what I call my last adventure concerning the orientated knot. Because oriented concerns a *yes* or a *no* for each one of these knots and I allowed myself, there, to stray by way of something that stems from the relationship of each one of these *yeses* or *no* with the two others. And for a moment, I said to myself – I did not go as far as to say to myself that there were eight knots, I’m not that stupid!

Namely, 2 x 2 x 2, *yes* or *no* x *yes* or *no* x *yes* or *no*. I did not even go so far as to think that there were four of them, but I do not know why I was racking my brain over the fact that there were two of them and it is not all the same something that does not have a bearing. That after having asked in an explicit way, I obtained from Pierre Soury, who, I hope, will distribute it to you the next time, I obtained, am I going to say the demonstration, what I asked for, namely, the showing (*monstration*) that there is only one orientated Borromean knot. The showing in question, that Pierre Soury communicated to me within a time span, as I might say – he is not without merit – he had to [wrestle with it], it is a shaky thing to demonstrate, he provided me in time for me to read it and for me to be quite convinced of it, the showing, not the demonstration, the showing that in terms of orientated knot there is only one, well and truly the same.

The only thing that this leads us to, and here I am challenging him, is the following. It is that this similar he reduces to the same, he can only do it starting from the fact that this something about which I am questioning him on this occasion. It is why it is required for this showing to be depicted, why must it pass by way of what I am calling, and what I already called, my flattening-out of the knot? It is something that deserved to be individualised, this flattening-out. Because, as I think you have already seen by this pencil sketch that I had to make on the board, namely, flattened-out, a perspective pencil sketch, you have indeed been able to see that if this knot is not of its nature a flat knot, far from it, the fact that it has to pass by way of the (124) flattening-out to highlight the sameness of the knot, whatever may be the orientation that you give to each one, which, I already made you sense it, indicated, will evoke that there will be eight of them, I told you that I did not let myself be taken in. But anyway all the same I still got bogged down in thinking that there were two of them. This simply proves the extraordinary debility of thought, at least of mine and in a general fashion that thought, the one that proceeds by way of what I said earlier in terms of a *yes* or a *no*,

thought, must be looked at twice before accepting what must indeed be entitled its verdict.

Is there not, as I might say, a sort of *fatum* of thought which, in attaching it too closely to the true, allows there to slip between its fingers, as I might say, the Real? This indeed is what I brought out the last time by a remark on the concept in so far as the concept is not the same thing as the truth; in so far as the concept is limited to a grasp as the word *capere* implies, and that a grasp is not enough to be sure that it is the Real that one has in one's hand.

There you are! These remarks that I am making to you that you have, I do not know why, the patience to accept, mean that it is impossible for me to warn you at every instant about what I am doing in speaking to you. That I am doing something that concerns you, your presence proves, but that is not enough to say the mode under which this is happening. To say that you comprehend something about it is not even certain, not certain at the level that what I am saying is sustained. But there is something worthwhile and it is indeed because of situating this thing, I am saying it in this way, that we comprehend one another. It is difficult not to sense, in the very text of what is said, in the sense that we comprehend one another has no other substratum than we embrace one another. And I see all the same that this is not quite what we are doing, and that there is here an equivocation, an equivocation which, it must be said, like all equivocations has an aspect of smut, to call things by their name. And what I strive to do, let us say, is to put a bit of humour into the recognition of this smut as a presence. This indeed is what gives its weight to the way I cut the knot in stating this point whose bearing should be clearly specified, that there is no sexual relationship.

What does that mean when I say it? It does not mean that we do not find the sexual relationship at every street corner! And that in (125) highlighting that everything must be re-centred on this scumble,

this stew, to appeal to what! To the Real, to the Real of the knot. Freud obviously did not take a step, a step which moreover consisted, is that not so quite simply in noticing that from all time people spoke about nothing but that, that everything that was done in terms of philosophy oozed the sexual relationship from every pore.

So then, what does it mean when I state that there is no sexual relationship? It is to designate a very local point, to manifest the logic of the relation, to mark that R to designate the relation, or to be put between x and y, is to enter here and now into the operation of writing, and that, as regards what is involved in the sexual relationship, it is strictly impossible to write $x R y$, in any way, that no elaboration of the sexual relationship can be made that is logical and at the same time mathematical. This is exactly the accent that I put on this statement *there is no sexual relationship*, and this then is to say that without having recourse to different consistencies – for the moment I am only taking them as consistencies – to these different consistencies which nevertheless are distinguished by being named Imaginary, Symbolic and Real, without the recourse to these consistencies in so far as they are different, there is no possibility of this scumble. That there is no reduction possible of the difference of these consistencies to something that will be simply written in a way that is supported, I mean that resists the test of mathematics and which allows the sexual relationship to be assured.

These modes which are those under which I took the floor, Symbolic Imaginary and Real. I would not say at all that they are obvious (*évidents*). I strive simply to empty them (*les é-vider*), which does not mean the same thing because to empty out is based on a void and that the obvious is based on seeing. Does this mean that I believe in it? I believe in it in the sense that it affects me as a symptom. I already said what the symptom owed to believing in it (*l'y croire*) and what I strive to do, what I try, is to give to this *I believe in it* a different form of credibility. It is certain that I will fail at it. It is not a reason for not

undertaking it, if only to demonstrate something which is the beginning of the impossible, already my impotence.

The knot is supposed by me to be the Real in the fact that it determines as ek-sistence, I mean, in that by which it forces a certain mode of *turning-around*, the mode under which there ek-sists a ring of string with respect to another, it is in this that I have managed to shift the question, insoluble of itself, of objectivity.

(126) This seems to me less silly, objectivity thus shifted seems to me to be less silly than the noumenon; because, try to think a little about what people persisted at for more than two millennia of history the noumenon, conceived in opposition to the phenomenon. It is strictly impossible not to bring out in its connection – but as you are going to see it is in retrospect – not to bring out in its connection the metaphor of the hole. Nothing to say about the noumenon, except that perception has the value of deception. But why here not remark that it is we who say that this perception is deceptive? For perception properly speaking says nothing precisely. It does not say, it is we who make it say, we talk all by ourselves. This indeed is what I am saying, in connection with any saying whatsoever, we lend our voice. The saying is a consequence, it is not the voice, the saying is an act.

So then, if the noumenon is nothing other than what I have stated as a hole, perhaps this hole, by finding it named as such in our Symbolic starting from the topology of the torus, of the torus *qua* distinguished from the sphere by a mode of writing by which there are defined as a matter of fact *homo-* as well as *homeo -*, as well as *auto-morphism*, whose foundation is always the possibility of being founded on what is called a continuous distortion and a distortion which is defined by encountering what creates an obstacle – that is what topology is - to another cord that is supposed to consist, this is what makes the torus, t-o-r-u-s, that I would be happy to call here the tube-torus (*tore-boyau*).

In order to depict for you the torus in a way that may be tangible do
I...[on the board] Here is a torus [VIII-1], make a hole in it, put in your
hand and catch what is at the centre, the centre of the torus. That
leaves like that a feeling of which the least that can be said is that
there is a discordance between this hand and what it squeezes.

(127) There is a way other than that to show it, which would be to
suppose another torus inside the torus [VIII-2]. How far can one go
like that? You must not believe that it is enough here to place another
inside the second torus, because this would not at all be something
homogenous despite the appearance given by the cup (*coupe*), that
would not be something homogenous to what is depicted here.

[On the board] As is clearly demonstrated by the correct way of drawing
a torus, when one does it in a mathematical way [VIII-3] it would
have to be another ring placed here [VIII-2] in order for this one to be,
equivalent to the one that I first cut to give here the figure of the torus.

In short, if these cords supposed to consist give some support to the
metaphor of the hole, it is only starting from the topology of the torus
in so far as it elaborates mathematically the difference between an

implicit... topology and a topology which, by being distinguished from it, becomes explicit, namely, the sphere, in so far as every supposition of the Imaginary participates first of all implicitly in this sphere in so far as it radiates. *Let there be light!* That is not a *tube-torus!*

The annoying thing, this is what analysis reveals concerning what is involved in the consistency of the body, it is to the tube that one must come instead of the polyhedrons which occupied the 'Timaeon', 'Timaeic' imagination throughout the centuries. It is what I earlier called the tube-torus that prevails, and when I say tube-torus, that is (128) not enough, as you see sufficiently from these drawings, it is not enough to orientate things towards the tube, it is as a matter of fact a sphincter.

Here we are then, in what renders more tangible than anything, the relationship of the body to the Imaginary, and what I want to point out to you is the following: can one think the Imaginary, the Imaginary itself in so far as we are caught up in it by our bodies, can one think the Imaginary as imaginary to reduce, as I might say imaginarity or imaginarity, as you wish? One *is* in the Imaginary, that is what must be recalled. However elaborated you makes it, this is what analysis brings you back to; however elaborated you make it, in the Imaginary, you are. There is no way of reducing it in its imaginarity. It is in this that topology takes a step. It allows you to think, but it is a retrospective thought, that aesthetics, that what you sense, in other words, is not in itself, as they say, transcendental, that it is linked to what we can very well conceive of as contingency, namely, that it is this topology that is valid for a body. Again it is not a body all by itself! If there were not the Symbolic and the ek-sistence of the Real, this body would simply have no aesthetics at all, because it would have no tube-torus. The tube-torus, torus with the hyphen as I write it, is a mathematical construction, namely, made of this inek-sistent relationship, *qua* ek-sistent, that there is between the Symbolic and the Real. The notion of knot that I am putting forward can no doubt be

imagined, as I said, be depicted between the Imaginary the Symbolic and the Real, without loosing for all that its weight of Real, but precisely why? Because there is an effective knot, namely, that the cords are squeezed, that there are these cases where the ek-sistence, the turning around, no longer happens because of these triple points whose ek-sistence is suppressed. This is what I indicated in telling you that the Real is demonstrated as having no meaning, having no meaning because it begins. Because it begins with what?

[On the board] With the fact that here, if this Real, to indicate it, if this Symbolic to indicate it by a different colour, I make in this way, reducing the place, the one that I indicated as being that of small **o**, I reduce meaning to this triple point that is here. Only this meaning, *qua* vanishing gives meaning to the term of Real. In the same way, here, at this other triple point which is defined by this corner, it is enjoyment *qua* phallic that implies its liaison to the Imaginary as ek-sistence, the Imaginary is the *pas-de-jouissance* (the step/not of enjoyment). Just as for the Symbolic, it is very specifically that there is no Other of the Other which gives it its consistency.

Does that mean that all of these are only models? I already said and put forward, which is no reason for me not to repeat it, that models have recourse as such to the pure Imaginary, the knots have recourse to the Real and take their value from the fact that they have no less bearing in the mental than the Real, even if the mental is Imaginary for the good reason that they have their bearing on the two. Any couple, anything involved in the couple is reduced to the Imaginary. Negation is also a way of acknowledging, *Verneinung*, Freud insists on it from the start, a way of acknowledging where alone, the

acknowledgement is possible because the Imaginary is the place where all truth is stated and a truth denied has just as much Imaginary weight as an acknowledged truth, *Verneinung* as *Bejahung*.

How does it happen, this is the question that I ask in bringing you the answer, that the Real only begins with number 3 (*chiffre 3*)? All Imaginary has something of the 2 involved, as I might say, as a remainder of this 2 effaced from the Real. This indeed is why the 2 ek-sists with respect to the Real, and that it is not out of place to confirm that ek-sistence, namely, what plays on every cord as ek-sistence, has the consistency of the others. That this ek-sistence, namely, this operation, this limited field, where the trajectory or the path as someone said to me recently someone who was speaking to me about this subject, which again is nobody but Soury, that the ek-sistence, the operation of the cord up to the point that something squeezes is indeed the zone where one can say that consistency, the consistency of the Real, namely, what Freud put the accent on, renewed the accent, no doubt using an ancient term, the phallus. But how know what the Mysteries put under this term of phallus? By accentuating it, Freud exhausted himself, but it is in no other way than (130) by its flattening-out. Now, what is at stake is to give its whole weight to this consistency, not simply the ek-sistence of the Real. To name, to name (*nommer*) that moreover you could n-apostrophe-h-o-two ms-e-r, write *n'hommer*. To say is an act; what makes saying an act, is the adding of a dimension, a dimension of flattening-out.

No doubt, in what I encouraged Pierre Soury to share with us just now, namely, his demonstration of the fact that there is only one knot, by taking it as orientated, he distinguishes all sorts of elements that only stem from the flattening-out: the turning over of planes, the turning over of rings, the turning over of bands, indeed internal or external exchanges. These are only, you will read them, at least I hope so, these are only the effects of the flattening-out as regards which it would be well to highlight that there is here only a recourse,

an exemplary recourse to the distance there is between the Real of the knot and this conjunction of domains, the one that is inscribed, that I inscribed here earlier on the board to give weight to meaning. That all of this may illuminate, illuminate in fact the practice of a discourse, of the discourse properly called analytic, is what I will leave you to decide, without making any more concessions today. I acknowledge, I did not make many of them. But consult simply these terms such as the ones that Freud puts forward concerning what he calls identification. I am proposing to you in closing this session today the fact that identification, the triple identification as he puts it forward, I am formulating the way in which I define it: if there is a real Other, it is nowhere else than in the knot itself and that is why there is no Other of the Other. This real Other, make yourselves identify yourself to its Imaginary, you have then the identification of the hysteric to the desire of the Other, the one that is happening here at this central point. Identify yourselves to the Symbolic of the real Other, you have then this identification that I specified as being the *einzigster Zug*, the unary trait. Identify yourselves to the Real of the real Other, you obtain what I indicate as the Name-of-the-Father, and that is where Freud designated what this identification has to do with love.

I will speak the next time about three forms of the Names-of-the-father, those that name as such the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, for it is in these names themselves that the knot holds up.

Seminar 9: Tuesday 8 April 1975

Voilà! I am struck by one thing, which is that – nevertheless I searched, I searched for traces, for traces somewhere of what I call cogitation, whose cogitation, I will say later – cogitation remains limed in an Imaginary which is, as I have, let us say, suggested for a long time, the Imaginary of the body. What is cogitated – you must not believe that I put the emphasis on the Symbolic – what is cogitated is in a way, retained by the Imaginary as rooted in the body. Well then, it strikes me not to have, not to be able, in the literature which is not simply philosophical - philosophy is moreover in no way to be distinguished from the artistic, from the literary... I am going to emphasise that progressively, is that not so? And to put my cards immediately on the table, I am going to announce something that I will take up later.

It is hard to imagine, make no mistake, because one must stand back a little it is hard to imagine the degree to which the Imaginary is sticky and has a stickiness that I am right away going to designate, that of the sphere and of the cross. It is fearsome! I have been, in short why not say it, I have been strolling through Joyce because I was requested, like that, to speak at a Joyce congress which should take place in June. I cannot say that it is not imaginable, it is only too imaginable! It is not Joyce who is responsible for it. To be limed like that in this sphere and the cross, one can say that it is because he read a lot of St Thomas. Because that was what was taught in the Jesuits where he received his formation. But it is not only due to that, you are just as limed in the (132) sphere and in the cross. It is there on the little page [IX-1] a circle, a section of a sphere, and then inside the cross. What's more that makes the + sign. You cannot imagine how much you are retained in this circle and in this + sign.

It can happen, is that not so, that by chance an artist, who sticks something in plaster on a wall, makes something that by chance is like that [IX-2]. But nobody notices that this is already the Borromean knot.

Try, like that to tackle it for yourselves. When you see it like that, what do you make of it imaginarily? You make of it two things that hook onto one another and which come back to fold over, this A and this B [IX-3], to fold them over in this way. As a result of which, the circle, the ring, the cycle, I will come back later to what that means, has only to slip over what is thus knotted.

It is not, as I might say, natural, what does natural mean? Once one approaches it, in short, it disappears, but in short, natural to your imagination, it is not natural to do exactly the opposite, namely, to distort the circle, the cycle like that [IX-4], which seems to be dictated for all that, in short, if one (133) makes a simply different use of A and B.. That is a fact, it is a fact of which the least that can be said is that it is curious that I should be interested in the Borromean knot because you can be sure that the Borromean knot is not obligatorily what I have drawn for you a hundred times. Is that not so in fact! That is also a Borromean knot [IX-5], just as valid as that in the form in which I usually flatten it out. It is a true Borromean knot, I mean this one.

Look at it closely, I already said that if I was, like that, gripped one day by the Borromean knot, it is altogether linked to this order of event or advent, as you wish, that is called the analytic discourse, and in so far as I defined it as a social bond emerging in our day. This discourse has a historic value that has to be mapped out. It is true that mine is a weak voice to sustain it, but it is perhaps so much the better because if it were stronger, well then I would perhaps in short have less chance of subsisting. I mean that it seems difficult to me, throughout all history, like that, for the social bonds prevalent up to now not to silence any voice that is designed to sustain a different emerging discourse. This is what has always been seen up to now and it is not because there is no longer the Inquisition that it should be believed that the social links that I defined, the discourse of the master the discourse of the university, indeed the hysterico-diabolic discourse should not stifle, as I might say, whatever voice I may have. This having been said in short, I within this, I am a subject. I am caught up in this business, like that, because I set about existing as an analyst. That does not mean that I believe that I have a mission of truth. There were people like that, in short, in the past, who were crackers. No mission of the truth because the truth, I insist, cannot be said, it can only be half-said. So then let us rejoice that my voice is low....

(134) In every philosophy...Up to the present like that, there is philosophy, the right one, huh, the current one, and then from time to time there are crazy people who precisely believe they have a mission of truth; the whole thing is simply buffoonery! But that I should say so has no importance, luckily for me, I am not believed! Because when all is said and done, believe this for the time being, the right dominates, the right philosophy, it is indeed still there. I made, like that, a little visit during these holidays, as a way of making him a little sign before both of us disintegrate, to someone called Heidegger. In fact I am very fond of him. He is still very stout hearted...There is already something that he is trying to get out of. There is something

in him like a, like a presentiment of *sicanalise*, as Aragon said. But it is only a presentiment because Freud, in short he does not what way to turn when he... it does not interest him.

Nevertheless something emerged through him, through Freud, is that not so? Yes, whose consequences I am drawing out, by weighing it in its effects which are no small thing. But this supposes, this would suppose that the psychoanalyst ek-sists, ek-sists a little bit more. Anyway! He has already begun... there is already that, huh, begun to ek-sist, there, as I write it. But what to do so that the knot to which I have come, there, not of course without getting entangled in it just as much as you, what to do to make him tighten this knot, to the point that the speaking being as I call him, no longer believes, no longer believes what? That outside the being of speaking, he believes in being, huh! Is it too crude to say that it is uniquely because there is the verb to be? No, that is why I said the being of speaking. He believes that because he speaks, well then that is where his salvation lies. It is a track (*erre*) and I would even say a unary track (*trait-une-erre*). Yes! It is thanks to this that what I will call an orientated decoding has prevailed in what is called thought, the thought that is described as human. I am letting myself go like that, something gets into me from time to time, and I would say that this track deserves rather to be pinpointed by the words on the move (*transhumant*), its so called humanity depending only on a naturalness of transit, like that – and what is more, which postulates transcendence...

My success as I might say, which has of course no connotation of a result to my eyes and with good reason... I only believe, like Freud, in the bungled action, but in the bungled action in so far as it is revelatory of the site, of the situation of the *transit* in question, with *transfer* in one's grasp of course, all of that, gives something of the *trans* [trance?]. This *trans* must simply be brought back to its proper (135) measure. My success then, my succession, that's what that means, will it remain in this transitory? Well then this is the best

thing that could happen to it because in any case there is no chance that the *humant-trans* should ever tackle anything whatsoever. So then just as well have an endless peregrination! Simply Freud made the remark that there is perhaps a saying which takes on the validity that I am going to tell you, as only being up to now forbidden (*interdit*). That means to say between, nothing more, between the lines. This is what he called, like that, the repressed. Naturally, I am not going to get up on my high horse. But why, if really as I have just said, there is not, even in people who would be made in a way to meet it, no trace of this Borromean knot, despite what I am telling you, since the sphere and the cross, can be found everywhere, someone might have noticed that this could make a Borromean knot, as I have just explained to you.

Good, as it happens I made this discovery of the Borromean knot, without looking for it of course! It seems to me like that, it must also appear like that to you, of course, that seems to me to be a notable discovery in order to salvage not the air of Freud, a-i-r, but precisely his track (*erre*), what exists of it, which is rigorously a matter of the knot. Good! Now let us pass on to something like that, to get our teeth into – and this [IX-2] is what is important; why the devil did no one draw this plus which consists in writing this sign like that, in the proper way? [IX-4]

There is all the same someone, like that, who one day, you do not remember, of course, because you have not read all of Aragon – who reads the whole of Aragon! – there is a passage in the young Aragon, where he begins to fume, I mean to get heated up, by claiming that at one time...who went so far as to suppress the crossroads, *quadrivii*, he was thinking of autoroutes, because autoroute is a rather funny word huh! What is meant by an auto-route? A road in itself or a road for itself? Anyway, who found this time, there are still a lot of crossroads, a lot of street corners, of course! In short, I do not know what got into him, like that, to think that there would no longer be any

crossroads, that there would always be subterranean passages, that this time deserves a better fate than to remain in general theology? What is curious is that he in no way drew a conclusion. That is the surrealist mode, is that not so? It never culminates in anything. He did not spatialise the Borromean knot in the right way. Thanks to which, is (136) that not so, we are still at being, as Heidegger said to me there, that I was able earlier to extract from his brain, being *in-der-Welt*, at *in-der-Welt-sein*. It is a cosmeticology, which is also cosmeticological. It is a tradition like that, thanks to what? Thanks to this *Welt* there is a *Umwelt* and then there is a *Innenwelt*. This should make you suspicious, this repetition of the bubble (*bulle*) yes I learned that in cartoons it is by bubbles, I had never noticed it, because I should tell the truth, I never look at cartoons. In short I am ashamed, I am ashamed because it is marvellous is it not? They are not even cartoons, they are photo-montages, in short they are sublime! They are photo-montages, and I read in *Nous deux* photo-montages with words! And then thoughts, is when there are bubbles!

I don't know why you are laughing, because for you this is familiar! At least I suppose so because...yes! Does the question I am asking here in the form of this bubble prove that the Real makes up a universe? It is here, the question that I ask, it is one that I asked starting from Freud, in something which is only a beginning, which is that Freud suggested that this universe had a hole. And what is more, a hole that there is no way of knowing. So then I follow the track of this hole, as I might say, and I encounter, it is not I who invented it, I encounter the Borromean knot which, as they always say, fits me like a ring on my finger...here we again have the hole! Only there is all the same something, when one goes ahead like that in following the track of things, which is that one notices that there is not only one thing to make a cycle. It is not obligatorily and only the hole. Yes, if you take two of them, from that, from these cycles, from these things that turn, from this circle in question [IX-2], and if you knot both of them, in the right way...you must not make a mistake of course – and

I must say that I make mistakes all the time, it is not only Jacques-Alain Miller! The proof that...look at that! When I wanted earlier to make the Borromean knot for you, that one there is shocking, I put my foot in it! Because made like that, it is not a Borromean knot.

Namely, that you can always cut one of them, the two others will remain knotted. It's not the right yoke! But in short, provided you fold them in the right way, you notice that if you add this straight line to it [IX-6] nothing more than this straight line, well then! It is a Borromean knot. The straight line, infinite of course as I said, stated

at the beginning of this seminar. That makes a Borromean knot that is just as valid as the one that I usually draw and that I am not going to start on again. If the straight line is an infinite straight line, and how not refer to it as the string in itself, the consistency reduced to the last it has, well then, it makes a knot! Naturally, it is much more convenient for us to close this consistency. I mean to notice that it is enough here to make a buckle to rediscover the familiar knot, the knot in the way in which I usually draw it [IX-6]. What is interesting, is that not so, in representing it in this way, is to notice that starting from there [IX-7], the way, the first, of writing the Borromean knot rebounds on this cycle [IX-6] and that it is one of the ways of showing how the knot can be, as I might say, doubly Borromean, namely, that we pass to the bo-bo knot of four.

(138) There you are! I showed you here [IX-8] another illustration of this knot of four. But the question that this poses is what is the order of equivalence of the straight line [IX-6], of the infinite straight line, as it is there, of the straight line to the cycle? There is someone, a man of genius called Desargues, to whom I made an allusion at one time – in short ‘at one time’, at the time when I made an allusion to him... – to whom the idea came that every straight line, every infinite straight line achieved closure, created a buckle at a point at infinity. How could this idea have come to him? It is an absolutely sublime idea around which I constructed my whole commentary on *las Meninas*, the one about which people say, in short, if we are to believe the hacks, was completely incomprehensible. I do not know. It did not seem to be so to me, at least! What is the equivalence of the straight line to the circle? It is obviously to make a knot. It is a consequence, is it not, of the Borromean knot. It is a recourse to efficiency, to effectiveness, to *Wirklichkeit*.

That is not, that is not the important thing! For if we find them equivalent in efficiency, in the efficiency of the knot, what is the difference? I am not telling you at all that I am satisfied huh! I approach, I approach so painfully, good God, that this will make you suffer, everything that concerns thinking-out-the-Borromean-knot. Because I told you, it is not easy to imagine it, which gives a proper measure of what all thinking (pensation) is, as I might say. It is all the same curious in short that even Descartes, is that not so. His *Regula decima*, namely, the one that I highlighted, even read for you

(139) concerning what is not said literally, concerning the use of thread, the use of weaving, the use of what might have led him to the knot, and to the Borromean knot in particular, he never made anything of it. That he never made anything of it is a sign.

Good! So then the difference? I am not saying that it is my last word, is that not so, the difference is in the passage from the one to the other, and in something that for the moment I content myself with illustrating, with illustrating without doing it in a definitive way. The fact is that between the two, there is an interplay. And since this whole interplay only culminates in their equivalence, it is perhaps in this journey of something which, by being a cycle, buckles a hole. It is perhaps in the interplay of ek-sistence, of the track in short, of the fact that there is an interplay, in short, that this moves, that this opens as they say, that the difference consists, a difference of ek-sistence. One ek-sists, heads off into the track until it only encounters simply consistency, and the other, the other, the cycle, is centred on the hole.

Naturally, no one knows what this hole is. That the hole, should be what the emphasis is put on in the corporal by all analytic thought, well, this rather puts a stopper in the hole! It is not clear. By the fact that it is the orifice on which there is suspended everything that is involved in the pre-Oedipal as they say, that all perversity is orientated, which is that of all our behaviour, integrally, is quite strange! This is not going to illuminate the nature of the hole for us. There is something else like that that might come to mind, which is quite unrepresentable. It is what is called, in short, like that by a name that only dazzles because of language, it is what is called death. Good, that puts no less a stopper in it! Because we do not know what death is.

There is all the same an approach, an approach that is expressed in what mathematics has described as topology which envisages space differently. Note this differently, it is worthwhile remembering it. Well then, one cannot say that this leads us to notions that are all that easy. One sees clearly there the weight of imaginary inertia. Why did geometry find itself so much at ease in what it combines? Is it by adhering to the Imaginary, or is it by a sort of injection of the

Symbolic? This is what would deserve to be posed as a question to a mathematician. In any case, the twisted character of this topology, the (140) establishment of notions like that of neighbourhood, indeed of accumulating point, this emphasis put on something – we see very well what the aspect is - on discontinuity as such, while manifestly there is here a resistance. Continuity is indeed a natural aspect of the imagination.

Good, I am not going to develop this any more. What I note, is that the difficulty of the introduction, like that, of the mental to topology, the fact that it is not more easily thinkable gives a good idea of what there is to be learned from this topology as regards what is involved in our repressed.

The effective difficulty, is that not so, of cogitating about the Borro-knot, here, reduplicated by the fact that the accessibility constituted by this sphere and the cross presents it as an example of a missed *mathesis*, missed inexplicably by a hairs breath, never familiar in any case, why not see in the manifest aversion that this entails, the very trace of this first repression? And why not become engaged along this furrow, just like a dog who picks up a scent? Except for this of course, that the sense of smell is not what characterises us, and that we must take into account this smell effect in the dog. How? This can imitate, imitate a perception effect which would be the supplement for a lack that we must indeed admit if we have, and this is a question, had our eyes opened. If we open our eyes to the ek-sistence of the *Urverdrängt*, of something affirmed by analysis which is that there is a repression that is not simply first but irreducible. This is what we should be following the trace of, and this is in short what I am doing before you in so far as I am able. Naturally, all the same, I take care to tell you that I am not getting up on my high horse, I mean that I do not believe that I have found here the last word, not at all! To think that one has found the last word, would be properly speaking paranoia. Paranoia, is not that, paranoia is being stuck in the

Imaginary. It is the voice that sounds, the look that becomes all-prevailing it is a matter of the congealing of a desire. But in short, all the same that would be paranoia, Freud told us not to worry. I mean to say why not? This could be a vein to follow, huh! There is no need to be so afraid if that leads us somewhere! It is quite clear that this has only ever led to...well to the truth. Which indeed makes it the measure of the truth itself, namely, what the paranoia of President Schreber shows, which is that there is no sexual relationship except (141) with God. It's the truth! And it is indeed what puts in question the ek-sistence of God, we are here in something failed in creation, if I can thus express myself. The saying is to trust something which, probably dupes us. But to not be its dupe is to be nothing other than the first occupant of the non-dupe, in other words what I called the impetus (*erre*). But this impetus is our only chance of really fixing the knot in its existence, because it is only ek-sistence *qua* knot. It is what only ek-sists by being knotted in such a way that it can only be squeezed. Even in confusion! [On the board] What I have not been able to draw for you here is the Borromean knot; it is enough to have one of three. You know, you can very well draw it in a totally confused way, so that you won't hear a peep out of it!

To say that *there is no sexual relationship* starts from the idea of a *phusis*, namely, from something that would make of sex a principle of harmony. Relationship, up to today means for us proportion. The idea that one could reproduce this with words, that words were designed to mean something, that if being is, the result is for example that non-being is not. Yes! There are still people for whom that means something. The Parmenides meaning there, like that, at the origin, has become chit-chat, and that it does not come into anyone's mind that this is not properly speaking a sign that it is only wind, *flatus vocis*! I am not saying at all that they are wrong, quite the contrary, they are precious to me, they prove that meaning goes as far in equivocation as one may desire for my theses, namely, for the analytic discourse. Namely, that starting from meaning there is

enjoyed, *s'oui-je, j'ouisse* myself, *souis-je m'assoter* with words. Naturally, naturally, there is something better. Except for the fact that the better, as popular wisdom has it, is the enemy of the good. Just as surplus enjoying comes from the *père-version*, from the *a-per-(e)-itive* version of enjoying. We can do nothing about it. The speaking being aspires only to the good, as a result of which he plunges always into the worst. That does not mean that he cannot refuse it, huh! Not even me. Here, I am a grain like all of you, ground down in this salad. The trouble is, is that everyone knows that this has good effects...I am talking about analysis! That the good effects only last for a while does not stop it being a respite, and that it is better, make no mistake, than doing nothing. It is a little annoying all the same! It is an annoyance that one can try to go against, despite the current, is that (142) not so. Because it is, despite everything, of a nature to prove the ek-sistence of God himself. Everyone believes in him! I defy each one of you [to show] that I will not prove to him that he believes in the ek-sistence of God! This is even the scandal. The scandal that psychoanalysis alone highlights. It highlights it because at present it is only psychoanalysis that proves it. I am talking about proving it. It is not at all the same as proving to you that you believe in him. Formally, this is only due to Freud's Jewish tradition, which is a literal tradition that links it to science, and at the same time to the Real. This is the cape that must be rounded.

God is Father, hyphen, towards, *père-vers*. This is a fact made obvious by the Jew himself. But we will indeed finish up by, in short I cannot say that I hope for it, I am saying it – by going against this current, we will finish up by inventing something less stereotyped than perversion. This is even the only reason why I am interested in psychoanalysis, I am saying that I am interested and why should I try to do what is currently called galvanising it. But I am not stupid enough to have the least hope of a result that nothing promises and which no doubt has been taken from the wrong end. This thanks to this unbelievable story of Sodom and Gomorrah, huh! There are even

days, when it can come to me that Christian charity is on the path of a perversion that illuminates a little the non-relationship. You can see how far I am going, huh. It is nevertheless not to my inclination, but anyway, make no mistake, we must not exaggerate (*charrier*)...nor be charitable (*chariter*)! There is no chance that we have the key to the road accident which means that sex has ended up by being an illness in the speaking being, and the worst illness, huh! The one by which he is reproduced. It is obvious that it is to the advantage of biology to strive, to become with a slightly different emphasis, 'viology', the 'logy' of violence and to force itself to the side of mouldiness with which the aforesaid speaking being has many analogies. You never know, a lucky encounter! Someone like Francois Jacob is Jew enough to allow the non-relationship to be rectified, which in the present state of knowing can only mean replacing this fundamental disproportion of the aforesaid relationship by a different formula, by something that can only be conceived of as a detour that is destined to err (*erre*), but an error limited by a knot.

Yeah! I would not like all the same to leave you without pointing out something to you, pointing out something which I think is opportune. I think that you have had a pile of little pages distributed, because I (143) have been told so by Michel Thomé and Pierre Soury? Yes! They are little pages that are very important because they demonstrate something, that there is only a single orientated Borromean knot.

There you are! So then, for them I want, like that, because probably they will be the only ones to appreciate it, to point out the following for them, which is that what I contributed today like that – I don't know what I contributed today moreover – what I contributed today, namely, the remark that there is a way of making a cycle with two circles, this remark has consequences as regards their proposal, that there is only one orientated knot. On the fact that there is only one orientated knot when there are three rings of string, but not when there are more, I agree. Nevertheless, there is something amusing, which is

that if you transform one of these rings into an infinite straight line...
– that was the import of the remark that I had made to them, but,
against which they were right to hold out – I had made the remark to
them that it was on the side of this third that there was something that
seemed to me to require the ek-sistence, not of one knot, but of two
orientated knots. It is to them that I am addressing myself for the
moment is that not so, and because of that I am charging them to
respond to me. I am addressing myself to them. I am not asking a
question, I am not saying does it not appear to you? I affirm, I affirm
that if there is one that is transformed into an infinite straight line,
there is no longer simply one orientated knot, but two. I did not make
the little drawing of it, but I am going to do so. I am going to do so on
this last piece of paper that I explicitly left blank, and I am pointing
out to them that the infinite straight line is not orientatable. From
where could it be orientated? It is only orientatable, it is obvious, it is
well known, starting from any chosen point whatsoever on this
straight line from which orientations diverge. But diverging doesn't
give it one. So then, with respect...you are going to see that I am
going to do exactly what should not be done, namely,... Ah! all the
same, I have managed it. Good. Namely, the following which is that
by sticking to a simple formulation, let us point out that in the double
circle [IX-9] there is an orientation, namely, what we will designate
by the word *gyre* (*gyrie*). Not of course
that we can say that it is dextro-yratory
or laevo-yratory, everyone knows that
now. For with all the time that people
have been racking their brains to do so,
it seems all the same, not that it is
demonstrated, but that one could consider
that, in short, there were enough clever
people racking their brains, to do something about which it would be
conceivable that we should send it as a message to someone who
is supposed to be on another planet, and who would know the
distinction between right and left. As regards that, we can admit it, as

we have ended up by admitting it for the squaring of the circle, even though there it has been demonstrated, we can admit that nothing can be done. But to distinguish the gyres as being two, that we can do. We could do it with words in a message for the inhabitants of another planet.

[on the board] It is enough for them to have the notion of a horizon, which gives at the same time that of a plain. If we put just these two circles [IX-10] flattened out, this is what is supposed by the notion of horizon. We can say for example that we define one of them as being further from the point from which we will start on the straight line as a point of view, and that there is something external, which, as you see, because of the straight line highlighted by Soury and Thomé, concerning the knot of these two circles is, from a dextro-gyratory side, if we define dextro-gyratory by the fact that the most external one goes underneath, goes above the band of the circle, of the ring of string, and that there is another which, by this fact, also goes over, because this is how we define the gyre, but it is found to be in a different direction with regard to the circle. This circle [IX-9] has then two orientations, this one and that one, this one dextro-gyratory, that one laevo-gyratory; we are incapable of saying which is dextro, which is (145) laevo, we are incapable of transmitting it in a message. No manipulation of the knot of three – I tried it because I had hoped that the Borromean knot would perhaps give it to us – gives unambiguously the definition of laevo or of dextro. We always find ourselves confronted with the situation of having two gyres, but that to define them by the fact that the most external strip passes over the other strip, and that this is what ought to give the orientation, always fails. Since, as you see there, if we define the fact that the most external strip passes over the other, we find ourselves before an ambiguity, is it this one or that one? On the contrary, the ek-sistence

of two gyres is made manifest by that. There are two gyres, two orientated Borromean knots, not just one, starting from the moment when we made an infinite straight line from one of the three, in so far as the infinite straight line is defined as non-orientatable. Namely, if you want it again, that we have the difference with what quite properly Soury and Thomé reasoned, namely, that there are three centrifugal, we are going to put a little e to say centrifugal, going towards the outside, there are there centripetal, three i's, there can be one i and two e's, one e and two i's.

These diverse specifications are those on which Soury and Thomé depend to demonstrate that there is only a single orientated knot.

If we have one straight line, one bar without orientation, we have then one-zero, one-i, one-e, and it is starting from that that there does not come a similar order, namely, that there is one-without-orientation, one-with-a centrifugal-direction, towards the outside, one-with-a centripetal-direction, towards the inside.

1o	1i	1e
1o	1e	1i

(146) This is of interest, since for their demonstration, they started from the notion of the same, namely, that in all, reducing all the projections, all the flattening-outs that they made, they demonstrated that from these different flattening-outs there resulted the fact that it was the same, it was the same, as I might say, from all the flattened-out points of view. But it is sufficient that one, taken moreover from the knot point of view, should ek-sist, for it to demonstrate the orientations, namely, the Borromean knot *qua* orientated as being two. The knot is certainly not orientated, this from the fact that the three are

so. If one of the three is not so, and it is sufficient for that that it should be coloured which means identical to itself, this makes it comprehensible that there are two of them. Once it is, either coloured or disorientated, what distinguishes it, there were already two provided one is specified. This remark consists in saying that a single coloured knot is sufficient, is sufficient by being equivalent to the fact that one of the knots is not orientated. The word orientatable which is in the dictionary of what was distributed to you is striking. The word orientatable already means that there are two orientations. The knot, certainly, can reabsorb these orientations among themselves, but it does not reabsorb them, once there is carried out on one of the elements of the knot this thing of distinguishing it by the fact that it is not orientatable, namely, that it is transformed into a straight line.

I, do not propose, but I think I have sufficiently indicated what is involved in this knot as doubly orientated, and that it alone is what explains by the rapprochement that I made with the coloured one, that one of these knots should be by the fact of not being orientatable, by this very fact coloured, requires that there are two knots, and that is why the coloured one and the orientated one at the same time, makes (147) two. No doubt Thomé and Soury will think, no doubt it will come to them that the flattening-out here introduces a suspect element. Nevertheless, I point out the following to them, that the same articulations concerning orientation are valid, if we draw these two knots these two circles in the following way, that I believe, that perspective sufficiently indicates and that makes no reference to exteriority of one of the curves, of the one with respect to the curve of the other. There is neither external nor internal with the simple reference to these spatial way of saying, put into three dimensions, by

representing the two circles, the circles that become cycles, already with this way, there is a way to demonstrate that there are two knots, and not a single one orientated, two Borromean knots of three orientated.

There you are, I will stick with that for today.

Seminar 10: Tuesday 15 April 1975

Just like that, I imagined this morning, as I awoke, two little drawings, the two on top [on the board], on the extreme right. I imagined then two little nondescript drawings – you were able to see the difficulty I had in simply reproducing them. It is a matter in these two drawings: [X-1 and 2] those on top, of two triangles, and in addition, two triangles of the most ordinary type, in short, they do not even have curved sides; two triangles that cross over one another.

There is all the same, I think that it will be tangible for you who look at that, as I fabricated it, that there are in twos, those of the left, the red, that is why I put the others in black, which are knotted in a chain, which make just by those two, a chain, which are by this fact, comparable in every way to what I will talk about later, two toruses, one of which would pass through the hole of the other. The two

others are not knotted. They can be pulled apart from one another. It (150) is like a torus that would be flattened out to operate, not at all to be knotted, but to operate in the hole of the other.

The case is the same, that is also why I put them in black, for these two triangles that are drawn underneath, except for the fact that one of these triangles is in sum bent around what is presented as – but of course that means nothing at this level – one of the sides of the other, I am saying side because people imagine that a triangle has three sides.

It is simply to get you into the swing of a geometry, to put you into the dimensions of a geometry that is repugnant for the word geometry; not without reason, because it is not a geometry, it is radically distinct from it. A topology is what, at the start, indicates how what is not knotted two by two can nevertheless make a knot.

We call a Borromean knot what is constituted in such a way that by subtracting one of these elements that I depicted, I say depicted, because it is only a figure, it is not its consistency, for each one of these couples of two that I made, it is enough to break – what is meant by break we will try to say later – that it is enough to break one of these elements in order that all the others should be also unknotted from each of them; and this can be done for as great a number of them as one wishes to state. You know that there is no limit to this stating. It is in that that it seems to me that there can be supported in a sayable (*dicible*) way, a term that I will comment on later, it is in it that there can be supported the term of sexual non-relationship, sexual in so far, I can only repeat, as it is supported essentially by a non-relationship of

the couple. Does the knot as a chain suffice to represent the couple relationship?

(151) At a time when most of you were not at my seminar, since it was a time when I brought out what was involved in demand and desire, I illustrated with two toruses the link to be made between demand and desire, two toruses, namely, two orientatable cycles. I am going all the same to make the two toruses for you or at least to indicate them to you. It is something that begins to be drawn like that.

[On the board] You see, what is more, one gets entangled in it. Obviously, I am not very gifted, but you are no more so than I. Here's how this is drawn, if you want to make something complete. Since I put a wrong line there, I am going to indicate that there is on this torus, this particular torus, something which on its circuit comes to enter into the hole of the other torus. It is by depicting in each one of these toruses something that turns around that I showed what winds around this one, is shifted onto the other by a series of windings around the central hole of the torus. What does that mean if not that demand and desire, for their part, are knotted. They are knotted in the measure that a torus represents a cycle and is therefore orientatable.

You know, because all the same you have heard talk of that, of what constitutes the difference between the sexes, that this is situated at the level of the cell and especially at the level of the cellular nucleus or in the chromosomes which, since they are microscopic, seem to guarantee for us a defined level of the Real. But why the devil should people want what is microscopic to be more real than what is macroscopic! Something usually differentiates the sex which in each

species is situated as male from that which is female, the fact is that in one case, there is a homozygotism, namely, a certain gene which is paired with another gene, without one ever knowing in advance how (152) in each species it is divided up, I mean, whether it is the male or the female that is homozygotic. The difference to the other sex, is that in the other sex, there is a heterozygotism somewhere, namely, that there are two genes which are not paired, pair meaning that they are h-o-m-o, homozygotic, that they are similar.

It is an opportunity to give its whole weight to what André Gide makes great play of in *Paludes*, namely, the famous proverb *Numero deus [sic] impare gaudet*, which he translates by, the number two rejoices at being odd, as I said a long time ago; he is quite right, because nothing would produce this two, if there was not an odd. This odd in so far as it begins at the number three - which, of course, is not immediately seen - and which makes it necessary to display openly more developed knots, specifically what I call the Borromean knot.

With the Borromean knot, what we have within our reach is something that for us is essential, crucial, for our practice and we have no need of a microscope for there to appear the reason, the reason for what I stated as a first truth, namely, that love is *h-a-i-n-a-m-o-r-a-t-i-o-n*, hainamoration. Why love is not the *velle bonum alicui*, as St Augustine states, if the word *bonum* has the slightest support, namely, if it means wellbeing? Not that certainly on occasion love is not preoccupied a little bit, the minimum, with the wellbeing of the other, but it is clear that it only does so up to a certain limit, and I have found nothing better, up to now, than the Borromean knot to represent this limit. To represent it, you should clearly understand that it is not a matter of a figure, of a representation, it is a matter of positing that it is the Real that is at stake, that this limit is only conceivable in the terms of ek-sistence, which for me, in my vocabulary, my own nomination, means the interplay, the interplay permitted to one of the cycles, to one of the consistencies, permitted by the Borromean knot.

Starting from this limit, love persists (*s'obstine*) because there is something of the Real in the affair, love persists, quite contrary to the wellbeing of the other. This indeed is why I called it *hainamoration*, with the substantified vocabulary of the writing with which I support it.

This notion of limit implies then an oscillation, a yes or a no, it is to wish the good of someone or to wish strictly the contrary, it is all the same something which suggests to us the idea of a sinusoid. So then, (153) what is this sinusoid like? If there is a limit, it is a circle. The sinusoid is like this [X-5].

Does this sinusoid wind around? Does it make a knot or not by being wound around or not? This is the question that is posed by the notion of consistency, more nodal, as I might say than that of line, since the knot underlies it. There is no consistency that is not supported by the knot. That is why from the knot the very idea of the Real is dictated. The Real is characterised by being knotted. But still this knot must be made.

The notion of the unconscious is supported by the fact that not only is this knot found to be already made, but it is found made in a different emphasis of the term 'One is made (*on est fait!*)'. One is made by this act X by which the knot is already made. To my mind there is no other possible definition of the unconscious. The unconscious is the Real, I am measuring my terms. If I say it is the Real in so far as it is holed, I advance. I advance a little more than I have the right to, because I am not the only one who says it, who still says it, soon everyone will repeat it and, by being rained on, it will finish up by becoming a very pretty fossil. But meanwhile it's new! But up to the

present, I am the only one who has said that there was no sexual relationship, and that this made a hole at a point of being, of the speaking being. The speaking being is not very widespread, huh! But all the same, it is like mould, it has a tendency to expand. So then, will we content ourselves with saying that the unconscious is the Real in so far as it is afflicted...- You're leaving, you're quite right. How can people put up with what I am telling them! – that the unconscious is the Real, in so far as in the speaking being, it is afflicted by the only thing that makes a hole, which assures us of the hole. This is what I called the Symbolic, by incarnating it in the signifier, of which when all is said and done there is no other definition than that, the hole. The signifier makes a hole.

(154) That is why I am putting forward, I already said it, the knot is not a model. Not alone is what makes the knot not Imaginary, not a representation, but its characteristic is precisely the following, that is why it escapes from being represented, and that I assure you that it is not to make grimaces, that every time I represent one, I put in a wrong line; since I believe I am no less imaginative than anybody else, this demonstrates already the point to which the knot is repugnant to us as a model. There is no affinity between the body and the knot, even if in the body, it plays a damned important function for analysts. The knot is not the model, it is the support. It is not reality, it is the Real. That means that if there is a distinction between the Real and reality, it is the knot, not which gives a model of it, until of course finally, fossilisation arrives, you pass your time making knots between your fingers. It is desirable. That will suggest to you a little more ingenuity.

In bringing back the unconscious to the Symbolic, namely, to what makes a hole from the signifier, I am doing something, my God, that will be judged by its effect, its fruitfulness. This seems to me to be dictated by our very practice, which is far from being able to be content with an obscure reference to instinct, as people persist in

translating the word *Trieb* into English. Instinct at its emergence and which, of course, is immemorial, and how even know what it meant, before Fabre, who only supports it from one thing, how the devil can a little insect know, because we affirm this knowledge from the precision of its gestures, how it must at a particular point of the body of another insect, at a particular joint, and what is more since it is a matter of an insect slipping underneath what is called the carapace and which, of course, is only a figurative mythology because there must be somewhere something to pierce, to reach what, a particular precise point of what we know now comes from the ectoderm, namely, the invaginated part that is called the nervous system and there, breaks something which means that the other insect can be preserved.

What is this knowledge? What interest has it? How is it explicatory to transport it into a behaviour which is like the one that we see in the human being, every day, and who obviously has no instinctual knowledge, who does not see any further than the tip of his nose, but who, for his part also, from a different source, finds himself able to do a lot of things. And specifically, in short, knowing how to make, it is a way of putting it, to say that he knows how to make love is probably (155) very exaggerated. This pushes all the same this idea that I stated, of course, because I for my part take risks like that, that pushes this idea that, the one that I came to, like that in little steps, that the Real is not all (*tout*) and when I say that it is not all, that puts a lot of things in question. At the same time it implies that science, well, only extracts little bits of this Real. That it extracts manifestly up to the present with the idea of the universe, which it seems is indispensable for it but why? So that it can manage to assure, to make sure. Obviously it manages to make some things sure, when there is number, and that is truly what it is all about. How does it happen that language conveys a certain number of numbers so that one finally arrives at qualifying as real number properly ungraspable numbers, that are not otherwise defined, namely, that they are not in the series, that they even cannot be in it, that they are fundamentally excluded

from it. How these numbers one, two, three, four came to peoples' minds says a lot about the subject of knowledge. For my part, I took like that a certain side, pushed by what? I will not say by my experience because an experience only means one thing, namely, that one engages in it, and I do not see why my engagement would be preferable. If I were the only one for example anything I might say would have no import. It is indeed because there is something that I am trying to situate, in the form, in the species of psychoanalytic discourse, namely, that I am not alone in carrying out this experiment, that thanks to the fact that I am like everybody else, I am a speaking being. That thanks to this fact I am led to formulate what can account for this analytic discourse, in a certain way. Good!

There is someone who – this was reported to me – like that, he is a complete bastard; he said that, I do not know, that my theory was dead! It is not as dead as all that, it will indeed end up by becoming so, is that not so, with the crusting over that I spoke about earlier. Meanwhile, this guy who obviously is not of my persuasion, he is one of these guys who talk...who talk like that...they talk...they don't know what they are saying, who talk about psychical reality! Yes! I would not call anything whatsoever by such a name, because the psyche, precisely is what everyone has tried to avoid, it gives rise to incredible difficulties, it involves a world of suppositions, it supposes (156) everything, it supposes God in any case. Where would the soul be if there were no God, and if, what's more, God had not explicitly created us to have one! This cannot be eliminated from any psychology.

What I am doing, at least what I am trying to do, is to talk about an operational reality. Naturally it is much more limited, but that requires, it seems to me, from the fact that the simple word, the blah-blah...the blah-blah of the bastard I mentioned just now, who says that my theory is dead, in short, he literally does not know what he is saying, it means that he is only talking, he is blathering, and I am sure,

that in his analysis that works. That works with a certain limitation, of course, but I am sure that it works, otherwise, he would not continue to be an analyst. Even the word of those who believe in psychical reality works. Yes! Despite you, for you, and this is what, I don't know, I would like a little bit to make you grasp, that for you, for you if simply you experience things a little, the structure of the world (*monde*), if I can express myself thus, to talk about what is filthy (*immonde*), the structure of the world, I would ask you to try to grasp the points, the points where you can grasp that for you the structure of the world consists in putting you off with fine words. And that this is even why the world is more futile, I mean that flees, it is more futile than the Real, this Real that I am trying to suggest to you, in its *dit-mansion*, the dwelling of the said, that I try to get you to grasp by this said of mine, namely, through my saying.

The fuss that is being made about this psychoanalytic business is crazy, and it is badly read. There are very serious people, there are very serious people, who busy themselves with the dreams of animals. They cannot of course, there is no way of knowing whether the animal dreams, I beg your pardon, they cannot of course know whether the animal dreams, but really they know that it has all the appearances of it, is that not so, of the dream. The animal sleeps and then, it is obvious that if he stirs, it is because something is going through him, and since of course, naturally, no one doubts that ideas are images, nothing more, that is even what it means; what is marvellous, is that language is always there as a witness. So then there are images, so he has ideas, which does not mean that he names them. So then, there are guys like that who get excited around the idea that the dream is not there, as Freud said, to protect sleep. The trouble is that Freud did not (157) say that. Sleep in itself can only designate *qua* sleep what is called a need, the need to sleep. What Freud says, is that the dream in the speaking being...because he did not experiment on rats, nor on anything else like that of which we have the proof that it dreams, no one knows whether a fly dreams, nor a rat, one can imagine it because

we are all a bit of a rat from some angle, and in particular we are failures (*raté*)! And the experiments in question are such more than the others, they are ratified, they are Ratmen. In short when one is a man one is inhabited by a lot of Ratmen. In any case we have men who are at the level (*au ras*) of science. Freud said that the dream protects, not the need, but the desire to sleep. It is quite certain that this *dit-mansion* alone adds to this Real like that, this insignificant Real in short, that is supposed to be scientific, where people imagine needs. But on the contrary, if there is one thing that Freud really made us sense, and there we should follow the text, and notice that for his part, he knows what he is saying, which is that the dream protects something that is called a desire. Now a desire is not conceivable without my Borromean knot.

This is simply in short a remark by which I am trying to show that my saying is all the same, for its part, orientated, and to say that what I am saying is only conditioned by the fact that – I would not say that the word acts in the analytic discourse – that only the word acts. *Im anfang war die Tat* as someone or other has said, and he believes that he invented something there! Yes in short, it's not too bad, he thinks that it contradicts *das Wort*, but if there is not *dat Wort* before the *die Tat*, well then, there is no *Tat* at all. While analysis grasps a point, very limited of course, a very limited point where the word has a *Wirklichkeit*. Of course, it does what it can, it perhaps cannot do a lot, but in short it is all the same a fact, a fact that is all the more exemplary, that this gives us the hope of having a little light on something which is manifest, that there is no action that is not rooted – I will not even say in the word, in the *wawah* in *das Wort*, *das Wort* is that, it is to go *ouah-ouah*. Only the unconscious allows it to be seen how there is a knowledge, not in the Real, [but as a support of the Symbolic]. It is already a lot that it should be supported by this Symbolic that I tried to get you to sense as conceivable, not at the limit, but by the limit, as being made up of the consistency required for the hole, and by this fact requiring it. The Symbolic, certainly,

(158) goes round in circles, and it only consists in the hole that it makes. So then everything that has been said about instinct, only means that we had to go towards the Real, towards the supposed Real, that one goes to the Real in order to have a presentiment of the unconscious. And in the sense that the body means consistency, the unconscious gives body to this instinct in a practice. If we want body to mean consistency there is only the unconscious to give body to instinct.

Yes! Of course, why would all this not be a vain debate between specialists, huh! But in short, this supports a saying, a saying which could have consequences, if analysts said something other than tittle-tattle, it's a fact that they say nothing. Have you ever seen something come out of the *Institut psychanalytique de Paris*, for example? Something readable? It's funny all the same, yeah, you will tell me that there is my School. Of course my School, I have just had an experience, like that, in the *Journées* which have even, that's what's marvellous, what is tiredness! Nevertheless I was very happy, I was completely in my element. Everybody said things that proved that I had been read and I could not get over it. Not only which proved that I had been read, but even, faith, that people were able to bring out of it, like that, pseudopodiums which proved that my saying was being extended. Even I mean to the extent of drawing a certain number of consequences and which were no small thing. You must not imagine that because I question them here that they do not react. They react for reasons which stem from the function of saying, which stem from ek-sistence, namely, from the knot, when all is said and done. But it existed bloody well in these *Journées*. I, naturally have a tendency to think that what I am saying, namely, this discourse founded on a hole, the only hole that is certain, the hole constituted by the Symbolic, because there is one thing whose demonstration, everything on the board is designed to demonstrate it, a hole provided it is consistent, that is circumscribed, a hole is sufficient to knot together a strictly indefinite number of consistencies. And this begins with two as is

manifest by this Borromean knot here [IX-2]; that it begins with two guarantees it. That is why the two is only supported by the fundamental hole of the knot. A striking thing, the four [X-6], namely, how it happens that a hole, this one for example, is sufficient (159) to knot together three consistencies that you can make rectilinear – for it is clear that here I can reduce this buckle to be parallel to the one that is here, which on this occasion I designated by a small b.

Why would I give a hole, a hole circumscribed by a consistency this privilege, this privilege of highlighting the first time that the fact that the hole makes a knot is not limited to two. The fact is that the couple, all by itself, is always unknottable, unless it is knotted by the Symbolic.

I had put that forward as I could at one time, I was recently reminded, in what is called my Rome Discourse, the one for which finally I am delaying a repetition of, I spoke about the full word. Obviously, it was not bad, even though what the words were worth does not amount to much namely, as I told the person who was talking to me about it, the full word, if indeed it supports what creates a knot in the *you are my wife*, I all the same showed a little bit, because I said it since, of course, I did not say it right away like that because I had Lagache and Favez-Boutonnier on my back. In short, anyway, you can imagine if I had said *tuer ma femme* huh, like that, yeah! To kill her, yes, good. That would have made a bad impression (*mauvais effet*), and I am all

the same...I look twice at it, I do not lack all common sense, I look twice at it before creating a bad impression. Someone asked me recently in the name of what did the *Jury d'Accueil* (Reception Committee) proceeded in order to stretch its benevolent hand over a certain number of people in the School. It is simply that, they will not (160) make a bad impression, they will not make a bad impression right away - they will do so later when they have got older, and have won a little authority.

Good, well, the couple, of course, was knotable, whatever may have been the full words that founded it. What analysis demonstrates, is that not so, what it demonstrates in a quite tangible way, is that it is knotted despite that. It is knotted by what, huh? By the hole. By the prohibition of incest. Yes, there are not many people who have highlighted that. It must all the same be said, in the Jewish religion, there was a thing all the same that I wanted to tell you like that, in passing – why do the Jews not get a good press huh? Well, I am going to put that in your pocket, it corrects a certain number of things. It is because they are not nice/gentiles (*gentils*). If they were gentiles, well, they would not be Jews would they? That would settle everything! It is the prohibition of incest. There are all the same people who managed to make that emerge in myths, and even, the Hindus are after all really the only ones who said that if one has slept with one's mother you had to go away, I don't know whether it is towards the East or towards the West, I think it is towards the West, towards the West with one's own prick between one's teeth, after having cut it off of course!

Yeah! We will not consider the fact of the prohibition of incest as historical. It is of course historical, but one has to look so much in history that, as you see, I ended up by finding it among the Hindus, and one can say that here one gets hold of one end of it, huh! It is not historical, it is structural. Why is it structural? Because there is the Symbolic. What one must manage to clearly conceive of is that this

prohibition consists in the hole of the Symbolic. There must be something of the Symbolic for there to appear individualised in the knot this something that I, I do not so much call the Oedipus complex, it is not so complex as all that. I call that the Name of the Father. Which means nothing but the Father as Name, which means nothing at the start, not simply the father as name, but the father as naming. There, one cannot say that in this regard the Jews are not nice huh! They really did explain to us what the Father was, the Father that they call, the Father that they stick into a point of the hole that one cannot even imagine, *I am what I am*, that is a hole, no! Well! It is from (161) there, that by an inverse movement, for a hole, if you can believe my little schemas, the hole whirls around, or rather it gulps down, huh, then there are moments when it spits out again. It spits out what? The Name. It is the Father as Name.

Obviously one must have all the same a little idea of what that involves, namely, that the prohibition of incest, is propagated. It is propagated on the side of castration, like the other gentiles, in short here the Greeks showed us all the same in a certain number of myths, namely, where they made a genealogy uniquely founded on the Father. Uranus, Chronus, and so on and so forth, until the moment when Zeus after having made a lot of love, faints, faints before what, before a breath. There is all the same a further step to be taken otherwise we comprehend nothing about the link of this castration with the prohibition of incest. It is to see that the link is what I call the sexual non-relationship.

When I say the Name-of-the-Father, that means that there can be like in the Borromean knot an indefinite number of them. That is the core point. It is that this indefinite number in so far as they are knotted everything rests on one. On one, *qua* hole it communicates its consistency to all the others, hence the fact that, you understand, the year when I wanted to speak about the Names-of-the-Father, I would all the same have spoken about a few more than two or three, huh!

And what upset that would have caused among analysts, if they had had in short, a whole series of Names-of-the-Father! You can well imagine that I could not have stated an indefinite number of them. A little bit more than the two or three that I had prepared, I am quite satisfied all the same to let them high and dry, namely, to have never taken up these Names-of-the-Father, except, like last year, in the form of the *Non-dupes*, the *Nons-dupes-qui-z'errent*. Obviously, they cannot but err because the more of them there are, the more they will become entangled, and I am certainly very happy to have not brought out a single one.

But, this indeed is why I found myself at the end of these *Journées* having to answer for something that naturally no one had paid attention to in the School, namely, as to what constituted what is called a *cartel*. Why a *cartel*? This is the question that I asked, and – to which miraculously I obtained indicative responses, pseudopodiums as I said earlier, things that made a little bit of a knot, is that not so! (162) Why did I posit very precisely that a cartel starts from three plus-one person, which in principle makes four and gave as a maximum this five, thanks to which that gives six. Does that mean that I think that like the Borromean knot, there are three that must incarnate the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. After all the question could be put, I might be crazy! Have you heard tell, I asked the question yesterday, at the *Journées* because I wanted above all to receive, to instruct myself, have you heard tell of identification? Identification in Freud is quite simply inspired. What I want is what? The identification to the group. Because it is certain that human beings identify to a group. When they do not identify to a group, they're finished and should be locked up. But I am not saying by this to what point of the group they must be identified. The start of any social knot is constituted, I am saying, by the sexual non-relationship as a hole, not of two, at least three, and what I mean, is that even if you are only three, that will give four. The plus-one person will be there, even if you are only three, as is very precisely shown by this

schema here [IX-7], this giving the example of the fact that this will make a Borromean knot [X-7] if one started from the idea of the cycle, as it is made from two knotted [X-6] even if you were only three, that will make four, hence my expression plus-one. And it is by withdrawing a real one that the group will be unknotted. For this you must be able to withdraw a real one to give the proof that the knot is Borromean and that it is indeed the three minimal consistencies that constitute it. In the three, one never knows which of the three is real, (163) and that indeed is why there must be four, because the four is what in this double buckle [IX-7] supports the Symbolic by what in effect it is made up of, namely, the Name-of-the-Father. Nomination is the only thing about which we can be sure that it makes a hole. And that is why in the cartel I gave this number four as giving the minimum, not without considering that one can all the same have a little bit of slack about what ek-sists and perhaps one day, why not next year, at the rate I am persisting, I will try all the same to show you what all the same the Names-of-the-father...if I couple this Name-of-the-Father to the Symbolic, to make of it the plus-one, by which there is manifestly assured...while here [On the board, IX-2], with three there is something that is not seen right away in the fact that neither *a* nor *b* cross over the hole and make a chain. When there are two of them [IX-6] one sees that even with one it does not cross any of the two holes, that the hole is between the two. That indeed is why the couple does not exist. But perhaps we can specify that there is only after all the Symbolic which has the privilege of the Names-of-the-father, that it is not obligatory that it should be to the hole in the Symbolic that nomination should be joined. I will indicate it next year.

But to come back from this, because I want to end on something which has substance, did not Freud state properly that in identification, he said, nobody sees its support, namely, its import. There is no love except from the identification brought to bear on this fourth term, namely, the Name-of-the-Father. Is it not strange that he only states three identifications for us, and that in this three there is

everything you need to read my Borromean knot. Namely, that he goes as far as to designate properly consistency as such, in so far as in this knot, it is everywhere. Whether it makes a hole or not, consistency is the basis namely, you see, the *triskel*, namely, this [X-7] for example because I only have the example of it there, the *triskel* which is not a knot. It is only inscribed from consistency, he called that the unary trait, one could not say better! Which is a component of the knot, not without having got the idea that there is only love, I would say, because of the fact that the Name-of-the-Father makes a buckle between the three, makes a buckle of the three of the *triskel*. This term *triskel*, I think that it perhaps means something to a certain number of you. It is strictly that, in so far as extended you see what in (164) it? Three batons (*fusils*) which make a bundle, that support one another in 3's, this is what as you know perhaps, and this is where the name comes from, the Bretons took up to make up their coat of arms, the coat of arms of modern Brittany.

That gets us away from the cross, there is already that in short. Yeah! Apart from the fact that one can say that the cross of Lorraine, in its way if it is drawn in the correct way also makes a *triskel*. And what did Freud add to it? He added minimal identification to it in order that this term of identification is supported with respect to the Borromean knot.

I repeat for you, precisely, [On the board] that it is in so far as the Name-of-the-Father is what makes a knot here, and it is a matter of the *triskel*, the Name- of-the-Father, here, makes a knot of the *triskel*, it is in so far then as the *triskel* ek-sists that there can be identification, identification to what? To that which in the Borromean knot, I remind you, in every Borromean knot, I remind you... There, you see, here is my *triskel* here in every Borromean knot it constitutes the heart, the

centre of the knot. And where did I mark for you that already desire was situated, the desire which is also a possibility of identification? It is here, namely, there, where I situated for you the place of the **o**-object as being the one that dominates what Freud makes the third possibility of identification, the desire of the hysteric.